

OFFALY ASSOCIATION LONDON
40th ANNUAL DINNER DANCE



SATURDAY 16th FEBRUARY 2002
THE LONDON IRISH CENTRE
MURRAY STREET
CAMDEN TOWN
LONDON NW1

Mr Donie Egan.
Past Chairman and long serving Committee Member.



OFFALY ASSOCIATION LONDON

COMMITTEE 2002

Life President :	Fr. Tom Scully O.M.I.
President :	Esther Power
Hon. President :	Donie Egan
Vice Presidents :	Liam Galloghly
	Peter Hynes
	Austin Daly
	Pat Berry
Chairman :	Kieran Sullivan
Vice Chairman :	Denis Connolly
Secretary :	Tom Purcell
Asst. Secretary :	Peter Hynes
Treasurer :	Mary Brigid Eivers
Committee :	Liam Galloghly

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

On behalf of the committee of the Offaly Association London, I wish to welcome you all here tonight to our Annual Dinner Dance. We are privileged to have here this evening the company of some very distinguished guests, and I would like to thank all of them for making the long journey from Ireland to be with us.

No effort has been spared by our Committee to make tonight's function an enjoyable finale to a memorable year for Offaly people. It is for this reason that we have published this booklet you are now reading.

I would like to thank the management and staff of The London Irish Centre for providing this wonderful setting here this evening and making it a truly "green , white and gold" occasion.

In the midst of our celebrations, I would like to thank all the committees' that have served the Offaly Association so well over the last 40 years.

My wish is that you all have a most enjoyable evening.

Beannacht De Oraibh
Kieran Sullivan



The founders of the Offaly Association, London.

Back, L to R. Sean Conway, Sean Glennon, Jim McGuinness, Tom Scally, Joe Dunne.

Front, L to R. Joe Gallagher, Dickie Conroy, Moss Buckley, Dermot O' Brien, Dolores Conroy.

Missing from photograph. Owen Brannigan, Paddy Longworth, Charlie Daly, Billy Fitzpatrick.

Offaly Association London. 1962 – 2002.

This is a brief history of the Association. It gives names of committee members over the 40 years, but does not provide a definitive listing as some records were destroyed by fire in the late 1970's. Apologies for any omissions.

Offaly narrowly lost the 1961 All-Ireland football final to Down on a scoreline of 3-6 to 2-8. A reception committee was formed in May 1962 to welcome across that football team. The reception took place in London.

The Offaly Association, London was formed in August 1962. The committee comprised of Joe Gallagher (Ballinagar), Dickie Conroy (Rhode), Moss Buckley (Cappincur), Dermot O'Brien (Tullamore), Dolores Conroy (Rhode), Sean Conway (Tullamore), Sean Glennon (Rhode), Jim McGuinness (Daingean), Tom Scally (Ballycommon), Joe Dunne (Ballycommon), Owen Brannigan (Edenderry), Charlie Daly (Geashill), Billy Fitzpatrick (Doon) and Paddy Longworth (Kilcormac). Moss Buckley had a very big influence in the early years. Up to 1967, the meetings were held in the Alexander, Clapham. Tom Scally was the first secretary. He was a very meticulous and diligent secretary. Owen Brannigan took over from him. Billy Fitzpatrick was involved at this time, as were the McEvoy's, Charlie, Matt and Martin. Charlie McEvoy joined the committee in 1966. He was to play a very important role in future years.

For a period in the late 1960's the meetings were held in West Drayton. There was a strong Geashill presence there then, having settled in West Drayton in the early 1930's. Kieran Devery (Ferbane) was chairman from 1969 through to 1973. In 1970 the meetings moved to the London Irish Centre.

St. Patrick's Day parade's were a very big social occasion through the 1960's. Although some of the original committee had returned to Ireland, there was always an influx of new faces. The parades were cancelled in 1970 due to the troubles in Northern Ireland. They were revived in 1974.

The fortunes of the Association were closely linked with the performance of Offaly in football and hurling. 1970 was a key year for the Offaly Association. Kerry beat Offaly twice in 1969. They won the National League title on a scoreline of 3-11 to 0-8, and won the All-Ireland final on a scoreline of 0-10 to 0-7. In May 1970, the Surrey Tavern (H.Q. of Surrey Cricket Club) held a reception for the Offaly football team of 1969, who played Mayo at Wembley. A wonderful time was had that night, and rumours have it that they ran out of beer. Paddy Doolan (Belmont) and Tim Carroll were involved with the Association at this time, as were the Daly brother's, Vincent, Butch, Austin and Charlie. Charlie Daly was a huge influence at this time. These were very good times for the Offaly Association and the annual Dinner Dances were held in Barker's, Kensington, in 1972, 1973 and 1974.

1972 was another key year. Eamonn Kinahan was Chairman at this time. The London County Board did not invite the 1971 team across. This was the first time that the All-Ireland champions were not entertained in London. The Offaly Association invited the complete 1971 team across.

Meetings took place in the Manor House in the early 1970's, due mainly to the driving influence of the Daly brother's. The fortunes of the Offaly football team dwindled during the mid 70's and the Offaly Association followed suit. 1974 saw the return of the St. Patrick's Day parade, although it was only a small parade to Southwark Cathedral.

1975 saw the first London Irish Festival, in Chelsea. Offaly did not take part that year, but did take part the following year. 1975 and 1976 were very lean years for the Association and a 3 man committee of Vincent Daly, Noel Leeson and Donie Egan kept the flag flying. Barney Byrne, after seeing the small turn out behind the

Offaly banner at the 1976 parade, decided to join the fray.

The year's 1976 to 1979 saw a re-building phase in the fortunes of the Offaly Association. Barney Byrne was Chairman during these years, Donie Egan was ever present, and May Clark became Secretary in 1979. The late 70's saw the biggest gathering of Irish people in London for many years. Donie Egan was Chairman at the London Irish Centre for 7 years during the period 1977 to 1993. The London Irish Festival made huge leaps at this time. Resources were pooled and large sums of money were raised for welfare as a result. Prior to the festival, fund raisers were taking place all over London, and it was felt that the same people were buying one ticket after another. The London Irish Festival's were huge and £1.5m were distributed in welfare payments during the 24 year period 1975 to 1998. On the Offaly Association, Phil Corcoran got involved as P.R.O. in the late 70's.

1980 was another landmark year in the fortunes of the Offaly G.A.A. A committee was formed in 1981, and the nucleus of that committee was there for almost the next 20 years. It was a very stable time for the Association. Offaly excelled in the sporting arena in both hurling and football, and very successful functions were held in 1981, 1982 and 1983. The 1983 function had a huge turnout, 310 people, to honour the 1982 football team. Donie Egan was Chairman at this time, with Barney Byrne as vice Chairman and May Clark as Secretary. John Healey, Lorretta Dunning and Paddy Dunning also played key roles at this time. The successful early year's of the 80's, meant that the "famous silverware" could be displayed at our functions. This has continued right up to the present day.

1984 was a traumatic year for the Association. It lost it's chairman, Barney Byrne, the night following the annual Dinner Dance.

The Association members were actively taking part in the London Irish Festival. They ran the Offaly stall, took part in the parade and stewarded the event. They were also actively involved in the St. Patrick's Day parade, and came away with the prize for "Best Float" in 1991.

The Association undertook some major fundraising ventures during the 1980's and early 1990's. The Tullamore Church, Matt Connor, Nicola Meacle, Paul Murray and David Hogan were some of the beneficiaries to name just a few. Key Association members during the 80's included Charlie Daly (President for most of the 80's, and became Life President in 1988), Vice Presidents included Michael Whelan, Frank Ward, Donie Egan, Austin Daly, Butch Daly, Bill Barnett, Dermot O' Brien and Fr. Tom Scully. Chairmen were Pat Berry and Donie Egan. Secretaries were May Clark and Matt McEvoy (Matt held the post for almost 12 years, a huge achievement). Committee members included Lorretta Dunning, Charlie McEvoy, Lorraine Byrne, Esther Power, Paddy Dunning, Bridie Murphy and Peter Hynes. The 90's revealed much the same faces and saw the emergence of Ray Digan, Liam Galloghly, Austin Brennan, Tim Conroy, Ann Darby, Sean Devery, Ronan Scully and Bill Fleming. Lorretta Dunning was President in the early 90's and was succeeded in 1993 by Esther Power. Fr. Tom Scully was made Life President in 1993. In the late 90's, Denis Connolly, Kieran Sullivan, Mary Brigid Eivers and Naomi Darby played key roles. Tom Purcell joined the committee in early 2001.

The strong links with the G.A.A. have been maintained over the years. Special thanks go to Brendan Ward and Br. Sylvester who have kept a very structured link between the G.A.A. and the Offaly Association, London.

Sponsors

The Association wish to express their gratitude to the following for their generous sponsorship.

Frank Ward Skips
McDermott Brothers
Noel Lehane
The Greenwood Hotel
Kearns Coaches (Birr)
Credit Union, Tullamore
John Conway
Sean Spain Construction (Coventry)
Joe Hayes (Ballinasloe)
Killeshal Concrete
Tullamore Products
Offaly County Council
In Granite, Clara
Mick Kelly
Sean Maunsell
Bank Of Ireland, Tullamore
Donie Egan
Anglo Celtic Insurance
Kilnbridge

Grateful thanks to the following for Raffle prizes.

Tullamore Court Hotel
Pat Carroll Travel
Tara Travel
London Crystal (Mr. Jim McGrath)
M. Sills, Wexford Association
K. Dunne, Wicklow Association
Tom Macasey, Wicklow
Clare Association
The Bridge House, Tullamore
Bank Of Ireland, Queen St.
Bank Of Ireland, Ilford
Tom Gavigan
Noel Lehane
Stena Line

TOASTS

Ireland

Proposed by : Mrs. Esther Power
President, Offaly Association, London

Our Guests

Proposed by : Mr. Kieran Sullivan
Chairman, Offaly Association, London

Response by : Mr. Joe Dooley
Chairman, Offaly County Council

Mr. Brendan Ward
Chairman, Offaly GAA County Board

Fr. Gerry Kivlehan
Director, London Irish Centre

Other Guests

Mr. Tommy Greene

Mr. Willie Nolan

Mr. Matt Connor & Mrs. Siobhan Connor

Mr. Joe Dooley & Mrs. Marie Dooley

Mr. Brendan Ward & Mrs. Carmel Ward

Mr. Joe Dooley

Mr. Pat Dooley

Rev. Fr. Gerry Kivlehan O.M.I.

Mr. Larry O' Leary

Mrs. Rosaleen Byrnes

Mr. & Mrs Frank Sweeney

Mr. Kieran Galvin

Mr. Gerard Rogers

Mr. Gerard Scully

Mr. Sean Purcell

Mr. Tommy Varden

MENU

Mixed Melon Cocktail in a sugared Glass
Cream of Vegetable Soup
Rolls and Butter

Roast Sirloin of Beef, Red Wine Sauce, Buttered Onion and Mushrooms
Thirty Portions Poached Salmon Hollandaise
Twenty Portions Vegetarian Food

Roast and Parsley Potatoes
Mashed Carrots and Swede

Decorated Sherry Trifle and Cream

Selection of Cheeses, Biscuits, Fruit and Celery, Butter

Tea, Coffee, Dinner Mints

Bon Appetit!

Matt Connor, one of our honoured guests here tonight.

The Picture That Says It All

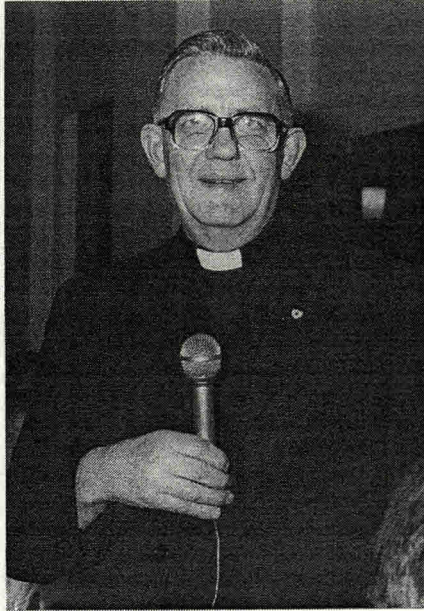


A picture that sums up the football career of Matt Connor – the happy smiling face as he sets off to do the thing he was best at, playing football.

FOR THE RECORD

MATT CONNOR'S senior inter-county career began on 26 March, 1978, when he lined out for Offaly in a National Football League Division 2a (South) meeting with Meath at Tullamore. Offaly won the match by 1-10 to 1-8, Matt marked his debut with one point, and the most prolific scoring record the game has ever seen was under way. By the end of 1984 – his last appearance was against Mayo on 2 December – Matt had played a total of 161 senior inter-county and representative matches, and had scored a total of 82 goals and 660 points, for a career aggregate of 906 points.

**Fr. Tom Scully. O.M.I.
Life President.**



**Mr. Pat Berry.
Past Chairman.**



Past Committee and guests enjoying a function.



Willie and
Tommy back in
1961.

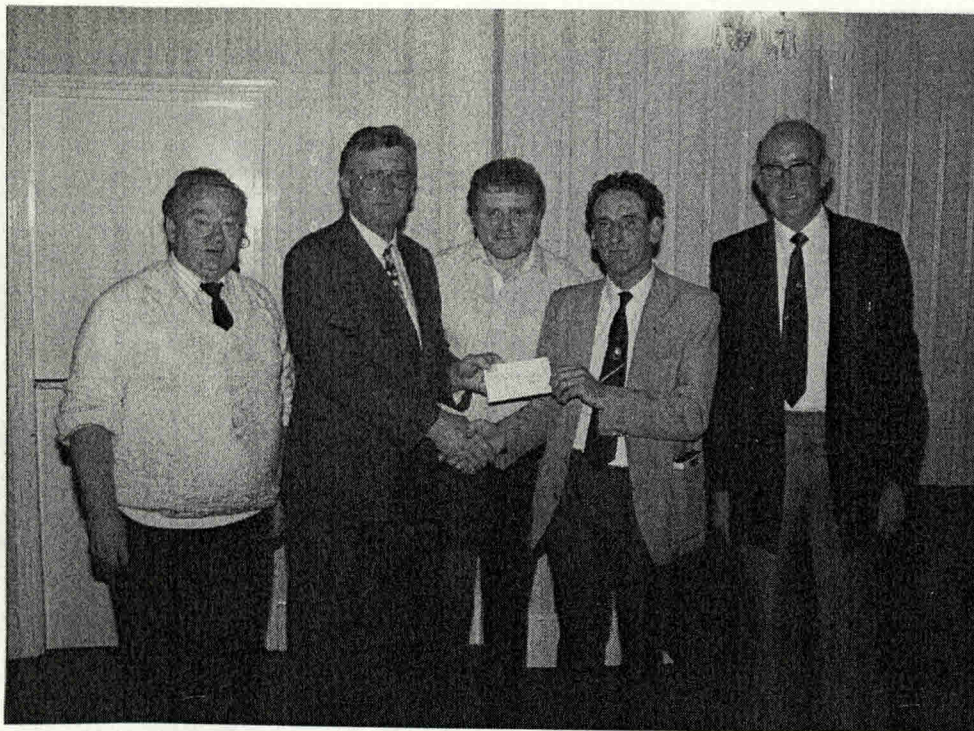


The Offaly team who were beaten by Down in the 1961 All-Ireland SFC final.

Willie Nolan and Tommy Greene are with us tonight.

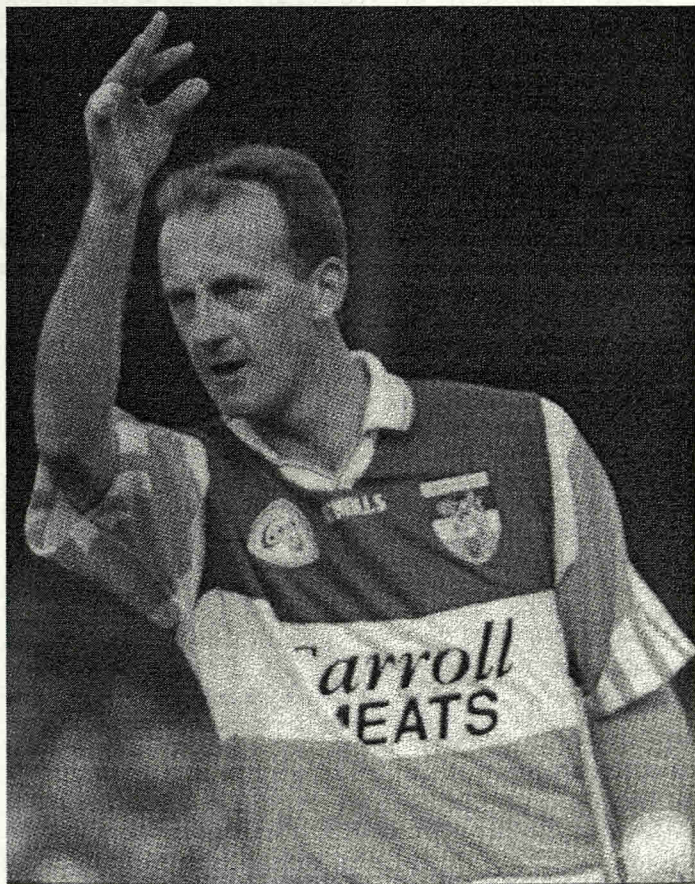


Charlie McEvoy, Vice Chairman of the Offaly Association, London, being presented the McGann Cup from Mr. Eddie Naughton, Chairman of the Roscommon Association, London, for the best turned out float, St. Patrick's Day Parade 1991.



One of our Fundraising ventures.
Mr. Brian Guinan presenting a cheque to Mr. Peter Hynes, Offaly Association, London,
for the Nicola Meacle Fund, May 1991.

Joe Dooley, one of our honoured guests here tonight.



The London Irish Centre

The ebb and flow of Irish emigration has always been determined by the economic climate at home and the attraction of better job prospects or self betterment abroad.

It is estimated that between 1939 and 1946 a quarter of a million emigrated to Britain. With the post war boom in the 1950's the weekly immigrant influx reached one thousand, a situation unprecedented since the Great Famine.

Many of the newly arrived emigrants had to live in poor quality accomodation and they had to accept employment in poorly paid jobs. In response to a Pastoral letter for Trinity Sunday 1955, a committee was formed to address the problems of Irish immigrants. From those humble beginnings in 1955, the services of the London Irish Centre have grown and developed down through the years. The Social Service Bureau has now developed into a well resourced and well staffed advice and information centre providing a wide range of personal and community services, for the newly arrived immigrant and for Irish people living in Britain.

Services include :-

- Camden Elderly Irish Network
- Federation of Irish Societies
- Irish Centre Housing
- Irish Chaplaincy in Britain
- London Irish Elders Forum
- London Irish Survivors Outreach Service

Details are also provided on :-

- Jobs and training
- Accomodation
- Missing persons
- Returning to Ireland
- Care services

Full details can be obtained on **www.Irishcentre.org**.

We welcome our friends from other County Associations who are with us tonight.

Cavan Association
Carlow Association
Clare Association
Cork Association
Fermanagh Association
Galway Association
Meath Association
Roscommon Association
Sligo Association
Tipperary Association
Waterford Association
Wexford Association
Wicklow Association

We welcome past committee members who are with us tonight.

Thank you to the Dave Lawlor Band (Tullamore).

Taxi Service.

Phone for your taxi on 0207 700 2222

Thank you all sincerely for your support tonight. Kindly respect the privacy of local residents on leaving.