



Cumann Pheadair Naofa



**St. Peter's GAA Club, Warrenpoint**

## TUARASCÁIL AN RÚNAÍ

At the conclusion of a year it is time for us to look back at what has been achieved in the previous year and how we can improve in the year to come. As we enter 2024 we are celebrating 140<sup>th</sup>. Anniversary of GAA and the 136<sup>th</sup>. Anniversary of the founding of a club in Warrenpoint. We must ask ourselves what we can do to improve and can we rely on the support of all our members, both young and old to reach our targets.

We have over 1,000 members, adult and youth, and we cater for all age groups in football, hurling, ladies football, camogie, GAA for All, Mothers & Others, handball, culture and band. It is a club that we should all be very proud of but we must strive to improve each year, otherwise we will regress each year, something which none of us now, or those who went before us, would want to happen. To achieve progress we need the commitment of all members and I think that each of us must ask ourselves “am I playing a full part in improving Cumann Pheadair Naofa.”

During the year we laid to rest our Senior Coommittee Member and former Cathaoirleach, Hubert Shannon. After moving from Belfast to Warrenpoint Hubert became deeply involved in the administration of the club, culminating in an eight year term as Cathaoirleach. He was a man who lead by example and could definitely have said that he gave his full commitment to improving the club. He has now joined his wife Eileen with whom he spent many Sunday nights enjoying the craic in our social club. Ar dheis De go raibh a anam. To all other members who lost loved ones during the year I extend my deepest sympathy.

Covid still caused some disruption to the operation of the club but it seems that all have accepted that life must return to normal One good thing which resulted from Covid was the use of On Line meetings and I honestly feel that the incoming committee should consider alternating meetings between in person and on line. During the playing season attendance at meetings in the clubrooms was poor and perhaps this is the time of year to make use of technology.

## GAMES

After losing to Burren in the first round of the Senmior Football Championship our senior footballers narrowly beat Bryansfprd before exiting the Championship having been defeated by Clonduff. In Division 1 they had a mediocre year when they finished mid table. It must, however, be remembered that we had a large number of long term injuries and we also had quite a number of weekend weddings during the year. However if we wish to bridge that 70 year gap without a Senior Football Champiodhip win I feel we must ask for total commitment from all players. Other clubs can get that so why can we not. It was very pleasing to see the great improvement shown by some of the young players introduced to senior football for the first time. I am confident that the combination of these young men and the many committed players we have will bring us success in the near future.



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One man whose commitment cannot be questioned is, one of our senior players, John Boyle who took on the position of player/manager after the resignation of the previous incumbent and we must thank John and his team for the tremendous effort they put in during the year.

Our senior hurlers took part in the Intermediate Hurling Championship this year, having won the Junior last year and performed well to reach the semi final where they were beaten by a very experienced Bredagh team. I congratulate the team on their performance during the year and thank Sylvester McConnell and his selectors for their great effort during the campaign.

Ronan Magee and his selectors are to be congratulated on taking the senior ladies to the Junior B Championship Final which they won by defeating Clonduff in Burren. This was a great step forward for our ladies section and we look forward to their progress continuing in the years ahead.

At under age level we fielded teams at every age level from U7 to U18 in both hurling, football and ladies football and while they did not bring home many trophies they all performed very well and were coached by over 100 voluntary coaches. We did have great success with our U15 footballers winning the Cup Competition, congratulations to the team and mentors. I thank all the managers and selectors for their outstanding work and wish them well next year. Full reports on all teams are included in subsection reports.

Our camogie section was reformed seven years ago and has been operating competitively at U12 level and this year they were rewarded with success when they won U12 Division 2 Championship. They are also training children from age 6 upwards and are intending entering an U14 team in 2024. I congratulate all the coaches for their hard work during the year and wish them every success in 2024. The girls enjoyed a trip to Croke Park to the All Ireland Camogie Final.

GAA For All has been the great success in recent years and it is great to see that these games are now being facilitated in their rightful place at half time in many inter county games and given recognition not only at county level but at provincial and national level. This year was another very successful one with the highlight being an address by Tegan Carvill to the GAA Congress, what an honour for a young lady.

We also have a Mothers and Others team which is attracting new members into the club as well as giving these ladies an enjoyable outlet which had not existed previously and has provided them with a number of challenge games against other clubs who also promote this section. Hopefully it will continue to grow and flourish in the years ahead.

During the summer months we organised a Hurling Coaching week, a Football Coaching week and we participated in the Cúl Camp also. We were really delighted at the huge number of young members who attended all these courses and are sure that the benefit of the courses will be evident in the years ahead. We thank all the coaches who attended to help these young players and the football committee, hurling committee and Brendan Rice who organised the courses



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In a year when a number of injuries occur there is quite an amount of administrative work to be done in preparing claim forms, submitting them, properly filled out, to the insurance broker who administers the Players' Injury Benefit Scheme and chasing the payment when due. I thank Paul Grant for acting in that role during the year.

I have not been attending away games this year and greatly appreciate the use of twitter, now X, to keep us informed of the progress in the games I thank Aisling McGivern and the communications committee for this service and for the weekly press notes.

I would like to congratulate the Down Communications Committee, of which Aisling is a member, on winning the McNamee Award for best County Final programme in 2022.

### DEVELOPMENT

After receiving £400,000 from club members and friends for the Our Vision Development program it is bitterly disappointing that we have been refused grant aid from the local council on two occasions despite the excellent submissions prepared by Feargal McCormack and Eamonn Connolly. The steering committee are holding a special meeting prior to the AG to assess the current position and to prepare a progressive plan for the future to ensure that the second field is developed in the near future.

We are pleased that we still have the Strategic Alliance with St. Mark's High School which was recently extended for a further three years and provides us with the necessary facilities to enhance the development of club activities.

The club has been very active in attending the many courses organised at County, Provincial and National level for both coaches and club officers which help to greatly improve and maintain a high standard within a club and I have no doubt will ensure that we continue to achieve the highest standard within the Club Maith scheme.

### FUNDRAISING

Each year we have a number of fundraising events such as coffee mornings etc but we depend mostly on a few major events. Our increased lotto sales has greatly contributed to the weekly income of the club as does the social club at weekends and when special events are held in the premises. Our Club Breakfast in the Whistledown Hotel has now become an annual event which is much enjoyed by all who attend it and this year we organised a Golf Day in Warrenpoint Golf Club which was extremely well supported by those who participated, those who sponsored greens and tees and those who bought raffle tickets. It was a very enjoyable day which made a significant contribution to our income. This year our signs at Pairc Liam Uí Ír were due for renewal, and not only did we get all renewed but we encouraged three new companies to take signs. I thank all those involved in organising these events and look forward to them continuing in the future.



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Being in charge of the club finances has become a more difficult task with each passing year and I wish to acknowledge the tremendous work carried out by Shane Lavery and his assistant treasurer Eamonn Connolly.

### **VISIT OF LUGDUNUM CLG** Gope that

Following a visit by Larry Byrne and Daniel Bird to France in February 2020 at the invitation of Eoin Campbell, who is now resident in France, Lugdunum CLG paid a return visit to Warrenpoint in the last week of July. They were in the North for a week and included us in their programme. We had a most enjoyable few days when the visitors were hosted by club members and a football game and social night, including a BBQ, were organised and some of our Mothers and Others team participated with the French visitors in a challenge game in Rostrevor.

It was a most enjoyable weekend for all, both visitors and hosts and should be repeated in a few years again with our club visiting France.

### **SPONSORSHIP**

We are most fortunate to have many local businesses who sponsor in many different ways such as balls for games, jerseys and other items of equipment and we deeply appreciate their generosity but in particular I wish to thank our main sponsor, for many years, the Whistledown Hotel who are very generous to us each year. We hope that their sponsorship is of mutual benefit as many of our members frequent the premises on a regular basis.

### **CONCLUSION**

I am stepping down as secretary after two years as I feel that it is a position which should be filled by a younger member. This has been my fourth term as secretary and I have enjoyed every one of them and I hope that Daniel Bird will enjoy his second term. I wish to thank the membership of the Senior Committee for their help and support over my term and in particular I thank Larry Byrne and Paul McKibben both of whom were excellent cathaoirleachs, Hugh Carr who was the assistant secretary and my wife Donna for putting up with the telephone calls, emails etc.

Finally if I have omitted to mention the contribution made by anyone, I sincerely apologise and assure them that their work is greatly appreciated.

Is mise le meas,  
Dónal MacCormaic