

MOONEE VALLEY BRIDGE CLUB NEWSLETTER

COMMITTEE UPDATES PEOPLE & EVENTS GAME PLAY & FUN



President update

I hope everyone had an enjoyable time over the festive season and you're all now back and ready for another year of good company and good bridge at the club. The Events and Education Subcommittees continue to work hard on innovations and improvements so watch out for information on their plans in the weekly emails.

I play bridge at the Chicago Contract Bridge Club when I visit my daughter in the USA and observed that they never have a sit out table regardless of how many people turn up to play at any particular session. The way they avoid this is to have a table set up where two human players can play the hands, they would otherwise have missed but this time, using tablets and BBO and playing against two robots. We are working out how to implement this at MVBC and have recently purchased two tablets so there will be no more sitouts. Watch this space for further information about our implementation trials.

The start of the year is perhaps a good time to remind everyone about the need for adherence to the rules and etiquette of bridge at all times. Here's a quick reminder of some basics with apologies to the vast majority of members who consistently adhere to these guidelines.

- Please do not discuss how you should have bid or played at the table - that's a conversation for after the game over a glass of wine.
- Dummy should never speak or touch a card until the specific card has been called by declarer, the only exception being to confirm "No Hearts Partner?" to avoid a possible revoke.
- If you're asked to move your bidding box off the table, just do so without question. These boxes can block other players' view of the cards and it's no trouble to accommodate such a request.
- Greet others when they arrive at your table and thank each other at the end of the round.
- Never turn over the lead card till partner has acknowledged s/he is ready. This is a double check against a lead-out-of-turn and good practice in team work.
- If anything untoward happens CALL THE DIRECTOR. It is not bad manners or offensive to ask for any issue to be sorted out by the person who is trained to give correct rulings. This includes any matter of play, bidding, possible hesitation - the list is endless. Let's make our New Year's Resolution to avoid sorting things out at the table ourselves and instead just resolve to rely on our friendly and highly skilled directors.

With best wishes for 2026 and happy bridging.

Eveline

Editors Note

Welcome to the Summer edition of the MVBC newsletter.

MVBC is built on its people and the community it fosters. We would love to hear from you, so if you have a story to tell or there is something you have read that you feel that would be beneficial to others, please drop us a line so we can share in upcoming editions of our newsletter.

email: monique.park@me.com

Alternatively speak to one of the committee members on your ideas.

Committee Members

President: Eveline Fallshaw

Vice President: Fraser Thorpe

Secretary: Tina Tregaskis

Treasurer: Phil Young

Members: Bernadette Boundy,
Michael Halfpenny, Greg Nunn,
Monique Park, Nicholas Yule



EVENTS - What to expect in 2026

Revamped Sunday play

Towards the end of last year, Sunday bridge participation dwindled averaging around two to three tables a week, so it was decided by the committee to suspend Sunday play whilst giving the Events Committee time to rethink how we can attract more players on Sunday. From March 15th Sunday bridge will recommence from time to time with some special events to entice more players.

If you're free consider coming along to these Sunday events:

Sunday Teams – 15 March, 1.00 pm start
Irene English Memorial Interclub – Sunday 22 March (Williamstown v MVBC)

Interclub Teams – This is being worked through with the MCC Bridge Club

Novice Event – (Also in discussion) For members with less than one year's experience, likely to held around July after BB1 finishes.

Keep your eyes on the weekly email to see what's happening for Sunday bridge.

Congress 2026

This year's premier MVBC event is our Congress that runs at the clubhouse from Friday 29 May to Sunday 31 May. Last year 300 people played bridge over the three days, many from other clubs around Melbourne.

Friday 29 May: (Match points)

Novice Pairs: (<100MP and <15MP)

Open Pairs

Saturday 30 May:

Open Swiss Pairs

Restricted Swiss Pairs (<300MP) - played in football club rooms

Sunday 31 May

Teams

The Congress senior director is Laurie Kelso with Rex Fox directing the restricted event

The Events Sub-Committee works behind the scenes to plan and ensure the smooth running of our major events, including our yearly Congress. Our members and their roles are:

Fraser Thorpe (Chair) – Organises the Congress and other events needing MyABF registration, and provides a monthly report to the Management Committee

Michael Halfpenny – As well as being a director and bridge teacher, Michael prepared this year's events calendar and advises on event management

Sue Hume – Prepares event information for the weekly club email and takes and distributes meeting minutes

Marianne Deerson – Coordinates catering for the Christmas parties and Congress, helps with event setup, event certificate recognition and keeps the noticeboard current and eye-catching

Toni Arnott – Organises the volunteers for our congress, assists with purchasing and catering and event setups for the Christmas parties and our Congress.

What's coming up in 2026?

The sub-committee has organised a fun and varied program. Why not plan the next six months around these dates and book in early for a place.

Eddie Karen Memorial Mixed Teams – Thursday 29 January, 1.00 pm

Ned Gladney Super Novice Pairs (under 15 masterpoints) – Tuesday 3 February, 7.15 pm (Red Point)

Judy Larsen Swiss Pairs – Monday evenings 9,16 and 23 February, 7.15 pm (Red Point)

Eclectic Pairs – Tuesday nights throughout February and March

Jenny Date Mid-Week Swiss Pairs – Tuesday afternoons 10, 17 and 24 March (Red Point)

Sunday Teams – 15 March, 1.00 pm start

Irene English Memorial Interclub – Sunday 22 March (Williamstown v MVBC)

Restricted Pairs Championship – Monday afternoons 13, 20 and 27 April (Red Point)

Pairs Championship – Monday evenings, 11, 18 and 25 May (Red Point)

MVBC Super Congress – Friday 29 to Sunday 31

Please save these dates and see you there!

Our People

Playing in the US - by Kim Frazer

Many members will know that I recently travelled to play in the US Fall Nationals in San Francisco with my American friend Mary Ose. This was my first foray into bridge in the US and it was certainly an experience to remember. The weather was magnificent, albeit chilly, throughout my stay with sunny days without much wind.

Firstly, before the main bridge event started, I did some sight-seeing as I took in some of the more famous tourist attractions San. Fran. has to offer. These included the ferry to Alcatraz and around the island (must have been a miserable place for the inmates), cable car rides, Fisherman's Wharf & surrounds, a lot of walking around SF and surrounds. During these few days as I got past jetlag, I enjoyed two local club games – one in Palo Alto and one in Sacramento – where my partner and I topped the duplicate fields. Both the local clubs provided a smorgasbord lunch for players, and the bridge was a bit more relaxed than here in Australia, with a more casual approach to time limits for each round. However, nobody seemed terribly fussed about time and we all enjoyed ourselves immensely.

While in Sacramento, I was also hosted by our friend Carrie and her family for Thanksgiving

dinner which included a walk for charity in the morning dressed up as - you guessed it – a turkey! After dinner Mary and I travelled back to our hotel in SF, by the express train, to be ready to play our first event the next day.

The tournament was held downtown at the Marriott Marquis hotel. The bridge convention occupied the large conference space on two levels, catering for the several thousand players who participated. Each day saw a variety of events which suited everyone from the top-level internationals in attendance right down to rookies. The National events had qualifying sessions and if you were knocked out of these, you had the option to play in other events – either pairs or teams – that ran on the intervening days. Each morning there was an array of morning snacks in the foyer, with something different each day – some looking more appetising than others. In our first National Pairs event our good form from the club games deserted us and we were knocked out after the qualifying rounds, so we opted to play a teams' event the next day. The pairs and major teams' events ran along similar lines to our events here with pre-dealt boards & hand records. Start times were a little flexible, with the exception of the two major events (the Soloway and the Reisinger where entries closed earlier), entries were allowed on the actual day, so the draws were often not complete until after the scheduled start time as often players were still entering the events after start time. The seating for these events was displayed on digital boards which were updated in real time, and it was a bit like Bingo waiting for your team number to appear so you could find your table.



Entry desk Chaos- no-one gets turned away

The tournament was held downtown at the Marriott Marquis hotel. The convention occupied the large conference space on two levels, catering for the several thousand players who participated. Each day saw a variety of events which suited everyone from the top-level internationals in attendance right down to rookies. The National events had qualifying sessions and if you were knocked out of these, you had the option to play in other events – either pairs or teams – that ran on the intervening days. Each morning there was an array of morning snacks in the foyer, with something different each day – some looking more appetising than others. In our first National Pairs event our good form from the club games deserted us and we were knocked out after the qualifying rounds, so we opted to play a teams’ event the next day. The pairs and major teams’ events ran along similar lines to our events here with pre-dealt boards & hand records. Start times were a little flexible, with the exception of the two major events (the Soloway and the Reisinger where entries closed earlier), entries were allowed on the actual day, so the draws were often not complete until after the scheduled start time. Often players were still entering the events after start time. The seating for these events was displayed on digital boards which were updated in real time, and it was a bit like Bingo waiting for your team number to appear so you could find your table.

The less significant teams’ events were a different story altogether with no pre-dealt boards & the draw was managed via a large board. This meant the first task at each table was to shuffle and deal your boards each round and there were no hand records for these events! You simply scored up against your opponents for the 6-boards you played in that round. Your team either won or lost the match. After 5 x 6-board matches the morning session was over & based on your results from the previous session your team was reclassified for the afternoon’s session into an appropriate field.



Lesser team draw board

Mary & I had greater success in the women’s pairs qualifying for the finals, but due to the large number of players requesting stationary seating, my partner and I were stuck as EW for the whole event and the cards were definitely in NS favour, so our final wasn’t the greatest. In most of the events there were at least two comfort/food breaks during the session, as well as a generous break for lunch. I mentioned earlier about the lack of attention to time limits at the clubs where I played and the National event was no different. Players seemed to take more than the 15 minutes of time allotted for 2-boards and often used the comfort break time to catch up. After 6 days of bridge, and with only an insignificant event on for the day, Mary and I took a day off from bridge to do some more touristy things.

We headed out and started with a walk up the steps to Coit tower (only 455 steps), then travelled by Waymo (the self-driving car like Uber) to the ferry terminal to travel across to Sausalito which was a pretty, but exclusive town. We visited the quaint houseboats and other sights, had clam chowder soup for lunch in a diner, and then headed to the Golden Gate bridge to tick off another item on my bucket-list, a walk across the GG bridge. It was just spectacular scenery and amazing views. We then walked back to take in the most crooked street in the world – Lombard St, before heading back to our hotel to get ready for a birthday dinner celebration for one of Mary’s friends.



Playing area for the pairs event



Playing area for the Reisinger event

One of the most exciting things during the tournament was following the progress of the mostly Australian team that ended up winning one of the marquis events - the Soloway teams. It was therefore a delight to meet that team in the other major teams' events - the Reisinger. Played behind screens, this event is a board-a-match format so essentially you score 2, 1 or 0 on a board - 2 if you win the board, 1 if you equal the other side & 0 if you lose the board. It is a challenging format and one that is rarely played in Australia, but it is great fun as going for -1700 still only gets you a 0. Think of it as match points on steroids!

Whilst we were outclassed in the Reisinger by the very strong field, in our final event - the Mixed Teams - we played with two pick-up partners from the US and made it through qualifying to the finals on the final day. In that Mixed teams' final, we played one of our rounds against the National team of Taipei where this interesting hand came up:

Dealer N: Vul N-S

♠ 832	♠ 7
♥ KJ9764	♥ A53
♦ QJ3	♦ A86542
♣ Q	♣ K109
♠ AKQJ10654	♠ 9
♥ 2	♥ Q108
♦ K97	♦ 10
♣ A	♣ J8765432

North	East	South	West
2H ^{W=}	3D	4C	4NT ^{WCB}
P	5H ^{W=}	P	6S
All pass			

Our opponents did well to put our unfamiliar partnership to the test with some aggressive bidding at this vulnerability with the auction proceeding: Of course, there was nothing to the play with 7S or 7NT a laydown. The club bid from South had the desired disruptive effect and worried my partner as to whether he could pitch the losing diamond once he knew we were missing the diamond Q. I wondered afterwards what he thought I was overcalling 3D with, but playing with a new partner can often throw up questions, particularly as to what a player will and won't do after a pre-empt. From my perspective, I thought this was a bit timid as since I didn't have the QD I was likely to have some other values for a 3-level overcall. In my view 5NT as a King ask might have been a better option than the sign-off in 6S as this would have enabled us to reach the Grand Slam on the board.

Another exciting board was this one where we picked up 12 imps when our table defeated 4S, while our teammates at the other table made 4S. Interestingly, quite a few tables reached 6s, a few played unsuccessfully in 3NT and a couple even tried 7S. **Before reading on, what would you lead from the West hand to 4S?**

If you opted for the singleton J, the contract can now be made as declarer can win in dummy; cash the KQ of spades, ruff a low club with the JS, cash the Ace and throw West in with a spade. Declarer can now pitch two losing diamonds on the AD and play a heart towards the King hoping the Ace is on-side which is the only chance to make.

An important rule to remember when leading is that whenever you have long trumps, leading your long suit is usually the best option. Here the lead of a heart to the Ace followed by a diamond switch at trick 2 will easily set the contract by one trick as the defence can cash 2 diamond tricks, the Ace of hearts and West will also get a trump promotion.

Despite the occasional events where we had to shuffle and deal our own boards, and the various delays with start times and slow players, the US national events are large, and generally well-run events with many options for players find an event to play that suits their skill level. There were also a variety of options apart from bridge such as the usual celebrity talks on offer as well as seminars for teachers and other events daily.

Dealer W: Vul N-S

♠ KQ	♠ 4
♥ 10	♥ AJ95
♦ A1095	♦ QJ8
♣ AKQ932	♣ T8654
♠ 10652	♠ AJ9873
♥ Q8762	♥ K43
♦ K63	♦ 742
♣ J	- -

One evening we participated in Bridge Mania which was run as a youth fund-raising event featuring popular game shows seen on TV such as Jeopardy and Family Feud, but with bridge themed questions. The Jeopardy game was run by Jeopardy champion James Holzhauser (pictured below) who racked up \$2.4M dollars in 32 games. James who kindly posed for a picture with me was named Honorary Member of the Year by the ACBL. This award is given annually to someone widely known throughout the membership who has given freely of their time and ability, without thought of reward and in the interest and welfare of the League as a whole. Although our team in Family Feud were not successful, this event was a lot of fun and made a change from a regular trivia night.

I had a fabulous time in SF at the Fall Nationals so if you love bridge and want to experience something a bit different to an Australian National tournament, I would highly recommend trying out one of the three National US events offered each year by the ACBL.



Important note on Membership Renewals

The committee decided in 2025 to freeze the membership fees at the longstanding rates of \$50 for home club members and \$25 for non-home club members. This freeze will continue for at least another year as it was part of the financial considerations in the increase and rationalisation of table fees in 2025.

Members will once again have the option of "doing nothing" and the fee will be deducted from your MyABF bridge credit account. If you have opted out of that approach you can still pay via EFT. You can not pay cash at the club. You will also be able to pay the membership manually at a time of your choosing prior to the membership lapse date of 31 March 2026.

It is far easier to track and reconcile membership if you allow the payment to occur via MyABF. This is not mandatory but the committee requests that you use this option as your first choice.

There will be a batch job that debits membership fees on 28 February 2026. That job will continue to attempt to collect fees until they are paid or until 31 March 2026 at which point unpaid memberships will automatically lapse.

You can speak to any committee member to assist you with renewing your membership for 26/27.

Book Review

Gaining the mental edge at Bridge by Kim Frazer

Gaining the Mental Edge at Bridge offers a surprisingly fresh take on a game that's often treated as purely technical. What makes this book stand out is its focus on the psychological side of bridge, an area many players overlook despite its enormous influence on performance.

Overall Impression

Kim brings a unique blend of expertise to the table: she's not only an accomplished international bridge player but also an Olympian and multi-Commonwealth Games gold medalist in shooting. That background gives her unusual authority when discussing mental discipline, focus, and emotional control — skills that translate remarkably well to competitive bridge. The book's central argument is simple but compelling: players spend countless hours studying bidding systems and card play techniques yet rarely invest in the mental habits that allow those skills to shine under pressure. Kim fills that gap with practical, accessible strategies.

What the Book Does Well

1. Makes mental training approachable

Kim breaks down concepts like concentration, handling nerves, and maintaining emotional balance into clear, digestible guidance. Her writing is straightforward and avoids jargon, making the material accessible even to casual players.

2. Connects elite sports psychology to everyday bridge

Her experience in precision shooting gives her a deep understanding of how small lapses in focus can cost a win — a parallel she draws effectively to bridge tournaments. This cross-disciplinary insight is one of the book's strongest features.

3. Offers practical, table-ready techniques

Kim doesn't just talk theory. She provides concrete exercises and mental routines that players can adopt immediately, from pre-game preparation to in-the-moment refocusing strategies. These tools feel realistic and grounded in lived competitive experience.

Who Will Benefit Most

Intermediate and advanced bridge players looking to improve consistency

Tournament competitors who struggle with nerves or concentration

Players who already study bidding and card play but want to elevate their mental game

Anyone interested in performance psychology, even outside bridge

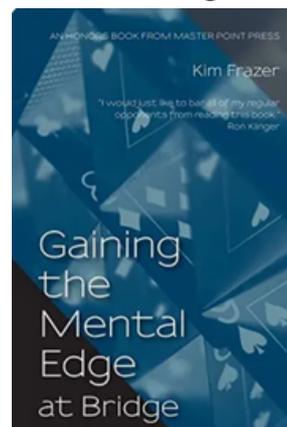
Why It Matters

Bridge is as much a mental endurance sport as it is a card game. Kim's book highlights that mastering the psychological dimension can be the difference between good and exceptional play. It's no surprise the book won the 2020 IBPA Book of the Year Award — it fills a genuine gap in bridge literature.

Final Thoughts

Gaining the Mental Edge at Bridge is a thoughtful, practical, and well-crafted guide that brings sports psychology into the bridge world with clarity and authority. Whether you're a club player or a seasoned competitor, this book offers tools that can genuinely elevate your game.

Available to borrow at the MVBC Library or can be bought online



Tribute - Ken Burns

Ken Burns was my Bridge partner for 5 or 6 years until he stopped playing in 2024. We started lessons together, and initially played on Tuesday nights, which was for novices. We also practised informally with friends at one another's homes where we could talk about the hands and gain confidence. It was the beginning of a group of friends that became very close through learning and supporting one another. It wasn't just about Bridge. It was a social network for us all.

Ken was a thoughtful player, always showing consideration for others. He was a gentleman, always polite and never boastful. He was a valued part of the group.

Thursday afternoons were introduced to provide supervision for players looking for experience. The then Director, Barbara Conquest, provided quick and friendly advice on whether to bid, and what to lead. They were very social days. Enjoying Bridge, learning a bit, and socialising a lot. The Bar takings were significant, and Frosty was a great host.

Most of our group were retired, and we were looking for company, as well as a challenge for our brains. We exchanged information about books, movies, insurance, internet packages, anything we needed to know about.

Ken was always good for book and theatre reviews. As we shared knowledge, we started to organise group bookings for theatre, for lunch, for dinner, one another's birthdays, informal Bridge tutorials. Favourite place for lunch was 'Naked for Satan' in Brunswick street, dinner at 'Wills Dumplings' in Puckle street, and birthdays at 'Old Man Drews' in Mount Road.

More players heard about our friendly Thursdays, and it is now the most popular day to play. Some of our group didn't come back after Covid, others didn't stay for long. Medical issues had gotten in the way for some, but as a core group we had reunion lunches every so often.

Ken made it to one at the Boathouse in 2024, (photo) but couldn't get to a 2025 gathering as his health was deteriorating rapidly. He had a number of health issues and stopped coming to Bridge. Arnie and Jackie Bates organised lunches in Williamstown at 'Pelican's Landing', which was close to home for Ken. Walking along the Esplanade will always bring back happy memories.

Ken went into care in December, and passed away on New Year's Day with family at his side. The Bridge Club observed a minutes silence in respect. His memorial at Hobson's Bay Yacht Club was attended by current and past members of the Bridge Club, members of his choir and walking group. Whenever I see a Bridge player who can't decide which of their last two cards to lead, I am reminded of Ken, and remember that it's only a game! It was always the friendships that mattered.

Julie Nelson



Ken with Annmaree Sharkey and Bernadette Cashen

Our People

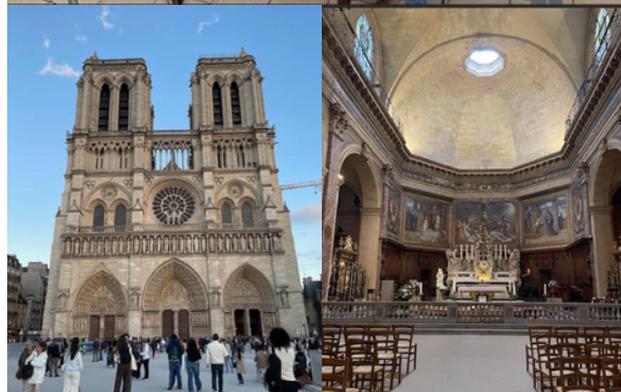
Playing Abroad - By Cathy Johnstone

In September 2025, I was lucky enough to have a holiday in France, with my husband, Paul Sidebottom, and as we were near Reims, early on, he suggested to me that we contact a local bridge club and see if we could join a session.

We are long time members of Moonee Valley Bridge Club, so we hoped not to disgrace them as much as ourselves. I wrote to the Amical Bridge Club, which is outside the small town of Dinan, quite near Reims and they replied that we were very welcome to come to their afternoon session. We arrived, with some concerns about our French, let alone our bridge, but were warmly welcomed by all. There were 8 tables, so 24 boards, and table fees were €4 each.

Standard American was readily understood by all, but in conversation we failed to get much beyond our Melbourne location and whether our opponents at each table had been to Australia, as our language competencies were very similar. Each table had bidding boxes, but they were hooked on to the table, thereby avoiding the occasional crash of a box. The suits and cards were somewhat different: piques (spades), coeurs (hearts), carreaux (diamonds), trefles (clubs), which made calling for a card to be played somewhat different. Mostly the faces of the cards were the same, except for the major players: Ace = 1; King=Roi; Queen=D; Valet (Jack)= V. Because the cards were different, we had to be extra careful counting points!

Play was intense and did not allow for any kind of break over the time of play, unlike our friendly halfway tea break at MVBC. We acquitted the club respectably and really enjoyed the challenge and the knowledge of the portability of this great game to anywhere in the world. It was a fun activity to incorporate into our holiday - highly recommended!



Members' Welfare

MVBC is more than just a bridge club, it is a community that cares for the welfare and wellbeing of their members.

If you or a member you know is unwell or who is hospitalised for a length of time, either email the secretary mvbcsecretary@hotmail.com or contact Julie Nelson on 0411 879 262 .

Player profile - Teresa Pietrzak

Question 1 How long have you been playing bridge?

I have been playing bridge since I was 16

Question 2 Why did you start playing bridge and how were you introduced to the game?

My friend invited me to his house, as they needed one extra player for their bridge game. They explained the rules to me and let me join in. From the beginning, I was intrigued about the rules of the game and found it very interesting. I played a lot while I was studying, as while I was in student accommodation in Poland, many of the other students also played bridge. When I came to Australia with my family, I found out in a local newspaper about a local bridge club in Ascot Vale on Union Road. So I called them and found out the details about the lessons and sessions they offered. I decided to take part in lessons with Eddie Karen, who taught me how to play proper bridge. After finishing my course in ACOL, I started playing bridge only once per week, as I was busy with work and family.

Question 3 What is your favorite thing about bridge?

I was always very excited to play bridge, regardless of win or loss. I enjoyed figuring out how to make the correct contracts, through choosing the right decisions based on my cards and the information from my partner. When I retired, I started playing much more bridge, and it instantly became my passion

Questions 4 Do you have any other hobbies other than bridge?

I try my best to fit my bridge schedule around my busy gym and Zumba classes!

Question 5 What led you to become a director?

Last year, the committee of Moonee Valley introduced a free directing course. I decided to take part, as I was eager to try something new, give myself a new challenge and fill in any free time I had. I also attended two online directing courses and extra training to be a director assistant of bridge sessions.

Question 6 What commitment / qualities are required for someone considering becoming a director?

To be a bridge director, it is important to be able to help people to solve any problems they may have, ensure that the sessions go smoothly and that all players are enjoying themselves. I am incredibly happy to be a bridge director, and I look forward to improving further my ability to carry out my duties



Player profile - Nick Matteo

Question 1 How long have you been playing bridge?

i have been playing for about 18 months and I almost have 1 Master point.

Question 2 Why did you start playing bridge and how were you introduced to the game?

Firstly, I have harbored an ongoing fantasy of becoming the new Noel Coward. Notwithstanding my natural wit, charm and erudition, I needed a practical 'something' to complete the illusion. Mixing exotic cocktails proved to be an outcome of diminishing returns. Slurred bon mots couldn't quite cut it. Then, try as I might, I could not raise a single eyebrow in silent mock scorn (a truly underrated aptitude). Hence bridge. The perfect entree into the world of refined urbanity.

Question 3 What is your favorite thing about bridge?

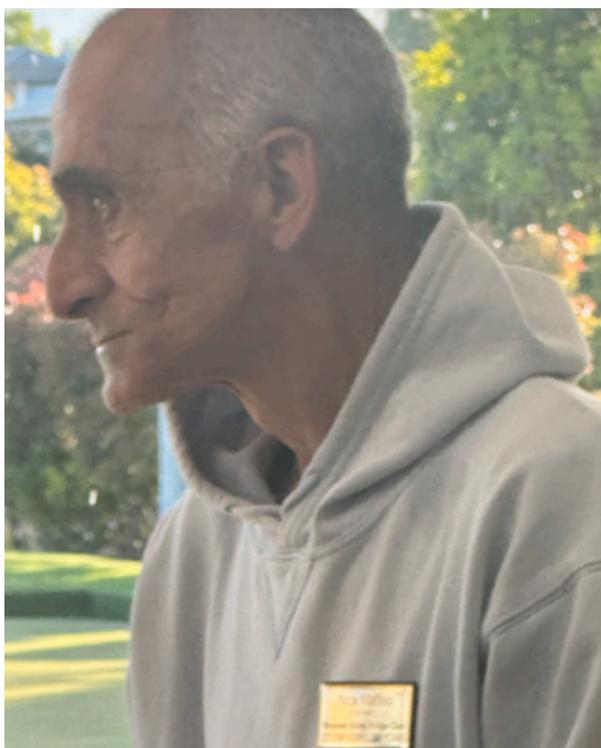
What I love and hate about bridge in equal measures is the highly codified bidding and card play, the arcane, almost 'cult like' conventions and the extraordinary pressure to adhere to the same - EXCEPT when it's not. Paradox and absurdity - does it get any better?

Question 4 What is your funny /memory about bridge?

It was a typical Thursday pm at MVBC. Lots of activity and general hubbub. My partner, our first game together, both slightly uneasy, were down the back near the bar. There was one particular hand. I misinterpreted my partners opening bid. Quickly, as in an adrenaline fueled fever dream, we ended up in 5 Diamonds. Of course we went down much to our ignominy. However, we quickly debriefed, identified the problem, and after the requisite self-recriminations and generous absolution, were ready to move on. But no, fate had other plans. The ever-vigilant Michael had noticed the rogue transgression. He stormed out of the office towards us like an avenging headmaster. An unusual hush descended on the room. Surreptitious glances from the other tables followed in his wake. He stopped at our table and bellowed 'You boy! What's the meaning of this? Meaning the 'aberration'. Red faced we both blustered some trite justification. Michael acknowledged our pathetic ramblings in silence. he then turned and left. But in those 5 seconds of silence there was a purgatorial lifetime. You had to be there to fully appreciate the whole thing.

Questions 5 Do you have any other hobbies other than bridge?

Apart from bridge, I spend an inordinate amount of time in the dark at local cinemas. However, when my Vitamin D levels drop, I have been known to venture into the sunlight to play Trugo with a local Brunswick Club.



MVBC Xmas Parties

The MVBC XMAS parties were a fantastic end to a fabulous year with great food, cheer, trivia, laughter and free bridge play. We had almost 200 members join one of the 2 sessions held on Tuesday 2nd and Thursday the 4th of December. A big call out to the events committee for organising the catering through ASRC - Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, who exist to create pathways to employment for people seeking asylum. They offer training, mentoring and paid work through our catering and event services. Also, a big thank-you to Michael Halfpenny for being the Emcee and Trivia Master for both events. Below are the Trivia Q&A

1. Who ran the seminar on bidding more accurately at MVBC in February? **Andy Hung**
2. Who runs Tuesday night sessions at MVBC? **Christy Geromboux**
3. Who are the two people who act as MVBC's Masterpoint Secretary? **Michael Halfpenny, Marianne Fridell**
4. Which club won the inaugural Irene English Memorial Teams Competition between MVBC and Williamstown BC held for the first time this year? **MVBC**
5. The two MVBC players with the most masterpoints are **George Lovrecz** and **Kim Frazer**. Spell their names.

- .6. At the charity day held in April who was the very generous person who brought along 20 jars of home-made marmalade for sale to raise extra money for our charity, and what was our charity this year? **Wilma Buckley, Make a Wish**
 - The remaining questions are about our 50th anniversary held this year. If you have our souvenir booklet or have read it thoroughly you will have a great advantage.
 7. In which year did EBC finish up? **2015**
 8. In which year did MVBC commence? **2012**
 9. In the commemorative booklet there is one typo. Name the person of the article in which the typo occurred. **Peter Hill**
 10. Name the four members of the 50th anniversary committee. **Marianne Fridell, Wilma Buckley, Sue Hume, Greg Nunn**
 11. What was Robert Rowan's job 50 years ago? **Teacher**
 12. Where did Jenny Date learn to play bridge? **On a Cruise**
 13. How many times did Alan Glasson win the MVBC Championship Pairs? **7**
 14. When was EBC's first congress? **1990**
 15. Name the five speakers at the five bridge sessions held during that week? **Robert Rowan, Greg Nunn, Jenny Date, Peter Hill, Michael Halfpenny.**
- Congratulations to the winning tables!



MVBC Xmas Parties



Celebrating 100 years of contract bridge

Last year MVBC celebrated our 50-year anniversary.

This year, bridge players around the international bridge community are marking one of those big ones: 100 years of contract bridge. A whole century of bidding misunderstandings, inspired leads, tragic moments in defense, unforgettable partners, and even the occasional perfect hand.

And yes — Australia has been part of the story pretty much from the beginning

So... how did contract bridge actually begin?

Contract bridge didn't appear overnight. It wandered its way here, evolving through whist, biritch and auction bridge before finally landing on the version we all recognise today — vulnerabilities, contracts, and the delicate art of deciding whether 3NT is brave or foolish.

In 1925, American player Harold S. Vanderbilt found himself on a cruise through the Panama Canal and did what many of us do on holidays: he tinkered with bridge scoring. His updates — especially the idea that you only score what you contract to make — reshaped the game into something sharper, fairer and far more exciting.

Clubs in London, New York and Paris quickly adopted the new rules, and suddenly contract bridge had a passport and a global fanbase.

The ABF's own historical notes gently remind us that Vanderbilt didn't reinvent the wheel so much as give it better grip. But 1925 is the moment the modern game truly took flight — the one we're celebrating today.

Bridge lands in Australia (and flourishes quickly)

Did you know organized bridge associations have been active in Australia since the early 20th century? Australia welcomed bridge with open arms — and probably a biscuit tin.

By the early 1930s, NSW and Victoria had established organized bridge associations, with other states soon joining in. As interstate rivalry grew (some things never change), the Australian Bridge Council was formed to bring everyone under one national umbrella.

By the 1960s, the name evolved into the one we all know today: the Australian Bridge Federation (ABF).

Fast-forward to now, and bridge in Australia is:

- 32,000 members strong
- Spread across more than 340 affiliated clubs nationwide
- Supported by teachers, directors, volunteers and organizers who keep everything humming — from weekday club sessions to marquee national event.

Whether it's the Summer Festival of Bridge, the Australian National Championships, or a country-town club session with homemade muffins, bridge has woven itself into the social fabric of Australia.

A 100-year-old game that somehow feels brand new

Celebrating the centenary is a great excuse to look back — but the real magic is how modern bridge still feels

A 100-year-old game that somehow feels brand new!

Celebrating the centenary is a great excuse to look back — but the real magic is how modern bridge still feels.

Why has it lasted? Because:

- It's social. Bridge gives people community, connection and somewhere to belong.
- It's endlessly stimulating. Every hand is a new puzzle (and sometimes a new adventure).
- It's flexible. Play in clubs, at home, online, casually or competitively — whatever works for you.
- It's beautifully intergenerational. Kids, parents, grandparents... everyone competes on equal footing.

Despite its age, bridge has adapted magnificently. Online play flourishes, teaching programs are expanding, and the centenary has sparked celebrations from San Francisco to Stockholm to Sydney

The centenary isn't being treated as a single date — it's a year-long global festival of everything we love about this game.

How can you mark 100 years of contract bridge?

For existing players

- Encourage a friend or family member to join their local club's next beginners' course or teach them yourself!
- Volunteer as a mentor or help run beginner lessons.
- Share your "how I started playing bridge" story — online or at your club

For newcomers

- Join a learn-to-play course at a local club.
- Ask a friend to teach you the basics.
- Try an online intro session and then give in-person bridge a go.

If every player brought just one new person into the fold, the next 100 years would be off to a flying start.

For the full article click below

[100 YEARS OF BRIDGE FULL ARTICLE](#)

Online learning

Unlocking Better Bridge: A Look at Tony Staw's YouTube Channel



Bridge Lessons Tony Staw

@TonyStawBridgeClass · 4.97k subscribers · 320 videos

Our last newsletter included links to at Peter Holland's YouTube channel as part of our exploration of online resources. In this edition we are looking at Tony Staw's site. He teaches in-person lessons and supervised duplicate sessions within the UK bridge circuit. His YouTube channel is like a live classroom: he sets a topic, poses questions, waits for viewers of the session to respond, and then he provides analyses and advice on the given topic by playing sample hands.

He has a rather laconic style, and he is very easy to follow. He teaches the ACOL system, but his lessons are still absolutely appropriate for those who do not use this system. He has 320 videos covering bidding, play as declarer, and defence. He covers general topics such as Common Mistakes and How to Avoid Them as well as signalling, optimizing finesses and defensive errors.

Who the Channel Is Best Suited For?

While his channel can be enjoyed on many levels, its content is especially appropriate for:

Beginner to Intermediate Players:

If you've grasped the basics of the game and are ready to build a solid bidding foundation or improve your declarer play, the explanations are pitched clearly and without unnecessary jargon.

Club Players Looking to Improve Results:

Duplicate and casual club players will find concrete advice they can apply immediately to their next session.

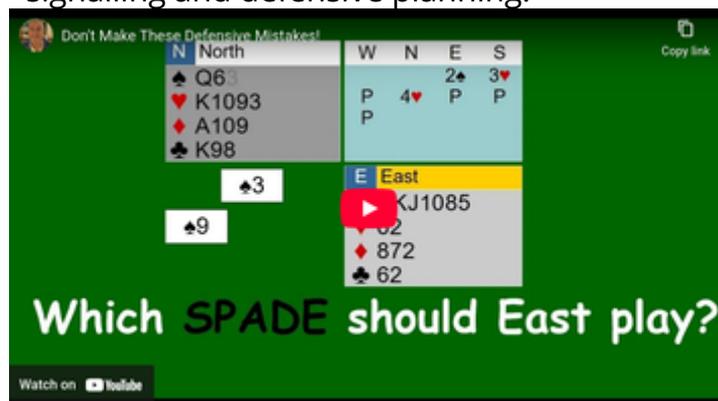
Advanced players:

Can still benefit from the tactical discussions and defence problems, though the channel's pace and approach are often most beneficial for those growing toward that level rather than already there.

Next is just an example of his most popular videos. Whether you're just beginning your bridge journey or looking to polish your game before your next club night, this channel deserves a place in your watchlist. Happy watching!

Don't Make These Defensive Mistakes!

Highlights key defence errors and how to avoid them — ideal for players struggling with signalling and defensive planning.



DOUBLE CLICK

Finessing, the Rule of Seven, and the Danger Hand covers advanced declarer play concepts like finesses and controlling the "danger hand" — useful for players who want to brush up on our BB3 classes.



DOUBLE CLICK

Defend These Five Hands With Me!

A practical walkthrough of defence problems — perfect for intermediate players wanting to test and improve their defensive judgement.



DOUBLE CLICK