

## YBC Teachers and Teaching Assistants



### **Andrew Merrison (HEAD OF TEACHING)**

Andrew was taught Bridge in 1985 by his A-level Physics teacher (13+ points to open, strong 2s, and a variable No Trump). In 1986, while studying accountancy, he founded the Bridge Club at Trent Polytechnic and subsequently attended Junior Camps of the World Bridge Federation in 1987 (The Netherlands) and 1989 (Poland). In 1989, Andrew was one of the very first four recipients of the WBF Youth Awards. Ultimately, he became a professional teacher, lecturing in Linguistics for over 20 years (Conversation Analysis, Social Inter-Action, Semantics and Pragmatics), and he also regularly taught extra-curricular Bridge. Andrew joined YBC in June 2022, but since then he has certainly played A LOT (way more sessions than there have been days of play) – and already with over 135 members ('gotta catch 'em all')! He is currently Head of Teaching, Chair of the club committee, Webmaster, and TD. He also represents YBC in both face-to-face and online Yorkshire Leagues. He is also a (pretty competent) viola player. He (currently) owns 21 animal-face T-shirts (have you seen them all?), and regularly wears odd socks and a yellow bowler hat. Oh – he also has a diagnosis of autism (is anyone at all surprised?).



### **Mike Barnard**

I started playing knockout whist as a young boy (many years ago!), then on to partner whist, and then bridge at university. Until 2019, I played mostly social bridge, and then I started playing duplicate twice a week with the u3a. I joined York Bridge Club in 2022 and currently play about three times a week. Before I retired, I worked in IT where I had the opportunity to do some technical teaching, including speaking at conferences. In 2023 I started assisting Andrew Merrison and John Guest with the classes they run and really enjoyed it. So I took the leap and did the teaching bridge course run by the national body EBTA. In my role as YBC's "Player Development Guide", together with Andrew, I've developed the (freely available) FOUNDATION CONVENTION CARD and I've now developed a series of stand-alone Sunday Seminars on: opening leads; Robson's rules; patterns, signals and discards; declarer play.



### **James Carpenter**

I've been a keen bridge player since learning to play at school back when the world was young. Having been a member of York Bridge Club for almost as long, I'm pleased to be joining the club's teaching team to help grow the membership. I am a qualified Tournament Director, regularly running sessions at York, and a member of the EBU national TD panel. I've had some modest successes as a player, twice obtaining gold points, although I've never won a food processor [unlike Iain Crockatt]. As a keen reader, I've always enjoyed studying the game, and I look forward to sharing my experience and knowledge with aspiring players. Beyond bridge, I'm a fan of Asterix the Gaul, Sherlock Holmes and Knitting (but not necessarily in that order).



### ***Azizah Clayton***

Azizah has spent her working life teaching and lecturing; the passion to share knowledge has always been paramount in her life. Having taken up the game of bridge late in her retirement, she quickly acquired a teaching qualification with the EBED. She initiated the “Bridge into Schools” project with a group of YBC buddies (helpers), which came to a halt because of Covid. However, the lockdown gave her an opportunity to start some teaching in the online Play and Learn sessions; and becoming a trustee of YBC gave her the opportunity to take a lead in organising the teaching scheme at the YBC. The YBC is planning to make our teaching delivery second to none – a huge task and an exciting one.



### ***John Guest***

John has been playing Bridge since the age of 10 and serious Bridge for the last 20+ years. He started offering a revision and improvement class for intermediate standard players in 2017 and also looks after the Monday evening “Improvers” session for the club. He is a wonderful bridge teacher, an excellent communicator and has the patience of a saint. He usually delivers his courses “Revise your ACOL” (starting in September) and “Extend your ACOL” (starting in January).



### ***Linda Kitchen***

Bridge and bridges, in many guises, have featured in my life for over fifty years. First as a Civil Engineer involved in the design and construction of Motorway bridges; then – after a period of raising children – the inspection, repair and replacement of Railway bridges. My introduction to the *game* of Bridge was in a design office, where I was often invited to make up a fourth when the “lads” were missing a player for lunch break bridge. Hence, I was never taught properly. Fast forward to retirement: I learned to play Bridge at very good classes provided by YBC. Thus began a new Bridge challenge! That was some seven years ago and I am still learning. It is a brilliant game and I am keen to encourage, teach and help others to learn and increase their enjoyment in a sociable and social environment. As well as being an ACOL player, I also identify as an AFOL (if you know, you know)!



### ***Simon Kennedy***

Simon first played bridge fifty years ago – rubber of course. Some forty years ago he met Alison and married and raised a family of three daughters. Once the oldest was old enough to babysit her sisters Simon and Alison joined a teaching club in Aylesbury and learnt to play duplicate. In 2009 they joined with others to found the Aylesbury Aces Bridge Club, where Simon also took his turn as Chairman of the Club for several years. He also started teaching bridge as well as training as a Tournament Director, graduating with distinction in 2014. He has regularly directed since then. In 2017 Simon and Alison retired to York, joined York Bridge Club and have played regularly ever since. When not at YBC, you might well find Simon on a cruise ship teaching bridge, or on the piste teaching skiing.



### ***Ruth Mattingly***

My working life consisted of two very different careers. Firstly I joined Harrods as a trainee buyer where I discovered a love of shopping but left when I had my son. Secondly when my son started school I retrained as a social worker and became a team manager of a Child Protection Team in London. Then my husband and I moved to York 28 years ago when I became a Guardian *ad Litem* [expert independent child witness in local authority care proceedings] working for the Lord Chancellor's Dept. My interests are mostly in music; I belong to three different choirs and I am learning to play the saxophone. I first learned to play bridge when I retired. I absolutely loved it, got hooked and started teaching bridge to a York U3A group, which sadly ended with Covid lockdown. I am thrilled to have done the Teacher Training course in 2022 and am pleased to be part of the YBC teaching team and sharing my enthusiasm and love of bridge as well as making good friends.



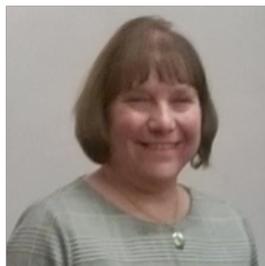
### ***David Mitchell***

An erstwhile actuary, David has played club bridge on and off for the last 30 years, but during this time has had some long breaks away from bridge due to various work commitments. He got back into bridge during Covid and he rejoined York Bridge Club in 2022. He enjoys playing in various club sessions and takes part in both league and other competitions. David has started helping out with the Youth Academy and the Friday morning 'Red Book' lessons and is keen to build upon that experience. All being well, he will gain his EBTA qualifications in summer so that he can be a fully-fledged member of the teaching team. When not playing bridge David enjoys watching his football team – Burnley (yes ... someone has to!). He is also a keen hill walker (and Munro bagger) and walking footballer.



### ***David Moore***

David spent his working life as a university teacher. He took up bridge as a beginner about 10 years ago. He runs the "Assisted Play" sessions at the bridge club, which are immensely popular with learners. He also teaches Year 1 and Year 2 classes. He has a dry sense of humour which makes his lessons fun and friendly. He was part of YBC's "Bridge in Schools" project which ran a couple of years ago. He also worked as a tennis coach for many years before old age [his words!] took over.



### ***Rowena White***

I began playing bridge regularly after my children left home for university. A year later, in 2009, I started a bridge club at Fulford School. We are now in our 17th year and I have seen hundreds of students try the game. Over the years I have witnessed at first-hand how the game can develop young people socially, emotionally and mentally and encourage teamwork. I joined York Bridge Club when the concept of creating a Youth Academy was discussed in 2022 and in October our concept became a reality. I have had a lot of fun over the years working with young people who have much to give as well as gain from the game. I am now County Youth Officer for Yorkshire and am a past holder of the Alec Salisbury Award.

## YBC TADSS Assistants



### ***Marcus Barbor***

25 years being taught. Thereafter, 25 years teaching science in secondary schools and later science education at Roehampton University. 50 years with just the one wife, so far. 3 years (feels like 30!) partnering Andrew Merrison. One, a constant source of joy. One, a source of bewilderment and constant misunderstanding. And I'm not saying which is which! I wear socks in pairs (radical!) and have no yellow bowler hat. But, like Andrew, I do like bridge gadgets and I heartily recommend the Really Unusual No Trump (RUNT) – not so much because it gets interesting results but mainly because it's FUN ... if only I could get him to remember the damned thing!!!

### ***Bryan Boulter***



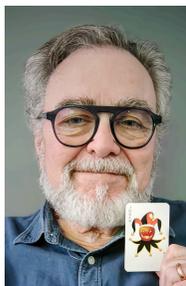
Bryan started to learn to play Bridge properly on retirement from his job as a lawyer in 2011. He enrolled for lessons at YBC in May 2012 and completed about 3 years' worth of lessons. He has been assisting classes at YBC run by John Guest, Andrew Merrison and Mike Barnard over a period of about 3 years. His legal skill-set has clearly served him well in terms of his approach to teaching: strong communication, sharp analytical skills, excellent judgment, problem-solving ability, attention to detail, confidence, resilience, and all supported by a commitment to continuous learning and client focus. Fortunately, you can enlist his services for just a 1.4% fraction of the government-recommended hourly charge out rate of £288! When not at the bridge table, Bryan enjoys bird watching and Argentine Tango (usually not at the same time). And, despite his keyboard-playing skills, apparently it is an unfounded rumour that he can be hired as a Peter Gabriel lookalike!

### ***Ren Buss***



Unlike the majority of those listed, learning to play bridge was my response to mid life crisis, but it then went onto the back burner whilst family and career (which included working as a professional accounting tutor) intruded. Dusted off again with retirement I now really enjoy the social aspects and the challenge of trying to upgrade my outdated thinking and adapt. I'm also the proud "DOG GRANDMA" of a beautiful big black slobbery boy called DRAX.

### ***Martin Cooper***



Back when God were a lad, my parents and I used to play cards and board games while listening to the wireless. So when I started my first job with an insurance company in London, and all my colleagues played Bridge, I was very keen to learn. We played at lunchtimes, in the monthly Bridge Club, and in the Insurance league. A few years later I moved to an oil company and found the same setup there, except the league was for London Business Houses. Eventually, I became an IT contractor, and as none of my friends played, I contented myself with reading the Bridge columns in the newspaper. About 5 years ago, I decided to seek out some face-to-face action and joined YBC. I then had to learn the modern style and systems. I am now enjoying my Bridge more than ever and hope I can encourage everyone to love this incredibly rewarding and often infuriating game. (PS: I'm a "CAT DAD".)



### ***John Hayton***

John (a practising chartered accountant) has been playing bridge since he was 10 years old and has taught bridge, mainly to improvers, since 1985. He is keen to improve his knowledge of more recent bridge teaching methods and develop his skills in making the learning process fun. John spent a number of years on the Yorkshire Contract Bridge Association Management Board and he is particularly proud of being part of a group which helped over a thousand Yorkshire bridge players continue to play the game that they love during the period of Covid restricted activity. It is easy to spot John at a bridge event as he always seems to be wearing a Leeds United shirt and/or drinking Red Bull – it gives him wiings!



### ***Sue Osborne***

I have been a Bridge addict ever since I learned to play at school and have been involved in teaching Bridge for many years at my local Bridge Club. When I retired 8 years ago from working with children with special needs I began looking for a new challenge. With my partner Phil we began hosting Bridge Holidays for Bridge Overseas, so we now get to visit new places, meet new people and also get the occasional game of bridge. When I am not playing Bridge I love musical theatre and dancing. I keep my brain going with quizzes and attempting to learn Spanish. Last year we moved to York from Rugby to be closer to my family and to become more involved in Grandma duties with my five grandchildren.



### ***Jonathan Sanders***

I grew up playing cards with my parents and grandparents, and passed on the fun of socially playing cards to school friends. Fast forward several decades and wanting a new challenge, I signed up to bridge lessons at my local club. I've been playing for 9 years now and having taught English as a foreign language for many years (mainly in Mongolia and Japan), I'm now combing two things I enjoy, by teaching bridge. As well as being Vice Chair of the club committee, Competitions Secretary and the captain of the YBC Yorkshire League "C TEAM", I'm also a keen cyclist and beekeeper.



### ***Michael Waller***

Having learnt bridge at school, I more or less gave up playing when I made the radical decision that I ought to leave university with a degree. Having subsequently worked as a clinical scientist, I only returned to the game a few years ago and it has been a lot of fun. I've been surprised to find that you can gradually improve your standard of play at any age. While I occasionally play on-line, I much prefer face-to-face bridge (many thanks to my partners and the YBC membership!). However, I also really enjoy watching top-level bridge on BBO and Real Bridge. You see wonderful examples of bidding and card play, but you also see that even the best players are human – they make mistakes too ... just not as many as the rest of us! I'm also a (relatively new) TD and a Trustee of the club.