



BRIDGE ON THE EDGE, INC.

**A NOT FOR PROFIT BRIDGE CLUB OWNED BY ITS MEMBERS
SERVING THE ST. JOHN'S DUPLICATE BRIDGE COMMUNITY**

September 2018



GREETING FROM PRESIDENT HEIDI

Fall 2018: The Game's Afoot! It's time for our gardeners, fishers, golfers and vacationers to come back to the bridge club after a beautiful summer. Where once September meant school uniforms, desks, examinations, classrooms, and prefects, for duplicate bridge players it now signifies masterpoints (in almost as many colours as our old Crayola packages), A B and C players, stratification, directors, competitions, and even rankings. It never gets old!

Our NFP club is growing and thriving, in no small part thanks to all our members and particularly to those who volunteer their time and talent. Many of you provide great service to BOTE in order to keep things running smoothly. Kudos for your selfless efforts. We couldn't manage without our dealers, directors, board members, communications assistant, bakers, drivers, cleanup crews, recorder, mentors, teachers, *ad hoc* volunteers like our Financial Review Committee and our Alzheimer's Fundraising Group, as well as friends of the club. We also depend mightily upon our club manager, Rahul Chandra: he is a calm, reliable, go-to-guy *extraordinaire*.

This fall, we have some exciting new initiatives to announce:

We are now offering five games a week. Quite a full program with something for everyone! The new Thursday morning, 21-board game will be monitored for attendance; if you're a morning person, please give the new game a try.

We also have lessons designed to suit the needs of our 170-plus members as they add to their bridge toolkits. Think about signing up for lessons to meet your learning goals. Let us know if there's a topic you'd like to learn more about. We have great teachers and strive for a dynamic learning environment.

In addition, we are hosting beginner lessons at the club on Monday evenings. This gives us a way to reach out to new players, and it broadens the demographic at BOTE.

We all have our own bridge story. I joined ACBL only five years ago. At BOTE, I learned conventions like Bergen, inverted minors, and 1430. Quite the journey, culminating most recently in competing at my first tournament. What fun it's been, and I encourage others to embrace the possibilities here on the edge. Talk about lifelong learning!

Your volunteer Administrative Board works hard to make this a club we can all be proud of as well as a place where we can learn and have great fun. Thanks to them, and to our members, for their support.

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Getting to Know You

Judy Crewe, Webmaster *Extraordinaire*



Aside from members of the Executive perhaps no one devotes more volunteer hours to our club than Judy Crewe, our self-styled 'communications assistant.' She's responsible for our website and her list of responsibilities is lengthy – uploading the results of each game to our website, posting notices, updating member rank achievements and financial information, updating monthly calendars with respect to dealers, directors and special events and lessons, monitoring the Bookings section, processing new members and maintaining the membership list, booking visitors to games and lessons, monitoring, managing and redirecting emails received through info@bridgeontheedge, and facilitating with special events.

Some of this is done on a one-to-one basis – have you ever received a phone call from Judy advising you were double-booked for a game, or a personal email advising a game or lesson you were booked for had been cancelled? She checks the website several times a day, every day.

Many hours are involved each week. Why does she do it? Because she loves working with computers, loves bridge, and loves to help make things happen. And in particular she aims to help make BOTE the best club it can possibly be.

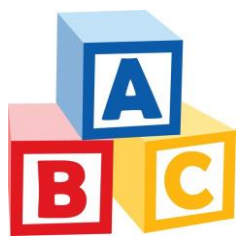
Judy credits Tim Summers, BOTE's first Secretary, for getting the website off the ground in the first instance. He continues to play a significant IT role and, she says, "We are so lucky to have him!"

Not only is she a clever hand with computers, she's a clever hand at the table although relatively new to the game. A year after retirement she took her first lessons from Joan FitzGerald, in September 2015. A little over a year later she took the plunge to the competitive side, and hasn't looked back since. She loves the social outlet bridge has provided since she gave up work and finds it a great way to meet new friends. She continues to take lessons, has a fine collection of well-used bridge books, and works to improve her game. Mostly, however, she just wants to have fun and enjoy the game.

And she continues to work quietly and effectively on our behalf behind the scenes.



In her "spare" time Judy enjoys the challenge of coordinating colours in a variety of manners including quilts, bags and canning.



Are you A, B or C? – Stratification demystified courtesy of Randy Bennett

In a perfect field there would be an equal number in each category, 1/3, 1/3, 1/3. This doesn't always happen at a club game. (Note: The ranking of a pair is based on the player with the higher number of points. If a pair consists of a newer player and an advanced player the ranking is based on the number of points held by the advanced player.) One day a player-pair with 200 points may be in C while the next day they may be stratified as B. The point range shifts depending on the number of players in each range. This is adjusted depending on the strength of the field that day.

Tournaments advertise the stratifications for the different events before they happen. This stratification is based on historical data. Sometimes the stratifications will be modified at the event.



Island Exemption

Newfoundland enjoys special status under the ACBL's rules governing the allocation of Silver masterpoints. Typically they're allocated only at Sectional tournaments. If you live in Ontario or Florida, for example, you can attend Sectional tournaments every weekend if you're so inclined. Living in Newfoundland, you can't, so that under the regular rules you would have little or no hope of ever becoming a Life Master.

When Silver masterpoints were first introduced Bermuda argued its case before the ACBL. Because it was an island with one Sectional a year, it requested that at all sectional-rated games, about 6 a year, it be allowed to issue silver rather than black points. This 'island' exemption was granted. When Randy Bennett learned of the Bermuda ruling, he requested that Newfoundland, also being an island, be given the same status. The request was granted.

Halifax Highlights

My First Bridge Tournament

Nellie Burke



In January I was sitting by the pool at our rented condo in Florida chatting about bridge with my friend, Sharon Gross of New Jersey. She had introduced me to duplicate bridge two years before after she learned that I had played social bridge for many years. She is an avid bridge player, with over 1800 points, and has played in many tournaments over the years. I noted that we didn't have tournaments in St. John's and that the nearest one was in Halifax. "Are you going this year?" she asked. I explained that much as I would like to, my regular partner had a previous commitment and couldn't. "I'll come up and help you win some gold," she announced. My jaw dropped. With just over 70 points I couldn't believe my luck.

I went to the tournament with no real expectations. Rather, I viewed it as a learning experience. As to a goal, I thought it would be wonderful if I could win 5 gold points. In preparation, I studied the 2/1 system. Michael's cuebid, Bergen, etc. so that I could play those with Sharon. We wanted to play in the Bracketed Knockout Sessions on Tuesday and Wednesday of the tournament, and Janet Parsons and Roy Bungay of Stephenville agreed to team up with us. They had not played together before and Sharon and I had played together only a few times (and didn't do too well). I was nervous and worried that I would let the team down.

On Monday, July 2, I left St. John's at 5:15 am and was supposed to arrive in Halifax around 6:30. Unfortunately, the plane couldn't land because of fog, circled several times, attempted one aborted landing, and headed to Fredericton to refuel. I finally arrived at the Lord Nelson around 11:30 to find the room wasn't ready, left my luggage with the desk, grabbed a bite of lunch, and met up with Maureen Howard to play in the afternoon side game. We did well (57%) considering it was our first time playing together.

Sharon arrived mid-afternoon; we had dinner, and then played in an evening side game as a warm up for the Bracketed Knockouts over the next two days. We did fine (56%) and I was starting to feel a bit better. After socializing in the hospitality suite, we went back to our room and discussed bridge hands until our eyes closed.

The next morning we headed out for breakfast and a walk instead of playing. At 1:30 we began the first session of the Knockouts, which was all new to me. Because we had to deal the cards before each session, there would be no hand records. Thank God - we wouldn't be up half the night discussing each hand! We made plans for the next day in case we got knocked out, but lo and behold, we won the first session and went back at 7:30 for Round 2. Once again things went smoothly, we understood each other's bids, and when the results were tallied we had won the round again. Wow! By winning two rounds, we were guaranteed 5 gold and I was over the moon!

That night in the hospitality suite, there were lots of congratulatory remarks and by now I was feeling pretty good. It was wonderful to compare results with others from our club and to realize how well everyone was doing. It reminded me of something that had happened during play earlier that evening. A pair arrived at our table and when I introduced myself as being from Newfoundland, one guy said to the other, "Oh, from Newfoundland; very dangerous players. They come here with 50 points but play way up here," raising his arm above his head. That's when I realized that players from our Province are well respected.

When on Wednesday afternoon we started Round 3 of the Knockouts, I felt I had nothing to lose since with 5 gold and 3 red points, I had already reached my tournament goal. But once again we won - I couldn't believe my good fortune as we were now guaranteed 9 gold! After a celebratory dinner, we went back for the final round and won it as well. Thirteen gold!

By then I was exhausted but couldn't resist playing on. The following two days I made every mistake in the book, but was on such a high it didn't matter. I came away with a total of 18 points including 13 gold.

The Friday evening party was wonderful but it took days to get *Barrett's Privateers* out of my head. For my first tournament experience, I certainly had a blast. The Nova Scotians were wonderful hosts and I hope to be back for a future tournament.

My sincere thanks to Sharon, Janet and Roy, who took me under their wings and helped me surpass my wildest expectations. I asked Sharon why she did this for me. She said that when she was struggling to get her Life Masters, someone did it for her and she was just passing it on. How wonderful. I see some of that type of thing happening at our club, but I do think there is room for more.



Halifax Highlights

Canadian Atlantic Regional Tournament (Can-At), July 2-7, 2018: An Overview

Patricia O'Brien



A fine contingent of BOTE players boarded planes bound for the Can-At tournament in Halifax at the beginning of July, a whopping 27 of us in total, several of us 1st-time tournament players. And what a time we had! I was among the uninitiated and faced a bewildering array of choices in terms of games – side games, pair games, Swiss teams, Knockouts, Gold rush – and sat down to play with another 518 tournament registrants at the Lord Nelson Hotel in downtown Halifax over a 6-day period, 3 sessions per day. That's a lot of bridge! Daily bulletins arrived in our In-boxes providing the results of each game and/or session, rankings and masterpoints awarded.



Strawberry Shortcake



Heidi & Janet H stepping 'er out

Outside of game times, there was much socializing to be done as well. A hospitality suite open from 10:30 – 11:30 pm each night offered wine and beer at a price and an amazing variety of Nova Scotia food specialties for the taking – lemon pound cake with blueberry sauce, strawberry shortcake (in strawberry season!), clam chowder and 'All Things Smoked Salmon'. There was a special Newfoundland dinner to which all 27 of us plus Roy Bungay of Stephenville were invited, organized and hosted by my friend Nancy Spencer and her hard-working Halifax team of home chefs. A large table groaned under the weight of roast beef, ham, every kind of salad you can think and a few you can't, vegetables, dips, spreads, desserts too numerous to mention, all specialties of various members of the team; and all, it seemed, as competitive in the kitchen as at the bridge table. On Friday night there was an East Coast Ceilidh, with live music, singing and

dancing, when each out-of-province attendee was initiated into The Order of the Good Time, that Nova Scotia tradition dating back to the days of First Grand Master Samuel de Champlain, explorer, colonizer and writer, in 1606. We each received a certificate to prove it. The evening ended only when the last standing, the Newfoundlanders, were finally asked by hotel staff to close 'er down!



The Order of the Good Time

In addition to the bridge and social events, there were daily talks and discussions with experts (including Jerry Helms whom many of you know from his monthly bridge column in the ACBL's *Bulletin*), prizes for winners, and charity raffles. Plus walks in the Park (see Janet Hannaford's article), visits to Halifax's magnificent new library and numerous fine restaurants, and attendance (for the lucky few) at the famous Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo.

So how did we do? 519 players won a total of 6012 MPS. Of these, 456 were won by BOTE players. Eight of our players, Tom Dale, Brian Collins, Richard Lash, Deirdre Davis, Brenda Woodman, Marilyn Bennett, Janet Parsons and Nellie Burke, ranked in the top 100 MPS winners. It was Nellie Burke's first tournament, so a fine achievement on her part. Allison Hill achieved her Life Masters. Congratulations to them all!

If you're a relatively new player who has never considered going to a tournament, perhaps you should. The caliber of bridge at BOTE is high so tournament play is not overly intimidating, and the whole experience is fun. The next Can-At takes place in Moncton in June 2019. Already the idea of renting a bus to transport BOTE players from Halifax to Moncton and return is percolating.

Halifax Highlights

Halifax Public Gardens: Side Bar to a Tournament

Janet Hannaford



If you haven't been to a bridge tournament, you would think that all anyone does is stay at a hotel, play bridge, find reasonable restaurants, and head to bed. Not always the case. There are always alternatives and it is worthwhile seeing what the city has to offer. This was the case in July at the Can-At when I explored Halifax Public Gardens every day.

The Halifax Public Gardens is Atlantic Canada's quintessential Victorian garden; a place to stroll, relax and find calm, an oasis in the urban milieu. Situated across the street from the Lord Nelson, host hotel of the tournament, this park proved to be accessible and inviting, beckoning each morning to explore its nearby reaches.



Pebbled walkways, both serpentine and straight, lead to the abundance of flora in these few city acres. At every turn, the senses are invigorated, seized by the splendor before your eyes. A canopy of tall trees rings the perimeter of the gardens, offering shade, while the trembling branches issue a welcome breeze to passersby, as was the case this hot early July.



Central to the architectural plan is a Bandstand surrounded by a plethora of colourful geraniums and begonias, together with dark leafy plants in black and burgundy for a striking contrast; these beds are largely geometric in shape. Alongside are a number of urns with an assortment of summer annuals, and small foliage plants festooned with creepers.

Grasses. Spikes. Roses. Weigela. Marigold. Zinnias. Hosta. Cottage gardens. Shrubberies. Groves of trees. All these and so much more to observe as you amble your way along.



A prominent aspect of a Victorian garden, used to commemorate public events or history, is carpet bedding. These are thick plantings of low growing flowers and foliage created on a lawn. Halifax Public Gardens has two. Carefully sheared to uniformity and perfection by the horticultural team, these beds are a burst of color and texture, a carpet on the grass.

The Gardens feature a small pond and floating in the middle is a miniature replica of the *Titanic*. The small banks provide a comfortable spot to sit and read or otherwise muse in quiet contemplation. Close by is a duck pond, popular with young children and those accompanying them. The presence of two resident geese is the major attraction. Ducks waddle the pedestrian paths with ducklings following closely, runaway tots in close pursuit.



With every turn, something new awaits your discovery: Unusually shaped trees, swaths of dense bushes, tropical plantings (cacti, agave, pineapple), statues, fountains, a quiet coffee shop with patio. All this and more can be found in moments when one needs to break from the game and acquire perspective.

Halifax will host the Can-At in 2020. Should that tournament be on your list, take one morning or afternoon to experience these delightful, exuberant Public Gardens.



Did You Know...?

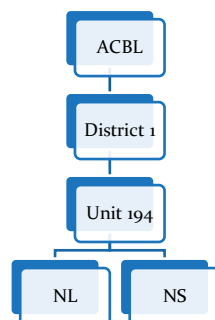


That Shuffle Pairs is a BOTE innovation. Tom Dale once mused about a new form of mentoring, one that paired players by draw. In 2017-18 then-President Brian Collins ran with the concept and developed the game we now know as 'Shuffle Pairs.' The first game was held on January 11th, 2018. It paired skilled players with less experienced ones on a randomized basis and proved an unqualified success, with many new and previously unlikely partnerships formed, if only for an afternoon. A second game held April 25 attracted an equally large number of enthusiastic participants with the result that more games are planned. The ACBL was impressed – a recent edition of its Bridge Bulletin carried a short article on this innovative approach to mentorship, which we hope will spread to other clubs.

That at \$6313 BOTE raised the 2nd largest amount of any club in Canada during the course of its 2018 Longest Day fund-raising efforts in aid of the Alzheimer Society of NL. A round of applause, please!

That BOTE has adopted a Psych Bidding Policy which limits the number of psych bids to one psych bid per player, per session, at all regular club games. However, psych bids against C players are not allowed at all. Penalties are involved

That ACBL sanctions clubs to run games and award Masterpoints. Clubs are organized geographically into Units under Districts. Units run Sectional tournaments and other ACBL bridge events. Marilyn Bennett of St. John's and Joan Gillam of Corner Brook are NL's representatives on the Board of Unit 194, and Leo Weniger of Halifax is the elected District 1 representative (District Director) to the ACBL board. A number of years ago Unit 194 sanctioned NL to hold a Sectional tournament during the 1st weekend of August every 2nd year. They were discontinued due to financial reasons.



Our Fearless Leaders a.k.a Executive



*Brian Shortall, Secretary, Rahul Chandra, Club Manager, Heidi Janes, President,
Janet Hannaford, Vice-President, Rick Comerford, Treasurer*



THREE CHEERS FOR OUR BOARD AND DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS

During the course of its first 2 full years of operation this September (CONGRATULATIONS BOTE!), it has taken a large number of dedicated volunteers to firstly, get our not-for-profit club off the ground and secondly, initiate a wide range of new games, programs, benefits and events. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to those who are willing to put their names forward and take on the difficult task of trying to make the club run smoothly and satisfy everyone. When they fall short of the impossible, satisfying everyone, that is, let's try to remember that it is just that: ***impossible!***

Straight Talk from Our Treasurer

Rick Comerford

After a year of operations, BOTE's financial results are becoming fairly predictable. The following is a summary of what we might expect for an "average" year:

Expenses:

Fixed

We have a number of "fixed" expenses which occur each year. The main ones are: Rent (\$27,000), Manager's Salary (\$10,800), Insurance (\$1,500), Bridge, Office and Cleaning Supplies (\$3,000), and Hospitality and Events (\$2,000). This totals \$44,300. With five games scheduled per week, we will also have Directors' Fees of \$250 per week, or \$13,000 annually. Based on current activity levels, the total "fixed" expenses are \$57,000.

These are partially offset by our share of the revenue from lessons of \$4,000 and Membership Fees of \$2,500; however, in the past year, the latter was mostly offset by the costs of nametags.

So we have \$50,000-\$55,000 in fixed costs to cover with our game fees.

Variable

We have two costs which vary by the amount of activity. The first is our payments to the American Contract Bridge League(ACBL) and the Canadian Bridge Federation(CBF). These total approximately \$1.25 per player/ game, regardless of how much we charge. Based on 9,000 individual plays, ACBL and CBL fees are \$11,250 annually. When added to the fixed costs (above) of \$55,000, our costs total \$66,000.

The second is our HST payment. Since our revenue is greater than \$50,000 annually, we are required to pay HST. This works out to approximately 13% of our table fee, so if we charge \$10.00, \$1.30 goes to HST; if we charge \$7.50 then \$0.97 goes to HST; and if we charge \$5.00 then \$0.65 goes to HST.

Revenue:

From October 1, 2017 until July 31, 2018, there were a total of roughly 7,500 individual plays at BOTE including "Competitive", "99er's", and "Beginners". This approximates 9,000 on an annual basis.

Based on the foregoing costs, our price to “breakeven” and cover all our costs, assuming 9,000 plays, is \$8.50 per game.

(Number of plays) **times** (our net (After HST) revenue) **divided into** \$66,000

Revenue	9,000 at \$8.50	\$76,500
Less HST	13% of \$76,500	<u>(\$10,000)</u>
Net Revenue		\$66,500
Expenses		<u>(\$66,000)</u>
Surplus		<u>\$500</u>

The following are the projected results at various prices per game:

Price	\$5.00	\$7.50	\$8.50	\$10.00
Number of plays	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000
Revenue	\$45,000	\$67,500	\$76,500	\$90,000
Less HST	\$5,800	\$8,800	\$10,000	\$11,700
Net Revenue	\$39,200	\$58,700	\$66,500	\$78,300
Expenses	\$66,000	\$66,000	\$66,000	\$66,000
Surplus (Loss)	(\$26,800)	(\$7,300)	\$500	\$12,300

We have built up a comfortable surplus of \$30,000 during the initial year.

The Board is working on several options to set the cost of playing Bridge at the amount required to maintain a financially-healthy and sustainable club on a long-term basis.



Upcoming



Date(s)	Event	Facilitators
Sept 6 th	Thursday Morning Bridge Starts	NOTE: \$5.00 fee for this game only
Sept. 10 th – Oct. 29 th	Bridge for Beginners 1	Randy & Marilyn Bennett
Nov. 5 th – Dec. 17 th	Bridge for Beginners 2	Gloria Stone
Sept. 11 th , 18 th , 25 th	Supervised Play	Janet Hannaford
Oct. 2 nd , 16 th , 23 rd , 30 th	Bidding & Playing Slam Hands	Randy Bennett
Oct. 2 nd – 8 th	Ottawa Regional	



Articles and suggestions for the January 2019 edition of the Newsletter are welcomed. Please send to patriciaobrien@nl.rogers.com