

MINUTES

1. Attendees

- a) **Present:** James Smith (JS, Chairman), Brian Callaghan (BC, Treasurer), Chris Duckworth (CD), Mike Hill (MH), Shireen Mohandes (SM), David Muller (DM), Lorinda Muller (LM), Sue Buchan (SB), David King (DK)
- b) **Apologies:** Heather Dhondy (HD), Victor Lesk, Sati McKenzie (SMc), Ian Payn

2. Minutes of 2023 AGM

SE proposed that the minutes be accepted. SM seconded and this was agreed nem con.

3. Matter Arising from 2019 Minutes

The Treasurer had spoken to Andrew Clery about the possibility of him reviewing the Association's accounts, but this had not yet been done. BC will pursue this matter.

4. Chairman's Report

"It has been a somewhat turbulent year in the Bridge world in general with contradictory forces pulling the EBU in different directions. I am glad to say that at the time of writing things seem to have calmed down considerably and that the EBU is in good hands.

As far as events in London are concerned, I am sad to report that there are very few successes to highlight and perhaps the less said the better. Our two great - shall I say, flagship - competitions, our two annual Café Bridge events, continue to thrive and be very popular. The April event running in The Tonsleys raised £700 for our Charity and the Chiswick event (just finished) raised just over £1,700. Interest in County events continues to wane. The London Teams of 4 attracted only 4 teams and there was not enough interest to run a Championship Pairs at all this year. But the Mixed Pairs, No Fear Pairs and Garden Cities heats are still ongoing and the London Congress had a slight increase in overall entries. The London Tollemache team qualified for the final.

The Lederer is a continuing success with huge thanks to organizer Kath Stynes and our sponsor, Andrew Black.

There are achievements worth noting:

- The 2023 Gold Cup was won by Janet de Botton's team with 5 London Members: Janet de Botton, Artur Malinowski, Ben Handley-Pritchard, Tom Townsend and Thor Erik Hoftaniska.
- The 2023 Crockford's Cup was won by Tim Leslie's team also with 5 London Members: Tim Leslie, Mike Bell, Sarah Bell, Stefano Tommasini and Ben Norton.
- The 2023 Premier League Division 1 was won by team Black with 2 London Members: Andrew Black and David Gold.

In the last twelve months we have lost some notable names:

- Peter Donovan, Bridge columnist for the Daily Mail for nearly 60 years, died in November 2023.
- Peter Burrows has also left us, a former County Chairman in the 1980's, as has
- Willie Coyle, a London member with an illustrious playing career. He mainly played for Scotland but also represented Great Britain before devolution and latterly England.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my very hard-working Committee. They all give their time and energy without complaint for the good of the game and I am deeply indebted to all of them for their cheerful advice and support.

We are still desperately looking for someone to be our County Secretary; anyone interested, please get in touch.

5. Treasurer's Report

BC had circulated accounts for the previous financial year, along with comparisons for the current year to date. He reported that the last financial year had been less successful financially than the previous year, due to a number of factors. These included increased spending on engraving of trophies, rising costs and increased costs in sending players to representative events.

Overall, however, the Association's finances were still sound and he saw no need to take any specific steps for this year. The current total bank balance is approx. £13,400.

DK noted that he knew of good-value engravers in his local area, that the LMBA could use for future engraving work.

6. Adoption of accounts for 2019

SE proposed that the accounts be adopted, subject to them being reviewed. This was seconded by MH and passed nem con.

7. Subscriptions for 2024-2025

London UM subs remain as for some time at 8p per player per session. The meeting gave the committee the option to change the UM amount by +/- 2p if necessary.

8. Elections to Executive Committee

DK had recently been co-opted on to the committee. His formal election was proposed by JS, seconded by CD and agreed nem con. It was noted that there are still vacancies, meaning that it was not necessary for other committee members to stand down on this occasion. Anyone interested in serving on the committee was encouraged to make themselves known.

9. EBU Shareholders' report

The Chairman re-iterated his view that the last year had been a difficult one for the EBU, with a number of changes to the personnel of the EBU Board, and a complete change to the Board of EBED. However, things were now on a much more even keel. The Bridge – It's a Big Deal Festival of Bridge had been an excellent idea and was proving to be very successful.

10. Any other business

There was no other business and the meeting closed at 7.30pm.