Mrs Ellen (Nell) Foley, Tramore

Nell’s Bridge Work Record

Nell started playing bridge in Portlaoise Bridge Club with her husband Conor in September 1965, (they won gross on their first night), having learned the game over their summer holidays in Kilkee. Their good friend Pat McMahon from Tipperary town taught Conor, on days that were too wet to play golf, and wrote out the bidding on empty cigarette boxes. Conor then taught Nell the rudimentary bidding but had no need to teach her the play. She was an experienced card player who had been roped in from a young age to play 20s in her home in Donegal.

They became very enthusiastic bridge players having devoured George Ryan’s *Bones of Bridge* along with any other bridge book they could find.

They started a bridge club in Abbeyleix in 1966. Abbeyleix now has three clubs.

Nell was elected to represent the South Midland Region on the National Executive of the CBAI in 1968. Conor was elected as Regional Secretary at the same meeting. Nell took over as Regional Treasurer shortly afterwards and spent the next 8 years in that role.

Nell gave lessons in Rathdowney and Durrow and started clubs there.

In 1976 she was delighted to be elected by the South Midland Region to represent them as CBAI President for 1977/78. She had a great year travelling all over the country and playing with lots of friends she met over the previous years. She served on the IBU council for 1978/79.

Nell acted as regional representative on CBAI Intermediate / Novice subcommittee. Here she acted as Secretary and Chairperson. She was also a member of the Finance subcommittee along with Michael Lynch and Paul Porteous.

Conor and Nell moved to Longford in 1981 and immediately became involved in the North Western region. She became Honorary Secretary of that region in 1983. They left Longford in 1987 and moved to Tramore which now had them back in their South Midland Region. Nell remained on the Finance subcommittee and also on the National Executive.

When the new South Eastern region was set up she became a member of that committee. She acted as Regional Chairperson for some years in the mid-90s.

Nell continued to play competitive bridge being a member of both Tramore and Tramore 73 clubs and Waterford Bridge club. In the early years of the new century she found a new partner Dr. David Ko and they were both competitive and willing to play anywhere. Nell actually overcame her fear of flying, on her own, to go to Brighton to partner David on two occasions.

She continued to encourage new players and Conor and herself ran Thursday afternoon sessions in Tramore for players who wished to improve.

She eventually was happy to play with her two eldest daughters and encouraged them to improve and learn new things. She had a huge interest in all aspects of the game and would discuss the bridge hand from the daily paper with anyone. She became very interested in playing on her iPad but spent hours giving out about the stupid robot partner who would never lead her suit or play the way she wanted.

Having being diagnosed with a serious lung disease last autumn she was on 24 hour oxygen and reluctant to leave her house. But for anyone who visited her bridge was always part of the chat.