

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

Te Aroha News August/ September 2026



Remembering Barbara... and Joe



Joe and Barbara Keys were two neat members of our club...and they had a story to tell. Jo passed in 2023 and Barbara just a few weeks ago. We told their story back in 2022 and again a year later on Jo's death.

They were an inseparable couple being married for 64 years. Our newer members will not remember Joe. So, this story remembers both of them. They both grew up in Te Aroha and met at a basketball fund-raising dance in Te Aroha West. They had many trips overseas though lived in Matamata since 1957.

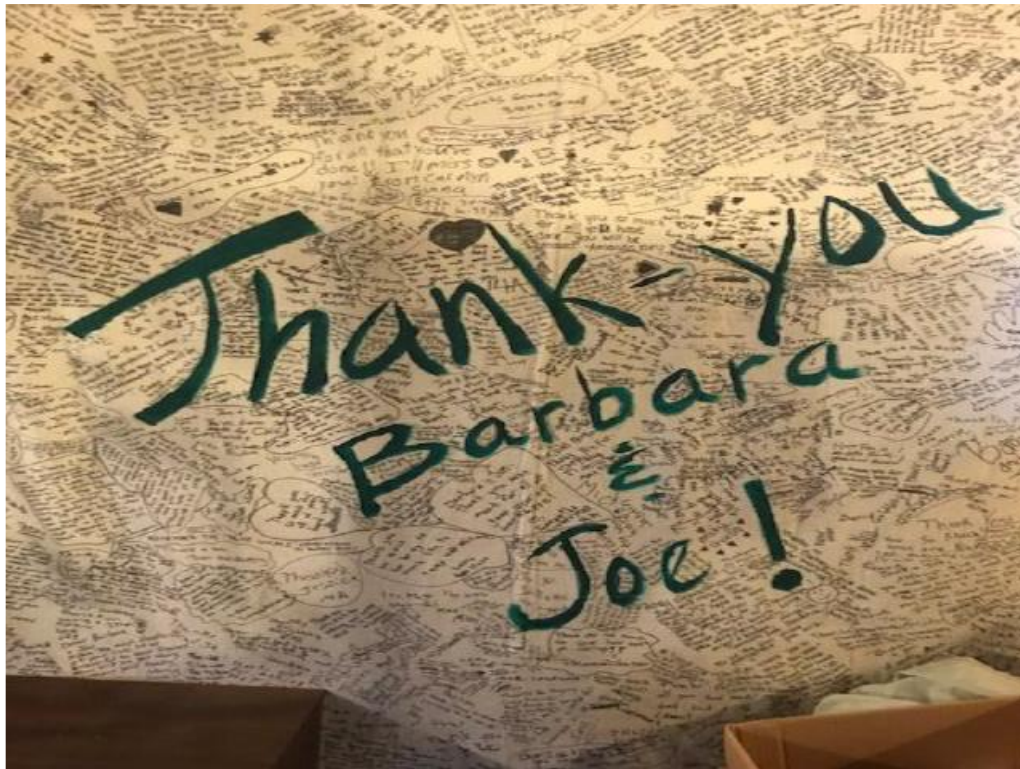
Barbara was very sporty and was a Thames Valley rep in Netball and Badminton. She went to school and played tennis with Peter Snell and went to a tennis coaching school in Auckland.

She worked at the local ANZ Bank where her contemporaries included Lesley Quilty, whom she knew from school, and Carol Wilson. Then came the kids and then came the itchy feet, especially Barbara's. They had holidays around the Pacific but in 1986/87, it was more than a few weeks' holiday. It was two years travelling around Australia in a camper van....and literally all the way round and back again! It was supposed to be a trial run for a similar experience around Europe though the big European experience never eventuated.

Travel has been in their blood and a phrase they use to describe themselves is "rich in memories with not much money." They could do more than a bit of complaining but what shone through is their positive get-on-with-it approach..and get on with life they certainly did.

Then came the visits to American summer camps, firstly to Camp America and then 13 visits to a camp in New Hampshire for the children of predominantly wealthy Jewish New Yorkers or those from Boston. The children were in the 7-15 year old age group coming for 4 or 8 weeks. In later years, the camps opened up for under-privileged children too. Jo and Barbara spent 8 weeks at a time at the camp. Jo did maintenance while Barbara helped Joe out as well as working as the receptionist in the camp infirmary.

What was most unusual was that most of the staff were in the 18-25 year age bracket. When they first went, Barbara was 54 and Joe 59. The camp owners really appreciated Joe and Barbara. The camp had a "Keys Lane" while they developed a garden there from thick bush called "Keys Corner". The respect in which they were held was well summed up by the cloth parchment they were given on retirement, with words of thanks from many of the children.



hanging in their garage, a cloth signed by so many of the children at the camp with words of thanks

They did plenty of travelling like on a “Young at Heart” 42 day tour across USA and Mexico with those aged about 20-25, one third of their age at the time. There were many visits to Australia too. They travelled with tea towels with maps of New Zealand printed and prominently showing on the maps was a town called Matamata.

Although Barbara learnt to play bridge earlier, from the late Joyce Catchpole, Joe only learnt about six years before his death. They were members at both Matamata and Te Aroha. Barbara always took a special interest into how club members performed in tournaments following results on-line although she did not play herself in them herself.

They leave a son, a daughter and 3 great grandsons. Their daughter was the first disabled overseas Rotary exchange student, the travel lust being passed down a generation.

Many people wish they could go explore, do something different. Barbara and Joe got up and achieved that. They seemed so positive and had so many happy memories.

Te Aroha at the “Sixes”

Early August saw the annual “Cambridge 6’s” take place at the Karapiro Event Centre. There was the usual mix of dress-up, a quiz, heaps of raffles and a touch or two of bridge! Te Aroha had one team of six plus an extra Open pair (Tim and Rochelle) while Laurie and Joy were also there in different teams.

We cannot all be good at everything, though we can try! We “tried” extra hard when it came to the dress-up with a theme of “Superstition.” 36 teams and our “team of 6” came in second while Tim and Rochelle’s team finished just behind them in 3rd place.

Lucky Shits!



Indeed, we were! That’s Ross, Adri, Anna, Malcolm, Shirley T and yours truly

You may well call it “good fortune” to be “rained upon” from above but are you aware of which playing card is termed “The Curse of Scotland”?

The Curse of Scotland: the 9 of diamonds



Joy's team were leprechauns while Laurie's were the "Black Cats" (Laurie "politely" refused to produce a picture!)

We can skip the results of the quiz and the bridge though a few raffle prizes were seen heading towards our town afterwards. A good day at "The Lake".

Another New Potential Club Member

In a few years' time. Well, her mother, father, grandparents, grand-mother, step grand-father, great-uncle and great- aunt are/were . (A special prize if you can work out who that lot are!) So, welcome to Olive and congratulations to Oscar and Grace.



Bridge and Dress-Up at the Saxon Teams

As I am sure you all know, the third night of The Saxon Teams is a special night at the Club with all asked...and all came.... dressed up in a theme of "Fours".

The Bridge ended up much closer than it seemed after the first night though "Three Blind Mice" came through to win. I am still just a little confused at the connection to the number "4" but am assured all is good. So, well done to Alma, Gaye, Lisa and Rochelle:



Second “bridge wise” were Shirley (Bailey), Jan, Thomas and Henk.



otherwise known as “Suit Yourself”

However, maybe the main awards of the evening (and maybe there is no maybe about it!), were the dress-up champs, significant winners as per the voting:

The Wizard of Oz



Scarecrow, The Lion, Dorothy and Tin Man

Congratulations to Cam, Ross (McIntyre, in case you are wondering), Laurie and Debbie. A special “well done” to Debbie whose “Tin Man” was seen at The Grand before play and long into the “Port Session” afterwards. In second place were “The Beatles”



Hanna, Malcolm, Bernie, and Damien. Sargeant Peppers' Lonely Heart Club Band.

Malcolm won the award for the best dressed individual.

There were other pretty good “dress-ups” too. What better description of the Number 4 were there than these two teams. “Great Minds” they say “think alike”.

Four Square



Four Holes in One?



They will all be “shouting” if they have! Peter TJ, Wendy, Richard and Norma are four happy but maybe not champion golfers.

Four Leaf Clovers



More “greens”, this time the Irish connection. Leon spends some time each year in the Emerald Isle, Anna too. June and Alan’s connection there is a little less obvious. Maybe they will all be lucky at the bridge table?

And finally, **The Four Elements**



Water, Earth, Fire and Air as portrayed by Richard, Shirley, Joan and Nancy

Wisdom of Solomon



Run, Rabbit, Run!

What would you bid here?

♠ 6 4 3
♥ K 6 4 3
♦ K
♣ A J 7 6 2

West	North	East	South
			Pass
Pass	1 ♣	Dbl	Pass
Pass	?		

You did not have a very good hand when you opened third in hand and matters seemingly have taken a turn for the worse. You have been doubled in 1C for penalties: well, West converted East's take-out double to a penalty double. You have an OK but not great trump suit. Do you pass or maybe bid, perhaps 1H?

You got yourself into a mess by opening (though 1C does not usually have this bad an outcome). Can you get out of this disaster?

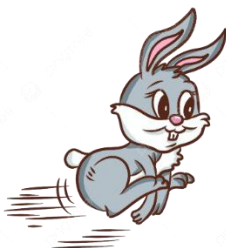
South Deals	♠ 6 4 3		
N-S Vul	♥ K 6 4 3		
	♦ K		
	♣ A J 7 6 2		
♠ J		♠ A K Q 9 8	
♥ Q J 10		♥ A 7	
♦ 9 5 4		♦ A 10 8 7 3	
♣ K Q 10 9 8 5		♣ 3	
	♠ 10 7 5 2		
	♥ 9 8 5 2		
	♦ Q J 6 2		
	♣ 4		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			Pass
Pass	1 ♣	Dbl	Pass
Pass	?		

You know West has a heap of clubs. Believe them! Try somewhere else. It is almost always best to do so.

The above board came in the final round of the recent Rotorua Restricted Open Pairs. Tim and Rochelle were East-West. North stayed in 1Cx and made just 3 trump tricks, -1100, a great result for Tim and Rochelle who otherwise could only make 9 tricks in 3NT, 11 imps to East-West.

Had North tried 1H, North could scrape up 3 or 4 heart tricks, CA and certainly one, maybe 2 diamond tricks. East-West would do better not doubling this contract but bidding on.

There are a few lessons to be learnt from this deal:



When you are doubled at the 1 level and do not have a great trump suit, RUN...somewhere, anywhere. It is unlikely to be worse and may be a lot better.

In the above hand, if North redoubles 1C, that redouble should always be for rescue...always! South must bid.

Although it is not always best to do so, South might have bid 1D after East's double of 1C, especially if 1C can be as short as 2 or 3. That bid is not in a text book but is one practical way of finding a fit and does make it harder for opponents to find where they should be. If North will not run from 1Cx , then South can help them out by doing so first.

East-West got a great score but it could have been even better. When you know your partner has a trump stack, as here, lead a trump. It is rarely wrong as here. 4 down x seems a great result but on a trump lead, North need only make CA and CJ. West will soon draw trumps...+1400.... Even better!

Congratulations to Tim and Rochelle who finished 3rd in this event, the above board being a very significant reason why.

The unfortunate North-South pair this day were the youngest players at the tournament, by far. They gave Tim and Rochelle a good "run for their money" in the other 9 boards of the match with our pair only recording a narrow win. Grace and Nico have a great future in this game.



Here they are, no doubt reflecting on how they could have improved their score on the above board.

The “Smiling South African”



Why is Cam so happy? He has a glass of port, a full glass. That might be one reason. Yet, he is also celebrating a second Springbok victory over the All Blacks....and all dressed up in green South African T Shirt here in “All Black



Country”! It’s OK, I suppose.

At least the third Springbok victory was celebrated on the third night of the Saxon Teams. No green jersey this time for Cam.....and we all can breathe a sigh of relief that the All Blacks won one game in the series..or else Cam could have worn his green jersey again on the final night of the Saxon Teams, too. (Remember, that was a night about “foursomes”!)

Well, that’s all for this combined month, “combined” as yours truly had three weeks in “Oz” in August. A full issue this time. So, we will save until next month some neat views of Victor and Mark’s recent trip across the USA and also news of the Jo Mayall day out in Katikati, a smaller journey than to LA, Niagara, “The Big Apple” etc but hopefully a nice trip for the “Te Aroha 8”.

Until October. Richard

