



# Newsletter 20/02

## October 2020

### THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGING

The WBU is pleased to welcome Ceri Pierce as its new Chief Officer. Ceri will be picking up the reins from Neville Richards, our Acting CEO, who will be handing over his duties to Ceri over the next 6 months.



For those of you who do not know Ceri, she is a Valleys girl (Treforest) and has been involved in Welsh bridge since the mid 90s, (with a 15 year break to have three children). She is from a

bridge playing family – her father was the late Alan Pierce, whom many will remember, and her wicked step-mother (and also her bridge partner in recent years) is Maggie Pierce, whom many will know.

Ceri currently lives in Somerset and can see Wales in the distance over the sea, but also spends much of her time in Cardiff (Covid-19 permitting). She is a member of the East Wales Bridge Association.

Ceri's initial objectives are to accomplish a smooth handover and to ensure that the organisation runs smoothly and efficiently, providing enjoyable bridge events at all levels. The more people we have playing bridge, the better.

Enthusiastic volunteers and helpers who would like to get involved with the WBU – helping to organise events, teaching, admin, marketing - anything really - should contact her by emailing [ceri@wbu.org](mailto:ceri@wbu.org)

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

#### October

- 10<sup>th</sup> NWBA Pairs (contact Sarah Amos)  
WWBA Vince Bevan Cup (contact Sarah Amos)  
11<sup>th</sup> WBU AGM (Zoom) – SEE NEXT PAGE  
**30<sup>th</sup>- 1<sup>st</sup> Lady Milne (Realbridge)**  
**Teltscher Trophy (Realbridge)**  
WWBA Swiss Pairs (contact Keith Davison)

#### November

- 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Gold Cup (provisional)  
21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> Tollemache qualifiers (Realbridge)  
27<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> Porthcawl Congress (BBO) (contact Irene Thomas)

#### December

- 6<sup>th</sup> NWBA Teams of Four (contact Paddy Murphy)  
EWBA Mixed Pairs (contact Helen Houston)

*All events will be held online (see next page)*

### ♠ ♥ ♦ ♣ AGM ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠

The long awaited AGM, which was delayed by the Covid-19 situation, will be held on Zoom on Sunday October 11th at 11.45am for a midday start. To register for the AGM, please click on this link:

[https://welshbridgeunion.org/event/wbu-virtual-agm-using-zoom/?instance\\_id=2444](https://welshbridgeunion.org/event/wbu-virtual-agm-using-zoom/?instance_id=2444)

or send your name and WBU number to [ceri@wbu.org](mailto:ceri@wbu.org). You will then be emailed a link to join the meeting.

## COVID-19 GUIDANCE

*Notice from the Management Committee (17/9/20)*

The Welsh Government has announced that from Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September you cannot meet socially indoors with people not in your extended household. In addition, as of 14 September meetings or gatherings indoors (even within your extended household) must be limited to 6 people (not including any children under 11). Furthermore, since the end of September many counties have been placed in local lockdown and the meeting indoors of extended households is now also forbidden.

This removes any doubt as to whether clubs may run face-to-face games, and makes clear that this will not be possible until such time as further changes or clarifications to the rules may be announced.

If suitable changes do emerge in the future and a club wishes to consider re-opening, it will still be essential to complete a thorough Risk Assessment and comply with all remaining social distancing rules.

As a result, the WBU has cancelled all face-to-face events until the end of December and will review the situation for January later this year.

We encourage Clubs and Areas to hold their regular competitions online in the meantime

*Ceri Pierce, Welsh Bridge Union*  
Tel. 07837 563283

## NEW PRESIDENT

The WBU also has a new President, Marie Topp from North Wales. Her appointment was made during the lockdown without the usual handover from the retiring President, which would normally take place at the AGM the weekend of the Perry and Spickett.

Marie can also see the sea, but has a much nicer view of it than Ceri's!. Marie has brought a breath of fresh air to the WBU and both she and Ceri

are looking forward to working together and also with the rest of the Management Committee who's members have an enormous amount of experience and expertise to move the WBU forward. New ideas, initiatives and faces are very welcome.



*The WBU would like to thank the retiring President David Newman from the West Wales Area, for his hard work and service to the WBU during his term.*



If you are longing for some real-life bridge, the Madeira International Bridge Open (Pairs, Teams and side events) is on from 29<sup>th</sup> October to 9<sup>th</sup> November.

[www.bridge.madeira.com](http://www.bridge.madeira.com)

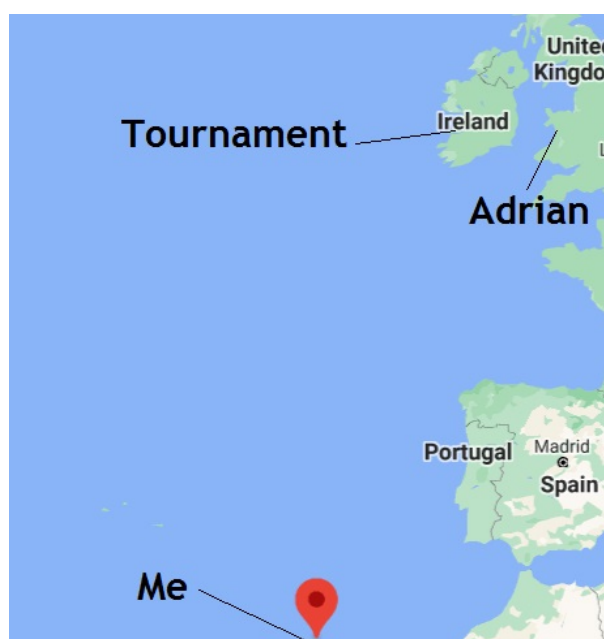
*Madeira is on the air bridge list, so no quarantine for direct flights.*

# "I fought the law and the law won"

from your Editor

Members may be aware of the Law of Total Tricks, which says "*If the opponents have a fit of  $x$  cards in a suit and your side has a fit of  $y$  cards, then the total number of tricks available is  $x + y$* ".

Adrian Thomas and I played together recently. Social distancing was scrupulously observed: Adrian was at home in Dolgellau, I was in Funchal, and the event took place in Ireland. We needed to borrow a bit of the proverbial luck from our hosts to escape the Law's clutches.



**SOCIAL DISTANCING**

We were doing averagely well when I picked up this hand at Game All:

♠J1087432, ♥Q2, ♦void, ♣8654

Partner opened 1♦ and RHO overcalled 1♥. Fearing that we would get too high if I bid immediately (especially with a void in partner's suit) I passed, hoping to get the spades in later. LHO now ventured 2♣ and partner rebid his diamonds. After some thought, RHO bid 2♥ and now I could show my long spades and very weak hand with impunity. LHO raised to 3♥, partner competed with 3♠, and RHO bid 4♥.

West	North	East	South
-	1♦	1♥	Pass
2♣	2♦	2♥	2♠
3♥	3♠	4♥	?

Strictly speaking, according to the Law our opponents should have a 9-card fit and we should have 10. That gives a total of 19. If they are making 4♥ we are only down one (-620 vs. -200); and if we are making 4♠ they are only down two (+620 vs. +500). It therefore seems fairly clear to bid 4♠, which is what I did. My left-hand opponent duly doubled and led the king of hearts.

♠ Q 9 5  
♥ A 8 6  
♦ A Q J 10 6 5 4  
♣ none  
■  
♠ J 10 8 7 4 3 2  
♥ Q 2  
♦ none  
♣ 8 6 5 4

As you see, not only had East-West stretched 8 cards to show 9, but East had bid hearts three times on a suit missing the ace, king and queen (as it turned out, he was missing the jack too – West had that).

It was a simple matter to win the ace, cross to the queen, ruff a club, cash the ace of diamonds throwing a club, ruff a heart, ruff a club, ruff a diamond, ruff the last club, ruff another diamond high (in case West had run out of them) and play a trump for 11 tricks and +990.

You have to feel sorry for West: he had the ace and king of trumps and ♥KJ, and his partner had bid three times. He didn't really deserve his 0%.

\* \* \* \* \*

On the last hand, the Law reared its head again. In second seat, at green, I picked up ♠void, ♥8742, ♦KJ7632, ♣AK3. Dealer opened 1♥ and I overcalled 2♦. Responder raised to 2♥ and partner unexpectedly leapt to 5♦. After a very long think, RHO bid 5♥. What should I do now?

West	North	East	South
-	-	1♥	2♦
2♥	5♦	5♥	?



It's not altogether clear how many hearts the opponents have, but it can't be more than 9 and it oughtn't to be fewer than 9. Partner should have five diamonds for his jump to 5♦. That gives us a total of 20, so if they are making 5♥ we are going three down in 6♦ (-650 vs. -500); and if we are making 6♦ they are only going three down in 5♥ (+920 vs. +800). Again, it seems clear to bid 6♦, so that's what I did. This time it was my right-hand opponent who doubled, and LHO led the ♥10.

Dummy was a bit of a disappointment. The opponents' bidding had led me to expect a heart void, not the singleton queen. It was nice to see the ace of trumps, but all his other cards were completely useless; I'd gladly have exchanged the ♥Q and ♠K for the queen of clubs, or even the jack.

♠ K 8 7  
♥ Q  
♦ A 10 9 5 4  
♣ 10 9 8 4  
■  
♠ none  
♥ 8 7 4 2  
♦ K J 7 6 3 2  
♣ A K 3

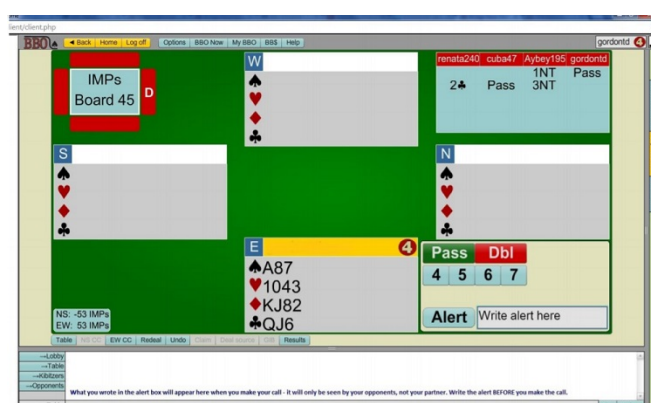
While East was fumbling to get the ace of hearts out of her hand, I was wondering, rather despondently, where I was going to park my club loser. Was there a possible squeeze? Might a double finesse work? How would I manage my entries? No need for any of that: East tried to cash her ace of spades and that was +1090.

Again, West didn't really deserve his 0%: his partner had bid 5♥ despite the risk that we would make 6♦; and then to add insult to injury she let it through. A club or another heart would have beaten it (she didn't have any diamonds). And, worse, if she'd opened 1♠ like a normal human being - for indeed, she had five of those as well as five hearts - her partner would have led a spade and there would have been no getting it wrong.

It just goes to show, if you break the Law you need a good defence.

## HOW TO ...

### Alert a bid on BBO



When it is your turn to bid, the "bidding box" appears at the bottom of the window. BEFORE you bid, type a brief explanation (e.g. 2+, or *Spades + minor*, or *Splinter*) into the Alert box. Your bid will appear in yellow in the auction. Your partner will not be able to see that you have alerted.

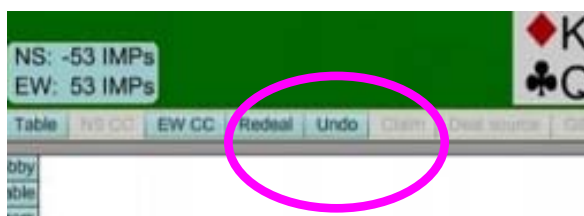
If the opponents want clarification, they can click on your bid and the Alert box will reappear. You can expand your explanation.

Alternatively, the opponents can send you a Chat message (without your partner's seeing it), and you can reply to both opponents by clicking *Opponents* in the list of Chat options on the left of the screen.

If your opponents ask for information, please reply. There are few things more frustrating on BBO than waiting for an explanation that never comes.

### Undo a bid or play on BBO

On the old (green) client version of BBO, the Undo button appears below the table:



On the web version (the blue one), the Undo button is - annoyingly and inconveniently - in a drop-down behind the three little lines at top left. It's much harder to Undo quickly.

See also p.7 re Undo.



## More sad farewells

### Liam Sheridan



It was with great sadness and shock that we learned of the death of Liam Sheridan on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> August. A stalwart of Bridgend Bridge Club from its early days, Liam had enormous stature as a player, not just locally, but on the national and international stage.

Liam represented Wales in five Camrose Home International Championships, in four European events, and at the Mind Sports Olympics in Beijing, as well as winning a prestigious invitational event, the International Masters, on more than one occasion. He was one of the top Grand Masters in the country, having built up a huge number of masterpoints over the years.

As a player of great authority, Liam exemplified the high standards expected of the top players, and disapproved when the better players tried to blind ordinary club members with science. He always took the trouble to explain any bids which the lesser players might find confusing, and seemed to know instinctively which opponents needed understanding and supportive advice, and which deserved, and could

stand, being gently castigated for their poor bidding or play. He was a great mentor and coach, being generous in his advice to those who he could see were keen to improve. He kept an avuncular eye on the diverse and sometimes baffling characters who inhabit the world of bridge, but he was rarely condemnatory, his comment that one member of our community "could be intensely irritating" being the worst thing I ever heard him say about anybody.

In recent years Liam put his teaching skills to great use supporting John Beard on his Bridge Holiday programme, and in developing a friendly and enthusiastically-supported club at Aberthin. Although he had competed successfully at the highest levels of bridge, Liam enjoyed the social aspect of the game, as evidenced by the bridge days he organised from time to time, usually accompanied by good food, and where the company was as important as the bridge. One thing Liam didn't do was computers, so, when Covid-19 struck, he was quite prepared to put away bridge for a while, remarking that there were plenty of other things to do in life.

One of these, famously, was a love of horse-racing, and another a devotion to jazz music. Additionally, in his younger days Liam was evidently a very good squash player. He was a family man, of course, but suffered the cruel blow of losing his wife Maureen to a terminal illness at far too young an age. They had been together since their teenage years and, having discovered bridge, became a formidable partnership at the table as well as in life.

So, while Liam will be greatly missed at all levels of the Bridge community, we send our condolences to those who will miss him most, his family and, of course, his partner Glenda.

*Many thanks to Bridgend Bridge Club for allowing me to use the obituary published on its website.*



## Bill Turner

*Bridgend Bridge Club has suffered another great loss. Again, many thanks for permission to use the obituary.*

It is with great sadness that we have to report the death of our Club President, Bill Turner on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September.

Bill was born in the mid-1930s on a remote farm in Mid-Wales and suffered early misfortune when he lost the sight of one eye in an accident while he was picking fruit as a boy during the War. After moving to Llandeilo he met the love of his life, Mair; they married, had two sons, and Bill began a successful career in engineering.

Bill was a keen sportsman, playing cricket and golf, but, despite his eyesight his real strength was pistol shooting, at which he was good enough to represent Wales. A man of incredible energy and intellectual curiosity, he threw himself into all his interests, such as gardening and photography, with passionate enthusiasm, as those of us who played bridge with him will readily attest. It is difficult to imagine a keener or more dedicated bridge player than Bill, and he was playing most days until his final illness.

Bridgend Bridge Club was very important to Bill and we owe him a lot. When the club had to find new premises, he spent much time and effort researching possibilities before settling on Nolton Church Hall, which has proved an excellent venue. His technical skills were evident in the way he organised the cupboard and mended damaged tables, his commitment to the club he served as Chairman for many years being second to none. He was always singing the praises of Bridgend BC and trying to persuade other bridge-players to give it a try.

Bill ran bridge classes for several years and produced copious and very well-organised notes. Latterly he was generous in his efforts to support and develop less experienced and able players, and those of us who partnered him learned a lot. What was remarkable was that, well into his

eighties, Bill was still looking to develop his own game and explore new approaches, sometimes, it has to be said, to the point of complications which were difficult for a man of his age to remember. The fact that he was willing to try, however, shows how focused and competitive he remained right up to the end.

While Bill never reached the international heights he had achieved in shooting, he did serve as Chairman of the national selectors for a time, and was a very well-known figure on the Welsh tournament scene for many years - in fact he was probably one of the best known and most recognisable.

Bill's phone calls were legendary. If you played with Bill you could expect a call from him the following morning, and would wonder what was wrong if you didn't hear from him. Even if you hadn't played with him the night before, he might still call to give you a blow-by-blow account of his exploits, to test how you would have approached a particular problem, or to seek sympathy with his bad luck. We all felt that, inconvenient though these regular calls sometimes proved to be, we would miss them when they stopped, and that has proved to be the case.

While it is often said after people have gone that they will be sorely missed, it is not a cliché in Bill's case: he was a larger-than-life character whom we will all miss immensely. The way in which he faced increasing health difficulties, especially those which hampered his enjoyment of bridge, declining eyesight and hearing, showed what a resilient and courageous character he was. His fearlessness meant that he was not slow to give his opinion and stand his ground, which could lead to "artistic differences" with partners; but even if you disagreed with Bill, you couldn't help admiring his spirit, determination and commitment. Wherever he is now, you can be sure he is looking to make up a four for a game of bridge.

# SUMMARY OF ONLINE REGULATIONS

*by Tony Haworth*

With the increased use of various online bridge platforms, players need to be aware of some of the regulations regarding their participation in online tournaments.

The WBU has adopted the EBU's regulations, which can be found in EBU Sky-Blue Book [2020].

A summary of these, identifying the main points of interest, is:

- Players should complete a full system card for opponents' benefit. In addition it is courteous to provide a one-line summary at the start of a new round.
- Online software is designed such that it is impossible for players to make illegal bids or penalty plays (simplifying the Director's role).
- All conventional bids (ones that you would announce or alert in face-to-face bridge) are self-alerted. When a player self-alerts, the alert together with an explanation is communicated only to the opponents, not to partner. It is recommended that all bids (up to 7NT) be alerted.
- Any further explanation of a convention must be made via private messaging (ideally to both opponents).
- If a player realises that he has made an incorrect explanation he should immediately message both opponents (e.g. 'Wrong explanation -.....')
- It is **forbidden to communicate privately** with partner during a board (most platforms prevent this).
- Players can request an 'Undo', but this should only be as a result of a misclick, not of a change of mind. Directors will usually be sympathetic to requests during the auction, but Undos will rarely be granted during the play.
- Claims are handled in line with face-to-face bridge, recognising that the ability to discuss with players is more restricted (so unless under time constraints, it is advisable not to claim).
- Actions out of tempo can result in a Director adjusting a score for possible Unauthorised Information.
- Boards not completed within the scheduled time can be aborted. Most online software has the ability to apportion blame for any slow play, and an artificial score can be awarded accordingly (e.g. 60-40 to the faster/slower pair).
- Some platforms use the 'stop' card concept, preventing a player from bidding until a time expiry following an opponent's jump bid. Even if this facility is not provided, players can still pause following a jump bid without implying a hesitation.
- It is perfectly permissible for players to consult their own system cards and notes (the opposite of face-to-face bridge).

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## LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF ONLINE

Remember that prolonged computer use can cause health problems. Make sure you have a chair which supports your back, and that the height and angle of the screen do not give you a stiff neck and shoulders. Check that the size of the screen is right for you, and adjust the brightness to avoid glare and consequent eye strain. Take frequent breaks away from the screen (even if it's only to get up and make a cup of tea while you're dummy).





## THE FAR-DISTANT CLEDDAU

*We received the following email contribution from Irene Delahunty, Western Area ATO and doyenne of Pembroke Bridge Club.*

*It provides a much-needed injection of cheer into a dismal year.*

.....  
I opened Pembroke Bridge club on April 12<sup>th</sup> 2017 and it has gone from strength to strength. The most difficult part was trying to find a venue after the hotel we started in, the Lamphey Court Hotel, decided that because we were averaging 8 - 10 tables at each session they should put my rent up to £80 each time we played (£160 per week, cash!). I did find another venue, Jameston village hall which we moved into after 18 months. It is a lot smaller, and we have to divide our tables into 3 rooms, but hey ho I make it work.

I bake twice a week to keep all my players happy, and if I am being honest I think a lot of them only come for the home-made cakes!



I am thrilled that in such a small town we are able to play twice a week and average 6-8 tables on a Tuesday evening at 6pm and 8-10 on a Friday afternoon at 1pm.

We also run a teaching class on a Wednesday morning from 10am - 1.30pm. These lessons have been a great success.

Peter Milewski runs the main section of the class and I take the beginners in another room. Just before lockdown we had an attendance of six full tables with Peter and three full tables with me. I always felt that running lessons would be the way forward, as lots of members are getting old, and so it is fab to see so many of our beginners now taking the plunge and coming into our club sessions, albeit treading very wearily.

The motto in my club is to BE NICE. I say this consistently to all my members. I do not allow any arguing, any 'one liners', or insults at my tables. I stress to them all that if they are unhappy with their partner about anything, they discuss this privately in the sit-out or when they are on their own, in order to not cause any upset at the table. This rule works. I also think the best thing is not having any committee, and therefore if anyone has any problems or issues they come directly to me.

On Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March we had our last bridge evening all together at the tables. By April 9<sup>th</sup> I had been in contact with Sarah Amos to ask if she could help me set up online. I cannot begin to tell you how many players had never played online before, or even heard of BBO. Between Peter and me we managed to set up members aged from 55 to our eldest at 93. It was not an easy task, but when I look back I am so delighted that I put that little effort in. We have played over 50 sessions online now, playing three times a week, Tuesday mornings at 11am, Thursday afternoons at 2pm and Friday mornings at 11am. We average 6 to 10 tables at each session. Sarah Amos is our Director and has attended each time.

Our bridge lessons also continue. Peter runs a session every Wednesday morning





with our learner group. He has two tables on average each week on BBO. We did start the lessons on Bridge Club Live but we find the BBO set up a lot better.

Along with communicating with my members (we have over 80) online, I wrote a newsletter the weekend we finished at the club. and I have continued for 23 weeks writing my newsletters every Sunday.

I continue with my newspaper reports which are published in the two local newspapers each week, and by this means several members who are unable - for various reasons - to join us at the online tables are still able to see the weekly results.

I truly believe that bridge is a wonderful game, and am so glad I began young, but all I seem to hear about is how many

clubs are closing and struggling. I just feel with a little effort, dedication and home-made cakes, bridge can continue if you have the right environment and if everyone continues to BE NICE!

**Irene Delahunty**



**Norma and David Newman enjoying some Christmas cheer in Pembroke**



#### Entry

By email to Helen Houston:  
Email: [ato@ewba.org.uk](mailto:ato@ewba.org.uk)

- include name, BBO username & membership number of all players
- entry only completed upon payment
- Payment details will be sent upon entry

## **EWBA February Congress**

### **Swiss Pairs Saturday**

(scored and assigned by match points)

### **Swiss Teams Sunday**

(format to be confirmed)

**20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> February 2021**

### **Green pointed events**

#### Health & Safety

As per health & safety advice, the time set to complete a round will include extra 'eye rest' time.  
We also advise players to use a desktop or laptop with a 17+” monitor, not a tablet or mobile phone.

## **ONLINE ON BBO**

#### Entry fee

**Saturday:** £20 per pair

**Sunday:** £40 per team

#### Playing times

##### **Saturday:**

12:00 – 15:15: 4 x 6 boards

16:15 – 19:30: 4 x 6 boards

##### **Sunday:**

start: 12:00

1 hour lunch break

finish: 19:30

## GOOD LUCK TO OUR INTERNATIONAL TEAMS

### LADY MILNE

Maggie Pierce & Gilly Clench  
Ceri Pierce & Mia Deschepper  
Sarah Amos & Andrea Knox



*NPC Tony Disley*

### TELTSCHER TROPHY (SENIOR CAMROSE)

Bob Pitts & Barry Jones  
Alan Stephenson & Paul Denning  
Filip & Diane Kurbalija

*NPC Paddy Murphy*

## WBU Mailing List – sign up now

The WBU would like to communicate directly with members, rather than solely via clubs, to send out the newsletter and other bridge-related information straight to you.

If you have not already signed up for the WBU mailing list, please do so using the link below to ensure you get direct communication in the future. The mailing list is secure and your details will not be passed on to 3rd parties.

<https://welshbridgeunion.org/mail-list-subscription/>

or visit the WBU website at [www.welshbridgeunion.org](http://www.welshbridgeunion.org)

*[Members who wish to be on the mailing list are required to **OPT IN**, to comply with the GDPR regulations.]*

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Llanddewi, Llandrindod Wells, Powys LD1 6SE

## NOTE TO CONTRIBUTORS

If you are sending a bridge hand, it would be a kindness (to me) to observe the following conventions:

- a) Unless they're at the start of a sentence, ace, king, queen etc. do not have a capital letter.
- b) Nor do hearts, spades etc.: "holding five hearts ..."; "If the king of spades holds ..."
- c) When using abbreviations, the suit comes before the card: HK, DQ (or ♥K, ♦Q) etc.

Screenshots of hands are generally not of high enough resolution. If you include one in an article, please send me the .jpg file separately.

## USEFUL CONTACTS

Tony Haworth is the Director and Administrator for WBU StepBridge (see previous issue):

[thaworth@tonyh1.plus.com](mailto:thaworth@tonyh1.plus.com)

The following kindly people have volunteered to be coordinators for newsletter items (articles, events, obituaries, photos, jokes, hands ...):

WWBA: Irene Delahunty

[irene.dela@btinternet.com](mailto:irene.dela@btinternet.com)

EWBA: Helen Houston (ATO)

[ato@ewba.org.uk](mailto:ato@ewba.org.uk)

Or you can send your contributions to me (Laura) at:

[newsletter@welshbridgeunion.org](mailto:newsletter@welshbridgeunion.org)



**Liam Sheridan**

*(obituary p.5)*



**Bill Turner**

*(obituary p.6)*