



It's hard to believe 2019 is almost over and what a year it has been! There have been all sorts of national and international events to remind us of our fragility, Christchurch, White Island, Brexit and an impeachment in the offing. We have a lot for which we can be grateful!

On the bridge front things have, thankfully, been a bit more mundane, but there have been highlights. At prize-giving on Friday night there were two special presentations. Marilyn Jackson was presented with her life member pin and on behalf of New Zealand Bridge Moss Wylie was presented with his plaque for achieving Gold Grand Master status. Both are remarkable achievements and we wish Marilyn and Moss many more years of bridge enjoyment and success.

You will have noticed that the book has not yet been delivered. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, the committee is trying to encourage more people to play on a Thursday night and so the Thursday format has been altered in an effort to encourage more people along. There were several options discussed at the AGM and we have endeavoured to incorporate them into the Thursday programme. Consequently, it has taken time to come up with appropriate changes.

Secondly, as I'm sure you will be aware by now, we have received a proposal from the Invercargill Masonic Heritage Building Charitable Trust to lease the Harvey Kitto room, the east room, on a long-term basis. This proposal, should it go ahead, requires minor changes to our playing programme, hence the delay with the bridge book. A sub-committee has had three meetings with IMHBCT and yesterday, Saturday, we received a formal proposal. The full committee is meeting this week to discuss and approve or reject this proposal. Once that decision is made and then the book can go to print. As soon as any lease agreement is signed by both parties, we will ensure the information regarding that is available on the notice board.

There are sign-up sheets in the foyer for teams, mixed teams, and mixed pairs and the criteria for those combinations are on the white board in the playing room. There will be open nights in March, April, June, July, August and September. On these nights you can come with or without a partner. As people arrive the director/convenor will pair up people who have no partner and providing people are on time no one will go home as there will be a volunteer to play if there is an odd number of people. These nights will be handicapped.

The printers close over the Christmas/New Year break so as soon as the books are available we will advise you. We know that some of you like to plan in advance so once we have finalised the final draft for the printer Jill has offered to send a copy of that draft to those who would like it, please reply to this email if you'd like to receive that draft.

There will be some extra bridge available to those who are interested over the holiday period; on Friday 20th at 10.50am, Monday 30th at 7.20pm and Friday Jan 10th at 10.50am. These sessions will not be part of the holiday bridge competition and there will be someone to play with if you don't have a partner so just turn up. Again, we will pair people up as they arrive if they have no partner. Partnerships will not be broken up!!

There are many people to thank for their contributions to our club this year; most were acknowledged in my annual report but there are some who require further mention. Special thanks to Margi and Christine who organised a really great Christmas party following prize giving on Friday. Your programme was a great success and everyone commented what a fun night it was. And again, to Margi, Christine, Sue and Jean who delighted us with their Seafood Dinner in April; our sincere thanks for your efforts to provide our club with a fundraising night that was so enjoyable. Our thanks to Grant and Fred and their teams of bar people who serve us with a smile. That relaxing time after bridge, whether it's with wine or water or beer or a bag of crisps, is the time we get to know other club members and to foster friendships that last a lifetime. Without those bar folks giving up their time that culture, that is part of bridge, is lost...and so we thank them. Then there are the directors, the dealers, librarians, the convenors, the committee and sub-committee members and many others who do things without acknowledgement to make the wheels of the club turn. Thank you, the club needs your enthusiasm, your loyalty and your ongoing support.

If anyone has questions, queries, concerns or comments please feel free to call me or email me at judith.lawton@xtra.co.nz. And if you are aware of bridge members who are unwell or need support please tell me or a committee member. We can't support those we know nothing about.

On behalf of your committee I wish you all a very happy and healthy festive season and look forward to a successful, safe and prosperous 2020 for all of us.

Judith

Invercargill Contract Bridge Club

President

