

30 April 2025

CENTRAL COAST BRIDGE CLUB – AGM ON 8 MAY 2025

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

The 2024-2025 financial year has been a busy year for the CCBC with the newly elected committee working together on several fronts. During the year, the Building Upgrade Project was a major focus and was successfully completed early in the new year. Key milestones included: -

1. **SGM to Approve Stages 1, 2 and 3 (2 May 2024)**: members voted 59:1 to approve the simultaneous construction of Stages 1, 2 & 3 at a total cost of around \$900K.
2. **Finalised Construction Funding**
 - **Member Donations: \$507,000** - in the fullness of time, the generosity of members in donating around a half million dollars towards the building upgrade project will be recognized as a significant achievement for our Club and the wider bridge industry
 - **Member Loans: \$225,000** - loans from 13 members secured over the Clubhouse property
 - **Australian Bridge Federation (ABF): \$100,000** – loan at 3% interest only payable for 3 years
3. **Relocation of CCBC Bridge Playing Activities** – the Clubhouse cleaned out and bridge operations transferred to the LJ Hotel during the last week in May 2024
4. **Construction** – commenced during the first week of June 2024 with a 5–6-month timeframe
5. **Occupation of Clubhouse** – occurred during December 2024
6. **Construction Completed** – in March 2025 at a total cost of \$950K
7. **NSW Government & CC Council Grants** - the CCBC has applied for a NSW Government Grant of \$55K towards the cost of the new kitchen which will be evaluated later this year.
8. **Valuation of Clubhouse Property**: \$1,670,000 – Property Valuations NSW on 18 March 2025.

The new Clubhouse should assist with securing the future of the CCBC given that property values generally double every 10 years – owning our own building eliminates the “tenancy risk” faced by many bridge clubs whereby their tenancy arrangements can be terminated at short notice.

VOLUNTEERS

I would like to pay tribute to the Volunteers who work hard and selflessly to support the efficient operations of the CCBC including: -

Bridge Playing

- **Directors** – John Redfearn, Norm Berger, Matt Raj Mal and Peter Cloughessy worked tirelessly to oversee 8 weekly duplicate bridge sessions, are unpaid and should always be respected. Without Directors, the CCBC cannot open its doors.
- **Boards** – Graham Williamson
- **General Support**: collecting table fees, emptying baskets, cleaning up, packing dishwasher.

Tournament Secretary/ Organizer – Norm Berger – a very difficult and constantly changing role including seeking to maximize table numbers at special club championship events

Catering – Sue and Keith Woodbury and a group of wonderful volunteers worked extremely hard to provide catering at all special events – although new to the catering role, Sue and Keith introduced a high level of professionalism and energy to this function - also a special thank you to all members contributing cakes and slices etc.

Masterpoints Secretary – Peter Cloughessy – very efficient and knowledgeable with this time-consuming role

Congress Convenor – a big thankyou to Maree Kelly for acting as Congress Convenor and doing an outstanding job at the recent Super Congress – on both days Maree was well supported by a team of volunteers individually mentioned in the Convenor’s Report.

Purchasing Officers – Jenny O’Donohue & Leonie Grimshaw for managing the regular purchase and provision of refreshments for members

Club Administrator & IT – Mike Hilton – a very tech savvy member

Website & Digital Manager – Lawrie Ransom and Mike Hilton

Recorder – Lawrie Ransom and Chrissy Flanigan

Newsletter – Jill Wildey – produced high quality and relevant newsletters

Social Welfare Representative – Jill Wildey

Gardening - Carolyn Dickinson & team who work tirelessly to maintain the gardens.

Training & Development – John Redfearn for providing lessons for Beginners and Intermediates during most of the year and after his illness, to Matt Raj Mal for stepping in to provide Beginner’s lessons. John and Matt have been supported by several experienced players who assist with transitioning beginners into supervised play.

Maintenance – the CCBC maintenance expenditure is at an all-time low due solely to Rod Shellshear’s “can do” attitude and his ability to resolve a myriad of maintenance issues.

Trophies, Prizes and Honor Board – Grahame Williamson

Relocation to the Long Jetty Hotel – thank you to John Redfearn, Norm Berger, Rod Shellshear and Peter Cloughessy for their tireless work during the 6-month relocation to the LJ Hotel. These responsibilities included dismantling and storing all equipment, tables and chairs on numerous occasions when this venue was booked for other events. Also, thanks to all the members who assisted with these tasks, together with helping with the move out of the Clubhouse during May 2024 and the return to the Clubhouse in December 2024.

Sub Committees – active sub committees include the Building Upgrade Project (Rod Shellshear and myself), Marketing (Maree Kelly, John Redfearn & Jan Buchanan-Medina), Constitution Review (Norm Berger, Rod Shellshear, Lawrie Ransom, Kerrie Ransom & Allan Raward), Teaching and Development (Matt Raj Mal, Kerrie Ransom, Norm Berger, John Redfearn & Colin Kleinig) and the Kitchen Upgrade (Kerrie Ransom, Jill Wildey, Dawn Thomas, Lorraine Brennan & Rod Shellshear).

New Constitution – thankyou to all members who attended the SGM and supported the committee by voting overwhelmingly to approve the new Constitution – special mention to Norm Berger and Lawrie Ransom for their explanations of key changes at the SGM and to Rod Shellshear and Peter Owens (Newcastle Lawyer) for working together to ensure that an experienced legal mind carefully vetted the entire document. These legal services were provided at no cost to the CCBC.

Executive Team – in her first year, Lyn Paton, our secretary has conducted herself in a quiet and unassuming manner yet with a high level of efficiency and competence when meeting her responsibilities including assisting with the organization and conduct of the special general meeting to adopt the new constitution together with everyday duties focusing on member communications and updating member records. Our Treasurer, Rod Shellshear, has worked tirelessly to ensure that all receipts and payments are reconciled and balanced, income is correctly recorded and banked, expenditure is tightly controlled, and the committee has accurate and timely information to support its decision-making process. Our Vice President, Norm Berger, has focused his efforts on the operational aspects of running our bridge club including regular directing, organizing the calendar of special events as Tournament Secretary and involvement in 2 sub-committees

SUPER CONGRESS - 22 & 23 MARCH 2025

Please refer to the Congress Convenor's Report prepared by Maree Kelly – Maree was thrown in at the deep end by the committee and immediately rose to the occasion drawing on her events management skills and experience – the result was an outstanding Congress enjoyed by 132 attendees at the Saturday Pairs event and 112 at the Sunday Teams event.

Congress income totaled \$12,982 and Congress expenses totaled \$7,861 resulting in a net profit of \$5,121 (excluding GST). This outcome was an excellent result underwritten by the combined efforts of Maree and her team of hardworking volunteers. The Congress also raised around \$1,400 from raffles which has been donated to 2 local charities. A special mention should go to Sue and Keith Woodbury and their catering/kitchen team for the provision of quality refreshments at the event.

FINANCIAL

Please refer to the Treasurer's Report for 2024-2025 including the following key points: -

- Net operating profit: \$31,266,
- Net cash flow surplus: \$35,615,
- Cash reserves: \$82,584 including a Westpac term deposit of \$50,000,
- Table fees increased from \$8 to \$10 effective 5 May 2024 with 10 prepaid coupons costing \$90,
- Capital expenditure on Building Upgrade Project: \$1,017,275 including construction costs of \$950,150 paid to Buterin L'Estrange, \$51,915 for various consulting, CC Council and other fees and \$15,210 for contract administration and project management services,
- Member donations of \$507,000 to finance construction costs,
- Member loans of \$225,000 to finance the balance of construction costs,
- Property Valuation: \$1,670,000 – Property Valuations NSW on 18 March 2025
- Budget net profit for 2025-2026 of around \$30,000 after interest costs,
- Member numbers: 159 home club & 14 alternate members.

CODE OF CONDUCT RE: MEMBER BEHAVIOUR

The committee remains committed to ensuring that members adhere to the Club's Code of Conduct which provides guidelines for acceptable behaviour in and around the Clubhouse and between members. At the end of the day, members are entitled to the quiet enjoyment of a game of bridge.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP – NOMINATION OF NORM BERGER

Since the establishment of the CCBC in May 1975, there have been life memberships bestowed on 11 members with only 3 life memberships since 2000 - Helen Eaton and John Redfearn in 2004 and Don Robb in 2011 or 14 years ago. Peter Johnman became a life member in 1991.

Norm Berger has been nominated for life membership by Phil Thomas and Grahame Williamson for his outstanding contribution to the CCBC during the 15 years since becoming a home club member in December 2009.

Given the lack of suitable candidates for Life Membership during the last 14 years, I would like to draw everyone's attention to the eligibility requirements for life membership as they relate to Norm:-

A home club member is eligible for life membership if he or she has been a home club member for at least 15 years and always upholds the values of tolerance, respectfulness, fairness, professionalism, honesty, integrity, openness, and accountability.

In addition, the nominee must have consistently made outstanding contribution to the Association in at least one of the following areas:

1. **is a bridge teacher at the Association** – Norm has been involved in teaching beginners and nurturing intermediate players over several years
2. **is an ambassador** – Norm has represented the CCBC in tournaments and championship events over a 10-year period in NSW, Queensland and Canberra. He regularly partnered John Redfearn, Glen Campbell, Kevin and Angela Dougall during this period.
3. **is a service person** – Norm has been a regular director during 14 of his 15 years at the CCBC and recently directed 17 consecutive bridge sessions at a time when the other 3 directors were either unwell or otherwise occupied. Norm has also been a regular member of a wide range of sub-committees including Building Upgrade, Constitution Review, Marketing and Teaching & Development. Norm has also been an active volunteer assisting with CCBC activities including Congresses, maintenance, the yearly program booklet etc.
4. **is a committee member** - Norm was elected as a committee member in May 2009 and has remained a committee member for 14 of the 15 years since he became a home club member in December 2009. Norm has also been the Vice President on 7 committees and Tournament Secretary on 6 committees.

FINAL COMMENT – LIFE MEMBERSHIP

A member nominated for Life Membership must “consistently make outstanding contributions to the CCBC in at least one of the 4 nominated areas: is a bridge teacher, an ambassador, a service person and a committee member”. Norm has consistently made outstanding contributions in ALL 4 nominated areas and has clearly met all the requirements for Life Membership.

Please note that the general committee is unanimously in favour of the nomination of Norm Berger for Life Membership.

DIRECTORS – SHORTAGE

The relatively small number of directors available to manage bridge sessions remains a significant and high operational risk for the CCBC. Currently, John Redfearn, Norm Berger, Matt Raj Mal and Peter Cloughessy are the only 4 regular directors. Peter Johnman also helps on an as-needs basis. Despite a concerted effort a few months ago to attract potential directors, none have been forthcoming.

An aspiring director needs to understand the game of bridge, have been playing for several years and would generally be at a minimum restricted or an advanced novice masterpoint level. With both John and Peter unwell during February and Matt interstate, Norm was forced to direct at every bridge session spanning more than 2 weeks. If Norm had also been unavailable, the CCBC may have been forced to close its doors as it is extremely difficult to arrange directors from other clubs at short notice. Going forward, it is essential that the CCBC attracts more directors.

ROLE OF PRESIDENT

The President is charged with providing leadership and direction to the committee and is responsible for ensuring that the committee fulfills its responsibilities for the governance and success of the Association. The President is generally the spokesperson and should work to maintain key relationships within and outside the committee. During my 2 years in this role, I have endeavoured to meet these responsibilities to the best of my abilities.

Although differences of opinion and tensions occur at both the committee level and between members, I have attempted to remain impartial during these differences. The overriding responsibility of the President is to place the interests of the Club above any personal aspirations. At the end of the day, we are all Volunteers and always strive to do our best.

I wish my replacement, Peter Cloughessy, and his team of committee members every success going forward.

FINAL COMMENT

Again, I would also like to thank all members who have shown support and compassion to those members who have suffered a significant personal loss. Without the support of the “CCBC Bridge Family”, the grieving process and its accompanying sadness would have been more difficult and painful. There has been a succession of much loved and respected members passing away during recent times and sadly, as part of everyday life, this will continue to happen. I encourage members to continue to support grieving partners and families during these difficult times.