

**CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION of IRELAND**

# Newsletter

**September 2023**

**22nd Edition (Digital)**



***Ireland's Bermuda Bowl Team (left to right): Adam Mesbur, Mark Moran, John Carroll, Tommy Garvey, Nick FitzGibbon (Coach), Hugh McGann, Tom Hanlon and Grainne Barton (Inset) NPC.***





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## CBAI National President's Welcome

*I am greatly looking forward to my year as National President. It has been a long time since the regional meeting at which I was chosen as the nomination from North Munster. It has given me time to observe Pat O'Mahony and see our members' very positive reaction to his short succinct speeches.*

*When I came to Ireland in 1980 it was through bridge that I learnt the geography and history of Ireland which had been lacking in my Scottish education. It didn't take me long to visit every county in Ireland travelling to bridge competitions. My aim this year is to play bridge in every single county. If any club wants to help me in that endeavour I'd welcome hearing from you.*

*It has been clear in the last year that some of our players will not return to face-to-face bridge for various reasons. However, it is comforting to see that there are lots of new people taking lessons from more and more bridge teachers. Some of these are using online methods for enhancing their lessons. We must do more than we did in the past to encourage new players. In some clubs beginners were seen as something of a nuisance as they slowed down the game. My motto for the year is "Cherish our Beginners". An occasional word of encouragement may be just what a nervous newcomer needs. Some players expect to see gradual improvement in their game as they learn more about bidding, card play, and defence. My experience is that improvement goes in jumps rather than a smooth rise.*

*Our Irish International Open Team have just finished competing in the World Championship Bermuda Bowl event with 23 other teams. They had*



**Gordon Lessells, CBAI President**

*a tough time against the top eight teams. We should be very proud that we had a team in the event. I hope the players return with vigour to compete in the home internationals and in our national championships. I am hoping that in the coming season, we will have some success in the Camrose, Lady Milne, Teltscher, Junior Camrose and Peggy Bayer events. Wouldn't it be wonderful if our Women's Team could pull off a victory in the Lady Milne which so narrowly eluded them this year.*

*I hope also that I can encourage improvement in the ordinary club player. If you do not use Roman Keycard Blackwood, for example, try to learn it. It does help greatly in bidding the right slams. I've always found that bidding and making slams gives players more pleasure than the disappointment in going down in a slam. Let's aim to be more daring this year.*

*As I travel around the country playing in congresses and national events, I hope to meet many people with new ideas about how to improve or develop our game. Feel free to give me your ideas. Bridge is a game whose fascination doesn't go away; it can, and does, provide enjoyment for a lifetime.*



## CBAI President's Merit Award 2023

Each year, the CBAI's National President adjudicates on nominations for the President's Merit Award. This award is designed to recognise the unsung heroes and heroines of Irish bridge - the people who do all the hard work behind the scenes without which bridge clubs and competitions could not function, but without ever seeking official status or other recognition for themselves.

We are delighted to inform readers that Teresa O'Reilly, from Bailieborough, County Cavan, was selected as this year's winner of the President's Merit Award. Teresa's story perhaps epitomises the intent of this award, and is a great example of selfless devotion to the cause of bridge. She was involved in setting up Bailieborough Bridge Club more than forty years ago, and ever since then she has been an enthusiastic advocate for bridge in the area, teaching beginner and improver classes all over Cavan - in Bailieborough, Cootehill, Cavan Town, Virginia, Oldcastle, and Ballyjamesduff - generally without any payment. The many nominations she received mentioned her tireless work, as well as her patience, enthusiasm, and generosity; Aileen Timoney, who knows a LOT of bridge players, commented that she couldn't think of anyone who "had put such love and devotion into bridge" or deserved the award more. Kathleen McArdle, the President of Bailieborough Bridge Club noted that all in the club "are eternally grateful to Teresa and feel that she is truly deserving of this award."

There were, as ever, several deserving candidates nominated for the Award this year, but there can only be one winner, and President Pat O'Mahony was convinced that it should be Teresa. He travelled to Cavan to present her with the award

as part of the IBU Seniors Congress; our thanks to Aileen Timoney for organising that presentation, which many of Teresa's friends and club-mates were able to attend. Teresa is pictured below with Councillor John Paul Feeney, Chairman of Cavan County Council, and Pat O'Mahony, President, CBAI. We understand that a lovely evening was had by all, and the celebration also made the Anglo-Celt newspaper, which was nice publicity for Teresa and her award, and also for bridge more generally.



**Councillor John Paul Feeney, Teresa O'Reilly and Pat O'Mahony, CBAI President.**

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## Chief Executive's Welcome



Welcome back to all our members for the 91st Season of the Contract Bridge Association of Ireland. Let's hope that this year will represent another large step on the road to recovery after the disruption caused by the Covid pandemic.

I was struck in reading the regional secretaries' reports that some of them reflect more-or-less business as usual in their area - lots of live competitions, lists of winners, details of classes and charity events and so on. The "C-word" does not appear at all in some reports. Others, however, convey a more tentative assessment of the return to live bridge, and express cautious optimism about a better picture this season. This divergence of views accurately reflects the "glass half full, glass half empty" situation that I referred to at our AGM. Your view of how full the glass is will depend largely on local conditions wherever you play your bridge. Wherever that is, I hope that your club is back to the table and that things are going well. If there's anything we can do to help, please just ask. In particular, if you'd like to promote the club within your locality to try to attract new members, or students for classes, we have lots of material that will be helpful.

All the CBAI and IBU national competitions are back live since last season, and the full calendar for 2023/24 is up on our website, with the pre-Christmas competitions now open for online entry. Most congresses are also back live (although a small number remain online), and those we have been informed of are listed in the calendar. We'd encourage you to play in as many of these events as you can. Please note the new start time of 1:00 p.m. for CBAI and IBU Saturday competitions, unless notified otherwise. We'd also appreciate it if you could do your best to make sure that your club supports our three weeks of Simultaneous Pairs, which are always popular. The IBU Simultaneous Pairs Week will be from 6-10 November 2023; the Celtic Nations Simultaneous Pairs Week will be from 4-8 December 2023, with the proceeds once again going to junior bridge; and the CBAI Simultaneous Pairs Week will be from 4-8 March 2024 (note the move from the traditional first week in February to avoid a clash with the new St Brigid's Day bank holiday).

Finally, a personal plea to all who attend our national competitions and congresses. Please make a special effort to stay for the presentation of prizes if you can. We understand that on occasion your presence will be urgently required elsewhere, but that can't be the case every time. It is a bit dispiriting, and somewhat discourteous to the prizewinners and the organisers, to find that the only people still present are the prizewinners themselves, their immediate families, and those to whom they have promised a lift home!

I hope that the CBAI office and staff (Bernard, Eimir, Fran, Freda, Siobhan, and myself) are continuing to serve you well. As ever, if you have any comments or suggestions for the CBAI, just drop me a line or chat to me in person when you see me.

With best wishes for an enjoyable, competitive, and sociable, bridge season in 2023/24, and I hope to see you at the bridge table very soon.



REGIONAL NOTES

Eastern Region

Secretary: Bernie Rountree

♣♦♥♣

Our season opened with a very successful bridge promotion week in August when the Eastern Region hosted five events in the region. Leaflets giving information about local clubs and availability of lessons were distributed and at some of the venues we had tables set up with volunteers playing. Conscious of the need to attract younger players to the game, we asked children, aged 5 to 15, to come along with their parents to the Stillorgan event. They took part in a mini-bridge demonstration which attracted a good bit of attention and a number of passing children sat in to play, some of them were very keen. In September ER President, Seamus Kennedy, welcomed members to our President's & Delegates night in Greystones Bridge Centre where club packs were collected followed by a game of bridge. It was encouraging to note the number of clubs who participated in the event. All our regional competitions were held "live" this year and winners were:

- Novice Pairs:** Yvonne Corrigan & Mick Stuart.  
**Inter B Pairs:** Annette Kelly & Ann Lynn.  
**Inter A Pairs:** Simon Burrell & Martina Lee.  
**Master Pairs:** Michelle Moloney & Sandra Newell.  
**Inter B Teams:** Jean Hennebry, Cora Ryan, Nell. McDowell, Connie Collins.  
**Inter A Teams:** Kathryn Ryan, Christine Heath, Tim Furlong, Robert Wolfe.  
**Master Teams:** Willy Clingan, Brigid Sheehy, Mary Murray, Maura Byrne.  
**4 Fun Teams:** Cathal Louth, Colette Kavanagh, Joan Madden, Mary Doyle. Eileen O'Doherty: Annette Kelly & Sheila Harvey. Eastern Reg. Memorial: Mamie MacCormac & Brendan Martin. Britton Trophy: John Noonan & Carol-Ann Cummins.



**Yvonne Corrigan and Michael Stewart, winners of the JJ Murphy Trophy, being presented with the Cup by Dermot O'Brien, CBAI CEO.**



**Mary and Eoin Hodkinson, winners of the Lambert Cup for Area Masters, being presented with the Cup by CBAI CEO, Dermot O'Brien.**

A shortened version of the Bray Congress was held in Dun Laoghaire in September and received a good turnout, with 50 Pairs and 24 teams competing. Dun Laoghaire hosted the O'Kennedy Teams and Muldoon Pairs competitions, but other local events such as the Greystones Open and Arklow Cups did not return this year. Perhaps 23/24 will resurrect them! On the national front, the Eastern Region had great success, with a number of winners in national competitions, at a range of levels. Yvonne Corrigan & Mick Stuart brought home All-Ireland gold to the Eastern Region, by going on to win the national Novice Pairs (the J. J. Murphy Trophy); Mary & Eoin Hodkinson won the national Area Master trophy (the Lambert Cup); Kathryn Ryan & Christine Heath won the national B Pairs championship (the Civil Service Cup); John Noonan & Carol-Ann Cummins won the national Mixed Pairs (the Spiro Cup); Teresa Rigney was a member of the victorious national Women's Team (the McMenamin Bowl); Adam Mesbur and partner won the CBAI Master Swiss Pairs. JJ. Murphy Trophy Winners Yvonne Corrigan & Mick Stuart. Lambert Cup Winners Mary & Eoin Hodkinson. Spiro Cup Winners Carol-Ann Cummins & John Noonan. We finished out the year with a very successful gala final of the 2020 Massey Bros. League in the stunning setting of Dun Laoghaire Golf Club Bridge Club in Enniskerry. Many thanks to the club for accommodating us. The event, which is sponsored by Massey Bros. and was organised and run by Fedelma Martin, was cut short in March 2020 by the advent of Covid. Twenty-two teams played eleven matches and there was a pairs competition for the supporters. Spot prizes were awarded and a supper was provided after the competition. Overall, it was a terrific success and many

thanks to Fedelma for all her hard work, and we hope to include the Wicklow clubs in next year's league. The winners were: Seniors: St. Therese's BC, Celine Lyons, Carmel Furlong, Kay O'Kelly, Fedelma Martin, Claire Strecker; Inter A: Victor BC, Joan McCudden, Eileen Murphy, Pam Kelly, Brenda Naughton, Conac Breslin, Siobhan Boyle, Jackie Flynn; Inter B: Dun Laoghaire BC, Kathryn Ryan, Christine Heath, Tim Furlong, Frances Donnelly, Hal Hosford, Seamus Kennedy. Novice: St. Crispin's BC, Eleanor Callanan, Annette Kelly, Sheila Harvey, Ann Lynn, Kate Ui Gallachoir, Iain Lynn; Pairs Competition: Michael Rowan & Phil Harnett.

**New clubs**  
We welcomed two new clubs in the region during the year, St. Anne's Cabinteely and Blackrock Guardian Angels. This brings our total number of clubs to 66 with a membership of 3,891, well increased from last year.  
**Charities**  
Clubs in the Eastern Region raise thousands of euro each year for charities making a valuable contribution to their local areas. Among the ER clubs donating to charity during the year were Arklow, St. Michael's Kilmacud, Wicklow, Well, St. Laurence's. Thanks to the Greystones and Dun Laoghaire Bridge centres for the use of their facilities for competitions and meetings. Finally, the regional AGM took place in Dun Laoghaire Bridge club on 26 May and Maura Kavanagh was elected President for the year 2023/24 with Marie Fitzgerald incoming Vice President. Thanks to Seamus Kennedy, our outgoing President, for all his work during the year. Seamus attended every regional competition and was a very visible president playing in every club to which he was invited and even some



**John Noonan and Carol-Ann Cummins, winners of the National Mixed Pairs, being presented with the Spiro Cup, by outgoing President of the CBAI, Pat O'Mahony.**

clubs without an invite! Thanks also to the hard-working members of the ER committee.  
Check out Eastern Region news and events on our website: [www.bridgewebs.com/easternregion/](http://www.bridgewebs.com/easternregion/)  
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## REGIONAL NOTES Western Region Secretary: Peggy Cheevers ♣♦♥♣

2022/2023 has been a relatively good year in the Western Region. Bridge resumed in many clubs during the winter months followed by summer bridge in many areas and hopefully it will continue to grow in numbers in the coming year.

### National Qualifiers

The Western Region held the qualifiers for the National Pairs Competition in December 2022. This was the first main competition since Covid, it took place on Sunday afternoon 4 December and saw a fairly good turnout with ten tables. In general, the attendance was good for these competitions and they have been very successful.

### Interprovincials

Connacht entered 3 teams of 4 in the Intermediate A, Area Masters and the Open sections, so 36 people in total into the Interprovincials in November 2022. There was quite a struggle in getting people to attend; travel to Dublin and overnight in a hotel is now very expensive. Connacht did not feature in any of the sections.



**Winners of The Coen Trophy, National Mixed Teams Championship Enda Glynn, Joan Kenny, Teresa Rigney and Conor Boland with CBAI President Pat O'Mahony.**

McMenamin Bowl winning team (National Women's Teams) and winning the Moylan Cup (All-Ireland National Pairs). A season for the ages indeed.

### County Development Officer's Report

Margaret Forde reports a relatively quiet year.

Western region member numbers increased by a small amount from 2021/22. Two clubs closed, and one did not affiliate for 2022/23 but may return next year. At the end of the year, the region had 35 affiliated clubs.

While face-to-face bridge is back to full capacity in many rural areas, numbers remain well down in Galway city. It's a struggle to get players to compete in some competitions, with costs of travel and accommodation a big factor. Almost 80% of our players are Intermediate Bs, around 19% Intermediate As, with small numbers of Masters, and few Novices as there have been no classes in recent years. We need to encourage new members as there is an aging population and, also internet connections can be a problem in rural areas for online classes. The region is hoping to hold an Open Night in September. The new President of the Western Region is Kathleen Kilroy from Mountbellew, and we wish her every success in the year as President.



**The late Ultan McCabe, a huge loss to the North Midlands Region. May he rest in peace.**

### President Anne Killilea's Bridge Day

Ann Killilea, Tuam Bridge Club, held her President's Prize in the Ard Rí Hotel Tuam on 2 April. There was a great turnout with 24 tables and a broad attendance from across the Western Region. It was a most enjoyable day.

### National Competition Winners

The region had a number of notable successes on the national stage. The team of David Walsh, Enda Glynn, Gay Keaveney and Paul Scannell continued their dominance of the Kelburne Cup (National Teams Championship). The same team won this competition in 2018, 2019 and 2022 – a clean sweep of the last four live runnings of this event. What a wonderful achievement.

Big congratulations also to Enda Glynn and Joan Kenny on winning the prestigious Coen Trophy (National Mixed Teams Championship) with their teammates Teresa Rigney and Conor Boland.

Joan had an extremely successful year. Aside from the above win, she also represented Ireland in the Lady Milne Trophy (Women's Home Internationals) in Scotland, where the Irish team finished second, just pipped for victory by 1.95 points by England in the closing stages, as well as featuring on the

## REGIONAL NOTES North Midlands Secretary: Peter O'Meara ♣♦♥♣

The past year has been more a rebuilding process as it was the first year since covid that we were able to hold face-to-face competitions, and while numbers playing in competitions were down on previous years we were successful in running all our normal regional competitions. These included two Regional Presidents' Prize competitions Matt O'Brien's the holder of the office in the year gone by and as covid had prevented Frank Kelly's being played in his normal year in office it was played in early November. All in all it was a delight to be back at the table playing and meeting with old rivals and friends at the same time. Congratulations to all the winners of all competitions who were as follows: Frank Kelly's Prize: Olive Kilbane & Josephine Brady. Matt O'Brien's Prize: James & Catherine Connolly: Regional Pairs, Master: Brid & Sean Galligan; Inter A: Peter Flynn & Mary McCormack; Inter B: George Farrell & Andrew Nally; Novice: Cynthia Devine & Helen O'Brien; Regional Teams, Master: Joan Donnellan, Una Flynn, Olive Kilbane, and John Kiernan; Inter A: Philomena Walsh, Mary Farrell, Mary Fallon, and Goretti Kenny; Inter B: George Farrell, Andrew Nally, Jimmy Lennon, and Margaret Lynn; John Cunningham Trophy: Lorraine Barry & Denise Conlon; Athlone Open: Frank & Brenda Kelly; Gala Day Master Pairs Matt Forde & Pat Claffey; Inter B Pairs; Monica & Gerry O'Gorman.

During the year some members did the region proud at national events. Pride of place goes to Brid and Sean Galligan. Liz and Helen O'Reilly who were winners of the Cooper Cup Team of Four competition. Sean and Brid also won the Monday night IBU Simultaneous Pairs with their Mullingar club mates Frank Higgins and Mary Macken winning on Tuesday night. John Kiernan and Sean Masterson (Templemichael, Longford) won on Wednesday which proved a great week for the region.

Promotion of the game is so important going forward and it was after such efforts that during the year a number of very successful beginners' classes were held throughout the region with great attendance at all of them. Many thanks to all involved in the efforts to promote and teaching of the game.

Sadly during the year we lost some great stalwarts of the game in all parts of the region but one in particular was a huge loss. The passing of Ultan McCabe was a shock to many – a man who had given so much to the game at both club and regional level. He taught the game in and

around Ferbane over a long number of years. He was the holder of every position at club level at some time. He was TD of the region for a number of years running all the competitions along with his wife Eileen, and a member of the regional committee for a long number of years. He served as President when it was the Ferbane club's turn to nominate the president for the region. He was ably assisted in all of these endeavours by his wife Eileen, which culminated in both of them being acknowledged for all their work for the Association by being awarded with the National President's Award in 2022, an honour that was richly deserved. To all the families who lost loved ones we offer our sincere sympathy and may their gentle souls rest in peace.

Our regional AGM was held in Ferbane Bridge Centre on June 27, when our new President Eamonn Bray, nominated by Mullingar, took office with the outgoing president Matt O'Brien now ex-officio on the committee. There was no other change in any of the positions with all the outgoing officers returned for the coming year. The enthusiasm shown in Eamonn's acceptance speech was great and we can look forward with great hope for another good year. In conclusion I would like to thank all who helped out during the year especially those who acted as TD for competitions and our regional committee and wish everyone good health and happiness in the coming year. Most of all, enjoy your bridge!



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**REGIONAL NOTES****South Munster***Secretary: Linda O'Riordan*

This past year has been a very busy and successful one for South Munster. Pat O'Mahony continued as CBAI Honorary President for 2022/23 and was able to attend most of the many events that were held face-to-face across the country. Pat was a tireless advocate for the live game, and never stopped encouraging members to return to the table to enjoy all the social aspects of bridge again. We would like to thank Gordon Lessells once again for allowing Pat to extend his tenure and wish Gordon all the best as President for 2023/24.

Our AGM was held on 13 June and Carmel Connolly, Cork Bridge Club, is the new Regional President for South Munster with Jean Kelly, Youghal Bridge Club, as President Elect for 2024/25.

Bernie O'Halloran, President for 2022/23, was very pro-active. Her first initiative as President was to hold a teaching seminar in Ballinhassig with the Teaching Committee. This was well supported and there are nine newly qualified teachers in South Munster, spread from Mitchelstown to Skibbereen and all over the county. This will hopefully enable clubs to run classes and attract new members. Bernie then organised two Club Tournament Directors courses. With the assistance of Carmel Connolly, our regional Tournament Director, participants were provided with skills required in relation to movements, rulings, and etiquette for their club. The courses were held in Ballinhassig and Killarney and have been a great help with clubs returning to live bridge.

South Munster had fifty-six clubs in 2019/20 but five clubs have closed, and four clubs have amalgamated with clubs in their locality and one new club has affiliated so currently we have forty-seven clubs. Membership was up from 2021/22, but remains down from the pre-covid peak, but with all our excellent teachers, both new and existing, clubs should be well-placed to increase memberships. Clubs need to promote this wonderful game, and having a well-qualified teacher within your locality should help increase your membership. There seems to be a demand for new hobbies and bridge is a perfect fit.

The Duais an Uachtarain was held on 17 September, over one day in Cork Marts in Fermoy, which proved an excellent venue. There was a great turnout and fifty-seven pairs participated. Winners: Derek O'Gorman & BJ O'Brien, Cork and Dublin; Best Area Master: Maura Foley & Oliver Morgan, Kenmare; and Best Intermediate: Joan Meagher & Anne Cronin, Macroom. Congratulations to everyone.

South Munster held all our regional competitions live. We had sixteen pairs for the Intermediate A & B pairs. Winners for Intermediate A: Anne Fox & Konstantin Rabkin and Intermediate B: Dermot Houston and John O'Donovan. The Master Pairs were held on 2 December with nineteen pairs. Winners: Derek O'Gorman & Cian Holland.

The National Pairs held in Ennistymon proved a very successful weekend for South Munster. Derek O'Gorman & Cian Holland won the Davidson Cup. The Laird Cup, for Intermediate As, was won by Berna Tracey & Noreen Maloney, Kinsale, with Anne Fox & Konstantin Rabkin, Middleton, coming second.

In the Civil Service Cup, for Intermediate Bs, Dermot Houston & John O'Donovan came fourth. Congratulations to all who participated. The Barry O'Connell Trophy, qualifier for the Kelburne, was held in the Silver Springs Hotel on 19 February and eight teams entered. The winners were Cian Holland, Derek O'Gorman, John Russell, and Tom McCarthy.

The winners of the playoff were Verna Brownlow, Geoff Roberts, Deirdre Walsh and George Hayes. Derek O'Gorman's team had already qualified as Kelburne runners-up from

the previous year. The Olive Rose Memorial Plate was won by Carmel Connolly & Freddie Murphy and the Specsavers Competition was won by Lucia Murphy & Margaret Ryan.

Numbers were down for both competitions. There were only ten pairs for the Novice competition and the winners were Fidelma Good & Fergal Canovan. Novices have not had the luxury of playing outside of their clubs for the last two years so hopefully numbers will be up next year.

I want to thank all the secretaries for continuing to inform their club of these events and would ask members who have played in regional competitions over the years to encourage new members to play outside of their clubs. For those of us who have played many years, we have been fortunate to have "At Homes" or Club Cup competitions which gave us our initial opportunity to play outside our club.

Finally, I wish to extend our condolences to the families and friends of deceased members over the last year. We look forward to seeing new and old faces back playing bridge for 2023/24.



**Carmel Connolly and Bernie O'Halloran**



**Duais an Uachtarain Winners for 2022/3 BJ O'Brien and Derek O'Gorman with CBAI President Pat O'Mahony, who presented the trophy**



**Berna Tracey and Noreen Maloney with the Laird Cup for the National Inter A Pairs. Pat O'Mahony presented the winners with the trophy.**

**REGIONAL NOTES****South Midlands***Secretary: George Ryan*

The first full year back after covid provided plenty of challenges for bridge clubs all over Ireland, but the challenges were particularly acute in a geographically spread region such as the South Midland area, which encompasses four separate counties. Our regional committee worked hard at re-establishing the connections with clubs that had weakened during the covid hiatus, particularly our President, William Prior, who made it his business to visit as many clubs as he could during his term of office. He passes on his thanks for the warm welcome he received.

The region was very active in the area of charity fundraising too. At the charity event in June organised by Father Martin Delaney to raise funds for Laois Hospice eagle-eyed observers would have spotted the notable pairing of our Regional President William Prior and Daniel O'Donnell. This was a great event, which raised funds in a very good cause. Our thanks to Daniel, a great friend of bridge ... and a very good bridge player, who came first on the night, for giving his time so willingly to an event run by a club recovering from Covid.

We in the region have also raised €21,200 through weekly online bridge tournaments since covid struck; these funds have been ring-fenced for a charity that provided crisis counselling to people with suicidal ideation. As you can imagine, demand for these services has increased greatly in recent years and the charity has been happy to report that there are many people walking around this part of Leinster who might not be doing so were it not for the efforts of bridge players and the South Midland Virtual Bridge Club. This is the only bridge club in Ireland where 100% of all proceeds without expenses go to a charity. We will be calling on all of you bridge players to support this great cause once again in the autumn. And sure why wouldn't you anyway?

The South Midland region had some joy at the bridge table too. We are pleased to report that our team of Willie Redmond, Kevin Kennedy, Tom Reilly, and Pat Costello were second in the Bankers Trophy (National Intermediate A Teams Championship) in Portlaoise in April 2023. This was an extraordinary performance by any measure as one of the team went directly from the bridge table to hospital on the Saturday night and then signed himself out of hospital to complete the competition on the Sunday. (He went straight back to hospital on Sunday evening for a further ten days). If only we could field a fit team, what might we have achieved!

We fielded a fully fit lady pairing of Kathy Monks and Nora Kelly who were the second Area Master Pair in the Jackson Cup (National Women's Pairs Championship) in Clane in January. And Kathy and Nora also featured among the prize-winners in the McMenamin Bowl (National Women's Teams Championship) the same weekend, featuring as the second ranked Regional Masters team, alongside Carmel Gleeson and Kathleen Cassidy. In the Revington Cup (National Men's Pairs Championship) our pairing of Tom Reilly and Kevin Kennedy finished as the second-ranked Area Master Pair.

I want to thank all the club secretaries for their work and support during the year, and look forward to working with them all again in season 2023/24.



**Regional President William Prior with Daniel O'Donnell at the Fundraiser for Laois Hospice.**

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**REGIONAL NOTES****Dublin North***Secretary: Aidan Synnott* ♣♦♥♣

The 2022/23 season proved to be a challenging year in Dublin North Region. All our clubs returned to face-to-face bridge but with varying degrees of success. Some returned to normal levels of activity almost immediately, but many others had much slower re-starts. While some of these have now recovered to pre-Covid levels of activity, others have experienced a contraction in activity which persists. A few clubs suffered the further complication of finding themselves homeless but most of these have now secured new venues.

The experience of our clubs was reflected in entries for our regional competitions, and several of these had to be cancelled because there were insufficient entries to run them. However, we did run the Regional Pairs, Regional Teams, and the 4Fun Teams Qualifier. The Regional Master Pairs was won by Rosemary O'Brien & Paul McDermott (Malahide BC) while the A Pairs winners were Anthony McMackin & Noel Hughes (Malahide BC). The winning team in the Regional Teams consisted of Dave Terry, Conor O'Hara, Pat Cassidy, and Tom Gilligan (Malahide BC).

The 4Fun Teams Qualifier, held on St. Patrick's Day, was well supported. It was won by a team consisting of Fran Ronan, Orla Duffy, Adele Sleator, and Ann Scally. Second were Mary Reid, Alex Reid, Evelyn Doyle, and Brona Moore. Mary Reid, Orla Duffy, Helen Ahern, and Marian Smyth went on to form a team which won the National 4Fun Teams event.

Our Regional League, the Kirwans League, was held online for the Intermediates and face-to-face for the Masters. The winning A team members were Bernadette Murray, Frank Hayes, Breda O'Mahony, and Liz Chambers (Malahide BC). The B winners were Catherine McManus, Jim Miley, Anthony Campbell, and Sam James (Glasnevin BC). In the Masters' League, the winners were Sean Whelan, Rosemary O'Brien, Nuala Lynch, Paul McDermott, Brendan Rushe, and Fran Ronan (Malahide BC).

With the return to face-to-face bridge, most of the virtual clubs which were active in the region ceased their online activity. However, the region had two very large virtual clubs, Clontarf Area VBC and Glasnevin Region VBC. At the peak of the lockdown, these clubs between them catered for the needs of twelve physical clubs with almost 1,000 members. Both clubs continue to be active, albeit at a much-reduced level. They now run one tournament a week each, both of which are well supported.

The Region held two educational events. In December, a

club-level Tournament Director course was conducted by Norma Madden and Aidan Synnott while in March Aidan Synnott ran a Bridgemate course, ably assisted by Mary Connell, Tom Craig, Thérèse Gumbrielle, and Jim McCormack. This again was aimed at club-level Tournament Directors. These courses proved popular, both being over-subscribed.

Normally, DNR holds a social event each year to present prizes to the Regional League winners. This was, of course, impossible during the Covid outbreak. For the 2022/23 season, we decided to run a gala event to honour, not only those who won the League that season, but also all who had won it, and other regional competitions, during the Covid period. This was held in May 2023 and was very successful. We particularly want to thank Mary Breen who took on the lion's share of the organisation involved as well as our sponsors, Kirwans Funeral Directors.

We held our AGM in June 2023. Our outgoing President was John Kehoe (Sportslink BC). John had served the region with great distinction during what had proven to be a challenging year. He was replaced by Dan O'Mahony (Vernon BC). Mary Breen (Malahide BC) resigned as Regional Secretary, having served the maximum term of five years. She had fulfilled that role with great dedication and had become a vital member of the committee. Fortunately, her experience and wisdom will not be lost as she was appointed as Vice-President for 2023/24 and will become President in 2024/25. Mary was replaced as Regional Secretary by Aidan Synnott (Glasnevin BC). Mary Deane (Malahide BC) resigned as Treasurer to take up the role of CDO together with Liz Sherlock (Raheny BC). Our new Treasurer is Ria Malone (Iona BC).



**DNR Gala Event  
2023 - Mary  
Breen with  
Luke O'Sullivan  
(Kirwans) and  
John Kirwan.**



**4Fun Teams winners  
2023 - Dublin North  
Region with Dr. Martin  
Brady.**

**REGIONAL NOTES****Mid-Leinster***Secretary: Blanaid Morris* ♣♦♥♣

President Owen Cummins continues his two-year term with committee members, Siobhan Canty, Barbara Burke, Neil Burke, Yvonne Dalton, Mags Kelly, Bert McKay, Marian McKay, Kevin McKeivitt, Blanaid Morris and Angela O'Neill. The committee is delighted to announce a new venue for the Cunningham League – Castleknock Community Centre, Laurel Lodge in D15 and is planning to hold remaining competitions in other parts of the Region. We have more than 2,200 members playing in 37 clubs.

We are very lucky to have so many bridge teachers in our Region providing classes to all levels of players. See the MLR website for details [Mid Leinster Region](#). Congratulations to the winners of our Regional and National competitions:

Cunningham League: Master - Westmanstown TR; A1- Cnucha KMcC; A2 – DBB PB; B – Confey Castle BL; Novice – DBB CK.

Regional Pairs: Master – Liam Gaynor and David Remond; A Frances Daly and Maura Colgan; B – Dara Voyles and Paul Dunne.

Regional Teams: Master - Owen Cummins, Arthur McGrail, Paddy Daly and Mags Kelly

A - Angela O'Neill, Kevin McKeivitt, Helen Dredge and Ann Hogan

B - Dara Voyles, Paul Dunne, Nicola O'Dowd and Ena Souhan  
Novice - Virginia Pye, Pauline Moynihan, Lynn Elliot and Bernie Brereton

Naas Pairs: 1<sup>st</sup> Michael Fitzgerald and Owen Cummins, 2<sup>nd</sup> Gaye Downs and Marie O'Mara. 3<sup>rd</sup> Paddy Cooney and Mags Kelly.

Presidents Cup: 1<sup>st</sup> Mary Greene and Joseph Coyne, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ann O'Kelly and Myles Fitzgerald, 3<sup>rd</sup> David Redmond and Liam Gaynor.

Civil Service Cup: Intermediate B National Pairs Final  
2<sup>nd</sup> Dara Voyles and Paul Dunne

IBU Virtual Club Pairs: Intermediate  
Winners Mags Kelly and Paul Dunne

**Development Officers Report Bert & Marian McKay**

Encouraged clubs to get back to face-to-face bridge  
Attended Secretaries meeting and delivered packs to clubs in our area.

We represented the Region at CBAI AGM in Cork  
Promoted beginners' classes throughout the region  
Attended all meetings Governing Council and Regional on Zoom and face-to-face.

Promoted Regional, National and IBU events.

Supported our local clubs with the running of competitions.  
Kept in contact with Regional Secretary and committee and



**Winners of the Intermediate "A" National Teams finals  
being presented with the trophy by Pat O'Mahony, CBAI  
President. Left to right Angela O'Neill, Kevin McKeivitt  
Helen Dredge and Ann Hogan.**

provided feedback.

**Leixlip Bridge Club Gerard O'Neill**

Leixlip Bridge Club celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary at a dinner in the Springfield Hotel, Leixlip on 18th May 2023. "We were delighted that three of our founding members were present. Rita Lacey, Dolores Farnan and Deirdre Sweeney together with the late Paddy Reilly set up the club in 1983. Initially they met in Paddy's house. Paddy was President and Rita was Secretary. New members were recruited by word of mouth. Paddy gave bridge classes to the early recruits. Later classes were organized in Colaiste Chiarain, Leixlip and from this the club grew.

The club has used a number of different locations in Leixlip over the years. Currently the club meets in Our Lady's Parish Centre. Members play on Tuesday morning and Thursday night. In 2022/23 the club has 99 affiliated members. Many of the members, who are keen bridge players also play in neighboring clubs. Leixlip Bridge Club welcomes new members and we look forward to a bright future."




**Leixlip Bridge Club founder members Rita Lacey, Dolores Farnan and Deirdre Sweeney.**



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REGIONAL NOTES

North Munster Secretary: Tom Hardiman ♣♦♥♣

Reflecting on the past bridge season, the pandemic's impact is still prominent in North Munster with many clubs inactive, players quitting or moving online, and a demographic shift due to the loss of players and aging members. However, new enthusiasts have started taking lessons, highlighting the need to create a welcoming environment for their integration into the community.

However, the regional tournaments reflected a decline in participation, suggesting that the bridge community is still in a phase of recovery. The Falls Hotel's endorsement as an excellent venue, with its impressive turnout from Ennistymon, offers hope and continuity for the forthcoming events.

The performance of our players in national events did show some promise. Rita Cassidy and Gordon Lessells came second in the Duais an Uachtarain. Bob and Maureen Pattinson, John and Kelan O'Connor came second in the Kelburne Cup. Kelan O'Connor was on the winning Holmes Wilson Team, Diarmuid Reddan won the Revington Cup and Jeannie Fitzgerald won both the McMenamin Bowl and the Moylan Cup, and was on the Irish Women's team that narrowly failed to capture the Lady Milne Trophy for the first time.

In the larger perspective of global bridge events, it's heartening to see our very own Kelan O'Connor's remarkable performance of finishing third overall in the recent tournament run on BBO and FunBridge to celebrate the Olympic eSports Week, with an average score of 70.7% in the finals segment. The event had more than 2,400 players advanced from the preliminary round, which required an average of 55% or better in the qualifiers.

It's imperative to underscore the importance of promoting our rising Intermediate A and B players. Their potential is the cornerstone of the region's future success in bridge.

On the administrative front, we saw transitions in leadership with Liam Lynch assuming the role of Regional President and my own appointment as the Regional Secretary. It is commendable that the Regional AGM has decided to centralize some prominent events in the home county of the Regional President. This centralization, coupled with the upcoming Tournament Director's Course, augments our aim for height-



Incoming CBAI President Gordon Lessells receiving the Chain of Office from Pat O'Mahony, outgoing President.

ened regional cohesion.

Our affiliation with national governance saw a significant highlight with Gordon Lessells, a proud Aberdeen native, assuming the esteemed position of National President of CBAI. Gordon's long-standing dedication of over 40 years and unparalleled contribution to Irish Bridge make his appointment both deserving and promising for the entire community. The AGM was held at the Castletroy Park Hotel, and had a game of bridge afterwards which was a great success raising almost €1,000 for the National Council for the Blind of Ireland.

Change of Guard: Gordon Lessells, now at the helm as CBAI President, following Pat O'Mahony.

For the coming season, we have a robust calendar of events. The anticipation surrounding the Intermediate and Novice Congress, and the Camrose Trials signifies the region's intent to reclaim its vibrancy. Furthermore, the decision to host the National Pairs weekend once again at the Falls Hotel, Ennistymon augments our enthusiasm.

In conclusion, while challenges persist, the signs of recovery are evident. Our resilience, coupled with the continuous efforts of our community, will pave the way for a brighter future for bridge in North Munster. It is crucial that we not only acknowledge the achievements of the past but also set our sights on future endeavours, cherishing our novice and developing players and fostering an environment of continuous learning and growth in the aftermath of the COVID-19 disruption.



Tralee International Bridge Congress 2023: Prize Winners of St Vincent de Paul Charity Open Pairs, Irene Prendergast & Maureen Ryan, with Nicky Fitzgibbon & Trish Stack, Congress President Hugh O'Connell and Tom Hardiman Secretary of North Munster.

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- **Beginners** Wednesday 19.00-21.00, 13 September, St Paul's Church Hall, Glenageary (€180)
- **Next Steps (Post-Beginners)** Thursday 11.00-13.00, 14 September, St Paul's Church Hall, Glenageary (€180)
- **Fundamentals (Post-Post Beginners)** Thursday 19.00-21.00, 14 September, St Paul's Church Hall, Glenageary (€180)
- **Advanced Players** Friday 11.00-13.00, 15 September, Online (€180)
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**REGIONAL NOTES** **Dublin South Region** *Secretary: Brid Kemple* ♣♦♥♣



**Incoming Regional President Teresa Gavin (right) and outgoing President Fiona O'Gorman**

Each year we begin with our Regional AGM in May where this year we welcomed Teresa Gavin as our new President. Teresa plays in the Bankers, Civil Service and Regent Clubs. We always ensure that we have one or two new faces on our very active Regional Committee, and we have done so again this year. Once again, Dublin South finished off the 2022/23 bridge year with a long list of titles:

Egan: John Carroll & Mark Moran, Nick FitzGibbon & Adam Mesbur.

IBU Master Club Pairs: Thomas Mac Cormac & Partner

Lambert Cup: Eoin Hodkinson & Mary Hodkinson

Marie Cummins Trophy: Dublin South Region once again won the prize for the most successful region with teams participating in all three National Team Finals.

IBU Senior Teams: Peter Goodman & Team.

IBU Senior Pairs: Peter Goodman & Partner.

Moylan: Joan Kenny & Partner.

Burke: Peter Goodman & Aoife MacHale, BJ O'Brien & Teresa Rigney.

Holmes Wilson: Karel De Raeymaeker & Anna Onishuk, Conor Boland & Partner.

Teltscher Trials: Fred Barry & Paul Porteous, David Dunne & Michael McAuliffe, Joan Kenny & Teresa Rigney

Geraldine: Karel De Raeymaeker & James Heneghan, Peter Pigot & Partner.

McMenamin Bowl: Siobhán Part & Teresa Rigney, Joan Kenny & Partner.

Master Pairs: Nick FitzGibbon & Adam Mesbur.

InterProvincials: Dublin South Region had several members on the winning Open and Area Master Teams.

Lady Milne Trials: Siobhán Part & Teresa Rigney, Joan Kenny & Partner, Gilda Pender & Partner

Camrose Trials: Conor Boland & Tom Hanlon, John Carroll & Mark Moran, Adam Mesbur & Partner

Coen: Conor Boland & Teresa Rigney, Joan Kenny & Partner

Spiro: John Noonan and Partner.

Duais An Uachtaráin: BJ O'Brien & Derek O'Gorman

To this list we will add the names of some of our junior players

who are showing some promise for the future of Irish bridge: Luca Crone and Matthew O'Farrell came 6<sup>th</sup> in the President's Cup at the European Transnational Youth Championships and Phedra Kingston, just 17, is displaying great bridge technique meriting publication in that Championship's Daily Bulletin. Dublin South Region cherishes and encourages all our junior players, and we are happy to make regular financial contributions to Irish Junior Bridge.

**Dublin South Region Bridge Clubs**

We have 40 bridge clubs in Dublin South and that means that we have 40 hard working bridge committees without which we would have no bridge. These clubs come in all sizes, some own their premises, and some are quite insecure with their venue. Two clubs have moved venue - important information to share: Tallaght Bridge Club meets at Kilnamanagh Community Centre, Treepark Road every Tue night and welcomes visitors. Grosvenor AM Bridge Club meets in Dom Marmion House, Dundrum playing every Thu morning from 10 am to 12.30. They welcome new members and will provide a partner. The Regent Bridge Club, 25 Waterloo Road is once again hosting their three Leagues open to Regent members and non-members this year starting in September. You can enter as a team of 4-7 players. Entries for the Intermediate and Area Master Leagues are still being accepted while entries for the Premier League are closed as it is already at maximum capacity. See [Regent Bridge Club, Dublin, Ireland \(bridgewebs.com\)](http://Regent Bridge Club, Dublin, Ireland (bridgewebs.com)). One big anniversary this year is at the Templeogue Castle Community Bridge Centre which is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in April 2024. Congratulations to all at the TCCBC. What a success it has turned out to be! Last but not now least, many of our bridge clubs are running bridge classes and seminars. For those seeking a bridge teacher, our Dublin South Region website at [Dublin South Region, Dublin, Ireland \(bridgewebs.com\)](http://Dublin South Region, Dublin, Ireland (bridgewebs.com)) holds details of all our bridge teachers and we advertise classes where asked to by the Clubs.



**Lambert Cup Winners Eoin & Mary Hodkinson.**

The Dublin South Region Calendar for 2023/24 is as follows:  
Regional Teams Competitions Fri 3 Nov 2023 Regent BC 19:30 (previously qualifiers for the IBU Teams).  
Carroll Cup Master Teams for City Centre Clubs only  
Paul O'Reilly Intermediate Teams Trophy.  
National Pairs Qualifiers, Sat 2 Dec 2023 TCCBC 11:00  
Quin Cup Master Pairs, Joe Moran Cup Intermediate A Pairs, Duffy Cup, Intermediate B Pairs  
National Teams Qualifiers, Sun 3 Dec 2023 TCCBC 11:00  
Pigot Cup Master Teams, BJ O'Brien Trophy Intermediate A Teams, Ruth Giddings Trophy, Intermediate B Teams  
National 4-Fun Teams Qualifier, Monday 22 Jan 2024, Milltown Golf Club BC  
Kay Downes Trophy Novice Trophy date and venue to be agreed.  
The Fanagan League will once again begin before Christmas and finish in the late spring leading up the Finale on Sunday 12 May 2024.



**Master Pairs Winners Adam Mesbur & Nick FitzGibbon.**



**Tom Hanlon (above) and John Carroll (below) at the Bermuda Bowl, which was held in Marrakech, Morocco.**



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REGIONAL NOTES

North Eastern

Secretary: Seamus Costello



Our new season began in September with Peter Byrne remaining for a second year as President. We knew that the year would present challenges for our clubs in reopening again. Player numbers would be lower than before the pandemic struck, the costs of hiring a venue had increased and some clubs might have to seek a new venue. However, the clubs in our region showed great determination to get back to live bridge and we can be well pleased with the numbers that affiliated this year, one of the highest in the country. One of our clubs, Kingscourt, has closed permanently. Our weekend fixtures, the finest in the country, by and large returned to normal with only a few clubs not holding their open competitions this year. Our regional events this year all were played in ABCD Centre, Drogheda, and went well although with lower numbers of players.

The winners were:

**Pat Taaffe Trophy** Tim Carroll & Kay Goldsworthy

**Mixed Pairs** Phil Geoghegan & Dave Doherty

**Regional Pairs** Masters: Frank Davey & Joe Coyne; A's: Vincent Bissett & Carmel Brogan; B's: Angela Everitt & Sylvia McCann

**Regional Teams** Masters: Frank Davey, Pat Duff, Deirdre Tuckey, Seamus Costello; A's: Joe Bissett, Phyllis Carew, Camilla McLoughlin, Vincent Bissett; B's: Kathleen McCabe; Mary Maguire, Brid Campbell-McManus, Melissa Brady – the last-named team went on to triumph in the national championships, winning the Tierney Trophy (pictured below)

**Novice Pairs Pat Thornton Cup** Val Grimes & Eve Connell

**Ladies' Pairs Frances Dunne Cup** Mary Timoney & Mary Brady

**Men's Pairs Des Scully Cup** Brian Kiernan & Liam Farrell

50th Anniversary Celebration for Slane Bridge Club



On Monday 29th March Slane Bridge Club celebrated its 50th anniversary in the Conyngham Arms Hotel, Slane. A fantastic night was had by all of the large attendance. **Pictured above:** Eileen 'Grady, Secretary. Margaret Duff, Captain, Donal O'Boyle, President, Eithne O'Boyle, Treasurer and Peg O'Hagan, committee member.



Cavan team wins National Intermediate "B" Teams - The Tierney Trophy. Pictured here with Pat O'Mahony, CBAI President are: Kathleen Brady, Brid Campbell-McManus, Melissa Brady and Mary Maguire.

President's Merit Award for 2023

In April Teresa O'Reilly from Bailieborough Club was selected as the winner of the President's Merit Award for 2023. The award was in recognition of Teresa's devotion to bridge. She was involved in setting up Bailieborough Bridge Club more than forty years ago, and ever since has been an enthusiastic advocate of bridge in the area, teaching beginner and improver classes all over Co. Cavan. The CBAI President, Pat O'Mahony, presented the award to Teresa at the opening night of Seniors Congress in Cavan Crystal Hotel. A very large gathering was in attendance on the night to share in Teresa being honoured.

Bridge Promotion

Again this year a good number of our clubs have carried out bridge promotion in their localities. The feedback is wonderful with big numbers for Beginners Classes starting in September.

Bridge promotion will in the future be easy as CBAI now have in place a model where promotional posters and handout leaflets will be available for clubs along with a template for printing on the posters and leaflets.

We remember all the members from clubs throughout the region who have passed away during the past year.

**Our incoming Regional President for 2023-2024 is Kay Goldsworthy, Skerries.**

DROGHEDA & DISTRICT  
BRIDGE CONGRESS

ABCD Bridge Centre,  
Fairgreen, Drogheda

From Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> - Sunday,  
8<sup>th</sup> October, 2022

Thursday: Novice & 'B' Pairs  
Championship & Open Pairs

One session - @ 7.30 p.m.

Friday: Mixed Pairs & Gala Pairs  
@ at 7.45 p.m.

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& Intermediate "A" Pairs

2 Sessions – starting at 12 noon

Sunday: Congress &  
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REGIONAL NOTES

South Eastern

Secretary: Oona Dwyer



Regional Officers:

Regional Secretary: Oona Dwyer (087 9893025) Email: [oonadwyer@gmail.com](mailto:oonadwyer@gmail.com)

President/Chairperson: Larry Mordaunt (087) 9299241 Email: [larrymordaunt@gmail.com](mailto:larrymordaunt@gmail.com)

Treasurer::Jim Doyle (086) 3619911 Email: [jimdoylebree@gmail.com](mailto:jimdoylebree@gmail.com)

CDO: North Wexford: Jim Doyle (086) 3619911.

CDO: South Wexford: Johanne Powell (087) 6717073.

CDO: Waterford: Jim Kennington (087) 6294188.

CDO: Dungarvan: Delia Smith (087) 193282.

Congratulations to John Phelan who won the Men's Pairs (Revington Trophy) in partnership with Diarmuid Reddan.

The follow up from our bridge promotion last year at Bannow Rathangan Show was very successful, and resulted in large numbers attending classes in both New Ross and Wexford.

**Bridge Class Contact Details:**

(Commencing in October/November):

Lucy Phelan (Waterford City): 086

8275192.

Jim Doyle (Wexford): 086 3619911.

Helen Holman (Gorey): 087 2335340.

John Hosey (New Ross): 087 9553343

Waterford will be holding its 41<sup>st</sup> Bridge

Congress from Friday 5 to Sunday

7 January 2024 in the Tower Hotel,

Waterford. The Congress Committee has

negotiated a special hotel rate of €170

per person sharing for 2 Nights B&B and

1 Dinner. Call the hotel on (051) 862300.

Many thanks to all the club secretaries

for their work and information during the

year, and to the Regional Committee for

their help and organising events.

The region extends its sympathies to the

families and friends of our bridge players

that passed away during the year.



Diarmuid Reddan and John Phelan winners of the Revington Trophy with Pat O'Mahony, CBAI President.

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2023

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## REGIONAL NOTES Northern - Donegal *Secretary: Margaret Doherty* ♣♦♥♣

The dates for this season's Donegal International Bridge Congress are 3-5 November. The venues are the Abbey and Central Hotels Donegal Town. Renowned far and wide as one of the great bridge weekends, we in Donegal look forward to seeing you all again and will be delighted to welcome new attendees. After a three-year absence imposed by Covid, last year our Congress Secretary Jim O'Sullivan and his committee were determined that we would have a face-to-face Donegal Congress in 2022.

Many were nervous but Jim and his team worked diligently to ensure that it was a great success. Certainly the bridge players from all over Ireland were delighted to be back in Donegal. Much gratitude is due to all those that attended and to our sponsors which included The Central Hotel, Donegal Town; Abbey Hotel, Donegal Town; Donegal County Council; Axis Construction Ltd, Dungloe; The Old Castle Bar & Restaurant, Donegal Town; La Bella Donna Restaurant, Donegal Town; Donegal Town Credit Union; Peter's Man shop, Donegal Town; Elite Boutique, Donegal Town; Forget Me Not Craft Shop, Donegal Town; Home Instead Senior Care, Letterkenny; Apple-green; and Chandpur Indian Restaurant, Donegal Town. All the Donegal bridge clubs re-opened in September/October 2022. There was a drop in the number of players in all of the clubs on return with some continuing to play online. Marion Gallagher ran the West Donegal Bridge online bridge club during Covid. This West Donegal Bridge club included the six Bridge clubs in her area. When the clubs re-opened Marion very kindly returned the money raised by the online games to the clubs, enabling them to invest this money back into their clubs. Glenties and Killybegs invested in technology purchasing Bridgemates etc, thus ensuring instant results at the end of a club night. The Open Cups which are run by each club throughout the region during the bridge season proved hard to organise in 2022/23, hopefully this will change in 2024 as the risk posed by Covid diminishes and everyone becomes more comfortable in going back to the bridge table. In Donegal most of the clubs close for the summer months with the exception of two of our Inishowen clubs, Carndonagh (Tuesday at 7.30pm) and Moville (Friday at 7.30pm) and visitors are always welcome.

Nationally the Donegal Bridge players had a successful year and notable performances included:

The Jackson Cup: Carndonagh Bridge Club's Anna Carr & Margaret Farren are the winners of the Jackson Cup for the second successive year;



*O'Connor Trophy winners.*

O'Connor Trophy Intermediate Winners: Ballybofey & Stranorlar Bridge Club's Barry McMenamin, Tony Carr, Carmel Gallinagh, and Michael McGlynn

The Burke Trophy: Donegal's Margaret Farren, Connell McLoone, Denis Ellis, and John McGinley finished third; In the CBAI Simultaneous Pairs Mary Duffy & Caro O'Connor (Letterkenny Bridge Club)

were sixth nationally on Monday, Grace Gallagher and Shaun Coll (Cloughaneely Bridge Club) were fifth nationally on Tuesday, and the Glenties Bridge Club pair Connell McLoone and Denis Ellis playing in Sligo & Friends were eleventh nationally on Friday.

As the Donegal bridge season came to an end, on 24 May the outgoing Regional President, Mary Roullier, hosted her golf/bridge day at Ballybofey & Stranorlar Golf Club, and a great day was had by all. Our outgoing regional secretary Margaret Doherty, who had held the office for six years under four different presidents has stepped down and is taking a well-deserved break. All Donegal bridge players are very thankful to her for all her hard work, and wish her the best.

Gerry O'Keeffe, nominated by Carndonagh Bridge Club, was elected the new President of the Northern Region, for the 2023/24 season, and took up office at our AGM on the 31 May. We all wish Gerry a successful and enjoyable year.



*Regional President Gerry O'Keeffe.*



*Anna Carr and Margaret Farren, winners of the Jackson Cup for the second successive year, receive the trophy from Pat O'Mahony, CBAI President.*

## Ireland Team in Bermuda Bowl

Ireland qualified for the Bermuda Bowl (the world bridge championship) for only the second time in our history, and were represented in Marrakech, Morocco, by the team pictured on the front cover of this newsletter (left-to-right, Adam Mesbur, Mark Moran, John Carroll, Tommy Garvey, Nick FitzGibbon (Coach), Hugh McGann, Tom Hanlon. Inset: NPC Gráinne Barton). Many of these individuals were also involved in our only previous appearance, in Shanghai in 2007.

The event consisted of a preliminary round-robin over eight days, with three matches per day, from which the top eight teams would qualify for a subsequent knockout phase. The team started brightly, and for several days were in, or close to, the eight knockout-qualifying spots. But in the long-run, the challenge of playing a lot of full-time professional teams, in extremely hot conditions, took its toll, and we finished in a very creditable thirteenth place (of 24 teams), winning ten, drawing two, and losing eleven matches. The team also had a good run for a while in the subsequent Transnational Teams competition.

We should be very proud to have been represented at the world championships, and our thanks to the team for all the hard work they put into preparing for, and playing at, the event. They featured several times on the BBO Vu-graph, which allowed Irish fans to watch our team in action. Our feedback is that lots of CBAI members followed the prowess of the team during their two-week

stint in Morocco, and that it created great interest and excitement amongst the bridge-playing community, but unfortunately not much publicity, despite our best efforts, in the Irish world more generally.

Aside from the Bermuda Bowl, the tournament also saw the Venice Cup (Women's world championship), D'Orsi Trophy (Senior world championship), and Wuhan Cup (Mixed world championship). The medalists in the various competitions were as follows:

**Bermuda Bowl** (Open): Gold - Switzerland; Silver - Norway. Bronze - Italy.

**Venice Cup** (Women): Gold - Israel; Silver- Turkiye; Bronze -China.

**D'Orsi Bowl** (Senior): Gold - Denmark; Silver - USA1; Bronze - USA2.

**Wuhan Cup** (Mixed): Gold - USA2; Silver - France; Bronze - Romania.

The unluckiest losers were probably Poland, who qualified for the knockout stages in three of the four competitions - Bermuda Bowl (in 4th place), the Venice Cup (in 1st place), and the D'Orsi Bowl (also in 1st place), but failed to make the podium at all. The feedback on the championships was that they were a great success, and that the host Moroccan Federation did an excellent job on the venue and the organisation. The only downside seems to have been the extreme heat, which meant that the players were pretty much confined to their air-conditioned hotels.

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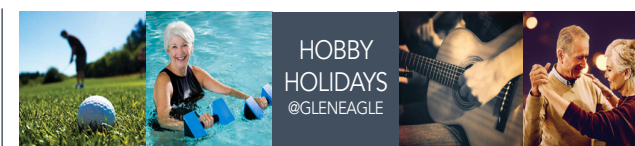
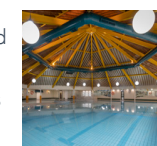


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## REGIONAL NOTES North Western Region Secretary: John McCrohan ♣♦♥♣

This past year in the bridge calendar has been a strange one. Quite a few clubs have returned to their normal activity, playing regularly on their usual night, with numbers of tables similar to pre-pandemic. Others have resumed with significantly reduced numbers, finding it difficult to persuade some members to leave their homes, people who are still worried about going out meeting groups of people, or who are happy to play online from the convenience of their homes. And unfortunately there are clubs who have not resumed, and may never do.

We should all work at persuading people that for the sake of their mental health and social skills they should resume their old activities and hobbies, as advised by the Chief Medical Officer. If they still cannot, then we should keep in contact with them to let them know they are not forgotten, and check on their welfare.

Hopefully next September should see a bigger turnout, helped by recruiting new members through lessons for beginners, and advertising the club's existence and activity e.g. in active retirement groups, community notice boards, local websites, parish newsletters, etc. The CBAI has a stock of promotional materials that can easily be adapted to include specific club information.

Because of a hesitant start to the year, our regional events were held later than usual, with a bit of pressure to get them done in time for the National finals. There was a modest turnout for the pairs event, but we were well represented in the finals in Ennistymon. However numbers for the teams competition were so low that the competition was not held, and the entrants were automatically qualified for the national finals in Portlaoise. As it turned out only the Masters team was able to attend. Hopefully the numbers will be better this season.

The Winners of the Regional Pairs were: Masters: Tommy Banks and George Brennan; Intermediate As: Attracta McGettrick and Anne Kinsella; Intermediate Bs: Breege Kelly and Teresa Filan.

Earlier, on 12 March, Jim O'Malley's Regional President's Prize was held in Sligo, with a more encouraging turnout. The winners were Pam Gillanders and Mary Naughton. At national level things are picking up. Almost all congresses are returning, though some of them remain online, including unfortunately both our local congresses in Sligo and Ballina. Hopefully, both will be back face-to-face before too long. Generally, attendances were satisfactory in all the national events; it was particularly pleasing to see the 4Fun Teams re-appear after a three-year gap.

The region had one notable national success during the year, with Niall and Ian Kilroy being part of the team that won the National



Confined Teams Championship (the Cooper Cup), pictured above.

I would like to finish by paying our respects to all the members of the region who passed away during the year, including (Sligo) Pat Kilfeather, Marguerite Kilfeather, Josie Noonan, Sheila Galbraith, Ann O'Beirne,

Martina Nallon, Mary Cleary; (Swinford) Canon Michael Joyce, Peggy Cunney; (Kiltimagh) Barbara O'Grady, Vera Cunney, Brid McGrath, (Castlebar) Ellis Flood, Angela Colgan, Brenda Crowley, Teresa O'Shea, Christina Millett. May they rest in peace.

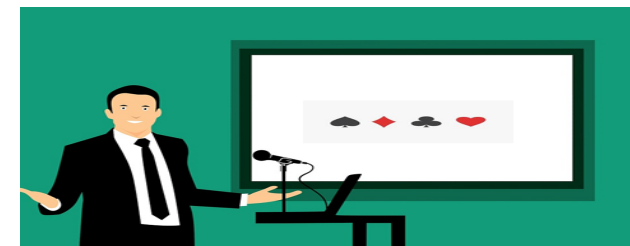
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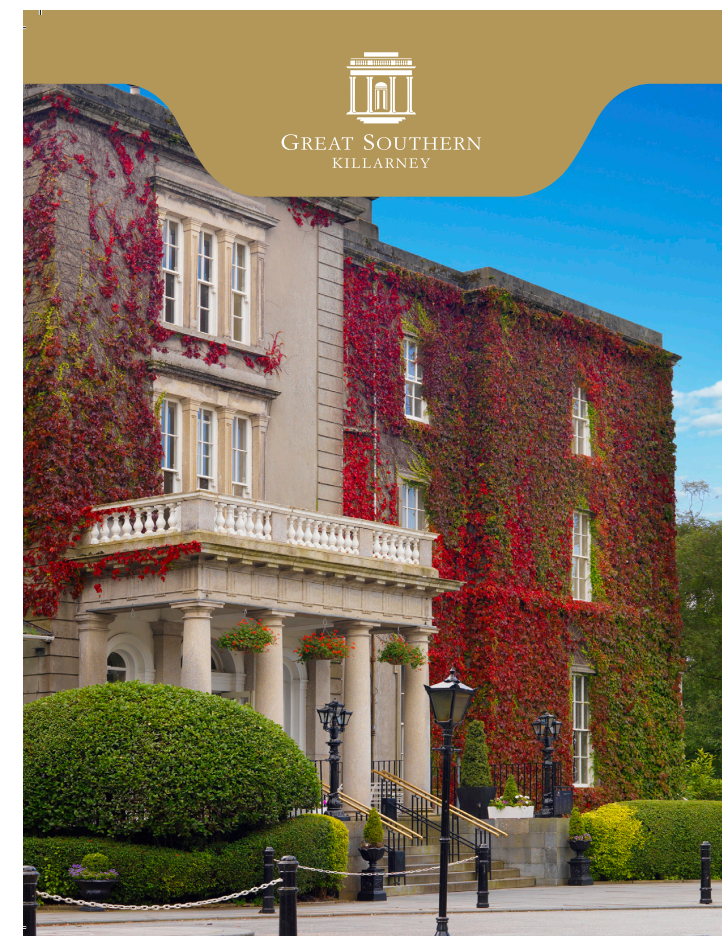
## BRIDGE CLASSES 2023/24



Our website shows a full list of all of the upcoming bridge classes that our accredited teachers have advised us of, being held both in-person and online. They are arranged by area alphabetically and can be found by following this link:

[CBAI Bridge Classes](#)

If you are a CBAI-accredited teacher who is running classes and would like us to list them, please email [info@cbai.ie](mailto:info@cbai.ie) or call us on (01) 4929666 and we'll be happy to help.



  
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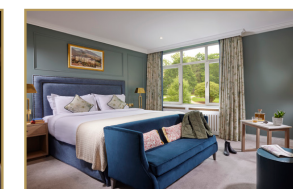
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# Junior Committee Report

Season 2022/23 saw something of a return to normality in the world of junior bridge. The previous few years were a bit of a blur due to covid and its impact on bridge. Everything was online throughout the pandemic, but this year we were finally back to face-to-face competitions. It was great for the juniors to be back at the physical rather than the virtual table.

The Junior Camrose (Under-26) and Peggy Bayer (Under-21) Trophies were held in Manchester this year, in February. The event was well run, thoroughly enjoyable, and everyone was delighted to be able to actually meet people in person. The Irish teams were: Junior Camrose Squad: Luca Crone, Matthew O'Farrell, Denise Walsh, Leah Finnegan, Sheila Walsh, and Isabel Burke. NPC Karel De Raeymaeker. Peggy Bayer Squad: Phedra Kingston, David Hoyne, Klara Flanagan, Eve Connell, Adam Murphy, and Tom Gorey. NPC Margaret Murphy.

In the end, the English squads proved to be too strong in both events. Their backing and funding of junior bridge is creating a big gap between them and the other countries, and they have dominated both age categories in recent years. Ultimately our best chance of competing, given the difference in resources, is via numbers and recruitment. The best source of juniors currently is the children of bridge-playing parents.

So, if you know of any junior players who might benefit from our programme, or you have any feedback or ideas in relation to the development of junior bridge, or would like to volunteer your services in any way, we'd love to hear from you – please feel free to contact any of the committee or to email [irishyouth-bridge@gmail.com](mailto:irishyouth-bridge@gmail.com).

The summer was full with numerous events. The main ones were the EBL Transnational Junior Pairs and the WBF World Junior Teams Championships, both held in Veldhoven, in the Netherlands. We sent several pairs to the EBL event, and the most notable performance came from Luca Crone & Matthew O'Farrell who came sixth in the President's Cup. (Luca and Matthew also went to the Chicago nationals over the summer, which should be great experience for them.. Our thanks to

Thomas MacCormac for facilitating this trip.)

n the teams, we accepted a late invitation to be a replacemnt team within the Under-21 category, sending an inexperienced group – all still teenagers: Klara Flanagan, Phedra Kingston, David Hoyne, Eve Connell, and Aileen Armstrong, with (non-teenager) John Phelan as NPC. The team found the going tough, but did have their moments – see Phedra Kingston's hand at the end of this article.

The season also saw some notable performances by juniors in major CBAI events. Luca and Matthew came ninth in the Master Pairs; Isabel and Tom eighth, with a session prize, in the Duais an Uachtaráin; Luca, Isabel, and Tom were on the team that came fourth in the Coen Trophy; and Isabel and Luca were



**Luca Crone & Isabel Burke in action in Veldhoven. Note the LoveBridge tablets, which are increasingly being used for the bidding process in junior international events, though physical cards are still used for the play.**



**IBU Under-26 Team at the World Youth Teams: Klara Flanagan, Phedra Kingston, David Hoyne, Eve Connell, Aileen Armstrong, NPC John Phelan (with TD Fearghal O'Boyle and parent Martin Connell).**



**Irish Participants in EBL Transnational Pairs: David Hoyne, Phedra Kingston, Matthew O'Farrell, Luca Crone, Tom Gorey, Isabel Burke**

on the team that came fifth in the Holmes Wilson Trophy. All very promising performances justifying our practice of encouraging juniors to play in as many serious events as they can. We also held a MiniBridge beginners' day in Templeogue where primary school children came and played for a few hours. Thanks to Mary Howley, Aisling Considine, Margaret Murphy and all who helped out, and to the CBAI for organising some goodiebags for the kids. It was a great day and the feedback was very positive. Unfortunately, the traditional Schools Championships competition was postponed again this season; it is proving very difficult to find a time and venue that suits all the schools. We are continuing to work on this and hope to find a resolution shortly.

Thanks to all the committee members for their efforts during the year: Karel De Raeymaeker, Margaret Murphy, John Phelan, Paul Porteous, Luca Crone, along with Pat Johnston, Sandie Millership, and Wayne Somerville representing the NIBU.



**Phedra Kingston & David Hoyne in action in Veldhoven, also using the LoveBridge tablets.**

Round 3 – Ireland v France  
Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ A Q 6  
♥ Q 7 4  
♦ A 8 4 3  
♣ A 9 8

♠ J 10 9 7 5 2  
♥ J 3  
♦ 9 6  
♣ K 10 7

N  
W  
S  
E

♠ 8 4 3  
♥ 10 9 8 6 5  
♦ J 10 5  
♣ J 2

♠ K  
♥ A K 2  
♦ K Q 7 2  
♣ Q 6 5 4 3

West	North	East	South
Bens	Kingston	Libbrecht	Hoyne
–	1NT	Pass	4♣
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣
Pass	5♦	Pass	6NT
All Pass			

11 tricks on top and an easy 12th if the ♠K is right. As you can see, however, it isn't!

Phedra led the ♠9 from hand and East played low smoothly. Phedra assessed that holding the King he would have given the matter at least some thought, so she decided East didn't have the King and ran the ♣9, losing to the ♠10. Later she returned to Dummy and led the ♠Q, pinning East's ♠J, and limiting the Club suit to one loser.

This play is known as an intra-finesse, and Phedra was one of only two players to make 6NT. Well played!!



## CBAI & IBU

<b>16/17 Sep</b>	<b>Duais an Uachtarain</b>
<b>5/8 Oct</b>	<b>Drogheda Congress</b>
<b>13/15 Oct</b>	<b>Limerick Congress</b>
<b>21/22 Oct</b>	<b>Spiro &amp; Coen Trophies</b>
<b>3/5 Nov</b>	<b>Donegal Congress</b>
<b>6-10 Nov</b>	<b>IBU Sim Pairs Week</b>
<b>10/12 Nov</b>	<b>Kenmare Congress</b>
<b>18/19 Nov</b>	<b>IBU Interprovincials</b>
<b>24/26 Nov</b>	<b>Kilkenny Congress</b>
<b>4-8 Dec</b>	<b>Celtic Sim Pairs Week</b>
<b>9/10 Dec</b>	<b>Master Pairs</b>
<b>5/7 Jan</b>	<b>Waterford Congress</b>
<b>13 Jan</b>	<b>Men's &amp; Women's Pairs</b>
<b>14 Jan</b>	<b>Men's &amp; Women's Teams</b>
<b>19/21 Jan</b>	<b>Cork Congress</b>
<b>26/28 Jan</b>	<b>Ennis Congress</b>
<b>3/4 Feb</b>	<b>Reg Master Pairs &amp; Teams</b>

## Calendar 2023/24

<b>10/11 Feb</b>	<b>Holmes Wilson Cup</b>
<b>16/18 Feb</b>	<b>Nov &amp; Inter Congress</b>
<b>24/25 Feb</b>	<b>National Pairs Finals</b>
<b>1/3 Mar</b>	<b>Malahide Congress</b>
<b>4/8 Mar</b>	<b>CBAI Sim Pairs Week</b>
<b>9/10 Mar</b>	<b>Burke &amp; O'Connor Cups</b>
<b>22/24 Mar</b>	<b>Clonmel Congress</b>
<b>23/24 Mar</b>	<b>National Teams Finals</b>
<b>29M/1 Apr</b>	<b>Galway Congress</b>
<b>5/7 Apr</b>	<b>Tralee Congress</b>
<b>13/14 Apr</b>	<b>IBU Moylan Cup</b>
<b>16/18 Apr</b>	<b>IBU Seniors Congress</b>
<b>27/28 Apr</b>	<b>Lambert &amp; Cooper Cups</b>
<b>11 May</b>	<b>IBU Club Pairs</b>
<b>25 May</b>	<b>4Fun Teams</b>
<b>25/26 May</b>	<b>IBU Egan Trophy</b>
<b>7/9 Jun</b>	<b>Sligo Congress</b>





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