

Annual General Meeting of the International Bridge Press Association

Tuesday, November 11, 2003, 9:00-10:30 a.m.

Jardin d'Hiver, Hermitage Hotel, Monte Carlo, Monaco

Attending:

Christer Andersson (Sweden), John Carruthers (Canada), Simon Cochemé (England), Mario Dix (Malta), Elly Ducheyne (Netherlands), Harvey Fox (England), Henry Francis (USA), Panos Gerontopoulos (Greece), Ghassan Ghanem (Jordan), Dilip Gidwani (Ghana), Tony Gordon (England), Mark Horton (England), Per Jannersten (Sweden), Patrick Jourdain (Wales), Sidney Lazard (USA), Knut Kjærnsrød (Norway), Laila Leonhardt (Denmark), Knut Erik Ljung (Norway), Peter Lund (Denmark), Brent Manley (USA), Nissan Rand (Israel), Barry Rigal (USA), Stuart Staveley (Scotland), David Stern (Australia), P.O. Sundelin (Sweden), Ron Tacchi (France), Anna Maria Torlontano (Italy), Alan Truscott (USA), John Wignall (New Zealand)

Apologies:

Maureen Dennison (England), Ron Klinger (Australia)

1. *President Henry Francis took the chair and called the meeting to order.*
2. *Patrick Jourdain offered homage to Jim Borin of Australia, member of IBPA for many years, who had died recently. It being 11th November a moment of silence was also offered in memory of those who had lost their lives fighting in wars.*
3. *The Minutes from the AGM held in Montréal in August 2002 were approved as published in Bulletin 453.*
4. **Officers' Reports** *President Henry Francis read his report. Francis stated that it has been a good seven years in office. In particular he wanted to thank the following people: José Damiani for the help and cooperation of the WBF over the years; the sponsors of our various annual awards; Elly Ducheyne for being a bastion of strength in the Press Room; Mark Newton for his computer expertise; Per Jannersten for the website; Barry Rigal as Awards Chair; Stuart Staveley as Membership Secretary; Anna Gudge for her electronic help; Jean-Paul Meyer for conducting the search for a new Bulletin Editor; Alan Truscott for being available to do whatever was needed; Evelyn Senn for being a tireless worker right up until retirement; Maureen Dennison for ably taking over Evelyn's duties; Patrick Jourdain for being our fearless Bulletin Editor for many years and for the many other major roles he has played.*

Executive Vice-President, Patrick Jourdain, reported he had had a quiet year, now ending, having retired as Editor. He thanked Henry Francis for agreeing at short notice to extend his Presidency by a year when Jean-Paul Meyer decided in Montreal not to take up the post. Per Jannersten had done most of the work associated with changes in handling the Bulletin and the website.

Organisational Vice-President, Per Jannersten, reported that since last year's AGM we have made some progress in our efforts to take advantage of modern techniques. **The Bulletin** is now available on the website as soon as it is completed by the Editor. It is in a format that can be printed anywhere in the world. (The

latest issues have been printed in Norway.). **The website** averages 10 hits/day (compared with 4 the previous year), still discouraging considering the amount of work, but the trend is right. **Our database** containing updated addresses, phone numbers, etc, is still not online, which is a shame. There is an updated webpage as an addendum to the Handbook, however. **Photos** are in an embryo-stage with a photo-library that you can reach via the Handbook. To get this complete we need a hand from a volunteer who is willing to put a name to each and all of the faces.

The Secretary, Maureen Dennison, due to illhealth, had no report, but she had sent minutes of the meetings in Montreal. Maureen is now out of hospital and recovering at home. She is prepared to continue in her role as secretary.

The Treasurer, Christer Andersson, reported on the financial year 2002 and the budgets for 2003 and 2004. Last year, the income of IBPA was US\$ 1.500 less than expected because of no sponsoring via clippings services and no support from one of the earlier Award sponsors. However, expenditure was US\$ 4 100 less than expected, mainly because of reduced costs of printing the Bulletin (US\$ 2 000), and the fee to the Membership Secretary being withheld, giving a saving of US\$ 1 000.

At the end of the year the organisation had made a surplus of more than US\$ 7 400, partly because of keeping the expenditure to a minimum but mainly the European currencies being very strong in relation to the US\$.

The decision taken at the last AGM to reduce the subscription fee when a member opts to receive the Bulletin via internet, has a minor effect upon our finances as the lower income is mainly balanced by savings in postage and printing. However, as slightly more than 80% of the income of IBPA is through subscription dues, the present development, characterised by a drop in membership from year to year, is a very poor omen for the organisation.

5. Appointees' Reports

The WBF & EBL Liaison Officer – Panos Gerontopoulos, reported that the relationship between IBPA and the WBF and EBL remained good throughout the year. The year contained a Clippings Competition for the EBL that was beneficial both to the EBL in the

amount of publicity it generated, and to those members energetic enough to send in their clippings and lucky enough to come up in the draw at Menton. IBPA retained none of the money for itself.

Membership Secretary – Stuart Staveley reported that IBPA has 373 members. Of these 352 are full, 15 are honour and 6 are sponsored. There were indications last year that after recent falls membership numbers were beginning to stabilize around the 400 mark.

Unfortunately the 2003 figures prove otherwise as there has been a further drop of over 10%. Of particular concern is the fact that the decline, previously in areas of currency difficulties, has spread to countries that had of late provided strong and growing support. There has, for example, been a drop of over 25% in the number of members drawn for countries such as Australia, Germany, Ireland, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, South Africa and the USA.

The year 2003 saw the introduction of a two-tier membership, with those content to download the Bulletin from our website paying a subscription reduced by one third. Those who have opted for the lower-priced service in 2003 number 120, approximately, one third of the paying membership.

The list of members recruited between the start of the Montreal Olympiad and October 2003 was: Argentina: A. Madala; Canada: Mrs. E. Carruthers, M. Ewashkin; India: R. Jayaram; Israel: P. Campanile, Mrs Z. Campanile; Norway: P. Bang, E. Ljung; Sweden: R. Bystrom; Taiwan: T-Y Liang; UK: A. Balfour, P. Hasenson, Mrs H. Schapiro, P. Still, B. Townsend; USA: B. Cook. Renewed: T. Aagaard (Den), R. J. Fleet (UK); G. Ghanem (Jordan); E. Granwald (Sweden); A. Uisk (Sweden); P. Van Rooy (Net).

In Monte Carlo: New: Bjorn Fallenius (Sweden and USA). Renewed: Krastyu Kavlovakov (Bulgaria), Patrice Piganeau (France), J. Rhind (Bermuda).

Bulletin Editor John Carruthers reported that his first year as Editor could be termed, “The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly,” after the 1960s film of that name. “The Good” was the number of new contributors, especially women and those from WBF Zones other than Europe and North America. “The Bad” was Carruthers’ forgetting to put the Notice of AGM in the Bulletin. “The Ugly” were two misanalysed deals, one by Brian Glubok about Bill Gates, and the other in a whimsical piece by Zia about his son.

Accounts and Annual subscriptions

Treasurer Christer Andersson reported that in the published accounts, printing and postage are together, a difference from past reporting. There was a motion from Barry Rigal to approve the accounts through December 31, 2002. David Stern seconded. Jourdain explained that the Bulletin Editor’s fee shown in the 2002 accounts included the travel allowance for Montreal. The increase in Editor’s fee in the budget was to cover page making previously done by Anna Gudge, Production Editor. Gudge was thanked for her work over

the past years. The motion to approve the accounts was carried.

Francis reported that the Executive Committee has recommended increasing the members’ fee for the hard copy Bulletin from £42 to £44 and lowering the fee for the Internet version from £28 to £25. This will more accurately reflect the relative costs of publishing the two versions. David Stern moved that the Executive Committee recommendation be approved by the members. PO Sundelin seconded. Stern asked if there was a danger that it would become economically unsound to publish the Bulletin in printed format. Francis replied that there are still members who do not have email/Internet access as yet, so it was unlikely to happen in the near future. Per Jannersten stated that the Bulletin was now photocopied for mailing to those members who had the printed version, so the fixed cost had been reduced. Ron Tacchi stated that a .lit file would produce the Bulletin in book form. Discussion was closed and the motion on subscriptions from the Executive was carried.

6. Elections The slate of Officers up for election was reported as follows: President – Patrick Jourdain (Wales); Chairman and President Emeritus – Henry Francis (USA); Executive Vice-President – Jan van Cleeff (Netherlands); Organisational Vice-President – Per Jannersten (Sweden); Treasurer – Christer Andersson (Sweden); Secretary – Maureen Dennison (England); Honorary General Counsel – Bill Pencharz (England); Auditor – Julius Butkow (South Africa). The full slate was approved.

Francis turned the Chair over to Jourdain, who thanked Francis for his 7 years work as President.

Election of Executive members. Re-standing for a 3-year term to the AGM in 2006: Dilip Gidwani (Ghana); Peter Lund (Denmark). Standing for a 3-year term: Ron Tacchi (France). Already serving until 2004: Panos Gerontopoulos (Greece); Chris Diment (Australia); until 2005: John Carruthers (Canada); Julius Butkow (South Africa); Barry Rigal (USA). Due to Jan van Cleeff’s election as Executive Vice-President, another vacancy appeared for a 1-year term to the AGM in 2004. Francis nominated Brent Manley (USA). Jourdain asked for ratification of nominations. All were ratified.

Honour Member Jourdain proposed Francis as Honour member for 2004. Ratified.

7. Annual Awards Rigal took the floor to MC the annual awards ceremony (for full details see previous Bulletin).

- The Romex Award for Best Bid Hand of the Year went to Sidney Lazard and Bart Bramley (USA) for reaching 7NT in the Blue Ribbon Pairs, reported in *The Blues*, Bulletin 456, p.6, author Bart Bramley. Lazard accepted the Romex Award from Alan Truscott, New York Times.
- The ITES Award for Best Defence of the Year was presented by ITES Africa Managing

Director and IBPA Executive member Dilip Gidwani to player Eric Greco (USA) and co-author Alan Truscott, who accepted on behalf of co-author Larry Cohen. The deal occurred at the Nebraska Regional Tournament and was reported in Cornhusker Defence, Bulletin 464, p.13.

- *The Digital Fountain Best Played Hand of the Year went to Geir Helgemo (Norway), for an Internet deal reported by Geir Tislevoll in Bulletin 460, p.8, A Thing of Beauty. Anna Maria Torlontano presented the Geirs with the Digital Fountain Award.*
- *The OKBridge Award for Best Junior Deal went to Ophir Reshef (Israel) for The False-Card, by*

8. Any other Competent Business Jourdain reported that membership is down about 10% from last year. Membership Secretary Stuart Staveley noted that we usually experience a drop of about 40 members per year, but that these had previously been replaced. This has not happened recently, he stated, and as a consequence we now have about 400 members. Suggestions for reversing this trend were asked for. Mario Dix (Malta) suggested a standing order to renew membership. The Executive promised to look into this as a possibility. Laila Leonhardt (Denmark) suggested contacting individual NBOs through their magazines to recruit members. Anna Maria Torlontano suggested contacting journalists directly. Staveley reported that he personally contacts all non-renewals by letter. Jourdain announced that the WBF/IBPA Press Conference will be held on Friday, November 14, at 11:45 a.m. in the Hermitage Hotel, Jardin d'Hiver. The Press Conference will be followed by a luncheon sponsored by the WBF.

Junior and Senior membership pricing. The Executive had

Andrew Robson (England), Bulletin 451, p. 14. Henry Francis made the presentation on behalf of Matt Clegg of OKBridge to Dror Lalouche, Reshef's Junior Team colleague. In a separate presentation the following week in London, IBPA member Simon Cochemé presented the OKBridge Award to Andy Robson.

- *Finally, the IBPA Personality of the Year Award was presented to Gianarrigo Rona of Italy by Patrick Jourdain, the new IBPA President (for citation see previous Bulletin). Rona humbly and gratefully accepted the IBPA Personality of the Year 2003 Award.*

approved half-price membership for those 21 years of age provided they take the Internet version of the Bulletin. Half-price membership had been approved for those current members 80 years of age and older regardless of which version of the Bulletin they elect to take. These decisions were ratified.

Tacchi queried membership not being fully electronic. Jannersten replied that members joining by Internet had gone to the Production Editor, Gudge, who faxes them to Staveley. The membership files kept by Gudge to date will now be kept by Andersson until a suitable permanent replacement is found. Jannersten stated that information in the membership files is updated monthly on the IBPA website, in the Handbook. There being no further business, Jourdain declared the meeting closed.

*John Carruthers
December 11, 2003*