Maothail
Mohill

Gleann an Chairthe Chuainin
Glencar Manorhamilton

Naomh Muire-Cill Tochairt
St. Mary's-Kiltoghert

Naomh Pádraig Droim Dhá Thiar
Dromahair St. Patricks

Barr na Cúile
Barnacoole

Seán Ó hEisiln Béal an Átha Mór
Ballinamore-Sean Ó Heslin's

Gort Leitreach
Gortletteragh

Gaeil Liatroma
Leitrim Gaels

Achadh an Mheasa
Aughavas

Naomh Osnat
St. Osnat's

Eanach Dubh
Annaduff

Gaeil na Meilge
Melvin Gaels

LIATROIM

CELEBRATING 125 years OF THE GAA

Naomh Cailiín-Fionach
Fenagh St.Caillins

Gleann Fearna Coillte Clochair
Glenfarne Killyclogher

Achadh na Sileann
Aughnasheelin

Eisiinn
Eslin

Achadh an Mhuilinn
Aughavillan

Cluain
Cloone

Droim Oir Bhealaigh
Drumreilly

Cill Tiobraid
Kiltubrid

Carraig Álainn
Carrigallen

Baile na gCléireach
Ballinaglera

Droimcaorthainn
Drumkeerin

Gaeil na hAilne
Allen Gaels

DPS Print 071 9671472

Scéal CLG Liatroma 1984 - 2009

Scéal CLG Liatroma

1984 - 2009

CELEBRATING 125 years OF THE GAA

€20

Scéal CLG Liatroma
1984 - 2009

Foilsithe ag Coiste Chontae Liatroma CLG

Eagarthóir: Tomás Ó'Móráin

Muintir Liatroma
sa bhaile is thar lear

Thank you for your generous support
of the Green and Gold!
Coiste Chontae Liatroma CLG

Buíochas

Sincere thanks is due to the following in relation of the publication of
Scéal Liatroma 1984 – 2009

Cathaoirleach Coiste Liatroma Gearóid MacSamhráin, for his initiative in marking the 125th Anniversary of the GAA in this manner

Jim Conlon, for his patience in the tedious task of word processing the hundreds of manuscript pages handed to him by the Editor

The Editor and staff of The Leitrim Observer for generous access to files and photographs, with special thanks to Frankie Smith

Leitrim Observer photographer Willie Donnellan, who over the years, has captured every emotion of the GAA at club and county level and who so generously shares those images for all our GAA publications

Photographer James Molloy, for compiling his inimitable collages that portray the many facets of the GAA in Leitrim

Leabharlannaí Liatroma Seán Ó Súilleabháin and the courteous and helpful staff of Leitrim Co Library in Ballinamore for the use of and assistance with the excellent research facilities available there

The various Boards and sub-committees of Coiste Liatroma

Michael Foley, DPS Print, Carrick on Shannon and his staff, with special thanks to DPS Graphic Designers Kevin Moran and Lisa Foley

All those who submitted material or photographs

The GAA body of officials, players, clubs and supporters in Leitrim that provide the passion to make "Scéal Liatroma" possible and worthwhile

Míle Buíochas do Uachtarán CLG Críostóir Ó Cuana for honouring us by officially launching "Scéal Liatroma" on 2ú Nollaig 2009

Ag féachaint romhainn

Leitrim GAA Strategic Plan 2009-2015

Towards the end of 2008 the GAA at National Level launched its Strategic Vision and Action Plan 2009-2015. This document has become the forerunner for all levels of the Association to become involved in the Planning Process.

Throughout 2009, the Provincial Councils and all 32 County Committees have been engaged in the process of Strategic Planning for the period 2009-2015. 2009 has been dedicated to the development of the County Plan for Leitrim and the completed document will be launched by Uachtaran Cumann Luthchleas Gael Criostoir O Cuana on December 2nd 2009.

When developing this Plan, Leitrim County Committee was conscious of the eleven main 'Themes' outlined in the 'National Strategic Vision and Action Plan'. In order to ensure uniformity and facilitate the implementation of both Plans simultaneously, all of the actions identified in the Leitrim Plan have been categorised under one of the following themes:

Games Development
Games Schedule
Inclusion and Integration
Urbanisation, Rural De-Population and Club Structures
Volunteers and Officer Support
Club, Culture and Community
Planning
Communications
Funding Opportunities and Financial Excellence

In order to arrive at a finished document, the process involved a number of meetings of the main County officers with Provincial Council during the early and middle part of the year, the setting up of a County Steering Committee and Focus Groups to cover each of the areas outlined above. The County Forum involved up to 6 members from a variety of roles among each of the county's 24 Clubs. This forum was held on October 28, 2009 and was attended by 138 members and proved a most valuable and enlightening exercise.

A parallel exercise has been carried out by an Underage Review Taskforce and the views of all clubs were sought on all aspects of Underage Activity. The findings and recommendations of this Task Force have fed into the Strategic Plan also and will be launched on the same night as an equally important document towards the future of Leitrim GAA.

All feedback from the Focus Groups and Club Forum has been intertwined into a plan that it is hoped will serve Leitrim GAA well over the period up to and including 2015, by which stage it is expected that the planning process will be embedded in all units of the Association.

It is expected that all Leitrim Clubs will begin the process of Club Planning in 2010.

Teachtaireacht an Uachtaráin

Is cúis mhór áthais dom cúpla focal a scríobh ar fhoilsiú an leabhair tábhachtach seo. Táimid go léir an-bhródúil as stair ginearálta an Chumainn agus is rud iontach é stair Liatroma a chur le chéile mar seo. Mar sin ba mhaith liom mo comhghairdeas a dhéanamh dóibh go léir.

I would like to extend my congratulations to the Leitrim County Committee and to former Secretary Tommy Moran in particular, on the publication of this updated version of your county history. The last major updating of your history came in the GAA's Centenary year and while a mere 25 years have passed in the interim, those very years have been decorated with exceptional achievement for Muintir Liatroma.

The glory days of the early 90's, of course, spring readily to mind and no one will ever forget those heartwarming scenes in Hyde Park Roscommon in 1994, when Declan Darcy lifted the Nestor Cup to end 67 years of heartbreak for the county, as Leitrim finally ended their drought to become champions of Connacht.

Either side of this great victory, there were Connacht titles to savour at both U-21 and Minor levels and All Ireland final appearances for both the County's Vocational and Junior teams have followed in the interim. These successes have been victories for everyone who ever pulled on the Green and Gold of Leitrim or who worked at club or county level in the hope that one day, what often appeared an impossible dream, might finally become reality.

Of course I am also well aware of the excellent facilities that have been developed all over the county in recent years and I salute the outstanding commitment of the people of Leitrim in this respect. The recent redevelopment at Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada brought particular attention to the county and the stadium is one that all Leitrim people can rightly be proud of.

But the GAA of course is about much more than just the playing of our games. It is about the cultural and social development of all its members and supporters. It is about families; it is about people; it is about place. The commitment of the clubs and people of Leitrim to the first Lá na gClub held last May, to the staging of Féile na nÓg a few years back and on an annual basis to the likes of Scór, demonstrates a deep passion and love for your county and for all that the GAA represents and strives to achieve.

I hope you enjoy Scéal Liatroma and the memories it will evoke. The past 125 years have marked but the beginnings of the GAA in Leitrim. I sincerely hope that the next 125 will prove even more successful for the people of your proud county and I have no doubt that they will.

Rath Dé ar an obair,
Criostóir Ó Cuana
Uachtarán

Reamhrá

Mar Cathaoirleach Coiste Chontae Liatroma Is mór an onóir domsa an reamhfhocal seo a scríobh don an leabhar seo,

It is a great honour for me as Cathaoirleach of Coiste Chontae Liatroma to write a foreword to this great publication in a year in which we celebrate 125 years of our great Association.

This publication is a follow on from Scéal Liatroma which was published at the centenary of the GAA in 1984 and it is a record of the events from 1984 to 2009. One thing for certain, the GAA provides many memories, and while the eighties were largely uneventful on the intercounty scene, the nineties certainly made up for it.

The winning of the All Ireland B championship, the many games with neighbours Roscommon, beating Galway in Tuam, the winning of the Connacht final in 1994, playing National League in Croke Park, the winning of the Connacht Minor Championship, playing in the All Ireland minor semi final in Croke Park against a Tyrone team which was later to become famous, took us to the new Millennium.

Foremost among our memories here is our Connacht final appearance in Millennium year, our excursions across the Atlantic to play New York in the Connacht Championship, our many one point defeats, an appearance in Croke Park for the Tommy Murphy Cup, numerous All Ireland Scór successes, success on the hurling field, and many successful outings in handball including the most recent success world title success. The Leitrim Ladies winning the All Ireland Intermediate football championship in Croke Park and of course the hosting of the National Finals of Féile in conjunction with our neighbours Roscommon and Sligo was another huge occasion for the county.

Infrastructure development also took place, with land being bought for the provision of training facilities, and of course the opening of our new stand in Páirc Seán MacDiarmada. The provision of the stand Ardán Mhic Shamhráin, at a cost of €3.2 million, is a monument to Leitrim's loyal supporters, with once again the McGovern Bros Aughavas, who were famously associated with the sponsorship of our senior team in the nineties, sponsoring the naming rights and providing much needed cash to help to defray costs.

Our ever loyal supporters were also busy, as usual providing vocal backing for their beloved Leitrim teams at all levels and whether it be Hyde Park, Gaelic Park, Wexford Park, or Croke Park, our supporters were always there, and on numerous occasions became familiar with the going exchange rate for our many trips to take on London at Ruislip.

Clubs have also have been very busy providing top class facilities for their players and the standard of playing pitches in the county at the moment is a credit to the many people who have given freely of their time to ensure that future generations of GAA players will have the very finest playing and training facilities.

When I wanted to update our history in conjunction with the 125 years celebration of our association, I asked Tommy Moran, a man who has given a life time of dedicated service to the GAA at local, provincial, and national level, a man whose heart and soul is in the promotion of his beloved Leitrim, to take on the job. Of course he willingly accepted, and quietly set about doing the job with the minimum of fuss.

I want on behalf of Leitrim GAA people at home and all over the world, to say a very sincere thank you to Tommy Moran for the enormous amount of time, work and energy he has put into this marvellous production. We are eternally grateful to him, and the people who assisted him, for recording the many memories of Leitrim GAA over the last 25 years and leaving us with a legacy for the present and future generations of Leitrim GAA supporters to enjoy.

Go raibh maith agaibh

Mise Le Meas

Gearóid MacSamhráin
Cathaoirleach

ScéaL CLG Liatroma 1984-2009

Scéal ClG Liatroma 1984-2009 has been a labour of love for me as I tried to portray just what Cumann Lúthchleas Gael has meant to Leitrim and its people over the past quarter of a century.

Scéal CLG Liatroma 1884-1984, edited by Seán Ó Súilleabháin had recalled a changing century, from the early days of playing for the parish with pigskin footballs to an era of well structured clubs and games and with a new focus on playing and spectator facilities.

Leo Kenny's and Tommy Moran's 1996 production Leitrim Green and Gold gave a taste of further advancements in this regard, with pride of place going to the Connacht Championship team of 1994 and its morale-boosting aftermath for the county.

In Scéal na Milaoise – the county's Millennium Production – Séan Ó Súilleabháin gave a brief over-view of the inter-county scene, but his main aim was provide a platform for all Leitrim clubs to fly their flags of personal efforts and achievements.

A number of clubs have issued their own publications – with Ballinamore Sean O'Heslin's producing a Club DVD – and all of these will be treasures locally for generations.

Scéal CLG Liatroma 1984-2009 would certainly have plenty of material available for research and thousands of print images from which to select – so filling pages would not be a problem. But what I felt Coiste Chontae Liatroma wanted, was a summary of the progress or otherwise of the Association in the county since the GAA Centenary in 1984. I trust that these pages will mirror, to some extent, the main developments of the past 25 years, all of which were the result of GAA people in the county rolling up their sleeves and devoting countless hours of voluntary effort, whether as a player, club officer, parent, teacher, club member. Lotto co-ordinator, fund-raiser, supporter, team trainer, coach, county officer – an endless list who form the army of workers that are the envy of sporting organisations around the world.

So *Scéal Liatroma* is mainly about people, about you and your neighbour who have made the GAA what it is. Sadly so many have gone on Slí na Fírinne, the ones mentioned here are but a small representation of the hundreds we have lost, to the immense grief of their families and to the overall loss to their clubs and counties. Sonas na Síoraí dóibh go léir.

There are celebratory pages too, when we showed the world Leitrim knows how to show our pride in our green and gold footballers, hurlers, handballers, Scór performers --- anyone representing us in a green and gold jersey.

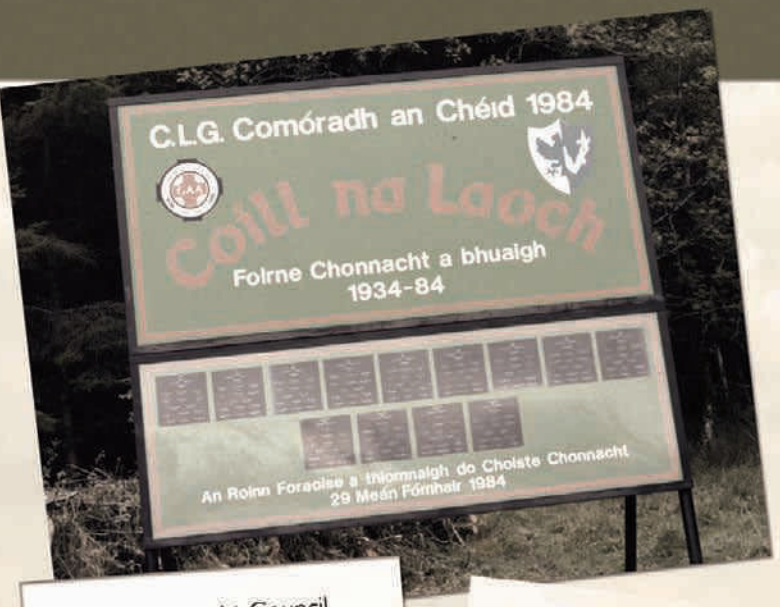
Generosity and good-will are evident in these pages also, as sponsors, fund-raisers and the Supporters Club members – during the boom times and now in the recession – are there to swell the coffers, because we want Leitrim to win, we want the best for our players, spectators and especially our young people.

Your name or your photograph may, or may not appear in this publication --- but you are included in here though, because this book is dedicated to the whole GAA family throughout the county and you are an important part of that family – there is a special bond between all of us Leitrim people. If you are in the county, living elsewhere in Ireland, or overseas on even the farthest away continents, that love of our county seems to continue to burn brightly.

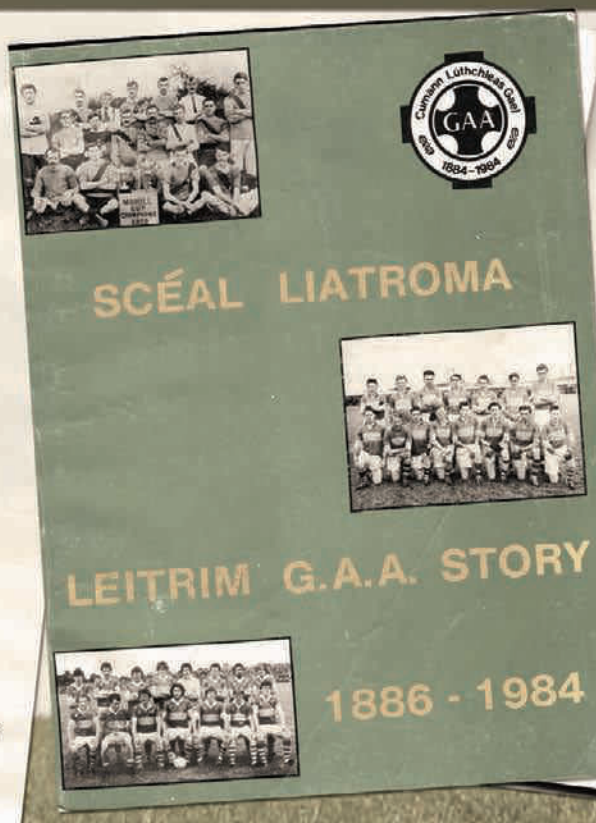
May the flame of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael continue to shine throughout the Leitrim world for the next 25 years, right up to the next chapter of the on-going tale that is Scéal Liatroma.

Tomás Ó Móráin

Ag féachaint siar ar

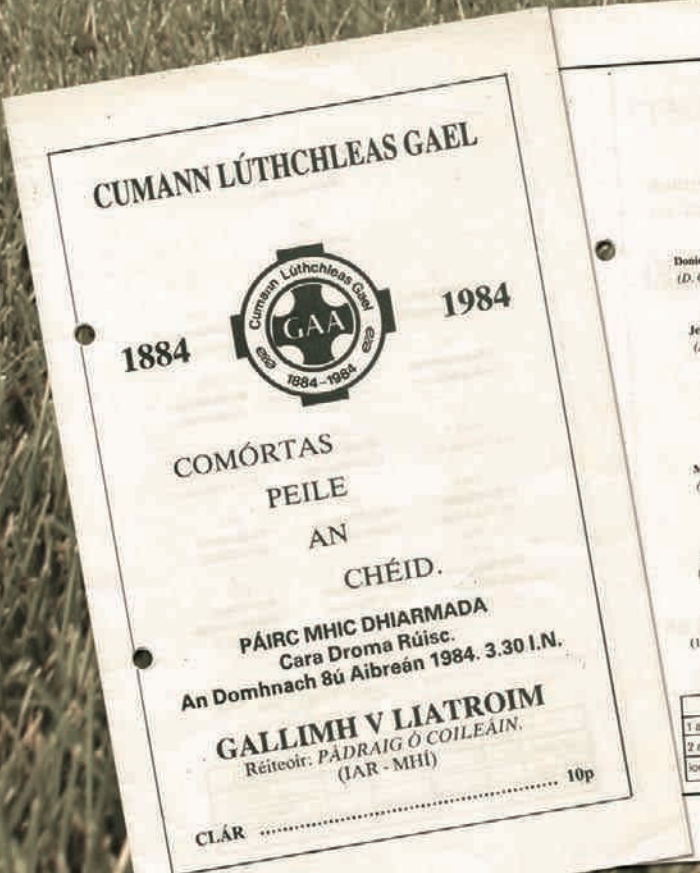


In 1984 Connacht Council planted trees in Drunmkeerin Forestry to commemorate Connacht's winning Railway Cup football teams.
A tree was named in memory of each player.



DELEGATES AT THE 1889 COUNTY CONVENTION 20th OCTOBER, 1889

Mohill Faugh a' Bealaghs—John Magennis, Hugh Reynolds
Eslin Sarsfields—John Flynn, Patrick Faughnan
Gortletteragh Campaigners—Michael Heslin, Michael Reynolds
Ballinamore William O'Briens—Owen Morohan, Jas. McLaughlin
Cloone Sons of O'Connell—J. Healey, J. Maguire
Ballinaglera Gladstonians—Hugh Ferguson, John McSweeney
Keshcarrigan O'Sullivans—James Rutledge, Bernard Bohan
Carrick-on-Shannon Emmets—James Wallace, A. Coyle
Bornacoola Hugh O'Neills—J.J. Kellegher, Andrew Reynolds
Gowel Lord Edward Fitzgeralds—William Doherty, J. McCrann
Drumshanbo St. Patricks—J. McManus, P. Sullivan
Annaghduff Parnellites—J. Gilhooly, J. Warde
Kiltubrid Redmonds—Thomas Beirne, John Moran
Drumsna Connaught Rangers—James Honan, M. Mahon
Fenagh Sons of St. Caillin—Michael Coonan, Michael Murphy
Killinummery P.A. McHughs—J. Mulroney, M. Duignan
Up. Drumreilly Charles Kickhams—P. Maguire, Brian McEnroy
South Gortletteragh Michael Dwyers—T. Donnolly, J. O'Neill
Lr. Drumreilly John Dillons—Pat Dolan, M. McGovern
Gorvagh Brian Boru's—M. Doonan, F. Beirne
Oughteragh Wolfe Tones—Pat Flynn, Phil Gaffney


CUMANN LÚTHCHLEAS GAEL

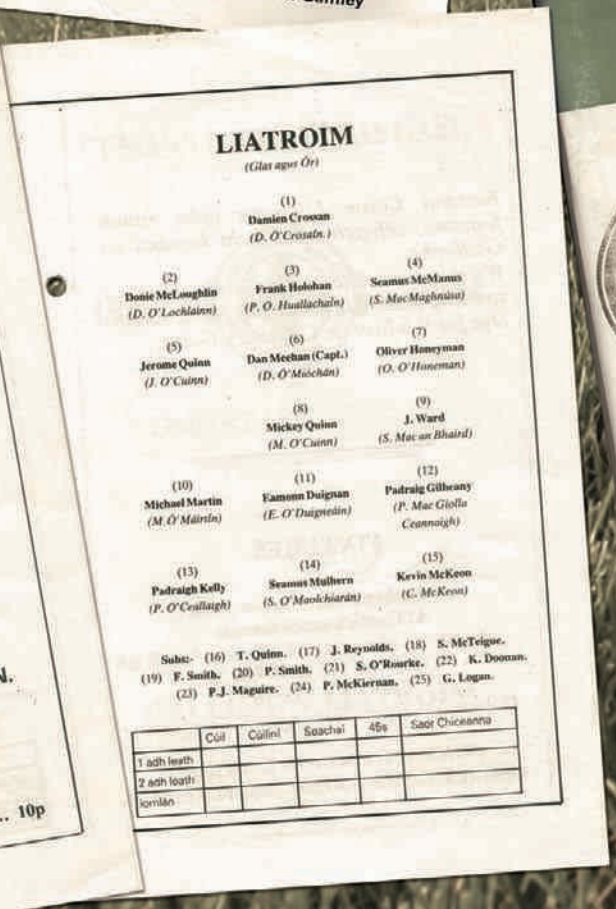
1884 — 1984

COMÓRTAS PEILE AN CHÉID.

PÁIRC MHIC DHIARMADA
Cara Droma Rúisc.
An Domhnach 8ú Aibreán 1984. 3.30 I.N.

GALLIMH V LIATROIM
Réiteoir: PÁDRAIG Ó COILEÁIN. (IAR - MHÍ)

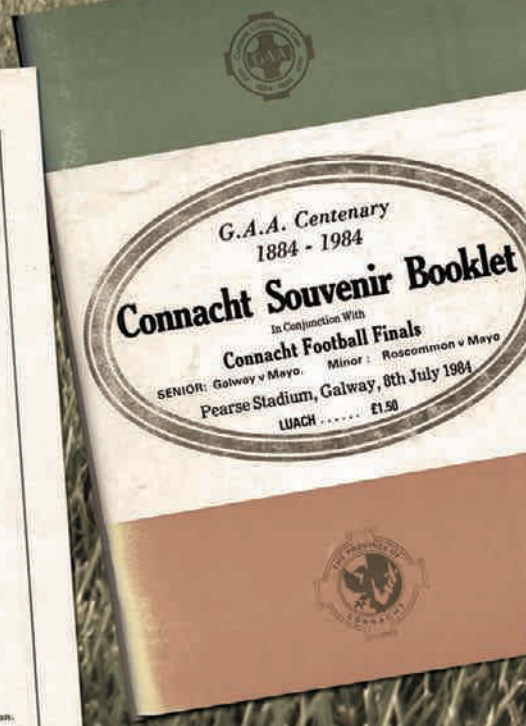
CLÁR 10p


LIATROIM
(Glas agus Ór)

(1) Damien Crossan (D. Ó'Crosáin.)
(2) Donie McLoughlin (D. O'Lochlainn)
(3) Frank Holohan (P. Ó. Huallacháin)
(4) Seamus McManus (S. Mac Maghnúis)
(5) Jerome Quinn (J. O'Cuinn)
(6) Dan Meehan (Capt.) (D. Ó'Miúcháin)
(7) Oliver Honeyman (O. O'Honeman)
(8) Mickey Quinn (M. O'Cuinn)
(9) J. Ward (S. Mac an Bhaird)
(10) Michael Martin (M. Ó'Máirtín)
(11) Eamonn Duignan (E. O'Duigneáin)
(12) Padraig Gilheany (P. Mac Giolla Ceannaigh)
(13) Padraigh Kelly (P. O'Ceallaigh)
(14) Seamus Mulhern (S. O'Maolchiaráin)
(15) Kevin McKeon (C. McKeon)

Subs:- (16) T. Quinn. (17) J. Reynolds. (18) S. McTeigue. (19) F. Smith. (20) P. Smith. (21) S. O'Rourke. (22) K. Doonan. (23) P.J. Maguire. (24) P. McKiernan. (25) G. Logan.

	Cúl	Cúlíní	Seachaí	45s	Saor Chicéanna
1 adh leath					
2 adh leath					
Iomlán					



Bhliain an chéid 1984

Published by Leitrim County Board GAA
1984

SCÉAL LIATROMA

Cumann Lúthchleas Gael GAA 1884-1984

LEITRIM GAA STORY
1886 - 1984

EDITOR
SEÁN Ó SUILLEABHÁIN

1984 "Scéal Liatroma" committee
Back row l-r: Pat Clarke, Fr. Dan Gallogly, Des Guckian, Andy Redican, Joe Daly, Padraig Leydon.
Front row l-r: Aiden MacGabhann, Michael Whelan, Séan Ó'Súilleabháin (Editor), Tommy Moran, Eamonn Tubman

Bliain Comóradh An Chéid

1984

CLUICHI CEANNAIS PEIL

LIATROMA

MIONUA:- 1.45 I.N.
Achadh Na Sileann V Béal An Átha Móir

SÓISIR:- 3.00 I.N.
Achadh Easa V Aislinne

SINEAR:- 4.15 I.N.
Achadh Mhadileann V Sean Ui h-Eislin

PÁIRC SEÁN MAC DIARMADA
CARA DROMA RÚISC

An Domhnach 26.8.1984.

Kiltubrid Pipe Band
And Aughavas Youth Band
In Attendance.

LUACH - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 30p.

SENIOR:

Achadh Mhaoileann

GORM AGUS BUI

(1) Tomas O Cuinn (Thomas Quinn)

(2) Brian O Cuinn (Bernie Quinn) (3) Martin O Flannagain (Martin Flanagan) (4) Deasun O Cuinn (Des Quinn)

(5) Seamus O Cuinn (Seamus Quinn) (6) Seamus Mac Tadhg (Seamus McTeague) (7) Sioroim O Cuinn (Jerome Quinn)

(8) Micheal O Cuinn (Michael Quinn) (9) Pius O Flannagain (Pius Flanagan)

(10) Padraig Mac Giolla Fhaonaigh (Padraig Gilheaney) (11) Proinnsias Mac Gabhann (Frank Smith) (12) P. S. Mac Conduibh (P. J. McNiff)

(13) Padraig O Flanagan (Pat Flanagan) (14) Nollaigh Mac Giolla Fhaonaigh (Noel Gilheaney) (15) Damian Mac Giolla Fhaonaigh (Damian Gilheaney)

Ional: (16) Gearoid O Flanagan (Gerry Flanagan), (17) Sean Mac Aodh (John McHugh), 18) Cathal O Ceallaigh Charlie Kelly), (19) Proinseas Mac Tadhg (Francis McTeague), (20) Donaill O Culnn (Donal Quinn), (21) Padraig Mac an Phrioraigh Pat Prior), (22) Micheal O Pluincead (Michael Plunkett), (23) Conchuir Mac Aodh (Conor McHugh).

	Cuil	Cúilini	Seachal	455	Saor Chiceanna
1 adh Leath					
2 adh Leath					
Iomlán					

SENIOR:

Sean Ui hEislin

GIAS AGUS OR

(1) Damian O Crossain (Damian Crossan)

(2) Sean Creimer (Sean Creamer) (3) Niall O Gallchoir (Niall Gallagher) (4) Brian Mac an Ghallogiaigh (Brian Gallogly)

(5) Mairtin Mac Diarmada (Martin McDermott) (6) Oilibhear Honeyman (Oliver Honeyman) (7) Seamus O Hiabhai (Jimmy Heavey)

(8) Antoin Mac Craith (Tony McGrath) (9) Padraig Mac Ciarnain (Patrick McKiernan)

(10) Gabriel O Darsaigh (Gay Darcy) (11) Seosamh Mac Gabhainn (Joey Smith) Capt. (12) Aodh O Murchu (Hugh Murphy)

(13) Sean O Crossain (Sean Crossan) (14) Proinnsias O Hiabhai (Frank Heavey) (15) Gearoid O Logain (Gerry Logan)

Subs: (16) P. McKeon, (17) F. Maguire, (18) C. O'Reilly, (19) B. Breen, 20) R. Dolan, (21) T. Conlon, (22) G. Curran, (23) P. Martin.

	Cuil	Cuilini	Seachai	455	Saor Chiceanna
1 adh Leath					
2 adh Leath					
Iomlán					

Still hopeful – after 100 years!

The progress of the county senior footballers was regarded by many as the barometer of success in Leitrim. We still talked of the heroes of 1927 and of the great county teams of the late 1950's, but we longed for much more than one-offs or close calls.

The Under 21 Connacht Championship winning team of 1977 was providing the backbone of the senior side of the early 1980's and we could see improved performances, though the hard luck stories continued. Particularly so was an exciting Connacht championship clash with eventual all-Ireland finalists Galway in Carrick-on-Shannon in 1983, on a day when a little more experience and football savvy could have helped us end a long litany of defeats to the Tribesmen.

Back Row: *Brian Stenson, Gerry Mahon, Sean Murray, who became Cathaoirleach Coiste Liatroma in 1985, Brendan Burns and Tommie Flynn.* ***Front Row:*** *Tommy Moran, George O Toole, Tomás O Ríordáin and Tony Mc Gowan*

The GAA Centenary Year in 1984 had started well, with a convincing championship victory over Sligo but any hopes of further progress in the Connacht campaign were firmly dashed by Mayo. So Leitrim was now heading into the second century of the GAA with just one Connacht senior title to its credit.

Irrespective of the great work being done at club and county level in all aspects of the Association, there was still that yearning to make an inter-county breakthrough. Would the remaining years of the 1980's fulfil that dream?

A major stumbling block to counties like Leitrim in preparing teams to compete at a high level was a lack of funding due to the meagre income from club championship games and other sources. This problem would be greatly eased by the foresight of one

Eamonn Duignan the power behind the Leitrim Supporters Club

of Leitrim's star players, Eamonn Duignan of Mohill, who went on to become the powerhouse behind the Leitrim GAA Supporters Club and in 2009 Eamonn is still fulfilling that role.
The impact of the Supporters Club is intrinsically linked to the workings of the county board and due credit must be given to all those who worked on the coalface of the club, whether in Leitrim, Longford, Sligo, Westmeath, London, New York and especially in Dublin. One of the most consistent fund raisers for the Board has been the annual Leitrim GAA Golf Classic in Dublin, spearheaded originally by Joe Layden, and later by Barry Donnellan, backed by a dedicated hardworking committee and by a succession of generously-minded sponsors.

In glamour counties fund raising is often linked to holiday funds for players or such like, but in Leitrim it was necessary just to keep the wheels turning and to properly prepare our inter-county teams at all levels. Much of the energy of the main officers was necessarily

Leitim longed for a repeat of the 1927 success. Pictured here is Ned Dolan's medal from 1927.

focused on finance, a factor that demanded even more time consuming efforts on behalf of the county. It is also important to acknowledge the unselfish generosity of Leitrim GAA supporters – they too have always been prepared to make personal sacrifices for the good of the "green and gold".

In 1985 Séan Murray of St, Mary's had replaced Gerry Mahon as Caithaoirleach and used his great insight into the workings of the County Board to set up management and other structures to maintain the effective running of a comprehensive club fixture programme and to have a series of budgetary controls in place. Like all his predecessors he longed for inter-county success, while also ensuring that the day-to-day workings with sub-committees and clubs were efficient and streamlined.

Team Managers were becoming ever more intrinsically linked in people's minds to the success or otherwise of counties and it must be said that anyone in a team management position in Leitrim had always striven to enhance the talents and develop the potential of our county's sides. No Team Manager or Selector could ever have been faulted for lack of effort.

Steering the county in 1985
Declan Mc Cabe (team manager) centre, with selectors Noel Crossan, left, and Brendan Harvey.

So, what would 1985 bring? Declan McCabe and his selectors (Noel Crossan & Brendan Harvey) continued the process of team building around the well-established stars Michael Martin and Mickey Quinn, both of whom were selected on the Connacht Railway Cup Team for the semi final against Munster in January 1985.

Initial success came with a victory over Sligo in the Connacht Championship by 3-7 to 0-11 after a replay. But once again Mayo proved our downfall, inflicting a 2-11 to 0-5 defeat in the semi-final. So there was the long wait till the National League commenced in Autumn.While there was a great air of optimism in the west in general, due to the opening of Knock Airport amid the gleaming smiles of Monsignor Horan and Taoiseach Charlie Haughey, things were gloomy in Leitrim football.

The one bright spark in the league was a victory over Westmeath, thanks to a last minute point by Ciaran Mahon – a man who had the distinction of playing Minor, Under 21 & Senior football with Leitrim that year, also finishing as the county's top scorer and receiving the County Player of the Year award.

"Leitrim Observer" sports journalist Declan Tierney was far from impressed with the county team's performance in the league and was scathing in his criticism —-

"It now looks as if the state of football in the county is at crisis point again & seemingly the best they can hope for in the league is a couple of places up from the dregs of the table…" `

This came after the loss to Offaly and Declan had more to say after Leitrim lost the last NFL game of the year to Sligo on the score 3-4 to 1-6 —-

"The tale of woe continues —- this was another painful chapter in Leitrim's downward saga in the league —- the wise ones were the ones who stayed away – of course there can be the excuses that Leitrim are trying to build a team and there are promises that everything will come right for the championship next year —- lets face it for once and for all, Leitrim football has plummeted to the depths—-"

Declan's words would have touched many a raw nerve, but in Leitrim GAA we were nothing if not resilient, so we were not discouraged by the criticism and continued to live in hope, something we had been doing for the

One of Leitrim's greats Frank Holohan

first century of the Association. If the GAA was to be measured in Leitrim on inter-county success, then we'd have closed shop years ago. But it can be very hurtful if a lack of effort or organisation is implied.

There were words of encouragement too in the pages of the "Leitrim Observer", in the form of a poem submitted by a county GAA follower, who described himself as "an exiled disillusioned Leitrim supporter"

"Arise again
and train and train
with might and main
and maybe someday
on a distant shore
a Leitrim fan
will walk with head erect again"

While the poem had a memorial card feel to it and the supporter had become disillusioned, there was a glimmer of hope inherent in the lines – but were we going to have to wait until we reached a "distant shore" in Heaven or elsewhere?

The first Connacht Championship game for Leitrim in the GAA's second century was against Sligo at Markievicz Park, when the sides finished level and the replay in Carrick on Shannon brought some joy to Leitrim followers with a 3-7 to 0-11 victory – at least we were off to a winning start. But, as had happened so often over the years, we lost out in the Semi-final to Mayo by 2-11 to 0-5, a rather comprehensive defeat.
There was little joy for Leitrim in any grade in 1985 with the Minors losing to Sligo in the championship & the Under 21's being swamped by 3-14 to 1-5 by Mayo, though many of that Leitrim Under 21 side went on to become senior stars in ensuing years. The greatest footballing disappointment was losing the Connacht Junior final to Galway in a game Leitrim had totally dominated up to the closing minutes — the maroon and white continued to be our bogey team.

LIATHDRUIM (Sinsear)
Dathanna - Glas agus Ór

1
Damian Mac an Crois
Damien Crossan
(Seán Ó Heslins)

2 Donal Mac Lochlainn, Donie McLoughlin (Fenagh)
3 Séamus Ó Ruairc, Séamus O Rourke (Carrigallen)
4 Tomás Ó Cuinn, Thomas Quinn (Aughawillan)
5 Oilibhéar Honeyman, Ollie Honeyman (Seán O Heslins)
6 Dónat Ó Miochain, Don Meehan(Captain) (Ballyboden, Dublin)
7 Seán Ó h-Eilin, Shane Heslin (Gortletteragh)
8 Micheál Ó Cuinn, Mickey Quinn (Aughawillan)
9 Séamus Mac a' Bhaird, Jimmy Ward (Ballyboden, Dublin)
10 Caoimhin Mac Eoin, Kevin McKeon (Civil Service Dublin)
11 Micheál Ó Mairtin, Mickey Martin (St. Mary's)
12 Pádraig Ó Ceallaigh, Pádraig Kelly (Glencar, Manorhamilton)
13 Seosamh Mac Raghnaill, Joe Reynolds (Eslin)
14 Brian ODúill, Brian Doyle (Carrigallen)
15 Proinsias OFlainn, Frank Flynn (Gortletteragh)

1-0 0-1

Fir Ionaid
16 Eamon Ó Ruairc Enda O Rourke (Glencar, Manorhamilton)
17 Máirtin Ó Flanagáin Martin Flanagan (Aughawillan)
18 Séamus Mac Manáis Séamus McManus (Carrigallen)
19 Micheál Ó Deigneáin Michael Duignan (Civil Service Dublin)
20 Séamus Ó Maoilchiaráin Séamus Mulhern (St. Mary's)
21 T. P. Mac Lochlainn T.P. McLochlainn (Fenagh)
22 Proinsias Ó h-Uallachain Frank Holohan (Drumreilly)
23 Seán Mac Niocaill Seán Nicholl (Aughavas)
24 Ciarán Ó Fallúin Kieran Fallon (Skerries, Dublin)

1-6

LIATHDRUIM (Na Mionúirí)
Dathanna - Glas agus Ór

1
Séamus Ó Seanlá
James Shanley
(Aughnasheelin)
2 Michéal Ó Duibhir, Michael Dwyer (Allen Gaels)
3 Cillian MacLochlainn, Killian McLoughlin (Fenagh)
4 Geároid MacCoisdealbha, Gerry Costello (Mohill)
5 Pádraig Ó Haicéad, Pádraig Hackett (Allen Gaels)
6 Micheál Maguidhir, Michael Maguire (Drumreilly)
7 Oilibhéar Ó Coill, Oliver Coll (Aughnasheelin)
8 Seán Ó Gaoithín, Seán Gulben (St. Mary's)
9 Aodh Ó Gráltáin, Hugh Gralton (St. Mary's)
10 Ciarán Ó Maitiúna, Kieran Mahon (Captain) (Seán O Heslin's)
11 Seosamh Ó Cathasaigh, Joe Casey (Aughavas)
12 Diarmaid Ó Briain, Dermot O Brien (Seán O Heslin's)
13 Caoimhin Ó Dochartaigh, Kevin Doherty (Cloone)
14 Pól Ó Ciarán, Paul Kieran (Seán O Heslin's)
15 Dónal Ó Conghaile, Donal Connelly (Glencar Manorhamilton)

Fir Ionaid
16 Criostóir MacAodha Chris McHugh (Carrigallon)
17 Pascal Ó Maitiúna Paschal Mahon (Bornacoola)
18 Tomás Ó Laoidaigh Thomas Lee (Carrigallen)
19 Peiter MacAtachán Peter McGaraughan (Carrigallen)
20 Tomás Ó Coigligh Thomas Quigley (Annadull)
21 Tomás MacAogáin Thomas Egan (Mohill)
22 Diarmaid MacEoin Dermot McKeon (Mohill)
23 Aidan Ó Ruanaí Aidan Rooney (Glencar Manorhamilton)

1-7

On the club scene it was a good year for Gortletteragh, defeating old rivals Séan O'Heslins in a replayed county final and then going on to later take the Division 1 League title, as well as capturing the County Senior Hurling Championship with many dual players involved. Drumkeerin had their day in the sun too winning both the Junior A Championship and Division 2, while Drumreilly, a club that would later feature prominently at under age level, won their first Rural Minor League title. St. Mary's continued their dominance in the county at Juvenile level.

There was an international aspect to 1985 when Under 14 & Under 16 teams from New Haven visited Leitrim and played a number of challenge games throughout the county. It was interesting to note that there were many familiar Leitrim family names among the touring party, proving yet again that many who had emigrated from the county were doing their bit to keep the GAA flag flying overseas.

The ongoing good work in pitch development continued, marked by the official opening of the Fenagh GAA Club grounds, dedicated to the memory of Séan Leyden, a star member of the 1977 Connacht Under 21 championship team, who had been tragically killed in the prime of life. Séan's father, Packie, had been a member of the Leitrim All-Ireland Junior team of 1938 and all his family were deeply involved in the Association – there were always close ties between local communities and the GAA club.

Other clubs were also busy improving and developing their facilities with the Bornacoola club finalising work on their club grounds set to officially open in 1986. The 1980's was a decade of poor economic success but yet clubs were able to secure the financial support necessary to keep the club facilities to a high standard. Future years would show greater advances in this regard, with more modern player and spectator facilities being provided throughout the county.

The fixture makers!
Back Row: Jackie Browne Tommy Moran John Mulligan, Paddy Mc Eneaney. Front Row George O Toole, Andy Redican, Gerry Mahon.

Protecting the hamstrings!
Members of the Gortletteragh senior squad prepare for the county final.

Cumann Luthchleas Gael
COISTE CHONTAE LIATROMA

CLUICHI CEANNAIS PEIL

Paire Mac Diarmada

Cara Droma Ruise

AN DOMHNACH 25-8-'85.

Soisir :
EANACH DUBH V. DROIM CAOTHRAIN
2.45 i.n. Reiteoir : P. O Floinn.
Sinsear :
Gortlitreach v. Sean
Ui h-Eislin
4.45 i.n. Reiteoir : S. O Phrioraigh.

CLAR - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 40p.

JUNIOR:

Eanach Dubh

DATHANNA: MARUN agus OR. (Colours: Maroon and Gold)

(1) Michael Lynch (Micheal O Loinsigh)
(2) Tim Shanley (Tadgh Mac Seanlaoich) (3) Cathal Lynch (Cathal O Loinsigh) (4) Sean Cox (Sean Mac an Choilligh)
(5) Lar Lynch (Lorcan O Loinsigh) (6) Gerry McLoughlin (Capt.) (Gearoid Mac Lochlainn) (7) Michael Lynch (Micheal O Loinsigh)
(8) Peter Rowe (Peadar O Rinn) (9) Gerry Newton (Gearoid O Naachtain)
(10) Chris Murray (Cristoir O Murrai) (11) Maurice Shanley (Muiris Mac Seanlaoich) (12) Gerry Flanagan (Gearoid O Flannagain)
(13) Declan Shanley (Deaglan Mac Seanlaoich) (14) Gerry McNamara (Gearoid Mac Conmara) (15) Frank Shanley (Proinsais Mac Seanlaoich)

Subs.: (16) Ken McManus, (17) Tommy Quigley, (18) Padraig Lynch, (19) Eamon Shanley, (20) Tom Gill, (21) Philip Duignan, (22) Declan Cox, (23) Colum Fox, (24) Eugene Cox, (25) Eunan Lynch, (26) Paul Keoghoy, (27) Francis Lynch.

Druim Caothrain

(1) Brian McWeeney
(2) John Harkin (3) Hugh McPartland (4) Michael Kelly
(5) Gabriel McKenna (6) Michael Smith (7) Hugh Duffy
(8) Thomas McKenna (9) Fergus O'Donnell
(10) Stan O'Grady (11) John McPartland (Captain) (12) Seamus Harkin
(13) Danny O'Shea or Noel Flynn (14) Brendan McPartland (15) Noel McPartland

Subs.—(16) Maurice O'Donnell; (17) Brian Kelly; (18) Brendan McKenna.

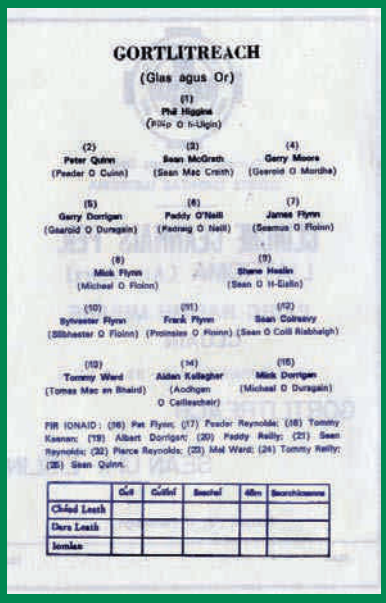
Dan Meehan clears his lines. In forefront is Diarmuid Sweeney

Finance raised its head at Board level during 1985 with lengthy discussion and more than a little innuendo in relation to expenditure. The Cathaoirleach Séan Murray wisely established a County Finance Committee both to raise funds ant to keep budgetary controls in place. A series of fund raising events in Dublin eased the financial burden and county selectors, Brendan Harvey, Paschal Mooney and others worked tirelessly in this regard. It was a fact of life that Leitrim's income from its own resources simply could not cover administration and team preparation costs, so great energy would have to be expended in raising supplementary finance.

Similar problems existed in many counties, all of whom would turn to supporters clubs, golf classics, major raffles, race-days and every possible fund raising gimmick in an attempt to fund their Boards and to properly prepare teams for inter-county competition.

It was to be some time before the GAA would eventually sanction sponsorship of county teams, a factor that was to open up new opportunities for county finances. And when this time did come, support for Leitrim was not found wanting with a succession of generously minded business people and companies rallying to the cause.

In 1985 the county lost one of its most ardent workers with the death of Kilian Burns, Glenfarne. Kilian had served his club in many capacities, including the position of secretary for many years and his genial personality was a great asset to his industrious work for the GAA.



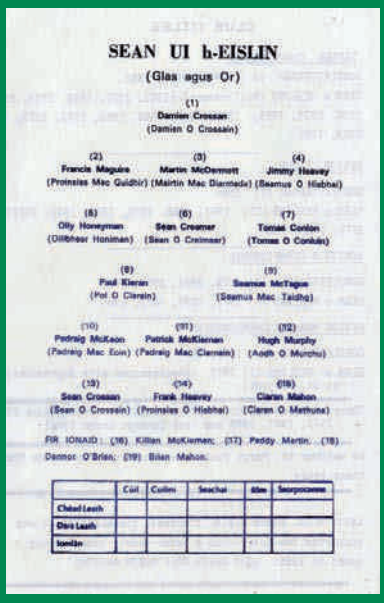
GORTLITREACH

(Glas agus Or)

(1) Phil Higgins (Philip O h-Uigin)
(2) Peter Quinn (Peadar O Cuinn) (3) Sean McGrath (Sean Mac Craith) (4) Gerry Moore (Gearoid O Murchu)
(5) Gerry Dorrigan (Gearoid O Dunagain) (6) Paddy O'Neill (Padraig O Neill) (7) James Flynn (Seamus O Floinn)
(8) Mick Flynn (Michael O Floinn) (9) Shane Heslin (Sean O h-Eislin)
(10) Sylvester Flynn (Silbhester O Floinn) (11) Frank Flynn (Proinsias O Floinn) (12) Sean Calreavy (Sean O Coill Riabhaigh)
(13) Tommy Ward (Tomas Mac an Bhaird) (14) Aidan Kelleher (Aodhgan O Ceallechair) (15) Mick Dorrigan (Michael O Dunagain)

FIR IONAID: (16) Pat Flynn; (17) Peador Reynolds; (18) Tommy Keenan; (19) Albert Dorrigan; (20) Paddy Reilly; (21) Sean Reynolds; (22) Pierce Reynolds; (23) Mat Ward; (24) Tommy Reilly; (25) Sean Quinn.

	Cull	Cuilinn	Seachtain	40m	Seachtcinnire
Chéad Leath					
Dara Leath					
Iomlan					



SEAN UI h-EISLIN

(Glas agus Or)

(1) Damien Crossan (Damien O Crossain)
(2) Francis Maguire (Proinsias Mac Guidhir) (3) Martin McDermott (Mairtin Mac Diarmada) (4) Jimmy Heavey (Seamus O Hiabhai)
(5) Olly Honeyman (Oilithear Honiman) (6) Sean Cromer (Sean O Creimear) (7) Tomas Conlon (Tomas O Conluin)
(8) Paul Kieran (Pol O Ciarain) (9) Seamus McTague (Seamus Mac Taidhg)
(10) Padraig McKeon (Padraig Mac Eoin) (11) Patrick McKiernan (Padraig Mac Ciarnain) (12) Hugh Murphy (Aodh O Murchu)
(13) Sean Crossan (Sean O Crossain) (14) Frank Heavey (Proinsias O Hiabhai) (15) Ciaran Mahon (Ciaran O Mathuna)

FIR IONAID: (16) Killian McKiernan; (17) Paddy Martin; (18) Dermot O'Brien; (19) Brian Mahon.

	Cúl	Cuilinn	Seachtain	40m	Seachtcinnire
Chéad Leath					
Dara Leath					
Iomlán					

***Gortlettragh**, the first Leitrim Senior Champions in the second century of the GAA, who defeated Sean O'Heslins in the replayed final*

CRAOBH CHONNACHTA 1985

PAIRC MAC DIARMADA

LIATROIM v SLIGEACH

MAIGH EÓ v LIATROIM

Liatroim

D. O Crossain
Damien Crossan
(Sean O Heslins)

Donal Mac Lochlainn (Fenagh) — Seamus O Rourke (Carrigallen) — Tomas O Cuinn (Aughawillan)
Oilithear Honeman (Oily Honeyman) (Sean O hEslin) — Donal O Meachain (Ballyvoden) — Sean O Heslin (Gortletteragh)
Seamus O Maoltheirn (Seamus Mulhern) (St Tiarnach's) — Micheal O Cuinn (Mickey Quinn) (Aughawillan)
Seamus Mac Maghnuis (Seamus McManus) (Carrigallen) — Seosamh Mac Reamoinn (Joe Reynolds) (Eslin) — Padraig O Ceallaigh (Padraig Kelly) (Glencar Manorhamilton)
Proinsias O Huallachain (Frank McGohan) (Drumreilly) — Brian O Duill (Brian Doyle) (Carrigallen) — Seamus Mac an Bhaird (Jimmy Ward) (Ballyvoden)

16. Killian McLoughlin (Fenagh) 17. Martin Flanaghan (Aughawillan) 18. Kevin Mckeon (Civil Service) 19. Michael Duignan (Civil Service) 20. T.P. McLoughlin (Fenagh) 21. Ciaran Fallon (Skerries) 22. Sean Mitchell (Aughavas) 23. Frank Flynn (Gortletteragh) 24. Michael Martin (St Mary's)

Liatroim	Cull	Cuilinn	Seachtain	40 m	Scor Chic
1st Leath					
2u Leath					
Iomlan					

1986

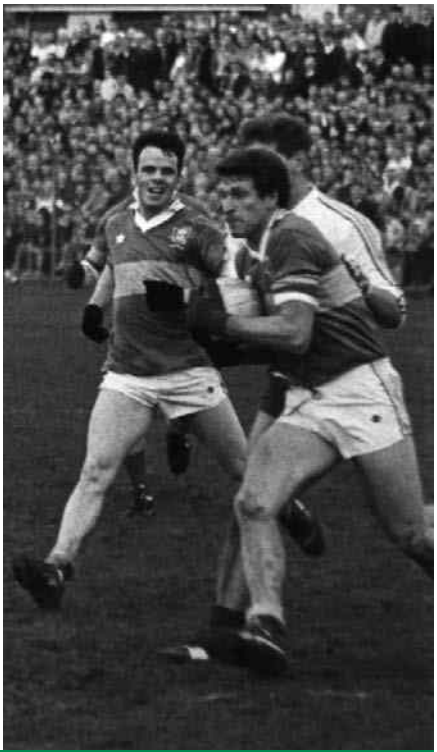
The 1986 convention saw former county secretary Tony McGowan take over as Chairman and in this role Tony became renowned for his up-beat, optimistic outlook, irrespective of how bleak affairs appeared or how many defeats the county team suffered. He could always sense there was light at the end of the tunnel but that tunnel still appeared long and windy – there was much work to be done and many disappointments to overcome before the ray of sunshine would appear.

On the financial front, the most audacious fund raising venture ever embarked on by the County Board was an outstanding success. Eamonn Duignan, Brendan Gormley & Tommy Moran acted as co-ordinators of a £100 draw with monthly prizes of top of the range cars plus attractive cash incentives. It was considered a gamble at the time, because in 1985, £100 was a steep asking price for a raffle ticket. But the county supporters rallied to the call, generating a net profit of £100,000. Amazed at the success other counties were quick to follow with similar ventures.

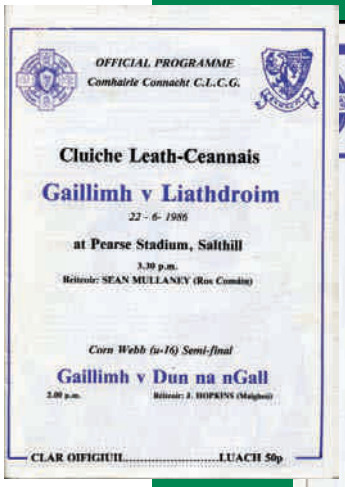
Michael Martin was still a regular on the Connacht Railway Cup team and was chosen on the training panel for the visit of the Irish team to Australia, though eventually missing out on the trip. Despite Michael's best efforts and leadership qualities with the county team, the year had started badly with heavy defeats in the National League to both Derry and Louth, leaving us second from the bottom of Division 3. The league would later revert to the more satisfactory system of four divisions – with just three divisions there was nothing more than prestige to play for, if you lost the first few games.

Michael Martin initiates another Leitrim move against Galway

The ball is in the Galway net – but Michael Martin and Brian Doyle rush in, just to make sure!



Brendan Conway (left) runs in to support Dan Meehan



OFFICIAL PROGRAMME
Comhairle Connacht C.L.C.G.

Cluiche Leath-Ceannais

Gaillimh v Liathdroim

22 - 6 - 1986

at Pearse Stadium, Salthill

3.30 p.m.

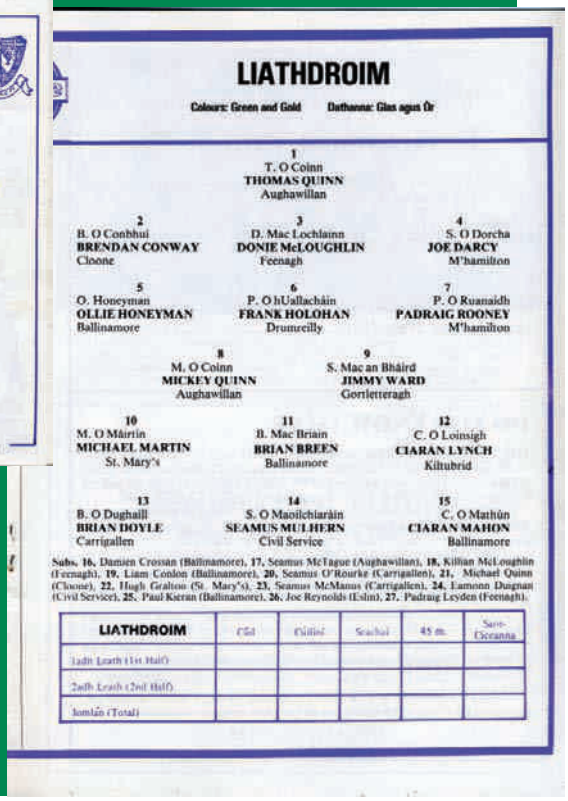
Reiteoir: SEAN MULLANEY (Ros Comáin)

Corn Webb (u-16) Semi-final

Gaillimh v Dun na nGall

2.00 p.m. Reiteoir: J. HOPKINS (Maigheo)

CLAR OIFIGIUIL.....LUACH 50p



LIATHDROIM

Colours: Green and Gold Dathanna: Glas agus Ór

1
T. O Coinn
THOMAS QUINN
Aughawillan

2
B. O Conbhui
BRENDAN CONWAY
Cloone

3
D. Mac Lochlainn
DONIE McLOUGHLIN
Feenagh

4
S. O Dorcha
JOE DARCY
M'hamilton

5
O. Honeyman
OLLIE HONEYMAN
Ballinamore

6
P. O hUallachain
FRANK HOLOHAN
Drumreilly

7
P. O Ruanaidh
PADRAIG ROONEY
M'hamilton

8
M. O Coinn
MICKEY QUINN
Aughawillan

9
S. Mac an Bhaird
JIMMY WARD
Gortletteragh

10
M. O Mairtin
MICHAEL MARTIN
St. Mary's

11
B. Mac Briain
BRIAN BREEN
Ballinamore

12
C. O Loinsigh
CIARAN LYNCH
Kiltubrid

13
B. O Dughaill
BRIAN DOYLE
Carrigallen

14
S. O Maoilchiaráin
SEAMUS MULHERN
Civil Service

15
C. O Mathún
CIARAN MAHON
Ballinamore

Subs. 16, Damien Crossan (Ballinamore), 17, Seamus McTague (Aughawillan), 18, Kilian McLoughlin (Feenagh), 19, Liam Condon (Ballinamore), 20, Seamus O'Rourke (Carrigallen), 21, Michael Quinn (Cloone), 22, Hugh Gralton (St. Mary's), 23, Seamus McManus (Carrigallen), 24, Eamonn Dugnan (Civil Service), 25, Paul Kieran (Ballinamore), 26, Joe Reynolds (Eslin), 27, Padraig Leyden (Feenagh).

LIATHDROIM	Cúil	Cúlíní	Seachad	45 m.	Saor-Ciceanna
1adh Leath (1st Half)					
2adh Leath (2nd Half)					
Iomlán (Total)					

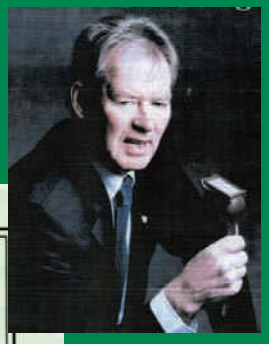
Our championship hopes for 1986 went up in smoke on Bonfire Night following a 2-15 to 2-8 defeat to Galway, so all the intensive training, planning and preparation went for nought. This was before the days of the "back door" qualifiers. Leitrim had submitted a motion to the 1986 Congress that competition be provided for counties eliminated in the early rounds of the championship and this motion was under consideration by the GAA's Coiste Riaracháin na g-Cluichí. Perhaps the motion sowed the seed for the Championship Qualifiers that were eventually introduced with great success.

Leitrim did participate in a "Summer League" but it lacked the championship bite and had a short lifespan. Séan Creamer and Kieran Brennan had joined the back room team of Declan McCabe, Brendan Harvey and Noel Crossan and their combined efforts and energies were dedicated to improving overall footballing standards and ear-marking potential county material.

Ready to Support Leitrim's Big Fundraising Draw- (l to r) Brendan Harvey, Michael Feeney, Paschal Mooney & Declan Mc Cabe

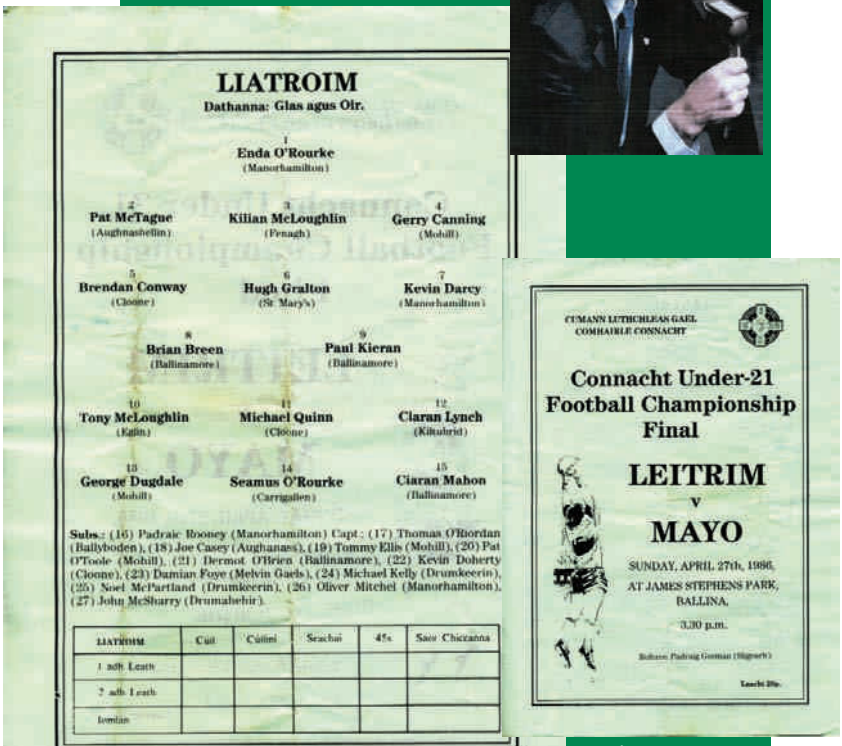
Spirits were lifted with a heart-warming victory over old rivals Galway in the Under 21 championship and supporters were out in force for the Connacht Final against Mayo in Ballina. There were many great individual displays, but Mayo had better teamwork and emerged victorious. However, valuable experience had been gained by the Under 21 players, many of whom were still underage for the following year.

Minor team manager, Eamonn McGowan, did not receive the necessary response from many players for the Connacht Minor League and this was poor preparation for the championship clash with Galway who emerged easy winners. From 1987 onwards the responsibility for the county minor team was being handed over to Bórd na nÓg and it was hoped this would give better cohesion in the training of Under 16's and Minors.
A welcome visitor to the county for coaching sessions with the youth was Micheal Ó Muircheartaigh, a man always willing to inspire and encourage young people to develop their skills and play their best possible part in Cumann Luthchleas Gael.

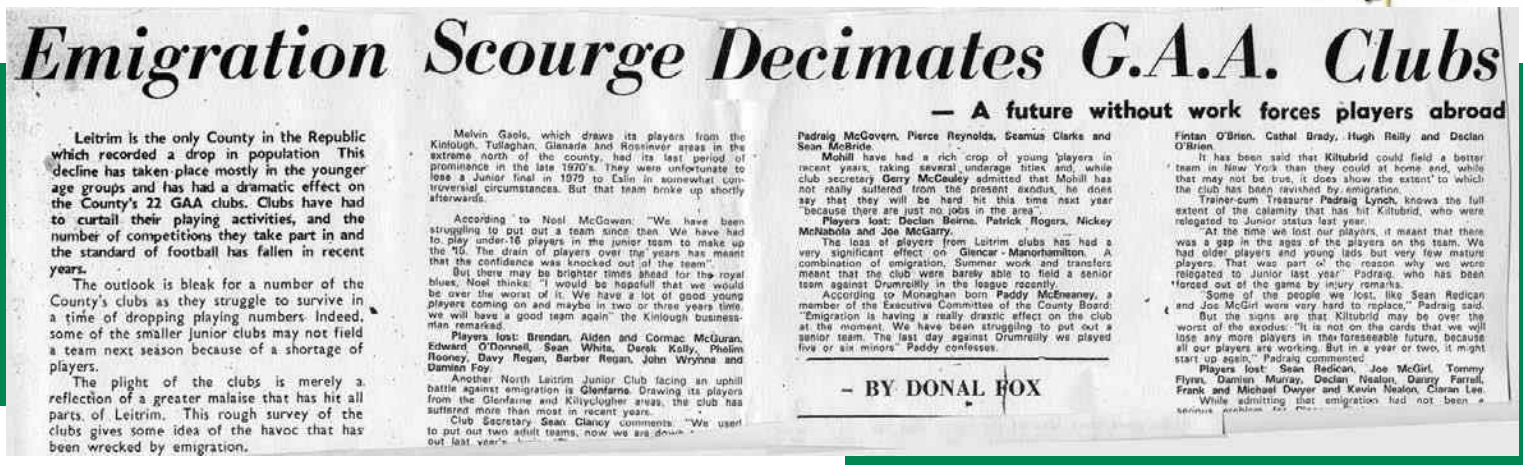


An interesting feature of the club championship was the amalgamation of Junior clubs and near neighbours Bornacoola and Annaduff as the "Nipper Shanley's" in the Senior championship, but overall the 1986 championship was lack lustre though there was plenty of keen rivalry in the final, when Séan O'Heslin's overcame Aughawillan.

The Junior A Championship was a long drawn out affair with plenty of unsavoury moments and was eventually won by Annaduff. The more veteran players were to the fore in the Junior B Championship, with Séan O'Heslin's clinching the title, but the much talked about Over 30's competition seemed to be on its last legs with Cloone and Gortletteragh getting walkovers to the final which Cloone won by a narrow margin. Prospects looked good for the future for Mohill, capturing the Minor and Under 21 Championships but they, like all other clubs in the county, were feeling the effects of mass emigration at the time.



Under 21 team Vs Mayo



Emigration Scourge Decimates G.A.A. Clubs

— A future without work forces players abroad

Leitrim is the only County in the Republic which recorded a drop in population This decline has taken place mostly in the younger age groups and has had a dramatic effect on the County's 22 GAA clubs. Clubs have had to curtail their playing activities, and the number of competitions they take part in and the standard of football has fallen in recent years.

The outlook is bleak for a number of the County's clubs as they struggle to survive in a time of dropping playing numbers Indeed, some of the smaller Junior clubs may not field a team next season because of a shortage of players.

The plight of the clubs is merely a reflection of a greater malaise that has hit all parts of Leitrim. This rough survey of the clubs gives some idea of the havoc that has been wrecked by emigration.

Melvin Gaels, which draws its players from the Kinlough, Tullaghan, Glenade and Rossinver areas in the extreme north of the county, had its last period of prominence in the late 1970's. They were unfortunate to lose a Junior final in 1979 to Eslin in somewhat controversial circumstances. But that team broke up shortly afterwards.

According to Noel McGowan: "We have been struggling to put out a team since then. We have had to play under-16 players in the junior team to make up the '10. The drain of players over the years has meant that the confidence was knocked out of the team".

But there may be brighter times ahead for the royal blues, Noel thinks: "I would be hopefull that we would be over the worst of it. We have a lot of good young players coming on and maybe in two or three years time we will have a good team again" the Kinlough businessman remarked.

Players lost: Brendan, Aiden and Cormac McGuiran, Edward O'Donnell, Sean White, Derek Kelly, Phelim Rooney, Davy Regan, Barber Regan, John Wrynna and Damien Foy.

Another North Leitrim Junior Club facing an uphill battle against emigration is **Glenfarne**. Drawing its players from the Glenfarne and Killycloghier areas, the club has suffered more than most in recent years.

Club Secretary Sean Clancy comments: "We used to put out two adult teams, now we are down ... out last year's ...

Padraig McGovern, Pierce Reynolds, Seamus Clarke and Sean McBride.

Mohill have had a rich crop of young players in recent years, taking several underage titles and, while club secretary **Gerry McCauley** admitted that Mohill has not really suffered from the present exodus, he does say that they will be hard hit this time next year "because there are just no jobs in the area".

Players lost: Declan Beirne, Patrick Rogers, Nickey McNabola and Joe McGarry.

The loss of players from Leitrim clubs has had a very significant effect on **Glencar - Manorhamilton**. A combination of emigration, Summer work and transfers meant that the club were barely able to field a senior team against Drumreilly in the league recently.

According to Monaghan born **Paddy McEneaney**, a member of the Executive Committee of the County Board: "Emigration is having a really drastic effect on the club at the moment. We have been struggling to put out a senior team. The last day against Drumreilly we played five or six minors" Paddy confesses.

— BY DONAL FOX

Fintan O'Brien, Cathal Brady, Hugh Reilly and Declan O'Brien.

It has been said that **Kiltubrid** could field a better team in New York than they could at home and, while that may not be true, it does show the extent to which the club has been ravished by emigration.

Trainer-cum Treasurer **Padraig Lynch**, knows the full extent of the calamity that has hit Kiltubrid, who were relegated to Junior status last year.

"At the time we lost our players, it meant that there was a gap in the ages of the players on the team. We had older players and young lads but very few mature players. That was part of the reason why we were relegated to junior last year" Padraig, who has been forced out of the game by injury remarks.

Some of the people we lost, like Sean Redican and Joe McGirl were very hard to replace," Padraig said.

But the signs are that Kiltubrid may be over the worst of the exodus: "It is not on the cards that we will lose any more players in the foreseeable future, because all our players are working. But in a year or two, it might start up again," Padraig commented.

Players lost: Sean Redican, Joe McGirl, Tommy Flynn, Damien Murray, Declan Nealon, Danny Farrell, Frank and Michael Dwyer and Kevin Nealon, Ciaran Lee.

While admitting that emigration had not been ...

So many club players had become part of the "Flight of the Earls" to London, Manchester, New York, Boston or San Francisco, draining the county and the country of well educated and talented young people – but they had to go where the jobs were at the time.

A positive aspect to the year was the fascinating success of Ciste Gael, thanks to the dedicated hard work of co-ordinator Tommie Flynn who had for many years now tried to impress on clubs how the scheme could benefit not only the County Board but also the clubs themselves. Former county chairman George O'Toole had always been an avid supporter of Ciste Gael since its inception.

Bornacoola had their big day, not only with the opening of their new pitch but also with the launch of their Club History, edited by Joe Daly. Club histories were more and more becoming an important facet of club activity and in years to come will be a valuable and treasured part of the club, county and national memorabilia for the whole association.

Again Leitrim GAA was plunged into sadness in 1986 with the tragic accidental death of Aughnasheelin club player and official Séan Sammon. Séan, together with his brother Padraig, and sisters Ann, Mary and Majella had represented Aughnasheelin and Leitrim in the Ballad Group section of the Centenary Scor All Ireland in 1984.

Thankfully the year ended on a reasonably high note for the county senior team with fair performances in the National League which saw Leitrim in second place on the points table, with prospects of promotion looking good.

In the opening round on November 2nd - what a time to be commencing National League – Leitrim had a close 0 -9 to 0 -7 victory over Antrim at Casement Park. Michael Martin could not play due to an injury but there were good performances from Thomas Quinn, Donie McLoughlin, Frank Holohan, Joe Darcy, Mickey Quinn, Jimmy Ward, Ciaran Mahon, Liam Conlon, Brian Breen, George Dugdale and Seamus Mulhern, a combination of the Under 21 teams and others who would make big names for themselves in Leitrim football in future years.

Round 2 against Westmeath in Cloone ended in a draw, but the Leitrim forwards were very much off target in Tullamore, losing to Offaly 1-10 to 1-7 in a game that should have gone Leitrim's way. There was a seasonal feel to the final game of the year played on December 16th in Pairc Séan MacDiarmada, when Leitrim overcame Sligo by a single point in a game described as *"a low quality encounter between two average teams"* But there would be tougher games ahead, especially against Galway, who were table toppers in Division 3 North.

(l to r) Pius Flanagan, Paddy Dolan, Sylvester McGovern, Seamus Mc Tague, Declan Dolan, Ray Dolan & Brid Curran
(Paddy Dolan played in the All Ireland Minor final with Leitrim in 1956 and holds 8 Senior Championship medals with Ballinamore Sean O'Heslins)

The 1987 Convention marked a change in the position of President of the County Board with Tomás O'Riordáin, who had been elected Life President many years previously, deciding to step down to let others share the honour. His replacement, Tom Gannon, was already a Leitrim historical icon, having captained the Connacht Championship team of 1927.

Delegates hoped a bit of logic would be brought back to the National League by returning the format to four divisions and hopefully playing it at a more favourable time of year. There was heated debate about team managers being given power to appoint their own selectors with Christy Gallogly stating "The day when we allow team managers to select who they like will be the day we meet our Waterloo". Christy was not for turning on many issues, his comments always livening debate at Board meetings or Conventions.

Leitrim's performance on the resumption of the National League certainly did not impress Declan Tierney who wrote
"There were no redeeming features about this game at all……Leitrim were demoralised and destroyed by a shabby looking Galway side whose success could be attributed to a few fine individual performances……So the Galway hoodoo still exists and if Leitrim's performance is anything to go by, then their luck is not about to change for the foreseeable future……Don't be fooled by the scoreline (2-11 to 3-5) ……where were the results of all the training that we were told about?……fitness certainly wasn't in abundance on Sunday and if that performance is anything to go by then it is going to be a bleak year ahead……"

Declan Tierney was fearful of Leitrim's opening Connacht Championship game against London in Ruislip, if performance did not improve. This defeat to Galway had scuppered Leitrim's chances of promotion in the league and the game against Louth in Dundalk left nothing to play for with Leitrim losing by a single point, 2-7 to 3-3. The final game on March 8th was yet another losing one, 1-6 to 0-6, to bottom of the table Fermanagh. The game seemed to be going Leitrim's way until the introduction of Fermanagh substitute Peter McGinnity, who swung the game in his county's favour.

At the time neither Peter nor the Leitrim players, officials or supporters were to imagine that Peter McGinnity would become Leitrim's team manager inside the next decade. So a wet and windy March had an air of gloom concerning the county team's performances, but over in New York the Kiltubrid Pipe Band was putting the county on the map by leading the St. Patricks Day Parade down 5th Avenue. This same band had led many a parade in Pairc Séan MacDiarmada for Connacht Championship games and Leitrim County finals. Many members of the band continue to have long association with the Kiltubrid club as players and administrators.

Page 14 "Lobán Observer", Saturday, 6th June, 1987.

Leitrim struggle

Subs save footballers blushes

LEITRIM — — — — — — — — 1-12 LONDON — — — — — — — 1-8

Despite being under intense pressure for well over three quarters of this Connacht senior football championship clash against London, Leitrim eventually got a grip of the game and emerged convincing winners in a very poor encounter played at Ruislip on Sunday.

But Leitrim came perilously close to losing this game, and up until the last 10 minutes London looked far the better side, and it was only when a few disasterous selections were rectified in the attack that Leitrim worked as a complete unit.

misdirected pass from O'Rourke Dermot Corrigan in the 32th minu of the game resulted in London goal.

Leitrim struggle in victory over London

LEITRIM

COLOURS: GREEN & GOLD

1 Damian Crossan (*Ballinamore*)
2 Donie McLoughlin (*Fenagh*) 3 Kilian McLoughlin (*Fenagh*) 4 Hugh Gralton (*Carrick on Shannon*)
5 Brendan Conway (*Cloone*) 6 Joe Darcy (*Mannerhamilton*) 7 Shane Heslin (*Gort Letteragh*)
8 Seamus O'Rourke (*Aughavilliam*) 9 Mickey Quinn (*Carrigallen*)
10 Brian Doyle (*Carrigallen*) 11 Jimmy Ward (*Gort Letteragh*) 12 Kevin Doherty (*Cloone*)
13 Brian Breen (*Ballinamore*) 14 Thomas Quirk (*Aughavilliam*) 15 Ciaran Mahon (*Ballinamore*)

SUBS:
16. Paul Kieran (Ballinamore)
17. Seamus Mulhern (Carrick-on-Shannon)
18. George Dugdale (Mohill)
19. Ollie Hoocyman (Ballinamore)
20. Padraig Cornyn (Ballinaghera)
21. Dermot O'Brien (Ballinamore)

Farewell Dance
The London Co Board & The Tara GAA Club sponsor
A farewell dance for The Leitrim Party
at The Grosvenor Room, Willesden Green, NW2
Tomorrow Night
Music by
THE GREAT HUNGER
Tickets £2.00 (£3.00 at door) Dancing 10 till late

In preparation for the championship clash with London Declan McCabe was pleased with the team's performance in defeating Cavan in the Ballinacargy Tournament final – and particularly by the display of Thomas Quinn who had been switched from goals to full forward. Thomas made the position his own for the London game, a fixture Leitrim supporters were quite wary about, remembering the defeat of 1977.

London based Joe Darcy manned the vital centre half-back berth and Leitrim supporters travelled to Ruislip in reasonably big numbers. There were plenty of anxious moments before substitutes Paul Kieran, Seamus Mulhern and George Dugdale steadied the ship to eke out a four point victory, much to the relief of team captain Shane Heslin and all the players and team management. Lining out at midfield for Leitrim that day was Seamus O'Rourke who would later go on to carve out a big name for himself on a different stage, as actor, producer and playwright with the Carrigallen Cornmill Players.

So the chips were down for yet another championship clash with Galway in Carrick-on-Shannon, with the bookies favouring the Tribesmen to come out with another victory. A big talking point was whether Michael Martin would return from the United States for the game. Michael did make the trip and boosted Leitrim's hopes despite the severe loss of Mickey Quinn through injury. The critics got a rude awakening with Leitrim defying the odds and in an outstanding second half display had Galway on the ropes but just couldn't find the vital few scores to kill them off, with the Galway side just hanging on for a 1-10 to 0-10 victory.

It was again Galway who put paid to any hopes ay Under 21 level, defeating a Leitrim side that had earlier reached the Hastings Cup Final, by 1-10 to 0-9. It was the turn of Mayo to be yet another bogey team for Leitrim, defeating our Minors by 3-11 to 3-5. Future senior stars on that Leitrim Minor side were Declan Darcy, Padraig Kenny and Aiden Rooney. Bórd na nÓg had taken over responsibility for the county minor side and had good initial success earlier in 1987 in the Connacht Minor League.

The County Board had introduced seeding for the club championship and the ever dependable Gortletteragh emerged as champions defeating Aughawillan in the final, though Aughawillan did have the consolation of capturing the Division 1 League title.

The progress of the Gortletteragh Club, both on the playing fields and in its development work, was very much the focus of the whole community in the 1980's. One family very much to the forefront was the Reynolds family and it was a great loss to the club when Charlie Reynolds passed away in 1987 – and in the following year 1988 the death occurred of his brother Paddy.

(L - R) Gerry Mahan, Des Quinn, Sean Maxwell, Christy Gallogly

Former St Mary's star Dermot Gallagher shows he never lost his footballing touch! Dermot, a former Irish ambassadar to the USA has always been a keen follower of Leitrim and a tireless worker for the Supporters Club.

But there is no doubt that Galway can be beaten in Carrick-on-Shannon; it nearly happened four years ago and Leitrim didn't have as young or determined a side as they are putting out these days.

Confidence in themselves is vitally important and that combined with a total team effort and they could give Galway a hop. Anything short of that and they don't have a prayer.

The Leitrim line out is:

Damian Crossan

D. McLoughlin K. McLoughlin H. Gralton
B. Conway J. Darcy S. Heslin
M. Quinn P. Kieran
B. Doyle J. Ward G. Dugdale
B. Breen A. N. Other K. Mahon

Subs: T. Quinn, O. Honeyman, S. O'Rourke, S. Mulhern, K. Doherty, D. O'Brien, R. McKeon, R. Duffy, J. Quinn.

Second half burst not just good enough

GALWAY ..... 1-10, | LEITRIM ..... 0-10.

A dream nearly came true for Leitrim football Sunday when out of the blue they battled and side and almost snatched this Connacht senior fo noses.

Not in recent years have Leitrim supporters they faced a crippling defeat but pulled out all the they came within two points of them.

So once again Leitrim have to content themselves with the thought of what might have been and it seems that is what Leitrim footbal is resigned to at the moment. Galway got the foundation of scores in the first half and in the early part of the second and it was good enough to hold out to intense pressure from Leitrim.

It was a disappointing day for team manager Declan McCabe and his selectors who had brought home Mickey Martin from Boston specially for the game. Mickey Quinn, who was out with a hamstring injury, was a loss at midfield and Seamus Mulhern, who started at full forward, was eventually moved to the middle of the field.

1987 also saw the passing of Michael Fox of Manorhamilton, the founder of "The Leitrim Guardian" magazine. Michael had and intense pride in his club, his county and in his adopted club Kilfinane in Co. Limerick. For many years Michael, under the pen-name "Gael Óg" reported extensively on GAA affairs in "The Leitrim Observer".

The GAA had introduced Leadership Courses for club officers nationwide and there was a good response from the grassroots in Leitrim, though clubs were finding it difficult to attract young people into officership positions. There was a feeling about too, that clubs in general in the county had little or no interest in the workings of the County Board and were more or less cocooned in their own environment. It was hoped the Leadership Courses would help solve these and other administrative issues.

Supporters Club members John Sorohan, Brendan Canning and Noel McPartland

Leitrim Team that played Sligo in the National Football Leauge Dec 1987.
***Back Row** (L - R) Martin Flanagan, Seamus O Rourke, Donie McLoughlin, Enda O Rourke, Michael Martin, Joe Darcy, Mickey Quinn, Thomas Quinn & Declan Mc Cabe (team manager). **Front Row** (L - R). Killian McLoughlin, Brendan Conway, Paul Kieran, Jimmy Ward, Ciaran Mahon, Noel Heron and Seamus Mulhern.*

Dublin All ireland midfielder Brian Mullins gives some tips to the Leitrim players at a training session in Páirc Mac Diarmada.

Leitrim Under 21 Team 1987
***Back Row** (L - R) Paul Kieran, Michael O'Dwyer, Gerry Canning, Killian McLoughlin, Dermot Tiernan, Enda O'Rourke, George Dugdale, Dermot O'Brien.*
***Front Row** (L - R) Damian Foy, Ciaran Lynch, John McGlynn, Brendan Conway, Brian Breen, Ciaran Mahon, Michael Maguire.*

Gortletteragh Senior Football Championship winning Team in 1987
***Back** (L - R) Shane Heslin, Peter Quinn, Mel Woods, Sean Colreavy, Phil Higgins, Jimmy Ward, Frank Flynn, Mick Flynn.*
***Front** (L - R) Pat Flynn, Gerry Dorrigan, Seanie McGrath (capt), Joe Dorrigan, Paddy O'Neill, James Flynn, Sylvester Flynn. **Mascots**: Patrick Reilly, Michael Dorrigan, Stephen McGrath, Pauric Mc Garry, Derek Kelleher, Stephen Reilly, Terry Kelleher.*

Attending the GAA Leadership Course for club officers in 1987

Drumkeerin officers Rev.Felim Kelly P.P., Ann Gilhooly and Peter Foley

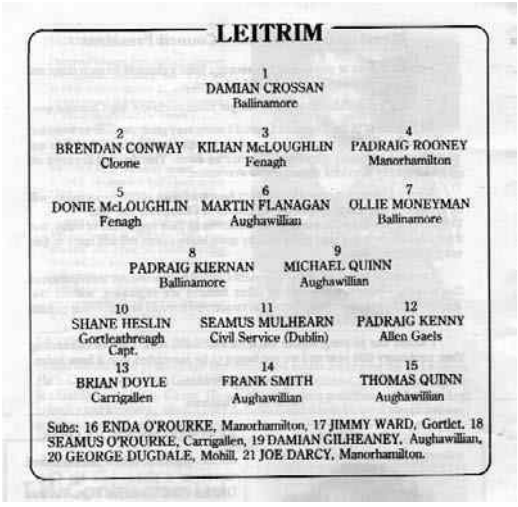
John Renolds, Myles McGrail and Thomas Forde, Ballinaglera,

John Keenan, Josephine Dorrigan and Aiden Kelleher, Gortletteragh. In the background is Anna Devaney from the Glencar Manorhamilton Club.

1988

As 1988 began clubs were still struggling to cope with the loss of players to emigration and County Board meeting after meeting featured transfer requests for those who hoped that their footballing skills would secure them employment, particularly in London and New York. This drain on our clubs meant that veteran players were being cajoled back into action and very young players were now finding their way onto adult teams. The new system of four divisions in the league worked well, so club players were getting more games, were facing new opposition and were competing at a proper level.

The glory days of '88 belonged to the Leitrim Ladies team who captured their first ever All Ireland amid rapturous excitement in Croke Park and proudly paraded the Junior Cup through the county where the team and officials were rightly lauded for their success. Many of these players had family members on their men's club and county teams and all of them were deeply involved in a range of club activities. The victory lifted spirits in the county, after the disappointment of losing out on promotion in the National League early in the year, having a rather inept championship performance against Mayo in the Connacht Senior Championship in Charlestown and losing the Under 21 Semi-final to Roscommon, having already defeated long-time rivals Mayo in the first round.



Leitrim team that played Mayo

A "footballing" helmet! *Seamus Mulhern in action against Mayo in Charlestown – reacurring injury forced Seamus to wear the hurling helmet for protection. (This is no longer allowed under GAA rules.)*

In safe hands - Paul Kieran makes a high catch against Mayo

The scoreboard tells a gloomy story, but Leitrim players don't ease up

Standards in the club championship did little to raise morale, though neighbours Séan O'Heslin's and Aughawillan did provide exiting fare in the county final with the Ballinamore side emerging victorious. The semi-final of the Junior A Championship provided us with unexpected thrills with Eslin and Bornacoola drawing, going to extra time, drawing again, going to a replay, another draw, with yet another draw after extra time before Eslin eventually made it to the final. This marathon proved worthwhile as they easily overcame Glencar/Manorhamilton in the final. The Over30's didn't even feature a final! After a series of postponements, misunderstandings, uncooperativeness and a fair amount of gamesmanship the competition was aborted for 1988. No one shed a tear.

Events that provided encouragement during the year were the opening of newly developed facilities at the Bee Park, Manorhamilton and St. Hugh's Park, Ballinaglera. These community pitches would be available for use by the local clubs and would provide more top class grounds for the playing of our club games.

Cumann Lúthchleas Gael

SRAITH PEILE NÁISIUNTA — ROINN III

7 Eanair, 1988

i bPáirc Uí Éilí, An Ómaigh

300 i.n.

TÍR EOGHAIN

i.e.

LIATROIM

Réiteoir : P. Kavanagh (Meath)

• LUACH :: 10p •

Official Re-Opening

of

THE BEE PARK

Manorhamilton

Sunday, June 5th 1988

Galway v. Dublin

(HURLING)

Souvenir Programme £1.00

Michael & Jim McPadden who won the GAA McNamee Award 1988, for best Video production. They had videoed the 1988 All Ireland Ladies Final with Tommie Tighe as commentator

1988 Leitrim Captain, Jimmy Ward, 1927 Captain Tom Gannon and 1938 Captain Mick Killkenny

... Linking the decades

***Pictured at the County Board Function in 1988 to honour the Golden Jubilee of the 1938 All Ireland Junior Team: Back** (L-R) Packie Leyden, Michael Moran, John F. McGuinness Frank Carter, John F. Mollaghan. **Front row** (L-R) Vincie Faughnan (1938 mascot), Michael McGowan, Mick Kilkenny (captain), Peter O'Rourke, Eddie Delahoyde (County Seceretary 1938)*

Official Opening

SAINT HUGH'S PARK

BALLINAGLERA

Sunday, 14th August, 1988

LEITRIM v DONEGAL

Souvenir Programme £1.00

During the year the county suffered the loss of two great Gaels and former County Board officials – Ging Duignan and Eddie Delahoyde.

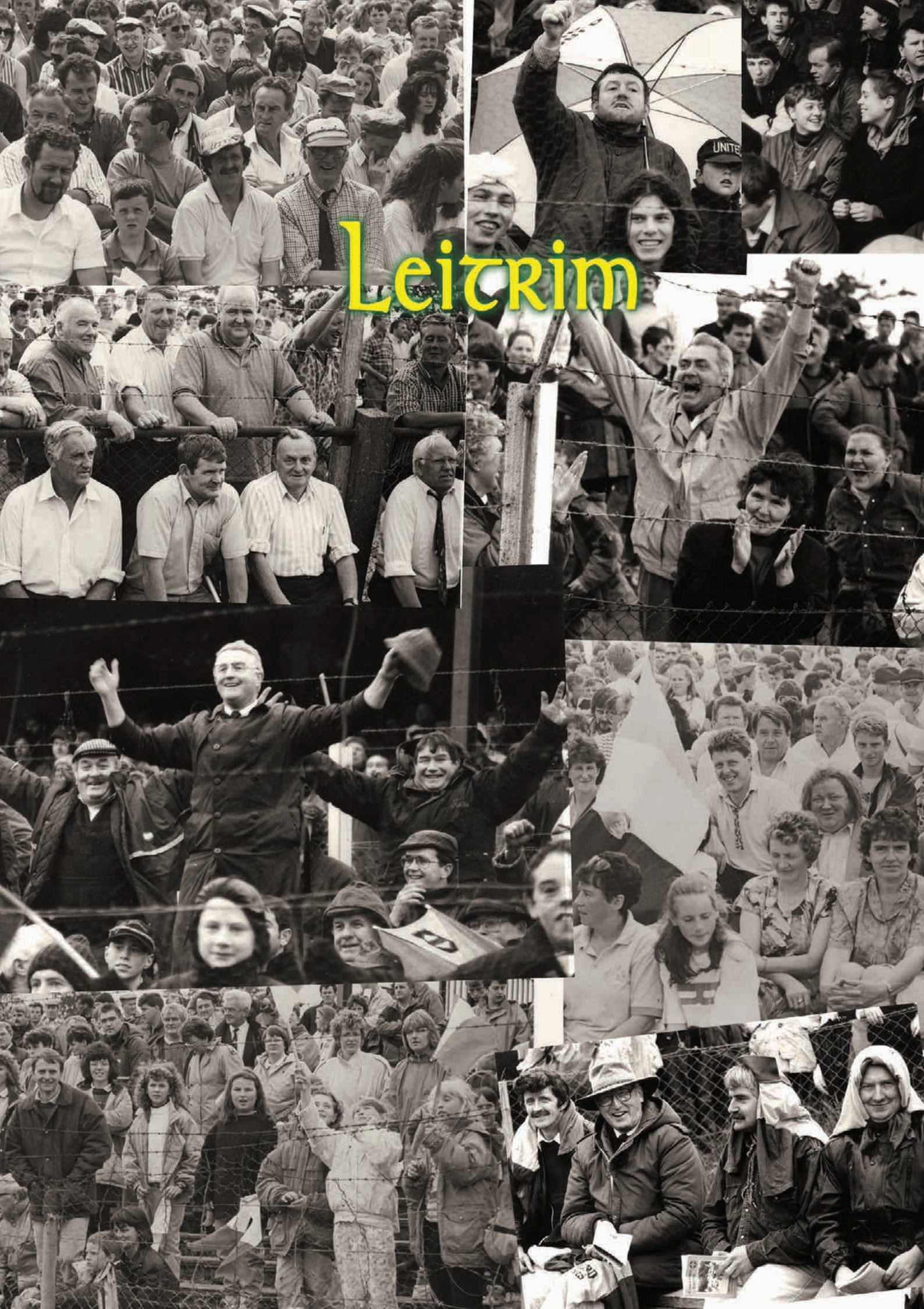
Ging Duignan
former Chairman
Leitrim Co. Board

Ging, who was a member of the St. Mary's championship winning team of 1958, was a former Cathaoirleach of Coiste Liatroma and a well known figure in County and provincial GAA circles.

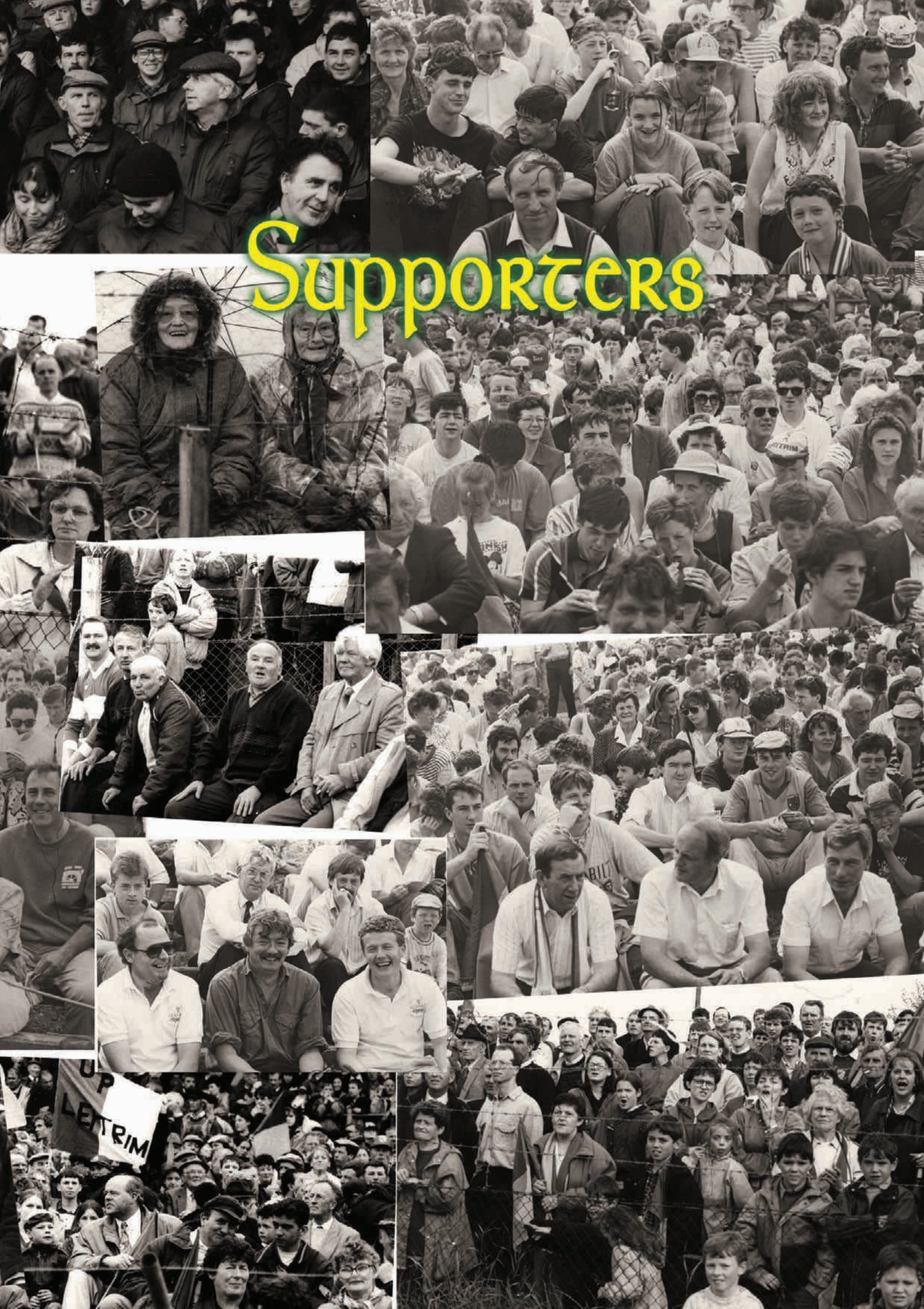
Eddie Delahoyde had served as Runaí of Coiste Liatroma for a number of years, had been a selector with the county team and also with his home club, Ballinamore Sean O'Heslin's. Earlier in 1988 Eddie had joined members of the 1938 Leitrim Junior team at the County Board Golden Jubilee celebrations to honour the 1938 side.

Ned Dolan's impressive medal collection. Included are the 1927 Connacht Senior, 1938 Connacht Junior and a number of county championship medals won with his club, Ballinamore.

***The 1938 Leitrim Junior Team and officials** pictured at Barry's Hotel Dublin prior to the All Ireland final against London.*


Leitrim

Supporters



1989

1989 started well, with deserved victories in the National League over Sligo, Offaly and Fermanagh leaving Leitrim as joint table toppers with Tyrone in Division 3 North. Confusion over the date of the play-off and hopes that the game might be fixed for Croke Park had caused us to take our eyes off the ball and we never really got going in the game, eventually fixed for Enniskillen. Tyrone won, gained promotion to Division 2 and later became Ulster champions.

In the late 1980's and early 1990's there was very little separating Tyrone and Leitrim team performances and results. But as we look back now, in 2009, both counties have had very contrasting fortunes with Tyrone now top of the pile with their All-Ireland successes. If only we could unlock the formula that breeds success!

Tony McGowan, Pat Clarke and Paddy Dolan were the new management team and we were hopeful of a good run in the Championship, following the good performances in the league. But Leitrim could take no pride in the Connacht campaign of 1989 – an insipid performance in Ballymote saw us lose by 1-11 to 1-6 to Sligo, who were later heavily defeated by Roscommon. We certainly did not rate very highly in the pecking order in the Connacht Championship - 1927 seemed further back in history than ever.

A close call! *This Leitrim effort was inches wide - and Tyrone won the play – off game, much to the dissapointment of selectors Pat Clarke, Paddy Dolan and the Leitrim Players*

Liátroim (Leitrim)

Dathanna: Glas agus Ór

(1) Máirtín MacGabhann — Martin McGowan (Allen Gaels)

(2) Cillian Mac Lochlainn — Killian McLoughlin (Fenagh)
(3) Seán Ó h-Eisiln — Shane Heslin (Gortletteragh)
(4) Padraig Ó Fionnagáin — Pat Flanagan (Aughawillan)
(5) Nollag Ó Mórain — Noel Moran (Allen Gaels)
(6) Oilibhéar Ó h-Eoghanacháin — Ollie Honeyman (Capt.) (Sean Ó Heslins)
(7) Gearóid Ó Fionnagáin — Gerry Flanagan (Aughawillan)
(8) Padraig Ó Donnchú — Pat Donohoe (Drumreilly)
(9) Micheál Ó Cuinn — Mickey Quinn (Aughawillan)
(10) Deaglán Ó Dorchaí — Declan D'arcy (Aughawillan)
(11) Proinsias Ó Floinn — Frank Flynn (Gortletteragh)
(12) Ciarán Ó Mathúna — Ciarán Mahon (Séan Ó Heslins)
(13) Brian Ó Breoin — Brian Breen (Seán Ó Heslins)
(14) T. P. MacLochlainn — T. P. McLoughlin (Fenagh)
(15) Seamus Mac An Bháird — Jimmy Ward (Gortletteragh)

FIR IONAD: (16) Caoimhín Ó Dúnáin - Kevin Doonan (Fenagh); (17) Tomás Ó Conaláin - Tomás Conlon (Seán Ó Heslins); (18) Tomás Mac Ellis - Tommy Ellis (Mohill); (19) Georóid Dé Buitléir - Gerry Butler (Eslin); (20) Aodhán Ó Ruanaidh - Aidan Rooney (Manorhamilton); (21) Pádraig Ó Cionnaith - Padraig Kenny (Allen Gaels); (22) Liam Ó Conaláin - Liam Conlon (Seán Ó Heslins); (23) Pól Ó Ciaráin - Paul Kieran (Seán Ó Heslins); (24) Máirtín MacAodha - Martin McHugh (Aughnasheelin).

*The Leitrim **Team that played Sligo** in the 1989 Connacht Championship*

Leitrim Team that played Sligo in the 1989 Connacht Championship
Back Row *(L to R) Shane Heslin, Pat Donohoe, Jimmy Ward, Brian Breen, Martin Mc Gowan, Noel Moran, Declan Darcy, Killian Mc Loughlin.* ***Front Row*** *(L to R) Pat Flanagan, Gerry Flanagan, Mickey Quinn, Ollie Honeyman (captain), Ciaran Mahon, Frank Flynn, T.P Mc loughlin*

And so on to the commencement of the 1989/1990 National League and it began to appear we were on the road to disaster. A very comprehensive defeat by Laois in the opening round, followed by annihilation at the hands of Galway coincided with the displeasure, unrest, doubts insinuations, withdrawals and general discontent among players, supporters, the Board and the Leitrim GAA world in general.

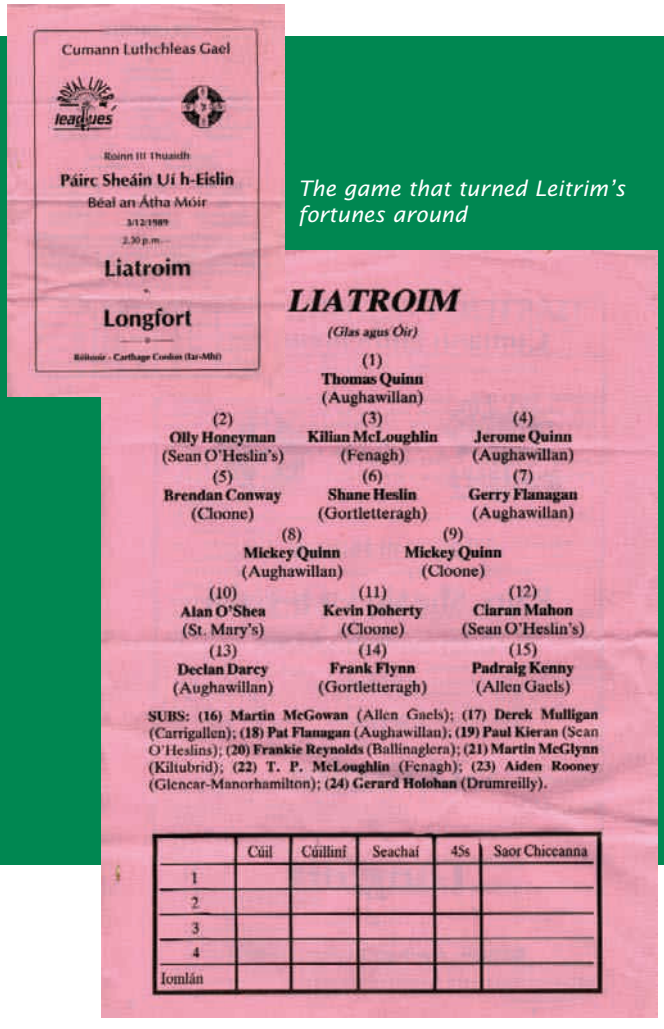
Tony McGowan and newly appointed selectors James Holohan and Aiden Crossan were now at the helm and seemed to be staring into an abyss. They had confidence in the quality of the Leitrim players, but felt a team manager with almost magical powers was needed to provide leadership and guidance.

The Messiah that was to save Leitrim came in the form of P.J. Carroll, who took on the role of Leitrim Team Manager – a position very few would relish at the time.

P.J. had a straight talking, no nonsense approach and he instilled a pride in the Leitrim jersey that somehow seemed to be lacking. There was almost immediate transformation, with the players throwing off the shackles of the first two rounds and gaining a well deserved victory over Westmeath in Athlone. Then came a rip-roaring display in a drawn game against Longford in Ballinamore. Supporters could suddenly feel a new dawn was approaching but only confirmed optimists like Tony McGovern could actually see Leitrim being promoted at the end of the National League, come spring 1990 – but so it would come to pass.

New county selectors James Holohan (left) and Aiden Crossan (right)

Midfielder Mickey Quinn goes highest against Sligo!



Cumann Luthchleas Gael

leagues

Roinn III Thuaidh

Páirc Sheáin Uí h-Eislin

Béal an Átha Móir

3/12/1989

2.30 p.m.

Liatroim

v

Longfort

Réitheoir - Carthage Conlon (Iar-Mhí)

The game that turned Leitrim's fortunes around

LIATROIM

(Glas agus Óir)

(1) **Thomas Quinn** (Aughawillan)

(2) **Olly Honeyman** (Sean O'Heslin's) (3) **Kilian McLoughlin** (Fenagh) (4) **Jerome Quinn** (Aughawillan)

(5) **Brendan Conway** (Cloone) (6) **Shane Heslin** (Gortletteragh) (7) **Gerry Flanagan** (Aughawillan)

(8) **Mickey Quinn** (Aughawillan) (9) **Mickey Quinn** (Cloone)

(10) **Alan O'Shea** (St. Mary's) (11) **Kevin Doherty** (Cloone) (12) **Ciaran Mahon** (Sean O'Heslin's)

(13) **Declan Darcy** (Aughawillan) (14) **Frank Flynn** (Gortletteragh) (15) **Padraig Kenny** (Allen Gaels)

SUBS: (16) **Martin McGowan** (Allen Gaels); (17) **Derek Mulligan** (Carrigallen); (18) **Pat Flanagan** (Aughawillan); (19) **Paul Kieran** (Sean O'Heslins); (20) **Frankie Reynolds** (Ballinaglera); (21) **Martin McGlynn** (Kiltubrid); (22) **T. P. McLoughlin** (Fenagh); (23) **Aiden Rooney** (Glencar-Manorhamilton); (24) **Gerard Holohan** (Drumreilly).

	Cúil	Cúillíní	Seachaí	45s	Saor Chicéanna
1					
2					
3					
4					
Iomlán					

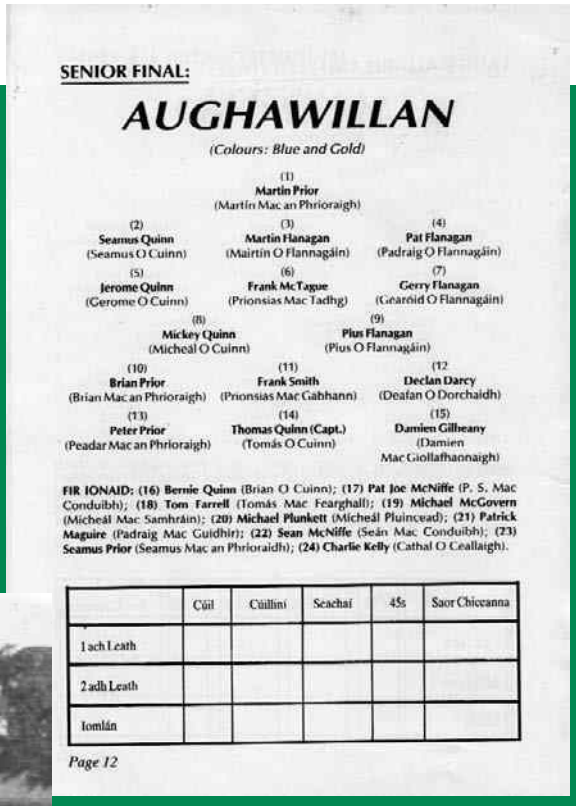
The Leitrim Messiah – Team manager P.J Carroll

Autumn 1989 gave the county pride too on the club front, with the wholehearted performance of county champions Aughawillan in the Connacht Club championship. In the provincial semi-final played in Aughawillan the home side should have disposed of opponents Clann na n-Gael of Roscommon – All Ireland finalists for the previous three years – and it took a late point from club and county star Pat Flanagan to bring the game to a replay.

Fracas in the fog *– Aughawillan team manager Pat Prior (centre) is exasperated during the fog – bound Connacht Club Championship game in Johnstown*

This replay at Johnstown was one best forgotten – it became a foul ridden and bad tempered game that came to an unfortunate boiling point and was to be shrouded in controversy. Clann na n-Gael went on to win yet another Connacht title but the Leitrim champions had shown that despite their limited numbers there was no limitation to the talent, commitment and club spirit of Aughawillan. This club, like others in Leitrim, was to come so close to Connacht provincial honours on a number of occasions, but just lacked that little bit of good fortune that often makes the difference between victory and defeat.

Evidence that the schools of the county were doing their full share in promoting our games was the victory of the Leitrim County Vocational Schools team over Galway in a replayed Connacht Semi-final and their glorious victory over Mayo in the Final. Team Manager Joe Flynn and his selectors had shown that sometimes the malaise can very often come from within. Maybe what Leitrim needed was to forget all the hard luck stories and the inferiority complex that seemed to drag the county down. This was one aspect that the newly arrived P.J. Carroll was certainly working on, he was not going to be shackled by the chains of history.



SENIOR FINAL:

AUGHAWILLAN

(Colours: Blue and Gold)

(1) **Martin Prior** (Martín Mac an Phrioraigh)

(2) **Seamus Quinn** (Seamus O Cuinn) (3) **Martin Flanagan** (Mairtín O Flannagáin) (4) **Pat Flanagan** (Padraig O Flannagáin)

(5) **Jerome Quinn** (Gerome O Cuinn) (6) **Frank McTague** (Prionsias Mac Tadhg) (7) **Gerry Flanagan** (Gearóid O Flannagáin)

(8) **Mickey Quinn** (Micheál O Cuinn) (9) **Pius Flanagan** (Pius O Flannagáin)

(10) **Brian Prior** (Brian Mac an Phrioraigh) (11) **Frank Smith** (Prionsias Mac Gabhann) (12) **Declan Darcy** (Deafan O Dorchaidh)

(13) **Peter Prior** (Peadar Mac an Phrioraigh) (14) **Thomas Quinn (Capt.)** (Tomás O Cuinn) (15) **Damien Gilheany** (Damien Mac Giollafhaonaigh)

FIR IONAID: (16) **Bernie Quinn** (Brian O Cuinn); (17) **Pat Joe McNiffe** (P. S. Mac Conduibh); (18) **Tom Farrell** (Tomás Mac Fearghail); (19) **Michael McGovern** (Micheál Mac Samhráin); (20) **Michael Plunkett** (Micheál Pluincead); (21) **Patrick Maguire** (Padraig Mac Guidhir); (22) **Sean McNiffe** (Seán Mac Conduibh); (23) **Seamus Prior** (Seamus Mac an Phrioraidh); (24) **Charlie Kelly** (Cathal O Ceallaigh).

	Cúil	Cúillini	Seachaí	45s	Saor Chiccanna
1ach Leath					
2adh Leath					
Iomlán					

Page 12

Leitrim under 21 team manager Pat Lindsay (second right) pictured in action with Roscommon during his illustrious playing career.

Under 21 Team Manager, the former Roscommon star Pat Lindsay, had a similar outlook and worked extremely hard to have Leitrim ready for the championship clash with Galway. He had prepared his charges well and had a very capable group of players in the proper psychological frame of mind – evident from a top class display that saw Leitrim lead until the dying minutes, when a fortuitous goal snatched victory for Galway. Again we wondered - how come the lucky breaks always seemed to go to the stranger teams?

On the club front one wondered would a new team soon emerge to challenge Senior Championship specialists Aughawillan, Seán Ó Heslin's and Gortletteragh? The intermediate champions, Allen Gaels, who captured the Frank Reynolds Cup presented to the Board by the Aughavas club in memory of their great stalwart, appeared a top class team in the making.

At Board level work continued on promoting the "500 Club" draw, attempting to draw up a master fixtures plan for the year and in effort to recruit new referees, as well as endeavouring to achieve a greater level of the two-way communication between clubs and the County Board.

As emigration continued to take its toll on many clubs in the county, it was heartening to note that while many players might be based in far flung places inside Ireland they were retaining their loyalty to their home clubs and making the sacrifices necessary to be available for duty weekend after weekend. Proposed playing rule changes were also on the agenda in 1989, but what the Leitrim GAA body was mostly interested in at the end of the year was, could the change in fortunes brought about by P.J. Carroll continue into 1990. Could the dawn of a new decade bring hope of sunny times ahead?

We were not to know it then but the 1990's were to bring a complete upswing to the fortunes of Leitrim GAA.

Inclement weather didn't prevent loyal supporters like Eamonn Daly, Drumshanbo from following the team

Drumlea Under 21 team 1988 County Champions
Many of these players were to become senior stars with their clubs Aughawillan and Drumreilly, and with Leitrim

The 1990's began like a footballing fairy tale for Leitrim.

In the very first year of this new decade the county was to win promotion from Division III to Division II of the National Football League; Leitrim would become All-Ireland B champions; have two All Star nominations and our very first All Star, Mickey Quinn; be named the Royal Liver Team of the Month and P.J. Carroll selected as Manager of the Month; a new level of championship performance at Senior and Under 21; massive media coverage and an ever-increasing army of fanatical supporters. Leitrim had risen, Phoenix-like, from the ashes.

A New Leitrim

Success for Leitrim had been well received –innumerable messages of goodwill came in from Leitrim people throughout the globe, but more important than that, similar messages of goodwill came from Árd Comhairle, Comhairle Chonnacht, G.A.A. people throughout the country and particularly from our rivals. This genuine admiration and sincere congratulations sums up what the GAA is all about. Not mere statistics but people.

Leitrim undoubtedly was the glamour team of 1990 – and, as such, was the team other counties wanted to beat. The wheel had turned! So often we had complained of the lack of coverage for us at national level; we had chided our national press, radio and television. We could chide no longer.

Publicity for Leitrim locally and nationally, in every sphere of the media, was unparalleled by any other county in 1990 – proving, perhaps, what we have long been told, that you make your own news.

The adulation given to our team; the respect for our players, selectors and Team Manager; the high profile given to individual players, like our first ever All-Star Mickey Quinn; the banner headlines; the radio commentaries and interviews; the television coverage – all of these were something new to Leitrim.

P.J. Carroll had instilled in his panel of players a confidence in themselves and in their own ability; a distinct pride in wearing a Leitrim jersey; a dedication and commitment of a new level; a spirit of comradeship and loyalty to each other and to their county; a sense of responsibility to themselves, to their fellow players, to their clubs, to the County Board, to the supporters; an organised system of training and overall preparation; the need to make personal sacrifices; a disciplined approach to the game with proper respect for their opponents.

Perhaps, most of all, P.J. Carroll had built a new Leitrim. A Leitrim that had gone football mad, where long lost supporters were returning in their hundreds; a Leitrim in which the youngsters regarded the county players as heroes; a Leitrim that has a real pride in itself and in its achievements; a Leitrim to which our scattered exiles looked back through different eyes; a Leitrim that was the dream of past generations.

The first person to acknowledge that the new wave of success was far from a one-man effort was P.J. Carroll himself. The County Board guided by Antóin Mac Gabhann, a Cathaoirleach of boundless energy and unbridled enthusiasm, played its part too. Even in the darkest hours, Tony always had supreme confidence in Leitrim and its players. His devotion, and the devotion of his family, to all aspects of the Association was contagious. Apart from his role in administration and in conducting the affairs of the Board he had close association with the team preparations and games in his role as a selector.

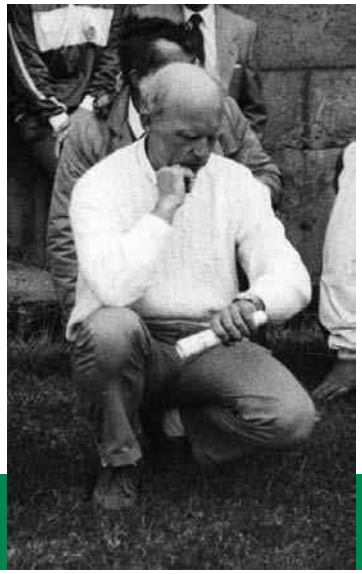
The other two selectors – Aiden Crossan and James Holohan – were no less committed to their task and Leitrim could take pride in a team management structure that would gladly accept any workload necessary for success.

Every single member of the county panel had contributed generously of his time, talent and energy to put the team on the pedestal it enjoyed. Personal sacrifices had been made willingly in spite of any hardships involved to be available for team preparations, meetings, training or games. Being a member of the Leitrim team was a very distinct honour.

Each officer of the County Board and the Board itself, sub-committees, club members, our Supporters Club and our enthusiastic supporters themselves had all played various roles in ensuring a great team effort on behalf of Leitrim.

Our increased exposure to the G.A.A. world at large was certainly a major factor in having two players in key positions – Declan Darcy at centre-half-back and Mickey Quinn at midfield – nominated for selection on the Bank of Ireland All Stars.

Leitrim waited with baited breath for the final team selection and it was with a great sense of pride we heard the news that Mickey Quinn had, indeed, been chosen at midfield on the All Stars team – the supreme hallmark of greatness. The honour was well deserved by a player of very exceptional footballing talents, whose exemplary sportsmanship, inspiration and leadership qualities made him an ideal model for the young people of Leitrim to emulate.



An anxious P.J Carroll checks his watch – every second counts!

Observer Sport 1...

National League Division Three (North)

MAGNIFICENT LEITRIM!

LEITRIM 2-6 : OFFALY 1-6.

FANTASTIC! Fantastic is the only word to describe last Sunday's crunch game with Offaly in Cloone which will be remembered for an amazing and remarkable Leitrim recovery from imminent defeat and the birth of a new star.

Leitrim's footballers were cheered off the field after they had come back from a seven point deficit to win by a goal in a manner that left Offaly flabergasted and many of the spectators with heart problems! But it was the emergence of Aughawillan's Declan Darcy as a player of exceptional talent that stole the show.

Climbing The Ladder

1990 began with a new hope, on the resumption of the Royal Liver National League. Heavy defeats by Laois and Galway followed by victory over Westmeath and an exciting draw with table toppers Longford left us with a slim chance for promotion. A very slim chance.

On a wet and windy day in Cloone it was obvious a new Leitrim was emerging as the team was cheered off the field after a second half rally – inspired by a superlative display from Declan Darcy – that gave us two very valuable league points against Offaly. Further victories over Sligo and Fermanagh made other results of the utmost importance – and the news of Longford's defeat of Galway gave us real prospects of promotion.

Longford were promoted – in joint second place on the Division III table were Leitrim and Offaly. A play off to decide who would meet Wicklow (Division III South Runners-Up) for ultimate promotion to Division II.

A play-off? With Offaly? 1982 All-Ireland winners? Tradition? No hope?

P.J. Carroll and his team had other ideas and Hyde Park, Roscommon resounded with Leitrim cheers when the players showed that tradition is very much in the mind. Then it was off to Mullingar – with our ever-increasing band of supporters – for the most important game in the year to date. Baltinglass had just won the All-Ireland Club Championship and this Wicklow team was backboned by their stars. Could Leitrim do it? They could and did!

The Championship

With the confidence gained from the good run in the National League, culminating in the promotional game against Wicklow, it was with an air of excitement and expectancy that the county prepared for the eagerly awaited Connacht Championship clash with Roscommon

Leitrim's Championship Panel

TEAM LINEOUT:

Leitrim

1 Thomas Quinn (Aughawillan)

2 Olly Honeyman (Sean O'Heslins) | 3 Pat Donoghue (Drumreilly) | 4 Jerome Quinn (Aughawillan)

5 Gerry Flanagan (Aughawillan) | 6 Declan Darcy (Aughawillan) | 7 Killian McLoughlin (Fenagh)

8 Mickey Quinn (Capt.) (Aughawillan) | 9 Mickey Quinn (Cloone)

10 Brian Breen (Sean O'Heslins) | 11 Shane Heslin (Gortletteragh) | 12 Ciaran Mahon (Sean O'Heslins)

13 Liam Conlon (Sean O'Heslins) | 14 George Dugdale (Mohill) | 15 Padraig Kenny (Allen Gaels)

SUBS TO BE CHOSEN FROM: Martin McGowan (Allen Gaels); Mickey Martin (St. Mary's); Brendan Conway (Cloone); Gerry Holohan (Drumreilly); Noel Moran (Allen Gaels); Donie McLoughlin (Fenagh); Hugh Gralton (St. Mary's); Jimmy Ward (Gortletteragh); Derek Mulligan (Carrigallen); Aiden Rooney (Glencar-Manorhamilton); Pat McTeague (Aughnasheelin); Peter Prior (Aughawillan); Martin McGlynn (Kiltubrid); Pat Flanagan (Aughawillan).

Connacht Semi-Final Preview:

THE CARROLL CALENDAR

— By John Connolly —

October 28th: Leitrim 2-7, Laois 1-10. Leitrim's League campaign starts badly as they go down to a ten points drubbing by a faster and fitter Laois team.

November 11th: Leitrim 1-12, Galway 6-16. Rock bottom as Galway have the run of Pearse Stadium in Salthill as they humiliate Leitrim.

November 25th: Leitrim 2-11, Westmeath 3-5. Leitrim begin to pick themselves up in Athlone as they battle past Westmeath. P. J. Carroll watches and decides to take over.

December 9th: Leitrim 1-10, Longford 1-10. They new Leitrim begins to show itself as they come away with a point when they should have tasted victory. A good start for Carroll.

February 4th: Leitrim 3-4,, Sligo 1-5. Wind, rain and a determined Sligo side are pushed aside as Leitrim weather the storm in Ballymote with two goals from Hugh Gralton.

February 11th: Leitrim 2-6, Offaly 1-6. The fightback of the year! Declan Darcy proves to be the hero of the day as Leitrim overcome a rampant Offaly side to record a famous victory.

March 4th: Leitrim 1-19, Fermanagh 4-5. Another convincing performance from Leitrim despite conceding two soft goals. A play-off with Offally awaited.

March 18th: Leitrim 4-8, Offaly 2-7. Another classic as a huge Leitrim crowd travelled to Roscommon. Two goals from Liam Conlon and magnificent displays from the Quinns at midfield, Olly Honeyman and Padraig Kenny won the day. Best performance yet.

April 15th: Leitrim 0-17, Wicklow 1-9. Leitrim turn on the style to overwhelm a tenacious Wicklow. Ciaran Mahon, Gerry Holohan and Aughawillan's Mickey Quinn were the stars on the historic day that saw Leitrim clinch promotion.

May 12th: Leitrim 1-11, Mayo 1-10. A late rally from Leitrim saw them snatch victory after an indifferent first half.

May 19th: Leitrim 3-9, Dublin 2-13. Leitrim tear the Dubs apart in the first half but injuries and a determined fightback from Dublin saw them snatch the honours in a highly competitive clash.

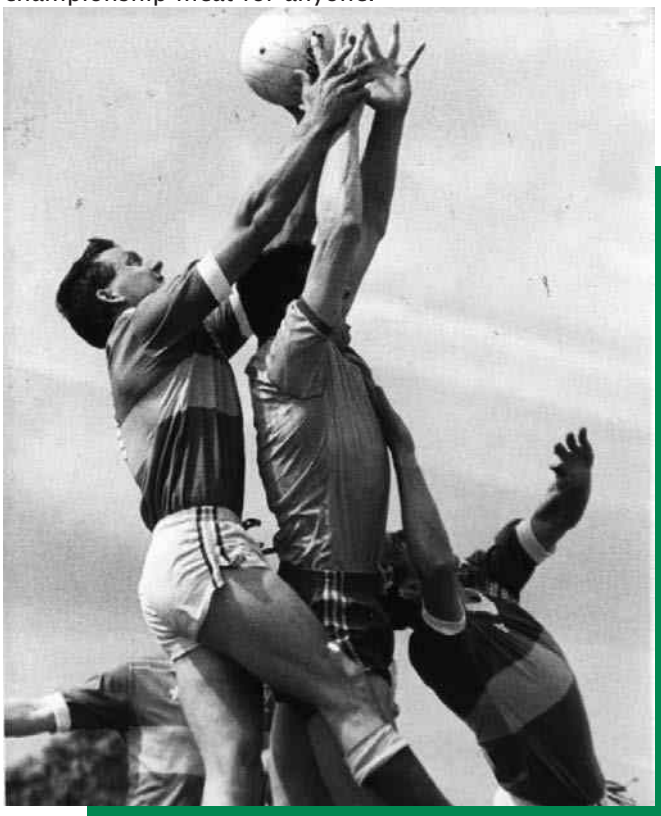
June 3rd: Leitrim 0-12, Derry 1-9. Another late rally from Leitrim saves the day after an indifferent showing. Stepping off the bus to play the game didn't help matters.

June 17th: Leitrim 0-16, Cork 0-6. Leitrim demolish the reigning All-Ireland champs with an excellent first half display. Cork showed little interest for the contest and it became no more than a hard training sesssion.

At this stage supporters were even attending training sessions and could see for themselves the highest ever level of preparation by any Leitrim team as the players went through rigorous routines on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings in Ballinamore.

Numerous counties now sought challenge games against us and the attendance at the clashes against Dublin and against Cork, the All-Ireland Champions, in Carrick-on-Shannon by far surpassed the numbers that would have come to a National League game only a year earlier. The valuable experience gained from playing Dublin and Cork, Mayo, Monaghan etc. etc was a boost to our attempts to be fit in every respect for Hyde Park. For most of the game Leitrim led all the way and without a doubt would have clinched a Connacht Final place were it not for cruelly unfortunate injuries to Captain, Mickey Quinn, and to Gerard Holohan in the course of the game – so Roscommon went on to win and had a much more convincing victory over Galway in the Connacht Final.

Despite the defeat, Leitrim followers were not too despondent, because in this team they saw a very definite hope for the future. For years on end a Leitrim supporter was happy to put up a reasonable championship performance, not to get beaten by too much. But 1990 was different – it was the spirit in the team, the obvious improved standard, and the quality of play that made our supporters happy. While our supporters were happy enough having run Roscommon so closely, our players felt differently. None of them could have done an iota more in preparation; they had simply given of everything they had in training, dedication, challenge games, personal sacrifices and sheer hard work. They had done everything asked of them and it was unfortunate that the opportunity of a Connacht Final did not arise – because we could have done it, we could have beaten "the old enemy" Galway and what a psychological lift that would have been. There was now a steely determination in every players mind – they were no longer going to be easy championship meat for anyone.



Reaching the heights as a midfielder Leitrim 1990 All star Mickey Quinn

Leitrim players and officials celebrate All Ireland B Victory

PJ Carroll receives a hero's welcome in Ballinamore after the All Ireland B victory over Sligo

All Ireland B Championship

A better time – from a Leitrim viewpoint – could not have come the holding of the first ever All-Ireland Senior B Competition, than in 1990.
We quickly responded to the invitation to compete and despite a certain lack of interest by some counties and some confusion over the timing of the competition, it certainly was the best thing that happened to Leitrim football at senior level since 1927.

Now we had a real target to aim for, an All-Ireland title because, despite the great success of the team earlier in the year we had nothing concrete to show for it in terms of cups or medals.

Luck was with us too – we had a bye in Round I. It was an enthusiastic group of players who travelled to Clonmel on the Second Round game against Tipperary where a tenacious home side made us fight very hard for victory.

The Semi-Final against Fermanagh in Breffni Park was another close affair but despite a gallant second half rally by the Ulstermen we were on our way to Hyde Park again for an All-Ireland Final clash with near neighbours Sligo – who had defeated us in the 1989 Connacht Championship.

It was a delighted George O'Toole, Uachtaran Chomhairle Chonnacht, who presented the first ever All-Ireland B Cup to Leitrim Captain, Mickey Quinn and it was a delighted throng of Leitrim people who celebrated after what turned out to be a rather one-sided game, highlighted however by a really special goal from Padraig Kenny.

There was the Celebration Dance, the victorious tour of the county, the visiting of schools and clubs by Mickey Quinn and his fellow players, the adulation from young and old, the congratulations — an indication of the euphoria that would envelop Leitrim when that barren Connacht Championship spell since 1927 would finally end. There was a feeling that the Nestor Cup would soon be finding its way to Leitrim.

One of the most satisfying aspects of the All-Ireland B success was that Michael Martin, a player who had rallied the team in so many league and championship

Supporters get behind Leitrim! *Tony Gallogly presents a cheque to Chairman Tony McGowan at a Leitrim training tession at Gaeil Colmcille Club in Kells, watched by Paddy Flynn, selector Aiden Crossan and Jim Lynch*

The Leitrim Team that played Roscommon in the 1990 Connacht Championship: Back Row *(L to R) Ollie Honeyman, Liam Conlon, Ciaran Mahon, Thomas Quinn, Declan Darcy, Brian Breen, Shane Heslin, Killian McLoughlin.* ***Front Row*** *(L to R) Gerry Flanagan, George Dugdale, Pat Donohoe, Paidraig Kenny, Mickey Quinn, Mickey Quinn (Cloone), Jerome Quinn*

The Ballinamore Sean O' Heslin's team defeated Mayo champions Hollymount to qualify for the 1990 Connacht club final : *Back Row (L to R) Ollie Honeyman, Brian Breen, Conor Harte, Damien Crossan, Paul Kieran, Ray Logan, Sean Crossan, Peter Reynolds Front Row: Gerry Logan Ciaran Mahon, Tommy Conlon, Liam Conlon, Gary Smith, Dermot O' Brien, Joe Honeyman*

CUMANN LÚTHCHLEAS GAEL

LEITRIM GAA

Training Fund Draw

COUNTY HOTEL

Carrick-on-Shannon

FRIDAY 15th JUNE

Music by

Margaret O'Rourke & Hi-Tech

Dancing from 11 pm - (Raffle will be held at 12 Midnight)

SPECIAL GUESTS -

Leitrim Senior Team

with Team Manager and Selectors

CEOL - CAINT - CABARET - CRAIC

(NOTE: Raffle Tickets still available through Clubs) F.O.C.

encounters, who had been an All Star nominee and who had been the pride and joy of his club, St. Mary's, and of his county for so long was at long last receiving a senior medal in the green and gold of Leitrim.

The air of confidence in the county had permeated to the Under 21 level too and in a scintillating performance Leitrim crushed a strong Sligo challenge in the first round of the Connacht Championship. Then in the Semi-Final we overcame Under 21 specialists Mayo in a nail-biting finish in Charlestown. And so it was off to Pearse Stadium with hopes high of stealing a march on Galway. It was a close call, but Galway finished stronger, so our aspirations of another Connacht Under 21 title would have to wait for at least another year.

A New Initiative

With so many players based in the Dublin area it was only at weekends that the full panel could meet. In Leitrim P.J. Carroll took the sessions, in Dublin it was that Aughawillan stalwart Frank Darcy. A decision was taken that was to be copied by many clubs and counties in ensuing years – the whole panel would meet during the week at a central location. And so we called on the Gael Cholmcille club in Kells for the use of their facilities and we were received with open arms – as Leitrim was to be later on also at the Drumbarragh Club, at St. Loman's in Mullingar, at Longford Rugby club and other in-between locations

The decision meant many a long mile to and from training for the Leitrim panel, team management and officials but there were no complaints. Leitrim would have gone to the moon if it meant increasing the chances of success,

Frank Darcy spent many a long hour co-ordinating the Dublin based panel members and it was no surprise that he was honoured as Leitrim's Ciba Geigy Clubman of the Year for 1990. Franks passion for his home club Aughawillan was well matched by his devotion to Leitrim.

The newly inaugurated Over 40's Inter-county competition had its sceptics, but team manager Terry Shortt was to ensure Leitrim played a major role.

On the club scene it was still the traditionally strong clubs that bagged the limelight at senior level, with once again Séan O'Heslins meeting Aughawillan in the County Final. Indeed these two clubs were forming the backbone of the county senior panel at the time. Defending champions Aughawillan looked to be retaining their title until a whirlwind finish from Séan O'Heslins saw the club take its 20th senior championship – a very impressive record. Ballinamore went on to show yet again that club football in Leitrim was a match for anyone, defeating both Shamrock Gaels of Sligo and Hollymount of Mayo en route to a Connacht Final clash with Galway Champions, Salthill. Team captain Ollie Honeyman surpassed even his own high standards with an impeccable display of football artistry, but O'Heslins were to return home disappointed.

Leitrim clubs were still awaiting a provincial title, we wondered if there was a hoodoo at club level too.

Despite some great performances in the years since 1990 it is amazing that Séan O'Heslins still await that 21st title. A new order was gradually emerging and from 1990 onwards some new names were to be inscribed on the Fenagh Cup.

With the success of the senior team and the consequent number of inter-county games, there were many delays in the championships and leagues and this was one of the major issues in a report from a County Board Commission spearheaded by Terry Shortt and Oliver Doonan. Oliver was busy in other ways too, helping in the organisation of the very successful Training Fund Draw with the co-ordinator, long time County Board Treasurer, Séan Maxwell. Everybody was working towards the common goal of improving Leitrim and as usual the business people of the county and supporters in general were not found wanting with financial help.

Not only were All-Ireland B and other successes of the 1990's important for the G.A.A. followers of Leitrim, but important for Leitrim as a county on a much wider scale than within the G.A.A.

The Leitrim Observer celebrated its centenary year in 1990

Business was generated for hotels, pubs, garages, bus services newspapers restaurants, fast food outlets, flag sellers, every spectrum of commercial life within and outside the county and in an age of a depressed economy we can be proud of the contribution this Association has made to Leitrim as a whole.

Indeed it would be well for the whole country to realise the millions of pounds that are generated for the commercial life of Ireland by the G.A.A. as thousands of followers flock to games in every county for practically the whole calendar year. It is a factor acknowledged by business people themselves and they reciprocate through generous sponsorship of the various units of the Association, but it is a factor often overlooked by the general public.
As Autumn approached thoughts turned to the 1990/91 National Football League and it was a time of great expectancy in the county. Clubs were organising coach loads of supporters to travel to away games, plans were made around Leitrim's fixture calendar. If the county did not succeed it certainly would not be from lack of support.

Status to Last?

Now that promotion had been achieved, would it just be a temporary measure? Could Leitrim really hold it's own in Division II? The sceptics wondered. Would the bubble burst?

News that Mick O' Dwyer had taken over the management of first round opponents, Kildare, drew massive media publicity to the Newbridge encounter. Leitrim followers were there in force and witnessed one of Leitrim's greatest ever displays – and superlative midfield performances from Mickey Quinn and Pat Donohoe - to prove we really were Division II material and drawing warm and genuine praise from Mick O'Dwyer who recognises a good player or a good team when he sees one.

Then it was the famous "local derby", the most awaited clash of the year. Again, tradition counted for nothing and Leitrim had a comprehensive victory over their Team Managers native county, Cavan, in front of the largest crowd seen at a National League game in Leitrim in years.

The ever increasing and even more exuberant Leitrim following next headed for Casement Park where Antrim brought out the very best in a Leitrim team that simply did not want to be beaten. They say a good team makes its own luck - and luck was with us when a late Antrim free failed to rise and we gained two valuable league points.

It was back to Carrick-on-Shannon for the fourth very competitive league fixture. This time we were up against 1989 Connacht Champions and All-Ireland finalists, Mayo. Could Leitrim possibly finish 1990 on a winning note or would the memory of a litany of defeats at the hands of Mayo be the psychological barrier we would not overcome?. The national media were there in force – Leitrim won and opened up all kinds of possibilities for the 1991 Connacht Championship!

A big challenge for Leitrim

***Leitrim are in control** – P.J Carroll can relax with Jim Lynch and county chairman Tony McGowan. At the rear are Gerry McGovern and Joe McInerney*

Pride and passion see Leitrim through

LEITRIM .....0-10 MAYO 0-7

More Laurels

It came as no great surprise that the first winners of the Royal Liver National League Team of the Month – a new incentive from the already generous sponsors, the Royal Liver Assurance Company – were Leitrim, chosen from all of the 32 counties as the supreme team and earning a very valuable £1,000 prize from the sponsors.

We had cause to be proud of winning the Team of the Month – as the award winners are chosen by the G.A.A. correspondents from throughout the country who see each team in action. No doubt the obvious disciplined sportsmanship of the Leitrim team – we were glad that not one Leitrim player was ordered off the field during the year – was also a major factor in being selected.

P.J. Carroll was voted Manager of the Month for November by the Ulster G.A.A. Sportswriters in a scheme sponsored by Bass Ireland Ltd. And the ultimate personal accolade came for him with the announcement he was elected as Phillips Electrical Manager of the Month for December.

Little wonder then that the Executive Committee of Leitrim County Board saw fit to bestow the 1990 Hall of Fame Award on P.J. Carroll for the amazing contribution he had made to the county in the past year – he well and truly deserved to be among Leitrim's greats. 1990 had another milestone for the county with the celebration by our local newspaper "The Leitrim Observer" of a century in production. The coverage given to the G.A.A. affairs at county and club level was an ever increasing facet of the Observer and kept our exiles right up to date with news of all aspects of the Association. 1990 was a special year for Seamus Prior also, he was chosen as referee for the All Star Tour – and in the following year was to become the first Leitrim man to referee an All-Ireland Football Final.

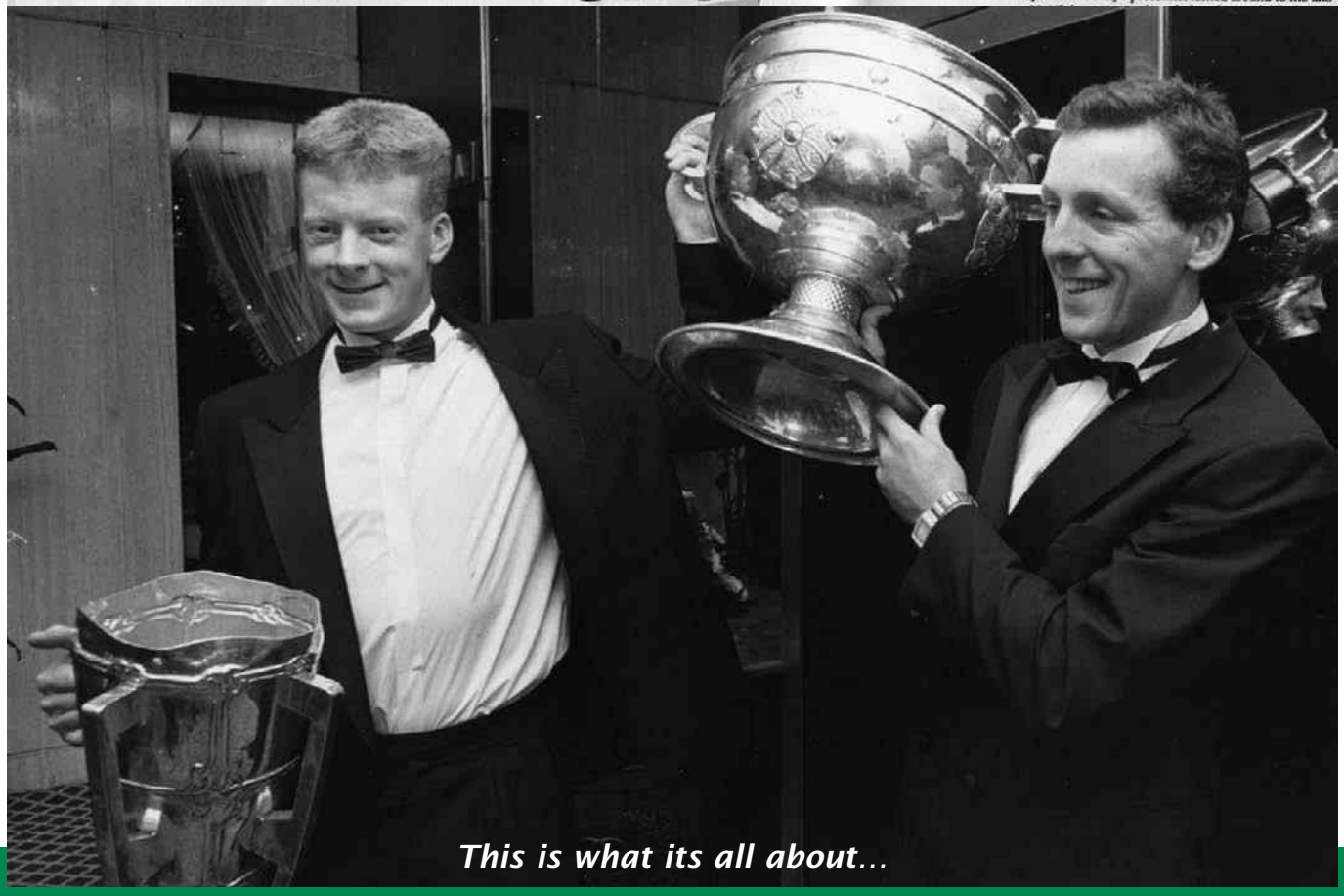
A break with the 1927 team came with the news of the death of legendary Jack Bohan, while the sudden death of Gortletteragh and Leitrim hurler Jim Dorrigan put many things in perspective.

History was made last week as Mickey Quinn became the first ever Leitrim player to gain the highest individual honour in the Gaelic Football world — a Bank of Ireland Allstar Award. Sports Reporter John Connolly talks to the "Mighty Quinn" about the Allstar award and Leitrim football in general.

Mickey finally catches the big one!

— by John Connolly —

That game first revealed to the watching "Giants" of Connacht football just how serious Leitrim were. No longer did they sit back and await the ritual slaughter like lambs. Such was the shock and amazement that Leitrim's performance caused that day that one Mayo pressman turned around to me and



This is what its all about…

Leitrim's 1990 All Star Mickey Quinn with the Sam Maguire and All Star nominee Declan Darcy with the Liam Mc Carthy Cup

1991

1991 began with a high profile encounter for Leitrim – this was when we were chosen by Goal for a fundraising charity game against Dublin. Over 3000 people gathered into the Swords G.A.A. ground for this novel clash – not too many years beforehand we would hardly have had that attendance at a Leitrim game in the Championship. But we were still the glamour team of the G.A.A., the new kids on the block.

Supporters geared themselves for an exciting year – holiday plans were put on the long finger. Nobody wanted to miss seeing Leitrim in action. For the players and team management, though, it was business as usual. Energy sapping training sessions, team talks and challenge games- complete focus on the forthcoming resumption of the National Football League and an anxious eye on the Championship clash with Sligo. The players distanced themselves from all the hype – there was serious work too be done.

On the resumption of the Royal Liver League our game against Longford had to be held up for a quarter of an hour – to allow the crowds flocking to Pearse Park to gain admission. Another new scenario for us. We almost faltered that day, but thanks to a late Liam Conlon goal we had two more valuable league points. Our supporters got edgy. There was talk that the recent successes were just a bubble. A bubble soon to burst. It was almost as if some of our own had a death wish.

Derry came to Carrick-on-Shannon with five late switches on their team. A mere draw would put us in Division I, the television cameras were there to capture the moment. But the moment never came as our forwards shot wide after wide and our defence was caught on the hop.

A dressing room that was normally choc-a-block and filled with back slaps and handshakes was strangely silent. Where was everyone? Some went home to pick teams, their Leitrim team, some teams went to print. Of course it is decidedly easier to pick the team after the game – our Team Manager and selectors could not afford this luxury though, they had to pick the team before the game.

Yes, we did have another chance. A draw in the final round against Tyrone would still put us into the Quarter Final and into Division I. For fifty minutes we were at sea with Tyrone dictating the play in Omagh. Suddenly the old Leitrim sparkle returned and the team found its form, three goals in ten minutes. In a nail biting finish Tyrone held out to grab both points and take Divisional honours. A premature "result" from the vital Kildare/Mayo clash announced they had drawn. Leitrim were through and Tyrone shared in our euphoria. Then the real result came – a win for Kildare who were now level with us on points.

Unbelievably we still had one more chance. The play-off game against Kildare had a big prize – Division I, a Quarter Final League place and a tilt at Kerry in Croke Park. Despite our hiccups in the recent games our supporters were back, and in full voice.

Action from the Leitrim – Kildare National League play off game in Navan

Ahead at half time, we were almost there, Kildare go ahead, Leitrim hit back with an Aiden Rooney goal, the game is within our grasp, we were just moments from glory. Then it happened – one of those nudges by a forward, unnoticed by the referee, and the ball was in the net. Mick O'Dwyer leads his Lilywhites on to meet Kerry and eventually to a National League Final, a final they almost won.

Coupled with our bitter disappointment of defeat was our sadness when the news broke that Fr. Gene Cox had died at the game. It was a sad day for Leitrim.

If the supporters felt disappointment spare a thought for the players. They could not have given more. Sacrifices aplenty had been made. For over a year and a half, practically non-stop these players had done everything asked of them. They had trained in sunshine, in rain, in frost and in snow. They forfeited weekends with their families and friends, they played fund raising games, they talked to the press, radio and television, and they visited schools and clubs. Scattered throughout the country, frequent long distance travel was commonplace. But there were no complaints, no appeals for special treatment; it was all being done by a group of players who had formed a bond seldom witnessed at county level. It was all being done for Leitrim.

A sad but cherished photograph of the late Father Gene Cox, taken at a half-time in the Leitrim versus Kildare match in Navan on Easter Sunday 1991, some minutes prior to his sudden death.

The Under 21's Revive Flagging Spirits!

As we trouped home from Páirc Tailteann, Navan on Easter Sunday with the news just breaking of the sudden death of our former Cathaoirleach, Rev. Eugene Cox and having suffered a bitter defeat by Kildare in the vital N.F.L. play-off game, it was only the most avid Leitrim supporter who expected an upturn in our fortunes on the following day.

Only those very close to the team felt that Leitrim had any chance of defeating Mayo, potential All-Ireland champions, in the Connacht Under 21 Semi-final. But the team had prepared long and prepared well. The hard training over the winter months, the experience of the Hastings Cup Competition, the dedication of the players and the excellent preparatory work by the Team Manager and Selectors were about to bear fruit.

Runaí Choiste Chontae Longfoirt, John Greene, deserves credit for the organisation of the Hastings Cup competition that provided a number of rewarding games as a build up to the Provincial U-21 Championships. Defeat in the final by Westmeath merely spurred the players to make even greater efforts in their championship preparations.

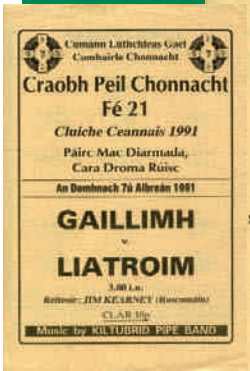
The abiding memory of the game against Mayo will be the three goals scored by full-forward Pat O'Callaghan – reminiscent of a similar feat by Mel Kiernan in the 1977 All-Ireland Under 21 Semi-final against Kerry – and the great spirit shown by every member of the Leitrim side. Into the Connacht Final against arch rivals Galway and an opportunity to reverse the result of the previous year. The supporters were back, but sceptical. Could any Leitrim team defeat Connacht kingpins Mayo and Galway in the same week? The rest is history.

By any standard it was a remarkable achievement. But one wonders if the significance of this achievement was not lost, to some degree at least, on our supporters who seemed content with nothing less than success at senior level. It is not often we win Connacht Championships at any level – our last was fourteen years before, back in 1977.In the All-Ireland Semi-Final we were unfortunate to come up against an exceptionally strong Tyrone side (among whose stars was Peter Canavan, later to become one of the games best ever players) that went on to win the All-Ireland. Team Manager P.J. Carroll and his selectors now had a conveyor belt of quality players who could be drafted into the senior panel.

In May 1991 Leitrim took part in an International G.A.A. tournament in Belfast with Antrim, London and New York and were very honoured to win the Belfast Crystal Trophy presented to the team captain Ollie Honeyman by former Olympic gold medallist Mary Peters, representing the Northern Ireland Sports Council. The weekend, a blend of games and special events, was a good "bonding session" for the team in the run up to the Connacht Championship.

Pat O Callaghan, scorer of 3 goals against Mayo, in action against Galway in the Connacht Under 21 final

All set for the 1991 Connacht Under 21 final Peter Donohoe, Donal Smith, Martin McHugh, and James Doran.


Cumann Lúthchleas Gael
Comhairle Chonnacht

Craobh Peil Chonnacht
Fé 21

Cluiche Ceannais 1991

Páirc Mac Diarmada,
Cara Droma Ruisc

An Domhnach Tá Aibreán 1991

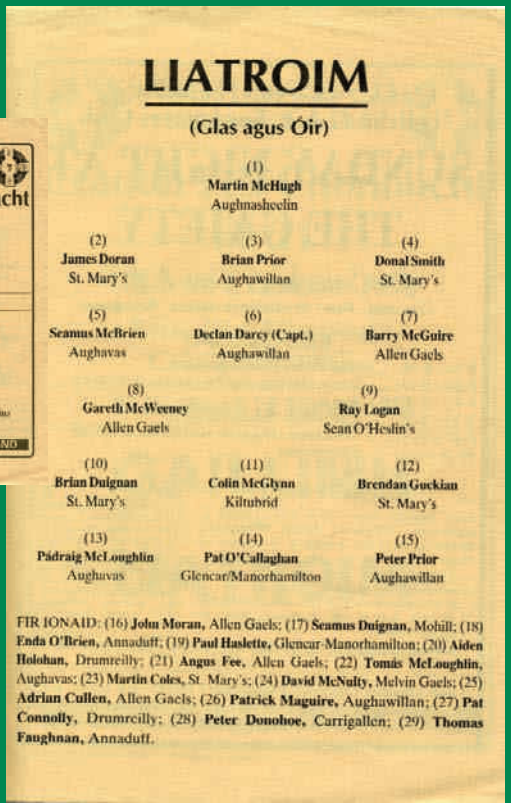
GAILLIMH
v
LIATROIM

3.00 i.n.

Reitheoir: JIM KEARNEY (Roscommon)

CLÁR Iúr

Music by KILTUBRID PIPE BAND


LIATROIM

(Glas agus Óir)

(1) **Martin McHugh**, Aughnasheelin
(2) **James Doran**, St. Mary's
(3) **Brian Prior**, Aughawillan
(4) **Donal Smith**, St. Mary's
(5) **Seamus McBrien**, Aughavas
(6) **Declan Darcy (Capt.)**, Aughawillan
(7) **Barry McGuire**, Allen Gaels
(8) **Gareth McWeeney**, Allen Gaels
(9) **Ray Logan**, Sean O'Heslin's
(10) **Brian Duignan**, St. Mary's
(11) **Colin McGlynn**, Kiltubrid
(12) **Brendan Guckian**, St. Mary's
(13) **Pádraig McLoughlin**, Aughavas
(14) **Pat O'Callaghan**, Glencar/Manorhamilton
(15) **Peter Prior**, Aughawillan

FIR IONAID: (16) **John Moran**, Allen Gaels; (17) **Seamus Duignan**, Mohill; (18) **Enda O'Brien**, Annaduff; (19) **Paul Haslette**, Glencar-Manorhamilton; (20) **Aiden Holohan**, Drumreilly; (21) **Angus Fee**, Allen Gaels; (22) **Tomás McLoughlin**, Aughavas; (23) **Martin Coles**, St. Mary's; (24) **David McNulty**, Melvin Gaels; (25) **Adrian Cullen**, Allen Gaels; (26) **Patrick Maguire**, Aughawillan; (27) **Pat Connolly**, Drumreilly; (28) **Peter Donohoe**, Carrigallen; (29) **Thomas Faughnan**, Annaduff.

Having gone so close to defeating Roscommon 1990, all Leitrim eyes were firmly fixed on the repeat Semi-final clash, this time in Carrick-on-Shannon. But the Leitrim players and officials had another thought in mind – Sligo had to be overcome in the first round. They prepared diligently and despite lacking the services of injured captain, Ollie Honeyman, did come out on top and the clash we had long awaited was finally upon us.

A full house was expected, such was the interest in the game. A capacity crowd did turn up and our Minors set the pace, overcoming Roscommon to earn a place in the Connacht Final. Could the seniors do likewise? A little piece of history was created in that Leitrim, for the first time ever, wore an advertising logo on the jerseys. The sponsorship, graciously offered by Gandon Securities and administered by Annaduff clubman, Ciaran McNamara acknowledged that Leitrim was a team with potential.

Connacht Under 21 champions 1991: Back Row *(L to R) Brian Prior, Barry Mc Guire, Brendan Guckian, Martin McHugh, Seamus McBrien, Brian Duignan, Colin McGlynn, Ray Logan.* ***Front Row*** *(L to R) James Doran, Padraig McLoughlin, Gareth Mc Weeney, Declan Darcy, (captain) Donal Smith, Pat O Callaghan*

Team manager PJ Carroll acknowledges the Leitrim support as he greets Declan Darcy & Seamus Duignan

Garrett Moran is delighted to hold the Connacht Under 21 Cup, surrounded by the team management, officials and supporters, in a very happy Leitrim dressing room.

We led for most of the game, but Tony McManus and his team-mates were too experienced to panic. They clawed their way back into the game, the experience of the big days stood them well and they finished too strong for us, going on to a Connacht Final spot against Mayo.

The knives were out. Why was the team picked as it was, why were switches not made, why, why, why?

It was only when Roscommon defeated Mayo in a replay and went on to give the team of the moment, Meath, such a fright in the All-Ireland Semi-final that people began to acknowledge that the Leitrim side did after all, have potential, that Leitrim were not too far removed from the top teams in the country.

It was a big blow to the team to learn that talented half-back John Owens was transferring to Tipperary where his family was now based. Losing a player of John's calibre put a severe dent in the quality of the panel. Leitrim and all small counties really needed everyone at their disposal.

There was big support in the county for a Congress motion that would see Dublin-born players being allowed to declare for the home county of either of their parents. But this would only apply to designated counties. When this motion did come to pass the first Dublin Player to don the Leitrim senior jersey was Jason Ward, to be followed in 1995 by Ciaran McGovern, while others rallied to Leitrim at Under 21 level.

Cox Memorial Tournament

The death of Rev. Eugene Cox P.P. was a tragic blow for his family, his parishioners in Dromard, Co. Longford and for the G.A.A.

Fr. Gene had close Associations with the G.A.A. from his early childhood in Annaduff, going on to win All-Ireland College success with St. Mel's, Longford and to be a star player with his native club and with Bornacoola.
His priestly duties took him to Leeds where he became Chairman of Yorkshire G.A.A. and on his return to Ireland he continued his role as a very able G.A.A. administrator in the various parishes to which he was appointed and became chairman of Leitrim County Board G.A.A.

Fr. Gene's brother Stanley Cox had been Leitrim delegate to Connacht Council and was Secretary of the County Board at the time of his death in 1982.

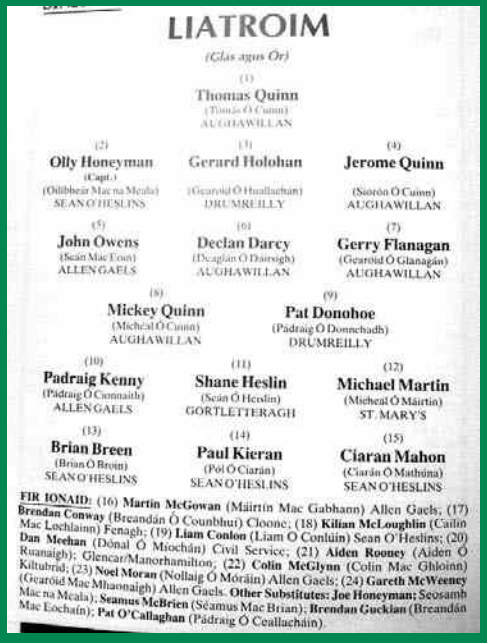
It was fitting that the memory of these illustrious brothers should be honoured by a tournament organised by Coiste Chontae Liatroma and it was fitting, too, that the tournament should prove so successful.

Leitrim, Cavan, Galway and Tyrone took part in the tournament played in Ballinamore and very efficiently organised by a special committee working in conjunction with the Séan O'Heslin club.

For the National League, Leitrim had been hoping for four Divisions of eight teams, with all the games being played in the calendar year, from February until mid-April – but this system was some years off still.

* Taking up careers as male models — Ciaran Mahon and Declan Darcy model Leitrim's new jersey complete with sponsor's logo "Gandon" watched by Annaduff man, Ciaran McNamara, Financial Dealer with Gandon Securities (left) and Dave Billings, Director Gandon Securities.

The Leitrim side that overcame Sligo in the Connacht Championship



The Leitrim side that faced Roscommon

The League commenced in October 1991 with yet another meeting against Roscommon and yet another game Leitrim could have won – but a well-established lead was frittered away in the last few minutes. The game against Antrim was a carbon copy of that against Derry earlier in the year - more missed chances. There was a renewed spirit shown against Donegal, but another defeat meant we would simply have to overcome both Longford and Wicklow when the League would resume in Spring 1992.

Our financial return from the previous year's National League had increased substantially, as it was based on attendance at games, but still County Treasurers Brendan Gormley and Séan Maxwell were hard pressed to keep the coffers full enough to cover the financial outlay. The Board was still running a major raffle, this time co-ordinated by Vice-chairman Eamonn Tubman ; Eamonn Duignan and the Supporters Club were still working might and main; there was a great response from business people; Ciaran McNamara and Gandon Securities had helped out by team sponsorship and a really important new initiative was the first ever Leitrim Golf Classic run by Joe Layden and his committee in Dublin.

This Golf Classic, in 2009, continues to be one of the major sources of the Board's income. Generous event sponsors like Jim McNaughton of Tile Style and Deane Brothers Builders have helped this Leitrim Golf Classic become one of the top attractions on the charity circuit and has made it one of the top money earners for the Board.

On the club scene, new senior champions emerged when Allen Gaels took their first county title after a nail-biting final against hot favourites Sean O'Heslins. Allen Gaels, as a club, was to make its mark in Leitrim football more and more over the years, while many of their players donned the Leitrim jersey in various grades.

Carrigallen took the Intermediate title after an exciting clash with Melvin Gaels – a club that was being guided by former Leitrim star player and former Team Manager Michael McGowan, a man who was later to become Cathaoirleach of the County Board. The Junior Championship Cup went back to Glenfarne after a lapse of 32 years, while the Under 21 campaign had a number of exciting clashes before St. Mary's won the final though there were misgivings about players as young as fifteen having to line out with some clubs at that level, due to a lack of players in the 18 – 21 age bracket.

A disappointing feature of all the championship fixtures was the generally paltry attendance at the games and the Executive Committee of the Board was considering means of improving this situation, including the possibility of playing some games on Saturdays. But back in 1991, Sunday was still the sacred day for the championship. One big improvement noted though was the general presentation of all the venues for the games and the much more uniform approach by clubs to togging teams out properly. The days of multi-coloured togs and socks were coming to an end. Some clubs were also taking a leaf from the county team by having a physio present at games and installing First Aid equipment in dressing rooms. From a medical viewpoint

Stanley Cox, the former Coiste Liatroma Secretary (right) pictured with his Chairman George O'Toole

Mrs Annie Cox with her daughters Anne Marie and Frances, delighted with the success of the Cox Memorial tournament

George O ' Toole (centre) pictured with county board treasurers Brendan Gormley (left) & Sean Maxwell

the county was fortunate to have doctors making themselves available to be of assistance to the various teams – men like Dr. Declan Loftus, Dr. Kieran Greene, Dr. Mel Gorman and Dr Dermot Cribbin with the footballers and Dr. Sean Bourke with the hurlers.

The importance of the small club in the greater G.A.A. scheme of things was to see referee Seamus Prior and his umpires James McCaffrey, Peter Flynn, Tommy Costello and Killian Mulvanerty officiate at the All-Ireland Final in Croke Park between Meath (who had the three replays in the Leinster Championship against Dublin) and eventual champions Down. This was a great occasion for the Aughnasheelin club.

Mary Peters, Olympic Athelte, pictured with Leitrim Co. Board Chairman Tony McGowan at the 1991 celebrations in Belfast

LET'S GO WITH LEITRIM
Leitrim G.A.A. Supporters Club

SUNDAY NIGHT AT THE GAIETY

On Sunday, 21st April

Comedy - Folk - Traditional - Cajun - Bluegrass

PROGRAMME

8.10 - 8.30 : Comedian Shaun Connors
8.30 - 9.15 : Chris Meehan and His Redneck Friends
9.15 - 9.30 : Break
9.30 - 9.40 : Comedian Shaun Connors
9.40 - 10.30 : Stocktons Wing with Matt Molloy & Friends
10.30 p.m. : Conclusion

Special Train!!!

Train Departs Sligo - 15.45 Hrs.; Calling at Collooney, Ballymote, Boyle, Carrick-on-Shannon, Dromod, Longford, Longford to Dublin Direct.

Arriving Dublin 19.00 Hrs. Bus to take passengers direct to Gaiety Theatre.

Show commences 20.00 Hrs.. Show concludes 22.30 Hrs. Bus to take passengers back to Connolly Station.

Train Departs Dublin 23.30 Hrs. Arrives Sligo 2.45 Hrs.

Coiste Chontae Liatroma Thanks the Leitrim Supporters' Club for the provision of Togs and Socks for the Leitrim Team in to-days game.

From Aughinasheelin to Croke Park!
Seamus Prior, referee of the 1991 All Ireland final between Down & Meath, with umpires who officiated with him on the big day James McCaffery, Peter Flynn, Tommy Costello & Killian Mulvanerty. Also pictured are Ollie Cull & Peter Meehan, who officiated with Seamus at a number of Leitrim County Finals

The Allen Gaels team that won the clubs first Senior Championship title in 1991
Back Row *(L to R) Gareth McWeeney, Adrian Cullen, Noel Moran, John Moran, Martin McGowan, Barry McGuire, Aiden McKeon, Sean Wynne.*
Front Row *(L to R) Gerry Keane, John Owens, Sean Flood, Padraig Kenny (captain), Padraig Hackett, Angus Fee, Pat McGovern*

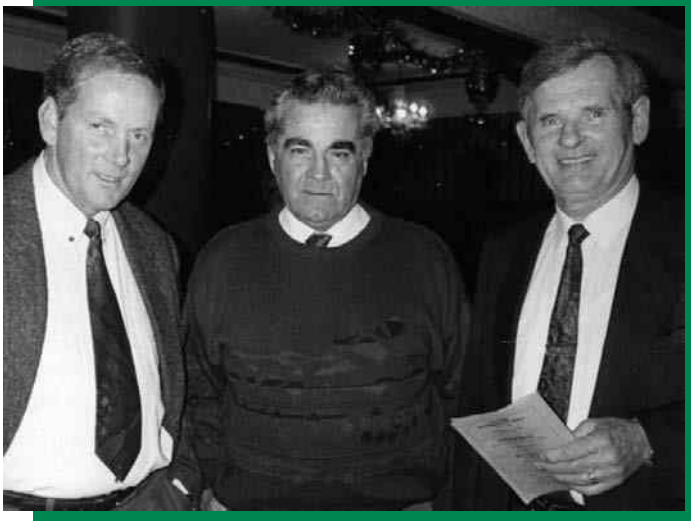
By the start of 1992 much of the impetus, the hype and the media attention had disappeared in Leitrim. Doubts were creeping into the minds of the supporters – these same supporters who had been on a high for the previous two years and had watched re-run after re-run of the league and championship matches in their local pubs. They couldn't get enough of the team, yet now there was not the same buzz or air of expectancy.

The opening National League game against Longford in Carrick-on-Shannon raised spirits a little, but then came defeat to Wicklow who were chasing a place in the Quarter Final. We were staring relegation in the face with only two league points out of a possible ten, a scant reward for all the effort put in by the team management and players.

As it happened, a new format was introduced for the National League for 1991/1992 so placings really didn't count, but the overall results from the campaign were a blow to morale. Despondency passes quickly in Leitrim and we were soon building up for the championship. The news that Joe Darcy was rejoining the panel came as a welcome boost and would compensate in some way for the loss of John Owens.

The Connacht Championship rota saw Leitrim head to Ruislip for a first round clash with London. The 3-17 to 2-10 scoreline in our favour belied the fact that the team had not performed impressively. However the large band of travelling supporters and all the Leitrim exiles were happy with the win and to earn another tilt at Roscommon. As always, the Leitrim people in London were welcoming and generous to the team and officials and all enjoyed a real Green and Gold social function after the game.

Seamus O Rourke and Brian Doyle, in their dual role as team managers and players explain the finer points to their Carrigallen team mates preparing for the 1992 county final against Aughawillan



Dublin based Leitrim team trainer Frank Darcy (left) pictured with former Leitrim stars Jim Lynch & Josie Murray

Leitrim Under 21 Team, delighted with the Hastings Cup

There was now a four-week gap before Leitrim would descend en-masse on Hyde Park. No one could question the commitment of the panel of players in the preparation for that game against Roscommon. No one could belittle the efforts of the Team Manager and his selectors or Frank Darcy and his charges in Dublin. No one could hint at any lack of support or co-operation financial or otherwise from the County Board. No one could claim that anything was left undone. Roscommon again. We thought of and talked about 1990 when we had the game in our grasp but when injuries to key players Gerry Holohan and Mickey Quinn turned it against us; 1991 when we had the game in our grasp again but let it slip through inexperience or whatever.

1992 was going to be different. But it wasn't really, we let it slip again. The hard facts are that since 1976 we hadn't beaten any team in the Connacht Championship except London and Sligo. Leitrim had promised much, but in the heat of championship football we appeared to be some way off the mark, despite everybody's best efforts.

For years we will debate on the missed chances, on the goals that should have come, on the goals that should not have come. We can talk of hard luck, of another "near one" but we should have had the game sown up long before Roscommon's freak goal. It was another bitter pill of experience for the players who now realised that a Connacht title slipped from their grasp. Despite the disappointment they were now fully aware that mental attitude is a major factor.

That game in Hyde Park brought P.J. Carroll's three-year term as Leitrim Team Manager for the Connacht Championship to an end. Perhaps P.J.'s greatest contribution to Leitrim football – apart from his raising of standards – was that he had instilled a pride in every Leitrim player in the county jersey; he had been passionate for success for the county and he had imbued everybody with that same passion. His selectors James Holohan, Aiden Crossan and County Chairman Tony McGowan had spent every ounce of their energy on behalf of Leitrim.

They gave their all for Leitrim…
Selectors Tony McGowan (Cathaoirleach Liatroma) Aiden Crossan and James Holohan with team manager PJ Carroll who ended their term after the 1992 Connacht Championship

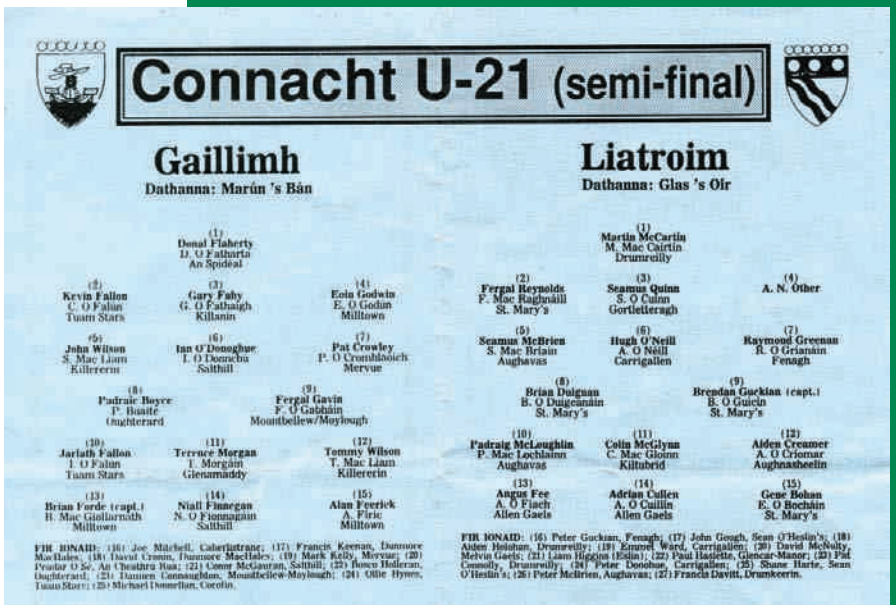
Promoting the Leitrim GAA lotto
Back Row *(L to R) Martain McCartin, Seamus Deavaney, Jim Meehan & Enda Stenson.*
Front Row *(L to R) John Keaney and Gerry Mahan*

A New Leader

Following P.J. Carroll's departure many felt that Leitrim's chances of a place in the sun had evaporated.

But Leitrim faces were smiling once more with the announcement of John O'Mahony of Mayo as County Team Manager.

John O'Mahony has all the credentials. An All-Ireland medal winner at Minor and Under 21 level, a Senior Inter-county player, Manager of teams at College, Club and County level culminating in Mayo's exciting appearance in the 1989 All-Ireland Final, a qualified G.A.A. coach, an administrator at the highest level, a man with the feel for the G.A.A. in all its varied roles and as an organiser of exceptional capabilities.



Connacht U-21 (semi-final)

Gaillimh
Dathanna: Marún 's Bán

(1) Donal Flaherty, D. O Fatharta, An Spidéal
(2) Kevin Fallon, C. O Falún, Tuam Stars
(3) Gary Fahy, G. O Fathaigh, Killanin
(4) Eoin Godwin, E. O Godin, Milltown
(5) John Wilson, S. Mac Liam, Killererin
(6) Ian O'Donoghue, I. O Donnchu, Salthill
(7) Pat Crowley, P. O Cromhlaoich, Mervue
(8) Padraic Boyce, P. Buaite, Oughterard
(9) Fergal Gavin, F. O Gabhain, Mountbellew/Moylough
(10) Jarlath Fallon, I. O Falún, Tuam Stars
(11) Terence Morgan, T. Morgáin, Glenamaddy
(12) Tommy Wilson, T. Mac Liam, Killererin
(13) Brian Forde (capt.), B. Mac Giollarnáth, Milltown
(14) Niall Finnegan, N. O Finnagáin, Salthill
(15) Alan Feerick, A. Fíric, Milltown

FIR IONAID: (16) Joe Mitchell, Caherlistrane; (17) Francis Keenan, Dunmore MacHales; (18) David Cronin, Dunmore MacHales; (19) Mark Kelly, Mervue; (20) Peadar O Se, An Cheathru Rua; (21) Conor McGauran, Salthill; (22) Bosco Holleran, Oughterard; (23) Damien Connaughton, Mountbellew-Moylough; (24) Ollie Hynes, Tuam Stars; (25) Michael Donnellan, Cocolin.

Liatroim
Dathanna: Glas 's Oír

(1) Martin McCartin, M. Mac Cairtin, Drumreilly
(2) Fergal Reynolds, F. Mac Raghnaill, St. Mary's
(3) Seamus Quinn, S. O Cainn, Gortletteragh
(4) A. N. Other
(5) Seamus McBrien, S. Mac Briain, Aughavas
(6) Hugh O'Neill, A. O Néill, Carrigallen
(7) Raymond Greenan, R. O Grianáin, Fenagh
(8) Brian Duignan, B. O Duigeanáin, St. Mary's
(9) Brendan Gucklan (capt.), B. O Guiclín, St. Mary's
(10) Padraig McLoughlin, P. Mac Lochlainn, Aughavas
(11) Colin McGlynn, C. Mac Gloinn, Kiltuberid
(12) Aiden Creamer, A. O Criomair, Aughnasheelin
(13) Angus Fee, A. O Fiach, Allen Gaels
(14) Adrian Cullen, A. O Cuillin, Allen Gaels
(15) Gene Bohan, E. O Bocháin, St. Mary's

FIR IONAID: (16) Peter Guckian, Fenagh; (17) John Gough, Sean O'Heslin's; (18) Aiden Holohan, Drumreilly; (19) Emmet Ward, Carrigallen; (20) David McNulty, Melvin Gaels; (21) Liam Higgins (Eslin); (22) Paul Hazlette, Glencar-Manor; (23) Pat Connolly, Drumreilly; (24) Peter Donohoe, Carrigallen; (25) Shane Harte, Sean O'Heslin's; (26) Peter McBrien, Aughavas; (27) Francis Davitt, Drumkeerin.

His decision to accept the post of Leitrim Team Manager was not taken lightly. He needed to be certain that the loyalty and commitment he would give to the position would be matched in enthusiasm by the clubs, by the County Board and especially by the players.
John O'Mahony need not have worried – everything he asked for was delivered and he himself made no secret of the fact that his main aim was to deliver a Connacht Senior Championship to Leitrim.

In regard to the players at his disposal, the ground work had been well prepared by P.J. Carroll; Frank Darcy would continue his great work with the Dublin based panel members and then the choice of Ollie Honeyman and Joe Reynolds as selectors was a very wise one. Both men had long displayed passion in abundance for Leitrim.

A new initiative by John O'Mahony was the appointment of a "back-room management team" who would assume particular roles, attend training and all games and have regular meetings with the Team Manager and selectors.

Chairman Tony McGowan, Vice-Chairman Eamonn Tubman, Secretary Tommy Moran and joint Treasurer Brendan Gormley would represent the Board and they would be joined by Frank Darcy and team medical officer, Dr. Declan Loftus.

Dr Declan Loftus long serving team doctor to his club Allen Gaels and to Leitrim.

For many years prior to 1992 – and right up to the 125th anniversary in 2009 – Dr. Loftus made an enormous contribution to Leitrim G.A.A. by his full commitment in monitoring the welfare of the county players, in the prevention of injury and in the immediate and professional treatment of any injuries that did occur. Very often work like Declan's goes unrecognised, but he is certainly owed a great debt of gratitude by Leitrim G.A.A.

There was the usual long wait from June to October for inter-county activity to resume. Our opening game against Longford lacked the crowds and the atmosphere of two years previously in Pearse Park, but it was important to have a win, as it was our first competitive game under new manager John O'Mahony. It was tense and it was close – but we won and there was the added consolation with some new and recalled faces giving top class performances.

The game that will live in most peoples minds from 1992 will be our second round encounter, against the All-Ireland champions of 1989 and '90, Cork. Judging by any statistics, it should have been an easy victory for the Munster men, but one statistic that was overlooked was the sheer spirit and determination of Leitrim. We drew a match we could have won. But we could have lost it in those dying moments too, so hearts were happy. Few people, outside the team, had expected us to take a point from Cork.

Donegal were ready for us, still remembering their close call against us a year earlier in Ballyshannon. Facing the All-Ireland Champions on their home ground did not deter Leitrim and an opening point from corner-back Joe Honeyman appeared to be the extra tonic needed. But Donegal came again and again in a series of overlapping movements that seemed to leave our players bewildered and in awe, defeating us by 1-14 to 0-6.

Anxious to show the public that their real form was against Cork and not against Donegal, the Leitrim players, in a rearranged team, showed determination, spirit and skill in a fine win over Tipperary in the final game of the season, leaving us with five points coming into the break. We were now nicely placed on the League table – our future was in our hands.

Patsy Prior, who gave great service to Aughawillan as a player and team manager.

Emmet Ward in action with Carrigallen in the club senior championship

The Under-21 team went through gruelling preparation for the Hastings Cup Competition from early January and the confidence of being Connacht Champions was a big factor in the victories over Cavan, Monaghan and Fermanagh before yet another meeting with old rivals, Roscommon. The final of the Competition, played in Hyde Park - a familiar setting to us - was nail-biting for the Leitrim followers but a point from Brian Duignan in the dying seconds gave us our first ever victory in the competition and compensated somewhat for the defeat in the final the previous year.
This victory, in fact, turned out to be our only footballing title in 1992 and it was achieved by a team that showed great promise - and indeed a number of these players were now regular members of our Senior panel. Perhaps the break was too long before the Connacht Under-21 Championship but the team seemed to have lost its bite, a number of players had picked up injuries and we lacked the conviction of title holders when meeting Galway in Tuam. But the players rallied from strong Galway attacks, with a number of brilliant individual displays and had we availed of all our scoring chances, the result might have been different than the 2-11 to 2-4 scoreline against us.

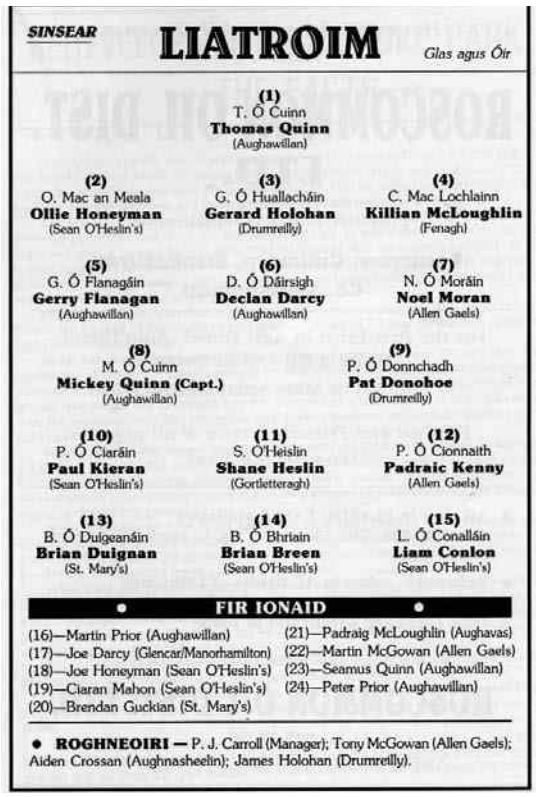
Many of the Under 21 side featured on the Senior team in the Senior B Championship against Antrim in Casement Park in October, but the home side put paid to our chances of following up on our All-Ireland success of the previous year.

On the club front, the big senior championship talking point was the elimination of County Champions Allen Gaels in the first round. The final was between seasoned campaigners Aughawillan and a Carrigallen side desperately anxious to get their hands on the Fenagh Cup. Seamus O'Rourke and Brian Doyle took charge of Carrigallen and also played their hearts out on the field as team members, but Aughawillan proved too crafty.

The Leitrim champions went on to defeat Strokestown in the Connacht Club Semi-Final in Elphin and all Leitrim turned out in force for the final against Knockmore, played in Aughawillan. It was so close for the home side and so heartbreaking to see Knockmore score fortuitous goals and deprive Aughawillan and Leitrim of a much longed for Connacht Club title.
Michael McGowan led Melvin Gaels to victory in the Intermediate Final, making up for their 1991 defeat and in the Junior Championship history was made when Ballinaglera captured their first ever championship title.

Due to atrocious weather conditions, objections and appeals the very unsatisfactory situation arose of the Under 21 championship not being completed and the long awaited final between Allen Gaels and St. Mary's was deferred until January 1993.

The Master Fixtures Plan was working reasonably well in providing a regular programme of games for all adult players. There were the usual appeals for postponement of league games in particular, with the new phenomenon of music festivals, stag parties and three-day weddings making it difficult for clubs to have a full complement of players.



SINSEAR

LIATROIM

Glas agus Óir

(1)
T. Ó Cuinn
Thomas Quinn
(Aughawillan)

(2) Ó. Mac an Meala — **Ollie Honeyman** (Sean O'Heslin's)
(3) G. Ó Huallacháin — **Gerard Holohan** (Drumreilly)
(4) C. Mac Lochlainn — **Killian McLoughlin** (Fenagh)
(5) G. Ó Flanagáin — **Gerry Flanagan** (Aughawillan)
(6) D. Ó Dáirsigh — **Declan Darcy** (Aughawillan)
(7) N. Ó Moráin — **Noel Moran** (Allen Gaels)
(8) M. Ó Cuinn — **Mickey Quinn (Capt.)** (Aughawillan)
(9) P. Ó Donnchadh — **Pat Donohoe** (Drumreilly)
(10) P. Ó Ciaráin — **Paul Kieran** (Sean O'Heslin's)
(11) S. O'Heislin — **Shane Heslin** (Gortletteragh)
(12) P. Ó Cionnaith — **Padraic Kenny** (Allen Gaels)
(13) B. Ó Duigeanáin — **Brian Duignan** (St. Mary's)
(14) B. Ó Bhriain — **Brian Breen** (Sean O'Heslin's)
(15) L. Ó Conalláin — **Liam Conlon** (Sean O'Heslin's)

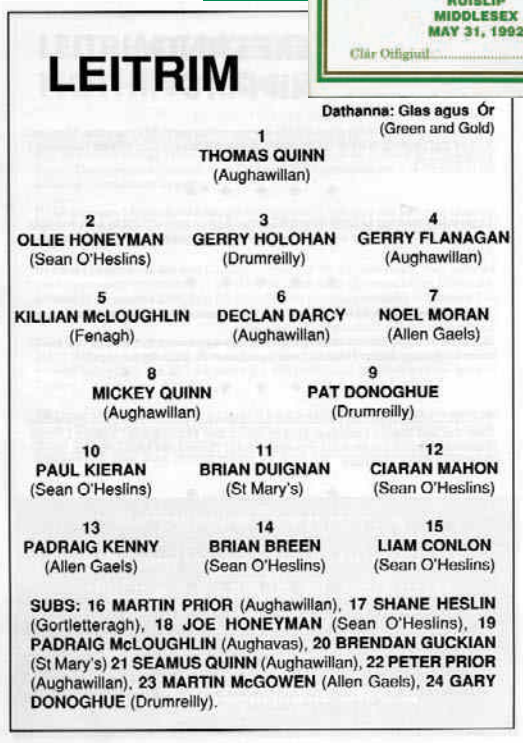
FIR IONAID

(16)—Martin Prior (Aughawillan)
(17)—Joe Darcy (Glencar/Manorhamilton)
(18)—Joe Honeyman (Sean O'Heslin's)
(19)—Ciaran Mahon (Sean O'Heslin's)
(20)—Brendan Guckian (St. Mary's)
(21)—Padraig McLoughlin (Aughavas)
(22)—Martin McGowan (Allen Gaels)
(23)—Seamus Quinn (Aughawillan)
(24)—Peter Prior (Aughawillan)

• **ROGHNEOIRI** — P. J. Carroll (Manager); Tony McGowan (Allen Gaels); Aiden Crossan (Aughnasheelin); James Holohan (Drumreilly).

Connacht Senior Football Championship semi-final team

Cumann Luthchleas Gael
Coiste Chontae Lonndain
Peil Sinsir Cúige Connacht
London v **Leitrim**
2.30 pm
Peil Sóisir Cúige Na Breataine
London v Herts
3.45 pm
Over-40's
London v Sligo
5.00 pm
AT
THE GAA GROUNDS
WEST END ROAD
RUISLIP
MIDDLESEX
MAY 31, 1992
Clár Oifigiuil £1.00



LEITRIM

Dathanna: Glas agus Ór
(Green and Gold)

1 THOMAS QUINN (Aughawillan)
2 OLLIE HONEYMAN (Sean O'Heslins)
3 GERRY HOLOHAN (Drumreilly)
4 GERRY FLANAGAN (Aughawillan)
5 KILLIAN McLOUGHLIN (Fenagh)
6 DECLAN DARCY (Aughawillan)
7 NOEL MORAN (Allen Gaels)
8 MICKEY QUINN (Aughawillan)
9 PAT DONOGHUE (Drumreilly)
10 PAUL KIERAN (Sean O'Heslins)
11 BRIAN DUIGNAN (St Mary's)
12 CIARAN MAHON (Sean O'Heslins)
13 PADRAIG KENNY (Allen Gaels)
14 BRIAN BREEN (Sean O'Heslins)
15 LIAM CONLON (Sean O'Heslins)

SUBS: 16 MARTIN PRIOR (Aughawillan), 17 SHANE HESLIN (Gortletteragh), 18 JOE HONEYMAN (Sean O'Heslins), 19 PADRAIG McLOUGHLIN (Aughavas), 20 BRENDAN GUCKIAN (St Mary's) 21 SEAMUS QUINN (Aughawillan), 22 PETER PRIOR (Aughawillan), 23 MARTIN McGOWEN (Allen Gaels), 24 GARY DONOGHUE (Drumreilly).

Of particular assistance to clubs was the Leadership Course conducted by Debbie Ní Mheasaigh of the G.A.A.'s Policy and Planning Committee in Páirc an Chrócaigh, giving an insight into the roles and responsibilities of the various club officers.

The raising of finance would continue to be a major task for both clubs and County Board and 1993 would see the birth of the "Leitrim G.A.A. Lotto". For a time this was to prove a good source of revenue, but its impact on the Board lessened greatly in later years when many clubs embarked on weekly and fortnightly Lottos to boost their own club funds.

On the national front Leitrim would have been regarded once again as "gallant losers" and so forth, but the county had had enough of moral victories. What we really longed for was to take a really big scalp in the championship. So we finished 1992, eagerly awaiting the Connacht Championship clash with Galway in Tuam on May 30th 1993. Could the hoodoo be broken?

One Leitrim Player who had never believed Leitrim were not equal to other counties was former Leitrim captain, Leo Heslin. Leo died in an accidient in 1992, leaving a void in his beloved county.

From the Leitrim Log . . .

Two, yes . . . but three? Today the three Quinn brothers from Aughawillan — Mickey, Thomas and Seamus — tog out on the Leitrim panel. Is this rare achievement a record in Connacht Senior Football?

★ ★ ★

Leitrim's first appearance in a Connacht Final was way back in 1914 against Roscommon in Boyle. 6,000 fans watched the Bornacoola Pipe Band lead the teams in the pre-match parade. Alas when the sound of Bornacoola music 'died', Roscommon went on to take the title: 1-2 to 0-1.

★ ★ ★

There is a transfusion of Kerry blood in two of the Leitrim Green and Gold minor jerseys today. The Lynch cousins on the panel, Michael (Mohill) and Gearoid (Drumshanbo) are the sons of two G.A.A. Dingle brothers, Tom and Sean, who migrated to Leitrim in the '60's.

★ ★ ★

A Leitrim man, Jim Butler of Jamestown, won two Connacht Senior medals — with Galway in 1945 and Roscommon in 1947. It was merely a coincidence that when Roscommon beat Leitrim 1-8 to 0-3 at Carrick-on-Shannon in the 1947 semi-final an invasion of the pitch held up the game for half an hour.

★ ★ ★

Another young Jamestown man, Gene Bohan, is one of Leitrim's brightest prospects. Gene lines out today in his third Connacht Minor championship, and for the third time against Roscommon! He is also on this year's Co. Under-21 team. He also had the distinction of winning a Co. Roscommon Primary School's medal in 1986 while playing with Dangan N.S., Kilmore.

★ ★ ★

Patience and perseverance are two great G.A.A. virtues in Leitrim. The county has waited 65 years since 1927 for a second Connacht Senior Football title. The current County Senior Football Champions, Allen Gaels, Drumshanbo persevered for 102 years before taking their first Senior Championship in 1991.

★ ★ ★

When the Provincial Minor Championship was resumed in 1945 after a war-time break Connacht Council calculated that it would take 40 gallons of petrol to fulfil each Minor championship game! There was no shortage of petrol in Leitrim as the Minor team went all the way to their first All-Ireland Final where they lost 4-7 to 0-4 against Dublin.

Excert from the Leitrim - Roscommon Programme June 1992

John O Mahony, the new Leitrim team manager (second from left) with selectors Joe Reynolds and Ollie Honeyman. On right County Secretary Tommy Moran.

1993 – a watershed for Leitrim

1993 was to be the year that, at long last, Leitrim buried the Galway ghost, that maroon and white eerie spirit that had haunted us for almost half a century. Those removed from the scene could scarcely comprehend what a Senior Championship victory over Galway meant to the Leitrim team and the Leitrim supporters.

The year opened with all eyes on that up-coming fixture in May – the status of the team would be judged that day. But first there was the resumption of the National Football League and a mouth-watering clash with Cavan, now being managed by the recent Leitrim boss P.J. Carroll. Leitrim won the day and P.J. was magnanimous in defeat and in his hopes that Leitrim would make the breakthrough under John O'Mahony.

Two more points from the Carlow match left us with the most important last game for any of the divisions, a clash with Kildare in Round VII that would see the winners go directly into the Quarter Finals, with the certainty of Division I status in the proposed re-structuring of the Leagues into four Divisions, based on League placings. There was plenty of hype, with Kildare the focus of National attention, being predicted as the team to go places. There was little between the teams on the day - but a disastrous start saw us playing catch-up for too long and the chances of the lucrative play-off stages once again evaporated. For that Kildare game Tony and Sean Gannon of City Recovery, Santry, Dublin had sponsored the team, another gesture of goodwill from loyal supporters.

Then team sponsorship for the remainder of the year came from a die-hard Leitrim man, Jimmy O'Connor of Annaduff and the Jimmy's of Dromod" logo became known far and wide.

Oliver Cosserly (right of picture) one of the main organisers of the huddle in Sligo enjoying a Leitrim game with Sean Moran, Charlie Mc Hugh Paddy Joe Mc Govern, Pat Joe Reyonlds and Vincent Quinn. In the background is John Harte winner of a GAA presidential award in 2007

Generous Leitrim sponsor
Jimmy O'Connor pictured with Leitrim minor, under 21 and senior star Adrian Charles

Morgan on the march!
Mascot Morgan Quinn, son of Jerome, grew up to be an Aughawillan star at juvenile and adult grades and a menber of the Leitrim Minor football and hurling teams.

Thanks to the encouragement of Eamon Sheridan of Killargue who had successfully spearheaded a local Lotto in his native Wicklow, the Leitrim Lotto was up and running, with a target of £30,000 for the year. This target was eventually not reached, despite a great effort by many people, not least Aubrey Hyland of Drumreilly who was recording phenomenal personal sales.

County Board PRO Des Quinn was coordinating the Supporters Club and there was a great response from Leitrim people and Leitrim Associations everywhere. Diverse ideas were developed for fundraising, including a get together in Sligo aptly named by organizers Oliver Casserly and Gerry Flynn as "The Huddle"

Meanwhile the players were in many a huddle as preparations for the Championship went on unabated. Team Manager John O'Mahony was leaving nothing to chance, all bases were covered.

Jimmy O'Connor was the new county team sponsor and his logo "Jimmy's of Dromod" was to adorn thousands of Leitrim jerseys and other playing gear.

And so it was of to Tuam with the team confident of success, but supporters less so. Not everybody had the same mindset as the players. Years and years of disappointment had probably built up ingrained doubts in even the most avid supporter. But all that was to change.

So many people had said that Leitrim could go so far, but no further - that when the crunch came on a really big day, the collapse would come. But it didn't come and what day could be bigger than facing Galway in the Championship in their favorite hunt, Tuam. We were in the fifth decade since a previous Senior Championship victory over the maroon and white and in the intervening years many a decade had been recited as we prayed to overcome the apparent hoodoo the Tribesmen held over us. Aiden Rooney had danced his way to All Ireland Scor success with Glencar/Manorhamilton a week previously, but it is his sidestep on the field we remember when he slotted over the winning point to secure what could be simply

The art of midfield play - *Pat Donohoe goes highest against Roscommon*

69 mins: A foul on Liam Conlon results in Aiden Rooney pointing the free with less than two minutes of normal time remainig.

71 mins: A foul by George Dugdale on Lorcan Dowd results in Derek Duggan restoring Roscommon's two point advantage from a free. Gerry Holohan arrives on for Jason Ward and releases Mickey Quinn to midfield.

72 mins: A free from Tommy Grehan is brilliantly caught by Lorcan Dowd who turns and thunders the ball over the bar.

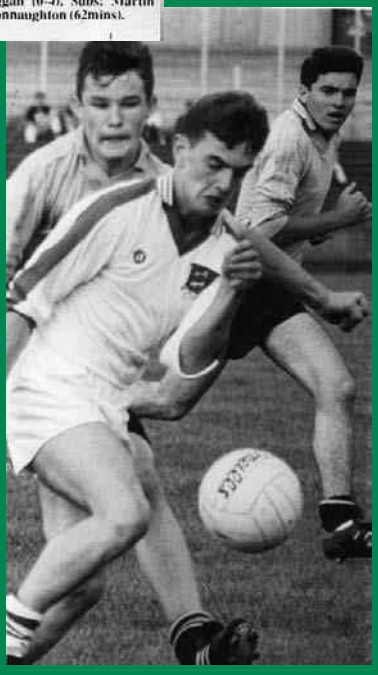
74 mins: Leitrim keep on charging, looking for a saving goal. A foul on Declan Darcy sees Aiden Rooney float the free in towards the square. Unbelievably, Briaff Breen goes higher than everyone else and flicks a shot towards the goal. However, the reactions of debutant keeper Brian Morkan saves Roscommon and the shot is cleared for a fifty.

75 mins: The fifty is taken short and Declan Darcy is fouled. Darcy takes the free and blasts it over the bar for a point. However, referee Michael Curley sounds the final whistle to end Leitrim's dream.

Teams and Scorers

Leitrim: Thomas Quinn, Seamus Quinn, Mickey Quinn, Joe Honeyman, Noel Moran, Declan Darcy (0-2), Gerry Flanagan, Jason Ward, Pat Donohue, Colin McGlynn, George Dugdale, Padraig Kenny (0-2), Aiden Rooney (0-4), Brian Breen (0-2), Liam Conlon (1-0). Subs: Paul Kieran for McGlynn (42mins), Gerry Holohan for Ward (71mins).
Roscommon: Brian Morkan, Les Shiel, Pat Doorey, Enon Gavin, Joey Connaughton, Tommy Grehan, Mattie Reilly, Seamus Killoran, John Newton, Don Connellan (0-1), Paul Earley (1-1), Tom Ryan (0-3), Eammon McManus (0-1), Lorcan Dowd (0-2), Derek Duggan (0-4). Subs: Martin Fallon for Killoran (55mins), Damien Donlon for Connaughton (62mins).
Referee: Michael Curley (Galway).

Leitrim Vs. Roscommon



Gene Bohan, ace marksman who scored a last minute point for St Mary's to force a county final draw with Aughawillan

At the Leitrim lotto draw in The Leitrim Bar, Sligo in 1993 - *Michael Mc Tiernan, Eamonn Tubman, Tony Mc Gowan (Cathaoirleach CLG Liatroma) Nancy McLoughlin, Gerry Flynn, Jim Meehan, George O Toole and Hugh McLoughlin*

described as an emotional victory. And all the emotions burst forth, and we must say that Galway were magnanimous in defeat. The sea of green and gold in the square in Tuam after the game was awash with smiling faces and the arrival of the team from the dressing room was greeted with a rapturous response.

The victory was earned, not just on the day, but in the previous months of professional approach to the Championship when all involved with the team put in a tremendous amount of sheer hard work, making personal sacrifices aplenty with one aim in mind. Nobody could have given of themselves more. The work continued unabated for the clash with Roscommon, the tension mounted; the excitement reached fever pitch and a history making first ever all-ticket Connacht Championship match added to the glamour.

The glamour of the bigtime!
The hard slog begins in the dressing room

Leitrim's Day of Glory!

Grown men cried in Tuam Stadium last Sunday afternoon — they danced, they hugged, they cheered themselves hoarse and they shook more hands than a politican at election time as a tidal wave of joy and celebration swept over Leitrim's long suffering footballing fans.

For a glorious change, the tears weren't marking yet another game Leitrim should have won but tears of joy as Leitrim finally ended the famous Galway forty-four year hoodoo with a nerve wracking one point victory over Galway in Tuam.

by John Connolly

When referee Joe Kearney finally blew that long, final whistle, a huge roar banishing forty-four years of heartbreaks, disappointments and humiliations erupted as Leitrim people finally savoured a long awaited victory over bogeymen Galway.

69 mins: Fallon makes amends with another free from thirty yards to level the scores and set the scene for an unbelievable finale.

69 mins: With the pressure on, Pat Donohue makes a great catch from Thomas Quinn's kickout. Donohue passes on to Colin McGlynn who passes to Aiden Rooney. Rooney cuts in from the wing and sends over a brilliant left footed point for the lead with just ten seconds of normal playing time remaining.

70 mins: With the game in injury time, Galway attempt a short kickout but it is won by Leitrim. Brian Breen sends George Dugdale free and the Mohill sharpshooter advances on goal and almost takes the paint off the post with a rasper of a shot that just goes wide. However, referee Kearney blows full-time to begin a huge celebration in Tuam Stadium.

Teams and Scorers

Leitrim: Thomas Quinn, Seamus Quinn, Mickey Quinn, Gerry Flanagan, Joe Honeyman, Declan Darcy, Noel Moran, Jason Ward (0-1), Pat Donohue, Colin McGlynn, George Dugdale (0-3), Padraig Kenny (0-2), Aiden Rooney (0-2), Brian Breen (0-3), Liam Conlon (1-1). Subs: Paul Kieran for Ward (44mins).

Galway: Pat Comer, Ger Farrell, Gary Fahy, Francis McWalter, Aodhan O'Se, Tomas Mannon, Sean De Paor, Fergal Gavin (1-1), Brian Moylan, Tommy Wilson (0-1), Jarleth Fallon (0-5), Fergal O'Neill (0-3), Ricky Flaherty, Kevin Walsh, Val Daly (0-1). Subs: Kevin McDonagh for Wilson (28mins), Tomas Kilcommins for Walsh (48mins), Padraig Boyce for Moylan (56mins).

Referee: Joe Kearney (Roscommon).

Leitrim Vs. Galway

Connacht Senior Football Championship Special

The victorious Leitrim team that defeated Galway in the First Round of the Connacht Championship on Sunday.

Unshakeable belief sees Leitrim home

As the faithful trooped out of Carrick-on-Shannon last March after the humiliating League defeat by Kildare the mood was one of desolation. The Championship prospects against Galway in their own backyard looked grim and for many it seemed the end of the good days for Leitrim.

But John O'Mahoney, without fanfare or hype set about the task of rebuilding the team and mounting a serious challange for the provincial crown. But the followers remained unconvinced and they travelled to Tuam on Sunday with little real hope of success. The Kildare defeat allowed O'Mahoney to tackle, really for the first time the problems, that beset the team. He immediately set about raising the fitness level of the team and reorganising his troops into a formidable unit.

The results of that hard work and diligent preparation were clear to be seen on Sunday. Gone was the crippling self-doubt that afflicted the team against Roscommon last year and in its place was an unshakable confidence in its own ability.

O'Mahoney had worked hard on that aspect of the Leitrim psyche, going so far as to compile a tape of music for the team bus with such titles as *Simply the Best* hammering home the message.

It was the fierce committment and that undying belief in themselves that saw Leitrim succeed where so many of their predecessors had failed. But they played as team throughout with all fifteen players harrying the opponents and forcing them into hurried passes or mis-hit kicks.

● Pat Donohue is congratulated after the final whistle Leitrim Minor footballer Fintan McBrien in Tuam last Sund
Photo by Willie Donne

The atmosphere in Carrick-on-Shannon was electric and Leitrim supporters were in full voice, absolutely confident of victory. But that was not to be, with Roscommon again dashing our hopes. The glory day in Tuam appeared to be forgotten as Leitrim supporters again turned negative. Were the failings of the team re-appearing? What had happened? What about those missed chances? Why did we concede soft scores again? Why was a game almost over before we realized we could actually win it? The post-mortems went on.

Only the most narrow-minded followers, though, could accuse the players of lack of effort and there was a general consensus that the team was making steady progress.

Nobody could fault our Under 21 side for lack of effort either – the most galling thing for many was that it was the blue and gold of Roscommon that had eliminated us from the Connacht campaign at this level also. Was Roscommon going to be another "bogey" team for Leitrim, as Mayo and Galway had been for years?

John O'Mahony

– *Leading from the front*

BY TOMMY MORAN

John O'Mahony watched Leitrim play Roscommon in the Connacht Championship in Hyde Park last June. Little did he think then that when Leitrim would next line out in competitive action that he would be their Team Manager.

John's decision to accept the post of Leitrim Team Manager was not one lightly taken. A major influence on his decision was the obvious enthusiasm of the players for success. He would hope to channel this enthusiasm towards success for the county.

John O'Mahony has very impressive credentials for his new post. From his early years he was a star player with Ballaghaderreen club and was soon wearing the red and green of his native Mayo, winning an All Ireland Minor medal with the county in 1971 and an Under 21 All Ireland three years later. This led him to a regular position on the Mayo senior side. His playing career is not finished – he is still proud to represent his club at Junior B level.

Keenly interested in coaching – he a qualified GAA coach – he was coaxed into the management side of the game by his club in the early 1980's and his qualities as a manager caught the eye of Mayo Board officers who entrusted him with the management of the county's Under 21 side in 1983.

The natural progression was be become manager of the Mayo senior team. In the four years that he was at the helm in Mayo their senior team contested four Connacht Championship Finals, winning two, and going on to a thrilling All Ireland Final against Cork in 1989 – the closest the Westerners had come to becoming All Ireland champions in many decades.

A promising inter-county refereeing career for John was interrupted by his involvement as a Team Manager. As an administrator he has been prominent in Connacht Council circles as the Colleges delegate to the Provincial Council.

A teacher on the staff of St. Narthy's College in Ballaghaderreen, John is the natural leader in the College's sporting activities, thus broadening an already very wide spectrum of GAA involvement.

But one thing John O"Mahony will not claim to be a is a miracle worker. He knows full well that success in Leitrim can only be achieved by whole-hearted commitment in every sphere – from players, County Board, clubs, supporters, and from the Team Manager.

The Leitrim county team is in good hands. John is joined by two Leitrim greats in the role of selectors – Ollie Honeyman and Joe Reynolds. What John O'Mahony expects of the present players is exactly what both Ollie and Joe gave to Leitrim over a long period of years. Their is no doubt whatsoever but that the three are of the one mind in what is needed for success.

John O'Mahony will not be overawed by Galway or by the big occasion today – he has been down this trail many times before. Nor will he allow his players be overawed. John has prepared the team well in every aspect – nothing has been left to chance. The players, to a man, have responded to his promptings. They know full well the task before them today. Population statistics, tradition, unemployment, emigration will not decide today's game – the result will depend on seventy minutes man to man football. John O'Mahony has Leitrim ready.

It could be a long Summer in Galway.

11

LIATROIM

(DATHANNA: GLAS AGUS BUIDHE)

1
T. Ó CUINN
Thomas Quinn
(Aughawillan)

2	3	4
S. HONEYMAN	**M. Ó CUINN (Capt.)**	**S. Ó CUINN**
Joe Honeyman	Mickey Quinn	Seamus Quinn
(Sean O'Heslins)	(Aughawillan)	(Gortletteragh)
5	6	7
N. Ó MÓRÁIN	**D. Ó DORCHA**	**G. Ó FLANAGÁIN**
Noel Moran	Declan D'Arcy	Gerry Flanagan
(Allen Gaels)	(Aughawillan)	((Aughawillan)

8	9
S. Mac an BHÁIRD	**P. Ó DONNCHADHA**
Jason Ward	Pat Donoghoe
(St. Brigids)	(Drumreilly)

10	11	12
C. Mac GLOINN	**G. DUGDALE**	**P. Ó CIONNAITH**
Colin McGlynn	George Dugdale	Padhraig Kenny
(Allen Gaels)	(Mohill)	(Allen Gaels)
13	14	15
A. Ó RÚNAIGH	**B. Ó BRIAIN**	**L. Ó CONNLUAIN**
Aidan Rooney	Brian Breen	Liam Conlon
(Glencar-Manorhamilton)	(Sean O'Heslins)	(Sean O'Heslins)

FIR IONAID: 16. M. Mac Prior - Martin Prior (Aughawillan); 17. G. Ó h-Uallachain - Gerry Holohan (Drumreilly); 18. K. Mac Lochlainn - Kilian McLoughlin (Fenagh); 19. P. Mac Raghnaill - Fergal Reynolds (St. Marys); 20. P. Ó Cioráin - Paul Kieran (Sean O'Heslins); 21. S. Ó Buachain - Gene Bohan (St. Marys); 22. M. Ó Cuinn - Mickey Quinn (Cloone); 23. S. Ó Cuinn - Seamus Quinn (Aughawillan); 24. C. Ó Mathúin - Ciaran Mahon (Sean O'Heslins).

Jimmys of Dromod
LEITRIM SPONSOR

21

Leitrim Vs. Galway

Cumann Lúth Chleas Gael
Comhairle Chonnachta

Connacht Senior Football Championship '93

at Páirc Naomh Iarfhlatha
Tuam Stadium

Sunday, May 30, 1993

Gaillimh

v

Liatroim

Time: 3 p.m.

Referee: Joe Kearney (Roscomáin)

Preceded by Galway S.H.C. 1993

Carnmore v Paraic Pearses'

Time: 1.15 p.m. • *Referee: P. Lynch*

1.45 to 2.00 p.m. – I.N.T.O. Mini Games

Clár Oifigiúil – Luach £1

The Day Leitrim broke the Hoodoo!

Resumption of Inter-County activity saw us win a vital All-Ireland 'B' game against old rivals Longford. The restoration of confidence showed in a League win over Fermanagh but our failings seemed to re-emerge when we allowed Meath snatch two vital League points in Carrick-on-Shannon.
We dominated the game. Meath won it. A much more disturbing performance was to follow in the All-Ireland 'B' Semi-Final against Sligo in Markievicz Park. Our players probably made the same mistake as numerous other teams in the past, underestimating the opposition and Sligo deservedly went on to contest the 'B' Final, only to lose out to Laois.

The National League was to be our next test, would Leitrim fare well, or would we be left to bemoan missed chances? To have a good build up for the 1994 Connacht Championship we needed steady performances in the League. One of the big tests for Leitrim was another meeting with Galway.

It was back to Tuam again, but for the first half Leitrim looked a far cry from the side that had represented us against the same opposition in the Championship. However, after half-time the lethargy disappeared and one of the great comebacks was staged by a transformed side, losing very narrowly in the end. We needed to win the last game of the year, against Laois - the Divisional leaders and All-Ireland 'B' Champions. It all came together for our team and the victory over Laois compensated for the earlier disappointments.

St. Mary's Club had built up an amazing catalogue of successes from juvenile to adult level and were hotly tipped as potential county senior champions, especially after eliminating the 1992 finalists Carrigallen and also championship specialists Gortletteragh and Sean O'Heslins. The final against Aughawillan was an exciting affair, played before a large and enthusiastic attendance. A serious injury to Hugh Gralton upset the rhythm of the St. Mary's side and it took a last minute point from Gene Bohan to salvage a draw with Aughawillan. The replay was another ding – dong affair, especially in the second half, but it was Aughawillan, who incidentally featured both their Club Chairman, Pat Flanagan, and Secretary, Frank Smith, in the team, who held out to add yet another title to their already impressive tally.

G.A.A Stewards

In connection with he Connacht Minor and Seniors football semi-final on Sunday, 27th June '93 in Pairc Sean MacDiarmada, the following are requested to report to the office inside main entrance and collect their tunics at 12 noon sharp.

Ticket collectors main entrance and Castlecarragh entrance supplied by Connacht Council.

Ticket Collectors Sideline - Gate No. 1 - Tom McCabe; Gate No. 2 - B. Mulvey (Jamestown); Gate No. 3 - J.J. Noone; Gate No. 4 - S. Shortt; Gate No. 5 - M. McDermott; Gate No. 6 - John Murphy. Also one on each gate from Connacht Council.

Sideline Enclosure - Passage No. 1 - Noel Crossan and J. Meehan; Passage No. 2 - John Harte, Sean McGovern; Passage No. 3 - S. Quigley, Sean Murray; Passage No. 4 - John Morahan, Paddy Glancy; Passage No. 5 - Pauric Reynolds, J.J. Dolan; Passage No. 6 - Shane McWeeney, T. McGushin.

Pitch Gate (Band Entrance) - John Shanley, Jim Doran.

Pitch Gate - Dublin Road.

Piatch Gate - Castlecarragh End - G. McGarry.

Pitch Gate - Sideline Side - E. Costello.

Pitch Stewards - Castlecarragh End - A. Noone, P. Connolly.

Dublin Road End - Ml. McKeever, Ronan Butler, Enda Stenson.

Sideline (side) - Thos. Flynn, Bernie Bohan.

Dressingroom side including dug outs - Pauric Griffin, Shane Butler, F. Bohan, Jos. Flynn (chief steward for entrance pitch).

Embankments - Castlecarragh End - Brian Mulvey, Kiltoghert (score board); T. Connolly, J.J. McWeeney.

Dublin Road End - Declan Bohan, Stephen Flynn, Sean Burns.

Stand Side - Ml. Flynn, Myles McGrail, Niall Farry, Sean Duignan, Paddy O'Rourke.

Dressingroom Side - Tom McLoughlin, P. French, Paddy Guckian.

Embankments - Chief Steward - J.J. Rourke.

Players Gate - Connacht Council appointments.

Public Address - Gerry Mahon N.T.

Score Board - Nicholas Flynn.

Programme Manager to be appointed by P.R.O.

P.R.O. - Des Quinn.

Programme Sellers - John Burns, Jos Flynn (Jnr.), Barry Crowe, David Crowe, Colin Murray, Cathal Commerton, Andrew Whyte, Michael McWeeney, Paul McGreevy, Michael Flynn, Cormac Greene, Enda McGreevy, Bernard Murray, C. Glancy, Kieran Glancy, Kieran O'Rourke, Dermot Morahan, Rory O'Connor, Francis Molloy, Niall Commerton, Gerry Guckian, Jonathan Corrigan, Dermot Reynolds.

Philip Casserly, Mohill. Val Fitzpatrick, Mohill. Tom Fitzpatrick, Mohill. Gerard Scollan, Mohill. Dermot Scollan, Mohill. John McCrann, Mohill. Francis Flynn, Aughawillan. Martin Flynn, Aughawillan. Lorraine McCauley, Aughawillan. Fionna McCauley, Aughawillan. Morgan Shanley, Bornacoola, Gary McCloskey, Bornacoola. Darragh Cox, Bornacoola.

Sales of programmes will be managed by Enda Stenson. All programme sellers must be at the main gates on Sunday before 1 p.m.

You are requested to bring bags capable of holding the programmes and cash and report at 12.30 p.m. sharp.

No cars allowed on main entrance for safety reasons.

No hawkers allowed inot ground or not allowee to set up near main entrance at Dublin Road.

Kindly do not park your car at entrances to two private houses on either side of main entrance.

George O'Toole.

"Stewards play a big role too"

***This training is thirsty work!** – Brian Breen avoids dehydration*

***A study in concentration!** Leitrim goalkeeper Martin McHugh*

The Intermediate title went to Aughavas, managed by former county star Noel Blessing, the first Leitrim man to win a Railway Cup medal. Junior specialists Eslin gained another Championship title after a replayed final against St. Mary's. The Under 21 Championship was again far from satisfactory, with St. Mary's appealing to the County Board over the decision of the Fixtures and Disciplinary Committee to award the title to Allen Gaels. A boardroom decision would not be made until 1994.

Gortletteragh became Division I League champions, but in the other divisions the games were still dragging on approaching December. Of course they should have been played much earlier, but for some reason many clubs dissipated more effort in seeking sufficient excuses to be granted postponements, rather than preparing for games.

The referees of the county were busy in their efforts to have improvement and consistency by attending seminars, fitness tests, training courses and examinations, but as happened every year since the founding of the G.A.A. they were being criticized at almost every turn.

The Drumkeerin Club had its special day in summer of 1993, with the official opening of the new club grounds and dressing room facilities. The big game on the day was a challenge between Leitrim and Derry – the team that a few months later went on to capture the Sam Maguire.

Would Leitrim, like Derry, make the big time? The draw for the Connacht Championship of 1994 had set the county a big task. To bring the Nestor Cup to Leitrim, to repeat that success of 1927, then we would have to defeat our recent nemesis Roscommon, then the winners of the Galway/London game – in all probability Galway – and then the winners of Mayo and Sligo, with most people predicting it to be Mayo. If results went according to predictions, then Leitrim had to prepare to defeat Roscommon, Galway and Mayo, all in the space of seven weeks of championship football.

If 1993 had been a championship watershed, then 1994 was going to be a challenge of oceanic proportions.

County Board PRO Des Quinn, Co-ordinator of the 1993 Supporters Club – and future Cathaoirleach of Coiste Liatroma – pictured with his wife Marie and Fr Dan Gallogly

***Gracious in victory** –Declan Darcy, Aughawillan, consoles his county team mate Brendan Guckian after St Mary's lose the county final replay. Seamus Quinn, the Aughawillan corner back is congratulated by a supporter*

***Some Leitrim Referees** (L to R) Pat Egan, Tommy Moran, Seamus Shortt, Sean Byrne, Frankie Mulvey, Terry Shortt, Shay Reynolds and Stephen Flynn*

The referees must keep fit too! –
Pictured before a training session at Carrick on Shannon Sports complex are ***Back row*** *(L to R) Seamus Shortt, Noel Lyons, Gerry Costello, Seamus Prior, Sean Mc Cartan, Frank Flynn, James Mc Caffery, Terry Shortt.* ***Front row*** *(L to R) Stephen Flynn, Anthony Noone, Padraig Flynn, Gerry Gallogly, Joe Dorrigan, Cosmos Murray, Bobby O Rourke.*

Leitrim GAA Supporters' Club

The Leitrim G.A.A. Supporters' Club is renewing membership for the coming year 1993/94. With the championship well under way the Supporters Club Committee are anxious that membership fees are returned as promptly as possible. By joining now members can avail of all draws and benefits of membership for a full twelve months.

SCHEDULE OF BENEFITS:

★All members will be registered in a Supporters' Club registration book which will be retained by Leitrim County Board G.A.A.

★All members will receive a special membership card.

★All members will be eligible for a draw for All-Ireland tickets, for this year's Hurling and Football All-Irelands.

★All members will be eligible to take part in four very attractive draws which will be announced during the year.

★All life members will receive a special Gold Card and a specially commissioned Certificate. Holders of life membership cards will be entitled to free access to home games involving Leitrim County Teams, subject to conditions of Leitrim Co. Board.

★All members **who are registered on or before August 31st, 1993** will be entered in a Special Bonus Draw.

DRAWS:

DRAW 1: Week-End for Two in the Slieve Russell Hotel, Ballyconnell. Week-end Rail-Break for Two, Travel & Hotel. *Sponsored by "Irish Rail".*

DRAW 2: All-Ireland Tickets for All-Ireland, Hurling & Football. Two "Supabus" return tickets Ireland/Britain. *Sponsored by "Bus Eireann".*

DRAW 3: Aer Lingus Trip for Two to the U.K. Louis Copeland - Designer made suit.

DRAW 4: B & I Line, Ferry Trip for Two to the U.K. A Selection of Donegal Irish Parian China.

*** SPECIAL BONUS DRAW ***

All-Ireland Ten Year Ticket - for **ALL** members who join or renew membership on or before **August 31, 1993.**

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES: Annual Membership £10; Life Membership £100.

METHODS OF PAYMENTS: Standing Order, Cheque, Bank Draft, Postal Order or Cash. Made payable to: Leitrim G.A.A. Supporters Club.

Membership Application

To apply for Leitrim G.A.A. Supporters Club Membership contact -

DES QUINN, Leitrim P.R.O., Drumcullion Garadice, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim.
Tel: (078) 44287. Fax: (078) 44613.

Leitrim G.A.A. Supporters Club is operated under the auspices of Leitrim G.A.A. County Board.

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Seamus Quinn wearing the "City Recovery" Leitrim jersey pictured in action in the National League against Kildare

1993 Leitrim Golf Classic

On the 18th tee for Leitrim Ollie Honeyman, Josie Murray, Jim Lynch and Ciaran Mahon

Supporting the Leitrim GAA
Cyril Doyle, John Cryan, Marie McGovern, Tony Gallogly, Seamus Lavin

LEITRIM GOLF CLASSIC

The Third Annual Leitrim Golf Classic takes place on:

Friday, May 21st - Hermitage Golf Club, Dublin

This highly prestigious event has earned universal recognition as the best organised Golf Classic of its type in the country.

Highlight of this year's event is the winning team prize of a week-end for eight in the spectacular K-Club, Kildare. Value £1,800.

Participation in the event is by any of the following:

- Entering a team of 4 or half team of 2.
- Sponsoring a Hole or half a Hole.
- Providing Sponsorship or Personal Contribution.

Intending participants or contributors can contact:

LEITRIM GOLF CLASSIC at Tel: 01-2836077 or Fax: 01-2836133
or LEITRIM COUNTY BOARD at 078-44108 or Fax: 078-44707.

The proceeds from the day's events are used for the promotion of and financing of training expenses incurred in the preparation of Leitrim County teams.

Leitrim Observer Ltd. Tel: (078) 20025.

Former Leitrim Star Fr Tom Colreavy, a life long supporter of the county

Jim Connolly, Drumreilly, a keen supporter of Leitrim in dublin

Speaking to the guests at the presentation of prizes at the Golf classic Joe Layden, first Chairman of the committee.

Sean Deane celebrating the Aughawillan 1993 championship victory. Sean would later be the main sponsor of the Leitrim Golf Classic in Dublin

Loyal Leitrim supporters in Dublin –
Sean Gannon, Charlie Donnellan and Sean Flynn

Barry Donnellan of the Leitrim Golf Classic Committee with Janet Browne of Dublin Crystal one of the sponsors

1994 The Resurrection of Leitrim

The most poignant G.A.A. image of 1994 was Leitrim team captain Declan Darcy holding the Nestor Cup aloft in Hyde Park, Roscommon, on July 24th with the 1927 Captain Tom Gannon – an image that spanned 67 years of hopes, dreams and endeavor. It came to represent the resurrection of Leitrim.

Leitrim became the G.A.A. fairytale of 1994. Cinderella had come to the Ball. We have read so often that the G.A.A. has its roots in every parish in the country. This was never more evident than in summer of 1994 when every parish in Leitrim - every soul in every parish in Leitrim - was caught up in the tide of emotion that swept through the county following our Connacht Championship victory at Hyde Park, Roscommon. The Nestor Cup was ours. And the tide of emotion went far outside Leitrim's boundaries and Ireland's shores, for every son and daughter of the county - and there are many scattered throughout the globe - united in joy and in pride and that close bond that always existed among Leitrim people everywhere was cemented forever. No more looking back. No more near misses. No more hard luck stories. No more ifs and if onlys.
Leitrim were champions. And worthy champions. The hoodoos of the past were buried. Forever.
But it wasn't only Leitrim people who rejoiced.

We witnessed a genuine outpouring of goodwill towards the county and towards the team from our 1994 Championship opponents, Roscommon, Galway and Mayo; from the other contestants Sligo and London; from every G.A.A. unit at club or county level. This goodwill was amply demonstrated on our first ever Senior Championship appearance at Croke Park when Dublin joined all the other counties in welcoming Leitrim on an occasion that was historic for the county and for the G.A.A. as a whole. This was what the G.A.A. was all about - people and their roots - pride in the parish.

Sacrifice

The Leitrim team had now tasted success. It was well used to the taste of defeat.

The players knew what it was like to go close, to almost make it. They had made sacrifices year after year - only to see their hopes dashed and to see another long year lie ahead.

For 1994 a supreme effort was needed - many had considered the Open Draw unkind - were even the Gods against us? Team Manager John O'Mahony and his selectors demanded much of the players. And much was willingly given. The players were a credit to themselves, their families, their club and their county. They had just cause to be proud.

It was appropriate too, to remember the many Leitrim heroes since 1927, the many who sacrificed themselves in the cause of Leitrim, in the cause of the green and gold.

Their personal disappointments had been many - close calls or heavy defeats - but they must share in the glory of 1994, for they set the example for others to follow; they kept the Leitrim flag flying; they kindled and rekindled the fire of hope; they withstood the critics; they kept the faith. Now it was time to let them celebrate too.

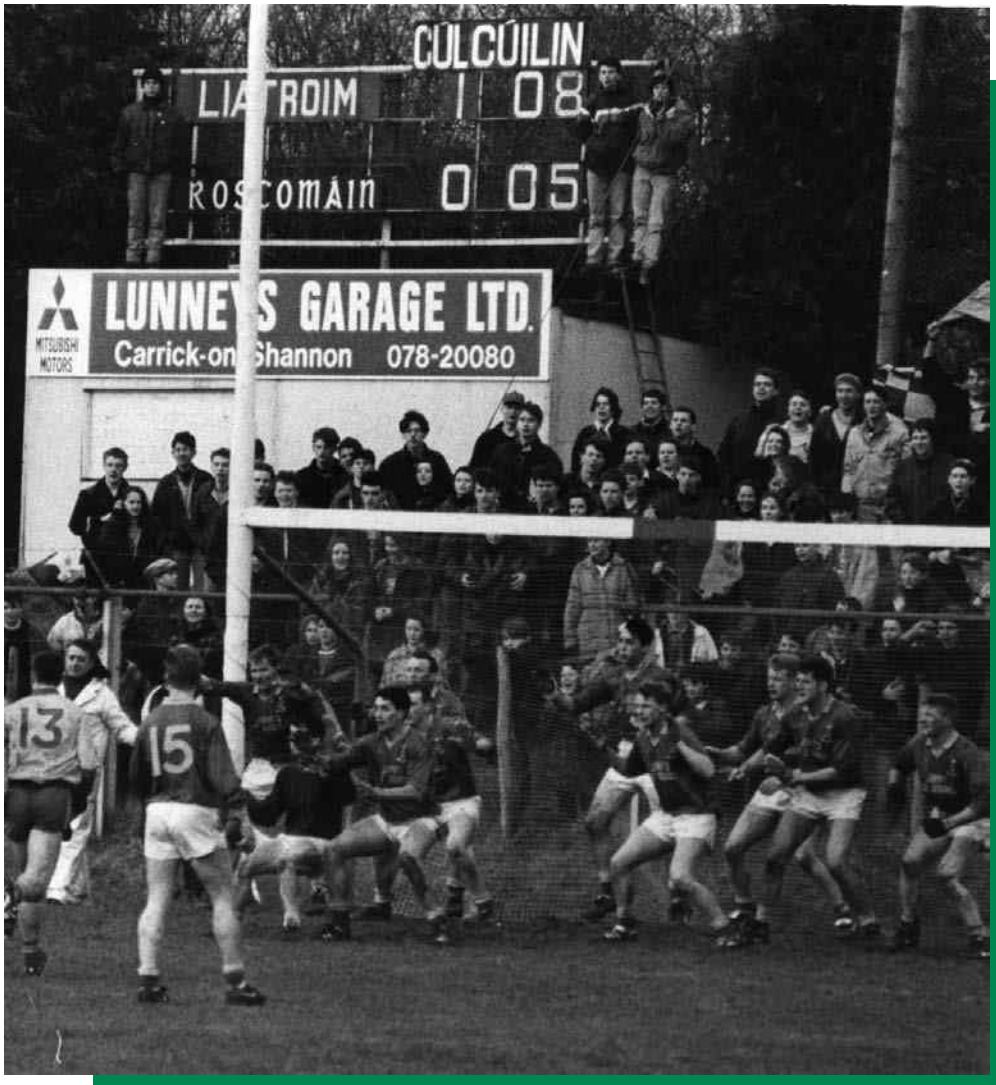
The build-up

Our first step towards the Connacht Championship was a rather faltering one in Pairc Uí Chaoimh, when we kicked wide after wide while completely dominating Cork in the first game of the resumed 1993/94 National League. A disallowed goal and no provision for legitimate injury time further added to our woes.

But still the spark was there - all that was needed was for the team to gel together and take a greater percentage of the scoring chances we were so readily able to create.

The supporters were there too - even a 200-mile journey could not deter the Leitrim faithful and the Munster Champions were in awe of the following generated by a team from a county whose population would only match some of their clubs. Louth came - and the rain came - to Cloone for Round VI and the Leinster hopefuls were halted in their tracks by a Leitrim side that fought like tigers in the mud. Two valuable League points and a morale boosting victory.

Old rivals Roscommon in the final round! The closeness of the teams in Division II was emphasized in those last round games. Victory for Roscommon would have meant a play-off with us to determine relegation. A draw or a win would leave us safe. Safe we were, after proving we could beat Roscommon after all. Now we bemoaned that one point defeat in Cork - we could so easily have qualified for the play-offs and the big money and Division I.



Keep out the Rossies! Goal keeper, backs, forwards & midfielders all man the defence, to try and keep Roscommon at bay in the National League game, March 1994

Mc Govern brothers, Aughavas, became the new Leitrim sponsors in 1994. Pictured from left are Peter, Tom, James, Gerry, Fr Andy, Paddy joe and Tony – all proud of Aughavas & Leitrim
Fr Andy & Paddy Joe had been stars of the Aughavas county championship winning teams in 1949, 1952, 1954 and 1955.

New Sponsors

Finance was ever high on the agenda with an ever increasing generosity being shown by all branches of our supporters. Jimmy O'Connor had completed his sponsorship agreement after the National League. He had watched with pride many great days for the county in the "Jimmy's of Dromod" jersey and no day more so than the championship victory over Galway in 1993 in Tuam.

The County Board did not have to wait long before new sponsors came on board. James, Tony and Peter McGovern offered generous sponsorship to Leitrim and the "McGovern Brothers Aughavas" logo became part and parcel of Leitrim G.A.A..

Could we do it?

The psychological effect of that League victory over Roscommon was important. But many doubted that we could repeat it in the Championship - the losing mentality was still about. But not with the team. Not with this Leitrim team. This team was a team of winners.

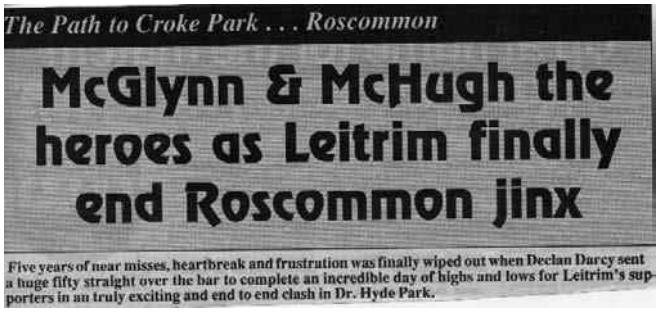
The work was hard, very hard. Of course every county was training hard - but we had the added problem of a scattered panel based in Leitrim, Dublin, Coleraine, Castleblaney, Sligo, Enniskillen, Cavan. Unity meant travelling - long weary miles in rain or shine. Once again Gaeil Cholmcille of Kells became the focal point - and no club could have been more co-operative.

Training, challenge games, more training, laps and more laps, training weekends, sprints and more sprints, travelling and more travelling, training and more training. Amateurs preparing professionally.

John O'Mahony was the guiding light. He had travelled down this road before - the players were eager to follow, Joe Reynolds and Ollie Honeyman strove equally hard, while Frank Darcy continued to co-ordinate preparations in Dublin. Injury problems were quickly acted upon by team doctor, Dr. Declan Loftus. A back-up group was on the ready for the diverse preparations. A team effort.

We were ready for Hyde Park. We were ready for Roscommon. For many supporters this was a Connacht Final. For the team, it was but a step along the way.

That heart-stopping second half was a test of our psyche - could we let it slip again?. Hyde Park was as silent as the adjacent cemetery when Declan Darcy stepped up to that last minute free. And then it erupted. Declan had done a Captain's job - a natural leader.



The Path to Croke Park . . . Roscommon

McGlynn & McHugh the heroes as Leitrim finally end Roscommon jinx

Five years of near misses, heartbreak and frustration was finally wiped out when Declan Darcy sent a huge fifty straight over the bar to complete an incredible day of highs and lows for Leitrim's supporters in an truly exciting and end to end clash in Dr. Hyde Park.

Though disappointed, Roscommon proved remarkably gracious in defeat and that close neighbourly rivalry turned into solid support for the rest of the campaign.

Now for Galway in Carrick-on-Shannon. The demand for tickets was an indication that Leitrim hopes were high - the supporters were beginning to think positively! But negative thoughts kept recurring in a rather forgettable game, only made memorable by another last minute kick from Declan Darcy. Leitrim supporters could hardly breathe, a draw hung on Declan's accuracy. He did it again.

Most commentators wrote us off. Tuam was Galway's happy hunting ground. They were not likely to let Leitrim do a two-in-a-row there. It was nail-biting again - but the Leitrim players had been well prepared, they refused to panic, they refused to die. Shrewd switches by the selectors and a display of fire from the players saw us hang on, until Padraig Kenny's boot put us into a Connacht Final, the first since 1967.

The mathematicians were at work. 27 years since we were in a Connacht Final. 67 years since we had won one. 27 and 67 added up to 94. Could '94 be our year?

Tom Gannon, the 1927 Captain, was still one of our staunchest supporters. Joe Layden, the 1967 Captain, was still one of our major fund-raisers. The omens looked good!

LEITRIM ON THE MARCH

From the moment the Leitrim supporters spilled out on to the Square in Tuam, the public begun to sit up and take notice. Leitrim had beaten Roscommon. And now they had beaten Galway after a replay. Could there be a story here?

The Path to Croke Park ... Galway

Dogged Leitrim refuse to concede victory to Tribesmen!

Leitrim ..... 0-9, Galway 1-6
(in Carrick-on-Shannon)

Leitrim ..... 0-11, Galway 0-10
(replay in Tuam)

The sale of tranquillizers in Leitrim must have jumped a hundred fold as John O'Mahony's men took the art of living dangerously to new levels in two pulsating, nerve wracking and very different matches in Pairc Sean MacDiarmada and Tuam Stadium within the space of a week at the beginning of July.

The county became awash with green and gold. Chimney pots, shop-fronts silage-bales, bedroom windows, television masts, signposts, cars, lorries, tractors, even motor-bikes - building sites, schools, scaffoldings and sculleries all flew the Leitrim colours. The candle of hope had been lit and was now becoming a flame.

But away from the hullabaloo and the excitement the team kept working. There was another job to be done.

While supporters bought tickets and flags and made transport arrangements and prayed and hoped and prepared for visiting relatives and talked into the night, the players and team management still traversed the roads - still the training and the challenge games and the sacrifices. The bookies lowered their odds. Maybe Leitrim could win!

Anticipatioin in Hyde Park

Connacht Champions 1994!: Back Row *(L to R) Seamus Quinn, Colin McGlynn, Noel Moran, Mickey Quinn, Martin McHugh, Liam Conlon, George Dugdale, Gerry Flanagan.* ***Front Row*** *(L to R) Paul Kieran, Aiden Rooney, Joe Honeyman, Declan Darcy, Pat Donohoe, Padraig Kenny, Fergal Reynolds*

Glory Glory

A goal for Mayo after fifteen seconds would have buried many a Leitrim team from the past. On the terraces some shook their heads - "the same old story". But it wasn't the same old story. This Leitrim team was writing a whole new story and went on to outplay Mayo throughout the field. Throughout Ireland, throughout the world, Leitrim people were listening in. In the U.S.A. the game was being shown live and in New York and Boston and San Francisco the emigrants were on their feet - rising to their heroes.

The Path to Croke Park .. Mayo.

Long wait ended as Mayo crumble under Leitrim's hunger

Leitrim ..... 0-12, Mayo 2-4

Sixty-seven years of long, agonising waiting was ended in spectacular fashion in Dr. Hyde Park on Sunday, July 24th just shortly after 5pm when Declan Darcy lifted the Brendan Nestor Cup high over his head before thousands of jubiliant and estactic Leitrim fans in Roscommon.

A scary period in the second half added to the tension but history was being enacted before our eyes and all of Leitrim suddenly descended on the grass of Hyde Park.

Years and years of pent-up emotion burst forth in a scene of celebration seldom before witnessed - Micheál Ó Muircheartaigh declared that thousands of Leitrim Gaels were looking down from the balcony of Heaven; Seamus Duke grasped for words to express what he and all the press-box were experiencing; Ger Canning was almost speechless, but the cameras were telling the story. All of Connacht, all of Ireland, all Gaeldom, shared in the unbridled joy and how fitting it was that 1927 Captain Tom Gannon should have been present to receive the Nestor Cup with Declan Darcy. This particular scene added to an already nostalgic occasion as it linked the players of old with new generation of heroes.

the Leitrim defence and finds sub John Casey unmarked. He sidesteps Martin McHugh but Noel Moran brings him down at the expense of a penalty. Ronan Golding steps up to take and Martin McHugh brings off a brilliant save but the rebound comes to Kevin O'Neill who fists it over McHugh's head for a goal.

65 mins: Jason Ward comes on almost unnoticed for George Dugdale.

68 mins: Declan Darcy shoots wide from a free.

71 mins: Brian Breen arrives on for Liam Conlon while John Casey is booked after Martin McHugh is hit coming out to make a clearance.

72 mins: Mayo cut the gap back to just two points when McDonnell fires over another point.

74 mins: Brian Breen goes off on a great run and is fouled. Referee Mick Curley tells Aiden Rooney it will be the last kick of the game and Padraig Kenny starts celebrating. Rooney takes the kick, it goes over the bar but is forgotten as the final whistle sounds the beginning of the greatest party ever seen in Dr. Hyde Park!

Final Score: Leitrim ..... 0-12, Mayo 2-4

Teams & Scorers

Leitrim: Martin McHugh, Joe Honeyman, Seamus Quinn, Fergal Reynolds, Noel Moran, Declan Darcy (0-2), Gerry Flanagan, Mickey Quinn (0-2), Pat Donohue, Paul Kieran (0-1), George Dugdale, Aiden Rooney (0-4), Colin McGlynn, Padraig Kenny (0-2), Liam Conlon (0-1). Subs: Jason Ward for Dugdale (65mins), Brian Breen for Conlon (71mins).

Mayo: Barry Heffernan, Anthony McGarry, Kevin Cahill, Gary Ruane, Pat Holmes, Michael Coleman, Peter Butler, Pat Fallon (1-0), Kevin Staunton, Kevin O'Neill (1-1), Colm McManamon, Tony Morley, John Conmy, Liam McHale, Kevin Lydon. Subs: John Casey for Morley (37mins), Ronan Golding (0-1) for Conmy (37mins), Kieran McDonnell (0-2) for Lydon (57mins).

Referee: Michael Curley (Galway).

Fáilte abhaile

How could anyone forget the journey home, the emotive crossing of the bridge into Carrick-on-Shannon, the first public greeting from the St Mary's Club and the local MRD, the voice of Joe Flynn speaking for the young and the old, for the thousands who had waited to greet the history-makers. It was a happy Leitrim group that relaxed in The Bush Hotel in Carrick-on-Shannon at a celebratory dinner hosted by Joe Dolan. The fact was beginning to sink in, we were Connacht Senior Champions. Glory. Glory. Alleluia!

Aiden Rooney took the last kick of the game in the 1994 Connacht final – and then Leitrim went crazy!

Despite careful pre-planning, Monday's victory tour, commencing in Dromod and finishing in Ballinamore, fell far behind schedule and many were left disappointed. But such was the welcome accorded throughout the county, such was the preparation made by local communities, that it seemed unkind to them to rush away, so that the latter part of the tour went well into Tuesday morning when the people were still dancing on the streets of Ballinamore.There were many subsequent journeys with the Nestor Cup, but few more emotional than the visit to St. Patrick's Hospital, Carrick-on-Shannon, where men and women who had longed and prayed for generations for a Leitrim victory, at last could lay their hands on the Connacht Trophy. It was true indication of what winning really meant.

The 'super optimist' was right after all!
Tony McGowan enjoys a fag and embraces Liam Conlon after the Connacht Final.

God was on Leitrim's side!
Paddy Flynn, Pat Prior, Fr. Dan Gallogly, Dr Francis McKiernan, Bishop of Kilmore & Dr Colm O'Reilly, Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise, pictured in happy mood after Leitrim's win. In front are future Aughawillan & Leitrim stars Christopher & Barry Prior.

GARDA

Bank of Ireland
LIATROIM
Paints

A New Leitrim

The media descended. Here was a real story. Sports writers, feature writers, newspapers, magazines, radio, television, photographers all sought out a new angle.

We certainly cannot have any complaints about lack of exposure for the county - and we must compliment all sections of the media for the very positive image portrayed.

Outsiders saw a new Leitrim - a county of natural beauty and a county of a vibrant people - people who were proud to belong to this so-called poor relation. Winning the Connacht Championship was a valuable public relations exercise for tourism in Leitrim.

Indeed, this fact was acknowledged by Leitrim County Council when they honoured the team and officials with a Civic Reception as a gesture of appreciation for helping create a new image of Lovely Leitrim.

A short time previously, Eurovision Winner and staunch Leitrim supporter, Charlie McGettigan had been similarly honoured by the Council - and deservedly so. Charlie epitomized the type of community minded person the G.A.A. encourages its members to be. His immense talents had been freely given to Drumshanbo and to Leitrim and his Eurovision win with Paul Harrington in early 1994 was welcomed throughout the county. The Leitrim team was returning from a challenge same with Tyrone when news of Charlie's success came through. It was a further inspiration to the team that Leitrim could succeed. 1994 also saw the re-opening of the Shannon-Erne Waterway, so Leitrim was big news in sport, music and tourism.

As the team coach approached form Drumcondra and turned into Cloncliffe Road the players, who had been shielded from the excitement, got some grasp of what success had meant - all the training and the long hours and the sacrifices suddenly became worthwhile. Galway Minors were roared on to victory - the West stood together. And then Leitrim took the field in a treasured moment, a moment that will be savoured for many a long day. From the dressing room tunnel to the farthest corner of The Hill they rose to Leitrim. A special moment in time.

Charlie McGettigan, winner with Paul Harrington of the 1994 Eurovision Song Contest, signs an autograph for a star struck young fan. Charlie has used his musical & vocal talents on numerous occasions in fundraising ventures for Leitrim GAA.

NOW FOR CROKE PARK!

Few days in the history of Croke Park will ever match the arrival of Leitrim. The city was a sea of green and gold. Babies, parents and grandparents converged from the Seven Seas. The wonder was - how could a county of 25,000 people generate such support? .... How could Leitrim be responsible for a sellout crowd at Croke Park?

1927 and 1994 Leitrim Captains Tom Gannon and Declan Darcy with the Chairman of Leitrim County Council Paschal Mooney, and with Councillors and officials at the Council's Reception for the Leitrim team.

Noel Moran made his own history by being the first Leitrim man to score in an All-Ireland semi-final in Croke Park while Seamus Quinn demonstrated what a traditional full back is all about. The forecasted collapse after five minutes did not come - Dublin realized this Leitrim team had come to win. A goal for Dublin after a dubious piece of play and a further goal on the stroke of halftime, when play had continued despite a serious injury to George Dugdale, left us with an uphill struggle for the second half.

It was a baptism of fire facing Dublin in their own backyard, but the Leitrim players played their hearts out to the final whistle - no one could complain of lack of effort.

A twelve point defeat was heartbreaking for the players, team management and officials who knew it did not reflect the effort put in by all concerned. The supporters were less downhearted - they had not really expected to win, they were content to have gone so far. Not so the players - they had been preparing and playing to win. It took time for the realization to dawn that the journey, for the present, was over.

But time also helped to cement resolutions for 1995 - and the players vowed to do it all again. Our supporters were loyal in defeat - they were still at the dressing room door after the game, at the hotel and proud all the way back to Leitrim.

A cloud was later to hang over this week-end with the news of the sudden death of Joe Harte on his way to the game, of the tragic death of Kevin McKiernan later in the evening and of another sudden death late on Sunday night of Sean McWeeney, who had also attended the semi-final.

Making it possible

Success at inter-county level is financially demanding, very much so. The news that the G.A.A. had acquired and accepted sponsorship of the All- Ireland Football Championship was greeted with joy, particularly in counties where any major sponsorship is hard to come by and our success in the Championship saw us receive £16,000 from the national sponsors, the Bank of Ireland. This was a major boost to our resources - far surpassing our own Championship gates. All counties benefited from the sponsorship and we must compliment the officials who negotiated the agreement with the Bank of Ireland.

The McGovern Brothers of Aughavas - James, Peter and Tony - made an Act of Faith in Leitrim by becoming our team sponsors prior to our first Championship game. They increased their sponsorship for the Connacht Final, and even more so for the All-Ireland Semi-final and were prompt to offer continued sponsorship for the 1994/95 National League. Indeed the McGoverns were to remain team sponsors for the next five years and showed amazing generosity, not only in their team sponsorship, but also in the provision of meals and accommodation and hospitality in Dublin, London and New York. Their spirit mirrored the goodwill existing between the county team and the people of Leitrim.

Generous Gestures

Leitrim and its people were not found wanting in generous support of the team as was witnessed by the kindness of 1993 sponsor Jimmy O'Connor and also by Gerry Murtagh of Murtagh's House of Fashion, Carrick-on-Shannon, who supplied the full panel and officials with blazers, slacks and accessories. Leitrim people, business and private, at home and abroad rallied to support the team either by direct sponsorship, donations to the training fund, subscriptions through clubs or by membership of the Supporters' Club.

The Leitrim team and officials *pictured with James McGovern (team sponsor), on arrival at JFK airport New York. The official outfits were supplied by Gerry Murtagh of Murtagh's Drapery, Carrick on Shannon.*

For each of them, their generosity was an indication of the pride they all felt in their county and the personal sacrifices made by them reflected their wish to be supportive of the efforts being made by the players, team management and County Board. Míle buíochas dóibh go léir.

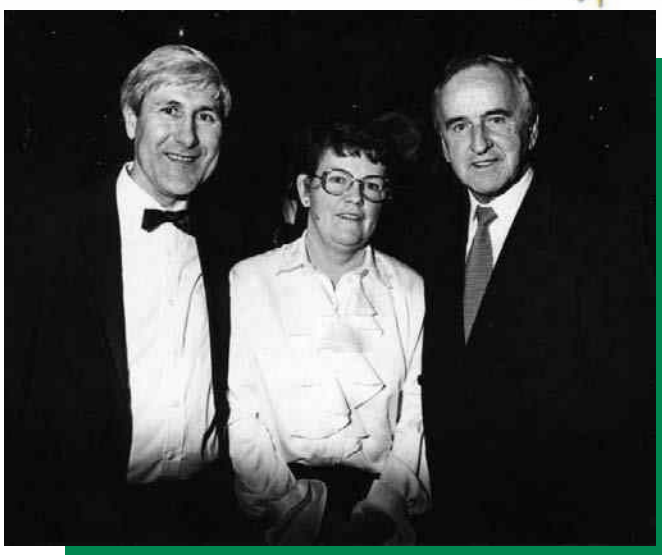
A remarkable feature of Leitrim people is the close association they retain with the county, even when based far outside its boundary.The Leitrim Golf Classic and The Friends of Leitrim, both spearheaded by Joe Layden in Dublin; the Leitrim Supporters in Galway, in Sligo, in Leixlip, in Castlebar, in Dublin, in Westmeath, in Longford, in many parts of Ireland organized by people like Eamonn Duignan, Micheal Sweeney, Oliver Casserly, Tom Conefrey, Gerry Flynn, Gerry Duignan, Pat Egan, Jim Meehan, Tony Gallogly, Paddy Flynn, Berney Crossan, Declan Quinn, Oliver Kelleher, Martin Moran, Michael Cryan and countless others all played a vital role.

Particularly busy right through the year was Joe Layden's Committee and we owe a great debt to Joe and to people like Michael Feeney, Barry Donnellan, Jim McNaughton, Jim Lynch, Josie Murray, Seamus Lavin, Sean Flynn, Sean Gannon, John Sorohan and all the others whose organizational abilities and business acumen was evident in matters so varied as Golf Classics, Discos and Corporate Dinners. All who helped in any way, from the smallest personal donation to the largest, can feel part of a great team effort by Leitrim.

Such efforts were evident on the eve of the All-Ireland Semi-Final when substantial sums were raised by Eamonn Duignan, Donal Cox and a committee of young and willing helpers at a function in Ballsbridge and by Tony Gallogly, Paddy Gaffney, Paddy Flynn and another hard-working committee at another packed function in the St. Mary's G.A.A. Clubhouse in Leixlip. Leitrim people rallied in force.

No less generous were our Leitrim exiles. In London, Proinnsias Redican, Frank Keegan, Sean Clarke and many others were busy; in Leeds it was Charlie Beirne; in New York, Joe Mclnerney, Mike Carty, Noel Heron, Pat Murray, Brendan Flanagan, Vincent O'Rourke and a band of willing helpers; in Toronto, Maureen Mulvey, Willie McKiernan and a strong Leitrim contingent; in Chicago, Seamus Feeley, Joe Keane, Tosh Reynolds; in San Francisco, Gerry Deane, all of six thousand miles away; in New Haven, Catherine McMorrow, Kevin Beirne, Sean Scollan, Aloysius Blessing and there and in many more far flung parts, our emigrants associated themselves with the efforts being made to ensure Leitrim's progress would not be halted through lack of finance. The same generosity was shown too by the Leitrim Society of New York while on a visit home in preparation for their Centenary.

Coming home was a popular thing for Leitrim people to do in 1994 and the return of exiles to the county for the Connacht Championship and All-Ireland Semi-Final must have hit an all-time high - another important facet of the team's success.



Staunch Leitrim supporter Berney Crossan, pictured with his wife Ann & Taoiseach Albert Reynolds at the Leitrim Function in the Burlington Hotel.

Barry Donnellan, Taoiseach Albert Reynolds and Joe Layden at the "Friends of Leitrim" corporate function in the Burlington Hotel, Dublin.

NEW **YORK, NEW YORK!**

For years we had watched - and had tinges of jealousy - as other successful county teams were rewarded with overseas trips. Our players had never complained, they accepted that such incentives were simply outside the ambit of the Board's finances. And so it would remain. But following the Connacht Championship victory, others set the work, anxious to reward Leitrim just as other teams had been rewarded.In New York, business-man Mike Carty, proprietor of the famed "Rosie O'Grady's" Bars and Restaurants assembled a committee of dedicated Leitrim followers in the city itself and in other parts of the States, as did Joe Layden in Dublin, and then on both sides of the Atlantic sufficient funds were raised and an invitation issued to the Leitrim team and team management group to make a 10 day visit to New York. The trip was thoroughly enjoyable, thanks to the organizers, and the Leitrim team party was warmly welcomed by a host of Leitrim exiles and by the Leitrim G.A.A. Club of New York and the New York Leitrim Society.

During their stay, the group made a short visit to New Haven as guests of the Leitrim people there and of the Gaelic Hurling and Football Club and the already strong bonds between exiles and their home county were further strengthened.

Suffice it to say that the trip was memorable for all concerned and it was of immense value in that the players could see for themselves the far reaching effects their achievements had on the people of the county, irrespective of location. It was fitting that on the day the Connacht Champions had lined out in Gaelic Park, that the Leitrim Club should also be in action, qualifying for the New York Division A Final, which they subsequently went on to win for the second year in a row. This was a remarkable achievement in itself and speaks well for the efforts of Noel Heron, Frank Brady and Frankie Dwyer who masterminded the Leitrim footballing efforts. The victory brought joy to the hearts of Leitrim stalwarts of earlier years - men like Joe Taylor, Joe Bohan, Mike Dillon, Pat McKeon and Pat O'Brien and many others who had also worked extremely hard in organizing the American trip.

London Exiles

Many of our London exiles were now frequent visitors to our county - regularly attending League and Championship games. Part of the preparation for our Connacht Campaign included an invitation to visit and play London in early summer and their trip was entirely funded by our London-based Leitrim supporters.

In November, the team was back in London again - this time as guests at the Leitrim Association Dance - and this trip was very generously funded by Tony McGovern of McGovern Bros., another indication of the family's generosity. The dinner invitations were sponsored by another great Leitrim supporter, Pat Gallagher, and once again the players realized the involvement of so many people in the county's success.

Sincere thanks is due to the many people involved in the London trips and to the Leitrim Association in relation to a highly enjoyable Social function.

Invitations

At home, the team and officials were invited to many G.A.A. and County Association celebrations and were amazed at the generous goodwill from all quarters. But John O'Mahony had the responsibility of ensuring the preparations continued for the National League, so that team officials acted as representatives of the team at many of the Social gatherings on. However, the players were always made available for presentation of medals and other similar functions with Juvenile clubs and for visits to the schools of the county. It would be simply impractical and contrary to training schedules for players to attend the many other events to which they were invited - but still the invitations were highly regarded and appreciated.

Supporters Club

Inter-county success is an incentive to join any county's Supporters' Club, but the work of promotion, registration and personal contact is of vital importance if there is to be any success.

The county was fortunate to have Eamonn Tubman, the Board's Leas-Cathaoirleach, and fellow co-ordinators Leo Kenny and Diarmuid Sweeney use their persuasive cowers and expertise not only to recruit large members into the Supporters' Club but also to motivate the different branches of the club into fund-raising ventures of various kinds. The results of their work was an indication of the supreme efforts made. An excellent innovation was the production of Supporters Club Videos and the Board was grateful to Joe Gormley of Interparts and J & M Commercials for sponsorship of the 1994 Championship video.

Mike Carty (left) of Rosie O'Grady's Bars and restaurants, main organiser of the Leitrim visit to New York, pictured with former Leitrim stars Pat O'Brien of Glencar and Eddie Rowley of Mohill.

John O' Mahony pictured in Gaelic Park with Seamus Wrynn and Bridie Moran, Ballinamore

The Connacht Champions pictured in Gaelic Park, New York

Standards

Following the Leitrim - Dublin Semi-final many commentators spoke and wrote of the apparent "yawning gap in standards" between Connacht and the other provinces, leading people to feel that all the Connacht counties lay far behind the rest of the counties in the country. This was hardly so - in a recent 'Sunday Press' rating we had been placed in eighth position overall. While we could argue that the All-Ireland Semi-finalists should comprise the top four, being listed eighth in that particular survey made unprecedented progress from our listing of a few short years before, when we were placed in the upper twenties!

Leitrim were now Provincial Champions and embarking on the 1995 Connaught campaign would be a new experience. But nobody was in any doubt but that the county would again be celebrating after the Connacht Final and then off to Croke Park for more excitement.

Prospects

The future depended very much on the talent available at under-age level, particularly at Under-21 and Minor. The efforts of Bórd na nÓg continued to produce a steady stream of skilled players with some particularly talented individuals. From our Under-21 panels we needed to have a number of prospective seniors year after year.

The Hastings Cup again provided good competitive fare for our Under-21 side and the Team Management had an opportunity to assess a large number of players. Maintaining a regular training programme at this age-group is rather difficult due to the involvement of many of our panel in Third Level competitions.

There was also a long break between the Hastings Cup and the Connacht Championship but despite the rather erratic training opportunities, the Leitrim side turned in a marvellous performance in disposing of a fancied Roscommon side in the opening round. It was obvious that the positive attitude of the Senior team had rubbed off on the Under-21's.

In the Provincial semi-final we faced Mayo in Castlebar and allowed ourselves to be outplayed in the first half, giving Mayo a comprehensive half-time lead. Leitrim treated the attendance to a thrilling fight back after the interval in a second half that were particularly memorable for some individual displays, but particularly from Seamus Quinn who completely dominated play when moved to centre-half back - emphasizing the fact that a player of his calibre can fit into any position on a team. Time ran out on us before we could overhaul Mayo, who went on to take provincial honours and contest the All-Ireland Final. No doubt many of our Under-21 side would, over the next few years, become regular members of the Senior panel and provide continued hope for the future.

A wide ambit

It has been widely acknowledged that 1994 was Leitrim's greatest ever year.

There was Charlie McGettigan's Eurovision success, the All-Ireland Scór victories for Ballinamore and Carrigallen clubs; the re-opening of the £30 million Ballinamore/Ballyconnell Canal on the Shannon-Erne Waterway which would mark a tourism bonanza for Leitrim and surrounding regions; the achievement by Allen Gaels clubman Ciaran Fitzgerald in swimming the English Channel and then the very welcome news that the Masonite Corporation of America would be siting their multi-million pound enterprise in the Drumsna area with resultant high employment for the county.

It is gratifying to know that our Connacht Championship success did have a distinct bearing on the decision by Masonite to site the factory in the county. Representatives from the Corporation were on an exploratory visit to Ireland in the run-up to the All-Ireland Semi-final and were deeply impressed by the colour, the atmosphere, the spirit, the pride exuded by all of Leitrim and took a close look at the county as a result. Eventually, for many reasons, the decision was made to set up the business in the county - we are glad of any influence the success of the team has had.

Business in general in the county would have benefited from the 1994 Championship campaign, and while many of the games were played outside the county, the celebrations and the high spirits and the thousands of returning exiles did have a good effect on the commercial life of Leitrim.

The major event in Ireland, of course, in all of 1994, was the development of the peace process and immense credit was due to all responsible in bringing about a situation that the people of the country had longed and prayed for. Being a border county, we could now look forward to the to the re-opening of all border crossings with neighbouring Fermanagh and hopefully a still further increase in business, particularly from tourism. It was vitally important to the Board that commercial life in the county improved and that job opportunities increased so that some halt could be made to the exodus of young people from Leitrim. With our population at a mere 25,000 - something similar to the town of Salthill - any further drop, particularly in the 18 -25 age group, would, apart from bleeding the county of its life-blood, make it continually more difficult to compete at intercounty level with counties of so much greater population. Being a small county does have some advantages - particularly a very close bond among its people - and this perhaps is one of the major advantages we had in Leitrim.

NATIONAL LEAGUE 1994-95

On the Sunday following the return from the U.S. Leitrim faced a stern test against Ulster Finalists. Tyrone, in the opening round of the Church & General National League in Carrick-on-Shannon and despite the jet-lag and the tired limbs notched two valuable league points.

But the tiredness seemed to hit in Ennis when we were completely over-run by Clare in the most disappointing performance of the year. It seemed that, in the second half, when the game started to slip away from us, the players just did not have the energy or the will to fight back - it looked as if the very long season was having its ill effects.

But such notions were quickly dispelled with a display of great heart and immense pride in Carrick-on-Shannon when we once again displayed our superiority over the Tribesmen.

The build-up to the final pre-Christmas game against Mayo was far from ideal due to doubts about and the eventual unavailability of the Aughawillan members on the county panel, because of the proximity of the Connacht Club Final. Appeals to Connacht Council for a deferral of the final went unheeded and so we fielded minus a number of first team choices against Mayo, our Connacht Final opponents, in Charlestown. We also had the added disadvantage of injuries to George Dugdale, Liam Conlon and Colin McGlynn - although Colin did enter the game in the closing stages.

But the strength of our panel became evident when the replacement players fitted in perfectly to the team and we saw one of the great-hearted performances by Leitrim, coming back from a five point deficit to snatch a thoroughly deserved victory and finish the intercounty season on a extremely high note.

3 in a row for Aughawillan!
A delighted Gerry Flanagan holds aloft the Fenagh Cup after his club's third successive Leitrim Senior Championship victories in 1992, 1993 & 1994.

George Dugdale is honoured by the Mohill Club for his part in the 1994 Connacht Championship victory.
Padraig Keegan, Martin Moran, George Dugdale, Willie McGarty (with the Nestor cup) and Stephen Flynn.

The Club Scene

Due to the long season of involvement by the county team and the subsequent trip to America, the club senior championship was compressed into a four week period, along the way there were some shock results, with Allen Gaels and Aughawillan making it through to the final, with many of the county team involved. It was looking good for Allen Gaels until a late penalty swung the game for Aughawillan. They looked a hot tip for the Connacht Club title later in the season putting up a tremendous performance before a rather fortuitous goal helped the Galway champions Tuam stars to victory. A provincial win for Aughawillan would really have put the icing on the cake in 1994.

In his report to the Convention, the County Secretary was advocating that the championship be run on a league basis, in four groups
of three, with the top two qualifying for the Quarter Finals. It was some years before the format was finally agreed to.

In the Intermediate Championship victory went to Aughavas for the second year in succession and they would be graded senior for 1995. St. Mary's were the disappointed finalists, but they made Aughavas fight to the finish. Former Leitrim and Connacht star and All-Star nominee Michael Martin was still a key figure in the St. Mary's side. The Junior final had exciting moments too, with Allen Gaels, helped by veterans Sean Wynne and Eamonn McGowan, holding off a strong Drumreilly challenge – they too had seasoned campaigners in former county star Noel Maxwell and James Holohan.

At Under 21 level problems remained with having a cohesive fixture programme. St. Mary's had defeated Allen Gaels in Spring – in the 1993 Final – and the same two sides awaited the 1994 Final. A National Seminar of county Officers debated long and hard about a satisfactory fixture programme for the club players. Similar problems arose in any county that was having success at county level – it was difficult to cater for club fixtures. Suggested solutions all seemed to lead to other problems. Some counties had adopted the practice of week evening fixtures - but how could we adopt this practice in Leitrim when at least half of every club team is based at work away from the County, or in third level colleges as far apart as Letterkenny and Limerick?

Our success in 1994 and the attached euphoria throughout every club in the County did overshadow misgivings about fixtures at club level - and this holds true of any county that reaches the latter stages of the League or Championship - so what we needed was to continue to be successful at inter- county level and at the same time ensure that club fixtures work in tandem.

Glenfarne G.A.A. Park

Re-Opening & Blessing of Glenfarne G.A.A. Park & New Changing Rooms

On Sunday Next, July 31st

Programme of Events

9.30 a.m. - Band Parade from Rainbow to St. Mary's Church with St. Naile's Youth Band (Kinawley).

9.45 a.m. - Band Recital in Church Car Park.

10. a.m. - Concelebrated Remembrance Mass for all deceased players and members of Glenfarne G.A.A. Club. Chief Celebrant - Rev. T. Woods P.P., assisted by many Glenfarne born priests (former footballers). Past and present footballers taking part in the liturgy. Choirs of St. Mary's & St. Michael's singing specially arranged hymns. Music by members of Glenfarne C.C.E. Live broadcast of Mass by M & NWR.

10.45 a.m. - (Approx) Band Recital in Car Park followed by parade to the Rainbow.

1.30 p.m. - Under 16 football challenge. Glenfarne v. Shannon Gaels. Referee: Padraig Flynn.

2.30 p.m. - Intermediate Football Challenge - Glenfarne v. Glencar/Manorhamilton. Referee: Oliver Fitzpatrick.

3.30 p.m. - Marching Band display by Botha Youth Band (Derrygonnelly) playing all your favourite tunes.

3.45 p.m. - Blessing of Park & Changing Rooms by the Rev. T. Woods P.P., assisted by Glenfarne priests. Official re-opening of grounds by Mr. Aidan McGowan, President of Leitrim County Board G.A.A.

4.00 p.m. - Senior Football Tournament - Aughawillan (Leitrim 1993 Champions) v. Devenish (Fermanagh 1993 Champions).

5.30 p.m. - Refreshments for all teams in the Rainbow.

10.00 p.m. - Banquet and Dance in Rainbow. Don't miss this great night of nostalgia when you can reminisce with friends of the great footballing years in Glenfarne.

Dancing to Sean O'Neill & The Gold Ring Band, Armagh

Full Bar. N.B.: This days events will be recorded on video, so place your order early for this treasured souvenir.

For A Great Day Out - Glenfarne Is The Place To Be Next Sunday.

700.

The only solution was for clubs to continue to play, even without the services of their county players. For this to be acceptable, a radical change in our League and Championship structure was needed. Agreement amongst clubs to postpone league games during the Summer months as an "obligement" to each other, led to many games being played in most atrocious weather conditions in late November and early December, and this could not be allowed to continue to happen. As we entered 1995 we still had to finalize our 1994 leagues and our 1994 Under 21 Championship (another competition most difficult to complete in any county), so any further deferrals of fixtures would be out of the question. The time had come for the complete fixtures programme of the Association to be streamlined - and this could only be done by a National Committee, rather than by a series of smaller units who are inclined to cater only for their own needs, rather than giving consideration to fitting into an overall plan.

Development of playing and spectator facilities continued throughout the county, with the official opening of Glenfarne G.A.A. club grounds and with major work being done also, especially by Melvin Gaels and Annaduff.

At Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada, George O'Toole and his committee had made remarkable progress in the terracing of further areas of the embankments; in the provision of wheelchair access to a raised viewing area and in the allocation of seating to a newly developed enclosure adjacent to the dressing rooms. We urgently needed an improvement in the existing capacity so that we would be in compliance with the very stringent Safety Regulations in relation to the ever-increasing numbers attending our games.

Since the early 1960's George O'Toole had played a very important role in the many developments at Carrick-on-Shannon and we could take pride in having a county grounds with such excellent playing, spectator and press facilities.

The finance allocated by the Board to Páirc Mac Diarmada was money well spent.

Seamus an All Star

Leitrim rejoiced at the news that Seamus Quinn had been selected as full back on the All Star Team – a great honour for the player himself, for his family, for his club Gortletteragh and for the county.

Seamus had been prominent in Leitrim since his Juvenile days when he won the Bórd na nÓg Youth Player Award. In the few intervening years he continued to blossom in many positions at club and county level, but it was in 1994 that he really hit the national headlines with his displays at full back when he warmed many a heart with his style of play that was reminiscent of the greatest ever players in that position. His All-Star award was well merited, as was his Connacht Players of the Year Award - received from the votes of other inter- county players throughout Ireland.

It'll probably be remembered for all time — the ball went in long and high towards the Leitrim goal about thirty-five yards out. The Dublin full-forward, realising that this was going to be yet another battle that he was about to lose, began to drag and pull out of his opponent but with only one hand available, Seamus Quinn was not about to be beaten and brought off a spectacular one handed catch!

by
John Connolly

That catch, in front of over fifty thousand people on Leitrim Senior's first ever appearance in Croke Park last August 21st, is just one of a long line of memorable moments that the twenty-one year old Gortletteragh man has provided for Leitrim football fans since he first starting scoring spectacular goals for Leitrim's Under 16 & Minors a little over five years ago.

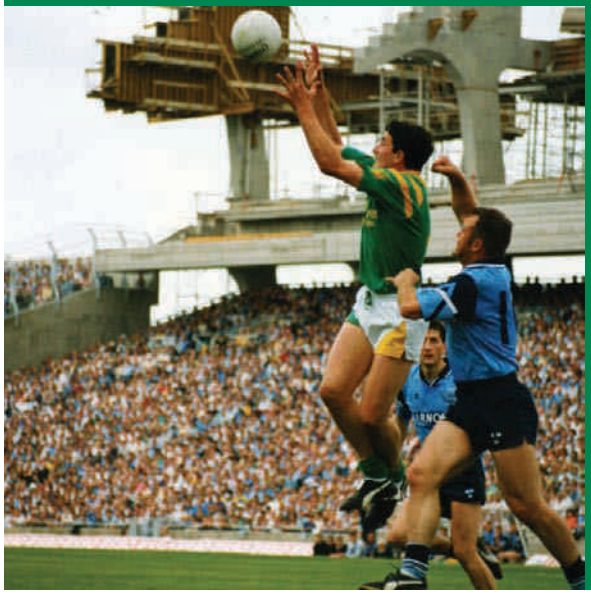
And last Friday night in the Burlington Hotel, Quinn completed an amazing year both for himself, Gortletteragh and Leitrim when he joined a very select band of footballers when he was named to the 1994 Bank of Ireland Allstars team.

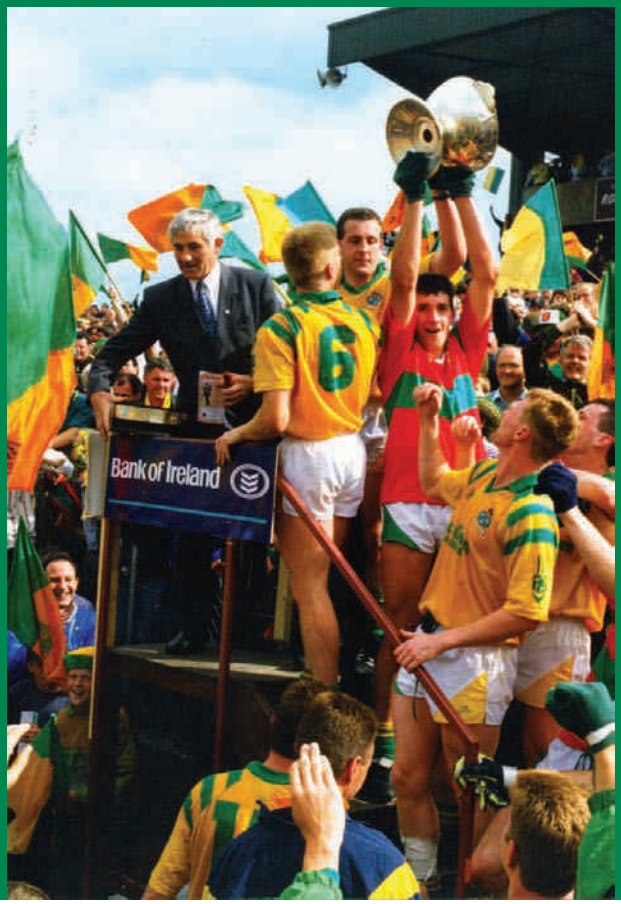
Seamus had double reason to celebrate last Friday evening when he announced his engagement to Marie Ward — certainly making it a night to remember for a young man who gained one of the highest individual honours in the Gaelic footballing world.

But what was perhaps most impressive and satisifying about the Leitrim's second ever Allstar Award was the incredible unaminity of all observers in the game — for an Award Scheme often bedevilled by controversy, the universal approval of Quinn's Award is perhaps the greatest tribute of all!

Seamus Quinn receives his Bank of Ireland All-Star Award. L-R: John McNamara, General Manager West Bank of Ireland, Seamus Quinn, John Sorohan, RTE, P.J. McGrath, Chairman Connacht Council

The three other Leitrim players who won All-Star nominations: Padraig Kenny, Pat Donohoe, Declan Darcy, pictured at the Bank of Ireland function in the Burlington.





Seamus also had the distinction of being named Man of the Match in the All-Ireland Semi-final, while Joe Honeyman had received this accolade with a powerful performance in the Connacht Final, as well as being named Sports Star of the Week. There were playing awards for other team members as well, particularly team captain Declan Darcy and long time stalwart Mickey Quinn. John O'Mahony received awards for his role as Team Manager, while as well as the Civic Reception from the County Council, the team was honoured with the prestigious "Personality of the Year Award" from "The Leitrim Guardian" magazine.

Beside the nomination of Seamus Quinn for an All-Star Award, there were also nominations for Declan Darcy, Pat Donohoe and Padraig Kenny, all of whom were being recognised for particular contributions to the Leitrim success story. Indeed, all three could feel disappointed at not gaining ultimate selection but four nominations in themselves mark considerable achievement. Declan Darcy had the distinct honour of being named National Sports Star of the Year, in acknowledgement of his playing prowess and his leadership qualities as captain of Leitrim.

All the players honoured, of course, readily conceded that awards would not come, were it not for the quality of their fellow players, and all the various awards had been accepted very much with the whole team panel in mind.

Local Radio

One of the major build-ups to the Connacht Final was the "Talk in" organised by Joe Finnegan and Seamus Duke of Shannonside FM who donated the profits of the evening to our training fund. Thanks were especially due to the visiting panelists Dermot Earley, Martie Morrissey, Donal Keenan, Raymond Smith and Sean Kilfeather, all of whom became involved at their own expense and who demonstrated the goodwill there was towards Leitrim.

Shannonside-Northern Sound and N.W.R. Radios had given comprehensive coverage of all our activities at club and county level and - a very important communications link with our supporters. Seamus Duke's "Gaelic Grapevine" programme was a major publicity vehicle for all games and G.A.A. activities in the county.

National radio and TV

Many times during the year on R.T.E. Radio and Television we were profiled both in sports and on feature programmes and there was a very positive reaction from the public in relation to all of these. Particularly nostalgic was the interview of Tom Gannon by Michael O Muircheartaigh - this was but one of the many occasions on which Mícheál highlighted Leitrim - a county he has assisted in many ways over the years. Go minic, freisin, ar Radio na Gaeltachta, bhí Liatroim mar ábhar na gcláracha agus bhí suim pearsanta sa chontae ag Seán Bán Breathnach.

The media

Never before has Leitrim been the subject of so much media attention at national level and all the G.A.A. and feature writers were gracious without being condescending - they all recognised a good story! Within the county we had received particularly good coverage from *The Leitrim Observer*, *The Longford Leader* and all our other local papers, with colour features being the order of the day. There is no doubt but that coverage of G.A.A. affairs is a major aspect of any Irish publication. A special word of praise was due to *Leitrim Observer* photographer Willie Donnellan - at long last he took the picture he longed for - a Leitrim captain with the Nestor Cup.

But there very sad moments too within Leitrim in 1994, particularly with the accidental deaths of Juvenile players Brian O'Connor of Sean O'Heslin's and Carrigallen's Brendan McCartin and Garry Coyne – Garry had been a member of the Leitrim Under 16 panel.

Now for 1995 - The Next Step

January would see an early start to the year with involvement in the newly inaugurated Connacht F.B.D. Tournament in honour of the late Patrick Francis Dwyer, the former Rúnaí of Coiste Chontae Roscomáin who had died during the year. P. F. was an extremely friendly and courteous official and there were many happy memories of his involvement in Leitrim - Roscommon GAA activities.

With 6 points in the League and with the other results, in general, being kind to us, we could confidently face Cork at home in Carrick and Louth and Armagh away in the final three rounds - and out destiny was in our own hands. Reaching the final stages of the League would not only be a good springboard for the Championship, but would generate much needed finance for the Board and add greatly to the normal share of the pool and of the Church and General sponsorship.

We would await the winners of the Galway - Sligo Championship clash in the Connacht Semi-final. We were the team to beat and how John Bosco McDermott would relish another showdown with us. How much more would Sligo Manager P. J. Carroll relish such a showdown! Since taking over at the Sligo helm, P. J. had been the cause of a dramatic turnaround in performance and in results, just as he achieved in Leitrim - and both Galway and Leitrim would be wary of the Sligo challenge.

Retaining the Connacht Championship had to be our major goal for 1995. After that we would look to greater things in Croke Park.

Any ideas about a closed season for intercounty activity were quickly dispelled in January 1995 with the FBD Tournament, together with a number of challenge games, in preparation for the National League, the forerunner to the championship. Leitrim had see-saw performances in the league against Louth, Cork and Armagh and survived in Division II.

The next focus was for the championship clash with either Galway or Sligo. To the supporters it mattered little who the opposition would be – we were on our way to a two-in-a-row and nothing would stop us. There was even talk of an All-Ireland Final appearance for Leitrim. A county that was said to have suffered from an inferiority complex for generations had a complete turn around. All our possible championship dates were pencilled into family diaries – life in Leitrim was going to revolve around the Nestor Cup again.

Good news on the financial front for Leitrim!
The McGovern Brothers would continue their county sponsorship, while Jimmy's of Dromad would be minor team sponsors.
Pictured from left. James McGovern, jimmy O'Connor, Peter McGovern, Tony McGovern and Paddy Joe McGovern

John O'Mahony, his selectors and players and the County Board were more realistic. 1994 was now history. There was much work to be done, so preparations were on a par with the previous year. The high profile of the Leitrim team was best portrayed in the Connacht Railway Cup team selection of 1995, a record seven players – Joe Honeyman, Noel Moran, Seamus Quinn, Pat Donohoe, Padraig McLoughlin, Declan Darcy and Padraig Kenny – were honoured with the provincial jersey. However, Connacht lost to Ulster 0-15 to 0-8.

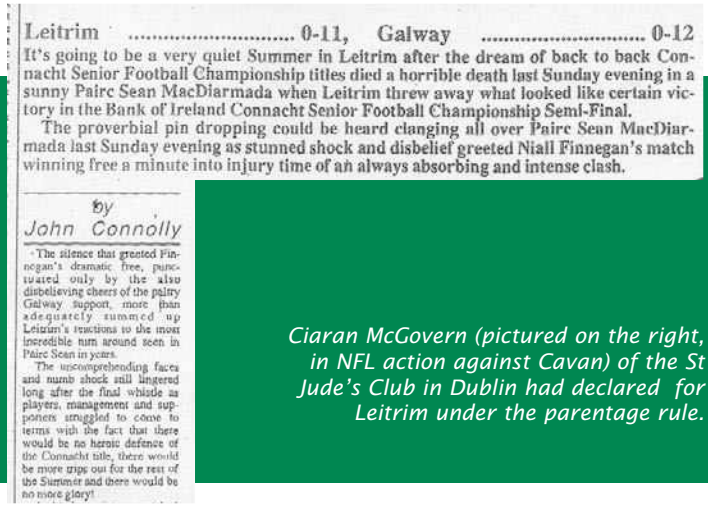
With Galway drawing with Sligo, 0-11 apiece, in the Connacht Championship in Sligo, the replay was fixed for Tuam. This time the Tribesmen upped their game and won by a seven point margin.

So the scene was set for Leitrim to take on Galway in Carrick-on-Shannon on Sunday June 18th. The county, from Rooskey to Tullaghan was still emblazoned in green and gold and the "*Lurganboy on Tour*" banner was behind the goals well before the throw-in.

The Leitrim players, who had been joined by another Dublin born player, Ciaran McGovern, appeared to be in the right frame of mind to perform like champions. But the spark of 1994 was somehow missing and well into injury time we were hanging on for dear life and thinking ahead to a replay in Tuam.

Then it happened. Referee Pat Casserley blew the whistle for what we thought was the end of the game. But it was for a free to Galway and Niall Finnegan made no mistake, dashing Leitrim hopes and dreams. The scoreboard read Galway 0-12, Leitrim 0-11. The county was simply shell shocked.

Leitrim supporters out in force for the Galway Clash



Leitrim ..... 0-11, Galway 0-12

It's going to be a very quiet Summer in Leitrim after the dream of back to back Connacht Senior Football Championship titles died a horrible death last Sunday evening in a sunny Pairc Sean MacDiarmada when Leitrim threw away what looked like certain victory in the Bank of Ireland Connacht Senior Football Championship Semi-Final.

The proverbial pin dropping could be heard clanging all over Pairc Sean MacDiarmada last Sunday evening as stunned shock and disbelief greeted Niall Finnegan's match winning free a minute into injury time of an always absorbing and intense clash.

by John Connolly

The silence that greeted Finnegan's dramatic free, punctuated only by the also disbelieving cheers of the paltry Galway support, more than adequately summed up Leitrim's reactions to the most incredible turn around seen in Pairc Sean in years.

The uncomprehending faces and numb shock still lingered long after the final whistle as players, management and supporters struggled to come to terms with the fact that there would be no heroic defence of the Connacht title, there would be more trips out for the rest of the Summer and there would be no more glory!

Ciaran McGovern (pictured on the right, in NFL action against Cavan) of the St Jude's Club in Dublin had declared for Leitrim under the parentage rule.

64 mins: Leitrim finally look to have assured themselves of a place in the Connacht Final when a ball from Aiden Rooney is knocked on to Padraig McLoughlin by Ciaran McGovern. McGovern runs on to a great handpass from the Aughavas man and put the ball over the bar from straight in front of the posts.

67 mins: Fergal O'Neill is booked for an off the ball incident.

69 mins: Val Daly gets the ball and passes out to Jarleth Fallon who sends the score of the day just inside the post to narrow the Leitrim lead to just one point.

70 mins: A Leitrim attack breaks down with Cathal McGinley passing out to a defender. The ball is moved upfield to Sean De Paor, standing totally unmarked, and he moves forward to knock over a brilliant curling point from thirty-five yards to incredibly level the scores.

72 mins: Jason Ward arrives on for a tired Pat Donohue but as the game enters injury time, Fergal Gavin collects Martin McHugh kickout but is fouled by Mickey Quinn some thirty-five yards out on the left hand side of the field. Niall Finnegan earns himself a place in all Galway supporter's hearts when his free curls just inside the far post.

73 mins: Leitrim try to break upfield but their passes go badly astray and referee Pat Casserly blows the whistle on Leitrim's defence of their Connacht Championship crown.

Full-time Score: Leitrim ..... 0-11, Galway 0-12

Leitrim: Martin McHugh, Joe Honeyman, Seamus Quinn, Gerry Flanagan, Noel Moran, Declan Darcy (0-1), Ciaran Murray, Mickey Quinn, Pat Donohue, Padraig Kenny, Brian Breen (0-1), Paul Kieran (0-1), Padraig McLoughlin (0-2), Colin McGlynn (0-4), Liam Conlon (0-1). Subs: Ciaran McGovern (0-1) for Moran (47mins), Aiden Rooney for Kenny (57mins), Jason Ward for Donohue (72mins).

If a week is a long time in politics, then three minutes is a long time in football. There we were, time ticking away, two points up in defence of our Connacht title, before a live television audience, another final appearance in the offing, another year in the sun. Then it happened, as simple as one, two, three. Three Galway points and we surrendered the Nestor Cup.

Disappointment would be a mild word to use. Galway's subsequent emphatic victory in the Connacht Final and a thrilling All-Ireland Semi-Final against Tyrone left us pondering on what might have been. Did we surrender not only a victory over Galway, but a Connacht title and a possible All-Ireland appearance?

The county was in a state of shock. Leitrim flags had been reflown from the 1994 vantage points in anticipation of a long hot summer. Suddenly it was over. And then the questions came - why, why, why?

There was no simple answer, perhaps there was a combination of answers, but if the people of Leitrim felt at a loss, what of the players and the Team Management? After the 1994 All-Ireland Semi-Final a marker had been put down - another Connacht title in 1995 and another assault on Croke Park.

The preparation had been as thorough as in 1994. There were the training sessions, the sprints, the circuit training, the sand dunes, the coaching sessions, the endless slogging on the training fields; the countless miles of travelling, the specifically chosen challenge games; the sacrifices. There was the same professional approach, the same commitment and there is no doubt but that had the Galway hurdle been overcome that the possibilities for Leitrim were endless.

There was no joy at Under 21 level either, with Mayo once again being too strong for us, despite the presence of a number of established senior players who were still eligible for Under 21.

Back to basics –

Summer 1995 belonged very much to the clubs.

A structured youth policy is the foundation for success at adult level and this was proven by the emergence of Aughavas as a real force in the senior ranks and in a closely fought thriller they edged out reigning three-in-a-row champions Aughawillan to cause one of the sensations of the season.

The championship race was thrown wide open, suddenly there were many contenders for the title. One of the "top four" was gone, now it was anybody's game, with Allen Gaels as probable favourites.

Brothers Ciaran and Fergal Reynolds vital members of the St. Mary's team

Once again Drumkeerin mastered a disappointing Drumreilly side while St. Mary's and Carrigallen ousted Glencar/Manorhamilton and Melvin Gaels without setting the world alight.

Arguments against Saturday evening games were severely dented when a record crowd for championship quarter-finals saw Fenagh edge out Drumkeerin and Allen Gaels, after a hectic struggle, narrowly defeating Aughavas, the giant killers.

Carrigallen were simply routed by a powerful Gortletteragh side that many were tipping as championship material and in the final quarter-final St. Mary's gave a taste of what was to come by overcoming a Sean O'Heslins side of great potential but of great disappointment on the day.

The wisdom of the Fixtures' Committee's decision in staging the championship Semi-Finals in Ballinamore was rewarded with a capacity attendance that saw Allen Gaels relinquish what should have been an unassailable lead to a tigerish Fenagh team that clawed its way back into the game, drawing level on the stroke of time.

St. Mary's lived dangerously against Gortletteragh, a club that refused to give in, and despite an early lead were fortunate enough to be still ahead at the final whistle. But the potential was there and the many talented individual players seemed at last to be blending as a team.

In the replayed Semi-final, Fenagh played like a team possessed and some scintillating individual displays in an impressive overall team performance saw the club bridge a gap of decades and reach the County Final to give a totally new and rather unexpected pairing.

The County Final was one that the neutral supporters wanted both sides to win - the long barren years since either had taken the Senior title evoking support and good will.

We were treated to an exciting, sporting skillful and free flowing game, highlighted by a masterly midfield performance by Fenagh captain and county star Killian McLaughlin and by the incisive runs and scoring skills of St. Mary's Gene Bohan, together with the remarkable achievement by Michael Martin in winning a second county championship medal twenty years after captaining Sheemore Gaels hack in 1975.

No one would have begrudged either team success, but the cup went to St. Mary's captain Brendan Guckian who held it aloft with the last club winning captain of 1958, George O'Toole, thus bridging a gap of almost forty years and bringing overdue success to the Carrick-on-Shannon officials who had laboured for so long in search of success at senior level.

In the heat of the action – Hubie Reynolds and Ray Tubman, Fenagh and Gene Bohan, St Mary's

Tommy Ellis, Fenagh under pressure from Ivan Keaney and Kevin McKenna, St Mary's

Donal Smith St Mary's, a member of the 1994 Leitrim championship panel, attempts a block down on a clearance by Niall Flynn, Fenagh.

For Fenagh, there was glory in defeat. But more important, there was hope for the future and the ideal blending of very talented young players with their more experienced veteran team mates would see the Fenagh side remain as championship contenders and very possible champions.

On reflection, the 1995 Senior Championship would be seen as the best of recent times. One obvious feature was the elimination of renowned campaigners like Aughawillan, Sean O'Heslins and Gortletteragh, emphasising the improved standard in other clubs at this level. Allied to this was the number of superlative performances by many young players who gave continued hope for the retention of our high status at county level.

Very important and very satisfying too were the increased attendances, and the renewed interest in the championship — proving that proper marketing of our games is both essential and rewarding.

Of note also was the sportsmanship evident right through the campaign and the excellent presentation of teams and venues for which our players, club mentors and officials deserved the highest credit. The overall high standard of refereeing and the efficiency of linesmen and umpires added greatly to the quality of the games and congratulations were due to Sean McCartan on what was a big day for him - and is a big day for any referee - a top class performance in his first County Senior Final.

The Leitrim senior championship title is back in St Mary's, for the first time since 1958. Enjoying the moment are team manager Michael Tunney and captain Brendan Guckian

Sean Mc Cartan , all set to referee his first county senior final, as team captains Brendan Guckian and Killian McLoughlin shake hands. Also pictured are linesman Gerry McGovern, Padraig Flynn, Aiden Mac Gabhann, Tony McGowan

In the Connacht Club Championship, Sligo champions Eastern Harps were expected to be too strong for St. Mary's, but sharpshooters Michael Martin and Gene Bohan turned the tables. In the Semi-final, the Leitrim-Roscommon rivalry was renewed when Clann na n-Gael came to Carrick-on-Shannon. The last few minutes were breathtaking, but St. Mary's defence held out, with county star Fergal Reynolds playing a stormer at centre-half back. So another Leitrim side had made it to the final stage and all clubs in the county were fully behind St. Mary's. There were many unsavoury aspects to this Connacht Club Final, which the Galway champions scarcely deserved to win. But the scoreboard told the story, St. Mary's had lost out.

There was some consolation for the Carrick-on-Shannon club when their Intermediate team – including a number who had won the Minor Championship that year – proved too strong for surprise contenders Eslin. A pleasant aspect to the Intermediate campaign was the return of George Dugdale to the Mohill side, having finally recovered from a serious injury received in the All-Ireland 1994 Semi-final against Dublin.

Junior teams were more and more being comprised of veteran and very young players, in some cases with fathers and sons playing side by side. In the final, Kiltubrid overcame Glenfarne and proved that their great work in developing good under age structures for a number of years was paying off. The club was tipped as one that would go on to prosper at adult level.

The protracted 1994 Under 21 Championship had finally come to a conclusion in early 1995, with Allen Gaels avenging a number of defeats by St. Mary's. Ballinaglera had amalgamated with Allen Gaels to form the St. Francis Under 21 team – indeed the championship was made up very much of amalgamated sides. In yet another very long drawn out campaign victory went to St. Joseph's, the amalgamation of Carrigallen and Aughavas. Year after year the Under 21 Championship found itself being played far too late in the year – and there was even a motion on the Convention Clár to have it abolished altogether. The sensible solution was to have it played early in the year, prior to the third-level examinations and at a time when the county selectors would have an opportunity to cast their eye over possible contenders for a place in the Leitrim panel.

For the club leagues John O'Mahony was very cooperative in releasing county players, but there were still delays and postponements – not due to competitive sports like soccer or rugby, but in the main because the Fixtures Committee's greatest headache was an ever-increasing social calendar undertaken by the ordinary club player. And this was long before the days of the Celtic Tiger! As soon as fixtures were published somebody came up with some excuse or another to look for a postponement. This temporary arrangement was one that had to be tackled head on, to have all leagues completed within a calendar year. In future years there was a big improvement in this regard.

Fund raising continued unabated, with a profit of €40,000 being netted from a €50 draw and with the County Board Lotto and even a Table Quiz, all adding to

the coffers. Many officers of the Board and all of the Executive were deeply involved in the fund raising efforts, all anxious to help out, to play their part in keeping Leitrim at the top.

Aiden Mac Gabhann, who had succeeded former county star Jim Lynch as Uachtarán Choiste Liatroma, had completed his three year term, during which he had worked with the same dignity as he had done in various roles for the Association, including as Uachtarán CLG Chonnacht and G.A.A. Trustee. Tony McGowan, who had led the county for the previous ten years, from the depth of Division IV right up to the heights of the Connacht Championship, decided to step down as Cathaoirleach and many tributes were paid to Tony, his wife Phil and to all the McGowan family.

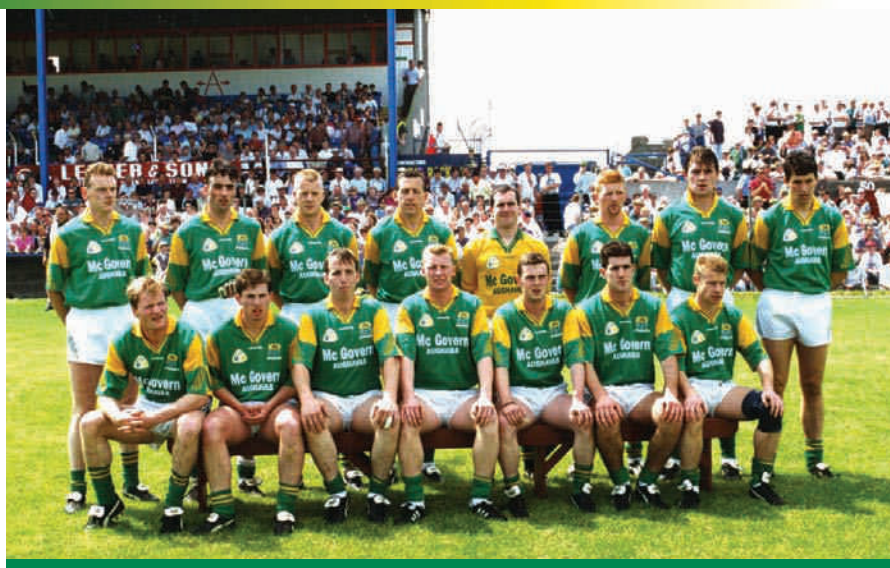
There were changes at Connacht level too, with the genial and long serving Secretary Johnny Mulvey retiring after a lifetime of service to Mayo and to Connacht Council. Johnny had been the referee at the famous 1958 Galway- Leitrim Connacht Final. The Council had decided to appoint a full time Secretary due to the workload involved in the many developing facets of the G.A.A. in the province. John Prenty of Ballyhaunis, the then serving Rúnaí of Coiste Chontae Mhaigh Eó was appointed to the position and has overseen unprecedented progress in the Association in the West.

Each year seemed to bring particular moments of sadness too. On the evening of our championship defeat to Galway we learned of the death in a motor accident of Drumreilly player Peter McGirl, whose father Michael had been a former Leitrim Team Manager. It was a reminder to us that there were other more important things in life than being successful in sport. Disappointments pass, the loss of a family member is something we never recover from.

The county looked forward with renewed hope to the 1996 Championship, with Leitrim being drawn again to meet the winners of the first round clash between Sligo and Galway. Would the cries of "Lei-trim, Lei-trim" resound around Markievitz Park or Tuam? The players were ready for any eventuality.

1996

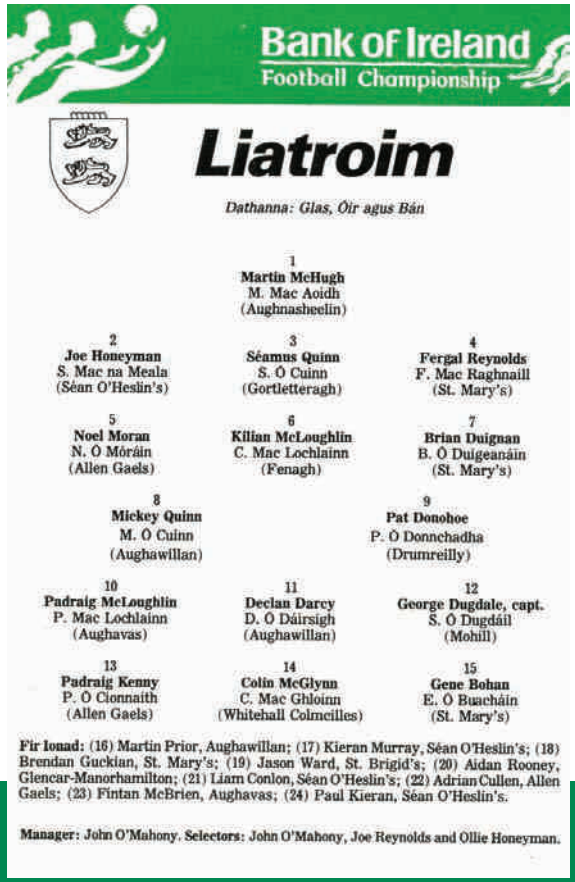
Leitrim started 1996 in strong contention for a place in the Quarter Finals of the Church and General National League, but we were rocked back on our heels by an avalanche of Armagh attacks in Lurgan – this was a game we should have had in the bag at half time. The long journey to Páirc Uí Chaoimh brought no joy either, but we finished the league on eight points after a comprehensive victory over Westmeath. There was still hope but other results on the day saw Cork and Cavan scrape through to the Quarter Final and gain promotion.



Standing (L-R): Noel Moran, Pat Donohue, Declan Darcy, Mickey Quinn, Martin McHugh, Fergal Reynolds, Colin McGlynn, Seamus Quinn. Seated (L-R): Joe Honeyman, Padraig McLoughlin, Killian McLoughlin, George Dugdale (Capt.) Gene Bohan, Brian Duignan, Padraig Kenny.

So the preparations went on at full pace for the championship. John O'Mahony and his selectors left nothing undone to have the team prepared, mentally and physically. There was the same attention to every detail as there had been when we became champions in 1994. By now the players had experienced both glory and disappointments, so nothing would faze them now.

Yet again Galway and Sligo finished level in Markievicz Park, but in the replay Galway had six points to spare. So we were bound for Tuam again – a venue we considered a happy hunting ground since the historic victory in 1993. We also had the added benefit of having Colm O'Rourke adding his advice, experience and encouragement during the championship build up at training in Kells. The players could do no more. What was asked of them was willingly done. Tuam was bedecked with green and gold.



Bank of Ireland
Football Championship

Liatroim

Dathanna: Glas, Óir agus Bán

1
Martin McHugh
M. Mac Aoidh
(Aughnasheelin)

2
Joe Honeyman
S. Mac na Meala
(Séan O'Heslin's)

3
Séamus Quinn
S. Ó Cuinn
(Gortletteragh)

4
Fergal Reynolds
F. Mac Raghnaill
(St. Mary's)

5
Noel Moran
N. Ó Móráin
(Allen Gaels)

6
Kilian McLoughlin
C. Mac Lochlainn
(Fenagh)

7
Brian Duignan
B. Ó Duigeanáin
(St. Mary's)

8
Mickey Quinn
M. Ó Cuinn
(Aughawillan)

9
Pat Donohoe
P. Ó Donnchadha
(Drumreilly)

10
Padraig McLoughlin
P. Mac Lochlainn
(Aughavas)

11
Declan Darcy
D. Ó Dáirsigh
(Aughawillan)

12
George Dugdale, capt.
S. Ó Dugdáil
(Mohill)

13
Padraig Kenny
P. Ó Cionnaith
(Allen Gaels)

14
Colin McGlynn
C. Mac Ghloinn
(Whitehall Colmcilles)

15
Gene Bohan
E. Ó Buacháin
(St. Mary's)

Fir Ionad: (16) Martin Prior, Aughawillan; (17) Kieran Murray, Séan O'Heslin's; (18) Brendan Guckian, St. Mary's; (19) Jason Ward, St. Brigid's; (20) Aidan Rooney, Glencar-Manorhamilton; (21) Liam Conlon, Séan O'Heslin's; (22) Adrian Cullen, Allen Gaels; (23) Fintan McBrien, Aughavas; (24) Paul Kieran, Séan O'Heslin's.

Manager: John O'Mahony. **Selectors:** John O'Mahony, Joe Reynolds and Ollie Honeyman.

Leitrim team that played Galway

An early Galway penalty goal rocked the supporters but not the players. They fought back and things were looking good at half time. A period of Galway dominance in the second half saw Leitrim playing catch-up. Many green and gold supporters raced back from the exits when the introduction of substitutes and positional switches in the team line-out saw us stage an amazing fight back that almost brought victory. We would have been very fortunate to have won, but certainly deserved a draw – and just imagine what a Leitrim-Galway replay in Carrick-on-Shannon would have done for the county. But the dreams of another Connacht title and another appearance in Croke Park were dashed. Galway had won 2-13 to 2-11. For many years Leitrim supporters would have considered it a great achievement to hold Galway to two points in the championship. But those days were gone; we didn't want to be whipping boys or championship fodder for anyone any longer.

After the game there was further disappointment for the county, with John O'Mahony announcing his retirement as Team Manager. The Under 21 meeting with Mayo in Castlebar was John's last game in charge of Leitrim. Retiring with John were his selectors, Ollie Honeyman and Joe Reynolds and Dublin based trainer Frank Darcy.

The departure of John O'Mahony and his management team ended the most successful period ever in Leitrim football and their efforts go down in the county's G.A.A. folklore. But all involved were anxious that it would not be the end but merely a transition to a new team management and that Leitrim players would remain serious contenders in both the National League and Championship.

Mayo, who had already defeated London and Roscommon, proved too strong for Galway in Castlebar, winning the Connacht title by 3-9 to 1-11 and later proving the West was still awake by reaching the All-Ireland Final but showing a little less shrewdness than Meath who brought home the Sam Maguire.

Des Quinn of Aughawillan was the new Cathaoirleach of the County Board, narrowly defeating the outgoing Leas-Cathaoirleach Eamonn Tubman in a contest at the Convention. Des already had wide experience in officialdom, both with his club Aughawillan and with the Board and was a man of boundless energy and enthusiasm. He introduced many innovative ideas, among them The Leitrim Trust Fund, which brought in substantial funds to the Board on a long-term loan basis.

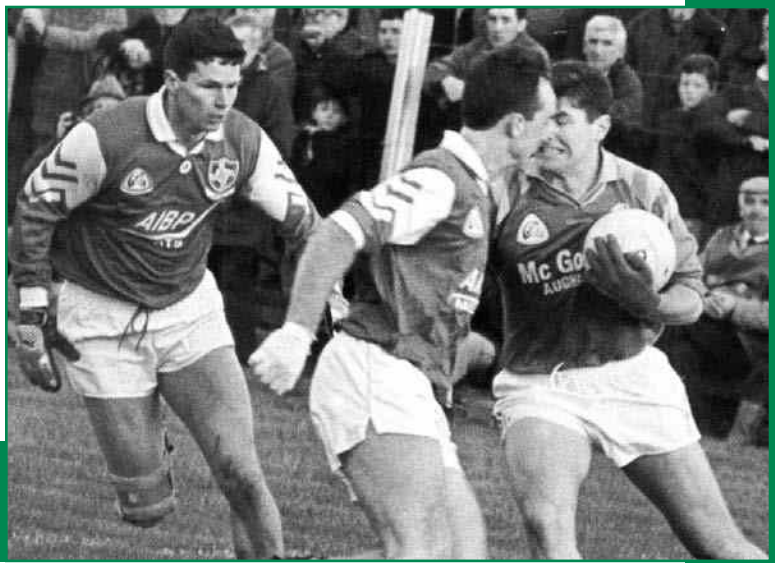
The new management introduced to Leitrim – Noel Crossan, Dan Meehan (selectors) Dr Pat O Neill (team advisor), Cathaoirleach Des Quinn, team manager Seamus Bonner and Tommy Moran

A major role of the Chairman was to lead the search for a new County Team Manager and this saw the appointment of former Donegal and Ulster star Seamus Bonnar to the role, with former Leitrim stars Noel Crossan and Dan Meehan as selectors. A welcome addition was that former Dublin All Ireland star and All Ireland Manager Pat O'Neill would act in an advisory role. The management team certainly had the qualifications necessary to take charge of teams at every level. The county could still look forward with confidence. There would be a close bond with the Under 21 team as Joe Reynolds had the role of Team Manager in that grade.

Despite being short a number of team regulars, Seamus Bonnar got his Leitrim management career off to a great start with a well-deserved National League victory over Dublin. The team went on to drop points to Monaghan, have a spirited victory over Louth, but a narrow defeat to Laois. With four league points and two home games to come in February we looked good for Divisional honours. Seamus and his selectors looked forward to developing a settled team for the remainder of the league through the FBD games to come in January and then to be ready for Ruislip and the opening round of the 1997 Connacht Championship against London, with the winners to meet 1996 All- Ireland finalists Mayo in the semi- final. There were busy times ahead.

Martin McHugh - "The Leitrim Guardian" - Denies the Dubs

Ciaran Murray rushes in to intercept in NFL v Dublin.



"My Ball" says Adrian Cullen as Louth defenders converge..

In the Leitrim senior championships the holders St. Mary's lost out in the final to Allen Gaels who really didn't play to their full potential in the Connacht Club campaign. Ballinaglera took the Intermediate title and looked destined for greater things ahead. Once again Eslin showed that they were championship specialists and took the Junior A title, earning the right to play in the newly inaugurated Connacht Junior Club Championship. In Junior B it was St. Mary's who earned more honour for the club, just pipping Carrigallen after a replay. The Carrigallen side featured a number of players that had won the 1995 Under 21 Championship with St. Joseph's but in this grade it was St. Francis who took the 1996 title.

Brothers in arms!
The three McLoughlin Brothers Donie and Killian, centre of picture and TP to the rear of picture, in action for Fenagh against Cloone

The early elimination from the Connacht Championship had left more time for club competition in 1996 so the leagues progressed well. The ever improving Aughavas side took the Division I title, with Mohill capturing Division II. Bornacoola and Aughawillan had qualified for the Division IV after the most closely contested league of all.

While the national media felt little reason to focus on Leitrim during 1996, the clubs and county were receiving great coverage from the *Leitrim Observer* and all local papers in the region, with Cormac Mac an Ghoill, the Board's Oifigeach Cultúra keeping the county very much to the forefront in the *Longford Leader*. On the airwaves Seamus Duke of Shannonside – Northern Sound and P.J. Leddy of North West Radio brought the news, reviews and live commentaries to Leitrim listeners. A voice from the past was lost to the Association with the death of former G.A.A. broadcaster Micheál O'Hehir.

Ballinaglera capture Intermediate Title:
Back row: (L-R) Nigel Cullen, Rory Gilmartin, Declan McGreal, James Wynne, John Reynolds, Colm Maguire, Sean Mc. Morrow,. Front row: (L-R) Ray Gilmartin, Joe McMorrow, Barry McGourty, Anthony McAuley, Adrian McGourty. In front: future Ballinaglara stars - Patrick McGreal, Enda Maguire, Aidan Cullen, Phillip McGourty.

Nationally it was a glorious year for Wexford hurlers who brought the Liam McCarty Cup back to the Model County. The ever popular Uachtarán of Cumann Lúthcleas Gael Jack Boothman had completed his term of office and was succeeded by Connacht man Seosamh Mac Donncha, the former Galway all-Ireland hurler who had brought an extra touch of pride to the province with his rendition of "The West's Awake" after Captain Joe Connolly's emotional speech when Galway ended years of heartbreak by capturing the Liam McCarty Cup back in 1980. Joe McDonagh hoped to have the honour of presenting Liam or Sam to a Connacht team during his term of office.

Uachtarán CLG Jack Boothman had made a number of official visits to Leitrim during his term in office

Champions 1996

Back L–R: Gerry Butler, Tommy Beirne, Michael Beirne, Brendan Wynne, Liam Higgins, Nathan McKenna, Cormac McManus, John Gerard McLoughlin. **Front L–R:** Noel McNulty, Aidan McCrann, Pauric McNulty, Declan Wynne (capt), Tommy McLoughlin, Joe Reynolds, Kenneth Wynne.

Positive news for the county at the beginning of 1997 was that James, Tony and Peter McGovern had confirmed that their sponsorship would continue. This was a personal rather than a commercial decision as the McGoverns took great pride in their native Aughavas and Leitrim and hoped that their input would be of benefit to the team and the Board in their on-going efforts.

As Seamus Bonnar and his management team prepared for the year, the atrocious weather conditions all during the FBD Connacht League in January made it difficult to properly evaluate player or team performances.

The opening National League game of the season against 1996 All-Ireland finalists Mayo was eagerly awaited and Leitrim supporters were out in force in Ballina. But the damp weather matched our spirits as we were easily outplayed by the home side.

But the team played more true to form in the vital clash with Clare at Carrick-on-Shannon, when that famed fighting spirit was more evident and we guaranteed our retention of Division II status. It had been acknowledged that this particular League Division was extremely difficult and competitive and finishing mid way in the group of highly respected teams was no mean achievement.

Success had not come by chance but from the diligent hard work and planning done by Team Manager, Seamus Bonnar, selectors Dan Meehan and Noel Crossan, team advisor Dr. Pat O'Neill, and a panel of players that were prepared to play their hearts out for Leitrim and undergo whatever rigorous training programme that was demanded of them.

On the brink

Preparations stepped up for the Championship and the players traversed the country again, to training in challenge games in a variety of locations. We were going to be in a no-win situation for the Championship clash with London in Ruislip. If we won, we would get little credit because victory would be expected, if we lost, then there would be a backlash from supporters.

Leitrim County Board GAA

Extends *Mile Buiochas* to officers and members of London GAA for their hospitality and co-operation

Sincere thanks to Frank Keegan and his committee of the Leitrim Golf Classic at Muswell Hill Golf Club to the participants and sponsors especially P B DONOGHUE GROUP

GOOD WISHES TO ALL OUR LEITRIM EXILES AND SUPPORTERS

Thanks and appreciation to our team sponsors

McGovern Brothers

Dublin - Aughavas - London

Good Luck to The Leitrim team today

We are proud of the wearers of the Green & gold

Cead mile failte to everyone at **McGoverns Bar** Kilburn for the Leitrim get together

THE IRISH WORLD

THE BEST PAPER FOR GAA COVERAGE

Foireann Lonndain		Foireann Liatroim
Dathanna: Bán agus Glas		Dathanna: Glas agus Or
	1 John Collins S. O Coileáin	1 Martin McHugh Kilglass
2 Stevie Kane S. O Cathàin	3 Diarmuid Gordon D Mag Mhuirneachàin	4 Ciaran Byrne C O Broin
2 Joe Honeyman Sean O Heslins	3 Seamus Quinn Gortletteragh	4 Fergal Reynolds St. Mary's
5 Pascal Cullen P O Cuilinn	6 Barry McDonagh B. Mac Donncha	7 Fergal O' Brien F. O'Briain
5 Noel Moran Allen Gaels	6 Killian McLoughlin Fenagh	7 Kieran Murray Sean O Heslins
8 Mick Hesnan M. hEasnáin	9 A. N. Other	
8 Brendon Guckian St. Mary's	9 Jason Ward St. Brigid's (Dublin)	
10 Ger O'Shea G. O Sé	11 Senan Hehir S. O hEachair	12 Aidan Creamer A. Mac Thréinir
10 George Dugdale Mohill	11 Declan Darcy (capt.) Aughawillian	12 Jimmy Guckian St. Mary's
13 Paul Coggins P. De Cogáin	14 Darren Gaffey D. Mac Gaffai	15 Tommy Maguire T. Maguidhir
13 Adrian Cullen Allen Gaels	14 Adrian Charles Aughavas	15 Fintan McBrien Aughavas

Referee: D Joyce (Galway)

Fir Ionaid:	Fir Ionaid:
16 Peter Mullarkey P. O Maoilearca	16 Gareth Phelan Melvin Gaels
17 Robert Walsh R. Breathnoch	17 Padraig Kenny Allen Gaels
18 Mark Smith M. MacGabhann	18 Mickey Quinn Aughawillian
19 Tony Murphy A. O Murchú	19 Joe Tiffoney Melvin Gaels
20 Frank Hussey P. O hOsa	20 Aidan Rooney Glencar/ Manorhamilton
21 Paul Hehir P. O hEachair	21 Liam Conlon Sean O Heslins
22 Timmy Connolly T. O Conghaile	22 Pat Donoghue Drumreilly
23 Niall McGee N. Mag Aoidh	23 Padraig McLoughlin Aughavas
24 John Devine S. O Daimhin	24 Ciaran McGovern St. Judes (Dublin)
25 John Cusack S. O Ciosog	

CELEBRATING TEN YEARS OF GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

While our followers wound themselves up for a festive weekend in London, and a presumed victory, the team focussed very much on the Championship clash ahead. London had been proving for some years now that their team was no pushover and the Leitrim team management and players were conscious of the task ahead.

*The Leitrim Senior team who were defeated by Mayo in the Connacht Championship Semi-Final in Castlebar. **(Back)** Seamus Quinn, Adrian Cullen, Adrian Charles, Martin McHugh, Jason Ward, George Dugdale, Mickey Quinn, Noel Moran. **(Front)** Ciaran Murray, Gerry Flanagan, Killian McLoughlin, Declan Darcy, Brendan Guckian, Fintan McBrien & Joe Honeyman. Photo by Willie Donnellan*

And what a sensational game it turned out to be! Leitrim breathed a sigh of relief when Declan Darcy, who turned in a remarkable scoring performance, goaled from a last minute penalty to bring the game into extra time. We finally emerged victorious after a nail biting evening and a below par performance but a win is a win. And once again, we had reason to be thankful for a star studded display by Mickey Quinn.

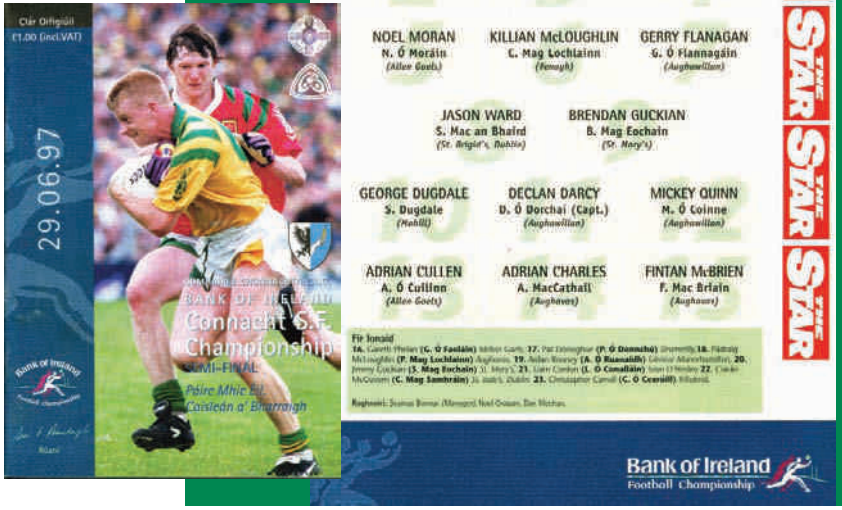
The 2-18 to 1-13 victory was much talked about, with London feeling that Leitrim was extremely fortunate to have won a dubious penalty. But for a county that had suffered hard luck stories for years Leitrim had no qualms and would come home relieved at being in the Semi-final against Mayo.

There were many erroneous opinions expressed about London being forced into extra time on the day, while the real position is that this arrangement has been in place by Connacht Council since London first entered the Connacht Championship. Indeed, we would gladly have welcomed a replay in Carrick-on-Shannon and no doubt the Provincial Council will now review that long standing arrangement.

The trip to London generated great interest among our many exiles in Britain and the Leitrim Supporters Club in London under the guidance of Chairman Frank Keegan, and his assistant Gerry Keaney, availed of the opportunity to raise substantial funds for the Board and rally together an enthusiastic following for the Green and Gold. The warm hospitality, generosity and good will of all concerned was much appreciated. We returned home relieved and eager to prepare for another tilt with Connacht Champions Mayo.

Even more intensive preparations continued and the team appeared to be gelling nicely in good time for the Semi final clash in Castlebar. It was unfortunate that an injury incurred by Padraig Kenny, while training for the London game, turned out to be a long term one and it was particularly disappointing for the player himself who had never missed a League or Championship game in the previous eight years. With the Minors having been in action in the curtain raiser there was a great buzz among Leitrim footballers and for the first twenty minutes we were really dominating the exchanges. But our superiority was not transferring itself into scores and this was later to prove our undoing.

In the closing moments of the second half an unfortunate flare-up occurred after a foul on a Leitrim player and it was very much a case of "one in, all in". The fracas certainly did not make for good television and after a subsequent investigation by Connacht Council one Leitrim player received a lengthy suspension. There was strong reaction in the county at the time, but the simple fact was we were out of the Connacht Championship. After that 0-18 to 0-11 victory, Mayo went on to defeat Sligo by a single point in the Connacht Final and win their way again to another tilt at the Sam Maguire.



Many an inquest is held on every championship defeat and there are a series of ifs and buts. No fault can be laid with the players who did all that was asked of them despite all the personal sacrifices involved, nor with the team management who worked equally hard in an effort to bring glory to Leitrim. Both the players and team management would acknowledge that the Board, sponsors, or supporters were in no way lacking in ensuring that all the necessary training and preparatory facilities were available. We lost out to a better team but we can recall particular moments of play when the tide might have swung in our way.

Over the previous few years, Jason Ward had given tremendous service to the county and was an important part of the 1994 successes. For the moment he found the amount of travelling involved incompatible with his current employment and he was unable to be part of the panel. Similarly Ciaran McGovern had logistical problems but was expected to rejoin the panel shortly. Both Jason and Ciaran, though Dublin born, qualified under the parentage rule and became totally committed and extremely popular members of the county senior squad. We owed them many thanks for their dedication to the Green and Gold.

For the past number of years we had become accustomed to the familiar faces and household names that formed the nucleus of the Connacht Championship team of 1994, feeling that this group had not reached its full potential and that at least one more title could have or should have been won.

Following our exit from the championship, a further catalogue of injuries added to those already incurred, eat its way into the panel. Team Manager Seamus Bonnar decided to retire from the position, bringing to an end the current management structure. Some members of the panel, possibly disappointed with the team performance and possibly feeling worn out from a number of seasons of intensive activity, felt they needed a temporary break.

All of this was compounded by the decision of Team Captain Declan Darcy to declare for his native Dublin, thus bringing an historic association with the team to an end. Declan had a unique record with Leitrim, having captained the 1991 Connacht Under 21 team and three years later the never to be forgotten 1994 Connacht Senior Championship team. And who will ever forget the moment he led Leitrim on to the sod of Croke Park? Apart from his many achievements with Leitrim and Connacht Teams, Declan was honoured with many individual awards, the latest being an All Star nomination for his performance with the county during the 1997 Championship.

The departure of such a high profile player and key team member was naturally a great blow to Leitrim, but his decision was met with good will by his fellow players, by the Board and by supporters, all of whom wished him continued success on the playing fields. It must be said that the team members had looked on the loss in a positive light and had taken responsibility on themselves to ensure it did not have an adverse effect on team performance.

The professional approach adopted by Under 21 County Team Manager Joe Reynolds, in conjunction with his selectors Noel Crossan and Thady McTernan, ensured that it was a well-prepared Leitrim side that faced Mayo in the Championship in Carrick-on-Shannon. A number of very competitive games in the Hastings Cup Competition had aided the preparation and the team management had cast its net wide to ensure to include all available and suitable players.

Despite a spirited performance and some brilliant individual displays, Mayo again emerged victorious. However it was important to note that quite a number of that Under 21 side formed the nucleus of the present senior team and with many of them available for the coming season we could have an air of confidence when facing Mayo yet again at this level in 1998.

The sanction to use our second best team in the Connacht Junior Championship was a major boost, but we fielded with little preparation and without some key players awaiting duty at senior level and had to give second best to Roscommon in an exciting encounter played in Elphin. But the players on duty gave of their very best and there were many regrets that we had not decided to make a better preparatory effort.

Finance

This was a problem that simply wouldn't go away. It had been clarified on so many occasions and in so many forums that we simply could not survive on our own very limited resources. So we were forced to embark on a non stop fundraising roundabout that occupied the minds, hearts and time of practically all officials, sub committees, helpers, and supporters. We simply could not survive were it not for the sharing of the workload by so many with the interest of the county at heart. The efforts involved in promoting our fund-raising Championship Draw were remarkable and an enthusiastic group of sellers helped to make it a financial success. Sincere thanks was due to Mitsubishi Ireland and to Lunneys Garage, Carrick-on-Shannon for their generous involvement in this draw. The work of the Green and Gold committee, under the Chairmanship of Donal Cox, continued to be a major asset but it was disappointing to note the apparent lack of interest in our very attractive Green and Gold magazine whose sales were far off target. It was certainly not from any lack of effort by a hard working coordinator Leo Kenny. We simply are not an association of readers.

County Board Treasurer, Brendan Gormley, Donal Cox, Chairman of the Leitrim Green and Gold Committee; Kevin Lunney and County Board Chairman, Des Quinn at the official launch of 1997 Championship draw.

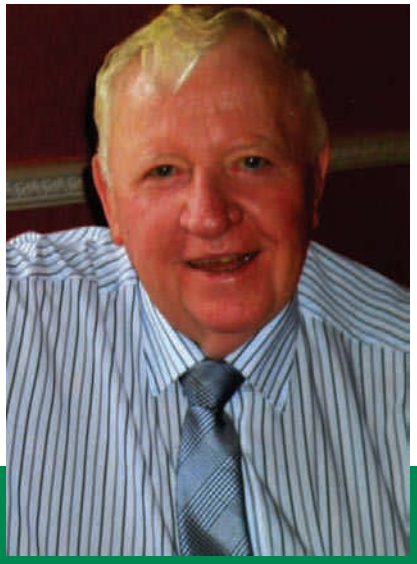
The Leitrim Lotto once again proved to be one of our major sources of income, thanks to the non stop efforts of Gerry Mahon and his energetic Lotto committee. Had all clubs matched the returns from a few very hard working units, then the Lotto returns would have solved many of our financial headaches. For a number of years now, Joe Layden and a particularly efficient committee, in conjunction with main sponsor Jim McNaughton of Tile Style, had been responsible for an extremely successful Leitrim Golf Classic in Dublin that has continued to prove one of the financial mainstays of our activities.

A cue was taken from their work by Frank Keegan, Chairman of the Leitrim Supporter Club in London, and the result was yet highly successful Golf Classic from a financial and social point of view. Once again another Leitrim company answered the sponsorship call and this time it was the P.B. Donoghue Group of Companies, whose director Ben Donoghue is a native of Aughawillan.

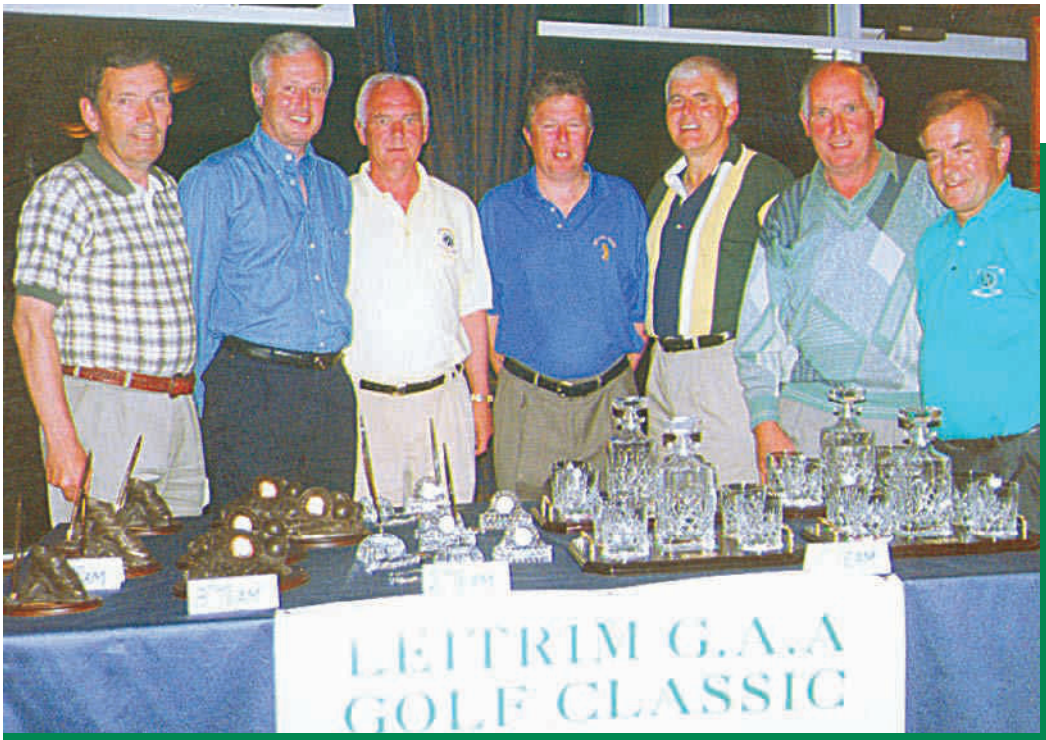
Avid Leitrim supporter Michael Cryan was the brains behind the very successful Midland Golf Classic held at Moate Golf Club, while Noel McPartland and Martin McGowan combined forces to organise a similarly successful Classic at the Slieve Russell Golf Club in Ballyconnell.

All of those organising committees, teams and sponsors were testimony of the amazing good-will that existed towards the Green and Gold. The various sponsorships received from Bank of Ireland for the Connacht Championships, from Church and General for the National League, from AIB towards the coaching programme at Connacht level and for our AIB County Awards and the Guinness Sponsorship for the promotion of Juvenile Hurling, added to our local sponsorships, including Jimmy's of Dromod for the County Minor team, all helped ease the financial strain. For many counties the local Club Championships had returns of anything from £80,000 upwards. If this were the case in Leitrim, then we would not have had to go with cap in hand so often.

Buíochas le Dia, senior championship aspirations were no longer the prerogative of the few and, for the modern day player, tradition counted for little. So reigning title-holders Allen Gaels approached with caution their first round clash with near neighbours and in-form league leaders Ballinaglera. Had the challengers not been depleted by injuries we might, indeed, have seen the champions bite the dust. Though hampered by injuries themselves, Allen Gaels survived, going on to a convincing quarter-final victory over old rivals Aughawillan before struggling to overcome a promising Glencar/Manorhamilton side in the semi-final and claiming a place in the County Final and hoping to make it two-in-a-row.



Ben Donoghue, a native of Aughawillan, whose company PB Donoghue Co. Ltd generously sponsored the Leitrim Golf Classics in London, in suport of Leitrim GAA



Sorohan team winners of the Leitrim GAA Golf Classic at the Slieve Russell Golf Club
***L-r** Mairtin McGowan, Fergus Reid, Val Cassidy, Captain Slieve Russell Golf Club; Brian Reid, Sean Halpin, Frank Sorohan and Noel McPartland.*

With the big names like St. Mary's and Sean O'Heslins falling at the first hurdle, the other half of the draw appeared to belong to either Gortletteragh or Fenagh. It took a replay to decide their quarter-final clash, but it was a youthful and talented Aughavas side that caused one of the sensations of the championship by ousting a more experienced and seasoned Gortletteragh in the Semi final. So the scene was set for a novel County Final and after an unsettled start, Aughavas really put it up to the champions with a display of fast, skilful football. But the physically stronger, much more experienced Allen Gaels, boosted by some remarkable individual performances, won out in the end. However, Aughavas had certainly put down a marker for future years and had proved an inspiration for other up and coming contenders.

With home advantage in the Connacht Club Championship, Allen Gaels had high hopes of overcoming Sligo representatives Tourlestrane in Carrick-on-Shannon, but the team never struck its County Final form and failed to grasp a number of opportunities of victory. In the end, Allen Gaels were fortunate enough to escape with a draw. However, their best form returned in the replay and in a thundering final quarter, they turned on the style to qualify for the club's first Connacht Final, but the provincial title eluded them, as it has eluded all Leitrim clubs to date.

Much would have been expected of Drumreilly and Mohill in the Intermediate Championship, but their campaign was short-lived, going out in the first round. The quarter finals provided very attractive pairings with Dromod village neighbours Bornacoola and Annaduff living up to the old adage "for the pride of the parish" before Annaduff qualified for a Semi-final meeting with St. Mary's. It was touch and go in the other quarter final before Drumkeerin ousted Kiltubrid who eventually lost out in a replayed semi-final to a very well balanced and well prepared Glenfarne side, who set up another unique final pairing with St. Mary's who had proven too strong for Annaduff.

St. Mary's early exit from the Senior Championship was to prove beneficial to their Intermediate team, as a number of their top class players were still eligible for duty. Despite Glenfarne's best efforts and whole-hearted performances from all their players, they were gradually outplayed by a St. Mary's side that would have proven a match for many of our senior teams.

One of the problems related to the championship being tied into the leagues arose again when St. Mary's could not be promoted to Div. I and so would be eligible to contest the Intermediate Championship again in 1998.

The overall strength of the St. Mary's club was again evident in the Junior Championship when they qualified for yet another final against Sean O'Heslin's who belied their league form and powered their way through the campaign. In an excellent curtain-raiser to the Senior Final, the Junior title made a long awaited return to Ballinamore and perhaps paved the way for a new impetus to a club that were the standard bearers in senior titles but that seemed to have lost the winning touch in recent years. Sean O'Heslins would now embark on their Connacht Junior League under experimental rules.

With a record total of 15 teams in Div. IV of the league, the Junior B Championship promised to provide an intriguing campaign, but many clubs were faced with the problem of insufficient numbers, due to involvement in higher grade championships, and so we had a number of walkovers that were of little use to opposing sides. From the start, it appeared the title was going Mohill's way and so it proved, with comprehensive victories right up to the final against Glencar-Manorhanulton.

NEW CLUB - LEITRIM GAELS

A pleasing aspect of the Junior B campaign was that it featured a new club, Leitrim Gaels, who lost out in the second round. However, the experience gained in the championship and in the full league campaign would surely stand to this new club that had to be complimented for its full involvement in all aspects of the Board's workings during the year. The enthusiasm of the officers, players and members augured well for the future. The decision of Annual Convention to run off the Under 21 Championship early in the year proved to be a wise one as it released players from their amalgamated teams for their own club duties and also avoided the usual clashes that occur with the very important third-level college exams. Besides, the early timing could also bring to the forefront players of inter-county standard who may have escaped notice in earlier trials. A disappointing aspect of the championship was the concession of a first round game and an imbalance in many of the teams, but the second round and semi-finals were closely fought affairs, bringing together the specialists at this grade, St. Mary's, and the Allen Gaels/Ballinaglera amalgamation St. Francis. A see-saw final of an exceptionally high standard ended all square and in the replay, St. Francis proved superior — with a number of the team later to collect senior medals with Allen Gaels.

At both county and club level teams were deprived of players through injury and in this regard the Board set up a number of First-aid classes for team officials. Marie Quinn, wife if chairman Des, used her professional nursing skills to assist clubs in the prevention and treatment of sports injuries.

Other courses that were well accepted and proved equally useful were the ongoing instruction and advice for club officers conduced by the CLG Policy and Planning committee.

There was general satisfaction with our League structures that provided a comprehensive programme of games over the four divisions. The one obvious drawback was the vexed question of teams not being promoted or relegated because the club was already involved in an upper or lower division. It may benefit one club that may avoid the relegation drop, that can have a corresponding negative effect on another denied promotion. If this aspect could be ironed out, then the system could scarcely be improved upon.

The Mohill club and all of Leitrim were greatly saddened by the death in 1997 of the former great county footballer and hurler Michael McGuinness. Michael, whose sons would later be Leitrim stars, was himself named at full forward on the Leitrim Millennium Team.

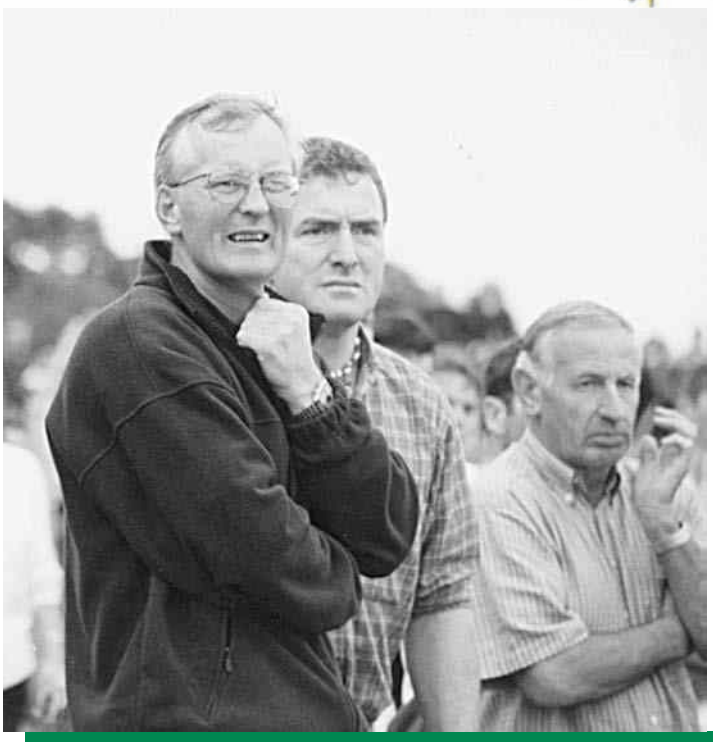
In the autumn of 1997 the Board was again in search of a new management structure for the county team. Peter McGinnity of Fermanagh accepted the position of Team Manager and he certainly had all the qualifications necessary. A former county and provincial player of unique quality and a G.A.A. All Star, Peter had wide coaching experience, not only with St. Michael's College, Enniskillen, but also with various Fermanagh county teams and with clubs over a wide area in Ulster. He was a man also who was quite familiar with Leitrim football and at that time also with the club scene, through his involvement with Aughavas.

Peter McGinnity, when accepting the position of Team Manager found himself taking over a much-changed panel. With many of the old faces unavailable for a variety of reasons the Team Manager set about recruiting replacements and a big number of players got an opportunity of becoming part of the new panel.

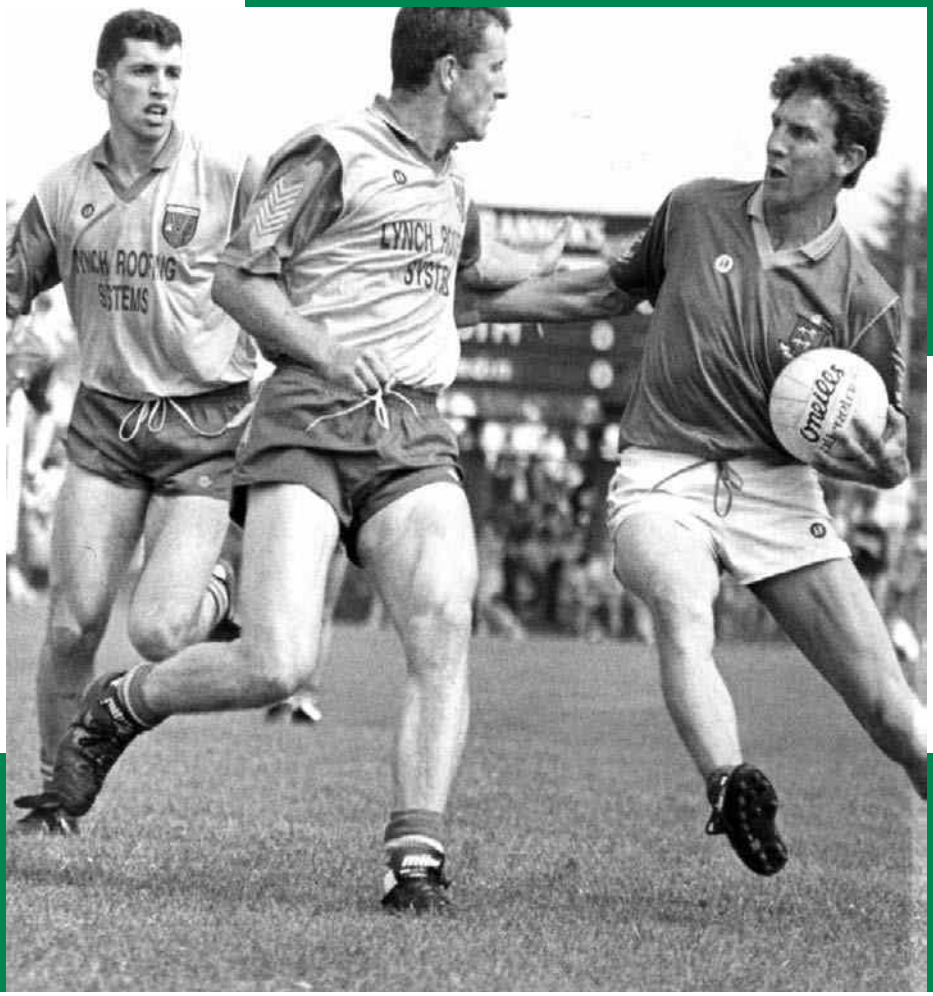
In the 1997/98 National Football League there was an unsettled start against Galway, but this was to be expected at such a short preparatory time, but subsequent results against Carlow and Fermanagh showed that the Team Manager, with his undoubted coaching skill was blending together a side that was showing distinct promise. A victory over Kilkenny before Christmas meant we were going into the resumption of the National League in a very formidable position. Hopefully we would then have quite a number of other players available, so competition for places on the team panel was certain to be very keen.

As part of the management team were two men who had been part and parcel of the club and county scene at the highest level for a long number of years – Shane Heslin of Gortletteragh and Aughawillan's Thomas Quinn who had been a vital part of the 1994 Connacht championship panel

So 1997 had been a year of change within the team, but, as ever, Leitrim looked forward with confidence.



***New Leitrim manager** and Aughavas advisor Peter McGinnity watches developments during the County Senior Final with Aughavas manager Sean McCartan and Tom McLoughlin.*

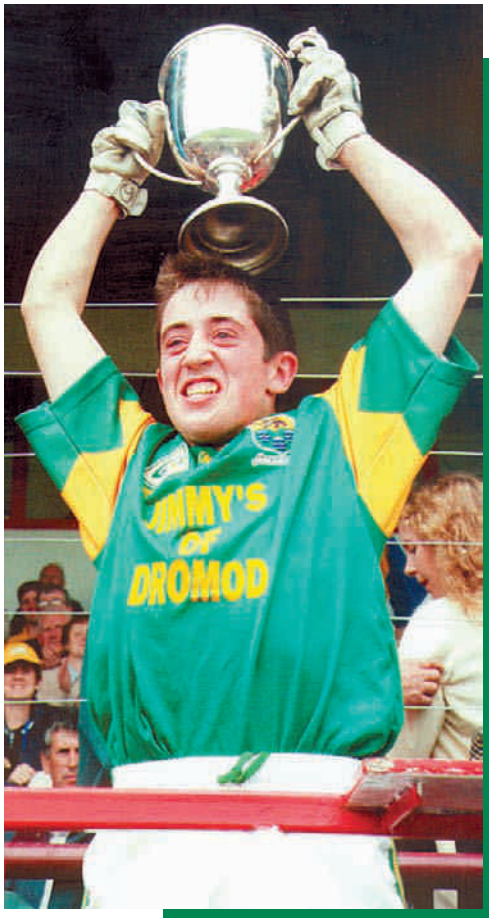


***Shane Heslin** who had a long career in the Leitrim Jersey*

1998

The high point of 1998 was to be on a wet miserable day in Tuam on July 19th when the Leitrim Minors took the Connacht title, after a long barren period in that grade since 1956. Forty two years was a long, long wait and we thought back to the generations of Minors who had gone through the system in the intervening years – many of whom were star players in their own right, but were never fortunate enough to make the breakthrough. Minor Team Manager Pat Prior and his selectors Aiden Kellegher and Frank Rooney and the officers of Bórd na nÓg , together with the players, fully deserved the provincial title.

In the All-Ireland Semi-Final at Croke Park they were outplayed by a slick Tyrone side – many of whom went on to win Minor, Under 21 and Senior All irelands. But Leitrim gained much from this 1998 Minor team too – quite a number went on to be stars at Under 21 and senior level, with many of them still the leaders of the county team in 2009.



***Leitrim's Captain Fantastic Seamus Maguire** holds the Kilcoyne Cup aloft in Tuam Stadium after the County Minor Football team created history by becoming only the third Leitrim team to win the Provincial Minor title when they defeated Sligo 0-8 to 0-7 in a nailbiting Final.*

Photo by Willie Donnellan.

Leitrim Minors Connacht Champions 1998

Back (L - R): Aiden Kelleher, Selector, Noel Doonan (Carrigallen), Padraig McGarry (Gortletteragh), Michael Duignan (Bornacoola), Morgan Shanley (Bornacoola), Enda Lyons (Carrigallen), Pat Prior (Manager), John McKeon (Drumreilly), David Crowe (St. Mary's), Gary McCluskey (Bornacoola), Kevin Quinn (Bornacoola), Francie Rooney, Selector.

Middle (L - R): John McGuinness (Mohill), Barry McKiernan (Aughavas), Terry Kelleher (Gortletteragh), Seamus Maguire (Cloone) Capt., Shane Canning (Mohill), Michael McGuinness (Mohill), Donal Ó Callaghan (Glencar-Manorhamilton), Philip Casserly (Mohill), Enda McKeon (Kiltubrid).

Front (L - R): Philip Charles (Aughavas), Paul McGreevey (St. Mary's), John McGuinness (Bornacoola), Dermot Scollan (Mohill), Michael Foley (Drumkeerin), Sean Rehill (Aughawillan), Hugh McGee (Carrigallen).

Shane - A Tragic Loss

The low point in the year was undoubtedly the news of the death of Shane McGettigan of Drumshanbo. At just 21 years of age he was taken from the world in the prime of life in a construction accident in Boston, where he had gone for the late summer after Leitrim and Allen Gaels had been defeated in the championship. Shane's footballing career had blossomed from an early age and he was recognised as one who would play vital roles for his club and county for years to come.

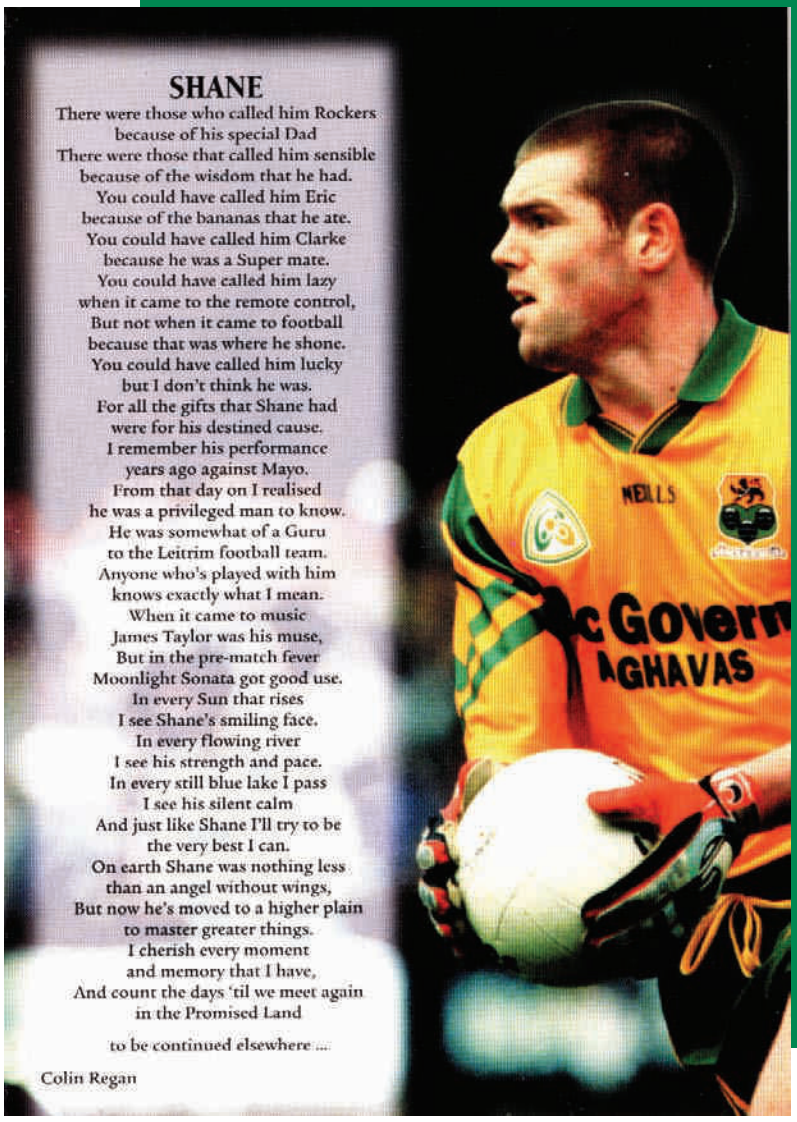
Shane McGettigan
(third from left) pictured in action an Croke Park against Dublin

Shane McGettigan was a vivacious and courteous young man, a man who had talents in abundance and who so generously shared these gifts, a man who was committed to his family, to his career, to the GAA and a man who wore the Allen Gaels and Leitrim jerseys with such obvious pride. We all shared in the grief felt by his parents Charlie and Goretti, his sisters Tara and Ciara and all his relatives and the many, many friends he had made for himself in his own community, in his college days and particularly on the playing fields. No doubt Shane would continue to be an inspiration to the lives he touched so closely with his warm, charming personality and manly spirit. We thought too of the Stuart family, who suffered the loss of their son Ronan in the same tragedy as Shane McGettigan.

It was very fitting that in his acceptance speech after receiving the Sam Maguire for Galway, the team captain Ray Silke made respectful reference to Shane, who had just a few months earlier lined out against Galway in the championship game in Carrick-on-Shannon.

On the proposition of Shane's clubmate Leo Kenny, Connacht Council would later name the Connacht Club Championship trophy in Shane's honour and on the re-opening of their newly developed pitch and facilities, the Allen Gaels club also honoured Shane by naming their grounds The Shane McGettigan Park. As well as that the Boston G.A.A. had dedicated the Shane McGettigan Room to his honour at the Gaelic Centre in the city.

Just days after Shane's death the whole community, the whole world, was numbed by the slaughter of the Omagh Bombing. But out of the darkness of the savagery came a ray of hope that perhaps the longed for days of peace were finally at hand. The international recognition of the efforts for reconciliation was evident in the joint awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to John Hume and David Trimble, perhaps a reminder, too, that their communities had shared so much grief.



1927 CONNACHT SENIOR CHAMPIONS
Front Row (sitting): P. O'Hehir (Trainer), Dublin; C. McCartan, M. Casserly, J. Shanley, T. Cannon (Captain); W. Martin, M. Morgan, B. O'Neill.
Back Row (standing): P. Martin, J.W. Murphy, P. Masterson, P. McMahon, Rev. J. Dolan, P. Murray, J. Reynolds, P.C. Blessing, W.J. Flynn, J. Mulvey.
Insets: Ned Dolan, P. Carey, J. Bohan.

Earlier in the year we suffered the loss of former Sean O'Heslin's and Leitrim Footballer Frankie Beirne, a link with many of our teams who strove so hard with little return, but with the same commitment to the Green and Gold.

On the 1st of March came the death of a legend, Tom Gannon, the Captain of the 1927 Connacht Championship team and its last surviving member, who had served the county in so many capacities- as a player and leader, as an administrator, as an exemplary role model and most recently as Uachtarán of Coiste Chontae Liatroma. In his 99th year, Tom had retained his great interest and great love of the GAA and one of his proudest footballing moments came with the Connacht title of 1994. His name will be indelibly linked with Leitrim, the county of which he was so proud.

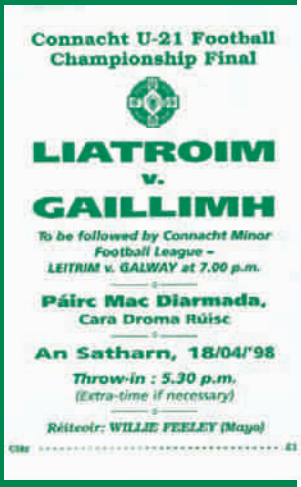
Joe Mc Inerney

The county suffered another blow with the untimely death of Joe McInerney, whose undivided loyalty to all things Leitrim and whose personal contact with so many exiles and whose organisational ability made him the ideal link-man in so many ventures on our behalf in New York and further afield in the United States. His decades of service as Secretary to the Leitrim Club in New York were an indication of his loyalty and he took great pride in his club's latest victory in the New York Championship, a few days before his death. For many years Joe had worked diligently on behalf of the County Board, promoting the Supporters Club and fund-raising draws and was also on the New York Committee that helped organise the visit of the Leitrim team in 1994. A section of Leabharlann Chontae Liatroma is dedicated to his memory and contains much of the G.A.A. memorabilia Joe had personally collected over the years. Pat Murray and a committee comprised of many of Joe's friends continue to honour his memory with the annual Joe McInerney Golf Classic, part of the proceeds of which go towards the Leitrim Supporters Club back home.

There was the usual early start to competitive action and the Team Manager, Peter McGinnity and selectors Shane Heslin and Thomas Quinn were putting the team through its paces in the FBD League in preparation for the remaining games in the National League and especially for the championship, when we would face the winners of the first round clash between Galway and Mayo. Either team would be very formidable opposition.

Ken McPartland was drafted into the management team who would also cater for the Under 21 side. Spirits were raised when Leitrim won its way to the Connacht Under 21 Final, only to be rather unfortunate to lose out to a very strong Galway side – a number of whom would be in the maroon and white and earn All-Ireland Senior honours in September.

The team management could not be faulted for effort, or for providing an opportunity for a great number of players to show their worth. When Galway defeated Leitrim 0-14 to 0-9 in the FBD League in January only two of the 1994 side had lined out – new players were being blooded. Ten of the Galway side of that day were later to play in the All-Ireland. The scoreline was the same when we played Roscommon in Kilmore, but the good news was that All Star Seamus Quinn had returned after injury.


Connacht U-21 Football Championship Final

LIATROIM v. GAILLIMH

To be followed by Connacht Minor Football League – LEITRIM v. GALWAY at 7.00 p.m.

Páirc Mac Diarmada, Cara Droma Rúisc

An Satharn, 18/04/'98

Throw-in : 5.30 p.m. (Extra-time if necessary)

Réiteoir: WILLIE FEELEY (Mayo)

Leitrim

(1) Enda Lyons (Carrigallen)

(2) Derek Kelleher (Gortletteragh) (3) Adrian Charles (Aughavas) (4) Seamus Dillon (Glenfarne)

(5) Michael Greene (St. Mary's) (6) James Phelan (Melvin Gaels) (7) Ronan Haslette (Glencar-Manor)

(8) Pat Farrell (Capt.) (Bornacoola) (9) Paul McDermott (Mohill)

(10) Dermot Reynolds (St. Mary's) (11) Ciaran Duignan (Fenagh) (12) Fintan McBrien (Aughavas)

(13) Peter Gaffey (Mohill) (14) Donal Brennan (Cloone) (15) Terry Kelleher (Gortletteragh)

FIR IONAID: (16) Kevin Nolan (Allen Gaels); (17) Martin McCarron (Melvin Gaels); (18) Gerard Scollan (Mohill); (19) Niall Comerton (St. Mary's); (20) Fintan Cox (St. Mary's); (21) Niall Flynn (Fenagh); (22) Des White (Drumkeerin); (23) Darragh McKiernan (Kiltubrid); (24) John Cullen (Drumkeerin); (25) Tom McNabola (Annaduff); (26) Alan McKeon (Allen Gaels); (27) Philip Charles.

Team Manager : Peter McGinnity

Selectors : Ken McPartland, Tomus Quinn and Shane Heslin

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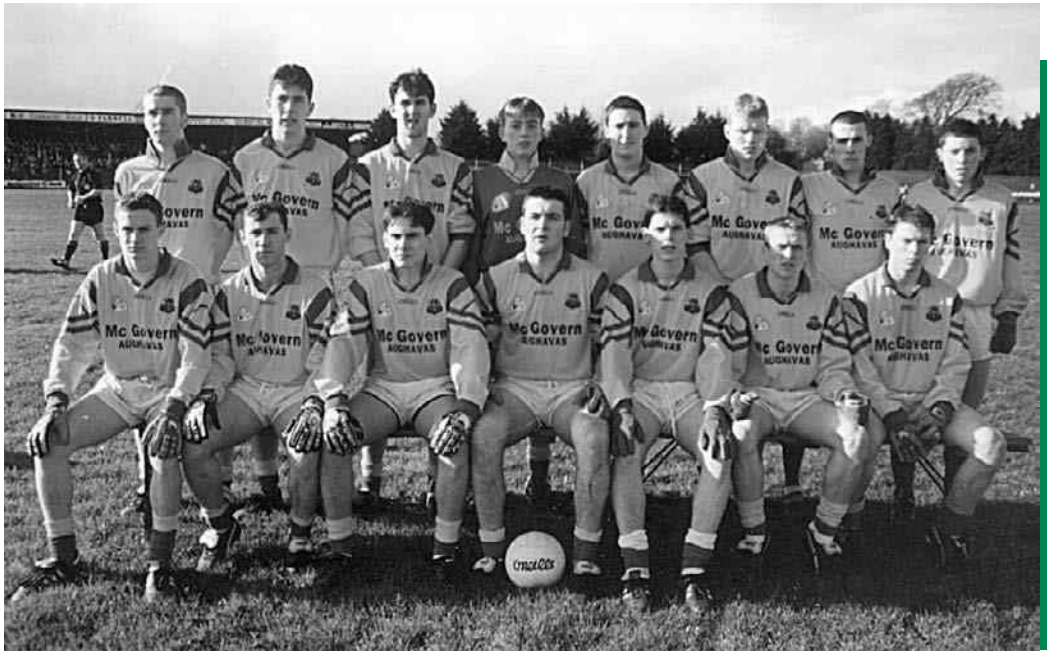
Challenge games against Fermanagh, Longford and Monaghan were played in the run up to the National League. Again we were facing Mayo in Ballina, but the team was perfecting a short passing game with intricate movements and on the day were the better side, but Mayo took the valuable two points thanks to a lucky goal and some unerring free taking by Maurice Sheridan. New faces like Roy Logan, Joe Tiffoney, Colin Regan, Christy Carroll, Pat Farrell, Derek Kellagher, Ciaran Duignan, Gene Bohan, Ciaran Murray and Adrian Cullen were blending well into the team.

The next big test was against Laois in Carrick-on-Shannon and Leitrim earned a well-deserved draw, mainly thanks to the sharp shooting of Gene Bohan. For the last game in Drogheda we needed at least a draw against Louth to retain Division II status. In a whole hearted performance, Leitrim had a 2-6 to1-7 victory and would again be among the big names in Division II for the 1988/89 National League.

So we could now concentrate on the championship. While the Juniors lost 0-11 to 0-8 to Sligo after a replay, the Under 21's showed great promise firstly by drawing 0-9 to 1-6 against Mayo, thanks to late frees from Fintan McBrien and then winning the replay when a Ronan Haslette goal gave us a 1-7 to 0-9 victory. Unfortunately Galway were too strong in the Connacht Final.

An impressive 1-17 to 1-10 victory over Laois at the official opening of the new facilities at Annaduff seemed to leave the team in good shape for the championship. With team captain, Ciaran Murray, receiving the cup and Adrian Cullen the "Man of the Match" award from Mrs. Annie Cox, wife of the late Rúnaí Contae, Stanley Cox, after whom the Annaduff G.A.A. grounds are named, there was a buzz in the air again. We would have no fears of Galway.



The Leitrim team which defeated Mayo to reach the Connacht Under 21 Final against Galway. ***(Back)*** *Niall Comerton, Ronan Haslette, Niall Flynn, Enda Lyons, Michael Greene, Adrian Charles, Derek Kellegher, Terry Kellegher.* ***(Front)*** *Donal Brennan, Fintan McBrien, James Phelan, Pat Farrell, Seamus Dillon, Peter Gaffey and Ciaran Duignan.*

Photo by Willie Donnellan

John O'Mahony, the Galway manager, must have had conflicting emotions as we were simply overwhelmed and offered only token resistance with a 1-16 to 0-5 scoreline against us. We were simply shell shocked, trying to pinpoint exactly what had gone wrong. Had we known then that the game would be his last in the Leitrim jersey for Shane McGettigan, then the result would have been of little significance or worry to the team, the Board or supporters.

There had been high hopes too for Melvin Gaels, victors in the County Final over long time rivals Sean O'Heslins, for the Connacht Club Championship, but they lost out by 0-11 to 0-7 to Roscommon Gaels. However, the Melvin Gaels side was now forming the main backbone of the Leitrim senior team.

For the opening round of the National League in October there had been a major reshuffle in personnel and in positional changes on the team that faced All-Ireland Champions Galway in Carrick-on-Shannon. With most of their victorious All-Ireland side on duty, Galway inflicted a 0-13 to 0-8 defeat, rocking us back on our heels. But Peter McGinnity lifted spirits again with a great display by the team in Páirc Uí Rinn, even though Cork snatched a 2-11 to 1-8 victory thanks to two early goals against the run of play.

Leitrim captain Ciaran Murray accepts the Hubie Doherty Memorial Cup from Sean Doherty watched by Cloone GAA Club Chairman Seamus Tiernan after Leitrim had defeated Cavan. Photo by Willie Donnellan

A view of the new Annaduff G.A.A. dressing rooms complex

The not so walking wounded! *Melvin Gaels captain Joe Tiffoney is pictured with the Fenagh Cup and his broken leg, sustained playing for Leitrim against Cork in the National League.*

Photo by Willie Donnellan

The last game of the season was against Tyrone and we were fully deserving of at least making a league point, by drawing 2-6 to 1-9. Included on the Tyrone side were Peter Canavan and Brian Dooher, who would become footballing icons in the red and white. That result helped to banish some of the negativity we had felt during the year.

County Football is not all sunshine!

Closed season?

There was the occasional mention of a closed season for inter county activity, but this was just a myth. The only closed season is the few weeks after you're knocked out of the Championship - before you start preparing for the League!

County football had become so competitive; the approach to preparation had become so professional, that it was now all time consuming with so many diverse aspects to training programmes. Teams couldn't afford the luxury of switching off, even in the depths of Winter. Naturally this can make almost unrealistic demands on players, team mentors and officials. Leitrim players had always rallied to the call and their training, preparation, loyalty and commitment had been no less than the most elite in the country. So defeat can be a bitter pill to swallow, particularly a defeat as suffered in the Championship to Galway. It can also be hard to explain, how months and months of top quality preparation with attention to even the minutest detail can evaporate when it is most needed. There were no easy answers. If there were, then the solutions would be easy.

Comprehensive defeats can gnaw away at one's confidence and almost cause a need for a complete rebuilding process. The early rounds of the National League can be testing times, with unavailability and doubt to the fore. But the simple fact was, we needed everyone. Our limited playing resources denied us the luxury of casting the net too wide.

Irrespective of results or even of team performances, we were fortunate to always have people willing to work extremely hard to help out with finance. Barry Donnellan had replaced Joe Layden as Chairman of the Leitrim Golf Classic Committee without any lessening of the classic's success. While players trained and played their hearts out, there were many others involved in off-field activity to give them every support.

It was good news for Leitrim that there would be new team sponsors ready to take over the mantle when the McGovern Brothers would complete their five-year term, during which they had shown very generous financial support and goodwill to the team and the County Board.

The Board was indebted to Chief Executive Jim Hoey and the Management Team of Masonite for their willingness to embark on a three year agreement that would see the Company sponsor our Senior and Under 21 teams, the five divisions of our Leagues and our Senior Championship. An international company with its roots in the United States had now its Irish roots planted in every parish and in every club in the county. Our association with Masonite Ireland would be cordial and interactive and would hopefully see a continuation of the increased success we had witnessed in the nineties, success that would be the foundation for further progress into the new millennium.

A new power had risen with the re-emergence of Melvin Gaels as County Senior Champions. This youthful, flamboyant and talented team now formed the nucleus of our county Senior side and would remain the powerhouse of football for some time to come. Drumreilly achieved the goal they had set themselves by powering through the Intermediate Championship while a new look Dromahair became worthy Junior A title holders.

The Junior grades continue to feature an ever increasing age gap, so it was a mixture of the enthusiasm of youth and the wise heads of veterans that brought the Junior B title to Cloone and the C title to Sean O'Heslin's. As in previous years the Under 21 championship caused the greatest headache in the fixture calendar and was delayed into the spring of 1999, when the Glenmanor Gaels amalgamation took the title.

A welcome development in 1998 was the affiliation of the St. Osnat's Club, Glencar to the County Board.

Towards the end of the year the leagues fell foul of the weather and clingy, sticky dauby soil that Mother Nature seemed to bestow on most parts of Leitrim left many pitches unplayable. A number of clubs were now beginning to give serious consideration to installing all-weather pitches – and this was something that did come to pass in the next decade. There were many regrets too that clubs – and indeed the County Board – had not acquired ground for training purposes and thus be able to leave the pitches solely for the playing of games, at least in inclement weather.

At this time, nobody could foresee the great strides that would be taken in this regard, most of all the development of the Centre of Excellence by the Board of Annaduff, one of the main projects underway at the 125th Centenary of the G.A.A.

There was joy all over the West in 1998 with the exciting victory of Galway in the All-Ireland Final and the G.A.A. people of Leitrim felt a special affinity with the Galway side, due to the fact that the Team Manager was John O'Mahony, a man that was still revered in the county. Three years later, in 2001, John would again lead Galway to capture the Sam Maguire, but few would argue that perhaps his greatest managerial achievement was with Leitrim in 1994.

That Connaht victory was beginning to feel ever more distant, but optimistic as ever, Leitrim still hoped that 1999 might be the year it would be repeated. We would have Roscommon at home in Carrick-on-Shannon for the opening game in the championship – what greater incentive could there be for players and supporters alike?

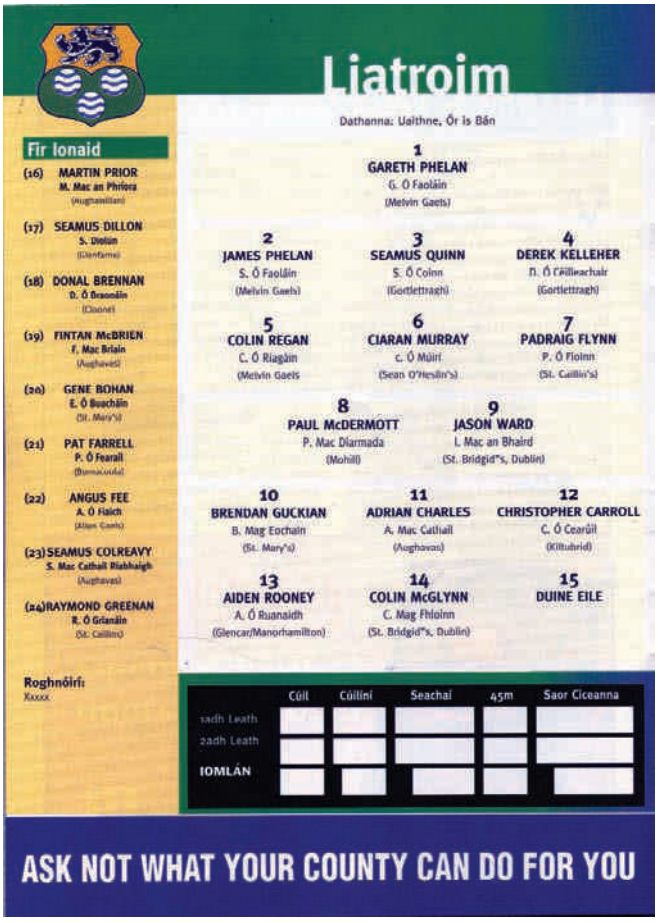
Masonite Ireland Managing Director Jim Hoey is pictured outside the Masonite factory in Drumsna with Leitrim GAA County Board Secretary Tommy Moran and Chairman Des Quinn and former team sponsor James McGovern of McGovern Brothers Aughavas after details of Masonite's sponsorship of the Leitrim Senior & Under 21 teams as well as the Club Championships and Leagues were announced.

Picture by Keaney's Photographic.

As we entered the final year of our most fruitful decade to date, we hoped that this fact would be a sort of rallying call to everyone to make a very special effort. It was important to have a good start to the competitive year, but it turned out otherwise.

The FBD Connacht League saw us produce displays of varying standards, but the main issue was to rally our forces for the resumption of the National League and thus attain the much needed points. But it was not to be and Peter McGinnity our Team Manager felt he could get no more out of the team and opted to retire from the position. Peter's departure caused much speculation about so called rifts, but the parting was amicable on both sides, with each respecting the other's position with dignity. No effort had been spared by the Manager or by his selectors Thomas Quinn and Shane Heslin and it was unfortunate that their combined efforts with the players did not achieve more.

Things had been looking good at first, with a draw against Mayo and a two point win over Galway in the FBD League, while the Under 21's were performing well in the Hastings Cup, defeating Fermanagh, Cavan, Clare and Donegal, before losing out to Sligo. Defeats then came in the FBD to Sligo and Roscommon, but Peter McGinnity had introduced many new faces to the team and everyone was still optimistic.



There was huge interest in the National League game against Dublin in Parnell Park, as it would pit Declan Darcy in the Dublin jersey against many of his old teammates, with Francis Davitt given the unenviable task of marking Declan. The game had everything – thrills spills and excitement and a short lived fracas before Dublin won convincingly by 1-19 to 0-6.

An even worse performance was to follow by losing out to Offaly by 2-4 to 1-2 in a crunch relegation battle in Carrick-on-Shannon. This defeat led to Peter McGinnity resigning on the same evening following a meeting with the Board and the players. Selectors Shane Heslin and Thomas Quinn also resigned feeling they could bring the team no further.

The final two games of the National League - a stirring performance against Donegal and a rather subdued display against Armagh - were under the direction of the officers of the Management Committee who then had the task of setting up a new management structure,

It was heartening to see so many capable people anxious to take over the team and the appointment of former Leitrim star Joe Reynolds as Team Manager was warmly welcomed by all who had admired him as a player and later as a selector with our successful team of the early l990's. With another former county star Jimmy Ward in support role, Joe Reynolds set about the task of the build up for the eagerly awaited Championship clash with Roscommon.

"With the right attitude from the players, anything is possible." It may sound as an advertising slogan but for new Leitrim manager Joe Reynolds, those words represent the way forward for Leitrim football to regain it's pride!

In it goes!
Observer photographer Willie Donnellan brilliantly captures the moment Chris Carroll's shot enters the net against Roscommon with the ball in the far left of the picture.
Photo by Willie Donnellan

Preparations were well planned and professional and the players reacted with enthusiasm and determination. The local rivalry created a special buzz and while we lost out to Roscommon 0-15 to 1-7 we certainly won back a lot of fading support with a gutsy wholehearted performance that showed the players had great pride in the green and gold jersey. These players and all involved with the team, however, felt a great emptiness and the growing demands for a further chance in the Championship were very understandable.

Our Roscommon neighbours proved to be our bogey team at all levels of the championship, having to play second best to them at Minor, Junior and Under 21 level also. Our Under 21 side had shown great promise during the Hastings Cup Competition, backboned by excellent players from the Connacht Minor side of 1998, and it was comforting to note the number of these who were already making the breakthrough to the senior side and forming a strong part of the re-building process.

A welcome addition to the Connacht Senior Championship was the inclusion of New York for the first time. There was a carnival atmosphere in Castlebar for the historic occasion and there was a strong Leitrim connection with Frank Brady, the former Glencar/Manorhamilton and Leitrim player, managing the New York side. Despite losing out to Mayo by 3-13 to 0-10, New York were still anxious to be a part of Connacht and in the year 2000 would play Galway in Tuam and in 2001 Roscommon in Hyde Park. By this time Connacht Council had agreed that the counties would travel on a rota basis to play the Connacht Championship fixture in Gaelic Park. This would obviously be much more suitable to the New York G.A.A. Board.

With the pendulum swinging away from inter county activity, the summer months saw a streamlined programme of club league and championship fixtures. But it was soon time to turn our thoughts to the National League once more and Ken McPartland joined the Management team as the third selector, showing the same dedication epitomised by Joe Reynolds and Jimmy Ward.

The All Ireland B competition would, we hoped, provide an excellent platform for the league campaign, but our involvement was shortlived, losing out to Antrim in the first round. Injuries to key players added further to our woes and we lost out heavily to Antrim in the opening National League game at Casement Park - a game noted by the lack of the support we had been accustomed to over the decade. Now more than ever did the team needed the moral back up, so it was a bad time for supporters to be staying away from our games.

The decision by Jason Ward to completely cut his ties with Leitrim and declare for his native Dublin was a great blow to our ongoing plans, as there were hopes he would rejoin the panel and players of his calibre are very difficult to replace. Since declaring for Leitrim under the parentage rule, Jason had blended into the side and showed the same passion for the green and gold as anyone born in the county, being a very important cog in the 1994 wheel. He traveled many a long journey in the Leitrim cause and everyone wished him success with Dublin.

It was a transformed Leitrim that had a comprehensive 1-19 to 1-8 victory over Limerick in the second round of the National League in Carrick-on-Shannon and it gave a ray of hope to team manager Joe Reynolds and selectors Jimmy Ward and Ken McPartland. There were many stars on the day, with Derek Kelleher and Aiden Rooney particularly prominent.

The next round had an unusual ring to it – a first ever visit to Ruislip for a National League game with London. Despite rumblings that Leitrim players were not being catered for to the degree suggested by the newly formed "Gaelic Players Association" (GPA), the team and a large army of supporters went to London with high hopes and came home happy with two league points, holding off a determined home side with a 2-13 to 1-9 scoreline.

So the team could be happy enough with four league points to date, though there were more difficult games to come in the second part of the league in February. It was also acknowledged by the players that they were being well treated in relation to training facilities, playing gear, travelling and meal allowances etc. The main difference between the weaker and stronger counties was that the later could afford team holidays to exotic destinations, while the former had to content themselves with the bonding "weekend away", but the pride in the county jersey was just as strong with Leitrim players as with those from any other county. In the last two games of the year, Leitrim lost out to Mayo but drew with Galway in the opening rounds of the 2000 FBD League.

A Moment in History

A new year - A new decade - A new century - A new millennium. An unprecedented expectancy of change in every aspect of life. How would we measure up?

The old ways were well and truly gone. No longer were many players leaving the hay in the meadow to go to train. Our highly educated young men lived a sophisticated lifestyle of laptops, e-mails, foreign holidays, overseas business trips and intense pressure to meet company targets. Intermingled with this was a non - stop social whirlwind of stag parties, festivals, discos, pop concerts and 21st birthdays - all of which were very demanding on finances, time and energy. Sporting activity very often centered on the indoor pool, sauna, steam room and jacuzzi. We may have reminisced about togging out under a bush or playing in goals in our trousers, but such nostalgia carried little weight with the modern generation.

Nowhere is local pride and passion as intense as in the GAA units, but pride and passion may not be enough. Together with having acceptable playing and changing room facilities, we needed a streamlined programme of games and activities, fitting into an overall plan, to make our Association attractive to the growing generation. Time was of the essence and we needed to be able to structure a calendar of events that would give due recognition to juvenile, adult, club and county affairs, whether for players, officials or supporters. Radical thinking and deep surgery would be needed - but the climate was certainly ripe for making whatever adjustments may have been necessary.

"Burnout" was one of the buzz words and it was understandable that certain players would suffer from it. Can't we all recall talented eighteen-year-olds who could be playing Minor, Under 21 and Senior with their Clubs, be on their County Minor and Under 21 and maybe Senior teams, on their third level college in Sigerson or Trench Cup Competition, have to attend training for all of these and perhaps have a minimum of three matches per week. Sometimes we can make too many demands on an individual's time and tolerance - and certainly not be allowing him much time for academic pursuits.

At the same time there were others who never had the opportunity to suffer from burnout. They were the perpetual subs, so seldom swung into action because we wanted to play our best team all the time. These players deserved their glory days too, so maybe clubs could be more amenable to playing without all their stars and give the average footballer or hurler a chance. We needed to give this aspect some attention and leave requests for postponements in the outgoing millennium. Players wanted games, not postponements. Players wanted games, not countless training sessions.

And so to county level. More burn-out and talk of taking breaks or opting out for a rest. The only closed season came after defeat in the championship - a whole summer of inactivity in sharp contrast to the feverish activity in January in the Connacht FBD League or other Provincial Leagues and in preparation for the resumption of the Church and General National League. Training on cold, wet, dark evenings - playing games in atrocious conditions for teams and supporters alike. There had to be a rethink on this. A specific and curtailed inter county season would probably be welcomed by officials, team managers and most of all by the players, who had to undergo months and months of gruelling training for a limited number of games.

Drumkeerin GAA stalwarts Andy Redican and Pat Duignan appear to enjoy the Garda esscort as they make their way to a game!

Proposals to re-vamp the Championship through the now famous "back door" never got across the threshold. A round robin was the only acceptable system but not a very practical solution in a province with five or six counties. So the weaker counties continued to be the cannon fodder and so their only course was to try that bit harder to make the breakthrough against the big guns. There was much talk of lack of interest in the Church and General National League. Not so in Leitrim. A guaranteed seven games, reasonable expectations of success and a good financial return. If only the league commenced in Spring so that all competitions were in the same calendar year. That could be part of an overall plan.

A DECADE OF PROGRESS

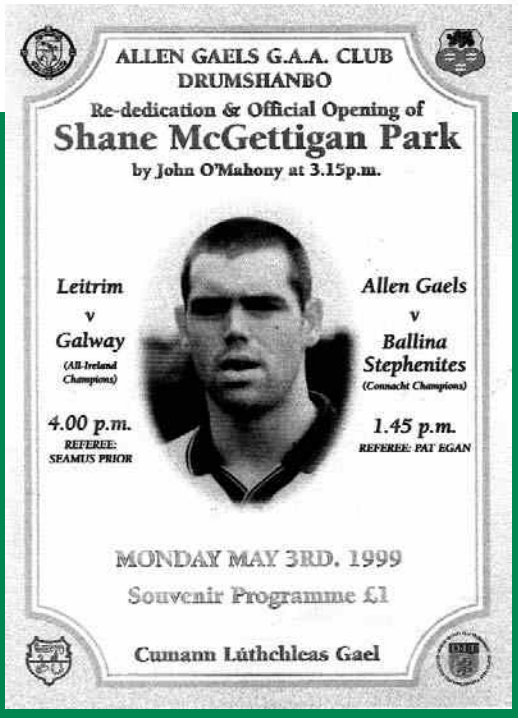
As we looked back, we pondered on the struggles for existence in a county where the population continued to dwindle and contrasted it with the recent past when the economic boom had sent shockwaves through at least the property development industry. Hopefully these mushrooming new houses would mean a subsequent rise in the number of families who would see their future in Leitrim. While town clubs might benefit, one wondered of the future of many rural units where the numbers continued to fall due to the attractions of town living.

In our reflections of the past we will certainly regard the 1990's as our most successful decade in the G.A.A., the high point being the Connacht Senior Championship of 1994 and the wave of emotion to Croke Park. The nineties also saw us capture Minor and Under 21 Connacht titles, the All Ireland B championship, All Star nominations and awards, promotion from Division IV right up to Division I, numerous individual, team and managerial awards and a general raising of our overall stature in a national context.

As we closed the decade our fortunes had slipped slightly. Over the previous ten years success had not been confined to the county team involvement. We could boast of an ever improving and comprehensive programme of games through our highly efficient Bórd na n-Óg; an excellent structure of Coaching, Summer Camps and Schools of Excellence from our Coaching Committee; highly successful Cumann na mBunscol and School Competitions; the promotion of indoor hurling with hopefully a greater interest in the promotion of juvenile field games; proportionally very high involvement in Scór with numerous All Ireland successes ; wide ranging and well planned developments and improvements at Páirc Seán Mac Diarmada; a competitive league structure and a marked improvement in club championship fixtures; an overall raising of standards in previously unsuccessful clubs; continuing improvements at Club grounds; full participation in the G.A.A. 's Comhairle programme which smoothes the path for more efficient club structures; an extremely successful supporters club; a greater sense of pride in Leitrim.

Cur le chéile

The goodwill of our supporters had been especially evident over the decade also, as was illustrated by the



Exuberant Leitrim supporter Michael Cryan pictured in 1994 with Declan Darcy and the Nestor Cup. Michael has raised substantial funds for Leitrim through the Midland Golf Classic

generous financial involvement of our team sponsors; the many, many generous and talented personnel who spearheaded major fund raising ventures like the Leitrim Golf Classic in Dublin and regional Golf Classics in Moate and Ballyconnell; the Branches of our Supporters Club in Athlone,Dublin, Galway, Longford and Sligo, always ready to play a key role - our overseas Supporters Club in London in conjunction with sponsors, the P.B. Donoghue Group of Companies and in New York with the support of Rosie O'Grady's Bar and Restaurant – displayed their loyalty and generosity to their native county; the many generous benefactors and supporters who displayed their support in very practical terms; the countless people who assisted in co-ordinating draws and raffles and the ever dependable stewards who manned championship gates. We were extremely fortunate to have such a committed team of people in so many locations working so hard, hand in hand with the Board, for a common purpose.

Leitrim and Roscommon may be deadly rivals on the field but off it, they have combined to help raise finances with the news that both County Boards had come together in a unique fundraising scheme. The Club Cairde Liatroma agus Roscomain Weekly Lotto would benefit both counties. Pictured at the launch of the weekly Lotto are: Seamus Gallagher (Leitrim County Board PRO & Leitrim Club Cairde Co-ordinator) & Dominic Connelly (Roscommon County Board PRO & Club Cairde Co-ordinator) discussing the details of launch.

The last Leitrim team of the Millennium which drew with Galway in the FBD League in Cloone. (Back) Padraig Flynn, Ray Greenan, Martin Prior, Donnacha Lynch, Adrian Cullen, Pat Farrell, Aiden Rooney, Ollie McGuinness. (Front) Gareth Foley, Derek Mulligan, Derek Kellegher, Seamus Quinn, Dermot Reynolds, Michael Maguire, Angus Fee.
Photo by Willie Donnellan

Bornacoola's Declan Bohan and Tom Duignan pictured with County Board President John Tom McGushin at the Leitrim G.A.A Convention in Drumkeerin.
Photo by WIllie Donnellan

Equally important to the many aspects of our affairs had been those who devoted countless hours to the promotion of games and cultural activities in every club area; the parents and teachers who encouraged G.A.A. participation by those in their care; the many families who made personal sacrifices so that their members could find time for involvement; those who purchased tickets, supported the Lotto, expressed support for Leitrim.

Leitrim may be small, have a minuscule population and many other disadvantages, but as a result we do all have a special sense of unity, a sense of belonging, a unique bond that links people from the county all around the globe.

It was important that in the Rí-Rá of the millennium we should focus on the positive with a firm determination never to let things slip back.

Players in the key role

All would be nothing without our players. Irrespective of all other activity, the main interest of the general public centred on the fortunes of their team, whether it be club or county. Club players, many of whom were based outside, had shown remarkable loyalty to their home parish. Our county players, in good times or bad, had displayed immense pride in their green and gold jersey.

The Team of the Millennium promoted in conjunction with The *Leitrim Observer*, would honour fifteen of Leitrim's greats - but in so honouring would really be an acknowledgement of the hundreds and hundreds of loyal players who made up our league and championship sides - all with a common purpose, to bring glory to their county.

In recent years the demands made on county panels had reached remarkable proportions with a concentrated, professional approach to training and preparation. The endless driving, direct from work on college, the late nights, the training sessions in the most atrocious of conditions; the personal sacrifices necessary; the allotment of four evenings a week to team affairs; the glory days and the disappointments; the injuries and long recovery periods, the curtailment of social activity; the diet sheets and training schedules; the criticism from disgruntled supporters; the weekend away while other teams soak up the sun in exotic climates; the monotony; the hard - slogging.
All to be part of a Leitrim team. Let nobody say that a Leitrim player is any less dedicated that one from the most successful counties.

Working with the players had been a long list of managers and selectors, right up to the current trio of Joe Reynolds, Jimmy Ward and Ken McPartland and it was important to remember that similar demands were made on their time and energies, but their aim is similar to the players - success for Leitrim.

Also of major importance had been the back up teams of county officers and the medical personnel who cared for the various needs of the team panels. Dr. Declan Loftus, our team doctor, had played a key role in a most professional and caring manner where his work, all done on a voluntary basis, was instrumental in reducing injury and in speeding recovery of injuries incurred. Likewise Dr. Kieran Greene, Dr. Mel Gorman and other doctors had been generous with their time and professional assistance in the care of players at various levels.

Injured players were catered for under the G.A.A.'s Injury and Insurance scheme and the committee in charge was ever conscious of attempting to have benefit improved.

Again in 1999 we had the trauma of losing young players – this time it was the Glenfarne Club that was in mourning with the death of club players Enda McDermott and Gerry Gallagher. The sense of loss permeated throughout the county and we all in some small way tried to share the incalculable grief of the McDermott and Gallagher families. Hopefully the solidarity shown by G.A.A. members on such occasions eases the pain to some degree – we are all part of a larger family in the Association.

A Fíor Gael who passed to his eternal reward during the year also was the former Leitrim star Jim Lynch. Jim wore his Leitrim heart on his sleeve from his early playing days with the county in the 1950's, right up to the time of his death and was extremely proud to have served a three year term as Uachtarán of the County Board. With his wife, Mary, he was always deeply involved in the promotion of the Leitrim Association and Leitrim County Board – in everything that might be of help to his beloved native county. It was very fitting that the Annual Leitrim G.A.A. Hall of Fame award was later named in his honour.

The inclement weather with its severe impact on pitches during 1998 meant there was a large backlog of games to be completed and the leagues over ran into 1999. This delay also meant an arrangement in relation to relegation and we had fourteen teams for the 1999 Division I league. This proved a blessing in disguise because this Division was the most competitive for years. Even in the closing stages there was very little between the top and bottom teams.

The other divisions may not have been as competitive but there was still a keen edge in the promotion and relegation areas. A disappointing aspect for St. Osnat's had to be the limited number of games available to them in Division V.

The remarkable aspect of our Masonite Senior Championship was the exit of our traditionally strong clubs prior to the Semi Final stage. One of our youngest teams Bornacoola, made a strong challenge for honours before losing out in a replay to St. Caillins of Fenagh. The other semi final provided probably the best game of the series when Glencar - Manorhamilton overcame defending champions Melvin Gaels. There was an air of anticipation for an exciting County Final, but it only came to life in the closing moments when it looked as if the Fenagh side had finally ended the years of frustration and waiting. But their celebrations were premature, as Glencar - Manorhamilton snatched apparent victory from St. Caillins grasp.

The balance of power had certainly swung towards this club as it had already captured the 1998 Division I title, formed a major part of the 1998 title winning Glenmanor Gaels Under 21 side and went on to take the Junior A and Junior B Championships. Hopes that Glencar Manorhamilton would feature well in the Connacht Club Championship were dashed by Sligo kingpins Tourlestrane - and still Leitrim waited for an elusive provincial club title.

All our championships were competitive and the presentation of teams and venues was first class as they were in general for all our Masonite Leagues. If only everything had gone so smoothly but the ongoing criticism leveled at referees left a lot to be desired. For years on end pious platitudes were bestowed on referees at club and county conventions – and indeed at Congress – but in the heat of a game, no matter how irrelevant, the platitudes were quickly forgotten. Leitrim could boast of having referees of a very high standard over the previous decade, with a number appointed to major inter-county fixtures – the most prestigious appointment of all having seen Seamus Prior as the All-Ireland referee back in 1991.

Having served as County Board Secretary since the death of Stanley Cox in 1982, Tommy Moran felt that after eighteen years in the position, the advent of a new millennium was an appropriate time for change and would be retiring at Convention. Leas Rúnaí Enda Stenson, who had worked in various capacities with the Board, as well as being a busy referee, was also retiring, as was the Vice Chairman Michael McGowan whose service to Leitrim knew no bounds, whether as a club and county player, team manager or extremely efficient administrator.

But changes in the officer board would in no way lessen its effectiveness and Coiste Chontae Liatroma would continue to be a strong and vibrant body, as it always had been since its foundation.

Among the many initiatives of Uachtarán Joe McDonagh was the setting up of the G.A.A.'s Football Development Committee back in 1997. The remit of the FDC was to look at all aspects of Gaelic football, to ascertain what areas were giving cause for concern and to make proposals for improvement.

The FDC realized changes were necessary, particularly in relation to providing a regular programme of games for club players. But a very wide ambit included all aspects of playing activity: the National Football League and the knockout Championship; public demand for more games; television exposure; floodlit games; sponsorship and commercial opportunities.

The most radical proposal was to revise the inter-county competition structures that would set up a three section All-Ireland series.

The committee, comprised of men of experience and vision, would be presenting the proposals to Congress 2000.There were arguments for and against what the report contained, but everyone was agreed that change was in the air.

As the curtain came down on 1999 people worried about a possible millennium bug, but the whole world celebrated in unison a very special moment in time.

Coiste Chontae Liatroma marked the occasion in a number of ways, with the Millennium Committee under the chairmanship of Gerry McGovern (later to become Cathaoirleach of the Coiste Contae) spearheading the events. One of the most important was the launching of a simply magnificent Millennium Book of G.A.A. affairs in the county – "Scéal Liatroma sa Mhilaois". Superbly produced and edited by Séan Ó Súilleabháin it encapsulated the importance of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael to the county.

A brief resume of inter-county activity to date and a snapshot of all spheres of the association in the county, together with the history and highlights of every club in the county made "Sceal na Milaoise" an invaluable collectors item a vitally important part of the Leitrim G.A.A. archives. The county was fortunate that Séan Ó Súilleabháin, a G.A.A. man to the core, worked as Leabhlannaí Liatroma and had built up and continues to build a treasure trove of G.A.A. memorabilia in a historical context.

There was immense interest in the selection of the Leitrim Team of the Millennium as voted by the readers of the "Leitrim Observer" newspaper. Any selection of greats is always made difficult by the fact that there are so many who deserve to be included, but those chosen always acknowledge that they really represent hundreds of others who have played the game with the same dedication, skill and pride in the jersey.

Millenium team lineout

The team selected was

Noel Crossan
(Sean O'Heslin's)

Ollie Honeyman
(Sean O'Heslin's)

Seamus Quinn
(Gortletteragh)

Frank Holohan
(Drumreilly)

Noel Moran
(Allen Gaels)

Josie Murray
(St. Mary's)

Tony Hayden
(Bornacoola)

Mickey Quinn
(Aughawillan)

Leo McAlinden
(Cloone)

Paddy Dolan
(Sean O'Heslin's)

Packie McGarty
(Mohill)

Michael Martin
(St. Mary's)

John "Nipper" Shanley
(Annaduff)

Michael McGuinness
(Mohill)

Cathal Flynn
(Gorvagh)

In honouring the Team of the Millennium the people of the county and Coiste Chontae Liatroma were really paying tribute to all the talented players who had represented the green and gold with great distinction and who had brought such joy to the sporting lives of generations.

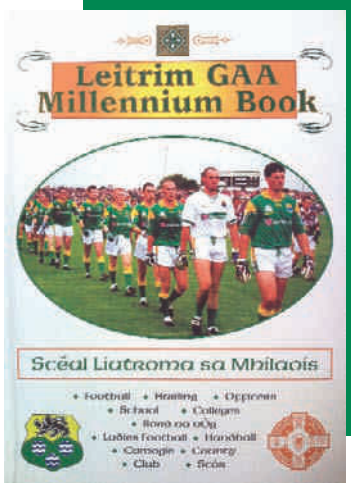
2000 Leitrim marches into new Millenium

Comhdháil 2000 saw Seamus Gallagher, Drumkeerin, a dedicated G.A.A. man and great community worker, take over the role of Rúnaí Coiste Liatroma. Paddy Kane succeeded Michael McGowan as Leas Cathaoirleach, while Gerry McGovern became Leas Rúnaí. One of the youngest County Committee officers in the county was the new PRO Breifne Earley, whose IT skills enhanced the communication within the Board and with higher councils and the media. Leo Kenny, who had been the Board's unanimous choice as Leas Uachtarán, Comhairle Chonnacht, was replaced as Connacht Council delegate by Joe Flynn, who with Seamus Prior would now represent Leitrim at provincial level. At Ard Comhairle we would still be represented by Gerry Mahon, while two Bornacoola men who had given outstanding service to Bórd na n-Óg were also on the Executive – John Tom McGushin as Uachtarán and Declan Bohan as Oifigeach Ógra. Cormac Mac an Ghoill was continuing in his role as Oifigeach Cultúra and Brendan Gormley in the demanding position of Cisteóir, while Micheál Charles was again Development Officer.

CUMANN LUTHCHLEAS GAEL
COISTE CHONTAE LIATROMA
present
COMÓRADH NA MILAOISE
in
Bush Hotel
Cara Droma Ruisc
on
23 Feabhra, 2000
with
Peter McNally & The Strangers
Céad Mile Fáilte

Leitrim Marches into new millenium

***As Millennium year began, 7 month old Lauren Aoife Lynch** had her heart set on Leitrim lifting the Sam Maguire in her lifetime! Lauren is the daughter of former Annaduff player Cathal Lynch who was spearheading the activites of the EC Gaelic Football Club in Brussels and the European GAA Board.*



***The All-time greats of Leitrim Football! The Leitrim GAA Team of the Millennium pictured at the GAA County Board Millennium Celebration in the Bush Hotel (Back Row, from left to right)** Noel Crossan (Goalkeeper), Michael Martin (Left Half-Forward), Frank Holohan (Left Half-Back), Seamus Quinn (Full-Back), Mickey Quinn (Midfield), Leo McAlinden (Midfield), Noel Moran (Right Half-Back), Ollie Honeyman (Right Full-Back), Tony Hayden (Left Half-Back). **(Front Row, from left to right)** Cathal Flynn (Left Corner-Forward), Paddy Dolan (Right Half-Forward), Mary Stanford (daughter of John Nipper Shanley, Right Full-forward), Packie McGarty (Centre-Forward), Phil McGuinness (wife of Michael McGuinness, Full-Forward), Josie Murray (Centre-Back).*

Guiding the Board as Cathaoirleach into the new millennium was Des Quinn, a man of great leadership qualities and innovative ideas, among them being "The business friends of Leitrim", when he asked more commercial concerns to rally to the green and gold with great success.

January was again a busy month on the football scene, with two further rounds of the FBD league, in which Leitrim lost narrowly to both Roscommon and Sligo and so were out of contention for a place in the final stages. But hopes were still high for a good run in the National League, with possible hopes of promotion, especially with having three home games. But home advantage proved of little use as Leitrim lost all three, against Wicklow, Offaly and Louth but did gain two points away against Westmeath.

So, in the build up to the championship, Joe Reynolds and his selectors, as well as putting the team though its paces on the training field, also had to gear up the players psychologically for the forthcoming championship.

Patricia Dolan , Veronica Dolan, Kathleen Doyle, Edmund Doyle and Paddy Dolan at the Leitrim Millennium Celebration and County Awards Dinner Dance in the Bush Hotel. Photo by Willie Donnellan.

Leitrim GAA Millennium Committee Secretary Gerry McGovern pictured with Leitrim Observer Sports Editor John Connolly at the Leitrim Millennium Celebration and County Awards Dinner Dance in the Bush Hotel.

A major promotional visit to the schools in Leitrim was made by Uachtarán CLG, Seosamh MacDonncha, in spring 2000. The Uachtarán proved to be a fantastic ambassador for the Association, bonding with the pupils of all ages, the teachers and the parents. As a former teacher himself, the Uachtarán was well aware of the great work being done in primary and post-primary schools and wanted to acknowledge this to the teachers of the county.

Death of Leo Kenny

However, the conclusion of his visit proved an extremely sad occasion, with the sudden death of Leas Uachtarán Comhairle Chonnacht, Leo Kenny. Leo, who had accompanied the Uachtarán on the tour of the county, together with Rúnaí Seamus Gallagher and schools coach James Holohan, had just made a presentation to Seosamh MacDonncha, on behalf of Coiste Chontae Liatroma, when he passed to his eternal reward. Leo's untimely death came as a great shock to his assembled G.A.A. comrades, to his club Allen Gaels, to everyone in Leitrim G.A.A., but particularly to his wife Breege and their family.

Leo Kenny had given life long service to the Association as a player with his club Ballymahon, with Multyfarnham College, with Longford and as an administrator with Ballymahon, Castlerea, Allen Gaels, Leitrim and Connacht. He had contributed enormously at every level and in a particular way in the publication of G.A.A. histories and yearbooks. It was fitting that that the Uachtarán of the Association was able to be present at Leo's funeral Mass, to give a most moving eulogy on this Fíor Gael. The Connacht Millennium Cup Competition for clubs in the province was later renamed the Leo Kenny Cup Competition and is continued on in his honour. Following Leo's death, the former Rúnaí Liatroma, Tommy Moran, was selected by Coiste Chontae Liatroma to replace Leo as Leas Uachtarán Comhairle Chonnacht.

Legendary Leitrim football star, Packie McGarty, pictured receiving his Connacht Football Team of the Millennium Award from President of the G.A.A., Joe McDonagh, at a special function in The Welcome Inn, Castlebar, last Saturday evening. McGarty, the only Leitrim man to be chosen, was one of the greatest players to have ever played the game. He was selected at right corner forward on the star-studded team.

As the weeks ticked by coming up to the championship, preparations went on unabated in Leitrim. The draw had been kind – Leitrim would meet the winners of the Roscommon - London tie in the Connacht Semi-final. Just one victory and we would be appearing once again in the Connacht Final. As expected, Roscommon defeated London comprehensively, following up on their good run in the National League.

The pundits predicted another rout, especially with the game being played in Hyde Park. Nobody was giving Leitrim a chance. Fortunately there was one group that was not perturbed by the footballing forecasters – this was the Leitrim players and Team Management. Deep down they knew they could do it – the months of tough physical and mental preparation had them geared up at exactly the right time. No matter what Roscommon would throw at them they would fight back.

And fight back they had to, after the concession of three first-half goals that would have rocked many a team. Nobody present will ever forget Leitrim's second half performance of fast flowing football, unbridled passion and copybook scores by a team that John Connolly described in his match report in the *Leitrim Observer* as "Lazarus Leitrim".

John wrote – *Move over Lazarus, move over Houdini, move over Bill Clinton, Bertie Ahern or any other politician – Leitrim footballers have taken your place as the greatest escape artists of all times, with an amazing comeback that defied logic and form..... Joe Reynolds, Jimmy Ward and Ken McPartland seemed to have the Midas touch last Sunday".*

It was very much a team performance, but Paul Kieran, Gareth Foley and Ciaran Murray were simply exceptional. Seamus Quinn had difficulty in adapting to his new position of centre-half forward but it was he who grabbed possession, broke through several challenges and fired over the match winning point with just seconds left in normal time. The Leitrim supporters were already scaling the Hyde Park fences, but had to endure three minutes of nail-biting injury time before they heard the final whistle – and then they celebrated in style.

The scenes were reminiscent of Tuam in 1993 when we broke the Galway hoodoo and of Hyde Park in 1994 when we captured the Nestor Cup. The only controversy concerned the sending off of Colin Regan – this was to be a contentious issue. Amazingly, apart from having defeated London in Ruislip, this was Leitrim's only other Senior Championship victory since the 1994 Connacht Final – but nobody cared, we had beaten the Rossies on their home ground and would be returning here for the Connacht Final.

It was back to the drawing board for the players, while the Supporters Club and supporters in general put their shoulders to the wheel in relation to fundraising. Golf classics, raffles, sponsorship, Club Cairde – in conjunction with Roscommon County Board -, club functions, individual donations, the business friends of Leitrim, ...every source was turned to and there was a magnificent response in Leitrim and from Leitrim people scattered throughout Ireland, England and the United States. The buzz was back and the county relished it to a man.

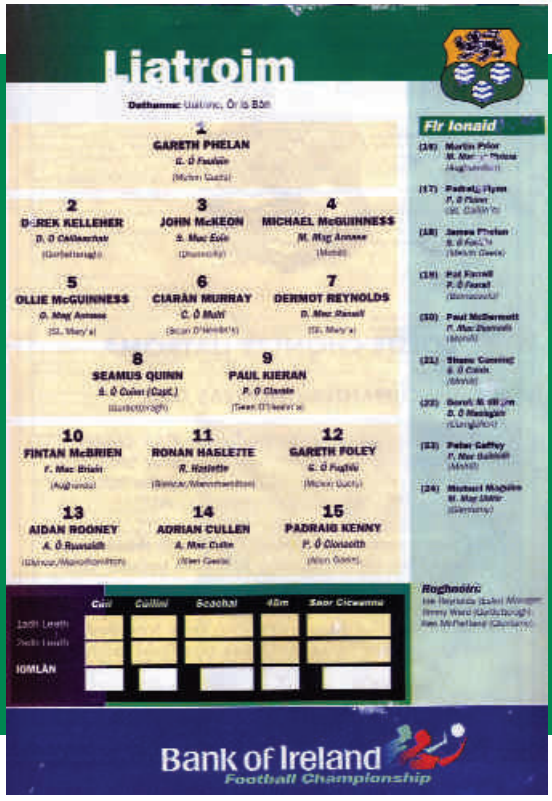
The Cup that cheers! Ballinamore P.P.S. joint captains Declan Crushell and Declan Maxwell hoist the All-Ireland Colleges Senior Championship C trophy high to a raputurous welcome from teammates and supporters in Portlaoise.

Photo by Willie Donnellan.

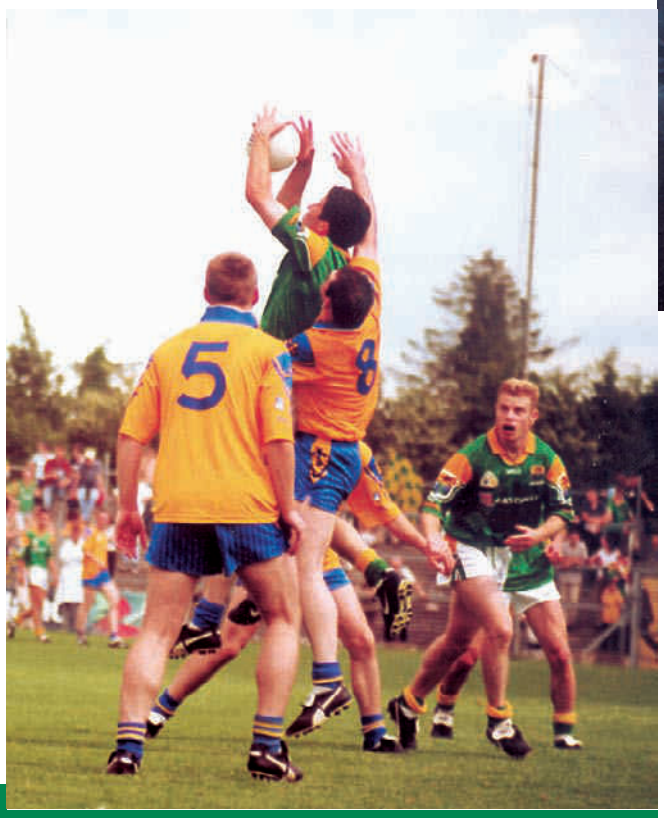
On July 30th a green and gold army descended once more on Hyde Park, ready for the battle between Leitrim and Galway, between Joe Reynolds, the Leitrim manager and John O'Mahony with whom Joe had been a selector when John had managed Leitrim. On the sideline, it was going to be a game of cat and mouse. On the field, it was the maroon and white trying to reimpose their superiority over Leitrim.

What Leitrim needed was to start as they had finished against Roscommon, but for some reason the team appeared very lethargic and were hit by some early Galway scores, including what most commentators felt was a "gift" of a penalty. By half time we had scored just one point, but a second half resurrection saw another great fight back, but it was not enough. The Tribesmen went on to take the title by 1-13 to 0-8 and leave us disappointed yet again. But nobody could fault the team for effort.

It had been a busy season for the management team as they had also taken charge of the Junior side that had defeated Mayo 3-6 to 0-9 in the Connacht Semi-final, but lost out to Roscommon in the final by 2-8 to 0-8. A number of the players in the Connacht Minor Championship team of 1998 were key figures with the Juniors. These players were also involved with the Under 21 team that had a good run in the Hastings Cup Competition before losing out in the semi-Final to Tyrone, who later in the year won the All-Ireland Under 21 title. In the Connacht Under 21 championship at Ballina, Mayo proved our bogey team once again, winning on a 3-18 to 1-8 scoreline.



What's the story? James Phelan, Gareth Foley, Damien McGowan, Frank Foy and Jimmy Phelan check out all the news in the Leitrim Observer ahead of the Connacht Final. Photo by Willie Donnellan.



Ronan Haslette brings off a spectacular high catch in the Connacht Semi-Final victory over Roscommon, as Padraig Kenny awaits the outcome.

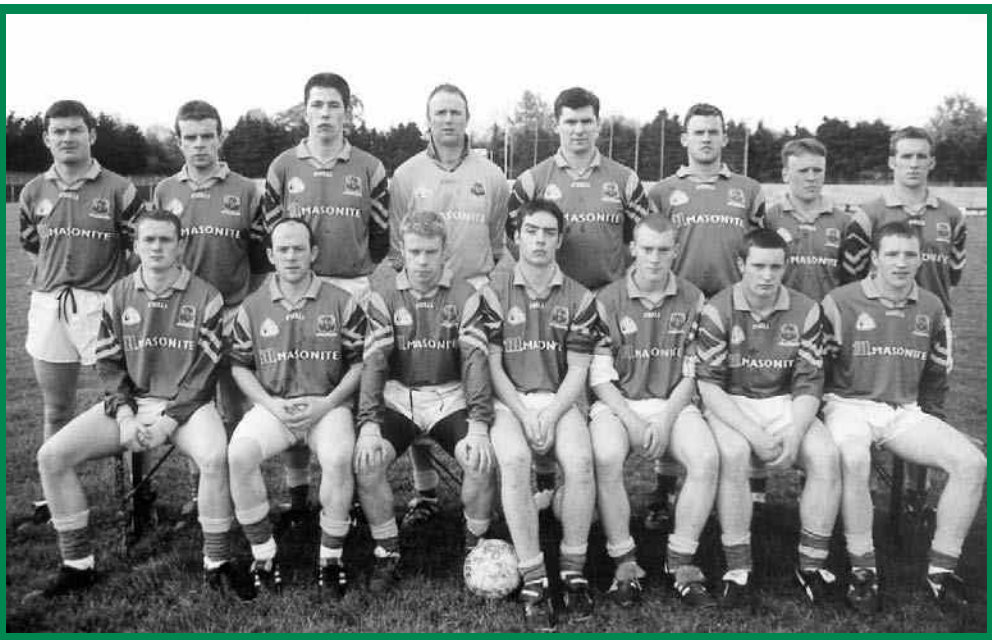
Photo: Willie Donnellan.

The very popular Masters (over 40's) Competition was gaining ground in the county, thanks to the efforts of former County Board Vice Chairman Terry Shortt and his committee. Among a number of former stars lining out with the Masters were Mickey Quinn, Frank Smith, and county selector Jimmy Ward.

After our exit from the County Championship we discussed at length the new format being introduced in 2001, when teams eliminated in the provincial series would have an opportunity of re-entering the All-Ireland series through what was referred to as "the back door". While most felt it was a great idea to give teams a second chance, others felt this new system would really favour the stronger counties – if they lost out on an "off day" they would still be in contention. These new proposals would certainly liven up the 2001 All-Ireland Championship.

On the resumption of the National Football League Leitrim avenged the previous years defeat by Antrim, then lost by four points to Limerick, before finishing off the competitive year with a 2-21 to 0-2 hiding of London in Carrick-on-Shannon. The first year of the new Millennium had seen us in a Connacht Final – what would the future hold?

Leitrim full-back John McKeon and Ladies star wing-back Mary McKeon relax at home with the family dog ahead of their respective Connacht Finals.
Photo by Willie Donnellan.



*The **Leitrim Junior team** which defeated Mayo to reach the 2000 Connacht Final. (**Back**) Ollie McGuinness, Michael Maguire, Ronan Haslette, Martin Prior, Adrian Cullen, Ray Gilmartin, Angus Fee, Derek Mulligan. (**Front**) Peter Gaffey, Gareth Foley, Padraig Kenny, John McKeon, Michael McGuinness, Shane Canning, Dermot Reynolds.*
Photo by Willie Donnellan

The Leitrim team and panel who contested the first Connacht Senior Football Championship Final of the new Millennium in Dr. Hyde Park, Roscommon. (Back Row, from left to right) Ronan Haslette, Angus Fee, Derek Kellegher, Fintan McBrien, John McKeon, Michael Maguire, Dermot Reynolds, Aiden Rooney, Padraig Flynn, Peter Gaffey. (Middle Row) Ray Greenan, Michael McGuinness, Donnacha Lynch, Ciaran Murray, Martin Prior, Gareth Phelan, Paul Kieran, Adrian Cullen, Ollie McGuinness, Paul McDermott. (Front Row) James Phelan, Shane Canning, Derek Mulligan, Jimmy Ward (Selector), Seamus Quinn (Captain), Joe Reynolds (Manager), Pat Farrell, Gareth Foley, Padraig Kenny. Missing from photo: Colin Regan and selector Ken McPartland.
Pic. Willie Donnellan.

The 2000 Senior Football Championship sponsored by Masonite Ireland, was for the first time played on a round robin basis. 16 teams entered the draw with four divisions of four, therefore guaranteeing each team three matches. The top two teams in each division would qualify for the quarter-finals, which would then be run on a knock-out basis. There was great excitement in the Bush Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon as Seamus Duke and John Lynch of Shannonside/Northern Sound prepared to broadcast the draw live to the region. No seedings, so the chances of a "Group of Death" or some fascinating local derbies were high. And so it turned out. Allen Gaels, Sean O'Heslins and St. Mary's drawn together with up and coming Bornacoola completing the group.

Northern clubs Melvin Gaels, Glenfarne and Ballinaglera drawn with Aughawillan to guarantee three local derbies. Holders Glencar/Manor and hopefuls Aughavas, managed by Jim Carty and P.J. Carroll respectively, in along with newcomers Mohill and Kiltubrid. And more local derbies in the remaining group with Carrigallen, Drumreilly, St.Caillins and Gortletteragh drawn together.

As we entered the final round of matches, the only guarantee was that Gortletteragh were through to the quarter-finals and Drumreilly were out,-thus leaving 14 clubs in contention for seven places. With each set of group matches being played at the same time (with the exception of the Gortletteragh v Drumreilly match) mobile phone bills must have increased significantly with calls being made to and fro to get the very latest updates. Eventually, Melvin Gaels, Aughawillan, Allen Gaels, Sean O'Heslins, Aughavas and Glencar/Manor joined Gortletteragh with one play-off needed between Carrigallen and St. Caillins to clinch the last Quarter Final place. St. Caillins it was who came through and so we were down to the last eight.

Gortletteragh would be the first to admit they were lucky to overcome Aughawillan, while another close contest saw Aughavas get the better of Sean O'Heslins. Allen Gaels put out the 1999 Champions Glencar/Manor while Melvin Gaels and St. Caillins took two matches to decide their issue—Melvin Gaels eventually winning through. Semi finals beckoned and when Aughavas overcame Melvin Gaels in the first Semi-final, it was generally thought that a repeat of the 1997 final was on the cards between Aughavas and Allen Gaels. But Gortletteragh had other ideas and in a power packed performance, they had the match tied up long before the finish.

So after 32 matches, we were down to the final two of the Millennium Championship. Both sides having gone through the entire Championship with 100% records, something had to give, barring a draw, of course. With weather conditions very unfavourable to the occasion, the match never lived up to expectations, but in a powerful second half performance, Aughavas overcame Gortletteragh and took the title and the Fenagh Cup for the first time in 34 years.

Aughavas captain Fintan McBrien pictured with Masonite's Jim Hoey and Leitrim County Board Chairman Des Quinn after the 2000 Senior Final. Photo by Willie Donnellan

Aughavas 2000 Senior Champions

There were tears of joy among many of the Aughavas veterans of bygone years as they rejoiced on the sidelines at Paírc Sean Mac Diarmada – and none of them could have been happier than James McGovern and his brothers, life-long Aughavas supporters and club sponsors. It was a personal triumph for team Manager P.J. Carroll – the former Leitrim boss – as he had led yet another club to a senior championship, having done likewise in a number of other counties.

The new championship format received favourable reaction – teams had got more games, there was a great degree of anticipation and the games had, in the main, proved very competitive and exciting. The final date had been delayed due to Seamus Quinn's participation with the Ireland Team in the Compromise Rules games – but nobody complained as they would not wish to deprive either Seamus himself or the Gortletteragh club of the International honour.

In the Connacht Club Championship, Aughavas were to play the Galway Champions in the Semi-final. Due to Galway's late Club Final and their refusal to nominate a team to represent them and then Connacht Council's refusal to grant Galway's request for a postponement, Aughavas were caught in the middle of something that was not of their doing. Eventually, a compromise was reached, due to the goodwill of Aughavas, and Galway champions Corofin came to Carrick-on-Shannon. Unfortunately for Aughavas, Corofin came out on top by two points but not before Aughavas gave them an almighty fright.

The County Board had secured a new sponsor for the Intermediate, Junior and Junior B Championship – Sean Clancy of Glenfarne Wood Products, a former secretary of his club and an avid supporter of Glenfarne and Leitrim.

The Intermediate championship was on a round-robin basis, similar to the senior, but it did not turn out nearly as successful, especially with appeals for cancellations and with as many battles in the board room as on the field.

St. Mary's and Cloone met in the first Semi-final with St. Mary's advancing to the final after a poor match. The second Semi-final turned out to be the match and the comeback of the Championship. Annaduff led Drumkeerin by nine points early in the second half and looked odds-on to book their place in the final. But suddenly, Drumkeerin woke up and in a blistering last twenty minutes ended up winning by one point.

It was tough on Annaduff, but Drumkeerin advanced to meet St. Mary's in the final. In an entertaining encounter, Drumkeerin never repeated their second half Semi-final performance and the more committed St. Mary's always held the upper hand and ran out convincing winners.

Twelve teams took part in the Junior Championship, which was played on a knock-out basis. Dromahair were the only first team involved, while the other eleven teams were reserve teams. Allen Gaels and Dromahair were two of the favourites for outright victory, but having drawn each other in the first round, it meant early elimination for one. Dromahair were to bow out and so Allen Gaels were to become firm favourites to lift the title. They powered their way to the final as did Gortletteragh in the other half of the draw. Against the odds, Gortletteragh shocked the title favourites, emerging worthy winners.

Sean Clancy in action with his club Glenfarne. Sean's company 'Glenfarne Wood Products" became sponsors of the Leitrim Intermediate and Junior Championships

The Drumkeerin team who were defeated by St. Mary's in the GWP Intermediate Championship Final.

Fifteen teams took part in the Junior "B" Championship—three first teams, three second teams and nine third teams. One of the first teams, Eslin, were favourites to take the title but the bye-law restricting U-16 players playing adult football didn't help their cause. Leitrim Gaels showed they were progressing all the time with good victories over two of the bigger clubs, Glencar/Manor and Allen Gaels. They met Eslin for a place in the final, with the more experienced Eslin men getting through after a very close contest. Sean O'Heslins left their poor league form behind them and won their way through the other half of the draw. They continued their good Championship form in the final and overcame the favourites to clinch the title and promotion to Division III.

The U-21 Football Championship began in August and was played over the following two months with twelve teams competing. A new team Eastern Harps entered—an amalgamation of St. Caillins and Cloone. The first two rounds were midweek fixtures, a decision some clubs were not too happy with. Mohill, with many of their senior team included, and St. Francis, an amalgamation of Allen Gaels and Ballinaglera reached the Final. After a very entertaining match, Mohill were victorious, which made up for their final defeat in 1999.

In the Masonite Leagues, a total of 51 teams took part in the four divisions. But the Board would have to iron out problems in relation to promotion and relegation – for example, Intermediate Champions St. Mary's could not be promoted to Division I because the club already had a team in that division. There were motions submitted to Convention that would hopefully sort out that and other logistical problems that had arisen.

The dreaded Millennium Bug never arrived, so computers and the ever developing modern technology continued to open up a whole new world of communication. A new phenomenon was the G.A.A. websites and Leitrim was to the fore in this regard, with youthful PRO Breifne Earley and Coiste Chontae Liatroma being honoured with the G.A.A. McNamee Award for the best county website.

Spreading the word on Convention. Cormac McGill of the Longford Leader and P.J. Leddy of NWR pictured in Drumkeerin.

Leitrim continued to be the leaders in this regard and in later years County PRO Brendan Doyle was to spearhead advances in the use of IT at county, provincial and national level. It was to be a logical step for the G.A.A. eventually to rule that communication by e-mail would be accepted as official correspondence. This was to be joy to the ears of anyone involved in secretarial work with the Association. Many an over-burdened Rúnaí had spent countless hours and limitless energy in typing, photocopying and pasting. At long last the day was coming when time and energy could be better spent in promotional and other work, whether at club, county or higher level. The world was embracing change and Cumann Lúthchleas Gael would keep in step.

For the previous five years Cathaoirleach Des Quinn had ensured that Leitrim played its part at club and Board level and that everyone kept abreast in the changing world. Des had decided to step down from the position at the end of 2000 and at Comhdháil Liatroma on December 9th was succeeded as Cathaoirleach by another man with an outstanding G.A.A. pedigree,

Leitrim County Board PRO Breifne Earley and Chairman Des Quinn pictured as they try out the new Leitrim GAA website at it's launch in Carrick-on-Shannon Community School. Photo by Willie Donnellan

Leitrim GAA Millennium Book Editor Seán Ó'Suilleabháin pictured with County Board Secretary Seamus Gallagher and Chairman Des Quinn after the book's official launch
Photo by Willie Donnellan

Days like this
BAINISTEOIR
DUNNES BAR
BUILDERS MERCHANT

Michael McGowan of Gaeil na Meilge.
The second year of the new millennium saw an early start for the Leitrim players, preparing in the cold, wind rain and even snow, for the second half of the National Football League.

Leitrim supporters had often been hailed as "great travellers" to away games, but only a small band of followers were in Aughrim for a very heartening performance against Wicklow, with the home side edging it by a single point. The team performance dropped in the next game in Carrick-on-Shannon, when we were easily defeated by Westmeath. Due to the Foot & Mouth crisis in Northern Ireland the fixture against Armagh was cancelled and there was no joy after a long trip to Cork for the final round, with the Leesiders taking the two league points.

So the team management and players had to regroup and prepare to meet Galway in the lion's den in Tuam in the Connacht championship. The 2001 Championship was eagerly awaited due to the Congress decision to introduce the Qualifiers. That first year of the new system must have been difficult for players to come to terms with mentally. Would it be as easy to build yourself up for victory if you knew there was a second chance? In any event, the Leitrim panel, though hit by a number of defections from the Connacht final side of the previous year, again put in a supreme effort, with most of the training being done at the magnificent St. Loman's complex in Mullingar. In various challenge matches the team appeared to be gelling well, so Leitrim had a quite air of confidence for the big clash in Tuam.

But this confidence seemed to evaporate, despite scoring three goals, and the game ended in a cake-walk for Galway, on an embarrassing 3-24 to 3-5 scoreline. Many talked of a return to the "bad old days" when the maroon jersey seemed to put some sort of spell on Leitrim.

In the subsequent Semi-final Galway lost out to Roscommon, who had earlier beaten New York and who went on to clinch the Connacht title against Mayo. But the sensation of the championship was when Galway clawed their way back through the Qualifiers and went on to bring the Sam Maguire back across the Shannon. John O'Mahony had achieved the unthinkable, recording an All-Ireland victory in the very first year of the Qualifiers.

"The back door" system proved unattractive for Leitrim and there was little enthusiasm for the Qualifier game against Antrim in Casement Park. Morale was at a low ebb after the heavy defeat by Galway and so Antrim had little difficulty in ending Leitrim's championship aspirations for 2001.

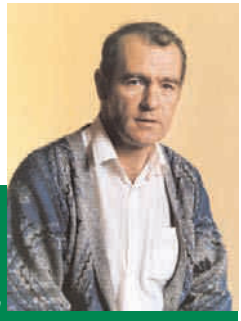
There were fears that the increased number of inter county championship games would have an adverse effect on club fixtures – and with increased televised games this was probably so – but at least there was a momentary reward for counties from the Qualifiers, with Leitrim receiving €40,000 from the pool, with the stipulation that €20,000 of this was spent on coaching.

Leitrim Stars head Down Under, Leitrim's Fabian McMorrow (Melvin Gaels), Ciaran McNama (Drumkeerin), Jimmy Holohan (Connacht Selector), Gavin McWeeney (Aughnasheelin), Frank Holohan (Drumreilly) and Philly McGuinness (Mohill), the five players picked for the Connacht U-17 Tour of Australia, pictured with Bord na nOg Chairman Declan Bohan, on left, and Leitrim GAA County Board Chairman Michael McGowan, on right.

Photo by Willie Donnellan.

The Leitrim Junior team which defeated Mayo to reach the Connacht Final. (Back) Ollie McGuinness, Michael Maguire, Ronan Haslette, Martin Prior, Adrian Cullen, Ray Gilmartin, Angus Fee, Derek Mulligan. (Front) Peter Gaffey, Gareth Foley, Padraig Kenny, John McKeon, Michael McGuinness, Shane Canning, Dermot Reynolds. Photo by Willie Donnellan

So near and yet so far! Two pictures of Leitrim hitting the post captured by Willie Donnellan. On the left, Jimmy Guckian lines up his shot that crashed off the post in the seventh minutes while, on the right, Shane Canning drives his shot past Galway keeper Padraig Lally only to see it come back off the post . Photo by Willie Donnellan



Sean Duignan and his match commentator Tommie Tighe brought all the thrills and spills of Leitrim County & Club games on his very populatr video recordings over many years

The Leitrim team which was defeated by Mayo in the Connacht U-21 Championship. (Back) Padraig McGarry, Declan Maxwell, John McGuinness, Enda Lyons, Dermot O'Rourke, Philip Casserly, Michael McGuinness, Michael Duignan. (Front) Shane Canning, John Gilbane, Noel Doonan, John McKeon, Seamus Maguire, Terry Kellegher and Michael Foley. Photo by Willie Donnellan

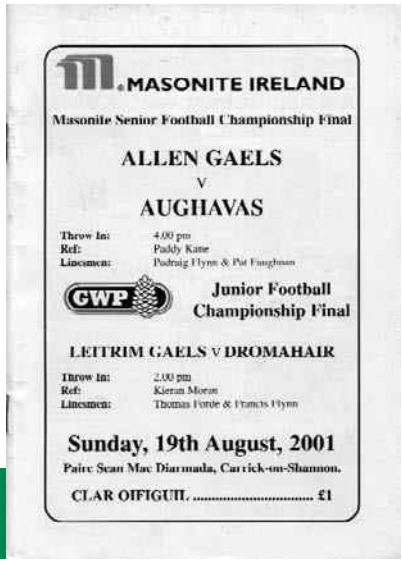
Our exit from the championship had a regrettable down-side, as Joe Reynolds did not wish an extension of his three year term as Team Manager. His selectors Jimmy Ward and Ken McPartland felt likewise in their positions and so the Board acceded to their wishes, despite the regret at losing three men who had given their all for each county team in their charge.

The Hastings Cup proved a difficult one for the Under 21's, losing to Tyrone and Mayo and it was the latter who also put paid to any Connacht championship aspirations after a close and tense encounter in Carrick-on-Shannon. Mayo also disposed of our Junior title hopes in the Connacht Final, despite the fact that we were allowed play our second best team. The concession to us of the first round game by Galway had proved poor preparation. So we had little encouragement to take from participation in the 2001 Connacht Championship campaign.

Irrespective of championship results, support for the county never wavered. As well as the county team, Senior championship and League sponsorship from Masonite Ireland; the GPW sponsorship of the Intermediate and Junior championships and the sponsorship of the Under 21's championship by the Bush Hotel, there were the on-going efforts at home and abroad to raise funds under the umbrella of the Supporters Club. The Supporters Club itself had major success with Gerry McGovern and Jim Meehan co-ordinating a very successful draw; Barry Donnellan was again to the forefront in the Leitrim Golf Classic in Dublin; Noel McPartland and Martin McGowan likewise at the Classic in the Slieve Russell Golf Club; Pat Murray, Mike Carty and others at the Joe McInerney Memorial Golf Classic in New York and the indefatigable Michael Cryan hosting the Midlands Golf Classic in Moate. London came to the fore too, with Frank Keegan promoting a fund raising concert featuring Leitrim recordings and TV stars Eleanor Shanley and Charlie McGettigan, with Leitrim business people and private individuals in London rallying to the cause. There were numerous other efforts to boost the county finances, which were helped also by a much-increased return in club championship gate receipts. At Bórd na nÓg level funds were also boosted by generous sponsorship and donations.

One was left to wonder what would befall a county like Leitrim, if it had to depend on its own internal funding to administer the board, prepare teams and develop infrastructure. The Board could simply not survive, so the financial contribution of so many people was of prime importance year by year and was something which was continually acknowledged by the officers of Coiste Chontae Liatroma.

It was important, not only for the commercial life of Leitrim, but also for clubs and the board that employment opportunities would increase in the county. So the siting by MBNA of its European Call Centre in Carrick-on-Shannon, to employ over 1,000 personnel was greatly welcomed. Many Leitrim people based away from home gladly returned to avail of the work opportunities with subsequent increased membership for many G.A.A. clubs. Located close to Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada, the parking facilities at MBNA, now Bank of America, are of major advantage on big match days in Carrick-on-Shannon. During the 2000's Leitrim as a county was to undergo a major sea-change in regard to the property boom in particular, a boom that in 2009 is well and truly over, with the collapse of an economic period


MASONITE IRELAND

Masonite Senior Football Championship Final

ALLEN GAELS

V

AUGHAVAS

Throw In: 4.00 pm
Ref: Paddy Kane
Linesmen: Padraig Flynn & Pat Fitzgibbon

GWP Junior Football Championship Final

LEITRIM GAELS V DROMAHAIR

Throw In: 2.00 pm
Ref: Kieran Moran
Linesmen: Thomas Forde & Francis Flynn

Sunday, 19th August, 2001

Pairc Sean Mac Diarmada, Carrick-on-Shannon.

CLAR OIFIGIUIL £1

(Left/Right) - Seamus Fallon, Evelyn Martin, Annette Martin, Ciaran Kelly, Michael Martin.

referred to as the era of "The Celtic Tiger".

Having seen a very successful Masonite Senior Football Championship in 2000, under a new round robin format, we looked forward to 2001 being even more successful. There was great excitement as the draw was broadcast live by Shannonside Radio from the Bush Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon, with Jim Hoey, Chief Executive of Masonite, making the draw and John Lynch conveying them to eager-eared listeners. The four groups of four teams threw up many interesting clashes, but the most drawn-out saga turned out to be a three-match marathon between local rivals Sean O'Heslins and Drumreilly, to decide who would join Carrigallen in the Quarter final grouping. In the end Drumreilly ousted their neighbours and went on to record an unprecedented run of nine championship games without reaching the final. Previous titles had been won by teams who had played only three or four games, but the round-robin system had introduced a new dimension.

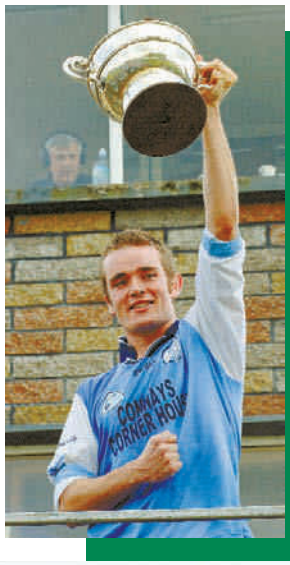
At Quarter Final stage Melvin Gaels defeated Carrigallen, Allen Gaels overcame Bornacoola, Drumreilly knocked out St. Mary's and the surprise packet of the championship to date, Kiltubrid, caused a sensation by drawing with reigning county champions

A well known voice in Leitrim – Shanonside FM sports Editor and commentator John Lynch.

Aughavas, though losing out in the replay.

In the Semi finals Aughavas regained their form of 2000 by knocking out Melvin Gaels, while Drumreilly amazingly had yet another draw against Allen Gaels, but there their long run ended as the Drumshanbo side won the replay. Aughavas were hotly tipped to make it two in a row, but an injury to county star Fintan McBrien did not help their cause and they met an Allen Gaels side that had retained its best form for the final.

In the Connacht Club Championship, Allen Gaels were drawn against St.Marys of Sligo in the Quarter-Final and following a draw in Sligo, lost out after extra-time in Carrick-on-Shannon. They were disappointed that in both matches, they let a good half-time lead slip, and eventually lost out in extra-time.



The cup that cheers *- an injured Donnacha Lynch holds the Fenagh Cup aloft after Allen Gaels won the County title in Pairc Sean Mac Diarmada.*

Photo by Willie Donnellan

As in 2000, the Intermediate Championship was again on a round-robin system, but much more competitive. From the two groups of four teams each, Annaduff, Aughnasheelin, Glenfarne and Gortletteragh made it through to the semi finals with Annaduff emerging as eventual winners and also gaining promotion to Division I.

Twelve teams took part in the Junior "A" Championship on a knock out basis. As expected, Dromahair proved too strong for all opposition who were comprised of "second teams" from the other clubs.

There were sixteen teams in the Junior "B" Championship that feature three "first teams" – Eslin, Leitrim Gaels and St. Osnat's. Leitrim Gaels earned "bragging rights" by defeating close neighbours St. Mary's in the semi-final before going on to capture their first ever Championship title by defeating Dromahair in a thrill-a-minute final. The result sparked off great celebrations for Leitrim Gaels followers – and they deserved to celebrate as the club had made great strides in its short existence. The club went on to make further progress at both juvenile and adult level, including the development of an ultra modern pitch and player and spectator facilities at their community field, a venue that is proving

The vanquished Glenfarne team who were defeated by Annaduff in the Glenfarne Wood Products Junior A Championship Final in Pairc Sean Mac Diarmada.

Photo by Willie Donnellan

The victorious Dromahaire team which won the Glenfarne Wood Products Junior A Championship in Pairc Sean Mac Diarmada by defeating Mohill.

St. Caillin's captain Patrick Guckian raises the Cup high after his team's victory over Glencar/Manorhamilton in the Masonite Senior League Final. Photo by Willie Donnellan

extremely popular for fixtures at Coiste na nÓg and Senior Board level.

In the Under21 Championship, Mohill, the favourites, had an impressive passage to the final, but came up against a very talented Drumlea team – an amalgamation of Drumreilly and Aughawillan – who proved much too strong for them.

Rúnaí Seamus Gallagher and the Fixtures Committee were determined to have all fixtures completed inside the calendar year and with great forward planning achieved their goal despite having to cater for a total of fifty two teams in the various leagues.

Fenagh St. Caillins took the honours in Division I; in Division II Annaduff made it a great year for the club by clinching the title; Kiltubrid captured the Division III title while St. Mary's took Division IV after a replayed final against Annaduff and Glenfarne held off a strong challenge from Dromahair in the final to take honours in Division V. A feature of the league was the surprise promotion or relegation of many clubs, but everybody was happy with a very full and satisfactory club fixture calendar for 2001.

The victorious Leitrim Gaels team which won it's first ever championship title by defeating Dromahaire in the Glenfarne Wood Products Junior B decider. Photo by Willie Donnellan

The St. Caillin's team which defeated Glencar/Manorhamilton in the Masonite Senior League Final. Photo by Willie Donnellan

The up-coming Convention was to see another change in the Executive, as long serving Treasurer Brendan Gormley had decided to step down from the post. Over his long term of office he had been involved in a plethora of fund raising activities for the Board and could remember with pride his part in the "back room" management group when we won the Connacht title in 1994. Brendan would be replaced by Jim Meehan who had long experience of officialdom with his club Dromahair and he had been one of the most diligent fund-raisers for the Board in numerous activities year after year,

An enforced change in the position of Uachtarán Coiste Liatroma came with the death of Bornacoola and Leitrim stalwart John Tom McGushin, the proud holder of the office. The affable John Tom, a household name throughout the county, had given unstinting service to his club as a player and administrator and left an indelible mark on Leitrim, particularly in his role as Cathaoirleach of Bórd na n-Óg. His interests extended to every branch of the

Association and we would long remember his participation in Scór as a member of the Bornacoola Tráth na gCeist team.

At Convention, the late John Tom was replaced as Uachtarán Liatroma by someone else who relished the role, Mrs. Teresa Bohan of Mohill, one of the clubs and the county's longest serving and most ardent supporters.

Another blow to Leitrim in 2001 was the passing of another legendary G.A.A. personality, Christy Gallogly of the Sean O'Heslin's club in Ballinamore. For many years Christy had served as the Rúnaí of the South Leitrim Board where he and the Cathaoirleach George O'Toole formed a most unique partnership. He later became Leitrim delegate to Comhairle Chonnacht and his sharp wit in promoting any aspect of the Association in the county made him a voice to be respected. He had a passion for the promotion of Vocational Schools football and was a successful mentor with his schools Keshcarrigan and Ballinamore and with the Leitrim Vocational Schools team. He was passionate also about his native club and served in numerous key positions over a lifetime of service. Christy's brother Fr. Dan Gallogly was also heavily involved in the G.A.A. at Cavan County Board level and he served a three-year term as Uachtarán Chomhairle Uladh.

Michael McGowan and the Executive had a new management structure in place, before the end of 2001, with Declan Rowley of Longford as team Manager and Declan Bohan and Pat Donohoe – the midfielder on the 1994 team – as selectors. They looked forward to revitalising the team and preparing for the new look National League which would be played over a nine week period in February and March 2002. For years there had been calls for this new structure to be introduced and at last it had come to pass. Another milestone in the G.A.A. at national level in 2001 was the abolition of Rule 21 at a special Congress in November.

Uachtarán CLG Liatrioma, John Tom McGushin (left) who died in office in 2001. On right is Christy Gallogly, former delegate to Connacht Council, who also died in 2001. In the centre is Michael McGowan who had served in a number of official posts with John Tom & Christy

New Leitrim GAA County Board President Teresa Bohan pictured at the Board's Annual Convention. Teresa is the first woman to be elected to the post.
Photo by Willie Donnellan

Declan Rowley

September 11th 2001

The whole world was rocked on September 11th 2001, with the attack on the Twin Towers, New York.

The first recorded victim was Leitrim priest Fr Mychael Judge. There were others with close family connections in Leitrim who died or were seriously injured in the attack.

Many Leitrim born police and firemen, all of whom are members of the Leitrim GAA Club in New York, played heroic parts in the rescue operations.

Another year had passed without Leitrim having made an impact on the inter-county scene, but club structures were solid and hopes remained high for improved performances and a share of success in 2002.

January 2002 was a busy but not very fruitful month for the Leitrim players. With Team Manager Declan Rowley and his selectors using the FBD league to develop the squad and try out some new players, it was not particularly worrying about losing all four games – the main focus was to have a settled team for the National League.

The opening round against Limerick had to be called off due to a snow-covered pitch, but keen interest was being built up for a novel second round game against Kerry – the first ever competitive meeting of the two sides at senior level. The weather again proved a spoil-sport, although the game did take place. But with Carrick-on-Shannon and Cloone water logged the County Board was forced to switch the game outside the county and use the facilities of the Kenagh G.A.A. Club in Longford – a most unusual situation in National League history. This was extremely disappointing for everyone involved in Leitrim G.A.A., because hosting Kerry in Carrick-on-Shannon would have been an historic occasion. In Kenagh, Leitrim put in a good first half showing, but the kingdom turned the screws in the second half and ran out comprehensive winners.

This compulsory switching of the game emphasised the need to have all-weather facilities within the county and it was something that was very much on the agenda at county and club level in ensuing years.

In the third round Armagh had an easy victory over us on their home ground, but in the refixture against Limerick, Leitrim put up a much improved performance, scoring 2-10 – much higher than our match average – but still losing out by conceding 2-16. The team showed further improvement against Louth in Cloone and delighted the home followers with a well deserved draw. This gutsy showing had supporters back in big numbers for the clash against Wicklow in Aughrim, where Leitrim avenged the defeat of the previous year. In the final two games, against London and Antrim, Leitrim played cohesive football, winning both by substantial margins.

So the National League had been satisfactory enough – we had finished on a high with three wins in a row and two of the teams that had defeated Leitrim – Kerry and Armagh – were to be the All-Ireland finalists later in the year, with Armagh going into the history books and capturing the Sam Maguire.

The Connacht Championship would be one with a difference in 2002, as Sligo would travel to Gaelic Park to play New York. This was a gala occasion as Sligo people from home and from throughout the United States converged on the Big Apple to see Sligo record an eight point win. Leitrim County Board had a keen interest, not

Leitrim's management team of Declan Bohan, Declan Rowley and Pat Donohue discuss arrangements with County Board Secretary Seamus Gallagher.

Photo by Willie Donnellan

Frank Keegan, Chairman Leitrim Supporters: Ann Keegan; Sean Faughnan; Tommy Moran M.C.; Eleanor Shanley; Charlie McGettigan. Frank and Sean were the main organisers of the event in The Galtymore in London, ably assisted by Ann on the night.

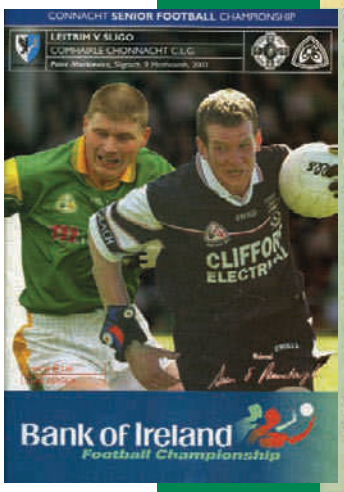
only in the game, but in the numerous events surrounding the fixture, as the following year, 2003, would see Leitrim make the journey on an agreed rota basis.

But for 2002 the main overseas focus was on London, where Leitrim would meet the home side in Ruislip. Confidence was high, especially due to the easy victory in the National League, but Leitrim were taking no chances and settled into the task of coming away with a victory, which they did on a 0-15 to 0- 10 scoreline. The supporters were happy and enjoyed the celebrations arranged by the Leitrim followers in London.

Preparations were then geared for the semi-final clash with Sligo in Markievicz Park and the homesters operating in Division I of the National League were tipped to pip Leitrim. In fact, Sligo had a comfortable 2-13 to 2-4 victory against a Leitrim side that fought bravely but were hampered by the loss of full back Adrian Charles, whose over enthusiasm as captain of the team led to his dismissal for a very heavy challenge.

So Leitrim looked to the Qualifiers once more and to a home game against Tyrone. Even in mid-summer the deluge of rain left the referee with no option but to abandon the game early in the fist half. At that stage, in the heavy underfoot conditions, Leitrim were holding their own and in fact were two points ahead, but in the refixture a week later were simply no match for the northerners, whose team featured many of those who would win the All-Ireland in the following year. Thus ended the championship campaign for 2002 and now the players and team management would have a long period of inactivity until the FBD League in January and the National Football League in February and March of 2003. However all the players would be busy with championship and league football with their clubs.

Members of Carrick-on-Shannon Fire Brigade pictured operating a pump in an effort to remove some of the surface water from the pitch at Pairc Sean Mac Diarmada.
Photo by Willie Donnellan



Many of the panel of course were involved in inter-county duty with the Under 21 team against Mayo, to whom they lost out in the Championship, which was not played until August 2002. This meant there had been a long break since their participation in the Hastings Cup and made it very difficult for the Under 21 Team Management of Declan Bohan, Pat McWeeney and Thomas Keenan to keep their charges geared up for the clash with Mayo, the specialists in that grade. It was Mayo too that put paid to Leitrim's chances in the Connacht Junior Final. Even with having a bye into the final, Leitrim put in little preparation and so paid the price.

Few realised the commitment involved in being part of a county panel, especially at senior level. There are many demands on time and energy and many sacrifices to be made, especially in regard to diet, physical training, mental preparation and one's general social life. There were calls for players to receive pay for play, but players did not really lead this call. All they wanted was to receive proper treatment in relation to training gear, travel allowances and proper meals after training or games. There were major improvements in all aspects and Leitrim County Board was not lacking in any consideration of its panel of players. Another welcome addition was that county players would be allocated a quota of tickets for games in which they were involved.

The extremely wet summer of 2002 saw the start of the Masonite Senior Championship delayed until late July. The "round-robin" system was now well established and competition in the group and Quarter Final stages was very keen. Eventually Allen Gaels would meet Fenagh St. Caillins in one semi-final and old rivals Glencar/Manorhamilton and Melvin Gaels would come head to head in the other. Amazingly, for the second year in a row both semi-finals finished level – an indication of the high standards in the senior clubs – and after the replays Allen Gaels faced Melvin Gaels in the County Final. The final, in which the Drumshanbo side captured their second title in a row, never lived up

to the quality of the earlier rounds. What Allen Gaels now wanted was to bring home the Shane McGettigan Cup – the Connacht Club trophy – but it was not to be as the Gaels lost out to Crossmolina and Leitrim's wait for a provincial club title still dragged on.

For the teams who failed to reach the Senior Championship Quarter Finals there was a new initiative – the Senior "B" Championship, for the Pat Stenson Memorial Cup, presented to the Board by the Stenson family of Eslin. This proved very competitive and it was neighbouring clubs Carrigallen and Drumreilly – both anxious for a senior title – that met in the final. After an exciting encounter Drumreilly became the first winners of the Senior "B" Championship, bringing home the Pat Stenson Cup.

In The midst of the Championship we mourned the loss of Aughnasheelin footballer Seanie Tubman, whose death shocked us all.

Due to the varying standards of the teams in the Intermediate Championship there were few exciting clashes and it was expected that the two teams relegated from Senior in the previous year – Kiltubrid and Sean O'Heslins – would reach the final. And so it turned out, with Kiltubrid having three points to spare over the Ballinamore side and thus capture the Frank Reynolds Memorial Cup. And so Sean O'Heslins, holders of a record 20 Senior Championships, were in the unusual position of still being graded Intermediate. The club was certainly anxious for a return to the top flight in Leitrim.

In the Junior A championship the first timers were Leitrim Gaels, due to their victory in the Junior "B" the previous year, but they lost out at the semi-final stage to St. Mary's, who went on to record a comprehensive victory over Glencar/Manorhamilton in the final. In a very disappointing Junior "B" Championship the title went to Eslin and while most G.A.A. followers were willing St. Osnat's to success in the Junior "C, they lost out in the Quarter Finals to eventual winners , Dromahair. As had happened so often before, the Under 21 Championship was put on an ever extending long finger and would not be decided until the following year, when it would be divided into A and B sections.

For the Fixtures Committee, under the chairmanship of Paddy Keane, it had been a most frustrating year, due to the enforced cancellation of so many games at all levels, with pitches water-logged and unplayable for many months of the year. With almost two hundred and fifty league matches to be played in the various divisions, it was no surprise that the leagues could not be fully completed before the year-end.

The good news for the club championship was that gate receipts had increased by €30,000 but this was counteracted to some extent by a drop of €13,000 from the Championship Qualifiers due to smaller attendances in 2002. With Golf Classics, other fund raisers and the Supporters Club under Gerry McGovern and Mary Glancy doing trojan work, all of these combined to bring in a total of €100,000 of external revenue to the Board – this was a major achievement and certainly aided treasurer Jim Meehan in balancing the books for the year. In their backing for the county, Leitrim G.A.A. followers had never fallen short.

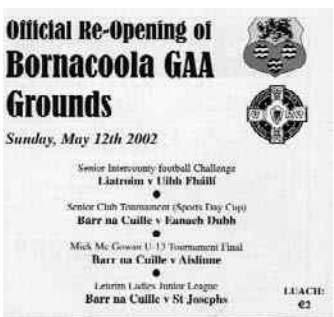
As well as supporting the county financially it should be remembered that many of the same people were equally generous to their own clubs, particularly in relation to the development of club facilities. Carrigallen had recently upgraded their grounds and dressing rooms, while similar projects were underway in Aughawillan, Fenagh, Gortletteragh and in the newly acquired St. Mary's Club ground adjacent to Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada. In Ballinamore, the Sean O'Heslin's Club was also embarking on a major project, with Allen Gaels doing likewise in Drumshanbo. Throughout the county facilities were being continually upgraded, so Club Lottos and a myriad of fund raisers were the order of the day. If warm-hearted generosity could breed success then Leitrim at both club and county level, would deserve many top honours.

The availability of a dedicated training ground for all county teams was becoming more and more of a necessity and with this in mind the County Board had formed a special committee that would fully investigate all possibilities with a view to having practical and definite progress made in the short term.

Comhdháil Bhliantíul 2003, to be held in December 2002, would again see changes in the Executive. Chief among these would be the election of a Rúnaí to replace Seamus Gallagher who was forced to retire from this time consuming position, due to his own work commitments. It was becoming increasingly difficult for any Rúnaí to carry out all the duties involved in the position on a part-time basis and to be using his home as a County Board office. The time was fast approaching when County Boards would simply have to appoint people to full time positions in administration and to provide a dedicated office for County Board use.

But Seamus Gallagher's work for the Board was not complete – with Gerry McGovern he had been appointed to oversee all the arrangements for the visit of the Leitrim team and supporters to New York for the Connacht Championship clash in Gaelic Park on May 4th 2003. This would be a major occasion for the Leitrim people in New York and throughout the United States; for the Leitrim County Board, county team and team management – but even more so for the virtual army of supporters from every corner of Leitrim and beyond who were planning to turn Gaelic Park into a sea of green and gold. The Leitrim players would certainly not lack support!

2002 was the Centenary Year of Comhairle Chonnacht and the Council marked this with many events. A major one was the official opening of new offices in Ballyhaunis that would be the hub of all GAA activity at provincial level in Connacht. The Council also published a comprehensive history of its 100 years of activity, edited by Tommy Moran and compiled by him and a number of enthusiasts from the other Connacht counties. Coiste Chontae Liatroma was honoured that the Connacht GAA Centenary Banquet was held in Leitrim, in The Landmark Hotel, Carrick on Shannon.



May McGushin wife of the late John Tom and Phyllis and Tom Duignan, parents of the late Thomas, pictured at the memorial to honour John Tom and Thomas. The memorial was unveiled in the grounds of Pairc Bárr na Cúille in Dromod.
Photo: Willie Donnellan

At the hub of the Supporters Club Jim Meehan (standing), Gerry McGovern, Eamonn Duignan and Mary Glancy

Jimmy Guckian flies high in an attempt to field the ball during the first half of the National Football League clash with Wicklow in Aughrim as Gary McCloskey moves in to support.
Photo by Willie Donnellan

At the 2003 County Convention, held in December 2002, there were two key figures nominated to succeed Séamus Ó Gallachóir as Rúnaí. Both nominees – Declan Bohan of Bornacoola and Stephen Flynn of Mohill – had excellent G.A.A. pedigrees and had been long serving officers of Bórd na nÓg, as well as serving in different capacities with the Senior Board. Not surprisingly, with such high profile candidates, the vote was a tie. Not wishing to put the Cathaoirleach Michael McGowan into the unenviable position of making a casting vote, Declan Bohan very sportingly agreed to withdraw his name and so Stiofáin Ó Floinn was elected as the new Rúnaí. Gerry McGovern was elected Leas Cathaoirleach, while John Keenan became Leas Rúnaí, the latter making a little bit of family history as his brother Thomas was also on the Executive as Coaching Officer. Despite ailing health Cormac Mac An Ghoill still had the willingness and the energy to continue as Oifigeach Cultúra.

2003 opened for the players and team management with an eye on the up-coming trip to New York, but in the meantime there was serious work to be done. Supporters might be planning for a festive stay in the Big Apple, but for the team party it was a championship game – and one in which defeat simply could not be contemplated.
The FBD League, with games against GMIT, Roscommon and Sligo provided opportunities to experiment, while losing to Limerick, Westmeath, Louth and Antrim in the National Football League ensured there was no complacency. Victories over Offaly, Wicklow and London were some comfort, but the big test would come in New York.

How we wished that we should perhaps have put more effort into the FBD League in previous years and thus maybe have qualified for the final in Gaelic Park - it would have given us a taste for the atmosphere there. But the logical approach each year seemed to have been to test out new players in the FBD rather than make a serious effort to win the "home" final. In recent years Connacht Council had allowed Third-level Colleges in the province to compete in the FBD in order to give them top class training opportunities for the Sigerson Cup. With the colleges being allowed the luxury of first choice on county players, the five counties in the province were weakened considerably as a result, so perhaps if we had fielded our first choice players at all times, then we might have been successful.

Leitrim Supporters Club in New York plan huge welcome for Leitrim team and fans.
Committee members of the Leitrim GAA Supporters Club of New York pictured at the Leitrim Society of New York annual dinner dance in the Astoria World Manor, New York. The committee had left no stone unturned to have everything in place for the Leitrim Senior team and supporters visit for the Leitrim v New York Connacht Championship match in Gaelic Park on Sunday, May 4. The Leitrim Supporters Club of New York are producing a Souvenir Journal for this historic visit by the Leitrim team. This committee and all Leitrim people in New York are really looking forward to meeting the players, supporters, County Board and Connacht officials, family relations and friends at the big match in May.
Photo by Willie Donnellan

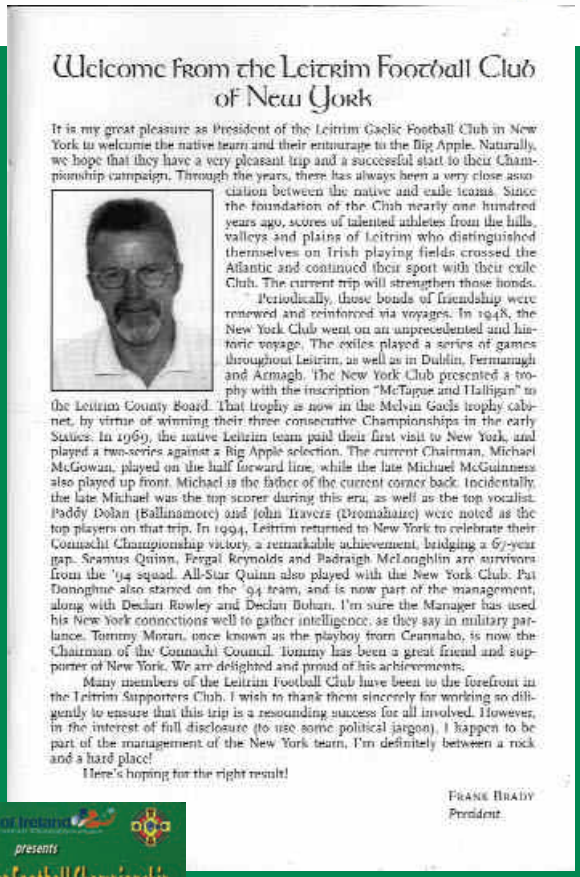
In any event, the die was cast, the draw was made, We would be opening our Connacht Championship campaign across the Atlantic. Team preparations were one thing, putting all the travel and accommodation plans in place were another, so there was constant communication with the New York Board and especially with a specially convened committee of Leitrim exiles. Pat Murray, Mike Carty, Frankie Dwyer, Frank Brady, Mike Dillon, Helen Lavin, Seamus Clarke, Nuala Bohan McGovern and a host of others were putting plans in place for meeting and greeting the Leitrim contingent, for the production of a souvenir journal and especially for a major Leitrim night to be held at "The Terrace on the Park".

Declan Rowley, his selectors, the team and the official party were closeted away from all the hype at an hotel in Rye, north of New York and made only a brief visit to the city, where they were lavishly treated in Rosie O'Grady's Bar and Restaurant by Mike Carty, after a training session at Gaelic Park.

But the Leitrim jerseys were everywhere – on Broadway, in the Bronx, in Queens, on Ellis Island, in Macy's store, in Woodbury Common, on the New York subways, in the yellow cabs and on the tour buses. Manhattan hotels were choc-a-block with Leitrim visitors and Rosie O'Grady's, the Playwright, J.P. Clarke's, Rory Dolan's and all the pubs with any Leitrim connection were bursting at the seams. The mood was jovial, inhibitions were few and the strains of "Lovely Leitrim" drowned out much of the hustle bustle around Times Square, with Teddy Loughlin of Dromahair in an impromptu duet with Marian Harkin MEP. Tickets were snapped up for the game in Gaelic Park and for the Sunday night function, at which all of Leitrim expected to be celebrating victory.

But it was a close call. Full time and the teams were level. This wasn't supposed to be part of the script. The thousands of Leitrim supporters bedecked in every conceivable mixture of green and gold sat in stunned silence, awaiting extra time. One could only guess the atmosphere in the Leitrim dressing room, but the players made a blistering return to the playing field and held off an intense New York onslaught to record a close 0-14 to 0-12 victory. The home side was bitterly disappointed, as the players felt they had let a moment

Mike & Caroline Carty of "Rosie O'Grady's" Seamus Wrynn & Pat Murray – very welcoming to the Leitrim people in New York



Welcome from the Leitrim Football Club of New York

It is my great pleasure as President of the Leitrim Gaelic Football Club in New York to welcome the native team and their entourage to the Big Apple. Naturally, we hope that they have a very pleasant trip and a successful start to their Championship campaign. Through the years, there has always been a very close association between the native and exile teams. Since the foundation of the Club nearly one hundred years ago, scores of talented athletes from the hills, valleys and plains of Leitrim who distinguished themselves on Irish playing fields crossed the Atlantic and continued their sport with their exile Club. The current trip will strengthen those bonds.

Periodically, those bonds of friendship were renewed and reinforced via voyages. In 1948, the New York Club went on an unprecedented and historic voyage. The exiles played a series of games throughout Leitrim, as well as in Dublin, Fermanagh and Armagh. The New York Club presented a trophy with the inscription "McTague and Halligan" to the Leitrim County Board. That trophy is now in the Melvin Gaels trophy cabinet, by virtue of winning their three consecutive Championships in the early Sixties. In 1969, the native Leitrim team paid their first visit to New York, and played a two-series against a Big Apple selection. The current Chairman, Michael McGowan, played on the half forward line, while the late Michael McGuinness also played up front. Michael is the father of the current corner back. Incidentally, the late Michael was the top scorer during this era, as well as the top vocalist. Paddy Dolan (Ballinamore) and John Travers (Dromahaire) were noted as the top players on that trip. In 1994, Leitrim returned to New York to celebrate their Connacht Championship victory, a remarkable achievement, bridging a 67-year gap. Seamus Quinn, Fergal Reynolds and Padraigh McLoughlin are survivors from the '94 squad. All-Star Quinn also played with the New York Club. Pat Donoghue also starred on the '94 team, and is now part of the management, along with Declan Rowley and Declan Bohan. I'm sure the Manager has used his New York connections well to gather intelligence, as they say in military parlance. Tommy Moran, once known as the playboy from Cranmabo, is now the Chairman of the Connacht Council. Tommy has been a great friend and supporter of New York. We are delighted and proud of his achievements.

Many members of the Leitrim Football Club have been to the forefront in the Leitrim Supporters Club. I wish to thank them sincerely for working so diligently to ensure that this trip is a resounding success for all involved. However, in the interest of full disclosure (to use some political jargon), I happen to be part of the management of the New York team, I'm definitely between a rock and a hard place!

Here's hoping for the right result!

FRANK BRADY
President

LEITRIM

Gareth Phelan (1) (Gael na Meilge)

John McKeon (2) (Drumrathaille) | James Phelan (3) (Gael na Meilge) | Michael McGuinness (4) (Munhail)

Niall Gilbane (5) (Gaeil na hAilina) | Shane Foley (6) (Cill Tobair Bride) | Dermot Reynolds (7) (Nuomh Muire)

Paul McDermott (8) (Munhail) | Chris Carroll (9) (Cill Tobair Bride)

Shane Canning (10) (Munhail) | Seamus Quinn (11) (Captain / Gortmrach) | Declan Maxwell (12) (Drumrathaille)

Michael Duignan (13) (Barr-na-Caille) | Oli Maguire (14) (Drumrathaille) | Padraig McLoughlin (15) (Achadh Beag)

Subs: Enda Lyons (16, Carrig Alainn), Michael Greene (17, Naomh Muire), Ian McGreevey (18, Naomh Muire), Fintan McBrien (19, Achadh Beag), Colin Regan (20, Gael na Meilge), Terry Keleghei (21, Gortlitreach), Brendan Brennan (22, Gaeil na Meilge), Kieran Murray (23, Sean Ui h Eilin), Fergal Reynolds (24, Naomh Lomann-Iar Mhi), Donal Brennan (25, Cluain), Adrian McGourty (26, Baile na Glearach), Michael Foley (27, Droim Caothruin), Michael J. McCawley (28, Baile na Glearach), James Holohan (29, Drumrathaille), Kevin Ludlow (30, Eanach Dubh)

Manager: Declan Rowley
Selectors: Declan Bohan, Pat Donohoe

Leitrim's historic visit to New York

Photos by Willie Donnellan

of history for New York G.A.A. slip from their grasp. Among the many delighted Leitrim supporters were the executives of the Masonite Corporation, to whom such an occasion was a really unique experience and they were very proud that the Leitrim team was sponsored by Masonite Ireland. There were many Leitrim heroes on the day and the Galway Crystal Man of the Match Award went to Padraig McLoughlin.

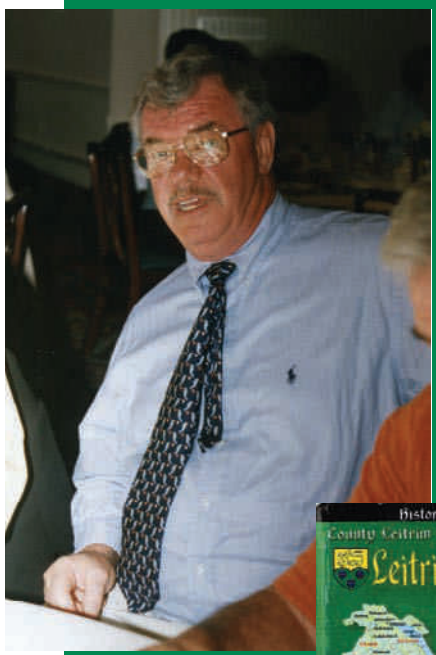
Spirits were high among the 900 plus that attended the Leitrim Function later that evening at the Terrace in the Park Banqueting Hall – and all were relieved that the first hurdle was over and that we could now look forward to the second round clash with Galway at home in Carrick-on-Shannon.

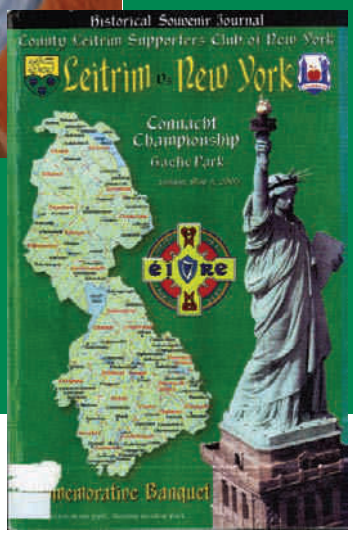
Great credit was due to Comhairle Chonnacht, to New York and Leitrim G.A.A. Boards and to everyone involved in the top class presentation of the game in Gaelic Park. All who travelled for the occasion deeply appreciated the arrangements made and the generosity extended by the host committee in New York and the excellent planning on the home front by Seamus Gallagher and by Gerry McGovern.
Everything related to the trip was handled expertly by a number of Leitrim people in New York and their help, together with the professionalism of James Wrynn, whose father Seamus was a former Ballinamore player, was much acknowledged.

Just weeks after the mass exodus to New York, the supporters were now flocking to Carrick-on-Shannon for the second round clash with Galway but despite a reasonable start we never really got in to the game and lost out by a nine point margin on a 2-13 to 1-7 scoreline.

The Leitrim line-out against Galway

Connacht Council President Tommy Moran presents the Galway Crystal Man of the Match trophy to Leitrim's Padraig McLoughlin.


Former Mayo goalkeeper Eugene Rooney proprietor of "The Irish Pub' on 7th Avenue, New York, always generously welcoming to the Leitrim and other Connacht teams playing in the championship in Gaelic Park.



The Qualifier Draws saw us pitted against neighbours Roscommon, so the game was more like a Connacht Championship encounter then a Qualifier. Leitrim were on top everywhere except where it mattered – on the scoreboard – and we greatly bemoaned losing a game we should have won, with Roscommon winning by a single point 2-9 to 1-11. Championship victories were becoming few and far between.

There was to be further disappointment just weeks later when the Under 21 side put up a serious challenge to Mayo but lost out to the eventual Connacht Champions. It had been difficult for the Under 21 team management to prepare properly, especially as the Hastings Cup Competition that had paved the way for the grooming of players in this grade had not been played that year.

"The Crown" in Cricklewood - a familiar meeting place for Leitrim & other Irish exiles in London

The County Board could see a great need to lessen the fall-out between Minor and Under 21 grades of so many potential inter-county players, so it was wisely decided to form a Development Squad that would be a link at this critical age level and that hopefully many promising Minors would be trained and monitored for future County participation – and particularly to improve championship prospects for our Under 21 teams. Three well known and respected coaches, James Holohan, Martin McGowan and Brian Breen would take charge of the process.

Leitrim did not participate in the Connacht Junior Championship in 2003,but in the Masters Competition featured very strongly under the management of Pat Prior and Terry Shortt and ran a highly rated Dublin team very closely in the All-Ireland Semi-Final. Many of these over 40's players were still active at Junior levels with their clubs and were proving that age need not be a barrier if players keep themselves in reasonable shape physically. It was ironic that while we bemoaned a high fallout of players in the 18-21 age bracket, that we still had many players continuing active participation into their early or mid forties, particularly in rural clubs where their services were invaluable in the fielding of second or third teams.

A total of twenty teams contested the Leitrim Senior Championship in 2003 – the highest number ever – but it was really only in the closing stages that the games became really competitive. Fenagh St, Caillin's still had bitter memories of their County Final defeat to Glencar/Manorhamilton and hoped they could erase all that heartache when they qualified once more for the final, this time against St. Mary's, but they endured further disappointment with the Fenagh Cup finding it's way to Carrick-on-Shannon. Most neutrals would have hoped for a St. Caillins victory, mainly because of so many Fenagh players who had given amazing personal service to their club for many years without much tangible reward.

But all the clubs were fully behind St. Mary's in their effort to capture a Connacht Club title but they came up against a strong Caltra side, powered by the Meehan brothers, who made their own piece of history by winning the Galway Senior Championship for the first time and then going on to win the All-Ireland Club title on St Patrick's Day 2004. This was the road every Leitrim club wanted to travel.

Gortletteragh had a share of veterans on board when clinching the Intermediate title as had Junior "A" Champions, Bornacoola and Junior "B" Champions Allen Gaels, while St. Osnat's, desperate for a county title, failed to get the better of a combination of youthful and veteran players on a strong Mohill side in the Junior "C" Final. The long delayed 2002 Under 21 Championship was only partly finished by April 2003 when Kiltubrid defeated Drumkeeran in the B Final and it was to be September before Drumlea (Drumreilly – Aughawillan) got the better of Oughteragh Gaels (Sean O'Heslin's and Aughnasheelin) after a replay and extra time in the A Final. Drumlea looked odds on to be 2003 champions also but were surprised by a strong Glencar/ Manorhamilton side while Melvin Gaels took the B Championship after a replayed final against Drumkeerin.

Running in tandem with the championships were the various divisions of the league and the Fixtures Committee's efforts in providing a regular series of games for club players were well rewarded with the comprehensive programme being adhered to and with the weather much kinder and grounds more playable than in 2002.

The clubs throughout the county and Leitrim G.A.A. followers everywhere were shocked by the untimely deaths of Peter McGovern of Aughavas and of Jimmy O'Connor of Annaduff.

Peter, whose brothers, Fr. Andy and Paddy Joe, had been star members of the Aughavas championship teams of the 1950's, was a keen Leitrim supporter and had shown this in a very practical way by the joint sponsorship, with his brothers James and Tony, of the county team for a 5 year period, commencing in that historic year, 1994. On the team's many trips to London, Peter always showed welcome generosity and relished in the county's success.

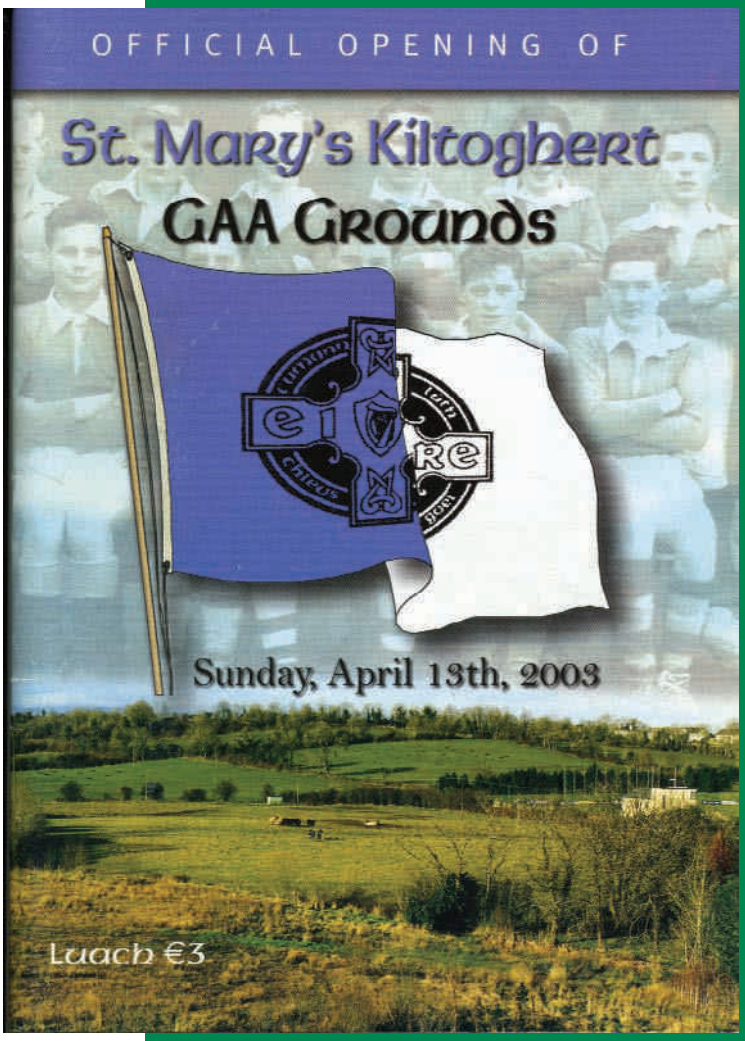
Jimmy was a man who wore his Leitrim heart very much on his sleeve and he had been an avid supporter and an extremely generous sponsor of not only Leitrim, at County Board and Bórd na nÓg level, but many clubs were to benefit from his good-will and from the G.A.A. atmosphere at "Jimmy's of Dromod". A member of a prominent Annaduff G.A.A. family, Jimmy had also been a star player with St. Mel's College, Longford and with his home club.

Since the introduction of sponsorship of county boards and clubs, Leitrim had been extremely fortunate in this regard and with the continuing sponsorship by Masonite and by GWP. Fund raising continued unabated by the Supporters Club and by highly organised committees in various locations, while the Landmark Hotel Carrick-on-Shannon came generously on board with the sponsorship of a Leitrim G.A.A. Golf Classic at the Slieve Russell in Ballyconnell, adding to the income received from the other well established golf classics that continued to be a welcome and substantial boost to the Board's finances. County Treasurer Jim Meehan and Leas Cisteoir John Mulvey again worked hard to maximise general income and to use budgetary restraints. If there was to be any likelihood of the Board's plans for infra-structural development to be successful, then it was important to build up financial resources that would kick-start these ambitious but badly needed improvements.

Fund raising was a big issue at club level also, with club "Lottos" being one of the most common and most fruitful ventures. Year by year there was a marked improvement in playing and spectator facilities throughout the county and 2003 was a special year for the St. Mary's club, with the official opening of their new pitch and club pavilion at Castlecarragh. These facilities were to be of great benefit to the County Board also as they provided parking areas, extra dressing rooms and an ideal warm-up pitch for teams on big match days at Pairc Seán Mac Diarmada.

Local radio was by now part and parcel of county and club G.A.A. activity and both Shannonside Northern Sound and North West Radio were providing excellent coverage, not only of games, but of all activity in the Association throughout the county. Commentators John Lynch and P.J. Leddy, together with a variety of analysts, were bringing live action of all county and major club games to an eager listenership. "*The Leitrim Observer", "The Longford Leader*" and other local media were giving continuing increased print and photographic coverage of our affairs, with the weekly "G.A.A. Club Notes" being an ever expanding communication vehicle for readers at home and particularly for those throughout the country and overseas.

The involvement of so many dedicated G.A.A. members in a wide variety of roles meant that the Association was remaining the focal point of the community in every corner of Leitrim. This activity at club level is the bed-rock of the G.A.A., but year after year Leitrim supporters also yearned for some success on the inter-county scene, just to lift the spirits of Leitrim as a unit. We hoped that maybe



2004 might do just that.
Hope springs eternal in Leitrim. If it did not, then the countless hours of effort by so many people would appear such a waste of time. 2004 was to bring a certain level of reward with a Connacht Junior Championship title and participation in an All-Ireland Junior Final and Replay – there seemed to be some quirky hand of fate still holding us back from national honours.

The Masters team also had the satisfaction of an All-Ireland appearance, but even our Over 40's lost out on that little stroke of luck necessary to be outright winners.

A Connacht Junior, or even an All-Ireland Junior title, would appear well down the pecking order in counties with several Senior All-Irelands, National Leagues, All Star Awards and what have you. But plenty of counties have quite bare trophy cabinets, so when success of any nature does come, it is always more valued.

Leitrim's 1938 team that reached the All-Ireland Junior Final was remembered in glowing terms for years afterwards and had featured high calibre players – as did all the provincial Junior winners. The 1952 side was another much vaunted team and contained stars like Packie McGarty who would feature so strongly at Senior level for many years, especially in successive Connacht Finals that they unfortunately lost out to Galway.

So the Junior team of 2004 were heroes in their own right, with many of them having starred for the county at Minor, Under 21 and also Senior level in preceding years and many had been members of the Development Squad that had been put together just a year earlier – so the work of Martin McGowan, James Holohan and Brian Breen was already bearing fruit.

This on-going process was matched once again by the hard work and generosity of Leitrim supporters and the loyal band of fund-raisers who rallied to the call. Similarly, when the Masters team reached the All-Ireland Final stages, the required finance was generously provided by the Sorahan Brothers of Gortletteragh and Dublin. Leitrim followers flocked to the Masters Final which ended in a thrilling draw and again to the replay when the Dubs edged through by a point. Not only did Leitrim have a strong team, but had a powerhouse of organisation behind it with Terry Shortt, Pat Prior, Patsy Connaughton and Hubie Reynolds forming a top class management structure.

The end of year accounts would indicate the major tasks involved in the running of a County Board. Figures like income of €929,827 and expenditure of €873,845 would have been unheard of, or even dreamt of, some decades previously. In finishing the year with a €55,982 surplus of income over expenditure, the Board indicated it was well in control of financial matters and the surplus would be very necessary to help boost the funds required for the ambitious plans the Board had in relation to the provision of training facilities. But much, much more was going to be needed and it was quite

The victorious Leitrim team that defeated Roscommon *in the Connacht Junior Championship Final. (Back, l to r) James Glancy, Barry Prior, Padraig McGarry, Donnacha Lynch, Daniel Lowe, Dermot Kennedy, David Duignan, Francis Holohan, (Front) Johnny Goldrick, John McWeeney, Barry McWeeney, Kevin Ludlow, James Holohan, John McGuinness, Michael Foley.*
Photo by Willie Donnellan

clear that the prudent management of finances was an ever-pressing topic. The perennial drawback in Leitrim was the miniscule return from club championship receipts in comparison to the more densely populated counties. But one thing was certain – on a comparative basis Leitrim was head and shoulders over many county's in regard to general fund-raising. Once again the counties sponsors, benefactors and supporters were matching their good will and enthusiasm with their generosity.

As always, the main focus for team management and players was the opening round of the Connacht Championship and with a home against Roscommon scheduled for June 20th, all the training and participation in the FBD and National League was really geared towards that fixture. Leitrim versus Roscommon in Carrick-on-Shannon would never lose its appeal among supporters of either county.

Even before the series of games began, Team Manager Declan Rowley and Selectors Pat Prior and Declan Bohan were busy putting training schedules in place and, with the help of Dr. Declan Loftus and the rest of the backroom team, were laying out plans for the physical and mental welfare of the players and to have the strongest panel available for duty at all times. It was now 10 years since we had brought the Nestor cup to Leitrim and everyone was anxious for those glory days to return.

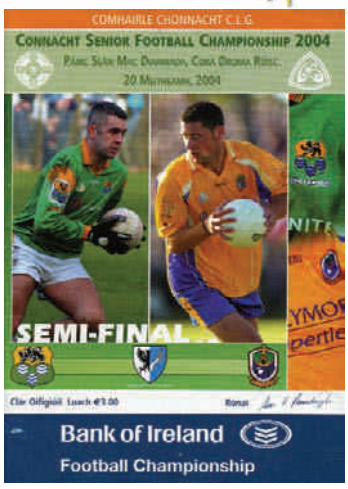
But the year had not started too well, with an indifferent FBD Connacht League campaign that saw Leitrim lose the opening leg to Galway/Mayo IT, then recover slightly to defeat the Defence Forces, before losing heavily to Sligo in the third and final round.

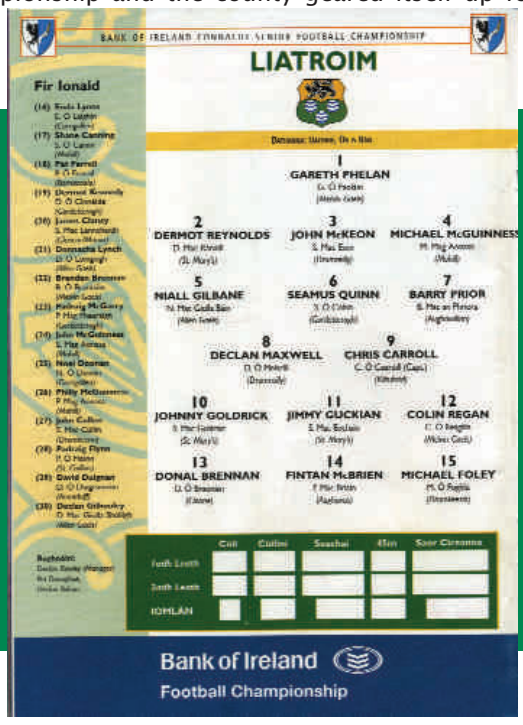
In the National Football League, Leitrim did not set the world alight either, though starting with a win over London in Ruislip. Then followed a heavy defeat to Donegal, before we had the gutsiest performance of the campaign, against Clare in Ennis. Though losing 1-13 to 0-9. Leitrim showed a new spirit and a feature of the game was the marksmanship of Michael Foley, who was to be the county's top scorer for 2004. Then came a comprehensive victory over Carlow, though spirits were dampened again when Offaly inflicted a heavy 2-10 to 0-4 defeat in Carrick-on-Shannon – and the graph went slightly upwards when we drew with Monaghan.

Irrespective of league placings, the final game brought with it an almost championship flavour when Leitrim travelled in huge numbers to Hyde Park to take on Roscommon. Supporters were in full voice when Leitrim led 0-4 to 0-2 at half time, but were silenced in the second half when we could only manage to score one point and the home side won by 0-11 to 0-5.

No matter, with the approach of the championship, the National League game was history and team captain Christopher Carroll and his players eagerly awaited Roscommon's visit to Páirc Séan Mac Diarmada on June 20th. There was a score to be settled following Roscommon's "robbery" of the previous year's championship clash.

Páirc Séan was a cacophony of sound right from the throw-in as rival supporters cheered on their teams. The Roscommon 0-7 to 0-5 half time lead was increased by a Frankie Grehan point before Michael Foley put Leitrim level with a well taken penalty. From then to the end of the game it was a see-saw affair, right until the 35th minute, when Barry Prior fired over the equaliser for Leitrim. Roscommon had one last chance, but to the resounding cheers of the Leitrim contingent, the ball went wide. It finished 0-13 to 1-10, so yet another visit to Hyde ParK beckoned. We were still in the championship and the county geared itself up for the replay.





But the game did not live up to the excitement of the drawn encounter and the little bit of luck needed in the championship was not on our side. Christopher Carroll lorded it at midfield with Declan Maxwell, the defence played its heart out, but the forwards just couldn't get sufficient scores on the board and Roscommon went on to the Connacht Final by virtue of their 1-9 to 0-5 victory.

For Leitrim, it was the Qualifier Draw – and a visit by the Dubs on the following Saturday. This would be the first Leitrim – Dublin championship clash since the All-Ireland Semi-Final of 1994, a game remembered for the display of Seamus Quinn at full back – a display that had earned him an All Star Award that year. Indeed, Seamus was the only Leitrim player from that side of ten years previously to be still lining out with the county. In 1994 Pat Donohoe was midfield for Leitrim – this time he would be on the sideline as a selector with Declan Bohan and Team Manager Declan Rowley.

The Dubs supporters came to Carrick-on-Shannon in their thousands. It was the era of the Celtic Tiger and hotels, restaurants and guest houses enjoyed a bumper weekend – everybody spent money at will. But in Páirc Séan there was no joy for Leitrim, as Dublin had a comfortable 1-13 to 0-4 victory – the Qualifiers were certainly not proving to be a happy hunting ground for Leitrim. This defeat brought further bad news for Leitrim followers as Seamus Quinn called an end to his star-studded career in the green and gold and Team Manager Declan Rowley and selectors Pat Donohoe and Declan Bohan also decided to call it a day.

Yet again we had suffered championship heartbreak, but no one faulted either the players, the team management, the backroom management structure or the County Board. Everybody had given total commitment to the cause. Climbing the championship ladder still remained an Everest for Leitrim.

The Connacht Junior title did bring some consolation for 2004 and all the players valued their provincial medals. The 0-10 to 0-9 victory over Mayo in the opening championship game was but small retribution for the many defeats suffered at their hands in other grades over the years. But it booked us a place in the Connacht Final, where Jimmy Guckian and Michael Foley helped Leitrim to a 0-12 to 1-8 win over Roscommon. When team captain Kevin Ludlow raised the Connacht Junior Championship Cup, at last we had a taste of success.

With fourteen players from that victorious Junior side being drafted into the Senior panel for the clash with Roscommon, hopes were not too high when we faced Kildare with an almost completely new look side in the All-Ireland Semi Final. But these players were well seasoned from under-age level and as part of the County Development Squad and earned their place in the All-Ireland final with a well deserved 1-12 to 0-7 victory.

Could Leitrim do it? Could we at long last capture an All-Ireland title? Certainly Martin McGowan, James Holohan and Brian Breen thought so – they had supreme confidence in their squad and this rubbed off on the players. In an unusual setting for the Leitrim team – Semple Stadium in Thurles – the Leitrim players really showed their worth when coming from behind to earn a draw with a Waterford side that appeared cruising to victory in the last quarter. The equalising point from Damien O'Donnell brought joy and relief to the large Leitrim following.

The replay in Birr never saw us reach the same heights and in the final quarter Waterford took control, scoring five unanswered points to win on a 2-19 to 2-9 scoreline. Losing an All-Ireland Final was a bitter pill to swallow for the players. We wondered were the Gods against us. There was to be no joy at Minor or Under 21 level in the Connacht Championship either, with both sides losing out narrowly to Roscommon.

At club level a comprehensive programme of games was planned and completed by the hard working Coiste Riaracháin na gCluichí Liatroma. It was a very special year for the Annaduff club, winning the Senior Championship and Division IA League title – their championship success after a 76-year wait was particularly sweet. St. Mary's kept to the forefront by taking the Intermediate title, while Annaduff had further glory by winning the Junior A Championship. The Junior B title went to Melvin Gaels and the Junior C to Glencar/Manorhamilton. Once again the Under 21 Championship was completed very late in the year, when Glencar/Manorhamilton defeated Drumlea in the A final and Melvin Gaels got the better of Drumkeerin in the B final.

A noteworthy success in the league competition was the victory of Leitrim Gaels over Drumreilly in the Division V final.

A safe pair of hands! *Leitrim captain Chris Carroll make a fine catch under pressure. Photo by Willie Donnellan*

Kevin Ludlow, captain of the victorious Leitrim Junior Team *is presented with the Connacht Junior Cup by Tommy Moran, President of the Connacht Council, following his side's win over Roscommon in Carrick-on-Shannon . Photo by Willie Donnellan.*

Clubs remained busy at development work also, with Aughnasheelin celebrating the opening of top class new facilities. It was very pleasing for Coiste Chontae Liatroma to witness the ongoing park development all throughout the county. There was great delight also when Leitrim hero Packie McGarty was honoured by Uachtarán CLG Sean Kelly with a President's Award and overseas there were celebrations in New York when the Leitrim club published its Centenary History. This publication was the result of dedicated research work by Frank Brady and by the late Joe McInerney. At home and abroad Leitrim was playing its part in the G.A.A.

The victorious Annaduff team *that defeated Gortletteragh to win the Masonite Senior Championship title in Pairc Sean Mac Diarmada. It is the second time Annaduff won the title, having last won it in 1928.*
Photo by Mick McCormack

The report of the Club Structures Workgroup would have a big bearing on the organisation of club leagues and championships and the County Board had prepared new Bye-Law motions for Convention that would streamline the complete club structures and competitions within the county. What might be appropriate in other counties might not necessarily be of benefit in Leitrim – what was important was to have the best system in place to suit our own needs.

Convention in December 2004 saw the retirement of Stiofáin Ó Floinn as Rúnaí, with his successor being Déaglán Ó Buacháin of Bornacoola. Stephen had been far-seeing, industrious and committed and had made a great impact on G.A.A. affairs at many levels in the county over the years. Declan Bohan, just recently retired as a County Selector, was the ideal choice for Rúnaí, bringing to the position a wealth of experience, not only in administration, but in every sphere of activity in the Association.

Another major change in the county was the appointment of a new Team Manager, Des Dolan of Westmeath, to succeed Declan Rowley. Des was well blooded for the job, having been a star player at club and county level in his native Westmeath and having held numerous coaching and managerial positions in an illustrious career within the G.A.A. Des set to work immediately with selector Pat Prior and from early November 2004 was preparing the team for the 2005 FBD Connacht League and National League and with a long range view on the Connacht Championship clash with Sligo.

A new Team Manager always brings something new to the table, players are re-vitalised and hopes are renewed for inter-county success. With the county progressing well within the broad spectrum of the G.A.A., what supporters and officials and players wanted was to match that progress with tangible results for the green and gold. Irrespective of everything else, we still gauged our overall position on how the senior County team fared.

One thing the G.A.A. people of Leitrim had in abundance was hope. As 2005 approached, we wondered once again, could this be our year.

The world was rocked by the devastating tsunami that claimed hundreds of thousands of lives in the Thailand region at Christmas 2004. The scale of the disaster was utterly horrendous and the Irish people, like all nations throughout the world, were extremely generous in offering financial assistance. It is important to record that the clubs of Leitrim, the County Board and the G.A.A. as a whole were not found wanting in their response to the humanitarian appeals.

A member of the Leitrim Millenium team, Leo Alinden, passed away in 2004. A native of Armagh, Leo had distinguished himself as a player and administrator in Leitrim and had the distinction of playing Railway cup football with both Connacht and Ulster. He was immensely proud to have been selected as a member of the Leitrim Team of the Millenium.

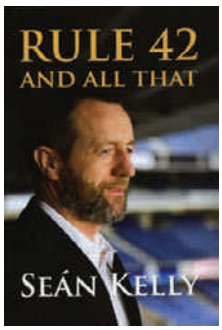
The Donnellan family pictured at the recent launch of the 2005 Leitrim Guardian *(l-r) Sarah Donnellan; Willie Donnellan; Marian Donnellan and Rachel Donnellan. Everyone in Leitrim GAA was delighted that Willie was honoured as Leitrim Guardian Person of the Year.*

The Men in Black

What will be remembered most from 2005 in G.A.A. terms will be the decision at Congress in relation to Rule 42, when Croke Park was opened, on a temporary basis, to rugby and soccer, while the new Lansdowne Road Stadium would be under construction.

Uachtarán CLG Seán Ó Ceallaigh had steered the Association through the debates in the months leading up to Congress and had made a special appeal to all clubs to consider the issue fully and then mandate their delegates to vote according to the clubs decision at County Conventions. Similarly County Boards were asked to mandate county delegations to Congress. The Uachtarán made no secret of his own personal opinion on the matter, but he wanted whatever decision was made to be what the grass-roots members felt was the right thing for the Association to do.

Obviously there were people entrenched in their own views on both sides of the much-debated issue, but Comhdháil CLG 2005, held in Páirc an Chrócaigh passed the motion to temporarily set aside Rule 42, a decision that was accepted with dignity by the Association as a whole.



It was an historic day for the G.A.A. and the decision rightfully brought a wealth of good-will from all quarters to Cumann Lúthchleas Gael.

2005 was to be a major milestone in infrastructural development for the County Board, with the completion of the purchase of the 13.5 acres at Annaduff for the proposed Centre of Excellence. This development would incorporate two full sized pitches with ultra modern ancillary facilities and, when completed, be the training centre for all county teams. This is something that had been in the pipeline for years, but Cathaoirleach Gerry McGovern, Rúnaí Declan Bohan and Development Officer P.J. Meehan, together with the County Executive Committee were anxious to bring this dream to fruition. Costs would be enormous, but the Board felt that this was a logical step forward – and it followed on the lines of similar projects in many other counties.

Allied to the Annaduff development was the proposed major overhaul of the facilities at Páirc Séan Mac Diarmada. Cathaoirleach of the Páirc Séan Mac Diarmada Committee, Joe Flynn, was spearheading the planned erection of a new stand, dressing room complex, media rooms, ultra modern press, radio and TV facilities, meeting rooms, kitchen and catering areas – the whole spectrum of what would be needed to upgrade our county grounds to 21st century standards.

Again costs would be high – but the Board was happy that there would be a generous response to fund-raising appeals – and it also had secured a very generous grant of €300,000 from the Sports Capital Funding, backed up by a further €60,000 from Clár. Every possible avenue of grant aid would be fully sourced and the Board was also happy that there would be substantial funding from Cumann Lúthchleas Gael.

The sheer volume of work involved in steering the development at Annaduff and at Carrick-on-Shannon would be a daunting prospect, but the county was fortunate to have the leadership and the officership required to bring the projects to completion – but there would be a few difficult years ahead particularly in relation to funding of the projects.

On a smaller, but on as important a scale, the clubs in the county were continuing their ongoing pitch and dressing room development and 2005 saw the all-weather grounds at Shane McGettigan Park, Drumshanbo and Sean O'Heslins Park, Ballinamore host their first games on their newly installed surfaces.

The Club Grounds of the Year annual award was proving an incentive to all units to properly maintain their facilities and regular inspections by the County Development Committee ensured that safety measures were in place and continually upgraded. Cumann Lúthchleas Gael could be proud of the major work being done all throughout the county by an army of dedicated club officials and members who were providing top class facilities for present and future generations. Leitrim clubs were very much to the forefront in this regard.

Tom McLoughlin (right) pictured with Declan Bohan, was a long serving Treasurer of Bórd na nÓg in Leitrim and was a dedicated member of and worker with the Fenagh club. His sons Donie, JP and Killian all played inter county football with Leitrim, as well as being stars of the Fenagh team.

2005 also saw the publication of a new G.A.A. Club Manual that would be the template for clubs to properly administer all their affairs, to have defined job specifications for the various officers and to be part and parcel of the ever-improving G.A.A. communication system. Rules passed at Congress would bring many new faces into the officership of the Association at every level over the next few years. It had been decided that no officer could serve longer than five years in any one position, so clubs would be casting their net wide into the community to attract new people of vision to fill these positions. There were arguments for and against this new ruling, but it was generally accepted as being the way forward and would possibly be an incentive for younger members to become officers in the knowledge that the term would be limited in contrast to what they had experienced before, with many clubs and counties having had the same officership personnel for decades. New faces would bring new ideas and a new vibrancy while the retiring officers would still be available to all units for guidance and advice.

With the ever-increasing use of IT within the Association it was imperative for clubs to have within their officer board people skilled in this regard and Leitrim clubs could boast of having some of the most progressive officers in the land. Of particular note was the setting up of club websites and their continual updating that spread the club news throughout the world. Without a doubt, it was the work of Leitrim IT Officer, Brendan Doyle, that had led the way in this regard and he can also be credited with having wireless broadband introduced into Páirc Séan Mac Diarmada and also into all major grounds in Connacht. It was no surprise that Leitrim had been chosen by Cumann Lúthchleas Gael as the lead pilot county for testing the new membership and fixtures software. For the remainder of the decade Leitrim would be the front-runners in the use of IT at club and county level.

The 21st century had certainly become the communications age and this was evident also from the ever-increasing coverage given all games and all G.A.A. activity within the county by "The Leitrim Observer" and other local papers, not only with editorial and pictorial content, but with comprehensive and generous allocation of space for all G.A.A. club notes. Likewise the coverage on local radio continued to increase and Seamus Duke and John Lynch of Shannonside FM and PJ Leddy and Gerry Farry of Ocean FM kept their wide listenership fully up to date with all G.A.A. affairs in Leitrim.

There was a greater buzz too about our leagues and championships, especially in the closing stages and whole communities were bedecked in colour when the local club reached a County Final in any grade. What county supporters wanted to see was the whole of Leitrim awash with green and gold and basking in the success of our county teams.

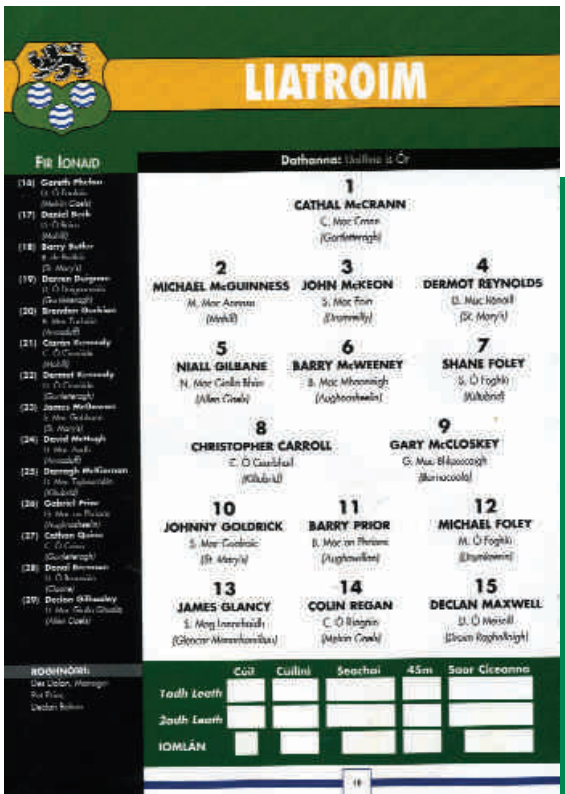
Des Dolan, his management team and players had been busy in preparation from November 2004. There was a new focus on the FBD and other provincial leagues and also the National League in 2005, with the introduction of experimental rules, most of which were aimed at eliminating cynical fouls from both hurling and football. The most talked about was the introduction of a "Sin Bin" – a ten minute suspension from the game for any player yellow carded for specific fouls. This was then changed to the offending player being substituted – but the proposed changes fell by the wayside at Congress.

Leitrim's campaign opened in Castlebar, losing 2-6 to 1-5 to GMIT in the FBD league, with Barry Butler having the unique distinction of being the first Connacht player to be "Sin Binned". The next two FBD games were more successful – against Clare and Sligo – and helped prepare the team for the National League, though with the third level colleges having first call on players it was difficult for the Team Manager to assess his panel to the fullest degree.

However there was satisfaction with how the team performed during the league, with a draw against keen rivals Longford and victories over London, Clare and Roscommon – the latter coming in the final round and setting us up nicely for the championship preparations.

It was important that the Under 21 side would also perform well, because a number of the team were also members of the Senior panel. The team reached the Hastings Cup Final, unluckily losing to Longford by a single point – and being more unfortunate in losing out to Mayo in the Connacht Under 21 Championship after extra time.

We were defending Connacht Junior Champions, but surrendered our title when coming second best to Sligo in Markievicz Park – though the team was much weakened due to the fact that eligible players on the Senior panel were not made available for Junior duty.



Liatroim V Sligeach

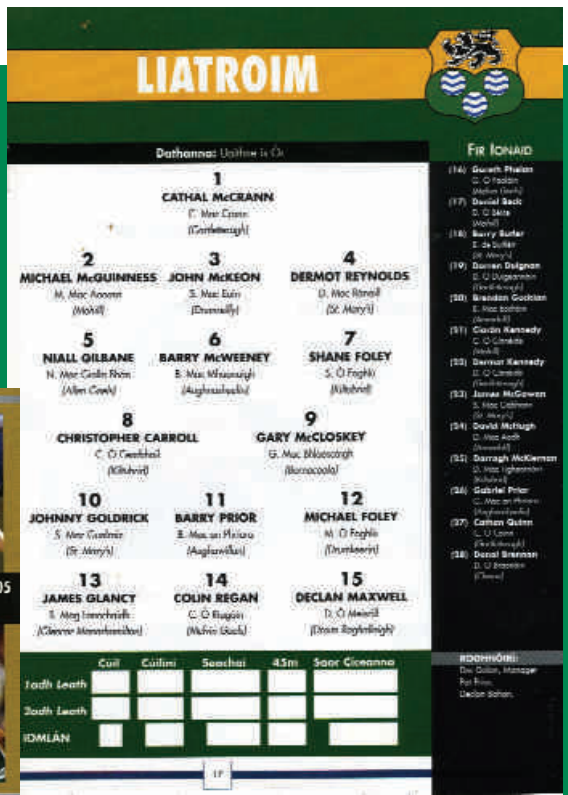
The Leitrim team that defeated Sligo *in the Bank of Ireland Connacht Senior Championship.* ***(Back)*** *James Glancy, Barry McWeeney, Niall Gilbane, Gary McCloskey, Cathal McCrann, Declan Maxwell, John McKeon, Shane Foley.* ***(Front)*** *Johnny Goldrick, Colin Regan, Michael McGuinness, Chris Carroll (captain), Barry Prior, Michael Foley, Dermot Reynolds.*
Photo by Willie Donnellan

The main focus was on the senior clash with Sligo in Páirc Séan Mac Diarmada – and preying on everyone's mind was the fact that it was now fourteen years since we had won a home championship game. Thankfully this was rectified with a convincing 1-11 to 0-9 defeat of Sligo, a game in which John McKeon, Declan Maxwell and Johnny Goldrick were particularly outstanding and in which the Leitrim defence added to its growing reputation.

Live television added to the glamour of the Semi-final against Galway in Pearse Stadium, a game in which Leitrim made an amazing fight-back in the last quarter to come within three points of the Tribesmen, 1-11 to 1-8. From the sideline it appeared that Leitrim realised only too late that the game was there for the taking, so it was a case of another missed championship opportunity.

The players were obviously gutted, but rallied again for the Qualifier game against Meath in Carrick-on-Shannon. But there was to be more heartbreak here, because seconds after David Beck had put Leitrim in the lead well into injury time, substitute Ollie Murphy popped up to score an equaliser. Few teams got second chances against Sean Boylan and Meath over the years – and so it was with Leitrim losing out 1-12 to 1-8 after extra time.

There was little enthusiasm for the Tommy Murphy Cup Competition, but the Board felt compelled to compete for fear of being penalised by losing out on its financial share from the Qualifiers. As it happened this directive from Ard Chomhairle to counties was not followed up on later, but in any event we did travel to Thurles to meet Tipperary and nobody was too disappointed at losing out by a single point. It was generally felt that participation in the Tommy Murphy Cup was detrimental to club football, particularly by delaying the internal Championships.



The highlight of the county championship of 2005 was undoubtedly the capturing of their first ever senior title by Kiltubrid after a unique final pairing with Bornacoola – two clubs that had pursued a step-by-step approach from juvenile level upwards over the preceding years. It was a proud Christopher Carroll who brought the Fenagh Cup back to Kilclare, Keshcarrigan and Drumcong – a just reward for a player who had given his heart to his club and county.

Gerry McGovern, accompanied by Jim Hoey of Masonite Ireland, presents the Fenagh Cup to Kiltubrid Captain, Christopher Carroll.

The whole county rejoiced in Kiltubrid's victory over Coolera – Strandhill in the opening round of the Connacht Club Championship and in their exciting draw with St. Brigid's of Kiltoom in the Semi-final _ and commiserated with them when losing 1-11 to 1-7 in the replay. We had been hoping Kiltubrid might be the team to bring the Shane McGettigan Cup to Leitrim.

The fact that Leitrim had been allowed derogation from Rule 124 brought a new dimension to all the Championships – and this, added to the recommendations of the County Structures Workgroup, left it a very busy year for clubs in both championship and league. Sean McGovern, the Cathaoirleach of the Counties Fixtures Committee and all the members, were certainly providing a platform for competition for players in all grades.

Three players were particularly busy in October – Barry Butler, Barry Prior and Brendan Guckian were all part of the Galway-Mayo IT team that travelled to New York for a replayed FBD Home Final against NUI Galway – the teams had finished level after two replays and two periods of extra time back in January. It was decided by Comhairle Chonnacht and by the sponsors, FBD, to allow both teams to make the trip, with the winners taking on New York on the same weekend.

Despite a number of good performances and some well merited wins in the FBD league since its inception, Leitrim had yet to have outright victory and earn the right to play New York in Gaelic Park – something that would have been a just reward for the efforts of the players.

On the financial front the County Board Treasurer, Jim Meehan, and his assistant John Mulvey, the Supporters Club officers and members, the Dublin Golf Classic Committee, county team sponsors Masonite and an ever extending list of associate sponsors, together with a very generous public, were all continuing to play a key role in their support of all county teams and of the workings of the Board.

Kiltubrid - 2005 Masonite Leitrim Senior Football Champions! The Kiltubrid team and panel pictured their County Final victory over Bornacoola in Pairc Sean Mac Diarmada *Photo by Willie Donnellan*

There was universal sadness at the death, after a prolonged illness, of the county's long serving Oifigeach Cultúra, Cormac Mac an Ghoill.

Bhí grá an-laidir ag Cormac dona bhean chéile Máire agus a chlann, do Chumann Bárr na Cúille, do Liatroim, don a chontae dúchais Tír Chonaill agus do Chumann Lúthchleas Gael.

Cormac was a G.A.A. man through and through and while he will be remembered with great pride by everybody involved in Scór, he will also be remembered for his journalistic work with *The Leitrim Observer, The Longford Leader, The Donegal Democrat* and other newspapers – and for his commitment to his parish, his club, his county and his country. Of special pride to Cormac was the fact that his son, Fergal, a staunch member of the Bornacoola team and club was also one of the leading officials in Páirc an Chrócaigh.

At the annual Comhdháil Liatroma held in November 2005, Cormac was succeeded as Oifigeach Cultúra by another keen Gaelgóir and Scór promoter Séan Ó Súilleabháin, who had been acting as Records Officer with the Board for a long number of years and who had built up a treasure of G.A.A. memorabilia related to our county and our clubs.

There were two further changes at Convention: Sean McGoldrick, the Oifigeach Caidreamh Poiblí and the Oifigeach Ógra Diarmuid Sweeney had decided to retire after terms of dedicated service in their positions and were succeeded by Brendan Doyle and Seamus Mallon, who would maintain the high standards set by Sean and Diarmuid. The Board was fortunate in having such capable people ready and willing to be part of the workings of Coiste Chontae Liatroma.

As the year drew to a close Leitrim looked forward to the development of the new stand and facilities at Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada – and supporters' thoughts were going further into 2006 with a championship meeting with the winners of Mayo and London. The year might be ending but spirits were

The Bornacoola team *Photo by Willie Donnellan*

The Eslin team and panel that defeated Gortletteragh to win the GWP Junior A Championship Final in Pairc Sean Mac Diarmada. *Photo by Willie Donnellan*

Sean McGoldrick the hard working PRO of Coiste Chontae Liatroma

Cormac Mac an Ghoill

being renewed for fresh start.
2006 started well for our footballers with FBD victories over both Sligo and GMIT, though losing out to Galway. The players were in a positive frame of mind heading into the National League and snatched a draw in the opening round in Ballyshannon against a fancied Donegal side. Then followed victories over Clare and London, but form dropped for the remaining games so there was still plenty of hard work to be done before the championship.

Des Dolan, Pat Prior and Declan Bohan and team co-ordinator John Keenan, Dr. Declan Loftus and all the management and backroom personnel had performed their duties well and had the players prepared in every aspect in good time to meet Mayo (who had earlier defeated London) in Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada.

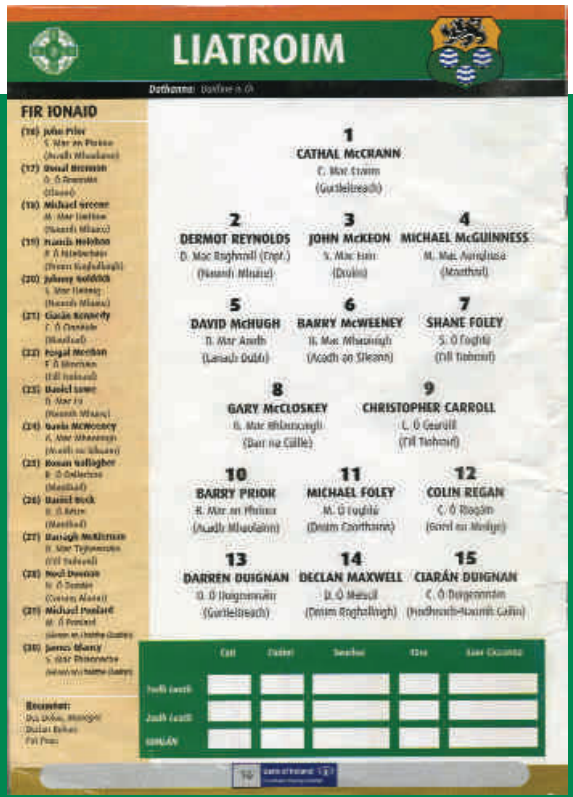
This game was to follow a similar pattern to the championship clash with Galway the previous year. Leitrim only came alive in the final quarter and rocked an, up to then, rampant Mayo side back on their heels, narrowly losing out in the end by a single point, 1-10 to 1-9. Mayo breathed a sigh of relief – as did their management duo of Mickey Moran and John Morrisson, who incidentally only two years later would be in charge of Leitrim.

Drawn against Sligo in the Qualifiers we had good reason to be confident of at long last ending a losing sequence in this part of the All-Ireland Championship. But yet again our dreams came to nought, as Sligo eked out a one-point victory, 1-7 to 0-9. The Qualifier back door remained closed to Leitrim for a further year at least.

Inaugural Cormac McGill Shield Winners
Pictured receiving the Cormac McGill Shield from Ailbhe McGill (centre, daughter of the late Cormac) are Charlie McCartin and Padraig Gaffney, both of Drumreilly GAA club, who won the accolade, awarded for the 'Best Scór Club of the Year' at the Leitrim Scór na nÓg Finals, which were held in Ballinamore.

Photo by Willie Donnellan.

Despite the general apathy towards the Tommy Murphy Cup Competition in 2005, Leitrim decided to whole-heartedly complete the year and had good victories over Tipperary and Carlow, thus qualifying for the Murphy Cup Final in Croke Park, as a curtain raiser to the Dublin-Mayo All-Ireland Semi-Final.



Liatroim V Maigh Eo

Liatroim V Sligeach

The Leitrim team and panel pictured before the Tommy Murphy Cup Final with Louth in Croke.
(Back) *James Glancy, Johnny Goldrick, Declan Maxwell, Ronan Gallagher, Darren Duignan, Philly McGuinness, Barry McWeeney, Cathal McCrann, John Prior, Shane Foley, Chris Carroll, Gary McCloskey, Gavin McWeeney, Michael Greene, David McHugh, Noel Doonan.* ***(Front)*** *Philip Howard, Dara McKiernan, Ciaran Kennedy, Liam Ferguson, Michael Poniard, John McKeon, Ciaran Duignan, Donal Brennan, Barry Prior, Michael McGuinness, Dermot Reynolds, Colin Regan, Michael Foley, Francis Holohan, Daniel Beck, Gary Reynolds.* *Photo by Willie Donnellan*

With such a glamour day beckoning, Leitrim spirits were again lifted and over 6,000 green and gold fans descended on headquarters. Backed by a large Mayo and Connacht contingent in the stands, the Leitrim supporters were in full voice for the clash with Louth but our players never really got into the game and never looked like catching the Leinster side that had set up an early lead. However, the experience was a memorable one for players and supporters, to have a really big day in the new-look Croke Park – and a victory for Mayo over Dublin to gain a place in the All-Ireland left us thinking that maybe our team wasn't that far off the top flight after all. We wondered what might have happened had we really started to play as we could in that championship meeting with Mayo in Carrick-on-Shannon and not have left it to the last thrill a minute final quarter. It appeared that Leitrim was experiencing a lifetime of unfulfilled dreams.

Leitrim's Declan Maxwell rises highest to gather the ball under pressure from a Louth opponent in Croke Park. *Photo by Willie Donnellan*

But as we looked back over the FBD, National League, the championship and Tommy Murphy Cup we could fault no one for any lack of effort – the players and every single person involved with the team had given their all. Nothing had been left to chance and nobody could do any more. It was also important to acknowledge the technical assistance given to team preparation by Brendan Doyle, Thomas Keenan and Pat Feeley in their role as staticians for all Leitrim games. It has to be said that all bases were being covered in having the county side fully prepared.

Leitrim G.A.A. followers were delighted that Des Dolan would remain at the helm for 2007 and would be joined as selectors by Pat Prior, Gerry McLoughlin and John Russell, making up a very capable management structure that would look after the Senior, Junior and Under 21 sides. The 2007 National League would take on a new importance for Leitrim and all other counties, with qualification for the various divisions for 2008 on the agenda following the league campaign. It would be our task to climb up the ladder as high as possible.

For the Connacht Junior Championship the team was again short many eligible players and lost out to eventual provincial champions Roscommon. Many felt that with a proper approach to this grade we could easily have captured another Connacht title – and for Leitrim any title, irrespective of grade, is always a welcome boost to the county and its supporters.

Mohill players and supporters celebrate their victory *over St. Mary's in the Masonite Leitrim Senior Championship Final in Cloone.* *Photo by Willie Donnellan*

Mohill captain and man of the match, *Shane Canning proudly holds the Fenagh Cup aloft after his side's dramatic one point victory over St. Mary's in the Masonite Senior Football Championship in Cloone.* *Photo by Willie Donnellan.*

The timing of the Connacht Under 21 Championship, in the middle of the National League campaign, had not suited Leitrim, as a big number of the players were also on the Senior side and it was no surprise that we lost out to a strong Mayo side that went on to become All-Ireland Champions.

Demands on the top players at Under 21 level were becoming ever greater, being called upon for duty at many levels at club, college and county and there was growing support for calls to have Minor and Under 21 competitions abolished and replaced by an Under 19 grade. However, when this idea did later come before Congress in the form of a motion, it was rather heavily defeated. So the problem would remain – how could players in the 18-21 age group be spared the burn-out of constant training and participation in games?

For the internal club championship, the structures now in place ensured keener competition in all grades. The use of score difference in deciding the teams in the qualifying stages meant that not only results, but actual scores, were of prime importance. So teams gave it their all in their bid to guarantee Quarter Final placings.

Kiltubrid's hopes of claiming a two in a row Senior Championship fell by the wayside and it was Mohill who captured the Fenagh Cup after a great resurgence against a rampant St. Mary's side in the County Final.

Carrigallen win Intermediate crown!
All smiles! Captain Andrew McManus and Man of the Match David Flynn celebrate Carrigallen's victory over neighbours Drumreilly in the GWP Intermediate Championship Final Replay in Cloone.

Photo by Willie Donnellan

The most improved championship in the county for 2006 was the Intermediate, with Carrigallen eventually capturing the Frank Reynolds Cup after an exciting draw and a thrill a minute replay against close neighbours Drumreilly – two teams that were providing key players to the county senior side. Carrigallen went on an impressive run in the Connacht Intermediate Club Championship and were unlucky to lose out in the provincial final, played in atrocious weather conditions, but on a fine surface at Ballinamore Sean O'Heslins new pitch.

Eslin gained promotion to Intermediate status for 2007 by winning the Junior A championship after a high quality final against Annaduff, Leitrim Gaels and St. Osnat's made bold efforts to succeed in the Junior B and C championship finals but weren't strong enough for the winners, St. Mary's and Aughnasheelin.

Sadly, Junior clubs were feeling the pinch of Leitrim's allowed derogation from Rule 129 in relation to club championships – while the derogation did definitely provide more championship outings in the lower grades, it also tended to be of assistance to the stronger clubs, thus making it more difficult for Leitrim Gaels and St. Osnat's to capture county titles.

The Under 21 A Championship was won by Oughteragh Gaels – the Aughnasheelin and Sean O'Heslin's amalgamation that had also won the Minor crown – evidence of quality players in the 17-21 age group in those clubs. Despite this fact, Sean O'Heslins were still finding it difficult to make their mark in the Senior Championship, the last of their record 20 county titles having come back in 1990. In the Under 21 B Final, much delayed for a variety of reasons, Carrigallen would meet Drumkeerin.

The vexed question of clubs agreeing or disagreeing to play the first series of league games without county players did have a detrimental effect on the running of the overall league programme, despite the very best efforts of the County Fixtures Committee and very straight talking from Rúnaí Liatroma, Declan Bohan. The fixture makers were doing their utmost to have their comprehensive programme of league games completed well within the calendar year and well before the bleak, cold, miserable days of December.

A number of motions on the Clár for 2007 Convention would certainly lead to heated debate on the overall issues, bit it was hoped clubs would take an overview of the whole league structure rather than a closed view on what would suit their club best.

From January 1st 2007, in line with the Congress decision on Fixtures & Discipline, the County Fixtures Committee would now become the Competition Control Committee and a new County Hearings Committee would come into being that would deal with any hearings requested by clubs or individuals in relation to proposed disciplinary charges.

With 900 games played at all levels in the county during 2006, it was testament to the dedication of all Leitrim referees that not one fixture had to be postponed or cancelled due to non-availability of a referee. Referees' co-ordinator Seamus Prior and his committee were continuing to do an excellent job in the recruitment, training and monitoring of referees and they could take great satisfaction from the consistent performance of our referees at club level in the county and of our inter-county referees on the provincial and national stage.

The commitment shown by all these officials for our games deserved much more than the occasional outbursts of verbal abuse and scathing criticism levelled at them, even at under-age level. But by and large clubs and supporters did acknowledge the magnificent and fair-minded contribution of our referees to our fixture programme.

Despite their already busy schedule, the referees of the county would readily make themselves available for duty to the organisers of Féile Peil na nÓg which was to be hosted by Leitrim, in conjunction with Roscommon and Sligo, in Summer 2007. The Féile Committee, under the chairmanship of Stephen Flynn and with Patricia Bohan as Secretary, were well into the planning stages in 2006, as were the clubs of the county who would play host to visiting clubs for this major sporting event.

There was much nostalgia in September 2006 when the dressing rooms, press box and kitchens at Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada were demolished, in preparation for the work on the new stand that would bring our county venue into the modern era for players and spectators. Since 1964 these facilities had been developed from humble beginnings by men of vision who toiled in much more difficult times to give us a county headquarters for our games, our players and our patrons. The old dressing rooms were now gone, but the memories of great players and great games would remain.

The plans for the ultra modern 3,000 seater stand together with all the ancillary facilities would bring many a headache to the County Board and to the Development Sub-Committee and Finance Sub-Committee – who were also heavily involved in the work on the Centre of Excellence at Annaduff. Their pain was eased somewhat by generous grant and other financial aid from the Sports Capital Funding Department, the G.A.A. National Infrastructure and Safety Committee, from Cumann Lúthchleas Gael itself and from Comhairle Chonnacht.

Coiste Chontae Liatroma had also embarked on a major fund-raising venture to help defray some of the cost involved. A novel "Teams that built the Stand" project appealed to the county' supporters and to the general public to make financial contributions towards the work and thus earn a place on the "teams". Appeals were also made for corporate donations and for the naming rights of the new stand.

When one considers that all the county officers and committee members involved were also charged with the general administration of the Board's affairs and with the fielding of inter-county teams, the workload on everyone was immense. But there were no complaints – a true indication of the quality of people masterminding the Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada project, the Centre of Excellence and everything related to the overall progress of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael in the county. It was little wonder that Leitrim G.A.A. people responded with whole-hearted generosity.

What was of major help to the Board from an administrative point of view was the employment of two administrative workers and two environmental workers at Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada under the very worthwhile Community Employment Project funded by FÁS.

Leitrim continued to lead the way in Information Technology, with the further development of the county G.A.A. website that was acknowledged in media circles to be the best in the country. This website was having almost 600 "hits" per day during the championship season and even in the relatively quite month of November 101,380 pages of information were served to visitors logging on to ***leitrimgaa.ie***

The year also saw Cumann Peil Gael na mBan in the county continue its progress and enjoying widespread support from all Leitrim Gaels, particularly in the All-Ireland Junior Final at Páirc an Chrócaigh when a spirited and talented team unfortunately lost out to Sligo.

It was an unusual scenario for Leitrim to have had two teams feature on a Croke Park programme in the same year. We hoped it would be the forerunner of other such occasions for the county.

Footballing referee Frank Flynn receiving his "Best New Referee" award from Uachtarán CLG Seán Ó Ceallaigh in 2006.

Frank is pictured in footballing action with his club against Ballinamore Sean O'Heslins.
Other players in picture are Seamus Quinn, Peter Reynolds and sharp-shooter Liam Conlon.

In 2007 Leitrim made a very welcome and joyous return to Páirc an Chrócaigh when the county at large was there in force for the All-Ireland Intermediate Cumann Peil Gael na mBan final. The disappointment of the previous year's Junior defeat was forgotten when Team Captain Sinéad Brennan raised the Mary Quinn Cup on the Hogan Stand. It was a victory fully deserved by a team of immense talent, determination and fighting spirit. Little wonder that five players were nominated for Lady All Star Awards, with Sarah McLoughlin being selected on the All Star fifteen.

The victory was particularly memorable for Anne Marie Cox and Maeve Quinn who now had Intermediate All-Ireland to add to their Juniors from eighteen years previously. Their longevity at the top level of football was a testament to their personal talents and to the training methods and team managements involved in Cumann Peil Gael na mBan Liatroma. It was also significant that Maeve Quinn should be a member of the team that captured the All-Ireland trophy named in honour of her late mother.

The occasion was a special one too for the Brennan family from Cloone, with three sisters featuring on the team and their father Damien acting as a vital part of the management structure. Winning an All-Ireland was a memorable milestone for the families of all the girls involved – families steeped in the G.A.A. who were playing a real role in the affairs of their own G.A.A. clubs.

The dedication and generosity of Leitrim G.A.A. folk was evident in 2007, not only from the support shown all county teams, but in the magnificent response to the County Board's appeal to "Get on the Team". People needed little prompting to respond to the call to support the building work of the new stand and facilities at Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada, something that was a great morale booster to the county officers.

Particularly satisfying to the Board was the willingness of the McGovern Brothers – the former county team sponsors – to again show their magnanimity by a very generous financial contribution for the naming rights of the new stand for a period of ten years. It was a proud day for the McGovern family, for the Board, for the Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada Committee and for all of Leitrim when Ardán Mhic Shamhráin was officially opened on the day of the championship meeting with Galway.

The cranes were in place and the building work in steady progression during the playing of the FBD and National League games, so Páirc Naomh Mhuire in Cloone hosted all county home fixtures with great aplomb. The Cloone club had always been generous in providing playing and training facilities for all county teams and later in 2007 were to unveil a very welcome new addition to their facilities – the installation of state of the art lighting system suitable for the playing of even inter-county fixtures. This was a very bold initiative by the progressive club and one that would be of great benefit to the Board and to Cumann Lúthchleas Gael.

The FBD League became a stop/start affair with the weather proving a spoilsport for many of the fixtures, the same scenario happened during the National League, with even the Leitrim-London games in Ruislip falling foul of the elements. Despite everything we managed to gain eight points from the seven league fixtures and qualified for Division III for 2008. It had been a very competitive campaign with counties anxious to stay above the drop zone of Division IV that would see them lose the right to compete in the championship qualifiers.

When championship time came along, travelling to Ruislip was no novelty for the Leitrim team who were happy to return home with a four-point victory 1-12 to 2-5. So preparations were upped for the clash with Galway on June 24th, a game that was arousing more interest than usual in the county, as it would also mark the official opening of Ardán Mhic Shamhráin.

Aughnasheelin's All-Ireland winning ballad group *who had the honour of performing in Croke Park on St Patrick's Day. Pictured are (l-r) Brendan Sammon, Cait Cullen, Declan Sammon, Sinead Egan and Sile McNulty.*

But Team Manager Des Dolan, selectors Gerry McLoughlin, Pat Prior and John Russell and all involved with the team were focusing their attention completely on what would happen on the field. Memories of the close encounter of two years previously in Pearse Stadium were still very much in players' minds – they were determined to play to their potential for the full seventy minutes this time.

In the days preceding the game, hundreds of interested supporters joined Cathaoirleach Gerry McGovern, Rúnaí Declan Bohan and other officers on conducted tours of the McGovern Stand. They were to marvel, not only at the magnificent seated area for 3,000 patrons, but also at the quality of facilities within the stand from the dressing rooms, to the press, radio, video and TV facilities, to the media room, VIP areas, meeting rooms, catering areas, referees' rooms, First Aid Stations –the whole spectrum of what was now needed in the modern age. The views of Leitrim people would be naturally coloured in relation to the standard of what had been provided – but these views were to be quickly endorsed by visiting teams, supporters and particularly by everyone involved in the journalistic element of our games. Leitrim County Board could justly be proud of what had been achieved and Joe Flynn, George O'Toole and all the members of the Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada Committee could take a well deserved bow.

Despite the best efforts of the players they were to lose out by four points to the Galway men on a 0-17 to 1-10 scoreline. Leitrim had been finding it difficult over the years to get past the twelve or thirteen point scoring total, which is seldom sufficient to win championship encounters.

CONNACHT FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP 2007

Fáilte go Páirc Seán Mac Diarmada

A Chairde

Mar Cathaoirleacht ar Coiste Chontae Liatroma is mór an athais orm fáilte a fhearadh romhaibh gath duinne go léir cuig Páirc Seán Mac Diarmada, Cara Droma Ruisc inniu.

On behalf of Leitrim County Board I would like to welcome all patrons to this historic occasion here in Páirc Seán Mac Diarmada as the unveiling of our new stand coincides with the Connacht minor championship semi-final between Sligo and Galway and the visit of Galway for the Connacht Senior Championship semi final clash with Leitrim, and I would like also to welcome the Sligo and Galway County Board Officials, players and supporters, who have travelled here to Carrick on Shannon for this very important game; I hope you have an enjoyable time and a safe journey home.

It is somewhat of a coincidence that Galway are here today because on that historic day in 1964 when Páirc Seán Mac Diarmada was officially opened Galway were also part of the programme as they played Down on that occasion.

Since then this famous venue affectionally known locally as Páirc Seán has been the home of Leitrim GAA and has been the location for many historic occasions both at club and county level. The affection with which Páirc Seán is held by Leitrim supporters is a tribute to the men who in the early 1960s made the decision to purchase and develop the grounds and we must never forget the trojan work that these people have done in the upkeep and maintenance of the grounds as Páirc Seán has always been in prime condition for championship games.

Today we unveil our new stand which replaces the old dressing rooms complex; a complex which was one of the most modern at that time has served the needs of Leitrim GAA well over the last 40 years and has so many happy memories for many Leitrim people The opening of the stand today is the culmination of many people's work but space restrictions will not allow me to name everybody individually. To the members of the County Board executive, to the people who sat on the various committees, our planning and development committee, our finance committee, our information technology committee, our financial advisers, I say a big thank you.

Gerry McGovern, Chairman of Leitrim County Board, with Colin Regan, left, and Philip Howard, both from the Senior team, at the launch of an innovative fundraising drive, titled "Get on the Team", by Leitrim GAA supporters and Board to raise 1.5 million to complete the redevelopment of Páirc Seán Mac Diarmada.

I also want to thank the Infrastructure and Safety committee in Croke Park for their extremely valuable advice and help the planning of this development

To the supporters of Leitrim GAA, whether based in the county, in Dublin or in any part of Ireland as well as our supporters worldwide who have supported this project, I say thank you. To the company that advised, designed and planned the project, and also took charge of the construction, Arkpt Engineering Consultancy Ltd, (Carrick-on-Shannon and Sligo) the finished product is a tribute to their engineering skills. I thank you for a job well done

To the main Contractors M I Construction I want to say well done. The quality of the workmanship speaks for itself.

Over the years the presentation of the venue has been the responsibility of the Páirc Seán committee and as they resume their duties today I want to thank them sincerely for many years of dedicated service and once again the presentation of the venue today a tribute to them.

In conclusion I want to pay a special tribute to the St Mary's club for the enormous level of co-operation that we received over the period of the construction of the stand

Finally I want to thank the Páirc Seán Committee, all our officials and stewards for their assistance and co-operation in staging today's fixture

Gearoid MacSamhrain
Cathaoirleach, Coiste Chontae Liatroma

7

Leitrim's players work out in the new look Pairc Sean Mac Diarmada in preparation for their Connacht Championship clash with Galway.

Photo by Willie Donnellan

GAA President Nickey Brennan cuts the tape on the new Ardan Mhic Samhrain Achadh Easa *watched by Leitrim and Connacht GAA officials, guests and members of the clergy.*

Photo by Willie Donnellan

Two weeks later Leitrim did up their score, to a higher 1-14, only to lose out to Donegal by two points in probably the most exciting Qualifier game in which we had been involved. Ardán Mhic Shamhráin resounded with Leitrim cheers when a movement between Barry McWeeney, Declan Maxwell and Shane Canning set up James Glancy for a wondrous goal in the sixth minute of injury time to put the sides level; 1-11 each. Both teams played their hearts out in extra time, but Donegal came out on top by 1-16 to 1-14. If ever a Leitrim team deserved a victory this was the one.

Always busy in Páirc Seán –
(L to R) Eddie Guckian, Padraig Griffin, Patsy Guckian, Shane Butler, Joe Flynn (chairman Páirc Mac Diarmada committee)

But there is no sentiment in sport and you have to be able to make your own luck. We had been gaining a reputation of being difficult to beat at home in Carrick-on-Shannon, a mantra oft repeated by visiting team managers. They possibly all believed we would be difficult to beat – but they still expected to win all the same. On occasion some of them would throw in an extra barb – "Well, we'd need to be beating teams like Leitrim if we intend to go places".

It should be remembered that "teams like Leitrim" make the same efforts and sacrifices as all others, as do the team management, the County Board – everybody involved in any aspect of National League and championship preparations. Thankfully, this has always been accepted by the people whose opinions really matter – the proud Leitrim G.A.A. supporters.

Gerry McLoughlin and Pat Prior had taken on the added role of managing the County Under 21 team, while John Russell took charge of the Junior side, but the Under 21's were to lose out to Galway and the Juniors to Mayo – this one after extra time. The Board wisely decided that there would be separate management in place for the different grades in 2008, as it was nigh impossible for those involved with the senior side to find the time, nor the energy, to focus on other grades at the same time.

Des Dolan, who had thankfully recovered from a prolonged illness in 2007, was reappointed Senior Manager for 2008, with Pat Prior being joined as selectors by 1994 stars Noel Moran and Brian Breen, while another hero from that Connacht Championship side, George Dugdale would be team trainer. The Connacht Championship rota would see Leitrim travel again to Gaelic Park to play New York. Nobody had forgotten that scary scenario five years previously when we scraped through only after extra time – so preparations would begin long before the end of 2007.

The report of the Task Force on Club Competitions was accepted willingly by all units in the county and this led to a very satisfactory and comprehensive fixture calendar for all of 2007. Particularly satisfying to clubs was the playing of the Shield Competitions in the May-June period. Also gratifying was the approach taken by the CCC in relation to the derogation from Rule 129, which dealt with the championship status of players – clubs would still have the privilege of fielding more teams while the Derogation did not militate too heavily against solely Junior clubs.

The club Championship was played in almost wintry conditions during what the calendar said were the Summer months, but attendances were good and the quality of the games of a high standard. St. Mary's regained the Senior title, while Drumreilly overcame the disappointment of 2006 to become Intermediate Champions. Annaduff also had a change of luck in the Junior A Final, while Leitrim Gaels made their own piece of history by capturing the Junior B title on a Tuesday night under lights in Cloone. No one would have begrudged St. Osnat's victory in the Junior C Final but they lost out to a St. Mary's, a club that showed its great playing resources by having fielded four teams in the different championship grades.

Leitrim 1977 Under 21 team honoured
Leitrim's 1977 Connacht Under 21 Championship winning team were honoured by the Connacht GAA Council when they were paraded as the guests of honours at the Connacht Final in Hyde Park. The team was presented to the crowd between the Senior and Minor Finals before being honoured after the game at a special function in Roscommon. Above is a picture of the Leitrim panel and management at the function in Roscommon. ***(Back)*** *Gene Logan (on behalf of brother Gerry), Hugh Murphy, Padraig Leydon (on behalf of brother Sean RIP), Frank Bohan, Mel Kiernan, Frank Smith, Gerry Beirne, Joey Bird, Sean Crossan, Eamon McGowan (Selector).* ***(Middle)*** *Michael Martin, Seamus Mulhern, Michael Flynn, Leo Logan, Liam Flynn, Tommy Mulvey, Dessie McNulty, George O'Toole (1977 County Board Chairman), Joe Sorohan (Selector).* ***(Front)*** *Pat Flynn, James Flynn, Pat McDonald, Thomas McKenna, Frank Holohan (Captain), Joe Reynolds, Charlie Kelly, Mickey Quinn and Michael McGowan (Manager). Photo by Michael McCormack*

The Under 21 Championship was one of the most competitive for years, with Glencar/Manorhamilton winning the A title and Dromahair deservedly capturing the B section.

During the leagues and championships the new County Hearings Committee, comprising of Chairman Tommy Moran, Secretary Diarmuid Sweeney, Pat Egan and former county chairmen Des Quinn and Sean Murray dealt with a total of 19 hearings from individuals and clubs and all the decisions were accepted in good faith. Sean McGovern, who had served as Cathaoirleach of the Fixtures Committee would later be added to the panel of the County Hearings Committee.

One of the highlights of the year was undoubtedly the successful hosting of Féile Peil na nÓg and the new stand at Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada certainly added greatly to the Opening Ceremony and for the facilitating of spectators and teams for all the finals at the conclusion of a great G.A.A. weekend. All the clubs in the county, together with their counterparts in Roscommon and Sligo, had done the Féile movement proud.

As well as coping with the intensity of his role as Development Officer, P.J. Meehan was playing a leading part in all the development work at Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada and also at the Centre of Excellence at Annaduff, where Jons Ltd., the contractor on the N4 Rooskey & Dromod by-pass had left the site ready for the laying of the two training pitches. P.J. Meehan had also worked closely with the Construction Engineer on the Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada project, Stephen Garvey and with the main contractors M & I Construction. The great contribution made by the Development Officer was mirrored by all the officers of the Board, particularly in such an eventful year.

The "5 Year Rule" in relation to county and club officers was beginning to take effect in Leitrim. Jim Meehan, who had been an excellent Treasurer; John Keenan who had doubled as Assistant Secretary and Team Co-ordinator and Assistant Treasurer John Mulvey had all completed their term. Fortunately the rule does not debar an officer from embarking on a different role, so Jim Meehan succeeded Gerry Mahon as Ard Chomhairle delegate, while John Mulvey took on the position of Cisteoir, with John Keenan as his assistant. Thankfully the Board would still benefit from the expertise and enthusiasm of these dedicated officials.

***Gerry Mahon**, who had served in numerous positions with Coiste Liatroma, including a long term as the county's Árd Chomhairle delegate.*

***Fundraising for the development of their new pitch & facilities at Aughnasheelin**: Sean Mahon, Philip Roddy, Peter Meehan, Frank McNulty, Brendan Sammon and John Gormley.John was club treasurer at the time of his death in 2007 and had also served as chairman and secretary. Frank Mc Nulty who died the following year had a great passion for his club and worked extremely hard in the promotion of the GAA.*

Gerry Mahon had decided to retire as an officer of the Board, having been the Connacht Council delegate for a number of years; then Cathaoirleach of Coiste Liatroma before going on to a record 24 year term as Ard Chomhairle delegate. At national level Gerry had twice been appointed to An Coiste Bainistí and also was prominent on a number of other high profile committees at Páirc an Chrócaigh. He had served Leitrim well.

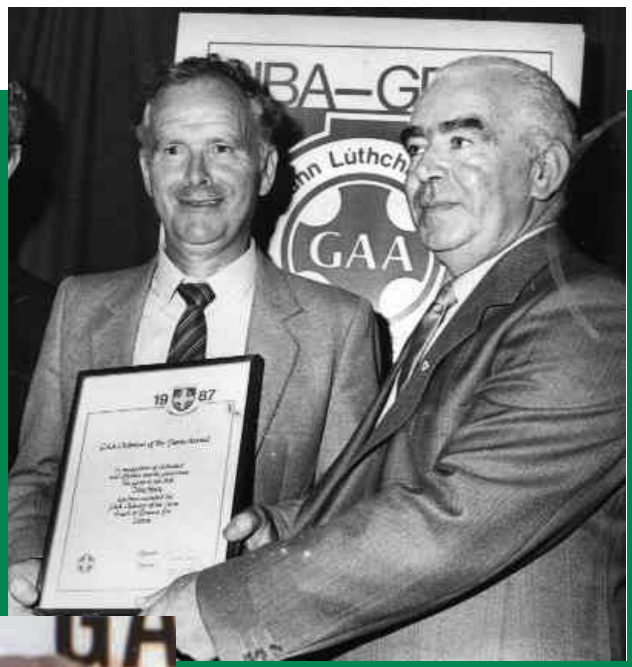
There would be a new Uachtarán CLG Liatroma following the 2008 Convention, when Michael McGowan, a man of many parts with his club and his county, was elected as successor to Sean Maxwell, who was completing his three year term. Sean had been a proud holder of the post, just as he had been proud to serve the county as a former Cisteoir and as an officer of Coiste Scór Liatroma.

Páirc an Chrócaigh would also see a major change at the end of 2007, when Liam O Maolmhichil would bring an end to his term as Ard-Stiurthoir. Liam, always willing to be of special assistance to Coiste Chontae Liatroma, had led the Association since 1979 and had overseen decades of progress – none more important than the re-development of the magnificent Páirc an Chrócaigh Stadium.

Liam was being succeeded as Ard-Stiurthoir by a man held in the highest regard by all members of Cumann Luthchleas Gael, Páraic Ó Dufaigh of Monaghan. The Association would continue to be in safe hands.

Leitrim G.A.A. was in safe hands too, and the county could be proud of many advances made in 2007

The quality of the work done by the officers and all involved with the Board, whether in the day to day running of affairs, the management of county teams, the coaching of our young players, the ever-improving IT packages, the development of facilities —- every aspect of the Association —- was recognised by continuing support of our sponsors



***John Harte** of Ballinamore Sean O'Heslins Club won a Presidents Award from Uachtarán Nioclás Ó Braonáin. Twenty years earlier he had recieved the Clubman of the year Award from President John Dowling. Long service typified club members like John*

Masonite and others and by generous good will from so many.

The county was receiving very positive reaction in media circles, to which The Leitrim Post newspaper, edited by county player Colin Regan, was a welcome addition.

Again in 2008 we would be in the eye of the media when we embarked on another championship outing to Gaelic Park.

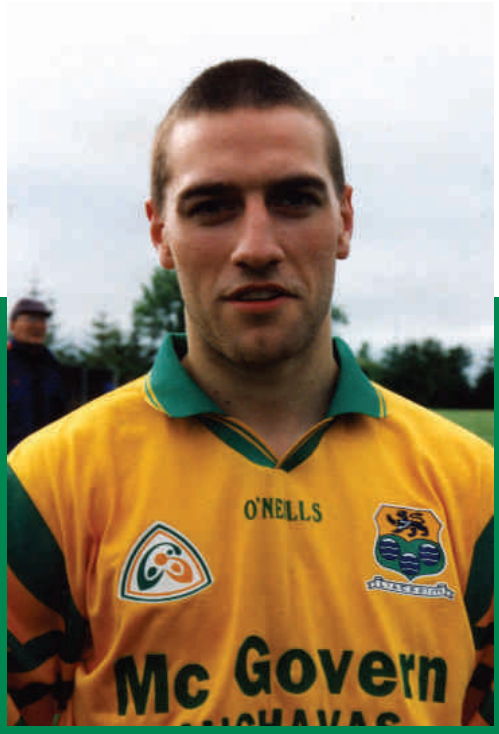
Two men who had both served as Leitrim county secretaries died within two days of each other in December 2007.

Tomás Ó Ríordáin had been Rúnaí of Coiste Liatroma from 1953 to 1970 and had also been particularly prominent in the promotion of hurling at all levels in the county as well as being a football and hurler of note. Despite moving to Dublin with his family in 1971, Tomás never lost his love of the county nor of his former club, St. Mary's, and was extremely proud to be elected as Uachtarán CLG Liatroma.

Tony McGowan acted as Rúnaí from 1971 to 1979 and as Cathaoirleach from 1986 to 1995 and worked both positions with his unbridled enthusiasm and infectious optimism for the success of Leitrim. He was justifiably very proud to have led the county to the long awaited Connacht Championship success of 1994. Tony had also played a leading role in the coaching of teams with Drumshanbo Vocational School, with his club Allen Gaels and with Leitrim.

Also passing to his reward in 2007 was Pat Cull President of the Aughnasheelin Club who had served hes club and county as a player, referee and an administrator of the highest caliber.

Liam Ó Maolmhichíl retired as Árd Stúirthóir in 2007, after an illustrious period in office



Journalist, Melvin Gaels & Leitirm Footballer - Colin Regan, who was editor of the Leitrim Post

The work of these exemplary G.A.A. members and the full support of their families deserve to be acknowledged by all followers of the G.A.A. in Leitrim.

Over the winter of 2007 plans were being formulated for another onslaught on the "Big Apple".

The green and gold army was getting itself ready to march again. Talk of a possible end to the Celtic Tiger era was not going to deter our supporters. The money would come from somewhere. If Leitrim had a championship game in New York, then the supporters would be there in force.

The Leitrim Masters

All Ireland B Finalists 2006

All Ireland B Finalists 2008

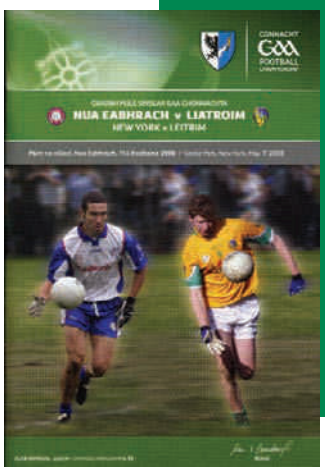
Leitrim players and Team Management were very conscious of the good-will towards them from every quarter and were determined to repay the faith and generosity of their supporters by the best preparations possible for 2008. The year did start well, with good team performances in the FBD League. This would kick start the National League campaign in Division III which would see us meet Sligo, Down, Longford, Wexford, Limerick, Louth and Fermanagh.

However, results did not go our way and we finished on just four points which saw us relegated to Division IV for 2009, but more importantly it meant we had lost our right to compete in the Championship Qualifiers in 2008. So it was to be all or nothing, there would be no second chances.

This would put extra pressure on everyone involved, it was like being back to the pre-qualifier days when your whole year depended on the result of your championship outing. One strike and you were out.

It was not difficult for Des Dolan and his selectors to motivate the players for the Connacht Championship in Gaelic Park. While New York was still without a championship victory, Leitrim would take no chances – especially after the very close call of 2003.

The players were put through their paces with an intensive training regime and with the usual quota of challenge games, while the doctor and the physiotherapist made every effort to have everyone in top physical condition. Playing New York is probably a no-win situation. There is little acknowledgement for a victory, while defeat would be considered catastrophic.



Leitrim

Enda Lyons (1) *(Carrigallen)*

Dermot Reynolds (2) *(St. Mary's)* | John McKeon (3) *(Drumreilly)* | Shane Foley (4) *(Killarbrid)*

Gary Reynolds (5) *(Carrigallen)* | Michael McGuinness (6) *(Mohill)* | Barry Prior (7) *(Aughamullan)*

Gary McCloskey (8) *(Captain/Bornacoola)* | Michael Duignan (9) *(Bornacoola)*

Emlyn Mulligan (10) *(Melvin Gaels)* | Declan Maxwell (11) *(Drumreilly)* | Ciaran Duignan (12) *(Na Fianna)*

Donal Brennan (13) *(Cloone)* | David O'Connor (14) *(Bornacoola)* | Michael Foley (15) *(Kilcock)*

Subs: Noel Gill (16, Killukin), Aidan O'Flynn (17, Glencar/Manorhamilton), Ciaran Kennedy (18, Mohill), Stephen Feeney (19, Drumlosetin), James Glancy (20, St Mary's), Francis Hodolan (21, Drumreilly), Ronan Gallagher (22, Mohill), Barry McWeeney (23, Aughnasheelin), Niall Murray (24, Aughnasheelin), Philip McGuinness (25, Mohill), Darren Duignan (26, Gortletteragh), Fintan McBrien (27, Aughavas), Colin Regan (28, Melvin Gaels), Philip Howard (29, Bornacoola), James Glancy (30, Glencar/Manorhamilton).

Manager: Tiew Dolan

Selectors: Brian Breen, Noel Moran, Pat Prior

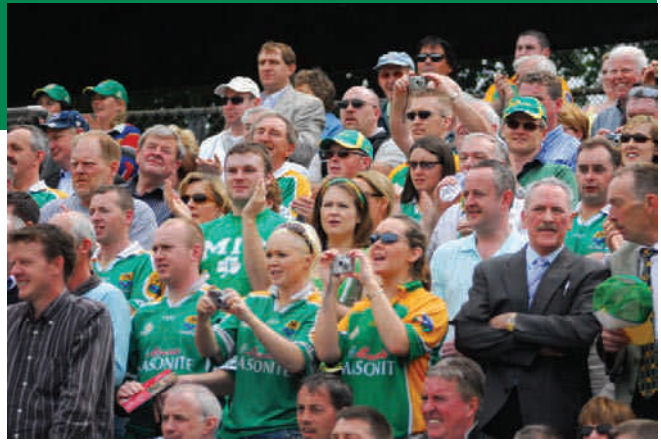
The Leitrim team who defeated New York. Back, from left *- Gary Reynolds, Emlyn Mulligan, Donal Brennan, David O'Connor, John McKeon, Declan Maxwell, Barry Prior, Michael McGuinness and Michael Duignan.* ***Front, from left*** *- Michael Foley, Ciaran Duignan, Gary McCloskey, Enda Lyons, Shane Foley and Dermot Reynolds.*

In preparation for the trip many Leitrim exiles were again busy, ensuring everything was in place in New York, while there was the same welcoming generosity from business people who would host and cater for the team party. Pride in the county was as evident in our people overseas as it was back home in Leitrim. There was a great gathering of Gaels at the Leitrim Club Function in Rory Dolan's on the eve of the game and nobody would hear of defeat.

New York, with three Leitrim born players in their panel – Johnny Goldrick, Sean Munnelly and Alan Foley (whose brother Michael was lining out for Leitrim) – did put up a very physical challenge but team captain Gary McCluskey and his Bornacoola clubmate Michael

On the bench, waiting for the call at Gaelic Park.

Leitrim faces in the sunshine at Gaelic Park.



Emlyn Mulligan receives the Galway Crystal Man of the Match award from Connacht GAA President, Lauri Quinn.

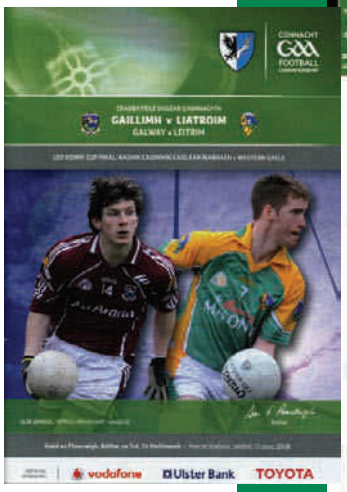
Leitrim in the Press Box at Gaelic Park - Pictured left to right, Seamus Gallagher, Shannonside; Kevin Blessing, Ocean FM; John Lynch, Shannonside; Brendan Doyle, Leitrim PRO and Donal O'Grady, Leitrim Observer.

Duignan controlled midfield and laid the foundation for a Leitrim victory, 0-17 to 0-6. Emlyn Mulligan made an impressive championship debut for the county, scoring 11 points; ten of them from frees and won the "Man of the Match" award. Our two midfielders had been stars of the Connacht Minor Championship team of 1998, as had John McKeon, Michael McGuinness and Michael Foley and like all of the other team members were certainly giving a long-time commitment to Leitrim.

Pearse Stadium again beckoned for the Semi-final clash with Galway. As was expected, all G.A.A. pundits predicted a reasonable performance from Leitrim but in the end a victory for Galway.

And so it turned out. After a rather shaky start, during which we felt the bad old days against Galway were back again, the team recovered its composure and did put up a magnificent challenge, but not enough to trouble Galway who emerged victorious by four points, 2-14 to 1-13. There would have been a time when this result would have been considered progress by Leitrim's supporters, but no more. The air of disappointment was palpable as we trooped out of Salthill, realising that our championship aspirations were ended for another year.

So it was on to the more humble Tommy Murphy Competition, in which we defeated Clare, but lost out in the second round to Wicklow playing at home in Aughrim. If Leitrim had a reputation for being difficult to beat in Carrick-on-Shannon, the same could be said of Wicklow playing at home in Aughrim. We could not begrudge them their victory because, like ourselves, they had been trying against the odds for years. The arrival of Mick O'Dwyer as Team Manager had put a new pep in their step and they were gradually ridding themselves of the tag of being perpetual under-dogs.



With senior inter-county activity ended for the year, Team Manager Des Dolan decided to retire, as did selectors Noel Moran and Brian Breen and Team Trainer George Dugdale. They were disappointed not to have brought a Connacht title to Leitrim, but it certainly wasn't from any lack of effort or dedication on their part.

Again the County Board had a major task in hand. Putting a new Team Manager in place for any county is something that cannot be taken lightly. Players want leadership that they can look up to and respect, the Board wants a management structure that will work hand in hand with the officers, while supporters want a team manager with an established reputation who would have the qualities necessary to bring at least a Connacht title.

The appointment of Mickey Moran as Team Manager, with John Morrison as his assistant certainly ticked all the boxes. Both men threw themselves into their task with relish, attending club championship games throughout the summer of 2008, making note of potential county panellists. They had the distinct advantage of having had hands-on experience of Connacht football through their time with Mayo, so the expectations of the county rose again.

The Under 21 team, under the management of Liam Higgins, Pat McWeeney, Michael Maguire and John Russell had won the Hastings Cup Shield competition early in the year and were well ready for the championship clash with Mayo in Castlebar. A late scoring spurt from the home side once again put paid to our hopes at this level. The Under 21 grade was one in which Leitrim had always performed well, with very little between us and the other Connacht counties, even Mayo or Galway. For some reason the gap seemed to widen when it came to senior level –probably the main cause of this was the limited numbers available to us due to our small population. Salthill, for example, had a larger base from which to choose then Leitrim had.

Despite the numbers available, Leitrim did appear to have quality in its playing force and this was emphasised when the Junior team, with no senior panellists involved, defeated Sligo and only lost to Roscommon after extra time in the Connacht Final. Provincial success would have been well merited by these Junior players who played their hearts out in the Leitrim jersey, under the shrewd management of Martin

Gerry McGovern welcomes new manager Mickey Moran and trainer John Morrison to Pairc Sean MacDiarmada.

McGowan and Jams Holohan, two mentors who were well acquainted with possibly every club player in the county. There was no possibility of anyone with potential slipping through the net.

The Competitions Control Committee was doing its utmost to have a Master Fixtures Plan in place for 2008 and there was much consultation with clubs on this matter. It was agreed that the club championship would not commence until Leitrim had completed its inter-county activity. This decision would appear to indicate that not many expected the county to be involved in the championship on the third Sunday of September!

***Aughnasheelin 2008 GWP Intermediate Champions. Back**, from left - Gary Prior, Barry McWeeney, Michael Creamer, Gavin Sammon, Colm McGirl, Fergal McManus, Sean Mahon, Joe McGirl, Cathal Prior, Gabriel Prior, Brendan Mulvey, Cathal Egan, Niall Murray, Liam Higgins (Manager), Seamus McWeeney. **Middle row**, from left - Alan Dooner, Sean McWeeney, Conor Flynn, Wayne Gilgunn (Capt.), Damien Gilheaney, Paul Earley, Gavin McWeeney and Joe Earley. **Front** - Paddy McManus, Fergal Earley, Tommy Tubman, Vincent Mulvey and Derek Moran. Photo Therese Foy.*

Despite not commencing until early August, the championship was concluded in record time and also despite a hold-up due to an appeal to Connacht Council over a decision made by the County Hearings Committee.

Glencar/Manorhamilton, who had staged a miraculous second half come back against a dominant St. Mary's in the semi-final, went on to defeat Bornacoola with relative ease in the final and brought home the Fenagh Cup. Competition was very keen in the Intermediate Championship that came to have a fitting climax with an exciting final between Aughnasheelin and Drumkeerin. Play swung from end to end but a late rally from Aughnasheelin saw them capture the Frank Reynolds Cup and bring great joy to a club that was making great strides from Primary School and Juvenile level upwards.

Eslin once again qualified for the Junior A Final but had to give way to a very talented Allen Gaels side, while Kiltubrid took the Junior B title following a one point victory over Glencar/Manorhamilton

Following heartbreaking defeats in the Junior C Finals of the previous three years, St. Osnat's finally got their day in the sun with their victory over Drumreilly. This was but just reward for club members like Pat McDonald who had shown great dedication in the promotion of the game since the club's foundation. Neither the losers Drumreilly, nor any club in the county, begrudged St. Osnat's their well deserved victory.

The Shield and League Competitions provided plenty of activity for all clubs in 2008 also, so there was general satisfaction at the regular programme of games for club players in every grade. This, of course, is one of the most important roles of the County Board in any county and Leitrim was carrying this out very successfully.

LIATROIM

1
Colin Gilligan
(Coilin Mac Giolligain)
Glencar/Manorhamilton

2 **Mark Mitchell** (Marc O Mistéil) Gortletteragh
3 **Dermot Reynolds** (Diarmuid Mac Raghnaill) Annaduff
4 **Jason Conroy** (Jason Mac Chonraoi) Bornacoola
5 **Kieran O Flynn** (Ciaran O Floinn) Glencar/Manorhamilton
6 **Gary Reynolds** (Garrai Mac Raghnaill) Carrigallen
7 **James Campbell** (Seamus O Cathamhaoil) Gortletteragh
8 **Stephen Conaty** (Stiofain O Connachtaigh) Mohill
9 **James McGrail** (Seamus Mac Ghrail) St. Mary's
10 **David O'Connor** (Daibhid O Conchubhair) Bornacoola
11 **Conor Sheridan** (Conchur O Siordain) Melvin Gaels
12 **Ray Mulvey** (Reamonn O Muilbhigh) St. Mary's
13 **Ronan Kennedy** (Ronan O Cinneide) Mohill
14 **Emlyn Mulligan** (Emlyn O Maolagain) Melvin Gaels
15 **Stephen O'Hara** (Stiofain O Heara) Glencar/Manorhamilton

FIR IONAID: 16 **Donal Butler** (Domhnaill de Buitleir) St. Mary's, 17 **Conor McLoughlin** (Conchur Mac Lochlainn) Annaduff, 18 **David McGovern** (Daibhid Mac Samhrain) St. Peregrines (BAC), 19 **Darren McLoughlin** (Darren Mac Lochlainn) Mohill, 20 **Paul Og Ferguson** (Pol Og Mac Fheargháis) Melvin Gaels, 21 **Stephen Gilhooley** (Stiofain Mac Giollahuallaigh) Drumkeerin, 22 **Emmet Mahon** (Eimead O Mathuna) Kiltubrid, 23 **Colin Ryan** (Coilin O Riain) Glencar/Manorhamilton, 24 **James McWeeney** (Seamus Mac Suibhne) **Sean O Heslins.**

Bainisteoir: Liam Higgins. **Roghnóiri**: Pat McWeeney, John Russell, Michael Maguire.

With the increasing number of games there were greater demands on the services of our referees and it was frustrating for the officers of the County Referees Committee that a small number of clubs were not responding to calls to provide referees to the Board. In contrast there were other clubs with a big number of referees and who were aware of their responsibilities in this regard. Fortunately also, all Leitrim referees officiated for many years, out of a sense of duty to Coiste Chontae Liatroma. Recruitment of new referees continued to be one of the major headaches of those involved in the control of our competitions – but this was a country-wide problem and not confined to Leitrim.

The St. Osnat's, Glencar team who won their first adult title when they defeated Drumreilly to win the GWP Junior C championship. *The team was Liam Burke, Vincent McDonald, Vincent Kelly, Eamon Curneen, Ryan Burke, Davey Clancy, Dermot Clancy, Shane Feehily, Stephen Kerrigan, Daniel McGuire, Liam Burke Jnr., Alan Kelly, Eugene McSharry, Finbarr Twomey and Alan Gilligan. Subs - Noel Connolly, Erris Gallagher, Bernie Oates and Martin Zwierski. Photo Therese Foy.*

A glance at the Board's Financial Accounts for 2008 showed a total income of €1,300,553 and expenditure of €1,309,240, giving some indication of the work involved for the Treasurers and all the others charged with this responsibility. Sponsorship from Masonite and other companies, together with the efforts of the Supporters Club and the promoters of the Dublin and other Golf Classics, added to G.A.A. grants and corporate and individual donations all helped to keep the Board afloat. There was talk of a general economic downturn – one wondered what would happen if there came a subsequent reduction in financial support for the county.

In July 2008 the clubs of the county agreed that the €250,000 from the NISC Counties Fund should go directly towards the County Training Centre at Annaduff. The County Board, with the expert guidance of Eamonn Duignan, was continuing to make representation to Páirc an Chrócaigh for more financial support for the outstanding amount due on the development at Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada and also for the work at Annaduff. The funding of both of these projects would continue to be one of the major challenges for Coiste Chontae Liatroma for some time to come.

The broad spectrum of all G.A.A. affairs in the county were being expertly placed in the public domain by PRO Brendan Doyle while photo galleries, podcasts and video highlights of county and club games were available to the world at large. Brendan's IT skills and expertise were being widely used by the diverse branches of the Association within the county to great effect.

One of the stars of the great 1950's Leitrim Team, Frankie Quinn of Cloone and Dublin, died in late 2008. He was a renowned corner back in the Green and Gold.

Man of the Match*, Finbarr Twomey, Manager Pat McDonald and Captain Dermot Clancy - very happy after their win over Drumreilly.*

Sadly, 2008 also saw the passing of two former county administrators who had given unselfish service to the Board for a long number of years. Indeed, their whole lives had been lived for the good of the G.A.A. at club, county, provincial and national level.

Jack McNally had a sixteen year term as Cisteoir between 1955 and 1971 at a time when managing the meagre finances available to the Board was a particular challenge. Jack was also closely involved with the progress of the great Leitrim teams of that era and took great pride in his county and in his beloved Annaduff club.

George O'Toole, Cathaoirleach from 1971 to 1980, who later became Uachtarán Comhairle Chonnacht and a G.A.A. Trustee, would be particularly remembered for his work with Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada from its original development in 1964 right up to his close involvement with the project at the time of his death. A feature of his term as Cathaoirleach was his encouragement to clubs to develop their grounds and facilities.

With the high profile management team of Mickey Moran and John Morrison in place, the whole G.A.A. body in Leitrim looked forward eagerly to 2009, and the red-letter day for the coming year was Sunday May 31st - yet another mouth watering clash in Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada with our friendly foes, Roscommon.

On the sideline
BAINISTEOIR
BAINISTEOIR

In 2009 Cumann Lúthchleas Gael would celebrate the 125th Anniversary of its founding.

By any standards this was a major milestone for an organisation whose roots are firmly set in small parish communities.

Back in 1884 the founders probably felt they were responding just to the needs of the time in providing an organisation that would nurture Gaelic games and Gaelic traditions. They could not possibly have foreseen how the G.A.A. would take root and grow and be very much part of the fabric of Irish life one hundred and twenty five years later. That it did, is testament to the generations of men and women who have shown true patriotism and true pride in their local areas and given freely of themselves for the Association.

Any anniversary is a time to take stock, to review the past, to assess the present and to plan for the future.

Just as the G.A.A. has launched a National Strategic Plan for the further expansion and development of the Association, so too Coiste Chontae Liatroma has plans in place to ensure that the vitality of the club units and of the County Board will never lessen.

While 2009 would be a year of commemoration and celebration, from the extravagant and magnificent fireworks celebrations in Páirc an Chrócaigh, to the more humble ceremonies of Lá na gClub throughout the country, the day to day affairs had still to be seen to.

With Team Manager Mickey Moran, Team Trainer John Morrison and Selector Martin McGowan now in charge of team affairs, there was a great air of expectancy throughout the county. The players were bitten by the bug too and there was a great turn-out at training in preparation for the FBD and the National League. Again the Experimental Rules were in place for both competitions and Congress would later decide if the new rules had come to stay,

While the county may have been agog with excitement, Mickey Moran and John Morrison were taking a more cautious approach. They were looking at events long term and, with Martin McGowan, were anxious that all players on the panel would be given an opportunity to stake a place on the team – different lineouts would be used in the various games, until a settled fifteen was established.

If the team management had any doubts about any lack of good-will towards their plans, these would have been quickly dispelled at the launch of the Leitrim Supporters Club in Dublin, when whole-hearted backing was promised to the team, team management and County Board – the passion for the green and gold was as strong as ever with Leitrim supporters.

The first competitive game under the new management was in the FBD league against GMIT, which we lost by a single point. But there was no great despondency, as many new faces were involved, as there were against Galway, who defeated us 0-12 to 0-8. In the final game against Sligo there was more cohesion in the team and Leitrim had a one point victory.

More important than the defeat of Sligo that day was the news that Gary McCloskey had committees himself to Leitrim. Gary had, in the previous year, transferred from Bornacoola to London club Tír Chonaill Gaels, with whom he won a London Senior Championship – so naturally the management of the London team were anxious to have him for their county side. His loss to Leitrim would have been severe, so there was a combined sigh of relief that Gary would continue to don the green and gold.

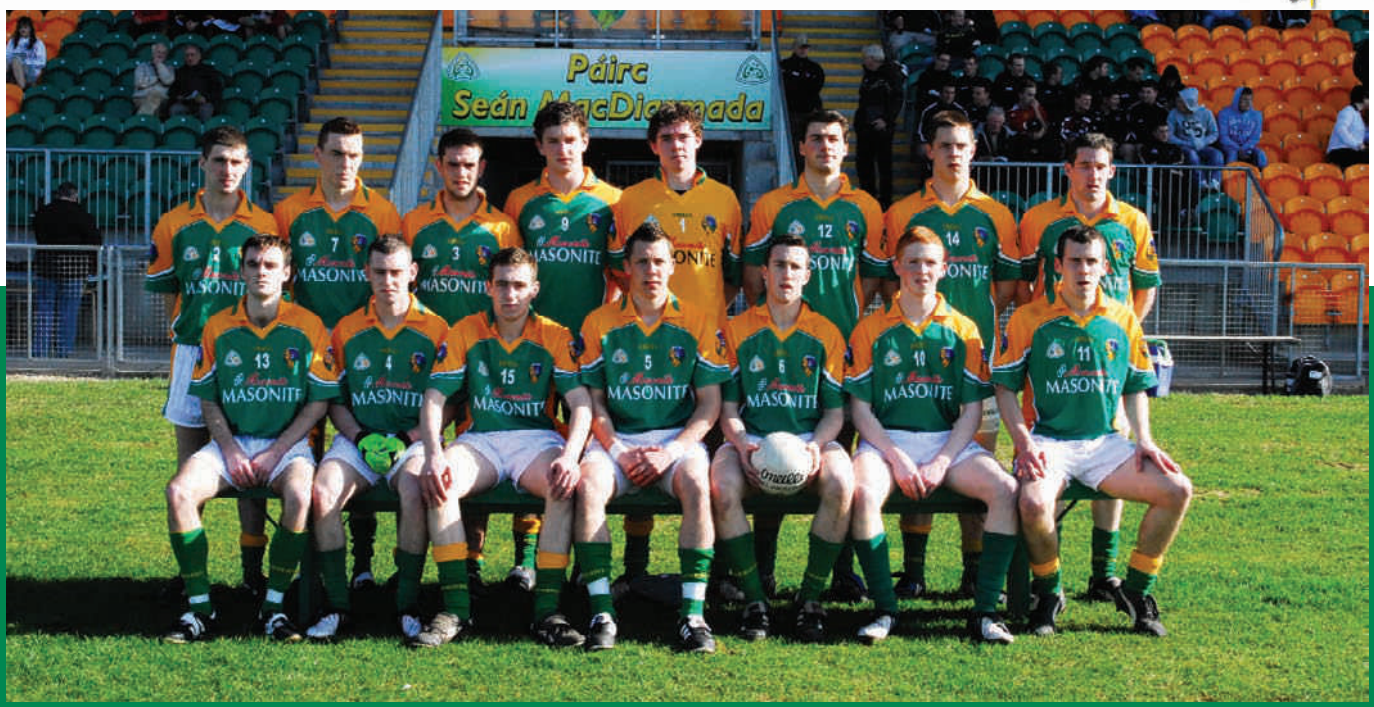
The first target for the year was to gain promotion to Division III of the National League.

The first step was taken in Ruislip with a 2-12 to 2-7 victory over London. An early goal from ace marksman Declan Maxwell had set the game up nicely, but it took a second goal late in the game from debutant Declan Gilhooley to kill off the London challenge. The second round game against Carlow was postponed due to Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada being snowbound, but then followed a severe trouncing by Sligo. There was consternation among Leitrim followers at this defeat, but team management appealed for calm and patience.

The players certainly made up for the insipid performance against Sligo by a much improved showing in defeating Carlow by 1-12 to 0-7 in the re-fixed round two game. Then came a draw with Antrim, with neither side playing up to form. Definite improvement was obvious when we beat Wicklow by two points, but then came a hammer-blow when we lost out to Waterford in Dungarvan. At this stage promotion was very much in the balance – we were depending on other results to go right for us. The victory over Kilkenny was a stroll in the park in Freshford and we finished off the league with a 2-9 to 1-9 defeat of Clare. Though completing the league on a high note, we were too far down the table for promotion with scoring difference taken into account.

With our thoughts now turning to the Connacht Championship, we were rocked by the news that an injury to free-taker and sharpshooter Emlyn Mulligan was long-term and he would be out for the remainder of the year. Losing a player of Emlyn's quality was a body blow, but the players were anxious that they would all make extra special efforts to attempt to compensate for his loss.

Some members of the senior panel were also busy with the Under 21 team that showed good promise early on, but lost out to Roscommon in the Hastings Cup Final. Team Manager Liam Higgins, his selectors and players made intense preparations for the Connacht Championship but were to bemoan many lost scoring opportunities when losing out to Sligo by 0-12 to 0-4. After defeating novel Connacht Championship opponents Fermanagh in the first round, the Junior team lost heavily to Mayo in the Semi-final, much to the disappointment of Martin McGowan.

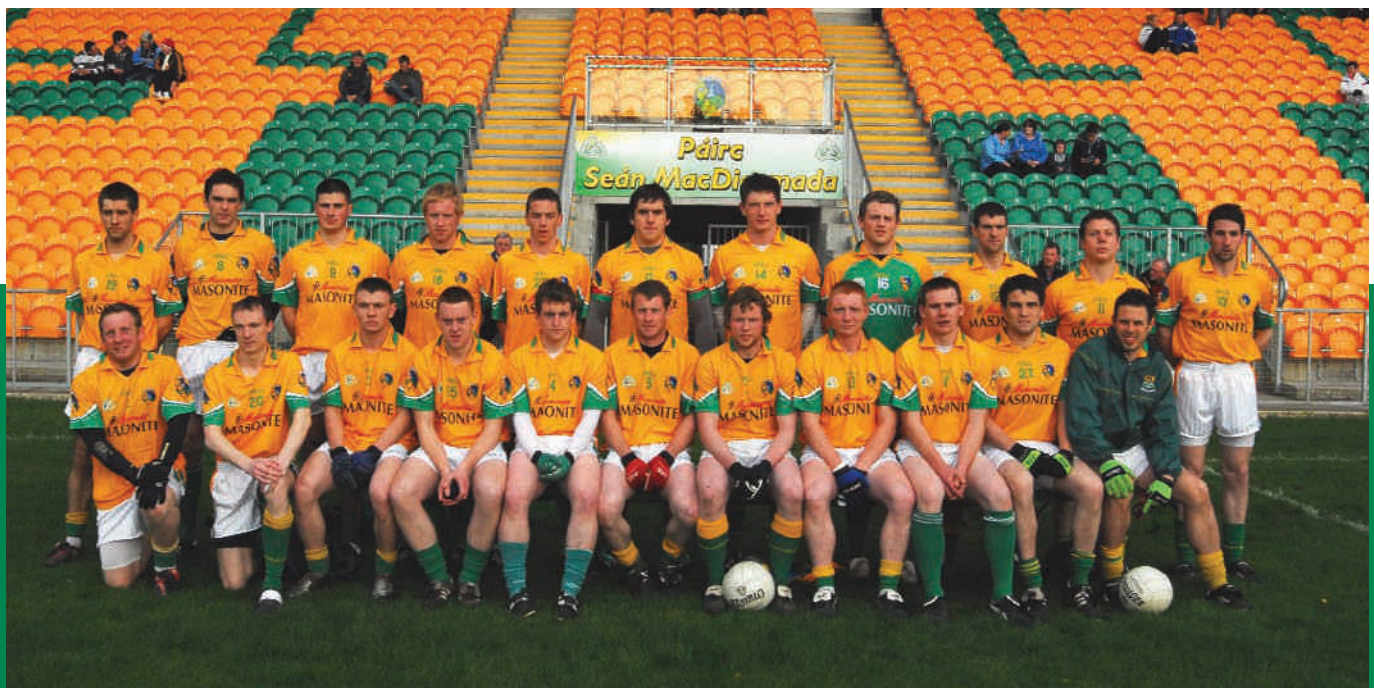


***Leitrim Under 21 team that played Sligo - Back row**, Mark Mitchell, Aiden Dolan, Conor McCauley, Emmet Mahon, Philip Farrelly, David O'Connor, Tomas Beirne and Wayne McKeon. **Front** - Gavin Sammon, Thomas Davitt, Adrian Croal, Paul Brennan, Conor Sheridan (Capt.), Eamon O'Malley and Fergal Clancy.*

So, on the inter-county scene, the focus was very much on May 31st, when we would host keen rivals Roscommon in Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada. This fixture was always one relished by both counties and one that had our home ground bursting at the seams. All along the Leitrim-Roscommon border bragging rights are very important and part of the local folklore.

For the championship campaign the team management reduced the panel to 30 and these included new faces in Colm Clarke, Damien O'Donnell, Paddy McGowan, Ray Cox, Brendan Gallagher from the Lucan Sarsfield club who had declared for Leitrim under the parentage rule and James Holohan who was returning to the panel after a long break. Also back and ready for championship action were Daniel Beck, Shane Canning, Declan Gilhooley, Pat Gilmartin and Noel Doonan. The backbone of the team was again the stalwarts from the past number of seasons.

As the day dawned the rival supporters were out in force, packing the new stand and the terraces. Among the many banners was the now regular "Lurganboy on Tour". The atmosphere was electric.



The Leitrim Junior team that defeated Fermanagh in the Connacht Junior championship. The lineout was - Anthony Conway, Liam Ferguson, David Flynn, Wayne Gilgunn, Aiden Bohan, Stephen Feeney, Ciaran Kennedy, Darren Sweeney, Ronan Gallagher, Wayne McKeon, Sean McGourty, Christopher Prior, Daragh McKiernan, Emmet Mahon and John McGuinness. Subs - Sean Murray, Nigel McGuire, Emmet Lee and Conor O'Rourke.

The Leitrim team and panel defeated by Roscommon in the Connacht Senior championship quarter-final played at Pairc Sean MacDiarmada.

Just 30 seconds after the start Colm Clarke had the debut youngsters dream about – he had the ball in the Roscommon net. Game on! Declan Maxwell, Shane Canning and James Glancy had ripped the Roscommon defence to shreds, before the ball was laid off to Colm, who put the Leitrim followers crazy. But as time wore on Roscommon were clawing their way back into the game, greatly helped by a well taken penalty from Karol Mannion. Calls for a Leitrim penalty went unheeded some minutes later, when substitute David O'Connor appeared to be fouled in the small parallelogram – and then Roscommon goaled again from a rebound to leave the half time score 2-5 to 1-4.

But all was not lost. Within three minutes John McKeon showed his quality as a star player by thundering up the field and right through the Roscommon defence to score one of the great goals of the 2009 All-Ireland Championship. It was tit for tat after that, but Roscommon gradually edged ahead for a 2-13 to 2-9 victory.

The shattered Leitrim players trooped off the field and the supporters bemoaned, yet again, what might have been. It was a great display but once again we were facing the Qualifiers. Team Trainer John Morrison was to rile many Leitrim supporters with subsequent comments that the G.A.A. people of the county needed to adjust their mind-sets, that their negativity was gradually seeping through to the players. If you expect to lose, or just put up a good show, then that's all you will do.

Whatever the cause, victory was apparently still outside our grasp and a seventeen point defeat of our Minor side by Roscommon in the championship did not bring great hope for the future. The County Board itself was very concerned that despite intense coaching and training schedules we were not featuring at either Minor or Under 21 levels over the past years. This would be the subject of much future debate.

One of the goals of the championship! Leitrim captain, John McKeon solos throught the Roscommon defence before unleashing an unstoppable shot to the net and turning away in celebration.

The Qualifier draws dispelled any despair. A home game against neighbours Longford was the ideal opportunity to get back into the championship race. Of course Longford felt happy too – their clashes with Leitrim in recent had always been close. It was all to play for. By half time nothing had changed, the teams were level at 0-7 apiece. In the second half Longford took control of the game, but with four minutes to go there was only two points between them. John McKeon went close to setting up Pat Gilmartin for a goal that might have swung the game Leitrim's way, but a Longford point from David Barden sealed the issue. It finished Longford 0-13, Leitrim 0-10. Hearts were heavy again as we left Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada so we could just imagine the shattered minds of the players and team management who had made such an effort to be really ready for the championship. On reflection, nobody could have done more, so there was no blame-game.

Mickey Moran and John Morrison were anxious to be re-appointed, they felt that they could still get more out of the Leitrim team – after all it is difficult to swing things around in just one season. The County Board and the clubs made an act of faith by re-appointing them for 2010, conscious of the great effort they and selector Martin McGowan had made.

So we watched the rest of the All Ireland Championship from the sidelines with particular hope that John O'Mahony would bring Sean Maguire back to Mayo and to Connacht. But those dreams died too and after some nervous encounters Kerry came good and became All-Ireland Champions yet again – with a final victory over Cork. Capturing the 125th Anniversary Championship was particularly sweet for the Kingdom. We wondered what it must feel like to be a Kerry supporter, or to be a Kilkenny follower and be in Croke Park for a fourth All-Ireland Hurling victory in succession!

In 1959 Leitrim played Derry in the National League semi-final in Croke Park. Sadly when attending a game in Croke Park in 2009, Patsy McBride, corner back on the 1959 side, took ill and died suddenly. A Great Gael, he was involved in Scór and in all community activites in Lurganboy.
Another former Leitrim star, who died in 2009, was Thomas Galligan of Ballinamore.

The only other inter-county moments of glory for us were with the Masters Over 40's team, who played a thrilling draw with Dublin in the All-Ireland Shield Final. The Leitrim side comprised of players who had given great service at club level, some at inter-county level and others who were still on club duty – including Brian Doyle who would later feature in the county Senior Final. Two of the side, Joe Honeyman and Padraig Kenny had played in the 1994 Connacht Final, while Killian McLoughlin was a sub that day. Kevin Ludlow had captained Leitrim to the All-Ireland Junior Final a few years earlier. Another feature of the game was that the Cloone club had a player on both teams – Dermot Tiernan and former Leitrim player Kevin Doherty with Dublin.

We may have bemoaned our lack of success in the younger grades, but the over 40's were certainly carrying the green and gold flag with distinction.

The team line out was

Kevin Ludlow
Annaduff

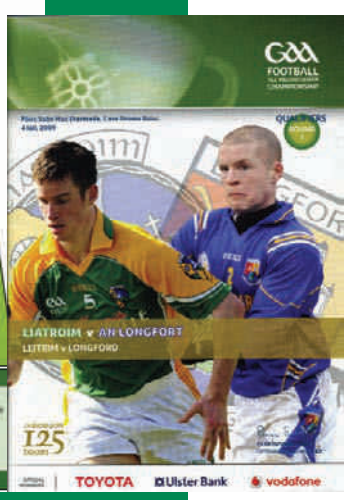
Noel Flynn *Drumkeerin*	Killian McLoughlin *Fenagh*	Damien Flynn *Aughnasheelin*
Joe Honeyman *Sean O'Heslins*	H.J. Maguire *Drumreilly*	Tommy McLoughlin *Eslin*
Eamon Heslin *Aughavas*	Kieran Fox (Capt.) *Glencar/Manorhamilton*	
Padraig Kenny *Allen Gaels*	T.P. McLoughlin *Fenagh*	Junior Haslette *Glencar/Manorhamilton*
Simon Foley *Melvin Gaels*	Brian Doyle *Carrigallen*	Dermot Tiernan *Cloone*

Subs: Padraig Hackett *Allen Gaels*
Sean Mahon *Aughnasheelin*
Peter Reynolds *Sean O'Heslins*
Shane Heslin *Gortletteragh*

It was very much back to the club scene for the summer months. The Senior championship, though featuring some lack-lustre games, did increase in quality and intensity at the Quarter Final stage when Sean O'Heslins almost knocked out reigning champions Glencar/Manorhamilton; Carrigallen rocked a fancied Annaduff side back on their heels; Melvin Gaels got the better of a hotly fancied Annaduff and Bornacoola staved off a very strong challenge from Mohill.

Few people expected Carrigallen to be a match for a more experienced Melvin Gaels side in the Semi-final, but they were and more. It took a replay for the holders of the title to eventually get the better of Bornacoola.

The scene was now set for what was being billed as the David versus Goliath final. Carrigallen in their first County Final in seventeen years and hoping to re-write the pages of parish history to link up with the great Tully team of the 1940's, up against the current County Champions who were well acquainted with games of this calibre. For neutrals, it was a case being in the Carrigallen corner, everyone feels for the under-dog.



But Carrigallen did not see themselves as such and Andrew McManus – a veteran of the side – had goaled inside the first minute. It set the pace for a thrilling encounter, with Carrigallen retaining the lead well into the second half. But there is no substitute for experience and the champions didn't panic and were very much back in control. Then Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada became electric when substitute Brian Doyle, all of 48 years of age, and with a long club and inter-county career to his credit, popped up to

Glencar/Manorhamilton - Masonite Senior Football champions 2009. Back, from left - James Glancy with Ronan and Eanna Fox, Sean Watters, Stephen O'Hara, Anthony McDonald, Shane Loughlin, David Poinard, Shane Sweeney, Fintan McGourty, Colin Ryan, Alan Hickey, Adrian O'Flynn, Paul Boylan, Rob Campbell. Middle, from left - Leah Fox, Pat Gilmartin, Paddy Maguire, James Gilmartin, Aaron Hickey, Dominic Kelly (Capt) with Senan Kelly, Adrian Croal, Darren Sweeney, Gerry Hickey, Alan Sweeney. Front - James O'Brien, Mark McGourty, Colin Gilligan, Shane Kerrigan, Brian McDonald and Jack Kelly, Michael Dolan, Gary Hickey, Thomas McDonald and Evan Sweeney.

crash in a goal for Carrigallen. It looked as if the long years of waiting were over for the wearers of the blue and white. But Glencar/Manorhamilton remained calm and got the few scores that mattered, retaining the Fenagh Cup on a 0-14 to 2-7 scoreline – a single point being the difference between elation and anguish.

It was heart-breaking for Carrigallen, particularly for brothers Andrew and J.P. McManus and Brian Doyle who had also suffered final defeat back in 1992, but the club's wait for another county final should be a short one, as there is the nucleus of a top class team there. For Glencar/Manorhamilton, who were gracious in victory, it was on to the Connacht Club Championship.

The Intermediate Championship built up to an exciting climax with Aughawillan defeating Gortletteragh to earn a place in the final against Cloone, who overcame Glenfarne-Kilty in the other Semi Final.

The Carrigallen team that were narrowly defeated by Glencar/Manorhamilton in the Masonite County Senior championship final.

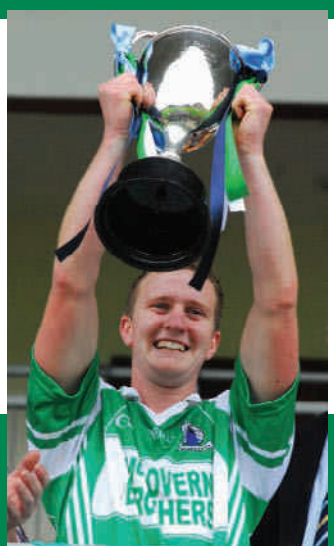
Cloone - GWP Intermediate Football champions 2009. Back row, from left - Dermot McCrann, Aidan Mulvey, Frank Reynolds, Seamus McCaffrey, Donal Brennan, Alan Canning, Kieran Casey, Declan Brennan, Damien O'Donnell, Padraig Harte, Liam Reynolds, Andy McGovern, Brian Mulvey and Mark O'Donnell. Front - Ronan Mulvey, Daragh Tiernan, Mickey Lohan, Mark Creegan, Mark Beirne, Gavin Reynolds (Capt), Seamus Maguire, Adrian Nicholl, Niall and Darren Brennan, Declan Tiernan, Sean Reynolds and Denis McCaffrey.

Adding spice to the final was the fact that former Aughawillan and Leitrim star Gerry Flanagan was Team Manager of Cloone and would now be forced into plotting the defeat of his own club. Played in the new Sean O'Heslins Park in Ballinamore, the clash attracted a capacity attendance who were treated to a thrilling encounter, with Cloone just holding on to win by a single point and capture the Frank Reynolds Cup.

Carrigallen's Andrew McManus tussles for the ball with Morgan Shanley, Bornacoola as linesman Michael Flanagan keeps a close eye.

Glencar/Manorhamilton captain, Dominic Kelly holds the Fenagh cup aloft for his club's second in a row Senior championship title.

Man of the Match, Damien O'Donnell and Cloone captain, Gavin Reynolds with the Frank Reynolds Memorial cup following their victory over Aughawillan in the GWP Leitrim Intermediate final. County chairman, Gerry McGovern looks quite pleased.



Aughavas captain, Trevor Farrelly with the Dick Ellis cup after their victory in the GWP Junior A championship final

In the Junior A Championship, Leitrim Gaels qualified for their first Semi-final at this level but lost out to Aughavas. In the other Semi-final Eslin held off a strong challenge from Gortletteragh, for whom 1994 All Star Seamus Quinn was still in action. Aughavas was a club anxious to get back to senior status and took the first step along that road with a two point defeat of Eslin in the final, thus qualifying for the Intermediate Championship for 2010.

Despite their championship final defeat in the Junior A, the Eslin club had plenty to celebrate in 2009, with the official opening of their newly developed pitch and facilities by Uachtarán CLG Chonnacht, Pádraig Ó Neachtáin. This was the culmination of an integrated club effort to provide the very best for the playing population and for the supporters, not only for the present but for generations to come.

In Ballinamore, the Sean O'Heslin's Club had good reason to celebrate also, with the official opening of their new pitch, training pitch, 750 seater stand, dressing rooms, meeting rooms and all ancillary facilities by Uachtarán CLG, Criostóir Ó Cuana. This venue, particularly with the quality of its pitch and seated stand, would be an ideal location for Leitrim Championship fixtures, college fixtures and also inter-county games in various grades in both football and hurling.

The great fund raising efforts by both Eslin and Sean O Heslin's were indicative of the unselfish work being done in all the clubs in the county to raise the finances necessary to provide the very best infrastructural facilities in our club grounds.

Irrespective of status in the league or championship each club wanted the best for its members.

Club officials and guests at the official opening of Eslin GAA club's new clubhouse and grounds on Sunday, August 2nd 2009. From left, Terry Bohan, Gerry McGovern, Don Reynolds, Seamus Prior (Connacht Council), Declan Bohan, Gerard Stenson (Chairman Eslin GAA club), Paddy Naughton (President Connacht GAA), Fergal McGill (Operations Manager Croke Park), Sean McLoughlin, Fr. Bernard Hogan and Cllr. Enda Stenson.

The impressive new stand at Sean O'Heslin Park, Ballinamore

Uachtarán CLG Críostoír Ó Cuna unveils the plaque at the official opening of Ballinamore's Sean O'Heslin Park, in May 2009.
Also included are Alan Banks, club secretary; Tom Burns, chairman park development committee; Adrian Smith, club chairman; Sr. Cecilia O'Heslin; Tommy Moran, chairman finance committee and Gerry McGovern, Cathaoirleach Coiste Liatroma.

***Gateway to happiness!** Eslin GAA club's magnificent new grounds.*

Another innovative move in pitch development came in 2009 with the Kiltubrid Club installing state of the art lighting facilities and continuing improvements at St. Mary's. Bornacoola, Gortlettragh, Fenagh, Mohill, Drumreilly, Aughawillan, Glenfarne, Allen Gaels. In fact all clubs, despite the economic downturn of 2009 continued to inves vast sums in providing top class facilities at their venues – another way of showing the GAA is strong in Leitrim.

The Under 21 A title went to Oughteragh Gaels and the Under 21B to Melvin Gaels.

While we would all aspire to winning the major titles in the county, there is no less regard for success in the lower grade championships. So Annaduff took great joy from their Junior B Championship victory over Allen Gaels, while Leitrim Gaels rejoiced when they captured the Junior C Cup, with a last-gasp victory over Glenfarne/Kiltyclogher. Throughout the Junior championship there was a great blend of youthful and more veteran players, all blending together for the glory of their own club.

The Dromahair club was in the national news in 2009 due to its participation in RTE's "Celebrity Bainisteoir" series of programmes. Television crews descended on the club, who had RTE comedienne Katherine Lynch as Bainisteoir. Katherine had been a former competitor in Scór na nÓg in Leitrim and was well acquainted with all G.A.A. affairs through her parents and family and her home club, Mohill. Katherine's mentor was the former Leitrim All Star Mickey Quinn. Katherine and Mickey brought Dromahair all the way to the final of the series.

A man and his camera!
For the past 30 years, Leitrim Observer photographer Willie Donnellan, has been ever present at County Board and club matches, functions, celerations – every aspect of the GAA. Thousands and thousands of photographs have featured every aspect of life in Leitrim and in particular the GAA – and there could be no more loyal supporters of Leitrim.
Willie is pictured here chatting with Uachtarán CLG Críostoír Ó Cuna and Sr. Cecilia O'Heslin.

Principal David O'Farrell, Katherine Lynch and Dromahair players with pupils from Drumlease NS

A magnificent sporting achievement for Fenagh and Leitrim came with the victory of Donal Wrynn in the World Under 15 One-Wall Handball Championship in Portland, Oregon, USA. This was just reward for Donal himself and for his family and club who have long been to the forefront in the promotion of Handball in the county. Being selected on the Irish team was a great honour in itself —- to win a World title was the stuff of dreams. Handball is certainly in Donal's blood as his uncle, Ben Wrynn – the former Leitrim footballing star – has been a leading exponent in the sport and is coach to many handball stars in his club, Leixlip, Co. Kildare.

World Under 15 One-Wall Handball champion Donal Wrynn *with his trophies and congratulatory cards at his home in Fenagh after his exploits in Portland, Oregon. This is an amazing achievement for Donal himself and for Fenagh and Leitrim handball.*

Coiste Chontae Liatroma made unrelentless efforts to even increase the financial revenue of previous years and were again greatly helped by the generosity of County team sponsors Masonite, other extremely generous sponsors, the Supporters Club, the Dublin Golf Classic Committee and by the continuing unselfishness of the ordinary supporters who rallied to our games and to all requests for monetary support. It could never be said that there was anything but good-will towards the County Board.

The county officers remained as busy as ever. High on the workload agenda was the financing of Páirc Sean Mac Diarmada and of the Centre of Excellence at Annaduff. Allied to these was the planning and practical application of the G.A.A. Strategic Plan. There would be no short-cuts on the road to progress.

In Coiste Chontae Liatroma, the five year rule in relation to officership positions was having a major effect come the end of 2009.

Included among the many officials who were coming to the enforced end of their term of office were Cathaoirleach Gearóid Mac Samhráin and Rúnaí Deaglán Ó Buacháin. For the previous five years both Gerry and Declan had given distinguished service to the Board and to the clubs and Gaels of Leitrim. Their leadership qualities, their work ethic and their integrity shone like a beacon in the Association and they could leave office content that they had fought the good fight.

County Board Chairman Gerry McGovern, who completes his 5 year term in 2009, performs one of his last official duties as he presents the Under 21 A Cup to Fergal McManus, captain of Oughteragh Gaels.

Likewise with all the other retiring officers, who had worked hand in hand with the Cathaoirleach and Rúnaí at Executive and County Board level – their unselfish contributions had been immense.

It is not too difficult to understand how Cumann Lúthchleas Gael, as an organisation, has withstood the test of time.

Bornacoola footballer and GAA Operations Manager at Croke Park, Fergal McGill with Uachtarán CLG Criostóir Ó Cuana and Árd Stiurthóir Páraic Ó Dufaigh finalising discussions with the GPA in November 2009. The GPA will now be oficially recognised by the GAA.

Leitrim to the fore in Singapore!

A native of Ballinamore, Co Leitrim, Brendan Wisley emigrated from Ireland in 1993. Since that time his interest in the GAA has never wavered and his GAA administrative skills had been well developed in Queen's University, Belfast. He has contributed enormously to the development of the Signapore Gaelic Lions Club and has helped in the organization of the All Star tours and the Asian Games.Brendan is an example of how Leitrim people have helped spread the GAA in their adopted cities and countries, as evidenced by the Tara's Club in London, the Leitrim Club in New York and the European County Board.

While never a strong Gaelic footballer, my heart is and always will be in Gaelic games. I do claim a double in the U 12 Leitrim Championship and League, in 1979, playing for Ballinamore with Paul Kieran (who won a Connacht Championship with Leitrim in 1994).I also am very proud to have won a Leitrim hurling medal with Sean O Heslin's.

I was Chairman of Queens University GAA club in 1992, when the club boasted great players in Anthony Tohill (Derry), Paul Brewster (Fermanagh), James McCartan (Down), Diarmuid Marsden, Paul Mc Grane and Kieran McGeeney (all from Armagh) to name but a few. It was in Queen's that I really got into the organising, i.e. registrations, buses, fixtures, sponsorship, dinner dances, meetings, more meetings etc. "We should never underestimate the time non players/committees put in the organisation as a whole".....

I emigrated to the USA, after receiving a job offer from a Plastics Company, while at University. I gladly accepted, as at the time unemployment was quite high in Ireland. New York was my first stop and when I had finished my induction to the company at HQ, I was sent to Memphis Tennessee, where I took up the role of Plant Manager.

New York had been somewhat of a change to the surroundings of Ballinamore, but Memphis was a real culture shock. In my 6 years there, I met everyone that was Irish — all 10 of us! There was no Setanta to watch the All Ireland live in Memphis and I remember driving for 6 hours hours many times to Atlanta or St. Louis, to watch the live transmissions available there. That has all changed now with the age of the internet, the GAA is really ubiquitous.

While in Memphis I started commuting between NY and Chicago, with work, eventually moving back to NY, and then to Chicago full time, all with the same company. It was good to be back in both cities as I was able to visit Gaelic Park, on many occasions, where I met up with a lot of Ballinamore and other Leitrim people. After Chicago, I moved to Houston Texas, on a 2 year assignment and from there to Singapore - "neither a hurling stronghold". When I got to Singapore, in 2003, I met no Irish person, and it was by pure coincidence on a flight back from Ireland, that while going through immigration, I turned around and saw a man in the queue wearing a Singapore Gaelic jersey. I asked him was that a joke and he replied "no". That decided my future GAA destiny.

I got in contact with the Singapore Gaelic Lions club and informed them I would like to get involved. I was an ordinary member of the club in my first year, and then went up for election of Secretary the following year and Vice Chairman the year after. Intense travel commitments to Australia and South Africa over the last two years, have prevented me getting involved as much as I would have wanted to with the club.

Alan Ryan, another Ballinamore native and a winner of All Ireland Scór na n-Óg Question Times with Sean O'Heslin's, is a key player in the Singapore Men's A team. He is the club's Chief Safety officer and was instrumental in implementing the safety strategy within the club. In 2009 the club purchased a defibrillator and have trained 12 members to be First Aid certified.

For the 2008/2009 year the club had approximately 120 members. One of the key objectives of the club is to raise the awareness of Gaelic Games in Singapore. The club, along with the local Irish Associations, is involved in raising money for charity events, such as the Special Olympics. In 2008 the club had a number of members who participated in the Singapore Marathon/Half Marathon and raised over $10,000 for the Singapore Cancer Society. I myself was one of the runners and we ran, or tried to keep running, in temperatures of 90 degrees. The club is also participating in the 2009 Marathon and will raise more funds for charitable causes.

The club members attended the 2009 Asian Gaelic Games, in Bangkok, Thailand. Tessa Mc Govern, whose grandmother hails from Ballinamore, won the Most Valued Player in the Ladies Tournament, and was instrumental in helping Singapore Ladies A team win the tournament for the first time. Tessa also won the inaugural All Star award in 2007/2008 and was the winner again in 2009.

Shouting "Up Ceannaboe" in downtown Bangkok will get you quite a few looks, but it's very rewarding when one of your own looks up and smiles. It was great to bump into Hugh Gough, also from Ballinamore, in Thailand, Hugh, lined out in goals, playing for Quatar, the previous year lining out for Dubai, when the tournament was in Penang, Malaysia

Gareth O'Brien, a nephew of Mae and Sylvester Mc Devitt, Ballinamore is the Singapore representative on the Asian County Board, which is now affiliated to the Leintser Council of the GAA, and is also the Men's A team selector. Another Leitrim man prominent in this part of the world was Columba Cryan of Ballinamore who served as Chairman of the Wellington club in New Zealand.

Singapore was the venue for the All-Star Tour for the hurlers of 2004 and 2005, where an exhibition game was played between the two teams at the Singapore Polo Grounds. This was a great event for the club, with all members taking part in the organisation.

All of us from Leitrim are delighted and proud to be playing our part in the GAA in Asia – but we never forget the green and gold at home.

Singapore abú. Liatroim abú.

IT in Leitrim GAA

BRENDAN DOYLE gives us an insight into the benefits of Information Technology within Leitrim and the broader GAA world.

A close relationship between the GAA and computers is not one that you might expect, but in the times we live in and considering the massive administrative workload placed on clubs regardless of size, it is inevitable that a marriage forms.

The uptake of IT within Leitrim clubs has been significant since the initial drive in February 2005; it's the club officers who have to be thanked for this. IT is often feared and sometimes considered unnecessary by some, but when a genuine effort is made to understand its benefits and to undergo a little training in its use, then the rewards are reaped.

IT will always retain an important role within the GAA and the new national IT strategy was launched and commenced implementation during 2008. This strategy forms a major part of the recently announced GAA Strategic Vision and Action Plan 2009-2015, so much so, that much of the success of the strategy is dependant upon the provision of and use of a sound IT platform.

Prior to 2005 the utilisation of IT for communications within Leitrim was limited, it was used by a few and in a way this was beneficial to the new IT committee, as it was basically a green field site ready for development. The county had a noted website in operation that had already won a McNamee Award, however it was in need of a little facelift. A committee was formed and a strategy was devised to improve communications internally and externally, whilst also devising ways to promote our games to young and old at home and away.

Introduction of E-mail

A structured E-mail system was unveiled and all clubs invited for training. A three month window was allowed in which clubs were expected to move from the old paper based communications to the use of e-mail. Leitrim clubs responded to the call and everyone was switched over inside of six weeks, the first important task was completed. Next on the agenda was the objective of getting clubs to have their own websites and to ensure that they were updated regularly. This was initialised and many clubs took up the offer of getting themselves on-line.

A survey was undertaken of referees' usage of mobile phones and the outcome was the introduction of texting of match results to the Fixtures Secretary immediately after a game concluded. This gave us the opportunity of getting results on-line in an accurate and timely fashion.

The website has undergone continuous improvement over the years and a serious campaign was initiated in 2006 to improve areas of the site. The provision of fixtures and results needed an overhaul to categorise the results by unit e.g. Ladies GAA, Coiste na nÓg, Hurling, etc. The scope was broadened and each unit was given access to its own complete administrative area for news and events, as well as fixtures and results. The provision of remote access by mobile phone type devices for administrators was incorporated in the back of house area, to allow news items and important announcements to be pushed on-line without the need to have laptops and broadband access. In fact, this area of the site was so well developed that many aspects can be managed completely by remote control.

He's got the whole world in his hands: Uachtarán C.L..G., Seán Kelly and Brendan Doyle, PRO and IT Officer with Coiste Chontae Liatroma browse through the newly revamped Leitrim GAA web site at the formal launch of the country's foremost county GAA website in the Bush Hotel Carrick-on-Shannon in 2005. Meanwhile, Gerry McGovern, Cathaoirleach Coiste Chontae Liatroma shows Damien McPartland, McPartland Oil, the official sponsor of the Leitrim GAA website, the art of the hand pass.
Photo by James Molloy

James Molloy's Photo Gallery

A particular area of the site that was deemed necessary, was the provision of a photo gallery to record all the key events on a regular basis. The County Board was very fortunate that photographer James Molloy was available and willing to assist in this area. James travelled the length and breadth of the country recording our activities and our gallery is by far the largest and most impressive of any GAA site worldwide – all thanks to James's fantastic efforts.

A Live Scoreboard system was initiated for supporters unable to get to our inter-county games and this system allowed users to view a simulated scoreboard live in real-time on the site. The scoreboard was updated live from the match venue, using simple low cast mobile phone technology. Many a game was followed from beaches world wide!

The whole mobile phone area was developed to provide a mini WAP site for standard mobile phone users. Primary information like news, events, fixtures, result etc was stripped of any fancy layouts and converted into a text format simple enough to view on a standard phone. This site continues today, however our phones are improving as time goes by and eventually will be able to view the site in its primary format.

In early 2007 a podcast section was developed that allowed us to record important interviews and audio clips that could be packaged up and made available as a sound file called a podcast. This file could be listened to on-line or downloaded to an MP3 player for later use.

Video Gallery
In 2008 a video gallery was developed and the site now hosts highlights of most of the Championship and League finals. The recording and editing of the material is the task of Brian Blake who provides a vital role for the county team, as well as for the website.

leitrimgaa.ie
The site is not a finished product and is continuously evolving and many innovative features are added on a regular basis. Serving tens of thousands of visitors on a constant basis, the site is recognized as a leader in the GAA world.
The fact that the site received top billing of all sites in a survey by Setanta Sports in 2007, followed by a 10 out of 10 report in the Irish Independent in 2008, shows that *www.leitrimgaa.ie* is making its mark. This is also borne out by the fact that it is often copied, but never beaten as many of our ideas have crept onto other sites, including those of large media organizations. The site would not be what it is without the assistance of the many contributors who feed in the material on a constant basis.

Early in 2008 Leitrim was chosen as a pilot county for the roll-out of a new online GAA membership system. The clubs of the county were invited to attend a training night, which they did in great numbers. A three week deadline was given to have all members' details online and each member registered for 2008. This target was achieved and much credit is due to the various club officers who worked hard to meet the deadlines. This system will be used for all club member registration into the future and the addition of a combined text service makes it a very useful tool for club officers.

This membership registration system is crucial to the County Board and to the GAA in general, as it provides a means of accurately recording the GAA population. Many benefits will accrue in years to come, as it is envisaged that each member will receive a membership card and will be linked to loyalty schemes.
As of Congress 2009 the electronic registration of members is compulsory and by spring 2010 there will be, for the first time, an accurate record of members world wide. As it is all electronic, the re-registering of members year on year becomes easier as the data is already present and a few simple clicks will complete the process for each member.

The availability of a complete electronic membership system opens many doors to other opportunities, including something as simple as a team sheet. You can categorize your playing members into panels for teams and at the click of a button a correctly formatted team sheet is prepared ready for submission to a referee prior to a game.

Networking made easy
Likewise, the important area of discipline and the recording of match reports, including sanctions, will now be possible as each member is clearly identifiable on the database of members. This system is tied in with a national fixtures and results system that will allow the fixtures secretaries worldwide to put all of their games on-line, categorized by competition. As match dates approach, the system can notify a referee and check his or her availability by text. The system records the responses and can assist in ensuring each game is allocated match officials. During the match the referee is sent a text which is ready to be completed when the game ends and returned to the system by *sms* thus allowing the recording of the score.

All associated league tables etc are updated upon receipt of the result and then this result is available across all linked websites at national, provincial, county and club level immediately. The PRO's life is also made easier as the system automatically sends a text when all results are in and allows the PRO to remotely connect with the system via mobile phone to send an e-mail of the results to a predetermined list of media contacts.
This feature is particularly useful when updating local and national radio stations, Aertel and local and national press of the day's results.

Throughout each year much time is spent within Coiste Chontae Liatroma in preparing documents and PowerPoint presentations for use by various committees and officers. A lot of assistance is provided to all committees, including the Finance Committee, who are very active in sourcing funds for the various developments within the County Board's remit.

Other events where assistance is provided include the County Championship Draw which is conducted live on-air with the help of a large screen presentation, showing the actual groupings and schedule of fixtures as they are drawn live on the night. Hard copies are made available immediately after the draw to the attendees, while an electronic copy is distributed online.

Our Cisteoir will also benefit from IT, as an accounts system is being rolled out by Croke Park to all units. This system will link back to a central location and will allow each unit to work to and manage an annual budget.

From a Health and Safety point of view, a monitoring system is in operation in some grounds with real time and gate attendances fed electronically to a central location, thus allowing monitoring of crowd capacity at grounds.

IT is here to stay and should be embraced by all units, because, when used properly, it makes our lives just that little easier.

Brian Blake plays a vital role for IT in Leitrim GAA.

Iomáint i Liatroim ó 1984

Le Seán Ó Suilleabháin

Kevin Glancy, Martin Cunniffe, Paddy Phelan

The Club scene

Senior Hurling

The club scene in senior hurling since 1984 has been dominated by two clubs, Gortletteragh and St Mary's. Gortletteragh were the dominant club for a long period and in latter years St Mary's have been even more dominant. In 1981 the St Finbarr's (Mohill) club was suspended for twelve months after they infringed the rules in the Co Hurling Final against St Mary's when they brought in a number of players from Offaly to play in the Co Hurling Final against St Mary's. The following year, St Mary's won the championship beating a Drumshanbo/North Leitrim selection. In 1983, when their suspension was up, the former St Finbarr's players regrouped and affiliated as Gortletteragh. St Finbarr's had in fact been largely made up of Gortletteragh players anyway and this team became the dominant force in Leitrim hurling for the next decade. They won eight senior championships in nine years between 1983 and 1991, and only Ballinamore's victory in 1987 denied them nine-in-a-row. During those years the county hurling team was also dominated by Gortletteragh players.
Gortletteragh also had a great football team at this time and in 1985 they won the senior double, football and hurling.

By 1992, St Mary's had been a decade without a senior hurling title but as Gortletteragh's star was about to wane theirs was about to shine. St Mary's won the senior hurling championship in 1982 and, remarkably, they have won 16 of the 18 championships since then, including 11-in-a-row to 2009, and they are probably not finished yet. It was Gortletteragh who denied them in 1996 and 1998. St Mary's success has been remarkable and at a time when St Mary's also has a strong football team they have managed to keep hurling to the forefront and almost entirely with local players that they have nurtured from underage. County teams have been made up largely of St Mary's players, and such teams have held their own at County level. During most of the past decade, St Mary's have had big wins in County Finals although Manorhamilton ran them to five points in 2008 and an All-Leitrim amalgamation; Gaeil an Chontae did likewise in 2005.

St Mary's have a unique double achievement. The club has won the Senior Football Championship on four occasions, three of these within the last 25 years. Remarkably, on all four occasions, 1958, 1995, 2003 and 2007 they won the Senior Hurling Championship as well, an amazing four doubles.

In summary the Co Senior Hurling champions from 1984 to 2009 have been:

St Mary's	(16)	1992	1993	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2001
		2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Gortletteragh	(9)	1984	1985	1986	1988	1989	1990	1991	1996
		1998							
Ballinamore	(1)	1987							

Minor Hurling (1984 – 2009)

Surprisingly, given their continued lack of success at senior level, Ballinamore have been very prominent at minor hurling level. Between 1984 and 2009, a minor hurling championship has been played in 18 of those 26 years and Ballinamore have won nine of then. St Mary's have won the other nine. It is a serious failing in Leitrim hurling that a minor hurling championship has not been played in 7 of the last 10 years. The competition was run in 2008 and 2009 so lets hope it will continue to be run in future years.

In summary the County Minor Hurling champions for the 1984 to 2009 period were:

Ballinamore	(9)	1985	1987	1988	1991	1992	1993	1994	2008	2009
St Mary's	(9)	1984	1986	1989	1990	1995	1997	1998	1999	2003

Under 16 Hurling (1984 – 2009)

An under 16 championship has been run every year since 1984. The 2009 competition is not completed at the time of writing. St Mary's have dominated this competition with 12 wins followed by Ballinamore with 7 wins.

In summary the winners of the Under 16 Championship were:

St Mary's	(12)	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1991	1994	1995
			1997	1998	1999	2003			
Ballinamore	(7)	1990	1992	1993	1996	2006	2007	2008	
Mohill (St Finbarr's)	(3)	2003	2004	2005					
Manorhamilton	(2)	2000	2001						
Elphin	(1)	1984							

Under 14 Championship (1984 – 2009)

An under 14 championship was played every year during the last 25 years except in 2004, 2006 and 2007. Again this age group has been dominated by St Mary's who have won half of the championships played.

The winners of the under 14 championship were as follows:

St Mary's	(13)
Ballinamore	(5)
Mohill (St Finbarr's)	(4)
Manorhamilton	(1)

Leitrim has been represented every year in Féile na nGael since 1984 and the following are the number of times each club represented Leitrim: St Mary's (16), Ballinamore (7), Manorhamilton (2) and Mohill (1)

On a few occasions the Under 14 championship has been amalgamated with the Feile competition with the winner holding both titles.

Underage hurling has been greatly assisted by coaches Brian Keane, Kevin Briscoe and Andrew Keary who have coached in the schools at different periods over the past number of years. This work is now coordinated by Development Officer, Thomas Keenan

The Ireland Shinty Team in 2006 *who played Scotland in Croke Park. Leitrim had two representatives on the team, James Glancy, back row second from left and Clement Cunniffe, third from right, front row.*

Na Clubanna

St Mary's

St Mary's have been the powerhouse of hurling for the past fifteen years or more and they are usually the best organised at all levels. Their success at senior level is a credit to their mentors, Paddy Phelan, Martin Cunniffe, Kevin Glancy and others. They have also put up great performances at Connacht Club level and have gone within a point or two of Roscommon and Mayo champions on occasions. They have reached the Connacht junior final on two occasions, 2005 and 2006, losing on both occasions to Galway side Skehana. They have great individual performers and some have been honoured at national level. Clement Cunniffe, Vinny McDermott and Brean Carroll have all been selected on the Nicky Rackard All Stars and Clement Cunniffe (2006) and James Glancy (2006 and 2008) have represented Ireland in the Hurling/Shinty internationals.

Ballinamore

Hurling was reorganized in Ballinamore in 1981 and since then the club has consistently played in all grades of hurling. They have been successful too in all grades but most particularly at minor level. Surprisingly, they were successful at senior level on just one occasion, in 1987. Ballinamore seem to have particular difficulty in running hurling alongside football and their best players, who are invariably good footballers also, do not give their best at hurling past minor grade. Still, they have contributed greatly to the hurling scene at county minor and under 16 level and Paddy O'Connor and Diarmuid McCaffrey continue to promote the game in a broad area around Ballinamore.

Mohill/Gortletteragh

From 1984 onwards Gortletteragh were exceptionally strong at Senior hurling level. Organised principally by Mickey Dorrigan and Mick Keane they dominated for over a decade. At underage level, the club was concentrated on the Mohill area and was organised at different times by Peter Logan and by John O'Donoghue. In the early 1990s their minor team was affiliated as Bornacoola and a lot of the players were from Bornacoola. Indeed, they were in the 1994 minor hurling final and only lost in a replay to Ballinamore.

Manorhamilton

There has been a long association with hurling in Manorhamilton. During a brief period of hurling revival they won a senior hurling championship in 1935. When hurling was organised again in Leitrim in 1953, Manorhamilton organised a team and won the senior hurling title in 1954 and 1959. Hurling survived into the early 1960s but died out in the town. In the 1990s underage hurling was organised in Manorhamilton for the first time by Michael O'Brien and Seamus Kelly. After years of effort their big breakthrough came when they won the under 16 title in 2000 and they repeated that success in 2001. Hurling is now being promoted strongly mainly through the efforts of Micheál Dolan and the club has been represented at Féile na nGael in 2007 and 2009. Above all, the rise of Manorhamilton in senior hurling has been a most welcome development in Leitrim hurling. Despite relative lack of success at underage level, Manorhamilton have become serious contenders at senior level and they have reached the senior final on three of the last four years and they ran St Mary's to five points in the 2008 final.

Elphin

For three years, 1983 – 1985, Elphin took part in Leitrim competition and in this short period they made an important contribution to Leitrim hurling. Organised by John McGrath, who taught in Carrick on Shannon and who, up until then, played with St Mary's, they made a particularly big contribution to the Leitrim teams that won All Ireland Special Under 16 and Minor hurling titles in 1983 and 1984 respectively. They fielded in underage competitions and won the under 16 championship in 1984. They also contested the senior hurling final in 1984. They returned to play in Roscommon the next year and folded up soon after.

Drumshanbo

There were senior hurling teams in the Drumshanbo/North Leitrim area under different names and they won the senior hurling championship as Allen Gaels in 1975 and as Lough Allen Gaels 1977. As late as 1985 a Lough Allen Gaels/Ballinamore combination played in the County Senior Hurling final. However, there has been no senior hurling there since then. There was some underage hurling in Drumshanbo in the 1980s, organised by Sean Lynch, John Joe Dolan and Éamon McGowan and they took part in under 14 competition for a few years. In the 1990s, at team organised by Martin McGowan won the Jim Dorrigan blitz on a couple of occasions.

Melvin Gaels

Melvin Gaels have made a couple of brief appearances in hurling over the 25 years, mainly due to the efforts of Michael McGowan. Melvin Gaels played in the Jim Dorrigan tournament for under 14 hurling on one occasion in the early 1990s and they took part in the senior hurling championship in 2000.

Carrigallen

Carrigallen took part in under 14 competition one year in the 1980s, organised by Noel Lyons, and a Drumeela schools team organised by Tommy Moran took part in the Jim Dorrigan tournament on one occasion.

County Teams

Twenty-five years ago, in 1984, Leitrim had one of their big days in hurling when they won the All Ireland C Minor Hurling title. In April last, the members of that team, as well as the Under 16 hurlers who had similar success a year earlier, gathered in the Bush Hotel for a celebration. It was a great celebration of two of the most important victories Leitrim has ever achieved in Hurling

Leitrim played in Division 4 of the National Hurling League since the re-organisation of the leagues in that format. Leitrim's best year was in 1987 when the county reached the final of Division 4 against Tyrone. Leitrim were boosted that year by the transfer of the four O'Riordan brothers from Dublin to Leitrim. Sons of the legendary Tommy O'Riordan, they made a big impact on the hurling scene. Sean, Niall, Éamon and Tomás made an inter-county transfer to Leitrim and their father, Tommy, became manager of the team. All of them were good hurlers and Tomás had been in goals on a Dublin minor hurling team that reached the All Ireland Minor Hurling final in 1983. Suddenly Leitrim's performances improved dramatically. The beat Sligo by 2-10 to 1-6 annihilated Donegal by 3-13 to 1-2 and beat Fermanagh by 3-11 to 1-5. Leitrim were now in the semi-final of Division 4. They beat Longford by 0-11 to 0-5 in the semi-final and were now in the final was against Tyrone.

The final was played in Enniskillen on 3 May 1987. Unfortunately, Tomas Ó Riordan, their top scorer, was injured before the final and was unable to play. Even without him, Leitrim dominated the first half and led by 1-3 to 0-1 at half time. Although Leitrim had what looked like a perfectly good goal from Seán Bourke disallowed in the first half they were boosted by the sending off of a Tyrone player. Leitrim still led by 7 points going into the last quarter. Then disaster struck: Tyrone got two goals within a minute and were ahead. It finished Tyrone 2-5 Leitrim 1-6 and a golden chance was gone. The O'Riordan brothers played the following year as well but the momentum was lost. The Leitrim team which played in that Division 4 Final was as follows:

	Jim Dorrigan (Gortletteragh)	
Henry Faughnan (Gortletteragh)	**Mickey Dorrigan** (Gortletteragh)	**Seanie McGrath** (Gortletteragh)
Bertie Moran (St Mary's)	**Albert Dorrigan** (Gortletteragh)	**Éamon O'Riordan** (Ballyboden St Enda's)
Tommy McLoughlin (Gortletteragh)		**Gerry Dorrigan** (Gortletteragh)
Shane Heslin (Gortletteragh)	**Niall O'Riordan** (Ballyboden St Enda's)	**Ollie Moran** (St Mary's)
Éamon McGowan (Ballinamore)	**Martin Cunniffe** (St Mary's)	**Seán Bourke** (Ballinamore)

In 2003 Leitrim qualified for the Division 3 Shield Final but lost to Donegal. In 2009 Leitrim finished in third place in Division 4 of the National League narrowly losing out on a league final place.

In recent years Leitrim have been playing in the Nicky Rackard and now the Lory Meagher Cups. Leitrim reached the quarter final of the Nicky Rackard championship in 2008 losing to Dublin side Fingal in Parnell Park while in 2009 Leitrim lost to eventual winners Tyrone by 5 points in the Lory Meagher championship.

The Leitrim senior hurling team V Longford in the NHL in Ck-on-Shannon, 2004. Back Row: *L to R: Martin Coles, Gary Hartigan, John Beirne, Michael Poniard, Val Cronin, Clement Cunniffe, Breian Carroll, Fintan McKiernan, Fearghal Carroll, Michael McKeon, Shane Fitzpatrick, Niall Glancy, Micheal McCarthy.* ***Front Row:*** *L to R: Dana Regan, James Glancy, James Keane, Stephen Dorrigan, Donal O'Grady, Kevin Glancy, Alan O'Shea, Hilary Phelan, Vincent McDermott, Tommy McLoughlin, Kieran Maxwell.*

An Iomáint faoi Láthair

Looking at the hurling situation over the past quarter of a century, there are plusses and minuses. The county senior hurling team is now better prepared than it would have been in earlier years and their performances are more consistent. At club level, hurling is still confined to four areas: Carrick on Shannon, Ballinamore, Gortletteragh/Mohill and Manorhamilton. Over the past twenty-five years hurling at all levels has been almost entirely confined to those areas. St Mary's and Ballinamore have been there consistently over all of those 25 years. The Gortletteragh/Mohill area, under different names: St Finbarr's, Mohill, Gortletteragh and even Bornacoola (at minor level), has usually taken part in competition at some level or other. There was no hurling in Manorhamilton 25 years ago but they have re-emerged over the past decade and have become well-organised at all levels in recent years. Indeed the only success story at club level in Leitrim hurling has been the emergence of strong Manorhamilton teams and it looks to be only a matter of time before they make a breakthrough at senior level. There was a senior hurling team in Drumshanbo up to the early 1980s and Drumshanbo took part in underage hurling in the 1980s but there has been no hurling there in recent years. There was some hurling, briefly in the Melvin Gaels and Carrigallen areas and Elphin played in Leitrim for a few years but there has never been more than 4 teams in any underage hurling competition in Leitrim over the past 25 years.

The year 2000 was a surprise in senior hurling when no less than 6 teams entered. This, to my knowledge, had never happened before. It came about because Gortletteragh and Mohill decided to split for that year and Melvin Gaels entered a team too. However, the following year it reverted to four and on one occasion, in 2005, there were only two senior teams when the whole of Leitrim amalgamated to play St Mary's in the senior final. Overall, the club position is more or less unchanged since 1984, no better and no worse. The disappointing feature is the failure to run some underage competitions in some recent years. The worst years were 2006 and 2007 when the only underage competition ran at all was an under 16 championship.

Kevin Glancy,Paddy Phelan, Mickey Dorrigan

Officers

In 1984 hurling in Leitrim was directed by Hurling Officer, Frank Mulvey. Frankie was succeeded as Hurling Officer by Mickey Dorrigan. The in December 1987, a Hurling Board was reorganized with Paddy Phelan (St Mary's) as Cathaoirleach, Mickey Dorrigan (Gortletteragh) as Rúnaí and Martin Cunniffe (St Mary's) as Cisteoir. Remarkably, the same officers have kept the hurling scene going ever since.

The St. Mary's team who completed 11 senior titles in a row in 2009.
Back Row: L to R: Kevin Glancy, Cian O'Reilly, Dana Regan, Cian McLoughlin, Darragh Singleton, Alan Duffy, Liam Greene, Shane Cardiff, David Tiernan, Gary Coone, Breian Carroll, Clement Cunniffe, Dermot Reynolds, Andrew Molloy, Paul McKiernan. Front Row L to R: Sean Beirne, James Glancy, Pauric McWeeney, Alan Doherty, Patrick McGoldrick, Kieran Boyle, Fearghal Carroll, Vincent McDermott, Colm O'Reilly, Niall Glancy, Tom Cronin, James Keane, Donal Butler.

All Ireland Intermediate Champions 200

Leitrim Ladies 1979 - 2009

by Patricia Bohan

With the GAA celebrating its 125th anniversary in 2009, the Leitrim Ladies Gaelic Football Association also reached its own milestone of thirty years since it was formed. With the National Association of Cumann Peil Gael na mBan having been established in 1974, only five years later on 25th June 1979 Leitrim formed its first county board in Drumshanbo. From the early 70's many girls around the county formed parish teams and played in festivals and tournaments at various times. The need for organised competition was acknowledged and the first formal competition was organised on a league basis in 1978 by the men's county board. Teams from Aughnasheelin, Allen Gaels, Aughawillan , Drumkeerin, St. Marys, Glenfarne and Fenagh took part, with Fenagh winning the title.

The first county board in 1979, which consisted of Vincent O'Rourke, Deirdre Quinn, Mary Murtagh (Glancy), Helen McLoughlin and Pauline McDonagh were not long about getting things started in the county. A league and championship was organised with the same seven teams participating. Aughawillan took the championship while Fenagh won the league and since then both these teams have led the way for all clubs in the county on and off the field in ladies football. The first county team to represent Leitrim played a challenge game against Roscommon Under 16's in October of that year. They won by 2-2 to 1-6 against the All Ireland finalists and for the record the team was Janice McTiernan, Phyllis Galllagher, Mary Maguire, Veronica Maguire, Mary Farrell, Helen McLoughlin, Catherine McMorrow, Deirdre Quinn, Noeleen McLoughlin, Pauline McLoughlin, Pauline Gilheaney, Mary McTeague, Mary Sammon, Pauline McDonagh , Ita Flatley Subs: Geraldine O'Rourke, Geraldine Wrynne.

1980 - 1984

Major success and All Star Awards

In 1980 Leitrim affiliated to Cumann Peil Gael na mBan and entered teams in the national junior League, Connacht senior, minor and under 16 championships. Roscommon defeated the team in the senior while both under age teams lost the final against Roscommon who were going through a successful period. At club level an under 16 competition was initiated with seven teams entering and was won by Glenfarne who also won the senior championship with Aughawillan taking the league.

Deirdre Quinn, *Aughawillan, player and administrator with Leitrim Ladies over many years*

In 1981 Leitrim won its first of many provincial titles during this period with a senior Connacht title win over Galway, but were defeated by Cavan in the All Ireland semi final. The minor team also reached the same stage but lost to Wexford. Deirdre Quinn won Leitrim's first All Star Award and four Leitrim players represented Leitrim on the Connacht Interprovincial team with Deirdre Quinn, Helen McLoughlin, Peggy Guckian and Phyllis Gallagher all featuring. Glenfarne and Fenagh reached all three club finals with Glenfarne winning the senior and under 16 titles while Fenagh had to be satisfied with the League title.

League Champions

Progress continued in 1982 and Leitrim reached it's first All Ireland final. In qualifying for the junior league final with victory over Dublin in the semi final, Leitrim had a one point win over Laois and were duly crowned League champions in May. In the championship, wins over Mayo and Galway gave the county its second Connacht title but lost by one point to Offaly in the semi final. Due to lack of opposition Leitrim qualified for the All Ireland minor final only to lose to Wexford. Tracy Monaghan won the county's second All Star award. With 224 registered members in Leitrim two new competitions were introduced at under 12 and minor. The county champions in the respective grades were Aughnasheelin at under 12, Aughawillan under 16 league and championship, Fenagh at minor and the first League and Championship double.

1983 saw Leitrim continue to be a leading force in ladies football. An unbeaten run in the senior league led to their first senior final appearance on 26th June against the kingpins of ladies football from Kerry. A refereeing error in the scores saw the game awarded to Kerry by one point when it was obvious to everyone that Leitrim had won by a point. The game was ordered to be replayed and in September Kerry took the title. Unfortunately Kerry also won the championship tie between the sides but the minor team had revenge in the All Ireland semi final before losing yet again to Wexford in final. Two All Star Awards came yet again to Deirdre Quinn and Tracy Monaghan while Maeve Quinn won a replacement award. Fenagh and Aughawillan dominated all competitions at club level and Fenagh reached the Connacht club final.

In 1984 Leitrim fulfilled its potential and reached the All Ireland Championship final where they took on Kerry who were going for three in a row. Played in Timahoe Co. Laois, Kerry won by one point in a low scoring match. At club level Aughawillan dominated, winning under 16, minor and Senior league and championship, with Drumreilly winning their only ladies title at under 12. Maeve Quinn and Geraldine Wrynne won All Star awards while Pauline Gilheaney won a replacement award.

1985 to 1989

With more and more counties getting themselves organised and entering national competition Leitrim continued to compete with the best but competition was becoming more intense and it was a period of change for the county. In 1985 the rivalry between Leitrim and Kerry continued when the teams met yet again in the Senior League decider. Unfortunately Kerry continued their winning sequence over Leitrim. For the fifth year in a row Leitrim retained their Connacht title but Laois halted their progress in the semi final. Maeve Quinn won her second All Star award and replacements went to Geraldine Wrynne and Deirdre Quinn. Augahawillan won the three underage titles while Fenagh took the senior double. Leitrim ladies were awarded a "Service to Sport " award by the Sports Advisory Body.

1986 saw a marked downturn in the fortunes of Leitrim. A number of the players who had contributed to the success of Leitrim since its formation had emigrated or retired from football. Galway at last defeated Leitrim in the Connacht final and a long winning sequence had ended. Leitrim did not compete at under 16 or minor so inter county activity for the year was quiet. Eight teams contested the senior club championship with Fenagh beating Cloone in the final that drew a huge attendance. Glenfarne won the minor and senior league titles.

Period of transition and success!

In 1987 Leitrim found it difficult to compete at the top level with teams getting stronger. Six league games all ended in defeat and Mayo dumped Leitrim from the Connacht championship. Football in the county was going through a period of transition with older clubs disbanding and a number of new clubs entering the scene. Seven teams entered the senior championship with Fenagh achieving three in a row. Aughawillan took the league title. Two of the newer clubs won the under age titles with Annaduff winning the minor and Cloone the under 12 title, their first county title.

However at last in 1988 Leitrim finally fulfilled a dream of playing in Croke Park and winning an All Ireland championship. The previous year Cumann Peil Gael na mBan introduced a Junior All Ireland to cater for weaker counties who had started inter county football and to help bridge the gap with the senior teams. This was to prove a well timed innovation and Leitrim were regraded to junior status that year. In the Connacht championship Leitrim had wins over Mayo and Galway and won the semi final by 4-1 to 0-7 against Clare. On then to the All Ireland final on 16th October and with over 3,000 travelling supporters Leitrim defeated London by 2-8 to 0-5 to claim the John Timmons cup. The team on that historical day was Marie McGovern, Bernie Donnelly, Noeleen Geoghegan, Stella McGriskin, Martina Flanagan, Helen McLoughlin, Mary Quinn, Maeve Quinn , Martina McDermott, Deirdre Quinn, Pauline Gilheaney, Caroline Mitchell, Elizabeth Hargaden (Capt.), Geraldine Wrynne, Ann Marie Cox. Subs: Patricia McNiff, Mary Shanley, Louise Kilraine, Nicola Cox, Teresa McDermott, Mary Brennan, Concepta Kellegher , Deirdre Harris, Doreen Mitchell, Shiela Heerin. For their efforts during the year Mary Quinn won an All Star award and Geraldine Wrynne got a replacement award. It was a just reward for the efforts of the players who had proved over the previous ten

The Leitrim Ladies G.A.A. team which won the All Ireland Junior title in Croke Park; Back row — Noeleen Geoghegan, Helen McLoughlin, Mary Quinn, Marie McGovern, Maeve Quinn, Pauline Gilheany, Stella McGriskin, Geraldine Wrynne.
Front row: Caroline Mitchell, Martina Flanagan, Bernie Donnelly, Liz Hargaden (capt.), Deirdre Quinn, Ann-Marie Cox, Mary McDermott.
In front — Mascot, Ciara O'Brien

Photo: Willie Donnellan

years that they could compete with the best in the country. The many near misses of the past and the dedication of their manager Eamonn McGowan from Allen Gaels were rewarded at last. The team were welcomed to the county with great celebration and they proved fantastic ambassadors for their sport down through the years. The achievement is all the more remarkable as resources in the early years were at a premium and indeed many of the players often had to dig into their own pockets to fund their trips to games. Club activity continued with Aughawillan taking the senior championship and Annaduff their first senior title when they won the league. Annaduff also claimed the minor and under 16 titles while Bornacoola won their first title at under 12.

In 1989 Leitrim fielded teams in both senior and junior championship and league such was the positive impact on the success of 1988. Another Connacht title at the expense of Mayo earned a meeting against Wexford in Carrick. A low scoring game ended in a draw but Wexford won the replay. The junior team reached the final but lost to Galway. Maeve Quinn won another All Star award and helped Aughawillan to retain the club championship with Fenagh winning the league at the expense of Annaduff. However it was to be Annaduff's year at underage winning under 12, under 16 and minor with Bornacoola winning the first under 14 competition.

1990 – 1994

This five year period proved to be a major disappointment for Leitrim at county level. With the level of competition increasing at a dramatic rate and a number of county players retiring, it was left to the younger players to make an impression on the county scene, but it was always going to take time to nurture their talents. The club scene was improving with competitive football for all under age teams which was very important to the development of the game in the county.

With the other four counties in Connacht playing at junior level Leitrim entered the Championship in 1990 in the All Ireland semi final after a poor league run only to be defeated by Laois in Annaduff. The minor team reached the Connacht final but were well beaten by Roscommon. Aughawillan completed a three in a row in the senior championship and for the second year in a row Fenagh beat Annaduff in the league final. Fenagh also took the under 14 and under 16 titles while Bornacoola won the under 12 title and Annaduff won the minor final for the third year in a row.

It was the same story in 1991 where Waterford defeated Leitrim in the semi final and it was obvious that at senior level the county was not competitive any more. It took a replay to decide the senior club final between Fenagh and Annaduff and indeed in the replay extra time was needed with Annaduff securing their first championship win. Fenagh reversed the result in the league final Cloone won both the minor and under 16 titles with Bornacoola victorious at under 14 and Annaduff at under 12.

Playing in the junior league. Leitrim, in 1992, had a reasonably successful campaign and narrowly missed the knockout stages. However it was back to the senior teams in the championship and this time Leitrim fell heavily to Laois in the semi final. More progress for Cloone when they won their first senior championship against Annaduff while Aughawillan won the league also against Annaduff after a replay. With the number of club teams increasing at under age level competition was becoming more intense. Bornacoola won the under 12 and under 16 titles, Kiltubrid began a period of dominance by winning at under 14 and Cloone retained their minor title.

Focus on Club Scene

While the number of under age teams was increasing in 1993 there were only four senior club sides. This along with the heavy defeats of previous years forced the county board to make the difficult decision not to play county football this year. At club level it was back to old rivals Aughawillan and Fenagh again who again shared the titles. Bornacoola and Kiltubrid dominated the under age finals with Kiltubrid winning at under 12 and under 14, Bornacoola at under 16 while Cloone made it three in a row at minor.

In 1994 Leitrim successfully applied to be regraded to

All Ireland winners 1988

junior status and again they proved to be competitive as it was the perfect incentive to start again. A championship semi final win over Sligo led to a final against Mayo and Leitrim were unlucky to lose by a single point in Castlebar. Leitrim also reached the semi final of the B championship but lost to Clare. Leitrim also hosted a game against the New York All Stars team that were on tour in Ireland while Maeve Quinn's excellent performances during the year earned her a third All Star award. Aughawillan again won the double and Bornacoola their fourth under 12 title with Kiltubrid winning the other three competitions.

1995-1999

In 1995 Leitrim again reached the Connacht final with wins over Roscommon and Galway only to go down to Sligo in the final. However they reversed the result in the B championship but lost to Westmeath in the semi final. Excellent performances from Ann Marie Cox and Maeve Quinn won them All Star replacement awards. Aughawillan lost the championship final to Annaduff but won the league title while Kiltubrid retained the three titles won in 1994 and Aughawillan won their second under 12 title.

National Congress in Leitrim

1996 began on a high note for the county when Carrick successfully hosted National Congress in March. A league campaign, which was played throughout the year, went well and Leitrim were back on the major stage again when they qualified for the final against Tyrone. Leitrim led all through the game but two late goals gave Tyrone the title. In the championship holders Sligo retained the Connacht title after a first round win against Leitrim . Annaduff won their first double in senior while Mohill won their first under age title at under 12. Bornacoola won at under 14 and Kiltubrid won under 16 and minor.

Having gained promotion to the senior league, Leitrim's ambition for 1997 was to consolidate their position and so they did, but in the championship it was Sligo yet again who dented their hopes of progress. Four Leitrim players Maeve Quinn, Patricia Bohan, Ann Marie Cox and Nicola Cox were on the Connacht panel that won the Interprovincial series for the first time since 1978 and Maeve Quinn was yet again honoured with a replacement All Star award. Eleven clubs participated in the under age competitions with Mohill winning at under 12, Bornacoola at under 14 while Kiltubrid won the under 16 and minor titles. At senior level Kiltubrid increased the number of clubs to five as Aughawillan secured the double yet again. But the story does not end there as Aughawillan became the first winners of the Connacht Junior championship with a win over St Nathys of Sligo. Victory over Netownbutler of Fermanagh in the semi final set up a rare All Ireland final appearance for a team from the county. It took a replay in December to decide the issue with the title going to Beaufort from Kerry.

Leitrim further enhanced a growing reputation in reaching the semi final of the Division 2 senior league in 1998 against Meath, but despite an excellent showing a physically stronger Meath team prevailed. On to the championship and despite starting as favourites against Roscommon, Leitrim left their best form behind them and lost by two points. Patricia Bohan won an All

Connacht Junior Champions 1999

Back: Selina Shanley, Eileen Colreavy, Deirdre Quinn, Maeve Quinn, Noeleen O'Rourke, Emer McGlade, Ann Marie Cox, Sinead Brennan, Aisling Brennan, Naomi Lee, Lorraine McDermott, Orla Bohan, Emer Horan, Emer Beirne, Lorna Diffley, Tara McCabe.

Front: Lorna McDermott, Sinead Quinn, Linda Tighe, Catherine Dolan, Patricia Bohan, Paula McGarry, Joanne Holohan, Carla Creegan, Mary McKeon, Theresa Mylette, Caroline Egan, Sandra Brady, Caitriona Bohan.

Leitrim delegates and County Board Officers at the 1996 Ladies GAA Congress held in The Bush Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon. *Back row (l to r): Helan Cafferty, Regina Prior, Maeve Quinn, (Aughawillan); Mary Shanley, Annaduff,; Charles Canning, (Cloone); Front row (l to r); Deirdre Quinn (Aughawillan); Noeleen Geoghegan (Fenagh); Mary Glancy (St. Mary's); Patricia Reilly (Fenagh); Patricia Bohan (Bornacoola).*

Star award and another replacement award went to Maeve Quinn. Marian College from Mohill won the county's first Connacht junior schools title with victory over Westport, but lost the semi final to Coolmine C.S. after extra time. Aughawillan retained their county league and championship and provincial titles but were unlucky to go down by a point to Ballyvourney (Cork) in the semi final after extra time. Annaduff won the under 12 title, Mohill under 14, Bornacoola under 16 and Kiltubrid the minor for five wins in a row. Two new clubs from Gortlettragh and Aughnasheelin were formed, bringing the total number in the county to thirteen.

In 1999 Leitrim finally made the breakthrough they has threatened for the past couple of years. Although the league run was poor with relegation back to junior football, the championship at last was secured. A good win over Galway set up a Connacht final against Roscommon who had reached Croke Park in 1998. The arrival of the infamous countdown clock to Carrick added to the atmosphere and Leitrim finally won the title they wanted by three points. Favourites Tyrone came to Drumshanbo for the quarter final and were lucky to escape with a two point win but Leitrim were happy with their Connacht title. The championship panel was as follows: Patricia Bohan, Noeleen O'Rourke, Joanne Holohan, Paula McGarry, Mary McKeon, Sinead Brennan, Aisling Brennan, Maeve Quinn, Emer McGlade, Linda Tighe, Eileen Colreavy, Ann Marie Cox, Catherine Dolan, Sinead Quinn, Deirdre Quinn, Subs: Emer Horan, Catriona Bohan, Naomi Lee, Carla Creegan, Emer Beirne, Caroline Egan, Orla Bohan, Teresa Moylett, Tara McCabe, Lorna Diffley, Lorna McDermott, Lorraine McDermott, Sandra Brady, Selina Shanley. Ann Marie Cox won her second All Star replacement award. The under 16 team also reached the Connacht final but found Galway much too strong. The introduction of a junior grade of football in the county was the only way forward to keep players playing after they finished with the under age grade. The first league was a huge success with six teams entered and St Josephs defeated Bornacoola in the league final . Aughawillan won the senior double yet again together with their first minor title. Cloone won at under 16, Mohill the under 14 title and Annaduff the under 12 championship.

2000 – 2005

A new millennium in the year 2000 and the female footballers and administrators looked forward to new challenges as standards increased throughout the county and across the country. The last five years of the previous decade and indeed the millennium saw remarkable progress in the ladies game. Thirty one counties as well as teams from Britain and New York play in the All Ireland series. Fitness and skill levels have reached an all time high and the demands of a county player matched those of their male counterparts. Live television since 1998 has dramatically heightened awareness of the game and opened the eyes of many people with respect to ladies football and yet in this context Leitrim have been more than competitive. Further challenges faced the development of the club scene in the county with the ambition of the

Building on Success

The players and management team of Pat Glancy, Noel Crossan and Micheal Tighe were determined to build on the success of 1999. The league went well with wins against Down and Carlow in the play knock out stages and now Leitrim had reached the National junior final. In contrast to the previous two games Leitrim started the game with great determination and blew Galway away with an eight point lead at the break. However Galway, to their credit, played more like they were capable of in the second half, but Leitrim kept one step ahead to win their first National title since 1988. Maeve Quinn, who made a welcome return after her recent marriage, lifted the cup on behalf of the team. The Leitrim panel that secured the title on a score line of 1-12 to 0-10 was Ann Marie Cox, Evy Guckain Mary McKeon, Maeve Quinn, Eimear McGlade, Deirdre Quinn, Sinead Quinn, Fiona Roddy, Aisling Kellegher, Patricia Bohan Emer Beirne Annette Donnelly, Sinead Brennan, Eileen Colreavy, Louise Heslin, Aoife Kelly. Carla Creegan Noeleen O Rourke, Linda Tighe Naomi Lee, Emer Horan Lorraine McDermott, Lorna McDermott, Caroline Egan, Bernie Egan, Paula McGarry Siobhan Mollaghan Sandra Brady Catherine Dolan, Michelle Maguire and Kathy Butler.

In the championship, a win over Mayo earned another Connacht final against Galway in Carrick. The clock certainly added to the excitement with Leitrim timing equalising scores to perfection. Level after full and extra time and on to Tuam for the replay. However it was not to be and Galway produced a higher level of football that Leitrim could not match and won convincingly in the end. The minor team played Mayo in the Connacht final at the end of July and while performing well found Mayo too experienced. Maeve Quinn, Emer McGlade, Teresa Moylett, Eileen Colreavy, Linda Tighe and Caroline Egan were on the Connacht Interprovincial panel that won its third title. Aughawillan won the senior championship for the fourth year in succession against Cloone while St Josephs defeated Bornacoola to take the Junior championship title. Annaduff won the under 12 title, Mohill the under 14 and Under 16 titles while Cloone took the minor crown.

In 2001 Leitrim were back in Division 2 of the league following on from the previous years success. However, they failed to make any impact on the league and were very lucky to remain in the same division for 2002. A

new format in the Connacht championship saw a series of first round games to determine the four semi-finalists. A heavy opening day defeat to Galway was followed by a win against Mayo and the draw determined a another meeting with Galway in the semi final. This time Leitrim pushed Galway all the way but suffered a narrow three point defeat to exit the championship. The underage representative teams again had no success. Aughawillan continued their dominance of the latter years of the previous decade collecting the league and championship double. Mohill took the Junior Championship and league with Gortlettragh winning the inaugural Junior B Championship with St Josephs taking the league. In total, fourteen teams representing 12 clubs fielded adult teams in 2001. This was great progress from in three years when only four adult teams competed. At under age level, St Josephs, Annaduff and Mohill took the honours at underage level.

New Management

A change of intercounty management in 2002 saw Aidan Heron take up the reigns. Unbeaten in the league with wins over Donegal, Kildare, Armagh, Fermanagh and Down and Leitrim qualified for the quarter final and duly defeated Louth. However the great run came to an end in a second half collapse in the semi final against Donegal in Dromod. In the Championship wins over Mayo and Sligo and onto Connacht final in Castlebar but the Galway full forward line caused irreparable damage and hopes were dashed for another year. A win over Sligo for the Minors earned a Connacht final date against Galway but a heavy defeat to the eventual All Ireland champions. Mohill's defeat of Aughawillan in the Senior Championship semi final ended a five year unbeaten run, but it was Cloone that took the ultimate honours and also added the league title with Kiltubrid securing the Junior double and Drumkeeran the Junior B double. In response to a need to provide football during exam times, a Senior and Junior 9 a side League was introduced with St Josephs and Ballinaglera taking the honours. Cloone, Aughawillan and Kiltubrid secured the under age titles while Sinead Brennan, Emer McGlade, Deirdre Ward and Patricia Bohan helped Connacht reach the Interprovincial final as Aughawillan reached the final of the Intermediate shield in the All Ireland sevens.

A Close Call!

In 2003 Eamonn McGowan once again took charge of the county team, having previously led the team to All Ireland success in 1988. Off the field the county team secured its first major sponsor from Clarkes Hotel in Mohill. Leitrim retained their Division 2 status but bowed out of the competition at quarter final stage with a defeat to Louth in Ardee. In the Championship Leitrim started brightly with a heavy defeat of Sligo and in the semi final a fancied Galway team were the visitors to Dromod. Six minutes from the end the teams were level with Leitrim having fought back from a three point deficit and in the final four minutes Leitrim scored 1-4 without reply to secure seven point win. In the final against Sligo in Castlebar, Leitrim were hot favourites to regain the Championship title last won in 1999. However on the day, devastation for the county is the only word that comes to mind following sixty minutes of an absorbing encounter. There were many crucial moments in the game but in the end the goals scored were the difference with a 0-18 to 4-8 scoreline. In the dying seconds of the game, a blistering Emer McGlade shot walloped off the crossbar and with that all the hopes and dreams for another year were gone. It took a replay for Aughawillan take the senior league title but they made no mistake in the Championship title and have now secured seven in a row. Annaduff took the junior double with St Marys and Gortlettragh winning the Junior B Championship and league. Cloone, St Josephs and Aughawillan secured the underage titles. Aughawillan enhanced a growing reputation in the All Ireland Sevens competition. Qualifying for the Intermediate Championship final after seven games, the team were unlucky to be defeated by a point in the final.

Focus on Youth

A trip to London for the county team at the end of January started the 2004 season. In the league, for the second year in a row Louth were quarter final opponents. The game went to extra time, a two point defeat was the result. Another Connacht final appearance against Sligo in August, thanks to wins over Mayo and Galway but no hard luck story this year, as getting to within two points of the victors during the second half was as good as it got, and Sligo went on to record a well deserved 4-11 to 1-10 win. While there was no success once again at underage level, Leitrim entered its first representative under 12 county team in a Connacht league and narrowly missed out on a place in the final. On the club scene another senior double for Aughawillan as they also reached the Connacht Intermediate Final while Bornacoola ended a run of seven finals defeats in securing the both the junior championship and Division 2 league as Ballinaglera took the Junior B Championship title. Aughawillan made their annual trip to the All Ireland Sevens and after many near misses finally landed the Intermediate Shield title after a hard days football. Recognising a failure at under age county level, it was decided by the county board to reform its underage competitions to ensure a level of football for all clubs to participate in and to allow more players to have a team to play on. A 9 a side championship was introduced at under 16 grade and

Left to Right: Ann-Marie Cox, Ita Flatley, Maeve Quinn & Patricia Bohan

Leitrim Team - All-Ireland Intermediate Champions 2007

7 and 9 a side introduced for the under 14 and under 12 grades as the numbers dictated. This has eventually now led to twenty clubs participating in underage football. In addition to the main championship winners of Mohill, Aughawillan and St Josephs, Dromahair, Ballinaglera, Kiltubrid and Cloone also tasted success. St Clare's Comprehensive School, Manorhamilton won the Connacht Senior D Post Primary Schools title.

With a number of new faces introduced to the 2005 county panel, It took a while for Leitrim to find their feet in the National League and at the end of a difficult campaign, relegation to Division 3 followed. A league format was introduced for the Championship, with London entering the Connacht Championship race for the first time. Leitrim had five games to play in the round robin series, but qualified for the final against Sligo. However on the day, nothing could prevent an impressive Sligo team retaining the title as Leitrim did not perform to expectations. However under the new format, a quarter final appearance against Wexford gave the team an opportunity to make amends. Leitrim managed to get to within two points of Wexford with 5 minutes remaining in the game, but three late Wexford points ensured there would be no fairytale ending to the championship campaign once again. Aughawillan once again won the double but their sights were firmly on Connacht success and this time they made no mistake as the collected the Intermediate title against St, Nathys of Sligo before a valiant three point loss to Abbeydorney of Kerry in the All Ireland semifinal ended their year. St Josephs took the junior crown and Glencar Manorhamilton their first adult titles in the Junior B championship and league while Ballinaglera lifted the junior A league. Kiltrubrid, St Josephs, Glencar Manorhamilton, Mohill, Leitrim Gaels and Cloone all tasted underage success in the various competitions.

2006 – 2009

A new era dawned for Leitrim in 2006 as they took the brave step of appointing an outside manager for the first time to manage the county team. Tuam native Jason Taniane was joined by Patricia Bohan and Helen Ward, in hoping to bring a change to the county's fortunes and it almost paid off in his first year in charge. First up was a Division 3 final appearance against Clare in Athlone. In a roller coaster game Leitrim were one point down with one minute left as Clare Owens scored a goal but straight from the kickout Clare responded with a goal within 15 seconds and the title was gone. In the Championship a dramatic Connacht final awaited with Sligo once again the opposition. Four points down at the break, but Sinead Quinn hit the winning point and fantastic last ditch defending ensure the long awaited title. In defeating Limerick in the All Ireland quarter final a new experience awaited the players as the TG4 semi final against Longford was televised live from Roscommon. A purple patch of scoring 1-09 without reply in the second half and Leitrim were finally off to Croke Park. Sligo had recovered from a shattering Connacht final defeat and were determined to make amends. With a huge Leitrim support behind them, Leitrim left their best form at home unfortunately and Sligo won the title by four points. So near and yet so far but there was still belief. Leitrim panel: Louise Loughlin, Emer Kelly, Sinead Brennan, Mairead Stenson. Teresa Mylott, Eimear McGlade, Carla Creegan, Maeve Quinn, Sarah McLoughlin, Mary McKeon, Lorraine Brennan, Sharon Kerrigan, Ann Marie Cox, Sinead Quinn, Aoife Kelly, Emer Horan, Alanah Bohan, Anna Conlan, Erin Farrell, Naomi Faughnan, Phillipa Maguire, Camilla McDonagh, Lisa McGowan, Michelle McNulty, Clare Owens, Eilis Quinn, Amanda Sweeney. On the club scene there was a change in structure as Aughawillan were regraded to senior status for Connacht club competitions and so all of the other senior teams in the county regraded to Intermediate with Cloone winning

the title. Glencar Manor and Dromahair took the Junior titles north as they continued to develop. Eleven different underage titles were won with St Josephs, Aughawillan, Sean O'Heslins, St Marys, Kiltubrid, Glencar Manor, Fenagh and Dromahair featuring among the winners.

The Mary Quinn Cup

Finally in 2007, the ultimate dream of success arrived in what proved to be a huge year for the GAA community in Leitrim. The hosting of Feile Peil na nOg was the first highlight of the year and what a privilege to be part of what was a wonderful success story. The highlight for everyone was the parade of the teams through Carrick from the wonderful new Ardan Mhic Shamhrain stand in Pairc Sean before it was officially opened a few weeks later. In the league the team just about managed to retain its Division 2 status having won promotion the previous year. However much work remained to be done. With a new Intermediate championship unveiled, Leitrim were re-graded up from junior level. The Mary Quinn cup proved to be an added incentive for the team. With Jason Taniane joined by Helen Ward and Damien Brennan on the management team, wins over Westmeath and Wexford earned a semi final date with Clare in Cavan. In a game full of drama and trailing by a point at the break Leitrim had it all to do in the second half. Goals by Michelle Reynolds and Eileen Donoghue gave Leitrim some breathing space but in the end a single point separated the teams and it was off to Croke Park once again. This time the team had been through it all before and were more focused. After a faltering start the team got into its stride and in the second half there was no doubt who the winner would be. A majestic performance from player of the match Sarah McLoughlin helped the team for a four point win as Sinead Brennan proudly took the Mary Quinn Cup home. And what a homecoming. Through Rooskey, Dromod, Carrick, Mohill, Ballinamore and finally to Cloone. Another tour the following evening as the team was feted up and down the county. Finally the work that had been continued by so many dedicated players and county boards every year since 1988 had been rewarded. From TV appearances, a Civic Reception to trips to Germany and London the celebrations continued throughout the winter. A wonderful occasion and a great reward for a great bunch of players and everyone involved. Leitrim panel: Louise Loughlin, Catherine Holohan, Sinead Brennan, Mary McKeon, Charlene Tyrrell, Lorraine Brennan, Teresa Mylott, Maeve Quinn, Aisling Brennan, Anna Conlan, Sarah McLoughlin, Eimear McGlade, Ann Marie Cox, Eileen Donoghue, Michelle Reynolds, Caroline Egan, Erin Farrell, Sinead Fowley, Mairead McCawley, Sarah McManus, Sinead McWeeney, Clare Plunkett, Sinead Quinn, Mairead Stenson, Amanda Sweeney. After taking a break at representative level competitions to reassess the way forward, it was onwards and upwards for the county underage teams and there were positive performances. At club level Aughawillan, Kiltubrid, Sean O'Heslins, Glencar Manor and St Josephs took the laurels while Glencar Manor, St Josephs, Drumkeeran, Kiltubrid, Aughawillan and Gortlettragh earned the underage club titles. Off the field, Leitrim were rewarded for their success with five All Star nominees, Maeve Quinn, Ann Marie Cox, Mary McKeon, Sinead Brennan as Sarah McLoughlin was announced as an All Star Award winner while Mary Quinn entered the Hall of Fame.

2008 proved to be a huge disappointment as for the first time since 1993, the county failed to enter a team for the championship. The year was a very traumatic one for all involved, as despite every effort things did not work out. From such a high in capturing the Intermediate All Ireland in September, to the low of wondering if everything would just fall apart. The county team took part in the national league but securing a manager proved impossible and there was no option but to withdraw from the championship. However, with great determination and resilience a new county board was established and all of the club competitions were completed on schedule. There was some light as the under 14 team won the Division 3 title at the All Ireland Blitz in Mullingar. Once again it was Aughawillan that secured the double with Mohill, St. Marys and Gortlettragh taking the other championship titles. St Josephs and Sean O'Heslins won the Division 2 and 3 titles respectively as Aughawillan, Aughlin Gaels, St Josephs, Kiltubrid, Drumkeeran, and Cloone shared the major underage titles.

After the turmoil of the previous year, the county team was back in competition in 2009, under the direction of Mayo native Frank Browne. A new panel of players was introduced and with a difficult league campaign and

Ladies 2009 All-Star Sarah McLoughlin with Mary Quinn, winner of 2009 Ladies Hall of Fame Award

relegation to Division 3 behind them, a new challenge of senior football for the first time since 1992 awaited. Despite a lot of hard work, Mayo proved much too strong in the Connacht semi final. The draw for the All Ireland qualifiers was kinder and Sligo provided the challenge in Ballyshannon. However despite a spirited performance it was Sligo that advanced. The focus turned to the Under 14 team that had been quietly progressing through their Connacht campaign. A narrow defeat in the B Final to Roscommon led to a route in the All Ireland B Shield competition. A comprehensive win over Fermanagh in the semi final led to the first All Ireland appearance of an underage team since 1973. Offaly and Leitrim provided a thrilling final in Edgeworthstown and they could not be separated. Pat McWeeney's charges made no mistake in the replay with a deserved nine-point win in Ballymahon. Leitrim panel: Kate Byrne, Amy McLoughlin, Patricia Forde, Orla Heslin, Emer Feeley, Shauna McLoughlin, Louise Bohan, Grainne O'Malley, Ciara Gaffney, Laura O'Dowd, Ann Marie Gallagher, Ailbhe Clancy, Shauna Clancy, Michelle Beirne, Niamh Feehily, Michelle Monahan, Lauren McManus, Deirdre Davitt, Tara Fitzpatrick, Shannon O'Grady, Emma O'Hagan, Kelly O'Brien, Niamh McKiernan, Ciara McGuire, Anita Conefry, Aileen O'Flynn, Claire Lynch, Shannon O'Rourke, Nicole Higgins, Chloe McGarry, Nadine Hackett, Michaela Nolan. Aughawillan ended the decade as they started with the Championship title but Kiltubrid celebrated a famous Division 1 league title as Dromahair made the club headlines in capturing the Junior and Intermediate B championships in addition to the Division 2 league. They qualified for the Connacht club final only to be denied the title in the last minute as Drumcliffe Rosses Point forced a draw and proved too strong in the replay. At underage level the competitions were restructured with the first 15 a side Under 14 championship that was secured by St Josephs who also took a clean sweep of all the major underage titles. They also became the first club from the county to feature in a Feile na nOg final while Ballinamore area won gold in the under 12 Community Games in Mosney.

This article is but a summary of the activities of Leitrim ladies football over its first thirty years in existence. There are stories associated with every year and games off an on the field – some happy some sad but still plenty of stories. The association has helped shape the lives of so many people and we hope in a positive way. Now with almost 1,200 members in the county we salute the many people who have contributed to our association, the many volunteers who train teams and those that organise games and all of the other important functions of the association that have to be undertaken. Here's to the next thirty years and beyond.

Leitrim County Roll of Honour

All Ireland Intermediate Championship : 2007
All Ireland Junior Championship: 1988
All Ireland Under 14B Shield: 2009
Division 3 Under 14 All Ireland Blitz: 2008
Junior National League: 1982
Division 3 National League: 1999
All Ireland Senior Championship Finalists: 1984
Senior National League Finalists: 1983, 1985
All Ireland Minor Championship Finalists: 1982, 1983
Connacht Senior Championship: 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992
Connacht Junior Championship: 1988, 1999, 2000, 2006
Connacht Minor Championship: 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984
Connacht Intermediate Club Championship: 2005 (Aughawillan)
Connacht Junior Club Championship: 1997, 1998 (Aughawillan)

Leitrim All Star Award Winners

Deirdre Quinn
Tracey Monaghan
Deirdre Quinn, Tracy Monaghan
Maeve Quinn, Geraldine Wrynne (Creamer)
Maeve Quinn
Mary Quinn
Mary Quinn
Maeve Quinn
Patricia Bohan
Sarah McLoughlin

County Board Officers 1979 – 2009

1979	Vincent O'Rourke	Mary Murtagh (Glancy)
1980	Vincent O'Rourke	Mary Murtagh (Glancy)
1981	Deirdre Quinn	Mary Murtagh (Glancy)
1982	Deirdre Quinn	Mary Murtagh (Glancy)
1983	Deirdre Quinn	Ita Flatley
1984	Noeleen Geoghegan	Ita Flatley
1985	Deirdre Quinn	Ita Flatley
1986	Maura O'Reilly	Joan O'Reilly
1986	Bernie Donnelly	Noeleen Geoghegan
1987	Mary Brennan	Geraldine Creamer
1988	Mary Quinn	Josephine Doorigan
1989	Mary Quinn	Martina Flanagan
1990	Mary Quinn	Patricia Reilly
1991	Patricia Reilly	Helen McLoughlin
1992	Patricia Reilly	Maeve Quinn
1993	Maeve Quinn	Patricia Bohan
1994	Charles Canning	Patricia Bohan
1995	Charles Canning	Patricia Bohan
1996	Patricia Bohan	Mary Glancy
1997	Patricia Bohan	Mary Glancy
1998	Patricia Bohan	Mary Glancy
1999	Patricia Bohan	Mary Glancy
2000	Geraldine McIntyre	Breifne Early
2001	Mary Shanley	Breifne Early
2002	Mary Shanley	Patricia Bohan
2003	Mary Shanley	Patricia Bohan
2004	Mary Shanley	Patricia Bohan
2005	Patricia Bohan	Kieran Moran
2006	George Manek	Kieran Moran
2006	Geraldine Cremer	
2007	Geraldine Cremer	Kieran Moran
2008	Geraldine Cremer	Bernadette Glancy
2008	Ray O'Connor	
2009	Ray O'Connor	Bernadette Glancy

1998 Connacht Minor Champions

1998 Connacht Minor Champions
Back Row: John McKeon, Michael McGuinness, David Crowe, Pauric McGarry, Enda Lyons, Philip Casserly, Barry McKiernan, Gary McCluskey.
Front Row: John McGuinness, Hugh Magee, Shane Canning, Seamus Maguire, Terry Kelleher, Michael Duignan, Donal O'Callaghan

Coiste na nÓg, formerly known as Bord na nÓg, has served the clubs and the young players of Leitrim well over the decades.

An ever-increasing programme of games at under age level, allied to an elaborate coaching system in clubs and schools, have ensured that the youngsters of the county have received intensive training in the skills of the games and have opportunities aplenty to display their talents in the varied competitions in the different age groups.

The G.A.A. Summer Camps are now firmly established throughout Leitrim and these give further opportunity for young footballers and hurlers to enhance their skills in a happy, non-competitive environment.

Over the years, Leitrim has had the benefit of having top-quality officers steering the workings of Coiste na nÓg and making every effort to provide a conveyor belt of talent for Minor, Under 21, Junior and Senior level in the county.

Despite the best efforts of everybody involved, Leitrim can boast of only one Minor Connacht Championship title in the past 25 years.

That was as far back as 1998 when Seamus Maguire of Cloone captained the team to victory over Sligo in the Connacht final on a rain drenched day in Tuam. This victory came after a long barren period at Minor level – the previous provincial title had been captured in 1956 when Leitrim qualified for the All-Ireland Final but lost heavily to Dublin.

The 1998 side came up against a Tyrone team of real quality in the All-Ireland Semi-Final – many of the Tyrone players were to go on to win All-Ireland medals at Minor, Under 21 and Senior level. The captain of that 1998 Tyrone side was the late Cormac McAnallen.

But one lasting benefit for the Leitrim Minor team of 1998 has been the number of players from the side who went on to represent Leitrim at Under 21 level and continued as the backbone of the senior team, right up to 2009. We can look forward to many brilliant displays from these players into the future.

As well as the championship, the Connacht Minor League has been an important outlet for our Minor players. Whilst success on the field may be intermittent, these footballers have the opportunity to don the green and gold at inter-county level and it gives them a real taste of what it really means to be selected to wear the county jersey.

Seamus Maguire with Tyrone captain Cormac McAnallen prior to the start of the 1998 All Ireland Minor Semi-Final, in the centre is referee Seamus McCormack of Meath.

The Ted Webb Cup and the Fr. Manning Cup competitions provide similar opportunities for the Under 16 players, while the development squads at the different age groups are the nurturing grounds for possible inter-county stars.

The work of Coiste na nÓg is backed up by dedicated juvenile sections in the clubs throughout the county. Credit must be given to the many club officers, parents and coaches who willingly take on the hard slog in their own club areas and spend countless hours in the training of our young players, in preparing them for games and in providing the playing facilities and playing gear necessary. Participation in the actual competitions is but a small part of the work involved. Coiste na nÓg has wisely introduced appropriate bye-laws to cater for teams of varying numbers and standards. No youngster is denied an opportunity to be part of a team and wise use is made of blitzes to ensure widespread participation.

Recent years have seen a dramatic increase in the number of games under the jurisdiction of Coiste na nÓg and it is a remarkable tribute to the Board, to the clubs and to the referees of the county, that such a wide programme is wisely scheduled and brought to conclusion each year. Youngsters are not particularly conscious of the grading of their team – what they want is to be part of their clubs side, whether at higher or lower level.

Of course, every youngster aspires to playing in Croke Park and this opportunity does fall to many, with the Mini-sevens and other similar and well-planned events. As well as this most clubs ensure that their juvenile players get to witness big club trips to National League Finals, Club Finals or All-Ireland Semi-Finals, where they can watch their heroes in real live action. Similar trips are made to many provincial games in Connacht, while Coiste na nÓg, in co-operation with Coiste Chontae Liatroma, organises parades and games on County Final day.

Particularly impressive in 2009 was the parade of hundreds of young players from 24 underage clubs at the County Final, to mark the 125th Centenary of the G.A.A. – this wise idea was but one of those used over the years by Coiste na nÓg to make the young players feel part of the action on big G.A.A. occasions.

There was a time when all underage county teams were managed by the Bórd na nÓg officers, but this system was replaced by the appointment of the team managers and selectors in the various grades. The county has been very fortunate in the fact that year after year, people with managerial and coaching skills have given their services willingly in the preparation and training of teams at all underage levels.

This is probably not considered the glamour side of the Association, but it is vitally important that young people can see adults willing to give of their time, energy and commitment for their sake. If success comes it brings consolation for the work involved, but so many have rallied to the cause without ever having the sweet taste of victory. Rather than this being a reflection on their efforts, it is testament to their dedication, that they are willing to give their all, even though they may realise they are fighting against the odds. One thing they do ensure is that every Leitrim team taking the field has been properly trained and is ready to play to the best of its ability.

Coiste na nÓg officers of recent years.

Back Row: Walter Sharpley, Diarmuid Sweeney, Charles Egan (who died in 2006) , Dan Gallogly.

Front Row: Caillian Ellis, Jimmy McNama, Attracta O'Reilly.

While much of the funding for the activities of Coiste na nÓg comes – as it should – directly from the County Board, Leitrim has also been fortunate in having many generous supporters

who became team or associate sponsors and help ease the financial burden. Commercial return is not of interest to these lovers of the green and gold – all they want is to see our young players and our under-age county teams given the facilities necessary and the opportunity to compete at a high level for the county.

Of major benefit to Coiste na nÓg also, has been the close co-operation it has enjoyed with the Primary and Post-Primary Schools throughout the county. Leitrim has been very lucky in the quality of its officers at youth level and it has been equally fortunate in the quality of its teachers and especially in their dedication to Cumann Lúthchleas Gael. Apart from their work in promoting our games in their schools, a vast number of the teachers have also been to the forefront within their own clubs and within Coiste Chontae Liatroma.

As we come to the end of 2009, Coiste Chontae Liatroma is busy putting plans in place for a full review of under-age structures in the county. Such a review is welcomed by Coiste na nÓg as there will be an opportunity to fully assess our current standing and to plan for the improvements that it may be possible to put into place, for the betterment of our youth – and to ensure that our young players and young members will be given a solid foundation to make them the future leaders of our clubs, our county and our association.

Coiste na nÓg Officers 2009 ---

Cathaoirleach	Dan Gallogly
Leas-Cathaoirleach	John Joe Beirne
Runaí	Attracta O'Reilly
Leas Runaí	Terence Boyle
Cisteoir	Joe Guckian
PRO	Padraig McGourty
Cláraitheoir	Anselm Reynolds

Above: Some Leitrim Tutors 2009
Left to right: Derek Kellegher, Brian Breen, Matt Gaffey, Kevin Ludlow, Mark Heslin.

Below: Connacht Coaching Officer John Tobin - centre of pic taken at a coaching seminar with Leitrim coaches.

Coaching – The Structured Approach

Coaching has always been an integral part of team preparation. Over the years the Connacht Council has given great support to this aspect of our games and official recognition was bestowed on coaching when the Council established its first Coaching Committee under Joe Mc Donagh, who later became Uachtarán CLG.

However in recent years, the significance of coaching extended its parameters to such an extent that the Connacht Council, under the Chairmanship of Tommy Moran and Provincial Coaching Chairman Mick Higgins, in conjunction with the National Coaching and Games Committee appointed John Tobin of Galway as the first full time Provincial Coaching and Games Officer. This trend would later be replicated in the other provinces. Since then the coaching structures and systems have continued to develop.

The system was further refined by appointing County Games Managers in each county, who take responsibility with their County Coaching Committee for all coaching and games activities within each county.

The five appointees were

Mayo:	Billy Mc Nicholas
Leitrim:	Thomas Keenan
Roscommon	Willy Hegarty
Sligo	Liam Og Gormley
Galway	Tom Mc Manus

Damien Coleman was also appointed as the Provincial Director for hurling.

The full time coaching staff was completed by the appointment of Games Promotion Officers by each County Board.

The coaching personnel have responsibility for the delivery of all the programmes and activities that are part of the National Coaching and Games policy.

Sustaining quality with quantity
Throughout the province, coaching is now provided in over 570 Primary Schools. This coaching is provided in 2 eight to ten week periods. This is complemented further by the invaluable input of teachers. To co-ordinate and organize this operation takes constant vigilance, because whilst the volume of players coached is important so too is the quality of the coaching. Sustaining and maintaining quality with quantity is the challenge.

In all of our Primary School coaching activities Cumann na mBunscol personnel have always made and continue to make an enormous contribution.

Go Games
As part of the new Strategic Policy, the Association has decreed that *Go Games* will be adopted as best practice up to and including 12 years of age. The conditions of these games ensure that everyone gets meaningful playing time, in an environment that is enjoyable, yet

challenging. These games are a vehicle for ensuring that the children are provided with games that are developmental by their very nature. The *Go Games* concept was introduced in 2006 and is gradually being adopted and implemented by Clubs and Schools.

Youngsters get to play in Croke Park
Emanating from a proposal from Connacht Coaching and Games Committee, Croke Park was opened in 2007 for one day to give young players from Connacht an opportunity to play in this great stadium. This has now been extended to 2 days. Children from various clubs, selected by their County Coaching and Games Committee, take part in a provincial Go Games Festival. As expected, these occasions have been much appreciated and treasured by all concerned.

Logistical problems in Second Level Schools
Although our games continue to be a vibrant part of most school activities, coaching in Second Level Schools has become increasingly difficult. Indeed the lack of coaching in some schools has been a major concern to our organization. Despite the great efforts and continued support of many teachers, societal changes are having a major impact on coaching in the schools. It is an area that requires immediate attention.

Third Level Colleges
Our Third Level officers, Adrian Hassett, N.U.I.G, Damien Curley, G.M.I.T, and Michael Harte, S.I.T. continue with the strong support of the college personnel, to do great work in this sector.

Training of Club Coaches
One of the most recent challenges facing many clubs has been the unavailability of home grown coaches and managers. To help alleviate this difficulty coach education structures needed to be remodelled.
The Connacht Coaching Education Committee was formed under the stewardship of Denis O' Boyle. Eight Master Tutors were trained at National level and these tutors will have graduated 52 coached by December 2009.
This body of tutors will deliver the various coach education courses and certify coaches in their respective counties.

Over the past number of years a large number of volunteers have undertaken coach education and received their awards. As well as the formal coaching awards, specific coaching workshops and seminars have also been available to all interested parties.

The coaching calendars, which are produced by each County Games Committee on an annual basis, outline all activities and courses.

Provincial Coaching Conference
The inaugural Connacht Provincial Coaching Conference took place in 2006. It was attended by over 400 coaches and had an all star cast: Christy Cooney (Chairman of the National Coaching and Games Committee), Pat Daly (Head of Games), Professor Tom Reilly (John Moore University), Niall Moyna (Dublin City University), Jack O' Connor(Kerry) and Paudie Butler (National Director of Hurling). This event has continued to hold its popularity each year.

Academies and Development Squads
The Academy and Development Squad Programmes have continued to flourish. In 2006 a residential camp in N.U.I.G. was established. Over 100 elite U-15's in both hurling and football got expert tuition in various aspects of the game. All were tested and evaluated to create a data base for future reference. The data indicated that the standard of our players is equal and in some cases better than their equivalent in other provinces.

Annual blitz days for Academies and Development Squads were first scheduled in 2004 and have continued successfully since. Amongst those are the Sean Purcell U-14 Academy, The Connolly/Cunniffe Academy and The Niall Mc Inerney Academy.

Other tournaments, such as The Ted Webb and The Suck Valley League continue to exist. In 2006 the Province had its first Connacht Féile in both hurling and football.

Thousands attend VHI Cúl Camps
The Summer Camps which have been an integral part of the county coaching schedules were relaunched as a national programme in 2006 and became the VHI Cul Camps. Since then the average provincial attendance has been approximately 11,000 participants.

Other programmes that have continued to promote coaching activities have been the N.U.I.G. and Sligo IT projects. In both of these courses undergraduates have been given academic recognition for providing coaching in the Primary and Secondary sectors. Since its inaguration in 2004, the Primary School In-service courses have attracted a large nunber of teachers.

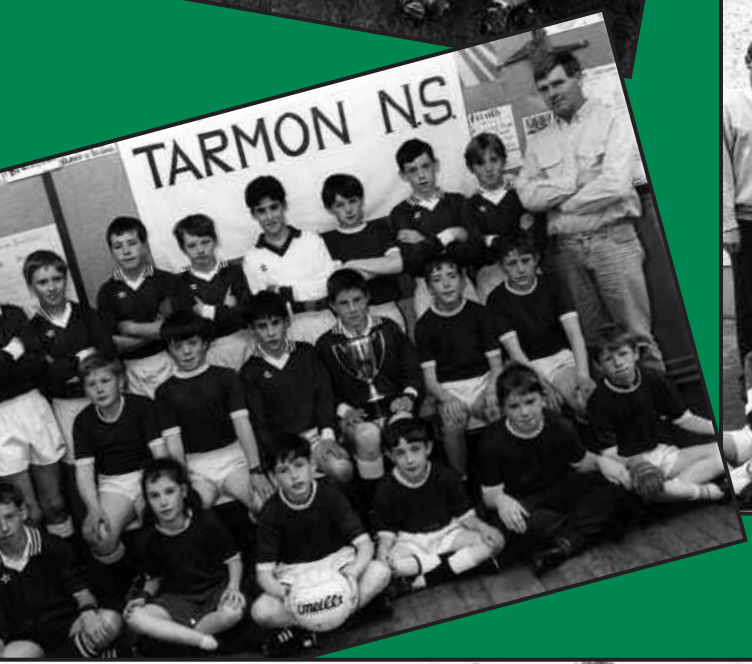
The *Transition Year Course* and the *Young Whistler Course* for prospective referees are other programmes that have been popular since their inception.

Coaching Resources
A number of resources have been produced to assist coaches and referees.

The ***Fun Do*** Pack that was produced by the National Coaching and Games Committee is the most comprehensive coaching tool of its time. The Connacht Council has produced a "Coaching structures and activities manual"; a "Strength and conditioning" DVD for the younger player; Player and Club Coaching Programmes for U-8 and U-10 Hurlers; a DVD on the Coaching of the Tackle and the Liam Sammon book, "Optimising Performance in Gaelic Football". All have been produced to contribute to the development of the player and coach.

Over the years the Connacht Council and Connacht counties have been to the fore in supporting and promoting all coaching initiatives and coaching personnel. But ultimately we must acknowledge and appreciate the thousands of volunteers who continue to help to sustain and grow all our games in the Province.

Coached Through the Years



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Féile Peil na nÓg 2007

Mary Glancy - PRO of the Féile organising committee recalls a great football and social weekend.

Féile Peil na nÓg is an annual international football festival for Under 14 Gaelic Footballers, both boys and girls, with approximately 4,000 children representing 164 teams taking part. In 2007 this festival came to Leitrim from 29th June to 1st July. It was one of the largest sporting events in the country that year and Leitrim, in association with Sligo and Roscommon, hosted the event.

Amongst those participating in the competition were club teams from each county in Ireland, from England, Scotland and also New York and Philadelphia in the US. This was a weekend of sport and friendships with every town, village and parish in Leitrim hosting a visiting team for three days. Some teams, especially those travelling from abroad, stayed for up to a week.

The highlight of the weekend was undoubtedly the parade of all the teams in Carrick on the Friday evening. From early in the day, teams started arriving from all parts of the country to all parishes in Leitrim, Sligo and Roscommon where they were welcomed with incredible hospitality. The sight of over 4,000 children in their club colours and with colourful banners in front of the newly opened stand in Pairc Sean in Carrick was a fantastic spectacle. After the official opening by the Presidents of the GAA Nickey Brennan and the Ladies Football Association Geraldine Giles, the Artane Boys Band led the parade as it made its way through the streets of Carrick to the review stand where the teams were introduced by Master of Ceremonies Tommy Moran.

On the Saturday, over 250 games were played at 42 venues all around Leitrim and in some of the clubs in Roscommon and Sligo. From early morning until late that evening hundreds of volunteers cooked and officiated at all of the venues to cater, not only for all of the players and volunteers, but also for the travelling supporters of which there were many. Travelling all around the county on Saturday, one could only marvel at the fantastic hospitality of the GAA clubs and Ladies clubs as they hosted their visitors. A huge range of activities was also organised on the Saturday evening by the clubs for their guests. And while the clubs hosted the visiting children in their houses, there was not a spare bed to be found in a guesthouse or hotel with so many visitors to the county.

The business end of the weekend started at nine o'clock on Sunday morning in Pairc Sean in Carrick where eleven finals were played. There was an unprecedented success for Leitrim in the first game as Drumreilly won Leitrim's first ever Féile title, defeating Eire Og from Roscommon in the Boys Division 6 Final.

In the Skills competition both James Gallagher from Drumkeerin and Colm Moreton from Leitrim Gaels also qualified for the finals. Over the course of the day it was estimated that more than ten thousand spectators came to watch the finals, each more entertaining than the next. And as the last of the visitors left on Monday, the event has heralded as an unqualified success.

The event was the culmination of two years work by the local organising committee and from the outset every club in the county became involved in the preparations. A 112 page souvenir programme was produced by Mary Glancy and Tommy Moran, featuring many articles, photos and details of all 164 teams that participated, including all of the fixtures. The compilation of all of the results was coordinated by Leitrim PRO Brendan Doyle in The Bush Hotel with results immediately available worldwide on the Féile website. In a further innovation the results were also available on WAP mobile phones. Over the weekend there were over 15,000 hits on the website – also a great success.

Aside from the weekend itself, Féile Peil na nOg was officially launched in the Bush Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon on 24th May and this was also proved a great occasion with players from all of the clubs in Leitrim, Roscommon and Sligo attending. This was the highlight of a week spent in the county by G.A.A. President Nickey Brennan and Ladies G.A.A. President Geraldine Giles, visiting many venues in the three counties to meet all of the primary schools pupils. Over 200 schools were also presented with training packs from Coca Cola, the main sponsors of the event.

The organising committee received great support from Leitrim County Council, the local Gardai, Civil Defence, Carrick Chamber of Commerce and Leitrim Tourism. While there has to be a committee to co-ordinate such a huge event in the Irish sporting calendar, it was the local clubs who got their clubs prepared for the week-end. Each club had their grounds and club rooms looking so well, pitches cut and lined, the smell of fresh paint and flags flying everywhere, it was brilliant. And of course the famed Leitrim hospitality was shown to their visitors which ultimately made the event the success that it was.

While there is an obvious competitive element to the weekend, for the majority of participants it was a wonderful social occasion and a great opportunity to show off our fine county to our visitors. There will, I'm sure, be many exchange trips in the future with the teams that stayed with each other and probably some lifelong friendships. And that is what sport for young is all about.

Paddy and Margaret Higgins and GAA President Nickey Brennan pictured presenting the Niall Higgins Memorial Cup to the Strokestown captain on winning the Boys Division 7 Final. The Higgins family donated the cup in memory of their late son Niall.

SCOR NA NÓG
Mol an Óige
FARMERS JOURNAL
SuperValu

Barr na Cuile - Rince Seit. People often talk about the greatest players who never won an All Ireland, but Bornacoola's Rince Seit group fall into that category. They were in the All Ireland Finals on 5 successive years (1986-1990) but were unlucky not to win on any occasion. They are pictured above at the Connacht Finals in 1988. Back (L to R): Seán Beirne, Declan Bohan, Tommy Larkin, and Peter Egan. Front: Ann Mulligan, Philomena Mulligan, Patricia Reilly, Theresa Duignan

Achadh na Sileann – Bailéad Ghrúpa. Aughnasheelin have contributed greatly to Scór in the County and after many years of reaching the All Ireland Finals their Ballad Group finally achieved All Ireland victory in 2006. Pictured at the Co Final that year are: Gerry McGovern, Cathaoireach Coiste Liatroma, Brendan Sammon, Cait Cullen/Sammon, Declan Sammon, Sinéad Egan, Sile McNulty and Maura Mulvey, Rúnaí Scór.

Naomh Muire – Bailéad Ghrúpa - Scór na nÓg. St Mary's have reached All Ireland Finals on a number of occasions. In 2007 this group reached the Finals in Scór na nÓg: Back: Roger Baker Kenny, Paddy Naughton. Cathaoirleach Coiste Scór Chonnacht, Brian Ó Fearghail Front: Elaine McPartland, Colm Bohan, Sinéad McGovern.

Barr na Cúile - Trath na gCeist - Scór na nÓg. Bornacoola won the All Ireland in Scór na nÓg Trath na gCeist in 2001. Pictured are: Michael Thornton, Bus Éireann, Cyril Staunton, Niall McGowan, Louise Staunton, Seán McCague, Uachtarán Cumann Lúthchleas Gael.

Fíonach – Nuachleas. Fenagh St Caillin's won the All Ireland in Nuachleas in 2005. Back Éamonn Óg Tubman, Seán Kelly, Uachtarán Cumann Lúthchleas Gael, Shane O'Rourke. Front: Séamus Mollaghan, Betty Doonan, T P McLoughlin.

Carraig Álainn – Aithriseoireacht. Brian Reilly has been a stalwart of Scór for many years and has taken part in Novelty Acts, Recitation and Solo singing. He reached the All Ireland Finals in Recitation in 1998

Scór – It's part of Leitrim Life

Says Oifigeach Cultúir agus Teanga
Seán Ó Súilleabháin

Where would we be without the GAA Scór?

What started 40 years ago is now an indispensable part of the cultural and social life of Leitrim. Many hundreds of youngsters have taken to the stage to participate in Scór over the past four decades. If they had not been given this opportunity with their clubs, then the vast majority of those young people might never have had experienced the thrill of being part of live entertainment and of developing their talents in this direction..
Scór is the primary entertainment event in many parishes and perhaps the only opportunity given to youngsters to sing, recite, act, dance or be part of a Quiz team.

At senior level the same is true. The revival of set dancing is almost entirely due to Scór and there would never be an opportunity for many people in a club area to form a ballad group, do a figure dance, or take part in recitation, novelty act or music group without Scór. We have been fortunate that throughout the past 40 years, Scór has been consistently strong in the county. Some years have seen more participants than others, clubs have been strong at times and then may had weak periods, but, overall, Leitrim has been very loyal to the whole cultural movement that started in the GAA forty years ago.

Various people have contributed to promoting scór in the County. Initially on 1970, it was the County Board through its Rúnaí, the late Tomás Ó Ríordáin that organised Scór. Then Josie Torsney was appointed Scór coordinator. Since than the list of Scór officers included: Shay Reynolds, Pat Clarke, Brendan Gormley, Peggy Lynch, Andy O'Rourke, Tommy Moran, Patricia McGoldrick, Cormac MacGiolla and Brid Sullivan. In 2009 Sean Maxwell retired as Cisteoir after a long period of years and he had also taken part in Scór on many occasions.

There have been memorable nights in Scór at all levels from local halls to national arenas, from nights when big halls were half empty and the heating wasn't the best, to nights in small halls bursting at the seams and when people had to go outside to get a breath of fresh air. Then there is the excitement of results being announced and sometimes not being what some people expected. Then follows the analysis and the discussion on the way home about who should have won or how someone didn't win and who might get to the next stage. There is a special excitement at meeting great Scór friends and being part of the friendly rivalry.

At Connacht and national level Leitrim are always there and there have been memorable occasions as clubs made the breakthrough at All Ireland level. Who will ever forget the night Aughnasheelin won the Ballad Group after years of trying or the night Fenagh won the Novelty Act? The brilliance of Gerard Canning, Sheena Cryan and Aidan Dockery in Recitation made the county proud, as did the dancers of Glencar-Manorhamilton. The Novelty Acts from Carrigallen and Seán O'Heslins had everyone enthralled. It is wonderful to see Scór so strong in Leitrim and to have the county so prominent also at provincial and national level. Gura fada buan é.

Scór celebrates 40 years

On 3 April last Coiste Scór Liatroma celebrated 40 years of Scór with a memorable Ceolchoirm in Ballinamore Community Centre. For those present it was a wonderful occasion as some of the greats of 40 years took to the stage to perform once again. Without the tension associated with adjudication and results, the entertainment on stage was a joy to behold as singers reciters, dancers and ballad groups entertained the big crowd for nearly four hours.

Coiste Scór Liatroma started by inviting a range of performers from over the 40 years. Many could not come on the night for various reasons but the organisers were delighted to get so many of the stars of Scór to appear on stage once again. In Rince Foirne, Glencar/Manorhamilton, two-time All Ireland winners, danced, as did the Aughnasheelin 1979 Figure Dance who hadn't been together for nearly thirty years. There was a great line-up of Solo Singers including Mai Reynolds who reached the All Ireland Final in the first year of Scór, Éamonn Daly and Orla who were in the All Ireland in 1984, Brid Megahy who twice graced the All Ireland stage, Sinéad Egan, Elaine Duignan, Aisling Maxwell and Deirdre McCabe, all of whom were in All Ireland Finals in either Scór or Scór na nÓg over the past decade. There was outstanding entertainment in Ceol Uirlise as the Morrow brothers, All Ireland winners in 1989 in Scór na nÓg, took the stage. Likewise Theresa Smullen who had just launched a solo album was accompanied by John McCartin and also the Dromahair music group who reached the All Ireland in 2007. There were some great recitations from Tom Fitzgerald, Leitrim's first ever All Ireland winner, Aidan Dockery, another All Ireland winner, Lorna Heslin, Brian Reilly and Noeleen Leddy. In Ballad group we had Bornacoola from 1983, St Mary's from 2008, the Aughnasheelin All Ireland winners from 2006 and Allen Gaels with Charlie McGettigan and Éamonn Daly who started out on stage in Scór in 1974. There were three wonderful Novelty Acts staged: Seán O'Heslins with the act that won the All Ireland in 2001 and also acts from Fenagh and Drumkeerin. Finally we saw the legendary Bornacoola set dancers who graced the All Ireland stage for five years in a row. One of the surprises of the night for the audience was to see a video of the famous Aughnasheelin set dancers from 1976 as they danced on RTE programme "Trom agus Éadrom" some years later. Sea, gan dabht, oíche shuntasach nach ndéanfar dearmad air go deo.

Leitrim have "Kingdom" status in Scór

Despite being passionate and committed in Gaelic football, Leitrim's success stories at Connacht level or All Ireland are few and far between. The extraordinary thing about Scór is that Leitrim are top of the list in Connacht and are up at the top at All Ireland level also. When you look at the chart for Connacht Scór Sinsear titles won by each of the Connacht counties it makes amazing reading:

Fenagh St Caillins pictured after winning the 2006 Connacht Finals. Back: Fergal Ellis, Shane McHugh, Laurie Quinn, Cathaoirleach, Scór Chonnacht, Diarmuid McHugh, Séamus McWeeney. Front: Caitríona Doonan, Nicola Cull, Adeline McWeeney, and Janette Leyden.

Carraig Álainn – Nuachleas. Carrigallen have won the All Ireland in Novelty act on two occasions. In 1988, Carrigallen won with Killian McGuinness and Gus Ward in a memorable act. Also in picture are Charles McGuinness and GAA President Dr. Mick Loftus.

Maothail – Nuachleas. Pictured above is a Mohill Novelty Act group which won the County Scór na nÓg title in Novelty Act in 1982: Gerard Canning, Maura Canning, Katherine Lynch and Patrick Rogers. Gerard Canning subsequently went on the win an All Ireland Scór Sinsear in Aithriseoireacht in 1988. Katherine Lynch is now a well-known comedy actress with her own shows on RTE television over the past couple of years.

Gaeil na Meilge – Ceol Uirlise. The Doherty sisters: Deirdre, Gráinne and Joanne, representing Melvin Gaels, won the Ceol Uirlise in Leitrim Scór na nÓg three years in a rwo: 1993,1994 and 1995. They reached the All Ireland Finals in 1995

Gortletteragh won the overall club award in 1987. They won three county titles that year: Aithriseoireacht (Lorna Heslin), Ceol Uirlise (Margaret, Helen and Jacqueline Grier) and Nuachleas (Breda Colreavy, Annette Colreavy, Lorna Heslin, Noeleen Gaffney and Kevin Quinn)

Seán O hEislin – Aithriseoireacht. Sheena Cryan from Ballinamore won the Recitation in Senior Scór twice: in 1985 and 1989. Pictured above receiving her award from Uachtarán Cumann Lúthchleas Gael, Mick Loftus.

Connacht Scór Sinsear titles (to 2009)

Liatroim	94
Maigh Eo	78
Gaillimh	75
Ros Comáin	41
Sligeach	28

No wonder that at Connacht level, Leitrim are expected to be strong and they frequently win as many as four titles on a Connacht final night as they did in 2005 and 2006. They went one better in 2007 and 2008 when they won 5 on each occasion.

At All Ireland level, Leitrim are also strong performers. At the end of 2009 the Roll of All Ireland Scór Sinsear winners is as follows:

All Ireland Scór Sinsear titles (To 2009)

Gaillimh	22
Tír Eoghain	22
Liatroim	20
Luimneach	20

Leitrim's successful run started in the 1980s. In the first ten years of Scór, Leitrim's only success was when Tom Fitzgerald won the Aithriseoireacht in 1971. The next success was when Annaduff won the Trath na gCeist in 1982. Since then Leitrim won six All Irelands in the 1980s, six in the 1990s and six in the 2000s

Level of participation
What stands to Leitrim is the high level of participation from the county's 24 clubs. In 2009, 18 of the 24 clubs took part in Scór Sinsear. This is, proportionately, probably the highest in the country. The clubs and especially the Oifigigh Cultúir agus Teanga in each club, deserve great credit for keeping the rate of involvement so high.

Leitrim's Greatest night at All Ireland Finals.
The greatest night for Leitrim Scór at all Ireland level was in April 1999 in the Ulster Hall in Belfast when three All Irelands were won on the same night. Aidan Dockery from Bornacoola won the Aithriseoireacht, Glencar/Manorhamilton won the Rince Foirne and Carrigallen won the Nuachleas.

Leitrim's Greatest night in Connacht
Leitrim's most successful night in Connacht was in the GAA Centenary year of 1984 when Leitrim got seven wins out of eight at the Connacht Finals in Banada. It was an extraordinary achievement and this occurred at a time when the one team of adjudicators did the whole adjudication. Ironically, the only ones who didn't win that night were Bornacoola set dancers and they turned out the most successful of the lot as they got to five All Ireland finals later.

Cormac MacGiolla agus Oíche Stairiúil i Scór na nÓg
Nuair a luaitear Scór i Liatroim, cuimhnítear láithreach ar Chormac MacGiolla. Ar fead tréimhse fada bhí Cormac páirteach i Scór nó i mbun Scór. Bhí sé mar Chathaoirleach ar Scór i Liatroim, bí sé freisin ar Choiste Náisiúnta Scór. Bhí sé mar mholtóir ar fud na tíre. Anois tá corn ag Coiste Scór Chonnacht ainmnithe do Chormac agus bronntar é ar an gContae is fearr i Scór Sinsear Chonnacht. Ní haon ionadh gur bhuaigh Liatroim é ar an gcéad bhliain i 2009. Freisin, tá plaic don scoil is fearr i Scór na mBunscoileanna i Liatroim a bhronn Clann Mhic Giolla agus tá plaic don club is fearr i Scór na nÓg Liatroma, iad uile ainmnithe in ómós do Chormac.

The Year all 24 clubs took part.
In the year 2000, Bliain na Mílaoise, Scór Cathaoirleach, the late Cormac Mac Giolla, set for himself a target – to have every one of Leitrim's 24 clubs taking part in Scór. This never happened in Leitrim or anywhere else for that matter. Ní féidir, é seo a bhaint amach, dar le go leor daoine. Is féidir, a dúirt Cormac. Clubs were cajoled and coaxed and every club indicated that they intended to take part. Bhí Cormac ana shásta. That was so until Annaduff didn't appear on the night they were supposed to. Well, 23 out of 24 wouldn't' be bad, to most people but to Cormac this would be failure. Cormac got to work before the next bout of Scór na nÓg, fixed for Bornacoola Community Centre. He taught music to some youngsters in Annaduff and it dawned on him to recruit two young tin whistle players. Manna from heaven to Cormac. They played a couple of airs and the "West was won". Bhí gach uile club i gContae Liatroma páirteach í Scór na nÓg.
It was an achievement that Cormac Mac Giolla deserved. No other County in Ireland could do it. The year 2000 was a historic one in Scór Liatroma, this was a feat unlikely to be equalled again, certainly never surpassed. But we cannot forget the two tin whistle players from Annaduff who made history possible.

Dromahair top for 20 years
Dromahair were the leading club in Scor na nÓg in the early years. For years after that Dromahair didn't take part at all but, happily, they are now back in force again and have been particularly successful in Ceol Uirlise. Their success in those early years was due to the outstanding work of Josie Torsney who was also the County Coordinator for Scór for many years.

Cathal Reynolds - 5 titles in a night
The outstanding individual feat in Scor na nÓg Liatroma was that of Cathal Reynolds from Bornacoola. He collected five County titles in the one night in 1990. He was on the winning Bornacoola teams in Figure Dance, Novelty Act, Ballad Group and Set Dance and won Solo Singing as well. It would be hard to beat that and it is doubtful if it was ever done anywhere in Ireland

All Ireland Wins – Unique achievements
To win an All Ireland in Scór na nÓg is a great achievement but there are two people who have won two All Irelands in Scór na nÓg, both from the Seán O'Heslins Club. Alan Ryan won twice in Tráth na gCeist in 1988 and 1991 and Catherine Smith won twice in Nuachleas in 2001 and 2006. Given their numerous successes in Senior Scór it is not surprising that several Seán O'Heslin's participants have multiple successes. Brid Sullivan has been part of six All Ireland winning Novelty Acts. Michael Fanning, Raymond McHugh and Sean McKeon each have been part of four successful Novelty Acts and Tommy Moran and Brendan Brennan have been in three each. There are two Leitrim people

Sean O hEislin – Nuachleas - Scór na nÓg. Seán O'Heslins have won the Nuachleas in Scór na nÓg on three occasions. The first title came with the group pictured above in 1997. Front: Aoife Moran, Jack Boothman Uachtarán Cumann Lúthchleas Gael, Muire Sweeney. Back: Ruairí Ó Suilleabháin, Denis Bourke, Bus Éireann, Laura Gilheaney and Alma McKeon.

Gaeil Liatroma – Amhranaíocht Aonair. Leitrim Gaels have participated strongly in Scór in recent years. In 2006, Anne Whitney won the Solo Singing in Leitrim. Pictured above with Gerry McGovern, Cathaoirleach Coiste Contae Liatroma, Anne Whitney, Maura Mulvey, Rúnaí Scór Liatroma and Seán Ó Suilleabháin, Oifigeach Cultúir agus Teanga.

Carraig Álainn – Ceol Uirlise - Scór na nÓg. There has been a number of outstanding musical families who have taken part in Scór na nÓg over the years in the County. The most successful of these were the Morrow brothers from Carrigallen, John, Thomas and Robert who won the Ceol Uirlise All Ireland in Scór na nÓg in 1989.

Sean O'Heslins have enjoyed particular success in Novelty Acts both in Scór Sinsear and Scór na nÓg. Many members of the same families and different generations have been on winning groups. In 2001 O'Heslins achieved a remarkable double, winning the Novelty Act in both Scór na nÓg and Scór Sinsear. There were four father or mother/son or daughter combinations on the winning groups. Pictured above are: Michael Fanning, Michelle Fanning, Brendan Brennan, Laura Brennan, Vera Brennan, Leigh Murphy, Joseph Murphy, Cyril Smith, Catherine Smith.

Gleann an Chairthe/Cluainín – Rince Foirne - Scór na nÓg. Glencar/Manorhamilton have been hugely prominent in Figure Dance both in Scór Sinsear and Scór na nÓg. Pictured above are their Figure Dancers who reached the All Ireland Finals in 1997. The group included: Annette McDonald, Marie Clare McMorrow, Amanda Sweeney, Shane Connaire, Fergal Kelly, Karl Kivlehan, David Sheridan and Aoife Duignan

Gleann an Chairthe/ Cluainín – Rince Foirne - Scór na nÓg. Glencar/Manorhamilton have reached the All Ireland Finals in Scór na nÓg on seven occasions. Pictured above is the team that reached the finals in 2004. Ciara Flynn, Eimear O'Neill, Linda McWilliams, Louise Loughlin, Shane Gilligan Emmett McMorrow, Evan Sweeney, Aidan McLoughlin

who have won All Ireland Sinsear medals in different events. Gus Ward from Carrigallen won in Nuachleas in 1988 and in Aithriseoireacht 1994. Seán Ó Suilleabháin from Seán O'Heslins won in Trath na gCeist and Nuachleas, both in 2002.

Seán O'Heslins - Outstanding in Scór
Among Leitrim clubs, Seán O'Heslins stand out for their participation but more especially for their successes in both Scór na nÓg and Scór Sinsear. At the time of writing Seán O'Heslins have the second highest number of All Ireland wins of any club in Ireland. Only St Enda's, Omagh, Co Tyrone are ahead of them. For some years, Seán O'Heslins were actually in the top spot and were only passed out in 2008. The club has won a total of 14 All Irelands, 9 in Scór Sinsear and 5 in Scór na nÓg.

Scór na nÓg All Ireland Titles.
In the 28 years of Scor na nÓg, seven all Ireland titles have come to Leitrim. The competitors who brought All Ireland glory to Leitrim are as follows;

SEÁN O'HESLIN'S.
1988 Trath na gCeist: Alan Ryan, Niall Gormley, Con Conlon.
1991 Trath na gCeist: Alan Ryan, Denis O'Connor, Cormac Ó Suilleabháin.
1997 Nuachleas: Muire Sweeney, Alma McKeon, Ruairi Ó Suilleabhain, Aoife Moran, Laura Gilheaney
2001 Nuachleas: Sarah McLoughlin, Ross Dooner, Catherine Smith, Joseph Murphy, Michelle Fanning, Laura Brennan, Paul Gilheany, Killian Cronin
2006 Nuachleas: Catherine Smith, Rowena O'Rourke, Lisa Duignan, Clare Fanning, Michael Costello, David Leyden, Neil Hughes

CARRIGALLEN.
Ceol Uirlise, Thomas, Robert and John Morrow.

BORNACOOLA
2001 Trath na gCeist: Niall McGowan Cyril Staunton Louise Staunton

Scor 1972 in the "ice box"
The poor state of Scór in Leitrim in the early years can be gauged by the report in the Leitrim Observer on the 1972 Scór Finals which included the first ever Scór na nÓg Finals on the same programme. The report went as follows:
"The Leitrim Scór 72 GAA Talent Competition Finals were held in Doherty's Hall Drumshanbo on Thursday night last. There was a disappointing attendance present and the standard of competition was not of a very high nature.
Doherty's Hall was like an "Ice Box" with comparatively little heating laid on. The programme of events billed for 8.30pm eventually got off the ground at 9.45pm.one hour and 15 minutes late. This is a deplorable state of affairs particularly under the freezing conditions which patrons had to sit through"

Footballers win scor titles.
Among the well-known County players who won County Scor na nÓg titles are Aidan Rooney in Set Dance (1981) with Glencar-Manorhamilton. Martin McHugh and Aidan Creamer in Set Dance (1983 and 1984) with Aughnasheelin. Brendan Guckian in Novelty Act (1984) with St Mary's. Fintan McBrien in Set Dance (1991) with Aughavas. Emlyn Mulligan in Nuachleas with Melvin Gaels (2000 and 2003). Many Ladies County footballers have also won County titles including Sarah McLoughlin (Leitrim's most recent All Star) who won an All Ireland in Novelty Act with Seán O'Heslins in Novelty Act and Amanda Sweeney who won an All Ireland in Scór Sinsear with Glencar/Manorhamilton in Rince Foirne. Aidan Rooney won an All Ireland in Scór Sinsear with Glencar/Manorhamilton in 1993, a year before he won a Connacht Senior Football Championship with Glencar/Manorhamilton.

Well known on TV and radio
Among the winners of County titles in Scor na nÓg was Carole Coleman of St Mary's, well known as a TV correspondent and author. She won County titles in Novelty Act and Ballad Group. Noeleen Leddy, well-known as a radio presenter and documentary film producer, reached an All Ireland Final in Recitation for her club Glencar-Manorhamilton. Catherine Lynch now a famous comedy artist on RTE won a County title in Scór na nÓg for her club Mohill.

Famous singers and musicians Started in Scór
Charlie McGettigan often recounts how his first venture on stage was as part of a Ballad Group representing Allen Gaels along with Éamon Daly, Anne Mulleady and Peggy Barry. They won the Ballad Group in Leitrim in 1974. However, when Charlie entered the Solo Singing he was disqualified for singing a song that wasn't considered Irish. Maurice Lennon of Stockton's Wing fame also won a County Scór Sinsear title with Melvin Gaels in 1977 when Ceol Uirlise was a solo item.
In 1973 and 1974, Eleanor Shanley, the national and international singing star of De Danann fame and also a famous solo artist won what was probably her first award for singing while representing her club Kiltubrid in Scor na nÓg.

Glencar Manorhamilton - 24 titles in figure dance
The highest number of wins in any single event in Scor Sinsear is that of Glencar-Manorhamilton in Figure Dance. The club has twenty-four wins since their first in 1977 with Noreen McManus, Ann O'Connell, Nuala O'Connell, Siobhán McKenna, Geraldine Quinn and Assumpta Hazlett.. This is a tribute to the work of Clare McMorrow and the promptings of Glencar-Manorhamilton Scor Supremo Johnny Keaveney and Lily Sweeney.

Musical families
The music competition has been fortunate to have some outstanding musical families taking part over the years. The Morrows from Carrigallen, Griers from Gortletteragh, Dohertys from Melvin Gaels, O'Callaghans from Glencar-Manorhamilton, MacManus' from Allen Gaels, Guckians from Annaduff, Wards from Aughnasheelin and many others.

Most wins in night
Two clubs share the honour of most wins on a night. Bornacoola won five of the eight events in Scór na nÓg in 1990 and Seán O'Heslins won five in Scór na nÓg in1997.

Clubs that won in all 8 events
In Scór Sinsear, three clubs have won all of the current eight events in Scór at one time or another: Bornacoola, Aughnasheelin and Seán O'Heslins. However Aughnasheelin and Seán O'Heslins can go one further: both clubs were also successful in the now defunct event of Motion Speaking. In Scór na nÓg Sean O'Heslins are the only club to have been successful in all eight events.

Fenagh's remarkable 9-in-a-row in Rince Seit.
Fenagh St Caillin's took very little part in Scór for the first thirty years. However, the past decade has been a remarkable one for the club. The pride and joy of the club in Scór has been their Scór na nÓg Set dancers. Initially, a group of very young set dancers, they improved and improved and won Leitrim and eventually Connacht titles. The same group reached the All Ireland for four years running between 2003 and 2006 and were unfortunate not to get the title on each occasion. This group was followed by a younger group and now in 2009, the club has won a remarkable 9 Leitrim Scór na nÓg titles in a row in Rince Seit. No other club has achieved this in any event in either Scór or Scór na nÓg in Leitrim

The next longest run in any single event was that of Sean O'Heslins in Question Time. They won every title from 1988-1994, seven in row. Fenagh just beat them in 1995 but Seán O'Heslins won the next two, making it nine successes in ten years. Sean O'Heslins won two All Irelands in this period

All Irelands in Scór na nÓg and Scór Sinsear
Two Leitrim people have won All Irelands in both Scór na nÓg and Scór Sinsear. Ruairí Ó Suilleabháin and Ross Dooner, both from the Seán O'Heslins club have succeeded at both levels, and both were successful in Nuachleas on each occasion.

Cill Tiobraid – Amhránaíocht Aonair - Scór na nÓg. Kiltubrid are another club that have increased their level of participation in Scór in latter years. Pictured above along with Laurie Quinn, Cathaoirleach Scór Chonnacht is David Evans who won the Solo Singing in Connacht in 2005.

Aisling Maxwell of Ballinamore pictured with Paddy Naughton Chairman Connacht Scór and long serving Connacht Scór Treasurer Shay Reynolds.

The All Ireland Scór Sinsear Finals in the National Stadium in 1984 was one of the greatest occasions ever for Leitrim Scór. Leitrim won seven of the eight Connacht titles that year and a huge Leitrim crowd descended upon the National Stadium. Seán O'Heslins won the Novelty Act that night and were the only Leitrim winners. However, participants from all clubs headed out to Ballyboden St Enda's GAA clubhouse and finished a long night there. In front of the picture above is the cast of the winning Novelty Act: Madge Murphy, Tommy Moran, Raymond McHugh, Brid Sullivan and Michael Fanning. The picture also includes two great Leitrim ambassadors in Dublin at the time: Séamus Fox from Manorhamilton and Jack Fitzpatrick from Drumreilly.

Leitrim Vocational Schools

In the period up to the mid 1990's there were 5 Schools – Carrick on Shannon, Carrigallen, Drumshanbo, Mohill and Drumkeerin –competing in the Vocational Schools Competitions, while the County Vocational School team competed in the Inter-county A Championship.
In 1995 this Leitrim team – that included future club and county stars Dermot Reynolds, Jimmy Guckian and Fintan McBrien - reached the All Ireland Final, played as a curtain-raiser to the National Football League Final in Croke Park.

Some years later Carrick V.S. and Marymount College were amalgamated and they entered the Colleges Competitions, which left only 4 schools now competing in the county at Vocational level.
Leitrim competes with Roscommon and Sligo in the Connacht Intercounty B Competition and have won provincial titles on many occasions, as well as winning two All Ireland B titles.

Teachers formerly involved were Joe Flynn, Tony McGowan, Michael McGuinness, Andy Redican, Tony Ward, Declan Conboy and Walter Sharpley.
Their good work has been continued by Sean Wynne in Drumshanbo; Jimmy Guckian in Carrigallen; Brendan Brett in Drumkeerin and Thomas Nolan in Mohill.

In the early 1990's Drumshanbo were extremely successful, while from the mid 1990' Carrigallen also enjoyed a very successful period, winning both Senior and Junior titles in Connacht. Both Mohill and Drumkeerin have been successful in Connacht also.

Carrigallen VS Captain Pat Connolly with one of the many Connacht Cups won by the school.

Leitrim county stars like John McKeon, Enda Lyons, the McGuinness brothers, Dermot Reynolds, Garry Reynolds, Christopher Carroll, Noel Doonan, Fintan McBrien and Tomás Beirn all started their inter-county careers with the county Vocational School teams.

In 2008 John McKeon captained Leitrim in the Connacht Championship, while in the Ulster Championship Cavan were captained by Mark McKeever. It is interesting to note that John and Mark had, some years peeviously, played together on a Carrigallen V.S. team that won the Connacht title and both had also been members of the Leitrim County Vocational Schools team.

Many future stars have had their first taste of success at Vocational Schools level. Long may the good work continue.

The Leitrim Vocational School team, Connacht Champions 1995, who played Donegal in the All Ireland Final in Croke Park in May 1995.

STATISTICS- Compliled by Seán Ó Súilleabháin

COUNTY SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS

Year	Result	Venue	Referee
1890	Mohill 2-2 Ballinamore 0-1	Keshcarrigan(Dooloughan)	Michael Murphy Fenagh
1891	Eslin 1-4 Mohill 0-2	Kilmore, Co Roscommon	T. Daly, Drumsna.
	(First game at Drumard abandoned, game continued at Kilmore		
1892-1903		No competition	
1904	Bornacoola 0-4 Mohill 0-2	Jamestown	
	(Mohill objected and c'ship was let fall through)		
1905	Bornacoola 0-4 Gortletteragh 0-2	Mohill	John O'Neill Mohill
	Gortletteragh objected, awarded title		
1906	Fenagh awarded title (Gorvagh were leading Fenagh 0-4 to 0-3 when match was abandoned)		
		Ballinamore	(Reynolds Rock)
1907-1909		No competition	
1910	Fenagh or Mohill, probably Fenagh		
1911	Cloone		
1912	Fenagh 1-1 Mohill 0-1	Mohill	M. O'Grady (Ballinamore)
1913	Ballinamore 2-3 Mohill 1-0	Corriga, Aughavas	
1914	Mohill		
1915	Aughavas 1-2 Mohill 0-2	Dromod	M. O'Grady (Ballinamore)
1916	Eslin beat Fenagh	Cloone, Grange	
1917	Eslin (awarded title)		
1918	Aughnasheelin beat Cloone	Fenagh	P. McKenna, Mohill
1919	Fenagh 1-2 Aughavas 0-1	Ballinamore	
1920-1921		No competition	
1922	Ballinamore 4-1 Mohill 2-2	Mohill	
	Played 9th March 1924		
1923	Kiltyhugh 3-2 Ballinamore 2-3	Fenagh	John McGuinness (Eslin)
1924	Gorvagh 3-2 Fenagh 2-2	Ardrum,Ballinamore	
1925	Gorvagh 1-5 Fenagh 0-5		
1926	Gorvagh 2-1 Fenagh 0-3	Ardrum Ballinamore	M. O'Grady (Ballinamore)
1927	Gorvagh 1-3 Annaduff 0-3	Ardrum Ballinamore	
1928	Annaduff 2-1 Gorvagh 2-0	Ardrum Ballinamore	Guard Phil McMahon
1929	Mohill 0-6 Fenagh 0-3	Ardrum Ballinamore	P Murray(Gorvagh)
	Played 29 March 1930		
1930	Ballinamore C'ship played on league system, Ballinamore beat Mohill in playoff.		
1931	Drumreilly 1-5 Fenagh 1-1	Ardrum, Ballinamore	
1932	Fenagh(Drumreilly beat Fenagh in final but lost title on objection)		
1933	Ballinamore beat Aughnasheelin by a point in replay		
	Draw was 0-6 each on 12/11/1933		
1934	Cloone 1-1 Ballinamore 0-1	Ardrum	Fr A. Lynch, Kiltubrid
1935	Ballinamore 1-5 Kiltubrid 0-5	Fenagh on 3/11/1935	P Donlon
1936	Ballinamore 1-6 Tully 1-5	Cloone, on 15/11/1936	
1937	Cloone 3-7 Tully 2-2	Ardrum	Fr. A Lynch, Kiltubrid
1938	Bornacoola beat Tully by a point		
1939	Ballinamore awarded title, Tully refused to play		
1940	Aughavas 3-4 Bornacoola 1-3	Grange, Cloone	Fr. A Lynch, Kiltubrid
	Final played in Dec 1940 Aughavas won 1-4 to 1-3 Objected to, replayed 2/16/1941		
1941	Carrigallen(In the final Ballinamore beat Carigallen by 2-1 to 1-1 but lost on objection) Played 1/3/1942		
		Mohill	Fr.A Lynch, Kiltubrid
1942	Cloone 1-8 Carrigallen 1-3	Mohill	J Shanley Dromod
1943	Bornacoola 3-9 Fenagh 1-4	Mohill	L Moran Eslin
1944	Cloone 1-5 Tully 0-4	Mohill	M J Gralton Ballinamore
1945	Tully beat Cloone	Carrigallen	Jimmy Holohan Drumreilly
1946	Cloone 4-4 Aughawillan0-3	Mohill	Mick McGowan Bornacoola
	played 4/4/1948		
1947	Cloone 2-2 Aughawillan 1-1	New Park Ballinamore	Mick McGowan Bornacoola
1948	Cloone 2-5 Aughavas 0-4	Ballinamore	P. Rourke
1949	Aughavas 4-7 Carrick on Shannon	Ballinamore	Serg. Martin
	0-1 (Aughavas won the first day on 8th Sept but Carrick lodged an objection)		
1950	Cloone 1-9 Ballinamore 0-5	Mohill	Columba Quinn Aughawillan
1951	Cloone 1-8 Carrigallen Harps 1-3	Ballinamore	Columba Quinn Aughawillan

1952	Aughavas 1-8 Fenagh 0-1	Ballinamore	H. Doherty, Cloone
1953	Bornacoola 1-4 Aughavas 1-3	Ballinamore	J. Creamer Ballinamore
1954	Aughavas 0-6 Sean Treacys 0-4	Ballinamore	P. Mulvey Roscommon
1955	Aughavas awarded the title after a long series of disputes.		
1956	Ballinamore 3-9 Melvin Gaels 1-4	Carrick	S. Slevin, Ballyshannon
	Replay (drawn game in Manorhamilton)		
1957	Bornacoola 3-7 Melvin Gaels 0-5	Ballinamore	M.O'Callaghan,Roscommon
1958	Carrick on Shannon 0-8	Ballinamore	J.P. Newton Annaduff
	Ballinamore 1-3		
1959	Melvin Gaels 1-6 Ballinamore 0-0	Carrick on Shannon	T. Greenan Fenagh.
1960	Melvin Gaels 1-5	Ballinamore	Mick Higgins, Cavan
	Carrick on Shannon 0-7 Replay		
1961	Melvin Gaels 1-6	Ballinamore	Tom Mollaghan, Aughavas
	Carrick on Shannon 0-5		
1962	Melvin Gaels Awarded at Co Board meeting on 9 March 2009		
1963	Aughavas 1-7	Ballinamore	Hugh Leddy, Annaduff
	Carrick on Shannon 0-6		
1964	Ballinamore 0-5 Melvin Gaels 0-4	Pairc MacDiarmada	Sergt. Waters,Drumshanbo
1965	Melvin Gaels 0-12	Pairc Mac Diarmada	S. Cox. Dromod.
	Gortletteragh 0-1		
1966	Aughavas 1-14 Annaduff 1-6	Pairc Mac Diarmada	John Martin, Mohill
1967	Ballinamore 1-4 Melvin Gaels 0-3	Pairc Mac Diarmada	T. O'Riordan Carrick
1968	Ballinamore 2-6 Melvin Gaels 1-4	Pairc Mac Diarmada	T. O'Riordan Carrick
1969	Ballinamore 1-11 Aughavas 2-5	Gortletteragh	J.P. Newton Annaduff
1970	Gortletteragh 1-11 Aughavas 1-7	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Tommy Moran Ballinamore
1971	Mohill 0-6 Ballinamore 0-4	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Sean Murray, Carrick
1972	Ballinamore 1-12 Mohill 1-7	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Eamon O'Grady Drumkeeran
1973	Ballinamore 2-5 Allen Gaels 1-7 Replay	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Eamon O'Grady Drumkeeran
1974	Sheemore Gaels 1-10 Mohill 0-8	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Pat Cull, Aughnasheelin
1975	Ballinamore 0-11 St Marys 1-6	Pairc Mac Diarmada	T.P. Cox, Annaduff
1976	Aughawillan 1-11	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Tommy Moran Ballinamore
	Glencar/Manorhamilton 1-7		
1977	Glencar/Manorhamilton 1-12	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Pat Egan, Fenagh
	St Marys 2-6		
1978	Aughawillan 2-5 Gortletteragh 1-7	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Seamus Prior, Aughnasheelin
1979	Ballinamore 0-7 Gortletteragh 0-6	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Joe Flynn Carrick
1980	Cloone 2-9 Gortletteragh 0-9	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Tommy Moran Ballinamore
1981	Gortletteragh 0-10 Fenagh 1-4	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Seamus Prior, Aughnasheelin
1982	Ballinamore 2-3 Gortletteragh 0-7	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Joe Flynn Carrick
	Replay		
1983	Aughawillan 0-7 St Marys 0-5	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Seamus Prior, Aughnasheelin
1984	Aughawillan 0-10 Ballinamore 0-6	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Pat Egan, Fenagh
1985	Gortletteragh 1-13 Ballinamore 0-4	Cloone.	Seamus Prior, Aughnasheelin
	Drawn Game Gortletteragh 0-6	Pairc Mac Diarmada	
	Ballinamore 0-6		
1986	Ballinamore 0-9 Aughawillan 1-5	Cloone	Padraig Flynn Manorhamilton
1987	Gortletteragh 1-8 Aughawillan 1-5	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Pat Egan, Fenagh
1988	Ballinamore 1-7 Aughawillan 0-8	Cloone	Seamus Prior, Aughnasheelin
1989	Aughawillan 2-7 Ballinamore 0-6	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Seamus Prior, Aughnasheelin
1990	Ballinamore 4-7 Aughawillan 3-6	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Seamus Prior, Aughnasheelin
1991	Allen Gaels 0-14 Ballinamore 2-6	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Pat Egan, Fenagh
1992	Àughawillan 0-10 Carrigallen 1-6	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Anthony Noone St Marys
1993	Aughawillan 0-12 St Marys 0-6	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Gerry McGovern Cloone
	Replay (Drawn Game Aughawillan 1-8 St Marys 0-11		
1994	Aughawillan 1-8 Allen Gaels 0-10	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Enda Stenson Eslin
1995	St Marys 0-8 Fenagh 0-6	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Sean McCartan Aughavas
1996	Allen Gaels 2-11 St Marys 0-15	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Brian Gordon Mohill
	Replay (Drawn Game St Marys 1-7 Allen Gaels 1-7		
1997	Allen Gaels 2-14 Aughavas 1-11	Pairc Mac Diarmada	James McCaffrey Aughnasheelin
1998	Melvin Gaels 2-7 Ballinamore 2-5	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Seamus Prior, Aughnasheelin
1999	GlencarManorhamilton1-8 Fenagh 1-7	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Gerry McGovern Cloone
2000	Aughavas 0-10 Gortletteragh 0-3	Pairc Mac Diarmada	James McCaffrey Aughnasheelin
2001	Allen Gaels 2-10 Aughavas 0-10	Páirc Mac Diarmada	Paddy Kane Gortletteragh
2002	Allen Gaels 0-11 Melvin Gaels 0-7	Páirc Mac Diarmada	Eamon O'Grady (Drumkeerin)
2003	St Marys 0-10 Fenagh 0-8	Páirc Mac Diarmada	Paddy Kane Gortletteragh

2004	Annaduff 0-7 Gortletteragh 0-5	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Eamon O'Grady Drumkeeran
2005	Kiltubrid 4-11 Bornacoola 0-7	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Michael Leyden Dromahair
2006	Mohill 0-13 St Mary's 1-9	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Francis Flynn Aughawillan
2007	St Mary's 0-11 Kiltubrid 2-3	Pairc Mac Diarmada	Thomas Forde Ballinaglera
2008	Glencar/Manor 2-9 Bornacoola 0-7	Pairc MacDiarmada	Ray McBrien Aughavas
2009	Glencar/Manor 1-11 Carrigallen 2-7	Pairc MacDiarmada	Eamon O'Grady Drumkeeran

Senior "B" Championship
(Started 2002)

2002	Drumreilly 2-9 Carrigallen 1-11
2003	Sean O'Heslins 1-7 Annaduff 0-8
2004	Glencar/Manor 3-9 Drumkeerin 0-4
2005	Annaduff 0-9 Allen Gaels 0-8
2006	Annaduff 0-13 Kiltubrid 1-7
2007	Discontinued

INTERMEDIATE FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

1928	Mohill	
1971	Melvin Gaels 0-7	Cloone 0-5
1972	Cloone	
1973	Glencar/Manor 1-9	Carrick 1-6
1974	Fenagh 2-10	Cloone 2-8
1975-	No Competition	
-1988	No Competition	
1989	Allen Gaels 1-15	Ballinaglera 1-6
1990	Aughavas 2-9	Aughnasheelin 1-10
1991	Carrigallen 3-10	Melvin Gaels 3-5
1992	Melvin Gaels 1-8	Drumkeeran 0-8
1993	Aughavas 1-12	Glencar-Man1-9
1994	Aughavas 2-4	St Marys 0-8
1995	St Marys 0-12	Eslin 0-5
1996	Ballinaglera 2-9	Annaduff 0-9
1997	St Marys 0-13	Glenfarne 0-10
1998	Drumreilly 1-10	Kiltubrid 0-6
1999	Mohill 0-16	Cloone 0-7
2000	St Mary's 2-7	Drumkeerin 0-9
2001	Annaduff 1-10	Glenfarne 0-9
2002	Kiltubrid 0-10	Ballinamore 0-7
2003	Gortletteragh 2-6	Glencar/Manor 0-6
2004	St Mary's 3-15	Aughawillan 4-3
2005	Glencar/Manor 0-10	Dromahair 0-7
2006	Carrigallen 2-6	Drumreilly 1-7
2007	Drumreilly 0-13	Aughavas 0-6
2008	Aughnasheelin 0-12	Drumkeerin 1-8
2009	Cloone 1-10	Aughawillan 0-12

JUNIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

(This list is for the overall Leitrim Junior Championship. From 1932-1970, the North Leitrim Championship winners played the South Leitrim Junior Championship winners in the County Final. In years where the North Leitrim winners did not compete particularly during the Second World War, the South Leitrim Champions are regarded as County Champions. This was so because the North Leitrim Board was always a subsidiary of the South Board. For most of the missing years there was no Junior Championship) Currently this would be called the Junior A Championship

YEAR	WINNERS	RUNNERS-UP
1917	Shamrocks (Gorvagh/Cornagun)	Kiltyhugh
1919	Aughaslane 0-2	Cloone 0-1
1926	Annaduff 0-9	Glenfarne 0-1
1928	Drumeela	Dowra
1929	Kiltubrid	Carrigallen
1930	Aughavas 0-2	Carrigallen 0-0
1931	Tully	
	(Bornacoola beat Tully in the final by 1-4 to 1-3 but Tully objected and got the title)	
1932	Bornacoola	Glenfarne
1933	Ballinamore 2-1	Kiltyclogher 1-3
1934	Glenfarne 1-6	Carrigallen 0-0
1935	Eslin 1-3	Kiltyclogher 0-1
1936	Glenfarne 3-10	Carrick 2-2
1937	Glenfarne	Gorvagh
1938	Annaduff 1-6	Blacklion 2-0
1939	Ballinamore 1-6	Drumkeeran 1-3
1940	Glenfarne 2-7	Ballinamore 2-1
1941	Annaduff 4-4	Drumreilly 3-1
1942	Eslin 3-6	Kiltubrid 1-2
1943	Mohill 1-7	Ballinamore 1-1
1944	Drumeela 0-11	Kiltubrid 0-10
1945	Carrick on Shannon 1-4	Fenagh 0-2
1946	Drumreilly	Annaduff
1947	Glenfarne	Gorvagh
1948	Aughnasheelin 2-4	Glenfarne 1-5 (7/5/1950)
1949	Drumeela/Harps 4-2	Mohill 0-2
	Drumreilly/Drumeela combination	
1950	Bornacoola	Glenfarne
1951	Blacklion 2-6	Aughnasheelin 2-3
1952	Bornacoola	Manorhamilton
1953	Carrick on Shannon	Manorhamilton
1954	Aughnasheelin 2-4	Gortletteragh 1-0
	North Leitrim winners did not play in 1954 final	
1955	Melvin Gaels 3-7	Aughawillan 2-1
1956	Carrick on Shannon 2-3	Dromahair 1-1
1957	Mohill 1-6	Manorhamilton 1-2
1958	Manorhamilton 3-6	Annaduff 1-8
1959	Glenfarne	Aughwillan
1960	Aughawillan 3-8	Melvin Gaels 0-3
1961	Dowra 2-6	Aughnasheelin 1-5
1962	Cloone 2-10	Dromahair 1-5
1963	Drumshanbo 3-5	Manorhamilton 1-6
1964	Annaduff 1-9	Drumkeeran 1-3
1965	Aughnasheelin	Glenfarne

1966	Drumkeerin 2-8	Mohill 2-3
1967	Fenagh 2-4	Glencar 0-2
1968	Mohill w/o	Glencar scr
1969	Cloone 3-5	Glencar/Manor 1-8
1970	Glencar/Manor 2-7	Annaduff 1-8
1971	Eslin 2-6	Fenagh 1-4
1972	Annaduff 2-7	Ballinamore 0-9
1973	Fenagh 2-8	Aughawillan 0-3
1974	Aughawillan 2-10	Drumkeerin 0-7
1975	Drumkeeran 0-15	Eslin 0-6
1976	Dromahair 0-13	Eslin 1-4
1977	Drumreilly 0-11	Bornacoola 0-7
1978	Mohill 1-10	Bornacoola 0-6
1979	Eslin 1-7	Melvin Gaels 2-3
1980	Carrigallen 0-12	Melvin Gaels 1-2
1981	Kiltubrid 1-10	Drumkeerin 1-6
1982	Glencar/Manor 3-12	Eslin 1-4
1983	Annaduff 1-8	Aughnasheelin 0-3
1984	Aughavas 1-10	Eslin 1-3
1985	Drumkeerin 0-8	Annaduff 0-5
1986	Annaduff 2-6	Kiltubrid 1-5
1987	Allen Gaels 5-6	Eslin 0-4
1988	Eslin 3-10	Glencar/Manor 1-5
1989	Kiltubrid 0-14	Mohill 0-3
1990	Cloone 4-11	Aughawillan 3-5
1991	Glenfarne 2-7	Dromahaire 1-7
1992	Ballinaglera 0-11	Dromahaire 1-6 (Replay)
1993	Eslin 2-8	St Marys 0-3 (Replay)
1994	Allen Gaels 2-8	Drumreilly 0-5
1995	Kiltubrid 1-14	Glenfarne 0-6
1996	Eslin 2-13	Glencar/Manor 1-9
1997	Ballinamore 1-8	St Marys 0-8
1998	Dromahaire 2-10	Eslin 1-9
1999	Glencar/Manor 4-10	Mohill 0-12
2000	Gortletteragh 3-9	Allen Gaels 1-6
2001	Dromahair 1-13	Mohill 1-2
2002	Carrick on Shannon 1-14	Glencar/Manor 0-8
2003	Bornacoola 0-11	Eslin 1-5
2004	Annaduff 0-11	Kiltubrid 2-3
2005	Eslin 0-6	Gortletteragh 0-4
2006	Eslin 2-4	Annaduff 0-8
2007	Annaduff 2-11	Carrigallen 1-11
2008	Allen Gaels 0-11	Eslin 0-10
2009	Aughavas 0-12	Eslin 0-10

JUNIOR B CHAMPIONSHIP

YEAR	WINNERS	RUNNER-UP
1975	Ballinamore 2-13	Fenagh 0-4
1976	Ballinamore 3-13	Allen Gaels 3-6
1977	Ballinamore 2-12	Allen Gaels 2-2
1978	Carrick on Shannon 1-5	Ballinamore 0-4
1979	Gortletteragh 0-6	Aughwillan 0-3
1980	Aughawillan 6-6	Cloone 1-4
1981	Gortletteragh 3-12	Aughawillan 2-7
1982	Gortletteragh 1-8	Aughawillan 0-10
1983	Gortletteragh 1-4	Aughawillan 0-3
1984	Ballinamore 3-2	Aughawillan1-6
1985	Aughawillan 1-7	Ballinamore 0-9
1986	Ballinamore 0-11	Gortletteragh 0-8
1987	Gortletteragh 2-5	St Marys 2-4
1988	St Marys 1-11	Allen Gaels 0-3

Ended in 1988 Revived in 1996 as a Junior Championship for teams in Div 4 of League. Up to 1988 it was for second strings of teams in Div 1 Senior League

1996	St Marys 1-8	Carrigallen 1-2(replay)
1997	Mohill 2-12	Glencar/Manor 0-3
1998	Cloone 1-7	Bornacoola 0-6
1999	Bornacoola 3-11	Ballinamore 2-8
2000	Ballinamore 1-11	Eslin 0-7
2001	Leitrim Gaels 0-9	Dromahair 0-5
2002	Eslin 4-13	Melvin Gaels 1-4
2003	Allen Gaels 0-10	Melvin Gaels 0-5
2004	Melvin Gaels 0-9	Leitrim Gaels 0-7
2005	Dromahair 1-15	St Mary's 0-6 (Replay)
2006	St Mary's 0-8	Leitrim Gaels 0-4
2007	Leitrim Gaels 2-9	Annaduff 1-3
2008	Kiltubrid 2-9	Glencar/Manor 1-11
2009	Annaduff 3-14	Allen Gaels 1-11

JUNIOR C CHAMPIONSHIP

Year	Winners	Runner up
1998	Seán O Heslins 2-5	Aughawillan 1-6
1999	Glencar/Manor 1-10	Aughavas 0-3
2000-2002		No Competition
2003	Mohill 1-9	St Osnatts 0-5
2004	Glencar/Manor 0-14	Eslin 0-4 (Replay)
2005	Aughnasheelin 1-9	St Osnatt's 1-7
2006	Aughnasheelin 0-11	St Osnatt's 1-6
2007	St Mary's 2-9	St Osnatt's 0-9
2008	St Osnatt's 2-9	Drumreilly 2-4
2009	Leitrim Gaels 2-4	Glenfarne/Kilty 0-9

UNDER 21 CHAMPIONSHIP

YEAR	Winners	Runner-up
1972	Ballinamore 2-4	Allen Gaels 1-6
1973	Allen Gaels 1-7	Ballinamore 0-9
1974	Drumlea 2-9	Mohill 1-1
1975	Drumlea 3-11	Allen Gaels 1-5
1976	Drumlea	Naomh Diarmada
1977	Lough Rynn Gaels	Annaduff
1978	Lough Rynn Gaels	Ballinamore
1979	Ballinamore	Aughawillan
1980	Aughawillan	Ballinamore
1981	Gortletteragh	Ballinamore
1982	Aughawillan	Fenagh
1983	Glencar/Manor	Fenagh
1984	Carrigallen Harps 3-8	Sliabh an I Gaels 1-7
1985	Mohill 2-15	Drumlea 1-2
1986	Mohill 3-13	Ballinamore 1-5
1987	Ballinamore 0-15	Carrigallen 0-3
1988	St Marys 1-8	Ballinamore 0-8
1989	Drumlea 1-9	St Marys 2-5
1990	St Marys 3-8	Glencar/Manor 0-2
1991	St Marys 0-14	Drumlea 0-7
1992	St Marys 0-8	Allen Gaels 0-5
1993	St Marys 2-9	Allen Gaels 1-7
1994	Allen Gaels 1-12	St Marys 1-7
1995	Carrigallen Harps 4-8	St Francis 1-9
1996	St Francis 2-12	St Marys 1-9
1997	St Francis 3-9	St Marys 2-6(replay)
1998	GlenManor Gaels 1-9 (Glencar/Manor/Glenfarne)	Castlefore Gaels 0-5
1999	Bornacoola 2-6	Mohill 1-7
2000	Mohill 1-9	St Francis 0-8
2001	Drumlea 0-13	Mohill 0-6

2002	Drumlea 0-18 (Replay)	Oughteragh Gaels 2-10
2003	Drumlea 0-11	St Francis 1-7
2004	Glencar/Manor 2-8	Drumlea 1-6
2005	Oughteragh Gaels 0-9	Drumlea 1-5
2006	Oughteragh Gaels 2-11	Glencar/Manor 1-6
2007	Glencar/Manor 1-13	Drumkeerin 0-8
2008	Oughteragh Gaels 1-7	Glencar/Manor 0-9
2009	Oughteragh Gaels 1-8	St Mary's 0-4

Under 21 B Championship

2002	Kiltubrid 3-6	Drumkeerin 0-10
2003	Melvin Gaels 3-6	Drumkeerin 1-6 (replay)
2004	Melvin Gaels 1-3	Drumkeerin 0-4
2005	Melvin Gaels 3-10	Drumkeerin 0-2
2006	Drumkeerin 1-9	Carrigallen 0-8
2007	Dromahair 2-7	Annaduff 0-7
2008	Drumkeerin 2-12	Carrigallen 1-7
2009	Melvin Gaels 1-12	Glenfarne/Kilty 2-6

MINOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

YEAR	WINNERS	RUNNER-UP
1929	Ballinamore	
1933	Fenagh	
1934	Carrigallen	Carrick on Shannon
1935	Ballinamore	Gorvagh
1936	Tully	Fenagh
1937-1942	No evidence that a Minor Championship was run during those years except in 1937, when there is no result for the final between Ballinamore and Fenagh.	
1943	Eslin	Fenagh
1944	Cloone	Ballinamore
1945	Aughavas	
1946	Ballinamore	Mohill
1947	Ballinamore	Annaduff
1948	Bornacoola	Aughavas
1949	Ballinamore	Bornacoola
1950	Fenagh 2-7	Bornacoola 2-5
1951	Fenagh	Cloone
1952	Ballinamore (won by Aughavas but lost on objection)	
1953	Jamestown	
1954	Mohill	
1955	(Won by St Josephs,Leitrim village, but lost on objection)	
1956	Mohill	Dromahair
1957	Aughavas	Manorhamilton
1958	Ballinamore	Manorhamilton
1959	Ballinamore	Melvin Gaels
1960	Ballinamore	Dromahair
1961	Ballinamore	
1962	Cloone	Manorhamilton
1963	Cloone	Manorhamilton
1964	Gortletteragh	Manorhamilton
1965	Carrick on Shannon 2-5	Manorhamilton 0-5
1966	Drumshanbo	Manorhamilton
1967	Drumshanbo	Dromahair
1968	Ballinamore	Dromahair
1969	Ballinamore	Dromahair
1970	Mohill	Drumkeerin
1971	Annaduff	Drumkeerin
1972	Kiltubrid	Annaduff
1973	Kiltubrid	Garadice
1974	Ballinamore	Kiltubrid
1975	Shamrock Gaels	St Manachan's
1976	Ballinamore	Shamrock Gaels
1977	Ballinamore	Garadice Gaels
1978	Ballinamore	Lough Rynn Gaels
1979	Lough Rynn Gaels	Ballinamore
1980	Garadice Gaels	Carrick on Shannon
1981	Eastern Harps	Carrick on Shannon
1982	St Francis	Glencar/Manor
1983	St Manachan's	Belhavel/Gaels
1984	Ballinamore	Aughnasheelin
1985	Ballinamore 3-10	St Manachan's 1-10
1986	St Manachan's 2-11	Carrick on Shannon 1-10
1987	St Francis 2-7 Replay	Carrick on Shannon 1-5
1988	Ck on Shannon 0-12	St Josephs 0-5
1989	St Josephs 2-10	Oughteragh Gaels 0-5
1990	St Francis 2-9	St Marys 1-8
1991	St Marys 2-15	St Francis 1-6
1992	St Marys 3-5	Oughteragh Gaels 2-7
1993	Oughteragh Gaels 2-6	St Mary's 0-3
1994	St Francis 3-11	Garadice Gaels 3-10
1995	St Mary's 2-7	Ballinamore 0-4
1996	St Josephs 2-10	St Mary's 1-12
1997	Mohill 5-9	Northern Gaels 1-6
1998	Bornacoola 3-10	Mohill 3-8
1999	St Francis 2-7	Mohill 0-7
2000	GlenManor Gaels 2-5	Garadice 1-6 (Replay)
2001	St Mary's 3-10	St Francis 0-9
2002	Oughteragh Gaels 3-7	Garadice Gaels 0-4
2003	Mohill 2-15	St Francis 2-6
2004	Mohill 0-12	St Mary's 2-3
2005	Mohill 0-10	St Marys 0-7
2006	Oughteragh Gaels 2-15	St Mary's 0-10
2007	Garadice Gaels 1-5	Oughteragh Gaels 1-4
2008	Garadice Gaels 2-7	St Francis 1-9
2009	St Francis	Garadice Gaels

(Amalgamations of clubs in finals since 1975 are identified as follows:Shamrock Gaels= Drumshanbo/Dromahair/Drumkeerin, St Manachan's=Mohill/Eslin, Garadice Gaels= Aughawillan/Drumreilly, Lough Rynn Gaels=Mohill/ Gortletteragh, Eastern Harps=Fenagh/ Cloone, St Francis=Drumshanbo/Ballinaglera plus Drumkeerin to 1987
Belhavel Gaels= Dromahair/Drumkeerin, St Joseph = Cloone/Aughavas
(Sometimes Carrigallen also, e.g. 1989) Oughteragh Gaels=Ballinamore/Aughnasheelin
Northern Gaels=Glencar/Manor/Glenfarne

MINOR "B" CHAMPIONSHIP
(13 a side started 1990)

Year	Winners	Runners-up
1990	Kiltubrid 6-6	Carrigallen 2-8
1991	Kiltubrid 2-9	Dromahair 0-10
1992	Fenagh 2-17	Drumkeerin 1-7
1993	Drumkeerin 1-14	Fenagh 1-5
1994	Drumkeerin 0-13	Annaduff 1-7
1995	Kiltubrid 2-14	Aughnasheelin 0-7
1996	Bornacoola 0-16	Gortletteragh 2-6
1997	Bornacoola 3-14	Fenagh 1-8
1998	Gortletteragh 1-9	Annaduff 0-4
1999	Gortletteragh 3-11	Drumkeerin 0-10
2000	Gortletteragh 1-12	Kiltubrid 0-11
2001	Kiltubrid 1-11	Drumkeerin 1-2
2002	Dromahair 0-15	Cloone 0-10
2003	Carrigallen 0-11	Aughavas 0-9
2004	Drumkeerin 2-7	Melvin Gaels
	(Called Dolan cup from now)	
2005	Melvin Gaels 1-16	Drumkeerin 2-9
2006	Garadice Gaels 1-12	Melvin Gaels 1-7
2007	Bornacoola 1-11	Drumkeerin 1-10
2008	Bornacoola 2-10	Carrigallen 1-10
2009	Drumkeerin	Dromahair

Minor "C" Championship Started 2004 (9 a side)

2004	Aughavas 0-11	Bornacoola 1-6
2005	Bornacoola	Glenfarne/Kilty
2006	Annaduff 2-11	Carrigallen 3-5
2007	Eslin 2-9	Gortletteragh 1-3
2008	Gortletteragh 1-11	Annaduff 0-4
2009	Leitrim Gaels	Glenfarne/Kilty

SENIOR FOOTBALL LEAGUE

The biggest problem is compiling a list under this heading, is trying to decide what is a League? Is it a league based competition as distinct from a knock-out one, or is it the subsidiary competition run by the County Board, that comes next in importance after the Senior Championship. What complicated matters in Leitrim is the Senior Championship was run on a league basis from 1910-1919 and again from the end of the twenties until 1946, except for a couple of years. However, from 1931 onwards, the County Baord ran a second competition every year, except in 1941 and 1942, and this second competition was often referred to as the League as the League or League Cup, even though it was usually run on a knock-out basis. The Canon Masterson Cup, also known as the Breffni Cup, from 1939-1945 was regularly referred to as the League Cup. For the sake of historical accuracy, the Senior League is considered to be a competition run on a points system as it has been since 1946. Prior to this the only years that had a strict League competition were 1931, 1934 and 1940. The other Cup Competitions are also listed.

Martin Cup	1932	Fenagh
	1933	Cloone
	1934	Cloone
Murray Cup	1935	Cloone
Lynch Cup	1936	Ballinamore
	1937	Cloone
	1938	Ballinamore
Breffni Cup	1939	Aughavas
	1940	Cloone
Masterson Cup	1943	Bornacoola
	1944	Tully
	1945	Ballinamore

Year	Winners	Runners-up
1931	Fenagh	
1934	Cloone	
1946	Carrick on Shannon	Ballinamore
1947	Carrick on Shannon	
*1948	Cloone *	
1949	Cloone	Ballinamore
*1950	Aughavas	
1951	Eslin(Mohill/Eslin)	Aughavas
1952	Cloone	Carrigallen
1953	Cloone	Drumreilly
1954	Aughavas	Bornacoola
1955	Abandoned	
1956	Bornacoola	Aughavas
1957	Bornacoola	Aughavas
1958	Melvin Gaels	Bornacoola
1959	Melvin Gaels	Aughavas
1960	Carrick on Shannon	Melvin Gaels
1961	Melvin Gaels	
1962	Melvin Gaels	
1963	Cloone	Melvin Gaels
*1964	Carrick on Shannon 4-6	Aughavas 0-4 *
1965	Melvin Gaels	Ballinamore
1966	Melvin Gaels	Ballinamore
1967	Ballinamore	Drumkeerin
1968	Ballinamore 2-4	Aughnasheelin 2-2
1969	Aughnasheelin	Ballinamore
1970	Ballinamore	Allen Gaels
1971	Ballinamore	Gortletteragh
1972	Ballinamore	Gortletteragh
1973	Allen Gaels 1-7	Ballinamore 1-6
*1974	Allen Gaels	Ballinamore
1975	Allen Gaels	Ballinamore
1976	Glencar/Manor	Allen Gaels
1977	Ballinamore	Allen Gaels
1978	Ballinamore	Glencar/Manor
1979	Ballinamore	Glencar/Manor
1980	Ballinamore	Gortletteragh
1981	Aughawillan	Ballinamore
1982	Ballinamore	Aughawillan
1983	Aughawillan	Carrick on Shannon
1984	Gortletteragh	Aughawillan
1985	Gortletteragh 1-8	Aughawillan 0-6
1986	Aughawillan 2-5	Ballinamore 0-8
1987	Aughawillan 1-8	Fenagh 1-4
1988	Ballinamore 0-7	Aughawillan 0-2
1989	Ballinamore 3-5	Aughawillan 1-8
1990	Aughawillan 1-13	Ballinamore 1-7
1991	St Mary's 1-11	Aughawillan 0-8
1992	St Mary's 1-10	Aughawillan 0-11

1993	Gortletteragh 0-10	Ballinamore 0-7
1994	Allen Gaels 1-11	Gortletteragh 0-8
1995	Gortletteragh 2-10	Allen Gaels 1-8
1996	Aughavas 3-9	Glencar/Manor 0-10
1997	Allen Gaels 4-2	Gortletteragh 0-6
1998	Glencar/Manor 0-11	St Marys 2-4
1999	Fenagh 2-9	St Mary's 1-8
2000	Aughavas 0-8	Allen Gaels 1-4
2001	Fenagh 0-12	Glencar /Manor 0-11
2002	St Mary's 1-5	Glencar /Manor 0-4
2003	Drumreilly 2-10	Bornacoola 1-4
2004	Annaduff 1-9	Allen Gaels 1-5
2005	St Mary's 0-10	Annaduff 0-5
2006	Mohill 2-12	Aughawillan 4-5
2007	St Mary's 3-13	Melvin Gaels 2-9
2008	Melvin Gaels 3-8	Glencar/Manor 3-6
2009	Glencar/Manor 1-11	Kiltubrid 1-6

*1948 Played on League system. Cloone confirmed winners, in County Board minutes of 3 Dec 1948

*1950 Minutes of Co Board meeting of 15 Dec 1950 awarded title to Aughavas after Ballinamore conceded points to Aughavas, in what was possibly a final league game with no final as such.
*1964 Final played on 20/2/1966
*1974 No Final, direct League system.

Senior League Div 1 B
Run as separate competition from Div 1A this year

2004	Kiltubrid 1-11	Glencar/Manor 0-8

LEAGUE DIVISION 2

YEAR	WINNERS	RUNNERS-UP
1975	Cloone	
1976	Carrick on Shannon	
1977	Aughawillan	
1978	Cloone	
1979	Mohill	
1980	Carrick on Shannon	
1981	Fenagh	
1982	Carrigallen	
1983	Drumreilly	
1984	Carrigallen	
1985	Aughavas	
1986	Carrigallen	
1987	Cloone	
1988	Glencar/Manor	
1989	Cloone 1-11	Allen Gaels 0-5
1990	St Marys 1-17	Aughavas 2-5
1991	Carrigallen 2-7	Drumreilly 0-6
1992	Melvin Gaels 3-5	Drumkeerin 1-9
1993	Glencar/Manor 1-10	Aughavas 1-8
1994	Aughavas 0-15	Ballinaglera 0-7
1995	Allen Gaels 1-9	St Marys 2-3
1996	Mohill 1-11	Cloone 0-9
1997	Annaduff 1-9	Kiltubrid 2-5
1998	Mohill 2-11	Glenfarne 1-8
1999	St Mary's 1-12	Kiltubrid 2-5
2000	Cloone 1-7	Drumkeerin 0-7 (Replay)
2001	Annaduff 1-6	Glenfarne 0-6
2002	Kiltubrid 1-11	Aughnasheelin 1-6
2003	Sean O'Heslins 0-15	St Marys 1-11
2004	Dromahair 2-10	St Mary's 1-6
2005	Mohill 0-12	Aughawillan 1-4
2006	Glencar/Manor 0-6	Carrigallen 0-5
2007	Gortletteragh 0-7	Aughnasheelin 0-5
2008	Aughawillan 0-10	Sean O'Heslins 0-9
2009	Carrigallen 1-11	Dromahair 0-6

JUNIOR FOOTBALL LEAGUE

As with the Senior League there are some problems with the Junior League also. What was referred to as the Junior Cup began in 1943. This was also called the Junior League Cup. Winners of this Cup were; Drumshanbo (1943), Carrick on Shannon(1944), and Bornacoola (1945). The competition continues on a full League basis from 1946.

Year	Winners
1946	Gorvagh
1947	Fenagh
1948	Drumeela Harps (Drumreilly/Drumeela)
1949	Gortletteragh
1950	Bornacoola
1951	Aughawillan
1952	Carrick on Shannon
1953	Carrick on Shannon
1954	Jamestown
1955	Abandoned
1956	Carrick on Shannon
1957	Mohill
1958	Gortletteragh
1959	Aughawillan
1960	Annaduff
1961	Aughnasheelin
1962	Aughnasheelin
1963	Aughnasheelin
1964	Gortletteragh
1965	Glencar
1966	Fenagh
1967	Drumkeerin
1968	Glencar
1969	Glencar/Manorhamilton
1970	Glencar/Manorhamilton
1971	Drumkeerin
1972	Fenagh
1973	Fenagh
1974	Aughawillan
1975	Drumkeerin
1976	Bornacoola
1977	Drumreilly
1978	Mohill
1979	Melvin Gaels
1980	Kiltubrid
1981	Drumkeerin
1982	Glencar/Manorhamilton
1983	Bornacoola
1984	Eslin N.B. This competition is now called Division 3a League
1985	Drumkeerin
1986	Allen Gaels
1987	Glencar/Manorhamilton
1988	Aughnasheelin After 1988 see Division 3 and 4.

JUNIOR B LEAGUE (DIV4A) For second teams of Senior clubs in Division 1 of the Senior League

Year	Winners
1975	Ballinamore
1976	Ballinamore
1977	Ballinamore
1978	None
1979	Ballinamore
1980	Aughawillan
1981	Ballinamore
1982	Gortletteragh
1983	Gortletteragh
1984	Ballinamore
1985	Aughawillan
1986	Ballinamore
1987	Carrick on Shannon
1988	Melvin Gaels
	After 1988 see Divisions 3 and 4.

Junior League Div 4b (For second teams of clubs in Division 2 of Senior League)

Year	Winners
1979	Mohill
1980	Allen Gaels
1981	Allen Gaels
1982	Mohill
1983	Mohill
1984	Cloone
1985	Mohill
1986	Mohill
1987	Cloone
	After 1988 see Divisions 3 and 4.

JUNIOR LEAGUE DIVISION 3C For second teams of Junior Clubs)

Year	Winners
1979	Aughnasheelin
1980	Carrigallen
1981	Aughavas
1982	Glencar/Manorhamilton
1983	Gortletteragh
1984	Ballinagleara
1985	Ballinagleara
1986	Allen Gaels
1987	Allen Gaels
	After 1988 see Divisions 3 and 4

League Division 3

Year	Winners	Runners up
1989	Annaduff 3-10	Aughavas 4-6
1990	St Marys 4-1	Drumkeerin 1-9
1991	Eslin 1-10	Bornacoola 0-5
1992	Ballinaglera 1-12	Gortletteragh 1-4
1993	Eslin 1-16	Gortletteragh 0-0
1994	Not finished	
1995	Kiltubrid 3-10	Bornacoola 2-10
1996	Bornacoola 1-10	Aughawillan 0-5
1997	Gortletteragh 1-13	Allen Gaels 0-10
1998	Allen Gaels 2-12	Dromahair 1-6
1999	Gortletteragh 1-8	GlencarManor 0-6
2000	Not finished	
2001	Kiltubrid 2-7	Mohill 2-3
2002	Glencar/Manor 1-6	St Mary's 0-8
2003	Annaduff 0-15	Carrigallen 0-8
2004	Allen Gaels 1-7	Annaduff 1-6
2005	St Mary's 2-11	Dromahair 2-7
2006	Glencar/Manor 1-8	Annaduff 0-5
2007	Drumkeerin 2-13	Dromahair 0-4
2008	Eslin 1-6	Annaduff 1-2
2009	Glencar/Manor 1-11	Ballinaglera 1-9

LEAGUE DIVISION 4

Year	Winners	Runners up
1989	St Marys 1-7	Kiltubrid 0-2
1990	Ballinamore 5-5	Glencar/Manorhamilton 2-4 Replay
1991	Glenfarne 4-9	Aughawillan 1-3
1992	Leagues restructured into 3 Divisions only in '92	
1993	Drumreilly w/o	Aughavas (in replay)
1994	Not finished	
1995	Annaduff 1-6	Melvin Gaels 0-8
1996	St Marys 1-9	Carrigallen 2-5
1997	Mohill 2-10	Kiltubrid 2-3
1998	Fenagh 0-14	Aughnasheelin 3-3
1999	Melvin Gaels 3-10	Bornacoola 0-13
2000	Cloone 3-9	Aughavas 0-14
2001	St Marys 2-11	Annaduff 0-10 in replay
2002	St Mary's 2-6	Aughnasheelin 1-6
2003	Melvin Gaels 1-6	Allen Gaels 0-5
2004	Annaduff 2-8	Melvin Gaels 0-11
2005	Drumkeerin 4-7	Gortletteragh 2-12
2006	Eslin 1-11	St Mary's 1-10
2007	Annaduff 2-10	Drumkeerin 2-9
2008	Annaduff 1-9	Ballinaglera 1-6
2009	Kiltubrid 1-8	Sean O'Heslins 0-9

League Division 5

1998	Sean O Heslin 1-7	Mohill 1-4
1999	Aughavas 2-8	Glencar/Manor 1-6
2000	No Div 5 this year	
2001	Glenfarne 1-12	Dromahair 1-8
2002	Dromahair 4-3	Aughavas 1-5
2003	Glencar/Manor 1-11	Mohill 1-9
2004	Leitrim Gaels 3-6	Drumreilly 0-7
2005	Dromahair 0-12	Leitrim Gaels 1-6
2006	Sean O'Heslins 1-13	Glenfarne 1-4
2007	St Mary's 1-9	Dromahair 1-7
2008	Glencar/Manor 2-11	Bornacoola 1-9
2009	Aughnasheelin 4-10	Carrigallen 0-13

League Div 6

2005	Aughnasheelin 2-6	Sean O'Heslins 0-10
	Replay Leagues restructured after 2005	

DIVISION 1 Shield

(Played as second tier of the league for teams in the bottom half after first tier)

2005	Not played	
2006	Bornacoola 1-9	Allen Gaels 2-2

Division 2 Shield
(Played as second tier of the league for teams in the bottom half after first tier)

2005	Aughnasheelin 0-8	Ballinaglera 0-7
2006	Aughnasheelin 1-8	Ballinaglera 1-7

Division 3 Shield

(Played as second tier of the league for teams in the bottom half after first tier)

2005	Bornacoola 1-9	Glencar/Manor 0-7
2006	Drumkeerin 3-3	Sean O'Heslins 0-9

Shield A
Shield s A and B are a mix of teams from Divs 1 and 2 of the League from 2007

2007	Melvin Gaels 2-9	Allen Gaels 2-8
2008	Gortletteragh 0-10	Glenfarne/Kilty 0-5
2009	Carrigallen 1-13	Dromahair 1-10

Shield B

2007	Glencar/Manor 1--11	Fenagh 0-8
2008	Cloone 1-9	St Mary's 0-8
2009	St Mary's 0-13	Melvin Gaels 1-5

Shield C
For teams in Div 3 of League

2007	Annaduff 2-11	Allen Gaels 2-8
2008	Not played	

MINOR FOOTBALL LEAGUE (Overall winners up to 1977)

Year	**Winners**
1956	Mohill
1957	Aughavas
1958	Ballinamore
1959	Ballinamore
1960	Carrick on Shannon
1961	Ballinamore
1962	Carrick on Shannon
1963	Manorhamilton
1964	Gortletteragh
1965	Manorhamilton
1966	Drumshanbo
1967	Ballinamore
1968	Drumshanbo
1969	Ballinamore
1970	Drumkeerin
1971	Drumkeerin
1972	Mohill
1973	Carrick on Shannon
1974	Garadice Gaels
1975	Ballinamore
1976	St Manachans

	TOWNS		**RURAL (9 a side)**
1977	Ballinamore		
1978	Ballinamore		Gortletteragh
1979	Ballinamore		Aughawillan
1980	Glencar/Manor		Aughawillan
1981	Ballinamore		Fenagh
1982	Glencar/Manor		Dromahair
1983	Mohill		Aughnasheelin
1984	Mohill		Cloone
1985	Mohill		Drumreilly
1986	Mohill		Carrigallen
1987	Drumshanbo		Carrigallen
1988	Carrick on Shannon		Aughawillan
1989	Carrick on Shannon		Carrigallen
1990	Carrick on Shannon		Melvin Gaels
1991	Carrick on Shannon		Melvin Gaels
1992	Glencar/Manor		Dromahair
1993	Carrick on Shannon		Aughavas
1994	Drumshanbo		Aughavas
1995	Carrick on Shannon		Drumkeerin
1996	Mohill		Bornacoola
1997	Mohill		Bornacoola
1998	Mohill		Bornacoola
1999	Mohill		Gortletteragh
2000	St Mary's		Rural not completed
2001	Not completed		Kiltubrid
2002	Not played		Not Played
2003	Mohill 0-17		St Marys 2-7 (13 a side)
	Aughnasheelin 3-7		Glenfarne/Kilty 2-8 (9 a side)
2004	Mohill 2-16		Carrigallen 2-10 (13 a side)
	Annaduff 2-6		Ballinaglera 1-8 (9 a side)
2005	Glencar/Manor 0-10		St Marys 1-5 13 a side
	Bornacoola 1-8		Eslin 0-5 9 a side
2006	Bornacoola		St Mary's 13 a side
	Glenfarne 1-13		Aughnasheelin 2-7 9 a side
2007	13 a side Final between Ballinamore and St Mary's not played		
	Aughnasheelin 1-12		Annaduff 3-1
	9 a side		
2008	Garadice Gaels 1-11		St Manachans 0-8
	15 a side		
	Glencar/Manor 1-9		Sean O'Heslins 1-8
	13 a side		
	Glenfarne /Kilty 3-8		Aughnasheelin 3-7
	9 a side		
2009	15 a side		
	Garadice Gaels	beat	St Mary's
	13 a side		
	Allen Gaels	beat	Carrigallen
	9 a side		
	Leitrim Gaels	beat	Aughnasheelin

LEITRIM COUNTY BOARD OFFICERS

Officers are listed for every year they were available. Where a year is skipped, this does not necessarily mean that there was no Board in existence or that the officers remained the same. It simply means that a list of officers could not be traced for that year.
Where the title of a club changed (i.e. St Mary's or Seán O Heslins) the same description was used throughout (i.e. Carrick on Shannon, Ballinamore etc)

County Board Chairmen

Year	Name
1889	Tom Fallon (Killanummery)
1890	Francis Murphy (Aughavas)
1891	Michael Murphy (Fenagh)
1905-1907	Thomas F Smith (Gortletteragh)
1908	John Lynch
1910	Fr Bernie Manning
1913-1914	Fr John Casey (Aughavas)
1915-1916	Michael O'Grady (Ballinamore)
1917	P. McKenna (Mohill)
1920	Michael O'Grady (Mohill)
1923	Tom Kiernan (Fenagh)
1924	Charlie Flynn (Gorvagh)
1925	John McGuinness (Eslin)
1926-1929	Charlie Flynn (Gorvagh)
1930-1932	Pee Murray (Gorvagh)
1933	Fr Francis O'Donoghoe (Carrick on Shannon)
1934-1942	Fr Andy Lynch (Kiltubrid)
1943-1945	Paddy Carey (Fenagh)
1946-1947	James P Gannon (Mohill)
1948	Pee O'Rourke (Tully)
1949-1950	Seamus (Ging) Duignan (Carrick on Shannon)
1951-1954	Jim Creamer (Ballinamore)
1955-1964	Fr Sean Manning (Annaduff)
1965-1967	Fr Bernie Doyle (Aughawillan)
1968-1970	Fr Gene Cox (Mohill)
1971-1980	George O'Toole (Carrick on Shannon)
1981-1984	Gerry Mahon (Ballinamore)
1985	Sean Murray (Carrick on Shannon)
1986-1995	Tony McGowan (Drumshanbo) Des Quinn (Aughawillan)
2001- 2004	Michael McGowan (Melvin Gaels)
2005-	Gerry McGovern (Cloone)

County Board Secretaries

Year	Name
1889-1890	John Mulligan (Mohill)
1904-1907	John O'Neill (Mohill)
1908-1917	John Flynn (Fenagh)
1920	Hugh Maloney (Ballinamore) and T Bohan
1923	Thomas Hanley (Mohill)
1924	S Flynn (Eslin)
1925	Michael McIntyre (Gortletteragh)
1926-1929	Felix McGovern (Drumreilly)
1930-1932	Paddy Reynolds (Fenagh)
1933	John "Nipper" Shanley (Bornacoola)
1934-1935	Paddy Carey (Fenagh)
1936-1942	Eddie Delahoyde (Ballinamore)
1943	Larry Moran (Eslin)
1944-1947	Tommy Faughnan (Annaduff)
1948-1949	Michael Reynolds (Cloone)
1950	Josie Martin (Ballinamore)
1951-1952	M Beirne (Kiltubrid)
1953-1970	Tomás Ó Riordáin (Carrick on Shannon)
1971-1979	Tony McGowan (Drumshanbo)
1980-1981	Stanley Cox (Annaduff)
1982-1999	Tommy Moran (Ballinamore)
2000-2002	Séamus Gallagher (Drumkeerin)
2003- 2004	Stiofán Ó Floinn (Mohill)
2005-	Declan Bohan (Bornacoola)

County Board Treasurers

1889-1890	John Reynolds (Mohill)
1905-1907	B Shanley (Bornacoola)
1908-1910	Philip McTeague (Ballinamore)
1913-1915	P F Kiernan (Drumreilly)
1916	T Kiernan (Fenagh)
1917	Hugh Maloney (Ballinamore)
1920-1924	J McGuinness (Eslin)
1925	Paddy Gannon (Aghaslane)
1926	P McMahon (Ballinamore)
1927-1939	Tom Kiernan (Fenagh)
1940	Tom Gannon (Ballinamore)
1941	J P Dorrigan (Cloone)
1942-1945	Michael Cox (Mohill)
1946-1948	T Wrynn (Dromod)
1949	Michael Reynolds (Cloone)
1950-1954	Columba Quinn (Aughawillan)
1955-1971	Jack McNally (Annaduff)
1972	Pat Cull (Aughnasheelin)
1973-1975	Brendan Burns (Ballinamore) and Brian Stenson (Eslin)
1976-1984	Padraig Egan (Fenagh) and Sean Maxwell (Drumreilly)
1985-1995	Brendan Gormley (Ballinamore) and Sean Maxwell (Drumreilly)
1996- 2001	Brendan Gormley (Ballinamore)
2002- 2007	Jim Meehan (Dromahair)
2008 -	John Mulvey (Ballinaglera)

County Board Vice Chairmen
Leas Chathaoirligh

1905	Denis Kelly (Mohill)
1915-1917	Charles Flynn (Gorvagh)
1920	John Flynn (Fenagh)
1923	C Flynn (Gorvagh)
1924	Tom Kiernan (Fenagh)
1925	Frank McGoldrick (Ballinamore)
1926-1932	Paddy Reynolds T.D (Ballinamore)
1934	Ned Dolan (Ballinamore)
1935-1940	Seán O'Rourke (Carrigallen)
1941	Michael Cox (Mohill)
1942	Michael McIntyre (Gortletteragh)
1943-1945	J P Gannon (Mohill)
1946-1947	Bernie Sweeney (Ballinamore)
1948	Michael McIntyre (Gortletteragh)
1949-1950	Jim Creamer (Ballinamore)
1951-1954	Ging Duignan

	(Carrick on Shannon)
1955-1956	Ging Duignan (Carrick on Shannon) and An tAthair Seamus Ó Dubhthaigh (Drumkeeran)
1957-1959	Ging Duignan (Carrick on Shannon)
1960-1967	Aidan McGowan (Melvin Gaels)
1968-1970	Christy Gallogly (Ballinamore)
1971-1973	Eamon O'Grady (Drumkeeran)
1974-1979	Seamus McGowan (Melvin Gaels)
1980	Michael McGowan (Melvin Gaels)
1981-1990	Terry Shortt (Aughavas)
1991-1994	Eamon Tubman (Fenagh)
1995	Des Quinn (Aughawillan)
1996-1999	Michael McGowan (Melvin Gaels)
2000-2002	Paddy Kane (Gortletteragh)
2003-2004	Gerry McGovern (Cloone)
2005-	Peter Flynn (Aughnasheelin)

Leitrim Men as Connacht Council Officers

Uachtarán of Connacht Council

Michael McIntyre (Gortletteragh)
Richard Ellis (Fenagh)
Aidan McGowan (Melvin Gaels)
George O'Toole (St Mary's)
2003-2006 Tommy Moran (Ballinamore)

Treasurer of Connacht Council

Felix McGovern (Drumreilly)
Hubert Gallagher (Melvin Gaels)
Brendan Gormley (Ballinamore)
Jim Meehan (Dromahair)

Fr Dan Gallogly was President of Ulster Council

Assistant Secretaries
Rúnaithe Cúnta

1915	Hugh Maloney (Ballinamore)
1933-1934	Seán O Heslin (Ballinamore)
1935	Eddie Delahoyde (Ballinamore)
1936-1940	Seán O Heslin (Ballinamore)
1941-1942	William Mulligan Kiltubrid)
1943-1945	Caillin Conefrey (Fenagh)
1946	C O'Reilly (Drumeela)
1947-1948	Robert Moran (Eslin)
1949	Josie Martin (Ballinamore)
1950	Noel Gaffney (Ballinamore)
1951	Josie Martin (Ballinamore)
1952-1956	Charlie O'Neill (Fenagh)
1957-1958	Michael Fox (Manorhamilton)
1959	Pat Conefry (Drumreilly)
1960	L Heslin (Cloone)
1961-1962	Brendan Kiernan (Ballinamore)
1963-1970	Anselem Reynolds (Fenagh)
1971	J J O'Rourke (Gortletteragh)
1972-1973	Anthony Canning (Mohill)
1974-1975	Tommy Flynn (Aughawillan)
1976-1980	Charlie McCormack (Ballinamore)
1981	Stephen Flynn (Mohill)
1982-1989	Frankie Mulvey (Ballinaglera)
1990-1992	Oliver Doonan (Fenagh)
1993-1999	Enda Stenson (Eslin)
1-2002	Gerry McGovern (Cloone)
2003- 2007	John Keenan (Gortletteragh)
2008 -	Colette Fox (Glencar/Manorhamilton)

County Board Registrar/Development Officer (The post is called Development Officer since 1986)

1927	Joe Mulvey (Kiltubrid)
1928-1929	Paddy Reynolds (Ballinamore)
1930	Garda Blighe (Mohill)
1931	Garda John Clarke (Kiltubrid)
1932-1939	Tom Gannon (Ballinamore)
1940-1970	Hubie Doherty (Cloone)
1971-1973	Seán Murray (Carrick on Shannon)
1974	Pat Quinn (Drumreilly)
1975-1976	Seán Murray (Carrick on Shannon)
1977-1978	Brian Stenson (Eslin)
1979	Enda Stenson (Eslin)
1980-1987	Shay Reynolds (Bornacoola)
1988-1993	Tommy Flynn (Aughawillan)
1994-1999	Joe Flynn (Carrick on Shannon)
2000-2002	Michael Charles (Aughavas)
2003-2000	Declan Bohan (Bornacoola)
2005-	P J Meehan (Kiltubrid)

Ionadaithe Ard-Comhairle
Central Council Delegates

1933-1936	Felix McGovern (Drumreilly)
1946	Michael McIntyre (Gortletteragh)
1948	Larry Moran (Eslin) and Michael McIntyre (Gortletteragh)
1949	Larry Moran (Eslin)
1950-1974	Leo McAlindin (Cloone)
1975-1981	Tommy Moran (Ballinamore)
1982-1984	Aidan McGowan (Melvin Gaels)
1985- 2007	Gerry Mahon (Ballinamore)
2008 -	Jim Meehan (Dromahair)

Oifigigh Caidrimh Poiblí - PRO

1979-1981	Arthur Boyle (Drumkeeran)
1982-1985	Stephen Flynn (Mohill)
1986	Donal Fox (Annaduff)
1987-1991	Seán Callaghan (Aughawillan)
1992-1994	Des Quinn (Aughawillan)
1995	Stephen Flynn (Mohill)
1996	Seamus McMorrow (Melvin Gaels)
1997-1999	Seamus Gallagher (Drumkeerin)
1999-2002	Breifne Earley (Carrick on Shannon)
1-2005	Seán McGoldrick (Carrick on Shannon)
2006-	Brendan Doyle (Kiltubrid)

Uachtaráin Coiste Chontae Liatroma

1916	Fr P Higgins (Aughavas)
1926-1932	Fr E Dalton (Fenagh)
1971-1986	Tomás Ó Ríordáin (Carrick on Shannon)
1987-1989	Tom Gannon (Ballinamore)
1990-1992	Jim Lynch (Carrick on Shannon)
1993-1995	Aidan McGowan (Melvin Gaels)
1996-1998	George O' Toole (Carrick on Shannon)
1-2001	John Tom McGushin (Bornacoola)
2002- 2004	Theresa Bohan (Mohill)
2005- 2007	Sean Maxwell (Drumreilly)
2008 -	Michael McGowan (Melvin Gaels)

BORD NA NÓG OFFICERS

Underage football was run at different times by Boards described as Juvenile Boards, Minor Board, Bord na nÓg. Responsibilities of Boards were often changed and the Senior Board sometimes ran underage football.
The following list is not complete before 1970.

CHAIRMEN CATHAOIRLIGH

1936	P. Reynolds NT
1946	Fr. Boylan (Annaduff)
1948	Michael McIntyre (Gortletteragh)
1949	Leo McAlinden (Cloone)
1958	Fr. P. Flynn (Aughavas)
1960	Fr. J. Faughnan (Annaduff)
1962	Canon McLoughlin
1964	Anselem Reynolds (Fenagh)
1968-1969	Fr. Earley (Drumshanbo)
1970	Anselem Reynolds (Fenagh)
1971-1973	Eamon O'Grady (Drumkeerin)
1974-1976	Sean Murray (Carrick)
1977-1979	Seamus McGowan (Melvin Gaels)
1980-1982	John T. McGushin (Bornacoola)
1983-1984	Pat Cull (Aughnasheelin)
1985-1989	John Tom McGushin (Bornacoola)
1990-1992	Joe Flynn (St Mary's)
1993-2001	Declan Bohan (Bornacoola)
2002- 2004	Caillin Ellis (Fenagh)
	Jimmy McNama (Drumkeerin)
2008 -	Dan Gallogly (Seán O'Heslin's)

VICE CHAIRMAN LEAS CHATHAOIRLIGH

1961-1962	Bro. Anthony (Carrick)
1968-1969	Anselem Reynolds (Fenagh)
1970-1973	Paddy Fox (Annaduff)
1974-1976	Joe Daly (Bornacoola)
1977	Anselem Reynolds (Fenagh)
1978-1979	John T. McGushen (Bornacoola)
1980-1982	Pat Cull (Aughnasheelin)
1983-1991	Seamus McGowan (Melvin Gaels)
1992	Pat Conefrey (Drumreilly)
1993-2001	Aidan Kelleher (Gortletteragh)
	Jimmy McNama (Drumkeerin)
2005 - 2007	Dan Gallogly (Ballinamore)
2008 -	John Joe Byrne (Drumkeerin)

SECRETARIES RÚNAITHE

1936	Pat Redican NT (Kiltubrid)
1946	Mark Keegan (Mohill)
1948	Joe Bohan (Gortletteragh)
1949	Jack McNally (Annaduff)
1958	Bro. Placid (Carrick)
1960-1962	Anselem Reynolds (Fenagh)
1964	Paddy Fox (Annaduff)
1968	Tony Canning (Mohill)
1969-1973	Seán Murray (Carrick)
1974-1976	Anselem Reynolds (Fenagh)
1977-1979	John Flood (Drumshanbo)
1980-1981	Josie Torsney (Dromahair)
1982-1984	John Mulligan (Carrigallen)
1985-1999	Stephen Flynn (Mohill)
	Diarmuid Sweeney
	(Manorhamilton)
2003-	Attracta O'Reilly (St Marys)

TREASURERS CISTEOIRÍ

1962	Brendan Kiernan (Ballinamore)
1968-1973	Michael Keane (Mohill)
1974-1977	Padraig Egan (Fenagh)
1979	Seamus Prior (Aughnasheelin)
1980-1994	Tom McLoughlin (Fenagh)
	Anselem Reynolds (Fenagh)
2003- 2007	Walter Sharpley (Ballinamore)
2008 -	Joe Guckian (Leitrim Gaels)

Ladies Senior Championship

1979	Aughawillan	
1980	Glenfarne	
1981	Glenfarne	
1982	Fenagh	
1983	Fenagh	
1984	Aughawillan	
1985	Fenagh	Glenfarne
1986	Fenagh	Cloone
1987	Fenagh	Glenfarne
1988	Aughawillan	
1989	Aughawillan 2-7	Annaduff 1-3
1990	Aughawillan 1-8	Fenagh 1-4
1991	Annaduff 4-8	Fenagh 2-11
1992	Cloone 3-8	Annaduff 2-2
1993	Fenagh 4-9	Aughawillan 1-9
1994	Aughawillan 3-4	Fenagh 1-3
1995	Annaduff	Aughawillan
1996	Annaduff 4-13	Cloone 1-8
1997	Aughawillan 2-8	Kiltubrid 0-4 Replay
1998	Aughawillan 2-15	Kiltubrid 2-8
1999	Aughawillan 2-16	Cloone 1-3
2000	Aughawillan 0-12	Cloone 0-4
2001	Aughawillan 3-12	Kiltubrid 0-5
2002	Cloone1-13	Mohill 1-7
2003	Aughawillan 1-10	Cloone 2-4
2004	Aughawillan 2-14	Mohill 2-1
2005	Aughawillan 3-11	Mohill 2-8
2006	Aughawillan 2-9	Cloone 1-7
2007	Aughawillan 7-14	Cloone 0-8

2008	Aughawillan 0-12	Cloone 2-2
2009	Aughawillan 1-11	Cloone 0-8
	Senior B C'Ship	
	Kiltubrid 1-8	Bornacoola 1-6
	Kiltubrid 5-11	Annaduff 1-8
	Cloone 5-8	Mohill/Gortletteragh 2-7

LADIES SENIOR LEAGUE

	Winners	Runner up
1978	Fenagh	
1979	Aughanasheelin	
1980	Aughawillan	
1981	Fenagh	
1982	Aughawillan	
1983	Aughawillan	
1984	Aughawillan	
1985	Fenagh	Carrigallen
1986	Glenfarne	Fenagh
1987	Aughawillan	Glenfarne
1988	Annaduff	
1989	Fenagh	
1990	Fenagh 2-6	Annaduff 0-5
1991	Fenagh	Annaduff
1992	Aughawillan 0-8	Annaduff 0-5
1993	Fenagh	Cloone
1994	Aughawillan 1-6	Cloone 0-2
1995	Aughawillan 3-13	Cloone 1-3
1996	Annaduff 1-11	Fenagh 0-6
1997	Aughawillan 3-9	Annaduff 0-8
1998	Aughawillan 3-5	Kiltubrid 0-0
1999	Aughawillan 2-14	Cloone 1-9
2000	Cloone 2-8	Aughawillan 4-1
2001	Aughawillan 4-13	Cloone 2-9
2002	Cloone 5-8	Mohill 2-8
2003	Aughawillan 3-10	Mohill 0-9 Replay
	9 a-side Snr League	
	St Josephs 2-3	Cloone 1-4
2004	Aughawillan 2-11	Cloone 1-6
	9 a side Snr league	
	Cloone 3-17	St Josephs 0-3
2005	Aughawillan 1-14	Kiltubrid 1-3
	9 a-side Snr League	
	Kiltubrid	Mohill

Intermediate Championship

2006	Inter Cship	Cloone 4-10	Kiltubrid 3-5
	Inter B Cship	St Josephs 2-12	Glencar/Manor 1-4
2007	Inter Cship	Kiltubrid 4-8	Mohill 2-8
	Inter B Cship	St Mary's 4-6	Glencar/Manor 2-6
2008	Inter Cship	Mohill 3-9	St Josephs 2-11
	Inter B Cship	St Josephs 4-5	Glencar/Manor 3-3
2009	Inter Cship	St Josephs 2-12	Ballinaglera 2-2
	Inter B Cship	Dromahair 2-17	Annaduff 2-8

SENIOR HURLING CHAMPIONSHIP

A hurling championship may have been completed in a few other years. Old GAA Yearbooks give Mohill as winners in 1904 and Manorhamilton Shamrocks as winners in 1906. There may also have been competitions in 1918-1919 and again in the 1933-1934 period. However, results are only given where they can be proved conclusively

	WINNERS	RUNNERS UP
1917	Mohill	Manorhamilton
1935	Manorhamilton 7-0	Ballinamore 1-0
1953	Ck on Shannon 8-2	Manorhamilton 2-0
1954	Manorhamilton	Ck on Shannon
1955	No Competition	
1956	Aughavas	Ck on Shannon
1957	Ck on Shannon 4-2	Manorhamilton 2-1
1958	Ck on Shannon 4-4	St Josephs 0-1
1959	Manorhamilton 7-6	Ck on Shannon 4-2
1960	Ck on Shannon beat	Kiltyclogher (Replay
1961	Ck on Shannon beat	Manorhamilton
1962	Ck on Shannon beat	Manorhamilton
1963	No Competition	
1964	St Finbarrs 2-4	Ck on Shannon 2-3
1965	St Finbarrs 4-4	Ck on Shannon 3-3
1966	St Finbarrs 6-6	Ck on Shannon 2-4
1967	St Mary's 3-3	Ballinamore 1-5
1968	St Finbarrs 2-5	Ck on Shannon 0-6
1969	St Finbarrs 2-5	Ck on Shannon 1-4
1970	St Mary's 4-9	Ballinamore 1-10
1971	St Bridgets 2-7	St Finbarrs 2-2
1972	St Mary's 3-7	St Finbarrs 0-10
1973	St Finbarrs 3-7	St Bridgets 2-4
1974	St Finbarrs 4-3	Ck on Shannon 2-4
1975	Allen Gaels 1-8	Carrick on Shannon 1-4
1976	St Mary's 3-9	Allen Gaels 3-5
1977	Lough Allen Gaels 3-5	St Finbarrs 1-4
1978	St Mary's 2-10	St Finbarrs 2-4
1979	St Finbarrs 2-6	Allen Gaels 1-2
1980	St Mary's 3-16	St Finbarrs 2-3
1981	Null and Void	
1982	St Mary's 3-6	N Leitrim/Drumbo 3-1
1983	Gortletteragh 4-8	Carrick on Shannon 1-3
1984	Gortletteragh 0-8	Elphin 0-3
1985	Gortletteragh 1-6	Lough Allen/Gaels 0-1 (Ballinamore/AllenGaels)
1986	Gortletteragh 2-13	Carrick on Shannon 0-5
1987	Ballinamore 3-5	Gortletteragh 2-3
1988	Gortletteragh 0-9	CarricK on Shannon 0-7
1989	Gortletteragh 3-6	Carrick on Shannon 1-7
1990	Gortletteragh 2-4	Carrick on Shannon 1-6
1991	Gortletteragh 3-5	Carrick on Shannon 1-4
1992	St Mary's 2-6	Gortletteragh 2-5
1993	St Mary's 2-7	Gortletteragh 0-4
1994	St Mary's 1-12	Gortletteragh 2-3
1995	St Mary's 2-3	Gortletteragh 0-8
1996	Gortletteragh 2-6	Carrick on Shannon 1-4
1997	St Mary's 3-13	Gortletteragh 2-3
1998	Gortletteragh 3-5	Carrick on Shannon 1-7
1999	St Mary's 0-9	Gortletteragh 0-7
2000	St Mary's 4-11	Gortletteragh 0-2
2001	St Mary's 4-8	Ballinamore 1-8
2002	St Mary's 4-15	Ballinamore 1-6
2003	St Mary's 2-15	Ballinamore 1-5
2004	St Mary's 6-12	Ballinamore 0-3
2005	St Mary's 2-10	Gaeil an Chontae 1-8
2006	St Mary's 2-17	Glencar/Manor 3-8
2007	St Mary's 0-18	Ballinamore 0-8
2008	St Mary's 2-9	Glencar/Manor 0-10
2009	St Mary's 2-18	Glencar/Manor 1-9

Craobh Peil Sinsear Liatroma
Leitrim Senior Football Championship
Roll Of Honour (to 2009)

Sean O'Heslins, Ballinamore (20)	1913,1922,1930,1933, 1935,1936,1939, 1956,1964,1967,1968,1969,1972,1973, 1975,1979,1982,1986,1988,1990
Cloone (11)	1911,1934,1937,1942,1944,1946,1947, 1948,1950,1951,1980
Aughawillan (9)	1923 (Kiltyhugh), 1976,1978,1983,1984, 1989,1992,1993,1994
Aughavas (9)	1915,1940,1949,1952,1954,1955,1963, 1966,2000
Melvin Gaels (6)	1959,1960,1961, 1962,1965,1998
Fenagh (5)	1906,(1910 probable), 1912,1919,1932
Mohill (5)	1890,1914,1929,1971,2006
Gortletteragh (5)	1905,1970,1981,1985,1987
Allen Gaels (5)	1991,1996,1997,A2001,2002
Bornacoola (4)	1938,1943,1953,1957
Gorvagh (4)	1924,1925,1926,1927
St Mary's, Carrick on Shannon (4)	1958,1995,2003 2007
Eslin (3)	1891,1916,1917
Glencar/Manorhamilton (4)	1977, 1999, 2008, 2009
Carrigallen (2)	1941,1945 (Tully)
Annaduff (2)	1928, 2004
Glencar/Manorhamilton (3)	1977, 1999, 2008
Drumreilly (1)	1931
Aughnasheelin (1)	1918
Sheemore Gaels (1)	1974
Kiltubrid (1)	2005

Craobh Peil Idirmheánach Liatroma
Leitrim Intermediate Football Championship
Roll Of Honour (to 2009)

Naomh Muire, Cora Droma Rúisc (4)	1995, 1997, 2000, 2004
Achadh Easa (3)	1990, 1993, 1994
Maothail (2)	1928, 1999
Gaeil na Meilge (2)	1971, 1992
Gleann Chairthe/Cluainín (2)	1973, 2005
Carraig Álainn (2)	1991, 2006
Droim Oir Bhealaigh (2)	1998 2007
Cluain (2)	1972, 2009
Fíonach (1)	1974
Gaeil na hÁilne (1)	1989
Baile na gCléireach (1)	1996
Eanach Dubh (1)	2001
Cill Tiobraid (1)	2002
Gort Leitreach (1)	2003
Aughnasheelin (1)	2008

The Final Whistle