

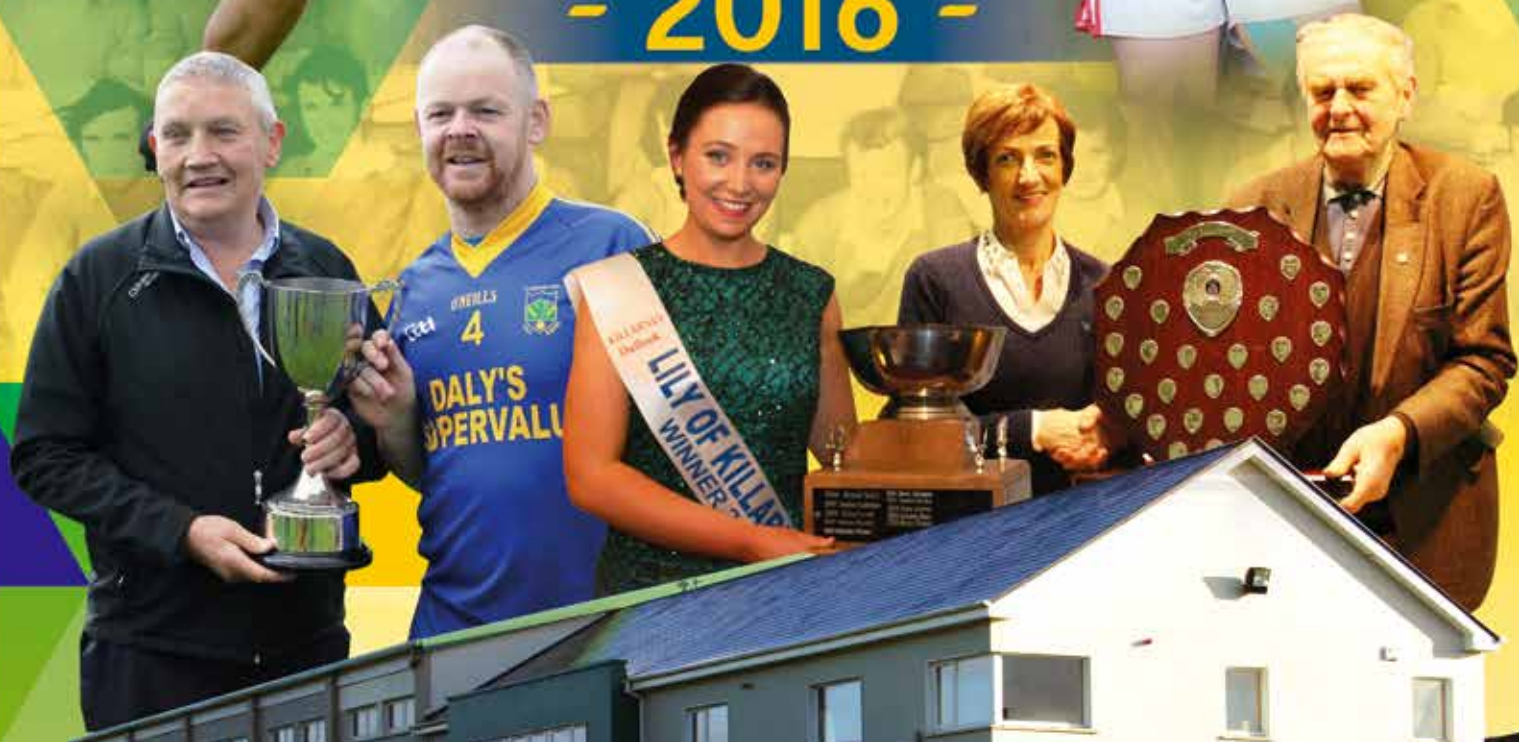


Cumann Spa



SPA REVIEW

- 2016 -



SPA GAA CLUB

KILLARNEY, CO. KERRY www.spagaa.com





Spa Chairman Gerard Mangan



I would like to extend a warm welcome to our readers at home and abroad to the 2016 edition of the SPA REVIEW. Last year we revived the Spa Review and it proved to be an outstanding success. Not alone is it an informative magazine to mark the outstanding achievements of our members in all aspects of life in Spa, it also has a PR and marketing exercise to it as well.

Coiste na nÓg had the very popular Hop Ball event which raised valuable income for the year ahead. The Golf Classic was a great success and the Lily of Killarney, now in its 44th year, is going from strength to strength. The 31 Card Drives are always very popular and the weekly club lotto are all vital cogs in the wheel. All those, coupled together, provide the income needed to progress the club into the future.

I would like to thank all those people involved in the progression of Spa GAA for their time and dedication, and I would encourage other members to get involved in the club activities, as there is always rooms for new ideas and new thinking.

I hope you enjoy this packed edition of the Spa Review. My thanks to the Review Committee who produced this fabulous publication, to Joanne O'Carroll of The Graphics Effect, Killarney for her expertise in the production and to KC Print for making the Spa Review possible. Bain taitneamh as.

So much material became available to the Review Committee that it made perfect sense to print the 2016 edition. As you read through this edition you will see the fruits of the hard-working committees that make Spa GAA a successful club.

Welcome from the Committee

The publication of an annual newsletter was suggested in the Spa 5 Year Plan when it was initially launched in 2011, and last year a committee of John Kelly, Donal Hickey, Anne Holland, Gerard Mangan and Deirdre O'Sullivan Darcy was formed.

The Review is also seen as an important means of communication within the club, as well as a publication that keeps Spa people living in other parts of Ireland, and overseas, informed about what's happening at home.

This new edition of the Spa Review was launched in 2016, covering some of the club's high points over the past number of years and the achievements of our members. The goal of the Review is to promote all areas of the Spa club, from the football teams to Scór, the social committees and grounds developments and juvenile sectors, as well as the history and the importance of the club and the role it plays in the wider community.

This latest edition, with the help of many contributors, gives an overview of all that has been happening in Spa during 2016, covering the club's successes and developments throughout the year. We hope you enjoy it!



Welcome from Committee - L-R Donal Hickey, John Kelly, Gerard Mangan, Anne Holland, Deirdre O'Sullivan Darcy



Mol An Óige Agus Tiocfaidh Siad

One of the initiatives which came about under the stewardship of Ivor Flynn as Chairman of Coiste na nÓg, was the setting up of a coaching committee to look at the direction of, and structure of coaching within our club. Over time thoughts turned to the youngest members of our club, and how their needs might best be served. It was decided that in order to keep up with modern day training philosophies, we needed to set up a football nursery. This ideal became a reality last October when one fine Saturday morning, Spa Gaa launched our ABC Nursery. This nursery caters for both boys and girls aged 3+ and affords them an opportunity to learn the fundamental movements and skills necessary to play Gaelic Football in a fun and safe environment.

What might seem to the casual observer as tots playing simple games, is in reality the beginning of what will hopefully be a long and successful football career with Spa Gaa. Casting the mind back to some of our more successful days as a club over the past few years and one immediately reminisces of us reaching the All Ireland Final in Croke Park, or more recently watching our young senior stars represent Kerry and win All Ireland medals. Glorious days such as these may seem very far removed from what is taking place each Saturday morning, but who knows what footballing journey our nursery stars will embark upon in the future.

As Shakespeare wrote, "To climb steep hills requires slow pace at first". Hopefully some of our nursery will one day too be handed the famous green and gold geansaí.

It truly is a sight to behold between the hours of 11.30 and 12.15 to come in and see the huge numbers of our future stars completing their training and furthering their skill set. Indeed it is one of the more rewarding age groups to work with as acquirement of skills is perhaps at a rate unparalleled at other ages, as the children often have little or no football experience arriving into us. Numbers are growing week after week as the word spreads of the great fun being had in our hall and new members are always welcome. We are very fortunate to have such a team of dedicated and talented coaches on hand to pass on the baton to the next generation and long may that last. They are too numerous to mention but suffice to say, as is the case with our coaches at all age levels, the club is indebted to these people who selflessly give up their time so freely to ensure the future flames of our great club have never burned so brightly.

Spa Gaa – The best is yet to come.

John O'Donoghue



Included in the photo are Leo O'Riordan, Ryan Fitzgerald, Sophie Moynihan, Connie O'Riordan and Dylan Fitzgerald



SPA U10 Boys

This year's U10 team enjoyed a good year of football. We had 21 players in total and between training and games we met a total of 40 times.

This year Spa took part in many blitzes including East Kerry Go Games in Fossa, County Go Games in John Mitchels, Milltown, Rathmore and Glenflesk Blitzes.

We also played Kilcummin and Firies in challenge matches, so in total we played 13 different clubs during the year which was great for the young lads .

We would like to thank everyone who helped us out during the year and it was great to get help from some of the senior players also.

Looking forward to 2017 hopefully we can recruit a few more players and we will try again to run a blitz in Spa also. Thanks and best wishes for the New Year.

Michael and Denis Doolan and Adrian McCarthy.



Team Talk with the U10 Boys



U12 Boys receiving their medals from Minor star Dara Moynihan - Included in photo are Ian Coffey, Christopher Healy, Aaron O Connor, Oran O'Neill, Evan O'Neill, Con Stack, David O'Sullivan, Oisín McCarthy, Eric Moriarty, Steven Wickham, Timmy Moynihan, Luke O'Neill, Rian O'Neill, Jack O'Sullivan, Donal Hickey, Oran Daly, Cormac Walsh, Cormac Coffey, Daniel Daly, Cathal Kelly, Johnathan O'Donoghue, Cian Russell, Emmett Spillane, Aidan Cronin, Joey McCarthy. These boys were the panel of players we used for both under 11 & under 12's. Jack O'Sullivan & Rian O'Neill being the only players over age for under 11's.

SPA U12 Boys

There was a panel of 22 in the Spa U12 boys (20 out of the 22 boys were under 11). The panel commenced indoor training in January 2016 facilitated by Donal O'Doherty which provided us with a varied skills training programme.

We were placed in division 6 in phase 1 of the county league. In this division we faced Ballyheigue, Duagh, Currow, Finuge and Rathmore. Unfortunately our young panel faced very strong opposition in this division, however as this competition progressed Spa ran a strong Finuge side to two points in the final match of phase 1 of the county league.

Due to our performance in phase 1 of the county league , the team were placed in division 8 in phase 2 of the county league. Spa faced Gneeveguilla, Ballylongford / Asdee, St Patricks Blennerville, Castleisland Desmonds and Kilcummin. Spa comprehensively won all their matches in phase 2 of the county league barring a narrow defeat against Gneeveguilla on a night when Spa were missing some key experienced players.

The team also played a number of challenge matches over the season including a good win over Macroom in the Castle Grounds and a competitive encounter with Galtee Rovers on the morning of the Munster Senior Football Final in Killarney.

The team were also invited to play in the Gerry Foley Invitational Blitz in Firies where the boys played brilliantly narrowly beaten by Rathmore and Kilcummin in the first two games followed by a good win over Legion in the final game.

Spa played in the East Kerry league where we had good results against Templehoe and Firies and narrowly beaten by Beaufort, Currow and Rathmore. At this stage of the season the coaching team could see a vast improvement in the team's skill level and confidence,

In October, the U12 Management team hosted a quiz and medal presentation ceremony for the parents and boys involved in the U12 panel during 2016. Dara Moynihan presented medals to the boys on the night. Money raised on the night went towards new footballs, training bibs, cones and various other training aids for 2017.

Many Thanks to the following people :

- Bernie Courtney for all her hard work and support during the year
- Ivor Flynn for providing new jerseys for the 2017 season
- Paul Casey for providing cheques on the day of the matches
- Donal O'Doherty for technical support during the indoor training
- Torc Hotel for their hospitality on the night of the quiz
- Dara Moynihan for presenting the medals to the boys on the night of the quiz.
- Thanks to the parents for providing cakes , tea and sandwiches when Galtee Rovers visited Spa in July.
- Also thanks to Patricia and Phildelma for washing the jerseys during the year.



Plenty “Hop Balls” at Special Coiste na nOg fundraising event

Over 250 people were in attendance at the Torc Hotel, on Friday 11th Nov 2016, for a novel Spa GAA Coiste Na nOg Club fundraiser, Hop Ball. All present enjoyed a fabulously entertaining night.

Proceedings got underway in a lively fashion, with former Kerry great Dara Ó’Cinnéide, an experienced presenter of Raidio na Gaeltachta and TV sports programmes, acting as anchor for the night.

Dara chatted with the club minors of the last few years who played for Kerry – Liam Kearney, Dan O’Donoghue, Mike Foley and Evan Cronin. Dara Moynihan was unavailable on the night. Youth has no fear of honesty and the lads provided great entertainment in telling of their experiences since winning All-Ireland medals with schools and county. Dara mixed the humour with the serious and got great commentary from the lads on what club, school and county participation mean to them. There were interesting insights into injury risks faced by younger players, which all agreed was something that merited more analysis.

The minors were immediately followed by All-Ireland winning club members from the 1960’s and 1970’s. This interaction was incredibly honest, with all participating on topical issues. Dara Ó’Cinnéide expertly judged the insightfulness and depth of contributions of all present – Michael Gleeson, Donie O’Sullivan and Paudie O’Mahoney.

Michael Gleeson talked about the value of community in a GAA club and entertained all present with an anecdote on his brief rugby career when studying in Dublin. Paudie recounted his record of not conceding a goal in an All-Ireland campaign.

Dara raised the growing influence of the GPA (Gaelic Players’ Association) in the game and Donie excellently responded with a well-considered argument about the privilege and the responsibility of being selected to play for your county and the risk that the existence of the GPA could lead to elitism within the playing GAA community of county versus club.



Special guests Brian Fenton, Dara Ó’Cinnéide and Ciarán Kilkenny

This provided plenty talking points for the final panel of Donnchadh Walsh and Darran O’Sullivan, of Kerry, and Brian Fenton and Ciaran Kilkenny, from Dublin.

Dara began with the final group by commenting to the Kerry lads about all the times Kerry people, including the players, used to graciously comment that it would be great to see Dublin win an All-Ireland. He asked if Donnchadh and Darran still felt this way.

Fenton and Kilkenny gave plenty of insights into playing on the Dublin team. Dara questioned all on the threat of Australian Rules football and the attraction it presents for young Gaelic footballers. Kilkenny recounted his experience of spending time in Australia playing Australian Rules professionally and how he decided quite quickly it wasn’t for him.

He said the appeal of winning All-Irelands with Dublin and the prospect of success with his club proved too alluring. The floor was opened to Q&A and young and old alike had no shortage of questions and comments. All participants stayed around to meet everyone afterwards for photos and introductions.

Jim Gleeson, who acted as MC on the night, deserves special acknowledgement for the excellent introductions he gave all participants, which was well researched and excellently delivered.

The organising committee was led by Coiste na nOg Chairman Ivor Flynn and included Michael ‘Stam’O’Donoghue, Andrew Garnett and Tadhg Hickey. The main sponsor of the night was Simply Suits while the Torc Hotel also provided outstanding support, as always.

Thanks to all who participated on the night and gave so freely and generously of their time for this fundraiser which raised over €4,000 for the underage club.

Ivor, Michael, Andrew agus Tadhg



The panel that took part in Hop Ball: Front L-R Mike O’Donoghue, Donnchadh Walsh, Darran O’Sullivan, Dara Ó’Cinnéide, Donie O’Sullivan, Ciarán Kilkenny, Evan Cronin. Back L-R Liam Kearney, Tadhg Hickey, Andrew Garnett, Paudie O’Mahoney, Mick Gleeson, Brian Fenton, Dan O’Donoghue, Ivor Flynn & Michael Foley



Spa U14 team and management

The Road to Féile 2016

Included in photo are Robert Cremin, Neily Kerins, Diarmuid Cahill, Matt McAuliffe, Josh Moore, Timmy Moynihan, Hugh Murhill, Jack O'Connell, Michael O'Donoghue, Luke O'Neill, Cian O'Sullivan, Jack O'Sullivan, Sean O'Sullivan, Oisín Walsh, Rian O'Neill, Paul O'Sullivan, Gary O'Sullivan, Bailey O'Sullivan, Ethan O'Neill, Róirí O'Connor, Cian Murphy, Eoghan Mulvaney, Nathan Moynihan, Craig McKenzie-Vass, Sean Hickey,

While attending a Child Protection meeting, in Killarney, around August 2015, reference was made to Kerry hosting Féile the following year. In order for our U14 boys and girls teams to participate, 24 Spa families had to agree to host 2 children in their homes for 2 nights, on 24th and 25th June 2016, and everyone over the age of 18 in those houses would need to be Garda vetted.

Right says I, better get cracking getting people to commit so that Anne Holland could get started on the vetting. A couple of meetings, many texts messages, letters and phone calls later, and it was obvious that there weren't enough host families for the girls.

As my own two girls were U14, it meant, they now wouldn't be competing in Féile. The boys fared slightly better, but we were still short of houses. It was decided to enter a team and the host situation would get sorted nearer the time. Summer 2016 came around quickly and additional club officers got on board with myself and Anne in forming a Féile committee.

Assumpta O'Donoghue stepped into the role of Féile Co-ordinator. Ivor Flynn agreed to take on the role of Coiste na nÓg Chairperson, a position that had remained vacant since January 2016, and Mathilda McCarthy juggled Spa shop duties with her new role on the committee. Things were coming along nicely. Adrian O'Sullivan joined me at the long awaited draw, where our visiting club was revealed as St. Mary's, Kiltoghert, Co. Leitrim. By the time I got home, the information was up on the Spa Facebook page. Parents were very enthusiastic about purchasing Féile tracksuits and the club kindly agreed to subsidise same for the occasion.

On the night that the gear was being distributed, with only a week to go before Féile, we still didn't have enough host families. I can't stress enough the role the 11 families that did host the 23 boys (one family hosted 3 children) played in Féile.

Only for those families, the U14 boys wouldn't have been able to participate. A few of their own children lost their beds and, some even moved out that weekend to accommodate the Leitrim lads, so I know it wasn't easy.

Joining our visiting Leitrim team on Friday 24th June at Spa, were Gneeveguilla, and their visiting team, Shandonagh, Co. Westmeath. Great work was done by referee, Tom Moriarty, in managing the 4 games played that evening. While the games were being played, Pat O'Neill, Adrian O'Sullivan and John O'Donoghue were cooking up a storm on the balcony with the barbeque. A big bualadh bos to everyone who showed great community spirit in helping out that night.



Coiste na nÓg Chairperson Ivor Flynn making a presentation on behalf of Spa GAA Club to Thomas Crowe, Chairman of our visiting club St Mary's Kiltoghert, Leitrim



Speeches were made, photos were taken, gifts were exchanged between the clubs, and, finally, it was time for the St. Mary's parents to entrust their children to the Spa parents. No doubt, there was a mixture of excitement and anxiety at that moment, but when everyone reconvened on Saturday to finally play our visiting team, all reports suggested that the boys had settled in nicely with their host families.

The end of the road for our U14 boys was in Cordal, on Saturday afternoon. They were disappointed not to progress beyond this as were their extremely dedicated trainers, Robert Cremin and Neily Kerins.

But, by the time the parade came Saturday evening, there was no trace of the earlier low mood, and, as we marched behind them, we were kept highly amused by their energy and interactions with the crowds lining the streets.



Team talk with Robert Cremin

Sunday morning came and St. Mary's were anxious to get on the road for the long journey home. All the families met up again, hugs were exchanged, photos were taken and we said our final goodbyes to the fabulous club members of St. Mary's Kiltoghert, Co. Leitrim. It didn't end there though, as there were other Féile games scheduled to be played in Spa that day.

Before we knew it, GAA President Aogán Ó Fearghail was standing on Spa soil! He was completely at ease mingling with everyone there, shaking hands and obliging for photos, before he was whisked off to another Féile location. We had survived Féile and it felt great!

Bernie Courtney
Secretary, Coiste na nÓg



Tom Keane (Chairman Kerry Coiste na nÓg), Gerard Mangan, Róirí O'Connor, Aogán Ó'Fearghail (GAA President) and Ivor Flynn (Chairman of Spa Coiste na nÓg)



SPA U16 Boys

In 2016, we had 25 boys registered to compete at this age group. In total, we held 40 training sessions with the playing season beginning in March and ending in October.

We also had numerous challenge matches against Dr.Crokes, Glenflesk, Listry, Fossa, Carraigaline and Castletownbere Training, in general, was well attended with the exception of a few nights.

It was decided to enter the higher level (Division1) of the East Kerry League in March to see how near or how far we were compared to the other teams in the division.

March 28th: We played Rathmore away and secured a great draw on a bad evening 2-10 to 3-7

April 18th: We also played Glenflesk away and lost by a point 3-13 to 4-9

We were easily beaten by Legion at home and also beaten comprehensively by Dr.Crokes at home. This ruled us out of the competition.

On May 28th we travelled to Ballyrickard, Tralee for an U15 Development Blitz.

The teams were 10-a-side, and the boys performed well with victories over Kerins O'Rahillys, Sneem/Derrynane, and we lost by a point to Listowel.

The U16 County League began in July. There was a long lay off due to Féile and the exams.

We were placed in Division 5 in a strong group.

July 13th (Home)	Spa	4-11	Beaufort	3-6
July 20th (Away)	Beale	4-8	Spa	3-6
July 27th (Away)	Finuge	2-6	Spa	4-13
August 3rd (Home)	Spa	3-12	St.Marys/Renard	3-10
August 10th (Away)	Ardfert	4-8	Spa	3-7
August 17th (Away)	County SF		Beale	2-9
	Spa	2-6		

East Kerry Championship

September 13th (Home)				
Spa	3-12	Firies		4-7
September 19th (Away)	EK Semi-Final			
Dr.Crokes	4-15	Spa		2-6
Sunday 16th October	U15 Boys (Away)			
Firies	2-9	Spa		2-6

Although there were no accolades in 2016, all in all it was a good year. More importantly, the development of the boys is paramount for the future, and more of our players to strive to make the county development squads.

Well done to Liam Spillane and Ryan Kelliher on attaining a place on the U16 South Kerry Development squads. We would like to wish the players moving to the minor grade all the best in their future careers. Thanks to Paudie Horgan, the Coiste na nÓg committee, the parents and most importantly, the players for an enjoyable year.

Donal O'Doherty



U16 Team 2016 - Included in Photo: Darragh O'Leary, Jordan Leahy, Evan Jones, James Lynch, Liam Spillane, Ian O'Connell, Stephen McKenna, Reece Hegarty, Michael Kearney, Shane O Donoghue, Conor Brosnan, Connie Cremin Mulrey, Cian Fahy, Ryan Kelliher, Michael Horgan, Sean Cahill, Gary Vaughan, Oliver Cremin Mulrey, Ruairi O'Keeffe, Keelan Deegan, Alan O Sullivan, Cian Murphy.



SPA Minors

For the minors for 2016 it was a case what might have been in all three campaigns. Playing in division 3B of the county league proved to be difficult without our St Brendan's College players resulting in Spa losing games they possibly could have won vs Scart/Cordal and Ballydonoghue. The highlight of the games was the hard fought draw gained back in An Ghaeltacht, it was not only a great spectacle but the team showed great desire and drive to come from 7 points down to draw the game. The final whistle meant a visit to the nearby beach in a post celebration March dip in the sea – a real sight to witness!

Our minors were right in the mix right up to the final game of the league versus Ardfert, needing a win at home to progress to the semi-final. A late injury time goal was to end our league campaign giving Ardfert a draw on the night. We ended the campaign level on points with Ballydonoghue, but they progressed to the semi-final due to the head-to-head rule tiebreaker.

It was heartbreak on the night but unfortunately, for all involved, it was a sign that far more effort and training was required from the entire panel.

We then played the East Kerry league and after a couple of close games, it resulted in Spa reaching the semi-final, where the eventual winners Scart/Cordal beat us easily at home. The disappointing part of this campaign was the fact that we were missing so many of our minor age players for most of the games and relied heavily on the u-16 members of the panel.

Our final round of games were the East Kerry championship and we received a walk-over from Scart/Cordal in the first round meaning a semi-final meeting in the B Championship with Legion. Played on a Bank holiday Monday in Dreen it was a fantastic display of heart and desire by the entire panel. The tie went to extra time with Spa holding out for a narrow victory. The East Kerry B final was our last game of our season was a much more sedate affair, a game we never got going in. Currow picked off score after score in the opening half and more or less put the tie to bed by half time. We rallied in the second half, but we were never going to catch a fitter and more cohesive Currow team.

To the members of the panel who enjoyed success with the Kerry minors, St. Brendan's College, Presentation School Miltown (Munster Finalists) and our 5 minor County championship winners – heartiest congratulations to you all!

Some of the issues that face minor players in our club right now are –

- the fixture pile up – schools/club/county – it's a crazy situation
- the length of the season
- summer jobs – more can be done by the club to help these players
- the number of players dropping out from U-16 to Minor which is a wider issue across all clubs

For the selection team of Kevin Healy, Sean Casey, Eileen Aherne and Aidan Cahill we would like to thank the players, parents and especially the U-16 players that came to the games throughout the year.



Gary Vaughan

Fionan Walsh



Back: Kevin Healy, Adam Dennehy, Eoghan Cronin, Oran Claffey, Conor Stack, Gavin O Sullivan, Micheál Kearney, Sean Cahill, Colm Hickey, Michael Shannon, Fionan Walsh, Eoin O Donoghue, Michael Aherne, Daniel Horgan, Niall Moynihan, Eoin Carroll and Sean Casey Front: Evan Jones, Cian Fahy, Ciaran Sheehan, Niall McCarthy, Michael Moynihan. Dion Marcus, Gary Vaughan, David Spillane and Dara Moynihan



Relentless determination and commitment bring success to young Spa stars at highest level



Spa players on the 2016 East Kerry Minor Team: Front L-R Eoghan Cronin, Niall McCarthy, David Spillane, Dion Marcos, Dara Moynihan

At the tender age of 12, Pakistani girl Malala Yousafzai began secretly blogging about the Taliban's punitive attempts to prevent young girls from accessing education. At just 14, she miraculously survived an assassination attempt after receiving a gunshot to the head.

Her relentless drive to secure and preserve young women's education was recognised when she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, in 2014, becoming the youngest person ever to achieve the award. She is a 'millennial' role model for all, a young person who has faced down adversity in the pursuit of justice and equality. She is inspirational.

In her Nobel Prize acceptance speech, she outlined the motive behind her bravery and defiance: "We had a thirst for an education, we had a thirst because our future was right there in that classroom. We would sit there with big dreams in our eyes. We wanted to make our parents proud and prove that we could excel."

We have been inspired, too, by many of the younger members of our community who have excelled in recent years. The county has had a run of sustained success at underage level, especially since 2014 with 3 All-Ireland minor wins and Hogan Cup triumphs for St. Brendan's College, following on from Pobalscoil Chorca Dhuibhne's outstanding achievement.

Many of us have been privileged to witness the prominent role young Spa men have had in various successful All-Ireland campaigns of recent years.

2016 has got to go into the football annals as being one of most memorable years considering the outstanding success achieved by the young men of Kerry, East Kerry and St. Brendan's College.



Dara Moynihan receiving his Man of the Match Award at the All Ireland Minor Final

The young Spa man who played a crucial role in all three triumphs is the dynamo from the Park, Dara Moynihan.

Awarded man of the match in Kerry's All-Ireland victory over Galway after contributing 0-2 from play in a typically industrious performance which saw him at the heart of all of the team's crucial scores, Dara turned in a tremendous display on the most special stage – Croke Park on All-Ireland final day.

It was a performance that was not in isolation. Months earlier, this same insatiable hunger and relentless drive was so apparent in helping his school colleagues from 'the Sem' to a long-awaited Hogan Cup triumph.

With his team struggling to establish a foothold in the game, Dara's energy and willingness to scrap for possession was a lifeline. He was the heartbeat of a special team. These two performances in particular have shown that Croke Park is a stage that he savours and we hope there will be many more memorable moments there for Dara in the future.

Hogan Cup success is very special to St. Brendan's. There have been too many near misses over the years, but to finally reach the summit of colleges football is heartening for many who have helped advance the cause of 'the Sem' over the years.

Spa can be proud of the role that all four members of the panel had over this campaign. David Carroll, Evan Cronin and David Spillane joined Dara Moynihan in helping secure a third Hogan Cup for school, a first since 1992.



Dan O'Donoghue and Gerard Mangan at the 2016 East Kerry All Star Awards

Manager Garry McGrath acknowledged the efforts of the Spa players in securing the distinguished colleges title: "The lads from Spa showed tremendous dedication and commitment to the team. All of them were outstanding ambassadors of their club. Every one of them played a significant part in our achievement. I want to take the opportunity to wish them every success in the future."

With Hogan Cup and the All-Ireland minor titles in the bank, it was left to the young men of East Kerry to put the icing on the cake that was 2016. Eoghan Cronin, Niall McCarthy and Dion Marcos joined Dara Moynihan on Seamus Moynihan's successful panel.

Spa man David Spillane had the honour of captaining East Kerry, who enjoyed victories over Shannon Rangers, Dr. Crokes and St. Brendan's en route to a county final victory in Fitzgerald Stadium, last October, over a well organised Mid-Kerry side, running out winners on a scoreline of 3-16 to 0-09.

Seamus Moynihan was delighted with the contribution of the five lads and praised them for their efforts during the campaign: "All of the players from Spa gave us a huge effort over the year. Dion Marcos selflessly travelled from college in Galway, showing great commitment. Niall McCarthy responded very well to training and his development over the year was obvious to us. He had a huge impact on final day. Eoghan Cronin is a tall, strong guy who did a very solid job for us at fullback when called upon. We were without a number of players the evening that we played St. Brendan's and both David Spillane and Dara Moynihan really stepped up. Both of them were exceptional that night and led the team through that tie. All the lads were great to train."

The achievements of the young men of Spa, in 2016, follow All-Ireland minor medals secured by Michael Foley and Evan Cronin, in 2015, and by Dan O' Donoghue and Liam Kearney, in 2014. The club had prominent representation in the county minor championship triumph of East Kerry, in 2013, also.

There is undoubted potential and young talent in our ranks. It is a great hope that these past achievements will drive future senior success in the blue and gold of Spa. Like any triumph, it will take serious commitment and will not be easy.



St Brendan's Hogan Cup Champions 2016 L-R Dr Gary Stack, David Carroll, Evan Cronin, Dara Moynihan, Shane Cronin, Niall McCarthy, David Spillane

Perhaps the words of the heroic young woman, Malala Yousafzai, should be kept in mind in the relentless pursuit of advancing the cause of Spa and working to achieving excellence and success together.

In an address delivered at Harvard, in 2013, Yousafzai encouraged her audience to follow her determination or 'thirst' in extreme adversity in the pursuit of desired goals. She appealed for all to focus to "make our future now and make our dreams tomorrow's reality."

The big dream in many eyes now is for Spa to thrive, to make that leap from being talented to develop the resolve necessary to overcome any adversary in the pursuit of success.

Football is in good health in Kerry and in East Kerry in particular. Like Malala has shown, a sustained thirst, determination and commitment is a prerequisite to eventual triumph.

Kieran Herlihy



The All Ireland winning Hogan Cup champions at the Civic Reception from Kerry County Council to mark their historic victory



Spa U21 Team 2016: Front L-R Dara Moynihan, Eoin Fitzgerald, Dion Marcos, David Spillane, Evan Cronin, Michael McCarthy, Niall McCarthy, Michael Foley. Back L-R Conor Cronin, Dan O'Donoghue, Aydan Mulvaney, Conor Kearney, Aaron Farrell, Timmy Hussey, Shane Cronin & Ciaran Spillane

SPA U21

East Kerry Championship Quarter Final

Played in Spa on the 14/02/2016

Spa 4.11 Firies 1.3

Team: D. Carroll, E. O' Donoghue, B. Lynch (Captain), C. Kearney, A. Mulvaney, S. Cronin, T. Hussey, M. McCarthy, D. O'Donoghue, M. Foley, C. Spillane, M. Moynihan, D. Spillane, E. Cronin, J. Murhill, Sub: E. Fitzgerald

East Kerry Semi Final

Played in Glenflesk on the 20/11/2016

Spa 4.20 Glenflesk 0.10

Team: D. Carroll, E. O' Donoghue, B. Lynch (Captain), C. Kearney, A. Mulvaney, D. O'Donoghue, E. Fitzgerald, L. Kearney, S. Cronin, C. Spillane, E. Cronin, D. Moynihan, N. McCarthy, M. Foley, D. Spillane Sub: M. Moynihan, E. Cronin, M. McCarthy

East Kerry U-21 Final V Crokes

Fitzgerald Stadium Sunday 18/12/2016

Team: D. Carroll, E. O' Donoghue, B. Lynch (Captain), C. Kearney, M. McCarthy, D. O'Donoghue, E. Fitzgerald, L. Kearney, S. Cronin, C. Spillane, E. Cronin, D. Moynihan, M. Foley, D. Spillane Sub: M. Moynihan, E. Cronin, C. Cronin, C. Stack, D. Marcos

For the second time in two years, we should have been celebrating. This year we had it in our hands but thirteen wides tells its own story - maybe next year.

We'd like to thank the panel of players as we couldn't have asked any more from them. They gave us everything, even after a long season with club and college, minors and U-21s. Fourteen of our starting fifteen are under age again this year. Who knows?

To Aidan Moynihan for making his facilities available to the players after training. To Margaret Doyle, Ruth Allen and Gary Stack, and our Chairman Gerard Mangan.

Many thanks for everything.

Sean Cronin, Pat Cronin, Mike O'Donoghue & James Fitzgerald

SPA Seniors

The start of 2016 saw a change in the Management & backroom team with the appointment of Joe Shannon, Tom Tobin & Mike Brosnan.

The management team met with the Panel in mid January to outline their Plans and agree objectives for the year ahead and a consensus was formed that the Intermediate Championship would be the primary objective.

The Management team outlined the standards, attitudes and culture change required and expected to position the Team to reach its full potential. It's fair to say that everyone bought into the vision and this was reflected in the supreme effort guys gave to training in the early part of the year when training was particularly tough notwithstanding the fact the 2015 season did not conclude until mid January 2016.

Collectively the Team and management went about improving fitness levels & skills and embedding a new playing style. The effort put in by all was reflected in promising performances in the early County League games leading up to the first round Intermediate Championship game V John Mitchels where the Senior Team produced one of its better performances of 2016. The spirit and focus within the squad remained high and the squad left no stone unturned in preparing for the next round v Kenmare. Unfortunately the squad was hit with a spate of injuries in the week prior to the game and we also lost key and influential players during the game. These circumstances all contributed to an under performance on the day ultimately leading to a loss.

Now that the primary objective was no longer achievable, after a short break to recharge the batteries to allow recovery from an extraordinarily long 2015 season and tough preseason training in 2016 the squad regrouped and set new goals. It's fair to say the break led to a loss of form (something we have learnt from) in the middle part of the year during which we lost a number of county League games which a team of Spa's calibre would be expected to win.



Back L-R: Michael Finnegan, Shane Fenton, James Devane, Darren O'Connor, Conor Cronin, Ciaran Spillane, Shane Lynch, Matthew Moynihan, Shane Cronin, Aaron Farrell, Michael O'Donoghue, Craig Hickey, Andrew Garnett, Jamie Spillane, Mikey Moynihan, Brendan Lynch
Front L-R: Dan O'Donoghue, David Carroll, Dion Marcos, Eoin Fitzgerald, Eric O'Donoghue, Michael Foley, Eoin Cronin, Michael McCarthy, Conor Kearney, David Spillane.

If nothing else the squad and management team were honest and upfront in discussing our own failings and shortcomings and we set about raising the bar and standards again in order to give a good account of ourselves in the latter part of the season. As a full squad we were relatively successful in this regard in so far as we were in the promotion hunt right up to the last County league game and the level of commitment and effort shown by the players in preparing for the o'Donoghue was nothing short of exemplary.

We had guys travelling from Limerick & Cork 2 nights a week without fail for training and during this period one could see the squad getting tighter as a group and confidence levels grew. We would like to thank the Club members who gave of their time to transport the players to & from Limerick and particularly Mike Brosnan & Tom Tobin who made several trips. Shane Fenton was not found wanting either in ferrying players from Cork

Again efforts were rewarded with an excellent performance in the game against the Legion following which we eagerly looked forward to the game v Rathmore. Unfortunately we came up short on the day against a very experienced well drilled Rathmore side however the two performances gave an insight to what the squad can achieve with the right attitudes, preparation and support in 2016.

2016 presented a number of challenges which everyone including the Club Executive worked to overcome i.e

- 1/ The integration of the younger players
- 2/ Students living away from home during the week
- 3/ At times the non availability of the pitch for training due to demand
- 4/ Summer work which curtailed some players training
- 5/ An unprecedented run of injuries

While we have no trophies to show for the supreme effort put in by all connected to the Senior squad we are confident we have made some progress. 2016 which was a transition year during which we embarked on a journey to change our style of football and create a stronger bond between the younger and more mature ! Spa warriors. This is still a work in progress but we as the Management Team are confident that the progress made in 2016 gives the Team a solid foundation on which to build for greater success in 2017 by way of delivering titles and trophies.

In conclusion The Senior Team and Management would like to take the opportunity to thank Ger our Chairman ,Marie Club secretary and the Club Executive for the excellent support they gave us in 2016. No ask was too big and there wasn't a problem or challenge that couldn't be overcome.

A big thank you to all the supporters who were steadfast in their support of what the Team was endeavoring to achieve. While we are sure you had frustrating days on the hill and side lines your presence at Home & Away games was greatly appreciated by all connected to the Senior squad.

The preparation for the battles ahead in 2017 have already started and we can assure you all that we are fully committed & resolute in our ambition to bring glory days back to Spa.

Joe Shannon, Mike Brosnan & Tom Tobin



Spa team and management celebrating their East Kerry Junior League title. Front :-R Dion Marcos, Conor Kearney, Conor Cronin, Jim Morris, Conor O'Riordan, Dave Devane, Joey McCarthy (mascot), JJ O'Donoghue (mascot). Middle L-R Aidan Cronin (mascot), Eoin Fitzgerald, Mikey Moynihan, Paul Russell, Padraig Courtney, Micheál Kearney, Eric O'Donoghue, Aydan Mulvaney, Cian Russell (mascot). Back L-R: Ger Cronin, Brendan Lynch, Michael Shannon, Shane Fenton, Corey Doyle, Paul Cahill, Andy Fitzgerald, Patrick O'Regan, Eoghan Cronin, Jamie Spillane, Conor Gleeson, Liam Courtney

2016 was again a very successful year for Spa. Following on our success of 2015 winning one competition. We competed in 4 competitions this year getting to 3 finals and winning East Kerry Junior and O'Sullivan Cup. We lost the County Junior final and reached semi final stage in the McElligott cup.

Despite a poor start to EK League losing to Dr Crokes, Rathmore, Gneeveguilla, Legion & Kilcummin before beating Glenflesk to get home advantage for a Div 2 semi final V Glenflesk which we won after extra time. In the final we faced Kilcummin in Rathmore and coming from behind we forced a replay after extra time. The replay of the final was played in Farranfore where in an exciting game the lads showed great discipline and heart to win the Tim Lenihan memorial cup after extra time.

In the County League we defeated Mitchels, Laune Rangers, drew with Beaufort, and received walk overs from Gaeltacht & Annascaul. We qualified to play Beaufort in the final which wasn't played till late September. Despite the final being fixed for the first week of July due to Clubs not fulfilling fixtures on appointed date.

In East Kerry championship we had a win over Rathmore in the first round in what was probably our best game of football over the season. We had a win over Gneeveguilla in the quarter final in Spa and welcomed Dr Crokes to Spa for the Semi Final winning fairly comprehensively on the night. We met Firies in the final which was played in Fossa where after a very poor first half everyone upped their game in the second half to bring the O'Sullivan Cup back to Spa after 19 years.

In the McElligott Cup we received a walk over from Listowel to face Gneeveguilla in semi final. With a number of players unavailable on the night our unbeaten 14 game run came to an end. Despite being down 17pts at half time the lads battled tirelessly to finally lose by 4pts.



Captain Paul Russell accepting the EK Junior League Trophy from East Kerry Board Chairman Tim Ryan

I would like to thank the 35 lads who gave a great commitment over the season and the leadership and encouragement shown to the young lads by our more senior players. Finally, thanks to my fellow selectors Ger Cronin and James Fitzgerald. Thanks also to Margaret Doyle for attending the lads.

Liam Courtney, James Fitzgerald & Ger Cronin



O'Sullivan Cup Final 2016 Front L-R David Spillane, Evan Cronin, Brian Devane, Cormac Cronin, Eric O'Donoghue, Aydan Mulvaney, Conor Kearney, Conor O'Riordan, Conor Gleeson, Dave Devane, Eoghan Cronin. Back L-R Alfie Giles, Andrew Garnett, Paul Russell, Corey Doyle, David Carroll, Brendan Lynch, Eoin Fitzgerald, Shane Cronin, Andy Fitzgerald, Mikey Moynihan, Ciaran Spillane, Jamie Spillane, Paul Cahill, Jim Morris, Shane Fenton.



Recalling start of Spa GAA club's 44-year association with the Killarney Advertiser

Some members of the 1940s Lissivigeen team, taken on the occasion of the launch of Spa History in 1998 Front L-R Arthur E O'Keeffe, Eugie Scannell, Danny Casey (Founder of Killarney Advertiser in March 1973), John Bambury. Back L-R Mickey Cronin, Neilus Doherty, Arthur D O'Keeffe, Eugie O'Keeffe, James O'Donoghue & Sean Costigan

The first Spa column submitted to the Killarney Advertiser, March 1st 1973, read as follows:

"Spa GAA club, winners of the O'Donoghue Cup--East Kerry senior football championship for the past two years, is proving as successful off the field as on it. It has been running a 31 Card Drive and a Buffet Supper Dance each fortnight, in the Castle Heights Hotel, which provides entertainment for all tastes and all ages.



As well as the card drives, the club has organised a Novice Polka competition confined to groups who have not won a competition previously and the winners of this competition are: Mrs Mary Spillane, Mrs Peggy O'Callaghan, Mrs Celine Healy, Mrs Patricia Moynihan, Donie Moynihan, Michael Moynihan, John Joe Healy and Denis Moynihan. The winners received a perpetual cup and a set of medals sponsored by Jimmy O'Brien Trophies.

The following is a list of the qualifiers in the card game who will now go on to compete in a grand final on March 17th: Michael Fitzgerald and Arthur E O'Keeffe, Patrick Cronin (Kilbreen) and Patrick Cronin (Knocknaskeha), Johnny Cronin and Pat McCarthy, Archie Cronin and Tom Joe O'Sullivan, Dave Slattery and John "Dunn" O'Donoghue, Con Doolan and John Kelly, Tim Kelly and P Warren.

The opening heat of an Open Polka competition is scheduled to commence on Wednesday March 14th, with a second heat on Wednesday March 28th, and, to date, this competition has attracted a large number of entries."

John Kelly



U14 Shield Final Winners

2016 another busy year for the SPA Lady Footballers

Ladies' football continues to grow and develop each year and is a strong vein in the club structure. 2016 was once again busy with plenty of fixtures for all our players and coaches.

U12 Co League Preliminary Round

InBhear Sceine Gaels, Firies, Dr. Crokes, Rathmore and Glenflesk. Played five games and unfortunately won none, but we came so close. This team is very young and got stronger with every game. We didn't enter into the grouping stage as we struggled with numbers and the young players were nervous as this was their first competitive year.



U13 Girls 2016

U13 County Championship Knockout

Spa 3-6, Dr. Crokes 0-4, quarter-final
Spa 1-3, Kilcummin 4-6, semi-final. Lost to a stronger side.
Played Dr. Crokes, Beaufort, Kerins O'Rahillys, Castlegregory, Listowel Emmetts, Dingle and Churchill.
Played 8, won 5 and drew 3.
Reached the semi-final against Dr Crokes and were defeated.
Spa 0-4, Dr Crokes 2-18.

U14 East Kerry League Div 3

Played in the group with Beaufort, Currow and Laune Rangers B.
Reached the Shield final and won comprehensively against a young Killorglin side.
Spa 6-8, Laune Rangers 0-5

U15 Championship B Group Knockout

Finuge St. Senans 7-7, Spa 0-8
Travelled to Finuge and heavily defeated.

U16 County League Div 3

Played against Inbhear Sceine Gaels, Finuge St. Senans, Currow, Dingle/Castlegregory, Scartaglin, Dr Crokes and Ballyduff/Beale.
Played 8, Won 5, Drew 1 and lost 2.
Reached the semi-final against Finuge/St Senans and what a cracker of a game it was. We ran out of time in the end, but the girls showed great spirit and determination.
Spa 4-5, Finuge/St Senans 3-13



U16 County League Div 3

Played against Inbhear Sceine Gaels, Finuge St. Senans, Currow, Dingle/Castlegregory, Scartaglin, Dr Crokes and Ballyduff/Beale. Played 8, Won 5, Drew 1 and lost 2. Reached the semi-final against Finuge/St Senans and what a cracker of a game it was. We ran out of time in the end, but the girls showed great spirit and determination. Spa 4-5, Finuge/St Senans 3-13

U16 East Kerry League Div 2 Knockout

Spa 2-7, Laune Rangers 5-15



U16 Girls East Kerry Finalists 2016

Senior Ladies

Junior B Championship

Milltown/Listry 0-6, Spa 2-8, quarter-final
Castlegregory/Annascaul 0-2, Spa 2-7, semi-final
Spa 0-9, Finuge/St.Senans 4-11, final
We played the final three months after the semi-final and this definitely didn't help as many of our players were back to school/college and couldn't commit to training.

Senior County League Div 3

Kilcummin, Milltown-Listry, Dr Crokes, Austin Stacks, Causeway, Clounmacon/Moyvane and Furies
Finished 5th on the table and failed to qualify for the play-offs.

Senior County Championship

Once again we entered the senior ranks with Rathmore. We unfortunately drew against Castleisland Desmonds in the first round and they were out for revenge after defeating them in the final last year.
Spa/Rathmore 1-12, Castleisland 2-21
We went onto the Munster B Championship, but were defeated by Cork.

Mary Jo Curran Cup

This was our second final within 2 weeks and we lost to our neighbours Kilcummin. Once again, we were waiting two months to play this final. The county fixtures need to be restructured as this competition was set up to give the clubs games during the summer months without their county players. We played final on 23rd October but the competition should have been finished by August.

County Scene

Cassandra Buckley and Linda Bruggener togged out with the Kerry senior team in 2016. Cassandra stepped away from the county scene this year after giving over 10 years with the team under three different managers. She continues to play club football and is coaching our underage also. Linda lined out with Kerry against Cork but unfortunately suffered an injury. No doubt she will be back in the near future.
Donal O'Doherty was elected at the Ladies' Co Board AGM as development officer and is doing Trojan work already in this position.

Thanks

Many thanks to the Coiste na nOg Committee, parents, players and especially our coaches. We found it extremely hard to get volunteers but we are very grateful for the following coaches who gave up their valuable time and expertise throughout the year. Many of them doubled up on their duties coaching various teams.

Coaches

- U6/8/10 Girls: Susan O'Sullivan, Linda O'Donoghue and Emma Daly
- U12 Girls: Joanne Hamilton and Pat Herlihy
- U13 Girls: Des Spillane, Donal O'Doherty and Tim O'Connor
- U14 Girls: Des Spillane, Donal O'Doherty and Tim O'Connor
- U15 Girls: Donal O'Doherty, Des Spillane, Tim O'Connor and Anne Holland
- U16 Girls: Timmy Fleming, Tom Doherty and Tim O'Connor
- Senior Ladies: Timmy Fleming, Tom Doherty and Tim O'Connor

*Anne Holland,
Spa Ladies GFC Secretary*



Senior Ladies 2016



U12 Girls 2016



Eve O'Donoghue crowned 2016 Lily of Killarney



The Lily of Killarney was first chosen, in 1974, as part of a festival to raise funds for the Spa club. It was suggested that Jules Benedict's famous opera, "Lily of Killarney", would be the most apt title for the one-week festival based in Dan O'Donoghue's field at the Trains' Bridge, Park Road.

Since then, "The Lily" has taken on many different formats and has grown in popularity over the years. The event has for many years been organised by the ladies' committee of the club and under their auspices has grown into one of the major social events of the year in Killarney.



Spa Ladies Committee with 2016 Lily of Killarney. Catherine Carroll, Susan Hayes, Sheila Curtin, Marie O'Keeffe, Denise Gleeson, Marguerite Brosnan, Eve O'Donoghue, Sheila Cronin

The 2016 and 43rd Lily of Killarney was selected at a buffet/dance in the Gleneagle Hotel, Killarney on Friday night 27th May. In 2016, 26 young ladies representing local business interests took part. Each girls was interviewed on stage by MC Ray O'Sullivan. They were also interviewed by a judging panel earlier in the evening.

At the stroke of midnight, Eve O'Donoghue, representing The Shire, was announced as the new Lily of Killarney. Along with the Healy/Cronin Perpetual Trophy, Eve also received a cash prize, a trip to the Killarney/London Reunion and numerous other prizes sponsored by local businesses.

She promoted the event at a number of events throughout the year including the 4th of July parade, Killarney races and regatta, South Kerry ploughing and the Killarney/London Reunion.

Sheila Curtin, Chairperson, Ladies Committee

The organizing committee, of which Frank Moynihan was commander-in-chief, drew up a programme of events for the week. McFadden's Amusements were booked nightly and other events included a Cork/Kerry senior club football tournament which included teams such as Nemo Rangers, St. Finbarr's, Austin Stacks and Shannon Rangers, and juveniles and veterans football matches.

The highlight, of course, was the selection of the Lily of Killarney at the Gleneagle Hotel, on the Sunday night. 12 finalists were selected from dances the length and breadth of the county and beyond and Eileen O'Connor, from Dromlusk, Blackwater, was crowned the very first Lily of Killarney. She received the Healy/Cronin Perpetual Trophy (still being presented to the winner) and a cash prize.



27 lilies of Killarney group 2016



Sheila McCarthy an outstanding champion of scór

It all started out simply enough when Sheila McCarthy was asked by her sister, Ann, to help out for one season of Scór. After fourteen years of service as Scór Officer, we

look back at what Sheila McCarthy has contributed to our club.

Sheila has been the most active Scór Officer in the county during this period and it is no coincidence that it has coincided with a period of unprecedented success in all levels of Scór for the club. A multitude of East Kerry, County, Munster and All-Ireland titles have come to the club during this period. Sheila, in her inimitable style, has been the glue that held it all together. Sheila has always had a tremendous interest in all activities related to the club. She is usually involved in any cultural or social activities organised by the club and a supporter of all Spa teams at venues throughout the county. Sheila believes passionately in the value of the GAA club in the community and its capacity to provide an outlet to members young and old.

Sheila in her role as Scór Officer meant business from the start. There were no half measures and her exceptional organisational skills were enthusiastically put into use for the benefit of the club. It was not unusual to find the invitation to Scór participants in the Spa notes from the end of August onwards. Most other clubs would start thinking about Scór in October!

Meetings were organised, mentors put in place and participants identified for the various disciplines. The season generally started with Scór na nOg in October and ended with Scór na bPaisti in April, with Scór Sinsear in between and overlapping with All-Ireland finals in the years we were fortunate to progress at Munster level.

Sheila's style and input were consistent throughout, whether a first round East Kerry competition in Fossa Hall or an All-Ireland Final in City West, Castlebar or Derry. Competitors were first and foremost representing Spa and had to be well prepared, well attired and ready to give of their best for Spa.

Winning was great but to Sheila only a bonus. Participation and making the experience as enjoyable as possible, particularly for the younger participants, was the main objective for Sheila. However, Sheila had high standards for herself and this rubbed off on mentors and participants. Without losing the sense of fun and enjoyment, unprecedented success followed.

Spa senior set dancers won a record-breaking five in a row All-Ireland titles in the period 2004 to 2008. The senior figure dancers won seven All-Irelands over the period 2002 to 2016. Spa was the first club in Ireland to win the All-Ireland in figure and set dancing in the same year; in 2004 initially and again in 2007.

It gave Sheila particular pleasure to make the breakthrough at All-Ireland level in Scór na nOg. We were successful in the rince set and recitation in 2014; the rince foirme and quiz in 2015 and again in the quiz in 2016. Sheila was a constant in all these unprecedented successes throughout the years.

Parents, mentors and participants were always kept in the loop; one stage of the competition was no sooner finished than Sheila was organising transport, accommodation and meals in venues throughout Ireland with her unrivalled efficiency. The best and most cost effective options were always provided and it made it easier for everyone involved.

While Spa as a club has always had a strong focus on cultural matters, Sheila, as a member of the Executive Committee for many years, kept the Scór activities to the forefront. It was a two-way street.

While Spa has always been known for its football process through the successful O'Donoghue Cup teams, Donie O'Sullivan and Mick Gleeson its first Kerry players, right through to our outstanding Kerry minor representatives of recent years, it is also synonymous with Scór at a local and national level.

While Sheila, with usual modesty, would acknowledge the contribution and expertise of participants and mentors, there is no question but she has been the leader, organiser and motivator for so many of the Spa successes.

Sheila McCarthy has given tremendous service to Spa in many roles, but we will look back in times to come in awe at what was achieved during her time as Scór Officer.

Míle buíochas Sheila

Seamus Clifford



Sheila McCarthy receiving the 2016 Overall Club Award from Vice-Chairman of Coiste Scór Jackie Walsh



SPA Set Dancers All-Ireland Scor Champions

Scór Na nÓg 2016 /2017

Once again, Spa participants were the only Kerry representatives at the All-Ireland finals in the Waterfront, Belfast, on the 11th Feb 2017.

Our set dancers gave a huge performance on the day and came home with an All-Ireland title.

Our Tráth Na gCeist team were again Kerry champions and went on to represent the county at All-Ireland level. It was a very close contest, but our team relinquished their title, just 2 points behind the winners, Donegal.

The figure dancers were East Kerry and County Champions.
Quiz Team: James Lynch, Daniel O'Sullivan, Kianan O'Doherty and Louise Fleming.

Set dancers: Áine Brosnan, Meghann Cronin, Órlaith Spillane, Érin Holland, Liam Spillane, Kianan O'Doherty, Gary O'Sullivan and Cian O'Sullivan.

Figure dancers: Áine Brosnan, Meghann Cronin, Kate Lawlor, Aishlinn O'Donovan, Érin Holland, Alice O'Donoghue, Leah Murphy, Ailbhe Gallagher.



All Ireland winning Set Dancers in Scór na nÓg 2017 with coach Triona Mangan



Our young Scór na bPaistí competitors

Scór Na bPaistí 2016

Our figure dancers and sean nós dancer (Laura Fleming) both took 2nd place in East Kerry.

We also competed in the solo singing and recitation. Our quiz team took part in the county final and did very well to come in the top 10, with over 30 teams participating.

Figure dancers: Roisín O'Sullivan, Ellen Carroll, Carrie Hickey, Kate Lawlor, Grace O'Connor, Ailbhe Gallagher, Laura O'Carroll, Laura Fleming.

Solo singing: Laura Fleming
Recitation: Clodagh O'Connor
Sean Nós: Laura Fleming

Quiz Team: Sean Hickey, Sean O'Sullivan, Ethan O'Neill and Rory O'Connor



All Ireland Scór na nÓg champions 2016 in Quiz with GAA President Aogán Ó Fearghail



Scór na nÓg competitors with Sean Kelly, Amy Reidy and Tim Ryan

Scór Sinsear 2016

Our Figure dancers claimed another All-Ireland title in the INEC in 2016.

Set dancers were East Kerry and County champions.

Ray O'Sullivan who has represented Spa in Recitation over the past number of years claimed his 4th county title in a row.

We were also represented in East Kerry by Ciara O'Shea in Solo Singing.

Our Tráth Na gCeist team competed in the County final and took 3rd place.

Figure Dancers :Sinead Cronin, Tricia Murphy, Clare Moynihan, Katie O'Connor, Fiona Kelly, Ciara O'Shea, Mairead Mangan, Ann Marie Nelligan, Marie O' Mahoney.

Recitation: Ray O'Sullivan.

Set Dancing: Sinead Cronin, Tricia Murphy, Niamh Fenton, Marie O'Mahoney, Katie O'Connor, Alice Culloty, Clare Moynihan, Sarah Jane Taylor.

Solo Singing: Ciara O'Shea

Tráth Na gCeist:Seamus Clifford, Jim Gleeson, John O'Donoghue, Niamh Clifford.

Eileen Aherne



Scór Sinsear Figure Dancers



Spa Figure Dancers at a Civic Reception from Kerry County Council to mark their All Ireland Scór title



SPA Muckross Community Games

County Competitions

U10 Indoor Soccer: The team narrowly missed out on qualifying for the county finals in February.

Team: Shane O'Sullivan, Cian Russell, Fionn Daly, Joey McCarthy, Jake Downing, Jason O'Reilly and Darragh Brosnan.

U14 Quiz: The team participated in the County competition in March in Castleisland.

Team: Ben Flavin, Cian Lynch, Julia Olabode, Laura O'Carroll, Oscar McCarthy & Treasa O'Sullivan.

Swimming: Spa Muckross came away with five individual gold medals, two bronze medals and a relay gold after a very successful day at the County Swimming competition. First timers, Fionn O'Donoghue Sheehan, Grace O'Connor and Nicole Murphy, all performed brilliantly.

Both Niall Coffey and Aisling Coffey won bronze medals in their respective U14 Butterfly races. Ethan & Faye O'Neill, Ian & Niamh Coffey and Margaret O'Brien all came first in their races and qualified to represent Kerry in the National Finals in Athlone. The U13 freestyle relay squad of Niall Coffey, Cathal Coffey, Ethan O'Neill and Ian Coffey (and Colm Looney who was unavailable) dug deep to come from behind to win a brilliant first relay medal for Spa Muckross in the pool. Spa Muckross came 4th out of a total of 27 participating areas.

Cross Country: There was great success in Beaufort in the County competition. All 6 Spa Muckross athletes qualified for the Kerry teams going to the National finals in August.

Cian Lynch returned for his second year on the U12 mixed distance relay team. He was joined by his brother Oisín, Timothy Moynihan & Jack O'Sullivan. 2016 was Marie Courtney's third time qualifying for the Kerry team, Her twin sister, Grace, joined her in 2016, in what was their final year in Community Games Cross Country events. Unfortunately, Timothy was unable to continue with the team travelling to the National Finals, due to other commitments.

Gymnastics: Anna O'Shea came first in the U9 gymnastics county competition.

Judo: 30kg U16 girls Kate Forde (1st), 35kg U16 boys Jason Murhill (3rd), 35kg U16 girls Ali O'Donoghue (1st), 45kg U16 boys Shane O'Sullivan (2nd), 55kg U16 girls Mairéad Bennett (1st). Kate, Ali & Mairéad qualified to represent Kerry in the National Finals in August.

U10 Gaelic Football: all boys played brilliant football over the course of the day and enjoyed themselves immensely. The boys lost by 1 point to the eventual winners Listowel.

Team: Shane Doolan, Darragh Brosnan, Mark Carroll, Kevin Looney, Shane O'Sullivan, Eoin Murphy, Maurice Joy, Cillian Murphy, Jason O'Reilly, Fionn Daly, Cian Russell, Jack O'Donoghue, Jake Downing, Aindi O'Cathasaigh, Joey McCarthy and Oran O'Neill.

Track & Field: Our local competition was held in the Demense field earlier in the year. The weather was ideal and there was a fantastic turnout. Children placed 1st to 4th in the local competition qualified for the County Finals in June.

The following were the significant results at the County Finals: U14 800m Marie Courtney (1st) Grace Courtney (2nd), U10 200m Jason O'Reilly (1st), U10 100m Cian Russell (1st), U16 100m Ruth Courtney (3rd) U12 100m Cian Lynch (2nd) and U12 Boys Long Jump (1st), U14 80m hurdles Aoibhe O'Doherty (4th), U12 600m Jack O'Sullivan (3rd), U12 200m Liadh McMahan (2nd), U16 High Jump Elizabeth Stack (3rd).

Spa Muckross came 2nd in the County for Marie Courtney, Cian Lynch, Cian Russell and Jason O'Reilly all qualified for the National Finals in August in Athlone.

National Finals

The U12 boys Cross Country team repeated their gold medal success from 2015. Gold medals for Cian & Oisín Lynch & Jack O'Sullivan.

Anna O'Shea (U9 Gymnastics), Mairéad Bennett (U16 55kg Judo) & Kate Forde (U16 30kg Judo) all won gold medals. Ali O'Donoghue came 3rd in the U16 35kg category in Judo.

Congratulations to many of our former competitors who had a very successful year on the GAA pitch (Hogan Cup, Kerry Minors, East Kerry Minors), most notably Spa player/Kerry Minor Man of the Match, Dara Moynihan, who obliged in attending our Awards Evening to present all 20 children who qualified at County level, in individual and team events, with a beautiful keepsake.

A huge thanks to the mentors who took charge of teams this year; it couldn't happen without you and to my fellow committee members. As usual, we struggled to get volunteers for our Church Gate and Street Collections, and our AGM was poorly attended, but we were able to form a committee to ensure that the children in the area can compete in 2017.

Sincere sympathies to all those who lost a loved one during the year, especially our committee members, Linda O'Doherty and Seán O'Sullivan, whose fathers passed away in 2016.

Bernie Courtney
PRO, Spa Muckross Community Games



2016 Award Winners - Dan O'Donoghue, Eoghan Cronin, Jamie Spillane, Seamus Clifford, Michaela O'Connor, Dara Moynihan and Cait O'Sullivan Darcy



Medal Presentation to members of the 2016 Junior Panel: Front L-R Paul Russell, Evan Cronin, Conor Cronin, Mikey Moynihan, Shane Cronin. Back L-R Chairman Gerard Mangan, Hugh O'Donoghue, Andrew Garnett, Brian Gleeson, Liam Courtney (Junior Manager), Jim Morris, Eoghan Cronin, Conor Kearney, Shane Fenton, Jamie Spillane



Seamus Clifford with his wife Ella and daughter Niamh with Chairman Gerard Mangan

SPA Awards Night 2017

Our 3rd Annual Awards night was held in The Torc Hotel on the Sat 4th Feb where the achievements of players, officers, and coaches were once again celebrated. A packed house of nearly 200 members arrived on the night to applaud all worthy recipients presided over by master of ceremonies Mick Gleeson.

Our guest of honour on the night was the imperious Dara Moynihan who played such an intrinsic part in the retention of the Tommy Markham Cup last September with the Kerry minors. Dan O'Donoghue scooped the Senior Player of the year award, followed by Micaela O Conner who won the coveted senior ladies award. Jamie Spillane and Eoghan Cronin won the Junior and Minor Player awards respectively. Seamus Clifford who has been instrumental in coaching our very successful Scor na nOg

Tra na gCeist teams won back to back All Irelands received the prestigious Cultural/Social award. Special mention on the night was given to our Outstanding Sinsear Scor figure dancers who won another All Ireland under the tutelage of Triona Mangan and Maureen Hegarty Vogels.

The Life-time Achievement award was given to the worthy and hugely popular Cait O'Sullivan Darcy. After some heartfelt words by Cait a wonderful night of dancing and song continued into the early hours aided by magnificent music by the "Two Mikes".

Andrew Garnett



Words of Wisdom - Guest of Honour Dara Moynihan and Lifetime Achievement recipient Cait O'Sullivan Darcy



We Who Are Old

Heroes of 1966 celebrate 50th anniversary of historic triumph

Spa's historic first O'Donoghue Cup victory, in 1966, was celebrated at a reunion in the clubhouse on 11th August 2016. The licence, which is given to old men to reminisce and dream that they once could play, was fully availed of.

The evening commenced with Mass, at which the deceased men of 1966 were specially remembered. We all felt enriched that we had known colleagues like Mick Kissane, Mickey Cronin, Paddy Dennehy, Timmy Joe O'Sullivan, John "Dunn" O'Donoghue, Denis Fenton, John Joe Foley, Tadhg O'Sullivan, Con Doherty, Mick Fitzgerald and Donie O'Leary.

Fittingly, the Mass was celebrated by Fr. Michael O'Donoghue, one of the heroes of 1966. Our neighbour, Fr. Tom Looney, concelebrated. Seán Moynihan, who travelled from Derry for the night, did the readings. The Muckcross church choir, which featured the distinctive voice of 1966 veteran Johnny Doolan, added greatly to the liturgy by leading the singing. The altar had been beautifully prepared by Cáit O'Sullivan Darcy and Majella Fitzgerald. Later in the night, we were joined by Fr Paddy O'Donoghue, in whose father's memory the cup was first presented.

The surviving players and representatives of deceased players and mentors were then introduced to the packed hall. Refreshments were served by a marvellous team of willing helpers.

There followed a most enjoyable evening during which memories were resurrected and stories told, most of which were true. A special welcome was given to Dan Dwyer, our opponent in the 1966 final. Tim Ryan, Chairman of the East Kerry Board, gave an interesting history of the O'Donoghue Cup.

The veterans of 1966 greatly appreciated being honoured by the club in such a dignified way. Their one fervent wish was that the O'Donoghue Cup, for too long now a stranger, would once again become a regular visitor to the beautiful club facilities in Tullig. The night showed the GAA at its best – interacting with the local community while remembering deceased colleagues and honouring their relatives. We hope that increasing commercialism in the higher echelons will not further weaken these core values of the GAA.

Donie O Sullivan and James Gleeson



Players and family members from the 1966 Team. Front L-R: Fr Michael O'Donoghue, Jim Gleeson, Gerard Mangan, Donie O'Sullivan, Denny Doolan, Tom Morris, Johnny Cronin, Johnny Doolan, Sean O'Sullivan Middle L-R: Seanie Moynihan, John Michael O'Sullivan, Majella Doherty, John Kelly, Michael Gleeson, Mary O'Connor, Patricia Foley, Pat Casey, Jack Morris, Connie Doolan, Steve McCarthy, Barry O'Connor Back L-R: Mike O'Leary, Kieran Dennehy, James Fitzgerald, Martin Kissane, Sean O'Donoghue, Sean Moynihan, Brian Fenton, Tom Riordan, Mark Fenton



Members of the Gleeson-O'Donoghue family at the 1966 Reunion with Spa players Jim and Michael Gleeson



Sean Kelliher and Fr Michael O'Donoghue at the 1966 Reunion



Three generations of the Cronin family



Billy, Tom and Jack Morris



Brian Fenton with Kathleen, Damien and Mark Fenton



Denny and Kathleen Doolan with their sons Michael and Denis



Sean O'Donoghue, Donie O'Sullivan, Joan O'Donoghue and Mick Gleeson



Kathleen Moynihan, Assumpta O'Donoghue, Seamus O'Donoghue and Sean Moynihan



Croke Park Lauds Spa GAA '31' Championship of Kerry

Forty-five long years have elapsed since the Spa '31' Championship of Kerry was initiated. Over the decades, it has proved to be a valuable fundraiser for the club and a social outlet for the members, not to mention the many fine card players who have graced its tables.

In an earlier era, it was organised as a weekly card game followed by a dance in the Ryan Hotel (now Hotel Killarney) and later the Castle Heights (now Killarney Heights Hotel). It attracted card players and set dancers from all over the county each week and continued for several decades.



Three club members who made outstanding contributions to Spa. L-R Tadhg O'Sullivan (GAA club Chairman for a record 17 years and founder of Spa -Muckross Community Games); John Wickham (made a huge contribution to the Spa 31' Championship of Kerry and the Spa GAA Social Initiative during his term as Chairman of the 31' Championship Committee); Tim Kelly who served as Chairman of Spa -Muckross Community Games during the 1970's and '80's when the club achieved much success

However, with the passing of time and the retirement and passing of so many card players, interest gradually waned. By the late 1990's, the club officers decided the time had arrived to review that format.

A committee comprising John Wickham as chairman, Johnny Cronin and Dave Herlihy, later augmented by Paddy O'Keeffe and Paddy B Lynch, whose father, Patrick Lynch, was a regular supporter of the weekly card drive.

The brief of the newly-elected committee was to review the format and replace it with a system whereby cards would be distributed to various venues around the county including Reenard to Valentia, Waterville and Dromid, and to Kenmare, Kilgarvan, Rathmore and Kilcummin and various other venues around east Kerry where the game of '31' was popular.



The late Denis P O'Sullivan Kilgarvan P.O., an accomplished 31' player who accompanied many fine players from his area of Kilgarvan to support the Spa 31' Championship of Kerry



A group of Spa members inspecting the State Merc during a visit to Áras An Uachtarain as part of the Spa GAA Social Initiative project: Johnny Randles, John B O'Sullivan, James Gleeson and John Wickham

Sponsorship was sourced from local companies including Quirk's Sand & Gravel, Mike Cronin Readymix and Pat Doyle Sand and Gravel. Following the passing of one of its long serving supporters, Johnny Kelly, his family kindly donated a perpetual plaque, the Johnny Kelly Perpetual Trophy, to be presented to the winners each season. They were also presented with Waterford Cut Glass and the runner-up received generous cash prizes.

The committee has done trojan work and has enhanced the image of the competition. When the former President of Ireland, Mary McAleese and her husband, Martin, launched the GAA Social Initiative, in 2009, with a view to creating more inclusiveness in local communities, particularly among older age groups, the Spa '31' Championship of Kerry received due recognition in Croke Park.



Members of this committee were received in Aras An Uachtarain and the chairman, John Wickham, RIP, briefed the President on the contribution the event had made to the Spa community and also to the wider communities of the county.



Committee members with the winners of the 2016 Card Drive: Paddy B Lynch, Johnny Cronin, Andy O'Regan, Paddy O'Keefe, Dave Herlihy

I wish to pay a special tribute to the organising committee for a job well done. Also a special word of thanks to the many people who have supported the event over the years; to the sponsors and the three local hotels - Hotel Killarney, Killarney Heights and the Torc where the final has been played in recent years.

John Kelly



Members of the 31' Card Drive Committee: Dave Herlihy, Paddy B Lynch and Paddy O'Keefe

Continuing success of Club Lotto

2016 was another successful year for our club lotto, launched in May 2012. There was one jackpot winner during the year when Aileen O'Sullivan, from Cheshire Home, won €15,400 in February.

Since launching, there have been 8 jackpot winners, the most recent being Michael Kearney, from Woodlawn, in January 2017. Over €120,000 worth of prizes have been awarded as well as much more being raised to fund club initiatives.

I would like to thank all committee members and volunteers for their efforts throughout the year and all those who help with the on-going administration of weekly draws.

Thanks also to the host venues and other outlets where tickets are sold weekly. Special thanks also to the regular sellers of tickets whose efforts make the lotto the success it is and especially all those who support the lotto through the purchase of weekly or annual tickets.



Lotto winner Aileen O'Sullivan collecting her cheque for €15,400 in February 2016

The closure of Cronin's Shop in early 2016 was a great loss to the lotto as well as the Spa community. I would like to wish the best of luck and thanks to Patrick and Gene Cronin for their contribution while in the shop which, I am glad to say, still continues.

I would also like to wish committee member James Cahill a full recovery on behalf of all of us involved in the lotto who look forward welcoming him back soon.

The lotto is a key fundraising activity for the club and its continuing success relies on the on-going support of all members.

Once again, míle buíochas to everybody involved

Tadhg Hickey,

Lotto Committee Chairman



Lotto winner Michael Kearney collecting his prize worth €12,200 in January 2017



Pat Casey

The Muckross sportsman who became a loyal servant to Spa GAA club

Since the formation of Spa GAA club in 1948, many outstanding footballers and athletes from the Muckross area have made a major contribution to the club, as well as to Spa--Muckross Community Games and athletic clubs. Today, the Spa-Muckross link continues to grow.

When Spa won the senior East Kerry title in 1949, the team included the Mulligan brothers, James and Patrick, Timmy Looney, Jim Walsh, Patrick Fleming and Jim Galvin. During the intervening 70 years, many more fine footballers and athletes from the area have donned the blue and gold with distinction, none greater than Pat Casey, from Gortagullane, who made a noble contribution to the club over a 24-year period.

Pat's first introduction to competitive football was with Naomh Mhuire in the national schools' competition, forerunner to East Kerry Bord na nOg, and he also assisted Moyeightragh in the Town Leagues before joining the reformed Spa GAA club in 1962.

A year later, he was a member of the Spa/Glenflesk minor side which won the East Kerry minor league and his colleagues in that team included Mick Gleeson, Johnny Cronin, Brian Fenton, Denny Doolan, Jack Morris (Spa) as well as Derry Crowley, Pat Favier, Paddy and Ger O'Donoghue (Glenflesk).

As Spa did not have a senior team, Pat and many of the aforementioned members of the Spa side which won the EK minor league, in 1963, joined the St Finan's senior club, which was then competing in the senior East Kerry championship for the O'Donoghue Cup, and figured in the half-back line with the hospital side defeated in the 1964 O'Donoghue Cup final by Dr Crokes.

When St Finan's became defunct in 1965, a decision was taken by Spa to affiliate for the East Kerry senior championship in 1966 and, as happened away back in 1948, this side emerged victorious over Kilcummin in the final. Pat Casey turned in a masterly display at midfield against Kerry senior player Tim Sheahan, a display which made him an automatic choice for the East Kerry senior team which won four senior county championship titles and the inaugural All-Ireland club championship, 1965 to '71.



Spa Senior Team 1970--Front L-R Barry O'Connor, Connie Doolan, John O'Sullivan, Diarmuid O'Sullivan, Pat Casey (Capt), Johnny Doolan, Donie O'Sullivan, Johnny Cronin. Back L-R John Cahill, John Joe Foley, Tom Morris, Sean O'Sullivan, Michael Gleeson, Denny Doolan, Paudie O'Mahoney, Jim Gleeson, Jack Morris, Mick Myers

He continued to assist Spa to further O'Donoghue Cup victories in 1969, '71, '72, '74, '75 and '77, as well as senior county league and county intermediate championship titles in 1974 and '75.

His displays in those games gained him recognition by the Kerry senior selection committee and he was a member of the Kerry senior panel which defeated Dublin in the 1975 All-Ireland final.

Indeed, he would surely have retained his place on the Kerry panel but for the fact that he joined the Merchant Navy for

some years, returning during the summer months to assist Spa. He also helped Spa to win an East Kerry hurling title in 1985.

Pat also distinguished himself as an oarsman with the Muckross RC and helped the club to win the senior sixes title at Killarney Regatta in 1973.

During his school days, he was a noted athlete and won many prizes at the annual Loreto national schools' sports day. At one event, he helped Loughquittane NS win the trophy for the best overall school in the county.

Suffice it to state the entire Casey family has enjoyed much success in the sporting arena, with Pat's wife, Breda (nee Kissane), winning numerous races with both St Finan's and Muckross rowing clubs at Killarney regatta.

Family members Pdraig, Sean and Denise have carried on the rowing tradition, with Sean representing Ireland in rowing at the Olympic Games.

Denise, now married into another famous sporting family, the Coffeys from Muckross, is deeply immersed in all aspects of Muckross RC and has also figured on many of the club's winning crews in recent years

Spa GAA club are indeed indebted to Pat Casey and the extended Casey family for their contribution to sport, including Gaelic football, over so many decades.

John Kelly

Patsy Cremin

President Chiarraí Coiste na nÓg- Ag Mol an Óige



Sean Kelly, Chairman of Kerry Co Board, presenting the Sceilig Crystal Communications Award for Youth to Patsy Cremin of Spa GAA Club in 1995

The term, 'legend', is very often bestowed on the great players of a club, and Spa has a long list of names worthy of the title. One of the self-effacing men in the background who would never describe himself as such is Patsy Cremin.

Too bad, Patsy. All of them would, and so would many others. Patsy was the driving force behind the development of Bord (now Coiste) na nÓg, not just in Spa but far beyond.

Juvenile GAA relied almost entirely on the schools and occasional club tournaments and challenge games up to the early '60s. Coaching was almost unheard of. Kerry had great footballers, but we relied very heavily on tradition and happenstance to develop their skills.

Some people, among them Patsy Cremin, had another idea. It was Ger McKenna, now President of Kerry GAA, who first proposed at the 1966 County Convention, that a Committee be set up. County Chairman, Dr. Jim Brosnan, agreed and drafted in the great Johnny Walsh, of Ballylongford, to set it up.

April 1967, almost exactly a half century ago. Tralee's CYMS Hall (the Austin Stack Pavilion, like the idea of a County League, were first mooted by Dr. Brosnan the same year). Dr. Jim Brosnan, Kerry Secretary Tadhg Crowley, Johnny Brosnan (Chairman), Vice Chairman Fr. James Linnane, Declan Horgan (secretary), Br. Clancy (treasurer) and more people to represent the clubs and areas.

No full list of attendees survives, but certainly two men present were Tadhg O'Sullivan (for East Kerry) and Patsy Cremin (Spa). Patsy was well-known as a gateman for East Kerry and his work with the Fitzgerald Stadium Committee, as well as his work for Spa.



Patsy Cremin with the Tommy Markham Minor Cup.

Patsy has remained involved ever since, serving on the Kerry Bórd na nÓg Executive Committee all along while always sowing good crops among Spa's juveniles – crops that have yielded many a rich harvest down through the years! Patsy is now President of Coiste na nÓg Chiarraí.

Patsy has coached (and occasionally cajoled and coaxed) many a Spa juvenile team since then. Spa, and Kerry, are immeasurably richer for his unstinting contribution of time, expertise, and patience.

Many of his proteges have worn the green and gold as well as the blue and gold. One in particular was a special moment for Patsy when his son, Denis, led out the Kerry minors as captain in 1982 (the same year that Féile Peil was founded). Denis was corner back and his clubmate Mike McAuliffe was corner forward (Glenflesk's Davy O'Donoghue would be another familiar name), but unfortunately Kerry lost out to Dublin by 1-11 to 1-5 in the final, with Mike kicking 1-3.

In 2015 and 2016, Patsy's grandson, Mike Breen, won two minor All Irelands with Kerry and his sister, Tara, has won two U16 All Irelands with Kerry.

Patsy has never once looked for recognition for all that he has done for Spa and for children all over Kerry, but he was honoured in 1995 with the GAA Communications Award for services to Bord na nÓg at Local, Divisional and County levels. The Award was presented by Sean Kelly, then Chairman of Kerry County Board.

Patsy was also the popular inductee of the East Kerry Hall of Fame in 2015.

No-one has deserved it more.

Jimmy O Sullivan Darcy



James Cahill The Complete Clubman



EAST KERRY CHAMPIONS 1987

As a good friend of James, it is indeed an honour for me to pen these few words in appreciation of his enormous contribution to the club, both on and off the field, over the last 40 odd years. Born in Knocknahoe in 1961, as a young boy he attended Raheen national school and even there was impressing everyone with his football skills. One evening in 1971 at the tender age of ten, James ventured to the famed O'Keeffe's field to watch some underage training under the very astute Timmy Joe O'Sullivan, or Thado as he was affectionately known. Later that evening he was told "bring your boots the next night and you can stand in goal".

That started a fifteen-year relationship with the great Thado as his team trainer and mentor and, most of all, they also became great friends. Quotes are from the Spa GAA club publication, "50 Blián Ag Fás", published in 1998, and from James' own tribute to Thado, R.I.P., 1986. There are transport memories always of that beloved grey Escort, NIN 447.

James went on to play at all underage levels, winning his first county medal at U16 in 1974 when only 13 years of age. His secondary education took him to St. Brendan's College and afterwards to the Dublin Institute of Technology where he qualified in June 1985.

He started work that October as Environmental Health Officer in Limerick with the Mid Western Health Board, (now the HSE West) and is now based in Newcastlewest. During those years, James played at minor and U21 levels and made his senior debut in 1980 at right full back, winning Kerryman Shield honours that year – a very successful start to his senior career which was to span the next 23 years as an outstanding defender at both senior and junior level.

He won three O'Donoghue Cup medals in 1985, 1987 and 1989 and had the honour of being captain in 1987.

Spa Junior Team 1999
Front Row . Frank Hickey Patrick Cronin Donal Cronin Ross Donovan Conor Gleeson Aidan Cronin Paul Casey Brendan D'arcy Garret Doolan Paul O Donoghue. Back Row. Dan Kennedy Tadhg Hickey Philip Coffey Kevin Healy Danial Doonan Kieran Dennehy Paul Russell Kieran Herlihy James Cahill Conor O Riordan John Bowe Cathal Flaherty Padraig Lynch Maurice Cronin.





SPA HISTORY COMMITTEE WITH CLUB MEMBERS & SUPPORTERS
1998

In 1987, Killarney again had a good run, with victories over Shannon Rangers and Feale Rangers before going down to eventual champions Kenmare by one point in the semi-final, 1-8 to 1-7. Paudie O'Mahoney, former Kerry goalkeeper and Spa trainer during those years, described James as "the best leader I ever witnessed in a dressing room". Great praise indeed.

As his senior career was coming to an end in the early nineties, Later that year, he was called into the Kerry senior team for the National League campaign and had some memorable performances in the green and gold under the watchful eye of the supremo himself Mick O Dwyer who was the bainisteoir at the time.

In 1986, Spa and Legion amalgamated as Killarney for the senior county championship and James played a starring role at left full back, having some memorable performance over West Kerry, Desmond's and Dr Crokes before going down to a star-studded Austin Stacks in the final.

James went on to play a major role in the junior team for many years winning the County Urban League in 1996, O'Sullivan Cup East Kerry in 1994 and did the double in East Kerry in 1997, winning the Junior League and Championship (O'Sullivan Cup).

As you can see from those results, James brought his enormous experience to great effect at junior level before eventually retiring in 2003 at the grand old age of 42 after a glittering career in the blue and gold. James was coach to numerous underage teams during his playing years, with some great results, and served as a senior selector for three years.

Having served on the executive committee of the club for many years, James was asked to become chairperson of the development committee in 2001 by the then chairperson, Andy O'Sullivan. The job was to oversee the complete redevelopment of the clubhouse with a state of the art, new development to serve all sections of the club for the years ahead. There was general agreement our facilities were completely outdated and other clubs in the parish were offering much better facilities.

James went on to put together a talented, hard working committee who did Trojan work over the next five years securing National Lottery funding, Munster Council grants, capital grants etc. James was meticulous in these applications as I well remember, being development officer with Kerry County Board at the time.

His attention to detail, photographs and back-up material was exemplary. After five years of tremendous work and fundraising, the grand opening took place on 26th March 2006, officially launched by Uachtarán C.L.G. Sean Kelly and John O'Donoghue T.D., Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism. A truly historic day for the club.

In the opening day programme, James wrote a wonderful article entitled, "From Dream to Reality", full of facts, humour and the usual "hop balls" from the man himself, a wonderful story covering the five years involved. If you have not read it get your hands on it and enjoy a most entertaining read.

James still runs that development committee and the club has since redeveloped our second pitch to a full-blown, sand based pitch with provisions for lighting installed, which will come into use later this year. The committee are at present developing the open area alongside the main hall as a state of the art gym with all the necessary facilities. To you James and that dynamic committee many thanks to you all for your excellent vision and attention to detail.



When the lotto was launched in May 2012, James was again highly involved and staunchly supported its launch. He again saw it as a great source of income for the club and it has been a huge success. James again is a permanent fixture in the Killarney Heights Hotel for the Lotto draw.

Charity events over the years have been a huge part of James' leisure time and he cycled and walked for numerous charities and fund raising events over the years. I know some of the people involved in these events and the feedback is to say a huge thank you for all your efforts.

James lives in Ballycasheen with his wife, Carmel, and sons, Paul and Mark. He is currently recovering from serious injuries sustained while climbing Carrauntoohil last July. Being the man he is, a wonderful recovery is in progress following nine months of intensive rehabilitation, a true testament to a great sportsman and administrator.

James, we wish you well in all your future endeavours, a speedy recovery and most of all a heartfelt thanks for your enormous contribution to a club I know you hold dear.

Your friend,
Ger Galvin



Impressions of a 'blow-in' to SPA

It's almost 40 years ago, but memories of arriving in the Spa area are still fresh in the mind.

Being a "blow-in" can sometimes be difficult. Being in the GAA, however, makes integration into a new community much easier. Irrespective of location, the GAA ethos is the same everywhere and opens doors to lasting friendships. The GAA has that fraternal sense of belonging that makes people feel at home.

I had been involved in my native Gneeveguilla club for several years and already knew many members of the Spa club. I also had relatives in the Spa area and that helped.

In the late 1970's, there was sharp-edged rivalry between the clubs. Gneeveguilla were enjoying their best run ever on the football field – not equalled since then – but they never got anything soft from Spa. Along with Dr Crokes, they were the top three clubs in east Kerry at the time.

Tadhg O'Sullivan was then chairman of Spa and the club's newly-developed playing pitch and dressingrooms were officially opened, in June 1979. I was there for the official opening which was marked by a Kerry v Cork challenge game, enjoyed by a large crowd on a sunny Sunday.

The same month, Gneeveguilla won the O'Donoghue Cup for the first time, defeating Spa in a hard-fought final. A few months later, my wife, Kathleen, and I moved to Tiernaboull and have happily remained there ever since, raising our family there.

At that time, the Castle Heights Hotel (now Killarney Heights) was the venue for a big social gathering each week - games of "31" on Sunday nights. There were several tables of card-players and legendary "31" players such as my kinsman, Pats Casey, Patrick Cahill and Mick and Mrs Sugrue, to name just a few, ruled the roost.

Not being in the same card-playing league as the aforementioned, I tended to pass a little time in the bar among Spa people, with Bernie O'Riordan and Marie as hosts. Hailing from Gneeveguilla, I often had to put up with "ribbing" from the likes of John O'Leary, the "Farmer" brothers, Donie and Andrew, the Herlihy brothers, William and Dave, and other rascals. Balls were hopping.

After a few years, I was roped in as secretary of Coiste na nOg, with Denny Doolan as chairman, and later as editor of the club's history, 50 Blian Ag Fas, 1948-1998.

It's been great to see the Spa club grow and prosper with the passing years. The modest "field" has changed beyond recognition and now boasts superb facilities, pitches, a multi-purpose sports hall, meeting rooms, dressingrooms and other amenities of which it can be proud.

The redoubtable Tadhg was the first chairman I knew. He was a formidable character, a most influential and dedicated man who demanded, and got, high standards. He set the benchmark and laid down the foundations which so many other worthy officers of the club have continued to build on. For me, a few things stand out in the club.

First, there's a deep-rooted community spirit through which the club has helped establish a distinct identity for the area it serves.

Second, there's that inspiring sense of loyalty and passion of its members of all ages, with some outstanding leaders coming forward over the years.

Third, there's a genuine willingness among the members to work selflessly for the club and support it in every way, be it on the terraces, the stage, the dancefloor, even the golf course, or with tractor or pick and shovel when needs be.

Fourth, the club is about much more than football; there are many other things going on - take its enviable, national record in Scor, as an example.

Donal Hickey



Donal Hickey with his wife Kathleen and son Tadhg.



SPA Welcome

Donie O'Sullivan, Mick Gleeson and Sam Maguire in a Torchlight Procession in 1970

Sunday September 27th, 1970, will live long in the lore of the GAA in Spa, as on that day Donie O'Sullivan climbed the steps of the Hogan Stand to receive the Sam Maguire Cup. His team mate and fellow Spa man, Michael Gleeson, turned in a storming display, finishing with a personal tally of 1-1 to pave the way for a well- deserved back to back victory for the Kingdom, which had also won the title, in 1969, with a side captained by Johnny Culloty, of Killarney Legion.



Donie O'Sullivan lifts the Sam Maguire in Croke Park

Kerry GAA records show the last time the Spa area was represented on a county senior team was in the 1930s when the former club chairman, Tadhg O'Sullivan, and his brother, Mick, wore the county colours in the National League. Way back, in 1901 and 1902, Denis and Thado O'Keeffe, from Lissivigeen, were regulars on the senior county side.

Donie O'Sullivan first came to the notice of the county selectors, in 1960. Playing in the county championship with Dr Crokes, he turned in a masterly display and his long kicking became a feature of those games.



Mick Gleeson

After suffering successive defeats by Down, in 1960 and 1961, Kerry were back in the race for Sam, with Donie O'Sullivan figuring at right full back. After turning in another fine performance against Dublin in the semi-final, Kerry reached the 1962 final against Roscommon which they won rather easily. Due to his studies in Maynooth College, Donie was unable to take his place in the final, but was still rewarded with his first Celtic cross.

Following suffering successive defeats to Dublin in the 1963 semi-final, and Galway, in 1964 and 1965, the county underwent a rather lean period until Jackie Lyne took over the management of the side in 1968. After bowing out rather narrowly to Down in that year's final, Kerry were once more back in the final, in 1969, and went on to defeat Offaly.

By now, Donie had copperfastened his place on the senior panel as one of the finest defenders in the country. His kicking of the dead ball became a feature of his play.

After Spa defeated Dr Crokes in the 1969 O'Donoghue Cup final and the all-conquering East Kerry team went on to win the county championship that season, Donie was the automatic choice for the captaincy of the Kerry team, in 1970.

Mick Gleeson first came to the notice of the county selectors after turning in a fine performance with East Kerry in the 1964 and 1965 county finals and was selected for the opening rounds of the National League, in 1965, against one of the country's finest full backs, Leo Murphy from Down.

When Kerry lost to Down in the 1968 final, Michael was a substitute. By then, he was figuring regularly with UCD in Sigerson Cup competitions and with East Kerry in the county championship, which helped to enhance his career as a county player. When Kerry faced Offaly in the 1969 final, Michael was an automatic choice for right full forward. Kerry won by a three-point margin to claim their 21st title.

After a historic round the world tour, Kerry were back in contention to regain the title, in 1970. In their opening game against Limerick, Mick Gleeson notched 2-1 and Kerry defeated Cork in the Munster final rather easily. After suffering a scare against Derry in the All-Ireland semi-final, during which Johnny Culloty was forced to bring off a fine penalty save from Sean O'Connell and Derry kicked a second penalty wide, Kerry survived to meet Meath in the final, on September 27th 1970.

For the first time, a Spa footballer would lead the team around Croke Park, before an attendance of 71,775. Kerry were dealt a sore blow in the 33rd minute of the game when Donie, who was playing a captain's part, was forced to retire with a muscle injury and replaced by Seamus Mac Gearailt.

Kerry gradually gained the initiative and when Den Joe Crowley, of the Rathmore club, scored a memorable goal, they were on the road to victory and Donie was ready to accept the Sam Maguire on the Hogan Stand.

Donie, Mick and Sam received a royal welcome on arrival at Killarney railway station, on the Monday night. A huge contingent of Spa supporters led the torchlight parade, which received much media acclaim.

John Kelly

The following is a verse from a poem:

"Their hearts are high in Spa tonight for Gleeson scored a goal and notched a point while Lynch got five O'Dwyer the same great score O'Connell two and Higgins two With quick replies from Meath O'Donoghue and Griffin Pat they scored two points each"

... a verse from a poem by Pat Crowley which appeared in The Kerryman on the Friday after the game.



Ongoing pitch and facilities development



Michael Cronin from the Field Committee assessing the New Pitch

For over four decades, the club has continued its expansion policy of investment in the purchase and development of land for playing fields, clubhouse, sportshall and parking facilities.

Virtually all GAA clubs now have at least two playing fields. In more recent times, we have witnessed the development of floodlit facilities for both playing and training purposes as well as the development of all-weather playing areas which can be used nearly the whole year round in any conditions.

And, as players increasingly expect better surfaces, the standards of natural grass pitches are improving through better routine maintenance.

Spa has a fine record in this regard and our progressive outlook, volunteerism and enterprise have left us very well equipped for the years ahead to fulfill the needs of the community and to enable us to reach our full potential.

Huge thanks are due to the foresight of the club's management, the support of the local community, the willingness of the O'Keeffe family to initially rent their land to us and, subsequently, to sell the land which allowed us to develop our own facilities. Indeed, all the club land of about 13 acres was purchased from Denis and Teresa O'Keeffe and family. Denis was our late vice-president

The following is a brief outline of our pitch development activity: In 1974, we completed the purchase of 5.25 acres for our main pitch. This ground was ploughed and re-seeded in 1978, 2 drains were installed under the bank on the roadside and drains were also provided under both goal areas.

In 1990, floodlights were installed on the roadside bank. At that time, we were one of the only 2 clubs in the county with training lights.

Back in the 1970's, the preparation for games involved grass cutting with a silage harvester and trailer for collecting. A water ballast land roller, filled with as much water as you could possibly get into it, was used occasionally to level out humps and hollows. Today, the maintenance work carried out on this ground includes regular mowing, sanding, fertilising and verti-draining.

In 1984, we completed the purchase of a further 2.50 acres for a juvenile pitch. Again this pitch was levelled, ploughed and re-seeded. Over the years, we had great difficulty with water lodging on top, as there was no natural drainage. This was due to the fact that the best of the soil was buried with over 4 feet of sub-soil in the leveling process. Repeated efforts to deal with this problem failed.



First Sod is Broken on the Top Pitch



New Surface Laid



First Sign of Growth



Ger Mangan and Michael O'Shea deep in discussion as the Ball Stop is put in place



Work begins on the new Gym



Indoor developments

In 2007, a further 5.25 acres was purchased to give us a second, full-size pitch, additional ground for car parking and training areas. Work commenced in late 2009 to develop and extend the existing juvenile pitch into a full-size senior pitch.

This was completed in 2010 and the pitch was available for use in early 2011.

However, due to severe compaction problems, we had ongoing problems with drainage and poor grass growth and it was decided to upgrade the pitch with drainage and a sand-carpet surface at a cost of about €108,000.

Following receipt of a Sports Capital Grant of €80,000, work commenced in 2015 with deep ploughing, grading, installations of drains, spreading of 3 inches of sand before fertilising and seeding in August 2016. It is planned to have this pitch ready for use, weather permitting, in April.

Regular maintenance, including sanding, verti-draining and fertilising, is important to maintaining good playing surfaces. This can cost us in the region of €12,000 annually. Regular mowing is also essential.

We are also very fortunate to be able to avail of the services of both the Community Employment and Rural Social Schemes which allows us to maintain the grounds to the highest standards. This also reduces considerably both the volunteer and financial burden on the club.

The maintenance of sand carpet pitches will require sand being continually applied to prevent earthworm activity reducing infiltration rates of the sand. Although these types of pitches have proven to perform well in winter, there could be hardness issues which could cause drainage problems in very dry weather.

Sand carpet pitches are also high maintenance in terms of nutrients and water and need intensive aeration and sanding programmes to prevent a "capping" layer from building up on the surface.

Further works will involve completing the work on the underage/training pitch, ball-stop netting, floodlighting, dugouts, pitch fencing, safety improvements to spectator areas, carpark surfacing, completion of the perimeter track, landscaping of the roadside bank – all being subject to the availability of the necessary funding.

Michael Cronin



The panel from the 'Hop Ball' fundraiser for Coiste na nÓg



Spa teams receiving their jerseys from sponsors Dalys Supervalu

Dara Moynihan and the 2016 All Ireland Minor Champions welcomed to Spa



All Ireland winning Set Dancers in Scór na nÓg 2017 with coach Triona Mangan



Spa dancers who performed on the Late Late Toy Show, with the organiser Noreen O'Sullivan



Sheila and John Kelly with Brian Fenton and Coiste na nÓg Secretary Bernie Courtney



Winners of the 2016 Golf Classic

Dara Moynihan and Michael Gleeson celebrating with the Tommy Markham Cup