



# GOLD COAST BRIDGE CLUB

Issue No 201 – June 2023

## *President's Report*

During May it was Volunteer Week. Without volunteers our Club would not function. We have over 50 volunteers that assist in many ways. We could not operate without them. Please join me in thanking them, they do a marvellous job.

One such volunteer is Liz Linderman. Liz organized two special events on consecutive Saturdays.



First was Neil Raward's remembrance. Neil was our Social Organiser for many years, and he loved getting everyone together and celebrating with a drink and joining in the fun and fancy dress. Neil was a past President and a special, much-loved member of our Club. Photo of Neil's widow Carole Millar and Sonja Bailey.

The following Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May, we celebrated the Coronation. Charles, eldest son of Queen Elizabeth II, assumed the role King Charles III of the United Kingdom and 14 other Commonwealth realms on the death of his mother last September. His Coronation took place with all the British pomp and ceremony and the club didn't miss the opportunity to incorporate a dress up and a glass of bubbly to honour this event. We did manage to play some bridge as well!



Both events were a huge success enjoyed by many. Thanks, Liz for organising this for everyone.

You may have noticed a much larger television on the north wall. We use the television to advertise events, as a countdown clock for each round of boards, breaks and end of play at sessions and as a teaching aide. The larger size now makes it possible for people at the back of the room to be able to read the information.

**Warmest regards,  
Odette**

### *MyABF*

Clubs throughout Australia are adopting more parts of the ABF's system called "MyABF". All members should set up their own personal account. To enter the club's own Congresses in June, you need a MyABF account. Information on setting up an account is available on the ABF website ([abf.com.au](http://abf.com.au)) or you can contact Paul Brake on 0490 117 482 or [paul.brake95@gmail.com](mailto:paul.brake95@gmail.com) for help (or he can set an account up for you). No cost is involved.

### *Vale Richard Misor*

Sadly, Richard passed away at the end of April. He joined GCBC on 15.2.2015 and played mostly on Thursday evenings. He was the true epitome of a gentleman and a gentle man.

In March 2020 Richard and his wife joined the cruise ship Ruby Princess, just at the beginning of the worldwide Covid-19 outbreak. The ship turned back after 11 days and docked in Sydney on 19<sup>th</sup> March by which time 663 passengers were exhibiting symptoms of the virus. Subsequently there were 28 deaths attributed to this cruise.

Richard and his wife were both infected. His wife recovered quickly but Richard was in critical condition and spent the next 77 days in ICU and a total of six months in hospital. His lungs were badly damaged and when released, he was confined to a wheelchair and permanently attached to an oxygen bottle. The couple moved into assisted living and Richard's wife died shortly after having lost her battle with cancer.

Richard returned to playing bridge at our club in March 2021, this time mostly on Saturdays. After a 12-month absence on his first game back he scored a very credible 61%. When he was not able to get a lift to the club, he would travel on the tram with three oxygen bottles hanging off his wheelchair.

He was admired by many and will be greatly missed, and our condolences go to his family.

### *May Events Winners – Congratulations.*

#### **Tuesday Red Point Pairs**

Section A: Michael Aikin and Coral Aikin

Section B: Jim Whalen and Lydia Bayer

#### **Monday Zeppelin Pairs Under 50mps**

Louise Hartnell and Peter Hartnell

#### **Thursday Teams**

Group A: Hymus team: Frank Hymus, George Topfner, Lynley Jenkins, Lindell Day

Group B: Waters team: Carolyn Waters, John Henderson, Melanie Mills, John Leach

Group C: Bunker team: John Bunker, Leonie Harris, Debbie Usmar, Lexie Yeates

### *June Events*

- **Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> June, GNOT Heat 3, Day 3 held at SPBC**
- **Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June, GCBC Graded IMP Pairs Congress. Sponsor Roberts Law**
- **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June, GCBC Graded IMP Teams Congress. Sponsor TBIB Insurance**
- **Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June, All Day Red Point Teams. Sponsor G A Day Pty Ltd**

### *New Member - Welcome*

Nynke Heida

### *Promotions*

National - Suzanne Purnell, Peter Lyons

Bronze State - Melanie Mills

Bronze Regional - Tony Pearlman

Local - Anne Zuscak, Bev Aird

Graduate - Inez Pinto, Bernadette Fulton

### *June Birthdays*

2<sup>nd</sup> - David Smith; 3<sup>rd</sup> - Wendy Browne, John Masters, Carolyn Miller; 5<sup>th</sup> - Angela Nicholls;

9<sup>th</sup> - Robyn Spooner; 10<sup>th</sup> - Di Brown; 11<sup>th</sup> - Beverly Jarvis; 12<sup>th</sup> - Bronwyn Scott;

14<sup>th</sup> - Sue Robinson; 17<sup>th</sup> - Victoria Cairns; 18<sup>th</sup> - Jo Wallace; 19<sup>th</sup> - Penny Grace;

20<sup>th</sup> - Bijan Assaee, Philip Roberts; 21<sup>st</sup> - Barbara Gray; 23<sup>rd</sup> - Helen Boxer; 25<sup>th</sup> - Jenny Lynton, Andrea Sage; 27<sup>th</sup> - Elaine Hennig; 28<sup>th</sup> - Tom Strong; 29<sup>th</sup> - Krystyna Homik;

30<sup>th</sup> - Vere Drakeford, Desley Quested, Jenny L Williams.

## *Australians and Bridge: A Short History*

*by Keith Ogborn, [historian@abf.com.au](mailto:historian@abf.com.au)*

Although it has been said many times before, it is worth repeating that a fantastic resource for all things bridge is the Australian Bridge Federation (ABF) website. Here is a fascinating article, <https://www.abf.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Australians-and-Bridge.pdf>

The first chapter is printed here to whet your appetite to read the whole article.

“The story begins in the 1890s, well before the emergence of contract bridge, because we cannot understand how the market for bridge has changed over the years without taking account of how bridge itself has changed. Throughout most of its history, with the significant exception of the recent past, multiple forms of bridge have co-existed, competing in different niches but often against each other, and were an important factor in the overall size and composition of the market for bridge.

The original end point was to be 2019 on the basis that it is way too early to make any judgment about the medium or longer-term impact of the COVID epidemic. However, the temptation has been hard to resist and there is a short post-script on the events of the last couple of years and some brief thoughts on current and future vulnerabilities and opportunities, that will hopefully help contribute to the discussions that we need to have about where bridge is heading.

### **1890-1899: A Very Different Game**

- **Original Bridge**

The form of bridge that came to Australia in this decade had reached maturity in the clubs of the Ottoman Empire. It was called by several names, such as bridge whist, britch and Russian whist. For simplicity, it is referred to here as ‘original bridge’. It had the exposed dummy, but there was no competition in bidding. Declarer simply picked the trump suit or passed the choice to partner. Scoring was along the lines of modern rubber bridge, with two games out of three making a rubber but the suits had different values and, unlike in the modern game, the penalties for undertricks varied according to the value of the suit. There was no limit on the amount of redoubling.

Because original bridge is often described, somewhat misleadingly, as a development or descendant of whist, it is easy to forget just how different it was seen at the time.

For serious card players, the exposed dummy and the dealer or partner's choice of trumps, shifted the balance of skill in the game somewhat away from managing the unknown to making best use of the information available. It also created a greater distinction between declarer and defender play. Many whist players saw the additional information as taking away the skill in the game. In one sense, this was true as there were less unknowns, but the new game was more about strategic skills and positional thinking. Rules were still important, but it opened up new horizons for flair and technique.

Bridge had other features that attracted people who had not previously been much involved in serious card play. Original bridge developed in a Mediterranean-Ottoman card playing milieu, that was typically far more lively than the relatively silent Anglo-Saxon competitive card-playing culture of the time. It had an intellectual appeal but also came with vocal chords attached. Bridge could be played with total and silent concentration or it could be combined with whatever level of social interaction suited the players involved. The flexibility of table culture would be a major factor in its growth and appeal.

Bridge had features that made it a very good game for gambling. It had a good balance between skill and chance that made it worthwhile for both skilled and less skilled players. Unskilful players were protected to some degree by the practice of scoring for holding honours (which as in America, had largely disappeared from whist in Australia). Unlimited doubling catered for the risk-takers but the varying penalty for undertricks also effectively allowed players to ‘fold’ as in poker by bidding the lowest ranking suit. Under local rules, hands were indeed often not played out if a declarer bid spades, the lowest ranking suit of the time.

- **Beginnings**

Bridge came to Europe, the UK and the US by various means, with Paris being a particularly important point of dissemination. It was played in some clubs from at least 1893, but it had a fairly low-key existence in the English-speaking world until around 1897. Although it had many sources of appeal, bridge did not have many of the features that a card game would need to have as much broad appeal as the simpler games, such

as the different forms of rummy. It required a specific number of players, the pace was relatively slow and the rules and conventions of play and scoring were relatively complex. However, there were a number of factors at work that led to it securing a very visible foothold towards the end of the decade among the upper classes, and particularly upper-class women.

There were several dimensions to this. In part, it was part of a broader movement for change among educated and affluent women. It was a time of creation of many formal women's social and political organisations and clubs. Without mostly challenging the traditional role of women in the family, there were demands for greater independence, better education and suffrage; and a desire for more stimulating and intellectual ways of using leisure (of which they had a considerable amount, with the availability of servants and no workforce opportunities). Bridge ticked many boxes in its combination of sociability and intellectual challenge and day-time bridge clubs rapidly became important female spaces.

The second major factor was the contribution bridge could make to the large-scale home entertaining that was a central part of upper-class life. The organisation of these events, which could involve a lot of people or last an entire weekend, was generally a female responsibility and there was a constant search for novelty and ways of breaking the tedium. While women did play whist, it was largely seen as a male game. Bridge by contrast had no such tradition and could be played without inflicting undue seriousness or silence on the gathering. It quickly became a feature of many upper class 'homes' or country weekends.

Gambling was also a major driver for both men and women with means. In the English-speaking countries at least, the playing of games of chance in public was largely prohibited but whether a game was considered to be one of skill or chance largely depended on the social status of those who played it. Poker was largely banned but bridge, with its aristocratic patronage, was mostly given a free pass. Bridge in the late 1890s in the UK was associated with an explosion of gambling outside the home in many ways similar to the legalisation of poker machines in more recent times.

The so-called bridge craze at the end of the nineteenth century almost certainly involved an extremely small proportion of the population but the social status of those involved gave it high visibility. The link between bridge and the high social status and fashionable world would be an ongoing feature of bridge for much of its history—to the benefit of the game in some ways and not in others.

- **Australia and Bridge in the 1890s**

The class of people who would take up bridge in Australia and their motives would largely follow the pattern of the UK—but slowly. There was no upper-class bridge craze in the late-1890s. So far, although there is evidence of occasional interest in the game, no contemporary reports have been found of actual play prior to the early 1900s. There are several possible reasons for this slow start.

In the initial decade, the game got little or no support from newspapers. The first newspaper reporting of the game did not come until 1898. There was a little more in 1899 but this mainly consisted of rehashed UK and US reports of the bridge craze and associated female gambling in these countries with no information on how to play it. Before this time, the only people who would have seen printed information would have been upper class households or library members who had access to occasional articles on bridge in British journals. The first textbooks from the US and UK became available towards the end of the decade but would have reached very few.

- **The Crowded Cards Market**

Card playing was a very popular pastime among all classes in Australia, particularly among men. The serious card playing scene was also a market crowded with well-entrenched games. Whist was declining but still had a good core of committed players. Cribbage and euchre were particularly popular and solo whist was starting to make an impact. All were played in formal competitions and socially. Players who had developed high skill levels in an existing game had little to gain from switching to or encouraging bridge, particularly as it was often seen as likely to be a passing high-society fad or purely a gambling game.

Australian society and geography at the time also increased the time needed to reach a critical mass of players. Australia in 1901 had a population of around 3.8 million. Only a very small minority of this population went on to secondary education; and the educated middle and upper classes, who provided almost all bridge players overseas, were a much smaller proportion of the population than today. This small population was then fragmented by geography. Australia had a majority rural population spread over vast distances making it even harder to gather groups of enthusiasts.

- **No Such Thing as Bad Publicity?**

Most of the publicity bridge did get in the newspapers was fairly negative. The general news items about the bridge craze overseas were almost invariably of the shock-horror variety about women incurring impossible gambling debts and neglecting their families. Bridge was usually mentioned in the card columns in response to requests from readers for information rather than the columnist's initiative. Most columnists were whist enthusiasts and were rarely positive about the new game. We will never know but there is a good case for thinking that negative publicity was probably not an important reason for the slow entry of bridge. Given the decline in whist, articles by whist columnists condemning in bridge might well have been seen as a recommendation. Many people would have taken the stories of female ruin with a pinch of salt; and sometimes the stories would have conveyed messages to readers quite different from the negative tone on the surface.

Readers would have noted that this was a game in which women overseas were taking considerable interest; that they seemed to enjoy it; the gambling was an opportunity to take some manageable risks and make their own decisions with money; and that bridge clubs were creating more opportunities for women to meet others in their spare time. They would have also learned that it was extremely fashionable, which, for the very Anglophile, Australian elites was no small thing.

An enduring feature of bridge seems to be that, while people may hear of it through media, the actual spread and building commitment to play the game has largely depended on personal contact and the work of individuals. Like the association of bridge with high social status, this has been both a strength and a vulnerability. In any case, in the 1890s, individual enthusiasts were clearly at work under the radar as nothing else would explain the seemingly sudden emergence of the game in Australia at the beginning of the twentieth century”.

#### *Declarer claims the remaining tricks – Laws 68-71*

- To claim one or more of the remaining tricks, a player should proceed as follows:  
Say “I claim the next x tricks,” then nominate the line of play and expose the remaining cards, eg “I will clear the last trump, cash the two best hearts in my hand and then cross to dummy for the remainder of the claimed tricks conceding the last trick”.  
*OR*- a simpler one - “I claim the rest of the tricks as I have all the remaining trumps”.
- If the claim is agreed, the board is scored as normal.
- If the claim is doubted by any player (dummy included) either
  - (a) The Director is summoned immediately, and no action will be taken pending his arrival *or*
  - (b) Upon the request of the non-claiming or non-conceding side, play may continue if all 4 players concur; otherwise, the Director is summoned.
- If called, the Director will rule in accordance with Law 70 - Contested Claim or Concession.
- A player may also concede tricks but note that a player cannot concede the loss of a trick that his side has already won or would likely have won if play had continued.
- If there is any confusion, the Director should be called immediately.

#### *Session Rules Reminder*

- Players should be **seated** 15 minutes prior to the start of play for a session.
- The Director makes the final decision on seating arrangements and on playing arrangements in the room (e.g. windows, air-conditioning).
- Only **green** and **blue** systems are permitted in club events.
- System cards are **compulsory** for competitions and red master point events and strongly recommended for all other sessions.
- NS are primarily responsible for the playing conditions at the table (bridgemates, management of boards and moving them if instructed to do so by the Director).
- EW are primarily responsible for tidy up and leaving the table in a good condition ready for the next session.
- All players should offer to help with general room clean-up to assist the Director.
- No notices are permitted on the noticeboards unless approval is given from the Management Committee.
- No trading is permitted on the club premises unless written permission is given via the Management Committee.

*In the Beginning... Lisa Basile*

On retiring, I moved from Brisbane to the Gold Coast. While it wasn't the distance many other club members have travelled to enjoy their retirement, it involved my leaving behind valued friendships. To enhance my retirement, it was suggested that I look into various community clubs that offered fellowship and fun.

I inquired about Probus, book clubs and about learning to play Bridge. I joined the Gold Coast Bridge Club in December 2015 and quickly found that bridge is an intensely complicated card game, one that involved learning a new non-verbal language, the language of bidding.

It didn't take long to recognise that joining this club was life changing. In part because bridge is addictive and because it opened up new opportunities and friendships. For me, and I suspect for most players, there is a love-hate relationship between the game and ourselves. I remind myself that playing the game provides endless learning and intellectual stimulation. Who doesn't want to remain mentally sharp?

**Happy Bridging**  
**Julie Wicks**

**Need a Partner:** Use your Pianola account to request or find a partner or contact:  
**Mon - Sat** Jim & Shelley Moodie...5591 2135 or 0402 634 013  
**Thursday Night.** Tom Strong.....0421 106 986

**Welfare Officer:** Cheryl Millar ..... 0409 879 081

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