**ST. FRANCIS BAY BRIDGE CLUB**

**PRESIDENT’S REPORT.**

**5 December 2015**

Welcome. Thank you for coming to the AGM. Hope you will also enjoy the bridge and the Christmas lunch.

The Club continues to prosper, but this has not been a great year.

Very sadly, we lost 5 of our members during the year, and I would like open proceedings by asking you to observe a few moments silence to remember Lin, Sue, Ian, Margaret and Marianne.

Our attendance at regular Club competitions was **down by a** little under 10%, with us losing, on average, 1 table each on Mondays and Fridays, while the Thursday Men’s grew by half a table. Wednesday’s Butler competition drew no interest and was cancelled, as TEAMs had been the previous year.

In a more positive vein, our Annual Teams Tournament continued to attract interest, and we increased the size from 24 tables to 28, which is the limit, and made it the best attendedbridge competition in the Eastern Cape. We are expecting a full house again next year.

We donated R4 000 of the proceeds to St Francis Hospice.

Our Charity Day again drew 22 tables and we raised R 6 300 for the NSRI. We had hoped that Dinks would be able to attend, but sadly, she was unable to do so.

Many of our members were interested in a TEAMs competition ahead of our Tournament, so we had a 1 day Championship, in which 10 teams entered. The winners were Shirley, Jill, Penny and Marion.

We also entered the WorldWide Similtaneous Pairs competition, with Penny Ashdown and Liz Horne coming 1st in South Africa, and 60th worldwide. The Club funded the entry, and we encourage members to enter next year.

Our “InterCity” competition with J-Bay was played 3 times this year, with the final being played at Herman Malan’s farm in Patensie. J-Bay soundly beat us in the decider.

We are planning to assist those members who wish to improve their bridge knowledge, and asked Judith and Eileen to present a short course on “Basic errors at the Bridge Table”. This was done very successfully in October. Judith has kindly agreed to run a series of (5 or 6) sessions to improve our knowledge of the Laws. These will start in January, and we would welcome participants.

We are indeed fortunate to have the use of this beautiful conference center and Clubhouse facility. The staff of the St Francis Links have been incredibly responsive and efficient in catering for our needs through both our regular bridge days and our special events. The addition of the cover over the deck area had a hugely positive effect for our Teams tournament.

The St Francis Bay Golf Club has very kindly hosted us when St F Links is not available.

The Heritage Centre remains our port of last resort. We have improved the facility this year, and wish we could justify an air conditioner.

On the financial side, Theonie will be happy to answer your queries, but I will cover our capital expenses.

We spent R 25 000 on upgrading our assets.

This included:

Chairs and an urn for the Heritage Centre.

New boards and cards.

A printer.

In 2016 we plan to buy a dealing machine.

You, our members, have been the best source of new players by telling your friends, and sending them on to Maureen and Judith for lessons. Please keep it up.

A Club can only run on volunteer labour, and my heartfelt thanks go to all of you who have put in the extra effort over the year.

\* A very special word of thanks to our Directors. Our regular Directors were Eileen and Sue who took turns to manage the competitions, and who put in a huge amount of time in learning their trade. Judith has now joined Eileen. Thank you, ladies.

\* Thank you to Yvonne for being our unofficial but highly efficient press liaison officer.

\* Last, but by no means least, I’d like to thank the Committee: Roger, Judy, Theonie, Wendy, John and Cookie for a truly fantastic team effort. Roger has picked up the required computer and internet skills and relieved that part of Judy’s workload. As secretary, Judy has kept us all up to speed and ensured that problems were anticipated, solved and recorded. Theonie kept a tight rein on expenses and helped ensure we maintained a healthy financial position.

It has been a privilege working with you.

Cookie is standing down.

Wendy has spent years on the committee, and also acted as secretary, vice-President and President. We thank her for her valued service to the Club.

Thank you.

Geoff