



The Sobell Bridge Club



The MINUTES of the 13th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held on Sunday 22nd May 2005 in the Olwen Bettsworth Hall, Mount Vernon Hospital at 6.00 p.m.

Present: - Kevin Colling - Chairman

Ken Short - Vice Chairman

Ron Hooker - Hon Treasurer

Geoff Gray - Hon Secretary

Michael Tucker - Assistant Treasurer

Liz Crook - Liaison Officer

Len Turner - President

Phil Ryan, Daphne Santon, Gerald Williams

And 90 ordinary members.

Welcome by the Chairman. The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming the large number of members who were attending.

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Committee member Jacquie North and from 73 ordinary members.
2. **The minutes of the 12th AGM**, held on the 9th May 2004, were approved without alteration, proposed Ethel Broughton, seconded Irene Willis.
3. **The minutes of a Special General Meeting**, held on the 6th September 2004, were approved without alteration, proposed Liz Poyser, seconded Sharon Christie.
4. **The Chairman's Report** Kevin Colling said he would keep his report short. As most people know the building is progressing very well. He thanked all the club members for their support, expressed thanks to Geoff Gray, Ken Short, Ron Hooker and the club Webmaster, Asaf Ersoy, for the work they put in to the club.

Kevin then called on Eddie O'Sullivan, as Treasurer of the Friends, to address the meeting.

Eddie O'Sullivan spoke about the money donated by the bridge club to the Friends. Over the last 5 years, the club had donated £240,000, which was held in a special reserve fund. When the opportunity arose to develop a new building for the Friends, the Friends had to move very quickly and managed to get planning permission and the approval of various Authorities in record time. The availability of the reserve fund meant that the Friends could commit to the building very quickly. The existence of the funds also meant that the Friends could demonstrate to other potential donors that

we had already taken steps to raise funds elsewhere.

Those who have seen the building will know there is a large room known as a multi-functional hall. The bridge club will have first use of this room, except on certain evenings. Last year the club donated an additional sum of around £30,000 to the Friends, we hope to see that figure expand when you start to use the new building.

Eddie O'Sullivan expressed the thanks of the Friends to the club.

Martin Isham asked when the building would be ready, Eddie O'Sullivan said it was about two weeks behind schedule, but we expect to receive the building in September or October, ready for final fitting out.

5. **The Treasurer's Report**. Ron Hooker stated that, with Brian Simmonds agreement, he had changed the name of the balance sheet to be 'Statement of Affairs' He apologised for the heading, which read 2003-4 rather than 2004-5.

There was an excess of £32,170 excess of income over expenditure, less the £30,000 donation to the Friends. This is some £1,200 less than in the previous year.

Table income is down, but expenditure is the same. There are fewer people playing. Similarly there was a significant drop in joining fees and subs, there was a drop in people joining or renewing their subs.

Income from the bridge suppers was up, we had one more supper and they were better supported. Income from the weekends away remained roughly the same.

Kevin Colling had taken over the tuition courses, and this had brought in £1500 to make us close to the surplus of last year.

Ron Hooker commented that, in addition to the building fund that Eddie O'Sullivan had reported, the club had additionally donated around £70,000 prior to the start of the fund. So the total donations to the Friends were around 3330,000-£340,000.

Rob Williams commented that the expenses seemed high. Ron Hooker said we pay £1500 per quarter for the use of the Olwen Bettesworth Hall.

Ron Hooker thanked the people who collect the table money, Michael and Shirley Tucker, Ken Short and Joan Knaggs, and Ruby Stiles. He especially wished to thank Ken Short for his help in the takeover of the job, and also thanked Brian Simmonds for his work as auditor.

6. **Motion to Approve the Accounts** The accounts were approved, proposed Liz Crook, seconded Pat Gibor.
7. **The Hon Secretary's Report**. Geoff Gray stated that membership now stood at 468, which is 16 fewer than at the AGM last year. This is a decline which he hoped could be reversed when the club got in to the new building.

As usual he thanked all those who contribute to the running of the club, but this year he singled out the team of Joan Prior, George Howlett and Gerald Williams who made such a good job of organising the weekends away.

Finally Geoff Gray thanked Joan Prior and her helpers for providing the buffet after the AGM.

8. **Report on playing matters** Geoff Gray reported that ordinarily the playing report would be made by the playing secretary, however since Jennifer Hay retired from the post last year, the club does not have one. So, he was making the report. What has happened is that the club has coped with the administration of playing matters by finding volunteers who share the jobs that Jennifer used to do.

So, the club has Ruby Stiles who now gets the Master Points from the EBU when required, while Fenny Lough has taken on the other stationery requirements, curtain cards and travellers and the like. Roland Lewis continues to maintain the competition ladders. Also, George Howlett has taken over the organisation of the trophies. Geoff Gray thanked them all, and also all the session managers, tournament directors, scorers and masterpoint issuers.

Finally he thanked Diana and John Fynamore, who have taken on the organisation of our Simultaneous Pairs competitions.

Geoff Gray said he left them till last because he felt it was also worth remembering Michael Melville who used to run them, amongst all the other work he put in for club.

9. **Report by the Chairman of the Social Subcommittee.** Brian Simmonds reported on the bridge drives.
He said they had been successful socially and very successful financially, raising over £2,000 for the club.

The organisation is getting smoother and smoother, and he wished to thank all those, too numerous to mention, who had contributed to the success of the events.

10. **Proposed Changes to the Constitution** Geoff Gray said that at the last AGM, it was agreed not to ratify the proposed changes to the constitution, but instead the club would work according to the new constitution. The committee was not proposing any further changes, and had not received any other proposals. He therefore asked that the existing constitution be now ratified.

This was agreed, proposed John Francis, seconded Brian Simmonds.

11. **Election of Committee Members.** Geoff Gray said that the posts of Playing Secretary and Social Secretary remained vacant, though Brian Simmonds was doing the latter job in all but name. All existing committee members were willing to continue. He therefore asked that the existing members be re-elected en bloc.

This was agreed, proposed Brian Simmonds, seconded Ethel Broughton.

At this point, Len Turner made a statement to the meeting. He said that clause 21 of the constitution stated that upon the recommendation of the committee a member or members who have given outstanding service to the club may be invited to become President or Vice-Presidents of the club. He now wished to put forward one member. A founder member and for many years a playing partnership with our founder chairman Stan Nicholls until his death two years ago. Together with Stan, Ken, Charles Buszard our founder secretary, Ethel Broughton and others, Joan was involved with the initiation of 'Bridge Weekends' Stan always insisted on preliminary inspection of hotels before making a firm booking. Joan accompanied Stan on these

trips and assisted in the decision-making. She also provided the essential secretarial work involved with members' bookings, cash collections etc. After 13 years she continues to do this job as a member of George Howlett's bridge weekend management team.

Joan attends to the issue of parking tokens. Her prowess as a pastry cook is well established by her catering contributions at bridge suppers and other special occasions.

Len Turner said that, quietly efficient, totally reliable, Joan Prior was invited to be the club's first Vice-President.

12. **Election of Honorary Auditor**. Kevin Colling proposed that Brian Simmonds be re-appointed, Eddie O'Sullivan seconded.
13. **Any Other Formal Business**. Brian Simmonds asked about parking facilities at the new building. Eddie O'Sullivan said there would be 18 additional parking spaces, as well as the existing facilities.

Ethel Broughton reported that a significant number of tablecloths had gone missing. A lot of work had gone into making the cloths, and she would like to know where they are and who is taking them. Geoff Gray responded that the committee will look into it, and asked if anyone at the meeting knew anything about them.

Ted Clark said that following the recent event when travellers went missing, he sent an email to the Secretary to ask the committee to consider having two Tournament Directors whenever an evening is split in to two sessions. He asked if the committee had considered the proposal. Geoff Gray responded that the committee had considered it. In fact, that is the normal practice on Thursday evenings, but it is a little more difficult on the Monday session, as the only two regular TDs who attend Mondays are Kevin Colling and himself. He said that the club could do with more TDs, and said that if anyone wanted to volunteer, the club would pay for the training.

The formal meeting closed at 6.50 p.m., and was followed by the presentation of Championship Prizes.

Before the presentation, George Howlett informed those present about the Stan Nicholls trophy. This trophy had been presented to the club by Anthony Nicholls in memory of his late father. The trophy is awarded to the winning team at the Sunday night teams event at the weekends away. The trophy was present at the AGM for anyone who wished to see it.

George Howlett announced the prizewinners for the main sessions:

Broughton Trophy (Monday evening):

1st Stan Figiela & David Kilby

2nd Kevin Colling and John Wood

Ethel Broughton presented the trophy and plaques to the winners and 2nd placed pair.

President's Trophy (Tuesday evening):

1st Kevin Colling and Catherine Stafford

2nd= Brian Simmonds and Sue Sheldon

2nd= Roland Lewis and Jennifer Hay

Roland Lewis and Jennifer Hay were absent. Len Turner presented the trophy and plaques to the winners and 2nd placed pair.

L and R Trophy (Thursday evening):

1st Allan Chalmers and Phil Ryan

2nd Kevin Colling and Catherine Stafford

Brian Simmonds presented the L and R Trophy and plaques to the winners and 2nd placed pair.

The trophies for the Friday afternoon sessions:

Individual Trophy

1st John Walsh

2nd Lucy Rees

Daphne Santon presented the trophy to John Walsh.

Pairs Trophy

1st Martin Isham & Lucy Rees

2nd Brian Jeffery and John Walsh

Daphne Santon presented the trophy to Lucy Rees and Martin Isham.

Graham Trophy (Friday Evenings):

1st Catherine Stafford and Mike Gentry

2nd Bea Segall and Olive Stretch

Douglas Graham presented the trophy and plaques to the winners and 2nd placed pair.

Apologies for absence were received from: -

Lynne Mathys, Marion Sweet, Claire McCullough, Pete Davis, Peter Townsend, Gaye Townsend, Bill Graham, Pat Graham, Sylvia Davidson, Arna Davis, Alan Marks, Ted Foster, Mark Samuels, Helen Samuels, Maureen Avins, Colin Wilder, Martin Holden, Barbara Kohn, Maureen Diggens, Fiona Fraiss, Muriel Feldman, Jane Harris, Len Bartlett, Ruth Allenby,

Francesca Merritt, Mona Harms, Joan Huggins, Jane Rogers, Helen Schapira, Gerry Schapira, Adrian L'Estrange, David Wilson, Ken South, Judy Walshe, Margot Hattam, Valerie Weeks, Hermann Hirschberger, Bob Batchelor, Tony Letts, Derek Sate, Penny Rutherford, Maura Finan, Bernard Colvin, June Hewitt, Jack McEnery, Jean Scott, Ian Dent, Pat Gordon, Christine Richmond, Carl Goldsmith, Margaret Goldsmith, Alan Thomas, Margaret Broadbent, Joe Grant, Roma Cohen, Liz Foster, Alastair King, Ahmad Mallick, Ulla Mallick, Carina Young, Bill Burgess, Diana Burgess, Rebecca Orlans, Stan Orlans, Guy Gimpel, Dorothy Gimpel, Peter Phillips, Audrey Mace, Rob Pyburn, Philomena Alam, Dorothy Beeton, Roger Lester, Judith Barnett