

Like all other organisations in Australia, the TBA has been affected to some extent by COVID-19 measures during the last 12 months, the most significant of which were mandatory check in requirements, and mask mandates in most recent times. The mask mandate has had a significant impact on attendances over the Christmas period with some members not wishing to play whilst wearing a mask, and others not wishing to leave their homes whilst the virus was swirling around the community.

Thankfully now, these have been lifted and we look forward to a return to normal life. I would like to thank all the members for their patience and co-operation during the pandemic, and thankfully we are not aware of any COVID-19 transmission at the club.

### **Beginner Teaching and Membership**

We have continued to focus on recruitment and retention of new members to ensure the future viability of our club. In 2021 our club membership exceeded 500 for the first time!

Sue Falkingham has continued to conduct Beginner's Classes twice a year, which has resulted in many new members joining our club. Please make them feel welcome whenever you come across them at the table.

New members joining straight from Beginner's classes has resulted in a larger proportion of "rookie" players at the TBA than in the overall population of ABF registered bridge players.

It is important that we assist these new players to grow their expertise so they can fully enjoy the pleasure of playing bridge. The TBA has decided to invest in continuing the Wednesday morning supervised session (now being run by Hugh Grosvenor), as well Tuesday nights (being run by Sue Falkingham). A big thank you to Phil Timmins and Geoff Green for their continuing assistance with these sessions.

The TBA has also now entrenched more "beginner focussed" events. We have moved to expand the Teams of 3 event to an all day event which first ran in August 2021. It was a great success, and many thanks to Lynne Cooke for her work in organising this tournament. The newly implemented Sunday Swiss Pairs event, designed to enable new members to gain experience in a competitive setting with a greater possibility of success is now attracting a good field of players on a regular basis.

Thank you to all TBA members who have assisted a new member to feel welcome into our club, and keep up the good work in this regard. It is very pleasing to see that new members have nominated for committee positions, and their participation is greatly valued by existing committee members.

## **Intermediate and Advanced Training**

David Robinson, Sue Falkingham and Hugh Grosvenor have continued to conduct improvers lessons on Wednesday afternoons at 2.00pm. These have been well attended and will continue throughout 2022 Wednesday afternoons.

Due to covid travel restrictions Justin Mill was unable to travel to Tasmania to conduct the annual State team training. He was replaced by Will Jenner O'Shea who ran well attended and highly regarded sessions over the weekend of June 19 and 20.

This year Justin Mill has again been booked to conduct the state team training on the weekend of May 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. Once again, this training will be available to all members, so make a note in your diary to attend!

## **Seniors Week 2022**

This year, the TBA has committed to participating in Seniors Week. We will hold an open day at the club as well as run some demonstration events in local shopping centres.

## **On Line Bridge**

In line with the ABF, the TBA has moved its weekly on-line session on Wednesday nights at 7.15pm to the Real Bridge platform. We are encouraging our members to become familiar with Real Bridge as it looks like it will be a permanent future feature of bridge in Australia.

## **State Bridge Matters**

For the first time in 2021, the annual October State meeting was held in Launceston, immediately preceding the Launceston Congress. There was considerable discussion about Tasmania's participation in the ANC, particularly as to whether it represented value for money for State bridge. The meeting decided to conduct a review of this issue and seek feedback from the members of all the clubs with a view to coming to a decision at the March 2022 TFoB. TBA members expressed overwhelming support for continuing participation in the ANC and this is the position we will be taking to the March TFoB meeting.

## **Name Badges**

The TBA decided to provide name badges for any member who wished to have one. Most members who applied have now received them, with smaller batches being manufactured from time to time depending on requests from new members.

## **Club Room Extensions**

It is clear now that the proposed Club Room extensions will not be able to proceed without government assistance as since we began discussing them, building costs have doubled in Tasmania.

In order to qualify for government assistance, projects need Planning Approval to show that they are viable. Consequently during 2021, the Committee decided to spend the money required to be able to obtain Planning Approval. Planning Approval was gained in September 2021 and the TBA has sought a grant of \$ 400,000 under Round 6 of the Building Better Regions infrastructure program. If we are successful, we will have to match the government contribution. Letters of support for our submission were provided by Senator Jonathon Duniam, Hon Andrew Wilkie MP and the Hobart City Council.

If we are successful in obtaining the grant, approval of this expenditure will be sought at a special general meeting of members. Concept plans have been on display for over 3 months to enable members to provide feedback to the committee.

## **Youth Bridge – 2021 and 2022**

Four young people, two boys and two girls, completed the 16 week course during 2021 and then competed in the ANC (On Line) where they were able to win one match.

We plan to run the Youth program on an annual or biannual basis, depending on demand and may use the “Bring Your Grandchild to Bridge“ day as a launch pad for the course in 2022. We will run our own BYGB Day and not rely on external sources.

## **Tasmanian Festival of Bridge**

This is scheduled for March 24<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> at the Grand Chancellor in Launceston. I urge all members to enter this event. It is a great opportunity to play against interstate players and win Gold Master Points. For the first time there will be a specific Mixed Pairs event (to be known as the Australian Mixed Swiss pairs) as well as the usual Restricted and Open Sections.

The top two Tasmanian Restricted pairs (under 300 Masterpoints) will be offered an ABF subsidy to participate in the Restricted Butler Trial at the ANC which is being held in Adelaide this coming July.

Congratulations to Andrew Richman, Catherine Elliot and their supporting committee for all the work they have done on this event.

Next year the TFOB will be held at the Ant Nest,(home of the Tasmanian Jackjumpers) aka MyState Bank Arena which is a wonderful new venue for major events in Tasmania.

## **ABF Technology initiatives**

There will be ongoing development of the MyABF application which may further streamline table money payments, as well as become the default way to enter most special events. I encourage all club members to set up their my ABF accounts, and ask for help to do this if you need it. The TBA may choose to become a test site for the new application.

## **Committee and Volunteers**

As my term as President is now complete, I would personally like to thank the hard working TBA committee and other volunteers for their assistance and support during the past three years. I would like to especially thank departing committee members John Grosvenor, Rosemary Giles, Edward Gee and Lynne Cooke and welcome new committee members Doug Bridge, Ian Ritchard, Pam Murphy and Hugh Grosvenor.

The TBA would not be able to operate without the help of its Management Committee or volunteers so a big thank you to all club members doing a job for the TBA for your work in 2021.

Julie Rhodes  
President  
March 2022.