

Good afternoon. I'm Mike Holdaway, current President of the Ashburton bridge club, a place where Jan spent many happy hours.

Jan was involved with the club for a very long time, and by my estimation would have attended the club rooms between 120 to 150 days a year for the many years she played... probably more if allowance is made for her time on the committee and being a convenor.

There is some doubt about when Jan started playing at our club, but the consensus seems to be at least 40 years ago.

Since that time, Jan has served as President of the club for two terms of two years, as well as serving on the committee for many years in various roles.

She was a long serving convenor, an important role where names of players wishing to play on a night are collated. Jan seemed to enjoy this role, getting to pair up players who were looking for a partner to play with, and having the opportunity to have a wee natter as well. She did not approve of players turning up without letting her know they were coming, especially if they were the current President. I only made that error once!

When I was learning, Jan would turn up to assist, and she was wonderfully encouraging and supportive of new players, something all new bridge players need, to get to grips with the game.

I'll repeat a story I told about Jan at the club the other night. Soon after lessons, my beginner partner and I were playing and got a very good result against Jan and her partner. While a lot of senior players may have been somewhat miffed at having to accept a bad result against a pair of newcomers, Jan was genuinely thrilled to bits for us and entirely encouraging.

A wee quirk of Jans that some of you may have noticed, is that if she made an error in play, she would say to her partner, sorry about that chief! Now the only other person I can remember saying that was my late father. My guess is that this iconic line comes from the TV show Get Smart, when agent 86 Maxwell Smart would apologise to his long-suffering boss, the chief! You need to be a certain age to remember any of this!

We will all miss Jan at the club, always resplendent in her lovely bright colours complimenting her friendly smile and disposition.

Thankyou for the opportunity to speak today. 15 October, 2025