

October/November 2021 Newsletter

President's Message

Kia Ora:

This is my final message as president as I am stepping down at the AGM on Friday, Nov 12. Usually, a president serves at least two years but this year so much of the committee's focus has been on changing its direction to a strategic outlook, I thought it needed someone with different skills to do the job. Peter Newell has been nominated to take on the role. In his work and as one of Aotearoa's world class bridge players, Peter has demonstrated he has what we need. We will be lucky to have him and I hope everyone will give him and those others nominated to the committee their full support. Change may sometimes be uncomfortable but I expect this committee to shake things up.

At the AGM there will be a motion to mandate that all members be double vaccinated if they want to play. Already, the Victoria and Kairangi clubs have taken this step. The government is clearly also heading in this direction for many optional recreational activities and once the government vaccine certificate is released; it will make such a move a lot easier. At a recent meeting of the Wellington City Clubs, which I attended, it was agreed that once a player is registered in one club, that club would seek their permission to share the information with other clubs and players will be okay to play in other club venues for tournaments and the like. Our surveys show that we are very close to 100 percent vaccinated. Assuming the resolution is supported, those "who are not vaccinated will have a clear choice if they want to play bridge with the rest of us.

The issue of smoking is another hot topic that will be discussed at the AGM. A remit to ban smoking on the property has the support of the committee. We have had designated smoking areas set aside but some smokers have ignored these rules. We think it is time to give a clearer steer on this issue.

So there will be plenty to discuss at the AGM as well as a free meal after for those who attend and the opportunity to play in the NZ-Wide Pairs after. Hope to see lots of you there.

Lastly, I would like to thank all the committee, and in particular, our remarkable club manager Bridget Hannaway-Wilcox, for the amazing job they have done during my year as President. All of you have done extra yards during the year and I think that mahi has prepared us well for the future success of the club.

Simon Louisson (President)

A very warm welcome to our new members –

From the latest Lessons,

Nicki Cooke, Jeremy Valentine, Lisa Lock, Anna Callender, Rachel King, Glenda Swan, Helen Dunn, Marty Scott, Julie-Anne Scott, Patrick Jackson, Tom Schnittger, Simon Cosgrove, John Clark, Anne Tobin, plus John Joseph from Kapi Mana and Suzanne deVere from Victoria.

It's great to have you join our club and I hope this is the start of a happy and enjoyable hobby (well, actually addiction for some of us ☐).

New Recorder for the Club –

By Margaret Curnow and Simon Louisson



Derek Snelling (pictured) has agreed to take on the role of the club's Recorder. He replaces Patrick D'Arcy who has undertaken the job for many years in his quiet, unassuming, but effective manner. The committee wishes to express its sincere thanks to Patrick.

The Committee sees the change as an opportunity to lift the profile of the Recorder. We are cognisant of the fact that some members don't know of the existence of the role. The role is to have someone members can go to on a confidential basis. It sits alongside the roles of the director, chief director, grade captains and the complaints procedure.

A member may want to discuss issues of behaviour they consider shouldn't go unchecked but isn't sufficiently serious to warrant a written complaint; it may be to check matters of bidding proprieties; or it may concern the behaviour of another player away from play and a member is unsure how to proceed. Having discussion with the Recorder doesn't preclude you making a formal complaint.

The Committee selects people like Patrick and Derek for the role because they are senior, experienced players who are seen as approachable, having a high moral ethic, and can listen and reflect on concerns brought to them. The job is to provide a sympathetic hearing, diplomatic discussion and, if need be, give advice to the complainant.

The Recorder will provide brief written reports to the Committee which will be non-identifying unless they are very serious matters such as obnoxious behaviour or suspected cheating. A records folder will be kept with the password only accessible to the president and club manager.

The committee's review of the Recorder role is part of an overall review of our behaviour policy and rules. NZ Bridge has identified unfriendly and unacceptable behaviour as the major reason for members leaving clubs. It was also clear from the member survey we conducted this year that this was the top concern. It may be a simple matter of a pair carrying on a conversation and not greeting a new pair to their table, but we know unfriendliness undermines our club.

As part of the review, we have scrapped what was termed our Zero Tolerance Policy. While that policy sent a strong message, in reality we didn't practice zero tolerance and therefore members got disillusioned. The truth is we are a club of 380 members and we don't all behave the same.

If someone behaves unacceptably, you are still going to be pulled up, but having your attention drawn to it, may be all that is required. We have reviewed the Conduct & Etiquette rules laid out in the Bridge Book and the committee has reinforced the view that behaviour should always be acceptable.

Our guide lay out examples of good behaviour, such as being a good table host or having a clearly completed system card, while also laying out examples of intolerable behaviour – rudeness, intimidation, negative comments on play, arguing with a director's ruling and racist or sexist comments.

We all mostly know what is and isn't okay. For unacceptable behaviour members have various options of redress – the director, grade captains, committee members and the President.

Issues can be raised informally or via a formal written complaint that goes to the complaints committee. The role of the Recorder sits alongside all this. Where an issue may not be clear-cut and a member just wants to confidentially raise it to get some wise counsel from someone who has encountered most matters before, the Recorder may just be the right person to approach.

Nose Clips

Many people who need to wear glasses have found how frustrating mask wearing can be, because of the tendency for the glasses to fog up. But fear not, dear readers, help is at hand! This website is offering a range of nifty gadgets to alleviate the problem and other issues (such as discomfort caused by having the elastic around ones ears).

<https://www.art-isan.co.nz/collections/all>

Annual General Meeting

As mentioned by Simon, the AGM is being held on Friday 12th November at 6pm, which will be followed by a light dinner, then the NZ Wide Pairs which starts at 7.30pm.

Registrations online via nzbridge.co.nz or email Bridget. Please also register for the dinner, for catering purposes.

Real Bridge

Wellington Bridge club is investigating the use of Real Bridge in the event we are unable to play at the club and the first trial took place on Sunday 7th November.

Players are invited to attend a "taster session" which is 8 boards to familiarise themselves with the platform. <https://realbridge.online/try-realbridge.html>

We can also offer short practice sessions for those unfamiliar with online play.



Library Article by Mike Murtagh

The club library was a hotchpotch of old titles before 2015. Not much of real interest for beginners or for established players. But Dougal McLean's bequest was made available and Julie Hawkins, an experienced librarian, was up to the challenge. In 2015 Julie set the library up in its present form. Club members continue to donate to the collection, plus Julie has been able to purchase some new titles, and borrowing is steadily increasing. Out of dates and many duplicates have been discarded [keep an eye on the 'In Need of a Good Home' box]. There are now about 500 books recorded on our library database, all are properly labelled and numbered, and on the shelves. It can be said that the library has become a point of difference for our club.

Julie has retired [twice now!] and Janet Dobbie has taken over from her. So thank you Julie - thanks also to Ray Gruschow who has helped out recently. Good that Janet can start immediately - another experienced librarian.

Some comment from a regular borrower follows:-

"Card play does not change that much - try Victor Mollo - still up with the best. No Alan Grant in my day - I learnt to play from Mollo and Gardener 'Bridge for Beginners' - it's stood up pretty well. They do recommend a 13-15 1NT opening, suggest considering 16-18 vulnerable, but card play section is fine.

My favourites on play for beginners were the Americans, Kaplan and Kantar - have them on my shelf and still go back to them. Dorothy Hayden's 'Winning Declarer Play' is in our library and is a classic. She played a lot with her husbands - the last of them I think was Truscott. Her no trump section is titled 'Let me play the NT's, dear!' Not much gender equity at the table then.

Hayden's book finishes with 41 problem hands that increase in order of difficulty. No 1 is titled 'Curse of Scotland'.

North

K
653
DJ92
C876432

South

A843
AK9
AQ104
AJ

South is declarer in 3NT, West leads the SQ, and K wins the first trick. Which card should you lead from dummy at trick 2, and why?

South has 9 tricks, provided KD is onside. Dummy has no entries so time to finesse is now. The right lead is the diamond nine - the curse of Scotland - leading the 9D allows you to remain in dummy for two subsequent finesses if that proves necessary. East may hold DK876. Forty more hands follow!

Club Results

September 2021

Friday – Spring Pairs

1st Ann Tyrie & Rhondda Sweetman
2nd Lesley Gilhooly & Mary Wilson

Tournament results.

September/ October 2021

Hamilton Congress 10A Teams (played online)

2nd Martin Reid & Peter Newell with Michael Ware & Hugh McGann

Sydney Butler Swiss Pairs (played online)

1st Paul Carson & Jeremy Fraser-Hoskin.

Nga mihi

Maureen Sheldon