

## DICK PAYNE(1936-2024)

Dick was born on 8 July 1936 in Barnet. Shortly after the family moved to Herne Bay where Dick grew up. He attended Queen Elizabeth Grammar School in Faversham and obtained A levels in Pure Mathematics, Applied Mathematics, Latin and French. He passed entrance exams to read Mathematics at Trinity Hall, Cambridge. Before going up to Cambridge Dick had to do National Service from 1955-57, which is where he learned to play bridge. He then went to Cambridge and graduated with a Mathematics degree but then went on to teach French at Rainham Mark grammar school for many years. He married Wendy in 1964 and they had two children Andrew and Ruth.

After graduation he honed his bridge skills by playing in tough rubber bridge games at the Brendan and Hamilton clubs in London, playing against the likes of John Collings. He started to play club bridge at Maidstone in 1970 and had successful partnerships with Freda Wilding, John Cullingworth and Kathy Stratten. Dick and I formed a partnership in the mid 1970's and played together in many Kent and national events. Our Kent team-mates were often Pat Collins and Colin Bishop. Dick won the Arnold Cup 8 times between 1974 and 1985 and then represented Kent in the Pachabo. Altogether he won 20 Kent trophies. National successes included wins in both the Brighton Congress pairs and teams and 3 appearances in the final of Crockfords. He was also runner-up in the National Pairs in 1973 and Life Masters Pairs in 1983.

Dick was a deep thinker about the game and had many interesting ideas, particularly bidding. He wrote copiously about the game, moreover with a very entertaining style. He got hooked on the Blue Club system and any success we enjoyed was largely due to his elaboration of that system in a work entitled "Opus Magnum" although it was never published. He was an avid devotee of "The Law of Total Tricks" and wrote and published "TNT and Competitive Bidding." Another published work was "Single Dummy Problems" a very entertaining book on declarer play.

Dick and I split up amicably as a partnership in 1987. Our swansong was in the Crockfords final where we finished runners-up. Dick then reformed an old partnership with John Cullingworth and continued to play in local and county events. His fertile mind continued to work away on systems and he adopted "The Variable Forcing Pass". Licensing restrictions meant he was confined to playing this in his local Maidstone club but he also hosted a private league and the new partner for playing this system in the league was Clive Cubitt.

Apart from bridge Dick was a keen tennis player and golfer - he was a member of Bearsted Golf Club for many years. Another passion of his was gardening. His country garden looked spectacular and he and Wendy became iris specialists. They opened their garden to the public through the National Gardens Scheme. He also had an allotment providing fresh fruit and vegetables.

His health declined in 2023 and was admitted to hospital in November. He never fully recovered but he and Wendy were able to celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary just before Easter this year. He passed away peacefully on May 11th surrounded by his lovely family.

On a personal note he was a true friend who I will greatly miss. He was best man at my first wedding and bridge apart, we kept in touch over the years and often enjoyed a glass of red wine together. R.I.P Dick

Peter Law