

MINUTES OF THE 57th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BWISC

HELD AT 1:15 PM SATURDAY 16 April 2011

1. Chairman's Welcome and Opening Remarks

The meeting was opened by Peter Ford who welcomed the 30 members present, and thanked Grosvenor Auctions for their hospitality in allowing BWISC to hold our AGM on the premises.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from: David Thornton, Chris May, Michael Hamilton, Michael Medlicott, Michael Oliver, Kevin Darcy, Richard Foden, Chris Harman.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting & Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous meeting on 9 May 2010, as published in Bulletin No. 225, June 2010, Pages 24 to 28, were accepted by the attendees.

4. Report by the General Secretary (Chas Gee)

The membership status as of December 2010 (date of issue of December Bulletin) was that we had a total of 331 members, of which 220 were from the UK. This represents a decrease of 6 members compared to the same date in 2009.

Over the year we lost 19 existing members (4 deceased, 4 resigned, and 11 due non-payment of membership renewal fees).

There were 13 new membership applications (compared to 14 last year).

The annual request for information on changes to members' details (made in the Bulletin) usually results in a good response. Members are urged to let the Secretary know of any change of address as soon as possible to ensure that they continue to receive issues of our Bulletin.

Chas reported that at the BWISC Committee Meeting, held earlier in the day, the Committee had unanimously recommended that Peter Ford become an Honorary Life Member of our Society. This was in recognition of the contributions Peter has made over the years both as Society Chairman and to the development of our Society publications.

5. Report by the Editor (Steve Jarvis)

Production of the Bulletin over the last year has continued smoothly and, thanks to the contributions of members – 49 different authors have contributed over the last 2 years – I have managed to fill the 40 pages. However, for some quarters it has been by the skin of my teeth with articles arriving near to my deadline to help me fill the edition.

So I repeat my plea from last year for more articles please, large and small. Charles and Peter have promised to get their whips out to the Group Leaders and hopefully they will respond by encouraging submission of material.

One aspect I would like to expand upon is inclusion of notice of members' displays. Please let me know if you have an exhibit in a show or are visiting a local society. I will then provide publicity, which should help boost attendance at the event.

Unfortunately, my plans for handing over the Editorship did not come to fruition and you are stuck with me for a little longer; hence the Jamaica Encyclopaedia will need to remain lower down my priority list than I should prefer.

However, I did find time to give the web site a makeover earlier this year. The previous site was designed about 10 years ago and had evolved to the point where even I had difficulty finding where I had put information. I was also able to incorporate some new design techniques. I hope the new site is considered an improvement.

My thanks again go to Charles Freeland and Peter Ford, whose wise advice and scrutiny ensures the finished Bulletin maintains its high quality.

Charles Freeland asked Steve to list the Group Leaders in the next Bulletin so as inform those without access to the website of some recent changes. Charles also commented that one of the responsibilities of Group Leaders was to help out in providing Bulletin articles on their specialities.

BRITISH WEST INDIES STUDY CIRCLE
INCOME STATEMENT : YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2010

	£'s	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>
INCOME :			
Subscriptions		3,619	3,761
Publications - Sales less commissions		3,009	1,210
Auction donation		1,329	1,445
Other donations		26	499
Exchange gains realised		60	-
Interest received		-	3
TOTAL INCOME		<u>8,043</u>	<u>6,918</u>
EXPENDITURE :			
Bulletin - Costs less advertising	1,636		1,699
Distribution and editorial expenses	<u>2,076</u>	3,712	<u>1,952</u> 3,651
Publications : Printing costs		5,974	1,446
Leamington Convention - net deficit		-	505
London 2010 Expenses & Dinner net of recoveries		330	-
Room hire costs		252	260
ABPS affiliation fee		226	238
Officers administration - Stationery, postage, telephone etc		191	172
Bank charges		121	37
Library expenses		-	10
Website		81	79
Other expenses		-	15
		<u>10,887</u>	<u>6,413</u>
DEFICIT EXPENDITURE OVER INCOME	£'s	<u>(2,844)</u>	£'s <u>505</u>

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2010

ACCUMULATED FUND :			
Balance at 1st January 2010		9,678	5,822
Add : Surplus (Deficit) for the year		(2,844)	505
Dollar conversion profit (loss)		114	<u>(203)</u>
			6,124
ROSES PUBLICATIONS FUND - Balance received			3,554
	£'s	<u>6,948</u>	£'s <u>9,678</u>
REPRESENTED BY :			
Cash at banks		7,322	8,971
Debtors - amounts due to us		<u>3,195</u>	<u>3,762</u>
		10,517	12,733
Less : Subscriptions received in advance	(2,169)		(2,440)
Other creditors - Amounts due by us	<u>(1,400)</u>	(3,569)	<u>(615)</u> (3,055)
	£'s	<u>6,948</u>	£'s <u>9,678</u>

AUDITORS REPORT

I hereby certify that the income statement for the year ended 31st December 2010 is in accordance with the books, vouchers and explanations given to me; and that the Balance Sheet at the 31st December 2010 shows the financial state of the British West Indies Study Circle as at that date.

J G M Davis FCA

John Davis 22/3/11

6. Report by the Treasurer (Ray Stanton)

This year the Study Circle has a deficit of expenditure over income of £2,844, which compared with the surplus in 2009 of £505. This is entirely due to the expenditure on publications and our policy of writing off all expenditure as incurred without regard to carry forward stocks.

Just over £5,000 of the publications expenditure was on the Trinidad book jointly produced with the BCPSG. Sales have been equalised with the BCPSG and in 2010 our share of sales amounted to £2,681 net of commissions. Because of the money received from the erstwhile Roses Caribbean Philatelic Society in 2009, we are able to finance this without depleting significantly our available resources.

Income from subscriptions was slightly reduced in 2010 to £3,619 and did not completely cover the cost of the Bulletin production and distribution, after allowing for advertising income. The shortfall of £93 is not significant in the general context of the Study Circle's resources. However the postage on the distribution of the Bulletin continues to increase at a greater rate than inflation, particularly for overseas members. It is some years since the last subscription increase, and in terms of value it compares well with many other societies. Nevertheless we are not proposing an increase this year but will have to consider again in twelve months time. We are proposing to make available a Paypal option for subscription payments which members may find convenient. Details will be available later in the year.

Income from the Study Circle auction continues to be an excellent source of funds and was very similar to the previous year, albeit slightly reduced at £1,329.

During London 2010 we organised joint activities with the BCPSG. The dinner was largely self financed by those attending but overall there was net expenditure of £330 on the events and £252 on room hire.

As a result of the deficit, the Accumulated fund has decreased from £9,678 to £6,948 although this year we have a small profit on the conversion of our US dollar funds. Due to the prevailing low interest rates we have had limited ability to earn any interest this year.

I would like to thank John Davis once again for being our auditor and for the advice and help he has given.

7. Report by the Librarian (Ian Jakes)

There has been a loan of seven books to four members during the year. This compares with a loan of sixteen books to six members during the year ended April 2010.

I have provided four members with answers to their respective requests for philatelic information including information relating to Barbados bootheel cancels, St. Vincent Ship letters and Dominica Postal Fiscals.

Two books have recently been purchased from Proud-Bailey Co Limited for the Library namely 'The Postal History of the Leeward Islands' and 'The Postal History of St. Lucia and St. Vincent'.

Edmund A. Bayley has donated an autographed copy of his book 'The History of the Post Offices in Barbados'.

James Podger has donated a copy of his booklet 'The Podgers Entertain' produced for their Royal Philatelic Society London Display on 15 April 2010. James Podger has also donated more than fifty catalogues which he acquired from a recent Spink Auction.

Many thanks to both Edmund and James for these donations.

I have been in correspondence with the great great grandson of Charles Whitfield King concerning the Cayman Islands scandal. I was able to provide him with a copy of all the correspondence which the Library received a few years ago from the Cayman Islands National Archive. In return, I have received two post cards, one showing a head and shoulders photograph of Charles Whitfield King himself and the other an early twentieth century photograph of Whitfield King's premises in Ipswich, both of which have been placed with the Library's documentation relating to the Cayman Islands scandal.

On 13 May 2011 I have arranged to meet Mr. J.M. Saunders, the son of our founder P.T. Saunders. He tells me that the book 'The Cayman Islands Postal History Postage Stamps and Postmarks' by Aguilar and Saunders was funded by E.F. Aguilar but was written entirely by our founder P.T. Saunders. The purpose of our meeting is so that Mr. J.M. Saunders can donate to the library a book given to his father by Alfred Charlton entitled 'The Cradle of the Deep an account of a voyage to the West Indies' by Sir Frederick Treves Bart. The book is inscribed 'With Best Wishes to the British West Indies Study Circle from Alfred Charlton Sept 56'.

8. Report by the Publications Officer (Peter Ford)

The year 2010 saw the long-awaited publication of our definitive handbook on Trinidad. Although mainly penned by John Marriott, we did have very generous help from many other Trinidad specialists. Unfortunately, I could only add two of their names to the title of co-authors, those of Ben Ramkissoon and Michael Medicott. We had this book printed in the States and the final product was without doubt a fine one. I had the pleasure of presenting the first copy to Sir John's widow, Lady Marriott on the first day of publication, 1st of March. She was delighted with the book and commented on its fine quality. The book had been part financed by the British Caribbean Philatelic Study Group and they took delivery of just over 200 copies while we had the other 200. Sales have been a little slow, but the critical acclaim has been deafening. It has garnered excellent reviews in all the main philatelic journals, both here and in the US, and was awarded a Gold Medal at CHICAGOPEX 2010. I am also told by an insider that it is in the running for the coveted Crawford Medal awarded by the Royal Philatelic Society London. Unfortunately, I have just learned that we have not won the medal this year but will enter it again next year. I have also entered the book in the Japanese exhibition in November, but we will have to see if that event takes place, given the recent disaster.

In our continuing series of Study Papers we published one on the British Guiana Coded Postmarks by Michael Rego. This was published right at the end of the year and sales have been lively. We also published an updated version of the Montserrat book; this contained much new information and many new illustrations of the scarcer material. And lastly, we republished Frank Deakin's Barbados with much improved illustrations, all of which were scanned by Steve Jarvis. This last was the first where I have used the print-on-demand system. After a few teething troubles, the result was first class and I intend using this system for our smaller booklets as we can order very small quantities without suffering high costs.

The accounts this year may seem a little down on last; this is, of course, mainly to do with the expense of producing the Trinidad book. However, sales of our books have been very good with the Trinidad taking first place with an impressive 90 copies sold last year. Michael Louka's St. Vincent study sold 13 and the Deakin Barbados 10. Of all the rest, sales were less than 10 copies each. I am pleased to say that, as a Study Circle, we have a total of 20 titles on sale. I doubt any other specialist society can match that. After our distributor's commission, we earned over £3,600 from publications, some of which had to go to the BCPSG to equalize receipts from the Trinidad book.

As for the future, there is no lack of books to be published. I had hoped to have Brian Brookes' St. Kitts Classic Collections book available today. Shortly, in conjunction with the British Philatelic Association, we are republishing a revised version of Michael Oliver's Leeward Islands book. I am starting work soon on a Study Paper on Bahamas Special Delivery local issues by Peter Fernbank and we are well advanced in compiling a handbook on Grenada and Volume 8 of the Jamaica Encyclopaedia that deals with airmail. Further in the future, I am hoping to publish an Antigua handbook as well as one on the Turks, one on Nevis and perhaps one on Bahamas.

If there is any member who feels able to help me in our publications efforts, please let me know. Personally, I derive great deal of pleasure when I see and feel the final hardcopy book in my hands and there must be someone else out there who would feel the same.

9. Report by the Chairman of the Committee (Peter Ford)

The year 2010 was notable for two things, one most enjoyable, the other not. The one that wasn't was the passing of our long-time President, Victor Toeg. A full appreciation of his life appeared in the December Bulletin, and so I will not repeat most of what was said there. Suffice to say, he had

been President for over 40 years, a feat unlikely to be matched ever again. We will all miss his wise counsel and his enthusiasm for BWI philately.

On a happier note, we held our joint meeting with our American sister society, the British Caribbean Philatelic Study Group in May to coincide with the big LONDON 2010 show. We held a joint auction which was our most successful ever, realising over £27,000, a figure which could be announced immediately as Steve Jarvis had been keeping track of things on his computer. This, together with after-sales and takings from the members' table, gave us a turnover during the weekend in excess of £30,000. Credit here should be given to our auctioneer, Simon Goldblatt and his team consisting of Nigel Chandler and John Jordan. There is absolutely no doubt that the proceeds from the annual auction help our finances greatly.

That was on the Friday preceding the big show which opened on the Saturday. We all took a break to attend the show and congratulations have to go to those who gained awards there and particularly to Darryl Fuller who merited a Large Gold for his exhibit of Leeward Islands Postal Stationery. I am told that Large Golds for Postal Stationery exhibits are rare indeed. Well done, Darryl!

On Sunday we were treated to formal displays by two of our members at Spink auction rooms. Firstly we had Graham Booth displaying his Maritime Mail, a report of which appeared in the September Bulletin. And secondly we had a display by Richard Foden of his early Turks Islands material. Both of these displays showed the depth of study that is undertaken by members and the research carried out by them. Both are to be congratulated on their displays.

All in all, this was a very successful weekend, organised mainly by Steve Jarvis; he managed to find venues in suitably central locations, not an easy task! He also arranged for an excellent meal at an Italian restaurant on the Saturday evening. Thank you, Steve!

The passing of our President means that this year we will be voting for a new President. In consultation with the Committee, we have decided to nominate Charles Freeland for the post. Charles, as many of you will already know, supports the Study Circle in many different ways and has been a Vice-President for a good few years. We have no hesitation in recommending him for the post of President. To replace him as Vice-President, we nominate Steve Jarvis. Again, Steve is a person who has put a great deal of effort into the Study Circle not only as Editor of our prize winning Bulletin, but also as our webmaster. Both of these jobs are very time consuming and we have been fortunate in having someone as keen as Steve to do them. The Committee therefore recommend his appointment as Vice-President. The Committee have decided that the President and Vice-Presidents should have to stand for re-election every 3 years.

As usual, I have to thank all the Committee for their hard work over the year and yet again appeal for more members to volunteer to help with the running of the Study Circle. The Circle cannot run itself; we need the input of members willing to give of their time and energy for us to remain one of the most successful specialist societies in the UK.

10. Election of President and Vice-Presidents of the Society

Charles Freeland was elected President, unanimously. Simon Goldblatt and Steve Jarvis were elected Vice-Presidents, unanimously. All positions for a period of three years.

11. Re-Election of the Chairman of the Committee

Peter Ford was re-elected unanimously.

12. Re-election of Officers

The Officers and Messrs. N. Chandler, P. Fernbank and M. Hamilton have all agreed to continue as members of the Committee. There were no further nominations, consequently, all are automatically re-elected.

13. Election of the Auditor

John Davis has agreed to continue with this role.

14. Other Business

None.