

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

Te Aroha News November 2025



New Life Members at the AGM

It was with great pleasure that I was able at the AGM to speak to the Committee nominations of Tim Rigter and Anna Kalma for Life Membership of this club.

Tim has been through bad and much better times at the club, first joining in 1999 and serving for many years since then on the committee and between September 2015 and November 2021 as Club President. He has and continues to fill so many roles at the club. He is a regular board dealer, sets up the movement and scores most Tuesday and some Friday sessions. He regularly keeps an eye on the time during the sessions. Whatever he does, he does willingly and with a smile on his face, making everyone feel welcome. He has, with more than a little support from his number one supporter back home, Kristin, applied for and obtained funding for the club on several occasions. Whatever needs doing, Tim will be there to help. He has been and continues to be a superb club member, fully deserving now the award of Life Membership.

If Ari got his son, Tim, into the club, then the same could be said of Hermanna and her daughter, Anna. Indeed, Hermanna has been responsible in getting so many of her family into this bridge club. Yet, in the first few years, Te Aroha Bridge Club was failing, membership down virtually to single figures. In those days, only as recently as 13 years ago, Anna stepped into the club and was a major force in its survival and revival. She took a keen group of new players for lessons, not that long after she had learnt the game herself and got most of them to stay at the club. Like her mother before her, she took on the role of Partnership Steward and was also Club Captain.

The atmosphere at the club changed so much for the better with Anna being so important in reviving the club, in making it a happy place to play bridge.



Yet, she has done so much more, not just for Te Aroha but for other clubs in the area, when it comes to movements and scoring. She is always so willing to help and she can usually find the solution quickly. She has also helped the club recruit more members, on-line, through Facebook etc. She has also been on the Board of New Zealand Bridge and on the Waikato Bays Regional Committee.

She has also been a driving force behind the club's main tournaments, Spa Town Teams and other events held simultaneously.

In recent years, she moved to Cambridge which has reduced the number of times she plays at the club. Yet, she is always available to help with movements, scoring etc.

She has said that she feels the revival of the Te Aroha Bridge Club is her most cherished achievement in the bridge world. The club and its members are surely most grateful for the support she has given to the club in the last 12+ years... and continues to give. For all she has contributed, Life Membership is a just reward. Our other Life Members are Henk and Laurie.

Change in Committee Members

After two years, Peter Daffurn is stepping down as Club President. During that time, Committee Member roles have been standardised and recorded. He has also overseen the revitalising of the outside of the club and the installation of underfloor heating. Previously, he served for a period as Club Secretary. Thank you, Peter, for all you have done for the club while serving on its committee.

Victor Kooter is also standing down from his position as Treasurer and from the Committee after serving in both capacities for 12 years. Financially, the club is in a fine position. The books too have been extremely well kept during that period. Thank you, Victor.

Jan Baker is also retiring from the Committee. As well as administering/scoring Friday Bridge, Jan has helped in other ways including in recent years applying for grants. Rumour has it that she will continue in her important Friday role.

Rochelle Van Heuven is also standing down from the Committee but thankfully, is still carrying on her most important Partnership Steward role.

Welcome, then, to the Committee to Lee Merlini as new Treasurer, to Debbie Hughes and welcome back to Charlotte Glass. Meanwhile, Paul Decker steps up from a Committee role to become Club President.

Other than myself as Club Captain, others remaining on the Committee are Shirley Bailey as Secretary and Tim Rigter, Lisa Pritchard and Ross McIntyre. It is a great sign for the heart of the club that all Committee positions were filled in advance of the AGM, thus not requiring any voting at that meeting.

A Worried Man?



Does he look it? No way! Glass of port in hand, he is, I am sure, looking forward to being the next Club President. Welcome, Paul Decker.

If the mood at the AGM is any indication, this club is in great heart. Thanks to those who have been on the Committee, those there now and to all those who will help out with jobs that need doing.

Shirleys to the Fore!

There was no stopping the Shirleys in the recently finished Hemmes- Kalma Cup club competition. Shirley Bailey and Shirley Townsend turned in three very consistent sessions of bridge to win the final competition of the year by 23.47% with a huge 62.38% average.

They had a strong challenger on the second night when Peter TJ and Lisa scored over 69% but that level could not be maintained over three nights. They finished 3rd behind Martin and Richard (Symes) but it was the Shirleys who were really celebrating...and rightly so.

“Palmy Days... and Nights”

A question for you.



What is unusual about this picture? Hold your breath for a few minutes and you will find out.

The NZ National Congress has moved to what should be its home for many more years, to the Events Centre right in the middle of Palmerston North. The roughly 800 attendees was a record for our National Congress and included several from our club. Guy, Victor, Rochelle, Tim, Anna and yours truly were there the whole 8 days. Alan was there most of the time and Joy for some of the time.

The nice venue is perfectly situated for visits to local cafes, pubs and restaurants (the Te Aroha team frequented many of these, all three!) and was in close walking distance to many motels. There were, though, no Te Aroha successes at the bridge table. Rochelle and Tim threatened in the Restricted Open Swiss Pairs. They led the 78 pair field with one match out of nine to play. However, they lost that by 4.79 imps which was enough to see them drop to 5th, only 3.03 vps behind the winners. Nevertheless, a

good steady performance. In the same event, Joy finished 20th and Alan 24th.

Tim, Rochelle, Victor and Guy were 3rd in the Restricted Open Congress Teams with one round out of 6 remaining but a 24 imp loss in the final match saw them finish 12th. Tim and Rochelle finished 7th in the Restricted Pairs Plate. Anna and I had no starring performances though consistently finished in the top thirds of most of our events...

But the real winners were:

Italian Mafia



The theme for “dress-up day” was the letter “I” and just as a Te Aroha team did last year (a multitude of “Richards”), so they stole the show in “25”.

Who could resist such a mean looking team? Certainly not the judges as our team took first place. If you see any of them prowling around the streets of Te Aroha, then best you open your wallets!

Well done to you all... a great look.

Money, Money, Money!



We see a rather happy Rochelle and Tim showing off their newly acquired wealth at the National Congress.

No, it was not prize money they won during the event.

No, it was not money they were owed by their Te Aroha friends.

No, it was not winnings from the pokies.. as if they would so gamble!

It was, though, prize winnings from the 2025 Gold Coast Congress which they only just received! Nice.

Back though to our question:



What is unusual about this picture?

Close examination will reveal that all 7 bridge players were holding a glass of drinking water at that evening's visit to Lone Star Restaurant in "Palmy". Indeed, that was their only beverage during the meal, yes, even for Guy!

It would be unkind but accurate to say that the only reason for this was that the restaurant had no liquor licence. Rest assured, though, that the group had not remained alcohol-free before and probably not after the meal as well. Yet, this picture captures a rare alcohol-free moment. Is that why the guy in blue on the left looks so "vacant"?

I am sure you recognise most in the photo. Anna had not come to dinner that night. Next to me is Hattie Curtis who lived and played bridge in Waihi for many years and who now lives in Takaka)"An tartaka" as Alan says frequently. Alan and Hattie are good friends and bridge partners and Hattie was very much part of the Te Aroha group in "Palmy"

Nice Achievements



Oscar, Lisa and Damien have not been playing that long and it is neat to see them recognised with Certificate of Proficiency Certificates. Well done to them all.

The Wisdom of Solomon



When will we ever learn?

The above wise words from the song “Where have all the flowers gone?” have been around a long time. I have been playing bridge a pretty long time, too.

We all need to learn. I have not, or so it seems. I am putting you in my seat and it soon became the very hot seat! The opponents got to 3NT both quickly and nervously. You are East and this is what you see in dummy:

South Deals	♠	8 7		
None Vul	♥	—		
	♦	Q 7 5 3		
	♣	A Q 10 8 7 6 3		
			♠	K J 6 4 2
			♥	J 10 4 2
			♦	K 8
			♣	K 5



West	North	East	South
	<i>dummy</i>	<i>you</i>	

1 NT

Pass	3 ♣	Pass	3 NT
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All pass

1NT was 12-14 hcp. The strength of 3C was unknown to everyone except North, until dummy went down. Your partner, West, led H9. Declarer won this trick with HK and played C2 with your partner discarding a lowish diamond. CT is taken by your king. What do you play to trick 3?

Well, H9 did not look very encouraging a lead. I had to find the right defence with all those club winners in dummy. I chose my 4th highest spade.... and the declarer breathed a big sigh of relief!

South Deals
None Vul

♠ 8 7
♥ —
♦ Q 7 5 3
♣ A Q 10 8 7 6 3

♠ Q 9 5
♥ A Q 9 8 7 6
♦ 9 6 4 2
♣ —

N
W E
S

♠ K J 6 4 2
♥ J 10 4 2
♦ K 8
♣ K 5

♠ A 10 3
♥ K 5 3
♦ A J 10
♣ J 9 4 2

West	North	East	South
	<i>dummy</i>	<i>you</i>	

1 NT

Pass	3 ♣	Pass	3 NT
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All pass

Declarer won SA and with HK, DA and six club tricks had made their contract.

What's the moral of the story? **Return partner's opening lead.** They often know best. They sure did this time! Sorry, Ann. A good lead, too. I had better follow my advice next time.

"When will we ever learn."

It's Christmas Party and prize-giving next week. There's also plenty of bridge at the club in December. Hope to see you there.

Richard