

SECRETARY'S REPORT 2021

The 2020 AGM was again a historic occasion as it was over the Internet on a Zoom call with 37 members linking to the meeting.

The 2021 playing season got going mid-April and while there were some games called off due to Covid outbreaks in schools and clubs, most matches were played. The Covid Supervisors played a key role in ensuring all players and managements were kept safe from the Covid Virus.

MEMBERSHIP

The Club membership was again one of the largest in the County with 450 adult members and 516 juvenile members. Our Registrar Damian Fearon does a tremendous job coordinating all the memberships and getting everybody registered on the new GAA Register, Foireann; as for the players registration, players are not insured with the Players Injury Support Scheme until they have paid membership and been registered on the system. I would stress that all injuries need to be reported to the Insurance Officer as soon as they happen so that all paperwork can be completed. Denise Close carries out this job of Insurance coordinator the players to a very high standard, Thank you Denise.

REFEREES

We added a new young referee this year as Matthew Brannigan completed his initial training and again Ciaran Branagan, Eddie Clancy, Kevin McGrath, and Paddy Branagan (Sen) represented us on the whistle. Paddy Branagan had the honour of refereeing the County Camogie Final – Well done Paddy! I know only too well in the heat of games it can be very easy to criticize the referee but we need to show referees the greatest respect – without them there are not games. Thanks also to Niall Rafferty and Louis Brown and anyone else who has helped out with refereeing Ladies Football Games.

PLAYING FIELDS AND FACILITIES

The Club's playing facilities were used to full capacity throughout the year for training and the playing of games. We also hosted County Championship games in Football, Hurling, Camogie and Ladies Football and some Colleges/Schools games.

The dressing rooms remained closed throughout the year owing to the Covid Pandemic restrictions; a new exterior door was fitted to the referee's Room – thanks to Eugene Branagan for getting the door fitted. Work is ongoing on the new storage shed for the grass-cutting machinery and should be completed shortly. Thanks to McGreevy Construction for providing the digger, Peter McCumiskey for driving it and to Gavin Carvill, Eugene Branagan (Kilcoo), Gerard Carvill, Eugene Lively and Brendan Murray who helped me with organizing this. This facility will be a great asset to our volunteers.

The goal mouths on the top pitch were re-sodded by Curran Contracts and Murtagh Walls did the direct-grass reseeding which was needed to keep the pitch up to standard. Brendan Murray continues to keep the grass cut and the pitches in pristine condition. This is a tremendous job as we have four areas to be kept cut.

With the opening of the dressing rooms next season a lot more help will be required to keep our facilities clean and presentable for all users. The Club owes a great depth of gratitude to Brendan Murray for his continuing dedication to our Club pitches.

The gym was deep-cleaned and repainted ready for reopening next season – Thanks to Neil Francis O'Hagan, Eddie Clancy and Ryan McShane for this task.

ADULT GAMES

The Club fielded teams at Senior, Seconds, Thirds, U20, U19 in Football, Senior and Seconds in Hurling and Senior Camogie and Ladies Football.

Senior Football

Clonduff under the new management of Ciarán Mc Bride, Mark Copeland, Anthony Grimes and Ryan McShane competed in the inaugural Corn an Dúin preseason competition where after defeats to Downpatrick and Burren in the group stages ended up in the plate section of the competition where they overcame An Ríocht in the semi-Final and Longstone after extra time in the final.

The 2021 League consisted of 10 teams and due to Covid it was decided by the county board that no relegation would take place in 2021. Clonduff had 5 home games and 4 away games. The home game against Burren doubled up as the 2020 league final with Clonduff coming out on top and winning the league for the first time in 21 years. With 6 victories and 1 draw in the 9 fixtures Clonduff narrowly missed out on securing back-to-back league titles where they were pipped by Warrenpoint by 1 point. In the Championship, Clonduff defeated Rostrevor in the first round before narrowly losing to Kilcoo in round 2. In Round 3 Clonduff defeated Warrenpoint before beating a strong Downpatrick side in the quarter final. We narrowly lost to Burren in the Semi Final stage with Burren securing a 1-point victory with the final kick off the game that left supporters, management and players devastated.

Overall, a positive year for the senior team where they fielded a number of young players throughout the year, Shane Close, Patrick Cowan, Will Kelly and Dean Mc Cabe all made debuts in 2021 with a number of other young players breaking their way into the senior team throughout the season.

Seconds Football

Mark Copeland, Ryan McShane and Anthony Grimes took charge of the seconds panel this year, they topped their group in the Felix Darby (League) with 4 victories from 4 games before beating Liatroim in the quarter final. Carryduff marginally beat them in the League semi-final.

In the Championship an opening round victory over Kilcoo was rewarded with an away tie to Carryduff in the quarter final where again a strong Carryduff team got the better of Clonduff.

Like the seniors a number of young players were given an opportunity this year to come into the squad and will have gained vital experience for themselves moving forward into 2022.

Thirds

Clonduff Thirds played in the Fr Davis Shield League winning against Drumgath, Longstone, Annaclone, St John's and Castlewellan and losing to Kilcoo and An Ríocht. With two wins in the championship against St John's and St Paul's before losing to Burren in the quarter finals. Captain was Damian Canning, vice-captain Ryan McGreevy. Training was well attended and match day squads were consistently around 25.

Thanks to PJ McGreevy and Conor Maginn for managing the Thirds team.

U19

The u19's started training at the end of April with a panel of 20 players with the aim to start a league campaign at the end of May. The league was then postponed, a number of teams dropped out to leave 4 teams in division 1. The league eventually started in the first week in July, with injuries the panel was 17 players. We were unsuccessful in our 3 league games and with no clarification about a championship the training stopped at the end of August. Thanks to Rory McGreevy and Mark Devlin for managing the U19s.

U20

U20 League/Championship currently in progress – thanks to Mark Copeland, Anthony Grimes and Ryan McShane for managing this team.

Senior Hurlers

It was a strange year for Clonduff senior hurlers in 2021. With the 2020 season curtailed before the Championship could be played it was played in the late July 2021. On a day that had perfect hurling conditions, Clonduff had a fantastic battle with Liatroim Fontenoys in Ballela with Clonduff ahead at half time before losing out on a scoreline of 3-18 to 3-12. During the early part of the season there was a significant number of games as Clonduff competed in the Down Div 1 League and comfortably regained status in the league before losing again to Liatroim in the League Quarter Final. With large numbers in the earlier part of the season the hurlers also competed in the 8 team Betsy Gray Shield and 5 wins from 7 games comfortably secured a knock out place before Clonduff lost to Ballycran in the semi-final. A large gap then loomed until the 2021 Championship with the first fixture taking place on 14th October. Despite to significant injuries and unavailability of players, results did not reflect the performances that followed. Games were played mostly in very poor windy and wet conditions at the wrong time of the year for starting championship hurling. The highlights were two strong performances against 2020 Intermediate winners Carryduff with a tight game won by Carryduff at the death in Clonduff Park with Clonduff winning the reverse fixture in the round robin group which involved 6 games closely fixed together. To benefit hurling at adult level within the club, engagement with the County Board is required to find a fixtures schedule that fits the needs of all players involved. Thanks to the management team of Damian Farnon, Paddy Branagan Snr and Francis Quinn. Thanks also to Declan Napier who stepped down as manager during the season after a number of years.

Senior Ladies Football

After a shaky and unsure start to the season the team and new management turned around their fortunes in the second half of the league. Their united and determined approach resulted in a good run in the Championship eventually reaching the Intermediate C Championship Final which was played on a wild, wet and windy night in Dundrum. Many thanks to Brian Keenan, Liam Brown and Shereen Lyness-Feenan for managing the team.

Senior Camogie

The Camogie Club will present a report on this year's activity – thanks to Guinevra McGilligan. I would like to congratulate the U13 and U15 Camogs on winning their respective Leagues and Championships.

UNDERAGE FOOTBALL

U17 Football

U17 footballers finished 2nd of 8 teams in the league group stages. They struggled to gain any momentum in the Championship and exited at the Quarter Final stage to the eventual champions Burren. Thanks to Keith Farrell and Conor Donnan for managing the U17 Footballers.

U15 Football

U15s were in all county Division 1 and with a relatively small panel gave a real good account of themselves against the best teams in the county. Highlight of the year was winning Div 2 Feile in the Abbey Grammar School. Thanks to Paul McConville, Kevin McGrath, Shane Ward and Ross Carr (jnr) for managing the team.

U13 Football

Clonduff U13 Footballers fielded 2 teams in 2021, Div 1 and Div 4 of the South Down Leagues. It was a challenging year for both teams. However, all players improved their skills and fitness levels over the season. We attracted a couple of new players to increase the size of our squad to 31 players which can only have a positive impact for u15's next year. Many thanks to all those who helped manage and train the two teams.

U11 Football

Overall, it was successful season. Started the season with 42 players and kept the full complement throughout the season. Throughout the season we worked on the transition to a larger pitch with emphasis on movement off the ball as well as running off the shoulder for support to teammates. Left and right sides were worked on to develop the players.

The A Team had a very good season coming second in a very competitive Division 1 League to a very strong Annaclone team and a number of players in this team assisted the U13's in their campaign which provided good experience for moving up to that age group.

The B1 team had an excellent season which resulted in them coming first and lifting the Division 3 League Trophy.

The B2 team had a very good season which saw their skills and teamwork develop throughout the season resulting in a number of very good victories in the second half of the season.

Many thanks to all those who helped manage and train the three teams.

U9 Football

The U9 football season got underway during the lockdown with our skills and activity league. The U9s and U7s joined for the league. Kids were divided into County teams and competed against each other to earn points based on the number of hours physical activity during each week. Bonus points were awarded for completing activity-based snakes and ladders and monopoly games.

The league lasted for 7 weeks up to Easter Saturday and all kids who took part received an Easter Egg.

There were extra-large Easter Eggs for the top 3 placed teams.

When restrictions were lifted, we quickly returned to the field, and took part in challenge games every two weeks from July to the end of September.

During the summer we had an U9 summer camp every Wednesday afternoon throughout July and August, which included healthy snacks and drinks each day. This was a wonderful camp which also hosted guest coaches from Soccer IFA, Ulster Rugby and Ulster GAA. The highlight of the camp was undoubtedly the water battle during the heat wave, when the kids not only soaked themselves, but took the opportunity to gang up on the coaches.

Our season finished in October with a fantastic end of season party in the INF Hall. There was play, burgers, drinks, snacks and a reusable water bottle along with a football for each and every kid to take home.

A special mention to all the dedicated coaches who made this possible.

U7 Football

2021 saw an increase in numbers of P2 and P3 children looking to play football. Throughout the year we had 100 children attending sessions. The focus during the year was to introduce the 'wee ones' to the skills of our games whilst ensuring they had fun throughout the year. Many thanks to all those who helped during the year especially the young ladies who came along on Saturday mornings.

UNDERAGE HURLING

U15 Hurling

This was a very successful year for the U15 squad as they finished 2nd in the All-County Division 2 League and reached the Feile na nGael Final before being defeated by Kilclief. This is a young, committed squad with over 90% attendance rate across the squad. 15 of the 18 players will be eligible for the 2022 season and the squad will grow to over 20 players. Thanks to coaches Eddie Clancy, Jim Murnin and Raymond Moan.

U13 Hurling

Our U13 hurlers participated in the All-County Hurling League which was played on a home and away basis and the 2021 U13 Hurling Championship. The squad of 15 lads acquitted themselves well in all competitions with a number of the lads playing hurling for the first time this season. Enjoyment of the Ancient game was a critical component for the lads with the increase in their skills set very pleasing to see as the season progressed. Our season was bookended with the end of year Parish League. A big thank you to Liam Boyle for sponsoring the tournament Cup. Thanks to coaches Shane Quinn and Tim Colhoun.

U11 Hurling

It was a busy 2021 season for our U11 hurlers who participated in the County Blitz programme. A total of 23 lads made up the U11 squad with a total of 14 games played against local teams on a Round Robin Basis. Season highlights for the lads was the coaching session from Slaughtneil and Derry Dual Star Chrissy McKaigue and a trip across on the ferry to the Ards to participate in Gerard McGrattan Blitz, hosted by the Portaferry Club. A big thank you to our senior hurlers Rían and Paddy Brannigan for compiling our Skills videos during the Covid Lockdown period and to our coaching team of Michelle McCoy, Micheál Murtagh and Shane Quinn.

U9 Hurling

The U9 hurlers had a very enjoyable and successful season with a variety of games and blitzes during the year. We participated in blitzes hosted by a number of local clubs such as Warrenpoint and Newry Shamrock's whilst also hosting 3 blitz days at Clonduff Park alongside additional friendly games. Like all youth hurling teams, there was a strong growth in numbers resulting in 25 players playing during the season. This is the most encouraging aspect with significant improvement in players playing the game for the first time and skill levels very high across the entire squad. Thanks to coaches Ciaran Kearney, Brian Canavan and Danny Nugent.

U7 Hurling

The 'wee' hurlers had a great year and benefitted from over 30 players regularly training on a Friday evening. Moving and striking fundamentals were well received and every training session had something new and fun included. The lads attended several blitzes throughout the year as well as hosting two. Highlight of the season was fielding 4 teams at the annual Newry Shamrocks Blitz where they all got a chance to play in Pairc Esler under lights. That and the time they got ice lollies after training!! Thanks to all the coaches, Francis Quinn, Lorraine Maginn, Cathy Shannon, Niall Donnan, Cathy Langford, Ciaran Kearney, Fionnbharr Murphy, Lorcan McAteer and Jamie Lynch

Thanks must also go to Covid Supervisors Lorraine Carville, Kathy Langford, Caroline Burns, Karen Rice, Paula Magee, Cora Rooney and Noleen Murphy

Peárcé Branagan Memorial Poc Fada 2021

In the U15 boys' competition Lorcan Binks just edged out Ryan Tweedy while Eoghan Rooney secured the U12 hurling competition.

In the camogie Niamh McAvoy won the Primary school girls' competition while Sinead McPolin came out on top for Secondary school girls.

In the Senior Ladies competition, versatile former Down and Clonduff Camog Karen Gribben pipped Ciara Murphy.

In the tightest competition of the day, Patrick Branagan Junior set a new course record to claim the Pearce Branagan Cup ahead of John Murphy by one stroke

UNDERAGE LGFA

The Club fielded teams from U9 to Minor (U18). This is the first year the club separated the boys and girls at U9 (P4/5) level such were the numbers of girls wishing to play. Because of concerns around the age grades there would be movement within the Ladies' Board to revert to 'even' age grades. That said it was a very good year for the Ladies Game in Clonduff.

U18

The Minor Ladies had a great season having only been defeated once during the year – a single point at home to Kilcoo. They redeemed themselves by beating Kilcoo away in the League Final to clinch the title. They then progressed to the Championship Final beating Kilcoo, Annaclone and finally Castlewellan in the Final to secure the title. Many congratulations to the girls and thanks to the management team of Damien Henning, Jimmie Devlin, Kevin Kearney and Shereen Lyness-Feenan for managing the team.

U15

The year started with 24 girls training and finished with 27 on the squad. In the tough Div 1 League the squad showed great determination and commitment finishing a very credible joint 3rd with Bredagh. Unfortunately, in the Championship Clonduff met a very strong Bredagh side in the first round and despite putting up a great fight it just wasn't Clonduff's year. Throughout the year the mentors and team have grown in strength, skill and confidence and they overcame some very tough situations. We look forward to bringing what we have learnt from this year into next year – this U15 panel of girls is definitely one to watch!

Many thanks to Marie Grant, Marty Woods, Charlene Sloan and Jackie Gilbey for managing this team.

U13

The U13 girls started off slowly but grew in skill and confidence with every game. In the Div 1 League they finished level with Bredagh at the top and went into a playoff in a night-time game in Dundrum and they ran out comfortable winners. In the Championship they were beaten by Carryduff in the quarter-final when they were hampered by players missing with Covid. Congratulations on winning the league. Many thanks to Malachy McMurry, Kevin Flanagan, Sinead McKeown and Iona Grant for taking charge of the team.

U11

The U11 (P6/7) girls had a great run in their league finishing second (there is no championship at this age group). Many thanks to Leanne McAleavey, Damien Rooney and Kayleigh McPolin for managing this team.

U9

2021 seen the first year of Clonduff U9 Ladies Football. We started and ended the year with 36 girls. The girls competed in many games with local clubs improving in every game. A great success for the first year. Many thanks to Joeleen McShane, Christine Grimes, Sinead Woods, Deirbhile Devlin, Jayme Farrell, Hugh McShane and Scott Read for their involvement with the team.

UNDERAGE CAMOGIE

This will be included in Guinevra's report but wish to send congratulations to U13 and U15 teams on winning their Leagues and Championships; Sara Louise on her Irish News All Star and Tierna and Orlaith on their Colleges All Stars.

HANDBALL

Unfortunately, Handball was one of the victims of the Covid 19 Pandemic and not a ball was played. The Handball Alley and surroundings has now been spruced up ready for the new Down Winter League.

SCÓR AND CULTURE

Scór competitions were another victim of the Pandemic. However, our hardworking Cultural Officer Caroline McGreevy ensured that this element of our club activities was not neglected. In the lead-up to Christmas 2020 she, on the suggestion of Kayleigh McPolin, organised a cross community "Twelve Days of Christmas" for Carols, Hymns or Christmas Songs, but such was the response that in order to have all contributions uploaded by Christmas Eve 3/4 songs were uploaded every day. Caroline organised a 5-week Scór/Cultural programme finishing on Easter Saturday with a different discipline each week. The final week was a 'Novelty Act' written by herself and her husband Paddy. This was fully rehearsed and recorded via Zoom. As a direct result of this programme seven local families were invited to showcase their talents on TG4's 'Realta na Gaolta' currently airing on television. The Summer Camps programme culminated on Sunday 29th August 2021 with 'Lá na gClub'. While the field activities were ongoing a full programme of live entertainment took place outdoors on a glorious afternoon. Many thanks to Caroline and indeed her whole family for all the hard work and to all those who contributed or helped in any way.

SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

The Club grounds are always made available to the local primary schools as their needs require. Our grounds are also used to host Colleges games when possible. Thanks to our local primary and secondary schools for continuing to promote our national games and culture.

DISCIPLINE

We all need to be discipline in our attitude towards the Club and Officials who visit the club. Discipline towards the Club means using the Club facilities for your own enjoyment and leaving the facilities ready for the next group to use. All team mentors should ensure all bottles, clothes and equipment is gathered from the pitches and club premises after each training session or game.

Discipline on the playing fields was acceptable but we can not afford to drop our standards.

SOCIAL CLUB

The Social Club remained closed owing to Covid Regulations but with these restrictions easing, the incoming committee need to give serious thought to how this excellent facility can be used to maximise

its potential as fund-raising venue. Thanks to Cathy Fitzpatrick for looking after the premises and the diary.

CLUB SHOP

The shop was finally allowed to open again and continues to keep the Club merchandise available to members and the general public. Thanks to Goretta, Noleen and Shane Cairns and to Lorraine Bloomfield for the invaluable work of coordinating and ordering, not only the stock for the shop, but also the monumental task of club merchandise both for general public and teams.

DEVELOPMENT

This time last year the plans for the new Sports Hall, Gym and Ball Wall were resubmitted and have now been passed so planning permission is granted.

Over the last few monthly meetings talks have been ongoing regarding the development of Brown's Field to accommodate a dedicated juvenile training/playing area.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Shereen Lyness-Feenan does a great job keeping the Club in the public eye with the weekly Club Notes. Sheenagh Walsh has the mammoth task of keeping Clonduff's Social Media channels updated, current and safe. Clonduff has FaceBook, Twitter and Instagram accounts. Many thanks Shereen and Sheenagh for this very public picture of our club.

ADMINISTRATION

A lot of unseen work goes into the running of the Club – thanks to Anita Brannigan, Niamh Murray and Ciara Kelly for the Minutes of Meeting, Sheenagh and Shereen for the Social Media and Lorraine Bloomfield for the online Club Lotto admin. Plans are well under way for the placement of an 'Online Shop' within the Club's extensive website, thanks to Anita Brannigan for keeping this updated.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Daniel McPolin will provide the Financial Reports for the year.

SYMPATHIES

Condolences to all Club members who lost loved ones during the year and especially to our former Club President Dean Anthony Davies. May they rest in peace. *Ár dheis Dé go raibh a hamamacha*

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Our Senior Footballers on winning the 2020 League and Corn an Dúin Plate 2021

U15 Footballers on winning the Div 2 Feile

U11.5B Footballers on winning the Div 3 League

U13 and U15 Camogs on winning their Leagues and Championships

U18 Ladies on winning their League and Championship

U13 Ladies on winning Div 1 League

Darren O'Hagan County Senior Football Captain

Sara Louise Carr on her Irish News All Star

Tierna Savage and Orlaith McCusker on their Ulster Colleges All Stars

All players who represented the County, University, College or School

THANKS TO:

Our Sponsors for your help and support – it is greatly appreciated. It is good to see so many new team sponsors coming on board as well as all our long-standing ones

All our players who give their time to train and play for our Club

Our Referees

Volunteers who give so much time to our Club, these people are too numerous to mention and I won't try in case I leave somebody out

Friends of Clonduff Lotto Sellers, Checkers, Poster Printers and Local Publicans for selling and hosting the draws

To the Gate Collectors

Umpires and Linesmen

Covid Supervisors

Medical Attendants

Sinead McKeown for checking Defibrillators on a weekly basis

CONCLUSION

To conclude this report, I would like to thank everybody who helped me during my term as secretary of this great Club. As I am stepping down, I would wish my successor every success in this very important role within the Club. I would also like to thank all those who helped out around the pitches with maintenance work, again too numerous to mention but you know who you are.

Personally, I would like to thank Anita Brannigan without whose help I could not have been secretary, and to all the Executive members.

Before I finish, I want to wish the incoming committee all the best going forward. I wish the entire club every success in 2022 and who knows what lies ahead. UPTHEYELLOWS!

SIGNED:



Tomás Ó Ceallaigh (Runai)