



**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting  
of the Young Chelsea Bridge Club  
held at 6.30 pm on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2009**

**Present (in person):** Renata Beauchamp Kerr, Brian Callaghan, Simon Cearns, Rob Cliffe, John Davidson Parker, Mark Davies, Chris Duckworth, Carrie Eden, Mike Eden, Clive Freedman, Dom Goodwin, Denise Grimston, Audrey Hartley, Ann Knowles, Noel Leaver, Elizabeth Lindsay, Margaret Lumley-Savile, Tony Mutukisna, Ian Payn (Chairman), Gordon Rainsford, Lindsay Scandrett, Cameron Small, Ivor Snowden, Lorna Vestey, Anne Watt, Michael Wellby, Liz Wright.

**1. Registration of Proxies**

The following members were present by proxy: Ella Alishan, Anne Brewster, Kooky Fallah, Franklyn Jacobs, Helen Schapiro, Angus Simpson, Pat Wolfston

**2. Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Janet de Botton, Michael Hill, Jon Lillycrop, Mahmoud Sadek

**3. Minutes of the AGM of 7<sup>th</sup> October 2008.**

The minutes of the 2008 AGM were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

**4. Matters arising from these minutes.**

There were no matters arising

**5. Chairman's Annual Report**

The Chairman reminded the meeting that at the previous year's AGM there had been a lot of discussion about the future of the club. During the past year, agreement had been reached to give the club at least a short-term future at the current premises. It had been agreed to surrender the top of the house, including the first floor playing room and offices, and terms had been agreed for us the stay in the lower two floors for up to three years at a greatly reduced rent. It was expected that the new lease would be finalised within the next few weeks, following which the club would have three years in which to implement plans for its future. He expressed the club's appreciation of the freeholder's agreement to this arrangement.

The Chairman went on to say that it was highly unlikely that we could afford to stay for longer than the three year "stay of execution" we had been given and that therefore planning had already started on preparing for change. Mark Davies had produced a paper with a framework for the first discussions, and a meeting to begin to develop ideas had been set for 20<sup>th</sup> October. It was important that the views of all the membership were taken into account in deciding the way forward and the shape of the club in the future, however, and he

asked for thoughts, comments and suggestions from all members as soon as possible, for consideration at that meeting. Members views on whether we should aim to expand or contract, what activities we should embrace and which we should reject, methods of finance, etc would all be very welcome.

On a less serious note the chairman announced that the club would in future no longer be serving draught bitter and lager, which had proved uneconomic. They would be replaced by a range of canned and bottled beers, and at the same time the range of food and wine would be reviewed. Members' views with regard to future choices in this area would also be welcomed.

The Chairman went on to describe some administrative changes during the past year. Jeremy Dhondy had stood down as Chairman of the Bridge Sub-Committee and had been replaced by Brian McGuire. Jeremy had retained responsibility for disciplinary matters, however, now liaising directly with the Management Committee on this. Mahmoud Sadek had retired as a club tournament director, though he would continue his involvement with the club as its archivist. As a member since the club's inception, it had been planned to make a small presentation to him at the AGM, but Mahmoud was not able to be present due to ill-health. The Chairman read out a statement from him, as follows: "It has been a privilege and a pleasure to have been connected to this great club for 41 years. This time has raced by alarmingly and it is almost certainly right to step back now. The best part of being with YCBC has been getting to know a large number of terrific people including many exceptionally fine and talented players. But this is not goodbye as I intend to play for many years to come. So I will see you all soon, but someone else will be saying 'arrow-switch please'." The Chairman also noted that Mahmoud, already an honorary life member, would in future play at the club as our guest.

The Chairman mentioned some notable club successes during the year. We were very proud to have three new World Champions amongst our membership - Zia Mahmoud, who won the Bermuda Bowl and Ross Harper and Colin Simpson who won the d'Orsi Seniors Bowl, both recently in Sao Paulo. Although the competition was not yet complete, the Young Chelsea would also win the NICKO for the first time in 2009, as both teams in the final were representing the club.

As usual, sadly, there had been a number of deaths during the last year. Three of the rubber bridge players, Loni Charlton (89), Ron Nabour (92) and Fish Tata (94) were remembered, together with Peter Czerniewski, who would be known to most of the duplicate players. Peter was a long-term club member, a very fine player and a true gentleman who would be much missed.

Finally, the Chairman thanked Elizabeth Lindsay for her sponsorship of the Inter-National teams and Gitte Hecht Johansen for sponsoring the Open Teams Challenge. He also wished to record thanks to the members of the Bridge Sub-Committee, his fellow members of the Management Committee, and Gordon Rainsford and all his staff, for their hard work throughout the year.

## **6 Treasurer's Annual Report**

The Treasurer, Cameron Small, circulated copies of the Profit and Loss account for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009, together with an amended statement which showed the expected profit and loss once the top of the house was taken out of the picture. Whilst the original statement showed a loss for the year of approx £8.7K, the amended statement showed that this could be turned into a profit of £4-5K under the new agreement about to be signed. The

treasurer also noted that the contraction of the club business would bring with it a considerable increase in stability, since we would no longer be vulnerable to changes in legislation concerning housing, etc.

There were a number of questions on the accounts. It was noted that accountancy fees had apparently increased significantly, and it was explained that we had in fact generated significant accountancy fee arrears in the past in sorting out the change of club ownership, which we were now paying back over a number of years.

In response to a question about the longer term future, the Treasurer explained that the new agreed rental for the club was approx two-thirds the market rate for property in the area. Whilst the rate had been agreed in the current financial climate, it was highly unlikely to be maintainable for more than three years, hence the necessity of planning to move.

The question was raised as to how well attendances and club membership were holding up in the current climate. This was answered by Gordon Rainsford, who said that numbers were no longer declining. Following on from this, the Treasurer was asked if table money and membership fees would be going up soon. He stated that this was not anticipated. The Chairman, however, felt that it was important that the Management Committee should be able to raise fees if absolutely necessary, and asked for a mandate from the meeting to do so if required. This was proposed by Rob Cliffe, seconded by Margaret Lumley-Savile and carried nem-con.

## **7 Adoption of accounts for 2008/9**

Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Mike Eden, seconded by Brian Callaghan and passed nem con.

## **8 Elections to the Management Committee**

Two nominations had been received for the one vacancy on the Committee, namely Simon Cearns and Lorna Vestey, both of whom were currently MC members, Lorna via co-option. Rather than take a vote, the Chairman proposed that this arrangement be continued and this was agreed. Simon was therefore duly declared re-elected and Lorna Vestey was immediately co-opted onto the Management Committee.

## **9 Any Other Business**

Carrie Eden asked whether there were plans to increase the club membership. The Chairman said that this was very much part of the planning considerations being addressed by the Management Committee. He would particularly welcome input from the membership on ways this might be tackled, and thought it might well be something for which a separate sub-group could be established to pursue. He noted that members views on all matters relating to the future would be sought via the club website and noticeboard and Gordon Rainsford added that a club Facebook page already existed that could be used also for this purpose.

Elizabeth Lindsay noted that the carpet in the hallway was a disgrace and could well put off potential future members. It was pointed out that there would be changes to the hallway when the new club lease was implemented, meaning that this problem would be addressed.

The Chairman reminded members of the forthcoming Open Teams Challenge, now to be held in November, for which entries were now being accepted.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.20 pm.