

TOWNSVILLE BRIDGE CLUB (TBC) HISTORY 2, A CLUBHOUSE IS BUILT 1971-1975

1971

The Club's 4th birthday was celebrated Friday 16th April at the Hotel Allen. On 13th July, the AGM at the Synod Hall was attended by 34 members with 8 apologies. Membership 87. President's Report – Tuesday nights averaged 7 tables, Friday nights 9.5 tables. Monday afternoon games were very popular and the need for premises bigger than the Synod Hall was increasingly evident. Some Monday games were moved to the Golf Club. There was some dissent with the 2 venues for Monday games, it was suggested the club look for bigger premises. Finances were \$2413. Annual subscription remained at \$5. It was resolved to play team matches 1 night per month. An Annual Bridge Congress in the Pacific Festival was recommended.

1972

This was somewhat of a seminal year for TBC. The first Congress ("Pacific Congress") was held in June 1972. A fund-raising Committee (*Mr K. Lafferty, Mrs P. Back, Mr F. Schulte*) was established on 24th July to commence provision of new premises for the Club. The first meeting of the Finance Committee on 21st August resolved that

1. a first net prize of only \$0.70 be paid to both NS and EW
2. table fees be raised to \$1.00
3. the Auxiliary be asked for additional help to raise funds
4. three Real Estate Agents be asked to look for a suitable building site for the proposed clubhouse
5. the President address members to explain the necessity for increased fund raising for the club

Mr A. Jackman was appointed the Club's QBA delegate.

The 5th AGM was held on 1st August at the Synod Hall. Minutes unavailable. *Mrs D. Kerr* reported bad manners creeping into club play.

On 14th August, July rental of \$77.00 for Synod Hall was paid. *Mr Schulte* proposed to offer the Council of church \$55 monthly.

On 4th September, decisions were made for

- the 1st Club Teams Championship to be played 3rd and 10th November, but on 9th October, this was deferred to the following year
- Masterpoints to be introduced for Tuesday nights
- *Mrs Margaret Ward* and *Mrs Ettie Fell* to be asked to give bridge lessons to raise additional building funds
- Table fees on Tuesday and Friday nights to be increased from \$0.50 to \$1.00 from 15th September
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On 29th September, a Special General Meeting at the Synod Hall was attended by 56 members. It was called to resolve a letter of dissent regarding increased table fees and the proposed building of the clubhouse. There was much discussion. *Mrs D. Crimston* requested consideration of reduced table fees for those hard pressed. On a show of hands and then a secret ballot, members wanted something done regarding building a clubhouse.

On 9th October, it was decided to hold a November spoon competition on Tuesday nights. And *Mr Schulte* produced a plan of the Wellington St area for lease off the Council.

The dissent over table fees continued to the extent that a breakaway group formed the Mundingburra Bridge Club (MBC) to play social bridge. A 7-table gathering played at 2 Sutter St, initially on Tuesday night 10th October. The following week on 17th October, a similar gathering played bridge, and 25 people signed a document stating they wished to start a social club to play on Tuesday nights. The following Tuesday 24th October, regular play on Tuesday nights moved to St Barnabas Hall for almost 4 months with increasing membership to an average of about 8-9 tables. Table fees were 40c, Membership fees \$1 per year. Separate document (*in prep*) for more details on the Mundingburra Bridge Club.

Meanwhile, back at TBC on 23rd November, a letter of offer from the Townsville City Council was tabled, advising of approval in principle to the application for allocation of a site in Council land off Wellington St. The club accepted the offer. It was noted that there was a drift of members away from Tuesday night club competitions to a competition elsewhere (MBC). The President said formation of a new bridge club was a good idea provided the times of play were different from Townsville Club. The President also moved (seconded *Mr F. Schulte*) that members with limited incomes be charged 60% of normal fees. *Mrs D Stewart* moved that prize money be set at 1st net \$0.70, 2nd \$0.40.

On 11th December, a letter from *Mrs Margaret Ward* advised of a summer school of bridge would commence in January 1973.

1973

The Auxiliary commenced play at Queen's Hotel on Monday 12th February.

On 28th February, *Mrs D. Crimston* was asked by the Treasurer to advise the Auxiliary that adequate records were required. A lack of compliance by the Auxiliary representative *Mrs Clancy* is mentioned several times in the 1973 minutes and also in the auditor's report. *Mr T. Borsboom* as well as *Mr T. Jackman* were accepted as QBA delegates.

The 6th AGM was at the Synod Hall on 26th July, with 42 attendees and 11 apologies. President's report:

- spoke of successful fund-raising activities re building a clubhouse
- noted excess income over expenditure of nearly \$3,000 and Club assets of near \$6,000
- hopeful the next AGM would be in own clubhouse
- Auxiliary increased their sessions from 2 to 4 Monday afternoons per month, but venue had been a problem and was still unsatisfactory

Annual subscription fee unchanged (\$5).

On 10th September, it was announced that a Zonal Pairs Championship would be held later that month. *Mrs D. Stewart* appeared to be the Zonal Secretary and later, was formally appointed for 1974-75.

On 17th December, *Mrs P. Back* was appointed to draw up a floor plan and get quotes for the new clubhouse. The committee accepted an offer from *Mrs D. Stewart* to organise a pairs competition on the Australia Day 1974 weekend in memory of her mother.

1974

By 28th February, Council Land for the clubhouse had been approved, and a strong possibility of a Government subsidy in July emerged. A sub-committee of *Dr and Mrs Back, F. Schulte, and Richard Ward* was formed.

On 24th April, the committee accepted a quote of \$26,310 from Hollis Parker to build the clubhouse, subject to approvals. Adult education classes on bridge were underway. *Mr A. Duncan* was appointed as Club Handicapper.

The 7th AGM was held on 2nd August at the Synod Hall, with 39 attendees and 17 apologies.

President's Report

- assets increased from \$5834 last year to \$9571 at end of 1973-74 FY.
- Application had been lodged through the QBA for a Queensland Government building subsidy
- Christmas party 1973 had attracted 22 tables
- June Congress 1974 attracted 46 pairs and 22 teams
- a Northern Zone for State Championship qualifying was established
- a Ladies Pairs Competition (new event) held over 3 Thursday nights in June 1974 was very popular
- play every Monday afternoon averaged 6-7 tables, shifted venue back to Synod Hall
- gave details of the new program of classes in 1974, jointly sponsored by TBC and Department of Adult Education and consisting of 10 lessons. The program was conducted on Thursday evenings by *Mrs Ettie Fell* and *Richard Ward*. There were 10 tables of beginners.
- *Mrs D. Crimston* resigned from her role as Secretary and was replaced by *Mrs Macdonald*.
- the Club Spoon, an annual event, was won by *Mrs Alma Wordsworth* and *Mrs Nehmer*.
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On 5th August, *Richard Ward* was appointed TBC delegate to attend QBA convention in October.

Regarding the building of the clubhouse, news came thick and fast in late 1974. Plans were approved by the Committee except the windows were too small and must go from ceiling to floor. The State government was to pay 25% of the final cost of the building. Quote for the building was raised to \$30,000. A grant from the Commonwealth was still not forthcoming and eventually, advice was received in May 1975 that the subsidy would not eventuate because Contract Bridge was not recognised as a sport. The Committee authorised the building sub-committee to commence the initial stages of building the clubhouse and report back.

Meanwhile, the club looked for a new venue as the rental for the Synod Hall was raised by \$5 per session. A bid to play at Valleys Tennis Club was declined. The Zonal Secretary reported that Mount Isa Bridge Club had been introduced to the Zone.

A Special Committee Meeting was called on 28th December to discuss clubhouse business. *Mr F. Schulte, Mrs D. Stewart, and Mr R. Ward* were given authority to sign a contract with Hollis Parker P/L on behalf of TBC.

1975

On 20th January, a Special Committee Meeting was convened to inform of clubhouse building progress.

- additional subsidies were imminent from either the State or Commonwealth.
- Council had received protests about traffic from residents in Wellington St and surrounds even before plans were finally approved. On 16th December 1974, an alternative site in Aitken St where traffic was not a problem was discussed with Council but rejected by TBC as the site was not ready for construction for some considerable time. Subsequently a written permit from the Council gave approval to build on Council Site "H".
- when the builders measured up the site, they were informed by Council that an alternative site "D" on the plan - not "H" - had been allocated to the Club. This resulted in extra costs for sewerage connection, drawing up the plans again, drainage, and power. Otherwise the site was satisfactory (apart from the possible difficulty of future extension of the building in the way intended), and construction progressed rapidly from here.
- cost of the club house (extracted from a letter to *Mr R. Leahy*, Director of Sport) had progressively blown out to \$38,047, and a request for the State subsidy to be raised from 25% to 33.33% (because of no Commonwealth grant) was lodged and granted.

On 3rd March, *Mr P. Vanderloos* from Brisbane agreed to direct the June Congress.

On 26th March, a Special Committee Meeting was held at the Wellington St site. It was resolved to

- borrow up to \$16,000 (of which \$3,000 was to be bridging finance) and to give security over the lease and building
- buy 60 chairs @ \$10.71 plus freight from Bendix Consolidated Industries
- substitute metal louvres up to sill height for glass

On 12th May, a resolution was carried to disband the TBC Auxiliary upon completion of the clubhouse.

By 9th June, all major construction had been completed. Painting and carpeting would be finished within a week. It was deemed that play in the new clubhouse could be commenced by 20th June, and a gala opening night was set for 27th July.

A Special General Meeting at the new clubhouse was held on 27th June, 63 members attended. A motion to raise the annual subscription fee in 1975-76 from \$5 to \$10 was carried.

On 25th July, the 8th AGM was held at the new Clubhouse, 50 attendees, 13 apologies. Membership 101 at 30th June.

President's Report:

- the net worth of the club had increased from \$9571 last year to \$22,061 thanks to the State subsidy and the steady income from table fees and other activities
- spoke of the 11th hour objections to the building but it was completed on time and within budget

The first night of play in the new clubhouse was on 27th July and was celebrated with a Gala Night. Praise for the clubhouse went to

- *Fred Schulte* for arranging finance
- *Arthur Bloxam* for his structural engineering help
- *Ken Back* for his organising ability
- *Pat Back* who fitted the clubhouse with decor and other domestic requirements

Resolutions passed on 4th August included

- the Secretary to write to the Council complaining of inadequate street lighting
- handicapping to be applied to all sessions except Tuesday night

Damage to screens by vandals was also first mentioned on 4th August.

On 25th August, resignation of *Mr Fred Schulte* was accepted, and damage to the clubhouse further discussed. Standard of dress to be adopted according to an ABF circular.

On 13th October, *Mrs A. Smith* offered to donate a trophy for Mondays starting in 1976. Players with an average handicap of 20 or less were eligible to win but anyone could play. Club handicaps were to be updated in the second week of each month.

Mrs Toohey to make curtains with helpers.

Mr A. Duncan was selected to attend the QBA convention.

President suggested to members that even-numbered tables would be non-smoking.

A time-switch external light costing \$160 was approved.

The Clubhouse could be hired by members for \$5 per session which included use of kitchen but not bridge equipment – Clubhouse to be left clean.

On 10th November, Thursday sessions were cancelled due to lack of support.

QBA delegates: *Mr A. Jackman* and *Mrs May Heck*. Written report on QBA convention was presented by *Mr A. Duncan*. Zonal delegate presented report showing Red MPs to be allocated for Zonal Pairs and Zonal Teams in future.

Clubhouse damage: wire-reinforced louvres were to be put in men's toilet, screens not to be replaced, metal louvres to be repaired.

Secretary to check booking of Pimlico Refectory for 1976 Congress.

Christmas hamper mentioned for the first time.

On 21st November, 52 members attended a Special General Meeting at the Clubhouse to pass a resolution which the Bank of NSW (now Westpac) required to finalise arrangements and documentation for the mortgage.

Members also voted against having non-smoking tables.

On 10th December, the booking of Pimlico Refectory for the June 76 Congress was confirmed.

QBA delegate: *Mrs Heck*, *Mr Jackman* resigned.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

This document has been compiled by *Charlie Georgees* as a digital record of our Club history. The information herein has been taken from a variety of documents on file at the Townsville Bridge Club. Some are typed minutes of meetings and AGM reports - some quite faded - and others are loose leaf pages of handwritten notes. If anyone has any information that can improve the accuracy of the record, please contact the author.

OTHER DOCUMENT IN THIS SERIES

"TBC History 1 The Formative Years 1967-1970"
