President’s Notes

Our club could not function without the wonderful work and great voluntary assistance of members. Come the AGM, we will need several new faces on the committee. I hope that if you have some skills or are willing to learn and want to contribute to the club’s smooth running that you will have a talk with me or any member of the Management Committee. Please consider the following challenges and, if you possibly can, put your hand up.

Lyndall Steed and Jackin Clare have done a great job with the financial side, ably backed by Dave Munro and Darrell Williams, but at the AGM in July we will need to elect a new Treasurer. If you have accountancy or similar experience, please talk with any of the above or phone me (9367 5548).

Secretary Rose Ford has served our club well during her term of office, but come the AGM we will need one or two persons to take over the various parts of the Secretary role.

Also Dave Munro has major commitments at BAWA and at our AGM will step down as Vice-President, so we need one or two new members to join the Management Committee and build up experience for the future.

Every day, every time we sit down at the table to enjoy our bridge, we at SPBC have a lot for which to thank other members. Without our Directors, our dealers, those helping our House Manager Jenny, those leading and participating on the various committees, maintaining trophies, editing our Handbook, helping run the bar, organising club and team events and congresses, and compiling this eNews we couldn’t enjoy our bridge fix. Nor could we have enjoyed the past years without the many active members who put their hands up to make this possible.

Is it your time to take a more active part in running our great Club? Think about it – and if it is your time, just contact any one of the current office bearers. We’re only a chat or a phone call away – and we’d love to do a bit of forward planning with you.

Many thanks

Bob

Club’s Easter Congress Raffle

We’re going to raffle a hamper at the end of the Easter Congress. Over the next few days your donations of wine, chocolates, delicacies and staples will be most gratefully received. (Nothing past its use-by dates please!)

Standard American:
On 20th April, 9.45 – 11.45am, Fiske Warren will run a single session lesson on Standard American Bridge for interested ACOL players. Cost $15, no partner needed.
Recent Club Results

Bob Nimmo Trophy (Pairs, State Masters and Below)

Winners were Sarita Singh and Mark Hughes, pictured above with President Bob Mitchell. Diane Smith and Rod Byrant were runners up.

The Mini-Bridge Day, organised by Jan Howell, drew a wide age range of participants. The day went very well; without the support of Lyndall Steed, Fiske Warren, Bob Mitchell, Judy Varley, Jenny Simpson and Sandy, it could not have been so successful.

Sixteen of the eighteen participants gave very positive evaluation, all enjoyed the session, eleven said they’d play Minibridge at home and seven gave their names for further contact. More than half heard about the day from club members, great to have that support. Not only did the Club offer something to the community during the City of South Perth Fiesta, but it was a good way to promote bridge and the club.
THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL BRIDGE CONGRESS

This event is coming to Fremantle in July this year. It will be held at Rydge’s Esplanade Hotel between 11th and 23rd July, and South Perth Bridge Club has sponsored one of the events.

Are you thinking of attending? How nice would it be if you could enter for FREE?

Well, maybe you could!

In return for our sponsorship, the organisers gave the club 16 personal entries our members only. So, to give as many people as possible the chance of winning their fully paid entry to the Congress, we’re raffling all 16 entries.

Tickets will be $2 each or 3 for $5.

Jan Howell and Jackin Clare will be organising this exciting raffle which will be drawn by the end of June.
Card Play Revision Course – OOPSIES! WE'RE SORRY!

No-one expected that so many people would turn up for Lyndall Steed’s Card Play Revision Course which started on the second Monday in March on a very hot afternoon. It caused a major kerfuffle when there simply wasn’t room for the normal session players and the course participants in the tea room for afternoon tea, and a number of people were very upset at having to go outside on such a hot afternoon.

Lyndall’s course, run on the second Monday of each month, beginning at 1.00pm, has so much to offer, and obviously many, many members thought they would enjoy the benefits. Please keep on coming.

Please accept our very sincere apologies for sending players outside on such a hot day. Next time, players will be invited to have their tea at the tables just inside the main playing room.

Member Profiles – Val Biltoft & Leone Fuller

On May 19th this year, Val and Leone will be part of the Australian women’s team at the Asia Pacific Championships in Bangkok. If they are successful, they will compete again in Chennai, India in October.

Whilst Leone is well travelled, it will be Val’s first real trip overseas and at the moment, her excitement (about the trip) and nerves (about representing her country) are having a high old time. Val and Leone have only been playing together for about four years, but they have represented WA in the women’s teams in each of those years. Leone is no stranger to international bridge either, having been part of the Australian teams in 2009 (Sao Paulo, Brazil) and (2010 Ning Po, China), and also in Hamilton, New Zealand.

Val was born in Germany of Ukrainian parents just after the war and the family immigrated to Australia when she was just two years old. They settled in Palmyra, where at that time, there was plenty of bush still, so Val’s childhood memories include tadpole hunting, exploring and picking wild flowers, with Fremantle their major “big smoke”.

As soon as Val finished school, she began job hunting. Her first job was with O’Connor Computing Data Centre who, after testing her and a couple of other candidates, sent them off for on the job training with both NCR and IBM as computer programmers because there was no other form of training available in WA. She and a work mate learned bridge when she was about twenty-four.

“We climbed up a couple of flights of stairs to the class and peeked in the door,” says Val, “All the others in the room looked ancient, well over seventy! I wanted to turn tail and go home, but my friend refused, and as she was driving, I had to stay too!” She adds, with a wry smile, “Of course, they wouldn’t look so ancient to me now! People look different when you’re only twenty four!”

She was working at West Rail when she met the man she was (after, she says, thinking long, hard and more than twice about it) eventually to marry when she was twenty eight. The marriage didn’t work well, but Val, whose husband travelled a lot, became a stay at home Mum and gave it her best shot for fifteen years. Although bridge was often on the back burner, Val and her husband helped Don and Marion Browning in the very early years of this
club’s formation, and Val is one of our founding members. Initially, they played at the Manning Library, but after that building burned down, they moved to the Ernest Johnson Football Pavilion ... with no air conditioning and lots of insects, attracted by the light, dive bombing and biting players. Although Val says she should have thought another twice about the whole idea of marriage, she has Tanya and Simon, two great children and absolutely no regrets.

There were some tough years as a single mother, working and raising her two children. Going out was difficult and her employer, a major utility provider Val prefers not to name and shame, was less than generous about allowing her time off (even as annual leave, paid or unpaid) to play bridge, even if it was to represent WA.

   “Some employers are fantastic like that, but mine wasn’t, so it limited the times I could even go interstate to compete, let alone internationally” sighed Val, “but that’s how it was.”

However, she has managed to play for WA for the last six years in a row, winning the Nationals in Adelaide and the Northern Territory with Leone as her partner. Now, after a solid twenty years back in the work force, Val is retired and she is looking forward to playing not only competitive, State and international level bridge, but also to catching up with old acquaintances over a friendly game at the Club. She’s also thoroughly enjoying quality time with her very active two and a half year old grand-daughter, Mila.

Leone Fullers’s childhood was very different from Val’s. She was born in New South Wales in the early 1960’s, and as her father was in the army the family moved very frequently. Primary school for Leone meant constantly changing schools – and, as each state system was totally different, Leone had more than the usual challenges to overcome at primary school, as well as the frequent changes of house. Leone worked out that although the family remained in WA after she turned nine, she had still lived in about nineteen or twenty houses before she herself turned twenty.

Leone trained as a social worker, and did clinical work for a number of years before moving into the management side, where she has been particularly involved with not for profit organisations, working as Executive Director and also as a management consultant for several organisations. She is currently a Community Board Member for the Mental Health Review Board and is also working as a management consultant.

   “I’ve always enjoyed the work, be it clinical or administrative and management,” says Leone. “Of course it can be stressful, but you really feel you are making a difference, and you can see the results.”

Her family played cards, especially 500, a game described by Wikipedia as a trick-taking game that is an extension of Euchre with some ideas from Bridge, so card games have always been a part of her life. Her sister Lauren needed a partner, so she taught Leone to play and a couple of years later, when she was twenty four, Leone met her husband Trevor, who is a chemical engineer, over the bridge table. Both have represented WA on a number of occasions, notching up many excellent wins. Today, she and Trevor still team up and enjoy playing together, but they are not a permanent partnership at the bridge table. They enjoy being able to discuss games played with other partners! Their daughter Kirstyn, who decided to learn the game so she could understand the ‘foreign language’ her parents so often used, has already represented Australia in the World Youth Girls Teams in Turkey and has also represented England – an unusual feat made possible because she is studying
chemistry in Manchester. Their other daughter, Danni, whilst also studying chemistry at UWA, has restricted her bridge involvement to acting as a caddy during big tournaments.

The Fullers often travelled together as a family whilst the girls were growing, and found that house exchanges were the ideal way for them to holiday. They’ve swapped houses with people in Wales, England, the Netherlands and Canada, each set of families exploring and getting to know completely new territories in a way not provided for by ordinary tours. This year, when Kirstyn graduates in June, they will spend six weeks exploring Italy and Greece.

“I’m just about unemployable this year because of all the travel”, laughs Leone.

Val and Leone regularly meet to discuss their system and their bidding, working at their bridge partnership on several levels. It goes without saying that all of us at South Perth Bridge Club wish this partnership every success in the international arena.

Now HERE’S a bit of a giggle!

The “Theme Day” at the recent Gold Coast Congress was “Dots and Dashes” .... and the winners ...

Cassie Morin  
Helen Arendts  
Valerie Isle  
Ros Warnock

Where DID you get your gear, ladies? Dash it all, you leave your editor speechless .....