

“There are a lot of indirect health benefits just from sitting around a table meeting some new people and playing a game of cards”

Play your cards right and Bridge is a winner

By LIZZIE STIPCEVIC

THERE is one club in Port Macquarie whose members are certainly playing their cards right.

The Port Macquarie-Hastings Bridge Club is holding an Open Day on April 21 for the public to see the benefits of playing Bridge.

And what better way to make new friendships and keep those brain cells working than playing the world's most popular card game.

“It's an opportunity for people to come and see what the clubhouse is all about,” said Ian Peterson, publicity officer for the Port Macquarie-Hastings Bridge Club.

“It's an important thing in a town like Port Macquarie where our average age is about 10



Playing Bridge is not only an excellent way to meet new people, but also helps keep the brain and memory sharp

“You don't have to have any particular skill set, you don't even have to know how to shuffle a pack of cards, they will teach you that too.

“Everything is based on initial instruction and the principles of Bridge and then we practice card play. You learn a lesson on any particular day but you also put it into practice

It's an important thing in a town like Port Macquarie where our average age is about 10 years older than NSW as a whole. As people tend to get older, a lot of the more active sports like lawn bowls and golfing become easy to drop out of and so does the social network that went with it.

"Bridge gives you an option. You've always got people and Bridge is a partnership game, you are always playing in a group of four people. You have a partner and you are playing against two other people. It just helps build relationships. You meet a lot of different people and personalities and it's a pretty good way to spend four hours having a good time."

Ian has been involved in the club since 2010 and says the health benefits from the game are just as important.

"There are a lot of health benefits to playing Bridge that tie into an ageing demographic," Ian explains.

"So many people aged 50-plus are concerned about the future in terms of dementia. Bridge is no magic bullet, but it does mean that you are thinking a lot, concentrating a lot, and what tends to happen is you keep your brain and memory sharp. There have been studies

done that show that if you keep mentally active you tend to sleep better at night, worry less and depression and melancholy are less of an issue. So there are a lot of indirect health benefits just from sitting around a table meeting some new people and playing a game of cards."



done that show that if you keep mentally active you tend to sleep better at night, worry less and depression and melancholy are less of an issue. So there are a lot of indirect health benefits just from sitting around a table meeting some new people and playing a game of cards."

With just under 300 members in the Bridge Club, there are people from all ages and all card-skill sets.

"They can come in if they like, absolutely cold, not know anything about it, even playing cards," assures Ian.

and the principles of Bridge and then we practice card play. You learn a lesson on any particular day but you also put it into practice with sample hands."

The facility is air conditioned and holds up to 200 players during the club championships.

"There will also be some demonstration play on the day and the people giving the lessons will give a rundown on what's involved, how long the lessons go for and any questions people have," said Ian.

"We play six days a week and you can pick and choose when you want to play. There are specific sessions for newer players or experienced players so you won't come up against someone who will whip your tail every week."

Come and check out the fun with the Port Macquarie-Hastings Bridge Club on Friday, April 21 from 11:30am at Hamilton Green, 176 Hastings River Drive. Learn about the fundamentals of Bridge and consider signing up for the New Player Lesson Program starting 9.00am on Friday, April 28 and continuing for 10 weeks.

For more information visit <http://pmhbridge.com.au>



SUMMER CLOTHING SALE

*half price
all summer clothes*

Tuesday April 18 to
Saturday April 22

PORT MACQUARIE
Lifeline Shops

122 Gordon Street
19 Central Street

 LifelineShop