# Leamington Bridge Club

Chairman’s Report 2022

Since my last report in November last year, bridge in Leamington has returned to a sort of normality. We resumed playing bridge face to face in September 2021 and have continued to do so on a Monday evening every week. We have run three seasonal competitions, the Autumn League, the Winter League and the Summer League and the winners of those competitions will be invited to receive their trophies at the end of this meeting. Attendances have been relatively steady at about 6 tables a session. For various reasons, all of them my responsibility, we have failed this year to run either an individual or a handicap competition, and I apologise for this and promise to try and organise both competitions this year. We did however manage to run a Christmas party last December and I hope that this will be possible again this year.

One new initiative in the year has been Café Bridge, which has taken place on four occasions so far (May, June, September and October). This was the result of an invitation from Esquires Café to use their premises for an evening session on a regular basis. It has proved a challenge to recruit enough players to make the event worthwhile for Esquires (ideally we need five tables at least) and at present it is not certain that the initiative will continue. The café has indicated that if we do wish to continue in 2023, they will charge a fee, in which case it seems doubtful that it will be viable. But I am sure that all those who participated will confirm that the experience of playing in a café (with drinks and refreshments available) was a pleasurable one.

Online bridge using the RealBridge platform has continued on a Wednesday evening, but numbers have dropped significantly since face to face bridge resumed. Some weeks we only have two tables. This is disappointing, but the income from the online sessions does help to compensate for the fact that we actually make a small loss most weeks at the face to face sessions (we really need 7 tables on a Monday to break even). I’m aware that we are competing in a crowded market, with online bridge available every day and evening from clubs all over the UK and indeed the world, so any suggestions on how we can improve our numbers will be warmly received by me.

Our membership currently stands at 51, including some who only play online, but I suspect that the true figure, once we have seen how many have renewed, is likely to be a little smaller than that. We welcomed several new members during the year, including Craig Buckley, Pauline Cronin, and Lincoln Lim, but we haven’t seen some of our old members either in person or online during the past year, including some we inherited following the merger with the old Leamington club. One regular player (although not actually a member) that we lost during the year was Larry Treacy, who died shortly after last year’s AGM. Once the dust has settled, I will produce an up to date membership list with contact details.

Finally, I want to thank the committee members for their support during the year, particularly Jerome for taking on the role of tournament director on an almost permanent basis, Andrew for the production of the results every week and Mark for taking the cash and producing the accounts. With the exception of Bala Maniam, who has been prevented from playing bridge this year by his wife’s illness, all the committee members are willing to continue to serve.