

Margaret Prentice – Nominee for Honorary Life Membership

To some a good friend, to many a competitive bridge partner and opponent, Margaret Prentice is respected by all at our Club as a long-standing Committee member who is dedicated to the successful operation and ongoing progress of Toowong Bridge Club.

She is indeed a professional volunteer and even before becoming an office bearer, Margaret began her volunteering efforts together with Diane Swan, monitoring and purchasing the office supplies.

In 2010, Margaret was elected to the Management Committee as Club Treasurer. It was a challenging year for the Committee and in particular for the Treasurer, as the 2011 Brisbane Floods brought major funding decisions through Club closure and clean up, rebuilding, reopening and recovery. Taking this opportunity to learn more about Club procedures and our members, Margaret continued as Treasurer for three years.

Then in 2014, Margaret was elected Club President. With even more to do, she took on an active role, being present at the Club on most days and over time, endeavoured to play at each session, so coming to know our members. She also became involved in all special occasions, coordinating our Melbourne Cup Pairs and Lunch, fundraisers such as Charity Day and of course our 50th Anniversary celebrations with the production of our Club history, *Tricks and Trumps*.

A good communicator, Margaret continued to edit our regular newsletter, endeavouring to keep everyone up to date with coming events, member profiles and members' bridge achievements. She initiated the use of Pianola as our membership database and along with our membership renewals, began to apply this for electronic dissemination of relevant bridge and Club news. Since then, use of this tool has been extended to publication of session results and finding partners.

As well, she took on the role of QBA delegate which kept her in touch with the broader bridge scene and encouraged our Club as host of the Queensland Youth Bridge Fun Day, the QBA Novice Teams of Three and an ABF Continuing Professional Development day for bridge teachers.

While she stood down as President in 2016, this was not the end of her volunteering. Margaret took on Membership Secretary, Provideore and in the last year, Walk-in Program Coordinator. Having introduced a structured education program, she is an active member of the education subcommittee, taking supervised play every Saturday morning, organising bridge workshops with visiting presenters as well as supporting our Club intermediate lessons. She is the rostered scorer for Tuesday morning sessions, has been kitchen convenor for congresses and can sometimes be seen working in the garden, very early on a weekend morning.

Margaret is a keen bridge player and has represented Toowong in the annual InterClub Teams and Zone GNOT Finals. She is a regular participant at the Gold Coast Congress and more recently at the Summer Festival of Bridge.

Margaret is the face of our Club to our paid workers. She liaises with our tea assistants, our cleaner, our garden service, ensuring that work arrangements are clear and that they have all required to perform their tasks effectively. When needed, it's Margaret who contacts and often meets with our service providers, the plumber, the printer and just now the NBN. And this service applies to our members too. Requests to buy some coupons, borrow a library book, or order a name badge, are met with on-the-spot attention and action.

Recognised for finding the right volunteer for our many jobs, a new banker or someone to care for the book table, Margaret willingly shares her knowledge of Club activities. She assists other volunteers, welcomes new members and encourages novices and improving players. For many years, this Club and our members have become a substantial part of her life and Margaret has contributed her time, energy and skills to keep it a great place to play.

This supports the Management Committee's recommendation to award Honorary Life Membership to Margaret Prentice.