

President's Patch #10 – April 2017

A call for help – to SMOKERS

We have no interest in trying to improve your lung quality, however we do have an interest in preserving the lung quality of all the non smokers in the Club, and not increasing their odour thresholds to objectionable levels.

Basically, the spare room on the East side stinks of stale smoke. Being charitable types, we don't believe anyone is flouting Club rules by smoking inside, or indeed legislation (smoking in a workplace is caught and our Administrator is an employee, thus we have a workplace). If anyone is in fact doing this and smoking in that room, please cease and desist.

We think the problem lies with people correctly going outside and smoking – but leaving the external door open so second hand smoke wafts inside. So .. close the door behind you and step a few metres away from it (depending on weather conditions). Your assistance will be appreciated.

Governance

Both the Club AGM and elections for some NZB Board members occurred in March. At Club level we have some new blood at the Committee table, with Julie Bunnell elected. Julie also joined the Administration and Technology subcommittees. We also have some non-committee members co-opted to serve on subcommittees, with Morgan Booker and Alistair James joining the Sessions subcommittee. Our "weakest link" is currently the Recruitment & Retention subcommittee, which currently comprises Andrew Brodie and Graeme Thomson. It would be great to have some new people and new ideas for this.

The organisational structure is on the noticeboard and also will be on a new Admin section of our website.

At NZB level the candidates voted for by PNBC were all elected: Alan Dormer as Chair, and Claire Coles and Jane Stearns as Board members. More recently, one of the incumbents has resigned leading to two current vacancies on the Board.

From the Subcommittees

Technology. We are in quite a good space currently with most upgrades having been implemented, and 2017 will mostly be a case of tweaking or rolling out better (eg use of tablets). Our timer clock is over 20 years old, and is showing its age on occasions.

Finance/H&S/Legal. The audit got completed in time for the AGM on a "just in time" basis. Succession planning is underway as Debbie Marcroft has indicated this is her last year in the Treasurer role. This role has become more specialised over time with Xero accounting. We are looking at this role becoming external (thanks Tony Fayerman).

Maintenance. External maintenance will be easier now that a fit for purpose ladder has been acquired. The guttering is narrow making it difficult to manually clean. Mesh and whiskers have been fitted to try and stop gum leaves clogging the drain outlets which happened last year. A commercial clean maybe required periodically, depending on the success of the mesh/whiskers.

Administration. We now have a role description agreed for the Administrator position. This is useful as it can highlight where there are gaps in responsibilities and, as well, highlights the skilled nature of many of the tasks.

Recruitment & Retention. While word of mouth is the most effective recruitment tool, its effectiveness becomes less over time as friends/family have been approached multiple times in the past. This year we have trialled two 'cold calling' techniques. One was Facebook ads. We had ~200 click thru's from the ads to our website lessons page. The other technique was a mailbox flyer drop of 5750 flyers, with the flyers professionally printed (by Fisher Print- thanks Paul Gatenby) and distributed by Reach Media (a NZ Post subsidiary). Prior to Lessons commencing in May we held a Mini-Bridge Open Day on April 23. This was a little scary as no-one had played Mini-Bridge before! 12 newcomers turned up (1/3rd were <26) who played with members, and other members acted as "help". Thanks to those members who turned out. The advantage of Mini-Bridge is that you can get playing quickly, and we played 10 hands with a NS and EW winner (box of chocs each), and drinks/nibbles at end.

Ken Bateman has volunteered to run the 10 week Beginners Lessons – a big thank you. These will start on Monday 1 May. Improvers Lessons will be conducted by a combination of Ray Kemp, Julie Bunnell, and Graeme Thomson, starting on Wednesday 3 May.

Social/Tournaments. First up in tournaments this year is the Intermediate and Junior tournaments being held on the same day in May for the first time. Many clubs have combined the two tournaments, into effectively an Intermediate tournament, however we will continue with holding separate tournaments as long as it is feasible to do so. Holding both on the same day considerably reduces the volunteer burden. Next up is the "in-house" tournament in June. This year we are inviting Hokowhitu to participate with us.

Social bridge nights are scheduled to commence at end of May, with a Back to Future theme, playing against the greats of yesteryear.

Sessions. The current hotspot is Tuesday night. We have a compressed season this year from April to October with some new events including May which is a Butler Pairs open to all comers from other clubs. A wider panel of interested parties is being formed to discuss options for the future. One idea that has been mooted is for November to be used for inter-club. Hokowhitu has indicated interest in one night. No-one else has been approached so far. To encourage socialisation post-play the bar will now be open on all bridge nights.

Dates to watch out for:

2 May. Commencement of the inaugural Butler Pairs All Comers Champs

7 May. Social Sunday Bridge

20 May. PNBC Intermediate and Junior tournaments

29 May. Back to the Future (Monday)

30 May. Back to the Future (Tuesday)

18 June. Social Sunday Bridge

24 June. 'In-house' tournament with Hokowhitu

29 June. Back to the Future (Thursday)