

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

The last couple of months have seen several events of note. Our financial position has become so healthy that Treasurer Genelle declared Scrabble night would be free (except to cover tea/coffee) so that's a real incentive to come along and enjoy an evening of fun and games throughout 2018.

The Club was honoured by the visits of several players who aren't regulars at the Club: Lexie Neale from Bomaderry, Collen and Richard Birch from the Central Coast and Glenn from Canada. Rocky Sharma made a couple of appearances as well. One evening, there were no fewer than 16 players who attended. Always good to see the enthusiasm for Scrabble exists far and wide.

Robin Duncan has been unwell in the last couple of weeks but is making a steady recovery in Westmead Hospital. We wish him all the best in his recuperation.

I am negotiating at the moment to see if we can get a room at Parramatta RSL for our annual tournament in August. If not, we can certainly return to the old stomping ground at Baulkham Hills Community Centre.

Keep enjoying Tuesday nights at the Club!

Chris

**SOUTH COAST SCRABBLING by Lexie Neale**

Some time ago Chris invited me to contribute to your newsletter and I have been rather lax in responding.

However, I will now make amends and let you know that Scrabble is alive and well in Bomaderry, as I'm sure Diana and Gerard will agree. We were delighted to have them call in for a few games when they were holidaying in our beautiful part of the world.

We recently held our annual presentations with every member receiving a certificate noting their game and word averages and highlights for the previous year.

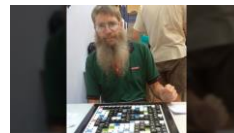


This year the perpetual trophy went to Greg Hopson in honour of his high game of 642. This is the highest score in the history of both Bomaderry and Nowra clubs. Greg celebrated on presentation day with a high word of 212, just a bit short of the record of 230. He proved a worthy winner and has vowed to put the trophy on prominent display!

Our annual tournament in February was very successful with a record 44 players competing. Graeme Lock Lee caused somewhat of an upset, beating Joanne Craig and Bob Jackman to the line in Division A. Congratulations also to Rene Chelton, Rhona Kenyon and Kara Eddington who won their respective divisions. *(Editor's note: I have edited Lexie's report here. While the event was very successful, I will always remember it as the second time I have lost all eight games in a tournament. A very humbling experience!)*

Bomaderry Scrabblers play on Wednesdays and Nowra Club on Saturdays, both at the Bomaderry Bowling Club. Visitors are always welcome on these days.

**SCRABBLE SNIPPETS**



- Nigel Richards of New Zealand is recognized as the greatest Scrabble player of all time. He has won the World Title three times.



- Esther Perrins of NSW, currently No. 3 in NSW and acknowledged as the world's best female player, is the only woman who has been placed in the top ten in any World Titles. She came 3<sup>rd</sup> in 2016.
- The USA is the only country that does not use the Collins CSW English dictionary in competitions. They use their own version.

## 2018 NATIONAL TITLES CANBERRA by Chris

Approximately 150 enthusiastic Scrabblers descended on Canberra at Easter to participate in this year's Australian National Championships. Efficiently run by John Hamilton with the support of a hard-working team, the event proved to be very successful, with many stories of outstanding plays, near misses and the obligatory reasons why we could all have done a little better.



After many changes at the top during the three days of competition, NSW's highest-rated player Ed Okulicz held off the impressive competition to claim the major prize. Ed last won the title in 2001 and his follow-up success in 2018 was a reflection of his consistency during his Scrabble career. A truly worthy champion!



Kempsey Scrabble aficionado Don Hadley won the plate event from fast-finishing Ronnie Bennett from Canberra. Don's dedication to the game can be seen in the Scrabble Word Guide which graces our tables weekly. Well done!

There were some excellent efforts, including our Club's ex-President, Richard Birch, who had a sensational first day and local NSW player Jyoti Chandna, who gained 92 rating points. As a side note, Jyoti, who plays at Waitara, achieved the incredible score of 340 for one word recently at her club. It was a triple-triple (of course) for the word DITZIEST, with the Z on a double word square. Awesome!

As for me, I had many near misses and I had lots of reasons why I could have done a little better. Nevertheless, I managed a couple of upset wins and gained quite a few ratings points. Incidentally, don't ever play BOTOX. I did and scored 64 points but my opponent didn't challenge. He should have. The word is not acceptable, although BOTOXED is fine. A strange world is this Scrabble game.

## CHRISTMAS CAPERS by Glenn

*Christmas is generally a time for relaxing but not for our resident Thespian/Masterchef/regular contributor to this newsletter, Glenn Levett. Here is a taste of the eclectic experiences he had after Christmas.*



My daughter decided that Christmas Day would be at her place in Darlinghurst for both families. A little trepidation, as it has been at Kings Langley for about 15 years. But it was fabulous.....no rush for people to leave and visit the other family, relaxed meal, pleasant present unwrapping, time for granddaughter, only had to cook Christmas pudding and made white chocolate/raspberry ice cream and stewed peaches (great with Christmas pudding!!!!)



Just after Christmas I went on a whirlwind trip north: two nights in Gunnedah (friend's 70th birthday). On my way to Nambucca Heads for third night and New Year went through Tamworth (saw the Golden Guitar), Uralla (Captain Thunderbolt's grave), Armidale, Dorigo (fly capital of Australia), Bellingen (searching for a play prop), Raleigh (found the prop I wanted and bargained the price down).

Fourth night in Port Macquarie: had lunch with two teacher friends from Waverley PS who moved up here (one to work and one to retire). Rather disappointing lunch: very little flavour, small servings, and a Panna cotta that had to stay in the container or it would have slopped all over the plate.

Had the fifth night at home then off to Helensburgh for a film shoot, then next day off to Central Coast to finish the film.

*More on Glenn on the next page.*

## GLENN ON GOOGLE

*We all know that Glenn is multi-talented but in searching for a photo to include in this edition, I came across some truly remarkable bits of information. Sorry for stalking you, Glenn!*



Glenn has recently advised us that he is breaking into the world of writing plays as well as acting in them. I thought this might be an opportunity to look into his portfolio in Google and it was impressive to say the least. I found that Glenn had been a school principal before venturing into the world of film and theatre. His long list of credits reveals the true extent of his talent. Certainly a very full life!

Have a look at <https://www.starnow.com/glennlevett>. Even Glenn did not know that website existed. Ladies be warned: the beach photo might set your heart a-racing!

## TRAVEL TIME by Chris

My wonderful wife Kris and I have recently been fortunate enough to find time to get away to a couple of different places in Australia for a holiday.

In late January, we had a week in Adelaide, taking in the picturesque Adelaide Hills, being entranced in particular, by the small town of Hahndorf. The German Lutheran heritage can be sensed at every turn, with the cuisine (and accompanying aromas) capturing the essence of Bavarian cooking. The nearby Mt Lofty House was also a majestic feature of the area.

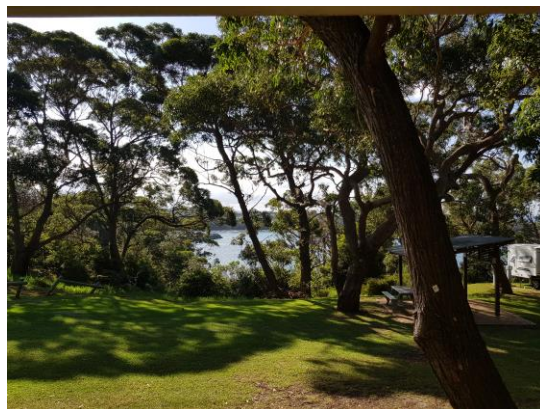


Adelaide was beautifully relaxing except for one thing: the 44° heat! Indoor activities such as going to the movies or diving into the pool where we stayed were absolute priorities. Despite that, the Tour Downunder (the bicycle race) went ahead. How the riders managed to cycle in that heat day after day was quite unbelievable!



Naturally, shopping was on the agenda and the markets in Adelaide provided a wide range of attractions for the girls (we went with another couple) while the men traipsed dutifully behind, as it should be.

For a change of scenery and a great lowering in temperature, a week in Ulladulla was a perfect getaway a couple of weeks ago. We hired a cabin for the week and put all the turmoil of the world behind us for a while.



The view from the cabin (above) was magical, although most of the time, I (once again) dutifully followed Kris down to the jetty where I studied my word lists while Kris displayed remarkable determination in fishing each day. Despite her best efforts, she was only successful once with a kind-hearted bream that took pity on her and made the supreme sacrifice. It was delicious, I must say.

While on the subject of food (seems to be a pre-occupation of mine), don't visit Ulladulla without buying a Hayden's pie, on the main road on the southern side of the town. It's an absolute highlight of the trip.

## A MILESTONE TO REMEMBER

There are many tournament players who play two or three thousand tournament games throughout their career. But when someone reaches 7000, that is an achievement indeed. The first Australian player to do this is NSW player John Barker (pictured) who reached this amazing milestone in the recent tournament at Newtown.



At the National Championships (the next tournament after Newtown), John was presented with the wonderful memento of a special book filled with photos and good wishes from countless members of the Scrabble fraternity (and sorority as well, of course). Graeme Lock Lee and George Khamis presented John with the book at the Presentation Dinner and also sang a song in honour of John to the tune of The Beverly Hillbillies. Graeme wrote the lyrics and played his now-famous ukulele for the gathered crowd. To say John was pleasantly surprised is an understatement.

While 7000 might seem a huge amount of games, the truth is that internationally, John has played a further 2000 games: a mind-boggling 9000 in total. Well done to him!

## OLDEST SCRABBLE BOARD

We are used to a wide range of Scrabble boards, often in a variety of colours, but the original board designed by Alfred Butts was not quite that colourful. Still, the design is clear to all who have played Scrabble.



This board resides in the American Toy Hall of Fame.

## A FEW FIRSTS

Just for fun, here are the first seven-letter words in the Scrabble dictionary that start with the various letters of the alphabet.

**AARRGHH**  
**BAAINGS**  
**CABALAS**  
**DABBERS**  
**EAGERER**  
**FABBEST**  
**GABBARD**  
**HABDABS**  
**IAMBICS**  
**JABBERS**  
**KABADDI**  
**LAAGERS**  
**MAATJES**  
**NAARTJE**  
**OAKIEST**  
**PABLUMS**  
**QABALAH**  
**RABANNA**  
**SABATON**  
**TABANID**  
**UAKARIS**  
**VACANCE**  
**WABAINS**  
**XANTHAM**  
**YABBERS**  
**ZABETAS**

Good luck in learning this challenging list.

## TOURNAMENT PLAY

Most of our players play the game simply for enjoyment but remember there are many tournaments in Sydney and the surrounding districts that provide an opportunity for learning new words and meeting others in the Scrabble world.

All players in the Baulkham Hills Club are paid-up members of Scrabble NSW so you never have to pay the \$10 surcharge for non-members at any competition.

If you want to consider playing a tournament or two to get a taste of what's involved, there's one on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> May being run by ex-President Richard Birch. Further details are at <http://nsw.scrabble.org.au/flyers/LakeMac2018.pdf>

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