



Trump•It

Arana Bridge Club Newsletter

April 2020

Vol 34 No 2

Judy Valentine – Our Founder



In the early 1960s, Judy was a young mother living with her husband in Mackay. She and some neighbours wanted to learn to play Bridge. In the absence of a Bridge club, or a Bridge teacher, Judy was nominated to learn Bridge from a book and teach the others. Driven by a desire to create a Bridge community near her, Judy rose to the challenge and began learning and teaching. She was an inaugural member of the Mackay Bridge Club when it was established over 50 years ago.

Judy's husband, David, was transferred to Maryborough where, again, she found there was no Bridge Club. Fortified by her experiences in

Mackay, Judy set about making local contacts who wanted to play. Soon she was the driving force behind the establishment of the Maryborough Bridge Club. Judy's skills and abilities became known to the Queensland Bridge Association (QBA). The QBA recommended that towns wanting to set up a Bridge Club should contact Judy. She has been integral to the setting up and expansion of a number of Queensland clubs, particularly Bundaberg and Rockhampton Clubs. She visited these clubs to teach Bridge and support their efforts to become affiliated with QBA and ABF. Returning to Brisbane in 1970, Judy was asked to be the Secretary of the QBA.

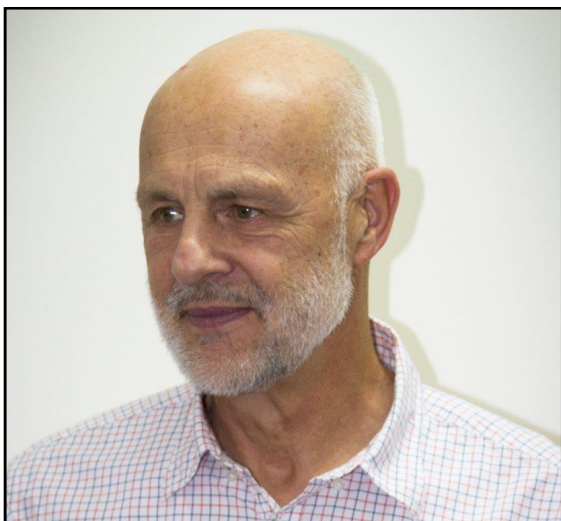
Our long term member, Pam Horton, has been telling me for a while that I needed to write a story on Judy who led the establishment of our Bridge club. Judy, using her well-honed skills, began teaching in Ferny Hills. Her first teaching venue was her home. As learner numbers expanded, Judy moved the group to a local hall and, finally, we were able to buy our own Bridge Club. Our building is fittingly named after Judy Valentine.

Based on all her years of teaching, Judy's grateful students pushed her to publish her lessons and examples. The book, *Bridging my Way*, is still used to teach beginners the joys of Bridge. When I asked Judy had she received an OBE for her thousands of hours of volunteer work she said with a laugh "the only OBE I'll get is the one you get for being Over Bloody Eighty".

By the way, Judy has attended 54 of the 59 Gold Coast Congresses. That's a difficult achievement to beat!

Kathleen Le Voi

From The President



The Coronavirus pandemic has hit hard for all Bridge communities worldwide. Because Bridge is so popular with older people, our members are particularly vulnerable to dying from the virus. With this in mind, the Committee decided to follow the Australian Bridge Federation (ABF) advice to close, which we did on Wednesday 18th March. Initially some of you may have been able to play social bridge at home but now that the National Cabinet agreed to further limit most indoor and outdoor non-essential gathering to two people that is no longer possible. Mike Le Voi has initiated club members playing with and against each other at nominated virtual tables using Bridge Base Online – more details in following pages.

Although I was away for the March committee meeting, I read that Mike Le Voi resigned from the committee; this was noted by the Secretary at that meeting. I thank him for his service over the past two years. More recently, Marianne McPherson has also resigned. That leaves 10 committee members. They are: Alan Norman, Trish Lye, Sue Norton, Jim Webster, Norma Hansen, Phil Chappel, Helen McLauchlan, Kathleen Le Voi, Liane Morris and me. At the request of Alan Norman, Helen McLauchlan volunteered herself and Richard McLauchlan for the role of Congress Convener. We also needed someone to co-ordinate dealers once the club is back up and running; Bruce Hansen has agreed to take on this task. I thank Helen, Richard and Bruce for their willingness to help. It is pleasing to see that our club members raised about \$1000 for the Bush Fire Relief fund that was sponsored by the ABF.

All face to face lessons have ceased due to the closure of the Club. As advised by an email from the Secretary, Novice and Intermediate lessons by Kathleen and Mike Le Voi will now be conducted online, more details in the following pages.

The Council has advised that preparation work on the back car park should be done by the end of April. Final work should be completed in the first week of June (depending on weather). The ramp to the back door is being designed. Alan Norman will continue to advocate for more disabled spaces. The Club's lease of Council land is set to expire in 2022. I will commence renewal negotiations with the council in the near future. The external upgrade to our building is now complete. All cracked sheets have been replaced; the painting is completed and the awning over the back door will be erected after the ramp has been installed.

Finally, I wish you and your family health and happiness at this most challenging time.

Robert van Beest



Learning Bridge Online

The planned face-to-face teaching of “Better Bidding for Improving Players” was cancelled due to Coronavirus. So, Michael and Kathleen decided to offer the seminars online. As a senior academic, Kathleen Le Voi has had long experience with online teaching and learning. Michael Le Voi, with his background as an IT expert, has much experience in solving IT problems. The Arana Contract Bridge Club has access to a software product called Microsoft Teams. As a Not for Profit organisation, Microsoft does not charge us to use it.

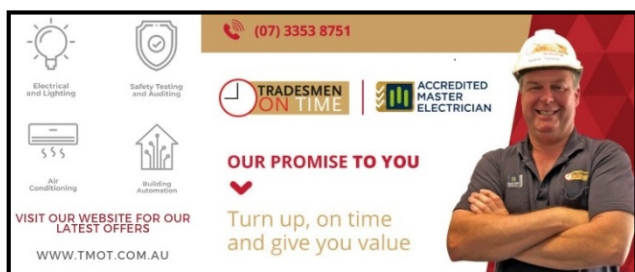
There are 18 members enrolled and they received simple instructions about how to set up their devices and download Microsoft Teams. Michael conducted two test sessions with registered learners which went smoothly. The test

involved ensuring that all participants could hear the presenter(s) and see the PowerPoint presentation. Participants could ask questions and hear each other. Learners used many different devices to access and participate including PCs, laptops, tablets and mobile phones.

The first online lesson “Hand Evaluation” was conducted on Wednesday 8th April. The lesson involved presenting hand evaluation criteria derived from Joan Butt’s learning materials and books by Audrey Grant and Paul Marston. Prior to the first lesson, learners were emailed lesson notes. During the lesson, Kathleen presented a series of hands to evaluate. Learners were invited to analyse each hand and then she asked participants to give their detailed analysis to the group. At the end of the session, each participant was invited to comment on the lesson. All participants said they found the session very helpful.

Many of the upcoming lessons will use Bridge Base Online Teaching Tables. Bridge hands, designed to teach a particular concept, e.g. Bidding and Playing No Trump, will be preloaded. Learners will be able to see the hands as they are being played. While they are bidding and playing, Kathleen and Michael will speak out their thinking so that it is clear for students to follow, question, comment and learn.

For the next few months, lessons will continue on Wednesday’s starting at 1.30 pm. After surveying participants, Kathleen and Michael have decided to divide each lesson into two 45 minute sessions separated by a 15 minute tea break. These lessons are provided at no cost to the club and no cost to participants – all of whom are Arana Bridge Club members. If you are interested in registering, please contact Michael Le Voi at: mikelevoi@gmail.com.



Tradesmen on Time – (07) 3353 8751

Playing Bridge Online

There are many ways to play Bridge at home, either on your laptop, iPad or tablet using

dedicated programs, or by playing in an online environment.

Several Arana members approached me to see if I could organise for our members to play with and against each other using BBO. I therefore designed a method which allows this to happen. Essentially, at home, I can host a small number of what BBO refers to as “Teaching Tables”. One problem that normally occurs is that BBO deals random hands so that one cannot download the hand records; like the ones we are used to seeing at the end of play at the club. Without the end of play hand record, there is no way for an online player to compare their actual bidding and playing with the ideal number of makeable tricks. Accordingly, I have enhanced the dealing program that is in use at the club so that I can create deal files at home in a format suitable for use by BBO. The program also creates hand records as a PDF that is emailed to players after the game.

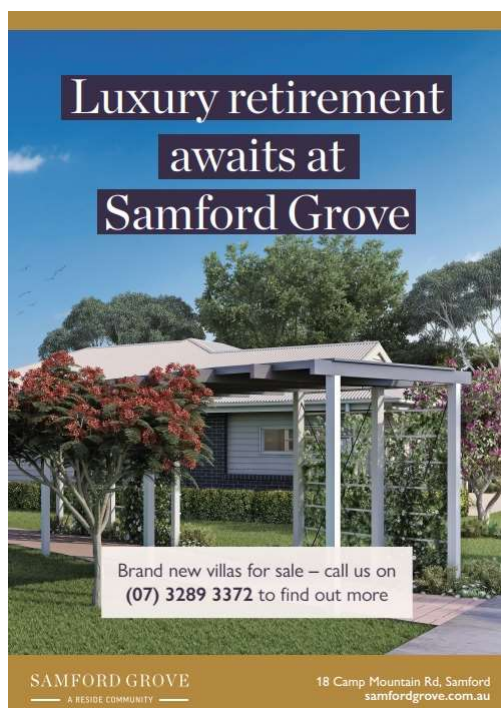
In order to enable members to play dedicated tables on BBO, I created an online spreadsheet that members are able to edit. Members are invited to edit the spreadsheet to specify on what days they would like to play and at which table they would like to sit i.e. which opponents they want to play against. Each day, I logon to BBO and create the Teaching Tables with the appropriate players and upload the daily deal file. Arana members then play between 24-32 boards by mutual agreement at each table.

In BBO, we encourage the use of the chat window which is visible at the bottom of the screen. Comments are normally of the form “Well Done, Partner” but sometimes a member gives more personal information such as “I can smell my sticky date pudding cooking!” (Thanks, Jan) or “I’m just popping off to the loo”. Chatting with your friends is an integral part of this process. We are all feeling socially isolated so the more interaction we can have with our friends, the better we all feel. This is why playing at Arana tables is more satisfying than playing with random people worldwide.

The number of Arana members playing online via this method has now passed 40. However, there is a limit to the number of tables that can be hosted by any one person. I host 3 tables every weekday. Recently Dawn Benes has been hosting two tables a day. We could be hosting sessions morning and afternoon, including Saturdays, if we had more members willing to host one or more tables. It is not difficult. I can provide written instructions and phone support. If you are interested in playing online, and/or helping by

hosting a table, please contact Michael Le Voi at: mikelevoi@gmail.com or by phone (see Member's Booklet).

Mike Le Voi



Teacher's Corner

The **Law of Total Tricks (LOTT)**, is a hand evaluation strategy, used in a competitive auction, to help determine how high to bid. It is not really a law, more of a guideline. The LOTT was first written by Jean-René Vernes for French players in the 1950s; it was first described in English in 1966. Later, in the USA, Marty Bergen and Larry Cohen popularised the approach. It continues to underpin Bergen raises, which are popular to this day.

Definition of the Law of Total Tricks: *The total number of tricks available on a deal is equal to the total number of trump cards both sides hold in their respective best suits, where the total number of tricks is defined as the sum of the number of tricks available to each side if they could choose trumps.*

For example, if North-South hold nine Spades between them and East-West hold eight Hearts, the LOTT says that the total number of tricks available is 17 (9 + 8). Note the LOTT says nothing about how many tricks each side will make; this depends on the split of HCPs as well as the number of trumps. When the HCP are fairly evenly split between the two sides, the number of

trumps held by each side is a close indicator of the tricks available to each side.

This method works on the assumption that for shapely hands, the combined length of the trump suit is more significant than points in deciding on the level of the final contract. It is of most value in competitive bidding situations where the HCP are divided roughly equally between the partnerships.

In a competitive auction, the LOTT says you should bid to a number of tricks equal to the number of trumps you and your partner hold (and no higher). With an eight card fit, you are safe to bid to the two level i.e. eight trumps making eight tricks. With a nine card fit, you are 'safe' to bid to the three level i.e. nine trumps making nine tricks.

In certain competitive situations, vulnerability can influence the optimum contract. Thus, with the HCP evenly split and facing a bid at the three level by the opposition, bidding to a level above the number of trumps held can be a useful sacrifice if the opponents are vulnerable and you are not. However, if you are vulnerable and they are not, bidding above the number of trumps held would be a foolish mistake.

Acknowledgements: Marty Bergen, Larry Cohen, Andy Slater (President of the Northern Suburbs Bridge Club) and Wikipedia.



Your Agents.

Simon Whitehead & Drew Crump

e whiteheadandcrump@harcourts.com.au

m 0403 856 205

Harcourts Solutions

New Members

The following are new members to the club. Please make them welcome.

Sandi Pirozzo
Patricia Donovan
Norah Weatherby
Lynette Fryer
Carmel Dwan
Dawn Carroll
Maureen Balfour
Diana Attwood
John Henderson
Lynette Rose
Lynda Roberts
Trish Taylor

Editorial Team

Kathleen Le Voi Michael Le Voi
ph 3851 4704

Email: editor.aranabridgeclub@gmail.com

Contributions may be by email (preferred) or by placing a note in the ideas box at the clubhouse

K.M.SMITH

FUNERAL DIRECTORS since 1883

We think of everything

Phone 3252 2031 - 24 Hours, 7 Days

2020 Gold Coast Congress



Joyce O'Brien



Deidre Taylor



Jim Taylor



Ann Smith



**Dawn Benes
Lorraine Pescatore**



Val Acklin

The Gold Coast Bridge Congress was held for the 59th year in February 2020. It was held in the Gold Coast Convention Centre at Broadbeach. The Gold Coast Bridge Congress is the largest Bridge event in the Southern Hemisphere and the second largest in the world – the largest being in North America. Thousands of people compete from all over Australia and the rest of the world; the place is always abuzz with excitement.



Dianne Wilkinson



Jan McRobbie



Gay and John Hull



Carol Bellis/Cynthia Sharp



Judi Sunman/Jan Powell



Yvonne Zande/Carla Webb

Around the Broadbeach area, there are multiple eating places, spanning a multicultural spectrum of cuisines. From my conversations with our Arana members, I gathered we all had a great time enjoying the company of so many Bridge enthusiasts. I can't say for sure how many Arana club members competed, but I took photos of those that I saw.

Kathleen Le Voi