

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – AGM Monday 20 May 2019

I would like to begin this year with proposing my warmest thanks to everyone who helps to support the Club in any way. Our Club could not operate without all those who contribute in the day to day running of the club, directing, scoring, providing refreshments, getting out the tables and cloths and putting them away again afterwards. However, my particular thanks must go to the members of the Committee who continue to work so hard to continue to develop and support the Club in so many different ways. Thank you to all.

Clare has had a good 2018/19! Table numbers have risen again slightly, and as the Treasurer's report shows, the Club is currently in a healthy financial position. We are fortunate at the moment to be able to continue to run the Robson events which draw in a healthy profit, and while these are available to us we are able to contribute more to Charity, and also to ensure that all members enjoy some benefits – in particular, table money is kept down and the SIM Pairs competitions for the year are paid for.

We continue to hold various events – the Christmas Party was a lot of fun with Italianate masks being worn by the majority; A group of us went to Huy, and we look forward to welcoming our friends back to Clare at the end of June this year, and the weekend will also include our Summer Party. We held a Guest Night in October which was well attended and which will be repeated this year. We have started the Bridgebites programme once a month which has also been well supported and we will continue to develop. Two Robson events and a successful Clare Swiss Pairs were among the major events of the year.

Clare has once again been well represented at County events during the year and it is nice to see so many of our members supporting these events – something that does not go unnoticed. We have once again played in both Summer and Winter Leagues and are hoping for more excellent performances by our teams this Summer.

Looking forward, the Committee is very alert to the need to continue to attract members to the Club and to keep them coming. We hope that the Guest Night and Bridgebites will help this, but there are two other ideas which are in development and which you will hear more about shortly – one is to hold some “supervised bridge sessions”, probably once a quarter, where our best players, including Jane and David, will be available to advise on bidding and playing hands. The second is to run a Cafe Bridge event locally and work has begun on that, although the event will probably not take place until June or July next year. All of this is encouraging, but of course the best way to promote the growth of our Club is by word of mouth, and by ensuring that all our newcomers and guests are warmly welcomed and have an enjoyable evening. We can all play our part in this, ensuring our bridge is well-mannered, and using the directors fully in the case of any dispute. Finally, and obviously, the Committee work on your behalf. Please let them know if they are doing a good job, and please remember that all contributions are welcome. Enjoy your bridge!