

History of Celbridge Bridge Club

Rough Draft

The Club was founded in 1979 by Denise O'Sullivan and Michael McGrath, and started life in the Boy's School on the Oldtown Road. One of the first members was Fr Crosby, who was the Parish Priest in Celbridge and an International Bridge Player. Fr Crosby gave bridge lessons in the early years of the club.

The earliest bank book for the Club shows an account was opened on July 30 1980 with a deposit of £65 by Denise Sullivan. Other names on the Deposit Books are Muriel Duff, Ursula Teague and Des Ward. Our earliest existing minute book starts with the AGM of 31 March 1983, and mentions the highlight of the year being a bridge Tournament in the Setanta Hotel to celebrate Fr Crosby's Golden Jubilee. The possibility of having a handicapping system was mooted and it was agreed to have one major handicapped competition per year.

The Committee that year were: Denise O'Sullivan, Muriel Duff, Peter Barry, Larry McCarthy & John Toal.

Yearly Subscription in 1983 was £4.

It was decided (27/9/83) that a trial of a handicapping system was to be used on one club night in 1984.

The Club had to borrow Canon Stronge's card tables for Friendlies with Rathcoole & N Kildare, which were a feature of these years.

The minutes of 22 Oct 1984 mentions the Clubs recent move to the new Salesian College, and also mentions that the school rule prohibited smoking. This was not seen as a problem for the Celbridge members, but was seen as a difficulty for inviting other clubs for friendly matches!

Concerns about low membership of the club and poor turnout was a running feature of all the early minutes.

Peter Barry and Larry McCarthy ran classes through the VEC to 15 people. (3/11 1985).

An Extraordinary general meeting was held on 18/09/86 to agree the move to the Mill. Negotiations with the Mill & the Setanta Hotel had been ongoing for some time.

Larry McCarthy undertook to investigate a number of handicapping systems. (23/4/87).

The Committee meeting of 21 May 1987 decided to put to the members later that evening the proposal that CBC affiliate to the CBAI. The Club affiliated to CBAI in 1987/88.

Fr Crosby, in his 80th year was granted Honorary Life Membership (21 April 1988).

Larry McCarthy to introduce a Handicapping System on 3 November 1988.

Smoking a problem, and smoking banned before 9pm (22 June 1989).

The handicapping system was deemed a success and a discussion ensued on whether it should be used for all club nights and/or for major competitions. Opinions differed and the matter was left to the committee. (AGM 11 April 1991),

The Club decided to stay open during the Summer. (2 May 1991)

Larry McCarthy continues to give lessons. Two tables to designated no smoking. (12 Sept 1991).

AGM 9 April 1992. An energetic discussion took place a motion to de-affiliation from the South Midland Region and to affiliate to the South Dublin Region. Feelings ran high. The Motion was defeated. Larry McCarthy proposes an individual competition.

No Smoking extended to 9.30pm (12/9/93)

Following complaints from members on the handicapping, it was decided that a First Gross & First Nett prize (of equal value) would be awarded each night.

Following years of worrying about low numbers and of running classes to encourage new members, the membership of the Club was closed, and future applicants *were to be considered on merit!!!* (Committee meeting 26 Jan 1995). AGM 27 April 1995 decided, due to shortage of space, to limit membership at the discretion of the committee.

AGM 16 May 1996, Peter Barry thanked Des Ward for constructing the Box for housing the tables. Peter Barry recommended the purchase of 4 sets of Bidding Boxes in an effort to reduce noise (a recurring problem) and also to introduce members to this bidding method.

AGM 15 may 1997. Bidding boxes deemed a great success and it was decided to invest in more of them. The waiting list from membership was again discussed, and subsequently all applicants were admitted bringing the membership to 70 members.

Jan 1998, Sean Coffey introduces Mazda Trophy.

AGM 11 may 2000, Lessons to be started again as Club looks for more members!

19 June 2001. Peter Barry again giving lessons. Concern about numbers again a feature.

Weekends away (Yeat's County, Great Southern Rosslare,) were an occasional feature during these years.

Earliest Computer Scoring was 4 Dec 2008, and ScoreBridge used for the first time in Celbridge 15 October 2009. Celbridge started their WebPage using BridgeWebs on 20 December 2013.

In Summer 2017, the Mill did some construction works involving our Bridge Room, and Celbridge BC (that is Bairbre McCann) arrange a move (temporarily) to the Slip Hall. We viewed the rearranged room at the Mill and decided that with its reduced size it was no

longer a suitable venue for us, and we agreed to remain indefinitely at the Slip Hall, which proved to be eminently suitable.

In March 2020, at the start of the Covid crisis, Bridge was temporarily suspended, with no knowledge of when it might be possible to resume. In May that year, Celbridge, Lucan & Palmerstown teamed up to run online sessions through BBO. The rebates from BBO maintained a steady income to allow the clubs to pay the CBAI affiliation fees and insurance without requiring membership fees from or members, and guests. It was not until 21st April 2022 that Celbridge BC returned to live Bridge at the Slip Hall.

On 27th October, Celbridge Bridge Club started Wireless Scoring using BridgePal and Kindle Tablets. All of this was arranged by Melanie Hill, who had experience of this scoring technology from another club. It all ran without a hitch.

Past Chairs	Years
?	1979-81
Muriel Duff	1981-83
Denise O'Sullivan	1983-85
Larry McCarthy	1985-87
Nuala O'Connor	1987-89
Margaret Kearney	1989-91
Muriel Duff	1991-93
Ken Monaghan	1993-95
Peter Barry	1995-97
Larry McCarthy	1997-99
Rosaleen Ryan	1999-2001
Ursula Teague	2001-03
Peter Barry	2003-05
Teresa McCarthy	2005-07
Maura Gallagher	2007-09
David Redmond	2009-12
Brid Whelan	2012-13
Breege McShane	2013-14
John O'Connor	2014-2016
Bairbre McCann	2016-2018

John Riordan	2018-2020
John Riordan	2020-2022 COVID
Liam Gaynor	2022-