

Dear Members.

Where do I start? How can I keep you in touch with one another and what can I say to cheer you up? I think we are all resigned to the fact that 'face to face' bridge will not happen this year and possibly not until the winter is over. But we must hold on to hope in troubled times. ***Always look on the bright side of life.***

An article which appeared earlier this year in the Sunday Telegraph quoted the following six rules for staying sane during the COVID restrictions. They were penned by a famous Irish psychiatrist, Dr Anthony Clare, who had a regular slot on Radio 4. They may seem obvious but it is always worth revisiting them with winter just around the corner and with the restrictions we are currently facing.

- Stay in regular contact with family and friends by phone or email etc
- Don't resist change – technology will not go away – embrace your laptop, if you have one, like a late-life affair and if you haven't got a lap top consider making a purchase. Help to choose and get started is always available. Let me know if you are thinking about a purchase.
- Cultivate a passion for something you like doing
- Live in the moment
- Look up and out – not down and in and keep track of what others are doing
- In good times you need to belong to a club/group. It is important we don't lose touch with the joy of our game and the friendships that HDBC has enabled us to build up over many years.

So, after reading this, I was thinking about my passions. Apart from bridge I struggle to find something that I can share with you!!! But there is obviously the one topic that you are already aware of from previous newsletters. So here we go again.

My Passion

I must admit I am a terrible hoarder

I keep things for many years

I cram every shelf and border

Because they bring me love and tears.

Today I dusted off a little memory

It is a table decoration still in tact

Just 25 years ago today is the anniversary

Of my younger son's wedding - yes a fact

The couple cannot have their planned treat I hear

So have decided to call in the young ones

To get involved with the footie and a beer

Just a family night in to celebrate with fun.

I wish I could make the trip to join the family mix

To raise a glass or two with all of those there

But stop - I must surely think of the rule of six

Knowing there are other ways to show I care.

We were recently clearing out the garage in the hope that we could put the cars away during the winter (assuming we remembered to do that) and I just could not resist saying to my husband on more than one occasion - **“Don’t throw that away it might come in”** We are still trying to make room for the cars!!!

And so to my real passion and you surely know about this. Yes, during lockdown, and especially playing on-line bridge, I have found a renewed energy for improving my game. It does not always manifest itself in my results but I do now feel I understand it a little better and the logic of some of the conventions. Just like the six rules above I have embraced my laptop like I have never done before as, prior to lockdown, I was very much linked to the luddite mentality. I hated trying something new like Zoom or Face Time and when we started the On-Line club I felt physically sick waiting for the game to start in case I could not cope with the system. But now I feel much more in my comfort zone and I am also attempting to learn more as I face up to all the challenges coming my way.

We had a zoom committee meeting recently and one of the items for discussion was our club website and the need to update it to reflect how we are functioning as a club while Greystones is closed. For those of you that click on the website from time to time you will notice that there is a link to the H.C.A website at the bottom of our home page. If you want an update about what the H.C.A is currently doing you will be able to read this in their regular monthly newsletters. It will certainly be an uplifting experience when we can once again step over the threshold of Greystones and see just how bright and clean it all looks. At the moment the Executive has to deal with a few areas of leaks in the roof – not a cheap job!!!

That’s all for now folks – stay safe – and until the next time – keep smiling.

Pat Carruthers (Chairman)

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