



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CLUB OF CAPE TOWN

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MINUTES OF THE 2025 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CLUB OF CAPE TOWN, HELD AT 10H30 ON THURSDAY, 23 OCTOBER 2025 IN THE GRILL ROOM, KELVIN GROVE CLUB, NEWLANDS

Attendees: 69 including the following Board members:

President	Shelley Monček
Vice President and Speaker Chair	Katrine Collins
Group Leader Chair	Marcela Solis
Area Representative Chair	Tracy Symmonds
Treasurer	Robin Perros
Secretary	Gisela Collins
Membership Chair	Pat Cairns
Philanthropy Chair	Caroline Bagley
Social Media Chair	Linda Smorenburg

Apologies: 25 members

The agenda was displayed on the overhead screen.

Item

1. President's Report – Summary

Shelley Monček, the President, welcomed members and reflected on a successful and eventful year, expressing gratitude to the Board for its dedication and teamwork despite the challenges of a largely new team (only two members continued from 2024). Collaboration and a shared commitment to serving members guided the Board's achievements.

Key highlights and acknowledgements:

- Tracy (Area Leaders Chair): Developed a strong mentorship programme and supported Area Leaders and members effectively.
- Linda (Social Media Chair): Expanded the Club's online presence and led a successful technology workshop on WhatsApp, Facebook, and website use.
- Pat (Membership Chair): Welcomed 44 new members, offering personal outreach and support.
- Katrine (Speaker Chair): Organised a diverse range of engaging and thought-provoking speakers.
- Caroline (Philanthropy Chair): Selected impactful community charities for donations, demonstrating strong commitment to giving back.
- Marcela (Group Leaders Chair): Co-ordinated information from Group Leaders and created a comprehensive calendar for the newsletters.
- Robin (Treasurer) & Gisela (Secretary): Recognised for their behind-the-scenes dedication and hard work.
- Leen (Newsletter Editor): Produced vibrant monthly newsletters, keeping members informed and connected.

The President closed by thanking members for their trust and support, acknowledging outgoing Board members for their service, and welcoming the new Board for 2026.

Applause from the audience.

(See full report in 2025 AGM Report Booklet handed out to attendees at the AGM and available on the IWC website.)

2. 2024 Minutes – Proposed and Seconded

Minutes of the 2024 AGM were displayed on the notice board at the current AGM and were also available online on the IWC website.

Shelley asked for a Proposer and Seconder for the 2024 minutes to be adopted.

Proposer: Wendy Coetzee

Seconder: Erica Meyer Liew

3 Treasurer's Report - Summary

The Treasurer, Robin Perros, reported that the Club maintained a strong financial position throughout the 2025 financial year, welcoming 44 new members and earning R22,700 in visitor fees. Interest income from reserves remained healthy despite a 125 basis-point rate cut.

A reserve policy document to govern the use of Club reserves was not completed but remains a priority for 2026. These funds continue to accrue interest and are reflected under Restricted Funds (equity) on the Statement of Financial Position.

Income and Expenses:

Costs rose significantly, with notable increases in venue hire (+51.5% for General Meetings, +300% for the AGM) and software licences (+11.5% to +33%).

A new audit firm, Vantage Chartered Accountants (SA), represented by David Young, was engaged due to the unavailability of the previous auditor, incurring additional professional fees.

The Club's book trolley (R829) was reclassified from fixed assets to capital expenditure.

The YOCO payment facility was introduced at meetings for philanthropy donations and raffle/book sales, generating R6,870 in transactions by year-end.

Despite higher costs, the Club achieved a surplus of R57,876, aided by prudent cost control and the 2025 increase in membership fees to R950. Fees will remain unchanged for 2026.

Following clarification from the Auditor, the Club's income from membership, donations and visitor fees is not taxable, as these are non-trading activities serving mutual and philanthropic purposes. This income does not generate profit for the Club.

Philanthropy:

Total funds raised: R123,250 — a 44% increase from last year.

R56,210 was distributed to monthly charities, with R67,040 (plus R4,960 from Club funds) allocated to year-end charities, totalling R72,000.

Governance and Future Changes:

The Board proposes a constitutional amendment to allow future Boards to verify financial statements through external review rather than requiring a full audit, reducing costs while maintaining transparency.

Robin noted that the year had presented many challenges but also tremendous growth for her. She expressed gratitude to Auditor David Young, the Board and her predecessor Alison Formolli. She extended best wishes to incoming Treasurer Julie Shadwell.

Applause from the audience.

(See full report in 2025 AGM Report Booklet handed out to attendees at the AGM and available on the IWC website.)

4. Report of Independent Auditor, Vantage Chartered Accountants (SA), David Young

David briefly discussed the audit report published in the 2025 AGM Report Booklet, which was too lengthy to read out at the meeting. He reported that the numbers were all correct, in accordance with the basis of accounting described in Note 1 to the annual financial statements and the requirements of the Club's constitution.

In common with similar organisations, donations and income received have been recorded on a cash received basis, as it is not feasible for the Club to institute accounting controls over funds received prior to the receipt of those funds into the bank account. He agreed that, due to the nature of the donations and income, this is the correct accounting treatment.

He said that the outcome of the audit was fantastic. He praised the Treasurer's excellent work and thanked her for her unwavering co-operation during the audit.

Applause from the audience.

(See full report in 2025 AGM Report Booklet handed out to attendees at the AGM and available on the IWC website.)

5. Shelley Moncek, the President, asked for a Proposer and Secunder for the accounts to be adopted.

Proposer: Margi Biggs

Secunder: Lorraine Dex

Question from the audience by Club member **Maxine Peters** on the financial reports:

She noted that there was a marked difference in the Club's year-end contribution to philanthropy in 2025 of only R 4,960 as compared to nearly 10 times more in 2024. She asked what had prompted this decision and why there had not been a poll on the Broadcast Phone, to enable members to vote on this issue. She asked what the Club is spending the year-end surplus on and said that she would send an email to the Board on the matter.

The President, Shelley Monček, responded to Maxine's question that the Club is a friendship club which also supports charity. She reported that she received complaints throughout the year from members about the Club's excessive contribution to philanthropy. The Board voted 7 in favour, 2 against, on the Club's year-end contribution of R 4,960. She pointed out that the Club needed to keep a reserve to enable it to absorb Kelvin Grove's price increases and general economic increases, as well as emergency matters. The Board's responsibility was to protect its members' funds, and to use those funds to run the Club efficiently.

Shelley found Maxine's tone to be rather aggressive, and after Shelley and Robin explained it all quite clearly to her with regard to the decision that was taken by the Board to withhold club funds and to not give them to philanthropy, Maxine did not accept it; she was insistent and tried to carry on in her argumentative tone - Shelley asked her to sit down thrice.

Applause from the audience.

The Treasurer, Robin Perros, repeated that this year's philanthropy donations exceeded last year's by 44%. She also repeated the numbers pertaining to philanthropy in 2025: R 123,250 was collected in total for philanthropy by the Club. After paying the Club's nine

monthly charities R56,210, a balance of R67,040 was available for the Club's four year-end charities as voted by members to receive additional funds. A contribution of R4,960 from Club funds brought the final year-end philanthropy pot total to R72,000.

Applause from the audience.

Comment from **Marianne Lovell**, Club member: There had been many questions over the years about the Club's year-end surplus going to philanthropy. It was perceived that the Club could not carry over a surplus for tax reasons. Robin reiterated that the Club is allowed a surplus with no resultant tax liability.

6. Membership's Report – Summary

Pat Cairns, Membership Chair, reflected on a year of learning and growth since taking up the role in October 2024. Initially hesitant to continue beyond one term, she now finds great value and fulfilment in contributing to the Club.

Membership Overview: January 2025

- 368 total members
- 356 paying members
- 12 honorary members
- 237 international (67%)
- 119 South African (33%)

Membership Overview: September 2025

- 388 total members
- 377 paying members
- 11 honorary members
- 251 international (67%)
- 126 South African (33%)

Key Achievements:

- Introduced 44 new members (including 14 South Africans).
- Cleared the backlog of unprocessed applications and waiting lists.
- Maintained the constitutional 2:1 ratio of international to South African members.
- Current membership spans 44 countries, with the UK and Germany most represented after South Africa.
- Average member age is 71.5, highlighting the need to attract younger members.

Laughter from the audience.

She expressed gratitude to all who supported her and looks forward to continued growth and vitality of the IWC in 2026.

Applause from the audience.

(See full report in 2025 AGM Report Booklet handed out to attendees at the AGM and available on the IWC website.)

7. Group Leader Chair's Report - Summary

Marcela Solis, Group Leader Chair, reported that she is in her third consecutive year on the Board. Applause from the audience. She reflected on a fulfilling year of friendship, collaboration and community building.

Key Contributions and Roles:

- Co-ordinated club calendars and schedules.
- Assisted in the production of the Club newsletter, a vital communication tool.
- Served on the Year-End Party and Thank-You Party organising teams.

Activities Overview:

The Club offers 32 diverse activities, spanning:

- Music, theatre, movies and games
- Outdoor and fitness pursuits
- Language groups and lectures
- Dining experiences (at restaurants and members' homes)
- Wine tasting, art and cultural events
- Book and discussion groups, hotel journeys and crafts

Updates & Changes:

- Creative Crafts (formerly *Stitch in Time*)
- Morning Tea Mingle (formerly *Elevenes*)
- Ageless Fitness – a new activity led by Dee Desmet
- Salad/Soup and Sweet and Sunday Lunch – currently seeking new Group Leaders for 2026
- Walk & Talk – discontinued due to lack of interest

Marcela mentioned that Lorraine Dex has resigned as Group Leader of Mahjong. Thus, the Club is searching for volunteers to lead Mahjong, Salad/Soup & Sweets as well as Sunday Lunch.

Acknowledgements:

Marcela expressed sincere gratitude to all Group Leaders for their enthusiasm and dedication in organising activities, outings and lectures. She extended special thanks to:

- The 2025 Board Members – for their friendship and support.
- Leen Verstraete, Newsletter Editor – for her outstanding editorial work.

She ended her report by saying that it had been a privilege to serve and be part of such an inspiring community of women, and she looks forward to continued engagement and growth within the IWC.

Applause from the audience.

(See full report in 2025 AGM Report Booklet handed out to attendees at the AGM and available on the IWC website.)

8. Area Representative Chair Report – Summary

Tracy Symmonds, Area Representative Chair, reported that the year 2025 was one of restructuring, innovation and enhanced member integration within the IWC's area management system.

1. Area 5 Leadership and Restructuring

After the resignation of its leader, Area 5 was disbanded following Board consultation, with members reassigned to Areas 4, 6 and 10. The Area 5 WhatsApp group remains active to maintain social links and communication continuity.

2. Newcomer Integration Initiatives

A Newcomers' WhatsApp group was launched in January 2025 as a networking and support space. Monthly coffee chats began in February, successfully fostering engagement. A priority booking system for new members (three-month grace period) was introduced in August. Collaboration with Maureen Collins and the Board refined these integration efforts.

3. Onboarding and Mentorship Programme

To address inconsistent onboarding, a structured mentorship programme was developed and approved by the Board. Each newcomer is paired with a volunteer mentor in her area for a three-month introduction period. The initiative launched in October via the newsletter

and the General Meeting, attracting 20 volunteer mentors. Ongoing refinement and formal guidelines are planned for 2026.

4. Communication and Structural Improvements

Tracy reconstructed missing area membership records, enabling accurate communication and co-ordination. Suburb listings were added to the members' directory and website to facilitate social connections and transport sharing. Updated area-suburb breakdowns were also provided for the newsletter.

5. Overall Assessment

The year saw major progress in area co-ordination and member support, marked by the Area 5 restructuring, newcomer initiatives and mentorship launch. Tracy expressed gratitude to all Area Representatives for their commitment and teamwork, who are the lifeline of the Club, and extended best wishes to Simi Sheikh, who will take over her role in 2026.

Applause from the audience.

(See full report in 2025 AGM Report Booklet handed out to attendees at the AGM and available on the IWC website.)

Comment from **Claudia Rocca** in the audience, that new members often struggled to find their feet in the Club and often felt left out. Tracy responded to Claudia that she is fully aware of this, and implementing the Mentorship Programme should improve the situation. She added that Pat Cairns, Membership Chair, had also been going out of her way to make new members feel welcome upon joining. However, new members should also be proactive and join as many activities as possible.

Applause from the audience.

9. Philanthropy Chair Report – Summary

Caroline Bagley, Philanthropy Chair, reported the following:

Overall performance:

Total raised: R123,250 — a 44% increase from 2024.

Total distributed:

- R56,210 donated to monthly charities.
- R67,040 allocated for end-of-year charity distributions.
- R4,960 additional Club donation.

Grand total distributed: R128,210.

Monthly charity beneficiaries (2025):

St Michael's Home for Girls • Tiny Owls Baby Home • Nonceba • Vetsol • Masikhule Childcare • New Hope SA • Carel du Toit Centre for Deaf Children • The Darling Trust • Masicorp.

All charities were member-nominated and carefully vetted by Caroline.

End-of-year charity poll winners (each receiving R18,000):

- St Michael's Home for Girls
- Tiny Owls Baby Home
- Carel du Toit Centre for the Deaf
- Vetsol

Fundraising sources:

Raffle ticket sales, book stall purchases, Group Leader contributions, ad hoc donations and host fee contributions.

Additional Projects and Highlights:

- “I Love Boobies” campaign: Collected hundreds of bras for underprivileged women.
- NSRI swimwear drive: Continued support providing costumes for swimming lessons and water safety.
- Recycling initiatives: Plastic bottle tops, bread tags, and empty bread bags collected to fund wheelchairs.
- Car Seat Campaign (African Brain Child): Led by Maxine Peters and brilliantly co-ordinated by her — collected 49 car seats.

Fundraising Teams:

- Red Hat Ladies (Barbara Smith): R36,080 raised — up 15% from 2024.
- Book Stall (Antoinette Pendrea-Noye): R11,910 raised — up 45% from 2024.
- Philanthropy Desk: Special thanks to Lindsey Kann and Mabelle Ackert for sorting and logistics.
- Bottle tops & bread tags: Many thanks also to Geraldine Berry for ensuring proper separation and correct delivery.

Caroline Bagley expressed gratitude to all members and volunteers for their generosity and teamwork and wished her successor a successful 2026 as Philanthropy Chair.

Applause from the audience.

(See full report in 2025 AGM Report Booklet handed out to attendees at the AGM and available on the IWC website.)

10. **Speaker Chair Report – Summary**

Katrine Collins, Speaker Chair, reported that 2025 was an outstanding year for the Club's speaker programme, marked by excellent attendance and enthusiastic member engagement throughout, even during the winter months. The focus this year was on inspiring, motivational and thought-provoking speakers covering a diverse range of topics.

Programme Highlights:

- February: Shéri and Dr. Susette Brynard – “Defying Expectations” – an inspiring talk on overcoming disability and advocacy for people with Down Syndrome.
- March: Dr. Bob Baigrie – “Antarctica from a Tall Ship” – humorous and fascinating tales from his adventures as a ship's surgeon and guide.
- April: David Collins – “Global Warming” – a challenging and enlightening presentation on the climate crisis.
- May: Elizabeth Handley – “Provence – A Feast for all the Senses” – a vivid, sensory journey through Southern France.
- June: Dr. Justus Appfelstaedt & Dr. Fatima Hoosain – “30 Years of Progress in Breast Cancer” – a detailed look at advances in treatment and care.
- July: Patrick Ryan – “A Journey Through Wildfire” – the transformation of a fashion photographer into a firefighter after experiencing a Cape Town wildfire.
- August: Alison Zweers – “How to Live Agelessly” – practical, science-based health and wellness strategies for midlife and beyond.
- September (Spring Hat Day): Pieter-Dirk Uys as Evita Bezuidenhout – “Evita at 90” – a hilarious, satirical performance raising R30,000 for The Darling Trust.
- October: Rob Caskie – “Snow Widows – Those Left Behind” – a moving narrative about the women who lost loved ones on Scott's ill-fated Antarctic expedition.

Katrine said that she steps down with some sadness as she so enjoyed her role. She is handing over to Kate George Weaver-Gibbs as the new Speaker Chair for 2026, confident that Kate's energy and talent will bring renewed vibrancy to the role.

Applause from the audience.

(See full report in 2025 AGM Report Booklet handed out to attendees at the AGM and available on the IWC website.)

11. Secretary's Report – Summary

Gisela Collins, Secretary, reported as follows:

Venue and Support:

Kelvin Grove once again provided excellent facilities and services for both monthly General Meetings and Board Meetings throughout 2025. Special thanks were extended to Shahiema and her team for their consistent assistance, and for the thoughtful addition of a ramp to the Ball Room stage, improving accessibility for members.

Attendance:

Average attendance: 191 members and guests per meeting.

Highest attendance: September meeting featuring *Evita Bezuidenhout* (254 attendees, including 79 guests) — the best turnout of the year.

Member Engagement:

The Friendship Lunch tables at The Grove Restaurant continued to grow in popularity, offering a welcoming space for both new and long-standing members to connect. A special IWC menu has helped reduce waiting times — thanks were given to Fabian and his restaurant team for their efficient service.

Gisela expressed gratitude to Shelley, the President, and fellow 2025 Board members for their support and camaraderie, noting it had been a privilege to serve as Secretary. She said that she looked forward to continuing in the role in 2026.

Applause from the audience.

(See full report in 2025 AGM Report Booklet handed out to attendees at the AGM and available on the IWC website.)

12. Social Media Chair's Report - Summary

Linda Smorenburg, Social Media Chair, reported the following:

Overview:

Serving on the Board as Social Media Chair proved both challenging and rewarding. Managing multiple digital platforms highlighted the technical complexities between Android and iOS systems and the need for better transition support. She recommended that outgoing Social Media Chairs remain available for at least four weeks once activity commences to assist their successors during the handover period – there is basically no activity between January and February.

Compliance and Member Consent:

To comply with the POPI Act (Protection of Personal Information Act), consent clauses have been added to the new member application form, and consent for existing members continues to be monitored to ensure full legal compliance.

Website:

The website was updated early in the year with current information on Group and Area Leaders, event photos, and other Club details. It remains user-friendly and informative, with the new password system functioning smoothly. Most members have successfully adapted to accessing the newsletter online.

WhatsApp & Broadcast Phone:

WhatsApp remained a vital communication tool for members and leaders. A well-attended training session helped improve digital confidence among members. Despite reminders that the Broadcast Phone is unattended, she continued to receive calls and messages daily.

Photo Hub (WhatsApp Group):

The Photo Hub continued to entertain members but had been restricted due to high commenting volumes and complaints about excessive number of photos. Now, only Group and Area Leaders may post up to 10 photos per event, and members have to apply to be on the Photo Hub.

Facebook:

The IWC Facebook group remains exclusive to approved members, with Leaders authorised to post IWC-related photos, and members are free to comment. However, membership growth has been slow, suggesting the need for strategies to increase engagement and participation.

Applause from the audience.

(See full report in 2025 AGM Report Booklet handed out to attendees at the AGM and available on the IWC website.)

13. Proposed Amendment to the IWC Constitution - Summary

The proposed amendment was displayed on the overhead screen.

Shelley Monček, the President, reported that the proposed amendment to the constitution is a change in the wording of Clause: Article VI – Duties, Section A: Executive Board.

Background:

In previous years, the Club benefitted from voluntary accounting support to review and verify the Treasurer's annual financial statements. However, due to the lack of such assistance in 2025 and the restrictive wording in the existing Constitution, the Club was obliged to employ an independent auditing firm to perform a full audit.

This professional audit successfully aligned the Club's financial statements with current reporting standards, though it resulted in unbudgeted professional fees. To ensure future flexibility and cost efficiency, a revision to the clause is proposed.

The revised wording will:

- Allow future Boards to engage either an independent reviewer or an auditor as appropriate;
- Maintain transparency and integrity of the Club's financial reporting;
- Avoid unnecessary audit costs when a full audit is not required;
- Still permit a full independent audit when deemed necessary.

Original (part) paragraph:

".....She shall appoint a person to audit the Treasurer's report annually."

Proposed new (part) paragraph:

"...She shall appoint an independent external individual to agree that the annual financial statements prepared by the Treasurer align with the underlying accounting records."

Shelley asked for a Proposer and Secunder for the proposed amendment to be adopted.

Proposer: Wendy Coetzee

Secunder: Margi Biggs / Claudia Rocca

14. Questions from Members

Rosemary Eriksson stated that she missed the printed membership directory, which is currently only available online on the website. Shelley, the President, replied that the printed version would likely be reintroduced in 2026.

Applause from the audience.

Shelley said that there would be a poll on the Broadcast Phone for members to vote on this matter next year. A small fee would be payable to cover printing costs.

Eileen Nelson reiterated the request for a printed membership directory.

Applause from the audience.

15. Introduction of the 2026 Board

Margi Biggs of the Nomination Committee said that she was introducing the 2026 Board on behalf of Dotti von Ulmenstein, who was currently overseas. She thanked the 2025 Board for their hard work during the year. The 2025 Nomination Committee, consisting of Dotti von Ulmenstein, Lorraine Dex and herself, had very actively searched for 2026 Board nominees and unfortunately did not receive many volunteers.

Margi then introduced the 2026 Board nominees in alphabetical order and read out a short biography on each nominee, calling them individually to stand up in front of the audience:

- Avril Lourens - nominated for: Philanthropy Chair
- Debbie Pretorius - nominated for: Group Leaders Chair
- Gisela Collins - nominated for: Secretary
- Julie Shadwell - nominated for: Treasurer
- Kate George Weaver-Gibbs - nominated for: Speaker Chair
- Linda Smorenburg - nominated for: Social Media Chair
- Pat Cairns - nominated for: Membership Chair
- Simi Sheikh - nominated for: Area Reps Chair
- Shelley Monček - nominated for: President

(The full biographies of the above-named nominees were published in the October newsletter.)

Margi asked the audience whether there were any objections to these nominees. None were received. Applause from the audience. Shelley then asked whether there were any objections to her nomination as President. None were received. Laughter and applause from the audience. Shelley thanked members for their continued support and assured them that the happiness of members would continue to be her priority.

16. President – Thank you

Shelley Moncek, the President, thanked Margi Biggs and the 2025 Board; she then welcomed the 2026 Board.

She called the following to the podium, thanked them for their support and professionalism throughout the year and handed them each an envelope with a gift voucher as a token of gratitude:

- Shahiema Davids, Conference and Banqueting Co-ordinator at Kelvin Grove Club
- Anwar Omar of Big Screen Visuals

She then called on

- Elena Piatti

to join her at the podium and thanked her for taking excellent photographs at the monthly General Meetings and at other IWC events. She handed Elena a bouquet of roses as a token of gratitude.

17. Close of Meeting

The President declared the meeting closed at 12h05.

Signed at Cape Town on the ^{19th} day of ^{11th} 2025:



SHELLEY MONČEK – PRESIDENT



KATRINE COLLINS – VICE PRESIDENT AND SPEAKER CHAIR



MARCELA SOLIS – GROUP LEADER CHAIR



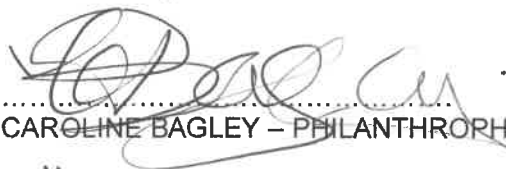
TRACY SYMMONDS – AREA REPRESENTATIVE CHAIR



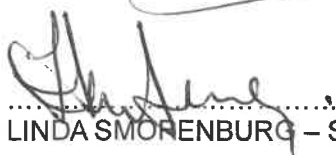
ROBIN PERROS - TREASURER



PAT CAIRN – MEMBERSHIP CHAIR



CAROLINE BAGLEY – PHILANTHROPY CHAIR



LINDA SMORENBURG – SOCIAL MEDIA CHAIR



GISELA COLLINS - SECRETARY

