

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2023

As our bridge year draws rapidly to a close, we look back to the plywood shuttered entrance, having to share the gents' toilets, (ugh) all seems such a distant memory.

We are thankful to have had a full playing year and while Covid remains with us with its ups and downs, we have learned to live with yet another curve ball that life sometimes throws at us.

As a club we have continued to focus on growing our members, as without a vibrant and strong membership we will gradually wither. Our Auckland Northland Region has supported us with sharing resources and ideas, and we are beginning to see the benefit of this collaboration across the region. We have grown the region by 180 members while the other five playing regions of New Zealand have shrunk.

Word of mouth remains one of the strongest ways to attract new members so if you have friends who you think could be interested in playing this great lifelong game of ours please spread the word that there will be lessons as usual next February. All details on our website. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the helpers and mentors that came along tirelessly to help the beginners get into the game during those early weeks. Many of them tell us that was helpful.

During the year unbeknown to many Jan Hollway, Nat Natarajan and Dave Christian have been beavering away redrafting our club constitution to bring it in line with the new Incorporated Societies Act. We should be able to roll it out next year to meet the date set by the new Act.

One of the changes that the lockdowns precipitated was the introduction of working at home instead of our offices and likewise playing bridge from home is now part of our weekly offering. Our National body NZB is still wrestling with the roll out of a guidance policy particularly with how on-line tournaments are affecting face to face tournaments. For the immediate future we will continue to support online bridge and face to face bridge as they both add value in different ways. A time may come when we are able to combine both methods simultaneously but for now our club is not sufficiently large enough to do so.

A number of our members have been doing improvers lessons online from earlier this year and next year we will be offering improvers lessons in our clubrooms. Watch this space for further details.

Many of you know that our long serving Tournament Secretary, Sue Osborne has retired and is moving south to Waikanae very shortly. I have known Sue for a good many years and served for several years with her on the club committee. I will miss her clear thinking and dry humour and steady quiet advice. Her best quip from way back when we were both busy working with our respective jobs and struggling to find the time to play bridge was, "The trouble with life is that it interferes with Bridge". On behalf of the club, I wish to take this opportunity to wish her all the best in her retirement and thank her for her contribution to the club for a good many years. She has promised to play with us next year online and we look forward to seeing her there.

Wishing all of you a great Christmas and New Year break and looking forward to meeting again across the card table next year.

Leo Sim