



## **NEWCASTLE BRIDGE CLUB INC.**

### **2019 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Notice is hereby given that there will be an Annual General Meeting of the Newcastle Bridge Club Incorporated. Details are as follows:**

**Date / Time:**

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2019 to commence at 11:00 am at the Newcastle Bridge Club.**

***There will be a sausage sizzle after the meeting (before start of play of the usual Saturday Bridge session).***

**Agenda Items:**

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Minutes of previous Annual General Meeting dated 22/09/2018**
- 3. Business arising from the 2018 AGM Minutes**
- 4. Treasurer's Report**
- 5. Business arising from the Treasurer's Report**
- 6. Appointment of Auditors**
- 7. Secretary's Report**
- 8. Business arising from the Secretary's Report**
- 9. President's Report**
- 10. Business arising from the President's Report**
- 11. General Business**
- 12. Election of Office Bearers**
- 13. Next Meeting**
- 14. Close**

## **ATTENDEES AND APOLOGIES**

### **ATTENDEES - 30 total**

Pamela Robinson	Tony Wagstaff	Chris Williams	Peter Peterson
Alison Lea	Norma Keith	Stewart Roach	Julie Butel
Rosalie Broughton	Janet Hill	Jan Nicol	Ailsa Kearney
Ken Wilks	Vincia Martin	Cheryl Pletz	Caroline Carey
Jill Blenkey	Giles Martin	Phillip Halliday	Graham Rummey
Wayne Morgan	David Corney	Lesley Booth	Helen Johnson
Ian van Altena	Margaret Corney	Philip Hocking	
Jeff Biddlecombe	Bernie Adcock	Cathryn Hocking	

### **APOLOGIES - 71 total**

Diann Miller	Peter Stanmore	Larry Bryant	Maureen Reeves
Judy Hayes	Howard Bridgman	Peter Goodwin	Nancy Herford
Jennifer Atkinson	Drew Cohen	Ali Shah	Jean Magill
Pam Dibb	Grant Cohen	Felicity Evers	Dianne Nelson
Julie Fraser-Easton	Judy Atkins	Geoff Stafford	Kathleen Chapman
Janet Ritchie	Bernie Atkins	Jocelyn Pech	Julian Ward
Sue Donohue	Rod Bell	Di McArtney	Jan O'Connor
Jim Thatcher	Yvonne Rennard	Ken Cruise	Margaret Newell
Kate Cafe	Effie Roach	Maureen Rippon	Margaret Moulston
Kay Rich	Enza Di Stefano	Fay Larkin	Peta Carney
Philip Robinson	Tony Di Stefano	Michael Simes	Jill Achuch
Anne Robinson	Helen Ward	Graham Woods	Judy Halliday
Wendy Baker	Margaret Pearson	Michael Seldon	Garry Baunach
June Boyd	Di Bradbury	Margaret Geddes	Chris Dibley
Geraldine Adams	Louise Dix	BW (Bruce Webster?)	Joan Wansey
John Burns	Paul Standing	John Stuart	Charles Bowen-Thomas
Judy Dwyer	Peter Wheatley	Deanna Stuart	Lesley Bowen-Thomas
Alison Torrance	Ken Berry	Alison Morris	



## Minutes of Meeting

**Date and Time of Meeting:** Saturday 14th September 2019 at 11:00am

**Attendees:** Refer schedule on previous page ("*Attendees and Apologies*")

**Chairperson:** Jeff Biddlecombe (President)

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Jeff Biddlecombe declared the meeting open at 11:00am, thanked everyone for coming and confirmed that the criteria for a quorum had been met.

### **Agenda Items:**

**1. Apologies:** Refer schedule on previous page ("*Attendees and Apologies*")

**2. Minutes of previous AGM dated 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2018:**

After confirming that there were no objections, Jeff moved that the minutes of the 2018 AGM be accepted. Vincia Martin seconded the motion which was unanimously accepted. Jeff signed the minutes as a true record of proceedings.

**3. Business arising from the 2018 AGM Minutes**

There was no business arising from the 2018 AGM Minutes.

**4. Treasurer's Report (Tony Wagstaff):**

Tony presented his report (copy included at end of Minutes) and tabled the Profit and Loss Statement for the year (refer separate document "*Newcastle Bridge Club Inc. Financial Statements FY 2018 – 2019*"). Copies were available at the meeting and the statement had been posted on the Club's website two weeks prior to the AGM. Tony reported that:

- **Profit** was \$13,139, 14% lower than 2018 so again down year on year.
- **Revenue** increased overall by \$3,215 (2.5%) but \$1,126 of this was due to a gain from trade-in on a dealing machine. Table fees remained unchanged for the year, and overall were close to the previous year as were the other major items (Congress and membership subscriptions).
- **Expenses** increased by \$5,358 (4.7%). \$3,276 of this was from "Competitions", approximately half of which was due to a new charge introduced to identify the cost of board dealing due to dealers getting a free game. The other main contributor was "Country Teams" where late charging for participation in the 2017 regional finals resulted in the cost for two years' participation being incurred in the year. Other increases included "Socials" (anniversary luncheon) and "Salaries and Wages". A reduction of \$2,549 in "Repairs and Maintenance" partly offset the increases.

Tony commented that apart from an increase in funds due to the cash surplus, our balance sheet is again essentially unchanged. He added that he remains concerned that our funds are not working hard enough. However, members rejected any proposed changes when the matter was raised at the 2018 AGM. Tony commented that with interest rates continuing to fall, he believed we should be seeking a better return on investments.

Tony recommended that the report be accepted.

**5. Business arising from the Treasurer's Report**

Jeff Biddlecombe commented on the low interest rates, adding that he considered it worthwhile to again evaluate alternatives and proposed that Tony again review the options. The motion was seconded by Roy Hardy and the proposal was accepted.

Rosalie Broughton raised a motion for the Treasurer's report to be accepted, which was seconded by Pam Robinson.

## **6. Appointment of Auditors (Tony Wagstaff)**

Tony proposed the Club continue to use Lambourne Partners to review its financial records. Tony added that it is an audit in everything but name and fee structure. Ken Wilks supported the proposal and it was seconded by Cathy Hocking.

Rosalie Broughton proposed a round of applause to thank Tony for his diligence as Treasurer.

## **7. Secretary's Report (Julie Butel)**

Julie presented her report for the year (copy included at end of Minutes). Points included:

- Involvement in Club activities: table numbers up, a marginal increase in membership, good growth in the Thursday session, and more participation by less experienced players at events and at sessions additional to Thursday.
- Acknowledgement of Caroline Carey's work in Publicity, including Newsletters, flyers, PowerPoint slides and setting up a Facebook page.
- Usefulness of Pianola
- Strategic Plan review with outcomes including a change in the format for Beginners' Lessons and an emphasis on appropriate conduct at the Bridge table

Julie thanked the Committee for their support, and members for their positive feedback. She reminded members that Committee meeting minutes were available within a week of meetings.

Jeff Biddlecombe moved that the Secretary's report be accepted. The motion was accepted by Alison Lea and seconded by Jan Nicol.

## **8. Business Arising from the Secretary's Report**

**Q.** How do Thursday players feel after playing at other sessions?

**A.** The general feedback was positive, and the more experienced players were welcoming.

## **9. President's Report (Jeff Biddlecombe)**

Jeff presented his report for the year (copy included at end of Minutes). Main points:

- Role of President has become less confronting; hence Jeff has nominated for another year and is looking forward to working through the actions identified in the Management Plan.
- Tuesday and Thursday sessions continue to be the most popular.
- Special acknowledgement of volunteers for the Tuesday night Supervised Play session.
- Decision to change Wednesday session start time and duration was lengthy and difficult but necessary due to declining numbers. A monthly social has been introduced and seems to be popular.
- The Friday Graded Pairs competition was run again but there has been a further decline in attendance. The future of the event will be reviewed at the end of this year's event.
- The standby roster is well supported by volunteers but there are still not enough volunteers for Wednesday and Saturday sessions. Jeff encouraged members to consider volunteering for these sessions.
- Wayne Morgan has conducted 2 courses of Beginners' lessons this year. Numbers are not as good as previous years but are still a source of new players. More work is needed to understand why people drop out - an action included in the Management Plan.
- Jeff thanked Tony Wagstaff for his work as Treasurer noting the Club remains in a strong financial position. He also thanked everyone who had volunteered their services to the Club throughout the year including directors, scorers, dealers, standby players and those who assisted at Congress and catering. He then went on to thank the individual committee members including Howard Bridgman who left the Committee earlier in the year.



## 10. Business Arising from the President's Report

**Q:** Will the Wednesday session start time be moved from 10:00am to 9:30am?

**A:** There is a risk that to do so would risk losing more players. We will review the situation in May to allow a full 12 months comparison.

**Q:** What is the next step for the Strategic Plan?

**A:** A sub-committee consisting of Tony Wagstaff, Caroline Carey and Jeff Biddlecombe has been formed to progress the actions identified. The review was initiated as we were doing a lot of things in an ad hoc way and needed an overall plan. Some areas identified included finding ways to encourage youth to get involved in Bridge, and how to attract more people in general to the Club.

As there were no further questions, Jeff moved that the President's report be accepted. Ken Wilks supported the motion which was seconded by Rosalie Broughton.

## 11. General Business

**Q:** Can the Club's bank details for EFT payment for tokens be included in the program booklet?

**A:** A link to the bank account information has recently been put on the website. The details will also be included in the 2020 Program booklet.

**Q:** Are there plans for a discount rate for tokens (as at Maitland Bridge Club)?

**A:** No plans at this stage.

**Q:** Cairns Bridge Club has a no cash policy so tokens can only be paid for by credit card. Are there any plans to allow credit card payment?

**A:** This has been considered in the past but there is a cost involved. We will continue to review options.

**Q:** The savoury biscuits supplied by the Club are awful.

**A:** The biscuits are purchased by a volunteer based on what has been acceptable in the past. Suggestions are welcome.

## 12. Election of Office Bearers

Jeff advised that the nominations for the various positions on the committee had been received. As no positions were being contested the following members were duly elected to serve as the next Committee:

**President:** Jeff Biddlecombe  
**Vice President:** Vincia Martin  
**Treasurer:** Tony Wagstaff  
**Secretary:** Julie Butel

### Ordinary Members:

Rosalie Broughton, Caroline Carey,  
Janet Hill, Ailsa Kearney

The roles of Masterpoint Secretary and Tournament Director will be confirmed at the first committee meeting. Additional individual responsibilities will also be assigned at that meeting.

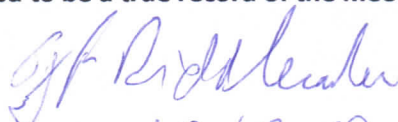
## 13. Next AGM

The date for the next AGM will be left for the incoming committee to determine.

## 14. Close

The meeting closed at 11:40am

**Confirmed to be a true record of the meeting**

  
10.10.19

Newcastle Bridge Club  
2019 Annual General Meeting  
Treasurer's Report

Our profit for 2019 again reduced year on year, being lower than 2018 by 14% and coming in at \$13,139 for the year.

Revenue increased overall by \$3,215 or 2.5%, but a large portion of this came from a gain from trading in one of our dealing machines. Table fees were unchanged for the year and, overall, were close to the previous year as were our other major items, Congress & Membership subscriptions.

Expenses were increased by \$5,358 or 4.7%. Larger movements came from

- Competitions, as defined by our accountants, which increased by \$3,276. About half of this increase was a new charge I engineered to identify the cost of board dealing, whereby dealers are given a free game for their assistance in this. More cost was evident also from Country Teams participation where late charging in 2017 for the cost of participating in the regional finals meant the inclusion of two years costs in this year
- Repairs & maintenance expenses were lower by \$2,549, while larger increases also occurred on Socials (due to the anniversary luncheon) and salaries & Wages.

As was noted last year, our balance sheet has not changed much over the year, apart from an increase in funds due to the cash flow surplus for the year. I continue to be concerned that the Club does not make its funds work a little harder. When this was raised last year, and rejected by a majority of members, we were looking at term deposit rates in the vicinity of 2.5%, but now we find such rates are further declined to around 1.5%. It is my firm belief that the Club should be looking to get a better return than this on their funds, as we are losing value with rates so low.

I recommend this report to members.

Tony Wagstaff  
Treasurer  
11 September 2019



## Secretary's report for 2019 AGM Newcastle Bridge Club

Welcome all to the 2019 AGM. Is it really 12 months since the last one! Somehow I managed to get through another year as Secretary – with the help of many! It's been a busy year – a quick review:

Participation in club activities was encouraging.

- Table numbers were up by 1.6% on last year, 4.2 % if the impact of discontinuing Thursday evening sessions is excluded.
- Total membership showed a marginal increase – 362 cf. 357 last year. With 28 resignations, the importance of attracting and retaining new members is again obvious.
- The Thursday session continued to grow – up nearly 10% on last year. It's a happy friendly session – hopefully encouragement for newer players to keep coming back. Ken Cruise and Jan O'Connor have continued with their mentoring program – their date books are usually booked out well in advance. And quite a few newer players are now regularly playing at more than one session / week.
- And good to see some of our less experienced members registering for special competitions and Congresses. No doubt Rosalie's recruitment drives have helped, as has the welcoming encouragement shown by experienced players. So that's a thank you and well done to everyone!

We've seen an increase in Publicity at the Club – well done Caroline Carey! 4 newsletters, informative flyers, entertaining PowerPoint slides and a Facebook page. If you're on Facebook and haven't liked our page yet, put it on your "to do" list – so you get to see new posts in your newsfeed.....so that you can then share and help spread the word.

Pianola continues to be a useful tool – for easier management of our member database, getting emails to all members or a particular group, and so on. And as members, there's access to personal history of our bridge results including analysis by role and by partner. I sometimes get told that people aren't getting the emails. If that's you and we've got your email address, let us know.

Earlier in the year, President Jeff led a review of the 2014 Strategic Plan. It was an interesting exercise to think about the Club's strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities before setting objectives and developing an action plan to achieve them.

One objective is to find ways to retain beginners. Hence a change in format of the Beginner lessons – so instead of 15 straight lessons, we're trialling 6 weeks of lessons, followed by 4 weeks of SP, then more lessons. Another objective is to improve the playing atmosphere at the club – and behaviour at the table is seen as key to player enjoyment. So, the flyer "Conduct and Etiquette at Bridge" was developed to increase awareness of its importance. The information isn't new – it's based on p5 of the Program booklet – but hopefully, a good reminder.

In closing I'd like to thank Jeff and the Committee for their ongoing guidance and help. Having a secretary with limited knowledge of the Club and the Bridge world has its moments for all of them, I'm sure! I certainly wouldn't be up for re-election if it wasn't for their support. And thanks to all of you for your positive feedback and encouragement, and for all that you do support the club.

Don't forget that minutes of Committee meetings are available on the noticeboard usually within a week of the meeting and a short summary is posted on the website. Previous minutes are also available on the website.

Thank you for your attention.

Julie Butel (Secretary)  
14<sup>th</sup> September 2019



Presidents Report

Being President is getting less confronting as the years go by so I have nominated for another year and, with the continuation of mostly the same Committee, I look forward to the work that we will be doing in conjunction with our Management Plan.

We are currently running 8 sessions a week with the Tuesday supervised session and the combined Thursday restricted and supervised sessions proving very popular. The Thursday morning is vying with Tuesday to be the bigger session with the Thursday session having the greater numbers at times.. The continual use of a Non Playing Director for Tuesday, Thursday and Friday morning sessions is still proving effective.

At this point, the Committee would like to especially acknowledge the following people who are volunteering/have volunteered for the Tuesday night Supervised sessions:

Directors Ken Wilks, Graham Rummey, Janet Hill, Bernie Adcock, Jeff Biddlecombe and the Stand-by players Alan Hemmingway, Vincia Martin, Kerrie Norris and Belinda Holding. These people ( and others who have filled in for them) give up their free time at the evening times and do so all through the year.

After some lengthy and ongoing debates, the Committee made the decision to change the Wednesday time to a three and a half session starting at 10 am rather than the 10:30 start. This was due to declining numbers and the opinion of non-Wednesday players that the session was too long.

A monthly social, along the lines of Thursday and Saturday, has been introduced for the first Wednesday of the month and this is proving popular. The jury is still out if this has helped the declining numbers as we have gained some and lost some players.

The first Friday in the month A and B competition is once again being run and the Club has maintained the prize money contribution of \$7:50 for each \$5:00 entry fee. There has been a drop off in numbers for this event again last year and this year and the Committee will be reviewing whether to continue this after the end of this year's event.

The standby roster is still being well supported with volunteers and this is helping attendance at the sessions where it is utilised. We are still unable to get enough volunteers for rosters on Wednesday and Saturday sessions and I would encourage members to help out in volunteering for Stand.by on those two extra sessions. The Club thanks those volunteers who keep this going.

Wayne Morgan has held /is holding another 2 sessions this year and while the numbers are not as high as previous years, they are holding up and, at the end of the lessons, the Club (& other clubs) may have some more new members with more people enjoying the great game of Bridge. The new people are feeding into Tuesday night and Thursday morning supervised sessions. As well, there are some who are venturing into the other sessions and every effort should be made to make their bridge experience an enjoyable one. We do need to follow up on those players who have dropped out to find out why and what we can do to retain them. This is another action on the Management Plan..



Our Treasurer has presented our financial results for the year. You will note that the Club remains in a sound financial position and should continue to do so. Thank you, Tony, for keeping us on such an even keel.

On behalf of our members, I thank all of those who have carried out tasks voluntarily within our Club, with particular mention to our volunteer directors, scorers, dealers, standby persons and kitchen volunteers. Special thanks to those who assisted at our congress, especially as there were a lot of new members being involved in the set-up work, the cooking of the slices, cakes, savouries and special dealing. However, we do seem to have the same people volunteering for kitchen duties and we would like more volunteers to share the load for this important task.

To all of those people above, well done and I hope you continue in this vein as you are vital to the successful and efficient running of the club.

Thank you also to my committee this year. We had one person who left the Committee earlier this year and I would like to thank Howard Bridgman for his efforts.

I would like to thank the rest of the Committee for the effort that they have put in voluntarily: Vincia Martin (Vice President) for her work as Maintenance Manager and introduction of the next level of bridge lessons with Paul Rooms Tony Wagstaff (Treasurer), Ailsa Kearney (Sending out of empathy cards when required and Catering Committee), Rosalie Broughton (Dealing manager), Caroline Carey (her excellent work in the preparation of the Newsletter and the newly installed Facebook page, Ken Wilks (Masterpoints Secretary) and Peter Peterson (Tournament Director),

I would like to make a special acknowledgement again to our secretary, Julie Butel. Julie has done an admirable job once again, not only in the secretarial duties but filling in for Ken's banking in his absence, her co-work on the Conference, her preparation of the yearly programme book and generally her devotion to the Club in many unrelated activities. Thanks very much, Julie!