

**Minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Bridge Club
Special General Meeting
held on Tuesday, 1 September 2020 online on Zoom**

Present:	Christine McCreath	President
	Reverend Canon Christopher Smith	Vice President
	Trish Frew	Honorary Secretary
	Jane Smithson	Honorary Treasurer
	Louis Moore	Honorary Competitions Secretary
	Len Hutton	Committee member
	Peter Calder	Committee member
	Jo Rowley	Committee member
	Jill Connor	Committee member
	Nicola Corbyn	Committee member

(Club members) Janet Beattie, Jane Davey, Penny Davidson, Sandy Duncan, Colin Edney, Ken Forrest, Paul Gipson, Marilyn Hodgson, Kitty Home Robertson, Anne Horne, Tony Houghton, Ian McCreath, Marion Mead, Jean Mole, Sue Price, Eric Price, Anthony Reed-Jones, Keith Robertson, Marguerite Robson, John Smithson, Morven Stone

Apologies: Kate Mole (Committee member), Jim Lindsay, Jude Gardner, Perry Vassie

1. Zoom protocol

Eric Price, the Zoom host, outlined the protocol for using Zoom.

2. President's welcome

Christine welcomed everyone to the first online Special General Meeting, explaining it was necessary given the cancelled AGM. She gave a précis of her report (attached).

3. Acceptance of 2019-20 Accounts

- The Committee proposed the accounts.
- The accounts were accepted by 20-0 votes.

4. Appointment of Account Examiner

- The motion "Greaves, West and Ayre are reappointed Account Examiner." was proposed by Jane Smithson and seconded by Tony Reed-Jones.
- The motion was passed by 21-0 votes.

5. Election of Office bearers and Committee members

- President: Christopher Smith
- Honorary Secretary: Paul Gipson
- Honorary Treasurer: Tony Reed-Jones
- Committee: Sue Price, Penny Davidson
- The Committee proposed the above.
- The five members were elected by 21-0 votes.

6. Members proposed resolutions

There were no member resolutions.

7. AOCB

The new President, Christopher Smith, accepted the position of President and thanked Christine McCreath for all the good work she has done over the past two years and for all the help she will provide over the coming year.

Christopher thanked Trish Frew for all her work as Secretary since before he was a club member; and Jane Smithson for all her work as Treasurer and noted how smoothly the accounts were accepted. Christopher also thanked Kate Mole and Nicola Corbyn for their time on the committee.

Christopher said that the coronavirus pandemic has created a unique and challenging time for the club and the Committee would be working hard to address it.

Colin Edney and Kitty Home Robertson both raised questions about online bridge in the future, particularly about playing later in the day and evening, and Christopher said that these would be addressed by the Committee's first meeting.

Christopher also mentioned that Mary Birtwhistle wasn't at all well.

The meeting closed at 6.25pm.

After the meeting, the new Committee confirmed their first meeting will be on Tuesday 8 September at 5pm, once again on Zoom.

Berwick Bridge Club – President’s Report for SGM 2020

Who would have thought this time last year that we would be forced to have a virtual Special General Meeting rather than a conventional Annual General Meeting ?

Thank you to all of you who are able to take part.

As you all know, we couldn’t complete our routine competitions in the season 1919-20, save one. Congratulations to Sue Price for winning the Lindsay individual.

Nor could either of our League teams play all its scheduled matches.

Paul and John spent a lot of time planning this year’s Berwick Congress, but this was also cancelled. Paul was, however, able to arrange an online congress for us which took place on the 26 April 2020. 40 pairs took part, and the winners were Sara Duncan and Tim McKay. Diana Drysdale and Ros French were second. Our congratulations to them.

Sadly, one of our members, David Darling died recently. Our thoughts go out to his family.

Marguerite Robson, a Past President, resigned recently as our Press Secretary. She has been a great stalwart of the Club for some many years, 22 years as Partnership Secretary and 10 years as Press Secretary. Thank you Marguerite for the immense amount of work you have done for the Club for so many years.

Thank you also to Marilyn Hodgson for taking over as Press Secretary.

Trish Frew and Jane Smithson are standing down as Secretary and Treasurer respectively, this evening. I am personally most grateful to them for everything they have done for me and my predecessors as President. I know all members will join with me in thanking them and all other members of the Committee most sincerely for everything they have done for the Club.

Finally, I’d like to express my thanks on behalf of all the members to Paul for the quite remarkable amount of work he has done by way of arranging online bridge for us. Quite apart from enabling us to play amongst ourselves, he has arranged matches for us against teams from various corners of the UK, South Africa and Australia, and he has helped to keep our mental equilibrium in recent months. I never thought I’d see the day when I’d play bridge online! Paul, we cannot thank you enough.

It has been a privilege to represent the Club as its President, and I have thoroughly enjoyed my term of office. I wish Christopher, all the other new office bearers and all our members every success for the future.

Christine McCreath

President

Bridge achievements by members outwith the club

National events

Penny Davidson and Colin Edney won the SBU Bobby Allan Trophy for the leading mixed pair in the Easter Simultaneous Pairs. This is the third time that a club pair has won this event.

Paul Gipson won the SBU Winter Foursomes, Scotland's premier weekend event, for the third time in four years.

Jean Mole and Reg Drysdale were 13th in the SBU Stirling Pairs with 54.81%.

Sandy Duncan, playing with Bob McPaul at the club, finished fourth in the SBU Simultaneous Pairs.

Brian Griffiths and Sandy Moor were 8th in the Tuesday Celtic Simultaneous Pairs, with Chris Orchard and Tony Reed-Jones 13th.

District events

Nigel Marlow came third in the East District Bronze Individual.

Diana Drysdale, playing with SBU President-elect Joan Forsyth, was equal third at the East District Congress Swiss Pairs.

Sandy Duncan won the Watson Trophy for the East District Congress Swiss Teams. Sandy first won this trophy in 1966!

Ros French and Colin Edney won the East District Simultaneous Pairs from Brian Thomas and George Martin in second place.

Nigel Marlow and David King were the best placed Berwick pair as they finished sixth in the East District Bronze Pairs.

Sandy Duncan, playing with Bob McPaul, won the East District regional final of the National Pairs.

Other events

Kitty Home Robertson & Susan White with Sarah Davidson & Tony Oates finished second in the Kelso Congress Teams.

Brian Thomas and George Martin won the Border Pairs (again!) by less than 1% from Louis Moore and Brian Griffiths. Janet Beattie and Margaret Patterson were joint third.

Marion Mead, Dorothy Moore, Marilyn Hodgson and Marguerite Robson won the Border Teams.

Reg and Diana Drysdale were 3rd in the New Melville Congress Swiss Pairs in December.

Ros French and Diana Drysdale won the Consolation Pairs Final at the Association of Inverness Bridge Clubs Congress in Newtonmore. Kate Mole and Margaret Patterson won the Congress Open Pairs (the tertiary pairs final) with 71%.

Many members have been promoted during the season:

★ Colin Edney	National Master
★ Jean Mole	Scottish Master
★ Terry Harris	4 Star Senior Master
★ Brian Griffiths	1 Star Master
★ Tony Oates	1 Star Master
★ Christine Rowell	District Master
★ Susan Wight	Local Master
★ Tony Reed-Jones	Local Master
★ Graeme Bone	Local Master

Berwick Bridge Club – Treasurer’s Report for 2019-20

Members total: 101

Our past season has been rather different from previous years and I hope this finds you all well.

You will not be surprised that in view of the exceptional situation of the coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent lockdown of the country, the AGM has been postponed until further notice. However, I thought that you should have an opportunity to see how the club finances have been affected by the sudden end to our bridge season.

You will find attached, the Financial Report and Examination of Accounts produced by Greaves West and Ayre. Tony Reed-Jones helped with finalising the accounts, it was useful to both of us, myself for the professional input and for Tony familiarising himself with how the club is run. I am proposing Tony as the next Treasurer of the club, hopefully taking over from me in September 2020.

This year has ended with the club making a small deficit of £359, unfortunately our income was reduced by the early shut down of the club, which was not matched by the savings made in hall hire charges and the £514 normally given out in prizes. We also set out at the beginning of the season to spend a little more money, since we have a large surplus in the bank - £11,883. We asked Diana and Jean to hold improvers lessons during the Autumn/Winter which were extremely well received and appreciated by the participants. These 16 extra sessions added to the hall charges. Also, we decided to renew all our old bidding boxes. Another Bridgemate was bought and the dealing machine repaired, contributing to our expenses.

The increase in costs for Master points and affiliation fees from £1,275 to £1,602 is as a result of a couple of factors. Additional SIMS events with more players participating, leading to a larger club subsidy. Secondly, timing differences in the purchase of Master points.

Sundries and donations consisted of £400 donated to the RNLI from the 2019 Congress. Two SIMS events raised £178 for the RNLI and £96 for UNICEF. Gifts of appreciation were given to Diana and Jean for their excellent bridge lessons. The club also showed their appreciation for all that Paul has done to keep the club going via BBO by giving him a case of wine. If anyone would like to join the almost 60 members playing on BBO who has not done so yet, there are instructions and links to Paul’s ‘How to Do It’ videos on the home page of the Berwick Club Website. If you need help, please do not hesitate to ask.

To retain our club SBU Affiliation and Memberships, the treasurer will collect the £11 annual subscriptions at the beginning of September and will send out a reminder and instructions nearer that time.

Stay safe, Jane

Jane Smithson (Honorary Treasurer)

26 May 2020

Berwick Bridge Club – Competition Secretary’s Report for SGM 2020

I can hardly remember when things were normal. It seems so long ago now.

I do remember that until our Covid wipeout, things were running quite satisfactorily & we were intending to upgrade the Bridge timer so that it could play more songs & dances: one of which would tell everyone who was holding up the room.

With the advent of BBO this is taken care of by the computer making a rude noise & simply moving on to the next board. I think it’s magic.

The only competition to be completed was the Lindsay individual which was won by Sue Price. So well done Sue & sorry about the trophy – all prizes being abandoned this year.

Thanks are sent to all the members who acted as Directors for the various competitions – the club could not operate without you. And thanks again to Paul for being a constant source of help whenever needed. During this crisis we owe thanks to Paul for much much more but that has already been said.

I am unclear as to what the coming season will present but I will be surprised if there is any physical bridge this year & even into next for some of our members until a vaccine is developed.

Playing whilst wearing a face mask holds no attractions to me & I expect I’m not alone there.

Meanwhile Paul is organising matches online & researching further online options.

Unfortunately the virtual world doesn’t suit everyone – it’s a generational thing I guess – so until we resume, our numbers will be severely depleted . Some may never come back.

Finally for all those of you who are lying awake at night worrying about the Bridgemates, please relax, I’ve removed the batteries.

Like me they’re powerless.

Louis Moore

Honorary Competition Secretary

Berwick A League Report SGM 2020

During the truncated league programme we played eight of our scheduled league matches winning three and losing five. This puts us in a worse position than last season but should be enough to retain our third division status. The SBU are intending that the remaining matches should be played before May next year as that seems to be the only sensible option given the coronavirus situation that everybody has been facing. Demands that these matches should be played online have been stopped by the SBU East on the basis that too many clubs would face difficulties getting players to carry out such tasks. I appreciate that many players are currently fulfilling their bridge needs online but it has never appealed to me and I suspect that I would struggle to raise a team on that basis.

That being the case it will be my responsibility to make such arrangements to fulfil our commitments as and when I can. I had made it general knowledge that I was not prepared to continue as A team captain for a new season but the ensuing silence has been deafening. Best wishes to all of you who are facing unprecedented situations in your daily lives. May we all come through it in one piece.

Best Regards

Garneth Ellis

Berwick Bears League Report SGM 2020

Berwick Bears had a more consistent season, we were lying in 3rd position in the league having won 5 out of our 8 matches by the time lockdown enforced a premature end to the season (2 of our losses were within a 3% margin so agonisingly close to being a losing draw!)

Many thanks to the 12 people who played throughout the course of the season, especially to those who stood in at the last moment to cover for unavoidable call offs.

We can only wait and see what the future brings with regard to resumption of league matches!

Trish Frew