

WBC News – January 2012

Happy New Year and Welcome Back

**A Big Welcome to Bridget Willcox (Hannaway),
our new Club Manager**

PUT IT IN YOUR DIARY

Wellington Open/Junior Tournament – Sunday 12 February 2012

Dot's Farewell Cocktails and Dinner – Saturday 18 February 2012

Beginners Lessons commence Tuesday 14 February 2012

Poppy Roberts Trophy Pairs 5A Tournament, first night Wednesday 22 February

Presidents Corner... Derek Snelling

Welcome back to the start of another playing year. This year will see some significant changes within the club.

As indicated towards the end of last year, Dot is retiring at the end of January. Don't forget that we will be hosting a dinner to celebrate Dot's association with the club on Saturday 18th Feb. Tickets go on sale this week so be in early. As a consequence of Dot's retirement Bridget Willcox starts this week as our new Club Manager. Many of you will know Bridget from her involvement in other areas of the club, particularly the Committee and the new members and lessons. We wish her well in her new role.

I want to thank those people who have taken on roles as Grade Captains for this year Phillipa Ballard on Tuesdays, Karl Hayes on Wednesdays and Jenny Borren on Thursdays. Your willingness to get involved is much appreciated.

Over the next few weeks we will be conducting our regular survey regarding aspects of the Club and specifically what areas you, as members, may be able to assist with help in running of the Club. Please give this some thought, even if it is only for one event/occasion a year, if we all give a little time then the overall load should be very small. Thank you to those who continue to support the club with offers of help. Finally we still have 112 outstanding subscriptions for the current year. Please remember that the early bird payment finished on the 31st December!

Here's to a successful year for the club and to each of you as individuals – good bridging!

Congratulations to winners of the Points Cups for 2011:

B Grade: 1st **Richard Schneider**, 2nd **Jolene Zink**
Ollie Lenart Trophy (most promising beginner): **Sarah Bradbury**
A Grade: 1st **Ray Gruschow**, 2nd **Graeme Norman/Nigel Kearney**
A Reserve: 1st **Malcolm Greig**; 2nd **Michael Revell**
Friday afternoon: 1st **Michael Stride**; 2nd **Mary Slowey**

It's a busy month or two at the Wellington Bridge Club...

**** Sunday 12 February. Open / Junior Tournament**

Last year we had approximately 84 entries and hopefully this time more of our Junior players will be encouraged to enter our only Junior tournament for the year. Open players going to the Gold Coast Congress, what better practise for you? Entries please on the notice board. Details on our website.

**** Saturday 18 February. Dot's Farewell Function**

Members are invited to celebrate Dot's many years as club manager. The function will be held at the Club. Cocktails and canapés will be served 6-7pm - \$20 per person OR Cocktails and Dinner - \$60 per person. Tables of 8 can be reserved. Tickets are limited and will be available from the office. Inquiries please to Bridget Willcox, Club Manager.

**** Wednesday 22 February. Poppy Roberts Trophy Pairs 5A Tournament**

First night's competition commences on Wednesday 22 February and it's always a full house, so please arrive early and be seated by 7.20 pm. It is important to register your names on the notice board so our director can get a good idea of the seedings.

**** Beginners Lessons for 2012**

Introductory bridge lessons being run by **Alan Grant** start next month on Tuesdays – from 14 February. The first three sessions, on 14, 21 and 28 February will give participants the opportunity to start out their experience of the game by playing MiniBridge – so those who have not played a trick-based game like bridge before will be able to practise playing bridge hands with tricks, just like in the full game of bridge. From 6 March the lessons will move onto learning the ACOL bidding system, and will also provide plenty of opportunity for further practice over the next 11 weeks up to 15 May. The cost of \$70 per participant is credited towards club membership in the first year.

Players who have some bridge experience, and wish to re-learn or improve their bridge at the introductory level may join the lessons any time up until 6 March. Sessions start at 7:45 pm each Tuesday; please arrive on your first occasion by 7:30 pm to allow a bit of time for signing-up and administration.

Now's the time to spread the word and/or put up a flyer on your notice board at work.

Please print off a flyer or two from our website.

**** Club Directors Training 2012**

Directing is fun (mostly). For those players who are interested in directing (or simply learning more about the laws and regulations), a series of lessons for club directors is being offered in February /March 2012. These lessons are free and enjoyable – but you do need to do a bit of homework as well. Please refer to the club notice board for more details, or speak to **Allan Joseph**.

Dot remembers ...



Dot reclining on her new garden furniture – a wonderful thank you present from the Friday Afternoon members.

My 18 and a half years working at the Wellington Bridge Club is coming to an end. During that time there have been a lot of changes and a lot of the same.

The biggest change must be in the production of the evening's results. When I first started, my Mondays used to be devoted entirely to the manual checking of the matchpointing (done by the players at the end of play) of the previous week. A very time consuming job but quite logical. Then came our current scoring programme and the raw scores were entered into the programme. That was a nightmare to check until the personal score sheets could be put on the Club's website. Members could then check their own scores. Now with Bridge Pads, the whole scoring process is covered though, of course, there is always the odd hiccup and changes have to be made.

The other big change has been the removal of formal Grading. When joining the Club, members were assigned a given playing night. To move up a Grade, a member had to challenge in a higher grade, then be signed off as having played so many nights in that higher grade with an average score of over 50%.

Now, the policy is that a member can play whichever night they feel comfortable in within a loose range of 1 – Junior, to 4 – Open. Many members now play two nights a week and there is a wider ability range in each evening's play.

Over my time at the Club, the one constant has been the wonderful and generous nature of members. I have always been so thankful to those members who I have rung, even late in the day, and they have readily come to fill a gap or to give someone a game. And the Club still has four sessions of Bridge each week. At one time the Treasurer was considering cancelling Friday Afternoon Bridge as being unprofitable. Getting down to 3 tables and having to cancel the afternoon's play was a pretty low ebb. But now, thanks to a wonderfully devoted core group, the numbers have grown and to have 15 tables playing on the last afternoon of 2011, far exceeding the number of tables playing those 18 years ago.

There have been some wonderfully funny moments and many conversations with people I have never met. Also some interesting moments as when the main high pressure water pipe in the roof broke, sending water cascading into the Motorway playing room right above the shelves of cards and stationery.

Over the years there have been many changes of Committee, President, Secretary and Treasurer, but one constant factor has been the support of Bruce Ivamy. He was a member of the panel that interviewed me for the Manager's position and he was given the task of teaching me the scoring. With his infinite knowledge of the Club, Bruce has been my mainstay and taught me, amongst other things, that with computers, there is more than one way to get the job done. I cannot thank him enough for his patience and ever valuable advice. I have loved my time here at the Club and will miss the constant interaction with the members. Maybe I should take lessons..... **Dot Procter**

Recent High Score...

Stephen and Annette Henry – 74.47% Wednesday 11 January.
[Was it luck at Table 13? Ed]

Friday afternoon at the club

The last event of the year was Visitors' Day held on the afternoon of 16 December. It was well-attended with 15 full tables. Those taking part enjoyed not only a good afternoon's bridge but also a delicious afternoon tea. Many people brought a plate so Dot did not have to create her usual afternoon tea with cakes and sandwiches. I don't know how she does it, but every Friday afternoon, different sandwiches and cakes appear. Dot's afternoon teas and her efforts to ensure there are always full tables, is undoubtedly one of the reasons why the number attending on Friday afternoons has steadily grown. Now there are regularly 10 tables of junior, intermediate and open players, a big change from the 3 or 4 tables of several years ago. I



Friday members enjoying Visitors' Day afternoon tea

have attended many sessions on Friday afternoons and have always found the atmosphere very pleasant and relaxed. Friday afternoons can be a positive experience for all grades of players. For junior players it is a good opportunity to test themselves and play against more experienced players in a very supportive environment, while the more experienced players are able to get to know club members they wouldn't otherwise meet and do a little bit of mentoring. If you are free, I can strongly recommend Friday afternoon bridge. Oh, the winners of the last Friday bridge session were

Jenny Coulter and Shirley Green.
Max Wigbout

Suzanne Duncan Memorial Pairs Tournament – 27, 28 and 29 December

This is a popular fixture on the holiday calendar. We had a very enjoyable and relaxed tournament with 26-28 tables every night, over 20 out of town visitors, and nice to welcome back from Canada, Debbie McLeod, home on holiday. Special thanks to Allan Joseph, our director; Committee members who helped in various ways; Isobel Ross and David May who greeted players on opening night; Carolyn Black from Hamilton, "supreme assistant and chauffeur" to the tournament secretary; Suzanne Green & Derek Snelling manning the bar on the last night; and Sue Thompson and Khay Ooi who did a sterling job serving the supper.

Congratulations to the prizewinners: Results were

- 1 **Kate Davies, John Patterson**
- 2 **John Cormack, Tony Thomson**
- 3 **John Davidson, Nigel Kearney**
- 4 **Deidre Stallinger, Debbie Wolak**
- 5 **Peter Benham, Brian Cleaver**



Some players take bridge so seriously ...

when they get a bad board it drives them up the wall! At the recent Suzanne Duncan tournament, one amused eye witness of this extraordinary behaviour commented "*this would never happen at our (Victoria) Bridge club....*"

From the Internet ... Last Train

Josh Donn is the reigning Blue Ribbon Pairs champion. He also has a junior world and another open national championship to his credit ... this is an extract from his "***Breakin' the Rules Slam Bidding***" blog.

"**Last Train** is a convention that, as it pertains to cue-bidding auctions, refers to the last cue-bid below the trump suit. It doesn't promise a control in the suit, but rather says the player has further interest in slam, but only one step below the trump suit to express it. In my opinion, Last Train is a convention imperative for good slam bidding, but I also think it may be the most misused convention in all of expert bridge. Many players seem to bid Last Train almost all of the time without even realizing that they do so.

Let's suppose you hold ♠KQxxx ♥xxx ♦Kx ♣Ax. You open 1♠, partner responds a game forcing 2♦, you bid 2♠ (not promising 6), and partner bids 3♣. You cuebid 4♣ and partner bids 4♦. This is exactly the situation that Last Train was created for. Your sixth trump and nice honours mean slam is well in the picture, but due to the possibility of heart losers you don't have safety beyond 4♣. You should bid 4♥ and let partner take it from there. However, change your hand to ♠KQxxx ♥xx ♦xxx ♣AKJ on the exact same auction through 4♦. There are plenty of players who would bid 4♥ here because... well, because it's there? The shape is bad, the diamond holding is the worst, and the slam interest and club honours have already been shown. This hand is not worth any more than 4♠ at this point. Bidding last train would be a "blame transfer", allowing you to blame partner for doing the wrong thing.

Jumping to Slam

I have long believed that the most underused slam bidding technique is simply jumping to slam. If your values tell you that's where you belong, then you should bid it. From time to time I see people instinctively bid Blackwood and I think to myself they are going to bid the exact same contract no matter what response they get..."

16 to 29 January, 2012



<http://www.summerfestivalofbridge.com/>

2012 Australian Youth Championships

Congratulations to **Liam Milne** (and partner Adam Edgton) who won the Pairs Championship Final in Canberra last weekend. Liam is also playing in the Youth Teams and **Tim Grant** and **Andrew James** also from our club are competing. Good Luck!

Reminder Please

Subscriptions were due by 1st January 2012. The discount does not now apply.

Welcome to New Members ... Stephanie Smith and Verna Schofield