



OFFICIAL OPENING WEEKEND

Páirc na nEalaí

April 28th - 30th 2023



Welcome to the Official Opening

As President of Carrick Swan Club I welcome everyone here today to share in what is a historic occasion for the club.

I first got involved at committee level in the club in 1958 and in that time I have soldiered with great people and one in particular I would like to remember today is my late friend and club secretary for 42 years Paddy Boland.



To think back to what we had then to what we have now is hard to even imagine and I am sure that all the great Swan people gone before us are with us today in spirit.

To achieve what the club has done with this development has taken a lot of hard work from many people in the club but there are two that deserve special thanks and they are Sean O'Shea our Club Development Officer and Sean McDonnell our Treasurer.

The club has come on in leaps and bounds over the last 15 – 20 years and we now have facilities that are equal to the best there is and I hope that will inspire greater success on the field.

The official opening of Páirc na nEalaí today is a great day for the club and I hope everyone enjoys the occasion.

Johnny Flynn
Life President
Carrick Swan Hurling, Football and Camogie Club

Schedule of Events

FRIDAY APRIL 28TH

7pm: Remembrance Mass followed by blessing of Páirc na nEalaí.

8pm: Refreshments served afterwards in clubhouse.

SATURDAY APRIL 29TH

11am - 3pm: Juvenile boys and girls hurling, football and camogie games and fun activities.

Time TBC: Camogie game.

Time TBC: Junior County League game vs. Cappawhite.

SUNDAY APRIL 30TH

11am: Field Opens.

11.30am: GAA President arrives.

11.45am: Official opening of Páirc na nEalaí.

12.30pm - 2pm:

Refreshments.

Time TBC: Premier Intermediate game vs. Portroe.



Chairman's Address

On this historic day, I am delighted on behalf of the club to welcome GAA president Larry McCarthy to Páirc na nEalaí to officially open our majestic new grounds. Warm welcome is also extended to Munster Chairman Ger Ryan, County Chairman Joe Kennedy, South board Chairman Seamie Mullins, GAA officers, distinguished guests and friends of Carrick Swan Club.



This is indeed an historic and special day for all the members and their families. For all swan people young and old who hold the club in such high standing it is one of our proudest days. Since our foundation in 1929 much has been achieved on and off the field. A Dan Breen Cup in 1947 and 24 South Senior Hurling titles are testament to the talent and bravery of all who have worn the black and white with such distinction. Today we have a vibrant club full of energetic and dedicated members. The completion of Páirc na nEalaí to such a high standard has given the club added impetus in the last couple of years. I'm sure it will enable us through continued dedication and hard work to emulate the successes of the past and create new heroes and role models for the generations to follow.

What a journey it has been to finally have our own playing facilities. As the membership grew in recent years the necessity of having our own playing facilities was becoming more apparent. This was increasingly evident during the discussions that developed in 2012 when our 5 year strategic plan was being finalised. Due to the foresight of the committee and members in 2010 in starting our club lotto, discussions on developing our field of dreams could begin in earnest. The hugely successful fundraising efforts that have evolved since and the support of the community and membership has been humbling. What seemed an almost impossible task has been achieved in just a few short years culminating in our first Senior match in July 2020.

The support of our County Board, Munster Council, Croke Park and the Government in providing invaluable grants and sound advice is much appreciated by all in the club. It exemplifies what a great family the GAA is and its contribution to society can never be underestimated. These fantastic facilities at Páirc na nEalaí will enable the Swan club to continue to promote participation in our games and contribute to the development of our community.

I would like to pay tribute to our treasurer Sean McDonnell and to all the officers of the club throughout the project, your commitment and perseverance has ensured we have a facility to rival any. To all the members and craftsmen who worked on the project and gave of their time and expertise, in particular William Barrett – Thank You.

Special mention to our field development officer Sean O'Shea. From conception, through planning and development your hard work, leadership and expertise has ensured we have the facility we have today. All this while performing your role as club secretary and much more besides. Your outstanding contribution to the success of the development, indeed to the club, will be long remembered.

This fantastic facility should give us hope and confidence for the future and contribute to the continued success of our great club. I look forward to supporting all our players as they continue to enjoy the use of these outstanding facilities.

Na hEalaí Abú.

Jim Bourke
Chairman



Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael Address



A chairde,

Is pribhléid agus ónoir mór dom a labhairt libh ar an ócáid speisialta seo.

I am delighted to be a part of the celebrations that mark the official opening of the new field that is Páirc na nEalaí, the home of Carrick Swan Hurling, Football and Camogie Club.

An investment in clubs has been the key to the success of the GAA and the dedication of clubs to the communities they serve and represent has embedded our Association in their locality. Aside from promoting our games, our clubs have a long tradition of providing excellent facilities to showcase the work they do. This work on facilities never happens by chance, never happens overnight and is the result of years of careful planning and preparation and significant fundraising.

Investments such as this are a massive commitment for our volunteers and the club executive should be commended for the manner in which this project has been built, phase by phase, since it first began in 2012 – and also for the fact that the development has not placed the club into serious debt – significant though the fundraising has needed to be.

Carrick Swan is a club with a rich history and heritage stretching back to 1929 and on occasions such as this it is appropriate to pause and pay tribute to the countless men and women who put down a path for today's members to follow and grow and build Carrick Swans.

Nothing celebrates the GAA more than the playing of games. The fruits of the hard work are for the young players of today and tomorrow to benefit from and ensure that the Carrick Swan story that began in 1929 has many, many more chapters to fill on and off the field.

Cups and medals will come and go but what endures is the pride in who we are and where we are from – the value of any club is not in the trophy cabinet but in the immeasurable positive impact that people derive from being a part of their local GAA Club.

Thar ceann Cumann Lúthchleas Gael, Comhghairdeas libh go léir.

Rath Dé ar an obair.

Is mise le meas,

Labhrás Mac Carthaigh
Uachtarán CLG



Chairman of The Munster Council Address

Thar ceann Chomhairle na Mumhan ba mhaith liom comghairdeas a dhéanamh leis na hEalaí ar an lá iontach speisialta seo nuair a osclóidh sibh bhur bpáirc iontach nua, Páirc na nEalaí. Ba chóir go mbeadh gach duine atá bainteach leis an gclub thar a bheith bródúil as an méid atá bainte amach agaibh as an áis iontach seo a fhorbairt chun ár gcluichí a imirt.



Today is a very special occasion for the Carrick Swan club as you open your magnificent new pitch and facilities here at Páirc na nEalaí. Since their foundation in 1929 Carrick Swan have been a prominent hurling and football club in Tipperary and are proud holders of a record 24 South Tipperary divisional senior hurling titles. They are continuing to grow and now also have a thriving Camogie Club.

The club embarked on this project in 2012, purchased the grounds in 2015, started development in 2018 and since then have worked tirelessly to develop Páirc na nEalaí to be a new home for their club of which they can be justly proud. Everything has been completed to a high standard with notable features such as an irrigation system to water their sand based main and training pitches. Their excellent fundraising efforts allowed them to spend more than €1m with a very small amount of debt remaining. This is a great tribute to the club officers and members who had the foresight and commitment to develop a vision for the club's facilities and then deliver on it in such a top class manner.

The availability of top class pitches and facilities, particularly in urban areas, is essential for the preservation and development of our games. Doing so in a cost effective manner that allows ongoing maintenance and further development without being burdened with excessive debt is very important. In that regard, Carrick Swan are an example to all clubs seeking to develop new facilities or enhance existing ones. New facilities such as Páirc na nEalaí are also of critical importance to the future integration of the associations that make up the Gaelic Games family.

Comhairle na Mumhan is delighted to see clubs developing facilities which will promote participation in our games. We live in an increasingly changing society and the availability of top class facilities is an essential pre-requisite to encouraging our young people to start and stay playing our national games. In Comhairle na Mumhan we are very committed to support clubs such as Carrick Swan as they seek to grow GAA participation and activities here in Carrick-on-Suir.

I hope you have a wonderful day today. I have no doubt it will be remembered as a historic day for Carrick Swan. With your proud history, you can look with confidence to the future here in your new home.

Guím gach rath oraibh i bPáirc na nEalaí.

Ger Ryan
Cathaoirleach
Comhairle na Mumhan (CLG)



Tipperary GAA Chairman Address

Cuireann sé an áthas orm, mar cathaoirleach Tiobraid Árann CLG, na focail seo a chur in iúl mar aitheantas ar oscailt oifigiúil thailte nua an chlub Carraig na hEalaí CLG agus Club Camógaíochta.



It gives me great pleasure as Chairman of Tipperary GAA to pen these words in acknowledgement of the official opening of the new club grounds of Carrick Swan Hurling, Football and Camoige Club.

I wish to compliment the club officers and club members for all their work and commitment in making this development possible. Carrick Swan GAA, like every other club, had a desire to have facilities of their own.

This desire was matched by strategic planning, commitment and hard work to create facilities that the club and its members can be proud of today. Carrick Swan have a proud GAA tradition and are forebearers in the South Tipperary hurling championship.

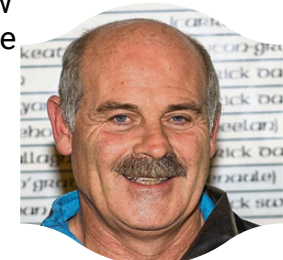
I visited the grounds in early 2018 and little did I think that it could be turned into such a marvellous facility. The work that was completed in laying the pitch was of the highest standard and such is the quality of the pitch that it is in constant demand by both the South and County GAA boards.

In conclusion, I want to congratulate Carrick Swan on this development and they can be very proud of this new facility and generations of "Swan" players will appreciate the vision of the current club officers for such a fine facility.

Seosamh Ó'Cinnéide,
Cathaoirleach,
Coiste Chontae Thiobraid Árann

South Tipperary GAA Chairman Address

On behalf of Coiste Thiobraid Árann Theas I would like to congratulate Carrick Swan Hurling, Football and Camogie Club on the official opening of their new playing fields and clubhouse here on the Ballyrichard Road which is the field of dreams known as Páirc na nEalaí.



The clubhouse and playing fields, after many years in the making with some set-backs along the way such as the Covid 19 restrictions, can now be compared with the very best in the county.

It is a tribute to the people of Carrick, the Carrick Swan Club and the local tradesmen and members who worked on the development led by Seán O'Shea their former Secretary and their current Club Development Officer.

The South Board look forward to playing more games in Páirc na nEalaí in the coming years. Again huge congratulations to all involved in this great Carrick Swan development and well done to all.

Seamus O'Maolain
Cathaoirleach
Coiste Thiobraid Árann Theas



Carrick Swan's Field of Dreams

The Carrick Swan Club have a proud history of participation in Gaelic Games since their founding in 1929. Leading the way in South Tipp with 24 senior hurling titles bears solid testimony to their success as a club as also has been their huge commitment down the years to the promotion of the games at underage and at all levels. The passion for the games of the Gael runs deep in the hearts and minds of the Swan.



Many old-timers will argue that their greatest day was when Willie Wall raised the Dan Breen cup aloft in 1947 after decisively beating Borrisoleigh to win their first and only County senior hurling title. Great day it was no doubt but April 30th 2023 will rank and supersede any achievements that went before when Carrick Swan will celebrate a truly magnificent achievement of providing a home of their own and a sporting facility the envy of many.

When dreams and vision collide in this life anything is possible and the story of this splendid sporting facility is truly remarkable. The dream and the vision was to provide sporting facilities of a high standard for the young and not so young, for the members and for the local community, nobody said it was going to be easy and it wasn't.

The story began in 2012 with bringing the dream and the vision before the club members, with white smoke there, the exploring of suitable sites began. The raising of substantial finance for the project, difficult negotiations to purchase the ground, preparing the plan for the project, planning permission, tendering for the work and liaising with the contractor plus a myriad of other issues associated with starting from a Greenfield site.

The dedication, the commitment and the patience of the various officers involved over the period were undoubtedly tested to the full and they deserve the highest commendation. Through it all there was a constant presence in the person of the then club secretary Sean O'Shea. His courage to take on the challenge, his leadership and expertise to see it through and bring his dream and his vision and that of his club to fruition will live long in the memory of all those associated with the project and those who will enjoy these splendid sporting facilities into the future.

Comhghairdeas go Na hEalaí.

Sean Nugent
Munster Council and Former Tipperary GAA Chairman



Páirc na nEalaí upstairs meeting room



External footpaths being laid, December 2018



The Story Of Páirc Na nEalaí

It has been the dream of many Swan people to have their own independent field for more years than I care to remember.

At various Annual General Meetings down the years the possibility of buying a field would be raised but in truth it never got too far, due to many things, not least the lack of funds and no realistic way of raising the funds of the magnitude required for such an undertaking, and the appetite to take it on probably wasn't there.



Sean O'Shea
Club Development Officer

What having our own field meant to Swan people is perhaps best exemplified by recalling a conversation I had in April 2014 with our Club Vice-President at that time the late William Lonergan. William was seriously ill in St Brigid's Hospital and sent word he wanted to see me. When I went down he was very weak but he managed to say that whatever happens let nothing stand in the way of the "field". William sadly passed away some days later.

From 1922 up to 1992 unemployment and emigration were near constant features of the economy and the people that ran the club during those years in particular deserve great praise for keeping the club afloat on an absolute shoestring with a very honourable mention to our life President Johnny Flynn who would know best of all what the club went through to survive in lean times.

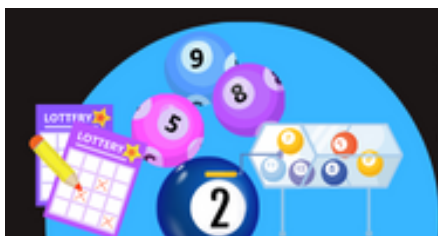
The rise of the "Celtic Tiger" from 1995 to 2007 and the subsequent economic crash when it happened in 2008 would influence greatly the club's thinking in relation to developing new facilities.

The economic crash was swift as many businesses folded and sadly went into receivership; the National Asset Management Agency (N.A.M.A.) was set up by the government in December 2009 to deal with non performing property loans.

In August 2010 a meeting took place between the outgoing Supporters Club Committee (which had been set up some years previously to help raise funds for the club) and the Club House Committee to discuss setting up weekly club lotto, this was readily agreed to and the Swan lotto committee was formed.

Steadily over the next number of years our finances improved thanks to a very hard working lotto committee and all on this committee deserve great credit as every Thursday evening without fail they are down in the hall running the lotto.

The money from the lotto would pave the way for the future development to become more than just a pipe dream; it was the key to allowing us to undertake the biggest development in the clubs history.



**SUPPORTING OUR LOTTO
HELPS FUND OUR JUVENILE
CLUB AND WITH FIELD
DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

JUST €2 TO ENTER

Draw takes place every Thursday
at 7.45pm before our weekly
Bingo (8.30pm) in our Juvenile
Hall.

www.CarrickSwan.com/lotto



In early 2012 a chance discussion in Kevin Dalton's shop in Kickham Street resulted in contact being made with Pierce O'Loughlin who was a local councillor at that time to see if he knew of any land that might be available for purchase within the town boundaries.

Pierce could not have been more helpful and we looked at various locations but one site in particular ticked all the right boxes, it was Ballyrichard Road and was a mere stone throw away from our old spiritual club house on the Green.

Now that we had a possible location we had to move fairly fast and the information gathered was rolled out to the Club Executive Committee on September 18th 2012, to their credit the committee were very supportive of the idea.

The late Noel Russell knew Will McGarry who was a Consultant Engineer in Clonmel and we both took a trip up to Clonmel to meet him. Will was very helpful and he visited the site and agreed that the project was definitely do-able but it would take a lot of work and money.

We then contacted John Ryan of Holycross who was on the Planning and Physical Development Committee of the County Board. John very kindly came down accompanied by the County Chairman at that time Sean Nugent to have a look at the site and was very encouraging about the project we had in mind and what could be achieved.

In November 2012 the Tipperary County Board were encouraging clubs to undertake a review of their club affairs and to plan for the future by developing a Club Strategic Plan.

A steering group consisting of Davy Boland, Colm O'Sullivan, Kieran Reade, Willie Hahessy and I travelled to Thurles to meet with Jimmy Minogue and Jackie Maher who were part of the county board's strategic planning committee.

On Friday November 30th 2012 some 75 club members came together in the club hall to brainstorm and compile our own 5 year strategic plan. This workshop was run and facilitated by the aforementioned Jimmy Minogue and Jackie Maher.

One recurring theme that night was the need to have more playing facilities borne by an increasing playing membership, the momentum to have our own field was at last gathering serious pace.

In February 2013, the late Noel Russell, Willie Hahessy and I met with Bobby Fitzgerald Accountant at his offices where we discussed our proposed plans; Bobby was very positive and gave us great advice.

In April 2013 and with the assistance again of Bobby Fitzgerald we officially registered our interest in the property with the estate agents and N.A.M.A.

Following a club committee meeting on October 18th 2013 it was decided that a field sub-committee should be set up and on Tuesday October 23rd our first field committee meeting took place, those in attendance were Jim Bourke, Kevin McDonnell, John Lonergan, Frankie Nolan, Noel Russell, Willie Hahessy, Jim Kennedy, Davy Boland, Benny Hahessy and I.





Most of this sub-committee would meet regularly to discuss and plan the way forward and the committee was later joined by Dick Lanigan, Cllr Kieran Bourke, James Hawkins, Kieran Reade, Alan P Ryan, Davy Dunne and Colin Regan.

On November 30th 2013 a meeting was held in the local town hall arranged by Cllr Pierce O'Loughlin with Pat Slattery and Michael O'Brien Town Clerk representing the town planners and the late Noel Russell and I represented the club. The meeting went very well with no immediate impediment to our proposed plans.

The land at Ballyrichard was under N.A.L.M (National Asset Loan Management) control and this meant that negotiations would not be as straight forward as a normal purchase.

From the outset we had to juggle two different proposed purchases, one was for the land and the other was for the building and we would need to acquire both to make a success of the overall development. The building was very important as it was structurally very sound and the plan was that it would form the basis of our new clubhouse.

Confidentiality would be a key requisite for ensuring that we could achieve the acquisition(s).

By this stage Jimmy Flynn of Flynn Associates had come on board to advise on the various planning stages and to design the proposed new facility.

On Tuesday February 4th 2014 Willie Hahessy, the late Noel Russell and I again had a meeting with Pat Slattery and the town planners and again they could not have been more helpful or supportive of the plans put forward.

In order to proceed any further however we first needed permission from the Tipperary County Board, Munster Council and Central Council to (a) purchase and (b) borrow if required.

At a County Board meeting held on February 5th our request to purchase, borrow and develop new facilities was supported by those in attendance and was proposed by PJ Maher and seconded by John Costigan.

Before we could contractually commit to anything with N.A.M.A. however, we had to again get the permission from the club members. At this meeting we promised that the project could be delivered without any major debt being placed on the club, and on Friday February 21st 2014 at a specially convened general meeting the clubs membership voted to proceed with the negotiations to purchase both the land and the building, a truly historic occasion.

On October 21st 2014 Jim Kennedy (who was Club Chairman at that time) and I made the long trip to Munster GAA HQ in Castletroy, County Limerick not sure of what way our application to allow us undertake borrowings would be viewed, but we needn't have worried as we were soon put at ease by Kieran Leddy and the members of the Munster Council Finance Committee.

On November 3rd Jimmy O'Gorman former Munster Chairman and now a member of the GAA National Finance Committee visited the site along with Kieran Leddy of the Munster Council and Sean Nugent as County Chairman, all could see the potential and



immediately were supportive.

The following week Central Council also supported our application and granted us permission to proceed.

In late February 2015 a very positive meeting was held in the Town Hall in Clonmel with the District Planner Amy Granville. This meeting was arranged and attended by Cllr Kieran Bourke who became a great asset to us as the project developed and in attendance also were Jimmy Flynn and I.

In most contractual scenarios regarding the purchase of land such as this it would be normal to purchase subject to planning but dealing with N.A.M.A. there was no such safeguard available to us and, it was either buy now or the property would be released to a foreign investment firm like Lone Star who were hoovering up such properties at that time.

A Deal is Finally Done

On March 27th 2015 on behalf of the club and with their full consent both Willie Hahessy and I met with Mark Culleton the club solicitor of Derivan, Sexton and Co to agree a deal for the land, having previously laid down a deposit in January.

While negotiating for the land we also had the added pressure of trying to negotiate a separate deal for the building. This was under the control of N.A.L.M. which was the National Asset Loan Management Agency as opposed to N.A.M.A and this in itself would bring its own difficulties.

The building was a major part of the overall project and so we paid down a deposit in February and eventually on October 22nd 2015 following many sleepless nights the purchase of the building was completed to the satisfaction of all concerned.



March 2015





Well aware that the lotto fundraising alone could not fund a project of this magnitude we had to come up with new ideas that would bring in revenue. First up was a celebrity dancing competition which due to public demand was held in Kilkenny's O'Loughlin Gaels GAA Complex on October 24th 2015 and this gave us a decent cash injection. One of the tickets for that event can be seen on the right.

Then it was James Hawkins that came up with the idea of the "12 Days of Christmas Draw" which has proved so successful for us since we began it in 2016. This draw has been a major help to the project as all proceeds go directly to the development.

As the road frontage was so derelict and shabby looking, in March 2016 we got Pat O'Hanlon Plant Hire to clear off the ditch where the decaying hoarding was and put up a post and rail fence, this cleaned up the area dramatically.

Then in May 2016 we got Pat to clear the site and we are also grateful to Pierce Keane for cutting down any dangerous trees and boughs at that time.

Jimmy Flynn of Flynn Associates drew up a detailed plan of what the new development would look like and we brought these artistic impressions to a general meeting of members in the club hall on March 25th 2016 when any relevant questions by those in attendance were answered to the satisfaction of all. We officially applied for planning in April 2016.

On 13th May 2016 we held a public information night in the club hall. At this meeting we displayed and outlined our full plans, it was particularly pleasing to hear from those living in the immediate vicinity of the site and the fact they were supportive of our plans, as previously mentioned the area had become very derelict and was a den for anti-social activity.

April 3rd 2017, a Historic Day for Carrick Swan Hurling, Football and Camogie Club

On April 3rd 2017 following further planning submissions we got the news we wanted when we received full planning permission for the development and we could all take a collective deep breath!

Now the work could begin in earnest and without doubt one of the best moves we made in relation to the installation of the playing pitches was in securing James Healy a well renowned Agronomist to look after the site analysis, design specifications, bill of quantities, tendering process, construction and grow in/establishment phases.

Shay Power Ltd was the appointed contractor to undertake the field development. Following a strict tendering process Shay Power Ltd came out on top, a coup for us in every sense.





In March 2018 the full site was sprayed to kill off all heavy growth and then overhead power cables had to be re-routed underground. In April 2018 we removed all temporary frontages and replaced it with perimeter fencing.



April 2018: Perimeter fence installation

The Blistering Hot Summer of 2018

It was July 2018 when the real heavy excavation and pitch installations began and due to the extremely hot and dry weather the site resembled the Sahara Desert at times. July 2018 was a month where passers-by could see visible progress on the site each day of the work being done. It was great to see and brought an air of giddiness and excitement to Swan people throughout Carrick and its hinterland as the development work progressed throughout the month.



July 2018: Heavy excavation work and pitch installation





During July and early August 2018, Shay Power and his team removed the topsoil, laser levelled the subsoil and installed a state-of-the-art drainage system that we will benefit from for years to come. As well as all that, they spread the topsoil back on, laser levelled it again, and spread 600 tonnes of sand on the field also.



August 2018: Slit drains installed, 600 tonnes of sand spread, field laser-levelled and grass seeded

Due to the blistering hot Summer of 2018, one of the warmest and driest summers on record in Ireland, we had to wait for the heatwaves and drought conditions to subside and for the temperatures to drop in late August before the grass seed could be sown.



September 2018: ...and now we wait patiently as the grass grows



November 2018: Starting to take shape



The grass pitches got plenty of time to mature before playing activity got underway in May 2020 as our players took to the field like young calves going out to grass for the very first time; the first official game featured our senior hurlers playing West Tipperary's Knockavilla–Donaskeigh Kickhams on July 1st 2020. A slightly blurry image of the opening clash of that very first game can be seen on the right hand side.



Building Renovations

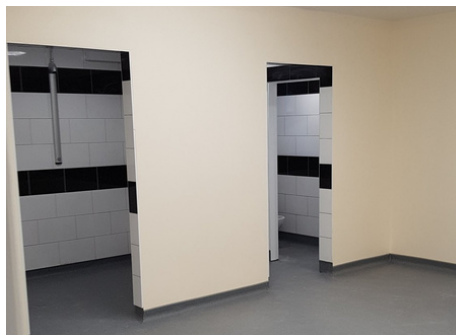
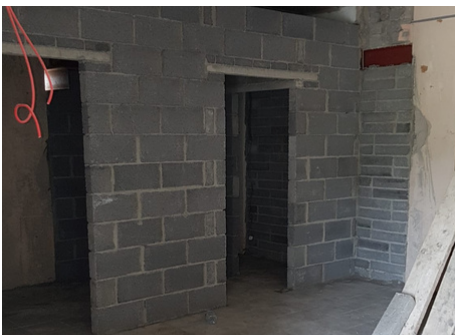
The building/renovation of the club house was another big undertaking and but for the input of our own tradesmen in the club it would not have been possible to achieve what we did.

Before we commenced the building work we let it be known that we wanted our own tradesmen involved as much as possible, we arranged an open meeting in the old club house on March 8th and following that meeting we were blessed to get some of our own clubmen on board. It was our intention to ensure it would be local labour as well as local materials and supply for this phase of the project.

Their attention to detail and their professionalism has resulted in us having a club house to be very proud of and the bulk of the work was completed by February 2020, great testament again to our own lads.



Clubhouse renovations Autumn and Winter 2019



Words of Appreciation

The problem at this juncture with naming names is inadvertently leaving someone out and if I do I sincerely apologise in advance but the following people are worthy of mention; the importance of William Barrett Building and Plastering Ltd to this project must be recognised, whatever was asked of William he always came up trumps, nothing was too much trouble for him and he ensured that the building project was relatively pain free.

William did a lot more than just working on and overseeing the building work he also did ground works such as installing footpaths and erecting lighting columns, a man for every occasion!

The other club tradesmen that we couldn't have done without and to whom the club owe a massive debt are Ray Dunne, Michael Waters, Lee Dunne – Carpentry and much more besides, Tom Kennedy – Electrical, Sean Barrett – Plumbing and Heating, Jim Kennedy – Concrete Coring, Jason Fleming and JSF Construction, David Morton/Brian Grace-Tiling, Tom Torpey, Mark O'Halloran, Alan P Ryan, Willie Hahessy, Danny McNamara, Lee Keane, Jamie Sweetman, Jim Bourke, John B Walsh, Kevin Lanigan, Dean Clery, Gerry Hawkins, Gavin O'Halloran, Dale O'Hanlon, Terry and Bobby Lonergan, Dean Waters, Aidan Waters, Brian Kelly, Gerry Grace, James Waters, Martin Walsh, Maurice Grace and Ross McNamara.



Thanks to the following ladies who fed the hungry workers from time to time, Mary Barrett, Yvonne O'Halloran, Bernie Torpey, Natasha O'Hanlon and Leanne Ryan.

Thanks to our Treasurer Sean McDonnell who at all times was available with the cheque book and without his full support it would have been difficult if not impossible to even contemplate achieving the end result. From my perspective spending money was probably the easy part but raising money is where the real heroes are to be found.

Therefore special thanks to the lotto committee led by Sean and ably supported by James Hogan, Debbie Cooney, Seamus Walsh, Dick Lanigan, Danny McNamara, Davy Boland, Martin Walsh, Terry Lonergan, Jim Bourke, Jim Kennedy and Dean Clery.

Thanks to those that continuously promote the lotto such as Noel Harrigan, Deborah Nolan, Billy Loughman, Martina Walsh, Martin Walsh and Debbie Cooney.

Also extremely important to us has been the "12 Days of Christmas Draw" and we have fantastic promoters, in fact we have too many to attempt to mention them all, but a special mention has to go to Willie Hahessy, Sean McDonnell and Mary Barrett for the work they put into it. This annual draw is eagerly looked forward to by all who participate so thanks to all that supports it.

To date we have received over €360,000 in grant aid and I would like to thank the following for their help and assistance involving those grants:

The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport for grant aid received under the Sports Capital Program and to Catherine Ryan and Kevin O'Keeffe for their assistance.

Central Council and Munster G.A.A. for the club development grants, thanks to Central Council's former finance Manager Kathy Slattery and to Munster C.E.O. Kieran Leddy who has supported us from day one. Kieran's successor as operation's manager John Brennan too has helped enormously and is always available to us.

Thanks to the South Tipperary Development Company for funding under the Leader scheme particularly both Mary Kinnane and Sara Bourke for their assistance.

Tipperary County Council for grant aid received under the Community Enhancement Program and the Community Facilities and Amenities Schemes.

I would also like to thank the following for their help and assistance throughout the project, Jimmy O'Gorman, John Costigan and Con Hogan.

Thanks to former Munster Secretary Simon Moroney as well as former Chairmen Sean Walsh, Robert Frost, Jerry O'Sullivan, Liam Lenihan and Tipperary's Ger Ryan the current Chairman.

Thanks to all the members of the Tipperary Co. Board during the development, former Chairmen Sean Nugent, Michael Bourke, John Devane and present Chairman Joe Kennedy.

Thanks to former County Secretary Tim Floyd who was always at hand to help us too and was always obliging and I am sure we can rely on the new CEO of Tipperary GAA Murtagh Brennan in the future.



Thanks to former County Development Officer PJ Maher for his assistance and to current officer Mark McLoughlin.

Former County Chairman and current Tipperary representative to Munster Council Sean Nugent is deserving of special thanks. Sean has been with us from the start and has shown a keen interest in the project as it developed and was always available for advice.

Sean was also instrumental in the recent agreement reached regarding the Davin "Memorial" Park in which we sold our usage but still retain a 40% share of any proceeds if the ground is ever sold in the future, this resulted in a win-win situation for both clubs. The club representatives in attaining this deal were Jim Bourke, Dick Lanigan and I.

Dick Lanigan deserves a special mention for his part as Chairman of the Davin "Memorial" Park Committee over many years and was also a valued and highly respected Chairman in our own club and is now our Vice-President.

Special mention goes to present County Vice-Chairman Jimmy Minogue. Jimmy offered great advice during our discussions with N.A.M.A. as well as on any other grant advice we needed. Jimmy was one of the facilitators at our first strategic meeting way back in 2012 and has held a keen interest in the development since then.

I would like to remember the late Rory Flannery from Nenagh for his advice throughout the N.A.M.A. negotiations. His advice at all times was both sound and invaluable; Rory had a way of making the impossible seem possible.

Thanks to John Ryan for visiting the site in 2012 and for being so enthusiastic about what we could achieve. When John returned some time ago, he couldn't believe the progress that was made.

I would like to thank both Mark Culleton and Pat Derivan Solicitors of Derivan, Sexton and Co Solicitors for all their help with the legalities surrounding the purchase of both the land and the building. They were a great help to us and always made themselves available.

Thanks to James Healy our Agronomist. We first met on December 8th 2017 and knew straight away we had the right man, a lovely man to deal with and highly professional.

Thanks to Bobby Fitzgerald for helping us to realise that in the financial sense at least this project could be done within the timeframe we wanted; Bobby was a big help to us.

Particular thanks to Jimmy Flynn; Jimmy has designed facilities that are up there with the best in the country, from laying out pitches to designing the club house Jimmy has been an integral part of the project and is a man we can rely on for his advice at all times.

Thanks to Michael Allen for designing the heating and plumbing specifications and to Seanie Dunne for the gas installations.

Thanks to South Tipperary Senior Executive Engineer Willie Corby who was very helpful and obliging anytime we needed clarification or advice on council related queries.

Since the project was first approved by the club we have had four different Chairmen hold office and each of them has stood fully behind the project and offered their support and help, they are John Lonergan, Jim Kennedy, Tony Hogan and our current chairman Jim Bourke.



Thanks to James Waters for creating the beautiful commemorative plaque for the official opening.

Thanks to Shay Power Ltd and his ever obliging machinery operator Richie Sayers who could not have been more helpful and easy to work with. They did all the heavy excavation works and the field drainage installations and ensured all were completed to the highest standard and were always available to offer advice.

Thanks to Gary and Sean Flood Ltd who did the final pitch installations and landscaping, they literally left no stone un-turned as can be seen by the quality surface on the pitches.

Thanks to Tony Scully former Tús supervisor for all his help over the last number of years and to his successor Valerie Carty.

Thanks to Colm Ryan of Cropcare and David Howell of Waterford Landscapes for their attention to the playing surfaces ensuring it is always in top order.

A general thanks to all of the other contractors who have worked on the project we were lucky that we only got the best.

Thanks to Jason Fleming for supplying machinery to us when we needed to erect the lighting columns and other work during the development; Jason is also a key sponsor to the club.

Thanks to all the club sponsors your financial assistance is greatly appreciated.

Thanks to former councillor Pierce O'Loughlin. Pierce was the first point of contact when we went on this journey seeking a potential site and he went out of his way to help us.

Thanks to current councillors David Dunne and Kieran Bourke, with a special mention to Kieran as he has liaised with us on many different aspects of the project. I remember one particularly cold March day in 2014 when Kieran helped Jimmy Flynn and I to peg out the field and training field to give us the first visual on what it would look like and whether it would fit!

Thanks to Mattie McGrath T.D., Seamus Healy, former T.D., Senator Garret Ahearne and Cllr Michael Murphy for their support when we required it.

Thanks to the official opening committee of Jim Bourke, Kevin McDonnell, Colm O'Sullivan, Elaine Power, Frankie Nolan, Seamus Walsh, Willie Hahessy, Mary Barrett and Siobhan O'Dwyer.

Thanks to Ronan Quirke for agreeing to do MC. Ronan is the voice of Tipperary sport.

Thanks to Seamus Walsh for arranging the mass held on Friday evening and to all who participated in the mass especially the celebrants Bishop Alphonsus, Father Paul, Father Jimmy and Father Tom and also the wonderful St Christopher Choir.

Huge thanks also to Colm O'Sullivan who compiled this wonderful keepsake booklet, a collector's item no doubt, top class work as always Colm.



Without Gerry Hawkins we would be lost as Gerry is the most obliging man you could meet as he constantly keeps the grass cut and the grounds in tip top condition and also thanks to anyone that assists with the grass cutting from time to time.

I am quite sure I must have forgotten someone I should have thanked and didn't, but please be assured that if you helped out in any way it is very much appreciated.

A lot done but more to do!

Conclusion

Without doubt the greatest achievement has been completing the project to date without any major debt incurred on the club as we promised would be the case from the outset, we have spent over one million Euros to date and our current loan is manageable. This did not happen by chance it is because we have a great club with great people in it and importantly a wonderful community who always support us.

On a personal note I remember today three of my closest friends, MJ Collins, Noel Russell and Bernard O'Neill. On many occasions over the years past we often sat having a quiet pint and would discuss the possibility of one day having our own field. All three sadly passed away before their time and are sorely missed; I hope they are having a pint together today.

I dedicate my own part in the project to my late father John O'Shea a former Club Chairman who died way back in 1975. I sincerely hope that he and all the deceased members of our great little club are smiling down on Páirc na nEalaí today.

The dream is no longer a dream it has at last become a reality.

Na hEalaí Abú.

Sean O'Shea,
Club Development Officer
April 30th, 2023



August 2020





Field Development Financial Report

When Carrick Swan GAA Club set out on its journey to where we are today our finance committee and club officers vowed that our planned development would not place financial pressure on our club. Careful financial planning in advance has ensured that this has not happened.



The commencement of our club lotto five years in advance of the start of the Field Development Project laid the foundation of financial stability and allowed us to commence our work on a sound financial footing.

Our annual Christmas draw which commenced in 2016 supplemented our weekly lotto activities. Expenditure to date has recently exceeded €1 million but thanks to the tremendous support of our own membership, our wider community and grant assistance from various sources we have arrived here today with only minimal indebtedness and a facility we can all be proud of and one which we hope we can further develop over the coming years.

We are extremely grateful to all who have helped in any way to make our dream come true and we thank you sincerely.

Sean McDonnell
Treasurer

What's Next At Páirc na nEalaí?

While there is a lot done we still have more to do, the next phase of the development works will see a 50m x 35m artificial playing surface installed complete with a 35m ball wall, fully enclosed and floodlit. It is hoped that this work will commence in the second half of 2023 once we secure planning permission.

We also intend to extend the current car park down towards the town side to give us another 40 car parking spaces, again once planning is secured.

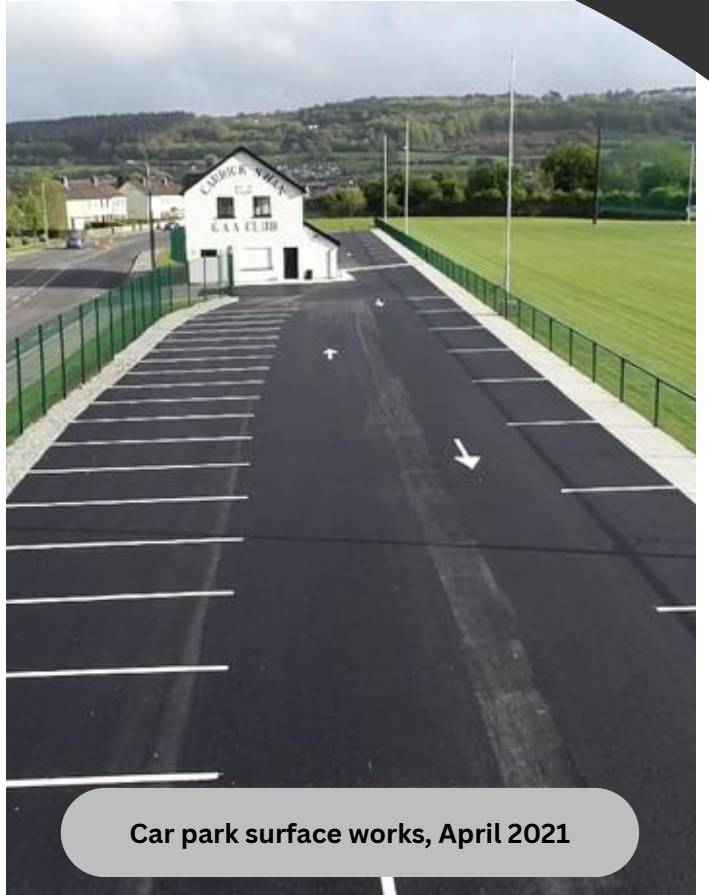
A covered viewing stand will then be planned for the Glen side of the field when finances allow but hopefully won't be too far away.

So where fundraising is concerned we are not gone away, with an expected future expenditure of around €400K I am sure you will understand why!!





June 2020, footpaths and spectator fence installed pitch-side



Car park surface works, April 2021



August 2021, floodlights turned on.



May 2022, Scoreboard installed

