

History of Unit 524

The first duplicate bridge game for Unit 524 was started by Mary Ross on September 15, 1955 In Hollister, CA. The unit was formed with officers and a Board. The job of game directing belonged for 1 year ex-officio to the Unit President, with all profit going into the Unit Treasury. On May 3, 1961 Florence Lydon started her own game on Wednesday afternoon at Dunne Park Club house. She owned this game until 1978.

There have been several club owners since 1978. Norma Black had a Wednesday game in Hollister. She eventually branched out to Gilroy and Morgan Hill creating the Monday night game and the Thursday game. After several years she sold the Monday and Thursday game to Dr. Jim Harper.

Jim Harper had these game until 2001. At this time he was retiring and moving so he wanted to sell the two clubs. He could not find a buyer so instead of closing the games he checked with ACBL Headquarters to see if they could be turned over to the Unit 524. Because Unit 524 is such a small Unit in comparison to other ACBL Units they decided to grant the non profit status games to Unit 524 in the interest of keeping bridge alive in South County. With the help of ACBL Headquarters and Harvey Brody, the Board Treasurer for District 21, these games were granted as non- profit. Thanks to Jim Harper this was a huge gift to our Unit.

The Unit is allowed to collect money for these games and deposit it into the Units bank account. At the end of the year the Unit must send Harvey Brody at recap of our income so he can incorporated this into District 21 filing of the Income Tax reported to the IRS.

In 2010 there was a thorough audit done by the IRS of District 21. The President Diana Dragt and Treasure Patty Stone had to compile all the financial information for 3 years. It was a time consuming task. With the help of Stu Goodgold District 21 President at that time we were able to provide all the necessary information and met all the IRS requirements. Before the Unit became non-profit, the average of the bank account balance was around \$500.00.

The Unit did not have a Sectional until Ron Dragt became President of the Unit. The previous boards did not think we could afford to have a Sectional in case it lost money. There was not enough money in the bank to cover any losses. The first Sectional was held at Gavilan College and fortunately did not lose money. We have had a Sectional every year since then. It is a requirement by ACBL that every Unit has at least one Sectional a year.

THE HISTORY OF DUPLICATE BRIDGE IN HOLLISTER

AS PAST MINUTES AND RECORDS FOR THE HOLLISTER DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB HAVE BEEN LOST, THIS IS THE HISTORY AS FLORENCE LYDON AND MARY ROSS REMEMBER IT:

MARY ROSS PUT ON A SERIES OF CONTRACT BRIDGE LESSONS TO BENEFIT THE SACRED HEART MOTHERS' CLUB AND AN EXTRA LAST SESSION WAS A DUPLICATE BRIDGE GAME. MANY WERE VITALLY INTERESTED AND SHE STARTED DUPLICATE ON THURSDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 15, 1955, IN THE RAINBOW ROOM (RESTAURANT) OF THE DABO HOTEL, FRANCHISED BY THE AMERICAN CONTRACT BRIDGE LEAGUE. AS REMEMBERED, WE HAD AN UNEXPECTED 8 TABLES, AND ABOUT THE SAME ATTENDANCE THE NEXT THURSDAY NIGHT. THE HOTEL MANAGEMENT WAS UNHAPPY WITH THE COFFEE AND FOOD PROFIT, AND THE ROOM PROVED TO BE CROWDED FOR THAT AMOUNT OF PEOPLE PLAYING CARDS. MARY WENT TO THE VETERANS MEMORIAL BUILDING COMMISSION AND PERSUADED THEM TO LET US HAVE THE ANNEX AT NO COST EACH THURSDAY EVENING.

WITH THE MOVE TO THE ANNEX, CARD TABLES WERE QUICKLY NEEDED. MARY WAS DONATING THE USE OF HER BOARDS AND EQUIPMENT. A GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS OR COUPLES DONATED \$10 EACH FOR THE PURCHASE OF 10 CARD TABLES, OF WHICH 7 ARE STILL IN EXISTENCE—SMALL, BUT USABLE. THESE ARE SOME OF THOSE DONORS: THE ROSSES, THE LYDONS, MABLE HYMAN, THE TALBOTS, THE OVERFELTS, HELEN SHELDON, THE NC NAMARAS AND THE SHEARERS.

AS THE FIRST DIRECTOR, MARY ROSS KEPT NONE OF THE INCOME, BUT USED IT TO BUY CARDS AND A SET OF BOARDS. WITHIN A YEAR THE CARD TABLE LOANS WERE ALSO PAID OFF.

OF COURSE THERE WAS A UNIT ORGANIZATION WITH OFFICERS AND A BOARD, AND THE JOB OF GAME DIRECTING BELONGED FOR ONE YEAR EX-OFFICIO TO THE UNIT PRESIDENT, WITH ALL PROFIT GOING INTO THE UNIT TREASURY. THOSE VOLUNTEER DIRECTORS INCLUDED MARY ROSS, FLORENCE LYDON, ILA OVERFELT, JEAN SHEARER, HAL TENNEY, HAROLD OVERFELT AND ROY SHEARER. WHEN THE LIST OF WILLING CANDIDATES WAS EXHAUSTED, MARY TOOK OVER THE OWNERSHIP OF THE GAME. THE CURRENT DIRECTOR MADE OUT RATING POINT AWARDS AND TOOK CARE OF THE PUBLICITY, BUT THERE IS NO RECOLLECTION OF DOING THE MANY REPORTS THAT ARE NOW REQUIRED.

AT THIS TIME OURS WAS THE ONLY DUPLICATE GAME IN THE AREA UNLESS ONE TRAVELED TO LOS GATOS OR SAN JOSE. WE OFTEN HAD PLAYERS FROM MONTEREY AND WATSONVILLE, BESIDES OUR OWN PLAYING AREA. FOR SEVERAL YEARS MORGAN HILL HAD A BI-WEEKLY GAME IN THE FRIENDLY INN, OWNED AND RUN BY MRS. LINDSTROM, UNTIL ILL HEALTH FORCED HER TO CLOSE THE GAME.

ONE THURSDAY DURING FLORENCE LYDON'S DIRECTING TERM, A TEAM-OF-FOUR EVENT WAS WIDELY PUBLICIZED (WITH MARY'S EXPERT ADVICE AND

ASSISTANCE, AS ALWAYS) AND WE HAD 15 TABLES, INCLUDING THE LATE RUSSELL LAMBERT AND HIS WIFE, ALICE. FLORENCE SAYS, "I MENTION RUSSELL BECAUSE I BEGAN TO PANIC THAT NIGHT, WITH SO MANY PEOPLE, NEEDING MORE TABLES AND BOARDS, AND HE WISELY TOLD ME TO KEEP COOL AND IT WOULD WORK OUT—AND SO IT DID!"

PLAYING IN THE VETERANS BUILDING ANNEX HAD ITS PROBLEMS—A CONFLICT WHEN THE BLOOD BANK WAS IN TOWN, THE EXTREMES OF HOT OR COLD WEATHER, OUR CARS BEING FLOODED ON VERY RAINY NIGHT, LOUD ROCK BANDS PRACTICING IN THE MAIN HALL, THE DANCING CLASS STAYING LATE, AND ALWAYS—WOULD THE CUSTODIAN TO BE ON TIME TO OPEN THE DOOR? OFTEN NOT, BUT WE MANAGED, AS EVERYONE HELPED.

OUR BETWEEN GAMES ROUTINE WITH THE BRIDGE SCORE IS WORTHY OF NOTE: EACH TRAVELING SCORE HAD A HAND RECORD, WHICH WAS FILLED IN DURING THE FIRST ROUND THE NORTH PLAYER, AFTER EACH HAND WAS PLAYED. AFTER THE DIRECTOR CHECKED THE MATCHPOINTING AND ADDITION, THE SCORES WERE PLACED IN THE COUNTY LIBRARY ON FRIDAY MORNING. FLORENCE AND GERALD MC NAMARA PICKED THEM UP BEFORE 5 ON FRIDAY AND TOOK THEM HOME TO LOOK AT. THEY DELIVERED THEM TO MARY ROSS ON SATURDAY, AND THEY WERE AVAILABLE THERE UNTIL MONDAY MORNING, WHEN THEY WERE RETURNED TO THE LIBRARY. LIBRARIANS REPORTED THAT THE SCORES WERE CONSULTED BY AS MANY AS 10 PEOPLE, AND MARY ALWAYS HAD MANY VISITS.

OUR ATTENDANCE CONTINUED TO BE GOOD AND IT WAS DECIDED THAT WE WOULD MOVE THE GAME TO THE HOLLISTER WOMENS' CLUB BUILDING, WHERE RENT WAS \$30 A MONTH. OF COURSE THIS WAS MUCH NICER, WITH EASIER PARKING AND STORAGE FOR OUR CARD TABLES AND EQUIPMENT. SOON A FRIDAY NIGHT GAME WAS STARTED IN MONTEREY, THEN PAUL MOSER BEGAN HAVING A TUESDAY NIGHT DUPLICATE SESSION IN WATSONVILLE. GRADUALLY THE OUT-OF-TOWN ATTENDANCE DROPPED AND WE WERE STRUGGLING TO MAKE THE RENT AND EXPENSES. AND TUESDAY NIGHT DUPLICATE WAS HALTED IN 1962.

IN 1961 MARY ROSS STARTED A WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON NOVICE GAME, WITH A LESSON PRECEDING PLAY, TO BENEFIT (AND LOCATED AT) THE HOLLISTER WOMENS' CLUB. SMALL ATTENDANCE LED TO AN EARLY DISCONTINUANCE. AND LATER FLORENCE LYDON DECIDE TO TRY A WEEKLY GAME ON WEDNESDAY AFTERNOONS, THE FIRST OF WHICH WAS ON MAY 3, 1961, AT THE DUNNE PARK CLUBHOUSE, WHICH WAS AND REMAINS RENT-FREE. AT THIS TIME THE UNIT BOUGHT A SECOND SET OF BOARDS FOR USE AT THE WEDNESDAY GAME. THIS DUPLICATE SESSION HAS BEEN CONTINUOUS, AND ON JANUARY 1, 1978, WAS GIVEN TO DALE SOULE, FLORENCE HAVING OWNED AND DIRECTED IT FOR 16 YEARS AND 7 MONTHS.

NOTHING LIKE JUMPING IN WITH BOTH FEET—FLORENCE DECIDED TO START UP THURSDAY NIGHT AGAIN, LOCATED IN THE I.O.O.F. BUILDING IN GILROY, ON AUGUST 1, 1963. SOME THURSDAYS WE HAD GOOD ATTENDANCE, BUT EXPENSES PROVED TO BE TOO HIGH, WITH RENT AT \$35 A MONTH. IN

NOVEMBER, 1964, THE GAME WAS MOVED BACK TO THE VETERANS BUILDING ANNEX IN HOLLISTER, BUT NOT WITHOUT SOME BATTLES WITH THE COMMISSION ON REMAINING RENT-FREE.

IN JANUARY, 1967, THE TURSDAY GAME WAS MOVED BACK TO GILROY, MEETING IN A SIDE ROOM OF THE WHEELER AUDITORIUM, WITH FLORENCE WATSON AS DIRECTOR.

IN JANUARY, 1968, THE TURSDAY GAME WAS MOVED TO THE GAVILAN COLLEGE FACULTY LOUNGE (RENT FREE, AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE) WITH "JIMMY" KASKO, OF SAN JOSE, AS DIRECTOR. SHE SUDDENLY MOVED AWAY IN AUGUST, AND HUGH GAILEY AND CAL SCHLESINGER WERE CO-DIRECTORS. THEN CAL TOOK OVER THE DIRECTING BY HIMSELF, AND ALSO HAD A MONDAY NIGHT GAME IN MORGAN HILL, MEETING AT THE HIGH SCHOOL. FOR BUSINESS REASONS CAL HAD TO QUIT, AND FLORENCE LYDON RAN THE GAME AT GAVILAN FROM AUGUST 1972 UNTIL JUNE OF 1974.

BILL MC INTOSH TOOK OVER THE OWNERSHIP AND DIRECTING OF THURSDAY GAMES IN JULY 1974 AND SOON MOVED THE GAME TO THE MONTEREY SAVINGS AND LOAN BUILDING, FLORENCE PINCH-HITTING WHEN BILL'S BUSINESS TOOK HIM OUT OF TOWN. FOR LACK OF ATTENDANCE, BILL CLOSED THE GAME IN OCTOBER 1975.

ON FEBRUARY 12, 1976, FLORENCE STARTED THE TURSDAY GAME AGAIN, IN HOLLISTER AT THE RANCHO SAN JUSTO SCHOOL LIBRARY. UNDER SPONSORSHIP OF THE HOLLISTER CITY RECREATION DEPARTMENT, AND UNTIL JUNE 1977, PAYING THEM 10% OF GROSS PROFIT. THIS ARRANGEMENT WAS CANCELLED, AS SUSAN BROWN, H.C.R.D. DIRECTOR, FELT THAT HER DEPARTMENT WAS NOT ABLE TO HELP US IN ATTENDANCE OR PROMOTION.

ON JANUARY 1, 1978, THE OWNERSHIP AND DIRECTORSHIP OF THE TURSDAY DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB WAS GIVEN TO DALE SOULE. FLORENCE LYDON OWNED THE THURSDAY GAME ALL BUT ONE YEAR SINCE 1963, AND WAS ITS DIRECTOR FOR A TOTAL OF 10 YEARS.

WITH THE TURNOVER OF THE TWO GAMES TO DALE SOULE, FLORENCE LYDON DONATED TO THE HOLLISTER UNIT #524 ALL THE PERMANENT DUPLICATE EQUIPMENT THAT SHE PURCHASED OVER THE YEARS—IN APPRECIATION TO THE UNIT FOR THE USE OF ITS BOARDS AND CARDS ALL THESE YEARS. IN THIS WAY, ALL PERMANENT DUPLICATE SUPPLIES ARE OWNED BY THE UNIT.

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