

Minutes of the 43rd Annual General Meeting of Seaford Bridge Club held at the Downs Leisure Centre, Seaford on Tuesday 19th February 2019 at 1.15pm

The Chairman declared the meeting open at 1315 with 48 members present.

1. Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from B. Raine, D Neech, J Allan, B Allan, M Norris, J Rowell, S Thorp, R Littlejohns, M Bawden, P Brain, K Brain, J Walker, P Vickery, R Gledhill, J de Vries, E Fry and A Byrne

2. Minutes of the 2018 AGM.

The minutes of the 2018 AGM were accepted as a true record of last year's meeting.

Proposed by John Nott Seconded by Mike Bennell

3. Chairman's Report.

I was casually minding my own business last February when I received a call from Carol Gillespie asking if I fancied putting myself forward for the role of Honorary Chairman again. So here I am.

2018 has been a special year for the Seaford Bridge Club with electronic scoring being introduced on Friday 10 August. The driving force behind it was John and Carol Gillespie and we should all thank them for their perseverance. It has all gone well and I can honestly say we are the only Bridge Club in Seaford to use Bridgemate! I hope everybody enjoys using the handsets with the ability to see their results as play continues and at the end.

Our Christmas Party was a great success judging by all the thanks that were received and as you will have seen from the accounts, was done at less than half the cost of previous years! It was the first time in a long time that we had decided to do it ourselves and Pam Pelling was in charge of the organization. Yet again our MC, Hugh Creamer, excelled himself and we all loved his rendition of the hilarious Ballad of Seaford Bridge Club. John Gillespie produced another Christmas Quiz and Alan Hughes was in charge of the bridge. Like the previous year, we split the party into two individual groups, 'Upper Class' and 'Steerage' and this worked brilliantly with the results being available immediately thanks to Bridgemate. I hope you'll all join me in saying a big thank you to everyone involved.

Our Secretary, Carol Gillespie, is standing down from the role after 3 years as is Alan Hughes, who has been a Committee Member for 7 years. A round of applause would be appreciated. We are fortunate that Carol has agreed to carry on looking after the BridgeWebs site during 2019. Special thanks go to all the Directors and Techies and to Martin Auger for keeping the Club Accounts in perfect shape; Heather Hedges for her humorous way of being the Partner Finder and Pam Pelling and Bridget Constantinos for keeping the refreshments on Fridays topped up; Joyce Rowell, Tony and Helen Thorpe for preparing new cards and finally to Marie Bawden for sending out Get Well cards.

On Tuesdays we are short of Directors and in an effort to try and get others interested we will be arranging to send anyone who would like to Direct on either a course at Eastbourne or to have some instruction in house. As a further incentive to new Directors the new Committee will consider allowing them to play for free sessions when they direct.

And finally, one other innovation brought in by the Committee. The Club has paid for a three-year subscription to Mr Bridge magazine from February 2019 and these are available for Members to read and then circulate.

4. Treasurer's Report.

The accounts, which have been audited by David Abrahams and have been on the board for several weeks were approved as a true record.

Proposed by Roger Chapman and Seconded by Pauline Clarke

David Abrahams had agreed to audit the Accounts again at the end of 2019.

5. Election of Officers.

Leslie Fowle: Honorary Chairman
John Gillespie: Honorary Secretary
Martin Auger: Honorary Treasurer

Proposed by Michele Conway and Seconded by Francoise Basden-Smith

6. Election of Committee.

Pam Vickery: Committee Member
Pam Pelling: Committee Member
Bridget Constantinos: Committee Member
Ruth Skinner: Committee Member

Proposed by Sylvia Stroud. Seconded by Rowena Auger

7. Competition Winners - 2018

Spring: Leslie Fowle/Debbie Forrester and Alan/Carol Hughes
Summer: Rowena/Martin Auger and Bridget Constantinos/Carol Hughes
Autumn: Alistair Dunbar/Diana Stevens and Betty Sharp/Heidi Howlett
Winter: Leslie Fowle/Sylvia Stroud and Rowena/Martin Auger

Grand Slam: Roger Chapman/Sylvia Winterburn and Peter Walker/Janet de Vries who, apart from Peter (non Member), all received £2.

The highest percentage score at 75.35% was achieved on September 4th by Margaret Reader and Pauline Clarke for which they each receive a prize of £5. Congratulations to them both on their achievement.

8. Members Proposal

Proposer: Peter Parsons

Seconder: Heidi Howlett

Proposal: That Seaford Bridge Club should discontinue paying weekly prize money with immediate effect.

Peter spoke for the proposal highlighting the annual cost of prize money – in excess of £500; the fact that 90% of winners came from the same small group of players and that given the small value of prizes – what was the point?

The Chairman thanked Peter for outlining his proposal. The Chairman countered by saying that the Committee was unanimous in its support of prize money. He went on to say that the Committee believed it would be a very sad day for the Seaford Bridge Club if it were to abandon the well established tradition of awarding a monetary prize to winners. This was for the following reasons:-

- it's always fun to know that you can receive a prize if you are lucky enough to win
- the Club can afford it and our Treasurer has no administrative problem paying out prizes
- the prizes do not go to the same members all the time. In the 12 months to 31.01.19 72 different players won at least once
- awarding prize money adds to the special ethos/uniqueness of Seaford Bridge Club and differentiates it from other clubs
- for those who do win rarely it should be seen as a real encouragement/incentive to receive a small prize

So, in summary, we are a duplicate bridge club and as such duplicate bridge is competitive and it is usual to receive some form of reward be it a trophy, vouchers or money thus adding something to the competitive and enjoyable nature of the game. Taking away prizes will reduce the Club to nothing more than a social club when our history of over 40 plus years has been that of a very competitive as well as a social club. Bridge without the competitive element becomes very bland.

The proposal was put to the meeting and, following a show of hands plus votes cast by members submitting apologies for absence, was defeated by 41 votes to 15 with one abstention.

As a result, the Club will continue to award prize money to the winners of weekly competitions.

9. Subscription Rate and Table Money.

The Treasurer reported that the Committee believes that the Subscription should remain at £15 and Table Money at £1.50. There was too much uncertainty for the Club to lower either against the current background of the impending redevelopment of the Wave Leisure Complex.

10. Any other Business.

There being no other business the meeting was closed at 13.45.