

Tuarasail na Rúnaí Coiste Chontae Fhearmanach 2012

A chairde gaeil go léir,

Fellow Gaels, I wish to welcome you all here today to the Community Centre, Newtownbutler for our County Convention of 2012 in this historic year for the Newtownbutler First Fermanagh's Club as they were formed on Sunday the 13th November 1887-125 years ago. We congratulate them for their 125 years of unbroken service and commitment to Gaelic Games and Gaelic culture and their hosting of today's Convention clearly demonstrates their commitment to another 125 years.

As the end of 2012 fast approaches it is my pleasant duty as Secretary of Fermanagh County Board to present my report for adoption at Annual Convention tonight detailing the activities that took place under the control of the Board during the year - a year that saw both our senior footballers and senior hurlers reach National League finals and promotion for 2013 with our senior hurlers also reaching the Lory Meagher Cup final.

On the domestic club scene, Tempo Maguires won the double - senior Championship and league and by winning the Senior Championship bridged a 39 year gap. Lisbellaw St Patricks won an Ulster Hurling Intermediate title and reached the All Ireland Intermediate Club Championship Quarter-Final.

On the Club development front, Derrygonnelly Harps officially opened their refurbished playing field and new dressing room complex which is a fine example of club and community voluntary effort in action.

Organisation

Our County Committee, the governing body of the Association met on 10 occasions in 2012, with an extra meeting in November dedicated to financial issues - an issue which I shall touch on later in my report. Twelve of our twenty-two clubs recorded 100% attendance this year with a further five clubs missing only one meeting. Only one club had a poor attendance record this year as can be seen from the data given in the attendance record included in the Convention booklet. Thanks are again due to Enniskillen Gaels club for hosting most of our County Committee meetings.

Between County Committee meetings, Management Committee met on 11 occasions up to the time of going to press. Again attendance by County Officers was generally excellent. Thanks to all the County Board Officers who put in so much time and effort on behalf of the Association.

Both our County Committee and County Management Committee structures have been in place for as long as I can remember. The challenge facing us as an organisation is 'are we being best served by these structures?' Have we enough cohesion and commitment within these bodies to meet the challenges going forward. Our strategic document 'Forbairt Fhearmanach' ends in 2012 and in early 2013 we will all be given the opportunity to play our part in planning the next five

years. This will be an opportunity to review the work of both our County Committee and County Management structures.

In co-operation with Ulster Council the now annual Club Maith seminar for Club Officers was held in St. Michael's College in February and was well attended.

At a meeting of the National Rules Advisory Committee on 16th August the following was decided - 'It was agreed to request Ard Chomhairle to advise counties that Divisional Sub-Committees can be formed through election but that other Sub-Committees should be appointed.' This will impact on the formation of three of our Sub-Committees in 2013, Youth, Hurling and Referees.

All of our Sub-Committees report to County Committee meetings and bearing in mind that each has its own report attached I only intend as in previous years, to comment as briefly as possible on the work of each.

Competitions Control Committee

This committee, chaired by Greg Kelly and administered by secretary Hugh Kelly, Youth secretary Finola Owens and Hurling secretary Jacinta Teague, again this year has ensured that our fixtures programme was completed in reasonable time.

The perennial issues of the national and provincial fixtures programmes, the county teams' training schedules, dual players and social and personal events were all to the fore again this year. In an attempt to address these issues and to deliver a consistent playing programme a number of midweek and double weekend rounds of fixtures were introduced at senior football level this year. These largely were a success even though there were some grievances expressed about the scheduling of fixtures during the week. The playing of our senior championship final on a Saturday night under lights also provoked discussion - this is a fixture that needs attention as the majority of delegates to County Committee expressed a preference that the county senior football final be scheduled on a Sunday afternoon.

With regard to discipline, CCC again had to meet on several occasions to deal with referees' reports. Their report informs us that in 2012 there was a marked deterioration in discipline compared to 2011 at adult level, with an overall total of 181 dismissals compared to 159 last year. At youth level, the total number of dismissals remained the same as last year – (Category 1 Infractions (double yellow) increased from 22 to 35 (59% increase), straight reds decreased from 31 to 18 (38% decrease).

CCC this year have also the responsibility of considering all transfer applications under the rule in relation to 'Transfers within the County (Rule 6.5 TO 2012)' and any aggrieved party has the right to appeal against a decision on a transfer to the County Hearings Committee.

The Hearings Committee, again this year under new Chairman Pat McGurn and Secretary Gerry O Hara, had the onerous task of adjudicating on hearing requests, at times having to arrange

meetings at short notice and at weekends. I express my thanks to the members of our Hearings Committee for carrying out their duties in a fair and impartial manner whenever called upon.

CCC report is included

County Planning and Physical Development Committee

This committee, under the Chairmanship of Jim Tummon and administered by Secretary Brian Armitage, has got through much work during the year with emphasis on physical development at county and club level, as well as information and assistance to clubs regarding grants, club deeds, safety inspections of club grounds and stewarding of matches and event control.

Training courses for the continuous training of match day stewards were held which means we now have a sufficient number of persons trained with the skills required for stewarding at matches and other functions held in our facilities.

We are extremely grateful to all those stewards who facilitate the safe and smooth running of our major fixtures throughout the playing season; a special word of thanks is due to Jim Tummon and Shane Connolly, Enniskillen and Michael Duffy & Liam Donnelly, Irvinestown, for their organisation and leadership of the county's stewards.

Jim Tummon stands down today from the position of Development Officer and I thank Jim for his work over the past 5 years. He is currently the County Safety Officer and no doubt we will see him continue in that role.

County Planning and Physical Development Committee report is included

Coaching and Games Development Committee

Again this year the well established coaching programmes were delivered across a wide range of areas. This is well detailed in the report from our Games Development Manager, Peter McGinnity. I want to acknowledge the work and thank all coaches, all who were employed throughout the year and those who worked in a voluntary capacity in coaching. I thank Deirdre Donnelly (Coaching Officer) in her first year in post for her work and commitment. In recent weeks the Coaching Committee has issued a questionnaire to all clubs to obtain their views on going forward in the years ahead and in particular to prepare for the County Strategic Plan. I appeal to all clubs to respond in a constructive way and put forward ideas as to how all our coaching programmes can be improved upon and delivered. As in previous years, a comprehensive report detailing his own work and coaching was presented by the GDM, Peter McGinnity at all monthly Youth meetings and at Youth Convention.

Coaching Officers and GDM report is included.

Cultural/ Irish Language and Heritage Committees.

Our Scor Sinsear competition held in Tempo this year, had 12 clubs participating with the winners going on to represent the county in the Ulster competition.

Scor Na nOg for 2012, with a very competitive and entertaining final hosted by Derrygonnelly Harps, was recently completed and I acknowledge all involved for organising a successful final.

Fermanagh District Council again awarded bursaries to the Gaeltacht. These have been awarded but have not yet been distributed. Hopefully this event will take place early in 2013. Our thanks to Tommy McLaughlin (FDC) for his co-operation with this initiative and to Fermanagh District Council for their continuous support.

Under the direction of Tom Cullen and Greg Kelly, Irish Language courses were again promoted at Downings Co Donegal. The Irish Language Class for beginners, supported by Fermanagh District Council and held locally in Enniskillen again took place this year. I thank those clubs who took up their annual St Patricks Day collection which goes towards the scholarship programme, and this year a number of young people benefited from allocations from our own funds financed from these collections.

Cultural/ Irish Language and Heritage Committee report is included.

Communication and Marketing Committee.

This committee under the direction of County PRO Johnny McManus and Secretary Niall Cullen contributed largely to the workings of PR activity. This year we did not produce an information and fixture booklet but concentrated our efforts on the development of our county website which was facilitated by Laird Design, Omagh.

Throughout our Club Championship, programmes were produced in house and the programme for our County Final day was again well supported by all clubs involved. During all our competitions, updated results and league tables were presented on a weekly basis.

Niall Cullen provided a support service to all clubs in respect of the Club Registration System and email.

The IT service for competition management was provided by Serva-Sport, providing a direct link to our website.

Both Facebook and Twitter are new tools of communication in this modern age of 'social media'. Both, if used properly, provide a whole new experience in getting information to our members. However like all new media inventions, they can be abused by unscrupulous individuals whose objective it is to indulge in abusing individuals and posting erroneous comments.

Communication and Marketing Committee report is included

Youth Committee

Our Bord na n-Óg, under the Chairmanship of Ferghal O'Connor and Secretary Finola Owens, again worked this year in conjunction with the CCC to deliver a programme of meaningful games across all underage grades. I compliment the Youth Committee for collating data on the number of players present on teams in all clubs from U-12 to U-16. This will be very beneficial in planning the future direction of our competitions and provides a valuable insight into the number of youth players available to our clubs and county.

Youth Committee report is included.

Referees Administration Committee

This committee under the Chairmanship of John Mohan, Secretary Harry Traynor carried out a lot of work in respect of referee recruitment, training and match preparation.

I acknowledge the work of our two Appointment Officers, John Mohan (adult) and Noel Davis (youth), in respect of their work regarding the appointment of referees to all games.

Congratulations to those chosen to take charge of our various County Finals and thanks to all who took charge of all other games and to those who acted as linesmen and umpires.

Our four intercounty referees - Martin Higgins, Ferghal Cleary, Niall Cullen and Enda McBrien officiated at many matches across the country, with Martin Higgins recently refereeing at the Asian games.

Referees Committee report is included.

Hurling Committee

The Hurling Committee under Chairman Peter Bogue, assisted by Secretary Jacinta Teague met on a number of occasions to deliver a hurling programme across our three clubs and at youth and adult level. While our senior hurling club teams get a sufficient number of games due to their participation in other counties leagues and in the newly formed Tain leagues, the same cannot be said for youth teams. This year saw the involvement of an appointed Croke Park mentor to help develop a better hurling games programme across youth activity. He outlined his programme at our November county committee meeting and time will tell if clubs fully engage with this initiative.

Hurling Committee report is included.

Lissan Committee

The Lissan Committee dealt with issues regarding the day to day running of the facilities at Lissan. The County Committee approved a recommendation from the Lissan Committee to take forward a planning application for the installation of a 'Wind Power Turbine'. This project is on-going.

With regard to the day to day running of Lissan, I want to again thank Joe McGurn and Seamus McMahan.

County Finance

The regular and vitally important work of this Committee, led by County Treasurer Hugh Crudden and Secretary Patricia Durnien, held a number of meetings in order to implement the Finance Committee's work plans. This included collecting admission money at National League matches and Club finals and arranging and collecting sponsorship for our internal competitions.

As in previous years we are expected to deliver on payment of monies that are vitally important to the running of our Association, these being - Player Injury Scheme subscription, Public Liability and Property insurance, membership registration, club levy and referee fees.

The registration of teams with the 'Players Injury Scheme' is now into its third year as an online facility using the Management Information System (MIS) which allows Clubs to directly register their participating teams with Croke Park, and then, on receipt of the invoice, submit the appropriate subscriptions. However there continues to be a number of issues that require some attention - the payment of the subscription on registration as claims will not be met until these are paid.

The registration of membership on the Serva Sport System has improved from last year with all clubs now detailing their members within the following categories - (registered for 2012, unregistered for 2012, full members, youth members, honorary members, social members, adult player, u21 player, minor player, juvenile player.) However the payment of registration fees continues to present problems, noting that at the time of writing this report, we still have registration fees to collect in respect of 2012 membership.

In terms of financial support we are grateful to all our sponsors and I appeal to all GAA people in the county to support them through difficult times ahead. Thanks to Patsy Tracey of Tracey Concrete, for his continuing valued support to our County Senior Football Team. Tracey Concrete was also the main sponsors to the recent fundraising weekend.

Our thanks also to O'Neill Sports for their valued sponsorship in respect of gear to all our county teams. Again this year O'Neill's Sportswear has supplied playing gear to all our teams. I want to acknowledge and thank Kieran Kennedy and all his staff for their assistance.

I also want to acknowledge the sponsorship provided to our County Minor and U-21 football teams by the Pat Blake Group and to our hurling teams from the Bite Group and Peter Bogue Motors this year.

Monaghan Bros Lisnaskea provided a kit van our senior football team and to our coaching staff for use during the summer camps. A number of other local businesses provided sponsorship to support our competitions and their details were published this year on our website.

I would like to thank Club Eirne for their fundraising efforts this year in which they again provided a significant contribution to support our senior football team. I want to thank all members of the Club Eirne committee for their work throughout the year.

Gate receipts from all our club competitions now form an important contribution to our overall budget. None of this would be possible without the dedication of our members of the finance committee who ensure that gates for all championship games and finals were covered.

This year we have finalised some outstanding revenue issues and this will impact on the way we carry out all our administration in respect of all activity. We have also introduced the Croke Park financial management software package and I thank Ferghal Ormsby (Croke Park) for his assistance to date. This is a very valuable tool to help with the management of our finances. It will be important that in the coming year we put in place persons with the required skills to carry out these tasks.

This was the first time in a number of years that we held a Fermanagh GAA fundraising draw. Tickets were priced at £10 or three for £20 with total prizes set at £3000. Our target was to raise in the region of £30k to £40k but our accounts will show that we raised a much lesser amount. This was disappointing but I thank all those individuals and clubs who made the effort to sell tickets.

Our Chairman, Patsy Dolan has put forward firm proposals for fundraising and this was debated at our November County Committee meeting. It is vital that we make a decision regarding the way forward with this as soon as possible.

Over the weekend of the 22nd – 25th November a fundraising weekend was organised with the bulk of the planning, organising and work at the events being undertaken by members of the senior football team management and players. Members of our finance committee and a number of trained stewards along with other helpers all came together to work at the various events from Thursday to Sunday to ensure that all went according to plan.

A Finance Committee report from our Treasurer is included with the Accounts and Balance Sheet which will be presented to Convention by our accountant Des Crudden, to whom we are grateful for his continuing advice and support.

County Teams

Senior Football

In the two opening games of the McKenna cup we recorded wins - Fermanagh (2.11) Antrim (1.06), Fermanagh (2.13) Queens University(0.10).In the third game we lost to Tyrone in Omagh Tyrone (0.13) Fermanagh to (1.07).

In the National League Division 4, we had very successful campaign winning seven of our eight games, (London 0-9 Fermanagh 2-15, Fermanagh 0-11 Clare 0-8, Kilkenny 0-4 Fermanagh 9-23, Fermanagh 0-11 Wicklow 0-9, Waterford 0-12 Fermanagh 0-15, Carlow 0-8 Fermanagh 1-16, Fermanagh 2-15 Leitrim 0-7) and one draw against Limerick (Fermanagh 0-13 Limerick 1-10). In the National League final played in Croke Park, we lost to Wicklow on a score line of Fermanagh 1-11, Wicklow 2-16.

In the Ulster Championship we had a home game this year against Down. The sending-off of one of our players in the first half meant that we faced an uphill battle for the remainder of the game and eventually lost out on a score line of Fermanagh 1-08, Down 2-10.

In the Qualifiers we had a home game against Cavan. In this game we had the upper hand for long periods but were hit by killer goals in a ten minute spell in the second half and Cavan ran out winners on a score line of Fermanagh 0-15 Cavan 3-13.

I thank all players who represented Fermanagh in 2012 for their efforts throughout the Inter-County season.

I thank Peter Canavan and all his backroom team for all their efforts in their first year in charge. His main objective in 2012 was to gain promotion from NFL Div 4 and this was achieved. We all look forward to continuing success in the forthcoming NFL Div 3 campaign and the Ulster Championship in 2013.

U-21 Football

Team Manager Mark Henry assisted by Brian Tracey set about preparing the team thoroughly at the start of the year with the panel participating in a number of planned challenge games. In the first round of the Ulster Championship we were drawn at home against Tyrone. This game was played under lights in Brewster Park and Tyrone gain the upper hand right from the start and ran out winners on a score line of Fermanagh (1.03) Tyrone (1.14)

Mark has stood down from the position of U-21 Team Manager and we thank him and his backroom team for their work and commitment over the past year.

Malachy Cullen has been appointed manager for the coming season and we wish him every success in the year ahead.

Minor Football

The Minors football team, under manager Simon Bradley competed in group B of the Ulster Minor League against Donegal, Antrim, Derry. We recorded a win over Antrim but lost to the much stronger sides in Donegal, Derry and Tyrone but in these games we were weakened by the absence of players who were involved in the St Michaels McRory team.

In the Ulster Championship against Down in a competitive and entertaining game, we lost by three points. Fermanagh (1.08) Down (1.11).

Simon Bradley is again in charge for 2013 and we wish him and his back room team every success.

Senior Hurling

Our Senior hurlers, managed by Seamus McCusker assisted by John Duffy in their first year put in a very good years work. They competed in the National Hurling League Div 3B, and recorded wins over Warwickshire and Leitrim. Unfortunately Longford did not field which resulted in only two competitive games in the NHL. We qualified to play Warwickshire in the NHL 3B final which we won on a score line of Fermanagh 2-15 Warwickshire 2-5.

In the Lory Meagher Cup, we recorded wins over Leitrim, Warwickshire and Longford and this set up a final pairing against Tyrone which was played in Croke Park. In a very entertaining and competitive game which went to extra time Tyrone just won by the narrowest of margins.

We congratulate the team on winning the NHL title and on their fine performance in the Lory Meagher Cup Final

Seamus McCusker & John Duffy are again in charge for 2013 and we wish them and their back room team every success.

U-21 Hurling

Rory O Donnell was in charge of the County U-21 Hurlers. We competed in the Ulster U-21 Hurling Shield along with Tyrone and Donegal where we got a bye to the final in which the team recorded an excellent victory over Tyrone on a score line of Fermanagh (0.12), Tyrone (0.10) This victory qualified the team for an All Ireland U-21 C game against Roscommon in which Roscommon emerged winners.

Minor Hurling

Rory O Donnell also took charge of the County minors in 2012. He worked hard at preparing the team for the Ulster Minor Hurling League and Championship. In the League they played Monaghan, Tyrone and Cavan. - results –Tyrone (4.09) Fermanagh (3.11), Fermanagh (4.05) Monaghan (1.14), Fermanagh (1.10) Cavan (1.09). In the Ulster Minor Shield competition the team won their opening game, semi-final against Tyrone –Fermanagh (3.04) Tyrone (1.08) In the final they lost to Monaghan on a score line Fermanagh (2.06), Monaghan (2.11)

Rory O Donnell has stood down from the position of both minor and U-21 Team Hurling Manager to take a break after a number of years involved at all levels. I thank Rory for his commitment and hard work during his involvement with all teams and thank him for his courtesy he showed in his day to day contacts when dealing with team affairs.

Games Activity - Club Competitions

2012 proved to be another eventful year on the playing fields across Fermanagh. The Senior Club Championships continue to be the showcase competitions but we also remain committed to servicing the needs of all our club players by providing competition at various levels both in youth and adult level. Full details of all fixtures and results are included in the comprehensive report from Hugh Kelly (CCC) so I need only to congratulate all winning teams at youth and adult level.

In our Senior Championship final, Tempo bridged a 39 year gap when they overcame Lisnaskea to win their 4th title. Tempo competed in the Ulster Club Championship against the Antrim champions St Galls, in Brewster Park, and on the day lost on a score line of 1-14 to 2.05 In the Intermediate Championship Teemore overcame the challenge of Irvinestown. In the Ulster Intermediate competition, they lost out against Down champions, Warrenpoint in Pairc Esler Newry, Teemore (0.11) Warrenpoint (5.08)

In the Reserve championships, Derrygonnelly won the Reserve 'A' Championship with the Reserve 'B' going to Teemore.

Lisbellaw overcame Lisnaskea to win their 8th consecutive Senior Hurling title. They went on to compete in the Ulster Intermediate Hurling Competition where they had a fine win over Donegal Champions Burt – Lisbellaw (5.11) Burt (4.07). In the Ulster semi-final they defeated the Armagh champions Cuchullains - Lisbellaw (3.14) Cuchullains (1.09). In the Ulster final Lisbellaw were crowned worthy winners of the Ulster Hurling Intermediate title when they recorded a well deserved win over the Antrim Champions St Bridgids Cloughmills. This win qualified them to play in the All Ireland quarter final where they had to travel to Ruislip London to play St Gabriels. St Gabriels won on a scoreline of 4.17 to 2.07. We congratulate Lisbellaw on their Ulster Intermediate title.

Lisnaskea represented the County in the Ulster Junior Hurling Championship, but went out in the first round to the Down champions, Bredagh.

Our senior leagues were very competitive with this year a top four semi-final was retained.

The Div 1 title was won by Tempo where they defeated Lisnaskea in the final.

The Division 2 title went to Kinawley, defeating Maguiresbridge, whilst Irvinestown lifted the Division 3 trophy winning over Belnaleck. In Erne Cup Division 1, Devenish took the title whilst Erne Cup 2 and 3 winners were Teemore and Maguiresbridge respectively.

Intercounty transfer activity continued throughout the year with 41 players transferring out of clubs. In addition to these transfers, 15 players applied for sanctions to play overseas in USA, Canada and Australia. I do not know how many of these returned home. 22 players transferred into clubs in the county.

Communications

This year saw the re launch of our website and this also introduced the mediums of Facebook and Twitter to Fermanagh GAA. A number of our championship games were communicated via Twitter.

Our activities were well covered by the local papers - the Fermanagh Herald, the Impartial Reporter, and the Fermanagh News.

Most games in the Ulster Championship were televised live by BBC, RTE and TV3. TG4 continues to give excellent coverage to all our codes and the continued coverage of the club championship scene is very welcome.

Our games were also well covered by local radio stations. Live updates and a results service was provided by Q101 and Q101 provided live coverage of a number of our Senior Club championship games. Thanks to Paddy Hunter and George Beacom.

Again in respect of all our communication activity our appreciation goes to our PRO Johnny McManus for his work throughout the year.

Strategic Planning

Work outlined in our own strategic document 'Forbairt Fhearmanach' continues and a report detailing the progress to date is included in the Convention Book. Our plan was for the period 2007 to 2012, we now must set in place activities that will deliver another five year plan.

We have also obligations to deliver on our Associations two other strategic documents - 'The GAA Strategic Vision and Action Plan 2009-2015 and at Provincial Level 'Ulster GAA Strategic Vision and Action Plan 2009-2015.

Child Protection

Fearghal O Connor was appointed as the County Children's Officer with his main role to ensure that everyone is fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in respect of the very important issue of child protection.

Our Association sums up our commitment to this issue as 'The Gaelic Athletic Association is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all young people who wish to participate in our Gaelic Games and activities. We will take all practicable steps to protect them from discernible forms of abuse, from harm, discrimination or degrading treatment and shall respect their rights, wishes and feelings.'

Fearghal has prepared a report and presentation on his work to-date which will be delivered to Convention along with the 'Fermanagh GAA Children's Officer Implementation plan - 2012-2014.'

GAA Social Initiative.

There was no formal activity organised at county level but a number of clubs included the Social Initiative theme in events they organised. There is no limit to the types of things clubs can organise for encouraging older people back to the centre of club life.

I would encourage all clubs to contribute to this very worthwhile project.

Alcohol & Substance Abuse Prevention (ASAP)

Patricia Durnien again took on the role as ASAP officer and we thank her for her work in this important area. To date not all our clubs have appointed an ASAP Officer and I would encourage those clubs to appoint a club ASAP officer who will be responsible for promoting and implementing the club drug and alcohol policies as well as organising prevention and education initiatives. They will be supported in delivering on these issues by our own ASAP Officer and the National ASAP Officer Colin Regan.

Issues

Finance

The economic climate has proved difficult for all aspects of our work in 2012. The county and clubs are undergoing pressures in the same way that most organisations are, be they commercial, sporting or charitable, the common general source of which is the economic and financial state of the country and has resulted in a significant reduction in dispersible monies available to the county. This has led to direct issues arising from the management of our own financial affairs which have to be addressed. The overall investment in our teams, coaching and other areas of responsibility have to be critically examined with clearly defined parameters in respect of income and spending put in place both by county and clubs.

Emigration/Falling Club playing numbers.

Clubs are losing players at an alarming rate, which directly affects a club's ability to field teams, to properly run the club, and to play its full part in community life. Last year 33 players transferred to clubs outside the county and this year 41 players, a total of 74 in two years. In the same period 32 players transferred into clubs resulting in a net loss of 42 players, the equivalent of two club teams. These numbers in themselves do not tell the full story as I am informed that a number of players, particularly second team players, are leaving but seemly not joining other clubs when they go abroad, either because there is no GAA club in the part of the world they are moving to or they just drop out of our games.

One of our clubs had to withdraw from our Erne Cup (reserve competition) after Round 1 due to falling numbers. Falling numbers will be a challenge to both administrators and club team managers and how best we can organise competitions to accommodate meaningful games.

Future of our Schools

The potential closure of small primary schools and some of our second level schools is perceived as the latest threat to rural communities and this will impact on our clubs. I congratulate the community effort involved in highlighting the issues in relation to St Aidans Derrylin and St Marys Brollagh. They have brought forward new ideas that if taken on board by our political masters, will help retain a second level presence in rural communities. With falling numbers our primary schools may have to be integrated and this may result in some clubs for the first time not having a primary school presence in their area. If this happens it is important that we are vigilant when adjudicating on club membership and 'First Club' issues.

Social Media

In his report to Congress in April of this year the Ard Stiuioir wrote 'Social Media Policies and Guidelines were developed to help educate and guide those who use social media in an official GAA capacity. In our effort to actively engage our audiences online, we must address issues that arise from this. The easy availability of these channels of communication, through which members can offer opinions – positive and negative – on the Association, is a new reality that a public sporting body such as ours must come to terms with.'

Social media, just as when radio and television was first invented, can be used as a channel for good or in the wrong hands can be manipulated and abused. Over recent months tragic events involving young people came to the attention of national news - events blamed on bullying and abuse to the individual through the mediums of Facebook, Twitter etc. Within our own organisation, some individuals who always want to remain anonymous, believe that they have the right to post comments criticising decisions, abusing referees and players. I appeal to all our clubs to encourage members to act responsibly and follow the guidelines in the 'Social Media Policies and Guidelines.' Throughout the year there will be issues that clubs or members in clubs genuinely believe need to be addressed. These can be raised at meetings by club delegates or sent in writing to the relevant person by the club secretary.

Tributes

In hurling Ryan Bogue, John Duffy and Ciaran Corrigan (Lisbellaw) were honoured with Lory Meagher awards.

I want to take this opportunity to congratulate St Michaels College, Enniskillen on winning the McRory Cup.

At this year's Convention we will be electing a new person to the post of County Development Officer, replacing the present Officer Jim Tummon, who have now completed his five-year term. I thank Jim for his commitment and work over these past five years.

At our County Committee meetings, all clubs record votes of sympathy to families in their area who have been bereaved. At our Convention Mass earlier this evening prayers were offered for all our members who have died during the last year.

In September we were shocked and saddened by the tragic death of Lisnaskea and County senior football player Brian Og Maguire. We also saw the passing of former County & Tempo player and committed county supporter Dessie Campbell (Tempo/Fintona) and former County & Coa player Gerry Donnelly (Coa/Trillick).

Go ndeana Dia trócaire ar a anamneacha go léir.

Acknowledgements and Conclusion

I wish also to take the opportunity to thank all who worked for the good of Cumann Luthchleas Gael at all levels throughout the county during the past twelve months.

On the conclusion of my fourth year as Rúnaí na gContae I want to thank my fellow Officers on County Management Committee for their support.

Our County Chairman Patsy Dolan has completed a busy first year in the post and I thank him for his support and assistance throughout the year.

I have also worked closely with County Treasurer Hugh Crudden and Assistant Treasurer Patricia Durnien across a number of areas regarding finance, and I thank them for their co-operation and hard work in 2012.

I also appreciate the co-operation I have received from all other County Officers, Sub Committee officers and our representatives to National and Provincial Committees.

At this point I thank our GDM, Peter McGinnity for his contribution to administration work in respect of Coaching and Games.

I thank all club representatives on County Committee for their co-operation and contribution to the running of meetings and as ever, I wish to express my grateful appreciation to the Officers of all the clubs in Fermanagh for their support and co-operation in dealing with the Association's affairs during 2012.

Again this year I have worked closely on a daily basis with Comhairle Uladh and Croke Park. I thank Danny Murphy and his staff at Comhairle Uladh and Paraic Duffy and his staff at Croke Park for their expert advice and assistance.

Conclusion

Finally I wish all of you here today season's greetings and express the wish that we can all go forward together in unity in the New Year. Nollag Shona daoibh.

Tomás Ó Báuighill

(Rúnaí na gContae)