

Bill Bowen (1918-2012)

Alfred William Bowen was born 1918 in Wolverhampton, the son of Alfred Ernest & Katherine Crewdson (nee Brown) Bowen. In September 1939 the family was living in Wolverhampton & Alfred senior was working at Wolverhampton Grammar School.

Bill studied at Oriel College in Oxford. In 1940 in Oxford he married Mary Lancashire. Mary was born 19 October 1918 in Derbyshire.

Chess was an early passion for Bill & he became Staffordshire Champion in 1934 & 1935. He continued playing in chess tournaments for many years & played for England. In 1949 he played in an international against Netherlands.

Bills first success in KCBA competitions was winning the Buck Cup in 1953 playing with John Sarjeant. At the time it was the main pairs event in the Kent calendar.

The Arnold Cup was dominated in the 1960s by a team including Bill, Mike Buckley, Mike & Daphne Williams & John Sarjeant. In the years between 1959 & 1969 this team won the Arnold in nine of the eleven years. Altogether Bill won the Arnold Cup ten times.

In 1962 Bill & Mike Buckley played in the Camrose trials & they qualified to play in matches in the 1962/3 season & then again in 1963/4 season. They continued to play in the trials on and off for a few years & were selected after qualification for matches versus Northern Ireland in November 1968 and versus Scotland in January 1971.

Bill also played regularly together in national competitions. In 1963 he partnered John Sarjeant & with Mike & Daphne Williams they won the Eastbourne Bowl, the main teams cup, in the EBU Autumn Congress. They repeated this success in 1966.

Another national competition in which Bill regularly played was the Field Cup. He played with Jonathan Cansino who also attended Oriel College. They won the cup four times in the years 1964 to 1968 inclusive.

Bill was part of the Kent team which won the Pachabo Cup in 1966 playing with Mike Buckley and Mike Williams & John Sarjeant. Over the years this team had a good record in the Pachabo, they also finished second, third & fourth in the 1960s.

He also played regularly for Kent in the Tollemache & was part of the team which reached the final in 1974, he partnered Bill Kember.

Mary also played bridge & she won five KCBA cups playing with Bill, they won the Phillimore Cup three times and also the Buck Cup & Gentry Cup once each. Over the years Bill won over thirty KCBA cups.

Bill served on the KCBA committee for many years including a spell as a treasurer, he stepped down in June 1991, as he was a qualified chartered accountant. He played his club bridge at Sidcup before moving to Ottinge near Canterbury circa 1980.

Bill died in 2012 & Mary died on 15 April 2015.

