

Reflections from Rosemary Ritchie.

I am going to take a different tack than Frances, Nicola, Pam and Joan – why did I take up Bridge – believe it or not it was the result of a bet (which I lost)

A close friend of mine spent two years in Nuie and learnt this game called Bridge – I had never heard of it! On her return to New Zealand, she and some of her friends used to have Bridge weekends. Children would be left with husbands and the bottom of the gin bottle appeared with regularity (although I suspect that at times it had been filled with water for appearances sake). Christmas and birthday cards often had a comment about 'c' points – what on earth were these? Me being me, I resisted for years but eventually lost the bet.

I shifted to Taupo and met this man called Bill Barnes - yes he was the Monday convenor so he had a hand in pushing me to honour my promise to my friends.

The class of 1990 had about 70 – yes 70 starters under the very capable tutelage of Colin Jackson. Lessons were held at Taupō-nui-a-Tia College and lasted from June to November. My first night at the Club, I played with Yope Van Der Leden – a stalwart of the Club who would play with anyone. I am the only one of that class still playing at Taupo but there are some playing at other Clubs around the country.

Bridge has changed a lot since 1991:

- We dealt our own cards at the start of play
- We recorded the hands on things called travellers
- At the end of play we collated the travellers
- Scores were input into the computer by the scorer, usually the next morning
- Convenors then called the top pairs within their scores
- 'C' points were sent to New Zealand Bridge once every three months for updating into the National database.

Every three months, players received a slip of paper showing the number of points awarded during the period and every year we would receive a chit giving our annual grade.

Yes, this is the way it was until the early 2000's when technology started to have a real influence.

Today we have:

- Email – about 2005
- Website - about 2005
- Electronic dealing – about 2008
- Electronic scoring – about 2012

There have been huge changes since the Club started in 1970 and I often wonder what some of the foundation members would think if they could see what we have today in the way of technology and premises, which are very different