TREASURER’S REPORT FOR THE MCBA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING TO BE HELD VIA ZOOM ON THURSDAY 15TH JULY, 2021 AT 7.00PM.

ACCOUNTING YEAR 1ST APRIL 2020 TO 31ST MARCH 2021.

In this extraordinary Covid-19 year, it would be an understatement to say that the complexities in the transition from ‘face-to-face’ to ‘online’ bridge have thrown up many challenges. These challenges have filtered through to the Treasury – for example, in a ‘normal’ year, entries on our bank statements amount to a maximum 200; this year there have been 1,000. Additionally, all those entries have to be checked – wrong reference codes, underpayments and people not paying until reminded, have all contributed to many hours of additional work for the Treasurer on top of an already heavy workload with all the online events.

Thanks to the genius of several MCBA online committee members, the County’s online presence started a week after lockdown with all our events ‘free of charge’ for several weeks until people got used to the format. Obviously this meant no income for a period. Under the banner ‘ Manchester County Cares….’ we decided to see if we could raise money for local charities by holding an event on the last Wednesday of the month. With the generosity of our members together with a contribution of approximately £800 from the county, we were able to send a total of £10,250 in the year. All the Charities were delighted to receive our generous donations:-

For St. Ann’s Hospice, Cheadle £1,600

Francis House Children’s Hospice £1,500

Centrepoint, Manchester £1,100

Mind Manchester £ 800

Seashell Trust, Handforth £ 750

Nicky Alliance Day Centre £ 700

NeuroMuscular Centre, Winsford £ 700

The Compassionate Friends £ 700

Prevent Breast Cancer, Wythenshawe £ 800

Prostate Cancer at The Christie £ 500

Mustard Tree Manchester £ 600

Royal Manchester Children’s Hospital £ 500

With the help of the Online Committee, several of our clubs received help in setting up their own on-line duplicates and as these sessions increased and started to flourish, the County gradually reduced its’ online presence. We realised that the County portion of the UMS collected by the EBU could be hurting our clubs so by December we had re-imbursed all of the clubs with the money the County would normally have received (between May and October – almost £600) and asked the EBU to stop collecting our part of the UMS contribution from 1st November. This was another loss of the County’s income but we felt it was more important for the clubs to have the benefit.

The English Bridge Union was also struggling, and not as quick off the mark as MCBA in offering online bridge, so our Executive voted to send a donation to the EBU of £1,000 for which they were most grateful.

The competitions we have run in this year have obviously been cheaper to enter as our expenses have been less. We had no halls to hire, boards to duplimate, refreshments to provide nor any Directors’ travelling expenses. The shorter league season events seemed popular with numbers remaining fairly static. All of our events ran at a slight profit rather than mostly slight losses. Some of the major inter county team events were cancelled in this year. Several friendly county matches were played and mostly the directing and UMS charges were shared.

I am pleased to attach the audited accounts for the year 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 which show that the County funds remain in good order. I sincerely thank Howard Stubbings for preparing the accounts and Peter Green for his audit thereof – a much bigger task this year than ever before.

Joy Blakey

Hon Treasurer MCBA