

## TAMBORINE MOUNTAIN BRIDGE CLUB HISTORY

This history has been written using available minutes kept since the formation of the club. There are 7 years where there are no minute records. As a general statement, the contents of the minutes are dominated by the conduct of a congress, the Christmas party and finances.

It is recorded in Historical Association papers that bridge was played on the mountain by the Kings and Aces Club on 26 March, 1934 at the Belvedere Café.

A public meeting occurred on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 1988 to consider the formation of a Bridge Club. The 18 persons in attendance agreed to form a Bridge Club. A committee was formed and it was agreed bridge would be played at 7pm on Monday nights with coaching being provided during the evening. Membership would be \$10 and table fees \$1.50.

In 1989, a constitution was adopted and the Club applied for affiliation with the Queensland Bridge Association and the Australian Bridge Federation. However not all members agreed with this and in the list of members at the time, half of the members were "non affiliated".

Incorporation was discussed as early as 1995 with it actually happening in 2002.

Over the years, the constitution was modified on several occasions and the financial year was altered to what it is today-January to December.

After the formation of the Club, it played bridge in the Vonda Youngman Community Centre. In 1991 because of increasing hire fees at this venue, the Club moved its meetings to the Creative Arts Centre following agreement to a fee of \$500 per year. During the Christmas period each year, it was not possible to play at Creative Arts and the first mention of a Clubhouse was made in 1994 when it

was suggested the Club needed a building site 13m x10m on level ground and the club would make representation to the Council that year following the Council elections. In 1995, the Bridge Club provided \$1500 to Creative Arts to upgrade kitchen equipment and this amount was offset against future rent. The Club continued to explore other venues- scout hall, golf club, bowls club, show hall- but none were considered suitable. The dominant issues were storage and the setting up of tables.

In 2007, the Tamborine Mountain Sports Association (TMSA) was formed and the development of a sporting complex was being planned. The Bridge Club joined the TMSA and indicated its needs. In 2009, the TMSA advised the Bridge Club that its needs could not be included in stage 1 and that it would be included in stage 2 which would occur in 18 to 24 months and it still has not happened in 2019. In 2012, the Bridge Club saw no future in pursuing the TMSA option and resigned its membership.

In 2011, the Club negotiated with Roslyn Lodge the use of a room where table and chairs could be set up and remain in place. However the arrangement was short lived because of roadworks associated with a neighbouring development. At this time the Club was also offered the Masons building in Canungra. It would need to be moved to the mountain. However no Council or other land could be found and the building was sold.

2013 was the year when it all started to happen -a vision for our own clubhouse ; financial planning to fund the Clubhouse; discussion with the Council as to available land; plans of the building. In a discussion paper prepared by the Club for the local Council, the preferred option was to build a clubhouse on the TMSA complex. The response by the TMSA was negative and following significant negotiation with all parties, it was agreed the Bridge Club could build on the TMSA lease, it would rejoin the TMSA, pay a facility fee to TMSA and provide its own power and water. The site was negotiated with the TMSA as parking and an effluent outlet were the dominant

requirements. As the building was being built on Council land, its ownership would revert to the Council on completion. A right of use agreement enabled the bridge club to use the building consistent with the dates (2023) of the TMSA lease from the Council.

The Club negotiated a \$30000 loan from the ABF to be paid back over 20 years, obtained 2 Community Gambling fund grants totalling \$53000 and used its accumulated funds to pay for the building. It would not have eventuated if it was not for strong leadership within the Club, significant personal donations and enormous physical efforts of volunteers. Austerity in activities was agreed-table fees increased to \$5, prizes were reduced and catering was basic. The Clubhouse was officially opened on 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2015. The loan to the ABF was paid back in full in 2018, 15 years ahead of schedule.

From 18 members at the Clubs formation, membership numbers were between 42 and 58 in the 1990's to the mid 2000's. In 2011, there were 78 members and in recent years there are around 100 members. All members are affiliated with the ABF/QBA. Two life members have been created- Guy Ethell (1994), Keith Bowman(2017).

In the early days, dollars were tight. Members had to bring their own cups; discussion would occur relating to buying cards and how to make them less sticky as they aged and donations were frequent. It still happens as our present kitchen has donated crockery and cutlery. The club bell was donated in 1989. Also in 1989, a set of boards, 28 packs of cards and a  $\frac{3}{4}$  Howell table cards were purchased. A computer was purchased in 2003 as its purchase was not able to be justified in 2000. A website could now be created. A dealing machine was purchased in 2008. Eight Bridgemates were purchased in 2011. All of this equipment has been upgraded following the success of Community Gambling Fund Grant approvals in 2016 and 2018.

The dominant feature of all committee minutes was the Congress. It was first held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1990 at the Community Centre. The second congress was a 2 day event in November 1991. It was attended by 200 players. The external director would only come if smoking was allowed and so there were smoking and non smoking tables. What movement occurred poses a question. Two congresses occurred the following year. They were non smoking with 30 tables in March and a 2 day event in November with novices one day and open the other. A comment is recorded that “unless you have a congress, you have no club spirit”. In 2005 and thereafter only a one day congress was held. Congresses continued until 2012 when a motion was passed that they be discontinued and a members day be held in their place. It is revealed in the minutes that they were a significant challenge for a small club to organise and hold and even though they made a profit, it is questionable if it really covered the voluntary efforts of many members.

The main focus of a Bridge Club is encouraging and supporting the playing of bridge and in doing so meeting the needs of members. From the time of its formation, the members of the club have provided guidance and stimulation to those wanting to learn to play or improve their bridge. At times, external teachers have been paid to give lessons. In 1993, handicaps were created and free games were awarded to handicap winners. In late 1993, a clock was used to speed up play with each board being completed in six and a half minutes. At the same time, a trial of no coffee break was undertaken so that play could be completed by 10pm. In 1994, one pair finished first in the Australia Wide Pairs and another pair finished first in the Queensland Wide Pairs. In 2017, a pair finished first in the Australia Wide Novice Pairs. The minutes often record concerns about the cost of masterpoints, particularly red and those associated with the congress. A Thursday night session was trialled and this was moved to the afternoon. In the mid 2000's, the numbers on Thursday afternoon were such that the viability of the session was questioned. However numbers picked up and it has continued ever since. A trial

of Saturday play was undertaken in 2010 but this ceased through lack of numbers and the rental cost. Because the club has its own facility, a Wednesday afternoon session commenced in 2016 as a stepping stone for those learning and wishing to gain confidence. This has now become a normal session and an additional session on Friday afternoon offers supervised play with some tuition.

The Tamborine Mountain Bridge Club is well governed, financially stable, has 100 members with \$40 membership fees, plays 4 sessions each week- one being supervised play; pairs championship in July; red points once a month; free games for handicap winners- with table fees of \$5, has a well equipped and technologically modern facility- 2 computers, timers, bridgemates, compscore, website, space for 16 tables- and has members who are provided with an optimum environment to play bridge- AC- and be involved in social activities- wine & cheese after sessions in the last week of the month; 3 teams events each year; 2 trivia nights each year. The Right of Use Agreement with the Sports Association extends to 2034, the same date the Sports Association lease concludes with the Scenic Rim Regional Council.

John Youngman  
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