

BRIDGE TE AROHA: lovely place, lovely game ♠♥♦♣

Te Aroha News April 2025



The Wedding Corner



We start our wedding section this time with a quiz. Who is featured above and how long ago was this picture taken?

Moving on.....

Yes, Cam and Emma tied the knot at the end of March and here is proof of that.



It does look like our club members get married in nice places. Lovely weather and by all reports a great occasion.



Meanwhile on Good Friday.....



Don't Grace and Oscar look happy...and with good cause. Despite wind and rain before and after their big day, it turned out just fine when it was most needed. Congratulations to them both and to Emma and Cam.

Back then to our first wedding photo. Who did you think was featured? Well done if you said Austin with his then newly-wed bride, Barbara. Did you get the "when" as well? 10th April 1965. So, if you are counting, that means Austin and Barbara have just celebrated 60 years together. That's far longer than most bridge partnerships!

60 years on.....



Here's a more recent photo, 60 years on . They celebrated with a morning tea at Daltons', the landscape suppliers where Austin works part-time six days a week and then with a family celebration for about 60 friends and family (including some bridge players) at the Matamata Club. They still look pretty good, their dog too, though she was not around when they first got married! Watch this space for the 70th in a few years' time. Congratulations to both of you.

Maybe now we will have a break from bridge weddings for a month or two?

Second at “The Mount”



Anna, the local sponsor, and Herman

For the last two years, Tim and I have rather enjoyed ourselves at Mt Maunganui's 3A Multi Grade Pairs with two successes. No hattrick this year but Anna kept the Te Aroha name firmly among the prize-winners when this year, she and Herman Yuan (from Cambridge...and Anna's neighbour ,too!) finished just 0.35% behind the winners. Finishing so close behind Liz and Blair Fisher is no disgrace. A nice day for Anna and Herman who averaged 61.16% over the two sessions.

Anna also did well down south when her team finished 3rd in a 5A event in Dunedin and the following day was 5th in the 5A Pairs. To complete a good month, back with her normal partner, Anna's team was 4th in the Auckland Easter Congress 10A Teams.

Green Fingers....or “Chokolot”?



Well, it is not only their fingers that are green. Anyone would think it was St Patricks Day rather than just an evening at the club in early April. Gaye and Paul are “well decked” in the colour green and are holding a couple of the home or club grown chokos for which Paul is becoming world famous, well in the Te Aroha world.

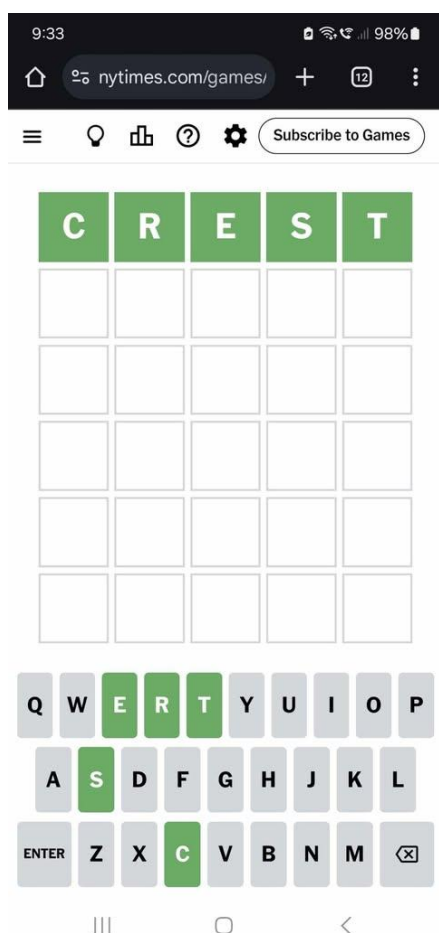
I have been cooking and eating some and the taste is very pleasant, much more so than some orange coloured veg. Watch out then for 12th July Day when the Deckers will no doubt change their colour to orange (commemoration of the Battle of the Boyne north of the Irish border) and this next vegetable will be not nearly as nice...or so I say!



Remember this?

Amazing, Paul.... and it is not just the chokos either with melons and many other fruit and vegetables appearing on the table nearest to the bridge club entrance.

On the “Crest” of a Wave



I am not sure how many of you do the daily on-line Wordle puzzle, where you have 6 guesses to work out a 5-letter word. For those who do, how many attempts does it normally take you..maybe 3, 5, a lucky 6th an unlucky 7th! Maybe it takes you a few minutes? It takes me a few minutes more than that!

Well, on April 14th, a club member rather excelled. That's right: did it in one! 5 seconds or how long it took Rochelle to type "Crest". I asked Rochelle if it felt like winning 40 million on Lotto and she said "much better".

As an aside, I rather think many bridge players lose their sense of values, having a much higher regard for the game of bridge than the outside world. Not Rochelle, of course. The only explanation for her comment was that she must have had several 40 million Lotto wins in the past!

So, a special "Wisdom of Solomon" tip for Wordle. Forget "Crest" as your first pick for the next 100 years. Rochelle has. Mind you, it seems she might be able to help you with your next Lotto numbers pick.

Well guessed, Rochelle. Now, how good are you at working out Tim's bridge hand?

The Wisdom of Solomon

(the bridge tip, this time!)




Never Pre-empt a Pre-Empty

This means if the opposition open the bidding with say a Weak 2 opening, maybe a 3-level pre-empt, it is not a good idea to bid if you have a **weak** bid of your own. If you do bid in such a situation, your partner expects you to have an Opening Hand.

This next story tells you why.

Trust your partner! Maybe!

A couple of weeks back I had a very pleasant Friday game with Peter TJ. I picked up one rather nice hand:

South Deals			
N-S Vul			
♠	9 7		
♥	A 9 8 5 3 2		
♦	A		
♣	A K Q 9		
West	North	East	South
<i>Richard</i>		<i>TJ</i>	
			Pass
1 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
?			

Now, normally, TJ's bid is a weak bid, very few high card points and lots of hearts. No matter how strong I am, I should pass 4H, considering how weak he might be.

However, I was suspicious. The opponents were very silent. I wondered whether my partner had rather more than he showed. If he had high cards, we were very likely to make a slam. So, I decided to take a chance, nothing to lose except a reputation of bidding makeable slams. I bid 6H. What's the worst that could happen? That TJ did held the hand he showed! This game is all about blame. I have broad shoulders.

Yes, you've guessed. TJ had what he should have, basically just a string of hearts. North led a trump. I cringed as he put down 5 hearts, 4 diamonds and 3 clubs, all rubbishy cards, no ace nor king. I was doomed..well the contract was, except for one wonderful thing. He only had one spade! Wonderful as indeed was one his rather useful "black jack".

South Deals

N-S Vul

♠ A 10 6 3 2

♥ 10

♦ K J 5

♣ 7 4 3 2

♠ 9 7

♥ A 9 8 5 3 2

♦ A

♣ A K Q 9

N
W E
S

♠ Q

♥ Q J 7 6 4

♦ Q 8 4 3

♣ J 6 5

♠ K J 8 5 4

♥ K

♦ 10 9 7 6 2

♣ 10 8

West

North

East

South

Richard

TJ

Pass

1 ♥

Pass

4 ♥

Pass

6 ♥

All pass

North led their trump. With trumps out of the way very quickly, I could play 4 rounds of clubs, discarding the SJ from dummy and very soon made all 13 tricks. The slam was unbeatable but an even better score when I made the overtrick.

Well bid, TJ. Next time, I will trust you.

On to the very next hand. I was blessed with an even stronger hand!

Board 4

North Deals

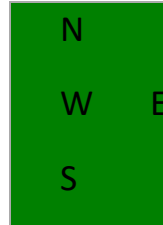
Both Vul

♠ K Q 2

♥ A Q

♦ K 5 4 3

♣ A K 6 5



West North East South

Richard

TJ

2 ♥

3 ♦

Pass

?

I had a flat 21 hcp hand and was about to open 2NT but not just North but my partner as well bid before me and TJ was vulnerable. I trusted him to have what he had shown, an Opening or near Opening hand with some diamonds.

No messing. I was there with 6NT, perhaps conservatively but partner might not have much more than a string of diamonds. I awaited dummy with interest and hope! The contract was destined **not** to be lay-down!

Board 4

North Deals

Both Vul

♠ A J
 ♥ J 10 8 7 6 5
 ♦ —
 ♣ Q 10 4 3 2

♠ K Q 2

♥ A Q

♦ K 5 4 3

♣ A K 6 5

N
 W E
 S

♠ 5 4

♥ 3 2

♦ Q J 10 8 7 6 2

♣ J 7

♠ 10 9 8 7 6 3

♥ K 9 4

♦ A 9

♣ 9 8

West	North	East	South
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<i>Richard</i>	<i>Val</i>	<i>TJ</i>	<i>Nick</i>
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	2 ♥	3 ♦	Pass
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6 NT	All pass
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Val (North) led HJ. I won, played a diamond to dummy's DQ and Nick's ace. Nick returned a heart. I won and played lots of diamond winners and then CAK. However, Val could keep CQ and SA and I finished down 2.

Yes, I could have bid 3NT and then TJ would have put down SA and his long diamonds. Even that was not enough to guarantee slam. So, Val and Nick ended up even with us over the 2 boards. Thanks TJ, you were nearly a double hero... but a little bit extra next time, please, for your free bid.

Our Latest Movie Star



You may not know (I certainly did not) that Rochelle had a part in “The Gone” during its filming in Te Aroha. Maybe the start of a new career? In case you cannot see too clearly, she is in the middle in blue, at the rear, I believe, not wrapped in blue at the front.

She will sign autographs any Tuesday night to anyone who dangles a Pinot Gris in front of her.

Bridge A ‘Head!

Well, this **Sunday, April 27th**, there is the second round of the Waikato Area Pairs being held at the club. We have a number of local pairs playing which is great. Please remember a spot of morning tea if you are playing.

Thanks in advance also to those who have offered to help.

On **Saturday June 7th**, it’s Spa Town Teams at Silver Fern Farms Events Centre. A few club members will play in the Teams and we hope many more will take part in the Restricted Swiss Pairs which runs along side it. You can enter either event through NZ Bridge website...or if you prefer, just tell me if you want to play. \$40.00 per person for a day’s bridge.

We will also be needing some volunteers for the kitchen and to provide morning tea....and to provide raffle prizes.

Waikato Inter Club Teams at Cambridge: Sunday 22nd June

If you are interested in playing in the Open, Intermediate or Junior competitions, please either tell me or put your name on the sheet on the notice-board before the end of May. 4 players per team.

and a night to help Alan...Tuesday June 3rd

Many of you will be aware of the major operation Alan Mace has recently had in Melbourne to steady his right-hand. It is wonderful to report that the operation appears to have been successful. This cost a heap of money..and he could be having a similar operation to correct his left side.

The Committee have decided that it would be appropriate to make a small contribution towards the costs that Alan has already incurred by having a fund-raising evening on **Tuesday June 3rd**, which is a Social Night in the club program. We intend to invite players from other clubs, especially Waihi, where Alan is still an active member and been a big contributor for many years.

As well as this fund-raising evening, the Committee have decided the proceeds from the Spa Town Teams raffle should also be donated to Alan.

We hope as many club members as possible will come on that Tuesday night to support one of our most popular club members.

Off to Oz.

That's Tim for 6 weeks during May and June going to Australia "up the middle and round the west side" by road. He will not be around on Tuesday nights which means he should fall well behind in the "Slam Cup" competition. Have a great time, Tim.

And welcome back, Shirley

Nice to see you back, Shirley (Bailey, that is) after a few weeks away looking after your daughter who is recovering well after a difficult period.

That's all for now until the May newsletter....and if there are any further weddings to report, please let me know.

Richard

