



Cumann Pheadair Naofa



St. Peter's GAA Club, Warrenpoint

TUARASCÁIL AN RÚNAÍ

The past year has been a year of mixed fortunes and emotions for the club, from sadness at the death of our President Barney Carr to the satisfaction and pride of our senior hurlers winning the Down Junior Championship and the fact that for the first time in our history we contested three adult County Championship Finals

Three short weeks after our AGM we suffered the loss of a man who had given over 80 years service to our club, our county and our province. Barney Carr was a member of our three senior championship winning teams in 1943, 1948 and 1953 and when his playing career was over he became treasurer of the club for over twenty years and also served a term as club chairman before becoming Life President. Of course Barney was known best for being manager of the great Down teams of 1960 and 61 but it is often overlooked that he was also a man of vision. It was he who at Down Convention of 1959 got the management structure of the county teams altered, a decision which had an immediate and dramatic affect on the team fortunes and it was also Barney, who in 2012, suggested that we should introduce “the mark” into Gaelic football, a decision which was taken many years later. His wisdom and advice will be sadly missed in our club. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam usail. Within a few short weeks we lost another ex chairman John Hogg, who also made his contribution to the club, and we offer our deepest sympathy to both the Carr and Hogg families.

Covid has continued to impact on the activities of our club although not as severely as 2021 and I would like to sincerely thank our Covid Response Team for their untiring work in supporting the elderly and vulnerable in our community, their work is very much appreciated by all. In these difficult economic times. A uniform exchange day and a day to support St. Vincent de Paul and Friends of St. Dallan's were held to help alleviate the difficulties being experienced by many. I wish to thank all those involved in these events especially Colette Lock who acted as co-ordinator.

GAMES

For the second time in four years our senior footballers reached the County Final, having defeated Saul, Burren and Loughinisland (the latter two on penalties), to face Ulster and All-Ireland Champions Kilcoo. Everyone, except those in Warrenpoint, thought that we were going to be well beaten. How wrong they were because this was a game which was extremely closely contested with both teams level at the end of normal time. The rules stated that there had to be extra time and in the first half of extra time Kilcoo scored four unanswered points and try as they might our team could only score three in reply and so lost by the minimum margin. We can be very proud of our players who gave a tremendous performance and could have dethroned the champions but it was not to be. We must sincerely thank Shane Mulholland, Mark Poland and the management team for their excellent preparation of the team. This year the team had to field without some of their best players due to injury, none more so than Ross McGarry who, in the year he got married, suffered two serious injuries. I have no doubt that with the introduction of some of our excellent young players over the next few years that the Frank O'Hare Cup will come to our club for the fourth time.



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To those who attended the Blues Breakfast or became a Patron of the final we thank you sincerely and greatly appreciate your support.

At underage level in football we fielded at all levels from U-7 to U-19 which necessitates a tremendous level of commitment by mentors and players from early in the year. Our U-19s won the B league while our U15s were beaten in the B championship final. We thank the many mentors who have coached these young men during the year and look forward to many of the players representing the club at adult level in the years ahead.

Our senior hurlers went one better than the footballers when they won the Junior Hurling Championship which they last captured in 2009. Having completed the round robin section of the championship they then defeated Kilclief by four points in the semi-final and Castlewellan in what was a very closely contested final. This was a truly great performance by our hurlers who also finished joint fourth in the league.. I wish them well in the Ulster Championship and congratulate them on what they have achieved to date under an excellent management team led by Sylvester McConnell and Martin Houlahan. We are also delighted that Dermot Donnelly is now a member of the county management team.

Our Senior Ladies also had a most successful season when they too reached the county Junior Final where after an exceptional performance they were beaten by a very strong Saul team. This team continues to improve with each passing year and under their manager Ronan Magee will no doubt bring back silverware to the club in the near future.

Just eight years ago Camogie was restarted in the club with an U-12 team, we are now fielding at five underage levels with the girls really enjoying playing and being coached by people who are totally committed to the promotion of the game. With the number of young girls participating it will not be long until we are able to field at adult level again. Our thanks must go to the coaches who have worked tirelessly during the year.

In the summer of 2020 GAA for All was started by Declan and Helen Carvill and as the saying goes from small acorns large trees grow and so it has been for this group of young people who are helped in every way by a dedicated group for whom nothing is a problem. The growth of this section is most heartening and they were rewarded this year when they were invited to visit Stormont by Justin McNulty MLA and former Armagh star, followed by an invitation from the Ulster Council to play in Clones at half-time in the Ulster Semi-Final and last but not least they had the opportunity to play on the hallowed turf of Croke Park. A truly memorable year for this special group and especially for Michael Carvill who was awarded an Ulster GAA Hero Award early in the year – well done Michael!

Our liaison with the local schools continues to bear fruit with our strategic plan with St. Mark's working extremely well providing us with their excellent facilities for training all teams indoors during the winter and early spring and affording us the opportunity to train many of our young players on a Sunday morning. We were very fortunate to obtain the services of a part-time coach for St. Dallan's and I thank Aaron Gregory for his sterling work during his term with us which



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unfortunately has come to an end. We also thank Brendan Rice for the many hours he puts into coaching the children at St. Dallen's and for his organisation of the Cúl Camp which attracted huge number during the week in August. I thank the principals and staff of both schools, especially the caretakers, for their help and courtesy.

This year we have a new Injury Fund co-ordinator who looks after all the injury claims for cost of surgery, medical appointments and loss of wages where appropriate. This can be a difficult task depending on the number of injuries and the seriousness of them. I thank Paul Grant for accepting the position and for dealing with all claims efficiently.

None of our games could be played without a referee and we in our club are most fortunate to have four excellent football referees and two equally efficient hurling referees. This year I wish to congratulate Micheál Moore on his handling of the Junior Football final and am confident that we will see all our referees in charge of important games in the years ahead. I also congratulate Kieran Rice who has acted as linesman for numerous inter county hurling and camogie games.

DEVELOPMENT

Development covers both the implementation of the policies to ensure that our club is among the top clubs in Ireland and the physical development of our facilities.

Currently, led by Development Officer Anne McCormack, we are approaching the end of our second Five Year Development Plan while simultaneously preparing for our next one from 2023 to 2028. This will reflect the desired direction of the club and challenge all of us to implement the plans necessary, while ensuring that all coaches are suitable to carry out their roles and that all administrators are attending courses to keep them updated with what is required to be a capable club officer. In August this year the club adopted the GAA Inclusion Charter which acknowledges the club's commitment to provide a welcome club for all.

2019 saw us launch the Our Vision project and in October 2021 we were granted planning permission to carry out our complete plan. We have recently completed the improvements to the existing entrance from the Rostrevor Road and we look forward to the continuation of the project in the near future. I would like to thank the small Focus Group under the chairmanship of Feargal McCormack and the professional team led by our architect, Bernard Dinsmore, for their untiring work to achieve this project and I also thank all those generous Patrons whose generosity greatly helped to make the dream a reality.

CULTURE

After the break due to the Covid Pandemic the GAA Scor took place again this year and our cultural committee led by Carmel McGrath ensured that we were well represented in most competitions and this was acknowledged when they were awarded the Moya McCormack Cup for their participation.



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All our competitors performed well and our Set Dancing team progressed to the Ulster Final where they were narrowly defeated.

Our band, although small in numbers still played an important role when they took part in the Funeral Mass for their founder member Barney Carr and also were prominently involved in the Christmas Carol Service. Hopefully now with the pandemic waning we will see the numbers grow again and we look forward to them entertaining us marching through the town and taking part in recitals.

SOCIAL CLUB AND LOTTO

One of our main sources of revenue over the years has been our weekly Lotto and this year thanks to Brendan Rice and all sellers it has been very beneficial to club finances. A decision was taken early in the year to start our jackpot at £5,000 and most certainly this has increased our numbers significantly however I would urge all members to make a greater effort to sell more lotto tickets at £1 per week, 100 single pounds amounts to £100 per week which is £5,000 per year.

The Social club has proved a great amenity for the club and is now fully open again. It is a place where people meet at the weekend for a quiet drink and a chat and is also used for other social functions organised by our members during the year. I thank all those who help with the running of the Social Club and urge our members to make more use of it at the weekends.

FINANCE

In an excellently presented Commentary and Set of Accounts our treasurer Shane Lavery details the financial state of the club and makes some very important suggestions as to how things can be improved. Shane aided by Micheál Moore not only had responsibility for the finances of the club but also that of the Social Club and other fund raising monies.

Our main source of income after membership is the Down Draw which has raised much money for the club since its inception in 2012. James Heaney takes responsibility for organising this and our thanks must go to him for a job well done

Our club would find it very difficult to support all our activities without sponsorship and I wish to especially thank Colm and Sarah in the Whistledown Hotel, our main sponsors, for their financial support, both in cash and in kind, and for their help and support. I also thank all our other sponsors who donate generously during the year. We deeply appreciate your continued support.

COMMUNICATIONS AND ICT

We have a very effective and efficient communications and ICT committee within the club led by our PRO Aisling McGivern. For those who are unable to be in attendance at games there are constant tweets keeping them informed of all scores and scorers and then producing weekly press



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notes to summarise the week's events. We also have an excellent website which contains all information relating to club structures and much more.

In my opinion the County Committee are to be congratulated on their use of internet to stream most championship games over the last two years. This has brought the games into the homes of the less able and vulnerable followers and I hope that it continues in the years ahead.

We have also witnessed many meetings being conducted using Zoom or Teams and while it was introduced to overcome the difficulties posed by the recent pandemic it has resulted in very efficient meetings which attract a much better attendance than those held in person

CONCLUSION

I wish to thank all members of the Management Committee for their work during the year And in particular I thank our outgoing Cathaoirleach Larry for his leadership during the past four years and hope that he continues to make a valuable contribution in the coming years. I also wish to thank Hugh Carr who accepted the position of Leas Rúnaí during the year and was a great support to me. To all those who acted in any capacity I would like to express my thanks and I wish the incoming committee every success in the next twelve months.

Dónal MacCormaic
Rúnaí