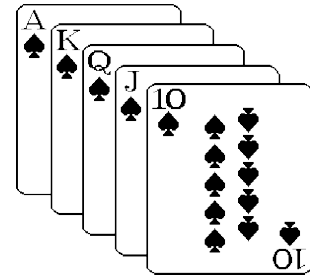


BALLARAT BRIDGE CLUB



June 2018 Editor R Gilmour email: gilmour345@hotmail.com

Early in May, we had a 3 day visit from Joan Butts. On the Friday, teaching members 2/1 bidding system, Saturday, material and training for members interested to teach, Sunday, declarer play.

From a personal point of view, I thought the way she presented the material was outstanding. Certainly exposing my weakness in many areas.

My other thought was; if I took my car to the dealer for about 2 hours , it would cost about 2 hundred dollars, and here, I paid \$25 for 4 hours of training and a free lunch !

3 swiss teams from Ballarat attended the Bendigo Congress. We are hearing that the venue and food provided was of a good standard, an enjoyable day.

A particularly impressive result from Gayle and Noemi ! Ranked 60 out of 67, they finished 44! This is what happens when 2 players work together, know each other's bidding. This did not happen by chance because they knew they would play together , so worked on their game for weeks before ! Ladies, you knocked it out of the park !

Vale

Vair Kavanagh 101

Ted Thomas 89

Janet Cowles

Monthly Topic

I have decided not to have bridge lessons or topics in this newsletter. If you want to read or be educated by bridge hands or conventions, you can see lots of that in the ABF and VBA newsletters available at the front desk. It is up to you to improve your game .

What is the role of our newsletter ?

We are not a manufacturing, retail or service industry. We can talk about events, past and future, and we can know our members more if they are willing to share. It was and is my intention to be different; have stories that are seasonal, topical. It is not my thinking to justify or apologise for the stories, if you liked them, good, if not, its not such a big deal, is it ?

Many of our members have an academic or professional background , so you should know that for your thoughts, insights and comments to have a maximum impact, they should be presented in an honourable manner, not by backstabbing or sniping.

Recently, I heard about a secret ballot regarding information displayed in the bridgemates. The reason it was switched off was to lower noise levels during play. Do we want to tie up Committee meetings with trivial matters ? If the Committee is involved dealing with such matters, our Bridge Club members will be the losers.

What is the role of our Committee ?

We require responsible and prudent management of money. We can expect that the Committee ensures the Club House is a safe and comfortable place for all who enter, that facilities are appropriate and maintenance is carried out

Hopefully ,we will see expansions of teaching and education beyond beginners; new levels, improvers, intermediate and advanced levels, adopting a standard bidding system for beginners and their mentors. If we invite members to participate in Congress events, we might expect some education how to play these events better. If all this is to happen, is our Bridge Club well able to educate us more?, do we need advice and or suggestions from the ABF, VBA, Waverley?

How should it be funded ? By the Club ? By members who attend the lessons ? And who will conduct these lessons ? We can not expect anyone to put in the time, the preparation of lessons, etc, without being suitably compensated .

Let us also require more of ourselves. Do not wait for others to show you new ways to improve your bridge , be proactive , demand and request guidance to take your game forward

“ A typical week” Anne Beck

Monday-7am get up, breakfast, if fine, not wet, walk dogs around the lake. Computer, emails etc. 9.30 am Adams (my son), look after 3 year old Jasmine. Later, walk to pick up Ned and Natasha from Pleasant St. primary school. Cook tea, then home to do dogs about 7pm. Bed about 10 pm, read.

Tuesday– dentist (5 visits) 8.40am, busy, walk dogs, pick up Natasha, (Ned and Adam do squash), look after the girls until Da, their mother, gets home about 5pm. Then home to cook tea or eat at Adams.

Wednesday– Sometimes Probus meeting or activity (on committee). Walk dogs, pick up Natasha, spend time with Ned till 5.30 ,cooking, maths, literacy etc or a game.

Thursday– Walk dogs, hospital visit SJOG, pick up accounts, treasurer of Auxiliary, then bridge at 1.15 pm

Friday– whatever, 3.30, pick up Natasha and Ned. Stay with Jasmine while Adam and Ned go to squash. Da gets home about 5ish.

Saturday ,Sunday, - walk dogs, Angela may come up on the weekend , Collingwood may be at the MCG, maybe bridge, maybe Alfa Club function, maybe lunch with family or friends.

Daily- walk dogs, check computer banking for SJOG, be on call for Adam, if time permits, washing ,housework, cook, gardening, shop, ring friends.

Forming part of the Australian Military commitment in South Vietnam in 1966, **2nd field Ambulance**, was stationed at Vung Tau from 1 April 1966 until 5 July 1967. The unit included a 50 bed element, a hygiene squad and a surgical team comprising of a surgeon and an anaesthetist. A detachment moved to the Task Force base to provide emergency medical treatment before evacuation for more definitive treatment.

The Port and City of Vung Tau was a relatively safe area, under government control, the rest of the province was under the control of the Viet Cong.

36 Evacuation Hospital, a 400 bed facility, was also situated at Vung Tau, part of the American logistic and support base there. You are an American nurse working at 36 Evac. You are most likely white, Catholic, maybe your dad or an uncle served in the military, you have a military mindset. You are in your early 20s, you joined the army to help pay for nursing school. You are being paid about \$80 to \$100 a month, many of you have never seen such money. You volunteered for Vietnam because you think it is the right thing to do, or so your brother doesn't have to go (only 1 sibling at a time in a war zone), some of you are ordered to go. You have about 2 years nursing experience.

You have 4 months pre-training before leaving, but nothing will prepare you for what you will experience in-country. The carnage, the ghastly wounds, the little children burned by napalm. You have no common language with the children, so you name them after Disney characters. You hear the Dustoff choppers coming in with casualties, they are taken to the triage area, decisions are made as to who can be saved, who cannot. You see the young soldier, the terrible head wound, he looks about 19, he is so frightened. You comfort him, hold his hand. " oh, you will be ok, you are so brave ! and so loved ! " and your heart breaks, your tears fall as his young life slips away.

It never ends, they keep coming, singly, a handful, 20 or more. Often, wounds are left open, to drain, to reduce infection. And there is pressure internally as well, because, as a female, you receive attention, welcome or not. You drink too much, smoke a little dope, all to help you cope.

Now your tour of duty is over, you are starting to question if it is right for America to be involved in this war, but when you are stateside, you don't like to hear how people are blaming the soldiers for the war. One year in your life, never to be forgotten for the rest of your life !

In years to come, you will see the TV show M.A.S.H, about the Korean war, and it is all so familiar, except you were in Quonset huts, not tents.

In 1966, **Jean Debelle**, was 26, and working as a newspaper journalist for the Adelaide Advertiser when she volunteered to work for the Red Cross in the Vietnam War as a welfare worker with the troops. Jean spent a year caring for wounded ANZAC troops from June 1966 until June 1967, in Vung Tau, Vietnam. Jean fulfilled another year for the Red Cross in Butterworth, Malaysia. Jean would supply the patients with combs, toothbrush and toothpaste, write letters home to the boy's mums if they were unable to write. She would play cards with the boys, take some of the more able into the town for shopping, or a day out to the beach there.

In latter years, Jean was to marry an American, and she did some public talking about her role as a Red Cross girl. She said, for one year, she was in love with 5000 Australians !

It is early December, 1966, I arrive at **2nd Field Ambulance** by chopper, I have a temperature of about 105. they put a wet sheet of my body, direct a fan onto me. I am not responding well. I am transferred to **36 Evac.** In early January, 1967, I am well enough to return to the Australian hospital.

I am in a room with 4 beds. Myself, 2 SAS soldiers, and a Viet Cong soldier, Stumpy, who has had a leg amputated by an Australian doctor. The SAS guys and myself teach Stumpy how to say "good morning Jean," but with some added swear words !

In the big ward, one of my friends ,Lyle Black, 5 RAR, has multiple lower body wounds from stepping on a mine. He would often say to Jean, " Jean, do you want to see my war wounds ?"

Jean, of course, such a lovely lady, so serene, not at all bothered by such in-appropriate behaviour from idiots, just went on with her duties ! Jean, we loved you too !

About a week later , Lyle and I are on a C130 Hercules on our way to the hospital in Butterworth. Lyle is very sick now, as well as being wounded, he also has malaria, so we are kept in Butterworth for a few days before going on to Darwin.

In 1988, I had occasion to be a patient of Mr. Roger Mitchell, a Ballarat surgeon. We become aware that we were in South Vietnam at the same time, he, in fact, was the surgeon who amputated Stumpy's leg. He said he was not qualified to do the operation, but he was the only one there he could do it. He told me he made a mistake by not taking the leg off higher to permit the fitting of a prosthesis.

Doctors who served with **2nd Field Ambulance**, and later, **8th Field Ambulance** , were taken in rotation from different hospitals, Mr Mitchell from the Prince Henry, Melbourne.

Dustoff The helicopter Medical Evacuation Teams

Vietnam was the helicopter war. To the wounded, no sight was more welcome than the Iroquois Helicopter with the Red Cross emblem painted on the nose, top and sides, known throughout Vietnam by the code name Dustoff. The UH-1 Bell Helicopter was fitted to carry 6 patients, with at least one member of the 4 man crew being a fully trained first-aid man, able to give treatment from transfusions to reassurance. They sped out to evacuate the wounded, landing in the most inaccessible places, which were more often or not ,under enemy fire. The average time from being wounded to hospitalisation was one hour.

The American Dustoffs were particularly well known by the Australians as being prepared to risk their lives and aircraft in assisting Australian wounded.

As usual, my stories are never about Bridge. In 2017/2018, worldwide, women are speaking up about unacceptable behaviour in the workplace. 2018, in Australia, we are talking about the service of women in times of conflicts. Colonel Susan Neuhaus spoke at the 2018 ANZAC day dawn service in Canberra. Colonel Neuhaus, a surgeon, has had operational deployments to Cambodia, Bougainville and Afghanistan. Her speech was the inspiration for this story.

1918, the President of France, speaking about Australians, said "we knew you would put up a good fight. We did not expect to be astonished by your valour"