

A
HISTORY
OF THE
SUNSHINE COAST
CONTRACT
BRIDGE CLUB

THE FIRST 25 YEARS

*This brief history has been compiled by
Sue Mabin.*

*Source material has been committee meeting minutes,
and information provided from members including*

*Betty Carney, Pauline Cunningham, Joe Erbacher,
Ken Dawson, Phil Eckersley, Wilma Hiddins,
Margaret Collins,
Judith Slade, Dot Borchardt and Lil Harris.*

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The S.C.C.B.C. was officially formed on April 11, 1973. Prior to this date, bridge sessions were held at Dormie House, now Headland Crest Motel on Monday afternoons and Thursday nights. Mrs Norma Vliegenhardt, an active member of the Queensland Contract Bridge Club, had moved to the Sunshine Coast and offered to teach and direct bridge and suggested an affiliation with the Queensland Bridge Association (Q.B.A.)

The inaugural meeting of the S.C.C.B.C. was chaired by Mr James de Courcy O'Sullivan, then President of the Q.B.A. and elected office bearers were -

President - Mrs. Betty Carney

Vice President - Mrs Pauline Cunningham

Secretary - Dorothy Deague

Treasurer - Magda Lindberg

The first congress was held at Dormie House, with entries restricted to players of regional master status or lower. This type of congress - a Mini-Congress - was a first for Australia and Jim O'Sullivan directed and presented the prizes. The club continued to hold a mini-congress until 1987. The first Open Congress was held in November 1978.

In her first annual President's report, Mrs Carney spoke of the benefits of affiliation and the increase in membership from 22 to 45.

Early committees had similar duties to present day ones, despite the small numbers - where to invest funds, how and when to distribute prizes and who should hold a key to the playing room. Committee meetings were held in the evenings, which may suggest something about the age of these members, as in later years it often became difficult to get members to play bridge in the evening, let alone attend meetings!

Members played bridge at the Buderim Community Centre and facilities were somewhat limited. A member at that time tells that men wore suits and women evening dress for the evening bridge session, and paints an amusing picture of having to retire behind a tree when the one available toilet was already being used!



Betty Carney, 1976.
First Club President.

Maida Mace and Tranby White were formidable opponents and are reputed to have introduced the "new" Blackwood convention to the club. Marjorie and Louie Price would allow beginners to replay the hand after explaining where the beginner had gone wrong.

A special meeting on 27/8/74 lasted all of 20 minutes, and the S.C.C.B.C. had adopted a new constitution suggested by the

Q.B.A. At this time members were paying \$0.50 per session for their game, making \$2.50, 25 years later, seem very reasonable. Bridge sessions moved from the Buderim Community Centre to the Buderim Bowls Club, but by late 1974 thoughts were turning to building a clubhouse. The club had already purchased tables and chairs, members had sewn corduroy covers and an adding machine was acquired, since all scoring was done manually. Probably very few, other than computers these days, remember the old formula for a top, $2n-2!!$, where n is the number of scores on the travelling score card. Directors were John Glennie, Maurice Sargent and Mr and Mrs Price. John Glennie made for the club, the wooden boxes which hold 36 sets of boards and which are still in use at the club in 1998.

It is strange but true that bridge novices most often dislike playing against more experienced players and in July 1975, the committee decided to separate novices from experienced players at club sessions. This may have started a trend which today in 1998 results in a natural sort of streaming during big club days where players will seat themselves at one end of the room or the other depending on their perceptions of their own skills! However, players in 1975 were gaining in skills and Sunshine Coast gained first and third places in the Wide Bay Teams Championship.

At the second A.G.M. in 1975, Mrs Vliegenhardt was thanked for her donation to the club from bridge lessons, and discussion began concerning a building



S.C.C.B.C. first congress, held at Dormie House,
16th & 17th March, 1974.

fund for the club's own premises. Many suggestions were made, including a site in Townsend Road Buderim, which would require rezoning by the Council. The committee was advised that application for this should remain strictly confidential!

Club members were working hard to raise funds and on one occasion Mrs Mary Murray and helpers made over 500 ^{dozen} lamingtons, and sold them at a street stall. Mrs Clarice Butt donated all printing costs and prizes for Congresses. Mary Murray became President in 1976 and a building sub-committee was formed. The club library began with a subscription to Australian Bridge.



Mary Murray



When the Italian Team visited Brisbane in 1976, \$100 donation from S.C.C.B.C. entitled one team from the S.C. to play. This team subsequently had the greatest success of any Qld team against the famous Italian internationals. Interestingly, this may in part have been due to the fact that several S.C. players at that time were playing the Blue Club system, which the Italians had devised.

By 1976, the club was growing so fast that it was necessary to run 2 sections on Mondays, and there was an urgent need for new directors. Records of the minutes show that even in 1976 smoking at the table was a big issue, but that no satisfactory solution could be found.

During 1977, numerous communications went back and forth between President Mary Murray and John Herbert, then Minister for Sport, with personal representations by Mike Ahern M.L.A. However, it seemed that no sports subsidy was available, application having been made earlier in the year. This lack of subsidy hamstrung any progress towards building a clubhouse as it was made clear that if building commenced, the club would no longer be eligible for any subsidy, should the Government have a change of heart. However, higher forces were acting on the club's behalf, and in a letter to the Premier of Queensland,

the Rt. Hon. Joh Bjelke Petersen, Mike Ahern urged Cabinet to allocate funds to a sports grant, making special mention of Mary Murray and her efforts. At a special meeting on December 7 1977 coinciding with the club's Xmas party, Mary Murray welcomed Mike Ahern and members. She explained that the purpose of the meeting was to get a decision from members on whether to build a clubhouse since no subsidy appeared to be forthcoming from Government. She painted a picture of a healthy financial situation, cash in the bank, \$27500 from guarantors willing to loan their money for 4 years, regular club takings and profits from fund raising and congresses.

Mrs. Murray suggested that repayments to the bank could be easily met and skilfully handled any predetermined concerns. Mr Ahern then addressed the meeting and suggested to members that they balance considerations of a subsidy which may or may not be forthcoming in the future with escalating building costs. After much discussion, the motion "that the Club go ahead with the building project subject to the availability of the bank loan" was carried unanimously and Mary Murray after thanking members for their confidence in her stated that she had not thought it possible to become emotional about a bridge club!

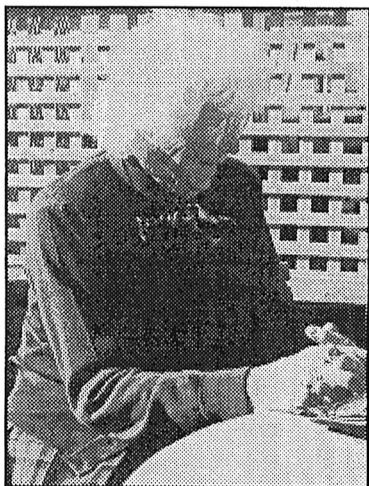
By December 1977, the Bank of N.S.W. in Buderim had approved a loan of \$30,000, but delays had resulted in increases in costs and a subsequent application for subsidy indicates that the building was now expected to cost \$47,000. Builders Messrs.D.G. and G.R. Allen were chosen by the committee. Local architect, Ian Jackson had designed the building at no cost.



The original clubhouse building was to be in Townsend Road, Buderim and after alterations to the plans to meet with Fire Board requirements, building was due to start in late February 1978. However objections from local residents were raised on three fronts.

- (1) vehicular access
- (2) extra traffic
- (3) rezoning of original park land

Despite objections being thrown out by Council, objectors had 30 days to appeal and the project was delayed. Freehold land including a house (which could be rented for useful income) became available in Ballinger Road, Buderim. This too, would require rezoning, but seemed to be an "outstanding opportunity" and a committee member was delegated to investigate further.



Doris Adamson

Shire Chairman Eddie de Vere was approached about land set aside for recreation purposes near the cemetery. While it was realised that south westerly winds would bring odours from the dump, this area appeared to offer the best solution to the "building problem" and the Council was asked to put the offer in writing. The club was informed that the area could not be freeholded but a request for a 25 year lease should be no problem. It was felt that this site offered the best long term prospects and as a result a development application appeared in the local newspaper in March 1979. 119 objections were received! It seemed that local residents were concerned about the increase in traffic, the proximity to a proposed

hospital and the predicted possibility of the hiring of the clubhouse for noisy dances. Objections were rejected by Council and subject to conditions for carparking, landscaping and aesthetic appeal, building approval was granted.



Land originally granted by Council was on the corner of Lingard and Buderim Road just below the cemetery. Problems began when it was found to be impossible to lay foundations on the site because of unstable land. A second site was made available, which is today's present clubhouse site and building started in late 1979. Joe Erbacher led the building committee, and working bees of club members completed many tasks. Jack Gibson and Tom Simper painted interior walls, Jean Thomson, Hilda Erbacher and Lil Harris painted toilets and kitchen. Joe Erbacher offered to lay exterior tiles if club members would donate money to purchase tiles. The required amount

was soon raised. The Caloundra Contract Bridge Club held an open evening and raised over \$200 which they donated to the building fund.

Monday 17 March 1980 saw the first session of bridge at the new clubhouse.

Final payment was made on 24/6/1980 and arrangements were already in hand to have the building officially opened by Cr.E.O. deVere, Chairman of the Maroochy Shire Council on 8/6/1980.

Cr de Vere congratulated the President and members on their stirring efforts and unveiled a plaque donated by Mr Tranby White. Despite the auspiciousness of this occasion and the fact that it was a Sunday, members managed to squeeze in a game of bridge before the official opening at 3.30pm!



L. to R. - Norma Levin, Pam Henry, Sue Mabin, Jan MacLennan, Betty Hind and Phyl Hubble



By March 1981, things were going well, a subsidy had been received from the State Government, the building had been approved for an extra level some time in the future and the carpark had been gravelled. Naturally work didn't stop and in her annual report for 1979, Mary Murray praised and thanked the Building Committee and added that during a sitout Joe Erbacher had found time to construct an incinerator!

Ingola Meldrum was bridge teacher during 1981 and her preferred system was the aforementioned Blue Club system. One particular adjunct to the system is the Ghestem Two-Suited Overcalls which is still played at SCCBC by many experienced players. It is rarely played in other areas of Queensland, although

many “experts” recognize it’s strength. The major advantage over the alternative, Michael’s Cue Bid, is that BOTH suits are known immediately. Of course, if partner doesn’t recognise the bid, a terrible mess results!

At this time, the office was part of what today is the playing area. If one looks at the “south” wall, one can see a strange vertical join. This marked the boundary of the office - a room in which only midgets would be able to score. There was no bar area and the carpark was unsealed . The driveway entrance to the club was directly off the Buderim/Moolooaba road - a hazardous start and finish to any bridge session!



Jan MacLennan and Judith Walker

While being exceedingly proud of their new “home”, club members were quick to recognise the problem of summer temperatures, and as early as 1981, air conditioning was being considered - and rejected. It would not be fitted for a further 14 years. However, the long awaited subsidy was finally received and recorded 13/4/81, not the \$12000 applied for, but at least a useful \$2300 which went some way to providing the Cardiffair system, which gave some relief from summer temperatures.

Second to playing bridge, players love to eat, which may explain a direction from the committee to the provider in May 1981 to the effect that biscuit consumption should be controlled by restriction of quantity and reduction of delectability! Members were very appreciative of the efforts of Lindee Dalziell, an excellent cook who with helpers provided the menu for the Xmas party of 1981. One member writes “My first Xmas party at SCCBC was a splendid evening, with the room laid out as for a wedding. The entertainment went long into the evening with Sybil Hood giving us a fine rendition of “The Twelve Days of Christmas.”

The annual Xmas party is looked forward to and well patronised. Originally held on a Wednesday evening, it was changed to an afternoon affair as members grew older, but not all could attend on a Monday afternoon. In latter years it has been held on a Saturday afternoon either 1 or 2 weeks before Xmas. However, individual sessions of bridge, which always carry their own special followers, for example, the Tuesday daytime session or the Tuesday night time session,

like to have their own Xmas celebrations as well.

To encourage carers with school age children to the club, an early session was started on one Thursday of the month with Sue Mabin and Lindee Dalziell providing a quality lunch for \$1.00. Profits from these lunches were specifically used to extend the club library and Lindee Dalziell became the club’s first librarian. The early Thursday session with lunch lasted for many years, and catering was taken over by Kaye Kent, Marie Daly, Judith Walker and Jan MacLennan but has been abandoned in recent years. However it did bring an influx of younger players to the club who also became involved in the sewing bees, when new curtains and tablecloths were made by an army of volunteers who brought their sewing machines to the club. The clubrooms looked very smart with checked tablecloths and curtains inexpensively made from unbleached calico with a check border. These lasted for many years and were even passed on to the Caloundra CBC when a change was decided upon. The charming tradition of clearing the tables and providing tablecloths for the lunch break at congresses was a SCCBC initiative and has been taken up by many other clubs.

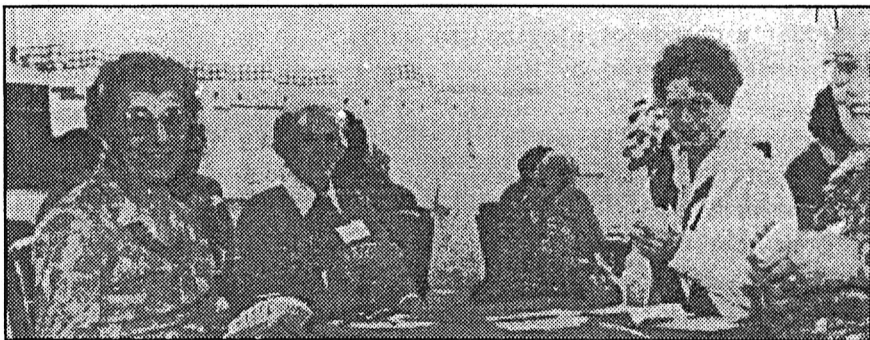
Tragically, President Tom Simper suffered a fatal heart attack at the club in 1982 and was replaced by Mary Murray until the AGM of that year.



1982 saw the Commonwealth Games held in Brisbane and the bridge year became busier than ever. Membership was up to 140 and thoughts were again turning to enlarging the club to provide a scoring area, a bar area, and more parking. A special meeting was convened and after an address by President Sue Mabin and a discussion from the floor it was decided to go ahead with the extensions, which were completed by September. As well a whiteboard was purchased and erected on the northern wall. It seemed extremely expensive at the time but has proved to be invaluable.

Club funds by now were in a healthy state and investment decisions had to be made. An investment with TEA might have proved costly when the company went into liquidation and although it was thought that only 95% of the capital was available, the whole investment with interest was returned eventually.

The need for a computer was often raised. In the early days, all scoring was done manually. A 13 table Mitchell movement could take a couple of hours. Handicaps were calculated every 2 months by Bill Ayres, not himself a bridge player but the husband of one, Sunny Ayres. The release of new handicaps was always surrounded by much interest. Now, handicaps are updated automatically by computer. The job of Masterpoint Secretary was an onerous one, requiring comprehensive records and good maths skills!



May Abdy, Sybil Whittle, Beryl Raper and Maida Mace

It was not until January 1987 that the SCCBC would finally join the computer age. Joan McPheat conducted inservice for scorers when the clubs first computer was purchased, SCCBC being one of the first clubs in Qld. to move to the much faster and more accurate scoring. It was adopted with a great deal of enthusiasm and, although scorers were not obliged to use the computer, there was a good deal of camaraderie as they embarked on the learning curve. The first computer was a green screen with dot matrix printer and floppy discs only. Several upgrades have resulted in the acquisition of a modern system with full colour, hard drive and bubble jet printer. Recently the club has purchased a dealing machine for use in both club sessions and congresses. Other district clubs are able to hire the use of this machine.

In 1984, the annual Red Point Congress, previously held in November was changed to mid June and now called The Honeysuckle Pairs. Richard Ward has directed this congress for many years, taking over from Reg Busch, though the inaugural congress of the SCCBC was directed by Nat and Mary Corrigan.

As smoking at the bridge table had always been distressing for some players, in 1984 letters were sent to all nearby clubs including Brisbane and the Gold Coast regarding a non-smoking congress. Little interest was indicated. However at club level, smokers were asked to be more considerate of the requests of non-smokers.

The smoking debate continued to "burn" and at the AGM of 1987 it was decided that smoking would be banned until after afternoon tea - a compromise of sorts!

Bravely, the committee decided that the 1988 Honeysuckle Pairs would be declared "smoke free". It was, of course feared that this decision would affect entry numbers, but this was not to be and President Judith Walker in her annual report indicated that the smoking edict had not affected entries in Red Point one day congresses either. Finally the club became totally non-smoking at the AGM in September 1990.



Jan MacLennan, Paul & Dot Borchardt

In September 1984, President Jan MacLennan took the reins and the new committee gratefully accepted the donation of an honour board from Dr Hamish Dalziell. The SCCBC was on the map with a new sign erected by the Council at the entrance to the sporting complexes. The top carpark was drained and sealed at a cost of approximately \$25000. It was decided to scrap the annual levy of \$7, to charge a straight annual fee of \$14 and to raise table fees to \$1.20. With these new financial strategies, the sealing of the carpark was able to be paid in full. The committee undertook further improvements to the kitchen and quotes were received for airconditioning - still considered too expensive, however the clubhouse debt was finally wiped in the 1984-5 financial year.

The SCCBC has been in the forefront of many innovations, one of which is the recording of the opening lead on travelling score cards. Some see no need for this, but frequently heard is "Oh, no wonder they made that contract. Look at the lead they got!!" Another first was the introduction of bidding boxes, used at clubs in Britain and Europe by President Judith Walker. She persuaded the committee to invest in these bidding boxes and the SCCBC was the first and only club in Queensland to use them. They were well received by club members but not so favourably when used at congresses, and were subsequently abandoned probably due to the cost of replacement. However, the bidding boxes were not discarded, and in recent years have been of assistance to some members who have difficulty in writing bids on the slips of paper provided for general use. New bidding systems can also be the cause of some alarm to players more fixed in their ways and a letter of complaint was received by a committee on one occasion about the opponent who opened the bidding at game level!! A variety of bidding systems are used at SCCBC, probably the most popular being Standard American, but many players use Acol and Precision.



Fay Houser, Peter Young, Pat Porter and Ivy Dahler

During 1987, the SCCBC became officially incorporated and thus an entity in its own right with the ability to hold property in its own name. It became necessary to revise the Constitution in order to conform with Justice Department requirements for incorporated bodies, while still retaining the original needs of the club. Thursday lunches were stopped in 1989, but many other plans went ahead. Dot Borchardt, long serving Secretary, became President, club funds were in a healthy state and projects were being sought for the forthcoming year. As a result, new ventilation was installed in the toilets and the old ventilators sent off to be auctioned. Club members Betty Shaw and Sue Mabin qualified for a place in the 1991 Queensland Women's team for the Australian State Championships and were lucky enough to play in Perth. They accredited themselves well and the Qld team finished 3rd. The SCCBC generously provided sponsorship to help with expenses.

Dirk Droog became President in the 1992 bridge year and his committee introduced a new prize, the Monica Bartels trophy, to be awarded to a player under regional master status who accumulates most green points in a calendar year. After Monica Bartel's death, Elizabeth Olly, her niece, financed this annual prize in appreciation of the enjoyment Monica experienced at SCCBC. The first winner was Ruth Erdelyi. It has proved to be a very popular competition. Other events taking place during the bridge year within the club are the President's Trophy, usually a 3 session Thursday competition, Monday pairs, Tuesday morning Novice competition, Tuesday night pairs and teams, Thursday Teams, as well as frequent Red Point days. Competition events gain monetary prizes for the winners but also allow competitors to build up their ABF points total.



Phil Eckersley took over the Presidency in 1993, and in maintaining the good relationships that have always existed between local clubs led the committee's decision to make an interest free loan to the Caloundra Contract Bridge Club for new carpet for extensions to their clubhouse.

At the AGM in 1993 during general business, discussion again ensued about the "intolerable conditions" in the clubhouse during summer, despite the

Cardiffair system, overhead fans and spraysealing of the roof the previous year, which had relieved summer temperatures by up to 4 degrees. The new committee agreed to look into this matter.

After consultation with several experts it became clear that the oft-suggested louvring of load bearing walls to create a breezeway was not possible and that the only option was airconditioning.

A special meeting to allow members to make their wishes known with respect to airconditioning was called for February 28 1994. This was necessary, firstly because of the amount to be outlaid, but also because of the concern felt by some members, of the health issues involved.

The committee had invited a consultant engineer, Mr. Rick Jones to this meeting and he was able to explain the pros and cons of airconditioning, and to a large extent allay any fears of Legionnaire's Disease etc. He stated that the air would be filtered and changed several times each minute. It is felt that he was able to satisfy many swaying voters and the secret ballot which followed voted to install air conditioning by a 2 to 1 majority.

The quote from M.A.R.C. Mechanical Services Pty.Ltd. was accepted, despite a petition from a group of members who felt that things should have been handled



Dot Borchardt, Marjorie Price, Paul Borchardt and Lia Morrison

differently. Legal advice confirmed that the meeting had been held in accordance with the constitution, and the job began. It was to cost in the vicinity of \$40000 and in view of the large outlay it was considered necessary to consult with Council about security of tenure of the lease. This was assured by then Shire Chairman, Fred Murray. After this meeting Phil Eckersley was also able to report back to committee that money was also to be made available for the sealing of the road entrance to the club.



In early years, directors were strictly "amateurs" and clubs were asked to recommend directors for accreditation. Hilda Erbacher served as a director for many years and was feared for her threat of a penalty for slow play!

Director's workshops were run by Reg Busch on a Sunday at QCBC, and were always well attended by SCCBC members. Reg Busch decided to set up Director's course exams. The first of these was held in 1989 and about 20 bridge players attended at QCBC for what was an open book exam. This may sound easy, but after five and a half hours Dot Borchardt and Judith Walker gave up. Ken Dawson went on to complete a seven hour marathon and became the first home club director to receive Congress Director's accreditation. Annual exams were subsequently done in two parts. Scoring, and knowledge of movements were done prior to the exam, and actual knowledge of bridge laws were tested in a three hour supervised exam, where the law book was able to be consulted. Members who have gained accreditation over the years are Jan MacLennan, Blanche Slaughter, Judith Slade, Anne McLeod, Norine Holloway, Helen Burley, Gaye McAuliffe, Fay McKinnon, Alison and Bill O'Callaghan(Noosa), Alan Maltby and Ken Rogers(Caloundra)

Joan Daunt has given long service to the club as Games Director.

