

Central Coast Leagues Club Bridge Club: President's Report 2016:

It has been good to be able to consolidate our Club during 2015/16. We owe a great deal to the CCLC for providing us with an area that we can call our own.

When I look back at all those years when we had to pack everything up and store our tablecloths and all our equipment after each session, it makes our current arrangement wonderful. Many of our newer members (i.e. anyone who has joined our Club since 2010) may not be aware of the effort it took to get a session underway when we were not in a position to leave out our equipment and to just lock the door at the end of play. In addition, for many of those years we actually had to move to a different venue for each session.

We have had some issues with our venue during the year and in particular problems with getting the room temperature levels right. The Leagues Club Management came up with the positive solution of installing separate air conditioners for the playing area which we can control. We very grateful for their generosity and we were especially appreciative of the way in which the CCLC organised for us to play in the Parkview room while the units were installed. We are still working on the best way of satisfying everyone as many players have different temperature needs. We may need to learn to carefully dress in layers so we can cool down or warm up as needed.

For most of the year we thought we would have to incorporate the bridge club and to cover our own insurance needs. The committee reviewed the constitution and looked at what we needed to do to incorporate. However last month we were advised that this was no longer necessary and that we were covered under the Incorporation of the CCLC. Still this was an interesting exercise as it was timely that we updated our Equipment Register and reviewed our Constitution. Thanks very much to David Bowerman in particular who spent a lot of time going through our Constitution and to Wendy Mitchell who upgraded the Equipment Register with Leon.

I could not help reflecting on the huge difference between our Club's present Register of six pages and over \$31,000 worth of equipment to the first Equipment Register I put together in May 1989. This consisted of two sets of boards, 65 packs of cards, 19 tablecloths a timer/clock and bidding pads, score sheets, 4 sets of Howell movement cards 9 trophies and 2 Monthly Medals, 1 notice board, a filing box and a brief case.

During the year we bought a new computer, a new printer, a new safe and changed our system of running movements from ASE9 to compscore. We were incredibly lucky to have been given a wireless microphone by Brisbane Water Bridge Club who upgraded their own system and thus had one surplus to their needs. We are very grateful to the Brisbane Water Bridge Club for their generosity.

We combined with Brisbane Water to run a successful training day for potential teachers with Joan Butts which involved 28 players on a Sunday in March. We also joined in with the Central Coast Bridge Club at Long Jetty for a Director's training session with John McIlwraith in June 2016. I think this level of cooperation with the other Clubs in our area is wonderful and hope we enjoy more of these combined training sessions in the future. This does not always happen in bridge clubs elsewhere which I think is a pity.

Congratulations to Matt Raj Mal who has successfully completed the required number of training sessions to gain full accreditation as a bridge teacher with the Australian Bridge Federation.

Our team competitions this year have been very successful with 16 Teams taking part in our Teams of Three competition, 10 teams in our Club Team Event and 6 teams in our Restricted Teams. We also had 35 teams taking part in our two Intra-Club Teams events held in February and September. The Intra Club Teams event was introduced by the Leagues Club Bridge Club back in 2000 with the aim of this being a local competition, opened only to those members of affiliated Bridge Clubs on the Central Coast. Initially these sessions were held at the Leagues Club but this was changed in 2001 such that they are held twice a year at the Leagues Club and once a year at Long Jetty and once at Brisbane Water BC.

It was also exceptional to see that out of 64 players attending the Intra Club Teams in February 2016, 18 players had over 1,000 master points. Statistics from the May ABF Newsletter (reported in our June Newsletter) highlighted the percentage of players in different rankings across Australia. This shows that the CCLCBC has a high proportion of strong players with double the National percentage of players in the 300 to 1,000 MP range as well as double the national average of players over 1,000 MPs. This is great for local competition though it can also indicate that we have far fewer new players joining our Club.

Thanks to our wonderful Social planners (in particular Lynn Lynch, Rosanne Ransley and Ruth Griffith) we again had some exceptional special events during the year, including the Melbourne Cup (all that yellow and daisies – not to mention our jockey Director), our Presentation Day with its wonderful green and Irish theme and directed by one of the Southern Hemisphere's biggest leprechauns and of course our Charity Day in June was an amazing success raising \$3,900 for our local charity, Pandora.

For the first time in a number of years we have actually had a slight increase in our membership and it is particularly nice to see some old members such as David Ford and Mark Levitt back after many years absence.

Sadly we also lost some wonderful members during the year including Dirk O'Connor in December 2015, Bill Pinfold and Les Free in February 2016, Dot Storey Wilson, Anne Stimson and John White in March 2016.

I have many people to thank for all their help over the year including Clair O'Connor who agreed to help out on our Committee for three months and Alan Bustany who was co-opted to take on the busy task of Tournament Organiser when he returned from tripping around Australia.

I would like to thank Colin Mitchell who took on the job of Chief Director again this year and has had been very busy with the introduction of the compscore programme.

At this point I would also like to congratulate and welcome two new Directors, Julie Sadler and Alan Bustany who successfully completed the Director's Exam and have been being steadily introduced to the glamorous world of Directing or did I mean onerous world of Directing. Well done and thank you for all the effort involved.

Gwen White has also helped tremendously with another year as Recorder and for those who may think this does not seem to involve much, let me assure you that Gwen just makes it look that way. Gwen is a wonderful resource for members who do not want to make an official complaint but need to express frustration or annoyance and seek advice as to the best way to proceed. We are lucky to have a Recorder with such patience and integrity who handles this role with great dignity.

We are also fortunate to have such an efficient Master point Secretary in Wendy Mitchell. Wendy has been ensuring that you receive your hard fought for points for four years now. This is a complicated area as well as requiring input to the ABF at the end of each month so we thank her very sincerely for her hard work.

A special thanks also goes to Tony Ransley who took on the job of Newsletter Editor and has successfully produced wonderful newsletters each month, including lots of lovely pictures which are greatly sought after by members.

I would also like to thank my fellow committee members who have completed another year with such spectacular results. Rosanne has done a great job as Vice President, taking on the role of Tournament Secretary and Social Secretary until we were able to ring in Alan Bustany to take on the Tournament Secretary role. In her spare time Rosanne assisted Wendy with recording our masterpoints.

Ronnie Ng has done a great job as Treasurer and provides our financial records in the precise way that the CCLC requires. Ruth has done a wonderful job as assistant treasurer and keeping day to day matters running smoothly.

Lynn Lynch has kept us on track and ensured that our meetings have been organised and minuted and has also done a superb job as our Welfare person. In addition Lynn has as usual excelled herself with her intricate designs and ideas for our special events such as our pot of gold for presentation day and wonderful door prizes.

Leon has kept our playing area and equipment organised as well as doing a lot of directing while David has focussed on maintaining our website and setting up our new computer etc. David has plans of completing the Directing Course so we will look forward to that too.

At this point I would like to thank all of our Directors for their hard work with running our sessions. It has not been easy to adjust to all the changes involved in changing our system to Compscore. The level of technology utilised in a session is staggering and it does put a lot of pressure on all our Directors. Well done everyone.

I would also pay tribute to two of our long term Directors Leyla Moncelet, who retired during the year after 15 years of directing and Peter Berzins who has stopped weekly directing after 29 years. We owe these two Directors a real debt of gratitude for all their efforts on our behalf.

We also need to thank the Central Coast Leagues Club Board who continue to finance our Club and to attend to our needs. It is sad (for us) to note that Trish MacLean has retired this week from her role as Executive Secretary to the Manager and from her role as the liaison person for the Internal Clubs. Trish has been there for our Club for the last 18 years and we appreciate all her efforts on our behalf. We do wish her well in her retirement from full time work and realise we are being selfish when we say we are sad to see her moving on.

Finally I would like to thank all of you, our members, who support our Club in so many ways. Our special Events are special because you support them, you contribute to our Charity Day by making goodies and donating items and selling and buying tickets and of course you turn up day after day to compete in this wonderful (but sometimes very frustrating) game that we enjoy so much. Thank you for all your support to me over the past year and I know you will continue to help our next Committee in their endeavours in the coming year.

Dorothy Berzins
President