

## **SECRETARY'S REPORT 2011**

“Effective teamwork on and off the field is the cornerstone of our Association – there is no strength without working together”. Club Maíth Values (Teamwork).

Clonduff is working towards the renewal of Club Maíth which is a 'Best Practice' award equivalent to the Quality Assurance scheme in industry. Our Platinum Award expired earlier this year. Attached to this Report is a copy of the Club Maíth Mission, Vision and Values Statement for your perusal – Are we on track? What value Award, if any, will we receive this time around?

2011 was not the smoothest of years in Clonduff but despite this a lot was achieved on and off the field in the last year. Towards the end of the playing season, the new pitch was marked out and officially used for first game of U21 Championship. The expansion in participation and inclusiveness was reflected by the fielding of two teams in the U14 and U12 Football Leagues, the resurrection of the U16 Ladies Football team and the introduction of an U12 Ladies Football team and the big increase in the number of young people playing Handball. Some of the highlights of the year included the Senior Footballers reaching their first County Final in eleven years; the U9½ Football team winning the Down and Ulster Community Games title and going on to represent both in the All Ireland Final in Athlone; the U13 Footballers excelling in the Rose Cup in Tralee; Soaring Star Camogie Awards for Fionnuala Carr and Orla Maginn and an Ulster 'Camogie Player of the Year' Award for Orla; another Ulster Handball Award for Sean McNally and the selection of Jenna Boden for the Elite Players' Training Camp for U16 Ladies Footballers.

As the Youth Report will verify, many of our Youth Teams in all codes had a high degree of success in their Leagues and various Tournaments – but the real success is the number of young people participating in sporting and cultural activities on offer in Clonduff. We fielded teams in the four field sports and were well represented in Scór and successfully competed in the Handball leagues. Our Club was well represented on County and Schools teams with both players and management personnel - many of our young people were involved in the successes of their respective educational establishments with Cathal Murray at the helm in St Colman's, Mark Copeland in SRC and Lorraine Maginn in St Mark's; and it is great news to have our own Kitty Fegan and Plunkett McConville appointed to full-time positions in St Patrick's Primary School. To all those who spend time and effort expounding the Gaelic Culture, Ethos and Skills to the young people in Clonduff and in our schools I say 'thank you' on behalf of everyone in the community.

Of course there were disappointments too – having reached their respective finals, expectations were high that our teams would go the whole way but they fell short – Senior Footballers and Senior Camogs, U16 Ladies, U14 Camogs and Hurlers and the relegation of the Senior Ladies Football team.

### **RÉITEORÍ (REFEREES)**

Jerry Quinn is Chairman of the County Referees Administration Sub Committee for Football and Hurling; John Anthony Gribben is involved in Referee Administration on the Ladies Board and Eileen Hamill with the administration of Camogie Referees.

The Senior Hurling Manager who is also a Senior Hurling Referee, Gerry Coughlin transferred to Clonduff bringing the total count for Clonduff referees to six for Football and Hurling, four Camogie and two Ladies Football referees. There are numerous young people who take charge of in-house juvenile games and tournaments and perhaps in the incoming year we should encourage these young people and others to acquire the 'Young Referees' qualification.

Clonduff wishes to say a big thank you to these people without whose services there would be no games.

## **PEIL (FOOTBALL)**

Senior, Seconds, Thirds, U21 and Minor Footballers all trained together – thanks to Paul Lambe, Noel Fitzpatrick, Paddy Brown, and Shane Ward, the constant figures on all management teams.

## **FOIRANN SINSEAR PEIL (SENIOR FOOTBALL TEAM)**

2011 was a topsy-turvy year for the Senior Footballers – initially they had a very disappointing run in the league and towards the end of the summer were propping up the table. Then they turned things around and put in a good late run in both the League and Championship, confounding a lot of pundits to reach the Championship final. The defeat of Kilcoo in the semi final was undoubtedly the high point of the season. The County Final is best forgotten but all credit to the players who put their best foot forward in Burren the following week to lift themselves off the bottom of the table and give themselves a fighting chance for survival in Division One – the rest is history. To all the players we say thank you.

The current ten-team league format does nothing to promote the skill and profile of players nor does it allow the leagues to be finished any earlier. Whilst the bottom end may be sorted now in mid-November the finalizing of the actual winners is still a long way off.

Thanks to the management team of Paul Lambe, Noel Fitzpatrick, Paddy Brown and Shane Ward; team trainers Ivan McQuaid and Sean Gallagher, Administrator Tommy Kelly and Team Nurse Paula Brown.

## **FOIREANN DHÁ (PREMIER RESERVE TEAM)**

Having escaped relegation last season the Seconds got off to a good start in the League in 2011, followed by a slump in form and then things evened out during the season and the team finished mid table. Unfortunately they went out in the first round of the Championship.

Thanks to Senior Management team plus Brian McGreevy and Thomas Murnin who looked after the Seconds.

## **FOIREANN TRIUR (THIRDS [RESERVE] TEAM)**

A mainly young Thirds team competed in the South Down Reserve League and won half their games to finish mid-table. Their opponents withdrew from the preliminary round of the Championship but they too went out in the first round proper.

Thanks to Senior Management team plus Thomas Murnin, Eamon Crothers, P J McGreevy for taking charge of the team and to Brian McGreevy and Ciarán McGreevy for helping out.

## **PEIL U21 (U21 FOOTBALL)**

The structure was switched from U20 last year to U21 in 2011. The format follows that which was introduced last year. The winners of the four groups will go into the Semi Finals. Clonduff got off to a great start with two comprehensive wins but hit a brick wall in their third game.

Thanks to Management team of Paul Lambe, Noel Fitzpatrick, Paddy Brown, Shane Ward, Artie Noel McConville and John Fegan.

## **PEIL MIONÚR (MINOR FOOTBALL)**

Minor Football in Down is now administered by All County Committee (U16 Football will follow suit in 2012). Clonduff Minors, by winning eight of their ten games finished very creditable runners up. They had two big wins in the Group Stage of the new Championship format but missed out in the top of the table clash with Warrenpoint to end their Championship run.

Thanks to the Senior Management team plus P J McGreevy and Artie Noel McConville.

## **IOMANA SINSEAR (SENIOR HURLING)**

Following the highs of last season Clonduff finished mid-table in 2012 but found the Intermediate Championship a step too far and went out in the first round. They went to the All Ireland Sevens and reached the Quarter Finals of the Plate and they reached the semi final of the Betsy Gray Cup. The

Seconds team finished third in the Armagh League. Rian Branagan a regular member of the Senior team has selected to participate in Colleges All Star Hurling trials and we wish him well – All Stars to be announced 6<sup>th</sup> December.

Thanks to the management of Gerry Coughlin, Stephen Burns and Damian Farnon and medical assistant Noleen Cairns.

### **PEIL na Mban (LADIES FOOTBALL)**

The Senior Ladies are undergoing a major rebuilding exercise and for the first time since their inception didn't have the best of seasons – in fact they have been relegated to the Intermediate League after five years in Senior League, during which time they won three Senior Championships.

Thanks to Ryan McShane and Ciarán McGreevy who looked after the Senior Ladies

The U16 team was the main focus of attention during 2011 reaching the finals of both the Championship and League. Saul gave a very strong performance in the Championship final and ran out easy winners. There was a three-way playoff in the League with Clonduff, Saul and Kilcoo involved. Clonduff drew with Kilcoo and lost to Saul by three points to secure the runners up spot. Thanks to Paula Cairns, Christine Grimes, Ryan McShane and Ciarán McGreevy.

An U12 team took the field in May with upwards on 30 girls attending weekly training sessions. Thanks to John Anthony Gribben, Marty Johnston, Sean Cowan, Paul Kelly and Joleen Branagan for looking after the young girls.

### **NA FÓIRNE ÓIGE (YOUTH)**

The Youth Committee is responsible for activities for the younger members of Clonduff from Under 16 downwards. Following on from the FUNdamentals programme (U6) initiated last year, Clonduff hired the INF Hall for the 'Gaelic Start' programme for P1-P4 boys and girls. Such was the demand that two sessions had to be provided. There was great support from County Coaches, our own coaches and a huge number of parents – at this level the involvement of the parents is essential and they didn't let their children down.

What a turnout for the Youth Award Night! Big names bring big crowds! Thanks to Ross Carr for organizing the Attendance of Darragh O'Sé and Danny Hughes and of course our own home-grown All Stars – Fionnuala and Orla.

The Youth Officer Paddy McConville will present the Youth report. Clonduff thanks the Youth sub-committee for their work during the year.

### **TUAIRISCIGH CAMÓGAÍOCHT (CAMOGIE REPORT)**

The Camogie Club will present their report and answer any questions arising. Thanks to Maura Quinn, Guinevra McGilligan and all the Camogie mentors for their co-operation over the past year.

### **LIATHRÓID LÁIMHE (HANDBALL)**

Clonduff had their best ever year on and off the Courts in 2011. They had a very successful year in the juvenile ranks, winning two juvenile titles – Shane Milligan and Rory McQuaid. There were 25 youngsters (8-12) in the court every Monday night last winter and they have begun again this year. The Seniors retained Division 1 status in the North Ulster League and they also won the Ulster Junior Championship for the first time. They also entered two teams in the County Leagues with Clonduff A retaining their County title after a replay.

Sean McNally had an outstanding year culminating in another Ulster All Star Award. Paul Shields reached the Ulster Junior Championship Final and was very narrowly defeated.

Thanks to all those who helped organize the County Awards night in Clonduff Clubrooms in June.

Ross Carr and Karen Gribben represented 'Down Past and Present' at the Down Handball shootout at Saval and both beat all in front of them on the day!

Handball is a sport for everyone – Karen Gribben proved that it is ideally suited to females as well as

males– so come on Ladies get yourselves out there on the Court! It's a great way to keep fit over the winter! And what about Des, Sean and Ross? Don't they prove it's a sport for all men too!  
Thanks to Senior players Des McNeill, Eddie Clancy, Paul Shields and Colin Shields for coaching the juveniles and to Colin for the Report.

### **DISCIPLÍN (DISCIPLINE)**

It gives me great pleasure to report that the great Discipline record of 2010 was generally adhered to by players and mentors during 2011. There were a few breaches with one Red Card in Football and one in Ladies Football and there were a couple of double Yellows. Great credit must go to the mentors for instilling this Code of Behaviour in the players - this is as it should always be but there is no room for complacency and we must continue imposing the 'Give Respect, Get Respect' initiative. There was one fine imposed but this was waived upon appeal.

### **TUAIRISCIGH SCOR (SCÓR REPORT)**

"A GAA Club without Scór is just another sports club" so says Jarlath Burns and Clonduff certainly would not argue with that.

In keeping with aims and ideal of the GAA, Clonduff competed in most disciplines at Junior and Adult Level and won the trophy for the Best Participating Down Club and picked up two South Down titles and one County Scór na nÓg title and South Down and County Senior Set Dancing. The 2012 juvenile competitions have now reached the County Final stage – Clonduff will be represented in Set Dancing and Quiz. Forty Clonduff juveniles participated in the South Down competitions.

Thanks to Joe Farrell, Wendy Branagan, Ursula and Maura Quinn, Lisa Gribben, Paddy and Fidelis Downey, Patricia Grant, Eileen Mooney, Ruby Crothers, Mary McGreevy, Marie Walls, Brian Canavan, Anne and Stephen Murray, Paul Kelly and the parents of all involved in the organizing and transporting of competitors to and from events. I truly apologise if I have omitted anyone.

### **AN PHÁIRC (FIELD)**

The new field came into use towards the end of the season with the U16 Footballers playing the first game when they entertained the Carlow Champions, Tinryland and a couple of weeks later it was officially marked and used by the U21s for their first game. The use of the new pitch is still limited though, for the next year.

Team mentors generally adhered to using the back field for training when it was available and to the Pitch Schedule but as the new field will not be fully operational until the latter part of next season it is imperative that all teams be represented at the monthly fixtures meetings to ensure that all teams have their own space and time without encroachment by others.

Despite our own busy schedule we still managed to host a few championship games and quite a number of schools games.

Thanks to P J and his team for keeping the pitches in such pristine condition throughout the season. Sean Cairns' retirement from work has been a Godsend for Clonduff! The amount of work Sean does around the clubrooms, the dressing rooms and the fields cannot be underestimated. Sean, on behalf of everyone in Clonduff this is your official 'Thank You' and long may you enjoy your retirement!

### **FORBAIRT (DEVELOPMENT)**

The new pitch is now operational, albeit in a limited capacity but there is still a lot of work to be done and Development is always a 'work in progress'. Clonduff owes a debt of gratitude to Aidan Brown and the Development sub-committee who have worked tirelessly for the last couple of years and on behalf of us all I say a big 'Thank You'. Thanks to Aidan for the attached report.

### **CUMANN CAIDRIMH (SOCIAL CLUB )**

The Social Club was busy during the past year, initiating and hosting a number of memorable events. I would, however, appeal to all club members to make full use of this great community facility for all

their family functions. The revenue generated by the Social Club is vital and adds greatly to the club's much needed financial demands. Thanks to Sean Milligan and the sub-committee for their hard work during the year and to Sean for the attached Report.

### **STAIR (HISTORY)**

The Townlands Project has been resolved recently with the awarding of the contract – all the stones should be in place by the beginning of next summer. Thanks to Jerry Quinn and his sub-committee for getting this over the line.

The next project of this committee is preparing the programme to celebrate our 125 years in existence which comes about next season.

### **TIONSCNAMH SÓISIALTA (SOCIAL INITIATIVE)**

Clonduff was one of two Down clubs selected to Pilot the Social Initiative, an idea formed by President McAleese and her husband Martin, initially aimed at older men. It was re-launched in 2010 as a club-based project, 'utilising the GAA club network as a vehicle to achieve the greatest reach into all our communities'. The clubs were to reach out to people with no former connection with the club as well as to former players and members.

Clonduff had been involved in Social Initiative type projects but didn't know to call it that – the Tribute Night to Kevin and Patsy being prime examples as well as the Thursday Night Card Playing and Parish Sevens at the Boley Fair.

In order to receive a Certificate of Participation the club had to put on three events in 2011 – Clonduff surpassed this – Saturday night Dancing, formation of Hillbillie Ramblers, GAA Oral History Project, inter-club Social Football tournament, GAA Chat Night and Yoga Classes.

Participating Clubs were invited to a Garden Party in Áras an Uachtaráin in July – Brendan Murray, Marie Walls, Niall Rafferty and Paul Kelly attended.

Brendan, Marie Milligan and I attended the Social Initiative forum on the same day as the County Final. Of the 22 participating Ulster Clubs Clonduff was selected to give a ten minute presentation on our activities. I undertook to do this as it was a great opportunity to showcase the best Clonduff has to offer.

Many thanks to Niall Rafferty our Co-ordinator for getting the project up and running.

### **CUNTAS AIRGID (FINANCE)**

The Treasurer's report has been prepared by Marie Walls and will be discussed at the AGM. Thanks to the Lotto sellers and the checkers who attend every Monday night. The Finance sub-committee, who has done Trojan work to date, is open to further suggestions for fundraising. A big thank you to our treasurer, Marie for not only for the Annual Report but also for the detailed monthly reports.

Personally I wish to say a special word of thanks to all those who have joined the Standing Order Scheme but there is still room for many more – Your Club Needs You!

### **COMHTHÁTHU (INTEGRATION)**

Clonduff's partial Integration for the last five or six years became somewhat fractured at the end of last year. Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael Christy Cooney, Uachtarán Chumann Camógíochta Joan O'Flynn and Uachtarán Cumann Peile Gael na mBan Pat Quill have committed to developing a 'One Club Model' at national level and the Ulster Working Party is almost ready to report on the way forward. Uachtarán Cooney has stated that the vast majority of people, both within and outside the Association, view all the Gaelic Disciplines as being members of the same family just as we here are all Clonduff people playing Gaelic Games and it is imperative that we strive to our utmost to make this an inclusive, community-based welcoming organisation.

The new Club Maíth Standards (A5) calls 'for clubs to be fully integrated with one management committee over-seeing both male and female sporting activities and codes'. The Camogie Club has to

'want' to be a member of a fully integrated Clonduff GAC –they are not to be coerced into it. The whole environment has to become one of inclusiveness where everyone feels valued and welcome.

### **COMHGHAIRDEAS (CONGRATULATIONS) To**

Fionnuala Carr and Orla Maginn on winning their Soaring Stars and Orla's Ulster Player of the year award

The U9½ Footballers who won the Down and Ulster Community Games and represented the County and Province in the All Ireland Finals in Athlone

The U13 Footballers and their mentors who were great ambassadors for Clonduff during the Rose Festival in Tralee – a special word to Nicole Curran, our own Down Rose and without whose presence Clonduff would not have had the opportunity of playing in (and matching) the best footballing county in the country

Jenna Boden on her selection to attend the U16 Elite Training Camp in UUJ

Our six U16 Camogie All Ireland winners

The four lads on the Hogan Cup winning team and their manager Cathal Murray

Rian Branagan's selection for Colleges Hurling All Star trials

St Patrick's Primary School on reaching the Cumann na mBunscoil final

Our Senior Set Dancers and Juvenile Novelty actors who won their respective County Titles

All the teams in all field sports who represented Clonduff at any level – those won tournaments and leagues or those who didn't win anything

All the men and boys who have represented Clonduff in Handball and picked up six county titles

To all our referees without whose services there would not be any games

Those who introduced and organized events under the Social Initiative

Paddy and the Youth sub-committee for the introduction and success of the Gaelic Start programme

To all Club members who represented their County as Players, Managers, Selectors or Administrators.

### **BUÍOCHAS (THANKS) To:**

On behalf of Clonduff GAC I would like to thank the very many players and volunteers involved in the Club:

A very special word of thanks to Sean Cairns for making himself available at every opportunity to the Club and the tremendous amount of work he has done around the Clubrooms, the dressing rooms and the field

The players of all codes at all levels who gave so much of their time to train and play for Clonduff

The mentors who freely gave their time to their teams and for their co-operation throughout the year

Our twelve active referees in all codes – how many other clubs can make this boast with honesty?

All those who took part in Scór competitions or helped prepare competitors

All the boys and girls who represented their schools or colleges and our adult members who were mentors or administrators of Gaelic Games in their schools

The Club sponsors and all who helped financially, and particularly those who came in for the Championship Finals and those who are members of the Standing Order Scheme

All who organized and supported fundraising events

The Lotto sellers and checkers and the Pub owners for hosting the Club Lotto

The Clonduff Post for publishing fixtures, reports and club adverts and particularly the Championship booklet

Jerry Quinn for sending the club notes on to the local press

Vincent Devlin for the photocopying throughout the year

The Primary and Secondary schools for their continuing support of Gaelic Games

Goretta and Noleen Cairns for running the shop at field and other events especially in the run-up to County Finals

The Gate Collectors, lines people and umpires and those who washed Jerseys

The organisers of the Annual Awards Night and the Youth Awards night

The helpers/stewards during the Club Tournaments and the Boley Fair weekend and on Halloween night

All who helped with the minutes of meetings during the year

Everybody who has given their time, effort, expertise, money, money's worth or other commitment, to help Clonduff GAC in any way

All the Clonduff people who are members of County or Divisional Board

Personally I would like to thank the outgoing Chairman and Committee members including sub committees for their co-operation and commitment over the past year and wish the incoming committee a successful and rewarding year in office.

### **COMHBHRÓN (SYMPATHY)**

On behalf of the Club I would like to express my sincere sympathy to the Gaels of Clonduff who suffered bereavements during the year. I thank all concerned for the big turnout at our Annual Deceased Members' Mass (Monday 14<sup>th</sup> November); Fr Cushenan who celebrated the Mass and all those who participated in it or helped in any way.

### **DEIREADH (CONCLUSION)**

There's no point pretending that everything was rosy in the Clonduff garden during the past year! It was far from it! However, we now have the chance to consign 2011 to history and bring this great club back up where it belongs. The incoming committee must commit to getting everyone on board the same ship and singing from the same hymn sheet. It won't be easy but the essential word here is 'commitment'.

Success should not just be measured on the number of trophies collected during year. It is the number of young, and not so young people we can keep within our ranks; it is the encouraging of all to be the best they can be whether that is as a player, a mentor, an administrator, a spectator or a social visitor; it is the provision of the best facilities we are capable of providing; it is the adoption of Codes of Best Behaviour and Practice at all levels and essentially it is a positive attitude emanating right throughout the Club and out there in the community.

Clonduff's Platinum Club Maíth Award expired earlier this year and the portfolio must be re-submitted – there will be no funding from any source for any Club that does not have a current Club Maíth Award. There is a lot of 'underpinning' work to be done in Clonduff in the incoming year but we are a great club and we will do it!

Let's make it happen in 2012!

Is mise le meas

*Anita Br Úi Branagáin*

An Rúnai

Cumann Chluain Daimh