

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

Te Aroha News December 2025



Party Time at The Club.

And what a lovely evening the Christmas Party was. It started with a nice socialising time, which was interrupted by the “sound of music” from our own “Bridge Boys”. It’s not every.. indeed, it is probably no other NZ bridge club which has a group of 4 members entertaining with some great music.... And they were “sooo good”. Well done to Tyrel, Oscar, Damien and Cam and their roadie, Charlotte. A great sound. **The Bridge Boys**



First heard at Te Aroha

Oh, one of the pains in being the drummer is that they usually seem to be at the back, harder to see, or impossible when the lead singer is doing his bit. So, let's put that right. Sorry, Oscar and Tyrel, we are featuring the drummer and as well the bass player:



They all contributed to the awesome sound. Here then are Damien and Cam.

Let's also use the first two words of that last sentence to describe the meal we had. "A great feed" with another of our members, Corolyn, "coming up trumps" with such a delicious feed, both mains and desserts.

The Chef



Thanks, Corolyn: yummy.

Next it was prize-giving and below we see those who came up on top this year.



Paul did a lot of hand-shaking as well as having his own hand shaken

a few times too. Here, Laurie and Jan received their prize for winning the Pro Tag Swiss Pairs. They also won the Auckland and Te Aroha Cups, the Individual event, Jan off scratch and Laurie the handicap. Here Jan is again:



with the Friday Town Clock Trophy. She won the event by over 20%.



The Thee Week Individual winners, Malcolm off Scratch and Peter TJ on Handicap while Peter and Paul were top Junior Pair in the Championship Pairs.

Winners off Scratch



and Handicap



Championship Pairs winners off scratch, Anna and Richard. Shirley Townsend won the Mokena Championship Handicap with Katrina. Paul was a very able substitute for this evening. Richard also won the Jim Shine trophy... and with more than a little help had success in:



Junior/Restricted Pairs with Damien and Enid Nicol Cup with Joy

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Rivals but Equals for The Slam Cup



as they shared first place, so Tim and Richard “shared” what was in the Cup. Tim was also there to lead his team to Saxon Cup success:



Missing for the trophy presentation was Austin. Well done to them all.

Three Week Pairs Winners



Off scratch, Hanna and Paul and handicap winners Damien and Cam.

One Week Later



Alma was not at the Christmas Party this year. Thus, the award (the President's Cup) for the Most Promising New Player was presented at the Club one week later. Congratulations to Alma who has made a great start to her bridge playing at the Club.

What a Night for the “Shirleys”

We have already seen that Shirley Bailey was in the winning Saxon Cup team and Shirley Townsend won a share of the Mokena Cup. In the Hemmes Kalma event, they joined forces and were clear winners.



On the left, Paul was just delighted to present the award to Shirley for Most Improved Player. It was lovely to have Henk do the honours for the winners of the Hemmes Kalma Trophy.

Reward for a rather good night



That was the night of the highest score of 2025. A challenge for 2026 for you all to beat the 72.45% scored this year.

After the prize-giving, it was time for a session of bridge. No supper this evening. Well, I think not needed but some members were seen hanging over the kitchen bar where the left-over food was. A neat evening.



The “Not so Well” Column

Hopefully, this is a very small column. Best wishes here go to Barbara who had a nasty garden fall resulting in a broken elbow. I believe she is home after a short spell in hospital.

Paul's Produce



We know where all the above came from, this fine looking garden, below.



Ever wondered what the President of a bridge club, well this bridge club, does, well some of his time. Amazing.

Pat's Celebration



It was the day for our Friday players to have their Christmas celebrations: hence the then empty bowls about to be filled with strawberries and cream. However, there was another celebration that day, with Pat cutting the cake Jan had baked. A lovely way to celebrate your birthday, a special one, with friends at the bridge club.

Farewell Arie



Arie Rigter had not played at our bridge club for a year or two. Before that, though, he had played for many years (he started playing around 1990)...and encouraged two of his sons, Tim and Adri, to take up the game. Arie passed away in mid- November. He was 95. He was farewelled by a huge number of family and friends, including many who knew him from our club. Thanks to all the Bridge Club Members who attended the funeral.

One bridge story. Arie was back in 2015 due to go to Waikato Hospital for a needed knee transplant. There was just one snag. The timing coincided with the last night of the Club Championship Pairs. Arie was playing that year with Tim. They were leading the event by not much. The transplant would have to wait! Indeed, it was postponed indefinitely.

However, it was definitely worth it as Arie and Tim won the Club Champs that year.

A Bridge game is just so important. Well, that one was.

The Wisdom of Solomon



Bidding a Good Slam

It's a nice feeling when you bid and make a slam. Sometimes, you need a bit of science to bid a successful slam...but not always! Most North-Souths at the club missed slam on the following. Yet, the only "science" involved was Blackwood, perhaps the highly recommended Roman Key- Card. Watch:

Board 5		♠	K Q 9 6 5 3	
North Deals		♥	K 9	
N-S Vul		♦	A 10 7	
		♣	A J	
♠	10 8 7 4	<div>N W E S</div>	♠	2
♥	7 4		♥	Q J 10 3 2
♦	Q J 9 6 3		♦	K 8 5
♣	7 4		♣	9 8 5 2
		♠	A J	
		♥	A 8 6 5	
		♦	4 2	
		♣	K Q 10 6 3	
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	
	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	
Pass	3 ♠	Pass	4 NT	
Pass	5 ♣	Pass	5 ♦	
Pass	5 ♥	Pass	6 NT	
All pass				

North's jump to 3S showed 15-18, maybe 19, hcp and at least 6 spades. South must then surely be interested in slam. There are different ways of responding to the Key Card Ask. 5C above showed 0 or 3 of the 4 aces and trump king. In view of North's jump to 3S, it had to be 3. 5D, the next non-trump suit, asked about the SQ. 5H said "I have the SQ and also HK. "

At that point, South could count to 12 tricks:, 6 spades, HAK, DA and CAKQ. South could not be sure of any more and settled for 6NT. Since North held CJ too, there were 14 tricks!

Yet, even using simple Gerber 4C over 3S, North shows 2 aces, then 2 kings. North must have more high card points than 14 to jump to 3S. 6NT would be a very worthwhile gamble. A nice slam to bid.

It was important North jumped to show their strength. Asking for aces and kings was all that was needed to bid this slam. The extra insurance South had that this would be a good slam was the so useful SJ.

A Short Break

The Christmas break from bridge in Te Aroha has got quite short. There's bridge every Tuesday except December 30th and Friday bridge every Friday except December 26th and January 2nd. So, do come along with or without a partner on the Tuesdays and Fridays. Our wonderful Partnership Steward, Rochelle, will be helping club members once again in the New Year, starting with the Three Week Individual beginning January 27th.

In January, we will welcome the new Club Committee. One change is going to be in the method table money is to be collected. Don't worry. The new Compass Dollar method will be straightforward to operate.

Here's hoping everyone enjoys the Christmas/New Year period and we welcome you all back to bridge in 2026.

Richard