

NORTHERN IRELAND BRIDGE UNION



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

27 JUNE 2021

NORTHERN IRELAND BRIDGE UNION

2021 Annual General Meeting of the Executive Council

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Union will be held on Sunday June 27th, 2021, at La Mon Country Club Hotel from 2.30pm

AGENDA

1. Chairman's welcome
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting
4. Matters Arising
5. To receive the report of:
 - a. The Chairman
 - b. The Honorary Secretary
 - c. The Honorary Treasurer
 - d. The Honorary Masterpoints Secretary (to include 'Report on Competitions')
6. To receive and pass the Financial Accounts if thought fit, for the year ended March 31st, 2021.
7. Chairperson's address
8. President's address
9. To elect Brian Mullan as incoming Vice-Chairman
10. To accept the nomination of Harold Curran (ex-Immediate Past Chairman) as a member of the Executive Council
11. To accept the nomination of Heather Hill, Brian Mullan, John Murchan, Michael McFaul, Anne Fitzpatrick and Ian Hamilton as members of the Emergency Management Committee
12. To re-elect the twelve members of affiliated clubs to serve as Councillors namely Lesley Agar, Christine Crockett, John Ferguson, Diane Greenwood, Norma Irwin, Ian Lindsay, Patricia McCorkell, Tom McKeever, Michael Stevenson, Liz Thomas, Brian Mullan (ex-officio) and the afore-named Harold Curran.
13. To elect the Examining Accountant
14. To elect three trustees
15. Statement from Kelvin & Malone regarding the distribution of table-money from online events.
16. Presentation of Trophies
17. Any Other Business.

Michael McFaul
Honorary Secretary.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRIDGE UNION

ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS

To be presented to members at the NIBU Annual General Meeting 2020

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NORTHERN IRELAND BRIDGE UNION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020

(Draft) Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday August 23rd 2020 at La Mon Hotel from 2.30pm.

Present:

President	John Murchan
Chairperson	Harold Curran
Vice-Chairperson	Heather Hill
Hon. Secretary	Michael McFaul
Hon. Treasurer	Anne Fitzpatrick
Hon. Masterpoints Secretary	Ian Hamilton
International Match Manager	Helen Hall
Councillor	John Ferguson
Councillor	Ian Lindsay
Councillor	Tom McKeever
Councillor	Norma Irwin

Other Delegates: Anne Hassan (SMCOBA), Sandie Millership (Brunswick), Richard Coulter, Liz Scott (Holywood), Robin Burns, Toni Sproule, David Leeman, Alan Hill (Kelvin & Malone), Elbha Walmsley, Diane Greenwood (Derryvolgie), Brian Mullan (Maghera), Hilary Ferguson (Quoile)

Other Members Attending: Michael Stevenson, Rosemary Kilpatrick, Florence Boyd, Geoff Booth, Heather Booth, Sheila Sharkey.

Apologies: Ethna Cahill, Christine Crockett, Pat Coull, Robert Coull, Christine Byrne, Maureen Kelly, Pat Johnston, Mary Wolsey, Dorothy Bruce, June Lyness.

Following refreshments, the Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **Minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting**

On a proposal by Heather Hill, seconded by Toni Sproule, the Minutes were accepted.

2. **Matters Arising**

None

3. **Annual Reports**

The Secretary said that an unlikely spinoff from the current pandemic was that the Union was gaining new clubs and members. This was due to the reliance on playing bridge online and the desire of clubs to avail of expertise in running online events – which could only come from affiliating to the NIBU.

The Treasurer thanked David Leeman for continuing to carry out his annual inventory of NIBU assets.

The Masterpoints Secretary expanded on his report giving details on plans to run as many Union fixtures as possible online during the new season.

On a proposal by Liz Scott, seconded by Sandie Millership, all the Officers reports were accepted.

4. **Financial Accounts**

The Treasurer said the Financial Statements showed a deficit of £1,473 for the year.

On a proposal by Ian Lindsay, seconded by Anne Hassan, the Accounts were accepted.

5. **(Outgoing) Chairperson's Address**

The Chairperson paid tribute to all those working to keep bridge alive through online tournaments, Diane Greenwood and Roberta Madill. He thanked Anne Hassan and Pat Johnston for their tireless efforts in encouraging young people to participate in bridge. He also thanked the Officers for their work and made special mention of the dedication towards supporting clubs shown by Ian Hamilton during the current pandemic.

Harold Curran then handed over to Heather Hill and offered his support to her over the next 2 years.

Heather Hill took the Chair.

6. **Chairperson's Address**

The Incoming Chairperson thanked her predecessor and paid tribute to the work he had done over the past 2 years. She went on to remind those present of the sheer amount of hard work that is done behind the scenes, not just by the Officers but by several other individuals who have always shown a willingness to 'do their bit'.

She expressed pleasure at seeing so many Intermediate players participating in online competitions and confirmed that the Union would gladly help and support clubs whose members wished to participate in online bridge. In closing, she said that members could raise any issue with her directly and she looked forward to her term of office.

7. **President's Address**

The President welcomed the incoming Chairperson into office and went on to support her request that members should bring any issues they have directly to the Officers rather than indulge in backroom gossip and rumourmongering. He also paid tribute to the work being done behind the scenes and singled out Kevin Hinds and Sandie Millership for special mention in relation to their work with online events.

8. **Election of Officers**

On a proposal by Elbha Walmsley and seconded by Anne Hassan the incumbent Officers were all re-elected namely Michael McFaul, Anne Fitzpatrick, Ian Hamilton and Helen Hall.

9. **Election of Examining Accountant**

On a proposal by Ian Lindsay, seconded by Alan Hill, Peter Green was re-elected.

10. **Election of Councillors**

The Secretary had received 9 nominations for 11 vacancies. A further 2 members were nominated from the floor of the meeting. Consequently, no election was necessary.

On a proposal by Hilary Ferguson, seconded by Richard Coulter the following members were elected as Councillors:

Lesley Agar (Kelvin & Malone)
Christine Crockett (Maghera)
John Ferguson (Quoile)
Diane Greenwood (Derryvolgie)
Norma Irwin (Kelvin & Malone)
Ian Lindsay (Quoile)
Pat Mc Corkell (Merville)
Tom McKeever (Coleraine)
Brian Mullan (Maghera)
Michael Stevenson (Kelvin & Malone)
Liz Thomas (Kelvin & Malone)
Harold Curran (Ex Officio)

11. **Election of Trustees**

On a proposal by John Ferguson, seconded by Florence Boyd, the following were elected as trustees of the Union:

Ian Lindsay, John Murchan, Alan Hill

12. **Presentation of Trophy**

The Millership Cup had been won by Tom Young's team. In his absence Liz Scott agreed to take the cup on his behalf.

13. **Online Cheating**

Diane Greenwood reminded the meeting that BBO held a complete record of all hands played. John Ferguson referred to comments in the Daily Telegraph bridge column on the subject of suspicious play. Helen Hall referred to the development of 'Real Bridge' as a means of dealing with the problem of online cheating.

14. **Other Business**

Geoff Booth asked that changes to the weekly programme of online events be highlighted on the website as soon as possible.

Liz Scott said congratulations were due to Wayne Somerville who had finished 2nd in the Mutton Cup, an expert individual tournament held in Madrid recently.

There being no other business, the Chairperson closed the meeting and asked that Council members wait behind for a short briefing.

At the meeting of Council members, the Chairperson explained that Officers had been meeting in 'Emergency' mode via Zoom and it was anticipated that this would be the medium for Council meetings in the near future.

John Ferguson said that the Emergency Committee appeared to be working well and suggested that things continue as they were pro tem. This was agreed by all present.

The meeting closed at 3.10pm.

Michael McFaul

Hon. Secretary

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

Good afternoon. It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to the Annual General Meeting of the NIBU

It is certainly the case that, during these extraordinary and unprecedented times the NIBU has been supported throughout by a great bunch of people. I would like to thank my fellow members of the Emergency Management Committee who have endeavoured to help keep matters of the Union continue unabated. I would also like to thank members of Council, who while have had little to do this past year, were always there if called upon for comment.

Of course we have all missed the balance of face-to-face meetings, the ability to meet together to discuss and debate issues. In this new world, where on many occasions there is often no clear right and wrong, reaching sound consensus driven decisions, has been a particular challenge and we in the NIBU have not perhaps always got it right first time.

The challenges of dependence on the online game have been and to an extent remain, substantial. It is universally recognised that, unfortunately, there remains a sharp rise in the number of players who are cheating. the NIBU, like all NBOs within the World Bridge Federation, condemns such behaviour .

At this point let us pause to remember all our fellow players who have died during this past year. in particular Margie Kelso, a long time supporter of the NIBU and widow of the late Billy Kelso former treasurer, secretary and Congress organiser. Also Gerry Fitzgerald a former Chairman of the NIBU and President of the Irish Bridge Union - a perfect gentleman in every way.

With apologies to some I may have inadvertently omitted as I was unaware of their passing.

Unfortunately the hard work started by Norma Irwin and her team with Primary School bridge has been put on hold due to the pandemic, so I have nothing to report there.

I would like to thank Sandie Millership and Norman Lacey for their continued hard work with the Junior Camrose and Peggy Bayer teams. they are also running coaching sessions with players who have not yet made these teams but are our future. Both these teams had some success in the competitions held on line in February.

While neither our Camrose nor Lady Milne teams were successful this year we continue to hope!. The trials for these are held each year for those who have sufficient national (red) points or are considered to have potential. There are many of you out there who should think about entering - you never know how you will do until you try!. Playing in NIBU competitions is where you gain these points and improve your standard - so come out and play.

I would like to thank Ian Hamilton for organising a number of these competitions online this year and also our TDs - Ian himself, Alan Hill and Sandie Millership. My thanks also to Diane Greenwood for running our weekly online competitions. This is a huge commitment and are very grateful to her for doing it.

My thanks to Harold Curran for running two sessions of the lockdown league- a great success and much enjoyed by many from all over Ireland. He is planning to start another session starting in September so watch out for details on the NIBU website and get your entries in.

Thanks to Brian McDowell and Helen Hall for keeping our website up to date and to Brian for organising the Northern Ireland Teams on Real Bridge.

We had a very successful Autumn Congress online which was organised by Ian Hamilton and run for us by the EBU. We are planning to run this again this year so put the dates in the diary - 10th -12th September.

Online bridge has continued at club level with 19 clubs running weekly tournaments producing a total income of £35 686.78 to the end of March . I am sure you all appreciate the amount of work our Hon. Treasurer, Anne Fitzpatrick puts into distributing these funds. We are also grateful to the CBAI for enabling our clubs to benefit in this way.

All that remains now is one of the most important duties of the Chairman - to elect a successor. It is with great pleasure that I welcome Brian Mullan as Vice Chairman. Brian is well known in bridge circles in the Mid-West and will bring a new perspective to the role.

HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT 2020-21

This has been a year like no other with no live bridge taking place and yet more players competing online than ever before. At the time of writing, it seems uncertain whether bridge clubs will be opening their doors again in the near future and even if they do whether players will return in the same numbers as previously. Will the need for social contact with other players trump the comfort of playing from home – only time will tell. It is likely that the two mediums will learn to co-exist with 'casual' competitions being played online and more prestigious events such as Congresses being held live. In the meantime, online cheating remains a major problem. One way to counter the problem is to bring players together playing online in one place but socially distanced. For International events, the world of real playing cards and BBO Operators suddenly seems like outdated technology. It will be interesting to see what the next season brings.

Affiliation.

Despite the absence of live bridge around the province, 33 clubs remain fully affiliated to the Union with a few others deferring their membership. This is a much better outcome than might have been expected a year ago. It reflects not only the loyalty of our clubs but also their recognition that the Officers continue to work tirelessly behind the scenes to keep Bridge events going. For well over a year now, clubs have been facilitated with online competitions every week as well as access to the majority of regular annual NIBU events. All affiliation fees for 2020-21 will cover clubs for a two-year period so in the majority of cases, fees will not be due again until November 2022. Meanwhile it is worth reminding everyone that the affiliation fee has been £5 per member for many years and continues to offer remarkable value for money.

Council

Due to the pandemic, it was not possible to hold any live meetings during the year. However, Council did meet via Zoom in February, and it is hoped that members will be able to meet more frequently during the incoming season. For obvious reasons it has been agreed by the Management Committee that the current Council membership will continue to serve for a second year.

(Emergency)Management Committee

Over the past year the Committee met on 8 occasions, 1 of which was 'live' and 7 via Zoom. The Committee has been undertaking the work of the Selection and Tournament Committees as well as managing all Union business. However, it remains the case that any major policy decisions will have to be ratified by the full Council. We all look forward to our first opportunity to meet round the table.

Other NIBU Committees

Due to the pandemic these bodies have not been active over the past season.

Website

The website is updated regularly with news and results by Helen Hall and Brian McDowell. The Hon. Secretary acts as Moderator for the website and is the recipient for the (many!) queries that are submitted via the 'Contact Us' facility.

Michael McFaul

HONORARY TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

We now have survived a full accounting year of lockdown as a consequence of Covid-19. Online bridge has become the platform for all bridge with no definite date planned for return to face to face competitions. Indeed another Autumn Congress will be held virtually this September. Many thanks to Ian Hamilton for organising the Inter Club and for his efforts in running online competitions and also to Diane, Sandie and all the Clubs who play bridge on BBO.

Our largest source of income is now from BBO (£6,386 for the year) with CBAI administering funds and monthly remittance being received which in turn is distributed to the various clubs after an administration charge.

Competitions held virtually were the Congress Teams (Net Income £937) and the NI Teams (Net Income £300). Our thanks again to Ian Hamilton for running the Interclub with net income of £1,930. Our normal expense for representative matches turned into Income of £1,102 as flight costs were refunded and the Lady Milne was held on Real Bridge. We are due to host the Teltscher in 2022 and it is hoped this can be held as a face to face competition.

A net surplus of £6,646 was incurred for the year with our reserves increasing from £51,817 to £60,463.

Affiliation fee to the IBU remained at £2,500 and to BGB £500.

During the year clubs encountered difficulties collecting fees from their members and it was decided that any amounts received would cover a two year period. Total fees received from clubs was £8,485 and £4,192 has been deferred until the year ended 31st March 2022. Unfortunately bridge in schools was not possible during 2020/21 but hopefully this will start again in the new season.

I would like to thank all those on the Management Committee who have assisted me throughout the year.

If you have any queries, I can be reached at annefitzpatrick14@gmail.com

Anne Fitzpatrick
Honorary Treasurer

N.I. BRIDGE UNION
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

- Income and Expenditure Account
- Balance Sheet

N.I. BRIDGE UNION

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

		31.3.21		31.3.20	
		£	£	£	£
Turnover					
Net Congress surplus	8	937		(1,054)	
Competitions		300		11,850	
BBO		6,386			
Trials		1,040		2,930	
Affiliation fees		4,293		10,595	
Sale of stationery and requisites		25		235	
Interclub & Celtic Pairs	8	1,930		4,353	
Bequests/ Junior reserve				151	
			14,911		29,060
Other income					
Ulster Bank Savings account interest		16		68	
National Savings Income Bond interest		87		127	
			103		195
			15,014		29,255
Expenditure					
Insurance		1,442		1,176	
Venue hire		-		1,548	
Competition expenses		916		7,322	
Printing, postage and stationery		357		1,783	
Representation matches expenses		(1,102)		11,384	
Affiliation fees		3,000		2,900	
Public relations		-		-	
Officers' expenses		400		500	
Coaching				173	
Sundry expenses		161		471	
Accountancy		600		600	
Schools bridge		170		1,049	
Stirling University		1,000			
Bank charges		96		88	
			7,040		28,994
			7,974		261
Depreciation					
Deppn of tables		168		187	
Deppn of Duplimat Machine etc		830		1,107	
Computer equipment		330		440	
			1,328		1,734
NET SURPLUS(DEFICIT)			6,646		(1,473)

N.I. BRIDGE UNION (REGISTERED NUMBER:)

**BALANCE SHEET
31 MARCH 2021**

	Notes	31.3.21 £	£	31.3.20 £	£
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	4		4,996		6,324
Chain of office			575		575
CURRENT ASSETS					
Stocks		713		713	
Debtors	5	3,058		1,497	
Investments	6	11,000		11,000	
Cash at bank		<u>53,623</u>		<u>40,486</u>	
		68,394		53,696	
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	7	<u>10,593</u>		<u>3,869</u>	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			<u>57,801</u>		<u>49,827</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			<u>63,372</u>		<u>56,726</u>
RESERVES					
Junior Bridge Reserve	9		2,909		2,909
Senior Bridge Reserve			2,000		2,000
Profit and Loss Account	9		<u>58,463</u>		<u>51,817</u>
			<u>63,372</u>		<u>56,726</u>

The financial statements were authorised for issue by the Treasurer on ...11th June 2021..... and were signed by:

..Anne Fitzpatrick.....
Mrs Anne Fitzpatrick (Treasurer)

HONORARY MASTERPOINT SECRETARY'S REPORT 2020-21

To say this year was one of upheaval in the bridge world would be an understatement. None of the NIBU affiliated clubs has played any face-to-face bridge during the season. However, thanks to the Union management, we have been able to keep the flag flying online. A number of clubs or groups of clubs have now an online presence, have played and submitted Masterpoints.

In addition, the NIBU was able to run most of its normal events on-line this year. The only missing events were the Leagues and the NI Mixed Pairs. Many thanks are due to directors Alan Hill, Sandie Millership, Jim McGilly and others for kindly getting results posted and delivered to me so that the Masterpoints can be updated in timely fashion.

The same sentiments apply in equal measure to all the club secretaries and scorers who helped in getting club Masterpoints uploaded onto the system during the year.

The following clubs or groups returned Masterpoints :-

Causeway Coast North Down Clubs Portadown Area Derryvolgie Lisburn City Windsor
Kelvin/Malone Newcastle Group Spa Diane Greenwood Boat Club Merville Warrenpoint

Some clubs did not affiliate for the season, and their database was simply emptied of members in the hope that they would re-affiliate in the future. Also, many members with multiple club membership only paid their affiliation to one. This meant that the membership numbers held up surprisingly well, even if affiliation fees dropped markedly. Current registered NIBU club members are 1530, down from 1708 last season. This drop is largely explained by a significant number of players not playing online and therefore eschewing re-joining their club for the season.

The Grade breakdown is:-

Expert	74	Senior	108	Intermediate A	282	Intermediate B	1066
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The number of players in each Rank is:-

Premier Grand Master	4	Grand Master	10	Premier Life Master	9
Life Master	19	Premier National Master	9	National Master	16
Senior Provincial Master	10	Junior Provincial Master	24	Tournament Master	18
Master	360	County Master	181	Local Master	244
Club Master	269	Novice	356		

Players of the year

Intermediate B

1st Rosemary Cunningham
2nd Marie McGivern

Intermediate A

1st Christine Stewart
2nd Anne Milligan

Senior

1st Ian Hamilton
2nd Rex Anderson

Billy Kelso Trophy

This year's joint winners were Anne Fitzpatrick and Harold Curran.

Congratulations to all of the above

Ian Hamilton Hon Masterpoints Secretary

14th June 2021

Promotions & Regradings

Special congratulations are due to Ian Hamilton, promoted to be NIBU's 4th **Premier Grandmaster**, and to Sandie Millership, Harold Curran and Heather Hill on becoming **Premier Life Masters**.

RE-GRADINGS EFFECTIVE FROM 1st SEPTEMBER 2021

INTERMEDIATE B to INTERMEDIATE A

1136	S Woodward	1340	F Young	2200	R Cunningham	3820	E McArdle
3905	U Cole	3982	V Von Hof	4439	P Blacker	4700	C Clegg
4738	M McNamee	5004	C Crockett	5142	R Seaton	5144	R Perrott

INTERMEDIATE A to SENIOR

4457 Kathleen Cassidy

SENIOR to EXPERT

None

All the above re-gradings are due for ratification by the Management Committee towards the end of August 2021 and any appeals must be made in writing to the Masterpoints Secretary and received before 21st August 2021. An e-mailed appeal is acceptable.

Ian Hamilton

Hon Masterpoints Secretary

ian@ishamilton.co.uk

14th June 2021

4737 G McNamee

4831 R Nicholas

14 Advanced Master

1136 S Woodward

1202 C Grist

1340 F Young

2200 R Cunningham

3905 U Cole

3982 V Von Hof

4439 P Blacker

4700 C Clegg

4738 M McNamee

4978 N Bryars

5004 C Crockett

5142 R Seaton

5144 R Perrott

5624 Z Kokot

18 Master

1720 A Turkington

2201 P Conway

2256 J McAnee

2371 K Morrow

2757 G Hutchieson

2761 F Morgan

2776 M McGale

3142 J Colgan

3301 P McDaid

3327 M Flynn

3755 A McCreesh

3878 B Strain

4414 B Mullan

4832 F Thompson

4949 G Ward

5211 N Lacey

5228 J Forsythe

5452 R Madill

32 County Master

1180 J Bryars

1204 P Norrby

1776 M Morgan

1789 JP Van Hoom

2573 P Lowry

2702 L Flynn

2862 L Lowe

3178 J Colvin

3431 P Prenter

3556 J White

3833 M Chen

4273 HE McKee

4406 J Quinn

4498 K O'Hare

4541 S Donaghy

4662 IM Martin

4850 J McGilly

4851 R McGilly

5018 P McAvoy

5024 J Duggan

5096 D Breen

5099 L McCullagh

5100 A Clark

5102 S McCullagh

5121 RM Morrow

5149 L Hunter

5219 C McAleavey

5227 T Megarry

5277 M McGivern

5462 R MacNamara

5463 R Flanagan

5609 S Burrell

29 Local Master

1877 T Falconer

2619 C Toner

2800	M	Elder	4808	A	Gallagher
2861	K	Lowe	4941	M	McGranaghan
3092	B	McGowan	5163	D	Carey
4520	C	McKenna	5268	M	Proctor
4732	D	Morgan	5273	M	Fee
4805	H	White	5369	A	Overell
4991	P	McCaul	5370	M	Wilson
5005	K	Cullen	5391	S	Henshall
5006	M	Morris	5394	K	Speedy
5090	K	Wallace	5395	L	Thomason
5098	C	Fearon	5472	A	Flanagan
5103	D	MacCann	5475	P	Proctor
5130	M	Giffin	5477	R	Proctor
5138	J	Kerr	5479	R	Black
5236	A	Kinkead	5483	M	Briscoe
5274	M	Kearney	5497	R	Graham
5393	M	Keenan	5556	W	Weir
5405	A	McGonigle	5587	D	Hamilton
5437	S	Prenter	5588	M	McMichael
5444	H	Warnock	5589	K	McGurk
5498	J	McNally-West	5607	G	Brown
5523	T	Taggart	5623	M	Sloan
5524	E	Taggart	5653	A	Gillham
5559	M	Crawford	5676	C	O'Brien
5585	A	Martin	5677	Y	Spiers
5611	W	Burrell	5680	S	Sheridan
5614	P	Hendrick	5681	S	Doherty
45		Club Master	5683	E	McGuigan
3070	S	Scarlett	5685	A	Dixit
3336	M	Kelly-Rogers	5701	H	Rea
3464	K	Curry	5731	S	Adair
3945	H	Hamilton-Brown	5736	M	Armstrong
3957	C	Keenan	5765	P	Redman
4003	L	McAdam	5768	M	McCarry
4606	K	Reihill	5771	M	Magorrian
4756	R	Martin	5772	T	McComiskey
			9011	A	Newbolt

NIBU Competitions 2020-21

At the 2020 AGM no Competition Secretary was elected, nor was the Competition Committee subsequently appointed. Instead, both roles were undertaken by the Emergency Management Committee.

With face to face bridge not possible during the season the NIBU continued to provide four times weekly, later thrice and latterly twice weekly online competitions, under the stewardship of Diane Greenwood, Sandie Millership and Ian Hamilton. Later, Kevin Hinds of City of Derry Bridge Club took over many of these events until illness intervened. The Union is most grateful to him for doing so, and to Diane Greenwood who kindly took over again, and continues.

In the interim many clubs acquired an online presence through the NIBU, via the patronage of the CBAI, to whom the Union is also grateful. Many clubs are now running successful regular duplicates.

The Intermediate Gala Pairs was staged online in August garnering a respectable entry and directed by Alan Hill, Sandie Millership and Diane Greenwood.

Results:-

Intermediate A:- Catherine Mahon & John Windebank (CBAI)

Intermediate B:- Linda Walsh & Sandra Peden (CBAI)

Novice:- David Hoyne & Tom Gorey (CBAI)

It was decided to hold the NIBU Congress online in September, one of the first major competitions of its ilk in the British Isles to do so. The Union relied heavily upon Nicole Cook of the EBU and her team for the successful staging of the event, the entries being handled by Ian Hamilton. The event attracted a large entry of 90 Mixed Pairs, 60 Congress Pairs, 48 Congress Teams and 50 Intermediate A and B Pairs, plus extra pairs in the Open Pairs. For the first time in many years the Congress made a profit.

Winners:-

Mixed Pairs – Kathleen Vaughan & BJ O’Brien (CBAI)

Congress Pairs – Roy Bennett & Harry Smith (SBU)

Congress Teams – Paul Fegarty, Catherine Curtis, Jamie & Liam Fegarty (EBU)

Intermediate A Pairs – Gillford D’Souza & Roughan Moloney (CBAI)

Intermediate B Pairs – Kat Hynes & Jo Brady (CBAI)

Following this successful experience most of the normal NIBU trophies were staged online, the results being as follows:-

East Down Pairs – Ann & Stephen Cairns

Belfast Swiss Pairs – Helen Hall & William Dukelow

Belfast Swiss Intermediate – Anne Milligan & Christine Stewart

NI Pairs – Harold Curran & Anne Fitzpatrick

North Down Intermediate Challenge:- Sean & Brenda Strain

Robb Cup – Gladys & David Hutchinson

Mid Ulster Pairs – William Dukelow & Dean Bradley

Mid Ulster Intermediate Challenge - Anne Milligan & Christine Stewart

NI Teams – David Burn, Kath Stynes, Maggie Knottenbelt & Heather Dhondy (EBU)

Northern Pairs – Myles Hannigan & GIB robot (CBAI)

The Union is grateful to Alan Hill, Sandie Millership and Ian Hamilton for directing the events. In addition, Alan directed the Camrose Trials, Lady Milne and Teltscher Trials, occupying several full weekends. We would be lost without him.

The NIBU Leagues did not take place in 2020-21. However, Harold Curran and John Murchan have run a successful NIBU League online. Its first iteration was completed in January 2021 and won by:- Anna Onishuk, Cian Holland, John & Lucy Phelan (CBAI)

It attracted 44 teams from around the British Isles.

League 2 is under way.

All three knockout Cups were competed for online the winners as follows:-

Kelvin Cup – Rex Anderson, Paul Tranmer, Wayne Somerville, David Greenwood

Mackinnon Cup – Ian Hamilton, Sam Hall, Greer Mackenzie & John Ferguson

Millership Cup – Tom McKeever, Anne Hassan, Eric Butterwick & Bill McCormick

The Northern Ireland and the Province of Ulster competed for trophies as below:-

Interprovincials:

Open:- Rex Anderson, David Greenwood, Wayne Somerville, Paul Tranmer, Anne Fitzpatrick, Harold Curran, Ian Hamilton, Ian Lindsay, William Dukelow, Dean Bradley, Fergal O'Shea, Michael Coffey – 4th

Area:- Anne Hassan, Liz Scott, Ann Cairns, Stephen Cairns, Pat Turkington, Brendan Mathews, Michael McIlroy, Kathleen Cassidy, Paddy Hamill, Brian Clarke, Sam Barr, Christine Byrne – 3rd

Intermediate:- Eric Butterwick, Bill McCormick, Christine Stewart, Anne Milligan, Diana Patterson, Gerry Henry, Suzi Jeffries, Colin Jeffries, Liz Thomas, Lesley Agar, Geraldine and Anne McCormick – 4th

Junior Camrose:

Aileen Armstrong, Andrew Newbolt, Conor Gallagher, Luke McGarvey, Lucy O'Kane, Xander Todd npc Sandie Millership – 5th

Peggy Bayer:-

Alex Scott, Ewan Todd, Evan McKeown, Alex Millar, EJ Atienza, JP Millar npc Norman Lacey – 6th

Camrose:

Rex Anderson, David Greenwood, Paul Tranmer, Wayne Somerville, Ian Lindsay, Ian Hamilton npc Michael McFaul – 5th

Teltscher:-

Brian McDowell, Alan Sharp, David Greenwood, Rex Anderson, Ian Lindsay, Ian Hamilton npc Michael McFaul - 4th

The Union is hopeful of running face to face bridge in 2021-22, but no date for commencing this has been possible as yet due to government restrictions.

The Union is grateful to the Emergency Management Committee for its considerable work this season, allowing its club and own competitions to thrive under lockdown.