

Minutes of the 68th and Final Annual General Meeting of the BWISC
and First Joint Meeting of the WIPSG, Held at 1.00pm Saturday 29 April 2023

1. Chairman's Welcome and Opening Remarks (Steve Jarvis)
A minute's silence was held in memory of Peter Ford, Chris May, David Horry and other past members lost over the past 12 months.
2. Apologies for Absence Malcolm Lacey, Dave Tetley, Kevin Darcy, John Seidl, Steve Zirinsky, Darryl Fuller, David Druett, James Gavin, Tim Pearce and Richard Capon all conveyed their apologies. 23 members of the society were present.
3. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising There were no matters arising and the record of the 2022 meeting was accepted as written.
4. Chairman's Report (Steve Jarvis) 2022 was a difficult year following the demise of our President and Chairman, Graham Booth and our long-term Vice-President Simon Goldblatt. My first year as Chairman has been a baptism of fire, dealing with the merger of the BWISC and BCPSG societies. We now seem to have regrouped and are moving forward. The BWISC membership at the end of 2022 was 298 and our combined membership is now 380, which is a very solid base. I wish to thank all Committee members for their support throughout the year. The main challenge for the next year is filling gaps on the Committee to replace retirees (Publications Manager, Advertising Manager and Accounts Independent Examiner). I wish to thank Terry Harrison and John Davis for their many years of service to the Society. Many of you will know that Peter Ford has died. Peter was a former Editor of the journal and Chairman of the Society, and has made a substantial contribution to the BWISC over many years. His work as Publications Manager has been prolific and as a result, I think it makes the society stands out from the crowd. If anyone would like to join the Committee to fill these vacant roles, we would like to hear from them. Our other challenge is to revitalise the Society by becoming more inclusive for members on both sides of the pond and further afield. We intend to introduce Zoom meetings and Susan Taylor and John Jordan have offered to fly over for a 2024 meeting in the USA, provided there is sufficient interest from North American members. The UK Convention (Guildford) is scheduled for October 2023, a different format to previously, driven by the very high prices being charged by hotels. I look forward to seeing lots of members there.
5. Secretary's Report (Susan Taylor) The Secretary's role has three components:
Membership - New members are processed by me. I check they are real, not scammers, and that they've paid and completed the necessary documentation before joining. Then I send a welcome message and their password. In 2022 we've had 21 leavers and 18 joiners (excluding the effects of the merger) Today the WIPSG, post-merger has 380 members, plus 20 complimentary members (philatelic organisations).

BWISC Membership Statistics as at December 2022.

Bracketed numbers are online/paperless

As at end	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total Members	298 (94)	301 (91)	310 (83)	309 (77)	339 (84)	339 (85)	340 (83)
UK	172 (39)	183 (47)	192	194	218	207	208
EUR	33 (15)	28 (9)	27	28	24	24	25
Rest of World	93 (40)	90 (35)	91	87	97	108	107
New/Rejoined	18	20					
Deceased	6	7					
Resigned/Lapsed	15	22					
Change	-3	-9	+1	-30	0	-1	+28

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Administration -The Secretary responds to a range of administrative queries: Librarians enquiring about data access, members who cannot get their password to work, members who are unwell, or individuals seeking an answer to a philatelic query. I also write (agree with the Chair) and issue the quarterly newsletters. It's the Secretary's unenviable task to chase up on folks who don't pay their dues, or fail to respond to vote requests.

Meetings – The Secretary attends, notes and produces minutes of any meetings the Society holds (AGM 7 May 2022 and Stampex 1 Oct 2022). These notes, along with any announcements, are posted in the quarterly journal. The Secretary additionally attends philatelic events, representing the Society. Last year there were two days at the Royal (Crawford Festival 28/29 June 2022), and the Philatelic Congress in Birmingham – on 9 September 2022 (where a group of us made a series of presentations). I take a selection of the Society's books to these events and try to sell them and to attract new members. The Secretary organises the bi-annual October Convention (due to be held in Guildford 14/15 October). This entailed getting quotes from various venues, and getting the Committee to agree a choice of location (not too expensive, near a main station, with free parking, near hotels, with a bar and catering facilities, big enough for exhibits and dealers too). Looking ahead – On 27 June I am representing the Society and presenting on 'Writing and encouraging writing for Philatelic Journals' at the Crawford Festival at the RPSL. The Society plans a meeting at the York Stamp and Coin Fair 21-22 July 2024, which I shall attend. Hopefully I shall be going to the USA next year to co-host a Society meeting at the 'Great Annual Stamp Show 15-18 August 2024 with John Jordan and John Seidl. It was originally envisaged that I'd arrange and coordinate Zoom meetings, but this hasn't happened. However, the good news is that James Gavin and Jonathan Guy have kindly offered to help with this responsibility. Arrangements to be agreed. There has been and still remains a lot of administration to do given the merger, but hopefully things will settle down soon.

6. Report by the Editor (Darryl Fuller) The merger of the two societies and relatively small change to the journal, from A4 to US Letter size has gone quite smoothly in the two issues I have prepared in 2023. The June issue is almost ready for the printer as I write this. Once again, I would like to thank Steve Jarvis, Susan Taylor, Terry Harrison, Peter Ford and my new proof-reader Paul Farrimond. Peter Ford's contribution will be greatly missed. I would also like to thank all the authors for their submissions over the last year. I am still in need of someone to write an auction report, so if you follow the auctions closely this would be much appreciated. (Michael Hamilton offered to report on the 29 April 2023 WIPSG Auction, and James Podger reported that he had submitted a report on the Graham Booth Spink Auction.) I would like to see more articles by former members of the BCPSG, so please start writing. I need articles both long and short, and since the BCPSG Journal is no longer being printed, this is your opportunity to keep the articles flowing. In my report last year, I mentioned that I was receiving a number of shorter articles but needed more longer ones. Well it now seems that the opposite is true. I am receiving good length articles from four to 20+ pages, but few single-page, or less, articles. I need both because in the June issue after I had largely completed the issue, I had one less advertisement than anticipated and was forced to write an article to fill the space. So please, write up those interesting items you have and send them in.
7. Report by the Treasurer (Ray Stanton) The accounts for the year to the 31 December 2022 (see later) show a surplus of £2,350 compared to £822 in 2021. The main reason for the increased surplus was that sales of publications, after commission paid, totalled £3,721. Whilst that was less than 2021, it exceeded the cost of new books printed by £1,286, given that fewer books were produced in 2022. As in previous years, book stocks are written off each year but are expected to produce a steady stream of future income to be used for new publications in subsequent years. Subscriptions and advertising income once again covered the bulletin costs including distribution, and the donation from the auction team was more than the previous year due to the continuing success of the 2022 Study Circle auction. Expenses were similar to last year except that there was no convention in 2022 whereas in 2021 that was an overall cost to the Study Circle of £787. The accounts leave the Study Circle with a balance in the Accumulated fund of £22,350, and in a healthy position to take forward the agreed merger with the British Caribbean Philatelic Study Group. I would like to thank John Davis once again for being our auditor and for the advice and help he has given, not just this year

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but over many years. John however has decided that it is time to put away his quill pen and we will be appointing a new independent examiner in due course. Once the new WIPSG Bank Account is established there will be a \$12,700 transfer from the BCPSG, to cover the financial liability of life members in the merged society who are posted Journals. This money will be transferred into the annual accounts over the coming 10 years.

Annual Membership fees need to take account of escalating postage costs. As a result, it is necessary to raise annual membership fees in 2024 to £18 for the UK, £21 for Europe, and £25 for the Rest of the World. However, the American \$30 fee already covers these increases so will not need to go up. The cost of annual Digital Membership will remain at £8 and we hope this will be an incentive for others to join. These new Membership Charges were unanimously voted in by the attendees and it was noted that the costs remain modest compared to those of many other societies.

8. Americas Report (John Seidl). We've gained more members than we've lost over the merger. We are planning for the following meetings: • The Great American Stamp Show in 2023, Aug 10-13, in Cleveland, Ohio • The Great American Stamp Show in 2024, Aug 15-18, in Hartford, Connecticut • It has also been suggested we have one at the Boston World Stamp Show in 2026, May 23-30, in Boston, Massachusetts We are looking for volunteers to help organise / participate in these meetings. We are in the process of consolidating the North American finances for the BCPSG and the BWISC. I would also encourage people to volunteer for the Committee, as well as submitting articles for the journal.
9. Publications Report (Ray Stanton, supported by David Druett) The total sales figure after commission paid was £3,721. This was less than the record year in 2021 due to the fact there were only two new books printed, Barbados Covers by Peter Ford, of which 29 were sold, and Mike Rego's book on Grenada. 41 copies of the Lady Macleod book by Susan Taylor printed late in 2021 were sold, and there were a few copies of many of the back publications. Of particular note there were sales in double figures of both of Peter Fernbank's books. There were reprints of further copies of Mike Rego's Steamships #2 book plus Peter Fernbank's book on King Edward VII. Nevertheless, the total spent on the preparation and printing of books was well down on 2021 which meant that overall there was a surplus on Publications of £1286. There are also good stocks of many of the back-catalogue books which as policy we do not value in the accounts but should produce continuing income for the new merged WIPSG. It was now important to identify a new Publications Manager and anyone willing interested in taking the role up should contact Steve Jarvis for further details.
10. Report by the Auction Team (Simon Richards supported by John Jordan, Charles Kennard and James Podger). The report on the 2022 auction appeared in the September 2022 BWISC Bulletin. The 2023 auction starts in an hour! We have some 710 lots and I hope we sell 60% as usual, and to reach £15- 20,000 in total sales. Bidder numbers are slightly down, maybe because they are all in the room, but the number of bids is up. I am grateful to all our vendors, and we aim to have a similar size auction in 2024. Please do send in your consignments. I am to despatch all successful bids before going to Essen on 20th May and will then consider offers on the unsolds which will run for about a month to end June, and then settle up with vendors early July. I am grateful to the team for their help. Unless the Committee has decided otherwise the catalogue for 2024 goes out with the March Bulletin and so it is essential all consignments are received by 15 January and earlier is very much to be desired; we start describing and lotting in August. The auction continues to trade under the old name and we will open discussion with the bank after the 2023 auction vendors have been paid. Postscript – the 2023 Auction went very well and takings were in the region of £28,000.
11. Report by BWISC WebMaster (Steve Jarvis) The web site for www.bwisc.org was revamped in the middle of last year. The merger required the transfer of our web site to the new domain, www.wipsg.org, and encountered the inevitable teething problems but these seem to have largely been overcome. The two membership databases were merged onto the new site and Susan Taylor has been very busy facilitating members' access to the site. The design for www.wipsg.org has been adapted to incorporate content transferred from the BCPSG site, particularly all the journals. Further work is required to include more history of the BCPSG. James Gavin has agreed to manage the Society's social platforms. Facebook is up and running and we also have a Twitter account. Both of these can be accessed from our web site home page.

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12. Election of Officers - the following appointments were confirmed for 2023/2024:

President Simon Richards

Chairman Steve Jarvis

Secretary Susan Taylor

Treasurer Ray Stanton. There is a vacancy for an Independent Accounts Examiner (non Committee role)

American Representatives John Seidl and Steve Zirensky. There is a vacancy for an American events organiser.

Auction Manager Simon Richards (supported by John Jordan, Charles Kennard, and James Podger)

Publications and Book Sales Manager Vacant – supported by David Druett

Journal Editor Darryl Fuller. There is a vacancy for the Advertising Co-ordinator – Peter Fernbank is considering.

Society Awards James Podger, supported by Michael Medicott and Ray Stanton. There is a vacancy for a fourth person on this team.

Webmaster Steve Jarvis

Social Media James Gavin and Jonathan Guy (Zoom)

Committee members who lend support to the above activities Peter Fernbank and Richard Stupples.

If any member is interested in volunteering for any of the vacancies please contact Steve Jarvis or Susan Taylor on info@wipsg.org or sec@wipsg.org

The society needs a new Independent Accounts Examiner, it was agreed by members that the Committee has authority to appoint one. Richard Stupples expressed an interest and Ray Stanton would discuss with him.

The Secretary brought to the attention of attendees a concern that has been raised by a small number of ex BCPSG members that the WIPSG Committee is over dominated by British personnel. She pointed out that currently the Committee comprised 16 volunteers and 4 vacancies. 6 of the current volunteers have international nationality (three Americans, two Australians, one Trinidad and Tobagian). The Committee would be delighted if persons from across the club's international membership volunteered to help with running the Society. This was particularly important as a lack of persons willing to volunteer for roles in the BCPSG had been the reason why it had found itself in difficulty and had needed to merge with the BWISC.

13. The WIPSG Constitution. The Secretary explained that following the merger a new WIPSG Account was needed for which the bank required a Constitution. This needed to be agreed by a majority of members. Unfortunately, only 35 members responded to the request to vote, so it became necessary to chase members for votes. She explained that whilst a nuisance it was important and necessary to do so. As at the AGM 242 members had voted for the new constitution. Three had objected and one person had raised some queries. The new Constitution was therefore passed, however some small changes to wording had been made as a result of the points raised (the removal/explanation of pseudonyms). These did not in any way change the overall meaning of the Constitution, which was available for viewing on the website.

14. Any Other Business:

The BWISC Library had become dormant, due to digital access to other databases and the soaring cost of postage. It was agreed that where possible key documents would be digitalised (Steve Jarvis would investigate this proposal), some books would be donated to the Royal Philatelic Society London, remainders would be made available to members including at the 2025 UK Convention.

A decision had already been taken that the BCPSG Library would be donated to the American Philatelic Library.

A vote of thanks was expressed to Steve Jarvis for his considerable efforts on behalf of the Society and for all of his work on the new website.

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BRITISH WEST INDIES STUDY CIRCLE

INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2022

	£'s	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
INCOME :			
Subscriptions		4,113	4,262
Publications - Sales less commissions		3,721	5,049
Auction donation (net of costs)		1,202	917
Other donations		174	26
TOTAL INCOME		<u>9,210</u>	<u>10,254</u>
EXPENDITURE :			
Bulletin - Printing & distribution costs	4,494		4,486
Less : Advertising	<u>(1,789)</u>	2,705	<u>(1,631)</u>
Publications : Preparation, Printing & Distribution costs		2,435	4,705
Convention costs net of recovery		-	786
Other room hire & meeting costs		787	440
ABPS affiliation fee		274	288
Officers administration - Stationery, postage, telephone etc		35	82
Insurance		140	
Bank charges		-	7
Website		484	269
		<u>6,860</u>	<u>9,432</u>
SURPLUS FOR YEAR	£'s	<u>2,350</u>	£'s <u>822</u>

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2022

ACCUMULATED FUND :			
Balance at 1st January 2022		19,238	18,341
Add : Surplus for the year		2,350	822
Exchange conversion profit		762	75
	£'s	<u>22,350</u>	£'s <u>19,238</u>
REPRESENTED BY :			
Cash at banks		21,028	16,415
Debtors - amounts due to us		4,664	5,402
Prepaid expenses		450	225
		<u>26,142</u>	<u>22,042</u>
Less : Subscriptions received in advance	(1,748)		(1,729)
Other creditors - Amounts due by us	<u>(2,044)</u>	(3,792)	<u>(1,075)</u>
	£'s	<u>22,350</u>	£'s <u>19,238</u>

AUDITORS REPORT

I hereby certify that the income statement for the year ended 31st December 2022 is in accordance with the books, vouchers and explanations given to me; and that the Balance Sheet at the 31st December 2022 shows the financial state of the British West Indies Study Circle as at that date.

J G M Davis FCA

J G M Davis
3rs April 2023