

THE SOBELL BRIDGE CLUB

In aid of The Friends of Michael Sobell House
Registered Charity No. 1079638



The MINUTES of the 28th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING **held on Sunday 15th May 2022** **in the Michael Sobell Centre, Mount Vernon Hospital at 6:00 p.m.**

Present: Adrienne Finch President
Peter Cobden Co-opted Chairman
Joanna May Minute taker

Also present:
30 other members

1. Adrienne Finch, the President, declared the meeting open and thanked everyone for coming. A minute's silence was held to remember all those members the Club had lost since the start of the Covid pandemic. Adrienne offered her personal thanks to all those on the Committee who had rallied round when Doug suddenly passed away last September. In particular, she mentioned Peter who took on the role of co-opted acting Chairman which he has carried out magnificently.
2. Apologies for absence were received from Gwen Cozens, Lois Hargreaves, Lynne Mathys, and Alan McBride.
3. Motion to approve the minutes of the 2018-2019 AGM
Proposed: Ann Paris, Seconded: Harry Silverman.
4. Co-opted Chairman's report

Peter echoed everything that Adrienne had said about Doug. He had done so much for the Club single-handedly ensuring the business of the Club was properly conducted.

He said the last two years had been strange for the Club. 2022 is the Club's 30th anniversary. The last function was held on 14 March 2020, a cheese and wine social event. Some people did not come because of the virus, the next day we decided to close the Club (this was nine days before the Government went into lockdown).

He recapped on the previous two years, commenting on the Committee's Zoom meetings, and thanked Theresa Murray-Bates for working independently with her students throughout the pandemic, including setting up Real Bridge sessions for them.

He expressed his thanks to Alan McBride and Keith Jones for starting online bridge in August 2020. These sessions on Monday evenings and Wednesday afternoons pulled the Club together. The Monday evening online sessions are continuing, and we get a reasonable number of players. Keith gives a welcomed donation to the Club each month.

After 17 months of not being able to play face-to-face, we decided to hold our first face-to-face sessions in September 2021. Very suddenly, 4 days later, Doug passed away. Adrienne took control of the situation and asked Peter to take over as temporary Chairman.

Peter identified four key areas of development since we returned to face to face sessions:-

- We were short of directors for various reasons. We found three members - Howard Atkins, Alan McBride, and Alan Marks - who were willing to undertake a the EBU director's course. They came through it and are now directing at the Club.
- We introduced a cashless payment system which has made it possible for members to pay by credit card and helped the Treasurer with the day-to-day administration of the accounts.
- We organised a survey of members to establish which weekend afternoon they favoured playing at the Club in order to accommodate those members who no longer want to drive at night. This resulted in the start of Saturday afternoon sessions, which will continue.
- Theresa Murray-Bates started a beginners' course three weeks ago. It gives potential for people to get involved in the Club and provides revenue income for the Friends.

He believes the Club is on a solid platform. Sixteen pairs have come top in duplicate sessions since the start of April 2022, and this shows a levelling out of the Club.

Peter expressed his personal thanks to the following people:

- a) All those who have come to the face-to-face sessions.
- b) Lynne Mathys for her work as Treasurer since 2008. She is now resigning from that post. Alan McBride has put himself forward for her position. She has said she will continue as a committee member without portfolio.
- c) Terry Butfield for his support, rational advice and for helping to organise the EBU directors' course.
- d) Gwen Cozens for rewriting the guidelines for scorers and nurturing the new scorers.
- e) Jane Brown for working with Gwen on scoring, for keeping the website up-to-date and for resolving problems that come up on the computer.
- f) Alan McBride for setting up online bridge with Keith Jones and for being a competent Secretary. Alan is stepping down as Secretary and Joanna May has put herself forward for this role.
- g) Joanna May for acting as the Saturday session manager and for putting herself forward for Secretary.
- h) Val Lloyd and Lois Hargreaves for their tireless dedication to Sunday evening sessions.
- i) Catherine Stafford for her work as session manager on Thursday evenings.
- j) Pete Davies who has single-handedly acted as dealer this year. He is also a scorer having learnt how to score.
- k) Howard Atkins, Alan McBride, and Alan Marks for training to be directors.
- l) He thanked our directors who have kept the Club going: Terry Butfield, Martin Isham, Lynne Mathys, Geoff Foley and Harry Silverman, and recognised that Neil Fraiss and Vinod Khanna had each directed a session.
- m) Theresa Murray-Bates for nurturing her students and the work she has put into it. the teaching programme.

- n) Keith Jones who gave us the link to online bridge. It is good to see him here tonight.
- o) Calver Townsend-has resigned from his post. Thank you to both Calver and Audrey for the dedication they have given to the Club over many years.
- p) My wife for her support, she corrects my grammar, punctuation etc.
- q) Howard Atkins for all the work that he has done as our auditor.

5. Treasurer's report

Provided by Howard Atkins, as acting Treasurer

- i) The figures have been affected by Covid.
- ii) Cash at the bank as of 1 April 2021 was £8,712.12
- iii) Excess of income over expenditure to 31 March 2022 was £3,505.66
- iv) Donations to Michael Sobell House to 31 March 2022 were £6,000.00
- v) Balance carried forward as of 31 March 2022 was £6,217.78

6. Motion that the accounts be accepted

Proposed: Terry Butfield, Seconded: Tony King

7. Election of Honorary Auditor

Proposed: Peter Cobden, Seconded: Anne Edmonds

8. Secretary's report

Nothing to report.

9. Election of Committee

Adrienne acknowledged that as there was no-one else who wished to join the Committee now, the Committee as listed on the agenda should be elected. A vote was taken which was unanimously in favour.

10. AOB

Bidding boxes

The members agreed there was no need for bidding boxes to be carried from table to table.

Masks

Following a discussion about the Club's position on wearing face masks where members were encouraged to express their views, a vote was taken. It was decided that the wearing of face masks at the Club would no longer be obligatory. This will now be an optional measure against Covid with the choice being left to individual members, but with the proviso that should a member at a table that you play at request that you wear a mask while at the shared table you comply with their wishes.

This new protocol took immediate effect. It will be reviewed should there be a significant new wave of the virus in the future.

Peter said he would send out a message to all members informing them of the result of the vote.

Formal thank you

Liz Crook made a formal thank you to the Committee for their work over the last three years.

Member of the Year Award

Peter told the meeting that as there had been no tournaments over the past two years, there was no need for any 'playing' trophies. However, there was one trophy which we are giving out this year. The Club is about the people, and we decided this year that this trophy had to go to one of the playing members who plays at the Club regularly and online. He has been a member for many years. By a unanimous decision, Tony King has been made 'Member of the Year'.

The meeting was closed at 6:45 pm.