

KINGSTON SEYMOUR BRIDGE CLUB

Notes of Annual General Meeting held on 26th January 2021 on Zoom

Present: Graham Daniel (Chair), Howard Davies, Joe Patrick, John Cockram, Jill Ford, Daphne Patrick, Martin Holcombe, Judy Holcombe, Tony Bowler, Tim Mather, Liz Hale, Sandra Sharp, Brian Cherry, Derek Sutton, Terry Yearsley, Ann Yearsley, Patricia Ewing, Carolyn Waite, Pauline Wilding, Roger Calderbank, Sylvia Stokes, Bryan Brice, Sue Brice, Salma Daniel, Pauline Deal, John Deal (26)

By way of introduction Graham asked us to remember a couple of people who are no longer with us, Jennifer Kinloch a club member, and Carol Chappell who was the steward of the village hall and therefore well known to the club and members.

1. **Apologies for Absence** – Sue Wilson, Joan Roper, Shirley Ross, Andrew Weller, Christine Weller, Ivan Gerstel, Aileen Gerstel, Ann Bawdon, Ken Bawdon, Judith James, Mike Fearon, Sylvia Fearon, Norman Renfrew, Muriel Renfrew, Patti Craven-Wilkinson (15)
2. **Minutes of Last Meeting** – Proposed Martin Holcombe, Seconded by Joe Patrick
Unanimously accepted by all present.
3. **Matters Arising** – None.
4. **Chairman's Report** – In the interests of time, a brief summary of the Chairman's report was read at the meeting, but the full version is attached.

Graham picked out a couple of bullet points from his report. He highlighted the disruption caused by the corona virus pandemic and the affect that this has had and will continue to have on the club and the playing of face to face bridge. He emphasised that we would be very cautious about reopening the club and take every advice on doing so. As a result of the pandemic Graham stated that we need to understand that some things will change forever and of course we've all learnt new things, including zoom of course and playing bridge online.

Graham also mentioned that we'd taken part in the Children in Need online bridge event which raised more than £59000 nationally and we were going to take part in the online Michael Coda cup in two weeks time. We also have 2 online teams playing in the Somerset Association's county league, both of which have equipped themselves well. One particular success for the club was Daphne winning the Terry Girdlestone cup, awarded to people who have made outstanding contributions to bridge in the local area. Graham added his congratulations.

Finally Graham thanked Howard specifically for his long and valued service to the club as Treasurer, a post he is now standing down from.

5. **Treasurer's Report** – Financial Statement attached.
 - (i) Howard stated that everyone had been sent a copy of the accounts in advance of the meeting. Howard explained that both income and expenditure of the year are significantly down on last year, mainly of course because we haven't been playing bridge face to face. Despite this the balance at the end of the year is slightly higher than it was at the end of last year which has left the club in a very healthy financial position. This means

that although we have no income coming in at present we will have no difficulty in meeting any expense obligations the club may have over the future year.

Sandra Sharp raised the question about paying the proposed reduced subscription for 2021 as highlighted in Howard's subscriptions proposal and Graham explained that we were just waiting for the proposal to be approved before we could collect it.

John Cockram proposed adoption of the club accounts and Tricia Ewing seconded. The accounts were unanimously accepted.

- (ii) Howard explained that annual subscription had been increased three years ago to £10 in order to build up a reserve for equipment replacement and a buffer against unforeseen cost rises. In light of the club being unable to play face to face bridge since last March and with it being unlikely that we would be able to resume playing face to face bridge for the foreseeable future Howard proposed the following:-

That the annual subscription for those who paid last year be carried forward to 2021 so that there would be no further charge for those who had paid their annual subscription in 2020. For anyone who did not pay an annual subscription in 2020 but who wanted to join this year, they would be required to pay a reduced flat fee of £5 subscription. Howard further proposed that table money would remain at £2 for members and £3 for guests.

This proposal had been distributed to members in advance of the meeting but Howard added that if circumstances changed during the coming year the committee may need to look at reviewing our finances but at the moment this was his proposal.

Howard proposed the motion and Tricia Ewing seconded the motion. This was accepted unanimously by the membership.

6. Election of Officers and Committee Members –

All the existing committee members bar Howard Davies were willing to stand again and there were no new nominations. Graham put a table of the nominations on the screen, detailing who had been the proposer and seconded, and Tim read them out to the membership.

Graham explained that the process had all been undertaken by the committee because of the difficulties of meeting face to face in the current circumstances. He went on further to say that the committee is now running a man short with only 7 members following Howard stepping down and that we do need to think seriously about getting new blood on the committee this year and deal with succession planning for the future. This is even more vital because after 6 years as Chairman Graham will be stepping down from his role at the end of the year.

As there were no other committee nominations the current committee members were placed in post and a vote was not required. . The committee members were therefore re-elected as follows:

Daphne Patrick, President – proposed by Howard Davies, seconded by Graham Daniel
Graham Daniel, Chairman – proposed by Howard Davies seconded by Tony Bowler
Tim Mather, Secretary – proposed by Graham Daniel, seconded Tony Bowler
Tricia Ewing, Treasurer – proposed by Liz Hale, seconded by Graham Daniel

Liz Hale, – proposed by Tricia Ewing, seconded by Graham Daniel
Tony Bowler – proposed by Graham Daniel, seconded by Tim Mather
Carolyn Waite – proposed by Tricia Ewing, seconded Liz Hale

John Cockram mentioned that even though that he is not on the committee he and Martin Holcombe would be prepared to run a training programme when the club gets up and running.

Graham responded by saying that this would be very welcome, and he went on further to say that we are able to co-opt members onto the committee during the coming year and he added that he was still looking for someone to shadow him in his technology and website officer role.

7. Members Questionnaire –

Graham started by saying that there had been an over 70% response rate which was very pleasing. He then put up a collated table of responses to the questionnaire on screen and briefly explained the results.

The highlights and initial conclusions were as follows:-

- There was a unanimous desire to get back to face-to-face play on Tuesday evenings.
- Around two-thirds of respondents are happy to play face-to-face or online.
- About half of respondents thought it would make a difference to playing online if they could see and speak to fellow players.
- There's a definite place for online play **alongside** face-to-face play at the club.
- There was modest interest in online club sessions, although we need to wait to see what the SCBA and EBU arrange.
- There was low interest in additional face-to-face club sessions.
- A very considerable and understandable caution was expressed in getting back to playing bridge face-to-face.

Graham went onto make a couple of extra observations. One which came out in the survey in the response to being willing to help organise additional club sessions. Of the people who responded positively to that question, 3 were already committee members and the other had already agreed to help with training sessions. Graham thought we would need to get more help from members in the future. The second observation related to the use of online bridge in the future even after the pandemic subsided. It was his view, of other clubs, and that of the EBU and Somerset Association that online bridge was here to stay in some form.

8. Matters Raised by Members –

Daphne wanted to thank Graham and Howard for their hard work and long service in running the club.

Brian Cherry reiterated Daphne's thanks and extended it to the rest of the committee.

KINGSTON SEYMOUR BRIDGE CLUB – Chairman’s Report 2020

I usually start my report by thanking everyone for coming, but this year is necessarily different! I will however thank those who are reading this for doing so – and would urge them to read to the end!

This is my fifth chairman’s report, and there’s no precedent for the sort of year it’s been.

For the first few weeks, all was well. Our average table numbers continued to creep upwards, we ran a couple of training sessions (thanks to John Cockram) in the village hall and hosted a well-attended session, led by Caroline Macpherson and funded by the SCBA, in the Claverham village hall. Even our AGM was well attended despite traffic chaos in the area which caused quite a few of our members to understandably give up, turn around and go back home!

Then suddenly, we started to hear of something called coronavirus and a place called Wuhan and we heard the first of what became frequent statements from the Prime Minister and his expert advisors on how we should do everything we could to stay safe. On 16 March, I and my committee colleagues took the decision that we should close the club and a few days later, the government put the country into the first lockdown.

We thought then that we’d be back to normality within a few months. My initial announcement said that we’d be closed until at least the end of April – and I meant last year! Now we know better, and we also know that you can’t play face-to-face bridge and maintain ‘social distancing’ or avoid touching the bidding cards or the playing cards other players have just touched. We also know that many of us fit the ‘elderly’ demographic and some of our members have underlying medical conditions – so we’re going to be VERY cautious about how and when we reopen the club.

Your committee is however planning for that day, at least as far as we can in what is still a very fluid environment. A considerable majority of members responded to our recent survey but even that was designed before the new coronavirus variant caused the infection rate to rocket again and prompted tighter restrictions over Christmas and the current lockdown.

There are reasons for optimism. We’ve at last been able to say “good riddance” to 2020, the vaccine rollout is under way and, with that elderly demographic I’ve already referred to, most of our members are likely to have had their first jab before the end of February. On that front at least, we can see an advantage to having a few wrinkles! It’s likely to still be several months before we can start to play face-to-face again but there is reason to believe there’s light at the end of the tunnel and, whilst the tunnel might be long, we will meet again!

We have to recognise that some of the things we’ve all been used to might well have changed for ever but, if we embrace them, some of those changes might be for the better. I believe that most of us have learnt to appreciate much more the things that we have, the people we love and all the people and businesses who have looked after us, to be grateful for them and determined to value and make the most of them in the future. I’m delighted and proud to have seen the extent to which so many of our members have kept in touch and supported one another, sharing news and positive thoughts through the WhatsApp group many of them joined and playing online bridge together. We’ve shown that we really are a club, rather than just a group of individuals who happen to play bridge together now and again!

Several things did still happen, albeit largely online rather than face-to-face. We did still play in the annual Children in Need simultaneous pairs event in November, joining the heat organised by Jenny

Gostlin and her team at the Clevedon & Portishead club and helping to raise a fantastic total in excess of £59K across the country.

The SCBA's Michael Coda Cup event, which we've played in for several years, will still take place. This year it's in aid of CLIC Sargent and, as with the Children in Need event, we're joining the Clevedon & Portishead club's heat, which will be played online on 3 February. Initial details have already been emailed to all of our members but a reminder and further information on how to make your donation payments will be sent out next week.

We still entered two teams in the SCBA's County League with the 'A' team, led by Tricia Ewing, winning all but one of their games to date following promotion last season. The 'B' team, which I lead, has given several of our members their first taste of this competition and, having struggled in their early games, they've now won their last three. The season ends in a month's time and all the results can be seen on the club website.

All of our games have, of course, been played online and, whilst it took a while for the organisation of that to settle, it certainly beats driving down the M5 to Woolavington on a cold, wet and dark Friday evening in winter! I still love face-to-face play, I really do miss the social interaction almost more than the game itself, but I firmly believe there's a place for online play running alongside our traditional club evenings on a long-term basis – and it's certainly helping fill a big hole in many of our lives whilst that face-to-face play isn't possible.

And, one last piece of 'feel-good' news. We nominated Daphne for the Terry Girdlestone Cup, which is awarded annually by the SCBA to people who have made a significant contribution to the life of their club over the past few years – and she was jointly awarded the cup with one other nominee. We all know our club wouldn't be here if it were not for Daphne's efforts in getting it going and I'm sure you would all want to congratulate her.

In closing, I must give thanks to my hard-working colleagues on the committee for all their support in these difficult times. Special thanks must go to Howard, who is stepping down after many years of enormously valuable service, not only as Treasurer but also as a source of calm and knowledgeable advice. There's been no one better for me to turn to whenever I've needed to bounce ideas around or to check how we should do something. I will miss him in that role but look forward to his long-term membership of the club and his personal friendship.

For those of you who have read this far, I thank you for your perseverance! I always emphasise that the Kingston Seymour Bridge Club is YOUR club; a few hard-working people make things happen, but it would all come to nothing if it weren't for you and your support. I look forward to the day when we can meet again, and I know that will happen. Your club will survive and flourish!

Stay safe.

Graham Daniel

Chairman, Kingston Seymour Bridge Club

KINGSTON SEYMOUR BRIDGE CLUB

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31.12.2020

	----- 2019 -----	----- 2020 -----
INCOME		
Membership Fees	£540.00	£490.00
Table Money	£2,962.00	£557.00
Table Money (Training)	£172.00	£52.00
Nailsea BC	£200.00	£30.00
Charity Collections	£296.00	£89.00
Donations	£30.00	£76.00
Bank Interest	£1.75	£1.35
Course Refund	£140.00	£321.08
Total Income	<u>£4,341.75</u>	<u>£1,616.43</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Hall Fees	£1,110.00	£232.50
Hall Fees (training)	£90.00	£30.00
EBU Affiliation	£26.00	
EBU P2P Fees	£613.32	£146.78
EBU - Club Insurance	£74.70	£74.70
BridgeWebs Licence (2020)	£48.00	£48.00
BridgeTabs Equipment	£153.73	£303.92
BridgeTabs Licences	£84.39	£82.36
ScoreBridge Licences	£31.00	£31.00
Competition Costs	£88.00	£20.00
Course Fees and Booklets	£140.00	
Equipment & Stationery	£229.66	£65.44
Charity Donations	£320.00	£189.00
Xmas Event	£47.18	
Refreshments	£105.29	£28.14
Duplicate costs	£250.00	£65.00
Misc.	£83.50	£22.94
Equipment & Stationery (Training)	£4.00	£66.00
Total Expenditure	<u>£3,498.77</u>	<u>£1,405.78</u>
Surplus / Deficit for the year	<u>£842.98</u>	<u>£210.65</u>
Accumulated Funds		
Balance as at 31.12.2018	£1,001.00	Balance as at 31.12.2019 £1,843.98
Surplus / Deficit for the year	£842.98	Surplus / Deficit for the year £210.65
Balance as at 31.12.2019	<u>£1,843.98</u>	Balance as at 31.12.2020 <u>£2,054.63</u>
Represented by :-		
Bank Current Account	£338.32	Bank Current Account £39.62
Bank Savings Account	£1,501.75	Bank Savings Account £2,003.10
Cash in Hand	£3.91	Cash in Hand £11.91
	<u>£1,843.98</u>	<u>£2,054.63</u>

Competition Report for 2020

County League

Despite all our restricted play we have, as a club, entered two teams in the county league.

On line bridge being the only game in town, all the matches have been online on BBOL but this has proved very successful and easier way to play, especially for the team matches, rather than travelling down to Woolavington on a Friday evening!

The A team

Playing in Division C of the league, after being promoted last year, has so far done extremely well.

Out of the 6 matches played so far they have won 5 and are placed in 3rd position, with one more match to play in February.

Team members are Anne and Terry Yearsley, Patricia Ewing, Liz Hale, Daphne Patrick

Led and organised by Patricia Ewing as Captain

The B team

Playing in division D of the league .The team have had a successful time. Winning 3 out of their 5 matches played so far. They have one match left to play in February.

Team members are Tim Mather, David Sands, Derek Sutton, Brian Cherry, Sylvia Fearon, Pauline Wilding, Tony Bowler, Graham Daniel

Led and organised by Graham Daniel as Captain

Other competitions

All other competitions have been held online. These include the South West Congress normally held in Weston at the beginning of October. Several members of the club did enter.

Numerous other congresses were available to enter and as everything is done online there is no hassle about booking hotels and travelling!

Clevedon and Portishead club have been running on line club nights, on Wednesday evenings. Kingston players have been welcomed to play. The club did host the Children in Need competition, in November. They are hosting the Michael Coda cup, another charity competition, which we normally enter and play in February on our own club night. This will be on Wednesday 3rd February.

Somerset Contract Bridge Assoc has details of many future competitions for this year 2021. At present everything is being played on line using either on BBOL or Real Bridge. You can find out more by looking at the web site.

Liz Hale Jan 2021