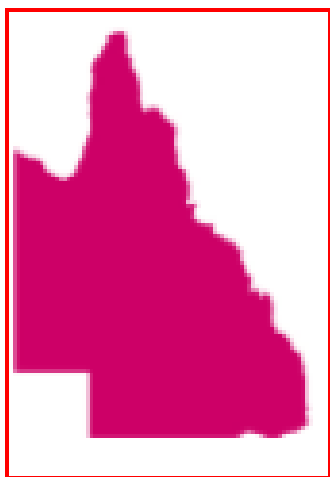


The Early Days of Queensland Bridge

Introduction



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Introduction

The aim of these pages is to provide an overview of the history of bridge in Queensland from the late nineteenth century to the mid-1950s — how the game changed, where it was played, and, most importantly, who the people were who played and supported it. It can be thought of as a kind of ‘prequel’ to *Mind Games*—the excellent QBA history edited by the late Colin Masters.

The history is divided into five parts:

- Part One is essentially a chronology, year by year, until 1929, of the key events in the early development of Queensland bridge.
- Part Two looks at the Brisbane charity bridge clubs that developed from the late nineteen-twenties and, which attracted numbers of participants that would be the envy of many clubs today.
- Part Three is about the split in the bridge world between players of contract and auction and the events that led up to the establishment of the QBA in February 1934.
- Part Four is devoted to the development of the QBA and the Brisbane Bridge Club from 1934 to the mid-1950s; and to the growth of local bridge clubs that were to provide the basis for the next stage of growth of bridge in Queensland.
- Part Five—the Appendix—lists what is known about the large number of clubs in country areas in the pre-1955 era.

Sources

The major source of information for this work has been Trove, the magnificent online library of digitized newspapers, journals and photographs, which is a cooperative undertaking of the main Australian libraries, and maintained by the National Library. It is available on the National Library website at www.nla.gov.au.

For the purpose of this online document, there are no footnotes. Should readers wish to check a particular fact or see the full original source, a search in Trove for the approximate date will usually bring it up without much difficulty. Otherwise, the author will be happy to provide the reference.

The author is very grateful to the National Library and to the Queensland State Library for their help in accessing their holdings, which made the history possible. Thanks are also due to Toni Bardon of the Queensland Contract Bridge Club for making available important archival material; and to Val Carmody and Richard Ward for much-needed help in commenting on the initial drafts of the text.

Images

Where a source for an image or photograph is not identified it should be taken as having been reproduced from newspapers included in Trove. The quality of photographs in the newspapers of the day is often quite poor but there still seemed to be benefit in having something to attach to what would otherwise just be a name.

Where an individual is identified as the source of a photograph,

either in the public domain or used with permission and properly attributed. Any issues relating to this should be brought to the attention of the author for correction.

Names

Establishing the complete names and, therefore, identity of many of the people in this story is not a straightforward matter. Many men, in formal settings, such as newspaper reports, preferred to be known by their initials. Wilf Boyce, for example, was never in a written report anything other than WFR Boyce.

To make it worse, married women, almost always were reported under their husband's initials. This practice was also followed in ABF records on interstate teams well into the 1950s. To the modern ear at least, referring to people in this way fails to bring them to life.

Finding the given names, used in this history, involved several steps. Newspaper reports were studied for clues about address and profession and then the electoral roll checked for a full name.

In the case of married women, the process usually involved first identifying the full name and address of the husband and then looking at others at that address.

I have included given names only when there is a high degree of certainty—but readers need to be aware that this is less than total. The author will welcome any information that suggests need for corrections.

In Closing

While the main subject is bridge, readers will find more than a few digressions, covering other organisations, some key events in Queensland history of the period, and some biographical details that go beyond a person's bridge career.

There are two reasons for this. The most respectable of the two is that bridge and its adherents were part of the society and strongly affected by what was going on in it. Beyond that though, I was struck by the range of fascinating characters that I found and the number of people whose contributions have probably been largely forgotten—and I couldn't bear to leave them out.

History is always an ongoing process. Other researchers will almost certainly find new material that would change or add to the narrative in this work. The author would be happy to receive any further information or material that could make subsequent editions more comprehensive and accurate.

On a final note, while history is based on facts, opinion always comes into the story—opinions about what is important, why things happened and what the consequences were. I should say that the opinions expressed here are mine and mine alone, and should not be taken to necessarily reflect the views of the QBA or ABF.