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**Ballinteer St Johns GAA Club Secretary’s report November 2022**

2022 has been a memorable year for Ballinteer St John’s celebrating our forty years as a club. We are lucky to still have so many of our founder members still active in the club to see their vision and dream come to fruition and grow to one of the biggest clubs in the Country.

This club has always been open and welcoming. I first started as a mentor in the Nursery 20 years ago and still retain the friendships made with mentors and players as we all continued our individual paths through club teams and committees. Our strength comes from our volunteers and so I would appeal to all members to volunteer and take part in any capacity as it all helps to keep the club strong and able to contend with all the new challenges as they arise.

Our 40th anniversary celebrations continued throughout the year, commencing with the planting of 40 trees in Marlay Park to mark our 40 years. At Halloween weekend a film was produced telling our story and commemorating the forty years. In November we had a Gala fortieth Anniversary dinner.

On administration, we have had ten full executive meetings since the last AGM and in addition many sub meetings to deal with particular issues as they arose. The executive review Registrations, child welfare, treasurer updates, health and wellbeing, bar, and team updates and many other issues. In March we commenced a recruitment campaign for a new coaching Officer and in October we welcomed Paraic McDonald joining us as Director of Coaching & Player Development, focusing on the key areas of coach education and player development from the nursery to senior level.

This year we were still recovering from the impacts and threat of Covid but in spite of that we had a very successful year in sport. The introduction of new initiatives such as the U19 competitions impacted hurling and football as players were in demand across many teams but thanks to managers and mentors working together we were able to meet our commitments.

Our year book contains detailed reports and photographs from all our teams so I will just give a short overview of each code below.

In Camogie 2022 saw large numbers coming through our Juvenile section and the retention of players feeding into the Adult section. This year we fielded 35 teams across CCC1, CCC2, Minor and Adult. We are currently fielding 24 teams in Go Games and 7 teams in our CCC2 section.

This year we entered a Minor team in League and Championship and ended the year as Division 3 County Champions. Well done to the players and their Management team, Padraic O’Heithir, Colm O’Callaghan and Neil Leslie.

We fielded three adult teams in Senior 2, Intermediate 2 and Junior 5 in League and Championship. Our senior team managed by Karl O’Keeffe and his backroom team had tremendous success and ended the year as unbeaten Champions in both League and Senior 2 Championship. We look forward to a return to Division 1 in 2023.

Thanks to all mentors and volunteers and to Lorna Doran, BSJ Camogie Secretary, County Board Delegates, Conor Dolan and John Wall . Conor is stepping down from the role of delegate to the County Board after many years and we acknowledge the huge contribution he has made both in his role as Mentor to our Juvenile and Adult camogie teams and the tremendous work he has done on behalf of the club.

In Ladies Football there are currently 797 adults, youths and G4MO (Gaelic for Mothers and Others) players registered with Ballinteer St. Johns. This is the first year that we had a G4MO section and we must thank Niamh Minogue-Jones for her work in this area. The club had three teams competing at every age group except u-16 and minor this year. The Ladies Football Games and Coordination committee started work this year and it is hoped that the work of the committee will contribute significantly to the growth and development of ladies football in the club in the coming years.

Thanks to all mentors and volunteers and to Paul Leahy LGFA Secretary and Board delegate. Thanks too to Eamonn Naughton and Alan Garvin who are stepping away this year who have contributed so much to the development and success of the Ladies Senior team over the last years.

Our Senior Hurlers season started with Division 1 league match in February and completed the season in October in the semi-final of the Senior 2 Hurling championship in Parnell Park. Good luck to senior team manager Jim Maguire who is stepping down after three years in the role as manager and five years with the club. Our Intermediate hurlers had a disappointing league in Division 4 however undaunted this team contested the Junior A championship reaching the quarter final against a strong Commercials side that went on to win the championship. The Junior hurlers had a good league campaign winning 8 out of 11 matches to finish 4th in Division 8 and reaching the semi final in the E championship. Our under 17 hurlers played in Division 2 of the league and ended up 2nd to be promoted for next year and contested the U17 A championship.

Thanks to all mentors and volunteers and to the hurling committee Head of hurling Ken Sheehan and County Board delegate Sean Lane.

The senior footballers had a tough season due to the unavailability for long spells of a high number of players on county duty. However in the league they retained their Division 1 status for the 2023 season. In the championship the senior footballers reached the quarter final. The Intermediate team finished mid table in Division 4 and had a great run to the semi final of the Junior A championship. The Junior A team also retained their league status and will play in Division 7 again next year and also retained their Junior B championship status. The Junior C team struggled in both league and championship mainly due to difficulties in trying field teams. The under 21s went all the way the 2022 B championship final where they had a great win against Cuala. This year our under 21s started the A championship with a convincing win against St Sylvester’s. Congratulations to Kieran Brennan club trustee who was inducted to the Laois hall of fame in 2022. Kieran won five Laois senior championships with his club St Josephs and represented his county between 1966 and 1978 receiving an All-Star nomination.

Thanks to all mentors and volunteers and to the Football committee Head of Football Chris Grady, Gerry O Donnell and County Board delegate Pat Smith. Well done to our All Stars who had a great day out in August at the National inclusion day in Croke Park.

Thanks to our Bingo, Lotto, Shop and bar committees who worked hard to get back in action following the on off demand of Covid and lockdown. In other events we had very successful summer camps in July, our family fun day returned this year and was a great success thanks to Keith O Meara and his team of volunteers. In July we also had our Golf Classic and a hugely demanding Longitude festival, thanks to all our organizers and volunteer stewards, this is a major source of revenue for the club. In May we had Darkness in to light for Pieta. This year, we have lost a number of club friends and members and we send condolences to their families and friends.

Thanks to all who have assisted me and the club this year and to all coordinators, mentors and committee members that do so much for the club.

This is my final AGM as secretary having served five terms in office. Thanks to the outgoing executive committee for all the hard work and dedication and best wishes to the incoming executive. Here’s looking forward to the next 40 years.

Is Mise

Gerry Watchorn

Runaí Naomh Eoin Baile an Tsaoir

November 2022

