



# Five Minutes With...

## **Colin Twelftree**



Colin is a long-standing and active member of our club. He is dedicated to his bridge, makes a great contribution to the Management Committee and oversees the bar at Unley.

Colin was born and educated in Adelaide. He studied Dentistry in the Dental Faculty of the University of Adelaide. Colin tells us that a shirt and tie was standard dress at the Dental School while attendance was from 8.30am till 5pm Monday to Friday during the 1960s.

After qualifying, Colin did two years National Service, serving as a Dental Officer in Vietnam, working as a general dentist. He had married Jude in his final year at Uni and she remained in Adelaide while Colin served overseas

Like many others, Colin's bridge interests started in his family. His parents played contract bridge. He learned to play socially as a teenager and honed his skills in the one-hour lunch break in the Dental School's common room.

Colin and Jude headed to London from 1969 to 1971 where Colin practiced dentistry. Jude's hairdresser's husband, Jonathon, was looking for a bridge partner at the time; Colin was happy to oblige and they joined the London Bridge Club. This led to invitations to make up a four for bridge at the weekend in beauty spots outside London. With a wry grin: 'We were in great demand in stately homes in Surrey,' he said.

After his time in London, Colin and Jude joined a tour across Europe in a clapped-out bus, heading in the general direction of Australia. He has interesting stories to tell about that trip, including the bus regularly breaking down. He and three mates would grab



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one of the spare tyres and use it as a card table for some hands of bridge! Colin was not at all fazed by the frequent delays! Eventually they flew back to Australia from Calcutta.

Some years later he nearly made it to Everest Base Camp. He recalls three climbers arriving at the airbase at Lukla, Nepal where many were stranded and bored. One called out, 'Is there a bridge player here?' Colin was yet again delighted to oblige.

When Colin returned to Adelaide he studied orthodontics. This led to him practising in the field, locally, nationally and internationally. Jude and he resided in Unley and joined the SA Bridge Association soon after it was established at its new Unley headquarters in 1973.

Colin learned the Schenken bridge bidding system with its strong one club opening; subsequently, when he started playing with Jim Burke, Colin's long term bridge partner and good mate, they learned the Precision system.

Thinking back, Colin recalls Monday evenings when competition was highly competitive. 'It was quite intimidating and there was no talking,' he said.

Colin enjoys bridge as a mind sport and always expects to improve his game. 'You meet some interesting people,' he said.

He likes to play twice per week and has competed at and enjoyed GNOT, the Barossa and Gold Coast Congresses.

As a member of the Management Committee, Colin, along with Jude, has often taken leadership in planning social functions, including the SA Bridge Assoc 90th Anniversary dinner. For several years Colin and Jude organised delicious refreshments for Pleasant Sundays.

In 2021, Colin took responsibility for setting up the bar at Unley which he continues to manage. The bar enhances the social life of the club and brings in revenue. It has been very successful on both counts.



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Colin is a family man who enjoys time with his family, his children, grandchildren and in-laws. Additionally, he has a range of interests and groups he belongs to. These include his bush walking group, cycling group, golf club, book club and lunch group. Needless to say, he has a wide circle of friends.

Colin has a long-standing commitment to supporting Legacy. He is a Section Leader and he coordinates various activities. In 2014 Colin was awarded the OAM and in 2024 the AM. These honours recognise his aid work in Vietnam and his far-reaching work in orthodontic education in Australia, NZ, PNG, SE Asia, Israel, Russia and the USA.

We thank Colin for his significant contribution to our club and recognise his broader role in making this world a better place.