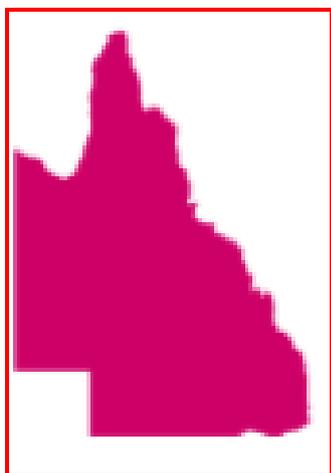


The Early Days of Queensland Bridge

Part One

The Beginnings: 1895-1929 A Chronology



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Original Bridge

When bridge first came to Australia it was known variously as bridge, britch, or bridge whist.

In this original form of bridge, there was no competition in the bidding. Either the dealer or their partner named the trump suit. Until shortly after the turn of the century it was mainly referred to as 'bridge whist'.

Not only did some suits score more than others as trumps but they also cost you more if you did not get seven of the thirteen tricks. Choosing trumps or no-trumps without knowing partner's hand was quite tricky.

The highest scoring suit was hearts. Spades was the lowest. If you were not sure what to do you could call spades, regardless of how many you had in your hand, so that at worst your losses would be small.

Bridge was almost never played except for money. Most people played for modest stakes but, in serious gambling circles, wins and losses could be huge as there was no limit on doubling—one could redouble indefinitely.

1895-1904: Getting the Word

1895

According to Wilf Boyce, one of the leading figures of Queensland bridge from the 1920s on, this was **when bridge first arrived in Australia** (and presumably Queensland) – but we don't know on what he based this.

Information on how to play the game was initially hard to get but bridge spread gradually, mainly by word of mouth among women in the upper strata of society.

1898

The **first description of bridge in a journal with a reasonably large Queensland middle-class readership**—*The Australasian*. This was followed in 1899 by a series of detailed articles on bidding and play in the English magazine, *The Field*, which was relatively widely read in upper class circles and available in many libraries and clubs

1899

The **first, passing, mention of bridge in a Queensland paper**, *The Moreton Mail*. It was mentioned in a such a way as suggests that its readers would have heard of the game.

1901

The local papers reported nothing about local bridge players—so we know nothing of the local pioneers—but start to carry **sensational articles on the craze for bridge in English high society.**

Bridge then was seen as a gambling game and almost never played except for money. Much of the publicity was highly negative involving stories of women neglecting their homes and losing large amounts.

The negative publicity continued on and off for many years, particularly aimed at women, who were the great majority of players. It seems to have done little to stop the spread of bridge, and probably helped promote interest in it.

The newspapers were careful to confine their talk about scandalous behaviour to British women—in a relatively small place they probably knew better than to directly criticise members of the local elite who were the great majority of bridge players.

1902

The Queenslander becomes the **first local paper to give a detailed description of the rules of bridge.**

1903-1907: Bridge Established

Bridge seems to reach a 'tipping point'. It became a well-known feature of life among the more affluent. The growth of the game was driven primarily by women, who organise regular games in their homes.

Social events involving bridge become more common, although often combined with tables for whist and euchre. At dances and balls, bridge tables were increasingly set up as an alternative for those who do not wish to dance.

1902

The **first reported bridge parties and tournaments**. The first, in July, was a small affair in the home of Mr and Mrs Franklyn MacMullen in Brisbane.

The first bridge event described as a tournament was held in October in the home of a Mrs Henderson at Southport on the Gold Coast.

These home bridge tournaments or bridge parties were to be a major part of 'society' life in Queensland for the next thirty or more years.

1902

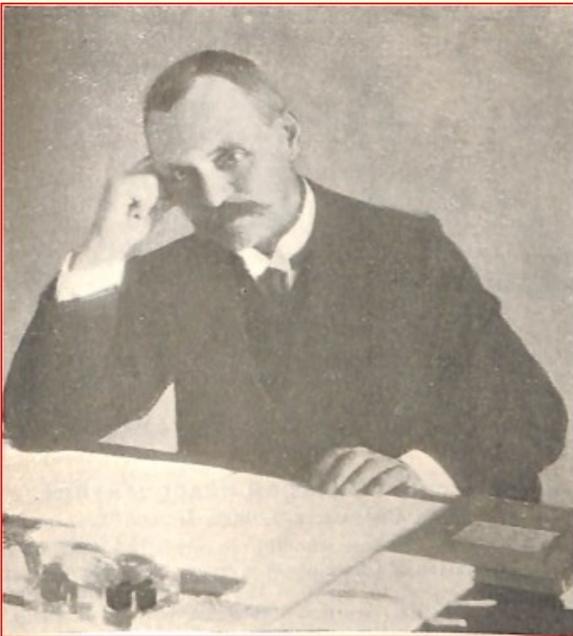
To cater for the new demand, the **first advertisements for bridge paraphernalia and advice on organising events begin to appear in the newspapers.**



An early container for bridge cards and scorer.

1903

In April, Mr. A. A. Orme holds a bridge party for friends at the Union Club, a high-end Brisbane residential hotel. This was an important indicator of **the growing respectability of bridge in upper class Brisbane**. It showed that the lurid newspaper reports about bridge were having little or no impact on local opinion. Orme was the long standing secretary of the Brisbane Anglican Diocese and the guests included leading churchmen.



A A (Alfred Alexander) Orme—secretary of the Brisbane Anglican Diocese from 1890-1913.

Highly respected and a well-known lover of card games and organiser of bridge and whist drives.



The Union Club—site of Mr Orme's bridge parties.

Similar private hotels, the Atcherley and the Canberra, would be major bridge venues in the 1920s and 1930s.

Photo: Queensland State Library

1904

A bridge “drive” is held at the Ipswich branch of the Joint Stock Bank—possibly the first such drive reported in the State. A bridge “drive” was an early form of competition rather than a party. People played against different pairs and usually with different partners, with prizes for the highest scores on the night.



The Ipswich branch of the Joint Stock Bank. Site of possibly the first reported bridge drive.

1904

The first hard evidence of the formation of home-based ladies’ bridge clubs. In December 1904, *The Northern Miner* reported on an event conducted by the Richmond Hill Ladies Bridge Club (a suburb of Charters Towers). This was almost certainly one of many that had been operating across the State, possibly for several years.

1905

The **first recorded bridge tournament in support of a charity**—in this case the Toowoomba Hospital Auxiliary. Over the next thirty years, bridge would be a major source of funds for charities. Charities, in turn, were a major force in increasing the popularity and accessibility of bridge.

Over the next fifty years, Toowoomba would be an important centre for bridge. In addition to the bridge played in the town, Toowoomba players travelled regularly to play in the Brisbane bridge clubs, including the Queensland Bridge Association.

1905

Beginnings of a bridge dynasty. Muriel (Queenie) and Edward Kivas Tully hold a bridge party at their Kangaroo Point home.

They continued to play at the

QBA into the 1940s and their son, Henry Kivas, was to be a frequent state representative.



Muriel and Edward Kivas Tully at the time of their golden wedding anniversary in 1952.

1905

1905 sees the beginning of **the age of bridge parties in the fashionable cafes of central Brisbane**. In November, the *Brisbane Courier* reported that 'a number of Brisbane bachelors will entertain some friends at a Bridge party at Rowe's Café'.

The "cafes" of the social pages were not the sort of businesses that we would now associate with the word. They were spacious, expensive, focused on fine light dining, and often provided entertainment. Originally designed to be able to cater for dancing, the owners rapidly adapted to providing venues for bridge.

The major cafes would host bridge parties several times a week and would continue to be important bridge venues well into the 1940s.



Views of Rowe's Café, Edward Street, a popular venue for bridge parties. Other major café venues were the Astoria and the Ann Hathaway.

Men and Women and Bridge

During its first thirty years, in Queensland and elsewhere, bridge primarily appealed to, and was promoted by women. This makes it very difficult to recreate the early history of the game in a comprehensive way as, in general, the earliest development of bridge was not considered as newsworthy as if it had been taken up in the elite men's clubs.

When it did enter the newspapers, it was, again, until taken up by the men's clubs such as Tattersalls, treated entirely as a social activity rather than a competitive intellectual activity. The result is that we know almost nothing of the pioneer leading players, teachers and organisers.

There was no real discussion of women's bridge in Queensland newspapers but looking at evidence from Australia as a whole and overseas, there was general agreement among informed observers that, while there was a very big social element and a large number of basic social players, on the whole, most serious bridge was to be found in the women's clubs.

Middle-class women had more opportunity to play and were much quicker to shift to, and promote, new and more complex versions of the game, such as auction and contract.

Until the late 1920s, there appears to have been little interest in bridge in the leading Brisbane elite men's clubs. Simpler games were preferred, bridge standards were low and people rarely played more than a few gambling hands after work before going home.

1906

Mrs Mackay in Warwick runs a bridge drive over three Friday nights for 32 people—16 men and 16 women. While bridge was played predominantly by women, part of its appeal was that, unlike the male-only whist clubs, it was **an opportunity for men and women to interact** in groups at something other than dances.

1907

A bridge and euchre drive is held at the South Brisbane Technical College Hall in aid of the General Hospital. **This movement of bridge from private homes to public spaces was an important step in increasing numbers at events and making the game more widely accessible.**

1907

The South Brisbane Croquet Club organises a bridge and euchre drive to raise funds. **The croquet clubs, run mainly by women, were to be important organisers of bridge in the 1920s and 1930s.**



Members of the South Brisbane Croquet Club. In the 1920s, the St Stephens and Graceville Croquet Clubs were to form important bridge clubs.

Photo: Queensland State Library

Competing at early bridge

The early scoring in bridge was along the lines of modern rubber bridge. People who made the first two games out of three won the rubber and got a bonus. The betting stakes were usually based on the points scored but there would also be side-bets for winning the rubber.

No duplicate was played. The luck of the cards played a big role, particularly as one also got points for holding honours. Nowadays, we see the element of luck as a bad thing—but in the early days it was a positive because it was seen to give less able players a chance to win and participate. This was particularly important when most play was for money.

In the early days of bridge, regular partnerships were not common. In clubs, players cut the cards to decide the partnerships. At 'progressive' bridge tournaments and parties, people changed opponents and often partners most commonly after each three boards, with the winners being those with the highest total raw points score at the end.

Another system in use was known as 'flag' or 'war' bridge. Under this system, the winners after three boards, collected a 'flag' before moving on. The pair or individual with the most flags at the end was the winner.

There would though often be side bets on the results of each mini-match.

1908-1914: Bridge at the Club

From at least 1902, there were almost certainly many informal bridge clubs in Queensland, as elsewhere, consisting of small groups of women who would meet on regular afternoons in each other's homes. However, these do not seem to have ever been reported in the local press.

From 1908, we start to see a few bridge clubs that have many of the characteristics of modern clubs. They operated in the evening, are on neutral community premises, were reasonably affordable for the middle class, and were open to all with an interest and willingness to abide by club rules.

The movement to such bridge clubs in this period was tentative. The clubs were still mainly part of a larger organisation—usually the local School of Arts—and even then often depended on the energy and enthusiasm of the organiser for their existence. They tended to fold with the onset of the Great War in 1914.

Nevertheless, however limited, the existence of the clubs showed **a market for bridge in the broader middle class** beyond the high society where it had been most popular.

The clubs seem more common in the country than in the city and this would remain true for the next four decades. In part, this might reflect the bias of the sources. Local country papers are more likely to report local bridge clubs than the metropolitan.

1908

The first newspaper mention of a local bridge club—the **Cavendish Bridge and Whist Club** in Brisbane. This is simply mentioned as one of a number of donors to charity and there are no other reports. However, it seems highly likely that it was a successor to the Cavendish Whist Club, formed in 1880, which met weekly at the Oxford Hotel. If it was the same club, the name change would have occurred some time after 1906.

In the period 1900 to 1910, other whist clubs are known to have been operating in Mackay, Gympie, Bowen, Maryborough, Rockhampton, Cairns, and Indooroopilly in Brisbane. Whist though was never a widely popular game and, in clubs, was largely confined to males.

Most people who played bridge would have either never or rarely played whist—but bridge is likely to have taken enough previous whist adherents to have made the whist clubs non-viable. They are not heard of after 1910.



The Oxford Hotel in Queen Street, Brisbane, site of the Cavendish Whist Club and probably the Cavendish Bridge and Whist Club. Whist clubs were generally men-only organisations.

Most bridge clubs, in contrast, were either mixed or women-only—the pubs of the time would not generally have been seen as an appropriate venue.

1909

The **first School of Arts bridge club** in Queensland is recorded in **Beaudesert**. This was followed by **Maryborough** (1912), **Chinchilla** (1913) and **Toowoomba** (1914).

The Schools of Arts were voluntary institutions joined by subscription that functioned as lending libraries, centres for adult education and recreation centres.

They were usually started by local community initiative to raise funds for a building or to use an existing hall. They are particularly important for the history of bridge outside of Brisbane.

From around 1907, bridge-playing seems to have taken off in the Schools of Arts, with many running ad hoc tournaments. From 1909, the informal bridge-playing sections developed into formalised bridge clubs within the School of Arts structure.

This was not without controversy as the bridge-playing was often for money, which was usually against School of Arts rules but difficult to enforce.



The Maryborough School of Arts in the 1920s.

Site of one of the first School of Arts bridge clubs.

1914-19: The Impact of War

The **outbreak of war** and its consequent impact tended to reduce the number of social bridge events. A number of bridge events were run for charitable causes, often directly related to the war, such as for wounded soldiers but public bridge did decline and would take some years to recover.

During this time, the Queensland bridge world was experiencing the **rise of auction bridge**, which, unlike original bridge, gave all players, not just dealer, the right to bid their hand.

1915

Auction had been mentioned briefly for the first time in the local press in 1908, mainly repeating material from London journals—but it is not until now that we see evidence that it is attracting substantial interest.

By this date, the game was popular enough for charity events to be able to include tables for auction enthusiasts. The war was a factor promoting auction among middle-class men, as it was one of the main games played by the officer class.



Early Auction bridge

Auction bridge introduced competitive bidding, which we now regard as an essential part of the game. The main problem was that there was no standard form of the game in the early days. Laws recognized by the English clubs had little impact.

Some played it as a game for three players, some for four, different scoring systems were used and there were different systems for valuing the suits.

Rules governing the progress of the bidding varied greatly. One version that was popular for some time, used a *misère* bid, known as *nullos*, where one bid to lose tricks.

The evolution of auction bridge

By the time auction bridge became popular in Queensland, and Australia generally, it had become far more standard and had undergone significant change.

When it was first widely played in Europe and the US, the dealer was still required to open the bidding as had been the case in original bridge. By the time of the first world war though this requirement had been dropped.

There were also changes to the value of the spade suit. In original bridge, it was almost impossible to get a game score in spades—the only purpose was to help declarers limit their losses if they had to bid with a dubious hand. Under local rules, players often did not bother to play out the hand if spades were bid.

To make spades worth bidding, in both auction and original bridge, around 1910 it became popular to give a choice of bidding spades in two ways—as the original low-scoring option or as the highest scoring suit (known as 'royal spades', 'royals', or 'lilies').

Once dealer was no longer forced to bid, there was no purpose in the lower value, and spades again became a single value—but this time as the highest suit.

1916

The **first recorded auction bridge tournament in Queensland** - in Bundaberg at the Gordon Club. By this time there had been a reasonable amount of standardisation and textbooks also were becoming more available.

1917

A number of locally-produced cheap text books on auction are available in bookshops in Brisbane and larger regional centres, such as Townsville

1918

Further Australian books on auction become available. The *Telegraph* in Brisbane referred to the 'craze' for auction bridge.

The **Commercial Travellers Club of Melbourne** promoted the game by publishing a cheap and widely available booklet on the laws of auction.

The game was now sufficiently well-known for it to be reported that lawn bowlers are playing it in-between matches.

1919

Report on the opening of the Yangan School of Arts suggests that **auction has replaced original bridge among enthusiasts.**

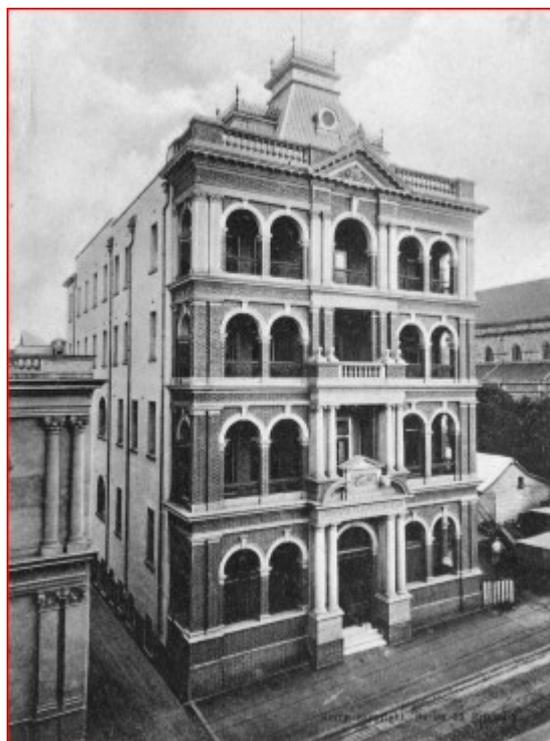
The Commercial Travellers' Clubs

Before mass communications, commercial travellers in country areas were essential to businesses selling to country towns and rural areas. Jimmy O'Sullivan, a long-term President of the QBA and ABF, spent many years in this role for his stationery company.

Travelling salesmen were, in all States, very important communicators about new card games and developments in existing card games. This was an important part of their strategy for making and keeping contacts. The rules produced by the clubs for various card games, including the 1918 auction bridge rules, were widely read and intended to reinforce this role.

Some commercial travellers became quite wealthy, independently representing many businesses. The travellers' clubs, which they helped fund in most states, were intended to provide short-term accommodation and a place to exchange information about places to be visited and leads.

In time, apart from travellers, many business people joined the clubs. Across Australia, they were the club of choice for many leading bridge figures. Austin Lennon, a stockbroker and President of the QBA and the Australian Bridge Council in the 1930s, was a member.



The Commercial Travellers' Club
Brisbane

Queensland State Library

1920-27: Auction Consolidates

Original bridge seems to have died out quite rapidly in the two or three years after the war (except in bridge drives or 'progressive bridge') but it seems to have taken several years for auction to achieve the level of popularity of original bridge, particularly for charity and social events. The game was more difficult and riskier and the existence of two types of bridge made it harder to organise events. The same problems occurred when contract gained traction in the 1930s.

1920 **The Ipswich branch of the Returned Soldiers and Sailors Imperial League of Australia (RSSILA) organises a bridge drive to raise funds for a Memorial Hall.**

The RSSILA (forerunner of the current RSL) was formed in 1916. Once formed, local branches often started to raise funds to get their own premises. Across the country, this led to an increase in bridge events as fundraisers.

Once the clubs or memorial halls had been built, they provided an accessible and affordable place for local bridge clubs. Often the RSSILA itself sponsored and organised the bridge club.

The reports do not specify the type of bridge played in these drives but it is likely that in this type of competition, original bridge survived for some years. Not enough people would know auction and the bidding process would add too much time.

1920

The Warwick and Ipswich returned soldiers clubs run bridge drives to raise funds to furnish their hall and club. The drives rely heavily on the effort of women associated with the clubs. A category of associate member was created specifically for participation in the drives.

1921

The first (fleeting) mention of contract bridge in a local newspaper, *The Queenslander*. This was followed by occasional articles over the next couple of years, mainly in country newspapers, but the game does not seem to have attracted interest on any significant scale. Bridge in Queensland for the next decade almost invariably means auction.



The Ipswich Memorial Hall —partly funded and furnished by bridge drives.

The network of returned soldiers' clubs, along with the Country Women's Association and the Schools of Art, was one of the major supporters of bridge and provider of venues right through to the 1960s.

Photos: Ipswich Libraries

Contract Bridge

One of the most persistent and widespread myths in bridge history is that Harold Vanderbilt invented contract bridge while on a cruise in 1925. Nobody at the time thought this and the view does not seem to appear until the early 1950s.

Contract bridge emerged during World War 1. The essential difference with auction was that one only scored for games if they were bid. The best documented claim of its invention gives the honour to British officials in India but it is likely that it was created by a number of people around the same time in different countries.

The first books in English on contract appeared just after the war and in Europe, contract in various forms, quickly overtook auction from around 1920. It had a brief vogue in Sydney between 1920 and 1922.

Contract was held back initially because of its perceived difficulty and the multiplicity of scoring systems and rules. Wilf Boyce, writing in 1927, said that contract had not taken off in 1920 because ordinary social players would stand no chance against skilled bidders—a major consideration when bridge was mainly played for money.

Vanderbilt's significant contribution to contract was the alternative system of scoring he developed, particularly the use of vulnerability (borrowed from an older French version of contract) and high bonuses for bidding slams, which eventually replaced other systems in use and promoted the standardization of contract.

1922

The first recorded inter-club auction bridge competition—two matches between the Warwick Soldiers Club and the Warwick Bowling Club.

Challenge matches of this kind became a feature of country bridge in the following decades. There were competitions between towns. In time, some larger centres developed regular competitions involving local institutions such as soldiers' clubs, bowling clubs and churches.

1923

The **first known advertisement in Queensland by a bridge teacher** offering lessons. We do not know her name or situation but the growing popularity of bridge, combined with the increased complexity of auction, provided a means of getting income that was often particularly important for middle class single women and widows with few other avenues of respectable work.



The opening of Warwick Bowling Club—participant in the first recorded inter-club contest. Bowling clubs were big drivers of bridge. Apart from anything else it was a useful source of income in the off-season.

Photo: Queensland State Library

1923

The papers reported that Mrs Gilbert Wilson has given a bridge party for sixty friends at the Bellevue Hotel, Brisbane. After the disruption of the war and the coming of auction, bridge parties were starting to revive and with some very influential backing.

“Mrs Gilbert Wilson”, formerly known as Emmeline Palmer, before her marriage to a Brisbane businessman, had been a superstar soprano of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

She was the third generation of the renowned Carrandini musical family. Both her mother and grandmother had been noted sopranos who toured widely in Australia. Originally based in in Melbourne, she moved to Brisbane in 1882.

A long-term bridge enthusiast from before the war, she was to give several large publicly reported bridge parties. In the mid-1930s, she was still active in bridge and a participant in QBA contract tournaments.



Emmeline Ida Wilson (date unknown).

When she retired from the stage, she turned to teaching and conducting performances by her students.

She was one of the major forces behind the organisation of concerts and other performances for various charities during the 1920s and 1930s.

Photo: Queensland State Library

1924

The first regularly scheduled bridge column appears in a Queensland newspaper—The *Longreach Leader*. Most papers had run occasional articles but this was the first to become a regular feature. The syndicated column ran fortnightly. The author was the English expert A E Manning Foster and was originally written for British audiences.

The first weekly bridge column was delivered by the *Townsville Daily Bulletin* at the beginning of 1925. The author this time, was another prominent English expert and player, Ernest Bergholt.

In the following decade, newspaper readers in the far North, would be much better supplied with information on international bridge trends, including contract bridge, than readers in the South, reflecting the vitality of the local bridge scene.

The first Australian to have a signed bridge column in Queensland was LJ Fox from Melbourne in 1922 but this was only printed on a few occasions. The preference was for well-known international names.



A E Manning Foster (1874 - 1939). Editor of the *Bridge Magazine*; card editor of *The Field*. Founder of the British Bridge League and author of numerous books.



Ernest Bergholt

1924

In Bundaberg, the local branch of the **Queensland Country Women's Association (QCWA)** organises a bridge and jazz evening attended by more than a hundred people—the first QCWA bridge event we can find.

The QCWA had been founded in 1922 and grew rapidly. Within a very short space of time, it became one of the major promoters of bridge, particularly in the country (although there was an active metropolitan branch).

To raise funds, as well as to provide a meeting point, local branches of the QCWA organised daytime bridge sessions for women. They were also one of the main organisers of regular evening bridge sessions for men and women.

As local branches acquired premises and spaces for women known as 'rest rooms', they were also often rented by local bridge clubs.



Bundaberg QCWA. CWA rooms were popular sites for daytime bridge and evening bridge clubs could be a good source of income at a time when the rooms would not otherwise be used.

1925

The Toowoomba Soldiers Club runs a successful multi-week auction bridge tournament. This may be the first such event in Queensland. Running a tournament over several weeks is indicative of a much greater commitment to the game by both players and organisers.

1926

The first reports of golf clubs holding bridge drives—the Ipswich and Maryborough clubs. For reasons that are not clear, golf clubs had lagged well behind bowling and croquet clubs in promoting bridge. It is possible that their more affluent membership made fund-raising less of an issue.

This was all to change, particularly in the 1930s. Many prominent bridge players, particularly in Brisbane, were also well-known in golf.

WFR Boyce was famous for having played full rounds on all Brisbane courses on the one day (with an hour to spare). Myrtle Macdonald, a long-time QBA player and state representative was also the long-term President of the Queensland Ladies Golf Association.



Myrtle Macdonald officiating at the Queensland Golf Championships. She was a QBA committee member and a member of the 1937 Queensland Women's Team, captained by her sister Ida.

Bridge in Newspapers and Radio

1927

W F R ("Wilf") Boyce, as 'Quart Major' begins a regular column in the Brisbane *Courier*. He noted that bridge was becoming more popular in the men's clubs and Tattersalls and the Johnsonian were both running events. He included an article on contract. He also suggested the creation of a club where there could be serious evening play.

The first bridge program is broadcast on Queensland radio – a lecture by Norman McCance from Melbourne.

Bridge columns by **Graham Kent** of Sydney was occasionally published in the Brisbane *Telegraph*.



The Amazing Mr Boyce

W F R Boyce (b 1878) was a bridge columnist for almost thirty years—first in the Brisbane *Courier* from January 1927 to August 1933, then the *Courier Mail* until May 1938 followed by the *Telegraph* continuing the weekly column until August 1941 and occasional articles in 1945. In October 1954 at the age of 86, he started a new weekly column in *Truth*. The pseudonym he used 'Quart Major' was the term used in whist for holding the AKQJ of a suit. In addition to his bridge columns, he wrote on golf weekly under the pseudonym of 'Plus'.

Boyce was a Brisbane solicitor but had spent his early career in the mining district of Charters Towers where he made and lost several fortunes speculating on leases. He would be a leading figure in Queensland bridge and an Australian par pairs championship winner. He was also famous as one of the great all-round sportsmen of his time and was at different times a champion cyclist, swimmer, gymnast, billiards player, boxer, rugby player and golfer. He was an influential background participant in Queensland politics and one of the founders of the Country Party. He was also an amateur inventor and published poetry.

Bridge Clubs

1927

The **Brisbane Ladies Bridge Club** is formed in February 1927, holding its first sessions at Vaughan's Café in the centre of Brisbane. Proceeds from table fees were to be allocated to charity.

The club would operate for almost thirty years and was the first of a new wave of charity bridge clubs in Brisbane from the 1930s to the 1950s. They would have some of the largest attendances and membership ever seen in Queensland up to the present day.

1928

This year sees the beginning of a surge in reports of bridge clubs in the country regions. In the far North, clubs were formed at Atherton and Beresford (with another club in the Cairns area, the Tolga Bridge Club forming in 1929).

A club for evening play was also formed in Ipswich. In line with the tradition of earlier whist clubs, it welcomed neither beginners or women as members.

1928

The Lyceum Club, the main gathering place for women in the professions and business, forms a bridge club within the club.



Dr Joyce Stobo, Lyceum Club member, was a leading Brisbane obstetrician and prominent figure in a wide range of charity work and women's professional and business organisations.

She would go on to be Vice-President of the important Sesame Bridge Club and a prominent organiser of bridge events in the early to mid-1930s.

1929

The **Brisbane Women's Club** forms a bridge 'circle' or club within the club. The Club had been formed in 1908, at the initiative of Margaret Ogg, who had founded the Queensland Women's Electoral League.

It was originally named the Women's Progressive Club with the purpose of 'providing a social centre for women workers in the cause of reform'.

In 1912 it adopted the less overtly political title of Brisbane Women's Club. The 1929 bridge club did not survive for long but the club continued to be an important centre of bridge events.

From 1937, the Brisbane Bridge Club became a sub-tenant at the club's premises at the Edwards & Co building in Adelaide Street, Petrie Bight; and it also became the location of the QBA from 1937 to 1943.

The Women's Club and the QBA left the building in 1943 when it was requisitioned for the army but the QBA returned in 1945.

1929

Tattersalls Club runs a weekly evening bridge competition for its members. For the first time for this men-only club, female guests are invited for a flag bridge evening.

It was reported to have been so successful that the experiment would be repeated—but it is not clear if this happened.

The Tattersalls club was originally for bookmakers who continued to use the club for settling up after race-meetings but attracted a broader membership interested in racing and other sports.

The men's clubs did not seem to take to bridge to the same extent as the women's. Simpler quicker games, such as solo whist, were preferred. Where played, bridge consisted mainly of short sessions before dinner.

The bridge club within Tattersalls and the associated competitions seem to have largely been driven by the energy and commitment of Wilf Boyce.



Tattersalls on settling day

In the next few years, he would broaden the activity to include an inter-club competition and he and some other members of Tattersalls, such as Otto Hirschfield and Frank Garnsey, would be major figures in the QBA.



Otto Hirschfield:

Prominent doctor and later Chancellor of the University of Queensland. Would later be a President of the QBA and several times Captain and member of the Queensland Open Team.



Frank Garnsey:

Advertising Manager, bridge columnist for the *Courier Mail*, President of the QBA and several times member of the Queensland Open Team.

Over the next decade the role of the men's clubs in the development of bridge, including Tattersalls, would be very minor.

Bridge would develop in different ways in different places, but, in terms of public interest and participation, the next few years would belong very much to the new wave of charity bridge clubs, discussed in the following section.