



Clones St.Tiernach's GFC 1886 – 2011

Clones Red Hands of Ulster Gaelic Football Club was founded in 1886, two years after the GAA came into existence. There were no organised county competitions in the early days and matches were often challenges between neighbouring clubs and taking part in tournaments. The first match Clones played was in 1887 against Currin Sons of Saint Patrick, a game that ended in a draw. The replay was unfinished as there was disagreement over disputed scores and refereeing decisions – a common enough outcome at the time it seems! The sides met a third time in St.Tiernach's Park, then known as Corranny field. Clones were the victors and so began the long and distinguished history of our club.

Many clubs ran tournaments in those early years. There are accounts of Clones travelling to Ballyconnell, Belturbet, Derrykerrib and Currin tournaments. These drew good attendances and were successful social and sporting events. After 1890 the club went into a decline that lasted 15 years. These were times of social and political unrest in Ireland and the effects proved difficult for many clubs to overcome.

By 1906 there was a revived interest in Gaelic games and Clones club reorganised. A field near Millbrook was bought and the local community worked voluntarily to take away a ditch which needed to be removed. A team was affiliated and was known as Clones Lámh Dearg GFC. It was also around this time that the first Clones camogie team was formed. The club colours were to be blue jerseys and white shorts. In 1906 Monaghan, Aghabog, Killeevan, Magherarney and Clones clubs formed a North Monaghan league and a cup for the competition was presented by Thomas Toal. The Souvenir Programme published for the official opening of St.Tiernach's Park in 1944 proudly claims in its club history that "By 1907 Clones Lámh Dearg was the best team in North Monaghan and succeeded in winning the Toal Cup outright ..." In 1910 Clones had a junior team, Clones Gaels, affiliated. This was probably what we know as a minor team. They soon adopted the name St.Tierney's, probably to distinguish themselves from the senior team. Through time the senior team too came to be known as St.Tierney's and in 1913 the club officially took the name St.Tiernach's.

Clones seems to have had a good spell between 1916 and 1917, winning the North Monaghan Championship in both years. At that time Clones had several players on the county team. These included Standish O'Grady, Paddy Cosgrove, Edward Bishop, Tommy Quigley, Jimmy Murphy, Joe Kiely and Dan Hogan. The last of those listed here, Dan Hogan, was one of the great Clones footballers. He was from Tipperary and was a railway clerk in Clones. Just a few years later in November 1920, Dan's brother Michael, the Tipperary football captain, was one of those shot in Croke Park on Bloody Sunday and in whose memory the Hogan Stand was named.

Jimmy Carroll was another outstanding player of that era and although he only played a few years for the club before immigrating to America, he earned a footballing reputation "that will endure while the GAA in Clones and Co. Monaghan endures." (1944 Souvenir Programme)

By 1922 football was prospering in Clones. There was a big military presence in the town and many soldiers played with the club. Two teams were affiliated that year. A very keenly contested street league was organised with three teams from the Barracks and three from the town taking part. In 1922 the Clones



juniors won the county championship. By 1925 things were taking a turn for the worse. Emigration was taking hold and a ban was introduced on players from the military. St.Tiernach's won a Toal cup in 1929 and that was the last appearance of Clones in a major competition for 10 years. One glimmer of hope was that Pat McGrane played for Monaghan in 1930 and was a sub for Monaghan in their defeat against Kerry in the 1930 All Ireland Final. He was the first Clones player to appear in Croke Park.

At the end of the thirties a revival of sorts took place, although it seems that not everyone agreed on the way forward. In 1938 two clubs represented the town; a name changed Clones Gaels and Clones Harps. Harmony was restored in February 1939 and a reunited St.Tiernach's rose from the ashes. It turned out to be a successful year and Clones won their first official county title beating Killanny in the Junior Football Championship final. This marked the beginning of a golden era for the club. They won the Junior Football Championship again in 1941, beating Ballybay in the final this time. The club entered a team in the Senior Championship in 1942 and won through to the final against Donaghmoynce. Clones were narrowly beaten. Shortly afterwards they played Killanny in the Hackett Cup Final and won 2-10 to 2-4.



In 1943 Clones reached the Senior Football Championship Final again, this time against Inniskeen. Two of the Clones team had played for Ulster by this time, Pat McGrane in 1936 and Peter McCarney in 1942. It seems that Peter McCarney's free taking was the difference between the sides in a close fought contest. Clones emerged winners of the club's only Senior Football Championship: Clones 3-8 Inniskeen 1-4. The Clones team was: D.Rooney, J.Smith, P.Burns, H.McCooley, E.Trainor, E.McDonald, J.Fay, T.McCabe, E.McCooley,

Front Row—from left—H. McCooey, P. O'Reilly, E. Trainor, P. Rooney, J. McCaul.
Middle Row—D. Kerr, D. Rooney, E. McDonald, P. McGrane (Capt.), P. McCarney, M. Murphy, A. Carroll.
At Back—E. McCooey, P. Burns, J. Smith, T. McCabe, J. Fay.

M.Murphy, P.McCarney, A.Carroll, P.Reilly, P.McGrane, L.McCaul and subs P.Rooney, S.Kerr, T.Quinn, T.McManus.

1944 was a landmark year for Clones St.Tiernach's. The club were senior football champions and support in the community was at an all-time high. Keenly aware of this, the committee set themselves the task of buying a permanent field. It was not an easy task because the owner of the field they had selected as being most suitable had been approached before and had refused to sell for many years. He finally accepted an offer of £700 and the field we know as St.Tiernach's Gaelic Park became the property of the club. It is interesting to note the ambition of the club committee as they set about buying the field. Their intention was "to procure a field of their own capable of housing Ulster finals and even Inter-Provincial games." (*Souvenir Programme 1944*) A further £500 was spent levelling, resodding and enclosing the pitch. "As in

1906 club supporters turned up in scores with spades, shovels, picks and carts and thus the park was ready in an amazingly short time." The AGM of the club at which the decision to buy the field was taken was in February of 1944 and the completed pitch was officially opened on August 6th. Maintaining and developing St.Tiernach's Park has been a feature of club activities ever since.

The energy of the club was not as focused on football in 1944 as it had been in 1943 and although Clones reached the Hackett Cup final they were beaten by Donaghmoyne and by Killeevan in the championship. Clones returned to winning ways in 1945 and beat Donaghmoyne in the Hackett Cup final.

1943 to 1947 was a golden era for representation of Clones St.Tiernach's players at county and provincial level. The County team of 1943 included both Peter McCarney and Eugene McDonald on a wet dreary miserable day at Breffni where Monaghan were narrowly defeated. There were four Clones St.Tiernach's players on the 1944 Monaghan team - Peter McCarney, Eamonn Murphy, Eamonn McCooey and Eugene McDonald. This team defeated the famous Antrim team on the day that St.Tiernach's Park was officially opened, August 6th 1944. In 1946 and 1947 both Eugene McDonald and Peter McCarney represented club and county on the Ulster Railway cup team. Indeed in 1947 both these Clones greats played in the memorable railway cup final on St. Patrick's Day in front of 60,000 at Croke Park where Ulster defeated Leinster on a score line of 1-06 to 0-03.

In 1948 the Ulster Council approved the building of two dressing rooms and the terracing of the hill behind the town goals. The football story of 1949 was the success of the Clones Minors in the championship. They met Scotstown in the final and won: Clones 3-1 Scotstown 1-4. Also in 1949 the club decided to name the terraced steps behind the town goals after Eoin O'Duffy. General Eoin O'Duffy had presented a cup for football in Ulster in 1916 and it was first competed for by Monaghan clubs; Clones and Blackhill were early winners. The cup was mysteriously lost in 1919 and remained lost until 1942 when it was found under a stairway in a house in Clones. In 1950 St.Tiernach's decided to offer the cup for an annual inter-county match between Monaghan and Derry. Derry were the first winners. The cup was presented for the first time in over 30 years in 1950 and the official naming of the O'Duffy Stand took place on the same occasion.

The fifties were lean years for Clones and in football terms for St.Tiernach's as well. Emigration took its toll and then there was the closure of the railway, firstly to passenger traffic in 1957 and then to freight services at the end of 1959. One brighter feature was the performance of the Clones minor team in the early years of the decade, winning the Fr.Maguire Cup in 1952 and again in 1953. The Clones street leagues held each summer continued to provide great local football competition. During 1952 Clones lady Mrs. Kathleen Coffey, well known in this area as an Irish dancing teacher and supporter of Scór competition, presented a cup to the St.Tiernach's Club in memory of her late husband Tom. This cup was presented to the winners of the summer league. In 1956 two Clones clubmen, Denis McGuigan and Ted Duffy won All-

Ireland Junior Championship medals with Monaghan. Meanwhile that year the Clones Under 14 team defeated Castleblayney to capture the McHugh cup.

The club's fortunes did not improve during the sixties. St.Tiernach's appeared in one Junior Championship final against St.Davnet's in 1962 and in one Ward Cup final against Oram in 1963. The Under 14 team was successful at the end of this



decade. Managed by Stan Kelly and Jimmy Connolly, they won the McHugh cup in 1968 and again in 1969. The amalgamated Minor team St.Finbarr's (Clones and Currin) reached the final of the Fr.Maguire Cup in 1969. St.Tiernach's Secondary School were strong competitors in both football and hurling during this decade. They were the first winners of the O'Callaghan Cup (U18 Co. Monaghan secondary schools) in 1963 and again in 1968. Away from the playing field, the club honoured Captain Jimmy Murphy for his years of service to St.Tiernach's 1913-1966. Also during these years the ground development continued with the purchase of the hill and the field linking St.Tiernach's Park and the Roslea Road.



1972 Ward Cup Winners and Clones Supporters

Clones St.Tiernach's enjoyed a golden era at both juvenile and senior levels during the seventies. In 1971 the Clones U14 team were beaten finalists in the McHugh Cup and winners of the Kilpatrick Cup. The U16 team won the Murray Cup. The Minor team won the championship, beating Ballybay in the semi-final and Castleblayney in the final. They were the first winners of the Fergal O'Hanlon Cup. The Junior team, managed by Jimmy Connolly, won through to the Ward Cup Final in 1972. Having beaten Cremartin in the semi-final they went on to beat Tyholland in the final.

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Clones Minors County Champions 1973

The Minors had seven wins in the Maguire Cup in 1973 but were beaten by Castleblayney in the final. In the Minor Championship they defeated Ballybay and Monaghan, once again reaching a final in which they faced Castleblayney. The match report says of their win "At O'Neill Park, Clontibret, in what must be rated as the best Minor Football Championship Final for many years, Clones beat Castleblayney by the narrowest of margins." (Clones 2-10 Castleblayney 2-9)

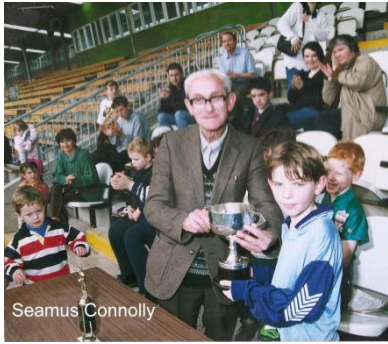


1975 Junior Double Winners

1975 was the year of the Junior double. Clones battled their way to a final meeting with Killanny in the championship, taking the honours in a match that surely proves the saying "Goals win matches" – Clones 4-3 Killanny 1-4. The panel, managed by Jimmy Connolly, was: Gerry McGarry, Leo Maguire, Eamonn Kelly, Christy Quigley, Robert Slattery, Aidan McCabe, Eamonn McCarney, Vincent Maguire (captain), E. McDonald, Ronnie Flanagan, Barry McCabe, George Neeson, Jimmy Flanagan, Paddy Tighe, Tony Maguire, John Douglas, Terry Lennon, Jim McCabe, Danny Reilly and Jimmy Monaghan. Later in the year, having lost only one match in the league, they also captured the Owen Ward Cup to add to the McCaldin Shield. Their success brought promotion from Junior to Intermediate ranks in 1976. In the Intermediate Championship of 1976 Clones lost a quarter-final to Oram. The team reached the Hackett Cup final but lost narrowly to Clontibret. The only trophy winning St.Tiernach's team in 1977 was the U12

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squad which captured the Coyle Cup, managed by John Cleary and Jim Kerr. The U21s reached the Division 2 final against Killanny that year but were unlucky.



Development work continued at St. Tiernach's Park all through the seventies, including the installation of seating and the provision of a new scoreboard. The club took part in Scór regularly during these years. In 1972 St. Tiernach's competitors took part in all the Scór competitions. The quiz team won a county title in 1976 and the ballad group reached the All-Ireland Final that year. Other major club happenings of the seventies were the retirement of Pat McGrane as club Chairman in 1970, the presentation to the club of the Connolly Cup by Seamus Connolly for the U12 town league in 1974 and a special presentation to Seamus Connolly at the County Board dinner of 1978 to acknowledge his twenty one years of service to the GAA in Monaghan.

In 1980 the development of St. Tiernach's Park continued with plans agreed to build new dressing rooms on the town side of the pitch, a broadcasting box and other facilities. This work was completed in time for the Ulster final of 1981. It was with great sorrow that St. Tiernach's clubmen learned of Pat McGrane's death in May of 1981. He was one of the great Clones stalwarts and a lifetime club administrator. He was the Chairman of the club for many years. A plaque in his memory was placed on the new dressing room building in 1981 and the seated area at the foot of the hill bears his name.

The one spark of success in 1980 was the U21 team reaching the final of the Kerley Cup. They were beaten by Magheracloone. In 1981 there were promising signs in the junior ranks with the U14s, U16s and minors all reaching finals. The club suffered another great loss in 1982 with the death of Kevin McCusker, caretaker of St. Tiernach's Park for 25 years. 1982 was also the year of the senior team's visit to Roscommon with two memorable challenge games played against Galway opposition, Newbridge-Ballygar and Glinsk, the home clubs of Tom Kelly and Gerry Fahy.

Clones won the Hackett Cup in 1983 and with it promotion to Division 1 of the Senior League for the first time in 38 years. St. Tiernach's, managed by Gerry McMahon and trained by Gerry Fahy, won the semi-final

against Donaghmoyne by the narrowest of margins 2-8 to 2-7. The final was another close encounter with Clones emerging the victors Clones 1-5 Annaghmullen 1-3. The team was Kevin Moore, Donal Reilly, Tom

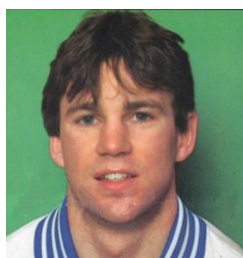


Hackett Cup Winners 1983

Moran, Christy Quigley, Brendan Murray, Ciaran Murray, John McCarthy, Eoin McDonald, Stephen Kerr, Gerry McGirr, Gerry Fahy, Lonan McDonald, Fintan Flynn, Donald McDonald and

Pauric Geoghegan. The U21 team were also successful in 1983, winning the Kerley Cup final against Killanny 2-7 to 0-6. The panel was P. Woods, Eddie Sherry, P. McCusker, Mark McGuigan, Jarlath McKenna, Brendan Murray, Pat McEntee, Lonan McDonald (Captain), Joe Beggan, John Maguire, Kevin Moore, Philip O'Harte, J. Monahan, Seamus O'Neill, P. Quigley, Paddy McPhillips, G. Rehill, M. Newell, M. Murphy, Sean Kerr and Gerry Quinn. In Scor na nÓg, the ballad group of Caroline Nicholl, Maureen Nicholl, Caroline Hanberry and Aileen Peake reached the Ulster Final. There was another trip away for the senior team in 1983, this time to Donegal. Over the weekend Clones played two matches, against Kilcar and Ardara.

1984 was the GAA Centenary year. There were plenty of activities to mark the centenary including a primary school league, a senior challenge against Kilrea of Derry and another against Gloucester St. Patrick's. The club took part in a centenary seven-a-side competition and a commemoration twenty one-a-side game against Inniskeen. This was the year of the U16 double. Managed by Jimmy Connolly, they won the McNally Cup, beating Carrickmacross 1-7 to 1-2 and went on to win the U16 Championship beating Scotstown 4-2 to 0-7. The team was, E. Masterson, D. McCaffrey, B. McCusker, N. McQuillan, P. McLoughlin, J. Lynagh, S. McDermott, C. Mulhall (Captain), D. Morris, A. Graham, P. Reilly, C. McKenna, M. Armstrong, A. Cassidy and D. Reavey. The U12s won the Coyle Cup in 1985, beating Monaghan in the final. In 1986 the club celebrated Ciaran Murray's All Star Award with a reception on The Diamond. Two juvenile



Ciarán Ó Muiri
Ciaran Murray
Muineachán Centre Half Back

teams, the U13s and U16s reached finals that year. In 1988 Jim McMahon did not go forward for election to the club committee after 35 years of service. The fortunes of the senior team went into decline during this year and Clones were relegated to Junior ranks. The St. Finbarr's Minors, U16s, U15s and U14s fared much better, all reaching finals. In 1989 the promise shown during the previous year by the juvenile teams translated into cup success. The U16s won the McNally Cup beating Carrickmacross 3-3 to 1-7 and the U15s won the Clancy Cup.

1990 was a great year for club on all fronts. St. Tiernach's Park was chosen by the Ulster Council to be the main provincial ground. In the Paddy Kierans Cup for the Reserve League Division 3 Clones beat Killanny in

the semi-final and Cremartin in a replay following a drawn final. 1990 was also the year of the minor double. Managed by Paddy Reilly, they won the Maguire Cup (league), meeting and beating Castleblayney



Minor Double Winners 1990

in the final 3-16 to 2-5. They won the Minor Championship final beating Latton 2-16 to 2-7. The panel was, Manus Quinn, Paul Hughes, Darren Cosgrove, Brian Moore, Adrian Lennon, Ronan McCaughey, Barry McLoughlin, Eugene McKenna, Colin McCaughey, Kevin Smyth, Declan McKiernan, Michael Slowey, Fergal Sheerin, John O Connor, Shane O'Neill, Finian Cassidy and Colm Lynch. The U16s were the holders of the McNally Cup and retained it in 1990 beating Castleblayney in the final 1-12 to 0-7. The U15s were beaten finalists in the Clancy Cup that year. The Gárda Cup was presented to the club for U12 football in the town.

The minors came close to winning a second double in 1991 securing the Maguire Cup again and only just losing out to Clontibret in the championship final. Clones won the Paddy Kierans Cup again and were



promoted to Intermediate football. The U15s reached another Clancy Cup Final. The following year, 1992, the minors had a third very successful year in a row. Managed by Terry Lennon, they won the Minor Championship beating Clontibret 2-7 to 0-10. They had the double within reach for the third consecutive year only to lose out narrowly to Clontibret in the Maguire Cup Final. The club

suffered a big loss in 1992 with the tragic death of John Matthews, the club treasurer.

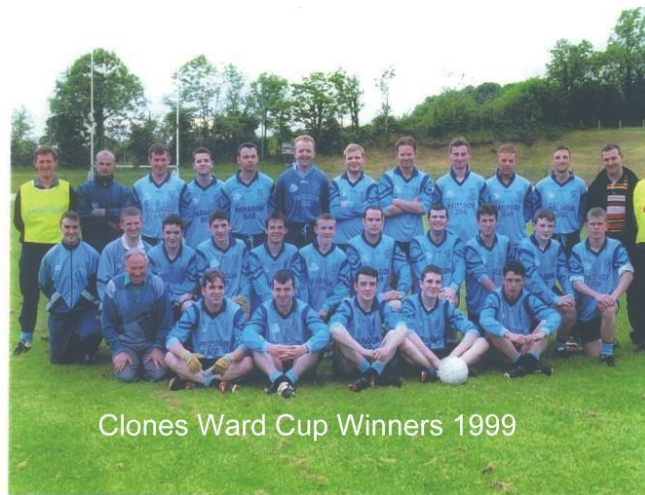
The Intermediate team fell just one win short of reaching the play-off stages of the league in 1993. They were beaten by one point by Monaghan Harps in the championship.

Major progress was achieved in the development of St.Tiernach's Park with the completion of the McGrane Stand. The development has continued apace over the years and with the completion of the Gerry Arthurs stand and further terracing work the capacity of the Clones ground exceeds 35,000. The ground hosted its fiftieth Ulster Final in 2000.





Clones had been relegated to junior football in 1994 and it was no surprise that they would make every effort to return to the intermediate ranks in 1995. St.Tiernach's, managed by Gerry McMahon and Liam Quigley, had won the first Winter League and they had an impressive win over Tyholland in the championship semi-final 3-16 to 1-5. The final previews in the *Northern Standard* held great expectations of the Clones team with three county players and the top scorer in the championship – Hudie McKenna. Clones did not have things their own way in the final and Cremartin earned a replay 0-11 each. There was no mistake the second day and Clones captured the McCaldin Shield 1-7 to 0-4. The panel was: Manus Quinn, Peter Cunningham, Brian Quinn, Declan Morris, Fergal McFarland, Colin McCaughey, James McKernan, Michael Slowey, Ross McDonald, Peadar Nugent, Declan McKernan, Martin Slowey, Eugene McKenna, Colm McKernan Fergal Nugent, Fintan Cunningham and Damien Reavey. The double seemed on the cards when Clones reached the Ward Cup Final but Oram took the spoils 0-8 to 0-6.



Clones Ward Cup Winners 1999

The next St.Tiernach's assault on Junior title honours took place in 1999. Clones had an impressive win in the quarter-final of the championship against Blackhill, winning 3-25 to 1-03. The semi-final was a closer encounter against Killanny with Clones securing a place in the final Clones 1-11 Killanny 1-8. Clones were favourites to take the title in the final against Doohamlet but were unlucky to concede two points very late on - Doohamlet 1-12 Clones 3-4. Clones won through to a semi-final place in the Ward Cup against Rockcorry 1-11 to 0-13. They met Ballybay in the final and secured the title winning by a goal – Clones 3-11 Ballybay 2-11. The panel was: Manus Quinn, Brian Quinn, Colin McCaughey, Peter Cunningham, Paul Connolly, Brian Lynch, Fergal McFarland, Ross McDonald, Ross Adamson, Niall Nolan, Declan McKernan, Paul Shiels, Donal Quigley, Colm McKernan, Fergal Nugent, Michael Treanor and Fintan Cunningham.



In 2003, managed by Gerry McMahon, Jimmy Corr and Tom Kelly, Clones launched a successful league campaign that resulted in a semi-final Dr.Ward Cup meeting with Aghnamullen. After a low scoring first half, a second half performance which produced two goals and four points for Clones was enough to secure a final place – Clones 2-7

Aghnamullen 0-5. Clones achieved promotion to intermediate football when they had five points to spare over Cremartin in the final 1-8 to 0-6. The panel was: Manus Quinn, Aidan Gillard, Fintan Cunningham, Paul Connolly, Fergal McFarland , James McKernan, Michael Treanor, Brian Quinn, William Gillard, Eugene Holland, Michael Slowey, John McDonald, Donal Quigley, Declan McKernan, Fergal Nugent, Colin McCaughey, Niall Nolan, Patrick McCarville and Aidan Treanor.

The fortunes of the seniors have been mixed since the Ward Cup win in 2003. They held their position in intermediate ranks during 2004 and were beaten finalists by a single point in both the league and championship campaigns of 2005.



St.Tiernach's were relegated to junior football again in 2006. The seniors didn't appear in the final stages of the league or championship in 2007 but were beaten finalists again in 2008. In 2009 Clones reached the championship semi-final against Emyvale and had a

great run in the league finishing at the top of the table. The league final was evenly matched with Seans scoring three points late in the game to snatch the Ward Cup. In 2010 it was still a case of so near and yet so far as the team again contested both semi-finals without success. Last year the seniors contested both the junior league and championship finals. This year we have already won the Dan Thompson Memorial Cup and have high hopes of securing promotion to intermediate football in the near future.

There continues to be great work done with the underage teams. St.Tiernach's has coaching structures in place which are second to none and young players have every chance to develop their footballing skills by taking part in normal training and participating in blitz competitions, summer camps and initiatives like the Go Games Programme. There are signs of success with the U14s winning the Division 4 League in 2010 and the U16s reaching the Division 4 Championship Final last year. The Clones Minors also competed strongly to reach the Minor League Division 3 Final in 2011.

The St.Tiernach's GFC Gala Ball marks the end of the club's 125 celebrations. There have been many opportunities in the course of the last twelve months to remember those who have gone before us and who handed the torch to this generation of club men and women. We have also enjoyed having the chance to welcome the people of Clones to St.Tiernach's Park for the club day last summer. The Ulster Final last year, the 125th year of the Association, was as colourful and enjoyable a sporting occasion as you could hope to attend and President McAleese honoured the event by being here. In the weeks before the 24th March 2012 we have celebrated the club's past with an exhibition in the County Library. By the time this account of our club's history is read it is our hope that all will have enjoyed an evening of sharing stories of

goals and points scored and missed and retelling the shared experience of all associated with Cumann Peile Thiarnaigh Naofa Cluain Eois.



There is no better way of ending this look back at our club's proud history than to acknowledge our thanks to our current Chairman Tom Kelly who has guided the club with drive and enthusiasm for many years now and equally to thank the coaches, managers, administrators and all who work tirelessly with our players. The parting words written by Con Short and Charlie Murray in the Souvenir Programme of 1944 are worth repeating in 2012, "So now, youth of Clones, put all your energy and enthusiasm into the battle and remember the long and honourable record and tradition you have to sustain and the prestige you have to uphold."

Clones Hurling

Clones hurling club was first formed around 1908. Within a few years they had won their first county championship against Greenan's Cross on an unusual score line of 9-1 to 0-0. Clones hurling teams were affiliated in every decade of the last century and seem to have competed well in county competitions. Clones won the 1938 senior county championship. The panel was: T.McCabe, O.Kerr, M.Bowers, T.Brady, G.Blessing (Capt.), P.Burns, P.Callaghan, J.Hughes, D.Kerr, E.Hughes, H.Keyes, H.Rogers, M.Kerr, J.Baker, E.Murphy, J.Conroy, T.McCarney and T.McPhillips. The club came to prominence again in the early fifties, winning the championship in 1950 and again in 1951, defeating Monaghan in both years. That panel was: K.Shreenan, J.Carroll, J.Baker, J.O'Reilly, S.McMahon, P.Murphy, J.Hannigan, D.Kerr (Capt.), P.Flaherty, P.Reilly, M.Quigley, T.Lee, J.Deegan, F.Taylor, I.Quigley, D.Reilly, Peter Reilly and S.Sweeney.

St.Tiernach's Secondary School had successful hurling teams in county and Ulster Colleges competitions during the sixties and early seventies. They won the Juvenile Hurling Championship in 1963. They continued to challenge strongly through the mid-sixties. They played in the Ulster Colleges Senior Hurling Championship in 1965 and 1966 reaching finals in both years. In July of 1964 Clones hurling lost a dedicated worker for hurling and camogie with the death of Hugh Keyes. He had been a teacher in the local Vocational School and a keen promoter of hurling and camogie in the town.



Clones senior hurling team won the county championship in 1968, beating Castleblayney in the semi-final and Clontibret in the final. The team was Seamus Connolly, Finian Baker, Fr.Gerry White, Dermot Curran, Michael Kelly, Terry O'Brien, Anthony Campbell, Pat McAuliffe, Liam Costello, Andrew Brady, Jim Kerr, Joe Baker, Eddie Hogan, Vincent Flanagan, Jimmy Connolly, Stan Kelly, Billy Kitt, Sean Whelan, Brian Curran and Brendan Dowling. Clones were in the final again in 1969 and in 1970.

1970 was the club's most successful year with county championship victories at minor, U16 and U14. The U14 team that year was: A. Monaghan, F. Brogan, H. Holland, B. McCabe, F. McPhillips, B. McDonald, S. Moore (Capt.), J. McQuaid, V. Hughes, M. Corr, P. J. Fahy, J. Monaghan, P. Johnston, M. Healy, J. Quigley, S. Crotty, A. Cadden, J. McCaffrey, J. McGeough, S. Kerr, J. Monaghan, L. Flanagan.



U14 County Hurling Champions 1970

In 1971, the U16 hurlers won the O'Keeffe Cup beating Castleblayney by 2-3 to 0-2. Hurling in Clones went into decline until the nineties when Mick Hannon began training a juvenile group of players in 1994. Clones reached an U15 county final in 1998. Hurling coaching continued until the early years of the new millennium. Padjo Hannon has relaunched hurling coaching in Clones during the last few months.



Clones Ladies Football

Clones Ladies GFC was formed in February 1993 and took part in the County Division 2 League in their first year. This first year turned out to be the most difficult in the club's history with the tragic death of young half back starlet Trudy Kierans, who at the tender age of 13 years was killed in a road accident while on a club outing to Killanin in Galway with the senior team. One month after Trudy's death the senior team contested the Division 2 Final and lost by a solitary goal to Kilmore/Drumsnatt.

This difficult first year galvanised the club and brought everybody together and this togetherness continued over the years so that every Clones Ladies team that took to the field in that famous jersey showed a quality and fighting spirit that brought success and trophy after trophy to Clones.

The big breakthrough came in 1995 when the senior team won the Junior League and Championship double. The underage revolution began in earnest in 1997 when the club's U14 team won the first county underage title playing some superb football along the way. The club had 5 representatives on the county

U14 team that year, including Fiona O'Reilly who captained the county team to All-Ireland glory. This was also the team on which the emerging talent of our own Aisling Tierney shone through, a player who was to represent our club at all age levels on the county team, including an All-Ireland final appearance in 2002 in Croke Park for the county senior team.

Throughout what became the golden years for Clones Ladies, 1997 to 2004, the club annexed the U12, U14, U16 and U18 County Championship titles by playing a delightful and exciting brand of football with several players representing the county on all grades of teams from U14 to senior, winning All-Ireland titles into the bargain.

2005 turned out to be an historic year for Clones Ladies GFC. After working hard to win the County Championship Intermediate title against a strong Emyvale team, our senior team progressed into the Ulster Intermediate Championship to represent Monaghan. Clones played their hearts out to defeat Templeport (Cavan Champions), St. Michael's (Donegal Champions), and Fintona (Tyrone Champions) to reach the Ulster Final on Saturday 22nd October 2005 in St. Tiernach's Park. On an historic day that will live long in the memory Clones defeated the Armagh Champions Carrickcruppen after an enthralling game of football. There was many a tear in the eye when club Captain Aisling Tierney climbed the steps to lift the Ulster Championship trophy aloft.



In 2006 the club contested the County Intermediate Championship and again they did the town proud by winning the county league and championship double. Clones again contested the Ulster Intermediate Championship and reached the Ulster semi-final only to be knocked out by local rivals Lisnaskea.

There followed a couple of lean years which eventually saw the club disband. In 2012 there has been a mini-revival and a few volunteers are currently trying to get this fantastic club up and running again. Let's hope we succeed.

Clones Camogie

The first camogie team in Clones was formed in 1904. With arrival of Mr. Henry Slowey in 1908 interest in camogie grew and Clones ladies travelled widely seeking matches with clubs in neighbouring towns. A ban was placed on hurling in 1919 and this only served to increase interest in the game. There was plenty of camogie activity in Clones during the thirties. Much of the credit for this belongs to Aodh Mac Cíosa (Hugh Keyes) who was an Irish teacher in Clones Vocational School. He introduced camogie into the school and many of his pupils later played for the town team. Interest spread and many who were not pupils took up the game.

In 1959 the County Librarian Martin McCabe was responsible for the revival of camogie in Clones. The reorganised club thrived for several years.

Clones Camogie Team, County Junior Champions, 1968



Back Row, left to right: Iris Murphy, Rhona Baker, Joan Baker, Clare Baker, Eithne Curran, Mary McCabe.
Front Row, left to right: Margaret Lambe, Rosemary Charity, Mary Lambe, Rita Moore (Capt.), Gabrielle Moore, Mary Hannon, Marie Brady.

In the late sixties a camogie club was affiliated and were successful in the following years. In 1968 they competed in the Monaghan Junior Championship. They had a notable victory over Knockatallon in the semi-final 6-0 to 1-1. Clones went on to win the title against Annaghmullen. The panel was: M.Lambe, M.Brady, M.Lambe, G.Moore (Captain), E.Curran, M.McCabe, R.M.Charity, P.Flanagan, M.Hannon, J.Baker, D.Flanagan.

Miss Mary Maguire came to teach in St.Tiernach's Secondary School in 1969. Under her inspiration the girls there began to play camogie. Camogie sticks were provided by Joe Baker, a great Clones clubman and supporter of both hurling and camogie. The girls played for about four years at that time.

In 1973 the Clones and Currin camogie clubs amalgamated. This new club was named St. Patrick's. However, in 1978 the club ceased to exist because of emigration, team members getting married and team members looking for work elsewhere.

Miss Áine O'Neill, a member of the Kildare camogie team, came to work in St.Tiernach's Secondary School in 1989. She immediately began to organise camogie in the school. The game waned again in 1992-1993 because of the decreasing number of girls in the school made it difficult to field a team. Many reasons have been put forward for this decline in interest. Perhaps the success of the Monaghan ladies football team influenced thinking. At any rate the team ceased to exist in 1993 and was replaced by a ladies football team.

Clones Handball



Seamus McCabe -Handball Hero

No account of the achievements of Clones GFC would be complete without making reference to the exploits of Seamus McCabe in the handball alley. For some twelve years he strode the handball world like a colossus. The following is a summary of his achievements.

1962 Junior Softball singles, All-Ireland Final.

1966 Senior Softball singles, All-Ireland Final. First ever Senior All-Ireland title for Ulster.

1967 Played in the World Championship in Toronto, Canada, and came third.

1967 Won the Senior Softball singles All-Ireland Final.

1970 Won the Handball Doubles All-Ireland Final in partnership with Louis Gilmore.

From 1960 to 1972 he won forty seven Ulster Championships.