

IDIR PEIL AGUS POBAL

A HISTORY OF THE G.A.A. IN THE PARISH OF ARDARA

by

Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill agus An Coiste Staire.

Eagarthoir: Sean Mac Conaill



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for

Ardara GAA Club

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Dedication

To those who went before us and the generations yet to come

An accurate account!

This book is based on contemporary club records and reports of the Ardara G.A.A. Club and on newspaper accounts of Club and County fixtures on the dates referred to. No offence is intended to any person or persons living or dead. Rather, the book is placed in the public domain to honour the men and women who contributed through their involvement in Gaelic Games to the growth of their communities at large, and particularly to all who went before us in this ancient parish of Ardara.

Focal ó'n Uachtarán



Is mór an onóir domsa an deis seo a fháil cupla focal a scríobh ar fhoilsiú an leabhair seo.

I am honoured to be given the opportunity to write this foreword to the History of such a famous and revered club. The book itself is the culmination of work begun by the late great Pádraig S. Mac a' Ghoill who sadly passed away in 1997 and never lived to see the fruit of his labours in terms of this project. I am sure it is a proud and happy Pádraig who watches over his beloved Ard an Rátha on this historic day.

The story told in this book is one of survival, of struggle, of development, of unbelievable highs and of depressing lows. It is a story that will strike a chord with thousands of GAA people in hundreds of clubs across the country. In so many ways, it is the story of the GAA itself.

Ardara has a long and prosperous history. From the first championship victory in 1923 to the most recent success in 2000, there have been many great days and many great names. None perhaps greater than the day in September 1992 when Ardara's own Anthony Molloy became the first ever Donegal man to claim ownership of Sam Maguire. Below him Martin "Rambo" Gavigan had a broad contented smile and trainer Anthony Harkin had also played his part.

Off the field too, the club has played a prominent role in the overall development of Gaelic Games in the county through the provision of many who have served the Association with distinction in administrative and official capacities. Indeed, I am led to believe that the club has provided five County Chairmen to the Donegal County Committee, a record unsurpassed by any other club in the county. That Ard an Rátha were honoured as the AIB Donegal Club of the Year in both 2000 and 2001 speaks volumes for the work that is being carried out at all levels.

Throughout the years, the club has provided a social, cultural and sporting outlet for the people of the area and their proud history of achievement, both on the field and off has been fitting reward for the dedication and commitment of your members. Indeed, I think it is appropriate that we acknowledge the commitment and courage of their club officials and their colleagues who continue to ensure that Ardara will go from strength to strength. Equally, we should always remember with pride those who have gone before and who kept the fire of Gaelic games burning brightly, in difficult times when there was little to celebrate.

I hope you enjoy this publication, a fine tribute to the men and women of Ardara who have kept the fire burning brightly through the generations.

Beir Bua,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Sean Ó Ceallaigh'.

Sean Ó Ceallaigh,
Uachtarán, CLG

Introduction

This history of the G.A.A in the Parish of Ardara is one that has been eight decades in the making and two in the gathering. It is the story of how the Gaelic Athletic Association impacted on a beautiful rural parish in South-West Donegal in the momentous years following the establishment of the Irish State, and how it impinged on the people and families of that community. It began as a labour of love by Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill and it has finally been completed by An Coiste Staire, seven years after his death.

Starting twenty years ago, Big Paddy travelled to the Democrat office in Ballyshannon and to the County Library, sometimes twice a week, painstakingly jotting down any G.A.A. item relating to Donegal in general and to Ardara in particular. With the help of his son-in-law, Sean Houston, he copied hundreds of pages of archival material from the local papers and chronicled them year by year as far as 1970. The actual writing started in the early nineties, and with the help of minute books, Club records and other assorted documents, he compiled extensive notes on the project. He enlisted the help of Mary McHugh in 1995, for typing, and saving data to disc. Unfortunately, he fell ill and passed away in May 1997 before the project could be brought to completion.

Despite being mentioned at every A.G.M. in the years following, it wasn't until January 2001 that the decision to complete the work was taken and the Coiste Staire was formed.

In the three years since then, members of the Committee have met almost on a weekly basis, and at last “Idir Peil agus Pobal” has come to fruition. To get to this stage, the committee trawled hundreds of documents and photos, dissected every available minute book, and have endeavoured to give as detailed and accurate an account as is humanly possible. There may still be inaccuracies. If so we, because we are the committee, apologise in advance for any name or mis-information that may be included – or omitted – in error.

We have as a Club been blessed with some brilliant administrators in the last 83 years, since Seán Ó Casaide, meticulously kept his records, in longhand, in school copybooks. In each decade there has been at least one officer who ensured that a proper account was taken of Club affairs, to be passed on for posterity. We have endeavoured to include as much of this information as possible, but in truth we could have filled another book of this size, with photographs in particular, such was the level of support that we received with the project. There were, however, a few important photos that we were unable to track down; most notably, the 1926 County Champions; the 1970 Junior Champions, the 1976 Under-14 Champions, and the Democrat Cup winners of 1931 and 1943. It seems, unfortunately, that no

photographs were taken of those teams at the time. There are other photos that we have included, that may not be of the best quality, but were too important to disregard.

Any Club in the County seeking to compile a Club history have a fantastic starting point in the books of An t-Athar Seán Ó Gallchóir. The statistics contained in both publications, "The Raidió Na Gaeltachta Book of Donegal G.A.A Facts" and "The Story of the Donegal Senior Football Championship, 1919-2001" are both priceless G.A.A publications. We thank him sincerely for making our job so much easier as a result of his research.

The members of the Committee involved in this project are as fine a bunch of people as I have ever worked with. In no particular order, there is the irrepressible George Doherty, who spent hours and days in the County Library, following up newspaper reports and gathering other details and photos when the opportunity arose. Few escaped our George when it came to this project; he even managed to pin Anthony Molloy down for an hour, and Liam Hayes couldn't do that! There are our Máistri Scoile, John Michael O'Donnell and Tom O'Donnell; I thank them for their sound advice, cool heads and attention to detail. There is our "meter man", James McBrearty, who on his daily rounds, came upon many stories, photos and other bits that were invaluable. There is Club Secretary, James McHugh, who was instrumental in setting up the committee, and the Chairman, Larry Gallagher, who has shown great interest and support since he took up office in 2003. Not least, there is Mary McHugh, who probably spent more time on the project than anyone else over the last seven years; she will be happy to see the fruit of her endeavours finally in print. Our American correspondent, John Keeney, was always on the end of the phone or an e-mail, as was his brother James, and we thank them also for their help. Our meeting venue for the past three years has been Doherty's Bar, and we thank them for their great hospitality. There was of course, the added bonus of having Eddie's vast memory-bank available to us as a reference source, whenever information about a game or an incident was scarce. The last piece in the jigsaw turned out to be Seamus Hayden of Black Lion Books. He took on the task of sub-editing and proof-reading the book. A critical role, we are deeply obliged to him for his work. We may even have converted him into a full-blooded Ardara G.A.A man in the process! Don Byrne must also be thanked for his work in this area in the early stages of the publication. The contribution of Kathleen Campbell must not be overlooked. She corrected our seímús and síntí fadas for us, often from her hospital bed. Go dtugfaidh Dia sláinte di.

We are grateful to our designer, Adrienne Randles from Letterkenny, for her professionalism and patience, and to Evan Logan and Browne Printers for doing an excellent job of printing. Our main, but not only contributor of photographs was Michael O'Donnell of Glenties to whom we are indebted. We thank also Kathleen Slowey, wife of the late Pat, John Foy of Ballybofey, Thomas Gallagher of The

Donegal Democrat and Ray McManus of Sportsfile, for their help in this area, as well as the scores of others who provided prints from their own personal collections. Our great source of information was of course the Donegal Democrat. There are few other papers nationally (if any) that give better Gaelic Games coverage than they do. We thank the paper and their staff for providing such a great service. We must also acknowledge the other papers, The Derry People/Donegal News, The Derry Journal, and the Peoples Press for the use of some of their archival material.

To the many people who made contributions towards the project, and in particular, the Donegal Local Development Company and Raidió Na Gaeltachta, we deeply appreciate the financial support we have received.

The book you are about to read will bring different emotions to many of you, joy and sadness among them. But it is our hope that it will also bring pride; pride in our past and pride of parish; pride, also, in the bright future that dawns across Crucknagapple for the young people who will succeed us. May they long remember those who went before.

Finally, this history acknowledges all those who played their part, on and off the field, to make Ardara G.A.A. the club it is today. That they also built this community is reflected in the title we have chosen – “Idir Peil agus Pobal”.

Le fíor-mheas

Seán MacConaill, Eagarthóir,

Ar son an Choiste Staire.



An Coiste Staire.

**Back L-R: James McHugh, George Doherty,
James McBrearty and Tom O'Donnell**

**Front L-R: Mary McHugh, John McConnell
and John Michael O'Donnell**



**Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill
1913- 1997**

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The First Seeds

“Éire áin an Éire nua,
Mór a bladhadh, rómhór a bua ;
Ní bheidh ar dhroim an domhain doinn
Tír soir ná siar chomh dea-fhoinn.”

Roimh Ré na Críostaíochta bhí cluichí á n-imirt i n-Éirinn. Nárbh é Cúchulainn fhéin a mharaigh an cú le sliotar nó liathróid de chinéal éigin nuair a bhí sé ar a bhealach chuig féasta i dteach Chulainn an gabha indiaidh cluiche iománaíochta a imirt. Tá an cluiche sin á imirt go dtí an lá atá inniu ann. Bhí iománaíocht, nó camán mar a tugadh air, á imirt anseo i bhfad roimh dheireadh an chéid seo caite. Is léir go raibh suim ar leith ag aos óg na linne sin i gcúrsaí spóirt.

Long before Anthony Molloy climbed the steps of the Hogan Stand, before Martin Gavigan took on the Aussies, the first seeds of what we know to be Cumann Luthchleas Gael were sown in the parish of Ardara. At that first meeting in Patrick Den’s shop in 1921, the men of vision who formed the Club could not have foreseen the changes that would take place over the next century: from the historic first Championship victory in 1923, to the most recent in the millennium year; from the many excellent Club and County officers in the early years to their successors in the interim and in the present day; from begging around the parish looking for a field to play on, to the excellent facility that Pearse Memorial Park now is. The Association would become an important part of everyday life in the parish of Ardara. There were controversies along the way - matches abandoned, the odd “legal-ish” player, scores that should, and some that should not have been. The story of the GAA in Ardara was to become one of folk heroes, of highs and lows, of great men and women both on and off the field of play. But most of all, it is a story about families, families who passed on their love of the GAA to their sons and daughters, to be carried in turn and passed on again over the cusp of a new century. All for “The Pride of the Parish”.

The Early Days

From the first days of the Club, the area has been known as a Gaelic football stronghold. It is ironic, though, that the game of hurling, or *camán* as it was then

known, was the number one field game for young men in the area for hundreds of years, even before the founding of the GAA in Thurles in 1884.

Almost fifty years elapsed after the founding of the G.A.A. before the association made any impact in South-West Donegal, particularly as far as football was concerned. Camán was the field game that was played extensively in the region; known throughout the county as 'Camán Tire' or 'Country Hurling'. It was the only field game played in Ardara for centuries and Camán was still widely engaged in when the G.A.A. was founded locally. This type of game was also known as cross-country hurling, and bringing home the ball or 'bool' at the end of a drawn game was a feature of many hard fought contests. In other parts of Ireland a similar practice applied to football.

At the turn of the century, camán was mostly played during the winter months when fields were hard and the playing venues were devoid of grass. Much has been said and written about the Cross-Country Camán and there is evidence that such a game was played in all parts of Ireland from pre-historic times down to the last century. Very little has been recorded of what such contests consisted of or how the game was played or decided, but it is certain that such a game would be played over a long distance. In Ardara we know that the playing field extended in one contest from Glengesh to Kilraine, a distance of five miles. These happenings were not only of the distant past, but games of a similar type were played in Ardara and indeed in other parts of South-West Donegal, up until the early part of the 20th century. Not until the Donegal County Board of the G.A.A. was formed in 1905 and an attempt was made to organise hurling, did cross-country camán cease to be a feature of the game in Ardara.

To participate in the game, each player made his own camán of ash, holly, black sallow or hazel. Most players owned two such camáns and brought both along for the game in case of breakages. The camán was made from a branch with a natural bend and the handle was of uniform thickness and two inches in diameter. The boss was roughly three inches wide with a depth of two inches at the heel, with a half-inch ridge on either side to give the ball elevation when striking off the ground. Some forwards fashioned camáns with a hollow in the 'boss' so the ball could be carried forward with ease and speed.

The ball used, known in Ardara as a 'bool', was made of briar-root, rounded under the embers of the turf fire until it was round and hard on the outside. The bool was three inches in diameter, weighed half a pound or more and had a life span of less





than two months. Other bools, made of hazel, were lighter but had a shorter life. The stick and ball used by the Creek Indians were similar to those used in Ardara with this difference – the ball used by the Indians was made of deer hair covered with hide.

This photo of a bool from the early 1900s, is taken from the GAA museum in Croke Park. It is likely though that this type was used for inter county matches as it has a leather surface and would have been too expensive for the games as described in this chapter.

Hurling Between The Ditches

Contrary to popular belief camán was not confined to the more spectacular cross-country game. Ordinarily camán games were played on Sundays or Holydays with roughly seventeen players or thereabouts on each team. The captain winning the toss decided the end from which his team would play and the side, right or left, that his team would strike the ball to – on or off the ground.

All players lined up in the centre of the field with the exception of the goal men who took up their respective positions and a player or spectator threw in the ball. The matches usually lasted between three and four hours.

The playing fields were similar in size to the present pitches, but unmarked. Two sticks or branches, similar to those used by the Native American Tribes and about the height of a man, served as goalposts and the scoring area for goals. Putting the bool between the posts was a goal. Points were unknown and there were neither sidelines nor a referee. But then, fouling was rare and seldom intentional. An aggrieved player usually appealed for justice and a



Pictured above is a caman from the late 19th century, similar to the type used in the area for the local games. This photo is taken from the GAA Museum in Croke Park.

consensus of opinion based on a code of honour decided the issue quickly.

Each game was a test of speed, strength and endurance. When we consider the weight of the ‘camán’ and the bool, it was amazing that men of all ages played in such contests, even players of over fifty years that had by then given over thirty years to the playing of such strenuous games, including the cross-country contests. One must also bear in mind that the players wore working clothes and hob-nailed boots.

Early Disputes

There are records of many disputes from these early matches, one of which tells of a game held in 1889, Glengesh played a Scadaman selection that included players from Ballycashel, Keadue and Brackey. The score was level at full time but there was a question of a hotly disputed goal that which had to be settled. It was agreed that the team which succeeded in taking the ‘bool’ home would be awarded the honours. This gave the winners the luxury of boasting about their victory, sometimes with barbed taunts that they had taken the trophy despite the best endeavours of the far-famed opposition. In this case it was decided that the bool would have to be hurled over the Scadaman-Brackey boundary to the north, or to the foot of the Glengesh hill to the south. The length of such a ‘field’ was two miles, and the bool had to be hurled over fields, some arable, across the Glengesh River many times, negotiating fences, drains and streams. Such a game could last for hours and a quick breakaway by either side was often hard to check. It was even harder to bring back the bool in the face of the team that had gained the initiative.

One game in March 1897 was not finished due to an incident where a Glengesh player was struck by a team mate’s holly hurley as both led a breakaway at a distance of 500 yards from the ‘midfield’. The contest, however, was replayed many times afterwards, from 1897 to 1906, over the same two mile field along the Glengesh valley. Unfortunately, this particular local cross-country replay, between these two teams, ended at the turn of the century and no longer did anyone witness almost forty players, in hot pursuit of a player leading a charge, and all striking at the bool with long swinging ground strokes, across miles of countryside. Ground caman was favoured, as a player could cover up to 40 yards with a stroke. This distance could not be reached by striking the bool from the hand. This is understandable when one considers the weight of the camán and the bool. The striking of the bool in flight had become a fine art and none but the most skilful camán players became adept at this style. During the summer months cross-



A photo of the Glengesh valley from the "S" bends. The area in the valley on the right hand side of the main road was where many cross country caman games took place in the late 19th century.

country contests were not possible but games of camán were then played on the strands of Loughrosmore and Loughrosbeg, tides permitting.

With the introduction of organised competitions and a new goalpost set-up, cross-country camán came to an end in the early years of the century. A new score of a 'hail' was registered when the ball passed through the space between the goalposts and other posts placed four feet further out along the end line. Somewhat like the 'behind' in Australian football. No number of 'hails' could equal a goal, and this change confined the game of camán to a selected playing pitch. It didn't catch on.

The teams which took part in the last cross-country camán games in the Glengesh area were Scadaman, Brackey, Keadue and Ballycashel. From Scadaman – James McGill, and Thomas McGill. From Keadue – John Gallagher, Patrick Gallagher, Peter Gallagher, John Gallagher and Teague Gallagher. From Ballycashel – James McGill, John McGill, Hugh Gallagher, John Gallagher, Neil Gallagher, Patrick

Gallagher and John McGill. From Brackey – John Breslin, Patrick McConnell and John McNelis.

The Glengesh team of those years was drawn from the following players – Patrick Breslin, James Breslin, John Cullen, Dan Breslin, (injured in the March 1897 cross-country game, had four stitches inserted in his head by the late Dr. Falvey), Peter McHugh, John McHugh, Patrick McHugh, Hugh James Maloney, all of Lower Glengesh: Patrick McGill and James and Patrick McGill (two brothers). All of these famous cross-country camán wielders have gone to their reward and with them the traditional game of camán as played along the Glengesh Valley until eighty years ago.

Their opponents in these early years of the century were the camán wielders of the adjacent townland of Brackey who on many occasions contested ‘bringing home the bool’. The Brackey team was composed of players from the McConnells (2) the McNelis’ in Upper Brackey (3), C. Mulraney, the Maloneys (2), Gallaghers, O’Donnells and the two McNelis families in Lower Brackey, two each, and C. Haughey. By 1905 Brackey had an organised hurling team and played in the County Championship. They had victories over Kilraine, Ardaghey and Mountcharles before being defeated by Burt Hibernians, who were then, as they are today, the dominant hurling force in the county.



The GAA Arrives in Donegal

"An té nach gcuireann san earrach,
cha bhaineann sé san fhómhar"

Nuair a bunaíodh Cumann Lúthchleas Gael i nDúrlas Éile sa bhliain 1884 tháinig forleathnú agus forbairt thar barr ar chluichí Ghaelacha i ndeisceart na tíre go h-áirithe. Eagraíodh cumainn 'sna paróistí. Mhuscail sin suim na ndaoine, ní amháin i gcúrsaí spóirt ach i ngach rud Gaelach go h-áirithe sa náisiúnachas.

21 years after the birth of the association in Hayes Hotel, the first Donegal County Board of the G.A.A. was formed on the 22nd October 1905. A meeting was held in Mountcharles in Cassie Macs Hotel for the purpose of organising, developing and administering Gaelic games in County Donegal. This followed on from the formation of the Ulster Council in 1903. There were football and hurling teams throughout the county but competition consisted of local matches only. In the south and south-west of the county there were teams from Bundoran, Donegal, Ardaghey, Croagh, Brackey, Mountcharles, Townawilly and Kilraine. In these areas Camán was a popular game.

The newly formed County Board elected the following Officers, with Seamus McManus, the well-known author, as Chairman.

- Patron -** Most Rev. Patrick O'Donnell, Bishop of Raphoe.
- President -** Rev. Dr. Edward Maguire, P.P.
- Secretaries -** Mr. Alec McDyre, N.T., Kilraine and Mr. J. Dowds, Stranorlar.
- Treasurer -** Rev Charles Boyce, C.C.
- Committee -** Edward Daly, (Bundoran), John McGahern (Donegal) and P. M. Gallagher, Solicitor in Donegal Town who was closely associated with Meentinadea, Ardara.

Competitions in hurling were organised by the newly formed Board and in 1906 Mountcharles defeated Brackey at the 'Planting' near Brackey Bridge. The

Brackey team was strengthened by the inclusion of Thomas McGill, Scadaman, and Neil Gallagher, Ballycashel, of the Glengesh team. In 1907 Ardaghey was victorious against Brackey abut was defeated by Burt in the County Final. Brackey, representing Ardara, became affiliated to the G.A.A. in 1906 by participating in the Hurling Championships.

From 1909 until 1921, camán declined gradually and local competitions came to an end due to emigration, World War 1 and the War of Independence. Nevertheless, the upsurge of patriotism sparked off by the 1916 rising and the War of Independence imbued young men with a great desire to revive their Gaelic games, culture, language and native industries.

In Gaelic Football, early records show Donegal taking part in the Ulster Championship of 1906, going down on a 0-18 to 0-2 scoreline to neighbours Derry. Football however did not find a proper footing in the county for a number of years, and it was 1919 before records show their next appearance in the Ulster Football Championship.

The national scene had by now changed, a new state, known as the Irish Free State, had been established. A new police force, An Garda Síochána, manned stations in every village in Ireland. Of a total force of 11,000 men, most were stationed far from home. Donegal, however, got many footballers and hurlers from the southern counties and these men popularised Gaelic Games here through their active participation and administration.



A Club is Formed

"Is fearr tine bheag a ghoras
ná tine mhór a loisceas"

Tá sé doiligh ag aos óg na linne seo a thuigbheáil gur imigh fiche bliain thart sular bunaíodh Cumann Thír Chonaill, ach is ceist stáiriúil í sin.

From the late 1800s into the new century, the game of soccer was very popular in South-West Donegal. The Evans Cup (a trophy donated by the Evans family of Ardara) was a big competition at the time. Quite a number of the players who went on to represent the G.A.A club after its formation were very talented soccer players and there were many teams in the south-west of the county. The game was also played in every town land. The main pitch in the parish was at the site where the



Photograph of Ardara Soccer team from 1912. A number of the players above went on to play for the first Ardara team in 1921. The photo also includes Sean O'Casaide and Johnnie Maguire who managed the first Ardara team to win the Championship.

Back from left: Johnnie Boyle (Chairman), Tommy Maguire (Main Street), A.N.other (Gallagher?), John Maloney (Brackey), James Cannon (The Diamond), Johnny Maguire(Main Street), Peter Breslin (Treasurer)

Front row:John Boyle Jr (baby), Barney Boyle, John Cassidy (NT), Richard Howley, Francie Maguire.

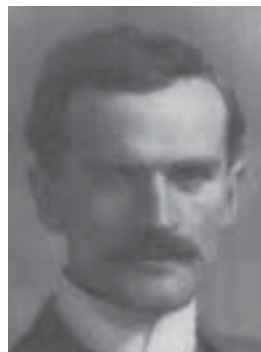
Seated: Charlie Mc Caul (Post Office), Charlie Gallagher (Front Street).

Mart was eventually built in 1912 (also owned by the Evans family). A number of factors contributed to the deterioration of the sport in the parish. The loss of Evans's field was a blow. The War of Independence however was a major factor which led to a nation-wide explosion of patriotism. The game of "Association Football" was widely regarded as one of the great British traditions and therefore soon became 'taboo' in many parts of the country.

The First Meeting

The Ardara G.A.A. Club was officially founded on the 21st October, 1921, at a meeting in Pat Breslin's (Den's) store at the West End, at that time usually used as an Assembly Hall. It is now owned by Mr. Seamus Gallagher of the West End. It was evident from the atmosphere prevailing that the young men present, some of whom had taken part in the 'fight for freedom' would formulate a further expression of national resurgence. A large gathering of enthusiastic, prospective members were present to found the new club. The main motivator in setting up the meeting was Con Herron (Glencoagh) who was elected as first Chairman.

Chairman – Mr. Con Herron, Glencoagh, older brother of Neil Herron (shop assistant in Messrs Johnny Sweeney's grocery Store (Vincent Herron's).



Mr. Charles McGill

Secretary – Mr. Charles McGill, a native of Upper Glengesh and shop assistant in the business of Mr. John Boyle, Main Street. In the early years of the century (1905 – 1907) he was the Brackey hurling representative on the Donegal County Board. He was also the local photographer and a Justice of the Peace.

Treasurer – Mr. Patrick Gildea, Saddler, of the Central Restaurant (a native of Drimnacrois, Glenties and who was later a delegate to, and acting Chairman of, the South-West Board.



Mr. Patrick Gildea

Quite a number of those who were included as players on the first teams attended these meetings and it was evident that there was a very strong desire to promote the ideals of the G.A.A. Gaelic football and hurling had come to stay.

The following is a copy of the first letter forwarded to the Secretary of the Donegal County Board G.A.A.:-

Gaelic Football Club
Ardara
22/10/21

Mr J. Curran

Dear Sir —

I am in receipt of your letter to the Hon of 20th and inclose a list of players for match to be played on 30th as follows —

James Cadden
James Gallagher
Francis McGuire &
Jim Breslin
Charles Freeman
John McKelvie
Leo. Howley
Don Breslin
Dinny Mooney
Michael Boyle
Paddy Giedra
Frank Gallagher
John Howley
Mick Fisher

The reason we are submitting 14 names is because we are not certain whether postman either of postal staff or rural auxiliaries are eligible. Francis McGuire is one of the names, marked with an & is on the rural staff and it rests with you to say if in order.

Colours selected by this club for registration is, white pants, golden jersey with green band round waist and on collar and cuffs.

Yours Truly Charles McGuire
Hon Secy

It was agreed by those present that the Club colours would be a jersey of green and gold. It was agreed to order the relevant jerseys, pants, stockings and football boots. An order was placed with Messrs Mc Devitt & Co., Glenties for 13 sets of each.

The First Match

Neighbouring Glenties had been quick off the mark four months earlier to form their Club, becoming active the week before the Truce became operative – 11th July 1921. The Ardara Club decided to play their neighbours in their first match. Glenties duly accepted the invitation and this heralded the beginning of the most keenly contested local derby in the County to this day. The Ardara Club had difficulty in finding a pitch for the match and eventually secured Mc Nelis's Holme (known after 1927 as the Show Field - which was owned by P.J Mc Nelis of the Nesbitt Arms Hotel.)

Club Secretary, Charles Mc Gill, notified the Glenties captain by letter of the venue as follows:

Ardara
G. A. A. Club.
26/10/21.

The Captain
Glenties G. A. A. Club.

Dear Sir.

I am requested by the
above club, ^{to inform you} that since we were
refused the use of Garrawart fields
for match on Sunday, we have
procured a field of Mc Nelis's along
the river, beside the town. This is the
best that can be had presently.

Yours faithfully
Charles McGill
Club Secy.

The game was played on Sunday 30th October 1921. The novelty of a new game by inexperienced Gaelic players fired the imagination of a newly peaceful public. Despite the fact that the standard of play was not high, except from those with some previous experience, the entertainment was appreciated and worthy of the occasion for the hundreds of spectators.

Most of the Ardara players had neither played Gaelic Football before, nor had even seen it played. It was also evident that the Club did not have a copy of ‘An Treorai Oifigiúil’, the Official Guide, because Club officers did not know if Francis Maguire - a postman - could legally play, he being in the Public Service. Glenties players turned out in all their sartorial splendour in contrast to the home side, whose players had not yet been fitted out in their green and gold jerseys. Patrick Gildea, (Saddler) and Treasurer, had obtained the football boots for the players.

The teams in those days consisted of 13 players. The positions lined out as follows: 1 goalkeeper, 3 backs, 3 half-backs, 2 rovers (midfielders) 1 centre-forward and 3 full-forwards. Francis Maguire had been added to the Ardara team to clarify his standing in the G.A.A.

The Ardara team that played in this historic match on the 30th October 1921 consisted of the following: -

James Cannon (Ardara), Jimmy ‘Ned’ Gallagher (Meenavalley), Dinny Mooney (Ardara), Francis Maguire (Ardara), Jim Breslin (Lurganboy), Charles Brennan (Hillhead), John McNelis (Common) (Captain), Leo and John Howley (Drimaha), Con Breslin (Lurganboy), Michael Boyle (Ardara), Frank Gallagher (Castlegoland) and Mick Fisher (Hillhead).

After a tough battle Glenties emerged victorious.

Jersey delay

With only boots to their name, securing the rest of the kit became a priority for the Club officers and when Charles McGill (Secretary and Draper) discovered that McDevitt & Co. could not fill his order for 13 jerseys due to pressure of orders, he proceeded to contact a Dublin firm (Elverys) as follows for a quote and sample.

G. A. A. Club
Ardara
Donegal,
8/11/21

Wm. N. E. O'Leary & Co. Ltd
Dublin.

Sir,
Please send a sample
or quotations for football (men's)
jerseys in quality the same as
inclosed - or nearest. Colours
required will be, amber, trimmed
with emerald, as follows.
Colour amber. Green collar & cuffs
and green band round waist
about 6 inches in width. Quote
your best terms to clubs. Care
etc.

Yours faithfully
Charles Toye
Am Secy.

On the 6th November, 1921, Ardara played Donegal in Donegal Town and on the following week, Sunday 13th November, Killybegs had Ardara as guests, unfortunately, still without their jerseys. The Ardara team on this occasion consisted of James Cannon (Ardara), Jim Breslin (Lurganboy), James 'Ned' Gallagher (Meenavalley), Dinny Mooney (Ardara), Con Breslin (Lurganboy), Francis Maguire (Ardara), Charles Brennan (Hillhead), Patrick Gildea (Ardara), Leo Howley (Ardara), Patrick McGrath (Ardara), Willie Farrell (Common), Mick Fisher (Hillhead) and Con Herron (Ardara).

Obviously the gate receipts (or part thereof) of matches played in those days had to be forwarded to the County Board. The following letter was forwarded by Charles McGill in regard to the monies collected at the Glenties match.

G. A. A Club
Ardara
3/11/21.

Mr J. Curran
Litterkenney.

D Caps - I inclose 5/- due for match played here on 30/10/21. I am asked to inquire how the Co Board is formed, and if each affiliated Club would be entitled to a delegate. Please send list of Glenties Club (registered) members, and would like to be informed about League fixtures in this District. Are colours selected by this Club and noted in letter of 22/10/21. registered?

To Caps
Chris McGill.

On the formation of the Ardara club, they entered the team in the South-West Donegal Senior Championship along with Glenties and Killybegs. They were to play each other on a home-and-away basis during the months of November and December 1921. The green and gold jerseys, so familiar throughout Donegal since then, were eventually delivered and were in use until the 1940's, when they were replaced by the Donegal County jersey of the 30's (green with one gold

hoop). The following is a report on the South-West Championship match between Ardara and Glenties played in Glenties on December, 5th, 1921 from the Donegal Democrat: -

Glenties v Ardara

Glenties and Ardara Gaelic Football teams met in the South-West Donegal Championship on Sunday. The venue was Glenties, and in the presence of close on 500 spectators the leather was set rolling amidst excitement, enthusiasm and an eagerness among the supporters of the opposing forces that were battling so strenuously on the playing pitch for supremacy. From the beginning it was however, clear to demonstration that Ardara was the superior combination and that it would carry off the laurels. The only question was the extent of the victory. Glenties were helplessly outclassed and indeed, it was a pity for those who were called upon to defend its honour on the ground of play, they made a plucky fight to prevent victory being borne to the neighbouring town. It was utterly impossible for them to do and the inevitable had to be submitted to, whether willingly or otherwise.

During the first half Glenties had the advantage of a light wind but this failed to assist in gaining the honours they were striving for. Leo Howley was the first to put a score to the credit of Ardara, the white flag having been raised, signalling that a point had been gained. McGrath soon followed with

another minor for the visitors. The Ardara backs Francis Maguire and James Gallagher were unbeatable. No rush, no matter how pressing, interfered with their sure kicking or handling of the ball. Craig and P. Molloy played a splendid game for the home team. Their style, movements and certainty were well worth witnessing. Other players for Glenties that could not escape observation were Joe Gallagher and Alphonsus McDevitt. They know the game and can play to perfection. Denis Mooney for Ardara showed himself as a leading player all through the contest.

On the turn over following half time Howley was again dangerous and in less than five minutes registered a major. From the right wing Charles Brennan sent a pass which was availed of by J. Hanna who after a scrimmage added another goal for Ardara and ten minutes subsequently McGrath added another from a pass from Mick Fisher, the result being when the whistle sounded for full time: -

Ardara - 3 goals, 2 points to Glenties - nil.

The Referee Mr. A. McDyre, Kilraine, discharged his duties in a faultless manner.

Despite the heavy defeat, it was the Glenties team that emerged to represent the South-West in the County semi-final. They won the return leg in Ardara while Killybegs ended Ardara's interest by beating them, before they also went down to Glenties. The Glenties men went on to reach the County final where they were defeated by Castlefin.

The Twenties

“Is olc an ghaoth nach séideann go maith
do dhuine éigin.”

S' na ficheadaí nuair a bunaíodh fo-chumann Ard a' Rátha d'fhás sé ó shíol go crann. Bhí foirne i ngach aird den pharóiste agus cluichí á n-imirt eatarthu. Bhí suim ar leith ins na cluichí seo, h-imríodh iad ar an mhíodún chothrom nó ar an trá. Ní raibh aon fheisteas peile acu. Ní raibh iomrá ar bith ar Puma nó Nike an uair úd. Chruinnigh na céadta chuig na cluichí sin de gnáth de shiúl na gcos. Bhí torthaí na gcluichí ina n-ábhar cainte ar fud na h-áite idir óg agus aosta.

The progress of the G.A.A., after it was founded in Ardara, was very impressive, when one considers that the players who formed the first team had neither any experience of Gaelic football, nor had even the privilege of seeing the game played anywhere in South-West Donegal. As already stated, the Club did not have a Treorai Oifigiul, bye laws, outfits, dressing rooms or a playing field. The most astounding fact of the quick rise to prominence of the team, was that most of them were past the teenage stage; heroes who had taken part in the War of Independence from 1919-21, and with the exception of one or two, none of whom had ever played Gaelic football before.

Rubber Dollies, Pink Snows and The Violets

As the game grew in popularity in the area local teams sprang up in many townlands in the Parish; such as Meenavalley, Aighe, Glengesh, Leaconnell, Crumlin, Gortnacart and Crucknagapple. Ardara and Drumbarron had the 'Rubber Dollies' and 'Pink Snows' respectively. The 'Violets' were from Gortnacart; the 'Swifts' from the Hillhead; and the 'Red Hughs' were from Meentinadea. These teams played each other on a regular basis in what would have been the first, albeit, 'unofficial' Parish League.

It is learned that the 'Swifts' were formed in October 1921 (just after the Ardara Club itself was formed.) A meeting was held in a stable at the rear of John Sally McMenamin's butcher shop at the Front Street. As there was no electricity in Ardara at that time, the meeting was conducted with the aid of a halfpenny candle.

There was a large attendance and all were very enthusiastic about the formation of the team. John Sally McMenamin was appointed Captain and Mick Kennedy Secretary. The formation of the team was as follows:- Packie Kelly (Goalie), Willie Bonner-McArdle and Joe Owen Boyle (full-backs), John Kennedy (student Maynooth College), Packie McGrath and Packie Phil Boyle (half-backs), Packie Doherty and Packie (Neddy) Boyle (full-forwards), Michael Bonner-McArdle and John Sally McMenamin (left-wing), Peter Carlin (ex British Navy) (full centre forward,) Jimmy Kelly and Willie Farrell (right-wing). As a football was immediately required a collection took place and each member subscribed a shilling. The Secretary, Mick Kennedy, was instructed to order the football from the Athletic Stores in Belfast and the price was twenty-one shillings.

Football was the popular pastime on Sundays in the areas mentioned above and at times contests were arranged between local teams and outside teams such as Kilraine, Meenaneary and Downstrands. Games were played every Sunday at Cashel, Common, Leaconnell, Meenavalley, Glengesh, Brackey, Crumlin, Garrowart, Magumna, Crucknagapple, Stormhill and Tullymore. Over 200 players participated in weekly games.

New Blood

The Club was strengthened in 1922 by Mr. N. J. Flanagan, Manager, and Mr. J. Mitchell (cashier) of the Ulster Bank. Sean Cassidy NT., was the newly elected Chairman. The team was augmented by the availability of Mr. Leo Howley N.T., Drimaha, who had two years experience with the St Patrick's Training College team, Erin's Hope in the Dublin County Championship. He also held the distinction of being the first Ardara player to play for Donegal in the Ulster Championship (v Derry in 1921). Also included for that year was Garda John Cunningham from Co. Leitrim who later that year transferred to Carrick to establish a new Garda Station. Another new recruit in 1922 was Mr. Denis O'Rourke, manager of the newly established National Bank, who was a competent footballer and hurler – a native of Cork and former Munster Provincial Rugby Player.

Car 'Stolen' At Towney

The Ardara team trained during 1922 in preparation for the Championship using whatever field became available in the winter months and local strands in the summer months. The first available record of a match is of a game played against the newly formed Kilcar club on the 29th of June 1922 on Towney strand. It was the first official match played in the parish of Kilcar. Ardara won the match easily against an inexperienced home side. The return leg was held on the 15th of August



The first known photo of an Ardara team, which was taken in 1922. Every effort has been made to correctly identify the names of the players, but there may remain a few inaccuracies.

Back L-R: Charlie Brennan, Sean O'Casade, James Ned Gallagher, Johnny Maloney, Denis O'Rourke, J. Mitchell, Charlie Gallagher (Front St).
Middle L-R: Michael Boyle (Neidi), Packie Breslin, John Carr (Muckross).

Front L-R: :Leo Howley, Denis Mooney, Jim (Hanna), Breslin, Thomas McBrearty (St. Johns Point)

and the visitors reversed the earlier result when they won on a score of 1-7 to 0-3. A story told by one of the Kilcar players of the day (Barney Carr) recalled the following incident that happened at the first game in Towney. "One of the Ardara players had taken a car full of players to the game. Cars of course were a very scarce commodity at the time. The Kilcar pipe band played before and after the game. They also played in a smaller group at the dance that night but they had their big drum in storage in Carrick. Luckily, though, one of the band could drive because he had driven an officer during the war, and as a result he said that he would 'borrow' the Ardara car and go and get the drum. He had a small 'mishap' on the way back out and so was delayed. When the Ardara players got back from the field, they thought the car was stolen and they created a terrible rumpus. Luckily enough the car soon appeared around the corner and after brief explanations, all was soon resolved."

The Club continued to participate in the League, which began at the end of 1922 and finished in April 1923. This arrangement continued until 1926 when the Championship became a knockout competition and trophies became available in 1927. The Ardara club now affiliated, and players registered, with County Secretary, Mr. J. Curran, Letterkenny. The South-West District was formed, with teams in Glenties and Killybegs. Sean Cassidy N.T. was appointed Chairman with Patrick Gildea as acting Chairman and Con Breslin or Johnny Maguire as delegate.

The First Championship Success

The Club only had to wait two years for its first hour of glory. They became Champions of the South-West District by having the most points in the League and thus qualified to meet Ballybofey in the County Final on Sunday the 8th of April 1923. The game took place at the Curragh Grounds on the Glenties/Ardara road (where a Bord Na Mona scheme was later established) The following report was carried in the Donegal Democrat, the reporter using the pen name 'Rock of

Cashel'.

"The game aroused widespread interest as both teams held unbeaten records in their respective District League area. The Ballybofey team travelled by special train and brought an array of supporters who were enthusiastic and quite confident in the abilities of their team to top the League".

The Ardara team was rather seriously handicapped by O'Rourke and Canning not being available. The pitch was in a wretched condition owing to the

heavy rainfall during the week. Both teams lined up at 3.15 p.m. and Mr. J. Curran, County Secretary acted as Referee. Ballybofey won the toss and elected to play with the advantage of the stiff easterly breeze.

The game

The game from a spectator's point of view did not come up to expectations. The pitch owing to its soft boggy nature, hampered the football of both teams and

coupling this with a strong breeze prevailing which carried the ball repeatedly over the sideline. This resulted in a series of throws and spoiling the effect of a game which if played under favourable conditions, would, I believe have been the best exhibition of Gaelic ever seen in the County.

The game opened up in a tame fashion. Ardara despite the breeze managed to keep the ball in the Ballybofey territory and Hannigan their brilliant full-back had to make several clearances. The play however was largely of a give and take variety until about 15 minutes from the start when Con Breslin the sturdy half-back scored a grand point from a free. Ballybofey now succeeded in bringing play into the Ardara half area, but it was for short duration as the Ardara half back line was practically impenetrable and once again the ball was taken to the Ballybofey goal area where we were provided with one of the few thrilling incidents of the game. The ball was lying practically on the goal line and a terrific struggle ensued for upwards of thirty seconds during which time one of the Ardara players carried the ball and went through but was lifted and thrown out by a Ballybofey player.

The claim however, was disallowed by the Referee who hopped the ball.

Ballybofey scored a point, which left the score, level at half-time 0-1 each.

At the resumption of play Ballybofey took the offensive and a determined rush was made for the Ardara goal, headed by Maxwell who looked like scoring had he not been dispossessed by Dinny Mooney in the nick of time. After this play was mainly confined to Ballybofey territory and were it not for the marvellous performance of Hannigan and McGowan, the Ballybofey full-backs, the score would have been heavy.

Charles Gallagher, Ardara's outside left succeeded in scoring two points, which left Ardara easy winners when the whistle went for full-time. The Ardara defence was remarkably strong and at no time during the game were they beaten, especially in the back line, which was held by McBrearty and the much tried and trusted James Gallagher. In justice to both teams the game was fairly contested. The spirit of the game was shown throughout: no exhibitions of temper, no abusive language, a clean and manly contest - even though the swampy ground and the boisterous weather were contributing factors. When a player tried to kick the ball he immediately found himself sinking feet deep in the clinging peaty soil.



The first Ardara team to win the Senior County Championship

Back Row: Mr Mitchell (National Bank), Tom Mc Brearty (St Johns Point), John Maloney (Brackey- Goalkeeper), Jimmy Ned Gallagher (Meenavalley),

Sean Cassidy NT (Treasurer) Centre Row: Mr Flanagan (Ulster Bank), Denis Mooney (Main St), Packie Breslin (West End), Con Breslin (Lurganboy), Michael Carr (Kilcar), P J Mc Cafferty (Glencoe), Johnny Maguire (Main St – Trainer) Front Row: Charlie Mooney (West End), Charlie Gallagher (Castlegoland), Jim Breslin (Lurganboy), Leo Howley (N.T Gortnacart), Charlie Gallagher, (Front St).



Ardara took the honours on a 0-3 to 0-1 scoreline. There was no trophy to display, - as there wasn't such a thing, and there were no medals for the players. The team which won the first Senior Football County Championship for Ardara was composed of the following players: -

John Maloney (Brackey), James 'Ned' Gallagher (Meenavalley), Dinny Mooney (Ardara), Hugh McBrearty (Dunkineely), Packie Breslin (West End), Con Breslin (Lurganboy), Michael Carr (Kilcar), Packie Joe McCafferty (Glencoagh), Charles Mooney (Ardara), Charles Gallagher (Castlegoland), Jim Breslin (Lurganboy), Leo Howley (Drimaha), Charles Gallagher (Front St.). The trainer of the team was Johnny Maguire (Main St.).

The rise of the new Club was also rewarded that year with Jimmy Gallagher, Charlie Gallagher (Castlegoland) and Con Breslin all making their Championship debuts for Donegal in the Ulster Championship v Derry. (Derry won 0-6 to 1-2 – Donegal won on a protest afterwards).

Con Doherty

Con Doherty (uncle of Eddie of Doherty's Bar) was a member of the original squad of players when the club was founded, and played in the early rounds of the 1923 Championship. During a practice in Glencoe, prior to a match, which was to be played in Doohill, Con sustained a serious injury. While bending down to tie a shoelace, he was accidentally struck on the head by the boot of another player. On hearing of the injury his sister Bridie, who was a nurse in London, returned home to take care of him but unfortunately his injury was so serious that he died within a fortnight.

Charlie Gallagher Recalls

Sixty years after playing on the first Championship winning team, Charlie Mooney and Patsy Gildea interviewed Charlie Gallagher of Castlegoland about his time as a young player. The following conversation offers an insight into what conditions were like at the time.

Q: When did you first start playing football?

A: I started playing about 1921. I played here locally first and then I played some matches with Glenties. When the GAA was formed in the County it was divided into two sections, East and West with the two winners meeting in the final. In 1923 Josie McSwine and myself were invited up to Ardara to take part in a trial match to select the team for the Championship. Josie was one of the best players in the County at the time but didn't perform on the day but I was selected for the team.

Q: Who were the selectors at that time?

A: Sean Cassidy and Johnny Maguire were the selectors at the time. We met Ballybofey in the final; the match was played out where Bord Na Mona is now. During the match I received a shoulder from one of the Ballybofey backs and went head first into a bog hole full of water. My team-mates formed a ring around me while I was fitted with a new pair of togs

Q: Who were the best players on the team at that time?

A: *Jimmy (Ned) Gallagher was the best player of his era, an outstanding defender, and Leo Howley was one of the best fielders of a ball that I have ever seen.*

Q: *Did the team do much training for the final?*

A: *We did not! Not much anyway. There was very little training done in them times.*

Q: *What other star players had Ardara in those years?*

A: *The Mooneys, Charlie and Denis, were fine players as were the Hannas. Jim was a very good player and was captain of the team.*

Q: *How did you travel to matches then?*

A: *In sidecars mostly as there was no motor cars in those times. I would cycle up to Ardara for the matches and on odd occasions went on horseback*

Q: *Were there crowds at the matches?*

A: *Oh there was, there was great enthusiasm for football in these times. There was some fellow from the back road in Ardara, I think he was a postman but he would fight at every match, he always had a stick with him. Then there was always fierce rivalry with Glenties, I remember John Sally, a butcher in the town who used to go to Glenties but he was often chased home from it.*

Q: *Would any of the footballers be active in the Sinn Fein movement?*

A: *Oh yes, they nearly all were, this is what drew them all together.*

Q: *How long did you play with Ardara after that?*

A: *I played until I wasn't fit to play anymore, I was 26 when I played in the 1923 final, I think I played until I was about 30.*

Q: *Did you play in the 1926 County Final?*

A: *I did, I played all those years but I remember the 1923 final the best.*

Q: *Where was your home pitch in Ardara?*

A: *We played in Howley's field but it was very hard to get good pitches. I remember a big Sinn Fein meeting in this field; Joe Sweeney was commander-in-chief at the time.*

Q: *Were many Ardara players selected for the county in those years?*

A: *Ardara had some fine players at this time and many of them played County football. Players like Leo Howley, Jimmy (Ned) Gallagher, Con (Hanna) Breslin, Charlie Gallagher, Charlie McDyre, Tom Gallagher Packie Breslin, Christy Kennedy, Packie John Gildea and my own brother Frank played some games for the County in the earlier years.*

Q: *Who were the players you admired during your career?*

A: *Killygordon had some great players but the best player of them all was John O'Donnell from Dungloe. If we had six or seven like him we could go to Croke Park any day.*

1924

In 1924 there were clubs affiliated in Glenties, Ardara, Killybegs and Kilcar. For the G.A.A. it was not a good year Economic conditions were unfavourable for development and thousands emigrated, many being playing members of the G.A.A. The Ardara team suffered badly and records show that despite reaching the South & South-West District League Final for that year, the team went down to Donegal on a 1-4 to 0-1 scoreline in a match played in Donegal Town.

Some of the prominent players of the day who were lost to foreign shores were James McGill (Aighe) who established the first G.A.A. club in Philadelphia, Packie Joe McCafferty and Jim Breslin. Other players of the first Championship winning team to emigrate were: Charles Brennan, (Hillhead), who was the last surviving member of the team; he lived to be 100 years and died in 1995; John Howley went to Yorkshire; Con Herron who went to New York and Frank Gallagher who also went to England. All those of the first ever team still alive in 1971 were presented with plaques by the Ardara G.A.A. Club to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the Club.



1925

Ardara, along with Ballyshannon, Mountcharles, Glenties, Kilcar and Donegal, took part in the 1925 South and South-Western League. The competition commenced in late 1924. On December 12th Ardara travelled to the Rock Enclosure to face Ballyshannon. The visitors looked a shade sturdier than the homesters. Ballyshannon led by 1-00 to 0-00 at the interval but three second half goals gave Ardara victory by 3-00 to 2-01.

The Glenties club seemed to have some difficulties at that time; Ardara and Kilcar

both travelled to their venue with teams but the homesters failed to field. At the Divisional Board meeting on the 1st of February they were expelled from the League and ordered to pay the travelling expenses of the Kilcar and Ardara teams. Kilcar had travelled to Ardara prior to this but due to “the deplorable state of the pitch” the match had to be abandoned. At the same meeting Ardara delegate Sean O’Casaide apologised to the Kilcar delegate Joe McDevitt and offered to pay half of the Kilcar teams travelling expenses on the day. Mr McDevitt gratefully accepted the gesture while stating their Clubs funds were “very low at present”

On March 1st Ballyshannon travelled to Ardara in two lorries and fourteen motors and made the journey to the “pretty little town” as stated in the paper of the day. With the wind behind them in the first half, the score was in Ardara’s favour at half



The above is a picture of a Donegal County team taken in 1926 in Omagh. The photo includes two Ardara players, Charles Mc Dyre (fourth from left, back row) and Garda Christy Kennedy (second from right front row) Although we are unsure of the names in the photo, The Donegal team that played that day was as follows - Richard Black, B. Whelan, C. McDonald, P. Flynn, P. Drumm, J. Rooney (all Ballyshannon), Charles McDyre, Garda Christy Kennedy, Ardara (native of Carlow), Denis J. Taylor, H. McGlynn, P. Doherty (Letterkenny), J. Hannigan, R. Doherty (Ballybofey), J. Clancy, R. Doyle (Carrigans). W. Smith (Buncrana), C. O'Donnell (Rosses Rovers).

time and they led by 2-02 to 0-01. Ballyshannon used the elements well in the second half however, and ended up winning the match on a score of 1-06 to 2-02. Ardara’s team on the day was: -

T. Gallagher, P. Brennan (Capt), P. McGrath, C. Breslin, J. Watters, J. Gallagher, C. Kennedy, P. Breslin, C. Breslin, C. McCafferty, C. McDyre and J. Gallagher.

Ardara’s only other dropped point was from a draw against Kilcar, thus leaving

them joint top of the table with Ballyshannon after all matches were played.

James Ned Gallagher of Meenavalley was one of the stars of Ardara and County teams of the 1920s. An outstanding defender he played on the first Ardara team in 1921. He went on to make his debut for Donegal against Derry in the Ulster championship of 1923. (Derry won 0-6 to 1-2). In the 1924 championship he played left half forward on the team that lost to Tyrone at the same stage (0-2 to 0-1). His last Championship appearances were in 1925 when he played on the winning side against Fermanagh in the first round, and lined out in the defeat to Cavan in the next match. He won Senior Championship medals in 1923 and 1926 with Ardara before emigrating to the U.S.A in 1927.

Kilcar Protest

The playoff between Ardara and Ballyshannon was arranged for June 21st, 1925 in Kilcar. Both sides were unhappy with the venue, Ballyshannon because of the long distance involved and Ardara for unknown reasons. Ardara stated that they would not be travelling and as a result Ballyshannon stated that if Ardara were not going to be there, there was no point in them travelling either. As the impasse continued in the week before the match, the Secretary of the League, Sean Conaghan of Glenties, took it upon himself to mediate in the situation and he instructed the teams to play the match in Mountcharles. The teams seemed to be happy with this and the match went ahead on June 21st. Ballyshannon went on to win the match on a score of 1-04 to 1-02.

At a County Board Meeting on June 28th Kilcar protested that since Ardara and Ballyshannon did not play their match in Kilcar as per the official fixture, then both Clubs should be suspended and disqualified. The County Board agreed and they nominated Kilcar (third in the League) to contest the County Final against Dunfanaghy. Kilcar ended up winning the Championship by default, as Dunfanaghy refused to play them because of the unsporting manner in which they reached the final!

1926 - Ardara's Second County Championship

1926 was an outstanding year for the Ardara G.A.A. Club as it was evident that although prominent players emigrated, those who remained - and that was the majority - had developed into outstanding footballers. The Championship, which began at the latter end of 1925, saw Ardara, Ballyshannon & Glenties contest the South-West League. Ardara and Ballyshannon both beat Glenties twice. Ardara beat Ballyshannon in Ardara. In the final and deciding game between the teams in Ballyshannon the home side won on a score of 4-00 to 0-00. Ardara successfully

protested that Ballyshannon fielded an unregistered player. Ballyshannon appealed that decision but the appeal was lost and Ardara had qualified for the County Final. The final was played on May 9th, 1926 in Ballybofey with Letterkenny Rovers as the opponents. T. Donohue of Glenties was the referee. Details of the match in the papers of the time were very limited. Letterkenny played with the aid of the breeze in the first half and scored first, but Tom Gallagher equalised. McDyre played brilliant in the Ardara defence. The teams were level at half-time. The match was extremely physical throughout with the referee receiving some criticism for allowing too much “forcible tackling”. Three second half points saw victory for Ardara on a score of 0-05 to 0-02 to win their second County Championship. The team on the day was not listed in the press, and no photograph was available.

Following the match Letterkenny protested against the Ardara team (grounds unknown) but lost the protest and Ardara remained Champions.

Ardara Athletic Sports

On the 15th August, 1926 the G.A.A Annual Sports Meeting was held in the Hotel Holme as was customary for the previous five years. The honorary Sports Committee Secretary was Mr. Louis Gildea and it was a very enjoyable and very entertaining display of athletic events. The field events were followed by a football match in which Ardara defeated Ballybofey, while in the hurling match Finner Camp defeated Ardara. That night a Ceili was held in the Iona Hall and music was supplied by Mrs Eileen Brennan, Mr. Johnny Gallagher, Mr. Tom Breslin, M. McAnaney, Mr. M. Cahill and Charles Gildea.

Dr. Maguire Cup

At a meeting of the Donegal County Board held on 1st September 1926, County Chairman Sean Cassidy agreed that a trophy be procured to commemorate the memory of the late Dr. E. Maguire. The following committee was formed to raise funds to purchase a suitable trophy - Sean Cassidy (Co. Chairman), Ardara, Rev. F. Sheridan, C.C. Letterkenny, Bro. Lucien, Ballyshannon, Mr. M. J. Dawson, (Co. Secretary), Letterkenny, and Mr. Sean Curran, Letterkenny. The committee met with outstanding success at home and abroad and several donations were forwarded from Ardara as shown in the records. The Cup cost in the region of £60.00 and from 1927 was presented to the County Champions each year.

The Democrat Cup

The format of the Championship (Divisional Leagues) prior to 1926 was maintained for a new trophy, 'The Democrat Cup' which was presented to the County Board by the local Paper. The first winners of the trophy were Finner Camp. This cup confirmed the League as the second most prestigious competition after the County Championship and the cup was keenly sought after.



1927

The 1927 County Championship was changed from the previous format and was to be played on an all-county basis. The draw for the first round matches saw Ardara drawn against Clonleigh from the Eastern division in a match which was to be played on the 21st of November 1926. It is evident from the records however that neither team competed in the County Championship that year (reasons unknown).

Sean Cassidy, as County Chairman, was obviously concerned at the dearth of clubs in the South-West area and made various attempts to encourage others to join. This letter from his memoirs was written to an unknown person in Killybegs to try and get a club formed there.

Ard a Ratha

Aibrean 7u

A Cara dilis

A cup has lately been presented to me, and as Gaelic football has lately become rather flat in this section of the County, I am anxious to set it up as a trophy for competition.

Could you get a club set up and team organised in Killybegs? It would be very desirable that a team from there should enter. It would provide sport. Ardara, Dunkineely and Glenties have signified their willingness to compete. I have written to Kilcar and Carrick already, but as yet have got no reply. I understand you still take an interest in matters of Irish games and that is why I write to you.

Let me have a reply at your very earliest convenience. I hope you will succeed in arousing the young Killybegsites to again become active. If you would need my assistance in organising, I would willingly try to help you out. Still, I'm sure you personally know a few who would help you in Killybegs.

Mise le meas ort

Sean O'Casaide

DONEGAL G.A.A. CLUBS.

PAST. PRESENT AND FUTURE.

Colours.

Ardara (a) (F)	...	Green with yellow hoop
Ardaghy (F)	...	Green with black hoop
Ballyshannon (a) (F) (H)	...	" white hoop.
Ballybofey (a) (F) (H)	...	Green with white diamond.
Belt (H)	...	Green with Amber Diamond.
Bandonna (a) (F) (H)	...	White with Yellow Hoop.
Banerana (F)	...	" Black hoop.
Carrigans (F)	...	" Yellow diamond.
Carrigart (F)	...	" Black diamond.
Castlefin (a)	...	Red and White Stripes (Horizontal)
Carndonagh (H)	...	Red and Black "
Clady (F)	...	Red and Green "
Claghna (F)	...	Red and Blue "
Donegal (F)	...	Blue and White diamond
Derry City (a)	"	Blue with Amber diamond.
Dunkineely (a)	...	Yellow with Green Hoop.
Dunfanaghy (F)	...	Yellow with White Hoop.
Dungloe (a)	...	Navy Blue and Red Collar & Cuffs.
Falcarragh (F)	"	Navy Blue and White "
Finser (H) (F)	...	Green and Yellow Stripes (Vertical)
Genties (a) (F)	...	Blue with White Hoop
Kilcar (F)	...	Blue with Amber Hoop
Killybegs (F)	...	Black with Red Hoop
Killygordon (a) (F)	...	Red
Letterkenny (a) (H & F)	...	Blue
Lifford (F)	...	Black
Moyle (a) H	...	Green
Mountcharles (a) (F)	...	Green & White Stripes (Vertical)
Newtownanagh (a) (h)	...	Yellow
Stranorlar (F)	...	White

All Clubs requested to use White Knickers.

A—Affiliated 1928.

H—Hurling.

F—Football.

The Ardara team did take part in the Democrat Cup competition and reached the final, only to be defeated by Killygordon on a 1-2 to 0-0 scoreline.

Charles McDyre (N.T) was a native of Kilraine and joined the Ardara Club from Naomh Conaill in 1923. It was a move that caused much consternation at the time in his native parish. He had learned his football skills while training to be a teacher in Dublin. He not only served County Donegal well as a player (1924-31) but was also a member of the Ulster Provincial team for the Tailteann games in 1926. He won an Ulster Junior Hurling Championship medal, and was County Secretary from 1928 - 1929. He went on to become Chairman of the Donegal County Board from 1934 - 1937. He was a member of the Championship winning Ardara team of 1926 and captained the team to another title in 1928. He was known as a great exponent of the full back position, although he also played as a forward for Ardara. His trademark was his peaked cap that he always wore back to front during every match. Towards the end of his career, he went on to play for his native Owentocker and Glenties teams, and became involved in the Glenties Club after his time on the County Board.

Cassidy And McDyre Take Top Spots At Convention

At the 1928 County Convention held in January 1928, Sean Cassidy was re-elected Chairman and the Club increased its influence when Charles McDyre was elected as Secretary. Numerous motions were passed that year and the by-laws were updated and produced in booklet form. The booklet was titled 'Donegal Record and Bye Laws 1928-1932'. Some of the bye laws passed that year were ahead of their time and indeed some have changed little since. Some of the more 'interesting' byelaws, which would seem unusual today, were the following:

Rule 23: *"The Co. Committee shall not be responsible for the loss of jerseys, knickers, boots, stockings, hurling sticks, footballs, etc either the property of a club or individual."*

Rule 31: *"For all matches both Clubs shall provide a ball. Clubs failing to do so shall forfeit the points should it be found necessary to abandon the game for the want of a ball"*

Rule 36: *"Inter-county players must provide their own boots, stockings, knickers, and hurleys."*

Rule 42 (a): *"Two thirds of the gate receipts shall be given to the travelling team and one third to the home team in each League area after the deduction of the Gate Levy."*

The rules were signed by Sean Cassidy and sanctioned by the Uachtaran of C.L.G Seán Ó Riain.

1928 – The Third Championship

As the previous year's format had not been a success, the County Board decided to divide the County into three sections in 1928 with Ardara, Mountcharles and Dungloe forming one section.

Tanatallon (Mountcharles) did well to draw with Ardara while Ardara had a convincing home victory over Dungloe. The first game of the second round was on February 26th with Ardara v Tanatallon in Ardara. Tanatallon struck first with a Finnegan goal. Ardara levelled with points from T. Gallagher, McGrath and C. Breslin. A fine Dunleavy goal put Tanatallon 2-00 to 0-03 ahead at a half time. Twelve minutes from the end an incident occurred which brought the game to an abrupt termination. A fierce tussle occurred in the Tanatallon goalmouth and the ball appeared to go over the line. It was quickly whipped out, however, by one of the Tanatallon backs. The Ardara umpire raised the flag for a goal. The Tanatallon players resented the decision and after a lengthy and heated discussion they left the field. The official score was Ardara 1-03 to Tanatallon 2-00.

The County Board decided to confirm the Referee's ruling and awarded the points to Ardara. Tanatallon then wrote to the Ulster Council vigorously condemning the action of both the County Chairman (Sean Cassidy) and County Secretary (Charles McDyre), their contention being, that as both officers were from the Ardara Club, they were biased in their decision. Tanatallon challenged the County Board to have the whole matter gone into impartially. They failed however in their quest and Ardara advanced.

The last game was between Dungloe and Ardara in Dungloe and the match ended in a draw. From this Ardara qualified for the County final of 1928.

The Final

Ardara and Killygordon contested the 1928 final which was played on the Hollymount pitch in Glenties on Sunday 6th May 1928. The admission was 1/-. A record attendance of over 2000 paid a record gate of £60.00. The ground at Hollymount in Glenties measured 140yards by 60 yards.

At the time it was stated that Irish games and pastimes had got a firm grip in Glenties and Ardara. The man in the street was as enthusiastic as the players and there was no difficulty in raising funds.

Referee on the day was Mr. P McNicholl from Annagry. Both teams had contested two finals each in that decade and were now powered by skill and experienced



inter-county players. There was an air of anticipation and the spectators were treated to an exhibition of Gaelic Football of which the Association could be proud and which was enjoyed by a huge concourse of spectators.

The game had been widely advertised and posters were displayed throughout the county informing the public of date, time, rail transport and price of admission. All of the Ardara



Ardara G.A.A. Team - Donegal County Champions 1928
Back Row (L - R): Con "Hanna" Breslin, Charlie McDyer, Thomas O'Donnell, Christy Kennedy, Barney Keeney.
Middle Row (L- R): Charlie Mooney, Charlie Gildea, Tom Gallagher, Michael Cullen.
Front Row (L - R): Johnny Watters, Packie John Gildea, Hughie Haughey, Michael "Bonner" McArdle.

players cycled to Glenties that day with their boots tied to the handlebars of the bicycles – anyone who was fortunate enough to have a bike. Most people would walk and thought nothing of it. The only people that had cars were Charlie Mooney, Packie McGrath and ‘The Saddler’. The teams published in advance of the game were: -



ARDARA: - Thomas O'Donnell, Tom Gallagher (Capt), Con Breslin, Leo Howley, Patrick Breslin, Hugh Mooney, Packie J. Gildea, M. McArdle, John Watters, Hugh Haughey, Patrick McGrath, Michael Cullen, Charles McDyre, Christy Kennedy, Denis Mooney, Bernard McNelis, John Gallagher, Hugh Gildea, Hugh Gallagher, William Boyle

KILLYGORDON: - Patrick Browne, Willie McCallion, Edward Brady, Edward Carr, Alex McNally, Frank Kelly, Tom Maxwell, Charles Kelly, Mick McNulty, John Roddy, Alex Brady, Willie J. Brady, Tom Sweeney, Jack Quigley and John Sweeney.

At the commencement of the game Very Rev. Charles Canon Kennedy, P.P. Glenties, threw in the ball. The game was a thriller. Ardara scored a lucky goal early on in the game and Whoriskey added a point to his goal. In the end Ardara won the match and Thomas O'Donnell's save from a penalty kick half way through the second half was crucial to their victory.

The full time score was Ardara 1-04 to Killygordon 0-03. Ardara points were scored by Michael Cullen 0-02, Con Breslin 0-01, C. McDyre 1-00, Hughie Haughey 0-01. At the end of the game Canon Kennedy presented the Ardara Captain Tom Gallagher with the Dr. Maguire Cup and urged the furthering of Gaelic Games. For the first time a Football Cup arrived in Ardara amid unprecedented jubilation as Charles McDyre held it aloft.

Leo Howley N.T., was a member of the first three Championship winning teams and the first Ardara player to represent Donegal, playing from 1921 to 1930. Leo was one of the first Ardara players to experience Gaelic Football, when he played in Dublin during his time training to be a teacher. A great fielder with an accurate boot, Leo was one of the great Ardara players of the 20s. Leo was absent when the photograph (below) was taken.

Packie John Gildea

Packie John Gildea was a key member of the 1928 side and was a well known 'character' in the parish. He was interviewed in 1984 by Charlie Mooney and Patsy Gildea, and here we publish the interview with some of the more 'colourful' language edited.

CM: *When did you start playing?*

PJ: *In 1924 or 25, I started to play football. I was about 21 at the time.*

CM: *In what grade did you play?*

PJ: *It was Senior Football at that time.*

CM: *Where did you play your first game?*

PJ: *I played my first game in Ballyshanny. Our home games were played in Howley's Field and in Charlie O'Donnells' field down at the Owenea Bridge. Charlie bought it from the Heekins of Tullymore, I think.*

CM: *Who played along with you?*

PJ: *Johnny Watters, Charlie Gallagher, Joe Gildea, Charlie McDyre, Leo Howley, Tom Gallagher, Francie Gallagher, Packie Breslin, Kennedy the Guard, Dennis Ned and his brother John, Francie and Barney McNeilis from Meenavally - they all played at that time.*

CM: *In what position did you play?*

PJ: *I played right half back, if they were stuck, but I usually played outside right and Johnny Whoriskey played inside right and Michael Bonner played on the left wing. He was a wee light devil!*

CM: *How many a side did you play?*

PJ: *After I started it was 13, that was in 1927.*

CM: *Did you do much training, Packie John?*

PJ: *We got a f*****' spade on a Monday mornin', go to the bog and start parin' and go down to the f*****' knees in f*****' mud, that's the trainin' we got!*

CM: *Did you do any celebrating?*

PJ: *Jesus Christ, no one had any money.*

CM: *How did you travel?*

PJ: *We travelled with the Mooneys, they had a couple of cars. Francie Gallagher and Packie McGrath had cars. Packie played at that time too.*

CM: *How long did you play?*

PJ: *I played for about 10 years. I was playing in Kentucky for a few years after it opened. My last game was against Dungloe.*

CM: *What were the referees like?*

PJ: *Just like they are now. They could be good and they could be bad. There were no managers in them times. Sean Cassidy was standing on the line and that was it but it was good craic all the same. When you started to get ould and get a couple of knocks it's then you would feel it.*

CM: *Football was a lot tougher then?*

PJ: *I don't know, it was nearly all catching and long kicking then and very little soloin'. If you were middlin' handy at the soccer you could beat a man f*****' easy. It was man for man, catch and kick. There wasn't as much holdin' as there is now. Jesus, you would want to be made of rubber nowadays.*

CM: *You could charge the goalie at that time?*

PJ: *Oh: Bundle in on top of him, if you got in!*

CM: *Who did you play in the final of 1928?*

PJ: *We played Killygordon. We got a Cup and I think that if you won it three times you could keep it.*

CM: *Did you go to any club meetings?*

PJ: *The meeting house was Mooney's, where Alan Given's is now. I never bothered going. They were in there f***** arguing. There was a crowd of them picking a team, maybe about ten times over. Naw, I was never at a meetin'. If I was picked I played but I never bothered a meetin'.*


CM: *Was there a league played?*

PJ: *There were parish leagues but they never were finished. There were too many rows.*

CM: *Winning the Co. Championship was a big achievement?*

PJ: *We knew nothin' about it. I don't think then any club got a medal at that time*

Towards the end of the year, the County Treasurer, Sean Connaghan, issued the following letter to clubs detailing the financial state of the Board at the time.

		
<p align="center">Cumann CO. ÚMHA-NAGALL S.A.A. Donegal County Board G.A.A.</p>		
Ref. No. 8	MEETING	30/ 928
(C O U N T Y)		
<p>Seiríse: Seán Ó. Fíneadh President John Connors, Ardara Vice-President C. S. M. Sallagáin Sec. J. Galloway, C.C. Churchill Mícheál M. Ní Ceath Michael Dawson, Letterkenny Claire Ní Ceath John McNa, Ballyboley Seán Ó. Connaghan Treasurer John Connaghan, Glenties Seán Ó. Connaghan Secretary Charles McIlroy, Glenties</p>	<p>The gate receipts from cup-finals etc. played at Glenties & Letterkenny amounted to £131 15 7. 1924 5 6 7 Liabilities paid £59 16 2. Exs. of teams all paid except Bundoran as yet unfd. The CO. Funds had to bear a deficit of £4 10 0 in respect of Inter- League on the 13/May /28. Affil. accs. dr. & cr. are paid. Shieldsdo. Championships.....do. Jerseysunfd. Postalpaid 1928 Ptg. a/c. unfd. Stationery.....do. Refs.do. Stamp dutiespaid. PERMITS A/C FEIS & GLENFIN LEVIES Cavan Co Bd.paid Tyrone do0/3 Bye - lawsDrs. £9 15 0 do.Crs. £15 do.Stock £12 10 0 Cupsvalue £110 5 0</p>	<p align="right">OUTSTANDING 10/- DO EST. £5 5 0</p>
<p>AFFILIATED CLUBS: Ardara (F) Ballyboley (F) Ballyshannon (H) (F) Bundoran (H) (F) Carrigan (F) Glenties (H) (F) Dungannon (F) Dungannon (F) Glenties (F) Killybegs (F) Letterkenny (H) (F) Monaghan (F) Roslin (H) (F) Stranmillis (H) (F)</p>	<p>Dr. Maguire fund Closed. Refreshmentals/C one outstanding. est. £2 All A/Cs. furd. except InterCO. are PAID.</p>	
<p>The Bye-laws are about to be issued and as we are on the eve of 1929 all Clubs should be requested to send forward orders for same, at once either to Sec. or myself accompanied with remittance Price sixpence per copy and I may add each player wishing to be registered must obtain an official registration form (which method I learn is about to be adopted by other Counties in coming year.</p>		

*because there was no money to buy anything. Sure, Christ, this club here couldn't buy shoes for them. They had to get the lend of f*****' shoes for boys. You would go a long way that time on a pound. We were runnin' dances down at the Mill at the Owenea Bridge on a Sunday night. It was four pence to get in and we made 24 shillings one night that a fiddler from Dungloe was playing.*

*There were others who used to turn up and hang around the door because they had no money, but they were always allowed in after a while. If you made a pound then, days you had a good f***** time!*

Re-Match

On the 28th August 1928, the County Senior Football finalists, Ardara and Killygordon, met in a friendly contest in Ballybofey with Mr. Eddie McFeely as Referee. This was, as expected, a brilliant game and Killygordon reversed the County Final result.

The final score was Ardara 1-02 to Killygordon 1-04. Ardara's scores came from M. McArdle 1-01 and Dinny Mooney 0-01. Best for Ardara were Tom Gallagher, Packie John Gildea and James N. Campbell.

Advance of Gaelic Culture

The twenties saw a major resurgence in patriotism and encouragement of all things Irish. To this effect a meeting of Feis Thri Chonail was held in Letterkenny on the 10th June 1928 and attended by representatives of the G.A.A., Gaelic League, Camogie, I.N.T.O. and An Fainne.

It was decided that a committee be formed of the various Gaelic organisations for the purpose of advancing, preserving and the developing of Gaelic culture.

The following committee was appointed to further the aims of Comh Choisde na gCumann Gaelach - Sean Cassidy, N.T., Ardara, Chancellor McCafferty, Rev. J. Gallagher C.C., Church Hill, Louis J. Walsh, Alex McDyre N.T., Glenties, Michael Óg McFadden T.D., Kilcar, Sean Curran, Letterkenny, Michael Dawson, C.E., Charles McDyre, Glenties, Frank Carney, T.D. Derry and P.J. Matthews.

In order to publicise the objectives of the newly formed Gaelic organisation it was decided that a communication be forwarded to all Gaels in Donegal requesting subscriptions of 2/6 each for the purpose of establishing a bi-lingual paper. Charles McDyre was instructed to draft and distribute a pamphlet throughout Donegal and it was hoped to get 42,000 subscribers to contribute. Here below is a copy of that request for financial aid to establish such a paper on 1st June 1928.



1929

The Senior Championship of 1929 was the longest ever, starting in early March 1929 and ending July 27th, 1930. In that year's Senior Football Championship first round, Ardara met Bundoran away on May 5th. As previous year's County Champions, Ardara got a shock in their first game as they were held to a draw in Bundoran, 0-3 each. They eventually made their exit from the Championship after a home defeat to Ballyshannon on the 3rd of August on a scoreline of 3-1 to 1-2. The match was played on the banks of the Ownea (also known as Fionn's Home. The field is situated on the left hand side of the river about 300 yards from the main Narin Rd). To conclude the year's action, on the 8th December 1929, Ardara played the new County Champions, Ballyshannon, at Ardara, in a game which ended in a draw. The final score was Ardara 1-05 to Ballyshannon, 2-02. Ardara scorers were Con Breslin 0-02, Dinny Mooney 0-01, Christy Kennedy 1-01 and John Watters 0-01. Best for Ardara were Tom Gallagher, Charles McDyre, Packie John Gildea and Packie Breslin.

The records show that the team qualified for the Democrat Cup final for the second time, but Dungloe were victorious on a 0-4 to 0-2 scoreline.

Other items of note from that year included Sean Cassidy's election as County Chairman for the fifth successive year, at the County Convention. The same gathering also saw Charles McDyre re-elected as County Secretary for the 2nd successive year and another Ardara man, Charles McGill (originally from Aighe, but resident in Ballybofey), elected as Registrar for the fourth year running. Sean Cassidy and Charles Mc Dyre also represented the county at the GAA congress in Waterford on the 10th of April.

Hughie Haughey (1910 - 1929), the son of Patrick Haughey and Margaret (nee Boyle from Abhainn tSeiscinne) was born in Maghera on the 11th of April 1910. Fourth in a family of seven, he was employed as a shop assistant in the Greenhouse Bar, which was then managed by Danny McNelis (brother of Patrick, of the Nesbitt Arms Hotel). Hughie was a member of the 1928 Championship winning team when only 18 years of age and scored a point in the second half. In the summer of 1929 Hughie was offered employment in Derry by a commercial traveller. He accepted and agreed to start his new job by the end of July. Sunday the 14th of July dawned to a cloudless sky, and having attended morning Mass, Hughie, accompanied by Connell Kennedy (brother of the late Mick Kennedy) went to the long point for a swim. After bathing for a while both of them were resting on a rock when Hughie, who was a strong swimmer, decided to have another dip. Tragically

The Thirties

"Chuir tú do chos dheas romhat ar maidin."

Bhí urraim agus ómós ar leith ar pheileadóirí na linne sin, go h-áirithe iad siúd a raibh sé de phribhléid acu léine an chondae a chaitheamh. Bhí a n-ainmeacha go h-ard i mbéal an phobail. Bhí tionchur mór ag ionadaithe ón chumann seo i gcúrsaí riaracháin san chondae mar uachtaráin, cathaoirigh agus postanna eile.

A new decade commenced with the hope that the 1930s would prove as successful as the Club's first 10 years. The 1930 County Championship saw Ballyshannon, Dungloe, Glenties and Ardara play in the South-West on a league basis. Dungloe defeated Ardara in Dungloe in the first match, but Ardara got a win over Glenties in their second match. At the end of the round robin section, Ardara and Dungloe, both having beaten Ballyshannon in their last matches, finished level on points and thus necessitated a play-off. This in fact proved to be a County Semi-Final as Killygordon had already qualified for the final from the Eastern section. The play-off was fixed for the 12th of October in Castlegoland and ended in a Dungloe victory on a scoreline of 4-7 to 0-5. The Ardara team in that semi-final was: - Thomas O'Donnell, Charles McDyre, Denis 'Ned' Gallagher, Packie Breslin, James Neil Campbell, Leo Howley, Dinny Mooney, Tom Gallagher, Packie John Gildea, Jim Maxwell, Con Breslin, Johnny Whoriskey and J. McDyre.

The game, seemingly, was not without incident however, some spectators describing some of the scenes as "disgraceful". There was such concern at the reports at County Board level, that they deemed it necessary to print the following advertisement in the Democrat two weeks later.

SOLEMN WARNING TO GAA CLUBS

A searching inquiry will be held at the next County Board Meeting of Donegal G.A.A. into conduct of players and spectators at the recent match between Ardara and Dungloe played at Castlegoland.

From this date any player or follower of either club guilty of unseemly conduct will not only be suspended but will be expelled from the Association.

Signed, Donegal County Board, 29th October 1930.

Following this enquiry, Leo Howley and John Hughie O'Donnell (Dungloe) were both suspended for 12 months. Dungloe however still went on to win their first Senior Championship, defeating Letterkenny in the final (after Killygordon refused to field for various reasons). Ardara did finish off the year with some success however when they won a seven-a-side tournament which was organised on County Final day in Glenties; defeating all on the day and Ballyshannon in the final.

County Convention

The 1930 County Convention was held in the Butt Hall, Ballybofey. Mr. Sean Cassidy presided and also present were Charles McDyre (secretary) and Hugh Mooney as the Ardara delegate. The Financial Statement revealed that the County Board had £25.00 on hand and were due £27.00 from the Ulster Council and £12.00 from the Tyrone County Board. The Auditor Mr. M. H. McLaughlin showed there had been a falling off of £134.00 from gate receipts in 1929. Sean Cassidy was one of the Vice Presidents elected, having relinquished his position as County President (Chairman), and John McGill (Ardara and Ballybofey) was again elected Registrar.

Donegal Re-Graded

Following little success in previous years in the Ulster Senior Football Championship, an important decision was taken by the Ulster Council which saw Donegal re-graded to the Junior ranks. In the first County match that year, against Derry on the 18th May 1930, the now familiar Ardara players Charles McDyre, Tom Gallagher, and Christy Kennedy appeared on the team. In the game against Fermanagh in the semi-final of the Dr. McKenna Cup, on the 8th June, the same Ardara players participated and adding to our representation was D. O'Rourke. The final score was Fermanagh 3-09 to Donegal 1-07. Donegal Juniors played Armagh in the Ulster Championship with Kennedy, Mc Dyre and Gallagher again featuring. The team eventually won their first Ulster Junior Football Championship after getting a walkover against Cavan in the final. They went on to play Dublin in the All-Ireland Junior Championship semi-final in Belfast on 13th September 1930. Ardara players who lined out that day were Christy Kennedy, Tom Gallagher and James Neil Campbell. The final score was seven points each and Dublin refused to play extra time. In the replay Dublin defeated Donegal by 3-06 to 3-02.



Garda Christy Kennedy was a native of Carlow who was stationed in Ardara in 1925. He soon joined the local club and became well known in the County for his exploits on the fields of Donegal. A member of the successful 1926 and 1928 Club Championship winning teams, he was a regular on the County Senior Team from 1925 to 1931. He played in numerous positions, but was best known as a half back. His last appearance for the County was in the 1931 Championship win over Antrim. During his time in the parish, Christy met and married local girl Nan Brennan. 1931 was to be his last year playing for the Club as he was moved on, to be stationed in Dungloe. He eventually moved to Letterkenny, where he lived with his wife and family until his death in 1976.

Medals Introduced

The County Convention of that year was held at the start of the year in the Butt Hall Ballybofey and Bro. Lucien of Ballyshannon was elected Chairman. A motion from Letterkenny read *“that a set of medals of Irish manufacture be provided by the County Committee for Senior Football Competition”*. The motion was adopted, indicating that medals had not been presented to the Ardara teams who had won the Senior County Championships of 1923, 1925 and 1928. As a result of another successful motion from Bundoran, Minor Football and Hurling Championships were to be inaugurated in Donegal as well as U-16 Championships.

1931

The 1931 Championship was played on a Divisional basis. There was no competition in the Southwest and Ardara went on to represent the Division. Ardara advanced to play Ballybofey in the County semi-final at Tanatallon on April 19th with both teams fully kitted out. A strong wind was blowing and it favoured Ardara in the first half which they led 1-02 to 1-0 at half time. In the second half Ardara failed to score against the wind, while Ballybofey added five points to win by 1-05 to 1-02 to end Ardara's Championship hopes for another year.

Ardara's First Democrat Cup Victory

With their interest in the Championship over, the team set their sights on the Democrat Cup Competition of 1931. Ardara entered with Glenties and Killybegs in Section A and by defeating both teams qualified for the County semi-final. The opposition was Bundoran, with the match to be played in Donegal Town on the 20th October 1931 with Patrick O'Brien as Referee. In the first half, Ardara, who

had a number of new players on the team, had a brilliant game. They defended stubbornly in the first period and held Bundoran to just three points. Jim Maxwell had Ardara's only score in this half. In the second half Ardara improved immensely and J. Mc Ginley scored 1-2 with Con Breslin adding a point. Bundoran's only reply was a solitary point. Ardara were victorious over their opponents on a scoreline of 1-04 to 0-04. The final saw Dungloe as their opponents, with the following extract taken from the report of the match in the Democrat.

The County Final was held in Glenties on the 8th November 1931, between Ardara and Dungloe. This proved to be a very entertaining game in suitable condition in Hollymount Park. In the first half Ardara had the better of the contest and had points from Jim Maxwell who had been through by a brilliant full-length movement involving J. Mc Ginley, William Boyle and Tom Gallagher. Ardara had another point from Leo Mooney who was sent through by Tom Gallagher. Further points from Con Breslin and Tom Gallagher left Ardara in

a comfortable position of 0-04 to 0-02 at half time. In the second half Ardara had points from Jim Maxwell who received a pass from Leo Mooney and the second Ardara score of this half came from Con Breslin who received the pass from Johnny Whoriskey. It was noted that Charles McDyre and Packie John Gildea proved to be outstanding backs. The final score was Ardara 0-06 Dungloe 0-04 and the Democrat Cup was brought to Ardara for the first time after two failed attempts in the finals of 1927 and 29.

The Ardara team lined out as follows. Thomas O'Donnell, Charles McDyre, Packie Breslin, Denis 'Ned' Gallagher, Johnny Whoriskey, Tom Gallagher, Christy Kennedy, William Boyle, Bernard McNelis, Packie John Gildea, Jim Maxwell, James Mc Ginley, Leo Mooney, Con Breslin, Charlie Gallagher and Francis O'Donnell.

On the Donegal County Team that year, Charles Mc Dyre, Christy Kennedy and Tom Gallagher played in the Ulster Senior Championship victory over Antrim 2-4 to 0-1. Antrim however advanced to the next round after successfully objecting to the composition of the Donegal team.

Other Ardara connections that year saw P.J. Brennan added to the newly formed list of County Referees and Patrick McHugh elected to the County Handball Committee. Charlie Joe Boyle N.T. of Largynaseeragh was instrumental in the formation of the new Cashelard Club outside Ballyshannon. He later went on to become a well known referee and also served as County Treasurer from 1947 to 1950.

1932

The 1932 Championship saw Ardara once again the sole representative from the South-West. Killybegs entered the Championship but records fail to show them

taking part. The team was bolstered by the addition of John Brown of Carrick and James Patrick McGinley of Kilcar, two of the best players in the county at the time. Ardara went on to play in the County Championship semi-final against Ballyshannon in Donegal Town on July 3rd. It was a great game of football, full of thrills and of a very high standard. Ballyshannon led by 0-06 to 0-03 at half time and went on to win the match on a score of 1-06 to 1-04.

The Ardara team: Thomas O'Donnell, Joseph Gildea, Patrick Gallagher, Packie Gildea, Packie Breslin, John Brown, Tom Gallagher, William Boyle, Con Breslin, Johnny Whoriskey, Leo Mooney, Barney McNelis, James P Mc Ginley, Sean Kennedy and Francis Gallagher.

On the 20th August 1932, there was a seven-a-side tournament in Killybegs in which Ardara, Bruckless, Killybegs and Donegal took part. Ardara defeated Donegal in the final and were presented with silver medals by Brian Brady T.D.

The Charity Cup

The Charity Cup was introduced in 1928, originally for teams in the Eastern division, with a set of gold medals to be presented to the winners. It soon became an all-county competition and was also known as the St Vincent de Paul Charity Cup. Ardara were not involved every year in the competition but they had entered in 1932 and played Killybegs at home on the 4th September, and then away on the 2nd October. They won both matches and went on to meet Dungloe in the County semi-final.

This match was scheduled for the 8th of December in Donegal Town but the game was postponed due to a snowstorm. The match was eventually played on the 26th February 1933, in Donegal, with Eddie Mc Feely as Referee. Dungloe won the game on a scoreline of Dungloe 1-04 to Ardara 1-03 after Ardara led by three points at half time.

Formation of Divisional Boards

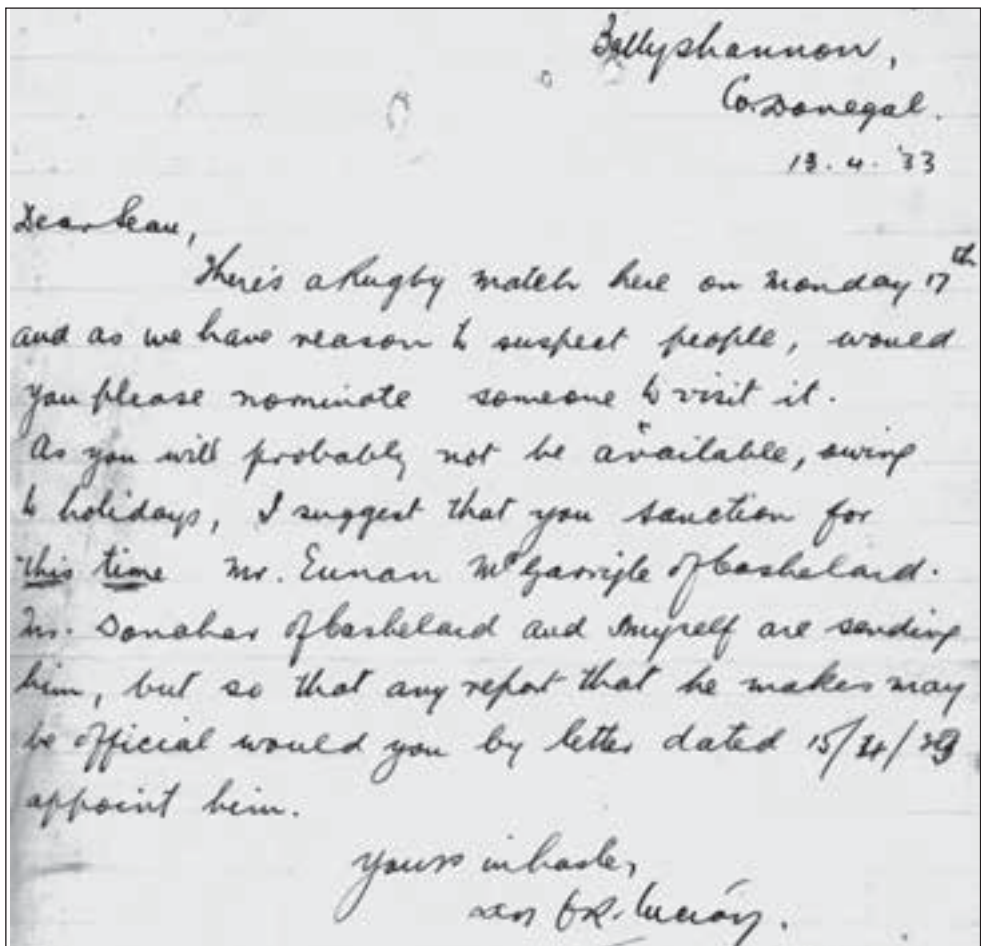
After the Charity Cup final a County Board meeting took place with Sean Cassidy presiding. What proved to be a momentous decision was reached when the Divisional Boards were established and the following were appointed to organise the new Divisions: - West Donegal – Mr. Dunlop, East Donegal – Mr. M. Walshe, South-West Donegal – Mr. Sean Cassidy and South Donegal – Mr. J. Maguire. The South-West was designated as the area between the Gweebarra and the Eany rivers. On the 28th June 1933 the first Inter-Divisional match was played at Dungloe between the West and the Southwest with Sean Kennedy of Dungloe as Referee.

The West won the match on a score of 3-05 to South-West 2-07.

The 'Vigilance' committee

As a strict rule in the GAA in the early decades (and indeed up until 'The ban' was removed in the early seventies), Gaelic players were forbidden to participate in any 'foreign' games such as rugby or soccer. To this end the County Board had in operation a vigilance committee. This committee included a number of people around the County, (who remained anonymous), who would monitor happenings locally on the sporting front and would make sure that any player who broke the rule were dealt with accordingly.

The following letter from Brother Lucien to Sean O'Casaide gives an idea of how the committee worked, as he asks for a member of the committee to attend an upcoming rugby match in Ballyshannon .



Ballyshannon,
Co. Donegal.
13.4.33

Dear Sean,

There's a rugby match here on Monday 17th
and as we have reason to suspect people, would
you please nominate someone to visit it.
As you will probably not be available, owing
to holidays, I suggest that you sanction for
this time Mr. Eunan McGarrigle of Garbheland.
Mr. Donohoe of Garbheland and myself are sending
him, but so that any report that he makes may
be official would you by letter dated 15/14/33
appoint him.

Yours in haste,
Bro. Lucien.

Sean obviously contacted Mr McGarrigle to officiate at the match, but the following letter from Mc Garrigle to Sean O'Casaide explains what happened next.

Caiseal Ard,
Beal-via-Seannig
21: 5: 33.

Sean O'Casaidé Uaf.,
Ard a'Raí.

A Cara,

I am sorry for delaying
so long in answering your letter.
I now wish to state that I will
willingly act as a member of the
Vigilance Committee in this area.
I will act as directed in your letter.
I am informed that members of a
club in this area took part in a
Rugby match on Easter Monday. I had not
your letter till about a fortnight
after Easter so I could not attend
that match. There were five, at least,
taking part in the game. One of those
players has returned to Letterkenny College
and the other to a College in Dublin.
This is all the information for so far.
Yr. m. p.
Adrian MacKeogh

1933 County Championship

The Senior Championship in the South-West in 1933 was a fiercely competitive affair, with Ardara, Kilcar, newcomers Glencolumcille and Killybegs taking part. Ardara and Glen drew in the opening match. Ardara won their second match in

Killybegs and in the third match they met Kilcar at the Owenea pitch. This match was a memorable affair with the following report carried in the Democrat.

"The greatest game of football seen in Donegal since the inauguration of the G.A.A. 3000 spectators witnessed Sunday's titanic struggle between the Ardara and Kilcar teams. Lorries, motorcars and about 1000 bicycles were parked along the country road for a quarter of a mile. The weather was ideal. Kilcar led by 1-03 to 0-02 at half time. A Maxwell point and an O'Donnell

goal levelled it and the excitement at this point of the game reached an Alpien pitch with rousing cheers awakening the slumbering echoes of the Owenea as the battle raged from goal to goal. D. Gallagher (Ardara) and J. P. Mc Ginley were heroic. At the end of the day Ardara won by 3-05 to 1-04 and all looked forward to the return in Towney.

Killybegs travelled to Ardara on July 16th and held them to a draw (0-8 to 2-2) this result left Ardara two points clear of Kilcar at the top of the table with their final game scheduled against Kilcar for the 30th of July. Kilcar needed to win to force a play-off. The following quote is from the Democrat *"The most thrilling and fastest stormed game ever witnessed on Towney Strand. This time it was Ardara who led at the interval 1-00 to 0-00 but Kilcar fought back to win 4-02 to 1-03 to force a play-off."*

The decider was played in Straleel on 20th August 1933. Another thriller ensued. Kilcar went into the lead with a soft goal and B. Gavigan added a point. Ardara hit back with a B. McNelis goal. McBrearty raised the white flag for Kilcar before the interval, leaving the score Kilcar 1-02 to Ardara 1-00. With J. P. Mc Ginley defending magnificently, Ardara failed to crack the Kilcar rearguard at first. A Gavigan goal for Kilcar was followed by a Gildea goal for Ardara. Points by Gildea and McNelis brought the sides level at 2-02 a piece. In the end Kilcar got the vital scores that they needed to win the match by the minimum on a scoreline of 2-04 to 2-03. The Ardara team that played in Towney was as follows: Thomas O'Donnell, Denis Ned Gallagher, William Boyle, Jim Maxwell, Tom Earley, Francie Gallagher, James A. McGinley, Barney McNelis (1-01), Packie John Gildea (1-02), Johnny Whoriskey, Packie Breslin, John Heena and Tom Gallagher.

Kilcar went into the County Senior Championship semi-final against Dungloe but were not strong enough for the Rosses men and Dungloe qualified for the County final against Bundoran. This match was played in Ardara on 1st October 1933 before a crowd of 7000 people. Dungloe won the match on a 3-2 to 1-3 scoreline.

Dungloe were powered by County star John Hughie O'Donnell. (who was married to Ardara girl Molly Campbell from the Main St.).

In the Democrat Cup competition of that year the South-West Division had five teams taking part, Killybegs, Owentocker (Glenties) Glencolumbkille, Ardara and Kilcar. The following fixtures were made for the first round (On a knockout basis)

A: - 12/08/1933 – Killybegs v Owentocker with Referee P. J. Brennan

B: - 19/08/1933 – Glencolumcille v Ardara with Referee J. McNelis

The winners of A to play Kilcar

The winners of B to receive a bye to the final.

Results are limited from these matches but county records show that Kilcar went on to win their first Democrat cup that year, defeating Gweedore in the final.

The 1933 Ulster Junior Football Championship

Donegal were again in the Junior ranks in 1933 and defeated Armagh in the first round of the Championship on a 1-5 to 0-7 scoreline, thus qualifying them for the Ulster Junior Final against Derry.

The match took place in Letterkenny on the 13th August with Jim Maxwell and Tom Gallagher of Ardara as part of the team. They had a brilliant start and at half time led by 2-03 to 1-02. Both Ardara men scored a point each. Donegal won that match and went on to participate in the All-Ireland Junior semi-final against Cork –their first ever visit to Croke Park- on Sunday 3rd September 1933.

In order to defray the expenses of proposed training, maintenance and travelling, it was decided that an appeal for funds be circulated to Donegal supporters and others at home and abroad. A Committee was elected, of which Sean Cassidy was elected Chairman. They beat Cork and had now qualified for the All-Ireland Final.



Photo taken on Maghera Strand on the 29th of June 1933 of Leaconnell and Straleel teams who played regular challenge matches on the strand.

Junior All-Ireland Final of 1933

The final was against Mayo in Croke Park and was fixed for Sunday 8th October 1933. The training of the County Team took place in Ardara for the week prior to the final. The players undertook a strenuous week's activity in numerous locations around the parish. The Hotel Holme was used, but the majority of the preparation took place on the strand at the Yellow Banks. This included a challenge match versus the Ardara Senior side as a final preparation for the game. Willie Young, a famous Cavan man who had trained the Cavan team to All Ireland success that year was recruited by the County Board to train the team. There was a great air of anticipation of victory around the County. Players were guests in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel, Woodhill Guesthouse and the Greenhouse.

The following letter from Sean O'Caisaide's memoirs is from Brother Lucien informing him of arrangements for a couple of the panel who were not able to arrive in Ardara earlier in the week.

Sallyphannan
Wednesday Morning

Dear Sean,

I hope the boys are seriously training. I'll be up on Monday and I expect he will be down to you this evening. Jerry McKeown has just finished a month's Army training, is arriving tonight (I expect) and will be on to Ardara tomorrow morning. Clancy had to go to Dublin for an examination.

My principal reason in writing is to get you to write Mr. Lickenny O'Brien & his Mr. O'Brien halfway to book their teams for a match for Glenties or Ardara some time in the new year (say April), in aid of the board funds - for a central 60 grounds. I am putting the matter up now so that we may have a claim on them if all others.

Hoping to meet you on Saturday or Sunday. Train from here Sunday morning at 6.30 7/- return.

Yours sincerely,
Brother Lucien



The Donegal team who played in the 1933 All Ireland Junior Final
Back Row from left: John McDermott (Ballyshannon), Owenie McFadden (Gweedore),
John Brown (Carrick), Joe Lawn (Donegal Town),
Bernie O'Donnell (Dungloe), Jim Mc Enhill (Donegal Town), Neil McGee (Falcarragh),
Teague Diver (Gweedore).
Front Row from left: Dessie Sweeney (Dungloe), Tom Diver (Gweedore), James P
McGinley (Kilcar), John Gallinagh (Ballyshannon),
Pat McManus (Bundoran), Terry McDermott (Ballyshannon), Tom Gallagher (Ardara),
John O'Donnell (Dungloe)
Sitting: Peter Clancy (Bundoran), Kevin Sweeney (Dungloe)

They travelled to Dublin as follows: - those in the North and West of the County travelled via Strabane to rendezvous with those from the South-West of the County. The South-West players travelled by train from Ballyshannon and via Dundalk, then proceeded to Clerkin's Hotel, Eccles Street, Dublin. The Donegal welcoming Committee in Dublin and Padraig O'Keefe, General Secretary of the G.A.A., attended to the entertainment and transport of the team.

The game itself was exciting. Donegal, defending the Canal End of Croke Park, had the better of the exchanges in the first half and scored 2-02 to Mayo 1-03. But all their scoring was in the first half and they went under totally in the second half, leaving the final score Mayo 2-15 to Donegal 2-02.

The Donegal line out was as follows: Jim McEnhill (Donegal), Teague Diver (Gweedore), Joe Lawn (Donegal Town), James P McGinley (Kilcar), John Gallinagh (Ballyshannon), Bernie O'Donnell (Dungloe), John Browne (Carrick), Paddy McManus (Bundoran), John O'Donnell (Dungloe-capt), Tom Gallagher (Ardara), Pete Clancy (Bundoran), Kevin Sweeney (Dungloe), Neil McGee (Falcarragh), Owenie McFadden (Gweedore), Terry McDermott (Ballyshannon).

County Board finances

At the County Convention held in early 1934, the following audited accounts for the year ended Dec 31st 1933 were presented by the Treasurer, Sean Conaghan.

Dr. Receipts & Disbursements Account of Donegal Co. Committee G.A.A.		Gr.	
For Year ended the 31st December, 1933.			
To Disbursements :-		By Receipts :-	
Affiliation Fees, 35 Clubs, 1933, 3 10 0		Affiliations, 35 Clubs, 1933, 26 18 0	
Championship Fee, 1933, jr. 10 0		Affiliations, 1 Club for 1934, 12 0	
Entrance Fee, 4 Co. League, 2 10 0		Entrance Fees, 1933, 5 2 6	
Bank Charges, 10 6		Entrance Fees, 1 for 1934, 2 6	
Bands, Co. and Hurling Committees, 6 3 0		Tournament Fees, 1 5 0	
Rent of Grounds, Labour, etc., 25 13 5		Gate Levies, 13 5 0	
Rail Vouchers and Motor Hire, 197 13 4		Gate Receipts as per Account, 306 5 8½	
Opposing Counties, 62 6 10		Appeals :-Co. Committee, 66 13 6	
Stationery and Printing, 17 11 1		Dublin Reception Committee, 10 0 0	
Postal, Telephone and Telegrams, etc., 22 15 7		Hurling Committee, 20 6 6	
Referees' Expenses, 8 10 0		Ulster Council Co. Committee, Training Grant, 10 0 0	
Medals (2. 6d. Discount Ret. in Receipts), 4 5 6		Central Council, 75 0 0	
Hurleys (Hurling Committee) 2 3 2		Hotel Expenses Refunds, 4 9 3	
Football (Inter-Div. Accounts) 18 0		Passengers, 38 18 0	
Appeal Expenses (Hire) 10 0		Protest Fee (Forfeit), 1 0 0	
Training Expenses, 41 8 3		Undetailed Receipts, 8 15 7	
Hotel Expenses, 72 7 4		Ceillidhe, Ardara, 5 14 0	
		County Colours, 5 4 9	
		Rail, Transport, Vouchers, etc., 60 12 5	
	460 5 11		
To Balance to Income and Expenditure Account	271 3 9½		
	740 9 8½		£740 9 8½
Dr. Income and Expenditure Account for Year ended 31st Dec., 1933.		Gr.	
Dec. 31.—To Outstanding Accounts paid 1933, 158 13 7		Dec. 31.—By Balance Carried Forward from 1932, 11 18 1½	
„ Balance Cash Forward to Balance Sheet, 124 8 4		„ Balance from Receipts and Disbursements Ac. 271 3 9½	
	283 1 11		283 1 11
General Balance Sheet of Donegal County Committee G.A.A. on the 31st December 1933.			
Liabilities and Claims.		Assets.	
Sundry Crs., 1933—Co. Committee, 3 0 0		Cash at Bank and on hands with Co. Treas., Divisional Secs., Ulster Council Sec. and Treasurer of Co. Hurling Committee, 124 8 4	
Sundry Crs., 1933.—Hurling Committee, 2 15 4		Sundry Drs. :-	
Sundry Claims, 1933.—Co. Committee, 5 16 0		Ulster Council, 45 16 8	
Sundry Claims, 1927 to 1932.—Co. Committee, 39 1 7		Divisional Committees, 7 2 0	
Capital Account, 396 3 5			52 18 8
		Trophies, 160 18 2	
		Seal of Co. Committee, 2 4 2	
		Team Attire, Committee, 13 12 6	
		Cross Bars, Committee, 0 6 0	
		Hurleys (Hurling Committee) 2 3 2	
	£356 10 4		£356 10 4
AUDITOR'S REPORT.			
I have examined the Accounts as prepared by the County Treasurer, and I find them Correct as far as I am able to determine.			
J. McLOONE.			



Tom Gallagher who was the son of Johnny Tom and Rosie Gallagher of the Wooden Bridge, was one of the shining lights of the GAA in Ardara in the 20s and 30s . He had an outstanding playing career with Club and County teams which spanned over 15 years. He made his debut for Donegal in the Championship of 1925, and finally retired from the County scene after the Championship defeat in 1938. Tom first appeared in the Club jersey in 1925 as a 20 year old and went on to win his first Championship medal

in 1926. He captained the side, which won the 1928 Championship. Known as an extremely versatile player, Tom made his County debut, in goals, in 1925 and went on to play in the 1928, 31 and 32 Championships in both the half and full forward line. His last appearance came as goalkeeper in 1938. The highlight of his County career came in 1933 when he was right half forward on the Donegal team which played Mayo in the All Ireland Junior Final. During his County career he won 2 Ulster Junior Championship medals, in 1930 and 1933, and a Lagan Cup medal in 1936. His last appearance came against Monaghan in the 1938 Ulster Championship where he kept a clean sheet in the 0-7 to 0-6 defeat for Donegal. On the Ardara Senior Team, he played in every position from goalkeeper to corner forward. In addition to his two Championship medals, he was also centre half back on the Democrat Cup winning team of 1931, as well as winning numerous 7 a side tournament medals. Tom also played his part in the administration of the Club, and served on the South-West Divisional Board as Chairman. When his playing career ended, he kept his involvement in the GAA and was one of the driving forces behind the reforming of the Killybegs club in the late 1940s. Tom was married to Molly (Boyle) of Tullycleave and they had three sons and four daughters. His sons Frankie and Niall went on to play for Ardara, with Frankie representing Donegal at Minor and Senior level. He passed away in 1965 at the age of 60 years.

Two teams fielded for the first time

1934 saw the Club decide for the first time to enter teams in both Senior and Junior ranks. Six years had passed since the last Senior Championship victory and the Club was hopeful of making a decent bid for success that year. At a meeting of the South-West Division in Ardara on the 18th February 1934, with Chairman Sean Cassidy presiding, the delegates were informed that eight clubs had affiliated and twelve teams had entered the competitions. There was a request from Dungloe to be allowed into the South-West Division. It was proposed by Charlie Mooney (Ardara) and seconded by Tom Gallagher that both the Dungloe and Gweedore Clubs should be taken into the Division. It was then agreed to divide the Division

into two regions – Boylagh, which would include Ardara, Owentocker, Dungloe and Gweedore, and Banagh which would include Killybegs, Kilcar and Glen. All of these would compete at Senior level.

The Boylagh Division was by far the tougher of the two and Ardara's first match was against the reigning County Champions, Dungloe, on the 4th of March. The game ended in a draw under referee O. McFadden. On the 25th of March Ardara drew with Owentocker in a local derby match and on the 1st of April Gweedore played Ardara in the final match in this section. The result of this match is unknown, but Ardara did not qualify for the South-West final in which Dungloe beat Owentocker.

The Senior County Final was played in Ardara, for the second year in succession, before a crowd of 2000 people. The ball was thrown in by Rev. John Kennedy Ardara. Bundoran were compensated for their defeat of the previous year by defeating Dungloe on a scoreline of 1-5 to 0-4. In the Junior Championship that year, the Club was drawn against Killaghtee, Glencolumbcille, Fintown and Gweebarra but had no success.

In the 1934 South-West Democrat Cup semi-final, Ardara defeated Kilcar by 4-01 to 2-01. The Ardara scorers were Vinny McHugh (1-00), Tom Early (1-00), Packie John Gildea, (1-00), Jim Maxwell (1-00) and Francie Heena (0-01). In the final of the competition Owentocker defeated Ardara by 2-03 to 1-04. Ardara had scores from Packie John Gildea (1-01), Bernard McNelis (0-01), Jim Maxwell (0-01) and John Campbell (0-01). Owentockers scores came from J. O'Donnell (0-02), Francis McGill (1-00), Patrick Gallagher (1-00) and Francis Gallagher (0-01).

7 A Side Successes

Seven a side tournaments were extremely popular at the time, and Ardara seemed to be particularly adept at this form of football. On the 26th June that year, in a tournament in Killybegs, they defeated Killybegs, Fintra, Glenties, and then Donegal in the final on a scoreline of 1-1 to 0-3. They were presented afterwards with a silver cup by Rev. N. Sheridan C.C. Killybegs.

They were also victorious in their own 7 a side tournament on the 30th October, when the following report was carried in the paper.

"Ardara and Kilcar qualified for the final and a thrilling encounter was the result. From the start Kilcar were sprightly and only brilliant play from O'Donnell, Maxwell, Gallagher and Boyle kept things scoreless. A Kilcar offensive combination resulted in a point, which was followed by another. Campbell scored a beauty of a goal for Ardara. Kilcar were not to be denied and quickly levelled with a point by McGinley. Mc

Ginley was reaching the high heights, while Maxwell and O'Donnell played well for Ardara. A rather easy goal dimmed Kilcars' hopes for success. Play continued to be robust. Ardara emerged victorious on a 1-3 to 0-3 scoreline. Maxwell was best on the field, while Gallagher and Boyle should walk on to the county team. For Kilcar, J.P. Mc Ginley was his cool confident self and lost none of his wizardry"

On the County scene, Vinny McHugh started on illustrious playing career in Donegal colours when he was part of the Donegal Minor Team of 1934. At Senior level that year, Denis (Ned) Gallagher played corner back on the Donegal team which played Fermanagh in the Ulster Senior Championship.



Jim Maxwell is remembered as one of the great Ardara players of the 30s and 40s and represented both Club and County with distinction. He first appeared on the Ardara Senior Team in 1928 and started a career that continued until he last donned the jersey in 1946. Jim started off playing at left corner back but shortly afterwards moved to 'centre full back', the position in which he played most of his football for Ardara and Donegal, although he

also played in the forward line on many occasions. Jim was well known county wide for his classy defensive play and indeed often made forays into the forward line with great success. Jim's first appearance at County level was in the Junior grade in 1930, playing against Derry in Ballybofey. He went on to win 2 Ulster Junior Championship medals and 2 Lagan Cup medals, being a member of the panel which was defeated in the All Ireland Junior final of 1933. He was also on the team that was defeated in the National League Final against Longford in 1937 in Pearse Memorial Park, and which won the traders' cup the same year at the opening of O'Donnell Park against Armagh. Jim's County career lasted for 9 years in total; his last Championship appearance was in the Ulster Senior Championship against Cavan in 1937. On the club scene, Jim's proudest day was in the Democrat Cup victory in 1931 over Dungloe when he led the attack from centre half forward. Like so many great Ardara players, he failed to win the coveted Senior Championship medal, playing on the losing side in 1936 and 1938. Jim's Club career ended in 1942, which meant that he narrowly missed out on the second Democrat Cup victory in 1943. He did however make occasional returns to the

team through the 40's and 50's when he answered the call when only 14 players were available.

He once recalled that his favourite victory for Ardara was won against a star-studded army team from the 17th Battalion from Killybegs in a game played in Glenties in the early forties. He travelled to the match with Wee Joe and Mollie Herron on a pony and trap. Jim's favourite pastime was angling and friends recall that he could catch a ball and a salmon with equal ease. He received the Ardara GAA hall of fame award in 1989 and passed to his eternal reward in 1993, a year after he enjoyed Donegal's first All Ireland success in 1992.

Jim will be remembered as one of the all time great Ardara footballers.



Jim pictured beside his beloved Owenea river in the eighties.



Donegal team from the late thirties.

**Included from Ardara are, Dan Ward (third from left back row),
Jim Maxwell (fifth from right back row),
Vinny Mc Hugh, Paddy Mc Gill and Tom Gallagher (extreme right back row),
and Harry O'Donnell (second from right front row).**

Camogie in Ardara in the 1930s

The sport of Camogie was played in Ardara from 1932 to 1936 with reasonable success, and since that time has been almost unheard of in South-West Donegal. The founder members of the Club were Ena Sheerin (Gildea), Ria Doherty, Angela O'Donnell, Mary Rose Boyle, Nattie McHugh and Sally McHugh. Barney Keeney and Packie McGrath also helped them in their efforts. They got the 'Saddler' Patrick Gildea, to order Camogie sticks and sliotars and they played their first practice match in Charlie Nancy's field, where the Ardara National School is now built, on the 2nd June 1932. They acquired rule books and with the help of Barney Keeney, who refereed all Camogie matches in South-West Donegal at that time, were soon very good at the game. One of their players, Susanna White (Cloughboy), was recognised as the best Camogie player in Donegal at that time and Susanna and Ena Gildea played for the County team during the mid 30's.

In 1933 Ardara did not fare well against other clubs but in 1934, fifty years after the G.A.A. was founded, they qualified to play Kilmacrennan in the County Camogie Final. On the day of the final Packie McGrath drove the team to Letterkenny in his 'Essex' Car and the supporters travelled with James E. Melly, Andy (The Baker) Breslin and John and Charlie Mooney. It was a big occasion for the town and the team had a huge following.

The game went to extra time and Kilmacrennan won by one point. On the way home Packie McGrath took the team to Croagh to the dance as a reward for their efforts and bargained with the doorman to get the whole team in for 3s and 6d. The team arrived home at 4.30 a.m. in the morning, still in the Camogie outfits. This was the last time this team played together. At the time Camogie sticks cost 2s. 6d. for an average stick and 3s.6d. for a good one. The sliotar could be bought for 1s. 3d.

The team that played in the final was as follows: Ria Doherty (goals), Nattie McHugh (full back), Peg Molloy, Ena Gildea, Ellen Cannon (half-backs), Mary Rose Boyle, Susanna White, Bridie Gildea (midfield), Maggie Cannon, Sally McHugh, Brigid Ellen White (half-forwards), Molly Mc Hugh (full-forward). The teams at that time were twelve-a-side.

The Camogie Club held a very successful fund raising Ceili in the Iona Hall that year. John Campbell was Fear an Ti and Miss Patrica Gildea and Miss Angela O'Donnell contributed songs and Dr. Carr sang an Irish duet with Michael J,

Kennedy. Ena Gildea, Molly Campbell, Tom Breslin, J. J. McHugh, Brian O'Donnell and J. Campbell provided the Ceili music.

The Club continued its progress throughout 1935 with matches against teams such as Croagh, (winning 1-0 to 0-0) Killybegs, (winning 2-0 to 1-0 at the Owenea Bridge) and Carrick (drawing 1-0 each).



Ardara Camogie team 1934

Back row from left: Angela O'Donnell, Maggie Cannon (Straleel), Mollie Brogan (O'Brien), Kitty (Phil) Boyle, Kathleen Given, Mary O'Donnell (Gildea), Mollie McHugh (Nancys). Front Row, L to R: Ena Gildea (Sheridan), Mary Rose McHugh (Boyle), Ellen Cannon (Straleel), Ellen Kennedy (Treasurer), Rosaleen McGill, Mary (The Saddler) Gildea, Sally Byrne (McHugh), Susanna White.

Match abandoned

On the 25th June 1935, in the County Camogie Championship, Ardara qualified to play Kilmacrennan in Donegal Town. The game ended in a draw 2-00 each. After the first goal, Kilmacrennan claimed that the first half was five minutes too long and Ardara refused to play extra time. Spectators invaded the pitch and the Referee abandoned the game. In the replay Kilmacrennan won by 2-15 to 0-00 in a match that was played in a downpour.

In the last Camogie match that the records show, Ardara played Maghery on the 2nd August 1935. The match ended in a scoreless draw with Barney Keeney as Referee. The following Ardara players were on the team that day: Mrs O'Brien, Nattie McHugh, Mary Rose McHugh, Ena Gildea, Susanna White, Molly McHugh, Peg Molloy, Kathleen Boyle, Margaret Meehan and Kathleen Allen.

Club hit difficult times

After a poor year experienced by the Club in 1934, it was decided that an effort had to be made to strengthen the playing strength of the Senior and Junior teams. It was evident from 1930 onwards that the teams who had won championships in the twenties were no longer a major force in the County. Outside players had been brought in with little improvement, and things reached an all time low in 1935 when the Senior team failed to field on three occasions. To redress this position, the Club, under the guidance of Sean Cassidy, Dan Ward, Charles Mooney, Patrick Brennan and others, decided to rectify the position by concentrating on the Junior team to try and raise the spirits of the Club. They were encouraged by the fact that the Camogie movement was enjoying remarkable success throughout the Club area – in the townland of Ardara, Brackey, Meentinadea and Loughros Point. The officers of the Club felt that a Parish League, in which all available adult players in the area participated, would be of great benefit and would unearth potential players for the Club's adult teams.

First Parish Leagues Formed

The decision to organise a Parish League in 1935 suggests that the popularity of Gaelic Football was not confined to the Ardara Town area. Indeed, matches between neighbouring National School catchment areas and against districts of neighbouring parishes were commonplace. Most of these 'friendlies' were played in a sporting manner, but the outcome of some wasn't decided until the following Fair Day. Therefore, in order to ensure that the official rules were applied with a neutral referee in charge, the Club, at a special meeting, organised a Parish League. Seán Cassidy was elected Chairman and P. S. Mac a'Ghoill as Secretary. Also in attendance were J. McGill, Brackey; Con Breslin, Gortnacart; Johnny Watters, The Point; Charlie Mooney and P. Breslin, Drumbarron; W. Boyle and C. Mc Hugh, Ardara.

- Rules: (1) Each team to nominate a full list of players whom they call on during competition.
- (2) List of players in a match to be handed to referee before beginning of game.
- (3) Donegal Co. Bye Laws to be adopted for control of Competition (four days).
- (4) Committee to hear protests or other matters to be fixed for competition as a whole.

The following draw was made for the first round of the league:

Sun. 13th of October: Meenavalley v. Ardara. Referee, J. Watters.
Gortnacart v. Drumbarron. Referee, J. Mc Gill.

Sun. 20th	Point	v. Brackey	" P.J. Brennan.
	Meentinedea	v. Meenavalley	" J. Mc Gill.
Sun. 29th	Ardara	v. Gortnacart	" P. J. Mc Gill N.T.
	Drumbarron	v. The Point.	" J. Mc Gill.

The team lists that are available from that era are:

Drumbarron: Cathal Ó Maonaidh, Conn Ó Gallochobhair, Seán Ó Coilín, Brian Ó Domhnaill, Leon Ó Maonaidh, Pádraig Mac Giolla Dé, Pádraig Mac Gabhagain, Enrí Ó Domhnaill, Séamus Ó Gallochobhair, Mícheal Ó Baoill, Tomas Mac Suibhne, Phelim Ó Gallochobhair, Proinnsias Ó Baoill, Tadhg Ó Gallochobhair.

Meenavalley: Denis Gallagher, John Gallagher, Leo Gallagher, Barney McNelis, Francie McNelis, Patrick Gallagher, Joseph Gallagher, Dan Gallagher, Joseph Shovelin, Hughie Boyle, Joseph Meehan, Patrick Shovelin, Patrick Boyle.

Ardara: William Boyle, Jim Maxwell, Charles McHugh, Tom Early, John.B. McHugh, Vinny McHugh, Packie Boyle, Danny Haughey, Hugh Given, F. O'Donnell, Jim Fisher, Jim. Breslin, J.J. McHugh.

At a meeting on the 28th of November Con Breslin stated that Gortnacart was withdrawing from the League "owing to the lack of spirit in Gaelic Football in the area". It was first decided, "to transfer all the Gortnacart players to Meentinedea G. F. C." but in January '36 it was agreed that Gortnacart amalgamate with Loughros Point.

The last available League Table was as follows:

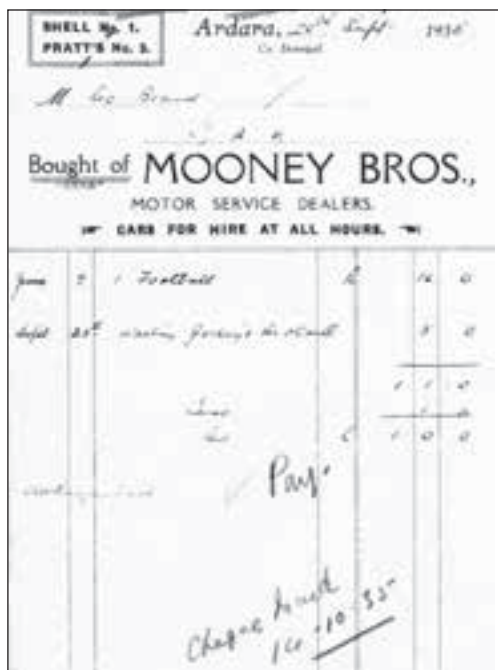
Team	Played	Won	Lost	Drew	Points
Meentinedea	2	0	2	0	0
Meenavalley	3	3	0	0	6
Drumbarron	3	3	0	0	6
Brackey	1	0	0	1	1
L. Point	2	0	1	1	1
Ardara	3	1	2	0	2

Junior Championship Final 1935

It is unclear how many (if any) matches the Junior team had played to reach the final. Ardara had not prepared as a team. There was no physical training or coaching and the players had no experience of playing together, the only opportunity they had in the previous months being the Parish League. The game was played in a very sporting manner on a cold frozen Magheragallon before a very large attendance. Although Ardara were defeated by 4-2 to 0-01, the game was not as one sided as that score indicates. Andy McHugh scored the lone Ardara

point in the last minute. The Gweedore lead was piled up in the first half but Ardara came more into the game in the second half. Many recall the intense cold of that shortest day of the year and the frozen roads and the resulting hazards of travelling to and from Magheragallon. It was the first visit of most of the players to Gweedore and all involved had good reason to remember the hospitality of Joe Friel and his family on that occasion. The Ardara team which played in the 1935 Junior final was composed of the following players: - Charles McHugh (Maghera), Barney McHugh (Leaconnell), Andy McHugh (Leaconnell), Josie Meehan (Balbane), Hugh Gildea (Monargan), Francis Heena (Crumlin), John Gallagher (Meenavalley), Jim Gildea (Monargan), Paddy McGill (Meentinadea), Neilly Herron (Glencoagh), Francis Boyle (Magumna), James Shovlin (Roughra), Leo Mooney (Ardara), Harry O'Donnell (Ardara), Leo Gallagher (Meenavalley), Patrick Gallagher (Drimaha), Dan Shovlin and Jim Fisher.

This bill was paid to Charles Mooney for one football and laundry work during the year.



Arranmore Disaster Charity Match

As a result of the Arranmore Disaster, which occurred on Saturday 9th November 1935, a public appeal had been made for funds to alleviate the loss caused by this drowning tragedy. The Ardara G.A.A. Club decided to organise a friendly game between 'The Emeralds' and 'The Shamrocks' at the newly acquired field at Kentucky. The Emeralds won on a score of 1-06 to 1-04.

The Emeralds team consisted of the following players: - Joe Breslin (Hillhead), Johnny Watters (Kenaughty), Jim Fisher (Hillhead), Francis Heena (Crumlin), Jim Maxwell (Hillhead), Paddy McGill (Meentinadea), Vinny McHugh (Hillhead), Charles McHugh (Hillhead), Packie John Gildea, William Boyle, Tom Early, Hugh Gildea, James Joseph McHugh (Kilgole).

The Shamrocks line-out was: - Hugh McTeague (Garrahill), John Gallagher

(Meenavalley), Denis Gallagher (Meenavalley), Patrick McGill (Glengesh), Thomas Shovlin (Roughra), Thomas McGill (Scadaman), Patrick Joe Gallagher (Common), John McGill (Aighe) and Hugh Gallagher (Ardara). The amount raised was £6-12-0.



Denis Ned Gallagher was one of a family of 10 sons and 6 daughters born to Ned & Katherine Gallagher of Meenavalley. His older brother Jimmy had preceded him on the Ardara teams of the 20s, with Denis making his debut for the Club Senior team in 1930. He won his first and only County medal for the Club in the Democrat Cup victory of 1931, lining out at left corner back.

He progressed to play with the County and made his Championship debut in 1934 against Fermanagh, playing at left full back in the 2-5 to 1-3 defeat for Donegal. He also played in the Championship of 1935 against Cavan, this time at full back. Donegal lost on a 1-11 to 1-9 scoreline. Starting out as a corner/full back, Denis soon moved out to the half back line and made the number six position his own, although he did venture to the forward line in the 1938 County Final defeat to Gweedore. Denis continued to turn out for the Club in the early 40s and indeed, after hanging up his Club jersey, continued to play with his beloved Meenavalley in numerous parish games and friendlies. Married to Hanna Mc Gill, Denis passed away in 1975.

1935 AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the Ardara G.A.A. Club was held in the Courthouse on the 3rd October, 1935 the following officers were elected to serve the Club in 1936: Chairman, Sean Cassidy; Secretary, Dan Craig; Treasurer, Charles Mooney; Committee - Padraig S Mac a'Ghoill (Meentinadea), James Maloney (Maghera), Johnny Whoriskey (Kenaughty), Con Breslin (Lurganboy), Denis Gallagher (Meenavalley), William Byrne (Sandfield), Packie Breslin (Ardara) and William Boyle (Hillhead).

Club Re-organised

Following the success of the Parish Leagues and the emergence of new talent through the Junior team of 1935, it was then decided that an effort be made to blood the young players now becoming available with those who were involved in the 1928 Championship and 1931 Democrat Cup winning teams. Five members of the 1935 Junior team were promoted to Senior ranks - Hugh Gildea, Francis Heena, Andy McHugh, Paddy McGill and Harry O'Donnell. The South-West Senior Championship began on March 8th with Ardara beating Kilcar. Ardara went on to win all their games; beating Killybegs twice, with the matches being detailed in the local press as follows.

Donegal Senior Championship - Ardara v Killybegs

15th May 1936

Under ideal weather conditions and before a large attendance of enthusiastic spectators Killybegs met Ardara at Maguire's Park, Killybegs in the first round of the County Championship competition. Notwithstanding that Killybegs were without the services of Rodgers, McGill and Byrne, they have rarely if ever given such poor display and proved easy victors to a virile Ardara combination.

Swift open football marked the initial stages of the game and after a few minutes play a rapid Ardara onset was witnessed. Boyle transferred to Watters who sent over a Mminor for the visitors. The seashiders fought back with McGuinness dashing away and placing nicely for P. J. Cunningham to equalise. Quickly driven back on the defensive, Killybegs resisted stubbornly and a sprightly Ardara central manoeuvre carried danger to the home zone where Tom Gallagher placed accurately for William Boyle to raise the white flag and put Ardara in the lead again. From this stage onwards Ardara dominated the play and had it not been for the sturdy defence of John P. McGuinness and Andrew Martin the homester's arrears would have been much heavier. McGill was well in the limelight when Ardara renewed their efforts and from this pass Gildea registered a beautiful point for the visitors which left the half time score Killybegs (0-01) to Ardara (0-03).

After the restart Killybegs failed to improve, Ardara being first to assert themselves and the home front trio experienced many exciting moments. Tom Gallagher (Ardara) after eluding several of the opposing players, sent into the parallelogram for Shovlin to score the first goal of the game for Ardara. Subsequently, Ardara were awarded a fifty and from the resultant kick McHugh put Watters in possession to convert a minor for the visitors at close range. Two points from D. Shovlin increased Ardara's margin. The visitors continued to apply strong pressure and danger continued to

hover over the home citadel when McGill engineered a clever movement and passed to Tom Gallagher who crossed to Gildea who fired into the net. The home goal fell once more when Gallagher (Ardara) received from McHugh and sent past the home custodian which left the full time score Ardara 3-06 to Killybegs 0-01. Ardara scorers were Packie Whoriskey ((0-01), William Boyle (0-01), Packie Gildea (1-01), Dan Shovlin (1-02), Tom Gallagher (1-01)

Outstanding for Ardara were William Boyle, Tom Gallagher (Capt), Paddy McGill, Packie Gildea, and D. Shovlin.

The teams were: –

Ardara – Charles McHugh, James Fisher, Jim Maxwell, Hugh Gildea, Andy McHugh, Vinny McHugh, Denis Gallagher, John Gallagher, Tom Gallagher (Capt), Paddy McGill, Packie Watters, William Boyle, Francie Heena, John Campbell, Dan Shovlin and Packie Gildea.

Killybegs: - M. Gallagher, J. P. McGuinness, A. Martin, and Jos. McGuinness, J. Boyle, F. Gillespie, T. Leslie, F. Brady, Con McGuinness, Conal McGuinness, J. Coughlin, J. Gallagher, John McGinley, P. J. Cunningham and M. Carr.

Referee was Mr. James P. McGinley.

Donegal County Championship

Ardara v Killybegs; The Return Match *(Derry People – May 1936)*

Ardara travelled to meet Killybegs on Sunday last in the second last match of the first round of the County Championship Competition. It was a fine day for a game and the football pitch was in good condition. Ardara broke away from the throw in. B. O'Donnell got possession and passed to Johnny Whoriskey who scored a goal for Ardara in the first few minutes of the game. From the kick out Killybegs got into action and forced the play into the Ardara half of the field but failed to score on getting several good openings. Then Charles Cunningham got possession and kicked for goals – Maloney running in to score a goal for Killybegs, making the game level. Following a period of fine football during which both teams pressed hard for a score with the defence on both sides playing well. Then from a 'scrimmage' in the Killybegs goals B. O'Donnell put through a goal for Ardara. Killybegs succeeded in scoring a point from Joe Boyle and John P. McGuinness put over another point from a free forty yards out. At half time the score stood Ardara 2-00 to Killybegs 1-02

At the beginning of the second half it was any-body's game and Killybegs did the attacking for the first ten minutes but William Boyle and Denis Gallagher in the Ardara defence cleared on every occasion. Earley – Ardara's outside right got possession of the

ball and kicked for goals, B. O'Donnell running in to knock it through for a goal for Ardara. Before the final whistle Ardara scored a point from Earley making the final score Ardara 3-01 to Killybegs 1-02.

The outstanding players on the Ardara team were William Boyle and Denis Gallagher in defence, B. O'Donnell, Earley and Whoriskey in the forward line. John Paul McGuinness in the Killybegs defence was the outstanding man on the team. James P. McGinley (Kilcar) was the Referee and was very capable and impartial. The League Table now stands – Kilcar 4 points, Ardara and Carrick 3 Points and Killybegs nil.

Next Sunday will be a big day in Ardara. Kilcar travel to meet the home side in Ardara. Kilcar and Ardara have not met for years and all will remember the great games that ensued when these old rivals met in the past. The game is going to be well worth watching. Are Ardara going to oust Kilcar to add two more points to their lead? These are the puzzling questions that the outcome of the match on Sunday will answer. The match is starting at 4.00 p.m. (S.T.) and Sean Kennedy N.T. is the Referee. At 3.00 p.m. in the same park I presume Ardara Junior Team will meet Killaghtee in the Donegal Junior Championship. Sean Conaghan from Glenties will referee that match.

The team duly accounted for Kilcar in the match referred to above on a scoreline of 2-3 to 1-2 to qualify for the county semi-final against county champions Bundoran. The match was played in Ardara on 23rd August and gathered huge interest locally. It turned out to be a thrilling game with Bundoran going ahead four times and Ardara levelling four times. The game finished level, 0-4 each. The replay was fixed for Bundoran's Gaelic Park. Prior to that game, both teams attired in full outfit were headed by the Dungannon Brass Band and led down the street to the field. The Democrat stated that the match was somewhat unique in so far as high-class football was concerned and were it not for the absence of speed, it would have completely outrivaled the previous Sunday's display between Mayo

and Louth. Bundoran led 0-4 to 0-0 at the break after being favoured with a strong breeze. Two goals from Packie John Gildea however helped Ardara to a thrilling 2-2 to 0-4 victory. Tom Gallagher had an outstanding game for Ardara.

1936 County Final

Ardara faced Dungloe in the County Final in Pearse Memorial Park on the 13th September 1936. £60.00 was collected at the gate and the Kilcar Pipe Band led the teams around the field. At half time, after bouts of exhilarating football by both teams, Dungloe led by 0-04 to 0-02. The Ardara points came from Tom Gallagher and Packie Gildea. In the second half, Ardara stepped up a gear and had three quick points from Tom Gallagher and P. Gildea. Jim Maxwell notched up three more points. The side suffered a huge blow when Tom Gallagher retired injured and had to be replaced by Francis Heena. Dungloe entered a good patch only to be stopped by a goal from Paddy McGill, which was followed quickly by another from Vinny McHugh. Dungloe gained the initiative at this point and scored two goals to leave the final score Ardara 2-03 to Dungloe 2-08. The Ardara team was the same as played in the semi-finals: - Charles McHugh, Francie Heena, Jim Maxwell, Hugh Gildea, Andy McHugh, Denis Ned Gallagher, B. McHugh, William Boyle, Paddy McGill, Harry O'Donnell, Tom Gallagher, James A. McGinley, P. J. Gildea, Johnny Watters and Patrick Gildea.

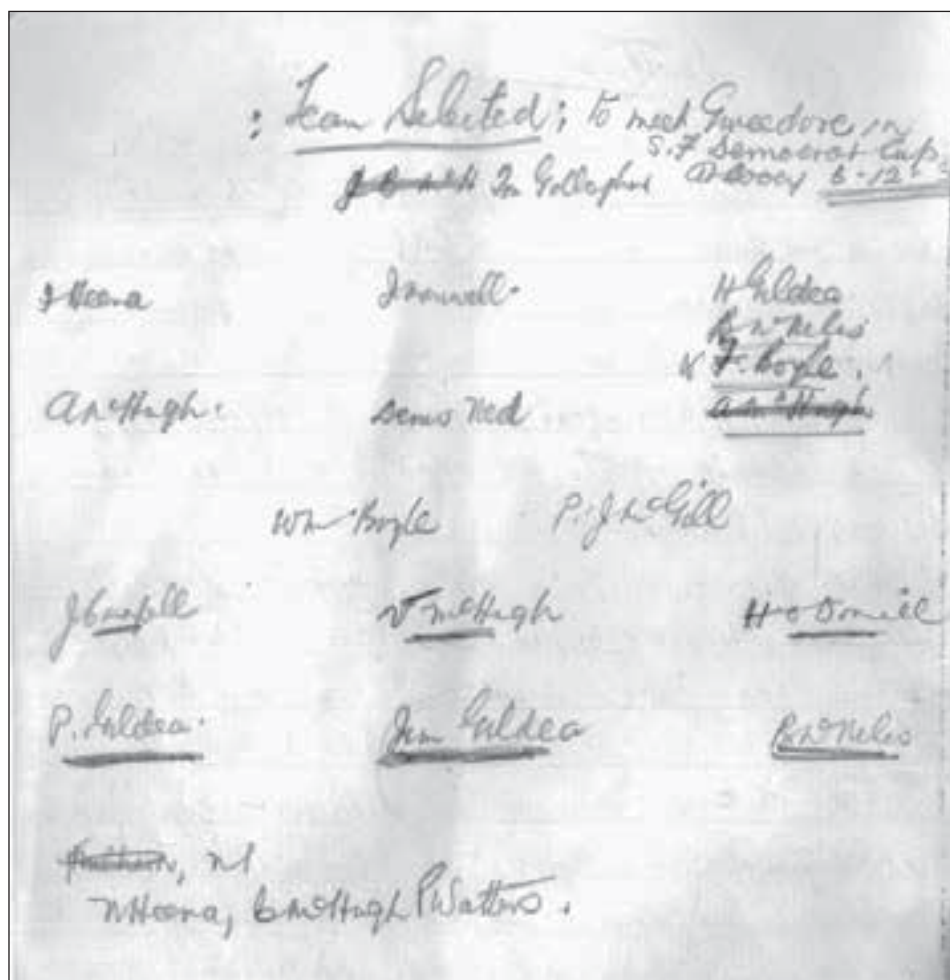
Dungloes lineout was : D. Sweeney, K. Sweeney, J.D. Sweeney, J.O. Donnell, John Boyle, J. Sharkey, K. Winston, B. Winston, J. Sweeney, John Sharkey, P. McPaul, A. Boyle, James Boyle, B. McGowan, P. Sweeney.

Referee:Owenie McFadden (Gweedore)

Vinny McHugh and James A McGinley joined Jim Maxwell in the County Senior ranks that year, playing in the team that defeated Fermanagh in the first round before going down to Monaghan in the Ulster Semi-final. Mc Hugh and Maxwell were also members of the Donegal team that won the Lagan Cup for the second time.

Other Competitions

In the Democrat Cup of 1936 the team reached the County semi-finals, only to be defeated by Gweedore after a close match in Dooley. This page from the minute book of the time was used at a Club meeting to select the team for the match.



In the South-West Junior Championship Ardara drew with Dunkineely, 1-06 each, on the 9th August, Dunkineely being the only other team in the competition. In the replay match, Dunkineely were victorious and later went on to win their first County Junior Championship. One of the Club officers of the day stated afterwards - "The team chosen did not live up to expectations but, with more regard for the success of their Club, Ardara could have won both Championships (Senior and Junior) for the Club that year." The Ardara Junior team was John B. McHugh, William McLaughlin, Tommy McGill, Barney McHugh, Neilly McHugh, Joe Gildea, James Kennedy, Harry O'Donnell, Teague McNelis, P. McHugh, Vinny Gildea, Paddy Gallagher, Paddy Sweeney and Brian O'Donnell.

Kilraine also hosted a seven-a-side competition on 4th October 1936. The Ardara team was:- Barney Mc Nelis, Denis 'Ned' Gallagher, Packie Gildea, Paddy Gallagher, Joe Breslin, John Gallagher and Dan Shovlin.

Details of the outcome of that tournament were not available.



Charles Mooney first came to prominence as a player on the first Club team to win the Championship in 1923. Playing in the forward line, he was one of the few players to have won three County Senior Championship medals in 1923, 26 & 28. His biggest contribution to the Club however was off the field. He was widely regarded as one of the most important people in the Club through the 20's, 30's, and 40's. He lived on the main street (where Alan Given's shop is now situated) and many people of that time would say that the Club 'headquarters' were situated there. Charles was Treasurer of the Club from 1932 to 1943 (probably even before 1932 also) and during that time he kept the Club afloat financially in times when money was nowhere to be found. If the Club was short of money, Charles Mooney provided it himself. He used his own car to transport Club players and teams to matches around the county, mostly free of charge. He was instrumental in the purchase of Pearse Memorial Park in 1935 and in its subsequent development, becoming one of the first trustees of the Park in 1939. He stored the Club jerseys, footballs, boots etc in his own house and ensured their safekeeping. Charles was known as an extremely kind man, especially where the youth of the parish were concerned. A very active man, Charlie ran a extremely successful hackney business and was also the original owner of what is now known as the West End Bar.



Charles Mooney right, pictured above with Packie Doherty (uncle of Eddie). This picture was taken in Belfast in the 1920s.

Annual Sports Day

The Ardara annual sports day was held on the 13th August 1936 and winners in the 100 yards were first, Jim Fisher and a second Paddy McGill. In the 300 Yards, Jim Fisher and Vinny McHugh were first and second respectively. The programme continued with a seven-a-side competition with six teams competing. Killybegs were the eventual winners. The following Referees were in action: - Sean Cassidy, Tom Gallagher, Hugh McNelis and Josie Boyle. Patrick Logue ran the Camogie competition with Killybegs beating Meentinadea 1-00 to 0-00 in the final.

Annual Meeting

Despite reaching the semi-final of the Democrat Cup, the final of the Dr. Maguire Cup and the Divisional final of the Junior Championship, the Club brought no final honour back to the parish that year. The Secretary at the time - Dan Craig, issued the following statement in his Annual Report *"This should be a guidance or a warning to us in the competitions of future years - not to confirm victory until it is secured - the bird is not in the hand until then"*.

The accounts of 1936 showed financial affairs to be in a very bad state. The Secretary also warned in his Report *"If our club, with indifferent play, is resulting in the public losing interest in the cause, I venture to say that if our teams took greater interest in their play and gave the public better value for their money, our Gaels would benefit and our Club would recover materially"*. The Secretary stated that Central Council had given a grant of £200.00 to the County for pitch development, £100 of which was allocated to the Club towards their new field. He went on *"What conditions will be attached to this grant, we do not yet know. The expenditure in cash, purchasing, deeds, interest and disclosure on the loan, labour paid and other improvements, fencing, draining, and enclosing pitch, amounts to £256.11.3 and if free labour is estimated, the total cost would come to probably close on £300. As a finished sports field it is in rather poor state, but it is our hope, that at some future date it will be vested in Trustees, to hold as property of the Ardara Gaelic Club, it will be somewhat more respectable in appearance than it is today. However, a great advance was made in acquiring and putting it into its present shape and it is confidently hoped that in any future developments and improvements of it, that the promoters of the object and the Club will have material support from the Parish, both town and country."*

A plan to develop hurling in the Club had not materialised in 1936, and the Secretary expressed his disappointment as follows. *"Although a sub-committee was set up to start hurling in the Club through the Minors and school players, I regret to say that the idea ended with its beginnings - nothing eventualised - and so hurling remains a dead letter yet. Perhaps indifference again. It is to be hoped that an earnest effort to establish the game, Ireland's proudest boast in national athletics, will be achieved in the parish in the coming year 1937. Dungloe, Gweedore, Ballyshannon and Donegal have good Minor hurley players and Club teams. Is Ardara going to the rear in this advance of Tirconail to restore her pride in the national game? Our young members should be organised and led to see that nothing bars them, hurleys, ball, playing pitch, everything is wanting. I recommend that the suggestions I have made be given the earliest consideration by our active young men"*.

Ardara Officers Take Temporary Charge At County Convention

The annual G.A.A. County Convention took place in the Butt Hall, Ballybofey on 31st January, 1937. Presiding was Charles Mc Dyre, and delegates were present from eleven clubs including Ardara, which was represented by Donall Mac a'Bháird, Padraig S. Mac a'Ghoill and Leo O'Maonaigh. Arising from the understanding that the outgoing Chairman, Charles Mc Dyre, and secretary Sean Kennedy were not seeking re-election, Donall Mac a'Bháird (Ard An Rátha) was selected to act as temporary Secretary. M. J. Doherty, who presided during the proceedings had to adjourn to consider the election of officers, this resulted in the existing officers, Charles Mc Dyre, Dan Ward and Sean Cassidy accepting temporary office. All three were members of the Ardara G.A.A. Club. These three men held the officerships until April when, at a special Convention, the following were elected permanent Officers.

Chairman - Rev. Fr. D. Molloy (Falcarragh)

Secretary - Donall Mac a'Bháird (Ard An Rátha)

Treasurer - Sean Cassidy (Ard An Rátha).

Donegal's First National League Final Played In Ardara

The 1936/37 National League competition saw Donegal's best run in the competition since their involvement in the Leagues commenced. They won the 5 County League (The Lagan Cup) which saw them top of a table that included Armagh, Derry, Tyrone and Fermanagh. The Derry match took place in Ardara, Donegal winning on a 1-8 to 0-4 scoreline, with Maxwell and McHugh listed as playing well for Donegal. This qualified them for the National League Division 2 final where their opponents were Longford. The County Board decided that Donegal, having home advantage, would nominate Ardara as the venue. The game was played on the 7th of March 1937, but unfortunately for the home side Longford were too strong and ran out winners on a 1-7 to 1-3 scoreline. This was the only national final to be played in the Parish in the Club's history.

The Donegal team listed on the day was as follows:

N. McGroarty, B.Winston (Gweedore), J. Maxwell (Ardara), T. Campbell (Bundoran), J. Quinn (Castlefin), M. Melly (Ballyshannon), J. Browne (Kilcar), P Gillespie (Gweedore), J. Doyle (Letterkenny), V. McHugh (Ardara), K. Sweeney (Dungloe), J. O'Donnell (Dungloe), J. McManus (Bundoran), J.P. Mc Ginley (Kilcar), H Gallagher (Gweedore). Subs used: E Cannon (Kilcar), G McGill (Dunkineely), J O'Rourke (Letterkenny), H Dunlop (Gweedore).



**A section of a County Team taken in 1937 in O'Donnell Park Letterkenny
Included are (back row from left) Jim Maxwell, Josie Boyce (Glenties), Vinny McHugh,
George McGill (Dunkineely), Eddie Cannon (Straleel). Front Row from left: Paddy McGill,
Jim Quinn (Castlefin), Josie Doherty (Burtonport).**

In that year's Ulster Junior Football Championship, Donegal played Fermanagh at Irvinestown on 4th April, 1937. Vinny McHugh, Paddy McGill and Tom Early were all members of the team. They were defeated on a score of 3-06 to 1-08. In the Ulster Senior Championship Donegal defeated Antrim by 3-08 to 0-06 with Jim Maxwell playing at fullback and Vinny McHugh at full forward scoring 1-01. With the same Ardara players, Donegal lost the semi-final by 2-12 to 1-04 at Breffni Park, Cavan. Donegal Minors suffered a similar defeat, also to Cavan 2-12 to 2-05.

This photograph we have failed to identify, despite having consulted with some Ardara players of the '30s and '40s. We are not sure if it is an Ardara or Donegal County team. The photo was the property of Denis Ned Gallagher.





Vinny Mc Hugh – A footballing legend- 1917-1983

When people talk of great Ardara footballers of the past, Vinny Mc Hugh's name is close to the top of the list. He will always be known as one of the finest ever to don the Club and indeed County jersey.

Vinny first burst on the scene in 1934 as a Minor with Ardara and Donegal. A Minor again in '35, he was a key member of the team which was defeated by Tipperary in the All Ireland semi-final. His first appearance for the Club at Senior level was also in 1934, against Gweedore at the Owenea Bridge. William Boyle, who was cycling to the match that day, fell off the bike at Walkers brae and was unfit to play. As a result of William's misfortune, Vinny started his illustrious career in the green and gold. He went on to become the inspiration behind Ardara's appearance in the County Senior finals of 1936 and 1938, One of his greatest regrets, was not being on an Ardara Senior Championship winning team. His main highlight at Club level was leading the Club (that year under the Downstrands name) to the Democrat Cup victory in 1943, scoring 1-8 out of Ardara's total of 2-8. Known as a brilliant fielder (his one handed catch was famous around the county) Vinny played most of his football at centre half forward and also played midfield, his favourite position, for Club and County. His accuracy, both from play and dead ball, was famous all over Ulster.

Vinny won Lagan Cup medals with Donegal in 1936 & 37 and played in 12 Ulster Championship matches for Donegal between 1936 and 1945, His inter-county career ended in 1947. He was also the first Ardara player to be selected for Ulster, being picked at left half forward in 1938, 39 and 42. He considered the 1938 Ulster semi-final between Donegal and Monaghan in Carndonagh as the hardest match in which he ever played. Monaghan won the match by one point (0-7 to 0-6). He rated Jim Mc Cullagh from Armagh his toughest ever opponent and the best player he ever seen. His all time favourite player from within the county was his great friend, James Patrick Mc Ginley from Kilcar, whom he described as " a worker to get the ball, and a joy to watch on the ball". His most admired Ardara player was Harry O Donnell.

Vinny was held in high esteem by his footballing



Vinny and Bridget Mc Hugh, pictured on their wedding day in 1941.

contemporaries. Cavan legend, T.P.O Reilly, described him as "the man who never knew when he was beaten". Vinny served on many Club committees over the years and was a regular officer and team selector. He was also elected Club Chairman in 1973. Earlier, in the sixties, he had been a County Senior team selector in the sixties. Vinny was the first winner of the Ardara GAA Hall of Fame award in 1983, shortly before his death from illness .He was married to Brigid (Boyle) and they had 5 sons and 2 daughters.Vinny passed away on the 22nd of May 1983, His contribution to the GAA in both Club and County could never be under-estimated.

O'Donnell Park is opened

The official opening of O'Donnell Park (Letterkenny) took place on Sunday 7th May 1937 with Donegal playing Armagh in football and Antrim in hurling. Three Ardara players were included in the football team: Jim Maxwell at full back, Paddy McGill at midfield and Vinny McHugh at half forward. The Ardara stewards involved were Sean Cassidy, Charles Mooney, Dan Craig, Bernard O'Donnell, Packie Breslin, Packie Doherty, Joseph Herron, Barney Keeney, James Gallagher, Dan Ward, Willie Deery and John B. McHugh.

1937 Club Championship

Ardara competed in the South-West Senior Championship and played Dunkineely in their first match, which they won on a scoreline of 3-05 to 0-02. Their next outing was to Glenties and the match was fixed for July 4th. The team however could not get transport to the match and the game was postponed. That year in the South-west, Dunkineely could not field a team after their defeat to Ardara, Killybegs did not enter the competition, and Kilcar was suspended for leaving the field at Glenties after they drew with them. Glenties eventually played Ardara twice, winning 4-2 to 1-4 in Ardara and by 4-1 to 1-4 in Glenties. After all this, Glenties won the Division and went on to the County semi-final where they were defeated by Ballyshannon.



Above shows a selection of medals won by Joe Gildea of Crumlin in the thirties.



The Donegal team of 1937 pictured after winning the Traders Cup against Louth in O'Donnell Park Letterkenny.

Back from left: Dan Ward, ?, Josie Boyce (Glenties), Jim Maxwell, Mick Melley (Ballyshannon), Packie McNelis (Glenties), ?, Eddie Cannon (Straleel), Priest ?, Paddy Og Gallagher (Gweedore), Jimmy Boyle (Dungloe), ?, Sean O'Caisaide.

Front from left: Charlie Mooney, Jim Doherty (Bundoran), J. Bradley (Castlefin), ?, Vinny McHugh, Jim Grimes (Ballyshannon), John Gildea (Glenconwell).



Dan Craig from the Diamond, who was Club Secretary in 1936 and 37. Dan was highly involved in the Club in the 30s, and was a very efficient Secretary. Dan, although never having played the game to a great extent, was a great promoter of all things Irish and was known as a great Republican. He attended many County Conventions on behalf of the Club and was a regular gate collector and committee member. Dan could always be depended on to "call a spade a spade", and his annual reports were always worth listening to, as there was sure to be some controversial issues raised.

The Lilywhites

Historically, players from the Downstrands area of the parish have always played with distinction for the Ardara Club, although they also fielded teams under their own name in different years, usually in the Junior grades. But on a few occasions, Ardara players played Senior under the Downstrands name in the Senior Championship and other competitions. The highpoint of this arrangement was the Democrat Cup win of 1943. (See separate report). The team was more commonly known as 'The Lilywhites' as a result of their predominantly white jerseys. The first fielding of a Downstrands team is believed to have been in 1935. In the South-West Junior Championship of 1937, they played Leitir macáward at Dooey in a game which ended up being abandoned by the referee, P.S Mac a'Ghoill, due to unruly behaviour. At the resultant South-West meeting, with Francis Haughey presiding, the match was awarded to Downstrands.

Leitir macáward appealed the decision to the County Board, but were unsuccessful and were suspended with immediate effect from the Association. Downstrands first rise to prominence however came in 1938 when they reached the County Junior Championship final only to be narrowly defeated by Cloghaneely 2-3 to 0-5. (No details available).



This photo of the lilywhites was taken in 1939 on Narin strand
Back row: L to R: Packie Watters (Edergole), Paddy Sweeney,(Drimaha), Packie Harkin, Paddy Mc Cole , Packie John Gildea, Francie Boyle(Sandfield), with cap- Peter Gallagher (Carn), Fr Leo Moore, Michael Byrne(Sandfield-Manager), John Boyle .
Front Row: L to R: Josie Boyle , Jack Craig, Sonny Boyle, Jimmy Boyle(Clogher), Tom Earley, Dan Shovelin (Tullycleave), Michael Nicholson (Rosbeg).

Croagh Seven-a-side

One of the highlights of 1937 was the seven-a-side competition in Croagh in June. Ardara defeated Glenties B 4-2 to 0-3, Glenties A 1-3 to 1-1 and Drimarone in the final 4-2 to 2-6 (after extra time) to win the competition. The team was made up of the following players: - D. Mulhern, Joe Breslin, Vinny McHugh, Michael Boyle, Paddy McGill, Harry O'Donnell and Tom Early. Tom Early broke the crossbar in the final and the match had to be interrupted while it was fixed. The other teams who fielded were as follows:

Drimarone: Kerrigan, Tully, McGinty, Sheerin, O'Neill, Sweeney, Monaghan.

Croagh: McDyre, Brennan, J.J. Gallagher, E. Gallagher, Cannon, Keeney, McNelis.

Glenties A: Molloy, McGill, McGuigan, Gallagher, P. Gallagher, McNelis, Gildea.

Glenties B: J. Molloy, Roarty, Byrne, Boyle, C. Molloy, J. Gildea, Gallagher.

Dunkineely: Carr, Gallagher, Harvey, C. McLaughlin, F McLaughlin, McGinley, Gallagher.

1938

At the A.G.M of the Club, held in January 1938 in the Courthouse, the following officers were elected:- Chairman - Sean Cassidy; Secretary - Dan Ward; Treasurer - Charles Mooney. The Committee consisted of Dan Craig, Johnny Whoriskey, Leo Mooney, James Maloney (Maghera), John B. McHugh, P. J. McGill O.S., Vinny McHugh, Denis 'Ned' Gallagher, Peadar Breslin and Hugh Gildea.

Club Secretary Dan Ward went on to be elected County Secretary at that year's Convention; a position he held until 1944.

The 1938 Democrat Cup competition had commenced in late '37 and in the second replay of the Democrat Cup semi-final between Ardara and Glenties on the 9th January, 1938, Glenties were victorious by 1-03 to 0-02. Vinny McHugh scored a first half point with Jim Maxwell scoring the only Ardara point in the second half. The Ardara team consisted of the following: - John B. McHugh, Denis 'Ned' Gallagher, Tom Gallagher, Vinny Gildea, Francis Heena, Jim Maxwell, Harry O'Donnell, Paddy McGill, Hugh Gildea, Bernard McNelis, William Boyle, James Josie McHugh and John Campbell. Best for Ardara were Vinny McHugh, Jim Maxwell, Paddy McGill, Tom Gallagher, Harry O'Donnell and John Campbell.

The final was held on the following Sunday in Pearse Memorial Park, when Kilcar defeated Glenties. Glenties, however, advanced after their protest against the Kilcar team fielding late for the match was upheld. The Democrat Cup final that year was eventually played in Ardara on Sunday 10th August, 1938, between

Gweedore and Ballyshannon. Gweedore won the match on a score of 2-08 to 1-04.

In the county Minor football final, St Eunans defeated Glenties by 2-2 to 1-3, in Glenties, with Paddy McGill (Ardara) as Referee. At the conclusion of the game, the Mayo Cup and medals were presented to the victorious Glenties team by Dan Craig (Ardara) on behalf of the County Board.



William Boyle of Kentucky first appeared on the Ardara Senior team in 1928, when he was a member of the panel which won the Clubs third Senior Championship. This was the beginning of a long and distinguished playing career with the Club. William normally lined out at midfield although he also played in the back-line on many occasions. He served the Club Senior and Junior teams until 1943. William was involved in 3 County Senior finals in total (1928,36 & 38) winning a medal in 28 and going on to win 2 Democrat Cup medals in 1931 and 43. He was selected to play for Donegal in the period from 1933 to 35, playing in the Ulster Junior Championship. He was also a member of the Donegal panel who played in the 1933 All Ireland final, but due to commitments at home was unable to travel to Croke Park. William was involved in the purchasing of Pearse Memorial Park and gave much of his time voluntarily in draining the pitch and maintaining the grounds in the early days. A weaver by trade, William married Mary Rose Boyle, one of the top Camogie players of the thirties, and their talents were handed on to their son John, and his many grandchildren; Johnathan, Brendan and Derek, and



This photo was taken at a game in Pearse Memorial Park in June 1947. From Left: Patrick Sweeney, Phil Mc Hugh, Packie Mc Ginley (boy), Mary Rose and William Boyle

granddaughters; Yvonne, Carmel and Katherine Herrity who have all represented the club with distinction at under-age and adult levels. Although unable to travel to games anymore, William was known to have thrown his stick and his hat into the air, when he listened at home to the Senior Championship victory of 2000, in which John (Selector),Brendan and Johnathan all played key roles. William was honoured by the Club in 1990, when he was only the third person to be inducted into the Hall of Fame , to join his friends and team mates, Vinny Mc Hugh and Jim Maxwell.

Senior team qualify for 5th County Final

In the 1938 Donegal Senior Football Championship only three teams competed in the South-West Division – Ardara, Kilcar and Glenties, with the matches being played on a round robin basis. Ardara had a good start with victories over Kilcar (1-7 to 1-4) and over Glenties (1-9 to 1-3). Kilcar defeated Glenties and then shocked the home side in Kentucky on a 0-6 to 1-2 scoreline, which put Ardara's hopes of advancing in jeopardy. Ardara drew their last match with Glenties (0-3 to 1-0) to leave them a point ahead of Kilcar in the section.

Kilcar however had a game in hand, at home against Glenties, which they were expected to win. Our neighbours however, with nothing to play for, caused the shock of the year when they went to Towney and came home with a 2-8 to 3-2 victory, thus sending Ardara through to the County semi-final where their opponents were Ballyshannon.

Played in Donegal Town, the match was a thriller from start to finish. Both sides were missing key players with Melly, Goan and McGahern missing for Aodh Ruadh, while Ardara were without Harry O'Donnell and Denis Gallagher. Ardara came out on top by 1-03 to 0-03, Vinny McHugh's first half fisted goal being the key score. McHugh scored 1-2 in total. The other point came from Packie John Gildea. A brilliant performance from Jim Maxwell played a major role in the victory. Ardara then went on to meet Gweedore in the County Final, which was played in Glenties on September 4.

The following report is taken from the Democrat.

Donegal Senior Football Championship at Glenties - Gweedore Victorious After Fine game

Before a crowd representing £70 gate receipts, Gweedore defeated Ardara in the final of the Donegal Senior Football Championship at Glenties. The game was one of the finest ever witnessed in the County, and ended with the scoreline

Gweedore 1-7 Ardara 0-5

From the throw in until the final whistle, the sides maintained a fast pace. It was not until the second half was well advanced that Gweedore drew well ahead, and in the closing stages their defence was hard pushed to retain the advantage against a determined effort from Ardara to pull the game out of the fire.

Castlefin pipe band paraded the teams

onto the field and again rendered a few selections at the interval.

Ardara broke away from the throw in and after three minutes M.Boyle put them in the lead with a point. T. Gallagher showed up well in repulsing a Gweedore raid and when Ardara again got going, good work by Mc Hugh and Heena resulted in Watters putting over a second point. Gweedore reduced the lead with a point per J.Coyle and shortly afterwards H. Gallagher levelled matters. Exchanges subsequently were very keen, particularly in centerfield, but Gweedore were slightly superior, and went ahead with two points by H. Gallagher. At the interval Gweedore led by

4 points to 2.

The resumption brought no slackening in the gruelling pace that had characterised the first half. Ardara were again first to score, V. Mc Hugh again sending over a point., Shortly afterwards P. Watters restored equality. Gweedore came into the picture and H Gallagher pointed, and then J Gallagher had two minors from 'frees'. In a goalmouth scrimmage H. Sweeney fisted a goal to give Gweedore a six-point lead. Ardara made a determined bid to pull the game out of the fire, but although they attacked for the last ten minutes they only

succeeded in registering a single point per W. Boyle.

Teams:

Gweedore: J. McCole, T. Diver, J. Gallagher, D. McGinley, O. Boyle, H. Gallagher, J. Sweeney, P. Coll, J. Gillespie, H. Sweeney, J. Coyle, H. Roarty, D. Breslin, H. Dunlop, J. Duggan.

Ardara: D. Boyle, J. Maxwell, T. Gallagher, H. Gildea, C. McHugh, A. McHugh, F. Heena, W. Boyle, P. McGill, P. Watters, V. McHugh, N. McHugh, J. Campbell, D. Gallagher, M. Boyle. Subs: J. Fisher, P. Gildea, and P. Heekin.



The Ardara team that contested the 1938 County Final

Back from left: William Boyle, Paddy McGill, Hugh Gildea, Charlie McHugh, Fr. James McGinley, Denis Ned Gallagher, Packie Watters, Vinny McHugh, Packie Gildea.

Front from left: Andy Mc Hugh, Harry O'Donnell, Danny Boyle, Francie Heena, John Campbell, Jim Maxwell. Missing from photo is Tom Gallagher.

Reproduced is the actual sheet that the gate collectors used to tally up the receipts for the match. It is verified and signed by Dan Craig, Joseph Friel, Domhnall Mac a'Bháird and Charles McDyre.

C.F.C.F. Co. Dán na nGall.

An t-ábairt deirid 1938

Corn an Dr. Maghaidir

Gate R. az na gleannra 4.9.38

Ard. a Róz v Jaóz Dobair

Torad An t-ábairt ... Nozoi £15 - 10 - 0

Arz. Zeal £48 - 14 - 9

" buidé 11 - 5

£64 - 16 - 2

1 - 8 - 0

£56 - 8 - 2

Suidh Four Pounds Sixteen

Shillings and Two Pence

net £63 - 8 - 2

Na bailigíoirí

Seosair O'Keefe

Domnall O'Keefe

Domnall Mac a'Bháird

Caol Mac Duibh

Grain Gail £64 - 16 - 2

1 - 8 - 0

£63 - 8 - 2

Don

Staples for change

but in the

at 10.00

80c

Wrapping up the year

At the end of the year a Prisoners Defence Fund game was played in Glenties on the 6th November with referee Francis McGill. Glenties were totally superior on the day and won by 6-04 to 0-00. Ardara were depleted by the absence of Vinny McHugh, William Boyle, Andy McHugh and Denis 'Ned' Gallagher.

At the South-West Donegal Convention, Paddy McGill (Ardara) retired as Secretary after three years. Ardara were to continue their prominence when Tom Gallagher being elected Chairman and Dan Ward Secretary of the Divisional Board.



The Donegal County Team of 1938 who were defeated by Monaghan by one point in the first round of the Ulster Championship

Back from left: Neil McGroarty (St Eunans), Jim Blake (St. Eunan's), Paddy Gill (St. Eunan's), Tom Gallagher(Ardara), Dan Ward (Ardara), Jim Quinn (Castlefin),C. McLaughlin (Carndonagh), Jim Doherty (Bundoran), James McGarvey (Kincasslagh), Eddie Cannon (Kilcar), Neil McGee (Gweedore), Jim Maxwell (Ardara).

Front from left: Danny Gillespie (Gweedore), Vinny McHugh (Ardara), James P McGinley (Kilcar), Joe Canavan (St. Eunan's), Al O'Gorman (Ballyshannon),

Joe Bradley (Killygordon), Josie Boyce (Glenties), Jim Devlin (Moville)

County matches

In the Ulster Junior Football Championship in Breffini Park on Sunday 24th April, 1938, Donegal beat Cavan on a score of 5-04 to 3-04. Ardara's Paddy McGill scored a goal that day. The following week, on 1st May, in Magheragallon, Donegal played in the Dr. McKenna Cup against Tyrone. Donegal defeated the visitors on a score of 3-08 to 2-02. Vinny McHugh scored 1-01 in the first half and 1-03 in the second half. Playing at full back was Jim Maxwell and 'goal man' was Tom Gallagher.

They then went on to meet Armagh on the 8th May and all four players featured. Armagh won the match on a score of 2-13 to 2-02. In the Ulster Senior Football Championship of that year Vinny Mc Hugh and Tom Gallagher were the Ardara players on the first fifteen which went down to Monaghan in the 1st Round on a 0-

7 to 0-6 scoreline. In another County match played that year, Donegal played Derry in Glenties with the Castlefin Pipe Band in attendance. Donegal were victorious on a score of 3-06 to 0-03. The following Ardara players were part of the team - Tom Gallagher, Paddy McGill and Harry O'Donnell, who was outstanding.

In the National League football playoff, group D, played at Sligo, Donegal were defeated 6-10 to 0-14 with Tom Gallagher, Vinny McHugh and Francis Heena playing as members of the team.

In '38 Vinny McHugh became the first player from the Club to make the Ulster squad. He went on to represent Ulster again in 1939 and 1942.



Francie Heena of Crumlin, played for Donegal in the National League of 1938 and also for the County Junior team in 1938/39. He first played for the Club on the Junior team of 1935, moving on to play Senior from 1936 until 1944. He played corner back in the 1936 County Final, and wing half back in the 1938 decider against Gweedore. He won his only medal in the 1943 Democrat Cup victory against Convoys. Shortly afterwards his work as a weaver took him to the Downings area, where he played for many years with the local club and raised a family. He remained in Downings, where he lived until his death in 1999.

1939- Championship controversy

With war threatening Europe and beyond, 1939 once again saw the format for the Senior Championship altered. A motion proposed by St. Columba's, Letterkenny, was passed at County Convention; that the Senior Football Championship be played on an all-county basis, with exception of Inishowen. The motion also ruled that the present Divisional structure be retained for Junior and Minor football. At a stormy County Board meeting in February it was decided the Senior Championship would be played on a home-and-away basis with the League winners being County Champions. Many clubs were sceptical about the new arrangement as a result of widespread anxiety over the long travelling distances that the new format would entail and the financial pressure it would place on clubs. Only six clubs entered – Ballyshannon, Glenties, Kilcar, Gweedore and two Letterkenny Clubs, St. Eunans and St. Columbas. For the first time since its formation, the Ardara Club would not take part in the Senior Football Championship. Ardara's non-participation caused some controversy, with the Ardara officers taking exception to a newspaper insinuation of the time that the

officers of the Club had decided that Ardara should not enter regardless of the players' wishes. The Ardara Club replied stating that it was a Club decision supported by the players. The Club still entered a team in the South-West Junior Championship but their participation was short-lived as Dunkineely defeated them on a 2-6 to 2-5 scoreline. Downstrands was also in the Junior Championship that year but was defeated by Falcarragh by 2-3 to 0-5 in the County final that took place on the 24th of June. No details are available of prior matches that they may have played to qualify for the final. A Downstrands team also took part in a Glenties 7-a-side competition held on the 27th of August. They were defeated in the final by the home side. The Downstrands team was as follows: Michael Nicholson, Dan Shovlin, Jim Boyle, John Boyle, Francis Boyle, Tom Early and Hugh Boyle.

Big Dan loses the Dr. Maguire

The 1939 Senior Football Championship final was eventually played in Pearse Memorial Park on 22nd October, Gweedore and Ballyshannon doing battle. With the score standing 0-06 to 0-04, Gweedore had a last minute goal disallowed and as a result a number of Gweedore players walked off the field. The match was duly abandoned and Ballyshannon were later awarded the game at the next County Board meeting. There was major controversy, however, when the Dr Maguire Cup, which was in the possession of the Runai Condae, Dan Ward, was grabbed from his hands by one of the Gweedore players and spent the next six months in the Gaeltacht! Terms of suspension were imposed at the October County Board meeting, but on the 3rd March, 1940, on the proposal of Leo Mooney (Ardara), seconded by Jim Quinn (Castlefin), the Gweedore players were re-instated.

An important event in the Club's history took place on the 11th of June when the Pearse Memorial Park was officially opened, with Donegal playing Mayo (See separate chapter). It was a fraught point, a resolution of hope, as war loomed in Europe and the Club closed another disappointing year.

The 1939 Donegal Minor Football Championship final took place on 3rd December between Glenties and Ballyshannon with Paddy McGill (Ardara) as Referee. Glenties won on a score of 2-02 to 0-02 and Paddy McGill then presented the Mayo Cup to the Glenties team Captain Davy Brennan. On the 1st December the Ardara G.A.A. Club organised a Ceili Mór in the Iona Hall. Fear an Ti was Paddy McGill, Meentinadea, assisted by Paddy McGill, Largynaseragh.



Donegal win Ulster Junior Championship

Donegal's Junior Team were tipped for honours in 1939 and they did not disappoint. They overcame Fermanagh in the first round, Danny Boyle (Front Street) was goal man and Jim Maxwell played in the full back line. This was followed with a match against Down which Donegal won on a score of 0-06 to 1-01 with Vinny McHugh scoring a point. They then met Cavan the following Sunday, 30th July, in Bundoran, Donegal winning on a score of 2-08 to 3-04. James Mooney (Ardara) was part of the team and scored 1-01 with Jim Maxwell and Danny Boyle also featuring. The team captured the Ulster title when they defeated Derry 2-8 to 3-4 on the 30th of July in Bundoran. The Donegal team was as follows:

D. Boyle (Ardara), J. Devlin (St Eunans), J. Gallagher (Gweedore), T. Murphy (Bundoran), D. Gillespie (Gweedore), H. Gallagher (Gweedore), T. Campbell (Bundoran), M. Melly (Ballyshannon), S. Gallagher (Downings), T. Duffy (Gweedore), D. Callaghan (Killybegs), J. Mooney (Ardara), D. Breslin (Gweedore), L. McDermott (Ballyshannon), J. Gallagher (Ballyshannon).

Donegal's victory meant that they played Dublin in the All-Ireland Junior semi-final on 27th August, 1939, Boyle, Maxwell and Mooney retaining their places. Donegal's first half display was not up to the standard they had shown earlier in the Championship so far and they failed to improve in the second half, leaving the final score Dublin 5-10 to Donegal 1-02.



Danny Boyle of the Front Street was goalkeeper on the Donegal Junior Team of 1939 which won the Ulster Junior Championship. Danny is widely recognised as one of the finest ever to guard the Ardara goal.

His Club career spanned the years 1937 to 1945. Like so many of his team mates, his only County medal came in the Downstrands Democrat Cup win of 1943.

In Senior competition, Donegal competed in the Dr. McKenna Cup against Cavan. The match was played in Magheragallon and had £110.00 gate receipts. This was recognised at the time as one of the best games seen in Donegal in those years. Vinny McHugh had an outstanding game and Donegal won on a score of 1-07 to 1-06. They then went on to play Armagh in Ardara on Tuesday 28th May, 1939 in the semi-final. Donegal were heavily defeated by 4-04 to 1-05. Vinny McHugh was once again outstanding.

In the Ulster Senior Championship that year Vinny McHugh (now at midfield) played in the 0-6 to 1-1 victory over Down and in the semi-final defeat to a famous Cavan side 5-12 to 0-4.

Important events from the thirties

1930 Mayo County Council is dissolved for refusing to appoint a Protestant as Librarian.

1931 The Irish Press is launched.

1932 De Valera enters Government for the first time.

1933 Adolf Hitler becomes German chancellor.

1934 Irishmen fight on opposite sides in the Spanish Civil War.

1935 The sale of contraceptives becomes illegal.

1936 The first Aer Lingus flight between Dublin and London takes place.

1937 The Constitution of Ireland is adopted.

1938 Douglas Hyde is inaugurated as President of Ireland.

1939 World War Two begins.



The Forties

Tiocaidh bliain an óir,
Bliain an bhairr mhóir
Agus bliain an bhróin.

Is cinnte go ndeachaigh Cumann Lúthchleas Gael i gcion go mór ar dhaoine agus bhí sé ina ábhar dóchais acu le linn an chruatain agus an droch-uair.

The year was 1940 and Europe was in the grip of the Second World War. Irish people still tried to maintain a degree of normality and Cumann Luthchleas Gael in Donegal was no different. The Championship format of 1939 had not proven to be a success and there was widespread agreement that changes needed to be made. A motion therefore was passed at the 1940 convention that the County would be split up into 3 divisions; North, South and Inishowen. Ardara, Ballyshannon, Kilcar, Glenties and Donegal were the five clubs that made up the Southern Division. The defending County Champions, Ballyshannon, were acknowledged the strongest team and despite having a close shave against Ardara (4-4 to 3-6), they went on to the County final after 7 victories in their section. Dungloe were the eventual County Champions, defeating the Ernesiders 3-8 to 1-3 in the final held in Pearse Memorial Park. (Gate receipts £50).

Information on the Ardara results that year is scant with the team winning only 2 matches out of 8. The only report was on the match against Kilcar, which Kilcar won 4-4 to 2-3. The Ardara team was listed as follows.

J. Breslin, Danny Boyle, Packie Watters, Harry O'Donnell, Paddy Sweeney, Andy McHugh, James Mooney, Paddy McGill (Capt), William Boyle, Francis Heena, Jim Maxwell, Tom Earley, John Joe Campbell, Vinny McHugh, Charles McHugh. Other players mentioned in matches that year were, W. Mulhern, T. Rooney, Danny Maloney, Michael Boyle, F. Boyle.

Objections & Appeals

Information on the club scene for this particular year is generally limited, for obvious reasons. The Democrat Cup seems to have begun at the usual time, late in 1939. Ardara defeated Killybegs in the South-West Democrat Cup on February 25th, 1940. The result, however, was overturned when Killybegs lodged an

objection against the eligibility of James Mooney of the Ardara team. Killybegs successfully contended that as Mr Mooney was working and living in Killybegs, he was ineligible to play for Ardara. The Ardara club appealed the decision to the County Board and the relevant meeting was held on the 20th of March in Glenties, with Sean Kennedy presiding. Domhnaill Mac a'Bháird and Padraig S. Mac a'Ghoill put the Ardara case forward, stating that the player in question resided at home in Brackey on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday each week. The Ardara appeal was upheld on a vote of 6 to 4.

On the county scene that year reports are also scarce. In the Senior Championship, Donegal had victories over Armagh 0-6 to 0-5 but, for the second year in a row, fell to Cavan 0-12 to 2-3. Vinny Mc Hugh played in both matches. In a National League match, Donegal met Sligo at Magheragallon. The final score was 3-12 to 5-03 in Donegal's favour. Vinny McHugh and Harry O'Donnell played on the Donegal team.

1941

The Club did not see any major improvement in fortunes in 1941 and it proved to be a lean year as regards football. The Donegal Senior Championship system was once again to change. It was to revert back to the 1938 system of the four divisions. Downstrands had decided to enter Senior ranks and played in the South-West Championship, which included Kilcar, Ardara and Glenties. In early May Ardara beat Downstrands and in the next match Glenties easily defeated Ardara on June 1st.


Ardara were having 'commitment' problems with some their players and as a result withdrew from the competition. They were however granted permission to re-enter when they sorted things out, and returned to play Kilcar on the 20th of July. They lost that match but three weeks later, at home, they had a good victory over the same opposition. Downstrands were also having problems and eventually withdrew from the competition in early August, having played (and lost) only three games. Glenties, powered by Columba McDyre, went on to win the Division that year. They then defeated Ballyshannon in the semi-final, in Ardara, before losing the County final by the minimum (0-10 to 2-3) against Gweedore in Dungloe.

Rising Ardara star Harry O'Donnell made his Senior Championship debut for Donegal in the narrow first round defeat against Cavan in Bundoran (1-6 to 0-7). On the same day and venue, Vincent Rankin of Downstrands played for Donegal Minors against the same opposition. (Cavan was 2-5 to 0-5).

Democrat Cup trouble

In October that year Ardara and Glenties met again in a Democrat Cup game and following an incident of sorts, a number of Ardara players left the field without the referee’s permission. The referee then failed to report the incident to the South-West Divisional Board. The matter was raised with Central Council who referred it to Ulster Council, who referred it back to Donegal County Board. Donegal County Board met on 25th January, 1942 and, on a vote of 11-4, decided to award the game to Glenties. They directed the Divisional Board to discipline the Ardara players who left the field and the referee who failed to do his duty.

This invoice was paid to Patrick Gildea for a football for the Club, bought during the year.



ARDARA, Dec 29th 1941

Memo Mr V. C. B.

Bought of P. Gildea & Sons,

HARNESS MAKER

In expressing thanks and deep appreciation of the business you have done with me, I wish you to be assured that further favours will be similarly valued and promptly dealt with.

Agent for Coleman and Aladdin Lamps.

Fishing Tackle a Speciality.

1941	Sup 13 One Football	105	14.6
Total		253	

New Competitions

1942 saw the Ardara and Downstrands teams join forces again, alternating names, depending on the competition. This year also saw the introduction of two new trophies into the South-West Division - The Green Cross Cup and the more famous St Connell's Cup. The latter was to have a long life in the annals of the Divisional Board. This cup was first presented at a Divisional Board meeting in March 1942 by the then Chairman Thomas Brennan from Glenties on behalf of the Glenties club. It was to be used for competition by Senior teams in the South-West Division. The following fixtures were made at the same meeting: - St Conals v Downstrands at Narin on 29th March ; Downstrands v St Conals at Ardara on 11th April; Downstrands v St Conals in Ardara; Downstrands v St Conals in Glenties on 17th April. The Downstrands team for the competition was as follows:- Hugh Byrne, Jim Maxwell, John Gildea, Vincent Boyle, Harry O'Donnell, John Boyle, Vincent Rankin, Paddy McGill, Vinny McHugh, J. Boyle, Paddy Gildea, Packie Moore, P. J. Boyle and Danny Maloney. The eventual results of the competitions are unknown for that year. The only results available were:

Green Cross-Cup: St Conal's 2-3 Downstrands 0-6

St Connell's Cup: Downstrands 3-9 St Conal's 2-2

Just as it had been a struggle in the Ardara parish over the previous few years to keep the Association going, so it was now in other areas. In the South-West Championship only two teams entered, Glenties and Ardara. Glenties won the title by defeating Ardara in a third match after both sides had beaten each other once. Glenties advanced to the County final where Ballyshannon beat them by 2-8 to 1-4 in Pearse Memorial Park on the 13th of September.

Vincent Rankin made his Senior debut in the Donegal colours that year, playing at left half forward in a team which also featured Vinny McHugh at midfield. Unfortunately, they went down to Cavan in the Championship.



Vincent Rankin of Narin honed his football skills as a student at St Eunan's College and on Narin Strand during his summer holidays. He played Minor for the County against Cavan, 1941, at the age of seventeen, before moving on to the Senior ranks the following year (while still a Minor). He then joined Vinny McHugh at midfield in the '43 championship game against Tyrone. He was also a member of the Donegal team which was defeated in the Ulster Junior final of 1945. For the Club, his playing highlight was the Democrat Cup win of 1943 when he starred at midfield alongside Danny Maloney. He was Senior Team Captain in 1946, but his playing career ended in

1947 when, at the young age of 23, he retired from the game to run the family business. Vincent went on to lend his experience to the Downstrands team in the 50s, helping to manage the side with Sergeant Paddy Gill. He was inducted into the Ardara GAA Hall of Fame in 1993, an honour which he was extremely proud of receiving. Married to Bridie, they had two sons and two daughters. Vincent passed away in 2002.



St. Eunan's College, Letterkenny. 1940/41
Back, L-R: Fr. Peter Moriarty, Chas. McCaul, V. Rankin, T. McGlinchey,
Kieran McAnally, Connie Mulhern, Fr. Augustine McCauley.
Middle: P. O'Halpin, Chas. Boyle, T. Keegan, P. Stephens,
Sean P. Gallagher, Paul Dunleavy.
Front: C. O'Halpin, Joe Browne.

1943 - Back in the big time.

In 1943 Ardara made great efforts to re-awaken the G.A.A. in the parish. They competed in the Senior Football Championship, under the Downstrands (“Íochtar Tire”) name, with only themselves and neighbours Glenties entered in the South-West. The battle was as it had been in ‘42, and it took three titanic struggles to separate the teams. Glenties won at home 2-3 to 1-4.; Downstrands took the second leg 1-9 to 1-8 and in the third match, Downstrands emerged victorious by 2 points (2-7 to 1-8). This earned them a semi-final berth against the Southern champions, Ballyshannon. The match was played on the 1st August, 1943 in Tanatallon (Salthill-Mountcharles) with Dan Sheerin as Referee. At half time the score read 2-03 each. In the second half Downstrands failed to score as Vincent Rankin and Danny Maloney retired injured. Near the end, Harry O'Donnell was replaced and

the final score was Ballyshannon 6-06 to Downstrands 2-03. It was described as a “dirty” game and four Downstrands men had to retire injured. The Downstrands team was as follows: Danny Boyle, Hugh Gildea, Harry O’Donnell, Vincent Boyle, Paddy McGill, Andy McHugh, James Mooney, Vincent Rankin, Danny Maloney, Neil McHugh (1-00), Vinny McHugh (1-01), John Boyle (0-02), Jim Boyle, Packie Watters and Paddy Sweeney. Subs were William Boyle for Vincent Boyle, Patrick Boyle for Danny Maloney, Packie Moore for Vincent Rankin and Leo Mooney for Harry O’Donnell.

For the second year in a row the final of the County Championship was played in Ardara, on August 8th, when Ballyshannon were victors over a defeated Convoy.

Downstrands take the Democrat Cup

Despite the disappointment of the Championship defeat, the team soon re-grouped and came through all opposition to reach the Democrat Cup final. The match was played in Drumboe on the 19th October, with the opposition being the defeated County finalists, Convoy (surprise packet and Junior Champions of 1942). Over 1000 spectators attended the match, which Downstrands won on a score of 2-08 to 0-08. Vinny McHugh finished up top scorer on 1-08 with John Boyle (Narin) getting the other goal. The match was played in ideal conditions and the following team was on duty: Danny Boyle (Front Street), William Boyle (Glengesh), Harry O’Donnell (The Diamond), Hugh Gildea (Monargan), Paddy Sweeney (Crumlin), Danny Maloney (Maghera), Paddy McGill (Brackey), Andy McHugh (Leaconnell), Vincent Rankin (Narin), Vinny McHugh (Hill-Head), Vincent Boyle (Narin), Tommy Boyle (Front Street), Packie Watters (Edergole) and John Boyle (Narin). Subs were: - Packie Moore (Narin), Dan Shovlin (Tullycleave), Charles McHugh (Hill-Head) and Francis Heena (Crumlin).

The team was also known to have reached the St Connell’s Cup final that year with the 17th Battalion from Killybegs supplying the opposition. The participation of the Army team in this competition improved standards locally. Their team included well known inter county stars of the day such as, John Forde from Mayo (2 All Ireland medals), Casey and Ryan from Galway, Farrell and McInerney of Longford and that brilliant Antrim and Ulster footballer, Sean Gallagher. Ardara was still able to cope, however, and came out victorious against them on numerous occasions. In the drawn St Connell’s Cup final in Glenties, the opposition threatened to send to Finner for the great Kerry player Joe Keohane, an All-Ireland winning full-back, so that they could defeat Ardara.

Ardara/Downstrands resurgence in the county was evident when 4 players, Vinny McHugh, Vincent Rankin (both midfield), James Mooney (right corner forward)

and Harry O'Donnell (left corner back) all played on the County Team in the Ulster Senior Championship against Tyrone on the 20th of June. Tyrone won the match by 1-8 to 0-7.



Harry O'Donnell – ‘The Wooker’

Harry O'Donnell and his brother Hugh Patrick were born in Crove, but as young lads moved to live with their uncles, James and Harry Cannon, in ‘Smokeys’, a house on the Diamond, where the old Cinema stands today. After learning his carpentry trade from his uncles, Harry expertly made milk churns and wooden barrels for a living. Though not a tall man, he was renowned for his high fielding, elusive side step, and a great drop-kick. He first came to the attention of the Club, when he starred for Drumbarron in the 1936 Parish League as a 17 year old. He started his career in the forward line, but as time went on he became more famous as a back at both Club and County level. He first appeared for the Club Senior team in 1936 as a 17 year old, against Bundoran, in the drawn County semi-final. He lined out at right half forward that day and kept his place for the replay and subsequent County final. In the 1938 final, Harry's absence through injury was a major factor in the team's loss to Gweedore. His first County jersey came in



Harry O'Donnell pictured in action against Down in the Ulster Championship match at O'Donnell Park in 1949.

1937, when he featured alongside John Joe Campbell on the Donegal Minor team against Cavan, in Breffni Park. His full Championship debut came in 1941 when he lined out at right corner back, Cavan winning narrowly 1-6 to 0-7. He went on to play in Donegal's Championship campaigns of '42 and '43 against Cavan and Tyrone respectively. He won his first Club medal in the Downstrands' Democrat Cup win of 1943 when he played full-back in the victory over Convoy. Harry emigrated to England in 1944 and his loss to both Club and County at his peak was a major blow. He did return however in early 1948 and took up where he left off. He played corner back again for Donegal in the Ulster Championship of '48 against Antrim; played the same in the '49 match against Down and full-back against Armagh). His final appearance came at full forward in the 1950 drawn match against Down. Harry was a key member of the great Ardara team of 1950, which was widely regarded as one of the strongest the Club has ever produced but failed to win a Senior Championship. Harry was one of the many great players from the Club over the years who failed to attain this honour. He emigrated once more in 1951 and this brought an end to his career with Ardara and Donegal. Harry was commonly referred to by his nickname, "The Wooker". This developed from an expression used by his Scottish cousin, Jim Ward who spent some years living with Harry and his uncles. Jim, from Glasgow, used the soccer expression, "Walk her in lads" and Harry soon latched on to this when advising his team mates during a match. He became known as "The Walker" soon to become "The Wooker" He married and raised a family in Bristol and passed away in 1996. "The Wooker" will always be remembered as one of the best Ardara players at Club and County level.

Seán Ó Casaide steps down

The Club held its 1944 A.G.M. early in the year and the following officers were elected: Chairman – Domhnaill Mac a'Bháird; Secretary – Tommy Boyle; Treasurer - Charles Mooney. This led to the re-organisation of the Club with a Selection Committee, Stewards and delegates to County Board meetings chosen also. Numerous tributes were paid to long serving Seán Ó Casaide who stepped down from the position of Chairman after serving for 22 years. He still kept the position of County Treasurer, however, and was elected for the tenth year running at County Convention. It was agreed at the AGM that monthly meetings of the Club were to be held on the last Sunday of every month after late Mass in the Courthouse. At that time Club finances were at low ebb and the Club set about running Bazaars to redress the situation. At the end of that year Charlie Mooney (Treasurer) showed a credit balance of £8. 11s. 51/2d.

Selection row causes split

On the playing front, after the heights achieved the previous year, things took a downward trend again and the club failed to enter a team in the Senior Football Championship. The main reason being that, following the Democrat Cup victory of 1943, the Downstrands players, as a result of Packie Moore not being selected on the starting fifteen in the final, refused to play for Ardara in 1944, and duly transferred to Glenties. Being the only team entered in the south-west, the Iniskeel men went forward unchallenged to the county semi-final where they were defeated by St Eunans. Times were extremely difficult in the country, and emigration among other things had taken its toll on the club. The issue caused serious concern in the parish and the matter was raised at a club meeting on the 24th June, where it was proposed by Francie Diver and seconded by Packie Watters that the club get a few players from Kilcar to field a team. Barney O'Donnell proposed an amendment, which was seconded by Paddy McGill that we play 15 from Ardara. After a vote among the members present, the amendment was carried on a vote by 7 - 5 and all members agreed. The impasse with the Downstrands players was eventually resolved after the Championship and a team was then entered in the Democrat Cup to be held later in the year.

In that competition the team qualified for the semi-final where they met Gweedore at Glenties on the 5th November 1944. At half time Ardara led by 1-02 to 1-01. Vinny McHugh scored two frees and Tommy Boyle scored the goal. In the second half Ardara had scores from Paddy McGill (0-01), Eddie Haughey (0-01) and Vinny McHugh (0-01 ^ free). The final score was a draw - Gweedore 2-02 to Ardara 1-05. Team and scorers were: Francis Heena, William Boyle, Packie Watters, Phil McHugh, Paddy Sweeney, Vincent Boyle, Vincent Rankin, Paddy McGill (0-01), Danny Maloney, John O'Donnell, Vinny McHugh (0-03), Eddie Haughey (0-01), Dan Shovlin and Tommy Boyle (1-00). The replay was fixed for Dungloe on the 18th November. Gweedore ran out winners 2-03 to 1-04. At a subsequent County Board meeting, it was claimed that both teams were late taking the field on the day. A proposal from the floor was then carried by 9 votes to 3, that the teams meet again in Dungloe on 11th February 1945. The game never took place however, as the Ulster Council ruled that both teams should be thrown out of the competition.

Parish Leagues re-introduced

To address the problem of the shortage of playing members in the Club, it was agreed to re-introduce the Parish Leagues which had been dormant for a number of years. The competition was held during the month of July with seven-a-side teams, confined to the following areas, with the following people in charge of each area:

Brackey (Paddy McGill), Maghera (Danny Maloney), Loughros Point (Francie Heena), Beagh (Packie Watters), Hillhead (Vinny McHugh) and the Hillhead (Hugh Gildea). Medals were awarded to the winners.

Other Club events of note that year were a Sports Day held on the 29th of June in Pearse Memorial Park, and the ordination of Fr Neil Mc Hugh of Leaconnell to the priesthood. As a playing member of the Club, and brother of Andy, who was also a Senior team regular, it was decided to give him a special welcome home reception to the parish. The team was kitted out in full football rig (18 in total) with a number of horses and riders. They all marched into the town, where a short address was given by a number of speakers on the Diamond before they escorted him over the Main Street.

The Club was again well represented on County teams. Paddy McGill and Andy McHugh were on the Donegal team who defeated Derry and Antrim in the Ulster Junior Football Championship before losing the Ulster semi-final against Cavan on the 18th June. In the Dr. McKenna Cup, Donegal defeated Fermanagh and Cavan with Vinny McHugh playing on the team and Paddy McGill listed on the subs.

Dan Ward elected County Chairman

Dan Ward continued his massive involvement at County level when he followed in Sean Cassidy and Charles McDyre's footsteps, to being elected County Chairman at the 1945 County Convention in the Courthouse in Stranorlar, on the 28th of January. The other officers elected were, Harry Carey (Secretary) and Seán Ó Casaide (Treasurer). Paddy McGill and Neil Heena represented Ardara at the gathering.

The 1945 Club A.G.M. was held in the Courthouse and the following officers were elected for the year:

Chairman: Domhnall Mac a'Bháird

Secretary: Padraig S. Mac a'Ghoill

Treasurer: Tommy Boyle.

Following their failure to field in the 1944 championship, Ardara came out fighting again in 1945 to win the South-West Donegal Senior Football Championship for the first time since 1938. They defeated divisional champions Glenties by 4-07 to 0-04 in the opening game and then beat Kilcar twice, 1-4 to 0-6 away, and 3-7 to 0-3 at home, to take Divisional honours.

Ardara played Ballyshannon in the Donegal Senior Football Championship semi-final on the 8th July. The conditions were very greasy and at times play was dangerous and extremely robust. The Democrat stated that the conduct of some of the spectators was at times appalling. Ballyshannon had all the play in the first half

and led 2-4 to 0-0 at the break. Ardara did not dominate play until the second half with fine play from Vinny McHugh who scored a goal and a point, and Packie Moore who scored a point. With County stars of the day, Mick Melly, Red Jack Gallagher and PJ Goan all lining out for Ballyshannon, the Ernesiders held out for a 2-5 to 1-2 victory. The Ardara team and scorers on this occasion were: - Tommy Boyle, Michael Boyle, Packie Watters, Danny McGill, Paddy McGill, Vincent McHugh (1-01), Vincent Rankin, Paddy Sweeney, Vincent Boyle, Danny Maloney, Packie Moore, Michael Gallagher, John O'Donnell, Dan Shovlin, Bernie McNelis and James Mooney (0-01).

The referee reported afterwards that “ a small number of spectators from the Downstrands Club or Ardara people invaded the pitch” but despite the matter being discussed at County Board level, no action was taken. The Club, however, was far from impressed with some of their supporters’ behaviour and the Chairman, Domhnaill Mac a’ Bháird, drew attention to it by stating the following: *“Though I agree with the encouragement of players on the field and the applauding of good football, I can not see the point in shouting unseemly remarks and the encouragement of unmanly action as it injures the name of the club and perhaps does not entice outside teams to come to play in Ardara.”*

In the Ulster Junior Championship that year, Danny Maloney was selected and played at right full back. Donegal lost the game on a score of 3-13 to 0-10. Vinny McHugh played on the Senior team, that defeated Derry before losing to Cavan in the Ulster Senior Championship.



Ardara Senior Team 1945

**Back from left: Vinny McHugh, Andy McHugh (Leaconell),
 Danny Maloney (Maghera),
 John Heena (Crumlin), Vincent Boyle (Narin), P Watters (Tullycleave)
 Franice Heena (Crumlin), Tommy Boyle (Magumna),
 Front from left: Phil Tammy McHugh (Kentucky), Danny McGill (Scadaman),
 Mickey Gallagher (Narin), John Gillespie (Narin), John O'Donnell (Carn),
 Micheal Boyle (Meenacrois), Micheal Boyle (Maghera), John 'The Rock' Shovlin.**

1946

The war was over and calm had returned to Europe. The year, however, will always be remembered for the bad harvest in the country. In Ardara the following officers were elected at the 1946 AGM: - Chairman - Domhnaill Mac a'Bháird, Vice Chairman - Neil Heena; Secretary - Padraig S. Mac a'Ghoill; Ass. Secretary - Michael Gallagher; and Treasurer - Tommy Boyle. Vincent Rankin was elected captain and Vinny McHugh as vice-captain of the Senior team for the coming year. The following Selection Committee was elected - Paddy McGill, Vincent Boyle, Packie Watters, Neil Heena and Jim Boyle. County Board Delegates - Packie Watters and Paddy McGill.

To defray expenses for the year, the Club held a very successful Bazaar in the Iona Hall. After outlay and expenses, £45-9-5 was accounted for, which was a very large sum at the time.

The Donegal County Convention was held in the Butt Hall on the 27th January 1946 and John McGill and Paddy McGill represented Ardara. Sean Cassidy was re-elected County Treasurer for the 12th time; an historical 'first' for the Ardara Club. It was revealed that 1138 members were registered throughout the county. A motion was passed at the March meeting of the County Board that an Inter-Divisional Championship be organised. It was agreed that the South-West play the South at Ballybofey on 31st March 1946. The Donegal selection committee proceeded to select the players from the various divisions. Among those selected for the South-West team were Packie Watters, Vincent Rankin and Vincent Boyle. It was agreed at the meeting of the 2nd May that eleven clubs would enter teams in the Minor Football Championship including Ardara, although it is unclear in the records if the Club fielded a Minor team that year.

Ardara retain South-West Championship

Ardara progressed well that year in the Championship. They retained their South-West title after a series of close encounters with Glenties and Kilcar both home and away. The following report was carried in the Democrat on the 28th of August, of one of the Ardara/Glenties encounters:

Big Crowd See Ardara Win at Home

Before a record attendance at Pearse Memorial Park on Sunday, Ardara defeated Glenties 0-5 to 0-2 in the Senior Football Championship (Dr Maguire Cup)

The game was exceptionally keen and interesting. If football did not reach a high standard, it was due to over-eagerness on the part of both sides. Glenties were slightly superior in the opening half and the fact that they were in arrears at the interval was mainly due to the fact that Ardara had the advantage of the breeze. In the second half Ardara served up much better football and dominated the exchanges. Hard knocks were given and taken in a sporting manner, and the game, which was admirably controlled by Mr G Stewart Donegal Town, was free from incidents of any kind.

After ten minutes Ardara opened the scoring with a point from V. McHugh from a free. A Glenties raid, which spelt danger, was spoiled by indirect action on the part of their forwards. Ardara got on the move once more and went further ahead with another point from a free from V. McHugh and, just before the interval, D. Boyle from a "free" reduced the deficit for Glenties.

Half-time-Ardara 0-2 Glenties 0-1

Glenties broke away after the

resumption and J. McDyer notched a point. After this score the homesters assumed supremacy and for a lengthy period, the visitors staged only two raids, both proving abortive. T. Boyle restored Ardara's lead with a point and shortly afterwards, A. McHugh put the homesters ahead with a similar score. T. Boyle added another, which proved to be the concluding score of the game. Glenties were on the offensive when the final whistle sounded. M. Quinn (Glenties) retired in the first half and was replaced by P. Bonner.

V. Mc Hugh, V. Rankin, P. Watters, T. Boyle and V. Boyle were outstanding for Ardara, while Glenties were best served by J. McDyre, P. McGettigan, D. Boyle, P. McHugh, F. McNelis and J. O'Donnell.

Ardara- *Danny Boyle, Danny McGill, Phil McHugh, Packie Watters, Danny Maloney, Vincent Rankin, Paddy Sweeney, Vinnie McHugh, John Gillespie, Vincent Boyle, Michael Gallagher, Bernie McNelis, Bernie Boyle, Tommy Boyle, Andy McHugh.*

Glenties: *J. Gallagher, P. McNelis, F. McGettigan, J. O'Donnell, P. Mc Hugh, B. McDyer, J. McDyer, D. Shovelin, D. Boyle, M. Quinn, C. Molloy, P. Dunleavy, A. Mc Dyer, A. Gildea, P McGeehan.*

This victory saw Ardara proceed to the County semi-final against Gweedore . The match was played in Stranaghlough, Glenties. On a wet pitch, Ardara failed narrowly against a Gweedore team that included such greats as Hughie Tim Boyle, Jackie Gallagher and Hudai Beag Gallagher. Gweedore led 0-4 to 0-2 at the break, but John Boyle's (Narin) goal in the second half sent the match level before a last minute point from Jackie Gallagher sent Gweedore into the final. Ardara were short Andy McHugh that day and Paddy McGill and Vinny McHugh were injured during the game and had to retire. Features of the game were the opportunist goal scored by John Boyle and the questionable decision of a ball which appeared to be

over the Gweedore goal-line but was not allowed. The score was 0-07 to 1-3.

At a meeting of the Donegal County Board held in the Literary Institute, Letterkenny on the 29th September 1946, the Chairman explained that they had received a communication from the General Secretary of the Association. The Central Council had requested all counties, in view of the urgency of the harvest situation, that all fixtures except Inter-County games in which commitments had been made, should be postponed that week-end. The County Secretary had got in touch with him and they decided that in view of the backward state of the harvest, and due to the request made by Central Council, it would be best to postpone the final. William Boyle and Sean Cassidy represented the Ardara G.A.A. club at the meeting. Gweedore eventually won the Championship, defeating St Eunans by one point 0-7 to 0-6.

In the Ulster Junior Championship that year, Packie Watters, Vincent Boyle and Vincent Rankin were all members of the Donegal team which was defeated by Derry in the Ulster Final at Ballybofey by 2-5 to 0-7.



This photograph was taken of a Donegal team in Celtic Park, Derry in 1946. The photo was submitted by Packie Moore. Unfortunately despite numerous attempts, we have been unable to identify all the players.

**Back L-R: Packie Watters, Unknown, Sean Curran, Pearse Dawson (St Eunans),
Kieran McCready (Ballyshannon), Unknown, Unknown,
Eddie John McGonigle, Paddy McGee (Gweedore)
Front L-R: Mickey Blake (St Eunans), Conal (or Fr Hugh) Boyle (Dooey),
Phelim Browne (Carrick), Packie Moore, Liam Kelly (Dunfanaghy)
Danny Gillespie (Gweedore), Unknown**

In the Dr. McKenna Cup, Donegal met Tyrone in Ballybofey on the 2nd May. Packie Watters was substitute that day. As the game ended in a draw, the replay was fixed for Dormered in Co. Tyrone. Donegal were victorious on a score of 3-06 to 0-06 with Vincent Rankin featuring in this game. Packie Moore was also a member of the County panel in 1946.

Donegal entered the Lagan Cup in the 1946 – '47 competition and met Derry in Ballybofey on the 17th November, 1946. Vincent Rankin and Vincent Boyle were members of the team that lost to on the occasion on a score of 1-04 to 1-07. In the Ulster Senior Championship, Vincent Boyle was full forward on the Donegal team, that defeated Monaghan before going out to Cavan in the next round.

1947

1947 saw the following members elected to office for the year.

Chairman:	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird.
Vice Chairman:	Vinny McHugh,
Secretary:	Padraig S Mac a'Ghoill,
Ass.Secretary:	Michael Gallagher
Treasurer:	Tommy Boyle



Group of local schoolboy footballers pictured in Pearse Memorial in 1947

Back: Joseph Logue, Seamus Breslin, Phonsie Bennett, Brendan Whelan

**2nd Row: Frank McHugh, Anthony Breslin, Gerry Breslin,
Packie McGinley, Vincent Herron**

**3rd Row, Pat Brennan, Finbarr Whelan, Frank 'Bomber' O'Donnell, Billy Maxwell,
Malachy Herron, Front row: Donal Whelan, Charlie Bennett**

Off field activities that year included a bazaar, which was held in March to raise funds for the Club. Another fund-raiser was the running of a card draw, with 20 lines to a card, for a prize of a lady or gents bicycle. The draw took place at a dance in the Parish Hall. The Treasurer showed a debit balance at the end of the year of £7.00 after a very hard and expensive year.

At County Board level, Mr. Charlie Joe Boyle, a native of Largynaseeragh, replaced Seán Ó Casaide as Treasurer. Sean had served the County well for 12 years. Padraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, who acted as Club Delegate, was elected County Registrar. Domhnall Mac a'Bháird was elected delegate to Ulster Council. Committee Reports revealed that there were 1813 registered members in the county and that there was a balance of £281-3-0 in County Board funds.

Three in a row but too late

The forties continued to be a decade best forgotten for the majority of the clubs in the South-West Division. Ardara and Glenties were the only two clubs once again in the 1947 Senior Championship. Indeed the two clubs were responsible for flying the flag for the division for most of the forties. The Championship was late getting under way that year and it didn't commence until the 13th July. Ardara drew first blood, at home to their neighbours by 1-5 to 0-4, and Glenties won the second leg in Glenties 1-5 to 1-3.



The Ardara Senior Team of 1947

Back row: Packie Watters, Billy Maxwell F Gallagher, Paddy The Saddler, Paddy McGill, John Gillespie, Harry O'Donnell, John Gildea, P.J. Gallagher, Charlie Keeney, Guard Sullivan,

Phonsie Bennett, Malachy Herron Frankie O'Donnell

Front Row: Frankie Brennan, Phil McHugh, Eddie Haughey, Tommy Boyle, Packie Moore, Micheal Boyle, Micheal Gallagher.

Ardara took their third South-West Championship in a row by winning the deciding match 1-6 to 0-3 on the 3rd of August. Unfortunately, things were not as straight forward as that. The match on the third was played, despite a request from the County Board to the South-West Board, to nominate a team for the County Semi-final, fixed for that same day against St Eunan's. The South-West went ahead and played the match in Ardara in the hope that the County Board would defer the semi-final. St Eunans, who had qualified for the semi without playing a match, went ahead and fielded a team, and at the next County Board meeting duly claimed the points. Despite Ardara having a large degree of support from the other delegates, the St Eunans delegates were adamant that they were instructed to claim the game by their club, and as a result the County Chairman Joe Mc Devitt ruled in favour of St Eunans, who reached the county final without kicking a ball, but were defeated by Gweedore. The late start to the South-West Championship had cost Ardara dearly.

The Democrat Cup final was played in Ardara that year. The match, between Gweedore and Ballyshannon, was played on the 16th November 1947, ending in a draw. The following acted as Stewards: - Phil McHugh, Francie Diver, F. Malone, Paddy McGill, Packie McConnell, J. McGill, J. Heena, Neil Heena, Jim Boyle, William Boyle, Tommy Boyle, Eddie Haughey, F. Gallagher, J Boyle, Packie Gildea, Vinny McHugh, Danny Maloney, F. Gildea, J. O'Donnell and D. Shovlin. The replay, which Gweedore won, took place in Ballybofey..

Packie Watters made his Championship debut that year for Donegal. He played centre half forward against Antrim in the Ulster Senior Football Championship in Letterkenny, on 8th June 1947. The final score of the match was Antrim 3-08 to Donegal 0-03. James Mooney was also on the team, playing at left corner forward. On the 6th July, Donegal met Tyrone in the Ulster Minor Football Championship. The match was played in Dungannon and Frankie Brennan was selected for the team. The final score was Donegal 1-01 to Tyrone 3-05.

Donegal met Tyrone in the Dr. Lagan Cup on the 14th September 1947. Packie Watters and Packie Moore were involved. Both players were also selected against Fermanagh on the 28th September, at Ballybofey. Donegal defeated Fermanagh 3-07 to 1-03 with Packie Moore featuring in the forward line. In the Dr. Lagan Cup against Derry at Celtic Park on the 12th October, Donegal won on a scoreline of 4-06 to 2-03. The Ardara players who took part were Packie Moore and Danny McGill.



This Donegal team photo was taken in 1947.

Back L-R: Owenie Gallagher (Dungloe), Barney Coyle (Gweedore), J. Wilson (Carndonagh), Eddie John McGonigle (Corlea), Charlie Campbell (Dungloe), Sean Slevin (Aodh Ruadh), Jim (Yankee) Gallagher (Aodh Ruadh), Eddie O'Donnell (Dungloe). Front Row: L-R: Red Mickey Gallagher (Gweedore), Hughie Tim Boyle (Gweedore), T.J. Casserly (Moville), Danny Boyle (Glenties), Harry O'Donnell, Patsy Brogan (Four Masters'), Jim Gallagher (Aodh Ruadh).



Packie Moore of Narin first began playing football at the National School in Downstrands. His first adult game was at the age of 17 and he soon became a regular on Downstrands and Ardara Senior teams. He was a member of the Democrat Cup winning side in 1943 and was known as a speedy corner-forward with a great finish. Packie graduated to the County team around 1946 and played in the Lagan Cup and Mc Kenna Cup competitions for Donegal until 1950. He played for Ardara until the age of 42. Packie was married to Molly (Herron) and they raised a family of two sons and 3 daughters at their home in Narin. Their sons Patrick and Thomas also followed in Packie's footsteps in wearing the Club jersey; Patrick (Bobby) playing Under-Age and Senior with the club, while Thomas won Under 16 and Minor Championship medals, before he was tragically lost at sea in 1998. Packie received his greatest honour when he was inducted into the Ardara GAA Hall Of Fame in 1994.



The Donegal Minor Team of 1947 who were narrowly defeated by Tyrone in the Ulster semi-final at Dungannon.

Back Row, L-R: J. Sweeney, H. Mc Govern, M. Carr, J.O'Donnell, S. Rutherford, O. McGinley, S.McCool, F. Brennan, J. Carr, S. McDermott

Front Row, L-R: S.O Kane, E. Boyle, C. Halpin, J. Gallagher (capt), D. Sweeney, T. Sweeney, M. O Regan, P. Rogers.

1948 - New faces at A.G.M

1948 saw new faces elected at the Club A.G.M. John Slowey was elected Chairman; Dan Ward was Vice Chairman; Phil McHugh became Secretary (he resigned in October and Frankie Brennan took over for the duration of the year), and Tommy Boyle, Treasurer. The County Convention was held in the Butt Hall, Ballybofey, on 28th January, 1948. Charles J Boyle was re-elected Treasurer, as was Pdraig S. Mac a'Ghoill as Registrar. The Club was represented at Convention by Phil McHugh, John Gildea and Charles Mooney. As all reports were not dealt with, the Convention was reconvened on the 22nd February.

At the County Céilí which was held in Glenties on the 16th April, 1948 that year, Seán Ó Casaide, former County Treasurer for 12 years, was presented with a chiming clock, on behalf of the Donegal County Board, by the new County Treasurer, Charles J. Boyle.

Four in a row, but protest wins

Once again only the two neighbours competed in the South-West Championship. Obviously, with the teams meeting each other so often, relationships started to get slightly 'strained' between the clubs. In the first scheduled match in the Championship, the appointed referee (and County Chairman) John McDermott of Ballyshannon was unable to attend and both clubs failed to agree on a substitute.

Glenties claimed the points, but the County Board upheld Ardara's appeal and the match was played. As in the previous year, it took a play-off once again to separate the teams, with Ardara winning by 1-7 to 2-2 to take their fourth South-West Championship in a row. The team that day was as follows. - Tommy Boyle, Francis Heena, Packie Waters, Phil McHugh, John Gillespie, Danny McGill, Michael Boyle, Danny Maloney, Paddy McGill, Michael Gallagher, Harry O'Donnell, Eddie Sullivan and Packie Moore. The following were outstanding for Ardara, Tommy Boyle, Danny McGill, Michael Boyle and Michael Gallagher. (Only 13 players were listed in the press).

As the County was divided into five divisions in '48, Ardara played Ballyshannon in the County quarter-final in Donegal Town on the 15th of August. A late Harry O'Donnell point gave Ardara the narrowest of victories by 1-06 to 1-05. The team lined out as follows. - Frankie Brennan, Tommy Boyle, Packie Watters, Phil McHugh, Eddie O'Sullivan, Danny Maloney, Michael Boyle, Willie Boyle, Vincent Boyle, James Mooney (0-1), Paddy McGill, Harry O'Donnell (0-3), John Gillespie (0-1), Packie Moore and Michael Gallagher(1-1). Sub: Paddy Sweeney.

Just as in 1947, a protest then came into play. The essence of the objection was that the Ardara team was illegally constituted; players involved had transferred to outside counties – Vincent Boyle to Dublin and Willie Boyle had been seen with the Antrim team. Representing Ardara at the County Board meeting on the following Friday were Pdraig S Mac a'Ghoill and E. O'Domhnaill. After a long discussion the County Secretary Sean McCumhaill ruled that the Ardara team was not properly constituted and the protest was upheld. By virtue of this decision, Ballyshannon advanced to play Letterkenny in the County Senior Football final at Glenties two days later on 22nd August, 1948. St. Eunan's won by 2-2 to 0-4.

In other competitions that year, Ardara participated in the annual seven-a-side football tournament, held in Donegal, for the Britton Memorial Cup, on the 22nd August (the day Ardara was due to play the County semi-final). Seven teams took part in the competition. Ardara reached the semi-final and was defeated by Dungloe on a score of 3-04 to 1-02. Ardara players taking part were Frankie Brennan, Frankie Gallagher, Harry O'Donnell, John Gildea, Patrick Gildea, Eddie Haughey and Phil McHugh.

Ardara reached the final of the South-West Divisional Competition (St Connell's Cup). They played Glenties, at Glenties, on the 10th October 1948. The game, which proved to be a fine display of football, was won by Glenties on a score of 1-06 to 0-04. Ardara were short Packie Watters, Packie Moore, Danny Maloney, Danny McGill and Michael Gallagher. The Ardara team and scorers were: - John

Gildea, John Heena, Paddy McGill, Michael Boyle, Danny McHugh, Phil McHugh, John O'Donnell (0-01), Harry O'Donnell (0-02- 1 free), Tommy Boyle (0-01 – free), John Gillespie, Frankie Brennan, Patrick Gallagher, Hugh Byrne, Paddy Gildea and Patrick Joe Gallagher. An account in the Donegal Democrat read as follows: -*“Individual honours went to the veteran Patrick J. McGill who played the best game ever. Harry O'Donnell and John O'Donnell were much in the picture, but McGill's display will long be remembered by those who saw the game”*.



Ardara Juvenile Team 1948

**Back Row: John Keeney, Frank McHugh, Billy Maxwell, Charlie Byrne (Monargan).
Kneeling: Packie McGinley, Gerry Breslin, Anthony Breslin, Frankie 'Bomber' O'Donnell,
Finbar Whelan, Peter 'Paul' Breslin, Malachy Herron, Hugh O'Donnell, Charlie Bennett.
Sitting at Front: Pat Brennan.**

First Juvenile team entered

The County Donegal Juvenile (Under 16) Championship was inaugurated in 1948. It is unclear if the competition was run on a Divisional or a County basis. On the 17th October, Ardara played Dungloe in this championship, winning on a score of 4-01 to 2-01. The Ardara team consisted of the following players: - Pat McGhee, C. Byrne, Billy Maxwell, John Keeney, John McGill, Larry Mangan, Finbarr Whelan, Packie McGinley, Frankie O'Donnell, Malachy Herron, Pat Brennan, Hugh O'Donnell, Charlie Bennett and Frank McHugh. Ardara's scorer in the first half was Frank O'Donnell (1-00) from a Charlie Bennett/Finbarr Whelan move. In the second half the scores came from a brilliant move involving Charlie Bennett,

Frank McHugh, and Finbarr Whelan, who passed to Frank O'Donnell for a brilliant goal and from Malachy Herron who added another goal in the final minutes.

A big blow to the Club was the death of rising star James Leo Gallagher, goalkeeper on the Ardara and County Minor teams of 1948. At the Donegal County Board meeting on 5th August, 1948, the County Chairman passed a vote of sympathy to the Gallagher family, Doohill South. All members stood in silence.

On the 12th December, 1948 the South-West Divisional Board A.G.M. was held in the Courthouse, Ardara. Domhnaill Mac a'Bháird had been Treasurer of the South-West Board during 1947. The Ardara club was represented by Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, Tommy Boyle and Phil McHugh. The new Officer Board for the coming year was elected and Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill was elected Secretary/Treasurer with Domhnall Mac a'Bháird stepping down. He was elected as a Divisional Selector. Harry O'Donnell and Tommy Boyle were selected as referees. There was an amount of £13-17-11 in Divisional funds.



The photo above is from the western drama 'Gunsmoke' which took place in the Saddlers Hall in 1948. The cast includes some well known GAA men of the time whose talents obviously were not limited to the playing fields!

From Left: L to R Charlie Gallagher (Cathaoir), Dan Ward, Frankie Brennan, Thomas Campbell, Johnny Gallagher, John Saddler, Frankie Tom, John McGill, Ted Breslin, Packie O'Donnell

Representative games

Packie Watters was elevated to provincial status that year as substitute on the Ulster team that played Leinster on the 21st February. Leinster won on a score of 2-10 to 1-12.

An inter-divisional match was played between the South-West and the South, played at Glenties on the 11th April, 1948. The South won the match on a score of 3-07 to 1-04. Ardara players engaged were P. McHugh, Paddy McGill and Harry O'Donnell.

In the National League quarter-final, Donegal played Sligo and won on a score of 3-05 to 1-07. The match was played before a capacity crowd. Harry O'Donnell played at fullback and Eddie John McGonigle (then of Corlea) played at half forward and scored 2-00.

In the Ulster Senior Football Championship, Donegal played Antrim, in a game which had to be abandoned after 10 minutes of the second half due to torrential rain. The match was replayed in Belfast on the 26th June, and was won by Antrim on a score of 4-05 to 1-04 despite great displays from Packie Watters at fullback and Harry O'Donnell at corner back. Donegal played Tyrone in the Dr. Lagan Cup match in Bundoran on the 18th September. Tyrone won on a score of 1-07 to 0-08. Harry O'Donnell played at fullback. In the next two games – Donegal v Fermanagh on 1st October and Donegal v Derry in Letterkenny on 17th October, Harry played at full-forward and scored in both games (2-02). In the Fermanagh game Donegal won on a score of 4-08 to 1-04. Packie Moore was also a member of the Donegal team.



This Donegal team photo was taken in 1948

Back L-R: Mick Slevin (Aodh Ruadh), Barney Coyle (Gweedore), Paddy McGee (Gweedore), Frank O'Donnell (Kilcar), Francie McGettigan (Glenties), Charlie Campbell, Paddy Prendergast (Dungloe), Jim McGlynn (St. Eunan's), Dan Doherty (Aodh Ruadh)
Front L-R: Eddie John McGonigle (Corlea), Harry O'Donnell (Ardara), Jim McFadden (Gweedore), Hughie Tim Boyle (Gweedore), Owen Carney (Aodh Ruadh), Patsy Brogan (Four Masters'), Jim Gallagher (Aodh Ruadh), Conal Boyle (Dooey), Packie Moore (Ardara)



This Donegal team photo was also taken in 1948

Back L-R: Jim 'Yankee' Gallagher (Ballyshannon), Tommy Boyle (Ardara), Barney Coyle (Gweedore), Eddie John Gonigle (Corlea), Charlie Campbell (Dungloe), Unknown, Peadar McGeehan (St. Eunan's), Sean Curran (St. Eunan's), Patrick Joseph Gallagher (Common, Ardara) John McDermott (Ballyshannon-selector)

Barney Campbell (Glenties).

Front Row L-R: Frankie Brennan (Ardara), Hughie Tim Boyle (Gweedore), Joe Carroll (St. Eunan's), Red Mickey Gallagher (Gweedore), Tony McGrath (Pettigo), ? , T.J. Casserly Merville, Harry O'Donnell, Ardara

1949

1949 was a busy year for the Club with teams entered in all competitions, including a Junior team for the first time in a number of years. At the beginning of the year, the A.G.M saw the following officers elected: Domhnaill Mac a'Bháird as Chairman, John Slowey as Vice Chairman, Frankie Brennan as Secretary, Eddie Haughey and Michael Gallagher (Portnoo) as Asst-Secretaries and Tommy Boyle and Francis Diver as joint Treasurers. The financial statement of the Ardara G.A.A. Club for 1948 showed that income was £130-14-5 and expenditure was £131-13-2, giving a shortfall for the year 1948 of 18s-9d.

Showdown At Dooley

The first activity for the Senior team that year was in the St Connell's Cup Divisional final. Presumably, the only two teams entered in the competition were Ardara and Glenties. They played on the 3rd March, with Ardara winning on a score of 4-04 to 0-01. This was their third successive year as winners of the cup.

In the Senior Championship, the downward trend in the Division in previous years continued and this time Ardara was left unopposed, as Glenties had opted to re-grade to Junior status. Unfortunately for Ardara, this meant advancing to a County semi-final against the reigning champions, Gweedore, without playing a match.

Despite this disadvantage, Ardara put their talented opponents to the pin of their collar, in a game that will long be remembered for various reasons. The match was played on the 25th of July in Dooley.

Ardara gave a brilliant first half display and 3 points from Harry O'Donnell, one each from Frankie Brennan and B O'Sullivan were added to by a Tommy Boyle goal. This left them in the lead at half-time 1-5 to 0-0. Jackie Gallagher of Gweedore missed a first half penalty. Gweedore however showed their fighting spirit in the second half and goals from P.J. Gallagher and Michael Carr reduced the deficit. A point from Gallagher and another from Anton Rogers levelled the scoring, but Vinny Mc Hugh regained the lead for Ardara, before Rogers equalised to send the match to a replay. There were however some nasty scenes afterwards, with a number of spectators allegedly invading the pitch to remonstrate with the referee, Charlie J O'Boyle (the County Treasurer). The following extract is from the Democrat:

"Though the game was marred by an unseemly incident at the end, it will long live as a memorable one in Co. Donegal. The incident referred to marred what was otherwise a clean if somewhat robust encounter, and it reflects little credit on those responsible. When the final whistle sounded a section of the crowd raced on to the pitch and attempted to assault the referee Charles J O'Boyle, Tanatallon, who had handled the game in a capable manner. The aggressive attitude of those concerned was stated to be due to the fact that the referee did not allow enough time for stoppages in the second half. The officials restrained those attempting to assault Mr O'Boyle, but that he should be subjected to such a shameful display of temper is something to be deplored.

Ardara fielded without their inter-county full back, Packie Watters while they also had the misfortune to lose the services of Michael Boyle, through his being injured by a club mate while practicing a few moments before the game was due to commence. Classic displays by Harry O'Donnell at full-back and Frankie Brennan at centre-half-

forward, were features of a display by the South-West team who seemed to suffer no demoralising effect from Boyle's absence. Gweedore fielded without Danny Gillespie and

Willie Gallagher, but the former came on at the resumption for Friel, who retired. Jim Mc Fadden made a welcome re-appearance on the team after an absence of some months, while Jackie Gallagher capably filled the full back position. The fact that Gweedore were able to wipe out Ardara's interval lead of 1-5 to 0-0 within 25 minutes after the resumption is the best tribute that could be paid to the fighting qualities of the Western men.

The teams were:

Ardara - Danny. Boyle, John Gillespie, Harry O'Donnell, Phil Mc Hugh, Danny Maloney, Frankie Gallagher, Bernie McNelis, Paddy McGill, Patrick Joe Gallagher Seamus Breslin, Frankie Brennan, Vinny McHugh, Tommy Boyle, Eddie O'Sullivan, Michael Gallagher.

Gweedore - N. Mulligan, H. Friel, Jack Gallagher, B. Coyle, C. Mc Bride, S. Kearney, P. Mc Gee, A. Rodgers, H. Boyle, P.J. Gallagher, Joe Gallagher, J. Mc Fadden, P. Coyle, J. Coll, M. Carr.

The Referees Report was discussed at the next County Board meeting and was critical of Gweedore players and supporters. Frank Gildea, John Gildea and Eddie Haughey represented Ardara at the meeting. It was decided to reimburse Ardara £10.00 for travelling expenses for the replay, which was fixed for Ballybofey (due to concerns about a recurrence of the incidents). One Ardara player was to be suspended for two years for interfering with the referee and two others were summoned to attend the next County Board meeting in connection with their behaviour after the game. The referees report was adopted by 13 votes to 7. Two Gweedore men were also to face charges at the next meeting.

The re-play was a huge disappointment for Ardara; Gweedore led by 1-02 to 0-02 at half time. They went on to win the match on a score of 3-09 to 0-03. The margin might have been greater but for a brilliant display in the Ardara goal by John 'the Saddler' Gildea.

The Ardara panel was:- Danny Boyle, John Gillespie, Harry O'Donnell, Phil McHugh, Danny Maloney, Frankie Gallagher, B. McNelis, Paddy McGill, Patrick Joe Gallagher, J. Breslin, Frankie Brennan, Vinny McHugh, Tommy Boyle, B. O'Sullivan, Michael Gallagher, John O'Donnell and Eddie Haughey. Michael Boyle (injured).

Gweedore went on to win their eighth title by defeating St.Eunan's in the final. The margin between success and failure for Ardara that year was the missed opportunity, on that July day in Dooey, to topple this great Gweedore team.

Juveniles Reach First County Final

Ardara defeated Glenties in the Juvenile (U-16) Divisional final of 1949 and went on to meet Gweedore in the County quarter-final on 4th September 1949. The match ended in a draw but Ardara won in a replay in Dungloe. They were missing Seamus Breslin and Thomas Breslin due to them not being released from St Eunans College for the game. They then beat Tantallon (Mountcharles/Donegal Town) in the County semi-final, which was played in Glenties in October, and went on to meet St.Eunan's in the County final on Sunday 30th October. St. Eunans won the match 1-06 to 1-02.

The Ardara team that played that day was as follows:-

Gerry Breslin, James Max McNelis, Billy Maxwell, John Paul McGill, Packie Maguire, J. Boyle, Sean Bonner, Larry Mangan, Finbarr Whelan, Harry Laverty, Charlie Bennett, Frank O'Donnell (Bomber), Anthony Breslin, Peter Paul Breslin, Packie McGinley. Other players to play that year were; Thomas Breslin, Seamus Breslin, Vincent McConnell and John Keeney.

The Junior team played Kilcar in the Championship and won on a score of 1-05 to 1-02. They then met Glenties in the Divisional final and were beaten 1-05 to 1-03. The team was: - Anthony Breslin, J. Moore, Eddie Haughey, D. Monaghan, Danny McHugh, Danny Breslin, P. J. McNelis, A. Kennedy, Hugh Byrne, P. Shovlin, C. Molloy, Paddy Gildea, Charles McHugh, Brendan O'Donnell, Neil McHugh and Jim Maxwell.

A friendly match was held in the Showfield on the 15th August between Ardara and Dungloe, to gather some badly needed funds. The prize on offer was the Fr. McGroarty Cup. Dungloe went on to win the Cup and the Ardara team was as follows: - Tommy Boyle, John Gildea, Harry O'Donnell, John Heena, Bernie McNelis, James Mooney, Phil McHugh, Paddy McGill, Vinny McHugh, Patrick J. Gallagher, Frankie Brennan, Eddie Haughey, Packie Moore, Frankie Gallagher and Michael Gallagher.



The Donegal team who defeated Down in the Ulster Championship first round in 1949.
Back L-R: Sean Donnelly (Castlefin), Sean Curran (St. Eunan's), Peadar McGeehan, Packie Watters, Charlie Campbell (Dungloe), Harry O'Donnell, Paddy McGee (Gweedore) Conal Boyle (Dooey), Jim Gallagher (Ballyshannon).
Front L-R: Frankie Brennan, Hughie Tim Boyle, Danny Boyle (Glenties), Dan Bonner (Doochary), Barney Coyle (Gweedore), Jim 'Cookie' Boyle (Dungloe), P.J. Gallagher (Gweedore)

Ardara were once again well represented on Donegal teams. In the Minor grade of that year, Donegal played Fermanagh in the first round and won on a score of 3-04 to 0-01. Frankie (Tom) Gallagher played at left full back and was named among the outstanding players. They advanced to play Tyrone at Letterkenny and once again Donegal won on a score of 1-04 to 0-05. Frankie Gallagher again played at left full back. They lost to Armagh in the Ulster final on the 31st July with Gallagher featuring at centre-half-back.

Donegal defeated Derry on a score of 2-02 to 1-04 in the Dr. McKenna Cup in Celtic Park on the 1st May, Eddie John McGonigle and Harry O'Donnell scoring the goals. Also on the team were Frankie Brennan and Packie Watters. They then advanced to play Armagh and defeated them on a score of 0-06 to 0-03, Frankie Brennan at half forward scoring one of the points. Packie Watters was wing back and Harry O'Donnell played at full back.

In the Ulster Senior Football Championship, Ardara were once again to the fore. Donegal defeated Down in the first round and won on a score of 2-6 to 0-8. Harry O'Donnell and Packie Watters played in the full back line, and Frankie Brennan made his debut at right half forward. In the next round, however, Armagh were the victors on a scoreline of 0-14 to 1-4. Packie Watters played at left full back, Harry O'Donnell at full back and Frankie Brennan was back at half forward.



Donegal Minor Team of 1949, who reached the Ulster Final.

Back (L-r) Danny Doogan (Glenties), Frankie Tom Gallagher (Ardara), Paddy Coyle (Gweedore), Michael Mellett (St Eunans), John Gallagher (Gweedore), Patsy McCole (Dungloe), Charlie Collins (St Eunans), Leo Curran (St Eunans), Denis O'Donnell (Falcarragh), Fr Hugh Boyle (Gweebarra).

Front (l-r) Jimmy McGranaghan (Honey) St Eunans, Patrick Peoples, Paddy Laughlin (Aodh Rua), Seamus McCarron (Moville), John McCready (Aodh Rua), Pat Quinn (Killybegs), Jackie McDermot (Aodh Rua), James McGettigan (St Eunans), ?, P. J O'Donnell (Leitirmacaward).



Tommy Boyle's first involvement with the GAA was as a young man while under the influence of Seán Ó Casaide N.T who was headmaster in the old town school. His first taste of an 'official' match came in the late 30's in a Parish League match between his native Magumna against Mullinacloy, in a game refereed by Barney Keeney. The teams on that day were as follows:

Magumna: Barney Herron, Patrick Neil Breslin, John N. Breslin, Paddy Breslin, John Molloy, Francie Boyle, Joe Boyle, Tommy Boyle, Eddie Haughey, Paddy Haughey, Jim Boyle (Woodhill). team manager: Barney Herron.

Mullinacloy: Jim T.Boyle, John N. Boyle, Jim Boyle, Eddie Brogan, Charlie Gallagher, Jim Gallagher, Joe Gallagher, John Ward, Paddy Keeney.

His playing career with the Club began in 1940 when he was picked on the Ardara Senior team. Tommy played in goal on occasion, but for the most part was a goal scoring corner forward, often turning up at the right time to bag a goal for victory. It was in this position that he lined out on the Democrat Cup winning team of 1943. He recalls fondly that victory in Ballybofey. The team celebrated with a meal and refreshments afterwards and then made the long journey home to Ardara where the cavalcade paraded the trophy through the town. The festivities finished off at the dance in the Saddlers Hall where Vinny McHugh was carried shoulder high around the dance floor. Tommy also picked up South-West Championship medals and St Connells Cup medals through the forties and played on the 1950 side which was the first to defeat the great Gweedore team at home in Magheragallon. He went on to play for the Donegal Senior team on many occasions between 1948 and 1952. Tommy's involvement with the Club was immense and even while playing he became deeply involved in the administration of the Club. His first position was in 1944 when he was elected Secretary. As was the case in most clubs in the County, few records were kept of meetings etc, in those years, but Tommy ensured in his first year as Secretary that from that point on, minutes were kept of all Club meetings. He moved on to become Treasurer the following year; a post he retained until 1955, sharing the position with Francie Diver for a couple of years and then with Frankie Brennan, before stepping down.

Tommy was also a well-known referee in the South-West Division and was Chairman of the South-West Referees Board during the 60s. Tommy rose to the position of Chairman of the Club in 1966; a post he held until 1970. The sudden death of his wife Nancy in 1972 limited his involvement for a period, but he kept himself in touch at officer level as much as possible. The Greenhouse Bar was a common meeting venue for both the Club and South-West Divisional Board through the 60's and 70's. Tommy was elected to the position of Vice President of the Club in 1991 and was finally honoured with the position of President following the death of his great friend and clubman Padraig S Mac a'Ghoill in 1997. Tommy received the Club Hall of Fame award in 1991, and took great enjoyment out of Donegal's breakthrough in 1992 and Ardara's Championship victory in 2000. In spite of illness over the past few years, his involvement in the Club has continued through his son, Thomas Jr, who has been a member of the Club Executive from the eighties until the present day. There are few people who have contributed more to the development of the Ardara GAA club over the years than "Tommy Tom"Boyle.



Tommy receives his Hall of Fame award at the 1991 Dinner Dance from Club President Padraig S Mac a'Ghoill. Also in the photo is Ross Carr from the All Ireland winning Down team of the same year, who was one of the guests at the dance.

Jim Faughnan was a native of Derry who came to Ardara lived on the Front Street and was a shoemaker. Jim had a great input into Under-Age football during his time in the parish and was very well respected by all the young lads of that time. In 1947/48 Jim put together a group of players mostly Under 14 and invited them to Pearse Memorial Park for football practice. Jim moved to England around 1950 and was sorely missed by the Club at the time, but many would say that he had a great influence on the players involved in the Minor team who reached the County Final in 1951 and the team that won the Championship in 1952.

In the 1937 National League Division 2 Final in Pearse Memorial, a story is told that Vinny Mc Hugh and a Longford midfielder contested a broken ball. Vinny spotted a half crown on the ground, went down, picked it up, put it into his sock and went on to gain the ball and send it downfield!



Taken at the seven a side at Dunkineely sports in 1949.
Back L-R: Leo Gallagher (boy), Ted Breslin, Frankie Tom Gallagher, Michael Boyle,
Phil McHugh, Frankie Brennan, Gus Mc Intyre (in suit), Jimmy (Con John) McNelis
Front: Paddy Gildea (Saddler), Harry O'Donnell, Eddie Haughey.



This photograph was the property of Denis Ned Gallagher. We have not been able to locate the exact identity of the team, but feel that it is a Donegal team taken in New York or Philadelphia in the 40s or fifties. We would be interested in anyone who could identify where it was taken or any of the players involved.

Important dates and events from the forties:

1940 German bombs kill three women in Co. Wexford.

1941 The North Strand area of Dublin is bombed.

1942 Ration books are issued in the Free State

1943 Fianna Fail wins General Election.

1944 The Childrens Allowance Act: Two shillings and sixpence a week for the third child and any further child under six.

1945 Japan surrenders, signalling the end of World War 2.

1946 Clann Na Poblachta is formed, led by Sean Mc Bride.

1947 Archbishop Mc Quaid allows his flock to ignore fasting because his people are undernourished. James Larkin dies.

1948 John A Costello is elected Taoiseach.

1949 Republic of Ireland Act comes into effect, as does the Ireland Act (1948) in the U.K. The latter opens the door for the Irish emigrants of the 1950's.



The Fifties

'Nuair a cím an fharraige 'sé mo chroí bhíos cráite,
Smaoitiú ar na buachaillí má bhíonn siad ar na
bádaibh;

Guímse Rí na nAingeal-Sé sheocras na plainéid –
Go ligfidh sé slán na buachaillí gan chontúirt ar bith
báite.'

Chuir an imirce isteach go mór ar láidreacht na foirne sinsir 'sna caogadaí. Ar fud na Breataine agus i Meiriceá fosta bhí fostaíocht ar fáil go forleathan agus ba dheacair locht a fhágáil orthu siúd a d'imigh ar thóir na hoibre. Mar sin féin choinnigh siad siúd a d'fhan sa bhaile an tine ar lasadh ainneoin go raibh an t-ábhar tine gann go leor. Rud eile a choinnigh borradh faoi'n tine ná an géarchoimhlint leis na comharsana.

A new decade signalled changes all around, both in Ardara and in County G.A.A circles. The biggest change was the scrapping of the Divisional Championships. The All County Senior Championship was introduced for the first time after a Dungloe motion at County Convention. The Democrat Cup competition was now a County Senior league, with semi-finals and final for the top four teams. Ardara received a great boost when they had three new additions to their Senior team. Tom Wickham from Sligo arrived in Killybegs as a trainee chemist, and as the fishing port did not have a Senior team, he was eligible to play with Ardara. Sean McGettrick came from Longford to work as a Fisheries officer in Killybegs and was also eligible, while Paddy Prendergast, the famous Mayo full back became stationed as a Garda in Clogher. All three men were noted County footballers. With great local talent available, hopes were high that the long wait for the Dr Maguire might nearly be over. What was to happen that year will be long remembered in the Club's folklore, when great tales are being told of games gone by.

1950 started with the following officers being elected at the AGM:

President:	Fr. Mc Groarty.
Chairman:	John Slowey.
Vice Chairman:	Tommy Boyle.
Secretary:	Eddie Haughey
Treasurer:	Francie Diver.

Captain: Harry O'Donnell
Vice Captain: Frankie Brennan.



Selection Committee: Frankie Brennan, Harry O'Donnell, Barney O'Donnell, Tommy Boyle, Francie Diver and Jack Craig.

Eddie Haughey of the Yellow Banks, who was elected Club Secretary for 1950, was one of the most active members of the Club throughout the 40s and 50s. He represented the Club as a player, Club officer and as a County and Divisional Board delegate for many years. Eddie played most of his football in the forward line and had a long playing career spanning two decades. Like so many others of the time, Eddie emigrated to England in the late 50s and lived there until he passed away suddenly in 1985.

1950

At the South-West Divisional Board Meeting held on the 15th January 1950 Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill was elected Secretary/Treasurer and Tommy Boyle and Harry O'Donnell were elected County Panel referees. The Donegal County Convention was held in the Butt Hall, Ballybofey on 27th January, 1950, with the following Ardara delegates present - John Gildea, John Slowey, Francis Diver, Phil McHugh and Frankie Gallagher. Domhnall Mac a'Bháird was elected Donegal Delegate to National Congress and also to the Ulster Council.

At a meeting of the Club on the 12th March the following Pearse Memorial Park Committee was set up: - Chairman, John Slowey; Secretary, Michael J. Kennedy, Treasurer, Seán Ó Casaide; Committee - Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, Jim Faughnan and Eddie Haughey.

Competitions Commence

The first outing for the Senior team that year was in the St Connell's Cup competition, when Ardara played Glenties in Ardara. The result was a draw, Ardara scoring 1-5 to Glenties 2-2. The Ardara scores came from Eddie Haughey (0-01), and Paddy Prendergast (0-02), Bernie McNelis (0-01) and Tommy Boyle fisted a goal. The team on duty that day was - John Gildea, Phil McHugh, Eddie Haughey, Harry O'Donnell, Michael Boyle, Paddy Prendergast, Paddy McGill, Frankie Brennan, Frankie Gallagher, Bernie McNelis, Michael Gallagher, Sean McGettrick, Eddie O'Sullivan, Tommy Boyle and John Gillespie.



The Ardara team that played Glenties in the St Connell's cup
Back L to R: Danny Boyle (front street), Paddy McGill, John Gildea, Packie Watters, Tom Wickham, Frankie Tom Gallagher, John Boyle (Square) Michael Boyle, Frankie Brennan.
Front L to R: Phil McHugh, Eddie Haughey, Harry O'Donnell, Paddy Prendergast, John Gillespie, Sean Mc Gettrick, Eddie O Sulllivan, Bernie Mc Nelis

The All County League competition commenced in April, with Ardara playing in a group that included Gweedore, Dungloe and Gweebarra. In their first match on the 22nd, Ardara won against Gweedore on a 3-3 to 1-4 scoreline. On the 7th of

Ardara on Scoring Spree

At the Pearse Memorial Park, Ardara maintained their winning sequence in the Senior League by a convincing victory over Gweedore to the tune of 3-6 to 1-2. The homesters led at half time by 1-1 to nil.

Representing gate receipts which were in the neighbourhood of £50, the attendance was a record for an inter Club game in Donegal.

Disappointing as a competitive encounter, the game was one in which Gweedore never revealed the form of

their Championship games last year, with the result that Ardara never seemed to be fully extended.

The game- *Playing with the breeze Ardara broke away from the throw in, but it was not until the 12th minute that they had their first score, a point from Harry O'Donnell. Both citadels had narrow escapes in subsequent exchanges, T Boyle in the 25th Minute sending in a low hard shot from 30 yards which beat the Gweedore custodian, P Gallagher, whose view*

May they shocked the County Champions, Gweedore, in Pearse Memorial Park, with the following report on the match appearing in the Democrat.

seemed to be blocked by a defender. Immediately after the resumption, the woodwork came to the visitors' rescue when a terrific shot from T. Boyle struck the crossbar and was cleared. O Sullivan enhanced the homesters' lead with a point and shortly afterwards H. O'Donnell scored a grand goal, which he followed up with a point from a free. Gweedore figured in a few spasmodic raids before Ardara again went on the offensive and had points from Mc Gettrick and O'Donnell. Shortly after W. Gallagher goaled for Gweedore and PJ Gallagher and Coll added points. T. Boyle, a goal, and O'Donnell, a point, completed Ardara's scoring

Best for Ardara were Prendergast, T. Boyle, P. Watters, F. Gallagher, P.

Moore, H. O'Donnell and F. Brennan. Gweedore's outstanding players were M.J. Gallagher, P.J. Gallagher P. McGee and B. Coyle.

Under referee D. Shovlin, Tullycleave the teams were-

Ardara- J. Gildea, P. McGill, P. Watters, P. McHugh, J. Gillespie, F. Gallagher, M. Boyle, P. Prendergast, F. Brennan, T. Wickham, H. O'Donnell, T. Boyle, J. Mc Gettrick, E. O'Sullivan, P. Moore.

Gweedore- P. Gallagher, H. Friel, D. Gillespie, B. Coyle, J. Coyle, P. McGee, C. Mc Bride, M.J. Gallagher, H.(Tood) Gallagher, P.J. Gallagher, W. Gallagher, Boyle, P. Mc Fadden, J. Coll, C. Bonner.



The Ardara team that defeated Gweedore in the league at Pearse Memorial Park.
Back row: L to R: Francie Diver, Eddie O Sullivan, Michael Boyle, John Gildea, Packie Watters, Paddy Prendergast, Paddy McGill, Tom Wickham, Frankie Brennan, Barney O'Donnell
Front: Eddie Haughey, Phil McHugh, Packie Moore, Sean Mc Gettrick, Frankie Tam Gallagher, Harry O'Donnell, John Gillespie, Tommy Boyle, Jack Craig.

Ardara then travelled to Mullaghderg on the 21st May to play Rosses Rovers and won on a score of 2-04 to 0-05. Their last match in the section was in Dooey on the 28th May, when they drew with Gweedore, 1-03 to 0-06. This result qualified them for the County League semi-final.

It was time for the Championship to commence, however, with 9 teams entering, and Ardara had drawn Gweedore in a County quarter-final with the home advantage of playing in Pearse Memorial.

With the agonising defeat in the replay of '49 high on the minds of the Ardara players, they made no mistake this time and defeated the champions 2-5 to 1-2. The game was held on the 16th of July. The homesters led 0-3 to 0-1 at the break. Gweedore rallied and led 1-2 to 0-4 with 15 minutes remaining. Late goals from Seamus Breslin and Packie Moore gave Ardara an historic victory. Ardara's best on the day were Michael Boyle, John Gillespie, Tom Wickham, Harry O'Donnell, John Gildea and Frankie Brennan. The victory however came at a cost, when Michael Boyle of Leaconnell, after playing a brilliant match, suffered a broken leg, which kept him out of the game for the rest of the year.

Mayhem in MacCumhaill Park

Ardara now advanced to the semi-final and played St Eunan's in Ballybofey on 30th July. In a match which was score for score throughout, St Eunan's got off to the better start. Harry O'Donnell then scored a brace of points. Ardara went into the lead on the resumption, with a point from Alphonsus McShane. The sides exchanged scores until five minutes from the end. The Democrat takes up the story:

"Five minutes from full time, and with only a point dividing the scores, It looked like anybody's game in the Senior Football semi-final in Ballybofey on Sunday. St Eunans were leading 2-4 to 1-6 at the time and Ardara were making strong efforts to draw level when, like a bolt from the blue, Moriarty fielded about 40 yards out and sent a fast shot across the Ardara goal for M. Curran to box to the net. So ended one of the hardest fought and most thrilling

Donegal semi-finals I have witnessed for the past few seasons. The score was disputed, hundreds of spectators invaded the pitch and after an interval, the referee Alo Thompson Ballybofey signalled that play would not be resumed when he sounded the whistle. It was an unfortunate climax to a game that drew a record attendance from all parts of the County and a most unsatisfactory ending from every point of view for the 1200 odd spectators present"

Ardara players were furious at the goal being allowed, claiming it was a square ball. Arising out of this, the Ardara full back Packie Watters felt so strongly about it that he refused to allow the kick-out to be taken, duly sitting on the ball. Other players got involved and spectators crowded onto the pitch. The match was then

abandoned by the referee. The frustration of previous years had finally boiled over and exploded. The Ardara panel that day was John Gildea, Paddy McGill, Packie Watters, Phil McHugh, John Gillespie, Frankie Gallagher, Seamus Breslin, Eddie O'Sullivan, Frankie Brennan, Sean McGettrick, Harry O'Donnell, Alphonsus McShane, Packie Moore, Tom Wickham, Michael Gallagher, Tommy Boyle and Michael Boyle.

Referee's report

The monthly County Board meeting was held that night in the Butt Hall and the referees report for the match was on the agenda for discussion.

Referee D. Thomas had reported that four minutes before full time St. Eunan's scored a goal. Having consulted the two umpires he placed the ball on the 21 yard line for the kick out. P. Watters, the Ardara full back, disputed the score and refused to kick out the ball. At this stage a section of Ardara supporters invaded the pitch, threatening him and adopting a fighting attitude. He had no option but to call the game off.

Mr Roger McRory, Letterkenny, proposed the adoption of the referee's report. Mr L. O'Ceile, Letterkenny, seconded. Mr Paddy McGill, Ardara proposed and D. Ward seconded that the report be referred back for further information. On further discussion the report was adopted by 12 votes to 9. A long and sometimes heated discussion then ensued. Others taking part were S. Gallagher and C. Ferry, Gweedore, Sean Ó Cinnéide, Dungloe and P. Mc Nulty, Stranorlar.

Mr McRory proposed that the points be awarded to St. Eunan's; that P. Watters, Ardara, be suspended for six months under Rule 140 and that the Ardara Club be furnished with a copy of the referee's report and given five days notice of changes therein.

The Co. Secretary suggested that Mr Mc Rory's proposal involved three distinct motions, which should be taken separately. As an amendment to the first proposal Mr Sean Ó Cinnéide proposed that the County Committee was satisfied that rule 140 did not apply to the case, except in so far as P. Watters was concerned. Mr Ó Cinnéide's amendment was carried by 8 votes to 7 and P. Watters was accordingly suspended for six months under rule 140.

The Chairman, Mr Austin Canning, S.P. dealing with the allocation of points, said it would be sheer hypocrisy on his part to put to a vote what he felt he should himself decide. He must accept the referee's report as a statement of fact – that report left no doubt as to who was responsible for the termination of the game. He accordingly awarded the points to St. Eunan's. Ardara appealed the ruling to the Ulster Council, on the grounds that the County Chairman did not have the authority to award the points of the match. They argued that the rest of the committee present

were entitled to vote on the matter. The Ulster Council upheld the Ardara appeal on a technicality, but St. Eunan's still progressed to the County final against Four Masters'. This match was never played and the 1950 Championship was eventually ruled null and void in April, 1951.

The Sequel

The Ardara team did not have to wait too long for another chance at the cathedral town men. The sides met in the League semi-final four weeks later, on the 27th of August, in Glenties, and this time, there were no disputed goals and no need for pitch invasions with Ardara getting the victory on a 1-7 to 0-4 scoreline. Ardara led at half time on a score of 1-03 to 0-02 with Eddie O'Sullivan getting a spectacular goal from a ball lobbed from midfield. Paddy Prendergast, who played at fullback brought off a never to be forgotten catch, and Danny McGill, playing at centre half back, proved too much for the St. Eunan's attack. The victory meant a place in the final against Gweedore, a game that did not take place until July 1951.

More trouble

The game however was a very volatile occasion, with the Ardara supporters taking the opportunity to let the Letterkenny men know of their displeasure at the events that occurred at the earlier match. The aforementioned Roger McRory came in for the most abuse and as a result he made an official complaint to the County Board, which summoned Ardara man, Packie Watters, in connection with their investigation.



Action photo taken at the Ardara v St. Eunan's match in Glenties. John Gildea in the Ardara goal waits for Mickey Blake of St. Eunan's to pull on the breaking ball. Paddy McGill runs to block while Paddy Prendergast and Jim Mc Gettigan of St. Eunan's get up from the ground. The shot went wide.

cumann iúir-cleas saoróel
coisde conndae dúin na nGall.

meabracán

ó Aedh O. Dálaigh, Seolad: Beal Atha Bannaigh, Co. Dubh na nGall. Dara:	Do Padraig Ó Fuaraisige, Seolad: Fe Cumann C.L.C.G., Ard a'Rath.
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A Chero,
 This is to inform you that you are entitled to be heard in your own defence at a meeting of the County Committee in the Market Hall, Glenties, on Thursday, 24th May at 7.30 p.m. when charges made against you by Ruidrí Mac Ruidrí, Letterkenny, who alleges that you accosted him after the St. Eunan's v. ~~SHENGO~~ Ardara league final at Glenties on Sunday, 27th August, 1950, will be considered.

Is M^{se},
 AODH Ó DÁLAIGH,
 Rúnaí.

The letter from the County Board to Packie Watters, informing him to attend the meeting investigating the alleged incidents, which occurred after the League semi-final in Glenties.

The issue was discussed at the next meeting of the Board in the in Butt Hall, Ballybofey on Sept. 17th 1950.

The following extract is taken from the minutes of the meeting.

A letter read from Mr R. Mc Rory, Letterkenny re incidents during and after the County League Semi-Final at Glenties 27th August 1950. He states that during the match he was subjected to continuous barracking by Ardara supporters which he ignored. He was accosted in the street by Patrick Watters, Ardara who asked him to "stand his ground". When he continued walking Mr Watters shouted " You are not out of the town yet ". He construed this as a threat and reported the matter to the Garda who took appropriate action. At 7.40p.m he states he had occasion to enter licensed premises in search of missing passengers.

He was about three minutes on the premises when Seamus Breslin, Vincent McHugh and Edward Haughey from Ardara entered. He was going to leave but the doorway was barred by these men. They refused to let him past and adopted a fighting attitude and were it not for the intervention of Harry O'Donnell, Ardara, he was convinced that he would have been seriously molested. The publican allowed him to pass inside the counter and out by the rear door. He had to climb over a gate and in doing so he tore his trousers. He decided to leave town with whatever passengers he had on the bus. He asked

the County Board to take appropriate action in the matter against the persons mentioned and the Ardara Club in accordance with Rule 16 page 51, official Rule 25 page 55 O. G. and Bye Law 51 page 6 Donegal Bye Law.

Mr Mc Rory speaking of his letter said that in his long experience of games, he never heard such "barracking" and abusive shouting. His Club and many self respecting members of the association resented bitterly the calling of "half baked priests" to the clerical students who played for his team. The referee Mr O Mc Fadden who reported the final scores as Ardara 1 – 7 St. Eunan's 0 – 4, stated that the conduct of some of the Ardara supporters before the game was very unsportmanlike, shouting remarks at the St. Eunan's team and raising regular "bedlam". Rev. Br. Gabriel, St. Eunan's, said that some of the women were worse than the men. It all seemed to be organised. The Chairman A. O'Cannain said he was at the game for a

brief period but that he did not feel comfortable there for very long. Never the less he was long enough there to note a few things and there seemed to be good grounds for the belief that it was an organised movement.

The Secretary A. O'Ciarda said that the whole position was sickening. It was not a bit wonder that it had been suggested that the G.A.A in Donegal could not manage their affairs when they had misconduct in this shape and form all the time. These incidents have got to stop – they have gone too far already and there was only one way of stopping them. D. Ward apologised to Mr Mc Rory, the St. Eunan's Club and the County Committee for the incidents and gave a personal undertaking for the future good behaviour of the Ardara Club and its supporters. Mr Mc Rory said he would accept Mr Ward's apology and undertaking as far as the Ardara Club was concerned.

On the motion of the Chairman, seconded by the Secretary, Messrs Ed. Haughey and V. McHugh were suspended for six month under Rule 25 page 55 from the date of the meeting and the case of Seamus Breslin was adjourned until he attended a meeting of the County Committee on or before Convention. The case of Packie Watters was adjourned until his current period of suspension had expired.

The meeting accepted Mr Ward's apology and undertaking, as far as the Ardara Club was concerned

Club suspended for six months

Despite Mr Mc Rory's undertaking, he appealed the County Board's decision to the Ulster Council, on the grounds that the Ardara Club should have been suspended as a result of the incidents. At the hearing of the appeal in Portadown on the 28th Oct. 1950 Messrs Austin Canning and Domhnall Mac a'Bháird represented the County Board. The Ulster Council ruled that the Ardara Club be suspended for a period of six months, from the 17th Sept. 1950 to 4th March 1951, and that V. McHugh and Ed. Haughey be suspended for one year. In the case of Seamus Breslin, he was to present himself at a County Board meeting where a ruling under Rule 25 and Rule 16 would be discussed and appropriate action taken if necessary.



The Ardara team that defeated St. Eunan's in the league semi-final at Glenties.
Back L to R: Fr. Peter Heekin, Harry O'Donnell, Billy Boyle, Seamus Breslin, John Gildea,
Danny McGill, Paddy McGill, Tom Wickham, Eddie Haughey, Eddie O' Sullivan,
Tommy Boyle, John Slowey
Front: Sean Mc Gettrick, Frankie Tam Gallagher, Paddy Prendergast, Phil McHugh,
Phonsie Mc Shane, Frankie Brennan, John Gillespie, Vinny McHugh, Bernie Mc Nelis.

At a subsequent County Committee meeting held in the Butt Hall, Ballybofey on Sunday 10th of June 1951, the case of the County Committee and Roger McRory, Letterkenny v Seamus Breslin and Patrick Watters was heard.

When the question arose for consideration, the County Chairman said that Seamus Breslin, who was present, said that he was sorry for what occurred and tendered his apology to Mr. McRory and the County Committee. The Committee and Mr. McRory duly accepted the apology and the Chairman declared the case closed.

Regarding the case against Patrick Watters, the County Secretary read out a copy of the notice forwarded to him, requesting him to appear at the meeting. Mr. John Gildea, Ardara, said that P. Watters was a hackney driver and was engaged that day at a Pioneer rally in Letterkenny. The Chairman said that Mr. Watters would stand suspended until he appeared before a meeting of the Board.

At the next County Committee meeting in the Literary Institute, Letterkenny, on Sunday the 8th July, 1951, on the proposal of P.S. Mac a'Ghoill seconded by Séamus Mac Floinn, Standing Orders were rescinded unanimously, to deal with the case of Patrick Watters, Ardara. Mr. Watters, who appeared, apologised for the incidents set out and the Chairman ruled his suspension lifted and the case closed.

The only other Club team in action that year was the Minor team, although details of their participation during the year are limited. There is information of them defeating Gweebarra and Carrick, the latter for which they received a cup of sorts, but it was not thought to be an official Championship game. The team that played Carrick in Straleel was as follows.

Hugh McCole, Billy Maxwell, Alphonsus Bennett, John Boyle, Joseph Logue, Thomas Breslin, Seamus Breslin, Brendan Whelan, Gerry Breslin, Finbarr Whelan, Charlie Bennett, Frank Molloy, Frank O'Donnell, Frank McHugh, Harry Lafferty, Larry Mangan, and Sean Bonner (Meenarillagh).



Photo shows a group of Killybegs athletes after winning the cup at the sports in 1950. Pictured from left are: Sylvie Mulhern (Loughros Point), P.J. Mc Fadden, Brian Gallagher, Pat Quinn (with cup), Sean Mc Guinness, Fonsie Gallagher, Tommy Maloney (Loughros Point), Charlie Bennett

County teams

In the Ulster Junior Championship, Donegal played Derry at Ballybofey on the 1st April, 1950. John Gillespie, Frankie Gallagher and Tommy Boyle were named on the team, the latter two scoring a goal each in the second half.

The Donegal Senior team was in action on the 16th April, when they played Tyrone in Letterkenny, in the Dr. McKenna Cup. They lost the match on a score of 0-09 to 0-06 and the following Ardara players were in action - Harry O'Donnell at full back, Frankie Brennan at half-forward and Frankie Gallagher as substitute. Donegal also reached the Lagan Cup final that year but were defeated in Irvinestown. Frankie Brennan played on the team, and Packie Moore was one of the substitutes.



**Gerry Breslin (Moagh)
who played for Donegal County Minors in 1950.**



The Donegal team who were defeated in the 1950 Lagan Cup final
by Monaghan in Irvinestown.

Back Row L-R: John Mc Dermott (Ballyshannon), Nonnie Gallagher (Gweedore),
Charlie Campbell (Dungloe), Michael Mellett (St Eunans), Frankie Brennan, Seamus Kane
(Ballyshannon), Jack Mc Mullan (Donegal Town), Jim Gallagher (Ballyshannon),
Tom Wickham (Ardara), Red Jack Gallagher (Ballyshannon),

Packie Moore, Jimmy Gallagher (Ballyshannon), Davy Brennan (Glenties).

Front Row, L-R: Peadar McGeehan (St Eunans), Joe Carroll (St Eunans), Barney Coyle
(Gweedore), Hughie Tom Boyle (Gweedore), Sean Mc Gettrick (Ardara), Mickey Gallagher
(Gweedore), Anton Rogers (Gweedore), Willie Gallagher, James Mc Gettigan (St. Eunan's)

Brennan Hits Two Goals For Donegal

Donegal drew with Down in the Ulster Championship, in a game which was played on the 18th June. The score was 3-05 to 2-08. In the Ulster Minor Championship against Tyrone in Omagh the same week, Donegal lost on a score of 1-07 to 0-03. Ardara had two players on the team: A. Gallagher and Seamus Breslin.

The following is an extract from the report on the Senior match in the Democrat

"Donegal's great effort in Senior Championship"

Outpacing and out jumping their opponents until the closing stages, and playing with a verve and dash that gives promise of greater things in the future. Donegal were unlucky not to take the points at St Patrick's Park, Newcastle on Sunday where they drew with Down on the scores 3-5 to 2-8 in the first round of the Ulster Senior Football Championship.

Although favourites to take the honours, Down for the greater part of the game could not match the Donegal men in the air or in a race for the ball while their forwards

lacked punch and understanding of the Tirconail men.

Features of the game were the grand display given by the Donegal defence in which P. Watters (Ardara), J. Gallagher (Gweedore), and J. Gallagher (Ballyshannon) shone. The grand centre-field partnership of J. Carroll (Erins Hope) and H. Boyle (Gweedore) who outplayed and outgeneralled J. Shortt and D. Cole, and the brilliant display of A. Rogers (Gweedore and U.C.D) who scored 1-2 of his teams total, P.J. Casserly (Moville), M.J Gallagher (Gweedore and U.C.D) F.

Brennan (Ardara) and his Club-mate Harry O'Donnell who led the attack, played impressive football. Most elusive player on the field was D. Curran (St Eunans,) while S. O'Kane (Bundoran), P. McGeehan (St Eunans) and M. Gallen (Killygordon) were much in the picture, Charlie Campbell (Dungloe) the capable Donegal culbaire

could not be blamed for the two shots that beat him. The Donegal team lined out as follows-

C. Campbell, P. Watters, J. Gallagher, M. Gallen, S. O.Kane, J. Gallagher, P. McGeehan, J. Carroll, H. Boyle, M.J. Gallagher, A. Rogers, P.J. Casserly, F. Brennan, H. 'Donnell, D. Curran.

Frankie Brennan scored two goals in the above match, but the replay proved disastrous for Donegal, who lost by 4-03 to 1-07.

That same year, Donegal defeated Derry in the Dr. Lagan Cup competition on the 8th October, 1950, winning the match on a score of 0-06 to 1-02. Ardara players in action were Harry O'Donnell, Eddie O'Sullivan, Sean McGettrick and Frankie Brennan. The latter two scored a point each.



Francie Diver, Club Treasurer, was originally from Altnagapple, but settled in the West End following his marriage to Maggie Quinn in 1941. Francie played a big part in the Club through the 40s, 50s and 60s, but aside from his own involvement, few have the legacy of family G.A.A involvement that Francie and Maggie Diver have left to the present day. Not one to grab the limelight, Francie did most of his work behind the scenes. In an

official capacity, he was a regular member of the Club Committee, and served as Treasurer from 1949 until 1951. Francie rarely missed a Club game and acted on the Senior team selection committee, as well as helping out with under age teams, often transporting teams to games around the county. It was his kindness and generosity however that he was best known for, and he regularly treated teams, in particular Under-Age teams, to refreshments after matches, out of his own pocket. He was always on hand when times were tough financially for the Club, and never requested anything in return.

The family business at the West End has been the unofficial headquarters for the Club over many years. It was the focal point, where teams gathered for away matches, and where many meetings, both official and "unofficial" have taken place. Francie passed away in 1978. The Diver family involvement in the Club though, since Francie first started, has been phenomenal, with his sons, daughters, grandsons and granddaughters all playing a big part in the Club in different ways, both on and off the field.



This photo was taken at the sports day in the show field in 1948. Joe "Owen" Boyle (Yellow Banks) takes aim while being marked extremely tightly by an unknown defender (look closely). At the other end of the field is Paddy Haughey. Some of the others who are identified watching on are Eddie Doherty (boy with hands in pocket), Conal (Con John) Mc Nelis, Neil Craig (Shanaghan), John Mc Grath and Brendan O'Donnell (Carn). Jimmy (Con John) McNelis, Eddie Shovlin, Paddy (Bell) Breslin.



Packie Watters

Packie Watters was born in Tullycleave in 1917. He first played competitive football with Downstrands Junior Team in the mid 30s as a young lad, before he made his place on the Ardara Senior Team. A giant of a man, Paddy's first year as a regular on the team was in 1937, and he went on to play an important role on the team that reached the Senior final of 1938. That day he played alongside Vinny McHugh in the half-forward line, scoring two points from play. Although a very versatile player, Packie Watters will always be regarded as one of the best full backs ever to play for Club or County. He soon made the position his own and commanded the square with great authority. A great all round footballer, Packie was known as a superb high fielder and rarely let one slip in the goalmouth. His first honour as a Club player was on the Democrat Cup winning team of 1943. He lined out at full forward that day in the victory over Convoy. Politics of the time meant that he did not receive due recognition as a County player until later years. His debut as a County player came in 1946 as a 29 year old when he played on the Donegal Junior team, which played in the Ulster Championship. He was promoted to the Senior team later that year and made his Senior Championship debut at centre half forward in the 1947 first

round defeat to Antrim. Packie soon moved to his favourite position of number three in the 1948 Championship against Antrim, a position he retained until his last Championship appearance in 1951. His performances for the County soon caught the eye of the Ulster selectors and Packie made the Ulster panel in 1948 and 1949, one of the highest honours in the game for a player of the time. Packie unfortunately never managed to win that elusive Senior Championship medal with the Club, despite playing until he was 37 years of age. He played on teams that were beaten in Senior Championship semi-finals in 1943, 45, 46, 47, 49 and 1950, finally hanging up his boots in 1954. Packie was married to Kitty (Heena) and raised a family of 5 daughters and 2 sons at their home in Edergole. His son Patrick won an Under 14 Championship medal for Ardara in 1976. Packie died suddenly in 1979 at the age of 62. He was honoured posthumously in 2001, with the G.A.A. Hall of Fame Award, which was accepted on his behalf by his wife Kitty; a small token for his outstanding service to the Club.



Many G.A.A stalwarts are pictured here in this section of the crowd at a pioneer social in the Parish hall in 1950.

The following are the names of some of the people who are included.

Packie McGinley, James McGinley, Jack Maguire, Bernie Mc Nelis, Joe Breslin (Shaskinagreana), Raymond Brennan, Paddy Shovelin, Phonsie Moore, Mrs Tynan (Glenties), Martin Whelan, Bart Whelan, John McCole, Seamus McGee, Patrick McGrath, Gerald Given (Yellow Banks), John Mc Bride (Narin), Maureen McGill (Cunningham), Mary McGill (Whelan), Paddy Mc Cole (Burdeck), Willie O'Donnell, Packie Meehan, Vincent Meehan (Tullymore), John Breslin (Monargan), Phil McHugh, Joseph Gallagher (Yellow Banks), Vincent McConnell



This photo was taken after the 1951 County Convention in Ballybofey. Barney Campbell of Glenties had just been elected County Chairman.

Standing L-R: Tommy Boyle, Hugh Daly (Secretary) Dan Ward, John Gildea, John Slowey, Paddy Haughey, Frankie Brennan, Sean Slevin (Ballyshannon), Frankie Tom Gallagher, Conall O'Fearraigh (Gaoth Dobhair- Cisteoir). Seated is Barney Campbell.

1951 - Club at a low ebb

Following the traumatic events of 1950 and the subsequent suspension of the Club by the Ulster Council, the Club received a further blow in 1951 with the news that Tom Wickham and Sean Mc Gettrick had moved on to play for Kilcar, whose team would cover the area from Glencolumbcille to Dunkineely. Paddy Prendergast had also left the area, which left things at a low ebb for the start of the new season. The A.G.M. was not held until the 6th May, after the suspension had been served, and the following officers were elected for that year:

Chairman:	John Slowey,
Vice Chairman:	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird
Secretary:	Frankie Brennan
Ass Secretaries:	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird and John Gildea
Treasurer:	Francie Diver.
Committee:	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, Phil McHugh, John Gildea, Paddy Gildea, Tommy Boyle and Danny Boyle.

Senior Team Captain : Frankie Brennan
Vice Captain: John Gildea .
Selection Committee: Tommy Boyle, Jack Craig,
 Phil McHugh and Frankie Brennan.
Gate Stewards: John Slowey, Francie Diver, Domhnall Byrne,
 Frankie Gallagher, Thomas Campbell
 and Domhnall Mac a'Bháird.

The paid up members for 1951 were - Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, Paddy Gildea, Francie Diver, Billy Maxwell, Peter Breslin, John Slowey, Phil McHugh, John Gildea, Frankie Brennan, Ted Breslin, Paddy Gallagher, Neil Heena, Patsy Herron, Teague Breslin, Tommy Boyle, Frankie O'Donnell and Jim Kennedy.



John Slowey, Main Street, served as Club Chairman in 1948, 1950 and 1951. He was an active member of the Club and held many positions on the officer board in the '40s and '50s as well as attending County and Divisional Board meetings.

Downstrands Regroup

Having been out of action since 1945, the Downstrands Club was reorganised in 1951 as a Junior team, with the Ardara Club officers being included as members of their committee.

The following officers were appointed:-

Chairman	-	Guard Eddie O'Sullivan (Clogher)
Vice Chairman	-	Joseph Boyle (Narin)
Secretary	-	Michael Gallagher (Narin)
Treasurer	-	Jack Craig (Portnoo)
Committee	-	P. J. McGill O.S., John Slowey, J. Diver, Tommy Boyle, Danny Boyle, John Gildea and Phil McHugh

No records were available for games played by the team that year.



Mickey Gallagher from Narin was elected Secretary of the Downstrands Club in 1951. Mickey first played football for the Erin's Hope club in Ballybofey/Stranorlar where he worked as a shop assistant. Whilst playing in the twin towns, he was selected for the Donegal County Minor team in 1939, before he returned home to Narin in the early '40s. He first played for the Ardara Senior team in 1945 and soon made his mark as one of the

Club's main players, starting his playing career at centre half forward. He eventually moved to the full forward line where he marked up many scores along

the way. He was one of the Club's most prominent workers during this period and served as Assistant Secretary of the Club on a number of occasions. He was one of the driving forces behind the reforming of the Downstrands Club in 1951 and did his utmost, with others, to keep the Club going in difficult times. Mickey passed on his talents to his son Michael, who went on to play for the Ardara and Kilcar Clubs. Mickey passed away in 1999 at the age of 79.

Emigration hits

1951 saw the Club severely hit by emigration. There was an abundance of work in England following the Second World War and as a result the Club lost a number of players from the previous year in addition to Wickham, Mc Gettrick and Prendergast. Nevertheless, those who remained made every effort to keep things active.

The Club's first match in the Senior League of 1951 was against Gweedore. On the day both teams fielded under strength, with Ardara the bigger sufferer, being short eight players of the previous year's League side. Despite this, it was good fare with Gweedore just deserving victory. Good defensive play and faulty finishing by both sides kept the scoring low. Gweedore, who were playing with the wind, opened the scoring with a point, which was followed by a goal. The legality of the score was questioned but the referee allowed it. On the turnover, Bernie McNelis did not resume for Ardara and his place was taken by J. Kennedy. The only score in the second half was a goal, which was scored by Frankie Brennan after the resumption. Outstanding for Ardara were Packie Watters, Phil McHugh, Danny McGill and John Gildea.

The teams:

Ardara - John Gildea, Paddy McGill, Phil McHugh, Packie Watters, Bernie McNelis, Danny McGill, Eddie Haughey, Frankie Brennan, Tom Walsh, Tommy Boyle, John Gillespie, Michael Gallagher, Patrick Gildea, Danny Boyle and John Shovlin.

Gweedore - A. Gallagher, F. Friel, H. Boyle, B. Coyle, P. McGhee, S. Kearney, J. Coyle, H. Gallagher, C. McBride, P. J. Gallagher, W. Gallagher, J. Breslin, J. Bonner, J. Boyle and J. Harley.

This followed two defeats in the league by Rosses Rovers. The second of those matches was played in Ardara and the home side was pipped at the post by a penalty goal, scored in the last minute of the game. John Gildea who had been playing right full back went into the goals but had no chance.

The Ardara team on the day was:- Danny Boyle, John Gildea, Packie Watters, Phil McHugh, John Gillespie, Danny McGill, Eddie Haughey, T. Walsh, Frankie Brennan, Michael Gallagher, Mick Gerrard (worked for the Ordnance Survey), J.

Kennedy, Joseph Shovlin, Gerry Breslin and Alphonsus Bennett.

Derby Trouble

Ardara, who now had two defeats in their last two games, were next to play Glenties. The first match was drawn for Glenties and on the day Ardara won on a score of 1-06 to 0-03. This match was witnessed by a large crowd, but the game, which was marred by a number of incidents, did little credit to the offending players. One player got his marching orders and a number of others were lucky not to have fallen under the referee's 'baton'. The spectators were not pleased with the tactics adopted on a number of occasions and the referee's task under the circumstances was by no means an enviable one. After eight minutes, a Glenties player got his marching orders and frayed tempers were very much in evidence. In the 17th minute Frankie Brennan clinched the issue by fisting a goal from a cross by Gerry Breslin. The score was disputed but the referee allowed it. A point by Rodgers and a point by Gerry Breslin for Ardara concluded the scoring.

Their second match against Glenties was played in Pearse Memorial Park. Ardara confirmed their first round League form by defeating Glenties 2-04 to 1-02. This time the game was played in a good sporting manner. As both sides were below strength, the game lost some of its 'derby' flavour. On the run of play Ardara were slightly the better side and deserved their victory. Michael Gallagher for Ardara did much of the scoring, keeping his team ahead at all times. Several dangerous Glenties raids proved abortive and in the end a further goal for Ardara had a determining effect on the result, with O'Sullivan scoring for Ardara. This score had given Ardara a nine point lead. With ten minutes to go, Glenties secured a goal through J. McDyre and to finish the scoring, Davy Brennan kicked a final point for Glenties.

The teams:

Ardara - Neil McHugh, John Gildea, Packie Watters, Alphonsus Bennett, John Gillespie, Danny McGill, Phil McHugh, Frankie Brennan, Eddie O'Sullivan, Peter Breslin, Mick Gerard, Billy Maxwell, Packie Shovlin Danny McHugh and Michael Gallagher

Glenties - V. Sweeney, P. Brennan, D. Brennan, S. Finn, P. McHugh, P. Rodgers, F. McGettigan, D. Sweeney, F. McLoone, D. Doogan, J. McDyre, E Walker and D. Doyle. (Only thirteen Glenties players were listed in the report).

Problems

Ardara then played Dungloe in Dungloe and were defeated by two points. After this game however, things took a turn for the worse for the team. Commitment problems from some players meant that the Club could not field a team for the

return match with Dungloe in Pearse Memorial Park. With the Championship coming up and the team due to play a strong Ballyshannon side, things did not improve. Ballyshannon travelled to Pearse Memorial, but the Club could not field 15 players. For a team that should have won a Championship the previous year, it was a severe blow for the Club officers and players who tried to keep things going.

The final of the 1950 Democrat Cup was not played until 8th July 1951. Opponents, Gweedore, were much too strong and took the trophy by 2-10 to 1-6. The Ardara line out for the match was as shown in the match programme.

GAOITHDOBHAIH				ARD A' RATHA			
Sean Duffy				John Gildea			
Rhys Friel	Rhys Biele	Charles Brier		Paddy McGuire	Paddy Finnergan	Phil McHugh	
Petrak McGee	James Doyle	Brian Doyle		John Gillogly	Shane MacGill	Michael Byrne	
Markus Gallagher	Joseph Gallagher			Frank Brennan	Seamus Bowlin		
Petrak Gallagher	Willie Gallagher	Anthony Rodgers		Sean McGonigle	Tom Wadden	Patrick McKeown	
Petrak Doyle	Conor McBrat	John Breslin		Timothy Doyle	Mark Gervais	Michael Gallagher	
RESERVES: 1. James Byrne, 2. Conor Gallagher, 3. Anthony Gallagher, 4. Seamus Brennan, 5. Jackie Gallagher, 6. Charles O'Donnell, 7. Sean Doherty				RESERVES: 1. Tom Wadden, 2. Shane MacGill, 3. Jim McNelis, 4. Danny McHugh, 5. Paddy Gildea, 6. Seamus McKeown			
Half Time Score	W's	Goals	Points	Second Half Score	W's	Goals	Points
GAOITHDOBHAIH	—			GAOITHDOBHAIH			
ARD A' RATHA	—			ARD A' RATHA			
THE "DONEGAL DEMOCRAT," THE MOST WIDELY READ WEEKLY, CARRIES FULL REPORTS OF ALL GAEILG ACTIVITIES. PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY. PRICE 3d.				Full Time Score			
				GAOITHDOBHAIH			
				ARD A' RATHA			

Minors Reach First Final

Ardara Minors had a strong team in 1951 and reached the Club's first County final in the grade. They progressed to the County semi-final where they met St Eunan's. They drew this match Ardara 1-05 to St Eunan's 2-02. Seamus Moore, full back on the St. Eunan's team, stated "Ardara should have won this game". Ardara made no mistake in the replay and beat St. Eunan's on a score of 1-06 to 1-05.

They had now qualified to play Tanatallon in the County final. The Tanatallon team which was drawn from Dunkineely to Donegal Town, as much too strong for the Ardara side and won the match on a score of 3-07 to 1-01.

Ardara Panel :- Domhnall Whelan, Josie Boyle (Tullycleave), Billy Maxwell, Vincent McConnell, Peter Pat Breslin, Packie McGinley, James Max McNelis, John Paul McGill (Maghera), Seamus Breslin, Charlie Bennett, Frank McHugh, Gerry Breslin, John Keeney, Thomas Breslin, Packie McGuire, Neil McCole and Jimmy McNelis.

Tantallon: John Cassidy, Con Friel, Kevin Meehan, Sean Griffin, Dave Hanna,

Denis Hegary, Danny Murray, Jimmy Ward, Willie Cunningham, Dom Breslin, Liam Brogan, Seamus Meehan, Angus Brogan, Seamus Montgomery, Francis Burke,



**Frankie Gallagher, Packie O'Donnell, John Gildea and Ted Breslin
pictured in Dublin for the 1951 All Ireland final.**

Financial worries

A meeting of the Club was held in the Courthouse on Sunday 17th November. A small number of members attended and the main subject for discussion was finance, as the Club was up to £100.00 in debt. It was agreed to ask the businessmen of the town for a loan until such time as the Club was in a position to pay. It was proposed by Tommy Boyle and seconded by Domhnall Mac a'Bháird that the Club hold a raffle. Prizes were to be drawn at the County Ceilidhe in the Parish hall, on January 11th 1952. It was also decided to hold the usual Annual Bazaar and to travel with the annual play. Those who contributed to the Loan Scheme were:

- £5.00 Tommy Boyle, Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, John Slowey,
Teague Breslin, Francis Diver and Neil Heena.
£2.10.0 Ted Breslin, Paddy Gallagher and Paddy Gildea.



Jack Craig, Treasurer of the Downstrands Club in 1951. Jack, who was from Portnoo, drove Ardara and Downstrands teams all over the County in his V8 taxi. Jack also acted as selector for both teams during his time and never missed a match through the 50's and 60's.

1952

The 1951 A.G.M. was held on the 10th February 1952, in the Courthouse. The Secretary, Frankie Brennan, in his report, stated that looking back on 1951 he could not say that it was a year of great success. *"Apart from not gaining any major success, a very poor spirit prevailed throughout the year, especially among some of our playing members. The players, on being asked if they would play on different days always gave a very positive answer but sometimes did not turn out at all. When players show a lack of interest like this we cannot expect our supporters' interest to be very keen and it also gives a very bad example to our younger players. There were two occasions during the year, for the first time in the Club's history, when we were unable to field a team on account of this attitude on the part of players. Players should not have to be asked to play at all. They usually know when a game is taking place and if their interest is keen enough they will be there on the spot"*

The following officers were elected for 1952

Chairman	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird
Vice Chairman	John Slowey
Secretary	Frankie Brennan,
Ass. Secretary	Phil McHugh
Treasurer	Tommy Boyle

Committee: Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, Phil McHugh, Paddy Gildea, John Gildea, Thomas Boyle, Ted Breslin and Frankie Gallagher.

Senior Team Captain: Frankie Brennan

Vice Captain: John Gildea.

Team Selection Committee: Tommy Boyle, Phil McHugh, Jack Craig and Frankie Brennan.

Gate Stewards: John Slowey, Francie Diver, Domhnall Byrne, Joe (Larry) Gallagher, Thomas Campbell, Domhnall Mac a'Bháird and Ted Breslin.

Billy Maxwell was appointed to look after the rigs for 1952.

The following were the members for the year:- Phil McHugh, Tommy Boyle, John Slowey, Billy Maxwell, Paddy Gildea, Francie Diver, Peter Breslin, Ted Breslin, Frankie O'Donnell, Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, Frankie Gallagher, Danny Breslin, John Gildea, John Brogan, Vincent McConnell, Thady Gallagher, Francie Boyle, Patsy Herron, Eddie Haughey, Alphonsus Bennett, Patrick Maguire and Paddy Breslin.

Donegal G.A.A. Convention

At the Donegal G.A.A Convention held in the Butt Hall, Ballybofey on the 27th January, Ardara was represented by Phil McHugh, Frankie Brennan, John Gildea, Frankie O'Donnell, Tom Fitzpatrick and Ulster delegate Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, who was also Divisional Board Secretary and delegate to National Congress.

A Club Meeting was held in the Courthouse on Sunday 25th May, 1952. The attendance was a little better than usual and as usual the main topic up for discussion was finance. It was proposed by Tommy Boyle and unanimously agreed to hold a "Forecast" on the Antrim v Donegal match at Corrigan Park. 6d per forecast and 10/- for a Card of 22 forecasts. The Prize was £10.00. It was decided to get 150 Cards.

At the South-West Divisional Board Meeting held in Killybegs, it was decided to make fixtures in the St Connell Cup Competition. They decided on a single League system, to pool the gates and to divide the net 'Pool' equally among the four Clubs, after first giving 5% of the net pool to the Ardara Club, which had donated the cup. Should a final or a deciding game be necessary, such game would be played at Pearse Memorial Park in Ardara.

All County League

In the County Senior league of 1952, Ardara's first match was against Killybegs and was played in May. The paper reported *"This was a pulsating game between two well matched sides, with the game being played in Straleeney (Killybegs). On the Killybegs side McGettrick and Andy Cunningham reached great heights. Ardara, one of the first areas to pull its weight in the Gaelic movement, could feel rightly proud of the display of their players in that game, which could have gone in their favour with a little more steadiness in attack. Packie Watters gave a great display while intercounty star Frankie Brennan had no less than three goals. He also contributed a brace of points."* The final score was Killybegs 4-05 to Ardara 3-03.

Ardara's next match was against Donegal Town. The match was played at Tír Chonaill Park, with the home side coming into prominence to take a close victory, 2-02 to 1-04. The football was of a very high order all through and the closeness of the scores lent much to the enjoyment of the contest. Patsy Brogan had his usual outstanding display for the homesters, while Frankie Brennan was to the forefront for the visitors. Ardara led at half time by 1-03 to 0-01 but Donegal played better in the second half, to take the result. For Ardara, Eddie Haughey, Packie Maguire, Peter Breslin, Charlie Bennett and Tommy Boyle with the irresistible Frankie Brennan strove hard to maintain the upper hand, but to no avail.

The teams were:

Ardara - Eddie Haughey, Packie Watters, Packie Maguire, John Keeney, Peter "Pat" Breslin, Tom Gallagher, Phil McHugh, Tommy Boyle, Frankie Brennan, Charlie Bennett, P. Finn*, Frankie Tom Gallagher, Thomas Breslin, Billy Maxwell, Packie McGinley, Subs: P. Best* and John Gildea.

*Peter Finn and Paddy Best were ESB men who worked in the area at the time. Best was a former Sligo and Connacht forward in his prime. It is likely both men may have been 'slightly illegal'!

Donegal - J. Thomas, J. Gallagher, P. Prendergast, D. Murray, P. J. Harvey, J. Kelly, J. Boyle, P. Brogan, P. L. Brogan, J. McMullan, S Reagan, J. O'Neill, T. McGroarty, A. McBrearty, S. McCafferty and J. Keaney.

Ardara's match in the League was at home to Ballyshannon, a game which they won on a 1-4 to 1-2 scoreline. They then played the return game in Ballyshannon and were beaten, and they also lost the return leg with Donegal Town. Their last game in the League was against Killybegs at home, in a match which they won. They lost four and won two in their League campaign for the year.

Championship Changes Again

The County Board voted to abandon the two-year open draw in favour of a return to the old Divisional system. In the first round of the Donegal Senior Championship, played at Pearse Memorial Park, Ardara edged out Glenties on a score of 1-04 to 0-03. Both teams fielded a number of Minors who acquitted themselves very well. Towards the end of the first half, two Glenties players and one Ardara player got their marching orders. On the whole though, the game was played in a very sporting manner. Ardara, playing against the wind in the first half, goaled in the second minute, when Domhnall Whelan connected with a well directed sideline kick by Charles A. McNelis. In the second period Glenties pressed strongly, with Brennan and Bonner making an impact. In the 28th minute Whelan sealed Glenties' fate with another point.

Teams:-

Ardara - Danny Boyle, Patsy Herron, Billy Maxwell, Alphonsus Bennett, Peter Breslin, Frankie Gallagher, Packie Maguire, Frankie Brennan (0-02), Thady Gallagher, Tommy Boyle, Domhnall Whelan (1-01), Charles A Mc Nelis (0-01), Joseph Logue (Front St), Frankie O'Donnell and Tom Breslin.

Glenties - V. Sweeney, J. O'Donnell, D. Brennan, F. McGettigan (0-01), Dr. P. Dunleavy, P. Rodgers, D. Sweeney, J. McDyre, P. M. Boyle, P. Bonner (0-01), D. Shovlin, S. Finn (0-01) and J. McGlynn. (2 names missing).

The return leg was played in Glenties and it ended in a draw, Ardara 1-03 to Glenties 0-06, with the standard of play being very good. Billy Maxwell opened the scoring with a goal in the 9th minute from a 45. Two minutes later Domhnall Whelan added a point from 45 yards. D. Shovlin replied with a point for Glenties. Frankie Brennan pointed from a free from 21 yards for Ardara. S. Finn, who was in sparkling form for Glenties, added three points from frees, and this was followed by a point from Frankie Brennan. The Referee was G. O'Neill, Glenties.

Ardara needed to win this match to force a play-off with Killybegs for Divisional honours. In his annual report, the Secretary Frankie Brennan stated - *"had there been a different Referee in charge of the game with Glenties, in Glenties, the result would have been a win in our favour, instead of a draw"*.

Ardara had already played Killybegs home and away in the Championship that year. They lost to them away and won at home, but were still short of points to force a play-off with them in the Division that year. Killybegs (which included Kilcar, Glencolumbcille and Dunkineely) went on to win their first County Championship.

Jim Maxwell – What a Goalie! By Martin Whelan

I recall many matches in Pearse Memorial in my youth, more for the incidents attached to them, rather than for the quality of the football. Many times a referee had to be found among the spectators, a whistle was often provided by a local Garda. Impartial umpires were like hens' teeth. One of the ongoing problems in those days was the failure on many occasions to have enough players to make up a team of 15. I recall one game against Glen when Ardara were one man short. The great Jim Maxwell, who served Club and County at full back, and was by this time retired, was at the game as a spectator and was persuaded to play in goal. It was an awful day, with the rain coming down in torrents. Poor Maxwell took off his jacket and put the trousers inside his socks, no football boots, and took up his position in goal. Ardara pressed for most of the first half, so Jim took shelter from the elements under the hedge at the back of the goal. Suddenly the Glen men broke away and one of their forwards, spotting an empty goal, kicked from far out. A sure goal! until Maxwell darted out from his shelter and punched the ball clear. All hell broke loose. The Glen team were incensed that a man had run from the crowd to clear the ball. I was stuck in the middle of the excitement and still remember Maxwell telling the angry Glen forward, "Listen caddie, my names is on the team sheet." The referee had to find the team list, which he had put safely away, and sure enough, Jim was our bona fide net minder, and the game resumed. Many a good story was related in the Green house over that day. Lord rest Maxwell and all those who served the Green and Gold.

St Connell Cup

In the St Connell Cup competition, in 1952, Ardara played Killybegs in Straleeney. The following is the Democrat report on the match.

Ardara Capture points from Killybegs Ardara 2-05 Killybegs 1-06

Ardara had a well deserved if narrow victory over Killybegs in the St Connell Cup 1952 Senior Football Competition, after one of the keenest and most stubbornly fought encounters witnessed in the South-West for many a day. The homesters who led at half time 1-06 to 2-01, failed to score in the second moiety and Ardara added four points to emerge victorious. The game was about twenty minutes old when Ardara had the first score. A well taken goal by Billy Maxwell in the 26th minute seemed to swing the game in the visitors favour. Killybegs broke away from the throw in and after two minutes opened the scoring with a soft goal by Jim McHugh. This was followed by a point from a 30 yard free by Mc Gettrick and he also scored two further points.

Ardara struck back with an opening point from Frankie Brennan from a 25 yard free in the 19th minute. The homesters followed with a point each from McGettrick, Carr and Philips. Then came Maxwell's goal and the turning point of the game. Two minutes

afterwards Ardara further reduced the arrears with a well taken goal by Packie Gildea. Half Time score Killybegs 1-06 to Ardara 2-01.

In the tenth minute of the second half Frankie Brennan scored a point followed shortly by the equalizer. Packie Moore and Tommy Boyle pointed for Ardara to complete the scoring.

Teams:-

Ardara— Phonsie Bennett, John Gildea, Packie Watters, Phil McHugh, Jim O'Reilly, Frankie Tom Gallagher, Michael Boyle, Paddy McGill, Frankie Brennan, Thady Gallagher, Packie Moore, Eddie Haughey, Billy Maxwell, Patrick Gildea, Tommy Boyle.

Killybegs – J. Callaghan. P. McGinn, J. McHugh, H. O'Donnell, J. Byrne, P. Mc Shane, F. Gillespie, A. Cunningham, S. Mc Gettrick, A. Carr, T. McHugh, T. Wickham, P. O'Donnell, W. Quigley and H. Phillips.

Referee – Dan Sheerin – Mountcharles

At this stage of the St. Connell Cup competition, Ardara and Donegal were now sitting on level terms and had qualified for the final, a game which would not be played until 1953.

Éist le ceol na habhann agus gheobhaidh tú breac.

Má bhí mórchuid de na peileadóirí imithe féin, ba chumasáí na peileadóirí óga a d'fhágadar ina ndiaidh. Bhí mianach ar leith iontu siúd a bhuaigh Corn na Mionúir do'n chéad uair i 1952. Ba mhór an ceiliúradh a lean an bua seo. Nuair a síleadh go raibh an tóin titithe as an pheil sa pharóiste, thug an bua seo uchtach úr don lucht tacaíochta.

Ardara's First County Minor Championship

The Minors of 1952 created history for the Club when they won the Mayo Cup for the first time. With a number of players surviving from the team that reached the final the previous year, they did not suffer a defeat throughout the competition and won all games well. The addition of Harry Lafferty from Ballybofey, who lived and worked with his uncle in Narin, was also a big boost. They had runaway victories over Glenties both at home and in Glenties. Their closest call was against Carrick in Towney, in the first match, but they won the return game well at home, as



An Ardara G.A.A Pioneer team who defeated Glencolumbcille in a charity match played in Glen in 1952. The match was organised by Father Neilly Mc Groarty

Back row from left: Packie Shovlin (Kilclooney), Vincent McConnell, Paddy Carr (Tullybeg), Paddy Haughey, Phil Boyle, John Gillespie, Phonsie Bennett, Packie Maguire, Tony Ward, Thady Gallagher.

Front from left: John McGill (Aighe), Sean Melly, Peter Paul Breslin, Pat Brennan, John Keeney, Peter Pat Breslin, John McShane.

Ardara 3-04 Sliabh Liag (Carrick) 0-03

At Pearse Memorial Park, Ardara had qualified for the Minor Football Championship semi-final. Ardara led at half-time by 1-01 to 0-00, Weather conditions were bad, with a greasy ball and water-logged pitch. Ardara deserved their victory. The Referee was Dan Shovlin – Tullycleave.

Outstanding for Ardara were Peter Breslin, John Keeney, Charlie Bennett (0-03), Frank McHugh, Harry Lafferty (0-01), Tom Breslin and Frankie O'Donnell. The goal scorers for Ardara were Luke Boyle, Vinny Herron and Domhnall Whelan.

reported overleaf.

Ardara then went on and met Rosses Rovers in the County semi-final the following

Ardara Minors Excelled Ardara 7-05 Rosses Rovers 1-04

Ardara won well yet Rosses Rovers were in no way disgraced. All of the Ardara 15 are worthy of honourable mention though a special word of credit goes to Ardara's full forward Domhnall "Langan" Whelan an artist with the ball if ever there was one. Vincent Herron scored Ardara's first goal. H. McPaul pointed from a penalty for Rosses Rovers. Domhnall Whelan had a goal and a point for Ardara followed by another point from Frank McHugh. McCauley replied with a point for Rosses Rovers. J. Rodgers in the Rosses Rovers goal had a brilliant save from Whelan. Charlie Bennett had another goal from the penalty spot.

Logue and Whelan exchanged points to leave the score at half-time Ardara 3-03 to Rosses Rovers 0-03.

In the second half Bennett had two points for Ardara before Logue replied with a similar score. Whelan had two goals in succession for Ardara. From a melee McNelis shot Ardara's sixth goal. The Rosses Rovers came into the picture to secure a goal per J. Duffy. Bennett next made the opening for Frankie O'Donnell to shoot the net to leave the scores 7-05 to 1-04 for Ardara. Domhnall Whelan (Ardara) scored on the day (3-02)

week

Ardara had now qualified for the 1952 County Minor final. There was great excitement in the Parish and all hands headed to the match on Sunday. They were not to be disappointed; Ardara annexed their first Minor Championship title and the first Championship honour in any grade since 1928 at Dooey, Leitir macaward on Sunday 31st August, 1952.

Ardara win their first Minor Title

Ardara 4-10 St Eunans 0-03

Ardara led by 3-10 to 0-01 at half time in a game that was somewhat affected by a breeze, which blew from goal to goal and which at times reached semi-gale force. There was no doubt about Ardara's victory which was clear cut and decisive. Though affected by the wind the game was much more interesting than the scores would seem to suggest as St Eunans put up a much better fight than is reflected in the ultimate result. The secret of Ardara's success was their excellent teamwork, their speed, accuracy and the sound display of their backs, half-backs and mid-field pair when facing the wind in the second half.

Ardara opened the scoring in the 2nd minute with a point by James McNelis who received from Charlie Bennett and let go a low shot at the St Eunans keeper who deflected over the bar in an effort to clear. Ardara maintained the pressure and after Vinny Herron had finished inches wide from a difficult angle - Harry Lafferty pointed. St Eunans had a short period of pressure but could make little headway against the breeze and Ardara returned to the offensive for Frankie O'Donnell to send a rasping shot to the net from a 10 yard range. O'Donnell was well positioned by McNelis for the score, the latter having gained possession after a delightful solo run by Frank McHugh.

In a subsequent Ardara attack Lafferty finished inches wide and during further thrusts, McCann the St Eunans full back saved well on two occasions. Ardara forged ahead for Frank McHugh to increase their lead with a point in the tenth minute. The St Eunans defence almost continuously under pressure played stubbornly but Whelan put Ardara ahead in the 15th minute with a penalty, which he sent to the net. Two minutes later Frankie O'Donnell goaled first time from a pass by Vinny Herron. St Eunans fought back spiritedly for H. Blake to open

their account with a point in the 18th minute. Barrett from a 30 yard free replied with a similar score. In the 22nd minute Ardara had a goal disallowed when S. Hoare the St Eunans Keeper was charged heavily. Two minutes later Ardara had a goal by Vinny Herron disallowed, the scorer being adjudged inside the parallelogram. In the 25th minute Frankie O'Donnell had a further Ardara point followed by a brace of minors by Charlie Bennett from frees. Before half-time Tom Breslin and John Keeney had a point each to leave the scores Ardara (3-10) to St Eunans (0-01).

A reorganised Ardara defence ably countered strong St Eunans presence in the second half. After a number of wide's M. Monaghan registered a point in the 10th minute. Although facing a breeze, Ardara had almost as much of the exchanges as St Eunans. In the 15th minute S. Harvey pointed for St Eunans who subsequently had a number of wides. In the 23rd minute Vincent McConnell sealed the issue with an Ardara goal. Outstanding for Ardara were Tom Breslin, Charlie Bennett, Frankie O'Donnell, Domhnall Whelan, Frank McHugh, Harry Lafferty and Vinny Herron. All the other players gave sound displays also.

Teams:-

Ardara – Neil McCole, Josie Boyle, Packie Maguire, James V. McConnell (1-00), Patrick Boyle, Peter Breslin, John Keeney (0-01), Tom Breslin (0-01) (Capt), Charlie Bennett (0-03), Harry Lafferty (0-01), Frankie O'Donnell (2-01), Frank McHugh (0-01), Vincent Herron, Domhnall Whelan (1-00) and James McNelis (0-02). Reserves – Pat Brennan, Patrick McGhee, Peter Gallagher and Charlie Gildea.
St.Eunan's – S. Hoare, H. Coyle, S. McCann, B. Sweeney, J. McGranaghan, J. Gallagher, L. Blake, S. Harvey, P. J. Carbery, H. Blake, M. Ronaghan, J. Roarty, J. C. Duffy and C. Doherty.



**The Ardara Minor Team of 1952- The first team from the Club
to win the County Minor Championship.**

Back from left: Charlie Bennett, Peter Gallagher (The Mines), Peter Paul Breslin, Vincent McConnell, Josie (Phil) Boyle, Domhnall Whelan, James Max McNelis, Packie Maguire, Charlie Gildea (Doohill), Patrick McGhee, Sonny Boyle (with hat), Phonsie Bennett, Sean Gildea, (Glenconwell), Peter Watters (Meentinadea), Peter Pat Breslin.

Front Row: Pat Brennan, Neily McCole (Narin), Harry Lafferty (Narin), John Keeney, Frank McHugh, Thomas Breslin, Frankie 'Bomber' O'Donnell, Father Luke Boyle, Vinny Herron

Celebrations

"The path to the final victory was not as some people thought – a bed of roses. They met stubborn competition in the South-West and it was only the methodical training, the unflagging spirit and the keen sense of discipline which prevailed amongst the players which carried them through." These were the words of Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, when he presented the Mayo Cup to the captain of the Minor team, Tomas Breslin, at a dance in the Iona Hall.

Speaking in Irish, he said, *"It was a momentous as well as historic occasion in the life of the Club which in the 31 years of its existence had its shares of ups and downs in the Gaelic area. We have had our lean periods and times particularly in the early days of the Club, when we rode on the crest of the wave. We have had our moments of triumph, flushed by the glory of success and we experienced our moments of deep disappointment and failure to achieve our objective, but tonight we celebrate for the first time the winning of a Donegal Minor crown – an objective for which we have been striving hard for a number of years. We won our last Senior Football Championship in 1928 and we also won the Democrat Cup in 1931 and in 1943. I thank you for the feat that you have accomplished and I hope that many of you players will wear the Club and County colours in another grade*

in the coming years."

He then presented the medals to the players. Mr. Thomas Breslin, captain of the team, said that it afforded him great pleasure to accept the Mayo Cup on behalf of the members of the team. *"It was a source of pride for all of us to win the Minor title and I can only express the hope that in future years the victorious team will continue to uphold the traditions of the Club and the lofty ideals of the G.A.A."*

The historic victory was celebrated in verse by Sonny Keeney of Glendowan.

The Ardara Minors

*In this parish we had football teams who won years ago
They defeated Ballyshannon, Killygordon and Dungloe.
But now we have a Minor team that's worthy of our praise.
They've kindled up the dying coals and set the fires ablaze.*

*They upheld the Ard'ra colours, which on many a field were seen
And waved for Ireland's freedom, the famous gold and green.
They defeated Carrick and Glenties and Rosses Rovers too.
Letterkenny in the final, their names I'll tell you.*

*We had Herron, Whelan, O'Donnell, their positions they did play,
With Breslin from the Diamond, the Boyles from Tullycleave,
With McNelis and McConnell, and Keeney from Glendowan,
And Maguire from Carrickacleava, helped to bring the laurels home.*

*We had Lafferty a forward, along with young McHugh,
They had Letterkenny trembling, like the Danes before Brian Boru.
And hurrah for Charlie Bennett, who played there like a star
And gave an exhibition of shooting o'er the bar.*

*We had Breslin from Doohill, our grand full centre back,
And by his skilful actions, cleared many a hard attack,
With young McCole from Narin, on him we look with pride;
'Twas as hard to score a goal on him as try to stop the tide.*

*There were shouts "Up Letterkenny" and mark the players up,
Don't let across Gweebarra, the medals and the cup.
But the referee was busy in marking down the score,
When the final whistle blew, t'was twenty two to four.*

*You may talk about your college boys, who come from near and far,
But they haven't got the skill, like the bogmen from Ardara.
Long live the Letterkenny boys, who fought back brave and true,
And wished Ardara good luck, like all good sportsmen do.*

*I hope the spirit will remain among our players all,
Some day they'll bring Maguire's cup to County Donegal!*

Donegal Reach National League Semi-Final

1952 saw the County team making the headlines, with the side capturing their third Lagan Cup by defeating Armagh in the final in Clones on the 16th of March, the final score being 2-6 to 1-4. Frankie Brennan lined out at right half forward. John Gildea, who was also a member of the panel, had played in goals for the team in a few of the matches in earlier rounds. Following the victory over Armagh, the team had a quarter final win over Sligo, in Glenties, before an estimated crowd of 10,000 people. This victory saw the team qualify for the National League semi-final against Cork. The match was held on the 6th of April 1952 in Croke Park. This was the first time any of the Donegal players had played on the sacred sod, and as a result they had a nervous opening. Their more namely opponents had a whirlwind start and scored 2-2 without reply. Donegal had settled down by half time, but unfortunately, despite some brilliant play, could not make up the deficit, losing at the end by 3-3 to 0-7.

The Donegal line out was as follows:

Con Halpin(St Eunans), Patsy Brogan (Four Masters'), Pearse Dawson (St Eunans), Barney Coyle(Gweedore), Hughie Tim Boyle (Gweedore), Jim Gallagher (Aodh Ruadh), Peadar McGeehan (St Eunans) Frank O'Donnell(Kilcar), Michael J Gallagher (Gweedore), Frankie Brennan (Ardara), Conal McCauley (Killybegs),



The Donegal team who won the 1952 Lagan Cup against Armagh.

Back row from left: Dermot Moriarty, Con Halpin (St Eunans), Barney Campbell (Glenties-County Chairman), Patsy Brogan (Four Masters'), Phil Bonner (Glenties), Anton Rogers (Gweedore), Jack McMullen (Four Masters'), Andy Carr (Kilcar), Eddie John Gonigle (Corlea), Tom Wickham (Killybegs), Pearse Dawson (St Eunans), John Gildea, Barney Coyle (Gweedore), Davy Brennan (Glenties)

Front row from left: Michael J. Gallagher (Gweedore), Peadar McGeehan (St Eunans), Hughie Tim Boyle(Gweedore), Charlie Collins (St Eunans), Sean McGettrick (Killybegs), Jim Gallagher (Aodh Ruadh), Frank O'Donnell (Kilcar), Conal McCauley (Killybegs), Paddy Coyle (Gweedore), Frankie Brennan.

Charlie Collins (St Eunans), Paddy Coyle (Gweedore), Tom Wickham (Killybegs), Sean Mc Gettrick (Killybegs). Sub used: Anton Rogers (Gweedore).

John Gildea and Eddie John Gonigle (then of Corlea) were subs on the Senior panel that year and played in the earlier games.

In the Championship of that year, Donegal had great hope for a breakthrough, but



Pax Brennan, Ted Breslin, Frankie Brennan, Jim Kennedy, Packie O'Donnell and friend pictured prior to the National League semi-final in Dublin in 1952

suffered a disappointing first round defeat to Antrim on a 1-7 to 2-3 scoreline. Frankie Brennan lined out in his customary number 10 position.

Draw

A meeting was held in the Courthouse to arrange a County Ceili and annual draw. There was a fair attendance. It was agreed to hold the Ceili on 23rd January 1953 with the Forthill Ceili Band. Admission was to be fixed at 3/6. Tommy Boyle proposed that the tickets for the local annual draw be fixed at 3d each. Phil McHugh seconded. After much discussion the prizes were fixed as follows:-

- | | | |
|-----------|---|----------------|
| 1st Prize | - | Dinner Set |
| 2nd Prize | - | Tea Set |
| 3rd Prize | - | Bottle of Wine |

The draw was to take place at the County Ceili.

1953

The Annual General Meeting of the Club was held in the Courthouse on Sunday 1st February, 1953. The minutes of the previous Annual General meeting were read and unanimously adopted. The adoption of the Secretary's Report was proposed by Frankie O'Donnell and seconded by Paddy Haughey. In his Secretary's Report for 1952 Frankie Brennan stated that it was a year of ups and

downs. With regard to the Club in general, he said it had not been a very successful year. He went on to say *"During 1952 our Club seems to have gotten a bad name from our neighbouring clubs. In a way I do not blame them for having such an opinion of us, because a number of our spectators, both members and non-members, would give any club a bad name, by their conduct throughout last year. Also, the attendance at meetings was too bad to be true. I think if these gentlemen, who are so fond of creating scenes, came to the meetings called and found out the consequences of such scenes, they would not be the cause of them in future. That is of course if they have any interest at all in the Club. I would like therefore to make an appeal to all our members to attend meetings a little bit better in 1953. Several times last year I was criticised on the way the Club was run, especially regarding different teams fielded. I asked these men to state their cases at a Club meeting but they did not turn up at any. I am sure I did make lots of mistakes during the year but I was doing my best to run the Club as well and as economically as I could"*.

The Chairman said that it was only too true that we had gotten a bad name last year. He then appealed to both players and spectators to try and end the bitter feeling that existed against outside clubs, and to curb tempers in 1953. Various tributes were paid to the victorious Minor Team for the honour brought to the Club in 1952

The Treasurer, Mr. Tommy Boyle, furnished a very detailed financial statement, showing a credit balance of £31.14.0. Phil McHugh proposed the adoption of the report and Ted Breslin seconded. The Treasurer was highly complimented by Mr. Domhnall Mac a'Bháird on the fine manner in which he presented his accounts and also on the way he endeavoured to keep the Club in a strong financial position.

It was agreed to enter a Juvenile, a Minor and a Senior team in 1953. Mick Feely stated that it would be a good idea to hold a Ceili during An Tostal. The date for the Ceili was fixed for the 10th April.

The officers elected for the 1953 were as follows

President	-	Seán Ó Casaide
Chairman	-	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird
Vice Chairman	-	Neil Heena
Secretary	-	Frankie Brennan
Ass. Secretary	-	Ted Breslin
Treasurer	-	Tommy Boyle

Committee - Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, Phil McHugh, Packie Gildea (Saddler), John Gildea, Tommy Boyle, Ted Breslin and Frankie Gallagher.

Senior Team Captain : Frankie Brennan with Phil McHugh as Vice Captain.

Gate Stewards: Willie McNelis, John Slowey, Domhnall Byrne, Joe (Larry) Gallagher, Thomas Campbell, Domhnall Mac a'Bháird and Ted Breslin.

Team Selection Committee: Tommy Boyle, John Gildea, Domhnall Byrne, Joe (Larry) Gallagher, Thomas Campbell, Domhnall Mac a'Bháird and Ted Breslin.

The list of members for 1953 were:- Francie Boyle, Paddy Gildea, Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, Mick Feeley, Peter Breslin, Neil Heena, Vincent McConnell, Patrick Maguire, Phil McHugh, Phonsie Bennett, Billy Maxwell, Ted Breslin, Frankie Gallagher, Frankie O'Donnell, John Gildea, Teague Breslin, Vincent McHugh, Edward Haughey and Frankie Brennan.

The St. Connell Cup Final of 1952

This final was played in Pearse Memorial Park on Sunday 18th January, 1953. Donegal, who were the holders, defeated Ardara in a game that was marked by keen and robust football. Ardara had an almost equal share of the first half exchanges but the forwards finished weakly. Played in ideal weather conditions the game attracted a large crowd. The final score was Donegal 3-03 to Ardara 0-03.

Teams:-

Ardara – Frank McHugh, John Gildea, Packie Watters, Packie Maguire, John Gillespie, Billy Maxwell, John Keeney, Frankie Brennan (0-01), Thady Gallagher, Packie Moore (0-01), Phil McHugh, Charles Anthony McNelis, Michael Gallagher, Eddie Haughey (0-01) and Frankie Gallagher.

Donegal – J. Thomas, J. Gallagher, A. McBrearty, D. Murray, P. L. Brogan, J. Kelly, G. Hughes, P. Brogan, J. McMullan, P. J. Burke, I. Brogan, D. Hegarty, J. O'Neill, J. Ward and S. McCafferty.

Donegal County G.A.A. Ceili

The annual Ceili of the Donegal County Board was held in the Parish Hall, Ardara on the 23rd January, 1953. The event merited the title "Donegal's Premier G.A.A. Festival". It was held in Ardara in 1950 and also in 1952. On both occasions, local arrangements were very capably carried out by the Club. Both functions were outstandingly successful. No stone was left unturned to provide the usual amenities. An all-night supper service was available. Music was provided by the Fort Hill Ceili Band. Tickets for the Ceili were moderately priced at 3/6 each. The Fort Hill Ceili Band members were Tommy Diver, John Diver, Sonny Breslin, Johnny Gallagher, John Whoriskey, Nellie Mc Andrew and Mollie Campbell.

Kilcar take St Connell's Cup

Ardara reached the St Connell Cup final in 1953. They had convincing wins over Glenties and Donegal and met Kilcar in the final. The match was played in Ardara

on Sunday 1st February. Kilcar led at half-time 2-04 to 0-00 in a game that was much keener than the scores would suggest. Ardara were without inter-county half-back Frankie Gallagher and Charles Anthony McNelis was also absent. The game was played in a fine sporting manner and although the weather was ideal the pitch was waterlogged. The final score was Kilcar 3-04 to Ardara's 1-02.

Teams:-

Ardara – Peter Breslin, Eddie Haughey, Packie Watters, Alphonsus Bennett, Billy Maxwell, John Gildea, Packie Maguire, Phil McHugh, Thady Gallagher (0-01), Frankie Brennan, Frank McHugh, Vinny McHugh, Peter Gallagher (The Mines), Tommy Boyle and Charlie Bennett (1-01). Subs – John Keeney for Peter Gallagher. The Referee was Mr. A. O'Neill, Glenties.

Kilcar – E. Brown, J. McHugh, F. O'Donnell, M. O'Driscoll, P. O'Donnell, P. McShane, F. Gillespie, W. Cunningham, P. Gillespie, H. Philips (1-01), C. Byrne (0-01), A. Carr (1-00), C. McLaughlin (0-01), P. Brown (1-00), S. Duggan (0-01).

Meeting – 8th February, 1953

At a meeting held in the Courthouse, it was agreed to write to Dunkineely regarding the play "The Dawn Express", which was being staged by a Dunkineely group at that time, to ask them to present the play in Ardara on a suitable Sunday during Lent. Prices of admission were fixed at 3/- 2/- 1/-. Children were to be half price. It was proposed by Paddy Haughey and seconded by P. Gildea that the annual Bazaar be held on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday 1st, 2nd and 3rd March. Tommy Boyle and Willie McNelis were appointed to collect the upper half of the town and Paddy Haughey and Domhnall Mac a'Bháird the lower half. It was decided to spend a maximum of £10.00 in Timoney's, Donegal Town, for prizes for the bazaar and the admission was to be 2d.

Special Meeting – 12th April, 1953

This meeting was called to make arrangements for a special An Tostal challenge game – Donegal v Sligo. 40 fencing posts were to be purchased from J. Myles & Co., Ballyshannon, to strengthen the fence around the field. As many as possible were asked to report to the field on Wednesday 15th April, not later than 6.00 p.m. It was proposed by Phil McHugh and seconded by John Gildea to pay two men, for two days, to fix the wire and to get all the voluntary help possible.

Senior League

In the All County League, the Senior team's first match was against Dungloe. The teams shared the points after a keenly contested encounter. Dungloe led at half-time by 0-03 to nil. The game never had a dull moment and held the interest of the spectators to the end. Outstanding for Ardara were Phonsie Bennett (cúlbaire), who brought off many fine saves, as well as Frankie Brennan, Frankie Gallagher,

John Gildea, Billy Maxwell, Phil McHugh, John Keeney and Charlie Bennett.

Teams:-

Ardara – Alphonsus Bennett, Peter Breslin, John Gildea, Billy Maxwell, John Keeney, Frankie Gallagher, Packie Maguire, Thady Gallagher, Phil McHugh, Charlie Bennett (0-01), Frankie Brennan (1-02), Packie J. McGinley, Frankie O'Donnell, J. Breslin and Eddie Haughey.

Dungloe – C. Campbell, J. Doherty, D. Bonner, C. Doogan, P. Boyle, P. McCole, J. Boyle, F. Whyte (0-01), C. Boyle, P. Gallagher (0-01), T. Keogan (0-01), A. Logue, J. Wilson, B. Kennedy and E. Doherty (0-01).

After this match the League did not go too well for the team, as they only collected two further points. They lost to Gweedore, home and away. Dungloe beat them in Dungloe and they drew in Ardara. Ardara did beat Glenties in Glenties and this was their only win in the League that year.

Shock defeat in Championship semi-final

The Senior team had an impressive run in the Championship of 1953. The previous year's County Champions were now called Kilcar and were rated as the team to beat in the South-West once again. Ardara won out the Division by winning their home and away games both with Kilcar and Glenties. Kilcar were unable to field a team for their home match with Ardara, as they felt that the game would be called off due to the bad weather. With the weather good, Ardara were awarded a walkover. The results of the matches were as follows:-

Kilcar	0-07	Ardara	1-05
Ardara	2-06	Glenties	0-05
Glenties	0-03	Ardara	1-10

They then met surprise packet Carndonagh in the County semi-final. Ardara were

Carndonagh 2-08 Ardara 1-10

Six points in arrears at half-time and finishing the game with 13 men Carndonagh put up a remarkable performance in the 2nd half in the semi-final of the County Championship at McCumhaill Park Ballybofey to win by one point and so qualify for their 1st County Final in this grade. John Gildea at full back had an outstanding game all through and Frankie Brennan was in devastating shooting form.

Teams:-

Ardara – Alphonsus Bennett, Peter Breslin, John Gildea, Eddie Haughey, John Keeney, Frannkie Tom Gallagher, Packie Maguire, Phil McHugh, Thady Gallagher, Charlie Bennett, Frankie Brennan, Tomas Breslin, Packie Moore, Seamus Breslin and Domhnall Whelan.

Carndonagh – J. A. McLaughlin, S. Smith, J. Smith, J. McConalogue, P.

Carolan, L. Nangle, N. McCarron, F. Harvey, D. McLaughlin, P. McLaughlin, J. Smith, P. Healy, H. Doherty, P. O'Connor and P. Duggan.

Referee – Captain J. Fitzgerald – Donegal.

strong favourites for the game but despite leading the whole way through, Carndonagh came back at the end and won the match by a point.



Carndonagh were then defeated by Gweedore in the County final. The Ardara Club would have been unhappy with the composition of the Inishowen team but did not make any official protest on the matter.

John "The Saddler" Gildea, first played for Ardara Senior team in the early '40s. A son of one of the founding members of the Club, Patrick Gildea, he soon established himself as one of the best goalkeepers in the county. With John in goals, and Packie Watters at full back, there were few opposition forwards who dared go too close to the goal area. He was a regular on the Senior team for a number of years, and was, like his teammates of the time, desperately unlucky not to win a Senior Championship medal. On the retirement of Packie Watters, John moved out to full back and soon made the position his own. John made his debut for the County Junior team in 1950, and put in a brilliant display in Donegal's win over Fermanagh's first team, in the Ulster Junior Championship of 1950. He was soon drafted onto the Senior panel and was a member of the panel that won the Lagan Cup in 1952, playing in a number of matches prior to the final. He was controversially dropped from the position for the final in Clones against Armagh, after being handed the number one jersey, only to be told five minutes before the throw in that Con Halpin of St Eunans was to be given the position. John was a hard Club worker and served as Vice Chairman and assistant Secretary of the Club in the fifties. He emigrated to America in 1955, and continued his playing career with the Mayo Club in Philadelphia. Playing in goals, his highlight was being selected for the American League All-Star team that played the touring All Ireland champions, Down, in the city, in 1962. John and Theresa returned home on a permanent basis in July 2000, just in time to witness the Club's most famous Championship victory. Never one to miss a Club or County match, John was inducted into the Club's Hall of Fame in 2001, for his great service to the green and gold jersey during his long career.

Minor Championship

Defending their Minor title from 1952, the Club's first match in the South-West

Minor Championship was against Killybegs in Pearse Memorial Park. Ardara scored a 4-04 to 0-00 victory over Killybegs. The pitch was waterlogged and the Ardara boys adapted better to the conditions. Ardara players Frank McHugh, Vincent Herron and Luke Boyle, from the 1952 team, played a big part in their victory. Best for Ardara were Neilly McCole, Luke Boyle, Frank McHugh, Vincent Herron, Vincent McConnell, Eddie O'Donnell and Pat Brennan.

The teams were:-

Ardara – Charlie Keeney, Vincent McConnell, Mick Herron, Niall (Tom) Gallagher, Peter Gallagher (The Mines), Tommy Given, Neily McCole, Phonsie Moore, John McBride, Patrick McGhee, Pat Brennan, Luke Boyle, Eddie O'Donnell, Vincent Herron and Hughie Bennett.

Killybegs – E. McFadden, F. Ward, B. Cotter, J. McGuinness, J. McGettigan, M. Thornton, C. Meehan, E. Breslin, P. Cunningham, J. Diver, A. Gallagher, J.



Ardara Minor Team 1953

Back row from left:Neilly McCole, Peter Gallagher, Niall (Tom) Gallagher, Pat Brennan, Patrick McGee, John McShane, Eddie O'Donnell.

Middle row:Tommy Given, Hugh Mc Cabe, Mick Herron, Phonsie Moore, Vincent McConnell, Fr Luke Boyle.

Front row:Frank McHugh, Vincent Herron, Hughie Bennett.

Gavigan, C. Mooney, J. Boyle and S. Tully.

Referee :Vinny McHugh (Ardara)

They defeated Killybegs, in Killybegs, and their next match was against Carrick in Towney in the second round. They lost this match on a score of 1-04 to 2-07. Outstanding for Ardara in this match were Peter Gallagher, Neilly Gallagher, Pat

Brennan, Neilly McCole, Vincent McConnell and Vincent Herron. Ardara did exact revenge in the return leg in Ardara, winning by five points. They then drew with Glenties at home, 2-04 each, with the scorers being Patrick McGee (0-01), Frank McHugh (1-01), Pat Brennan (0-01) and John McShane (1-01). They were beaten in Glenties and this resulted in Glenties being top of the table in the Division to give them the Divisional Championship. In the Iniskeel Cup competition, the team did not proceed to the final stages. They defeated Killybegs in the first match but lost to Glenties and Carrick, both home and away, to end their interest.

Juveniles reach Championship final

The Club Juvenile team did very well in 1953, reaching the County Juvenile final. In their first match, they played Killybegs at Pearse Memorial Park and won on a score of 4-12 to 0-03. The match was refereed by Tommy Boyle – Ardara and the teams were:-

Ardara – James Keeney, John McShane, Hughie Bennett, Terence McGovern (Front St.), John McGill, Tommy Given, James McGinley, Hughie McCabe, Patrick McGee, Hugh O'Donnell, Martin Whelan, Leo Gallagher, Raymond Brennan, Patsy Gildea and Eddie Doherty.

Killybegs – J. Boyle, B. Cotter, M. Boyle, L. Flanagan, P. Carr, M. Rodden, P. Gallagher, C. Meehan, J. Harkin, B. Gillespie, T. McBrearty, S. Watson, M. Galvin and S. Tully.

*Only 14 Killybegs players were listed.

The return leg was played in Killybegs, in a game that Ardara won on a score of 0-

Ardara Juveniles reach County Final Ardara 4-02 Ballyshannon 0-06

Ardara qualified for the 1953 Juvenile Final when they defeated Ballyshannon 4-02 to 0-06 at Tir Chonaill Park, Donegal Town. Outstanding for Ardara were Sonny Given, Hughie McCabe, Patrick McGhee, Hughie Bennett and Danny Gallagher.

Teams –

Ardara – John Keeney, John McGill, Hughie Bennett, James McGinley, Danny Gallagher (Altnagcapple), Tommy Given

(Sonny)(1-00), Raymond Brennan, Hughie McCabe (0-01), Patrick McGhee, Leo Gallagher, Eddie O'Donnell (1-00), Eddie Doherty, Martin Whelan (2-01), Hugh O'Donnell and Patsy Gildea (Tailor).

Ballyshannon – S. Ward, B. Daly, S. McHugh, M. McGovern, M. Whyte, J. O'Neill, W. McAllister, T. Loughlin, L. Masterson, O. R. O'Neill, M. Cullen, P. McCready, S. Ferguson, C. Flynn and M. Garvey.

04 to 1-00). They had now reached the County semi-final and were meeting Ballyshannon.

In the final, the team was up against St. Eunan's. Ardara dominated in the early

stages of the match, with James McGinley and Patrick McGhee playing well. Their failure to take their scores, however, cost them dearly and St. Eunan's ran out comfortable winners, 1-5 to 0-0. The Ardara team had been severely hampered by the unavailability of Martin Whelan, Hughie McCabe and Hugh O'Donnell, all of



The Ardara Juvenile team that reached the County final in 1953 and was defeated by St Eunans

**Back from left: Danny Gallagher, John McShane, Johnny McGill, Sonny Given, Raymond Brennan, Pat McGhee, Hughie Bennett, James Keeney,
Front from left: Leo Gallagher, John McNelis Patsy Gildea, Gerald Given, James McGinley, Eddie Doherty, Tom O'Donnell, Johnny Gallagher, Charlie O'Donnell.**

whom were attending college outside the county and were not released for the match.

An Tostal Challenge – Donegal v Sligo

On the 1st May, 1953, Donegal and Sligo shared the honours at 2-05 each in this challenge match which was played at Pearse Memorial Park, Ardara. The Tostal festival was conceived as a way of extending the tourist season throughout the country. Unfavourable weather conditions did not prevent a good attendance of supporters travelling to see old rivals Donegal and Sligo meet. The ball was thrown in by Very Rev. Canon Boyce P.P. Ardara, who was President of the local An Tostal Council. The arrangements for the game were in the capable hands of Domhnall Mac a'Bháird and other members of the Ardara G.A.A. Club. The Referee for the game was Tommy Boyle – Ardara.

The Donegal team on the day was: - J. McDermott, L. Nangle, P. Dawson, B. Coyle, H. Boyle, P. Brogan, P. McGeehan, H. Coyle, Frankie Brennan, J. Gallagher, M. J. Gallagher, P J. Burke, F. O'Donnell, Harry Philips, T. Keoghan,

M. Ward.

One single Juvenile hurling match was played during the year, against Glenties Ardara won.

At a Club meeting held on Sunday 13th December, 1953, the following were proposed as officers for election at Divisional Convention –

Chairman	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird
Vice Chairman	Tom Gallagher
Sec/Treasurer	Danny Boyle (Glenties)
Selection Comm.	Tommy Boyle
Panel Of Referees	Tommy Boyle and Frankie Brennan
Provisional Panel	John Gildea, Dan Shovlin, D. Boyle and J. P. McGinley.
Auditor	Seán Ó Casáide.

The delegates appointed to attend Convention were Phil McHugh, Eddie Haughey, Tommy Boyle and Frankie Brennan.

After much discussion on a proposal from Phil McHugh, seconded by Frankie Brennan, it was agreed to ask the Gweedore Club for £12.00 regarding an unplayed game from 1951. It was proposed by Eddie Haughey and seconded by Tommy Boyle to get a number of cards for a draw for a bicycle. Cards of 22 lines at 6d per line. Draw to take place on Sunday 4th April, 1954. A vote of sympathy was passed to Tom Earley, Packie Moore and Patrick McGhee on recent bereavements.

In his report to the 1953 Annual General Meeting held on the 20th of December, Secretary Frankie Brennan said *"In my opinion 1953 was a good year for the Club. I know we did not capture any trophies but all our games were played in a good and sporting manner and that is what counts. There were a few minor incidents but nothing of consequence. I hope that next year even these will not occur. We had a successful draw and Bazaar in the beginning of the year. Here I would like to thank the Dunkineely Players, who did a play for us during Lent, and I am sure everyone will agree that they gave us a wonderful performance."*

The following were elected officers for 1954:-

President	Mr. Seán Ó 'Casáide
Chairman	Phil McHugh
Vice Chairman	John Gildea,
Secretary	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird
Ass Secretary	Vincent McConnell
Treasurers	Frankie Brennan and Tommy Boyle

Committee - Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, Packie Gildea, Ted Breslin, John Gildea,

Phil McHugh, Tom Gallagher, Francie Diver, Brogan and Tommy Boyle.

Senior Team Captain :Frankie Brennan

Vice Captain: John Keeney.

The Gate Stewards were - John Slowey, Domhnall Byrne, Joe Gallagher, Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, Ted Breslin, Francie Diver, Willie McNelis and Thomas Campbell.

Team Selection Committee - Tom Gallagher, Vinny McHugh, Neil Heena and Frankie Brennan.

1954

To prepare for the coming season, the Senior team organised a challenge match against Gweedore in Pearse Memorial. Three members of the previous year's

Keen Challenge game at Ardara Gweedore 2-04 Ardara 0-06

The game, between Senior County Champions Gweedore and Ardara, was played at Pearse Memorial Park on St Patrick's Day, 1954, and was marked by a strong breeze. Frankie Brennan was in sparkling form for Ardara scoring five of his side's six points.

Under Referee Captain J. Fitzgerald - Donegal the teams were:-

Gweedore - M. Gallagher, J.

Gallagher, B. Coyle, J. Boyle, C. Boner, P. McGee, P. Coyle, C. McFadden, P. Gallagher, C. McBride, C. O'Donnell, C. Coyle and P. J. Gallagher.

Ardara - Hughie Bennett, Eddie Haughey, Charlie Bennett, John Gildea, Packie Maguire, Jimmy McNelis, John Keeney, Phil McHugh, Thady Gallagher, Neilly McCole, Alphonsus Bennett, Frankie Brennan, Neil McCole.

Minor team, John Keeney, Packie Maguire and Charlie Bennett, all made their Senior debut.

Senior Football Championship

In the Senior Football Championship of 1954, Ardara met Naomh Columba in the

Ardara for Quarter Final with Gweedore Ardara 1-07 Dunkineely 1-02

At Dunkineely Ardara defeated Dunkineely by 1-07 to 1-02 in the final of the South-West Division of the Dr. Maguire Cup. They qualified to meet Gweedore in the quarter-final next Sunday at Dooley, Leitirmacaward. The attendance at the game created a record at this venue. A feature of the game was two penalties for Ardara in the first half. The Dunkineely

keeper D. Doherty stopped Frankie Brennan's terrific shot but Brennan followed up to drive the ball to the net from the close range. A few minutes later Ardara were awarded a second penalty. The home keeper cleverly pushed Frankie Brennan's rasping shot around the post for an abortive '50'. Outstanding for Ardara were Frankie Brennan, Phil McHugh, John

Keeney, Eddie Haughey, Charlie Bennett and Packie Maguire. The teams were:-

Ardara - Hughie Bennett, Alphonsus Bennett, John Gildea, Eddie Haughey (0-01), John Keeney, Jimmy McNelis, Packie Maguire, Tom Breslin, Phil McHugh (0-01), Pat Brennan, Frankie Brennan (1-01),

Charlie Bennett (0-04), Tommy Boyle, J. Kilmartin and Peter Breslin.

Dunkineely - D. Doherty, T. McGroarty, C. Brady, M. Thornton, B. Cotter, J. Byrne, A. Ward, E. McGhee, P. Sweeney, B. McLoughlin (0-01), M. Mitchell, P. McDonagh (0-01), G. Floyd, A. Gallagher (1-00) and J. Kane.

first round, home and away, and won both legs. They then advanced to play Dunkineely in the Divisional decider.

In the County quarter-final played in Glenties, Gweedore beat Ardara, on a score of 2-05 to 1-04. In what was termed in the paper as "a grand sporting game", Ardara led by 1-03 to 1-02 at half-time, but as happened so often, Gweedore came at them in the second half and an early Paddy Coyle goal turned the tide, to give Gweedore the victory.

Frankie Brennan was once again the only Ardara player on the County Senior team in the Ulster Championship, playing at midfield on the team, which lost to Tyrone 1-7 to 1-5.

Ardara's Second Minor Championship

Is fearr socrú dá dhonacht ná dli dá fheabhas.

Bhí na mionúir buach arís sa bhliain 1954 nuair a fuaireadar an lámh in uachtair ar Chaisleán na Finne sa chluiche cheannais leis an scór 2-03 in aghaidh 0-07. Ghnóthaigh Lucas Ó Baoill dhá chúl sa chluiche sin. Bhí conspóid faoi cheann amháin de na cúil sin. Bhí achomharc ach sheas an toradh.

Despite an early exit in the 1953 Championship, the Club still felt they had a team that was good enough to win another Mayo Cup. They qualified for the County quarter-final at the expense of Naomh Cartha (Carrick/Kilcar), whom they beat in a play-off, to win the South-West.

There was, however, a controversial outcome to this match. The South-West Divisional Board awarded the match to Carrick, at the next meeting, as a result of the Ardara team fielding late. The Club then appealed the decision to the County Board.

Conall Ó Fearraigh presided at this County Board Meeting in Glenties.

Speaking to the Appeal Committee, M.O'Byrne and Tommy Boyle stated that the Chairman of the Board had fixed the start of the game for 7.30 p.m. However, the spokesman pointed out that the game could not commence at 7.30 p.m., as the

Devotions were still in progress in the Church, and moreover Carrick had no ball with them. It was further stated that on the day in question, Ardara had also played in the Juvenile Championship semi-final at Letterkenny. That game had been held up and as a result five of the players, due to play in the Minor game at Ardara, could not show up for a 7.30 p.m. start.

Mr. D. Mac a'Bháird referred to a special Meeting of the South-West Board and stated, that at this meeting, the Carrick delegate admitted that their Club had no ball with them. Nevertheless, the points were awarded to Carrick under Rule 82.

The Chairman, Conall Ó Fearraigh, stated that he had been a Gate Steward at O'Donnell Park, Letterkenny, when Ardara took the field in the aforementioned Juvenile game, at the appointed time of 3.00 p.m. The game could not be started however, as a funeral was progressing down the town and it was the custom to lift the 'Offerings' at O'Donnell Park. Frankie Brennan approached him twice and told him that Ardara had a Minor fixture at home and that they would have to leave if the game did not start. The Officers ruled as follows:-

"That the circumstances connected with the Juvenile Championship semi-final at Letterkenny were responsible for the Ardara team being unable to field at 7.30 p.m."

According to the Secretary of the South-West Board, the game could not have started owing to the Devotions being still in progress at that time and therefore in this special circumstance, the Divisional Board should not have enforced Rule 82 and that the £1 fee be returned to the Ardara Club.

Following their successful appeal, Ardara then advanced to play Ballyshannon in the County quarter-final, a match they won on a 3-6 to 1-2 scoreline. They were

Minor Semi-Final should be a delight

The Minor Championship semi-final between the County Champions Rosses Rovers and the South-West Champions Ardara is expected to be a highlight as both teams have players of the greatest ability. Last Sunday Ardara showed convincing form in defeating a Ballyshannon side which although below full strength was nevertheless what was considered a very capable team.

There will be much interest in the display of Sean O'Donnell the Rosses Captain who also Captained the Leinster Colleges team

earlier this year. He will have a number of namesakes who are also very capable players and some other Club-mates who were seen to good effect some weeks ago in the final Minor County Trial before the game with Antrim. Pat Brennan is one of Ardara's star players. He did much to bring his team to the semi-final and he has quite a number of able partners to aid him in his quest for further honours. The throw-in is at 3.00 p.m. and the Referee will be Frank Muldoon, Donegal Town. The winners of this game will meet Castlefin in the County Final on Sunday 5th September.

Ardara Minors defeat County Champions Ardara 2-07 Rosses Rovers 2-05

Rosses Rovers, the Donegal Minor Champions surrendered their honours to Ardara at the Fr. Tierney Park on Sunday before the big game in the semi-final of the Championship. Ardara defeated the Western boys 2-07 to 2-05, after leading 2-05 to 0-01 at half-time in a game that was contested at a fast pace and was most exciting in the closing stages when Rosses had narrowed the gap between the sides to three points. Hughie Bennett starred in the Ardara defence during the second half period of Rosses pressure and he got good assistance from J. McCole and John McBride, who gave great coverage to culbair James Keeney.

At midfield Pat Brennan and Fran Ward

had an edge on their opponents for most of the time. Luke Boyle was a treat to watch on the centre half mark and Raymond Brennan was a dangerous forward always. The other forwards Hughie McCabe and Eddie O'Donnell, Patsy Gildea and Hugh O'Donnell were nice players. Rosses Rovers who had ten of the side which won the 1953 Championship final against Glenties a short time ago, had outstanding players in Sean O'Donnell and Sean A. O'Donnell in the second half while full forwards John Campbell, Brian Logue and Paul Sweeney were also much to the fore. The Ardara scorers were:- Hugh O'Donnell (0-01), Raymond Brennan (1-02), Luke Boyle (1-03) and Patsy Gildea (0-01).

now to meet Rosses Rovers in the County semi-final. The following appeared in the Donegal Democrat prior to the match

Ardara are Donegal Minor Champions Ardara 2-03 Castlefin 0-07

Two well matched teams gave a wonderful exhibition of football of the highest order in the County Minor Final in Glenties on Sunday last. Conditions were against good football as rain fell for most of the game, yet both teams set and maintained a wonderful standard of play that exceeded anything witnessed in the Minor grade ever in the County. Playing with wind advantage in the first half, Ardara made the most of the scoring opportunities after Castlefin had gone into an early lead of two points. Both teams favoured the open wing football and all through, the fairly large attendance of supporters were treated to unbroken periods of delightful play, in which the fielding of the respective players was of the first order.

In the end there was nothing in it. In fact in the second half, as Castlefin gradually narrowed the gap between the scores to

draw level with only five minutes to go, it seemed that they would become Champions before the full time whistle. Ardara however, through great play by Pat Brennan, Fran Ward and Captain Luke Boyle, succeeded in getting in that little bit of extra punch to snatch two quick points. Castlefin fought back determined to pull the game from the fire and they almost succeeded. In a sweeping movement that ended in a gallant effort that culminated in the ball going narrowly wide. Excitement was high in the second half as Castlefin, also a great team, narrowed the lead, point by point until the teams stood all square with only five minutes to go. Pat Brennan and Gallagher scoring two points for Ardara to seal victory.

Teams:-

Ardara - James Keeney, Hughie Bennett, Neilly McCole, John McBride, Tommy

(Sonny) Given, Patrick McGhee, Phonsie Moore, Pat Brennan (0-01), Fran Ward (0-01), Eddie O'Donnell, Luke Boyle (2-00), Hugh O'Donnell, Leo Gallagher (0-01), Raymond Brennan and Patsy Gildea (Taylor).

Castlefin - D. Hannigan, S. Kennedy, D.

Kelly, E Catterson, S. Brennan, P. Lafferty, S. Kane, P. Kelly, P. Corrigan, E. McGroarty, P. McGhee, S. McGinty, S. Dullaghan and J. McBride.

Referee - John McGhee - Gweedore.

Ardara had now qualified for the County final and the match was fixed for Glenties for Sunday 5th September, 1954.

Cup Presented

Amid scenes of great enthusiasm, the Mayo Cup was presented to the Ardara captain, Luke Boyle, by the Donegal County Chairman, Mr. Sean Mac Fhionnlaoich, O.S, Gweedore. He congratulated Ardara on their fine achievement and he paid tribute to both teams for an exceptionally high standard of football displayed. It augured well he said for the future of the National games in both areas and although Castlefin had been defeated by a close margin, he wanted to say that they were a great little team.

Disputed Goal

The officers of the County Board considered the report of Referee Sean Mac Aodha, O.S., Gweedore, on the Minor Championship final played at Glenties. The Referee stated in his Report that because of a disputed goal awarded to Ardara, he considered that Castlefin had a genuine grievance. The dispute would not have arisen had there been goal nets. He was not in a position to say if it was a goal or a point. Though one Umpire flagged a point, both said it was a goal and he had no option but to award a goal. The officers decided to refer back to the referee for further information. At a later meeting the matter was again considered, when the referee sent a verbal message that he had nothing to add to his original report. On the proposal of S. Ó Sleibhín and seconded by Conall Ó Fearraigh, the report was adopted and the game awarded to Ardara.

Iniskeel and St. Conal Cups

In the Iniskeel Cup, only two teams took part. Killybegs did not participate and Glenties withdrew. Naomh Cartha (Holders) retained the Cup, with good victories over Ardara, at home and away. Ardara took part in the St Connell's Cup competition but did not fare very well. The only victory they had was a win over Glenties.



Pictured left is the 1954 Minor County Championship winning team. This photo was taken outside the Garda barracks in Glenties, after the final.

Back L-R: Tommy Boyle, James Keeney, Pat McGee, Fran Ward, John McBride, Hughie Bennett, Phonsie Moore, Neily McCole, Frankie Brennan, Paddy Haughey.

Front L-R: Tommy (Sonny) Given, Eddie O'Donnell, Leo Gallagher, Fr Luke Boyle, Patsy Gildea, Hugh O'Donnell, Pat Brennan, Raymond Brennan

Home Victory For Ardara Ardara 3-04 Glenties 0-04

Played at Pearse Memorial Park this game was inclined to be overly robust at times with the usual 'Derby' flavour. Outstanding for Ardara were Frankie Brennan, John McNelis, Packie Maguire, John Gildea, Eddie Haughey, Phil McHugh and John Keeney. Under Referee Mr. F. O'Donnell, Bogagh, Kilcar the teams were:-

Ardara - Hughie Bennett, Niall Gallagher, John Gildea, Phil McHugh, Packie

Maguire, Alphonsus Bennett, John Keeney, Frankie Brennan (0-02), Thady Gallagher (1-00), Patrick McGee, Jimmy McNelis (0-01), Peter Breslin, Vincent McConnell, Eddie Haughey and Tommy Given.

Glenties - D. Shovlin, P. Brennan, D. Brennan, F. McGettigan, P. McDyre, D. McGill, T. Ward, P. Rodgers, B. Campbell, C. Bennett, P. Bonner, S. McGettigan, J. McDyre, D. Sweeney and P. Gallagher.

Juveniles reach County Final

The Club's notable progress in Under-Age competitions continued, when the Juvenile team repeated their performance of 1953 and reached the County final.

Ardara 2-01 to Killybegs 1-03.

The following were outstanding for Ardara - Hugh O'Donnell, Edward O'Donnell, Raymond Brennan, J. Gallagher, Patsy McBrearty, Leo Gallagher and Patsy Gildea. The teams lined out as follows:-

Ardara - Johnny Gallagher, Domhnall Meehan (Tullymore), Raymond Brennan, Charlie O'Donnell, Sean Gildea (Tailor), Eddie O'Donnell, Eddie Doherty, Hugh O'Donnell (1-00), Leo Gallagher, Patsy

McBrearty, Tom O'Donnell (1-00), John Breslin (Brackey, brother of Anthony), John McHugh (Dublin), Patsy Gildea (Tailor)(0-01) and Domhnall McBride.

Killybegs - J. McCready, J. Meehan, M. Boyle, L. Flannagan, J. Harkin, C. Meehan, P. O'Donnell, J. Boyle, T. McCready, S. McGuinness, S. Tully, F. McGinley, M. Rodden, J. Cunningham and P. McGettigan.

Their first matches were against Killybegs, at home and away. The first leg match against Killybegs in Pearse Memorial Park was reported as follows.

The return leg was played at Ardara with the result being Ardara 2-05 to Killybegs

Ardara 4-06 Glenties 0-01

This match was played in Ardara and Ardara had a comfortable win over Glenties. Under Referee Mr. J. Gildea, Ardara, the teams were:-

Ardara - Johnny Gallagher, Charlie O'Donnell, Hughie Bennett, Gerard Given, Raymond Brennan, Eddie O'Donnell, Leo Gallagher, Hugh O'Donnell, John Breslin,

Tom O'Donnell, John McHugh, Patsy Gildea (Tailor), Sean Gildea (Tailor) Michael Keeney, Donal McBride.

Glenties - J. Ward, C. Brennan, T. Bonner, C. Bonner, A. O'Donnell, J. Boyle, J. O'Donnell, C. Boyle, B. Hare, E. Curran, J. McDyre, M. McHugh, S. Gallagher, D. McLoone and J. Gavigan.

0-03.

They then defeated Glenties at home in the South-West semi-final.

The team then defeated Kilcar, in the South-West final in Towney. This victory sent them forward to the County final where they played Pettigo. The Pettigo team had shocked everyone by reaching the final. They were inspired by PJ Flood who went on to star for Donegal for many years. Pettigo won the match on a 2-6 to 0-2 scoreline. There was some doubt however as to the make-up of the Pettigo team, which was echoed by Domhnall Mac a'Bháird in his Secretary's Report to the AGM.

"The Juvenile team's defeat by Pettigo was due to circumstances beyond our control and which, to say the least of it, was highly suspicious".

Breslin brothers win Sigerson Cup medals

The Breslin brothers of the Diamond created a piece of Club history in 1954, when they became the first players from the Club to win Sigerson Cup (Third Level College) medals. Thomas and Seamus were part of the U.C.G team that won the competition, after defeating U.C.D in the final after a replay. Both brothers missed the final of the competition, due to an overseas trip, but prior to the final, Thomas had featured in the left half back position, while Seamus was a star midfielder on the team. The team had reached the final in 1953 but were defeated by U.C.C. in a close match. Killybegs native, Conal McCauley, captained the side that year.



Seamus "The Diamond" Breslin first appeared on the Ardara Senior team at the age of 16 in 1948, and was soon heralded as one of the brightest stars in the County at that time. As a student at St Macartan's college in Monaghan, he won Ulster and All Ireland College

medals with the school in 1951. He went on to represent the County at Minor, Junior and Senior levels and was at home at centre-field or any where in the forward line. He was a member of the County Junior panel that won the Ulster Junior Championship in both 1952 and 54. Unfortunately for Ardara, Seamus was to play his last game for the Club in 1956, he emigrated to England shortly afterwards. He passed away in 1983. Seamus had an outstanding talent and many of the day felt he could have been a significant County Senior player had he remained in the country.



Thomas Breslin captained the first Ardara team to win the Minor Championship in 1952. He also played for the County Minors that year, having made the panel the previous year in 1951. A great half back or midfielder, he went on to represent Donegal at Junior level for 3 years. Thomas made his debut for the Senior team in 1952 and played regularly until 1956, when he emigrated to England, after finishing his studies in Galway. He eventually returned to Dublin, after his playing days were over, where he still lives. He has followed the fortunes of Club and County closely over the



The University College Galway team of 1953 which includes Thomas Breslin (2nd from left, back row) and Seamus Breslin (7th from left back row). Conal Mc Cauley (Killybegs) is pictured fifth from left in the front row. Other famous names in the photo include former G.A.A President Dr Mick Loftus (extreme left back row) and famous Galway footballer Sean Purcell (fifth from right, back row)

years and is an active member of the committee that runs the Golf Classic every two years in Narin/Portnoo Golf Club.

Domhnall Mac a'Bháird back as County Chairman

The Donegal G.A.A. Convention was held in the Butt Hall, Ballybofey, on Sunday 30th January 1955. Ardara delegates to Convention were Prionsias O'Braonáin, Seán Mac Giolla Dé, Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, R. Ó Braonáin, Uinsionn Mac Conaill, P. Ó Gallchóir, Cathal Ó Domhnall, Partalán O'Faoláin agus D. Ó Dairbhín. The Club had the honour of holding the position of County Chairman,

when Domhnall Mac a'Bháird was elected to the position, ten years after he first held the post in 1945.

1954 AGM

"A year of mixed fortunes" was how Secretary Domhnall Mac a'Bháird described the activities of the Club to the Annual General Meeting, which was held on Sunday 13th March, 1955. "Nevertheless, when all things are taken into consideration, it can be regarded as one of the most successful in the Club's history. We succeeded in regaining the Donegal Minor Championship, which we captured in 1952 for the first time – a performance which was highly commendable, particularly when the calibre of the teams that challenged our passage to that great honour is taken into consideration. Our Juvenile team also gave us a creditable performance on reaching the final for the second year in succession."

After reviewing the Senior Football Championship, the Secretary said that during the past five or six years emigration had taken a heavy toll of their playing strength and that the previous year's Minor ranks were somewhat seriously affected by this evil. The running of three teams entailed heavy expenditure, and with gates adversely affected by bad weather, the financial position would be in a bad way but for the success of the annual Bazaar and draw. He thanked all the townspeople and others who gave subscriptions.

The Treasurers, Frankie Brennan and Tommy Boyle, showed an income for the year of £205-3-2 with expenditure of £192-14-1. The figure for gate receipts of £37-0-0 was the lowest recorded for many years. The Tostal game that was played in Ardara between Donegal and Sligo amounted to £40-0-0. There was a credit balance of £12-9-1. Several members paid tribute to Mr. Boyle for his clear report and for his careful handling of the finances during his long term as Club Treasurer.

The following officers were elected for 1955:-

President	- Seán Ó Casáide
Chairman	- Phil McHugh
Vice Chairman	- John Gildea
Secretary	- D. Mac a'Bháird
Ass Secretary	- Patrick Haughey
Treasurer	- Frankie Brennan
Ass Treasurer	- Tommy Boyle
Senior Team Captain	- Phil McHugh with Vice Captain, Packie Maguire.
Selection Committee	- Messrs Tom Gallagher, Vincent McHugh, Frankie Brennan, Thady Gallagher, Domhnall Mac a'Bháird and Tommy Boyle.

Votes of sympathy were passed to the husband, family and relatives of the late Mrs Margaret Gildea, Ardara and to the family of the late Arthur Vincent Leonard, Cladymore, Co. Armagh, victim of the recent shooting affair. The meeting voiced condemnation of the shooting.



Phil "Tammy" McHugh first played for the Ardara Senior team in 1945, at the age of 24. He played on occasion until 1947, when he became a regular on the Senior team at left corner back. He maintained this position until 1954, when he moved out to midfield, where he remained (usually alongside Thady Gallagher or Frankie Brennan) until he emigrated to England in 1959. His consistently solid displays were his hallmark. He held the position of Club Chairman in 1954 and 1955 and was always a great Club man. Phil continued to play football with the St Anne's Club in London and went on to feature on the same team as his son, Phil Junior, in his older years. He also tried his hand at hurling in London, and was by all accounts a handy stick-man. Phil passed away in London in 1983 at the age of 62. He was awarded the Ardara G.A.A Hall of Fame award posthumously in 2000.

St. Connell's Cup

The St. Connell's Cup format was slightly different in 1955. The competition was played as the South-West section of the All County League, the winners going forward to the County semi-finals of the Democrat Cup. Ardara's opponents in the section were Glenties, Dunkineely and Kilcar. After all the teams played each other

Ardara beaten at Glenties Glenties 1-02 Ardara 0-01

This match was played in Glenties on Thursday evening 19th May. Though scoring was kept to a minimum the game was keenly contested throughout, with the conditions all against good football. On the whole Glenties deserved their victory though very little could have swung the pendulum in Ardara's favour. Due to the heavy rain of the previous week, the pitch was sodden and waterlogged, and to add to the tale of woe, the rain fell constantly for the greater part of the second moiety making the conditions extremely difficult and unpleasant. Due to some misunderstanding as to the starting time Ardara fielded with 14 players, but were reinforced after 15 minutes by Packie

Maguire, who gave a grand all round display at centre half-back.

The play was 15 minutes in progress when the first score arrived, fortunes fluctuating with end to end play a feature. Just at the end of the first quarter, Thady Gallagher opened the scoring with a point for Ardara, after a period of strong pressure by the visitors. Glenties struck back and afterwards T. Wright put the homesters ahead with a goal. Fortunes fluctuated in the closing ten minutes of the moiety and though both citadels had narrow escapes, there was no further scoring leaving the half time score - Glenties 1-00 to Ardara 0-01.

Seven minutes after the resumption D. Sweeney stretched the homesters lead with a point. Both sides staged a number of abortive raids. In the 20th minute D. Shovlin who had replaced T. Wright enhanced Glenties lead with a point, which proved to be the last score of the game. Ardara tried hard to pull the game from the fire in the closing stages but Glenties finished strongly to earn a narrow victory. Best for Ardara were Packie Maguire, John Gildea, Frankie Brennan

Teams

Ardara - P. Gildea, Alphonsus Bennett, John Gildea, Raymond Brennan, Patsy Gildea (Tailor), Vincent McConnell, Hughie Bennett Phil McHugh, Frankie Brennan, Jimmy McNelis, Thady Gallagher (0-01), H. Byrne, Leo Gallagher, Peter Gallagher (The Mines) and Packie Maguire.

Glenties - V. Sweeny, D. Brennan, J. O'Donnell, F. McGettigan, P. Keeney, D. McGill, P. Brennan, M. Larkin, E. Melly, M. Ward, P. Bonner, C. McMahon, T. Wright, D. Sweeney and P. Breslin

home and away, Ardara and Glenties qualified for the final.

Senior Championship

With emigration still a serious problem for the Club, the Senior team battled on and still proved to be the team to beat in the South-West Championship. The South-West was run on an all league basis, with Ardara up against Kilcar, Glenties and Dunkineely, each team playing the other home and away. The Ardara team was too strong for all opposition in the league section and following a run of six victories from six games, they qualified for the South-West final against Kilcar, who had

Ardara retain Senior Divisional Title Ardara 3-10 Kilcar 1-06

Ardara retained their divisional title and qualified for the County Semi-Final by defeating Kilcar in the concluding game of the Senior Football Championship (Dr. Maguire Cup), at Pearse Memorial Park, Ardara on Sunday 14th August. The Title holders had a very comfortable win which was played in ideal weather conditions before a large attendance. At half time Ardara were ahead by 0-06 to 0-02. Scorers for Ardara were Frankie Brennan, Seamus Breslin, Thady Gallagher, Frankie Gallagher a point each and Luke Boyle (0-02). In the second moiety Seamus Breslin scored 2-02, Thady Gallagher (1-00) and

Pat Brennan (0-02).

Ardara - Hughie Bennett, Alphonsus Bennett, John Gildea, Phil McHugh (Capt.), Peter Breslin, Packie Maguire, Tomas Breslin, Thady Gallagher, Frankie Gallagher Pat Brennan, Frankie Brennan, Vincent McConnell, Luke Boyle, Seamus Breslin and James Max McNelis.

Kilcar: C.Lyons, F.O'Donnell, F.Cunningham, H.O'Donnell, S. McNelis, P. McShane, A. Carr, P.Carr, S.McLaughlin, M.Byrne, P. O'Donnell, F.Gillespie, J.J. Lyons, S.Doogan, Leo McLaughlin.

finished second in the table on 8 points.

This victory meant that the team was through to the Championship semi-final against St. Eunan's.

Senior Championship Semi-Final Ardara - St Eunan's in Tense Finish Ardara 2-04 St Eunan's 2-04

The air was electric at Sean Mac Cumhaill Park, Ballybofey on Sunday evening 21st August as Ardara and St. Eunan's finished level in the Senior Championship semi-final. St. Eunan's at the end of the first half led by a goal and seemed likely at that stage to snatch the honours by a slight margin. But Ardara, finding their form, wiped out the arrears and twice drew level, the concluding minutes of the game providing hectic football. The intense heat made the going very exhausting but the fast pace was maintained to the end. At the interval St. Eunan's 2-02, Ardara 1-

02. Ardara scores came per Seamus Breslin (1-00), Pat Brennan (0 -01) and Thady Gallagher (0-01). In the second half Ardara scored (1-02) to St. Eunan's (0-02). Seamus Breslin (1-00) and Pat Brennan (0-02).

Ardara - Hughie Bennett, Alphonsus Bennett, John Gildea, Peter Breslin, Phil McHugh, Tom Breslin, Packie Maguire, Frankie Gallagher, Thady Gallagher, Patrick Brennan, Frankie Brennan, Vincent McConnell, Luke Boyle, Seamus Breslin and James Max McNelis.

The legendary Donegal and St. Eunan's full back, Joe Carroll, admitted afterwards that Ardara should have in fact won the match, having a quite legitimate point signalled wide in the second half. This was little consolation for Ardara however,

Ardara go out after hectic Replay Ardara 2-04 St Eunan's 3-08

Sixteen minutes after the throw-in of the Senior Football Championship semi-final replay, St. Eunan's and Ardara were on level terms with three points each and from the trend of play at that time, it seemed that Ardara were about to administer the coup de grace to St. Eunan's. Then the game took a dramatic turn as St. Eunan's registered a goal in each of the three succeeding minutes to eventually lead 3-06 to 0 -04 at half-time. It was an amazing game in so far as this costly lapse by Ardara was concerned, for they showed much spirit in the second half in whittling down the lead to within striking distance of success, but forceful though they were, the Ardara forwards at no time after the first quarter reached the same standard of craft

and efficiency as their counterparts on the St. Eunan's team.

The team were:-

Ardara: Hughie Bennett, Alphonsus Bennett, John Gildea, Peter Breslin, Phil McHugh, Tomas Breslin, Packie Maguire, Thady Gallagher (0-01), Frankie Gallagher, Pat Brennan (1-02), Frankie Brennan, John Keeney (0-01), Jimmy McNelis, Seamus Breslin (1-00) and Vincent M Connell.

St Eunan's: S. Hoare, R. Bryson, P. Dawson, J. Mc Donagh, S. Mc Cann, Joe Carroll, Noel O'Donnell, P. English, Peadar McGeehan, T. Ryan, S. Curran, S. Halpin, Harry Blake, Michael Ronaghan, F. Mc Laughlin.

and the replay saw the team once again fall at the semi-final stage.

SUBSCRIPTION RECORD		
YEAR	AMOUNT	SEC'S INITIALS
1948	1/-	f.m. a.
1949	1/-	P.O. Brennan
1950	1/-	E.O.H.
1951	1/-	P.O. Brennan
1952	1/-	P.O. Brennan
1953	1/-	P.O. Brennan
1954	1/-	P.O. Brennan
1955	1/-	P.O. Brennan
1956		
1957		

Your Obligations

1. Fostering the Irish Language
2. Promoting our National Games
3. Encouraging Ceilidhe Dancing
4. Attending your Club Meetings.

Member's Signature:- Frank Brennan

Address Ardara

Member's No. 27

Frankie Brennan's membership card from '40s and '50s. The card was held by the



The Ardara Senior Team of 1955.

Back from left: Paddy Haughey, Frankie Brennan, John Gildea, Thomas Breslin, John Keeney, Vincent McConnell, Packie Maguire.

Front from left: Thady Gallagher, Hughie Bennett, Phil McHugh, Peter Pat Breslin, Phonsie Bennett, Frankie Gallagher.

Sitting: Pat Brennan, Paddy (fifth class) Gallagher, James Max McNelis.

Missing from this photo are Seamus Breslin, Fr Luke Boyle and Jimmy McNelis.

member each year and signed by the Club Secretary.

County teams

During the year Frankie Brennan played for the Donegal Senior team against Tyrone, Galway, Antrim, Cavan, Monaghan and Mayo. His brother Pat played against Mayo and was substitute against Cavan.



On the Donegal Junior team, Packie Maguire, Tomas Breslin and Seamus Breslin played for Donegal against Fermanagh. John Keeney was a substitute.

Hughie Bennett played for Donegal County Minors in 1955 against Derry and was a substitute against Cavan. Hugh O'Donnell was a substitute against Derry and Cavan.

County Minor Championship

Ardara went out to defend the Mayo Cup in 1955 with their opponents in the South-West being Glenties and Kilcar. Each team was scheduled to play each other home and away. Ardara drew their first round match with Glenties on the 9th June in Pearse Memorial Park. Play was very keen with little between the sides and, although the game was played in fading light, there were many passages of very good football. With the issue in doubt to the very final whistle, it held the interest of the spectators to the very end. On the run of play, a draw was a fitting verdict though both sides missed gilt-edged opportunities for clinching the issue.

Their next game was against Kilcar and the venue was Towney Park on Sunday 12th June. Ardara led at the interval by 1-03 to 1-00. Kilcar were the much stronger side in the second half and, led by Brian Cotter at midfield, took command and ran out comfortable winners on a 4-3 to 1-4 scoreline. Played in glorious weather conditions, no quarter was given by either side throughout and the contest was a robust one. For all that, it was a sporting game with the exception, however, of one ungainly incident during the middle stages of the second half, when an Ardara player was ordered to the sideline by the referee.

The defeat in Towney meant that a victory in the next match over Glenties was vital. Glenties, however, were the keener side and inflicted another defeat on the County Champions

Minor Holders Beaten At Glenties Glenties 2-02 Ardara 0-05

Glenties leading 1-00 to 0-02 at half time finished the stronger side. Ardara had enough of the exchanges, particularly in the first half, to force a draw but for weak finishing by the forwards, and a defence which at times was unsteady under pressure. A ding dong struggle throughout the game was dourly contested and was not productive of a very high standard of football. The homesters, strong in defence and lasting the pace better, finished on a high note. Ardara fielded without their regular centre-half back Eddie O'Donnell and James McGinley deputised and gave a sound display. Leo Gallagher being the marksman for Ardara scored two of their opening points. Glenties followed with a goal to give them the lead.

Shortly after the resumption Gallagher equalised for Ardara and a further point by the same player off a 14 yards free gave

his side the lead again. After 20 minutes Glenties were in the lead again with McGroarty driving through a goal. Gallagher replied with a point but with a point each per F. Gallagher and A. Gildea, Glenties finished strongly.

The teams lined out as follows:

Ardara: James Keeney, John Harkin (Stragar), Hughie Bennett, Eddie Doherty, Packie Meehan (Tullymore), James McGinley, Terence McGovern, John McHugh, Patsy McBrearty, Hugh O'Donnell, Leo Gallagher, John McHugh, Tom O'Donnell, Mick Maloney (Brackey) and Johnny Gallagher.

Glenties: M. Boyle, C. Bonner, J. Boyle, J. Higgins, N. Gillespie, J. McGuinness, P. Gallagher, B. Gildea, F. Gallagher, J. Griffin, M. Rodden, T. Bonner, J. McCready, P. McGroarty, A. Gildea

Referee - D. Boyle - Glenties.

The result in Glenties meant that the last match against Kilcar was a 'must win' game. Unfortunately, the Kilcar men held out for a one-point victory, 0-7 to 0-6, and sent the home team out of the Championship.

Ardara's First Juvenile Championship

Beaten in the Juvenile Championship finals of '53 and '54, the '55 team was determined to go one step further and take the Dudley Diggis Cup back to Ardara for the first time. In the South-West Championship they played Glenties in the first round at Pearse Memorial Park with the match ending in a draw, Ardara 0-4 Glenties 1-1. With little between the sides, the return leg in Glenties was eagerly awaited. Ardara emerged winners in a close match, 2-2 to 2-0. Best for Ardara were John McHugh (best player on the field), James McGinley, Leo Gallagher (who switched to full-back), Eddie Doherty, John Harkin and Tom O'Donnell. Ardara had qualified to play Kilcar in the Juvenile Divisional Final. It was played on Thursday evening 21st July 1955, at Towney Park, Kilcar.

Ardara Hold Juvenile Divisional Title Ardara 1-07 Kilcar 1-02

Ardara, 1954 divisional champions and County finalists, retained the South-West Donegal Divisional Juvenile title in defeating Kilcar by 1-07 to 1-02. The winners who had thirteen of last year's side, led (1-04) to (0-00) at half time. Ardara scorers were Leo Gallagher (0-02), J. McHugh (0-01), Eddie Doherty (0 01), J. Gallagher (1-00). Ardara scored (0-03) in the second half against Kilcar's (1-02). Best for Ardara were James McGinley, P.

Gildea, Raymond Brennan, John Harkin, John McHugh and Leo Gallagher. The

Ardara team was:-

Michael Keeney, John Gavigan (Altnagcapple), Raymond Brennan, Gerald Given, John Harkin (Stragar), James McGinley, Sean Gildea, Leo Gallagher, John McHugh, Tom O'Donnell, Patsy Gildea, John Breslin (Brackey), Johnny Gallagher, Eddie Doherty and Domhnall McBride

The opponents for the County Juvenile semi-final were Pettigo. Following the '54 final defeat by the same opposition in questionable circumstances, revenge was

Juvenile Semi-Final Abandoned Ardara 2-04 Pettigo 0-05

With Ardara leading 2-04 to 0-05 twenty minutes from the end, the Juvenile County Championship semi-final against the County champions Pettigo had to be abandoned owing to darkness at Tirconail Park, Donegal on Friday evening 26th August, 1955. Pettigo were late taking the field and the game did not start until 35 minutes after schedule when Ardara

intimated that irrespective of the result they were claiming the points. Scoring for Ardara in the first half were Eddie Doherty (1-00), Leo Gallagher, John McHugh and Michael Keeney a point each. In the second half Leo Gallagher goaled and Johnny Gallagher had a point from a free in semi-darkness before referee J. Boyle Donegal abandoned the game.

upper most in the Ardara lads minds.

Ardara Claim The Points

Mr. Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, Chairman, presided at a special meeting of the County Officers in Carrick on Sunday evening 28th August, 1955, to consider the referee's report on the Ardara-Pettigo Juvenile semi-final played at Donegal on the previous Friday. The referee, Mr. Joe Boyle reported that he had abandoned the game due to bad light. The Ardara officials informed him that they were claiming the points. When the game terminated, Ardara were leading by five points. Ardara were awarded the points under Rule 82, page 82 O.G. They then went on and met Creeslough in the County final. The match was played on the evening of the Ardara/St Eunans Senior Championship replay.

Ardara Juveniles make history ***Ardara 1-9 Creeslough 0-7***

Ardara made history on Sunday the 4th of September at Tirconaill Park Donegal by winning their first Juvenile Championship. They atoned for the defeat of their Seniors earlier in the day.

Ardara in this game were the better balanced team. And in their captain, Leo Gallagher, Tom O'Donnell(a son of the great John O'Donnell, the great Donegal and Ulster player)Raymond Brennan, Sean Gildea, Johnny Gallagher and James McGinley, they had grand little players who gave a great exhibition. Ardara led at the break 1-6 to 0-2, their scores coming from Leo Gallagher (0-3), Tom O'Donnell, Patsy

Gildea, and Jim McDonagh (0-1) each and their goal came from John McHugh. In the second half their scores came from Leo Gallagher, Tom O'Donnell and Donal McBride (a point each).

Ardara team: Charlie O'Donnell, John Gavigan, Raymond Brennan, Gerald Given, Eddie Doherty, James McGinley, Sean Gildea, John McHugh, Leo Gallagher, Tom O'Donnell, Patsy Gildea (Tailor), J. Gallagher, Donal McBride, Jim Mc Donagh, Michael Keeney. Subs: Bart Whelan , Ned Gallagher



The Ardara Under 16 team thst won the County Championship in 1955
Back L to R: Raymond Brennan, Eddie Doherty, John Gavigan, Patsy Gildea (Tailor),
Johnny Gallagher, Donal McBride, Charlie O'Donnell,
Middle Row: Jimmy O'Donnell, Sean Gildea (Tailor), James McGinley, Tom O'Donnell,
John McHugh, Michael Keeney, Jim McDonagh,
Front row: Red Ned Gallagher, Gerald Given (Yellow Banks), Leo Gallagher,

Brackey win Juvenile game

In a Juvenile football game at Brackey on Sunday 27th November, 1955, Brackey defeated Ardara by 3 –06 to 0–09 after leading at half-time by 2–04 to 0–03. The Referee was P. Gallagher, Ard Chonaill, and the teams were (seven a side):-

Brackey - P. McGill, S. McGill, P McNelis, F. McNelis, Hugh McHugh, P. J. McGill and Val McHugh.

Ardara - Johnny Gallagher, J. O'Donnell, Danny Sweeney, Tom Breslin, Niall Gallagher, Charlie Given and Jimmy O'Donnell.

Fr Michael O'Byrne Ordained To The Priesthood

One of the big occasions of the year in the parish was the ordination of Fr Michael O' Byrne to the Priesthood. The following account of the event was carried in the Democrat.

Braving wretched weather conditions, a crowd of over 2,000 people turned out on Monday night at Ardara to give a tumultuous welcome home to a newly ordained Priest. The Priest was Rev. Michael O'Byrne son of Mr. C. O'Byrne, O.S. and Mrs. O'Byrne, Ardara. He was ordained in the All Hallows College in Dublin for Sydney, Australia by Right Rev. Dr. Scanlon, Auxillary Bishop of Honolulu. His reception home was one of the most impressive tributes ever paid in the district to the Priesthood.

On arrival at Brackey Bridge Fr. O'Byrne inspected a guard of honour. The concourse formed a procession led by a party of horsemen and proceeded to the Church of the Holy Family, Ardara. Marching behind the car were Fr. O' Byrne's comrades of the Ardara G.A.A. Club. Ardaghey and Kilcar A.O. H. Pipe Bands played appropriate airs during the procession.

On his way from the church to his home Fr. O'Byrne halted at the Diamond to receive an address from the Ardara G.A.A. Club which was read by Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, Chairman of the County Board. In passing, the address recorded that this was the sixth occasion during the past 20 years that the Club had been privileged to welcome home, as a newly ordained priest, one of its members. Mr. P. J. McGill, O.S. presided during this ceremony and returned thanks to all who had joined in the welcome.

Club Meeting

A meeting of the Club was held in the Courthouse on Sunday 20th November

to make arrangements for the holding of a presentation ceili, at which the Donegal Juvenile Football Championship medals would be presented. The trophies, the 'Dudley Diggis Cup', and 'Inniskeel Cup' would also be presented. It was decided to hold the function during the Christmas holidays. Additionally a vote of congratulations was passed to Thomas Boyle, joint Hon. Treasurer and well known playing member of the Club, on his recent marriage.

1956

The Annual General Meeting was held in the Courthouse on Sunday 11th March, 1956, Mr. Phil McHugh, Chairman presiding. Mr. Mac a'Bháird dealt in detail with the activities of the Club in a year which he described as "a year of mixed fortunes". The Report was in Irish and in English. They had won the Juvenile Football Championship for the first time and he paid tribute to the captain of that team, Leo Gallagher, who had moved to London. He congratulated the Senior team on regaining the divisional title and were unfortunate to have lost to Glenties in the final of the St. Connell Cup. He expressed regret at losing two outstanding members of that team, John Gildea who had gone to the U.S.A. and Luke Boyle who had gone to England to pursue his clerical duties.

Emigration Hits

"Emigration continues to be one our biggest problems as it has not only adversely affected the playing potential of our Senior team but has also taken a heavy toll of our Minors and Juveniles. To maintain status and prestige as a progressive unit of the Association in the Division we must lay our plans carefully to ensure that the evils of emigration will have the minimum effect on our force as a Club from the cultural, social and athletic aspects. This means we must pay special attention to our Minor and Juvenile footballers and Juvenile hurlers".

The above are the words of the Secretary Mr. Mac a'Bháird as he delivered his Report to the Annual General Meeting.

The report was adopted on the motion of Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, O.S. County Councillor, who said *"I am satisfied that the best traditions of the G.A.A. in the district are being upheld by the officials and the playing members of the Club. The problem of running the Club at the present time is a serious one from the financial aspect."* He was pleased to learn from the Treasurer, Tommy Boyle, that he was able to balance his budget. Pádraig S. appealed to the young members to be loyal to the rules of the association. *"I would appeal to them" he said "if they have not the proper spirit, not to become members of the G.A.A. at all, they will only bring it into disrepute. I also appeal to them to take an active part in the organisation and procedure at Club, Divisional and County board meetings".*

In his financial statement the Honorary Treasurer gave details of income and expenditure for the season. Income amounted to £120-0-2 with expenditure at £114-14-6. There was a credit balance of approximately £5-5-8. The Treasurer thanked all who had assisted him during the year but expressed dissatisfaction at the poor support accorded to the annual Bazaar.

C.L.G. Fo-Cumann Ard An Rathfa Balance Sheet – 1955

Income	L	s	d	Expenditure	L	s	d
Cash in Hand from 1954	12	9	1	Travelling Expenses	75	7	0
Gate Receipts	46	19	7	Catering	27	9	9
Co. Board Travelling Expenses	8	15	0	Insurance - 1955	1	10	0
Draw	5	11	0	Insurance - 1956	2	0	7
Bazaar	31	1	6	Rent of Courthouse - meet	0	6	0
Ceilidhe	14	4	0	Entry for Competitions	2	6	0
Membership Fees	1	0	0	Secretary's Expenses	1	4	3
	£120	0	2	P. Gildea Football	3	11	5
				John McGill Drapery	0	5	0
				Affiliation	0	12	0
				St. Connell Cup	0	2	6
				Total	£114	14	6
				Cash on Hands	5	5	8
Total	120	0	2		£120	0	2

The following officers were elected for the year 1956:-

President Mr. Seán Ó Casáide (outgoing)
Chairman Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, O.S.
Vice Chairman Messrs Phil McHugh/Tommy Boyle.
Secretary Domhnall Mac A'Bháird (outgoing)
Asst. Secretary Mr. John N. O'Donnell
Treasurer Mr. Frankie Brennan
Senior Team Captain: Thady Gallagher
Vice Captain: John Keeney
Team Selection Committee for the year was - Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, O S, and Tommy Boyle.

The Emergency Committee for the year was- Messrs Domhnall Mac A'Bháird, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, O.S., John N. O'Donnell, Tommy Boyle, Phil McHugh and Frankie Brennan.

The Gate Stewards were - Messrs Ted Breslin, Hugh F. Byrne, Domhnall Byrne, John Brogan, Vinny McHugh, P. Gildea, Willie McNelis,

Francie Diver and Neilly McHugh.

It was decided to increase the annual membership fee from 1/- to 2/6. It was agreed to enter teams in the Senior, Minor and Juvenile football championships and a Juvenile hurling team in addition to contesting the St. Connell Cup and Inniskeel Cup Competitions.



Thady Gallagher of Common first came to the fore playing for the Club's Minor team in 1945 & 46. He went on to play, on occasion, for the Junior team, before he emigrated to England in 1949. He remained in London from 1949 to 1951 and played at midfield for the Cuchulainns' Club, alongside former County player P.J. Flood of Pettigo. He returned home and played his first Senior match against Killybegs in Straleeny in 1952. Thady remained one of the first names on the team sheet during the '50s and early '60s, usually playing at midfield. He also represented the County at Junior level in 1954. He retired from the game in 1961 but maintained a keen interest in the Club and its teams. Thady was inducted to the Ardara G.A.A. Hall of Fame in 1998, to join many of his former team mates and friends.

Inniskeel Cup

Ardara took part in the Inniskeel Cup Minor competition, but did not fare out too well. They lost the first game to Glenties 1-3 to 1-5 and then won the second match in Kentucky by 1-7 to 0-5. Glenties advanced to the next stage, when they won the deciding match in Pearse Memorial by 1-3 to 1-0.

Minor Championship

In the County Minor Championship of 1956, Ardara drew Kilcar in the first round (home and away). The game in Kilcar was a thrill packed hour of pulsating football and drew the largest attendance for a long time to the South-West Donegal venue. Ardara won on a score of 1-10 to 1-08. Their scorers were Hugh O'Donnell (0-05), Danny McLaughlin (1-01), Domhnall McBride (0-02), Eddie Doherty (0-01) and Johnny Gallagher (0-01), with Hugh O'Donnell having an outstanding game for Ardara.

In the home game in Ardara, it was Kilcar who showed to be the better team, winning on a score of 2-07 to 1-03. The match was played on Friday 29th June. Ardara scorers were Hugh O'Donnell 0-01, Patsy Gildea 0-01 (Tailor), Hughie Bennett (0-01) and Eddie Doherty (1-00).

The deciding match was played in Pearse Memorial Park on Wednesday 18th July.

Ardara 4-02 Kilcar 2-01

South-West title holders Kilcar said goodbye to their crown at Pearse Memorial Park, when Ardara won the Minor Football title to qualify for the divisional final. The game was keen and closely contested with a high standard of football being a feature all through. Hugh O'Donnell and James McGinley were big factors in Ardara's success.

Ardara – Seamus McGee, Eddie O'Donnell, Raymond Brennan, Johnny Gallagher, Danny McLaughlin, James McGinley, Sean Gildea, Hugh O'Donnell (1-00), John Gavigan (Altnagcapple), Tom O'Donnell, John McHugh (1-00), Eddie Doherty (2-00), Jim Mc Donagh, Patsy Gildea (0-01)(Tailor) and John Mc Shane. Substitute: Charlie O'Donnell (0-01) for John Mc Shane.

The victory over Kilcar sent them into the County semi-final, where Donegal Town

Minor Championship Semi-Final Ardara 2-08 Donegal 5-04

With the lead changing hands on four occasions the Donegal Minor semi-final proved to be one of the greatest spectacles of football ever played in the Minor grade in the County. The match was played on Sunday 26th July, 1956. These were two grand teams fighting every inch of a sod made heavy by the week-end rains, showing remarkable fitness and catching the full ego of the Championship. Players in plenty could be singled out as outstanding performers.

Ardara – Seamus McGee, John McShane, Raymond Brennan, Johnny Gallagher, Danny McLaughlin, James McGinley, Sean Gildea, Hughie Bennett, Hugh O'Donnell, John McHugh, John Gavigan (Altnagcapple), Eddie Doherty, Tom O'Donnell, Patsy Gildea (Tailor) and Eddie O'Donnell.

Donegal: P. Baird, P. Hanna, S. Egan, P. Coughlan, A. McCauley, S. Caldwell, T. Scally, P.J. Flood, N. Griffin, B. Harvey, M. Gallagher, P. McGrath, J. Conaghan, J. Bell, S. Dunnion.

ended the team's hopes of glory.

Senior Team

The Senior team campaign in 1956 started off with the All County League, which saw the team playing in a very tough Division 1 League section with Dungloe, Gweedore and St Eunans. Their first game, played in April, resulted in a narrow defeat at home to Dungloe, on a scoreline of 3-4 to 2-5.

Ardara – Vincent McConnell, Peter Breslin, Billy Maxwell, Phil McHugh, John Keeney, Packie Maguire, Tomas Breslin, Thady Gallagher (0-01), Frankie Gallagher (0-01), Patrick Brennan (1-03), Frankie Brennan, Jimmy McNelis, Patrick McGee (1-00), Seamus Breslin and Packie McGinley.

Dungloe: P. Boyle, Sean Boyle, J. Gillespie, P. O'Donnell, O. Boyle, J. Cookie Boyle, J. Gilmartin, S. O'Donnell, H. Doherty, A. Logue, D. Murray, E. Gillespie, D. Boyle, D. Bonner, H. McGee.

There was then a long break in the League after this match, with the Championship taking over. Ardara's opponents in the South-West Championship were Dunkineely, Glenties and Kilcar. Their first match was against Kilcar on Sunday 3rd June and they were defeated by a score of 2-04 to 1-03. Heavy rain, which had been falling from 8.30 a.m., left the playing pitch in a waterlogged condition and a greasy ball was difficult to control. Despite these handicaps the respective teams gave a good display. There was little between the sides but two quick goals by Kilcar in the concluding stages clinched the issue. Ardara's scorers were – Pat Brennan (0-01), Frankie Brennan (0-02) and Charlie Bennett (1-00)

The next match was against Dunkineely and was played on the 17th June, 1956. Dunkineely's ability to take goals was the main difference between the sides and they won on a 4-3 to 1-5 scoreline.

The team got back on track in the next fixture against Kilcar in Towney, in a match that they had to win to stay in the Championship. A good team performance saw them take the points on a 2-8 to 1-3 scoreline.

Ardara – Packie McGinley, Billy Maxwell, Hughie Bennett, Phil McHugh, Peter Breslin, Packie Maguire (0-01), Michael Boyle, Tomas Breslin, Thady Gallagher, Pat Brennan (0-03), Frankie Brennan, Charlie Bennett (0-03), Connie Molloy (1-01) (Nesbitt Arms Hotel), Frankie Gallagher and Hugh O'Donnell (1-00). Substitute used – Pat McGee for Phil McHugh.

The surprise packet of the competition, however, was Dunkineely and they ended

Ardara Out Of The Championship Ardara 0-04 Dunkineely 1-04

Ardara, 1955 County semi-finalists, surrendered their divisional title at Dunkineely on Sunday 1st July in the second round of the Senior Championship. Played under adverse weather conditions, this game was keen and closely contested throughout with little between the sides except the scores. Heavy rain for the greater part of the game made it difficult for the players who in the circumstances served up a brand of football which was a tribute to their stamina and never say-die spirit. Ardara were forced to field without

Michael Boyle, Thady Gallagher, Vincent McConnell, Hugh O'Donnell and Hughie Bennett of their regular side, while play was only a short time in progress when they lost the services of their centre-half back Packie Maguire through injury.

Ardara – Packie McGinley, John Keeney, Billy Maxwell, Phil McHugh, Peter Breslin, Packie Maguire, Tomas Breslin, Frankie Gallagher, Frankie Brennan (0-01), Charlie Bennett, Pat Brennan (0-02), John P. McGill, Patrick McGee, Connie Molloy (0-01) (Nesbitt Arms Hotel) and Jimmy

McNelis. Substitutes – Paddy Gallagher (Brackey) for Packie Maguire and John Keeney for Phil McHugh.

Dunkineely: J. Byrne, C. Meehan, W. Cunningham, J. Boyle, F. O'Donnell, B.

Cotter, M. Mitchell, P. Sweeney, J. McGroarty, S. Tully, C. Brady, E. Haughey, M. Boyle, S. Kavanagh, P. Quinn

Referee: J.P McGinley (Kilcar)

the team's chances with a home win.

Dunkineely went on to win the South-West Championship, before being defeated by Ballyshannon in the County quarter-final. St. Eunan's won the Championship that year by defeating Ballyshannon in the final.

Senior League

Following their exit the Championship, the next competitive match was in the resumed League on Sunday the 21st October, when Ardara were victorious over Gweedore at Pearse Memorial Park. On the following Sunday, in the return match in Magheragallon, the home side made amends by winning by 5-3 to 1-4.

Ardara:– Charlie Keeney, Billy Maxwell, Phil McHugh, Vincent McConnell, John Keeney, Michael Boyle, Charlie Bennett (0-02), Frankie Gallagher, Thady Gallagher, P. Carbin, Packie McNelis (0-01), Jimmy McNelis, Patsy Gildea (1-01) (Tailor), Packie J. McGinley and Eddie Doherty.

Gweedore: E. Gillespie, B. Coyle, N. Gallagher, P. McGee, D. Mooney, C. Bonner, T. Diver, M.J. Gallagher, C. McBride, D. Sweeney, H.T. Boyle, C. Breslin, O. McBride, T. Sweeney, J. Sweeney.

Referee was John Newton (father of Des Newton, who worked for E.S.B. and was staying in Ardara)

Ardara lost their next match away to the County champions, St Eunans, (3-6 to 3-0) and had to win their last match in Pearse Memorial to stay in with a chance of

Ardara's Hopes Crushed *Ardara 0-04 St Eunans 1-03*

At Pearse Memorial Park, Ardara's hopes of qualifying for Senior League runners-up honours were crushed by St Eunans who confirmed their first round success by winning on a score of 1-03 to 0-04. The two teams were level at half time each team having scored two points. Despite the adverse weather conditions, it was a keen pulsating game with the interest of the spectators held until the final whistle. On a water logged pitch, the players rose above

the conditions and despite a greasy ball it was one of the finest exhibitions of football seen at this venue for a long time. The game was played on Sunday 11th November and Vincent McConnell was outstanding in goal.

Ardara – Vincent McConnell, Charlie Keeney, Billy Maxwell, Phil McHugh, John Keeney, Michael Boyle, Raymond Brennan, Thady Gallagher, Frankie Brennan (0-01), Charlie Bennett, Pat Brennan (0-01), Jimmy

McNelis (0-01), John McHugh, Patsy Gildea (0-01) (Tailor) and Eddie Doherty.

St Eunans: Con Halpin, C.McCann, Peadar McGeehan, Michael Ronaghan,

Sean Hannigan, Joe Carroll, Noel O'Donnell, J. Halpin, C.J. Duffy, F. Cannon, Sean Curran, Tommy Ryan, James Larkin, F. McLaughlin, Harry Blake.



Ardara Senior Team photo taken in 1956

Back L-R: Dan Shovelin, Unknown, Michael Boyle, Frankie Brennan, Frankie Tom Gallagher, Pat Brennan, Packie McGinley, Phil McHugh, Charlie Bennett, Packie Maguire, Tommy Boyle.

Front L-R: Hugh O'Donnell, Pat McGee, John Keeney, Thady Gallagher, Peter Pat Breslin, Vincent McConnell. The unknown person in the back row we have failed to identify despite contacting all the others in the photo it is felt that he was a stranger just playing for the day.

finishing runners up in the section.

St Connell's Cup

Four teams were entered in the St Connell's Cup competition for 1956. The competition however ran late in the year and for the most part was played in 1957, Ardara, Glenties, Kilcar and Dunkineely taking part. After each team played each other home and away, Ardara needed a win over Dunkineely in their last match to leap-frog Kilcar at the top of the table and take the trophy. The match was played

Ardara capture St Connell's Cup Ardara 2-5 Dunkineely 0-5

Ardara captured the 1956 St Connell's Cup at Dunkineely on Sunday last when in a keenly contested game, they defeated the home side by 2-5 to 0-5 after leading at half time 2-3 to 0-2.

Playing against the incline and aided by a slight breeze, Ardara held the balance of the exchanges in the first half, but Dunkineely were well in the picture in the

second moiety, and were actually dictating the course of the play when the long whistle sounded. Both sides fielded below strength, Ardara still being without Pat and Frankie Brennan, while the most notable Dunkineely absentees were Charles Brady and Peter Sweeney.

Dunkineely broke away from the throw in, but Packie Maguire (Ardara) stopped a

dangerous home raid to put his team on the offensive. After a short period of Ardara pressure, Dunkineely returned to the attack for P. Quinn to open the homesters account with a well taken point in the 2nd minute. Ardara struck back, and Charlie Bennett levelled up for the visitors in the 5th minute with a grand point from a thirty yards free. In the subsequent five minutes, Ardara were slightly on top and took the lead in the 10th minute, Bennett again pointing a free, this time from 35 yards. Dunkineely had a period of pressure before Ardara returned to the offensive for P.J McGinley to finish to the net for a spectacular goal following a goalmouth melee in the 15th minute. John McHugh played a major part in preparing the ground for McGinley's goal. A minute afterwards, Ardara went further ahead with another Bennett point from a 35 yards free from a foul on John McHugh. Dunkineely struck back and with the game 18 minutes old, M. Boyle flashed over a point for the homesters. Exchanges were fairly even during the subsequent five minutes with Ardara having a slight edge on their opponents. The visitors went further ahead in the 25th minute with a long shot from Chas Bennett, which A. Gallagher in the home goal seemed to misjudge to help the ball into the net for Ardara's second goal. Shortly afterwards, Thady Gallagher retired injured for Ardara and was replaced by Eddie Doherty.

Thady Gallagher resumed for Ardara on the turnover, and the visitors quickly forced play into home territory. Charlie Bennett enhanced Ardara's lead with another pointed free in the fifth minute. Ardara maintained pressure and D. Quigley, who replaced A. Gallagher at the resumption saved a hot fourteen yards drive from Eddie John Gonigle. Dunkineely improved and forced play into Ardara territory for M. Boyle to point for the homesters in the 15th minute. Five minutes later Bennett

increased Ardara's lead with with a point from a 21yards free after a foul on Eddie John Gonigle. Dunkineely now tried hard to pull the game from the fire, and for a period the visitors defence was firmly tested to hold the score-thirsty forwards at bay. H. Sweeney had a Dunkineely point in the 23rd minute and two minutes from time, T. McGowan had the concluding score of the game, a point for the homesters.

Under Mr D. Brennan(Glenties), who deputised for Mr P. Brogan (Donegal Town) the teams were:

Ardara: Seamus McGee, Raymond Brennan, Billy Maxwell, Michael Boyle, John Keeney (Capt), Packie Maguire, James McGinley, Phil McHugh, Thady Gallagher, John McHugh, Charlie Bennett, Packie. J. McGinley, Patsy Gildea, Eddie John Gonigle, John McNelis. Sub: Eddie Doherty

Dunkineely:A. Gallagher, J. Cunningham, W. Cunningham, C. Meehan, M. Rodden, B. Cotter, S. McGuinness, J. McGroarty, H. Sweeney, S. Tully, T. McGowan, M. Boyle, B. McLaughlin, A. McGinley, P. Quinn.

Ardara's outstanding players were: Charlie Bennett (who contributed 1-5 of his sides total), John McHugh, John Keeney, Phil McHugh, Packie Maguire, Michael Boyle, Billy Maxwell and Packie J McGinley. Best for Dunkineely were B. Cotter, H. Sweeney, W. Cunningham, S. McGuinness, M. Boyle, and J. McGroarty.

Cup presented

The St Connell's cup was presented on the field to Mr. John Keeney, captain of the Ardara team, by Mr Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, Chairman South-West Divisional Board, who, speaking in Irish and English, paid tribute to the victor and the vanquished for the fine exhibition of football they had served up and the grand sporting game which they had played.

on Sunday the 8th of March 1957.

Downstrands re-group.

Following a few years of non participation, the Downstrands Club was re-formed in 1956, where the following officers were elected at a meeting at the start of the year.

Chairman: John Boyle NT.
Secretary: Sgt James Crowley, (Clogher).
Treasurer: Bernie McNelis (Castlegoland).
Committee members: J. J. Nicholson, (Rosbeg); P. Shovelin (Narin);
W. Byrne, (Sandfield); F. McHugh,(Hillhead);
H. Boyle, (Clogher).

The Club was successful in the first round of the Donegal Junior Championship, when they defeated Glenties, by 0-04 to 0-02, after leading at the interval by 0-2 to 0-0. Outstanding for Downstrands were: Niall McCole, John Moore, Paddy McHugh, Phonsie Kennedy and Packie Moore. The Downstrands team lined out as follows – John McCole, Dinny Shovlin, Niall McCole, Mickey (Jordie) Boyle, Bernie McNelis, John Moore, Patrick McHugh, Danny McLaughlin, James Crowley (Guard in Downstrands), Paschal McHugh, Packie Moore, Phonsie Kennedy, Tony McNelis, Michael Gallagher and John Shovlin.

The team went on to win the Division, but was narrowly defeated by Bundoran in



The Downstrands Junior Team that took part in the Donegal Junior Championship of 1956.

Back row from left: Sgt Gill, John Moore, John McBride, Paddy Shovlin, Paddy McHugh, Dinny Shovlin, John Gillespie, Peadar O'Donnell, Vincent Rankin, Packie McGlinchey.

Middle from left: Paschal McHugh, Garda Crowley, Michael McHugh, John McCole, Bernie McNelis, Mickey Gallagher.

Front from left: Packie Moore, Phonsie Kennedy, Packie Shovlin, Danny McLaughlin, Michael Boyle (Jordie)

the County Championship semi-final after a re-play.
Juvenile Championship

In the Juvenile Championship of 1956, Ardara did not attain the same level of success as in the previous year. They went out of the Championship at the South-West stage. The following account is from their first match in the Championship.

Glenties and Ardara played a draw in the first round of the Juvenile Championship at Glenties on Wednesday 11th July, 1956. The game was keenly contested and it was in the closing stages that Ardara goaled to draw level. Ardara with the wind advantage led 0-04 to 0-00 at half time.

Ardara – Seamus McGee, Sean Boyle (Crove), Johnny Gallagher, Val McHugh, John Boyle (Tullycleave), John Gavigan, Sean Gildea, John McHugh (0-01), Tom

O'Donnell (0-02), Bart Whelan, Jim McDonagh, Michael Keeney (0-01), Jimmy O'Donnell, Domhnall McBride and Danny Sweeney (0-01). Gerald Given (Yellow Banks) replaced Jimmy O'Donnell in the second half.

Glenties: E. O Boyle, M. McLoone, J. Mc Dyer, L. McLoone, B. O'Donnell, J. McLoone, B. Brennan, M. Molloy, T. Bonner, J. Mc Kelvey, T. Gildea, C. Boyle, T. Craig, P. Craig, N. Griffin.

Juvenile Parish League games

1956 saw a number of matches played throughout the parish at Under 16 level with the various townlands entering teams. The games proved to be very competitive and sometimes controversial, as parish leagues often are. The following reports detail some of the games played during the year.

Sunday 1st April

Brackey 4-9 Ardara 5-6

Scorers for Ardara were Niall Gallagher (2-00), Bart Whelan (1-02), Danny Sweeney (1-00), Jack O'Donnell (1-01), James O'Donnell (0-01) and C. Given (0-01). The Brackey marksmen were Val McHugh 3-07 and Andy McNelis 1-02. Mr Anthony Breslin (Brackey) was Referee.

Sunday 4th November

Ardara 4-5 Brackey 2-7

In a Juvenile challenge game (seven-a-side) at Brackey, Ardara defeated Brackey 4-05 to 2-07 after leading 3-02 to 1-00 at half-time. The game was keenly contested throughout. The teams were:-

Ardara – Jimmy O'Donnell, Josie Brennan, Tomas Breslin, Ned Gallagher (2-01), Charlie Given (0-02), Myles McHugh (0-02) and Danny Sweeney (2-00).

Brackey – Val McHugh, Seamus E. McGill (0-07), Frankie McGill (1-00), Peter Erskine, Paddy Joe McHugh, John Joe McNelis (1-00) and Hugh McHugh.

Sunday 2nd December

Ardara 4-4 Tullymore 3-5

Ardara – Johnny Gallagher, Jimmy O'Donnell, Josie Brennan, Charlie Given (2-00), Myles McHugh (0-03), Hugh McHugh (1-00) and Danny Sweeney (1-01).

Tullymore – Enda Craig, Seamus Boyle (0-03), Michael Boyle (1-00), John Boyle, John Fisher (2-00), Seamus Craig and Sonny Carr (0-02).

Ardara Juvenile footballers had a busy but successful week-end campaign of challenge games. On Saturday 8th December, 1956 they defeated Tullymore in a return challenge at Owenea. Ardara led at half-time by 2-02 to 1-03 and they won on a score of 4-04 to 2-07. Referee was Charlie Bennett. The teams were:-

Ardara – Jimmy O'Donnell, Josie Brennan, Tomas Paul Breslin, Myles McHugh (0-04), Niall Gallagher (2-00), Charlie Given and Danny Sweeney (2-00)

Tullymore – Enda Craig, Sonny Carr, John Boyle (0-01), Michael Boyle (0-01), Seamus Boyle (1-02), John Fisher (1-02) and Seamus Craig (0-01).

On Sunday 9th December, 1956, Ardara Juveniles travelled to Narin where they defeated Downstrands. Ardara led at the interval and won on a score of 5-02 to 3-06. The referee was Charlie Bennett and the teams were:-

Ardara – Jimmy O'Donnell, Myles McHugh, Josie Brennan, Tomas Paul Breslin (0-02), Niall Gallagher (3-00), John Boyle (Tullycleave) and Danny Sweeney (2-00)

Downstrands – J. Kennedy, Patsy Sweeney, P. Kennedy, Jackie Hamilton (1-01), Frankie McHugh (1-00), Brendan McBride (0-04) and J. Boyle (1-01).

Club Meeting

Mr. Pádraig Mac a'Ghoill, O.S.(Chairman) presided at a largely attended meeting of the Ardara G.A.A. Club on Sunday 18th November. Delegates who were selected for the Annual Convention of the South-West Divisional Board were:- Messrs Phil McHugh, Vincent McConnell, Frankie Brennan, Charlie Bennett and John N. O'Donnell. It was decided to send a subscription of £1 pound to the National Cycling Olympic Games fund.



John (The Tae) Gallagher, All Ireland Fiddle Champion in 1956, pictured with the Oireachtas trophy.

On the motion of the Chairman, a vote of congratulations was passed to Mr. Seán O'Gallchóir, a member of the Club, on his recent success at the Oireachtas in Dublin where he won the All-Ireland Traditional Fiddle Competition. The meeting also extended felicitations to Mr. D. J. O'Rourke, former Manager, National Irish Bank,

Donegal Town, on his well-earned retirement. Condolences was tendered to the brothers and sisters and other relatives of the late Miss Catherine Gallagher, Meenavalley, four of whose brothers were former playing members of the Club, and to the wife, family members and relatives of the late Patrick J. Boyle also a former playing member of the Club.



Bernie McNelis of Castlegoland was elected Treasurer of the Downstrands Club in 1956. Bernie was a regular player on the Ardara and Downstrands teams of the forties and early fifties and usually played in the forward line. He was rarely seen playing without wearing a 'beret', and he continued playing for the Downstrands Junior team after he finished playing with the Ardara Senior team. He was a talented player, but also acted on Club committees and was widely respected throughout the parish.



Photograph taken at the 1956 County Convention. Chairman, Domhnall Mac a'Bháird has just finished his term in the chair and is pictured fifth from left in the front row, beside Hugh Daly, County Secretary. Photo also includes Ardara delegates, John Keeney and Vincent McConnell (7th and 8th on right of middle row), Charlie Bennett, (kneeling, on right of front row). Patsy (Tailor) Gildea (10th from right middle row), Packie McGinley (2nd from left, back row) and Frankie Brennan (3rd from left, front row)



Joe Larry Gallagher, Hughie Dorrian, Vincent McConnell and Charlie Gallagher pictured at the 1956 All Ireland final in Croke Park

Hugh O'Donnell wins Ulster Minor Championship medal.



Hugh O'Donnell (left) pictured with his friend and clubmate Michael Keeney on the John Mitchell's team of the 1960s. Seán Ó Donnell, Bogach was the other Donegal man on that team.

Hugh O'Donnell became the first player from the Club to win an Ulster Minor Championship medal, when he was a member of the Donegal panel that defeated Armagh, 2-5 to 0-6 in the Ulster final of 1956. A son of John O'Donnell, former Dungloe County star, and Molly (nee Campbell), he was a starting member of the team in all matches that year, except the Ulster final (when he was unable to take his place). The team was eventually defeated by Leitrim in the All Ireland semi-final, 1-9 to 2-1. He first played for the Club Juvenile team in 1953, and was half forward on the Minor team of 1954 that won the Club's second County Championship. He first played for the Club Senior team in 1956 and although he emigrated to England in 1960, he often returned home to wear the Club colours. A stylish footballer and a great fielder of the ball, he spent his years in England playing with the John Mitchell's Club in Birmingham where he won Warwickshire Senior and Junior Championship medals, usually playing alongside fellow Ardara man, Michael Keeney of Glendowan. Hugh was also an important member of the Ardara Junior Championship winning side of 1967. He continued playing with the John Mitchell's Club until 1973, when he retired from the game.

During 1956 Frankie Brennan played for Donegal against Kerry, Derry, Cavan, Sligo, Monaghan and Tyrone. Charlie Bennett and Frankie Gallagher played against Sligo. Billy Maxwell played on the Dr. McKenna Cup team along with John Keeney.



The Donegal County Team (including guests) which played Kerry at the opening of McCumhaill Park in May 1956

Back from left: Sean Young (Derry), Paddy Carr (Gweedore), Jim McKeever (Derry), Pat English (Roscommon), Robbie Gribben (Derry), James Cookie Boyle (Dungloe), Seamus Hoare (St Eunans), Joe Carroll (St. Eunan's)

Front row: Sean O'Donnell (Dungloe), Frankie Brennan, Sean McCormick (Ballyshannon), Pearse Dawson (St Eunans), Jackie McDermott (Ballyshannon), Frankie Donnelly (Tyrone), Peadar McGeehan (St. Eunan's).

On the County Junior team, Pat Brennan and Frankie Gallagher played for Donegal against Fermanagh and Armagh.

1957

The following Club officers were elected for 1957:-

President	-	Seán Ó Casáide
Chairman	-	Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill
Vice Chairman	-	Tommy Boyle and Phil McHugh
Secretary	-	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird
Treasurer	-	Frankie Brennan.
Ass. Treasurer	-	Ted Breslin
Senior Team Captain	-	John Keeney
Vice Captain	-	Charlie Bennett.

Selection Committee - Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, Tommy Boyle, Donal Ó Faoláin, Vinny McHugh, Phil McHugh and John Keeney. The Gate Stewards: John Brogan, Willie McNelis, William Boyle, Vinny McHugh, Ted Breslin, Patsy Gildea, Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, Tommy Boyle, Domhnall Byrne and John Slowey.

In 1957 the Club had teams involved at Juvenile, Minor and at Senior level. The growing trend of emigration continued and the Club suffered hugely that year, with the Senior Team losing six of its regular players in Phil McHugh, Charlie Bennett, Peter Breslin, Hughie Bennett and Patsy Gildea. That year also, the Club lost Pat Brennan who left to join the Gardai. This was a severe blow and at the time there was a doubt as to whether the Club could field a Senior team at all. The only positive note was the transfer to the Club of former Corlea, Ballyshannon and County player, Eddie John Gonigle, in mid 1956, after he moved to the area to live.

Juveniles.

The Juveniles played Glenties and over the two games they failed to progress. They lost the first game 1-4 to 0-5 and as a result needed to win the second match to stay in the Championship. The following report shows that the return leg proved to be somewhat controversial.

Juvenile Divisional Final Ardara 1-2 Glenties 0-5

Though most of the home followers left the field with the impression that Ardara won the game by a single point, with a score of 1-2 to 0-4, the referee's record of the scores at the end of this Juvenile Championship match at Pearse Memorial Park Ardara was Glenties 0-5 Ardara 1-2, a draw, which gave Glenties sectional honours as they defeated Ardara the previous Wednesday by 1-4 to 0-5.

The mystery of the point which left Glenties on level terms and which left Ardara supporters and indeed their players under the impression that the home side had qualified for a sectional deciding game by a point victory was somewhat cleared by the admission of one of the umpires, an Ardara man, that he 'flagged' two points for Glenties in the second half with the visitors leading by three points to two at half time. The other umpire, a Glenties man subsequently made a similar admission, while the referee, Dan Shovelin, Glenties, whose impartiality and integrity are beyond doubt was adamant as to the final score, Glenties 0-5, Ardara 1-2.

The writer like many others was under the impression that Ardara had won by a single point and had no record of a second score by Glenties in the second half, though he would admit that he could have overlooked making a note of a score in the excitement of the game. The umpires confirmation of the referee's figures, prove fairly conclusively, that the referee did not by mistake, record an extra point for the

visitors.

The game- Though the pitch was heavily waterlogged from the heavy rain of the morning and afternoon with a subsequently greasy ball, the game was keen and closely contested with the outcome in doubt up until the final whistle. Generally Glenties were all round the better team. Ardara was kept in the game right to the end mainly by outstanding individual displays by four or five players, which included the goalkeeper Jimmy O'Donnell, full back S. A. McGill, John Gallagher, M. Keeney, J. McGroarty and forceful tackling by S. Boyle and M. McHugh. Glenties had an exceptionally strong centre back both in stature and in performance in J. McDyer who saved the visitor's citadel on more than one occasion. They had two resourceful half backs in the brothers J. and M. McLoone, clever forwards in C. Boyle, J. McKelvey, P. McHugh and T. Craig and a strong midfielder in M. Molloy.

The teams were:

Ardara: J O'Donnell, James McGinley, Seamus Aodh McGill, James McHugh, Josie Brennan, John Gallagher, T. Breslin, M. McHugh, Bart Whelan, John McGroarty, Michael Keeney, J. O'Donnell, D. Sweeney, N. Gallagher, Hugh McHugh.

Glenties: E. Boyle, E. O'Donnell, J. McDyer, C. Bonner, C. Spillane, M. McLoone, J. McLoone, J. McKelvey, M. Molloy, P. McHugh, C. Boyle, P. Craig, T. Craig, J. Earley, J. Ward.

As a result of Glenties winning the first match, Ardara made their exit from the Championship



Photo taken of the 1957 Donegal County Junior Team after their victory over Derry in the Ulster semi-final at O'Donnell Park, Letterkenny.

Back Row L-R: Frank O'Donnell (Kilcar), John Hannigan (St. Eunan's), Seamus Halpin (St. Eunan's), John McDermott (Ballyshannon), Sean Doogan (Kilcar)

2nd Row L-R: P.J. McDermott (Carndonagh), Brian Cotter (Dunkineely), Pearse Ferriter (St Michaels), Noel O'Donnell (St. Eunan's), Sean Reilly (Downings/Mayo), Michael Ronaghan (St. Eunan's), Paddy O'Donnell (Kilcar), Fionn Gallagher (St. Eunan's), P.J. Flood (Pettigo), Billy Maxwell.

Front Row L-R: Sean McHugh (Aodh Ruadh), Pat Ward (Convoy), James McGettigan (St. Eunan's), Dom Murray (Dungloe), Charlie Bennett, unknown, Sean Ferriter (St Michaels)

* * * * *

Twenty years after he had featured with the Brackey Hurling Team, representing Ardara in the County Hurling Championships of the early years of the Century. Mr. John Maloney, Brackey, was goalkeeper of the Ardara Team which won the 1923 Senior Football Championship.

The first Ardara players to be selected on Donegal Inter County Teams were:- Leo Howley, N.T., Drimaha and Jimmy (Ned) Gallagher, Meenavalley. The Year was 1923 and the following year they were joined by Charles McDyre, N.T., Kilraine and Garda Christy Kennedy of Limerick, both of whom were also Inter-County hurlers. Charles McDyre was selected in 1926 as the first native of Donegal to play on the Ulster Inter Provincial Railway Cup Team.

Minors Reach County Final

The Minors won the Inniskeel Cup for the South-West Minor League when they beat Glenties 0-6 to 1-0 in the final. In the South-West Championship they also played Glenties in the divisional final, which was played at Pearse Memorial Park.

Ardara Minors in County semi-final Ardara 6-7 Glenties 2-3

At the Pearse Memorial Park on Sunday last, Ardara Minors retained their divisional title with a 6-7 to 2-3 win over a gallant Glenties side in the Divisional final.

Ardara led 3-5 to 1-0 at half-time in a game which saw the star studded home side at its best.. Glenties made a great, if futile attempt to wrest the honours from the champions and although Ardara won by a convincing margin, they failed to impress as a team capable of capturing County honours. Ardara's superiority, which was not as pronounced as the scores would seem to suggest, was almost exclusively the result of brilliant individual displays by four or five players. Notably M. Rodden at midfield, J. Gallagher in defence, and Tom O'Donnell and John McHugh in the attack, although the latter, although an inter-County player, was more subdued than in recent matches. Glenties monopolised the exchanges for fifteen minutes of the second half, but taking the game all round, Ardara deserved their victory, but will have to show considerable improvement to regain the County Minor Championship they last won in 1954.

In addition to those already mentioned, Ardara's best were: D. McBride, S. McGuinness, and S. Gildea. Best for Glenties were L. McLoone, J. McDyer, C. Boyle, T. Gildea, T. Bonner, J. McKelvey, and M. Boyle.

By virtue of their victory, Ardara were presented with the Dunkineely Cup which was presented to the South-West Board by the Dunkineely Club for the Minor Championship.

Under Mr D.Shovelin (Glenties) the teams were:

Ardara: Seamus McGee, James McGinley, Raymond Brennan, Johnny Gallagher, John Harkin, John Gavigan, Sean Gildea, Eddie Doherty, Michael Rodden, John McHugh, Sean McGuinness, Michael Keeney, Tom O'Donnell, Patsy Gildea, Domhnall McBride.

Glenties: E. Boyle, M. Boyle, J. McDyer, T. Bonner, J. McLoone, M. McLoone, P. Gavigan, P. Boyle, M. Molloy, C. Boyle, T. Gildea, J. McKelvey, M. O'Donnell, N. Brennan, P. Craig

In the County semi-final, the team accounted for Dungloe in a tight low-scoring match, 0-4 to 0-3. This qualified them for a County final place against Sean Mac Cumhaill's. A game that was played on Sunday 1st of September.

MacCumhaill's win thrilling Minor final Sean MacCumhails' 2-4 Ardara 1-6

The Minor final in which Sean Mac Cumhails defeated Ardara 2-4 to 1-6 ended on an exceptionally exciting note, with the South-Western champions making an all out bid for supremacy.

Backed by the breeze, Mc Cumhaill's led 2-2 to nil at half time and at that stage there could be no question that they were the better team. About midway through the second half Ardara woke up with a bang, and it was from this period on that Mac Cumhails really proved their worth. Their defence stood up exceptionally to some hectic Ardara incursions and tension mounted as Ardara reduced the leeway until only a point divided the sides with about two minutes to go. In this Ardara resurgence, Michael Rodden and Sean McGuinness played a notable part in midfield. Up to that the MacCumhails pair, L. Doherty and A. Given, had been having the better of the matters. The Killybegs boys, once they got into their stride, certainly gave the Mac Cumhails defence a busy time. In goal, T. Bogle had an outstanding game for Mc Cumhails, particularly in this thrill packed period, when he brought off some wonderful saves while another player to come through with flying colours was full back S. Mc Laughlin. Other able performers were Billy Quinn, L. Crumlish, D. Reid, H. Kane and F. McNulty.

In addition to those already mentioned, Ardara had outstanding players in full back J. Gavigan, R. Brennan, S. Gildea, John McHugh, Eddie Doherty and Tom O'Donnell. The scoring-F. McNulty opened the scoring for MacCumhails with a goal, but the game was twenty minutes old when they had their second score, a point from A.O'Neill. Billy

Quinn followed up with a goal and a point to leave them leading 2-2 to nil at half time.

In the 3rd minute of the second half, McGuinness opened Ardara's account with a point, but Quinn soon replied with a point for Mac Cumhaill's. After 15 minutes, Mc Nulty stretched their lead with another point. Ardara then took over with Rodden and Mc Guinness, and off a free, Rodden had a point. M. Keeney who had replaced J. Mac Donagh on the Ardara side, sent through a fine goal, and John McHugh followed up with a point. A great save by the Mac Cumhails culbairre robbed Ardara of a certain goal. Mc Guinness soon sent over another point as Ardara continued to press, and with three minutes to go, Rodden narrowed the gap with another minor. Almost immediately T. O'Donnell followed up with a point to leave only the minimum margin between the sides. But time beat Ardara for an equaliser.

Under referee Conal Boyle of Dooey, the teams were

MacCumhaill's: T. Bogle, D. Harkin, S. Mc Laughlin, P. Bradley, C. McMenamin, I. Crumlish, M. Lafferty, L. Doherty, A. Given, F. Mulrine, D. Reid, H. Kane, F. Mc Nulty, A. O'Neill, B. Quinn.

Ardara: Seamus McGee, Johnny Gallagher, John Gavigan (Altnagcapple), Raymond Brennan, John Harkin (Stragar), James McGinley, Sean Gildea, Sean McGuinness (Killybegs, Michael Rodden (Killybegs), John McHugh, Eddie Doherty, Tom O'Donnell, Jim McDonagh, Patsy Gildea (Tailor), Domhnall McBride. Substitute – Michael Keeney for McDonagh.



The Ardara Minor Team that reached the County Final in 1957
Back from left: James McGinley, Michael Rodden (Carrignamohill), Seamus McGee, Eddie Doherty, Raymond Brennan, John Harkin (Stragar), John Gavigan (Altnagapple)
Front row : Jim McDonagh (Clogher), Red Johnny Gallagher, Tom O'Donnell, John McHugh, Patsy Gildea (Tailor) Sean Gildea (Tailor), Domhnall McBride, Sean Mc Guinness (Killybegs) Missing from photo is Michael Keeney.

Senior Championship

The South-West Championship was once again played between four teams; Ardara, Kilcar, Glenties and Dunkineely. A straight draw was made for two semi-finals (home and away) with the winners advancing to the South-West final. Ardara drew Kilcar and in the first leg won easily by 4-8 to 0-6. However, the second leg did not go to plan; they lost 1-07 to 0-06. The play-off turned out to be just as close, but in the end Ardara advanced, winning by 3 points, 3-03 to 1-06. In this game the three goals scored proved to be vital in the success with Hugh O'Donnell getting two and the third coming from Eddie Doherty. Ardara then went on to play Glenties in the South-West Championship final.

Ardara regain S.W. honours. Glenties 0-3 Ardara 3-8

Before a large attendance at the Gaelic Grounds, Glenties, on Thursday evening of last week, Ardara regained the South-West Senior football Championship with a 3-8 to 0-3 win over Glenties, and thus qualified to meet the Western champions.

At half time Ardara led 1-6 to 0-2 in a game

in which they proved themselves the superior side throughout, although the issue was not finally decided in the visitors favour until near the end of the third quarter when a goal by John McHugh just about sealed the fate of the homesters.

Ardara played the more methodical football,

fielding cleanly, and using the more methodical approach. These fundamentals were lacking somewhat in the home side. The Ardara forwards played with a smoothness and precision and in a determined manner that often outpaced the Glenties defence. They had outstanding performers in Hugh O'Donnell, Pat Brennan, P.J. McHugh and T. Gallagher. In the defence Paddy Maguire at centre half back, captained the side instead of John Keeney, who was unable to turn out. Maguire had one of his best games ever, while Billy Maxwell at full back also gave an outstanding performance. The game throughout was played in a true sporting spirit. The teams were paraded from the town by the Ardaghey A.O.H pipe band. Best for Glenties were; D. McGill, J.

O'Donnell, B. Gildea, P. Breslin, E. Melly. In addition to those already mentioned at the outset, Ardara's best performers were P. McGee, J. Gavigan and P. Breslin.

The teams under referee P. Brogan (Donegal Town) were:

Ardara: Seamus McGee, Phil McHugh, Billy Maxwell, Michael Boyle, James McGinley, Packie Maguire, Peter Breslin, Pat McGee, Eddie Doherty, John McHugh, Pat Brennan, Hugh O'Donnell, Thady Gallagher, Eddie John McGonigle, Patsy Gildea. Sub: John Gavigan for M. Boyle.

Glenties: D. Shovelin, M. Larkin, J. O'Donnell, P. Brennan, L. McLoone, D. McGill, P. Keeney, J. Sheridan, E. Melly, B. Gildea, B. Campbell, P. Breslin, P. Rogers, N. Fallon, P. McHugh.

The team then met Dungloe in the County semi-final but lost on a score of 6-10 to 2-04 to the eventual County Champions.

The Senior team fared poorly in the league, losing most of their games. They were defeated by Aodh Ruadh on a score of 2-08 to 2-06, by Dungloe, 0-11 to 3-00, and by Donegal Town 3-03 to 2-01. Their only victory came against Sean Mac Cumhaills in Pearse Memorial Park on a 1-9 to 1-2 scoreline.

Parish Juvenile matches

The Club organised various Juvenile challenge matches during the year involving teams from Ardara, Narin, Brackey and Tullymore. The following reports of some of the matches appeared in the Democrat:

Ardara win Juvenile game

In a seven a side Juvenile game played at Brackey on Sunday 24th of March, Ardara defeated Brackey 6-5 to 5-6 after leading at half-time 3-2 to 1-3. scorers for Ardara were P.Gallagher (4-1) J. Gallagher (1-2), R. Given (1-0), P. Friel and K. McGill (0-1). The Brackey marksmen were J.J McNelis (2-2), P. McCabe (0-3), S. McGill (2-0), C.

Mooney(1-1). Under P. McGill (Aighe) the teams were:

Ardara: E. Craig, E. O'Donnell, P. Friel, R. Given, P. Gallagher, J. Gallagher, K.McGill.

Brackey : P. Mulhern, F. McGill, J.J. Mc Nelis, P. McCabe, C. Mooney, S. McGill, D. Mulhern.

Ardara defeat Tullymore in Juvenile game

In a seven a side Juvenile football challenge game at the Pearse Memorial Park on Sunday, Ardara defeated Tullymore by 2-3 to 0-5 after leading at half time by 1-2 to 0-3.

Teams and scorers were:

Ardara: M. Melly, J. Brennan, M. McHugh (1-1), N. Gallagher (1-0), D. Sweeney (0-2), J. O'Donnell, M. Keeney.

Tullymore: S. Boyle (0-3), M. Boyle (0-1), J. Boyle, J. Fisher, S. Carr (0-1), A. Conlan, J. McGinley.

Ardara Juveniles beaten

Ardara Juvenile footballers suffered two defeats in challenge matches on Sunday. At Brackey, an Ardara seven were beaten 4-6 to 1-2 by the home side. The scorers for Brackey were: H. McHugh (2-3), S. McGill (1-2), P. Erskine (1-0), F. McGill (0-1) All the Ardara scores were from Joseph Gallagher.

The teams were:

Brackey: S. McGill, H. McHugh, F. McGill, C. Mooney, P. Erskine, P. McCabe, P.

Mulhern.

Ardara: N. Gallagher, J. Gallagher, E. O'Donnell, P. Gallagher, P. Friel, T. O'Donnell, K. Sweeney.

At Narin the home side defeated Ardara 5-6 to 5-4 after a keenly contested game. The scorers for Narin were: J. McHugh, J. Boyle and J. Hamilton. For Ardara the scorers were D. Sweeney, C. Given, N. Gallagher, T. Breslin and M. McHugh.

Downstrands fall in County semi-final

Being the only team entered in the South-West Junior Championship, they received a bye to the County Junior Championship semi-final, where they played Lámh Dearg from Letterkenny.

Lámh Dearg 1-6 Downstrands 1-1

After a listless hour of football at the O'Donnell Park, the local Lámh Dearg Junior football team qualified for the Donegal Junior Championship final by defeating Downstrands 1-6 to 1-1.

The play never roused any excitement and the Letterkenny side who led 0-4 to 0-1 at the break were worthy winners. The winners were best served by T. Gleeson, J. McDonagh, M. Mellett, D. McDevitt, and M. Heneghan. Best of their forwards were Josie Boyle and B. O'Grady.

Downstrands had a good midfield in J. McNelis and Bruce, with Crowley good at centre half back, and veteran McNelis another good back. Their attack was weak and lost many chances.

Scorers for the winners were: Heneghan (0-3), B. McGranaghan (1-0) and a point each

per Boyle, O'Grady and Gleeson. J. McNelis had the Downstrands goal with P. McHugh pointing.

Under Referee Simon Gallagher Gweedore, the teams were

Lámh Dearg: P. McMenamin, F. Staunton, M. Mellett, J. McDonagh, P. O'Donnell, H. Coyle, D. McDevitt, M. Heneghan, E. Greenan, B. McGranaghan, T. Gleeson, B. Sweeney, B. McManus, B. O'Grady, J. Boyle.

Downstrands: Seamus McDonagh, Bernie McNelis, Neilly McCole, Michael Boyle, Dinny Shovelin, Jim Crowley, Willie O'Donnell, Jimmy McNelis, Packie John Bruce, John McBride, John Gillespie, Packie Moore, Paddy McHugh, Mickey Gallagher, Dinny McLaughlin

County teams



Charlie Bennett, Billy Maxwell, Packie Maguire, John Keeney and Pat and Frankie Brennan all played for the County Junior team during 1957. Keeney, Maguire and Brennan were all members of the Senior team who defeated Leitrim in the annual Traders Cup at Ballyshannon.

John McHugh, who played for Donegal County Minors in the 1957 & 1958 Ulster Championships. The team was defeated in the 1957 Ulster final by Armagh.



I mí Mheán Fómhair 1957 cailleadh Seán Ó Casaide, duine díobh siúd a bhunaigh an fó-chumann i 1921. Ag am a bháis bhí sé mar Uachtarán ar an bhfó-chumann, onóir a bhí tuillte go maith aige. Tá muid fíor bhuíoch dósan agus dá chomhleacaithe a dfhág an club seo mar oidhreacht ag aos óg na linne seo.

The Death Of Seán Ó Casáide

The Club suffered a huge loss on the 19th of September 1957, with the death of Honorary Club President, Seán Ó Casáide.

Seán Ó Casaide was elected Chairman of the Club in 1922, after joining on its inception, and remained in the position until 1945. A national school teacher, he qualified in 1909 and his first posting was in Largynaseeragh N.S, then an all-Irish-speaking school. He was appointed to Meentinadea N.S in 1914 and then moved on to Brackey in 1922. A few years later he took up the principal's job in the Ardara town school, a position he maintained until his retirement in 1952. Seán lived in what is now known as Laburnum House on the Diamond (later owned by Peg and the late Jim Kennedy). He had a passionate interest in Gaelic games and in Irish culture in particular. He was a founder member and the first Secretary of the Ardara branch of Conradh Na Gaeilge and Secretary of the Ardara Feis committee during the war years. He was also a founding member of the Parish Council, which was formed in 1940. He was Chairman of the South-West District G.A.A Board in the '20s and

Chairman (in those days the Chairman had the title of ‘President’) of the County Board from 1925 - 1929 and again in 1933. He then went on to become Treasurer of the County Board from 1935 - 1946. His attention to detail and efficiency were well known in the G.A.A fraternity, county-wide. His strong leadership of the Club in its infancy kept the G.A.A alive in the parish through some extremely difficult times. Seán was one of the key driving forces behind the purchase of Pearse Memorial Park and its subsequent development. He teamed up with Johnny Maguire and they were the men responsible for selecting the team throughout the twenties, when the Club had three Senior Championship victories. He also acted as a County selector, and was hugely respected in the County for his work in promoting the Association in the early years. A jovial type of man, Sean was a ‘true Gael’ in the real sense, a title which summed up the man better than any other. The County Chairman, Frank Muldoon, made the following reference to Seán at his funeral. "He had given every available minute of his life to the promotion of the game and the Irish language, not only in the G.A.A and the Gaelic League, but in every other organisation that aimed at making this little island more glorious to live in. It was in no small measure through his diligent leadership, that the G.A.A in the County had reached the pinnacle attained today, and during his time as Treasurer he brought them from ‘The Rocks’ to a solvent position." An appeal was made to those left behind to cherish the ideals he had worked for all his life.

Tributes paid.

On the night of his passing, a special meeting of the Club was called to arrange a suitable tribute for his wake and funeral. Pádraig S Mac a’Ghoill, Club Chairman, said that it was an occasion of deep sorrow for himself and the members of the Club. The death marked the passing of an era in the history in the Club and its activities, as it not only severed a link with the founding pioneers of the G.A.A in the parish, but removed one who, at the outset, was chiefly responsible for the Club’s founding and had played such a big part in its development. He had also served as County Board Chairman and Treasurer and in 1948 was made a special presentation from the Board, as recognition of his outstanding service. His work for the G.A.A continued to his last hour, said the Chairman. He was auditor to the South-West Divisional Board, up to the time of his death, and was Secretary and Trustee of the Pearse Memorial Park committee. He stated that he had known Mr Ó Casaide for over 35 years, as a teacher, as a member of the G.A.A and of kindred organisations such as the Gaelic League, and knew that he had done Herculean work for the language, work, and culture of the Gael, as well as in local, social, cultural and economic affairs.

"We in the G.A.A can pay no higher tribute than by carrying on the work that he started, in the honest, sincere and straight forward manner which characterised all his actions", he concluded.

Mr Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, who said that he knew the deceased for 41 years, said the late Mr Ó Casaide was devoted to the ideal of Pearse's Ireland, not merely free, but Gaelic as well. His sincerity of purpose and integrity were beyond reproach.

"I know no other man in Donegal whose work has had such a tremendous influence on fellow members of the G.A.A in the County."

Mr Domhnall Whelan O.S. associated himself with all the tributes and all present stood and observed two minutes silence.

1958

The following Officers were elected for the Year 1958:-

President	- Rev. A. Arnold
Chairman	- Pádraig Mac a'Ghoill
Vice Chairmen	- Tommy Boyle/Domhnall Mac a'Bháird
Secretary	- Domhnall Ó Faoláin
Ass. Secretary	- Domhnall Mac a'Bháird
Treasurer	- Seán Ó Cianaigh
Senior Team Captain	- Packie Maguire
Vice Captain	- Billy Maxwell.
Team Selection Committee - Tommy Boyle, Vinny McHugh and Packie Maguire.	



Domhnall Whelan, who was elected Club Secretary in 1958. Domhnall was full forward on the Club Minor team, that won the Championship in 1952 and served until his death in various official positions in the Club. Domhnall began his teaching career in Kiltorish N.S. He transferred to Leaconnell in 1959, and in 1965 was appointed Principal of St. Mary's N.S., a position he held until he was tragically killed in a motor accident in 1975.

Fund raising concert

A highly successful concert and dramatic entertainment was held in the Iona Hall to raise funds for the Club. There was a capacity attendance and the series of encores that the singers and Irish dancers received was a clear indication of how well the programme was appreciated.

In the drama end, Kilcar players were seen at their best in the major event of the night, Noel Marian's popular 3-act comedy 'Swan Song'. Kilcar players, who had

long been famous as interpreters of clean healthy comedy, excelled themselves in their performance which was punctuated with hilarious laughter from the first to the final curtain. Production was by Willie Mc Shane, Kilcar, who also played the leading male part in the play. The cast was as follows; Michael Shannon, Willie McShane, Mary Shannon, Maureen Shannon, Miss Maeve Cannon, Peter Henry, Mr Charles Cannon, James McMillan, Michael Erskine, Lizzie Casey and Miss Philomena McShane.

The concert part of the programme included songs by Messrs John and Charles Cannon, Kilcar; Ted Breslin and Billy Maxwell, Ardara; Irish step dances by Misses Eileen Byrne and Sally Brennan, with songs of his own composition, sketches, monologues and harmony on the guitar from Patrick M. Byrne, Meenbog, Bruckless, a well known popular entertainer. Incidental music was provided during the interval and for the dancers by Messrs John Watters, Tullycleave, and Mr Charles Cannon, Kilcar, with Mr Byrne playing his own accompaniments .

Mr Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, who acted as M.C. thanked all who had in any way contributed to the success of the show, and paid particular tribute to the Kilcar players for their superb performance and for the visiting concert artistes.

The Death Of Domhnall Mac a'Bháird



Fear mór i gcroí agus i dtoirt a raibh bua na scríbhneoireachta aige ba é Domhnall Mac a' Bháird. Chaith sé tríocha bliain is fiche i mbun chúrsaí riaracháin agus ag tuairisciú ar chluichí, ní amháin in Ard a' Rátha, ach sa chontae i gcoiteann. Mar chomhartha ómóis dó, bhronn an fóchumann corn cuimhneacháin ar Bhord na Contae do chraobhchomórtas na mionúr.

Following the death of Seán Ó Casaide the previous year, the Club was dealt another hammer blow in 1958 with the death after illness, of Domhnall Mac a'Bháird. Dan had a long association with the Club, stretching over 30 years.

Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, familiarly known to many in the G.A.A, as 'Big Dan' was a native of Cronkeerin, Ardara. Of Irish-speaking parents and educated at Meentinadea N.S., he entered into the national spirit of resurgence, as evidenced by his involvement in the G.A.A, Conradh Na Gaelige, Irish dancing and Irish language classes, after the establishing of the Free State in 1922. Although a very busy man in voluntary organisations, he was by profession a journalist from 1940

until his death and was a prominent reporter on the weekly and daily papers. His copy of G.A.A. matches was always interesting and analytical; he was a shrewd judge of games and players, despite never having played the game. He remembered fondly the occasion when he almost made his County debut. One day in Ballina, Co. Mayo, when the County team had only 14 players, his name was put into a hat along with Leo Mooney's, to decide who would play in goals against the home team. Leo won the toss and Dan didn't get the chance to wear a County jersey.

Dan was closely associated with the purchase and development of the Pearse Memorial Park, which was purchased in 1933 and officially opened in 1939. He held all positions in the Club, commencing as Secretary and moving on to Chairman, Vice-Chairman etc. during his lifetime of involvement. He was Club Secretary from 1954 to 57, just a year before his death. He also served the South-West Board with distinction, as Chairman and Secretary, over a number of years. At County level, he was elected County Secretary in 1938 and held the position for 6 years, before moving on to take the Chairmanship in 1945, an honour he held again in 1955. He was delegate to the Ulster Council and delegate to National Congress on numerous occasions. From 1930 onwards Dan was instrumental in the development of the Irish language and culture, through his promotion of Irish language and dancing classes in the parish. The great Hugh Daly from Ballyshannon, the County Secretary, who served on the County Board alongside

Dan, once described him as follows
"Dan was an idealist to the core. His love of the Gaelic way of life, his astute reasoning powers, and above all his kindly, happy, likeable spirit, are my memories of this Gaelic stalwart of South-West Donegal".



Domhnall Mac a'Bháird pictured in the 1940s with some friends on the Main Street.

From left: Margaret Kennedy, Monsignor James McGinley, Leo Mooney, unknown, Dan and Frank McGinley.

Dan's wake was held in the Greenhouse, the home of Tommy Boyle, his next door neighbour and close friend. His remains were escorted to the church, accompanied by a guard of honour of players and officers of the Club.

*Cronkeerin,
Ardara.*

*The Secretary,
Ardara G.A.A. Club,*

Sir,

I wish to take this opportunity, on my own behalf and on behalf of other relatives of my brother, the late Dan Ward. I thank very sincerely the Ardara G.A.A. club and each individual member thereof for their sympathy, condolence and willing help on the occasion of the death. I appreciate very much the charitable gesture of Mr. Tommy Boyle for the accommodation of the remains at the Greenhouse and the noble work of the past and present playing members of the team for carrying the remains and the forming of the guard of honour at the removal and at the graveside.

The attention and thoughtfulness of your members on that sad occasion was a great consolation to us and we shall always appreciate it.

Please convey this message to the members of you club.

*With thoughtful regard,
I remain,
faithfully yours,
Patrick Ward.*

The following is a letter from his brother to Ardara Club shortly after his funeral. At a Club meeting on Sunday 20th April, 1958, it was proposed that the Club perpetuate his memory, by donating a cup in his honour. This cup would be awarded to the winners of a competition. Leading the tributes for Domhnall, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill stated that Mr. Mac a'Bháird had a long association with the Club, going back almost thirty years and during that time he had been untiring in his efforts in promoting Gaelic pastimes. It was as a member, under the late Seán Ó Casáide, that he began his connection with the Club. He was involved at Club, Divisional, County and Provincial level. And at the time of his death, he was Chairman of the South-West Divisional Board.

" We are the poorer for his passing and the responsibilities that he bore so lightly must now be passed on, for us to build on the foundation that he has laid and take up where he left off".

Seconding the vote of sympathy, Domhnall Whelan O.S. said that the name of Mr



Mac a'Bháird had become synonymous with the G.A.A in the County. *"Here in Ardara it was always felt that if a problem arose, once it was brought to his attention a quick solution would be found. "We are all the better for having known him and we should try and emulate his sterling qualities as an ardent Gael".*

Domhnall Mac a'Bháird and John Gallagher, pictured in Dublin before an All Ireland final in the mid fifties.

Senior Team

In the St. Connell's Cup competition, Ardara beat Kilcar 1-02 to 0-03, lost to Glenties 2-03 to 1-03 and defeated Dunkineely 0-12 to 0-03. This resulted in them qualifying for the final, where they met neighbours Glenties. In a very closely contested game Ardara lost by the narrowest of margins 1-03 to 0-05. 1958 saw Dungloe being moved from the Western division into the South-West,

Dungloe's home victory Dungloe 2-9 Ardara 0-9

In the second round Senior football Championship tie on Sunday at Rosses Park, Dungloe defeated Ardara by six points before a good crowd.

Dungloe were short F. White, D. Bonar, S. O'Donnell and D. Logue and the consequent shuffling of their team appeared to have an unsettling effect. Both attacks were erratic but a feature of the game was the accuracy of Ardara's Eddie Doherty who had six of his side's points from placed balls. E. Boyle opened the scoring with a Dungloe point, but Doherty equalised from a 35 yards free. Ben O'Donnell soloed through for a Dungloe point and followed with another shortly after. The Ardara goal then had a narrow escape

when Murray sliced his kick from close in. H. McGee had a Dungloe point and Eddie Doherty added two Ardara points from frees. Following a goalmouth scramble, Dungloe were awarded a penalty, which D. Murray goaled at the second attempt after Seamus McGee had brilliantly saved his first attempt. C. O'Donnell and Eddie Doherty had a point each for Ardara to leave the half time score Dungloe 1-4 Ardara 0-5.

Ardara were first away on the resumption and P. Boyle in the Dungloe goal was forced to punch a hard McHugh shot over the bar for a point. D. Murray had another Dungloe goal and E. Doherty replied with a point from a free. Dungloe had their best spell

midway through the half and had points per J. O'Donnell (2) F. Sweeney and E. Boyle. E. Doherty (free) and J. McHugh had Ardara points, and D. Murray closed the scoring with a point from a Dungloe free. Dungloe's outstanding players were J. O'Donnell, E. O'Donnell, B. O'Donnell, P. Roarty and J. Boyle. Best for Ardara were S. McGee, B. Maxwell, P. McHugh, J. O Connor and J. McHugh.

Dungloe: P. Boyle, D. Greene, J.C. Boyle, P. O'Donnell, P. Roarty, J. O'Donnell, N.

O'Donnell, D. Devenney, E. O'Donnell, B. O'Donnell, O. Boyle, H. McGee, E. Boyle, D. Murray, F. Sweeney.

Ardara: Seamus McGee, Dan Shovelin, Billy Maxwell, Phil McHugh, John Gildea, John Keeney, James McGinley, Eddie Doherty, Jim Connor, John McHugh, J. Gallagher, Packie McGinley, Michael Keeney, Charles O'Donnell, Donal Mc Bride.

Referee: Danny Boyle (Glenties)

following a motion passed at County Convention. Ardara played in Section B of the South-West Championship, along with Dungloe and Glenties. They lost the first match to Dungloe in Ardara, on a score of 3-09 to 2-04 and in their second match travelled to Dungloe, with victory a necessity, to keep their interest in the Championship alive.

Glenties then defeated Ardara on a score of 1-07 to 1-04 in Glenties. Ardara won the return leg in Pearse Memorial (3-7 to 0-1), but Dungloe emerged unbeaten from the group and went on to win the County Championship. A highlight for the Club in 1958 was when Frankie Brennan captained the Donegal Senior County Team against Tyrone in Letterkenny. On the day, Frankie chipped in with a point for his team.



Packie Maguire, was elected Senior team captain in 1958. Packie first came to prominence as a stylish wing half back on the 1952 Minor team. He soon rose to the Senior team the following year. His progression continued in 1954, when he was an important part of the Donegal Junior panel who were defeated in the All Ireland Junior semi-final against Kerry. From 1955 on, Packie made numerous trips to England to work, but always returned to play for the Club in the Championship. Whilst across the water, he played for Tara and John Mitchell's, both Birmingham clubs, and the Four Masters' Club in Coventry. Packie played with Ardara until 1968, when he emigrated to Philadelphia. This move saw him travel to New York on weekends to play for the Donegal Club, winning a number of Junior Championship medals with them, Packie moved back to man the goals as his career was winding down. He returned home with his wife Josephine in the early 80s and has been an ardent Ardara and Donegal supporter ever since. Packie was inducted to the Ardara G.A.A Hall of fame in 2002.

No success for Juveniles

Ardara Juveniles defeat Glenties Ardara 4-2 Glenties 0-3

The return Juvenile game between Ardara and Glenties played mid-week was a complete surprise as the previous meeting saw Glenties have complete superiority in all sectors. On the occasion of the Ardara meeting the position was completely reversed and the attendance was treated to an exhibition of fast, skilful football, high fielding and long kicking by both sides. Ardara, who had introduced some new players and carried out some positional changes, dominated Glenties throughout, and although they fought back gallantly in the second half and held Ardara to one score- a goal, to Glenties one point- their forwards could make no impression on the Ardara backs where C. O'Donnell gave an outstanding display by fielding everything that came his way and kicking well outfield. At centre back J. McGinley had a fine game and got through a vast amount of solid work, while at centrefield, J. McGill was conspicuous with some good fielding and good solo runs, and capped a good hour's display with a goal and a point. P. Gildea, caught the eye in the backs and N. McGill,

D. Sweeney and J. McGroarty, while J. Doherty in goal was solid. Glenties were best served by, R. Earley at full back, where pressure was greatest at all times. At centrefield J. McKelvey had a very good game and sent in a stream of supply to his forwards. During the second half he was ably assisted by O. Boyle, who had been transferred from goal. Both players had keen tussles with their opposites, J. McGill and M. McHugh. Others to catch the eye were C. Spillane, N. O'Donnell, J. McLoone and T. Craig.

Under referee Domhnall Whelan O.S. the teams were:

Ardara: J. Doherty, J. O'Donnell, J. McGinley, J. Brennan, J. McGroarty (1-0), N. McGill, J. McNelis, C. O'Donnell, J. Gallagher (1-0), A. Cunningham, N. Boyle (0-1), P. Gildea, D. Sweeney, J. McGill (1-1). C. Diver (1-0). Sub: J. McNelis

Glenties: O. Boyle, E. O'Donnell, R. Earley, C. Spillane, S. McLoone, F. Campbell, N. O'Donnell, J. McKelvey (0-1), J. Ward, J. Doherty, T. Craig, P. Bonner, M. Gallagher (0-1), E. Bonner (0-1), F. Griffin.

The Juvenile Team of 1958 had limited success and did not qualify for the Divisional final. The following report is from their first round win over Glenties.

Minors lose second County final in a row

On the playing fields, the Minor team enjoyed the most success that year. In the South-West Championship they had victories over Kilcar and Dungloe, to win the Division. They went on to defeat Bundoran in the semi-final 1-06 to 0-04, which

Gweedore win thrilling Minor final. Gweedore 2-5 Ardara 2-4

A goal by Eamon McGinley in the last minute of the Minor Championship final, brought Gweedore their first title in this grade in defeating Ardara 2-5 to 2-4.

The standard of football was so good in this thrill packed game that thousands of people

were saying how lucky they would be to see anything resembling it in the Senior final that followed.

Here were two grand teams who were on level terms, 1-2 each at half time. For a period in the second half it seemed that

Ardara would prevail when they fought back to wipe out a one point lead taken by the Gaeltacht boys. With just five minutes to go Ardara held a one point lead, but in the 28th minute, Jackie Coyle sent over the equalising point, and less than two minutes later, Gweedore had the winner.

Football all through was of a delightfully high standard, with players in general giving sparkling performances. There was a great battle at midfield between Gweedore's Jackie Coyle and B. Boyle, and Ardara's Michael Rodden and Charles O'Donnell.

Most spectators would have been quite satisfied had the game ended in a draw, so even was the standard of the teams. Ardara earned their second half goal through a penalty, but in the first half they failed to register from a similar award. Gweedore took their chances well and their strong closing rally just carried the day against a gallant Ardara defence. There was a polish about the displays of both teams which was encouraging, not only for their supporters but for the County as a whole. Here was a wealth of talent produced by two Clubs, proficient in all the finer points of the game,

giving a display of perfect fielding, good positional moves and grand defensive as well as attacking qualities.

In addition to Coyle and Boyle at midfield, Gweedore had fine displays in Domhnall Breslin, Tom Hickey and S. Gallagher. Apart from Rodden and O'Donnell Ardara also had fine performers in Michael Gallagher, Michael Keeney, John McHugh and John Gavigan

Under referee Dick Everitt Ballyshannon the teams were

Gaoth Dobhair: J. Mc Bride, E. McGinley, F. McGinley, M. Coll, E. Brennan, M. Doherty, D. McBride, B. Boyle, Jackie Coyle, Domhnall Breslin, Tom Hickey, S. Gallagher, Neil Gallagher, Cathal McGinley, F. Diver. Subs: Eamon McGinley for Cathal McGinley, Eugene Gallagher for F. Diver.

Ardara: Seamus McGee, John Gavigan, Michael Boyle (Narin), Sean Gildea, Francis McBrearty, J. Gallagher, John Herron, Michael Rodden, Charles O'Donnell, Jimmy McGill, Michael Keeney, Donal McBride, John McHugh, Myles McHugh, Bart Whelan. Sub: Danny Sweeney for Bart Whelan.

set them up for a chance to make good the previous year's defeat in the County final. Their opposition were Gweedore, who were looking to win their first title in the grade. Unfortunately the game saw the team lose by a point, for the second year in succession.

Ardara 2-04 Glenties 0-05

Before a good attendance in Glenties Ardara Minors won the Inniskeel Cup when they defeated a Glenties selection comprised chiefly of Juveniles of the 1958 County final team. Ardara on the other hand were short Michael Rodden, Charlie O'Donnell (Clogher) and Domhnall McBride of the 1958 team, and had to fight hard to gain the honours. The great weakness on the Glenties team was the attack which found it difficult to score despite good approach work. On the other hand the Ardara centre field and attack always looked dangerous with John McHugh,

Michael Keeney and J. McGill playing with great combination. A goal scored by Myles McHugh from passes by J. McGill and J. McHugh was one of the highlights of the game as he crashed home an un-saveable shot from 25 yards. Others to catch the eye were John Gavigan and Conal Maguire (Carrickacleavea) while J. McDyre, C. Early, J. McKelvey, C. Boyle and M. Molloy played well for Glenties. Within a minute of the throw-in Seamus McGill sent over a point for Ardara. Glenties then came back with a shot at goal which was saved and on the rebound he made contact and sent to the

net, to give Glenties the lead.

Before the interval John McHugh, who was playing very well for Ardara, levelled with two points in succession. On the resumption Ardara pressed hard for the lead and a movement between John McHugh and Jimmy McGill set Myles McHugh up for a goal. After ten minutes another similar move between Seamus

McGill and Myles McHugh saw Michael Keeney find the net to increase the Ardara lead to (2-03) to (0-03). Glenties retaliated and good work by McDyre, Earley, McKelvey, Molloy and Craig kept the Ardara defence busy in which time C. Carr scored two points but Ardara had the final say when John McHugh pointed in the closing stages.



Inniskeel Cup Final– 1958

The Minor team of 1958 had some consolation for their defeat in the County final, by winning that year's Inniskeel Cup competition, which was

Photo taken in 1958 in Pearse Memorial Park

Back L-R: Bart Whelan, John McShane, Billy Maxwell, Middle L-R: Josie Melly, Audrey Baskin, Colvin Baskin, Goldie McGee, Imelda Haughey, Pat Doherty. Front: Martin (Coo) Shovlin, Edward O'Donnell



This photo was taken on a Sunday in 1958 at a local game in Castlegoland.

Standing: Patsy Keeney, Denis McLoone, Fr Brendan McBride, Dinny Shovelin, Finbar O'Donnell, Eugene O'Donnell, James Boyle, Brendan Bruce and Neil Boyle.

Kneeling: Jim Connors, Sean McNelis, John Byrne, Packie McGlinchey, Peadar O'Donnell and Michael Boyle

played in 1959.

1958 A.G.M

In his Annual Report, Domhnall Ó Faoláin stated, that 1958 was an uneventful year on the pitch with no major honours won. The Juveniles competed well without any luck and the Minors impressed by reaching the County final, but lost to a strong Gweedore side by one point. In the Senior Championship, a double defeat by Dungloe ended their title aspirations for another year. Emigration was again taking its toll and also the retirement of Frankie Brennan, who had given long and faithful service to Club and County. The Club suffered the grievous loss of Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, a true Gael and stalwart G.A.A member for Club and County.

1959 saw the following officers being elected:-

President	- Fr. A. Arnold
Chairman	- Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill
Vice Chairman	- Phil McHugh/Tommy Boyle
Secretary	- Domhnall Ó Faoláin
Ass. Secretary	- Charlie Keeney
Treasurer	- John Keeney
Senior Team Captain	- Packie Maguire

Ardara 2-7 Dunkineely 2-3

At the Pearse Memorial Park on Sunday last Dunkineely suffered a somewhat unexpected defeat at the hands of Ardara in the St Connell's Cup competition. Both sides were short a number of regulars. Dunkineely were short J.Keyes, W.Cunningham and Brian Cotter, all of whom are in the Garda depot. Later they lost Peter Sweeney and this proved a great handicap against an Ardara side short their captain P Maguire and C. Bennett. Despite their long lay off, it was a wholehearted and interesting game in

which Dunkineely's first half superiority was blotted out by the homesters, who wiped out an interval deficit of six points to take the honours.

Scorers for Ardara were: P. McGinley (2-1), P. Connors (0-4), T. Gallagher (0-1), and H. Bennett (0-2)

For Dunkineely, J. Boden (1-0), H. Sweeney (1-0), T. Hopkins (0-2), P. Sweeney (0-1).

Ardara: Seamus McGee, John Gildea, Billy Maxwell, Peter Breslin, James McGinley, Patrick McGee, John Gavigan, Pat Connors, Thady Gallagher, Michael

Keeney, Hughie Bennett, John McHugh,
Packie McGinley, Charles O'Donnell.
Charlie Keeney. Sub: Hughie Bennett.
Dunkineely: P. McGowan, M. Mitchell, S
McGuinness, H. McCormack, P.

Cunningham, P. Sweeney, M. Rodden, M.
Boyle, C. Brady, T. Hopkins, P. O'Donnell, J.
Boden, J. McGroarty
Referee: Tommy Boyle (Ardara)

Vice Captain - Peter "Pat" Breslin

Senior League and Championship

The 1959 All-County League was run on a Divisional basis, with the St Connell's Cup taking over as the South-West section of the Democrat Cup competition. There were five teams in the section, Ardara, Kilcar, Dungloe, Glenties and Dunkineely. Ardara's only victories in the competition were against Dunkineely and Glenties at home.

Ardara 1-06 Dungloe 2-06

County champions Dungloe had a hard earned victory in the Senior Football Championship at Pearse Memorial Park, Ardara, on Sunday when defeating the homesters by 2-06 to 1-06. The game, played in appalling weather, provided spectators with a pulsating hour's football. The gale force wind confined play to one half of the field and the Dungloe full-back had the unusual experience of clearing the lines well, only to see the ball being blown back to the position from which he had kicked. Ardara had the breeze advantage in the first half and scored six points without reply. But for erratic marksmanship in the first quarter they would have been well ahead.

On the overall exchanges, however, there was nothing between the sides and an early second-half goal for the Dungloe side was a shot that might have been saved. It was not

until five minutes from the end that Dungloe led for the first time with a goal by John Campbell.

Referee for the match was Tommy Boyle, Ardara and the teams were:-

Ardara – Seamus McGee, Peter Breslin, Mick Herron (Glencoe), John Gavigan, Charlie Keeney, Patrick McGee, James McGinley, Hughie Bennett, Michael Keeney, Domhnall McBride, Hugh O'Donnell, Billy Maxwell, John Keeney, Thady Gallagher and Charlie O'Donnell (Clogher).

Sub – Charlie O'Donnell (Front St.) for Charlie Keeney.

Dungloe: O. Boyle, J. O'Donnell, P. Bonner, J. Boyle, J. O'Donnell, M. Ward, S. O'Donnell, P. Boyle, S. McGarvey, D. Murray, H. McGee, F. O'Donnell, J. McGovern, P. Boyle.

Referee: S. Duggan (Kilcar)

The home victory was reported in the Democrat on the 27th of February as follows.

Dungloe won the Division, defeating Kilcar 3-4 to 1-6 in the final at Ardara. In the 1959 South-West Championship, Kilcar were widely recognised as the team to beat. Along with Dungloe, they dominated the competition, defeating Ardara, Dunkineely and Glenties. It was a poor year for the Senior team, with the only highlight being victories over Dunkineely and Glenties. Kilcar went on to reach the

County final, only to be defeated by MacCumhaill's. The following report was carried on the Ardara v Dungloe Championship match.

The Schoolboys' League

The organising and administration of a Schoolboys' Football League originated from a number of factors in the Club, such as the exodus of so many Senior players and the failure to win any Senior competitions in recent years.

On the plus side, Schoolboy competitions were being organised in the South and East Divisions and successful Minor and Juvenile teams had been organised in Ardara in the previous decade. Schoolboy football was being played in every school in the Club area and families of boys became prominently associated with the game as players; such as the McNelis family (Peter Oliver, Eamon and Matt) of Meenavalley, the McGill family (Manus, Aidan and Declan) of Edergole, the Keeney family (John, Charlie, James, Michael, Packie and Kieran) of Glendowan, the O'Donnell family (Frank, James, Charlie and John Michael) of Leaconnell, the Bennett family (Alphonsus, Hughie and Charles) of Ardara, the Gildea family (Patsy, Brendan and Josie) of Crumlin; and many other families of boys who were available to participate in a parish league.

The Club, realising that the basics of Gaelic football would have to be acquired at schoolboy level, organised a league based on school teams – Meentinadea, managed by Eddie O'Donnell O.S. and John Keeney; Meenavalley by Peter "Pat" Breslin and Peter McGee; Brackey by Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill O.S.; Leaconnell by Danny Maloney and Jimmy B. McGrenra; Hillhead by Alphonsus Bennett and Tommy Boyle, and Drumbarron by Frankie Brennan. The League was organised in two sections, home and away, with the winners of each section playing the runners up in the other section. Section A comprised Ardara, Hillhead, Meentinadea and Beagh, and section B comprised Meenavalley, Brackey and Leaconnell. The League proved an outstanding success with a full complement of players engaged, enthusiastically aided and prompted by their parents and spectators at the various venues. The Hillhead N.S. won the league, when they defeated Meenavalley in a thrilling final, with the winners being presented with Corn Cuimhneacháin Sheáin Uí Chasaide.

The following is a list of players who took part in the League, with their respective teams:-

Leaconnell - Sean McGill, Charlie Maloney, Domhnall McGill, Patrick Joe McNelis, Sean O'Donnell (Meentaseask), Hughie Haughey, Frank O'Donnell, Charlie O'Donnell and John Gavigan.

Brackey - Aidan McGill, Jimmy O'Donnell (Aighe), Brian McGill, Patsy

McCabe, Denis Mulhern, Manus McGill, Cathal McGill, Packie J. McNelis, Paddy McGill and Peter Mulhern.

Hillhead - Fergus Sweeney, Frankie Herron (Glencoe), Sean Campbell, Colvin Baskin, Edward O'Donnell, Packie Boyle (Ard Conal), Paddy Shovlin (Coo), Willie Boyle (Tullycleave), Gerard Given and C. Harkin.

Beagh - P. McLoone, Paul Shovlin, D. Shovlin, T. McHugh, J. Boyle, Oliver Kennedy, Conal Fisher, Hugh Shovelin, E. Kennedy and Bill Shovlin.

Meenavalley - Peter McNelis, Matt McNelis, A. McNelis, Conal McLoone, Andy Mohan (Corker), John Breslin (Roughra), John McGettigan, John Gallagher, Michael Breslin, Mickey McGettigan, John O'Donnell (Multins), Eamon McNelis



The Hillhead schoolboys team who won the first Schoolboys Parish league.
Back L-R: Phonsie Bennett (manager), Peter Boyle, Colvin Baskin, Conal Mc Nelis,
Frankie Herron, Fergus Sweeney.
Front L-R: Edward O'Donnell, Sean Campbell, Gerard Given, Louis Boyle.



and Frank McGee.

Meetinadea - Packie Keeney, Dominic Gildea, John Herron (Glendowan), Sean Brennan, Tommy Gavigan, Packie Keeney (Crumlin), Pat Gallagher, Tony Breslin and J. Boyle.

Ardara - Jody Gallagher, Ronald Given, Enda Craig, Kieran



Ardara players Donal McBride and Michael Boyle (Narin) are pictured on this St Eunan's college team that was defeated in the 1958/59 Ulster Colleges Senior Final (McRory Cup) by Abbey C.B.S.

Back L-R: John Wilson (Cavan-Trainer), Michael Boyle, P. J McGroarty (Mountcharles), Andy O'Brien, Donal McBride, Austin Coughlan (Frosses), Colm McCole (Burtonport), Domhnall Ward (Killybegs), Peter (Dodo) Sweeney (Dungloe), Don Harte (Lifford)
Front L-R: Louis Kelly (Cloughaneely), Mick McGinley (Dunfanaghy), Ollie McIntyre (Glencolumbcille), Manus Joe McCafferty (Fanad), Michael McClafferty (Downings – capt), John Campbell (Dungloe), Manus Ward (Burtonport), Seamus Caldwell (Donegal Town), Joe O'Donnell (Dungloe)

McGill, Lochlann McGill, Tom Campbell, Frankie Campbell, Patsy Gildea (Drimaha) and John Gallagher (Drimaha).

Michael Keeney- Played midfield for Donegal Minors in the 1959 Ulster Championship. Charles O'Donnell (Narin) also played on the team that defeated Monaghan in the first round, but was defeated by Cavan in the Ulster semi-final.

Kilcar 0-08 Ardara 0-02

Before a good attendance at Pearse Memorial Park a well balanced Kilcar fifteen defeated Ardara in the Minor Football Championship. Play was of a high standard but Kilcar were a much fitter team and had the better of the exchanges throughout. They had fine players in J. Doherty, D. Hegarty, D. Ward, Paddy O'Donnell, Leo Murray and Josie Gillespie, Ardara's outstanding players were - Michael Keeney, Charlie O'Donnell, John Herron, Nicholas McGill, J. McGill and J. O'Donnell.

Ardara - J O'Donnell, John McNelis, James McGinley, John Herron, Joseph Brennan, E Cunningham, Bart Whelan, Michael Keeney, Charlie O'Donnell (0-02), D Sweeney, J McGill, Nicholas McGill, Brendan McBride, J O'Donnell and J. Hamilton.

Kilcar - Mickey Haughey, Jimmy Cunningham, J Doherty, D. Hegarty, B. Byrne, D. Ward, J. O'Donnell, Leo Murray (0-01), Josie Gillespie (0-05), Paddy O'Donnell (0-01), Conal McGinley, Aodh O'Donnell (0-01), Sean Burke, Conal Gillespie and P. Byrne.



No Under-Age success

The lack of success at Senior level was echoed in the Under-Age ranks that year. The Juvenile team reached the divisional final, but Glenties were the victors and they advanced to the County semi-final, where they were defeated by St Nauls. The Minor team had no success in the Iniskeel Cup competition, which was won by Glenties, who defeated Kilcar. In the Championship, the team did not advance either and the

following defeat against Kilcar was reported in the Democrat.

Pat Brennan, who played for Donegal in the 1959 Ulster Championship and was a younger brother of Frankie, was a substitute on the 1952 Minor Championship winning team, and went on to star at midfield on the 1954 team that won the



Club's second title. He played for the County Junior team in 1955 and played for the County Senior team on several occasions between 1955 and 1960. Pictured above shows the top sprinters at the event. Back: Sean Mc Kenna (Letterkenny) runner-up County 200 yds; Eddie Doherty, runner-up South West 100 yds Championship. Front: Pádraig De Faoite (Letterkenny) 200 yds County Champion; Páckie Haughey (Kilgar) South West 100 yds Champion. Photo shows Hughie Bennett and Páckie McGinley standing with Eddie Doherty and James McGinley. The lads teamed up with Neil Brennan (Dungloe), Sean O hÉinne (Glen) to win the 7 a side competition at the sports.

Photos taken at the sports
in Glen in 1959

Corn Dhomhnaill Mhic a'Bháird

Following the decision of the Club to purchase a cup to donate in the memory of the late Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, it was decided at a meeting in July 1959, that the Domhnall Mac a'Bháird Perpetual Cup would be presented to the Donegal County Board, for the winners of the County Minor Football Championship. A sub-committee had been set up by the Club, in late 1958, to secure the funds necessary for its purchase.

There was a report by Mr. Tommy Boyle, Treasurer, on the work of the sub-committee. After a long delay and many disappointments, he had succeeded in purchasing a cup, of a type and design that the sub-committee had been looking for; it was now in his possession and bore the inscription in Irish lettering.

It was decided on the proposal of Mr. Boyle, seconded by Mr. Domhnall Whelan, O.S., that the trophy be presented to the Donegal County Board, for presentation

Tommy Boyle, Greenhouse.

Joe (Larry) Gallagher.

P.J. McGill, (Woodhouse).

Vincent McConnell.

John Gallagher,(West End).

Paddy Gildea (Saddler).

Charles O'Donnell Hillhead.

Charles Keeney.

Phonsie Bennett.

Hugh Bennett.

Michael Boyle, Maghera.

James O'Donnell, West End.

Danny Haughey, Kentucky.

Francie Diver, West End.

Packie Kelly.

Con Gillespie.

Kieran McCready, Dublin.

Tommy Given, Hillhead.

J. V. Herron, Main St.

John Boyle (Neddy), London.

Canon Boyce.

Andy Meehan, Loughros Point.

John Byrne, Nesbitt Arms.

Kevin Given, Hillhead.

J.J. McHugh.

John Keeney.

Peter (Pat) Breslin.

Tommy Ward.

Eddie O'Donnell.

Sean Gildea, Carrickatsleave.

Joe Carroll, Letterkenny.

Rev. A. Arnold.

Patrick Gildea (Pub).

Frankie Brennan.

Dónal Whelan.

P. Boyle, London.

Charlie Gildea, (Tailor).

Packie McGinley, Kentucky.

Johnny Gallagher.

Leo Howley.

John O'Donnell, (Grocer).

John N. O'Donnell.

Ted Breslin.

John Sharpe.

Christopher Gildea.

Owenie Boyle, (Rosses Bakery).

William Boyle, Kentucky.

Louis Walsh, Glenties.

P. J. Gildea, Doohill.
Paddy Herron, Edergole.
Jack McGill, Maghera.
Mick Kennedy.
Joe Breslin, Hillhead.
James Gallagher, West End.
Jim Maxwell, Ardara.
Conal Boyle, Dooey.
P. S. Mac a’Ghoill, Edergole.
Teague Breslin, Ardara.
Pat Boyle, Ulster Bank.
John ‘The Tae’ Gallagher.
James O’Donnell Jun, West End.
Francie Gallagher, Publican.

Joseph Breslin, Magumna.
Hugh Shovlin, Ard Connell.
Pat Molloy, Glenties.
Davy Brennan, Glenties.
Danny Boyle, Glenties.
John Byrne, Sandfield.
John Joe Campbell, (Woodhill)
Hugh Daly, Ballyshannon.
John Boyle, Greenhouse.
Packie McCafferty.
Tom Moore, Bridgetown.
Peter McGee, Drimaha.
Paddy Kennedy, Aclare, Sligo.

each year to the winners of the Donegal Minor Football Championship. There was

C.L.G. Fo-Cumann Ard An Rátha - Balance Sheet – 1959

Income	L	s	d	Expenditure	L	d	d
Membership	2	5	0	Ins., Affiliation/Entrance Fee	4	16	0
Credit Balance from Bazaar	33	0	1	Pd B. Maxwell days work at			
Annual Club Collection	14	1	0	hay for injured player	1	0	0
Credit Bal. from 4 Ceilidhes	46	6	9	Pd W. Young Mowing Field	1	6	0
Draw on Kichen Tea Set	18	14	2	Laundry	0	11	0
10 Week Silver Circle	104	8	11	Courthouse Rent - Meetings	0	15	0
1958 Credit Balance	14	0	5	4 (Size 4) Footballs for			
Gate Receipts	39	18	8	Schools Parish League	5	5	0
				Mass Offering - Dan Ward	0	10	0
	£272	15	0	One Pair of Football Boots	1	19	0
				One Football	3	7	6
				Secretary Expenses		12	3
				Hall Rent - Dancing Classes	5	17	6
				Advertising for Annual Ceili	1	0	0
				Loss on Annual Ceili held	4	1	2
				Catering	9	0	0
				Travelling Expenses	53	13	0
				Credit Balance	£179	1	7
Total	272	15	0		£272	015	0

unanimous agreement on this proposal. There was further agreement that the

Secretary of the Donegal County Board be notified of the Club's intention to present this trophy at the next County Board meeting, and to request that the first Minor football final at which the cup would be presented, would be played in Ardara.

The following people were recorded as those who donated the funds necessary to purchase the new trophy.

Important events from the fifties

- 1950** Korea: General Mac Arthur takes over United Nation Forces.
- 1951** Dr. Noel Brown announces details of his 'Mother and Child' health scheme.
- 1952** The Aer Lingus plane St. Kevin crashes in Wales killing all twenty-three people on board.
- 1953** The Health Act provides free Mother and Child services.
- 1954** Brendan Behan's 'Quare Fellow' is performed for the first time in Dublin.
- 1955** First transmission of television in Ireland broadcast from Divis in Co. Antrim.
- 1956** Ronnie Delaney wins a gold medal for the 1500 metres in the Olympic games in Melbourne.
- 1957** De Valera re-elected Taoiseach with his greatest ever majority.
- 1958** The Treaty of Rome establishes the E.E.C.
- 1959** Seán Lemass becomes Taoiseach.

The Sixties

Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí

Ba chinneadh fíorthábhachtach agus fadradharcach é tús a chur le sraith peile idir na scoileanna sa pharóiste i 1959. I gcionn blianta beaga bhí a thoradh le sonrú nuair a bhuaigh an fhoireann faoi 14 Craobh an Chontae i 1962

The swinging sixties arrived, and a new decade brought new hope after the fifties had promised so much and delivered so little. Four Divisional Championships were garnered but the elusive County Senior Championship, which had eluded the Club since 1928 was still a far off dream. Nevertheless, though small in numbers, the hard working officers kept the Club alive in what was to be the most difficult period ever experienced by the G.A.A in the Parish. No Club member had played for Donegal in the Ulster Senior Championship since Frankie Brennan in 1956, and any players who had shown promise of altering this statistic were usually grabbed by emigration. Prominent players who had departed in 1959 included Packie Maguire, Billy Maxwell, Hughie Bennett, James McGinley, Seamus McGee, Seamus Aodh McGill, John McHugh, Myles McHugh and Michael Keeney. But the organising of the Schoolboy Parish League in 1959 was a decision which would pay great dividends for the Club at Under-Age level throughout the sixties and lay the foundations for future successes at adult level.

The following officers were elected for 1960:-

President	-	Fr. A. Arnold
Chairman	-	Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill
Vice Chairman	-	Tommy Boyle
Secretary	-	John Keeney
Ass. Secretary	-	Donal Whelan
Treasurer	-	Frankie Brennan
Ass. Treasurers	-	John Keeney

Senior Team Captain - Pat McGee with Vice Captain Eddie O'Donnell, O.S.

Selection Committee were - P. J. McGill, Tommy Boyle and Frankie Brennan.

Gate Stewards were - John Brogan, William Boyle, Vincent McConnell, Phonsie Bennett, P. S. Mac a'Ghoill and Frankie Brennan.

At a Club meeting on the 22nd April, 1960, it was decided unanimously, on a proposal by Tommy Boyle and seconded by Frankie Brennan, that a new cup be assigned to the Schoolboys League in Ardara which was to be named "Corn Cuimhneacháin Sheáin Uí Chasaide.



Gerald Given pictured with Corn Sheáin Uí Chasaide after the Hillhead schools victory in the 1959/60 Parish League.

It was further agreed that a medal be presented to the outstanding player of the Schoolboys League for 1959-1960, Peter Oliver McNelis, and that the presentation of all other medals be made by the Chairman at a function in the Iona Hall at a later date.



Pictured above is the Brackey School team from 1960 who competed in the Schoolboy League.

Back L-R: Denis Mulhern, Peter Mulhern, Patsy McCabe James O'Donnell, P.J. Mc Nelis, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill

Front L-R: Manus McGill, Paddy McGill, Brian McGill, Cathal McGill, Aidan McGill

Invitation From Derry Schoolboys Club

The Secretary read a letter, received by the Chairman from Mr. Mc Loughlin of the Derry Schoolboys' Club, requesting a game or games for U-13 and U-15 years old schoolboys with Ardara. It was agreed that Ardara would entertain the Derry Schoolboy football team, in Ardara. The Secretary was instructed to inform the Derry Club of the Ardara decision and also to explain the administration of Schoolboy competitions in Ardara.

At a meeting on the 14th May it was decided to hold a Schoolboys trial on the 18th May in preparation for the visit of the Derry Schoolboy teams. It was also decided to meet a request from the South-West Donegal Agricultural and Industrial Show Society for a game on the Show Day, with Ballyshannon Schoolboys, on the second Wednesday in August. The Chairman and Secretary were commissioned to organise these matches.

A small report on the Under-13 match was carried in the Ardara notes in the Democrat.

At the Pearse Memorial Park on Sunday a selection from Derry met a selection from Ardara in an Under-13 challenge game, which drew a moderate attendance. The teams were evenly matched throughout and although Ardara were winners by the narrow margin of one point, a draw would have been a fitting decision.

*The Final score was Derry 2-4 Ardara 2-5
Scorers for Ardara were: T. Campbell (2-2)
Gerard Given (0-1), Patsy Gildea (0-1),
Matt McNelis (0-1)*

The Ardara team was as follows

John Gavigan (Leaconnell), Dominic Gildea

*(Meentinadea), Conal McNelis (Ardara),
Enda Craig (Ardara), Cathal McGill
(Brackey), Hughie Haughey (Leaconnell),
Sean Brennan (Meentinadea), Packie
Keeney (Meentinadea), Edward O'Donnell
(Ardara), Manus McGill (Brackey), Eamon
McNelis (Meenavalley), Matt McNelis
(Meenavalley), Tom Campbell (Ardara),
Patsy Gildea (Ardara), Gerard Given
(Ardara). Subs: Frank McGhee
(Meenavalley), P.J. McNelis (Brackey),
Sean Campbell (Ardara), Brian McGill
(Brackey)*

Mac a'Bháird Cup Presented to the County Board

A beautiful solid silver cup, a replica of the Ardagh Chalice, was presented to Donegal County Board, at their meeting on Friday night 10th June, 1960, by Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, O.S., on behalf of the Ardara Club. The Cup had been presented to perpetuate the memory of the late Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, a former County Official for many years, and would be designated to the Minor County Football Championship. As a token of appreciation, the Board decided that year's Minor County football final would be played in Ardara.

Speaking in Irish and English, Mr. McGill said they were all aware of the amount of work done by the late Domhnall Mac a'Bháird for the Association in the County.

His Club had decided that the most fitting way to perpetuate his memory would be in the presentation of this memorial cup to the County Board. It was their view that the cup should be presented each year to the winners of the County Minor Championship, as the late Domhnall Mac a'Bháird had done much for the youth and had been greatly interested in their progress. The Ardara Club also felt that the first County final at which the Cup would be presented should be played at Ardara but they were only making that request. He took the opportunity to thank all those associated with the occasion for their cooperation.

The County Chairman, Sergeant P. Gill, G.S, in accepting the cup, thanked the Ardara Club on behalf of the County Board. The late Domhnall Mac a'Bháird was known throughout Donegal as a man who had given life-long service to the Association and this was a fitting way to commemorate his memory. The County Board was grateful to the Ardara Club for presenting the Cup and it was fitting that it should be set aside for the Minor competition.

Mr. Danny Boyle, Glenties, County Treasurer, said he wished to be associated with the Chairman's remarks. He knew that it would have been Domhnall Mac a'Bháird's wish to have the cup donated for Minor football.

Mr. Hugh Daly, Ballyshannon, County Secretary, also joined in the tributes and said the Ardara Club was to be congratulated too on the success of their inter-schools competition. He had a letter recently from a lady in the county who was associated with the Gaelic movement for a long-time. She asked him to bring it to the notice of the County Board that not enough was being done for the schoolboy players, who in certain areas were being weaned from Gaelic games to Soccer. That was something the Clubs should be active about. The Ardara Club had done commendable work; so had MacCumhail's and the De La Salle Brothers at Ballyshannon. There were a few other areas too, but not enough was being done.

Mr. S. J. O' Boyle, Convoy, seconded by Mr. D. Brennan, Glenties, proposed that the first Minor final at which the cup would be competed for, be played at Ardara. Mr. John McDermott, Ballyshannon, said it was only fair that the game should be at Ardara and this was agreed to unanimously.

The question of re-allocating the 'Mayo Cup' which was the trophy for the Championship, was left over. Mr. John Kelly, Falcarragh, said the County Board could go into the question of other new trophies that would need to be replaced. Some of the trophies were a disgrace, he said. His Club had got a Junior Cup with

one handle off it. The Chairman said it could be raised by motion at the next Convention.



Corn Cuimhneacháin Dhomhnall Mhic a'Bháird, which was presented to the County Board for the County Minor Football Championship.

The first final at which the cup was awarded was held in Pearse Memorial Park in September that year, with Gweedore becoming the first winners of the cup, defeating Dungloe in the final by 2-3 to 1-5. Tommy Boyle refereed the match.



Photo shows Jimmy O'Donnell, John Byrne and James Keeney. This photo was taken in Dublin the day before the 1960 National League Final, the day Corn Dhomhnall Mhic a'Bháird was collected from the silversmith's.

South-West Senior Championship

The 1960 South-West Senior Championship was a small affair. Dunkineely and Glenties had regraded to Junior, which left Kilcar, Ardara and Dungloe the only teams taking part.

Ardara's first match was an away game with Kilcar, in Towney, with the Minor team also meeting the same opposition the previous week.

Kilcar do double over Ardara ***SFC Kilcar 3-6 Ardara 1-2*** ***MFC Kilcar 3-10 Ardara 0-2***

Within a few days, Kilcar scored a double success over Ardara in the Senior and Minor football Championships at Towney Park. In a midweek game Kilcar Minors had a 3-10 to 0-2 win while in the Senior Championship on Sunday they followed up with a 3-6 to 1-2 win.

So far as the Minor game was concerned, it was mainly one-way traffic, for Kilcar scored a much easier win than had been anticipated, leading by 2-4 to 0-0 at the interval.

Kilcar had sound defensive players in Ian Hegarty, Paddy O'Donnell and Sean Boyle, while Patsy O'Donnell, Bruckless and Connie Hegarty were well in command in midfield, with all six forwards being well on the mark.

For Ardara, Brendan McBride, John McNelis, John Boyle, Conal Maguire, Peter and John McNelis and Neil Boyle were well to the fore.

Kilcar 3-6 Ardara 1-2

After an exciting and thrill packed first half, which left the visitors' supporters in jubilant mood, with the issue at level pegging at the interval, Kilcar, the Democrat Cup holders, maintained their winning sequence by recording a convincing victory over Ardara in their Dr Maguire Cup tie on Sunday. Not only did the homesters monopolise the exchanges through the second half, but they left their opposition scoreless in that period.

The homesters almost completely

dominated exchanges after the first five minutes of the second half, and so clear cut was their superiority in the second quarter, that they never looked like losing their lead any time afterwards.

Kilcar proved to be the fitter and faster combination, were keener on the ball, and their various departments combined well, and were never in any trouble in the second moiety against an Ardara side which laboured hard, without achieving anything like their opponents precision as well as swift and lively co-operation.

Under referee John Diver (Gweedore) the teams were

Kilcar: Mickey Haughey, Jimmy Cunningham, Sean McGuinness, Seamus McNulty, Packie Haughey, Charlie Brady, Ian Hegarty, Eamon Browne, James Ward, Prionnsias Carr. Sean O'Donnell, Leo Murray, Joseph Boyle, Sean Doogan and Connie Cunningham.

Ardara: Alphonsus Bennett, Phil McHugh, Peter Breslin, John Keeney, Pat McGee, Conal Maguire, Paddy O'Donnell, Seamus Aodh McNelis, P.J. McGroarty (Leagan), Dan Shovlin, Hugh O'Donnell, James Keeney, John Herron, Patsy Gildea, Raymond Brennan.

Byrne, D. Ward, J. O'Donnell, Leo Murray (0-01), Josie Gillespie (0-05), Paddy O'Donnell (0-01), Conal McGinley, Aodh O'Donnell (0-01), Sean Burke, Conal Gillespie and P. Byrne.

Further games against Dungloe, home and away, and Kilcar at home, brought no improvement and the team went out of the Championship at an early stage. Dungloe went on to win the Division by defeating Kilcar in the final. The only victory of the year for the Senior team was in the St Connell's Cup against Glenties.

Ardara's impressive victory Ardara 3-6 Glenties 1-2

Ardara scored their first win in the St Connell's Cup competition when they defeated Glenties 3-6 to 1-2. Glenties fielded a much depleted side than that of 1959. Short John McDyre, C. Boyle and M. McLoone who have emigrated, and John O'Donnell who was unable to turn out. They put up a good fight however in the first half and turned over only two points in arrears. Ardara fielding all available players, gave a much improved display on recent outings, particularly in the second half, when they chalked up two goals and three points to a Glenties reply of two points.

On the whole the standard of football was low for inter-Club Senior football, but what was lacking in this respect was amply compensated by earnest, honest to goodness football, so that a good attendance of spectators were treated to an interesting encounter for three quarters of the hour.

Ardara were well served in goal by Alphonsus Bennett (usually a left full back). Newcomer D. Breslin did well at full back as did Peter Breslin, whose good defensive work caught the eye. Others who caught the attention were John Herron, John Keeney

and newcomers, Conal Maguire, and John McNelis. At centre field they were well served by Pat McGee who had his best game to date as also had John Gavigan. In the forwards

Hugh O'Donnell, particularly in the second half, and Eddie Doherty who got through a vast amount of work. For Glenties J. Earley, C Bonner and P. Keeney were very good, while E. Melly had a very sound game and fielded well. Others who did well were the Craig brothers, T. Bonner, J. Mc Kelvey and J. Ward, while C. Keeney, recently transferred from Ardara also gave his best performance to date.

The teams were:

Ardara: Alphonsus Bennett, John McNelis, D. Breslin, Peter Breslin, John Herron, John Keeney, Conal Maguire, John Gavigan, Pat McGee, John Keeney, Hugh O'Donnell, Eddie Doherty, John McGroarty, Patsy Gildea (tailor) and B O'Donnell.

Glenties: M. Mc Loone, J. Early, C. Bonner, J. Browne, P. Keeney, T. Bonner, C. Keeney, P. Bonner, E. Melly, T. Craig, M. Coll, P. Bonner, and J. Mc Kelvey.

Referee: Tommy Boyle of Ardara

Glenties avenged this defeat in the next round of the competition and another defeat to Kilcar ended the team's interest in the competition.

The Minor team exited the Championship following a second defeat to Kilcar in the home leg. In the Iniskeel Cup competition defeats to Dungloe and Glenties saw the team finish their competitive action for the year. Two Club players, however made the County Minor team for the Ulster Championship match v Monaghan. Michael Boyle (Narin) was full back, while Charles O'Donnell (Narin) was midfield on the team that lost to Monaghan in the first round.

The Juvenile team was drawn against Kilcar in the first round of the Championship.

At Pearse Park, Ardara the home side met Kilcar in the first round of the Juvenile Championship. The football was of a very low standard. Kilcar had the better of the exchanges in the first half and led at the turn over ten points to nil. In the second half Ardara settled down, and opened the score with a well taken goal by O' Donnell. From the kick-out Kilcar went into the attack and forced a fourteen yard free, which P. Byrne sent over the bar. The same player had three more points before Ardara forced three frees which John McNelis sent over, leaving the full time score Kilcar 3-5 Ardara 1-3

The teams under M. Erskine (Kilcar) were

Ardara: John Joe Doherty, Patrick Gallagher, John McNelis, Frank McGill, John Boyle, John Boyle, Joseph Kennedy, Conal McNelis, Peter McNelis, Hugh McHugh, Edward O'Donnell, Dan Shovlin, John Gallagher, Tommy O'Donnell. (Only 14 players listed)

Kilcar:B. Boyle, S. Boyle, H. Hegarty, P. Cannon, M. O'Donnell, S. Boyle, T. Hegarty, P. Moloney, E. Murray, J. Cannon, J. Byrne, M. Byrne, P. Byrne, J. Smith, and C. Cunningham.



This photograph was taken in the Galtymore ballroom in London in 1960. It shows many players of the 50s who had to emigrate to England in search of employment.

Back L-R: Vincent McConnell, Niall Gallagher, Charlie Keeney, James Keeney, Joseph Gallagher, Conal Melly, Jimmy O'Donnell, Josie Melly, Danny Mulhern, John McShane, James McGinley.

Front L-R: Anna Haughey (Leagan), Evelyn Campbell, Phylis Keeney, Mary Gallagher (Tullyhoniver-Glenties)

1961-Club regrades to Junior

It was a time for tough decisions in the Club with the start of 1961. The Club had been taking part in the Senior Championship since its foundation in 1921 and were the only Club in the South-West division who had been ever present in the competition. Results in recent years had been poor and the performance in the 1960 Championship had been the worst for a long number of years. The matter was discussed at the A.G.M. of the Club which was held on the 26th of February. The Rúnaí, John Keeney, presented his report, which was detailed and thought-provoking. In dealing with the results of the Championship teams in all grades, it made dismal reading – no trophies won, and lack of enthusiasm at training. The Senior team had failed miserably to Dungloe and Kilcar and, as a result of this debacle, the Secretary proposed, that following defeats in the St Connell's Cup to Dungloe and Glenties, the Club should enter Junior ranks for 1961. Emigration had claimed Senior players, John Gavigan, Sean Gildea, James Keeney, Danny Breslin, Donal McBride, Charlie O'Donnell (Narin) and a number of promising Minors who participated in the Iniskeel Cup competition without success. The Juveniles had the honour of winning the South-West Divisional Championship after a lean five years. The proposal to re-grade to Junior was passed at the meeting and for the first time since the founding of the Club, the Ardara team would not be taking part in the Donegal Senior Football Championship.

The Schoolboy competition was in its second year and, after entertaining contests between five teams, was eventually won by Hillhead, who defeated Meenavalley. The Club Schoolboys had some outstanding results against Kilraine, Ballyshannon and Derry. As of then (January 1961) the League was continuing apace. The Secretary concluded by saying the following, "*I would like to put on record that we presented Corn Cuimhneacháin Dhomhnaill Mhic a'Bháird to the Donegal County Board for the Minor Football Championship. The Trophy was won by Gweedore who defeated Dungloe in the final in Pearse Memorial Park and was presented by the Club Chairman*".

He ended by thanking all those who helped the Club during the year and congratulated all those who were married in 1960. The Treasurer, Frankie Brennan, reported the Club in a healthy financial position, with a profit of £40 on the year's workings and a substantial credit balance, some of which was invested in Prize Bonds. He paid tribute to the work of the previous Treasurer, Tommy Boyle, who had run such a successful Silver Circle and other functions. The meeting agreed to a request from the Treasurer that the sum of £100 be deposited in a Post Office account.

The Chairman complimented the Secretary on his fine report and for his outstanding work during the year. He said "*Never before have we had such a fine bunch of officials and I can safely say that they are the finest in the County. During the year we have set a headline for other Clubs to follow with the establishing of the Schoolboys' League, which is a great success. We have also presented the County Board with two cups, the Seán Ó Casaide Cup and the Domhnall Mac a'Bháird Cup, which is a replica of the Ardagh Chalice, and is one of the finest in the County to-day*".

The Club had for a few years been looking for another suitable field, as the Pearse Memorial Park was very swampy in wet weather and was getting extremely hard to maintain. Tommy Boyle, speaking on the proposition of acquiring a new field said, that at the moment there was little support coming from the people of the town and he appealed to them to come together to see if anything could be done. "If in the near future we get a suitable pitch it will be the people of the town who will benefit" he said.

Other items discussed were:-

That all Club teams be insured in future. This was proposed by Frankie Brennan and seconded by Vincent McConnell. (Only the Senior team had been insured previously).

That a Ceili be run in the Iona Hall with the proceeds going towards buying medals for the winners of the Schoolboy Leagues.

The following Officers were elected for 1961:-

President	- Fr Anthony Arnold C.C
Chairman	- Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill, O.S
Vice Chairmen	- Tommy Boyle, Frankie Brennan, Donal Whelan O.S.and Eddie O'Donnell, O.S.
Secretary	- Seán Ó Cianaigh
Ass Secretary	- Donal Whelan, O.S.
Treasurer	- Frankie Brennan
Senior Team Captain	- Peter Breslin
Vice Captain	- Eddie Doherty

Selection Committee - Frankie Brennan, Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill, Tommy Boyle, John Keeney and Peter Breslin.

Delegates to County Convention - Frankie Brennan, Tommy Boyle, John Keeney, Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill, John Byrne, Donal Whelan, O.S., Charlie O'Donnell, Alphonsus Bennett and Eddie Doherty.



Peter Pat Breslin who was elected Senior team captain for 1961. Peter was one of the great servants of the Club in the 1950s and '60s both on and off the field. Peter first played for the Senior team in 1953. His usual position was as a corner back in early years, but he eventually moved out to centre half back, where he gave many fine displays. He was known for his great positional sense, his fierce determination to win and an intense pride in the Club jersey. He also served on many Club committees down the years. Peter emigrated to England in the sixties effectively ending his Club career. His interest in the fortunes of the Club never diminished however, and he was particularly happy to receive the Club Hall of Fame award in 1999, shortly before his death.

Schoolboys' Leagues -1961

The first Club activity in 1961 was the continuation of the Schoolboy Leagues, which usually commenced in September/October period after the schools returned from their summer break, the schools involved being - Brackey, Leaconnell, Ardara, Meenavalley, Meentinadea and Hillhead. Games were played at various locations around the Parish, although the majority were held in Pearse Memorial Park.

The following Reports of school matches are taken from the Democrat of that year.

In the second round of the Schools League competition, Hillhead beat Ardara at Pearse Park on a score of 4-03 to 1-02. Although played in adverse weather conditions the game had some good passages of football. The teams and scorers under referee Tommy Boyle were as follows:-

Hillhead - Willie Boyle, Conal McNelis, Sean Campbell, Edward O'Donnell (1-01), Bart McHugh, Gerard Given (2-01), Conal Hugh Sweeney, Conal Fisher (Hillhead) and John Boyle.

Ardara - Lochlann McGill, M. Gallagher, Cormac Gallagher, Enda Craig, Tom Campbell (0-01), Patsy Gildea (1-01), John Gallagher, Phonsie Friel and Frankie Campbell

At the Pearse Memorial Park on Sunday last (2nd April), Meenavalley (2-1) again drew with Leaconnell (1-4) in the replay of the Schools League game. These games are providing a lot of entertainment and are keenly contested before a large following of football fans. The teams and scorers under referee Tommy Boyle were:

Meenavalley - Frank McGhee (1-00), Liam Furey (1-00), Matt McNelis (0-01), Michael Breslin, Brian Gallagher, Andy McNelis, Mick McGettigan, Andy Mohan and A McGill.

Leaconnell - Charlie Maloney (0-01), Frank O'Donnell (1-03), Peter McGill, Hughie Haughey, Donal McGill, John Gavigan,

James Brendan O'Donnell, Sean O'Donnell (Meentnaseask) and Charlie O'Donnell. Prominent for Meenavalley were Frank McGhee, Andy Mohan, Liam Furey and A McNelis,

Prominent for Leaconnell were Frank O'Donnell, Peter McGill, John Gavigan, Charlie Maloney and Hughie Haughey.

In the first semi-final of the Schools League played at the Pearse Memorial Park Ardara, Meenavalley had a decisive win over Ardara, defeating them 4-04 to 1-02. Teams and scorers were:-

Meenavalley - Frank McGhee (2-03), Matt McNelis (1-01), Tony Breslin (1-00). Michael Breslin, Eamon McNelis, Mick McGettigan, Andy Mohan, Liam Furey and F. Gallagher.

Ardara - Patsy Gildea (1-01), Enda Craig

(0-01), Cormac Gallagher, P. Shovlin, John Gallagher, Frankie Campbell, Josie Gildea, Lochlann McGill and Rory O'Donnell.

Prominent for Meenavalley were Frank McGhee, A. McNelis, Matt McNelis and Andy Mohan.

Prominent for Ardara were Enda Craig, Patsy Gildea, Cormac Gallagher and Frankie Campbell.

Referee was Alphonsus Bennett

At Cashel Park on Sunday, Hillhead had a decisive win over Meenavalley in the final of the Schools League competition. The score was 9-03 to 0-06. The Meenavalley boys deserve great credit for the wonderful display they gave against a team that in most sections had the height and weight advantage. The teams and scorers under Referee, Tommy Boyle were:

Hillhead - Conal McNelis, Willie Boyle, Sean Campbell (1-00), Edward O'Donnell (3-02), Bart McHugh (1-00) Gerard Given (3-01), John Boyle (1-00), Conal Fisher, Charlie Sweeney, Colvin Baskin, and Tommy Boyle. Manager of the team was Phonsie Bennett.

Meenavalley - Eamon McNelis (0-05), Matt McNelis (0-01), Andy Mohan, Anthony Breslin (Glen Quarry), Michael Breslin, D. O'Donnell, Brian Gallagher, Mickey McGettigan, Frank McGhee and Liam Furey. Manager of the team was Peter "Pat" Breslin.

Prominent for Hillhead were Conal McNelis, Sean Campbell, Gerard Given, Edward O'Donnell and Conal Fisher

Prominent for Meenavalley were Eamon McNelis, Matt McNelis, Andy Mohan and Frank McGhee.

At a Club meeting held on the 27th of May, 1961, it was decided, after the final of the Schools League, in which Hillhead defeated Meenavalley at Ardara, that the competition should, on a suggestion from John Keeney, be run as a Championship in double League form and a new set of rules to apply. Section A would consist of Hillhead, Brackey and Leaconnell. Section B consisting of Ardara, Meenavalley and Meentinadea. Each team was to get a grant of 30/- for the purchase of footballs.

In this Championship, which was run in the months of October and November of

1961, Meenavalley emerged winners, after defeating Leaconnell on a 1-6 to 0-8 scoreline. The teams that competed in the final were as follows:

Meenavalley: Liam Furey, Eamon McNelis, Brian Gallagher, Christy Gallagher, Danny O'Donnell, Andy Mohan, Matt McNelis, Michael Breslin, Anthony Breslin, Michael Gatens

Leaconnell: Peter McGill, Donal McGill, Frankie O'Donnell, Charlie O'Donnell, Joseph O'Donnell, John Gavigan, James O'Donnell, John M. O'Donnell, Charlie Maloney.

Some of the other line outs were as follows.

Ardara (West End): Lochlann Mc Gill, Cormac Gallagher, Martin Gallagher, Pat Shovelin, Enda Craig, Frankie Campbell, Patsy Gildea, Josie Gildea, Jody Gallagher, Rory O'Donnell, Tom Campbell.

Meentinadea: Packie Keeney, Jim Keeney, Charles Breslin, Thomas Gavigan, Sean Brennan, Dominic Gildea, Tony Breslin, Hugh Diver, Anthony Diver, Tom Gallagher, Kieran Keeney, James Watters.

Brackey: John Martin McConnell, Peter Mulhern, P.J. McNelis, Manus McGill, Paddy McGill, Brian McGill, Aidan McGill, Sean Mc Gill, John Mc Nelis, Peadar McConnell.

The success of the Leagues gave rise to the Club looking to play other clubs to give their own players a chance of wearing the Club jersey, and games were organised against Killybegs, Glenties, a Derry selection and MacCumhaill's. The following report of the MacCumhaill's match was carried in the Democrat.

A friendly Schoolboys game between Ardara and Sean MacCumhaill's played at MacCumhaill Park on Sunday last after the Senior Championship match provided a high standard of football. The result was a win for Ardara on a score of 3-04 to 2-01. MacCumhaill's had the upper hand in the early stages but their defence cracked under spirited Ardara pressure towards the end. The visitors, whose positional play and fielding were very good, eventually proved the winners.

Ardara - Lochlann McGill, Cormac Gallagher, Eamon McNelis, Sean Campbell, Enda Craig, Peter O'Donnell, Cathal McGill, Edward O'Donnell, Manus

McGill, Patsy Gildea (0-01), Tom Campbell, Peter McGill, Matt McNelis, John Gavigan (0-01) and Gerard Given (1-01)

MacCumhaill's: D. Scully, P. McCafferty, J. Foy (0-1), N. Henderson, E. Gallagher, J. Murray, P McClean, D. Ward, S. Quinn (1-0), P. McDevitt, M. McMenamin(1-0), B. Tinney, P.J. McArdle, C.McGonigle, T. Mc Ardle.

For the winners, Campbell was good in defence, while Cathal McGill, Edward O'Donnell, Tom Campbell, John Gavigan and Gerard Given were also among the best.

Praise at South-West Board

The success of the Club Leagues was the envy of other clubs, all over the county. So much so that after a South-West Board meeting on the 27th October, 1961, the following was reported in the Democrat.

On the proposal of Seamus Rogers, Rannafast, seconded by Tony Doherty, the £10 allocated by the County Board to each Divisional Board for the promotion of School games was given to the Ardara Club. Mr. Rogers stated that the Ardara Club were most entitled to the money as they had been promoting school games for the last two years. Mr P. J. McGill, O.S., Ardara, said that these school games should be extended to every Club area as they are a great means of teaching the finer points of

the game and by doing so they would eventually have a County team to win the All Ireland. Continuing, Mr. McGill said that he had read in a paper where the captain of the Offaly team won a medal when he was only ten years of age. The boys who took part in the Ardara Schools competition for the past two years and went on to secondary school, found that they could stand their own against boys from all over Ireland.

At the 1961 South-West Convention, the Secretary, Mr. P. J. McGill, in his report stated - *"Once again Ardara have given the lead to the Division in the matter of running Schools competitions and have taken part in challenge matches against other schools from outside the division. They are deserving of the highest praise and will undoubtedly reap the rewards when these young players start to appear as Minors, Juniors and Seniors"*.

The following motion submitted by the Ardara Club was passed at the meeting:-

"That a committee be formed from the School Clubs of the County, subject to the Donegal County Committee G.A.A. controlling the organisation and directing of its activities, and acting as a selection committee for inter-County competitions"

This motion went on to be passed at the County Convention and led to the setting up of the County Primary Schools Board of which Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill was the first Chairman, a position he held until 1969, when the County Minor Board was formed to oversee all Under-Age football within the County.



The 1961 Club Schoolboy (Under 14) team pictured with managers Phonsie Bennett and John Keeney

Back L-R: Phonsie Bennett, Manus McGill Hughie Haughey, Hugh McHugh, Tom Campbell, Conal McNelis, Enda Craig, Sean Brennan, Sean Campbell Frank McGee, Peter Oliver McNelis John Keeney. Front row L-R, Gerard Given, Matt McNelis, Eamon McNelis, Sean Gildea, Edward O'Donnell, Patsy Gildea, Cathal McGill, John Gavigan, (Leaconnell) P.J. McNelis.

Junior League and Championship

In 1961 the Club competed in the South-West Junior League and Championship. The format at that time required each division to play off their competition with the respective winners qualifying for the County quarter-finals. The following South-West Junior League match was held in June 1961.

Ardara 1-05 Kilcar 1-04

At the Pearse Memorial Park Ardara on Sunday, before a good attendance, in ideal weather conditions, Ardara had a narrow victory over Kilcar 1-05 to 1-04 in the Junior League competition. The game was a pulsating struggle with the spectators kept on their toes to the final whistle. The game at times was a little robust and the referee Tommy Boyle had to send two players to the line for fisticuffs.

There was very little between the teams although Kilcar combined better and were it not for the great display given by defender John Keeney who cleared every ball that

came his way, Kilcar would have had a comfortable victory. Peter Breslin also had a good hour in defence ably assisted by P. McGroarty. C. O'Donnell and Thady Gallagher had not things their own way at midfield against S. Burke and F. Cunningham who had the better of the exchanges. Charlie Bennett gave a good display and was well partnered by Eddie Doherty whose accurate placekicking was responsible for most of Ardara's scores. E. O'Donnell showed a big improvement from previous games. C. Maguire also had a good game. J. O' Donnell and A.O'Donnell

were outstanding in the Kilcar defence and H. Hegarty the centre half back also had a good hour. F. Gallagher and M. Boyle were also prominent and C. McGinley was noticeable.

Teams and scorers were:

Kilcar - Mickey Haughey, J. Cunningham, John O'Donnell (Molattoff), Aidan O'Donnell, Patsy McGowan, Aodh Hegarty, Johnny Byrne, Francie Cunningham, Sean Burke

(0-01), Oliver McIntyre, Frankie (Tom) Gallagher (0-01), Maurice Boyle, Joseph Boyle (1-01), Colm McGinley (0-01) and Prionnsias Byrne.

Ardara - Alphonsus Bennett, John Keeney, S. Earley, Peter Breslin, P. McGroarty, Brendan McBride, Packie McGinley, Charles O'Donnell, Thady Gallagher, Charlie Bennett, Eddie Doherty (0-05), Edward O'Donnell (1-00), Hugh McHugh, Conal Maguire and Patsy McBrearty.

The 'incidents' which occurred at the above match were discussed at length, when Tommy Boyle's Referee's Report was on the agenda at the next South-West Board meeting. The following report on the affair was carried by the Democrat.

Mr Davy Brennan, Glenties, presided at a meeting of the South-West Divisional Board, held in the Courthouse, Ardara. The Secretary Mr. P. J. Gill read the minutes of the last meeting, out of which a discussion arose from a referee's report submitted by Tommy Boyle, Ardara, who refereed a Junior game between Kilcar and Ardara in Ardara on the 11th of June. The Report stated that following the final whistle, he was attacked by a number of Kilcar players, which included one player he had put to the line during the game. Mr. M. Erskine, Kilcar, said that as there were two players of the name mentioned on the Kilcar team that day, the Report did not clearly state which one interfered with the Referee. Sergeant Gill said the Report stated that it was the player who was sent to the line. Mr. Erskine said that he would not condone anyone who attacked a Referee. Being present at the game and having witnessed the said melee, he wished to state that those who interfered with the Referee were not from Kilcar at all. The player who was mentioned in the

Report was present at the meeting and said that he was ordered off the field that day but he did not interfere with the Referee because he left the field immediately after the game was over.

Mr. Erskine said the melee arose over a misunderstanding by a number of spectators who differed with the final score given by the Referee. Even the pressmen present were confused but none of the Kilcar players interfered. The Chairman said that incidents such as these were detrimental to our Gaelic games and referees would have to be protected because if not, we might have difficulty getting referees at all. "Most of us who have refereed have had the same experience of being attacked when the game was over and it makes one hesitate to ever referee again" he said. Mr. Brennan said, that as the player concerned was manly enough in coming forward and attending the meeting, he would accept his word and let the matter drop. No further action was taken.

The Club went on to qualify for the final of the South-West Junior League, but the competition was not completed before the end of the year.

The team's first match in the South-West Championship was against Kilcar, a game which they won on a 1-6 to 0-4 scoreline. The team went on to win the the South-West Championship (defeating Rannafast in the final), but were defeated by Castlefin in the County quarter-final which was reported on as follows by the Democrat:

Donegal Junior Championship Quarter Final Ardara 1-03 Castlefin 2-05

The Junior Football Championship quarter final held in O'Donnell Park, Letterkenny, ended in a 2-05 to 1-03 victory for Castlefin over Ardara in a game that was well enough contested but was somewhat disappointing in standard. Ardara, short a number of regulars were unfortunate to lose through injury one of their best forwards, John McHugh, at a stage in the first half when they were showing great promise. The Castlefin side, however, were better equipped throughout. Ardara were best served by John Gildea, Peter Breslin, John Keeney and Conal Maguire. Charlie O'Donnell had his moments at midfield as had Paddy Maguire, while Eddie Doherty, Charlie Bennett and until he retired, John McHugh, were prominent in attack.

The teams lined out as follows.

Ardara: Phonsie Bennett, John Keeney, John Gildea, Peter Breslin, P McGroarty, Conal McGuire, Michael Herron, Charlie O'Donnell, Paddy Maguire, Charlie Bennett, Eddie O'Donnell, Hugh McHugh, John McHugh (0-01), Thady Gallagher, Eddie Doherty (1-02). Subs: Donal McBride for Hugh McHugh and Hugh McHugh for John McHugh

Castlefin: C. Nixon, E. Crawford, E. Mc Groarty, A. Bryson, Tom Kelly, C. Mc Groarty, T. Rushe, Pat McMenamin, D. Cadden, C. Donohue, Hugh Herron, Sean Kelly, Des Kelly, Paddy Corrigan. Subs: E. Catterson for M. Mc Menamin.

Under Age teams

The Club Minor team in 1961 had an unsuccessful year, being beaten by Kilcar in a Championship play-off and by Dungloe in the Inniskeel Cup (South-West Minor League), both home and away, and also by Glenties. The first match was a landslide victory for Glenties (6-10 to 0-3).The return leg was held in Pearse Memorial Park.

Ardara 1-06 Glenties 4-04

After suffering a heavy defeat by Dungloe the previous week at the Pearse Memorial Park, the Ardara Minors vindicated themselves somewhat by putting in a much better display at the same venue against Glenties, who had defeated them two

Sundays ago by a score that would put teams with less spirit out of the competition altogether. In this match Glenties won by 4-04 to 1-06 and were it not for a few fatal mistakes that were made by the Ardara defenders when victory seemed in sight, the

result might have been different. The teams and scorers under referee Peter Breslin were:-

Ardara - Brendan Bruce, Thomas Boyle, Edward O'Donnell (0-01), Brendan McBride (0-03), John Boyle (0-01), Peter Oliver McNelis (1-00), Patsy McBrearty (0-01)(Inver), B. Conaghan, John Nicholson, P. McBrearty, Conal McNelis, Hugh

McHugh and John McNelis.

Glenties: Willie Mc Nelis, Connell Mc Devitt (Lochderryduff), Pat Connaghan, Jamesie Mc Gill, Christy Spillane, Johnny D. Early, Frankie Campbell (3-3) and Neil Mc Kelvey, John Brennan, John Gildea, Jim Boyle (Loughfad), Jeremiah Carr (1-1) and Tony O Donnell.

The Juvenile team also had an unsuccessful year, being defeated by Glenties in the Divisional final, after defeating Kilcar in an earlier round.

The panel was as follows:

Columba Diver, Conal McNelis, Peter Oliver McNelis, Patsy Gallagher, Edward O'Donnell, Frankie Herron, Packie Boyle, Oliver Kennedy, John Nicholson, Tommy Boyle, Raymond Sweeney, Thomas O'Donnell, Sean McGill, Hughie Haughey, Tom Campbell, Patsy Boyle, Packie Keeney



Jimmy McNelis from Kilclooney, who played for Donegal in the 1960 and '61 Ulster Championships. Jimmy was playing with the Summerhill Club in Meath at the time, having transferred there through his work with the Garda Síochána. Jimmy first played football with the Ardara Minor teams of 1950/51, usually in the centre half back position. He played for Ardara Senior team before he joined the force in the mid fifties which curtailed his involvement. Jimmy played at left corner forward in 1960 against Cavan, and at midfield in the 1961 defeat to Derry. Jimmy passed on his talents to his daughters, Patricia, Orla, Niamh and Roisín, who all played with the Meath Ladies' County team. He passed away in Summerhill in 1990.

1962

One of the Club's main priorities at the start of the '60s was to try to acquire suitable land for a new playing pitch in the Parish. The surface at the Pearse Memorial Park had dis-improved considerably over the years and the Club felt that it was of the utmost priority to acquire new land as close as possible to the town. "Ardara in Quest of New Gaelic Grounds" was the banner headline over the Donegal Democrat report of the 1961 A.G.M. which was held in December of that year. The report read as follows:

Ardara in quest of new Gaelic Grounds

An intensive effort had been made during the year to secure new grounds, the Secretary Seán Ó Cianaigh stated in his report to the Annual meeting of the Ardara G.A.A Club, presided over by Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill, O.S. Mr. Keeney said since it was the policy of the Club to acquire new grounds, there was a necessity to have a special fund in the Club with this in view, so that when the opportunity arose they would be able to purchase. He urged that a special effort be made this year to organise functions for the fund. The big attendance of the members showed a marked increase in previous years. The Secretary in presenting his statement, which was unanimously adopted, said that unfortunately the pattern which had been set for the previous few years had not changed, and it was with regret that he reported no major trophies coming the Club's way in 1961. Though winning trophies was an added incentive for carrying on in future years, it must not be regarded as the top ideal for any Club.

They must be thankful that they were able to carry on so successfully under such adverse conditions. For the first time in the history of the Club their Senior footballers were re-graded to Junior ranks, but he sincerely hoped their stay there would be a short one. As recorded in the previous year's Report, it seemed their one hope of survival lay with the Schoolboys. If they maintained the standard which they had reached during the past year, there was no reason to feel despondent about the future of the Club. "In last year's report we urged that more inter-Club games be organised among the schoolboys" he said. "I am glad to report that our schoolboys played against Killybegs, Glenties, Ballybofey and Derry during the year and gave a good account of

themselves in all matches. I would like to see the boys getting even more than that number of competitive matches during the coming season and I feel confident that it will pay dividends. On the playing field it was our Junior team that did best. They are to be congratulated on winning the Divisional Championship. In the County quarter-final they went under to Castlefin. In the Junior League (St Connell Cup), we have reached the Divisional final and will meet Kilcar on a date yet to be arranged." Our Minor footballers did not advance very far in the Championship, losing to a better Kilcar side in the Divisional Championship after a play-off. In the Inniskeel Cup our Minors also failed to advance, losing to Dungloe in both home and away matches. We were disappointed with the display of our Juveniles against Glenties in the Divisional final after overwhelming Kilcar in an earlier round. After their display against Kilcar in that game we had great hopes for them, but their dispirited display against Glenties made us realise that one good display is never enough to win any honours.

On the home front, our Parish League for Schoolboys was played, with increased interest being shown by both players and spectators. The Hillhead must be congratulated on winning their second successive League title early in the year, by defeating Meenavalley in the final. A Schoolboys' Championship was run during the summer months and was completed on schedule, with Meenavalley defeating a strong Leaconnell team in a thrilling final, before a large attendance at Cashel. Meenavalley are to be congratulated on winning their first final after three successive appearances. This year we hope to run a similar competition. We hope that all teams who participated last year will

give their support.

"An effort was made to promote Hurling in the Parish during the year and had the Divisional Board made fixtures for the games, I have no doubt that we would have fulfilled ours." Mr. Ó Cianaigh congratulated all players in all ranks on the way that they turned out for the games during the season. At no time did they have any difficulty in

fielding 15 players. He was proud to say that none of their players or supporters were involved in any unseemly conduct on the playing field. "This fine sportsmanship brought honour not alone to the players and the Club but to the G.A.A. in general." In conclusion Mr. Ó Cianaigh thanked his fellow officers and the other members of the Club for their co-operation during the year.

Treasurer's Report

The outgoing Treasurer, Frankie Brennan, in presenting his Report on the expenses of the Club, showed that despite there being an increase on the previous year's expenses, he was happy to state that the accounts showed a substantial credit balance, some of which was invested in Prize Bonds. Although no profit was made on the year's workings, much had been done materially on the promotion of Gaelic games in general. The Club had the added burden of financing the promotion of the School Leagues, which he said were a great success. They also subsidised the purchase of hurleys and a new set of jerseys. The travelling expenses for the year had been considerably higher than in previous years. The gate receipts showed a decline but profit from the Silver Circle and Ceili compensated for these losses. In conclusion, Mr. Brennan thanked his fellow officers and the other members of the Club for their co-operation. On the proposal of Tommy Boyle and seconded by Charles O'Donnell, the report was unanimously adopted.

Mr. P. J. McGill, O.S, Edergole welcomed the members of the Club and paid a handsome tribute to his fellow officers for the efficient way in which they handled the Club's affairs during the year. In pointing out the weaknesses of the Club, Mr. McGill said that not enough young people were attending Club meetings, which would be an education and guidance for future Club officers, who would be able to take over the administration of the Club *"when those of us who are not as young as we used to be will be handing over. It is unfortunate that in this country, in comparison with some of the other countries in Europe, there are so many looking at so few doing so much. There are too many brass hats and too few to take their places"*.

Speaking on the School Leagues, Mr. McGill said that the efforts were guidance to other Clubs. The boys who took part in the school games have laid the foundation for future manhood to carry on the proud tradition of the G.A.A. It was very encouraging to note the efficiency and proficiency some of them had produced.

For the first time in the Club's history the Club had been re-graded to Junior but it was not their intention to remain in that grade. Emigration, as in former years, had caused havoc as a big number of the main players left the country. The desire to emigrate seemed to be the trend in recent years, whether it was the desire for adventure or whatever, they hoped it would be only temporary. Speaking on the late start of games during the year, the Chairman said that there would have to be a stop put to it as it was becoming a farce.

Mr Tommy Boyle presided over the Election of Officers for 1962, which resulted in the following:-

President	-	Right Rev. Dean C. Boyce, P.P.
Chairman	-	P. S. Mac a'Ghoill
Vice Chairmen	-	Tommy Boyle and Donal Whelan
Secretary	-	Seán Ó Cianaigh
Ass Secretary	-	Donal Whelan
Treasurer	-	Frankie Brennan

Selection Committee - Frankie Brennan, Tommy Boyle, John Keeney and Alphonsus Bennett.

Team Captain - Eddie Doherty with Vice Captain John McHugh.



Eddie Doherty- Senior Team captain for 1962

Gate Collectors - John Byrne, Alphonsus Bennett, Donal Whelan, William Boyle and Tommy Boyle.

The following were appointed to take charge of the teams in the Schoolboys League.

Meenavalley	-	Peter O. McNelis and Charles Breslin
Brackey	-	Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill
Leaconell	-	Donal Whelan
Drumbarron	-	John Keeney
Hillhead	-	Alphonsus Bennett
Meentinadea	-	Eddie O'Donnell

On the proposal of Tommy Boyle, Alphonsus Bennett was appointed Treasurer of the School League.

Delegates to Convention - Frankie Brennan, Seán Ó Cianaigh, P. J. McGill, Danny Haughey, John Byrne and Alphonsus Bennett.

A proposal by Francie Diver to award a set of medals to the runners up in the Schools League was rejected. It was decided to have the first draw in the Silver Circle on Sunday the 18th of February.

Ardara win first U-14 Schoolboys County Championship

The big success story of 1962 was the capturing of the first County Schoolboys (Under 14) Championship by the Club. In a tough campaign the team defeated Glenties home and away, Dungloe in the Divisional final at Dooley and Gweedore.

Ardara's Late Spurt Puts Them In Final Ardara 2-04 Gweedore 2-03

Outplayed for most of the hour by a heavier Gweedore side, Ardara Schoolboys staged a great rally in the last ten minutes to snatch a one-point victory in the semi-final of the Donegal Schoolboys Championship at Rosses Park, Dungloe on Friday evening last. Showing little of the form which brought them through the South-West campaign, Ardara trailed the westerners at half time by a point scored by Eamon McNelis to (2-02) scored by T. Curran (0-01) and J. McGinley (1-01). Whatever hope there might have been of a second half resurgence appeared dead as Gweedore resumed complete control in the third quarter with J. McGinley, H. Roarty and E. McFadden lording it around the middle of the park. Instead of doubling their scores in this period, however, Gweedore only managed to add one point per McGinley and found their efforts thwarted by poor finishing up front and a stout hearted Ardara defence in which full-back Cormac Gallagher, centre-half, Patsy Gildea, and keeper Lochlann McGill saved many tricky situations. Nevertheless, the westerners seemed assured of victory and points from Eamon

McNelis for Ardara in the 15th and 18th minutes did little more than put a more respectable appearance on the scoreboard. It was a goal from Frankie Campbell in the 50th minute that really galvanised the Ardara side. They were soon back for Eamon McNelis to point from the wing and in a welter of excitement, Enda Craig finished to the net in the 55th minute to put Ardara out in front by (2-04) to (2-03). For the game, Rosses Park had its first visit from a Telefis Eireann unit, which took some shots of the opening passages. The teams under Referee Mr. J. Darcy were as follows:-

Ardara - Lochlann McGill, Sean Campbell, Cormac Gallagher, Frank O'Donnell, Cathal McGill, Patsy Gildea, Paddy McGill, Enda Craig, Frankie Campbell, Matt McNelis, Manus McGill, Gerard Given, Tom Campbell, John Gavigan and Eamon McNelis.

Gweedore - P. Gallagher, P. Breslin, T. Carney, H. McGee, C. Coll, J. Gallagher, E. McFadden, H. Roarty, J. McGinley, P. Barr, P. Boyle, M. McGinley, P. Gillespie, T. Curran and I. Cunningham.

The Ardara team went on to defeat Clonmany in the County final on a scoreline of 0-13 to 0-00. The match was played on the 6th January, 1963, in O'Donnell Park, Letterkenny and the cup presented was the "Smiths Crisps" Cup. This was the first ever Schoolboys Championship to be played in the County. The Ardara team on that day was as follows.

Lochlann McGill, (Ardara N.S.), Frankie O'Donnell, (Leaconnell N.S.), Cormac Gallagher (Ardara N.S.), Sean Campbell, (Ardara N.S.), Cathal McGill, (Brackey N.S.), Patsy Gildea, (Ardara N.S.), Paddy McGill, (Brackey N.S.), John Gavigan, (Leaconnell N.S.), Enda Craig, (Ardara N.S.), Manus McGill, (Brackey N.S.) Eamon McNelis (Capt), (Meenavalley N.S.), Matt McNelis, (Meenavalley N.S.) Gerard Given, (Ardara N.S.), Rory O'Donnell, (Ardara N.S.), Frankie Campbell, (Ardara N.S.), Charles O'Donnell, (Leaconnell N.S.), Tony Breslin, (Meentinadea N.S.), James B O'Donnell, (Leaconnell N.S.), Charles Maloney, (Leaconnell N.S.) Aidan McGill, (Brackey N.S.), Micheal Boyle, (Ardara N.S.), Tom Campbell, (Ardara N.S.).



The Ardara Under 14 team that won the first County Championship
Back L-R .Charlie O'Donnell, Barney McHugh, Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill, Cathal McGill, John Gavigan (Leaconnell), Enda Craig , Lochlann McGill, Rory O'Donnell, Frankie Campbell, Patsy Gildea, Sean Campbell, John Keeney, John Byrne
Front row L-R: Paddy McGill, (Cashel), Gerard Given, Frank O'Donnell, Manus McGill, Matt McNelis, Cormac Gallagher, Eamon McNelis, Aidan McGill, Frankie Brennan.

Junior Team

The Club Junior team took part in the South-West League and Championship in 1962. They did not qualify for the South-West League Final, but did win the Divisional Junior Championship. The following report is from their first Championship match in Towney.

Ardara 2-7 Kilcar 1-6

The Ardara team not only started off on the right foot, but gave promise of regaining the former leading status of their Club in the South-West Donegal G.A.A sporting arena, when at Towney on Sunday last in the opening game of the Donegal Junior

Football Championship, they scored a well deserved victory over the Kilcar side.

The visitors, fielding a young lively team plus a few former stalwarts, led at the interval by 2-6 to 0-2 after holding the whip-hand throughout the first moiety, but added

only a solitary point in the second half. Kilcar who showed poor opposition in the first half, sprang into life and prominence on the resumption to make a game of it. When they secured a well taken goal in the opening minutes of the second half, they gave every indication that they were in the game with a chance. They kept pegging away, monopolising most of the exchanges until they narrowed the lead to a three point margin five minutes before the end. In this really brilliant rally by the home side, the Ardara goals had many narrow escapes as the Kilcar forwards missed many scoring opportunities by faulty finishing.

The Ardara defence, in which John Keeney was an outstanding exponent, never wilted before the homesters onslaught and he was ably supported by John McNelis and John Herron. In addition to their backs, Ardara also had a most outstanding player in Sean McGee in the centre half back position and he was well assisted by Diver and McNelis, while their midfielders Boyle and McBride gave very good displays. P. McNelis on the "40" gave a remarkably sound performance and received good support from John McHugh. Full forward Eddie Doherty and B. Whelan were conspicuous throughout and

accounted for their side's two goals, while C. Molloy was also a hard worker through the hour. J. Sweeney was also a sound half forward.

For Kilcar, M. Gillespie in goals, Hugh Hegarty and Aodh O'Donnell in the first line of defence, Micheal and Francie Cunningham in their second line of defence, Michael Maloney, Maurice Boyle on the "40", Michael O'Byrne and Mickey Cannon in the full forward line all played well.

Mr Charles Brady of Dunkineely was the referee and the teams were:

Ardara: - Seamus Gallagher, John Herron, John McNelis, John Keeney, Columba Diver, Seamus McGee, Conal McNelis, John Boyle, Brendan McBride, John McHugh, Peter Oliver McNelis, John Sweeney, Brendan Whelan, Eddie Doherty and Connie Molloy

Kilcar: Michael Gillespie, J.J. Cunningham, Hugh Hegarty, Aodh O'Donnell, Sean Boyle, Francie Cunningham, Eamon Cunningham, S. Keaveney, Mickey Maloney, Sean Carroll, Maurice Boyle, Oliver McIntyre, Michael O'Byrne, Josie Smith, and Michael Sweeney. Sub: Mickey Cannon for Josie Smith.

The team went on to win the Divisional Championship, defeating Rannafast in the final for the second year in succession, a hat trick of goals from Eddie Doherty being the crucial scores in a one point victory. The team, however, was defeated by Creeslough in the County quarter-final. In the South-West Junior League, the team went out after a heavy defeat to Kilcar.

Minor Championship

In the Minor Championship, Ardara defeated Kilcar in Pearse Memorial Park, lost in the second leg in Towney, but were victorious in the play-off, to advance to the Divisional final, where they were defeated by Naomh Conaill. The following Report of the game is from the Democrat of 3rd Aug 1962.

Glenties 0-08 Ardara 0-03

At the Gaelic Park Glenties, on Friday evening last, Glenties defeated a strong Ardara team in the Divisional final. Ardara had won the play-off honours against Kilcar the previous week on a 5-04 to 0-00 scoreline while Glenties qualified by defeating Dungloe by a point in their play-off. Football reached a very high standard at times, but the sparing use of the whistle at times gave an incentive to players on both sides to ignore a number of minor rules. Glenties' victory was due to their superiority at centre-field where F. Campbell and N. McKelvey had the better of the exchanges. Peter McNelis the Ardara centre-field star of previous games seemed off form and his partner J. Boyle tried to cover too much ground to make up for a poor Ardara forward line.

In defence Glenties were best served by P. Conaghan and P. McCabe. In the forwards John Gildea was the pivot for most of the

attacks and was responsible for most of the scores. Johnny D. Earley and P. Condon were also to the fore for Glenties. Ardara were best served by John McNelis, Conal McNelis, Frankie Herron, Hughie Haughey, Columba Diver, John Boyle and Raymond Sweeney, who gave a good display. The teams under referee Seamus Cleary were:

Glenties - Glenties: Willie McNelis, Alex Molloy, Pat Connaghan, Connell McLoone, Neilly Bonner, Pat McCabe, Michael Condon, Neil McKelvey (0-1), Frankie Campbell (0-2), Connie Maguire, Johnny D. Earley, John Gildea (0-4), Hugh Connaghan (0-1), Frank McGill.

Ardara - Tom Campbell, Frankie Herron, John McNelis, B. Meehan, Conal McNelis, Columba Diver, Hughie Haughey, Peter O. McNelis (0-02), John Boyle, Edward O'Donnell, Raymond Sweeney, Peter Boyle, Ollie Kennedy, John Boyle and Packie Keeney (0-01).

The Minors also played in the Inniskeel Cup, where they played Dungloe and Glenties home and away, but were only successful in the home fixture against Dungloe. The Juvenile team, which featured a the victorious Schoolboy side, was defeated in the Divisional final by Naomh Conaill.

Other Club activities of note in 1962 were the running of a very successful Silver Circle, which boosted Club funds considerably, and Ceili and Irish Dancing classes, which were also well supported.

Overseas stars

The losses of recent years by the Club to foreign shores were summed up in the Ardara Parish notes from the Democrat on the 19th of October 1962 when the following paragraph described matters in New York at the time.

The Ardara G.A.A Football Club, which is struggling for existence at home due to a big depletion in membership caused by emigration, had a proud and perhaps unequalled distinction in G.A.A history when seven former playing members of the team lined out with the Donegal New York team in a match against Philadelphia in the Gaelic Grounds Philadelphia. They were the five McNelis brothers from Meenavalley,(sons of Mrs Alice McNelis and Mr Paddy McNelis N.T) who are presently residing in New York and playing a big part in the promotion of Gaelic activities in the U.S.A. They are Packie John, who spent his honeymoon at

home four weeks ago and lined out for the Ardara team against Kilcar in the Junior Championship, and his four brothers, Charles, James, Bernard and Frank. Incidentally three other younger members of the family have featured prominently in the home competitions during the season. They are Peter Oliver, the star Minor, and Matt and Eamon who are two of the star attractions in the local Schoolboys' League. The two other members of the team were Jimmy McGill, son of Mr. and Mrs Barney McGill Aighe and Seamus McGill, son of Mr and Mrs P.J McGill, the Nick. The referee was Jim Harvey from Donegal.



This photo was taken of the Ardara Junior Team in 1962.

Back L-R: John Gallagher, (Cruckngapple), Peter Oliver McNelis, Eddie O'Donnell, Paddy Herron, John McNelis, Edward O'Donnell, James Keeney, Charlie Bennett
Front L-R: John Carr (Glenconwell) , Raymond Sweeney, Finbar Whelan, James McGinley, Danny Sweeney (Ardconall) , Pdraig McGill (Aighe), Danny Diver (Altnagapple).

1963

At the 1962 A.G. M., which was held in the Courthouse on the 9th February, 1963, Secretary John Keeney gave his usual detailed and comprehensive report of the Club's year, and cited the winning of the Schoolboy Championship as being the obvious highlight. He appealed to all those schoolboys who were over-age for the coming year to continue playing up through the grades. He also praised members of the Club for their great sportsmanship during the year, both players and supporters. He extended sincere sympathy on behalf of the Club to the family of the late Dean Boyce P.P., Club President, who had passed away during the year and who had been a great supporter of the Club.

Glowing tributes were then paid by numerous speakers, to the outstanding contribution in previous years of the Secretary (who had indicated that he was stepping down). Tommy Boyle, in paying tribute to the Secretary on a fine report, said that the Club should be ever grateful to Mr. Keeney for the time and energy he had devoted to the successful promotion of Club activities over the years. The success of the Schoolboys in winning the County Championship was in no small measure due to his initiative in promoting the local schools competition. This initiative of setting up the Schoolboy Leagues in particular, and their Championship success, was in no small measure due to the work that he had done. The Chairman joined in the tributes and also thanked the rest of the officers for the work they had done. John Byrne was elected as the new Club Secretary. In taking up the position, he stated that a number of Junior team players wanted to go back up to the Senior grade. After a lengthy discussion, it was agreed to enter in the Senior League and Junior Championship.

The officers elected for 1963 were as follows-.

President	-	Fr. Patrick Molloy, P.P.
Chairman	-	Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill
Vice Chairmen	-	Tommy Boyle and Donal Whelan
Secretary	-	John Byrne
Ass. Secretary	-	John Keeney
Treasurer	-	Frankie Brennan
Ass. Treasurer	-	Alphonsus Bennett
Team Captain	-	John McHugh with Vice Captain John McNelis.



John Byrne of Sandfield was elected Club Secretary for 1963. John's involvement in the Club started around 1960 when he became involved in the local Schoolboy Leagues and from then on, through the 60s and 70s, he was a tireless worker for Under-Age football in the Parish. John was involved in all aspects of the Club, be it fund raising, collecting at gates, umpiring, pitch work, Senior team selector etc. etc. He has also followed Ardara and Donegal teams far and wide over the years, and his loyalty to the Ardara G.A.A Club has been outstanding to the present day. Married to Ann (O'Donnell), they raised their family of 2 sons and 2 daughters at Ardconnell, where they still reside. John passed on his enthusiasm for the Club to his son John Martin, who is deeply involved in Club Under-Age teams, and has served as Minor Board Secretary, Assistant Secretary of the Club and South Donegal Board Chairman.

Trouble in Towney

Reports from Senior matches in 1963 are almost non existent. The Senior Team came up against Kilcar again in the Junior Championship first round. Ardara won the first match in Pearse Memorial Park, but the return leg in Towney proved to be controversial when the match was abandoned. A special meeting of the South-West Board was called to adjudicate on the matter, as Glenties had already qualified for the final. The following extracts are taken from the minutes of the meeting held in the Court House.

A meeting of the South-West Divisional Board was called on the 19th of August 1963, Seamus Rodgers Rannafast Presiding. The Chairman read the referee's report of the Ardara v Kilcar Junior Championship match in Towney. The referee, Mr Packie Haughey, stated in his report that the match had to be abandoned due to an encroachment of the pitch by a section of spectators, whose only interest in the game was to start a fight and upset the game. The Chairman said that the report was incomplete and failed to identify the players involved in the fisticuffs, therefore he could give no decision.

Mr Davy Brennan Glenties said that a decision would have to be reached as the Divisional final was fixed to be played at Glenties on Friday evening. Mr Brendan Mc Shane, Kilcar, said the main reason for the abandonment of the match was the

spectators and the Ardara spectators were as much to blame as Kilcar. The Ardara delegate stated that the only Ardara spectators present were the three hackney drivers who drove the team.

A proposal was made by Brendan Mc Shane and seconded by A. Hegarty that the game be replayed at Killybegs. There was then a counter proposal by Ardara that Ardara be awarded the points. Mr Danny Boyle, the proposer, said that Kilcar should have the pitch properly stewarded and as Ardara had won the first match and were on level terms when the match in Towney was abandoned, they should be awarded the points. A vote was then taken with the Ardara motion being carried by 9 votes to 2. The Divisional final was then fixed between Glenties and Ardara for Fintra on the 23rd of August.

Glenties won this match and ended Ardara's interest in the Championship. In the Senior League they had little success in their section, in which they were paired with Donegal Town, St Naul's, Kilcar and Dungloe.



A photo of the Tirconail Gaels team of 1963, that won the London Junior League and Championship. The Club was formed in 1962 to serve Donegal emigrants in London, and had always a very strong Ardara connection over the years.

Back L-R: J. Kelly (Ballybofey), J. Byrne (Carrick), L. Doherty (Ballybofey), P. Boyle (Glenties), M. Byrne (Carrick), Barney Coyle (Gweedore), T. McIntyre.

Middle row L-R: Donal Boyle (Dungloe), P. Duffy (Ballybofey), Joe Shovelin (Kenaughty-Ardara), F. McLaughlin (Teelin), D. Quinn (Castlefin), P.J. Sweeney (Letterkenny), Hugh McHugh (Ardara), Mick Maloney (Ardara).

Front L-R: E. McNelis (Gweedore), Jackie Rushe (Castlefin), Jim Brennan (Mountcharles), Jackie Reilly (Ballybofey), John McHugh (Ardara), C. Boyle (Glenties), P. Higgins (Donegal), J. Duffy (Ballybofey).

Sitting: Enda Brennan (Mountcharles), Barney McLaughlin (Teelin)

No Under-Age Success

The Schoolboy team went out to defend their title won in 1962 and were victorious over Glenties in the first round in the following game.

Ardara 6-03 Glenties 0-01

At the Pearse Memorial Park on Tuesday evening last Ardara defeated Glenties on a scoreline of 6-03 to 0-01 in the County Schoolboys' Championship. The teams and scorers were:

Ardara: Teddy Fisher, Tom Diver, Gerard Given, Kieran Gallagher, Josie Gildea, Manus McGill (3-00), Charlie O'Donnell (1-00), Frankie Campbell (1-01), John Boyle (0-02), Aidan McGill, Charlie Sweeney (1-

00), Brendan Gildea, John Micheal O'Donnell, Tommy Boyle and Jody Gallagher.

Glenties: Neilly Gildea, Martin Gildea, John Earley, James Breslin, Pat Connolly, Neilly McCole, Gerry Ward, Seamus Costello, Jimmy McSwiggan, Benny McGill (0-1), Paddy McDyer, Tony McFadden, Tony Doherty, Dessie O'Donnell and Gerry Mc Dermott.

Despite this victory however, the team went down in the next match to Killybegs. Killybegs went on to be defeated by Dungloe in the Divisional Final.



The Ardara Under 14 team of 1963

Back: L-R: Charlie Bennett, Peter McGill (Maghera), Brendan Gildea, John Boyle, Charlie O'Donnell, Martin Campbell, Jody Gallagher, Tommy Boyle, Kieran Gallagher.
Front L-R: Kieran Keeney, James Noel Moloney, Josie Gildea, Aidan Fisher, Bart McHugh, John Michael O'Donnell, Aidan McGill, Frank Sweeney, Tom Diver

The Juvenile team, which was based mostly on the Schoolboy team of the previous year, reached the Divisional final only to go down to Rannafast by 5 points.

Rannafast are S.W. Juvenile Champions Rannafast 1-06 Ardara 0-04

Rannafast are South-West Donegal Juvenile champions by virtue of their 1-06 to 0-04 victory over Ardara in the Divisional decider in Glenties on Wednesday evening last. Rannafast were ahead at the interval 1-01 to 0-02. The strongest sectors in both sides were the defences. The Ardara midfielders worked hard, but many balls were wasted by a rather subdued and sometimes erratic forward line. The man who should be the toast of Rannafast must be schemer-in-chief, midfielder Jim Bonner, who fell back to defence whenever danger threatened the Rannafast citadel. It was

through no fault of players of the calibre of Eamon McNelis, Hugh Haughey, Pat Gildea and Cathal McGill that Ardara did not come out on top and the lionhearted Eamon McNelis tried desperately to infuse some extra life into some of his teammates.

The teams were:-

Ardara - Conal McNelis, Edward O'Donnell, Hughie Haughey, Enda Craig, Eamon McNelis, Matt McNelis, Frankie Campbell, Patsy Gildea, Gerard Given, Cathal McGill, Manus McGill, E. Gallagher, Tom Diver, Packie Boyle and Andy Sweeney.

Rannafast - P. Sweeney, E. Boyle, D.

McGarvey, D. Ward, P. Gallagher, J. Boyle,
D. Greene, M. Gillespie, J. Bonner, P.
Greene, D. Boyle, S. Barr, R. Sharkey, A.

McCauley and J. Duffy
Referee - J. McLoone, Glenties.

The Minor team defeated Kilcar home and away but failed to neighbours Glenties in the Divisional final. In the Inniskeel Cup, Kilcar Minors got revenge by winning both matches to end Ardara's interest in the competition.

The drive in the Club to improve Under-Age football continued towards the end of 1963 when, at a meeting held in the Courthouse, it was decided that the Schoolboys' Football League and Juvenile Football League be proceeded with during the winter months. The competition was to commence immediately, in preparation for the forthcoming Ardara Juvenile Championship and afterwards the Donegal County Championship. The following Committee was appointed for the Schoolboys League and the Juvenile League.

P. J. McGill, O.S., Mr. Donal Whelan, O.S., Mr. Eddie O'Donnell, O.S., Mr. B. Sheerin O.S., Mr. John Byrne and the Secretary Mr. Alphonsus Bennett.

It was further decided that cups would be provided for both competitions and that the question of provision of medals for the winners would be decided at the Annual General Meeting.



Ardara group photo, taken in 1963 at a County match in Ballyshannon.

**Back: L-R: Ted Breslin, Sean Melly, Raymond Brennan,
Packie Maguire, Frankie Brennan, Leo Gallagher.**

Middle; Mary Whelan, Donal Whelan

**Front L-R: Hugh Fran Byrne, Charlie O'Donnell, Peter Pat Breslin, Danny Gallagher
(Crucknagapple), John Gavigan (Altnagapple) and Raymond Sweeney (Gortnacart).**

Sitting: John Neil O'Donnell

1964

The officers elected for 1964 were as follows:-

President	-	Rev. Fr. Patrick Molloy, P.P.
Chairman	-	Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill
Vice Chairmen	-	Tommy Boyle and Danny Haughey
Secretary	-	Charles Bennett
Ass. Secretary	-	John Keeney
Treasurer	-	Frankie Brennan
Ass. Treasurer	-	Alphonsus Bennett

Senior Team Captain for 1964 - Donal McBride with Charles Bennett as vice-Captain.



Donal McBride- Senior Team Captain 1964

Schoolboy Committee:-

Meentinadea	-	Eddie O'Donnell and John Keeney
Brackey	-	Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill
Hillhead	-	Alphonsus Bennett
Drumbarron	-	Eddie Doherty and John Byrne
Leaconnell	-	Charles Cunningham and Hughie Haughey

Gate Stewards were- Joe Gallagher, John Byrne, Danny Haughey, William Boyle and John Keeney.

Ardara capture second Juvenile Championship

Following the Schoolboys' victory in 1962, there were high hopes that the Juvenile team of 1964 would challenge for County honours and take the Club's second title in the grade (the first being in 1955).

The team duly won South-West honours, defeating Killybegs and Kilcar, and went on to defeat Castlefin in a semi-final in what was described in the Democrat as being "a needle affair". Their opponents in the final were Drumbar, but the Ardara lads justified their favourites tag with an impressive victory against a committed Drumbar side, whose star performer was a young Seamus Bonner, who went on to become one of the Donegal's finest County players.

Ardara 4-10 Drumbar 1-06

Although the final scoreline would suggest almost a walkover for the winners, a great rally by Drumbar in the last quarter infused real life into this game. Inside a five minute period from the 20th to 25th minutes of the second half, Drumbar scored no fewer than four times and had the Champions really worried. This great storming attack however was not maintained and although Drumbar strove for all they were worth, they were unable to catch up with their opponents, who, recovering from the shock of this unexpected onslaught, settled down to capture a great deal of their earlier confidence and supremacy.

Ardara's victory might be attributed to the fact that their players were, generally speaking, the taller and heavier, but more especially to their splendid fielding and perfect combination play. Nevertheless they were guilty of being wasteful of many chances in the first half, but for which their tally would have been a great deal higher. They went in at the break 1-06 to 0-01 in the lead. The game was played in sweltering conditions before a fair attendance.

The Scores

Patsy Gildea tipped over the bar for Ardara in the first minute from Manus McGill's centre, and Martin Campbell punched over another point from Enda Craig a minute later. There was no further score until the 15th minute when Martin Campbell again pointed from Cathal McGill. In the 25th Minute Seamus Bonner got Drumbar's first point, but Martin Campbell replied in kind for Ardara in a matter of seconds, Craig again placing him. Craig himself got a long distance point from a John Gavigan pass in the 27th minute. Manus McGill tipped over the Drumbar bar from Given and in the 29th minute Ardara got a great goal from a centre from Enda Craig, Frankie Campbell finishing to the net to give the winners a fairly comfortable lead of 1-6 to 0-1 at the break.

Second half

Ardara went ahead from the re-start, Tom Campbell pointing from Frankie and Martin

Campbell in the 2nd minute. Wallace Kee got Drumbar's second point in the 4th minute. Ardara's position was further strengthened by a fast goal in the 5th minute. Martin Campbell connected with Craig's drive with his fist and gave the Drumbar keeper no chance at all. This great score left Ardara in an impregnable position, with another goal coming from Patsy Gildea in the 7th minute. Drumbar at this stage were very much out of the game bungling whatever openings they got, and Ardara kept piling up the scores, Enda Craig pointing from a free in the 15th minute and Martin Campbell getting points in the 16th and 19th minutes. Then came Drumbar's great effort, as they surged upfield along the left wing for Brian Travers to plant the ball in the Ardara net. On top of this came a point from Tommy Quinn and further points from Kee and Bonner in rapid succession. However a somewhat shaken Ardara regained their poise before the situation got rightly out of hand and much of their confidence was restored when Patsy Gildea's drive rebounded from the upright. Frankie Campbell grabbed the ball and sent to the net. With only two minutes to go, the issue was decided but Seamus Bonner had the last say with a point for Drumbar.

Ardara - Bosco McGill, Cormac Gallagher, Seamus Gavigan, James N. Keeney, Cathal Campbell, Joseph Gildea, Sean Campbell, Lochlann McGill, Sean McHugh, Manus McGill (0-01), Enda Craig, (0-02), Frankie Campbell (2-01), Patsy Gildea (1-01), Martin Campbell (1-05) and Gerard Given.

Drumbar - Jim McHugh, Gerry McCafferty, Paddy Brogan, Peter Callaghan, Eamon Brogan, Eamon Cassidy, Pat Quinn, Malachy Sweeney, Jerry Travers, Micheal Mulhern, Seamus Bonner (0-03), Brian Travers (1-01), Hugh Cassidy, Tommy Quinn and Wallace Kee (0-02).

Referee - G. Griffin (*MacCumhailis*)



The 1964 Juvenile Team that won the County Championship.
Back L-R: Charlie Maloney, Enda Craig, Dominic Gildea (Tailor), Sean Brennan, Bosco McGill, Lochlann McGill, Packie Keeney, Sean Campbell, Cathal McGill, John McNelis.
Front L-R: Manus McGill, John Gavigan, Thom Campbell, Fr. Charlie Sweeney, Patsy Gildea (capt), Cormac Gallagher, Tom Diver, Gerard Given, Conal Kennedy, Frankie Campbell.



Group pictured in Ballybofey on the day of the Juvenile Final.
Back from left: Fr Willie McMenamin, Donal Whelan, Junior Slowey, Eddie Doherty, James Gavigan.
Front: Packie and Eugene Bennett.



Cormac Gallagher, Gerard Given, Patsy Gildea and John Gavigan celebrate their victory

Ardara and Glenties amalgamate at Minor level

The performances of the other Under-Age teams were not as noteworthy, with the Under-14 (Schoolboy) team defeating Killybegs in the first round, but then

losing to Dungloe to go out of the Championship.

The Club failed to field a Minor team on its own for the first time in a number of years, due to a lack of numbers in the grade, and decided to amalgamate with Glenties. This combination, however, was defeated in the Championship, by a Dungloe-Rannafast combination. One Ardara member of the team, Conal (Bán) McNelis, was selected on the County Minor panel for 1964.



Conal McNelis- played for Donegal County Minors in 1964

The Junior team's fate was joyless also, their only victory being in the League against Glencolumbkille, after losing to Killybegs home and away, and to Kilcar at home. Glenties were victorious in the Championship and this ended any hope of a revival in the Club at adult level.



The Ardara Junior Team that was defeated in the Junior Championship by Glenties in 1964.

Back L-R: Raymond Sweeney, Fr Brendan McBride, James Keeney, John McNelis, Sean Brennan, Packie Keeney, Edward O'Donnell, Columba Diver.

Front L-R: Peter Oliver McNelis, Fr Luke Boyle, Patsy Gildea, Michael Keeney, James McGinley, John Joe Doherty, John Boyle, Lochlann McGill

The continued efforts to purchase a playing pitch received a setback during the year. The owner, Mr John Byrne of the Nesbitt Arms Hotel, agreed to sell a pitch at the showgrounds, but after a fundraising drive, and meetings to organise same proved to be very poorly attended, the total amount of money pledged from the people of the Parish was £5. This unfortunately killed the interest of the committee at the time.



The Ardara 7 a side team that took part in the Narin 7 a side competition in 1964.
Back L-R: Charlie Bennett, John Joe Doherty, Conal McNelis,
Edward O'Donnell, John Keeney.
Front L-R; John Boyle (Neidi), Raymond Sweeney, John McNelis, James McGinley.



Clement Sweeney elected County Chairman

Clement Sweeney from Beagh, and then of Malin, was elected to the position of County Chairman at the convention in Glenties on the 2nd of February 1964. He was the sitting Inishowen Board Chairman at the time and he defeated Frank Muldoon (Donegal Town), John Kelly (Falcarragh), and Frank Mc Laughlin (St Eunans) after three counts. At the same convention, Pdraig S Mac a'Ghoill was elected unopposed as County Registrar. Clement went on to hold the chair for a second year in 1965 before stepping down.

At the South-West Divisional Board convention held in December of 1964, Frankie (Tom) Gallagher, who was then a member of the Killybegs Club, was elected Chairman. Alphonsus Bennett was elected honorary Secretary/Treasurer, while John Keeney was elected a Divisional Selector.

1964 A.G.M

The A.G.M for 1964 did not take place until March and was reported in the Democrat on the 2nd April 1965 as follows:-

Lack of Enthusiasm for National games in Ardara

Mr. Tommy Boyle presiding in the unavoidable absence of the Chairman P. J. McGill, O.S., complained of the lack of enthusiasm in the district and spoke of the importance to the young people of participation in our games. The Treasurer's Report showed a healthy credit balance, which was mostly achieved by the promotion of the Silver Circle. The outgoing Secretary, Mr. Charles Bennett, in his annual report, said that pride of place must go to the Juvenile team who gave great displays throughout the year, to win the County Championship. He reported on all the Club teams' performances during the year and was critical of the lack of training, by certain players on the Club Junior Tteam.

He voiced his disappointment that the Schoolboys' League was not completed, citing bad weather and lack of interest by a those in charge of a few of the teams as being the main reasons for its non completion.

He reported on the successful Silver Circle draw and all the promoters who sold the

cards and in particular the chief promoters, Tommy Boyle, John Keeney and Frankie Brennan. He was also grateful to Tommy Boyle for directing the draws and allowing his premises to be used for the draw. He voiced his disappointment on the response of the community to the fund raising drive to purchase the Show Field, which was a huge setback for the Club. The presiding Chairman Tommy Boyle complimented the Secretary on an outstanding report and on his work during the year. He was highly critical of the lack of support the Club got during the year for the G.A.A., and appealed to everyone to strive to uphold the ideals of the Association. "Participation of our young people in the games will help them become better men both physically and mentally and will help them to approach the difficulties of life with a more virile outlook. We have to make every effort, especially in providing work for our young people to keep them at home and we will be doing a great service to our country by making it a better place to live in", he concluded.

The following officers were elected for 1965

President	-	Fr. Patrick Molloy, P.P.
Chairman	-	P. J. McGill, O.S.
Vice Chairmen	-	Tommy Boyle and Danny Haughey
Secretary	-	John Keeney
Ass. Secretary	-	Charlie Bennett
Treasurer	-	Frankie Brennan

Team Captain - Charlie Bennett with Vice Captain John McNelis.

Gate Stewards were Tommy Boyle, Danny Haughey, William Boyle and Joe (Larry) Gallagher.

The Schoolboy League officers for 1965 were:-

Meentinadea	-	John Keeney and J. Breslin
Brackey	-	P. J McGill and Cornelius McNelis
Hillhead	-	Alphonsus Bennett and Raymond Sweeney
Drumbarron	-	Patsy Gildea and Brendan Sheerin, O.S.
Maghera/Leaconnell	-	Donal Whelan, O.S, Danny Maloney and J.B. McGrenra
Meenavalley	-	Peter O. McNelis

In 1965, teams were entered in the Schoolboy, Juvenile, Minor and Junior Championships.

Schoolboy team

The Schoolboy team had only two outings for the year. They defeated Killybegs in the first round but were beaten by Glencolumbcille, who went on to win the Championship for the first time. Due to lack of numbers, the Club joined with neighbours Glenties to field a team, but failed to register any victories.

Ardara's third County Minor Championship

The Club Minor team were the success story of 1965, blazing a trail through the Championship to win the Club's first in the grade since 1954. With Glenties not fielding a team in the grade, three players (Daniel McGeehan, Benny McGill and Joey Byrne) were allowed to play for Ardara. The team started off the year by capturing the Iniskeel Cup, following wins over Dungloe and Kilcar. In the South-West Championship, Kilcar were defeated home and away, and in the final, with Dungloe providing the opposition, Ardara were again successful. Mulroy Gaels' were the semi-final opponents and Ardara were victors, on a 2-07 to 2-04 scoreline in the match played at MacCumhaill Park on the 22nd August. The final took place against a fancied Gweedore team on the 5th of September 1965, with the following report of the match being carried in the Donegal Democrat:

Ardara bring Mac a'Bháird Cup home Ardara 1-09 Gweedore 0-07

Before a large attendance at MacCumhaill Park, Ardara won their first County Minor Championship in 11 years by defeating Gweedore 1-09 to 0-07, after holding an interval lead of 0-06 to 0-04. A goal scored by right half forward Tom Campbell from a long distance lob in the 16th minute of the second half gave Ardara a seven point lead, which Gweedore, despite a determined rally, were unable to overcome. This was a game that could have proven to be an elevating spectacle as both sides seemed to have the material to excel. The game showed signs of becoming too rugged approaching the interval of quite a good first half. When it ended only 26 players were in action, two from each side having been given their marching orders from Referee P. J. Ryan of Letterkenny.

Ardara powered by two grand midfielders Edward O'Donnell and Lochlann McGill, proved themselves the better side, but both teams threw away plenty of scoring chances. Ardara in this respect were the greatest offenders and had Gweedore overtaken them in the second half, it would have been largely their own fault. Sean Brennan, their captain and left half forward, put in an enormous amount of work. Eamon McNelis, who started at full forward and later moved out, was another forward to excel while both Tom and Frankie Campbell on the right wing, Joey Byrne and Patsy Gildea were well to the fore. The Ardara defence was a sound well-knit unit with Conal McNelis at full back being effectively flanked by D Gildea and Benny McGill. Cathal McGill, Packie Keeney and Willie Boyle gave the Gweedore half forwards Hugh Roarty, Conal Scanlon and Connie Coll little scope to get through for scores and Keeper Daniel McGeehin was never

troubled, even under pressure. Seamus Hickey, the Gweedore centre half back, put in a very strong performance for his side, while Teague Kearney and Eamon Mc Fadden were others to do well in defence. Teague McGinley was a forceful full forward but the midfield exchanges were so heavily weighed in Ardara's favour that the Gaeltacht team's forwards got much less of the ball than their counterparts.

Following the game, the Domhnall Mac a'Bháird Cup was presented to the Ardara Captain Sean Brennan by Mr. Hugh Daly, County Secretary, who congratulated the Ardara Club on winning the Championship after a span of 11 years. This was the first time that Ardara had won the Mac a'Bháird Cup, which had been presented to the County Board by the Ardara Club, to commemorate an outstanding Ardara Gael, Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, who had given outstanding service to the Association in the County.

The teams were:-

Ardara - Daniel McGeehin (Glenties), Dominic Gildea, Conal McNelis, Benny McGill (Glenties), Cathal McGill, Packie Keeney, Willie Boyle, Edward O'Donnell, Lochlann McGill, Tom Campbell, Joey Byrne (Glenties), Sean Brennan (Capt), Frankie Campbell, Eamon McNelis and Patsy Gildea.

Gweedore – P. McGinley, M. Gallagher, T. Kearney, J. McGee, H. McGee, S. Hickey, E. McFadden, I. Cunningham, P. Boyle, H. Roarty, G. Scanlan, C. Coll, P. Breslin, T. McGinley, J. McFadden. Substitute – J. O'Donnell for H. Roarty.

Referee was P. J. Ryan (Letterkenny).



The Ardara Minor Team that won the County Championship in 1965

Back L-R: Charlie Bennett, Jimmy McSwiggan, Cormac Gallagher, John Gavigan, Cathal McGill, Conal McNelis, Patsy Gildea, Lochlann McGill, Edward O'Donnell, John Boyle (Neidi), Daniel McGeehan, Benny McGill, Manus McGill, Tommy Boyle, John Keeney. Front L-R: Frank McGhee, Fr Charles Sweeney, Dominic Gildea, Sean Brennan (Capt), Eamon McNelis, Packie Keeney, Tom Campbell, Joey Byrne, Frankie Campbell, Gerard Given, Tom Diver.

Following the match there was an 'incident' involving both sets of players in the Butt Hall (where both teams were changing). At a Club meeting on the 28th of September a letter was received from the Rúnaí Condae asking the Ardara Club officers to attend a County Board meeting, called to investigate the alleged incident in which furniture belonging to the Butt Hall was damaged. It was agreed at the Club meeting that the Club "*would and should not accept any liability whatsoever for the incident*". The following report was carried in the Democrat.

Clubs to pay damage

The breaking of furniture in a room at the Butt Hall Ballybofey following the Minor Football Final was investigated at a meeting of the Donegal County G.A.A. Board with Chairman C. Sweeney, O.S. presiding. Mr. P. J. McGill, O.S., Ardara, said that his Club did not accept responsibility for anything that happened but a chair had been broken. Both teams had used the same room for dressing. Mr. Simon Gallagher, Gweedore, said that his Club deplored what had happened. They deplored the actions of some of the players but that it was beyond the control of the officers. Mr. Gallagher said that none of the Gweedore officers were in the dressing room and they were unable to find out exactly what happened.

Mr. John Keeney, Ardara said that he was the only officer in the room. Gweedore players were provoking Ardara players he said, and he tried to settle matters. Eventually a local Garda came in and got them to the street. Mr. Ben Griffin (MacCumhalls) said the damage was £3. After further discussion it was agreed that both Clubs would play 30/- each. The Ardara Club stated that they would do so to have the matter resolved, but were in no way accepting responsibility for what occurred. The Chairman condemned the incident and said that it was appalling and should have not have happened.



**A group of happy supporters pictured after the
Minor Championship victory in Ballybofey.**

**Back L-R: Josie Brennan, Raymond Sweeney, Alan Conlon, Jody Gallagher,
John Big Francie, Eunan Craig, Bart Whelan, Gerard Given, Josie McGinley, Danny
Haughey, Brendan Gildea,**

**Middle: John McHugh (Ardconall), Tommy Given, Archie Ormond,
Front L-R: P.J Haughey, Paddy Given, Gerard Ormond, Eugene Bennett**

Pictured below are Lochlann McGill, (Woodhill), and Edward O'Donnell (Front Street) who played midfield for the County Minor team in the Ulster Championship of 1965 against Derry. Lochlann went on to captain the team in the 1966 Ulster Championship, while Edward went on to play under-21 and Junior for Donegal.



Lochlann McGill



Edward O'Donnell

Juniors Reach Championship Final

The Club Junior team had a reasonably successful year in 1965. A victory over Rannafast qualified them for the final of the St. Connell's Cup, which was played early in the year. Their opponents Killybegs, however, were victorious in the Divisional final on a scoreline of 0-10 to 0-07.

Killybegs win St Connell's Cup

Before a good attendance at Pearse Memorial Park Ardara on Sunday, Killybegs were victorious in the Junior League final by 0-10 to 0-7

The game, played in fairly good weather conditions, with a heavy under-sod, didn't provide a high standard of football, but the eagerness of both teams resulted in the hardest hour's football seen in the South-West for some time. There was very little between the sides, but the telling factor in the closing stages was the fitness of Des Houlihan and Charlie Brady, ably assisted by Sean McGuinness. Had Ardara taken their scoring opportunities with a wind advantage in the first half, they should at least have had a further goal and two points, but on the other hand, Killybegs were also erratic in their scoring efforts in the first half.

In the first half Ardara were supreme in most sectors, especially in midfield where Peter O McNelis, ably assisted by P. McGill, kept a weak forward line on the attack. Charles Bennett and Edward O'Donnell and Sean Brennan combined well in the half

forward line, but the experience of Charles Brady, who was in the Killybegs defence during the first half, broke up a number of movements. Patsy McGowan for Killybegs was also a tower of strength and made some fine clearances. S. Galvin, L. Riley, Kevin McDonald and Micheal Boyle also featured prominently over the hour. For Ardara, John McNelis, Packie Keeney, Columba Diver, James McGinley and Raymond Sweeney were best.

Under referee J. Cunningham, Carrick, the teams were:

Killybegs: Donal Cannon, Patsy McGowan, M. Gallagher, Sean McGuinness, C. Kelly, Charles Brady, K. McDonald, Des Houlihan, Pat Cannon, S. Galvin, L. Reilly, M. Boyle, P. Burke, S. Gillespie, W. Byrne.

Ardara: Eamon McNelis, John Joe Doherty, John McNelis, James McGinley, Packie Keeney, Columba Diver, Conal McNelis, Peter Oliver McNelis, Pdraig McGill, Charles Bennett, Edward O'Donnell, Sean Brennan, Finbarr Whelan, James Keeney, Raymond Sweeney.

In the Junior Championship, Ardara defeated Rannafast in the Divisional final 1-08 to 1-04 in Glenties. Burt were then defeated in the semi-final, which set up a final meeting with Four Masters'.

The McNelis Brothers of Meenavalley, Andy, Packie John, Charles Anthony, Bernie, James Max, Frank, Peter Oliver, Matt and Eamon represented Ardara on the playing fields for 7 decades, '40s, '50s, '60s, '70s, '80s '90s and 2000.

Four Masters' are Junior Champions

Four Masters' 2-04 Ardara 1-06

The Junior Football Final, in which Four Masters' triumphed by the minimum margin over Ardara, provided a highly enjoyable and interesting curtain raiser for the Senior game. Here were two teams well prepared for an hour's gruelling football pace and there can be no doubting that both stuck it hammer and tongs until the end. Indeed, like the Senior game, defeat for the vanquished brought its disappointment but not dishonour. Four Masters" had the wind advantage in this game, but their half time lead 1-03 to 0-03 indicated they would face a big challenge in the second half, so well did the Ardara defence contain many of their most dangerous moves. The wind died down a bit after half time and finally disappeared during the Senior game.

When Ardara full-forward, former Inter County player Paddy O'Donnell, fisted the ball to the Four Masters" net in the 13th minute of the second half, it gave the South-Westerners a one point lead with ten minutes to go. Ardara had increased this to two points, and it seemed that they might add the Junior title to the Minor football title they had already won. Ardara were exceptionally well served by the brilliant Michael Keeney and the captain of the Minor side, Edward O'Donnell. John Hanna kept a safe pair of hands in goal for Four Masters' and full back Bob Dore cleared and distributed the ball judiciously on many occasions. He was strongly flanked by John Hanna and Tom Connaghan. Peter Sweeney, Captain of the side played a tremendous part at right half back with young Donal Monaghan and Paddy Woods lending valuable assistance. Des O'Shea, who partnered the powerful P. J. Flood at midfield, had his moments while in

the game. Phonsie Carr on the 40 with Francis Monaghan and Tommy Doherty were a most effective attacking line while the Caldwell brothers, Seamus and Tommy on the wings, and Sean Thomas all played notable parts in ensuring success.

Ardara too, were particularly well served in most sectors. Eamon McNelis was sound in goal while full back John McNelis as well as centre half Columba Diver gave outstanding service right through. John Joe Doherty, Packie Keeney, James McGinley and Conal McNelis on many occasions rallied the side to greater effort. Peter O. McNelis on the 40 was well in the picture, but found it no easy matter shaking off quick tackling defenders. James Keeney and Nicholas McGill were others to catch the eye.

Under Referee Gerry Griffin Stranorlar the teams were:-

Four Masters" - John Hanna, Patrick Hanna, Bob Dore, Tom Connaghan, Peter Sweeney, Donal Monaghan, Paddy Woods, Des O'Shea and P. J. Flood (0-03), Tommy Doherty, Fonzie Carr, Francis Monaghan, Seamus Caldwell (1-00), Sean Thomas (0-01), Tommy Caldwell (1-00). Subs: Harry Stewart for Des O'Shea, Terry Woods for Sean Thomas.

Ardara - Eamon McNelis, John Joe Doherty, John McNelis, James McGinley, Packie Keeney, Colm Diver, Conal McNelis, Edward O'Donnell (0-02), Michael Keeney, John McHugh, Peter O. McNelis (0-01), Nicholas McGill, James Keeney, Patrick O'Donnell (1-02), Raymond Sweeney. Subs Charles Bennett (0-01) for Nicholas McGill.



The Ardara Junior Team who were defeated in the 1965 Junior Championship Final.
Back L-R: John Gallagher, Charlie Bennett, John (Big Francie) Gallagher, Sean Brennan, Columba Diver, Conal McNelis, Edward O'Donnell, Packie Keeney, Michael Keeney.
Front L-R Paddy O'Donnell (Kilcar), Padraig McGill, Peter Oliver McNelis, James Keeney, Raymond Sweeney, Nicholas McGill, James McGinley, John McNelis, John Joe Doherty, John McHugh.
Sitting front: Tom Campbell, Patsy Gildea, Eamon McNelis.



In 1965, Eamon McNelis became the first player from the Club to win an Ulster Vocational Schools medal. He played full back on the team that beat Monaghan in the Ulster Final on a 3-10 to 0-2 scoreline.



John Keeney

The emigration of Club Secretary John Keeney to the U.S.A in 1965 left a void in the G.A.A in the parish at that time that was found very hard to fill. From the beginning there had always been officers and other people dedicated to running the Club, but each era or decade threw up one person or two who were the driving forces behind the Club at that particular time.

In the late fifties and sixties, John Keeney was the heart and soul of the Club, and his foresight and integrity were to leave their mark on the Club, long after he had left for the U.S.A to start a new life.

A son of Sonny and Aggie Keeney of Glendoan, the Keeney household was steeped in the G.A.A, with John and his brothers Charlie, James, Packie, Kieran and Michael all going on to play for the Club. John enjoyed a distinguished playing career, which started as a Juvenile in 1947 and continued until the late fifties, when

an injury curtailed his involvement. Following the 1952 Minor Championship win, John moved on to the Senior team and usually played at left half back during his time. He also played for the County Junior and Senior teams. It was, however, as a Club Officer that John Keeney made an indelible mark on the G.A.A in the parish. He first served as Club Treasurer in 1958 and 1959, and went on to act as Secretary of the Club from 1960-62, Assistant Secretary in 1963/64 and was back as Secretary again in 1965. The commencement of the Club Schoolboy leagues in 1959 was John's brainchild and it was his work with these Leagues and with the Under-Age teams in the Club that left an indelible mark on the G.A.A in the area. The Leagues were the first of their kind in the County and were the forerunner of the first County Under-14 Championship in 1962, following a motion from the Ardara Club. The winning of the 1962 Schoolboy Championship was a direct result of his organisation of Under-Age football in the parish and led to further successes in the sixties. John was also involved at Divisional Board level and regularly represented the Club at County Board meetings and Conventions. A weaver by trade, John was selected to travel to New York, to the World's Fair in 1957, to demonstrate the weaving trade at this huge event. He made another few trips, before he and his wife Kathleen (Breslin) travelled to Boston in 1965 and then settled in New York, in 1967, where they raised their daughters Dymphna and Mary, and son Gerard. John soon became involved in the Donegal New York Club acting as a team selector in the late sixties, and followed the Club consistently up to the present day. He and Kathleen are ongoing members of the Donegal Association in New York, and John has been honoured by being elected a Director of the Association for 2004. They make regular trips home every year, and John is still as passionate about the Ardara G.A.A Club as he was all those years ago, eagerly waiting for the Democrat each week, to keep in touch with the Club's progress. John was honoured at the Club's 75th anniversary Dinner Dance in 1996, for his outstanding contribution to the Club, and his name will always go down as one of the most influential members in the history of the Ardara G.A.A Club.

Memories of my early years with Ardara GAA Club,

by John Keeney

Growing up in the townland of Glendoan in the 1940's, would seem to suggest an environment that football would play little part in, but this was not the case. While we did not have any local football heroes from the Meentinadea school area turning out for the Ardara Club at that time, we were however inspired by the many older lads from the surrounding townlands who would get together on Sunday afternoons to play this game of Gaelic Football. Players from Meentinadea, Carrickacleava, Glencoe, Lower and Upper Gortnacart would gather to Glendoan and the game would be played on a field by the river, that at the time, carried the sluice gate that controlled water from Glendoan Lough to form the much needed swell at the power plant giving electricity to Ardara Town.

No matter what the age, all joined in the game of football. Sides would be called and the game would go on for several hours! With my brothers Charlie and James around and being close in age, we would get together and kick an old football around, if we had one, if not we would make one up from old material. My sister Mary Phyliss would often join us for a game and could certainly hold her own with any one of us! My brothers Michael, Packie and Kieran came along later and followed in our footsteps. All six brothers went on to play for Ardara teams at various stages in their careers.

During this time the late Paddy McGill, N.T., Principal teacher of Meentinadea School, was an outstanding playing member of the Ardara Senior Football team and also played with the County Senior team on several occasions. Paddy was known to us as the Big Master and his presence at the School inspired us young lads to take a more serious interest in Gaelic Football, with the result that more football was being played among the children attending the School, as well as the older adults in the area. Very soon the call came from the Ardara GAA Club and my good friend Packie McGuire (now Hillhead) and myself were invited to play with the Ardara U-14 team in a home and away series against

Dungloe. The late Jim Faughnan, who lived on the Front Street at the time, was in charge of the team. Jim, who was an excellent Manager and very popular with it, always used the famous words before a match "lets bring home the bacon", which we took to mean - "let's win the game". Jim also did much to revive the game in Ardara at the time and sought out young players from every corner of the Parish where the game was played. Packie McGuire and myself progressed to play for the U-16 and U-18 teams, reaching the 1951 Minor County final which we lost to a strong St Nauls side. However, we were back in 1952 to win the County Minor Championship after a great run in the Competition. Near the end of 1952 Packie and myself made our first appearance on the Ardara Senior team in the County League. We were in fact the first two players ever from Meentinadea School area to play for the Ardara Senior team! We remained as playing members throughout the '50's, during which time, the record shows, that we won four South-West Divisional Championships, competed in three County semi finals as well as one quarter final.

In the mid 1950's, on persuasion from the late Dan Ward, the legendary Club Secretary, County Board Chairman and Journalist, I became more involved in what could be called the administration of the Club. Fund raising included such efforts as ten week Silver Circle Draws and the annual Bazaar as well as many other activities. In the 1958/59 season, I became Club Treasurer serving for two years, followed by another two years as Secretary. During that time I had the great support of experienced Club Officials such as the late P. J. McGill, N.T., and the late Donal Whelan, N.T., Tommy Boyle, Frankie Brennan and several others within the Club who contributed in so many ways.

P. J. McGill and Tommy Boyle both held the position of Club Chairman during my tenure as Treasurer and Secretary. I must say I made many visits to the Greenhouse to

consult with Tommy on Club matters and he was always helpful, despite his busy schedule.

In the fall of 1958 the Club organised what turned out to be a very successful Schools Football Parish League. The following Committee were appointed to take charge of the various Schools teams of the Parish:

<i>Meentinadea</i>	<i>- Eddie O'Donnell, N.T.</i>
<i>Brackey</i>	<i>- P. J. McGill, N.T.</i>
<i>Laconnell</i>	<i>- Donal Whelan, N.T.</i>
<i>Meenavalley</i>	<i>- Peter (Pat) Breslin</i>
<i>Hillhead</i>	<i>- Phonsie Bennett</i>
<i>West End, Ardara</i>	<i>- John Keeney</i>
<i>Beagh N.S.</i>	<i>- John Byrne</i>

Many others also assisted with the various School teams and from this League emerged an excellent U-14 side which won the Donegal County Junior Championship of 1967. Basically, most of this team eventually went on to win both U-16 and U-18 Minor Championships for the Club.

The success of this venture was particularly

satisfying as the Club, due to emigration and other causes, had seen its Senior team depleted to such an extent in the late 1950's, that it had to revert to Junior status that lasted for a period of about 12 years. Thankfully, not least due to the influence of those young footballers, the Club have been back in the Senior ranks since the early 1970's and competing with the best in the County.

As I come to the conclusion of my story, may I say that I will always be grateful to those who helped me in any way during my tenure with the Club making it such an enjoyable experience. At this point I cannot help but mention my late parents Sonny and Agnes who had to put up with a family of footballers, but were always supportive of us, despite the fact that some farmwork was left undone in favour of playing football.

To all of you that I have played football with and worked within the Club, thank you for the wonderful memories we experienced and the friendship we enjoyed - and still continues to this day. **John Keeney**

1966

Tommy Boyle presided during the election of officers and committee at the Annual General Meeting of the Club, which was held in the Courthouse on Monday, 8th March 1966.

President:	Rev. Patrick Molloy P.P.
Chairman:	Thomas Boyle
Vice Chairmen:	Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill, Danny Haughey, Joseph Gallagher.
Secretary:	John McNelis.
Assist. Secretary:	Patsy Gildea.
Treasurer:	Frankie Brennan.
Senior Captain :	John McNelis
Vice Captain:	Peter Oliver McNelis.

Schoolboys Committee:

Ardara:	Charlie Bennett.
Meentinadea:	John Gallagher.
Brackey:	Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill.
Meenavalley:	Peter Oliver McNelis.

Crannogbois: Tom O'Donnell.
Leaconnell: Jimmy B.Mc Grenra, John Gavigan.
Drumbarron: Patsy Gildea.

Gate Collectors: William Boyle, Joe Gallagher, Donal Haughey, Thomas Boyle, Frankie Brennan, Phonsie Bennett, Charlie Bennett.



John McNelis of the Front Street who was elected Club Secretary in 1966. John played throughout the sixties for the Senior Team at full back and won Junior Championship medals in 1967 and 1970.

St Patrick's play in Senior Championship

In 1966 the Club found itself in an unenviable position of failing to field what was considered a good Senior football team. It was decided that an amalgamated team consisting of Ardara, Killybegs and Kilcar would be viable. After a long discussion with the officers of these clubs it was decided to enter the Senior football Championship and League under the name of " St. Patrick's ". At a meeting of the County Board on 13th June, 1966, it was decided run the Senior Championship and Senior League in four sections.

St. Patrick's was admitted to section 4 with Dungloe, Glenties and St Columba's, each team to play each other home and away. Killybegs was to be the recognised base for St. Patrick's, with variations to Ardara or Kilcar if necessary, when playing certain teams.

In their first match St Patrick's played St Columba's in a local derby. The Carrick/Glencolmcille team were playing under their new name after playing under different combinations over the years.

In the next match the team came up against a Dungloe team which had been fancied as Championship contenders that year. They were powered by County midfielder Sean Ferriter, who was a garda stationed in the area at the time. It was the new boys however who made all the running at Rosses Park, with the home side scraping a draw in the last minute.

St. Patrick's Had Close Win St. Columba's 1 – 9 St. Patrick's 1 - 12

St. Patrick's the recently formed combination from Ardara, Kilcar and Killybegs, shot into the lead at the top of the League table in their section of the Senior County

Football Championship on Sunday 12th July 1966 when they defeated St. Columba's 1 – 12 to 1 – 9 at Glencolmcille.

This was a keenly contested, lively and pulsating hour of football, with St. Columba's the Glencolmcille Parish team, fighting every inch of the way. St. Patrick's led 0 – 6 to 0 – 2 at the interval, but in the second half St. Columba's produced some splendid football and on various occasions took control. With a little more accuracy in the first half St. Columba's could have ensured victory. Trailing by a heavy deficit midway through the second half, St. Columba's made a determined bid, following a number of switches, and the large crowd from that to the end got plenty to enthuse over.

Scorers for St. Patrick's: M. Byrne 1 – 0; E. O'Donnell 0 – 5; P. O McNelis 0 – 3; J.

Doogan 0 – 2; and L. McGill who came on as a sub for Packie Keeney in the second half(0 – 2)

Scorers for St. Columba's: C. Mc Shane(1 – 0), J. Gillespie (0 – 4), C. Mc Laughlin(who came on as a sub for C. Gillespie in the second half- (0 – 4) and J. Talbot (0 – 1).

St. Patrick's: Donal Cannon (Killybegs), John Joe Doherty, John McNelis, Seamus Mc Nulty (Kilcar), Conal McNelis, Columba Diver, Seamus Gillespie (Killybegs), Edward O'Donnell, Packie Keeney, Des Houlihan (Killybegs), Peter Oliver McNelis, Josie Boyle, M. Doherty, Jimmy Doogan(Kilcar), Mickey Byrne(Kilcar) .

St. Columba's: P. Byrne, B. Byrne, Francie Cunningham, C. McShane, Jimmy Cunningham, Joe Talbot, John Cunningham, Sean McNelis, M. Walshe, P. J. Maloney, J. Gillespie, Sean Burke, F. Hegarty, C. Gillespie, C. Cunningham.

Ferriter Point Made It A Draw Dungloe: 0 – 9 St. Patrick's 2 – 3

A last minute point from a 35 yards free by Sean Ferriter enabled Dungloe to end all square at 0 – 9 to 2 – 3 with St. Patrick's in their vital Senior Football Championship tie at Rosses Park on Sunday 21st August 1966. The game, which produced hard, dogged and at times ragged football, ended on an exciting note with both sides striving hard for a deciding point.

The visitors went out in front from the start but were overhauled by the Rosses side entering the last quarter. With a two-point lead at the 57th minute, Dungloe appeared

to be in full control, until a brisk St. Patrick's attack brought a free, which Edward O'Donnell finished to the net in a goalmouth melee. Ferriter's equalising point earned a Championship point which may prove quite valuable to the Rosses men in the battle for Divisional honours.

Edward O'Donnell opened the scoring for the visitors in the 2nd minute when he finished to the net after a good solo run. Peter Oliver McNelis added another two minutes later with a neat 35 yards effort. In the 11th minute Pat Forker opened

Dungloe's account with a point from a short free and the hard working J. Reilly added a second as the first quarter ended. Dungloe keeper Packie Boyle was seen to good effect when he saved three times in succession in a fierce St. Patrick's attack. There was faulty finishing on both sides as the first half ended with Jimmy Doogan (short free) and Sean Ferriter from 40 yards swapping points to leave the visitors in front by 1 – 2 to 0 – 3 at the break.

With wind advantage in the second period Dungloe attacked, and Ferriter pointed a short free. In the 34th minute the McCole brothers, Niall and Colum, shared a Dungloe point, with the former carrying up from the full-back line to send a long lob to Colum who pointed from far out. At the other end Jimmy Doogan pointed a short free . Ferriter put Dungloe on level terms when he pointed from 30 yards and eased them out in front for the first time, in the 48th minute, when he converted a 35 yards free.

Further Dungloe attacks were thwarted by good defensive work by McNelis, Diver and Cannon before Enda Bonner who had come on as a sub sent over for Dungloe. Then came O'Donnell's goal and Ferriter's point to produce a really hectic finish and a sharing of the points.

The teams under Seamus Rodgers,(Rannafast), were :-

Dungloe: P. Boyle, O. Boyle, N. McCole, J. McElwee, B. O'Donnell, J. Bonner, P. McCole, P. Forker, M. Ward, J. Coughlan, S. Ferriter, J. Joyce, C. McCole, S. O' Donnell, J. Reilly.

St. Patrick's: Donal Cannon, Brendan McBride, John McNelis, Seamus McNulty, Conal McNelis, Columba Diver, John Joe Doherty, Edward O'Donnell, Pat Cannon, Des Houlihan, Peter Oliver McNelis, Cathal McGinley, Packie Keeney, Jimmy Doogan Mickey Byrne.

With St. Patrick's and Glenties qualifying from the section (St. Patrick's and Glenties drew in Ardara, with Glenties winning the match in Glenties), St. Patrick's were fixed to play St. Eunan's in the County quarter-final.

St. Patrick's Weak Forward Finish ***St. Eunan's: 1 - 14 St. Patrick's 1 – 04***

At half time in the first quarter final at Sean MacCumhaill Park, Ballybofey on Sunday 2nd October 1966 between St. Eunan's and St. Patrick's, the Letterkenny men led by 0 – 10 to 1 – 1 and they ended with a ten points win 1 – 14 to 1 – 4 because their forward's generally took their scoring chances well and showed vast improvement on earlier displays. St. Patrick's were somewhat of a disappointment to their supporters. At several periods they promised much, but failed to get into their game with the same

force as in the qualifying tests in their section. St. Eunan's used the ball better but tended to concentrate almost solely on their right flank. It paid off too, with young Packie O'Donnell proving himself the best forward of the side, although young Anthony Gallagher was not far behind. St. Patrick's had several fine performers but are hardly playing long enough together as a team to have reached their peak. John McNelis was sound at full back and was exceptionally well supported by Pat Cannon and John J. Doherty. Packie Keeney,

Conal McNelis and Columba Diver played strongly in the half back line, Edward O'Donnell and John McGinley had some spectacular moments at midfield.

Cathal McGill played a tremendous game, starting at left half forward. This is a player the selectors must have taken particular note of.

Packie O'Donnell gave St. Eunan's a point lead, but from a free, Edward O'Donnell equalised. Anthony Gallagher placed his brother James for a point and the lead again for St. Eunan's and then Tony McDevitt had a neat point. John Hannigan pointed a 50 yards free and Sean McEntee sent to Sean Donnelly for another. Following a James Gallagher free Jackie Reilly pointed and Packie O'Donnell soon had another to leave St. Eunan's lead 0 – 10 to 1 – 1 at half time.

Early in the second half Conal McNelis pointed for St. Patrick's and Jimmy Doogan followed up with another. Peter Oliver McNelis drove hard but hit an upright and subsequently Sean McGee cleared the St. Eunan's lines before Tony McDevitt placed

Sean Donnelly for a near point. Mc Devitt sent to Reilly from whom keeper Cannon saved but Packie O'Donnell was at hand to finish to the net. Dan McMenamin came on for the injured Sean Donnelly and then John McGinley pointed for St. Patrick's. Reilly and Kelly had a point each for St. Eunan's to complete the scoring.

Under referee Gerry Griffin, Stranorlar the teams were:-

St. Eunan's: S. Hoare, H. McBride, P. O'Donnell, S. McGee, Noel O'Donnell, John Hannigan, J. McMorrow, S. McEntee. James Gallagher, Sean Donnelly, Anthony Gallagher, Tony McDevitt, Packie O'Donnell, Jackie Reilly, S. Kelly.

St. Patrick's: Donal Cannon, John Joe Doherty, John McNelis, Pat Cannon, Conal McNelis, Packie Keeney, Columba Diver, Edward O'Donnell, John McGinley, Des Houlihan, Peter Oliver McNelis, Cathal McGill, Eamon McNelis, Jimmy Doogan, Mickey Byrne.



The St. Patrick's team that played in the 1966 Senior Championship.

Back L-R: Josie Boyle (Kilcar), Seamus Gillespie (Killybegs), Donal Cannon (Killybegs), Packie Keeney, Edward O'Donnell, Conal McNelis, John McNelis, Columba Diver, Jim Doogan (Kilcar), Tommy Boyle.

Front L-R: Paddy Cannon (Kilcar), Sean McGinley (Kilcar), Peter Oliver McNelis, Seamus McNulty (Kilcar), Des Houlihan (Killybegs), Seamus Gillespie (Kilcar), John Joe Doherty, Mickey Byrne (Kilcar).

Junior Team

The participation of St Patrick's in the Senior Championship meant that the Junior team had few games during the year. In the South-West Championship the team had victories over Rannafast and Killybegs to win the Divisional Junior Championship. This qualified them for a quarter-final match against Bundoran. The match was not played until January 1967, as the County team's successful run in the national League and Ulster Championship had delayed Club competitions. Their opponents, who included eight members of the Senior County team were much too strong, in a robust affair which was played at Sandfield.

Bundoran Sweep Through to Final

At the Gaelic Park, Sandfield, Ardara, on Sunday, Bundoran had a clear cut and decisive victory over Ardara in the Junior Football County Championship semi-final, when they defeated them by 2-9 to 1-2.

The game, which was played in fairly reasonable conditions, didn't add lustre to Gaelic Football because it was marred in the last quarter by frayed tempers resulting in the injury of Bundoran and County star, Declan O'Carroll, and Peter Quinn, the Bundoran centre forward. The referee, Gerry Griffin, would on a number of occasions, have been justified in sending a few players to the lines, but with an unfenced pitch, that was invaded by the spectators, it would take the courage of a superman to do this.

In the first half, had Ardara concentrated more on the ball than on the man, the score board might have looked more respectable in their favour.

In the second half, Ardara made an all-out effort to pull the game out of the fire, and the

great display given by Cathal McGill, in the right half back berth, was mainly responsible for holding Bundoran to a 2 point score in this half. The efforts of this young and promising footballer, who is worthy of notice by the County selectors, came to naught, by an erratic Ardara forward line, where the only ones to impress were Patsy Gildea and Patrick J. McNelis; Gildea especially, whose individual efforts were most times curbed when he was fouled going through.

The teams under Gerry Griffin were:

Ardara: Patsy Breslin, John Joe Doherty, John McNelis, Manus McGill, Cathal McGill, Columba Diver, Conal McNelis, Edward O'Donnell (0-1), Packie Keeney, Patsy Gildea, P.J. McNelis (1-0), Peter Oliver McNelis, Lochlann McGill, Sean Brennan, Donal McBride (0-1).

Bundoran: J. Daly, F. McGloin, L. McDaid, J. Healy, P. Cleary, B. Brady, M. Daly, D. O'Carroll, B. McEniff, S. Granaghan, D. McHugh, B. Gavigan, K. O'Gorman, P. Quinn, A. Campbell.

In the McNelis Cup competition, the team drew Dungloe in the first round in Pearse Memorial, but the match had to be abandoned after Fred Sweeney of Dungloe suffered a serious leg injury on the poor surface. The re-match was fixed for a month later in Dungloe.

Watched game On Crutches ***Dungloe*** ***4 – 10*** ***Ardara*** ***1 – 09***

In a high scoring game at Dungloe on Sunday 12th June the homesters beat Ardara in the McNelis Senior football cup. A feature of the game was the good form of Dungloe's County players, Sean Ferriter, very fit after his U.S. tour, Sean O'Donnell showing no effects of his recent arm injury, Pat Forker and John Bonner both showing a great turn of speed. Watching the game on crutches from the sideline was Dungloe forward Fred Sweeney who sustained a broken leg in the tie between these two sides at Ardara last month.

The teams, under referee Frank White, were:

Dungloe: P. Boyle , M. Gallagher, N. G. O'Donnell, C. Greene, P. Gallagher, J. Bonner, B. O'Donnell, S. O'Donnell, S. Ferriter, J. Boyle ,P. Forker, D. Logue, M. Farren, J. Reilly, J Bonner. Subs: D. Boyle, J. McGarvey, E. Bonner.

Ardara; John (Big Francie) Gallagher, Manus McGill, John McNelis, John Gallagher, Peter Breslin, Packie Keeney, Sean Brennan, Edward O'Donnell, Conal McNelis, Tom Campbell, Peter O. McNelis, Lochlann McGill, Frankie Campbell, James Keeney, Gerry Gillen.

Ardara, however, recovered well after this defeat and beat Naomh Columba to qualify for the final where they defeated Dungloe by four points in Glencolmcille. The only other match held during the year was a game against Glencolmcille to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1916 Easter rising.



Seamus McGee One of the longest serving and most outstanding goalkeepers in the Club's history. He played for the Senior Team from 1958 to 1972 and was a brilliant shotstopper.

Minor Controversy

In the Minor Football Championship, Ardara defeated Kilcar both home and away and then defeated Killybegs at home. In the return game in Ardara though, the match was abandoned by the referee, following the pitch being invaded by both sets of supporters. The match was re-fixed for Pearse Memorial Park, and the fishermen turned the tables and took the points. There were doubts, however, about the legality of the Killybegs team and following the game, the Club lodged an objection. Ardara were awarded the match by the Divisional Board after proving their case. There was another twist to the tale however, when Killybegs lodged a counter objection, against the Ardara team playing over-age players. This protest was also upheld and, as a result of both teams playing illegal players, both Clubs were expelled from the competition.

In the Iniskeel Minor Cup competition, the Club captured their first trophy of the

year when they won through, after a victory over Killybegs, a walkover against Naomh Columba, and a three game saga against Naomh Conaill in the final. A draw in Sandfield, another draw in Glenties, Ardara eventually won through after taking the third match in Glenties by three points.

The Club did not enter a Juvenile team in 1966 and the only other Under-Age activity involved the Schoolboy team, whose participation was short lived, following defeats to Naomh Columba at home and away.



The Ardara Under 14 team of 1966.

Back L-R: Frank Sweeney, Pat McGill (Aighe), Denis Joseph Shovlin, Conal Breslin (Stragar), John Boyle, Teddy Fisher, Patsy Gildea, Martin Sweeney, Kieran Keeney, Jimmy Campbell, Declan McGill.

Front L-R: Colm Campbell, Pat Maguire, Louis Boyle, Billy McNelis, John Herron, Malachy Maguire, Michael Gallagher, John Bernard Boyle, Don Byrne, Pete Shovlin, Bill Shovlin

Pitch problems

The playing surface at Pearse Memorial Park had been a cause for concern for the Club officers for some time, and had been deteriorating seriously over the years. The Club were using Sandfield also, after receiving permission from Sheila Connolly, and were also considering approaching Con Molloy to use the show field for certain matches. The injury to Fred Sweeney of Dungloe saw the matter come to a head and quick decisions had to be made. It was decided that approaches be made to Mr Denis Greene and Patrick Watters, Edergole, with a view to obtaining 200 loads of filling for Pearse Memorial Park and, if available, tractors to be employed to deliver same to the playing field. A proposal was then put to the Club by Denis Greene (Dungloe), to construct a playing field at Edergole, on land that he owned himself. After lengthy consideration, it was felt that the proposal would

not be financially feasible for the Club at that point in time. It was agreed that should Sandfield become available for sale, the Club would consider purchasing the land.



Photo above shows the Mc Devitt Institute team, Glenties who won the schools 7 a side Championships in Letterkenny in 1966.

Back Row :-Pat Molloy (Glenties), Bernard Maguire (Ardara), Patrick Glackin (Rosses), Patrick McGuigan (Glenties), Jimmy McGrath (Glenties), Eamon McNelis (Ardara), Tom Diver (Ardara) and Jimmy McSwiggan (Glenties).

Front Row :- Peter Sweeney (Fintown), Frankie Campbell (Ardara), Joey Byrne (Glenties), Josie McGrath (Glenties), Pierce McDevitt (Fintown) and Paul McDermott (Glenties)

Fr. Luke Boyle Homecoming

Arrangements were made at a Club meeting on the 22nd of August June 1966 to organise a 'Welcome Home' for Fr. Luke Boyle of Tullycleave, who was ordained in Sicily earlier in the year and who was a member of the 1952 and 1954 Ardara Championship winning Minor Football teams. It was also agreed that the Club would present him with a wrist watch to mark the occasion.

The following were selected to form a Guard of Honour:

Columba Diver, Bosco McGill, Edward O'Donnell, John McNelis, John Joe Doherty, Packie Keeney, Peter Oliver McNelis, Patsy Gildea, Tom O'Donnell, Charlie Bennett, Manus McGill, Sean Brennan, Lochlann McGill, Frankie Campbell, Tom Diver, James McGinley and John Boyle.

On the day the platform party comprised of Rev. Fr. Patrick Molloy P.P., Rev. Fr. William McMenamin C. C., Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill, Thomas Boyle and Frankie Brennan and the address of welcome was read by the Club Chairman Thomas Boyle.



Pictured outside the Chapel, waiting to start the parade.

Left row: Charlie Bennett, Edward O'Donnell, Conal McNelis, Columba Diver, Bosco McGill, Manus McGill, Frankie Campbell.

Right Row: John McNelis, Patsy Breslin, John Big Francie, Phonsie Bennett, Vinny McHugh, Frank McGhee, Patsy Gildea.



**Fr Luke is escorted over the town in Hugh Fran's Zephyr,
flanked on both sides by a guard of honour.**

**Included on the left is Frankie Campbell, Cormac Gallagher,
On the right, John Big Francie, John Joe Doherty, Frank McGhee,
Denis Gallagher (Beagh), Charlie Mooney.**



**Fr Luke saluted the crowd from the platform on the Diamond.
Seated is Mick Kennedy, Tommy Boyle and on the right, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill.**



Peter Oliver wins Club's first Ulster under 21 medal

Peter Oliver McNelis of Meenavalley, was a member of the Donegal panel that won the Ulster under 21 title in 1966. Peter did not start the Ulster final but was on the first 15 against Roscommon in the semi-final, Roscommon winning the match 2-2 to 0-5. Peter Oliver's talents first came to light, in the first Schools' Parish League in 1959/60 when he won the Player of the League award, while playing for the Meenavalley team who were runners up in the competition. He soon took his place on the Club Juvenile and Minor teams, and was heralded as one of the brightest prospects the Club had seen since Frankie Brennan. He played on the Donegal County Minor Team of 1963 that was beaten in the Ulster final. He played for the County Junior team in 1967 and also played for the Senior Team that year. He played for Donegal in the National League and McKenna cup competitions until 1972. A promising music career militated against a full commitment to the County team for the Championship. His first Championship medal for the Club was won in the 1967 Junior team's victory and he added another in 1970. A prolific scoring forward with either foot, his favoured positions were at centre-half forward or full forward, where he gave many brilliant displays for the Club in a career that lasted until 1974.

The Club was represented on the County Minor Panel that year by Cathal McGill, Manus McGill, Lochlann McGill (captain), Patsy Gildea and Eamon McNelis, but the team was defeated by the All Ireland champions, Derry, in the first round. There were no Club players the County Senior team of 1966, who were defeated in the National League semi-final by Longford (0-13 to 0-11) and were defeated by Down in the Ulster Championship final (1-7 to 0-8).



The Mc Devitt Institute Senior team who won the County Championship in 1966.

They defeated Convoys Technical School by 50 points in the final!

Back L-R: Brendan Gildea, Tony Doherty, John Martin McConnell, Bernard Ward, James Breslin, John Quinn, Cathal Ward, Jimmy Mc Swiggan.

Front L-R: John Boyle, Jody Gallagher, Charlie J. O'Donnell, Gerry McDermott, Brendan McGill, Tom Diver, Peter McKelvey, Gerry McDyre, John Harkin, Hugh Boyle

1967 -Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill Elected County Chairman



Pictured above: Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill- County Chairman in 1967 pictured with County Secretary Hugh Daly, Ballyshannon.

The beginning of 1967 saw the Club receive a tremendous boost when Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill was elected County Chairman at County Convention in Ballybofey, on Sunday the 29th of January. He was successful in a contest against the outgoing Chairman, Donal McGlinchey (St Eunans), and Edward Quinn (Bundoran). The first count resulted in the following votes being cast: Donal McGlinchey-88 votes, Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill-99 votes and Edward Quinn -77.

Following the elimination of Mr Quinn, Pádraig was successful in a head to head vote against Mr. McGlinchey on a vote of 99 to 75. The result was

a fitting tribute, as Pádraig had served as an officer at Club, Divisional, and County level, since his involvement commenced in the 1930s as a young man. His knowledge of the rules of the Association was well known throughout the County and his election received great praise from all clubs. The convention also saw Vinny McHugh elected as a County Selector, representing the South-West Division.

At the reconvened convention in March, a motion from the Ardara Club, calling for the setting up of a Minor board to organise and administer Minor, Juvenile and Schoolboy grades, was ruled out of order by the committee, on the grounds that it was already covered.

1967

The Club A.G.M was held in January but the record of the election of officers was not documented. It is known, though, that the following main officers were elected.

President: Fr Patrick McShane

Chairman: Tommy Boyle

Secretary: Danny Haughey

Treasurer: Frankie Brennan



Danny Haughey, was elected Club Secretary in 1967. Danny had been very involved in the Club during the sixties and served as Vice-Chairman from 1964-66. He was Club Secretary for 3 years (1967-69) and was also involved in running the School Leagues and in managing Under-Age teams. A well known tradesman locally, Danny also served as Treasurer and Registrar of the South-West Board in the late sixties.

Senior Team

Following another year in the Junior ranks in 1966, the Club again discussed the possibility of entering the Senior Championship. It was agreed at the start of the year to enter a team in the Senior football League and to defer a decision on the Championship, until the Club played a few matches, to see were they up to scratch for Senior football. Ardara were grouped in section one of the League with St Joseph's, Clann na Gael (Donegal), Glenties, Gweedore and Naomh Columba. The first match gave some hope, with a good win over Naomh Columba.

The team then defeated Clann na Gael in their next match, 3-7 to 2-5. This was to be their last victory for some time, however, and a loss to Gweedore and two heavy defeats, by Naomh Conaill and St Joseph's, convinced the Club officers and players that it would be best for the team to enter in the County Junior Championship and make an extra effort to win the competition for the first time.

Ardara beat St. Columba's Ardara 2-5 St. Columba's 1-6

A well-taken goal in the final stages, as a result of a grand shot by their star '40' man, Peter Oliver McNelis, which was finished by Manus McGill, gave Ardara a two point victory of 2-5 to 1-6 over St. Columba's, Glencolmcille, in their SFL tie at Glen on Sunday.

In a pulsating game, the sides were level, 1-4 all at the interval. Up until the visitors' dramatic goal, St. Columba's were holding on to a one-point lead, and at this stage, hopes were entertained that they might emerge with a slender victory.

Joseph O'Boyle, Kilcar, was referee, and the teams were:

Ardara: P. Boyle, M. Kennedy, John McNelis, P.J. McNelis, Tom Diver, Columba Diver, Sean Brennan, Edward O'Donnell (1-2), Conal McNelis, Packie Keeney, Peter Oliver McNelis(0-2), Patsy Gildea(0-1), Frankie Campbell, P. Breslin, Manus McGill (1-0) and Charlie Mooney.

St. Columba's: P. Byrne, C. McShane, F. Cunningham, B. Byrne, J. Cunningham, J. Talbot, S. Burke, P.J. Moloney, J. Gillespie, O. McIntyre, C. Gillespie, J. Kilgallon, C. McGinley, C. Cunningham, C. Maguire.

In the South-West Championship, the team was drawn against Naomh Mhuire (Kilcar) in the first round, to be played on a home and away basis. The first game was played on the 18th of August and Ardara won a close match by 3-2 to 1-7. In the home leg, the team repeated their away victory, this time on a 4-9 to 1-6 scoreline. This qualified them for the Divisional final against Leitrimacaward, again resulting in an easy victory for the Ardara men. Having won the South-West Championship, the team was drawn against Four Masters' in the County semi-final. The game was played in Fintra on the 22nd of October.

Merited Victory for Ardara

At the Gaelic Park, Killybegs, Ardara had a merited victory over Four Masters', Donegal, in the Junior semi-final of the County Championship, defeating them 2-9 to 2-4.

Ardara put up a stubborn defence and held Four Masters' to 1-3 to 0-0 score at the end of the first moiety. On the turn-over, Ardara went into attack in a very methodical manner, and their star performer, Patsy Gildea, put them on the march to victory when he shot a pile-driver to the net. The same player gave a grand display of place

kicking during the remainder of the game and pointed four further frees.

The game was a clean, hard-fought affair that did credit to both teams.

Ardara's victory can be attributed to their better teamwork, especially in attack, where Peter Oliver McNelis, Conal McNelis and Tom Diver were outstanding. At centre field, Packie Keeney accompanied by Sean Brennan, gained supremacy over Seamus Durkin and Sean Thomas.

In defence for Ardara, Manus McGill had a good game, ably assisted by Cormac Gallagher and John Joe Doherty. At centre

half, Columba Diver bore the brunt of the attack and was the strong man of the game.

The teams under Owenie McBride, Gweedore, who deputised for Seamus McKelvey, Crossroads, were:

Four Masters': T. Conaghan, C. Fox, B. Dore, J. Williamson, T. Woods, H. Travers, P. Woods, S. Durkin, S. Thomas, A. Corr, D. O'Shea, E. Mullin, M. Keeney, J. Bell, T. Caldwell.

Ardara: Seamus McGee, John McNelis, Manus McGill, Cormac Gallagher, John Joe Doherty, Columba Diver, Lochlann McGill, Sean Brennan, Packie Keeney, Patsy Gildea, Conal McNelis, Peter Oliver McNelis, Tom Diver, Hugh O'Donnell, Frankie Campbell.

Sub: Edward O'Donnell replaced Frankie Campbell.

The team had now qualified for the County final against Convoy. The match was played at O'Donnell Park Letterkenny on the 5th of November.

Ardara are Junior Champions

In a hard-fought Junior Football Championship final at O'Donnell Park, Letterkenny on Sunday, Ardara came back after playing second fiddle to Convoy in the first half, and ended on top with two points to spare.

It was a game that produced good football in the slippery ground conditions that prevailed, and reflected credit on the 30 players concerned.

Convoy had much the better of the first half, but turned over with only a single point in hand, 0-4 to 0-3. But the Easterners were played out of it for long passages of the second half, which Ardara dominated, and their best efforts late in the hour to fight their way back into the game were met by determined resistance.

Tackling was on occasions hard, and almost on time, referee T. Walsh, ordered a Convoy player to the line. There were some late thrills as Convoy tried to force a goal and almost did. But at the end, Ardara held control and team captain, Peter Oliver McNelis, went forward to receive the cup from County Chairman, Mr. P. S. McGill, O.S.

Convoy must blame themselves for failing with so many first half scoring chances when the game was all theirs. But Ardara's attack always shaped dangerously.

In the ground conditions, fielding by most of the players was remarkably good, and there were several good flashes of football. It took eight minutes before the first score came. A partial clearance and pressure on the Ardara goal gave Ambrose Given a chance and he pointed.

Two minutes later, Frank McGee was fouled on the run, and Patsy Gildea sent the free between the posts.

17 minutes had elapsed before Ian Farron punched over a point. Three minutes later, Ardara were level again as Patsy Gildea pointed another free.

Paidin Kavanagh had two points from frees to put Convoy ahead. Ardara came back per Cathal McGill, but the effort went wide. Just on half time, Patsy Gildea had their third point to leave it Convoy 0-4, Ardara 0-3.

Two minutes after the restart, Cathal McGill had a fine overhead point to level the

scores again. Two minutes later, Packie Keeney sent a long free soaring between the posts for the lead for the first time. Convoy were back again and Ambrose Given went in for a point to level again.

Substitute Donal McBride was just on the Ardara side when he grabbed a ball and smacked it against the cross-bar. The rebound came to Patsy Gildea who shot high and the umpires ruled it a point and the lead for Ardara again. Ardara went two points ahead in the 53rd minute when Peter Oliver McNelis was brought down heavily and Patsy Gildea sent a 30 yard free straight between the posts for what proved to be the last score of the game.

Convoy fought back in the dying moments and when Georgie Hunter blasted a great

opportunity wide, with only the goalie to beat, their final chance had gone. Under Mr.T. Walsh, Gortahork, the teams were:

Ardara: Seamus McGee, John McNelis, Manus McGill, Cormac Gallagher, John Joe Doherty, Columba Diver, Lochlann McGill, Packie Keeney, Sean Brennan, Patsy Gildea, Cathal McGill, Peter Oliver McNelis, Frank McGee, Conal McNelis, Tom Diver. Sub: Donal McBride for Tom Diver.

Convoy: S. McNamee, Sean McMullan, Brendan McGeehan, M. Garry, Charles Kavanagh, E. Gallagher, Matt Curran, Seamus Given, Paidin Kavanagh, Tommy Patton, Ian Farron, Ambrose Given, Clement Harvey, Hugh Harron, George Hunter. Sub: Danny Kavanagh for Harron.

The victory was a boost that the Club badly needed, as the sixties, prior to that, had been extremely forgettable at adult level. The win also meant that the Club had earned the right to compete in the Senior Championship in 1968. The work being done at Under-Age level from the late fifties until then, was finally beginning to bear fruit at adult level.

The year ended with the team having played eight matches in the County League, winning four and losing four, with two matches not being played.



The Ardara Junior Team, County Championship winners in 1967

Back L-R: Vinny McHugh, Donal McBride, Lochlann McGill, John McNelis, Columba Diver, John Boyle, Seamus McGee, Hugh O'Donnell, Sean Brennan, Conal McNelis, P.J. McNelis, Packie Keeney, Conal Gavigan, Jimmy O'Donnell.

Front L-R: Manus McGill, Charlie Mooney, John Joe Doherty, Cathal McGill, Cormac Gallagher, Peter Oliver McNelis, Frank McGhee, Frankie Campbell, Tom Diver, Bart McHugh, Patsy Gildea, Eamonn McNelis.

Club Schoolboy Football Championship

At a meeting of the Club in February, it was agreed to commence the local Schoolboys' football Championship. The Club area was divided into two sections.

A – Ardara A, Brackey and Leaconnell

B – Ardara B, Crannogbuí and Meentinadea

The League went on during the year and culminated in a final between Ardara B and Meentinadea. The Ardara lads were victorious after a tough match and were presented with the Seán Ó Casaide Memorial Cup and medals.

In the County Schoolboys' competition, the team won the South-West Championship, by defeating Glencolmcille and Killybegs, and then Dungloe, in the final at Glenties. The team was defeated in the County semi-final, by Gweedore, in a match, which was not played until April 1968.

County teams

Club players represented the County in different grades in 1967. Peter Oliver McNelis played for the County Junior team in the Ulster Championship and for the County Senior team later that year. Packie Keeney and Cathal McGill played for the County Under 21s in the first round defeat to Derry and Manus McGill was on the County Minor team that lost to Derry in the Ulster Championship first round. The opening of Fintra Park took place on the 11th of July. Many Ardara people contributed to the event. Pádraig Mac a'Ghoill was there as County Chairman. Donegal played Mayo in a challenge match and Cathal McGill and Peter O. McNelis were named in the subs, while Phonsie Bennett refereed the match.



Manus McGill of Edergole, who played full back for Donegal in the 1967 Ulster Minor Championship.

Meeting Snippets

In contrast to the previous years, 1967 saw the Club hold meetings on a regular basis. The decision to enter the Junior Championship, instead of Senior, was one which took three meetings to decide, as few playing members of the Club were present at the first two gatherings. With regard to this issue, Charlie Bennett stated the following at a meeting on the 31st of May. *"If the team are not willing to devote more of their spare time to training, it is useless entering in any competition, Our supporters, who are paying good money to see these games, feel that they are being let down by the poor performances"*.

At a meeting on the 20th of September, the following people were allocated All Ireland final tickets. As was the practice, the Chairman, Secretary and treasurer were entitled to one ticket each. It was unanimously agreed that Joe Larry should also get one ticket for the outstanding work he was doing for the Club. The remaining tickets which cost 15/ each were won by Columba Diver, Patrick McNelis, Packie Keeney and John McNelis.



Photo above shows the St Eunan's college Senior Team of 1966/67, The photo includes three Ardara players, Charlie Maloney (Leaconnell), Lochlann McGill and Manus McGill.

Back Row L-R. Aidan Furey, (Glenties), Seamus McGrory (Letterkenny), Donal Doherty, (Kilcar) Kieran McFadden, (Falcarragh) Paddy Brown, (Ballybofey) Niall Brown, (Ballybofey), Sean Sweeney, (Fanad). Kieran McAteer, (Fanad)

Middle Row-L-R. Paddy McGlynn, (Letterkenny), James McDaid, (Termon), Paddy McIntyre (Glen), Terry McMorrow, (Letterkenny), Paddy McGinley (Letterkenny), Paddy McDyre (Glenties), Sean Bonner (Letterkenny)

Front Row- L to R. Brian Doherty, (Malin Head) Charles Fox, (Donegal), Charlie Maloney, Mickey Doherty (Kilcar). Manus McGill, Lochlann McGill, Harold Reid, (Ballybofey).

1968

At the A.G.M of the Club held in the Courthouse on the 26th January, 1968, the following officers were elected,

President:	Rev Patrick McShane C.C.
Chairman:	Tommy Boyle
Secretary:	Danny Haughey
Treasurer:	Frankie Brennan
Finance Committee:	Charles Bennett, Columba Diver, Tommy Boyle.
Selection committee:	Vinny McHugh, Joseph Gallagher and Charles Bennett.

Delegates to County Convention - Joseph Gallagher, Vinny McHugh, P.S. Mac a' Ghoill, O.S., Danny Haughey, Francis Diver, Vincent McConnell, Patsy Gildea and Peter McHugh.

Senior Team Captain: Edward O'Donnell

Vice-Captain: Conal McNelis.



Phonsie Bennett, who was elected Senior Team Manager for 1968. Phonsie's involvement with the Club started in the late '40s and continued right through the decades. He was a regular Senior team player in the fifties and was involved with the Under-Age and Parish League teams of the sixties. Phonsie also acted on the South-West Divisional Board as Secretary/Treasurer. He took up refereeing whilst still a player and soon became well respected throughout the County. He was widely regarded as the best "whistler" in the County during the fifties. He continued his involvement through the seventies and eighties, and gave the Club sterling service in many different capacities.

Secretary's report

In his annual report, the Secretary paid a glowing tribute to the sportsmanship of the Ardara players in all their games in 1967,

The Chairman was unavoidably absent. Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill presided at the meeting. The Secretary, Danny Haughey, presenting his Report, said that the year 1967 was very successful for the Club. He complimented the players on their behaviour and good sportsmanship during the year. He continued as follows, *"I am happy to say that the sportsmanship of all our players must be complimented, especially in the game against Leitir macaward in the Junior Divisional final at Glenties, where they were provoked at times beyond all human endurance by a few of the Leitir macaward players, who would be doing the G.A.A a great service by resigning altogether from the Association"*. He congratulated the Junior football team on winning the County Championship in 1967 and the Schoolboys on reaching the County Semi-final.

He concluded: *"Our successful year is but a small step forward in our objective of winning the Senior Football Championship and the provision of a new playing field for our boys and future generations. So it is for us now to dedicate ourselves to the task that remains before us, and it is with pride that we look to the honoured dead of our Club, and the other members who had to emigrate and who worked so unselfishly to maintain our high ideals, for an increased devotion for the work that remains to be done"*.

The Secretary suggested that Birth Certificates should be issued to Under-Age players with photograph attached, in order to remedy the playing of over-age boys.

The Treasurer Frankie Brennan disclosed a profit of £147 on the year's working.

Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill completes his term of office

Following a year in the position of County Chairman, Pádraig left office in January 1968 and did not seek re-election at convention. In his Chairman's address, he called for the promotion of Gaelic games in post-primary schools. He also referred to the 'Ban' and said it was a matter for deep and thoughtful consideration by every delegate. The G.A.A. could never be just another sporting organisation because it was committed to the preservation, promotion and development of the games of their Country, handed on to posterity as the forms of outdoor activity best suited to the physique, temperament, aspirations and environment of the Irish people.

Mr. McGill stated that while G.A.A. activity in Co. Donegal had increased significantly in recent years, the personnel to deal with the increase had not been enlarged sufficiently. The previous year had memories of some outstanding achievements, as well as dashed hopes. The G.A.A. would need to take cognisance of the pressures and influences being brought to bear on the youth of today, many of which militated against dedication to strenuous outdoor pastimes. Mr. McGill thanked the Bishop of Raphoe, Most Rev. Dr. McFeely for having donated and presented the magnificent trophy to the winners of the Senior football County Championship. He thanked the County Board officers and others for their helpfulness to him during the year.

Junior Team presentation

The first social event for the Club in 1968 was the presentation of the medals to the victorious Junior Championship winning team of 1967. It was agreed to host a function in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel, with a meal being provided for all the panel involved in the success. Due to the unavailability of the Nesbitt Arms, the event was eventually held in Brennan's Hotel on the Wednesday after Easter. The officers of the Club agreed at a Club meeting held in March, that a proposal would be forwarded to the County Board to call for the medals for the winning team to be presented on the day of the match. At the same meeting, extreme annoyance was expressed that no Ardara players were selected to start on the County Junior team for the Ulster Championship match versus Derry. (Peter Oliver McNelis came on as a substitute). The grievance was to be aired by Club Delegates at both Divisional and County Board level.

Schoolboys denied fair play

The delayed Schoolboy Championship semi-final from 1967 was finally played in April of 1968 and the game proved to be one filled with controversy. The whole matter is best described by the Club Secretary in his annual report to the 1968 A.G.M which read as follows: *“The semi-final was arranged by the Minor Board to be played in Letterkenny. The game resulted in a draw. The official referee did not turn up and by mutual agreement between myself and other members of our Club and the Chairman of the Gweedore Club, we agreed to a referee who said he was from Termon, although we discovered later that he was a member of the Gweedore Club. He was, however, fairly impartial, and the game ended in a draw. The replay was fixed by the County Minor Board to be played at O'Donnell Park, Letterkenny, with Peadar McGeehan as referee. When Mr. McGeehan was entering the field, he was threatened by a number of Gweedore supporters, resulting in him calling off the game at half time, with Ardara leading. The game was again re-fixed, for the following Friday, by the County Minor Board. Paddy Hoey, through a telephone conversation with P. J. McGill, promised to provide a referee from East Donegal. When we travelled to Letterkenny and fielded our team, there was no official referee present.”*

“Together with the officers of the Gweedore Club, we agreed to a neutral referee who gave his name as J. Friel from Termon. We found out later he was a playing member of the Gweedore Club. In the first minutes of the game, our boys scored three goals. From then on, the referee did not allow the ball to pass the half field, without victimising our players. At one stage, I had to lift our goalkeeper from the square, to save him from being killed, after being attacked by a number of Gweedore players. The referee blatantly gave a free against us, resulting in a point, which brought the scores level. Despite all this, our boys went on and scored another point, leaving the full time score as us having won by a single point. When the game was over, the referee gave his decision as a draw. We pointed out to him that we had won. He said it was a draw. The matter was brought to the attention of the Co. Minor Board, and P. J. McGill, Vinny McHugh, Joe Gallagher and I attended a meeting of the Co. Minor Board in Ballybofey and stated the facts of the case, resulting in a re-fixture being made. The officers of the Club decided in principle not to fulfil the new fixture and so Gweedore won the Championship. We have not yet received the car fares for these three games.”

Back in the Senior Championship

The Club entered the Donegal Senior Championship again for the first time since 1960. They were placed in a three team group with MacCumhaill's, and St.

Patrick's (Kilcar/Glencolmcille). The teams played each other on a home and away basis with the top two teams qualifying for the County quarter finals. Ardara finished top of their group, with MacCumhaill's runners up. The home match against MacCumhaill's was reported as follows.

Ardara conquer MacCumhaill's

A young resurgent Ardara Senior Fifteen gave a spirited performance at home where they defeated Sean MacCumhaills by 2-4 to 0-6 in the Senior Football Championship.

The game started with a severe reverse for Ardara when Eugene Gallagher, from about 30 yards shot for goal. The ball hopped over the Ardara goalkeeper's head but was punched off the line by Manus McGill, and sent out over the sideline. The controversial score was allowed by the umpires. Ardara were quick to retaliate and in the eighth minute, Sean McGinley, who had a great game at centre field for Ardara, placed Frankie Campbell who sent to the net. From this on the game became a hard fought struggle in which MacCumhaill's, the more experienced side of the two, somewhat

upset the dashing movements of Ardara. In defence for Ardara John McNelis had one of his best ever games, ably assisted by Manus McGill and P.J. McNelis. In the half back line, Columba Diver, John Joe Doherty and Packie Keeney bore the brunt of the attacks. At centre field, Brennan and McGinley held a slight supremacy during the hour. In the half forward line, Cathal McGill, Conal McNelis and the ever elusive Patsy Gildea had a gruelling hour against John Dan Mc Menamin, stalwart of the MacCumhaill's defence, assisted by J. McGinley and Frank Doherty. In attack Lochlainn McGill and Frankie Campbell had a good game.

Mr J. McGinley (Glenties) was referee.

*The Sean McGinley mentioned above was John McGinley of Lough Mult, Bruckless, who played for Ardara that year. The team then advanced to a quarter-final meeting with St. Eunan's.

Ardara Tough Opposition for St. Eunan's St. Eunans 2-10 Ardara 2-06

Joe Winston opened the scoring in the second minute with a point for St. Eunan's. Eleven minutes passed before the second score - a point for St. Eunan's. The Ardara keeper Seamus McGee brought down the crossbar in a splendid but futile effort to stop the ball from going over the bar from Jackie Reilly. Just a minute later, Reilly put St Eunan's further ahead with a goal.

Ardara take lead

Ardara flashed back to get their first score, a goal finished by Sean McGinley, but really made by Cathal McGill, and within 30

seconds they were in front when McGill sent in another cross for Edward O'Donnell to punch to the net for their second goal. By the 17th minute Ferriter, with a well taken point, left it all square, and two minutes later M. Herron put St. Eunan's a point in the lead. St Eunans went on to score four more successive points before Cathal McGill got a point for Ardara just before the interval, following a foul on Patsy Gildea.

St. Eunan's forge ahead

In the first minute of the second half, Hannigan placed James Larkin, who

slammed the ball to the Ardara net. Cathal McGill made a great run up the left wing to reply with a point for Ardara. Jackie Reilly and Patsy Gildea exchanged points. Magee brought off a great save in the Ardara goal when under extreme pressure from Winston and Herron. A free against Pat O'Donnell for charging out while in possession gave Packie Keeney the chance to point for Ardara in the 17th minute, leaving a difference of four points between the sides. Joseph Winston had a point for Eunan's and Lochlann McGill replied for Ardara. A sideline kick taken by Columba Diver was well fielded by Conal McNelis, who pointed with 25 minutes gone. St Eunan's had a point from Joseph Winston from a free in the 27th minute and were pressing again when the final whistle went.

Under referee Naul Mc Cole Dungloe, the teams were;

St Eunans: Seamus Hoare, Hugh McBride, Pat O'Donnell, J, Blake, Seamus Kelly, John Hannigan, Noel O'Donnell, Sean Ferriter, Sean McEntee, Anthony Gallagher, Seamus Durcan, Joseph Winston, Barney McDaid, Jackie Reilly, James Larkin. Sub used Martin Herron.

Ardara: Seamus McGee, John Joe Doherty, John McNelis, Columba Diver, Conal McNelis, Packie Keeney, Dominic Mullan (Killybegs), Sean McGinley, Sean Brennan, Patsy Gildea, Peter Oliver McNelis, Cathal McGill, Brendan McBride, Edward O'Donnell, Frankie Campbell. Sub used: Lochlann McGill for D.Mullan.

The Senior Championship of 1968 went on to be the most bizarre on record, with three of the four quarter-finals being played, but as a result of appeals and counter appeals, the games were all re-fixed. The St Eunan's/Ardara game was also refixed, even though Ardara had no problem with the result. The Club decided that they were defeated fair and square in the match that was already played, and would not play the match again. St Eunan's were defeated in the semi-final by St Joseph's, who went on to win the Championship.

In other competitions, the Club had a good run in the McNelis Cup competition, which was limited to Senior Teams in the South-West. The team had victories over Kilcar, Glen, Glenties and Killybegs. Playing in Division 1 of the Senior League, the team had a few victories but emigration again depleted the side. Among those emigrating were two stalwarts of the Senior squad, John and Conal McNelis, who went to England and were a huge loss at the time.



Ardara Senior Team photo taken in 1968.

Back L-R: P.J. Mc Nelis, John Joe Doherty, Conal McNelis, Columba Diver, Sean Brennan, Seamus McGee, John Mc Nelis, Packie Keeney, John Boyle, Edward O'Donnell.

Front L-R: Patsy Breslin, Tom Diver, Frankie Campbell, Patsy Gildea, Charlie Mooney, Cormac Gallagher, Nicholas McGill.



The McDevitt Institute Senior team that won the 1968 County Schools Championship

Back L-R Fr. Dan McDyre, Pat McGill, Pat Boyle, Peter Martin Boyle, Frankie Rodgers, Kieran Keeney, John Maguire, Sean McShane, Noel Gallagher, Columba McDyre.

Front L-R: Neilly Byrne, Sean Houston, Michael O'Donnell, Gerry McDermott, Neilly Gildea, James Byrne, Jim Rodgers, Pat Molloy, Tony Boyle.

Fr Brendan McBride is ordained.

One of the big Parish occasions of 1968 was the ordination of Fr Brendan McBride to the priesthood. Fr McBride was an active playing member of the Club and a big effort was made by the members to commemorate his ordination.

Great Welcome Home for Fr. McBride

Ardara and Downstrands were en fete on Thursday evening last to welcome home Rev Fr. Brendan McBride, son of Mr J. J. McBride, N.T. and Mrs McBride, Narin, who was ordained in Rome earlier this year for the diocese of Raphoe.

On his arrival in Ardara, Fr. McBride, a playing member of the Ardara G.A.A Club, was escorted to a platform on the Diamond by the officers and members of the Club. Fr. Brendan had the honour of winning a Junior Championship medal with Ardara in 1967. Rev. P. McShane, Club President, and Tommy Boyle, Club Chairman, on behalf of the Club. An address was read by Mr P. J. McGill N.T., a former Chairman of the Club and last year's County Chairman Rev D. Mc Shane C.C., on his own behalf and on behalf of the other priests of the Parish and the people of Ardara, extended to Fr. McBride a céad míle fáilte. From the platform on the Hillhead en route to Downstrands, Fr McBride was escorted by the officials of the Club, and the playing

members, togged out in the green and gold, formed a guard of honour and escorted Fr. Brendan to the Hillhead, where he gave each member an individual blessing. From Ardara to St Conal's Church, Kilclooney, where he was received by the Very Rev. P Canon Molloy P.P., bonfires blazed along the route, which was spanned with bunting and banners of welcome. From St Conal's church to his home at Narin he was escorted by a cavalcade of cars, led by the Killybegs accordion band, to a platform outside his home, where Mr Charles Gallagher, Castlegoland, on behalf of the people of Downstrands, extended him a hearty welcome. Also on the platform were Rev. Patrick Heekin and his brother Rev. Peter Heekin, Tullymore. who are holidaying at home from London and U.S.A respectively, and Rev Luke Boyle, who is also on holidays at his home in Tullycleave, Ardara. Fr McBride received his early education at Clogher N.S., where his father is Principal.



This photograph was taken sometime in the '60's at a Club function in the Nesbitt Arm's Hotel. From left to right: Frankie Brennan, Charlie Bennett, Vinny McHugh, Packie John Gildea, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, Tommy Boyle, Jim Maxwell, Frankie Tom Gallagher and Johnny Doherty.

Glenties/Ardara win Juvenile Championship

As had happened on a few occasions since 1965, Ardara and Glenties once again joined forces at Juvenile and Minor level in 1968. It was agreed that the teams involved would be called after each Club on alternating years. In '68, the teams were under the Glenties name. The Minor team competed with little success, but the Juvenile team blazed a trail through the Championship and qualified for the County final against MacCumhaills. As well as the Championship being at stake, there was an added incentive that year, as the Players and Wills cigarette company were providing an all expenses trip to the All Ireland Football finals in Dublin for the winning team, with a hotel stay, tickets for the game and all meals provided.

Glenties Win All-Ireland Trip Glenties 0-10 MacCumhaills 0-06

Glenties/Ardara showed convincing form in defeating a plucky Sean MacCumhaill's side by 0-10 to 0-06 in the final of the Donegal Juvenile Football Championship at O'Donnell Park, Letterkenny. MacCumhaill's had shot in front after some fine play, but they lacked in physique in some sectors and Glenties surged forward in a sustained attacking wave in the second half to change a 3 points deficit into a 3 points lead.

MacCumhaill's full back, Sean Lafferty, played more than one man's part in trying to put his team back on terms again, but Glenties had strong sideline support and direction to encourage them to keep on top and the team responded magnificently. MacCumhaill's had a couple of gallant sallies, sparked off by Dermot Hannigan and Joe Houston. Kevin O' Hara for MacCumhaill's shot for goal, and a ground pick up led to the award of a penalty for MacCumhaill's, who were trailing 0-10 to 0-6 at the time. Referee Noel O'Donnell (St Eunan's) indicated it was the last kick of the game, but it ended in Sean Lafferty driving wide.

Story of the scores

Both sides missed good first half scoring chances. Glenties had two points per Gerry McDermott and Kieran Keeney but

MacCumhaill's replied with points per Dermot Hannigan (0-02) and Charles Kelly.

In the second half, Dermot Hannigan and Charles Kelly added points to MacCumhaill's lead, but Gerry McDermott pointed a free for Glenties. He added another point 8 minutes later, and Pat Boyle levelled the scores at (0-05) each. Immediately, McDermott soloed through to give Glenties a point lead and then Boyle added another. McDermott sent a free over the bar. McCool's rallied and Hannigan placed Houston for a good point. Glenties/Ardara came again and McDermott and McGeehan had further points before the final MacCumhaill's rally and abortive penalty.

teams:

Glenties/Ardara - Neilly Gildea, Michael O'Donnell, John Boyle, Kevin Quinn, Colm Campbell, John Sweeney, Kieran Keeney, Patsy McGeehan, Josie Gallagher, Pat Boyle, Gerry McDermott, Frankie Rogers, Jimmy Campbell, Sean Houston and Pat Molloy

MacCumhaill's- F. Murphy, S. McDermott, S. Lafferty, B. Dowds, D. McMenamin, P. J. McGowan, P. McGarrigle, S. Bonner, M. Lafferty, J. Houston, D. Hannigan, Chas Kelly, K. O'Hara, A. Kelly, K. Patton.



The Glenties/Ardara Juvenile Team that won the 1968 County Championship
Back L-R: P.J. McSwiggan, John Sweeney, Gerry McDermott, Colm Campbell, Kevin
Quinn, Josie Gallagher, John Boyle, Jimmy Campbell, P.J. Molloy, Sean Houston,
Phonsie Bennett.

Front L-R: Eamon Phelan, Hugh Brendan McDyre, Kieran Keeney, Patsy Furey, Alex Mc
Dyre, Frankie Rodgers, Patsy McGeehan, Neilly Gildea, Pat Boyle, James Cunningham,
Michael O'Donnell, Pat Molloy.

The team's victory assured them of the All Ireland trip, which proved to be a memorable experience for the team and mentors, P.J. Spillane (Glenties) and Phonsie Bennett. Down won their third All Ireland with a victory over Kerry. The following was the group's itinerary for the weekend

Saturday 21st September

- 4.p.m. Depart from Highlands Hotel in a special C.I.E coach.
- 8.p.m. Arrive Farnham Arms Hotel, Cavan. Check in for the night.
- 8.30.p.m. High tea in Hotel.

Sunday 22nd September

- 8.a.m. Attend mass in Cavan.
- 8.40.a.m. Breakfast in Farnham Arms Hotel.
- 9.30.p.m. Depart for Dublin.
- 11.a.m. Arrive at Broadstone Garage, Dublin, where a C.I.E courier and a Player-Wills representative will board coach for short tour of Dublin.
- 11.50.a.m. Arrive at Player-Wills Factory, South Circular Road, welcome by Mr T.A. Egan, Director.
- 12.15.p.m. Lunch.
- 1.15.p.m. Depart by coach for Croke Park.

1.45.p.m. All Ireland Minor Football Final

3.15.p.m All Ireland Senior Football Final.

Immediately after the games, the party are to assemble at the gates of Clonliffe College, Clonliffe Road, to return to Players-Wills by coach.

5.30.p.m. High Tea

As soon as convenient after tea, the coach will depart for Donegal.



The travelling party, pictured outside the Players and Wills factory in Dublin.

Back L-R: Colm Campbell, Michael O'Donnell, Eamon Phelan, Pat Molloy, Kieran Keeney, Sean Houston, Neilly Gildea, Josie Gallagher, Frankie Rodgers, Gerry McDermott, Neilly Byrne, Jimmy Rodgers, Patsy Furey, P.J. Molloy, Danny Harkin (Co.Board), Danny Earley, Kevin Quinn, James Cunningham, John Boyle, Hugh Brendan McDyre, Alex McDyre, Pat Boyle, Patsy McGeehan, Jimmy Campbell, John Sweeney, C.I.E Bus driver.

Front L-R: Players and Wills rep, Jack O'Donnell, P.J. Spillane, T.Egan (Players and Wills), Jimmy McKelvey, John O'Donnell, Paddy Hoey (County Board Chairman)



P.J. Spillane from Glenties was the main motivator behind the success of the Ardara/Glenties Under-Age teams of the 60s and early 70s. The teams won County Juvenile Championships in 1968 and 1971, and Minor Championships in 1969 and 70. They were runners-up in the Juvenile final of 1969, the Minor final of 1972, and the Under 21 final in 1971. The usual routine the week before a match saw P. J. travel around Ardara in his car visiting

the various players' houses, informing them of the arrangements for the upcoming game. He put in a huge effort at the time and was highly respected by the players involved.

1969

The following Officers were elected for 1969:-

President - Fr. McShane
Chairman - Tommy Boyle
Secretary - Danny Haughey
Ass. Secretary - Tom Diver
Treasurer - Frankie Brennan
Ass. Treasurer - Columba Diver

Senior Team Captain: Edward O'Donnell

Vice Captain: Conal McNelis.

Senior Team Manager: Phonsie Bennett.

Selection Committee: Vincent McHugh, Charlie Bennett, Jimmy O'Donnell, Joe (Larry) Gallagher, Phonsie Bennett and Michael Gallagher (Narin).

Finance Committee: Tom Diver, Charlie Mooney, Columba Diver, Denis Mulhern, Francie Diver and Joe (Larry) Gallagher.

Delegates to Convention: Danny Haughey, Tommy Boyle, P. J. McGill, Joe (Larry) Gallagher, Charlie Mooney, Packie Keeney, Charlie Bennett and Peter O. McNelis.



This photo was taken at a South-West Board A.G.M in Ardara in the late sixties.
From left: Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill (Registrar), Francie Cunningham (Naomh Columba - Chairman), Sean Burke (Naomh Columba - Secretary), and Danny Haughey (Treasurer).

Ardara and Killybegs form St. Enda's

As the Club decided to re-grade their players to Junior again for 1969, the officers of the Club approached Killybegs, with a view to combining forces to compete in the Senior League and Championship. The matter was first discussed at a Club meeting in March, with Packie Keeney stating that he had spoken to a few of the Killybegs club-men about the issue. He stated that their only concern was that they would be left with two or three players on the team. It was agreed that a selection

committee with equal representation from both Clubs would be appointed. On the issue of home venue, it was agreed that matches with St. Patrick's (Kilcar/Glencolmcille), would take place in Fintra, and that games against Glenties or Dungloe would be played in Sandfield. Gate money would be split evenly between both teams. The team proved to be a formidable outfit and had some good victories in the Senior League in section C, which included St. Patrick's, Glenties, Clanna Gael, St. Joseph's and Dungloe.

St. Enda's (Ardara/Killybegs) had comfortable win Dungloe 0-08 St Enda's 3-09

St. Enda's had a comfortable win over Dungloe in their Senior Football League tie at Rosses Park, Dungloe. Scorers for St. Enda's were Patsy Gildea (1-05), Edward O'Donnell (1-00), D. Mullan (1-00), C. McGill (0-02), D. Kelly (0-01), Peter O. McNelis (0-01).

The teams under Referee, Mr. S. Rogers, Co. Councillor were:-

St. Enda's- Charlie Keeney, Charlie

O'Donnell, Columba Diver, Charlie Tully, John Gallagher, Packie Keeney, Jack Furey, Sean Brennan, Dominic Mullan, Patsy Gildea, Cathal McGill, Peter O. McNelis, Frankie Campbell, Edward O'Donnell and Dave Kelly.

Dungloe- N. McCole, J. Boyle, J. McElwee, C. Elliott, H. Sweeney, E. Bonner, M. Gallagher, D. Boyle, P. McHugh, J. O'Donnell, L. Reilly, P. McGinley, M. White, G. McElwee, P. J. O'Donnell.

The seasoned St. Joseph's side however qualified for the League semi-finals from the section, with St Enda's finishing second. In the Senior Championship, the team was paired with Dungloe, St. Patrick's and Glenties in an all South-West division. St. Enda's proved to be the strongest force in the section. They defeated Dungloe and Glenties before clinching the division with a narrow 2-3 to 1-5 victory over St. Patrick's on the 29th of June.

Enda's through to County semi-final St Enda's 2-3 St Patricks 1-5

St Enda's (Ardara/Killybegs) qualified for the Donegal Senior Football Championship semi-final with a thrilling 2-3 to 1-5 win over St Patrick's at the Parish Park, Cashel, Glencolmcille on Sunday.

St Enda's had all their scores by midway through the first half, and St Patrick's had the home supporters on their toes as they cut the deficit to a single point in the second half.

St Patrick's were somewhat unlucky in

failing to get the equaliser in a thrilling game. In the first quarter, although playing against the breeze, they had the edge on their opponents but threw away some good scoring chances

St Enda's: Seamus McGee, John Boyle, Charlie Tully, John Joe Doherty, Dominic Mullan, Columba Diver, Kevin McDonald, Packie Keeney, Sean Brennan, Patsy Gildea, Peter O. McNelis, Dave Kelly,

*Seamus Gillespie, Edward O'Donnell,
Frankie Campbell.*

St Patricks: *Michael Gillespie, K. Gillespie,
Francis Campbell, C. McShane, Ian
Hegarty, Connie Hegarty, Donie Cronin,*

*Francie Cunningham, J. Gillespie, Seamus
Gallagher, J. Cunningham, Pat John
McIntyre, M. Byrne, C. Gillespie, Paddy
Beag Gillespie.*

This qualified the team for the County semi-final where St. Eunan's provided the opposition. St. Eunan's came out winners on a 1-15 to 1-3 scoreline.

The St. Enda's team which went down to St. Eunan's lined out as follows - Seamus McGee, John J. Doherty, Packie Keeney, Charlie Tully, Dominic Mullen. Kevin McDonald, Columba Diver, John Gallagher, Des Houlihan, Peter O. McNelis, Cathal McGill, Dave Kelly, Patsy Gildea, Edward O'Donnell and Frankie Campbell.

Subs were Jack Furey and Tom Diver.



The St Enda's team of 1969

**Back L-R: Dominic Mullan, Charlie Tully, Jack Furey, Columba Diver,
Seamus McGee, Edward O'Donnell, Seamus Gillespie, Sean Brennan.**

**Front L-R: Patsy Gildea, Charlie O'Donnell, John Joe Doherty,
Frankie Campbell, Dave Kelly, Kevin McDonald, Peter Oliver McNelis, John Boyle.**

Ardara/Glenties Minors triumph

The amalgamation theme continued in 1969 with Ardara and Glenties once again amalgamating at Minor and Juvenile grades. P. J. Spillane, who had been involved in the management of the victorious Juvenile team of 1968 attended an Ardara Club meeting on the 7th of March to propose the idea once more, stating that Glenties had only eight players of Minor age and he felt it would make sense that

they would play for Ardara in that year's competition. Ardara had only six players at home, and eight away at college, who would be available for some of the matches. It was agreed that the Clubs would merge as neither would be able to field a team in their own right. The Minor team would operate under the auspices of the Ardara Club and Glenties would field the Juvenile team. The Juveniles qualified for the County final, but were beaten by Drumbar on a 2-11 to 0-9 scoreline. (No information available). Ardara also entered a Schoolboy team but they made no progress in the Championship. In the Minor grade, Dungloe were the kingpins in the County in the mid sixties and won three County titles in a row in '66, '67 and '68 and were on course for a fourth title. Ardara however stopped their run in the South-West final played at Fintra.

Dungloe fail for fourth in a row

Dungloe Minor footballers failed in their bid to win four County titles in a row when they lost to a strong Ardara/Glenties combination in the South-West Final at Fintra Park, Killybegs on a 2-7 to 1-4 scoreline.

The Ardara/Glenties captain, John Boyle, elected to play against the breeze in the first half. It proved to be a wise decision as, after early Dungloe superiority, sparked off by a fine opening point from Pat Boyle, the exchanges evened off and by half time the scores were level at 1-3 each. The second half saw the South-Westerners take complete control to run out easy winners.

Under Mr. Des Houlihan (Killybegs) the teams were:

Ardara: Neilly Gildea, Sean Houston, John Boyle, Kevin Quinn, Jimmy Maloney, Paddy McGlynn, Michael O'Donnell, Josie Gallagher, Kieran Keeney, Frankie Rodgers, Gerry McDermott, Pat Boyle, Declan McGill, Seamus O'Donnell, Pete Shovlin.

Dungloe: N. McCole, P. O Connor, J. Solan, D. Lafferty, M. Sharkey, M. White, H. McGarvey, P. J. O'Donnell, T. Sweeney, B. Boyle, P. Boyle, D. Ward, M. O'Donnell, J. Gallagher, Subs: H. McCole, J. McCarron.

The team had an easy victory over Seán MacCumhaill's in the semi-final on a 2-9 to 0-2 scoreline to reach the final against St. Michael's.

Brilliant Ardara Minors win Mac a'Bháird Cup Ardara 2-10 St Michaels 2-02

In a hard fought final in which the winners showed all the brilliance of their previous games in their campaign, Ardara defeated St Michaels convincingly. This was a true reflection of the play throughout the game, as Ardara, always sure of what they could do in all situation's and calm and cool under pressure, became clear cut winners.

It was evident in the first ten minutes that Ardara had the measure on their opponents showing greater speed, anticipation, fitness, skill and team work. They took advantage of every scoring opportunity.

St. Michael's showed great spirit and determination, and good fielding, but had not the necessary speed or co-ordination to match Ardara, and it was evident that individuals had to carry the brunt of the battle. Their defence was not fast enough to hold out the fluent movements of the Ardara attack and had to be strengthened at the expense of the centre field, where Ardara, with Josie Gallagher and Kieran Keeney were having the better of the exchanges.

Ardara, who were sound in all departments even with a very young team, had prominent players in John Boyle, Josie

Gallagher, Pat Boyle, Kieran Keeney, Michael O'Donnell, Aidan McGill, Gerry McDermott (who scored five points from frees) Frank Rogers (whose goal was a gem from a free clearance by Aidan McGill to Colm Campbell to Rogers who shot hard to the net from an angle), John Sweeney, who with Boyle and McDermott created havoc in the St. Michaels defence.

Afterwards the Dómhnaill Mac a'Bháird cup was presented to the Ardara captain, John Boyle, by Mr Paddy Hoey, Chairman of the County Minor Board.

The teams under referee Danny Harkin were:

Ardara: Jimmy Campbell, Sean Houston, John Boyle, Kevin Quinn, Michael O'Donnell, Paddy McGlynn, Colm Campbell, Josie Gallagher, Kieran Keeney, Pat Boyle, Gerry McDermott, Frank Rogers, Aidan McGill, John Sweeney, Declan McGill

St Michaels: F. Brennan, J. Hunter, N. Gibson, H. Davin, C. McFadden, K. Dunlop, M. Ferriter, J. Cannon, E. Shannon, P. Mc Fadden, E. Hunter, C. McLoughlin, T. Doherty, J. Langan and M. McGee.

It was the fourth time that Ardara players were involved in winning a County Minor Championship and the second time for the Naomh Conaill Club. The increased effort put in on the training fields and the ability of both sets of players to combine well when playing together was the key to their successes. The work going into Gaelic football in the McDevitt Institute by Columba McDyre, among others was also an important ingredient.



The Ardara/Glenties Minor Team which won the County Championship in 1969

**Back L-R: Josie Gallagher, Colm Campbell, Gerry McDermott,
Kieran Keeney, Kevin Quinn, Jimmy Campbell.**

Middle L-R: P.J. Spillane, Charlie Bennett, Aidan McGill, Joe Craig, Declan McGill, Paddy McGlynn, John Boyle, Michael O'Donnell, Neilly Gildea, Sean Houston, Charlie Mooney, Jimmy Campbell, & Jimmy O'Donnell.

**Front L-R: John Sweeney, Eamon Phelan, Bernie Quinn, Frankie Rodgers,
Pat Boyle and Pat Molloy**

"The Bazaar"

One of the most popular events on the social calendar in the Parish throughout the '50s '60s and '70s was the annual G.A.A Bazaar. The event, which was held in the Iona Hall, was always a good fund raiser and drew large crowds to the venue. Numerous games were played, such as Bingo, rings and darts, as well as one penny raffle tickets and prizes given for the door tickets. The profit from the 1968 bazaar was £96 which was a huge sum of money for the Club. It involved much behind the scene organization, to book the hall from Mrs. Gildea, acquire amplification, have circulars printed and enlist the help of the business people of the town. The event was usually held in January and always gave the Club a timely financial boost for the coming year. The Club also hosted the Dunkineely Drama Group who put on a play in the Hall in January of 1969. Club treasurer Frankie Brennan reported a profit of £20 from the event after all expenses were paid.

Pitch debate continues

The ongoing debate continued in the Club through 1969 with regard to the problem

of a permanent playing pitch. No progress had been made in purchasing an alternative ground in 1968 and the debate centred on whether the existing pitch should be repaired or just simply forgotten about. At a stormy Club meeting on the 15th of March, a heated discussion ensued, with many members of the opinion that the Club should seek professional advice as to the future of Pearse Memorial Park. Others felt that any money spent on it would be money wasted. It was also discovered that new trustees needed to be appointed as some of the trustees on the deeds had long since passed away. Advice was to be sought from the County Secretary Hugh Daly and it was agreed that until the Deed of Trust situation was clarified and professional advice sought that no further money would be spent on the ground. The Club were still able to avail of the pitch at Sandfield for matches. Finding ground for organised training however was proving to be difficult. Francie Diver then came to the rescue when at a Club meeting in May, he offered his field, beside the minister's, to the Club for training purposes with one condition- that the players would use the gate to enter the field and not jump over the fence, Not an unreasonable request. The pitch would also be available for Under-Age matches.

County teams

On County teams in 1969, Aidan McGill, Kieran Keeney and John Boyle represented the County at Minor level, while Cathal McGill and Patsy Gildea played for the County in the Ulster Under 21 Championship. Peter Oliver McNelis and Cathal McGill also played for the County Senior team.



Columba McDyre of Kilraine. The legendary Glenties man was a big influence on the Ardara and Glenties Under-Age teams of the sixties, through his work in coaching the School teams in the McDevitt Institute. He passed on the experience gained from a brilliant playing career, which saw him play Senior football for 5 different Counties. He was of course the first Donegal man to win an All Ireland Senior Football medal, playing midfield for Cavan in the Polo Grounds in 1947. In coaching terms, Columba was regarded as being before his time, and was a brilliant tactician and team trainer.



**Photo shows the St. Eunan's College Senior Team
that won the Ulster Herald Cup in 1969.**

Back Row: Brian McNelis (Carrick), Alec McDyer (Glenties), Kevin Quinn (Ardara), Don Byrne (Ardara), Peadar McRory (Letterkenny), Declan McGill (Ardara)

Middle Row: Charlie Byrne (Churchill), Denis McCafferty (Donegal), Aeneas McClafferty (Downings), John Boylan (Carrigart), Michael Crossan (Letterkenny), Damien O'Connor (Rathmullan)

Front Row: John McCarron (Dungloe), Eugene Fox (Donegal), Mickey Sweeney (Letterkenny), Morgan Ferriter, captain (Dunfanaghy), Dermot O' Leary (Dublin), P. J. Hoey (Convoy), Roger Guthrie (Ballybofey)

Missing: Denis Doherty (Letterkenny), Cathal James (Letterkenny), John McAteer (Rathmullan)

Important dates and events from the sixties

- 1960** John F. Kennedy is elected President of the United States of America.
- 1961** Yuri Gagarin becomes the first person in space.
- 1962** RTÉ transmits the first edition of the 'Late Late Show'.
- 1963** Pope John XXIII dies. John F. Kennedy is assassinated.

- 1964** Brendan Behan dies, aged forty-one.
- 1965** The remains of Roger Casement are returned to Dublin for burial in Glasnevin Cemetery.
- 1966** Eamonn De Valera becomes President for the second time, at the age of eighty-three.
- 1967** The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association is established.
- 1968** Students demonstrate in Belfast for Civil Rights and form the People's Democracy.
- 1969** Neil Armstrong becomes the first man on the moon.



The Seventies

"Beidh achan lá mar an Domhnach agus
 achan Domhnach mar Domhnach Cásca"
 (Mícheál Óg Mac Pháidín)

S'na seachtódaí chonacamar tús na haisimirce. Bhí borradh faoi eacnamaíocht na tíre agus mar thoradh bhí na himirceoirí ag pilleadh abhaile. Bhí foirne faoi aois, na sóisír agus na sinsír buacach i gcomórtaisí contae ach bhí orainn fanacht ar feadh cupla bliain eile chun greim a fháil ar Chorn Dr. Maguire.

The seventies arrived, with flower power and the break up of the Beatles dominating all the headlines. As always, a new decade brought new hope for the Club, probably more-so with this one, as there were grounds for genuine optimism following the great success the Club had achieved at Under-Age level throughout the sixties. We had won one Under 14, two Juvenile and two Minor Championships, it was obvious that there was a fair degree of talent in the parish. Coupled with the Junior Champions of 1967, who were for the most part still playing adult football, it was the hope of those actively involved in the Club that success at Senior level would not be too far away. The recurring fear was that emigration might claim the majority of the talent in the parish and the first half of the seventies severely tested the commitment of the small but dedicated band of members who kept things afloat. As the decade went on, however, things began to improve, and, by the time the seventies said goodbye, the Club was in a healthy state and was ranked one of the strongest units in the County.

1969 AGM

The 1969 AGM of the Club was held on the 30th of January 1970 in the Green House, before one of the smallest attendances in the Club's history. The financial statement presented by Jimmy O'Donnell, showed an income of £333 for 1969, and an expenditure of £225, giving a credit balance of £108. As the secretary was absent from the meeting there was no Secretary's Report. Tommy Boyle reported on behalf of the Park Committee. The account showed a credit balance of £108 in its bank account, with a further £433 held separately. It was proposed by Charlie Bennett and seconded by Joe Gallagher that the three funds be amalgamated into one account under the names of Tommy Boyle and Frankie Brennan.

The following officers were elected for 1970:-

President	-	Rev. P. McShane,C.C.
Chairman	-	Tommy Boyle.
Vice Chairman	-	John Byrne.
Secretary	-	Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill.
Ass. Secretary	-	Charlie Mooney/Joe (Larry) Gallagher.
Treasurer	-	Jimmy O'Donnell.
Ass. Treasurer	-	Charlie Mooney/Joe (Larry) Gallagher.

Joe Gallagher, Charlie Mooney and John Byrne were elected as members of the committee.

The Team Captain for 1970 was Patsy Gildea with Columba Diver as Vice Captain.

The Gatemen were - Charlie Mooney, Jimmy O'Donnell, Joe (Larry) Gallagher and John Byrne.

Minors take two in a row

The existing arrangement with Glenties at Minor and Juvenile grades continued in 1970. The Minor team would be entered under the Glenties banner and the Juvenile team under the Ardara Club name. Ardara also entered an Under 14 team, but neither it nor the Juvenile team attained any success.

The Minor team blazed a trail through the South-West and qualified for the County semi-final against Bundoran. Goals from Jimmy Campbell, Frankie Rodgers, Kieran Keeney and Martin Sweeney helped the team to a 4-14 to 0-2 win. Bundoran failed to score in the second half.

Buncrana had shocked a few of the bigger clubs on the way to the final in the other half of the draw. The question was, did they have it in them to shake loose the grip of the reigning Champions. The Domhnaill Mac a'Bháird Cup was dear to any Ardara man, even under the Glenties name.

The final was played as a curtain raiser to the County Senior final between St. Joseph's and Rosses Rovers in MacCumhaill Park on the 6th of September. St. Josephs won, 1-16 to 0-4, but for the Ardara and Glenties supporters, it was the first match that counted.

Minor Title for Glenties/Ardara Glenties / Ardara 1-09 Buncrana 1-05

The Minor final which brought into opposition the holders Glenties/Ardara and Buncrana, was a powerful football battle in which a high standard of play was in evidence from both sides. At half time the champions held a 1-5 to 1-2 lead against a Buncrana side that played good football. In the end Glenties won by four points, but during the second half in particular, the Inishowen boys missed many scoring opportunities, which would have at least divided the honours.

The champions were fortunate in having such able defenders as big John Boyle, who shows great potential as a full back of future County teams, Sean Houston, Enda McGill and centre half, Michael O'Donnell, who was flanked by two strong wing players, Kevin Quinn and Pat Molloy. At midfield the champions were well represented by Josie Gallagher and Declan McGill, pitted against two fine Buncrana players in Liam Quigley and Paddy McGee. Gerry McDermott on the "40" for Glenties, and Jimmy Campbell at full forward, coalesced well, while on the wings Martin Sweeney, Patsy Furey, Frankie Rogers and Pat Boyle were others to catch the eye as did John Sweeney, who came on for Enda McGill in the first half. In goal Pat McGill was a most able custodian. Buncrana, making their first appearance in a Minor final, made a great impact. On the law of averages, this was a team who would have taken the Domhnall Mac a'Bháird cup to Inishowen, but they were unfortunate to meet an exceptionally strong and well

drilled side in the champions. Nevertheless, Donal McLaughlin at full back, John J. Doherty, John McDaid, Seamus Barr, Michael McLaughlin and Gerard McGinley were particularly impressive against a really slick attacking champion's sextet. In goal, Cathal Fullerton could not be faulted, while in attack, John Fullerton, Columba Quigley and Enda Barr gave great service, with P.J. McFadden, Terry Gallagher and Daniel McAteer often in the picture.

Under Referee Danny Harkin - the teams were:-

Glenties/Ardara – P. McGill, E. McGill, J. Boyle, Sean Houston, Kevin Quinn, M. O'Donnell, Pat Molloy, Josie Gallagher (0-04), Declan McGill, Pat Boyle, Gerry McDermott (0-03), Frankie Rodgers (0-01), Martin Sweeney, Jimmy Campbell (1-01) and Patsy Furey.

Subs – John Sweeney and Patsy McGeehan.

Buncrana – C. Fullerton, J. McDaid, D. McLaughlin, J. Doherty, S. Barr, M. McLaughlin, G. McGinley, L. Quigley, P. McGee, J. Fullerton, P. McFadden, D. McAteer, C. Quigley, T. Gallagher and E. Barr.

Following the game the County Chairman Paddy Hoey presented the Domhnall Mac a' Bháird Cup to the winning Captain Sean Houston



The Glenties/Ardara team which won the 1970 Minor Championship
Back L-R: Kieran Keeney, James Cunningham, Pat McGill, John Boyle, Patsy McGeehan,
Kevin Quinn, Josie Gallagher, Declan McGill, Jimmy Campbell, Martin Sweeney, Alex
McDyre, Johnny McGettigan, Pat Molloy and John Watters.

Front L-R: John Sweeney, Eamon Phelan, Enda McGill, Patsy Furey, Michael O'Donnell,
Sean Houston, Gerry McDermott, Frankie Rodgers, Pat Boyle, Seamus O'Donnell,
Michael Gallagher and Columba McDyre



Minor Board Chairman, Paddy Hoey of Convoys, presents the
Domhnall Mac a'Bháird Cup to the winning team and Captain, Sean Houston.

Ardara take second Junior Championship

The Club took a decision to enter the Junior, and not the Senior Championship once again in 1970. Having formed St. Enda's with Killybegs in 1969, Killybegs were again approached to renew the combination, but the idea did not gain any momentum. St. Patrick's (Kilcar/Glencolmcille), who had again joined forces at Senior level, invited a few of the Ardara players to play with them as Ardara were in the Junior ranks. John Boyle played full back and Sean Brennan played midfield with St. Patrick's, who were, however, defeated in the Championship by Rosses Rovers, who won the South-West Division.

Ardara fielded a strong team in the Junior League and Championship and qualified as South-West Champions, winning the league section by defeating Naomh Columba in Páirc na nGael. They had already defeated Kilcar, Killybegs, Glenties and Rannafast in earlier games.

Ardara in County Semi-final Ardara 4-06 St Columba's 0-04

Ardara became South-West Donegal Divisional Champions when they defeated St. Columba's (Glencolumbkille) by 4-06 to 0-04 at the Parish Park, Cashel, on Sunday. Ardara now qualify for the County semi-final of the Junior Championship as they have a total of thirteen points and no other team can catch them now. St. Columba's fielded minus most of their early season players and the visitors proved too good for them in all sectors.

Ardara aided by the breeze opened briskly with a goal punched in by John McNelis, following a free taken by Josie Gallagher. Frank McGhee added a minor before St. Columba's opened with a point by Donal Gillespie. Tom Diver and P. J. McIntyre exchanged points and Ardara monopolised the exchanges for the remainder of the moiety getting scores per Frank McGhee (0-01) and Martin Sweeney (1-01) leaving the half-time score Ardara (2-04) St. Columba's (0-02).

The visitors opened the second half with

Josie Gallagher slamming the ball to the net followed by points from Patsy Gildea and Frank McGhee and another goal by Declan McGill without reply from the home side. In the closing stages, St. Columba's made determined efforts to reduce their arrears but, apart from two points per Byrne and S. McNelis, made little impression on the Ardara defence. Mr. R. Daly (Killybegs) was the Referee.

Ardara – Jimmy Campbell, Cormac Gallagher, Josie Gildea, Paddy McGill, Kevin Quinn, Sean Brennan, Pat Shovlin, Patsy Gildea, Josie Gallagher, Declan McGill, Frank McGhee, Martin Sweeney, Malachy Maguire, John McNelis and Tom Diver.

St. Columba's - S. McNelis, B. Byrne, T. Keeney, C. Gillespie, S. Carr, B. Hegarty, D. Gillespie, P. J. McIntyre, B. McIntyre, S. Burke, P. Doherty, B. Cunningham, J. Gillespie, F. Cunningham and L. McGinley.

The team then progressed to the semi-final and accounted for St. Michael's on a 2-10 to 1-4 scoreline. Ardara led at half time 2-5 to 0-1 and ran out easy winners. The teams lined out as follows:

Ardara - Tom Diver, Josie Gildea, John Boyle, Pat Shovlin, Charlie O'Donnell, Packie Keeney, Sean Brennan, Cathal McGill (0-01), Josie Gallagher (0-04), Patsy Gildea (0-02), Peter O. McNelis, Frank McGhee (0-02), Martin Sweeney (0-01), John McNelis (1-00) and Aidan McGill (1-00).

St. Michael's - John Mulligan, Andy Hanlon, Tony Langan, Eamonn McGee, Seamus Greer, Hugo Devine, Monty Alcorn, Gerry Hannigan, Michael McColgan, Brian McGinley, Kevin Dunlop, Henry Shannon, Morgan Ferriter, P. J. McFadden and Neilly Gallagher.

On the same day Bundoran defeated Burt in the other semi-final to set up a clash with the South-West men. The sides' previous meeting was in the Junior semi-final of 1967, when Bundoran ran out easy winners at Sandfield. The sea-siders went into the match as hot favourites. Eight of their starting fifteen had already backboned the St. Joseph's side which the Senior Championship a month earlier, and no less than six of their team were regulars on the County Senior team.

Ardara – Bundoran Must Meet Again Ardara should have won well

When the final whistle came in the Junior Football Final it showed the scores were level between Ardara and Bundoran at 1-08 each. This was a game, however, that Ardara should have sewn up by half-time, had they fully availed of their scoring opportunities. They started off the game by pinning Bundoran to their posts but time and time again they failed to score in this half, sending 13 shots wide of the post as against three wides for Bundoran.

Indeed, the marked difference between the sides during this period was that Bundoran invariably showed deadly accuracy when they got scoring chances and at half time had a comfortable lead of 1-05 to 0-02. After forty minutes, Bundoran had stretched their lead to two goals 1-07 to 0-04. Josie Gallagher reduced the margin with a point and then in a strong attack, Peter O. McNelis sent the ball through to Cathal McGill, and Martin Sweeney was there to

finish to the net. This was the tonic score that Ardara needed leaving only 2 points in it with 15 minutes left for play.

Shortly after this Ardara had the ball again but a free out was awarded. The Ardara men continued to press with Packie Keeney playing an outstanding game at centre-half back and soon they had reduced the leeway to a single point. Excitement was high as they levelled the scores eight minutes from time, but Brendan McHugh went through to restore Bundoran's lead. In the 55th minute, Patsy Gildea capped a fine display by equalising and shortly afterwards the final whistle came. In this half Ardara shot four wides as against Bundoran's three making their wides total 17 to 6 for Bundoran. For the first eight minutes, during which they threw away seven scoring chances, Ardara were on the attack. Then Bundoran had a break. Seamie Granaghan was fouled, and Brian McEniff

pointed the 40 yard free.

He followed up with another point off a 45 yard free, and after 11 minutes Charlie O'Donnell opened for Ardara with a point. Declan O'Carroll pointed for Bundoran and at the end of the first quarter he flashed the ball to the Ardara net. Ardara forced a 50 without result. Brendan McHugh soloed through to point and Peter Quinn added another. Before the interval Peter O. McNelis pointed for Ardara to leave the scores 1-05 to 0-02 in favour of Bundoran.

Josie Gallagher pointed a good free for Ardara in the 2nd minute of the 2nd half, and displayed his accuracy by repeating from 45 yards. Brian McEniff replied with a point and Brendan McHugh added another. Josie Gallagher pointed a free for Ardara and Peter O. McNelis sent to the fast moving Frank McGhee, who blarged the ball goal-wards where Martin Sweeney was at hand to finish to the net. The game really

came to life with Ardara going all out. Josie Gallagher pointed another free and Frank McGhee equalised. Brendan McHugh went through to point for Bundoran but shortly before the full-time whistle Patsy Gildea equalised for Ardara.

The teams under Referee Danny Harkin, Convoy, were:-

Ardara - Tom Diver, Josie Gildea, John Boyle, Pat Shovlin, Sean Brennan, Packie Keeney, Aidan McGill, Josie Gallagher (0-04), Charlie O'Donnell (0-01), Patsy Gildea (0-01), Cathal McGill, Frank McGhee (0-01), Peter O. McNelis (0-01), Sean McNelis and Martin Sweeney (1-00).

Bundoran - Eamon Flood, John Daly, Liam McDaid, John Healy, Malachy Egan, Brian McEniff (0-02), Michael Pat Daly, Peter Barry, Brendan McHugh (0-04), Seamie Granaghan, Peter Quinn (0-01), John O'Connor, Jim Gavigan, Declan O'Carroll (1-01) and Aidan Campbell.

The replay of the match was fixed for the same venue on Sunday 8th November, 1970. Hundreds of Ardara supporters made the trip on the icy roads.

Ardara win another Junior Football crown

The game had entered a short period of lost time when Brian McEniff shot Bundoran's only goal to leave the scores 2-08 to 1-08 for Ardara in the replay of the Junior Football Championship Final at MacCumhaill Park, Ballybofey, on Sunday. The game started some 20 minutes late, due to a breakdown in Bundoran's transport arrangements and when deputy Referee, Jerry McCafferty, threw in the ball, there were only ten Bundoran players on the field but the others raced on afterwards. Indeed, shortly after Brian McEniff took his place on the team, Ardara supporters on the terraces were shouting "sixteen men". This position righted itself but Ardara men claimed that Bundoran scored a point in this short period.

As to the game itself, it was a good final by Junior standards and indeed, either side

would have done justice to the Senior grade. Ardara's last victory in the Junior Championship was in 1967 when they defeated Convoy at Letterkenny. There could be no question about their all round superiority on Sunday. They were sound in every sector and they went for the ball on all occasions, with a verve and a dedication that would not countenance defeat. Apart from that, the obvious football talent of the Ardara men was such as to put them in a class of their own. Particularly brilliant were the displays of midfielder Josie Gallagher, full back John Boyle, centre half forward Cathal McGill, centre half back Packie Keeney, top of the left Kieran Keeney, second midfielder Charlie O'Donnell and defenders Aidan McGill and Packie Shovlin. Josie Gildea, Patsy Gildea, Martin Sweeney, Sean Brennan and Peter O. McNelis were also well in the picture at all

times for this was a fine team victory so far as Ardara were concerned from keeper Tom Diver to top of the left.

Outstanding players on the Bundoran side were Declan O'Carroll, Brian McEniff, Peter Barry, Brendan McHugh, Peter Quinn, Seamie Granaghan and centre half back Michael Pat Daly possibly the most impressive of all.

Ardara who had twelve wides during the course of the game, (seven in the first half), as against a total of six for Bundoran in the early stages of the game, showed their superiority and following a free by Josie Gallagher, Cathal McGill, from a most difficult angle, opened the scoring with a very good point. Brian McEniff joined the Bundoran side and Ardara supporters began to shout that the seasiders had sixteen men. Declan O'Carroll sent to Brendan McHugh who equalised after 8 minutes, a Bundoran player after moving off. 2 minutes later Frank McGhee gave Ardara supporters plenty to cheer about with a well-taken goal. John Boyle and Pat Shovlin cleared the Ardara lines as Bundoran strongly threatened. The South-Westerners broke up-field and when Peter O. McNelis was fouled Josie Gallagher pointed the free. Ardara looked like taking another goal when Frank McGhee went through but the ball rebounded off an upright. Following a '50', Cathal McGill pointed for Ardara and when Peter Quinn was fouled at the other end Declan O'Carroll pointed. The game started to swing in favour of Bundoran and following a free by Brendan McHugh, Peter Quinn punched over a point and a Declan O'Carroll centre was transferred into another point by Seamie Granaghan to leave the interval scores Ardara 1-03 Bundoran 0-04.

In the first minute of the second half, a McEniff pass saw Declan O'Carroll leave only a point between the sides but Josie

Gallagher pointed a free for Ardara and Patsy Gildea followed up with another. Then Cathal McGill first timed a great goal and when Josie Gallagher pointed another free in the 13th minute of this half, Ardara led (2-06) to (0-05). Josie Gallagher pointed another free to put them 8 points in front. Brian McEniff was fouled and Peter Quinn pointed for Bundoran. A 45 yard free by Declan O'Carroll gave Kieran O'Gorman his chance to point for Bundoran. But Patsy Gildea again stretched Ardara's lead with a point. Peter Quinn sent to Brendan McHugh who pointed leaving 2 goals between the sides with 57 minutes gone. Bundoran attacked and still looked dangerous. In the dying moments, Brian McEniff got possession about 30 yards out following a Peter Quinn free. He lobbed the ball goalwards and it ended in the net. A further Ardara raid was repulsed before the final whistle.

The teams were:

Ardara - Tom Diver, Josie Gildea, John Boyle, Pat Shovlin, Sean Brennan, Packie Keeney, Aidan McGill, Charlie O'Donnell, Josie Gallagher (0-04), Patsy Gildea (0-02), Cathal McGill (1-02), Frank McGhee (1-00), Martin Sweeney, Peter O. McNelis and Kieran Keeney.

Subs – Declan McGill for Frank McGhee and Frankie Campbell for Martin Sweeney.

Bundoran - E. Flood, John Healy, Liam McDaid, Eamon Melly, Kieran O'Gorman (0-01), Michael Pat Daly, Jim Gavigan, Brendan McHugh (0-02), Peter Barry, Peter Quinn (0-02), Seamie Granaghan, Declan O'Carroll (0-03), Aidan Campbell, Joe O'Neill and Malachy Egan. Subs - Brian McEniff (1-00)

Following the game the Donegal County Chairman, Paddy Hoey, presented the Dr. McCloskey Cup to Patsy Gildea the Ardara Captain, who was cheered from the grounds by Ardara players and supporters.

Players and supporters made the journey home amidst great celebrations. The 1970 Junior team was regarded by many who played on it as one of the best all round sides that the Club had ever fielded. Amalgamation had worked to the Club's

benefit in other years and grades, but in this particular year, Club members experienced the downside. Many felt that but for St. Joseph's, an amalgamated club, this Ardara team could have won a Senior Championship in 1970 in their own right. Many tributes were paid to the management team of Charlie Mooney, Joe Larry and Jimmy O'Donnell, who had steered the team to success. The team were high flyers in the League also, and looked set to take the honours in that competition, but the closing stages had to wait until 1971 to be played. Unfortunately, no photograph of the 1970 Junior team was taken.

The following panel of players took part in the successful campaign:

Tom Diver (West End), Joseph Gildea (Crumlin), John Boyle (Kentucky), Pat Shovelin (Sandfield), Sean Brennan (Crucknagapple) Packie Keeney (Cronkeerin), Aidan McGill (Edergole), Josie Gallagher (Crucknagapple), Charlie O'Donnell (Leaconnell), Patsy Gildea (Crumlin), Cathal McGill (Aighe), Martin Sweeney (Ardconall), Frank McGhee (Drimaha), Peter Oliver McNelis (Meenavalley), Kieran Keeney (Cronkeerin), John McNelis (Front St), Declan McGill (Edergole), Frankie Campbell (Front Street), Kevin Quinn (Front Street), Charlie White (Cloughboy), Malachy Maguire (Shanaghan), John M O'Donnell (Leaconnell), Jim McGeady (Narin), Jimmy Campbell (Bridge Bar), Charlie Mooney (Brackey).

Ardara players prominent

With Ardara teams resurgent in most grades, the rise was reflected at County level, and during 1970, four Ardara players wore the County Senior jersey at different stages. Cathal McGill played for Donegal in the National League and in the Ulster Junior Championship, and also played number ten for Donegal in the Ulster Senior Championship first round defeat to Antrim. Patsy Gildea featured for both Junior and Senior County sides, and Charlie O'Donnell and John Boyle (still a Minor) all played for Donegal in the National League and in various challenge matches. At Minor level, John Boyle (full back), Josie Gallagher (centre half back) and Kieran Keeney (left half forward) played on the team that defeated Cavan in the first round at Bundoran (1-8 to 0-4), and were defeated by Fermanagh in the Ulster semi-final on a 1-12 to 0-10 scoreline. John Boyle was honoured for his performances during the year when the Donegal Democrat awarded him the Donegal Footballer of the Year award.

It was the first time that the award had been bestowed on a player from the Club, and it was also the first time a player still in the Minor ranks had been honoured. The following citation appeared in the Democrat when the award was announced.

Donegal Player of the Year for 1970



The 'Democrat' panel of adjudicators, having met on three occasions, by a majority decision, have named John Boyle, Ardara as Donegal's Player of 1970.

In doing so, they have assessed fully the displays of players they have seen in both Club and County games from February to December. Their decision was based on the fact that John Boyle gained the greatest distinction of the year in successfully stepping up from Minor to Senior ranks in the latter part of the year to fill the fullback berth on the County Team. His displays on the County Minor Team at Bundoran and Irvinestown and his capacity in Senior ranks to maintain the surety of fielding and unruffled demeanour when under stiff pressure for the Seniors, in no small way influenced the scales in his favour.

It is the first occasion in a period of forty years

football that a Minor defender has successfully graduated to Senior ranks in the same year. There were plenty of instances where Minors played in both the Minor and Senior County grades in the same season. It happened in 1963 when Declan O'Carroll, after an outstanding game in the Ulster Minor final against Down, was named at top of the right and helped the County to win its first ever Dr. McKenna Cup in the final against Cavan at Breffni Park. Were there many who ran him close for the honour? There were some, but not many. For 1970 was not a year of power in Inter-County football as far as Donegal was concerned. Congratulations John.

In service to his club, John Boyle was equal to the best this year, for without his powerful coverage, Ardara would never have survived the force of the Bundoran forward machine in the drawn Junior final. Again, in the replay, he showed that same great spirit of confidence that in the judgement of our adjudicators earned for him the title of Donegal Player of 1970.



Charlie O'Donnell from Leacconnell played for Donegal Under-21 and Senior teams in 1970/71. Another son of Charlie and Maggie, Charlie's first medal was in the 1962 Schoolboy victory when he was a member of the team along with his brothers James and Frank. He first played for the Ardara Senior team in 1968 and played for the St. Enda's team in the 1969 Senior Championship. Charlie's employment took him around

the West coast of Ireland, though, and he played for the Rosmuc, Micheal Breathnach, and Carna Clubs in Galway, and the Tourmakeady Club in Mayo, before he transferred to Kilcar, where he settled to live and work in 1974. His medals haul grew consistently through the seventies and eighties with the Kilcar Club, and he won 6 Senior League and 2 Senior Championship medals, among other honours, with them. After his playing career he was Chairman of the Park Committee responsible for the new Towney pitch, which was opened in 1984. He also served as Club Chairman for 5 years in the nineties and went on to serve as County Board Vice Chairman and Treasurer, a job which he held from 1999-2003. Charlie went on to receive his greatest honour at the 2003 County Convention in Letterkenny, when he was elected as County Chairman for the first time.

Other news

The Club continued to rent land at Sandfield, for use as a playing pitch. Two landowners were involved, and it was decided to offer them £3 each per annum in rent. This was later increased to £5 each. The pitch at Sandfield needed repairs to be done to it, and a few Club members did the work voluntarily, with the assistance of a few tractor owners to transport any required materials.

At a meeting in April of the year, the Club Chairman, Tommy Boyle, suggested the placing of an appropriate tombstone on the grave of the late Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, who had been associated with a number of organisations. Finance would have to be raised, and the following committee was elected to do this-Tommy Boyle, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, Jimmy O'Donnell, Francie Diver, Charles McHugh and Joseph Gallagher. It was the hope of the committee that a number of the other organisations he was involved with would also contribute.

The year ended on a high note with the annual dinner and siamsa which was held on New Year's Eve in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel. 230 people attended the function, the members of the successful Junior team were presented with their Championship medals. Tickets were priced at 21/- and the capacity crowd enjoyed the event.

At the County Minor Board convention held in November, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill was returned as Secretary. At the same meeting a motion from the Ardara Club, proposing that every club set up a separate committee to look after their Under-Age teams was carried.



Cathal McGill of Aighe became the first player from the Club, since Frankie Brennan in 1956, to play for Donegal in the Ulster Senior Football Championship, in 1970, when he played at right half forward in the first round defeat to Antrim. Cathal had always been a special talent since he first played on the Brackey N.S. team in the first Schoolboy League in 1959. He went on to win Under-14, 16 and Minor Championship medals with the Club, and was a key player in the Junior Championship wins of 1967 and 1970. Cathal represented the County at Minor and Under -21 level, and played with the County Senior Team many times between 1967 and 1971. But as in the case of a few others on the Club Senior team at the time, it was felt that he never got due recognition at that level. A brilliant ball carrier with either foot, he oozed class every time he had the ball and took some brilliant scores. A penchant for travelling saw Cathal also play with the Donegal New York club, in the sixties, with whom he won a New York Intermediate Championship medal in 1968. Like so many other Ardara

players, he also played for the Tirconaill Gaels club in London during his time. In later years, Cathal went to work in the United Arab Emirates, but settled back home again in the nineties, when he purchased the Lake House Hotel in Narin. The family ran the hotel for a few years before returning to sunnier climes in the U.A.E. During his time at home, Cathal often sponsored the Club and also helped out in the coaching of Under-Age players with his cousin Paddy Mc Gill (Barney), and John Boyle. Many of those involved in the Club in the sixties and seventies still



speak of the great talent that he had and rank him as one of the truly great players of that era.

Vinny McHugh and Cathal, pictured before the opening of Fintra Park in 1967



**A group of lads pictured outside the Bridge Bar before a match in 1970.
Back L-R Jimmy Campbell, Bart McHugh, Jody Gallagher, John Boyle, Brian O'Donnell
Front: Tony and Stephen Campbell**

1971 – Caoga bliain ag fás

The Club AGM took place on the 17th of January 1971 in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel. The Secretary Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill recorded 1970 as one of the great successes of the decade. Members gave of their best both on and off the field. The Glenties/Ardara combination in the Minor grade had won the Championship with eleven Ardara players contributing to this success. The Club had also won the Junior Championship in 1970, with many of the Minor team again playing a role, and a very successful Silver Circle had left the Club in a strong financial position. The Junior Championship medals were presented at the Dinner/Siamsa on New Year's Eve 1970. The secretary stated that 1971 was a great milestone for the Club in that it was the 50th anniversary of its foundation in 1921.

During the year Irish dancing had been introduced in the National Schools in line with G.A.A. ideals and was a most welcome development. The Ulster Fleadh Cheoil held in Ardara in 1970 was also a great success. Congratulations were extended to the local branch of the C.C.E. The Secretary deplored the small attendance at meetings throughout the year. In a community of 3000, it was hard to visualise that only 5 or 6 understood the workings of the Club. St. Columba's Comprehensive Glenties had just completed its first year. The facilities provided there for Physical Education would be of benefit to the development of Gaelic games among our Post-Primary children. At this meeting there was to be a vote on the ban on foreign games being played or attended by Association members. The Secretary urged all members present to treat the matter very seriously. The Club would endeavour to meet the dateline for the unveiling of the Domhnall Mac a' Bháird memorial scheduled for Easter Sunday. Schoolboy football had been ongoing for 12 years and was now bearing fruit.

In conclusion, the Secretary thanked his fellow officers and others who helped in any way. He hoped that they had been duly rewarded by the satisfaction of the success of the Club in 1970.

The Treasurer, Jimmy O'Donnell, showed expenditure for the year was £229-2-8, and income was £309-0-8, leaving a balance of £79-18-0 with some assets to come from the County Board.

The main item on the clár, was the intended removal of the ban on foreign games which was due to be voted on at County convention. The Club discussed the matter at length at the meeting and, following a vote, the decision was taken to support the removal of the ban on a majority of 22 votes to 5.

The following officers were elected for 1971:

President	Fr. Patrick McShane,
Chairman	Packie Keeney
Vice Chairmen	Joe (Larry) Gallagher/Patsy Gildea
Secretary	Pádraig J. McGill
Ass. Secretaries	Charlie Mooney & Joe (Larry) Gallagher
Treasurer	Jimmy O'Donnell
Ass. Treasurers	John Gallagher & Patrick Herron.

Committee - Patrick Herron, John Gallagher, Tommy Maloney, Conal Gavigan, Tommie Boyle (Tullycleave) and Tommy Boyle (Greenhouse).

Senior Team Captain : Packie Keeney

Vice Captain: John Boyle

Team Selection Committee - Joe (Larry) Gallagher, Charlie Mooney and Packie Keeney.

Under-Age Committee - P. J. McGill, Peter McHugh and Tommy Maloney.

Registrars - Charlie Mooney and Joe (Larry) Gallagher



Jimmy O'Donnell of the Front Street was Club Treasurer in 1970/71. Jimmy played Under-Age football for the Club as a Minor in 1959/60, before he travelled to England to work for a number of years. He returned home in 1966 and was soon active in the Club, becoming involved in the selection of Under-Age and Adult teams. Jimmy was an extremely efficient

Treasurer and kept a tight reign on the Club's finances during his time, as it was extremely difficult to raise the money to keep the Club afloat in those days. He was part of the management team with, Charlie Mooney and Joe Larry, under whom the Club won the Junior Championship of 1970. Jimmy moved to Ballyshannon in 1972 to become involved in the successful family bakery business, with his brothers Edward and Tommy, and although living on Erneside since that time, has supported the Club on a regular basis all over the County.

Seniors take Mac Niallais Cup

The first action for the Senior Team in 1971 was the final of the 1970 Mac Niallais cup, which took place on St Patrick's day in Glencolmcille. Ardara won the match on a 3-5 to 0-4 scoreline. The teams were as follows:

Ardara - John Heena, Josie Gildea, John Boyle, Peter O'Donnell, Sean Brennan, Manus McGill, Pat Shovelin, Josie Gallagher, Kieran Keeney, Enda McGill, Patsy Gildea (2-02), Declan McGill (1-01), P. Breslin, Martin Sweeney (0-2) and Charlie Mooney.

St Columba's - J. Gillespie, S. Gara, T. Keeney, C. Mockler, J. J. Boyle, B. Byrne, P. J. McIntyre, B. McIntyre, P. McGonagle, I. Craig, P. Heekin, J. McGinley, S. Burke, Josie Gillespie and P. Gara.

The trophy was presented by Pádraig Mac Giolla Easbuig to John Boyle Captain of the Ardara team.

Referee was Charlie Brady, Dunkineely.

The completion of the 1970 Junior League took place on the 4th of April in Fintra, where Ardara and Bundoran met in a repeat of the Junior Championship final. Ardara confirmed their status as champions when they had a convincing win.

Fitter, Faster Ardara Ardara 5-11 Bundoran 2-5

Fitter, faster and superior all round, Ardara showed convincing form on a perfect sod in Fintra Park, Killybegs, on Sunday last when they defeated Bundoran 5-11 to 2-5 before a large attendance in the County Junior Football League Final for 1970.

Ardara got off to a great start and had 1-2 up without reply after five minutes. Then Bundoran came well into the game for a period and had the scores level by the 12th minute. Ardara badly 'fluffed' a penalty awarded with four players moving in the same time as Cathal McGill shot, to send the ball well wide of the mark. It did not matter much however as they were soon back again, and by half time led by 2-7 to 1-3.

Bundoran had the wind advantage in the second half, but within a minute of the resumption, Ardara's Patsy Gildea sealed their fate with a well taken goal after bamboozling the Bundoran defence, which was never too happy when under pressure. Peter Oliver McNelis, impressive all through at full forward, played deeply and this added to Bundoran's problems, and when Declan McGill smacked the ball to the net after 40 minutes, it seemed that Bundoran's football spark had extinguished. This however was not so, and after good work by Brian McEniff, Declan O'Carroll and Billy Gavigan, the seashiders were awarded a penalty when Brendan McHugh was adjudged to have been fouled. Brian

McEniff sunk the ball to the net despite a valiant effort by Tom Diver in the Ardara goal.

Packie Keeney, Patsy Gildea, Peter Oliver McNelis, John Boyle, Cathal McGill, Josie Gallagher and Kieran Keeney were particularly impressive for Ardara with all other players proving their worth too. Brian McEniff and Declan O'Carroll, back from their San Francisco games, gave good service to Bundoran as did Seamie Granaghan, Billy Gavigan, Brendan McHugh and Peter Quinn. Nevertheless some of these failed to sparkle to the extent that they sometimes can.

Under referee Des Kelly Castlefin, the teams were:

Ardara: Tom Diver, Josie Gildea, John Boyle, Pat Shovelin, Aidan McGill, Packie Keeney, Sean Brennan, Josie Gallagher (0-3), Kieran Keeney, Frank McGhee, Cathal McGill (0-1), Patsy Gildea (2-3), Declan McGill (1-0), Peter Oliver McNelis (2-3), Martin Sweeney(0-1). Subs used: Frankie Campbell for Frank McGhee and Frank McGhee for Frankie Campbell

Bundoran: D. Cussen, Aidan Campbell, Joe O'Neill, Eamon Melly, Michael Pat Daly, Brian McEniff, Willie Doherty, Declan O'Carroll, Eamon Flood, Seamie Granaghan, Brendan McHugh, Billy Gavigan, Peter Quinn, Paddy Conlan, Colm Granaghan.

Cup Presented

Following the game, the County Secretary Hugh Daly presented the Mayo Cup to the Ardara captain, Packie Keeney. He congratulated Ardara on their victory and wished them success in this years Senior Championship. He also said the game was a tribute to both teams for the high sporting standards throughout.

Senior Team win prestigious tournament

In April of 1971, the Ardara team, which had won the Junior Championship in 1970, received an invitation from the Owen Roe Club in Donemana, Co. Tyrone, to play in a one day tournament, which would include the Junior champions from Derry, Tyrone and Antrim. The Club accepted the invitation and three car loads of players travelled to the northern venue on Saturday the 10th of June. The Ardara team played some great football to qualify for the final against Lámh Dearg from Belfast. The match ended in a draw after normal time, but the Donegal men prevailed, after extra time, on a 0-4 to 0-2 scoreline, with outstanding displays at centre field from Josie Gallagher and Manus McGill. The Ardara captain was presented with the Cardinal O'Connor Cup by the host side. The team returned victorious to the town and duly presented the cup to the Club Chairman Tommy Boyle in the Greenhouse Bar. The Ardara panel on the day was as follows;

Seamus McGee, John McNelis, Manus McGill, Cormac Gallagher, John Joe Doherty, Columba Diver, Lochlann McGill, Packie Keeney, Sean Brennan, Patsy Gildea, Cathal McGill, Peter Oliver McNelis, Frank McGee, Conal McNelis, Tom Diver. Patsy Breslin, Charlie Mooney. The team was managed by Joe Larry.



The Dressing rooms at Sandfield: Pat Shovlin, Patsy Gildea and Charlie Mooney get ready for a match in July 1971.

The Club entered the Senior League and Championship in 1971 with a great degree of confidence, after their successes of 1970. The draw pitted the team against neighbours, Naomh Conaill, in a mouth watering local derby, the majority of players from both sides having played against each other in the successful Under-Age teams of the '60s. With the reporting of matches in the late 60s and indeed through the seventies being very limited, reports are often times not available, but Naomh Conaill won the first leg in Glenties (no score available). Ardara won the second match (2-4 to 0-6) and won the deciding match (3-8 to 2-5) to proceed to the quarter-final, where MacCumhaill's were the opposition. The match was played on the 27th of July in Tírconaill Park.

MacCumhaills excel in tactical play

MacCumhaills 2-7 Ardara 1-4

Sean MacCumhaill's, leading by 2-7 to 1-4 at half time, qualified for the Senior Football Championship when they defeated Ardara in Tirconail Park on Sunday last.

In the first half, Ardara had the advantage of a semi-cross wind, but found it difficult to pierce a vigilant MacCumhaill's defence. They used the individual approach too much in attack, and seemed set on playing the ball into a crowded defensive area, rather than taking points from further out. MacCumhaill's on the other hand were more experienced in tactical approach and were able to dictate the trend of the game despite a great Ardara effort that brought a fine goal from Martin Sweeney in the 40th minute that left only three points between the sides. Ardara's jubilation only lasted a few minutes, with Hughie Temple and Eugene Gallagher making inroads for the goal that ended the South-Westerner's hopes.

The game was watched by one of the largest crowds seen at the Donegal venue for many years. Both MacCumhaill's and Ardara were short a few of their regulars. A notable absentee from the MacCumhaill's side was Frankie McFeeley, while it was the second half when Andy Curran joined their team. Ardara's Peter Oliver McNelis could only join his team in the second half, due to an injury received in an earlier game, while Charlie O'Donnell was indisposed and was unable to line out.

For MacCumhaill's, Liam McMenamin had a sound game at full back, well supported by Liam Sweeney and John McGinty. Dan McCool, young Sean Lavery and Tommy

McMenamin were particularly strong half backs, while Mickey McMenamin and Eunan Lavery were dominant figures at midfield. All six MacCumhaills forwards played intelligently with John Bradley, Mick Moriarty and Seamus Kane probing all the time.

John Boyle was an outstanding full back for Ardara, while Aidan McGill, Frank O'Donnell and Pat Shovelin were well in the picture too. Hardest working defenders were Packie Keeney and Kieran Keeney, who on many occasions turned defence into attack. Patsy Gildea was always dangerous in possession; Cathal McGill won most aerial battles and tried hard to break the MacCumhaill's defence. Near the end full forward Frank Campbell retired injured.

Under referee Charlie Brady, Inver, the teams were.

Sean MacCumhaill's: Mickey Lavery, John McGinty, Liam McMenamin, Liam Sweeney, Sean Lavery, Dan McCool, Tommy McMenamin, Michael McMenamin, Eunan Lavery, John Bradley, Mick Moriarty, Seamus Kane, Hughie Temple, Charlie Quinn, Eugene Gallagher. Sub: Andy Curran.

Ardara: Seamus McGee, Frank O'Donnell, John Boyle, Pat Shovelin, Kieran Keeney, Packie Keeney, Aidan McGill, Manus McGill, Josie Gallagher, Patsy Gildea, Cathal McGill, Declan McGill, Martin Campbell, Frankie Campbell, Tom Diver.

Subs: Sean Brennan, P.O. McNelis

In the Senior League, the Club put in some good displays early in the year, but after the Championship exit to MacCumhaill's, things took a downward turn, and by the end of the year, the team had finished mid table, and had failed to field on two occasions due to lack of players. The only other bright spot during the year was a victory in the Kilcar seven a side tournament in September. The team defeated Killybegs Boatyard and Naomh Columba before defeating Clanna Gael (Donegal Town) in the final. The winning seven was: Josie Gildea, Manus McGill, Frank

O'Donnell, Cathal McGill, Martin Sweeney, Seamus Gallagher (Kilcar), Patsy Gildea and Bernard McCabe (Killybegs).



Brian McGill, John Boyle and Sean Breslin, pictured outside Gaelic Park, New York in 1971.

Minors lose but Juveniles win County title

In the Under-Age grades, the Ardara/Glenties Minor team reached the County final only to lose to MacCumhaill's on a 3-6 to 0-8 scoreline. MacCumhaill's led at the break 1-2 to 0-4, but pulled away in the second half to win by seven points. The Ardara team lined out as follows: Don Byrne, John McGettigan (Glenties), Sean Houston (G), John McNelis, Martin Haughey, Michael O'Donnell (G), Neilly Byrne (G), Enda McGill and Martin Sweeney, Michael Gallagher, Patsy Furey (G), James Cunningham(G), Cathal Byrne, Seamus O'Donnell(G), Hughie Molloy (G).

The amalgamation of Ardara and Glenties in the Juvenile Championship once again proved to be too strong for all comers and they again took the County Championship, defeating Urris on a 3-9 to 1-3 scoreline on the 8th of August in MacCumhaill Park.

Glenties take Juvenile title

At MacCumhaill Park Ballybofey on Sunday last, Glenties defeated Urris in the County Juvenile Final on a 3-9 to 1-3 scoreline.

Glenties, who led at the interval on by 2-4 to 0-2, were very much on top in the first period, chiefly due to their superiority at midfield, and would have been much further ahead but for very bad shooting, which was in stark contrast to their excellent approach play.

Urris, playing with much greater spirit in the second half, looked at one time as if they would give the opposition a great run, but the Inishowen lads lost out badly by concentrating on low shots rather than picking off points, which were there for the taking. Glenties got on top again before the end, and were deserving winners.

Early raids by Glenties brought them a goal and a point inside the first five minutes, the

point coming first from a Cathal Byrne free, and Seamus O'Donnell then sending to the net from play. Michael Friel pulled back a point for Urris from a free in the tenth minute, and he also had the next score of the game, another point from a free in the 18th minute. Glenties got their second goal in the 20th minute. It was a well executed shot from Michael Gallagher who sent across the goals for Seamus O'Donnell to punch through.. A minute later O'Donnell, the ace scorer for the winners, sent over the bar from a Cathal Byrne cross. A point from Hugh Molloy and another from Enda McGill in the 23rd minute closed the first half tally. Glenties were just as quick in the second half, Hugh Molloy pointing from the throw in, and Michael Breslin getting through for a goal from a goalmouth scrimmage before a minute had passed. Cathal Byrne rattled a

point over in the 5th minute. With Glenties now leading 3-6 to 0-2, it looked pretty well all over, but Urris after that found their best form and mounted a strong attack which brought them a point from Neil Kearney in the 8th minute. Seamus O'Donnell replied with a point with a fourteen yard free, and then Urris swept forward again and their outstanding player Neil Kearney sent a great shot to the net. Urris continued to press, but poor finishing kept them from increasing their score. Two points from frees by Seamus O'Donnell made his personal tally 2-4.

The teams were:

Glenties: Don Byrne (Drumaghey), Anthony Harkin (Rosbeg), Bill Shovlin (Sandfield),

Gerard Molloy, Kevin Keeney, Enda McGill (Edergole), Jimmy McGlynn, Cathal Byrne, Hugh Molloy, Michael Breslin (Castledoherty), Michael Gallagher (Narin), Joseph Furey, Edwin Sweeney, Seamus O'Donnell, Vincent Rankin (Narin).

Urris: Bernard Friel, Jim Kelly, Joe Hegarty, Charlie Carr, Eddie Doherty, Paddy Diver, Noel Carr, Michael Friel, Dermot Doherty, Neil Kearney, Joe McGonigle, Charlie Doherty, Michael Grant, Danny Friel, Seamus Doherty.

Referee: John Bradley (MacCumhaill's)

At the end of the match, the cup was presented to Glenties captain, Hugh Molloy by Mr Paddy Hoey, Chairman of the County Minor Board.



The Glenties/Ardara team that won the 1971 Juvenile Championship

Back L-R: Joseph McGettigan, Jimmy Furey, Kieran Boyce, Pat Cunningham, Adrian Concurr, Michael Gallagher, Connie Molloy, Eugene Bennett, Don Byrne, Dinny Deery, Joseph Bonner, Bill Shovlin, Enda McGill and John Deery.

Front L-R: Gerry Molloy, Anthony Harkin, Edwin Sweeney, Vincent Rankin, Seamus O'Donnell, Hugh Molloy, Cathal Byrne, Gerard O'Donnell, Jimmy McGlynn, Kevin Keeney, Michel Breslin and Joseph Furey.

Under-21 Championship introduced

The County Under-21 Championship was introduced in 1971, following a successful Ardara motion to County convention. Glenties/Ardara reached the first final in the grade, when they came up against Gweedore in Ballybofey. The full-time scores suggests it was a close-run game.

Gweedore take first Under-21 title

Gweedore had the distinction of winning the first Under- 21 County Football title, with a 3-6 to 2-7 win over Glenties, to take the Kelly Cup, presented by Messrs Charles Kelly and Co. to the Donegal County Board for this competition.

Gweedore led 3-2 to 1-5 at half time in a hard fought game, in which the Gweedore defence proved both solid and reliable, Sean Lafferty and Andy O'Donnell in the half back line, holding sway. Colm Crilly at midfield, and Andy Campbell and Michael Diver in attack were also very impressive. The best defender for Glenties was Paddy McGlynn, with Aidan McGill also doing well at left half back. Frank Rogers in the forward line was the most outstanding man of the side, with Josie Gallagher and Pat Boyle also doing well.

The teams and scorers under referee Danny Harkin (Convoy) were:

Gweedore; Alan Boyd, Patrick McBride, Kevin Owens, Peadar Gallagher, Sean Lafferty (0-1), Andy O'Donnell, Seamus Mc Garvey, Colm Crilly, Francis Carroll, T. McGinley, Eamon McBride (1-0), Andy Campbell (1-4), Michael Diver, Malachy Owens (1-1), Sean Hickey. Subs: Sean McGinley for E. McBride, and Michael Lafferty for S. McGinley

Glenties: James Cunningham, Sean Houston, John Boyle, Josie Gildea, Paddy McGlynn, Michael O'Donnell, Aidan McGill, Josie Gallagher(0-1), Kieran Keeney, Pat Boyle, Gerry McDermott (0-3), Frankie Rogers (1-3), Martin Sweeney, Charlie O'Donnell, Patsy Furey (0-1).

The Club was once again well represented on County teams in 1971. Don Byrne (goalkeeper), Declan McGill (right half forward) and Martin Sweeney (full forward) played on the County Minor team in the Ulster Minor League and also in the Championship victory over Monaghan (4-8 to 2-6) before they were defeated by Tyrone in the Ulster semi-final on a score of 1-13 to 0-3. Enda McGill was also a member of the panel.

On the Under-21 County team, five players were on the first fifteen in the Ulster Championship against Tyrone (Tyrone winning on a 1-10 to 1-8 scoreline). John Boyle played full back; the half back line was Kieran Keeney, Josie Gallagher and Aidan McGill; and Charlie O'Donnell played at midfield. For the County Senior team, Cathal McGill, Charlie O'Donnell, John Boyle and Kieran Keeney all played for Donegal in the National League.

Josie Gallagher, Kieran Keeney, John Boyle and Frank McGhee all played on the County Junior team which was defeated by Derry in the first round of the Ulster Championship.

Following John Boyle's election as Senior Player of the Year in 1970, the Club received another honour in 1971, when Enda McGill of Edergole was selected as the County Youth Player of the Year.

Youth Player of the Year – 1971 ***Enda McGill***



Enda McGill, Ardara, son of the well known G.A.A. leader Paddy McGill, O.S., Edergole and Mrs. Nan McGill, who had the distinction of playing on four

different inter-County teams in 1971 although only a Juvenile (U-16).

He played for Donegal in Juvenile Hurling, Minor Hurling, Minor Football and for the Donegal Vocational Football team. He won a Donegal Juvenile 1970 Football Championship medal with the Ardara/Glenties side and was a prominent figure in helping Ardara to win the Minor Football Championship. He played with Ardara in the Juvenile, Minor, Junior and Senior Football Grades and on the U-21 team. He played with Glenties Comprehensive School in U-16 Hurling and with Glenties/Killybegs in Juvenile Hurling in the County Championships.



Declan McGill of Edergole, Donegal County Minor 1971

Since taking part in their first Senior Championship in 1922. Up to and including the 2003 Championship, the Ardara Club (excluding amalgamations), have played in the Senior Championship a total of 70 years out of 82.(This includes Downstrands in 1943) This does not include St. Patrick's (Ardara/Killybegs/Kilcar) in 1966 and St. Enda's (Ardara/Killybegs) in 1969. This is joint second in the County with Gweedore who are both behind St Eunans with 71.

The longest period where no Ardara player played for Donegal in the Ulster Senior Championship is from 1956, (Frankie Brennan) until 1970, (Cathal Mc Gill). Pat Brennan was with the Garda Club when he played in 1959, and Jimmy McNelis was a member of the Summerhill Club in Meath when he played in the 1960 & 61 Ulster Championships.

C.L.G.C. -- Coisde Chonndra Dhuin an nGall.

Guthon:
(072) 65114 (night).
(072) 65201 (day).

Convoy: 19 (D. Harkin).

Béal Átha Seanaigh,
Co. Dhuin an nGall.
18-5-1971.

Under-21 Football Championship:
Donagall v. Tyrone, at Omagh,
Sunday, May 23rd., 1971 at 3.30 pm.

A Chero,

The players listed below are hereby notified of selection. Each Player must provide pair of white togs, boots, stockings and pair of woollen gloves. The team will put up at the Royal Hotel, Omagh, and the team manager, Danny Harkin, requests that all cars report there by 1.30 p.m.

Is mise, do chero,

Aodh Ó Dálaigh, Rinceí Coonndra.

TEAM

	1 Noel McCole (Rosess Rovers)	
2 Vincent Lynn (Corndonagh & UCD)	3 John Boyle (Ardara)	4 Sean Lafferty (Sean McCool's)
5 Kieran Keeney (Ardara)	6 Josie Gallagher (Ardara)	7 Aidan McGill (Ardara)
	8 Charlie O'Donnell (Ardara)	9 Peter Barry (Dundoran)
10 Gerry McDermott (Glenties)	11 Denny Gillespie (Kilcar)	12 Martin Carney (Ballyshannon & UCD)
13 P.J. McGinley (Rosess Rovers)	14 Gerald McElwee (Rosess Rovers & UCD)	15 Michael Crossan (St. Ruan's)

16 - Donal Britton (Four Masters & UCD), 17 - Hughie McGowan (Ballyshannon), 18 - Paddy Joe Hoey (Convoy), Michael O'Donnell (Kilcar), 19 - Pat Boyle (Roger Casements). Emergency Reserve: Willie Coyle (Cloughaneely).

TRAVELLING ARRANGEMENTS: Garda Sergt. Kieran McGrady, Crime Section, Dublin Castle (phone: Home Dublin 50 76 76; Office: Dublin 752413, to arrange for Vincent Lynn, Aidan McGill, P.J. McGinley, Gerald McElwee. Sean Lafferty (Drogheda), as arranged with team manager, Danny Harkin, to take Kieran Keeney (Duggalk), Denny Gillespie, 8, Hillside Drive, Glasheen, Cork, to make own travelling arrangements; Martin Carney, "An Stad", Fr. Griffen Rd., Galway, to phone Chas. O'Donnell at Oulverra Eireann Factory, Termakedy, Co. Mayo, if he is able to find suitable transport to take him. Noel McCole, c/o Mrs. Mulhall, Westland Guesthouse, 31, Fitzwilliam Street, Belfast, to make own arrangements. ARARA-GLINTIES - Joe Boyle and P.J. Spillane to make travelling arrangements for these players, and also for Michael O'Donnell, Kilcar. Gene McGinley to arrange for Sean Sweeney, Roger Casements, and Michael Crossan, Letterkenney. Michael Cullen, St. Ruan's College, to join this car at Letterkenney. Gene McGinley to notify him of arrangements. Rev. M. Sweeney, Holy Cross College, Falcarragh, to lift on route Michael McFadden, Dunfomehy, and Paddy Murray, Letterkenney. He should also provide seat for Willie Coyle, Falcarragh. Paddy Hoey, and Danny Harkin, Convoy, and S.J. McDavitt, Stranorlar, to travel in same car. John Durcan, Dundoran, if he finds it possible, might tie in with Gene McGinley's car from Bifford. He is advised to phone Gene McGinley and advise him by Friday. Arrangements for Peter Barry and H. McGowan to be made by myself and Patsy Barron.

Because of the number of players involved the St. Joseph's v. Glenties SFL league game will be at 7.30 p.m. at Ballyshannon. Other S.F.L. games at 3.30: Glenties v. St. Patrick's at Donagall; Roger Casements v. Stranorlar at Downings. 3.00 p.m. - Oweedore v. McCools.

Letter above is from the County Secretary, Hugh Daly, notifying the Under 21 team of 1971 of the arrangements for the Championship match against Tyrone.



Aidan McGill of Edergole, played for Donegal at Minor (1969) and Under 21 level (1971)

Busy year for Club officers

In contrast to previous years, when Club meetings were not often held on a regular basis, 1971 saw the Club meet on a total of 16 occasions. The annual Bazaar held in March was a great success and raised a profit of £140 pounds. A set of 18 jerseys which cost a total of £22, was purchased early in the year, and players were asked to purchase socks in the Club colours, prior to the Junior League final in April.

Also in April of '71, the Domhnall Mac a'Bháird headstone was finally erected, after the commemoration committee had secured the finance necessary to purchase an appropriate headstone. The unveiling ceremony took place in July of that year and various tributes were paid by those organisations in the parish that Domhnall was associated with.

Problems arose in August which resulted in the Club being unable to use the pitch at Sandfield. This left the Club in the position of having to get the Pearse Memorial Park ready for use almost immediately. The pitch had fallen into disrepair, and following an inspection by Charlie Mooney, Joe Larry and Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, it was agreed that extensive draining would be needed to have the pitch in a reasonable state for playing on. Paddy Herron volunteered to look after the removal of the fencing, which had been erected when the Club leased the land out for grazing, as it wasn't being used for G.A.A purposes. Joe Larry Gallagher and Paddy Herron were appointed as two new trustees of the Club in addition to Hugh Daly, County Secretary. It was hoped that the deeds of the property would be sorted out as a matter of urgency by the Club's solicitors. An item of note during the year was a church gate collection, which raised the sum of £45 for the families of internees who were imprisoned in the North as a result of the ongoing troubles. The Club also held dances in the Iona Hall in conjunction with Jimmy O'Donnell (Crove). The takings were split 50/50 between the two parties.

The year ended with the Club organising its Golden Jubilee annual dinner dance in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel. Tickets for the event were priced at £1.50 for dinner and dance and 50p entry for those who wished to join in afterwards. Music was by the Auctioneers and the Club honoured surviving members of the first Championship winning team, as well as the Junior League winning team of 1970. This report of the function was carried in the local press.

Ardara 50 Years in the G.A.A. Founder Members honoured at Golden Jubilee Dinner

Ardara G.A.A. Club celebrated the 50th Anniversary of their founding at a Dinner and Siamsa in the local Nesbitt Arms Hotel on Saturday 31st December, 1971. The function formed part of the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Club and was attended by over 200 patrons. It was a most auspicious and enjoyable affair and reflected an air of jubilation, achievement and pride. Among the attendance were four members who were associated with the founding of the Club in 1922. One was Mr. John Watters, Kenaughty, who was a founder member and who gave long service as a player. The three others were Mr. Con Breslin, Lurganboy, Mr. Michael Boyle, Tullycleave, and Mr. John McNelis, Common, who were members of the first Ardara team of October, 1921.

Unavoidably absent was Mr. Leo Howley, ex-N.T., Ardara. Other members who were still alive are Mr. Con Herron, Glencoagh, a founder member, from New York. Mr. Charlie Brennan, Hillhead, now in New Jersey and Mr. Jimmy Gallagher, Meenavalley, now in Philadelphia, both former playing members, as were Mr Francis Maguire in the U.S.A, and Mr. John Howley, Yorkshire, England.

The attendance at the function also included Mr. Tom Walsh, Gortahork, County Chairman and Mrs. Walsh as well as Club Officers and playing members of the past and present teams. In a short but impressive ceremony, specially designed and inscribed plaques were presented to the founder members and three surviving players by the Club Chairman Packie Keeney, who also presented medals to the Ardara team, winners of the 1970 Junior Football League.

Mr. Keeney welcomed the surviving members associated with the founding of the Club, the County Chairman and past players and patrons. The County Chairman Mr. Tom Walsh speaking in Irish and English thanked the Ardara Club for their invitation. He was specially honoured to be present at the Golden Jubilee celebrations. The Club, he said, had a wonderful record of achievements and had made a great impact on

the Organisation in its fifty years of existence both on the playing field and in the Council Chamber. It had produced many great footballers and men who served faithfully and well at Club, Divisional and County levels – some with a lifetime of service and dedication, such as the late Sean Cassidy and the late Domhnall Mac a'Bháird, and the present Secretary, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill – all of whom served in many executive capacities at County and Provincial level.

The Club had also an impressive record on the playing field, winning three County Football Championships in the first decade of its existence and in the 1950's two Minor Championships. The last ten years saw the wonderful achievements of Under-Age teams – a record unequalled in Donegal or possibly any County. Last year the County hosted the Footballer of the Year, a new innovation in the G.A.A. and one which enhanced the image of the Association. In conclusion he wished the members of the 1921 team well and the Club continued success.

Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill in a short address in Irish and in English said this was an auspicious occasion in the life of the Club formed fifty years ago during a period of National stress when men who later played a prominent part on the playing fields were in Concentration Camps, and others were in the fight for freedom. He was delighted that those available surviving members were with them for the Golden Jubilee, and to realise that they, who had founded the Club had not been forgotten, that those of to-day remembered them. The tradition had been carried on and the Club had by its achievements vindicated their foresight and lived up to their standards. These men had been vindicated in their own time by winning three Championships, but the last decade saw the Club's greatest strength when seven Under-Age and two Junior Championships and Junior League titles had been won, and two further Championships were taken while assisting Glenties.



Club Chairman Packie Keeney presents the four survivors of the first Ardara team with a momento at the Club's Golden Jubilee celebration. From left Packie Keeney, John McNelis (Brackey), Michael Boyle, Con (Hanna) Breslin Johnny Watters and P.S. Mac a' Ghoill.



Packie Keeney of Glendoan was Chairman of the Club in 1971. Packie played Under-Age and Senior Football for the Club through the sixties and early seventies, and was a very accomplished centre half back. He was a member of the Juvenile ('64) and Minor ('65) Championship winning teams and he went on to play a big part in the Junior Championship successes of 1967 and 1970. He also played for the County at Minor and Under- 21 level in the sixties. Packie played for the Club until 1976, when he became one of the founder members of the Lifford Club, where he had lived for a few years. He also became active at County Board level, and acted as a County Senior Selector under three different managers, John Hannigan in 1975, Brian Mc Eniff in 1976, and Seán O'Donnell in 1977. He was a member of the Ulster Council in 1987 and 1988, as well as being County Development Officer, also in 1988. An accomplished video operator and photographer, Packie was the County Board video man during the '80s and '90s and has built up an impressive library of G.A.A videos. Packie retired from his career with the Post and Telegraphs, (later Telecom), and is now a director and founding member of the successful local radio station, Highland Radio, where he hosts a popular late night Country and Western show. Packie can still be seen at local Club and County matches as the sound operator with the station, and is still a regular attendee of Club functions and Dinner Dances.

A.G.M. of 1971

The 1971 AGM of the Club was held on the 16th of January 1972 in the Courthouse. Secretary Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill in his report congratulated the Club on its success during the year. He pointed out that teams had been entered in all grades and competitions and said that the Senior team had wonderful games with Glenties, with record gates at Glenties, Ardara and Killybegs and went on to the County semi-final only to be defeated by the eventual Champions – MacCumhaill's. The same team won the Donnacha Mac Niallais Cup and the Fr. Connolly Cup in Donemana by defeating the Junior Champions of Derry, Tyrone and Antrim.

The Minor team went on to the County final and, with Glenties, won the Juvenile Championship. It was significant that, in all, eleven players from the Club played on Inter-County teams, some in two grades and others in more than one grade of Football and Hurling, and one player, Enda McGill, was chosen as Donegal "Youth Player of 1971".

The Secretary congratulated all players on their sportsmanship in all games. Not one player was involved in a single unseemly incident. At administrative level the Club had a very busy and rewarding year, with sixteen Club meetings being held. The Domhnall Mac a'Bháird memorial was erected and, also, a very successful Bazaar was held. The Secretary thanked all his officers, especially team trainer, Charlie Mooney, and also Patrick Herron, Joe (Larry) Gallagher, Peter McHugh and Joseph Gildea who were responsible for the Under-Age teams.

The following officers were elected for 1972:-

President	-	Fr. Patrick McShane
Chairman	-	Vincent McConnell
Vice Chairman	-	Joe (Larry) Gallagher
Secretary	-	Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, O.S.
Ass. Secretary	-	Charlie Mooney
Treasurers	-	Joe (Larry) Gallagher & Charlie Mooney

Senior Team Captain - Cathal McGill

Vice Captain - Josie Gallagher.

Senior Team Managers - Charlie Mooney and Joe (Larry) Gallagher.

The following Managers were also elected for the Under-Age ranks:

Schoolboys/Juveniles	-	Peter McHugh and Martin Sweeney
Minor Team	-	John Byrne and Josie Gallagher

Elected to the Committee: Josie Gallagher, Sean Brennan, Jimmy O'Donnell, Paddy Herron, Tommy Boyle, John Boyle, Patsy Gildea, Pat McGill, Tommy Maloney, Charlie O'Donnell, Connell Gavigan, Tommie Boyle and John Byrne.



Vincent McConnell of Brackey was Club Chairman in 1972. Vincent had served the Club well throughout the fifties as both a player and committee member. He was a member of the 1952 Minor Championship winning team, and was a regular for the Senior team until 1959, when he emigrated to England and later to America. While Stateside, he was deeply involved in the Donegal New York Club and managed the team that won the first New York Intermediate Championship, which was somewhat of a break-through for the Club at the time. He returned home to settle in Edergole in 1971 with his wife Susan and three sons, and immediately got involved in the Club again at committee level. He has been one of the Club's best supporters since that time. He was honoured by the Donegal Club in New York in 1974, as Guest of Honour at their Annual Dinner Dance, for his contribution to the Club from 1963 to 1971.



Photo above shows the St. Eunan's College Under-15 team from, 1971, that won the Loch an Iúir Cup (Ulster Colleges Under 15 'B') by defeating Derry C.B.S by 0-8 to 0-6. It includes five Ardara players.

Back, L-R Vincent Rankin (Narin), John Gallagher (Rathmullan), John McGeehin (Letterkenny), Gerard Clerkin (Donegal), Michael Melly, (Killybegs), Danny Mailey, (Convoy), Adrian Concarr (Ardara).

Middle row, L-R: Larry Gallagher (Ardara, Rory McNelis (Carrick), Noel Gildea (Ardara), Gerard McIntyre (Glen), John McNamee, (Lifford), Michael Mulhern (Letterkenny).

Front row, L-R: Patrick Gallagher (Glendowan), Olly Hegarty (Buncrana), Adrian Guthrie (Stranorlar), Brendan Dunleavy (Ballybofey), Anthony Harkin (Rosbeg), Marius Shovelin (Narin), Gerard McCarron (Rathmullan).

1972

To prepare for the coming season, it was agreed towards the end of 1971 that an Adult Parish League would be organised in the Club area. It was hoped that the competition would help in the organisation of the Senior team for 1972. Senior team managers, Charlie Mooney and Joe Larry, were the chief organisers of the tournament and the following teams were selected, the games to be played on Sundays in the Show Field:

TEAM A

Cathal McGill (Aighe)
Pat Shovlin (Sandfield)
Bill Shovlin (Sandfield)
Tom Diver (Drimaha)
Pat McHugh (Kilclooney)
Enda McGill (Edergole)
Eamon McNelis (Loughros Point)

TEAM C

Columba Diver (Ardara)
Kieran Keeney (Cronkeerin)
Sean Brennan (Crucknagapple)
Tony Breslin (Castledoherty)
Patrick McNelis (Loughros Point)
Charles White (Cloughboy)
Patrick McHugh (Summy)

TEAM E

Josie Gallagher (Crucknagapple)
Josie Gildea (Crumlin)
Martin Sweeney (Ardconnell)
Martin Haughey (Leaconnell)
John Watters (Meentinadea)
John Gallagher (Leaconnell)
John Heena (Crumlin)

TEAM B

Frank O'Donnell (Leaconnell)
Peter Oliver McNelis (Meenavalley)
Declan McGill (Edergole)
Patsy Breslin (Castledoherty)
Charles Mooney (Brackey)
Donal McGill (Maghera)
Thomas Boyle (Tullycleave)

TEAM D

Patsy Gildea (Crumlin)
John Boyle (Kentucky)
John O'Donnell (Leaconnell)
Michael Gallagher (Narin)
Paul Breslin (Monargan)
Michael White (Clooney)
Eamon McNelis (Loughros Point)

TEAM F

Packie Keeney (Cronkeerin)
Pat McGill (Aighe)
Frank McGhee (Portnoo)
Frankie Campbell (Hillhead)
Michael Breslin (Castledoherty)
Hugh Maloney (Maghera)
Thomas Meehan (Loughfad)

The League ran on available Sundays early in the year but once County competitions began, it proved difficult to make fixtures and the competition was never completed.

Difficulties resolved

The impasse with the playing pitch at Sandfield continued to the end of 1971, but it was still hoped that an agreement could be reached with the owners of the land

so that the Club could avail of the facility once more. At the AGM, Packie Keeney and Bill Shovlin agreed to make enquiries as to resolving the situation. They reported to a Club meeting on the 2nd of February that an agreement had been reached, on condition that the Club would agree to certain stipulations with regard to the use of the area. It was eventually agreed at a Club meeting on the 23rd of March, that the Chairman and Secretary would sign the agreement on behalf of the Club. Work on Pearse Memorial Park continued, with the extent of the drainage work being agreed, and a contract to carry it out was signed with Jim Kennedy of Rushyhill, Dunkineely, who commenced the work in the latter part of the year.

Senior Team

Club Senior Team again competed in Division One of the Senior League in 1972. Their first match was against Glenties at Sandfield, on Sunday 23rd April and Glenties won on a score of 4-12 to 2-03. The team then played Naomh Columba away, on Sunday 7th May. This match was played in terrible weather conditions, with Ardara winning on a score of 2-04 to 1-03. The team competed well in the League in the early stages, but as the year went on, the Club had extreme difficulty in fielding a team and were forced to withdraw from the competition with a number of games remaining unplayed.

In the Championship, the team faced a difficult draw against reigning County Champions, Sean MacCumhaill's. The first leg was played in Sandfield on Sunday the 28th of May.

Ardara 1-06 MacCumhaills 2-03

Ardara met MacCumhaill's in the first round first leg of the Senior Championship. They were held to level scoring by Ardara in a power packed game. The match was played in Sandfield before a large crowd on Sunday in blustery conditions with some heavy showers. At times exchanges were rather hectic but Referee Andy Barrett kept a tight grip on the game. A feature of the game was the fact that over the first twenty minutes of each half MacCumhaill's failed to score. The half time score was MacCumhaill's 1-02 to Ardara 0-03.

The second half opened with Ardara's midfield pairing of Kieran Keeney and Manus McGill holding the initiative, backed up by Packie Keeney at centre halfback and Peter O. McNelis, Patsy Gildea and Frank McGhee moving well.

Teams and Scorers were

Ardara – Pat McGill, Pat Shovlin, Josie Gallagher, Josie Gildea, Aidan McGill, Packie Keeney, Enda McGill, Manus McGill (1-00), Kieran Keeney, Patsy Gildea (0-02), Peter O. McNelis (0-01), Frank McGhee (0-02), Declan McGill, Sean Brennan and Martin Sweeney.

Sub used – Charlie Mooney (0-01) for Pat Shovlin.

MacCumhaill's – Anthony McFeeley, Willie Sweeney, John McGinty, Seamus Temple, Tommy McMenamin, Andy Curran (0-01), Michael McMenamin (1-00) John Bradley, Seamus Kane (0-01), Eugene Gallagher, Hugh Temple (1-00), Michael Doherty, Frank McFeeley, D. Hannigan and Charles Quinn.

Subs used – John Houston and Brian Lafferty (0-01).

The replay took place in MacCumhaill Park on Sunday 25th June. MacCumhaill's ran out victorious on a score of 5-10 to 0-13. The match was far from high class, being rather a foul-ridden affair with the emphasis on spoiling tactics rather than reliance on football skill. A big proportion of the scores came either directly from, or as a consequence of frees. Ardara scorers were – Patsy Gildea (0-08, 4 frees), Charlie O'Donnell (0-01), Martin Sweeney (0-01), Sean Brennan (0-02) and Declan McGill (0-01).

Minors lose in County final

In the Minor Championship, the Club joined forces with Glenties and reached the County final, only to lose to St Eunan's. This was a good team but lacked training, due to the haphazard manner in which the Championship was run in the South-West Division and the uncertainty of fixtures being fulfilled.

St. Eunan's 4-16 Ardara 1-05

St Eunan's had an easy win in the final of the Donegal Minor Championship in Ballybofey, on Sunday 10th September 1972. There was never any doubt as to the eventual outcome of the game after the early stages, in which St. Eunan's went on to establish a commanding lead. At half time they led 1-11 to 0-01. In the second half, Ardara made a better effort and were a vastly changed outfit. It was only in extra time that they had their goal scored by Martin Haughey. St. Eunan's dominated throughout. Teams and scorers were:-

Ardara – Patsy Harkin, John McGettigan, Bill Shovlin, Kieran Boyce, Anthony Harkin,

Enda McGill (0-01), Eddie McLoone, Seamus McLoone, Martin Haughey (1-00), Michael Gallagher (0-01), Cathal Byrne (0-02), Kevin Keeney (0-01), Michael Breslin, Con McLoone, Eugene Bennett, Jimmy McGlynn and Jimmy Furey.

St Eunan's –R. McRory, F. Comiskey, G. McMonagle, Hugo Blake, Laurence Blake (1-01), Paddy Tunney (0-01), Christy Callaghan, P. Crossan (0-01), Paul McGettigan (0-02), D. Gallen, Charlie Collins (0-04), John McGeehan (0-02), M. Cullen, Jim Clarke (2-04), Malachy Keeney (1-01) and Mickey Mulhern.

Referee – Mr. Gerry Griffin (MacCumhaill's).

The Club Juvenile team competed in the South-West Championship but did not attain any success, while the Schoolboy team was defeated in the County semi-final by Aodh Ruadh. The Ardara/Glenties Under-21 squad, despite having a strong team, failed to field in the County Championship

County Teams

Enda McGill was named on the Donegal Minor team, that played Monaghan in the first round of the Ulster Championship. Michael Gallagher and Don Byrne were listed as substitutes. Kieran Keeney, Josie Gallagher and John Boyle were on the County Donegal Under-21 team for the Ulster Championship. Kieran Keeney played for the County Senior team in the National League, but had to withdraw from the panel due to sitting his final exams at college. Donegal went on to win their first Ulster Senior Championship in 1972, by defeating Tyrone in the Ulster

final at Clones. They were defeated in the All-Ireland semi-final by the eventual champions, Offaly.

Club activities for the year were completed with the annual dinner dance on New Year's Eve in the Nesbitt Arms hotel. The event proved to be an outstanding success with special guests being the Donegal Manager and 1972 All Star Brian McEniff, and his wife Cautie, County Chairman Tom Walsh, and Frank Muldoon, the Donegal representative on Central Council. The Anglo Celt Cup was also on display on the night.



**The 1972 Ardara/Glenties Minor Team that was defeated in the
1972 Minor Championship final**

Back L-R: John Byrne, Conal Aidan Gildea, Michael Campbell, Joseph Bonner, Noel Watters, Johnny McGettigan, Hughie Molloy, Gerry Molloy, Gerry O'Donnell, Josie Furey, Jimmy McKelvey.

Middle L-R: Eugene Bennett, Eddie McLoone, Niall Heena, Martin Haughey, Patsy Harkin, Con McLoone, Bill Shovlin, Enda McGill.

Front L-R: Phelim Molloy, Michael Gallagher, Anthony Harkin, Kevin Keeney, Cathal Byrne, Seamus O'Donnell, Michael Breslin, Kieran Boyce.

Mascot: Gerard Byrne.



Michael Gallagher of Narin, who played for Donegal County Minors in 1972 and 1973.

1972 AGM

The 1972 AGM of the Club was held on the 7th of January 1973 in the Community Centre. The Secretary gave his usual comprehensive report on the year's activities, stating that the Club had a busy year, but had no trophies to show for their efforts. The Club was fortunate to have resolved the difficulties with the playing pitch at Sandfield early

in the year, but its utmost priority was to ensure that the development work on the pitch at Pearse Memorial Park was expedited, so that the Club could eventually return to play their games there. The biggest disappointments of the year were the Club's failure to field in the County Under-21 Championship, and the Senior Team having to withdraw from the Senior League.

On a sadder note, the Club lost one of its founder members, when Johnny Whoriskey passed away, and former players, James Gallagher (Ned) and Neil Heena also went to their eternal reward. Sympathy was extended to Tommy Boyle on the death of his wife Nancy and the Club also extended good wishes to former Under-Age player Charles Sweeney on his ordination to the priesthood.

The following officers were elected for 1973:-

President	-	Very Rev. Liam McCaul, P.P./Rev. P. McShane
Chairman	-	Vincent McHugh
Vice Chairman	-	Vincent McConnell
Secretary	-	Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill
Ass. Secretary	-	Charlie Mooney
Treasurer	-	Joe (Larry) Gallagher
Ass. Treasurer	-	Charlie Mooney

Committee - Paddy Herron, John Gallagher, John Byrne, Patsy Gildea and Frank O'Donnell.

Senior Team Selectors - Charlie Mooney, Joe (Larry) Gallagher, P. S. Mac a'Ghoill and Vincent McHugh.

Under-Age Managers appointed were - John Byrne and Martin Sweeney.

Senior Team Manager - Charlie Mooney.

Senior Team Captain - Patsy Gildea with Vice Captain Aidan McGill.

Delegates to County Convention - Vincent McConnell, Joe (Larry) Gallagher and Tommy Boyle.

The following resolution was passed at the meeting.

"That All Ireland football tickets be given to Club officers not holding five year tickets, and that the remainder be drawn for among players intending to travel to the All Ireland final, and if such tickets are not being availed of, that they be given to those members next in order of the draw".

The following motions were passed for County Convention.

1. "That teams playing in the Senior and Junior County Leagues consist of 13 players".

2. "That players selected as 'Players of the year' (Senior and Under-Age) be presented with suitably inscribed trophies by the Donegal County Board".

3. "That the Donegal G.A.A County Convention condemn the continued occupation by British troops of Casement Park and Armagh Park and other G.A.A offices in the occupied counties".



Joe 'Larry' Gallagher of the Front street is a name that was synonymous with the G.A.A in Ardara throughout the sixties and seventies and indeed right up to shortly before his death, at 63 years of age, in 1986. His first involvement with the Club was in the '50's following his return from England to work as a weaver, with Gaeltarra Eireann, in the Mart in 1950. He was a keen supporter and a regular attendee at Club and County matches, and acted as a Gate

Steward for the Club. It was in the early sixties, with the advent of the Schoolboy Leagues and Under-Age teams. that he became active, and throughout that decade and into the next, he held many positions in the Club. But his main interest and his strongest asset was a talent for team selection, and he held the position of selector and joint manager of the Senior Team over a number of years. Together with his best friend and 'sparring partner' Charlie Mooney, he was responsible for keeping the Club on its feet through many difficult years, particularly in the seventies, and ran many fund raising draws and bazaars etc, to keep the Club on a sound financial footing. A well known taxi man in the South-West, he carried many footballers around the County and Province to play with County Under-Age and Senior teams, and indeed acted as a selector for a few years on County Minor and Senior teams. One of the great G.A.A outings from the town each year involved first securing an all Ireland ticket and then securing a seat in the taxi with 'Larry'. It was an annual pilgrimage that few liked to miss, and many stories are still told of eventful trips and of the characters that travelled with Joe to Dublin each year. He had travelled to 33 All Ireland finals in succession, from 1952 to 1984, before illness curtailed his travelling. In addition to his work with teams, Joe spent countless hours in Pearse Memorial Park with his shovel, digging drains with others, in the hope that the field would become playable on a regular basis. Indeed in 1976 and '77, he spent his Christmas holidays down at the field, when the Club badly needed the pitch to be in a fit state for the next playing season. He would be extremely proud of the ground as it is today.

Married to Margaret Cannon, they raised their family of four sons and one daughter at the Front Street, and Joe always received the greatest of support for his pastime from his family. Indeed he passed on his love of the game to all of his sons. Gabriel

and Kevin both played Under-Age football for the Club and are keen supporters, while Patrick gave Joe his proudest day, when he was the first Donegal player to captain an All Ireland winning team in Croke Park, in the 1984 Vocational Schools' final. Oldest in the family, Larry returned to the town after many years in Drogheda, and has since served as Treasurer, Minor Board Chairman and Club Chairman. Joe's daughter Kathy (Coneady) has been living in the U.S.A for a number of years. Joe's death, at all too young an age, was a huge blow, not only to his family, but to the Ardara G.A.A Club at the time. His legacy lives on though, through his family's involvement in the Club, and his name will always be held in the highest regard by those involved in the G.A.A, and indeed by the community as a whole.



Joe Larry pictured during his time in the Mart in the sixties, on the left is Packie Breslin (Cronkeerin).

Park Committee appointed

At the first meeting of 1973, a Park Committee was formed, with the following members elected; Charlie Mooney, Joe Gallagher, Vinny McHugh, John Byrne and Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill. During the year, work continued, to fill in the drains and level the middle of the field, which had been 'hollow' for as long as the field had been in existence. During the summer, volunteers harvested the hay on the pitch and sold it. Filling was secured from around the parish to level the field, but with the majority of the work left to a few loyal volunteers, the work took a lot longer than was expected. The road around the pitch was in a bad state of disrepair and following representation to the County Council, the Club was informed that it was not planned to carry out repairs or to lay tarmacadam on the road until 1975/76.

Seniors in Division 2

Following their disappointing showing in the 1972 League, the Senior team had to compete in Division 2 for the 1973 season. In the opening match they played Aodh Rua, who were too strong and won the match on a score of 4-10 to 2-06. They also lost to St Naul's on a score of 2-10 to 2-06. Their next game was against Convoy,

in Convoy. With both teams on the field, the appointed referee failed to turn up. Convoy would not agree to a toss of coin for selection of referee but were agreeable to play a challenge game. Ardara, apparently deciding that it would be an official fixture or nothing, left. They also played Naomh Columba in Glen and were victorious 2-04 to 0-04. Team and scorers on that day were:-

Ardara – Paddy Given, John O'Donnell, Frank O'Donnell, Bill Shovlin, Aidan McGill, Josie Gallagher (0-01), Martin Sweeney, Kieran Keeney, Declan McGill (0-01), Patsy Gildea (1-01), Charlie Mooney, Eugene Bennett and Frankie Campbell (1-01).

N.Columba – Conal Gillespie, Francis Cunningham, Peadar Gara, Patrick Gillespie, Sean Burke, John J. McLaughlin, Kevin McGinley, John P. McGinley, Roger Curran, James Hegarty (0-01), Brian Hegarty (0-02), Eamon Gillespie, Seamus Carr (0-01).

Subs – Paddy Donoghue and Benny McLaughlin.

The team finished in joint second position and narrowly missed promotion following a two point play-off defeat to Bundoran, in a game which was played early in 1974.

In the Senior Football Championship, the Club was drawn against the title favourites, St Joseph's. In the first leg at home, the team caused the shock of the round when, in a brilliant display at Sandfield, they defeated St Joseph's by 3-6 to 2-7. The team held out great hopes for success in the return leg in Ballyshannon but, despite putting on a fine display, they could not match the power of the home side who won on a score of 3-11 to 0-04. In the playoff in MacCumhaill Park, an under-strength side failed to rise to the occasion and missed their chance to progress to the next round. Enda McGill was the big man in the Ardara defence with Packie Keeney also turning in a good game. St Joseph's had a storming second half with Martin Carney and Seamie Granaghan excelling. The final result was St. Joseph's 1-17 to 1-04. The Club expressed extreme disappointment with the choice of venue, stating at County Board level that Fintra was the obvious choice for the play-off, but their objections fell on deaf ears. St Joseph's went on to win the Championship, defeating MacCumhaill's in the final.

The Ardara panel was:-

Don Byrne, Frank O'Donnell, John Boyle, John M. O'Donnell, Enda McGill, Packie Keeney, Aidan McGill, Josie Gallagher, Martin Sweeney, Patsy Gildea, Kieran Keeney, Frank McGhee, Declan McGill, Frankie Campbell, Charlie Mooney, Cathal McGill, Sean Brennan, John Herron and Josie Gildea.

Minor Success

The Minor team had a successful season, winning the Iniskeel Cup and Divisional honours. In the County semi-final they lost to Four Masters' after being unable to field a full strength side. John Byrne and Patsy Gildea managed the team. They were also helped out by Fr. Charlie Sweeney, who also assisted in the coaching of the players. The panel which won the Inniskeel Cup were: Don Byrne (Ardara), Billy McNelis (Burkestown), Michael Breslin (Castledoherty), Conal A. Gildea (Crumlin), Noel Watters (Meentinadea), Michael Campbell (Ardara), Adrian Concarr (Ardara), Eugene Bennett (Hillhead), Bill Shovlin (Sandfield), Michael Gallagher (Narin), Eddie McLoone (Rosbeg), Conal McLoone (Rosbeg), Anthony Harkin (Rosbeg), Patsy Harkin (Rosbeg), Enda McGill (Edergole - Captain), Eddie O'Rourke (Woodhill), Stephen Campbell (Ardara), Peter Shovlin (Ard Conal), Noel Gildea (Ardara) and Pat Boyle (Ardara).

Despite this defeat, the team contained many fine players, four of whom played on the County Minor team (Enda McGill, Michael Gallagher, Don Byrne and Anthony Harkin). The same four players were members of the St. Eunan's College team, which won the Herald Cup (Ulster Colleges Under 17 'B'). Kieran Keeney and Josie Gallagher played on both the County Under-21 and the County Senior teams during the year.

For the first time in a decade, the Club did not field teams at Under-14, Under-16 or Under-21 level, a disappointing statistic for all involved in the Club, and it was hoped to rectify the situation in 1974.



Photo shows the Tirconail Gaels team of 1973.

The photo includes five Ardara players who played for the Gaels that year.

Back L-R: Paddy Burke (Frosses) John Boyle (Ardara), Anthony Gallagher (St Eunan's), Josie Gallagher (Ardara), John Toland (Urris), Frank McSwiggan (Glenties), Charlie Tully (Dunkineely), Joe Kelly (Glenswilly), Paddy McGill (Ardara), Colm McGinley (Dunkineely)

Front L-R: Joe McGinty (Glenfin), Tony McGowan (Mountcharles), Seamus Gallagher (Kilcar), Gerry Corley (Galway), Manus McGill (Ardara), Hughie McGowan (Ballyshannon), Mick McGrath (Ballyshannon), Michael Oliver McIntyre (Naomh Columba), Denis McDaid (St Naul's), Declan McGill (Ardara).

Secretary Critical at AGM

The AGM of the Club was held in the courthouse on the 13th of January 1974. In reporting the activities for the year, the rúnaí expressed his concern at the diminishing number of active members and the sparse attendance at meetings. *"The Club have been most active during the year and, in all, 12 meetings were held, as well as a number of committee meetings. Attendances at these meeting were most disappointing and important decisions had to be taken by as few as four members. This position will have to be considerably improved if we hope to carry on as a viable, active Club. We would like to see more players in all grades present at our meetings, in order to avoid a complete breakdown of communication between officers and players. Many do not seem to realise that the Club has a very high and acceptable standing in the parish"*. He then went on to thank those involved in the Bazaar, Club Draw and Silver Circle; in particular Charlie Mooney, Joe Larry, John Byrne and Patsy Gildea, for the amount of work they had done in an effort to keep the Club finances afloat.

The rúnaí was also critical of the commitment to training and games of some members of the Senior team. *"One of the biggest weaknesses in 1973 (and indeed in 1972) was the great difficulty in getting players fully fit for games. It was almost impossible to get a full team from the players available, with the result that the team as a whole realised that the required dedication was completely lacking and as a result the team had no faith in itself. If our Senior team is to have any success, then this half hearted approach will have to be eliminated"*.

The financial statement was then presented by Charlie Mooney, and it showed an income of £629 and an expenditure of £340, leaving a credit balance of £319.

The following officers were elected for 1974:-

President	-	Very Rev. Liam McCaul, P.P./ Rev. P. McShane
Chairman	-	Frank O'Donnell
Vice Chairman	-	Joe (Larry) Gallagher
Secretary	-	Bill Shovlin
Ass. Secretary	-	Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill
Treasurer	-	Charlie Mooney
Ass. Treasurer	-	Joe (Larry) Gallagher
P.R.O.	-	Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill

Committee members - Tommy Boyle, Tommy Maloney and Vincent McConnell.
Gate Collectors-Tommy Maloney, Tommy Boyle, Charlie Mooney and Vincent McConnell.

Senior Team Manager: Josie Gallagher assisted by John Byrne.

Team Selection Committee; Joe (Larry) Gallagher, Josie Brennan and Martin

Sweeney.

Senior Team Captain - Aidan McGill with John M. O'Donnell as Vice Captain.

Delegates to County Convention - Charlie Mooney, Joe (Larry) Gallagher, Bill Shovlin, Tommy Boyle, John M. O'Donnell and Frank O'Donnell.



Josie Gallagher from Crucknagapple was elected Senior Team Manager for 1974. Josie learned his skills playing matches in the 'bog hole' in Altnagapple, where all the boys from the neighbouring townlands gathered to play every Sunday. Those playing included Kieran and Michael Keeney, Sean Brennan and Conal and James Maguire. The games were refereed by Josie's father, Eddie, and Sonny Keeney. Josie first featured on the Ardara/Glenties Juvenile team, which won the 1968 County Championship and in the same year got a trial for the County Minors, as a goalkeeper. He then went on to win County Minor Championship medals in 1969 and 1970. His debut at Club Senior level came in 1969, for St Enda's in the Senior Championship. Josie soon became well known around the County for his talents and was a brilliant high fielder and score taker, both from play and from frees. He played for the County at Minor and Under-21 level, and made his debut for the Senior team in 1972. He played on different occasions for the team until 1979 and was a sub on the side that was defeated in the 1979 Ulster final by Monaghan. He also played for Tirconail Gaels for a spell in 1972, along with John Boyle, Hughie Haughey and Charlie Tully, among others. As a player on the Senior teams of the seventies and early eighties, Josie won two Gaeltacht Championships, 2 Senior Shield, and 1 Senior Championship medal. He managed several Under-Age teams in the Club and led the Minor team to a Championship win in 1983 along with Martin Sweeney. He also managed the Senior team in the nineties. Josie rates Kieran Keeney, Peter Oliver and Patsy Gildea as the finest players he ever played with for the Club. He is eternally grateful to his late father, Eddie, for instilling a love of the game in himself and his brother John (R.I.P), and he often acknowledges the great times and memories that football brought to their home in Crucknagapple.

Glenties advance in Championship

Activity for the Senior Team in 1974 commenced with the 1973 League play-off against Bundoran, a game which ended in a two point defeat. The team did go on to win the MacNiallais Cup, on St Patrick's day, by defeating Naomh Conaill in the final. This however proved to be the team's last competitive action for 3 months. They went into the Championship campaign without a competitive game in the interim. Two challenge matches against Four Masters' were the only matches

played. Their opponents in the first round were Naomh Conaill. In the first game at home, Ardara put in a spirited display to earn a draw on a score of Ardara 0-10, Naomh Conaill 1-7. Glenties held the upper hand in the first half and got a boost when, after only 3 minutes, Paddy Mc Dyer hit a 40 yds free, which was deflected to the net. They were ahead at half time on a 1-5 to 0-3 scoreline. Ardara however, dominated the second half and had points from Kieran Keeney, Martin Sweeney, Peter Oliver McNelis, (2), John Boyle, and Packie Keeney. Glenties' only reply came through points from Conal McLoone and Pat Boyle. It was another exit, though, after the second leg and the Glenties men won rather easily on a 2-7 to 1-5 scoreline. The team had limited success in Division 2 of the League, finishing midway in the table.



Francie Cunningham presents Ardara captain John Michael O'Donnell with the MacNiallais Cup for 1974 after the team defeated Naomh Conaill. Also in photo are Enda McGill, Eugene Bennett and Josie Gallagher.



**The Ardara Senior Team that won the MacNiallais Cup in 1974
Back L-R: Enda McGill, Martin Sweeney, Eddie McLoone, Charlie O'Donnell, Frank O'Donnell, Don Byrne, Josie Brennan, Frank McGhee, Paddy Given, Noel Watters.
Front L-R: John Herron, Charlie Mooney, Connie Molloy, Josie Gallagher, John Michael O'Donnell, Vincent Rankin, Anthony Harkin, Bill Shovlin**

In the Under-Age ranks, there was also little success, and although the Under-14, Under-16 and Minor teams all won their sections, their interest ended at the quarter final stage. In the Under-14 and Minor Championships, Aodh Ruadh were the victors while Gweedore ended the interest of the Juvenile team.



Don Byrne of The Muirlinn, played for Donegal County Minors from 1971-1973, and for the Under 21s in 1974.

Chairman takes over as secretary

The newly elected Club Chairman, Frank O'Donnell, put in a hectic year in 1974. The Secretary, Bill Shovlin, resigned in May, due to pressure of work and, as a result of the officers being unable to find a replacement for the position, the Chairman agreed to carry out the Secretary's duties for the rest of the year. It was quite a busy year off the field, as the officers struggled to keep the G.A.A alive in the parish. It was a difficult time financially and various fund raising ideas were taken on board. The annual bazaar in March made a healthy profit of £106, but the big success of the year was a marquee that the treasurer, Charlie Mooney, organised in August. Some of the top bands in the country appeared at the venue, which was situated on the Killybegs Road, where Peter Oliver now resides. A profit of £400 accrued from the venture, and this left a healthy balance at the end of the year.

Work on Pearse Memorial Park continued during the year, with the matter of trustees once again an issue. At a meeting in February, it was agreed that the following names would be added to the Deed of Trust: Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, Joe Larry, John Michael O'Donnell, John Byrne and Charlie Mooney. The drainage work on the pitch continued but it would be a while before the pitch was in a fit state to be used on a regular basis for matches.

Past versus present game the highlight of the year

The event which attracted most interest during 1974 was a novel challenge match between the stars of the 50s/60s against the present Senior team. The match was a joint fund raiser, with the Club giving half of the proceeds to St. Vincent de Paul. The game captured the imagination of the parish and a huge crowd was present at the Show Field for the occasion. The match was played under normal rules, with two notable exceptions.

1. The present team could not score inside 30yds.
2. The present team could not solo more than 3 times.

The following report was carried on the game in the Democrat

Veterans victorious in Novel Football Game

A novel football game, in which the veterans of the 50s-60s played the present team, attracted a capacity attendance at Ardara (gate £104.00). The game which was played in ideal weather, was a most interesting and entertaining contest. The venue was the Show Field, by kind permission of Mr. Connie Molloy.

The Veterans were still going strong at the end and finished victors to the tune of 6-03 to 3-06, having led 3-02 to 0-02 at the interval. During the first half the '50/'60's team held the initiative. In the second half with the aid of four substitutes, they held out, with some fine saves, including a penalty, brilliantly saved by Ned O'Rourke. Many of the '50/'60 team had finished their football career before any of the members of the present team were born. The game was played in a fine sporting spirit with the younger players seeing some 'new rules' in operation. Casualties were confined to two, and these were quickly and expertly dealt with by the First Aid team, equipped with ambulance, uniforms and stretchers and composed of Dr. Dermot Campbell, Mickey Molloy, Liam Duffin and John Loughrey.

The teams under Referee Charles Mooney were:-

'50/'60s - Seamus McGee (Ardara), Alphonsus Bennett (Ardara), Charles Bennett (Narin Road), Michael Boyle (Maghera), John McGill (Maghera), Tommy Boyle (Ardara), Frankie Brennan (Ardara), Eddie John McGonigle (Tullycleave), Finbarr Whelan (Ardara), Brendan Whelan (Ardara), James McGinley (Hillhead), Brendan McBride (Narin), Tom O'Donnell (Ardara), Eddie Doherty (Ardara), John Joe Doherty (Ardara), George Doherty (Ardara), Ned O'Rourke (Ardara) and Bart Whelan (Ardara)

'70s - Don Byrne (Ardara), Enda McGill (Edergole), John M. O'Donnell (Leaconnell), Frank O'Donnell (Leaconnell), Sean Brennan (Crucknagcapple), Packie Keeney (Cronkeerin), Patsy Gildea (Crumlin), John Boyle (Kentucky), Frank McGhee (Narin), Peter O. McNelis (Meenavalley), Martin Sweeney (Ardara), Frankie Campbell (Ardara), John Herron (Hillhead), Paddy Given (Hillhead), Eddie McLoone (Rosbeg), Michael Gallagher (Narin) and Eugene Bennett (Hillhead).

The event was followed by an enjoyable buffet supper in the Nesbitt Arms hotel which was attended by a large crowd. A lot of debate took place during the night as to whether the present team should be replaced en bloc with the oldies team, who had taken their scalp earlier in the day.



Frankie Brennan lays the ball off to Charlie Bennett as Niall Heena, buys the dummy!



Ned O'Rourke has it covered in the goals as John Joe Doherty rises, while James McGinley, Phonsie Bennett and Josie Gildea await developments.



Johnny D, shows Patsy Gildea, he has lost none of his old 'tricks' and leaves him shouting for mercy!



Charlie Mooney strikes a penalty for the seventies team.



Ned pulls off a brilliant save!



All hands follow the ball, as Bart Whelan, Brian Mc Gill, Ned O'Rourke, John Joe Doherty, Josie Brennan and Josie Gildea lead the attack.



Ned clears his lines!



The Seventies team

**Back L-R: Packie Keeney, Connie Molloy, Sean Brennan, Patsy Harkin, Don Byrne, Frank O'Donnell, Martin Sweeney, Enda McGill.
Front L-R: John Herron, Eddie McLoone, John Michael O'Donnell, Eugene Bennett, Frank Mc Ghee, Frankie Campbell, Peter Oliver McNelis, Michael Gallagher, Paddy Given.**



The '50s/60s Selection who defeated the seventies team

Back L-R: James Max McNelis, Tommy Boyle, Eddie Doherty, George Doherty, Tom O'Donnell, Donal McBride, Eddie John McGonigle, Seamus McGee, John Paul McGill, Josie Brennan, Thady Gallagher, Frankie Brennan.

Front L-R: Connie Molloy, Finbarr Whelan, John Joe Doherty, James McGinley, Phonsie Bennett, Nicholas McGill, Bart Whelan, Charlie Bennett.



The Married Womens' selection, who played a Single Ladies selection on the same day in 1974.

Back L-R: Marion Bennett, Janet O'Donnell, Mary Doherty, Brid Boyle, Sheila Deeney, Eileen Maloney, Bernadette Bonner, Beattie Egan, Nancy Whittington, Frances Berick, Anne Byrne.

Front L-R: Anne Heena, Sarah Gallagher, Maggie Given, Mickey Molloy, Ellen Cassidy, Veronica Bennett, Eileen Keeney, Mena McCole, Kathleen Bennett.



The Single ladies' selection from 1974.

**Back L-R: Rosaleen Gallagher, Grainne Gallagher, Denise Brennan, Bernie Craig, Geraldine Craig, Rosemarie Brennan, Una Craig, Mary Gavigan, Brid McLoone (Rosbeg).
Front L-R: Peg Boyle, Mickey Molloy, Rosaleen McGuinness, Muriel Heena, Margaret Gallagher, Noeleen McCabe, Mary Gildea.**



All's fair...

**Veronica Bennett gets the better of Muriel Heena
as Kathleen Molloy supports from behind.**



Referee, Mickey Molloy (Tullycleave), makes a run for it at the final whistle.



Frank O'Donnell of Leaconnell held the distinction of being the only person to carry the positions of Chairman and Secretary in the same year, when he took on both jobs for the last six months of 1974. Elected Club Chairman at the age of 26, he was also one of the youngest to hold the position. Frank was a long serving member of the Club Senior team during the seventies and early eighties, and was a regular in the number two position during the successful years. Famous for his long kick out, Frank gave unyielding service during his career and, despite living away from the parish, travelled thousands of miles for training and matches. He was a prime example of loyalty to his home Club. When Frank's playing career ended he joined the Four Masters' Club in Donegal Town, where he had lived since his marriage to Vera (Campbell). His arrival was a huge boost to Gaelic Football in the area, where he quickly became involved in his new Club and contributed enormously to the development of Under-Age football. He played his part on the administrative side of the Club, serving as Chairman and Treasurer and in many other capacities. Frank and Vera have four sons and two daughters, all of whom have the same love of Gaelic games as their parents. Barry, Rory, Paul and Conor all won Under-Age Championship Medals with Four Masters'', and Paul won Meath Senior Championship medals, with Skryne, in the nineties, to add to the one his father won in 1981 with Ardara. Rory added to it in 2003 with Four Masters'' victory in the County final. Frank and the O'Donnell family were honoured at the 2000 dinner dance, when Frank was named as Guest of Honour as a small token of appreciation for his commitment to the Club during his playing career.

Keeney makes history

The biggest success story of 1974 in the County, was the capturing of Donegal's second Ulster Senior Football title. Kieran Keeney made history by becoming the first Ardara player to win an Ulster Senior Football medal. Kieran played in all the matches in Ulster, his most important contribution came in the Ulster Final replay against Down, where he came on as a second half sub and scored the winning goal in the dying minutes to give Donegal a 3-9 to 1-12 victory in Clones. Donegal had accounted for Tyrone (1-9 to 0-8) and Antrim (5-9 to 1-7) in the earlier rounds of the competition. Donegal went on to play Galway in the All Ireland Semi-Final but were beaten on a 3-13 to 1-14 scoreline. A special presentation was made to Kieran at the annual dinner dance on New Year's Eve to commemorate the occasion. At County level also in 1974, P.S. Mac a'Ghoill was Donegal's Central Council delegate in Croke Park.



The Donegal County who won the Ulster title in 1974

Back Left - Right: Anothony Gallagher (St. Eunan's), Martin Griffin (MacCumhail's), Kieran Keeney (Ardara), Donal Monaghan (Four Masters'), Seamus Bonner (Civil Service), Michael Carr (Kilcar), P.J. McGowan (MacCumhail's), Paul McGettigan (St. Eunan's), Danny Gillespie (Kilcar), Noel McCole (St. Eunan's), John Carr (Kilcar), Hughie McClafferty (Downings), Kieran McCready (Ballyshannon).

Front Left to Right: John Boyce (Downings), Michael Lafferty (MacCumhail's), Neily Gallagher (Gweedore), Gerard McElwee (Dungloe), Maring Carney (Aodh Rua), Finian Ward (Naomh Columba), Seamie Granaghan (Bundoran), Pauric McShea (Aodh Rua), Brian McEniff (Bundoran), Andy Curran (MacCumhail's), Joe Winston (St. Eunan's), Kieran McCready Jr.

1974 A.G.M

The 1974 A.G.M of the Club was held in the courthouse on the 12th of January 1975. Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill presided, as outgoing Chairman Frank O'Donnell, acting as Secretary, presented a report on the year's activities. In a comprehensive report, all aspects of work in the Club were covered, and he stated that the highlights of the year were the oldies' match in the show field and Kieran Keeney's exploits for the County Senior team. On the down side, the continuing exodus of talented players to Dublin and across channel was causing great problems for the

Club in fielding a team at Adult level. He was grateful for the work of the officers in keeping the Club afloat, both financially and otherwise. He concluded by expressing concern at the news, received lately, that the Club would not be able to use Sandfield for 1975, as a playing pitch.

The Treasurer Charlie Mooney then presented the following report to the meeting

Expenditure		Income	
Field at Sandfield	25.00	Membership	3.50
Meals and Lucozade	47.75	Bazaar	101.50
Officer expenses for 1973	25.00	Buffet Supper	130.23
Schoolboy meals	5.26	Marquee dances	400.00
Kee & sons (Donegal)	3.00	1974 Dinner Dance	119.25
Registration of players	8.00	Money for Hay	10.00
Insurance of players	8.00	Money on hand	319.02
Democrat (Adverts)	13.21	Gate receipts	93.40
7 Plastic balls	4.90		
2 small footballs	8.00	Total Income	1176.90
Player's medical expenses	5.00		
One pair of boots	5.50		
Officer expenses 1974	11.10		
1 football	8.50		
Rent for Courthouse	5.00		
St Vincent De Paul	50.00		
Senior Citizens party	10.00		
1 bottle of whiskey	3.80		
Referees expenses	15.00		
Travelling expenses	110.00		
Field Contract	450.00		
Roadstone	50.00		
Total	872.02		
Total Income	1176.90		
Minus Expenditure	872.02		
Balance	304.88		
Money in P.O. Account	381.95		
Money in prize bonds	50.00		
Total monies in the Club	736.83		

The following officers were elected for 1975:

President	-	Very Rev. Liam McCaul, P.P./Rev P. McShane.
Chairman	-	Columba Diver
Vice Chairman	-	Joe (Larry) Gallagher
Secretary	-	Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill
Treasurer	-	John M. O'Donnell
Ass. Treasurer	-	Charlie Mooney

Committee - Columba Diver, Joe (Larry) Gallagher, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, John M. O'Donnell, Charlie Mooney, Martin Sweeney, Brian McGill, John Byrne, Patsy Breslin and Bart McHugh.

Under-Age Teams Committee - Stephen Campbell, Eddie McLoone, Conal Haughey and Frank Molloy.

Senior Team Manager : Brian McGill (Cashel).

Senior Team Captain: John M. O'Donnell

Vice Captain: Martin Sweeney.

Team Selection Committee :Martin Sweeney, Kieran Keeney and Brian McGill.

Gate Collectors - Joe (Larry) Gallagher, John Byrne, Patsy Breslin and Charlie Mooney

John Byrne was appointed Referee.

Parks Committee - Charlie Mooney, Joe (Larry) Gallagher, P.J. McGill, John M. O'Donnell and Josie Brennan.

County Board Delegates - Joe (Larry) Gallagher and Charlie Mooney.

In 1975, teams were entered U-14, U-16, Minor, U-21, Senior Championship and Division 2 League.

Comórtas Peile na Gaeltachta

Ag cruinniú de'n Chlub i Mí Feabhra socraíodh iarratas a dhéanamh chuig Coiste an Contae páirt a ghlacadh s'na Comórtaisí. Mar gheall ar aighneas idir Naomh Columba agus Cill Chartha, tharraing Naomh Columba siar as an Chomórtas agus tugadh cuireadh do Ard a' Rátha imirt in aghaidh Chill Chartha sa chéad bhabhta i bhFionn Trá.

Cill Chartha 2-07 Árd a' Rátha 1-06

Bhuaigh foireann óg cumasach Chill Chartha, ar a raibh bunús de'n fhoireann a bhain Corn faoi 21 na Contae na bliana anuraidh, ar Ard a' Rátha, a bhí ag glacadh páirt sa chomórtas do'n chéad uair i bhFionn Trá, Dé Domhnaigh seo caite.

Cill Chartha – Aodh ó Cinnéide, Séamus Mac Briartaigh, Séamus Mac Giolla Easbuic, Mícheál ó Domhnaill, Mícheál Mac Giolla Cheara(1-02), Séamus Mac Fhionnlaoidh(1-02), Aodh ó Seibhlin, Dónal Mac Giolla Easbuic, Séamus ó Gallchóir(0-02),Aodh ó Canainn, Tomás Mac Pháidín,

Pádraig ó Canainn(0-01), Aodh ó hEigearthaigh, Mícheál Ó Domhnaill agus Peadar Mac Conrí.

Ard a' Rátha – Pádraig Ó hEarcáin, Brian Mac a' Ghoill, Seán ó Baoill, Proinsias ó Domhnaill, Éanna Mac a' Ghoill, Éamonn Mac Giolla Uain, Seán M. Ó Domhnaill, Mairtín Mac Suibhne, Ciarán Ó Cianaigh, Pádraig Mac Giolla Dé(1-04), Peadar O. Mac Niallais(0-01), Antoine Ó hEarcáin, Déaglan Mac a' Ghoill, Conall Ó Lúdhóg(0-01), Eoghan Ó Beinid.

Under 21s play Championship match in Cashel

The problems with Sandfield, which the secretary referred to at the A.G.M, were again resolved following representations made by Packie Keeney, Columba Diver and Patsy Gildea. The matter was not fully completed until April and, as the Club was drawn to play MacCumhaill's in the County Under-21 Championship in March, the Club had no pitch to play on. The first leg of the meeting was held in MacCumhaill Park, with the home side taking the honours.

Sean MacCumhaill's 3-06 Ardara 2-04

The Donegal Under-21 Football Championship of 1975 got underway on Saturday 1st March, when MacCumhaill Park was the venue for the meeting of the local side and Ardara which resulted in a victory for MacCumhaill's. It was a lively, closely contested game, as the scores indicated, and Ardara might have come closer but for having a second half penalty saved.

MacCumhaill's - Seamus Faulkner, Niall Tinney, Aidan Heeney, Kenny Griffin, Paddy McGinty, Gerard McGranaghan, Niall

Patton, Martin Griffin (2-02), Brendan Dunleavy (0-02), John McBrearty, Gerard McCafferty, Denis Porter (0-01), Finnian Hannigan, Michael Kelly and Patsy McGowan (1-01).

Ardara - Patsy Harkin, Paul McHugh, Eddie McLoone, Eddie O'Rourke, Noel Watters, Stephen Campbell, Tony Breslin, Connie Molloy (1-02), Eugene Bennett, Conal A. Gildea (1-00), Anthony Diver, Michael Campbell, Donal Craig, Eamonn Kennedy (0-01) and Michael Nicholson.

Referee - **Connie Maguire (St. Eunan's).**

The McGill family of Cashel came to the rescue for the home tie and offered their field to the Club for the match the field where the bakery is now situated. Ardara won the match narrowly against a strong MacCumhaill's side, and as a result forced a play-off. This was as far as the team went however, when MacCumhaill's won the return match easily by 8-7 to 2-2.

Seniors thrown out of Championship

In the first round of the Senior Football Championship, Ardara were drawn with Gweedore in the first round. The first leg was played in Ardara on the 15th of June and Gweedore won on a 5-6 to 1-8 scoreline.

Deserved but flattering win for Gweedore Gweedore 5-6 Ardara 1-8

Gweedore had a meritorious but somewhat flattering win over Ardara in Sandfield on Sunday last in the first round of the Senior Football Championship.

The game, played in grand weather conditions, with the exception of a fairly strong breeze blowing across the field, was reasonably entertaining and, on the run of play, Ardara should have had a much better score. In the last minutes of the first half, after the scores were level on two occasions, Ardara missed a penalty when the ball hit the upright. The first half was a rather dull affair, with the score at half time standing at 2-4 to 0-6 in Gweedore's favour. On the resumption, Ardara looked like a winning side, when they took control of centre-field and Patsy Gildea reduced their arrears with a goal. A minute later, Kieran Keeney got the equaliser. Neilly Gallagher again put Gweedore in the lead from a 20yds free, and shortly afterwards, Donal Breslin had another point for Gweedore. Ardara fought back and points from Martin Sweeney and Keeney levelled the scores.

In the 22nd minute Donal Breslin got a rather soft goal and the Ardara defence seemed to crumble afterwards. Gweedore went on to get points through Peter Breslin and Paddy Bonar. Donal Breslin and Peter Breslin sealed the issue for Gweedore with two well taken goals. Ardara had a point in between through Martin Sweeney.

The teams under referee Prionsias Carr (Kilcar) were as follows:

Gweedore: Packie McGinley, Sean Sullivan, John Diver, Owenie McBride, Paddy Bonar, Michael Gallagher, Francis Carroll, Seamus McGarvey, Dinny Gallagher, Sean Mulligan, Donal Breslin, Andy Campbell, Peter Breslin, Tadhg Kearney, Neilly Gallagher.

Ardara: Patsy Harkin, Eddie McLoone, Josie Gallagher, John M. O'Donnell, Anthony Harkin, Declan McGill, Frank O'Donnell, Martin Sweeney, Kieran Keeney, Lochlann McGill, Connie Molloy, Frank McGhee, Noel Watters, Patsy Gildea, John Herron .

The team then travelled to Magheragallon for the second leg, a few weeks later. Unfortunately for Ardara, a number of players scheduled to travel did not appear, which left the team with only 14 players. The official referee did not show up at the venue either. The Ardara team and mentors were left in the position whereby the only hope they had of getting the match played again was to refuse to toss for a referee, and then hope that the game would be re-fixed by the County Board. The following snippet appeared in the Democrat.

Ardara refused to play Senior Championship 2nd leg.

The game fixed for Magheragallon between Gweedore and Ardara did not take place when the appointed Referee failed to put in an appearance. The Gweedore officials asked Ardara to nominate a Referee so that they could toss up. Both teams were on the field at this stage, but Ardara declined and left the pitch. The matter is now in the hands of the County Board and it is likely

that Gweedore will be awarded the game as the ruling on this is quite clear - that where the appointed official fails to turn up the teams must toss up for choice of official. If they are awarded the game this will mean that they are also through to the quarter-finals since they won the first leg three weeks ago.

The Ardara team were duly thrown out of the Championship by the County Board at the next meeting. The team struggled to field teams all during 1975, but still managed to finish third in Division Two of the League by the end of the year. The most noteworthy win was an away victory to League leaders Falcarragh, when what was considered a very under strength team, travelled more ‘in hope’ than with any confidence of getting the points.

First defeat for Falcarragh Ardara 1-7 Falcarragh 1-5

Falcarragh suffered their first defeat in Division 2 this season, when they suffered a two points defeat to Ardara in a match which they led right up to the last ten minutes.

The home side were short some of their regulars, as were Ardara, but this did not really detract from the game. The home side had the better of the scoring in the first half and led at half time by 1-3 to 1-2. They continued to hold their lead for the first twenty minutes of the second half, but then Ardara took over and once they took the lead they never looked back.

Ardara: Cara Melly, John Cassidy, Patsy Gildea (0-1), Eddie O'Rourke, Frank O'Donnell (0-1), Josie Gallagher, Aidan McGill, Anthony Harkin (0-1), Noel Watters, Brian McGill, Frank McGhee (1-3), Patsy Harkin, Charlie Mooney, Conal A Gildea, John M O'Donnell(0-1).

Falcarragh: C. McCafferty, P. McMenamin, J. Keys, J. Collum, H. Doohan, J. Sweeney, B. Gallagher, B. Cannon, A. Penrose, P. McGinley, M. Coyle, H. Ferry, S. Curran, P. Sharkey, M. McGinley
Referee: Fr Sean Gallagher

In the Under-Age grades, the Under-14 and Under-16 teams won their sections in the All County competitions, but were defeated by Aodh Ruadh in the County quarter-finals. A fancied Minor side was knocked out early in the competition when the team came up against the eventual winners, Naomh Columba, in their section. The team that played in that match was as follows:

Patsy Harkin, Eddie O'Rourke, Eddie McLoone, Donal Haughey, Michael Nicholson, Paul McHugh, Don Breslin, Stephen Campbell, Eugene Bennett, Conal Aidan Gildea, Brian O'Donnell, Eamon Kennedy, Packie Bennett, Donal Craig, Danny Gallagher (Ardconnell).

A Funny Old Game. By Tom Campbell.

Many of you will be of the opinion that football is not a subject for serious debate. However, as long as I can remember, the discussion of peaks and troughs in the performance of Ardara teams in general, and of individual players in particular, has caused more heated debate than almost any other subject. Fortunately, most debate has taken place in one of our several fine

hostelries, which is just as well, because, as many of our politicians will agree, there is nothing like prolonged discussion for promoting a throat tightening thirst! That my chosen subject is an appropriately serious theme, I have no doubt, and at this point I call on the support of a now deceased-but-famous team manager of the soccer code, namely, Bill Shankly. When asked by a

Sunday Times reporter for his opinion as to the relevant importance of football, Shankly replied, "some people think that football is a matter of life or death. I can assure them that it is much more serious than that."

This attitude appeared to prevail when I went to the Pearse Memorial Park to observe my own sons train with other Ardara Juveniles under the stern eye and military discipline of their coach, Eugene Bennett. I was impressed by the coach's relationship with his players, which I would describe as "vigorously interactive" – especially on the verbal level. Being in the education business myself, I was very interested in the coach's use of the open-ended question as a means of encouraging personal analysis/development. This is most effectively illustrated when a player fails to carry out an instruction successfully and is then asked, "What are ye?" thus permitting a range of responses for future discussion. My sons enjoyed the sessions and made new friends. However, they found that the field had one major drawback i.e. midges. In comparison with the mosquitoes, which we encountered when visiting their mother's family in Sri Lanka last year, the boys thought that the Ardara variety were small but fierce, a description which is probably apt also when applied to the Ardara Juveniles.

I was able to attend three games during my visit and found them entertaining. The Seniors enjoyed a practically unopposed outing against Downings and it was after that game that Jimmy Brennan provided me with the title for this 'offering'. The Minors had two stern battles with Dungloe, ending in a last gasp winner in Glenties. This age group was of particular interest to me, because it was at Minor level that I last represented the Club – was I ever that young? The game has definitely developed in Ardara. I never remember playing on a team that sported matching socks, shorts and jerseys, and not a Wellington in sight. How did we ever win anything? However, I think that the current approach is absolutely correct and a very positive reflection on those responsible for the various teams.

Ardara Club has a lengthy history, with

myths and legends to accompany it. In the early part of the century, when football was less formally organised, there was a local team, which sported the quite whimsical name of the "Rubber Dollies", one of whose leading lights was John McMenamin (Sally). Later, there was a parish league in which the team led by Con Breslin (Hannah) was lyrically named "The Primroses". At that time, games were played on any field remotely flat and which the owner was willing to donate for the purpose. My father recalls a game played on the strand by the Point Road, near the "Yellow Banks". This reminds me of a tale involving my maternal grandfather, P.J. (Pax) Brennan. After listening to some football debate in the bar, he suggested that football had lost much of its rigour since his halcyon days. When invited to expand on his theory, Granda, never one to allow facts to ruin a good story, recounted having played a game on the strand near the Long Point, which lasted "from morning to night". Now every bar boasts at least one cynic, and Pax was duly asked by one audience member how the players had coped when the tide came in. True to his vocation as a master story-teller, he retained his composure and calmly retorted that, as far as he could remember, the tide had failed to appear that day. I am unsure as to whether a study of local marine records would help to verify this story and frankly, I don't care! Perhaps we can account for the "no tide" phenomenon by regarding it as an omen of future footballing achievements by players from the town.

That the club has produced some legendary players is not in question. As a young boy my father fed my avid imagination with accounts of performances by such players as Tom Gallagher, Jim Maxwell, William Boyle and the mighty Vinny McHugh, whose friendship I was fortunate to enjoy as I grew older. I was also told about the achievements of another great player, not far from Ardara, but connected to the town through marriage with my aunt Mollie. He was John O'Donnell from Dungloe. I never saw any of these men play but I have no doubt as to their "greatness". With the exception of William, with whom I had a word during my visit, they have all now departed, but we are enriched by their

memory.

My earliest memories of supporting Ardara are inseparably connected with the player who was my boyhood hero. This was my uncle, Frankie Brennan. Of those splendid long ago Sundays, I still have sepia tinted memories in which his faded yellow and green jersey transcends the midfield throng to grasp the "leather", before sending it sailing towards the posts. Somewhat later, I was highly impressed by another young player called Michael Keeney, and later still I watched with pride when his younger brother represented the County with some style. However, it would be totally unjust to draw up a list of famous Ardara players, which did not include our representatives on the All-Ireland winning team, Anthony Molloy and Martin Gavigan.

I was unable to be at Croke Park for the final and had to settle for a cinema seat in Hammersmith. It was unforgettable, and as friends from other parts of Ireland extended their congratulations after the game, I took delight in describing exactly whence I hailed. And I ensured that they knew the names of our representatives on the team; not least the man who had vowed to take Sam to "the Hills"! It is a matter of some regret that I can't claim to have represented Ardara at Senior level, however I have fond memories of many games in Under-Age teams. While still at the Town School, I played in the initial School League. My brother Frankie, a lethal corner forward, and I played for the "Down the Town" team. We had no proper kit and footwear was variable. However, I remember nerve-tingling struggles against Brackey, Meenavalley and Meentinadea, not to mention our arch-rivals, Hillhead. We never won the League, but the highlights of this period were games arranged against Derry on a Home and Away basis.

The first game was played at Pearse Memorial Park, and for weeks before I was haunted by the unthinkable i.e. I wouldn't be picked. Fortunately, I got in at corner forward with my old friend Patsy Gildea joining me. The match took place on a beautiful Sunday before a "packed house". It was a pulsating encounter. We won and I

was lucky to notch a few scores. There was high excitement that evening, with many of us floating on visions of famous County careers stretching out in the future. I experienced my one and only piece of fan adulation in the form of Jodie Gallagher, who on returning from the field, reported to my mother, "your Tom was great". As might be imagined that remark cemented a friendship between Jodie and I, which continues to this day. The return game was played at Celtic Park, Derry, and we left in a chartered bus to great excitement. However, it proved to be somewhat of an anti-climax. It poured with rain all day and Celtic Park was totally devoid of grass. It was a miserable game and we lost, and fortunately I can't remember any of the other details.

I was also fortunate to be part of County Championship winning teams at Juvenile and Minor level. I have fond memories of such players as my cousin Sean, R.I.P., Eamon and Matt McNelis, Conal McNelis and Edward O'Donnell, Sean Brennan, John Gavigan, Hughie Haughey, Cathal McGill, my brother Frankie, Patsy Gildea, Gerard Given, Cormac Gallagher and Packie Keeney to name a few. Indeed, it is a great pleasure to meet so many of them on my visits home, even if it does heighten my awareness of the passing years as I see some of their sons take the field.

There is an aspect of any club that must not be overlooked, and that is the support of the spectators, and Ardara has always been well served in this department. I recall that Francie O'Donnell and my uncle, John Campbell, were two stalwarts. However, I would award pride of place to Packie Kelly, whose summing up of team and individual performances was masterful. Listening to verbose, and no doubt, over-paid panellists analysing matches on T.V., I often yearn for one of Packie's comments. My favourite was his dismissive description of Ardara after a poor display as being merely "a currant bread team!" All three men whom I remember here have also gone to their reward, may they rest in peace.

Of late I have heard anxieties expressed regarding the threat posed to Gaelic Games by other codes, particularly soccer. I don't

share these fears, although I do agree that the current situation does indeed challenge the G.A.A. It is the duty of all those involved to meet the challenge. From my observations, the players appear sufficiently enthusiastic. I feel sure that many players enjoy both games, so why not promote the cause of co-existence. It is now thirty years since I last played for the Club, and during that time I have had quite extensive involvement with soccer and rugby. However, this has left my love undimmed for what we always called "football", and the winning of a Senior championship would give me greater joy than any other sporting event!

The success of any club may be judged by the number of young people regularly

turning up for training, and playing for the club. From my recent observations, Ardara has a very healthy future and I would like to conclude by encouraging all concerned to continue the good work even if on field, success is sometimes elusive. I have just read in the Democrat of the demise of our Juveniles at the hands of Letterkenny. I offer my condolences but perhaps some lines by the American Sportswriter, Grantland Rice, might serve to maintain a proper perspective.

*"For when the One Great Scorer comes
To mark against your name,
He writes – not that you won or lost,
But how you played the game!"*

Tom Campbell, London, 20/8/94

1975 A.G.M

The A.G.M of the Club was held on the 12th of January 1976, in the Courthouse. The rúnaí, in his report, stated that the low point of the year had been the walkover given to Gweedore in the Senior Championship. Lack of players had been a problem all year, and had the Club been able to afford to bring players home from around the country, then the situation could have been different. He reported on the progress of the Under-Age teams and gave great credit to Stephen Campbell for his outstanding work in this area. He also praised Noel and Leo Watters and stated that it was great to see young lads, such as these, make such an impression on the organisation of the Club. The total games played in all grades was 50, which was likely the most the Club had played in any one year. He paid tribute to those involved in the ongoing work at Pearse Memorial Park, which had left the pitch in a fit state to play on for the coming year, if the need arose. The road around the pitch had also been upgraded by Donegal County Council to an acceptable standard. He welcomed the fall off in emigration nationally, and he hoped that it would have a positive effect on the economy locally and on the G.A.A in particular. He concluded by expressing sympathy to the families of Con (Hanna) Breslin, James Ned Gallagher and Leo Howley, all former playing members of championship winning teams of the 20s, who had gone to their eternal reward.

The treasurer, John Michael O'Donnell, then reported on the Club's financial position, which showed an income of £708.58 and an expenditure of £409.75 for the year.

The following officers were elected for 1976:-

President	-	Very Rev. Liam McCaul, P.P.
Chairman	-	Columba Diver
Vice Chairman	-	Kieran Keeney
Secretary	-	Conal A. Gildea
Ass. Secretary	-	Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill
Treasurer	-	John M. O'Donnell
Ass. Treasurer	-	Charlie Mooney
P.R.O.	-	Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill

Team Manager for 1976 was Kieran Keeney and he was assisted by Columba Diver.

Senior Team Captain for 1976 was Martin Sweeney with Kieran Keeney as Vice Captain.

U-21 Managers	-	Conal A. Gildea and Noel Watters
U-18 Managers	-	Stephen Campbell and John Herron
U-16 Managers	-	Eugene Bennett and Conal Haughey
U-14 Managers	-	Tom O'Donnell and Frankie Brennan

County Board delegates - Columba Diver, Joe (Larry) Gallagher, Conal A. Gildea and Charlie Mooney.

Referees - John M. O'Donnell and Patsy Gildea.



The Officers and members who attended the 1975 A.G.M. in the Courthouse:
Back L-R: Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, Eddie O'Donnell, Josie Gallagher,
Charlie Mooney, Noel Watters, Joe Larry, Kieran Keeney.
Front L-R: Conal Aidan Gildea, Columba Diver, John Michael O'Donnell.

Senior team promoted to Division One

Following the disappointment of not fielding a team in the Championship in Gweedore the previous year, it was agreed that the Club should start at the bottom again, and enter the Junior Championship for 1976. The Club found itself,

however, in Division 1 of the League once again, when the League was re-structured at the beginning of 1976. Packie Keeney succeeded in having Ardara proposed and seconded at the County Board meeting in February, when the committee was short one team to make up the number for a new Division 1. The new format incorporated a Division 1a and Division 1b, determined on a geographical basis. Ardara were placed in Division 1B, with Naomh Columba, Kilcar, Naomh Conaill, Bundoran, Aodh Ruadh and Four Masters'. The Club had finally succeeded in making the top division, albeit by the back door. The proposal proved to be a momentous one as the Club have maintained their Division 1 status to the present day.

In the County Junior Championship, Ardara were paired with MacCumhaill's in the first round. In a major upset, MacCumhaill's second string beat Ardara by one point. It was a game in which Ardara had only themselves to blame, as they missed numerous chances to win the match. Playing a League game the day before, also had an adverse affect on their performance. There was some controversy afterwards, when Ardara lodged an objection with the County Board. They felt that they had a point disallowed and a goal scored against them that never was. The County Board re-fixed the game and the following day Ardara won on a score of 1-13 to 1-05. The teams and scorers on the day were as follows:

Ardara - Patsy Harkin, Eddie McLoone, Josie Gallagher, Noel Watters, Frank O'Donnell, Patsy Gildea, John M. O'Donnell, Anthony Harkin, Martin Sweeney (0-01), Lochlann McGill, Connie Molloy (0-04), Frank McGhee (0-05), Michael Gallagher, Kieran Keeney (0-01), John Herron (1-01). Sub: Fr. Eamon Crossan for Lochlann McGill.

McCumhaill's - Seamus Kane, Eddie O'Malley, Jim Stafford, Kenny Griffin, Eamon McGinty, Dan McCool, Paddy McGinty, John Foy, Noel McGowan, Gerry Murray, Harry Lafferty, Liam Patton, Mickey Lafferty, Bernard Lafferty and Charlie Duffy.

Referee - John McGlanaghy.

In the quarter final, the team easily accounted for St Michaels, which left them in a semi-final against local rivals Killybegs. In a closely contested game in Glenties it ended all square, 2-06 to 1-09. A last minute penalty for Killybegs from Noel Dorrian left the match all level at the end. The scorers for Ardara were Kieran Keeney (1-00), Frank McGhee (0-02), Eamon Crossan (0-02), Patsy Gildea (0-02) and Martin Sweeney (1-00).

The replay was fixed for MacCumhaill Park on the 22nd of August.

Killybegs through to JFC final Killybegs 2-8 Ardara 1-10

Killybegs had a deserved if narrow victory over Ardara in the re-play of the Donegal Junior Football Championship semi-final on Sunday, and their display indicates that they will prove to be tough opposition for their opponents in the final (Termon).

In the first half of fluctuating fortunes, Ardara scored two points without reply in the first eleven minutes, from Connie Molloy and Frank O'Donnell. Mickey McLaughlin pointed for Killybegs in the 14th minute and a minute later a goal from Dominic Mullin gave them the lead. They had another point through John Boyle, but by then Ardara had the better of the exchanges and by the 26th minute were on level terms, after points from Molloy and Harkin. They then shot into the lead with a goal from Frank McGhee which was followed by a point from Keeney inside the last three minutes of the half. Half time score Ardara 1-6 Killybegs 1-2.

Ardara opened the second half scoring with a point in the second minute from Frank O'Donnell, direct from a 50 yards free. However, the initiative started to swing in Killybeg's favour, and they took the next three scores, a point from John Boyle in the 4th minute, another from Sean Rogers in the 7th minute and a third from Pat Cannon, who had been switched to attack from full back. Ardara responded with a point from Connie Molloy in the 10th minute, but Killybegs wiped out the arrears with a goal from Cannon in the 13th minute, when Rogers broke through and placed him for a ground shot. Ardara should have had a goal in the 14th minute, but Connie Molloy failed to beat defender Charlie Boyle and had to be content with a point at the second bite. However, this point put them back in the lead, which was stretched by Anthony

Harkin when he sent over the bar from far out in the 16th minute. Leading by two points going into the last quarter, prospects of an Ardara victory seemed bright, but suddenly the steam went out of the whole side as they wilted under a deluge of Killybegs pressure. After a couple of near misses Killybegs pulled back a point per Pat Cannon, which he pointed after his goal effort was foiled. Relentless Killybegs pressure was causing great problems for the Ardara defence, and a free from 21yds from John Boyle brought the equaliser with only three minutes left.

Killybegs swept forward again, and another free from Hugh McFadden went to Sean Rogers, who punched the winning point. The game ended with Killybegs on the attack, and the full time whistle went before a free awarded to them could be taken.

Pat Cannon was the hero of the Killybegs team, with Dominic Mullin and Noel Dorrian also playing a big part.

Anthony Harkin was outstanding for Ardara, with Frank O'Donnell, Aidan McGill and Connie Molloy among the best of the rest.

Ardara - Patsy Harkin, Noel Watters, Josie Gallagher, John M. O'Donnell, Frank O'Donnell, Enda McGill, Aidan McGill, Anthony Harkin, Martin Sweeney, Lochlann McGill, Kieran Keeney, Frank McGhee, Patsy Gildea, Connie Molloy and John Herron.

Killybegs - Donal Cannon, Charlie Boyle, Pat Cannon, Donal Campbell, Seamus O'Donnell, Hugh McFadden, Eamon Byrne, Dominic Mullin, Noel Dorrian, Brendan Lafferty, Sean Rodgers, Charlie O'Donnell, Pat McGee, Mickey McLaughlin and John Boyle.

Seniors impress in Division One

In their first year in Division One of the League, the team took 16 points out of 24, which left them in second place behind Naomh Columba, and with it a semi-final spot against Gweedore. However, a more experienced Gweedore side beat them by four points in Letterkenny. Ardara dominated the game but a purple patch from Gweedore at the start of the second half left Ardara behind by 11 points. Gweedore

were All-Ireland Gaeltacht Champions at the time.

Gweedore 4-06 to Ardara 2-08

Ardara had a full strength team on the day where Martin Sweeney opened the scoring with a point. Gweedore scored a very lucky goal through T. Kearney. However, Ardara bounced back with points from Kieran Keeney and Patsy Gildea and a penalty from Martin Sweeney to leave Ardara ahead at the break by two points. Gweedore had a blistering start to the second half with goals from T. Kearney, P. Breslin and S. O'Sullivan and also two points from the latter. This all happened in the first 15 minutes. To their credit Ardara bounced back with Kieran Keeney scoring (1-03) to narrow the gap. However, they had a mountain to climb and with the Referee Sean McGhee blowing full time there were four points separating the

teams.

Ardara - Patsy Harkin, Frank O'Donnell, Josie Gallagher, Paddy McGill, Noel Watters, Patsy Gildea (0-02), Aidan McGill, Anthony Harkin, Martin Sweeney (1-01), Conal A. Gildea, Kieran Keeney (1-04), Frank McGhee, Adrian Concarr, Connie Molloy and John Herron. Sub used - Eamon Crossan for Adrian Concarr.

Gweedore - P. McGinley, P. McBride, J. Diver, C. O'Donnell, P. Bonner, Francie Carroll, P. Sweeney, S. McGarvey, P. Breslin, S. Mulligan, S. O' Sullivan (1-02), T. Gillespie, N. Gallagher, T. Kearney (2-02) and P. Breslin (1-02).

Referee - Sean McGhee

In the only other activity for the team, they progressed to the semi-final of the Gaeltacht competition, after defeating Naomh Conaill in the first round. The semi-final was against Kilcar, in Towney, and after a difficult struggle, Kilcar, who were Senior League Champions in 1975, eventually beat Ardara by one point.

Under-14s take second County Championship title

The highlight of the year in 1976 was the capturing of the County Under-14 Championship. The majority of the players on the team were born in the same year, 1962, in which the previous title was won. On the way to the final, the team qualified from their section after defeating Rosses Rovers and Naomh Conaill. In the semi-final, they had a one point victory in Fintra over an Aodh Ruadh side, which included such future stars as Sylvester Maguire, Tommy McDermott, and Matt Gallagher. This paved the way for a final duel with St Eunan's. The match was played as the curtain raiser to the Ardara/Killybegs Junior Championship semi-final on the 22nd of August. The Letterkenny side were red hot favourites on the day, but they had no answer to a slick Ardara outfit who were managed by Tom O'Donnell and Frankie Brennan.

County U-14 Championship Final

Ardara 7-5 St Eunans 4-5

Despite their hard luck in the Junior semi-final, Ardara had plenty to be cheerful about when their Under-14 team took the County title in that grade against a fancied St Eunan's side in Ballybofey on Sunday. In doing so they repeated the success of their Club in 1962, when in the first year of the competition, they defeated Clonmany. An interesting fact is that the personnel of the 1962 successful team largely figured on the Junior team that was beaten by Killybegs at the same venue.

St Eunan's were first to score with a Brian Ferry point but four minutes later Ardara got the perfect reply when Patrick McLoone goaled after a pass from Anthony Molloy. There was no further score until the 15th minute when Ferry blasted to the net to restore St Eunan's lead. Two points in quick succession from Jimmy Kennedy, followed by a goal from a 25 yds free from the same player and a point by Bobby Lonergan left St Eunan's leading 2-04 to 1-00, and there was every indication that Ardara would be swamped. Ardara dispelled that impression however by the good use they made of their possession in the last minutes of the half. A point from Anthony Molloy in the 26th minute was followed by a goal by Patrick McLoone in the 28th minute from a John McGill cross, and when Gerard McNelis pointed a free in the 30th minute there were only two points separating the teams at half time, St Eunan's 2-4 Ardara 2-2.

Ardara started the second half a completely revitalised outfit, and they immediately put the opposition under pressure. The half was only two minutes old when they took the lead with a shot from Gerard McNelis which the goalie held, but was adjudged to have crossed the line and the goal stood. Ted Breslin added a point in the 5th minute. St Eunan's got back into the race in the 6th minute, when a mistake in the Ardara defence let Bobby Lonergan in for another Eunan's goal. St Eunan's now had their nose in front, but they were stunned by an

*avalanche of goals scored inside the space of two minutes. The first was in the 10th minute by Ted Breslin from a Gerard McNelis '50' forced by John McGill. The second in the 11th minute, was sent in by McNelis from play, while Anthony Molloy followed up a minute later with another. St Eunans took up the running again with a goal by Martin Doherty in the 13th minute, but they were now struggling, and Ardara gained two more points, both from frees by Gerard McNelis. St. Eunan's only reply was a point from Tim Begley in the 23rd minute. Ardara then closed their account, with a goal in the 27th minute from Paul Brennan. Ardara - John Boyle (Narin), Paddy Watters (Edergole), Paddy Brennan (Ardara), Vincent Cassidy (Hillhead), Martin Gavigan (Tullycleave), Patrick Moore (Narin), Joseph Shovlin (Narin), Gerard McNelis (Ardara) (2-03), Anthony Molloy (Leamagowra) (1-01), John McGill (Maghera), Paul Brennan (Ardara) (1-00), Conal Breslin (Ard Conal), Ted Breslin (Wood Road) (1-01), Patrick McLoone (Rosbeg) (2-00) and Sean Hannigan (Wood Road).
Referee - John McGlanaghy.*

At the end of the match, Gene McGinley, on behalf of the Donegal Minor Board, congratulated both teams on a fine game of football. It was always good for football in the County to see a new team come along to take the Championship and he was sure that no one would begrudge Ardara their victory. He congratulated the officials of both teams, Tom O'Donnell and Frankie Brennan of Ardara and Paul Mc Geehan and Declan Nee of St. Eunan's on the tremendous work they had done. He presented the trophy to the winning captain, Gerard McNelis, who by the way, spent the last seven minutes on the sideline with opponent Jimmy Kennedy, after they were sent off following a confrontation. Mr. McGinley nominated Anthony Molloy as man of the match, an award that was richly merited.

A huge cavalcade followed the team back to the parish as the supporters celebrated the Club's first success in any grade since 1970. A sign of how difficult things were at the time for the Club was that the team had to borrow jerseys for the match from neighbours Naomh Conaill, as the Junior team who were playing in the Championship match immediately afterwards, were wearing the only set the Club owned. Unfortunately no photo was taken of the 1976 Under-14 team.



Gerard McNelis of the Front Street. Captain of the Under-14 Championship winning team of 1976. A brilliant free taker with either foot, Gerard went on to play for Donegal at Under-16, Minor and Under-21, and was a regular top scorer for the Senior team through the eighties.

Other grades

In the Under-21 Championship, the team drew St Eunan's in the first round. In the first match at Sandfield, the visitors won on a score of 2-2 to 1-3. They then progressed to the quarter-final after a 1-6 to 0-2 win in Letterkenny.

The Ardara panel was as follows:

Don Byrne, Marius Shovlin (Portnoo), Eddie McLoone, Noel Watters, Enda McGill, Patsy Harkin, Connie Molloy, Anthony Harkin, Michael Gallagher, Conal Aidan Gildea, Steven Campbell, Patrick Boyle (Narin), Michael Campbell (Front Street), Donal Craig, Leo Watters, Adrian Concarr, Paul Mc Hugh.

In the Minor Championship, the Club had little success and for the first time they failed to field a team in their first round match against Naomh Conaill, while in the Juvenile Championship, the team won their section, but lost out to St. Eunan's in the County semi-final.



Ardara Under-21 team of 1976

Back L-R: Michael Campbell, Don Byrne, Bobby Moore, Patsy Harkin, Noel Watters, Adrian Concarr, Stephen Campbell, Paul McHugh, Anthony Harkin, Marius Shovlin.

Front L-R: Neily Byrne, Enda Craig, Conal Aidan Gildea, Eddie McLoone, Michael Gallagher, Connie Molloy, Leo Watters, Patrick Boyle (Narin), Enda McGill.

1976 A.G.M

The 1976 A.G.M. of the Club was held in the Nesbitt Arms on Monday 10th January, 1977. The meeting was attended by thirty members.

The rúnaí, Conal Aidan Gildea gave a full report on the year's activities, and gave special mention to the Under-14 team and management on their great success. He felt that if this team could be kept together, that further success would come the Club's way in years to come. He also congratulated Anthony Molloy on winning the man of the match trophy and the Under-14 player of the year award. He echoed disappointment at the Junior team's failure to win the Championship, but had great optimism for the coming year, following the team's great showing in their first year in Division One of the County League. The biggest disappointment of the year was the poor attendance at meetings. This he stated, was very disheartening for the officers, to see such a lack of interest in the administration of the Club from the members. He called for more players to attend meetings, so that team matters could be discussed in more detail. Deepest sympathy was expressed to those who suffered bereavements during the year, and in particular to the Herron family of Glencoe, on the death of Con Herron, who was the first Chairman of the Club when it was founded in 1921.

Treasurer, John Michael O'Donnell reported an income of £739.50 for the year and expenditure £799.65. Most of this income had come from dances in the Marquee and the Hall.

The Cathaoirleach in his address thanked all who had given voluntary help to put Pearse Memorial Park in readiness for games. He also expressed gratitude to Paul Shovlin for the use of his field in Sandfield, and to all those who helped the Club in any way during the year.

The following officers were elected for 1977:-

President	-	Very Rev. Fr. L. McCaul, P.P.
Chairman	-	Columba Diver
Vice Chairman	-	Joe (Larry) Gallagher
Secretary	-	Conal A. Gildea
Ass. Secretary	-	P. J. McGill
Treasurer	-	John M. O'Donnell
Ass. Treasurer	-	Patsy Gildea
P.R.O.	-	P. J. McGill

Senior and Under-21 team Manager - Charlie Mooney

Assistants : Paddy McGill and Columba Diver.

Senior Team Captain - Kieran Keeney with Vice Captain, Noel Watters.

The following Under-Age managers were elected:

Minor- Patsy Gildea and John Herron.

U-16 -Conal Haughey and Joe (Larry) Gallagher.

U-14 - Tom O'Donnell and Conal Gallagher.

U-12 - Fr. Eamon Crossan and John Joe Campbell.

Gate Collectors - Paddy Herron, Conal Gallagher, Vincent McConnell, Joe (Larry) Gallagher and Bart Whelan.



Conal Aidan Gildea, who served as Club Secretary from 1976-78, had the distinction of being the youngest person ever to hold the position, being only 19 years of age when he was elected. Conal Aidan's talents also spread to the field of play and, as a young player, was selected for the Donegal County Minor team in 1975 and the County Under-21 teams of 1977/78, although a serious ankle injury in 1977 kept him out of the game for a period. He first

lined out for the Club Senior team in 1975 and became a key member of the successful Senior side of the late seventies and early eighties. An attacking half back, or a scoring forward, Conal Aidan was known as an accurate free or penalty taker and was regarded as one of the top Club forwards in the County at the time. He suffered a second serious injury in 1983, when an accidental collision with another player during the first round Championship match with Four Masters" left him out of the game for a period. He continued playing throughout the eighties, and retired from the game in 1992. When Conal stepped down from the position of Secretary, he continued to be involved in Club affairs, and held the position of Assistant Secretary from 1979 to 1984. His involvement also spread to managing Under-Age teams in the Club, and, along with Kieran Keeney, he managed the Under-21 team to a famous Championship victory, in 1983, over a fancied Aodh Ruadh team. Conal Aidan was honoured for his great service to the Club, when he was chosen as the Guest of Honour at the 2001 Club dinner dance and accepted the award on behalf of the Gildea family. A fitting tribute to the G.A.A "encyclopaedia" and 'text-pert' from Crumlin.

Marquee makes the news.

The main fund raiser in previous years, the annual 'marquee', was the subject of a court hearing in February of the year. One of the local residents had objected to the issuing of a licence to the Club, on the grounds that the noise emanating from the venue was causing some distress in the neighbourhood. The matter was reported in the Democrat on the 4th of February.

Objection to Ardara G.A.A Marquee

"The licence would not be issued until the Fire Officer approved and he also suggested that the music be 'toned down' so as not to annoy local people" said Justice M. Larkin at Glenties Court, when he was informed that the Court had received a letter objecting to the granting of a Marquee Dancing Licence to the Ardara G.A.A. Club for dates in July and August.

When Mr. Brendan Murrin, Solicitor for the applicants, who were named as Columba Diver and Charlie Mooney, moved the application, the Court Clerk Mr. Aidan McGale pointed out to the Justice that an objecting letter had been received about noise from the Marquee. Mr Murrin said that Ardara was a quiet town and the ten or fourteen days of Marquee dancing was the G.A.A. Club's only source of revenue. It

was an annual event he added.

Answering Mr Murrin, Garda Joe Deeney said that the Marquee was well conducted but that there had been individual complaints about the noise coming from the Marquee. Mr. Murrin said that the Marquee was held when the days were very long and only the odd 'crank' would object. Garda Deeney said that the Marquee promoters had a car park for this year. The objector had built a new house near the site. Mr. Murrin said that the objector was not far past the dancing age and that he should not be that excited about it. He should be in Court if he was that vehement about his objection.

Curaidh na Gaeltachta do'n chéad uair.

Do'n chéad uair riamh, bhuaigh Ard a' Rátha Comórtas Peile i ngrád na sinsear i 1977. Bhuaill said Naomh Conaill sa chéad bhabhta agus ansin Naomh Columba sa chluiche leath-cheannais.

Ard a' Rátha fríd go dtí Cluiche Ceannais

De Chomórtas Peile na Gaeltachta

Ard an Rátha 1-04 Naomh Columba 0-06

In ainneoin an drochaimsir bhí slua maith ag cluiche leath-cheannais Chomórtas Peile na Gaeltachta sinsir idir Ard a' Rátha agus Naomh Columba. Dianobair Antoine ó hEarcáin agus Ciarán ó Cianaigh i lár na páirce aus tacaíocht ó Nollaig ó Fuaruisce, Pádraig Mac Giolla Dé agus Mairtín Mac Suibhne sa line leathchúil a chuidigh go mór leis an bua seo. Bhí Cluiche breá ag Conall ó Lúdhóg mar leaththosach agus mar lánchúil bhí Seán ó Baoill ar fheabhas.

Do Naomh Columba d'imir P.S. Mac a' tSaoir, na deartháireacha Mhic a' Bháird, Seán ó Gadhra agus Mícheál ó. Mac a' tSaoir go maith .

Ghnóthaigh Ard a' Rátha 1-02 sa chéad leath le cabhair na gaoithe agus bhí an tádhl le fir Ghlinne nuair a bhuaill Conalló Lúdhóg cic íseal a bhuaill an cuaille agus a chuaigh leathan. Fuair Naomh Columba dhá phointe sa chéad leath ó chiceanna saora agus ní bhfuair Ard a' Rátha ach an scór céanna sin

sa dara leath; an dá chúilín sin ag teacht ó bhróig Chonaill Uí Lúdhóg. Ní raibh scór ar bith sna deich mbomaití deireannacha. Ba é Tomás Mac Briartaigh an réiteoir.

Ard a' Rátha : Pádraig ó hEarcáin, Proinsias ó Domhnaill, Seán ó Baoill, Nollaig ó Fhuaruisce, Pádraig Mac Giolla Dé (0-01), Mairtín Mac Suibhne, Antoine ó hEarcáin, Ciarán ó Cianaigh, Eamonn ó Crosáin (0-01), Mícheál ó Gallchóir, Proinsias Mac Aoidh, Conall ó Lúdhóg(1-02), Seosamh Mac Giolla Dé agus Seán ó hIarainn.

Naomh Columba : E. Mac Giolla Easbaig, S. de Búrca, F. Mac Cuinneagáin, E. Maguidhir, S.Mac Lochlainn, M.O.Mac a tSaoir, P.Mac a tSaoir, S.ó Gadhra, D.Mac a Bháird,M.ó Gallchóir (0-01), P.ó hEaghra, B.Mac a tSaoir (0-03), S.Mac a 'Bháird (0-01), S.ó Gadhra (0-01).

Bhí an bua ag Ard ar Rátha ar Chill Chartha sa chluiche ceannais i bPáirc na nGael leis an scór 0-17 in aghaidh 0-14. Bhí Ard an Rátha fríd ansin go dtí na Comórtais Náisiúnta a himríodh ar An Daingean i gContae Chiarraí. Casadh Baile Mhúirne as Corcaigh orthu sa chluiche leath cheannais ach buaileadh iad le dhá phointe, 0-11 in aghaidh 0-09. Mar sin féin bhí deireadh seachtaine breá ag na himreoirí agus ag an lucht tacaíochta i measc na gCiarraíoch.

‘San Dangean fosta don deireadh seachtaine bhí banna ceoil Mhín a’ Bhealaigh faoi stiúir Ghráinne Bn. Mhic Aoidh.



The first Ardara team to win the County Gaeltacht Championship in 1977.

Back L-R: John Boyle, Eddie McLoone, Anthony Harkin, Frank O'Donnell, Patsy Harkin, Kieran Keeney, Adrian Concarr, Martin Sweeney, Patsy Gildea, Charlie Mooney.
Front L-R: Columba Diver, Frank McGhee, Conal Aidan Gildea, Connie Molloy, Fr. Eamon Crossan, Stephen Campbell, Conal Haughey, Noel Watters, Enda Craig.

Seniors go out to St Joseph's in the Championship

The Club was back in the Senior Championship in 1977 and, in the first round, was drawn to play their 'bogey' team, St Joseph's. In the first leg, in Ballyshannon, the team put in a great performance to earn a draw (0-8 each). Conal Aidan Gildea scored the equalising point with three minutes to go.

Team and scorers in that match were:

Patsy Harkin, Frank O'Donnell, John Boyle, Eddie McLoone, Noel Watters, Patsy Gildea (0-1), Adrian Concarr, Kieran Keeney, Anthony Harkin, Michael Gallagher, Martin Sweeney (0-1), Frank McGhee (0-1), Conal Aidan Gildea (0-3), Connie Molloy (0-2), John Herron. Subs: Aidan McGill for Concarr (injured) Josie Gallagher for John Herron

With the second leg back in Pearse Memorial Park, a huge crowd turned out in the hope that the team could finally get over the men from Ballyshannon/Bundoran. The game was tough throughout, but Brian McEniff at full forward proved the difference between the teams.

McEniff Goals put St Joseph's through St Joseph's 2-07 Ardara 0-07

St. Joseph's who drew with Ardara in the first leg, had a flattering six points win over the home side in a scrappy first round, second-leg tie, before a large crowd at Ardara on Sunday. In a game in which the narrow pitch and close marking allowed little scope for open football, Martin Sweeney, who had a great game, and Anthony Harkin, had the better of the midfield tussle with St. Joseph's Sean Gallagher and Peter Long, and were well backed by a hard working defence, in which Patsy Gildea and Noel Watters were outstanding. The Ardara forward line was provided with plenty of opportunities and Kieran Keeney and Connie Molloy caught the eye. However, persistence in going for goals brought little reward against a close marking St Joseph's defence.

Much of the credit for St. Joseph's win must go to Brian McEniff who scored 2-04. McEniff opened the scoring with a point after 30 seconds. Martin Sweeney replied with a point for Ardara. McEniff put St. Joseph's ahead with a point from a free and two minutes later he punched to the corner of the net. Ardara hit back with two points from Connie Molloy and one from a free by Michael Gallagher. McEniff added another point. Then O'Rourke in the St. Joseph's goal produced a magnificent save to deny Conal Aidan Gildea. Chris McGuinness had a point for St. Joseph's to leave them ahead

(1-04) to (0-04) at half time.

In the second half Ardara piled on the pressure and were rewarded with points from Frank McGhee and Patsy Gildea. At this stage it seemed only a matter of time before Ardara would draw level but in the 12th minute the vociferous home crowd were stunned into silence when McEniff collected a ball on the 21, and his shot on the turn curled into the net and off the post. He added another point two minutes later. Ardara kept plugging away to the end but their only reward was a point from Michael Gallagher. Billy Gavigan completed the scoring for the winners with two points from frees.

Under Referee Mr. John McMahon (Glenfin) the teams were:-

St. Joseph's - Sean O'Rourke, Niall McQuillan, Brendan McHugh, Sean Boyle, Chris Mc Guinness, Martin Carney, Josie Boyle, Sean Gallagher, Peter Long, Billy Gavigan, Teddy Kane, Christy Murphy, Seamus Reilly, Brian McEniff and Thomas Quinn.

Ardara - Patsy Harkin, Frankie O'Donnell, John Boyle, Noel Watters, Patsy Gildea, Aidan McGill, Anthony Harkin, Martin Sweeney, Kieran Keeney, Michael Gallagher, Frank McGhee, Conal Aidan Gildea, Connie Molloy, John Herron and Eddie McLoone.

Substitute – Adrian Concarr.

In the Senior League, the team qualified for a place in the semi-finals for the second year in succession. As in 1976, 20 points were gained out of a possible 24 and they booked a semi-final spot against Gweedore. The team avenged the defeat of the previous year in Letterkenny and booked a place in the final. The Senior League final was against Bundoran in Ballybofey on the 28th of November. The teams had met earlier in the competition, with Bundoran coming out on top on a 1-

8 to 0-9 scoreline. The match was a low scoring game with Bundoran having four points to spare in the end.

Bundoran complete double League Final Victory Bundoran 1-07 Ardara 1-03

At Sean MacCumhaill Park on Sunday, Bundoran rounded off their most successful year to date, when they completed the Intermediate Championship and Senior League double, by beating Ardara by the slender margin of 1-07 to 1-03 to win an exciting County Final in the Senior League. The match was the most exciting and entertaining County final played in Donegal this year. It was indeed a great match with both sides playing fast free-flowing football. Ardara had sufficient chances to be ahead at half time, but too many wides and a strong Bundoran defence kept them at bay. At half time the score was two points apiece. The result was in doubt right to the end but the seashiders took their chances better than Ardara who had their chances in the first half but failed to avail of them.

In the opening minutes both sides kicked wides. In the tenth minute Patsy Gildea hit the crossbar and seconds later he scored a point. Patsy was then in hard luck for a goal with a shot that beat the Bundoran goalie only to be cleared off the line by the full back Brendan McHugh. Later, Patsy's brother Conal Aidan also hit the crossbar. In the 26th minute Frank McGhee pointed with a beautiful shot. Martin Flynn in the Bundoran goal saved a testing shot of 40 yards from Kieran Keeney. The score at half time was 2 points each.

In the second half the game was hard, fast and exciting, and was capable of swinging either way. Ardara switched Anthony Harkin to full forward and Connie Molloy to midfield. Almost immediately Conal Aidan Gildea passed the ball to Anthony Harkin whose pile driver shot was brilliantly saved by the Bundoran goalie who tapped the ball over the bar at the expense of a point. Bundoran

swept back into attack and scored a goal. At this stage Ardara made some positional changes. Patsy Gildea passed to Frank McGhee who blasted the ball goal-wards but again Martin Flynn in goal made another great save. Ardara missed a penalty after Conal Aidan Gildea was fouled in the square. Bundoran were now on top and went into a 6 points lead. Ardara courageously battled on to the bitter end. They were rewarded by a great goal from Kieran Keeney in the 28th minute after he received the ball from Conal Aidan Gildea, one of Ardara's best players on the day. However, despite this rally, it was too late. Billy Gavigan, Bundoran, settled the issue in the 29th minute, with the last point of the game.

Ardara's best players on the day were – Kieran Keeney, Anthony Harkin, Martin Sweeney, Conal Aidan Gildea, Frank McGhee and Patsy Gildea.

Under Referee, Colm McBride, the teams were as follows:-

Bundoran - Martin Flynn, Niall McQuillan, Brendan McHugh, Tom Connolly, Brian McEniff, Declan O'Carroll (0-01), Billy Gavigan (0-02), Mick Burke, Christy Murphy, Seamus O'Reilly (0-02), Seamie Granaghan (0-01), Tom Walsh (0-01), Fintan Lynch, Pat Curran (1-00) and Pat McHugh.

Ardara - Patsy Harkin, Frankie O'Donnell, Eamonn McNelis, Josie Gallagher, Noel Watters, Kieran Keeney (1-00), Aidan McGill, Anthony Harkin, Martin Sweeney, Conal Aidan Gildea (0-01), Michael Gallagher, Frank McGhee (0-01), Patsy Gildea (0-01), Connie Molloy and John Herron.

Substitute – Eddie McLoone.

In tournament matches in 1977, the team got to the final of the top competition in the county, the McGroarty Travel tournament, only to be defeated by St Eunan's, 1-8 to 0-9.

Ardara win Shows 7 a side

The Secretary of the Ardara Show Society decided in 1977 that a bit of variety was needed to give the 'Show' a boost and he decided that a Gaelic Football seven a side could be an event that would generate interest.

Teams from the South-west were invited to take part and the early rounds of the competition were run off in Pearse Memorial Park over a number of week evenings. These concluded with the seven a side kingpins of the time, Kilcar, reaching the final with the local team, Ardara. The final was fixed for show evening at 6.30pm with the game being played in the show field. A crowd of approximately 2000 people attended, with the field being completely ringed with people three and four deep. Phonsie Bennett was officiating and the atmosphere was electric, with Ardara having high hopes of deposing the seven a side champions. The pace was fast and furious, with Kilcar taking an early three point lead, but by half time, Ardara had levelled the scores at 0 – 6 each. Patsy Gildea had made two point blank saves to keep Ardara in touch. As the game came to the last five minutes, Ardara were trailing by three points and the situation was desperate. Patsy Gildea picked up the ball on the Ardara goal line and to everyone's amazement he threw off the cap he was wearing and went on a solo run. The Kilcar team of stars hopped off him one after the other but he ploughed on and twenty yards from the Kilcar goal he buried the ball in the net to level the scores. The crowd went wild and the referee blew for full time.

Extra time was to be played but Kilcar were not happy with this. The County Chairman, Seamus Rodgers, was asked for his opinion and he proposed that penalties be taken. The Kilcar team however objected to this and left the field. Mr Rodgers then presented the trophies to the declared winners, Ardara.

It was one of the most exciting football matches ever witnessed in Ardara and will be forever remembered.

The teams:

Ardara: Patsy Gildea, Conal A. Gildea, Martin Sweeney, Josie Gallagher, Connie Molloy, Eamonn McNelis, Anthony Harkin, John Boyle.

Kilcar: Seamus Gallagher, Danny Gillespie, John Carr, Sean McGinley, Michael O'Donnell, Dinny McBrearty, Tommy McFadden.

Under-Age teams defeated in four County semi-finals

The Club entered an Under-21 team again in 1977. The team advanced to the quarter-finals of the competition, but they were defeated by Rosses Rovers.

Indeed the Rosses combination (whose area covered what is now Na Rossa, Dungloe, and Naomh Mhuire Club areas) proved on numerous occasions to be too strong for Ardara selections in the late '70s, and in 1977 alone, put the Minor and

Under-21 teams out of their respective Championships at the semi-final stage. The Under-14 team went to the semi-final stage also, but were defeated by Aodh Ruadh, while the Under-16's went out at the same stage against St Eunan's.

St Eunan's Win Through to U-16 Final Letterkenny 2-10 Ardara 0-05

With greater determination and superior teamwork St. Eunan's defeated Ardara in the 1977 U-16 Championship semi-final in Glenfin. Playing with a very strong breeze in the first half, St. Eunan's built up a considerable lead. The Letterkenny side seemed sure of victory when the half time whistle blew as Ardara had only scored two points by Gerard McGill and Anthony Molloy. During the first quarter of the second half the Ardara boys fought bravely to gain control but they failed to take advantage on many of their scoring opportunities (2 of them from the penalty spot), and only managed three points, scored by Gerard McNelis, Frankie Cassidy and Patrick McLoone. St Eunan's will meet Ballyshannon in the County Final.

The teams were:-

St. Eunan's - K. Donoghue, J. Hone, E. McCauley, P. Curran, M. McGeehan, E. McIntyre, B. Ferry, C. Mulgrew, P. Carr, K. O'Donnell, J. Kennedy, E. McGettigan, K. McDevitt, G. Boyle and R. Blake.

Ardara - John Boyle(Narin), Paddy Brennan, Frankie Cassidy, Martin Harkin (Rosbeg) , Vincent Cassidy, Stephen Sweeney, Gerard McGill (Father Gerard-Maghera) , Gerard McNelis, Anthony Molloy, John McGill, Brendan Sweeney, Eamon Watters, Gabriel Gallagher (Front Street), Patrick McLoone and Patrick Moore.
Substitute - Conal O'Donnell.

County teams

Kieran Keeney continued to represent the County at Senior level and he was joined by Anthony Harkin on the team for the Ulster Championship, in which Donegal was defeated by Derry in the first round. Kieran played at right half forward, with Anthony at midfield alongside Seamus Bonner. Josie Gallagher also played for the team during the National League. Conal Haughey played for the County Minor team at midfield in the 1977 Ulster Championship, while Conal Aidan Gildea, Eddie McLoone and Stephen Campbell were all members of the County Under-21 panel.



**The Donegal Senior team that was defeated by Fermanagh
in the 1977 McKenna Cup Final.**

**Back L-R; Fionn McDonnell (Glenfin), Anthony Gallagher (St.Eunans), Anthony Harkin,
Noel McCole (Civil Service), Martin Griffin (Sean MacCumhaill's), Kieran Keeney, Donal
Monaghan (Four Masters'), Denis Doherty (St Eunans').**

**Front L-R: Michael Houston (Glenfin), Finian Ward (Naomh Columba), Martin Carney
(Aodh Ruadh), Michael Oliver McIntyre (Naomh Columba), Seamie Granaghan
(Bundoran), Pauric McShea (Aodh Ruadh), John Fullerton (Buncrana).**



The Tirconail Gaels team that won the London Junior Championship in 1977.

**Back L-R: Seamus Driscoll (Mountcharles), Charlie Tully (Dunkineely), John Macken
(Armagh), Donie Brennan (Galway), John Toland (Urris), Paddy Burke (Frosses), Dom
Murray (Bundoran), Jimmy Cunningham (Glen), Kevin Barry (Mchas), John Gallagher
(Ardara), Eddie McGinty (Glenfin).**

**Front L-R: Tony Walshe (Galway), John McEniff (Cavan), Paddy Garraghey, Mickey Corey
(Beleek), Danny Tully (Dunkineely), Paddy Boyle (Arranmore), Denis McDaid
(Mountcharles), Pauric Monaghan (Monaghan), Desmond Dunleavy (Mountcharles),
Tommy Corey (Beleek).**

Annual Presentation buffet

The annual presentation buffet was, as usual, held on New Year's Eve and was a very successful night, the highlight of which was the presentation of medals to the County Gaeltacht Champions. Those who received medals were the following:

Patsy Harkin (Rosbeg), Frankie O'Donnell (Leaconnell), John Boyle (Kentucky), Eddie McLoone (Rosbeg), Noel Watters (Meentinadea), Patsy Gildea (Drimaha), Martin Sweeney (Ard Connell), Kieran Keeney (Cronkeerin), Anthony Harkin (Rosbeg), Fr. Eamon Crossan (Ardara and Letterkenny), Michael Gallagher (Narin), Frank McGhee (Narin), Conal Aidan Gildea (Crumlin), Connie Molloy (Leamagowra), John Herron (Narin), John M. O'Donnell (Leaconnell), Aidan McGill (Edergole), Enda McGill (Edergole), Stephen Campbell (Front St), Eamon McNelis (Main St.), Noel Gildea (Main St.), Adrian Concarr (Murlinn), Donal Craig (The Diamond), Michael Campbell (Front St.), Lanty Molloy (Leamagowra), Conal Haughey (Ard Connell) and Josie Gallagher (Cnoc na gCapall).

The annual fundraising functions run by the Club met with a very generous response. The Church Gate Collection raised £110, while the annual marquee raised £373 and two Silver Circles run during the year took in over £1200.

1977 A.G.M

The 1977 A.G.M was held on the 9th of January 1978 in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel. The Secretary, Conal Aidan Gildea, reported on what was one of the best years the Club had in recent times. Ardara had won the Donegal Senior Gaeltacht Championship for the first time ever. They also reached the final of the Senior League and the final of the McGroarty Cup 13-a-side competition. The Club's Under-Age teams didn't meet with any success but all came close to County honours. Two Silver Circles run by the Club were very successful. Pearse Park was now completely fenced and in a fine playing condition. The officers thanked all those people who helped in the handling of the Marquee when dances were run there during the summer.

The Secretary also thanked Connie Molloy for the use of the Show Field for training purposes on winter nights.

The following officers were elected for 1978:-

President	-	Very Rev. L. McCaul, P.P.
Chairman	-	John M. O'Donnell
Vice Chairman	-	Joe (Larry) Gallagher
Secretary	-	Conal A. Gildea
Ass. Secretary	-	P. J. McGill.

Treasurer - Patsy Gildea
Ass. Treasurer - Columba Diver
P.R.O. - Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill

Senior Team Manager: Charlie Mooney with Assistant Paddy McGill.

Senior Team Captain: Kieran Keeney with Vice Captain Noel Watters.

Team Selection Committee: Paddy McGill, Charlie Mooney and Columba Diver.

Gate Collectors were - Paddy Herron, Conal Gallagher, Vincent McConnell, Joe (Larry) Gallagher and Bart Whelan.

The following Under-Age managers were elected for the Year:-

U-21 - Charlie Mooney and Paddy McGill

U-18 - Patsy Gildea and John Herron

U-16 - Conal Haughey and Joe (Larry) Gallagher

U-14 - Tom O'Donnell and Conal Gallagher

U-12 - Fr. Eamon Crossan and John Joe Campbell



John Michael O'Donnell, from Leaconnell, was elected Club Chairman in 1978. Another son of Charlie and Mary, John kept up the family tradition which saw his brother Frank take the chair three years previously. He held the position of Club Treasurer from 1975-77, had played for the Club in all grades, and was a regular member of the Senior team throughout the seventies. A versatile player, John Michael usually lined out at corner back or corner forward. A National School teacher, he taught in a number of schools outside the Parish before being appointed Principal of Brackey National School in 1978. Since coming to Brackey, John has ensured that Gaelic football has been an important part of everyday life in the school, and has led the school to Cumann na mBunscol County titles in different grades over the years. He was also very involved in the Club Under-Age teams in the '80s and '90s and was joint manager of the Under-14 team which won the County Championship in 1991. A number of players from that team went on to win Senior Championship medals for the Club. John also held the position of Secretary of Coiste Peile na Gaeltachta Dún na nGall in the County from 1983 to 1995. He is married to Máire (Walsh) and their sons Cian and Fionntán have both played Under-Age football for the Club, as have daughters Eimear and Méabh, who have also played for the County Under-14 and Under-16 Ladies' football teams.

Disappointing year for Seniors

The first competition for the Senior team in 1978 was Comórtas Peile Na Gaeltachta.

After defeating Naomh Columba and Kilcar, the team qualified for the final, which was played in Glenfin. An under strength Ardara team went down to the Gweedore men by a four points margin. In the Senior League the team got off to a good start, with a victory over MacCumhaill's in their first match, but three subsequent consecutive defeats put paid to their chances and the team finished close to the bottom of the table, with nine points from nine games. The League that year was run off in the months of March to June, and was completed before the Championship commenced.

In the first round of the Championship, their opponents were Naomh Columba, who had won the Senior League and All Ireland Gaeltacht titles in the previous month, and who were highly fancied (as were Ardara) for Championship honours that year. The first match was played in Ardara on the 25th of June and was watched by a huge crowd. Ardara did not disappoint their supporters and had an emphatic win.

Ardara sink League holders Ardara 1-14 Naomh Columba 0-9

At the Pearse Memorial Park, Ardara had a meritorious victory over Naomh Columba's Glencolmcille in the first round of the Senior Football Championship.

The game, which was played in reasonably good weather conditions, was the best display of football seen in many years. Despite the eight point margin, St Columba's kept fighting to the end, But the fitness of the Ardara side was a telling factor, together with their superiority at midfield and the application of their forwards in picking off their scores.

From the beginning, Ardara went into the attack and registered four points in as many minutes by Connie Molloy, Kieran Keeney, Seamus Gallagher and a 50 yards free from Josie Gallagher. Naomh Columba then settled down and registered three points by Michael Gallagher, Seamus and Padraig Carr. Ardara went ahead again by three further points, two from Josie Gallagher frees and one from Conal Haughey. Before half time, Des Daly had notched a neat point

for the Glen men, but at the other end they conceded a penalty when Conal Haughey was pulled down in the square, but Micheál ÓDonabháin pulled off a great save from Martin Sweeney's kick. Ardara then notched another point from a 14 yd free from Josie Gallagher.

In the first minute of the second half, Connie Molloy and Josie Gallagher stretched Ardara's lead by two further points. Naomh Columba got a point through Michael Oliver McIntyre. Ardara had another two points from Anthony Harkin and Martin Sweeney. Half way through the half however, Naomh Columba looked like pulling the game out of the fire when Seamus Carr notched two points, but Ardara came back with a goal from Anthony Harkin and a goal from Martin Sweeney. In the last ten minutes Naomh Columba came fighting back and registered three further points by Seamus Carr, Padraig Carr and Michael Oliver McIntyre to leave a deficit of seven points, but a final score by Seamus Gallagher gave Ardara a

convincing victory

The teams under referee Seamus McDermott (Glenfin) were;

Ardara: Patsy Harkin, Frank O'Donnell, Eamon McNelis, Enda McGill, Aidan McGill, Noel Watters, Eddie McLoone, Kieran Keeney, Josie Gallagher, Anthony Harkin, Martin Sweeney, Conal Haughey, Seamus Gallagher, Connie Molloy, Conal Aidan Gildea.

Naomh Columba: Mícheál Ó Donabháin, Francie Cunningham, Bernard McIntyre, Sean O'Gara, John James Mc Loughlin, Sean Gavigan, Des Daly, Finian Ward, Michael Gallagher, Pauric Carr, Michael Oliver Mc Intyre, Seamus Carr, Rory McNelis, Kevin McGinley, Paddy McGinley

The return leg in Páirc na nGael, two weeks later, saw the Glen men exact revenge and they were easy winners on a 1-9 to 0-3 scoreline. The play-off match was fixed for Donegal Town on the 16th of July, when one of the biggest crowds ever seen at the venue saw a brilliant game of football. Ardara led at the break by a point and added another immediately after the re-start. A Naomh Columba goal immediately afterwards, though, handed them the initiative and, despite intense pressure in the last ten minutes, Ardara could not get the score to force the game to a replay. Naomh Columba won the match on a 2-6 to 1-8 scoreline. They then went on to win their first Senior County Championship, defeating Gweedore in the final. The teams lined out in Tirconaill Park that day as follows;

Ardara - Patsy Harkin, Frank O'Donnell, Eamon McNelis, Enda McGill, Eddie McLoone, Aiden McGill, Noel Watters, Kieran Keeney, Josie Gallagher, Conal Haughey, Anthony Harkin, Martin Sweeney, Conal A. Gildea, Connie Molloy and Seamus Gallagher.

N. Columba – Mícheal Ó Donabháin, Francie Cunningham, Bernard McIntyre, Sean O'Gara, John James McLaughlin, Sean Gavigan, Des Daly, Finian Ward, Michael Gallagher, Pauric Carr, Michael O. McIntyre, Séamus Carr, Rory McNelis, Kevin McGinley and Paddy J. McGinley.

Junior Team go out in first round.

For the first time since the 1940s, the Club fielded a second adult team in the County Junior Championship of 1978. A mixture of youth and experience they were drawn against Glenfin in the first round. The team put up a gallant display in the first match at home but lost out by 2 points. The players' enthusiasm however was short lived, and in the second leg the team failed to field 15 players and thus were thrown out of the Championship.

The highlight of the year on the Under-Age scene was the performance of the Under-12 team, which was defeated in the semi-final of the Championship by Glenfin, after a replay. A missed penalty in the first match, in Tirconaill Park, cost the team dearly and Glenfin equalised, with a point, with the last kick of the game.

In the replay in Glenties, the Glenfin lads won on a 4-4 to 4-0 scoreline. They went on to win the Championship, defeating Rosses Rovers in the final. The Under-14, 16, Minor and Under-21 all went out in the early stages of their respective competitions.



Ardara Senior Team 1978, taken in O'Donnell Park before League game with St Eunan's.
Back L-R: Vincent McConnell, Gerard McNelis, Frank Molloy, Frank McGhee, Patsy Harkin, Kieran Keeney, Anthony Harkin, Conal Haughey, Eamon McNelis, Martin Sweeney.
Front L-R: Frank O'Donnell, Connie Molloy, Josie Gallagher, Seamus Gallagher, Conal Aidan Gildea, John Herron, James Mc Brearty, Lanty Molloy, John Michael O'Donnell, Anthony Molloy.



John Michael O'Donnell presents the Senior Player of the year award for 1978 to Martin Sweeney

Anthony Harkin wins All Ireland Club medal.

Anthony Harkin created history, by becoming the first player from the Club to win an All Ireland Club medal. He was midfield on the Thomond College, Limerick team that defeated Ballerin from Derry in the final at Croke Park (see Anthony Harkin profile). He also played at midfield for the County team in the Championship defeat to Derry, as did Kieran Keeney. Martin Sweeney and Eamon McNelis also played for the Senior team during the National League of 1978/79.



The Thomond College team which won the 1978 All Ireland Club Championship.
Back row L to R: Dave Weldrick (Dublin) (Coach), Sean O'Shea (Longford), Brian Mac Sweeney (Cork), Declan Smyth (Galway), James Heeney (Mayo), Aidan Green (Clare), Brian Murtagh (Westmeath), Larry Mc Carthy (Cork), Brian Murphy (Cork), Macdara Delargy (Limerick), Leo Golden (Mayo), Anthony Harkin (Donegal), Michael Houston (Donegal), Frank Noone (Mayo), Cathal McCarthy (Dublin), Chris McGlynn (Offaly), John O'Halloran (Cork) (Selector).

Middle Row: Jimmy Dunne (Offaly), Richie Bell (R.I.P-Mayo), Micky Browne, (Westmeath), Denis O'Boyle (Mayo), Pat Spillane (Captain-Kerry), Eddie Mahon (Meath), Martin Connolly (Mayo), Brian Talty (Galway), Mick Spillane (Kerry),

Bottom Row Michael Clarke (Mayo), Mick Caulfield (Wexford), Liam Patton (Donegal), Niall Monya (Monaghan), Gerry Dillon (Kerry), Johnny O Connell (Kerry).

Donegal Under-16 team travel to Dublin.

In 1978 the Donegal County Minor Board organised an Under-16 County team for the first time and matches were organised against Dublin selections, the highlight being the Sunday match, which was a curtain raiser to the National League game in Croke Park between the great Dublin and Kerry teams. Gerard McNelis and Anthony Molloy were key members of the Donegal team.

Donegal Under-16s hammer the Dubs

In front of 30,000 spectators, the Donegal U-16 County Team played the famous Dubs County side of the same age group, at Croke Park, in a curtain raiser to the eagerly awaited second clash of Dublin and their All Ireland conquerors Kerry. It was an historic occasion for the young Donegal lads to grace the green sward of Croke Park in itself, but to come off it victoriously against the home side to a rousing reception of over 30,000 people was an experience for them never to be forgotten.

The Dublin Board Chairman Noel McLaughlin presented Brian Tuohy with a

magnificent Trophy. As the Kerry and Dublin teams entered the Pitch, Donegal went on a lap of honour and they were greeted with a standing ovation by almost every section of the crowd. They had won the match on a score of 6-08 to 1-05.

The Donegal forwards gave an exhibition of how scores must be taken on the big occasion with Ardara's Gerard McNelis scoring (1-03) and neighbour Vincent Furey (Naomh Conaill) (4-01).

The Donegal Association in Dublin presented the team with a lovely set of inscribed medals to mark the occasion. The

Donegal Association President, Mr. Cathal O'Baoill, made the presentation and, with members Mr. Shovlin (Ardara), Mrs. Sheerin (Ardara), Mrs. Mc Cready (Ardara) and Mr. Donegal himself Kieran Mc Cready – helped to look after the team's welfare for the weekend in the Capital.

The Donegal team was as follows

John McGlinchey (Naomh Conaill), Sean Bonner (Na Rossa), Seamus Meehan (Four Masters'), John Doogan (Kilcar), Brian

Tuohy (Aodh Rua), Tommy McDermott (Aodh Rua), Gerry Mc Hugh (Na Rossa), Paul Carr (St Eunan's), Anthony Molloy (Ardara), Sylvester Maguire (0-01) (Aodh Rua), Gerard McNelis (1-03) (Ardara), John Farren (0-01) (Urris), Cathal Campbell (St Naul's), Martin Williamson (2-02), Vincent Furey (3-01) (Naomh Conaill).

Subs – Gerry Ward (Na Rossa), Marty Carlin (Red Hugh's) and Jimmy Kennedy (St Eunan's)

1979

The 1978 A.G.M. was held in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel on Sunday 7th January, 1979. The rúnaí reported on a disappointing year, with the hopes of a Senior Championship win once again being dashed in the first round defeat to Naomh Columba. Other Club teams had also failed to win any silverware, but he hoped that perhaps the concluding stages of the shield competition could bring some success.

On the financial side, the main fundraising event of the year was the ten week Silver Circle which raised a profit of £1,400.00. Gate receipts yielded a sum of £719.00 while the Annual Dinner Dance showed a profit of £300.00. Overall the income was £2,617.00 while expenditure was £1,797.00 leaving a balance of £820.00.

Work on the dressing rooms was on-going and they hoped to have them completed in a number of months. Major work on the playing field got underway also with the drainage being the major part of the project. The pitch was to be widened with the help of a grant of £4000.00 through the Youth Employment Scheme. This work was commenced late in 1978. As a result the Club got permission to play a number of Shield games in Fintra, late in the year.

The outgoing rúnaí, Conal Aidan Gildea, stepped down from the position after serving two years. Various tributes were paid to the young officer for his great contribution to the Club. The Chairman, Seán Michael Ó Domhnaill, also stepped down, and Bart Whelan and John Gallagher were elected as Chairman and Secretary, respectively, for 1979.

The officer board elected for 1979 was as follows:

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Presidents | - | Very Rev. Liam McCaul, P.P./Fr. Frank McAteer, C.C. |
| Cathaoirleach | - | Bart Whelan. |

Vice Chairman	-	Eamon McNelis.
Secretary	-	John Gallagher
Ass. Secretary	-	Conal A. Gildea.
Treasurer	-	Patsy Gildea.
Ass Treasurer	-	Columba Diver.
P.R.O.	-	James McBrearty

Senior Team Manager :Séamus Gallagher with Anthony Harkin as Trainer.

Selectors were: Joe (Larry) Gallagher, Charlie Keeney and Charlie Mooney.

Senior Team Captain: Patsy Gildea with Anthony Harkin as Vice Captain.

Junior Manager - John Gallagher.

Groundsman: Charlie Mooney.

The following Under-Age Managers were selected for the Year:-

U-21 - Conal Haughey and Lanty Molloy.

U-18 - Eamon McNelis and Kevin McGill.

U-16 - Bart Whelan.

U-14 - Charlie Keeney and Fr. Frank McAteer.

U-12 - Josie Brennan and Packie McGinley.

Delegates to Convention were P. J. McGill, Charlie Keeney, Charlie Mooney, Vincent McConnell, John M. O'Donnell, Anthony Harkin and Seamus Gallagher.

Club host County Convention

The year began with the Club hosting the Annual G.A.A. County Convention in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel on January 21st. The delegates were welcomed by Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill while Fr. Liam McCaul also addressed the meeting. The Club received many plaudits for the manner in which they hosted the event. The three main officers elected were:

Chairman: Francis Cunningham (Naomh Columba)

Secretary: Charlie Kavanagh (St Eunan's).

Treasurer: Hugh McClafferty (St Eunan's).

Ardara win first Senior Shield

A new competition was introduced in the County in 1978, the P.M.P.A Senior Shield. The competition commenced in September, to provide matches during the winter months. The competition captured the imagination of the Clubs, with the P.M.P.A Insurance Company providing a trophy in the shape of a Celtic Cross which was valued at £500. The competition ran through to March of 1979, with Ardara having a good run in Division One of the competition. They qualified for the final against Naomh Columba, a game which was played on the 4th of March 1979 in Fintra. Naomh Columba were going for a clean sweep of all titles in the

one season, having added the Dr. Maguire Cup to the League and All Ireland Gaeltacht titles. The Ardara team, however, were keen to finish the season, that promised so much and had delivered little, on a high note.

Playing with the aid of a strong wind in the first half, Ardara led only by two points at half time. That first half was nip and tuck; Connie Molloy opened the scoring with a point; Naomh Columba equalised through Finian Ward, who had a great first half for the Glen side; Ardara added on four further points through Josie Gallagher (0-02), Kieran Keeney (0-01), and Noel Watters (0-01) while Glen replied with points from Seamus Carr and Pat John McIntyre, to leave the half time score 0-05 to 0-03.

Ardara had the perfect start to the second half when Conal A. Gildea goaled for his side to open up a 5 point lead. The Glen men reduced the lead to a goal in the 49th minute and from there to the end there was huge pressure on the Ardara defence, but they held out to win, thanks to a second goal from Anthony Molloy, who collected a poor kick-out and rifled the Naomh Columba net. Afterwards, Patsy Gildea, as captain of the team, accepted the Shield from Francie Cunningham, County Board Chairman.

The teams were:

Ardara - Patsy Harkin, Frankie O'Donnell, Eamon McNelis, Patsy Gildea (Captain), Noel Watters (0-01), Kieran Keeney (0-01), Martin Sweeney, Anthony Harkin, Josie Gallagher (0-03), Conal A. Gildea (1-00), Connie Molloy (0-01), Seamus Gallagher, Frank McGhee, John Boyle and Lanty Molloy (0-01).

Subs used – Anthony Molloy (1-00) for John Boyle and Eddie McLoone for Anthony Harkin. Other Subs were – John Herron, John M. O'Donnell and Gerard McNelis.

Naomh Columba - Micheál Ó Donnabháin, Michael Breslin, Seamus Carr, John James McLoughlin, Michael O. McIntyre (0-01), Sean Gavigan, Des Daly, Finian Ward (0-03), Sean McGinley, Pat J. McIntyre (0-02), Michael Gallagher, Michael Hegarty, Sean Gara, Pdraig Carr (0-01) and Denis Gara.



Patsy Gildea of Crumlin, son of Joe and Theresa , was widely regarded as being one of the finest Ardara players ever to don the Club jersey. From first appearing as a stylish, scoring forward on the Ardara National School team in the 1959/60 Parish League, to his last appearance for the Club Junior team in 1989, Patsy had the distinction of having played in all fifteen positions on the field, during his long career. His first Championship medal came in the 1962 Schoolboy victory, and this proved to be the first of many honours to come, on the playing fields of

Donegal. He followed this with a Juvenile Championship medal in 1964 and a Minor medal in 1965. That was the year he also made his debut for the Club Junior team as a substitute on the team that lost the Championship final to Four Masters”. His first adult medal was not far away, though, and it came in the 1967 Junior Championship win over Convoys, when he starred at right half forward. In the 1970 Junior Championship victory, Patsy captained the side, a team he regards as the finest Club team he has ever played on. Throughout the lean period in the mid seventies, Gildea always led from the front, and when the Senior team’s fortunes started to rise, coming towards the end of the decade, he won Senior Gaeltacht medals, in 1977 and 1979, and captained the team to the first of two Shield titles in 1979 and 1980. As his playing career approached its twilight years, he finally got the elusive Senior Championship medal he deserved, in 1981, when he was goalkeeper in the victory over Four Masters”. He still kept re-appearing during the eighties, finding it impossible to hang up his famous ‘rugby’ boots. His last medal came in the 1987 Junior B Championship win over Lifford, when he came on as a substitute, and played a vital role at corner forward.

On the County scene, he played Minor, Under-21 and Senior for Donegal, but the fact that he was never selected to play for Donegal in the Ulster Senior Championship, despite being the most feared Club forward in the County, was a scandalous statistic, and one that the Ardara Club and its members found extremely hard to accept at the time. There was no doubt that he was good enough, but he seemed almost a victim of bias on the part of the County selectors on numerous occasions. Away from the playing fields, Patsy served the Club at officer level and played his part on many Club committees, as well as being the Treasurer of the Club from 1978-1980. He has been a trustee of Pearse Memorial Park from the early eighties to the present day. He also managed numerous Under-Age teams over the years, and with his wife Nora and family, rarely misses a Club match in any grade. Patsy’s son Steven is a current member of the Club Senior team and has won Under-14 Championship, All Ireland Gaeltacht and Senior Championship medals, to add to his father’s trophy cabinet. His son Joseph and daughter Helen have also represented the Club on Under-Age teams. Patsy’s brothers Brendan,



Josie and Conal Aidan have all played alongside him in the green and gold, and the Gildea name has been synonymous with the Club for over forty years.

Noel Watters, Patsy Gildea, Connie Molloy and Conal Aidan Gildea celebrate the Shield win in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel.

MacCumhaill's end Championship run at semi-final stage

In the Senior Championship of 1979 the team met and overcame St. Eunan's in the first round, after a playoff. In the first game, in Ardara, the home side won by 1-17 to 0-10. In a great team display, they had scores from Frank McGhee (1-00), Seamus Gallagher (0-05), Kieran Keeney (0-02), Conal A. Gildea (0-02), Connie Molloy (0-02), Lanty Molloy (0-02), Eamon McNelis (0-01), Josie Gallagher (0-01), Anthony Harkin (0-01) and Martin Sweeney (0-01).

The second leg did not go according to plan and Ardara lost on a scoreline of 0-11 to 1-04. The play-off, which was played in Ballybofey, resulted in a seven point victory for Ardara, on a scoreline of 1-09 to 0-05. On the day, Ardara were much sharper to the ball and they were on top throughout.

The team and scorers were - Patsy Harkin, Frank O'Donnell, Patsy Gildea, Eddie McLoone, Noel Watters, Kieran Keeney, Martin Sweeney, Anthony Harkin (0-01), Josie Gallagher, Conal Aidan Gildea, (0-01), Connie Molloy (1-01), Lanty Molloy, Frank McGhee, (0-01), Seamus Gallagher (0-05) and Anthony Molloy.

In the next round, Ardara defeated Rosses Rovers to qualify for the semi-final. (no score available). This victory left the team in a County semi-final for the first time since the 1950s, with their opposition being Sean MacCumhaill's. The match was played in Ballyshannon. Unfortunately for Ardara it was to be another disappointment for the team.



A happy group in the Nesbitt Arms hotel on the night of the Shield victory.

**At back: Charlie Herron
Middle: Liam Molloy, Eamon Molloy, Molly Moore, Connie Molloy, Patsy Gildea, John Gallagher.**

Front: Paddy Herron, Bobby Moore, Lanty Molloy, Connie Joe Molloy, Patsy Harkin.

MacCumhaill's through by a whisker MacCumhaill's 1-9 Ardara 1-7

By the narrow margin of two points, Sean Mac Cumhaill's earned their permit into the Senior football Championship final against Bundoran when they defeated Ardara by 1-9 to 1-7 at Father Tierney Park, Ballyshannon on Sunday. Even though it was a close victory for the Twin Towns side, it was a merited one, because they were able to take the chances that came their way, something which Ardara were unable to do.

Ardara's greatest weakness was the fact that they did not have an accurate free taker. During the sixty minutes, they were presented with five scorable frees in addition to the ones they did convert, but each time the ball was sent either right or left of the post. In addition they were unable to take their chances from play as accurately as MacCumhaill's and in the end they paid for their inaccuracies. They had the chances and they could have tasted victory, but it was not to be their day.

Ardara started as they were to continue by missing a convertible free kick. In the fifth minute MacCumhaill's indicated that they were not going to be plagued by such problems when the roving centre half forward, Enda Mc Menamin, notched the first point of the game from a 14 yd free. MacCumhaill's quickly followed up with two further points from play, from Frank Coyne and Dan Rooney. Ardara kicked another free kick wide, before Enda McMenamin had another point from a free, to leave his side four points ahead after eleven minutes. Halfway through the first 30 minutes, Ardara ended their run of ill luck with a well taken point from midfielder Josie Gallagher, from a free forty yards out. Five minutes later they got a dramatic if slightly controversial equaliser. In a quick and dramatic move, half back Noel Watters passed the ball to Seamus Gallagher, who without hesitation, moved the ball to full forward Eamon McNelis, who sent a rasper of a shot to the net. It was touch and go whether he was in the square or not, but it was a well taken goal.

Immediately afterwards, MacCumhaill's again were back in the attack and they took a two point lead with points from Dan

Rooney and Frank Coyne. But undeterred, Ardara fought back to equalise again with points from Eamon McNelis and Conal Aidan Gildea. With two minutes to go in the half, it appeared that the sides would remain level, but the very effective and dangerous half forward, Joe Houston, changed all that when he set up Frank Coyne to get the ball over the line after a goalmouth scramble. P.J. Mc Gowan followed up with another point before half time to give his side a four points lead at the interval.

Second half

In the second half Ardara fielded as they started, but MacCumhaill's substituted Francis Lafferty for Louis Walsh. Ardara had the wind and they started with a point from Eamon McNelis. They followed this up with another wide. In the tenth minute, MacCumhaill's got the first of their two points in the second half, when Enda McMenamin scored a great point after running from outfield. Ardara kept up the pressure with high balls into the square which Martin Griffin, who was on song, fielded almost effortlessly, again proving that if he had a slightly cooler temperament he would be one of the best full backs in the County. Ardara's fortunes improved when they introduced Connie Molloy, who was not fully match fit through injury, for Eddie McLoone. In the twelfth minute their County player Kieran Keeney had to come off with a leg injury, to be replaced by Anthony Molloy. However, five minutes later he was back on again for Frank McGhee, to help the attack. Molloy made his presence felt with a point from a well taken free on the right in the seventeenth minute, to narrow the gap to three points. Ardara kept up the pressure on the MacCumhaill's defence who gave away two frees in the twentieth and twenty second minutes, both of which were converted by Josie Gallagher. All Ardara needed was a point to equalise, and their supporters, who were in the majority, wildly cheered them on. However it was not to be. Enda McMenamin gathered the ball near the half way line and ran through the Ardara defence to give MacCumhaill's a two point lead with six minutes to go.

Ardara came back at them, but again their

lack of accuracy and bad luck was their downfall. A free by Josie Gallagher hit the post and went wide and this was followed by another shot which went wide. With Ardara still putting on the pressure, the referee blew the final whistle and MacCumhaill's had reached the final.

For the victors, Seamus Faulkner, Martin Griffin, John Kelly and Andy Curran were strongest in defence. P.J. McGowan played well in midfield and Enda McMenamin, Joe Houston, Frank Coyne and Dan Rooney were always dangerous in attack.

For the gallant losers, John Boyle, Kieran Keeney, and Noel Watters were best in defence, Josie Gallagher and Anthony Harkin made their contributions in midfield and Conal Aidan Gildea, Eamon McNelis and substitute Connie Molloy were the pick of the forwards.

Under referee Peter Mc Kelvey the teams

were;

MacCumhaill's: Seamus Faulkner, Kenny Griffin, Martin Griffin, John Kelly, Louis Walsh, Andy Curran, Hugo Lafferty, Kevin O'Hara, P.J. McGowan (0-1), Joe Bradley, Enda McMenamin (0-4), Joe Houston, Frank Coyne (1-2), Brendan Dunleavy, Dan Rooney (0-2). Sub Francis Lafferty for Walsh.

Ardara: Patsy Harkin, Frank O'Donnell, John Boyle, Eddie McLoone, Martin Sweeney, Kieran Keeney, Noel Watters, Josie Gallagher (0-3) Anthony Harkin, Lanty Molloy, Seamus Gallagher, Conal A Gildea (0-1), Patsy Gildea, Eamon McNelis (1-2), Frank McGhee. Subs: Connie Molloy (0-1) for McLoone, Anthony Molloy for Kieran Keeney and Kieran Keeney for Frank McGhee

In the Senior League of 1979, the team performed well, and were in with a good chance of winning the League, but a defeat in the second last game against Kilcar handed their opponents the League title. Ardara finished third in the table.

Mar sin féin, bhuaigh an fhoireann an dara corn nuair a bhain siad Comórtas Peile na Gaeltachta i ngrád na Sinsear sa Chontae do'n dara huair. Bhi an bua acu ar Naomh Conaill agus ar Chill Chartha, agus casadh Naomh Columba orthu sa chluiche ceannais. Bhí an bua acu leis an scór: Ard a' Rátha 0 – 9 in aghaidh 0 – 7 do Naomh Columba.

Bhí na Comórtaisí Náisiúnta i mBaile Mhúirne an bhliain sin agus rinne an fhoireann agus lán bus de'n lucht tacaíochta an t-aistear fada go Corcaigh deireadh seachtain na Cincíse. Bhí an fhoireann lagaithe mar nach raibh Proinnsias Mac Aodh, Máirtín Mac Suibhne nó Conall Ó Ludhóg ar fáil an deireadh seachtaine sin agus bhí an bua ag an fhoireann baile le pointe amháin, 1 – 7 in aghaidh 0 – 9, sa chluiche leath cheannais. Mar sin féin, bhí am ar dóigh acusan a chaith cupla lá agus oícheanta pléisiúrtha in iarthar Chorcaigh.

The team, qualifying for the National final of Comortas Peile na Gaeltachta, caused some friction in the parish, as the match was fixed for the same day that was already arranged for the First Communions. The First Communions were subsequently postponed at short notice. Seamus Hayden of Crannógbuí recalls what happened:

"We were not yet one year in the Parish and lived in a bungalow in Cloch Buí down the 'Point', that we rented from Hughie Couchman. We had one for Communion that year; our youngest daughter, Eimear.

There was another family, the Arnolds, who, like us, were not from Ardara in the first place, who were in the same situation. Jim Arnold, who was the Forester in Ardara, was from the town of Bray in County Wicklow; his wife, Jo Ann, was from County Carlow. My own wife, Ann, was from Dublin, and I too was a Wicklow man, from the town of Greystones.

At the time I was growing up, Greystones was steeped in sport. It was big into Soccer, Rugby, Rowing, and, dare I say it, Golf. It had also a GAA club, but the support for this club came from the surrounding villages. The emphasis across all clubs was on sportsmanship, and motivation was rooted in an individual and collective drive to play above themselves. It wasn't until I came to live and work in Donegal – in places such as Falcarragh, Gweedore, Killybegs and, of course, Ardara – that I encountered the hunger to win that, it seems to me, is such a characteristic of those involved in Gaelic Games.

I'm not above winning myself and my trophy of the occasion is a photograph of the only two children to make their First Holy Communion on the appointed day: Our Eimear and Shane Arnold!

I think the thing that upset Ann and I at the time was that no one bothered to tell us and we found out by accident only at the last minute as it were. I was outraged. I think I still am, but now I understand it better, particularly since proof reading this absorbing history of the GAA in the Parish. The GAA is the very lifeblood of this community. In any case, in regard to the postponement of the First Communion, I have always believed it was as much to allow Father McCaul himself, as he then was, attend the game; he was such a staunch supporter of the Club."

Oh, and by the way, Ardara ...almost did it!

Junior Team entered in Championship and Shield

The Club second team was again in action in 1979 and in the Championship, got past Burt in the first round. The team's run was ended however in the quarter final, when they were beaten by a strong Urris side. In the Junior Shield, the team put in some impressive displays and qualified for the semi-finals, but Urris once again ended their interest. The Junior panel that year was as follows:

Eugene Bennett, Hugh Gerard Gavigan, James Hegarty, Paddy Breslin, James McBrearty, Francis Gallagher, Adrian Concarr, Frank Molloy, Paddy McGill,

Gerard McNelis, Bobby Moore, Kevin McGill, James Gallagher (Big Francie), Michael Breslin (Castledoherty), Francis O'Donnell, Leo Watters, Sean McGuinness, Pat McGill, Tom Diver, Pete Shovlin, Donie McCole, Michael Nicholson, Kevin Quinn, Gabriel Gallagher, Frankie Cassidy, Matthew Shovlin.

Donegal reach Ulster Final

Having failed to get past the first round of the Ulster Championship since 1974, the Donegal Senior team made progress in 1979 and had wins over Tyrone in the first round (1-11 to 1-9) and Derry in the semi-final (2-9 to 0-14). In the final at Clones, Monaghan were too strong and took the title on a 1-15 to 0-11 scoreline. Anthony Harkin, Kieran Keeney, and Martin Sweeney all played in the campaign, with Sweeney (left half back) and Keeney (right half forward) playing in the final. Josie Gallagher was also a sub on the panel. Kieran had the distinction of scoring the first point of the match, only to have the point disallowed as the band had not left the playing area in time.



Martin Sweeney, left half back on the Donegal team, which played in the 1979 Ulster final, played football for Ardara over a period of twenty-eight years. Undoubtedly one of the finest ever to wear the jersey, Martin was a brilliant defender, who read the game superbly. He began his career in 1965, on the Schoolboys' team under the tutelage of Danny Haughey. He continued to play from then until he hung up his boots at the age of forty three, finishing his career as goalkeeper on the Club Senior team in 1994. His first honours were won with the Ardara/Glenties Minor teams of 1969 and 1970 that won the County Championship. From the beginning of his career, he played at every grade, making his Senior debut against Kilcar in 1970. He won his first adult medal the same year, on the team that won the County Junior Championship. Martin won two Minor County Championship medals, in 1969 and '70 with the Ardara/Glenties combination. In his honours list, he can also count three Gaeltacht County Championship medals and two Senior Shield medals. The crowning glory was the Senior Championship success of 1981. His biggest disappointment was a play off, that Ardara lost to Glen in 1978, when the Naomh Columba team went on to win the Championship. His most memorable game was in the Senior Championship against Red Hughs in 1984, when, from being nine points down at half time, Ardara came back in the second half to win by two points. Surprisingly, for a man renowned for his prowess at left half back and who also held the full back berth, Martin nominates full forward as his favourite position. He considers Charlie Mooney to have been the greatest worker and most important influence in the Club during the many lean years. For the County, Martin played Minor in 1970. Later he played Under-21 and he was at left-half back on the

Donegal Senior team for 3 years from 1978- 80. He terminated his relationship with the County team due to a disagreement with management. The best display of Gaelic Football ever witnessed by Martin, was given by Damian Diver at right half back in a League match against Gweedore in 1993. While doing his defensive work to perfection, he also made many forays up the field, and scored a personal tally of seven points from play, thereby, giving an object lesson in the role of the attacking half-back. Martin believes the game has speeded up considerably, because training is more frequent and severe now than in his playing days. He also believes that the road to success is in the nurture of youth teams and pays tribute to the excellent work currently being done in our Club in this regard.

His clearest memory, from his time on the County team, is of a challenge match against Leitrim, played in Ballyshannon. The keys to the pitch were mislaid and teams, officials and the small band of supporters had to gain entry by scaling the high wall. Martin has continued his involvement with the Club to the present day and can regularly be seen at Columba Diver's right hand, lining the pitch, digging drains or doing other odd jobs in his usual quiet, efficient, manner. His walks down the Kentucky road, with his five daughters and son in tow, are a regular feature. He lives quietly with his wife Nuala and family at Ardconell.



The Donegal team of 1979 which was defeated in the Ulster final by Monaghan.
Back L-R: Sandy Harpur (Robert Emmett's), Michael Gallagher (Naomh Columba), Michael Carr (Kilcar), Noel McCole (Civil Service), Seamus Bonner (Civil Service), Kieran Keeney (Ardara), Fionn McDonnell (Glenfin), Martin Griffin (MacCumhaill's), Kieran McCready (Physio)

Front L-R: Michael Lafferty (MacCumhaill's), Martin Sweeney (Ardara), Michael Houston (St. Eunan's), Finian Ward (Naomh Columba), Seamus Flynn (Aodh Rua), Brendan Dunleavy (MacCumhaill's), Jim Brennan (Dungloe).

Other news

There was no success for the Club Under-Age teams that year, with the Under-21 team losing a sectional play-off to Glenfin. The Under-14s were defeated in the quarter final by Rosses Rovers. The Juveniles went out at the same stage to St. Eunan's, while the Minor team were also defeated in the quarter finals by Killybegs. The Under-21 team had their interest ended, in the early stages, against Naomh Columba in Fintra.

In September of the year, it was proposed by Sean M. Ó Domhnaill that a Schoolboys' Parish League be held, with the winners receiving the Seán Ó Casaide Cup. Eventually eight teams were entered in the League and it was planned that the games would be played as curtain raisers to Senior Shield games where possible. The competition was won by St Mary's National School.

As quite a number of the Senior panel were based in Dublin, the costs involved in bringing home players each weekend was placing a burden on the Club's finances. At a meeting in October, it was suggested that a few members form a supporters' club, which would raise funds in order to defray some of these costs. The following month, Seamus Gallagher informed the monthly meeting that the supporters' club numbered 30 members and they had paid £155.00 in travelling expenses to date. It was agreed at that meeting, also, that supporters' club members would pay a weekly subscription of £1.00 while the players would contribute 50p per match. Dances were also held to raise funds.

Apart from the usual fundraising events like Bazaars and Dances, it was proposed in September that the Club should organise a Mayoral Election, with votes costing 10p each. When completed, the voting cards were worth £140.00. A list of 30 possible candidates was drawn up, who were to be approached regarding their interest. Another event organised that year was a Sponsored Walk, which made over £400.00.

Eamon Watters and John Boyle (Narin) were both members of the St. Eunan's college team that won the All-Ireland 'B' Colleges Championship for the first time. Eamon playing at corner forward while John Boyle was goalkeeper.





**The 1979 St Eunan's College team that won the All Ireland 'B' Colleges Championship.
(All Letterkenny unless stated)**

Back L-R: Pauric McDaid, Tim O'Donnell, Roger McGinley (Dunkineely), Joe Blake Eamon Blaney, Patch Curran, Charlie Mulgrew, Eamon Watters (Ardara).

Middle L-R: Rory Donohue, Brian Ferry, Colm McGonigle (Fanad), Jimmy Kennedy, Eunan McIntyre, Christy Ryan (Termon), John Boyle (Narin).

Front L-R: Joe O'Neill (Drimarone), Paul Carr, Tim Begley, Kieran Patton (Convoy), Eamon Stevenson, Raymond Blake, John O'Donnell (Dungloe).

At the Annual Dinner Dance on New Year's Eve, the Senior team were presented with their County Shield and Gaeltacht winners' medals, while other awards were presented to Kieran Keeney (Senior Player of the Year), Paddy McGill (Junior Player of the Year) and the Club referees Conal Gallagher (Meentashask) and John Gallagher.



Fr. Sean Gallagher presents Club Referee Conal Gallagher with an appreciation award at the 1979 Dinner Dance.



John Gallagher presents Paddy McGill with the Junior Player of the Year award for 1979 at the Annual Dinner Dance.



Fr. Sean Gallagher presents Referee John Gallagher with an appreciation award.



Award winners and Club officers pictured at the 1979 Dinner Dance.
Back L-R: Conal Gallagher (Referee), John Gallagher , Connie Molloy, Patsy Gildea, Columba Diver, Bart Whelan Charlie Mooney.
Front L-R: Paddy McGill, Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill, Kieran Keeney, Seamus Gallagher.



Presentation from the Club to Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill on his retirement as principal of Scoil Náisiúnta an Bhreacaigh in 1979

**Back L-R: Vincent McConnell, Columba Diver, Fr Liam McCaul, Charlie Bennett.
Front L-R:Patsy Gildea, Pádraig S.Mac a'Ghoill, Bart Whelan.**



Some of Paddys former team mates and Club officers join him at his retirement function

. Back Left - Right: Michael Boyle, Charlie Bennett, Danny Maloney, Tommy Boyle, Frankie Brennan. Seated : Vinny McHugh, Paddy McGill, Joe Gildea.

Important dates and events from the Seventies

- 1970** Charles J. Haughey and Neil T. Blaney sacked by Taoiseach Jack Lynch.
- 1971** Seán Lemass dies.
- 1972** Bloody Sunday in Derry – thirteen shot dead.
- 1973** Ireland becomes a member of the E.E.C.
- 1974** Bombs explode in Dublin and Monaghan killing thirty-nine people. Seán Mc Bride is awarded the Nobel Prize for peace.
- 1975** Three members of the Miami Showband are killed by a bomb in the North. Eamonn deValera dies, aged ninety-two.
- 1976** President Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh resigns. Patrick Hillary is elected President.
- 1977** Garret Fitzgerald replaces Liam Cosgrave as leader of Fine Gael.
- 1978** The year of the three Popes; Pope Paul VI and John Paul I die. John Paul II is elected.
- 1979** Pope John Paul II visits Ireland.



The Eighties

Tá muilté Dé mall,
Ach meileann siad go mín;
Fanann Sé le foighid,
Is glacann Sé an t-ionlán.

Bhí na hochtoidi buailte linn. Le fiche blian anuas bhí na comórtaisí Faoi Aois uilig, Craobh na Soisir, Comórtas Peile na Gaeltachta an Chontae agus An Sciath Sinsir bainte, agus cuid acu faoi dhó, ach ó 1981, ní raibh lámh leagtha ag captaen Ard a' Rátha ar Chorn Mhic Uidhir. I 1980 féin, bhí an Chlub i seacht gcluiche ceannais agus dhá chluiche leath-cheannais. I gcluiche ceannais Craobh na Sinsir, chaitheadh na dearthaireacha Uí Dhomhnaill, Proinsias agus Cathal, i gcoinne a chéile; bheadh bonn sinsir ag duine acu ar lá sin, ach is go Baile an Droichid a chuaigh sé.

Bhí na peileadóirí againn ach an raibh an spiorad agus an curatacht iontu? Ar Dhomhnach an chluiche ceannais 1981 tugadh freagra ar an cheist sin. Nuair a d'ardaigh Séamus Ó Gallchóir Corn Mhic Uidhir i bPáirc Sheáin Mhic Cumhaill bhí seandaoine ina seasamh ar an pháirc a d'imir don Chlub, don Chontae agus don Chúige ina nóige agus nár ghnóthaigh bonn sinsir riamh; bhí deora ina súile. Tá seanfhocal i ndeisceart na tíre: 'Beidh lá eile ag an bPaorach' ach ar an lá úd i mBealach Féich bhí a lá ag an bPaorach tagtha!

The Club enjoyed noticeable and constant progress in the latter part of the seventies. The eighties were to see that progress grow and grow, particularly in the first few years of the decade, when the Senior team began to really establish themselves as one of the top three sides in the County. The South-West had become a real battlefield, with Naomh Columba, Kilcar and Ardara being regarded as the pacesetters in the County. The meetings between these teams always guaranteed massive crowds and excellent football. These three were later to be joined by Killybegs and an emerging Four Masters' team, to leave a very high standard of football in the south of the County.

At Under-Age level, the Club were working equally hard, and this was to bear fruit, not only for the Club, but for the County also, with many fine players going on to make their name at Provincial and National level. At Senior level, it seemed only

a matter of time before the Dr. Maguire would return to the parish, but as there had been so many false dawns previously, few would have bet their life savings that it was a foregone conclusion.

The A.G.M. of 1979 attracted 63 members to Peter Oliver's on the 6th of January 1980, when Bart Whelan was returned as Cathaoirleach. The officers elected for 1980 were:-

Presidents	-	Very Rev. Liam McCaul, P.P. Rev Frank McAteer, C.C.
Chairman	-	Bart Whelan
Vice Chairman	-	Conal Haughey
Secretary	-	John Gallagher.
Ass. Secretary	-	Conal A. Gildea.
Treasurer	-	Patsy Gildea.
Ass. Treasurer	-	Columba Diver
P.R.O.	-	James McBrearty
Senior Team Manager	-	Phonsie Bennett.
Junior Team Manager	-	John Gallagher
Adult Team Trainer	-	Anthony Harkin.
Senior Team Captain	-	Anthony Harkin
Vice Captain	-	Seamus Gallagher.
Junior Team Captain	-	Frank Molloy
Vice Captain	-	James McBrearty
Groundsman	-	Edward Molloy.

The following were elected managers for Under-Age teams:-

U-21 - Seamus Gallagher and Michael Breslin.

U-18 - Anthony Molloy and Eugene Bennett.

U-16 - Eamon McNelis and Paddy Brennan.

U-14 - Charlie Keeney and Josie Brennan.

U-12 - Fr. Frank McAteer and Packie McGinley.

Club Referees were – Conal Gallagher and John Gallagher.

Under-Age Referees were – John M. O'Donnell and Conal Haughey.

Charlie Keeney was elected as First Aid Man.

Seniors retain Shield title

As happened in the previous year, the Senior team won through to the final in the 1979/80 Senior Shield competition. Finishing top of their group, they defeated Robert Emmets' in the semi-final to qualify for a decider against MacCumhaill's.

There was no need for motivation for Ardara against the Finn Valley men, after their narrow 1979 Championship semi-final defeat in Ballyshannon. The match was played in Fintra on a windy winter' day on the 25th of March 1980. Ardara had the better of things in the first half but led by only one point at half time, despite playing with the breeze. The second half, with MacCumhaills playing with the elements, saw Ardara play with huge heart, as they held their lead under severe pressure. The crucial score came when Ardara goaled from the penalty spot through Conal A. Gildea, when Lanty Molloy was fouled in the Square. This gave them a cushion for the remainder of the game.

The team was -

Ardara - Patsy Gildea, Frank O'Donnell, Eamon McNelis, Eddie McLoone, Noel Watters, Kieran Keeney, Conal A. Gildea (1-00), Anthony Harkin (Captain), Anthony Molloy, Josie Gallagher, Martin Sweeney, Lanty Molloy, Gerard McNelis, Seamus Gallagher (0-03) and Frank McGhee.

Subs used - Connie Molloy (0-01) for Eddie McLoone and John Herron for Gerard McNelis.

Other Subs – John Boyle (Front St.), Pete Shovlin (Sandfield), Patsy Harkin, Francis Gallagher (Ranny) and John M. O'Donnell.

Championship final heartbreak for Seniors

From an early stage in the Championship, the Senior team were installed as the favourites. This in itself added pressure to the team. Ardara drew Robert Emmett's in the first round and had an easy victory in Pearse Memorial, winning by 1-14 to 0-5. The return leg was a lot tighter, however, and the team was fortunate to come away with a win, by the narrowest of margins, 2-8 to 1-10. Their next fixture was a local derby tie against Killybegs, who had received a bye in the first round. A tough tie ensued, with the match ending in a draw; Ardara 0-8 Killybegs 1-5. The replay, however, saw Ardara run out easy winners on a 1-10 to 0-6 scoreline. The semi-final was a repeat of 1979, with MacCumhaill's again the opponents. This time there was no mistake and Ardara had qualified for their first Senior final since 1938, winning by 1-11 to 0-7. The opponents in the final were old rivals, Kilcar, who came through a difficult half of the draw, defeating Aodh Ruadh, Rosses Rovers and neighbours, Naomh Columba; the latter in an epic battle in Fintra, ending with a 2-9 to 1-10 scoreline. The teams had earlier met in the League, in July, when Ardara won at home by 2-10 to 1-8, and they had been installed as heavy favourites in all the local papers, to defeat Kilcar easily in the final. The underdogs had also been waiting for another Dr. Maguire to visit their parish - the last time was 1925. Their hunger for victory was evident from early on and they duly proceeded to make little of the pre-match predictions.

Senior final upset as Kilcar triumph Kilcar 1-13 Ardara 0-8

Displaying a determination, flair and a level of fitness their opponents could never come to grips with, underdogs Kilcar tore the form book to shreds at MacCumhaill Park Ballybofey on Sunday with a decisive eight points victory over their fancied South-West neighbours, Ardara, which gained them their first Donegal Senior Championship title since 1925.

On form, and particularly after their showing in the semi-final, when they were fortunate to defeat Naomh Columba, there were few in the County outside of their own supporters, who could see them preventing Ardara from adding the Championship to the Shield title won earlier in the season, but what a revelation they were on Sunday.

They were so impressive that it was difficult to believe that it was the same team which played in the semi final. That they had done their homework in earnest since that game was very evident, not only in the fact that they were yards faster than Ardara and still running as strongly in the last minute as in the first, but in their whole approach to the game. They ran, tackled, and contested every ball as if their lives depended on it, and yet all the time they played with a confidence and competence that Ardara could not achieve.

The favourites were struggling from an early stage. The little Dutch boy plugged the hole in the dyke with his finger, but Ardara just didn't have enough fingers to plug all the holes in the dyke. Their mentors switched and changed players all over the field to try and hold back the ever surging Kilcar tide, but to no avail.

Key men

Their efforts were particularly directed at negating the threat posed by Michael Carr and Martin McHugh who were key men in the Kilcar win. County star Carr was the man of the match. Posted at centre half back, he was not only commanding in defence, but menacing in attack when he took off on runs up the field reminiscent of Dublin star Kevin Moran. Usually these runs resulted in a free within range of the Ardara goals. It was there that McHugh came in. He

pointed frees from everywhere. In all he scored 10 points from 13, most of them from frees. But his effectiveness did not end there. This brilliant young player's speed and wizardry, made him a constant nuisance to the Ardara defence and try as they might, Ardara could not find a player to keep tabs on him. Apart from Conal A. Gildea, they tried Noel Watters and Lanty Molloy.

However, lest anyone think that this was a two man team; it wasn't. Victory was achieved with a whole hearted team effort, that had Ardara playing second fiddle all over the field.

Disappointing

Ardara were disappointing and, all through, one kept expecting them to raise their game but it never happened. Whether they were caught on the hop due to complacency, perhaps, they never settled, or perhaps more correctly, they were never allowed to settle.

With one of the biggest County final crowds for years, a pitch in great shape and a dry ball, the conditions were perfect as referee Jack Furey threw in the ball. Ardara started in the style most expected when Kieran Keeney pointed before a minute had elapsed on the watch.

The sides were level in the second minute when McHugh landed the first of his points, but by the sixth minute Ardara were two points up, when Connie Molloy landed two pointed frees. McHugh had another point from a free in the tenth minute after he was fouled himself. He had another point in the 13th minute and a Charlie O'Donnell score put them ahead for the first time.

Ardara then switched full forward Kieran Keeney and centre forward Connie Molloy and in the 21st minute, Molloy pointed a free after his brother Lanty was fouled. Two minutes later however McHugh was fouled again and exacted full retribution by putting Kilcar ahead and from another of his frees in the 25th minute Charlie O'Donnell pointed. It was at that stage Anthony Molloy moved to centrefield, but McHugh stretched the lead to three points. Just before half time,

Martin Sweeney broke clear from defence and pointed to leave the half time score, Kilcar 0-7 Ardara 0-5

When the teams lined out after half time, Noel Watters had switched wings to mark McHugh, but after Gerard McNelis had reduced the deficit with an Ardara point in the 2nd minute, McHugh stretched it again with another point a minute later.

There were three points in it again by the sixth minute, when a quick free from Ardara about 40 yards out was intercepted by Carr, who galloped upfield, played a one two with McHugh and finished with a glorious point. Four minutes after that McHugh stretched the gap with another free, as Kilcar dominated without reflecting that dominance on the scoreboard. Ardara's attacks were fewer, but they made better use of them and Connie Molloy from a free in the 13th minute and Gerard McNelis in the 20th minute left only two points in it. In the last five minutes though it was all Kilcar. McHugh points in the 26th and 28th minute put four points between the teams and any lingering hopes

Ardara supporters would have had were squashed a minute from the end, when a high lobbing ball from Dinny McBrearty was flicked on by Aodh Cannon to the net for the crucial score. Significantly and fittingly, the last Kilcar point was scored by McHugh from a pass by Michael Carr.

Ardara – Patsy Harkin, Frank O'Donnell, Anthony Molloy, Eddie McLoone, Noel Watters, Martin Sweeney (0-01), Conal A. Gildea, Josie Gallagher, Anthony Harkin, Gerard McNelis (0-02), Connie Molloy (0-04), Lanty Molloy, Seamus Gallagher, Kieran Keeney (0-01) and Patsy Gildea. Subs – John Herron for McNelis and John Boyle for Patsy Gildea.

Kilcar – Maurice Carr, John Carr, Dinny McBrearty, John Quinn, Charlie McGroarty, Michael Carr (0-01), Tommy McFadden, Danny Gillespie, Aodh Cannon (1-00), Martin McHugh (0-10), Francis Cannon, Sean McGinley, Francis Gallagher, Charlie O'Donnell (0-02) and Peter Conroy.



Vinny McConnell shows off his banner at the 1980 County final.



The Ardara Senior team that played Kilcar in the 1980 County final
Back L-R: Eugene Bennett, Frank McGhee, Pete Shovlin, Frank O'Donnell,
Patsy Harkin, Conal Aidan Gildea, Phonsie Bennett, Noel Watters, Lanty Molloy,
Gerard McNelis, Anthony Molloy, Patsy Gildea,
Front L-R: John Herron, Martin Sweeney, Eamon McNelis, John Boyle, Kieran Keeney,
Anthony Harkin, Connie Molloy, Josie Gallagher, Seamus Gallagher, Eddie McLoone,
Charlie Mooney.



The O'Donnell brothers of Leaconall, who were on opposite sides in the 1980 County final, pictured here after the match, Charlie and Frank exchanged jerseys, with mother and father, Mary and Charlie.



Noel Watters of Meentinadea, great half back of the seventies and eighties, who was Ardara's best player in the 1980 County final.

Naomh Columba take League title in play-off

The defeat was a huge disappointment to the team and supporters, but there was no arguing, that on the day, the Kilcar men were the hungrier side. Two sets of brothers played on opposing sides that day, Frank & Charlie O'Donnell from Leaconnell and Seamus and Francis Gallagher (Kilcar). The team tried to amend their disappointment by capturing the League title. With all games played but one, they were level with Naomh Columba at the top of the table, the decider to be played between the sides in Sandfield on the 12th of October. The match was as a brilliant tussle with the sides level at the break 0-6 each. There were few scores in the second period, however, and a late Naomh Columba equaliser saw the game finish level, 0-8 each. The League play-off or 'Final' as it was being billed, was fixed for Fintra the following Sunday. The game did not follow the trend of the previous meeting however and the Glen men raced into a 1-5 to 0-1 half time lead. Ardara upped the tempo in the second half but Naomh Columba defended well. A missed penalty for Ardara, with ten minutes remaining, summed up their day, and a year that promised so much for the team again ended in disappointment. The teams and scorers in the play-off were:

Naomh Columba: Michael Ó Donnabháin, Paddy Gavigan, John Joe Gara, Des Daly, Brian McNelis, Sean Gavigan, John James McLaughlin, John McGinley, Michael Gallagher (0-4), Rory McNelis (0-1), Pdraig Carr, Michael Hegarty (0-1), Sean Gara.

(0-2), Seamus Carr (1-2), Kevin Mc Ginley.

Ardara: Patsy Harkin, Frank O'Donnell, Anthony Molloy, Eddie McLoone, Lanty Molloy, Kieran Keeney, Noel Watters, Anthony Harkin, Martin Sweeney, Conal A .Gildea, Seamus Gallagher (0-1), Gerard McNelis, Connie Molloy (0-3), John Boyle, Frank McGhee. Subs used: Kevin McGill for John Boyle, Francis Connolly for Frank McGhee, Patsy Gildea for Anthony Harkin.

Referee: Sean McGee (Downings)

Comórtaisí Peile na Gaeltachta – Tír Chonaill

I gComórtas Peile na Gaeltachta sa Chontae, a bhí á rachtáil i nGleann Cholm Cille, shroich an dá fhoireann na Cluichi Ceannais. Chaill an fhoireann shóisir in éadán Naomh Mícheál ach 'sna sinsir, fuair Ard an Rátha bua ar Ghaoth Dobhair. Sa chluiche sin bhain said le cúilín amháin (0-10 m-aghaidh 1-06). Bhi na foirne ar chomh-scór ag leath ama (0-03) go dtí (0-03). Tháinig na pointí uilig ó

Sheosamh Ó Gallachóir. Sa dara leath d'imir siad i bhfad níos fearr agus fuair siad na pointí ó Sheán Ó Baoill, Seán Ó h Earráin, Seosamh Ó Gallachóir agus Pádraig Mac Giolla Dé. Chríochnaigh siad pointe amháin chun tosaigh, leis an Chomórtas a bhaint don darna bliain as a chéile.

An Fhoireann:-

Ard a' Rátha - Pádraig Mac Giolla Dé (0-01), Proinsias Ó Domhnaill, Éamonn Mac Niallais, Éamonn Mac Giolla Uain, Nollaig Ó Fuaraisce, Ciarán Ó Cianaigh, Conal A. Mac Giolla Dé, Antoine Ó hEarcáin, Seosamh Ó Gallachóir (0-04), Séamus Ó Gallachóir, Conal Ó Ludhóg (0-01), Lantí Ó Ludhóg, Seán Ó h-Earráin (0-01), Seán Ó Baoill (0-03) agus Proinsias Mac Aoidh. Fir ionaid – Pádraig Ó h-Earcáin agus Peadar Ó Seibhleáin.

S'na Cluichí Náisiúnta i nGaillimh d'imir Ard a' Rátha in aghaidh An Fháirche, an fhoireann baile. Chuaigh an cluiche go dtí am breise ach sa deireadh chaill Ard a' Rátha le dha chúl, leis an scor (3-09) go dtí (1-09).

Bhi athrú amháin ar an fhoireann a d'imir sa chluiche seo ó Chluiche Ceannais an Chontae. D'imir Antoine Ó Lúdhóg in ionad Proinsias Ó Domhnaill.

Juniors reach County final

Despite being in existence only a few years, the Club Junior team had made good progress, and included some fine players, who were close to making the Senior team. In the Championship, the team defeated Convoy, Cloughaneely and Aodh Ruadh in the earlier rounds, and had a shock victory over Naomh Ultan's first team in the semi-final at Glenties (1-8 to 0-7). The final was played the Sunday after the Seniors were defeated by Kilcar, and it was hoped that the Junior team would lift the gloom surrounding the parish.

St Eunans win first ever Junior title. Defeat again for Ardara. St Eunans 0-13 Ardara 0-8

The Junior Championship final at MacCumhaill Park on Sunday added a new name to the winners of the competition, when St Eunan's took the title for the first time. For Ardara, it was once again the disappointment of failure at the final hurdle. For the south-westerners, it must have been galling to accept defeat again so soon after the Senior Championship upset, but they would be the first to admit that the Letterkenny side more than deserved their victory. Although it was only in the final quarter that they got on top to such an extent that one could be sure that the cup

was destined for the cathedral town, the signs were there from earlier.

There was a lot of messing and mistakes early on, as both teams found their feet on the wet conditions. It was in fact the 10th minute when the first score was recorded, a St Eunans point per Michael Mulhern. The score was level four minutes later with a Paddy McGill point for Ardara and Francis Connolly put the losers ahead with a point a minute later.

All square

By the 17th minute Mickey Gibbons had it all

square again and four minutes later he added another to put Letterkenny in front. They were two up in the 24th minute thanks to a Pauric McDaid point, but Paddy McGill pulled one back for Ardara two minutes later.

Mickey Mulhern and Eamon Watters traded points around the 28th minute to maintain the one point margin, but in the last minute of the first half, Pauric Gallen and Mickey Gibbons notched two further points to put Eunans 0-7 to 0-4 ahead at the interval.

After the break Eunans added another three points to stretch their lead, Ardara replying in the 12th minute through Paddy McGill. This proved to be his sides last score and further points from Carl Hogg, Joe Winston and Mickey Mulhern sealed the victory for the cathedral town men. The final score,

being a true reflection of the game.

Under referee Fr Sean Gallagher, the team's were

St.Eunan's: Eugene Dowling, Michael McGeehin, P.J. Hoey, Joe Kelly, Pauric McDaid, Christy Callaghan, Billy Roarty, Declan Nee, Carl Hogg, Martin Rafferty, Joe Winston, Mickey Gibbons, Pauric Nallen, Mickey Mulhern, Peter Kelly. Subs: Brian Ferry for Declan Nee, Michael Sweeney for Martin Rafferty.

Ardara: Eugene Bennett, Leo Watters, Frank Molloy, Donie Mc Cole, Adrian Concarr, John M. O'Donnell, Francis Gallagher, Francis Connolly, Bobby Moore, Eamon Watters, Paddy McGill, Kevin McGill, James Mc Brearty, Pat Hughes, Sean Mc Guinness. Subs used: Pat McGill for Leo Watters, Sean Brennan for Kevin McGill

Unfortunately the bad run was to continue.

There was controversy in the week following the game, with the Club holding a meeting to decide whether to protest against the composition of the Eunan's team. It was alleged that three of the team were not registered and three others were not re-graded from Senior for that year. Following a lengthy discussion it was agreed to protest, but the protest was withdrawn shortly before it was due to be heard by the County Board.

In the Junior League (Division 3), the team put in many good displays and finished in second place in the competition behind Termon, thus achieving promotion to Division Two for the first time. Earlier that year, the team had been defeated in the 1979/80 Junior Shield semi-final by Urris.

In Comórtas Peile Na Gaeltachta they beat Na Rossa 2-07 to 0-06 in the semi-final but lost to St Michael's in the county final, 3-05 to 0-07.

Under-21s take first County title

The County Under-21 Championship was one title which had escaped the Club since its inception in 1971. A final defeat for the Glenties/Ardara combination that year was the closest that our players had come. There was a good side available in 1980, with a team made up of a mixture of the Senior and Junior teams that had reached their own respective Championship finals. The Under-21 team duly reached the Championship final, after victories over Convoy in the first round, Bundoran in the quarter final, and Killybegs in the semi-final. The final was played in Fintra on the 28th of September, with Kilcar as opponents. Following the Senior final a month earlier, there was plenty of motivation against a Kilcar team that was fielding a number of players from their Senior winning side.

Molloy inspires Ardara to victory in poor game Ardara 1-09 Kilcar 1-04

It was third time lucky for Ardara at Fintra on Sunday when they won the Under-21 football Championship for the first time, and recorded their first success in three Championship finals this year with a victory over South-West neighbours and Senior Championship conquerors, Kilcar, that was more decisive than the winning margin of five points would suggest.

The conditions were perfect, beautiful sunshine, a dry ball and sod and a big attendance, but sadly it was all wasted on a game that will be best remembered only for its unsavoury incidents.

The emphasis was too much on the physical, with some of the tackles positively dangerous, and a few players seemingly more intent on getting the man rather than the ball.

Thuggery

There were a number of what are euphemistically referred to as "off the ball" incidents, with one particularly blatant piece of thuggery, when an Ardara player was grounded by a deliberate and pre-meditated punch in the stomach, provoking a minor invasion by irate Ardara officials and supporters. The game was held up for some minutes, while referee Thomas McBrearty insisted on all unauthorised persons removing themselves from the enclosure. This was only achieved to a certain extent and there was again a big crowd on the pitch when Kilcar player Michael McFadden was injured, entirely accidentally, it should be added. It was thought for some time that he was seriously injured as he did not come round fully until some time after the game (the incident happened about ten minutes from the end) but it has been learned since the game that he has recovered fully.

Villains

Let it be taken from any of the above that all the villains were on the Kilcar side, it should be made clear that both sides had their hatchet men and there were more than a couple of players fortunate to finish the game. There were some good things to remember from the game and it is a pity that they were overshadowed by the bad. For instance there was the fine midfield display by Anthony Molloy of Ardara. Molloy was the dominant figure of the match. He struggled

in the early stages, but once he got moving, Ardara got moving, and by half time it was obvious where the cup was going to end up. Kilcar's only hope of preventing it resting on an Ardara sideboard seemed to lie in the talent of Martin McHugh. One could sense the anxiety of the Ardara defence every time he got the ball but he did not get it enough due to Ardara's dominance at midfield and he also came in for some pretty rough handling.

Superb

He was principally responsible for the rather misleading closeness of the scoreline at the end, with a superb opportunist goal 10 minutes from time. The ball broke to him 30 yards from goal, he stepped to the left to make space for himself, turned, and in a flash, the top left hand corner of the net was bulging.. McHugh scored two points and made the other as Kilcar raced into an early lead in the first ten minutes. Kilcar were playing so well at that stage, that had anyone predicted that Ardara were going to win comfortably they would have been laughed out of court.

Impact

But the switching of Gerard McNelis from centre-field to centre half forward, in a direct switch with Francis Connolly, seemed to profit both players and it was at that stage that Molloy began to make an impact. McNelis had Ardara's first score, a pointed free in the 15th minute and he added a similar score two minutes later.

In the 20th minute, Ardara took the lead in a dramatic fashion when Kevin McGill burst through to leave the Kilcar keeper stranded with a shot high to the left corner. Two minutes later, Martin McHugh missed a free that was within his range, but at the other end McNelis made no mistake from frees in the 24th and 27th minutes to give Ardara a half time lead of 1-4 to 0-3.

The winners should have had another goal three minutes after the re-start when Paul Brennan found himself in a good position close to goal, but ballooned his shot over the bar. McNelis put six points between the teams three minutes later. Paul Brennan added another point in the 18th minute but Christy Gillespie pulled one back for Kilcar two minutes later.

Goal

McHugh's goal left just two points in it, but the Kilcar fight-back never materialised, and Ardara cantered home with points from Sean Mc Guinness, who came on as a sub and McNelis.

The teams were-

Ardara - John Kennedy, Frank Cassidy, Francis Gallagher, Conal Haughey, Donnie McCole, Lanty Molloy, Leo Watters, Anthony Molloy, Gerard McNelis (0-06), John McGill, Francis Connolly, Kevin McGill (1-00), Paul Brennan (0-02), James Gallagher and Eamon Watters.

Sub used - Sean McGuinness (0-01) for James Gallagher. John Boyle, Paul Brennan, Paddy Breslin, Stephen Sweeney, Hugh Gavigan, Matthew Shovlin and John Kennedy.

Kilcar - John Hegarty, Gerard Shovlin, James Carr, Sean Hegarty, Gabriel O'Donnell, Maurice Carr, Alan Erskine, Charlie McGroarty, John Doogan, Martin McHugh (1-02), Francis Gallagher (0-01), Christy Gillespie (0-01), Gerard McBrearty, Cornelius Diver and Michael McFadden.

Referee – Thomas McBrearty.



The Ardara Under 21 team that defeated Kilcar in the 1980 Championship final.
 Back L-R: Vincent Cassidy, Paddy Breslin, Gerard McNelis, John Kennedy, Leo Watters, Francis Connolly, Anthony Molloy, Jamesie Gallagher, Conal Haughey, Donie McCole, Sean McGuinness, Paddy Brennan.
 Front L-R: Seamus Gallagher (Manager), Francis Gallagher, Michael Nicholson, Matthew Shovlin, Kevin McGill, Eamon Watters, Lanty Molloy, John McGill, Paul Brennan, Frankie Cassidy.



Lanty Molloy, Team Captain and Man of the Match in the Under-21 final of 1980. Another of the famous brothers of Leamagowra, Lanty was regarded as probably the most naturally talented footballer of the family. He made his debut for the Senior team in 1978 and soon became a regular. Equally at home in defence or attack, Lanty belied his small physique

and was as tough as they came. He played for the County Under-21 team of 1980 and graduated to the Senior team shortly afterwards. He was right half forward on the 1981 Championship winning team, but emigrated to New York in 1982, and returned home for the Championship for a few years afterwards. He remained in New York on a permanent basis and became a key player for the Donegal New York team through the eighties and early nineties. His loss to the Senior team was a major blow at the time and since he always performed well when he returned, it was felt that had he been at home through the eighties, he would have been a regular on the Donegal Senior team.

Other grades

In the other Under-Age grades, the Club Minor team had victories over Naomh Conaill and Rosses Rovers, but were defeated in the County quarter final by Killybegs. The panel of players used that year was as follows:

John Kennedy (Diamond), Paddy Brennan, Martin Gavigan, Paul Cassidy, Jackie Gallagher, Anthony Molloy, Eamon Cunningham, Jimmy Caffrey, Gerard McNelis, Patrick Gallagher, John McGill, Niall Campbell, Hugh Campbell, Conal Cunningham, Ted Breslin, P. J. Cassidy, Tomas Egan, Vincent Cassidy, John Caffrey, Shaun Hennigan, Jimmy Kennedy, Philip Ward, Paddy Watters, Patrick Mc Loone, Paul Brennan.

The Under-16 team finished second in their section to Rosses Rovers, but did not qualify for the knock out stages. The following played for the team in 1980:

Declan Breslin, Geoffrey Boyle, Martin Gavigan, Paddy Joe Cassidy, Tomas Egan, Declan McGrenra, Hughie McNelis, Conal Cunningham, Philip Shovlin, John Curran, Jackie Gallagher, Eamon Cunningham, John Kennedy, Tomas Maguire, Patrick Gallagher, Niall Campbell, Seamus McGuinness, Liam Molloy, Luke Gavigan, Ted Breslin, John Curran, John Molloy.

In the Under-14 Championship, the team qualified from their section but were defeated by Naomh Columba in the Championship quarter final. There was no success either at Under-12, with the team failing to qualify for the play-offs.

Sandfield purchased

The Club had been using Sandfield on a regular basis since the '60s. In 1980, 5/6ths of the land became available, with Mrs Brannigan, who owned the land, retaining 1/6th. It was decided that the Club should make a big effort to raise the money necessary to purchase the 5/6th stake. Columba Diver spearheaded the drive to finance the project, and through interest free loans from a number of Club members, the necessary £5000 (€20,000 equivalent in 2003) was attained. The contributions were to be repaid by the Club on an interest free basis, but none of the people involved ever accepted a refund. The purchase meant that the Club

would finally be able to use the pitch whenever necessary. Draining work was ongoing at Pearse Memorial and it was envisaged that it would be used as a summer pitch, with Sandfield being used for the winter months. The Club will forever be indebted to the following people who made the finance available to purchase the land.

Tommy Boyle	Frankie Brennan,	Tom Concarr
Vincent McConnell	Columba Diver	
Joe Gallagher	John (Big Francie) Gallagher	
John Neil O'Donnell	Frank Gallagher	
James Byrne	Charlie Bennett	
Connie Molloy (Nesbitt Arms)	Josie Brennan	

Bart Whelan elected County Secretary

Club Chairman Bart Whelan became the first person from the Club since Dan Ward to hold the position of County Secretary, when he was elected to the position during the year. The incumbent at the time, Charlie Kavanagh, had stepped down. Bart had been in the position of Assistant Secretary since being elected at the 1979 Convention, and duly accepted the position when it arose. It proved to be an extremely busy year for Bart, who was also Club Chairman.

Also on the County scene: Anthony Molloy and Gerard McNelis played for the County Minor team that was defeated in the Ulster semi-final by Derry. Lanty and Anthony Molloy were members of the County Under-21 team and Kieran Keeney, Lanty Molloy and Anthony Harkin played for the County Senior team during the year.



The 1980 County Minor team who were defeated by Derry in the Ulster semi-final.

Back L-R: Anthony Molloy, Sylvester Maguire (Aodh Ruadh), Pauric McDaid (St. Eunan's), Thomas Cleary (Aodh Ruadh), Paul Carr (St. Eunan's), Jimmy Kennedy (St. Eunan's), Paschal McTiernan (Aodh Ruadh), Tommy McDermott (Aodh Ruadh).
Front L-R; Sean Bonner (Na Rossa), Vincent Furey (Naomh Conaill), Seamie Meehan (Four Masters') Brian Tuohy (Aodh Ruadh), John Farren (Urris), Matt Gallagher (Naomh Brid), Joyce McMullan (Four Masters')

Dinner Dance

At the Annual Dinner Dance on New Year's Eve, a large crowd attended in the Nesbitt Arms hotel. Medals were presented to the Championship winning Under-21 team and to the Senior Shield and County Senior Gaeltacht winners. Anthony Molloy was selected as Senior Player of the Year for 1980, while Francis Connolly was selected as Junior Player of the Year. Bart Whelan was presented with the Clubman of the Year award.



Bart Whelan, Club Chairman, presents Michael Daly of the Ulster Bank with a copy of the 1980 Ardara G.A.A Yearbook.

Club launch first Yearbook

The Club reached another milestone in 1980, when it launched its first Annual Yearbook at Christmas. Edited by Edward Molloy, the 58 page publication chronicled the Club's activities through 1980, and also had many interesting articles from Club members and from others around the County. The publication was the first of its kind in the County and

received widespread praise at the time.



Pictured at the launch of the 1980 Club Yearbook

Back L-R: Packie Keeney, Charlie Bennett, Edward Molloy, Michael Gillespie, Martin Whelan, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill.

Front L-R: Bart Whelan, James McBrearty, Seamus Gallagher, Patsy Gildea.



The Donegal Under 21 team of 1980

Back L-R: Gerard Boyle (Rosses Rovers), Michael McBrearty (Four Masters'), Micky Gallagher (Pettigo), Pat McLaughlin (Pettigo), Michael Hegarty, Naomh Columba), Gary Snowe (Pettigo), Seamus Flynn (Aodh Ruadh), Jim Gallagher (Aodh Ruadh), Denis McBride (Downings), Anthony Molloy.

Front L-R: John McBride (Downings), Jimmy Whyte (Killybegs), Martin Shovlin (Naomh Ultan), Kieran Patton (Convoy), Gerard Gallagher (Gweedore), Bosco Reid (Red Hugh's), Donal Reid (Red Hugh's), Lanty Molloy, Niall Campbell (Rosses Rovers)

1981

The A.G.M of the Club was held on the 4th of January in Peter Oliver's. Outgoing Secretary John Gallagher gave a full report on the year's activities. He indicated that he would be stepping down from the position and many tributes were paid to him at the meeting, for his input into the success of the Club. In the Treasurer's Financial Report at the end of the year, the Club's income was recorded as £5,709.00 while expenditure was £6,682.00. Throughout the year the main source of income had come from bazaars and a Five Week Draw. Two hundred tickets were issued at a Club meeting in September in the hope of raising much needed finance. A major development during the year was the purchase of Sandfield, which would prove to be an excellent asset for the Club. The Secretary thanked those in the town who contributed to the loan to purchase the field. He also congratulated Club Chairman, Bart Whelan, on being elected County Secretary for 1981.

The officers elected for 1981 were as follows

Chairman	-	Eamon McNelis
Vice Chairman	-	Bart Whelan.
Secretary	-	Edward Molloy.
Ass. Secretary	-	Conal A. Gildea.
Treasurer	-	John Herron.
Ass. Treasurer	-	Columba Diver.
P.R.O.	-	James McBrearty.

Finance Committee – Columba Diver, Bart Whelan, Patsy Gildea, James McBrearty and Paddy Herron.

Club Referees – Edward Molloy and Conal Gallagher.

First Aid – Charlie Keeney.

Senior Team Manager - Charlie Mooney.

Junior Manager - John Gallagher.

Senior Team Captain - Seamus Gallagher.

Vice Captain - Frank O'Donnell.

Junior Team Captain - James McBrearty.

Vice Captain - John M. O'Donnell.

Groundsmen - Edward Molloy and Thomas Breslin.

The following Under-Age managers were elected for the Year:-

U-12 - John M. O'Donnell, James McBrearty.

U-14 - Josie Brennan and Paddy Brennan.

U-16 - Charlie Keeney and Vincent McConnell.

U-18 - Eugene Bennett and Adrian Concarr.

U-21 - Michael Breslin and Bobby Moore.

The famine ends - Ardara win the Senior Championship

After the heavy defeat in the 1980 County final, the Senior team was generally written off as a Championship contender and this opinion was held by many Ardara people, as well as throughout the rest of the county. The players and management, however, did not pay heed to the sceptics and with the same team available in 1981 as in the previous year, there was a quiet confidence among the panel, that with the tag of Championship favourites no longer applying, then there was every chance of the team achieving success and by the end of 1981, it seemed Lady Luck had finally transferred her affection to Ardara and everyone received her with open arms.

The Championship draw pitted the team against their old rivals from Gweedore in the first round. In a tough first leg match in Sandfield, Ardara won on a score of 0-07 to 1-03. The return leg in Gweedore was played on 5th July and Ardara came out on top on a score of 2-04 to 0-07. Ardara played poorly in these first two matches but they were to improve as the Championship progressed. A whole hearted display saw off Naomh Columba in the next round, which was played on 2nd August in Fintra, on a scoreline of 2-07 to 0-07. The semi-final was against the holders, Kilcar. In a close game in Fintra, Ardara dethroned the Champions on a score of 1-05 to 0-05 and thus qualified for their second consecutive final.

Surprise packet, Four Masters", had come through the other half of the draw. Although playing in Division Two of the League, they had accounted for Roger Casement's in the first round, had a bye in the quarter final, and had surprised a fancied St. Eunan's team in the semi-final. Ardara once again were installed as favourites for the game. The atmosphere was tense for team and supporters alike, but on Sunday the 30th of August, the many defeats of previous years were forgotten when the team finally landed the Doctor Maguire Cup.



The Teams parade around MacCumhaill Park before the match.

ARDARA ARE THE CHAMPIONS

Four Masters" throw it away

Ardara 1-07 Four Masters' 0-06

As expected, Ardara took their fourth Senior Football Championship title on Sunday, with a four points win over Four Masters", the same margin which the Club had over Killygordon in the 1928 final, the last occasion on which they were County Champions. However, while there were scenes of unrestrained jubilation in the Ardara Camp, most neutrals in the large crowd would have had mixed feelings leaving MacCumhaill Park, Ballybofey. It was nice to see Ardara winning the Dr. Maguire Cup for the first time in 53 years, particularly after the disappointment they suffered last year, but at the same time one felt a great deal of sympathy for Four Masters", who must still be wondering how

they managed to lose this game.

In the first half Four Masters" were in complete control. Ardara's tactic of placing half forward Gerard McNelis with Connie Molloy at midfield instead of regular centre fielder Anthony Harkin was never a success, and the Four Masters' midfielders P.J. Dooley and Paul Duncan had a field day. The dominance in the middle of the park and a solid performance from the Four Masters" half back line of Peter Callaghan, P. J. McGarrigle and Jackie McGroarty left the underdogs very much the top dogs in the opening 30 minutes. In the circumstances, most of Ardara's heroes were in the defence. The Man of the Match

was Seamus Gallagher, whose move from full forward to left half back certainly paid dividends, because in the second half particularly, time and time again, he terminated promising Four Masters" moves in authoritative fashion. Kieran Keeney, although having a handful in Seamus Meehan, also did some great covering in the first half.

The first score of the game came after six minutes when, in their first attack, Connie Molloy put Ardara in front. The score was level two minutes later when Ardara corner back Eddie McLoone was penalised for over carrying and Marty Kelly pointed a free for Four Masters'. Four Masters" had three more wides in the next few minutes. In the 17th minute, Ardara were awarded a sideline kick on the left about 30 yards out. Gerard McNelis floated it into the middle, several players went up for the ball but it fell at the feet of Ardara full forward Eamon McNelis, who hit it first time on the bounce to the net from about 12 yards. Despite that setback, Four Masters" ploughed on and Connie Molloy put Ardara four points ahead when he pointed from a free after Paul Brennan was fouled. Joyce McMullan scored a second for Masters' and they also had two other wides afterwards. Just before half time Anthony Harkin set up Lanty Molloy for another Ardara point to leave the half time score Ardara 1-03 Four Masters" 0-02.

At the beginning of the second half, Gerard McNelis converted a free from about 35 yards. Two minutes later Marty Kelly scored a point and the same player missed two more scoreable chances. Ardara had a goal saved in the 8th minute. P. J. Dooley scored points for Masters' in the 10th and 12th minutes. Eamon Watters replaced Eamon McNelis on the Ardara side. Connie Molloy

scored his second point from a free to stretch the lead to four points. Ardara were now shaping more like winners but whether it was prompted by confidence or desperation, the sending in of the injured Anthony Molloy with a heavily strapped left knee to full forward in place of Frank McGhee was a strange move, because the big full back was greatly restricted in his movements.

In the 22nd minute, P. J. Dooley scored the best point of the game from 45 yards out. However, Ardara's victory was practically sealed in the 24th minute when Connie Molloy pointed from another free. Before the end Gerard McNelis was wide from a dead ball kick and Paul Brennan punched wide from a Lanty Molloy cross. Marty Kelly had yet another wide for Donegal at the end.

Ardara - Patsy Gildea, Eddie McLoone, Martin Sweeney, Conal A. Gildea, Noel Watters, Kieran Keeney, Seamus Gallagher (Capt), Connie Molloy (0-04), Gerard McNelis (0-02), Lanty Molloy (0-01), Frank McGee, Anthony Harkin, Paul Brennan, Eamon McNelis (1-00) and John Herron. Subs used - Eamon Watters for Eamon McNelis and Anthony Molloy for Frank McGee.

Four Masters' - Michael Kelly, Gerard Breslin, Donal Monaghan, Dermot McGettigan, Peter Callaghan, P. J. McGarrigle, Jackie McGroarty, Paul Duncan, P. J. Dooley (0-03), Marty Kelly (0-02), Seamus Meehan (Capt), Joyce McMullan (0-01), Peter Coulter, Cormy Carr and Manus Brennan. Subs used - Michael McBrearty for Coulter, Michael Breslin for Callaghan and Martin Gillen for McGroarty (injured).

Referee - Sean McGoldrick (Lifford).



Seamus Gallagher lifts the Dr. Maguire Cup after the victory.

Although to the neutral supporter, the victory was far from impressive, it meant little to the huge support from the Parish. As the Dr. Maguire Cup was presented to Seamus Gallagher by County Chairman Michael Gillespie, there was a huge feeling of relief, that the jinx had finally been broken and the 53 year wait since Tom

Gallagher had led his side to victory in 1928 was over. The likes of Maxwell, McHugh, Brennan, Watters etc, and so many other great footballers through the ages had given their all to win a Championship medal but to no avail. But at least they had all lived to see another title back in the Parish, even though they were not wearing the jersey themselves. It was special, also, for team manager, Charlie Mooney, who had been deeply involved in keeping the G.A.A flag flying in the parish through the seventies, and through some of the leanest years that the Club had ever experienced. The celebrations continued for a whole week, with the cup visiting all corners of the parish in a huge cavalcade. The festivities were reported on in the Democrat that week as follows:

Non Stop Celebrations in Ardara

At 4.50 p.m. on Sunday evening last a sea of green and gold on the pitch of MacCumhaill Park, Ballybofey, told its own story as Ardara's fifty three year wait for glory was over and they once again got their hands on the Dr. Maguire Cup. The massive Ardara support erupted when the County Chairman, Mr. Michael Gillespie, presented the Cup to the Ardara Captain, Seamus Gallagher, after a tremendously well fought match.

The cavalcade back to Ardara stretched for miles with each car gaily decorated with flags and banners. When they reached their destination at Ardara, there were incredible scenes of celebrations, which went on until the early hours. A jubilant Club Chairman, Mr. Bart Whelan, addressed the enthusiastic gathering by paying tribute to the tremendous effort put in by the Players, Officials, and not forgetting the Supporters, whom he considered to be the best in the County. He also praised Tteam Manager Charlie Mooney for his shrewd handling of the team. Team Captain Seamus Gallagher and Team Trainer Anthony Harkin also paid tribute to their team mates and supporters, who stuck by them through thick and thin.

Following an excellent meal in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel, the Team and Officials watched their moment of glory again on video before

rejoining the festivities. At the Victory Dance the Cup was again presented to Seamus Gallagher, by Molly Gallagher, the wife of the last Ardara Captain (Tom Gallagher) to win the Trophy in 1928,. She said that it was a tremendous honour for her to hand this cup over to another of the Gallagher clan. Mr. Paddy McGill, O.S., and Charlie Mooney, also paid tribute to the successful team.

On Monday evening with little sign of the festivities coming to an end, a tour of the Portnoo, Narin, and Rosbeg areas took place, with a few stops along the way to pay tribute to the people who kept Gaelic Football going in this end of the Parish. When all the celebrations died down, it was only then that the more experienced men like Patsy Gildea, Frank McGhee, Eamon McNelis, John Herron and John Boyle would have realised that they finally had got their hands on the one medal that had eluded them throughout their careers. It also shows what can happen in football when young Paul Brennan could claim a Senior Championship Medal after only a handful of Senior appearances, while his father Frankie, who had no equal in the County for years, never got the reward that his play deserved.



Molly Gallagher, wife of Tom Gallagher, captain of the 1928 Senior winning team holds the Dr. Maguire Cup with captain Seamus Gallagher, also in the photo is Kathy McGill and John Roarty.



Former player John 'Ban' McNelis takes a drink from the Doctor Maguire cup from Team Captain Seamus Gallagher. Also in photo from left is John Gildea (Lurganbouy), Martin Sweeney, Noel Watters, Frank O'Donnell, Eamon McNelis, Gerard McNelis, Charlie O'Donnell, Finbarr Whelan. Boy in front is Michael Kennedy.



As County Champions, the team were drawn against Ballinderry in the Ulster Club Championship. The Ardara team expected to play Scotstown from Monaghan, but the Derry men had pulled off a shock win. Ardara's lack of experience at this level, however, was exposed and the Derry men won easily on a 2-9 to 0-5 scoreline.

In the League of 1981, Ardara finished in third place in Division One, behind winners Kilcar and runners-up Aodh Ruadh. The team had other success though. They won the prestigious Sandy Harper 13-a-side Tournament in Castlefin, with victories over MacCumhaill's, St Michael's and Red Hugh's, to face Kilcar in the final. With rivalry between the sides at an all time high, there was no love lost in Castlefin that evening, and after a hard fought game, Ardara won by two points. The team finished off the year by capturing the McNelis Cup, defeating Naomh Columba in the annual match between the Glen men and the County Champions.



Connie Molloy from Leamagowra, won the Man of the Match award in the 1981 County final. The eldest of the Molloy clan, Connie was a key player in the growth of the Club's fortunes at Senior level in the late '70s and early '80s. He won his first medal in the 1971 Juvenile Championship win by Ardara/Glenties and made his way onto the Senior team in 1974. His accurate left foot, which 'curled' over hundreds of points in his career for Ardara, was feared throughout the

county and his competitive nature singled him out as one of the hardest players around. Connie emigrated to New York in 1982 along with his brothers, Lanty and Frank. He returned home annually, whenever he got the call to play for Ardara in the Championship, and never let the side down. He made a huge contribution to the Donegal New York Club, joining them in 1982, and he was still featuring 21 years later, in 2003, on the Club's Junior team. He won New York Junior and Senior Championship medals with the exiles, and also managed both sides to Championship victories in the Big Apple. Connie passed on his talent to his son C.J. who won an All Ireland Under-14 Feile medal with the New York team, in their 2003 victory in Galway. Although permanently resident in New York with his wife Eileen and children, C.J and Fiona, Connie still remains a great supporter of the green and gold when on his annual visits home to Ardara.

Junior Team

Playing in Division Two for the first time, the Junior team found it difficult to accumulate points against teams who were all playing in the Intermediate Championship. At the end of the season, they had only two points from nine games and were relegated to Division Three. In the Championship, they went out in the first round to Four Masters". The team that played in that match was as follows:

Eugene Bennett, Michael Nicholson, Bill Shovlin, Paddy Breslin, Pat Shovlin, Adrian Concarr, Frankie Cassidy, John M. O'Donnell, Pat Brennan, Sean McGuinness, Paddy McGill, Leo Watters, James Gallagher, Pat McGill and Brian McGill.



Taken in Gaelic Park New York in 1981, Seamus Gillen (Convoy), Stephen Campbell, Frank Molloy, Pat McNelis (son of Charles), Jimmy McNelis (son of James Max).

Under-21s reach County Semi-final

The performances of the Club Under-Age teams in 1981 continued on an upward curve. The Under-21 team, who were defending their title, beat Cloughaneely in the first round home leg of the Championship, but in a mix up in the date for the return leg, the team and were eliminated by the Minor Board from the Competition. An appeal to the Senior Board, though, got the team reinstated, but it took three more games to separate the sides, with Ardara coming out on top in a play-off replay in MacCumhaill Park. The team then advanced to meet Four Masters" in the County semi-final at Ballybofey, and in one of the best games at the venue that year, Four Masters" were the victors by two points.



The Ardara Under-21 team of 1981 who were beaten in the County semi-final by Four Masters'

Back L-R: Donie McCole, Anthony Molloy, Lanty Molloy, Hugh Gerard Gavigan, Gerard McNelis, John Kennedy, Paddy Breslin, Sean McGuinness, Jamsie Gallagher, Seamus Ryan, Kevin McGill.

Front L-R: Vinny Cassidy, Paddy Brennan, Liam Molloy, Martin Gavigan, Ted Breslin, Frankie Cassidy, Eamon Watters, Paul Brennan, Danny Gallagher.



Paul Brennan, who played for Donegal Minor team in the 1981 Ulster Championship. Paul went on to play for the County Under-21s in 1983 and 1984.

Minors thrown out of Championship

The Minor team reached the semi-final of the League, but Four Masters'' were the victors despite a great team performance. In the Minor Championship the team played only once in their section due to teams not fulfilling their fixtures. In the County play-off stages, the team fielded forty minutes late against Termon, and despite winning the match, lost the points on the Referee's Report. Appeals to both the Minor and Senior Boards failed, so the team's chances were dashed, after playing only two Championship games.

The Juvenile team finished second in their section, but did not qualify for the play-offs. A bruising encounter with Rosses Rovers in Sandfield, in which five players were sent off, saw their opponents qualify for the closing stages of the Championship.

Under-14s Reach County Final

The U-14 team provided the Club with its biggest boost at Under-Age in 1981 by reaching the County final. Josie Brennan did tremendous work with this team in their preparation, but a slick Killybegs outfit were much too strong. They dominated the match throughout and won easily on a score of 5-14 to 0-03. The teams were :-

Ardara - Declan Gallagher, Pauric Brennan, Paul McNelis, Philip Gallagher, Paul McGinley, Brian Shovlin, Bernie Watters, Luke Gavigan, Seamus McGuinness, Luke Brennan, Pat McGinley, Ian Melly, Pauric McGuinness, Dermot Maguire and Peter McGill.

Subs – Joseph Brennan, Columba Molloy, Terry McCole, Brian O'Donnell, James Breslin and Vincent McConnell.

Killybegs – Joseph McGuinness, Aidan Doogan, Denis Carberry, Gavin O'Rourke, Francie Murray, John Gallagher, Willie McCallig, John Cunningham, Barry McGowan, Peter Neilson, Conor White, Martin Murchan, Arthur Meehan, Barry Cunningham and Conal Gallagher.

Subs – Declan McMenamin, Gerard McCallig, Shane Doogan and Paul Carberry.



The Ardara Under-14 team who were beaten in the 1981 County final by Killybegs.
Back L-R: Brian O'Donnell, Paul McGinley, Joseph Brennan, Terry McCole, Brian Shovlin (Summy), Pauric Brennan, Pat McGinley, Seamus McGuinness, Philip Gallagher (Ballycashel), Luke Gavigan, Columba Molloy, Clement Herron.
Front L-R: Ian Melly, Dermot Maguire, Vinny McConnell, Peter McGill, Luke Brennan, Declan Gallagher, Bernie Watters, Pauric McGuinness, Paul McNelis, Jamsie Breslin (Stragar).

Club visit to Tirconail Gaels

At a Club meeting in March, it was agreed that the Club should plan a trip to London at the end of the year, and visit the Tirconail Gaels Club. The rather presumptuous trip was planned as a celebration of what hopefully would be a Senior Championship title in August. Over 50 people travelled in October on Anthony McGinley's coach, leaving on Thursday via the Larne/Cairnryan ferry and returning on the following Tuesday. The Tirconail Gaels Club had just won their first Intermediate Championship on the previous Sunday. The teams played a challenge match at Hayes, Middlesex on the Sunday, with Ardara holding on for a 1-7 to 0-6 victory. The team's were as follows:

Ardara: Patsy Harkin, Frank O'Donnell, Eddie McLoone, Conal Aidan Gildea, Lanty Molloy, Martin Sweeney, John Herron, Anthony Harkin, Connie Molloy, Seamus Gallagher, Frank McGhee, Kevin McGill, Paul Brennan, Patsy Gildea, Noel Watters. Sub: Josie Gallagher for Frank McGhee.

Tirconail Gaels: John Boyle (Frosses), Jim Downey (Cork), Frank Glynn (Clare), Eddie McGinty (Glenfin), Dermot O'Connor, P. J. McGinley (Glen), John Rynn (Leitrim), P. J. Sexton, Jerry O'Sullivan (Limerick), Danny Tully (Dunkineely), John McParland (Down), George Walsh (Down), Paddy Burke (Frosses), Brendan Flanagan (Fermanagh), John Martin McConnell (Ardara). Sub: Paul O'Donnell (Mountcharles) for McConnell.

Referee: John Gallagher (Ardara)

A brilliant weekend was had by all, with the Tirconail Gaels Club doing their utmost to make their stay as enjoyable as possible. Functions were held in the 'Spotted Dog' in Harrow on Saturday night, and in the Roxborough, Harrow, on Sunday night, when presentations were exchanged.

Other news

The Club had a mini crisis early in the year, when Club Chairman, Eamon McNelis, resigned from the position. At an Extraordinary General Meeting on the 24th of May, Vice Chairman Bart Whelan agreed to take over the position until the end of the year.

The Lord Mayor campaign, proved to be a major success, with Brid Herron of Edergole being declared the winner, after raising the largest sum of money for the Club.

To celebrate the Championship success, the Club ran their Dinner Dance in the Portnoo Hotel. A capacity crowd honoured the winning panel of players, with Treasurer of the County Board, Francie Cunningham, making the presentation. At the function, Connie Molloy received an Award from Radio Na Gaeltachta, for being selected Man of the Match in the County final. Packie John Gildea, from the last Championship winning team in 1928, was also presented with a medal, as he did not receive one at the time. The Annual Buffet was held on New Year's Eve in the Nesbitt Arms, and the annual awards were presented at this function. Senior Player of the Year was Frank Mc Ghee, Junior Player went to James McBrearty, and Clubman of the Year was John Herron.



The 1981 Senior Panel after the presentation of Championship medals at the 1981 Dinner Dance in the Portnoo hotel.

Back L-R: Frank McGhee, Gerard McNelis, Anthony Harkin, John Boyle, Donie McCole, Anthony Molloy, Eamon McNelia, John McGill, Frank O'Donnell, Patsy Gildea.

Middle L-R: Conal Aidan Gildea, Kevin McGill, Eamon Watters, Connie Molloy, Seamus Gallagher, Josie Gallagher, Patsy Harkin, John Herron.

Front L-R: Noel Watters, Paul Brennan, Kieran Keeney, Lanty Molloy.



Charlie Mooney

Of many people in the Parish who were overjoyed at the Club's Championship success in 1981, few would have taken as much satisfaction out of the victory as the manager of the team, the wee man from Brackey. Throughout the seventies, many changes were made at officer level in the Club, with the main positions being changed around at each A.G.M. Regardless of who was elected, though, behind the scenes, the main inspiration keeping the Club going came from Charlie Mooney and

Joe Larry. Charlie was involved in everything in the Club from fund raising to managing the team, transporting the players in his blue Volkswagen van and, on many Sundays, trawling the town to get the last few names on the team sheet, many of whom had never before (or after!) turned out for the team. Many teams were picked on the back of a 20 Major box, with the same item being used as the team list. 'Mooney' tried all sorts of schemes to bring in finance, the most successful of which was the annual Marquee, which ran in the seventies and had the top groups from all over the country appearing at the Killybegs Road venue. As a boy, Charlie played for Brackey School, but never turned out for the Club until adult level. He was then part of the Junior Championship winning panels of 1969 and 1970. He always played at corner forward, where his turn of speed caught many defenders off guard. In the 1970 victory, he was one of the management team, along with Joe Larry and Jimmy O'Donnell. Charlie was involved in the Senior team all through the seventies, and it was only fitting that he was in charge when the team reached their pinnacle in 1981. Here, in an interview with John Michael O'Donnell, he reminisces about his times in the Club.

Q. What are your earliest memories of Gaelic football in the Brackey area?

A. I remember football being played in "Wee" Anthony Breslin's field on Sundays. Thady Gallagher, Corney McNelis, Vincent McConnell and John Keeney were among those who were regulars on a Sunday afternoon.

Q. When did you begin playing with the Club?

A. I never played Under-Age football. I started playing in 1964. John 'Bán' McNelis and Edward O'Donnell were regulars then. When I was going to school we had matches with other schools before John Keeney started the School League. We also played matches against Meentinadea and the Town. The teams were made up of young and older players. Later, I played on the St. Enda's Team in 1969.

Q. Did you go to Inter-Club matches?

- A. Every Sunday on which there was a match. Club meetings were held then after Sunday Mass and Dan Ward would send Paddy 5th Class to collect Thady 'Big Teague' Gallagher, and I would get a lift with him to Kentucky. I remember Dan Ward standing in the middle of the field writing the team list and someone said to him; "You haven't Peter Pat on?" Dan replied "There he is there, Peadar Ó Breisleáin"! Little did I think then that I would be doing the same thing many years later.

Q. When did you first take charge of teams?

- A. We amalgamated with Glenties in the late '60s for the Juvenile and Minor competitions. Many of the young players were employed in the Mart at the time and Joe Larry, who had a great interest in football, and myself, brought players to Glenties for training under Columba McDyre. After that I started attending meetings. I remember Paddy James McNelis, Paddy McGill, Cashel, Patsy McCabe and myself going to a Club meeting in Brennan's. Tommy Tom was Chairman, I think, and Frankie Brennan was Treasurer. I remember an A.G.M. that was held in the Greenhouse and only six attended: Tommy Boyle, Jimmy O'Donnell, John Byrne, Patsy Sweeney, Joe Larry and myself.

Q. When did you begin to manage teams?

- A. At that time, there were three or four selectors appointed and I remember Seán Young coaching the 1967 Junior team. I reviewed many of his drills and tried to apply them in later years. We didn't have coaches as such, but if you were fond of work, you got plenty of it, and that is how I came into team management, but according to the records of the time there wasn't the position of team manager mentioned.

Q. You must have fond memories of 1970?

- A. I remember on the way to play Glen in an early round of the Junior Championship Packie Keeney asking "Who are the favourites to win this Championship"? and Joe Larry said, "We are if we get past these bucks". Joe and myself went to Killybegs the previous day looking for a referee. We asked Des Houlihan, but he said that he was not available but told us to ask Sonny Daly. Daly refereed the match in Glen, and we were in the semi-final against St. Michaels' on a wet and windy day on a muddy pitch. We scrambled through and we now faced Bundoran in the final. I remember coming out the gate and the Club Chairman saying; "I don't care what you do, you won't beat Bundoran". Bundoran had won their semi-final easily.

With three weeks left before the final, we started to train in the Saddler's Hall and do road work around the circle. I remember Pat Shovlin (corner back) getting weak one night in the hall, and when I asked him to sit down he said "No" and continued on training.

In the final, when the final whistle blew, I thought that we had lost by a point, when in fact it was a draw. We won the replay.

A week later at a meeting in the Courthouse it was praise and congrats all round, but before the second match we were told often enough that Ardara had never won a replay.

It was a great victory as Bundoran had Declan O'Carroll, Brian McEniff, Brendan McHugh, Peter Barry and Billy Gavigan, all County players, on their side.

Q. This victory must have been a great boost to the morale of the Club?

A. There were flags on cars for weeks after that and at our first dinner dance which was held in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel on New Years Eve 240 attended.

Q. Who helped you with the management of that team?

A. Joe Larry, Jimmy O'Donnell also helped, he was Treasurer at the time.

Q. Winning the Championship in 1981 must have been very special, after the disappointment in the 1980 final.

A. It was a great feeling to be in the final of 1980. For the first time in many years we were inside playing in a final rather than sitting in the stand looking in. Of course, it was disappointing to lose, but the victory in '81 made up for it.

It was an even greater feeling then to take part in the Ulster Club Championship for the first time. Until then we only read about the Ulster Championship, now we were there competing.

Winning the County Senior Championship was also a great lift to older players. Jim Maxwell cried when I talked to him about the victory. Jim, despite being a great player for Club and County, had never won a senior medal.

Another great achievement for the Cub was winning the County final of Comórtas Peile na Gaeltachta in 1977, defeating a very good Kilcar team in Glen, and went on to play in the finals in Dingle. That was also a first.

Q. Did you get any help with coaching?

A. The arrival of Anthony Harkin on the scene made a huge difference. He was a qualified coach. I had ideas but couldn't put them across to the players. Anthony listened, understood my ideas and carried out my instructions. It was

gratifying to see the same ideas being used in coaching the County team ten years later.

Q. The Club grounds in Kentucky were closed for ten years. You were involved in rebuilding the pitch!

- A. I have a memory of the pitch in 1959. Ardara were playing a Club from Derry in a schoolboys' match, the pitch was lined out with sawdust and it looked great. Years later I remember thinking; wouldn't it be great to have our pitch in as good a condition again. At a meeting, Francie Diver suggested that his brother, Sonny, be asked to plan the draining. Sonny lined out the drains and Big Paddy mapped them and Jim Kennedy of Rushyhill opened the drains. I remember carrying the pipes from Gweedore on an old lorry. It was the occasion of Fr. Sweeney's ordination, the Tullies were lined with arches and I nearly cleaned them all out of it. That was before Christmas.*

Big Paddy, myself and young Larry Gallagher, who was on holidays from College, started digging the drains and Columba Diver joined us later. Danny Shovlin cut up all the fir logs that were taken out and we had extra help on Sundays. The drains were filled with chips. The hollow across the centre was filled with river gravel, thanks to Donal Byrne.

Josie Kennedy and myself drew gravel from the mouth of the Duog, and I brought clay from Glengesh.

There was a track machine, the property of Dan Greene, being used to level the refuse dump on the Bog Road. We got that machine to level the gravel across the centre of the pitch.

I believe that it was John (Eoin) Breslin who sowed the grass seed with a fiddle. In later years it was a lot easier, but back then, without the benefit of a FÁS Scheme, it was all hard work.

Q. It cost a lot of money to redevelop the pitch and run the Club at the same time. How were they funded?

- A. We ran raffles, Bazaars and dancing festivals.*

On one occasion, we brought two armchairs and a fridge to the chapel gate one Sunday morning and sold raffle tickets for one shilling each.

We held Bazaars in the Iona Hall. I remember one particular night we ran an entire Bazaar and ran the draw without any duplicate tickets.

We ran dancing Carnivals. We had a marquee in the Hotel Holm and later in John Molloy's field on the Killybegs Road.

It was difficult to keep the Club going then because Finn Harps were going well and we, here in the Club, were often told that we were flogging a dead horse.

Q. Joe Larry was your right-hand man in those days!

- A. *Joe was very good at picking players, he got on well with them, and looking to the future, he tried to get employment for them in order to keep them at home. Joe stayed very much in the background but had the success of the club at heart.*

I travelled everywhere with him. I remember after one All-Ireland, Joe had parked his car along the Canal and was waiting for one of his passengers to return. He was getting very impatient when Paddy McGill, who knew Joe to be a big Fianna Fáil supporter, shouted "Look Joe, there's De Valera passing", to which Joe retorted "Never mind Dev, would you go and get Brian McTeague!"

Q. You put a lot of time and effort into the Club?

- A. *Well I would like to think that we laid the foundations and it is great to see the great condition of the field and fine dressing rooms. It is a long way from the time the team toggled out in the back of my van and many of the players didn't have football boots and we had one ball and only fifteen jerseys. When Columba Diver became Chairman we had all the meetings at Diver's counter. He was Chairman for 3 years in the seventies and I don't think he spoke (in public) for the three years.*

I remember when he returned from America. I put him on the subs, which annoyed him. I remember saying to him, "You left me and went to Gweedore but when you came back you got involved in the work on the field. "Aye", he said, "and I'm there ever since!"



Brid and Paddy Herron, pictured after Brid won the Lord Mayor election in 1981.

1982

There was a great degree of satisfaction at the 1981 A.G.M when Edward Molloy gave his first report as Club Secretary. He outlined the historic year and the winning of the Senior Championship, the Sandy Harper tournament and the Dr. McNelis Cup.

He said: *"The victory cavalcade back to Ardara was the most memorable sporting spectacle in the Club's history, as hundreds of people came out to welcome back*

the Cup and applaud our heroes. After the match, celebrations were held in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel and a victory cavalcade to Narin, Portnoo and Rosbeg the next evening helped to make it the greatest week in our Club's history".

The Treasurer, John Herron, stated that the Club had now £310.00 in its 'kitty' going into 1982, with the income for the year running at £7,210.00 and expenditure of £6,900.00. Glowing tributes were paid to the Treasurer on the manner in which he handled the Club's finances and for his fund raising during the year.



Niall McCole from Narin, who was elected Club Chairman in 1982. Niall was very involved in all aspects of the Club in the eighties and also managed the Junior and Under-Age teams. Niall was one of the youngest people to be elected Chairman in a number of years.

The following officers were elected for 1982:-

Presidents	- Very Rev. Liam McCaul and Rev. Frank McAteer.
Chairman	- Niall McCole
Vice Chirman	- Pádraig S. Mac a Ghoill
Secretary	- Edward Molloy
Ass. Secretary	- Conal A. Gildea
Treasurer	- John Herron
P.R.O.	- James McBrearty
Senior Team Manager	- Packie Maguire with Frank McGhee as Team Trainer.
Junior Team Manager	- John Gallagher.
Senior Team Captain	- Connie Molloy
Vice Captain	- Anthony Harkin.
Junior Team Captain	- J. M. O'Donnell
Vice Captain	- Francis Connolly.
Groundsman	- Edward Molloy.
Ciste Gael Officer	- Bart Whelan
Oifigeach Na Gaelige	- Prionsías Mac Aodha
Club Referees	- Edward Molloy and Conal Gallagher.

Under-Age Managers for the year were:-

- U-12** - John M. O'Donnell, James McBrearty and John McConnell.
- U-14** - Bart Whelan and Niall McCole.
- U-16** - Josie Brennan and Charlie Keeney.

U-18 – Josie Gallagher and Martin Sweeney.

U-21 – Seamus Gallagher and Lanty Molloy.

Scór Committee were – Bart Whelan, Charlie Keeney and John M. O'Donnell.



John Herron held the position of Club Treasurer from 1981 – 1983. The popular Hillhead man was a tireless Club worker in the eighties and was also a regular on the Senior team during his playing career. He was a deserving winner of the Clubman of the Year award in 1981 for his great work as a Club officer. He played most of his football at corner forward, but made the journey back to defence and finished off his career at corner back. He won the Senior Player of the Year Award in 1985. John went on to manage the Senior team in the mid eighties, before he emigrated to New York for a number of years. Whilst abroad, he became very involved in the Donegal New York Club and was widely respected for his work with Club teams and at officer level.

Seniors crash out of Championship

The 1982 Senior Championship saw Ardara draw neighbours Killybegs in the first round. The Killybegs side had been Intermediate for the previous few years, and it was expected to be a fairly easy hurdle to overcome. The 'local derby' factor came into play, however, and a determined Killybegs performance in the first leg, in Sandfield, left Ardara's effort to stay in the Championship under pressure.

Ardara held by Killybegs Ardara 0-07 Killybegs 1-04

Senior Championship title holders, Ardara, almost came a cropper in this, their first defence of the title at Sandfield on Sunday last when they met a determined Killybegs fifteen in their first round first leg game. Killybegs opened with a goal from Bobby Daly and a point from Dominic Mullen. Although having plenty of possession, the home side really struggled when it came to taking their scores. It was midway through the first half before Lanty Molloy finally landed a fine long range point. John Herron and Seamus Gallagher added further points to leave the half time score 1-01 to 0-03.

A brace of early points in the second half saw Killybegs stretch their lead, before Ardara came into the game with points from Gerard McNelis (free), Lanty Molloy (0-02) and Anthony Molloy to edge narrowly in front. A Jimmy White free saved the day for Killybegs in the dying minutes. For

Ardara, Conal Aidan Gildea saved his colleagues on several occasions with timely interceptions and Kieran Keeney, Lanty Molloy and Anthony Harkin had their moments.

Ardara – John Kennedy, Eddie McLoone, Bobby Moore, Conal A. Gildea, John Herron, Kieran Keeney, Donie McCole, Anthony Harkin, Connie Molloy, Gerard McNelis, Lanty Molloy, Frank McGhee, Eamon Watters, Seamus Gallagher, Paul Brennan. Subs – Anthony Molloy for Eamon Watters.

Killybegs – Donal Cannon, Seamus O'Donnell, Charles Boyle, John Murrin, Conal Gallagher, Hughie McFadden, Eamon Byrne, Noel Dorrian, John Boyle, Jimmy White, Bobby Daly, Kevin White, Charlie O'Donnell, Dominic Mullen and Pat Dorrian.

Referee – Sean McGee (Downings).

With the team facing a must win situation in Fintra, the supporters were still hopeful that they would come through. Killybegs blew the form book out of the window however and ran out convincing winners on a 3-7 to 1-5 scoreline.

In the Gaeltacht competition, the team met Gweedore in Glencolmcille and were lucky to win by one point. With just a few minutes left in the match, an injury occurred to Gweedore's Anton Carroll, which caused the match to be stopped for a lengthy period and when it resumed the late-arriving Molloy brothers Connie and Lanty joined the team and were instrumental in turning an imminent defeat into a one point victory. The final, was played the following day, was against Kilcar. A gale force wind blew from end to end and a stronger finishing Kilcar side ran out winners by 1-06 to 0-05.

In Division One of the League, the team won five matches and lost three, and finished in 3rd place in the table.

County team take part in the Shield

As a result of an Ardara motion to Convention in 1982, (Charlie Mooney being the instigator) the Donegal County team was entered in Division One of the Shield in 1982. The home Club were allowed to play their County players, while the County team fielded a team from the rest of the clubs. The Ardara v County match was played in Pearse Memorial Park in August, and before a large crowd on a terrible day, the home side earned a draw on a scoreline of Ardara 2-4 Donegal 1-7. Prior to the game, the Park was officially re-opened and blessed by Fr Liam McCaul. The teams lined out as follows:

Ardara – John Kennedy, Conal A. Gildea, Martin Sweeney, Ted Breslin, Paul Brennan, Kieran Keeney (0-01), Donie McCole, Anthony Molloy (1-00), Gerard McNelis (0-010, John McGill (0-01), Seamus Gallagher (0-02), Anthony Harkin, John Herron, Eamon McNelis, Bobby Moore. Subs – Eamon Watters (0-01) for Bobby Moore, Patsy Harkin for John Kennedy and John Kennedy for Eamon Watters.

County – Naul McCole, Michael McBrearty, D. McGettigan, John McGowan, Matt Gallagher, Donal Reid, Tommy McDermott, Sean Gavigan, Sylvester Maguire, Seamus Reilly (0-03), Charlie Mulgrew (1-00), Joyce McMullen, Seamus Meehan, Frank Rushe (1-00), Patrick McGroarty. Subs – I Catterson for McCole, Michael Carr (0-01) for Sylvester Maguire and Martin Shovlin for Tommy McDermott.

The Senior team qualified for the Shield semi-finals, which took place in March of 1983, but were defeated by Aodh Ruadh by one point. In other competitions, they were defeated in the Sandy Harper Tournament, 1st Round, by Four Masters",

while in the MacCumhaill's 13-a-side tournament, the team reached the final against St.Eunan's, a game that ended in a draw, St Eunans 1-13 Ardara 1-10. The replay, however, was forgettable for Ardara, and they went down tamely on a 4-6 to 0-2 scoreline. The only silverware gathered that year was the Glenties 7 a side tournament. Ardara defeated Glenties and Kilcar before accounting for Na Rossa in the final.



Seamus Gallagher, of the Portnoo Road, played for Donegal in the 1982 Ulster Championship against Armagh. A Kilcar man born and bred, Seamus served the Kilcar Club through the '60s and '70s, before he transferred to Ardara in 1977. He soon became an important player for the team, both in defence or attack. With his adopted Club, he won Shield medals in 1979 and 1980 and, of course, captained the team to the Championship success of 1981. As a manager, he led the Under-21 team to Championship success in 1980 and also managed the Senior team in 1982 for a spell. He returned to Kilcar at the beginning of 1983 and went on to win four Senior League (1981-84) and two Senior Championship medals in 1985 and 1989. He returned to Ardara for two further spells, in the nineties, to manage the Senior team, and also acted as a County Selector under P.J. McGowan in the same decade.

Junior Team

The Club Junior team took part in four competitions during 1982; the Gaeltacht, League, Championship and Shield. In the Junior Gaeltacht, they defeated Naomh Mhuire (1-6 to 1-4), and Kilcar (1-8 to 1-5) before going down in the semi-finals in Glencolumbcille on Whit week-end to Cloughaneely on a 5-9 to 2-2 scoreline. In the Junior Championship, the team defeated Naomh Bríd and Four Master's, but were beaten in the quarter-final by Na Rossa's first team by a 1-6 to 0-3 margin. The team finished mid-table in both the Shield and Junior League.

Under the management of John Gallagher a total of 51 players turned out for the Junior team of 1982.



Gaelic Park-1982, Liam, Connie, Frank, and Lanty Molloy. Also in picture is Sean O'Grady (Mayo).

Minor and Under-21 teams reach County Finals

The Club Minor and Under-21 teams both reached their County finals in 1982.

In the Under-21 Championship, the team met Convoy in the first round, but Convoy failed to turn up, resulting in Ardara getting a walkover into the next round. Their next opponents were Naomh Ultan, with the gutsy Dunkineely side fighting all the way and going down by just two points 0-10 to 1-05. The uncanny accuracy from play and placed balls by Gerard McNelis was the real difference between the sides. A quarter final meeting with Naomh Conaill was played at Sandfield on the toss of a coin. Glenties were a tough nut to crack, but, they finally wilted under pressure. Anthony Molloy, who was playing his first game in the competition, was dominant in midfield.

They then advanced to meet Glenfin, in Glenties, on the day after the Ardara Show. The after effects of the previous day's (and night's!) activities were very evident and they barely scraped a draw. Team Manager, Seamus Gallagher, read the riot act and this had the desired effect on the following Sunday, when they completely outclassed their opponents by 3-09 to 0-04. With seven of the team already holding U-21 medals from their 1980 success, hopes were high that a second Championship could be won, but it was not to be. They met Aodh Rua in the final and went down on a score of 2-10 to 0-05. In this match Ardara made several brave attempts but they could not match a skilful Aodh Rua side that included six of the County Under-21 team.

The teams were:-

Ardara – John Kennedy, Stephen Sweeney, Martin Gavigan, Frankie Cassidy, Jackie Gallagher, Donie McCole, Ted Breslin, Anthony Molloy, Gerard McNelis, John McGill, Paul Brennan, Eamon Watters Luke Gavigan, Gabriel Gallagher and Patrick Gallagher.

Subs – Eamon Cunningham for Frankie Cassidy, Frankie Cassidy for Eamon Cunningham, Patrick McGill, Jimmy Brennan, Paul Cassidy, P. J. Cassidy, Thomas Maguire, Peter Breslin and Vincent Cassidy.

Aodh Rua – Gary Walsh, Pdraig McLoone, Pascal McTiernan, Paul Tuohy, Kieran Tinny, Tommy McDermott, Eunan Gallagher, Sylvester Maguire, Matt Gallagher, Pauric Bromley, Pauric Gallagher, Brian Murray, Frankie Gallagher, Conor McMahon and Eunan Doyle.



**The Ardara Under-21 team that was beaten in the County final in 1982 by Aodh Ruadh.
Back L-R: Vinny Cassidy, Paul Cassidy, Stephen Sweeney, Donie McCole, Paddy Joe Cassidy, Anthony Molloy, Ted Breslin, Frankie Cassidy, John McGill, Eamon Cunningham, John Kennedy, Gabriel Gallagher, Seamus Gallagher.**

Front L-R: Martin Gavigan, Paul Brennan, Patrick Gallagher, Gerard McNelis, Eamon Watters, Jackie Gallagher, Luke Gavigan, Thomas Maguire, Jimmy Brennan, Pat McGill.

For the first time since 1970, the 1982 Minor Championship was run by the newly formed South-West Divisional Board. After a tough section, Ardara tied with Naomh Mhuire at the top of the table, and after a play-off with the Rosses men, advanced to the Divisional semi-final. A one point victory over Kilcar, in Fintra, qualified the team for the final. A brilliant save on the goal line by Martin Gavigan in the last minutes of the match, ensured the victory. In the South-West final against Na Rossa, the Leitir men provided stiff opposition, with the Bonner brothers Declan, Michael and Donal, showing their class. Ardara held out for the win, though by the narrowest of margins, and captain Jackie Gallagher was presented with the 'Paddy the Cope Memorial Cup'.

The County semi-final was played on the 8th August against St Eunan's. The game was a severe test of character, as score for score became the order of play. A free kick, awarded fifty yards out, was to prove the ticket to the County final, as a well struck kick by Luke Gavigan went all the way to the net. As in the Under-21 final, the team were pitted against the Under-Age kingpins of the County at the time, Aodh Ruadh, who were going for their fourth Minor Championship in a row.

County Minor Championship Final **Aodh Rua 0-13 Ardara 0-08**

The continuing dominance of the Ballyshannon side over the Minor Football Championship continued last Sunday, when, at MacCumhaill Park, Ballybofey, they recorded a five point win over Ardara in a hard fought and exciting final.

Both sides had key players and thanks to players like Brian Murray, Luke Gavigan, Frankie Gallagher and Jackie Gallagher, the Minor Final was full of action. Ardara took the first score of the match with a point from Luke Gavigan. A high shot from Alan Murray saw Aodh Rua level seconds later. A poor clearance from the Ballyshannon defence left John Kennedy in for Ardara's second point in the fifth minute and Luke Gavigan extended this lead a minute later. A great Ardara move, which started at the back with Jackie Gallagher, found its way up field to Luke Gavigan, who in turn sent Pat McGill through to score Ardara's fourth point in the eleventh minute.

Aodh Rua came back into the game with Declan Gallagher (0-01), Frankie Gallagher (0-02) and Alan Murray (0-01) knocking over points. Just before the interval Ardara went level with a fine point by Conal Cunningham, but Declan Gallagher had the last say, when he knocked over a free for Aodh Rua, to leave the score at half time Aodh Rua 0-07 Ardara 0-06

In the second half Ardara displayed a promising degree of ball control and skill that augured well for their second half performance. They did not get off to as

good a start as they might have hoped for, in fact, they only managed a mere two points (Luke Gavigan 0-02) for the remaining thirty minutes, despite the fact that they enjoyed plenty of possession. Aodh Rua, on the other hand, made good use of their possession and added a further six points to their half time tally leaving the final score Aodh Rua 0-13 to Ardara 0-08.

Ardara - John McConnell, Patrick Joe Cassidy, Martin Gavigan, Niall Campbell, Thomas Maguire, Jackie Gallagher, Jimmy Caffrey, John Kennedy (0-01), Eamon Cunningham Luke Gavigan (0-05), Pat McGill (0-01), Conal Cunningham (0-01), Jimmy Brennan, Patrick Gallagher, Sean Hannigan. Subs: Gabriel Breslin, Leo Breslin, Peter Breslin, Seamus Connolly, Stephen Keeney, John Kennedy, Frankie McGill, Declan McGrenra, Seamus McGuinness, Hughie McNelis, Paul McNelis, Thomas Magurie, Brian Shovlin and Patsy Shovlin.

Aodh Rua - Seamus Gallagher, Packie Daly, Gary Walsh, Terence McShea, Gavan Murphy, Joe Curran, Brendan Drummond, Liam McGill, Brian Murray (0-02), Frankie Gallagher (0-02), Declan Gallagher (0-05), Alan Murray (0-02), John Drummond (0-01), Seamus McGonigle (0-01), Declan Walsh. Subs: Conor Boyle for Declan Walsh, Paul Gallagher for Gavin Murphy, Gavan Murphy for John Drummond, Michael Nee and Mark Cleary.

Referee - Francis Haughey - Lifford



**The Ardara Minor team of 1982 that was beaten in the County
Minor final by Aodh Ruadh.**

Back L-R: Martin Gavigan, John Kennedy, Eamon Cunningham, Jimmy Caffrey, Patrick Gallagher, Pat McGill, Thomas Maguire, Gabriel Breslin, Jimmy Brennan, Peter Breslin, John McConnell.

Front L-R: Paddy Joe Cassidy, Seamus McGuinness, Brian Shovlin, Declan McGrenra, Shaun Hennigan, Conal Cunningham, Jackie Gallagher, Luke Gavigan, Niall Campbell, Frankie McGill, John Kennedy.

Divisional Boards reformed

Under-Age football in the County was revamped in 1982, when the County was subdivided into five Divisional Board areas for the organisation of Under-Age football, the South, South-West, North-West, East and Inishowen. The South-West Division was made up of eight clubs, Naomh Columba, Kilcar, Killybegs, Ardara, Naomh Conaill, Na Rossa, Dungloe and Naomh Mhuire. At the first meeting of the new South-West Board, Edward Molloy was elected as Divisional Secretary/P.R.O and Referees' Secretary. The competitions were run on a two section basis, with the top two teams qualifying for the semi-finals. One team would qualify for the County knock out stages in each age group.

Under-16

In the South-West Under-16 Championship, Ardara defeated all comers and captured the Divisional title. Under the management of Josie Brennan and Charlie Keeney they had prepared well. They eased their way through the group and defeated Naomh Columba in the Divisional semi-final (3-11 to 0-4). They then met Naomh Mhuire in the Divisional final. Having disposed of them twice before in the competition, they sealed this victory on a score of 0-12 to 1-07. After the match, Divisional Board Chairman, Jimmy O'Donnell, presented the Cup to captain Thomas Maguire. In the County semi-final with Glenfin, on a wet day in MacCumhaill Park, a missed penalty was crucial and they went down to the eventual County Champions on a score of 1-07 to 0-05.



Ardara Under-16 Team 1982.

Back L-R: John Kennedy, Thomas Maguire, Jimmy Brennan, Patsy Shovelin, Gerard Breslin, Pauric Brennan, Stephen Keeney, Pat McGinley, Frankie McGill, John McConnell.
Front L-R; Leo Breslin, Luke Gavigan, Seamus McGuinness, Paul McGinley, Ian Melly, Paul McNelis, Brian Shovelin, Dermot Maguire, Bernie Watters.

Under-14

The Under-14 team competed in the Championship, and won a few matches, but did not qualify for the semi-finals. The Under-14 panel was as follows:

Niall Boyle (Clogher), Adrian Brennan, Declan Brennan, Joseph Brennan, Luke Brennan, Thady Breslin, John Martin Byrne, Martin Feeney, Declan Gallagher, Clement Herron, Terry McCole, Vinny McConnell, Peter McGill, Paul McGinley (Captain), Pauric McGuinness, Declan McLaughlin (Kiltoorish), Columba Molloy, Leonard Molloy, Seamus Murray, Brian O'Donnell, Declan O'Donnell, John O'Donnell, John Joe Whelan, Shane Whittington.

Under-12

The U-12 team of 1982 competed well in the Championship of 1982. The team wore the unusual colour of purple and yellow jerseys (Community Games outfits) with one notable exception – the goalkeeper, James McHugh, had the privilege of wearing the traditional green and gold during the entire campaign. The team qualified for the Divisional final against Naomh Conaill, but after a tough game, were defeated on a 1-2 to 0-2 scoreline.



Ardara Under 12 Team 1982

Back L-R: Conal Boyle (Narin), John Joe Whelan, Anthony O'Donnell, Paul Molloy, Paul Melly, Vinny McConnell, Colm Friel, James McHugh, Michael Kennedy, Adrian Brennan, Kevin Maguire, Thady Breslin, Hugh Gavigan, Dominic McNelis, Cathal Herron, Ronan Herron. Front L-R: Rory Maguire, Shaun McCole, John Martin Byrne, John M. Cunningham, Kevin Gallagher, Edward McCole, John O'Donnell, Declan Brennan, Luke Brennan, Declan Gallagher, Peter Watters, Seamus Murray, Conal Furey.



Anthony Molloy pictured after the match, behind is Bobby Moore.

Molloy and McCole win All Ireland Under-21 Medals

1982 was a red letter year for the G.A.A in the County, when the County Under-21 team won Donegal's first All Ireland . The team had won the County's third Ulster title in the grade by defeating Cavan (1-10 to 1-7), Down after a replay (1-9 to 0-4), and Derry in the Ulster final (0-10 to 1-5). The next hurdle was

the match with Laois, who were Leinster Champions, in the All Ireland semi-final at Longford on the 26th of September. On a terrible day, on a waterlogged pitch, the team squeezed out a 0-5 to 0-4 win, to take the County to their first All Ireland final. The final, in Carrick On Shannon, saw the biggest ever exodus of Donegal supporters to the Leitrim venue. The match was close throughout, but Donegal always kept their noses in front, and five points from Martin McHugh sent the team on their way to a 0-8 to 0-5 victory. The victory was a huge watershed for the County and gave the association in Donegal a huge lift. The Club were proud to have two members on the victorious panel, Anthony Molloy, who was ever present at midfield on the team, and Donie McCole of Narin, who was a substitute. There were huge scenes of celebration, as hundreds of supporters from the parish returned after the victory. The team toured the cup around the County, and they got a terrific reception in Ardara on Thursday the 21st, when the two local heroes paraded through the town with their team mates.

The historic team lined out as follows:

Michael Kelly (Four Masters'), Michael McBrearty (Four Masters'), Sean Bonner (Na Rossa), Matt Gallagher (Naomh Bríid), Eunan McIntyre (St. Eunan's), Tommy McDermott (Aodh Ruadh), Anthony Molloy (Ardara), Donal Reid (Red Hughs), Martin McHugh (Kilcar), Charlie Mulgrew (St. Eunan's), Joyce McMullin (Four Masters'), Pauric Gallagher (Naomh Bríd), Paul Carr (St. Eunan's), Seamus Meehan (Four Masters'), Subs used: Patrick McGroarty (St. Naul's) for Sean Bonnar, Sylvester Maguire for McGroarty

Team manager was Tom Conaghan and mentors were Donal Monaghan and Michael Lafferty.



The Donegal Under-21 Team- All Ireland Champions 1982.

Back L-R: John McGowan (St Naul's), Martin Shovlin (Naomh Ultan), Eunan McIntyre, (St.Eunan's), Anthony Molloy (Ardara), Paul Carr (St. Eunan's), Sylvester Maguire (Aodh Ruadh), John O'Donnell (Naomh Conaill), Joyce McMullan (Four Master's), Pauric Gallagher (Naomh Bríd), Maurice Carr (Kilcar), Marty Carlin (Red Hugh's), Donie McCole (Ardara).

Front L-R: Michael McBrearty (Four Masters'), Charlie Mulgrew (St.Eunan's), Seamus Meehan (Four Master's), Matt Gallagher (Naomh Bríd), Sean Bonner (Na Rossa), Brian Tuohy (Aodh Ruadh –Capt), Donal Reid (Bundoran), Tommy McDermott (Aodh Ruadh), Michael Kelly (Four Master's), Patrick McGroarty (St.Naul's), Martin McHugh (Kilcar).



Donie McCole of Narin was a substitute on the Donegal Under 21 team that won the All Ireland in 1982. A son of Dan and Nuala, Donie first came to prominence in his late teens, as a member of the Junior team of 1979/80, and soon after became a regular fixture on the Senior team. A flying wing half back, Donie, who never gave less than 100% every time he played, was always regarded as one of the fittest players on the team. He suffered a heartbreaking blow in 1984 when he broke his leg while training in Pearse Memorial Park, forcing him to miss out on the County final. His absence in defence was sorely felt as the team went down to Four Master's. Donie emigrated to the U.S. in the mid eighties and joined up with the Donegal Club in Boston, which he played a big part in the growth of the Club, captaining the team to the North American Board Intermediate Championship in 1991. Donie, and his wife Bernadine (Gallagher), moved to New York in the late nineties, where they now live with their two sons, Cara and Brendan.



Donie pictured with the North American Intermediate Championship Cup at the Donegal Boston Dinner Dance in 1991.



Jackie Gallagher of Meenlacharry– Ulster Minor League medal winner 1982

On the County scene

On other County teams in 1982, Jackie Gallagher won an Ulster Minor League Medal with Donegal. The team defeated Monaghan in the final, 2-7 to 0-11. Martin Gavigan made the panel for the Championship. Kieran Keeney, and Seamus Gallagher played for the County Senior team in the Championship against Armagh, both men playing corner forward, while Connie Molloy and Eamon McNelis also played for the team that year in other matches.

The year of Three Managers!

The Club officers had some difficulties with the Senior team in 1982, when Packie Maguire, who was elected manager at the A.G.M., resigned early in the year due

to a lack of commitment from some players. Charlie Mooney and John Boyle agreed to act as Co-managers for the Championship, but later in the year, they had to step down due to work commitments. Seamus Gallagher was then given the position, and took the team through the Shield campaign to the end of the year. There was discontent at one meeting during the year when an ex-manager said that he felt that the reason that the Senior team were doing so badly, was that the Officer Board of the Club were too young, and the players did not respect them as a result. Needless to say few agreed with this assumption.



The other principal item of interest from 1982 was the Father McCaul Cup competition, which was run as an adult Parish League. Four teams were selected and, in the final of the competition, Anthony Harkin's team defeated Connie Molloy's team by 2-18 to 3-4. The cup was donated to the Club by its President, who wanted the competition to be run prior to the Championship as a trial for the Senior team.

Meanwhile, Club stalwart Frank O'Donnell transferred to the Four Masters" Club, after giving the Club great service over the years. A presentation function was held in his honour prior to his departure.

Kevin McGill R.I.P.



The Spring of 1982 (24th March) brought sad news to the Parish – the death of Kevin McGill. His death took place in Holland, where he had gone just three weeks previously, to work. A player with the Club Junior and Senior teams, Kevin was just beginning to make his mark at Senior level. He was one of the stars of the U-21 team of 1980, which won the County final, and twelve months later he won a Senior County Championship medal, as a sub on the 1981 team. He had an

electric pace along with great footballing skill. His sense of humour, coupled with his kindness, made many friends for Kevin while working in Dublin. The Club staged a memorial match in Ardara on 22nd May and a number of Kevin's friends from his work in Dublin, and together with County stars, assembled to pay their respects. The event was to become an annual one, with the game against the Civil Service/Donegal Select being played every other year in Ardara and Dublin. The main organiser of the match was Jamsie O'Donnell of Kincasslagh, who ensured that the match was played each year. The first game for the cup was played late in 1982, when the Civil Service selection defeated Ardara in Pearse Memorial Park on May 22nd. The cup was presented to the winning captain, Brendan Dunleavy, by Kevin's sister Josephine. The teams lined out as follows:

Civil Service Selection: Pól O Gallachóir, Hughie Greene, Eddie McLoone, Pete Shovlin, Gerard Boyle, Francie Carroll, James O'Donnell, Connie Molloy, Brendan Dunleavy, Fionn McDonnell, Seamus Bonner, Kieran McCready, Noel Carr, Paddy McGlynn, Gary Snowe.

Ardara: Patsy Harkin, Anthony Molloy, Bobby Moore, Conal Aidan Gildea, Noel Watters, Kieran Keeney, Donie McCole, Gerard McNelis, Anthony Harkin, Eamon Watters, Frank McGhee, John Herron, John Kennedy, Eamon McNelis, Paul Brennan.

Sub: Eugene Bennett for Frank McGhee

Club launch second Yearbook



Following the success of their 1980 publication, the Club brought out their second yearbook in 1982. The book was edited by Frank McGhee and was a great mixture of news from the year and had many humorous articles.



Taken at the launch of the 1982 Club Yearbook are the Committee and some of the guest contributors.

Back L-R: Niall McCole, Thomas McBrearty, James McBrearty, Kieran Keeney, Edward Molloy, Connie Duffy (Democrat).

Front L-R: Bart Whelan, Anne McGhee, Frank McGhee, Charlie Bennett, John Michael O'Donnell.



Who's that famous footballer with Paudie O'Shea??!, taken in Dingle in 1982.



A group of locals in Gaelic Park in 1982. From left: Maureen O'Donnell, Padraig Carr (Carrick), Brendan O'Donnell, Jamsie Gallagher, Stephen McCahill, Michael Breslin, Connie Molloy, Anne Gallagher (Bakery), Lanty Molloy.

1983- A memorable year

1983 was to prove a great year for Ardara. Club teams captured the County Minor and Under-21 Championships. The Club nearly pulled off the previously unattained treble, but the Senior team was defeated in the County final. On the bigger stage, Donegal were back in the national news, with their third Ulster Senior Championship win.

The Club A.G.M took place on the 5th of December 1982 in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel with 68 members present. In his annual report, Edward Molloy stated that the Club played 104 matches during the year, which was a credit to all team managers and players. They reached nine finals for the year with the U-16 and Minor teams winning Divisional honours. The Treasurer, John Herron, stated that the Club was in a sound position financially, thanks to the great efforts of Charlie Bennett and his fellow candidates during the Mayoral Election Campaign.

The following officers were elected for 1983:-

President	-	Rev. Jimmy Shiels
Chairman	-	Charlie Bennett
Vice Chairman	-	Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill
Secretary	-	Edward Molloy
Ass. Secretary	-	Conal A. Gildea
Treasurer	-	Bosco McGill
P.R.O.	-	James McBrearty
Oifigeach na Gaeilge-		Partalón O'Faoláin
Senior Team Manager:		Martin Sweeney
Trainer:		Frank McGhee.

Junior Team Manager: - James McBrearty
Assistant Manager : - Paddy McGill (Cashel).
Junior B. Team Manager: - John Gallagher.
Groundsman : - Edward Molloy.
First Aid Man: - Charlie Keeney.
Adult Referee: - Edward Molloy
Under-Age Referees: - Frank McGhee and Eamon McNelis.

The following were elected as Under-Age Managers for the year:-

U-12 - John M. O'Donnell, James McBrearty and John McConnell.

U-14 - Frank McGhee and Niall McCole

U-16 - Josie Brennan and Charlie Mooney

U-18 - Josie Gallagher and Anthony Molloy

U-21 - Kieran Keeney and Conal A. Gildea.

The Scór Committee elected were:- Bart Whelan, Fr. Shiels, Charlie Keeney, John M. O'Donnell, Charlie Bennett and Ted Breslin.

Under-21s take historic victory

1983 will be remembered as the year the Club came closest to attaining the 'Treble' of Minor, Under-21 and Senior County Championships, a feat that had never been achieved in the County in a single year. The first Championship of the year was the Under-21, and the victory of 1983 will long be remembered in the annals of the Club as one of the most significant victories in the Roll of Honour. Under the management of Kieran Keeney and Conal Aidan Gildea, early round victories over Glenfin, Red Hugh's and Naomh Columba set the team up for a tilt at Aodh Ruadh, who had taken the title in 1982 and had a total of 10 players on the County Under-21 panel. Ardara's only representative was Anthony Molloy. The papers gave the South-West men little chance, but with the game fixed for Fintra, a pitch where Ardara had many historic victories in the past, many Ardara people were quietly confident that a shock was on the cards.

Ardara and Aodh Ruadh must meet again County U-21 Championship Final Ardara 1-06 Aodh Ruadh 1-06

How close can you get? Ardara were just one kick away from toppling Aodh Ruadh off their U-21 throne when Eamon Cunningham chose the wrong moment to kick short. Sunday's final at Fintra was watched by a large crowd who got more than their money's worth, as the underdogs from Ardara played way above themselves and looked to have reached a peak at precisely

the correct time. Aodh Ruadh struggled at times but when the pressure was on them their defence rose to their task.

Aodh Ruadh had to start without Tommy McDermott (on the bench), Conor Boyle and Eunan Gallagher (suspended). Eamon Cunningham and Anthony Molloy were at midfield for Ardara with Gerard McNelis

filling the full forward position. It was Aodh Ruadh who scored first and then Ardara missed a shot at goal. Aodh Ruadh scored a point through Brian Murray and this was followed by a point from Eamon Cunningham. Aodh Ruadh scored a goal giving them a four point lead. But Ardara, urged on by the majority of the large crowd, rallied. Eamon Cunningham knocked over two points from frees that left the score at the interval - Aodh Ruadh 1-02 Ardara 0-03.

Ardara missed a number of chances in the second half. Eamon Cunningham once again added another score to the Ardara tally. Two minutes later the Ardara supporters were in a state of ecstasy. A high ball into the penalty area was caught by Gerard McNelis, who fell to the ground and the Referee Fr. Sean Gallagheer awarded a penalty. McNelis took the kick and sent to the net to put Ardara in front. Aodh Ruadh then levelled the match with two more points by Murray and Doyle. Aodh Ruadh however were now under pressure, with Anthony Molloy at midfield giving them terrible problems. Every time Molloy leaped high to catch the ball the spirit of the Ardara team lifted. He was setting an example and the others were responding. Jimmy Brennan had a shot at goal saved by the Aodh Ruadh Keeper, Gary Walsh. In the last five minutes of the game Eamon Cunningham and John McGill scored points for Ardara. Murray

pointed two frees for Aodh Ruadh to level the match.

Ardara had a great chance for the victory when they were awarded a free in injury time. Eamon Cunningham, who had been scoring all afternoon, took his time and placed the ball on the 50 yard line right in front of goal. He remained unaffected by the Referee who was telling him to hurry up. Unfortunately for Ardara though it was a poor kick and went straight into Sylvester Maguire's hands to leave the teams to fight another day.

Ardara – John McConnell, Tomas Maguire, Martin Gavigan, Jimmy Caffrey, Ted Breslin, Paul Brennan (0-01), Naill Campbell, Eamon Cunningham (0-02), Anthony Molloy, John Kennedy (0-02), John McGill (0-01), Patrick Gallagher, Luke Gavigan (1-00), Gerard McNelis (0-01), Jimmy Brennan. Subs – Jackie Gallagher for Jimmy Brennan.

Aodh Ruadh – Gary Walsh, Conor Boyle, Pascal McTiernan, Eamon Maguire, Paul Tuohy, Tommy McDermott (0-01), Kieran Tinny, Brian Tuohy, Eunan Gallagher (0-01), P. J. Ward, Sylvester Maguire (1-00), Pauric Bromley, Frankie Gallagher (0-01), Brian Murray, Thomas Gallagher. Subs – Eunan Doyle (0-01) for Tomas Gallagher and Thomas Cleary (0-01) for Pauric Bromley.

Referee – Fr. Sean Gallagher.



Anthony Molloy races upfield, with Ciaran Tinney in close pursuit

The replay was fixed for the following Sunday in Fintra, even though the Aodh Ruadh Club had objected to Fintra as the venue, as they felt that the ground was not adequately stewarded the previous Sunday. The local papers once again made the Ballyshannon men hot favourites, as they felt Ardara had blown their chance of victory in the first match, and as is par for the course in these cases, the favourites usually prevail when they get a second chance. Alas, the Ardara lads forgot to read the script.

Ardara win U-21 County final replay Ardara 1-6 Aodh Ruadh 1-5

Aodh Rua were a stone's throw away from depriving Ardara of the County U-21 title last Sunday at Fintra Park, Killybegs, but thanks to a cleverly worked free-kick in the final minutes of normal time, Paul Brennan pointed the ball and ensured a narrow but deserved victory for his side. The Ballyshannon side came within one point of the winners, due to an own-goal seconds later, but Brennan's goal proved just enough.

This match won't be ranked in the all-time greats in terms of football, as the playing field was turned into something resembling an obstacle course with various limbs being used as mechanisms to propel players from the other team to the ground. Funny though, the only casualty was Niall Campbell, who received five stitches after a knock.

The main difference between these sides was that Ardara picked up where they left off in the first match, while Aodh Rua seemed to be content to play second string for long spells throughout the game. Indeed they fell into the Ardara trap of playing physical and sometimes unpleasant football - a far departure from their normal game. This suited Ardara and they capitalized on the Ballyshannon men's fouling tactics and as the game wore on they allowed their play to be dominated by Aodh Rua's mistakes. Ardara deserved their victory and they played with determination throughout. They were never in too much danger, even when a fluke goal nearly upset the flow of the play. Gate receipts were in excess of £900.00.

For the first quarter of the game both teams were slow to settle and the large crowd only saw one single Gerard McNelis point during that spell. This was thanks to a foul on Paul

Brennan, who had a much better game than in the final two weeks earlier. Aodh Rua's defence was caught napping shortly after Eunan Gallagher was booked for a foul, when a shot by Eamon Cunningham fell to John McGill which saw the latter send over the bar from play. Ardara were really on a high now. Ted Breslin, Paul Brennan and Niall Campbell were able to keep P.J. Ward, Sylvester Maguire and Pauric Bromley at bay, while Martin Gavigan, Thomas Maguire, Jimmy Caffrey, and John McConnell in goals, had a relatively easy first half as Aodh Rua made little impact in the attack.

Ardara had two further points in the first half. The first of these came as Eamon Cunningham pointed after a foul on Anthony Molly in the 22nd minute and the same player pointed from an acute angle free a minute later. Players booked in the first half were Ardara's Eamon Cunningham and Jimmy Caffrey and Aodh Rua's Eunan Gallagher. Half time: Ardara 1-4, Aodh Rua 0-1.

At half time the Aodh Rua camp was too quiet. One can tell when these lads are into a game, when you can hear the fighting talk and the players building themselves up, but that wasn't the case on Sunday. The manager gave them the fighting talk alright, but there was a sense of defeat surrounding the players' expressions.

Ardara were different on the other hand. It seemed that most of their under-age players had streamed out the field to surround them, while they shouted and made a lot of noise. Gerard McNelis and Brian Murray exchanged wides before John Kennedy opened the scoring at the start of the second half with a point. Aodh Rua brought on Eunan Doyle for Thomas Gallagher. Eunan Gallagher got Aodh Rua's second

point after being put through by Sylvester Maguire. The Ballyshannon side missed a great opportunity of going ahead in the tenth minute, when Brian Tuohy put Brian Murray through for a goal, but Murray's attempt from roughly two yards out came off the upright and bounced out again. Ardara had a very lucky escape. Shortly after, Tommy McDermott's short "50" reached Conor Boyle who pointed. Tommy himself followed up with a point. John McConnell in goals pulled off a great save from a Brian Murray shot.

Going into the final ten minutes, Aodh Rua substitute, Thomas Cleary, replaced Pauric Bromley, while Gerard McNelis was booked for a foul on Tommy McDermott. Eamon Maguire made a great clearance from defence to stop Ardara from adding further to their score. A point from Aodh Rua with a minute and a half to go left only a goal separating the sides and everything to play for, but as lady luck would have it, Ardara took advantage of one of their many second half opportunities to score and this time they did not fail their supporters.

Patrick Gallagher and Paul Brennan were working their way through, using a quick passing technique. Brennan was fouled and so the attack was halted. Eamon Cunningham lined up for a 50 yard free, so the Aodh Rua defence stood back but failed to notice Paul Brennan unmarked and after

a short pass to Brennan, Ardara had their insurance point.

Ballyshannon brought themselves to within a point of Ardara in injury time, when Niall Campbell was unlucky to palm a Sylvester Maguire shot to the net. It was too late however, and the referee blew for full-time shortly after to end the U-21 Championship for another year.

A happy Ardara side were presented with the trophy after the match. Over the two games they were the better side and while the fouling did spoil the game, in the end they were the worthy winners.

Under referee Seán O'Gallchóir, the team's were:

Ardara: John McConnell, Thomas Maguire, Martin Gavigan, Jimmy Caffrey, Ted Breslin, Paul Brennan, Niall Campbell, Anthony Molloy, Eamon Cunningham, John Kennedy, John McGill, Patrick Gallagher, Luke Gavigan, Gerard McNelis, Jimmy Brennan. Subs: Paddy J. Cassidy, Peter Breslin, Jackie Gallagher, and Pat McGill.

Aodh Rua: Gary Walsh, Conor Boyle, Pascal McTiernan, Eamon Maguire, Paul Tuohy, Tommy McDermott, Kieran Tinney, Eunan Gallagher, Brian Tuohy, P.J. Ward, Sylvester Maguire, Pauric Bromley, Frankie Gallagher, Brian Murray, Thomas Gallagher. Subs: Eunan Doyle for T. Gallagher, Thomas Cleary for P Bromley.



Jimmy Caffrey tussles with Frankie Gallagher of Aodh Ruadh, while Paul Brennan and Sylvester Maguire look on.

There were great scenes of jubilation when Fr Sean Gallagher blew the final whistle, with the large Ardara support invading the pitch to congratulate their heroes. Captain Anthony Molloy was presented with the cup and led the

huge cavalcade of cars back to the parish for the celebrations. The victory had a major bearing on the selection of the County Under-21 team with four further Ardara players being added to the panel, Gerard McNelis, Paul Brennan, John McGill and Martin Gavigan. Anthony Molloy also captained the County Under-21 side that year, when they reached the Ulster final, only to be defeated by Derry in Irvinestown.



County Chairman Michael Gillespie presents the cup to Ardara captain Anthony Molloy



The Ardara team that won the 1983 County Under-21 Championship.
Back L-R: Paddy Joe Cassidy, Patrick Gallagher, John McGill, Gerard McNelis, Anthony Molloy, Eamon Cunningham, Jimmy Brennan, Peter Breslin, Ted Breslin, Jimmy Caffrey, Niall Campbell.
Front : L-R: Martin Gavigan, John Kennedy, Paul Brennan, Thomas Maguire, Jackie Gallagher, Pat McGill, Luke Gavigan, John Mc Connell.

Minors make it a double

With eight of the Under-21 team, that had already won the County Championship, the Minors were fancied from an early stage to win Corn Dhomhnaill Mac a'Bháird in their own right, for the first time since 1965. The team had gone through their section in the South-West fairly easily, but were fortunate to come through a semi-final against Naomh Columba by a point. In the Divisional final against Killybegs, they eventually won through against a young team, who would prove to be a major force in the following years. Glenfin were defeated, on a 1-11 to 0-6 scoreline, in Glenties, in the semi-final, to set up a County final meeting against Gweedore. The match was played on the 18th of September 1983, the same day as the All Ireland final (Dublin v Galway), on a rain soaked MacCumhaill Park.

Ardara take fourth Minor title Ardara 1-03 Gweedore 0-02

Despite ferocious weather conditions, both sides served up some entertaining football at MacCumhaill Park last Sunday. Ardara were setting themselves up for a crack at the previously unattained treble of the Minor, U-21 and Senior Championship. Heavy rain, lashed on by a gale force wind blowing diagonally across the field towards the river end goals, caused many balls to drop, a lot of scrappy play and a multitude of passes to go astray.

Good football did break out in frequent patches throughout the game and despite the "favourite" tag on Ardara, they could never dominate Gweedore, who gave as good as they got. Gweedore were superior at midfield with the Ardara duo of Eamon Cunningham and Patrick Gallagher under par on the day. Ardara's defence played well on the day. Luke Gavigan was the danger man up front for Ardara and he caused a lot of headaches for the Gweedore men.

Luke Gavigan and Patrick Gallagher were first to score, with points in the 4th and 6th minutes. Gweedore were slow to settle but Piaras Coyle announced their arrival in the tenth minute, when he shot wide. The final score of the half came in the 11th minute when Luke Gavigan beat his man to score his second point. Eamon Ferry came close for Gweedore when he missed in the 23rd and 25th minute. Ardara should have had a goal in the 28th minute when corner forward Seamus McGuinness played a ball through to Luke Gavigan. He was forced wide but

managed to get the ball back to McGuinness whose shot was blocked down.

At the interval Ardara led by three points, while Gweedore were still at the starting line but had showed enough to leave the game wide open. The match-winning score, however, came five minutes after the restart. Seamus McGuinness passed to Gavigan who hit a shot at goal, that was saved by keeper Jodie Doohan, but the ball broke to Brian Shovlin who rifled it home to the net. Patrick McBride scored a point for Gweedore in the 13th minute. Gweedore's second and final point came when Eamon McNelis pointed for a free after a period of Ardara pressure. Gweedore had three wides. Ardara could not manage further scores but had done enough to ensure victory.

The Teams were:-

Ardara – John McConnell, Frank McGill, Niall Campbell, Thomas Maguire, Paul McNelis, John Kennedy, Jimmy Caffrey, Patrick Gallagher (0-01), Eamon Cunningham (Capt), Patsy Shovlin, Pat McGill, Jimmy Brennan, Seamus McGuinness, Luke Gavigan (0-02) and Brian Shovlin (1-00). Subs - Stephen Keeney, Pauric Brennan and Leo Breslin.

Gweedore – Jodi Doohan, Seamus McGeady, Hugh Ferry, Josie Ferry, Kieran Hickey, Cornelius McFadden, Brian Coyle, Eamon McNelis (Capt) (0-01), Brian Gallagher, Eamon Ferry, Piaras Coyle, Pat O'Donnell, Pat McBride (0-01), Cormac Breslin, Donal Doherty.
Referee was Sean McGhee.

It was a fitting end to the season for a team that had trained extremely hard under managers Josie Gallagher and Anthony Molloy. The team also played in the County Minor League, but a defeat to Naomh Columba ended their chances of taking the double. Five members of the team made the County Minor panel for the Ulster Championship; Patrick Gallagher, Eamon Cunningham, Niall Campbell, Jimmy Caffrey and John McConnell. The team was defeated by Armagh in the first round at Ballybofey.



The Ardara Minor Team – County Champions 1983.

Back L-R: Luke Gavigan, Patrick Gallagher, Eamon Cunningham, Jimmy Brennan, John McConnell, Frankie McGill, Niall Campell, John Kennedy.

Front L-R: Seamus McGuinness, Thomas Maguire, Pat McGill, Patsy Shovelin, Paul McNelis, Brian Shovelin, Jimmy Caffrey.

Under-Age

The other Under-Age grades progressed satisfactorily enough, but no Divisional titles came their way. The Under-16 Team were unlucky in having an outstanding Killybegs team in their section, and lost to them in the Divisional final. The Under-14 Team showed a marked improvement on the previous year and were somewhat unlucky to lose out in their divisional semi-final against Naomh Columba. The U-12 Team also went down in a divisional semi-final against Dungloe after some fine victories in earlier rounds.



Ardara Under 12 team 1983.

Back L-R: John M.Cunningham, Rory Maguire, Kevin Gallagher, John Herron, Anthony O'Donnell, Adrian Brennan, Conal Gallagher, Michael Cannon, Paul Melly, Cannon Thday Breslin, John M. Boyle, Kieran Gallagher, John Joe Whelan, Hugh McGill, Gerard McHugh.

Front L-R: Alan Mooney, Kieran Lynch, John M. Byrne, John O'Donnell, Charlie McHugh, Conal Furey, Declan Brennan, Edward McCole, Daragh Curran, Cathal Herron, David McGrenra, Shaun McCole, Ronan Whelan, Edward Lynch.

Eunan's stop the treble



Team captains Martin Sweeney and Anthony Gallagher shake hands before the match with referee Noel Kane.

In the Senior Championship of 1983, Ardara showed signs of putting the disappointments of the previous year behind them. The team was still highly regarded in the county and was named as one in the top three Championship contenders. A number of the Under-21 and Minor players of 1982 had staked their claim for places, and this ensured that the panel was somewhat stronger than in previous years. The team was drawn against the 1982 Champions, Four Master's, in the first round and it was ironic that, as had happened Ardara in 1982, the Donegal Town men lost their crown at the opening hurdle. Ardara won the home leg in Pearse Memorial (1-5 to 0-2). Four Masters' took the second leg (1-10 to 1-9), and Ardara went through to the quarter

finals with a 0-9 to 1-4 play-off win in Towney. They then defeated MacCumhaill's in the quarter-final (0-8 to 0-6) on a day when hurricane winds blew and spoiled any type of attractive football. The team had a rather fortunate victory in the semi final, when a last minute goal from Kieran Keeney gave the team a 3-5 to 1-9 victory over an emerging Aodh Ruadh side. They qualified to meet St Eunans in the County final of 1983 on Sunday 25th September, with Ardara fielding a number of young players on the day. With the Minor and Under-21 cups already in the cabinet, the team had a great chance of clinching the third leg of the treble. The weather was beautiful, with a large crowd (£4,300.00 gate). Unfortunately, it was not to be remembered as a beautiful day for football in the county and in a very poor match, St Eunans took their first Senior Championship since 1972.

Eunan's take Dr Maguire St Eunans 0-08 Ardara 0-03

The standard of football in this game never rose above the mediocre for the entire hour and the fact that St. Eunan's could only score eight points and Ardara only three, in what should have been the showpiece of the Donegal G.A.A year, needs no further elaboration. Conditions for the match were perfect, not a breath of wind and the sun shone down for the full hour.

At half time, the scoreline stood at five points for St. Eunan's against two for Ardara, Ardara's two points coming from Gerard McNelis (frees) while St. Eunans had theirs by virtue of two from McGettigan

and one apiece from Eugene Sharkey and Pauric McDaid. If the first half held little of spectator interest then the second period was a complete disaster all round. Only two points were shared by the team's in 25 minutes and the play for the duration was scrappy and uneventful. From Pat Gallagher sent over for Ardara in the second minute until Sharkey did likewise for St. Eunan's after fourteen minutes, the affair was a "yawn" and it was no surprise when the Ardara supporters began to leave the park long before the end. St. Eunan's ended the Ardara agony when Paul McGettigan and Eugene Sharkey scored the last two points,

which sealed the victory for them. Ardara had a great chance of a goal in the end, but Gerard McNelis's attempt was saved by Noel McCole.

Ardara – Patsy Harkin, Ted Breslin, Martin Gavigan, John Herron, Donie McCole, Paul Brennan, Martin Sweeney, Anthony Harkin, Gerard McNelis, Patrick Gallagher, Kieran Keeney, John McGill, John Kennedy, Bobby Moore, Anthony Molloy. Subs – Frank McGee for Bobby Moore, Eamon McNelis for John Kennedy, Conal A. Gildea, Eddie McLoone and Jimmy Caffrey.

St. Eunan's – Noel McCole, Michael Houston, Anthony Gallagher, Paddy Tunny, Eunan McIntyre, Brendan Roche, Michael McGeehan, Damien Judge, Jim McLaughlin, Pauric McDaid, Charlie Mulgrew, Jimmy Kennedy, Paul McGettigan, Paul McGeehan, Eugene Sharkey. Subs – Michael Mulhern for Paul McGeehan, James Gallagher for Pauric McDaid, Declan Nee, Christy Callaghan, Paddy Gallagher, Danny Mailey, Eugene Dowling, Frank Rushe, Leslie McGettigan and Shane Toolin.

Referee – Noel Kane (Robert Emmet's).



The Ardara Senior team who were beaten in the 1983 County Final by St.Eunan's.
Back L-R: Gerard McNelis, Patrick Gallagher, Anthony Harkin, Patsy Harkin, Kieran Keeney, Ted Breslin, Frank McGhee, Martin Gavigan, Conal Aidan Gildea, Anthony Molloy.

Front L-R: Donie McCole, John Kennedy, John McGill, Martin Sweeney, Bobby Moore, Paul Brennan, John Herron, Eamon McNelis, Jimmy Caffrey.
Mascot at front is Cathal Bennett.

The team's League campaign was somewhat forgettable in 1983, also, and the team narrowly missed relegation to Division 2, after a number of poor displays. In Comórtas Peile Na Gaeltachta, the team defeated Gweedore in the first round, and in the County stages in Magheragallon, defeated Kilcar in the semi final. It was felt that the final against Downings would only be a formality, but the Carrigart men, who were playing in the Senior competition for the first time, shocked the Ardara lads and took their first title.

In the Kevin McGill Memorial Match, played at Pearse Memorial, the Civil Service selection took the honours, by beating the home side.



Civil Service captain, Jamsie O'Donnell receives the cup from Pat McGill, after the 1983 match.



The Ardara team that played Civil Service in the 1983 Kevin McGill Memorial match.
Back L-R: Charlie Bennett, Donie McCole, Stephen Campbell, Frank McGhee, Patsy Harkin, Martin Sweeney, Bobby Moore, Anthony Harkin, Anthony Molloy, Kieran Keeney.
Front L-R: Thomas Maguire, Jackie Gallagher, John Kennedy, Conal Aidan Gildea, John Herron, John McGill, Eamon McNelis, Paul Brennan, Vinny Cassidy, Martin Gavigan.



The Civil Service team that won the 1983 Kevin McGill Memorial match
Back row L-R: Neil Shovlin (Ardara), Francie Martin (Glenfin) Eddie McLoone (Ardara) Finian McDonnell (Glenfin) John Mulvaney (Ramor Utd- Cavan), Conor Carney (Ballyshannon), Hugh White (Dungloe), Hughie Greene (Gweedore), Dermot Carney (Ballyshannon), Paul O' Gallachoir (Gweedore).
Front L-R : Pauric Daly (Ballyshannon), Kieran McCreddie (Dublin), Gary Snowe, (Pettigo) Paddy Crozier, (Ballymaguigan -Derry), James O' Donnell, (Kincasslagh) Brendan Dunleavy (Ballybofey), Francie Carroll (Gweedore), Pete Shovlin (Ardara).

No success for Juniors

The Junior team went through the year without any major success. Reaching the County Championship semi-finals was the highlight, after just winning a first round tie against Fanad Gaels. In the semi final against Milford, despite a fine first half, victory slipped from their grasp in the second half and they went down to a narrow defeat.

A succession of away matches at the start of the League was not the ideal way to start, but once the team found its way, it finished a creditable joint fourth. Early defeats in the League almost cost them their Division 3 status, but crucial wins in their final few games left the team safe.

In the Junior Gaeltacht competition, the team reached the quarter final, after a first round victory over Dungloe, but Glenfin were much too strong and they advanced to the next stage.

During the year a host of the previous year's U-16 players were introduced and they came through with flying colours.

The panel: John McConnell, Paul McNelis, Vincent Cassidy, Frankie McGill, James McBrearty, Paddy Breslin, John Caffrey, Jimmy Brennan, Frankie Cassidy, Seamus McGuinness, James Gallagher, Leo Watters, Martin Furey, Patsy Gildea, Stephen Keeney, Eugene Bennett, and Gerry Shovlin.

For the first time ever a third team was entered in the Championships, and while they won no games, it was a major step towards bringing to attention, many players who had never played before for the Club.

Parish School League

A most successful Parish School League was organised in 1983 by Bart Whelan. Saturday after Saturday, the crowds flocked to Kentucky to watch the Schoolboys in action. The two-teacher schools put up some spirited performances, but by the end of the competition, the two biggest schools found themselves at the top of the table when all the games had been played. Brackey finished on top and met St. Mary's in the final on Sunday 30th October at Sandfield. In a thrilling match, on a terrible day, St. Mary's finally squeezed through for the victory in the last five minutes. Thady Breslin became the first captain to be presented with the Father Luke Boyle Cup, which Fr. Boyle had donated for Under-Age football in the parish. The St Mary's team that year was:- Anthony Sweeney (Tullymore), Declan Devenney (Tullymore), Anthony O'Donnell (Ardara), Damien Diver (Drimaha), Thady Breslin (West End, Captain), Paul Gallagher (Ard Conal), Don Earley (Main Street), Shaun McCole (Kentucky), Aidan McHugh (Ard Conal). Subs – Naoise Molloy, Joe and Michael Doherty.



Fr. Luke Boyle presents the cup to St.Mary's captain, Thady Breslin.



The St Mary's team who won the 1983 National Schools Parish League.

**Back L-R: Anthony O'Donnell, Aidan McHugh, Anthony Sweeney,
Declan Devenney, Paul Gallagher.**

Front L-R: Joe Doherty, Naoise Molloy, Shaun McCole, Thday Breslin, Damian Diver, Don Earley, Michael Doherty. At back is manager Johnny D. Earley.



**The Brackey National School team who were defeated in the
National Schools Parish League final 1983.**

**Back L-R: Jimmy McHugh, Daragh Curran, John Joe Whelan, John Martin Boyle,
Gerard McHugh, Michael Cannon, Mark Gallagher, Hugh McGill, Gerard Gallagher.**

**Front L-R: Cathal Herron, Conal Furey, Malachy Gallagher, Bernard Gallagher, Seamus Murray, Kieran Lynch, Charlie McHugh, Adrian Whelan, Edward Lynch,
Martin McCabe, Ronan Whelan.**

Donegal take Anglo Celt for the third time.

The Donegal Senior team ended a nine year period in the doldrums in 1983, when they won the County's third Ulster Championship. Anthony Molloy and Kieran Keeney played key roles in the success. In the Ulster Championship, the team had victories over Armagh (1-10 to 0-7), Monaghan in the semi-final (1-14 to 1-9) and Cavan in the final (1-14 to 1-11). In the All Ireland semi-final at Croke Park, the team were desperately unlucky to go down to Galway by one point. Kieran Keeney had given Donegal a first half advantage when he gathered a rebound off the post and sent to the net. There was heartbreak, though, for Donegal at the end, when a Val Daly goal, with little time remaining, gave Galway a one point victory (1-12 to



1-11). Both Ardara men played in all the matches, Anthony at midfield and Kieran at left corner forward. The Anglo Celt cup visited Ardara on Show Day with many taking an opportunity to get their hands on the famous silverware.

Photo above shows Kieran Keeney after being taken down for a penalty in the 1983 Ulster final, Seamus Bonner converted to give Donegal their only goal of the game.



Kieran Keeney

The career of Kieran Keeney for both Ardara and Donegal, is something which would probably deserve a book of its own! The term 'Legend' can often be used to describe players and sometimes the word is used too freely, but in Keeney's case, as far as Ardara people are concerned, he earned the term during a career that was an example of loyalty to a Club that few in the County could equal.

Born in 1952, the youngest of Sonny and Aggie's footballing sons, Kieran first tasted football of an organised nature, playing for the Meentinadea School team, in the 1959 Schoolboy League which was organised by his brother, John. His first green and gold jersey came in 1960, when he played for an Ardara Under-11 team against a Derry selection. He claims that he nearly took the hand off Joe Larry when he handed him the number 5 jersey, as John called out the team. As the sixties progressed, his talent soon became evident and after his brother John emigrated to the United States in 1965, his older brother Packie became a great influence on the young lad's career. Going on to secondary school at the McDevitt Institute, Kieran soon became a vital player in successful School teams under Columba McDyre, and, of course, in the Ardara/Glenties Juvenile Championship winning team of 1968 and the Minor Championship victories of 1969 and '70.



His first County jersey was for the Donegal Vocational Schools' team in 1969 against Cavan. Kieran is pictured to the right of the photo, in the dark jersey, waiting for the breaking ball.



Kieran receives the Senior Player of the Year award for 1979 from Columba Diver

His adult debut for Ardara came in 1970, when he won Junior League and Championship medals with the Club. He had already earned his first County jersey at this stage, playing for Donegal Vocational Schools in 1968 and 1970, and for the County Minor team of 1969/70. He played for the County Under-21 team for three years, from 1971 to 1973, having already made his Senior debut in the National League of 1971. In a cruel twist of fate, later that year though, he was forced to withdraw from the panel because of his commitments as a student in Dundalk Technical College. As a result he missed out on Donegal's first Ulster Championship win in 1972. He rejoined the panel in late 1972 and played for Donegal consistently until the Championship defeat to Down in 1987.

Honours won for the County include two Ulster Senior Championships, in 1974 and 1983, (in the '74 victory, his injury time goal sealed a Donegal victory), and a McKenna Cup medal in 1975. Indeed he regards the '75 team as the strongest Donegal team he ever played on.

He also won a R.N.L.I trophy, in a tournament played in 1984 between the four Provincial Champions, and he received an All Star nomination in 1979. In his employment with the P & T and later Telecom, Kieran won Inter-Firms' medals in four different Counties; Donegal, Sligo, Mayo and Galway. During the lean years for the Club in the seventies, Kieran travelled from all over the country to play for Ardara each weekend, and he was finally rewarded with a long overdue Senior Championship medal in 1981. There were many low days, however, as all footballers have, and losing three Senior County finals in 1980, '83 and '84 was bitterly disappointing for him. He turned his hand to managing teams while still a player, and, as a manager of the 1983 Under-21 team with Conal Aidan Gildea,

steered the Club to a famous victory. He managed the Senior team in the nineties for four years, but the dominance of Killybegs meant no further titles in that era for the team. Kieran continued playing Senior Football until 1994, and following this, played for the Reserve team until he finally transferred to the Four Masters' Club in 1997. He had been living with his wife Mary and their family, in Donegal Town since 1988. Their support was crucial all through his career and anyone who thought that Kieran would wind down his career, were soon disillusioned. He has continued to play for the Four Masters' Club right up to the present day. Indeed, the day that Ardara captured their famous victory in 2000, Kieran was part of the Four Masters' Reserve team that drew, and eventually won the Senior Reserve Championship. He was a huge asset to the Four Masters' Club and became very involved at Under-Age level, helping to steer the Club to Championships in all grades; the most recent being the Under-14 in 2003, when his son, Stephen, played a starring role. Kieran was honoured by Ardara in 1997 as Guest Of Honour at the Annual Dinner Dance, for his loyalty to the Club throughout his career, and he still rarely misses a Championship match, when Ardara are playing. When asked to name the players he most admired over the years, Kieran singled out Andy Curran of Robert Emmett's and Martin Carney as two notable County players, whom he had great respect for. Other great talents were Gerry Mc Dermott of Glenties, whom he played alongside for the Ardara/Glenties teams, James Mc Hugh of Kilcar and Barry Mc Gowan of Killybegs.



In the last minute of the 1983 Ulster final, as Donegal defend a three point lead, Kieran (15) is back at the other end of the field and rises to field a vital ball.

Kieran's career with Ardara will long be talked about; his ability to play in any position with consummate ease, his sharp wit in the dressing room, his clenched fist when motivating a team, and his inspirational scores and crunching tackles are legendary in the Parish. There are few players who have left a bigger mark on the history of the Ardara G.A.A. Club than Kieran Keeney of Glendowan.



**A typical Keeney pose, Kieran celebrates after winning his second
Ulster Senior Championship medal in 1983.**



Show day 1983, Bart Whelan and Vinny McConnell display the Anglo Celt cup.

Other news

For their performances in the respective County finals, Anthony Molloy won the Under-21 Player of the Year award, and Patrick Gallagher won the Minor Player of the Year.

Catherine Molloy of Leamagowra represented the Club in the Cailín Gaelach competition and won the County title in Gweedore. She then went on to represent the County at the National finals. On a sad note, the death took place in London of Phil Tammy McHugh, former Ardara player and Club Chairman. Deepest sympathy was extended to his family from the Club officers.



Patrick Gallagher receives the Man of the Match award for the 1983 County Minor final from Charlie Bennett. Also in photo is County Chairman, Michael Gillespie.

At the Club Annual Dinner Dance on New Year's Eve the following received Awards:-

Senior Player of the Year	– Martin Sweeney
Junior Player of the Year	– Paddy Breslin
Special Appreciation Award	– Billy Maxwell
Supporter of the Year	– Josie Brennan
Clubman of the Year	– Anthony Harkin

1983 A.G.M

The Annual General Meeting of the Club was held on the 4th of December 1983 in Peter Oliver's, Chairman Charlie Bennett presiding. Following the Secretary's report, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, in praising the Rúnaí on his report, stated that if every Club in the County would file as comprehensive a report, then the history of the Association in the County would be very easy to write. There was a lengthy discussion, under matters arising from the report, as to why the Club did not protest against a neighbouring Club, which played an over-age player in the Under-12 Championship. There was also criticism at the amount of 'tension', in evidence at the National Schools' Parish League final, which was totally uncalled for. Ted Breslin Sr. was singled out for special mention for his work for the Club in 1983, in collecting at gates and always being on hand to help out in Club affairs. The Treasurers report showed an income of £6014.26, with expenditure of £6079.98, leaving a credit balance of £179.47. There was a great degree of criticism at the amount of money that it cost the Club in travelling expenses for their County Under-21 and Minor players, amounting to over £400 for the year. It was agreed that a motion be forwarded to County Convention, that the County Board should cover the expenses of all County teams.

In his Chairman's address, Cathal Ó Beannáid thanked all members for their support during the year. He was critical of some Senior players for their lack of interest towards the end of the year, and stated that the players should appreciate that they owe the Club a debt for being given the chance to play football.

The following officers were elected for 1984:-

President	-	Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill
Chairman	-	Charlie Bennett
Vice Chairman	-	Frank McGhee
Secretary	-	Edward Molloy
Ass. Secretary	-	Conal A. Gildea
Treasurer	-	Bosco McGill
P.R.O.	-	James McBrearty
Oifigeach Na Gaeilge	-	Seán M. Ó Domhnaill

Senior Team Manager :Johnny D. Earley

Assistant Manager Charlie Mooney.

Team Trainer: John Boyle

Senior Team Captain: Conal Aidan Gildea.

Junior Team Manager: Niall McCole

Assistant Manager James McBrearty.

Junior B. Team Manager :John Gallagher.

Groundsman: Edward Molloy.

Under-Age Managers for 1984 were:-

U-10	-	Bart Whelan and Anthony Molloy
U-12	-	Eamon McNelis, Bobby Moore and John McConnell
U-14	-	John M. O'Donnell and James McBrearty
U-16	-	Frank McGhee and Niall McCole
U-18	-	Josie Gallagher and Josie Brennan
U-21	-	Kieran Keeney and Conal A. Gildea

1984 – Comóradh an Chéid

Although the Association was only 79 years old in the county, the centenary of the founding of the G.A.A was celebrated all over the country in 1984. The year was to be one of mixed emotions in Ardara, with a number of major disappointments on the playing fields being somewhat balanced by the All Ireland victory of the Donegal Vocational Schools' team. The Club had six players on the panel, with Patrick Gallagher becoming the first player from the County to captain an All Ireland winning team in Croke Park, in the victory over Longford.

Gallagher leads Donegal to first All Ireland Vocational Schools' title

Donegal Vocational Schools' team made history on the 15th of April 1984, when they won the County's first All Ireland title at Croke Park, by defeating Longford on a 3-9 to 2-3 scoreline. The team had defeated Tyrone, Down and Derry in Ulster, and Connacht Champions, Leitrim, in the semi-final, to reach their first final in the grade. Donegal were installed as slight favourites for the final and they did not disappoint. Despite an early scare, they dominated the match with some brilliant football. It was a momentous day for Ardara, as six Club players were involved in the victory; Jimmy Brennan (right corner back), Niall Campbell (centre half back), Patrick Gallagher (midfield), Eamon Cunningham (left half forward) and Luke Gavigan (full forward). John McConnell was sub goalkeeper on the panel. All Ardara lads on the team put in great displays, with one of the highlights being a brilliantly fisted goal by Luke Gavigan in the second half, that was the insurance score for Donegal. As Captain of the team, Patrick Gallagher created history by becoming the first Donegal man to be presented with an All Ireland Cup in Croke Park. There was a great reception for the team when they arrived back in the county, and the Club hosted a special function for the local players, in Peter Oliver's, the following week. Presentations were made to each of the players as a memento of their great achievement.

The Donegal team which lined out in the final were as follows;

David Meehan(Killybegs V.S),Jimmy Brennan (Glenties C.S), Denis Carberry (Killybegs V.S), Cornelius McFadden (Pobalscoil Gaoth Dobhair), Rory O'Neill (Abbey V.S), Niall Campbell (Glenties C.S), Cormac McGarvey (Pobalscoil Gaoth

Dobhair), Brian Gallagher (Pobalscoil Gaoth Dobhair), Patrick Gallagher (Glenties C.S.), Owen Bonnar (Rosses C.S), Eamon Mac Niallais (Pobalscoil Gaoth Dobhair), Eamon Cunningham (Glenties C.S), Donal Bonnar (Rosses C.S), Luke Gavigan (Glenties C.S), Manus Boyle (Killybegs V.S).



**The Donegal team pictured after their victory over Derry
in the Ulster Final in MacCumhaill Park**



**The victorious Vocational Schools team climb the steps of the Hogan Stand
after their victory.**



Eamon Cunningham of Stormhill, son of Joseph and Margaret, was left half forward on the Vocational Schools' team of 1984. Eamon won Minor and Under-21 Championship medals with Ardara in 1983, playing midfield on both teams, and was captain of the Minor team in their victory over Gweedore. A great free-taker and fielder, he also played midfield for the Donegal Minor team in the 1983 Ulster Championship. Eamon emigrated to Philadelphia in 1986 and immediately joined the Donegal Club there, and made a great contribution both as a player and a manager.



Jimmy Brennan, son of Frankie and Mary, was right corner back on the Vocational team in 1984. A member of the Minor and Under-21 teams of 1983, he was equally at home in defence, midfield or the forward line. Jimmy played for the Donegal County Minor team at corner back in the 1984 Ulster Championship and also went on to play for Donegal Under 21s. Jimmy emigrated to England for a period in 1985 and joined the Tirconail Gaels Club. He went on to play for the London County team in the 1985 and 1987 Connacht Senior Championships, before returning home at the end of 1987.

Jimmy went on to become one of the Club's longest serving players through the 90s and was finally rewarded for his great service with a Senior Championship medal in 2000. He was honoured with the joint Clubman of the Year award in 1991, with his close friend Vinny McConnell, for their great work in the Club draw of that year. Jimmy is still enjoying playing Reserve football for the Club in 2003.



Niall Campbell of the Front Street, son of the late John Joe and Philomena, was centre half back on the 1984 Vocational team. A great reader of the game, Niall was an exceptionally talented defender, who played for Donegal at Minor (1983) Under-21 and ('85 and 86) and was a member of the Donegal Senior panel from 1985-87, winning a McKenna Cup medal in 1985. In the Club jersey, Niall won Minor and Under-21 Championship medals with Ardara as well as a Senior League medal in 1989. He was also the recipient of the Club Senior Player of the Year Award in 1992. Niall also played for U.C.G

in the Sigerson Cup from 1985-87. His career was cut short somewhat by a succession of knee injuries, which eventually forced him to give up the game in 1997.

Seniors lose third County Final in four years

In the Senior Championship of 1984, the team was, as ever, fancied to go a good distance. The Under-Age victories of 1983 had lifted expectation even higher than usual in the Parish. The first round draw, against Red Hughs, in the first round saw the team advance to the quarter-finals, after a great away victory in Killygordon, when they turned a nine point first half deficit into a two point victory. Local rivals, Killybegs, were then accounted for in a tough struggle, 0-09 to 1-04. The team had now qualified for a semi-final with MacCumhaill's, which was held in O'Donnell Park Letterkenny. The team put in a blistering performance and totally dominated the game, winning on a 1-15 to 0-1 scoreline. The Club's fourth final in five years was against the team they had defeated in '81, Four Masters" from Donegal Town. Unfortunately for Ardara, as was the case in 1980, the landslide victory over MacCumhaill's in the semi-final, had once again installed the team as hot favourites for the final. Four Masters" had won the Championship in 1982 and were keen to avenge the '81 defeat.... and that they did.

Four Masters' are County Champions - Ardara lose again Four Masters' 0-09 Ardara 1-02

Four Masters" from Donegal Town are the County Centenary Champions. They defeated a disappointing Ardara side in a tough physical game. It was Ardara's second consecutive County final defeat. The match was played at MacCumhaill Park on Sunday 26th August, 1984. The Four Masters' defence were under a lot of pressure in the opening minutes with Michael Kelly taking off a great save from a Keeney blaster. Ardara exploited early mistakes in the opposition's defence to their advantage. The battle between Corny Carr, Four Masters', and Connie Molloy, the Ardara centre half forward, began with both acting like children fighting over toffee, instead of footballers in a County final. This "mismatch" continued for the entire game and ruined what promised to be an interesting encounter. Incidentally, on the footballing side, Carr won because he stuck to his guns, while Molloy appeared to be more interested in the man than the ball.

The game was played at a blistering pace throughout. It was hard, physical, attacking football. Ardara's early goal swept them off their feet and this perhaps was their downfall. Four Masters" were physically too strong for the young Ardara men. They

were able to draw the line between hard football and rough play more successfully. At the end of the first half Ardara had four wides compared to Four Masters" who had five. Ardara had six frees while they had ten. Ardara struck two "50's" while the Donegal team had only one. The half time score was Four Masters' 0-05 to Ardara 1-01.



Anthony Molloy catches clean at midfield

In the second half, frustration and tempers got the better of some players, when Seamus Meehan and Paul Brennan clashed, with the result that Brennan lay stretched out on the green grass of MacCumhaill Park, while Meehan was

ordered to go take a walk to the sideline for the rest of the game. Four Masters" did enough in this half to win the match by taking their scoring opportunities. In this half, Ardara had three wides and ten frees while Four Masters" had six wides and twelve frees.

Teams and scorers were

Ardara - Patsy Harkin, Thomas Maguire, Martin Sweeney, Niall Campbell, Noel Watters, Lanty Molloy, Paul Brennan, Anthony Molloy, Anthony Harkin, Jimmy Caffrey, Connie Molloy, Patrick Gallagher (0-02), Gerard McNelis, Kieran Keeney (1-00) and John McGill.

Subs - Luke Gavigan for McNelis, Eamon Cunningham for Anthony Harkin. Conal A. Gildea, Jimmy Brennan, Frank McGee,

Eamon McNelis, John McConnell, Donie McCole, Ted Breslin, Jimmy Caffrey, Noel Watters, Bobby Moore, John Herron, Eamon Watters and Paddy Breslin.

Four Masters' - Michael Kelly, Gerard Breslin, Dermot McGettigan, Peter Gallagher, Sean Boyle, Corney Carr, Michael McBrearty, Joyce McMullan, Pascal Brogan, Seamus Meehan, Jim McLaughlin, P. J. Dooley (0-03), Jack McGroarty (0-04), Pauric Farragher, Declan McIntyre.

Subs - Larry Walsh (0-02) for McIntyre. P. J. McGarrigle, Martin Gillen, Eamon Gorrell, Brendan Martin, Paul Duncan, Enda Nolan and John Williamson.

Referee - Francie Haughey (Lifford)



The Ardara Senior team that was beaten by Four Masters' in the 1984 County Final.

Back L-R: John McConnell, Eamon McNelis, Lanty Molloy, Kieran Keeney, Patrick Gallagher, Patsy Harkin, Connie Molloy, Jimmy Brennan, Noel Watters, Ted Breslin, Anthony Harkin, Anthony Molloy, Donie McCole, Johnny D. Earley (manager)

Front L-R: Eamon Cunningham, Thomas Maguire, Jimmy Caffrey, Eamon Watters, Conal Aidan Gildea, Paul Brennan, Luke Gavigan, Gerard McNelis, John Herron, Bobby Moore, John McGill, Frank McGhee, Paddy Breslin.

Mascots at front are: Stephen Gildea, Cathal Bennett and Brendan McNelis.

The League campaign for the Senior team saw them get off to a good start, with three early victories, but indifferent form in their next five matches saw them just hovering over the relegation zone near the bottom of the table. A vital win over Downings saw the team guarantee Division One status once again. The team then won their last four matches, to finish in joint fourth place in the table.

In the Senior Shield their campaign was no better and through no fault of Club officials or management, they failed to field in two games against N. Columba and Cloughaneely. Had the team fielded and won both matches, they would have qualified for the Shield semi-finals.

Bua i gComórtas Peile na Gaeltachta do'n cheathrú huair.

B'é Corn na Gaeltachta i ngrád na sínsir an t-aon ábhar mórtais a bhí ag an Chlub i 1984. Bhí an bua acu ar Chill Chartha sa chéad bhabhta, leis an scór (0-10 in aghaidh 1 - 4) agus in 'sna Comórtaisí Contae ar an Fhál Carrach bhí an bua acu ar an fhoireann bhaile, 1- 11 in aghaidh 3 - 3. Bhí cluiche éasca acu sa chluiche cheannais in aghaidh Gleann Fhinne; 2 - 9 in aghaidh 0 - 6 an scór a bhí ann ag deireadh an chluiche.

Ard a' Rátha - Seán Mac Conaill, Séamus Mac Eachmharchaigh, Tomás Mac Uighir, Conal Mac Giolla Dé, Éamonn Ó Cuinneagáin (0 - 01), Dónal Mac Cumhaill, Niall Mac Cathmhaoil, Antoine Ó Ludhóg, Antoine Ó hEarcáin, Proinsias Mac Aodh (0-01), Bobby Ó Móra (1-01), Gearóid Mac Niallais ((1-01), Éamonn Ó Fuaruisge, Ciarán Ó Cianaigh (0-03), Lúcas Ó Gaibheacháin (0-02). Fir ionaid - Máirtín Mac Suibhne do Éamonn Ó Fuaruisge, Pádraig Ó hEarcáin agus Seán Ó Cinnéide.

Gleann Fhinne - Niall de Brún, Proinsias Ó Mearthaile, Liam Ó Máirtín, Tomás Ó Mearthaile, Máirtín Mac Crodáin, Gearóid Mac Cumhaill, Seosamh Ó Mearthaile, Seosamh Mac Diarmada, Tarlach Ó Raghallaigh, Liam Mac a' Bháird (0-02), Seán Ó hIarrain, Diarmaid Mac a' Bháird (0-01), Proinsias Ó Máirtín (0-02), Seán Mac Giontaigh agus Seán Ó Máirtín. Fir ionaid: Séamus Ó hIarrain do Liam Ó Máirtín agus Éamonn Mac Domhnaill (0-01) do Seán Ó hIarrain.



Bhí an fhoireann fríd anois go dtí na Comórtaisí Náisiúnta sa Rinn, Co. Phort Láirge, deireadh seachtaine na Cincíse. Bhí Craobh Uladh, Sinsear agus Mionúr, in éadan Ard Mhacha ar an Domhnach agus d'fág sin Ard a' Rátha lag go leor. Ag cruinniú de Choiste Feidhmiúcháin an Chlub moladh tarraingt amach as an Chomórtas ach ag cruinniú de na himreoirí dúradh gur chóir iarracht a dhéanamh foireann a chur le chéile.

Conal Aodán Mac Giolla Dé, Captaen Ard a' Rátha, ag tabhairt a oráide tar éis Corn Sínsir na Gaeltachta a ghlacadh.

Le cuidiú ó pheileadóirí ón fhoireann shóisir thug siad aghaidh ar Phort Láirge agus mar a tharlaíonn go minic, gan coinne, bhí an bua acu ar An Fháirche, curaidh na Gaillimhe, sa chluiche leath-cheannais. De bharr gortaithe, b'éigin do bhainisteoir na foirne, Seán D. Ó Luachaire imirt, agus is beag nach raibh ar Chathal Ó Beannáid, an Cathaoirleach, gléasadh amach fosta. Buaileadh ar Dhún

na nGall i gCraobh Uladh agus thaistil Ciarán Ó Cianaigh i rith na hoíche le bheith in am don chluiche cheannais. Ach, le cuidiú Willie Joe Padden, bhí an bua ag Béal a' Mhuirthid le pointe amháin, (0-10) in aghaidh (1-06). Tugadh ard-mholadh don fhoireann a thaispeáin misneach agus spiorad sa dá chluiche sin agus a d'fhág baile gan iad ag súil le mórán.

Rinneadh bronradh speisealta ar Phádraig Ó Gallchóir mar gurb é an t-imreoir leis an scór is airde don deireadh seachtaine.

Junior team

1984 proved to be a difficult one for the Junior team. With only a few of the regular players turning out for each game, it was difficult for the management to instil any sort of consistency in the team. Many young players were blooded, in an effort to field for fixtures, and to their credit, the team fulfilled all their fixtures. But in winning just one game in the League, the side was destined to play Division Four Football in 1985.

In the Gaeltacht competition, the side played superbly, to qualify for the semi-finals in Falcarragh. Playing against St Michael's, a spirited performance left their opponents stumbling for the greater part, before losing narrowly on a score of 0-08 to 1-03. In the Championship the team made an early exit, although they beat Termon in the first leg at home. The team lineout was Patsy Gildea, Vincent Cassidy, Martin Furey, Peter Breslin, John Cannon, John M. O'Donnell, John Caffrey, Jimmy Brennan, Frankie Cassidy, James McBrearty, James Gallagher, Patsy Shovlin, Frankie Shovlin, Paddy McGill, Patsy Moore, and Joseph Brennan.

Under-21s lose in County final

The Under-21 team were out to defend the title they won in 1983, and, with a strong panel still available, they were installed as favourites for the title from the earlier rounds. The team went through to the final the hard way, defeating all the strong teams in their half of the draw. Killybegs, Glenfin, Naomh Columba and Aodh Rua all fell, as the team strove to retain their County title. There was a shock in store though, when a Gweedore team that they had completely destroyed in the opening quarter, fought back and left Ardara counting the cost of missed chances.

Gweedore 3-01 Ardara 0-09

Ardara were left to reflect on how they ended up with nothing from a season which seemed to be going their way. They went into the game as favourites and once again failed to rise to the occasion and can really blame no one for their failure but themselves. Gweedore may have only got four scores, and were holding on desperately at the end, as Ardara kicked

away equalising chances. The half time score showed it level on a score of 0-06 to 2-00. It was a wet day and conditions were greasy with three Ardara players being booked - Martin Gavigan, Ted Breslin and Paul Brennan, with also three Gweedore players. Eamon Cunningham and Patrick Gallagher were the main cogs in the side at midfield, but did not make the impact they

might have been expected to. Ardara had the chance to level the match in the last minute, but a 35 yards free from Patrick Gallagher fell narrowly wide.

Ardara - John McConnell, Thomas Maguire, Martin Gavigan, Peter Breslin, Ted Breslin, Paul Brennan (Captain), Niall Campbell, Patrick Gallagher (0-02), Eamon Cunningham, John Kennedy (0-01), Jimmy Brennan (0-02), Jimmy Caffrey (0-02), Jackie Gallagher, Luke Gavigan (0-02) and Patsy Shovlin.

Subs - Stephen Keeney for Patsy Shovlin. Paul Cassidy, John McGill, Seamus McGuinness,, Pat Connolly, Brian Shovlin and John Kennedy

Gweedore: Seosamh Ó Dubhchain, Seán Ó Curráin, Eoghan Ó Fearraigh, Breandán Ó Baoill, Cornelius Mac Phaáin, Liam Mac Aodha (0-01), Colm Ó'Baoill, Brian "Mór" Ó'Gallachoir, Eamon Mac Niallais, Ciarán Ó h-Icí (1-0), Brian Mac Giolla Chóill, Seán Ó Gallachóir, Pól Mac Cumhaill (2-00), Cormac Ó Breisleáin, Ciarán Ó' Roartaigh for Seán Ó Curráin.

The match was refereed by County Treasurer, Francie Cunningham, from Naomh Columba, as the Donegal Referees Board were on strike and refused to provide officials for the match.



The Ardara Under-21 team which was defeated in the County final by Gweedore
Back L-R: Thomas Maguire, Jimmy Caffrey, Stephen Keeney, Patrick Gallagher, John McConnell, Paul Cassidy, Jimmy Brennan, Ted Breslin, Eamon Cunningham, Pat Connolly, Kieran Keeney (Manager).

Front L-R: John Kennedy, Jackie Gallagher, Brian Shovelin, Luke Gavigan, Niall Campbell, Paul Brennan, Martin Gavigan, Peter Breslin, Patsy Shovelin, John Kennedy.

Poor year for Under-Age teams

1984 was a very poor year for the Club Under-Age teams. They not only failed to win a Divisional title but even failed to contest a final. The U-12 team scraped through to the Divisional semi-final only to be defeated heavily by Dungloe, although some players gave very good performances. The U-14 team also contested the Divisional semi-final stages before Naomh Conaill, the eventual County finalists, got home by a point. The U-16 team didn't qualify for the Divisional semi-finals, while the Minor team were defeated by Naomh Columba in their Divisional semi-final.

U-14 Parish League Final

A very successful Under-14 Parish League was run during the winter months in 1983/84. The final was contested by Kevin Maguire's team and Vinny McConnell's team. The score at the end of normal time was 1-03 each. In extra time, the sharper finishing of Maguire's team saw them run out clear winners by (3-06) to (1-03). In a well balanced winning side, nine year old Damian Diver was the star, showing a maturity away beyond his years. Rose Breslin, for Maguire's team, showed her male colleagues how to rattle the net (she was the only female player).

After the match, the Cup was presented to the winning Captain by John Cunningham, Wood Road, who very kindly sponsored the competition. The team lineouts were as follows:-

Kevin Maguire's Team – John M. Cunningham (Wood Road), Rory Maguire (Carrickacleva), Damien Diver (Drimaha), Michael Cannon (Glengesh), John O'Donnell (Narin Road), Kevin Gallagher (Front Street), Adrian Whelan (Hillhead), Rose Breslin (Cronkeerin), Conal Furey (Shaskinagreana). Sub – Michael McGlinchey for Adrian Whelan.

Vinny McConnell's Team – James McHugh (Leaconnell), Hugh McGill (Aighe), Conal Gallagher (Killystewart), John M. Byrne (Ard Conal), Kevin Sweeney (Tullymore), Dara Curran (Glengesh), Declan Gallagher (Meenlacharry), Don Earley (Main Street), Billy Furey (Sheaskinagreana),. Sub – Niall O'Donnell (Narin Road) for Billy Furey.

Centenary Celebrations

Quite a number of activities were planned nationally and county wide to celebrate Centenary Year. On Sunday 18th March, 1984, a Centenary G.A.A. Parade, involving the Ardara and Kilcar teams was led by the Killybegs Accordion Band. They marched in from the West End of the town, stopping opposite the building where the G.A.A. was established in Ardara in 1921, and then on to Pearse Memorial Park.

The Club celebrated National Lá na gClub on Sunday 29th July. The day began with Mass, in the Church of the Holy Family, for deceased members of the Club. This was followed by the unveiling of a Club plaque on the dressing rooms at Pearse Memorial Park. The day continued then with a Schools' game, and Sports for all members who wished to join in. Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill won the Centenary Clubman of the Year award for the County in 1984. This special awards scheme was run on a National basis as part of the Centenary celebrations.

On the 2nd December, the Club held a function in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel, where a re-union of former Stars from the Club, who had played Inter-County Football or

Camogie, took place. The Club honoured each, by presenting them with an inscribed scroll on behalf of the County Board, as a mark of appreciation for services rendered to the County. The night was a huge success, with the presentations being made by Club Chairman, Mr. Charlie Bennett, Central Council Representative, Mr. Paddy McGill and County Secretary, Mr. Bart Whelan.



**The recipients of the Centenary Scrolls (or their representatives)
pictured at the function in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel.**

Back L-R: Kieran Keeney, John Boyle, Martin Sweeney, Josie Gallagher, Frank McGhee, Billy Maxwell, Charlie Bennett, Patsy Gildea, Niall Heena, Charlie O'Donnell, Vincent Rankin, Jimmy O'Donnell.

Middle Row: Aggie Keeney, Fr. Luke Boyle, Frankie Brennan, Bridget McHugh, Jimmy McNelis, Theresa Maloney, , Eddie John McGonigle, Molly (Tom) Gallagher, Pat Brennan, Bridget Ellen Whyte, Frankie Tom Gallagher, Edward O'Donnell, Mona Craig, Columba Diver, Nora Molloy, Packie Maguire, Mary O'Donnell, Thady Gallagher, Seamus Gallagher, Anthony Molloy.

Front L-R: Canon McCaul, Nan McGill, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, William Boyle, Tommy Boyle, Jim Maxwell, Packie John Gildea, Packie Moore, Ena Gildea.

Donegal New York and Tirconaill Gaels visit Ardara

One of the highlights of Centenary Year was the visit of Donegal exiles from New York and London, when the Donegal New York and Tirconaill Gaels teams both visited the parish as part of their tours of Donegal. On the 8th of August, the New York party arrived in Ardara and were welcomed by Club Chairman and Lord Mayor, Charlie Bennett, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill and Bart Whelan, in addition to returned 'Yanks' Columba Diver, Vincent McConnell and Packie Maguire. With Connie, Lanty and Frank Molloy all part of the Donegal team, there was great interest locally in the match against the home side. The Glenties band led the teams through the town, the Ardara team being led by Anthony Molloy, with the New Yorkers being led by Connie. The biggest crowd of the year in Pearse Memorial Park saw a great match, with the visitors coming out on top on a score of 4-10 to

2-11. A Dinner Dance was held in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel that night, and the Clubs exchanged presentations. The highlight of the night was a poem which Charlie Bennett composed in honour of the Donegal Person of the Year, Willie Joe Cunningham; it took the house down. A great night was enjoyed by all, and the reception was greatly appreciated by the visitors.



Local and Donegal New York officials at the function in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel to celebrate the team's visit to Ardara.
Back L-R: Charlie Faulkner, Gerry Timoney, Vincent McConnell, Edward Molloy, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, Bart Whelan, Columba Diver, Phil Brennan.
Front L-R: Mike Meehan, Connie Molloy, Charlie Bennett, Willie Joe Cunningham.



The Tirconaille Gaels' Club also visited the Club that summer, taking on the Ardara Senior team in a challenge match at Pearse Memorial. The home side won the match and presentations were exchanged afterwards at a function in the Nesbitt Arms. Stephen Campbell and Pat McGill were members of the Gaels' team.

Former Ardara Players, Stephen Campbell (left) and Connie Molloy, taken at the Tirconaille Gaels v Donegal New York match in 1984.

County teams

The Club was well represented on County teams in 1984. Jimmy Brennan, Thomas Maguire and Luke Gavigan were members of the Donegal Minor team that won the Ulster Minor League title. Anthony Molloy, Kieran Keeney and Patrick Gallagher were part of the Donegal Senior panel, while Martin Gavigan, Ted Breslin, Patrick Gallagher and, Paul Brennan were members of the Donegal U-21 team. Joseph Brennan was a member of the County Under-16 team.

At the County Convention in January, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill was elected as Ulster Council Delegate, Edward Molloy was elected Fixtures Secretary and Bart Whelan was re-elected County Secretary, for the fifth year in succession.

Scór Success

One of the weaker aspects of Club activities in the eighties had been the cultural end of the Club, with Scór na nÓg and Scór Sinsear being very poorly supported over the years. There was a major improvement in this area in 1984, and for the first time, the Club won two County Scór titles. The instrumental group of Josie Gallagher and Paddy O'Rourke won their section, while the quiz team of Pat Slowey, Eddie O'Donnell and John Cunningham won the County title in the Tráth na gCeist. In the County final of Scór na nÓg, the quiz team of Vinny McConnell, Cathal Herron and Joseph Brennan were only just deprived of County honours, finishing runners up on the night.



Ardara and Glenties players of the '50s and '60s clashed again in 1984, in a specially arranged "Oldies match" held in Glenties, the Glenties men winning a tough match.
Back L-R Columba Diver, James Maguire, Tom Diver, John Joe Doherty, Charlie Bennett, Daniel McGeehan, Terence Craig, Conal Mc Loone, Jim McGuinness, Pat McCabe, Connie McKelvey, Pat Boyle, Pat Connaghan, Connie Maguire, Packie Keeney, Joseph Briody,
Front L-R: Thomas Breslin, Packie Maguire, Conal Maguire, Neily Bonner, Cormac Gallagher, Jimmy McSwiggan, Conal 'Ban' McNelis, Bosco McGill, Seamus McGee.



All Star Banquet 1984- Columba and Margaret Diver, and Bart and Rosemarie Whelan meet legendary commentator Michael O'Hehir

Snippets

The Club once again held the Lord Mayor campaign in 1984, with Johnny D. Earley and Charlie Bennett going head to head to raise money for the Club. A fund raiser supreme, Charlie Bennett retained his 'chain' despite a great performance from the Senior team manager. The total monies amounted to £3200, which took the Club back on to a strong financial footing.

The Club won the annual Kevin McGill Memorial Cup against a Civil Service selection, in a game played at Pearse Memorial Park. It was the first time the Club had won the perpetual trophy.

Gortnacart quiz team won the Club Inter-Schools G.A.A Quiz. The team was – John O'Donnell, John Herron, John M. Byrne and Kevin Gallagher.

At the annual dinner dance on New Year's Eve, the following awards were made:

Senior Player of the Year: Patsy Harkin

Junior Player of the Year: John Caffrey

Minor Player of the Year: Jimmy Brennan

Clubperson of the Year: Charlie Bennett.

Supporter of the Year: Larry Gallagher (Cloughbois)



Patrick Gallagher of Front Street, who captained the Donegal Vocational Schools team in 1984, had always shown great talent on the football field, since first playing for the Club Under-12 team in 1977. That particular team, despite having a very talented bunch of players in their age-group, were denied ultimate success, year on year, by their great nemesis, the winning Rosses Rovers combination. It was not until they attained Minor age that the group of players showed true potential by winning the Minor County Championship against Gweedore in 1983. That same year was a particularly memorable one for Joe and Margaret Larry's son as he also gathered

an Under-21 Championship medal and came tantalisingly close to taking a Senior medal also. But, success for the Seniors that year was not to be; St. Eunan's the Club, and Patrick, of the unique treble. A member of the County Minor panel of 1983, he played for the County Under-21 teams of 1984, '85 and '86, and he also made a few appearances for the Senior County side in that time. It was his loyalty and performances for the Club, over the years however, that set him apart, regularly topping the scoring charts for the Senior team, as a stalwart on the side throughout the eighties and nineties. His intelligent play and high fielding ability caused problems for many opposing defences. In 1998 Patrick tried his hand at the managerial side of things and led the Senior team to the Club's first All Ireland Gaeltacht title in 1998. The team narrowly failed to break their duck in the Championship in his term, losing to Aodh Ruadh by a point in the 1998 semi-final and to the eventual winners, St. Eunan's, by four points, in the 1999 quarter-final. He did however stay around long enough to win a deserved Senior Championship medal in 2000, when he came on as a substitute along with two of the other great servants of the Club, Jimmy Brennan and Ted Breslin. Still playing Reserve football with the Club, 2003 saw him play Adult football for the 20th year in succession. Patrick joins an elite group of players who have played Adult football for the Club through three different decades. Married to Fiona, they live at Meenavalley with their two daughters Molly and Ava.



Award Winners 1984:
Patsy Harkin (Senior Player), Edward Molloy (Referee), Jimmy Brennan (Minor Player), Charlie Bennett (Clubman of the Year).

1984 A.G.M

"The Centenary year has ended for the Ardara G.A.A. Club; the historic year was celebrated as the origins of the Association were highlighted, but a lot of rejoicing was overshadowed by a season of dissatisfaction and frustration".

These were the sentiments of Secretary Edward Molloy as he presented a hard hitting Secretary's report to the A.G.M., on the 30th of December in Peter Oliver's. While congratulating those who had brought All Ireland glory to the Club that year, the Secretary was extremely critical of the lack of commitment of some Club players to the jersey, and of Club members, who failed to support some of the

events, which were organised to celebrate Centenary Year. He continued; *"The loss of two County finals we could easily have won, and should have won, was a shattering blow, but we must ask the question, Do the players really care for those who support their feeble efforts on these big occasions? None of us can point the finger and accuse, because we have fallen down on some of our duties, yet the lack of commitment shown by a lot of players, to not alone the Club, but to the teams they were playing on was an absolute disgrace. During the year, players went off without excuse, and others went off to play other sports, despite being desperately needed for their team"*.

He was high in his praise of the County Scór winners in Tráth na gCeist and Instrumental Music sections, and of the massive amount of work done by the outgoing Club Chairman, Charlie Bennett. The Treasurer, Bosco McGill, reported an income of £5,674.84 and expenditure amounting to £9,337.30, which left the Club with a debit balance of £3,380.99. The Treasurer stated that the main source of income came from Gate collections at the Chapel, which amounted to £550.00 during the year, and receipts from home games, which amounted to £750.00. Club Chairman, Charlie Bennett, stated that he was stepping down from the position, and various tributes were paid from the floor for the tremendous job he had done. Columba Diver was elected Chairman for the second time, having already held the position in the 1970s.

The following officers were elected for 1985:-

President	-	Pádraig S. Mac a Ghoill.
Chairman	-	Columba Diver
Vice Chairman	-	Charlie Bennett
Secretary	-	Edward Molloy
Ass. Secretary	-	John McConnell
Treasurer	-	Bosco McGill
Ass. Treasurer	-	John Herron
P.R.O.	-	James McBrearty
Scor Officer	-	Edward Molloy
Oifigeach Na Gaeilge	-	Pádraig Mac a'Ghoill

Senior Team Manager: Martin Sweeney

Assistants: John Boyle and Josie Gallagher.

Senior Team Captain: Anthony Molloy.

Junior Team Manager: James McBrearty

Assistants: John McBrearty and Andy McKeown.

Adult Referees - Edward Molloy and John Gallagher with Frank McGhee, Edward Molloy, Adrian Concarr and Bart Whelan as Under-Age Referees.

Under-Age Managers elected for the 1985 were:-

- U-12** - Bobby Moore and John McConnell.
- U-14** - John M. O'Donnell, John Boyle and James McBrearty
- U-16** - Frank McGhee, Josie Brennan and Hughie Bennett.
- U-18** - Patrick Gallagher, Ted Breslin and John Herron.
- U-21** - Kieran Keeney and Conal A. Gildea.

1985

1985 on the playing fields was largely a forgettable year for the Club, with the highlights being limited to Luke Gavigan's exploits for the County Vocational and Minor teams. For the second year in succession, an Ardara man lifted the All Ireland Vocational Schools' Cup on the Hogan stand. There was disappointment once again on the Championship front, with the Senior team falling at the first hurdle to old rivals Kilcar. From an administrative point of view however, a big step was taken, with the Club setting up a Minor Board Committee, to oversee the running of Under-Age teams. This departure was set to change the Club's fortunes at Under-Age level, and was to increase the importance and efficiency with which the Under-Age teams in the Clubs were coached and developed.

Gavigan captains Donegal to second All Ireland title.

Following the exploits of the County Vocational Schools' team in 1984, few would have expected the same to follow in 1985. With only five of the same panel available, the team was largely a new squad, but nonetheless, carried a lot of talented players. Under the same management team, they were soon making the headlines, and retained their Ulster title after defeating Antrim, Down and Tyrone. Offaly were easily handled in the semi-final, 4-5 to 2-2, to set up a second final in



succession, this time the opponents being Cork. The rebels had no answer to a slick Donegal side, and Luke Gavigan's goal shortly after the break, sent his team on the road to a 3-8 to 1-4 victory. Once again, an Ardara player was captain Luke Gavigan followed Patrick Gallagher by leading his side to a Croke Park victory.

Luke Gavigan receives the Ulster Cup from Art McRory after their Ulster final win over Tyrone

The team lined out as follows:

Joe Boyle (Rosses C.S.), Niall Muldoon (Abbey V.S), Eugene McMenamin (St Columbas), Brendan Ó' Baoill (Pobalscoil Gaoth Dobhair), John Joe Doherty

(Carrick V.S), Graham McAllister (Stranorlar V.S.), Donal Donovan (Carrick V.S.), John Bán Gallagher (Killybegs V.S.), Roger McShane (Carrick V.S.), Michael McGarvey (Pobalscoil Gaoth Dobhair), Steven Boyle (Abbey V.S.), Sean Paul Barrett (Milford V.S.), Frank Ward (St. Columbas), Luke Gavigan (Glenties C.S.), Donal Bonnar (Rosses C.S.).



The Donegal Vocational Schools team – 1985 All Ireland Champions
Back L-R: Eugene McMenamin (St. Columba's, Stranorlar), Donal Donovan (Carrick V.S.), Graham McAllister (St Columbas.), Joe Boyle (Rosses C.S.), Stephen Boyle (Abbey V.S.), Niall Muldoon (Abbey V.S.) John Joe Doherty (Carrick V.S.) Roger McShane (Carrick V.S.), John Bán Gallagher (Killybegs V.S.)
Front L-R: Breandán Ó Baoill (Pobalscoil Gaoth Dobhair), Frank Ward (St Columbas), Michael McGarvey (Pobalscoil Gaoth Dobhair), Luke Gavigan (Glenties C.S.) Donal Bonner, John Paul Barrett (Miford V.S.)



Luke makes a presentation on behalf of the team to Manager, P.J. McGowan.

Donegal Minors lift second Ulster Minor League and Championship

The 1985 Donegal Minor team bridged a 29 year gap, when they captured only the County's second Ulster title in the grade. The team got a big boost for the Championship, when they defeated Cavan in the Ulster Minor League final in May. Luke Gavigan captained the side, and weighed in with a brilliant first-half goal, to set his team up for a 5-6 to 2-11 victory. The Championship was the target however, and wins over

Down, Monaghan and Armagh set the team up for a repeat of the Minor League final against the Breffni men. The contest was over from early on, though, with Donegal coasting to a 2-11 to 1-3 victory. Cork were the next opponents, in the All Ireland semi-final in Croke Park, but it proved to be a heartbreaking day for the Donegal team. Despite dominating possession throughout, missed chances saw their hopes of victory dashed, when they went down on a 2-5 to 0-9 scoreline. There was no doubt that this was probably the most talented team that Donegal had ever produced at this level, and was the best chance the County had of winning that elusive All Ireland Minor title.

The team that won the Ulster Championship was as follows:

Emmett Golden (Bundoran), John Joe Doherty (Naomh Columba), Denis Carberry (Killybegs), Sean McBride (Termon), Peter McIntyre (St. Eunan's), John Cunningham (Killybegs), Diarmuid Keon (Aodh Ruadh), John Bán Gallagher (Killybegs), Barry Cunningham (Killybegs), Tommy Ryan (Termon), Barry McGowan (Killybegs), Steven McMenamin (St Eunans), Dermot Ward (Glenfin), Luke Gavigan (Ardara), Conor White (Killybegs). Subs: Danny Gallagher (Dungloe), Pat McGovern (Aodh Ruadh), Mark Cleary (Aodh Ruadh), Frank Ward (Glenfin), Brendan Boyle (Gweedore), Donal Bonner (Na Rossa), Roger McShane (Kilcar), Donal Bonner (Na Rossa), Eugene McMenamin (Robert Emmett's), Pascal Cullen (St. Eunan's), Francis Murray (Killybegs), Eamon McAuley (MacCumhaill's).

Luke Gavigan ended the year on a high note, when he was presented with the County Under-Age Player of the Year award.



Luke Gavigan

1985 was a year in a lifetime for Luke Gavigan of Tullycleave, as he dominated headlines in the press, as Captain of the Vocational Schools' team, and for his role in the County Minor team's march to an Ulster title, as well as being selected as Donegal Under-Age Player of the Year. It was fairly obvious early in the career of a young Luke Gavigan that a special talent had arrived on the scene. The youngest son of Peggy and Paddy, Luke first came to the fore on the first Ardara Under-12 team in 1977, when, under the tutelage of Fr. Eamon Crossan, he manned the centre half back berth at the tender age of nine years. It was evident to anyone who watched the small number six, that he had an uncanny ability to read the game and a habit of always being in the right place at the right time. As he played through the Under-Age ranks for the Club, he soon began to gather an impressive trophy cabinet. His first Championship medal came on the Under-21 victory in 1983 when, as a 15 year old, he starred at corner forward in the historic victory over Aodh Ruadh. A

few months later a Minor Championship medal was added to the list, and it seemed that it would only be a matter of time before a Senior medal would finish the set.

He made his senior debut in 1984, the same year that he gathered his first of two All Ireland Vocational School medals. Luke left his sick bed at home on the morning of the match, to travel to Dublin with his brother Hugh Gerard, to play a starring role. His brilliant fisted goal in the second half of the game finished off Longford's hopes. Following the success of 1985, his next major honour was won in 1987, when another Celtic Cross was attained, when he partnered his close friend Thomas Maguire on the Donegal All Ireland winning Under-21 team, playing through the campaign at corner forward.

His Senior County debut came in the 1989/90 National League Campaign against Dublin, and he went on to win an Ulster Senior Championship medal that year, as a substitute, making a late appearance against Meath in the All Ireland semi-final. A long career in the County jersey seemed to be on the cards for Luke, but a run of serious injuries curtailed his involvement, and prevented him from being able to stand the rigours of Inter County fare. Like so many other great Club players in the eighties and nineties, he failed to win a coveted Senior Championship medal, his only award in that grade being a Senior League medal won in 1989.

A serious cruciate ligament injury in 1996 was the beginning of the end of his career at Senior level, but despite moving to Ballybofey after his marriage to Charlotte (McBride) the same year, he continued to play Reserve football with the Club until 2002, when his limbs could no longer take the rigours of Club football. His contribution to the Club was not limited to the playing field and he served as Vice-Chairman and Minor Board Treasurer, and was Charlie Bennett's right hand man in the successful draws of 1989 and 1991. A talented coach, he passed on his experience to many Under-Age teams over the years. His brother Martin went on to carry the family name at County, Provincial and International level, and it was unfortunate that the two brothers could not have lined out together more often on the Donegal Senior team. A Network Technician with E.S.B, Luke resides in Woodlawn, Ballybofey with Charlotte, daughters Amy Lee and Rachel, and son Luke Jr.

Kilcar end Championship hopes

The Senior team of 1985 faced a difficult opener in the Senior Championship first round against Kilcar. The form of the team, in the lead up to the first leg match in Towney, was far from impressive. They had played their opponents previously, once in the Gaeltacht and twice in the League, with decidedly mixed results. Ardara won the first League match in Pearse Memorial on a 1-10 to 2-6 scoreline,

Kilcar won the Gaeltacht tie 2-3 to 0-2, and just two weeks prior to the Championship match, handed out a 0-16 to 0-6 defeat to the Ardara team in the return League match in Towney. In the Championship, hopes were not high for a victory, especially in Towney, where the Kilcar team had rarely been beaten in their four-in-a-row League wins from 1981-1984. The team management decided to go for broke, and made a few controversial changes to the team, two of which saw Thomas Maguire and Noel Watters moved up to the forward line. With the changes obviously working, and with Kieran Keeney keeping Martin McHugh out of the game, the home side was caught off guard and Ardara came away with a deserved 0-7 to 0-3 victory. With the home leg remaining, there were high hopes of the team advancing, but some terrible defensive errors let Kilcar in for three goals and sent them on to a 3-4 to 1-4 victory. The teams that lined out that day were as follows:

Ardara: Patsy Harkin, John Herron, Martin Sweeney, Ted Breslin, Niall Campbell, Martin Gavigan, Kieran Keeney, Anthony Molloy, Eamon Cunningham, Thomas Maguire, Jimmy Caffrey, Patrick Gallagher, Luke Gavigan, Gerard McNelis, Anthony Harkin.

Kilcar: Michael McFadden, John Quinn, Danny Gillespie, John Doogan, Michael Carr, John Carr, Seamus Gallagher, James Carr, Maurice Carr, Seamus McBrearty, Martin McHugh, James McHugh, Roger McShane, Vernon Hegarty, Gerard McBrearty.

The teams met in the playoff in Fintra, on the 14th of July. A 1-5 to 1-2 half time lead in Kilcar's favour let them edge through to the quarter-finals on a full-time score of 1-7 to 1-5. Kilcar went on to win the Championship, defeating Four Masters' in the final 0-9 to 0-7.

In Division One of the League, the campaign started off on a high note, when the team went top of the table after four games. Three defeats in succession, however, against Na Rossa, Naomh Columba and Four Masters', left them in danger of being relegated. A home match against Downings saw the team get the victory they needed to stay in Division 1 for 1986. Their final match, against Aodh Rua, was a disaster, that saw them suffer an embarrassing defeat, as they were beaten by seventeen points, 6-7 to 0-8. The only silverware in the Club in 1985 was the Kevin McGill Memorial Cup, which was won after defeating Civil Service.

On the County Senior team Martin Gavigan, Kieran Keeney and Anthony Molloy all played during the year, and Niall Campbell was a member of the panel which won the McKenna Cup.

The Junior team also had a forgettable year in 1985, finishing just below mid table in the League and being defeated in the quarter-final of the Championship by Aodh

Ruadh. The team had defeated Fintown in the first round after a play-off. The difficulty the management had in fielding a team is obvious, in the fact that a total of 53 different players lined out for the squad during the year.

Under-21

The Under-21 team had a difficult first round assignment against Aodh Ruadh, although, with four Ardara players on the County Under-21 panel, (Patrick Gallagher, Niall Campbell, Martin Gavigan and Luke Gavigan), the team was still strong in most sectors. An epic saga ensued between the teams. Aodh Ruadh won the first match in Pearse Memorial Park (0-5 to 0-4) but Ardara won the return leg in Fr. Tierney Park, 2-3 to 0-5. The play-off, in Donegal Town, resulted in a draw, 0-6 each. The play-off replay was held in Townawilly, but a few soft goals gave Aodh Ruadh the victory by 3-2 to 1-5.

Club form first Minor Board

At the 1984 A.G.M., it was proposed by John McConnell that a Minor Board committee be formed, to take full responsibility for Under-Age teams. Although the Club had won Minor and Under-21 titles in 1983, there had not been a victory in the lower age-groups since the Under-14 title of 1976. In 1984 none of the Under-Age teams even qualified for a South-West final. The motion was carried. John McBrearty was elected Chairman, with John McConnell as Secretary. The Committee was comprised of all the elected Under-Age managers. Anthony Harkin brought the Managers together and held coaching sessions with them in the early months of the year. Footballs were purchased for each National School in the Parish, and portable goals were made for Under-Age training and Leagues. There was no immediate success, however, with all teams being defeated in 1985 at sectional stage. Killybegs and Dungloe dominated most grades in the Division. An Under-10 team was fielded in the Club for the first time, and played a number of matches under the management of Patsy Gildea and Bart Whelan. The Board ran a very successful National Schools' League with St Mary's and Meentinadea qualifying for the final. A big crowd enjoyed a high scoring match, with St Mary's taking the Fr. Luke Boyle cup on a score of 4-12 to 4-5. Don Earley was man of the match scoring 3-3 for the winners. The teams lined out as follows:

St. Mary's: Stephen McGinley, Michael Doherty, Declan Devenney, Niall O'Donnell, Damian Diver, Anthony Sweeney, Joseph Doherty, Paul Gallagher, Don Earley.

Meentinadea: Donal Breslin, Shane Mulreany, Adrian Cunningham, Cathal Breslin, Rory Maguire, Michael McGlinchey, Neil A. Doherty, Packie Maguire, Noel McHugh.

Referee: John McConnell

Other news

A new development for the Club in 1985 was the fielding of a Ladies' team. After playing a few friendly matches, the team remained unbeaten. Mary McHugh addressed the A.G.M. and stated that an interest in Ladies' Football was beginning to sweep the County. The Club stated at the meeting that they would give their full support on the matter.



The Club launched their 1984 Yearbook in June of 1985. The book, which was edited by Bart Whelan, was of the same high standard as the Club's two previous offerings in 1980 and 1982, and was a big seller throughout the parish.

Sad events during the year included the death of two former Club players, Fr. Luke Boyle and Packie John Gildea (last surviving member of the 1928 Championship winning team). The tragic death also took place of Club supporter Pete Diver from Monargan.

Local winners in the Scór na nÓg competition, which was held in the Nesbitt Arms on the 17th of November, were as follows:

Question Time: Eamon O'Rourke, Joseph Doherty and Brian Gavigan.

Recitation: Brackey School Group.

Solo Singing: Gary McHugh (Ardconnell).

Instrumental Music: Eamon O'Rourke and Conal Furey.

Novelty Act: Brackey School Group.

Set Dancing: Bonner Cannon Group.

Dinner Dance

At the Annual Dinner Dance held in the Nesbitt Arms on New Year's Eve, appreciation Awards for their contribution to the Club during the year were presented to Sean Watters, John Gallagher, Edward Molloy and Luke Gavigan; the Annual Awards being presented to the following:

Senior Player of the Year: John Herron

Junior Player of the Year: Leo Breslin

Clubman of the Year: John McConnell

Minor Player of the Year: Pauric Brennan

Supporter of the Year: Martin McTaggart

Fr. Luke Boyle



The news of the death of Fr. Luke Boyle, on the 18th of March 1985, caused great sadness throughout the parish and especially to the members of the Ardara G.A.A Club. The son of James (Sonny) and Margaret Boyle, Fr. Luke was born in Tullycleave on the 14th of October 1936. Widely acknowledged locally as one of the finest Under-Age players ever to have played for the Club, he usually played in the half forward line, where his lightning pace and accuracy caused many a headache for the opposition.

His first honour came in the famous 1952 Minor Championship victory, when he played at wing forward, while still only 16. He went on to captain the Club Minor team to a Championship victory in 1954. Called to the priesthood, he was enrolled in the Salesian College in Pallaskenry, Co. Offaly, at the age of 13. His vocation meant that his career at Club Senior level was limited to a few appearances each year. Following his secondary schooling, he furthered his education in Gloucester, England, and in Messina, Sicily. He was ordained to the Priesthood in 1966 and received a great welcome home to the parish from Club and Community. He finished his playing career around the same time, as he returned to Pallaskenry after his ordination to teach for a few years, before moving to Missionary work, which took him to Swaziland in Africa. He served for six years there before moving to the Southern state of Lesotho, where he died suddenly at the age of 48. A huge crowd attended his funeral in the Church of the Holy Family and his remains are interred under the shadow of the Church Bell.

1985 A.G.M.

The 1985 A.G.M of the Club took place on Sunday the 29th of December, in Peter Oliver's. The Secretary reported on the year's activities, singling out Luke Gavigan for special praise, following his exploits for the County Minor and Vocational teams. He commented on the poor showing of Club teams, which saw the Club finish the year without any trophies to show, for the first time since 1977.

The Treasurer in his Report, showed an income of £18, 936.00, with expenditure of £12, 633.00, leaving the Club with a credit balance of £2,922.60. The successful Supporters' Club draw, which was run during the year, netted a total profit of £7,000.00.

The officer board elected for 1986 was as follows:

President	- Padraig S. Mac a'Ghoill
Chairman	- Columba Diver

Vice Chairman	-	Charlie Bennett
Secretary	-	Edward Molloy
Ass. Secretary	-	John McConnell
Treasurer	-	Bosco McGill
Ass. Treasurer	-	John Herron
P.R.O	-	James McBrearty
Registrar	-	Thomas Boyle
Senior Team Manager	-	John Herron
Assistants	-	Bart Whelan, Patsy Gildea, Charlie Mooney
Team Trainer	-	John Boyle
Scor Officer	-	Fr. Jimmy Shiels
First Aid	-	Charlie Keeney, Johnny D. Earley
Groundsmen	-	Edward Molloy, Conal Gallagher

The Minor Board officers elected for 1986 were:-

Chairman	-	Bart Whelan
Secretary	-	John McConnell
Committee	-	Pauric Brennan, Pat O'Donnell, James McBrearty, Patsy Gildea, Michael Lynch, Anthony Molloy and Johnny D. Earley.

Under-Age Managers elected were:-

U-10	-	Patsy Gildea and Bart Whelan
U-12	-	John McConnell, Eamon McNelis and Bobby Moore.
U-13	-	Pauric Brennan
U-14	-	Pat O'Donnell and Phonsie Bennett
U-15	-	James McBrearty and John M. O'Donnell.
U-16	-	Josie Brennan, John M. O'Donnell and James McBrearty.
U-18	-	Anthony Molloy and Conal A. Gildea
U-21	-	Kieran Keeney and Josie Gallagher.

1986 - More of the same!

1986 was another mostly forgettable year for the Club generally; another '85! There was disappointment again for Club Adult teams in their respective Championships, and the most encouraging aspect of the Club was the effort directed towards the Under-Age teams by the Minor Board and its committee.

The second leg in Downings was another close affair, and the home side almost brought the tie to a third game. Although behind for most of the game, Ardara came back to earn a draw and thus proceeded to a quarter-final meeting with Aodh

Ruadh.

Seniors lose in quarter-final

The Senior panel had a difficult year in 1986, with the loss of some key players to emigration. Connie and Lanty Molloy had by now become permanent residents in New York, and in 1986, Anthony joined them, although not on a permanent basis. Other young players to emigrate, towards the end of the year, were Jimmy Brennan, Jimmy Caffrey and Eamon Cunningham, all members of the Minor and Under-21 Championship winning teams of 1983. Senior management and players worked hard in preparation for their first round championship tie with Downings, the first time the Clubs had ever met in the Senior Championship. But it wasn't to be so easy.

Downings almost bring off a shock Ardara 1-12 Downings 2-6

The long awaited first round first leg tie took place at a very Sunny Pearse Memorial Park on Sunday last. Downings almost brought off a shock after going into an eight point lead in the first half, and also missed a penalty kick, which would have left the home side with an enormous amount to do in the second half.

The home side settled down after this and pulled back two points, before the break, from Martin Sweeney. Downings led at half time 2-5 to 0-5.

Having cut back the lead to six points, Ardara were still in the match with a chance, especially with the assistance of a stiff breeze in the second half. Anthony Molloy started the second half with a long range point, and this was followed with another from an Eamon Cunningham free. Downings had a point from Francie Boyce, before Patrick Gallagher set up Luke Gavigan for a cracking goal.

Ardara were well on top at this stage, and it was only a matter of time before they added to this, with a succession of points from Gavigan, Sweeney (2), Molloy and Jimmy Caffrey, to end up narrow winners.

Ardara: Declan Gallagher, Ted Breslin, Kieran Keeney, Paddy Breslin, Jimmy Brennan, Martin Gavigan, Eamon Cunningham, Anthony Harkin, Anthony Molloy, Patrick Gallagher, Luke Gavigan, Patsy Shovelin (Kilclooney), Bobby Moore, Martin Sweeney, Conal Aidan Gildea. Subs used: Jimmy Caffrey and Noel Watters.

Downings: Paddy Logue, Kevin Ward, Brendan Roche, Thomas Clyde, Seamus Doherty, Eddie McGroddy, Con Boyce, Mark Bradley, Francis Boyce, Paddy McBride, Denis McBride, Denis McGroddy, Paddy McClafferty, Hughie McClafferty, John McBride.

The second leg in Downings was another close affair but a hard earned draw saw the team go through to the next round and a quarter-final meeting against Aodh Ruadh. To face Aodh Ruadh was always going to be tough, but without key players! The game in Towney was close throughout. Aodh Ruadh led at the break, 2-1 to 1-3, Ardara's goal coming from Luke Gavigan. Aodh Ruadh went three points ahead after the break, but a goal from Anthony Molloy levelled the scores in the 16th minute. Martin Sweeney then put Ardara ahead with a point with four minutes remaining. The sides were levelled however, when in injury time, the

Ballyshannon men received a free for what was deemed to be a 'harsh' call for over-carrying. Gerry Curran pointed the free, which left the final score 2-4 each. The replay was most disappointing, for Ardara, defensive errors proved costly. Aodh Ruadh were on top throughout and led 1-3 to 0-3 at half-time. They went further ahead in the second period, and a late goal from Martin Sweeney only put a respectable look on the scoreline. Aodh Ruadh won the match, 1-9 to 1-4. They went on to win the Championship, defeating Red Hughs in the final.

The teams were:

Aodh Ruadh: Gary Walsh, Thomas Gallagher, Tommy McDermott, Joe Curran, Conor Boyle, Eunan Gallagher, Pdraig McLoone, Brian Touhy (0-1), Sylvester Maguire, Colm Herron, Brian Murray (0-1), Gerard Curran (0-3), Alan Murray (0-2), Pascal McTiernan (0-1), Seán Boyle. Sub: Diarmuid Keon for Joe Curran.

Ardara: Declan Gallagher, Niall Campbell, Thomas Maguire, Ted Breslin, Noel Watters, Martin Gavigan, Ciaran Keeney, Anthony Molloy, (0-1), Anthony Harkin, Patrick Gallagher (0-1), Jimmy Brennan, Gerard McNelis (0-2), Luke Gavigan, Martin Sweeney (1-0), John Kennedy (Diamond). Sub: Leo Watters for Kennedy.

Referee: John Harkin.

The team did not have a great League campaign, and despite winning their first four matches, finished just above the relegation zone. In the Gaeltacht competition, the team went as far as the semi-finals, after defeating Kilcar's second team in the first round (5-6 to 0-1). They then lost to the eventual winners, Downings, by five points. Martin Gavigan, Anthony Molloy, Kieran Keeney, Patrick Gallagher and Niall Campbell were on the Donegal Senior panel for that year, under Manager, Tom Conaghan.



Gaelic Park- October 1986. Bart Whelan, Anthony Timoney (Donegal Town), Paul Molloy, Jimmy McGonagle, Columba Molloy, Bobby Moore and John McConnell.

Juniors show improvement

Although the Club Junior team did not collect any silverware, there was a great improvement in the fortunes of the team. Team manager, James McBrearty, and assistant Andy McKeon, assembled a reasonably settled team and as a result, they

made a determined bid for promotion, only failing in the final games. A tough Championship draw saw the side make an early exit to a strong Lifford outfit, while in the Shield and the Gaeltacht, they again played well but did not qualify for the final stages. They finished third in the League, missing out on the second promotion spot. The players who lined out for the Junior side in 1986 were as follows:

Packie Maguire, Pauric Brennan, Peter Breslin, Paul McNelis, Leo Breslin, Paddy Breslin, Dermot Maguire, Joseph Brennan, John Hegarty, James McBrearty, John Caffrey, Declan Gallagher, Martin Feeney, Danny Sweeney, John Cannon, Brian O'Donnell, Vincent Cassidy, Adrian Brennan, Steven Bruce, Stephen McCahill, John McConnell, Vinny McConnell, Stephen Darnell, Francis O'Donnell, Jackie Gallagher, Ian Melly, Sean McGuinness, Seamus McGuinness, Eugene Bennett, Luke Brennan, Frank McGhee, Declan Brennan, Paddy McGill, Eamon McNelis, John Herron, Stephen Keeney.

Under-Age teams improving.

The fortunes of the Club Under-Age teams continued to improve, with the Club fielding at all levels from Under-10 to Minor. The Under-10 team performed admirably, despite failing to qualify for the Divisional final. The Under-12s put in some great performances and qualified for the Divisional final, after a brilliant victory over a fancied Dungloe team. A great Killybegs team who went on to win the Championship, was too strong in the final, winning convincingly in Kilcar. Damian Diver, Don Earley, Michael Doherty, Bernard Gallagher and Edward Lynch, put in good performances for the team during the season. The Under-14 team also had some good displays, but failed to progress. In the Juvenile Championship, a very talented team went all the way to the Divisional final, but went out of the competition after a brilliant tussle with a Tony Boyle inspired Rosses side. Declan Gallagher (Meenlacharry) and Luke Brennan went on to play for the Donegal County Under-16 team. The 1986 Under-16 panel was as follows: Luke Brennan, Conal McDevitt (Loughfad), Declan Gallagher, Vinny McConnell, James McHugh, Patrick Reynolds (Meenarillagh), Kevin Maguire (Carrickacleava), Peter Watters, Colm Friel (Narin), Edward McCole, Declan Brennan, Adrian Brennan, Kevin Gallagher (Front St), John O'Donnell (Hillhead), Paul Melly (Tullycleave), Charlie McHugh, Daragh Curran, Conal Gallagher (Brackey), Conal Furey (Sheskinagreana), Thady Breslin (West End).

The Minor team had an unsuccessful year, winning a few of their section matches, but failed to qualify for the Divisional semi-final.

The U-21 side in 1986 promised much but unfortunately failed to deliver. After winning the Minor Championship three years previously, they were early

favourites to progress in the competition. They were in the difficult half of the draw, and eventually overcame a good Naomh Columba side, over two legs, in the first round. The favourites clashed at an early stage, however, with Ardara and the fishermen drawn in the quarter-final. The Killybegs men, who had won the 1984 and '85 Minor Championships, came out on top after a competitive affair, and went on to win their first County Under-21 Championship. Six players on the Ardara team were members of the County Under-21 panel: Patrick Gallagher, Niall Campbell, Eamon Cunningham, Luke Gavigan, Jimmy Brennan and Thomas Maguire. The team lost to Tyrone in the Ulster final.



Bosco McGill of Main Street who served as Club Treasurer from 1984 - 86. Bosco is a grandson of Charles McGill, the first Secretary of the Club in 1921.



The Donegal Under-21 team of 1986.

Back L-R: Manus Boyle (Killybegs), Niall Campbell (Ardara), Patrick Gallagher (Ardara), John Cunningham (Killybegs), Seamus Ward (Glenfin), Gerry McDermott (MacCumhalls), Barry Cunningham (Killybegs), Johnny Gallagher (Termon)
Front L-R: Joey McDermott (Glenfin), Frankie Gallagher (Aodh Ruadh), Seanie McEniff (Bundoran), Thomas Maguire (Ardara), Gary Walsh (Aodh Ruadh), Declan Bonner (Na Rossa), Leslie McGettigan (St. Eunan's), Luke Gavigan (Ardara).

Charlie retains his chain.

The Club again ran a Lord Mayor election in 1986, with two candidates - outgoing mayor, Charlie Bennett, and Mary McHugh - going head to head, to raise money for the Club. Charlie eventually held on to his title, with the event raising a huge total of £9,100 for the Club. Both candidates were honoured at the Club Dinner Dance, when they were chosen Club Persons of the Year for their efforts. 1986 also saw the Club come up with a new crest. Anthony Harkin was responsible for the design, and it was to be displayed on all Club jerseys and other gear in the future.

The Club hosted the County Intermediate final between Naomh Conaill and Dungloe, at Pearse Memorial Park in September, Dungloe winning 0-8 to 0-6 before a capacity crowd.

At the Annual Dinner Dance on New Year's Eve, the following were presented with the respective awards for 1986;

Senior Player of the Year: Kieran Keeney.

Junior Player of the Year: Paul McNelis.

Minor Player of the Year: Brian O'Donnell.

Club Persons of the Year: Charlie Bennett & Mary McHugh.



Pictured after the Lord Mayor Election in 1986; Columba Diver, Mary McHugh, Charlie Bennett and Bart Whelan. Mary and Charlie were selected as joint Club Persons of the Year in 1986, for their fundraising during the mayoral election.

1986 A.G. M

"The Club during the past 12 months has become better organised, as a result of much work being put into the development of Under-Age football, pitch repairs, and the administration of the Club, but once again we failed to win any titles on the playing fields. As we suffered the despair of many great performances, without

bringing deserved success, the time has now come when we must go into every single game from now on, with the sole aim to win each one". These were the sentiments of the Secretary, Edward Molloy, as he opened his annual report to the A.G.M on the 28th of December in Peter Oliver's. He went on to cover all the year's activities, and singled out Martin Sweeney and Jim Caffrey (Sr.) for their great work on the Pearse Memorial and to the newly formed Club Scór committee, who had run a great local competition in both Scór na nÓg and Scór Sinsir. The Treasurer, in his annual Report, showed an expenditure of £8,920.00, with income of £13,820.28, leaving a credit balance of £3,805.04 plus £4,026.04 in the Parks Account. The Registrar, Thomas Boyle, reported a Club membership of 170, which was the third highest in the County, and an Under-Age membership of 259. The newly elected Treasurer, Mary McHugh, gave an address to the meeting, regarding Ladies Football, which it was hoped would be up and running in the coming year. She appealed to all teams to show co-operation with the Ladies in using the field for training sessions and games etc.

The following officers were elected for 1987:

President	-	Pádraig S. Mac a Ghoill
Chairman	-	Columba Diver
Vice Chairman	-	Charlie Bennett
Secretary	-	Edward Molloy
Ass. Secretary	-	John McConnell
Treasurer	-	Mary McHugh
Ass. Treasurer	-	Bosco McGill
P.R.O.	-	James McBrearty
Registrar	-	Tomas Boyle
Scór Officer	-	Edward Molloy
Oifigeach na Gaeilge	-	Pádraig S. Mac a Ghoill

Senior Team Manager: Frank McGhee

Assistant: John Boyle.

Junior Team Manager: James McBrearty.

First Aid: Johnny D. Early and Charlie Keeney.

Adult Referees: Edward Molloy and John Gallagher.

The following officers were elected to the Minor Board:

Chairman	-	Bart Whelan
Secretary	-	Pauric Brennan
Committee	-	John McConnell, Johnny D. Early, Phonsie Bennett, Pat O'Donnell, Tom Diver, Vincent McConnell and Ted Breslin (Senior).

Under-Age Managers

- U-10** - Patsy Gildea and Brian O'Donnell.
- U-12** - John M. O'Donnell, Tom Diver and John McConnell.
- U-13** - Pauric Brennan.
- U-14** - Johnny D. Earley and Phonsie Bennett.
- U-15** - Johnny D. Earley and Phonise Bennett.
- U-16** - Josie Brennan and James McBrearty.
- U-18** - John Hegarty and Pauric Brennan.
- U-21** - Eamon McNelis.

Underage Referees - Adrian Concarr and Eamon McNelis.

1987 – Donegal win second Under-21 All Ireland

The G.A.A in the county received a great boost again in 1987, when the County Under-21 team captured the County's second All Ireland Under-21 title. The team was mainly based on the 1985 Ulster Minor Championship winning side, with Luke Gavigan, and Thomas Maguire both playing key roles in the campaign. The team went about the job of winning the All Ireland in the toughest manner possible, playing five games to come out of Ulster and winning the All Ireland final after a replay against Kerry.

Luke, at corner forward, played in all the matches bar the Ulster quarter-final against Derry, which he missed through a suspension, following a controversial sending off in the first round, against Fermanagh, in Ballyshannon. But he had already scored two goals in a fortunate one-point victory over the Ernesiders.

Thomas played in the first three matches in Ulster, but missed the Ulster final, the Ulster final replay and the National semi-final, but won his place back for the All Ireland final against Kerry, where he lined out at left corner back. The teams drew the first match, before a brilliant team display from Donegal gave them a 1-10 to 2-4 victory, in the replay at Roscommon.

There were great scenes of jubilation across the County following the victory, and among the huge crowd of supporters from the parish, who had followed the team. The side was captained by John Cunningham of the Killybegs Club, son of Andy and Joan of Cunningham's Bar in Narin. Manager of the team was P.J Mc Gowan of Seán MacCumhaill's, and his mentors were Jimmy White (Killybegs) and Joe Winston of St Eunan's.

The team that lined out in the final replay against Kerry was as follows.

Danny Gallagher (Dungloe), John Joe Doherty (Naomh Columba), John Connors (Dungloe), Thomas Maguire (Ardara), Diarmuid Keon (Aodh Ruadh), John Cunningham (Killybegs), Paul Carr (Naomh Columba), John Bán Gallagher

(Killybegs), Baryy Cunningham (Killybegs), Paddy Hegarty (Naomh Columba), Tommy Ryan (Termon) (0-1), Barry McGowan (Killybegs) (0-1), Dermot Ward (Glenfin) (0-2), Manus Boyle (Killybegs) (1-7), Luke Gavigan (Ardara). Sub used; Seamus Ward (Glenfin) for Hegarty.



Donegal Under-21's 1987 All Ireland Champions
Back L-R: John Connors (Dungloe), John Joe Doherty (Naomh Columba), John Bán Gallagher (Killybegs), Danny Gallagher (Dungloe), Tommy Ryan (Termon), Barry Cunningham (Killybegs), Paddy Hegarty (Naomh Columba), Barry McGowan (Killybegs).
Front L-R: Dermot Keon (Aodh Ruadh), Paul Carr (Naomh Columba), John Cunningham (Killybegs), Luke Gavigan (Ardara), Dermot Ward (Glenfin), Manus Boyle (Killybegs), Thomas Maguire (Ardara)



Luke and Thomas celebrate after the victory with Michael Rose (Inver)



Thomas Maguire of Carrickacleavea was corner back on the Donegal Under-21 team of 1987. Thomas also played for the Under-21s in 1986, and had previously played as a County Minor in 1984. A great talent, he was an important member of the winning Minor and Under-21 teams of 1983. He first played on the Ardara Senior team the same year, and was a regular at corner or full-back. Good in the air, Thomas was well known for having a huge drive from a placed ball, and had great pace as a defender. He emigrated to the U.S.A shortly after the All Ireland win and played for the Donegal New York team for a period, until he finished his playing career.

Kilcar end Seniors' hope in semi-final

Despite the loss, through emigration, of key players, Eamon Cunningham, Jimmy Caffrey and Jimmy Brennan from the previous year's panel, the early season form the Senior team in 1987 was impressive, with the side leading League Division 1 South from an early stage. (The structure of the Leagues had been changed at County Convention to two sections in Division 1, split on a geographical basis, North and South).

Victories over Na Rossa and Glenfin, in Comórtas Peile Na Gaeltachta, qualified the team for a final appearance against Kilcar, but with the team depleted, due to County Senior and Under 21 commitments, the side went down to their keen rivals.

In the Senior Championship, Gweedore were the first round opponents, and following a 0-8 to 0-4 victory in Gweedore, the team was fortunate to advance to the quarter-finals after the home tie finished in a 1-4 to 0-7 draw. Gweedore missed a second half penalty to let Ardara off the hook. The team improved their form, though, for the next test, a quarter-final match with St. Eunan's at MacCumhaill Park. 0-7 from Gerard Mc Nelis, 2-1 from Connie Molloy and a Conal Aidan Gildea goal, gave the team a 3-8 to 2-4 victory over a disappointing Letterkenny side. This set the team up for a semi-final tie with Kilcar. The 1985 Champions had already defeated Cloughaneely and Glenfin in the earlier rounds. Their 1985 first round defeat was still high in the minds of the Ardara players. The match took place in Fintra, and it followed the pattern of previous Championship meetings of the teams, throughout the eighties. Kilcar led the match 1-8 to 1-7 with ten minutes remaining, when tragically, a spectator, Francie Byrne of Kilcar, passed away while watching the match. The game was immediately abandoned, and the replay fixed for the following Sunday the 24th of August.

Late Kilcar Blitz sees off Ardara Kilcar 2-7 Ardara 0-9

Ardara's dream of a place in this year's Senior Championship final was smashed to smithereens at Fintra Park, Killybegs on Sunday, as arch rivals Kilcar hammered a goal and a point in the last two minutes, to earn the right to play Aodh Ruadh in this year's decider.

So, once again, Ardara were unable to overcome the Kilcar hoodoo. It was a heartbreaking defeat for a side which has suffered the same fate many times for the past number of years. But, for the Kilcar men, the sound of Fr. Seán Gallaghers whistle was a peal of joy, for Ardara looked good enough to force this semi-final into extra time.

The swing of fortunes was quite extraordinary. The sides were level on no fewer than four occasions in the second half. Playing with a tigerish intensity and a fleetness of foot, Ardara promised so much but at the end lacked a maturity to push through for victory.

On a perfect day for football, a first half goal from Michael Molloy sent Kilcar in at the interval with a 1-3 to 0-3 lead. His side's point coming from Martin McHugh (2) and Neilly Cannon, while Ardara responded through Martin Gavigan, Gerard McNelis and Kieran Keeney. Ardara soon clawed back, to level after the break with three Gerard McNelis points, following some inspiring defensive play from Lanty Molloy at centre half back. Martin McHugh and Patrick Gallagher exchanged points, before the impressive Donie McCole raided up field to score an inspiring point to put his team into the lead for the first time, with eleven minutes remaining. The more experienced Kilcar men though soon regained the lead, with two points from McHugh. and although John Kennedy equalised for Ardara with five minutes remaining, a 55 metre free from McHugh, gave his side the advantage again.

One could not write off the Ardara men though, and they soon attacked again to try to gain the advantage. They courted disaster however, when with two minutes left, a scoreable free in the Kilcar half of the field was intercepted by Danny Gillespie, who in turn passed to Gerard McBrearty, who laid the ball off to the onrushing James McHugh. With a brilliant pass, McHugh found Mark McShane who had been left unmarked in front of the Ardara goal, and he gave Neilly Gildea no chance with a shot low to the corner of the net. With a little less than a minute to go, the game had been put beyond Ardara's reach. It was a cruel score to lose by, yet a well worked one and only served to highlight the danger of giving possession against a team such as Kilcar.

The game was blown up shortly afterwards. The effort of their recent arduous campaigns obviously paid off for Kilcar. Ardara's stiff, if somewhat unpredictable resistance will have helped them to pinpoint their weak spots. It will be hard to get out there and do it all again next Sunday, but then that's what champions are made of

Kilcar: Michael McFadden, John Doogan, James Carr, Seamus Gallagher, John Carr, Michael Carr, Neilly Byrne, Mark McShane (1-0), Danny Gillespie, Neilly Cannon (0-1), Martin McHugh (0-6), Seán McGinley, Michael Molloy (1-0), James McHugh, Gerard McBrearty.

Ardara: Neilly Gildea, Paddy Breslin, Ted Breslin, John Kennedy (Tullycleave), Donie McCole (0-1), Lanty Molloy, Niall Campbell, Anthony Molloy, Martin Gavigan (0-1), Gerard McNelis (0-4), Patrick Gallagher (0-1), Anthony Harkin, Luke Gavigan, Kieran Keeney (0-1), Conal Aidan Gildea. Subs: John Kennedy (Diamond) (0-1) for Conal Aidan Gildea.

Referee: Fr. Seán Gallagher (Cloughaneely).

The loss was another crippling blow to the team, and people were beginning to feel that someone had "jinxed" their efforts to win another Championship. Some of those players from the early eighties were coming close to retirement, and the hope that the Under-21 and Minor wins of 1983 had brought, was starting to drain away.

Following their Championship exit, things went downhill for the team and they slipped out of the play-off positions, following a humiliating 20-point defeat by Kilcar. This defeat meant that Kilcar had ended the Club's hopes in all four competitions in 1987; Senior Shield (beaten after extra time in the semi-final in January), Senior Championship, Gaeltacht, and the League. Other games of note for the Seniors in 1987 were; against the travelling Donegal New York party in August, which the visitors won, and the Annual Kevin McGill Memorial tournament, which saw Civil Service take the cup in Pearse Memorial Park.

Juniors take League and Championship double

The status of the Club Junior team had risen gradually in 1985 and '86, following a few lean years, after the 1980 Junior final defeat. Competitions had been restructured in the County and, from 1985 on, Club second teams played in the Junior 'B' Championship, with one or two exceptions, who played Junior Championship. Playing in Division 3 South of the All County League, the form of the team was promising from an early stage, with Ardara soon rising to the top of League Division 3 before their Championship campaign commenced.

The team had the difficult end of the draw in the Championship.

Under the management of James McBrearty, they overcame Killybegs after two victories in the preliminary round, and clashed with Malin's first team in the first round. Drawn matches in both Pearse Memorial and in Malin set up a third match in O'Donnell Park. An epic struggle ensued, with Ardara the winners by a one-point margin. An easy victory over Glenswilly (4-5 to 1-5) and a 1-8 to 0-2 victory over Fanad Gaels in the semi-final, set the team up for their first final in the grade, against Lifford. Ardara started as favourites against the border side, which ironically was managed by a former Ardara Club player and one-time Chairman, Packie Keeney. Played on the 14th of September in MacCumhail Park, the match proved to be fiercely competitive, with Ardara coming out on top after a physical battle.

Ardara win rough and tumble final ***Ardara 0-6 Lifford 0-2***

Sunday's Junior 'B' Championship final between Ardara and Lifford was a very poor advertisement for the competition. Ardara emerged from this bad-tempered, low-scoring affair to lift their first title in this category. But questions must be raised following some disgraceful scenes at the Ballybofey venue.

Both teams were guilty of some appalling off-the-ball incidents and as the game

progressed even some of the substitutes on the side of the pitch became involved. Referee John Harkin lost control of the game very early on, and even the sending-off of Lifford's Willie Crossan in the second half did nothing to arrest the decline of the game as a sporting spectacle. Football took a back seat as players increasingly abandoned the skills of the game for the more physical and ugly side of the sport.

Losing discipline, both teams refused to accept hard but fair tackles, which are part and parcel of Gaelic football, and retaliated when checked by opposing players.

Low scoring

The low score indicates the value of the game as entertainment. That only eight points were scored during the hour shows a chronic lack of the finer skills of the game. Lifford lost control of the middle of the field and with forwards who lacked the ability to take scores, their side was limited to only one point on either side of half time.

But the Lifford defence almost made up for the shortcomings of their attack. They played a tight game that even the experience of the Ardara side found difficult to overcome, and they managed to hold the Ardara team to only six points.

Ardara went on the offensive from the throw-in, but found the stubborn Lifford defence very hard to penetrate. With their almost total control at midfield, Ardara were able to keep constant pressure on the Lifford defence and eventually wore them down, and as their concentration slipped, their forwards came through for the vital scores.

But even with their dominance at midfield, Ardara came very close to losing the game, and almost conceded a goal when playing with the wind in the first half, – a goal which would have left the score level at the interval, but corner forward Seamus Lynch missed his chance and the teams went to the dressing-rooms at half-time with a scoreline of Lifford 0-1, Ardara 0-4.

Ardara's points in the first half came from John McConnell (two), Luke Brennan and Seán Mc Guinness. Paul Gallen got Lifford's point.

Lifford made a more concerted effort to play football in the second half, and had their forwards been on better form they might have come closer to beating Ardara, as they kicked a lot of wides mid-way through the half.

Lifford's new burst of life in the second half was largely due to some very shrewd

positional changes. Tom Devenney moved from centre half-forward to the centre half-back berth, where he combined well with man of the match for Lifford, Robert Campbell. Paddy Melaugh also had a good game for Lifford at corner back.

Ardara dominated the second half but were unable to transfer their superiority to the scoreboard. They did add further points from Joseph Brennan and Luke Brennan to one in reply from Danny McLaughlin.

Lifford finished the more determined and stronger team, but the Ardara defence, with victory in their sights, soaked up everything thrown at them and fully deserved their win. Lifford appeared to be too over-awed by the final occasion and did not settle to their true form.

Best for Lifford: Liam Crossan, Paul Gallen, Tom Devenney and Mark Kelly.

Best for Ardara: Pauric Brennan Luke Brennan, Leo Breslin and Stephen Keeney. County Chairman Charlie Faulkner presented Ardara captain Paul McNelis with the Junior B Cup immediately after the match.

Ardara: Eugene Bennett, Stephen Darnell, Pauric Brennan, Peter Breslin, Paul McNelis (Capt), Leo Breslin, Dermot Maguire, Seán Mc Guinness, Joseph Brennan, Seamus Mc Guinness, Luke Brennan, Leonard Molloy, Adrian Brennan, Stephen Keeney, John Mc Connell. Subs Frank McGhee for A Brennan, Brian O'Donnell for Peter Breslin, Vincent Cassidy, Paddy McGill, Patsy Gildea, Francis O'Donnell, Ian Melly.

Lifford: Pauric McGrory, Eamon Mc Laughlin, Willie Crossan, Paddy Melaugh, Liam Crossan, Eunan O'Brien, Robert Campbell, Paul Gallen, Donal Coyle, Ray White, Tom Devenney, Seamus Lynch, Mark Kelly, Austin Daly, Danny McLaughlin. Subs; Ray McGinley for Eunan O'Brien, Liam Harte for Ray Mc Ginley, John Murphy for Liam Harte, Paul Hegarty, John Campbell.

Referee: John Harkin (Naomh Columba)



The win come from a great mixture of youth and experience; twelve of the team were under 21; the others provided the added experience of seasoned campaigners like Frank McGhee, Patsy Gildea, Paddy McGill and the evergreen Francis 'Bomber' O'Donnell.

Charlie Faulkner presents the cup to captain, Paul McNelis after the match. Also in photo is Eugene Bennett.

Following the Championship victory, the team were well in contention to add League honours, and after dropping only two points in their section, they defeated Gweedore in the Division 3 semi-final, to qualify for a final against Milford.

There was controversy in the run up to the game, with the match being fixed on Monday the 29th of November for Sunday the 6th December in Ballybofey. The game was then postponed on the Wednesday and was put on again by the County Board on Friday the 4th of December, giving the teams only two days notice of the fixture.

The game was similar to the Championship final, although a little less physical. Milford had most of the possession through-out, but Ardara were more clinical in front of goal. Milford led at the break, 0-6 to 1-2, John McConnell fisting an Ardara goal from a Joseph Brennan pass. A second-half goal from Seamus McGuinness was then crucial to the Ardara victory, and further points from Leonard Molloy and Paul McNelis gave Ardara a slender 2-4 to 0-9 victory. Ardara's best players were Stephen Darnell, Pauric Brennan, Paul McNelis and the McGuinness brothers, Sean and Seamus. The victory celebrations however were somewhat sombre following a serious injury to Joseph Brennan, who broke his leg during the match.

Ardara - Eugene Bennett, Stephen Darnell, Pauric Brennan, Vincent Cassidy, Paul McNelis (0-02), Leo Breslin, Dermot Maguire, Joseph Brennan, Sean McGuinness, John McGill (Maghera), Seamus McGuinness (1-00), Leonard Molloy (0-02), Vinny McConnell, John Hegarty, John McConnell (1-00).

Subs - Peter Breslin for Joe Brennan, Paddy McGill for John Hegarty, Adrian Brennan for Vinny McConnell, Stephen Keeney, Frank McGhee, Brian O'Donnell, Stephen McCahill, Paddy McGill, Patsy Gildea, Francis O'Donnell and Ian Melly.



Ardara Junior team 1987- Donegal Junior 'B' and Division 3 League Champions.
Back L-R: Patsy Gildea, Peter Breslin, Joseph Brennan, Leo Breslin, Stephen Keeney, Leonard Molloy, John McConnell, Frank McGhee, Shaun McGuinness, James McBrearty.
Front L-R: Pauric Brennan, John Hegarty, Luke Brennan, Stephen Darnell, Brian O'Donnell, Paul McNelis, Dermot Maguire, Eugene Bennett, Ian Melly, Edward McCole.
Sitting: Adrian Brennan, Seamus McGuinness, Francis O'Donnell, Vinny Cassidy, Paddy McGill.

Under-Age teams improving

The performances of the Club Under-Age teams in 1987 continued in the same vein as the previous year, with the majority of teams beginning to compete consistently at Divisional level. The Under-10 team included some very promising players, and had a great run in the South-West Championship. They were eventually defeated in the Divisional final, following a replay. Players to impress in this grade were Mark Boyle (Kilclooney), Hugh Byrne, Conal Doherty, Francis Diver, David Diver and Aidan Nicholson (Narin).

The Under-12s were in with some very strong teams in their section, and although did not qualify for the Division final, gained some consolation, when they won the South-West 'B' Championship.

The Under-14 team had improved gradually over the previous years, and they were regarded as one of the top teams in the County. The problem though, was that Killybegs were also rated a top team, following their Under-12 victory in 1985. Only one team could qualify for the County semi-finals and however defeat in the Divisional Final by the fishermen, ended the hopes of Johnny D. Earley and Pat O'Donnell's men. Killybegs went on to easily win the County title.

The U-16 team had a mixed year, under manager James McBrearty. The Championship was a disappointment, with the team failing to qualify for the play-

off stages. They did however win the Cathal Coughlan Memorial Cup, which was hosted by the St Naul's Club, with the games being held in Drimarone. Captain Adrian Brennan won the Player of the Tournament Award.

The team on the day was Brendan McHugh, Kieran Lynch, Conal Gallagher (Edergole), Anthony O'Donnell, Declan Brennan, Rory Maguire, Adrian Brennan, John Herron, Adrian Cunningham, Charlie McHugh, John M. Byrne, Thady Breslin, Manus Friel. Sub used – Adrian Whelan for Manus Friel.



Mary Coughlan presents the Cathal Coughlan Memorial cup to Adrian Brennan after the teams win in Drimarone.

The Minor team reached the Divisional final when they put up a good performance to lose narrowly to a Naomh Columba side, powered by Noel Hegarty, on a 1-9 to 0-5 scoreline. The team in that game was as follows:

Ardara – James McHugh, Leonard Molloy, Conal Gallagher, Stephen Darnell, Adrian Brennan, Niall Boyle, Joseph Brennan, Declan Gallagher, Vinny McConnell, Luke Brennan, Paul Maguire, Edward McCole, Declan Brennan, Charlie McHugh and Mark Bennett.

The Under -21 team performed well in difficult circumstances, in a Championship, which stretched over six months. They accounted for MacCumhail's in the first round in early March, but they waited for five months for their next match, and then had to play the quarter and semi-finals inside four days. The Club lodged a complaint to the County Board, but their complaints went unheard. The team defeated Kilcar in the quarter-final, but during the match, suffered a few injuries. They next faced Naomh Columba, with an under strength team. A whole hearted effort was not enough against a very impressive Glen side who won easily on the night, 5-7 to 1-7, and went on to win the Championship, defeating Killybegs in the

final. In the lesser competitions, the Under-15 Ógsport team was defeated by Killybegs in the first round of the competition, while the Under-13 team was beaten in the Divisional semi-final by Killybegs.

St Mary's National School success

St Mary's had a double success; their first ever County Championship title and they also won the Divisional Schools' Quiz. For two years, St. Eunan's of Laghey had seen off their challenges but on this occasion Ardara turned the tables, and won on a score of 3-07 to 1-08. Outstanding for Ardara were Damian Diver, Don Early, Sean Whyte, Niall O'Donnell and Eamon Doherty. The team and scorers on County final day were - John O'Donnell, Sean Whyte, Niall O'Donnell, David Diver, Damian Diver (1-05), Jonathon Boyle, Eamon Doherty, Brendan Gallagher (R.I.P) (1-00), Don Early (Capt), Bernard Gallagher (0-01), Conal Doherty, Francis Diver, Patrick (Teague) Breslin (1-01). Sub used – Francis Gallagher. Referee – Brendan McShane (Kilcar).

St. Mary's was also victorious in the Schools' League within the Parish. With the strength of the School at that time, the team was split into two sections, Ardara North (above the bridge), and Ardara South. Ardara North were victorious in the League, defeating their Southern counterparts, and they won the Fr. Luke Boyle Cup.



The St. Mary's North team which won the parish league in 1987.

**Back L-R: Cathal Doherty, Luke McHugh, Bernard Gallagher,
Niall O'Donnell, Mark Cassidy.**

**Front L-R: Damien Gallagher, Brendan Gallagher, John O'Donnell, Eamon Doherty,
Francis Gallagher, Conal Doherty.**

Clubmen to the fore at County Level.

The increased involvement of Club members at County level was very evident in 1987, with a number of officers taking positions on Divisional and County Boards. Bart Whelan was re-elected Secretary of the Donegal County Board for the seventh year in succession. At the same convention, Pádraig S. Mac a Ghoill was elected Vice President of the County Board. John McConnell was elected as South-West Board Secretary and U-16 Manager, and was also elected County Youth Officer. Pauric Brennan was elected as Board Registrar, and Edward Molloy as P.R.O. Edward was also one of the County's delegates to the National G.A.A Congress in Wexford. On County teams, Luke Brennan and Declan Gallagher were part of the Donegal Minor team, while Martin Gavigan, Anthony Molloy, Kieran Keeney, Niall Campbell and Ted Breslin were all part of the County Senior panel at different stages during the year. Molloy and Keeney lined out in the 1-8 to 0-6 Ulster Championship defeat to Armagh. Anthony was also selected on the Ulster Railway Cup team of 1987. Don Earley, Damian Diver and Michael Furey (Shaskinagreana) played on the County National Schools' team.

Other news



Luke Brennan - All Ireland Colleges 'B' Medal winner with St. Macartan's College, Monaghan. Luke also represented Donegal at Minor and Under-21 levels and won a Senior League medal in 1989.

Luke Brennan of the Main Street became the third player to win an All Ireland 'B' Colleges' medal when he was a member of the St. Macartan's team from Monaghan which won the All Ireland final in March. Máire Nic Aoidh was selected as Cailín Gaelach an Chontae at the County Gaeltacht finals in Kilcar and went on to represent the County in the All Ireland finals in Belmullet, while Seán Mícheál Ó Domhnaill was re-elected as Secretary of the County Comórtas Peile Na Gaeltachta committee, for the fourth year in succession.

The Club received great praise for their hosting of both the Scór Sínsir and Scór na nÓg competitions in the Community Centre, where a huge crowd packed the hall to view two great nights of entertainment.

At the Annual Dinner Dance held on New Year's Eve, special awards were presented to Luke Gavigan and Thomas Maguire, on winning Under-21 All Ireland medals, and to Luke Brennan on winning an All Ireland Colleges' medal. Other annual awards were presented to the following:

Clubman of the year: Columba Diver

Senior Player of the Year: Ted Breslin

Junior player of the year: Dermot Maguire

Minor Player of the Year: Declan Gallagher (Red)

Supporter of the year: Josie Brennan

Appreciation Awards: Sean McGuinness, John Byrne, Sean McGuinness Jr., also to Club Referees, Edward Molloy and John Gallagher.



Supporter of the Year for 1987, Josie Brennan, pictured with sons Declan and Adrian. As a supporter, gateman, sponsor, etc, Josie is well known around the County as a loyal Ardara G.A.A man, and his family have all followed in his footsteps.

1987 A.G.M.

"A glorious year for our Club has ended, in which we have enjoyed many great moments and notable successes, notably winning the County Junior 'B' Championship and League titles, and the winning of

All Ireland and Ulster Under-21 Championship medals by two of our Club players. It was a year when the Club was hit by the emigration of many players, a period when many of our players did well on County teams and a twelve months where we hosted the best ever Scór events ever seen in the County", were the sentiments of Secretary, when he presented his seventh report as Secretary of the Club to the A.G.M, on the 3rd of January 1988, in Peter Oliver's, before an attendance of 70 members. He detailed the year's events and paid various tributes to those who had served the Club. He had a special word for Martin Sweeney and Jim Caffrey for their great work on pitch maintenance during the year, in both Pearse Memorial and Sandfield. He was highly critical of some Club members for their continuous abuse of referees. While the abuse of referees had become popular in both the County and Country at large, *"I feel that we should be big enough to accept and forgive their decisions, no matter how hard it may seem at the time".*

In her Report the Treasurer, Mary McHugh, showed an income of £9,177.33 with expenditure of £13,010.53. The Club had a current credit balance of £3,997.88 of which £3,148.29 was in the Park Account. The Registrar, Thomas Boyle, showed that 372 players were registered at Under-Age level, which was at the time the third highest in the County.

The following officers were elected for 1988: -

President	-	Pádraig S Mac a' Ghoill
Chairman	-	Columba Diver
Vice Chairman	-	Charlie Bennett
Secretary	-	Edward Molloy
Ass. Secretary	-	John McConnell
Treasurer	-	Mary McHugh
Ass. Treasurer	-	Bosco McGill
P.R.O.	-	James McBrearty
Registrar	-	Tomas Boyle
Scór Officer	-	Edward Molloy
Oifigeach Na Gaeilge	-	Partalón O'Faoláin
Senior Team Manager	-	Frank McGhee
Junior Team Manager	-	James McBrearty
Adult Referee	-	Edward Molloy

The following were elected as officers for the Minor Board: -

Chairman	-	John McConnell
Secretary	-	Pauric Brennan
Committee	-	Johnny D. Earley, Patsy Gildea, Pat O'Donnell, Phonsie Bennett and Tom Diver.

The following Under-Age Managers were elected for the year: -

U-10	-	Patsy Gildea, Columba Diver and John Boyle
U-12	-	John M. O'Donnell, John McConnell and Tom Diver
U-13	-	Pauric Brennan.
U-14	-	Johnny D. Earley.
U-15	-	Johnny D. Earley.
U-16	-	Pat O'Donnell and Phonsie Bennett.
U-18	-	Josie Brennan and John McConnell.
U-21	-	Eamon McNelis.

1988 – The Glen games

Supporters will long remember the exploits of the Senior team in 1988, as they were treated to a long Championship campaign. Seven matches were played in all, but unbelievably, another Championship ended in a semi-final defeat. The team was drawn against Red Hugh's of Killygordon in the first round. The first game in Pearse Memorial was one-sided, Ardara winning 3-10 to 1-4, but in the return match, at The Cross, the home side avenged the defeat, when they won by a point 1-8 to 0-10. The tactics of the home side towards the Ardara team and mentors left

a lot to be desired. The team re-grouped, however, and qualified for the quarter-final after a 1-10 to 1-3 play-off victory, on the 17th of July. It was at the quarter-final stage, though, that the Championship really came to life, with the Ardara v Naomh Columba tie grabbing the County headlines for three consecutive weeks.

The sides first met on the 24th of July, when Ardara held a five-point lead with eleven minutes remaining. The Naomh Columba men rallied, and a last minute goal from Noel Carr sent the match to a replay, final score – Ardara 0-10 Naomh Columba 1-7. Scorers on the day were: Ardara – Gerard McNelis (0-04), Luke Gavigan (0-03), Kieran Keeney, Patrick Gallagher, Luke Brennan (0-01) each. Naomh Columba – Paddy Hegarty (0-06), Noel Carr (1-01), Paddy Gavigan, Conal Gara, Seamus Carr and Damien Gillespie (0-01) each.

The replay was set for the same venue and time, on the following Sunday. The match largely followed the same script as the previous Sunday, with Ardara leading throughout, but once again being caught at the death by the Glen men. This time, a Seamus Carr point with the second last kick of the game shared the spoils. 18-year-old Luke Brennan was the best player on the pitch, with his piercing solo runs causing Naomh Columba all sorts of trouble throughout. John Joe Doherty, Sean Gavigan and Sean McGinley were the best for Glen. Scorers were – Ardara – Martin Gavigan, Luke Brennan and Luke Gavigan (0-01) each, Gerard McNelis (0-03 – frees). Naomh Columba – Noel Carr (0-02), Seamus Carr (0-01), Paddy Hegarty (0-03- frees).

Both teams, however, saved the best wine until last, and the second replay, which was held on the 7th of August, was an all time Championship classic. A Seamus Carr goal left Naomh Columba in front at the break, 1-3 to 0-4. Another Glen goal, from Dessie Cunningham in the 15th minute, seemed to put them on their way to victory, and they went five points ahead, when Eunan McIntyre pointed a minute later. Gerard McNelis points in the 24th and 26th minutes narrowed the margin to three, and sure enough, as had been the pattern in the two previous games, a goal at the death was still to come. This time, Luke Brennan equaled for Ardara, with two minutes remaining. This time though, it wasn't the last score, and Paddy Hegarty lofted a great point at the other end, after beating four defenders with a solo run. With the match going into added time, Ardara won a free 50 metres from goal. Martin Gavigan teed up the kick and sent it straight over the bar to send the tie into extra time. Ardara seemed to be raising their game at the right time, and in the first period of extra time, points from Bobby Moore, Declan Gallagher and Luke Brennan, left them ahead at the break by three points. Two points from Hegarty narrowed the margin to the minimum again, but when Steven Keeney found Patrick Gallagher with two minutes remaining, the half forward made no

mistake, and give Ardara their insurance point. Although Glen had a few chances to equalise, a Noel Carr point at the other end was their only score.

As the final whistle blew, the large crowd gave both sides a standing ovation, which was the least that the teams deserved, after such an epic saga of all that is good in Donegal football. The teams in the third match lined out as follows:

Ardara – Neilly Gildea, Declan Gallagher (0-01), Jimmy Brennan, John Kennedy, Ted Breslin, Kieran Keeney, Niall Campbell, Martin Gavigan (0-02), Anthony Molloy, Patrick Gallagher (0-02), Luke Gavigan (0-01), Luke Brennan (1-01), Conal A. Gildea, Anthony Harkin, Gerard McNelis (0-06).

Subs – Stephen Keeney for Patrick Gallagher, Patrick Gallagher for Conal A. Gildea, Bobby Moore for Anthony Harkin, Anthony Harkin for Anthony Molloy and Anthony Molloy for Bobby Moore.

Martin Sweeney and Seamus McGuinness featured in the earlier matches.

Naomh Columba – Colm McGinley, Michael McNelis, John J. Doherty, John P. Curran, Eunan McIntyre (0-01), Sean Gavigan, Norman Fuller, John P. McGinley, Paddy Gavigan, Seamus Carr (1-01), Paddy Hegarty (0-05), Dessie Cunningham (1-00), Noel Carr (0-02), Damien Gillespie (0-01), Noel Hegarty (0-01).

Subs – Conal Gavigan for John P. McGinley.

Referee – Noel Kane (Robert Emmets).



The Ardara team pictured before their quarter-final replay with Naomh Columba.
Back L-R: Ted Breslin, Leo Watters, Patrick Gallagher, Anthony Harkin, Anthony Molloy, Bobby Moore, Paddy Breslin, Gerard McNelis, Luke Gavigan, Conal Aidan Gildea.
Front L-R: Jimmy Brennan, Declan Gallagher, Jackie Gallagher, Luke Brennan, Neilly Gildea, Kieran Keeney, Martin Gavigan, Seamus McGuinness, Niall Campbell.

The victory meant that Ardara would play neighbours Killybegs, in the County semi-final.

Having played five Championship matches, on five Sunday in a row, the Club put in an official request to the County Board, for an extra week's grace before the semi-final. It was felt that it would not be fair to expect the players to play their fourth, sudden death, Championship fixture on yet another consecutive Sunday. There was no sympathy though at Board level for Ardara's plight, and the game went ahead in Towney on the 15th of August.

Good start puts Killybegs in second Senior final ***Killybegs 1-09 Ardara 0-10***

Killybegs qualified for only their second ever Senior Football Championship final last Sunday when they pipped a brave but tired Ardara side in Kilcar by two points. It was a game rich in entertainment and partly provided the promised feast of skill, drama and excitement expected. Neither side played up to their true potential but they had this clash finely balanced on a knife-edge to the final whistle. But what of Ardara? Certainly their six Championship games on the trot took its toll between injuries and loss of momentum. But I'm sure they won't be looking too hard for excuses. They will know in their hearts that Killybegs were just too strong on the day.

Sharper certainly was the word, as the fishermen got off to a tremendous start, scoring a goal and a point within 90 seconds of the start. Barry McGowan started the first move, sending downfield, to find Jimmy White. He passed to John Gallagher who found John Cunningham who sent over the bar. The dust had hardly settled, when McGowan again set up the move for the goal. His pass found Manus Boyle, who moved the ball to Rory McNelis, and the former Glen player caught the Ardara defence asleep and finished to the net. A horrific start by any standards, and one which ultimately cost Ardara the game. They hit back with a Gerard McNelis point from a free, but they somehow could not find any composure until the final ten minutes of the half. Killybegs had two further points from McGowan and Conor White by the fifteenth minute, and these were to be the last scores of the half for the fishermen. Hugh McFadden had a great stop from Martin Gavigan in the 15th minute, and their next score came when Patrick Gallagher coolly

slotted over in the 19th minute. Ardara were dealt a blow a minute later, when they lost free-taker Gerard McNelis through injury. He was replaced by Bobby Moore. Points from Luke Gavigan and Patrick Gallagher left the score at the break, Killybegs 1-3 Ardara 0-4.

Ardara started where they left off for the first ten minutes of the second half, but too many wides prevented them from making their way back. Patrick Gallagher broke the deadlock from a free in the 36th minute, but instead of pushing on, Ardara couldn't get going. Killybegs finally mounted their first serious attack in the 39th minute, but Manus Boyle shot wide with a goal chance at his mercy. They had a Barry McGowan point in the 43rd minute, which was followed by one from Conal Gallagher a minute later. Ardara then showed that they had not lost any of the fight they had shown in previous weeks and two Patrick Gallagher frees and a point from play from Anthony Harkin levelled the scores in the 49th minute. This blitz was impressive, but Ardara lacked the strength in depth seemingly to keep the pressure on and take the scores they needed.

Killybegs regained the initiative and points from McGowan and White (2) gave them a three-point lead, Ardara's only reply coming through two Patrick Gallagher frees. White sealed the game with two minutes remaining with another pointed free from 30 metres.

At the end of the day the early goal proved to be the vital score and Ardara just could not recover sufficiently to overtake the Killybegs men and grab the victory.

Ardara – Neilly Gildea, Conal A. Gildea, Jimmy Brennan, John Kennedy, Declan

Gallagher, Kieran Keeney, Niall Campbell, Anthony Molloy, Martin Gavigan, Anthony Harkin (0-01), Patrick Gallagher (0-07), Luke Brennan, Stephen Keeney, Luke Gavigan (0-01), Gerard McNelis (0-01).

Subs – Bobby Moore for Gerard McNelis, Leo Watters, Paddy Breslin and Jackie Gallagher.

Killybegs – Hugh McFadden, Paul Carberry, Denis Carberry, Kevin White, John McGuinness, Jimmy White, Michael

Campbell, John Cunningham (0-01), Barry Cunningham, Conor White (0-04), Barry McGowan (0-03), John Gallagher, Conal Gallagher (0-01), Manus Boyle, Rory McNelis (1-00),

Subs – Francis Murray, Stephen Burke, Barry Cunningham, Charlie Tully, Pat Byrne, and Keith Jones.

Referee – John McGlanaghey (Four Masters')

It was a sad end to a brilliant campaign, one which, with even a touch of lady luck, would have probably yielded another Championship, although one couldn't deny Killybegs their hour of glory, when they won their first Championship in 36 years by defeating Kilcar in the County final two weeks later. The team found it hard to recover for the latter stages of the League. They slipped gradually down the table and the slump ended in a three-way relegation play-off, with one team to go down, Ardara, Aodh Ruadh and Four Masters'. Ardara played Aodh Ruadh in the first match in Fintra and the Ballyshannon men ensured their survival with a 2-6 to 0-9 victory. This left Ardara's future in the top flight depending on a sudden death game with Four Masters', which took place in Fintra on the 31st of October. A Kieran Keeney point with three minutes remaining gave Ardara the victory on a 0-7 to 0-6 scoreline, and thus kept their top flight status intact, for the 12th year in succession.

The struggle to stay in Division 1 was in stark contrast to the effort put in by the management team of Frank McGhee and trainer John Boyle, whose energy never flagged, right through the year. In the teams only other competition that year, they were defeated in the County Gaeltacht semi-final by Glenfin.

The U-21 Championship was a big disappointment in 1988, as the Club failed to field in a first round play-off match against Kilcar. There was widespread discontent in the Club, at the poor timing for the competition and the first round play-off was fixed for the day before Ardara's important relegation play-off against Four Masters'. Regardless of the circumstances, though, the Club received very bad press for not fielding in one of the top competitions in the GAA calendar.

Tough year for Juniors

1988 was a difficult year of the Club Junior team, which played in Division 2 of the All County Leagues. The team put up many sterling displays, against mostly Senior teams, and were unfortunate to lose their status by only one point, in such a tough division. Emigration played a major part in the loss of many talented players in this grade. Championship fare gave them three games with Kilcar, when

both teams won their home matches. In the play-off, Ardara dominated long passages of play but did not take their scores. This proved costly in the end and the Kilcar men advanced to the quarter-finals. The team, however, fulfilled all fixtures, and manager James McBrearty ensured that every effort was made to try and achieve success.

Busy year for Minor Board

Minor Board activities continued apace in 1988 both on and off the field. The big success story of the year, financially, was the Table Quiz, which the Board organised during the winter months. This social night caught the imagination of many in the parish, and the weekly quizzes were soon getting up to 30 teams per night. Different Club members took turns in setting the questions, and a final was held in April, which saw 44 teams take part, in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel. The event was a great financial success for the Board, taking in £1900 profit in total.

The Club Under-Age teams suffered heartbreak also, as, with the Under -10s, 12s, 13s, 14s, 16s and Minors all qualified for their respective Divisional finals for the first time ever, but the Under-10 team were the only victors, defeating Dungloe to win their second Divisional title in succession. The Under-12s drew their Divisional Final against Dungloe, but were defeated by a point in the replay at Glenties. They went out of the Championship at the quarter-final stage to the eventual County Champions, Cloughaneely, in Dungloe. A big step forward in 1988 was the fielding of an under-12 'B' team, for the first time, in Divisional competition.

The highlight of the year for the Under-12 team was a day trip to Croke Park, organised by the management of the team, John Michael O'Donnell and John McConnell. The players travelled by coach to the capital, and played a challenge match against Raheny Gaels in the morning. They then travelled to Croke Park, where they had the freedom of the stadium for an hour, to play out their fantasies of perhaps someday playing for Donegal, at the hallowed venue.

In the Under-14 Championship, a good Ardara team was defeated by Killybegs in the Divisional final, Killybegs going on to win the County Championship. This was also the case in the Juvenile Championship; when Killybegs defeated Ardara at the same stage, and also went on to win the Championship. A talented Club Minor team had an agonising defeat in the Divisional final, against Dungloe, when in a replay, a hotly debated penalty decision went against them, to send them out of the Championship. Despite the disappointments, it was still highly encouraging for the managers of the teams, as the Club was beginning to become a force once again in Under-Age football, in the South-West and beyond.



**The Ardara Under-10s who won the South-West title in 1988
at their presentation function.**

Back L-R: Patsy Gildea, Shaun McEoin, Martin McNelis, Carl McGill, Kevin Byrne, Mark Cassidy, David Hennigan, Francis Gallagher, Eamon Diver, Ronan Doherty, Cathal Doherty, Columba Diver.

Middle L-R: Casmir McGill, James Doherty, Damian Gallagher, Brian Herron, Finbarr Boyle, Mark Whyte, Peter McHugh, Pauric Keeney, Brendan Boyle.

Front L-R: Seamus Byrne, Martin Bennett, Matthew Whyte, Brian Boyle, Gareth Herron, Conal Gildea, Pauric Keeney, Conor O'Donnell, Derek Heena, Stephen Gildea with Cup.

Scór Success

In 1988 the Club's fortunes at Scór continued to improve, with the Club winning three Regional finals at Dancing, Recitation and Question Time, with the dancers and Stephen Slowey going on to win County titles in their respective grades. The dancing troupe included the following: Michelle Kennedy, Aoife Gallagher, Frances Sweeney, Fidelma Bennett, Michelle Gildea, Gwen Early, Fionnuala Cunningham and Tracey O'Donnell. The Quiz Team was Shane McBrearty, John M. Cunningham and Kieran Lynch.



St Marys N.S. Quiz team, Bernard Gallagher, Shaun Whyte, James Boyle, N.T., Niall O'Donnell and Eamon Doherty, were crowned County National School Quiz Team Champions at the Cumann na mBunscoil finals in Ballybofey in April.



Molloy is Donegal player of the year

Anthony Molloy put in a brilliant year for Donegal in 1988, and as a result, was chosen as the Donegal Player of the Year. He played consistently well at midfield for the County, usually along with his Club mate, Martin Gavigan. The two were instrumental in Donegal's promotion to Division One for the first time, after defeating Laois in their final game in Portlaoise. Others to wear the County colours in 1988, were Luke Gavigan at Under-21, Declan Gallagher and Luke Brennan at Minor level, and Kieran Lynch for the County Under-16 team. Bart Whelan held his position as County Secretary, as did Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill as County Vice President. John McConnell and Pauric Brennan were re-

elected as South-West Board Secretary and Registrar respectively.



In the 1988 Under-12 final at Glenties, Vincent Ryan of Ardara tries to get past two Dungloe players, Derek Bonner and future All Star Adrian Sweeney. Looking on is Conal Doherty.



In the 1988 Divisional Minor final at Glenties, Ardara full-back, Stephen Darnell clears under close attention from Tony Boyle. Referee is Pat Boyle, Glenties.

1988 A.G.M.

The 1988 Club A.G.M. was held in Peter Oliver's on Sunday 18th December, before an attendance of 55 members. The Secretary, in his report on the year's activities, was high in his praise of the Club Minor Board and the progress that the Club Under-Age teams were making in South-West competitions. He also paid tribute to the Senior team on their Championship exploits, and in particular to the management of the team, for their committed and professional approach. In reporting on the Senior team, he was highly critical of the current League structure of Division 1 South and Division 1 North, which meant that the top 8 teams in the County were all in the same Division, which gave the teams in Division 1 North an unfair advantage. This format, he continued, had almost cost the Club their Division 1 status. The timing of the Under-21 competition also came in for criticism, but, he added, at the end of the day, the Club could not condone not fielding a team in the Championship play-off, and this was something, which could not be allowed to happen in the future. The Registrar, Thomas Boyle, showed 227 members registered at Under-Age, and 121 adult members. Mary McHugh, in her Treasurer's Report, showed an income of £20,400.79, with expenditure at £18,133.00. When savings accounts etc were taken into account, the Club had a credit balance of £6,265.67.

The Club agreed to set up a Finance Committee for 1989, with Charlie Bennett as Chairman.

The following officers were elected for 1989:

President	-	Pádraig S. Mac a Ghoill
Chairman	-	Eamon McNelis
Vice Chairman	-	Charlie Bennett
Secretary	-	Edward Molloy
Ass. Secretary	-	John McConnell
Treasurer	-	Mary McHugh
Ass. Treasurer	-	Thomas Boyle
P.R.O.	-	James McBrearty
Registrar	-	Thomas Boyle
Scór Officer	-	Edward Molloy
Oifigeach na Gaeilge	-	Partalón O'Faoláin
Finance Committee Chairman	-	Charlie Bennett
Senior Team Manager	-	Frank McGhee
Junior Team Manager	-	James McBrearty.

The officers elected to the Minor Board were: -

Chairman	-	John McConnell
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Secretary	-	Pauric Brennan
Committee	-	Johnny D. Earley, Patsy Gildea, Bart Whelan, Pat O'Donnell, Phonsie Bennett and Tom Diver.

The following Underage Managers were elected: -

- U-10** - Patsy Gildea and Columba Diver
- U-12** - John M. O'Donnell and Charlie Whyte.
- U-13** - Columba Diver and Patsy Gildea.
- U-14** - Luke Gavigan, Johnny D. Earley and Vincent Cagney.
- U-15** - Johnny D. Earley and Luke Gavigan.
- U-16** - Pat O'Donnell and Johnny D. Earley
- U-18** - Josie Brennan, Eamon Cunningham and John McConnell.
- U-21** - Andy McKeown (left Ardara early in the year and was replaced by Martin Sweeney) and John McConnell.

Underage Referees for the Year were Edward Molloy, Eamon McNelis, Bart Whelan and Frank McGhee.

1989- Under-Age comes through

The highlight of the Club year in 1989 was undoubtedly the capture of the Club's first Juvenile Championship since 1964. The work of the Minor Board, since its inception in 1985, had seen the Club improve its results each year, but defeats in Divisional finals were the most that had been attained. Under the management of Johnny D. Earley, Pat O'Donnell, and John McConnell, with Luke Gavigan also lending support, the team had progressed steadily since Under-12, but the strength of Killybegs had always come between them and a Divisional or County title. 1989 looked to be no different, and when the teams advanced to the Divisional final, Killybegs once again were too strong, winning by four points.

With a change in County competitions in 1989, whereby two teams would qualify from each Division for the County play-off stages in all grades,, (following a successful Ardara motion to the County Minor Board convention), the team advanced to lock horns again with Killybegs in the County final. The match was played in Towney on Saturday the 30th of July, and it was to prove to be one of the most sensational Championship wins in the Clubs history.

Last minute goal gives Ardara title Ardara 1-8 Killybegs 0-9

The scenes of sheer ecstasy and disappointment among the rival supporters in Towney on Saturday night last, were unique in their extremes. Ardara had just secured their first County title in 25 years thanks to a last minute goal from Steven

McGinley. The defeated Killybegs side, which were fancied to retain their title, were shocked and sick.

It was a remarkable victory for Ardara, yet, in the final analysis, a deserved one, and if only because of their teamwork, which

proved to be the main difference between the sides. Killybegs learned the hard lesson that you cannot survive on your reputation for too long in any grade in Gaelic football. Ardara showed little regard for tradition on this occasion, and overturned the formbooks in this South-Western derby.

Killybegs started the game brighter, and by the eleventh minute had a two-point advantage, through two Paul Callaghan efforts. Ardara broke their duck in the 12th minute, when Damian Diver, Don Earley and Kieran Lynch combined to place Martin Shovlin, who pointed well from play. This score seemed to spur Killybegs on however and for the next fifteen minutes they dominated proceedings and knocked over points from Brian Conaghan, Andrew McMenamin and Declan Haughey, giving them a four point lead with five minutes left in the half. Ardara then rallied somewhat, with an Adrian Whelan point closing the gap, two further points from Diver and another from Don Earley were replied to by Barry Mullen for Killybegs to leave the half-time score at Killybegs 0-6 Ardara 0-5.

It seemed that half time had saved Killybegs, as Ardara were just beginning to get into the swing of things. Many feared they would not be able to keep up the pace in the second half, but their determination kept them hanging on. Kieran Lynch levelled the scores with just a minute gone, but a more direct approach from Killybegs saw them regain the momentum to haul themselves back into the driving seat. Andrew McMenamin restored their lead in the seventh minute, and when Mark Boyle added another point soon after, it looked as if they had just enough left to get through. That appeared true as Ardara's short game led them up more blind alleys than enough. They also had opportunities from frees, but a solid Killybegs defence seemed to be good enough to hold on.

It was exciting end-to-end stuff however, and when sub Martin McCabe was fouled, Kieran Lynch's free was finally put over the bar by Michael Doherty. He had a hand in the next and equalising score, when centre half back, Adrian Cunningham, tore through the Killybeg's defence to point and level the scores with five minutes to go.

Ardara didn't allow themselves to panic and even when Mark Boyle raced upfield and

took what appeared to be the match winning point a minute later, they still hung on, attacking at every opportunity.

Time ticked away and the end approached fast. Killybegs had two attacks upfield, which could have ended the contest, but individual efforts did not pay off. Ardara's final attack upfield saw Adrian Whelan lob a high ball into the Killybeg's goalmouth, midfielder Steven McGinley caught and then dropped the ball, but in the confusion that followed, he managed to get his boot to the ball and send it to the back of the net for the winner.

A last gasp winner in anyone's book and with just time for the kick out, Ardara had won the day. It was not an exaggeration to say that the large Ardara support lost their marbles at the final whistle. Old men and young housewives jumped their own height with joy. Their unashamed delight at beating Killybegs was as good a reason as any, to throw caution to the wind. And what of Killybegs? Their blank stares of disbelief said it all. Perhaps they were a little too confident at retaining their title, maybe they under-estimated Ardara, but for whatever reason, they did learn that one must work hard in every game, right up to the final whistle, which in this case cost them dearly!

County Minor Board Chairman, Pat Conaghan, presented the Cup to the Ardara captain, Kieran Lynch, after match.

Ardara: Malachy Gallagher, Shaun White, Sean Gildea, Niall O'Donnell, Damian Diver (0-2), Adrian Cunningham (0-1), Michael Doherty (0-1), Kieran Lynch (0-1), Steven McGinley (1-0), Gabriel Cannon, Martin Shovlin (0-1), Thomas Moore, Adrian Whelan (0-1), John O'Donnell, Don Earley (0-1). Sub used: Martin McCabe for Gabriel Cannon.

Michael Furey, Eamon Doherty, Barry Doherty, Bernard Gallagher, Packie Maguire.

Killybegs: James Lowney, Martin McGuinness, Peter McGinley, Gareth Murphy, Barry McBrearty, Nigel McMenamin, Nigel Rodden, Mark Boyle (0-2), Andrew McMenamin (0-1), Brian Conaghan, (0-1), Paul Callaghan (0-2), Paul Rowan, Kevin Boyle, Declan Haughey (0-1), Barry Mullen (0-1).

Referee: John Carr (Kilcar)

The victory gave a great boost to the Club, at a time when the Senior team had suffered many disappointments in previous years. It also gave a great boost to the people involved in Under-Age teams in the Club and was to be the launch pad for a renaissance in this area, with the nineties seeing the Club take its place among the top Under-Age clubs in the County. The cavalcade from Kilcar back to Ardara was a sight to behold, when one could have been forgiven for thinking that it was a Senior Championship that was being celebrated!



The Ardara Under-16 team 1989 that won the County Championship.
Back L-R: Johnny D. Earley, Shaun Whyte, John O'Donnell, Adrian Whelan, Shaun Gildea, Adrian Cunningham, Malachy Gallagher, Don Earley, Martin Shovlin, Bernard Gallagher, Damian Diver, Stephen McGinley, Michael Doherty, Pat O'Donnell.
Front L-R: Edward Lynch, Barry Doherty, Eamon Doherty, Gabriel Cannon, Packie Maguire, Thomas Moore, Kieran Lynch, Derek Boyle (Mascot), Michael Furey, Niall O'Donnell, Martin McCabe, Edward Lynch, John McConnell.

In the other Under-Age grades, the news was also good, with the Under-10s retaining the Divisional Title that they won in 1988, by defeating Killybegs in the Divisional final.

The Under-12s won the Club's first South -West title when they defeated Dungloe in the final, at Glenties. The team were nine points down in the first half, but came back to win the title. They advanced to the County semi-final against Four Masters'', but after a great match in Fintra, went down by a four-point margin, to the eventual Championship winners.

The Club fielded a second Under-12 team for the first time in 1989, and the Under-12'B' team won the South-West Reserve League.



Ardara Under-12s 1989.

Back L-R: Trevor Boyle, Leonard Gildea, Eamon Diver, Conor Curran, Francis Diver, Johnathan Boyle, Hugh Byrne, Sean Heena, Mark Boyle, Jackie McHugh.
Front L-R: Paul McGhee, John Watters, John Boyle, Johnathan Herron, David Diver, Conal Doherty, Peter McHugh, Mark Whyte, Aidan Nicholson, Stephen Gildea, James Doherty.

The Under-13 team made it three titles out of three in the lower age groups, when they also defeated Dungloe in their Divisional final. They met St Eunans in the County semi-final, but were beaten after a close match.

The other teams did not have the same level of success, with the Under-14s going out at play-off stage, against Naomh Columba, while the Minor team failed to qualify for the Divisional final, after suffering a shock early exit to Dungloe. Having drawn the first leg at home, they came unstuck in the return outing.

The Minor League was played, thirteen-a-side, at a new under-17 grade but here again Ardara failed to impress.

The U-21s did not fare well in the Championship either, with a very young panel of players. They defeated a poor Buncrana side but a good St. Eunan's outfit came home easy winners against an Ardara side that fielded many U-16 players.

St Mary's School also brought home a County title in 1989. They won the Cumann na mBunscol competition for four-teacher schools, by defeating Kerrykeel in the County final at Letterkenny. The team were behind at half-time 0-05 to 1-00. They came out in the second half a different team and went on to a convincing victory. The Captain on the day was Conal Doherty, who scored three goals, the final score being Ardara 3-03 to Kerrykeel 0-05

Team and Scorers were: -

Jackie McHugh, Hugh Byrne, Kevin Byrne, Eamon Diver, David Diver, Conal Gavigan (0-01), Francis Diver, Jonathon Boyle (0-02), Kieran Reynolds, Conal Doherty, Captain (3-00 including 1 penalty), Mark Whyte, Seamus Byrne, Leonard

Gildea and sub David Hennigan.

Aodh Ruadh goal blitz kills off Seniors.

The Championship campaign for the Senior team looked promising in the early stages and with a strong panel of players available for selection, hopes for success looked favourable. The first round pairing saw neighbours Naomh Conaill as the opponents and with an impressive performance in the away leg in Glenties won, with a score of 0-12 to 1-08. In the second leg match in Ardara, they gained the victory necessary to advance to the next round.

Ardara give football lesson Ardara 1-15 Naomh Conaill 1-07

After the close game the previous Sunday, this proved the opposite, with the homesters completely on top and they gave their near neighbours a footballing lesson, to end up convincing winners. Naomh Conaill started brightly enough, with points from Martin Doherty and Pat Ward, before Ardara had their first score through a Patrick Gallagher free, after a foul on Luke Brennan. Gallagher and Ward exchanged further scores from frees, before a succession of scores left Ardara ahead 0-7 to 0-3 at the break. Ardara started the second half with a fine point from Ted Breslin, to be followed by Ardara's only goal of the match when Luke Brennan atoned for an earlier miss by superbly cutting through and shooting past James Cunningham. Naomh Conaill kept plugging away with points from Ward, Dessie O'Donnell and Hughie Molloy, but the fleet footed Ardara attack added another seven points before the end. Naomh Conaill's goal near the end from John P. O'Donnell came too late to be of any significance to the team. Anthony Molloy had a superb game at

midfield for Ardara, including two great points, one in each half. Jimmy Brennan, Peter Breslin and John Kennedy were stars in defence, with Kieran Keeney, Ted Breslin, Luke Gavigan and Luke Brennan in top form in attack. Naomh Conaill had good displays from Pat Ward, Gerry Doherty, Michael Gallagher and Dessie O'Donnell

Ardara – Eamon McNelis, Pauric Brennan, Jimmy Brennan, Peter Breslin, Niall Campbell, John Kennedy, Donie McCole, Anthony Molloy (0-02), Anthony Harkin, Kieran Keeney (0-01), Luke Gavigan (0-01), Patrick Gallagher (0-06), Seamus McGuinness, Ted Breslin (0-04), Luke Brennan (1-01), Sub used – John Kennedy for Luke Brennan.

Naomh Conaill – James Cunningham, John P. Molloy, Connie Doherty, Joe Gallagher, Gerry Doherty (0-01), Dessie O'Donnell (0-01), Eunan Boyle, Michael Gallagher, Pat Ward (0-03), Martin Doherty (0-01), Cruachar Boyle, Pat Roarty, John P. O'Donnell (1-00), John Molloy, John O'Donnell. Sub used – Hughie Molloy (0-01) for Roarty.



Niall Campbell gets the ball away against Naomh Conaill, despite pressure from Michael Gallagher.

The team's next outing was against Aodh Ruadh in the quarter-final. The game however was to prove a disaster for Ardara. Played in a gale force wind in Fintra, Aodh Ruadh had the elements in the first half and took full advantage. A four-goal blitz left Ardara out of the match at the break, Aodh Ruadh leading on a 4-7 to 0-4 scoreline. Despite an

improvement in the second half, the game was long over as a contest and the team went down on a 4-9 to 0-9 scoreline.

Seniors reach first County League final since 1977

Despite the disappointment of their Championship exit, manager Frank McGhee and his team made a decision that they would continue to train on a regular basis, to try to attain success in the League. The decision was to prove a wise one, with the team going on an unbeaten run in the competition, and thus qualifying in second place in Division One South for a semi-final date with Glenfin. On a cold day in December, Ardara were much too strong and had a comprehensive victory, on a score of 0-14 to Glenfin's 0-04. Due to the County Senior team's run in the Ulster Championship in 1989, fixtures were seriously delayed, with the League final against Kilcar being delayed until January 1990.

In Comórtas Peile Na Gaeltachta the team made an early exit to Naomh Columba in the first round. The non-appearance of a Waterford club, in the All Ireland series in Glencolmcille, gave them another chance as they were invited back into the competition at the eleventh hour. The team responded well and defeated Kerry side, Corca Dhuibhne, in a quarter final. There was no joy in the semi-final, however, against the home side, which took the victory to qualify for the final.

Mary McHugh again won the County Cailin Gaelach competition, while John Michael O'Donnell was re-elected as Secretary/Treasurer of the County Gaeltacht Committee

Seniors travel to London

The Club Senior team organised an outing to the Tirconail Gael's club in 1989. A small party of 15 players travelled to London, for the Easter weekend, in April. The team stayed at Terry's Hotel in Hammersmith and they played the Gaels on Easter Sunday morning, losing on a score of 0-09 to 0-08. Paul Brennan played for the Gaels and Seamus Carr was Guest Player for Ardara. The Ardara team were: - Bobby Moore, Stephen Darnell, Ted Breslin, Conal A. Gildea, Pat McGill, John Kennedy, Luke Gavigan, Patrick Gallagher, Jimmy Brennan, Paul McNelis, Kieran Keeney, Jimmy Caffrey, John McConnell, Eamon McNelis and Niall Campbell.



Subs used were Frank McGhee and Seamus Carr. The Gaels, as usual, showed the party a great weekend, with presentations being exchanged on the Sunday night, at a welcoming dance in the St. Joseph's Social Club in Wembley. The team returned home to Dublin airport on Easter Monday.

Juniors win Division 3 League

Having won the Junior 'B' Championship and Division 3 League in 1987, the Club Junior team were still regarded as one of the stronger second teams in the county, and were still pressing for honours in 1989. In the Junior Championship, the team got the better of a strong St. Eunan's side, in the first round, after two tough matches, but exited at the semi-final stage, when they were defeated by Urris' first team on a 2-7 to 1-3 scoreline.

The team that day was: Patsy Harkin, Leonard Molloy, Martin Sweeney, Vinny McConnell, Paul McNelis, Leo Breslin, Dermot Maguire, Joe Brennan, Adrian Brennan, Pat Connolly, Eamon Cunningham (1-01), Leo Watters, Stephen McCahill, Hugh Campbell and John Hegarty. Subs – Frank McGhee (0-01) for McCahill, Conal A. Gildea for Hegarty and John Herron (0-01) for McNelis. Edward McCole, Stephen Keeney and Paddy McGill.

They had performed well in the League and qualified for the final of Division 3, after defeating Burt in the semi-final. St. Eunan's were the opposition, the venue was Fr. Tierney Park, and the Letterkenny men avenged their earlier Championship defeat by Ardara.

McGeehan leads Eunan's to victory St. Eunan's 0-09 Ardara 0-04

St. Eunan's were divinely inspired to a fine victory over Ardara to win the Division Three League final in Ballyshannon on Sunday 26th November 1989, when the footballing Curate, Fr. Paul McGeehan scored four vital points. Ardara had their chances but failed to take them. They had a number of wides with two of them coming from the boots of John Hegarty and Adrian Brennan. Pat Connolly was their best player on the day. The game turned on a knife-edge in the 52nd minute when Stephen McCahill knocked over a fine point and reduced the arrears to just two points. With anxious faces appearing in the St. Eunan's dugout, Ardara looked like staging a comeback. But it was St. Eunan's who had the better finish scoring three points to win the match.

Ardara –Patsy Harkin, Liam Molloy, Paddy McGill, Declan Brennan, Paul McNelis, Vinny McConnell, Dermot Maguire, Joseph Brennan, Adrian Brennan, Pat Connolly (0-02), John Hegarty, Leo Watters (0-01), Stephen McCahill (0-01), John Herron, John McConnell,

Subs – Brian Shovlin, Conal Gallagher, Anthony O'Donnell, Francis O'Donnell, Kieran Lynch, Charlie McHugh, Declan Brennan, John M. Byrne, Leonard Molloy and Edward Lynch.

St. Eunan's – Eugene Dowling, Paddy Gallagher, Eddie McCauley, Kieran Hennigan, I. Duffy, Christy Callaghan, Mick Byrne, Gerard Kelly, Declan Nee (0-01), Peter Kelly (0-01), Paul McGeehan (0-04), Sean Melly (0-01), Raymond Blake (0-01), Padraig Cannon (0-01), John McGeehan.

Referee – Liam Brown (Four Masters') .

The final result however was not as 'final' as St. Eunan's might have thought. Ardara had been forewarned that Letterkenny might play a few players who had played in the Senior League and Championship, and had in fact contacted St. Eunan's the night before the match to ensure that this would not happen. Despite

the warnings, the footballers involved had played, and as a result, Ardara protested against the composition of the St Eunan's team and the fact that 3 players had allegedly played in the higher grade. The County Board upheld the Ardara protest and the League title was handed over to the Ardara team. It held little satisfaction for the players and management, but the Club felt strongly that a stance had to be taken, for if the trend of playing Senior players in Junior competitions continued, then Junior football would soon become irrelevant.



Ardara Junior team which won Division 3 of the League in 1989.

Back L-R: James McBrearty, Stephen McCahill, Joseph Brennan, Conal Gallagher, Vinny McConnell, Dermot Maguire, Patsy Harkin, Leo Watters, John Herron, Leonard Molloy, Anthony O'Donnell, Declan Brennan, Francis O'Donnell.

Front L-R: John McConnell, Pat Connolly, Kieran Lynch, Charlie McHugh, John Hegarty, Paul McNelis, Adrian Brennan, John Martin Byrne, Paddy McGill.

Big draw a major success

With the drain on Club finances increasing each year, it was decided to initiate a major drive to raise funds in 1989. A new Finance Committee, under Club Treasurer Mary McHugh, was formed. The Committee included Charlie Bennett, Bart Whelan, Columba Diver, Luke Gavigan, Thomas Boyle and Edward Molloy. It was agreed to hold a draw, with tickets costing £10.00 each. The top prizes would be 2 cars (a Toyota Starlet and a Subaru M70) with eight other valuable prizes in a prize fund of £18,000.00. Club members saturated the County with tickets for the draw, which was held in September. For the two months prior to the draw, members were sent out in pairs all over the South-West and beyond, and each night at 11.30.pm approx, a meeting was held in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel, where draw co-ordinator, Charlie Bennett, assessed the performance of each team, and kept motivating the troops. All the hard work paid off at the end and a grand total of over £21,000 was raised.

Sandfield purchased

The biggest and most important decision the Club took in 1989 was to purchase the remaining 1/6th of Sandfield. The Club already owned 5/6ths of the land since 1980 and the owner Mrs Brannigan gave the Club first refusal, as she had decided to put the whole farm up for sale including the remaining 1/6th of Sandfield. It was vital to secure ownership of the pitch. It was agreed at a meeting in March of the year, that every effort would be made to secure title to the land, and following negotiations with Mrs Brannigan's solicitor, a price of £9,000 was agreed. The area consisted of 63 acres, which included a likelihood of 3-5 sites. It was a major investment for the Club, but one that has proven to be a major asset. The sale took some time to complete and was finally concluded in 1991.



Martin Gavigan and Martin Shovlin try and stop Tyrone's Kieran Corr, as Michael Gallagher looks on in the 1989 Ulster Final.

Other News

Other issues of note were the performances of Anthony Molloy and Martin Gavigan for the Donegal County team, which went to the Ulster final in 1989, only to be defeated by Tyrone in a re-play. On other Donegal teams, Adrian Brennan was a member of the Donegal Minor panel which were defeated by Cavan in the first round of the Ulster Championship, while Kieran Lynch, Adrian Cunningham and Damian Diver were on the Donegal Under-16 team that was beaten in the Connacht final, by Mayo, at Ballyhaunis.

Bart Whelan continued for the 9th year as County Secretary, with Pádraig S Mac a'Ghoill also being re-elected as County G.A.A Vice President. John McConnell

was elected Chairman of the South-West Divisional Board and was manager of the South-West Under-18 team that won the County Minor Super League. Pauric Brennan was re-elected as Registrar of the Board, and Seán Mícheal O'Domhnaill was re-elected as Secretary/Treasurer of the County Gaeltacht Committee. Mary McHugh once again won the County Cailín Gaelach Competition in 1989, while the Club quiz team of John M. O'Donnell, James McBrearty and Eamonn McGill won the County final of Scór Sinsir.

At the Annual Dinner Dance on New Year's Eve, the following were presented with the year's awards;

Junior Player of the Year: Adrian Brennan

Minor Player of the Year: John Herron

Clubman of the Year: Luke Gavigan

Hall of Fame: Jim Maxwell

The Senior Player of the Year award was deferred until after the upcoming League final.



**The hard men from the Hillhead,
Pauric, Joseph and Adrian Brennan. Missing from the photo is Declan.**



Eamon McNelis of Meenavalley, Club Chairman from 1989-1991, was the youngest of the famous McNelis brothers who served the Club through six decades (1940s –2000). One of the longest serving Club players ever, Eamon began his football career while attending Meenavalley N.S. where he took part in the school leagues of the early 60s. In 1962 he was captain of the Ardara team that won the inaugural U-14 County Championship. A Minor Championship medal followed in 1964 and in 1965 he became the first player from the Club to win an Ulster Vocational Schools medal, when he was full back on the Donegal team that defeated Monaghan in the final. He made his debut for the Club Juniors in the same year and played as goalkeeper on the team that reached the County final only to go down to Four Masters' by one point.

Like many young men at the time, Eamon crossed the Irish Sea to seek his fortune but he never let his football skills diminish. He played club football with St Vincent's (Hertfordshire) and later captained Herts to a provincial title in 1972. He was also selected on the Great Britain side that played Donegal in a challenge match at Wembley.

He returned home in 1977 and made the number 3 position his own for many years. Despite being a surprise choice at full forward for the 1981 County final, Eamon scored the crucial goal that secured the title for Ardara after a lapse of 53 years. He went on to play for the Donegal Senior team in the 1982/83 National League campaign. Having served as Club Chairman in 1981 for a period, Eamon also acted as an Under-Age team manager and Club Referee, and didn't finish his playing career for the Club until he hung up his boots in the year 2000, a career that spanned over five decades.

* * * * *

27 different Ardara players have played for Donegal in the Ulster Championship. Leo Howley being the first in 1921.

Columba Diver was the first person from the parish to win an All Ireland Cómortas Peile na Gaeltachta medal. He was on the Gweedore team that won the title in 1968.

Ardara players have won the Donegal Player of the Year award on four different occasions. John Boyle in 1970, Anthony Molloy in 1988 & 1990 and Damian Diver in 2000.

Important dates and events from the eighties

- 1980** Republicans in Long Kesh begin a hunger strike.
- 1981** Garret Fitzgerald is elected Taoiseach.
- 1982** Charles J. Haughey becomes Taoiseach.
- 1983** The businessman Don Tidey is kidnapped and later released.
- 1984** A bomb explodes in The Grand Hotel, Brighton, during the British Conservative Party Conference. Five people die in the explosion.
- 1985** Bob Geldof's Live Aid concerts in London and America raise seventy million pounds for famine relief in Ethiopia.
- 1986** The Progressive Democrats are formed.
- 1987** Stephen Roche wins the Tour de France.
- 1988** A Pan Am Boeing 747 is destroyed in a mid air explosion and crashes in Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 259 aboard and 11 on the ground.
- 1989** The Berlin Wall comes down.



The Nineties

Is iomaí lá i mbliain is fiche, is níl aon lá acu nach dtagann.

Bhí peil Ghaelach a himirt sa chontae agus sa pharóiste ar bhun rialta le ceithre scór bliain. Bhí deireadh an chéid agus na mílaoise ag druidim linn, ach ní raibh greim fáite go fóill ag foireann sinsir na contae ar Chraobh na hÉireann. I 1991 roghnaíodh Máirtín Ó Gáibheacháin ar fhoireann na hÉireann a chuaigh go dtí an Astráil; bhuaigh na foirne faoi 14, agus na Mionúr craobhacha na contae; bhuaigh an Dún Craobh na hÉireann, agus thug D.J. Kane agus Ross Carr Sam go h-Ard a' Rátha chun go bhfeicfeadh muid é. Is beag a shíl muid ansin go mbeadh Antoine Ó Ludhóg á thabhairt arais chugainn é már chaptaen bhuacach 1992.

Ghnóthaigh an fhoireann faoi 21 Craobh na Contae dhá bhliain as a chéile i 1994 agus 1995, agus an bhliain dár gcionn, bhí ceiliúradh 75 bliana ag an Chlub. Cailleadh Pádraig S. Mac a' Ghoill i 1997; fear a chaith trí scór bliain i mbun cúrsaí riaracháin sa club, sa chontae agus ar choistí náisiúnta. I ndiaidh scór bliain páirteach i gComórtaisí Peile na Gaeltachta, bhuaigh na Sinsir Craobh na hÉireann ar na Croisbhealaí Luan Cincíse 1998. I 1999 piocadh Bréandán Ó Baoill ar fhoireann faoi 16 na hÉireann, a chuaigh ar thuras go dtí an Astráil. Cosúil le Ó Gáibheacháin, ba mhór an onóir é, dó féin, d'á mhuintir agus do'n club.

The great hope that Club members had of success in the eighties gradually dwindled through the decade as, despite early victories at Minor, Under-21 and Senior level, the expected mushroom of glory, and further Senior Championships, failed to bloom to the extent that was expected. There were still, however, many things that the Club could look back on with great satisfaction. Not least, the realisation that not everything revolves around success on the playing field, but in the many different contributions that the Ardara G.A.A Club had made to the Parish in general, and to the growth of the G.A.A in the County. Donegal had won four All Irelands in the '80s (two Under-21 and two Vocational Schools titles) and Ardara players played a major part in all of them. The re-birth of Under-Age

football in the parish was beginning again to bear fruit and would go from strength to strength in the new decade. The purchase of Sandfield had left the Club in the enviable situation of owning 63 acres of land, which included five sites, a boast few Clubs in the Country could equal. The administration of the Club had reached new highs, with many individuals going on to prove their worth at County level and beyond. The nineties however would provide new excitement, new heroes and of course, new disappointments. The G.A.A in Donegal would reach heights never before attained, and men from the parish of Ardara would be at the hub of these glories. A buck from Tullycleave would take on the might of Australia fair, and a Leamagowra man would lead Donegal to the 'Promised Land'. There would be sadness at the passing of great people, and huge disappointment at shattering defeats. The story so far had been one of the growth of a small seed, which had matured gradually into something the Parish could be fiercely proud of. Few could have imagined, however, how the next few years would give a new meaning to the word pride, and give Ardara and Donegal people a high that they had never before experienced.

1989 A.G.M.

The 1989 Annual General Meeting of the Club was held in Peter Oliver's on the 7th January, 1990. Before a smaller than usual crowd of 42 members, the Secretary reported on what he termed "the most successful and productive year the Club has had in the decade". He continued:-

"What has made the past twelve months so memorable is reflected in the following four achievements: The success of our Under-Age teams; the enormous financial profits made from the Club draw; the much improved form of our Adult teams in the League; and finally, the greatest achievement of all; the work done to acquire the remaining portion of Sandfield."

In a thought provoking report on all Club activities, he finished off with some of his personal hopes for the Club:-

"As we move into a new decade, the demands to keep the Association going are getting harder as other sporting codes strive for the services of our players, who normally only played Gaelic Games in years past. We must ensure that our players are well looked after and also that good accommodation is provided for the comfort of our spectators. I feel that, as the biggest sporting organisation in the Parish, the Club should show good example for the young people in the Parish to follow".

In praising the Secretary on a fine report, Club President, Padraig S. Mac a'Ghoill stated: "We have quite a number of Senior players whom I believe to be of County

standard; added to these, the players on the successful Under 16 team and a few of the current Junior team and we have ample talent in the Club for the next ten years, but I must ask the question, are we doing enough to encourage members to play our games?.

The Treasurer in her Report showed an income of £26,873.35 with expenditure of £30,445.03. She reported that the draw, which was run during the year, had yielded a profit of £21,247.00 for the Club. Various tributes were paid to the Finance Chairman, Charlie Bennett, and to Luke Gavigan, who were the main driving forces behind the success of the venture.

The following Officers were elected for 1990:

President	-	Padraig S. Mac a'Ghoill
Vice President	-	Fr. Patrick Kerr
Chairman	-	Eamon McNelis
Vice Chairman	-	Luke Gavigan
Secretary	-	Edward Molloy
Ass. Secretary	-	John McConnell
Treasurer	-	Mary McHugh
Ass. Treasurer	-	Thomas Boyle
P.R.O.	-	James McBrearty
Registrar	-	Tomas Boyle
Oifigeach Na Gaeilge	-	Partalón Ó'Faoláin
Adult Referees	-	Edward Molloy and John Gallagher
Senior Team Manager	-	Frank McGhee
Junior Team Manager	-	James McBrearty.

The Finance Committee was made up of Charlie Bennett, Columba Diver, Luke Gavigan, Bart Whelan, Thomas Boyle, Michael Breslin, Sean Watters, Vinny McConnell, Josie Brennan, Geraldine Diver and Fr. Kerr.

The Minor Board A.G.M elected the following officers:

Chairman: John McConnell

Secretary: Pauric Brennan

Treasurer: Luke Gavigan

Under-Age Referees: James McBrearty, John McConnell, Eamon McNelis, Bart Whelan, John M.Byrne.

Team managers:

Under 10: John Boyle and Patsy Gildea.

Under-12, Under-13 and Under-14: John McConnell and John Michael

O'Donnell.

Under-15/16: Johnny D. Earley and Pat O'Donnell.

Under-17/18: Johnny D. Earley, Pat O'Donnell and Eamon Cunningham.

1990 proved to be a huge year for the Club overall, with the exploits of County men Anthony Molloy and Martin Gavigan hitting national headlines, a blitz of Under-Age trophies and the Senior team taking their first major trophy in nine years.

Democrat Cup returns after 46 years.

Having qualified for the Senior League final at the end of 1989, the Club was in the unusual situation, in January 1990, of preparing for a Championship type match in the middle of winter. Kilcar had qualified as opponents and had rightly been dubbed "The team of the Eighties", for their exploits in the Championship in the decade gone by. Games between the two clubs had always reached fever pitch, and just because the match was not being played at the height of summer, made little difference to either team or their supporters. Kilcar were going for the League and Championship double, as they had already defeated Aodh Ruadh in the 1989 County final. A big crowd travelled to Fintra on the 30th of January and anyone

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly Ardara take Senior League title Ardara 1-10 Kilcar 1-07

It was a case of the Good, the Bad and the Ugly at last Sunday's County Senior League Final in Killybegs. We had the good in Ardara's spirited performance, the bad in what proved to be a foul-ridden first half and the ugly in a free-for-all at the end of the same half as players from both sides attempted to hammer the living daylights out of one another – on and off the pitch.

The sides were level on no fewer than five occasions and Luke Gavigan's goal proved to be the difference between the sides. Ardara's determination to establish control was evident from the start and they achieved it with flair, style and an intelligent use of teamwork, that bewildered their opponents. Credit must go to their powerhouses, Martin Gavigan and Anthony

Molloy, who dismantled the Kilcar attack on more than one occasion. Credit too must go to corner back John Kennedy for a performance that was as good as, if indeed not better than, anybody else's on the day. He was in total command in defence and combined with his front runners to sweep through the Kilcar resistance.

Punters saw the ugly side of Football with three separate incidents of fisticuffs during play.

Row No 1 - developed two minutes before half time when fists flew inside the Ardara half and play was held up.

Row No 2 – occurred seconds after the first one appeared to be resolved. The football

had not even started, when more players got involved and Anthony Molloy ended up with a bloodied face and a gash under his eye. Two players were sent to the line, Mark McShane from Kilcar and Pauric Brennan from Ardara.

Row No 3. – happened as both sides made their way to the Dressing Rooms. Two players got involved again and with the large crowd surging in it took a member of the Garda Síochána to restore order to proceedings.

The half time score stood Kilcar 1-03 to Ardara 0-06 but by this stage football was only a secondary consideration.

In the second half Ardara stamped their authority and started the half well and did enough in the half to win the match. They played with more spirit and deserved their victory.

The Teams:

Ardara – Eamon McNelis, John Kennedy (0-01), Martin Gavigan, Niall Campbell, Pauric Brennan, Jimmy Brennan, Kieran Keeney, Anthony Harkin, Anthony Molloy, Patrick Gallagher, Luke Gavigan (1-00), Eamon Cunningham (0-06), Seamus McGuinness (0-01), Ted Breslin (0-01), Luke Brennan (0-01). Subs – Neilly Gildea, Paddy Breslin, Conal A. Gildea, Martin Sweeney and Frank McGhee.

Kilcar – Michael McFadden, Seamus Gallagher, Neilly Byrne, Enda McHugh, John Doogan, Maurice Carr, John O'Donnell, Christy Gillespie (0-01), Mark McShane, Sean McGinley, Roger McShane, Stephen Byrne, Martin McHugh (1-04), James Carr, James McHugh (0-02). Subs – Gerard McBrearty, Danny Gillespie, John Carr, James Hagarty, and Manus Brady.

Referee – Mick McGrath (Aodh Ruadh)

who thought that "Its only a League final." were soon treated to a rude awakening.

The manner of the win mattered little to the victors, and there were Championship-like celebrations for the success starved Ardara supporters. Not since Vinny McHugh led his side to victory in 1943, had the famous Democrat Cup returned to the parish, and team captain Martin Gavigan accepted the Cup from his club-mate, County Secretary Bart Whelan, amidst jubilant scenes in Fintra. The team returned to the town in a cavalcade that saw the last car still at 'The Nick' when the first car was arriving at the Chapel! The players and their wives were treated to a celebratory meal in the Nesbitt Arms and a victory dance was held in celebrations that went on into the early hours of Monday morning. At the dance, Anthony Harkin was presented with the Club Senior Player of the Year award for 1989. The victory was particularly deserving for the team manager, Frank McGhee, whose effort in his previous years as manager, had been unequalled, and he had finally been rewarded with a trophy, to show for his endeavours.



**Bart Whelan presents Martin Gavigan with the Democrat Cup
after the victory over Kilcar in Fintra**

Killybegs end Championship hopes

The team had little time to savour their success, and, with only a few weeks break, were soon back in training again for the League and the Championship. The Championship draw saw the team receive a bye to the quarter-finals. This was disappointing for the Club, as it meant that there would be no Championship home match in the Parish that year; always a special day for the Club officers and members. The team's quarter-final opponents were MacCumhaills, and with Ardara playing their first match in the competition, the men from the Twin Towns were unlucky not to take the honours, Ardara winning by a point, 2-7 to 1-11. A dramatic comeback in the last five minutes secured the victory. Waiting in the semi-final were Killybegs, who had already accounted for both Aodh Ruadh and Downings. There were no neighbourly favours on the day for Ardara though, and the fishermen ran out emphatic winners.***

The longest serving Chairman of the Ardara G.A.A Club was Seán Ó Casaide, who held the position from 1922 until 1944. Columba Diver is the only person to hold the position in three different decades 1975-1977, 1985-87 and 1993-97.

Killybegs overcome below par Ardara Killybegs 2-18 Ardara 2-08

An estimated crowd of over 3000 witnessed the Fishermen outplay the underdogs in most departments. Conditions for the game were ideal, with no breeze and the pitch was in excellent shape. With the exception of Eamon Cunningham who scored 1-05, the Ardara front line was almost non-functioning, as chance after chance was squandered and countless passes went astray. The Ardara attack persisted in feeding Luke Gavigan with possession in the left corner forward position, when it became obvious from the early stages that he was not on his game. Had Ardara changed their direction of play, they might have done better.

Team Captain Martin Gavigan had a good game but his team-mates failed to rise to the occasion. For Ardara, midfielder Anthony Molloy came into the game only infrequently and never got going in the middle of the field. Killybegs capitalised on Ardara's weakness in midfield with Barry McGowan and Manus Boyle forming a formidable combination. Killybegs led at half time 1-09

to 1-05. Killybegs opened the second half scoring with seven points in a row that gave them a commanding lead which saw them finish on a score of 1-18 to 2-08.

The teams were:

Ardara – Neilly Gildea, Pauric Brennan, Ted Breslin, Peter Breslin, John Kennedy, Jimmy Brennan, Niall Campbell, Anthony Molloy, Martin Gavigan, Declan Gallagher (1-00), Patrick Gallagher (0-01), Luke Brennan (0-01), Kieran Keeney, Luke Gavigan (0-01) and Eamon Cunningham (1-05). Subs – Noel Watters, Martin Sweeney, Peter Breslin, Jimmy Brennan, Adrian Cunningham, John Kennedy, Vinny McConnell and John Herron.

Killybegs – David Meehan, Conal Gallagher, Paul Carberry, Mickey Campbell, Barry Cunningham, John Cunningham, John McGuinness, Manus Boyle (0-08), Barry McGowan (0-02), John 'Ban' Gallagher (1-03), Jimmy Whyte, Conal Gallagher (1-00), Denis Carberry (0-01) and Rory McNelis (0-01). Sub – Mark Boyle (0-03).

The team played on in the Senior League, which was run under a new format of a nine-team Division 1, with matches played home and away. But they failed to retain their title and finished only mid-table after amassing 16 points from 16 matches. It was no different in Comórtas Peile Na Gaeltachta; the team made an early exit, losing at home to Downings in the first round.

The Under-21 team also made a sudden exit from their Championship, when they were defeated by St Nauls in the first round at Fintra.

Seniors in trouble

There was major controversy for the Club in September that year when a League match against MacCumhaill's was abandoned, following the alleged sending off of

Martin Gavigan in the second half. The affair received national headlines, as Martin had just been selected for the International Team's trip to Australia (see below), and a major suspension would have ruled him out of the trip. The County Board launched an investigation into the affair and following a lengthy disciplinary hearing, at which Club officers and players were called to give evidence, the Club was fined £500 and given a severe warning as to future conduct. No action was taken against Martin, and as a result, he was able to fulfil his obligation to the Irish team. The fine was later mitigated to £100, at the November County Committee meeting.

New name and format for Juniors

As was the case in Division 1 of the League, the Junior team found themselves in a new division with a new title. From then on the Junior team would be regarded as the "Senior Reserve" team and would play in Division 1 Reserve. The new format was a big success as it meant that the Reserve team would be playing before the Senior team each Sunday, and would not be travelling to different venues as happened in the past. The team had an easy passage in the first round of the Championship, when, after defeating Bundoran away by two points, they had a walkover in the second leg, as Bundoran failed to travel. They went on to a tough quarter-final with Gweedore, where they drew the first match, after a late Pat Connolly goal saved the day. There was no further glory in the replay, though, when a late two-goal blitz sent the Gaeltacht men through to the semi-final. The team did have a very consistent League campaign, however, when they won 12 matches from 16 to finish in third place. In the Gaeltacht competition they had a victory over Termon in the first round, but went out at the next stage to Fanad Gaels.

Six South-West titles for Under-Age teams

It was another red-letter year for the Club Minor Board, when the Under-Age teams almost swept the board in Under-Age competitions in the South-West. Ardara won Divisional titles in U-10, U-12, U-13, U-14, U-16 and U-17. It was a feat never before achieved by any South-West club. The roll of honour started with the youngest team, the Under-10s, winning all their matches, before going on to defeat Naomh Columba in the final, 3-3 to 1-4. The Under-12 team had lost the majority of the side that had won the Division in 1989, but were still a good little side. They qualified for the Divisional final against Naomh Conaill. The Glenties boys had already won, when the teams met earlier in the competition, and were hot favourites. Peter McHugh, Steven Gildea and co. had other ideas though, and took a brilliant victory on a 8-4 to 2-1 scoreline. Later, they were defeated in the County quarter-final by Cloughaneely. The Under-12 Reserve team also won all their

matches, and were the top team in their section. The Under-13s were fancied to go at least one step better than the previous year, and looked to be heading that way when they won the South-West title by defeating Naomh Conaill 1-7 to 0-1 in Fintra. They met more than their match, though, in the County semi-final when they played Clochaneely. The first match finished level, Ardara 4-3 Clochaneely 3-6, but the Falcarragh men advanced to the final, when they won the replay 4-0 to 2-4, in a match Ardara dominated, but could not score.

The Under-14 team qualified for the County final by defeating Naomh Conaill after a replay in the South-West final, before a large crowd in Fintra. Victories over Termon and Robert Emmett's qualified them for the decider against a fancied St Eunan's side. A goal blitz by St Eunan's and a brilliant display by their goalkeeper,



The Ardara Under-14 team that were defeated in the 1990 County final.
Back L-R: John McConnell, Leonard Gildea, Niall McGuinness, Conor Curran, Shaun Whyte, Mark Boyle, Niall O'Donnell, Francis Diver, Eamon Cagney, Conal Gavigan, John Michael O'Donnell.
Front L-R: Kieran Mulhern, Johnathan Boyle, Vincent Ryan, Peter McHugh, David Diver, Aidan Nicholson, Eamon Diver, Pat Shovlin, Cian Sheridan, Cathal Bennett.
Sitting: Hugh Byrne, Stephen Gildea, Derek Boyle (mascot), Conal Doherty and John Watters.

Denis Veldman, proved to be the team's downfall, and Letterkenny won by 5-3 to 2-7.

The Juvenile team was all out to regain their County title and had nine of the starting fifteen of the team that was victorious in 1989. Killybegs also had a strong team remaining, but Ardara proved that they had gotten over their Killybegs 'jinx' at Under-Age level and won the Divisional title by a point in Glenties, albeit rather fortunately on a 4-3 to 0-12 scoreline. A victory over Downings, in the quarter

final, left a semi-final date with St. Eunan's. Although expected to win, Ardara came out on the wrong end of a 2-10 to 1-10 verdict in Dungloe.

A new grade, of Under-17, was introduced in 1990 instead of the Minor League competition, and was played in the Autumn months. Ardara defeated Dungloe in the Divisional final by a point, 1-7 to 1-6, but were defeated by Aodh Ruadh in the County semi-final. The Minor team came very close to making it a clean sweep of South-West wins, when they went to the Divisional final, only to be defeated by Naomh Conaill in a thrilling derby match in Towney. Glenties won the match on a 2-10 to 1-11 scoreline.

County jerseys aplenty were worn by Club players in 1990 with Damian Diver, Michael Doherty, Don Early and John O'Donnell all playing for the South-West and County Under-16 teams. At Minor grade, Adrian Cunningham and John Herron played in the Ulster Minor League, and were joined by Kieran Lynch of



The captains of the respective teams who won South-West Championships, pictured along with Minor Board officials and Guests.

Back L-R: John McConnell, Luke Gavigan, Patsy Gildea, Anthony Molloy, Pat Connaghan (Minor Board Chairman), Bart Whelan, Pauric Brennan.

Front L-R: Peter McHugh (Under-12), Conal Doherty (Under-13), Michael Doherty (Under-16), Mark Boyle (Fr. Luke Boyle cup), Martin Shovlin (Under-17), Shaun Whyte (Under-14), Matthew Whyte (Under-10)



**The Under-Age players of 1990 and managers, pictured
at the Annual Minor Board presentation night**

Edergole, who was right corner back on the team that lost to Derry in the Ulster semi-final.

In off the field activities, the Minor Board ran their usual table quiz to help the finances, with a large crowd attending the grand final in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel. The Club also hosted a visit from the Raheny Gaels Club, from Dublin, who were returning a visit the Ardara Club made in 1988. The visitors were hosted in the Community Centre, and played a match against the Club Under-14s, with a long puck competition, sports quiz, and disco, ensuring there was plenty of activity for both guests and hosts. The successful Under-16 team of '89 was rewarded with a weekend trip to Cork in February, to attend the Donegal v Cork N.F.L match in Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Unfortunately for the team and mentors, the match was controversially postponed at the last minute due to poor weather conditions. It was disappointing for all concerned but nevertheless the young lads had a weekend by the banks of the Lee they would always remember.

The Board also ran an Under-13 Parish League, for the Fr. Luke Boyle Cup, which proved a great success. There was a victory for Mark Boyle's team, after some superb matches. The manager of the team, Bart Whelan, used all his craft to get the best out of his side and it was another boost for him, as he battled back to better health.

Molloy leads Donegal to Ulster title.

1990 saw Anthony Molloy bridge a 7 year gap for Donegal, and a first for the Ardara Club, when he captained Donegal to its fourth Ulster title, in the victory over Armagh, in Clones. There was a big Ardara connection, as Martin Gavigan was an ever-present on the team, at midfield, alongside Anthony in the first round victory over Cavan, and then in the position he was to make his own, centre half back, for the rest of the campaign. Luke Gavigan was a sub on the team, and Anthony Harkin was coach. Donegal defeated Derry easily in the Ulster semi-final by 1-15 to 0-8 in Clones, and had a thrilling one point win over Armagh in the Ulster final, 0-15 to 0-14. There was great hope for a first All Ireland appearance when the team ran out for the semi-final against Meath on the 19th of August. Donegal were well in the match at half time as they went in level, 1-4 each at the break, but two 'soft' Meath goals in the second half ended their hopes. Molloy was brilliant at centre field, dominating Liam Hayes throughout and winning the R.T.E man of the match award hands down. Rambo held the centre well and his brother Luke also got in on the act as a second half substitute. Anthony went on to take his second "Donegal Player of the Year award" for his performances during 1990.



Martin
was also

Club Chairman Eamon McNelis presents Martin Gavigan with a donation towards his Australian trip in 1990.

decorated, as he won the Ulster writers 'Player of the Month' award for July, for his performances in the Ulster Championship.



Martin warms up before the first test. Also in the photo is Stephen O'Brien (Cork).

Rambo plays for Ireland

A huge story locally and nationally in 1990 was the Compromise Rules test with Australia, and more importantly, the selection of Martin Gavigan of Tullycleave on the panel, as Vice Captain of the team travelling down under. The huge honour was bestowed on 'Rambo' after fine displays for Donegal and his leadership qualities made him a 'natural' at the hybrid game. He played at centre-field on the team that defeated the Aussies and manager Eugene McGee stated afterwards, that he was one of the top three players in his squad. The two-week trip was a once in a lifetime opportunity for Martin and he received rave reviews for his performances against the Wallabies. The Irish team won the series, 2 games to 1. The scores of the matches were as follows 1st Test, Ireland 47 Australia 38; 2nd Test, Ireland 52 Australia 31; 3rd Test, Australia 50 Ireland 44.

Other news

John M O'Donnell reached the County final of Scór Sínséar, after some great performances in the Recitation section and was narrowly beaten on the night.



**Padraig S. Mac a'Ghoill presents William Boyle with the Hall of Fame Award
at the 1990 Dinner Dance**



**Award winners, Club Officers and Guests, Willie Joe Padden and Charlie Faulkner
(County Chairman) at the 1990 Dinner Dance**



In the National Schools' quiz, Brackey National School were unfortunate not to gain a County title, as they put in a great performance, only to lose out by one point in the final at Ballybofey.

At the Annual Dinner Dance on New Year's Eve, annual awards were presented to the following:

Senior Player of the Year: Martin Gavigan

Junior Player of the Year: Vinny McConnell

Minor Player of the Year: Kieran Lynch

Club-man of the Year: John McConnell

Hall of Fame: William Boyle.

Appreciation awards: Frank and Anne McGhee,
Martin and Luke Gavigan, Anthony Molloy.

Guest of honour on the night was Mayo footballer, Willie Joe Padden.

1990 All Star team

At the end of the year, P.R.O James McBrearty, in his report for Dearth magazine, selected his " Club All Star team", based on performances of all the Club teams during the year. His novel selection was as follows.

Malachy Gallagher (Under-16),

Vinny McConnell (Reserve),

Ted Breslin (Senior)

Niall O'Donnell (U-14)

Damien Diver (U-16)

Brendan Boyle (U-10)

Dermot Maguire (Reserve)

Fergal Heena (U-10)

Shaun Whyte (U-14)

Don Earley (U-16)

Peter Mc Hugh (U-12)

Martin Shovelin (Minor)

Kieran Keeney (Senior)

Luke Gavigan (Senior)

Stephen Gildea (U-12)

1990 A.G.M – Edward steps down

The 1990 A.G.M was held in Peter Oliver's on Sunday the 13th of January, with an attendance of 53 members. The Secretary, Edward Molloy cited the Senior League victory, Martin Gavigan's selection for the Irish tour to Australia and our three County men, who won Ulster Championship medals with Donegal, as the outstanding highlights of the year. He criticised those involved in some of the disciplinary problems that the Club had been involved in during the year, and stated his hope, that our record in this department would improve drastically in the

coming year.

The Treasurer, Mary McHugh, reported an income of £3532.95 and an expenditure of £10,440 leaving the Club with an overall balance in the bank of £14,042.98. The final transaction, of £9,000 for the purchase of Sandfield, had been paid to Mrs Brannigan.

The election of officers saw Edward Molloy step down from the position of Secretary, after 10 years in the position. There were numerous tributes from the floor for the outstanding contribution that he had made to the Club and for his unbelievable attention to detail and efficiency during his term in office. Outgoing Assistant Secretary, John McConnell, was elected as the new Club Secretary. Another notable change on the Committee, was the stepping down of P.R.O James McBrearty, who had served in the position since 1979. James had done great work in reporting Club affairs, and made sure that all Club matches and events were widely carried in the media. Minor Board Secretary, Pauric Brennan, was elected to the position.

The following officers were elected for 1991:

President	-	Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill
Vice President	-	Fr. Patrick Kerr.
Chairman	-	Eamon McNelis
Vice Chairman	-	Luke Gavigan
Secretary	-	John McConnell
Ass. Secretary	-	Edward Molloy
Treasurer	-	Mary McHugh
Ass. Treasurer	-	Thomas Boyle
P.R.O.	-	Pauric Brennan
Registrar	-	Thomas Boyle
Scor Officer	-	Sally McHugh
Oifigeach na Gaeilge	-	Máire Nic Aodha

Senior Team Manager: Anthony Molloy

Junior Team Manager: John Hegarty.

County Board Delegate: Bart Whelan.

Finance Committee: Charlie Bennett, Columba Diver, Luke Gavigan, Bart Whelan, Thomas Boyle, Michael Breslin, Sean Watters, Vinny McConnell, Josie Brennan, Geraldine Diver and Fr. Kerr.

The Minor Board elected the following officers:

Chairman: John McConnell

Secretary: Pauric Brennan



Treasurer: Luke Gavigan

Team managers:

Under-10: Patsy Gildea and John Boyle

Under-12: John Boyle and Paddy McGill

Under-13/14: John McConnell and John Michael O'Donnell

Under-14B: Vinny McConnell, John Boyle and James McBrearty

Under-15/16: John McConnell and Pauric Brennan

Under-17/18: Johnny D.Earley and Pat O'Donnell

Edward Molloy stepped down from the position of Club Secretary at the 1991 A.G.M, having held the position for a record 10 years in succession. A son of Bridget and the late John Molloy, the Leamagowra man was a shock choice for the job in 1981, as he had little experience prior to that, at committee level. Despite never having played the game, Edward took an interest in the fortunes of the Club, by travelling with his next door neighbours, the "Lanty's" to Ardara games, in the late seventies. As an avid supporter, his first position in the Club was as



1984, with main officers, Chairman, Charlie Bennett and Treasurer Bosco McGill

Groundsman from 1977-1980, lining the pitch with sawdust in earlier years, and with weed killer in later times. Little did he realise though, when he innocently accepted the position of Secretary in Peter Oliver's that first day, that it would be the beginning of a long and distinguished career in GAA administration, in both Club and County.

Elected Secretary of the reformed South-West Divisional Board in 1982, he played a vital part in the re-organisation of Under-Age football in the County at that time. He also held the positions of P.R.O and Referees' Secretary of that same Board, in addition to his Secretary's post, for the period 1982-1986. Edward's biggest claim to fame however is the title he holds countywide of "Mr. Fixtures", stemming from his work as County Board Assistant Secretary, which he held in 1991/1992, and from 1995-2003. He dipped his feet in the position of Assistant Treasurer in 1993 and 1994, but soon returned to his favourite portfolio, which he holds to the present day, recently being re-elected to the position for 2004. Widely regarded as the most



difficult position on the County Board, Edward has handled the job with courtesy and efficiency, and could no doubt write a book about both his own experiences and a selection of the excuses used by Clubs in an effort to secure a postponement. His annual reports to Convention are always eagerly awaited, and are sure to contain many humorous anecdotes. An ever-present at County Convention since 1981, he has also represented

Donegal at Ulster Convention and National Congress during that time.

One of the longest serving 'whistlers' in the County, Edward has been an active Club referee since 1978. Since his marriage to Margaret in 1990, he holds the unique distinction of being a member of both the Sligo and Donegal Refereeing panels, and has refereed Under-Age and Adult finals in both Counties. He was elected Donegal Referees' Board Secretary in both 1986/87 and 2000/2001; a position which carries its own headaches and problems. Although Ardara is always his first love, he also helps out his local Club in Sligo, Drumcliffe-Rosses Point, whenever the need arises.

At the 1980 Yearbook launch, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, Michael Daly (Ulster Bank) and Edward

As Club Secretary however, Edward will always be remembered for a number of things; his immaculate attention to detail; his love for compiling statistics; his thought provoking and "no punches pulled" annual reports to the A.G.M; and his continued loyalty to the Club, despite having lived in Rathcormack, Co. Sligo for the past 13 years, rarely missing a home match in either League or Championship during that time. He undoubtedly raised the standards by which future Club Secretaries would be measured and the administration of the Club has been much improved since his involvement began. "Mr Fixtures" is held in high esteem all over Donegal, and we await his forthcoming book, "Confessions of a Fixtures Secretary" with eager anticipation!

1991- Minors and Under-14s do Championship double

1991 saw many highlights, as the Club seemed to go from success to success. Two Under-Age Championships victories, Damian Diver becoming only the third Club player to win an Ulster Minor Championship medal, and Rambo's progressive rise to fame, as he received a replacement All Star and was selected for Ulster for his great displays in 1991.

When the Club Minor Board was founded in 1985, few would have believed that such dramatic progress could have been achieved in such a short space of time. Numerous Divisional Championships had been won and a Juvenile title in 1989. But nothing was to compare with 1991 when the Club Under-14 and Minor teams completed an unprecedented double Championship win.

The Minor team's victory was unlike the same group's victory at Under-16 in 1989, when they were rank underdogs, yet they defeated Killybegs. This victory

Diver Delights ***Ardara 1-10 Aodh Ruadh 1-08***

Showing much more determination throughout and a great will to win, Ardara lifted the Minor title on Sunday with a two-point margin over Aodh Ruadh. But the Ardara team and mentors must be thankful for the performance of the County minor star, Damian Diver. He was, in a word, brilliant. Not since the display of Michael Carr in the 1980 Senior final, have I seen a player dominate a game so much.

However, it was not a one-man show either, as every player on the Ardara side tried his heart out. Adrian Cunningham was a tower

of strength at centre-half back, while the return of Kieran Lynch added stability to the full-back line. Michael Doherty also had a fine match in the half-back line. Up front, Stephen McGinley, Don Early and Martin Shovlin were a constant threat, while John O'Donnell alternated between midfield and full-forward with great effectiveness. Aodh Ruadh certainly had their chances. They got a perfect start with a goal from their best player on the day, Brain Roper, after only 50 seconds, but they never displayed the urgency needed over the hour.

Their big name players, Donal Buggy, Anthony McGrath and Al Travers, never stamped their authority on the game, and they also were guilty of some bad shooting, Barry Ward being especially guilty in the second half. The game was won and lost in the first twenty minutes of the second half, when Ardara consolidated their one point half-time advantage to lead 1-09 to 1-04 and the Ballyshannon side's first point of the half did not arrive until eight minutes from the end. Aodh Ruadh did put in a spirited finish to get within a point of the Ardara side but they had left it too late.

Perfect Start

The Ballyshannon side got off to the perfect start when John Muldoon and Anthony McGrath combined to put Roper through after 50 seconds, and he made no mistake in beating the advancing Malachy Gallagher. But Ardara refused to panic and had pulled back two points within two minutes from two Don Early frees, after fouls on Early himself and Martin Shovlin. Aodh Ruadh increased their lead with a fine point from Donal Buggy in the 9th minute but immediately Ardara midfielder, Stephen McGinley, raced through to point at the other end. Then came the score which put Ardara on their way. Stephen McGinley again in space found Gabriel Cannon and his first effort came off the underside of the crossbar but he followed up to fist home the rebound and put Ardara in a lead they were never to relinquish.

Damian Diver had the first of his two fine first half points in the 15th minute, followed by the second in the 19th minute. In between, Brian Roper pulled one back for Aodh Ruadh. The Ballyshannon side had two bad misses from Barry Ward and Anthony McGrath before Brian Roper and Al Travers pointed to leave only a point in it at the interval: Ardara 1-05, Aodh Ruadh 1-04.

Both teams had everything to play for entering the second half but it was Ardara who showed the more determination and they were to add four points by the 20th minute without reply. Their two best players, Adrian Cunningham and Damian Diver combined before Diver was fouled in the 4th minute and Early pointed the free. Stephen

McGinley picked up a poor Aodh Ruadh clearance to put three points between the sides in the 9th minute. Adrian Cunningham once again did the donkey work for Don Early to set up Damien Diver for his third point in the 16th minute, and a Cunningham sideline was fielded beautifully by John O'Donnell in the 20th minute and he turned to hit a lovely point and put the Ardara side five points ahead.

Aodh Ruadh did put on pressure for the final eight minutes but they had left their effort much too late. A Donal Buggy free in the 22nd minute, was followed by strong claims for a penalty as substitute David Downey seemed to be fouled but the claims went unheeded. Two more Buggy frees in the 28th and 29th minute reduced the deficit to two points and then a lofted ball into the Ardara goalmouth almost ended in the back of the net but it broke to Brian Roper and his fisted effort went just over the bar to leave just a point in it.

It was obvious that time was almost up and the Ballyshannon side needed to win the kick-out but it was Martin Shovlin who won the break and fed Sean Whyte. The 15 year old showed remarkable maturity in holding possession and eventually being fouled from which Shovlin had the last score of the game for Ardara. Overall the standard of the game was not high, but the excitement of the final ten minutes made it enjoyable.

Ardara - Malachy Gallagher, Sean Whyte, Kieran Lynch, Niall O'Donnell, Donal Breslin, Adrian Cunningham, Michael Doherty, Damian Diver (0-03), Stephen McGinley (0-02), Don Early (0-03), Martin Shovlin (0-01), Adrian Whelan, Sean Gildea, John O'Donnell (0-01), Gabriel Cannon (1-00). Subs – Martin McCabe, Niall McGuinness, Thomas Moore, Mick Herron and Eamon Doherty.

Aodh Raudh - John Downey, Sean O'Mahony, Eamon O'Donnell, Niall McCready, Fergal McGrath, Raphael McGee, Ciaran McLean, Donal Buggy (0-04), John Muldoon, Al Travers (0-01), Anthony McGrath, Gary Brennan, David O'Donnell, Barry Ward, Brian Roper (1-03). Subs - David Downey for David O'Donnell.

Referee – An tath. Seán Ó Gallachóir.

propelled them to the fore, as one of the favourites for the Minor Championship of 1991, but the fishermen and Aodh Ruadh were widely tipped to contest the County final, from an early stage. It placed some extra pressure on the team, and early in the campaign they struggled to overcome Kilcar in the first round of the South-West Championship, over two legs. Dungloe were defeated in the semi-final and in the Divisional final, it was inevitably a repeat meeting of the 1989 Under-16 final. Towney was once more the venue, but this time the score was reversed, with Killybegs, ironically, grabbing the spoils with a last minute goal. With both sides qualifying for the play-off stages, Ardara were not unduly worried, and disposed of Cloughaneely and St. Eunan's in the quarter and semi-finals respectively. In the other semi-final, Aodh Ruadh had beaten Killybegs, and were ranked as very slight favourites for the final.

It was a brilliant victory over one of the strongest clubs in Under-Age football in the County. It was the Ardara club's fifth Minor title in its own right and deservedly earned the team a place in the history books. The Earley/O'Donnell management duo were by now getting the credit they deserved, for their hard work in the previous five years. The Domhnall Mac a'Bháird Cup was presented to the team captain, Adrian Cunningham, by County Minor Board Chairman, Sean Masterson. By virtue of their victory, the team had qualified for the Ulster Minor Club



County Minor Board Chairman, Sean Masterson, presents the Dan Ward cup to Adrian Cunningham after the match.

Tournament. Their opponents in the first round were the Monaghan champions, Clontibret, in a game played in Enniskillen, on the 7th of December. The Ardara lads were very slow to settle in the match and were fortunate to go in at half time only two points down, 1-3 to 0-4. They came out, however, in the second half

rejuvenated and two frees from Martin Shovlin levelled the scores. Despite the team gaining plenty of possession, Clontibret were more clinical in front of goal and led by two points with two minutes remaining. Ardara rallied and two Shovlin points levelled the issue, to send the game to extra time. A goal from Shane Maginnis for Clontibret gave the Monaghan lads a 2-11 to 0-13 lead after the first period of extra time. They soon went four points ahead, but two clear-cut goal chances for Ardara were driven wide, and another goal for Clontibret sealed the issue, giving them a 3-11 to 0-14 victory.

Under-14s make it a double

A week after the Minor success, the Under-14s were on stage, the same stage, same

U-14 A Championship Final Ardara complete the double over Aodh Ruadh Ardara 2-03 Aodh Ruadh 0-05

Ardara succeeded where they failed last year in lifting the U-14 A title on Sunday and in doing so they completed a double over Aodh Ruadh, having won the Minor title against the same club a week earlier.

This is the seventh time that Aodh Ruadh have been defeated in the U-14 decider, and 1972 remains the only time the club has won the title. This was Ardara's third U-14 title, winning the first ever title in 1962 and again in 1976. They were defeated in 1981 and 1990. Sunday's decider was a disappointing affair and the game never lived up to its pre-match billing.

The strong wind, which increased in velocity as the afternoon wore on, was an influential factor with only one point being scored against it over the hour. Appropriately that point was scored by Ardara in the first half from a Conal Doherty free in the 18th minute. Aodh Ruadh could only manage five points in the first half and their four point half time advantage always looked suspect.

But the Ballyshannon side had their chances to score in the second half, many good opportunities being wasted, and when they failed to convert a penalty midway through the half, it was obvious it was not going to be their day. But full credit to Ardara. Just like their Minors last week, these young lads put up a fighting performance all through and none more so than their strong midfielder, Mark Boyle.

While they struggled to get on terms for most of the second half, they never gave up the fight. Conal Doherty was their most dangerous forward and it was he who put them ahead for the first time with just three minutes remaining.

Their captain, Jackie McHugh, had a fine game at centre half-back, while Francis Diver and Hugh Byrne at opposite ends of the field also performed well. Conor Curran, was a commanding figure in the Ardara goals and apart from the penalty save he never looked like being beaten.

For Aodh Ruadh, Kenneth McGurran was by far their best player. Bobby Reynolds and Patrick McGrath used well in defence and up front the Ballyshannon forwards found the going tough. In hindsight, the failure of the Ballyshannon side to find the Ardara net on the day proved crucial and they had several opportunities. A good move in the 3rd minute involving Keith Mannion and Stephen Ward ended with Niall Rogers shot being saved at the expense of a '45'.

Aodh Ruadh did have the first score in the minute when Charlie Kane sent Kenneth McGurran on a long run before he pointed. Six minutes elapsed before Aodh Ruadh's second point, Patrick McGrath placing Stephen Ward for the score. But then came Conal Doherty's point against the wind to leave only a point between the sides and 18

minutes gone.

Aodh Ruadh added on three more points before the break in the 20th, 23rd and 25th minutes from Michael Ward and then two Keith Mannion frees to leave them ahead by (0-05) to (0-01) at the interval.

After only five minutes of the second half came the first Ardara goal. A '45' by Mark Boyle was not cleared and Jonathon Boyle was on hand to fist to the net to leave only the minimum between the sides and it looked as if Ardara were on their way to an easy win. However, that was not to be as Aodh Ruadh kept the Ardara side at bay until the 20th minute. And in between, the Ballyshannon side had their opportunities, including a penalty. A move involving Kenneth McGurran and Bobby Reynolds ended with Michael Ward being taken down in the area, but from the spot kick, Niall Rodgers' shot was well saved by Conor Curran.

David Greene in the Aodh Ruadh goal also pulled off a couple of good saves, especially one from Francis Diver in the 17th minute. Ardara also had their shooting problems from frees as Conal Doherty was badly wide from almost in front of the posts in the 17th minute.

The Ardara equaliser arrived in the 21st minute when a bad clearance by Niall Rogers was picked up by Peter McHugh

and he tapped over from outside the 30m line. Centre forward, Conal Gavigan wasted a marvellous opportunity to put Ardara ahead in the 22nd minute, but the Ardara pressure finally paid off three minutes from time as David Diver was fouled on a forward run and Conal Doherty found the range this time to put Ardara ahead for the first time.

The icing on the Ardara cake came in injury time when a high ball from Jackie McHugh was fielded beautifully by Stephen Gildea running across the goal and he finished to the net to put the issue beyond doubt. This was Aodh Ruadh club's fifth final appearance this year in football - U-21, Minor, U-16, U-14 and U-12 - and the U-12 side was their only reward.

Ardara - Conor Curran, Eamon Diver, Hugh Byrne, John Boyle, John Waters, Jackie McHugh, David Diver, Mark Boyle, Peter McHugh (0-01), Conal Doherty (0-02), Conal Gavigan, Jonathon Boyle (1-00), Leonard Gildea, Francis Diver, Stephen Gildea (1-00).

Aodh Ruadh - David Greene, Jamie McCauley, James Shannon, Sean Maguire, Charlie Kane, Patrick McGrath, Robert Reynolds, John Gillespie, Kenneth McGurran (0-01), Stephen Ward (0-01), David Hoey, Keith Mannion (0-02), Barry Travers, Niall Rogers, Michael Ward (0-01).

Referee - Conor McBrearty (killybegs)

opposition, same circumstances. The two teams had qualified from the Southern section, in a new All-County format. Aodh Ruadh held the advantage, having won in Fr.Tierney Park, while the match in Pearse Memorial ended in a draw. Ardara defeated St. Eunan's in the semi-final at Glenties, with Conal Doherty striking 1-7 in a 2-8 to 1-7 victory. With 10 of the starting fifteen from the 1990 team, that lost the County final, still available, team managers, John Michael O'Donnell and John McConnell, were confident that they could take that extra step. They felt the team had been gradually improving over the previous years. Beaten in the Under-12 semi-final in '89; beaten again in the Under-13 semi-final replay in '90; there was only one way to cement the work that had gone into the team, and that was to bring home the cup that Anthony Molloy, Gerard McNelis and Co. had returned with in 1976. Ardara Club members have held the position of County Secretary three times, Charles Mc Dyre (1928-29) Domhnall Mac a'Bháird (1938-1943), and Bart Whelan (1981-1990). While 1981-1990 was not a classic, it was another title that was very much



County Minor Board Secretary, Eugene Boyle, presents the Under-14 Championship cup to Captain, Jackie McHugh



Ardara Under-14 Team 1991 County Champions
Back L-R: John Michael O'Donnell, Hugh Byrne, Francis Diver, Mark Boyle, Conor Curran, Johnathan Boyle, Leonard Gildea, Conal Gavigan, John McConnell
Front L-R: Conal Doherty, John Watters, Johnathan Herron, Aidan Nicholson, Jackie McHugh, Peter McHugh, Eamon Diver, John Boyle, Stephen Gildea, David Diver

overdue. Having been instrumental in the Under-14 Championship being introduced in the County in 1962, it was hard to believe that the Club had only won two Championships in the grade in the previous 29 years. The win was a deserving one for the mentors of the team, who had been involved with this group of players for three successive years, and had at last received their just reward for the time and effort involved.

Other grades

There was progress, although no trophies, in the other Under-Age grades also. The majority of the Minor team were involved in the County Under-17 (Minor) League in the latter part of the year, and went to the County final of that competition. They were however defeated by Aodh Ruadh in the final at Fintra, on a 4-9 to 1-9 scoreline.

An Under 14 'B' team, under the management of Vinny McConnell, John Boyle and James McBrearty, was fielded for the first time in South-West competitions and although they found the opposition tough, they played eight games in total. And as the season progressed, the managers saw many of the team improve greatly as players. Two teams were fielded also in the Under-12 Championships, with the 'A' team losing out to Killybegs in the All-County southern section, while the 'B' team played a number of matches without success. The Under-13 team was knocked out early in their Championship, despite having a useful side. The Under-10s went for their fourth Divisional title in a row, but were denied by Dungloe, in a great tussle at Glenties. The Juvenile side did not have a successful campaign and failed to qualify for the Divisional play-offs.

In other events of note, the Minor Board organised the first Under-12 Parish League, in which over 50 children took part, with Eamon Diver's team defeating James Doherty's team in the final. The Board also treated the Under-10 and Under-12s to a day out at the Railway Cup final in MacCumhaill Park, where Ulster won the Cup, after defeating Connacht in the final.

Killybegs again the Victors

Edward Molloy is the longest serving Club Secretary (in consecutive years). The fortunes of the Senior team did not see a major improvement in 1991, with He held the position from 1981 - 1990 inclusive. their opponents in the first round being their 1990 conquerors, Killybegs. In the vital home leg at Pearse Memorial Park, the team lost narrowly by one point, in a

Goal blitz ends Ardara's hopes Killybegs 5-07 Ardara 0-11

Killybegs ability to avail of the scoring opportunities that came their way ensured that they advance to the quarter final of the Donegal Senior Championship. Ardara were leading at half time 0-08 to 1-02 and an early point after the break increased that lead to four points and left most convinced this tie would go to a third game. Unfortunately for Ardara, it was Killybegs who dominated for the remainder of the game. A goal in the twelfth minute of the game from Manus Boyle left them in the lead 2-4 to 0-9 and although Ardara equalised, Declan Boyle scored Killybegs third goal with ten minutes remaining. Conor White added another two minutes later, and Ardara's Championship hopes were over when a harmless Barry Cunningham shot was deflected past Eamon McNelis by one of his defenders and into the net.

When Killybegs get over the euphoria of defeating their neighbours, they may well worry at their inability to score for 34 minutes, and for 40 minutes the one outstanding player on the pitch was Patrick Gallagher, who from midfield was the game's top scorer with nine points.

Ardara County players Martin Gavigan and Anthony Molloy had quiet afternoons with Damian Diver playing well in defence, and

John Kennedy at corner back gave Manus Boyle few opportunities to score from play. Killybegs had solid performances from the Carberry brothers in defence, Barry McGowan at number six, Declan Boyle at wing forward and John McGuinness at corner forward.

Ardara – Eamon McNelis, John Kennedy, Jimmy Brennan, Pauric Brennan, Damien Diver, Martin Gavigan, Kieran Keeney, Anthony Molloy, Patrick Gallagher (0-09), Eamon Cunningham (0-01), Luke Brennan (0-01), John Kennedy, Declan Gallagher, Ted Breslin and Luke Gavigan.

Subs – Eamon Watters for Eamon Cunningham.

Killybegs – David Meehan, Paul Carberry, Denis Carberry, Mickey Campbell, Damien Cunningham, Barry McGowan, Kevin Whyte, Barry Cunningham (2-00), John Gallagher, Declan Boyle (1-00), Jimmy Whyte, Conal Gallagher (0-01), John McGuinness, Rory McNelis, Manus Boyle (1-04).

Subs – Conor Whyte (1-02) for Jimmy Whyte.

Referee – Austin Wallace

game in which missed chances gave Killybegs the advantage, on a winning score of 1-09 to 1-08. In the return leg in Fintra, after leading for three-quarters of the game, a barrage of goals ended the team's hopes yet again.

Killybegs went on to win the Championship, and were narrowly defeated in the final of the Ulster Club Championship, by Castleblayney.

The Ardara Senior performance, in Division One of the League was also far from noteworthy. After a bright start, things began to slide downhill and in the end they were lucky to escape relegation, securing the two points necessary to maintain their status in the top flight, with just two games left to play. In the Gaeltacht competition, the team also made an early exit, when they were defeated by Naomh Conaill after extra time, in the first round. The only silverware won during the year was in the Kevin McGill Memorial match, with a victory over Civil Service. The competition had been revived, having lapsed for a few years. There was some consolation also in the Under-21 team, that had some good victories in the Championship, before they too went out to eventual winners, Gweedore, in the semi-final.

Reserve controversy with Killybegs

With the Reserve team also being drawn with Killybegs in the Championship, there was a controversial outcome to the home leg, when Referee Pat Curley deemed the match to be a draw, although Ardara actually won the match by a point. The Referee admitted afterwards that he may have made a mistake, but an Ardara appeal to the County Board fell on deaf ears, and the result stood. The away leg, in Fintra, saw Killybegs advance to the quarter-finals after a close match, but the whole affair left a very sour taste among the players and management. In the Reserve League, the team performed reasonably well and finished mid table. But they did finish the year with a trophy, when they defeated Naomh Conaill to win



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The Donegal County Minor team 1991- Ulster Champions

Back L-R: Paul Diver (Gweedore), Paul Callaghan (Killybegs), Donal Buggy (Aodh Ruadh), Kevin McGettigan (Termon), Eunan Doherty (St. Michaels), Declan Boyle (Killybegs), Sean Boyce (Clochaneely), Odhran McBride (Termon).

Front L-R: Mark Boyle (Killybegs), Cornelius Brennan (Dungloe), Damian Diver (Ardara), Darragh Dolan (Bundoran), Ronan McLaughlin (Burt), Peter McGinley (Killybegs), Anthony McGrath (Aodh Ruadh)

McGinty Memorial Tournament, which was run by the Four Masters Club.

Rambo and Diver make the Headlines

1991 was really a year to remember for Damian Diver of Drimaha. His brilliant displays for the Club gave him the number five jersey for the County Minor team, who went all the way to the All Ireland Semi final. Donegal defeated Cavan (3-7 to 1-7), Fermanagh (0-14 to 1-5) and Tyrone (1-10 to 1-9) to win the Ulster Championship, Damian picking up the Man of the Match award in the Ulster final, for a great display. The team had an easy victory in the All Ireland quarter-final, over Warwickshire, but were defeated in the All Ireland semi-final by a Cork team powered by Brian Corcoran. The final score was 0-12 to 1-6.



The Donegal Under-16 team 1991, who won the Ted Webb Cup
Back L-R: Eamon Haran (St. Eunans), Pauric Gillespie (Naomh Columba), Barry Ward (Aodh Ruadh), Brian McGonagle (Dungloe), Paul Curran (Robert Emmetts), Niall O'Donnell (Ardara), Michael Doherty (Urris), David Clarke (Bundoran)
Front L-R: Shane McClafferty (Downings), Aidan Cannon (Milford), Kevin McGinley (Naomh Columba), Conal Cunningham (Naomh Columba), Sean McEwen (St. Eunans), Sean McGee (Clochaneeley), Ciaran McLean (Aodh Ruadh)

On other County teams, Anthony Molloy, had an indifferent year for the Senior team, captaining the side to victory in the McKenna Cup earlier in the year, but injury problems and differences with the management, left his appearances in the Championship limited to cameo roles in the Ulster Championship, which culminated in defeat in the final by 1-15 to 0-10 against Down. Martin Gavigan was an ever-present, in his sixth year for the team, and followed up his trip to Australia in 1990 with another jaunt around the world, this time to the Sky-Dome in Canada, when he was selected as an All-Star replacement, for the exhibition match in Toronto in January.

There was also glory for Niall O'Donnell and Shaun Whyte on the County Under-16 team, that defeated Mayo, to win the Connacht Under-16 Ted Webb Tournament. Niall played at corner back, while Shaun was a sub on the team for the final, but had played in the earlier matches in the competition. Luke Brennan and Declan Gallagher were other clubmen to wear the Donegal jersey, when they were members of the County Under-21 panel defeated by Tyrone in the first round of the Ulster Championship.

Donegal Ladies' County G.A.A Board formed

The sport of Ladies' Football although founded in 1974, had not as yet reached Donegal on an organised basis. This was finally put to rights, however, in 1991, when the first County Board of Ladies' Football was formed, on the 31st November in Ballybofey. Over 70 people turned up from different clubs throughout the county and the first County Committee was set up, with their main task being to establish the sport all over Donegal. Ardara officer, Mary McHugh, was elected as the first secretary of the new Board, and was one of the prime movers behind the birth of the game in the county.

The following were elected to the first Ladies' County G.A.A Board:

Chairman	-	Mr. Aidan Doherty (McCumhaill's)
Vice Chairman	-	Mr. Dermot Foy (St. Nauls)
Secretary	-	Miss Mary McHugh (Ardara)
Assistant Secretary	-	Miss Mary Gillespie (Cloughaneely)
Treasurer	-	Miss Paula McDyre (St. Eunan's)
Registrar	-	Mrs Caroline Quinn (McCumhaill's)

- P.R.O.** - Fr. Liam Logue (Gweedore)
Irish Language Officer - Miss Mary McHugh (Ardara)



The 1991 Under-10 team pictured with Down player Ross Carr and Patsy Gildea and the Sam Maguire cup at the Minor Board presentation night



Mark Cassidy, Johnathan Boyle, Johnathan Herron, and Francis Herron pictured with Down All Ireland winners, D.J. Kane and Ross Carr

Great interest and enthusiasm was shown at the



Dermot Maguire of Edergole, Junior Player of the Year in 1991. This was Dermots second time to have won the award, also having won it in 1987.

meeting and each club present left

the gathering determined to make the new sport as popular as possible. They advertised through the local Press and Radio and the Secretary was present on Convention day, distributing handouts to let the people of Donegal know that another part of the GAA was born in the County.

Other News

The Club followed up their successful draw of 1989, when they launched a similar effort in April of the year. Tickets were sold at £10 for a number of prizes, with a top prize of a Peugeot 205. The draw amassed a profit of £27,045.91 after a mammoth effort by Charlie Bennett and his squad.



The Annual Dinner Dance was held on the 28th of December in the Nesbitt Arms, and the Club was honoured by the presence of Ross Carr and D.J. Kane from the All Ireland winning Down team. The Down players had taken with them the Sam Maguire Cup and had attended the Minor Board presentation night, which was held earlier in the evening. The annual awards were presented as follows:

Senior Player of the Year: Patrick Gallagher

Junior Player of the Year: Dermot Maguire

Minor Player of the Year: Damian Diver

Club persons of the Year: Vinny McConnell and Jimmy Brennan

Hall of Fame: Tommy Boyle

Bart steps down as County Secretary.

The 1991 County Convention saw the end of Bart Whelan's ten-year term as County Secretary. The Hillhead man had overseen big changes in Donegal G.A.A during the eighties, with the County winning 2 All Ireland Under-21 titles and an Ulster Senior title. He proved himself to be one of the most efficient and popular Secretaries ever to have held the office. He gave of himself unstintingly above and

beyond the call of duty and brought a wealth of expertise and innovative ideas to the position. At the same Convention, Edward Molloy was elected Assistant Secretary of the County Board



Bart pictured alongside Michael Gillespie (Chairman) and Francie Cunningham (Treasurer) at the 1981 County Convention.

Bart Whelan's term as County Secretary, which ended at the 1991 Convention, was the end of an era in the G.A.A in Donegal. Bart followed in Donal Ward's footsteps, the only other Ardara man to hold the position, but soon made his own mark as a shrewd administrator, more than capable of holding down this prestigious office.

He was the youngest in a family of six brothers and one sister, whose father, Martin, a member of the Garda, died in 1947 at the young age of 41, leaving their mother to raise the family. All of his brothers played at various levels with the club, Donal being the most accomplished, playing as full forward on the 1952 Minor team. One of Bart's earliest G.A.A memories is of that day, when he was one of a large number of passengers on Packie Brennan's van, travelling to a match in Dooey. The van crashed in Glenties and they never made it to the game. His



Bart and his mother Mary, pictured on the day of the 1952 County Minor final, waiting for Packie Brennan's van to take them to the game.

mother, Mary Gallagher, was from a Gweedore family of ardent GAA folk (her brother Patrick won Senior Championship medals with Gweedore), and Mary instilled a love of the Irish language in her sons from an early age, a thing that stood Bart well throughout his time in the G.A.A.

His own playing career started as a member of the Under-16 team, which won the County Championship in 1955. He recalls John McHugh as the star of that team. Danny

Sweeney and Bart were corner forwards, and, he says, they were similar to John Herron and Frank McGee in the eighties, taken off every day when the back line were playing badly!



August 1991, Bart sells a £10 ticket to Anthony at the Club stand on Show day. John Byrne is pictured on the left.

Like many of his time, Bart attended Coláiste Eide in Galway, where he won a Connacht medal with the school Under-15 team. This, and his under 16 medal are his only trophies and his most prized possessions. He then attended Coláiste Charmain in Gorey, where he was a member of the Colaiste Charmain Senior team. In 1971 his college was drawn to play Buffer's Alley in the Championship. On the day, Bart was marking the famous Tony Doran. After ten minutes Bart's team was five points down, and everything that moved on the field was being hit by the Wexford men. The college team decided that, discretion being the better part of valour, they would retire. They walked off the field and left Buffer's Alley on their own. Thus ended Bart's playing career!

His involvement with the County Board began when the County Convention was held in Ardara in 1978. Bart contested the position of Assistant Secretary and got the job. He took up the position of Secretary in July 1980, when Charlie Kavanagh resigned from the position, and he remained there for eleven years. His biggest disappointment during that time was the defeat of the Donegal team by Galway in the 1983 all Ireland semi-final. The highlight of those years was when Tom Conaghan guided Donegal to their first ever All Ireland under-21 victory in 1982.

Bart became Chairman of Ardara in 1977 and was instrumental in big strides being made, both on the field of play and in the development of the Club. Ardara won the Senior Shield and construction of new dressing rooms was begun. Thanks to

Pádraig S. Mac a' Ghoill and Joe 'Larry' Gallagher, work started on the improvement of Páirc an Phiarsaigh. Bart credits the foresight of these two men as one of the key reasons that Ardara has such a fine playing pitch today. His proudest moment in the Club was in 1981, when he was Club Chairman; Ardara won the Senior Championship. He rates that team, under manager Charlie Mooney, as the best team he has seen in Ardara.

He recalls with affection the good times enjoyed during all his years of involvement with the Ardara Club. His most treasured memories are of his friendship with Pádraig Mór Mac a'Ghoill. Bart says that 'Big Paddy' was a man of such high standards in everything he did that it was a joy to work with him. He always knew the right way, he knew no other way and he, more than anyone else, guided the Ardara Club to becoming one of the finest and most respected clubs in the county.

His most enjoyable times with the Club were undoubtedly the weekends away at the All-Ireland Gaeltacht competitions. Although no titles were won on these trips, they helped to generate a great spirit within the Club. The trip to London in 1981 was also an outstanding success. Many old friendships were renewed that weekend with our exiles in London. Bart's involvement in the Club has continued to the present day, and his annual stint as Fear a' Tí of the Club Dinner Dance, always adds to a great occasion. The tables were turned on him in 2003 however when he was singled out as the Guest of Honour, at the Dance in the Blue Haven, for his great service to Club and County.

Bart made many friends through his involvement with Club and County. His good wife, Rosemarie, made many sacrifices in those years, especially during his time as County Secretary. His work made him an absentee father and husband. She was left largely on her own to carry on the task of raising nine children. His hope for Rosemarie is that she will reap her reward in the next life. He concludes himself: *The Ardara Club has prospered greatly down the years from the time when Charlie Mooney carried it on his back, to the present day. There is now a team of workers any organisation would be proud of, for it is vital to change with the times and encourage the youth to do the work. To facilitate this, it is important, as is now being done, to change the officers regularly. I strongly believe that the success of our Ardara Club is due to the young people becoming involved in all aspects of club work. Long may this trend continue, and the motto should be "Give youth a chance".*

1992 – Unbelievable!

When the 63 members of the Club gathered in the Community Centre for the A.G.M on the 17th of January 1992, few could have predicted what lay in store for

Club and County in the months that lay ahead. In his first Secretary's report, John McConnell gave special mention to the Championship victories at Under-14 and Minor level, and to all involved in these successes. He cited other highlights such as the great work being carried out to refurbish the dressing rooms at Kentucky and the achievement of the finance committee in making the draw such a major success. He was highly critical of the Senior team's performance during the year and continued: *"People all over the County are baffled by the lack of success of the Ardara Senior team in the past number of years, considering the number of quality players at our disposal. Sometimes I ask myself, have we got players of quality, or do we have too many players playing on past reputations? I do feel that we have a panel of players capable of beating any Club team in Ulster on a given day, but the commitment just has not been given and nobody here can argue with that. One recalls the great Under-21 victory in 1983 against a Ballyshannon team laden with County players. The reason for victory that day was that the players showed a fierce pride in the green and gold jersey, a pride that sadly, has only been seen on a few occasions since. Indiscipline among the players has been the biggest problem. The lack of unity within the team has led to arguments before, during, and after games, which were a shame to behold, and a terrible example to younger players breaking into the team.* Following a lengthy discussion on the report, and on the Senior team in particular, a motion was passed to the effect that the position of manager of the Senior team would not be a matter for election at the A.G.M, but would instead be decided after the Club Executive had discussed the matter, and had approached individual(s) that they felt would be capable of taking on the job. The Treasurer, Máire Nic Aoidh reported a working income during the year of £20,383.33, with an expenditure of £11,454.27, showing a working profit for the year of £8929.06. The Club draw showed a profit of £27,045.61. When all accounts were taken into consideration, the Club had £34,299.82 in its coffers. The Treasurer also reported on the ongoing efforts to form a Ladies Football Board in the County, and the meeting agreed that a local committee would be formed and that the Club would give its full support.

The following officers were elected for 1992:

President	-	Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill
Vice President	-	Tommy Boyle
Chairman	-	Bart Whelan
Vice Chairman	-	Luke Gavigan
Secretary	-	John McConnell
Ass. Secretary	-	Ann McGhee
Treasurer	-	Maire Nic Aoidh

Ass. Treasurer	-	Thomas Boyle
P.R.O.	-	Pauric Brennan
Ass. P.R.O	-	John M. Byrne
Registrar	-	Thomas Boyle
Scór Officer	-	Sally McHugh
Oifigeach Na Gaelige	-	Seán Mícheál Ó Domhnaill
Co. Board Delegates	-	John McConnell & Pauric Brennan
Under-21 Managers	-	Johnny D. Earley & Pat O'Donnell

Minor Board

Chairman	-	John Michael O'Donnell
Secretary:	-	Pauric Brennan
Treasurer:	-	Luke Gavigan

Under-Age managers

Under-10	-	John Boyle and Hugh Gavigan
Under-12	-	John McConnell
Under-13/14	-	James McBrearty and Columba Diver
Under-15/16	-	John McConnell and John Michael O'Donnell
Minor	-	Johnny D.Earley and Pat O'Donnell

Donegal reach the Promised Land

On the Inter-County stage, from 1989 on, Donegal Senior footballers had been making steady progress up the national ladder. They had reached 3 Ulster finals in a row (89-91), an unprecedented achievement for the County, and the victory in 1990 had given Donegal supporters great hope that it might not be too long until a Senior All Ireland would stand alongside the Under-21 successes of 1982 and '87. The 1991 Ulster final catastrophe against Down had dimmed that hope somewhat, and the sceptics (and there were many) had opined that Donegal were on the way down again. Locally, there was some anger at the way Anthony Molloy had not featured regularly in the 1991 Championship. But Anthony, who had decided to take a break after the Ulster final against Down, reconsidered towards the end of the year, and made the decision to fight to regain full fitness and his regular midfield jersey for the County.

The team had a good run in the National League, and qualified for the Division 1 quarter-final against Dublin. The game, in Breffni Park, saw Donegal lead throughout, only to give up the victory in the last five minutes to two late Dublin goals. Little did Donegal people realise, leaving Cavan that day, that the tables would be turned, on a bigger stage, five short months later.

By the time the Championship came around, Molloy was comfortable again in



midfield, Rambo was in his customary number six jersey, and Anthony Harkin was calling the shots on the training field, with his infectious enthusiasm. The first round in Breffni Park saw Donegal get out of jail, a dubious Tony Boyle goal, and an unbelievable McHugh free from 60 metres meant a replay in MacCumhaill Park a week later. They made no mistake the next

day though, cruising to a 0-20 to 1-6 win. Fermanagh were easily dispatched in the semi-final (2-17 to 0-7), which meant a Provincial decider with neighbours Derry.

Coming of age

The 1992 Ulster final in Clones is defined by many as the day that the Donegal Senior team really “came of age” as a unit. Down to 14 men at half time after John Cunningham’s harsh dismissal, a performance of unbridled pride, and passion, perhaps never before seen from a Tir Chonaill team, gave them a memorable 0-14 to 1-9 victory. It was a brilliant team performance. Few players could be singled

out over any other.



It was a great end to the Ulster Championship for the Ardara lads though. Martin Gavigan picked up the Man of the Match award, while Anthony was honoured as the B.B.C.’s Player of the Championship for his

performances during the campaign in which he earned his third Ulster Senior Championship medal.

The team came to Ardara with the Anglo Celt Cup on the night after the victory, but the atmosphere was somewhat strange. There was great jubilation, no doubt,

but it was a different feeling than with previous Ulster Championship victories; there was a sense among the crowd, and in particular the team, that there was “unfinished business” to be dealt with. The opponents in the semi-final were Connacht Champions, Mayo, who were in a similar situation to Donegal; they too had flattered to deceive somewhat, and were long overdue some success at national level.

Club Chairman Bart Whelan addresses the crowd at the homecoming to Ardara after the Ulster final.

Locally, a great buzz was being generated. The town was awash with bunting and flags and the like, and a huge crowd was planning to travel to the capital for the weekend. The Club Senior team took advantage of the opportunity, and arrangements were made to play the annual Kevin McGill memorial match with the Civil Service Club, at their home pitch in Islandbridge. Ardara relinquished their title to their hosts in an enjoyable match, but friendship was the winner on the day, as a great social occasion took place. Everyone from home who had travelled up for the weekend was treated to a reception and barbecue, with Jamsie ‘Tenacious’ O’Donnell at the grill. The survival of the Kevin McGill memorial match had simply been down to one person, the same Mr. O’Donnell, and the hospitality shown to the Club was typical of the man. The steaks and baked potatoes served up that day are still talked about by anyone fortunate enough to have tasted them!

Martin Gavigan enjoys the celebrations with the Donegal crowd after the Mayo match.

Mayo were despatched unspectacularly the following day. Donegal, who seemed



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that

extra bit nervous, made hard work of disposing of a mediocre western outfit. The nerves were hardly surprising, as there was no doubt that the County would never again get a better chance to reach centre stage. The large Donegal support went

berserk when Martin McHugh tapped a penalty over the bar with the last kick of the game to give Donegal a four point victory. The sense of disbelief on their faces told the whole story in itself.

Countdown

The build up to the final was a torrid time for Club officers, with a genuine fear that there would be a major shortfall in the number of tickets the Club would receive for the match. Anyone who knew anyone around the County was calling in favours wholesale. A Club meeting, sometimes two, were held every week in the interim, to keep people up to date with what was going on. The Club received an initial allocation of around 280 tickets from the County Board. The figure was in no way adequate for the demand, but at least one further allocation was guaranteed. By Friday the 18th of September, a total of 404 tickets were distributed from three allocations and unbelievably, anyone who had requested a ticket from the Club had been allocated one. The approximate figure going to the game from the Parish was estimated to have been over 500, when the amount of tickets that people would have sourced from outside the area was taken into account.

The town was bedecked in flags, buntings, window displays, etc. etc, in the fortnight prior to the match, and the 'buzz' in the parish and around the County was electric. The fact that 'Molloy' was captain gave the whole thing that bit of an extra



5.30.pm in Ardara on September 20th, those who stayed at home celebrate. Denis Gallagher pushes Danny Phil Den, as Paddy Keeney and Mary Gallagher join in the celebrations

significance around Ardara, and many dreamed about what might happen in the town on Tuesday the 22nd, the Tuesday after the match.

As had happened before the semi-final, the Club organised another match in the Capital, this time the opposition being Na Fianna from Glasnevin. Ardara won the game and had a very enjoyable evening in the Clubhouse afterwards with their hosts. Late in the evening, all dispersed to their various locations

around the City and arranged to meet up in the Royal

Dublin the following day for the biggest day in the history of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael Dún na nGall.

**Outside the Royal Dublin at 12.pm. The Ardara gang get ready to head to Croke Park.
From left: Stephen Gildea, John Byrne, John McConnell, Karen McConnell, Anne Byrne,
Barry Campbell (Kilcar), Rosemarie Whelan, Ian Campbell (Kilcar),
Patsy Gildea and Sandra Whelan**

Donegal take first Senior All Ireland

Dateline 20th September and Dublin seemed to have been absolutely invaded by Donegal men, women and children. The local hostelrys were awash with the green and gold, and there was plenty of jovial “slagging” with the Dubs. The Royal Dublin Hotel in particular was more akin to Diver’s on a Sunday after mass, such was the throng of Ardara people present. The tension on supporters’ faces told of the enormity of the task ahead of the team. The bulk of the Donegal support was already in for the Minor match, in which Armagh was defeated in the dying seconds by Meath. Most people were hoping that it was not going to be a ‘Leinster’ day and that the Dubs would not follow suit in the main event. As the Donegal team entered the cauldron at around 3.14, it was a special moment for all Donegal



people. Tears were openly shed at the final realisation of what the team had achieved by reaching this stage, and more importantly, at the possibility of what



lay ahead, should the team become victorious.

The Game

The game itself, of course, is now a milestone in history, as the greatest single achievement by Donegal people, in any walk of life. A missed Charlie Redmond penalty, James McHugh hits the crossbar, Manus finds his range, Donegal up 10-7 at half-time. Donegal dazzle after the break, total football, Molloy's huge fist pass, Rambo shuts up shop, Martin McHugh....class!

Tommy Sugrue

blows it up, 0-18 to 0-14, the dream was finally realised. To win the All Ireland for the first time was something amazing, but to win it in absolute style really put the icing on the cake. Tears flowed like the Owenea River in spate as everyone struggled to take in the enormity of what had happened. Of course, Ardara people cried that little bit extra. Molloy as captain was ready to climb the Hogan, Rambo had been brilliant also, and the team were at their absolute peak as a result of Anthony Harkin's training. It was one of those days where people would have loved to be in two places all at once; in Croke Park where it was all happening, and back in Ardara, where the few who stayed at home to 'mind the place' were dancing in the streets and having a joyous time.

When Anthony finally arrived at the platform, first to shake his hand was Mary Robinson, and like a true Ardara man, his first words to her were, "Jeez Mary, it was tough out there", just like he would have said to Columba Diver or Charlie

Mooney, after coming off the Pearse Memorial, after a tough Championship match. He accepted the Cup from C.L.G. Uachtarán Peter Quinn and raised 'Sam' aloft to the greatest roar ever heard in Croke Park. When he settled himself, he gave one of the finest acceptance speeches ever given by a winning captain after an All Ireland victory. It was a great oration considering that he had rehearsed the speech word for word with Bart Whelan in the week prior to the match, but had left the piece of paper that he had written it on behind him in Ardara! The Donegal crowd danced down O'Connell Street after the game, some headed back to prepare for the homecoming, and others stayed on in the Capital to celebrate. The celebration banquet was scheduled for the Grand Hotel in Malahide later that night, and many locals were fortunate to acquire tickets for the function. An unbelievable night of



celebration ensued with Daniel O'Donnell, among others, taking the stage to entertain those lucky enough to be present

This photograph was taken by Theresa Gallagher (Jodie), as the final whistle went in the 1992 All Ireland Final. The expression on Patsy Boyle and Jodie Gallagher's faces tell the whole story.

In the Royal Dublin at 6.pm. The Ardara lads celebrate the victory.

From left: Anthony O'Donnell, Jimmy Brennan, Adrian Brennan, Niall Campbell, Declan Brennan, and Patrick Gallagher

The children of Brackey School pictured with “Hill 17” in the background

The homecoming

The team and its entourage were due back in the County on Monday evening, and were due in “the home of football ” (o.k., maybe exaggerated, but it’s our book



and we’ll write what we want!!) on Tuesday night. Many had left Dublin on Sunday, after the match, to prepare for the occasion and ensure that nothing was left to chance for the homecoming. After a night and morning of celebration in Donegal Town, the cavalcade left for the South and South-West of the County on







Tuesday evening, with the last stop pencilled in for Ardara at 10 o'clock. The cavalcade travelled via Mountcharles, Dunkineely, Killybegs, Kilcar and Glen, before hitting the Kilcar-Ardara parish boundary at "Na Cuiriní", and so on to Leamagowra, Anthony Molloy's townland. The native townlanders had pulled out all the stops for their finest son, and a massive bonfire at the Leamagowra crossroads awaited the team. Bonfires littered the road on either side on the way down the 'S', with the highlight being a huge fire raging on the peak of Beangan, 1000ft above sea level. The slogan, "Go for Sam- Hill 17" was etched into the mountainside. The people of Leamagowra and Glengesh had really pulled out all the stops. As the cavalcade continued down into Scadaman, the view from Brackey School of the hundreds of cars, bonfires and lights that threaded the valley was a memory that will never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. The Brackey



pupils had painted every player's Christian names on the wall of the school for the

occasion. The St. Catherine's Children's band, from Killybegs, greeted the team at the town boundary at around midnight and, led by a Garda escort, the team made its way to the platform on the Diamond where Club Chairman, Partalón Ó Faoláin, greeted the party on behalf of the parish.

At the platform on the Diamond, Bart hands over the microphone to Anthony

Bart welcomed the huge crowd, and in particular, the Uachtarán of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael, Peadar O'Cuinn, Club President Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill and of course the local heroes, who received a prolonged standing ovation from the crowd. Following the welcome and speeches, the team were entertained to a meal in Nesbitt Arms Hotel, and the greatest night in the history of the G.A.A in the parish went on through to the next morning. Indeed for many, it extended to the following weekend, and even beyond. Great Ardara G.A.A men, the likes of Tommy Boyle, Frankie Brennan, Big Paddy, and so many other former Club stalwarts, were overjoyed to have lived to see this happen. They could now die happy, but the night was also tinged with sadness that great men like Joe Larry, Vinny McHugh, Dan Ward, and a legion of others, had not lived to see Donegal reach the pinnacle, after giving so much to the cause. The cup returned to the parish later in the week, when the Narin and Rosbeg area were visited so the locals could pay tribute to the huge role that Anthony Harkin played in the victory.

For the record, the Donegal team that won the county's first All-Ireland was as follows:

Gary Walsh (Burren), Barry McGowan (Killybegs), Matt Gallagher (Naomh Bríd), Noel Hegarty (Naomh Columba), Donal Reid (Red Hughs), Martin Gavigan (Ardara), John Joe Doherty (Naomh Columba), Brian Murray (Civil Service), Anthony Molloy (Ardara, Capt), James McHugh (Kilcar)(0-1), Martin McHugh (Kilcar)(0-3), Joyce McMullan (Four Masters), Declan Bonner (Na Rossa)(0-4), Tony Boyle (Dungloe) (0-1), Manus Boyle (Killybegs)(0-9). Sub used: Barry Cunningham (Killybegs) for Murray (inj.).

Four former Ardara and Donegal players stand proudly beside Sam Maguire.

**From Left: Frankie Gallagher, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill,
Packie Moore and Frankie Brennan.**

Ardara's First All Stars

The massive celebrations continued all over the County in the months that followed, and the year ended for the players with honour after honour. Countless functions were attended. The greatest honour of all though came in November of the year, when the Donegal team were rewarded with seven All-Stars, which included Martin Gavigan at centre half back, and Anthony Molloy, who was

selected to partner T.J. Kilgallon of Mayo at midfield. The other Donegal winners were Gary Walsh, Matt Gallagher, Martin McHugh, James McHugh and Tony Boyle. The Donegal team, despite their social commitments, blazed a trail through the National League, remaining unbeaten until the end of the year in a campaign which would see them eventually qualify for their first final in the competition, to



be played in 1993.

**The seven Donegal All-Stars with Brian McEniff,
at the All Star Banquet in the Burlington Hotel**

Killybegs triumph – again

Despite Donegal's exploits, life on in the Club scene went on, albeit sporadically, with many fixtures being cancelled as a result. In line with the new arrangement, agreed at the A.G.M, a new Senior team manager, former Club player, Seamus Gallagher, was eventually appointed, following a series of interviews. The appointment however did not bring the expected change in fortunes that everyone had hoped for. In the Senior Championship of 1992, it was a case of deja-vu for the team, as they once again were drawn against Killybegs. The Fishermen were the reigning County Champions after their victory over Red Hughs in the 1991 County final, and were such a dominant force, that they were expected to easily regain their crown again.

The first leg in Fintra proved to be a disaster for Ardara as they failed to score in the first half and Killybegs went in ten points to the good. Two second half goals by Charlie McSperry (Mayo) set the score, but Killybegs went in to score again. Treasking is 2-12 to Ardara 0-2-2-44. The final Breisle. It was remarked by many supporters leaving 1960-69. Three of the players were one of the Treasking performers. Boyle (1954/55) and also a Senior team in the 1960's of the Club. The team did try to salvage some pride in the second leg in Kentucky but, despite an improved home



performance, Killybegs proceeded to the quarter-finals on a 2-14 to 0-13 scoreline. They then went on to take the Dr. Maguire Cup for the second year in succession, by defeating Naomh Columba in the County final.

The Ardara team that fielded in the second leg was as follows:

Leonard Molloy, Adrian Brennan, Ted Breslin, Niall Campbell, Damian Diver, Jimmy Brennan, John Kennedy, Martin Gavigan, Anthony Molloy, Patrick Gallagher, Lanty Molloy, Luke Gavigan, Kieran Keeney, Declan Gallagher, Luke Brennan. Subs were: Eamon Cunningham, Don Earley, Michael Doherty, Pauric Brennan, Conal McLoone, Peter Breslin, John Herron, John O'Donnell, Seamus Gallagher.

In the All-County League, the team started off the year on a high note after a good early run in the League, as they topped the table for two months. As was the norm however, after the Championship defeat, things went downhill. Manager Seamus Gallagher did not see out the campaign and they ended the League in fourth position with 20 points from 18 games. There was some consolation for them, however, with the winning of the Eamon Byrne Memorial Tournament in Killybegs. They beat Four Masters' in the final of a 13-a-side competition, that was organised by the Killybegs Club, in honour of their former player, who had died suddenly on the playing field. The Ardara team received a fine silver cup, which was sponsored by the Killybegs Firemen, in memory of their former colleague. On the social side of things, the Senior and Reserve teams travelled to Knockmore in Mayo, at the start of the year, for a weekend away. The Senior team caused quite an upset, when they defeated a full strength home side, who were Connacht Club Champions, in a robust affair, while the Reserves also had a victory

when they defeated local Junior side, Ardagh, in a friendly match.

The Ardara Senior team who were defeated in the Championship at Fintra
Back L-R: Seamus Gallagher, Jimmy Brennan, Anthony Molloy, Niall Campbell, Kieran Keeney, Connie Molloy, John Herron, Ted Breslin, Patrick Gallagher, John Kennedy, Pauric Brennan, Phonsie Bennett.

Front L-R: Don Earley, Eamon Cunningham, Damian Diver, Luke Gavigan, Lanty Molloy, Martin Gavigan, Declan Gallagher, Michael Doherty, Luke Brennan

The Reserves also had a forgettable season in 1992, and went out of the Championship to Killybegs in the first round. The team had lost narrowly in Fintra, by a point (4-4 to 3-6), but they never found their rhythm in the return leg in Kentucky, and made an early exit after being well beaten, 3-15 to 0-9. They fared just as poorly in the League and finished second from bottom in Division 1 Reserve, with 9 points from 18 games.

Ardara Reserve team 1992, taken at a League match in MacCumhaill Park
Back L-R: Conal McLoone, Noel Watters, Eamon Doherty, Shaun Gildea, Conal Gallagher, Joseph Brennan, John Herron, Thady Breslin, Conal A. Gildea, Declan Brennan.
Front L-R: Frank McGhee, Martin Shovlin, Niall McGuinness, Adrian Cunningham, Joseph Doherty, John Martin Byrne, Vinny McConnell.

Under-12 and Juvenile teams reach County finals

The Club Under-Age teams did not reach the heights of the previous year in 1992, but nevertheless, had a good year by any standards. As in 1991, two County finals were reached but this time, the titles did not come the Club's way. The Under-10 team won their fourth South-West title in 5 years under Paddy McGill and John Boyle by beating Dungloe in the final by 3-03 to 2-02. The Boyle brothers Brendan and Derek, Donal Byrne, Lee Watters and Johnny Herron were the main stars on the team.

The Under-12 team surprised everyone, as they won out their section in the All-County Division 1 South, defeating all comers, including the reigning Champions, Aodh Rua. In the County semi-final, Gweedore were defeated after a thrilling game, by a one point margin in MacCumhaill Park, and this led to a final meeting

with Cloughaneely. The Falcarragh Club was flying high in the Under-Age divisions in the early nineties and they were hot favourite for the title. Sadly for



Ardara, Cloughaneely proved themselves worthy of the tag and they ran out convincing winners by 4-7 to 1-1. It was a game that saw the Ardara boys produce their poorest display of the year, and unfortunate that it was against one of the finest teams from the North-West. There was great hope though in the team for future years, what with the performances from the likes of Fergal Heena, Conor O'Donnell, Seamus Byrne, Darren Maguire and Patrick Gallagher during the year. Later, the Club treated the team to a trip to Dublin to watch the Dublin v Clare All Ireland semi-final, in Croke Park, where a great day was had by all.

Success eluded the Under-14 team, also, as Naomh Conaill gained revenge for their defeat two years previously at Under-12 level, and went through from their section to the County semi-finals.

The Juvenile team were one of the brighter hopes for the year. After losing the U-14 final in 1990 and winning the U-14 title in 1991, hopes were high that they could go a step better in 1992. They had a poor start to the year, when they lost their opening two games, then they started to put a run together and advanced to the Divisional final against Naomh Columba, who had beaten them twice previously in the section. The boys put on a terrific display of football to win handsomely and install themselves as favourites for the County title. Milford and Robert Emmet's were accounted for in the quarter and semi-finals, respectively, to

set up another meeting with Naomh Columba. The Glen men, though, had learned a lot from the Divisional final meeting and were dominant throughout. Ardara kept in the game with limited possession, but as the scores stood level into injury time, a point from the last kick of the match, from an awkward angle, gave Naomh



Columba the title by 1-13 to 3-6. Few could argue with the result, as the Ardara lads never raised their game, and the one point defeat was rather flattering to the team.

The Minor team set out to defend their title from the previous year, and with Diver, Doherty, Earley and the O'Donnells etc., all still Under-Age, they were well equipped to achieve the two in a row. An unfortunate draw, however, pitched two of the best teams in the County against each other, at the Divisional semi-final stage, which meant that one big gun had to bow out. Ardara met Killybegs in Towney, and as expected, a thrilling encounter ensued. This time the Killybegs lads were the better team and were victorious by three points 1-14 to 2-08.

The U-21 Team of 1992 was chiefly made up of the Minor teams of '91 & '92 and had a good run in the Championship, under Johnny D. Early and Pat O'Donnell and qualified for the County semi-final. They came up against the favourites for



the title; McCumhaill's. In a great performance from the boys, they went down to a last minute goal in a heart breaking defeat. MacCumhaill's then went on to win the County title.

Diver captains Vocational Schools to Ulster Title

Club players tasted success once more at Vocational level in 1992, when Damian

Diver captained Donegal to an Ulster Final victory over Tyrone. Niall O'Donnell played at corner back, Don Earley at corner forward, and John O'Donnell was a substitute. Diver lined out at centre half forward, scoring two points in the final. The team was then defeated by Kerry, (4-11 to 3-4), in the All Ireland semi-final

The Donegal Vocational Schools team 1992- Ulster Champions

Back L-R: Declan Boyle, Kevin Gallagher, Alan McGroary, Paddy McTeague, Brian McGonagle, James Ruane, Shane Carr, Martin Coll.

Front L-R: Aidan Cannon, Peter McGinley, John McAteer, Damian Diver Niall O'Donnell, Don Earley, David Clarke

On other County teams in 1992, Damian Diver captained the Donegal Minor team that was defeated by Armagh in the Ulster final, (0-13 to 0-9). Michael Doherty was also a member of the panel and played throughout the Ulster campaign. On the County Under-16 Squad, Niall O'Donnell captained a team, in which Shaun Whyte also featured, that was defeated by Mayo, in the Connacht final of a tourney in which Donegal was a guest team.

First Ladies competitions organised

Following the formation of Ladies' G.A.A in late 1991, the first competitions got under way in 1992. Ardara decided to field two teams, at Under-16 and Senior level. The County was split in four for the Senior League, with Ardara in the South-West along with Four Masters, Naomh Columba and St. Naul's. Each game was played on a home and away basis. The first competitive ladies' match, played by the Ardara Club, was held in Glencolumbcille, and the girls started off with a victory, after a tough encounter. The team that lined out in the first game was as follows.

Bernadette McHugh, Mary Boyle, Christine Gallagher, Sinead Bennett, Grainne Diver, Rose Breslin, Ann Breslin, Caroline McHugh, Charlene Kennedy, Arlene McCole, Mairead Gallagher, Bernie Gallagher, Yvonne Boyle, Mary McHugh, Fidelma Bennett. Subs: Anne Boyle and Christine Whyte.

The Ardara Senior Ladies' team 1992

Back L-R: Caroline McHugh, Christine Gallagher, Mary McHugh, Rose Breslin, Mary Boyle, Caroline and Noreen Mooney, Fiona Breslin, Mairead Gallagher, Fiona McBrearty, Fidelma Bennett, Ann Boyle, Charlene Kennedy, Bernadette McHugh, Mairead McHugh, Carmel Shovlin.

Front L-R: Margaret McHugh, Amanda Gallagher, Lorraine Gildea, Yvonne Boyle, Grainne Diver, Sinead Bennett, Bernie Gallagher, Ann Breslin, Arlene McCole

The team did not qualify for the League play-offs, but went on to reach the County Shield final but were well beaten by Urris on the day. In the Championship, the team played St Naul's home and away, but were unable to match them and went out in the first round. In the U-16 Competition, Ardara were paired successively with Naomh Columba, Naomh Conaill and St. Naul's and qualified for the County final, but were then defeated by a very strong Sean MacCumhaill's team.

Nevertheless, to make the final was a great achievement, in their first year of competitive action. There was success in the Community Games Under-14 competition though, when the Ardara girls won the County title.

The Under-16 girls team who were defeated in the County final in 1992

Back L-R: James McBrearty, Lorainne Gildea, Fiona McBrearty, Ann Boyle, Arlene McCole, Caroline Whyte, Carmel Shovlin, Yvonne Boyle, Amanda Gallagher, Charlene McHugh, Majella Gavigan, Phonsie Bennett.

Front L-R: Helen Gildea, Caroline Boyle, Emily Whelan, Grainne Diver, Kathy Gavigan, Sinead Bennett, Christine Whyte, Sinead Gallagher, Michelle Bennett.

Improvements continue at Pearse Memorial Park

Development continued on Pearse Memorial Park during the year, and the year saw the completion of the work on the Dressing Rooms, which had commenced in 1991. A new roof was erected, and a Referees' room and store room were added to the existing building. The work was carried out under a F.A.S. Social Employment Scheme, that employed 5 workers and was supervised by Luke and Hugh Gerard Gavigan, on behalf of the Club. It was the first major job that had been done on the dressing rooms, since they were built in 1980 and it left the facilities in a much improved state.

The Annual Dinner Dance was held in December, in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel, and the venue was packed to capacity, as the Club celebrated and honoured their All Ireland winners and All-Stars. Presentations were made to Anthony Molloy, Martin Gavigan and Anthony Harkin on their achievements during the year. The other annual award winners were as follows:

Senior Player of the Year: Niall Campbell.

Junior Player of the Year: John Martin Byrne.

Ladies Player of the Year: Mairead Gallagher.

Hall of Fame: Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill.

Minor Player of the Year: Michael Doherty.

1992 A.G.M

"1992 has been a year of destiny, for the County as a whole, and a year which saw three of our members outshine all the achievements of the Club since its formation in 1921. One finds it difficult to describe the feelings we all experienced on September 20th 1992 and the fierce outpouring of pride and emotion that we all felt as Ardara men, women and children, as Anthony Molloy held aloft the Sam Maguire. A dream of men long gone, who gave their life to the survival of Gaelic Games in the parish of Ardara, men too numerous to mention, who walked or cycled or took one of the few vehicles available, to play our National game and left the legacy for us to follow, in the hope that one day, famous sons of our parish would win a Celtic Cross".

These were the opening words of Club Secretary, John McConnell, as he presented his report to the Annual General Meeting on the 17th of January 1992, in the Community Centre, before 61 members. He continued:

“There are a number of things that must be acknowledged at this time: that this victory did not just happen overnight; years of hard work by the players themselves; their Clubs; their families; players who donned the Donegal jersey for years and years with little or no success; but probably most importantly of all, the people who gave of their time to teach these players the skills of the game.”.

The Secretary continued to detail the highs and lows of the year for the Club, and his report provoked much debate from the floor. There was criticism from a



number of speakers on the Senior team's exit from the Championship, and questions were asked as to where was the team going in the future? A number of players responded to the criticism, stating that it was not always the players that were to blame, and that there was not enough emphasis on coaching for the team during the year. Frank McGhee felt that too much pressure was being placed on the team from the Club and its supporters, and that the expectation of success each year was unrealistic. He did, however, state that a number of players needed to ask themselves were they willing to make the

necessary commitment to attain success.

On the finances of the Club, the Treasurer, Mary McHugh, reported an expenditure from the year of £27,810.40 and an income of £22,696.34, leaving a deficit for the year of £5,114.06. When the Club savings were taken into account, the Club had a total balance of £21,686.85. Following her report, she stated that she would not be putting her name forward for the position for 1993. Many tributes were paid to her for her work in the position since 1987 and the Chairman made a presentation of a Donegal Parian China vase to her, on behalf of the Club, for her efforts. On registration, Thomas Boyle, reported a membership of 311 adult members, which saw a significant rise from the previous year. The main reason being the number of people who became members as a result of Donegal's run to the All Ireland final.

The following officers were then elected for 1993:

President	-	Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill
Vice President	-	Tommy Boyle
Chairman	-	Columba Diver

Vice Chairman	-	Luke Gavigan
Secretary	-	John McConnell
Ass. Secretary	-	Máire Nic Aoidh
Treasurer	-	Anne McGhee
Ass. Treasurer	-	Thomas Boyle
Registrar	-	Thomas Boyle
P.R.O.	-	Pauric Brennan
Ass. P.R.O	-	John M. Byrne
Oifigeach Na Gaeilge/Scor Officer	-	Seán Mícheál Ó Domhnaill
Senior Team manager	-	Kieran Keeney
Reserve Team manager	-	John Gallagher
Under-21 managers	-	Pat O'Donnell and Johnny D. Earley
Minor Board officers		
Chairman	-	John Michael O'Donnell



Mary accepts the Donegal G.A.A. Communications Award for 2000 at the County G.A.A. Banquet also in the photo is Uachtaran C.L.G. Seán McCague and County Board Treasurer Charlie O'Donnell.

Secretary -
Pauric Brennan
Treasurer -
Luke Gavigan

Under-Age Managers

Under 10/12

- John Boyle and Paddy McGill

Under 13/14

- John M. Byrne and Fr. Gerry Doherty

Under 15/16

- John McConnell and John Michael O'Donnell

Minor

- Johnny D. Earley and Pat O'Donnell

Mary McHugh of Leaconnell, who served as Club Treasurer from 1987-1992, has always been one of the hardest workers in the Club, behind the scenes, since she first became involved in the mid eighties. The eldest daughter of Jimmy and Roise McHugh, Mary took over the post of Treasurer from Bosco McGill and soon began to boost the Club's finances on an annual basis. She took up the position just after

being elected joint Club-person of the Year, with her great friend Charlie Bennett, for their fund-raising during the Mayoral election of 1986. Her detailed annual accounts brought the job to a new level during her time in office, and many fund raising ventures put the Club finances on a sound footing.

Following her term as Treasurer, she became the first Secretary of the County Ladies' Board in late 1991, her administrative experience becoming a vital asset to the fledgling Board, as she became very active in the promotion of Ladies' Football in the County during the early years.

At Club level she became the first Chairperson of the Ardara Ladies' Football committee, and was also a keen player on the Ardara Senior Ladies' team through the nineties, usually lining out at full forward. A fluent Irish speaker, she represented Donegal as the County representative in the Cailín Gaelach competitions at Comórtas Peile Na Gaeltachta in 1987 and '88. It is however, through her organisational work, that she is best known locally, and her involvement in the preparations for the annual dinner dance each year, is one of the prime reasons for the success of the event. She has done trojan work with Scór na nÓg and Scór Síneair over the years – on many occasions she was the sole organiser of the Club event - that resulted in many acts going on to participate in County finals in both grades.

Mary had served as Assistant Secretary from 1993-1998 and moved on to the P.R.O position in 1998, a post which she has held up to the present day. She really found her niche in that particular job and quickly became known as one of the best in the county. She has been involved in producing match programmes for Championship ties in Pearse Memorial, as well as ensuring that all Club home matches are covered in the local media. Her production of the Millennium Club Yearbook received rave reviews in 2000 and her effort was finally rewarded when she was presented with the Donegal G.A.A Communications Award at the Millennium Banquet. The following year, Mary was instrumental in setting up the Club website www.geocities.com/ardaragaa which is one of the most comprehensive in the country. Her efforts in promoting the first Annual Club Golf Classic in 1998, earned her the Club Person of the Year award for the second time, the event becoming one of the Club's most successful fund-raising ventures on a bi-annual basis. Mary's sisters, Caroline and Margaret, and her brother, James, all followed her lead in becoming involved in the Club. All have served in different capacities. Mary finally met her match in 2000 when she married well-known St. Naul's clubman, Sean Kelly. She works for Club Treasurer, Stephen McCahill, in the Glenard Fish company in Killybegs, where G.A.A work is always high on the

agenda!

1993-Disappointment for Donegal

Following the heights reached in Donegal G.A.A. circles in the previous year, 1992 was always going to be a hard act to follow in both Club and County. Unfortunately, in Ardara, it was another case of what might have been, with no silverware to show for the year's efforts. The Club, however, was growing year by year, with teams now being fielded at 14 different levels, following the introduction of ladies' football in 1992. On the County scene, the Donegal team started off the year by qualifying for the National League final, after victories over

County Championship quarter-final Champions advance to semis with surprising ease. Killybegs 2-12 Ardara 0-05

Killybegs advance to the Championship quarter final after successfully overcoming Ardara on Sunday last in Kilcar. The margin of victory would suggest an easy victory for Killybegs, this only being so as a result of poor marksmanship from Ardara. A three or four point winning margin would have been a true reflection on the game itself. Played in ideal weather conditions, Killybegs settled first and had early points from a Manus Boyle free and a Barry McGowan point from play. At the other end Ardara missed three frees from close range as Patrick Gallagher squandered the early chances. Defending well and winning possession at midfield, Killybegs added further points from Barry McGowan (2), Mark Boyle (1), Manus Boyle (1) and Conor Whyte (1) to lead, 0-08 to 0-00 at half time. Just before half time David Meehan made a great save to deny Ardara their opening score.

The second half began with Ardara on the attack and again they missed early chances, hitting three wides in the first five minutes. In virtually their first attack of the second half, Killybegs scored a lucky goal when a broken ball fell to Conal Gallagher who hammered home past the helpless

Martin Sweeney. His goal brought a good 15 minute spell of Ardara pressure with points from Patrick Gallagher (1), Declan Gallagher (2), Kieran Keeney and Anthony Molloy.

Tried hard for Goal.

Ardara tried hard for a goal but the Killybegs defence held firm with Denis Carberry, Francis Murray and John Cunningham clearing many Ardara attacks. Just when Ardara looked like staging a comeback Killybegs made a further breakthrough when they were awarded a penalty as Conor White was fouled going through. Manus Boyle converted and the issue was truly beyond the reach of Ardara. Killybegs added further points from Jimmy White, Barry McGowan (2) and Conor White but were also guilty of poor shooting especially Manus Boyle and Jimmy White.

Need to improve.

For the winners, Francis Murray, Paul Callaghan, Barry McGowan, Mark Boyle and Conor White were best while players such as John Cunningham, Manus Boyle,

John Ban and Conal Gallagher will have to improve considerably if the 1992 Champions are to advance, further. For Ardara, John Kennedy, Declan Gallagher, Kieran Keeney, Eamon Cunningham and Anthony Molloy were best and will know that they did not deserve to lose by twelve points.

Killybegs - David Meehan, Francis Murray, Denis Carberry, Petr McGinley, Jimmy White (0-01), John Cunningham, Paul Callaghan, John Ban Gallagher, Barry McGowan (0-05), Manus Boyle (1-02, Conor White (0-03), Mark Boyle, Barry

Cunningham, Conal Gallagher (1-00), Tony Hegarty. Subs: Paul Rowan, T. Hegarty, Ian Cunningham and Barry Cunningham.

Ardara - Martin Sweeney, Niall Campbell, Ted Breslin, Adrian Brennan, Damien Diver, Martin Gavigan, John Kennedy, Jimmy Brennan, Patrick Gallagher (0-01), Anthony Molloy (0-01), Declan Gallagher (0-02), Eamon Cunningham, Michael Doherty, Kieran Keeney (0-01), Luke Gavigan. Subs: Don Early, Luke Gavigan, Sean Whyte and Jimmy Brennan.

Referee - Austin Wallace (Burt).

Cork, Longford, Derry (quarter-final) and Clare (semi-final). An estimated 35,000 Donegal people descended on Croke Park, to watch, hopefully, a repeat of the previous year's All Ireland meeting with Dublin. After a pulsating battle, a draw ensued, when Noel Hegarty pointed for Donegal in the dying seconds. The replay however did not bring good tidings for the team, and a week later, the Dubs finally got revenge for the previous September and were deserving winners on a 0-10 to 0-6 scoreline.

As the Championship approached, the previous winter's exertions were finally beginning to catch up on the Donegal team. Rambo and Molloy struggled to overcome old, recurring injury problems. Tony Boyle had also been ruled out of the team, and other key men such as James McHugh, Barry McGowan and Noel Hegarty were having their own problems. Despite the adversity, the team still managed to reach the Ulster final, with victories over Antrim (0-12 to 0-9) and Armagh, after a re-play, (2-18 to 1-7). (Although another rising Ardara player Damian Diver was called up to the County squad, briefly, when an injury crisis hit the team before the Ulster semi-final).

Derry was ready and waiting to settle a score with the Tirconaille men in the final. The main talking point, however, on the morning of the 1993 Ulster final was not the football, but the atrocious weather conditions. Clones had been swamped with a torrential downpour through the morning and it continued until match time and beyond. Never had such an important match been played in such terrible conditions, and the Ulster Council of the day received a torrent of criticism, for allowing the players to be subjected to such conditions. Nevertheless, the match was played and, unfortunately for Donegal, they ended up on the wrong side of the scoreline. Derry won 0-8 to 0-6. Molloy and Gavigan had made their first



appearances of the campaign as second half substitutes, but to no avail. It was a sad and unfair way for Donegal's odyssey to end.

Another early exit for Seniors

With long serving player Kieran Keeney at the helm and Frank McGhee as trainer, there was renewed optimism for the Senior panel for 1993. Early year activity saw the team defeat Naomh Conaill and Termon in the early rounds of the Gaeltacht competition, before bowing out to Naomh Columba in the semi-finals. The Glen men had also beaten the team in the 1992 Shield semi-final, which was played in March. Defeats in the first two games of the League did not inspire confidence and the team languished at the bottom of the table. Fortunes gradually started to improve though, and by the time the Championship came along, the team was playing well, although still minus some key players, due to injuries. MacCumhaill's were defeated in the first round of the Championship rather convincingly, (2-14 to 0-6 at home and 2-13 to 1-8 in Ballybofey). For the fourth year in succession, (1990- semi-final, 1991- first round, 1992- first round), the team again clashed with Killybegs in the Championship, this time at quarter-final stage. Despite the defeats that the team had suffered in previous years, hope welled eternally. "Sure we have to beat them sometime!" was the hope of many who believed that, on the law of averages, the team would eventually triumph over their foes. The law of averages did not take hope into account though, and it was the same old story for Ardara once again.

There was severe disappointment after a game, which saw the team fail to score in the first half, for the second year in succession. It truly did seem to all involved that the gods were adamant that this Ardara team were not destined for success. To the credit of team and management though, they re-grouped, to focus on the League, and delivered a series of impressive displays, which included a one-point victory over Killybegs in Fintra.

The story of the League got more complicated. Killybegs, who had lost only just a month previously to Kilcar in the final of the County Championship, were drawn to play the League fixture with Kilcar, in Towney, on the same day as the Railway Cup Inter-Provincial fixture. Kilcar would be without the services of the two McHughs. There was major discontent at the decision of the County Fixtures Committee, which had allowed both matches to be played on the one day. Kilcar lost, and Killybegs won the game and the League. The fishermen had denied Ardara the title by finishing a point ahead of them in the table. But the Ardara team had regained some of its pride and had created good vibes among the supporters for the season to come.

The individual highlight of the year was the performance of Damian Diver in a League match against Gweedore in Magheragallon, which saw him score seven points from play from his right half back position. As a performance it was one of the finest – if not the finest – ever seen by a player in an Ardara jersey. The team did end the year with a cup however, when they defeated Naomh Conaill in the Annual Johnny Boyle Memorial Tournament, at the Harvest fair in Glenties.

Ardara Senior team 1993

Back L-R: Don Earley, Martin Sweeney, Niall Campbell, Michael Doherty, Ted Breslin, Patrick Gallagher, Declan Gallagher, Anthony Molloy, Eamon Cunningham.

Front L-R: Luke Gavigan, Shaun Whyte, Damian Diver, Martin Gavigan, Niall O'Donnell, John Kennedy, Jimmy Brennan, Kieran Keeney

Reserves improve but no glory.

The Club second string, under manager John Gallagher, put in a number of good displays in 1993 and had a relatively good League campaign, ending up in fifth place in the table. They suffered the same fate as the Senior team, though, and went under to Killybegs in the Championship on that same terrible day in Towney. The team also made an early exit, in Comórtas Peile Na Gaeltachta, when they were defeated away by Naomh Mhuire. But the performances of a number of the players emerging from the Under-Age teams had given great cause for encouragement, and the team was proving to be a great step up for young players on their way to the Senior grade.

No County titles for Under-Age teams

In 1993 for the first time in five years, no Ardara Under-Age team qualified for a County Championship final, although the Under-13, -14 and -16 teams had all reached the semi-final stage before being knocked out. Kieran Keeney was the first Ardara player to play in an Ulster Senior Championship Final. He came on as a substitute in the 1974 final against Down and scored the winning goal. A majority of the youngsters now involved were at Under-10 level, where Paddy



McGill and John Boyle had 50 or more to draw on for the Under-10 'A' & 'B' teams. The 'A' team reached the Divisional final, before they were defeated by Dungloe. The Under-12s also fielded two teams, with the 'A' team reaching the County quarter-final, only to be defeated by Aodh Ruadh. The Under-12 team of the previous year had hoped to make amends for their defeat in the Under-12 final by making an impact at Under-13 in 1993. They qualified for the County semi-final, but were defeated by Aodh Ruadh by two points, the Ballyshannon men going on to win the Championship.

The Under-14 team started their training early in the year for a tournament that they had been invited to in Dublin, but which, unfortunately, never happened. The extra work, however, stood well to the team, and the huge effort that was put in by the managers, Josie Gallagher and Luke Gavigan, resulted in them reaching the County semi-final, but they were defeated by the eventual winners, Cloughaneely, who won a thrilling match in Dungloe by two points.

One of the highlights of the year for this team was a visit to Scotstown, for the Ulster Final week-end, where they were hosted by the local Club and played a match with their Under-14 side.

The Under-15 Ógsport team was the surprise packet of the year. They won the South-West title and only just failed, on score difference, to Four Masters' in the County final. Four Masters' then qualified for the Ulster finals of the competition. The team was: Conal Gildea, Eamon Diver, Jonathon Boyle, Peter McHugh, John Gallagher, Aodh Brennan, Stephen Gildea, Martin Bennett, Mark Cassidy, James Doherty and Peter Yates.

The Under-14 Champions of 1991, who were expected to be in the shake up for Juvenile honours in '93, put in some impressive displays on their way to the County semi-final, but were no match for St. Eunan's, who won well in

MacCumhaill Park.

The Minor team had a short innings in the Championship, making an early exit to Dungloe, and gained little success in the League.

The Under-21 team also under achieved, when they were surprisingly beaten by Downings at the quarter-final stage, after a replay.

The Club was well represented on County teams during the year. David Diver, Mark Boyle, and Conal Doherty played on the County Under-16 team, which was



beaten by Galway in the Connacht final. John McConnell was manager of the team. Shaun Whyte and Niall O'Donnell played for the County Minor team which defeated Antrim in the Championship, before making their exit to Tyrone in the semi-final, while Damian Diver lined out for the County Under-21 team in the Ulster Championship.

The Under-10 panel of 1993 with managers, John Boyle and Paddy McGill.

Ladies

At the Ladies' A.G.M., which was held in February, the following officers were elected for the year:- Chairperson – Mary McHugh, Secretary – Ann Breslin (Cronkeerin), Joint Treasurers – Caroline McHugh and Rose Breslin, Managers – James McBrearty and Jimmy Boyle.

In their second year of competition, the Girls' Senior team played in Division 2 South, of the League, and had some good performances, despite not qualifying for the semi-finals. In the Championship, they had a difficult draw against Urris, who



had beaten them in the 1992 Shield final. They put on a great show in Clonmany and shocked the home girls, to run out 2-9 to 3-4 winners. Urris however, turned the tables in Sandfield, winning by 2-8 to 1-5, then carried that impetus into the play-off match, which they also



won, 3-5 to 0-3. The Under-16 team reached the County semi-final but lost to MacCumhaill's in Tirconail Park. The team on that occasion was as follows: Breege Brennan, Caroline Boyle, Yvonne Boyle, Amanda Gallagher, Kathy Gavigan, Grainne Diver, Donna Donaghue, Charlene Kennedy, Lorainne Gildea, Emily Whelan, Sinead Bennett, Michelle Bennett, Siobhan McElhinney, Sinead Gallagher, Christine Whyte. Subs: Fiona McBrearty and Helen Gildea.

The Donegal Junior Ladies played their first competitive game at inter-county level in Ballyshannon, when they beat Galway on a score of 3-09 to 1-03. Caroline McHugh created history, by being the first Ardara girl to play on a County Ladies' Gaelic Team. Later in the year, the team defeated Tyrone and Fermanagh to win the Ulster Junior Championship, and reached the All-Ireland final, by beating Cork and Meath in quarter and semi-finals respectively. The team was eventually defeated in the final by a more experienced London team. Caroline, who had been joined on the team earlier in the Championship by the impressive Mairead Gallagher, also had the distinction of being the first Donegal woman to score in Croke Park, just a few minutes into the game.

The Ladies' County U-16 team won the Ulster Championship during the year and went on to meet Kerry in the All-Ireland semi-final, but lost on a score of 6-11 to 2-06. The Club was again represented on this team, with Grainne Diver playing in the half back line and Charlene Kennedy in midfield.

Caroline McHugh of Leaconnell created history in 1993 by becoming the first Ardara Ladies' player to play in an All Ireland final in Croke Park, when she lined out at midfield on the Donegal Junior team that was defeated in the All Ireland final by London. It was no surprise that the youngest girl in the McHugh family should play for Donegal; she always held her own as a footballer, lining out first of all for Brackey 'Schoolboys' team, under John Michael O'Donnell in 1983, and was one of the team's star performers. She was one of the main instigators of Ladies

Football in the Ardara Club and, as their star player in the early years, led the team in many games, albeit with little success. 1993 was definitely a memorable year for Caroline. She was accorded the Player of the Match award in the Ulster final against Fermanagh, and she became the first Donegal woman to score a point in Croke Park, when she opened Donegal's account against London. Caroline also went on to feature in the 1994 decider against Meath, lining out at full forward, but that elusive All-Ireland medal again eluded her. At Club level, despite the lean years of the nineties, Caroline finally won a County medal, when the Ardara team won the Division Two League in 1999. Further success followed in 2002, when the team secured Intermediate Championship and County Gaeltacht titles, a just reward as she neared the end of her playing career. Now known as Caroline Breslin, after marrying Leo in 1998, they live in Loughros Point with their son Colin.



Watching the door at the 1993 Dinner Dance, Shaun Watters, Charlie Mooney and Thomas Boyle.



Vincent McConnell imparts some wisdom to special guest, Brian McGilligan at the 1993 Dinner Dance.



Minor Player of the Year 1993, Shaun Whyte with Joe Brolly and Brian McGilligan.



Senior Player of the Year 1993 Damian Diver, with Joe Brolly and Brian McGilligan.



Reserve Player of the Year 1993, Eamon Doherty, with Joe Brolly and Brian McGilligan



Clubperson of the Year 1993- Francis O'Donnell Ardconnell.



Vincent Rankin receives his Hall of Fame Award from Joe Brolly and Brian McGilligan



Pat Slowey on the other side of the camera with Joe Brolly and Brian McGilligan.

Caroline receives her Player of the Year award at the 1993 Dinner Dance from Brian McGilligan.

The Ardara Senior Ladies team of 1993

Back L-R: Phonsie Bennett, Amanda Gallagher, Fidelma Bennett, Ann Boyle, Fiona Breslin, Rosemary Shovlin, Bernadette McHugh, Mairead Gallagher, Yvonne Boyle, Caroline Mooney, Christine Gallagher, Mary Boyle, James McBrearty.

Front L-R: Eileen McGroarty, Tanya McCole, Ann Breslin, Mary McHugh, Caroline McHugh, Charlene Kennedy, Grainne Diver, Sinead Bennett, Rose Breslin, Lorraine Gildea.

Flotto Launched

Following the major fund-raising efforts of 1989 and 1991, it was felt by Club officers that a more regular income was required for the Club, and that the enthusiasm for selling big draws every few years was on the wane. The Flotto draw was introduced in May, with the intention that it would provide a steady weekly income for the Club. The £1 a ticket draw, gave people the chance to match a sequence of 1-6 numbers, to win or share in a weekly jackpot; the jackpot to start at £150 and be raised every week until won outright. The decision proved to be

highly successful and the draw soon caught on locally, with Club members being selected each week to sell tickets, each in their turn, with the draw held every Saturday night in one of the local Public houses. Yet another successful fund-raiser during the year was a 'Night at the Races', which was organised by Frank and Anne Mc Ghee and which raised upwards of £1000 for the Minor Board.

Other bits

Other events during the year included a return visit by a club team, from Knockmore in County Mayo, whom the Seniors had visited in 1992. The Mayo lads defeated the Senior team in a challenge match and had an enjoyable social weekend. The Club also hosted the Trinity Gaels Club from Dublin, which included Dublin star Vinny Murphy. The visit was arranged by Charlie Given from the Yellow Banks, who was involved in the Club at the time.

Radio Na Gaeltacha ran a "Tráth na gCeist Spóirt" in 1993 which involved all the G.A.A clubs in the County. The Ardara team of Eamon Mac a Ghoill, Seán Mícheál ÓDomhnaill and Seán Mac Conaill reached the final of the competition, but were defeated by Naomh Mícheál in a live radio broadcast.

The Annual Dinner Dance was held in December, with Joe Brolly and Brian McGilligan from the All Ireland winning Derry team as the Guests of Honour. Joe Brolly left his mark with a witty and sometimes controversial speech, which did not go down too well in some quarters, while Brian McGilligan mixed freely with the crowd and was very well received. The Annual Awards presented on the night were as follows:

Senior Player of the Year: Damian Diver

Reserve Player of the Year: Eamon Doherty

Minor Player of the Year: Shaun Whyte

Ladies' Player of the Year: Caroline McHugh

Clubman of the Year: Francis O'Donnell

Hall of Fame: Vincent Rankin.

1993 A.G.M

The 1993 A.G.M of the Club was held in the Community Centre on the 9th of January 1994, with an attendance of 52 members. The Secretary, John McConnell in his report, covered all aspects of Club affairs during the year, but admitted that the year had been 'difficult' for him as a Club officer, and especially in the area of the distribution of tickets.

"One would expect the distribution of tickets would get easier after 1992, but in fact the opposite was the case. In 1992, most people were delighted at receiving a ticket, but the mood changed this year to where people were expecting a ticket, and a good ticket at that, and this led to serious problems. All I can say is that the distribution was done as fairly as possible, and perhaps if people saw what was involved in the distribution, first hand, then they might understand the difficulties".

Whilst commenting on the Senior team's performances during the year and their unexplainable 'flop' in the Championship, he still held out hope for the coming year following their performances in the League, and he was high in his praise for the great organisation and commitment that manager Kieran Keeney and trainer

Frank McGhee had instilled in the team. On the subject of employment he was outspoken and stated:-

"We must ensure that our players are looked after in this regard. In what is a difficult climate for everyone, all our members should be aware of any of our players who are not in full time employment and should they hear of a job opportunity, our

footballers should be tried to be accommodated, and I make no apology for stating this opinion. We have lost too many players in the past and we must try to stem the tide".

The Treasurer, Anne McGhee, in her first report, showed an income of £24,877.81



with an expenditure of £18,097.31, leaving a balance on the year's workings of £6780.50. With a total of £18,328.15 in the Post Office deposit account and Park Accounts, and £4329.50 in the working account, the total balance in the Club was £22,657.65. The Treasurer was paid various compliments for her work during the year, and especially for the way she handled the new Flotto draw. Thomas Boyle reported a registration of 319 members, which included 36 family memberships. Club membership fees were agreed for the year at £2/youth, £6/adult, and £12/family.

Under Any Other Business, a lengthy discussion took place on pitch development. The Chairman reported on the visit that Joe Pat Prunty had made to the parish during the year, and on the prospective sites that he had visited with Club officers, to examine the possibility of purchasing a second pitch in the Parish. The most feasible option seemed to be to develop the current pitch at Pearse Memorial Park, using sand from the Club grounds at Sandfield. It was agreed that the incoming executive should explore this option, from a financial point of view.

The following officers were elected for 1994:

President	-	Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill
Vice President	-	Tommy Boyle
Chairman	-	Columba Diver

Donegal U-21 A Final

Ardara charge back from the brink for 3rd title

Ardara 1-12 Aodh Rua 1-10

Aodh Ruadh's foot soldiers proved no match for Ardara's cavalry, led by a lithe and lethal Conal Doherty, who strode centre-stage to take the Donegal U-21 Championship title back to Ardara for the third time in the club's history. At Ballintra last Sunday evening Aodh Ruadh started as brightly as the welcome evening sunshine but the golden glow of a magnificent first-half performance was left smudged beyond recognition when those early flashes of brilliance, which conjured up a flattering six point half-time lead, were swept aside by an Ardara side who had grit, poise, spirit and talent when it was needed most.

The first half, which saw Aodh Ruadh lead by six points, 1-08 to 1-02, had some part to play in their undoing. An air of complacency appeared to set in, and the plaster encasing a certain lethargy on the field and the side-

line had set solid by the time it was realised that Ardara were well capable of retrieving that deficit, which in fact ran out to seven points 20 seconds into the second half. The Ernesiders could do little to stop a rising tide of Ardara confidence; when they mustered a counter to the Ardara second half onslaught, they were frustrated by superb goalkeeping from Conor Curran and less than superb split second decisions from referee, Liam Browne, who had been almost too kind to them at times in the first half.

But the flow was going Ardara's way and once they learned to live in an eight-man midfield - - Ardara began to create scoring opportunities, principally from frees. Ardara scores in the first half were a rare occurrence, they managed only three. But Aodh Ruadh were struck by a similar scoring drought, managing only a further

two points in the final 30 minutes. Indeed, their scoring difficulties may have had much to do with Ardara's ability to finally identify and close up the scoring threat. The common perception was that Donal Buggy would be the main danger, from play or frees, but his recent spell in hospital clearly sapped his energy and the decision to play him in a non-central attacking role was some indication that he wasn't fully ready for this battle.

However, the Roper brothers, Brian and Paul, assumed command of the attack and their probing realised a hatful of scoring opportunities in the first half. Remarkably, their contribution tailed away in the second half with Gary Brennan and later substitute, Barry Ward, asked to take over control. They failed to do so and as Ardara's grip on the game tightened one could sense Aodh Ruadh were in deep trouble. Yet, by the 48th minute, there was still a huge mountain to be climbed but Ardara clearly knew the route. So often Damien Diver and John O'Donnell have plotted the course from midfield but the beauty of the Ardara victory was the fact that it emerged via 'lesser mortals', players such as Conal Doherty and Michael Doherty, David Diver and Stephen McGinley.

Vital Score

The Roper brothers struck Aodh Ruadh's only second half points. The second, in the 44th minute from Brian, seemed a vital score. It was a scoring response to Ardara dominance, it put five points, 1-10 to 1-05, between the sides. It came at a critical time, seconds after a clear goal chance shot from Gary Brennan was stopped by Conor Curran who was a little fortunate in that Brennan drove the ball at home directly.

Just 12 Minutes

There was just 12 minutes left when Ardara hit the first in a series of un-replied to scores. Pauric Brennan gauged the distance perfectly to float over only his second score for the evening. However, he was soon to loom large, but the Doherty brothers made the next score, Conal, whose speed had caused first half problems including an opportunist Ardara goal, leaving the defence behind him before Michael came onto the final pass to point. A free, which seemed harsh, proved the

conduit for another Ardara score, made all the easier for Brennan when the ball was moved forward 14 yards after Aodh Ruadh objections to the original decision. Now nine minutes remained and the gap was one point.

Aodh Ruadh brought their big full-forward, John Muldoon, out to midfield in an attempt to restore some supply in a forward line that lay under siege from hard tackling Ardara defenders. Closed down by Anthony McGrath for most of the match, Damien Diver began to come out on top. There were more Aodh Ruadh changes, Barry Ward, heavily strapped to protect a hamstring tear, moved out to midfield. The siege continued, the Ballyshannon attack starved of the ball. By contrast, Ardara's attack was feasting now, from 45 yards Pauric Brennan converting his third free in-a-row to level the sides with eight minutes left.

Ardara took the lead six minutes later, for the second time in the match, Michael Doherty winning a kick-out and scoring. Seconds later Aodh Brennan missed a goal chance, shooting narrowly wide. The Ernesiders had two chances to level, a short free from Donal Buggy fired wide by Paul Roper and a second chance lost from a free which was easily cut out from a poor Aodh Ruadh pass. In the 63rd minute Ardara added its sixth point, David Diver fouled.

Stirring Comeback.

It was a stirring Ardara comeback. It was a steely display considering their abysmal first half form where Aodh Ruadh looked nearly too good. And at times the Ernesiders were magnificent, particularly Brian Roper and right half back, Niall McCready. Ardara led briefly at the start, Brennan pointing after 48 seconds. Donal Buggy added a string of scores from Brian Roper, Al Travers, David Downey, and two more from Buggy, one a fine score from the wing. At this stage Eamon O'Donnell was soaking up all that came his way, Don Early soon switched but again was well marked by Joe Duffy, brother of John.

With Conal Doherty the only real threat, it was left to centre half back, Sean Whyte, to get the second Ardara point, after 21 minutes. Seconds later an Ardara goal,

formed by a quick thinking short free from Damien Diver to Conal Doherty, made light of Aodh Ruadh's early domination. Close to the break, Aodh Ruadh hit a goal, Anthony McGrath's high ball well won by scorer, John Muldoon. Al Travers then pointed and the same player hit another after good work from the Ropers. From the half-time base of 1-08 to 1-02, an Aodh Ruadh win seemed likely. Unable to continue their momentum they got lost in themselves as Ardara got on about winning.

Words such as heart, commitment and that vital intangible, spirit, come to mind as one reflects on a deserved Ardara victory. Students of form will point to a win three years ago also against Aodh Ruadh in the Minor final and suggest that this win was not altogether surprising. Yet, the manner of the win, at a venue they publicly criticised because of its proximity to Ballyshannon, makes this Ardara win all the more memorable. On a team where no one played badly I felt the three Dohertys, Eamon, Michael and Conal gave something really special to this Ardara side. Judged

over 64 minutes play Niall McCready was my outstanding player for Aodh Ruadh who had others who played their heart out but to no avail.

Ardara – Conor Curran, Mark Boyle, Niall O'Donnell, Eamon Doherty, Gabriel Cannon, Sean Whyte (0-01), Michael Doherty (0-02), Damien Diver (0-02), (Capt), John O'Donnell, Conal Doherty (1-00), Pauric Brennan (0-06 – all frees), Stephen McGinley, John Brennan, Don Early, Adrian Whelan. Subs – Martin Shovlin (0-01) for John Brennan, David Diver for Stephen McGinley and Aodh Brennan for Adrian Whelan.

Aodh Ruadh – David Greene, Ciaran McLean, Eamon O'Donnell, David Downey (0-01), Niall McCready, Raphael McGee, Fergal McGrath, Donal Buggy (0-03 – 2 frees), Anthony McGrath, Al Travers (0-03), Brian Roper (0-01), Gary Brennan, John Muldoon (1-00), Joseph Duffy. Subs – Barry Ward for Al Travers and James Grimes for Joe Duffy (inj).

Referee – Liam Browne (Four Masters)



Vice Chairman - Luke Gavigan

Secretary	-	John McConnell
Ass. Secretary	-	Máire Nic Aoidh
Treasurer	-	Ann McGhee
Ass. Treasurer	-	Jimmy Brennan
P.R.O.	-	Pauric Brennan
Registrar	-	Thomas Boyle
Oifigeach na Gaeilge	-	Seán Micheál Ó Domhnaill
Scór Officer	-	Fr. Martin Doohan



Senior Team manager	-	Kieran Keeney
Reserve Team manager	-	John Gallagher
Under-21 Managers	-	Johnny D. Earley and Pat O'Donnell
Groundsmen	-	Francis O'Donnell and Martin Sweeney



The Minor Board elected the following officers at their A.G.M

Chairman	-	J a m e s McBrearty
Secretary	-	James McHugh
Treasurer	-	Luke Gavigan

Under-Age Managers:

Under-10: John Michael O'Donnell, John McConnell,

Francis Diver and John Hegarty,

Under 12: John Boyle, Paddy McGill and John Martin Byrne

Under 14: Josie Gallagher and Luke Gavigan

Under-16: Patsy Gildea, Sean Brennan and Eugene Bennett

Minor: Pat O'Donnell and Johnny D. Earley

Frank Gallagher of Gallagher's Bakery presents the Club with two full kits for the Senior and Reserve teams. This was the beginning of a sponsorship deal with the biggest employer in the Parish, which has been maintained on an annual basis to the present day. The support of the company has been very much a key issue in keeping the Club afloat financially.

From left: Columba Diver (Chairman), Frank Gallagher, Thomas Boyle (Registrar), Anthony Molloy, and John McConnell (Secretary)

1994-Under-21s take third title.

Following the dearth of success at County level since the double Championship wins of 1991, the Club really needed a boost as 1994 arrived, as '92 and '93 had been very bare years for the trophy cabinet. The winning Minor squad of 1991 was now at the Under-21 stage and for the most part still together as a team. Things had gone terribly badly for the Club at Senior level; maybe the Under-21s could lay the spirit that haunted them since 1988. But when the draw for the competition was made, it seemed like the gods were just going to insist each year that Killybegs were the team that Ardara had to beat, if they were going to win any further Championships. A repeat of the Under-16 final of '89 saw the same two teams with a few new faces; Ardara had since gained the Brennan brothers, Pauric, John and



Aodh, and a few of the 1991 Under-14s also made the grade. On the down side, though, they had lost former County Minor, Kieran Lynch and also Donal Breslin, both of whom had given up the game. The same script ensued as in previous meetings. Ardara won at home, Killybegs in Fintra, and Ardara squeezed through after the play-off. Urris and Termon were disposed of fairly comfortably in the



quarter and semi-finals and a repeat of the 1991 Minor final awaited against Aodh Ruadh. There was some controversy in the run up to the game, with the Club voicing their objections against the venue, Páirc Naomh Bríd in Ballintra. Although having excellent facilities, it was felt that the venue was far from neutral, due to its proximity to Aodh Ruadh, and that MacCumhaill Park would have been the appropriate site for the game. Despite noises at County Board level, the match went ahead as planned, and as expected provided a thriller, akin to the last time the sides met at the same stage in 1983.

Pauric Brennan rises highest in this midfield tussle at Páirc Naomh Bríd.

The performance of the team in the second half was fairy tale stuff, and once again Johnny D. and Pat O'Donnell had taken their charges to another County Championship win. The manner of the victory made the win all the sweeter for the large Ardara crowd, and with 12 of the starting 15 available for the following year as well, there was no doubt that there was a bright future ahead. There is one thing



for sure; that when Ardara and Aodh Ruadh clash in County finals, it is a game not be missed, and credit must go to the Ballyshannon Club for their consistently high standards.

The Under-21 team who won the 1994 County Championship.

Back L-R: Pat O'Donnell, Eamon Doherty, Francis Diver, Conal Doherty, Malachy

Gallagher, Michael Doherty, Pauric Brennan, Conor Curran, Niall O'Donnell, John Brennan, Stephen McGinley, Johnny D. Earley.
Front L-R: John O'Donnell, Shaun Whyte, Michael Furey, Adrian Whelan, Damian Diver, David Diver, Aodh Brennan, Mark Boyle, Don Earley, Gabriel Cannon, Martin Shovlin, Mascot Declan Gavigan.

Damian Diver hoists the Cup aloft after the victory.

Minors fall at the last hurdle

With the manner of the Under-21 victory being compared to the Championship win at the same age group in 1983, the similarities were to continue elsewhere that year as the Minor team also made it to the County final, to leave a double Championship win again on the cards. The Minors had accounted for an Adrian Sweeney-powered Dungloe side in the first round over three games, a strong Naomh Conaill side in the Divisional final, 3-13 to 4-08, and went on to defeat Muff and Aodh Rua to qualify for a final place against St Eunan's. The team, however, suffered a loss in the semi-final, when team captain Shaun Whyte was sent off and as a result would miss the final. The Letterkenny side had too much overall strength for the Ardara lads, and were deserving winners in a high scoring thriller. The scoreline read St. Eunans 2-18 Ardara 4-7 at the final whistle. The teams and scorers were:

Ardara – Conor Curran, Mark Boyle, Hugh Byrne, Jackie McHugh, John Watters, Francis Diver (0-01), David Diver, Niall O'Donnell, John Brennan, Sean Heena, Aodh Brennan, Peter McHugh (3-00), Jonathon Boyle (0-03), Niall McGuinness (0-01) and Conal Doherty (1-02).

Subs used – Leonard Gildea for Sean Heena, Eamon Diver for John Watters and Jonathon Boyle for Niall McGuinness. Peter Yates, Jonathon Herron, Seoirse Doherty, Martin Bennett and Stephen Gildea. Sean Whyte was also one of the panel.

St Eunans – Ronan Mulligan, Packie Gibbons, Seamus Nallen, John Anderson, Gary Doyle, Paddy Doherty, Damien Daly (0-02), John Haran, Brian McDermott, Leo Kelly, David McGinley (1-01), Shane O'Donnell (0-04), Adrian Mulligan (0-01), Kevin Winston (1-08), Sammy Bogan (0-02).

Subs used – John Scanlon for Anderson, Paddy Rainey for Doherty and John McGinley for Adrian Mulligan.

Conal Doherty is escorted off the pitch after being sent off, in the Minor final, by managers Pat O'Donnell, Johnny D. and Secretary, John McConnell

The 1994 Minor team who were defeated in the County final by St. Eunans
Back L-R: Pat O'Donnell, Stephen Couchman, Niall O'Donnell, Johnathan Boyle, Niall

Senior Championship semi-final

No holding Higgs as Glen make the final

Naomh Columba 3-09 Ardara 1-12

The battle of the South-West continued in Fintra on Sunday evening as Naomh Columba again reigned supreme against Ardara to reach their third county final in five years. Should Killybegs be successful on Sunday next, then it will also be a third final meeting of the men from Killybegs and Glen in that time. With victories already over South-West opposition, Naomh Conaill, Kilcar and Ardara, the men from Glen would be going for a clean sweep.

If anybody needed reminding of where the pulse of Donegal Gaelic football remains, then Fintra on Sunday evening underlined the strength of the game in the South-West. In a game that had everything, the Glen side were deserving winners with a second half performance that must have been one of their best ever. There was so much to record - the un-markable Paddy Hegarty, the fielding of 'Red' Declan, the shoulder injury to Anthony, the penalty miss by Patrick Gallagher, eleven Ardara wides, why Conal Doherty did not make the starting line-up for Ardara, a wonder goal from Michael Doherty, the unusually quiet performances of John Joe and Rambo, the second half awakening of Seamus Carr, the injury time save by Eunan McIntyre - this game was always interesting.

The Ardara Manager, Kieran Keeney, will look back and wonder why, with so much possession, his side lost. Perhaps he should have introduced himself much earlier than the 59th minute. But for all the Ardara excuses, their inability to mark Paddy Hegarty was their real downfall, just as it was for Kilcar two weeks ago. Ardara tried Ted Breslin and Sean Whyte to no avail and also used Breslin and Niall Campbell on a 'sweeper-type' position in front of Hegarty at different times.

'Romario' Higgs did the Samba on his own in the first half, but partner, Seamus 'Bebeto' Carr awakened from his first half slumber to play a major part in the second period. The more physical Ardara side looked like

overpowering the Glen men early on as Patrick Gallagher (free), and Declan Gallagher had points inside two minutes. Two minutes later Michael Doherty burst through but, while his shot was stopped by Kevin Doherty, referee, Peter Hughes, ruled that he had been fouled. The penalty, I thought, was harsh but Patrick Gallagher blazed the kick well wide.

First Goal

Paddy Hegarty gave notice of things to come with his first point in the 9th minute, before Damien Diver hit a beauty from the sideline two minutes later. Paddy Hegarty turned Ted Breslin to add another point in the 12th minute and a minute later, Breslin slipped and Hegarty tore through to hit the corner of the Ardara net and put his side 1-02 to 0-03 ahead. With Whyte replacing Breslin as Hegarty's marker, Ardara regained their composure and Jimmy Brennan and Patrick Gallagher(free) brought them level before Luke Gavigan put them a point ahead in the 18th minute.

Naomh Columba survived a double mistake from John Joe Doherty and 'keeper', Kevin Doherty, before Pauric Brennan fisted the final point of the half in the 23rd minute to leave Ardara 0-07 to 1-02 ahead at the break, poor reward for their almost total dominance. The penalty miss was one of seven Ardara wides in that opening half.

The loss of Anthony Molloy at half-time with a shoulder injury was a big loss, as the Glen men came out fired up and within 55 seconds they were back in the lead. John Joe Doherty started the move, which saw a Paul O'Donnell through ball flicked on by Seamus Carr. Eugene Doherty was first to react to slide the ball past the advancing Martin Sweeney. A minute later Seamus Carr from an impossible angle increased their lead. Ardara substitute, Conal Doherty, who looked too good to be on the bench, won a free, which Patrick Gallagher converted, but the terrible twins, Carr and Hegarty combined for the latter to hit

another point for Glen, the pass from Carr another of the highlights of the match. Paddy Hegarty again almost put Martin Gillespie through, but when the clearance broke down, Gillespie was on hand to put Naomh Columba three points clear, 2-05 to 0-08. A minute later Pauric Gillespie set Paddy Hegarty off down the left side and with the outside of his right foot hit a point that overshadowed all previous scores.

Beside me, James McHugh felt Ardara would never pull back four points, but within two and half minutes they were level thanks to a wonder goal. Michael Doherty won possession about 50 yards from goal and sped past all defenders to hit the back stanchion and then Patrick Gallagher levelled with a free won by Luke Gavigan. Damien Diver set Don Early on a 40 yard run to put Ardara back in the lead and the Brennan's, Pauric and Jimmy combined for Pauric to fist his second point and leave Ardara two clear, 1-11 to 2-06 with eleven minutes still remaining.

Clinching Goal.

Within three minutes, Naomh Columba were back in front. Pauric Gillespie, now operating up front in a switch with Eunan McIntyre - a shrewd move by the Glen bench to curb the roving Conal Doherty - availed of a Seamus Carr pass to point and he was then involved in the clinching goal that sealed Ardara's fate. Paddy Hegarty

fouled and his quickly taken free opened the Ardara defence. Pauric Gillespie was through but was held up by Martin Sweeney but Paul O' Donnell was on hand to finish the job. With seven minutes left, Ardara hit back with Declan Gallagher and Michael Doherty putting Damien Diver through to leave just a point in it 1-12 to 3-07.

However, in the final six minutes it was the Glen men who held their nerve, and especially Martin Gillespie, as he pointed two frees to relieve some of the off-field pressure. There was still almost an Ardara recovery as player-manager, Kieran Keeney, took a Patrick Gallagher free two minutes into injury time and it took a goal-line save from Eunan McIntyre to see Naomh Columba through.

Teams and scorers:

Ardara – Martin Sweeney, Niall Campbell, Ted Breslin, Sean White, Damien Diver (0-02), Martin Gavigan, John Kennedy, Anthony Molloy, Patrick Gallagher (0-05), Don Early (0-01), Declan Gallagher (0-01), Pauric Brennan (0-02), Michael Doherty (1-00), Luke Gavigan (0-01), Jimmy Brennan (0-01).

Naomh Columba – Kevin Doherty, Patrick Conaghan, John J. Doherty, Pauric Gillespie (0-01), Noel McGinley, Dessie Cunningham, Conal Cunningham (0-01), Eunan McIntyre, Damien Gillespie, Martin Gillespie (1-03), Eugene Doherty, Paul O'Donnell (1-00), Paddy Hegarty (1-04) and Seamus Carr.

Referee - Peter Hughes (Milford).



McGuinness, Francis Diver, Conor Curran, John Brennan, Seoirse Doherty, Mark Boyle, Leonard Gildea, Johnny D. Earley.

Middle L-R: John Boyle, Shaun Heena, Peter McHugh, Aodh Brennan, John Watters, Peter Yates, Hugh Byrne, Jackie McHugh, Conal Doherty, Shaun Whyte

Front L-R: David Diver, Gareth Herron, Stephen Gildea, Martin Bennett, Eamon Diver,

Mascot : Natalie Gildea.

In the other age groups there were also some commendable performances. The U-16 Team, under Managers Sean Brennan and Eugene Bennett, was the surprise packet of the year. After failing to win a game two years previously at U-14 level, the boys surprised everyone by winning the Divisional final in a thrilling game against Naomh Columba on a 2-13 to 2-12 scoreline. Victory over Cloughaneely in the quarter-final led to a semi-final place against St. Eunans, but the men from the Cathedral Town proved to be too strong and ran out winners 2-15 to 1-03, then went on to win the final easily.

The Under-16 team who won the South West Championship in 1994

Back L-R: Eugene Bennett, David Hennigan, Peter McHugh, Aodh Brennan, Eamon Diver, Peter Yates, Cathal Doherty, James Doherty, Liam Shovlin, Sean Brennan.

Front L-R: Mark Whyte, Francis Gallagher, Kevin Byrne, Mark Cassidy, Martin Bennett, Stephen Gildea, Conal Gildea.

The U-14 team was expected to do well after reaching the County final at U-12 level in 1992. A big effort was put in by managers, James McHugh and Josie Gallagher, but the team never fulfilled its potential. Robert Emmet's ended their hopes in a County play-off after a narrow defeat in the Divisional final by Naomh Columba. The individual performance of the year came from Patrick Gallagher, who scored 5-5 in the first round match against Killybegs. The team also reached the final of the Kevin Conaghan Memorial Tournament in Donegal Town but lost to Aodh Ruadh 0-13 to 2-5.

The U-13 team, under the guidance of John Boyle and Paddy McGill reached the Divisional final but were defeated by Dungloe, while the Under-12 team, under the same mentors, were narrowly defeated in the South-West final by Killybegs, and went out of the competition at the next stage to MacCumhaill's. Over fifty U-10s



were coached during the summer months under John M. O'Donnell, John

McConnell, Francis Diver, Patsy Gildea and James McBrearty. They took part in five blitzes in the South-West Division in both A and B competitions, winning the Killybegs tournament and being beaten on score difference in Dungloe.

Seniors go out to Glen in classic semi-final

With obvious strides being made by the Seniors in 1993, 1994 was somewhat of a make or break year for the team. Never had such talent been available to the Club at one time, with what seemed to be an ideal mix of youth and experience. With Anthony Molloy nearing the end of his playing days, and Martin Gavigan battling with injuries, time was running out for these men in their quest for a County

Kilcar show Resilience ***Kilcar 2-07 Ardara 0-09***

Kilcar once again defied the odds by showing a lot of resilience to overcome Ardara in Fintra. Ardara looked the stronger for most of the match, but the experience gained over the last number of years in the Championship was vital for Kilcar. Kilcar controlled the first half up until the last five minutes when Ardara got points from Martin Shovlin (0-01), Conal McLoone (0-02) and John O'Donnell (0-01) to leave the half-time score Ardara 0-07 Kilcar 1-03.

Ardara pressed home their advantage early in the second half with two brilliant points from Conal McLoone. Play became very scrappy at this stage as the commitment level from both sides increased and Kilcar began to dominate and held on to win in the end. Ardara can have no excuses. They did not score in the last twenty minutes and six of their nine points came from Conal McLoone frees, while only two points came from play.

Teams and scorers were:

Ardara – John Gildea, Leo Breslin, Adrian Brennan, Pauric Brennan, Gabriel Cannon, Conal McLoone (0-06), Eamon Doherty, John Herron, Joseph Brennan, Luke Brennan, Hugh Campbell (0-01), John O'Donnell (0-01), Martin Shovlin (0-01), Ted Breslin, John Hegarty.

Subs – Ian Melly for Joseph Brennan and Joseph Brennan for John Hegarty.

Kilcar – Kenneth Kennedy, Declan McDevitt, Finlay McIvor, Joe O'Donnell, Michael McShane, Noel McDevitt, James Hegarty, Anthony Diver, Cornelius Diver, Stephen O'Donnell, Peter Hegarty (0-01), Dermot Sweeney, Tommy Deane (2-01), Gerard McBrearty (0-02), Peter Kennedy (0-03).

Subs – John Boyle for Cornelius Diver.

Referee – **Hugh Sweeney (Four Masters)**

Championship. Early League form had been fairly consistent, if not spectacular, but the spirit in the camp was good, and training was lively and had a good atmosphere. In the Championship first round, Cloughaneely were defeated in two legs, both wins by a four point margin, and the team then had an easy victory over an inexperienced Downings team in the quarter-final, on a score of 4-15 to 0-04. Nemesis awaited, in the form of Naomh Columba, in the semi-final, and memories were re-kindled of the teams' great battles of the seventies and eighties when thousands thronged to watch the sides play. Paddy Hegarty was in unstoppable form for the Glen men, and once again the semi-final 'jinx' descended on Ardara

**The Senior team that played Naomh Columba in the 1994 Senior semi-final at Fintra
Back L-R: Martin Sweeney, Niall Campbell, Pauric Brennan, Declan Gallagher, Damian
Diver, Niall O'Donnell, Ted Breslin, Patrick Gallagher, Jimmy Brennan, Kieran Keeney
Front L-R: Conal Doherty, Shaun Whyte, Luke Gavigan, Don Earley, Martin Gavigan,
Anthony Molloy, John Kennedy, Michael Doherty, Conor Curran.**

The defeat was a bitter pill to swallow for the players and supporters and, with the first half shoulder injury to Anthony Molloy signalling the end of his career, it was a black day in the annals of the Club. The '94 Championship was looked on as one that definitely got away. Naomh Columba went on to the County final, where they were narrowly defeated by Aodh Ruadh.

The team were still well in with a chance of winning the League, but their form dipped dismally for a period after the Glen match, and the commitment of a number of players left a lot to be desired. The team eventually finished in third place, thus qualifying for the Shield competition, which was played between the teams finishing from 2nd – 5th in the table. Aodh Ruadh were defeated in the semi-final and on the 11th of September, the team finished off the year with some



silverware when they defeated MacCumhaill's in the final at Fintra on a 2-7 to 0-

7 scoreline. A young Aodh Brennan made a name for himself on the day and was by far and away man of the match. The Ardara team and scorers were:

Ardara – Martin Sweeney, Adrian Brennan, Jimmy Brennan, Joseph Doherty, Damien Diver (0-01), John Kennedy, Kieran Keeney, Patrick Gallagher, Declan Gallagher (0-01 – free), Conal Doherty (1-02), Pauric Brennan (0-01), Don Early (0-01), Aodh Brennan, Luke Gavigan, Conal McLoone (1-01). Sub used – Martin Gavigan for Kieran Keeney.

Comórtas Peile na Gaeltachta

Cé gur bhuail Cill Chartha orainn sa chead bhabhta de Chomórtas Peile na Gaeltachta tugadh cuireadh don fhoireann páirt a ghlacadh sa Chomórtas Náisiúnta i nGaoth Dobhair mar ionadaithe do fhoireann nár thaistil. Ní raibh go leor ama le h-ullmhú agus bhuail curaidh na Gaillimhe Ard a' Rátha sa chluiche ceathrú-ceannais go héascaidh.

County Secretary, Noreen Doherty presents the Senior Shield trophy to team captain, Declan Gallagher and his team mates.

Reserve team fall to Kilcar in semi-final

John Gallagher had assembled a strong Reserve team in 1994 and, as a result of an injury-free run by the Senior team, there was a greater degree of consistency in team selections at Reserve level.

The team accounted for Cloughaneely (after 3 games), and Gweedore, to qualify for the semi-final against Kilcar, which was the curtain raiser for the Senior match with Naomh Columba in Fintra. Despite a committed display, the team were not able to qualify for the Club's first final in the grade, and Kilcar went on to win the final easily.

Despite a fall off in attendances for matches after the Championship exit, the team qualified for the Shield semi-final, but were again beaten by Kilcar after a re-play.

County Reps



Charlie Bennett wins Donegal Person of the Year.

As the Naomh Columba match had signalled the end of Anthony Molloy's club career, his career as a County player also sadly ended in 1994, with the team's defeat by Tyrone in the Ulster semi-final. Anthony had battled back once more from injury to give it another shot, but decided to hang up the jersey after the match in Breffni Park. A glorious career, which began in 1982, was finally over. Anthony did not fade into the background though, and at the Minor Board Convention at the end of the year, he was elected County Minor team

manager for 1995. Martin Gavigan also suffered with injury problems during the year, and was only featured as a substitute for the first round win over Antrim and in the Tyrone match. Damian Diver, Declan Gallagher and Luke Gavigan featured in the panel towards the end of the year. Damian was joined by Don Earley on the Donegal U-21 panel, while Niall O'Donnell, Sean Whyte and Conal Doherty backboned the Donegal Minor team at full back, centre-half and full forward respectively in the Ulster Championship. The team defeated Antrim but lost to Armagh in the Ulster semi-final. One further Ardara man achieved County status in the year; Aodh Brennan of Doohill played on the Donegal U-16 team in the Connacht Championship.

More success at Vocational Schools level

The Vocational Schools County team had another good year in the 93/94 season, as they regained the Ulster title that they last won in 1992. The team defeated Monaghan and Fermanagh before accounting for Tyrone in the Ulster final on a 1-11 to 1-4 scoreline. Ardara's representation on the panel consisted of four players:



Whyte filled the central spots in defence, while Doherty and Boyle made appearances as substitutes in the campaign. A victory over Mayo in the All Ireland semi-final saw them through to their first final since a defeat to Kerry in 1987. There was no further glory for the team, though, as the Rebel men won the title on a 0-13 to 0-7 victory.

The four Ardara players who won Ulster Vocational School medals in 1994.

From left: Conal Doherty, Niall O'Donnell, Shaun Whyte and Mark Boyle



Charlie Bennett presents Frank and Anne McGhee with their Club persons of the year award for 1994

On the administration side, John McConnell was elected County Minor Board Chairman in 1994, while Edward Molloy was elected Assistant Secretary of the County Board, with responsibility for fixtures. Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill continued in his role as Vice President of the Association in the County, and he received

further honour at the Annual County Dinner and Céilí by being presented with the County G.A.A Hall of Fame

award, for his service to the Association.

Ladies

In Ladies' football, the Senior team competed in Division 2 and had a steady campaign, with victories over St. Michael's, Urris, Naomh Columba, Dungloe, and St. Naul's. They lost to Glenswilly and Glenfin and lost to Termon. In the Championship, Sean MacCumhaill's ended their interest in the first round. The team that fielded in the Championship was as follows;

Bernadette McHugh, Helen Roarty, Yvonne Boyle, Donna Donaghue, Grainne Diver, Ann Breslin, Noelle Bonner, Caroline McHugh (0-3), Charlene Kennedy, Michelle Bennett, Sinead Bennett, Lorraine Gildea, Emily Whelan, Riaghan Byrne, Caroline Boyle. Sub used: Mary McHugh for Caroline Boyle.

The Under-16 team were defeated in the Divisional play-off to Aodh Ruadh on a 6-6 to 3-5 margin. Many of the Club players, however, were making strides at County level. The County Junior team had again reached the All Ireland final, but lost for the second year in succession; this time Meath were the victors. Caroline McHugh and Mairead Gallagher were regulars on the team, with Charlene Kennedy on the substitutes' bench. Charlene also played for the County Minor team, while at Under-16 level, Grainne Diver played on the team and Donna Donaghue and Lorraine Gildea were substitutes. Catriona Gallagher, Noelle Breslin and Michelle Bennett completed the Club representation when they all played for the Donegal U-14 team.

Charlie Bennett is Donegal Person of the Year

Former Club Chairman, Charlie Bennett received his highest accolade to date in 1994, when he was selected to be Donegal Person of the Year. Charlie, who had been nominated for the award by the Club, was honoured for his amazing fund raising work over the years for many different charities. He was feted at a Gala



banquet in the Burlington Hotel on the 7th of May and on his triumphant return home the following day, was greeted with a cavalcade and numerous bonfires, as well as a Guard of

Honour from the G.A.A Club. A number of speakers paid tribute to Charlie on a platform on the Diamond, while the night ended with a celebration dance in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel.



Annual Dinner Dance

At the Annual Club Dinner Dance in December, Charlie Bennett was selected as Guest of Honour and the Club was privileged to have noted G.A.A commentator, Mícheál Ó Muircheartaigh, as guest speaker. Club Chairman Columba Diver acted as M.C before one of the biggest crowds ever to attend a Club function.

Presentations were made on the Club's behalf to both men on the night, and to the Annual Award winners who were as follows:

- Senior Player of the Year:** Declan Gallagher
Reserve Player of the Year: Conal McLoone
Minor Player of the Year: Niall O'Donnell
Ladies Player of the Year: Charlene Kennedy
Club-Persons of the Year: Frank and Anne McGhee
Hall of Fame: Packie Moore

Declan Gallagher Meenlacharry, Senior Player of the Year '94. Declan was called into the County Senior panel during the year, having already played County Minor and Under-21 for Donegal.

Frank and Anne McGhee who were selected Club-Persons of the Year for 1994. This "double team" from Doohill were honoured for their huge contribution to the growth of the Club, not only in 1994 but over a long period of time. Frank's involvement began in the early sixties as an Under-Age player, and he won his first medal on the 1965 Minor Championship winning team. His career as a Senior player began in 1966 and continued un-interrupted until 1985. On the field, he won 2 Junior Championships, 1 Junior 'B' Championship, and 1 Senior Championship

as well as Senior Shield, Gaeltacht and Division 3 League medals. When he finished playing at Senior level, he continued at Junior level and holds the Club record for the longest playing career at Adult level (37 years), just edging out Eamon McNelis (35 Years). He played his last game for the Reserve team in 2002,



but few will wager that he won't tog out at some stage again, whenever the Reserve team are looking for a fourteenth man! Frank's contribution was not limited to playing, and he managed Under-Age teams in the seventies and eighties, before holding the Senior Team Manager's position

from 1987 - 1990. He was rewarded for his huge effort in the job with a Senior League title in the famous victory over Kilcar in 1989. He has since trained the Senior and Reserve teams and his enthusiasm for the game has never waned.

As Frank would be the first to admit, his biggest supporter and ally has always been his wife, Anne, one of the hardest Club workers from the '80s until the present day, Anne's work behind the scenes was always done without fuss and little want for recognition. She was involved with the first Club Yearbook in 1980 and became 'Assistant Editor' to Frank for the Club Yearbook of 1982, since when her administrative skills have always been available whenever any work needed to be done. Having already served as Assistant Secretary, she took on the position of Treasurer in 1993 and remained there for 3 years. In that time she was responsible



for getting the Club's 'Flotto' draw off the ground and for its resultant success as the Club's main annual source of income. The McGhees have remained on the Club Executive until the present day. True to form, their weekly task is still counting the 'Flotto'

envelopes and passing on the takings to Patsy Boyle, the Club 'Flotto' Co-Ordinator, typical of the commitment that they have given to the Club over many

years.

The 1994 Award Winners with special guest Micheal O Muircheartaigh and Club officers.



Molloy calls it a day

1994 was a watershed in both Donegal and Ardara football, with the retirement of Anthony Molloy. It was ironic that his swan song for both teams ended in bitter defeats, Donegal going out to Tyrone in the Ulster semi-final, and Ardara losing to Naomh Columba at the same stage in the County Championship.

There was little fuss outside of the townland of Leamagowra on the 28th of May 1962, the day Nora, wife of Lanty Molloy, gave birth to their seventh child, their fourth son, a strong wee caddie, with big hands. It was obvious, however, from an early age, that the boy christened Anthony was destined for great things.

Honing his football skills on the rough pastures of his hillside home, at the National school at Crove, and later at Meenaneary, it was however, just a stroke of luck for the Ardara Club, that the Molloy brothers headed down the 'S' to play their football, and not "in through". Although their house was in the Parish of Ardara, their mother was McGonagle from Meenadreen and the family attended school at

Crove and Meenaneary, where their schoolmates played for Naomh Columba or Kilcar. Indeed, the Molloy's could easily have followed their friends into Páirc Na nGael or Towney, and little would have been remarked about it at the time. Thankfully, though, they chose to play for their Parish, and Anthony followed his older brothers, Connie, Lanty, and Frank, into the Green and Gold jersey at the age of 11 years. It was soon obvious that the young left-footed lad was destined to

"A Uachtarán na hÉireann, a Uachtarán Cumann Luthchleas Gael, a cléir, agus pobal na hÉireann, cuireann sé luachair an-mhór ormsa, an corn Sam Maguire a glacadh ar son muintir Dhún na nGall. Is lá iontach é seo do peileadóirí Dhún na nGall. Dfhán muid ro fhada, agus is fiú anois é."

"President of Ireland, President of Cumann Luthchleas Gael, clergy, and the people of Donegal We've done it!!!!!!!!!!!!!!".

"We in Donegal have waited far too long for this day to come, but it was worthwhile in the end.

There are a lot of people I would like to thank. I'll start by thanking our team mentors, Mickey Lafferty, Naul McCole, Seamus Bonner and Anthony Harkin. I would like to give a special word of thanks to our trainer, Anthony Harkin. As you saw, he had us in the best of shape out there today. I would also like to thank our physios, Karen Crawford, Teresa Fitzpatrick, our masseuse, Angela McMenamin, and the doctor himself, Austin O'Kennedy. I would like to thank my wife and family for the patience and support that they have given me all year, and I say

that on behalf of the whole Donegal squad".

"I would like to thank also our former players who wore the County jersey and who have contributed to our success here today. I also wish to thank yourselves, the supporters, who have been good to us down the years"

"Another man who didn't make the squad today; he had to pull out before the game started, I'd like you all to put your hands together for Martin Shovlin".

"Youse probably thought I'd forgotten somebody. But I want you to put your hands together for the greatest man in Ulster at the moment, Brian McEniff. For the past thirty years Brian has given his life towards Donegal football, and indeed Ulster football, and he got his just rewards out there today. Thanks very much Brian."

"Now I'd like youse all to put your hands together and give three cheers, three rousing cheers for a great Dublin team; Hip hip, hip hip, hip hip.

"Sam is for the hills!!!!!!"



With Ardara girl Bibi Baskin on the 'Bibi' show on RTE

become a leader of men.

First honours

A Club career that lasted 21 years, really came to life in 1976, when he won his first Championship medal, as a member of Tom O'Donnell and Frankie Brennan's Under-14 team that shocked a highly rated St. Eunan's in the final. Anthony collected the first of what would be countless Man of the Match awards in the process. From his first Senior game in the 1978/79 Shield final, to



Anthony receives his all star from Taoiseach Albert Reynolds. Also in photo is the then G.A.A president, Peter Quinn.

his last, in the 1994 Championship semi-final defeat, there were countless immaculate displays which didn't really yield the honours that Anthony and a number of other great Ardara players deserved. Injury limited his involvement in the 1981 Championship victory to a 10-minute cameo role, while three other County final appearances in 1980,83 and 84 ended in heartbreak for 'Ludhóg'. There were many highlights though, his most memorable being the 1983

Under-21 Championship win over Aodh Ruadh, when he was just simply awesome, lording midfield in both games in Fintra, against a highly rated Ballyshannon team. Anthony also went on to sit in the two big 'hot seats' in the

Club, as manager of the Senior team, and going on to hold the position of Club Chairman from 1998-2002, a period which saw the A.I.B Club of the Year Award coming to the Parish on two consecutive years, 2000 and 2001.

**The brothers Molloy in 1981.
Lanty, Frank, Connie and Anthony**

Hero

It was of course, as a County star that Molloy has become a national figure. His first Donegal jersey came in 1978, as a member of a highly talented Donegal Under-16 team that travelled to Croke Park for a weekend, to play Dublin. Many of that panel would go on to form backbone of All Ireland winning teams. He was selected for the County Minor team of 1980, which, although beaten in the Ulster semi-final, was rated one of the strongest ever fielded by the County. But, it wasn't until he turned out at Under-21 level in 1982, and that



**With his greatest fan,
his mother Nora.**

famous victory over Roscommon in Carrick-on-Shannon, that Donegal finally left all previous disappointments behind them and took home a coveted National title. Anthony was a star at midfield in the win, alongside Donal Reid.

His inevitable Senior debut came late in the same year, against Monaghan in the National Football League, and this game kick-started a Senior career that lasted until 123 games later, one of the longest careers in the County's football history.

In one of his finest hours for Ardara, the 1983 Under-21 final v Aodh Ruadh.

It wasn't however a career without its ups and downs. He was soon to experience the "thin line" between being carried off the field shoulder high, and trudging off on the losing side. The 1983 Ulster Championship win was followed by heartbreak in the semi-final against Galway. Molloy played that day with a knee injury sustained in an E.S.B match the previous Monday, an injury that had started to give trouble in 1981, and that would continue to plague him throughout his playing career. The defeat still ranks as one of his greatest disappointments ever, one, he feels, that cost Donegal their first All Ireland title after Val Daly's 'fluke' goal gave Galway a one point win.



Anthony is pictured looking over the Glengesh Pass shortly before the '92 All Ireland.

Destiny

It was however as a captain that Molloy found his true niche in life. Given the job in 1989, under Brian McEniff, he soon rewarded the faith shown in him by the Bundoran hotelier, and led Donegal to the 1990 Ulster title. A Man of the Match display against Liam Hayes and Meath in the semi-final, though, was still not enough for Donegal to overcome the Royal County. The next two years however were to shape his life forever. 1991 was a difficult 12 months for Anthony. He captained the team to a McKenna Cup win early in the year, but injury problems, and personal difficulties meant that he struggled to regain full fitness. His hitherto good relationship with Brian McEniff was strained somewhat and his role in the Championship was limited to substitute appearances. As a result, he seriously contemplated his future in the Donegal jersey.



The wounds eventually healed, however and his bond with McEniff, and as they say, the rest is history. There was really only ever going to be one person who would lead Donegal to an All Ireland. That was in the stars on that May day in 1962, and when the time eventually came, he rose to the challenge. He reserved his best football for that summer. Ulster Player of the Championship, and numerous other awards came his way and, despite all, he still kept his feet on the ground. After the victory over the Dubs in the All Ireland final, he really showed the Country how he had grown, not only as a player, but more importantly as a person. His speech that day will go down in the annals as one of the most memorable of all time.

Things were never just the same for Anthony after that day. The All Star he was denied by video evidence in 1990 was finally won. And for the next six months he took a career break from the E.S.B to tour the schools of the County with the Sam Maguire, as well as visiting most of the 32 counties and the U.S.A. He was sought after everywhere, and everywhere he went he made new friends and left a lasting impression. He played on through the 92/93 National League, and the decision not to rest him for a few months was to haunt the team later in the year. The wear and tear on his famous knee limited him to just one appearance in the '93 Championship, when he came on as a substitute in the famous Clones downpour against Derry. The curtain was on the way down, though, and it ended after that 1994 semi-final defeat to Tyrone. As he walked off the field, a dejected figure, those present that day knew that a great legend of Donegal was calling it a day. He tried to give it one last shot for his Club that year, but the injury nemesis struck again in the Championship semi-final against Naomh Columba, to bring to an end, also, his time in his beloved green and gold jersey. Next to Ardara and Donegal, Anthony's favourite 'other' team has always been Donegal New York, the team back-boned by his brothers Connie, Frank and Lanty, who emigrated to the Big Apple in 1982. He travelled stateside regularly to play for the exiles, winning two New York Senior Championships in the process, in 1986 and 1992, and also worked there for short periods in the eighties.

Never one to walk away from a challenge, Anthony took to management after hanging up his boots. He sought to pass his talents on to the County Minor teams of 1995/96 and 1999/2000, winning an Ulster title in his second year in charge, while in 1999 his team was only defeated in the Ulster final by a replay against the eventual All Ireland Champions, Down. Many of the young protégés that he took under his wing still hold fond memories of his stirring team talks and his

motivational abilities. There is no doubt that the job of County Senior team manager will come his way some day, and he will no doubt use some of the various qualities of his former County mentors, Tom Conaghan and Brian McEniff.

Having left his position in E.S.B in 1998, Anthony is now a well-established financial broker and property developer with Reynolds and Associates in Letterkenny, and has become joint owner of the Central Bar, his first venture into business in his home town.

To sum up the man that is Anthony Molloy, many words can be used. His easy-going personality has always been his best known attribute. His familiar call, “Yes there!” is famous locally, and is one he often uses when a person’s name has slipped his mind. His pride in his roots has always been worn on his sleeve, and is something he has always felt very strongly about. No one could command a dressing room like “Molloy” could, and no one could motivate his team-mates

better when it was all to play for. That famous day in 1992 will always be special for Donegal people, but it meant nothing like it does to the people of Ardara. Our Anthony lifted Sam for Donegal, and no other person will ever do it for the first time ever again. Around about these parts, as far as we are concerned, Molloy is a legend, and that just about describes him better than anything else!



With Derry Captain Henry Downey in Stephen McCahill's house in 1994.

Anthony Molloy – Fact File

Born 28-5-62

Club career: 1973-1994

County Career: County Voc Schools team 1977-79, County Minor team 1979-80, County Under-21 team 1980-83. County Senior team 1982-94.

School Honours

Under-13, 15, 17 & 19, County V.S Championships

Club Honours

Under-14 F.C 1976.

Under-21 F.C 1980, 83.

S.F.C 1981.

The Late John Gallagher

*Ardara Gaels, they mourn today,
One of their stalwarts who has passed away,
Each player will now feel the loss and
Sadly reflect on what has happened.
He's dead, John Gallagher from Crucknagapple!
His memory is now a treasured phrase
To remind us still of bygone days,
Of great events on Gaelic fields,
Of thrilling games for cups and shields.*

*Time will swiftly pass away,
John Gallagher is dead today,
Sadly we think of him who is in the tomb,
For alas! He died in manhood's bloom.
Short time ago we mourned his passing.
Many tributes paid will be everlasting.
Player, Referee, Club Official, he was so well known,
But now the seeds of history they are sown,
So that Gaels in future times will know
Of great events of long, long ago.*

*Now gone is the dream of earthly ways,
We may often think of Gaelic days.
We cannot forget, only hope and pray,
For every soul that's gone away.
For John Gallagher, far too soon has fled.
All silence now, alas he's dead,
Ardara's cause he served in many ways,
He gave his very best even in troubled days,
A sportsman through and through, a worker grand,
Promoting all that was best for his dear native land.*

*The winter's sun was dipping low.
The funeral procession was moving slow.
All the past seemed but one day,
John Gallagher was dead today.
The wee birds in bushes sang their airs,
While round the grave, the congregation said the prayers,
The wreaths and flowers, piled high, were evenly spread,
Glowing tributes were paid to the one that was dead,
To John, with his bereaved family, we say adieu,
In history pages we will always think of you.*

S.F.L 1989.

Senior Shield 1979,80.

Cómortas Peile Na Gaeltachta 1977, 79, 80.

County.

Total Senior Appearances: 123

Championship: 29.

NFL: 63

McKenna Cup: 19.

Open/Centenary Cups 6.

NFL debut: 14 November 1982 v Monaghan in Ballyshannon.

Championship debut: 1983 Ulster first round v Armagh in Ballybofey.

County Honours

1 All Ireland Senior medal, 1992.

1 All Ireland Under-21 medal 1982.

3 Ulster S.F.C 1983,90,92.

1 Ulster Under-21 F.C 1982.

Railway Cup 1989.

McKenna Cup 1991.

All Star 1992

Donegal Player of the Year 1988, 1990.

Donegal Millennium Team 2000 – midfield.

Other

2 E.S.B All Ireland Championships with N.W. Region.

2 New York Senior Football Championships with Donegal New York (1986,92).

Greatest influences on career: Brothers, Kieran Keeney and Bart Whelan

Most memorable game: County: All Ireland Final 1992.

Club: 1983 Under-21 final v Aodh Ruadh.

Favourite grounds: Clones, Croke Park.

Best players played with: Martin McHugh, Larry Tompkins.

Toughest opponent: County: Brian McGilligan

Club: John Ban Gallagher

Biggest disappointment: County: Losing to Meath in the 1990
All Ireland semi-final.

Club: Losing to Four Masters, 1984 S.F.C
semi-final and 1994
semi-final v Naomh Columba.

Favourite referee: Pat McEnaney.

Greatest regret: Not winning more at Club level.



Best ways to improve the game: Make the game 13 a side and introduce the mark. More efficient training for match officials

1995-The death of John Gallagher

1995 got off to the worst possible start for the Club when the news came on 11th of January of the sudden death of Reserve team manager, John Gallagher. The news of his passing was greeted with dismay by all who knew the quiet man from Crucknagapple. John was a G.A.A fanatic from an early age and, under the influence of his father Eddie, he and his brother Josie were both to make big contributions to the G.A.A in the parish.

John Gallagher's first contact with the Club came as an Under-Age player in the late fifties and he continued his involvement through the decades. He was, without a doubt, up there with the great Clubmen of days gone by. An adult player at home in the sixties, he emigrated to England in the early seventies and played a vital part in the growth of the Tirconail Gaels Club where he served as Club Secretary for a number of years. He was rewarded with the Club-Person of the Year Award from the Gaels in 1975.



John pictured with Anthony and Martin at the 1992 Dinner Dance.

On his return home in 1977, he immediately became involved again with the home Club, where he served on the Committee, before holding the position of Club Secretary in 1978 and 1979. It was, however, working with teams that John was happiest, and he became manager in 1978 of the first Club Junior team for over 40 years. In the 16 years that followed, he managed the Junior and the Reserve teams on many occasions and regardless of whatever difficulties that managing at this level involved, he always did so with a heart and a half and never had a bad word to say about anybody. His quiet style and manner earned him the respect of every player that had the good fortune of playing under his stewardship. John also took up refereeing in the seventies and acted for the Club in this capacity through the eighties. It is a tribute to his fairness and honesty that, regardless of the difficulties of the job, he never fell out with any Club for any decision of his.

At his funeral, John's remains were met at the Diamond by a Club Guard of Honour, which escorted the cortege to the Chapel, and the Club jersey, which he so loved, and the G.A.A flag were placed on his coffin. John's life is best described by a poem written in his honour, by his close friend, Willie Murray of Meentullynagarn.

1994 A.G.M

61 members attended the Club A.G.M on the 29th of January 1995 in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel, Chairman Columba Diver presiding. The secretary reported that 1994 had been a year of some great performances and mixed emotions.

“When one looks back on 1994, one thinks of all the contrasting emotions we experienced as we followed the Club’s fortunes during the year. Expectation, happiness, disappointment, sadness and hope would probably sum up the year in a nutshell, when looking for words to describe the happenings of the past twelve

Senior Championship, 1st Round, 2nd Playoff. Stunning end to draw saga Naomh Conaill 3-15 Ardara 1-16

In 50 years time, the fourth meeting between neighbours Glenties and Ardara to decide which team would go through to the second round of the Donegal Senior Championship will still be talked about. Prior to Sunday the sides met three times and all three games ended level. Last Sunday after normal time and over seven minutes of hotly disputed stoppage time in which Glenties got a vital point, they were level again. An amazing 248 minutes and still no decisive victor but possibly the most controversial game of the four finally ended with an extra-time win for the men from Glenties.

Such was the level of Ardara anger at referee Mick McGrath’s decision to play 7 minutes and 25 seconds of added time that he was jostled and shouldered by an Ardara player. At the end of 20 minutes of added time and Glenties the victors by five points he was again jostled by another Ardara player and after a 12 minute delay at the gates of McDevitt Park where irate Ardara supporters hurled verbal abuse, the referee was flanked by members of the Garda Síochána as he left the field. So counting the added time it took an amazing 268 minutes to finally decide the most remarkable saga since Dublin and Meath met in Croke Park in the Leinster Championship.

Being such close neighbours the rivalry was always going to be intense and last Sunday’s list of eleven bookings and one

sending off give some indications of the tone - it was teak tough, sometimes dangerously so, and a number of other players were lucky not to join Luke Gavigan for an early shower. Since Sunday, the events after the match have sadly completely overshadowed the game itself. Both sides played some wonderful football and a number of players emerged with enhanced reputations.

Brilliant Game.

Ardara’s John Kennedy, selected to man-mark the powerful John Gildea, had a quite brilliant game. Jim McGuinness, expected to lead Naomh Conaill by example, did just that, packing eight vital points to his name, one of them a heart stopping score from the side-line. Don Early yet again was one of the live-wire threats in the Ardara attack while Jonathon Boyle cracked home seven vital pointed Ardara frees.

Intense but lacking any particular brilliance the first 30 minutes passed by very quickly, Ardara with the breeze firing seven points to go four ahead after 20 minutes. They were due to start without Damien Diver who apparently was delayed on his way to Fintra but a last minute arrival was rewarded with his inclusion at midfield, Luke Gavigan opting out to allow Diver to take his place. Jonathon Boyle put Ardara 0-03 to 0-01 up, Jim McGuinness, also from a free the Glenties scorer. Don Early, Conal Doherty and Patrick Gallagher scored magnificent

points and Damien Diver added a 7th from a 60 metre free. Martin Doherty, McGuinness and Gildea responding with equally good scores for Naomh Conaill.

The last five minutes of the half saw some exceptional football from Ardara, Luke Brennan scoring a superb point after hammering his way past three heavy challenges. Jimmy Brennan finishing a Diver/Early move with a score. Naomh Conaill's Niall Boyle had a good chance for the taking when a high ball fell nicely but his left foot first time shot was poor and Ardara finished the half double scores ahead, Jonathon Boyle yet again punishing a close in foul with a free leaving the half-time score Ardara 0-10 to Naomh Conaill 0-05.

Ardara's anger at the final outcome is understandable when one considers how they carved out an eight point lead by the 45th minute. Despite having to face a steady breeze they were impressive in every facet of the game, short ball, long ball, and score-taking in the third quarter. That spell yielded 1-02, Luke Gavigan only recently on the field for Michael Doherty scoring a bizarre goal as the Glenties players simply stopped, thinking a free or a '45' had been awarded. Crisp Ardara points from Pauric Brennan and a Patrick Gallagher all but confirmed the belief that this was going to be Ardara's day.

Sudden Change

But the final quarter saw a dramatic and sudden change in fortunes, John Gildea flicking through for Dessie O'Donnell to score a Glenties goal that really woke them up. Four of the eleven bookings followed as the game entered its most intense spell, points coming from Naomh Conaill's Paddy Campbell, Jim McGuinness and Stephen McKelvey to leave just one point between the sides with four minutes to play. Ardara then lost Luke Gavigan. Already booked, he was involved in an off-the-ball incident as referee McGrath booked a player further up the field. Ardara's response to the loss of Gavigan was defiant, Jonathon Boyle converting a 30 metre free.

With Jimmy Brennan now steadying their defence they looked certain to win. But four minutes into added time Jim McGuinness pointed a free. Referee McGrath continued to add time for stoppages and the row which flared prior to Gavigan's dismissal. Time wasting by the Ardara 'keeper from kick-outs against the breeze also saw the minutes added to. Ardara supporters were whistling for all they were worth. Naomh Conaill won a 55 metre free, they wided, again a side-line but it went wide. 37 minutes had now elapsed but still play continued with Naomh Conaill's Patrick Roarty pointing.

From the kick-out normal time was ended. There was uproar. Ardara players vented their anger but after a five minute lull both sides had to line out again for a further 10 minutes each way. Sheer drama. Back to 15 men Ardara pointed from Jonathon Boyle and the same player added a 20 metre free. Just as the half ended Martin Doherty, quiet all through, went on a flying run winning a penalty from Niall O'Donnell which John Gildea calmly fired over. For the first time Naomh Conaill went ahead just by one point 2-13 to 1-15. 12 seconds into the second half Ardara levelled, Conal Doherty scoring. Naomh Conaill replied, Gerry Doherty, the centre-half back on target. Ardara attacked three times but each effort ended wide of the mark, the tide was turning Naomh Conaill's way.

Jim McGuinness showed great maturity as he built the ball movements slowly, doing his best to retain possession and kill time. He ended one such move with a vital point and Connie Doherty, the full-back, came racing through to score a late goal to all but wrap it up. Ardara were shell-shocked, their supporters in a rage that so much time had been played to allow Naomh Conaill a chance to draw. Referee Mick McGrath was eventually escorted by two Gardai from the field after some calm had been restored. Considering the drama and excitement these games engendered it's a real shame they should end on such a sour note.

Naomh Conaill - Brendan O'Donnell,

Paddy Campbell (0-01), Connie Doherty (1-00), Joe Gallagher, Seamus Campbell, Gerry Doherty (0-01), Seosamh McKelvey, Cruathar Boyle, Patrick Roarty (0-01), Stephen McKelvey (0-01), Jim McGuinness (0-08 - 5 frees), Martin Doherty (0-01), Niall Boyle, John Gildea (1-02 - 1 penalty), Charlie Boyle. Subs - Dessie O'Donnell (1-00) for Cruathar Boyle (42 mins), Matt Mannering (48 mins) for Niall Boyle.

Ardara - *Paucic Brennan, Niall Campbell, Niall O'Donnell, John Kennedy, Michael*

Doherty, Paucic Brennan (0-01), Sean Whyte, Martin Gavigan, Patrick Gallagher (0-02), Conal Doherty (0-02), Damien Diver (0-01 - free), Luke Brennan (0-01), Don Early (0-01), Jimmy Brennan (0-01), Jonathon Boyle (0-07 - all frees). Subs - Luke Gavigan (1-00) for Michael Doherty (injd) (50 mins), Peter McHugh (62 mins) for Conal Doherty (extra-time), Eamon Brennan (extra-time) for Luke Brennan.

Referee - Mick McGrath (Aodh Ruadh).



months in C.L.G Ard a' Rátha.

He described the year as one of the most successful the Club had in recent years, which at one stage saw the Club in line for three major Championships. He was critical of the Club's discipline record during the year, which saw eight players sent off at different levels. It was a statistic that must be improved on in 1995, he stated. He expressed the hope that the coming year would see the Club improve on its facilities and that a Park Committee would be formed to oversee these developments. The death of John Gallagher had been a terrible blow to the Club and he paid tribute to the loyal Crucknagapple man and the mark he had left on the Club during his involvement. On matters arising from the report, many tributes were paid to Anthony Molloy, who had announced his retirement from Club and County football during the year, and he was wished well in his new position of

County Minor Team Manager.

The financial report by the Treasurer, Anne McGhee, reported an income for the year of £26,352.56 and an expenditure of £28,444.05, showing a deficit for the year of £2091.49. The total monies at hand, when all accounts were taken into consideration, was £22,268.31. She reported that income on the Flotto draw had risen considerably to an average of £238.19 per week after the draw was restructured in July. The figure pre-July had been £97.57. She paid particular tribute to Earley Transport and to the Club Senior players who had travelled at their own expense during the year.

Following a very constructive and positive gathering, Charlie Bennett addressed the meeting and thanked the Club for the part they played in his election as Donegal Person of the Year, and promised to continue to support the Club in any way that he could in 1995.

The following Officers were elected for 1995:

President	-	Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill
Vice President	-	Tommy Boyle



Chairman	-	Columba Diver
Vice Chairman	-	Luke Gavigan
Secretary	-	John McConnell
Ass. Secretary	-	Mary McHugh
Treasurer	-	Anne McGhee
Ass. Treasurer	-	Thomas Boyle
P.R.O.	-	Pauric Brennan
Development Officer	-	Charlie Bennett
Scor Officer	-	Fr. Martin Doohan

Oifigeach Na Gaeilge	-	Partalón Ó Faoláin
Senior Team manager	-	Kieran Keeney
Reserve Team Manager	-	John Hegarty
Under-21 Managers	-	Johnny D. Earley and Pat O'Donnell.

Thomas Boyle of the Greenhouse, who stepped down as Registrar at the 1995 A.G.M. Thomas had served in the position for a number of years in the eighties and nineties, as well as holding the position of Assistant Treasurer for a period. The “marathon man” is a son of former Club President Tommy Tom. Thomas carried on his father’s work in the Club and is a regular member of the Club Executive, as well as being involved in Under-Age football and acting as Physio for the Senior team.

At the Minor Board A.G.M the following officers were elected:

Chairman	-	James McBrearty
Secretary	-	James McHugh
Treasurer	-	Luke Gavigan
Registrar	-	Larry Gallagher
Team managers		
U-10	-	John McConnell and Francis Diver
U-12/U-13	-	John Boyle and Paddy McGill
U-14	-	Thady Breslin, James McHugh and Don Early
U-15	-	John M. O'Donnell
U-16	-	Josie Gallagher and Sean Brennan
U-18	-	Johnny D. Earley and Pat O'Donnell

U-21 A Championship Final Ardara take second title in a row Ardara 0-13 Naomh Columba 0-10

Ardara retained the U-21 title on Sunday last in Tirconaill Park, Donegal Town, with an impressive performance against a game Naomh Columba side. Although there was a close enough finish to this U-21 final, Ardara always held the upper hand and one felt that Naomh Columba needed a goal to have any chance of lifting the title. The chances of the Glen side were not helped twenty minutes into the first half when they lost Georgie Doherty after he was involved with Damian Diver after Diver had scored one of the scores of the game. Doherty had been moved to midfield from the throw-in to man-mark Diver, but he was finding the task a difficult one, and his dismissal left the

Naomh Columba side with a massive hill to climb.

They were 0-07 to 0-03 in arrears at the time, but it is to their credit that they never gave up and in the last quarter of the game they were still finding something in reserve and closed the gap to three points on two occasions. But in the end it was never going to be enough against an Ardara side going for their fourth U-21 title that were collectively and individually the superior team on the day. They had an outstanding player in Michael Doherty, who scored three points from his half-back placing and generally caused Naomh Columba most

headaches. Apart from Doherty, Damien Diver at midfield, Pauric Brennan at centre half-back, Don Early and 17 year old Aodh Brennan were also impressive, while all the other Ardara players gave their all.

First to score.

Ardara were first to score in the 4th minute, Conal Doherty's typical run ending with a '45' from which Pauric Gillespie pointed. The opening minutes were spoiled by over-fussy refereeing, which did not make any use of the advantage rule. The Naomh Columba mentors were obviously worried about marking duties, which saw their side shuffled before the start. John Doherty at corner-back, Georgie Doherty at midfield and Kevin McGinley in the half-forward line, while Ardara moved Sean Whyte to full-back to police Pauric Gillespie.

Jonathan Boyle put Ardara two points ahead in the 7th minute, before John Kelly pulled a point back for Naomh Columba, but by the 16th minute, Ardara had opened up a five-point gap. Firstly Damian Diver took a quick free to the overlapping Michael Doherty to point, followed by a Jonathon Boyle free. Then Don Early hit a great point from the wing, before Aodh Brennan set up Michael Doherty for his second super point. In between, a Glen raid involving Pauric Gillespie and Noel McGinley saw a great block from Pauric Brennan to deny them a score. Pauric Gillespie, the only Naomh Columba player to show his true form on the day, hit a lovely left footed point in the 17th minute but then missed an easy 21 metre free.

The Naomh Columba full-forward atoned for the miss with another score from play, but then Damian Diver took off on a great run and fired over a point to increase the lead to 0-07 to 0-04, and on his return he clashed with Georgie Doherty with the Glen man receiving his marching orders. At this stage, Naomh Columba moved the County panellist, Patrick Cunningham to the half-back line to try and curb the Doherty runs, but in the 23rd minute Michael Doherty hit his third point, a beautiful score from fully

40m. Naomh Columba hit back with two Pauric Gillespie frees, but before the end of the half Peter McHugh with a beautiful dummy set up Conal Doherty for the final score of the half - Ardara 0-09 to Naomh Columba 0-05.

Selected at corner-back and starting in the half-forward line, Kevin McGinley was now at full-back for Naomh Columba, and the Glen men had a great chance after 30 seconds with the disappointing John Kelly firing just wide. Don Early won a free for Jonathon Boyle to increase Ardara's lead, but sub, Ciaran McDevitt, just on the field, hit an excellent point for Naomh Columba. John O'Donnell hit an inspirational point from the sideline for Ardara, and Gerard Cannon was lucky not to receive his marching orders as he brought another Michael Doherty run to an end. From the free Jonathon Boyle made it 0-12 to 0-06 with 44 minutes gone and it looked like the game was dead and buried.

A minute later Conal Doherty was through but he elected to hit his effort first time from the ground and it was saved, while at the other end good work by Michael Byrne saw David Gillespie pointing. Glen refused to throw in the towel and after a raid by Pauric Gillespie and Gerard Cannon needed great defending by Ardara, Patrick Cunningham showed the way to reduce the margin 0-12 to 0-08. In the last ten minutes, Pauric Gillespie was stopped in a similar style to Michael Doherty and Pauric Brennan was only booked for the foul. From the free Gillespie made the margin just three points.

Insurance point.

With the three point margin, Ardara elected to hold possession and they hit an insurance point a minute from the end with Gabriel Cannon at the start of the move - Don Early, Damian Diver and Pauric Brennan finishing the score. In injury time, Gregory Doherty hit the final score, but the goal which Naomh Columba needed was not forthcoming. Overall, Ardara were deserving winners and it was fitting to see Damian Diver lift the Cup for the second year in a row. For Naomh Columba, the half-back line of Conal Cunningham, Noel McGinley and Gerard Cannon did not produce their best, while up front Pauric

Gillespie did not have the help he needed to really trouble the Ardara defence.

Ardara - Conor Curran, Eamon Doherty, Niall O'Donnell, Sean Whyte, John Brennan, Pauric Brennan (0-02 - 1 '45'), Michael Doherty (0-03), Damian Diver (0-01), John O'Donnell (0-01), Conal Doherty (0-01), Aodh Brennan, Gabriel Cannon, Peter McHugh, Don Early (0-01), Jonathon Boyle (0-04 - 3 fress). Sub used - Martin Bennett for Conal Doherty.

Naomh Columba - Gerard McGill, Kieran

Gara, Patrick Cunningham (0-01), John Doherty, Gerard Cannon, Noel McGinley, Conal Cunningham, Gregory Doherty (0-01), Georgie Doherty, John Kelly (0-01), Dermot McGinley, Kevin McGinley, Michael Cook Byrne, Pauric Gillespie (0-05 - 3 fress), Brendan Doherty. Subs - David Gillespie (0-01) for Brendan Doherty, Ciaran McDevitt (0-01) for John Doherty and Derek Hegarty for John Kelly.

Referee - Austin Wallace (Burt)

Under-Age Referees elected for the year were –

Neilly Gildea, James McBrearty and Frank McGhee.

The Glenties saga

It was 74 years since they first met in a challenge game on the 31st of October 1921. In Championship, they had played each other 48 times; Ardara had won 29, Glenties winning 16, with three draws. It was the oldest derby in the county, and always the toughest. Yet when the teams met in the Championship first round of '95, they provided more talking points than in all the previous meetings put together. This was tribal warfare at its very best. Record crowds brought a financial



bonanza for both Clubs. The first day in Pearse Memorial ended Naomh Conaill 1-11 Ardara 0-14. New kid on the block, Johnathan Boyle scored 0-11 on his



Championship debut. The next day, in Glenties, another draw, 0-10 to 0-10. The play-off in Fintra, 2-7 to 2-7, and then the fourth game, again in Fintra on the 13th of August, but with an unbelievably explosive conclusion. Michael Daly of the Donegal Democrat takes up the story.

Patrick Roarty of Naomh Conaill chases the ball, followed by Martin Gavigan.

Cruachar Boyle and Damian Diver await the outcome

The outcome of the match and, more so, the manner of the defeat, had infuriated the Ardara team and supporters like never before. Neither team nor supporters could understand why the referee had played so much injury time at the end of normal time, and the Club was united in looking for answers. Unfortunately no explanation was forthcoming, and to add salt to the wounds, Martin Gavigan was called before the County Board for remonstrating with the referee after the match. Club Chairman, Columba Diver, and Secretary John McConnell appeared with Martin before the Committee, and also provided video evidence of the amount of actual stoppage time in normal time, so as to prove that the Referee had erred in his handling of the game. The committee refused to accept the evidence and dealt solely with the referee's report, with the outcome being a six month suspension for Martin and a severe warning for the Club as to its future conduct. The whole episode stunned the Club and its members, and the fact that the four games had been the most talked about in the history of the County Championship held little consolation for all concerned.

The Club held an Extraordinary General Meeting on the 9th of September to discuss the outcome of the case and it was decided that if an appeal was possible, that the case should be forwarded to Ulster Council. Under the rules, the only ground the Club had for an appeal was if the County Board had not followed the proper procedure in dealing with the case. It was agreed that the Secretary would check with Croke Park with regard to procedures and report back to the Club with the outcome. At a meeting five days later, the Secretary, after consultation with Croke Park, and other high officials of the Association, stated that it was highly

unlikely, in the event of an appeal, that the Club would win the case. Martin himself also stated that he did not wish to take the matter any further, and that it should be allowed to rest, despite his and the Club's despair at the whole sequence of events.

The Senior team of 1995 who played Naomh Conaill in the first round play-off replay.
Back L-R: Kieran Keeney, Shaun Whyte, Conal Doherty, Pauric Brennan, Martin Gavigan, Niall O'Donnell, Niall Campbell, Ted Breslin, Pauric Brennan.

Front L-R: Peter McHugh, Michael Doherty, Patrick Gallagher, Jimmy Brennan, Don Earley, Johnathan Boyle, John Kennedy, Luke Brennan, Luke Gavigan.

Following the Championship, the team's League form was never better than average and they finished in mid-table in Division 1 of the League, winning 6 games, losing 6 and drawing two matches. The team made an early exit from the Gaeltacht competition, losing to Glenfin in the first round, and in tournament games, the team took part in the Eamon Byrne Memorial Trophy and reached the final only to be beaten by a point, also by the Glen men. The team had better luck in the Charlie McGlynn 7 a side tournament in Glenfin, when they beat MacCumhaill's in the final on a 3-12 to 2-9 score-line. The team was – Niall O'Donnell, Sean Whyte, Kieran Keeney, Eamon Doherty, Thady Breslin, Michael Doherty, Jimmy Brennan, Aodh Brennan, Don Early and Leo Breslin.

Under-21s take two in a row.

The Under-21 team of 1995 were looking to retain the title they won in dramatic fashion in 1994. The majority of the team still remained Under-Age and, although they had won Juvenile, Minor and Under-21 Championships to date, as a team this age group had yet to win a title together. In a very tough draw, the team got past St. Eunan's in the first round by winning the second leg match in O'Donnell Park, after managing only a draw in Pearse Memorial. A 1-12 to 1-4 victory over Dungloe in the quarter-final led to a semi-final clash, against Aodh Rua, that was almost a re-run of 1994. Despite Ardara holding an eight-point lead in Tirconaill Park, Aodh Ruadh repeated what Ardara had done the previous year, and came back from the dead. Although they didn't get the win, the game finished level, Ardara 0-15 Aodh Ruadh 1-12. The replay was identical, apart from the fact that Ardara had to come from behind this time, and they went on to win 1-12 to 1-9. The opponents in the final were Naomh Columba; a first time for the teams to meet at this stage. The Glen men were famous for their fighting displays and never say die attitude. Ardara were installed as favourites for the match in most quarters, and after a tough struggle, came through to win the Club's fourth title in the grade.

Once again, Johnny D. and Pat O'Donnell had taken their team to another Championship victory, the fourth in six years. They had a knack of instilling

confidence in their players and as a result they were proving to be extremely hard to beat in Under-Age competitions. This victory was the end of their Under-Age career for most of the players, many of whom were seasoned Senior players already. It had lifted some of the gloom that persisted after the Glenties affair. It



remained to be seen if they could transform their run of Championship wins to the bigger stage and help to break the deadlock at Senior Championship level.

County Treasurer Sean McGinley presents Damian Diver with the Under-21 Championship cup after the win over Naomh Columba.

The Ardara Under-21 team that won the 1995 County Championship.

Back L-R: Johnny D. Early, John O'Donnell, Conal Doherty, Shaun Whyte, John Brennan, Conor Curran, Francis Diver, Seoirse Doherty, Niall O'Donnell, Malachy Gallagher, Eamonn Doherty, Pat O'Donnell.

Front L-R: Pauric Brennan, John Watters, Martin Bennett, Eamon Diver, Don Earley, Gabriel Cannon, Aodh Brennan, Damian Diver, Peter McHugh, Michael Doherty, Johnathan Boyle, Jackie McHugh. Mascot Oisín O'Donnell.

The win was Damian Diver's second Championship win in 1995 as a captain. He had already led Donegal to the Ulster Under-21 title after the team defeated Down (1-9 to 1-6), Monaghan (0-8 to 0-4), Fermanagh (1-12 to 1-6) and Cavan in the final, after a replay, by 3-11 to 1-11. He narrowly missed the chance of leading the team to an All Ireland final, when Donegal was narrowly defeated by Kerry, 2-5 to 1-6, in the semi-final at Tuam. Pauric Brennan of Doohill was also a member of the panel.

Donegal win third All Ireland Vocational Schools title

On May 14th of the year, Donegal lifted their third Vocational Schools title in Croke Park, when they defeated Leitrim in the final by 1-12 to 0-7. Once again there was a strong Ardara connection, with Aodh Brennan at left half forward, Conal Doherty at corner forward and Peter McHugh as a substitute. All played big parts in the campaign as they defeated Tyrone, Cavan, Derry and Kerry on the path to the final. The winning team against Leitrim was as follows:

David Greene (Ballyshannon V.S.), Gary Hilferty (Loreto, Milford), Martin

McMenamin, (St. Columbas), Don Monaghan (Abbey V.S.), Rory Sweeney (Abbey V.S.), Eamon Reddin (Sacred Heart, Buncrana), Gerard Cannon (Carrick V.S.), Barry Monaghan (Abbey V.S.), Dermot McColgan (Buncrana V.S.), David Carroll (Ballinamore V.S), Raymond Sweeney (Rosses C.S.), Aodh Brennan (Glenties C.S.), James Boyle (Rosses C.S.), Brian McLaughlin (P.C.C), Conal Doherty (Glenties C.S.). Subs used: Ciaran Browne (Carndonagh C.S.), Vincent Kennedy (Abbey V.S.), Adrian McColgan (Buncrana V.S.).

Reserve team lose in County final



Following the death of John

Aodh Brennan climbs above Shane O'Donnell of St. Eunans as David Diver waits for the break.



Gallagher earlier in the year, it was decided that the best way that the Club could commemorate him would be to donate a cup in his honour for the County Senior Reserve Championship. The Club Reserve team were keen to be the first winners of the cup, to commemorate their former manager, and current manager John Hegarty assembled a strong squad for the Championship. As with the Senior team, a four game battle was fought with Naomh Conaill in the first round. Each team

won at home, then drew in Fintra before Ardara pulled through in the fourth game, at the same Fintra venue, on a score of 1-12 to 0-7. Further victories over St Eunan's and Naomh Columba left the team in the County final against Dungloe. The team struggled to live up to its pre-match favourites tag, though, and after 12 minutes, Dungloe were 0-5 to 0-1 up. Three pointed frees from Conal McLoone brought the team back into contention, and at half time, although outplayed for most of the period, the team were behind by just two points, 0-6 to 0-4. Playing with the breeze after the break, things looked to be in good enough shape, and when Martin Shovlin narrowed the gap further, with just three minutes gone, with a fine point, Ardara looked to be in the driving seat. A quick Dungloe point, though, changed the state of the game, and their ability to carry the ball against the breeze became a telling factor. They added on another two points in the remaining 20 minutes, with Ardara's only reply coming from an Eamon Cunningham point. The team's bid to be the first winner of the John Gallagher memorial cup had come to an end and Dungloe earned a deserved victory on a 0-09 to 0-06 scoreline. The teams lined out as follows:

Ardara: Conor Curran, Jackie McHugh, Leo Breslin, Peter Watters, Joseph Doherty, Conal McLoone (0-4, frees), John O'Donnell, John Brennan, Adrian Brennan, Joseph Brennan, Eamon Cunningham (0-1), Hugh Campbell, Martin Shovlin (0-1), Thady Breslin, Paul Melly.

Dungloe; Derek Gallagher, Paul McGee, Hugh Sweeney, Declan McCole, Brendan McCole, Thomas Brennan (0-1), Joe Boyle, P.J. O'Donnell, Mark Clerkin (0-2), Eamon Kelly (0-3), Pauric Bonner, Martin McGlynn, Ronan Brennan (0-1), Patrick McGowan (0-2), John Ward. Sub used: John Ward.

Referee: Pat Curley (Milford)

Despite the defeat, the team were still in line for honours in the League, but had to settle for qualification for the Shield. They defeated Dungloe in the final to receive some recognition for their efforts. It had been the best year a Club Reserve team had since the Junior 'B' team of 1987.

A new development in the Club in 1995, probably the most important for some years, was the introduction of a third adult team in County competition. Manager James McHugh assembled a vast variety of players with the likes of Paddy Breslin and Jackie Gallagher lending their experience to help the cause. The team had a very good first year in League Division 4, finishing in fifth place but went out to Malin in the first round of the Junior 'B' Championship.

The Senior Reserve team who were defeated in the 1995

Senior Reserve Championship final.

Back L-R: Francis Diver, Joseph Brennan, Adrian Brennan, Leo Breslin, Conor Curran, John O'Donnell, Thady Breslin, John Brennan, John Hegarty, Eamon Doherty.

Front L-R: Martin Shovlin, Joseph Doherty, Peter Watters, Paul Brennan, Jackie McHugh,

Conal McLoone, Eamon Diver, Eamon Cunningham, Vincent Ryan, David Diver.
Sitting: L-R: John Martin Byrne, John Watters, Paul Melly, Pauric Hegarty,
James Hegarty, Hugh Campbell.

Injury time goal stuns Minors in final.

The Club Minor team that was beaten in the County final of 1994 again qualified for the 1995 County final, and once again the opposition was St.Eunan's. The team



had already beaten all opposition in the South-West, and had accounted for St.Naul's and Four Master's in the quarter-final and semi-final respectively. Both teams had met previously, at the semi-final stage at Under-16, when the



Letterkenny lads won easily. This meeting however was much closer. Ardara started well, but suffered a big blow when they lost team captain Conal Doherty after seven minutes following an accidental collision, which necessitated emergency treatment. The quick actions of team manager Johnny D. Earley saved the day after Conal was rendered unconscious. The injury unnerved the Ardara team, though, and St. Eunan's pulled away for a period. But the accuracy of Jonathan Boyle kept Ardara in the game, and a Shaun Heena goal left the sides level at half time, 1-5 each. The teams exchanged scores in a great second half, with Heena pulling Ardara level at 1-12 each with one minute remaining. It wasn't to be Ardara's day though, and when the St. Eunan's full forward Kevin Winston won a ball close to goal in injury time, he broke Ardara's hearts by finishing to the net to give his side the Dan Ward Cup. The teams and scorers were:

Ardara: Conor Curran, Hugh Byrne, Jackie McHugh, Mark Boyle, John Watters, David Diver, Kevin Byrne, John Brennan, Aodh Brennan, Peter McHugh, Francis Diver, Stephen Gildea, Conal Doherty, Shaun Heena (1-1), Jonathan Boyle (0-11). Subs: Martin Bennett for Doherty.

St. Eunans: Enda Kelly, Paschal Gibbons, Paul O'Dowd, Hughie Lennon, Ronan Mulligan, Adrian McClafferty, Lawrence Maguire, David McGinley (0-1), Shane O'Donnell, Shane Sullivan (0-1), Kieran McMonagle, Stephen Crossan, Kevin Winston (2-9), Kieran Haran, Shane McBrearty.

Referee: Liam Browne (Four Masters)



The 1995 Minor team who were defeated in the County final by St. Eunans.
Back L-R: Johnny D. Earley, Shaun Heena, Ciaran Mulhern, Leonard Gildea,
Francis Diver, Seoirse Doherty, Conor Curran, John Brennan,
Hugh Byrne, Conal Doherty, Pat O'Donnell.
Front L-R: Peter McHugh, Stephen Gildea, Martin Bennett, David Diver,
Aodh Brennan, John Watters, Jackie McHugh, Jonathan Boyle,
Mark Cassidy, Kieran Reynolds, Mark Boyle.

Sitting: Francis Gallagher, Eamon Diver, Jonathan Herron, Kevin Byrne, Cathal Doherty.

In the other age groups the Under-16 team under Josie Gallagher and Luke Gavigan, had a very tough South-West campaign and finished third in the Division. Injuries to key players meant their resources were stretched and they went out at the quarter-final stages to Buncrana.



The U-14 team, managed by James McHugh and Thady Breslin had a long drawn out campaign, before going out to Cloughaneely in a County play-off
 The U-15 Óg-Sport 7 a side team had a successful campaign. Under the guidance of Josie Gallagher they won the South-West Divisional competition and finished third in the County finals in Ballybofey. The U-13 team had a short campaign, losing to Killybegs and Dungloe, while the U-12 team won the South-West title by beating Killybegs on a score of 4-05 to 0-03. They then competed in the County semi-final and were beaten by County Champions St Michaels after a great game in Dungloe. John Boyle and Paddy McGill did great work with this team.

A total of over 50 children were coached at U-10 level in 1995 and, for the first time, the Club fielded three teams at this level in the South-West Blitzes. The 'A' Team were victorious in the Killybegs Blitz and performed well in the other tournaments, while the 'B' Team managed by Sean Whyte and Francis Diver had a very successful year, winning the Blitzes in Glenties, Ardara, Killybegs and Dungloe. Indeed in the Dungloe Blitz the 'B' team were nearly pipped at the top by the Ardara 'C' team, who had impressive results on the day.

Parish Leagues

The Club ran two very successful Parish Leagues in 1995. At Under-10, the team captained by Gareth Concarr defeated Gerard McCabe's team in the B final, while Kieran Boyle's team defeated Kevin Gallagher's team in the 'A' final, and Kieran Boyle's teams completed the line up. The people involved in managing the teams were Patsy Gildea, Conal McLoone, Francis Diver, Don Earley, James McHugh, Aodh Brennan, Stephen Gildea, John M. O'Donnell and Sean Whyte.

In the U-12 competition, four teams also competed in a round robin competition. The eventual winner was Johnny Herron's team, managed by Declan Brennan. Other teams were captained by Derek Boyle, Cathal Watters and Stephen McHugh who were managed by John Boyle, Paddy McGill and John M. O'Donnell respectively.

Other highlights of the year for the Minor Board, included Stephen McHugh's victory in the County Under-12s skills awards in O'Donnell Park Letterkenny and the victory of St Mary's N.S. Girls team in the final of Round IV Cuman na mBunscoi in Ballyshannon; en route they had wins over Bockey, Belcruit, Meenagowan and Comeen. In the final they were much too strong for a young Rockfield N.S. side. The team was managed by their teacher, Raphael Meehan. The team and scorers who beat Ballyshannon were Mairead Brennan (2-00), Lorraine McBrearty (0-01), May Feeney (0-01), Noreen Gallagher (1-00), Maria Diver (3-05), Yvonne McNelis (1-00), Natalie Gildea (2-00), Carmel Feeney, Marie Gallagher, Ellen Jane Breslin, Tara Sweeney, Catherine McNelis and Maura McHugh.

Under-12 Parish League winners 1995 – Johnny Herrons team with manager Declan Brennan.

Stephen McHugh of Summy, who won the County Under-12s skills award in 1995



Ladies' progress continues

The Ladies section of the Club continued to toil, and in 1995 they following officers were elected to the Committee;

Chairman: Phonsie Bennett.



Paddy Breslin of Cloch Buí, is presented with the Junior Player of the Year Award for 1995 by James McHugh. Paddy is the only player to have won the Junior Player of the Year award on three occasions, 1982, 1983 and 1995. Paddy 'On', as he is better known, is one of the great unsung heroes of the Club. The most capped Junior player in the Club's history, Paddy also played for the Senior team on numerous

occasions in the eighties. His honours list includes an Under-21 Championship medal, a Junior 'B' Championship medal, two Division 3 League medals, as well as Senior League and Gaeltacht honours. Playing at full back, corner back or centre half, the 'Point' man rarely if ever missed a match, and guided many young players through Junior ranks and on to the Senior team. The popular Eircom technician still continues his involvement, through the Under-Age teams, and is still one of the most popular Clubmen around.



Frank and Anne McGhee at the 1995 Donegal G.A.A. Banquet with Anthony Molloy.

Anthony Harkin



While 26 Donegal men can claim to have won an All Ireland Senior football medal, only one can claim to have coached a Donegal team to win the ultimate in Gaelic football. That honour, of course, belongs to Anthony Harkin of Rosbeg. Although the quiet man from Rosbeg has become known nationally as one of the top G.A.A coaches in the country, it is his loyalty and commitment to the Ardara club that sets him apart locally, as a brilliant Clubman for the past 30 odd years.

It's a far cry now from that day in the sixties that his father, Packie, travelled to Letterkenny and

brought back one pair of football boots and a leather ball, for Anthony and his brother, Patsy. Although there was initial disappointment at only one pair being

brought back to Rosbeg, there was method in Packie's madness, Anthony was right footed, and Patsy kicked with the left, so neither brother had cause for complaint! The boys attended the local National School at Kiltorish, where Anthony got his first 'real' game, as a 10 year old, on a Downstrands Schoolboys' selection, which played Ardara in Sandfield in 1966. Despite a thirty two points to one beating that day, it didn't quench his love of the game, and he soon progressed through the Club Under-Age teams. His first Club match was for



Anthony in 1977, when he was selected on the Advanced Colleges' team.

the Under-14 team, in 1969, against Dungloe, and two years later he won a Juvenile Championship with the Ardara/Glenties selection that defeated Urris in the County final. His brother Patsy recalls from that time,

"I remember Josie Brennan would pick us up in the bread van. There were four of us; myself, Anthony, Con and Eddie McLoone. I was always in the back of the van, in between the shelves. The good players always got the front seats!"

He went on to St. Eunan's College, in 1968, to start his secondary education, The school at that time was a great football nursery for the county, and Anthony played with many fine players. He won a Loch-an-Úir (Ulster Under-15 Colleges) medal and was also selected as Sportsman of the Year on two occasions. It was in St. Eunan's, that he first began to train teams, getting up early to help with the training of the McRory Cup (Senior Colleges) team. He recalls:

Michael Cullen, my Latin teacher was a wonderful example of a dedicated coach, who trained teams every evening and took teams to matches on a Saturday, and often provided lunch for us out of his own pocket. I bought Joe Lennon's coaching book in 1972, and also learned a great deal from it".



Anthony clears the ball away from his former Thomond College team-mate, Michael Houston, in the 1983 County final against St. Eunan's

He made his debut, in 1973, for the Ardara Senior team, in a League game against St. Eunan's, in O'Donnell Park. He recalls Charlie Mooney hiding the jerseys that day, as Billy Maxwell was trying to get one for himself! (Some things never change.)

It was his time in Thomond College in Limerick, though, that moulded Anthony's future career, both as player and coach. Attending the school at the same time as such G.A.A greats as Mick and Pat Spillane, Denis 'Ogie' Moran, Brian Talty and many more, his playing career blossomed. He was part of a great Thomond team that won the Trench, Ryan (Higher Education

League), and Hodges Figgis Cups. The College was not permitted to enter the

Sigerson Cup, and the Hodges Figgis was the annual match between the Trench and the Sigerson Cup winners. The undoubted highlight, though, was in 1978, when the College team (who were allowed to compete in the Limerick County Championship) went on to win the All Ireland Club Championship, defeating St. John's, of Belfast, in the final on a 2-14 to 1-3 scoreline. Anthony lined out at midfield that day along side Brian Talty. The coach of that team was also a man that Anthony greatly respected. *"Dave Weldrick of Thomond College was a great*



Willie Joe Padden presents Anthony with a memento of his involvement in Donegals Ulster win at the 1990 Dinner Dance.

coach, and was a man ahead of his time." By this time, Anthony had progressed through the County ranks as a Minor(1973-74), Under-21 (1974, '75, and captain in '76), and Senior from 1975-79. Despite being at the other end of the country, Anthony's loyalty to the Club ensured that he travelled home every weekend to play for Ardara, often hitching a lift to Galway, where he would team up with his friend, Kieran Keeney, to travel home to Ardara..

Having received his B.A. in Physical Education in Thomond,

he soon started to pass on what he had learned there to the local Senior team, and took over the coaching of the team under manager, Charlie Mooney, in 1978. At that time 'Coaching' was the new 'buzz' word, and in Anthony Harkin, the Ardara team had someone who was up to speed with anything that was out there in training methods. The days of kicking in and out to the goals, and then picking two teams, was gone, and all of a sudden, the Ardara players were preparing for games in a new, invigorating fashion, which soon delivered the benefits, in the Senior Championship win of 1981. Anthony Harkin was coach. There were plenty of disappointments in those days, too. Defeats in the 1980, '83 and '84 finals cost Anthony further medals in that time, although the League victory in 1989 was a memorable win, with Anthony winning the Senior Player of the Year award that year, for his part in the success. Anthony spent many years at mid field, and was known for his phenomenal work rate, his ability to keep star players on the opposing team out of the game for long periods, and for his fielding ability.



**In the 1988 semi-final at Towney, Anthony contests
midfield with John Ban Gallagher**

Anthony's reputation as a coach eventually reached beyond Ardara, and in 1989, he got a chance to test himself in a higher level arena. Brian McEniff called on him to train the Donegal team. It was the start of a partnership that was to bring great things to the G.A.A in the County. An Ulster title in 1990, and of course the All Ireland win in 1992, brought Anthony his due reward, as a coach, and his greatest achievement to date. His return home to Rosbeg with the Sam Maguire Cup on the Sunday after

the win, is one of his proudest memories. Following Brian McEniff's departure as manager in 1994, Anthony stepped out of the County scene, and eased back on his involvement, but still trained Ardara regularly during the summer months, during which time he returned to his home in Rosbeg to catch up on some fishing. The winning of one County Championship, as a coach, did not really satisfy him though, and when Johnny D. took on the manager's job in 2000, he duly obliged, and had the Ardara team in superb shape when they defeated St. Eunan's in the County final. When asked was there any stage before that match that he was convinced the team would do it, he said,



A proud moment for the Harkin family. Anthony is pictured on his return home to Rosbeg in 1992, with his parents, Packie and Joe, and brother Patsy with the Sam Maguire.

"I knew we would win the Championship when I talked with Johnny D. Earley, one night at training, when the boys were flying in a backs and forwards exercise. Our team meeting, that we had before the final, left me in no doubt that we would win the game."

He was honoured with the Club Person of the Year award that year, the second time he won the award; the first was in 1983.

The call to return to the County stage came again in 2003, when Brian McEniff once again asked him to take on the team, after Donegal had their worst losing sequence in decades – 6 games in a row, in the National League. Although Anthony had many other commitments, he took on the job on a short-term basis, and again changed the fortunes of the team, by bringing them to an All Ireland semi-final, before Armagh ended the dream. It was undoubtedly one of his greatest coaching achievements. When asked what he considers his most satisfying accomplishment, he said:

"My most satisfying achievement in coaching, was taking Ardara to Championship wins in 1981 and 2000. In '81, it was because it was not done for such a long time, and in 2000, because nobody gave us a chance, especially in the final. Helping Donegal in 2003 to get to an All Ireland semi final, after a long losing run, was also very satisfying."

Anthony stepped aside after the 2003 campaign, but is still busy in his role as a GAA master tutor in Ulster, for Foundation, Level 1 and Level 2 coaching courses. He has been involved in this aspect of the field since 1980, when he first assisted



At the Thomond College 1978 reunion in 2003. Anthony catches up with old friends, Eddie Mahon (Meath), Brian Talty (Galway) and Sean O'Shea (Longford).

Jim McKeever of Derry in doing courses around the Province. During that time, he wrote and produced the "Follow the Stars" coaching video for the Ulster Council in 1997, a production that has been used by hundreds of coaches around the Province since then.

Anthony has taught at Loreto College in Milford since 1979 and is the school Vice-Principal. He

lives in Ballymaleel, Ramelton, with his wife Kathleen, daughters, Aisling, Catriona and Aoife, and son Tony; his greatest supporters.

Notwithstanding Anthony's many achievements as a coach and a player, to Ardara people his greatest claim to fame has always been his loyalty to the green and gold. Regardless of the thousands of miles that he has travelled for the cause, expense was never an issue. And in the present day of coaches getting paid handsomely (allegedly!), for their services all over the country, Anthony is seen to have remained true to his roots; a claim that, sadly, has become less and less common nowadays. He has made a huge contribution to the story of the Ardara G.A.A Club, and we have no doubt that he will return again in the future to repeat the success of '81 and 2000.

1995 A.G.M

An attendance of 76 members gathered in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel on the 28th of January for the Club A.G.M of 1995. As expected, the main item covered in the Secretary's report was the Senior team's exit from the Championship. He detailed the events that occurred in Fintra, and the unhappiness felt by Club members at the outcome of the game. He concluded by saying;

" Why the referee chose to end the game in the manner he did, will always cause us to wonder. The anger felt by us all on that day in Fintra will hopefully never surface again, before, during, or after a football match".

He went on to pay tribute to Kieran Keeney, who was stepping down from the position of Senior Team Manager. He was delighted to report, though, that he would still be available to play for the Reserve team in the coming year. He cited the Under-21 victory as the highlight of the year, and commended the fielding of a Junior team in the League and Championship. Sympathy was extended to two former Club stalwarts who died during the year: Harry O'Donnell, a great Club player of the '30s and '40s, and former Club Secretary, Danny Haughey, who had also passed away. He ended his report with a stinging attack on the discipline record of Club teams, which saw a total of 16 players sent off in all competitions; undoubtedly the worst year in the Club's history in this regard.

Anne McGhee presented her Treasurer's report, which showed expenditure of £38,013.78 with an income of £37,669.75, showing a small deficit on the year's workings of £344.03. The average weekly income from the Flotto draw had risen to £230.69 for the year, and gate money had risen to £5064, the bulk of which came from the Glenties games in the Championship. Following her report, she announced that she would not be seeking re-election for the coming year. Various speakers paid glowing tribute to her for being one of the most efficient and

progressive treasurers the Club had ever elected.

The following officers were elected for 1996:

President	-	Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill
Vice President	-	Tommy Boyle
Chairman	-	Columba Diver
Vice Chairman	-	Luke Gavigan
Secretary	-	John McConnell
Ass. Secretary	-	Mary McHugh
Treasurer	-	Larry Gallagher
Ass. Treasurer	-	Michael Breslin
Registrar	-	Conal Doherty
P.R.O.	-	Pauric Brennan
Scór Officer	-	Fr. Martin Doohan
Development Officer	-	Charlie Bennett
Oifigeach na Gaeilge	-	Partalón O'Faoláin
Senior Team Manager	-	Josie Gallagher
Reserve Team Manager	-	John Hegarty
Junior Team Manager	-	James McHugh
U-21 Managers	-	Johnny D. Early and Pat O'Donnell

Minor Board Officers

Chairman	-	James McBrearty
Secretary	-	James McHugh
Treasurer	-	Luke Gavigan

Team Managers

Under-10	-	John McConnell, Francis Diver, John Hegarty, Michael Breslin, Conal Doherty and John Brennan
Under-12	-	John Michael O'Donnell and Declan Brennan
Under-13/14	-	John Boyle and Paddy McGill
Under-15/16	-	James McHugh and Noel Watters
Minor	-	Eugene Bennett and John Boyle

1996 -75 years on

1996 was another milestone in the history of Club and Parish. The Club reached the 75th anniversary of its foundation in 1921. The G.A.A in the parish had grown beyond the wildest expectations of its founders, and the Club was fortunate that there was still a steady stream of people willing to carry on the work they started. The year itself was an unforgettable experience. Celebrations were organised to celebrate the anniversary, Pádraig S.Mac a'Ghoill was elected President of

Cumann Lúthchleas Gael in the County, another Juvenile Championship was captured, and believe it or not, the Senior team once again were involved in a Championship marathon, which nearly eclipsed the story of 1995.

Killybegs end hopes again after three game marathon

Following the exploits of 1995, few in the County, let alone Ardara, would have expected anything other than a straightforward Championship campaign in 1996. Josie Gallagher was the new manager, and he was assisted by John Kennedy and Anthony Harkin. The team had an early exit in the Gaeltacht competition, to Dungloe, and displayed indifferent form early in the League, but nothing to get really anxious about. They had a fairly negotiable draw in the first round, although Glenfin proved to be a little more difficult than the pundits expected. The team made it through, though, after a four point win at home (2-12 to 1-11), and a five point victory in blistering sunshine in Glenfin, (3-15 to 2-13). The hoodoo team was waiting in the quarter-final. The fishermen, the boys from Killybegs, were the one team that Ardara just couldn't handle in the previous eight years. 1988 semi-final, 1990 semi-final, 1991 first round, 1992 first round, 1993 quarter-final. Seven Championship games in all, and the score stood at 7-0 to Killybegs, and for good measure they had won four Championships in that same period ('88, '91, '92 & '95.) They were defending Champions in 1996, and by the time they reached Ardara in the quarter-final they had been involved in a four game series with Aodh Ruadh that had been the talk of the county. But Ardara were more confident in 1996 than possibly ever before of getting one up on their great rivals. The steady influx of quality Under-Age players was keeping the team fresh, which meant a



Martin Gavigan and John Cunningham contest a ball in the third game at Tirconail Park, with Damian Diver and Michael Doherty (12) awaiting the outcome.

very strong panel was available. On the other hand, Killybegs basically had the same team since 1988, with a few additions. On average the Ardara team were younger, if a little bit less experienced.

The game was fixed for Tirconail Park. A real thriller, swinging from end to end, Killybegs



**John Kennedy chases Manus Boyle
assisted by Pauric Brennan
and Damian Diver**

led, Ardara led, and at the end it took a point from Ardara corner back Shaun Whyte to send the game to a re-play. Although a draw was a fair result, it was somewhat of a moral victory to Ardara that at least Killybegs had failed to beat them in a Championship match. The re-play was one of the greatest matches ever seen at the venue, with an exceptional standard of football. Hard hitting, you name it, this game had it. Extra time ensued, and at the end they were still deadlocked, 0-20 each. Killybegs hit 17 points from play to Ardara's thirteen, Johnathan Boyle v Manus Boyle in the free-taking stakes, 'Rambo' in brilliant form, Diver, Ted, etc, etc, It was breathtaking stuff. The re-play was fixed for the same venue, for the

following weekend, but the result that Ardara had yearned for was not forthcoming.

Senior Championship quarter final replay Killybegs stage brilliant comeback Killybegs 1-11 Ardara 1-09

An astonishing second half comeback, led by a quite brilliant Barry McGowan, saw Killybegs at last overcome Ardara to reach the Senior Championship semi-final at Tirconall Park, Donegal Town, and bring to an end a series of quite outstanding matches.

There were only seven minutes remaining, when Killybegs took the lead for the first time and few would have predicted the outcome at half-time as Ardara had steam-rolled Killybegs in the first half to deservedly lead by seven points at the break, 1-07 to 0-03. But the half-time break, as in the games against Aodh Ruadh, afforded Killybegs enough time to re-organise and the Killybegs team which took the field was a completely different outfit, with Barry McGowan now at midfield, to form a partnership with John Bán Gallagher, which dominated the final 30 minutes to an alarming degree, from an Ardara point of

view.

Dream Start.

Ardara had a dream start, Conal Doherty getting possession from the throw-in and cutting through the Killybegs defence to fire past David Meehan, the only goal Meehan had conceded in the three matches. Killybegs had started without the injured Mark Boyle, and Conal Gallagher had rearranged their side with John Cunningham at midfield and Barry McGowan at centre-half back. Two Manus Boyle frees got them back in contention before Jonathon Boyle pointed a free for Ardara. A measured pass from Barry McGowan saw Manus Boyle score a glorious point in the 10th minute, but that was to be the start of a drought for the Fishermen as they went 23 minutes before they were to score again.

In the meantime, the huge crowd, estimated at around 4000, were treated to an Ardara

display of power running which yielded six points from Conal Doherty, Jonathon Boyle (after a free rebounded off the upright), two from Luke Gavigan and two frees from Jonathon Boyle. A minute before the break, Ardara could easily have had a second goal, Sean Whyte making a great run through the Killybegs defence, but from point blank range he managed to put his final shot wide of the target when it looked easier to score. Half-time score - Ardara 1-07 to Killybegs 0-03.

The half-time spectator talk was all about Ardara, and when Killybegs re-appeared, the inclusion of Mark Boyle for the other injury worry, Denis Carberry, meant that they had to restructure their side once more. Jimmy Whyte was switched from corner-forward to corner back and Barry McGowan went to midfield. Boyle was to play a significant part in giving the Killybegs attack the direction it needed and within seven minutes they were back in contention with four unanswered points, Manus Boyle converting two frees and Barry McGowan pointing twice from play.

Don Early had a good point for Ardara but it was clear that they were struggling to come to terms with John Ban Gallagher and Barry McGowan at midfield. In the 44th minute, an Ardara attack was broken down by Jimmy Whyte. John Bán found Paul Callaghan and his effort for a point came back off the upright into the hands of Manus Boyle and from close range he had no difficulty finding the net. The goal may have been fortuitous, but Killybegs took full advantage, Barry McGowan pointing from a free from his hands to level matters on the 47th minute.

With a continuing dominance at midfield, Killybegs had a chance to go in front in the 50th minute, Mark Boyle finding Conor Whyte, but his weak effort from close range was turned around the post. With seven minutes to go, Killybegs did get in front. Barry McGowan and Peter McGinley set up Paul Callaghan four minutes from time. Ardara substitute Patrick Gallagher put Ardara back on level terms, but a minute later Killybegs were back in front, Manus finding John Bán to Barry McGowan to Peter McGinley, and from well outside the 45 m line, McGinley curled over a score as

memorable as anything that had gone before in this epic encounter. It was a fitting finale to a wonderful series of games.

Ardara had no answer to the Killybegs performance in the second half. It was hard to imagine after the last two games that one team would dominate so much, especially given that the Killybegs side had again been depleted by injury. But as in the games against Aodh Ruadh, the experienced players on the Killybegs side came up trumps, especially when things were going badly. For Ardara, their second half performance was hard to believe. Players who had lifted them in times of trouble in the last two games just could not find the rhythm.

Killybegs - David Meehan, Brian Conaghan, Denis Carbery, Anthony Boyle, Peter McGinley (0-01), Barry McGowan (0-03), Trevor McNern, John Bán Gallagher (0-01), John Cunningham, Shane McGuinness, Barry Cunningham, Paul Callaghan (0-01), Conor Whyte, Manus Boyle (1-05 - 4 frees), Jimmy Whyte. Sub - Mark Boyle for Denis Carbery (half-time).

Ardara - Conor Curran, Niall O'Donnell, John Kennedy, Ted Breslin, Sean Whyte, Pauric Brennan, Aodh Brennan, Damien Diver, Martin Gavigan, Michael Doherty, Conal Doherty (1-01), Don Early (0-01), Jimmy Brennan, Luke Gavigan (0-02), Jonathon Boyle (0-04 - three frees). Sub - Patrick Gallagher (0-01) for Jimmy Brennan.

Referee - Pat Curley (Milford)
£6,700 gate

Sunday evening's replay was attended by one of the largest crowds ever at a quarter final tie, with a gate of £6,700.00 and this added to the two previous gates of £3,195.00 and £2,825.00 meant that the total receipts for the tie were almost £13,000.00. It is estimated that there were about 2,700 paying spectators going through the turnstiles, but the total figure must have been close on 4,000 when players, mentors and children are taken into account.

Manus Boyle was the most consistent over the three games scoring 0-06, 0-07 and 1-05 to leave him the top marksman, while Jonathon Boyle notched 0-16 for Ardara.

It was another case of "What if?" for the Senior team and its loyal band of supporters. "It wasn't meant to be for Ardara in this decade." seemed to be the conclusion most people took from the Championship story of the nineties to date. Playing five matches in the Championship in any year would mean at least reaching a County final. Killybegs went on to win their fifth Championship by defeating their other neighbour, Kilcar, in the semi-final (by a point), and Naomh Columba in the final (also by a point). No one could say that they didn't do it the hard way. As for Ardara it was back to the drawing board again. The team finished out the League, with little fuss and no honours, but in a highly creditable runners-up position to the winners, Dungloe. During the year Damian Diver made his Ulster Senior Championship debut in the game against Down, playing at right half back, and played regularly in Donegal's run to the National League final, when they were defeated by Derry.

No joy for Reserves

The Reserve team of 1996 still had the bulk of the panel available from the previous year, but they failed to reach the same heights in competition. They made an early exit from the Gaeltacht competition, losing to Downings in the first round. In the Senior Reserve Championship, they accounted for Glenfin in the first round over two matches, 0-18 to 2-3 in Pearse Memorial, and 4-12 to 1-5 in the away leg in Glenfin. The team exited at the quarter-final stage, though, losing to Aodh Ruadh by 1-6 to 0-4 after a very poor display in Tirconaill Park. In Division 1 Reserve League, the Club team was fairly consistent and finished in the top four of the table, winning 9 games, losing two, and drawing three matches, thus qualifying for the Shield. In the final of the Shield they played St.Eunan's, in a game which didn't take place until March 1997. St.Eunan's won on a 2-12 to 1-7 scoreline.

The Ardara team that day was as follows:

Leonard Molloy, Leo Breslin, Conal McLoone, Pauric Brennan, Kevin Byrne, Adrian Brennan, Peter Watters, John O'Donnell, Thady Breslin, Francis Diver, Seamus McGuinness, Joseph Brennan, John M.Byrne, Steven Gildea, Kieran Keeney. Sub used: Joseph Doherty.

Juniors reach County final

The success story of the Junior team continued in 1996 when they qualified for the final of the Junior 'B' Championship and the semi-finals of the Division 4 League. In the Junior 'B' final, Kilcar were the opponents, in Fintra, and proved to be the better team, winning on a 2-11 to 1-5 scoreline. Playing in Division 4 South of the League, Ardara was in the unusual situation of having to be careful **not** to be promoted to Division 3 of the League. After finishing second in their section, they played Malin's first team in the semi-final. In a close match in MacCumhaill Park,

the Inishowen men ran out winners to clinch a spot in the higher grade. James McHugh was player-manager of the team and he was assisted by Vinny McConnell and Jackie Gallagher.



The Junior team that lost in the County Junior 'B' final in 1996.

Back L-R: James Doherty, James McHugh, Eamon Diver, Joseph Boyle, Malachy Gallagher, Brian Herron, Leonard Molloy, Neil Gallagher, Daragh Curran, Kevin Byrne, Conal Gildea, Paddy Breslin.

Front: L-R: Jackie Gallagher, John Watters, Mark Whyte, Mark Cassidy, Johnathan Herron, Conor O'Donnell, Paul Melly, Martin McCabe, Frank McGhee, Jackie McHugh, Seamie McGuinness.

Juveniles take fourth County title.

The winning of the County U-16 Championship was undoubtedly one of the highlights of the 1996. The team was well guided by managers, James McHugh and Noel Watters, in a campaign, which saw them dominate the South-West Division before defeating Naomh Columba in the Divisional final. They then defeated Carndonagh in the quarter-final and had a walkover against Cloughaneely in the semi-final, thus qualifying for the County final against Aodh Ruadh. The game was fixed for Towney, where Ardara had won their last title in the grade in 1989.

Heena magnificent as Ardara spirit is rewarded Ardara 2-10 to Aodh Ruadh 1-09

Five points behind on two occasions, Ardara showed all their fighting qualities to come from behind and win their third County U-16 title when they overcame Aodh Ruadh in Towney on Sunday evening. And they can thank their star forward, Fergal Heena for their recovery. Red-headed Heena with a final tally of 1-08 was the real difference between the sides as the Aodh Ruadh defence were unable to curb his straight running, especially in the second half.

Heena was not part of the Donegal U-16 team in the recent Ted Webb competition and one wonders why? There was just a point between the sides with five minutes left on the clock. Ardara leading, and inside two minutes Heena hit the target three times to effectively end the game in Ardara's favour, and when Gareth Blake reduced the margin to three points with two minutes left, Heena hit back once more to fittingly have the final score on the stroke of time and give his side a comfortable four point victory.

The opening quarter was dominated by Gareth Blake with pointed frees in the opening ten minutes, one from a sideline 35 m from goal. Blake made the running for a fourth point from Paddy Travers and after 18 minutes of almost total Aodh Ruadh dominance, Blake finished their fifth point with his left foot under pressure. But, Ardara finished the half much better. Half-back, Aidan McHugh, showing the way with their first point in the 22nd minute and a minute later, Fergal Heena made his first real contribution, finishing to the Aodh Ruadh net to reduce the deficit to just two points. Three minutes later Heena cut in from the left and hit the post but just before half-time, Shane Ward pointed to leave the half-time score: Aodh Ruadh 0-06, Ardara (1-01).

Three minutes into the second half, Gareth Blake gave the Ballyshannon side a five point advantage once more, cutting in from the wing to fire home a great goal. Fergal Heena replied with a pointed free but again Blake finished a move started in the defence by O'Reilly in the 36th minute. But it was Ardara who began to show the fighting spirit. Two points from play followed from Heena in the 19th and 40th minute and three minutes later he added another from a free. Full-forward, Paddy Gallagher, who was a handful throughout for the Aodh Ruadh defence, pointed on the 43rd minute and a minute later Heena placed a free beautifully in front of Gallagher to find the

Ballyshannon net and suddenly a five point deficit was turned into a two point advantage.

Shane McShea reduced the margin to the minimum with fourteen minutes left before Heena took control again in the final five minutes, as described earlier. Overall, it was a closely contested final and at times, due to the refereeing, it was not pretty, but Ardara will not be worried by that. They showed the fighting qualities necessary on the day and in Heena they discovered a player of real class.

Ardara - Peter Yates, Paddy McHugh, John Kennedy, Declan Breslin, Aidan McHugh (0-01), Seamus Byrne, Gareth Herron, Conor O'Donnell, Darren Maguire, Stephen Watters, Brendan Boyle, Barry O'Brien, Fergal Heena (1-08), Paddy Gallagher (1-01), Brendan McNelis. Subs - Matthew Whyte for Brendan McNelis (half-time).

Aodh Ruadh - Carl O'Brien, Brian Merrifield, Paul Downey, Philip O'Reilly, Patsy Quinn, Damien McGrath, Enda McFadden, Shane McShea (0-01), Michael Gurn, Shane Ward (0-01), Phillip McLoone, Gareth Blake (1-06 - 2 frs), Patrick Dannagher, Donal Hannigan, Paddy Travers (0-01). Sub - Anthony Boyle for Brian Merrifield.

Referee - Jim Brennan (Dungloe)



John McConnell presents the John McFadden memorial cup to Fergal Heena. Also in photo is Aodh Ruadh captain, Michael Gurn, and Referee Jim Brennan

County Minor Chairman, John McConnell, presented the Ardara Captain, Fergal Heena with the cup after the match, and it was fitting that the Ardconnell man was on the receiving end after a brilliant individual display. James McHugh and Noel Watters had worked extremely hard all season to reach their goal and the team had responded in the best way possible to repay their loyalty.



Ardara Under-16 team 1996 County Champions.

Back L-R: Noel Watters, Brian McGill, Declan Breslin, Darren Maguire, Brendan McNelis, Patrick Gallagher, Peter Yates, John Kennedy, Alan Elliott, Brendan Boyle, Gareth Herron, Conor O'Donnell.

Front L-R: Marty Herron, Barry O'Brien, Daniel Cunningham, Seamus Byrne, Fergal Heena, David McDyre, Patrick McHugh, Paul Collum, Aidan McHugh, Finbarr Boyle, Matthew Whyte, Stephen Watters

Other grades

In the other grades, the closest the Club came to a County title was at Under-13 level. This team, managed by John Boyle and Paddy McGill, qualified for the County final but were defeated by a strong Four Masters' side by 4-8 to 2-5. The team had gone one step further from the previous year at Under-12 and were undoubtedly on the right road toward success in future years.



Ardara Under-13 Team - Championship finalists 1996.

Back L-R: Kenneth Doherty, Darren McNelis, Cian O'Donnell, Eamon Boyle, Cathal McGill, Liam Cagney, Johnny McGill, Fintan O'Donnell, Cathal Watters, Francis Herron, John Boyle, Liam McGill, Gerard McCabe, Martin Sweeney.

Front L-R: Enda Gallagher, Kieran Whelan, Tommy Feeney, Peter Boyle, Stephen Nicholson, Johnny Herron, Dessie O'Brien, Stephen McHugh, Derek Boyle, Patrick Gallagher, Gareth Concarr.

The Under-10 grade had been expanding in recent years, and 1996 was no exception. 'A' and 'B' teams were again fielded in the South Blitzes, with the 'A' team finishing second on no less than four occasions, while the 'B' team won four tournaments during the year. A very successful Parish League was also held, with Kevin Gallagher's team winning the trophy.

Two teams were again fielded at Under-12 level. They were up against strong opposition in the South-West, but competed well throughout and finished fourth in the South-West League.

The Under-14 team battled hard in 1996 but with little success; they were defeated by Gweedore, in a play off match, after qualifying from the South-West Division.

The Minor team had a disappointing campaign; they were defeated in the South-West final by Naomh Columba, and in the County quarter-final by Four Masters. The team had a very enjoyable outing in October, when they travelled to the St. Finian's Club, in Dublin, to which Aidan McGill (Edergole) was attached. The trip was sponsored by donations from his brother Manus, who resided in Detroit, U.S.A. Managers of the team were Eugene Bennett and John Boyle.

The Under-21 team lost to Naomh Columba in a first round play-off, to end their hopes for another year.

75th Anniversary Celebrations

To commemorate another landmark in the Club's history, it was decided to organise a gala week of celebrations to mark the 75th birthday of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael in the parish of Ardara. Between the 28th July and the 4th August, a programme of events was organised for both young and old of the parish to celebrate the major contribution the Club had made to the community. The earlier



Chairman, Columba Diver, presents the only living survivor from the first club meeting, Barney Keeney with an inscribed mirror, during the Club's 75th anniversary celebrations

part of the week was dedicated to the youth of the area, with boys and girls between the ages of 10 and 14 taking part in various mini-leagues, which were run off on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. Over 120 children participated, overall. Medals were presented to all the children at a special Disco, on the Thursday night, which was organised by the Club Minor Board.

For the Adults, Wednesday night saw a G.A.A. Quiz in Doherty's Bar where

local 'experts' were quizzed on their knowledge of local and national G.A.A topics. Some controversial questions, with a local flavour, generated plenty of heated debate with some very "smart" answers coming from the floor. On Friday, there was a Pitch & Putt Classic for members and past players, with 60 taking part at the excellent Sandfield Course. Martin Sweeney took the honours for the seasoned golfers while Patsy Gildea captured the Beginners' Prize and John Kennedy of Doohill won the Juvenile Award.



The 1981 Senior team pictured before their re-match 15 years on, against Four Masters'
Back L-R: Frank O'Donnell, Anthony Harkin, Connie Molloy, John Boyle, Patsy Harkin,
Kieran Keeney, Noel Watters, Gerard McNelis, Eddie McLoone,
Martin Sweeney, Charlie Mooney.
Front L-R: Anthony Molloy, Frank McGhee, Patsy Gildea, Seamus Gallagher, Eamon
Watters, John Herron, Eamon McNelis, Paul Brennan and Conal Aidan Gildea

The highlights of the week were reserved for Saturday and Sunday. On Saturday, the Club organised a re-play of the 1981 Senior County final against Four Masters', with the same players taking the stage, albeit a little greyer and heavier. The Donegal town men gladly accepted the challenge and both teams rose to the task of reliving past memories. The teams played out an entertaining draw, 2-11 to 1-14, then retired to the Greenhouse after the match to renew old acquaintances, reminisce about the eighties and tell some tall tales. The Man of the Match award was presented to Eamon Watters, who showed that he had lost none of his old speed or soloing ability.

The grand finale, planned for Sunday night, was a Dinner Dance in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel. The Club had decided to honour three famous teams from the past which had made important breakthroughs in the Club's history, the 1952 Minor Championship winning team, the Schoolboy team of 1962, and the 1981 Senior Championship side. A huge effort was made by all the players to attend the function, with people travelling from all over Ireland, England and even from the

U.S.A. A specially inscribed and framed scroll, which was commissioned by the Club, was presented to each player. Other presentations were made; to John Keeney, who had returned from America for the occasion and was honoured for the great impact he had on the Club in the '50s and '60s; to Charlie Mooney for his efforts in the '70s and '80s; and to Barney Keeney, the only surviving member of the first Club meeting which was held in 1921. The night was a huge success; a worthy climax to the huge effort that Club officers had put into organising the whole week's programme. For many former players, it was the first chance they had to catch up with their old team-mates. Some had not met for up on thirty years or more, and it was a night to remember for all concerned, with many contacting the Club in the weeks following, to record their appreciation.



Surviving members of the 1952 Minor team who were presented with scrolls at the 75th anniversary celebrations

Back L-R: Vinny Herron, Pat McGee, John Keeney, Pat Brennan, Packie Maguire, Dan McCole (On behalf of Neilly), Vincent McConnell, Charlie Bennett.

Front L-R: Kenneth Boyle, James Max McNelis, Thomas Breslin, Harry Lavery, Paul Breslin (On behalf of Peter) and Bart Whelan (on behalf of the late Donal).



The 1962 Under-14 Champions with their scrolls at the Club 75th anniversary celebration.

Back: L-R: Francis Campbell (On behalf of Jimmy), Charlie O'Donnell, Paddy McGill, Eamon McNelis, Tony Breslin, Lochlann McGill, Frank O'Donnell, Brian O'Donnell (on behalf of Rory).

Sitting L-R: John M. O'Donnell, Frankie Campbell, Patsy Gildea, Maire Dunleavy, (on behalf of Cathal McGill) Charlie Maloney.

McHugh and Brennan win Ulster Minor Championship and All Ireland Vocational School medals

Aodh Brennan from Doohill, and Peter McHugh from Drumbohill, picked up their second All Ireland Vocational Schools' medal in 1996, equalling Luke Gavigan's record of 2 All Ireland V.S. medals won in 1984/85. Aodh played at full forward, and Peter in the corner beside him in the final against Kerry, when Donegal won on a 2-13 to 3-9 scoreline. The team had defeated Fermanagh, Cavan and Wicklow on the way to the final.

It was a busy year for the two boys, who were also key members of Anthony Molloy's County Minor team that won Donegal's first Ulster title in the grade since



1991. In the Championship they defeated Down (4-8 to 1-5), Monaghan (4-15 to 0-2 – Peter with three goals), and Antrim (4-20 to 1-2) on the way to the final. In the Ulster final against Derry, Donegal took the title after a replay in Omagh, 0-9 to 1-5. Peter played at corner forward, while Aodh came on, only as a sub in that match, after lining out in the previous encounter.

Aodh and Peter, pictured along with Martin McHugh at the 1996 Dinner Dance, where they received a presentation on behalf of the club, for their achievements in 1996

In the All Ireland semi-final, against Laois, a terrible start left Donegal playing catch up, with Laois leading 2-5 to 0-4 at half time. Aodh Brennan came in at the break, and, playing at wing half back, sparked off a Donegal revival with some great runs at the Laois defence, one of which he finished off to the Laois net, to give Donegal a great chance of victory. Time ran out on the team though, and Laois came out on top by a point, 2-8 to 1-10. It was Donegal's best chance of qualifying for the All Ireland Minor final, a feat never before achieved by the County.

On other County teams, Darren Maguire and John Kennedy played for the County U-16 Team, while Brian McGill was goalkeeper for the County U-15 team. On County Ladies' teams Patricia Mannering and Maria Diver played for the Donegal Under-14 team against Fermanagh in the Ulster final, which Donegal won on a score of 6-13 to 3-10. On the day Maria scored 0-04.

The only other County reps that year were Charlene Kennedy and Caroline McHugh, both of whom continued to play for the Donegal Ladies' Junior team.



**The St. Mary's National School team 1996,
which won the County Cumann na mBunscol title.**
**Back: Natalie Gildea, Catherine McNelis, Lorraine McBrearty, Mairead Brennan,
Noreen Gallagher, Tara Sweeney.**
**Front: Lucy Byrne, Ellen Jane Breslin, Maura McHugh, Maria Diver,
Marie Gallagher , Carrie O'Donnell.**

Pádraig S. becomes County G.A.A President.

Club President, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, received his greatest honour at the beginning of the year, when he became the first lay person to be elected President of the G.A.A in the County. Hitherto the Bishop of Raphoe had always been elected as the Uachtarán, but at the Convention in Killybegs, Bishop Philip Boyce was elected to the position of Patron, and Pádraig was elected President. It was a fitting tribute to the work he had done for the Association in both Club and County. At the same convention, John McConnell was elected as P.R.O of the Board, having completed a three-year term as Minor Board Chairman, while 'fixtures man', Edward Molloy, was re-elected Assistant Secretary.

At the Annual Dinner Dance, Martin McHugh was Guest of Honour before a packed house in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel. The Under-16 players who won the County Championship were presented with their County medals, while the following won the annual Club Awards:

Senior Player of the Year: Ted Breslin.

Reserve Player of the Year: Stephen Gildea.

Junior Player of the Year: Kevin Byrne.

Ladies' Player of the Year: Grainne Diver.
Minor Player of the Year: Aodh Brennan.
Club Person of the Year: Columba Diver.
Hall of Fame: Andy McHugh.
Special Award: Stephen Campbell



Columba Diver makes a presentation to Stephen Campbell at the 1996 Dinner Dance. Stephen was honoured for his service to the Club in the 1970s both as a player and as one of the hardest Club workers of that time. Living in London since 1981, Stephen has given a home to many young Ardara men who have travelled to London over the years, and is a past player and Club Secretary with Tirconail Gaels.



Andy McHugh of Leaconnell is presented with the Hall of Fame award by Charlie Bennett. Andy first played on the Junior team of 1935, and went on to play for the Senior team in the 1936 and 1938 County finals. Andy was also on the 1943 Democrat Cup winning team, and played for Donegal Junior team in the forties. Andy played all his football in the half back line, and was an extremely proud recipient of the award.



Columba Diver and John McConnell present John Keeney with an award for his work for the Club in the fifties and sixties.

1996 A.G.M

The 1996 A.G.M of the Club took place in Peter Oliver's Lounge on the 26th of January 1997 with 68 members present. The Secretary reported on what he viewed was a successful year, with the 75th anniversary celebrations, the Juvenile Championship victory, and the provision of a new practice pitch at the Pearse Memorial Park, as some of the main highlights. He singled out the Club Chairman for his huge efforts with regard to the work on the new pitch and also the contribution made by Hugh Gerard Gavigan on the machinery end of things, not forgetting the workers on the F.A.S scheme. On the Senior team's exit from the Championship, he felt that regardless of how disappointing it was, the display against Killybegs offered great hope for the future. He was highly critical of the suspension of Damian Diver who was, along with five other Donegal players, suspended for playing in New York in October. He labelled the suspension 'ridiculous', and hoped it would not affect what should be the beginning of a long inter-county career. He also sympathised with the families who had suffered bereavements during the year, and in particular the Breslin family on the death of Ted Senior who had been a great Club supporter and worker, since the 1950s.

On finance, Larry Gallagher, presented his first report as Treasurer, showing a total income of £35,777.94 of which £20,954 was from the Flotto. Expenditure ran at £48,416.67, of which £6,767.00 arose in connection with the Flotto. The main reason for the deficit was a sum of £16,000.00, which had been spent on work on the new practice pitch in Pearse Memorial Park. The total of all Club accounts showed funds in hand of £16,007.00. A discussion ensued with regard to the

possible need for a big Club draw, but it was agreed that with a slightly greater effort, the Flotto would be more than adequate to fund the Club.

The following officers were elected for 1997:

President	-	Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill
Vice President	-	Tommy Boyle
Chairman	-	Columba Diver
Vice Chairman	-	James McHugh
Secretary	-	John McConnell
Ass. Sec	-	Mary McHugh
Treasurer	-	Larry Gallagher
Asst.Treasurer	-	Michael Breslin
P.R.O	-	Pauric Brennan
Oifigeach na Gaelige	-	Seán Mícheál Ó Domhnaill
Scor Officer	-	Fr. Martin Doohan
Senior Team Manager	-	Josie Gallagher
Reserve Team Manager	-	John Boyle
Junior Team Manager	-	James McHugh
Under-21 Managers	-	Johnny D.Earley and Sean Brennan

At the Minor Board A.G.M the following officers were elected:

Chairman:	James McBrearty
Vice Chairman:	Conal Doherty
Secretary:	James McHugh
Treasurer:	Declan Brennan
Registrar:	John Martin Byrne
P.R.O:	Fergal Heena

Under-Age Managers:

Under-10:	John McConnell, Francis Diver, Michael Breslin, John Hegarty and Shaun Whyte.
Under-12/13:	John Michael O'Donnell, Vinny McConnell and Declan Brennan.
Under-13/14:	John Boyle, Paddy McGill, Cathal McGill.
Under-16:	Conal Doherty, Thady Breslin, Brian McGill.
Minor:	James McHugh, Noel Watters.

1997- The death of Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill



The biggest story of 1997 was, unfortunately, one of sadness, when, on the 9th of May, the death occurred, after illness, of Club and County G.A.A President, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill. His contribution to Cumann Lúthchleas Gael was unequalled, from his first involvement in the '30s, as a Committee member and a noted footballer, to his final position as President of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael in both Club and County.



Paddy pictured in his playing days in the 1930s

Pádraig or 'Big Paddy', as he was more commonly known, the eldest son of Thomas and Mary McGill (nee Shovlin), was born in Scadaman in 1913. His parents, who were both native Irish speakers, instilled a love of the language in their oldest boy; a value that he carried through his long life. He attended Brackey N.S as a young boy. It was to be his destiny to finish his teaching career as Headmaster at the same school. His first Headmaster was the legendary Seán Ó Casaide, former Club and County Chairman, and Treasurer, of the '20s and '30s. His first contact with the administration of the G.A.A was as a young boy writing out notices of County Board Meetings for his Master. His secondary schooling took him to St. Enda's in Galway and from there to St Patrick's

Teacher Training College in Drumcondra, where he completed his teaching studies. In his first month in College in Galway he played in the Connaught Junior Colleges' Championship in 1928, and again in 1929. In Dublin, in 1930 and 1931, he played in the Leinster Senior Colleges' Championship and claims to be the first Ardara player to play in Croke Park. In 1931/32, he played Dublin Junior Championship Football with Erin's Hope, and played in the Senior Championship the following year.

When Pádraig qualified as a teacher, he took up an appointment as Principal of Meentinadea N.S. on July 8th, 1934. In 1952, he was transferred to Brackey N.S., where he remained until his retirement in 1979. After taking up appointment in Meentinadea N.S., he became involved in organising Parish Leagues in the Club for the first time. This catered for up to 30 men and boys, and, in conjunction with this development, a Camogie team was organised with 30 girls taking part. Shortly afterwards he extended the movement to the school children, with the provision of subsidised hurleys and camogie sticks.

His playing career for Ardara began as a member of the Junior team in the Championship of 1934. In 1935, he was again part of that team that lost the County Junior final against Gweedore in Magheragallon on 23rd December. From 1936 to 1953, he played for Ardara, usually at centre-field, and played in the 1936 County Senior final against Dungloe and in the 1938 decider against Gweedore. He first appeared in South-West Divisional, County Junior, and County Senior teams in 1937, when the Dr. Lagan Cup was won for the second time. He also appeared in many Donegal teams up to 1948. Despite his great service as a player, his only County medal came as a member of the Democrat Cup winning team of 1943. Paddy also had a great love of handball and played in alleys in Talbot Street and St. Pats, Drumcondra, during his time in College in Dublin. In 1943 he was invited by the Glenties G.A.A. Club to play a challenge tournament, as part of the official opening of the newly constructed alley. Together with the Leinster Champion, Lorcan Byrne of Kilkenny, they defeated Thomas Brennan of Glenties and John Boyle of the Reelin Bridge in the best of five games. He also played

hurling, a game he had been familiar with from his native townland, where it was traditionally played. During his playing career, he was also a well-known referee and officiated in many games in the forties and fifties in the South-West Division.



Paddy, Packie John Gildea, and Tommy Boyle pictured at the 1981 dinner dance

Despite a long and distinguished playing career, Big Paddy will mostly be remembered for his work as life long administrator for Cumann Luthchleas Gael.

His long career as an Ardara Club officer began as Secretary in 1945-1947. He went on to serve as Chairman (1956-65), Secretary again from 1970-73 and 1975, and was chosen to be the first Club P.R.O. in 1975, a post he held until 1978. As Club Chairman, he, along with John Keeney, was instrumental in 1959 in setting up the first Schoolboy Leagues in the parish. The decision had long lasting implications, not only for the G.A.A in the parish, but in the County as a whole. The success of the Ardara Schoolboys League resulted in the formation of the County Schoolboy Board in 1961, as a result of an Ardara motion to County Convention. The first Schoolboy (Under-14) Championship was run in 1962, Ardara being the first winners. Pádraig was elected first Chairman of that Board, and remained in the position until 1968, when the County Minor Board took over the responsibility for Under-Age football in the County.

Although sitting on the Club committee from the early thirties, his first official G.A.A. post was as Secretary of the South-West Divisional Board from 1936 to 1939, a position he also held from 1945 to 1947. He acted as Chairman of the Board in the '50's and '60's. Having attended his first County Convention in 1936, his first involvement with the County Board came in 1937, when he was elected County Registrar, and thus started a link with C.L.C.G. Dún na nGall that lasted for the next sixty years. He held the Registrar's position for two years, and held it again in 1947/48. In the years following, he served in many different capacities for the County Board, including Ulster Council delegate and Central Council delegate, and rose to the position of County Chairman in 1967, a position he held for one



Paddy and County Board Vice President Tom Farren from Carndonagh.

year. In the same decade, he also held the position of selector for the County team, as well as being Chairman of the Parks and Finance Committees. During his involvement with the County Board, he worked with 23 different County Chairmen of that time. He held the major distinction of having attended 59 Donegal G.A.A conventions, a feat which will probably never be equalled.

He attended his first National Congress in 1940, and, of the 27 Presidents of the G.A.A., knew personally and worked closely with no fewer than 17 of them. He went on to serve as Vice-President of the Association in the County in the eighties, and held the post until he was elected to be the first lay person to hold the position of President at the County Convention in Killybegs in 1996; an honour and a recognition indeed!

One of Pádraig's pet projects was the development of Pearse Memorial Park, and he was involved in so many different ways throughout the years in the purchase, planning, and work on the field in Kentucky. Indeed anyone unfortunate enough to call the field by anything other than its official name, was quickly rebuked by the big man, who was proud both of his own involvement and of the legacy of Pádraig Pearse, in memory of whom the field was named. He spent many days at the pitch with Joe Larry, Charlie Mooney and others, digging drains, and removing huge pieces of bog oak from the field to leave it in a fit state to play on.

1984 was a busy year for him, as Cumann Lúthchleas Gael celebrated 100 years of proud existence. Pádraig served as P.R.O. for the County Centenary Committee that year and was also part of the Ulster History Committee, which published the 'Ulster Story', a chronicle of the history of the G.A.A in the nine counties. He attended the official opening of Centenary Year at Michael Cusack's Cottage in Clare as well as attending the annual G.A.A. Congress in Belfast. But the highlight of the year for Pádraig was undoubtedly the honour he was accorded as Centenary "Clubman of the Year". He was presented with a specially inscribed scroll by Pádraig ó Bogaigh, the G.A.A. National President.

Paddy had a highly successful personal life and, following his marriage to Nan (Dunleavy), raised a family of four sons, Manus, Aidan, Enda and Declan, and two daughters, Maureen (Houston) and Fidelma (Carron), at their home in Edergole. All Paddy's sons followed in their father's footsteps and played for County teams at various levels.

His involvement with the Parish of Ardara was not limited to the G.A.A, and he served on many local voluntary committees, notably the Parish Council, St. Vincent De Paul, South West Donegal Show Society, Comhaltas Ceoiltoirí Éireann, Muintiur Na Gaeilge and the Pioneer Total Abstinence Association. One of his proudest boasts, as a member of the latter, was his gold pin, which he was awarded for being 50 years a Pioneer. His biggest notable achievement outside of C.L.G however, was being elected as a Fine Gael County Councillor in 1950 for the Glenties Electoral Area, a position he held until 1960, and he was involved in bringing many important developments to the Parish in that time.

Bhí Pádraig ina chainteoir agus níl aon chuimhne agam ar ócáid ar bith nach i nGaeilge a raibh ár gcomhrá le na chéile. Bhí Pádraig ina Chathaóirleach ar Choiste Dhún na nGall de ‘Muintir na Gaeltachta’ – an ghluaiseacht a bhunaigh Peadar Ó Ceallaigh chun an Ghaeilge a chaomhnú agus a spreagadh. Bhí dlúthbhaint aige leis ‘An Ghaeltacht Bheo’ agus le ‘Glór na nGael’. Bhí cruinneas agus gontacht le sonrú ina chuid scríbhneoireachta, agus bród agus éirí in áirde le tabhairt faoi deara nuair a bhí imeacht Gaelach ar bith á eagrú. Thug sé tuaraisc ar imeachtaí Gaelacha sa Chlub gach uile bhliain dúinn.

Following his retirement in 1979, Paddy spent most of his time researching and compiling the History of C.L.G in both Club and County. He travelled religiously to the Democrat offices in Ballyshannon each week, and scoured the archives and papers from their earliest publications. He wrote hundreds of pages of notes and, together with his son in law, Sean Houston, printed out the relevant articles or match reports from each year from the 1930s onwards as far as 1970. He had worked on the project right up to his death, and it is to his honour that this project is dedicated.



**Paddy receives the Hall of Fame Award in 1992 from Anthony Molloy.
On the right is Nan and son Enda**

Pádraig was buried on Sunday the 11th of May, and his remains were brought to the Church of the Holy Family, flanked by a G.A.A. Guard of Honour on both sides, from his house to the Chapel. Following the Memorial Service, his remains were interred in the local cemetery. Partalón Ó Faoláin gave an oration at his graveside on behalf of C.L.C.G. Ard a’Rátha.

Big Paddy had moved on, and had left a huge legacy in his wake. A tall, staunch figure of a man, he was easily moved to tears. This was often visible when his native Ardara won a Championship, when he spoke of great Gaels of the past, and of course when Donegal won their first All Ireland in 1992, the same year he was inducted into the Ardara G.A.A Hall of Fame.

Go ndéanfaidh Dia trócaire ar a anam dhílis.

Second half come-back gives Minors their sixth title

The highlight for the Club on the playing field in 1997, was the capturing of the Club's sixth Minor Championship title. Under the management of James McHugh and Noel Watters, who had led the Juvenile team of 1996 to victory, the Minors were fortunate to qualify from the South-West Division, coming out in third place after a difficult campaign, which saw the team suffer through injuries and suspensions. They peaked at the right time, however, and they proceeded to account for Gweedore, Four Masters', Termon and Kilcar, to qualify for the County final against St. Eunan's. The match was played on the 9th of November in MacCumhaill Park.

Minor Championship Final Bennett turns the tide in favour of Ardara Ardara 0-12 St Eunan's 0-08

An incredible turnaround in the last seven minutes of play saw Ardara come from two points down to defeat St Eunan's by four points in the final of the Minor Championship at MacCumhaill Park, Ballybofey, on Sunday.

It was a miraculous recovery by the South West side, who were completely dominated in the first half and were lucky to be trailing by just five points at the interval. St Eunan's could easily have had a much great half-time lead. They were denied by a great save by Peter Yates from Vernon Gallagher in the 15th minute and they also fired seven wides. Despite that, they looked so comfortably in control in that first half, that nobody really give Ardara much of chance of staging a comeback.

Enter Martin Bennett. The Ardara bench made their substitution three minutes from the end of normal time in the first half with Bennett, a member of this year's County Minor Panel, coming in for Stephen Watters. Troubled by injury all year, Bennett was expected to play twenty minutes, but

Ardara's plight meant an earlier introduction.

He did not see much of the action at the end of the first half, but his second half display was the main reason why Ardara won this match. Moved to the '40' at the start of the second period, Bennett began winning breaks, and his forceful runs changed the pattern of the game. Earlier, Ciaran Doherty had been coping with some ease in the position against Fergal Heena, but he moved with Heena to corner-forward and subsequently the Eunan's defence lost their balance.

The first half lacked any sparkle, especially from Ardara. Eunan's dominated everywhere, especially down the middle with Doherty, Karol Kerrane and Brendan Roache very prominent. Points from Kevin Rafferty, Paul McGinley and a lovely score from Kerrane had the Letterkenny side three points ahead after nine minutes. Ardara's first point came in the 13th minute, Peter Yates initiating the move finished by Pádraig Gallagher.

Eunan's could have found a goal in the 15th minute, but Peter Yates made a great stop to deny Vernon Gallagher at the expense of a '45'. There may have been some justice in the save as Gallagher seemed to have fouled full back, Eamon Diver, prior to receiving the pass. From the '45' Ciaran Doherty launched a great point for Eunan's.

Mark Whyte had Ardara's only other score of the opening half from a 17th minute free, as St Eunan's piled on the pressure and points followed from Garvan Mulligan, Odhran McGowan and Joe Mullin before the end of the half.

Half-time: St Eunan's 0-07 Ardara 0-01.

The second half tempo was noticeably higher from the throw-in and Conor O'Donnell won a free for Mark Whyte to point after 33 minutes. At the other end, Yates was again in action stopping a Jamie Murphy effort in the 36th minute. A foul on Fergal Heena gave Mark Whyte his second score in the 38th minute and St Eunan's 'keeper, Ronan Ferry made a point blank save from Kevin Byrne two minutes later. Jamie Murphy increased the margin to four points again with a point in the 44th minute but incredibly that was to be the final score for the Letterkenny men.

A minute later a great run from Darren Maguire through the middle yielded a free from which Whyte pointed, and two minutes later John Kennedy put Kevin Byrne through to draw another foul as he released the ball to Matthew Whyte. Although the younger Whyte put the ball in the net, the play was called back and Mark Whyte pointed the free to reduce the margin to two, 0-08 to 0-06.

St Eunan's could have sealed a win in the 52nd minute when Garvan Mulligan put Brendan Roache clear with a great ball. However, Ardara 'keeper Peter Yates closed down Roache and made another great stop. Ardara midfielder, Maguire won another free in the 58th minute for Mark Whyte to reduce the margin to the minimum, and St Eunan's world fell asunder as the kickout went straight to Pádraig Gallagher who fired over the equaliser.

Letterkenny substitute Martin McCauley was penalised for over-carrying a minute

later and Mark Whyte put Ardara in front for the first time. Then came two points in a row from Fergal Heena, while it was fitting that Martin Bennett had the final score in the 64th minute. Ardara's second half performance was worthy of victory but for Letterkenny players like Ronan McClafferty, Ciaran Doherty, Karol Kerrane, Brendan Roache and Joe Mullen, it must have been difficult to accept defeat. Half-forward Odhran McGowan just could not accept, as he reacted to the referee's decision against him after a sliding tackle two minutes into added time and was sent off.

For Ardara, midfielders Darren Maguire and Conor O'Donnell were brilliant in the second half; Mark Whyte's accuracy from frees was all important; Matthew Whyte and James Doherty also played their part; the Byrnes and Eamon Diver were excellent in defence, but without the leadership of Martin Bennett, I doubt if they would have been successful.

The Ardara team and scorers were:

Peter Yates, Aidan McHugh, Eamon Diver, John Kennedy, Seamus Byrne, Brendan Boyle, Kevin Byrne, Conor O'Donnell, Darren Maguire, Stephen Watters, Fergal Heena(0-02), James Doherty, Matthew Whyte, Patrick Gallagher(0-02), Mark Whyte (0-07 all frees). Subs used Martin Bennett (0-01) for Stephen Watters, Patrick McHugh, Liam Shovlin, Gareth Herron, Conal Gildea, Brian McGill, Alan Elliot, Brian Herron, Frank Craig and Jonathon Herron.

Referee - Connie O'Gara (Naomh Columba)

Match Facts: Ardara had four wides in the first half and one in the second, while St Eunan's had seven first half wides and seven in the second. Ardara won 38 frees, 15 in the first half. Ardara had two players booked. Eamon Diver (9th min) and Kevin Byrne (57th min). St Eunan's had two booked, Vernon Gallagher (14th) and Karol Kerrane (57th) while Odhran McGowan was sent off in the 62nd minute.

It was a great comeback by the team and a satisfying victory for all concerned. Team captain, Mark Whyte, was presented with Corn Dhomhnaill Mhic a'Bháird after the match amidst great celebration. As a result of the team's win, they had qualified for the Ulster Club Minor tournament, run by the St. Paul's Club in Belfast. In the first round, the team was drawn against the Armagh Champions. In a game, which was similar to the County final, the Armagh boys were much on top in the first half, but a similar second half rally by Ardara just failed to take the honours after reducing a six point deficit down to a point. Pearse Og's eventually won the match 0-12 to 0-8.



County Minor Board Chairman, John Friel, presents Corn Dhomhnaill Mhic a'Bháird to Ardara Captain Mark Whyte after the team's victory.



Ardara Minor team – 1997 County Champions.

Back L-R: James McHugh, Darren Maguire, Fergal Heena, Matthew Whyte, Conor O'Donnell, Peter Yates, Eamon Diver, John Kennedy, Brendan Boyle, Paddy Gallagher, Brian Herron, James Doherty.

Front L-R: Stephen Watters, Seamus Byrne, Johnathan Craig, Alan Elliott, Liam Shovlin, Aidan McHugh, Kevin Byrne, Gareth Herron, Mark Whyte.

Sitting: Frank Craig, Patrick McHugh, Conal Gildea, Martin Bennett, Brian McGill.

Under-21s lose in County final

In the Under-21 grade, a very young Ardara team surprised even the most committed of supporters when they reached the final of the County Championship, following victories over Milford, Naomh Columba and Naomh Conaill. As in the Minor final, St Eunan's were the opponents, but this time the scoreline was not the same. A very young Ardara team had no answer to a powerful Letterkenny outfit, who led at half time by 1-9 to 0-4, before going on to a comprehensive 3-18 to 0-5 victory.

The Ardara team that day was as follows:

Ardara – Conor Curran, Sean Heena, Niall O'Donnell, Conor O'Donnell, Kevin Byrne, Brendan Boyle, Mark Boyle, Aodh Brennan (0-01), Darren Maguire, Conal Doherty, Peter McHugh (0-01), Fergal Heena, Mark Whyte (0-01), Jonathon Boyle (0-02), Stephen Gildea. Subs – Francis Diver for Brendan Boyle, James Doherty for Darren Maguire and John Brennan for Fergal Heena.

Féile na nÓg comes to Donegal

For the first time, the Annual G.A.A Under-14 All Ireland Tournament was held in Donegal in 1997. Over 120 teams took part in Boys' and Girls' competitions, with



Uachtarán C.L.C.G Joe McDonagh addresses the crowd in Pearse Memorial Park on Friday evening at the first round of matches.

the Club entering teams in both. Ardara had a big connection with the Féile, with John McConnell acting as Chairman of the organising Committee, while James McHugh was also a member. James McBrearty acted as the local Féile Officer, which entailed ensuring all local arrangements were covered. The weekend commenced with a gala parade in Ballybofey of all the competing teams, and all the Donegal ones met their visitors. Each visiting club was hosted by a Donegal club. Ardara hosted the Ballinderry Boys from Co. Derry and the Old Parish Girls' team from Co. Waterford.

The weekend turned out to be a great success, and many new friends were made. One of the highlights was the visit of Uachtarán Cumann Lúthchleas Gael, Seosamh Mac Donnacha, who mixed with the teams and supporters on Friday evening at the matches in Pearse Memorial Park and was glowing in his praise of the beautiful setting of the Ardara pitch. A brilliant Ballinderry team was too strong for the local lads and went on to win Division 1 of the Boys' competition. The

Ardara Boys were managed by John Boyle, Paddy McGill and Cathal McGill, while the Girls were led by James McBrearty and Jimmy Boyle. The highlight of the Girls' weekend was Siobhan Heena qualifying for the All-Ireland finals of the 'Skills' competition, where she finished fourth and received a gold medallion for her efforts.

The visitors were extremely appreciative of the hospitality extended to them in the Parish, and hoped that they would some day be able to return the favour.



The Ardara Under-14 Girls Féile team photographed with G.A.A President, Joe McDonagh.

Back L-R: Patricia Boyle, Elaine Boyle, Patti Mannering, Rebecca Watters, Joe McDonagh, Noreen Gallagher, Melissa Maher, Julie-Anne Boyle, Deirdre Breslin, Margaret McHugh.

Front L-R: Mairead Brennan, Jenna Bennett, Leone Diver, Nicola Quinn, Sabrina Diver, Mairead Watters, Siobhan Heena, Eimear Byrne

**Front : Sarah McGill, May Feeney, Grace Doherty, Lorraine Diver, Fiona Elliott
Holding banner: James McBrearty and Jimmy Boyle**



James McBrearty and Jimmy Boyle lead the Ardara teams in the Féile Parade in Ballybofey

In County competitions later in the season, the Ardara Boys were defeated in a Championship play-off by Gweedore, after a re-play, while the Under-14 Girls went to the County final before they were defeated by Four Masters'.

In the other grades, The U-13 team took part in the South-West Championship and reached the County semi-finals before being beaten by Buncrana. Conal Doherty's U-16 team was well depleted from the previous year's County title winning team and failed to qualify from the South-West Division. The U-12 team under the management of John Michael O'Donnell and Vinny McConnell had some great displays in their section but, against some very strong opposition, finished in a mid-table position in the South-West. The B team lost the South-West Reserve final to Na Rossa. The Boys played on after the Championship in a few challenge matches, and in an enjoyable Parish League, which was organised by John M. O'Donnell. Jamie O'Donnell's team were the victors.



County Coach, Paddy Hegarty presents Siobhan Heena with an award for finishing in fourth place in the All Ireland Féile Skills competition in 1997

The Under-10 'A' and 'B' teams took part in the South-West Blitzes with the A team winning four out of the seven tournaments, while the B team were victorious on two occasions. The year culminated for this age group with the annual Parish League, in which Shaun Gallagher's team emerged victorious in a final against Declan Gallagher's team. Those involved at this age group were John McConnell, John Hegarty, Conor O'Donnell, Aodh Brennan and Michael Breslin.

Another highlight of the year for the Minor Board was the first G.A.A Summer Camp in August, when 100 boys and girls from Ardara and Naomh Conaill clubs took part in a week of coaching G.A.A. skills by County Coach Paddy Hegarty and his team. A great week was had by all participants, with the Ardara Camp being one of the biggest in the County.

First round exit for Seniors

Despite the promise shown the previous year, 1997 did not bring any major change in the fortunes of the Senior team. A first round defeat to eventual winners Aodh Rua put paid to their hopes. In the first leg in Fr. Tierney Park, Aodh Ruadh led 1-3 to 1-2 at the interval, Ardara's goal coming from an early Michael Doherty penalty. Aodh Ruadh were much the stronger in the second period and a second

goal gave Aodh Ruadh a 2-08 to 1-05 victory. The Ardara line out that day was: Conor Curran, Eamon Doherty, John Kennedy, Ted Breslin, Aodh Brennan, Sean Whyte, Michael Doherty, Damian Diver, Martin Gavigan (0-1), Conal Doherty (0-1), Jimmy Brennan, Peter McHugh, Patrick Gallagher (0-1), Don Earley, Martin Bennett (0-1). Sub: Luke Brennan for Bennett.

In the return leg in Pearse Memorial, Ardara dominated the first half and led by five points after twelve minutes with Jonathon Boyle and Michael and Conal Doherty getting the bulk of the scores. Things looked better when Aodh Rua were reduced to 14 men when Kieran Keown was sent off, after an off the ball incident with Michael Doherty. Ardara finished the half leading by a score of 0-08 to 0-04.

The second half, though, saw Ardara's world come crashing in, as Aodh Ruadh stuck in four goals to leave no way back for the home team. Aodh Rua won the match on a score of 4-08 to 0-11. Jonathan Boyle was top scorer for Ardara, scoring eight points. Aodh Rua went on to win the Championship following the "Leslie McGettigan affair".

In the County League, the inability to field a full team in important matches was detrimental to their chances, but ironically the team's best period was after their Championship exit when they secured a string of good victories to ensure their continued Senior status. Their final status was 14 points from 14 games. In the 1996 Shield competition, held earlier in the year, Aodh Ruadh defeated Ardara in the final in March by four points. Ardara had earlier defeated Kilcar in the semi-final in February to qualify for the final.

Following an invitation from the Kilmacud Crokes' Club, the team took part in the All Ireland seven a side competition in Dublin, on the All Ireland weekend. They defeated Éire Óg from Carlow and Bantry Blues from Cork before going down to All-Ireland Champions, Crossmaglen, by a goal, in a match in which they put up a great display against a full strength 'Cross' team.

The Reserve team had a mediocre year also, with performances in the League being inconsistent; they finished in sixth place in the table, taking 18 points from 14 games. They suffered the same fate as the Seniors in the Championship, going down in the first round to the Ballyshannon men. Managing the side were John Boyle and Paddy McGill.

Our Junior team, under manager James McHugh, had a fairly consistent season, finishing in third place in Division 4 South while going under to eventual winners, St Eunan's, in the County semi-final of the Junior 'B' Championship.



Ladies' Football

The Ladies' section of the Club kept working away and, despite an early Championship exit to Urris, they provided a number of players for the County Under-Age teams. Caroline McHugh, Charlene Kennedy and Mairead Gallagher played on the Donegal Ladies' Junior team that reached the Ulster final. Michelle Bennett, Mairead Brennan, Patti Mannering, Julie Ann Boyle, Elaine Boyle and Jenna Bennett played on the Donegal U-16 Girls' team.

The St Marys N.S. Girls team, were also successful during the year and won the Cumann na mBunscoil title. They were well managed by Raphael Meehan and defeated the Glencovitt N.S team in the County final in Ballyshannon. The team was: Ellen Jane Breslin, Carrie O'Donnell, Carmel Feeney, Michelle Gallagher, Natalie Gildea, Maura McHugh, Lucy Byrne, Margaret Whyte, Kirsty Sweeney, Rosarie Sweeney, Sinead Sweeney, Carmel Boyle, Melanie Hubbard, M. Gallagher, Catriona Feeney, Catherine Herrity, Bronagh Given and Deana Sweeney.

County reps

Damian Diver again led the way at County level, playing for Donegal Senior team in their run to the National League final, and in the Ulster Championship, where they were defeated by Cavan in the semi-final after defeating Antrim in the first round. In the other grades, Sean Whyte was part of the Donegal U-21 panel, and Fergal Heena and Martin Bennett played on the Donegal Minor team. Brian Óg McGill, John Kennedy and Brendan Boyle played on the Donegal U-16 team, while Lee Watters, Brian McGill and Brendan Boyle were part of the Donegal County U-15 squad. On the Donegal Vocational Schools' team Aodh Brennan, Conor O'Donnell and Martin Bennett were all on the first fifteen on the team that was defeated by Tyrone in the Ulster semi-final.

On the administration side, John McConnell continued as P.R.O of the County Board, as did Edward Molloy as Assistant Secretary. James McHugh was elected Chairman of the South-West Minor Board in 1997.



**Kieran and Mary Keeney
are Guests of Honour
at Dinner Dance**

Kieran Keeney is Guest of Honour

Kieran Keeney, who had transferred to the Four Masters' Club at the beginning of 1997, was selected as the Guest of Honour at the Annual Dinner Dance in December as a tribute to his outstanding service to the home Club as a player and manager. Kieran and his wife Mary were both

presented with tokens of appreciation from the Club and a capacity crowd turned out to honour the popular Glendowan man. In accepting his presentation, he spoke of his love for the Ardara G.A.A. Club and of his appreciation of all who had wished him well on his transfer to the Four Masters' Club; a decision, he said was one of the most difficult he had made during his life. County Chairman, Pat Connaghan, represented the County Board on the night. Kieran then presented the Annual Awards to the winners, who were as follows:

Senior Player of the Year	Eamon Doherty
Reserve Player of the Year	Peter Watters
Junior Player of the Year	Mathew Whyte
Clubman of the Year	Johnny D. Earley
Ladies Player of the Year	Sinead Bennett
Minor Player of the Year	Peter Yates
Supporter of the Year	Brian McGill
Hall of Fame	Vincent Boyle



Vincent Boyle of Narin, receives the Hall of Fame Award from Charlie Bennett at the 1997 Dinner Dance. Vincent played Junior football with Downstrands in 1939. His first game for Ardara was played in 1940 at Castlegoland, on Charlie Gallagher's land. He was left half forward on the Ardara team that won the Democrat Cup in 1943. He played on

the Donegal team that reached the Ulster Junior Final in 1945 and played on the Donegal senior team from 1945 to 1947. He joined the Garda Síochána in Dublin in 1947 and was a member of that team which won the Dublin Senior Championship in 1948 and were beaten finalists in 1952. Vincent served with the Garda Síochána and is currently enjoying his retirement at his home in Ballyshannon.



The 1997 Award winners pictured along with Guest of Honour Kieran Keeney and County Chairman Pat Connaghan.



Kieran Keeney presents Brian McGill with the Supporter of the Year Award.



This photo was taken in 1997 at a function in the Highlands Hotel organised by P.J. Spillane, to re-unite those involved in the successful Ardara/Glenties Under-Age teams from 1965-1972.

Back L-R: Charlie Bennett, Thomas Boyle (on behalf of Tommy), Phonsie Bennett, P.J. Spillane, John O'Donnell.

Front L-R: Pat Connaghan (County Chairman), Danny Harkin (Former referee), Michael Glynn, Jimmy McKelvey and Jack O'Donnell.

1997 A.G.M- New Officer Board take over.

The 1997 A.G.M of the Club was held on the 11th of January, with 72 members present. The Secretary, in his report, cited the death of Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill as undoubtedly being the low point of the Club year, and he paid tribute to the former Club and County President for his service to G.A.A during his lifetime. He paid special tribute to the Minor team and management on their Championship victory, which gave the Club a great boost in a year where highlights on the playing field were few. He was critical of the Senior team's performance in the Championship and the commitment of a number of players.

"There were many factors which made success for the Senior team nigh impossible this year; emigration, suspension, poor commitment to training by some, over socialising by others; we in Ardara can always find an excuse for our shortcomings. We are now entering 1998, 3 years after our last Under-21 Championship victory, and can anyone say that we are any closer to winning a Senior Championship? I don't think so. Had the progress made in '96 been improved on, then we would be well in with a shout, but this has not happened. A number of players must ask themselves serious questions if they intend to keep playing Senior football for Ardara".

The Treasurer, Larry Gallagher reported an income of £47,835.05 and expenditure of £46,855.91, with income on the 'Flotto' only slightly up on the previous year at £14,202.38. Total monies stood at £10,046.18. There was a lengthy discussion on the Flotto with widespread discontent at the number of people not turning out to sell on Saturday nights. It was agreed that the question of whether the format of the draw should be changed to a more lucrative system would be discussed at the first Club meeting.

With all four main officers intimating they were stepping down, many tributes were paid to them on the way they led the Club during their term of office. The election of officers saw Anthony Molloy elected as the new Chairman; Minor Board Secretary, James McHugh stepped up to the position of Secretary, and Stephen McCahill was elected to the position of Treasurer.

The new Officer Board elected was as follows:

President	- Tommy Boyle
Vice President	- Frankie Brennan
Chairman	- Anthony Molloy
Vice-Chairman	- Larry Gallagher
Secretary	- James McHugh
Ass. Secretary	- John McConnell
Treasurer	- Stephen McCahill
Ass. Treasurer	- Michael Breslin
P.R.O.	- Pauric Brennan
Registrar	- Conal Doherty
Scor Officer	- Máire Nic Aoidh
Oifigeach Na Gaeilge	- Partalón Ó Faoláin
Development Officer	- Columba Diver

The Minor Board A.G.M had elected the following officers.

Chairman	- James McBrearty
Secretary	- James McHugh
Treasurer	- Declan Brennan

The following Under-Age Managers were elected:-

- U-10** - Aodh Brennan, John Hegarty, Conor O'Donnell, Matthew Whyte, Derek Boyle and Michael Breslin.
- U-12** - John McConnell, Anthony Molloy, Larry Gallagher and Vinny McConnell.
- U-14** - John M. Byrne, Joseph Doherty and John M. O'Donnell.

- U-16** - John Boyle.
U-18 - James McHugh and Noel Watters.



Pauric Brennan, who stepped down from position of P.R.O at the 1997 A.G.M., had served in the position since 1992. He had also held the position of Minor Board Secretary, and acted as South-West Board Treasurer and Registrar. Pauric was a Junior and Senior player in the eighties and nineties, and was the bane of many a Club Chairman over the years by leaving the attendance at a meeting in fits of laughter as a result of one of his famous ‘wisecracks’, during a serious discussion!

1998 - Comórtas Peile na Gaeltachta buaite don chéad uair.

Bhí na nóchadaí beagnach imithe agus ní raibh greim faighte ar Chorn Mhic Ghuidhir ó 1981, ach céim mhór chun tosaigh é nuair a baineadh Comórtas Peile na Gaeltachta do’n chéad uair. Toghadh Pádraig ó Gallchóir mar bhainisteoir, Antoine ó Ludhóg agus Seán ó h Iarrain mar chúntóirí agus cuireadh tús leis an traenáil go luath sa bhliain.



Buaileann An tEaspag Ó Buidhe le foireann Ard a’ Rátha roimh an chluiche.

Bhí an bua ag Chloich Cheann Fhaola ar Ard a’ Rátha i gcluiche cheannais an chontae de’n Chomórtas, ach toisc go raibh na comórtaisí náisiúnta ar an Fhál Carrach, Thír Chonaill. Bhí na Comórtaisí ar siúl deireadh seachtaine na Cincíse. Sa chluiche ceathrú- ceannais is dian an

choimhlint a bhí eatarthu féin agus Cill tSéadna as Maigheó. Thóg sé dhá thréimhse de am breise buaiteoir a fháil. Chríochnaigh an cluiche; Ard a’ Rátha 3-20, Cill tSéadna 2-17. Fuair said an lámh in uachtair ansin ar Chorca Dhuibhne as Ciarraí sa chluiche leath-cheannais leis an scór; Ard a’ Rátha 1-12, Corca Dhuibhne 2-06.

Dé Luain an chéad lá de Mheithimh bhí an cluiche mór, do’n chéad uair riamh, beo ar TG4.

Cluiche Ceannais de Chomórtas Peile na Gaeltachta.

Ard a' Rátha 1-14 Cloch Ceann Fhaola 0-16

B'é Ard a' Rátha an séú club sa chontae a bhuailh Comórtas Peile na Gaeltachta i ngrád na Sinsir nuair a d'éirigh leo an bua a fháil ar Chloich Cheann Fhaola sa chluiche ceannais Dé Domhnaigh seo caite. Bhí an bua tuillte go maith acu tar éis an chuid is fearr a fháil ar Chill tSéadna i gcluiche ceathrú-ceannais Dé Sathairn agus ar Chorca Dhuibhne sa chluiche leath-cheannais Dé Domhnaigh.

Bhí an cluiche ceannais teann go maith gan mórán idir na foirne. Caithfear creidiúint a thabhairt do Damien ó Duibhir, captaen ne foirne, fá choinne a shár iarracht agus do Sheán ó Baoill a ghnóthaigh scóranna iontacha ón talamh agus ón imirt; seacht bpointe is fiche do'n Chomórtas. Ag imirt le cabhair na gaoithe sa chéad leath, ghnóthaigh Conal ó Dochartaigh agus Seán ó Baoill pointí go luath ach chothromaigh Cloch Cheann Fhaola gan mhoill le péire de phointí ó Ailín Mac Pháidín. Chuaigh an fhoireann baile pointe chun tosaigh le sár iarracht ó Sheán Pól ó Gallchóir ach bhí an lámh in uachtair ag Damien ó Duibhir agus Seán ó Domhnaill i lár na páirce agus chuaigh Ard a' Rátha chun tosaigh le pointe ó Mháirtín ó Bheinid agus péire ó Sheán ó Baoill ach chothromaigh an fhoireann baile arís le scóranna ó Niall ó Coileáin agus Eoin ó Colla. Chuir Máirtín ó Beinid agus Seán ó Baoill ciceanna saora thar an trasnán ach fuair Seán Pól ó Gallchóir dhá phointe leis an scór a fhágáil cothrom, seacht bpointe an taobh, ag leath ama.

Le dhá chluiche thuirsúla ar a gcúl ag Ard a' Rátha bhí mórán de'n bharúil go mbeadh an lámh in uachtair ag an fhoireann bhaile sa dara leath agus chuaigh siad chun tosaigh le scóranna ó Sheán ó Ceallaigh agus ó Coileáin. Bhí deich mbomaite de'n dara leath caite sula bhfuair Ard a' Rátha scór; pointe ó Mháirtín ó Bheinid. Fuair Seán ó Baoill ceann eile ach chuir Mac Pháidín an liathróid thar an trasnán ar an taobh eile de'n pháirc le ceathrú uaire fágtha. Dhá bhomaite ina dhiaidh sin tháinig scór an chluiche, cúl ó bhróig Stiofáin Mhic Giolla Dé. Sé bhomaite ina dhiaidh sin fuair Ard a' Rátha cic éirice agus b'éigean do'n chúl báire, Seán Antoine Mac Pháidín, sár shábháil a dhéanamh leis an liathróid a chur thar an líne chúl fá choinne cic 45 meadar, ach thaispeáin ó Baoill a mhiotal nuair a chuir sé an cic caol

díreach thar an trasnán. Bhí Ard a' Rátha cúl chun tosaigh anois ach chothromaigh Cloch Cheann Fhaola arís le pointí ó Mac Pháidín, ó Colla agus Donncha ó Fearraigh ó dhaichead meadar amach ó'n chúl.

Bhí am breise le himirt anois agus le cosa tuirseacha bhí an imirt briste go leor. Ní raibh ach scór amháin sa chéad leath sin, cúilín ó Mháirtín ó Beinid.

Ag tús an dara leath chuir ó Baoill cic 45 meadar thar an trasnán agus as sin go deireadh an chluiche fuair an dá fhoireann atharna scór. Chríochnaigh an cluiche leis an scór; Ard a' Rátha 1-14, Cloch Cheann Fhaola 0-16.

Ba mhór an gairm molta a d'éirigh as lucht leanúna Ard a' Rátha nuair a séideadh an fheadóg. Ba mhór an t-éacht é; bhí an Comórtas Contae buaite ceithre huaire, ach anois do'n chéad uair, bhí com an Aire ag dul go hArd a' Rátha Bhronn Aire na Gaeltachta, Éamonn ó Cuiv, an com ar Damien ó Duibhir agus duais 'Fear an Chluiche' ar Sheán ó Baoill.

Cuireadh fáilte mhór roimh an fhoireann ag fillleadh ar a mbaile dúchais.

Ard a' Rátha:- Conchubhar ó Curráin, Mícheál ó Dochartaigh, Tadhg ó Breisleáin, Éamonn ó Dochartaigh, Aodh ó Braonáin, Adrian ó Braonáin, Caoimhín ó Beirn, Damien ó Duibhir, Seán ó Domhnaill, Conal ó Dochartaigh(0-01), Seán ó Luachaire, Pádraig ó Gallchóir, Máirtín ó Beinid (0-03), Sean ó Baoill (0-09), Stiofán Mac Giolla Dé (1-01).

Fir Ionaid:- Seosamh ó Dochartaigh do Phádraig ó Gallchóir, Feargal ó hÉidhne do Aodh ó Braonáin, agus Aodh do Chaoimhín ó Beirn.

Cloch Cheann Fhaola:- Pól A. Mac Pháidín, Caoimhín ó Colla, Seosamh Mac Gairbheith, Pádraig S. ó Dubhcháin, Donncha ó Fearraigh (0-01), Pádraig ó hEarcáin, Eoin Mac Pháidín, Séamus ó Dubhcháin, Seosamh ó Gallchóir, Gearóid ó Dubhcháin, Seán ó Ceallaigh (0-01), Eoin ó Colla (0-02), Seán P. ó Gallchóir (0-05), Ailín Mac Pháidín (0-05), Niall ó Coileáin (0-02).

Fir Ionaid:- Liam ó Colla do ó Coileáin, agus Donncha ó Dúghaill do Ghearóid ó Dubhcháin.

Réiteoir:- Seamus de Faoite, Na Cealla Beaga.



Seán Ó Luachaire ag iarraidh éalu óna fhear.



Ard a' Rátha - Curaidh Sínsir Chomórtas Peile na Gaeltachta 1998.

Ar chúil - Séamus Mac Aodha, Peadar Mac Aodha, Darren Mac Uimhir, Máirtín Ó Beiníd, Conor Ó Domhnaill, Adrian Ó Braonáin, Proinsias Ó Duibhir, Seán Ó Baoill, Aodh Ó Braonáin, Feargal Ó hAoine, Seosamh Ó Dochartaigh, Máirtín Ó Gaibheacháin, Seán D. Ó Luachaire.

Tosach - Seán Ó Luachaire, Caoimhín Ó Beirne, Éamonn Ó Breisleáin, Conor Ó Curráin, Mícheal Ó Dochartaigh, Damian Ó Duibhir, Séamus Ó Braonáin, Pádraig Ó Gallchóir, Seán Ó Domhnaill, Lúcas Ó Braonáin, Aodh G. Ó Duibhir.

Suite - Seosamh Ó Gallchóir, Conal Ó Dochartaigh, Éamonn Ó Dochartaigh, Seán M. Ó Beirne, Deaglan Ó Gaibheacháin.



Seán Ó Baoill, Imreoir an Chluiche, le naoi bpointe

Another semi-final defeat

The Senior team were drawn in the preliminary round for the first time ever, and had to qualify for the first round proper. They defeated Na Rossa over two legs; 0-18 to 1-8 in the first leg in Dooley, while a much closer second leg saw Na Rossa fight hard before going down 0-12 to 0-7 to an unimpressive Ardara side in Pearse Memorial Park. Gweedore were dispatched in the next round. A comprehensive 0-17 to 0-10 win in Ardara was followed by a tough match in Magheragallon, where two goals saw the team through by two points, 2-6 to 0-10. The quarter final saw a repeat of the Gaeltacht final with Cloughaneely. The match in Glenties, though, was not as nail biting an encounter as the previous meeting between the teams, with Ardara playing some great football in a 1-19 to 2-10 win. Ardara had a chance in the semi-final to avenge the previous year's first round defeat to Aodh Ruadh, with the game fixed for Tírconnaill Park, a ground that had few good memories for the Club in Senior Championship football. The match was originally scheduled for Sunday August 30th, but the tragic death of John Gallagher of Meenakillew, meant the match was postponed until Sunday the 6th of September.

On a rain-soaked day, the team started poorly, and Aodh Ruadh raced into an early lead. Goals from Eamon Doherty and Peter McHugh gave Ardara hope, as both sides missed several good scoring chances. Aodh Ruadh pulled away after the break, and after 15 minutes of the half, lead 1-12 to 2-3. Ardara rallied though and for the remainder of the game, they were camped in the Aodh Ruadh half. Peter McHugh goaled in the 51st minute, but chance after chance went begging and despite further points from Martin Bennett and Johnathan Boyle, Aodh Ruadh held on to victory on a 1-12 to 3-5 scoreline. Aodh Ruadh went on to win the Championship, defeating Naomh Columba in the final, 1-11 to 0-11.

The teams that fielded in the semi-final were as follows;

Aodh Ruadh - Gary Walsh, Anthony McGrath, Eamon O'Donnell, Brendan Boyle, Martin McGlynn (0-01), Patrick McGrath, Gavin Bourke, Stephen Ward, Barry Ward (1-01), John Duffy (0-04 - all frees), Niall McCready (0-01), Brian Roper, Michael Ward (0-01), Damian Conlon (0-01), Val Murray (0-03 - two frees). Subs - Sylvester Maguire for Damian Conlon, Kerry Ryan for Patrick McGrath and Charlie O'Donnell for John Duffy (all 55 mins).

Ardara - Conor Curran, Brendan Boyle, Ted Breslin, Aodh Brennan, Eamon Doherty (1-00), Damian Diver, John Kennedy, Patrick Gallagher, John O'Donnell, Conal Doherty, Peter McHugh (2-00), Michael Doherty, Don Early, Jonathon Boyle (0-03 - two frees), Stephen Gildea. Subs - Martin Bennett (0-02 - one free) for Michael Doherty (23 mins), Jimmy Brennan for John O'Donnell (23 mins) and Michael Doherty for Patrick Gallagher (45 mins).

Referee - Pat Curley (Milford).

League form in 1998 was also poor, with the team winning only 6 games out of 14 during the season, to finish just above the relegation play-offs. The team did win the Jamsie Breslin Memorial Tournament, in October, when a mixture of Senior and Reserve players defeated a strong Kilcar team in the final on a 1-10 to 1-09 scoreline.

As in the previous year, the team took part in the Kilmacud Sevens tournament in Dublin and were drawn in a group that included Corofin (Galway), Castlewella (Down) and St Anne's (Dublin). Ardara defeated Corofin and St Anne's, but in the final game were defeated by 2 points by Sevens Castlewella, who had won the Tournament previously on a few occasions.

Reserves go out in quarter final

The Reserve team showed a big improvement in performance in 1998 and had victories over Na Rossa and Gweedore in the Championship before going under to Cloughaneely in the quarter final at Glenties. Manager James McHugh blooded many new players during the year, to replace a number of players who had given up the game. In the Reserve League, the team finished in joint fourth place with a total of 16 points from 14 games. The panel was as follows: Brian McGill, John M. Byrne, Conal McLoone, Peter Watters, Shaun Heena, Conor O'Donnell, Declan Brennan, Francis Diver, Darren Maguire, Liam Shovlin, Thady Breslin, Matthew Whyte, Stephen Watters, Luke Gavigan, Patrick Gallagher and James Doherty.

The Junior team had a good year with the side reaching the County semi-final of the Championship, and had a very good league run, finishing fourth in the table. Player-managers Jackie Gallagher and Paddy Breslin put in great effort in their first year in management, and were unfortunate not to win a trophy. The Junior panel in 1998 was as follows:

Another successful Féile

Following the success, locally and county wide, in 1997, of the Féile Peil na nÓg competitions, it was decided to hold the competition again in the County in 1998, with the same format in operation. This time Ardara hosted a Boys' team from An Ríocht, in County Down, and a Girls' side from South Kerry. In the opening

matches on Friday, the local Girls' team ran a very good Kerry side to within a few points, while in the Boys' game, Ardara were defeated by the eventual Division 2 Champions by two points. In the Round robin section on Saturday morning, Ardara Boys defeated Kilcar, but were beaten by three points by the Tipperary Champions, Newport. The Down lads eventually qualified as winners of the section. The Girls' team failed to qualify, despite playing well and defeating Killybegs in their first match in the morning. The local teams again extended a typical Ardara welcome, with the local parents treating their visitors as special guests for the weekend. The Ardara Boys' team was managed by John Martin Byrne and Joseph Doherty, while the Girls' team was managed by James McBrearty, Jimmy Boyle and Margaret McHugh. James McBrearty again acted as Féile Officer and did Trojan work in organising the whole week-end, arranging accommodation for the children and making sure that everything was in order. On Saturday night, the four teams attended a Disco in the Community Centre, where presentations were made to both visiting Clubs. Prior to Féile, the Uachtarán, Joe McDonagh, visited the County and spent a few hours in Ardara, where he met 5th and 6th class children of the Parish in the Community Centre. There he was accompanied by County Féile Chairman, John McConnell, and was welcomed to the parish by Club Chairman, Anthony Molloy, Club officials and the teachers of the local schools.



Pictured in the Community Centre at the Uachtarán's School visitations. L-R: James McBrearty, Joe McDonagh, Anthony Molloy, John McConnell and Stephen McCahill.

Under-12s reach County final

One competition that the Club had little luck with in previous years was the Under-12 Championship. Runner-up, in 1992, was the closest that the Club had come to a victory. In 1998, following a lot of work at Under-10 level in previous years, there was a talented team available. In the South-West Division, Naomh Conaill were the main threat and both teams qualified for the Divisional final. The teams had already met in their section, with the Glenties lads winning a close match. The final, in Fintra, was another lively affair, but again the Naomh Conaill team finished out on top, on a 4-8 to 2-8 score. Both teams qualified however, and wins over Gweedore, MacCumhaill's and Malin saw Ardara qualify, with their neighbours again waiting, for the County final. Neither side had ever won the grade before, and a large crowd turned out in Fintra for the match. The game was a classic from the throw-in, but despite Ardara going in at the break on level terms



Donal Cape of Naomh Conaill wins this ball from Gareth Concarr in the Under-12 final.

after playing against a strong breeze, Naomh Conaill upped the tempo and ironically had some great scores from Conal 'Bán' McNelis Jr., that proved to be the difference between the teams. The final score was Naomh Conaill 4-16 Ardara 6-5. The Ardara lads were disappointed afterwards, but could

hold their heads high after a gutsy

performance. The Ardara team and scorers on the day were: Joseph Gildea, Shaun Gallagher, Dallan Maguire, Dominic Breslin, Declan Collum, Declan Gallagher, Joseph Shovlin, John Boyd (1-00), Matthew Maher (1-00), Adrian McHugh, Gareth Concarr (0-03), Kieran Gallagher (1-00), Conal Gildea, Kevin Gallagher (3-1), Martin Shovlin (0-01). Subs – Joseph Gallagher, Sean Kennedy, Jonathon Shovlin, Noel Gallagher, Nicholas Maguire, Kieran Breslin, Michael Herron, Derek Gallagher, Liam Boyle, Shane McBrearty, Thomas Maguire.



The Under-12 team which were defeated in the 1998 County final by Naomh Conaill.
Back L-R: John McConnell, Dallan Maguire, Declan Gallagher, Kevin Gallagher, Declan Collum, Joseph Gildea, Adrian McHugh, Matthew Maher, John Boyd, Gareth Concarr, Michael Herron, Anthony Molloy.
Front L-R: Derek Gallagher, Shaun Gallagher, Shaun Kennedy, Dominic Breslin, Kieran Gallagher, Kieran Breslin, Tomas Maguire, Shane McBrearty, Joseph Gallagher.
Sitting: Noel Gallagher, Conal Gildea, Nicholas Maguire, Joseph Shovlin, Liam Boyle, Johnathan Shovlin, Martin Shovlin.

The Club also fielded a strong 'B' team in 1998 and they won the South-West Reserve Championship, defeating Na Rossa in the final. They went on to the County play-offs, but were defeated in the County semi-final by Robert Emmett's. Both teams were rewarded for their efforts in September of the year when they went on a trip to Croke Park, to watch the Derry v Galway All Ireland semi-final. On the way to Dublin, they played a challenge match against Navan O'Mahony's in Meath, and the Meath Champions won a tight match by two points, 3-6 to 2-7.

The other Club teams had a reasonably quiet year. The Under-10s competed in the Divisional Blitzes where they played very well, finishing up second most days. On a number of occasions a kick of a ball was all separated them from the winners but, overall, great progress was made by this bunch of players. John Hegarty, Stephen McCahill and Matthew Whyte put a lot work into these teams.

The Under-13 and Under-14 teams had limited success in their respective Championships; the Under-14s had a few good wins, but didn't qualify for the play-offs, while the Under-13s were defeated by Naomh Conaill, both home and

away, in the first round of the competition.

The Under-15 Og-sport team, under the management of Paddy McGill, captured the Divisional title by emerging winners from the South-West Blitz in Glenties. In the County playoffs, they acquitted themselves very well despite not making the final. The players in this team were very young, with up to twelve of the squad still under the age for the following year.



**Summer Camp 1998-
Group winners from
left: Brendan
McDyre(Naomh
Conaill), Shaun McGill
(N.C), Aoife
McDonnell (N.C),
James Hegarty,
Maeve O'Donnell,
Noel Gallagher, David
Molloy (N.C)**

The Juveniles put in
some great
performances
during the year but
the last 10 or 15

minutes in most games were their downfall. In the All County League they didn't make the top two in the section, thus failing to qualify for the County semi-finals.

The Minors never rose to the heights of the previous year. They were unbeaten in the Divisional Championship, but in the South-West final they were well beaten by Kilcar, who went on to win the County Championship. Aodh Ruadh ended their interest in the County play-offs.

The Under-21's also made an early exit, which was a big disappointment. Having defeated McCumhaill's in the first round they went out at the quarter final stage to Termon in MacCumhaill Park.

Parish Leagues

The Minor Board ran a series of very successful Parish Leagues in 1998, in the Under-10, Under-12, Under-13 and Under-15 age groups. In the Under-10 League, Declan Gavigan's team were victorious over Pete-so Cannon's team in the 'A' final, while in the 'B' section, Carol Breslin's team defeated Pauric Hegarty's team. In the U-12 Group 'B' final, Joseph Gildea's team beat Noel McCabe's team, while the 'A' final was won by Adrian McHugh's team, which defeated Declan Collum's team.

The U-13 League was also very competitive with Patrick McGill's team winning the 'B' section and Ciaran Boyle's team winning the 'A'.

In the Under-15 League, Dessie O'Brien's team beat Johnny Herron's team by a goal.



Kieran Boyles team, Under-13 Parish League winners in 1998.

Back L-R: John M. Byrne, Sean Kennedy, Kieran Boyle, Adrian McHugh, Dallan Byrne, Joseph Gallagher, Larry Gallagher.

Front L-R: Plunket Maguire, John F. McHugh, Jonathan Shovlin, Fergus McBrearty, Shaun Gallagher, Declan Gallagher

Ladies teams

The Ladies were also busy in 1998, with the Club fielding at U-14, U-16 and Junior level. The Under-14s qualified from their section and reached the County semi-final, where they went down to Bundoran, while the Under-16s came up against a powerful Four Masters' team, that eventually won the County Championship. The Junior team was beaten in the County semi-final by Carndonagh at Newtowncunningham.

The Junior team was as follows: Sabrina Diver, Lorraine McBrearty, Donna Donaghue, Mairead Diver, Grainne Diver, Patti Mannering, Michelle Bennett, Mairead Gallagher, Elaine Boyle, Noreen Gallagher, Maria Diver, Noreen Boyle, Charlene Kennedy, Caroline McHugh, Nicola Quinn, Yvonne Boyle and Mary McHugh.

On the County scene, Mairead Gallagher, Charlene Kennedy, Michelle Bennett and Sansha Maguire were part of the Donegal Ladies' Junior panel, when they beat Monaghan on a score of 5-14 to 1-12 to win the Ulster Championship. And Mairead Brennan, Patti Mannering, Jenna Bennett and Maria Diver played for the Donegal Under-16 Ladies' team in 1998.

John McConnell elected County Chairman

The Club received another honour at County level on the 13th of December when, at the County Convention in Jackson's Hotel, John McConnell was elected to the position of County Chairman. John had just finished a two-year term as County P.R.O. when he put his name forward for the position, as incumbent Pat Connaghan stepped down after two years. He received 91 votes, defeating John Cassidy (Four Masters', 19 votes) and former Chairman, Charlie Faulkner (MacCumhaill's, with 15 votes). The new Chairman was welcomed back to the parish with a cavalcade to the town and a celebration dance in Peter Oliver's that night. He became the fifth Clubman to hold the position, following in the footsteps of Seán Ó Casaide, Charles McDyre, Dan Ward and Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill.

At County level, Damian Diver was an ever present on the Donegal team that reached the Ulster final but was defeated by Derry through a last minute Joe Brolly goal. Peter McHugh and Conor Curran played for the Donegal Under-21 team on their way to a Hasting's Cup victory over Roscommon. Conor O'Donnell and Fergal Heena played for the Donegal Minor team, while Brendan Boyle represented Ulster in the Australian Rules Under-17 series, as well as playing for the Donegal Under-16 team in the Connacht Championship, in which he was joined by Brian McGill. Darren Maguire, Conor O'Donnell, Fergal Heena and Brendan Boyle were part of the Donegal Vocational Schools' team that reached the Ulster final. Johnny McGill and Patrick Gallagher were selected for the Donegal Under-14 School of Excellence panel, while James McHugh was elected P.R.O. of the South-West Minor Board and Pauric Brennan was elected Treasurer.

Other news



The Scór na nÓg Instrumental Group that qualified for the County final in 1998.

L-R: Brian McGill, Damian McGeehan, Justin Campbell.

Front: Barry Walsh, Siobhan Heena.

There was a marked improvement in the Club performances in Scór in 1998. Club performers qualified for five events for the County semi-finals; Solo Singing - Cliona Heena;

Quiz team - Brian McGill, Derek Boyle and Daniel O'Brien; Instrumental Music - Siobhan Heena, Damian McGeehan, Brian McGill, Justin Campbell and Barry Walsh; Ballad Group – Bridget Gildea, Denise Boyle, Aoife Mooney, Lorraine

McBrearty and Cliona Heena; and recitation – Alyce McGrath. Three of the participants were successful in qualifying for the County finals; the Quiz team, Alyce McGrath, and the Ballad group; but despite performing well, all three failed to win a county title,



Ballad Group- Scór na nÓg1998.
Standing:Lorraine McBrearty,
Bridget Gildea, Denise Boyle.
Front:Aoife Mooney, Cliona Heena

The biggest single item of financial income during the year (excluding the Flotto) came from the first Annual Golf Classic, which was run on behalf of the Club at Narin/Portnoo Golf Club on the 5th of September by an

organising committee, which was led by Club Chairman, Anthony Molloy. The Classic was a major success, with 50 teams participating. Tees and prizes were sponsored and the Club received great support from the people of the Parish, with the event making a profit of over £7,000. It was subsequently agreed that the event would be run on a biennial basis.



Thomas Moore

There was a sad low-point in the life of the Parish in 1998, with the deaths of former Club player, Thomas Moore, together with his friend Michael (Jack) Boyle, who were tragically lost at sea while fishing off Rosbeg in November. Despite an extensive search of land and sea, the men's bodies were never recovered. Thomas had been a member of the Under-16 and Minor Championship winning teams of 1989 and 1991 respectively, and was a son of former Club player, Packie Moore, and his wife Molly, of Narin.

At the Annual Club Dinner Dance in December, Anthony Harkin and his wife Kathleen were selected as the Guests of Honour. The Annual Awards went to the following:

Senior Player	-	Conor Curran
Reserve Player	-	Francis Diver
Junior Player	-	Martin McCabe
Minor Player	-	Darren Maguire

- Ladies Player** - Michelle Bennett
- Club Person** - Mary McHugh
- Hall of Fame** - Michael Boyle, Billy Maxwell,
Danny McGill and Thady Gallagher.



The 1998 Award winners at the Dinner Dance in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel.

Former greats enter the Hall of Fame



Charlie O'Donnell presents Michael Boyle from Maghera with the Hall of Fame award for 1998.

Michael first played for the Club in 1946, and immediately became a regular in the half back line for the Club. A left footed player, Michael always attacked the ball at every opportunity and was a very stylish footballer, who always delivered a good long ball to his forward line.

Michael suffered a setback in 1949, when, he suffered a broken leg, while playing brilliantly in a match against Gweedore in Pearse Memorial Park. The injury which kept him out of the game for a long period. He returned to the team in 1952 and played until he bowed out in 1957.



John McConnell presents Billy Maxwell with his Hall of Fame Award.

Billy first played Juvenile for the Club in 1949, and went on to play Minor from 1949-51, playing at full back on the team that was defeated in the 1951 County final. He soon graduated to the Senior team and although he started playing in the forward line, he eventually replaced John

the Saddler at full back, when he retired. While working in Downings in the 50s he played for St. Michael's in their 1953 Junior final loss to Pettigo. He returned to Ardara and played on until 1959, even on trips home from England, before he moved to Sixmilebridge in County Clare. Billy's family have all played for their local Club, and despite living away from home, he rarely misses an Ardara Club Championship match. He has served as Club Vice-President since 2000.



Danny McGill from Scadaman, first played for Ardara in 1942, and played on throughout the forties and fifties. A teak-tough centre half back, Danny was always one of the first names on the Ardara team sheet. He first played for Donegal in the Traders' Cup of 1945/46, when he played in matches against Fermanagh and Louth. The highlight of his County career was as a member of the Donegal Junior team that won the 1954 Ulster Championship, when he was right half back on the team. Danny spent many years during this time working in England, and while abroad played for the Garryowen Club in London, although he often returned home during the summer holidays to play for Ardara. Danny transferred to the Naomh Conaill club in later years, when he moved to reside in Glenties, where he still resides with his wife Rose and family. Danny's sons, Denis and Kevin, went on to play for Naomh Conaill, while Denis also played for the Red Hugh's Club in

Killygordon, where he has served as Secretary of the Club for a number of years.



James McHugh presents the Hall of Fame award to Jackie Gallagher on behalf of her father Thady.



Columba Diver, who stepped down from the position of Chairman in at the 1997 A.G.M, has for some time been regarded as the ‘Head’ of the G.A.A. in the parish, and the main instigator behind many of the key decisions that were taken since the 1970s. The purchase of Sandfield, the development of Pearse Memorial, and the many disputes that he has quelled are just a few of his achievements in that time. It would take more than a few words to describe the impact he has had on the development of the Club, and

to tell all that he has done in that time. Without causing offence to many other great people, the title “Clubman of the Century” would be the most apt description that he could be given. This interview with George Doherty gives an insight into the man himself and touches on some of his experiences since he first became involved in the Club as a young boy.

Q. What were your earliest memories of the GAA in the town?

A. My earliest memories of GAA in Ardara would be helping my father in different things that he was involved in, and one of them was fundraising. We used to have a shilling a week Silver Circle. I was the one that went around the houses selling it. We held a draw in Tommy Tom’s every Saturday night. He used to run dances in the Iona Hall and I helped him with those also. The more modern dances were illegal at the time – he ran them in his own name but they were for the GAA and I helped with the ticket collecting at a very early age. The other early memory I have was of (being) down in Kentucky with Leo

Gallagher of the Yellow Banks. He worked in Tommy Tom's at the time. Tommy was very good, letting him off every Saturday to mark out the field. I used to help him gather up the saw-dust out at John McGill's and down at James Neddy's. The fields were all lined out with saw-dust at the time.



In New York in 1986 at Connie Molloy's wedding. Columba is seated with Noel Watters, Willie Joe Cunningham, Bart Whelan and Charlie Bennett.

Q. Can you remember your first AGM?

A. I don't remember very much about my first AGM, but I know that (regarding) any meeting from 1957, I was at them. I used to go to Divisional Board meetings at a young age, but I don't remember much about my first AGM.

Do you remember when you first played for the club?

A. I remember that, alright! It was an under-sixteen game in Glenties. I was a good bit under sixteen at the time. What exact age I'm not sure. The cars were going to Glenties for the game but I couldn't get on a car. I had the rig ready and tied it to the carrier of the bike. I headed off cycling for Glenties. I got in at the very start, playing in goals. Dan Shovlin was referee – he was an uncle of John McShane, from Tullycleave. Phonsie Bennett was one of the managers; John Keeney was along with him. That was my first time playing for Ardara in an under-sixteen game. Towards the end of the game, I got a thump from Leo McLoone! The referee had blown the full-time whistle before I could get up again. That was my first experience.

Who were your main influences in those days?

A. Tommy Boyle would be one of the main influences – John Keeney, Frankie Brennan, Big Paddy McGill, Phonsie Bennett, my father – those were the people who had the main influence on me in those days.



At the 1987 Dinner Dance, Columba, after receiving the Clubman of the Year award is pictured along with Edward Molloy (Secretary), Sean McGinness (Appreciation Award) and Josie Brennan (Supporter of the Year).

Q. The Sixties were tough times for the Club. Can you recall some of the darkest days?

A. Going back to the sixties, the darkest day I remember was the day that John Keeney went to America. We thought, here in the Club, that we could not do without him. In the seventies, a man of the same calibre would come along, by the name of Stephen Campbell. He was my right-hand-man the first three years I was Chairman. When he went to England in the late seventies, it was another dark day for the Club. Stephen was a very big loss to us.



Columba receiving the Clubman of the Year award in 1996 from Club President, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill.

Q. You played for Gweedore for a while when you worked in that area. What was the background story to that?

A. That's a long story. I was working in Gweedore and trained along with their players, and they were very good to me. I made a lot of friends there. I think it was 1969. There was a Gaeltacht Championship played for the first time ever. I was working in Nonnie Gallagher's and one evening I was working overtime on a late shift. Owenie Beag told me to come down

to the field before the game started to see if they had enough players. It was a mid-week game against Dunfanaghy, on a Wednesday night. The final was to be played the following Saturday. There was a lot of the Gweedore boys away from home. I went down before the game started but they wouldn't put me on. I was looking for a game, even though I was an Ardara player. I went back to work again but returned at half-time to see how things were going. They were being beaten by six points, and I was told to tog out. I went in at centre half back. We got a draw out of it. The replay was on Friday night, so I had to play again that night and we won the game well. The boys were back for the weekend, but I played Saturday, Sunday and Monday, and Gweedore won the competition. Later that year, in October, I think it was, the same two teams were allowed to play again in Croke Park. We had a great weekend in Dublin. That night, at the meal after the game in Croke Park, there was a transfer form put in front of me, with all the players around the table, and I was asked to sign it, which I did. It was very hard not to after they had treated me so well. After I came home, I told Big Paddy about it. He said that it couldn't go through, it was illegal. It was put through one night at a County Board Meeting, after Big Paddy had gone home, and that's how I became a Gweedore player. I went on to win a League medal with them in the following year, and that was my involvement with Gweedore. Shortly after that I returned to play with Ardara before I went to America. Some of the Gweedore players that I played with are still close friends today.

Q. You also got a run out with the County Team. What was that occasion?

A. That's the year I played with Gweedore. I think Freddie Coll might have been Secretary that year. I think it was October. I got a game in Dungannon in the League. Big John Boyle was full-back. I was centre half and Charlie O'Donnell was mid-field. I went to America that Christmas and that ended that!

Q. You played some football in London and New York. Can you tell me something about that?

A. 'Sixty five, I went to London and played with Tír Chonaill Gaels. There were a few from Ardara playing at that time – Raymond Sweeney, Martin's brother, and Vincent McHugh. I went to America in 1970 and played with Donegal New York for three years. I enjoyed my time there; I did not distinguish myself very well, but I enjoyed every minute of it. Through the football, we got work, and I must say, they were very good to us. I did well in New York over football and I am thankful for that.



Chairman, Anthony Molloy congratulates Columba after he had been caught unawares as the Guest of Honour at the 1999 Dinner Dance, while the crowd give him a standing ovation.

Q. You first became Chairman in 1975. How did that come about?

A. That year, believe it or not, was the year I came back from America and I had a fall-out with Charlie Mooney. I had a great ambition to come home. I know I left, and went to play for Gweedore, but I always wanted to play for Ardara some day again. I trained hard that year in America, to be fit when I came home, which I did in the month of May. Charlie Mooney was manager at that time. They were playing Glenties down in Sandfield, there were only two subs, himself and myself. He put himself on, and I never got on. That retired me from football. I wasn't even going to games then. I had fallen out completely with him. The AGM was in January 1975. I had started playing golf a lot. I remember my father clearly saying to me 'You are going to play no golf today'. There were wild hailstone showers. "You couldn't play in that weather, why don't you go to the meeting?" I went to the meeting and when the post of Chairman came up, there was a lot of to-ing and fro-ing. Anyway, Tommy Boyle was responsible for me being elected Chairman. I remember saying to Tommy afterwards "I will get my own back on you some day". After a year in the job I found that I really enjoyed it, and I often thanked Tommy for forcing me into the job. I was an unlikely candidate at the time, for the job, because I would not be a good public speaker, but I have to say, I enjoyed every minute of it.



Mary McHugh presents Margaret with a bouquet of flowers at the 1996 Dinner Dance, also pictured is Martin McHugh

Q. You have the distinction of holding the position in the seventies, eighties and nineties. What were your fondest memories as Club Chairman?

A. During the seventies, we had no great success at Senior level, but there was a good bit of success at Under-Age level. There is one thing that stands out in my mind, as Chairman – when we bought Sandfield. We had a meeting in our house. We had no money, but we were never in debt, and had not the kind of money to go buying land. I took it upon myself, that night at the meeting, to go round the town and gather money to buy Sandfield. I would say it was the fastest money ever raised in one evening! Not one person refused me the money. There was a ceiling of £500 put on it – some would have paid more – not one refused me the money. We did not take more than £500 from anybody and from that to smaller amounts, we collected all the money in one evening. I am very thankful to all the people of Ardara who supported this purchase.

Q. From the end of the seventies, through to the eighties and nineties, the Club went from strength to strength. What is your opinion on that?

A. In my opinion, the biggest single reason was that we came back to play in Kentucky. When we were down in Sandfield, everyone had to be transported down there. Due to that, a lot of Under-Age football wasn't encouraged the way it should have been. Coming back to Kentucky was a big thing, plus the fact that more people came in to help the Club. In the earlier years, one or two people did everything. When more people started to come into the Club, more work was put into Under-Age football.

Q. You have become synonymous with Pearse Memorial Park since the seventies. How did your involvement there commence?

A. When I became Chairman in seventy-five, they were actually working at the field. Joe Larry and Big Paddy were the main movers there. I came into the middle of that. After that, there were several jobs done. We were always working against ourselves, there were a lot of people in the Club who thought we were throwing good money after bad, and that it would never be a field. We were always looking for a site to move to. Anyway, the field is in good shape today, and a lot better than most people would have thought. There would have been more done earlier on, but everyone thought we were going to leave for somewhere else.

Q. What would you like to see done at the field in the future?

A. For the future, I would like to see more land bought in Kentucky to make a bigger practice field. Last summer, with all the Ladies and Under-Age teams, there was hardly room to move in it, so we do need more space. I would like to see that happen. If we can manage that, I would like to see the present field made bigger and wider, and more training facilities elsewhere.



A familiar sight; Columba digging drains in the Pearse Memorial.

Q. The Championship win, in 2000, was an historical occasion; your son Francis played a major part – it must have been a proud moment for you.

A. Yes, the Championship win in 2000 was a great occasion for the Club. I was really excited about that, with Francis playing centre field and Johnny D. being manager. I was also very nervous that things might not go well on the day, but I thought that Francis did very well and I must say I was very proud of him. For me to have a son playing centre field in the final of the Championship, with me being Chairman for nine or ten years and winning nothing, it really was a great day. Gretta (Columba's sister) was in the stand with us that day, with Don (Gretta and Johnny D's son) also playing. We probably made a show of ourselves! Who cares? We won! I know it was also an unbelievable moment for John McConnell, who was County Chairman that year. It was a great feeling to see one of our own presenting the Cup.

Q. You must be happy with the way the Club has grown in the past twenty years?

A. I am very happy with the way the Club has grown in the last twenty years. A huge number of people are now involved. We have plenty of mentors working with the Under-Age group – all of them are good workers. I don't think there is another Club in the county with so many good workers. I would like to win another County championship. You don't have to win every year – to win one every so often is a big help to any club. For the future, a championship win this year would be very nice.

Q. Now Columba, after all those questions, have you any funny memories?

A. One, I thought was kind of funny myself, looking back on it – it happened in Kilcar. When I was playing, I was considered a rough player. I wasn't rough – I always hit fair with the shoulder. Prionnsías Carr was refereeing. Cathal McGill came on that day – he was only fifteen years of age. A fellow from Teelin, Hegarty, hit him a bad shot. I ran the full length of the field and hit him. Prionnsías Carr was for sending me off. I put my hand on Prionnsías's

shoulder and told him “I was never sent off in my life, and you are hardly going to spoil my reputation now”. He looked at me, and told me I could stay on!

Another one, was when myself and Mooney used to run concerts in the Iona Hall. We had the Narin Players up – John McCole, John the Rock and several more from Narin were up. We decided to have a raffle. We sold the tickets but didn’t make much money. Before I went on stage to present the prize, I said to Dan McCole “How much should we give?” Dan said “Ten Shillings, there will only be one person disappointed, and that’s the one who wins!”

Another day, we were beaten by MacCumhaill’s in the Championship, in Letterkenny. On that day, the referee didn’t turn up, so they got a fellow from the army to referee. He turned out to be so bad, we decided to protest to the County Board about the bad refereeing. MacCumhaill’s agreed with us that it was terrible, and they agreed to play us again if we played in Ballybofey. We won the next game by about twenty points!

1998 A.G.M

The 1998 A.G.M of the Club was held on the 10th of January 1999 in the Community Centre, with 64 members in attendance. In presenting his first report as Secretary, James McHugh gave a comprehensive review of the year’s activities, citing the highlights as being; the winning of Comórtas Peile Na Gaeltachta for the first time; the ongoing development of Pearse Memorial Park, and the election of John McConnell as County Chairman. He spoke in glowing terms of the Senior team’s victory in Cloughaneely on Whit weekend, and of the disappointment of going out of the Championship at the semi-final stage to Aodh Ruadh. He was critical, though, of the team’s performances in the League, which saw them gather only 14 points from 14 games.

“Winning 6 games out of 14 is just not good enough for a Club like Ardara. The League games are the bread and butter games, and in 1998, too many games were lost that should have been won. If the team is to get used to winning, they must put in a bigger effort in the League, as the teams that are consistent in the League, usually do well in the Championship. Too many players in the Club just don’t take the League seriously enough.”

He paid tribute to Frank McGhee, who retired from playing at the end of the year, and who held the distinction of being the longest serving player the Club ever had. He praised the Club’s discipline record, although he stated that the abuse of referees from Club supporters was an issue that had to be addressed in the coming year.

The Treasurer, Steven McCahill, reported an income of £57,970.73 and an expenditure of £52,558.01. The change in format of the Flotto draw had been very successful, the new format of picking 4 numbers out of 24 resulted in bigger income and bigger jackpots. The average profit per week had risen to £459.58 in 1998.

The following officers were elected for 1999:

President	-	Tommy Boyle
Vice President	-	Frankie Brennan
Chairman	-	Anthony Molloy
Vice Chairman	-	Larry Gallagher
Secretary	-	James McHugh
Ass. Secretary	-	John McConnell
Treasurer	-	Stephen McCahill
Ass. Treasurer	-	Michael Breslin
P.R.O.	-	Mary McHugh
Oifigeach Na Gaeilge	-	Partalón Ó Faoláin
Scór Officer	-	Mary McHugh
Development Officer	-	Columba Diver
Senior Team Manager	-	Patrick Gallagher
Reserve Team Manager	-	
Junior Team Managers	-	Paddy Breslin and Jackie Gallagher
Under-21 Managers	-	Johnny D. Earley and James McHugh.

At the Minor Board A.G.M the following officers and managers were elected:

Chairman	-	Larry Gallagher
Vice-Chairman	-	Connie Bennett
Secretary	-	John M. Byrne
Ass. Sec	-	Conor O'Donnell
Treasurer	-	Declan Brennan
Ass. Treasurer	-	Matthew Whyte
P.R.O.	-	Derek Boyle

Team managers.

Under-10: Stephen McCahill, John McBrearty, Margaret McHugh, Patsy Boyle, Hugh P. Shovlin. .

Under-12/13: John McConnell, Anthony Molloy, Michael Breslin, John Hegarty, Larry Gallagher.

Under-14/15: John M. Byrne, Joseph Doherty, Declan Brennan.

Under-16: Paddy McGill, John Boyle.

Minor: James McHugh, Noel Watters.

1999- Under-Age teams shine once more.

In the last year of the Millennium, the performances of Club Under-Age players was again the main talking point, with four County finals being contested, Under-12 A & B, Under-13, and the Minor Championship. The highlight was the winning of the Under-12 'A' Championship for the first time in the Club's history. The strength at this age-group was further evidenced, when the Under-12 'B' team won the County Division Four Championship, beating a number of 'A' teams from other clubs along the way.

The Ardara 'A' team had been fancied as Championship contenders from an early stage, as, along with Killybegs, they had dominated their age group at Under-10 level in 1997. They went through the South-West campaign unbeaten, the only point lost stemming from a draw in Fintra against Killybegs, the home side. The teams met again in the Divisional final in Kilcar, and in one of the best Under-12 games ever seen in the South-West, Ardara came out on top in a high scoring affair, 4-18 to 5-7.

U-12 A County Final Gildea shines for victorious Ardara Ardara 5-07 Buncrana 2-06

A power packed second half display from the Ardara boys paved the way to victory in a highly entertaining U-12 'A' final played in MacCumhaill Park on Sunday evening last in brilliant sunshine. The young Buncrana team may have been well beaten at the finish, but for long spells, they controlled this final and played some wonderful football. In the end, however, Buncrana had little answer to Ardara's determination and accuracy in front of goal. The sides were level at the interval but Ardara came out in the second half to hit 2-05 to just one point in reply.

On the day, Ardara's Conal Gildea was one of the stars of the final, with an outstanding display at full forward and a personal tally of 2-05. Both teams reached Sunday's final after qualifying from their own Divisional Leagues, and served up a game of quality football and no end of skill on the big occasion. It was nip and tuck stuff in the opening period with each side enjoying the lead before having to settle on level terms going in at half time.

Ardara struck the opening score of the

game through Kieran Breslin early on, but within two minutes, Buncrana had raised the first green flag of the contest when Michael McLaughlin's fine run ended with his lobbed effort dropping in under the bar. Conal Gildea hit his team's first goal on nine minutes, and soon after, he put his team 2-01 to 1-0 in front, after Martin Lynch had done well to save the initial effort.

Points were exchanged at either end before Buncrana hit the net again - this time Oisín O'Flaherty created the opening for Darragh Irwin to flick home. The accuracy from frees of Buncrana forward, Pauric McLaughlin, kept Buncrana in touch in the first half, but Ardara were to score a third goal before the break. No. 11, Martin Shovlin, may not be all that big in stature, but he looks a quality player in the making, and his superb finish came at the end of a scything run through the Buncrana defence.

Two late points from Michael Hegarty and half back, Darren McGlynn, brought the sides level at half-time, 3-02 to 2-05. Buncrana were to find the going tougher in the second half as Ardara took control.

While substitute Hugh Shovlin certainly made a difference with two goals, it was Conal Gildea who really caught the eye, hitting a couple of glorious efforts and five points in that half. Elsewhere, Ciaran Gallagher worked hard in attack as did Shaun and Declan Gallagher at centre-field.

When Buncrana threatened at the other end, Thomas Maguire, Michael Herron and Jonathon Shovlin often tidied things up for Ardara. Despite the defeat, Buncrana certainly played their part in a quality final. They will be disappointed to have hit only one point in the second half but they also had a number of great displays, especially from their keeper, Martin Lynch, and from Joe Friel and Darren McGlynn, as well as from Michael McLaughlin and the hard working Christie McDermott at midfield.

Ardara - Shaun Kennedy, Thomas Maguire, Michael Herron, Dominic Breslin, Noel

Gallagher, John F. McHugh, Jonathan Shovlin, Shaun Gallagher, Declan Gallagher, Derek Gallagher, Martin Shovlin (1-01), Joseph Gallagher, Kieran Shovlin, Conal Gildea (2-05 - 2 frees), Kieran Breslin (0-01). Sub- Hugh Shovlin (2-00) for Joseph Gallagher (30 mins), Liam Boyle for Derek Gallagher (50 mins) and Pete-So Cannon for Kieran Breslin.

Buncrana - Martin Lynch, Joe Flynn, Joseph McDaid, Kevin Porter, David Doherty, Michael McLaughlin (1-01), Darren McGlynn (0-01), Caolan McCann, Christie McDermott, Oisín O'Flaherty (0-01), Michael Hegarty (0-01), Adrian Doherty, Pauric McLaughlin (0-03 - frees), Darragh Irwin (1-00), Adrian Porter. Subs - Sean Doherty for Adrian Porter (54 mins).

Referee - Charlie Dorrian (Glenfin)

Following a quarter-final win over Four Masters', the teams clashed again in the County semi-final, with Towney as the venue. Another, similar struggle ensued, but again, the Ardara lads came out on top, 0-16 to 2-5, after a late Killybegs rally. In the County final, the Inishowen champions, Buncrana, were waiting; a talented side. The Ardara lads, though, had plenty of motivation; many of the team had tasted defeat at the same stage in 1998.

Following two previous final defeats, the last major Under-Age title that the Club had yet to win, had finally been attained. The seeds of the success lay in the coaching of the players for the four previous years at Under-10 level.



**County Minor Board
Chairman, John Friel,
presents the Under-12
Championship cup to
Ardara captain, Johnathan
Shovlin**



Ardara Under-12 team, 1999 County Champions.

Back L-R: John Francis McHugh, Hugh Shovlin, Fergus McBrearty, Michael Breslin, Hugh G. Diver, Shaun Kennedy, Shaun Gallagher, Joseph Gallagher, Declan Gallagher, Liam Boyle, John Hegarty, Conal Gildea, Declan Gavigan, John McConnell.

Front L-R: Johnathan Shovlin, Derek Gallagher, Dominic Breslin, Stephen Boyle, Tomas Maguire, Martin Shovlin, Kieran Gallagher, Michael Herron.

Sitting: Noel Gallagher, Oisín O'Donnell, Pete-so Cannon, Carol Breslin, Kieran Breslin.

The 'B' team also blazed a trail to a County title, defeating all others in the South-West before beating Milford, Burt and Pettigo in the final on a 3-14 to 1-3 scoreline. The winning panel was as follows: Hugh Gareth Diver, James Boyle, Liam Boyle (Capt), J.J. Shovlin, Stephen Boyle, Declan Gavigan, John Francie Barrett, Paddy McGrath, Hugh Shovlin, Fergus McBrearty, Oisín O'Donnell, Pete-So Cannon, Pauric Hegarty, Carol Breslin, Daniel Shovlin, Ciaran Gildea, Simon Watters, Brian Collum, Daniel Sweeney, Christopher Classon, Conor Classon, Kevin Boyle, Saoirse Mac Cártaigh.

The 'A' team completed a hat trick of cups when they won the Willie Rogers Tournament, in Ballyshannon, which included County Champions from Mayo, Leitrim, Sligo and Fermanagh. It was great year for the team managers, John McConnell, Anthony Molloy, John Hegarty, Michael Breslin and Larry Gallagher, who put in such a huge effort in coaching the players.



Ardara Under-12 'B' team, 1999 County Division 4 Champions.

Back L-R: Daniel Sweeney, John Francis Barrett, Michael Breslin, Fergus McBrearty, Simon Watters, Brian Collum, Christopher Classon, Hugh G. Diver, Hugh Shovlin, Declan Gavigan, Liam Boyle, John McConnell, Stephen Boyle, John Hegarty.
Front L-R: Oisin O'Donnell, Kevin Boyle, James Boyle, Pete-so Cannon, Paddy McGrath, J.J. Shovlin, Pauric Hegarty, Carol Breslin, Saoirse Mac Cartaigh, Daniel Shovlin, Conor Classon, Kieran Gildea.



In a successful Under-12 Parish League, the Kevin McGill Memorial Cup was won by John Francis McHugh's team, which defeated Martin Shovlin's team in the 'A' final. In the 'B' Final, Michael Herron's team beat Kieran Gallagher's.

Frankie McGill presents the Kevin McGill Memorial Cup to John Francis McHugh after his team's win in 1999.

Under the same management as the Under-12 team, the Under-13 team were keen to go one better than the previous year's Under-12 defeat, and won the South-West Division by beating Naomh Conaill on a 4-

11 to 2-11 scoreline. They then defeated Buncrana in the County semi-final by two points, to qualify for the County final, where Glenfin were the opponents. The game turned out to be an end to end affair. Despite some good forward play from Kevin Gallagher (1-1), and Martin Shovlin (0-3), three Glenfin goals sent Ardara

in at the break, down 3-6 to 1-7 to Glenfin. Despite the five point gap, the Ardara lads rallied, but a controversial disallowed goal from Gareth Concarr, and a missed penalty, meant that they could not close the gap enough, and the Glenfin lads ran out 4-13 to 1-15 winners.



The opposing captains in the Under-13 final; Kevin Gallagher (Ardara) and Paddy O'Connor (Glenfin) with Referee Liam Browne

Gweedore too strong in Minor final

The fourth Under-Age team to reach a County final in 1999 was the Minor team. In the earlier rounds, the team had seen off the challenge of Naomh Columba (after three games), Four Masters' in the quarter-final, and Glenfin in the semi-final. The sides finished level in the first game in Tirconaill Park, but Ardara won through to the final after an extra-time victory four days later. This was one of the best games seen at Minor level for some time.

Gweedore awaited in the County final, which was played before the Aodh Ruadh/St. Eunan's Senior final, on the 19th of September. Unfortunately it was a match the Ardara team will not remember too fondly. Gweedore were on top from early on, and went in at half-time, an unassailable 1-10 to 0-1 in front, Derek Boyle getting the only Ardara score. Despite a rally at the start of the second period, the team could not just get close to their opponents, and Gweedore ran out 2-15 to 0-4 winners. The tough campaign, and in particular the Glenfin games, had taken their toll, but Gweedore were the best Minor team in the County that year and few could argue otherwise. The management team of James McHugh, Johnny D.

Earley, Martin Bennett and Paddy McGill put in a great effort during the year and had taken the team as far as they were fit to go.

The team and scorers in the final were:

Brian McGill, John Kennedy, Daniel Cunningham, Patrick Gallagher, Aidan McHugh, Johnny Herron, Kenneth Doherty, Brendan Boyle, Matthew Whyte, Stephen Watters (0-01), Stephen McHugh, Lee Watters, Frank Craig, Derek Boyle (0-03) and Johnny McGill.

Sub used – Cian O'Donnell for John Kennedy.

Referee – Connie O'Gara (Naomh Columba).



The Ardara Minor team that lost the 1999 County final to Gweedore.

Back L-R: James McHugh, Johnny McGill, Daniel Cunningham, Brian McGill, Lee Watters, Aidan McHugh, John Kennedy, Stephen Watters, Kenneth Doherty, Johnny D. Earley.

Front L-R: Frankie Craig, Matthew Whyte, Patrick Gallagher, Brendan Boyle, Stephen McHugh, Derek Boyle, Johnny Herron, Thomas Boyle.

Sitting: Dessie O'Brien, Cian O'Donnell, Tommy Feeney, Daniel O'Brien, Stephen Nicholson, David Mc Dyre.

Many from the Minor team also featured on the Club Under-21 team that reached the County semi-final. The Under 21s accounted for MacCumhaill's and Termon in earlier rounds, before they were defeated by Aodh Ruadh in Tirconaill Park on a 0-15 to 0-9 scoreline.

In the other Under-Age grades, John Boyle and Paddy McGill's Juvenile team also performed very well. John and Paddy, together with Michael Doherty, had done a lot of work with them and they beat Naomh Columba, Dungloe (twice), and Aodh

Ruadh, before meeting County favourites, Four Masters', in the last match of their group, in the Division 1 South section of the Championship. The match resulted in a draw denying them the point they needed to qualify for a Semi-final spot. Four Masters' took the crucial point and went through. They went on to win the Championship.

The Under-14s failed to qualify for the play-off stages, despite competing well, while the Under-15 team didn't progress in the Óg-sport or Gaeltacht competitions, Naomh Conaill ending their interests in the latter.

The U-10s continued to make progress in 1999, with up to 50 children taking part. They competed well in all the Divisional Blitzes, and were close to victory on a few occasions. Stephen McCahill, Patsy Boyle and Margaret McHugh put in a lot of work coaching these children and despite the numbers involved, they made great progress.

The other main highlight of the year for the Minor Board was the hosting of its biggest summer camp to date in Pearse Memorial Park. One hundred and fifty children from Ardara and Glenties participated in what had by now become the biggest camp in the County.

Martin Gavigan enters the Donegal G.A.A Hall of Fame



Kathleen and Martin pictured after the presentation with John McConnell (County Chairman), Noreen Doherty (Secretary) and Dr. James Mc Daid.

At the County G.A.A Banquet in January 1999, Martin Gavigan was inducted into the Donegal G.A.A Hall of Fame, along with team-mates, James McHugh and Matt Gallagher, and former County Goalkeeper, Seamus Hoare. From Sandfield to Toronto, from Kentucky to Sydney, the path of Martin's football career consisted

of many thousands of miles travelled, many glorious days, and indeed many moments of pain and suffering.

It was early in his career that Martin picked up his nickname, ‘Rambo’, when he first came to note, locally, as a small, sturdy corner back on the Under-14, Championship-winning team of 1974, the first time he teamed up with another future All Star and friend, Anthony Molloy. The similarity in physique between the Tullycleave man and Sylvester Stallone, in Stallone’s portrayal of the character, John Rambo, in the film “First Blood”, made the name a fairly obvious choice. It really described him perfectly. The never say die attitude, supreme physical strength, and his ability to lead by example, soon rubbed off on those fortunate enough to share the same team as him.



Martin comes up against County team-mate, Michael Gallagher, in the 1989 Championship clash with Naomh Conaill.

His career was, by most standards, that of a late developer on the County stage. He was a Donegal Minor panellist in 1982, the same year he made his Senior debut for Ardara, but failed to make the team. It was as a twenty year old, that he got his first County jersey, in Donegal’s Under-21 first round defeat to Antrim in 1984. Despite showing good form at Club level, he didn’t make an impact at the top grade until Tom Conaghan called him up in 1987 for a McKenna Cup game against Tyrone. He made his Championship debut the following year, in the 2-10 to 0-8 defeat to Armagh, and soon grabbed a regular place, first at midfield, and later at his favourite position, centre half back. His Championship career lasted until the

defeat to Monaghan in the 1995 campaign, and while he returned to play in the National League in 1997, his injury problems ruled him out of that year's Ulster campaign, after playing a total of 89 games for Donegal.



**Martin clears under pressure from an Australian in the 1990 Test match.
Also in photo is Irish Referee, Paddy Collins.**

He gathered many honours along the way, and first came to National prominence in his selection as Tour Vice-Captain on Ireland's successful trip to Australia in 1990. He was greatly respected by the Team Manager, Eugene McGee who described his involvement in the tour as follows:

"Martin Gavigan's quiet demeanour was deceptive, as it hid a steely determination to do everything right on the trip to ensure success. This was a very necessary trait for Martin, as one of the two player-leaders to have, as he and captain, Robbie O'Malley, had much greater influence with the players on a long trip like that than captains have with county teams in Ireland. We had many wild characters on that trip and Martin's role in keeping these players focussed on the job in hand was very crucial. He was also of course a great leader in training, and a star in the matches, because the other players looked up to him as a man who who would stand in the gap no matter what the Aussie players threw at him. Indeed the respect, from all the other star players on the panel, for Martin was one of the most notable memories I would have of what was a fabulous and successful trip in 1990."



The victorious Irish team at Dublin Airport on their return from Australia in 1990

An Ulster medal in 1990, an All Star replacement in 1991, his magnificent displays in 1992, a further All Star, 2 Railway cup medals (1991 and 1993) etc, etc, were to follow. A big disappointment for Martin, though, despite playing on some fine Ardara teams, was not winning a Senior Championship medal for the Club. His only notable success came as captain of the team that won the All County League in 1989. His other Club successes were his '76 Under-14 medal, an Under-21 Championship in 1983, and an All Ireland Gaeltacht win in 1998, his last year playing for the Club. Martin is a Building Technology teacher in St. Columba's College in Stranorlar and has lived in that area since his marriage to Kathleen (Flanagan) in 1992. They have two children, Donna and Nathan. In this interview, he talks about his career and his achievements.

Q: What was your earliest footballing memory as a child?

A: My earliest memory was playing for Kilclooney School in the National Schools' Parish League. The game was played in Sandfield against the Town School and I think Fr. Eamon Crossan was in the charge of our team.



The proud parents: Peggy and Packie with Sam Maguire in 1992

Q: What would you rate as being an early influence on your career?

A: I remember being greatly influenced by the great Dublin- Kerry games of the seventies and eighties. They were great games and some great players were involved in both teams.



Martin raises the Anglo Celt with brother Luke after Donegal's win over Armagh in 1990. Also in photo is Declan Bonner.

Q: Do you remember much about the Under-14 Championship win of 1976?

A: I remember playing corner back on the team, and the thrill of playing my first game in MacCumhaill Park. I can also remember great excitement afterwards and on our return to Ardara with the cup.

Q: Biggest influence on your career?

A: I was always greatly influenced by other Ardara players who played for Donegal, such as Anthony Molloy and Kieran Keeney. I also had great respect for Anthony Harkin as a coach and the various team managers that I played under.

Q: Your most memorable Club game?

A: My most memorable Club game was definitely the 1983, Under-21 victory over Ballyshannon. The fact that they had so many County players, whereby we had only one, made it a great victory.

Q: And for the County?

A: For the County team, my most memorable game was the Ulster final win against Derry in 1992.



Martin and Kathleen at the homecoming in 1992

Q: Your trip to Australia must have been a great experience, what are your favourite memories from that trip?

A: It was great in the way that I was able to train and play with players I had always admired like Jack O'Shea and Eoin Liston. We trained daily, and sometimes twice a day, like professional players in other codes. Our first test game was played under floodlights in Melbourne and that was a very memorable experience.

Q: Would you have like to have been offered a chance to play Aussie Rules football fulltime?

A: Definitely; the physical and the professional aspect of the game really appealed to me.

Q: Was Eugene McGee a hard taskmaster?

A: Eugene McGee was a real gentleman, but when he talked you really listened. I have great respect for him, because he has a great knowledge of the game and he calls it as he sees it.

Q: Your trip to the Skydome must have been a memorable one; how did you find playing in an enclosed arena on Astro turf?

A: Playing in the Sky-dome was a magical experience. It was my first time playing on astro turf, with a great big roof overhead. It was really breathtaking when we entered the stadium for the first time.



In the NFL game against Down in 1988. Martin clashes with Greg Blaney, a player he regards as his most difficult opponent on the county scene.

Q: You served under three different County Senior managers. What strengths had each one in your opinion?

Tom Conaghan: Tom gave me my first break in the County scene. He had great discipline, but some players were not prepared to give him 100%, so there was conflict.

Brian McEniff: Brian had the ability to keep everyone on board. He looked after his players' needs, jobs etc, and would do absolutely anything to win.

P.J. McGowan: P.J. was very committed, and very approachable, but he didn't get the co-operation he deserved from all his players.

Q: Can you see yourself getting involved in coaching or managing teams in the future?

A: I can't see myself getting involved in managing teams because I don't think I have the temperament for it, but I do like working with under-age players.

Q: Your most cherished memory from 1992?

A: The joy and excitement that I felt after the final whistle will always stay with me. Climbing the steps of the Hogan Stand and watching Anthony lift the Sam Maguire is a cherished memory that I will never forget.

Q: What was your biggest disappointment at Club level?

A: Not winning a Senior Championship medal with Ardara.

Q: And for the County?

A: Not having the opportunity, in 1993, to help, in the defence of the All Ireland at full fitness, due to tearing my cruciate ligament in a club game for Ardara.

Q: You most difficult opponent.

A: Martin McHugh, in club football.

Q: Your favourite position?

Centre half back.

Q: Your most cherished award (apart from your All Ireland medal)?

A: My Under-14 Championship medal from 1976.

Q: You were very unfortunate with injuries during your career, How many different operations did you have during your playing days?

I had seven knee operations; three on the left and four on the right, but the worst injury was the tear on my cruciate, which really was the beginning of the end of my football career.

Q: Do they still hamper you in everyday life?

A: At the moment, not too bad. I can still enjoy my weekly indoor football games on the astroturf at Finn Valley without any major discomfort.

Q: Have you any regrets from your time as a footballer?

I have been extremely fortunate during my football career, and, as I already mentioned, circumstances in 1993 were very disappointing, but on the other hand, I was fortunate that the injury did not happen a year earlier.



Martin and Kathleen pictured at the Banquet with all his family and his Ardara supporters

Martin Gavigan – Fact file

D.O.B: 20-11-64

Education: Kilclooney N.S. Glenties Comprehensive School, Thomond College.

Most difficult opponent:

Club: Martin McHugh, **County:** Greg Blaney.

Favourite position.

Centre half back.

Honours won:

Club: Under-14 F.C (1976), Under-21 F.C (1983), Senior League (1989), and Comórtas Peile Na Gaeltachta (1998).

County: 1 All Ireland S.F.C, 2 Ulster S.F.C,

Other: 1 All Star (1992), 1 Replacement All Star (1991), Vice Captain Ireland International Rules (1990) 2 Railway Cup (1991, 1993)

The death of Michael McNelis



The Parish of Ardara was hit with a devastating blow on the 16th of August 1999, with the news that the death had taken place of Michael McNelis, son of former Club Chairman and player, Eamon McNelis, and his wife, Grainne, of Edergole. Michael died as a result of injuries sustained in a tragic car accident, on the road to Fintown on the 13th of August. Four young men from Northern Ireland were killed instantly, while Grainne, Michael's brothers, Eamon and Shaun, and their Aunt, Margaret McGill, and her daughters, Martha and Breena McGill, were all seriously injured.

Michael was a popular member of the Under-10 team in 1998 and again in '99, and, despite his tender years, was known by young and old in the area. A star in every sense, he was full of fun and the joys of youth. He was one of a young team of Club Flotto sellers, and made his weekly calls to his neighbours in Edergole, Brackey and Magumna. On the football field, he was a joy to have in the team. He was full of devilment and anticipation, and he got great satisfaction out of identifying weakness in the best thought-out coaching practices of the Club Under-10 coaches, Margaret McHugh, Stephen McCahill and Patsy Boyle. The Under-10's were devastated at the loss of a great friend. Michael's remains were met at

the Hillhead by a Guard of Honour of his team-mates, toggled out in the Green and Gold, and they accompanied him through the town on his last journey. It was their way of saying goodbye. Few young people made their mark in as short a time as Michael McNelis. He will always be fondly remembered.



The Under-10 team await to form a Guard of Honour for Michael

Following Michael's death, his family donated a perpetual cup to the Club for the Annual Under-10 Parish League. A great round-robin competition was held in September, with Conor Classon's team beating James Boyle's team in the 'B' final, while in the 'A' decider, between Paddy McGrath's team and Peter Oliver McNelis' team, the game went to extra time, and Paddy McGrath's team became the first winners of the Michael McNelis Memorial Trophy, thanks to two goals from Kevin Molloy. Eamon presented the cup to Paddy McGrath, but in a magnificent gesture, the young Loughros Point lad handed over the Cup to the losing captain, Peter Oliver, a first cousin and best friend of Michael's, as he



understood how much the trophy meant to him. It was a fitting end to what was a successful and also a very year for the Under-10 teams and management.

Paddy McGrath hands over the Michael McNelis Memorial Cup to Peter Oliver McNelis after the Under-10 Parish League

Great success for National Schools

On the National Schools scene in 1999, the Club organised a very successful Parish League, with all schools in the area taking part. Played on a league basis, Brackey

and St. Mary's qualified for the final. The match finished in a draw, and Brackey went on to win it in extra time on a score of 3-07 to 2-05. League organiser, John McConnell, presented the trophy to the winning captain, Adrian McHugh. The St. Mary's team had little cause for disappointment, though, as they went on to win Cumann na mBunscol, Roinn a 4, County titles in both Boys' and Girls' competitions. The St. Mary's Girls beat Dunfanaghy easily in their final, on a 9-6 to 1-3 scoreline. Carmel Boyle was top scorer, with 5-3 on the day. The Boys' team completed the double in their final against Kilmacrennan, when a late goal from Pete-So Cannon saw them win the final on a score of 5-09 to 5-03. The work of teachers, Raphael Meehan and Colm Cannon, was paying great dividends. Brackey reached the Roinn a 3, Girls' final but they were beaten by a very strong Carrigart team, on a score of 1-12 to 5-13.

Meentinadea N.S. were not to be outdone, either. They qualified for the County finals of the National Schools' Quiz, where they were defeated by one point for first place.



Brackey N.S. ,Parish League winners 1999.

Back L-R: John M. O'Donnell, Adrian McHugh, Kevin Gallagher, Sean Kennedy, Gerard Maguire, Dallan Maguire.

Front L-R: Declan Gallagher, Shaun McNelis, Noel McCabe, Nicholas Maguire.

Brendan Boyle plays for Ireland

One of the undoubted Club highpoints of 1999, was the selection of Brendan Boyle of Kentucky, for the Irish International Rules Under-17 team to travel Australia. Brendan had come through intensive trials as part of the Ulster team during 1998, and easily adapted to the hybrid game from an early stage. The travelling party headed out from Dublin Airport on the 28th of March on a 17-day trip which would see them take on the semi-professional Australian lads in three test matches.

The trip was indeed one to remember for Brendan, as he featured in all three games at Melbourne, Shepperton and Adelaide. Although the home side won the three games in the series, Brendan acquitted himself well, playing at centre half back,



Brendan receives the 1999 Minor Player of the Year Award from Thomas Boyle

midfield and even in goals for a period, during the third match. A highlight of the trip was attending an Australian Football League match at the Melbourne Cricket Grounds, where the team was introduced to the crowd of 90,000 people at half time. Following the last game in Adelaide, the host and visiting teams were honoured at a special banquet, where mementoes were exchanged. The Australian boys presented the Irish players with an Aussie rules ball and medal, while the Irish party presented their hosts with a G.A.A skills video, and

book on the 1998 All Ireland Championships. It was a once in a lifetime trip for the Kentucky man, and an experience he will never forget.

Quarter-final defeat for Seniors

The draw for the 1999 Senior County Championship matched Ardara against Dungloe for the first time in the competition since 1979, when Ardara defeated Rosses Rovers in a County quarter-final. It was a difficult draw, as the Rosses men had established themselves as one of the top teams in the County in the 90's. A great team display in Pearse Memorial Park gave them the advantage in the first leg. A 1-17 to 0-09 victory was as deserving as the scoreline suggested. Ardara were fast in attack, watertight in defence and razor sharp on the breaking ball around midfield, where Damian Diver and Brendan Boyle excelled. In the return leg, in Dungloe, however, the tables were turned, and Dungloe sent the tie to a third match, winning by four points. Despite the setback, the Ardara team management



Senior player of the Year 1999, Peter McHugh cuts through the Eunan's defence in the 1999 quarter-final

had learned from the defeat, and the players again produced some of their first leg form, to send Dungloe out of the Championship, on a 2-11 to 0-11 scoreline, in Davy Brennan Memorial Park in Glenties.

The quarter-final was against a powerful St. Eunan's team, and they proved to be a little too experienced for the South-Westerners. They pulled into a 0-7 to 0-2 lead after minutes, but Ardara reduced the deficit to 0-8 to 0-5 by the interval, Conor Curran saving Ardara with a

brilliant penalty save from Kevin Winston before half-time. Two points from Brendan Devenney put Eunan's further ahead and, despite points from Johnathan Boyle and Fergal Heena, a Charlie Mulgrew goal on the 40th minute left Ardara with an uphill battle. To their credit, though, they never gave in, and the sides exchanged points, before a Fergal Heena goal left two points in it with 13 minutes left. Brendan Devenney took over for Eunan's, scoring two quick points, and they held that margin until the end, winning on a 1-16 to 1-12 scoreline.

The teams and scorers were as follows:

Ardara – Conor Curran, Martin McShane, Joseph Doherty, Niall O'Donnell, Damian Diver, Eamon Doherty, Aidan McHugh, Brendan Boyle, Aodh Brennan (0-01), Peter McHugh (0-01), Jonathan Boyle (0-05), Conal Doherty, Fergal Heena (0-02), Don Early (0-02) and Michael Doherty (1-01). Subs used – Jimmy Brennan for Eamon Doherty. Others – Martin Bennett, Ted Breslin, Kevin Byrne, Stephen Gildea and Sean Whyte.

St. Eunan's – Tony Blake, Terence Gallagher, Maurice McGeehan, Peter McGeehan, Brian McDermott, Adrian McClafferty, Johnathan Scanlon (0-01), John Haran, Paul Crampsie, Brendan Kilcoyne, Charie Mulgrew (1-00), Damien Daly (0-01), Mark Crossan (0-02), Brendan Devenney (0-09) and Kevin Winston. (0-01), Subs used – Paul O'Dowd for Crampsie and Shane O'Sullivan for Mulgrew.

Referee – Jimmy Whyte.

St. Eunan's went on to win the Championship, defeating Four masters' at the next stage, and Aodh Ruadh in the final. It was a big disappointment for all concerned, following the progress made in 1998, but they had been faced with a very difficult side of the draw. In other competitions, the team competed in the All Ireland Gaeltacht competition in An Rinn, in Waterford. As defending Champions, the team reached the semi-finals, but the absence of the Donegal Senior and Minor players, who were on Championship duty with the County, was too big a loss, and the team went down narrowly, by one point, to the eventual winners, An Ghaeltacht, from Kerry. In League Division 1, the team finished in fifth position, just missing a semi-final spot by two points.

Reserves go out in quarter-final

The Senior Reserve team had almost a complete overhaul in 1999, with many of the established players hanging up their boots for various reasons. A number of young players were introduced, and their performances led to some good results for the team. They had impressive wins over Dungloe in both first round games, but they suffered the same fate as the Seniors in the quarter-final, where St. Eunan's came out on top. The teams were level at half time, but the loss through

injury of Patrick Gallagher cost them dearly in the second period.

In the League, they became known as the draw specialists, as a result of five games shared. Their final record showed four wins, five draws, five defeats. In the Gaeltacht competition, Fanad Gaels ended their interest in the first round

The Junior team competed in Division 1B of the County League under the guidance of Malachy Gallagher. This team was made up of both young and not so young, and even some extremely 'old' players. In the League, they finished mid-table while in the Championship they lost out in the first round to Naomh Columba.

Ladies win first title



Mary McHugh, Caroline Breslin and Charlene Kennedy pictured after the game with the Division 2 League Cup.

After seven years of struggle, the Ardara Ladies team finally got their hands on some silverware in 1999, when the Senior team won Division 2 of the League. It was just reward for James McBrearty, Jimmy Boyle and co., who had worked hard since the team was established, as had the Ladies, some of whom had been playing since the first game in 1992.

The team reached the semi-finals of the Championship. The panel included – Sansha Maguire, Lorraine McBrearty, Charlene Kennedy, Noelle Breslin, Rebecca Watters, Noelle Bonner, Maria Diver, Paddy Mannering, Mairead Watters, Teresa McGroarty, Mairead Brennan, Noreen Gallagher, Rose Mannering, Siobhan Heena, Michelle Bennett, Mary McHugh,

Helen Gildea, Mairead Diver, Elaine Boyle, Leona Diver, Sabrina Diver, Aoife McDonnell, Natalie Gildea, Caroline Whyte, and Donna McGill.

The U-14 and U-16 teams also qualified for the County semi-finals, but were defeated by MacCumhaill's. Charlene Kennedy and Mairead Gallagher played for the Donegal Ladies' Junior team that was defeated by Down, on a score of 5-09 to 4-07, Charlene scoring 1-01 on the day.

Patti Mannering represented the Club on the Donegal Ladies' Minor team, while Sansha Maguire represented the Club on the Donegal U-16 Girls' team.



The Ardara Ladies' team which won the 1999 Division 2 League.

Back L-R: James McBrearty, Mairead Watters, Siobhan Heena, Caroline McHugh, Noreen Gallagher, Rebecca Watters, Tracy McGill, Noelle Breslin, Michelle Bennett, Sansha Maguire, Elaine Boyle, Helen Gildea, Mairead Diver, Sinead Bennett, Patti Mannering, Mairead Gallagher, Charlene McHugh, Jimmy Boyle.

Front L-R: Rose Mannering, Mairead Brennan, Aoife McDonnell, Jenna Bennett, Natalie Gildea, Mary McHugh, Maria Diver, Lorraine McBrearty, Caroline Whyte.

County teams

The Club had a wide representation on Donegal teams in 1999. Damian Diver was again a key player on the Senior team, that was defeated by Armagh in a first round replay in the Ulster Championship, and he was joined on the panel for the National League by Eamon Doherty. Peter McHugh and Aodh Brennan played on the Donegal Under-21 team, which reached the Ulster final but lost to Monaghan, on a score of 1-08 to 0-12. Anthony Molloy returned as County Minor Manager. The team reached the Ulster final, only to go under to the eventual All Ireland Champions, Down, by four points, after a replay. Brendan Boyle and Aidan McHugh (Leaconnell) were first choice players on the team, while Stephen Watters (Monargan) played in the Ulster Minor League. Derek Boyle, Johnny Herron, Stephen McHugh and Kenneth Doherty all played on the Donegal Under-16 team

that won the Connacht Championship, defeating Mayo in the final. Johnny McGill finished the line up, when he was a member of the County Under-15 panel.

At County Convention in December of the year, John McConnell was re-elected County Chairman, and Edward Molloy was re-elected Assistant Secretary, while on the South-West Board, James McHugh continued his good work as the Board P.R.O.

Other news

The social highlight of the year was a trip to Glasgow, organised in March, when the Club Adult teams and a number of supporters travelled over for the weekend, leaving on the Friday and returning on Sunday. The trip proved to be very successful. The party stayed in the Marriott Hotel and attended a Celtic home match in Parkhead on Saturday, returning home on Sunday.

In Scór na nÓg, Cliona Heena qualified for the County final of the solo singing which took place in Convoy. Cliona was unfortunate on the night to be defeated by one point.

The Club lost a great friend in January of 1999, with the death of Pat Slowey. He had been a great friend of the Club and a great supporter of all Club activities. Up to the time of his death, he had been the official Club photographer, always covering the local Leagues, Summer Camps, and Annual Dinner Dances.

Diver is Guest of Honour.

At the Annual Dinner Dance, which was held in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel, Columba Diver was honoured as special guest for his unrivalled contribution to the Club from the sixties until the present day. Mayo All Ireland winner, Sinead Costello, was on hand to present the Senior Ladies' team with their Division Two medals, and Columba presented the annual awards to the following winners:

Senior Player of the Year: Peter McHugh

Reserve Player of the Year: Patrick McHugh

Junior Player of the Year: Jackie Gallagher

Minor Player of the Year: Kenneth Doherty

Ladies Player of the Year: Maria Diver.

Club-person of the Year: Stephen McCahill

Hall of Fame: Peter Pat Breslin, Frankie Tom Gallagher,
Eddie John McGonigle and John Gillespie.

Appreciation awards were presented to Ted Webb Cup winners, Johnny Herron, Stephen McHugh and Derek Boyle, former Club Chairman and player, Packie Keeney, and to Charlie Mooney for his work over the years.



Stephen McCahill

Patrick Gallagher presents the Clubperson of the Year award for 1999 to Stephen McCahill. Known as a great Community worker, Stephen was thrown in at the deep end at the 1997 A.G.M, when he took on the position of Club Treasurer, and since then, has been instrumental in

the success of the Club behind the scenes, both as a Club Officer and Under-Age manager.

1999 Hall of Fame winners

The Club honoured four former Club players in 1999 when Eddie John McGonigle, Frankie Tam Gallagher, John Gillespie, and Peter 'Pat' Breslin were all inducted into the Club Hall of Fame.

Frankie 'Tom' Gallagher was a son of Molly and the famous Tom Gallagher of the Wooden Bridge. Frankie first played for Ardara, as a sixteen year old, in 1946, and he soon became a regular member of the Senior team. A County Minor in 1948, he played on the Donegal team that was narrowly beaten that year by an Armagh team that went on to win the All Ireland title. Frankie was a regular committee member and attended many County Conventions as a Club delegate throughout the fifties. He emigrated to Manchester in the same decade, and wasn't long in the city before he was instrumental in setting up the 'Oisín' club. The team soon won three Lancashire Championships, four other Ardara players, Peter Paul Breslin, Danny Brogan, Packie Con Hanna, and Frankie's brother Niall being prominently involved, also. Frankie soon found himself on the Lancashire County team that qualified for the 1953 All Ireland Junior final, in which they were defeated by Mayo. Frankie returned home to play for Ardara, and played Senior and Junior football for Donegal on numerous occasions. He eventually moved to Killybegs in the early sixties, where he was instrumental in the revival of the Club in the town. It had been dormant for a number of years following their Senior Championship win of 1952. The Club has since gone from strength to strength and Frankie is highly respected in the fishing town for his contribution to its success. He now lives in the U.S.A, but still keeps an eye on the happenings at home of both his local Clubs.

Eddie John McGonigle from Tullycleave, arrived in Ardara in 1956 following his marriage to Nan Melly. By the time Eddie arrived in Ardara, he was somewhat of a household name in G.A.A circles in the County, having played for Donegal in the late forties and early fifties. Born in Ballyshannon, he first played with the Corlea Club, on the border with Beleek. The closest he came to success with the smaller Club, was defeat in the 1945 Junior County final against Castlefin. He then joined Aodh Ruadh, and went on to win a Senior Championship medal in 1951 and a Democrat Cup medal in 1955. For Donegal, he had played in the 1948 and '49 Ulster Championships, and was also a member of the panel that won the 1952 Lagan Cup.

By the time Eddie joined the Ardara Club, he was in the twilight of his career, but he still gave many exciting displays for his adopted home. Known through his career for his goal-scoring exploits, the slogan, “Bog her on, Eddie John” could often be heard from supporters when he went on his famous solo runs. Sadly, Eddie passed away in 2000, shortly after he received his award, which he greatly cherished.

John Gillespie of Narin, Hall of Fame winner in 1999, was one of the key players on the Ardara teams of the '40s and fifties. Although born in Drumboe, Stranorlar, John came to live in Narin as a young man, and soon became involved in his two great sporting loves, Golf and Gaelic Football. An outstanding half back, John will be remembered for many great displays for the Senior team, and for his sportsmanship and love of the game. He was a mainstay of the Downstrands Junior team of the fifties, and got great satisfaction in playing for the lower end of the parish.

John was well known countywide as a brilliant golfer, and won countless honours in the sport. He was also a past President and Captain of the Narin/Portnoo Golf Club.

John was deeply moved by his Hall of Fame Award, but sadly passed away a few months afterwards when he died suddenly at his home.

* * * * *

The Ardara Club have held the position of County Treasurer only once – Sean O Cásaide Cassidy (1935-1946).

The County Convention was held in Ardara on one occasion only. The year was 1979, when it was held in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel.



The 1999 Hall of Fame winners, pictured at the Dinner Dance with Club Officers.
Back L-R: Stephen McCahill, Anthony Molloy, Charlie Bennett, John McConnell,
James McHugh.
Front L-R: Eddie John McGonigle, John Gillespie, Veronica Bennett (On behalf of Peter
'Pat') and Frankie Tom Gallagher.



1999 Dinner Dance, from left:
Anthony Molloy, Kenneth Doherty (Minor Player of the Year), Johnny Herron, Stephen
McHugh and Derek Boyle (Ted Webb winners) and Club Secretary, James McHugh.

Important events from the Nineties

- 1990** Nelson Mandela is released from prison.
- 1991** The Birmingham Six are released.
- 1992** Donegal win their first Senior All Ireland title - 108 years after the GAA was founded.
- 1993** Sonia O'Sullivan becomes the first Irishwoman to win a medal in a major international track competition as she comes second in the 1500M in Stuttgart.
- 1994** Albert Reynolds resigns as Taoiseach on the seventeenth of November.
- 1995** Seamus Heaney wins the Nobel prize for Literature.
- 1996** Veronica Guerin is shot dead by a member of a criminal gang.
- 1997** Mary McAleese is elected President of Ireland.
- 1998** Twenty-nine people die in a bomb attack in Omagh, Co Tyrone.
- 1999** Gay Byrne retires from broadcasting.



“The Field”

Char dhruid Dia bearna riamh nach bhfosclódh Sé bearna eile.

Is iomaidh lá a caitheadh agus deora allais a sileadh sula raibh páirc imeartha dágcuid féin ag peileadóirí an cheantair. Deirtear nach féidir capall rás a dhéanamh de asal, ach tionatíodh portach isteach i bpáirc peile den scoth.

This whole story that has gone before, while of the greatest importance, might never have come about, but for one single thing, a place for our footballers to play. From the very beginning, and, one would truthfully have to say, even for the first sixty odd years, the Club have always had difficulty in ensuring, at the beginning of each year, that they would have a ground fit to play on. And if a field was playable at the start of a season, that was no guarantee that it would hold up, or even be available for the duration of any competition in any given period. Following the first game against Glenties, in the ‘Show Field’, in 1921, the Club went from “pillar to post” in the search for a suitable ground, and there were times when matches just could not be played, when a venue could not be found, or had to be abandoned, due to the deterioration of the surface.

Throughout the twenties, various fields were used, all of which, were taken on rent for the day, or were given on the good will of a local landowner. Despite these handicaps, the Club still managed to win three Senior Championships in the decade. The team used many grounds around the parish to hone their skills. Some of the more frequently used were Paddy Keeney’s field in Stormhill, Ned (Pat) Boyle’s field in Magumna, Howley’s (Drimaha), Bryce’s (Edergole), and the Mullan - which was a flat area between the Mullan and the Sandpit at Magumna, which was owned by Paddy Herron in recent years. These pitches were mainly used during the winter months, as was the Ardara Strand, under Whoriskey’s of Kenaughty, where much of the training for the 1923, 1925 and 1928 finals was done. The strands in Loughros Beg and Loughros More bays (when tides allowed) were also availed of during the summer months. As the thirties followed on, the field at the Owenea (Fionn’s home) was used frequently, and continued in use until the current pitch at Kentucky was purchased in 1935.

A field is purchased

The Club officers in the early thirties were extremely conscious of the lack of a permanent playing pitch, and set about rectifying the position. Discussions were

ongoing from early 1932 in regard to lands at Kentucky, that were owned by Hugh Gildea, and eventually agreement was reached and cemented with a handshake in 1933.

Earliest records show that the land was originally acquired by Mr. Francis Gildea, of Ardara, who bought the field from part of the C.D.B. Estate, formerly owned by James R. K. Trendenick, on the 31st October 1913, and he became the registered owner on the 2nd April, 1914. Title passed to his son, Mr. Hugh Gildea, Main Street, a merchant in the town. The field, consisting of an area of 5 acres, 2 roods and 35 square perches statute measure, formed part of the lands received by Richard Murray from James Nesbitt on the 20th December, 1669.

To purchase the land, the Club secured a bank loan of £200 from the National Bank, on the 12th of April 1934, and finally purchased the land for £180 on the 17th of January 1935. The first Trustees named on the deeds were Sean Cassidy, Charles Mooney and Joseph V. Herron. The transaction was finally completed on the 2nd of June 1939, when the property was registered in the name of the Club and vested in the GAA.

From the first “handshake” on the land, in 1933, until 1935, a considerable change had taken place. Thanks to the great work done by Club volunteers, new drains were put in place and some of the famous fir roots were removed. A playable surface was eventually achieved and a home-made concrete roller was used to level the surface. A tar-barrel fence was placed around the field to keep out intruders. When the County semi-final (Ardara v Bundoran) and the final (Ardara v Dungloe) were played in August 1936, the Ardara G.A.A. Club and supporters had every reason to be proud of a fine playing field. There was further honour in 1937, when the National League Division 2 final between Donegal and Longford was also played on the pitch.

Times were extremely difficult in those days. The Club obviously had a tough time in keeping things above water, and with the park account in a very unhealthy state in 1937, the three trustees donated £10 each to keep the account solvent, payments, which were not eventually repaid to the men concerned until 1954. The Club received a £100 grant from the GAA in 1939, which greatly eased the financial pressure and helped to bring about improvements to the pitch and its surroundings.

The official opening

At a Club meeting on the 2nd May, 1939, it was proposed by Domhnall Ó Creag and seconded by Pádraig S. Mac a’Ghoill that the playing field be named The Pearse Memorial Park, so that at the Official Opening, this name could be used. It was also decided to invite the Mayo Senior football team to play Donegal at the

opening, and that Ardara play Downstrands as a curtain raiser.

On Sunday 13th June 1939, the Park was officially dedicated, blessed, and opened by the Very Rev. Canon J. Byrne, P.P., Ardara. The following is the report of the big event that was carried in the Sports Page of the "Peoples Press" on Saturday 17th June, 1939.

(Note - The "Peoples' Press" G.A.A. Correspondent was none other than Donal F.

The Gaeltacht village of Ardara was enthusiastically decorated on Sunday, with banners and streamers spanning the streets, bearing Irish slogans, to greet Mayo, the great Western footballers, and six successive time National League winners, who were the attraction in a challenge game with Donegal for the Pearse Memorial Cup, presented by the Ardara Club for the official opening of their new G.A.A. Park. Weather conditions were by no means ideal and rather heavy showers of rain fell throughout the afternoon, but nevertheless, this did not in the least mar the event and there was a large crowd present, representative of all parts of the Country, and from areas far beyond. The elaborate and beautiful new Park was, with befitting ceremonial, solemnly blessed and declared open by Very Rev. Canon Byrne, P.P., Ardara, who delivered the opening address in the unavoidable absence of Mr. P. MacNamee, National President of the G.A.A.

Situated behind the town and overlooking the sea, or Loughrosmore Bay, with a fine panorama of the Donegal hills and mountains, the new Park is one of the most picturesque in Ulster. For the past six months, the combined brains and intelligence of the local G.A.A. Club - prominent amongst these were Messrs Donal F. Ward (Secretary) and Seán Ó Casaide, both Secretary and Treasurer to the County Committee respectively - have been actively at work to achieve the present magnificent stadium.

Voluntary labour figured largely in the scheme, except for the fencing in of the pitch with wire, posts, etc, and including the construction of a neat dressing room for players, which ran into high costs financially. Elaborate seating accommodation has also been provided on both sides of the pitch, and when the funds are more replete, the

Committee hopes to erect a Grand Stand. Kilcar A.O.H. Pipe Band were present all during the day and rendered excellent selections of traditional airs and music, both in the village and before and after the ceremony and games. The Donegal and Mayo teams were also played onto the field by the Band and marched around the Park before entering their positions for the game.

The Opening Ceremony

After blessing the new Park, Very Rev. Canon Byrne, Ardara, delivered the opening address, in the course of which he referred to the unavoidable absence of the President of the Gaelic Athletic Association, who was to be there on the occasion, and thanked the local G.A.A. Club for extending him the invitation to attend to declare the Park opened. He looked upon the occasion as a great honour conferred on him by the Gaels of Ardara and moreover looked upon it as a great honour given to the Church. He highly congratulated the members of the Ardara Club for their great and untiring work in the magnificent manner in which they had the field so properly and elaborately planned and lined out. Before the members of the Club began to work at this field a short time ago, said the Canon, it was then only rough moor land but he must say the work done spontaneously to these grounds has given it a complete transformation. He hoped the local G.A.A. Club, now with its magnificent field at their disposal, would continue to prosper. He could not bring his brief address to a close without mentioning the name selected by the Club for their new Park. It was a very appropriate name - The Pearse Memorial Park. The name of Pearse, he said would always live in Ireland, for his work done nobly and wholeheartedly for the cause in all its phases, both language and games, and as a Patron, his name would live forever. The four teams formed a semi-circle around the platform by the roadside.

Canon Byrne then declared the Park open.

Welcome to Mayo Team

Mr. Sean Cassidy, O.S., who was the next speaker, in the course of a brief address, paid a high tribute to the people of the town of Ardara and also to the people of the entire Parish. They all, he said, contributed their part magnificently towards the work of founding a magnificent official venue, so that a prominent place could be given to their native games. By their assistance, he said, they had demonstrated the high esteem and regard in which they held their games, which were of considerable National importance. He then extended a hearty welcome to the Mayo G.A.A. team, who travelled such a long distance to play Donegal, on this occasion, and to demonstrate their high skill of football talent, which had won for them such a great reputation all over the land. They were under a deep debt of gratitude to the Mayo team, who at once consented without hesitation to travel to Ardara, when approached.

Mayo Captain Acknowledges

Mr. P. Moclair, Captain of the Mayo team, acknowledging the address of welcome, sincerely thanked the Ardara Gaels for giving them the opportunity to come to Donegal. They were highly pleased with their visit, which was a very enjoyable one for all of them. They highly appreciated the kindness and hospitality shown to them in the land of the O'Donnells. "As a matter of fact, we, the members of the Mayo team", concluded the speaker, "are rejoiced to be given the opportunity to travel anywhere, and do our utmost, especially where the interest of the G.A.A. is concerned."

The Referee for the match was Mr. Sean Kennedy, Chairman of Donegal County Board, and he handled the game with his customary efficiency and skill. Vinny McHugh was outstanding for Ardara and Paddy McGill also played his part on the team.

The teams were:

Donegal - Hugh McGuinness, Tommy Campbell (Bundoran), Tom Gallagher (Ardara), Neil McMonagle (Kilcar), Eddie Cannon (Kilcar), Paddy McGill (Ardara),

Seamus McGarvey (Rosses Rovers), Vinny McHugh (Ardara), Micheal Melly (Ballyshannon), Alo Gorman (Bundoran), Hughie Gallagher (Gweedore), S. Doherty, John Gallagher (Gweedore), Dinny Callaghan (Killybegs), Joe Bradley (Killygordon). Others to play were Jim Maxwell (Ardara), Columba McDyre (Glenties).

Mayo - T. Burke, P. Quinn, J. O'Shaughnessy, P. Kelly, T. O'Regan, J. Poffenwell, M. Griffen, A.O'Toole, J. Munnelly, J. Keaney, P. Judge, S. Mongey, G. Gorrell, P. Moclair and T. Hoban.

The final score in the match was Mayo 3-08 to Donegal 1-04.

Trophy Presented

Following the match, the trophy - the Pearse Memorial Cup - was presented to the winning team by Mr. Sean Kennedy, O.S., (Meevagh), Chairman of the Donegal County Board, who, speaking in Irish, congratulated the winners upon their success, which he said, they had deserved. The Cup was presented amid enthusiasm, and on behalf of the Mayo team, Mr. P. Moclair suitably replied. The attitude of both teams towards the match was most sportsmanlike. In the course of the interview with the "Peoples Press", G.A.A. correspondent, one member of the Mayo team said he confessed he was expressing the wish of the whole team that they deeply appreciated their visit to the highlands of Donegal, and gave voice to the beautiful scenery which they encountered of their journey to Ardara. He also gave voice to the kindness and hospitality of the people of the Gaeltacht.

On the playing pitch, he said they deeply appreciated the spirit of the crowd. It was indeed a pleasure to play under such circumstances. Concluding, he said they were delighted with the Ardara village and surroundings and the catering arrangements too were up to a standard, which could not be surpassed. It was really a pleasurable trip for them, and they would return home with their admiration for Donegal increased a hundredfold. The Donegal players praised the visitors and readily admitted that the Mayo team could not be excelled for their sporting manner.

The "Curtain Raiser"

Prior to the big game, Ardara met Downstrands in a Junior friendly encounter, as a "Curtain Raiser" to the other match. This was a one-sided game, as the final score indicated. The visitors were masters of the situation at all stages, and ran out easy winners on a score of (1-06) to (0-01). Prominent for Ardara, were McGill, Gallagher, O'Boyle and Maloney and for Downstrands, Gildea, Shovlin and Early were prominent. Mr. J. Whoriskey, Ardara, was an impartial Referee.

Céilidhe Mhór/An Concert

There was a very enjoyable Céilidhe Mhór in the Iona Hall on Saturday night at which the Mayo footballers were guests of honour. The music was by the Forthill Ceili Band and Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill was Fear an Tí. During the interval, they were welcomed by

Mr. Donal F. Ward, (Secretary of Donegal County Board). There was a very large attendance, as there was again on Sunday night, when a Concert and Dramatic entertainment was staged. The principal attraction was the celebrated Kilcar Irish Dramatic Club, winners of the first prize and the Dr. Tracy Cup at Sligo Feis this year, who produced "The Rising of the Moon". The Production was under the supervision of Mr. Brian McCairt, O.G., who himself took one of the leading roles. The Ardara Dramatic Club also produced an English Play, "The Singer", by Pádraig Pearse. The acting was of a high standard and won rounds of applause. There was also a supporting Concert programme of singing and dancing, which proved highly popular and left the audience in merriment. Several artists of broadcasting fame figured on the stage. These functions were a huge success from all standpoints.

Ward, County Secretary, Ardara.)



Snowed under: This photo was taken by Bart Whelan in the winter of 1995

Field closed

Through the '50s and '60s however, the field began to deteriorate somewhat, with the drain, which ran across the middle of the field, causing serious problems, as did the old fir roots, which surfaced from time to time, and were a dangerous hazard for competing teams. Indeed the Club actively and continuously looked for alternative grounds throughout the '60s. The matter finally came to a head in 1966, when Fred Sweeney, of Dungloe, suffered a serious leg break in a match against the home side, and the field was immediately closed to activity.

Following a number of unsuccessful attempts, the Club succeeded in renting a field at Sandfield (The Léana), which was owned by Sheila Connolly, and this pitch was used as the main ground for a number of years. There was a serious difference of opinion at the time as to whether the Club should secure a new pitch, and many meetings ended in stalemate, with some members favouring resurfacing the Pearse Memorial Park, while others proposed that a new field be bought. Indeed, in 1966, it was proposed and seconded at a Club meeting, that two lots of land at Edergole, owned by Denis Greene (Dungloe) and Jim Boyle (Edergole) be purchased. The deal however never came to fruition.

While Sandfield was being used as the main pitch, work continued on Pearse Memorial Park, with drains being dug by hand and the bumps and hollows filled in. On the 1st December 1976, work began on the restoration of the pitch, and Charlie Mooney delivered 500 tractor loads of material for levelling the ground. By the 15th February 1977, 1100 yards of drain had been opened, filled and closed, and 400 yards of open drains cleaned at a total cost of £2,800.00 - the cost being met from Club funds. The first Championship match since 1966 was held on the pitch that year, when Ardara played St. Joseph's in the first round of the Championship. The next phase of improvement was carried out from the 2nd November 1977 to 25th January 1978 and included the erection of a chain-link fence and gates at a cost of £3,200.00, for which a grant of £1,900.00 was obtained

from the Youth
Employment
Scheme.



**Club members
shown at the**

**erecting of a plaque in 1996 to
commemorate the Clubs 75th anniversary.**

New dressing rooms

The next major development was the completion of two new dressing rooms in August 1979. Although the total cost to the Club was in the region of £7,000, the cost would have been considerably more, but for the voluntary work of men like John Byrne, Vincent McConnell, Columba Diver, Joe “Larry” Gallagher, Paddy McGill, Paddy Herron, Charlie Mooney and Patsy Gildea. There had been no dressing facilities at the ground since the old green shed, which was situated at the right corner of the field on the Long Point end, was done away with in the late 1960s.

The culmination of all this effort took place on Sunday the 22nd of August 1982, when the Pearse Memorial Park was officially re-opened and blessed by Very Rev. Liam McCaul P.P. and a challenge match took place between the Ardara Senior team and a Donegal County selection. The match resulted in a draw (See 1982).

By the time two new car parks were added in 1984, during Charlie Bennett’s term as Club Chairman, a total of £25,630.00 had been spent by the Club on the grounds. In respect of this, grants of £9,100.00 were obtained from the Youth Employment Scheme, £5,900.00 came from the Central Council, and £650 from the Ulster Council. The remainder of finance came from Club funds.

Sandfield

Despite the concentration on the development of Pearse Memorial Park, the “wise men” of the Club still had an eye to the future, and when 5/6ths of Sandfield came up for sale in 1980, Columba Diver ensured that the ground was purchased, after a number of voluntary donations were sourced from Club members (see 1980), to raise the price tag of £5,000. The ground was used frequently through the eighties, when the Pearse Memorial was unplayable, and in 1989, the remaining 1/6th was purchased for £9,000. Although the pitch was used less and less through the nineties, the investment in the ground alone gave the Club a “nest egg”, which included five sites and a total of 63 acres of ground. Three of the sites were subsequently granted planning permission, and at the time of print were on sale to



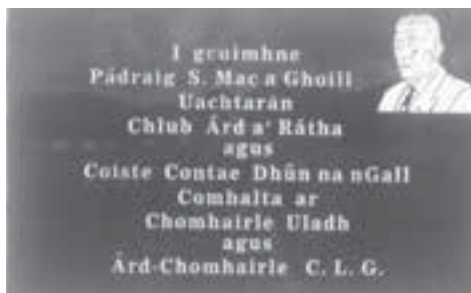
the general public.

Improvements continued apace through the nineties, with the dressing rooms receiving an overhaul in 1990/91, when a long overdue referee's room was built and the dressing rooms re-roofed. This work was done under another F.A.S scheme, with Luke and Hugh Gerard Gavigan overseeing the work to ensure it was completed to a high standard.

The traffic on the pitch grew yearly at an alarming rate, and the Club addressed the problem in 1997, when the dressing room car park was converted into a new training pitch. This proved to be one of the most important developments to date, and has eased considerably the usage of the main pitch, especially during the summer months, when up to four or five teams could be using the grounds at one particular time. Two further dressing rooms and tea/meeting room were added in 1999, followed by new dug-outs, scoreboard, floodlights on the training pitch, ball stop nets, new gates and advertisement hoardings, to leave the pitch on a par with most in the County.

While many became synonymous with Club teams in the past, one person has become synonymous with the well being of the Pearse Memorial Park, from the eighties until the present day, Columba Diver. 'Diver', while not only being the brains behind the purchase of Sandfield, has overseen all the major developments in Pearse Memorial Park in the last two decades. Continuous draining of the pitch by hand has ensured that the field is now playable almost 12 months of the year. In 2001, Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, who had also made a huge contribution, was honoured with a commemorative marble plaque, that was erected in his honour on the front of the new Club meeting room.

In the meantime, the draining continues, as does the constant 'grooming' of the surface. Should the Club ever decide to move away from "The Field", it would probably never be the same. Too many points have been scored, too many memories have been created and too many heroes have been moulded there. It may not be Croke Park, but as far as the people of Ardara are concerned, The Pearse Memorial Park is definitely our "Field of Dreams".



The commemorative plaque erected in 2001 in memory of Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill.

A New Millennium

'Chuir me mo dhóchas i mo rún daingean féin
agus i neart
na bhfear a bhí faoi mo chúram.....' (Mac
Grianna)

Ba mhór an tógáil croí é do phobal an pharóiste go raibh an fhoireann sinsir i gcluiche ceannais na contae i mbliain na mílaoise. B'iad Naomh Adhamhnán rogha na coitiantachta ag saineolaithe peile sa chontae ach bhí Ard a' Rátha ag neartú le gach cluiche ach an raibh siad láidir go leir nó sciliúil go leor chun curaidh na bliana 1999 a chloí. Ar an seachtú lá déag de Mheán Fómhair tugadh freagra ar an cheist sin agus bhí tuilleadh le teacht. sul a ndeachaigh an ghrian síos ar bhliain na mílaoise bhi corn eile sa mhála. Don chead uair riamh bhain an club Craobh Cheannais na Sinsir agus an Sraith Sinsir sa bhliain céanna. B'iontach an radharc é, fear d'ar gcuid féin, Cathaoirleach Bhord na Contae, ag bronnadh Corn Mhic Uidhir ar Éamonn Ó Dochartaigh agus na deora ag sileadh leis. I Mí na Samhna cuireadh críoch foirfe leis an bhliain nuair a bhuail Ard a' Rátha Naomh Cholumba i Fionn Trá i gcluiche cheannais na sraithe sinsir. An oíche sin bhí dhá chorn phríomha na contae ar chuntar tí tabhairne an Dochartach.

A new age, era, century, or whatever you wish to call it, arrived to great celebrations, around the world. Some people argued that it had come a year early (had 2000 years actually passed?), but few missed the opportunity to celebrate this great milestone of the birth of Christ. In Ardara, the community really excelled themselves, and a night to remember was had by all who gathered on the Diamond on the 31st of December 1999. It was a night that proclaimed, what we had known for years, that few towns in Donegal, or indeed anywhere, can boast as great a community spirit as the people of the Parish of Ardara. A spirit that is there to be tapped into. In times of celebration or achievement, tragedy or crisis, it affects all of the people, and every effort is always made to rally around and support those in need of it.

It has been the same with the G.A.A in the area. Often, people drift away for periods, but they come back when the call comes, and when they are needed most.

The biggest Association in the Parish had toiled for 79 years, and as a result, a tradition was created that is the envy of many Clubs all over Donegal. The nineties had passed on, and with them, some of the most historic days that Donegal people would ever see or dream about. The great hopes of the early eighties, which dimmed somewhat as the decade ended, had been revived with more Under-Age success stories, but still the Doctor (Maguire) had failed to show for his appointments, time and time again. The decade raised more milestones in its passing than any previous ten years had done, and still we craved more. Eternal optimists, as we are in this corner of the South-West, and because rather than despite a 19 year break since the last Championship win, we still had great hopes for the immediate future. Few, however, could have predicted what would unfold in the first twelve months of the new millennium.

1999 A.G.M

The local A.G.M was held on the 16th of January 2001, in the Community Centre, with 54 members in attendance.

“As we enter a new millennium, our Club stands on a very solid base, both on and off the field, and we, as members of C.L.G. Ard An Ratha, must do everything in our power to ensure, not only the continuation of this development, but also to make this Club the very best in the County.”

These were the opening words in the annual report given to the meeting by Secretary James McHugh, as he detailed the year's events in his usual detail. He cited the success of the Under-Age teams as once again being the highlight of the year. He felt that, despite the Senior team's exit in the Championship quarter-final, the team had, in general. He was glowing in his praise of the work of team manager, Patrick Gallagher, who left no stone unturned in the quest for success. He was however, critical of the attitude of a select number of players.

“In my opinion, there are too many players looking for the easy option, and I feel they must stand back and ask themselves what they are doing to bring success to the Club. It is always easy to blame the manager for things not going well. The players must play their part, both on and off the field, something that has been lacking for quite some time, as some would rather blame others than look at their own shortcomings.

Steven McCahill, in his Treasurers report reported an income of £68,602.41 and an expenditure of £70,018.63. The bulk of the spending was down to the recent developments on the field, which cost £30,891.41. The Treasurer received glowing praise for his work during the year, and in particular, his efforts in securing the £20,000 grant from the National Lottery towards work on the Pearse Memorial

Park.

The following officers were elected for 2000:

President	-	Frankie Brennan
Vice President	-	Billy Maxwell
Chairman	-	Anthony Molloy
Vice Chairman	-	Larry Gallagher
Secretary	-	James McHugh
Ass. Secretary	-	John McConnell
Treasurer	-	Stephen McCahill
Ass. Treasurer	-	Patsy Boyle
P.R.O.	-	Mary McHugh
Oifigeach Na Gaeilge	-	Partalón Ó Faolain
Development Officer	-	Columba Diver
Scór Officer	-	Breda Boyle
Registrars	-	Mairead Whyte/Sinead Gallagher
Senior Team Manager	-	Johnny D. Earley
Reserve Team Manager	-	James McHugh
Junior Team Manager	-	Jackie Gallagher
Under-21 Team Managers	-	James McHugh and Johnny D. Earley.

The Minor Board A.G.M elected the following officers:

Chairman	-	Larry Gallagher
Secretary	-	John Martin Byrne
Treasurer:	-	James McBrearty

Team Managers:

Under-10 A & B: Stephen McCahill, Patsy Boyle, John McBrearty and Margaret McHugh.

Under-12 A & B: Hugh Gerard Gavigan, John Hegarty, Hugh Peter Shovlin, Colm Cannon.

Under-13/14: John McConnell, Larry Gallagher, Michael Breslin, John Martin Byrne.

Under-16: John Martin Byrne, Joseph Doherty and Mark Cassidy

Minor: John Boyle and Paddy McGill.

2000 - Millennium Champions

19 years was too long for any Club to be without a Championship, and it was certainly too long for a Club with a tradition like C.L.G. Ard an Ratha. The year



2000 started off in a similar way to every other year, big hopes, new ideas, but no more and no less optimism than shown previously. Everyone knew, not only in the Parish, but also around the other clubs, that Ardara definitely had the players, but were they willing to make the sacrifices necessary to win a Championship?

A new manager was in charge. Johnny D. took the reins as Patrick stepped down. Johnny's track record, in winning Under-Age Championships, was unequalled in the Club. And with the majority of the players he had worked with, at Under-Age level, now having matured onto the Senior team, many felt that he could take the team an extra step, if not altogether as far as a Doctor Maguire. Then, with John



Boyle as selector, and the best coach in Ireland, Anthony Harkin, training the team, they had a solid base to start from.

In the first round second leg against St. Naul's at Pearse Memorial Park Francis Diver and Brian McCabe (St. Nauls) are on the ground, while Edward Gallagher, Brendan Boyle, Kevin Byrne and Martin McShane await the outcome.

Although League form was impressive early on, heavy defeats to Four Masters', and away to Gweedore, caused concern, but these were soon forgotten, with a big away win over Killybegs, and a two-point victory over St. Eunan's at home. The Championship draw seemed to be favourable enough; St. Naul's were usually a difficult enough team to beat, but Ardara were favoured to go through. The script wasn't followed in the first game however, and in Gerard Gallagher Park, the home side had a deserving 0-13 to 0-10 win against a lacklustre Ardara team. Things improved only slightly for the second leg; a two point win was 'scraped' in Pearse Memorial Park (0-8 to 0-6), but the team improved immensely for the play-off in Glenties, and won easily on a 1-9 to 0-4 scoreline.

Four Masters' awaited in the quarter-final; a team similar to Ardara, and that had the best Under-Age pedigree in the County throughout the nineties. The week before the game, though, things just seemed to get worse by the day for Ardara. Damian Diver suffered a bad hand injury on a trip to England, while, by the weekend, Brendan Boyle was also deemed out for the game after a fall while away on holidays. There was an air of doom and gloom around the place, but thankfully the players did not buy into it. The sides were level on five occasions in the first half, with the score level at half time (0-05) each. The vital goal for Ardara came

in the second half, after Jimmy Brennan won a kick out, and sent on to Michael Doherty, who shot through the Donegal Town defence to find the corner of the net. In the end, the strength of the Ardara panel was the key, in a 1-10 to 1-6 victory. Diver and Boyle made appearances in the second half that steadied the ship and helped steer it home. The victory sent warning signals around the County; Ardara



were going well, they had the players, and they were finally making the sacrifices; the clubs still left in the Championship had better watch out!

Steven Gildea tries to get past Gareth Britton and Ciaran Cassidy of Four Masters in the quarter-final at Towney.

The Gaeltacht men were waiting in the semi-final. Gweedore had won more County Championships than any other team (12 in total), and there was no doubt that they would match Ardara's hunger on the field. It was going to come down to the team with the best players. The game was played on Saturday the 27th of August, in

MacCumhaill Park. The sides were level at the break, 1-5 to 0-8, Stephen Cassidy's penalty goal giving Gweedore an early advantage. Both sides were reduced to 14 men in the second half, Sean Gallagher of Gweedore and Jonathon Boyle receiving their marching orders, but Ardara held on to win on a 0-11 to 1-6 scoreline.

Ardara proved they had the best players, if only just, and in Conal Doherty, they had the best player on the field. It was his best performance since the Under-14 semi-final of 1991, scoring six points from play, and showing all the potential that everyone knew he had. He was supported by 18 others who gave everything that



they had, and as a result, they propelled Ardara into their first Senior County final since 1984, although one could be forgiven for thinking the team had just won the Championship, such was the jubilation shown after the final whistle.

The scenes after the semi-final victory against Gweedore in MacCumhaill Park.

The sleeping giant that slumbered for 19 years had finally awoken. The mighty St. Eunan's had come through



the other side of the draw, and were ready and waiting for the South-West men. The final just couldn't come quickly enough.....

Hats flags and rosettes

The people of the Parish responded to the occasion like never before. Everything was painted green and gold. Windows, teddy bears, roads, poles, hairstyles, Volvo's, even the sheep weren't safe! The entire community was buzzing with



excitement and the only talk for the next three weeks was of the County final, as all the other hassles of everyday life were forgotten about.

Brendan Kilcoyne, the St. Eunans Captain, and Eamon shake before the game. In the middle is Referee Seamus McGonigle.

Those close to the team knew that things were beginning to come

around at just the right time. The boys were really hyper at training, It was obvious even to the un-trained eye. There was a special 'buzz' about the team, but thankfully, very few outside of Ardara knew this. It proved to be an important 'secret weapon' in our artillery. Our opponents were the defending County



Champions, they had a host of inter-county stars in their team, and were hot favourites in any betting man's book.

The Pre-match parade.

'The Democrat' did their normal, impressive, pre-final supplement, a part of which was a feature in which they interviewed twelve

well known G.A.A. players and managers from around the County. The verdict was unanimous, a Eunan's victory, no question about it. There was one black sheep however. How ironic it was, that the one person who had helped put Ardara out of numerous Championships in the nineties, Killybegs and Donegal forward, Manus Boyle, was the only person willing to stick his neck out and predict an Ardara

Diver and Doherty lead the way as.....

ARDARA REACH PROMISED LAND

Ardara 1-09 St Eunans 0-07

"The Valley of dreams" said a banner outside Ardara; and their team reached the promised land on Sunday with a display of hunger and running that brushed aside the Champions, St Eunan's, in MacCumhaill Park on Sunday. The so-called experts around the county, including this reporter, have humble pie to eat this week, and Gallagher's Bakery might have some overtime, such is the amount of pie to be eaten. This may have been a shock win, but we gladly take our hats off to an Ardara team who adorned county final day with a display of total football that was a joy to watch.

In fairness, they had not set the world alight this year, but a final is all about performing on the day and Ardara used sixteen players before the final couple of minutes, and in that time, all sixteen performed to a very high standard - something that you dream of in your preparations. Leading the way, not for the first time, was their inspiration, Damian Diver, who, despite shipping a heavy knock in the first half, after an accidental collision with Kevin Winston, drove his side forward continuously and was in command around the midfield area.

His main accomplice in steering the Ardara ship to their win was Michael Doherty, who acted as a perfect link between defence and attack, carrying the ball at pace which had the St Eunan's defence in trouble from early on. Apart from his work-rate, Doherty also contributed four magnificent points from play, something which tipped the man of the match award in his direction, although one would not have argued if Diver had got the nod.

Inspirational.

However, it was not just a two-man team. Peter McHugh was inspirational in the way he led the attack and Don Earley's second half display of ball-winning was well above average. Over the hour, you would have felt that Ardara would have needed their share of frees for Jonathon Boyle to keep them in touch. As it was, Boyle was their top scorer,

but all of their total of (1-09) came from play. At the back, Eamon Doherty kept a very tight rein on Brendan Devenney, with Kevin Byrne also outstanding. Young Brendan Boyle kept Kevin Winston scoreless, the first time that has been achieved in the Championship this year, and Francis Diver came of age at midfield, winning his battle with seasoned campaigner, John Haran.

From a neutral point of view, the game was very entertaining and open, with the Ardara style of play making sure that everything was happening at lightning pace. One doubted early on if Ardara could keep up the pace, but they did right to the end, by which time St Eunan's were just not able to get their game going. Apart from Devenney, the St Eunan's forward threat never materialised, with Kevin Rafferty probably the only player to play to potential. Because Ardara were winning nearly all the breaks, the pressure was constant on the St Eunan's defence. Indeed, the five point winning margin hardly does justice to the supremacy, which Ardara had. The sides were level at 0-04 each at the break, and many thought that Ardara might suffer for their inaccuracy in the first half. They could easily have been four or five points to the good, such was the level of possession they held.

The pattern was the same in the second half, and their goal in the 43rd minute was the real turning point. It was fitting that Damien Diver played a big part in the score, carrying the ball forward before releasing Don Earley. Earley rounded Tony Blake, but his effort was expertly stopped by the county keeper. However, the ball broke to the right and fell into the path of full-forward, Jonathon Boyle to lash to the empty net. Even after that score, Ardara had a couple of chances of adding to their tally, but inexperienced finishing was threatening to let them down. A 20m free dropped short and was caught by Tony Blake on the crossbar, and it needed Michael Doherty to step up and add a very important insurance score with ten minutes remaining.

Before that, Brendan Devenney had claims for a free turned down after being tugged back and was booked for making his protest. That was probably the only period where referee Seamus McGonigle had a problem, as he showed remarkable fitness to keep up with the play. Overall, it was an easy enough game to referee, with both sides concentrating on football. Even when St Eunan's threw everything at Ardara in the final minutes, the bravery of the Ardara backs, and Sean Whyte in particular, was evident. Whyte threw himself in front of a Kevin Winston effort in the final minutes, epitomising everything Ardara did on the day. The fact that Conor Curran had not one save to make is also a reflection on the superiority of the Ardara defence.

As the final whistle approached, the Ardara sideline became very excited, with substitutions coming fast. It was strange that St Eunan's did not make any change until nine minutes from the end, and by then Ardara were very much in control. Brendan Kilcoyne came out around the middle of the field but Ardara were coming in waves, and even when they were in tough situations, they always seemed to get a man in support and take the move forward. The win is of huge importance - they have craved this success for a long time. Everything that could be won at underage level had been achieved, but without a senior title, there was always something missing.

Promised Land.

On Sunday they reached the promised land and the homecoming reflected a sense of joy and relief that finally they had made the

breakthrough. Not having been in a final for sixteen years was something of a monkey on their back, especially with the huge effort that has been put in at underage level. Now they have hauled themselves to the top of the pile and nobody in the county will begrudge them. Their great work at underage has finally been rewarded, even if hardly anybody else in the county believed it was going to happen on Sunday last.

Ardara - Conor Curran, Sean Whyte, Eamon Doherty, Joseph Doherty, Martin McShane, Brendan Boyle, Kevin Byrne, Damian Diver, Francis Diver, Fergal Heena (0-01), Peter McHugh, Conal Doherty (0-01), Don Earley (0-01), Jonathon Boyle (1-02), Michael Doherty (0-04). **Suns** - Adrian Cunningham for Martin McShane (41 mins), Aodh Brennan for Conal Doherty, Patrick Gallagher for Jonathon Boyle, Ted Breslin for Joseph Doherty and Jimmy Brennan for Francis Diver (all 58 mins).

St Eunan's - Tony Blake, Brendan Roache, Maurice McGeehan, Jonathon Scanlon, Damien Daly, Terence Gallagehr, John Haran, Shane O'Donnell (0-01), Vernon Gallagher, Kevin Winston, Rory Kavanagh, Brendan Kilcoyne, Kevin Rafferty (0-02), Brendan Devenney (0-04 - 2 frees). **Subs** - Brian McDermott for Shane O'Donnell, Conal Dunne for Vernon Gallagher both 51 mins), Paul Crampsie for John Haran (58 mins).

Referee - Seamus McGonigle (Aodh Ruadh).

victory, and oh Manus, how right you were!

* * * * *

Ardara Club members have held the position of County Board Chairman six times. This is more than any other Club. Sean O'Casaide (1925-29 & 1933), Dan Ward (1945 & 1955), Charles McDyre (1934-37), P.S. Mac a'Ghoill (1967), & John McConnell (1999-2001). Clement Sweeney of Beagh (then of Malin) held the position in 1964 and 65, while former player Charlie O'Donnell of Leaconnell, a member of the Kilcar Club, was elected to the position in 2003.





Eamon raises the Dr. Maguire.

Never, since that meeting on the 21st of October 1921, had a team in the green and gold of Ardara played better, or played harder, or played with such a pride in the jersey. There was no way that day that they were going to be beaten; Eunan's, Crossmaglen, Nemo Rangers, it wouldn't have mattered, the 17th of September was Ardara's day. The many great Ardara Gaels looking down had obviously called in all their favours with the man above so that their beloved Club would finally have its day in the sun. An tAthar Sean Ó Gallachoir probably described it best, when he covered the game in his book, "The story of the Donegal Senior Football Championship 1919-2001."

"And sometimes the human spirit responds with unimaginable valour and creativity and magnificence to the calling of the hour. And sometimes the collective will, the desperate hunger, the common dream of a pobal find expression in deeds of unexpected grandeur and greatness and beauty. And sometimes limbs and minds, finely tuned by years of discipline, become puppets of the heart, driven by the spirit of the parish, the frustration of failure, the contempt of commentators, the desiderium nostrorum. From the first minute, it was obvious they were up for it. From the first minute, it was obvious that they wanted it more, that their hunger was greater. From the first minute, they were first to the ball. From the first minute, there were exquisite ball passing skills by hand, fist, foot; there were men available to receive; there were men running off the ball; there was the chasing and the hunting in ones, in twos, in packs. And from the first minute, there was Diver at the nub of everything, director of operations, maker

of goal, soloer forward, harrier back, picker up of midfield ball, generator. And County Chairman John McConnell cried. And the Democrat said Michael Doherty was man of the match, journalists, too, shell-shocked like the Cathedral boys, worshipping false Gods.

And in the September twilight, with sun set on Rosbeg and Maghera, they brought home the trophy, the curadhmhír, home. Home to Ardara. So often the best part, the coming home. As heroes. Men apart. But men a part of the community that bred, reared, formed, moulded them. Home now to the fields, nay, the patches of sand and clay, that sustained them. To elders that doted and chided. To those they grew, are growing up with. To those who tried and tried, and now cried. Frankie. If we don't our children will. Legacies. And Legends. Now to be remembered always. Won a medal in millennium year. Dry year. Night to remember. But, above all, day to remember. By Finn. Hero. He rose. They all rose."

The scene on the MacCumhaill Park pitch after the match, was akin to Croke Park in 1992, albeit on a smaller scale. It was an emotional day for County Chairman, John McConnell, who presented the Doctor Maguire Cup to his Club and to the team Captain, Eamon Doherty. People just hugged and cried, and savoured a moment that they had been waiting to happen for 19 years.



The players celebrate their famous victory.



Michael Doherty receives the Man of the Match Award from Darren Farnan of the Donegal Democrat. Michael gave a brilliant display in the final scoring four points, and revelling in his role as a third midfielder. As a result of his displays for the Club, he was drafted into the County Panel and played during the National League. Michael had already represented Donegal as a County Minor, and is well known as one of the better Club players in the County



The Homecoming

It was nigh on an hour after the final whistle that the huge crowd assembled to leave Ballybofey for home. The Volvo leading the way, as the usual forty-five minute journey became over two hours, as the clubs en route all saluted the victory. The cavalcade stretched for over three miles. The people of Glenfin lit bonfires and cheered at the passing mayhem. Even their famed local weatherman, Michael Gallagher (who had called Johnny D prior to the game and predicted a bad day weather-wise, but also predicted an Ardara win), was also to be seen. Fintown came out in force, and our neighbours from Glenties really gave all a great welcome. A banner had been erected at the entrance to the town and the main street was bedecked in flags. The Ardara and Glenties clubs had many ups and downs over the years, but when push came to shove, there was a genuine happiness among most Glenties people that the Dr. Maguire Cup was visiting next door for 12 months, and it was very much appreciated.

As the cavalcade reached the parish boundary, the true belief that the Championship had **really** been won was brought home to everyone. People from all over the South-West had travelled to the town, to see and to help Ardara celebrate. Young and not so young waited patiently as the Garda escort, which led the way from Ballybofey, came down the Front Street, where a few thousand people waited patiently. The players eventually made their way onto the victory platform on the Diamond, where the Cup was hoisted once more to the loudest cheer of the day..... More tears and then some.

The party was welcomed by a great Clubman, the then Chairman of Donegal County Council, Charlie Bennett. Other speakers included Club Chairman, Anthony Molloy, John McConnell, Johnny D. and Eamon, Team Captain. It was the biggest gathering in the town since the 22nd of September 1992, the night Sam came down the 'S'.

After the formalities were over, the party began in earnest, straight through the night and into Monday, without a break for many. On Monday evening, the team and supporters assembled at the Church grounds and the cavalcade made its way to the Rosbeg and Portnoo, to salute, not only those from the area who were involved in the victory, but all the great Downstrands players who had travelled up past the hanging stone, to play for their parish. On Tuesday evening, there was another tour of the Parish, from the town to Meentinadea, on to Meenavalley, up through Glengesh and down into Maghera, and then, to finish, down the 'Point'. The route lined with bonfires and happy faces.









Back to Earth

Despite the festivities, life had to go on the following weekend, and things came back to earth with a bang; a League match in the Banks, against Naomh Mhuire. Despite, maybe because of, the groggy heads, the team was fortunate to come away with a draw, having already qualified for the League semi-finals. A bigger test lay in wait though, the first round of the Ulster Club Championship against the Cavan champions, Gowna, on the following Sunday, the 1st of October. With all the hysteria following the County final, the game had nearly been forgotten about, and



although the team returned to training on the Tuesday before the match, it was proving difficult to motivate a group of players who had just realised their life's ambition.

Patrick Gallagher tries to break away from Patrick Brady of Gowna in the Ulster Club match in Ballybofey.

Their opponents were a seasoned outfit, who had won a string of Cavan County titles, and were now gunning for an Ulster Club title. Unfortunately for the Donegal Champions, there was little room for sentiment, and as Ardara failed to



take some early scoring chances, the Cavan men took full advantage. They ran out easy winners, on a 2-13 to 1-7 scoreline. The Ardara team on the day was as follows: Conor Curran, Sean Whyte, Eamon Doherty, Joseph Doherty, Kevin Byrne (0-01), Brendan Boyle, Martin McShane, Damian Diver (0-01), Francis Diver, Fergal Heena (0-01), Peter McHugh, Conal Doherty (0-01), Don Earley (0-01), Johnathan Boyle (0-01), Michael Doherty (0-01). Subs used- Patrick Gallagher for Francis Diver, Jimmy Brennan for Jonathon Boyle, Stephen Gildea (1-00) for Don Earley, Ted Breslin for Peter McHugh.

Jimmy Brennan tries to dispossess one of the Gowna defenders.

Thankfully, the defeat did not spoil Ardara's chances of taking the 'double'. They had already qualified for the League semi-finals, and played Aodh Ruadh, a month later, in Fintra. A 2-10 to 1-10 win took the team through to the final of the Democrat Cup. The opponents in the final were League specialists, Naomh Columba, and memories of the many battles, fought between the teams had over three decades, all but guaranteed a close struggle. Famous for their never-say-die attitude, the Glen men were not going to lie down easily. The match was played on the 19th of November in McDevitt Park.

Ardara end memorable year with the double Ardara 0-13 Naomh Columba 0-09

Superb second half football, in dreadful conditions, with a gale force wind against them, saw Ardara come from behind to complete the League and Championship double, emulating St Eunan's who, last year, also did the double. In September, Ardara won the County Championship; on Sunday, at freezing cold Fintra, they added the League title, Eamon Doherty adding the Democrat Cup to the sideboard, where sits the Dr. Maguire. This is only their third time to win the league and Glencolmcille side, Naomh Columba, really tested them. Naomh Columba contributed brilliantly to a game that should have been destroyed by terrible weather. Credit both teams for their endeavour, and a thousand thanks from roughly as many supporters who braved the chill to see snatches of often clever but always brave football. Mid November may be well be a crazy time to decide such a prestigious competition, but it was the same pitch and the same wind for both teams and there was a raw and simple honesty from both sides. In the absence of adequate space to accommodate reporters, I returned to my old stomping ground, pitch-side, and in a way I think I left Fintra knowing exactly how cold, wet and slippery it was for both sides. In view of the conditions, some of the football played was quite breathtaking.

Led by County senior team selector, John Joe Doherty, who wore the number 14 shirt, Glencolmcille led by 0-05 to 0-04 at half time, Doherty and county 'veteran' Noel Hegarty scoring some excellent first half points for a Glen side who were battling into the teeth of a gale. With the strong wind in their favour in the second half, Paddy

Hegarty, John Kelly and Conal Gavigan hit truly superb points. But Ardara's superior fitness began to tell as they played some of their best football of the year in the final 20 minutes. Jonathon Boyle, who scored a total of six points from frees, putting Ardara ahead, with three minutes left; his score from 40 metres, on the wing, a quite marvellous free kick on any day, but quite special considering the strong wind he was kicking into. Further points from Don Early, Michael Doherty and Martin McShane ensured Ardara's first League title since 1989 and a wonderful Championship and League double for the year 2000.

Diver Back

Damien Diver the Donegal captain, and a vital contributor in the crucial final 20 minutes, looked quite tired at the final whistle, but he has happily recovered from the injury that kept him out of the Galway game. Diver played well, but if you were to look for a player who inflicted real damage, I would pick Fergal Heena out. I would not forget Michael Doherty, or Don Early either. These three made a massive free when 'players who won games' were asked to step forward. Wind howling, noses running, eyes peppered white with sleety rain, it was dancing time and boy did these three cut a swagger. Heena only scored a point altogether, but he was my man of the second half (Aidan Burke, who can spring twice his height for a ball, was my first half M.O.M, playing with guile and guts at centre half forward for Naomh Columba). With the game poised at 0-08 each, with 17 minutes left, Michael Doherty fired over a levelling point, but before that, Early had won a free

converted by Boyle to make it (0-06) to (0-08). Hard work saw Noel Hegarty blocked, the ball whizzing through six sets of hands, before Early hit an outrageous score from the wing. That made it 0-07 to 0-08, one in it and Johnny D's boy putting a smile back on the boss. Glen were slipping. Their first half display was truly incredible. On 19 minutes, John Joe drew them level at 0-02 each, two minutes later Noel Hegarty found Pauric Gillespie, who scored a fine point (all this remember, against the strong wind). Minutes later, a half chance for a goal for Gillespie, but John Kelly settles for a point, and Noel Hegarty pointed a free to top and tail a superb effort from Naomh Columba. Late in the half, 30 and 34 minutes, they slipped up slightly, Fergal Heena and Jonathon Boyle (free) making it closer than it should have been, 0-04 to 0-05 at the break.

Whirlwind Start

Glen's start to the second half was a whirlwind, three points in four minutes and to be honest I thought it was the end of Ardara. Paddy Hegarty, helped by an upright, hammered over a point inside 30 seconds, John Kelly made a great fetch and then swung over an equally good point. Glen, using the long quick ball effectively, and Conal Gavigan made it 0-08 to 0-04 from 40 metres. But then the air came out of the Glen tyres, bit by bit Ardara clawed back, and near the finish, with the game won, Anthony Harkin turned to me "I thought the extra fitness might do it" he said, and it was a major factor.

With four minutes left, however, Glen were ahead again, John Joe was fouled after his defence had played the ball cleverly and carefully to the attack. Noel Hegarty pointed. But, the momentum swung back to Ardara, Jonathon Boyle pointing a free to level and another free, a great score from Boyle, on the wing, put Ardara ahead. My three top men dominated the final passages of play, Heena doing well to release Early who fisted a point, and Michael Doherty scoring with the boot to make it 0-12 to 0-09.

Three minutes into injury time, with tickets being fired left and right, as Ardara subs entered the fray to run down the clock. There was an insurance score, wing back, Martin McShane, putting four between them.

All 35 players involved deserve credit for their part in making this entertaining and competitive. Heena, Early, Michael Doherty, I have said enough about. Sean Whyte also should be praised highly, for an exhibition at corner back play, and for some excellent scores from difficult frees, a salute too for Jonathon Boyle. For Glen, Aidan Burke was a revelation, he commanded and controlled in the first half, from centre forward, rarely wasting a ball. The Cunninghams, Hughie, and more so, Conal, were always steady, while John Joe and Noel did plenty, but ultimately it was not enough to deny an Ardara side who, by winning the League have added consistency to obvious Championship class. What a year for John McConnell, presenting the Dr. Maguire, and now the Democrat Cup, to his own Club.

Ardara – Conor Curran, Sean Whyte, Eamon Doherty, Joe Doherty, Martin McShane (0-01), Brendan Boyle, Michael Doherty (0-02), Damien Diver, Francis Diver, Fergal Heena (0-01), Peter McHugh (0-01), Conal Doherty, Don Earley (0-02), Jonathon Boyle (0-06, frees), Stephen Gildea. Subs – Darren Maguire for McHugh and Jimmy Brennan for Francis Diver (injury time).

Naomh Columba – Gerard McGill, Hughie Cunningham, Noel McGinley, Kevin Cunningham, Georgie Doherty, Conal Cunningham, Michael McGuire, Noel Hegarty (0-02) fs, Conal Gavigan (0-02), Paddy Hegarty (0-01), Aidan Burke, Terence Byrne, John Kelly (0-02), John Joe Doherty (0-01), Pauric Gillespie (0-01). Subs – Seamus Carr for Gillespie, Dessie Cunningham for Georgie Doherty and Gary Kennedy for Terence Byrne.

Referee – Liam Browne (Four Masters).

It was a fitting end to the most successful year in the Club's history; it was the first time that both League and Championship, the double, had been won in the same

year. There could have been no greater reward, for the superhuman efforts of the players and management, than to see the two Cups coming home to Ardara; first, the Dr. Maguire, in along the Glenties road; and then, the cream on the milk, the Democrat Cup, down the 'Nick'! Fintra was again good to Ardara, and the latest victory put the seal on a wonderful year for C.L.G. Ard an Ratha.



Eamon Doherty raises the Democrat Cup after the League final against Naomh Columba.

One could not finish our account of the year 2000, without including the famous "Ardara 2000" song, which was composed by Frank McGhee and Malachy Gallagher in the week after the Championship win. Many's the rendering the song had in the months following the County final.

19 Years

(To the air of Lannigans Ball)

*The year 2000 will go down in history
For several reasons and the odd mystery.
But in Ardara, the greatest of all
Is the County Championship of all Donegal.*

*From Aighe to Clooney they're all going looney
Guilty and Vinny and Charlie Mooney
Giving advice to the Management Team,
McConnell and Brennan, they knew the scene.*

***Chorus : Nineteen years we went in search of it
Nineteen years we won nothing at all
Nineteen years we went in search of it
Now we're the champions of all Donegal.***

*Curran in goal 's a bit of a stopper
And all his kick outs went straight to Potter,
But if one happened to go astray,
You couldn't repeat what the Potter would say.*

*Heena came back to us from the States,
To get on the team he just had to wait.
He got his debut against St Naul's
He made no mistake when he got the ball.*

Repeat Chorus

*They say Jimmy Brennan is tough as leather,
When he jumps for the ball he flies like a feather.
There's Francis and Brendan to play in the middle,
Where they could kick it 's a bit of a riddle.*

*There's Martin McShane, he came from the Rosses,
A couple of games 'n he impressed the bosses,
With bicycle shorts, he played in the back-line,
With his point in Fintra you'd think he was front-line.*

Repeat Chorus

*Well on the old team, the Docs they were plenty,
If they left the pitch, the place would be empty,
With Joseph and Michael and Conal a flyer,
And Eamon to lift the Dr. Maguire.*

*Damien's hair had got a bit curly,
Aodh Brennan got a little bit burly,
Since he left Ardara, he put on some weight
Was it something he drank, or something he ate?*

Repeat Chorus

*Jonathan Boyle, the frees he does slot,
Some he kicks over the black spot,
Some times he's in form and some times he's maybe,
They say that sometime he should go and see Brady.*

*Johnny and John and Anthony too,
Some people think they hadn't a clue,
Some of the tactics were not very clear,
But we won the double in Millenium year.*

Repeat Chorus

*With Lee and Cruise both in the dugout,
When under pressure they sure did help out,
Matthew Whyte as strong as an ox,
Sub Keeper Shovlin as cute as a Fox.*

*Don Earley would run and shout for the ball,
Being low to the ground he'd rarely fall,
A dummy or two and he's on his way,
He found the posts in Ballybofey.*

*Peter McHugh is next on the card,
He's not very big but he's awfully hard,
And Ted on the panel, renowned for speed,
In a race for the ball, he'll be in the lead.*

Repeat Chorus

*St. Nauls, the first day did give us a whackin',
From their new field, they sent us home packing.*

*On came Gildea, to get the team going,
One right hook on Griffin, and a red card he was shown.*

*Four Masters' in Towney were next to be met,
To beat us they thought it was a safe bet.
That notion was soon put out of their soul,
When Jimmy and Michael created a goal.*

Repeat Chorus

*They said that Gweedore were too good for us,
With their kind of play they'd soon close our 'doras',
But Kevin and Adrian in defence were sensational,
Some people said it was divine inspirational.*

*Against St Eunan's we hadn't a hope,
Eleven to one the Democrat wrote.
In MacCumhaill Park our boys became men,
Now we are tops in the County again.*

Repeat Chorus to end



Johnny D. does it again!

The Senior team's successes in 2000 were of course led by the popular bus man from the West End, Johnny D. Earley. Since he first became involved, the Mullinard man has undoubtedly been the most successful manager in the history of the Club. A key player on the Glenties Under-Age and Senior teams of the sixties, Johnny arrived in Ardara in the seventies after marrying Gretta Diver, and Naomh Conaill's loss was definitely Ardara's gain.

He first became involved as the regular transport man, and soon started managing the St. Mary's School team, in 1982, that won numerous Parish Leagues and two County Cumann na mBunscoil titles. He was thrown in at the deep end, in 1984, when he managed the Senior team to the County final, where they lost to Four Masters. But he returned to the Under-Age teams, and following a lot of hard work, he teamed up with Pat O'Donnell to take the Under-16 title home to the parish, in 1989, in a famous victory over Killybegs. That team went on to win a Minor and two Under-21 Championships, and provided the backbone for the Senior team's millennium success. He was also involved in the Minor teams of '94, '95 and '99, each of which reached the County final, and the Under-21 team who were beaten in the decider in 1997.

His motivational ability has driven many of his teams from a lost cause, onto some great victories, over the years. Socially, J.D. is famous for his storytelling prowess, and for his ability to make an already tall tale, considerably taller and funnier; and many bus journeys have been made much shorter as a result of his endless supply of jokes and sayings.

Known, not only for his talents on the sideline, he has also doubled up as the Club first aid expert since the eighties, and his ‘surgery’ at the West End is always busy,



during and after hours. His healing hands have provided a quick cure for many over the years. The recipient of the Clubman of the Year award in 1997, Johnny will always be hugely respected in the Parish for his part in bringing so many glorious days to the Ardara G.A.A Club, and the story is not over yet.

Johnny D. and Damian relax on Divers window in the week before the County final.



Former Club players, John and Hugh McHugh, pose with the League and Championship cups in Dohertys. Hugh passed away shortly after this photo was taken.

Reserves and Juniors exit early.

Despite the inspiration of the Seniors, there was no happy ending to the campaigns of the Reserve and Junior teams. The Reserve team had a very disappointing campaign, with some very poor performances throughout. A number of players moved up to Senior level and settled in quite well, but a number of other prominent players were ruled out for the year, with injuries and studies, with the result that the team fielded many young players. At the end of the year, they finished in the bottom

half of the League, while they lost to St Nauls in the first round of the Championship. In the Gaeltacht competition, they went out in the first round, this time to Naomh Columba.

The Junior Team competed in the Championship only, and were drawn against Naomh Padraig, Lifford, in the first round. After losing the first leg at home, they turned the tables in the away leg, in Lifford, with a great performance. The play-off in MacCumhaill Park was a closely contested game, which they lost narrowly. Jackie Gallagher managed the team.

Club fined after explosive Under-21 match

The Under-21s drew St. Eunan's in the first round of the Championship. The game was played in Ardara, and at the end, the visitors came back to snatch a draw. This match ended in controversy, after a 'bizarre' sending off. A St. Eunan's defender, reported to be the full back, who was involved in an incident, was approached by the referee, Connie O'Gara, but made a hasty exit from the pitch before the referee got a chance to interview him. The referee waited for him to return, but he failed to do so. The incident sparked a number of scuffles on the pitch.

Ardara led by 1-04 to 0-04 at half time. Afterwards, St. Eunan's turned a two-point deficit into a one-point lead, but Ardara came back to equalise and force a replay, on a score of 1-05 to 1-05.

However, as both teams went to the Dressing Rooms, the tensions displayed earlier, exploded, and a serious melee took place between both sets of teams. The County Board took a dim view of what happened and both Clubs were fined £500 for their part in it. The replay in Letterkenny went in favour of the home side, and the Ardara team bowed out of the Championship.

Under-10 and Under-12 performances the high spot for Under-Age teams

The Club Minor Board had a busy year, once more, in 2000. The highlight was the performance of the Club Under-12 team, which reached the County final for the third year in succession. Killybegs had been installed as hot favourite from early in the year for the County Championship. The teams met in the South-West final, where the fishermen had a fairly comfortable victory. The Ardara lads, though, didn't let the setback affect them, and after wins over Gweedore and St. Eunan's, and a thrilling semi-final win over a good Kilcar team, they qualified for the final, with, once again, Killybegs as opponents. Despite a gutsy performance from the Ardara lads, Killybegs eventually pulled away in the second half and won the Championship by virtue of a 1-18 to 1-7 scoreline. The teams that fielded in the final were:

Ardara – Hugh G. Diver, James Boyle, Oisín O'Donnell, John F. Barrett, Paddy McGrath, Stephen Boyle, Conor Classon, Declan Gavigan, Noel Gallagher (1-01), Carol Brelsin, Conal Gildea (0-03), Dean Sharpe (0-03), Fergus McBrearty, Pete-so Cannon, Peter McNelis. Subs used – Pauric Hegarty, J. J. Shovlin and Carmel

Boyle.

Killybegs – Cillain Byrne, Bernard Byrne, Shane Boyle, Jason Martin, Daniel O'Donnell, Seamus Coleman, Stephen Muirhead, Paul McGinley (0-03), Brendan Faherty, Brian McCabe (1-03), Ryan McNelis (0-09 – 4 Frs), Shane Kelly, Pauric Breslin, Ciaran Tully (0-03), Michael Mullen. Subs – Jamie Ratcliffe for Mullin, Evan Burke, Don Campbell, Pauric McIntyre, Barry Gallagher, Barry McFadden and David Ainsworth.

Referee – Mark Dorrian (St Nauls).

The team recovered well from their defeat, and went on to retain the prestigious Willie Rogers Tournament in Ballyshannon. Along the way, they competed with the Champions of Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim, Fermanagh and Tyrone, before coming out on top. It was fitting that they had something to show, as the team had improved consistently during the year, thanks to the work of John Hegarty, Hugh Gerard Gavigan, Colm Cannon and Hugh Peter Shovlin. The U-12, B team entered Division 4 of the Championship, but was beaten by Na Rossa in the County quarter-final.

The Boys finished off the year with the annual Club U-12 Parish League, for the Kevin McGill memorial cup. Fergus McBrearty was the winning captain, as his team defeated Conal Gildea's team in the 'A' final. In the 'B' final, Noel Gallagher's team won from Pete-so Cannon's team.



The Gortnacart/Crannogbuí team who competed in Cumann na mBunscoil competitions in 2000 picture with Teachers, Tom O'Donnell and Eamon McGill.

The team was rewarded for their efforts when, along with the Under-13 team, they had a very enjoyable weekend in Dublin, where their hosts were the Templeogue/Synge Street GAA Club. When they arrived in the Capital, they paid a visit to Croke Park and the GAA museum, before going on to meet their hosts. They then played two challenge matches, before going to visit the National Basketball arena in Tallaght, where they spent two hours availing of the excellent facilities and the games on offer.

Under-10s win Warrenpoint Tournament

The Under-10s had a brilliant year in 2000 as they finished the year unbeaten. The 'A' team won all eight South-West Blitzes, while the B Team won five. Their finest hour came in County Down, when they participated in the Warrenpoint Blitz, with teams from all over Ulster and Leinster taking part. Eventually, after some excellent football by the Ardara boys, they emerged as winners, beating Banbridge in the quarter-final, Warrenpoint in the semi-final and Mayobridge in the final. They were the first team from outside County Down to win the competition. The teams were managed by Stephen McCahill, Margaret McHugh, Patsy Boyle, Eamon McNelis and John McBrearty. They put in endless hours of work with these players, and this work was very evident in their performances. The year ended with the Under-10 Parish League, for the Michael McNelis Cup. The League was a great success, with two very competitive and exciting finals on Saturday 4th November for the prestigious memorial trophy. In the B final, Conor Classon's team defeated Kevin McCabe's team, while in the 'A' decider, a thrilling game saw Francis Boyle's team defeat Peter Oliver McNelis' team after extra-time.



The 2000 Under-10 team, who won the Warrenpoint Tournament in Co. Down with their managers, Stephen McCahill, Patsy Boyle and Margaret McHugh.

The other Under-Age teams failed to advance significantly in competitions, the biggest disappointment being the Under-13 team, which was defeated in the Divisional final by Killybegs.

The Club fielded two Under-14 teams in 2000. The 'A' team failed narrowly to qualify for the County semi-final, after a draw with Naomh Conaill in their Divisional final game meant that the Glenties men went through. The 'B' team entered the South-West 'B'. Championship, but didn't qualify for the play-off stages.

The Under-15s went out in the Gaeltacht Championship to Glenfin, and also failed to qualify in the Óg-sport Gael, 7 a side competition. The Under-16 team, likewise, failed to qualify from their section, while the Minor team never reached the heights of the previous year, losing to Four Masters' in the County quarter-final.

Ladies teams grow and grow

The Ladies' end of the Club was not found wanting in 2000, with the Girls' fortunes improving year by year. It was obvious that a major breakthrough was not too far away, as the Under-14 Girls qualified for the County final, thanks to victories over Four Masters', Kilcar, and Robert Emmet's. In the final they were most unlucky, as they lost out to a strong Four Masters' side. The U-16 team also advanced in their group, and a very talented team only lost out in the final to St. Eunan's. On the way to the final, they had accounted for Glenfin, Kilcar and MacCumhaill's.

The Senior Ladies' team had a quiet season, due to the unavailability of some of their more experienced players. Forced to field a young team in many of the matches, they were in with the top three teams in the county, Four Masters', St. Eunan's and MacCumhaill's and failed to qualify in the League. In the Championship, they were defeated in the semi-final by Four Masters'. James McBrearty and Jimmy Boyle continued toiling away, and it would only be a matter of time before their efforts were rewarded. Charlene Kennedy, Mairead Gallagher, Michelle Bennett, Sansha Maguire and Maria Diver were all members of the Donegal Ladies Junior team in 2000, while Sansha, Rebecca Watters and Mairead Watters played for the County U-16 Ladies team.

That the game was very strong in the National Schools, was down to the coaching at U-10 and U-12 levels in the Club. St. Mary's National School continued their excellent success, and they also captured a double, the Cumann na mBunscoil Championship, and the County Mini-Sevens, early in the year. From this, Carmel Boyle and Michelle Gallagher represented the school, in Croke Park, in the annual Mini-Sevens games. Michelle played at half time, at the Armagh v Kerry game,

while Carmel played during half time, at the All-Ireland final. The other schools, Meentinadea, Brackey, St. Conal's, Kilclooney and Crannog Buí, also participated in the various Cumann na mBunscoil activities.



The St. Marys girls team who won both the Cumann na mBunscoil and the I.N.T.O seven a side competitions in 2000. They are pictured with their teachers, Colm Cannon and Raphael Meehan

Ardara win top Club and individual awards

Few were surprised that the Club swept the board, of awards, at the end of the year. Foremost, perhaps, was the A.I.B. Donegal Club of the Year award, which was presented at a function in Croke Park, and which was attended by Secretary, James McHugh, Treasurer, Stephen McCahill and Development Officer, Columba Diver. The Club received a cheque for £500 and a commemorative plaque. But that wasn't all. At the annual Donegal G.A.A County Board Banquet, in January 2001, the Club also won the Club of the Year award. On the same night, the Club was honoured in the individual categories, with Damian Diver being selected as the Donegal Player of the Year, and Mary McHugh being presented with the communications award, as the top P.R.O in the county for 2000. Among other things, she set up the Club website, and produced a souvenir Club Yearbook in December. A historical night for the Club was topped with the announcement of the Donegal G.A.A team of the millennium, in which Martin Gavigan and Anthony Molloy were selected at centre half back and mid field respectively. The Club was also represented at a function in the Canal Court Hotel in Newry, in November, where all the County Champions of Ulster were each presented with a cheque for £500 for their achievements by A.I.B. The award was accepted on the Club's behalf by team manager, Johnny D. Earley, and by P.R.O., Mary McHugh.



Johnny D. and Mary Kelly meet Armagh's Joe Kernan at the Ulster Club Champions awards in the Canal Court Hotel in Newry.

County teams

The success of the Senior team was reflected in the County Senior panel for the NFL, when Eamon Doherty, Michael Doherty, Brendan Boyle and Damien Diver were all members of the panel selected by the new Team Manager, Mickey Moran. Damian also won his first Railway Cup medal, earlier in the year, when he was a sub on the Ulster team that defeated Connacht in Sligo. It was a busy year for Brendan Boyle, as he was also captain of the County Minor team, which was managed by Anthony Molloy, as well as playing on the County Under-21 squad. Lee Watters and Kenneth Doherty were also selected for the County Minors in 2000. Johnny McGill and Patrick Gallagher (Moagh) played for the Donegal U-16 team that competed in the Buncrana Cup, and Gareth Concarr, Kevin Gallagher and Matthew Maher were members of the Donegal U-14 Development Squad.

At officer level, John McConnell continued as County Chairman, Edward Molloy as Assistant Secretary, and James McHugh was P.R.O. of Donegal Minor Board. Outside of the Association, Clubman Charlie Bennett received his greatest accolade to date, when he was elected Chairman of Donegal County Council in July of the year.

Other news

A bigger effort was put into Scór in the Club, in 2000, particularly in Scór na nÓg, with two acts qualifying for the County finals. In the Solo Singing Section, Cliona Heena did the Club proud, when she just missed winning the County title, by the



narrowest of margins, while James Hegarty, Joseph Shovlin and Dallan Byrne put up a good showing in the Trath na gCeist.

The Scór na nóg Quiz team 2000. Dallan Byrne, James Hegarty and Joseph Shovlin.

The Club's Bi-Annual Golf Classic was held on the eve of the Senior County final and proved once again to be a tremendous success. There was a magnificent response from the business people

in the Parish, indeed from the neighbouring Parishes also, with over 50 teams of four taking part in the competition. The event raised over £10,000 for the Club coffers. The Committee responsible for organising the event were as follows: George Doherty, Pauric Brennan, Thomas Breslin, Mary McHugh, Stephen McCahill, Martin McMahon, Charlie Bennett, Bart Whelan, Columba Diver and Anthony Molloy.



Golf Classic 2000: John Michael O'Donnell and Anthony Molloy welcome Packie Bonner and Charlie Collins to Narin and Portnoo Golf Club

A year of unprecedented success for the Club, but a year of sadness, also; a number of former Ardara greats did not live to see it. The Club lost three former Hall of Fame winners in 2000. Peter "Pat"

Breslin, Eddie John McGonigle and John Gillespie all passed to their eternal reward, while Harry Lafferty, of Ballybofey, a member of the 1952 Minor Championship team, also died suddenly. Their contribution will long be remembered.



Guest of Honour, Frank O'Donnell and his wife, Vera, receive their presentation from Mary McHugh and Columba Diver respectively.

Year celebrated at Annual Dinner Dance.

The Club hosted its biggest ever Dinner Dance, in the Blue Haven in Kilcar, in January, after the original night in December had to be postponed due to poor weather conditions. The event saw over 400 people attend what was a gala night, where the Club celebrated the year in style. Former Club Chairman and long

standing player, Frank O'Donnell, was selected as Guest of Honour on behalf of the O'Donnell family of Leaconnell, who had made a major contribution to the Club down the years. The Senior team were presented with their League and Championship medals, and the Annual Award winners were also honoured. The Hall of Fame awards went, posthumously, to the families of former players, Danny Maloney (Maghera), Packie Watters (Edergole), and Phil (Tammy) McHugh.

The other Annual Award winners were:

Senior Player of the Year	-	Eamon Doherty
Reserve Player of the Year	-	Paddy Gallagher
Minor Player of the Year	-	Brendan Boyle
Lady Player of the Year	-	Martina McGroarty
Club Person of the Year	-	Anthony Harkin
Supporter of the Year	-	Claire Boyd.



Claire Boyd accepts the Supporter of the Year Award at the 2000 Dinner Dance.



The Diver Clan pictured at the 2002 Dinner Dance.



Charlie Bennett presents the Hall of Fame Award to Kitty Watters, who accepted on behalf of her late husband Puckie.



The Annual Award winners at the 2000 Dinner Dance in the Blue Haven



Don Earley, Martin Shovlin and John Martin Byrne.



Hughie Maloney accepts a posthumous Hall of Fame award from Charlie Bennett on behalf of his late father Danny.



Danny Maloney, from Maghera, was an uncle of Michael Boyle and they both played for a number of years together in the half-back line for Ardara. Described by his contemporaries as a strong fielder and formidable defender, he was selected mainly in the centre half-back position. His playing career stretched from 1940 to 1948. He partnered Vincent Rankin at centre-field on the Downstrands team that won the Democrat Cup in 1943 and played for Donegal in the Ulster Junior Championship of 1945 at right-full-back. In the year 2000 he was posthumously awarded the Club's Hall of Fame Award which was accepted by his son Hugh on behalf of the family.



Diver is Donegal Player of the Year.

There was only ever going to be one Donegal Footballer of the Year in 2000. Damian Diver's performances for Ardara, during the League and Championship campaigns, made him a shoe-in for the award from an early stage. Regardless of what team he ever lined out for, since he first appeared as a wee freckle-faced nine year old, on the St. Mary's National School team of 1982, there was never any doubt but that he would play a major part in whatever success came the way of the Ardara G.A.A Club over the next 20 years.

A son of Tom and Mary B. Diver from the famous Diver football family tree, it is no exaggeration to say that few players in the Club's history have determined the destiny of the teams that he has played on, as much as Damian Diver has. His explosive style, never say die attitude, and supreme athletic ability, have always singled him out as Ardara's best

player, nine days out of ten. His partnership with Johnny D. Earley, which was formed in his early days at St. Mary's, has proved to be a winning combination, and many Championships have followed as a result.

Damian receives the Sports Star of the Month Award from Darren Farnan and Tom Comack of the Donegal Democrat.



In County terms, he stands only behind Anthony Molloy, with 26 Championship appearances for Donegal, as being Ardara's most capped player for the County. He holds the distinction of being the only Ardara player to have captained Donegal

Minor (1992), Under-21 (1995), and Senior teams (2001), in the Ulster Championship. He is also the most successful captain of Club teams, having led the Under-21s to Championships in '94 and '95, and the Seniors to All Ireland Gaeltacht success in 1998. From his Senior debut for the Club, in 1991, there have been countless Man of the Match displays; the higher the stakes, the better he plays. His finest display in a Club jersey however was in a slightly less high profile game, a Division 1 League match, in Gweedore, in 1993. Playing at right half back, Diver split the post seven times in total, all from play, in what those present would have termed the greatest individual performance from an Ardara player ever seen in a Club match. Do-chreidte a dúirt pobal Gaoth Dobhair an lá sin. One of the biggest mysteries in Diver's career, though, is the fact that he didn't make his Senior County Championship debut until 1996, despite being a member of the panel on and off since 1994. The Championship first-round match against Down, saw him line out at right half back, in a 1-9 to 0-11 defeat. Since that time he has played under four different County managers, P.J. Mc Gowan, Declan Bonner, Mickey Moran, and Brian McEniff, but unfortunately a major Championship or League medal has eluded him in that time. The 2003 All Ireland semi-final defeat to Armagh, is the closest he came to following in Anthony and Martin's footsteps by playing in an All Ireland final. He is still hopeful of fulfilling that ambition before he hangs up his County jersey. A qualified Quantity Surveyor, he manages the family Centra store in the town.



**In the 2000 quarter final against Four Masters',
Damian comes off the bench to help the team to victory.**

Fact File

Date of birth: 6-7-74

Height: 5-11. **Weight:** 13 stone 5lbs

Honours won: Ulster Minor Football Championship (1991), Ulster Under-21 Football Championship (1995), Railway Cup (2000), Ulster Vocational Schools (1992), 1 Senior Football Championship, 2 Under-21 Football Championships, 1 Minor Football Championship, 1 Under-16 Football Championship, 1 All Ireland Comortas Peile Na Gaeltachta, 2 Cumann na mBunscoil County medals.

Donegal Player of the Year 2000.

Donegal Supporters Club Player of the year 1996.

Ardara Minor Player of the Year 1991.

Ardara Senior Player of the Year 1993

Appearances for Donegal: 89 (NFL, Championship and McKenna Cup)

Most difficult opponent:

Club: Barry McGowan.

County: Mike Frank Russell.

Best team mate:

Club: Ted Breslin.

County: Tony Boyle, Noel Hegarty.

Biggest influence on your career

My father, Eamon Harvey (County), and Johnny D. Early.

2000 A.G.M.

Sixty-five members gathered in the Community Centre for the A.G.M of the Club on the 21st of January 2001. In reporting on the most successful year in the Club's history, the Secretary, James McHugh, was glowing in his praise of the efforts made during the year.

"For the past number of years, the Runaf's report consistently highlighted the Senior team's lack of success. Year in, year out, the same theme was running through each report, and one word, 'discipline', was continuously being used. We were always left wondering what might have been, as it was a story of continuous failure. This past year has been so different, as the tide has been turned completely. What might have been has turned into reality. Failure has been replaced with success, disappointment with elation, and the list goes on."

He went on to pay tribute to all those involved in the success, and stressed the hope that the team could handle "being the team to beat", in the county, in 2001.

In commenting on the performance of the other Club teams, he had some harsh words regarding the Under-21 performance in the Championship. In particular, he referred to the fracas that occurred in the match against St. Eunan's, in the Pearse Memorial Park, which soured what was a good year for discipline for the Club. He concluded his report with the following:

"We must build on the success of the past year. This success didn't arrive overnight, as it resulted from many years' hard work from so many people. We cannot sit back and let things happen. We must use this success to our advantage, as I believe we have only tapped into a small fraction of the potential that exists in our Club at present, and I ask you all to play your part in keeping C.L.G. Ard An Ratha a thriving and successful Club in the years ahead."

The Treasurer, Stephen McCahill, reported an expenditure of £77,282.22 and an income of £83986.78

The following officers were elected for 2001:

President	-	Tommy Boyle
Vice President	-	Frankie Brennan
Chairman	-	Anthony Molloy
Vice Chairman	-	Larry Gallagher
Secretary	-	James McHugh
Ass Secretary	-	John McConnell
Treasurer	-	Stephen McCahill
P.R.O.	-	Mary Kelly

Development Officer	-	Columba Diver
Scór Officer	-	Breda Boyle
Oifigeach Na Gaeilge	-	Partalón Ó Faoláin
Registrars	-	Mairead Whyte, Sinead Gallagher.
Team Managers	-	Deferred to first Club meeting.

At the Minor Board A.G.M, the following officers were elected:

Chairman	-	Larry Gallagher
Secretary:	-	John M. Byrne
Treasurer:	-	James McBrearty

Team Managers:

- Under-10:** Jackie Gallagher, Connie Bennett, Matthew Melly, Ted Breslin, Conal McLoone.
- Under-12:** A & B: Stephen McCahill, John McBrearty, Margaret McHugh, Patsy Boyle and Eamon McNelis.
- Under-13:** Hugh G. Gavigan, John Hegarty, Hugh P. Shovlin, Colm Cannon.
- Under-14:** John McConnell, Larry Gallagher, Michael Breslin, John Martin Byrne.
- Under-15:** John McConnell, James McHugh, Larry Gallagher.
- Under-16:** James McHugh and John Hegarty.
- Minor:** John Boyle and Paddy McGill.

2001

Following the heights reached in 2000, it was always going to be difficult to replicate the same achievements in 2001. Once again, hitting the high spots fell to the Club Under-Age teams, as the Senior team found it hard to reproduce the standard they set for themselves in the previous year. The highpoints of the year were winning the Club's fourth Under-14 Championship and the Club of the Year



Award, for the second year in succession, while the undoubted low point of the year was the sudden death of that great Clubman, Charlie Bennett.

The death of Charlie Bennett

Like a knife thrust through the heart of the community, is one way of describing what the people of Ardara felt, when the news was flashed home, on the 18th of

March, of the sudden death, in New York, of Charlie Bennett. Charlie, and his wife Marian, had travelled to the U.S.A., as part of Charlie's role as Chairman of Donegal County Council.

There were few community activists who could sustain their involvement so intensely, and for such a long period, as Charlie Bennett. From the time he and his wife, Marian, returned from England, in 1963, until his untimely death, in Brooklyn, on the 18th March 2001, much of his spare time was spent in the many organisations and committees, of which he was a member, if not the driving force.



An early photo of Charlie and Marian



Charlie with his good friend Phil McHugh

Born in Corkermore, on the 10th of January, 1934, Charlie attended Binbane N.S. and later, Meentinedea N.S., where he was taught by Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill. When the family moved to Ardara, he went to Gortnacart, where Leo Howley was Principal. Described by his contemporaries as a stylish footballer, who played mainly in the forwards, he was a member of the historic Minor Championship winning side in 1952. He played at midfield that day, and scored three points. The following year, he played on the Senior team that reached the semi-final and were narrowly defeated by Carndonagh. He also played for the County Junior and Senior teams, and was later a County selector.

Between 1954 and 1963 he spent various periods in England where he married Marian Boyle in Peckham, London on the 24th of September 1958.

In 1964, after he returned from England, he became Club Secretary, and was Assistant Secretary the following year; a year in which he was Senior team captain and the Junior team reached the County final, but were defeated by one point by Four Masters'. He continued his involvement and was

elected 'Lord Mayor of Ardara' in recognition of his fund-raising for the club. He was Club Chairman in 1983, '84 and '85, a period in which he demonstrated his prowess as a fund-raiser. He also received the honour of Club Person of the Year in 1984, and again in '86, for his huge contribution to the Club. He was the instigator of the Hall of Fame Award and every year, at the Annual Dinner Dance,

his eulogising of the recipient made each and every one of them feel that they were indeed worthy of the award. His greatest performance was at the Dinner Dance in 2000, the millennium year, when, wearing the chain of office of Cathaoirleach Comhairle Chontae Dhún na nGall, he uttered the immortal words, “I love the media and the media love me!”

To Charlie, the GAA Club was an important bedrock for other community activities. He was actively involved in Care of the Aged, The Pioneer Association, St Vincent de Paul Society, Friends of the Handicapped, Ardara Parish Council, The Heritage Centre, Ardara Tourism, and the Community Centre. In 1993, he was named Donegal Person of the Year in recognition of his outstanding work for charity. In 1997, following the death of Conell Boyle, Charlie was co-opted to Donegal Co. Council, an opportunity to represent his people in the ‘Seat of Power’. It was as Cathaoirleach that Charlie led the official Donegal Co. Council delegation down Fifth Ave., in the St. Patrick’s Day Parade in 2001, but, sadly, during a parade in Brooklyn, the following day, he collapsed and died later in hospital. The suddenness of his death was a tremendous shock, not only to his wife Marian, and his son Cathal and daughter Sinéad, as well as the entire Bennett family, but also to the community and to anyone who ever made his acquaintance.



Taken in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel at the 1983 Dinner Dance. Back, Charlie and Patsy Gildea. Sitting: John and Anne Byrne, wife Marian, Mary and James McBrearty.

On hearing of Charlie's death the County Manager, Michael McLoone, said,

"If we can take any consolation from his untimely death, it is that fate determined that he died while in his role as First Citizen of Donegal, the highest office that Charlie could have held, and a role which he carried out with great pride and distinction. He was a great ambassador for the county and was proud to represent the people of Donegal."



After the 2000 County final, Charlie celebrates with Billy Maxwell, Columba Diver, Tommy Boyle and Eddie Doherty

His funeral was the biggest and the most representative of Church, State and Pobal ever seen in Ardara. The impact Charlie Bennett had made on the community was echoed by Fr. Austin Laverty P.P., V.F., in the funeral homily:

"It may be difficult for people from other communities to appreciate how much the death of Charlie Bennett impacts upon us here in Ardara. When we consider that he was involved in everything good that happened in this part of the county over the last thirty years; how his name was almost synonymous with this parish and its well-being; how he worked tirelessly to make this a caring and progressive community; how he gave his time and energy unstintingly to every worthwhile project that ever started here – then you can begin to get a small inkling of the sorrow of this community at the suddenness of his call."

No Championship repeat for Seniors

Out to defend the Doctor Maguire, the Senior team came suddenly back to earth in February, when the Championship draw saw a repeat of the 2000 County final against St. Eunan's. Patrick Gallagher answered the call to manage the team, after Johnny D. stepped down at the end of 2001. The same backroom team was in

place, with Eddie McLoone added as a mentor, with special responsibility for the growing number of Club players working in Dublin. The draw was one that the team could have done without, as it took some time to get the celebrating, which had carried on into the New Year, out of the system. The first leg game, in O'Donnell Park, confirmed these worries, and the home side ran out easy winners, 1-12 to 2-4, in a weak Ardara display. Unfortunately for Ardara, things did not really improve in time for the second leg match, in Pearse Memorial Park, and Ardara's reign as County Champions came to an abrupt end.

Champions bow out tamely. Ardara 2-07 St. Eunan's 3-08

Forget the scoreline, this was a one sided, low-standard game which St. Eunan's were able to coast, after they converted a penalty after just four minutes. Corner-forward, Kevin Winston, finished with three goals, each which was presented to him gift-wrapped by a very lethargic Ardara defence. Behind by 2-01 to 0-01 after fifteen minutes, Ardara, despite woeful shooting, got the margin down to two points by the break, but they then committed hari-kari, two minutes into the second half, gifting a third goal to Winston, and with it, any chance they had of taking this tie to a third game.

Without Joe Doherty, Francis Diver and Jonathon Boyle of their championship winning team, the home side were at odds with themselves from the start, and once they put themselves on the back foot, they lost their shape completely. Overall, this was an error-strewn game. St. Eunan's, only needing a draw to advance, can count themselves lucky they were not up against a more focussed side, as they lost the midfield battle, but they had a strong defence, and in Rory Kavanagh, they have a player who will make a name for himself, along with Winston and Devenney, before this campaign is over.

Ardara knew they had to put a plan in action to deal with Brendan Devenney. Sean Whyte was despatched to help Eamon Doherty, and they did a reasonable job. Devenney was sharp, but after twisting and turning in the 4th minute, the defence had done their job as his effort for a point dropped short. However, Rory Kavanagh was alert and picked up a rebound, and he was blocked by Johnny Herron as he shot

for goal, resulting in a penalty. From the kick, Kevin Winston fired home his first goal.

With Ardara finding it difficult to get on target (they had eight first half wides), Devenney set up Brendan Kilcoyne for a point, before Michael Doherty got Ardara off the mark in the 9th minute. The porous Ardara defence leaked a second goal in the 15th minute, Kenneth Doherty giving the ball away easily, with Shane O'Donnell and Kevin Rafferty setting Winston free, and from close range, he squeezed the ball past Conor Curran. Two minutes later, Brendan Devenney found space to get an easy point. Ardara hit back, with a good point from Fergal Heena, and they were given further hope when Kevin Byrne made a great fetch, and when the ball was sent forward Peter McHugh collected and sent Conal Doherty through to find the net in the 19th minute.

Devenney added a point for St. Eunan's, but Peter McHugh replied with an equally good effort, before Brendan Kilcoyne pointed a free, to leave St. Eunan's ahead by 2-04 to 1-03 after 29 minutes. Before half-time, two points from Heena (free) and Conal Doherty gave the home side some hope, trailing by just two points – Ardara 1-05 to St. Eunan's 2-04.

Then, two minutes into the second half, a speculative lob forward saw both Eamon Doherty and Kenneth Doherty mis-time their attempts to catch, and the ball ran free to Kevin Winston, who coolly chipped the advancing 'keeper for his third goal. Two minutes later, Brendan Kilcoyne added another point from a free and Ardara's self-destruction continued with Conor Curran's

kick-out only reaching Kilcoyne, who tapped it back over the bar to leave his side 3-06 to 1-05 ahead.

The task was an uphill one for Ardara, as St. Eunan's knew all they had to do was to not concede a goal. Indeed, the Letterkenny men had the ball in the net in the 43rd minute, Devenney finding Winston free again, but before he put the ball in the net he had lifted it off the ground. Michael Doherty and Fergal Heena (free) pulled two points back for Ardara by the 45th minute, but they were making little headway against the St. Eunan's defence. Indeed the next score did not come until the 60th minute, Kevin Rafferty lofting a point, while a minute into injury time, the goal that Ardara needed much earlier, arrived, Heena converting a penalty after a foul by Terence Gallagher. A very scrappy and low-standard game, and some funny refereeing decisions from Jimmy White, which had both sides scratching their heads – a lot of emphasis on looking for continuity, but when a player is fouled, he is fouled, and he will become frustrated when a free is given against him

for over-carrying seconds later.

Ardara – Conor Curran, Kenneth Doherty, Eamon Doherty, Sean Whyte, Johnny Herron, Damian Diver, Martin McShane, Brendan Boyle, Kevin Byrne, Don Earley, Aodh Brennan, Conal Doherty (1-01), Fergal Heena (1-03 – pen, two frees), Michael Doherty (0-02), Peter McHugh (0-01). Subs – Joseph Doherty for Kenneth Doherty, Stephen Gildea for Don Earley and Stephen McHugh for Conal Doherty.

St. Eunan's – Tony Blake, Terence Gallagher, Mark Crossan, Jonathon Scanlon, Barry Tinney, Adrian McClafferty, Brendan Roche, Shane O'Donnell, Paul Crampsie, Damien Daly, Kevin Rafferty (0-01), Rory Kavanagh, Brendan Kilcoyne (0-04 – two frees), Brendan Devenney (0-02), Kevin Winston (3-01 –one pen). Subs – Conal Dunne for Adrian McClafferty, Brian McDermott for Barry Tinney, Maurice McGeehan for Paul Crampsie and Brian McGeehan for Kevin Winston.

Referee – Jimmy White (Killybegs)

It was a hugely disappointing end to a Championship, which, it was hoped, would see the team prove that the previous year was not just a one-off. The team tried to make amends in the League, and ended up in joint fourth position with Dungloe. In a play-off match in Fintra, Ardara, with a number of young players in the team, put in a great performance to defeat the Rosses men by three points. However, it transpired that week, that a flaw in the County League Regulation, meant that Dungloe, who had a better scoring average than Ardara, should have been put forward instead, without a play-off. Dungloe duly accepted the lifeline that was thrown to them, and went on and won the League.

The team also took part in the Kilmacud Seven-a-side tournament in Dublin on All-Ireland Final weekend. They beat Hollymount (Mayo) and Moorefield (Kildare), but lost narrowly to the 2000 Champions, Castlewellan (Down).

I gComórtas Peile na Gaeltachta, d'éirigh leis an fhoireann Sinsir a mbealach a dhéanamh go dtí cluiche ceannais na Condae, taréis lámh in uachtar a fháil ar Naomh Mícheál agus Naomh Náille. Ach sa chluiche ceannais, bhí An Clochán Liath ró láidir, agus bhí bua éasca acu, leis an scór 1- 14 in aghaidh 0 - 9.

De bharr go raibh An Clochán Liath ag dul go Ciarraí mar curaidh na bliana roimhe, tugadh cuireadh do Ard a' Rátha fosta. Bhí deacrachtaí ag Ard a' Rátha

foireann a chur le chéile chun páirt a ghlacadh sa Chomórtas Náisiúnta. Tharraing siad as an Chomórtas, rud a chuir díomá ar an Choiste Náisiúnta agus chuir siad a míshuaimhneas in iúl don Chlub.

The Senior Reserve team, under the management of Frank McGhee, finished the League campaign in mid-table, while in the Championship, they defeated St. Eunan's in the home leg but lost the away leg in O'Donnell Park. In the play-off in Glenties, St. Eunan's came out on top, with four points to spare. In Comórtas Peile Na Gaeltachta, they defeated St. Naul's in the first round, but lost to Cloughaneely in the County quarter-final.



Nan McGill presents Corn Phádraig S. Mhic a'Ghoill to County Minor Board Chairman, John Friel. Also included from left is Maureen Houston, Eilish Rushe (County Minor Board Secretary) and Sean Houston.

Under-14s take Corn Phádraig S. Mhic a'Ghoill.

The highlight of 2001, on the playing fields, was the winning of the Club's fourth Under-14 County Championship, and with it Corn Phádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill. The Club had donated a perpetual cup to the County Board in 2000, to commemorate Pádraig Mór, and felt it appropriate that it should be presented for the Under-14 Championship. Pádraig had been instrumental in setting up the initial competition in the grade, in 1962, Ardara being the first winners. The Ardara team had won the Under-12 title in 1999, and as a result, were one of the Championship favourites from early in the season. They qualified from a tough South Donegal section in first place, and after defeating St. Eunan's in the County semi-final (2-13 to 3-7), had qualified for a repeat of the '99 Under-12 final against Buncrana. A tough match was expected, but few predicted just how tough it would be.

Ardara just make it.

Ardara 4-8 Buncrana 3-10

In a repeat of the Under-12 final of two years ago, Ardara had just a point to spare in this Under-14 final, one of the best under-age finals seen in some time.

Buncrana opened the scoring in the first minute of the game with a great goal from midfielder Christy McDermott, who, along with his other midfield partner, Daragh Irwin, dominated the first half. Their strong physique in the middle of the field was the engine of the Buncrana attack.

Buncrana added another McDermott point in the 5th minute, and by now were definitely in the driving seat, with Ardara having quite a lot of work to do. Ardara didn't register their first score until the 15th minute, when Kieran Gallagher scored a free. Buncrana replied with another point, from McDermott, in the 17th minute. There was also some great defensive work in this half by Ardara's Declan Gavigan, Johnathan Shovlin and Shaun Gallagher. Ardara added points in the 18th and 19th minute by Declan and Kieran Gallagher. Another point in the 20th minute for Buncrana, by Darragh Irwin, put them firmly in the driving seat. Ardara were caught out in the 21st minute, when Buncrana took a quick sideline ball, which saw Joe McDaid finish to the net. Two great saves by Ardara keeper, Joseph Gallagher, denied Buncrana further goals. Following these misses for Buncrana, Christy McDermott made no mistake, when he scored another super point from play. Kieran Gallagher had another Ardara point in the 27th minute, and Ardara should have scored a goal, but Conal Gildea was denied by a great save from Buncrana keeper, Matthew Deeney. Towards the end of the first half, Buncrana added points from Irwin and McDermott to put them nine points in front, but on the stroke of half-time, Kieran Breslin broke away from his marker to plunder an Ardara goal. Half time- Buncrana 2-7 Ardara 1-4.

The second half opened like the first, with Buncrana pointing through Christy McDermott. Ardara at this stage had a lot of work to do – but a long ball from Declan Gavigan found Declan Gallagher, who in

turn found Conal Gildea, to finish to the net. The gap was six points again when Johnny Fullerton added a point in the 25th minute, but the Inishowen men were reduced to 14 men in the 40th minute, when centre half back, Michael McLaughlin, was sent off. At this stage Ardara's Martin Shovlin was coming more into the game. Another long ball in by Ardara, once again ended in the hands of Gildea, who scored his second goal. Ardara had now stepped up a gear, and the small Shovlin at centre half forward scored another point in the 44th minute. In the next five minutes, Buncrana had three wides. They then scored in the 45th minute, through McDermott, and a goal in the 47th minute from Oisín Flaherty put them five points ahead once more. Ardara replied with a point from Gildea, and they were also denied goals in the 50th and 53rd minutes, the latter being disallowed for a ball infringement in the square. Ciaran Gallagher pointed a free in the 54th minute, was followed by the equalising goal from corner back, Noel Gallagher. With just minutes remaining, it was a very tense and exciting countdown, with Buncrana missing some scoring chances, but Ardara sealed a tremendous comeback, when Kieran Gallagher pointed to give them their fourth County Under-14 Championship win.

Ardara: Joseph Gallagher, Noel Gallagher (1-0), Michael Herron, John F. McHugh, Johnathan Shovlin, Shaun Gallagher, Declan Gavigan, Declan Gallagher (0-1), Kieran Gallagher (0-5), Derek Gallagher, Martin Shovlin (0-1), Hugh Shovlin, Pete-so Cannon, Conal Gildea (2-1), and Kieran Breslin (1-0). Subs used: Tomas Maguire, Dominic Breslin, and Derek Gallagher.

Buncrana: Matthew Deeney, Paul Grant, Darragh McGlynn, David Doherty, Keelan McCann, Mickey McLaughlin, Johnny Fullerton (0-1), Daragh Irwin (0-2) Christy McDermott (1-7), Oisín O'Flaherty (1-0), Michael Hegarty, Pauric McLaughlin, Adrian Doherty, Joe McDaid (1-0), Adrian Porter.

Referee: John McGlanaghy (Four Masters)

It was a great comeback from the boys, against a very talented Buncrana team. After the match, Corn Phádraig S. Mhic a'Ghoill was presented to the Ardara captain, Declan Gallagher, by Pádraig's wife, Nan, and daughter, Maureen. The team went on to collect two other prestigious trophies. They won the John McFadden memorial tournament, defeating some of the top teams from Derry and Donegal, before beating Dungiven in the final, and they also won the Derrygonnelly tournament, in which they defeated the Champions of Armagh, Fermanagh and Cavan to take the cup. It definitely was a year to remember for the team and the management of John McConnell, Larry Gallagher, Michael Breslin and John Martin Byrne.



Nan presents the cup to Ardara Captain, Declan Gallagher. Also in photo, County Minor Board Chairman, James McHugh and Maureen Houston.

Under-13s the best of the rest

In the other Under-Age grades, the highlight was the performance of the Under-13 team. The boys, who had reached the County Under-12 final in 2000, put in the display of a lifetime in the South-West final against Killybegs, defeating the Champions after extra-time, in Towney. Victory over Urris set them up for the County final against a strong St. Eunan's side.

The match, which was played in Ballyshannon, saw Ardara set up some great chances in the first quarter, but failing to take advantage, despite the best efforts of Conal Gildea, at full forward, who caused the Eunan's defence endless problems throughout. They did lead, 1-1 to no score, at the end of the quarter, with a point from Pete-so Cannon, and a goal from Gildea. Fergus McBrearty had added a point before St. Eunan's got on the score-sheet. Then, Ardara had a setback, when a second goal from Gildea was disallowed, for a disputed ball infringement in the square. This seemed to spur St. Eunan's on, and by the time the half time whistle came, they were 2-3 to 1-3 in the lead.

A brilliant Gildea point, after the break, gave Ardara renewed hope, but the physically stronger Letterkenny players managed always to keep a cushion between the sides, and despite Ardara having two good goal chances in the last five minutes, the Eunan's defence cleared the danger, to win by 2-10 to 1-7. A disappointing end for the lads, but their displays during the season were a great source of satisfaction for the team managers, John Hegarty, Hugh G. Gavigan, Colm Cannon and Hugh P. Shovlin.

The team in the final was as follows: Donal Byrne, Paddy McGrath, J.J. Shovlin, James Boyle, John F. Barrett, Oisín O'Donnell, Conor Classon, Stephen Boyle, Declan Gavigan (0-1), Peter O. McNelis, Pete-so Cannon, Fergus McBrearty (0-2), Carol Breslin, Conal Gildea (1-1), Noel Gallagher (0-3). Sub used: Anthony Byrne.



The Ardara Under-13 team 2001, who were defeated in the County final by St. Eunan's Back I-R: Colm Cannon, Brian Collum, Fergus McBrearty, John F. Barrett, James Boyle, Declan Gavigan, Donal Byrne, Conal Gildea, Stephen Boyle, J.J. Shovlin, Dean Sharpe, Johnathan Breslin, Daniel Sweeney, Hugh G. Gavigan.

Front L-R: John Hegarty, Peter O. McNelis, Pete-so Cannon, Carol Breslin, Noel Gallagher, Conor Classon, Paddy McGrath, Oisín O'Donnell, Hugh G. Diver, Daniel Shovlin, Brendan Gavigan, Hugh P. Shovlin.

Sitting: Daniel Shovlin, Pauric Hegarty, Stephen McCahill, Anthony Byrne, Johnathan Gallagher, Kevin McCabe, Paul Barrett, Francis Boyle.

The Under-10 teams had another great year in 2001, the 'A' team winning all eight Blitzes in the South-West, while the 'B' team won four of their tournaments. The teams also travelled to Warrenpoint, to defend the title they won the previous year, but were defeated by Bundoran in the second round. The Annual Parish League was a great success, and after some great games, two exciting finals were held. In the 'B' final, Conor Tonry's team defeated Pauric McGill's team, while in the 'A' final, Daniel Shovlin's team defeated Stephen McCahill's team. Afterwards, Eamon McNelis presented Daniel Shovlin with the Michael McNelis Memorial Cup. The presentations took place in the Clubroom, with refreshments prepared

by the parents. Conal McLoone presented the 'B' Player of the Year to Sinead Gavigan, and the 'A' Player of the Year award to Daniel Shovlin.

The Under-12 team had a good Divisional campaign and met Killybegs in the Divisional final in Glenties. Killybegs took the honours, after a good match, both teams going through to the quarter-finals, where Cloughaneely ended Ardara's run.

The Under-12 Parish League was run through the month of September, with the final being played on Sunday 7th October. A large crowd enjoyed some great football from the four teams. The 'B' final was contested between the two "Point" men, Paddy McGrath and Jonathon Breslin, with Paddy's team coming out on top. The 'A' final was between Anthony Byrne's team and James Boyle's team with Byrne's men finishing on top. After the finals Frankie McGill presented the Kevin McGill Memorial Cup to the winning Captain, Anthony Byrne, on behalf of the McGill family. Anthony Molloy and Eamon Doherty presented the other captains with their awards.

In the other grades, the Under-16 team failed to qualify for the knockout stages of the Championship, despite winning some earlier matches, while the Under-15 team went out in the first round of the Gaeltacht to Naomh Conaill. But they were impressive in the County Óg-sport 7 a side competition, winning the South-West, before going out at the semi-final stage, again to Naomh Conaill.



The Under-12 Parish League Captains in 2001 with their Team managers:
Back: Margaret McHugh, John McBrearty, Patsy Boyle and Stephen McCahill.
Front: Paddy McGrath, Anthony Byrne, James Boyle and Johnathan Breslin.

A strong Minor team, in 2001, went through a tough campaign in the Championship before going out at the semi-final stage. They overcame Naomh Columba, over two legs, in the first round, and defeated Naomh Conaill in the quarter-final (3-8 to 2-4), after a re-play, Derek Boyle being the top scorer, with 3-03. In the semi-final, they met St Michael's, in a game where they played with fourteen players for 45 minutes, but some missed chances proved their downfall. Despite playing some great football over the hour, a Colm McFadden goal, with just six minutes to go, proved the difference, with St. Michaels winning the match by four points.

The U-21 squad also reached the County semi-final, where they were defeated by the eventual winners, Four Masters'. They had already defeated Termon and Fanad Gaels in the earlier rounds, but on a terrible evening in Kilcar, Four Masters' ran out easy winners, by 2-13 to 1-5, despite a margin of only one point between the teams at half time. The team was managed by Noel Watters and Jimmy Brennan.

Donegal Celtic Football Club visit Ardara

In July, the Club was honoured to have as guests, the Donegal Celtic G.A.A. Club from New York. The Club were on a tour of Ireland with their Under-10 and Under-12 teams, and with former Ardara player, Connie Molloy, as one of the mentors, they stopped over in Ardara and played matches against the home sides, in both grades. Connie's own son, C.J., was one of the stars of the Under-12 side. Ardara won both games, although the level of skill displayed by the visitors was evident to all. Afterwards there was a presentation dinner in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel, where a presentation was made by Columba Diver, on behalf of the Ardara Club, to Connie, who accepted it on behalf of the Donegal Celtics. Another token was presented by former New Yorker, Packie Maguire, to a former friend, Tommy Trainor, a great servant of Gaelic Football in New York for well over 40 years. The New York visitors responded in kind by presenting the Club with a beautifully inscribed plaque, and they also presented each Ardara player with a special medal.

Ladies take first County Championship

The hard work put in by James McBrearty, Jimmy Boyle, and Margaret McHugh, since the Club entered Ladies' Football in 1992, finally bore fruit, in 2001, when the Under-16 team won the Club's first ever 'A' Championship. They reached the final by defeating a very strong St. Eunan's team in the semi-final. In the final, they performed brilliantly against Four Masters', in Fintra, to win the game by four points, on a score of 2-04 to 1-03. At the end, the Captain, Aoife McDonnell, accepted the Cup from Charlie Kavanagh, from the Ladies' County Board. Team and scorers were – Mary Whelan, Stephanie Sweeney, Sabrina Diver, Martina McHugh (Narin), Eimear O'Donnell, Sharon Kilbane, Meave O'Donnell, Aoife McDonnell (0-02), Ciara Mooney, Catriona McHugh, Jenna Bennett (0-01), Maura McHugh, Carol Breslin (2-01), Natalie Gildea, Michelle Gallagher. Subs – Carrie Bennett for Maura McHugh, Catriona Feeney for Michelle Gallagher, Therese Gallagher for Jenna Bennett. Others subs were – Aoife Watters, Carmel Boyle and Louise McKenna.



The Ardara Under-16 girls team that won the Club's first Under-Age County Championship.

Back L-R: Aoife McDonnell, Sabrina Diver, Therese Gallagher, Natalie Gildea, Catriona McHugh, Mary Whelan, Ciara Mooney, Carrie Bennett, Louise McKenna, Michelle Gallagher, Carmel Boyle.

Front L-R: Stephanie Sweeney, Martina McHugh, Aoife Watters, Carol Breslin, Genna Bennett, Maura McHugh, Maebh O'Donnell, Sharon Kilbane, Catriona Feeney

The victory proved to be the springboard for further success in years to follow, and finally gave the Girls' teams the confidence and knowledge that they could compete with the best in the county. The Under-14s also played well during the season, before going down to Glenfin in the County semi-final. The Senior team played in the All-County League Division 2, and finished mid-table. In the Intermediate Championship, they lost the semi-final to Glenfin by a margin of just one point.

Other highlights during the year included Charlene McHugh and Mairead Gallagher's performances on the County Ladies' Junior team that won the Ulster Junior Championship against Armagh by seven points. They then lost to Limerick in the All-Ireland quarter-final. Five Ardara girls played for the County U-14 team that won an All Ireland Division 3 Blitz in Mullingar; they were Ciara Mooney, Sharon Kilbane, Catriona McHugh, Stephanie Bennett and Eimear O'Donnell. Aoife McDonnell played for the County Under-16s during the year.

Ardara take Club of the Year for second time

The Ardara Club received further recognition in 2001, when they once again were selected as the A.I.B. Club of the Year. The Club received the Award from the Uachtarán, Sean McCague, at a special function in Croke Park, which was attended by Columba Diver and Stephen McCahill.



Anthony Molloy receives the Award on behalf of the Club from Ray Sheen (A.I.B) and Uachtarán C.L.G Sean McCague

County teams

The Club's representation on Donegal County teams, in 2001, was one of the largest ever. Damian Diver captained the Donegal Senior team in the Ulster Championship, and was

joined on the team by Eamon Doherty, while Michael Doherty was a substitute. Brendan Boyle played on the County U-21 team, and Kenneth Doherty, Johnny Herron and Stephen McHugh were members of the Donegal Minor team. Gareth Concarr, Matthew Maher and Kevin Gallagher were all part of the Donegal U-15 Development Squad, while Martin Shovlin, Kieran Gallagher and Declan Gallagher were part of the U-14 School of Excellence team.



Doherty makes Championship Debut.

Donegal's first round Ulster Championship match in 2002, saw Eamon Doherty make his Championship debut for Donegal. Eamon had first played for the County in February 2000 against Antrim in the McKenna Cup, but did not claim a regular place until after his brilliant displays at full back for Ardara in the 2000 Championship win. Eamon is a great example of what can be achieved through hard work and dedication, as he did not make his Senior Club Championship debut until 1996 at the age of 21. Since that he has been the mainstay of the Ardara defence, and is well known as the best Club full-back in the County.

Fact File

Date of Birth: 05-04-75

Ht: 6'2" **Wt:** 13 St.

Occupation: Publican

Honours won: Senior, Under-21 (2), Minor and Under-16 Championship medals.
1 Senior League.

Ardara Reserve Player of the Year 1993

Ardara Senior Player of the Year 1997 & 2000

Favourite Position: Wing half back.

Most Memorable Game:

Club: 2000 County final

County: 2002 All Ireland quarter-final v Dublin 2002.

Biggest Disappointment: Losing the Ulster final in 2002 against Armagh, and losing the 2003 County semi-final against Four Masters

Most difficult opponent:

Club: Brendan Devenney

County: Ray Cosgrove (Dublin)

Biggest influence on your career: Parents, Eddie and Evelyn, and Club Managers.

Best players played with:

Club: Ted Breslin, John Kennedy, Damian Diver and brother Michael.

County: Tony Boyle, Noel Hegarty and Adrian Sweeney.

Favourite Grounds: Pearse Memorial and Croke Park.

Any changes you would make to the game?: Allow the pick-up off the ground.

Your earliest football memory: Winning a Parish League medal with the Town School.

Your hopes for the future?: To win another Championship for Ardara and to win a medal with Donegal.

Gildea honoured at Annual Dinner Dance.



Club Chairman, Anthony Molloy presents Conal Aidan Gildea with his award as Guest of Honour at the 2001 Dinner dance

Conal Aidan Gildea was selected as Guest of Honour at the 2001 Dinner Dance, which was held in the Highlands Hotel, Glenties. Conal accepted his award on behalf of the family, who had contributed greatly to the Club

over many years. Special appreciation awards were presented to Mrs Margaret Gallagher, for the great contribution of her husband, Joe (Larry) to the Club in the '50s, '60s and '70s, while John Byrne was also honoured for his efforts down through the years. The Championship-winning Junior team of 1967 were also brought together for the occasion, and each player received a framed photograph of the team, 35 years after their victory. The other annual award winners were as follows:

- Senior Player of the Year** - Brendan Boyle
- Reserve Player of the Year** - Patrick Gallagher (Moagh)
- Minor Player of the Year** - Johnny Herron
- Ladies Player of the Year** - Sancha Maguire
- Club Persons of the Year** - Patsy & Breda Boyle
- Hall of Fame** - John Gildea
- Appreciation Awards:** - John Byrne (Ard Conal)
and Joe 'Larry' Gallagher (Front Street).
James McBrearty (Edergole), Jimmy Boyle (Narin), Mairead Gallagher, Charlene McHugh, Noel McCabe and Joseph Gildea (Flotto sellers).



The extended Gildea family pictured at the 2001 Dinner Dance.



Patsy and Breda Boyle receive the Clubpersons of the Year award from Conal Aidan Gildea. This husband and wife team have made a huge impact on Club affairs since they returned home in 1998. They were surprised on the night, not only with their award, but with the arrival of their daughter Niamh, and son, Conor from England specially for the occasion



Larry and Margaret Gallagher receive a special posthumous award from the Club in appreciation of Joe 'Larry' for his dedication to the Club during his life.



John Byrne, who received an appreciation award for his service to the Club, is pictured along with his son John Martin, wife Anne, and daughter Mary.





The 2001 Award winners pictured at the Annual Dinner Dance.



James McHugh elected Minor Board Chairman

James McHugh, of Leaconnell, was elected Chairman of the County Minor Board, for 2001, at the Annual Minor Board Convention. Another member of Jimmy and Roise McHugh's family of Leaconnell, James had made a big impact on G.A.A. affairs in the Parish, since he first became involved in the Club Minor Board, as Secretary, in 1994. James' administrative ability soon came to the fore, and his hard work and organisational skills became an asset to the Club, as it grew from strength to strength. At the same time, he also became involved in the coaching of Under-Age teams, his first success in this department coming in the 1996 Juvenile Championship win over Aodh Ruadh, when he teamed up with Noel Watters on the sideline. The same team went on a year later to win the Dan Ward Cup, in a famous comeback win over St. Eunan's. James was raised to the Senior Board at the 1998 A.G.M., when he took over from John McConnell as Club Secretary, a position he holds to the present day.

A qualified, Level-One Coach, James has also managed Junior and Reserve teams in addition to his work with Under-Age teams, and trained the Club Senior team in 2002 and 2003. His contribution to the G.A.A in the County stretched beyond his work for the Club, and he has served as a Divisional Board officer and County Minor Board P.R.O, and has been involved with the County Coaching Committee

for a number of years. He also served as a mentor with County Minor and Under-Age Development Squad teams since his involvement at County level began.

James won the Club-Person of the Year award, in 1995, for his work with the Club Minor Board, and the A.I.B Club of the Year Awards, that the Club gained in 2000



and 2001, were rooted in the impressive entries he submitted to the Committee on behalf of the Club. A teacher in Cashel N.S. in Glencolmcille, James is always striving to develop the Club at every opportunity, and is highly respected in the Community for his contribution to the growth of the Club in the past decade and for his work with the youth of the Parish.

James receives the Clubperson of the Year Award in 1995 from Chairman Columba Diver.

John McConnell ends his term as County Chairman.



John McConnell ended his three year term as County Chairman at the County Convention in Ballyshannon on Sunday the 12th of December. Having served the maximum three year term in the position, he stated that he would be taking a stepping down from County affairs completely to devote more time to his family and to Under-Age football in his Club. Following his final address, he received a standing ovation from the delegates present.

John McConnell grew up in a household in which Gaelic Football was the main topic for daily discussion, while across the road from his parents' home was the residence of P. S. Mac a'Ghoill. John could not, therefore, escape from being fired with enthusiasm for the game from a very young age. There have been men in the past who, for a period, were involved in field development, coaching or the administration of the Club, and then stepped aside, but for John, involvement means total commitment all day, every day.

His enthusiasm for the Club was evident from an early age. He recalls attending meetings when he was thirteen and fourteen years old, and following Under-Age

and Adult teams from an earlier age, “sneaking on to the bus for all the away matches.”. One of his earliest memories was of the Under-14 Championship victory against St. Eunan’s, in Ballybofey in 1976. About that final he recalls:

“ I remember feeling awful sympathy for Gerard Mc Nelis, who was the best player on the field, that day, but was harshly sent off in the second half of that final.”



At the National Youth Congress in Dublin in 1988.

From left: Brian McGeehan (St. Eunans), brother Vinny, John and Pat Connaghan (County Minor Board Chairman)

Since 1982, John has been involved with at least one Under-Age team each year, and

indeed, he recalls one year in the eighties when he was involved with every Under-Age team, which, he feels was not a good thing because you were preventing someone else from getting involved.

He adds, *“We have been very lucky to have had some great people involved with our Under-Age teams during the last few decades and the growth of the club has never been dependent on one single person.”*

He recalls that there was little emphasis on coaching when he first played with the Under-12s, in 1977. *“The teams were picked and the ball was thrown in! It wasn’t until the eighties, and then due mainly to the influence of Anthony Harkin, in coaching circles, that coaching became more important.”*



With Uachtarán C.L.G Seosamh Mac Donncha in Ballybofey in 1998.

The All Ireland success of ‘92 was a tremendous boost to football in Donegal, but John believes that little was done to develop and advance Under-Age football within the county in the aftermath of ’92. He was elected Cathaoirleach of the County Minor Board at the end of 1993 and immediately set about reorganising the structures of Under-Age football.

“The introduction of summer camps, the restructuring of Under-Age competitions, and the promoting of Under-10 Blitzes were the most satisfying developments from that period.” He continues: “Although in my last year, in 1996, the Minor team defeat in the All-Ireland semi-final was a big disappointment, because I believed the team was good enough to win the All-Ireland.”

In 1991, John had succeeded Edward Molloy as Club Secretary, a post he was to hold for seven successive years, during which he experienced the great buzz of '92, the many successes of Under-Age teams, and the lows of successive defeats in the Senior Championship.

“The highlight from those years was the winning of the Under-14 and Minor Championships in 1991, while the Championship defeats against Killybegs were very demoralising, although the defeat by Glen, in 1994, disappointed me most. I felt that it was the best team we had fielded in the Championship in a long time,” he recalls.

Donegal was the Host County for Féile na nÓg in 1997 and again in 1998, with John as Chairman of the Féile Committee. This was an onerous undertaking, involving as it did, the co-ordination of the preparations of the host Clubs, setting the venues for matches, and organising the official opening and closing of Féile. So impressed was Seosamh Mac Donncha, Uachtarán of Chumann Lúthchleas Gael, with John's organisation of the event that he appointed him National Féile Chairman in the year 2000, for a three year term, which saw him preside at National Féilte in Tipperary, Carlow and Galway.



County Treasurer, Charlie O'Donnell, presents John with an Appreciation Award for his work as County Chairman at the County Banquet in January 2002. Also in photo is County Secretary, Noreen Doherty, and John's (understanding!) wife Karen.

If the general mental image of a Chairman of Bord an Chontae is that of an ageing, aloof, conservative male, who presides over meetings and pontificates like the old philosophers of ancient Greece, then that description surely did not fit the man who held the post from 1999 to 2001. Only in his early thirties when elected Cathaoirleach of Bord an Chontae, he was one of the youngest ever to hold that post. The contacts he made through his earlier involvement with Under-Age football throughout the county now made it easy for him to relate to club officials, because they knew where he was coming from.

"I enjoyed my time as chairman," he recalls, "but there were also some very difficult periods, when tough decisions had to be taken, and you were in the firing line as a result. My youth was definitely an advantage, but the down side was the sheer time involved and the amount of time away from my family."

If a County Chairman has a dream, and that dream is to present the Senior Championship trophy to the captain of his own Club, then John realised that dream. On the 17th of Sept., 2000, it was John, with the tears rolling down his cheeks and all but overcome with emotion, that presented Corn Mhic Uidhir to his fellow Club man and captain of the Ardara team, Eamon Doherty. Happy, happy day!

Sport is about fun and enjoyment, but sometimes, and when least expected, joy can turn to grief as it did in the tragic death of young Michael McNelis, who was a member of the Under-10 Blitz team. It was a devastating blow not only to his parents, Eamonn and Gráinne, his brothers, Seán and Eamonn and the McNelis and Gallagher families, but also to his team-mates and buddies. John was asked to carry Michael's number four jersey in the Guard of Honour, as his remains were escorted from the Hillhead to the Chapel by his Under-10 team-mates, a privilege that John regards as one of the most unforgettable events of his career. It was also the most harrowing.

Of all his roles in Gaelic Football, John is at his happiest coaching the very young, seeing them progress in the skills of the game, and enjoying their reactions when handed a Club jersey on a match day or when praise is given for a game well played.

It should be no surprise that he has a vision for the Club, and that is to see it develop and progress, until it not merely matches, but surpasses the best organised and the most successful clubs in the country.

S M Ó D

2001 A.G.M.

The 2001 A.G.M. of the Club was held on the 20th of January in the Community Centre, the small crowd of 33 members reflecting what was, for the most part, a disappointing year. The Rúnaí, Seamus Mac Aodha, reflected in his report the disappointment of all the members at the showing of the Senior team, after the heights reached in 2000. He explained the circumstances behind the failure of the Club to travel to Comórtas Peile na Gaeltachta in Kerry, and stated that it was an occurrence that must not be allowed to happen again. He was critical of the County Board in their handling of the League fiasco with Dungloe. He cited the Under-14 Championship win as the highlight of the year, and welcomed the winning of the A.I.B. Club of the Year award for the second year in succession. On a sadder note, the year had seen the passing of Club member Vincent Herron, a veteran of the 1952 Minor Championship winning team and a great supporter. Yet another great supporter and patron of the Club, Canon Liam McCaul, also died during the year.

The Treasurer, Stephen McCahill, reported an income for the year of £83,986.78 and an expenditure of £77,282.22. The weekly profit on the Flotto had risen to £586.95 per week, and he appealed for more assistance in selling the weekly draw. On matters arising from his report, the issue of the incoming Euro currency was discussed, and its possible effect on Flotto income, and it was agreed that the £1 fee would be increased to £2, with the prizes being increased accordingly.

The following officers were elected for 2002:-

President	-	Tommy Boyle
Vice Presidents	-	Frankie Brennan and Billy Maxwell.
Chairman	-	Anthony Molloy
Vice Chairman	-	Larry Gallagher
Secretary	-	James McHugh
Ass. Secretary	-	John M. Byrne
Treasurer	-	Stephen McCahill
Ass. Treasurer	-	Patsy Boyle
P.R.O.	-	Mary Kelly
Scór Officer	-	Breda Boyle
Oifigeach Na Gaeilge	-	Partalón Ó Faoláin
Development Officer	-	Columba Diver
Registrars	-	Mairead Whyte/Sinéad Gallagher
Coaching Officer	-	John McConnell

Senior Team Managers: Patrick Gallagher with assistants Eddie McLoone, John Boyle and Anthony Harkin.

Reserve Team manager: Anthony Molloy assisted by John Hegarty.

The following Minor Board officers were elected for 2002:

Chairman	- Larry Gallagher
Vice Chairman	- Hugh Gavigan
Secretary	- John M. Byrne
Ass Secretary	- Connie Bennett
Treasurer	- James McBrearty
Ass Treasurer	- Jackie Gallagher

Team managers

Under-10: Jackie Gallagher, Connie Bennett, Matthew Melley,
Thomas Boyle, Ted Breslin, Conal McLoone

Under-12/13: Stephen McCahill, John McBrearty, Patsy Boyle, Eamon McNelis
and Margaret McHugh.

Under-14: John Hegarty, Hugh Gerard Gavigan

Under-15/16: John McConnell, Michael Breslin,
Larry Gallagher, John Martin Byrne.

Minor: James McHugh and John Hegarty.

2002 – The Eddie Brennan affair

With the Senior team having an early exit from the Championship in 2001, batteries were sufficiently re-charged by the time the 2002 Championship arrived. For the second year in succession, fate and the draw again pitted Ardara and St. Eunan's to meet at the first round stage. It was a challenge, but it gave the team the chance to make up for their poor showing in the previous year's competition, and consolidate their position as genuine Championship contenders once more. The succession of events that followed, however, will be long remembered in the County, and particularly in Ardara, but unfortunately for all the wrong reasons.

The story began at the April County Committee meeting. The proposed transfer of Sligo County Panellist, Edward Brennan, from the Drumcliffe-Rosses Point club, in Sligo, to the St. Eunan's club, was up for ratification in the matters arising from the minutes of the March meeting. It had become common knowledge that Mr. Brennan was a student in the L.Y.I.T, and therefore as a student would not be in a position to transfer. The Ardara delegate at the meeting, John McConnell, made a query regarding the player's eligibility, and asked; if the transfer were approved, would it mean that any student attending the College in Letterkenny could transfer to either St. Eunan's or the Letterkenny Gaels' Clubs in the future. He stated that it was a matter of serious concern for clubs throughout the county, all of which had players attending college of one kind or another. The County Chairman, Danny

Harkin, stated that the matter would be looked into before the next meeting.

The May County Committee meeting arrived, and under correspondence, the Chairman read out a letter from Eddie Brennan, stating that he was a student in the L.Y.I.T. and he **would** be moving to the town, and that he **would** be looking for work in the town when he finished school. Despite protestations from the floor, the Chairman ruled that the transfer be processed. The Ardara delegate in reply, stated that as the player was a student, he was in no way entitled to play for St. Eunan's. And with the clubs due to meet in the first round of the Championship, he pleaded with the County Board to sort the issue out prior to the clubs meeting later in the year. Ardara and St. Eunan's had a healthy rivalry in the past, but if this matter were not cleared up, then there would definitely be problems later in the year. He went on to state, that if the player played illegally against Ardara, then a protest would be forthcoming. He concluded by stating that the Club were very serious about this issue, and that if this transfer was allowed to go through, then rural clubs would lose players continuously in the future to large clubs in College areas all over the country. The County Secretary gave a commitment to have the matter queried further, and as a result, the Club was notified in June that G.A.C. in Croke Park confirmed that as a student, he was not entitled to a transfer to St. Eunan's. The Club was notified of this, as was St.Eunan's, and as a result, it was felt that the matter would not arise again.

Eunan's draw first blood

Happy that the matter had been settled, the teams duly met in the first round of the Championship in O'Donnell Park in Letterkenny. On the day there were no arguments; St. Eunan's ran out convincing winners on a 2-10 to 0-7 scoreline. The home side led at the break 1-6 to 0-2, and despite a rally of sorts after the break, Ardara just could not get close enough, and they were, as in 2001, left in a must win situation back at Pearse Memorial Park.

Because the Donegal team had advanced through Ulster to the All Ireland quarter-final, the return Ardara/Eunan's game didn't take place until the 24th of August. There was immediately a controversy, however, when the aforementioned Eddie Brennan appeared in the number 7 jersey for St. Eunan's and lined out at corner forward. Club officials decided to discuss the matter further after the match, but a protest seemed the likely outcome. The long break since the first leg had obviously given Ardara much needed time to re-group, and they went on to produce their best display since the 2000 Championship final.

Ardara up for it **Ardara . . . 0-13** **St. Eunan's . . . 1-7**

Peter Campbell reports from Pearse Park.

Ardara were really up for this second leg tie and were deserving winners against champions, St. Eunans. The home side dominated the first half but had just three points to spare on the scoreboard, conceding a Conal Dunne goal in the 21st minute. The Letterkenny side staged a comeback to draw level after ten minutes of the second half and things looked ominous for the home side. However, they drew on their reserves to pull away again in a well-contested game.

Lining out with Damian Diver at centre forward, Ardara were firing on all cylinders in the opening quarter. Jonathan Boyle had a stormer, pointing from a 46m free and a '45', while in between Michael Doherty pointed from play. Eunan's weren't getting a sniff of the ball and Stephen McHugh made it 0-4 and Jonathan Boyle added another free from the sideline. In between, the impressive Joe Doherty made a great surge forward but the final pass went astray. Kevin Winston had a half chance for St. Eunan's before they got their opening score after 21 minutes, Conal Dunne blazing a trail through the Ardara defence to fire low to the corner of the net. The Letterkenny men had new recruit, Eddie Brennan, following Damian Diver, but he was mostly following shadows or fouling and Jonathan Boyle pointed a resulting free in the 25th minute. Michael Doherty's effort came off an upright, but Stephen Gildea snapped it up to fire over their seventh point. A very quiet Brendan Devenney (who was rumoured to have trained with Sligo Rovers the previous day) pointed a free that was moved on for dissent, and St. Eunan's almost had a second goal in the 29th minute - Rory Kavanagh and Conal Dunne setting up Devenney, but he fired off the crossbar with the goal at his mercy. Conal Dunne picked up the rebound to point, while in added time, Kevin Byrne found Jonathan Boyle to turn and point with his left. Half-time: Ardara 0-8, St. Eunan's 1-2.

Forty-five seconds into the second half, Peter McHugh found Damian Diver and he found the target from near the sideline. Then came a good St. Eunan's surge with three excellent points from Kevin Rafferty

and a free from Devenney to tie up the scores. Jonathan Boyle edged Ardara in front from a 40m free in the 46th minute and substitute Conal Doherty doubled the margin a minute later. Brendan Kilcoyne, now at corner forward, pulled a point back but Conal Doherty cancelled that score with nine minutes left. There was just one more score as Damian Diver and Don Earley set up Jonathan Boyle to turn and point with his right in the 54th minute. From there to the end the home side played possession football and St. Eunan's were unable to make any inroads. An excellent display from the home side, who might be a little worried that they had just three points to spare after dominating for long periods. Damian Diver was a true leader, with Jonathan Boyle a match winner. But they had others who stepped forward, like Joe Doherty, Eamon Doherty and Kevin Byrne, with substitute Conal Doherty making a good contribution. For St. Eunan's, Sean McEwen, Kevin Rafferty and Conal Dunne tried hardest, but it was not a display of champions.

Ardara: Conor Curran; Joe Doherty, Eamon Doherty, Patrick Gallagher; Aodh Brennan, Kevin Byrne, Kenneth Doherty; Brendan Boyle, Francis Diver; Michael Doherty (0-1), Peter McHugh, Damian Diver (0-1); Stephen Gildea (0-1), Jonathan Boyle (0-7, four frees, one '45'), Stephen McHugh (0-1). Subs., Conal Doherty (0-2) for A. Brennan; Don Earley for S. Gildea; Darren Maguire for P. McHugh.

St. Eunan's: Tony Blake; Terence Gallagher, Maurice McGeehin, Jonathan Scanlon; Damien Daly, Brendan Kilcoyne (0-1), Sean McEwen; Kevin Rafferty (0-3), Paul Crampsie; Conal Dunne (1-1), Rory Kavanagh, Kevin Winston; Brian McGeehin, Brendan Devenney (0-2, frees), Eddie Brennan. Subs., Mark McCloskey for B. McGeehin; Damien McClafferty for Crampsie; Ronan Lennon for Daly; Brendan Roache for Scanlon.

Referee: John McGlanaghy (Four Masters).

Following the victory, which took the tie to a third match, Club officers once again discussed the issue, and decided that, regardless of the outcome of the third match, a protest would be forthcoming. In the seven days that followed, the County Board once again notified St. Eunan's about the possible repercussions that might follow if Brennan played in the third game, which was fixed for Ballybofey on Sunday the 31st of August.

Despite the warnings, St. Eunan's once again fielded the said player. The game was another close contest, but St. Eunan's, who led 1-7 to 0-5 at the interval, held on in the second half for victory. Ardara hit 10 wides to 3 for St. Eunan's, and finished on the wrong end of a 1-11 to 0-12 scoreline.

The teams fielded as follows:

Ardara – Conor Curran, Joseph Doherty, Eamon Doherty, Patrick Gallagher, Aodh Brennan, Kevin Byrne, Kenneth Doherty, Francis Diver, Brendan Boyle (0-01), Peter McHugh, Damian Diver, Michael Doherty (0-02), Stephen Gildea, Jonathon Boyle (0-07 – 3 frees), Stephen McHugh. Subs – Conal Doherty for Francis Diver (22 mins), Darren Maguire for Patrick Gallagher (half-time), Fergal Heena for Stephen McHugh (42 mins), Don Early (0-02) for Stephen Gildea (50 mins).

St Eunan's – Tony Blake, Terence Gallagher, Maurice McGeehin, Damien McClafferty, Jonathon Scanlon, Sean McEwan, Eddie Brennan, Kevin Rafferty, Rory Kavanagh (0-02), Damien Daly, Conal Dunne (0-01), Brendan Kilcoyne (0-02), Brian McGeehin, Brendan Devenney (1-05), Kevin Winston. Subs – Mark McCloskey for Brian McGeehin (42 mins), Brendan Roache for Jonathon Scanlon (48 mins) and Paul Crampsie for Maurice McGeehin (58 mins).

Referee – Jimmy White (Killybegs)

As agreed before the match, the Club officials, following consultation with the Senior panel and management, decided to proceed with their protest against the legality of the St. Eunan's team. Although it was a difficult decision to make for all concerned, it was felt vitally important for the future of the Club that they do so. It was felt that the effort the Club had invested for years, in developing their Under-Age players and teams, would be a waste of time if St. Eunan's were allowed to continue to 'import' players each year. A full case was prepared, with the protest being lodged on the grounds that Rule 37 T.O. 2001 was broken. The rule states that any player wishing to transfer to a club must be in permanent residence in the area of the club that he wishes to join. The Ardara officials produced documents, which left little doubt as to the illegality of the player in question. The protest was heard at a specially convened meeting of the County Executive on the 9th of September. Both sides presented their case (John McConnell and Columba Diver representing the Ardara Club), and the matter was

adjourned to a further meeting, as the Committee felt they needed further clarification from Croke Park on the issue. Following consultation with the Uachtarán of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael, who stated that the only way that the player could transfer, would be if he could prove that he was living in Letterkenny for 12 months of the year. At an executive meeting on the 12th of September, St. Eunan's were given until Monday the 16th of September to prove his permanent residency. At the meeting on the 17th in the Abbey Hotel, further documentation was produced, none of which followed the criteria laid down by the Uachtarán, but it mattered little to the committee. The Ardara protest was ruled to have failed, due to "insufficient evidence".

The decision stunned Club members, who agreed that the decision flew in the face of fair play. It was immediately agreed to appeal the decision to Ulster Council, on the grounds that the committee did not follow the relevant rules in making their decision. The Ulster Council hearing was held on the 9th of October in the Four Seasons Hotel in Monaghan, John McConnell and Columba Diver again representing Ardara, and Noreen Doherty and P.J. McGowan representing the County Board. Following a lengthy discussion after hearing the case, the Council officers informed both parties, that they were seeking further clarification from Croke Park, and would then make a decision.

A week later, during a full Club meeting on the issue in Dohertys Bar, the word came through that the Ulster Council had received clarification from the G.A.C. in Croke Park, that Ardara were justified in protesting, and accordingly decided in Ardara's favour.

Although the Club had been vindicated at that point, few people felt that it was the end of the case, as St. Eunan's had from an early stage, been citing court action, should the decision go against them. The County Board appealed the ruling to Croke Park, but the appeal was thrown out on a technicality (the cheque was made out in English). The fact that the Club was now officially back in the Championship was of little consequence to the people of Ardara. The protest was pursued to protect the future of the Ardara Club, and if successful, would protect rural clubs all over the country against the poaching of quality players by the big urban clubs; one of the biggest problems facing the G.A.A.

Court proceedings

As expected, a court case was taken by St. Eunan's, against the G.A.A., on the grounds that the words 'Student' did not appear in Rule 37, and as a result, the transfer could not be stopped. In the meantime the Donegal Senior Championship had been on hold since September. The Club held a meeting in December and decided to inform the County Board that the Club was willing to pull out of the

Championship and let the competition be finished, on the condition that St. Eunan's would also withdraw. St. Eunan's did not accept the offer and three High Court hearings were adjourned, while behind the scenes attempts were made to sort out the issue. The G.A.A. were proposing independent arbitration from an early stage, and the Association's solicitor, Mr. Gerry Brady from Dublin, met Club officers in Monaghan to discuss the matter. There followed a full briefing on what independent arbitration would entail. It was also stated at the meeting that no arbitration would be agreed without the consent of the Ardara Club. The Club officers reported back to the Club A.G.M on the 19th of January 2003.

As the arbitration would entail the appointment of a person with no standing in the G.A.A, it was a strong opinion of all the members, that the Ardara Club would have nothing to gain from going down that route. The Club had always stated that it would not go outside the rules of the Association in the case; this was a fundamental principle, central to their whole involvement in Gaelic games, and one that the Ardara Club had lived by since its inception in 1921. To support the move to outside arbitration would go against this stance and would render the G.A.A.'s own rulebook valueless. The Club was also very apprehensive at the proposal to involve only a single arbitrator. Club members felt deeply that the case could be swung against them by sheer weight of numbers; it was felt that witnesses could be provided that might not necessarily know the full truth of the matter at hand, and that the decision could therefore go, unjustly, in favour of St. Eunan's. In short, they had no confidence that the issue could be dealt with fairly outside of the G.A.A.'s own procedures, which had already ruled emphatically on the issue. It was agreed at the meeting to withdraw from the proceedings forthwith. The Club had won the case through the proper channels, and would not go outside the Official Guide to sort out a dispute, just because Cumann Lúthchleas Gael were unwilling to take on the case in the courts. The Club issued a statement withdrawing from the proceedings, and thanking the clubs of the county for their support on the issue.

Arbitration

The arbitration went ahead, a Senior Counsel was appointed, Mr Michael McGrath from Tipperary, and the hearing went ahead on the 15th of February 2003 in the Mount Errigal Hotel (a sponsor of St. Eunan's Club), and as expected the decision went with the Letterkenny club. The County Board re-instated St. Eunan's in the Championship immediately.

The Ardara Club met and decided to issue a further statement to end the matter. The following was released to the Press.

"The decision of the County Executive of Donegal GAA to re-instate St. Eunan's into the 2002 Senior Football Championship has been met with widespread disbelief in the parish of Ardara. While the decision of the Independent arbitrator was no great surprise to the Club and was, we feel, a foregone conclusion, the decision of C.L.G. to agree to an outside body to adjudicate on a case within the GAA has stunned us all and has made the members of the Club feel ostracised by the Donegal County Executive Committee and (by) the highest officers of the Association at National level.

CLG Ard An Rátha took a stance on this issue, in frustration with what we see as the continuous abuse of the transfer rules by the St. Eunan's Club. This is the first time the Club has objected to another club in the county in 14 years with regards to the legality of a player. We made every attempt to have the matter finalised before the clubs met in the Championship, raising the matter at both the April and May County Committee meetings, and as a result, were told at the end of May by the County Board that the player was illegal and that St. Eunan's had been informed accordingly.

When the player appeared on the St. Eunan's team in the second leg match in Pearse Memorial Park, the County Secretary was contacted immediately and she confirmed that St. Eunan's had been informed of the player's illegality. A decision was then taken by the Club, after Ardara won the match, that the matter should be deferred until after the play-off. If Eddie Brennan played in the third match, then regardless of the result, a protest would be lodged. We had hoped the situation would not arise again. The Club had given every opportunity to all parties to avoid the situation, but to no avail.

What happened after the third match has been well documented. The Club have strictly adhered to the Official Guide at all times and as a result of the Association's failure to meet St. Eunan's head-on in High Court, there was only going to be one outcome to a hearing involving the independent arbitrator. The Club was informed that no arbitration would be agreed to without our consent, but this was obviously another smokescreen by the GAA and its solicitors.

The Club at all times have tried to act in the best interests of the Association. We agreed to withdraw from the Championship on numerous occasions to allow the competition go ahead, as long as the matter was sorted out internally within the GAA.

St. Eunan's have always claimed that Edward Brennan has been a resident of Letterkenny for 4 years and therefore that he qualified under the permanent residence rule. Anyone who states that this is true is not relaying the true facts of the matter. To this day, they have failed to provide documentation to back this up. The evidence provided to the County Executive at the original hearing can be viewed by any individual who wishes to do so.

The actions of the then County Chairman, Danny Harkin, in the matter have added to the situation reaching this farcical conclusion. His insistence on putting the transfer through without the relevant evidence at the May meeting was paramount in the eventual controversy. Although he was out of the country when the objection was lodged, he made contact with the County Secretary by phone to attempt to have the objection ruled out of order. The secretary did not accede to this request, as there were no grounds to do so. He has stated on numerous occasions that Eddie Brennan was legal, but to this day has yet to view the evidence that either side produced.

The failure of the County Executive to uphold our objection, based on the evidence of both sides, still baffles our members. If the County Executive had not informed the Ardara Club of Edward Brennan's illegality in the first place, an objection would have never been lodged.

It is quite obvious to the Club at this stage, that any club who have the financial backing, will in future be able to flaunt the rules as they see fit. As it is now obvious that the GAA will run scared from clubs who go outside the Association to fight their case. The official guide seems to be obsolete as and from the 15th of February (2003).

The situation at present means that an illegal team has been allowed to compete in the Donegal Senior Championship of 2002 and the Donegal County Executive have allowed this to happen.

At a Club meeting on Monday 17th of February, a decision was taken, not to proceed with any further action, despite numerous alternatives being available to the Club. The way that the Club has been treated with contempt by the relevant committees for acting under the rules of Treorai Oifigiul will only serve to motivate

the Club into working as hard as is humanly possible to develop the GAA in the parish of Ardara. We do appreciate the support that has been received by numerous clubs around the county, and hope that the stance that has been taken by the Club will prevent any illegal transfers occurring in the future."

The Championship went ahead, and was completed in April 2003, Gweedore winning their first title in 42 years by defeating St. Eunan's in the final.

The affair left the people of Ardara feeling betrayed and totally let down by the County Board and those in power in Páirc an Chrócaigh. Everyone agreed that Ardara were right to act in the manner that they did, but when it came to people standing up and being counted, there were few to be seen. The Ardara Club officers and members were united from start to finish throughout the whole sorry business, and will no doubt use this unity to make the Club as strong as possible in the future. Just like the one in 2000, the Championship of 2002 will never be forgotten in Ardara, unfortunately though, for all the wrong reasons.



In the League semi-final against St. Eunan's. Derek Boyle chases the loose ball ahead of John Haran.

Seniors defeated in League semi-final

As the controversy continued during the year, the team continued to train and to perform well in the League. They finished up in second place in the competition, and were drawn to play St. Eunan's in the League semi-final. The game, which took place in MacCumhaill Park, saw Ardara field without County players Eamon Doherty and Brendan Boyle. Michael Doherty had a brilliant first half, scoring

three out of their first-half four points, but St. Eunan's all round strength saw them go through to the final by the odd goal, in a 2-12 to 1-12 final result. Naomh Conaill went on to defeat St. Eunan's in the final and thus win their first Senior trophy in their history.

I gComórtas Peile Na Gaeltachta shroich Ard a'Rátha Cluichí Ceannais an Chontae a bhí ar siúl thíos i nGaith Dobhair. 'Sna Cluichí roimhe sin, bhí an bua acu ar an Tearmainn agus ar Naomh Chonaill. Sa chluiche leath-cheannais d'imir siad Naomh Náille agus bhain Naomh Náille le cupla pointe.

The Senior Reserve team made their exit early in the Championship, when they were knocked out by St. Eunan's. They drew the first leg in Letterkenny, but in the second match at home, Eunan's won by 0-06 to 0-05. In the League, the team finished in the bottom half of the table, while in the Junior Gaeltacht competition, they defeated Termon and Fanad Gaels, before going down to Naomh Mhuire at the quarter-final stage.

The Under-21 team had also a reasonably short campaign, defeating Kilcar and MacCumhaill's before being eliminated by St. Michael's in the quarter-final at Dooey by the odd goal.

Red letter Year for Ladies' Teams

After struggling for 10 years with little success, 2002 finally saw the Ladies' section of the Club get their just reward for their efforts, with the teams bringing home four different Championship titles. The Senior team, who had only previously won the Division 2 League in 1999, really put in a big effort in 2002 and as a result won their first County Intermediate Championship, and added the Comórtas Peile Na Gaeltachta title for good measure. The final victories in both competitions were at the expense of the Ladies of Cloughaneely.

In the Intermediate final, in 'The Banks' at Mullaghderg, the team had a big victory over the Ladies from the North-West, winning on a score of 7-13 to 4-02. As a result of the win, they represented the County in the Ulster Club Championship, where their opponents in the first round were Sperrin Óg, from Greencastle in Tyrone. The match ended in a draw, after normal time, but in extra time Ardara went down by two points. The following were members of the successful Senior Ladies' panel in 2002: Sancha Maguire, Rebecca Watters, Caroline Breslin, Stephanie Sweeney, Eimear O'Donnell, Patricia Mannering, Mairead Watters, Charlene McHugh, Aoife McDonnell, Mairead Brennan, Mairead Gallagher, Ciara Mooney, Natalie Gildea, Maria Diver, Catriona McHugh, Siobhan Heena, Noreen Gallagher, Charlene Smyth, Martina McHugh, Sharon Kilbane, Meabh O'Donnell, Carmel Boyle and Michelle Gallagher.



County Ladies' Chairman, Charlie Kavanagh, presents the Intermediate Championship cup to Ardara Captain, Maria Diver

Mairead Gallagher and Charlene McHugh won Ulster Junior Championship medals with Donegal in 2002, and after defeating Kildare in the semi-final, they qualified for the All-Ireland final against Galway, but the western girls were too strong, winning by seven points on the day.

I gComórtas Peile na Gaeltachta, bhain siad an comórtas nuair a bhí an bua acu ar Chloich Cheann Fhaola, 5-05 in aghaidh 1-07, thíos i

nGaoth Dobhair. De bharr sin, chuaigh siad ar aghaidh go dtí Cluichí Ceannais na h-Éireann i nGaillimh i mí Meithimh. Sa chomórtas sin d-imir siad cluiche amháin in éadan an fhoireann áitiúil a bhí ró-láidir do na mná ó Ard a'Rátha. Cé gur chaill siad an cluiche sin, bhain siad uilig sult as an deireadh seachtaine a bhí acu.



The 2002 County Intermediate and Gaeltacht Champions.

Back L-R: Carmel Boyle, Catriona McHugh, Patti Mannering, Mairead Gallagher, Noreen Gallagher, Sancha Maguire, Mairead Brennan, Charlene McHugh, Caroline Breslin, Rebecca Watters, Mairead Watters, Aoife McDonnell, Charlene Smyth.
Front L-R: Meabh O'Donnell, Sharon Kilbane, Stephanie Sweeney, Maria Diver, Siobhan Heena, Natalie Gildea, Eimear O'Donnell, Martina McHugh, Michelle Gallagher, Ciara Mooney

The Under-16 team completed the two in a row, when they defeated Moville in the County final in Castlefin on a 3-17 to 3-6 scoreline. A superb first half display ensured victory and in doing so they played some passages of brilliant football.



The Ardara Under-16 Girls team which won the Club's first Under-Age Championship.
Back L-R: James McBrearty, Mary Whelan, Eimear O'Donnell, Dena Sweeney, Catherine Herraghty, Martina McHugh, Catriona McHugh, Rosarie Sweeney, Ciara Mooney, Aisling Corcoran, Michelle Gallagher, Louise McKenna, Aoife McDonnell, Jimmy Boyle.
Front: L-R: Carrie Bennett, Therese Gallagher, Meabh O'Donnell, Bernadine McCabe, Maura McHugh, Stephanie Sweeney, Carol Breslin, Aoife Watters, Sharon Kilbane, Catriona Feeney

The Under-14 Girls' team completed a brilliant year when they defeated Moville in the County final by 3-11 to 3-06. Martina McHugh, as Captain, accepted the Cup from Alma Kavanagh of the Ladies County Board. The team gave some brilliant performances on the way to this success.



James McBrearty, Stephanie Sweeney (Captain), Caroline McHugh and Jimmy Boyle pose after the girls Under-16 Championship victory.

The Club entered an Under-12 Girls' team for the first time ever. Coached by Connie Bennett, they reached the County semi-final, but despite a great performance against Termon, they just missed out on a County final place.

Not to be outdone in the success stakes, the Girls of St. Mary's N.S. created their own bit of history in 2002 when they won Roinn 4 of the Cumann na mBunscol Football Championship for the 5th consecutive year, a truly remarkable achievement. The work and effort put in by teachers, Raphael Meehan and Colm Cannon, and also by the coaches of the Club Ladies' teams, played a big part in the Girls' successes. Shauna Sweeney of Tullymore was rewarded for her displays for the school when she was selected to play in Croke Park at half-time in the Donegal v Galway All Ireland Junior final.

Another big year for the Minor Board

In overall terms, the Club Minor Board celebrated its most successful year in 2002. Under-Age competitions in the County were re-vamped, with the County being split up into two Regional Boards, North and South, John Martin Byrne and John McConnell taking up positions as Treasurer and P.R.O. respectively. In the Southern Board area, which covered from Bundoran to Naomh Mhuire, the Ardara Under-12, Under-14, and Under-16 teams won their respective Regional Championships, the Under-14 team won the first All-County Under-14 League, the Under-15 team won Comórtas Peile Na Gaeltachta for the first time, and the Under-16 team were defeated in the County Championship final.

The Under-10 panels, with players numbering 60 at one stage, competed in the Southern Board Blitzes, with the 'B' team unbeaten for the entire campaign, while the 'A' team came close to winning on a number of occasions. The annual Parish League for the Michael McNelis Cup was, as usual, keenly contested. The finals were played on Sunday 18th October and despite the inclement weather, there was a good turnout of people who were treated to two highly entertaining games. In the 'B' final, Paul Gallagher's team defeated Nicholas Breslin's team, while in the 'A' final, Kevin Herron's team defeated Gary Sweeney's team. Afterwards, Eamon McNelis presented the Michael McNelis Memorial Cup to the winning captain, Kevin Herron. Ryan Melley received the 'B' team Player of the Year, while Natalie Sweeney received the 'A' group Player of the Year. The coaches (and their wives) could well be proud, considering the effort they had devoted all year to ensure that all players were looked after in the best manner possible.

The Under-12 team finished the year as Southern Champions, qualifying from their section in a group which contained some excellent teams. The team qualified for the Southern final and defeated Killybegs on a score of 3-12 to 3-04. They gave a

great second half performance with midfielders Conor Classon and Francis Boyle dominating. Stephen McCahill, Declan Boyle and Brendan Quinn all scored points and Stephen Sweeney netted a vital goal from close range. After the match, the Paul Gartland Memorial Cup was presented to the winning Ardara captain, Conor Classon, by Southern Board Vice-Chairman, John Joe O'Shea. The team lost out to eventual winners, St Michael's, in the County semi-final.



Ardara Under-12s 2002- South Donegal Champions.

Back L-R: Pauric McGill, Peter Oliver McNelis, Ronan McBrearty, Johnathan Gallagher, Christopher Shovlin, Stephen Sweeney, Francis Boyle, Stephen McCahill, Patrick Maloney.

Front L-R: Declan Boyle, Kieran Hennigan, Daniel Shovlin, Conor Classon, Kevin McCabe, Brendan Quinn,

Sitting: Paul Watters, Derek Bennett, Brian Kennedy. Standing at back: Stephen McCahill

The 'B' team were not to be outdone and also emerged as Southern winners, defeating Aodh Rua in a very entertaining 'B' final.

In the annual Parish League, Peter Oliver McNelis' team won the Kevin McGill memorial cup by defeating Francis Boyle's team in the final.

Most of the Under-12 'A' panel were members of the Under-13 team, who played in the Southern League but failed to qualify for the final stages.

Under-14s win County League

The big success story of the year was the performance of the Under-14 team. Under

managers John Hegarty and Hugh G. Gavigan, the team put in some brilliant displays during the year. With a strong Killybegs side installed as County favourites from an early stage, the Ardara boys upset the form book when, on a terrible evening, they defeated Killybegs in the Southern Championship final in Towney, on a 1-11 to 2-6 scoreline, to win the title. In the County semi-final the following week, however, Cloughaneely were waiting in the wings, and caught the boys on the hop in 'The Banks', in Mullaghderg, inflicting a five point defeat on the team.

It was in the League, however, that they showed their best form, and after qualifying from the Southern section, they produced their best display of the year when they defeated a St. Eunan's team, that had just won the County Championship, by five points. Their opponents in the final were, once again, Killybegs, but the boys proved their early season win in the Championship was no fluke, when they inflicted a four point defeat on their neighbours, winning the match 3-7 to 1-9. Brilliant displays from team captain, Conal Gildea, and from Declan Gavigan, Noel Gallagher and Stephen Boyle provided a launch pad for the win. After the match, the County League Shield was presented to Conal Gildea by Kathleen Campbell of the County Coiste na n-Óg committee.

The team also participated in the John McFadden and Derrygonnelly tournaments, but lost out in the final of both competitions.

Declan Gavigan, Conal Gildea, Noel Gallagher, Donal Byrne and Stephen Boyle were all selected for the Donegal Under-14 School of Excellence Squad for 2002.



The Ardara Under-14 team 2002. County Division 1 League Champions.
Back L-R: Don Earley, Declan Gavigan, Stephen Boyle, John Hegarty, Fergus McBrearty,
Anthony Byrne, Donal Byrne, Brian Collum, John Francis Barrett, Conal Gildea, J.J.
Shovlin, Hugh Gerard Gavigan, Ciaran Gildea.
Front L-R: Johnathan Breslin, Paddy McGrath, Derek Gallagher, Francis Boyle, Noel
Gallagher, Pauric Hegarty, James Boyle, Oisín O'Donnell.
Sitting: Johnathan Gallagher, Stephen McCahill



Seosamh Ó Ceallaigh ag bronnadh Corn Ó Cheallaigh ar Mhairtín Ó Sibhleáin.

An fhoireann Faoi-15 buacach i gComórtas Peile na Gaeltachta

Bhí an fhoireann Faoi-15 páirteach i gComórtas Peile na Gaeltachta agus tar éis an bua a fháil ar Naomh Conaill agus Naomh Náille bhí siad sa chluiche ceannais in aghaidh An Clochán Liath i nGaoth Dobhair. Bhí ógánaigh Ard a'

Rátha ró láidir do mhuintir na Rosann agus bhuaigh an Club a gcéad chorn sa ghrád sin leis an scór 5-09 in aghaidh 0-08. Thar ceann an Choiste bhronn Seosamh Ó Ceallaigh Corn Ó Cheallaigh ar an chaptaen Máirtín Ó Sibhleáin. I gComórtas Óg Spórt an Contae chuaigh an fhoireann chomh fada le cluichí cáithe an chontae, ach chaill siad in aghaidh Bun Dóbhraín agus dá bharr sin, theip orthu an cluiche cheannais a bhaint amach.

In the County Óg-sport 7 a side competition, the team qualified for the County finals, but were defeated by Bundoran in a play-off and failed to reach the final. Under-16 lose in County final.

The Under-16 team were once again strong, and despite a few poor displays in the League which cost them qualification, they added the Club's third Southern Championship when they defeated Aodh Rua in the final in Mountcharles, after a replay. The first match ended in a draw (2-09 each). In the replay, Ardara produced a great display and emerged as victors by seven points, 1-12 to 0-08. Following an easy victory over Cloughaneely in the semi-final, they qualified for a Championship final against Buncrana, who were the defending Champions. The game was played in MacCumhaill Park. The Ardara lads dominated the first half but went in at the break only two points in front, 0-6 to 0-4. Two second-half goals from Buncrana set them on their way to back-to-back titles. Ardara failed to recover sufficiently, and eventually went down by 2-08 to 0-9. It was a bitter pill to swallow for the lads. They had already lost Under-12 and under-13 finals in 1998 and 1999 and were hoping to take their first Championship as a team.



Ardara Under-16 team 2002 – County Finalists.

Back L-R: John McConnell, Declan Gallagher, Michael Herron, John Boyd, Hugh Shovlin, Declan Collum, Gareth Concarr, Adrian McHugh, Kieran Gallagher, Joseph Gildea, Shaun Gallagher, Larry Gallagher, John M. Byrne.

Front L-R: Matthew Maher, John Francis McHugh, Shaun McNelis, Martin Shovlin, Kevin Gallagher, Nicholas Maguire, Derek Gallagher, Johnathan Shovlin, Conal Gildea.

Sitting: Dominic Breslin, Noel Gallagher.

Matthew Maher, Kevin Gallagher and Gareth Concarr were part of the Donegal U-16 team that were defeated in the Buncrana Cup final by Tyrone in extra time, while other team members,

Jonathan Shovlin, Kieran Gallagher, Declan Gallagher and Martin Shovlin were selected for the County Under-15 Development Squad.

In the Southern Minor Championship, the team drew in a preliminary round, and eventually got through after a play-off with Bundoran. In the first round proper, they lost to Kilcar in Towney, 3-13 to 0-05, and went out of the competition when the second leg in Pearse Memorial ended in a draw, 2-09 to 3-06. The team also played in the Southern Minor League, but failed to qualify for the play-offs.

Mick Herron Memorial Tournament.

A new initiative by the Club Minor Board in 2002 was the organising of a one day Under-12 Tournament. A former player, Patsy Herron, presented a cup in memory of his brother Mick, also a former player, who was killed in a tragic accident in the 1960s. The inaugural tournament saw Dromore and St. Enda's (Tyrone), and Buncrana and the home side (Ardara) battle it out. After a great day's football, Ardara and Dromore qualified for the final. The home side did their best to match the visitors, but Dromore took the victory on a 5-1 to 1-6 scoreline. After the match, Patsy Herron presented the cup to the winning captain, Conor O'Neill. The same player was also presented with the Player of the Tournament award.

Other Minor Board initiatives during the year included the Under-12s' visit to

Dublin to the Donegal v Meath All Ireland qualifier game in August. On the way to the Capital, the team played Navan O'Mahony's in a challenge match in the morning before travelling on to the game. The annual summer camp was again a great success, with well over 120 children taking part in the activities in Pearse Memorial Park. And later in the year, fourteen of the Club's foundation level coaches took part in the Level One Course, which took place in Pearse Memorial in November. The Club had now, by far, a greater number of qualified Level One coaches than any other club in the county.

Glenties Comprehensive take County titles

With the Club Minor Board playing an ever greater part in the fortunes of the Comprehensive School teams, by way of coaching support, etc. the school teams were soon reaping the benefits of the hard work at Under-Age level in both the Ardara and Naomh Conaill clubs. The Senior Boys' team won their first title for many years, in December of 2002, when they defeated Rosses Community School in Dooley, on a 0-15 to 1-8 scoreline. In January of 2003, the Under-16 team followed suit by defeating Falcarragh Community School in the final at Gweedore, 1-11 to 1-5. The Girls' teams also got in on the act by winning the Senior and Under-14 finals with big victories over Carndonagh C.S. and St Catherine's V.S respectively.



Brendan and Michael Breslin from Sligo I.T at the Club Dinner Dance in December with the Sigerson Cup.

Boyle wins Sigerson Cup medal

Brendan Boyle of Kentucky became only the third player in the Club's history, to win a Sigerson Cup medal, when he played midfield on the Sligo I.T. team that defeated U.C.C. in the final at Sligo. The win was another milestone in the growing career of John and Margaret's son as he joined the Breslin brothers, Seamus and Thomas, who were the only previous winners. Their success came in 1954, as members of the U.C.G. team that won the prestigious cup. Brendan had represented the County at all grades, making his Senior

debut, also in 2002, against Roscommon in the National League. He went on to make appearances in the Ulster final v Armagh, and both All Ireland quarter-final matches against Dublin in Croke Park. On the same weekend as the Sigerson Cup match, Conor Curran won a Trench Cup medal, when he was goalkeeper on the St. Patrick's Drumcondra team that won that tournament.



Patrick Gallagher wins All Ireland V.S medal.

Following in the footsteps of an older namesake, Patrick Gallagher of Moagh, son of Jim and the late Sarah Gallagher, joined the band of All Ireland winners in the Club when he was corner back on the Donegal Vocational Schools team that defeated Kerry in the All Ireland final in Clones in May. Patrick, a student at Glenties C.S., put in some great displays, not least in the final itself, as Donegal defeated Kerry on a 1-14 to 0-7 scoreline. He thus became the 13th player from the

Club to have won an All Ireland V.S. medal. Patrick, along with Johnny McGill of Brackey, was also a member of the Donegal Minor team that lost to Cavan in the Ulster Minor Championship.

Patrick Gallagher Senior, the first Donegal Captain of an All Ireland winning V.S team, presents Patrick Gallagher of Moagh with an award for winning an All Ireland medal in 2002.

Molloy family honoured at Dinner Dance

The Annual Dinner Dance was held in December in the Blue Haven, with the Molloy family of Leamagowra being honoured for their service to the Club down the years. Connie, who travelled from the U.S for the function, accepted the award on behalf of the family. The other award winners were as follows:

Senior Player of the Year	Joseph Doherty
Reserve Player of the Year	Seamus Byrne
Minor Player of the Year	Cathal McGill
Lady Player of the Year	Mairead Watters
Hall of Fame	Packie Maguire
Club Person of the Year	John Hegarty
Appreciation Awards	Mairead Gallagher and Charlene McHugh, Brendan Boyle, Connie Molloy and Patrick Gallagher (Moagh).
Jubilee Award	Thomas Breslin, Captain of the 1952 Minor team.



**The Molloy family from Leamagowra pictured at the 2002 Dinner Dance.
Back L-R: Lanty, Frank, Anthony, Terence, Paul and Liam
Front L-R: Paddy Kennedy, Catherine, Connie, Nora, Caroline Molloy and Marie Molloy**



Marian Bennett presents the Charlie Bennett Hall of Fame Award to Packie Maguire.



John Hegarty receives the Club Person of the Year award for 2002 from Edward Molloy. Since arriving from Kilcar to live in the Parish, John has been a tireless worker with both Under-Age and adult teams, as well as serving the Club as a player through the eighties and nineties.



Group Winners at the 2002 Ardara Summer Camp with County Coach Paddy Hegarty and County Players Eamon Doherty and Brendan Boyle.



Ardara Coaches who completed the Level One Coaching Course in December 2002



Frankie Brennan enters Donegal G.A.A Hall of Fame.

Frankie Brennan, one of Ardara's greatest ever footballing sons, joined a select band of illustrious peers when he was inducted into the Donegal GAA Hall of Fame, at the County Banquet in 2002. From his earliest days, kicking a ball around the streets of Ardara, it was obvious that what Pax and Winnifred Brennan's son had was a special talent, that would leave an indelible mark on the playing fields of Donegal and Ulster, in what was to be a sparkling football career.

Born in 1929, Frankie's first recollection of playing football was in his days at Ardara National School, under headmaster Seán Ó Casaide. The young Brennan was already talked about locally, from when he first kicked a ball around the street. He recalls his first experience of a proper football match:

"When I was 10 or 11 years of age, a few school games were organised by Sean Cassidy and we played a few games against Dunkineely. There was no Under-Age football in Ardara at that time and I learned to play in Summerhill College, in Sligo, where we reached a Connacht Colleges' final. I also got a trial for the Connacht Colleges' team at that time. There were a few Parish Leagues started locally, but they never finished, they created a lot of ill feeling and rivalry among supporters. I was never too much in favour of them".

It was in the intensity of Connacht Colleges' football that he learned the real cut and thrust of the game. His first County jersey came as a Minor in 1946, the year after he was told by a Doctor to give up the game, when he sustained a bad cartilage injury to his knee. Frankie ignored the advice, though, and he was selected for the County Minors after receiving rave reviews for the Summerhill side. Frankie played centre-half-back on the team. He also dabbled in Athletics in those days, and was a Connacht Champion in the high jump, in 1947. When he was at home

on summer holidays, he played for the Glenties Minor team (Ardara had no team in the grade) and he went on to play again for the County, in the grade, in 1947. In the same year, he made his debut for the Club Senior team. It was the start of a career in the Club jersey, which was to see many brilliant performances for Ardara, but unbelievably was to yield no medals for the man many believe to be Ardara's greatest ever player.



Taken in Pearse Memorial in 1939.
Back L-R: Ned Mangan, Frankie Brennan, Cathal Gildea (Saddler), Seán Logue.

Front Row L-R: Phonsie (Tom) Gallagher, Phonsie Gildea (Saddler), Cathal McHugh.

In his first year on the Senior team, Frankie played in goals for a number of matches, before moving out and played at midfield, a position he shone in, during his playing career with Ardara. Frankie made sure at an early stage that he wasn't going to be without a team jersey those days; he bought his own Ardara jersey early on, and wore it throughout his Club career. His faded green and gold jersey stood out in many team photos of the day. There were no cones, bibs or ladders used in the training in those days,



An early photo of Frankie and Mary

“Everyone went to the Pearse Memorial Park and kicked the ball in and out of the goals for a few hours. At that time, work was hard and everyone was fit, and these sessions helped players with their catching and kicking, something I think is badly lacking in today’s game.”

His first Championship match for Donegal came in the 1949 first round defeat to Down, where he played at right half forward, in a 2-6 to 0-8 win for the Mourne men. Although the county fielded some of the all time Donegal greats in the 1950s, Frankie among them, the team always seemed to be ‘jinxed’ in the Championship, and from 1949 to 1956, the only occasion that they progressed past the first round was after defeating Monaghan, in their 1955 opener. But they went down at the next stage, to Cavan, by 2-5 to 1-6.

The undoubted highlight of Frankie’s career, though, was in 1952, when he won his only medal, in the Lagan Cup against Armagh. Donegal advanced to the National League semi-final, against Cork, in Croke Park. Early “stage-fright” seemed to affect Donegal, and two first-half goals gave Cork an early advantage, which, Donegal could not pull back, despite dominating the second half. Cork won by 3-3 to 0-7 on the day. Frankie recalls that day vividly:



With close friends, Ted Breslin and John The Saddler in the fifties.

“It was a great occasion, and while I got very sick with nerves before the game, once I got into it, I was o.k. Cork was a huge team. They were giants of men. We got off to a bad start, but once we got stuck into them we gave as good as we got. We made a number of changes at half-time and I have no doubt, if we had played as well in the first half as we did in the second, then we would not have been beaten”.

Frankie went on to captain the County from 1954-57, and as a cartilage injury began to curtail his involvement, he wound down his career as captain of the County Junior team in 1958.

He also received Provincial recognition and was selected as a substitute on the Ulster team of 1953. When asked to compare the County set-up with that of the present day, Frankie says it is a totally different scene nowadays.

“For a start, there was no collective training, the only time I can remember getting together as a team was the week before the semi-final game against Cork. Apart from that, you only met your team-mates on the day of the match. There was no manager as such. The team was picked by just one selector from each Divisional Board, plus the County Secretary, Treasurer, and Chairman, who took overall control. The County Board supplied the jerseys, and the players had to provide the rest of the gear”.

In his time, he played against some of the finest players in the game.

“Jim McKeever of Derry was the most outstanding player of that time. I also played against Jack Mahon of Galway, another superb footballer. Others from that time were Sean Quinn(Armagh), John Rice (Monaghan), and the Tyrone pair, Eddie Devlin and Mick Cushnehan. I played a lot of my County football against Ulster sides, as the League (Lagan Cup) was comprised of the eight Ulster teams, minus Cavan.”

Frankie's Club career was filled with many great memories, but was also strewn with disappointments, as through the fifties, the Senior team strove to win a County Senior Championship. Despite having some great players, the team failed at the semi-final stage on four occasions. Frankie recalls the great team they had in 1950 in particular, which included Paddy Prendergast, Tom Wickham, Sean McGettrick, Packie Watters, and Harry O'Donnell, all County players, but the famous semi-final episode against St. Eunan's, in MacCumhail Park, saw them thrown out of the Championship that year. Unlike many players, Frankie continued his involvement on the sideline, and gave sterling service to the Club as an officer, starting in 1949 as Secretary, a position he held again from 1951 to 1953. He was joint Club Treasurer from 1954 to 1957, and held the position again through the sixties from 1960 to 1969.

Frankie recalls how difficult it was to keep the Club going in the early years:

“It was hard to run a Club at that time as money was very scarce. A football cost 7s. 6d. at the time, and I often had to go around the town to collect the price of it. We ran bazaars and ceilis to raise funds. The local drama group, headed by Nellie

Boyle, performed in other towns to raise money for us. There were many others, though, who also were very good at that time, John Slowey, Donal Byrne, William Boyle, Francie Diver, John Byrne, John Campbell, Ted Breslin, Willie McNelis, many of whom were always willing to help and usually acted as gate collectors at every home game. Charlie Mooney of the Main Street was a great man for the Club and could always be counted on for financial help. Dan Ward was a great administrator, and Paddy McGill was always available and acted for us at County Board level. I remember Sean Cassidy, who gave me my first all Ireland ticket in 1948, and his work for the Club was enormous. Tommy Boyle was my right hand man at that time and was a great worker for the Club.



Frankie and Mary at the Banquet with the family: Standing from left: Rosemarie, Paddy, Jimmy, Paul, Luke and Denise.

Frankie also tried the other big job in football, as a Referee, but he didn't keep the whistle too long.

"I spent about four years at it and it was a tough job at the time, I was in charge of a Dungloe v Gweedore Championship game in Dungloe and all hell broke loose, the teams were level but the game never finished, that was a bad day".

Frankie was honoured with the Club Hall of Fame award in 1995, and was very proud to accept the award, having no medals of any kind to show for his service to the Club. He received great support during his playing career from his late wife, Mary, who always looked after the homestead when Frankie was away on G.A.A. duty. Their family have all followed his great love for the game, with sons Jimmy, Paul, and Luke all playing for Donegal at Under-Age level, while Paddy also won

honours for the Club as a young player. Daughters Rosemary and Denise complete the family.

Frankie's love for the game, and support for Club and County, continues to the present day, and it was ironic that when Ardara had their greatest success in 2000, Frankie was in America on a pre-arranged holiday, and missed out on the celebrations. He did, however, make up for it on his return and celebrated the League victory over Naomh Columba that little bit extra.

Few players have given the service, both on and off the field to their local Club that Frankie Brennan has. He will always be regarded as one of Ardara's greatest County players by G.A.A followers all over the County. Not bad for a fella who was told to give up the game at 16 years of age!



Some happy faces at the Banquet, From left: Luke, Brian McEniff, Frankie, Frankie Campbell, Mary and Manus Boyle.



Club Officers, Team managers and Under-Age Captains pictured with Special Guest, Mickey Moran at the 2002 Minor Board Presentation night.



**Minor Captain of 1952, Thomas Breslin
pictured with Anthony Molloy after receiving his Jubilee award
at the 2002 Dinner Dance.**



**The Glenties C.S. Under-16 team that won the 2002/2003
County Vocational School's Championship**



The 2002 Golf Classic Committee. Since the first event was held in Narin and Portnoo Golf Club in 1998, George Doherty's committee have raised over €30,000 for the Club in the Bi-ennial event.

**Back L-R: Stephen McCahill, Pauric Brennan, Mary McHugh, Martin McMahon and James McHugh.
Front L-R: Columba Diver, Thomas Breslin George Doherty and Bart Whelan.**

2002 A.G.M

The 2002 A.G.M. was held on the 19th of January 2003, in the Community Centre. 53 members were present.

The Secretary, James McHugh, reported on what was a frustrating year, and was highly critical of the way the Club was treated in relation to the Eddie Brennan affair. He urged all those present to use it as a motivating factor for the coming season. He congratulated the Ladies on having their most successful year to date, winning four County titles. He concluded by reminding all those present of the great tradition of the G.A.A. in the Parish and of the need for everyone to pull together in the coming year for the good of the Club.

The Treasurer, Stephen McCahill, reported an income for the year of €94,675.59, with an expenditure of €94,533. The Flotto draw continued to be the Club's main source of income, with the weekly draws taking an average profit of €840, the highest figure since the draw was launched. He singled out Patsy Boyle for his great work in the organisation of the draw. The report had also shown an increase of 22% on gates, for which Josie Brennan and, again, Patsy Boyle, were congratulated on their efforts.

On other matters, Senior team manager, Patrick Gallagher, reported on what was a

difficult year for team and manager, and on his disappointment at the way the Club was treated in the Eddie Brennan saga. He was critical of the discipline of some players during the year, and stated that he was stepping down from the position, but he felt he was handing over the strongest panel of players in the county to the incoming manager, whoever that might be.

The following officers were elected for 2003:

President	-	Frankie Brennan
Vice President	-	Billy Maxwell
Chairman	-	Larry Gallagher
Vice Chairman	-	Anthony Molloy
Secretary	-	James McHugh
Ass. Secretary	-	John M. Byrne
Treasurer	-	Stephen McCahill
Ass. Treasurer	-	Patsy Boyle
P.R.O.	-	Mary Kelly
Coaching Officer	-	John McConnell
Oifigeach Na Gaeilge	-	Seoirse Ó Dochartaigh
Development Officer	-	Columba Diver
Scór Officers	-	Gerard Slowey, Claire McNelis.
Registrars	-	Mairead Whyte, Sinead Gallagher.
Adult team managers	-	TBA

The following officers were elected to the Minor Board for 2003:

Chairman	-	Hugh G. Gavigan
Vice Chairman	-	Connie Bennett
Secretary	-	Conal Doherty
Ass. Secretary	-	George Doherty
Treasurer	-	James McBrearty
Ass Treasurer	-	Jackie Gallagher
P.R.O.	-	Gemma McCahill

Team managers:

Under-10: Connie Bennett, Jackie Gallagher, Thomas Boyle, Matthew Melley, Declan Gallagher, Ciaran Gallagher, Declan Gavigan.

Under-12: John Martin Byrne, John Mc Brearty and Don Earley

Under-13/14: Stephen McCahill and John Hegarty.

Under-15: Hugh Gavigan and John Hegarty.

Under-16: John McConnell, Michael Breslin, Larry Gallagher and Michael Breslin.

Minor: James McHugh and John Hegarty.



Larry Gallagher was elected to the position of Club Chairman in 2003. Following his education at St. Eunan's College, Larry spent many years in Drogheda with the Post and Telegraphs, before finally getting a long awaited transfer back home, in July 1991. A great supporter of the Club, from afar, in all the years he spent away, this oldest son of Joe Larry and Margaret immediately followed the lead of his late father, on his return, and immersed himself in Club affairs. He first held

the position of Club Treasurer in 1996, and gained many admirers for the manner in which he handled the purse strings in the two years that he held the position. He then took on the post of Minor Board Chairman, in 1999, and stayed with the position until the end of 2002, presiding over some of the Board's most successful years. Larry was also deeply involved with Club Under-Age teams, and was a member of the management of the Under-12 team that won the Championship in 1999, and then went on to win Under-14 and Under-16 Championships in following years. In his first year in the role of Chairman he proved to be an extremely popular holder of the position, and won many admirers with his hands-on approach and attention to detail. Larry is a Regional Manager with Eircom Business Systems, and lives at Stormhill with his wife Mary, daughters Sinead and Amanda, and son Joseph.

2003-Brilliant year for Under-Age teams

Once again it was left to the Club Under-Age teams to make the headlines in 2003, with both Boys' and Girls' teams taking all sorts of silverware back to the Parish, in different grades. The Girls' teams even improved on the great year they had in 2002, with Championship wins at Under-12, Under-14B, Under-16B and Minor, and an All Ireland Feile final appearance. The Under-16 Boys' team took home the County League and Championship double. The Under-15s retained their Gaeltacht title and the Under-13 team won the Southern Championship. The Under-10 Community Games team won the Ulster title for the first time. The highlight of the year, by individual Club players, was undoubtedly the winning of All Ireland Junior Ladies' medals by Charlene McHugh, Mairead Gallagher and Aoife McDonnell, who all played on the Donegal team that defeated Kildare in Croke Park. The Club Senior team left a bitter 2002 behind them, but despite being one of the favourites for the County Championship, they had no joy and went out at the semi-final stage.

Under-16s do the double

The highlight of the year for the Under-Age teams, was the performance of the Juvenile team, which took home the Club's fifth Championship in the grade, and the first League title. The team had already won the Under-12 and Under-14 Championships on the way up, and were once again tipped to add another title. They were keen to go step further than in 2002, when they were beaten in the final by Buncrana. The team showed good form at an early stage, and in the League competition came through the Southern Division un-beaten, having defeated Bundoran in the Southern final. They went on to take the County Division 1 League title, with victories over St. Michael's in the semi-final, and a brilliant comeback win over St. Eunan's in the final. The boys were down, 2-5 to 0-1, after nineteen minutes of the game, but came back with a great display in the second

half, to win the match on a 3-6 to 2-7 scoreline.

County Youth Officer, Declan Cunningham, presents the Under-16 County League Shield to Ardara captain, Kieran Gallagher



In the Championship campaign, they had an easy first round passage over Four Masters', got a walkover against Bundoran in the

Regional semi-final, and had a narrow victory over a good Killybegs side in the Southern final, (2-7 to 1-7). A 3-10 to 0-6 win over Convoy, signalled a County final for the second year in succession, this time against neighbours, Killybegs. The teams had already met twice during the year, Ardara winning two close games, both by three points, so another battle was expected with the Fishermen. The game was fixed for Towney, the scene of the Club's last two Championship victories in the grade, in 1989 and 1996.

Breslin pulls Ardara strings Peter Campbell reports from Towney

Ardara . . . 1-10

Killybegs . . 0-8

When they were needed most, Ciaran Breslin got and made the scores which gave Ardara their fifth Co. U-16 title before a large attendance at Towney, Kilcar, on Sunday evening. There wasn't much paper used in detailing the highlights of the first half, as Ardara struggled to make use of a good breeze. Indeed, Killybegs probably played

more football, but had a serious deficit when it came to penetrating the last line of defence. After twenty-six minutes, Ardara had just three points on the board, but by the half-time whistle, they had increased that to six, with Killybegs getting one in reply. The second half, however, was a much better affair, with Killybegs re-

organising, and thanks to the promptings of Paul McGinley, Gerard McHugh and Christopher Murrin, they were back on level terms with nine minutes left. It was then that Ardara corner forward Ciaran Breslin made his mark. He had already notched a point at the end of the first half and kicked another at beginning of the second, but his two points in as many minutes gave the winners breathing space, and just to decorate his performance, he found substitute Oisín O'Donnell with an exquisite pass, a minute from the end of normal time. O'Donnell moved forward and fired to the Killybegs net to kill off the game.

It looked good for Killybegs for much of the first half as they dominated around the midfield area through Christopher Murrin, a mountain of a man, who tore through the Ardara defence at will. Ardara had their first score from Martin Shovlin after five minutes, thank to a mistake in the Killybegs defence. Ten minutes elapsed before their second score. Ciaran Breslin won a free and he was involved in a 1-2 with Ciaran Gallagher before the latter found the range. An interception by Michael Herron led to another free in the 21st minute and Ciaran Gallagher added Ardara's third point. Ciaran Breslin got around Sheamie Coleman to get Ardara's fourth point in the 26th minute and from the kick-out Derek Gallagher set up Ciaran Gallagher to point with his left. Again from the kick-out Declan Gallagher won a break and found Derek Gallagher for their third point inside a minute. Just before the break Ryan McNelis found Shaun Kelly, who was fouled in front of goal and Christopher Murrin had Killybegs' only point of the half.

Half-time: Ardara 0-6, Killybegs 0-1.

It didn't look good for Killybegs as Christopher Murrin went, after receiving a 'graveyard pass' a minute into the second half in a challenge with Declan Gallagher. I always thought it was called a 'hospital' pass, but Kilcar veteran umpire, Con Haughey, is responsible for the more severe description. Murrin recovered well and almost individually hauled Killybegs back in to the game. That was not before Ardara added two points, from Derek Gallagher and Ciaran Breslin, after 36 minutes. Then came the Killybegs revival. Christopher Murrin had their second point, a delightful long-range

effort with the outside of his right. Ryan McNelis and the hard-working Brian Faherty had two more by the 41st minute. They had a goal chance two minutes later, when Shane Murrin and Ryan McNelis combined to fire across the goal, but substitute Jamie Ratcliffe failed to make contact, with the goal at his mercy. Paul McGinley was pulling the strings for Killybegs, and he was instrumental in a point, which was finished by Shaun Kelly. Gerard McHugh started another move, which ended with Christopher Murrin reducing the margin to two points with 46 minutes gone. McGinley was involved again, for Murrin to add another, and a bad kick out saw Sheamie Coleman and Murrin set up Shaun Kelly for the equaliser, with still nine minutes of normal time left. It was then that Ardara awoke, with Ciaran Breslin pointing, and he repeated the feat, thanks to a great intercept by Declan Gallagher with five minutes left. Then a minute from the end of normal time the game was killed off, when Breslin found Oisín O'Donnell who fired to the net.

Killybegs had their chances, but you had to feel sorry for Christopher Murrin, the outstanding player on the field. He had great support in Gerard McHugh, Paul McGinley, Ryan McNelis and Shaun Kelly. Ardara probably were a little better balanced. They were strong down the middle, when needed, and Ciaran Breslin's four points were central to their victory.

Ardara: Hugh Shovlin; John F. McHugh, Declan Gavigan, Dominic Breslin; Jonathan Shovlin, Declan Gallagher, Steven Boyle; Ciaran Gallagher (0-3, one free), Michael Herron; Tomas Maguire, Martin Shovlin (0-1), Derek Gallagher (0-2); Noel Gallagher, Conal Gildea, Ciaran Breslin (0-4). Subs., Oisín O'Donnell (1-0) for Maguire (44 mins); Shaun Gallagher for Boyle (60 mins.)
Killybegs: Cillian Byrne; Brendan Faherty (0-1), Gerard McHugh, Paudge Breslin; David Ainsworth, Paul McGinley, Shane McBrearty; Christopher Murrin (0-4, one free), Shane Boyle; Ciaran Tully, Sheamie Coleman, Ryan McNelis (0-1); Brian McCabe, Shane Murrin, Shaun Kelly (0-2). Subs. Jamie Ratcliffe for Tully; Jason Noctor for McCabe.
Referee: Shane Toolan (Aodh Ruadh).

The victory, although hard earned, was a great achievement for the team, and immensely satisfying for the management of John McConnell, Larry Gallagher, Michael Breslin and John M. Byrne, who had been working with the boys since Under-10 level. The John McFadden Memorial Cup was presented to team captain, Kieran Gallagher, by the County Youth Officer, Declan Cunningham, and the huge Ardara support made the journey home to a great reception back in the town.



The Ardara Under-16 team which won the 2003 Donegal County League and Championship

Back L-R: John M. Byrne, Stephen Boyle, Derek Gallagher, Michael Herron, Shaun Gallagher, Declan Gavigan, Hugh Shovlin, Kieran Breslin, Joe Gallagher, Declan Gallagher, Conbal Gildea, Kieran Gallagher, Larry Gallagher.

Front L-R: John McConnell, J.J. Shovlin, Johnathan Shovlin, John Francis McHugh, Fergus McBrearty, Pete-so Cannon, Noel Gallagher, Oisín O'Donnell, Martin Shovlin, Tomas Maguire.

Under-10s win Ulster Community Games

In the other grades, once again a huge effort went in to the Under-10s, with the 'A' team making great progress during the year, and the 'B' team winning all their respective Blitzes. The big news from the grade, though, was the performance of the Under-9 ? Community Games team, which was also under the umbrella of the Club Under-10 coaches. They won the Ulster title. The team had beaten Bundoran in the County final, and got past Laragh United (Cavan) and Monaghan Harps in the Ulster competition. They participated in the All Ireland finals in Mosney, and came home with the Bronze medal. It was a great effort by the team and their coaches, who were followed by a large group of supportive parents and friends.



The Ardara Under-10 Community Games team that won the Ulster Championship in 2003. Standing: Matthew Malley, Jackie Gallagher, Gerry Davenport (National President), Sally Bennett, Connie Bennett and Thomas Boyle.

Back L-R: Nicholas Breslin, Ethan Kelly, Gary Sweeney, Aidan Shovlin, Brendan McNelis (Capt), Paul Gallagher, Kevin Herron, Patrick Gavigan, Michael Maloney.

Front L-R: Tomas Boyle, Harry Hennigan, Shaun McLaughlin, Aaron Bennett, Conor Gallagher, Shannon Sweeney, Cathal Gallagher, Neil Campbell, Katie Molloy and Kyle Gallagher.

In the annual Under-10 Parish League, the Michael McNelis cup was won by Michael Maloney's team who defeated Mark Watter's team. In the 'B' final, Sean McGuinness' team defeated Ryan Melly's team. The captain of the winning team, Michael Maloney, was presented with the Michael McNelis Memorial Cup. The 'A' Player of the Year went to Neil Campbell, with the 'B' Player of the Year going to Tomas Boyle. Eamon and Grainne McNelis sponsored the prizes. All in all, a great year for the Boys and their hard working coaches!



Stephen McCahill presents the Kevin McGill Memorial Cup to Christopher Shovlin after his team won the Under-12 Parish League in 2003.

Also in the photo are from left: John Martin Byrne, Hugh Gerard Gavigan and John McBrearty.

The Under-12 team started off the season well, and having won their first six games, qualified for the Southern Championship final against Bundoran. The

seasiders were too strong in the decider, though, and won the game comprehensively. Despite the defeat, the lads went on to beat Carndonagh in the County quarter-final, before going out at the semi-final stage to St. Eunan's in a

thrilling match in Dooey. In a high scoring affair, the Letterkenny boys ran out winners by 5-7 to 1-14. The Boys also qualified for the Southern League final, but were again defeated by Bundoran, in Ballintra. In the U-12 Parish League, Christy Shovlin's team won the Kevin McGill Memorial Cup by defeating Conor Tonry's team.

In the Under-13 Championship, the team followed the progress they had made as Under-12s in 2002, when they won the Southern Championship. In the final, they had a last minute victory over St. Naul's, when a goal from a Stephen McCahill free clinched a one-point win for the Boys (3-04 to 2-06). In the County semi-final, they came up against the 2002 Under-12 Champions, St. Michaels, but, despite dominating the game for periods, the Ardara Boys went out of the Championship by 2-06 to 0-07.

The Under-14s had the misfortune to be playing in the same Division as the two best Under-14 teams in the County, Naomh Náille and Four Masters'. They had no success in the League, while in the Championship, they defeated Naomh Conaill in the first leg at Pearse Memorial, lost in Glenties, and went out of the competition after a one point play-off defeat in Dooey.

The U-15 team participated in the annual Óg-Sport competition. This seven-a-side competition was hosted by Ardara in 2002, with eight teams, split into two groups, participating. Ardara was drawn in the group that included Convoy and St. Eunan's, with the latter winning the final.

Bhi an Club páirteach i gComórtas Peile an Chondae Faoi-15 i rith na bliana fosta. Bhain siad an comórtas céadna an bhliain aroimhe sin, i nGaoth Dobhair. Sa bhliain seo, bhain siad fhad leis an chluiche ceannais arís, ach bhí an fhoireann bhaile, Cloich Ceann Fhaola, ag fanacht leo. Bhí an chéad leath cothrom go maith, ach sa dara leath bhí Ard a'Ratha ro-laidir dóibh. Ní raibh Cloch Ceann Fhaola i



ndan smacht a coinneál ar Conal Mac Giolla Dé, a bhí ag tabhairt taispeántas iontach ar fad sa leath sin. Ag an chríoch, bhain Ard a'Ratha le cheithre phointe, agus bhí an captaen, Nollaig Ó Gallchoir an-bhródúil ar fad ag tabhairt Corn Uí Cheallaigh ar ais go dtí Ard a'Ratha an lá sin.

Seosamh Ó Ceallaigh ag bronnadh Corn Uí Cheallaigh ar chaptaen Ard a' Rátha, Nollaig Ó Gallchóir.

Fielding a young side, the majority of whom were Under-17, the Minor team played in the Southern League and Championship, but had little success. In the Championship, they defeated Dungloe at home, lost the away leg and went out after a five-point, play-off defeat in Dooey. Quite a number of the Minor team featured on the Under-21 squad under the management of John McConnell. The team received a walkover in the first round against St. Naul's, but despite showing good form in challenge games, went out to Four Masters' in the quarter-final stage, at Fintra, on a 1-10 to 1-6 scoreline.

A major success for the Minor Board, was the annual G.A.A. Summer Camp in Pearse Memorial Park, in July. There was a tremendous response to it, with over 180 children attending for the week. Despite some inclement weather the children really enjoyed themselves as they were coached in football and hurling. Each participating child received a Donegal playing kit of Jersey, shorts and socks, which proved to be a huge success.



Brackey N.S. County Roinn 4 and Indoor Gaelic Champions 2003.
Back L-R: John Michael O'Donnell, Declan Boyle, Pauric McGill, Pauric Molloy, Brian Kennedy, Eamon McNelis Jr.
Front L-R: Michael Kennedy, Aidan Boyle, Kevin McCabe, and Peter Oliver McNelis.

Schools to the fore

The National Schools of the Parish again made a name for themselves in 2003, with Scoil an Bhreacaigh Boys' team winning the County Indoor Gaelic Championship. They also captured the Roinn a 4 title, after defeating St. Eunan's of Laghey in the Cumann na mBunscoil County final. This was their first final in 20 years, and their success was particularly satisfying for the Máistir Scoile, Seán Micheál Ó Domhnaill.

St. Conal's N.S. Girls' team won the INTO Cuman na mBunscoil 7 a side competition, in November, by beating Greencastle in the County Final. They won out their section in the South-West and defeated St. Naul's in the semi-final, by 6-10 to 1-02. The final was a brilliant game, with the match ending level. Two periods of extra time still couldn't separate the sides, but St. Conal's came through in the second period by virtue of a Tanya Barrett goal. The winning panel was as follows: Anna Gyo, Karla Boyle, Sinead Gavigan, Tanya Barrett, Paula Molloy, Amanada Shovlin, Karen McNelis, Alana Barrett/McGinley, Jenna Shovlin, Grace Harrington and Laura Lee Weir. They were managed by their teachers, Mrs Brid Naughton and Master Thomas Plunkett.



The St. Conals N.S. Girls team-County I.N.T.O Seven a side Champions 2003/04

Back L-R: Sinead Gavigan, Paula Molloy, Grace Harrington, Karen McNelis, Jenna Shovlin.

Front L-R: Alarnagh Barrett McGinley, Amanda Shovlin, Anna Gyo, Carla Boyle, Tanya Barrett.

St Mary's Girls' team were runners up in the Cumann na mBunscoil County final of Roinn 4 Girls. They were beaten in the final, by Frosses N.S., while the St. Conal's Boys' team was also beaten in the County final of the I.N.T.O sevens, this time by Termon N.S.

The continued link between the Club and the Comprehensive School continued to pay dividends, when the School teams retained their Senior and Under-16 County



The Glenties C.S. Senior team celebrate their win in the 2003/04 Senior Schools final in Fintra.

titles. The Seniors defeated St. Columba College, Stranorlar, in Fintra (2-6 to 0-7), while the Under-16 team defeated Pobalscoil Gaoth Dobhair, in Dooey, on a 1-8 to 2-3 scoreline. The School was denied a treble of wins, when the Under-14s were well beaten by Pobal Scoil Cloch Ceann Fhaola in the County final.

Mick Herron Tournament

The Minor Board once again organised the Mick Herron Under-12 tournament, and ran it on a bigger scale than in the previous year. Eight teams competed in two round-robin sections, at Pearse Memorial Park and in Fintra. Dungiven (Derry), Dromore (Tyrone), Derrygonnelly (Fermanagh), St. Sylvester's (Dublin), Aodh Ruadh and Naomh Conaill joined the host teams, Ardara and Killybegs, and in a great day's football, reigning champions Dromore qualified from the Fintra section and St. Sylvesters from the section in Pearse Memorial Park. A brilliant St. Sylvester's were easy winners in the final, on a 8-8 to 1-4 scoreline. The victors were presented with the Cup by Patsy Herron, on behalf of the Herron family. The Dublin lads, and their mentors, were hosted by the Club in Ardara over the weekend, with both Bórd na nÓgs exchanging presentations, as well as a table quiz being held for the both the Ardara and Dublin lads.



Patsy Herron presents the Herron Memorial Cup to Brendan Murphy, Captain of the St. Sylvesters team from Dublin. Also in Photo is Minor Board Chairman, Hugh Gerard Gavigan.

Donegal Ladies win first All Ireland title

Although they reached the All Ireland final on three previous occasions, the Donegal Junior Ladies

County team had always failed at the final hurdle in their quest for All Ireland medals. In 2003 though, they at last cleared the final hurdle, when they defeated Kildare in the All Ireland final at Croke Park. There was a big Ardara connection in the victory, with Charlene McHugh (goalkeeper), Aoife McDonnell (right half back) and Mairead Gallagher (substitute) all playing vital roles in the victory. The team received a huge welcome back to the County on Monday evening in Donegal town, with a large local contingent travelling up to congratulate their local heroines. It was Ardara's turn to host the celebrations on Tuesday evening, when

the cavalcade, with the West County Cup, received a huge Ardara welcome. Charlene McHugh led her team-mates through the town and onto the victory platform at the Heritage Centre. With John Michael O'Donnell acting as M.C., various local speakers congratulated the girls on their wonderful achievement.



Charlene McHugh raises the West County Cup on the teams arrival to Ardara on the Tuesday after the All Ireland final. Team Captain, Debbie Lee Fox is beside her.

Replying on behalf of the team, manager, Maxi Curran – followed by mentors, Brendan Drummond and Gary Walsh, and by team captain, Debbie Lee Fox – spoke of the important contribution of the Ardara girls, and in particular of Charlene Kennedy, who had been converted from an outfield player into a

goalkeeper at the beginning of the year, with great success. Charlene replied on behalf of the local girls, thanking the people of Ardara for the great welcome. She paid particular tribute to James McBrearty and Jimmy Boyle, who had put huge work into Ladies football in the Club since 1992. The players then finished off the night at a reception in Brennan's Bar which, of course, went on into the early hours of the morning.

It was a great reward for the girls, with Aoife McDonnell winning an All Ireland medal at just 17 years of age, while Mairead Gallagher finally got her reward for dedication to the County, after losing out in two All Ireland finals previously, in 1994 and 2002. Charlene finished the year in style, when, at the County Ladies' Banquet, she was selected as Joint County Player of the Year (with Debbie Lee Fox).



Charlene McHugh, goalkeeper on the Donegal Ladies' team in 2003, has been an ever present on Ardara Ladies' teams since the first training session up in the Community Centre, back in 1992, and she has given 100% for the Club ever since. A daughter of Breege and Mick Kennedy of Tullycleave, she first captained the U-16 team to a County final in 1992, but had to wait until 1999 to win her first medal. She was instrumental in the Club's successes

in 2002 and 2003, when they had Intermediate and Gaeltacht victories. Charlene shared in the County's success in 1993, when she won an Ulster Under-16 medal. The team lost out to Kerry in the All-Ireland semi-final in Tuam. She was a member of the Donegal Junior panel that won the Ulster Championship in 1994 and three in a row Ulster titles from 2001 to 2003. It was her switch to a goalkeeping in 2003 that emphasized her versatility, however, and after countless training sessions with Donegal All Ireland winning goalkeeper, Gary Walsh, has become one of the top net-minders in the Country. Her performance in the All Ireland final, in particular, was seen by many as the key to the team's victory.

Charlene is a former Ardara Ladies' Player of the Year, and this year received her top individual honour when she was selected as joint County Ladies' Player of the Year for 2003. Charlene is also a top-class basketball player who has won several County Championships over the years. Her jovial nature, good humor and



dedication to the cause has endeared her to many throughout her football career. Charlene works in the family business at Brennans Bar and lives at Lower Brackey with her husband, Jimmy McHugh.

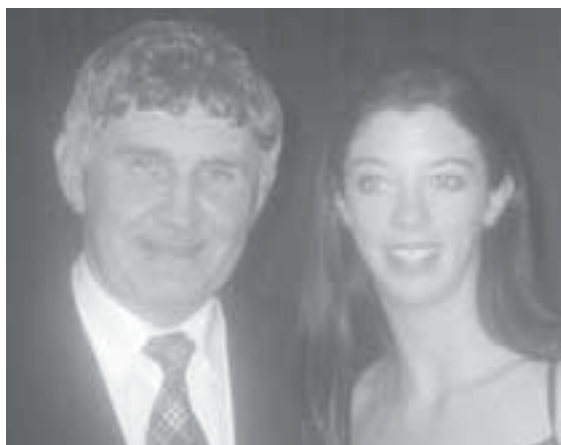
Charlene receives her Joint County Player of the Year Award at the County Banquet from Ladies G.A.A President, Geraldine Giles



Aoife McDonnell, right half back on the Donegal Ladies All Ireland winning team of 2003, first made the headlines in 1998, when she helped Naomh Conaill U-12 Boys win a County title at the expense of Ardara. Ironically, it was back on the same pitch in Fintra, in 2001, that she captained Ardara to their first Girls' Championship trophy, when they defeated Four Masters' in the County U-16 final. A superb all-round sports woman, excelling at basketball, athletics and soccer, as well as Gaelic Games, she has even been known to try her hand at ballet. Aoife played a huge

part in Ardara's success in recent years, helping them to Division 2 League, Gaeltacht and Intermediate successes, and in 2003, captained the Minor team to

their first title, with a victory over the holders, St. Eunan's. Aoife is a great example



to the other players around her, with her attitude to training and her determination to continuously better herself. A daughter of Frank and Theresa McDonnell of Glenties, there is no doubt that Aoife will be a long-serving player on both Ardara and Donegal Ladies' teams of the future.

Aoife meets Mick O'Dwyer at the 2003 Ladies Banquet.



Mairead Gallagher from the Glen in Killybegs, is one of the most experienced Lady footballers in the County. A totally committed player, operating either in defence or in attack, she always leads by example and is always on hand to encourage the younger players around her. A winner of five Ulster medals, she has been one of the most outstanding players in Donegal since 1992. She enjoyed Club success for the first time in 1999, in the Division 2 League win, and collected medals again in 2002 and 2003 in Gaeltacht and Intermediate Championship levels. A

former Ardara Club Player of the Year in 1992, the highlight of her career was when she was selected Donegal "Player of the Year" in 1999. The All Ireland medal Mairead received in 2003 was a well-deserved reward for her loyalty to Club and County after successive years of disappointment. She has also played for Ulster in the Inter-Provincial series, and she has played soccer and basketball at the

highest level in the County.

She is enjoying a break at the moment, after a recent knee operation, but both Club and County teams will be watching with interest as she works her way back to full fitness.



Mairead receives her All Ireland Medal from Ladies G.A.A president, Geraldine Giles.

Girls dominate Under-Age competitions

Following a brilliant year in 2002, few felt that the Club Ladies teams could equal those achievements in 2003. James McBrearty and Jimmy Boyle, though did not buy into this, however and the Girls duly went out and took home four County titles to the parish.

The first title the Girls took home was in the Under-12 grade, with the popular husband and wife management team, Connie and Sally Bennett in charge. A very talented side had victories over Aodh Rua, St. Naul's and Killybegs in the early rounds, and then defeated favourites, Glenfin, in the semi-final, after an epic struggle (2-08 to 0-12). They met Termon in the final in a game that proved to be one of the most exciting of the year, with the issue in doubt right up to the final whistle. It took a three-goal blitz from Tanya Barrett to tip the scales in Ardara's favour, leaving the final score 5-08 to 3-11. The large Ardara support went home delighted with the team's display, and in particular with the big performances from Tanya Barrett, Ciara and Amanda Shovlin, and Paula Molloy.



The Under-12 Girls team who won the County Championship in 2003.

Back L-R: Karen Craig, Orla Heena, Mairead Gallagher, Edel Feeney, Sharon Devenney, Anna Gyo, Ciara Shovlin, Tanya Barrett, Sinead Gavigan, Siobhan Shovlin.

Front L-R: Katie Molloy, Natalie Sweeney, Grace Watters, Gillian Breslin, Paula Molloy, Carla Boyle, Nicole Sweeney and Amanda Shovlin.

At back are the managers, Connie and Sally Bennett.

Under-14 girls reach All Ireland final

The Under-14 girls certainly had a memorable year, the highlight of which was their participation in the All Ireland Under-14 Feile Tournament in Galway. The team were nominated to represent Donegal, after winning the 2002 Under-14 Championship. Despite losing a large part of that team, James and Jimmy still had a strong outfit available. Hosted by the Tuam Stars Club, the Girls headed off to Galway, with some loyal supporters, on Friday, in time to take part in the huge parade of teams at Pearse Stadium in Salthill.

Playing in their first match, in Division 3 of the competition, they defeated the host side in a one-sided match on Friday evening, and they had two further wins on Saturday morning against St. Michael's (Galway) and Bishop Challoner School

from Birmingham. These results left the girls top of their group, and through to the All Ireland semi-final, where they were paired against Curry from Sligo. The game, which took place at Headford, was a ding-dong struggle, but goals from Ciara Shovlin and Tanya Barrett were vital for Ardara, and sent them on their way to their first All Ireland final, on a 2-2 to 0-7 scoreline.



The Ardara Under-14 girls team, pictured at the Feile Parade in Pearse Stadium.

The final was fixed for early Sunday morning in Pearse Stadium, with Westmeath Champions, Garrycastle, as opponents. A nervous Ardara team got off to a poor start, and a few early Garrycastle goals left them behind by seven points at the break. The girls showed great fighting qualities, however, but despite owning the ball in the second half, they went down on a 3-4 to 1-5 scoreline. Nevertheless, it was a great achievement and experience for the girls, whose displays and behaviour over the weekend were a credit to all concerned. . The top scorers in Galway were: Aisling Corcoran (6-14), Tanya Barrett (7-07), Ciara D Shovlin (5-05) and Aoife Watters (3-01).

Back home, they soon had to go out and defend their County Under-14 title. In the same section as MacCumhaill's, Glenfin and Four Masters', they were denied a place in the County semi-final after a one-point, play-off defeat to Glenfin in Donegal Town. A last minute goal sent the Brockagh Girls through. The defeat meant that Ardara would be competing in the 'B' section for the remainder of the Championship, and they went on to take the trophy, after defeating Aodh Ruadh in the semi-final, and Buncrana in the final, 5-9 to 5-4. The Girls also added the Marie Brennan Cup to their cabinet. In the competition run by the St. Naul's club, they defeated the home side in the final on a 3-05 to 2-04 scoreline.

The successful Under-14 panel were as follows: Nodlaig MacCarthaigh, Sinead Concarr, Sarah Kennedy, Aoife Watters, Kelly Bennett, Michelle Maguire, Bernadine McCabe, Sarah Connolly, Patricia McDevitt, Ciara Shovlin, Dena Sweeney, Aisling Corcoran, Mairead McGill, Tanya Sweeney, Paula Molloy, Ciara D. Shovlin, Tanya Barrett, Meave O'Donnell (Captain), Lorraine Boyle, Grainne Byrne, Shauna Sweeney, Jacinta Feeney, Leane Sweeney and Mairead Slowey.

The Under-16 Ladies team had the same fate as the Under-14s as they were eliminated from the 'A' competition by Glenfin, which relegated them also to the 'B' section. They defeated Buncrana in the County semi-final, and St. Michael's in the decider, by a score of 4-12 to 2-08. The Cup was presented after the match to Catriona McHugh by County Ladies Board Chairman, Paddy Coll.

The team that lined out against St. Michael's in the final was: Bernadine McCabe, Catherine Herrity, Therese Gallagher, Catriona Feeney, Eimear O'Donnell, Meave O'Donnell, Sharon Kilbane, Catriona McHugh (0-03), Aoife Watters, Carmel Boyle (0-04), Carol Breslin (1-02), Michelle Gallagher (1-00), Martina McHugh (0-01), Aisling Corcoran (1-01), Ciara D. Shovlin (1-01).

Subs used – Ciara Mooney, Dena Sweeney, Tanya Barrett and Kelly Bennett.



The Ardara Under-16 girls team who won the County 'B' Championship in 2003.
Back L-R: Dena Sweeney, Nodlaigh Ni Cartaigh, Aisling Corcoran, Katherine Herraghty, Ciara Mooney, Carmel Boyle, Bernadine McCabe, Catriona McHugh, Eimear O'Donnell, Michelle Gallagher and Maebh O'Donnell.

Front L-R: Sarah Kennedy, Sinead Concarr, Jacinta Feeney, Mairead Slowey, Kelly Bennett, Michelle Maguire, Aoife Watters, Carol Breslin, Sharon Kilbane, Martina McHugh and Therese Gallagher.

Kneeling: Patricia McDevitt, Tanya Sweeney, Shauna Sweeney, Tanya Barrett, Ciara Denise Shovlin, Caira Marie Shovlin, Catriona Feeney and Lorraine Boyle

Ladies take the first Minor Title

The one title that the Club Ladies had yet to win was the County Minor title. In the 2003 Minor Championship, the team had a quarter-final victory against Termon (6-12 to 3-03), which sent them through to meet Moville in the County semi-final. The match was played in Newtowncunningham and finished all square (2-9 to 3-6), after a closely fought contest. The replay took place the following week in Ardara, with the local side putting in a great second half performance to win

comfortably in the end. Carol Breslin scored 4-04, Aoife McDonnell had a great game at midfield with Aoife Watters, and Sharon Kilbane was outstanding at the back. The girls went on to defeat St. Eunan's in the final at Letterkenny, on a ??? scoreline, to cap a great year for all concerned.

The team on the day was: Bernadine McCabe, Therese Gallagher, Stephanie Sweeney, Sharon Kilbane, Eimear O'Donnell, Meave O'Donnell, Aoife Watters, Aoife McDonnell (0-02), Ciara Mooney, Carmel Boyle, Aisling Corcoran (2-00), Maura McHugh (0-01), Carol Breslin (3-04), Martina McHugh (1-02), Natalie Gildea (0-01). Subs; Catherine Herrity, Michelle Gallagher, Catriona Feeney and Catriona McHugh.



The Ardara Minor team who won the 2003 County Minor Championship for the first time.

Back L-R: Catriona McHugh, Martina McHugh, Meabh O'Donnell, Carmel Boyle, Bernadine McCabe, Stephanie Sweeney, Aisling Corcoran, Aoife Watters, Ciara Mooney, Natalie Gildea and Michelle Gallagher.

Front L-R: Therese Gallagher, Maura McHugh, Eimear O'Donnell, Aoife McDonnell, Sharon Kilbane, Carol Breslin, Katherine Heraghty, Catriona Feeney.

The Senior Ladies team had a quiet year, playing only a few games in total. They were defeated in the Championship at Pearse Memorial Park by the Finn Valley combination (Glenfin /MacCumhaill's). They did however retain their Gaeltacht title, with a home victory against Glenfin in the semi-final (2-18 to 2-13), and a comprehensive victory over home side, Cloughaneely, in the final.

The team and scorers on the day were: Meave O'Donnell, Rebecca Watters, Stephanie Sweeney, Aoife Watters, Eimear O'Donnell, Mairead Watters, Ciara Mooney, Charlene McHugh (0-02), Aoife McDonnell (0-02), Catriona McHugh (0-03), Mairead Gallagher (0-02), Mairead Brennan (1-05), Natalie Gildea (0-01), Maria Diver (0-01), Carmel Boyle (1-02). Subs used – Catherine Herrity for

Rebecca Watters, Maura McHugh for Stephanie Sweeney, Aisling Corcoran for Natalie Gildea.

In the Senior Championship they were beaten at home by the Finn Valley side (Glenfin/McCumhaill's) in the first round.



Tanya Barrett from Narin, who played in the mini-sevens game at half time in the All Ireland Junior final in 2003.

On County teams, the Club was again well represented, with Aoife McDonnell, Stephenie Sweeney and Maura McHugh on the Donegal Ladies Minor team. Eimear O'Donnell, Ciara Mooney, Catriona McHugh and Carol Breslin were part of the Donegal Ladies U-16 team. Aoife Watters, Meave O'Donnell, Aisling Corcoran and Bernadine McCabe were part of the Donegal Ladies U-14 team that reached the Ulster

final. Aoife Watters captained the team. Tanya Barrett played at half time during the Ladies All-Ireland Junior final in Croke Park in October, while Paula Molloy, Natalie Sweeney, Ciara D. Shovlin and Amanda Shovlin all played at half time during the Ladies Ulster final in Clones, when Donegal defeated Cavan to win the Ulster title.



James McBrearty has been involved in the Club at many different levels since he transferred from his native Killybegs, in 1978, to live in Edergole.. James is "Mr. Versatility" in Ardara, and in the 26 years that have elapsed in that time, has operated in many different roles; player, bus driver, Under-Age manager, Junior manager, Referee, you name it James has tried his hand at it, and

has always managed to do each job with considerable ease. James first played with the Club Junior and Senior teams shortly after moving from Killybegs, and continued his playing career into the nineties. He had a most successful stint as manager of the Club Junior team from 1987-1990, when the team captured the League and Junior 'B' Championship double in 1987, and went on to win the League again in 1989. As an officer, James' first position in the Club was in 1979, when he took up the position of P.R.O., a job he held until 1990. His efforts in the position took the job to a higher level, and he ensured that all Club matches were consistently reported, and that statistics were kept for the year. He also held the positions of Minor Board Chairman and Minor Board Treasurer, among others, as well as acting as Club Senior Referee through the nineties.

James became involved in the Ladies' section of the Club on its founding in 1992, and, along with Jimmy Boyle, Margaret McHugh and others, worked diligently in the background through many of the lean years, when Ladies' football was a lot less glamorous than it is today. The hard work finally paid off in 1999, with their first title, the Division 2 League, and this was followed a few years later by the Intermediate and Gaeltacht Championship wins of 2002. It was however, at Under-Age level that James' work has been most effective. The Club Under-Age teams reached finals at different age-groups from 1992 until 2000, but it wasn't until 2001 that James, Jimmy and Co. got the success they deserved, when the Under-16 team came home with the County Championship that year, after defeating Four Masters'. This win seemed to give the management and the Girls the confidence to go on to greater things, and 2002 saw Championships being won at Under-14 and Under-16 level, to cement the Club's standing as the top Under-Age Ladies' Club in the county. In 2003, the two Championships that hadn't been won up until then, Under-12 and Minor, were taken home, and in a red letter year, the Under-14 Girls made it to the All Ireland Féile final, only to be defeated by Garrycastle from Westmeath. The Under-14 and Under-16 Girls took home the County 'B' titles in their grades to finish a full set of County Championships. James also took great satisfaction in the Donegal Ladies' All Ireland win of 2003, when three of his protégés came home with All Ireland medals, due in no small part to his input to their football careers since 1992. James is the local E.S.B meter man, and lives with his wife Mary, at Edergole. They have two daughters, Fiona and Lorraine, and one son, Shane.



Jimmy Boyle from Rosbeg, has been involved as assistant manager of almost all the Ladies teams in the Club since 1993, and has rarely missed a match in that time. Jimmy started off driving the team, but since his involvement began he has been involved in all the success that the Ladies teams in the Club have had since that time, and in particular in recent years when the teams have won numerous Under-Age Championships. Jimmy has always been a great Club and County supporter and is always available when help is needed.



James McBrearty and Jimmy Boyle receive a special award from the Club on their success with the Club Ladies teams in 2003. Also in photo is Packie and Josephine Maguire (Sponsors) and Larry Gallagher, Club Chairman.

Four Masters' end Seniors' hopes in semi-final

The Senior team lacked little in motivation for 2003 as a result of the 2002 Championship debacle. Following the A.G.M, former managers, Johnny D. Early and Patrick Gallagher joined forces in an effort to take the Championship title again, with James McHugh as team trainer, and John Boyle and Eddie McLoone as selectors. The team burned up the ground in the early stages of the League. After five games, in the lead up to the Championship, they were sitting at the top of the table. The draw pitted the team in what was widely regarded as the tougher half of the Championship, including as it did, St. Eunan's, Four Masters' and Naomh Conaill. Ardara drew their neighbours in the first round, the first time the teams had met since the famous 1995 episode. Ardara carried their good form through, winning 0-12 to 0-7 at home, and going through to the quarter-final after a 2-11 to 1-9 win in Davy Brennan Memorial Park. A blistering second half display from Gareth Concarr, who scored 2-3 in the second half after coming off the bench, sealed the win.

There was a long delay before the quarter-final. The County Senior's good run in the Championship resulted in endless postponements of the Club's Senior game with Aodh Ruadh. When it was finally played on the 14th of September, Ardara came through on a score of 3-11 to 0-13, two first half goals from Stephen Gildea and Michael Doherty giving Ardara a 2-6 to 0-7 lead at the break which they never relinquished. The final scoreline of 3-11 to 0-13 was very flattering, though, to the

winners, with Aodh Ruadh having missed numerous chances throughout the match.

Once the Championship draw had been made, the whole county was looking at one possible semi-final scenario, Ardara v St. Eunans. The Ardara lads were also hopeful that they would get their chance to consign 2002 to the history books. Four Masters' however threw the script out the window, when they defeated St. Eunan's in the quarter-final at Ballybofey, 0-12 to 1-7. Notwithstanding the Four master's victory, Ardara were regarded in most quarters as favourites for the tie, but a young Donegal Town side was beginning to fulfil the Under-Age promise shown in the previous years, and ran out deserving winners.

Donegal Senior Football Championship semi-final Joel in masterclass Four Masters 1-08 Ardara 0-07

Four Masters showed the greater hunger to overcome a lethargic Ardara in the semi-final of the Senior Football Championship at MacCumhaill Park on Sunday. Nobody epitomised that hunger better than Joel Carr, who recovered from a heavy knock off-the-ball at the start of the second half to contribute three points which proved the difference between the sides. Carr spent five minutes recovering after an incident that saw Brendan Boyle receive a yellow card, which could have been a different colour.

Ardara were on top for most of the opening half, but after getting a point through Brendan Boyle after 38 seconds, they reached the 15th minute with just a two point advantage. Stephen McHugh with a 45m free, and Michael Doherty with his only point of the game, were their other scorers, while Michael Doherty had converted a free for Masters. Damian Diver had dominated most of the play in that opening quarter, but his promptings went on deaf ears in the Ardara forward line, where only Don Earley provided any real threat. The Dohertys were unusually quiet while Jonathan Boyle also had an off day.

Joel Carr had a Four Masters point in the 18th minute, swinging his right from 45m after the Donegal Town men found it difficult to break the gain line. Earley made inroads for Stephen McHugh to point with his right on 22 minutes but then the game got a fillip

with the arrival of the only goal. Barry Dunnion, not for the first time, started a move, which included Barry Monaghan, before Rory O'Donnell's effort from 40 m was half-blocked. The ball was broken by Ciaran Cassidy and Michael Doherty pounced to fire to the net. Damian Diver responded, winning a free from which Jonathon Boyle pointed and that was to remain the score until the break – Four Masters' 1-02 to Ardara 0-05.

The second half started with Stephen McHugh getting yellow carded, followed by the Boyle-Carr incident. Ardara took the lead on 36 minutes when Conal Doherty was fortunate to get a free when he seemed to dive on the edge of the square and Jonathan Boyle pointed the free. On the 39th minute, Diver started a move which ended with the impressive Don Earley pointing Ardara in front again. A minute later Michael Doherty had levelled again with a great score from 35 m and in the 45th minute that man, Joel Carr, put Masters' ahead for the first time, this time finding the target with his left. It was he who scored a minute later to put them two ahead.

Worse was to follow for Ardara, as Conal Doherty was shown a second yellow and a red for a trip on Barry Dunnion. In the final five minutes, the Donegal Town men shut up shop and Marcus Monaghan strolled forward (although he seemed to take a lot of

steps) to make the margin three, and then in added time Karl Lacey fired over the insurance point. The only retort from Ardara came with the final attack, a Jonathon Boyle effort being well blocked. Ardara will be disappointed but they can have no complaints. Apart from Damian Diver, Don Earley and to a lesser extent Stephen McHugh, they were out of sorts. Four Masters had good all round play from Barry Monaghan, Shane Carr, Barry Dunnion, Karl Lacy and Joel Carr.

Ardara – Conor Curran, Matthew Maher, Eamon Doherty, Joseph Doherty, Aodh Brennan (Captain), Damian Diver, Kevin Byrne, Francis Diver, Brendan Boyle (0-01), Conal Doherty, Jonathon Boyle (0-02 2 frs),

Michael Doherty (0-01), Don Early (0-01), Stephen McHugh (0-02 1 fr), Stephen Gildea. Subs – Gareth Concarr for Stephen Gildea and Paddy Gallagher for Stephen McHugh.

Four Masters – Paul Durcan, Damien Cassidy, Don Monaghan, Patrick Gillespie, Karl Lacey (0-01), Gareth Britton, Barry Dunnion, Marcus Monaghan (0-01), Barry Monaghan, Derek McGinty, Shane Carr, Joel Carr (0-04), Rory O'Donnell, Kieran Cassidy, Michael Doherty (1-02 1fr). Subs – V. Murray for Rory O'Donnell and Peadar Espey for Derek McGinty.

Referee – **Seamus McGonigle (Aodh Ruadh).**



Spot the Ball- Ardara players, Matthew Maher (2), Aodh Brennan and Eamon Doherty tussle with Joel Carr (12), Derek McGinty and Ciaran Cassidy of Four Masters in the 2003 semi-final at Ballybofey.

Whether the team had been preparing for St. Eunan's all year and got complacent, or whether they just underestimated Four Masters', it made little difference. Four Masters' had deserved their win, and they went on to win the Championship, defeating Termon in the final. They also raised Donegal's profile on the Ulster stage, by defeating Cavan Gaels and Castleblaney in the Club Championship, but were defeated in the Ulster semi-final by St. Gall's of Antrim.

There was huge disappointment in the Club after the defeat. What was felt was the Club's best chance to win a Championship, since 2000, slipped away from them. The team found it difficult to recover from the loss, and although they had already qualified as top team in the League table, they failed to find motivation to train for the semi-final against Gweedore. There was little excuse, though, for their performance in that game, at Falcarragh, with Gweedore going on to win by 3-14 to 1-7, in what was undoubtedly the worst performance given by the Senior team

since the Killybegs game in 1992. The Gweedore lads seemed to have the upper hand in 2003, though, having already beaten Ardara in the County Gaeltacht final at Falcarragh (1-11 to 1-8), and earlier in the League, at Pearse Memorial Park, with a last minute goal.

Reserves go out to Naomh Conaill after four matches.

The 2003 Reserve team was under the management of John Hegarty and Jimmy Brennan. Drawn against Naomh Conaill in the Championship, they ended up having a titanic struggle with their neighbours. Naomh Conaill won the first match, in Ardara, by three points. Ardara won in Glenties, in Davy Brennan Memorial Park, by the same. The play-off back in Pearse Memorial, was again a draw, but the Glenties men finally went through, on a score of 0-11 to 0-6, after a further play-off in Fintra. Ardara struggled in the League during the year, and finished in the lower half of the table. Despite the best efforts of the management team, few players gave the team the commitment that was needed; this was an issue that had been causing the Club serious concern for a number of years.



Johnny D. Earley makes a presentation to Pat O'Donnell on the occasion of his retirement in February 2003. Pat was the other half of the successful double team with Johnny D. that won Under-16, Minor and two Under-21 Championships. A huge crowd turned out at the function in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel to honour the Dungloe native, who was one of the most popular members of the Garda that ever served in the Parish.

Donegal reach All Ireland semi-final

Donegal Senior team was the surprise packet, nationally, in 2003 when, after a dismal run in the National League, and a first round defeat by Fermanagh in the Ulster Championship, they turned their season around and defeated Longford, Sligo, Tipperary, Down, and Galway on their way to the All Ireland semi-final. All Ireland Champions, Armagh, ended the dream with a 2-11 to 1-10 win in Croke Park. Anthony Harkin, who was called in to train the team in April, made his mark on the panel and soon had them in brilliant shape. Damian Diver was a regular on the team during the year, while Brendan Boyle made his first Championship start for Donegal, when he had a fine match in the All Ireland quarter-final, against Galway, in Castlebar. Eamon Doherty was also on the panel during the campaign.

The rejuvenated Donegal supporters followed their team in droves, with one of the

largest contingents in the County going from Ardara. By the time the game against Galway came around, over 750 people from the Parish were looking for tickets, in scenes reminiscent of 1992.

In the other County grades, Brendan Boyle, Kenneth Doherty and Stephen McHugh were on the Donegal team that lost in the Ulster semi-final to Monaghan. Matthew Maher and Gareth Concarr were on the Donegal Minor team that lost, after a replay, to Fermanagh. Declan Gallagher, Kieran Gallagher and Martin Shovlin were all on the Donegal Under-16 team, that lost to Tyrone in the Buncrana Cup final. And Conal Gildea, Donal Byrne, Declan Gavigan, Stephen Boyle and Noel Gallagher were part of the Donegal U-15 Development Squad. Paddy McGrath of Crannogbuí was a member of the Donegal G.A.A School of Excellence panel. Declan Gallagher was a member of the Ulster Under-16 Development Squad, while Matthew Maher was a member of the Ulster Under-17 International Rules team. In administration, Edward Molloy continued as County Board Assistant Secretary, while John Martin Byrne was elected as South Donegal Chairman early in the year.



John Martin Byrne of Ardconall was elected the Southern Minor Board Chairman for 2003 at the Board convention early in the year. John Martin has for a long time been one of the hardest Club workers, akin to his father John Sr., who also great service to the Club down the decades. John Martin was elected the first Treasurer of the Board in 2002, and took over the Chair when

Declan Cunningham vacated the office on being elected County Youth Officer. A Level 1 coach, he has been involved in the Club Under-Age teams for a number of years, and was involved in the management of the Under-14 and Under-16 teams that won their respective County Championships in 2001 and 2003 respectively. He is also Assistant Secretary of the Club, having served as Minor Board Secretary from 1999-2001, and will no doubt be one of the main driving forces behind the Club in years to come.

Under-16 team visit Tirconail Gaels

The Club Under-16 team that won the League and Championship double, travelled to London at Hallowe'en to visit the Tirconail Gaels' Club. The money for the trip was raised through a special Bórd Na n-Óg fundraising draw, which proved to be a great success. The trip was one to remember for the lads and management, who travelled to London via Heathrow on Thursday, and returned home on Sunday evening. The highlights of the weekend included visits to Madame Tussauds, the London Planetarium, the Spurs v Bolton Premiership match in White Hart Lane,

and a visit to the Alexandra Palais for some ice-skating. The social highlight of the weekend was the visit to the Tirconaill Gaels' Clubhouse and the club's pitches, at Greenford, on the Friday evening. The boys played the local lads in a challenge match under floodlights, and won the game convincingly against a good Tirconaill Gaels' team. Following the match, a reception was held in the Clubhouse, with



presentations being exchanged by both Clubs. The London end of the trip was organised by former Ardara Minor Board Chairman,

Hugh Gavigan presents Tirconaill Gaels Chairman, Andy Duffy with a memento of the Ardara Under-16 teams visit to London. Also in the photo is Senior Board Chairman, Larry Gallagher.

Clubman, Stephen Campbell, who left no stone unturned to

ensure that the lads had a great weekend from start to finish. The hospitality shown by the Tirconaill Gaels' Club was, as usual, second to none. The Club Chairman, Andy Duffy, in particular, made sure that the travelling party was provided with transport for the whole weekend. The historic visit was the first time that a Club Under-Age team had travelled overseas on a visit, while it was also the first time an Under-Age team from Ireland visited the Tirconaill Gaels' Club.



Cormac MacAnallen is special guest at Under-Age presentations

The Club Minor Board organised their Annual Presentation night in the Nesbitt Arms Hotel, where they welcomed Tyone All Ireland winner and All Star, Cormac MacAnallen, as a very popular Guest of Honour. A crowd of over 200 people saw the County Championship winning teams in the Boys' Under-16 and Under-15 Gaeltacht grades receive their medals, as did the Girls of the Under-12, Under-14B, Under-16B, and Minor Championship winning teams.

Presentations were made also to the various players who had won Player of the Match awards in their respective County finals. All teams were treated to a meal, and following the presentations, a disco was held to end the night. A presentation disco for the younger children was held in the Narin Inn on Christmas week, with the Under-12 Parish League medals being presented, as well as those for the St. Conal's N.S Girls' team that won the County I.N.T.O Sevens title.



Cormac McAnallen presents Gemma McCahill with an award in recognition of her work as Minor Board P.R.O



Well known Umpire and Under-Age manager, Michael Breslin, daughter, Carol, son, Kieran and wife, Mary meet Cormac.Mc Anallen.



**Some of the local girls pose with Cormac McAnallen at the Minor Board Awards night.
From left: Grainne Byrne, Mairead Slowey, Shauna Sweeney, Cormac McAnallen, Edel Feeney, Lorainne Boyle and Leanne Sweeney**





Hugh Gerard Gavigan, who was elected Minor Board Chairman in 2003, after many years working quietly behind the scenes, meets Cormac McAnallen with his sons Declan and Brendan.



The winning captains of the various Under-Age teams and their managers, show off their silverware at the Minor Board Awards night.



John Byrne gives Cormac some advice at the Minor Board Awards.



Shaun Gallagher

The news on the 22nd of December 2003 of the tragic death of Shaun Gallagher of Moagh, son of Jim and the late Sarah Gallagher, devastated the community of Ardara in a way that few deaths had done previously. Shaun was one of most popular young people in the Parish, and his death came as a huge shock to all those who knew him. Having played football from an early age, Shaun had won Championship medals at Under-12, Under-14 and

Under-16 levels for Ardara, and was always looked on as a player who would never let the side down. Indeed less than two months before his untimely death, Shaun had enjoyed the Under-16 team's trip to London, where he was as usual the life and soul of the party during the weekend. The pain of loss felt by the community was evident from the huge crowds that attended his wake and funeral at the family home. The funeral took place on Christmas Eve, the Club jersey of green and gold was placed on his coffin. The funeral cortege was accompanied by a Guard of Honour drawn from the Club Under-16 and Minor teams that Shaun had been a member of. His loss will be deepest felt by his father Jim, brothers Patrick and Seamus, and sister Catriona. Shaun may have lived but a short life, but he lived it to the full, and he will long be remembered by all those fortunate enough to be his friend.

Annual Dinner Dance

At the Annual Dinner Dance, which was held in the Blue Haven on the 29th of December, there was a surprise in store for the Fear an Tí, Bart Whelan, when it was announced that he was Guest of Honour for the night. 250 people attended what was a very enjoyable function. The local girls on the All Ireland wining Ladies team were honoured for their achievement, while John Keeney was the recipient of the Hall of Fame award, and travelled especially home from America with his family for the event. The other Annual Awards were presented to the following:

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| Club Persons of the Year | - | Connie & Sally Bennett
& Jackie and Geraldine Gallagher. |
| Hall of Fame | - | John Keeney |
| Appreciation Awards | - | James McBrearty (Edergole)
and Jimmy Boyle (Narin), Mairead Gallagher,
Charlene McHugh and Aoife McDonnell. |
| Senior Player of the Year | - | Francis Diver |

Reserve Player of the Year - Martin Sweeney
Minor Player of the Year - Gerard McCabe
Lady Player of the Year - Mairead Brennan



**The 2003 Players of the Year pictured with Club Chairman, Larry Gallagher.
 From Left: Francis Diver (Senior), Mairead Brennan (Ladies), Martin Sweeney (Reserve)
 and Gerard McCabe (Minor)**



**The Keeney family come out in force to celebrate John winning the Club Hall of Fame
 Award at the 2003 Dinner Dance.**



Connie and Sally Bennett and Jackie and Geraldine Gallagher accept the Clubpersons of the Year Award for 2003 from Club Secretary, James McHugh and Chairman, Larry Gallagher.



The Canon's Concert 2003 - Columba Diver and his alter ego, Kieran Dorrian.



Guest of Honour at the 2003 Dinner Dance, Bart Whelan with his wife Rosemarie.

Conclusion.

Our story ends on the 31st of December 2003. The labour of love, which we as a committee started, full of enthusiasm, in January 2001, and that became almost an obsession, has matured on the branch as “Idir Peil agus Pobal”. To be honest, had we any idea of the massive amount of work involved in the research and the writing of this book, then we might have had second thoughts about getting involved. But in the realisation of the dream, I think we have all enjoyed it immensely, and have learned so much, not only about the G.A.A. in Ardara, but about the people of Ardara in general. We are undoubtedly clannish, obviously stubborn, and most outstandingly loyal, but I think the trait we clutch tightest to our hearts is that we are a people that are fiercely proud of our heritage. And this pride never leaves us regardless of where we travel, or how long we may stay away from home, indeed even if we never return. In truth, we could have written on and on, such are the stories and tales that are there for the telling. We have, however, deliberately left some stories still to be told. Stories of great characters, fights during and after games, the stuff that legends are made of, stories that grow with time. You know the ones,

“I remember the day we played Glenties over in the aul field.....”

We are just going to leave those tales to those who tell them best.

The story is of course unfinished; there are heroes yet to be born, dreams yet to be realised. We hope that, in reading this book, those who carry the torch in years to come will truly appreciate the work of those who have gone before them, and without whom the Parish of Ardara would be a much poorer place. If God spares us all, the Club will be 100 years old on the 21st of October 2021, and we look forward with anticipation to the sequel, Idir Peil agus Pobal, An Ath-imirt!

Epilogue

Cormac McAnallen



The G.A.A world was rocked to the core on Tuesday the 2nd of March 2004 with the news of the death of Tyrone All Ireland winner and All Star, Cormac McAnallen. The news was greeted with great sadness locally, as just three months earlier, Cormac had, together with his fiancée, Ashlene, travelled to the Club's Annual Minor Board presentation on the 12th of December as Guest of Honour. On that night, the young Tyrone lad left a lasting impression on all who met him as he mingled

freely with both young and old, and gave of his time to ensure that everyone who wanted to have a chat with him, or get a photo taken, had the opportunity to do so. Following the presentation of medals, Cormac spoke to the young people present, advising them of the pitfalls they would encounter in both their personal and sporting careers, and encouraged them to be the best that they could be, in whatever path they followed in life. He was aware of his own Ardara connections, through his maternal grandmother, Mary Meehan, from Glencoe, who was a niece of the late Agnes Herron of Edergole. Former great Ardara supporters, Charlie and Brian Herron of Glencoe were Cormac's grand-uncles; Paddy Herron of Edergole and Bernadette Gallagher of Loughros Point are Cormac's second cousins, and are his closest living relations in the Parish. The late Bridie Diver of Altnagcapple was also member of the family tree. It was obvious to those present that night, that the young man from Eglish was destined for great things in the future. Few could have expected his life to be cut so short, so soon afterwards. The G.A.A has lost one of its brightest stars. We are just happy in Ardara that we had the honour of meeting him, even if only for a short time.



Patsy Boyle

It was the 6th March 2004, and we were just finishing "Idir Peil agus Pobal" when we heard the news of the sudden death of our great friend and Club man, Patsy Boyle. Just an hour earlier, Patsy had been, as usual, the life and soul of the Minor Board table quiz in the Greenhouse Bar, but on his return home, took suddenly ill and passed away, to the great distress of his wife, Breda.

Since returning from England to live at 'Homeward Bound' in 1998, Patsy and

Breda had become immersed in community life in the Parish, and in particular, in the Ardara G.A.A. Club. Even while away, they had been loyal supporters of Ardara and Donegal, regularly travelling home for matches. Once directly involved, Patsy took over the job of Assistant Treasurer in the Club, and since that time had the task of running the weekly Flotto draw. It was something he enjoyed, despite it being one of the most difficult and frustrating tasks in the day to day running of the Club. He took great pleasure in his weekly ritual of holding up the two plastic bags, filled with full envelopes, as he took a stab at guessing the amount of money gathered. “Yeah, 1,000 Euros, possibly 1,100, give or take a few Euro”, and he was always close to the mark.

It was only four short months before his death that he and Breda fulfilled one of his life’s ambitions in doing a sponsored walk, following the same route as Red Hugh O’Donnell, from Donegal Castle to Kinsale. That was Patsy, he just didn’t talk about things, he went ahead and did them. And in whatever he did, Breda was always at his side. She, Conor and Níamh will miss him terribly, as will all of us.



Club Records & Statistics 1921-2003

All Ireland Medal Winners

Senior Football Championship

1992 Anthony Molloy Martin Gavigan - Anthony Harkin trainer

Under 21 Football

1982: Anthony Molloy, Donie Mc Cole

1987: Luke Gavigan Thomas Maguire

All Ireland Club Championship

1978 Anthony Harkin (Thomond College)

All Star Awards

1992 Anthony Molloy & Martin Gavigan

International Rules

1990 Martin Gavigan in Australia (Vice Captain)

Railway Cup

1991, 1993 Martin Gavigan .

1989 Anthony Molloy .

2001 Damian Diver

All Ireland Vocational School

1984: Patrick Gallagher (Capt), Eamon Cunningham, Niall Campbell, Jimmy Brennan, Luke Gavigan, John Mc Connell

1985: Luke Gavigan (Capt)

1995: Aodh Brennan, Conal Doherty , Peter Mc Hugh

1996: Aodh Brennan, Peter Mc Hugh

2002: Patrick Gallagher (Moagh)

Sigerson Cup

1954: Seamus and Thomas Breslin (U.C.G)

2002 & 2004 Brendan Boyle (Sligo I.T)

International Rules Under 17

1999 Brendan Boyle

Donegal Player of the year

John Boyle 1970

Anthony Molloy 1988 1990

Damian Diver 2000

Ulster Championship Medal winners

Senior Football

Anthony Molloy 1983, 1990, 1992

Kieran Keeney 1974, 1983

Martin Gavigan 1990 1992

Luke Gavigan 1990

Under 21 Football

Peter Oliver McNelis 1967

Anthony Molloy 1982

Luke Gavigan Thomas Maguire 1987

Damian Diver, Michael Doherty 1995

Minor Football

Hugh O'Donnell 1956

Luke Gavigan 1985

Damian Diver, Micheal Doherty 1991

Peter Mc Hugh & Aodh Brennan 1996

Junior Championship

Tom Gallagher 1930, 1933

Jim Maxwell 1933, 1939

Danny Boyle 1939

James Mooney 1939

Seamus Breslin, Packie Maguire 1954

Dr Lagan Cup

Vinny Mc Hugh 1936 1937

Jim Maxwell 1936 1937

Paddy Mc Gill 1937

Frankie Brennan 1952

McKenna Cup

Anthony Molloy 1985 & 1991

Martin Gavigan 1991

Niall Campbell 1985

Kieran Keeney 1975

Ulster Minor Football League

Luke Gavigan 1984 1985

Jimmy Brennan 1984

Thomas Maguire 1984

Jackie Gallagher 1982
 Peter Mc Hugh 1996
 Aodh Brennan 1996

Ulster Vocational Schools

Luke Gavigan 1984,1985
 Niall O Donnell 1992, 1994
 Aodh Brennan & Peter Mc Hugh 1995, 1996
 Eamon Mc Nelis 1965
 Patrick Gallagher, Eamon Cunningham, Niall Campbell, Jimmy Brennan, John Mc Connell 1984
 Shaun Whyte 1994
 Damian Diver & Don Earley 1992
 Patrick Gallagher (Moagh) 2002

Buncrana Cup (Ulster Under 16 Football)

Johnny Mc Gill & Patrick Gallagher 2000

Ted Webb (Connacht Under 16 Football)

Niall O Donnell 1991
 Derek Boyle , Johnny Herron, Stephen Mc Hugh 1999

Senior Championship Appearances for Donegal

No.	Player	Period
29	Anthony Molloy	1983-94
26	Damian Diver	1996-2003
22	Martin Gavigan	1988-95
	Kieran Keeney	1974-87
12	Vinny Mc Hugh	1936-45
11	Frankie Brennan	1949-56
8	Eamon Doherty	2001-2003
	Harry O Donnell	1941-50
	Charles Mc Dyre	1924-29, 1931
7	Packie Watters	1947-51
	Brendan Boyle	2002-2003



5	Tom Gallagher	1925-38
	Christy Kennedy	1923-31
4	Jim Maxwell	1932-37
3	James Gallagher	1923-25
	Leo Howley	1921-25
	Martin Sweeney	1979
2	James A Mc Ginley	1936-37
	Denis Gallagher	1934-35
	J Mooney	1943-47
	Vincent Rankin	1942-43
1	Charlie Gallagher	1923
	Vincent Boyle	1946
	Cathal Mc Gill	1970
	Seamus Gallagher	1982
	Luke Gavigan	1990



Donegal County Championship & League Finals

Senior Football Championship (5 titles)

1923	Ardara	0-3	Ballybofey	0-1
1926	Ardara	0-5	Letterkenny	0-2
1928	Ardara	1-4	Killygordon	0-3
1936	Dungloe	2-8	Ardara	2-2
1938	Gweedore	1-7	Ardara	0-5
1980	Kilcar	1-13	Ardara	0-8
1981	Ardara	1-7	Four Masters	0-6
1983	St Eunans	0-8	Ardara	0-3
1984	Four Masters	0-9	Ardara	1-2
2000	Ardara	1-9	St Eunans	0-7

Senior Football League (Democrat Cup) (4)

1927	Killygordon	1-2	Ardara	0-0
1929	Dungloe	0-4	Ardara	0-2
1931	Ardara	0-6	Dungloe	0-2
1943	Downstrands	2-9	Convoy	2-4
1950	Gweedore	2-10	Ardara	1-6
1977	Bundoran	1-7	Ardara	1-3
1989	Ardara	0-10	Kilcar	0-7
2000	Ardara	0-13	N. Columba	0-10

Cluichí Ceannais an Chomórtais Náisiúnta (1)

1998	Ard a' Rátha	1-14	Cloich Cheannfhaola	0-16
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Cluichí Ceannais Sinsir Na Gaeltachta (3)

1977	Ard a' Rátha	1-9	Naomh Columba	0-7
1979	Ard a' Rátha	0-17	Cill Chartha	0-7
1980	Ard a' Rátha	0-10	Gaoth Dobhair	1-6
1984	Ard a' Rátha	2-9	Gleann Fhinne	0-6

Senior Football Shield (3)

1978/79	Ardara	2-7	N. Columba	0-7
1979/80	Ardara	1-5	MacCumhaills	0-4
1994	Ardara	2-7	MacCumhaills	0-7

Div 1 Reserve Shield (1)

1995	Ardara	1-8	Dungloe	0-7
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Junior Football Championship (2)

1935	Gweedore	4-5	Ardara	0-1
1938	Clochaneely	2-3	Downstrands	0-5
1965	Four Masters	2-4	Ardara	1-6
1967	Ardara	0-7	Convoy	0-5
1970	Ardara	2-8	Bundoran	1-8
1980	St Eunans	0-13	Ardara B	0-5

Junior Football League

1970	Ardara	(Division 2)
1987	Ardara B	(Division 3)
1989	Ardara B	(Division 3)

Senior Reserve Football Championship

1995	Ardara	0-6	Dungloe	0-9
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Junior 'B' Football Championship

1987	Ardara 'B'	0-6	Lifford	0-2
1996	Kilcar	2-11	Ardara 'C'	1-5

Under 21 Championship (4)

1980	Ardara	1-9	Kilcar	1-4
1982	Aodh Ruadh	2-10	Ardara	0-5
1983	Ardara	1-6	Aodh Ruadh	1-5 (Replay)
1984	Gweedore	3-1	Ardara	0-9
1994	Ardara	1-12	Aodh Ruadh	1-10
1995	Ardara	0-13	Naomh Columba	0-10
1997	St Eunans	3-18	Ardara	0-5

Minor Championship (6 + 2 with Naomh Conaill)

1951	Tantallon	3-7	Ardara	1-1
1952	Ardara	4-10	St Eunans	0-3
1954	Ardara	2-3	Castlefin	0-7
1957	Mc Cumhailis	2-4	Ardara	1-6
1958	Gweedore	2-5	Ardara	2-4
1965	Ardara	1-9	Gweedore	0-7
1969	Ardara/Glenties	2-10	N. Mhicheal	2-2
1970	Ardara/Glenties	1-9	Buncrana	1-5
1971	Mc Cumhailis	3-6	Ardara	0-8
1972	St Eunans	4-15	Ardara	1-5
1982	Aodh Ruadh	0-13	Ardara	0-8
1983	Ardara	1-3	Gweedore	0-2

1991	Ardara	1-10	Aodh Ruadh	1-8
1994	St Eunans	2-10	Ardara	4-7
1995	St Eunans	2-12	Ardara	1-12
1997	Ardara	0-12	St Eunans	0-8
1999	Gweedore	2-15	Ardara	0-4

Under 17

1991	Aodh Ruadh	4-9	Ardara	1-9
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Under 16 (5 + 2 with Naomh Conaill)

1949	St Eunans	1-6	Ardara	1-2
1953	St Eunans	1-5	Ardara	0-0
1954	Pettigo	2-6	Ardara	0-2
1955	Ardara	1-9	Creeshlough	0-7
1964	Ardara	4-10	Drumbar	1-6
1968	Glenties/Ardara	0-10	MacCumhail's	0-6
1971	Glenties/Ardara	3-10	Urris	1-3
1989	Ardara	1-8	Killybegs	0-9
1992	Naomh Columba	1-13	Ardara	3-6
1996	Ardara	2-10	Aodh Ruadh	1-9
2002	Buncrana	2-8	Ardara	0-9
2003	Ardara	1-8	Killybegs	0-8

Under-16 League

2003	Ardara	3-6	St. Eunans	2-7
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Under 15 Gaeltacht (2)

2002	Ard An Ratha	5-8	Clochán Liath	0-8
2003	Ard An Ratha	4-8	Cloch Cheann Fhaola	2-9

Under 14 (4)

1962	Ardara	0-13	Clonmany	0-0
1976	Ardara	7-5	St Eunans	4-5
1981	Killybegs	5-14	Ardara	0-3
1990	St Eunans	5-3	Ardara	2-7
1991	Ardara	2-3	Aodh Ruadh	0-5
2001	Ardara	4-8	Buncrana	3-10

Under 14 League (1)

2002	Ardara	3-7	Killybegs	1-9
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Under 13 Championship

1996	Four Masters	4-8	Ardara	2-5
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1999	Glenfin	4-13	Ardara	1-15
2001	St Eunans	2-10	Ardara	1-7

Under 12 (1)

1992	Clochaneely	4-7	Ardara	1-1
1998	Naomh Conaill	4-16	Ardara	6-5
1999	Ardara	5-7	Buncrana	2-4
2000	Killybegs	1-18	Ardara	1-7

Under 12 Div 4 FC (1)

1999	Ardara	3-14	Pettigo	1-3
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LADIES ROLL OF HONOUR

- 1992** Ladies' club founded.
Mary McHugh elected County Secretary.
Community Games U-14 team defeat Milford in County final.
U-16 team defeated by Seán Mac Cumhaill's in County final.
Seniors defeated by Urris in Shield final.
- 1993** Charlene Kennedy and Grainne Diver win U-16 Ulster Championship medals.
Caroline McHugh and Mairead Gallagher win Ulster Junior Championship medals.
Caroline McHugh selected "Player of Match" in Ulster final.
- 1994** Caroline McHugh, Mairead Gallagher and Charlene Kennedy win Ulster Junior Championship medals.
- 1995** U-14 defeated by Seán Mac Cumhaill's in county final.
- 1996** Community Games U-12 team defeat Letterkenny in County final.
- 1997** St. Mary's N.S. win Cumann na mBunscol competition.
U-14 defeated in County final by Four Masters".
Club hosts U-14 Féile team from Old Parish, Waterford.
Siobhan Heena takes 4th place in All-Ireland skills in Féile.
- 1998** St. Mary's N.S. win Cumann na mBunscol and Mini Sevens.
Club host U-14 Féile team from South Kerry.
- 1999** Win Division 2 League title.
St. Mary's N.S. win Roinn 4 Cumann na mBunscol competition
Mairead Gallagher selected "Donegal player of the Year".
- 2000** St. Mary's N.S. win Cumann na mBunscol competition.
U-14 A team defeated by Four Masters" in County final.
U-16 A team defeated by St. Eunan's in County final.

- 2001** St. Mary's N.S. win Cumann na mBunscol and Mini Sevens.
 Catriona McHugh, Ciara Mooney, Eimear O'Donnell, Sharon Kilbane and Stephanie Bennett win All-Ireland C medals at All-Ireland U-14 Blitz.
 U-16 A team defeat Four Masters' in County final.
 Charlene Kennedy and Mairead Gallagher win Ulster Junior championship medals
- 2002** U-14 A defeat Moville in County final.
 U-16 A defeat Moville in County final.
 Seniors defeat Cloughaneely in Intermediate final.
 Seniors defeat Cloughaneely in Gaeltacht final.
 Seniors lose to Sperrin Óg, Greencastle (Tyrone) in the Ulster Intermediate Club Championship.
 Charlene McHugh and Mairead Gallagher win Ulster Junior Championship medals.
 Seniors lose to Connemara Gaels in All-Ireland Gaeltacht finals.
- 2003** St. Connell's N.S., Kilclooney, win Mini Sevens.
 U-12 A defeat Termon in County final.
 U-14 B defeat Buncrana in County final.
 U-14s win Marie Brennan Memorial tournament.
 U-14s Runners up in Roinn 3 All-Ireland Féile.
 U-16B defeat St. Michael's in County final
 U-18 defeat St. Eunan's in County final.
 Seniors defeat Cloughaneely in Gaeltacht County final.
 Charlene McHugh, Aoife McDonnell and Mairead Gallagher win Ulster and All-Ireland Junior Championship medals.
 Charlene McHugh selected as Joint Donegal Player of the Year.

Club Officers 1921-2003

Year	Chairman	Secretary	Treasurer
1921	Con Herron	Charles McGill	Patrick Gildea
1922	Sean Cassidy	Charles McGill	
1923	Sean Cassidy	Charles McGill	
1924	Sean Cassidy		
1925	Sean Cassidy		
1926	Sean Cassidy		
1927	Sean Cassidy		
1928	Sean Cassidy		
1929	Sean Cassidy		
1930	Sean Cassidy		
1931	Sean Cassidy		
1932	Sean Cassidy		Charles Mooney
1933	Sean Cassidy		Charles Mooney
1934	Sean Cassidy		Charles Mooney
1935	Sean Cassidy	Dan Craig	Charles Mooney
1936	Sean Cassidy	Dan Carig	Charles Mooney
1937	Sean Cassidy	Dan Craig	Charles Mooney
1938	Sean Cassidy	Dan Craig	Charles Mooney
1939	Sean Cassidy	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird	Charles Mooney
1940	Sean Cassidy	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird	Charles Mooney
1941	Sean Cassidy	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird	Charles Mooney
1942	Sean Cassidy	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird	Charles Mooney
1943	Sean Cassidy	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird	Charles Mooney
1944	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird	Tommy Boyle	Charlie Mooney
1945	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird	P. S. Mac a'Ghoill	Tommy Boyle
1946	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird	P. S. Mac a'Ghoill	Tommy Boyle
1947	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird	P. S. Mac a'Ghoill	Tommy Boyle
1948	John Slowey	Phil McHugh	Tommy Boyle
1949	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird	Frankie Brennan	T. Boyle & F. Diver
1950	John Slowey	Eddie Haughey	Francie Diver
1951	John Slowey	Frankie Brennan	Francie Diver
1952	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird	Frankie Brennan	Tommy Boyle
1953	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird	Frankie Brennan	Tommy Boyle
1954	Phil McHugh	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird	T. Boyle & F. Brennan
1955	Phil McHugh	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird	T. Boyle & F. Brennan
1956	P.S. Mac a'Ghoill	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird	Frankie Brennan

1957	P.S. Mac a'Ghoill	Domhnall Mac a'Bháird	Frankie Brennan
1958	P.S. Mac a'Ghoill	Domhnall O'Faolain	John Keeney
1959	P.S. Mac a'Ghoill	Domhnall O'Faolain	John Keeney
1960	P.S. Mac a'Ghoill	John Keeney	F. Brennan & J. Keeney
1961	P.S. Mac a'Ghoill	John Keeney	Frankie Brennan
1962	P.S. Mac a'Ghoill	John Keeney	Frankie Brennan
1963	P.S. Mac a'Ghoill	John Keeney	Frankie Brennan
1964	P.S. Mac a'Ghoill	Charlie Bennett	Frankie Brennan
1965	P.S. Mac a'Ghoill	John Keeney	Frankie Brennan
1966	Tommy Boyle	John McNelis	Frankie Brennan
1967	Tommy Boyle	Danny Haughey	Frankie Brennan
1968	Tommy Boyle	Danny Haughey	Frankie Brennan
1969	Tommy Boyle	Danny Haughey	Frankie Brennan
1970	Tommy Boyle	P.S. Mac a'Ghoill	Jimmy O'Donnell
1971	Packie Keeney	P.S. Mac a'Ghoill	Jimmy O'Donnell
1972	Vincent McConnell	P.S. Mac a'Ghoill	Joseph Gallagher
1973	Vincent McHugh	P.S. Mac a'Ghoill	J. Gallagher & C. Mooney
1974	Frank O'Donnell	Bill Shovlin	Charlie Mooney
1975	Columba Diver	P.S. Mac a' Ghoill	J. M. O'Donnell
1976	Columba Diver	Conal A. Gildea	J. M. O'Donnell
1977	Columba Diver	Conal A. Gildea	J. M. O'Donnell
1978	John M. O'Donnell	Conal A. Gildea	Patsy Gildea
1979	Bart Whelan	John Gallagher	Patsy Gildea
1980	Bart Whelan	John Gallagher	Patsy Gildea
1981	Eamon McNelis	Edward Molloy	John Herron
1982	Niall McCole	Edward Molloy	John Herron
1983	Charlie Bennett	Edward Molloy	John Herron
1984	Charlie Bennett	Edward Molloy	Bosco McGill
1985	Columba Diver	Edward Molloy	Bosco McGill
1986	Columba Diver	Edward Molloy	Bosco McGill
1987	Columba Diver	Edward Molloy	Mary McHugh
1988	Columba Diver	Edward Molloy	Mary McHugh
1989	Eamon McNelis	Edward Molloy	Mary McHugh
1990	Eamon McNelis	Edward Molloy	Mary McHugh
1991	Eamon McNelis	John McConnell	Mary McHugh
1992	Bart Whelan	John McConnell	Mary McHugh
1993	Columba Diver	John McConnell	Ann McGhee
1994	Columba Diver	John McConnell	Ann McGhee
1995	Columba Diver	John McConnell	Ann McGhee

1996	Columba Diver	John McConnell	Larry Gallagher
1997	Columba Diver	John McConnell	Larry Gallagher
1998	Anthony Molloy	James McHugh	Stephen McCahill
1999	Anthony Molloy	James McHugh	Stephen McCahill
2000	Anthony Molloy	James McHugh	Stephen McCahill
2001	Anthony Molloy	James McHugh	Stephen McCahill
2002	Anthony Molloy	James McHugh	Stephen McCahill
2003	Larry Gallagher	James McHugh	Stephen McCahill



The Main Playing Rules of Gaelic Football in 1884.

1. There shall be not less than 14 or more than 21 players a side.
2. There shall be two umpires and a referee. When the umpires disagree, the referee's decision shall be final.
3. The ground shall be at least 120 yards long by 80yds in breadth and properly marked by boundary lines, which must be at least 5 yards from fence.
4. The goalposts shall stand at each end in the centre of the goal line. They shall be 15 feet apart with the cross-bar 8 feet from the ground.
5. The captains of each team shall toss for choice of sides before starting play and the players shall stand in two ranks opposite each other until the ball is thrown up, each man holding a hand of one on the other side.
6. Pushing or tripping from behind, holding from behind or butting with the head shall all be deemed foul, and the player so offending shall be ordered to stand aside, and may not afterwards take part in the match, nor can his side substitute another man for him.
7. The time of actual play shall be one hour. Sides to be changed only at half-time.
8. The match shall be decided by the greater number of goals. If no goal is kicked, the match shall be deemed a draw. A goal is when the ball is kicked through the goal-posts under the crossbar.
9. When the ball is kicked over the sideline, it shall be thrown back by a player of the opposite side to he who kicked it over. If kicked over the goal line by a player whose goal line it is, it shall be thrown back in any direction by a player of the other side. If kicked over the goal line by a player on the other side, the goal-keeper whose line it crosses shall have a free kick. No player of the other side to approach nearer than 25 yards of him until the ball is kicked.
10. The umpires and the referee shall have, during the match, full power to disqualify any player, or order him to stand aside and discontinue play, for any act which they may consider unfair as set out in Rule 6.



Ardara - 1978/79 County Senior Shield Champions
Back L - R: Martin Sweeney, John Boyle, Patsy Harkin, Conal Aidan Gildea, Connie Molloy, Anthony Harkin, Frank Molloy, Frank O'Donnell, John Michael O'Donnell, Gerard McNelis.
Front L-R: Anthony Molloy, Noel Watters, Eamon McNelis, Seamus Gallagher, Josie Gallagher, Patsy Gildea (Capt), Kieran Keeney, Frank McGhee, Lanty Molloy, Eddie McLoone.



Ardara – 1981 Donegal Senior Football Champions
Back L-R: Charlie Mooney, Eamon McNelis, John Boyle, Donie McCole, Connie Molloy, Kieran Keeney, John Herron, Patsy Gildea, Conal Aidan Gildea, Gerard McNelis, Anthony Molloy, Martin Sweeney.
Front L-R: Frank O'Donnell, Eddie McLoone, Frank McGhee, Lanty Molloy, Paul Brennan, Seamus Gallagher (Capt), Anthony Harkin, Noel Watters, Josie Gallagher, Eamon Watters, John McGill, Kevin McGill. Mascot: Adrian Whelan.



Patrick Gallagher lifts the All Ireland Vocational School Cup after Donegal's win at Croke Park in 1984.



The opposing captains, Donegal's Luke Gavigan, and Cork's Alan Bluett shake hands before the 1985 All Ireland Vocational Schools final. In the middle is Referee Anthony Maher (Laois).



Ardara Minor Team 1991- Donegal County Champions
Back L-R: Mick Herron, Shaun Gildea, Michael Doherty, Don Earley, Donal Breslin, Malachy Gallagher, John O'Donnell, Adrian Whelan, Stephen McGinley, Kieran Lynch, Thomas Moore.
Front L-R: Martin Shovlin, Eamon Doherty, Gabriel Cannon, Niall McGuinness, Adrian Cunningham, Shaun Whyte, Niall O'Donnell, Damian Diver, Martin McCabe.
Mascot: Joseph Gildea.



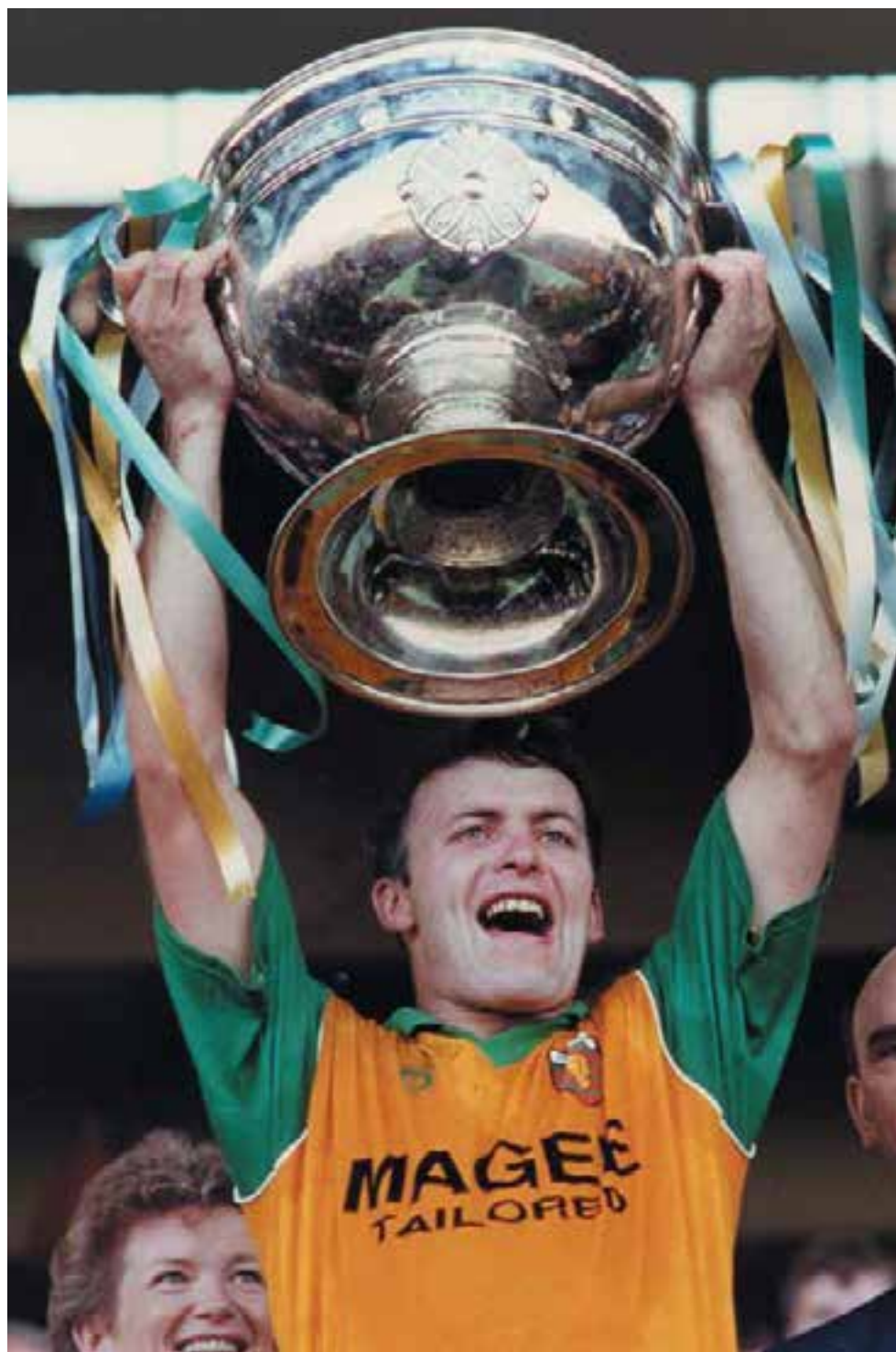
Donegal – 1992 All Ireland Senior Football Champions.

Back L-R: Matt Gallagher (Naomh Brid), John Joe Doherty (Naomh Columba), Noel Hegarty (Naomh Columba), Gary Walsh (Burren), Brian Murray (Civil Service), Barry McGowan (Killybegs), Declan Bonner (Na Rossa), Donal Reid (Red Hugh's).

Front L-R: Martin McHugh (Kilcar), Joyce McMullan (Four Masters'), Manus Boyle (Killybegs), Tony Boyle (Dungloe), Anthony Molloy (Ardara), Martin Gavigan (Ardara), James McHugh (Kilcar).



Barry Cunningham breaks through the Dublin defence in the 1992 All Ireland Senior final, as Anthony Molloy and Martin Gavigan look on. Others in photo are from left: Declan Bonner, Paul Bealin (Dublin) Tommy Carr (Dublin) and Paul Clarke (Dublin).



The proudest day in the history of the Ardara G.A.A Club – September 20, 1992.



**Ardara's Heroes.
Martin Gavigan, Anthony Harkin and Anthony Molloy.**



**1997 County G.A.A Banquet.
Back L-R: Columba Diver, Edward Molloy, John McConnell, Mary McHugh.
Seated: Jack Boothman (Úachtarán C.L.G), Pádraig S. Mac a'Ghoill, Seosamh
MacDonncha (Úachtarán tófa C.L.G).**



The 1998 Hall of Fame winners at the Annual Dinner Dance.
Back L-R: James McHugh (Secretary, Anthony Molloy (Chairman), Anthony Harkin (Special Guest), John McConnell (County Chairman), Stephen McCahill (Treasurer).
Seated: Michael Boyle, Billy Maxwell, Charlie Bennett, Jackie Gallagher (On behalf of her father, Thady) and Danny McGill.



Brendan Boyle plays for Ireland.
Taken at the official launch in Belfast of the 1999 Under-17 International Rules tour to Australia.
From left: John Boyle, James McHugh, Brendan Boyle, Anthony Molloy, Margaret Boyle and John McConnell.



**St. Mary's N.S. – County Cumann na mBunscol and I.N.T.O Seven a side winners in 2000.
Carmel Boyle and Michelle Gallagher, who were selected to play in the mini sevens in
Croke Park pose with Colm Cannon (Headmaster) Raphael Meehan (Teacher)**



**Ardara G.A.A Club- A.I.B Donegal Club of the Year 2000.
Taken at the Awards ceremony in Croke Park.
From left: James McHugh (Secretary), Stephen McCahill (Treasurer) and Columba Diver
(Development Officer).**



"Put it back in quick Johnny D. !"
Johnny D. performs quick surgery on Shaun Whyte's dislocated shoulder in 2000 as Frank McGhee (left) and Brendan Boyle look on.



2000 Senior Championship 1st Round in Pearse Memorial Park.
Brendan Boyle, Kevin Byrne and Shaun Whyte battle with the St. Naul's boys.



The faces tell the story.
MacCumhaill Park- September 17th 2000.





**From one Ardara man to another.
County Chairman, John McConnell presents Eamon Doherty with the Dr. Maguire Cup
after Ardara defeated St. Eunan's in the 2000 County final.**



Ardara Senior Team 2000 – Donegal County Champions.

Back L-R: Anthony Harkin, Thomas Boyle, Patrick Gallagher, Ted Breslin, Aodh Brennan, Francis Diver, Jonathan Boyle, Conor Curran, Fergal Heena, Matthew Whyte, Brendan Boyle, Kevin Byrne, Jimmy Brennan, Anthony Molloy, Johnny D. Earley.
Front L-R: Joseph Doherty, Stephen Gildea, Adrian Cunningham, Darren Maguire, Don Earley, Lee Watters, Peter McHugh, Michael Doherty, Eamon Doherty, Patrick McHugh, Martin McShane, Pat Shovlin, Damian Diver, Shaun Whyte, Conal Doherty, James McHugh. Mascots: Derek Bennett and Kevin Molloy.



The Doherty Family with the Democrat Cup – Fintra, Nov. 19, 2000.
From Left: Michael, Eamon, Eddie, Evelyn, Conal and Joseph.



**The Wise Old Men of Ardara football enjoy the 2000 Dinner Dance.
From left: Eddie Doherty, Vincent McConnell, Frankie Brennan and Josie Brennan.**



The Senior Team, Management and Club Officers at the 2000 Dinner Dance.





Ardara Under-14 Team 2001 – Donegal County Champions.

Back L-R: Larry Gallagher, Stephen Boyle, Hugh Shovlin, Shaun Gallagher, Declan Gallagher, Joseph Gallagher, Kieran Gallagher, Declan Gavigan, Michael Herron, Conal Gildea, Jonathan Shovlin, Michael Breslin.

Front L-R: John McConnell, Fergus McBrearty, Dominic Breslin, Pete-so Cannon, Oisín O'Donnell, Tomás Maguire, Derek Gallagher, Martin Shovlin, John Francis McHugh, Noel Gallagher, Kieran Breslin, J.J. Shovlin and John Martin Byrne.

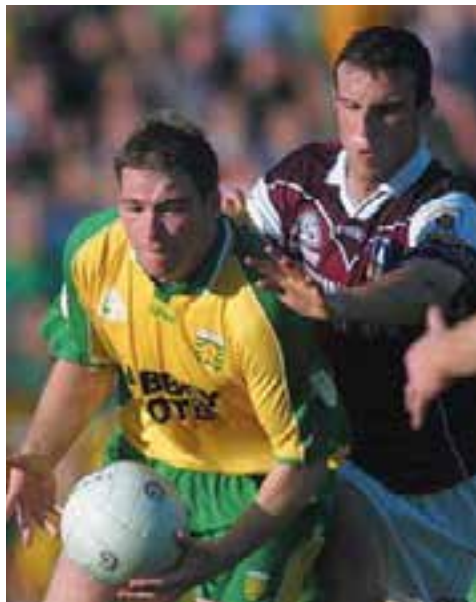


Ardara Under-14 Girls – 2002 County Champions

Back L-R: James McBrearty (Coach), Louise McKenna, Stephanie Bennett, Meabh O'Donnell, Michelle Gallagher, Catherine Heraghty, Bernie McCabe, Carmel Boyle, Dena Sweeney, Aisling Corcoran, Michelle Maguire, Aoife Kilbane, Jimmy Boyle (Coach). Front L-R: Shauna Sweeney, Jacinta Feeney, Mairead Slowey, Grainne Byrne, Kelly Bennett, Martina McHugh (Captain), Carol Breslin, Catriona Feeney, Aoife Watters, Lorraine Boyle, Leanne Sweeney.



Eamon Doherty celebrates Donegal's win over Meath in the 2002 All Ireland fourth round qualifier.



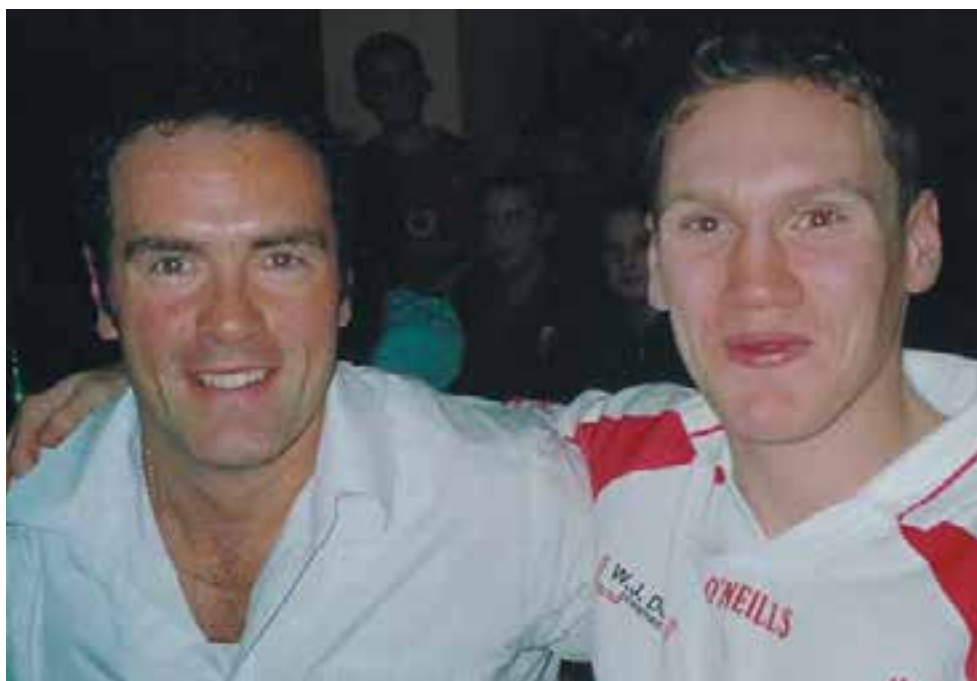
Brendan Boyle gets the ball away from Galway's Joe Bergin in the 2003 All Ireland quarter-final in Castlebar.



Damian Diver releases the ball in the 2003 All Ireland qualifier against Tipperary in Croke Park.



The Oldest Rivals - Ardara V's Naomh Conaill.
2003 Senior Championship 1st Rd in Pearse Memorial Park.
From left: Patrick Roarty, Johnny McLoone, Kenneth Doherty, Aodh Brennan,
Francis Diver, Stephen McHugh.



New Friends, but for only a short time.
12 Dec. 2003 -Damian Diver and Cormac McAnallen meet at the Ardara Minor Board
Awards night.



**The Ardara Girls take home the West County Cup.
All Ireland winners, Mairead Gallagher, Charlene McHugh and Aoife McDonnell are
pictured with the proud Ardara Ladies' managers, James McBrearty and Jimmy Boyle.**



**The legendary Mick O'Dwyer congratulates Charlene McHugh
at the 2003 Ladies All Ireland Banquet.**