

NORTHERN IRELAND BRIDGE UNION

Annual General Meeting 2015

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at U3A, Foyleside, L'Derry on Sunday June 21st at 2pm.

Present:	President	Ian Hamilton
	Chairperson	John Bergin
	Immediate Past Chairperson	Ciara Burns
	President-elect	Anne Hassan
	Hon. Secretary	Michael McFaul
	Hon. Treasurer	Anne Fitzpatrick
	Hon. Competitions Secretary	John Murchan
	Council Member	Pat Johnston
	Council Member	Eric McNicholl
	Council Member	Ian Lindsay

Also: Una McFeely, Robert Coull, Stephen Cairns, Anne Cairns, Josephine Hegarty, John McCusker, Anne Bergin, Jim McGirr, Fr. Jim McGonagle, Marion Ross, Marlene Montgomery, Orla Quigley, Nuala Zahran, Jim Moore, Bernie Sargent, Ina Taylor, Noel Houston, Carol Donaghey, Valerie Von Hof, P.J.McNelis, Seamus Donaghy, Kevin Hinds, Mary O'Kelly, Mary McLaughlin, Mairead Morrison, Andrina Kelleher, Kathleen McCay, Pat Coull, Philip McAvoy, Pat Williams, Cathy McCay, Gene McAtamney, Sinead McNicholl, Liz Scott, Norma Perceval-Price, Alan Sharp, Rex Anderson, Pat McDaid.

Apologies: Elbha Walmsley, Rosario Heatherington, Brian McDowell, Margaret McDowell, Toni Sproule, Shelagh McCaughan, Alan Hill, Heather Hill, Robin Burns, Christine Byrne, Clare Watson, Neill Cauwood, Denis Cahill, Ethna Cahill, Norma Irwin, Rosemary Kilpatrick, Derek Cannell, Nuala Mooney, James McAllister, Kathleen McAllister, Emmet Devlin, June Spiers, Ros Young, Bill Scott, Harold Curran, Colette Hynes, Celine Duffy, Rose Campbell, Fr Porter, Florence Boyd, Colette Carlin, Angus Stewart, Eugene Quinn, Joan Ferguson, Madeleine Breen, Anne Gallagher, Bernie O'Kane, Tony McDermott, Gerard Morrison, Kathleen Morrison, Mary O'Doherty, Dorothy Hegarty, Eddie O'Hare, Sally O'Hare, Colin Jeffries, Sandie Millership, Jeff Millership

The President of City of Derry Bridge Club, Josephine Hegarty welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. Chairman's address

John Bergin said that this was the first time the AGM had been held in L'Derry but that he hoped it marked a new approach of 'outreach' whereby the meeting would be hosted by different clubs across the province each year, thus allowing the wider membership to become more involved and more aware of NIBU business.

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on June 4th 2014

Item 10: John Murchan stated that comments attributed to G. MacKenzie were not accurately recorded in his opinion. He read out G. Mackenzie's text. Anne Cairns pointed out that, in her opinion the minute effectively summarised G. Mackenzie's comments.

Item 3: John Murchan clarified that Alan Anderson had offered to run the Millership Cup during 2014-15.

Item 8: John Murchan pointed out that Rex Anderson had been nominated for Council from the floor of the meeting.

There were no other Matters Arising from the minutes and they were accepted, subject to the points above being noted, on a proposal by Anne Bergin, seconded by Liz Scott.

3. President's Address

The Chairman introduced the NIBU President informing all that Ian Hamilton would be most familiar as the brains & driving force behind the Interclub Duplicate Pairs competitions. Ian Hamilton reminded the meeting that he remained in post until June 2016 when the roles of Chairperson and President are merged. He was delighted to see such a good turnout, mostly from members who had never attended an AGM before now. He went on to express his strong support for the incoming Competitions Secretary, Liz Scott and looked forward to working closely with her on the newly-formed Tournament Committee.

4. Amendments to the Constitution

John Bergin said that Council had identified certain ambiguities in the text of the Constitution in which the wording did not clearly reflect what was intended. Although proposed changes to the text had been drafted and circulated, it was clear that a wider review had been called for. On that basis it was proposed to defer the amendments pending a more detailed analysis of the changes needed. This was agreed on a show of hands.

5. Annual Reports

John Bergin referred to the booklet containing the reports from Office-Bearer's and two committees (Selection and Youth). A report from the former Competitions Secretary had been requested for inclusion but had not been forthcoming.

Ciara Burns raised a number of issues regarding the Selection Committee report. The Chairman asked that these be passed to the Selection Committee for a response.

Anne Cairns raised a number of issues relating to players selection and to communication problems.

Rex Anderson queried why there had been no report from the Laws & Ethics Committee. The Chairman said that he would ask all Office-bearers and Committee Chairs to submit reports for next year.

Ciara Burns asked for the Competitions Secretary report to be presented. John Bergin said that Council agreed all office-bearer reports be submitted in advance for publication and comment from members and that no report had been submitted by the Competitions Secretary. Ciara Burns stated that John Murchan had brought his report to the meeting. Following comment from Bernie Sargent and Una McFeely, it was proposed by Fr. J Mc Gonagle and seconded by Eric McNicholl, that all questions from members should be submitted in advance. This was agreed.

6. Treasurer's Report

Anne Fitzpatrick spoke to her paper outlining the Financial Accounts for the year ending March 31st 2015. Stephen Cairns asked about Camrose related expenditure. It was pointed out that NIBU players pay their own expenses except for travel unlike the other Home Countries who are fully subsidised. Anne Hassan reminded the meeting that expenditure always rose when we had to host matches on home soil and with two home teams to support.

Rex Anderson asked for the full set of accounts to be posted on the website and Anne Fitzpatrick agreed this would be done.

On a proposal by Bernie Sargent, seconded by Kathleen McCay, the accounts were adopted.

7. Election of Office-Bearers

John Bergin introduced Anne Hassan in her new role of Chairperson/President-Elect to serve one year prior to becoming the sole figurehead of the NIBU. The appointment was approved by all on a show of hands.

The incoming Competitions Secretary, Liz Scott was proposed by Anne Cairns and seconded by Rex Anderson. As the other office-bearers were all standing for re-election as Council nominees, they were all returned on a show of hands.

8. Election of Council members

John Bergin confirmed that 8 nominations had been received. He read out the names on the ballot paper. Michael McFaul added that a late nomination had been received the evening before the AGM. The Chairman informed the meeting that clubs were asked to submit nominations no later than 14 June. His view was that to accept a late nomination would be unfair to other clubs as they were not offered a similar deadline extension. He said that there may be clubs which refrained from submitting nominations on the grounds that they were too late. Anne Hassan expressed concern over the procedure being employed stating that, as a Council member, she could be held personally responsible for not following the Constitution.

The Chairman agreed to put to the meeting whether or not nominations of candidates to stand for Council should be accepted after the closing date of 14 June. 42 voted not to accept late nominations, 3 voted for and there was one abstention. No names were added to the ballot papers.

At this point, the Chairman announced the results of the election to Council and that the following had duly been elected:

Eric Mc Nicholl (Maghera), Pat Johnston (Derryvolgie), Ian Lindsay (Kelvin-Malone), Harold Curran (Cooke), Valerie Von Hof (Limavady), Pat Coull (City of Derry), Sinead McNicholl (Dungiven).

9. Delegates to the Irish Bridge Union & Bridge Great Britain.

Ian Lindsay pointed out that this item of business was normally transacted at the first Council meeting following the AGM. It was confirmed that this was consistent with the Constitution and so the matter was passed over.

10 Consideration of a resolution put to the meeting in accordance with the Constitution.

The proposal "That the NIBU does more to develop bridge in the West of the province" was submitted by Stephen Cairns (St. Michaels) and Marius McHugh (Devenish). Stephen Cairns spoke in support of the resolution.

Anne Cairns referred to coaching but stressed that clubs would really prefer lessons to be delivered locally in clubs. She asked if any 'package' of lessons existed that could be used widely to prevent 're-inventing the wheel' each time. Alan Sharp confirmed that Coleraine club used such a package and he would be happy to circulate it.

Anne Hassan and Pat Johnston stated that the NIBU was not resourced to deliver lessons widely and did not provide accreditation for bridge teachers. However it was confirmed that the Selection Committee would be addressing the issue during the forthcoming season.

Liz Scott assured members that the Tournament Committee would take on board the need to encourage players in the West through the selection of a wider range of venues and competitions. She invited Stephen Cairns to sit on the Tournament Committee. During general discussion on related matters, Rex Anderson and Ian Lindsay reminded the meeting that the Sonya Britton trophy aka the 'North/South' match was essentially a social event and was not held under the auspices of the IBU. The CBAI and NIBU hosted the event on an alternating basis.

The proposal "That the NIBU does more to develop bridge in the West of the province" was put to the floor with 46 votes for and 1 against.

11. Presentation of Trophies

Michael McFaul informed the meeting that he had possession of a number of trophies. However as none of the winners were present, no presentation took place.

The Chairman announced the prize-winners for Intermediate B, Intermediate A & Senior Player of the Year to applause from all.

Senior: Ruth Connolly
Inter 'A': Ros Young
Inter 'B': Dean Bradley

There being no other business, the Chairman thanked U3A Foyle and Chairman Robert Coull for the use of their premises. He was pleased to announce he had 28 tables for the Charity Bridge event and supper to follow.

The meeting closed at 4pm.

Michael McFaul
Hon. Secretary