

**MINUTES OF THE 66TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BWISC
HELD AT 11:00AM SATURDAY 22 MAY 2021**

1. Chairman's Welcome and Opening Remarks

Graham was feeling very enthusiastic about the fact we were able to come out and meet finally after a long period of isolation due to the pandemic. It was nice that the meeting could proceed as we have no written constitution meaning that any number of members present enabled the meeting to be held as it was considered a suitable quorum.

2. Apologies for Absence

David Binstead, Nigel Chandler, Trevor Chinery, Mike Kentzer, Guy Langton, Tony Walker, James Podger, Peter Ford, Ray Stanton and Paul Hancock all sent their apologies.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

There were no matters arising and the record was accepted as written.

4. Report by the General Secretary (Richard Stupples)

I've attended my first committee meeting and I've fielded several queries that have come through the secretaries email address regarding stamps and had positive replies to both from the people I directed the questions too and those that members have been able to answer. Other than that, I'm finding out about the role as items need doing.

5. Report by the acting Membership Secretary (Steve Jarvis)

After an increase in membership in 2016, numbers have reverted to previous levels but remain at over 300.

BWISC Membership Statistics as at December 2020

As at end	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Total Members	310	309	339	339	340	312	304
Online	83	77	84	85	83	63	48
UK	192	194	218	207	208	200	193
EUR	27	28	24	24	25	19	20
Rest of World	91	87	97	108	107	93	91

2020 Detail

	Printed	Online	Total
UK	151	41	192
EUR	19	8	27
Rest of World	57	34	91
Grand Total	227	83	310

My thanks to Paul Hancock for agreeing to take over this role from 2021.

6. Report by the Editor (Terry Harrison)

After 35 issues in charge of editing the Bulletin the time has come for me to lay down my pen and hand over to my successor Darryl Fuller. I have enjoyed the challenge of assembling the Bulletin and in the process my knowledge of West Indies philately has increased exponentially.

I would like to thank all of the contributors for providing such a wide range of articles, and long may they continue to do so.

I would also like to extend my thanks to Peter Ford for his proof reading and Steve Jarvis for liaising with the printers.

With Darryl living in Tasmania the time difference is likely to cause some problems with obtaining material from advertisers. To maintain continuity, I have agreed to be the UK point of contact.

7. Report by the Treasurer (Ray Stanton)

The accounts cover the two years 2019 and 2020 and show a surplus of £1,235 in 2019 and a deficit of £433 in 2020. Once again Bulletin costs including distribution were comfortably covered by subscriptions received and advertising charged.

The donation from the auction team, net of expenses, was reduced slightly in 2020 compared to previous years as a result of the disruption caused by the pandemic. The main reason for the deficit in 2020 is due to all the printing and binding costs of the Peter Fernbank KEVII book, which totalled £2,057, being incurred in December 2020 without any sales being made as yet. In line with previous years we treat publications income and expenses on a cash basis and no value is placed on stocks held.

Other general expenses were generally in line with previous years, once the deficit on the biennial convention in 2019, and the donation to the Royal also in 2019 are taken into account. As a result the surplus the Accumulated fund has increased by the 31st December 2020 to £18,341 which after taking into account a loss on the conversion of our US dollar funds over the two years of £220.

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

There were no issues raised and Simon Greenwood proposed that the accounts be accepted and John Jordan seconded

8. Report by the Librarian (Ian Jakes)

Until recently most requests for information from the BWISC Library were by letter. Since the last Librarian's Report I have received just one such letter. Our members have at long last moved into the 21st century and email requests are causing new problems e.g. a request allegedly from our chairman asking me to purchase iTunes gift cards on his behalf.

It has come to my notice that during the last 12 months some emails addressed to me have not been received. If any member has not received a reply to a library request, that member should please telephone me after the lapse of a reasonable time for a response. Two members, both internet experts, have been drafting new philatelic books and much information can, of course, now be found online. Both members have asked whether there is additional information in the BWISC Library, which, of course, there often is. I have provided snippets of information to both members, which, hopefully, will be useful.

A recent request for information resulted in the provision of a scan of a butterfly Papiliohomerus designed by Philip Hart in 1952 which appeared on a Jamaican stamp. Other members were provided with information about Jamaica Red Cross labels together with an explanation for their non-appearance in Stanley Gibbons catalogue, information on Royal Mail postal services from British Guiana in or about 1845, and information about British Honduras postmarks.

9. Report by the Publications Officer (Peter Ford)

In 2020 we published three books. First was a long-awaited book on Trinidad and Tobago, completing the trio of books on that colony. When we published the book on St. Vincent in 2017, we had 50 softbacked copies printed and then had them hard bound. Once stocks of those were depleted, we had softbound copies printed. This seemed a better way to have the option of hardback versions of our publications published without having 300 copies printed and the associated problems of tying up our funds and the subsequent storage.

The Trinidad and Tobago went the same way with 50 hardbacked copies available as well as softbacked versions. The hardback books were sold at cost with no discounts.

Next we published the book on King Edward VII Imperium Keyplates by Peter Fernbank and the Blinco brothers. This went through the same process and 50 hardbound copies were and still are available. Later softback copies will be available. The next book published was one on Farthing stamps by Richard Capon, Bill Gibb and George Stewart. This was only published in softback.

The Grenada book is next on our list to be published which will hopefully be before the Convention in October. Also there is another book on Grenada from a slightly different perspective as one would expect from Mike Rego. After that there is nothing else in prospect. I would ask those members who have in the past promised to write books on their specialist subject to put their backs into writing one. Those members know who they are!

Sales last year were on a par with previous years with just under £2,500 gross, netting us a little over £1,900 after commission and expenses. Sales were fairly evenly spread out over our list of publications with, surprisingly, Victor Toeg's Dominica leading the way with 5 books sold!

10. Report by BWISC WebMaster (Steve Jarvis)

The website continues to tick over.

As we have not had any meetings this year, there have been no significant additions to the content, except relating to the auction, together with frequent changes to announcements regarding arrangements. The website continues to be the focal point for new applications which requires administration effort and my thanks to Paul Hancock for agreeing to look after this task. Finally, I have recently implemented Google Analytics on the site and next year I should be able to provide some statistics on activity.

11. Report by the President and Chairman of the Committee (Graham Booth)

The last two years have obviously been difficult for all of us because of Covid; but we seem to have survived in reasonable shape, and in some ways, the pandemic having forced us into different ways of communicating, like zoom, is opening new vistas for the future. I think it is also safe to say that a society that has had to change its Secretary, Editor and Auction Manager in two years would not be finding it easy, and so it has proved. So, first of all, I would like to pay tribute to Terry and Simon for their dedication over many years which has helped to make the Society what it is today. Then I want to thank Simon Richards and Darryl Fuller who have volunteered to replace them. Darryl lives in Tasmania so there will probably be technical problems to overcome as he takes over the Editorship, and nobody can replace Simon Goldblatt's encyclopaedic memory so changes in procedure will be necessary there.

The Society's governance must be sufficiently flexible to accommodate the strengths and weaknesses of the people who volunteer their time and skills. It became apparent that nobody was prepared to replace George as Secretary, so we have split the role and we now have three people, Bill Gibb, Richard Stupples and Paul Hancock doing what was previously done by George. Consequently, the Committee is a big one and trying to ensure that things do not slip between the cracks we have created in the organisational structure is a problem. But we can only work with the members who are prepared to volunteer and what they are prepared to do. In addition, in a Society with no Constitution and therefore a Chairman who theoretically can do as he likes, a big Committee is no bad thing.

From a personal point of view, I have done a lot of preparatory work looking at the potential problems and advantages if we respond positively to the BCPSG's request to consider a merger. Strong and differing opinions are held by individual committee members and we are a long way from making a recommendation to the membership. Finally, I have been deeply involved with the work of one of our most gifted but controversial members trying to strike a balance between excessive censorship and allowing unsupported opinion to masquerade as fact. Regrettably, this has resulted in his resignation from the Society and the withdrawal of a manuscript we would have liked to publish.

12. Election of Officers and Committee Members

The chairman had previously intended to step down at this meeting but in light of the pandemic had agreed to stay for the next year. This motion was proposed by Ian Jakes and seconded by Steve Jarvis.

The editor of the magazine, Terry Harrison has stepped down and Darryl Fuller is taking over. Graham Booth proposed and Steve Jarvis seconded.

Secretary is Richard Stupples. Meetings Secretary is Bill Gibb. Membership Secretary is Paul Hancock. All were proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Steve Jarvis

Simon Goldblatt has stepped down as auction manager and Simon Richards will take over. Proposed by Graham Booth and seconded by Steve Jarvis.

Graham went on to thank both Simon and Terry for their efforts and enormous contributions to the society.

All other committee members were accepted by the room en-bloc.

13. Election of the Hon. Auditor

John Davis was nominated and appointed as honorary auditor for the Society.

14. October Convention 2021, Red Lion Basingstoke

The convention clashed with the last day of Stampex and the venue was unable to provide an alternative date due to the wedding commitments it had already made and the large backlog it was currently holding. It was generally felt that this wouldn't be a bad thing as people wouldn't have to travel out twice to attend both separately and it might well provide some benefit as those coming down to London for Stampex might well extend their stay for the length of the weekend and come on to the convention after going to Stampex. A leaflet will be sent out with the next bulletin providing more about the booking procedure and costs etc.

15. Possible merger with BCPSG

The merger proved to be the topic of the day, and it was well discussed at the meeting. Currently BCPSG has about \$18,000 in the bank. However, it has a deficit about \$3000 per annum. It was thought that there were about 60 joint members of both BWISC and BCPSG, which would enable the total membership to increase to about 440. BCPSG has a written constitution which we don't have. There is an issue with life membership within the BCPSG which BWISC doesn't have. Some of its income is generated by donations from life members. Graham emphasised that there was considerable discussion amongst the Committee over some issues and we were not yet ready to start detailed discussions with BCPSG let alone present a proposal to the general membership.

There were a number of questions from the floor during which it was emphasised that it was a merger that was under discussion not a takeover:-

Where would meetings take place?

What would be the balance between "classic" and "modern" issues?

What would be the name of the merged Society? It is felt by many that BWISC is a very strong brand, but some members consider it's "Britishness" is not necessarily attractive to potential younger recruits.

It was also mentioned that the G B Society, the U.K's largest society, doesn't have a constitution.

The general feeling was positive that the possibility of a merger should be pursued.

16. Other Business

There was a question about how much the Royal was costing for hiring for the day, but it was felt justified as the societies normal meeting places either at Grosvenor or Spink were too small to be satisfactorily socially distanced in line with current guidelines. Gibbons had also offered their meeting room.

Simon Goldblatt asked to introduce Keith Jupp, who with others would be seeking to head up a semi-autonomous company that would be looking to provide internships for philatelist of the future starting in 2023.

There were no other matters arising and Graham closed the meeting with the intention of starting the auction in about an hour and reminded people to please remember that we were to maintain social distancing whilst viewing lots.

Accounts 2019 and 2020

BRITISH WEST INDIES STUDY CIRCLE
INCOME STATEMENT : YEARS ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2019 & 2020

INCOME :	£'s	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Subscriptions		4,302	4,388	4,556
Publications - Sales less commissions		2,274	2,807	2,616
Auction donation (net of costs)		1,225	1,702	1,800
TOTAL INCOME		<u>7,801</u>	<u>8,897</u>	<u>8,972</u>
EXPENDITURE :				
Bulletin - Printing & distribution costs	4,300		4,604	4,645
Less : Advertising	<u>(1,768)</u>	2,532	<u>(2,030)</u>	<u>(2,036)</u>
Publications : Preparation, Printing & Distribution costs		5,084	2,795	1,811
Convention costs net of recovery		-	957	-
Other room hire & meeting costs		-	250	298
ABPS affiliation fee		288	273	259
Officers administration - Stationery, postage, telephone etc		72	82	102
Bank charges		-	19	-
Donation - RPS		-	500	-
Exhibition entry fees		-	-	225
Website		258	212	220
		<u>8,234</u>	<u>7,662</u>	<u>5,524</u>
(DEFICIT) SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	£'s	<u>(433)</u>	£'s <u>1,235</u>	£'s <u>3,448</u>

BALANCE SHEETS AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2019 & 31st DECEMBER 2020

ACCUMULATED FUND :				
Balance at 1st January 2020		18,953	17,759	14,022
Add : (Deficit) Surplus for the year		(433)	1,235	3,448
Exchange conversion profit (loss)		(179)	(41)	289
	£'s	<u>18,341</u>	£'s <u>18,953</u>	£'s <u>17,759</u>
REPRESENTED BY :				
Cash at banks		16,312	16,375	14,206
Debtors - amounts due to us		4,897	5,627	5,944
Prepaid expenses		225	250	350
		<u>21,434</u>	<u>22,252</u>	<u>20,500</u>
Less : Subscriptions received in advance	(1,918)		(2,199)	(2,116)
Other creditors - Amounts due by us	<u>(1,175)</u>	(3,093)	<u>(1,100)</u>	<u>(625)</u>
	£'s	<u>18,341</u>	£'s <u>18,953</u>	£'s <u>17,759</u>

AUDITORS REPORT

I hereby certify that the income statement for the years ended 31st December 2020 and 2019 are in accordance with the books, vouchers and explanations given to me; and that the Balance Sheets at the 31st December 2019 and the 31st December 2020 show the financial state of the British West Indies Study Circle as at those dates.

J G M Davis FCA

J G M Davis
 29th March 2021