

# GYMPIE BRIDGE CLUB

## NEWSLETTER

February / March 2018

Issue No 58

Hello fellow bridge club members,

Welcome to our first newsletter for 2018. It's almost easy to believe the old saying, "bad things happen in threes", because sadly, the year has begun as the last one ended — with the deaths of club members. Bernie (Greentree) died on 14th January, and just two weeks earlier, Diana (Thorogood) died on New Year's Day; while George (Konyi) died in early November last year. Three club stalwarts who will be missed by all who knew them.

**Diana** (seen here in one of her lovely Melbourne Cup Day outfits) had been a member of the club for more than 20 years and was always a "general handy person" on all fronts. She has been on the executive, was a member of the upcoming jubilee committee, was a florist and baker at our congresses and other events, looked after the kitchen, and even, with Kay as her assistant, re-covered some of our bridge chairs which were getting rather tatty at the time. Diana was born in what was then Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and met her English born husband Peter in South Africa. They emigrated to Australia about 30 years ago and settled in Gympie. Husband Peter continues to play bridge at the club.



**Bernie** was a self-taught surveyor who spend many years in PNG, before returning to Darwin, where he met and married Ruth. The couple's engagement party was held on the evening of Cyclone Tracy — not the best of starts to a lifetime together! They moved to Alice Springs soon after and spent many years in that inland town. But as retirement loomed for Bernie, they began looking for a home closer to the coast, quickly settling on Gympie. Bernie had been an avid bowler in his day and took up bridge in recent years. He was an indispensable helper to Jennifer at her bridge lessons; was known to sharpen a pencil or two in his time at the club and was always a willing volunteer at our many events. Ruth is also a member of our club and will "carry on bridging" too.

The funeral for **George** was a private one, so in memory of him and to honour the work he did for the club, particularly in the gardening area, the committee is putting in a garden under the new overhead power line (needed for the upgraded air-con system) with a plaque dedicated to George. It has been decided to make it a native garden, consisting of some small shrubs and flowers.

All three members bought something special to our club. All three were always there to lend a helping hand when required and that expertise will also be missed. RIP

Meanwhile, a gentle reminder from our treasurer Trevor that if your subs have not yet been paid, they need to be before the end of the month.

Finally, Cathy Reed is our guest columnist this edition; we have our always informative director's column from Kay; another Kevin Feeney column and something a little different this month, an elegy for George, written by Jack Wright. Enjoy and . . .

. . . Good bridging everyone, Jenz

## HAVE A LAUGH

When the bridge-playing wife learnt she was going to have twins, she said: "That's just like my husband. Doubling me when I'm vulnerable."

A couple of bridge players were at a concert. One addict asked the other, "What's that book the conductor keeps looking at?" "The score," the other one said. "Oh, who's vulnerable?"

You know you're in trouble at the bridge table when the first thing the opponents decide to do is draw trumps, and you're the declarer.

My partner and I had a misunderstanding. My partner assumed I knew what I was doing.

## OUR BIRTHDAYS

### IN FEBRUARY

- 5: Steven Verity
- 7: Carolann Verity
- 11: Sue Schierning
- 18: Dave Connors
- 19: Lesley McHugh
- 25: Jenz Davidson
- 26: Ed Beckett

### AND MARCH

- 1: Kay Kerr
- 2: Greg Dewar
- 3: Vicki Polley
- 3: Jack Wright
- 5: John Byrnes
- 14: Kelly Chapman
- 18: Helen Morrissey
- 19: Ruth Sparrow
- 22: Sandra Skennerton

# President's report

I hope everyone had a great Christmas — our Christmas Party was deemed a great success by all who attended. Who would have guessed all the interesting treasures found in handbags and pockets? A sub-committee has been formed to plan the 2018 Christmas Party so we will keep you posted regarding their progress.

As we welcomed in 2018, sadly we have had to farewell two wonderful club members: Diana Thorogood and Bernie Greentree. Diana was a long time committee member, only stepping down from the committee in recent years. Her expertise and flair in the kitchen on Congress days will be sorely missed. Bernie, for the last couple of years, had assisted Jennifer and Fran with the beginners' lessons and was a willing volunteer to assist Directors in collecting boards and Bridgemates after sessions, and preparing for the next session by sharpening pencils and distributing playing slips to tables. Both will be sadly missed. If the meaning of life is to love and be loved, they both did it in spades. RIP Diana and Bernie.

On a happier note, our garden is thriving with the heat, mulch and occasional showers. So much so, we were overtaken by weeds. Thankfully, Marilyn Virtue recommended a couple just starting out in business, to assist us with our weeding. Jaryd and Justine will continue to maintain the gardens on a fortnightly basis. Our sign will also be erected the week commencing 29 January. The sign not only informs passers-by of the club's location but will also include information regarding beginners' lessons, contact numbers, email address and website information. Lessons commence on 6th February and hopefully, with the recent advertising in the Gympie Times, numbers will be up on previous years. Watch this space.

Welcome back to Jeff Streat — good to see him up and about after his operation. I'm also fully recovered from my operation too, so the Committee is back at full strength. My heartfelt thanks to Kaylene Lingard for holding the fort so admirably during my convalescence. Her support was much appreciated.

And last, but not least, good luck to everyone travelling to the Gold Coast for the Congress — let's do Gympie proud!

Happy bridging, Kelly.

## Thumbs up

Thumbs up to our new gardening duo, Jaryd and Justine Upton, who have recently put in some sterling work on the club gardens and lawns. They (the gardens) are looking pretty fab and all kudos to the hard working couple for a job well done.



## Thumbs down

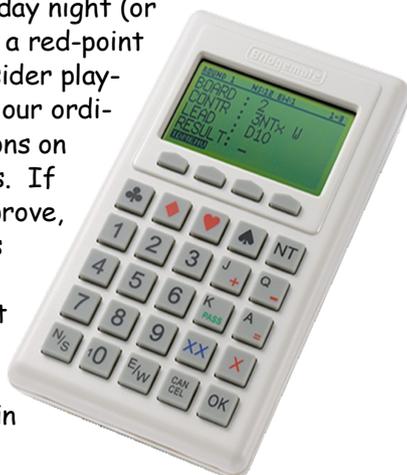
Are you aware that clubs belonging to the Australian Bridge Federation are allocated a certain number of red-point events annually, determined by the number of green points accrued?

The green points are calculated using a formula based on the number of tables played at every session. A minimum of 24 boards should be played and sit outs count as played boards.

With that in mind, it is therefore of great concern that Thursday nights are, once again, dropping off to at best on some occasions, just four tables; and at worst, "go home, we don't have enough people to make a competition".

So if the club has to cancel a session because of poor attendance, there is a real chance we will miss out on future red-point events. Simply because we are not accumulating enough green points at our regular bridge sessions to qualify for those elusive red ones.

So, if you're one of those people who only attend bridge on a Thursday night (or Monday) when it's a red-point event, please consider playing more often at our ordinary bridge sessions on one or both nights. If numbers don't improve, the consequences for our club could be that we will not have as many red-point events for anyone to attend in the future.



## Cathy's Cardplay . . .

### Guiding principles to remember

Cathy Reed is our guest columnist this month and has chosen words of wisdom from Michael Furstner.

Six guidelines for **declarer** to consider and remember.

1. In NT contracts develop the additional tricks required for your contract before cashing in your sure winners. This means losing the lead early while you still have your stoppers in hand.  
In Trump contracts, usually draw trumps first, unless you need to ruff in Dummy or get rid of some losers first.
2. When running a suit: play the high cards from the short side first. For example, with  $\heartsuit A Q x$  opposite Dummy's  $\heartsuit K x x x$ , first play the Ace and Queen, and then lead the small heart to Dummy's King. That way, you can play all 5 tricks in the suit without the need for another side entry to Dummy.
3. In most cases, only draw opponents' losing trumps:  
 $\spadesuit A K x x$  opposite  $\spadesuit x x x x$ , draw trumps twice only. Then force the opponent to ruff a trick from one of your side suits. This leaves you with 4 trumps instead of only 2.
4. Indirect finesse means leading a low card to a high one, trying to avoid Opponent's high card. Direct finesse means leading a high card to a higher one, trying to catch Opponent's high card. Only play a direct finesse when you hold 4 of the 5 honour cards.  
A double finesse towards  $A Q 10$  or  $A J 10$  has a 75% chance of gaining 2 tricks.  
A double finesse towards  $K J x$  has a 75% chance of making at least 1 trick.  
For any single finesse, towards  $A Q (x)$  or  $K x (x)$ , the success rate is 50%.  
With 8 cards or less, double finesse - leading up to the lowest honour card first.
5. When the four high cards in a suit are divided amongst all 4 players do not lead that suit, unless you hold the 10 also, but let your opponents lead it for you. It applies equally to Defence.
6. When opponents hold an odd number of cards in a suit, they'll break evenly 65% of the time: ie: 5 cards will break 3 and 2. When opponents hold an even\* number of cards in a suit, they will break unevenly 65% of the time: ie: 6 cards will break 4 and 2, or worse. Therefore, avoid 4+3 trump suits, but a 5+2 holding is not too bad.  
\*The exception is when opponents hold only 2 cards in a suit. Then they are divided 1-1 almost 50% of the time.

A further six guidelines for **defence** in our next issue.

# Kevin's Korner . . .

## Planning the Play

Some contracts are easy to play but others like this one below require a plan and careful consideration as the play continues.

Dealer: North

Vul: N/S

♠ 6543	♠ 98
♥ 7643	♥ 52
♦ T3	♦ KJ874
♣ QT9	♣ K874
♠ A	
♥ AKT98	
♦ 9652	
♣ 652	
♠ KQJT72	
♥ QJ	
♦ AQ	
♣ AJ2	

Bidding:

South	West	North	East
1S	2H	Pass	Pass
X	Pass	2S	Pass
3S	Pass	4S	All pass

Opening lead: Heart king.

To South this looks like an impossible contract. However, he was told long ago (by Rob Ritchie) to place the strategic cards in the hands where they would allow him to succeed.

So he placed both the minor suit Kings in East's hand. However, to finesse, South had to plan his transport to North's hand.

This can only be done by retaining his Spade 2. All goes to plan, ruffing the 3rd Heart lead high, drawing trumps, crossing to dummy using the vital Spade 2.

He now leads the Club Queen, but when East does not cover with the King, he discards the Club Jack to preserve his transport back to the 9 or 10.

This is also vital to return to dummy to finesse the Diamonds. I can already hear people saying "too hard", but you will be surprised at how often this play works and if you are going to go down, then go down fighting.

Happy bridging.

Kevin Feeney



## It's on the cards . . .

The new season of bridging gets off to a flying start in Gympie on Thursday, with the first red-points event, the **Summer Pairs**, held at our regular morning session.

Of course, the big event on the calendar is the **Gold Coast Congress**, being held this year from Friday to Friday, 16th to 24th February. And to all our members not travelling to this event, please bear in mind that with so many away at the congress, we'll need extra players to make up the numbers on Monday 19th, Tuesday 20th and at both Thursday sessions on 22nd February.

The second of our red-point events, the **Autumn Pairs**, follows on Monday, 5 March. Then there is one of our bigger events, the **Pairs Championship**, yet another red pointer, being held over two Tuesdays — 13th and 20th March.

Finally, if you're keen on travelling a bit, there's the **Sunshine Coast Graded Teams** (four) at the Buderim club, being held on Sunday 25th. Always a great experience and a great club to visit.

Re our **Pairs Championship**, if you're not part of the playing mob, we're asking you to consider helping out in the kitchen, or perhaps helping get the club set up for the champs, or helping put it all away afterwards. We reckon we're going to be a bit pushed, with three of our stalwarts now no longer here to help us out.



# Director's Digest



Something a lot of us seem to have forgotten is that whilst Stayman 2♣ is self-alerting, the conventional responses to Stayman are alertable, as are natural responses which convey a message about strength or special distribution. In summary, if you play standard Stayman and reply 2♥, indicating that hearts is your one and only four-card Major, this does not need to be alerted. If, however, you play Extended Stayman, then all responses to the 2♣ MUST be alerted.



Speaking of alerts, a lot of alerts seem to occur after the person to bidder's left has already passed or bid. Alerts must be made immediately after the alertable call has been completed by audibly saying "Alert" and circling the call on the bidding pad.

Good to see a lot of players covering the bidding sheet after each player has played to the first trick — or is it only when I am at the table? I know this does not happen at many other clubs and I am not sure why they choose to ignore this rule/regulation. But good to know that we at least are trying to do the right thing.



A reminder to players that they are required to be at the club 15 minutes before the start of play. Directors are constantly frustrated by late arrivals especially for a busy session such as Tuesday afternoons. Sometimes the movements have to be completely re-hashed because of late arrivals or in some cases, non-arrivals. If you know you are going to be late, please phone the club to advise, so the Director and your partner are not left wondering.

At almost every session, we are plagued by the ringing of at least one mobile phone. Please ensure phones are turned off or put on 'silent' before play begins. If you need to leave your phone on for a good reason, please discuss it with the Director. If the problem continues, we may have to consider imposing penalties as happens in some other clubs.



'Til next time,  
Kay

## Got a suggestion? Got a gripe?

Then please, tell someone on the committee. If it's a gripe, don't grizzle to your husband or wife, partner or friend — tell a committee member and if it's a suggestion, write it down and "post" it in our suggestion box. You can sign your name to it or remain anonymous, just make sure your committee is aware of it. The suggestion box is on top of the bookcase near the office door.

Chinese whispers are not constructive and we want this club to be the best it can be. So tell us your gripe - or your suggestion - and the committee will do its best to address issues.



Keep those suggestions  
coming in folks ...

# *Evening Alone at Southside:*

## *An elegy for George Konyi*

(Borrowing: 'My father will be there now, at a hall  
in the dark of the country, shining at the waltz,  
spry and stately, twirling at formal speeds  
on a roaring waxed-plank floor.'  
*Evening Alone at Bunyah* Les Murray)

Image: maryvalleycountry.com.au



Almost every time, these days, I crest the hill before Long Flat  
with the old country hall on my right, I think  
George won't be going dancing again

so light and elegant *your* progress in the Dorothea Waltz  
while we, first-timers, stumbled (the things that look easiest  
being often the hardest, even life: at least to live it gracefully like you did)

one post-prandial Saturday night, at peace in your chair  
your heart erupted, medicos say you, who never smoked, rarely drank  
and were the soul of caution, would have felt nothing (but they cannot *know*)

George, I knew almost by instinct that you had been an engineer  
so fine your logic, so precise your calculations during any Thursday morning session  
at the Gympie Contract Bridge Club

you danced *there*, too, at least metaphorically, your facial expressions  
quick-stepping from pleasure to bewilderment while less  
mathematically-inclined partners strove to keep pace

but did no-one tell you, *George*, that the auction in bridge is supposed to be silent?  
you tut-tut-muttering to yourself and it may as well have been your native Hungarian  
shaking your impressively high-browed head as we others broke the rules

*in extremis*, you would shrug your shoulders really quickly as if no-one would notice  
you brought new heights of eloquence to silence (like L.J.K. Setright\* bursting into Latin  
while writing of cars, as if to remedy his readers' ignorance)  
there's a limit to what you can do

with a pencil

on a small square of paper ... (*pass*)

bidding in contract bridge mirroring the difficulty of life

some fifteen years you grew the garden (though I knew you less than three)  
your tall frame angling through a tapestry of colour  
welcoming us to the front door

I imagine you at the century's  
turn, newly retired (the age I am now), agile on those slopes  
clasping your secateurs

even without all the care you lavished here to remind us  
you'll live on in this club, dear *George*  
your chief legacy: unforgettability.

\*The erudite L.J.K. Setright (1931-2005) wrote that in his childhood 'engineers were worshipped'. He read law at London University but abandoned that profession for motoring journalism. His books include *The Designers* and *Drive On! A Social History of the Motor Car*.

John M. Wright  
December 2017