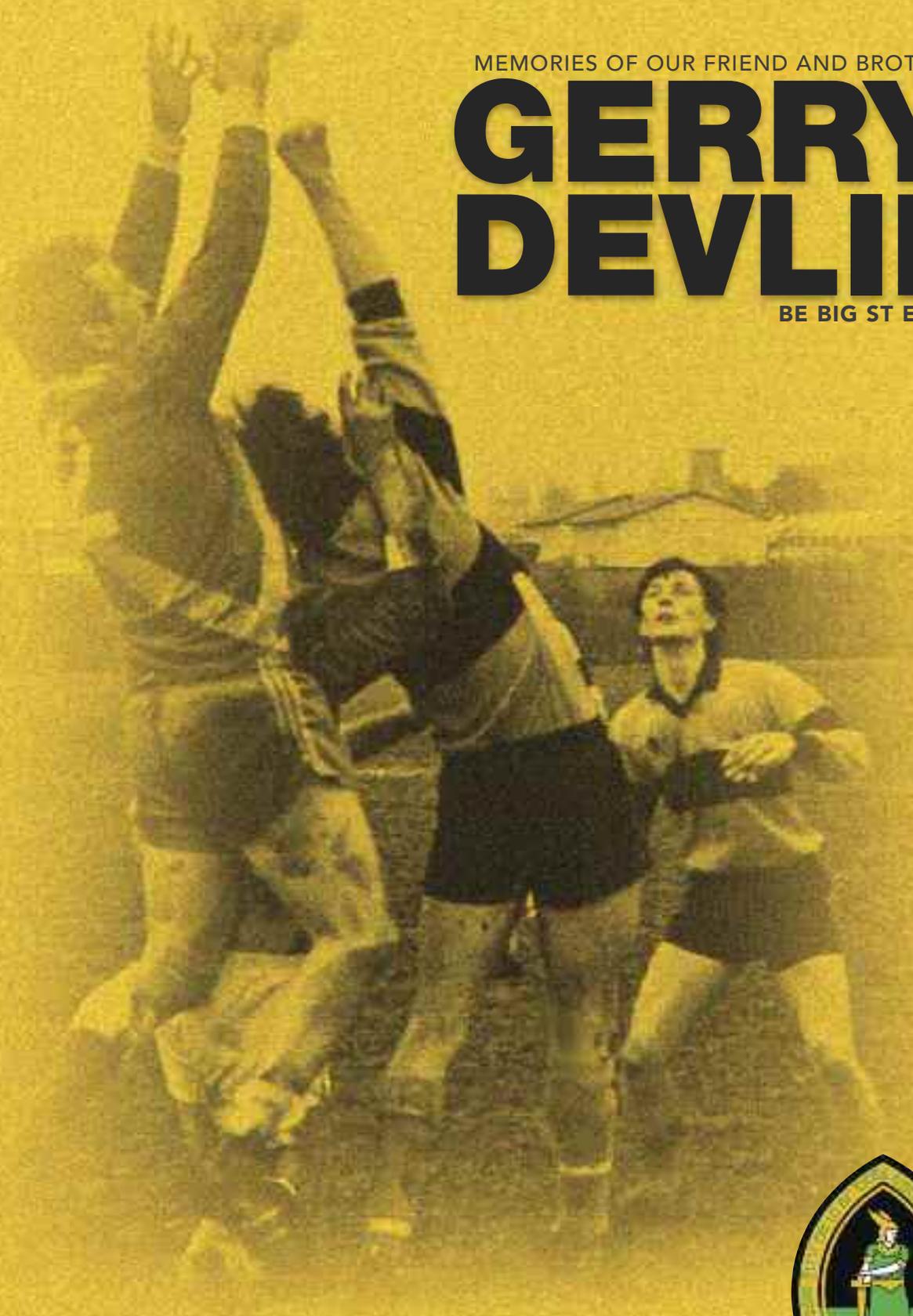


MEMORIES OF OUR FRIEND AND BROTHER

GERRY DEVLIN

BE BIG ST ENDA'S





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Gerry Devlin

We are privileged to be paying this tribute to our friend and brother Gerry Devlin.

20 years on since one of our greatest club members was cruelly taken from us, how better than to have many past players and a number of current senior footballers come together to play some football, no matter how rusty, share some stories and enjoy a bit of craic.

Trying to gauge the legacy that someone leaves behind is almost an impossible task but the sense of loss at the time of his death and the willingness of everyone to participate today is a testament to the impact Gerry had on us all and the respect in which we hold him.

Hopefully everyone will enjoy the opportunity to remember Gerry and connect with old friends and teammates. Just keep in mind the phrase: "The older we get, the better we were"

At the time of his passing our club had 14 teams competing in black and amber. Today, as we gather, there are more than 30 teams competing in Football, Hurling, Camogie and Ladies Football. This it could be argued is the most fitting tribute that can be paid to Gerry and our other members cruelly taken from us over the years.

This book brings together a collection of stories and images from the period and illustrate Gerry's love and passion for St Enda's.



Naomh Éanna CLG

Stephen Jennings



It is a privilege and an honour to be Chairperson of our club, but it is at times like this, that the solemnity and magnitude of the role weigh heavily. I know for a fact that had Gerry lived, he would have definitely been chairman of our club by now, and might still be, as he was driven by a will that our club would be the greatest we could be.

Having raised my own family in the arms of the club, I know the experience that Gerry, Kevin, Michael, Eamon and Liam would have had growing up along with their sisters Oonagh and Angela. They say that great clubs are built on great families and our club has been blessed with one of the best in the Devlin's. On the playing field, in the Committee room, fundraising, refereeing, taking teams, building (and rebuilding) the clubhouse, providing maintenance, we simply would not be the club we are today, without the Devlin family, and as such, it is a great honour for me to be Chair of our great club at this special and poignant time.

The esteem in which Gerry's memory is held, is very easily quantified. Our Senior Footballer of the Year award (perhaps the most esteemed award our club has to give) is named after Gerry. In May 2012, legendary GAA commentator Mícheál Ó Muircheartaigh, attended to name our brand new championship sized pitch 'Páirc Ghearóid Uí Dhoibhlin'.

A plaque in memory of Gerry is displayed proudly and prominently on the front of our club house declaring 'Ní Bheidh a Leithid Arís', 'there will never be his likes again', never a truer sentiment ever expressed.

In 2006, on the 50th Anniversary of the club being founded, it was appropriate that the most compelling sports event that year was the Gerry Devlin Senior Football tournament, that brought perhaps the highest calibre of quality that has ever graced our pitch, with Tyrone champions boasting then reigning All Ireland medal holders, Omagh St Enda's playing off with ourselves, reigning Ulster club champions St Galls who had recently lost the All-Ireland club final and Derry champions Bellaghy Wolfe Tones, whom St Galls had beaten in the Ulster final of 2005.

In 2011 to celebrate and remember what would have been Gerry's own 50th birthday, a group of friends scaled the Mourne Mountains in Newcastle.

We have a proud tradition in our club, of remembering our fallen. We proudly remember Sean Fox with family fun days, and Gerard Lawlor's name is kept alive in the appropriate guise of a primary schools competition.

It has often been said that a man is not dead, as long as his name is still spoken, and whereas Gerry's loss is as keenly felt today by us his friends but so much more deeply by his family, we hope that we as a club have done as much for Gerry's memory, as he did for the club, in his short time with us.



YOUNG GERRY

James Gerard Devlin - known to us all as Gerard or Gerry - was born on 8th August 1961 in the Mater Hospital Belfast, the third child of Seamus and Margaret Devlin.

His older siblings, Angela and Michael, wanted him to be called Gerard but on leaving hospital, he was brought first to his Devlin grandparents. On seeing him, his grandparents and aunts all said, "He is the spit of his father" and he would have to be called James.

He lived in Glanworth Drive Belfast until October 1971 when the family moved to Glenwell Crescent Glengormley. Shortly after this the youngest of the family, Oonagh, was born.

Gerry attended Christian Brothers Primary School Park Lodge with his brothers, Michael, Kevin, Liam and Eamon. While there he represented the school team winning the Raffo cup (twice) and Rice cup trophies and then on to St. Mary's CBS winning 1st year league and Dalton Cup (Ulster colleges trophy).

Gerry started playing for St Endas juvenile teams, joining his brothers Michael and Kevin in 1971. Success would soon follow the underage teams Gerry played on. In 1973 St Enda's won the U-13 league (South Antrim), which was also the very first juvenile trophy the club won. He went on to win U-14 league 1975 and Butler Cup 1976 before going on to make his debut on senior team 1977 at age of 16.



Big day for Gerry:

Holy Communion May 1969,
St Gerard's Chapel, Antrim Road



First football battles:

Kevin sitting on the ground, Gerry to the right with Dermot Allen and Sean Allen at Grove football pitches, Jellicoe Avenue, before moving to Glengormley in 1967



Holiday in Carlingford, County Louth

from left to right: Michael, Angela, Gerry and Kevin



From left to right: Liam, Gerry, Michael,
Kevin and Mrs Devlin



Kevin on his bike being helped by big sister Angela,
Gerry next to them taking a rest.

SCHOOL DAYS

Gerry and Kevin holding the cups they both helped win playing for Park Lodge



Gerry standing to the left of the goal keeper

Winners of Rice Cup and Raffo Cup
Gerry and Kevin with the winning trophies



Park Lodge school team

Back Row: Left-Right

Terry Cullen (teacher from Tyrone), Andrew Toland, Stephen Drysdale, Jim Nulty, **Gerry Devlin**, Seamus Sheehy, Michael Thompson, Peter Shields, Paddy Nagle and Kevin Devlin.

Front Row: Left-Right

Adrian Naan, Edward Gourley, Noel Mc Ginnetty, Sean Rooney, Tommy Breslin, Barry O'Kane, Michael Carlin, Brendan O'Hara, James Rogers and Gerard Robinson.

Early Success - 1973 Under 13 South Antrim league winners
(First juvenile trophy for the club)

Gerry sitting at the front right. Dermot McCoy in front row with head looking at the grass.

Back row includes Steven Drysdale, Paddy McCoy, Kevin Devlin.
Team managed by Seamus Devlin, John Moulard and Alex Thompson
Captain Brendan Hinds



Reflections

Michael Devlin

The day trip to Castleblaney, from left to right:
Gerry, Michael, Liam, Kevin, Mr Devlin, Eamon and Angela



A summer following Antrim to all Ireland glory...

On a sunny May Day in 1969, our family set off to Castleblaney to watch Monaghan v Antrim in the preliminary round of the Ulster under 21 football championship. Monaghan were the favourites to progress to the next round.

This was common practice for Seamus Devlin, his wife Margaret and sons, me, Gerard and Kevin. It would be a few more years before they would be joined at the matches by Eamon and Liam. The Monaghan match would serve to give a summer, as young boys, brothers, that we would never forget and which inspired in us, a love of Gaelic Football and Antrim.

Antrim duly trounced Monaghan scoring five goals in the process. Onto the quarter final against Derry at Casement Park, midweek. Derry were hot favourites as they were reigning All Ireland football under 21 champions, retaining two thirds of the championship winning team. Things didn't look well, when Joe Dowds was dismissed in the first half for taking out one of the Derry flyers, but still, Antrim pushed on for a famous win.

The Ulster semi-final presented the opposition of Fermanagh, which would also be at Casement. Our own Danny Burns took the place of the suspended Joe Dowds! It turned out to be a comfortable win for Antrim, and Down awaited in the Ulster final.

This was fixed for Davitt Park, Lurgan midweek. Down were raging hot favourites as half of their team were part of the great Down senior team that won the Sam Maguire in 1968, boasting players such as Colm McAlarney, John Purdy, Mickey Cole, John Rooney and Ray McConville. Antrim would again upset the odds to win by a couple of points.

The All Ireland semi final brought the challenge of Cork, with a certain Johnny Maloney from Tipperary doing their best to beat Antrim. A superb pointed free from the 13 metre line, right out on the sideline by Andy McCallin gave Antrim a hard fought but deserving win.

The All Ireland final would be in Croke Park, with Roscommon our opponents. This final was the curtain raiser for the Cavan v Offaly All Ireland senior football semi-final. For the first time in a long many years, Antrim were the favourites! In a soaking wet day, we prevailed and won Antrim's first ever, and only grade 'A' All Ireland title.

The Devlin family along with a couple of thousand others went to St Teresa's hall on the Glen Road, for the teams homecoming.

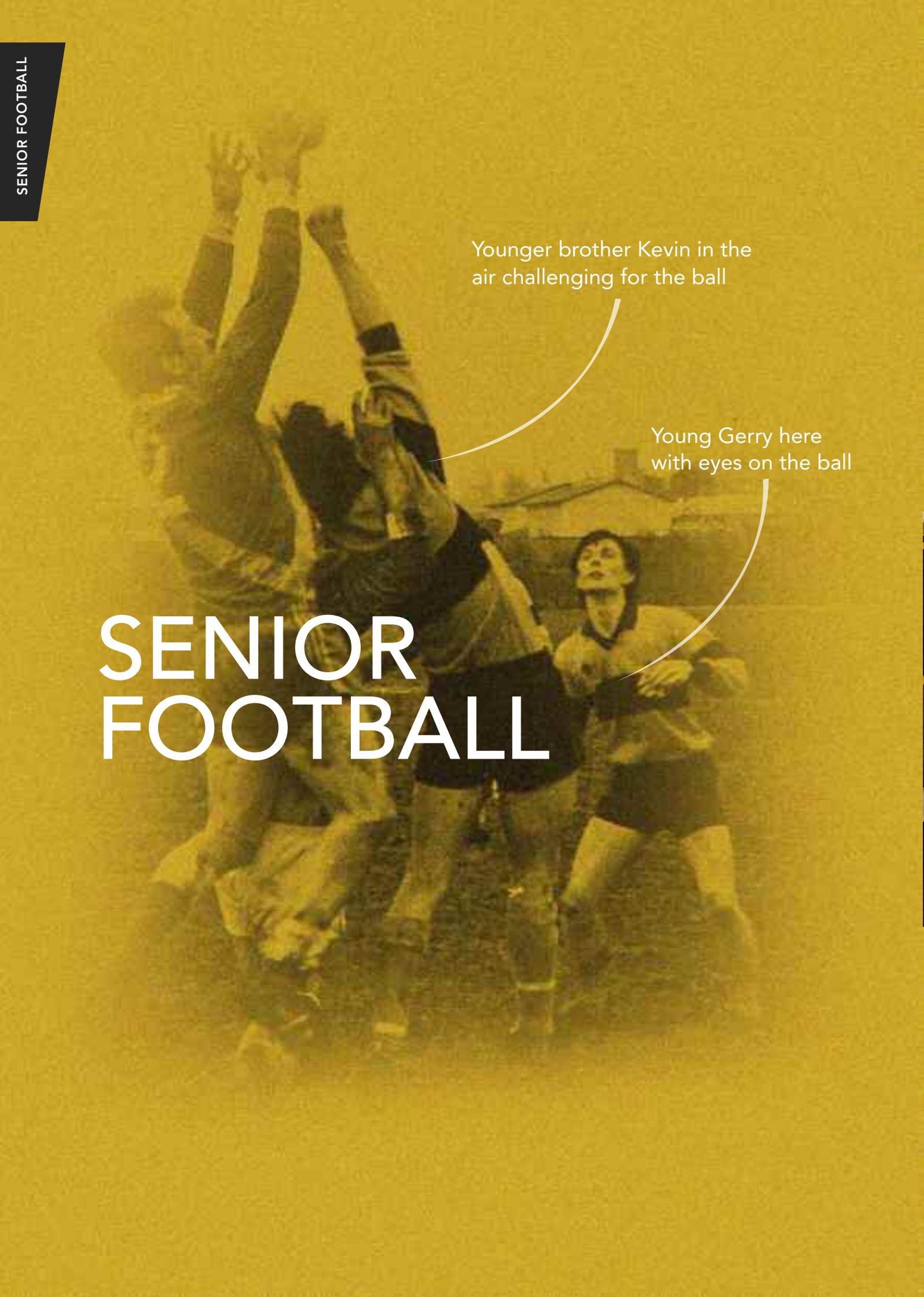


Antrim under 21 All Ireland team

Younger brother Kevin in the air challenging for the ball

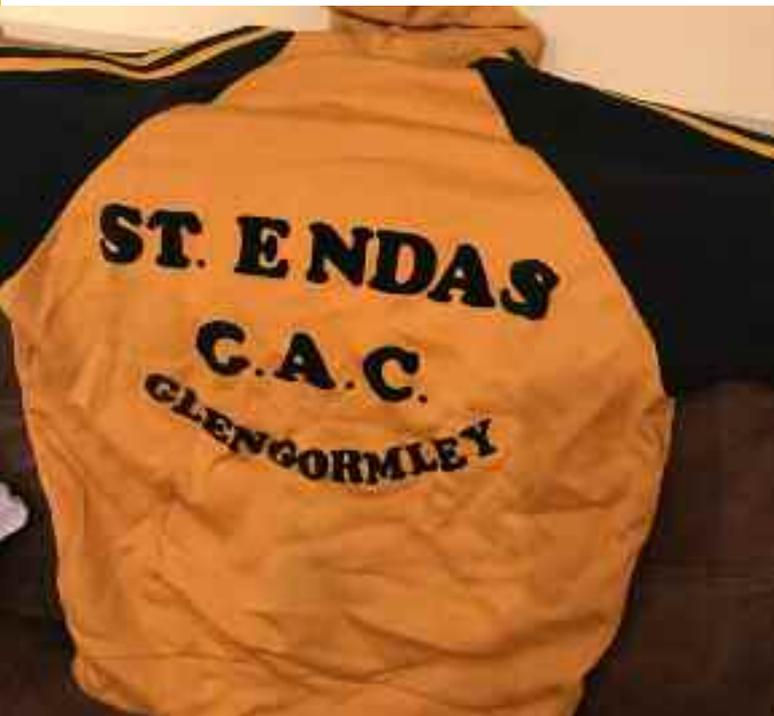
Young Gerry here with eyes on the ball

SENIOR FOOTBALL





The very first club track top 1984...



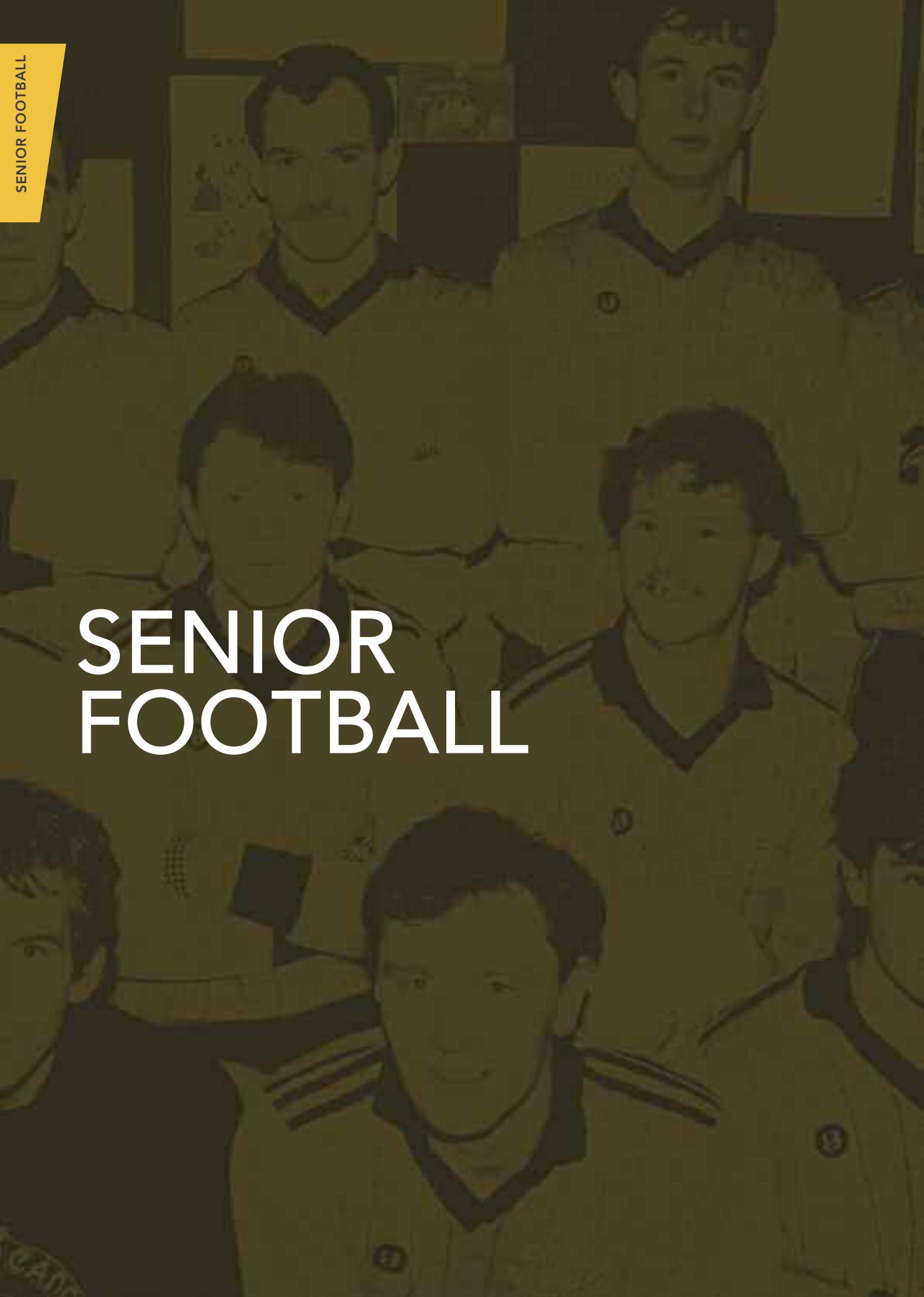
Senior football championship team 1979

1988 All County Division 2 Winners
Back Row: Left-Right
Donal McAteer, Micky Lemon, Major McGovern, Enda Hayes,
Danny McGrinder, Joe McCarville, Declan Steele, Alan Smith,
Mick Conway, Eamonn Prenter, Paddy Doherty

Middle Row: Left-Right
Brendan Prenter, Sean Hughes, Dominic Colaluca,
Dermot Maguire, Paul Gupta, Brendan McGinn,
Ray Farrell, Harry Patton, Germanus McGrinder

Front Row: Left-Right
Micky Ferguson, Eamon Devlin, Martin Sherlock,
Kevin Devlin, Gerry Devlin, Neil McCleery, Ciaran Prenter





SENIOR FOOTBALL

SENIOR FOOTBALL



Gerry takes on the challenge of management



A couple of old team mates who played with Gerry



Enda Hayes
Enda jumps for the ball, good catch not sure about the green shorts



Micky Ferguson in action
The old pitch that many of us grew up playing on, a cherished memory now. The club house in the background being built.

Senior football championship team September 1993

Back Row: Left-Right

Brendan Prenter, Paddy O'Hara, Michael Scott, Declan Steele, Enda Hayes, Joe McCarville, Paddy Dornan, Eamon O'Hara, Micky Nagle, Gerry Devlin

Front Row: Left-Right

Eamon Devlin, Pearse McCormack, Paul Darby, Kevin Devlin, Micky Ferguson, Larry Gourley, Marty Sherlock, Tommy Kelly

7's winners

Back Row: Left-Right

Paddy Doc, Harry Patton, Alan Smith, Donal Mc Atee, Dominic Colaluca

Back Row: Left-Right

Eamon Devlin, Brenden Prenter, Kevin Devlin, Neil Mc Cleery, Micky Ferguson

Back Row: Left-Right

Michael Conway, Ciaran Prenter, Gerry Devlin, Germanus Mc Grinder



The three wise men, Seamus Devlin (manager) Austin Hinds, past club chairman and Tony McGlinchey, past club president



Some of the first club juvenile mentors, From left to right
Back row: Alex Thompson, Danny Burns, Frank Wolesly, Seamus Devlin, John Mouland
Front row: Joe McCoy, Seamus Boylan, Toosie Gilmore



Looks like Eamon's doing most of the work here.



Seamus Devlin
 Mr Devlin a very proud father in this picture with his baby son Kevin.



Gerry's grandfather circled in blue
 Gerry's grandfather Mr Patrick Devlin played for the famous Belfast Celtic team in the 1920's. Also won an Irish Cup medal in 1923 for Alton United, (Lower Falls), beating Shelbourne 1-0 in the final. He finished his career at Larne FC.

Great picture here with lots of the old club members, this picture was taken the day after the club had been burnt out again.



Gerry, Hazel, Patrica, Kevin and Eamon, good times.



Building the old club house, from left to right
Ronan Magee, Micky Lemon, Kevin O’Kane, Kevin Devlin



Club committee members in the late 70’s
Back row: Con Lynch, Michael Devlin, Ray Farrell,
Gerry McLarnon, John Lawell, Sean Fox
Front row: Austin Hinds, Sean Hughes, Gerry Devlin,
Tank McLaughlin, John Morgan



St Enda's Senior Football Team 4 Oct 1956

Back Row L-R: Tony Colucci, Clancy Manning, Norman Artyon, Peter Doyle, Gerry McEvilly, Sam Healy, Harry Hillier, Paddy Lally; Front Row: Frank Lacey, Brendan Doyle, Frank Hillier, Kevin Doyle, Eddie Barry, Dennis Barry, Tony Colucci, Raymond Murray, Joe McGonigal, Tom Mallickin



Club Chairman, Liam O'Murtha, presents the 'Man of the Match' awards to Dermot McCoy, Kevin Devlin (U.21 County), John Burns (Railway Cup and Co.), Michael Devlin and Gerry Devlin (U.18 and 21Cs.)



Back Row L-R: Jack Murray, Gerry McEvilly, Thomas O'Connor, Clancy Manning, James Gilmore, Tony Colucci, Cathal McGonigal, Norman McCreery, Brendan McCreery, Kevin Doyle, Sam Healy, Brendan Doyle, Harry Hillier, Paddy Lacey; The two Abbots are Kevin Colucci (Abd.) and Dublin Seery (Abd.)

St Enda's Senior Football Team at opening of their first pitch Sunday 19th May 1957



This old chicken house was the first club changing rooms. (No hot showers in those days)



Seán Hughes, Paul Gupta, Liam Goodfellow, Paddy Burns, Michael Lemon, Michael Devlin, Cianan Preuter, Gerry McCarran, Joe Brien, Brendan Preuter, Gerard McCarran, Paul Copeland, Brenda Hinds, Kevin Devlin, Cian Lynch, Gerry McCrea, John Morgan, Martin Sharlock, Gerry Devlin, Seán Hinds, Dermot McCoy



ANDERSONSTOWN NEWS, Saturday, 7th. April 1984 - Page

All County Division 3 SFL Champions 1984

1984 ALL COUNTY
DIVISION 3 SFL
WINNERS MEDAL



Gerry receiving the All County Division 3 SFL trophy



Reflections

Martin Sherlock



Gerry Devlin - Reflections on a teammate, a manager, a friend and an inspiration

When thinking about Gerry the phrase "Be Big Saint Enda's" always springs to mind and creates two very different emotions. Firstly, one of great determination that he intended it for designed to urge his players or teammates on to challenge for a ball or get ready for a game and secondly profound sadness as it was the call by his brother Kevin at Gerry's graveside back in December 1997. At the time when many of us were struggling it was exactly what we needed.

I first got to know Gerry while playing for our juvenile teams even though he was a couple of years older than me. At the time I lived in the Ballymurphy area of West Belfast and had come to St Enda's through my friendship with Eamon Prenter. It was a dangerous journey to get to the old club but without fail either Mrs Prenter or Seamus Devlin would collect me or drive me home. A few times Gerry would have been in the car and we would have chatted about football.

As I moved into the senior team I became more aware of Gerry the player. I suppose he was initially just Kevin's older brother and having played with Kevin throughout my time at St Enda's I expected him to be similar. This was probably reinforced because Mickey was also on the team and he brought the same granite toughness and determination that I expected of the Devlin brothers

However, as I became more settled in the Senior panel and was integrated into the team it became clear that each of them brought something different to the game and would give 100% in training and matches. Only Gerry would declare himself as an out and out forward. He was a forward who had everything.

Throughout the Division 3 winning season of 1984 I witnessed first-hand how he could take a score from distance, was cool in front of goal, and could see a pass. I was lucky enough to be on the receiving end of these passes on many occasions. Unfortunately one day I was maybe not so lucky. Playing against McDermott's GAC in the Falls Park was always a physical challenge and Gerry had won the ball around the half way line. After evading a couple of challenges he steadied himself to shoot from wide on the left. Hoping he might see me I made a run from the opposite side of the field as the ball came towards the square. I made it just as the ball dropped short of the keeper and fisted it into the net. Unfortunately I also collided with the defender and the goal-post and lost one of my front teeth. Was it worth it? Absolutely, A Goal is a Goal after all. Was it a pass? Of course it wasn't Gerry smiled as he admitted it was just a poor shot.

The part of his game that I had come to admire the most was his ability to win the ball. He had good hands and could fetch a highball but it was the 50-50 challenges that he relished. He could take a hit and roll away with the ball and he could certainly pay it back but he did so with a calmness that perhaps Kevin only mastered later in his football career.

The best example of Gerry's cleverness I recall came when we had to replay an abandoned game against Tir na nOg, Randalstown. After all the disciplinary issues had been dealt with by the County Board the game was re-fixed and obviously the referee for the game had been instructed to keep a close eye on the proceedings.

Gerry was playing at centre half forward and in direct opposition to one of their more influential players. Again it was a feisty affair with little between the two teams until midway through the second half.

In winning a breaking ball that had cleared midfield he gathered it quickly just ahead of his marker and took a heavy challenge. It was unlike Gerry to go to ground but on this occasion he collapsed and looked badly injured. The referee had no option but to send off the offender and he did.

Concerned for his well-being I had gone to check on him as he looked in distress only to find him lying with the ball grasped tightly in his arms and a smile on his face. He let me know that he was fine but would be even better when we won the game. Taking advantage of the extra man we duly did.

The end of Gerry's playing career was approaching not due to any diminishing of his talent but because of a second knee injury. In those far distant days it was unusual for anyone to come-back from a knee ligament injury as it required a large opening of the leg and considerable amount of stitching. Gerry had previously recovered from one in much the same way as Pat Spillane but a second injury meant that his playing career was over. He did however recover sufficiently to participate in the legendary end of training Penalty Kick Competition.

It was a definite loss to our team as we were going to miss a talented player but also a leader on the pitch and by this stage Gerry was probably our most experienced player. Conversely it was to provide Gerry with the opportunity to manage the Senior team within a couple of seasons when he replaced Tommy McCullough.

As a manager Gerry was meticulous as the pages contained elsewhere in this book will testify. His greatest asset was that he could read players. He worked out quickly the players who needed a hug or a rocket or those who could sort their game out by themselves. It was during this time that I became close to Gerry - he asked me to come on board and organise training and drills. This would allow him to talk to individuals or watch players form and attitude. There were many hours of tactical chat under the "stolen" light of the rugby pitches near the Valley Leisure Centre.

Strangely it is a place I have never returned to since his murder and avoided it during my time as the senior manager. It is amazing how some things take a lifetime to heal.

After a couple of seasons see-sawing between Division 1 and Division 2 we finally settled into our senior status around 1993 and for the next decade we equipped ourselves well in the top flight. It was fitting that Gerry should be instrumental in this achievement and that 20 years on our new set of Senior players will have the opportunity to play Division 1 football once again. Time to "Be Big St Enda's"

During this period, we were indeed a better than average Division 1 team having topped the league table on a number of occasions but we never had the squad strong enough in depth to break the St Paul's - Cargin stranglehold at the time.

Gerry's tactical abilities and motivational qualities ensured that we were always ready for games and on most occasions we were able to leave the pitch knowing that we had given everything for our black and amber jersey. When it wasn't the case Gerry would let us know.

After a defeat against Davitt's in a league game at Twinbrook Gerry was visibly annoyed at a lack-lustre performance and with an eerie calmness he asked Kevin and one other player to leave the changing room. Then he unleashed his own version of Fergie's hairdryer on us all. He was clear that he expected more from grown men representing St Enda's and that the lack of heart and character was unacceptable. It was and still is a privilege to wear a St Enda's shirt and on that day Gerry made that crystal clear. **NOT BIG ENOUGH ST ENDA'S.**

On the way home it was a somewhat strained journey in my car as Gerry would travel with me to and from games and training. Having scored two hard fought goals in the game I thought I should have joined Kevin outside the changing room. When challenged Gerry told me it was better for the team that I was there as it showed no favouritism. It was difficult to disagree.

After the 1995 season Gerry felt that he needed a rest from the Senior team and that the squad would benefit from a new manager and new ideas. The club enlisted the services of Frank Dawson from St Gall's to manage the side and we had a solid league campaign. The season highlight was to be the progress made in the Senior Championship beating Glenavy, All Saints Ballymena after a replay and losing the semi-final to eventual winners St Paul's.

Gerry at this point had taken on the role of assistant manager-but while Frank brought a new dimension to training and greater expectations of the players it is fair to say that Gerry's knowledge of what made us tick was a vital ingredient in the success. We had high hopes for second season success but Frank left us shortly before the season started to continue his coaching in and around the club and county scene in Ulster.

It seemed only a formality that Gerry would take over the team again but he felt that the club should actively be looking for the best available manager not just the easy option. In my opinion Gerry was the best and with a great deal of persuasion from Kevin, the inimitable Sean Hayes and myself among others he took on the role. We embarked on the 1997 campaign with Gerry leading us.

The team continued to make progress despite playing all our home games at Casement Park while the new pitch at St Enda's was being developed. We again topped the league for a number of weeks. It is difficult to recall much of the football that year as memories of 1997 are all overshadowed by the events of the 5th of December and Gerry's murder.

One game I do remember was a match at Randalstown in late July on perhaps the warmest day of the year. I had tried to dip for the ball in a crowd of players when I took a kick to the head. At the time most players wore metal studs and the resulting gash to my head was painful but not as painful as what happened next. Gerry rushed to check on me and lifted a bottle from the medical bag to rinse the blood away so I could play on.

Unfortunately for me the bottle contained some wintergreen rub which when poured on the open cuts made the pain considerably worse.

At that point Gerry realised what had happened and apologised and rinsed the wound with water this time. However, he was so sorry that he was barely able to speak because he was in fact laughing so much.

The last time that I spent with Gerry was around Halloween when we played Golf together at Fortwilliam. We chatted about the past season and the season ahead and about players who were making progress.

We discussed the change in playing style that the new flat St Enda's pitch would necessitate and it was clear that Gerry was relishing the challenges ahead. He was full of optimism for what could be achieved next.

At about 10.00am on Saturday 6th December I received a phone call from Vinny McCaffrey to tell me that someone had been murdered the previous night at St Enda's. I was aware that it was to be a closing night for the old club and knew that the club would have been busy. He told me that someone had said it was Gerry. It had to be a mistake.

I immediately tried to contact Kevin or Liam and when there was no answer I feared the worst. Soon after that Paul Darby called me from Liverpool where he had just moved for work. It was and remains unbelievable.

Immediately I left the house and drove to Gerry's home I met Liam and Martin Scott as I entered the house. Now there was no doubt Gerry had been murdered, his family Hazel, Aiden and Gavin that he worked tirelessly for decimated and his friends of whom I am proud to call myself struggling even now to make sense of it all. There was supposed to be a ceasefire.

After an hour or so I wanted to know where Kevin was and no-one seemed to know. I knew I would find him at the old club and so I went to talk to him. He was standing at the spot where Gerry had fallen looking up onto the pitch. I haven't a clue what was said but somewhere in there was the friendship that had lasted many years and continues still.

It was beyond difficult for everyone to see Gerry resting in his coffin and the rest of us can only guess how Gerry's family got through those days. Standing at his coffin I was alone with the then club President Sean Hayes we agreed that the best tribute that could be paid to Gerry was ensuring that the Senior Football team got back out on the pitch. It really was time to "Be Big St Enda's" As I said earlier this was the call that Kevin made at Gerry's graveside the next day.

In early January 1998 I gathered the Senior panel together for training and of course Kevin and Eamon were present. The Devlin's knew how important football was to Gerry. To this day every man who attended that training and stepped up to play for us that season has my admiration and gratitude.

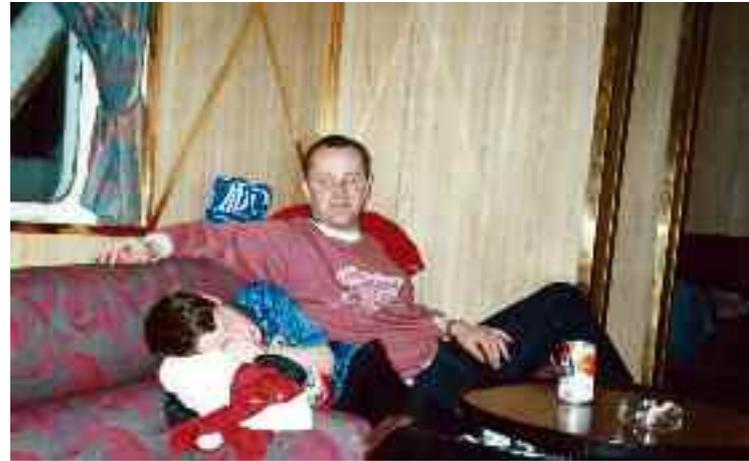
The players I'm sure had to deal with the same questions at home about their personal safety. Is it too soon? Why do you have to be there? The answer to the last one was always a very Gerry type sort of answer. When it comes to St Enda's the answer sums it all up. **WHY NOT ME.**

After the murder of our President Sean Fox in 1993 Gerry had told me that his wife Hazel was concerned about his safety especially as media coverage at the time showed many St Enda's members forming a guard of honour at Sean's funeral. Poignantly Gerry had answered with a less than reassuring comment that no-one would need to see a paper to know he was a Saint Enda's man.

It is almost impossible to convey the despair of those days to the current St Enda's players. As the father of two current juvenile players it is both a blessing and a prayer that those days are far behind us. Conversely though it is important that men like Gerry Devlin and others are woven into the fabric of our club as we grow from strength to strength. He is part of our identity, the uniqueness of Naomh Eanna and a source of inspiration to our future success. Remember **BE BIG SAINT ENDA'S.**



Gerry as a young father taking a holiday in Cork, (1986) with his two sons Gavin, Aiden and nephew Kevin junior



Gerry and his son Gavin on the ferry home from Gavin's first Premier League match.

Gerry had taken Gavin to Old Trafford in a failed attempt to make him a Man Utd fan! Gavin is still an Everton fan (maybe should have listened!)

Liam, Gerry, Michael and Kevin enjoying a pint and having the craic



15th June 1992 - All Ireland champions Down, bring Sam Maguire to St Mary's on the Hill P.S. Gerry and Kevin attended with their sons to see Sam up close!



Reflections

Paul Darby



When the call for reflections and recollections on Gerry for this book came out a couple of months ago, I tried on a few occasions to sit down and put pen to paper. Each time, I couldn't get much beyond an opening sentence. I couldn't get beyond the recollection of receiving a phone call to Liverpool on a Saturday morning in December and the shock; flying home, going straight to the house to see Kevin, not having the words and watching him carry all of us, friends, family, club, community, with a dignity that I couldn't make sense of under the circumstances; sitting in the Bellevue after the funeral with Liam and other friends talking, laughing but mostly feeling desolate and bereft; the guilt of getting back on a flight to get on with life; the guilt.

Martin Sherlock asked me a few weeks ago to write something. I said I would have another go. No promises. In his own inimitable, piss-taking style he pushed and prodded, 'just write something short and accurate Darby, a bit like yourself'.

I picked up my phone, looked through the Whatsapp group messages, laughed (not at Scrubbers contributions) and looked at Gerry's photo and thought, he was a handsome fella and he had a tan that almost matched mine! He is smiling in that photo. It made me smile. It reminded me of being managed by him and being in his company. One look, one gesture, one word, one smile and you would walk barefooted on broken glass for him, for his team. So here goes.....

When I joined St Enda's from Pearses along with Micky Scott, I felt like a fish out of water. I don't mind admitting it. Everyone was welcoming enough but for a few years, I felt like an outsider at the club. That I felt this way was largely my own doing. Missing a late penalty in my first championship game for the club (against Creggan at Moneyglass?) didn't help. Nor did my first encounter with the senior team as a 16 year old playing for Pearses. I was a mouthy pain in the arse back then (some say I still am!) and spent much of that game slabbering at Enda Hayes about the state of his hair (and shorts). I also offered Kevin Devlin a 'fair dig' during that game. Me. 16. Kev Dev. Oh dear. What was I thinking?! Luckily for me, he was on the side line (probably suspended) so I survived the encounter.

I'll be honest in saying that I don't recall much about Gerry in my first season or two. I was more worried about keeping on the right side of Kevin and Enda (and avoiding Ed in tackling drills or 'backs and forwards' at training). I had never really paid much attention to managers, coaches or teachers up to that point but the more I learned about Gerry, the more I got to know him, the more that changed. He became the only person that I played under who I considered a 'mentor' in the truest sense of the word.

His credentials as a person, leader, coach, manager, psychologist and physio (winter green on an open wound Marty?!) have been covered by others in these pages. Gerry was all of these things to me. He would often challenge and call me out for playing 'sammy soccer' and missing training. He was right. We sometimes had conflicting views and heated arguments about the way the game should be played. He was right. We would sit in his car outside my house after training and chew the fat and laugh about all manner of things, usually about how he was right and I was wrong. I would confide in him. He would listen and as I got out of the car he reminded me that he was going to hit me a boot up the ass if I kept on faffing about with footballs when he was trying to talk at training.

I remember him calling a get together up at the old club house after our infamous championship match against Ballymena at Rasharkin in 1996. Frank Dawson, who was manager at the time, gave us the Monday night off training but Gerry thought a few things needed to be said to help us focus on the replay. During the match I scored our first point within 30 seconds of the game starting and responded to the usual pre throw in 'hustle and bustle' with my marker by politely pointing out that this was the start of a long night for him. 10 seconds later my mouth was flapping about like Decky Steele's after a few pints, and I was covered in blood. No red card. I interrupted Gerry at half time with some shite about giving me the ball. He let me vent and had a quiet, calming word as I left the changing room. To cut a long story short we were three points down deep into injury time and got a free on the 21. I looked over to the touchline at Gerry for my cue. I exaggerated pointing over the bar to signal my intent. He shouted back so everyone could hear, 'take the point'. One look, one gesture, one nod, a smirk. I duly carried out his instructions, shot low into the bottom left hand corner and took the game to a replay. When we arrived up for the get together, Gerry led us out of the bar, into the changing room. I remember him at one point standing behind me, grabbing me by the hair, pointing around the changing room and telling us that championship football was grit, physicality AND skill. That stayed with me. Probably my proudest moment in sport. Public praise from Gerry. We could have played the replay that night. The County Board made us wait a month to let tempers cool after our brutal first encounter

(during and after the match). As far as I was concerned, the replay was won that night in the club.

So, Gerry is intimately connected to my relationship with St Endas. Loyalty to him sustained me during some bleak years of division 3 football when I came home from Liverpool. He was always in my mind on journeys up to the club, driving past the lane, when pulling on the shirt, even when practising frees in the near dark after training. When I missed, I would curse to myself 'fuck, what would Gerry think of that'. When the ref blew the whistle at the end of the game against Glenavy a few months ago to confirm promotion back to Division One for our current seniors, my first thought was, what would Gerry think of that'.

While I only played under and knew him for 6-7 years, Gerry was the common thread through my 25 odd year association with St Endas. And he will continue to represent that continuity for me. When my own kids, Oliver, Oran and Grace start their journeys with St Endas and in Gaelic games, I'll take them by the hand some bright Sunday morning, walk them across the Gerry Devlin pitch, show them the memorial stone, point down to where the old club and pitch was and tell them a little about my mentor.

Thanks Gerry. Miss you.

Reflections

Eamonn Prenter



Everyone has a different memory of Gerry. He fulfilled many roles both official and unofficial. He was a player, supporter, coach, manager, on the one hand and a confidant, therapist, counsellor, friend on the other. His family have had an extensive involvement in the club over many years. Many people, myself included, my brothers, owed so much to Seamus, Gerry's father, for their involvement in St Endas and in Gaelic games generally. More about that later.

There were a few years between myself and Gerry. As a fifteen year old I enjoyed the company of my own contemporaries but when I played with the minors including Gerry, Sean Hughes, Dermot McCoy, Sean Hinds, Danny McGrinder, Gerry Rooney I could only marvel at their stories of nights out in Glengormley and all the "close calls" in this part of the world in what were the dangerous late 70s and early 80s. I looked up to those guys. I still do. Glengormley was a dangerous place. It was an outpost. The 'field' and the club house, at that stage a former pig sty were isolated, surrounded by fields and lonely lanes. We had a field to play on, not a pitch, and sectarian turf wars played out most weekends below in Glengormley.

There was a constant political tension at the time but the football was enjoyable, of the highest standard, and the club produced top quality minor players over the course of a decade. No team won a minor championship but regularly reached semis and finals. We were a particularly formidable outfit at the Hightown. Maybe it was the sloped pitch, the wind, the always sodden parts of the pitch or gulleys running across it. Maybe it was the former pig sty that players had to change in or perhaps it was the sight of smouldering embers of a clubhouse constantly vandalised or set on fire below the bottom goals. We survived off the pitch and thrived on it. There were a lot of skilful players, and Gerry was one of them. They could also look after themselves physically. Gerry was one of those. Some could look after themselves verbally. Gerry was definitely one of those.

With all that talent coming through to the senior ranks from the early to late 80s those were successful times at senior level. Two promotions and two intermediate finals in roughly 5 years would testify to that. In hindsight though, we under achieved. I sensed it then and believe it even more so now. Gerry was one of the most influential and popular players. On reflection we missed his presence on the pitch when he had to retire prematurely due to a knee injury. When I left for London in 1989 we had gained promotion to the First Division for the first time ever and we maintained a presence there for a few years but we were never able to 'kick on'. We might have done so had he been playing. The manager and coach that I am told he was, is also probably the person that the seniors needed on the sideline at that time to drive us on. We needed someone that had that organisation, commitment, competitive edge and drive that commanded the respect of all the players that I know ultimately, he became renowned for.

When I left for London in 1989 I never thought that I would ever be back playing with St Endas. It never even entered my head when I arrived in Dublin in September 1997 with work. Even after Gerry was murdered in December of that year I still wasn't considering a return to St Endas. It didn't happen on that dark and damp night that I went up to the club to see the scene of the crime. It didn't occur when I stood in Gerry's packed living room later that night before he was laid to rest.

I started talking to all the St Enda's characters I had grown up with in the cortege on the day of the funeral and a few of the players that we had played against – one who had broken my nose in Falls Park and another, who along with 5 or 6 of his teammates had chased me into the changing rooms at St Pauls. Nobody does funerals like the GAA. I knew then I had to play again for the club.

I was supposed to play with St Vincents in Dublin when I got back from London. It could never be the same as playing with 'your' club and playing with, and for, your own. Driving up to County Antrim for matches or training was never the slightest problem. When you really want to do something you will find a way to do it. Excuses were reserved for not doing other things. I felt the club was entering a new and exciting era, albeit without Gerry, and would have the best facilities in Antrim. When you are used to dealing with, and in fact your individual and collective character is formed by the adversity, that we all experienced when myself and Gerry were kids, a nearly 250 mile round trip isn't such a big deal. In fact, it was akin to being a man down in a match when everyone gives that little bit extra and that was very much the attitude in the club after Gerry's death. Everyone gave that little bit more to get us through difficult times. We have always been a resilient and resourceful club. I think we have moved from surviving to thriving.

On those long drives I thought constantly of people in the club that down through the years had given far greater commitment to so many more people over so many years. One person was never far from my thoughts in that regard. Seamus Devlin. Like father like son.

Reflections

Niall Murphy



My memories of Gerry Devlin aren't necessarily forged on the football pitch, but rather as a trusted neighbour, family friend and fellow Gael.

The Devlin family home was 6 or 7 doors around the corner from where I grew up, and whereas I am sure that Gerry had moved out long before I arrived on the scene, my memories of growing up, going to football or hurling training, always had Gerry marked out as a friendly face about the club, always knowing who I was and always taking an interest in whatever ball I was kicking about (usually with Barry Lemon or Brian Curran!)

I would have known Oonagh Devlin the best growing up, baby of the house as she was (is!) as she was friendly with my sister Gráinne.

My most distinct memory of Gerry was on the 25th June 1995 when just a week after finishing my A levels, he asked me along to play a reserve football match at Randalstown. A few weeks earlier, Gerry had awarded me with the Minor Footballer of the Year Award (we weren't a great crop), and Gerry presented me the trophy named after his father. He couldn't have been more welcoming that night, telling me how he was looking forward to seeing me with the senior set up, which at that time was some team. I remember him distinctly telling me that we were both cut from the same cloth, he had gone to St Mary's as well, and that we were Gaels and never to forget that. He didn't physically prod me in the chest, but psychologically he did.

I couldn't have been looking forward more to that day in Randalstown. I was playing rightly, until a very late tackle, wrecked my left knee, which was never the same again. In later years I would have my front teeth knocked out and tear ankle ligaments at Randalstown so 25th June 1995, was the start of a bad relationship there, but in other ways, it was the start of a close bond with Gerry. Gerry had had his own grave problems with knee injuries and he always took time to enquire as to my well-being and to share exercises and rehabilitative ideas to build my knee up again. Even then as a 17/18 year old with no proven ability at senior, he had a sense of making you feel special.

After Gerry was murdered it was a very difficult time for everyone. Harrowing in fact. The funeral was an exceptional demonstration of collegiate togetherness, as much for each other as for the Devlin family, but there was a deep sense of how catastrophic the loss was for his brothers, sisters, wife and children. Football or indeed St Enda's meant nothing in comparison. Kevin's exaltation to us at the graveyard in Carnmoney was more than a rallying call, it was an order to stay together and to be strong. Ní neat go cur le chéile, we have strength in unity.

As my working life drew me towards assisting those coming to terms with their loss as a result of conflict, it was a professional and personal privilege to be approached by Kevin in recent years. My personal relationship with Kevin, and all of the Devlin family, make their instructions all the more compelling and honourable.

Their concerns as to Gerry's murder extended to the potential role of informers, who may have been protected to ensure that an overarching intelligence agenda was not affected. This was a sorry fact of life in those times, and the regrettable fact of Gerry's murder is that it bore striking similarities to the murder of Sean Brown at Bellaghy GAC just 6 months previously. I also have the privilege of representing the Brown family and as such was aware of some disgraceful facts pertaining to that investigation. Evidence destroyed, evidence not collected, obvious leads not followed, arrests not effected to a reasonable strategy, informers possibly protected. In my heart I knew that collusion was likely to be a feature in Gerry's murder, but on a professional level I was reticent to canvass an opinion either way, as to do so in the absence of evidence is reckless and irresponsible.

My fears were realised, when completely independent to the Devlin family, or me personally in fact, a retired police officer approached our legal practice for advice and assistance. Completely unsolicited, he volunteered that as a CID officer he had worked on many murder cases wherein Special Branch deliberately corrupted the prospect of a successful investigation.

This officer, whose identity is known to the Police Ombudsman, told us that he was the first police officer who attended the scene, accompanied by a colleague, close to midnight. They met with local Parish Priest Father Dan White who was also in attendance. He further confirmed that he completed all the initial tasking of inter-agencies such as SOCO (Scene of Crime), mapping, photography which would have included briefing Special Branch on the details of the case and also received a briefing from Special Branch at this early crucial stage of the investigation.

He confirms that Special Branch informed him as a CID investigator to look towards, as he describes it; 'UDA Muppets'.

At 2am in the morning of 6th December 1997, Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan rang and asked him for a full brief and update. The detective informed Ronnie Flanagan of this intelligence brief and the persons 'suspected' to have carried out murder.

The next afternoon, on 7th December, the Detective Chief Superintendent and Detective Superintendent in charge of the case advised the detective that Ronnie Flanagan at a briefing on the murder, the next morning with Special Branch, had caught Special Branch out for telling lies. What transpired was that the Special Branch had deliberately briefed the detective incorrectly, putting the CID onto a false led, whilst briefing Ronnie Flanagan with another different briefing on the matter, the morning after. Therefore at a very early and crucial stage in the investigation (the golden hour) the CID were looking in the 'wrong area'.

Crucially the detective had recorded the entirety of this disinformation contemporaneously and in great detail in the C6 Occurrence Book of the station area concerned.

I have also had the privilege to represent the families of those murdered at the Loughinisland atrocity in 1994 and I note the remarks of the Police Ombudsman in the Loughinisland report (9th June 2016), wherein he notes a particular concern that

"Special Branch failed to pass on intelligence into the activities of loyalist paramilitaries thereby protecting these individuals, who continued to commit serious criminal acts, from effective investigation"

Kevin has lodged a detailed 7 page complaint with the Police Ombudsman's office (2 non sensitive pages of which I have reproduced herein), and I only trust and hope that that office has the same tenacity and determination as Gerry had when on the pitch, to ensure that truth and justice prevails in respect of Gerry's murder and that the dignity of his memory is restored to that which we all remember.

Ar a Dheis Dé go raibh a anam uasail Ghaelach.

Police Ombudsman
Cathedral Buildings,
St Annes Square
11 Church Street
Belfast
BT1 1PG
Dear Sir

Re : Kevin Devlin obo Gerard Devlin deceased

We write further to the submissions made on 9th December 2014 and to your letter 3rd August 2016 and refer to the above and write to formally lodge a complaint against police in respect of the failed investigation into the murder of Mr Devlin.

Gerard Devlin was murdered at the gates of the clubhouse at St Enda's GAC on 5th December 1997 at approximately 2240. He had arrived at the club to collect his brother, our client and the complainant, Kevin Devlin.

The complaint can be generally characterised as follows:

- 1 : That the investigation into the murder has not been efficiently and properly carried out.
- 2 : That the police have failed to update the family as to investigative developments.
- 3 : That no earnest effort was made to identify the persons that carried out this atrocity.
- 4 : That the police investigation has failed to discharge the state's duties as per article 2 of the ECHR, as incorporated by Schedule 1 of the Human Rights Act 1998.
- 5 : That there persists a suspicion of state collusion in this murders.

Our client seeks to specifically complain of the following:

- 1 From 1997 until today's date, there was little or no information from RUC/PSNI regarding an update of the investigation. There was a lack of continuity in Senior Investigating Officers, e.g. Sam Kincaid, Alan McQuillan. Furthermore, our client fears that the allocation of resources to the investigation was reduced at a very early stage, prior to the case being rigorously and exhaustively investigated.
- 2 **Exhibits** – Our client seeks an appraisal as to the retention of exhibits and the whereabouts of same presently. Our client has a specific complaint with regards to the manner in which Gerry's blood stained clothes were seized, as they were taken away in brown paper bags rather than clear forensic bags.

1

Partners

Kevin H Winters | Joseph D McVeigh | Gerard McHamara | Niall Murphy | Peter Corrigan | Michael Crawford | Paul Pierce
Advocates | Litigation Consultants | Solicitor
Clare McKeegan | Dermot Mackin | Chris Stanley (London) | Paula Hennessey

5 SUSPECTS and the Role of Informants

Investigating police did discuss the names of suspects with our client and family. However our client is concerned that the pre-eminence of the RUC intelligence agenda was prioritized at the expense of investigative diligence in catching those responsible for murdering Gerry Devlin and that the nature of the relationship between police and informants undermined the investigative process.

- a) **Mark 'Swinger' Fulton** Fulton's name was given to police as potentially being the person who called to our clients house (where Gerry was residing at the time) on the Tuesday 2nd December 1997, the Tuesday before the murder. He asked for a 'Mr Brown' at that time. We are cognizant of the fact that Fulton was a key suspect in the murder of another GAA official 6 months previously, Sean Brown, at Bellaghy GAC.
- Our client requests an update as to what investigative opportunities were undertaken and developed in this regard, as no ID parade was convened.

On 10th June 2002, Fulton, who was being held on remand in HMP Maghaberry since December 2001, was found dead in his prison cell with a leather belt around his neck. Fulton was found on his bed rather than hanging from the ceiling, leading to speculation that his death had been accidentally caused by autoerotic asphyxiation. As such, we respectfully submit that article 2 ECHR cannot apply in determining the issue of his status as an authorized informant.

- b) **Billy Wright** Sam Kincaid informed the family that Billy Wright was involved and that Wright had received a phone call in prison in the weeks prior to Gerard's murder. Our client requested at the time, how did Kincaid know that Wright had received this call, who made it and what was the content of the call. Our client requests that PONI investigate this phone call as a line of enquiry. Kincaid further stated that he knew that the gun used had travelled straight from Glengormley to Portadown, and when pressed as to how he knew this, he merely stated 'intelligence'.
- i. Our client seeks confirmation as to whether or not this was the same intelligence that was deployed to mislead CID or that which was confirmed to Ronnie Flanagan.
- ii. Our client also requested that police investigate who visited Billy Wright in the three weeks prior to Gerry's murder, and we request that PONI confirm that this was done.
- iii. We understand that these are issues which were considered in detail at the Billy Wright Public Inquiry.

On the morning of Saturday 27th December 1997, just before 10.00 a.m., Wright was shot dead by INLA prisoners inside the Maze Prison. As such, we respectfully submit that article 2 ECHR cannot apply in determining the issue of his status as an authorized informant.

Reflections

Michael Scott



My senior football career in St Endas began when I was 32 years old and it coincided with Gerry becoming the manager of the team at the age of 31.

Back in 1992 the world was a different place. Despite what some might say, the GAA was struggling within North Belfast.

I played for Pearses who were a division 1 up until 1989. Three years later on 26 April 1992 they collapsed after failing to field on 3 occasions. Following the demise of the Pearses, myself and Paul Darby made the trip up the Antrim Road to join St Enda's.

Things were not great at Hightown either. Our first week at the club coincided with some bad results for the St Enda's senior teams and the senior football team manager had just resigned.

Sunday 26 April 1992 Division 2 hurling

Glenariffe 5.13 St Enda's 0.2

Saturday 2 May 1992 Under 21 football championship,

St Enda's 1.8 Lamh Dhearg 3.12

Sunday 3 May 1992 Division 2 hurling

St Enda's 1.6 Glenarm 3.10

Wednesday 6 May 1992 Division 2 football

St Enda's 0.2 Glenavy 3.9

Gerry became senior football manager following the Glenavy defeat. At this point St Enda's were mid table and from reading the old Irish News were considered well off the pace. Gerry quickly lifted the spirits of the team and the team went on to win the remaining league matches and finish second in the league and gain promotion to Division 1 along with Glenavy.

Gerry's biggest strength was his man management skills, he talked to everybody. Nobody was left out, we were all equal although we were most definitely not equal on skill levels! He could tell you were being dropped and you would think afterwards that you had just done him a favour – he had a way with words which made you feel special. Back then I was the oldest on the team, and after every game I had a telephone conversation with Gerry. Little did I know but he was having conversations with every player, Rotary where he worked must have had some phone bill!

In 1993 our first game in Division 1 was away to St Johns. We won by a point and that set us up for the season. Gerry knew what our limitations were and realised that a good team spirit can take a team a long way even if the ability is not there – a bit like the Ireland soccer team.

He introduced the away friendlies in Brackville where the "after party" in the Venue in Coalisland was as important as the match and the challenge games down in Carrickmore prior to the championship. His vision was really advanced for the time and he was doing it all himself!.

I suffered a really bad injury in the May of 1994 in a match against Ballymena when both Conor Quinn and I were both stretchered off to hospital with broken ribs. The next evening Gerry and Kevin Curran called down to my house to see how I was and with a basket of fruit as a present. These things you never forget. No doubt Conor Quinn had a similar visit that night as well.

To Gerry we were his players and we were all special.

Let us not forget him.

RIP Gerry.

Reflections

Declan Steele



It's hard to believe that it is now 20 years since our club's senior football manager Gerry Devlin was cruelly taken from us at the young age of 36. When asked to pen a few words as to memories of Gerry I thought 'where do I start?'

Having played senior football and hurling for the club for the best part of 20 years it's fair to say that I encountered a few managers in my time but without causing offence I can categorically say that Gerry was the one created the biggest impression on me.

Gerry's strength was his ability to speak to every player on a one to one basis and extract every ounce of ability that person had and get it onto the pitch but one of the main assets that he had was that he also had an unmistakeable confidence in himself and that came across in the teams that he put out on the pitch. That confidence probably came from being a very skilful player himself and I remember on one occasion the senior team were training on the gravel pitch in Hightown School and despite having a bad knee Gerry joined in the match. I was playing in my usual defensive position in those days and Gerry moved into the forward line to be marked by me. I cockily thought I would be too fit for this 'oul boy' with the dodgy knee but no sooner had I thought that, the ball came into the forward line and Gerry beat me to it and as he went to have what I thought would be a shot at goal I was confident that I would block him but as I went to block him he did the most beautiful drag back with the ball and as I was lying on the ground he stroked the ball over the bar. Needless to say the shouts of delight from Gerry and the abuse that he gave me could be heard up in the old club and he never let me live it down.

Gerry had great communication skills and in an era of no mobile phones and Apps like 'What's App' he was in constant contact with his players. At the time I was a student I worked on a Friday night in the CB club facing the Waterworks and I could almost guarantee that every Friday night at about 8pm when I would hear over the tannoy 'Phone call for Steele' that it would be Gerry and we would discuss the match which we may have had the previous Wednesday or the forthcoming match that weekend.

While he had an uncanny ability to get the best out of you, he was not behind the door either and in many of these conversations he would have told you in no uncertain terms if your performances were sub-standard.

From when we got promoted to Division 1 for a 2nd time in 1992 the senior teams star was most definitely on the rise with quality young players like Darby, Tucker Kelly, and Coogie in the forward line along with quality players who had a serious physical presence like Enda and KD in the central defensive positions and a young Maurice Walsh and Brendy Prenter in midfield.

After gaining promotion we really established ourselves as a solid Division 1 team who were afraid of no one and under Gerry I remember beating top teams Cargin, St. John's, Lamh Dhearg etc. However sub-standard performances were not tolerated either and one such under par performance came against Davitts in about May 1995 at Twinbrook. We had got off to a flyer in the league and travelled to play what was a good Davitts team which was backboned by their minor championship winning team of 1987 at the 'Stadium of Light' in a confident manner. Needless to say perhaps we were a bit over confident and after being beaten convincingly, Gerry stormed off the pitch and as the team filed into the changing rooms in upstairs in the Brook Activity Centre Gerry said 'Right Decky Steele, Our Kevin and Vincey McCaffrey leave the changing rooms' To say I was sh**ting myself was an understatement as I thought we were in for a bollocking but the 3 of us must have done something right that night as he shut the door and proceeded to tear strips of the rest of the panel while outside in the corridor I remember saying to KD with a large dose of relief 'I'm glad I'm not in there' I don't think there was any paint left on the wall of the changing room and the panel were left in no doubt what was acceptable and what wasn't.

On another occasion in 1993 we travelled to Corrigan Park to play the Johnnies. My memory is a bit vague here but for some reason Gerry had only returned to manage us after a period out and before the match I heard a St. John's mentor saying to another that we were going well and this would be a tough match to which the other mentor said 'Are you kidding me? It's St Enda's'. I relayed this conversation to Gerry and he used it to motivate us. As it happened we beat the Johnnies on their home pitch with two second half goals. I can't remember who got the first but Sean Hughes definitely got the second goal with a great shot and afterwards Gerry gave an inspirational speech about how people were saying that Gerry was back and that you're f**king right he was. A man with unmistakeable confidence in his own ability!

This was also the match when at half time Enda Hayes said to everyone that if we won he would buy everyone in the panel a pint afterwards in the club and he near shit himself afterwards when he realised that the win would cost him about £40. Of course everyone knew that Enda was as tight as ducks arse and would love to have taken him up on the once in a lifetime offer but he had a lucky escape when only 2 or 3 people went back to the club because it was a Wednesday night and most people had to work the next day. I'm still waiting on that pint Enda

Great memories of a great manager and person, cruelly taken from us. It is such memories of great people that are the things you take most from your playing career when it's over.

Reflections

Colly Donnelly

Chairman, Antrim County Board



I was in the same 4th year class as Gerry in St Marys 1976. He arrived from Barrack Street to begin his 4th year studies along with a few others. Our whole class dynamics changed, they were men among boys. They thought it was a good idea to take on the 7th years, they had no fear, but that was Gerry Devlin, a strong character who believed no one was better than him and he no better than anyone else. Gerry was a born leader, a talented footballer who looked out for us small guys on the team.

I clearly remember the day that Gerry's life was so cruelly taken away from him, in such a cowardly fashion. As great a loss as Gerry was to St Enda's and to the GAA, the loss to his family is incalculable. His spirit no doubt lives on in St Enda's, he was a credit to the Devlin Family especially his father who worked tirelessly for the club in those difficult times. It will be an honour to attend with you on Saturday 9th December on behalf of the Antrim County board to remember a good friend and a great Gael.

Reflections

Kevin McGuinness



If I was writing a reference for Gerry, it would be along the lines of the following attributes:

- **Hard working**
- **Genuine**
- **Loyal**
- **Relentless**
- **Talented**
- **A true friend**
- **Can handle himself....**

When Gerry came up to Saint Marys from Barrack Street, I got the opportunity to play alongside him for the school team as opposed to going to war against him in his Saint Endas jersey. We became good friends and had the utmost respect for each other, on and off the pitch. We successfully won the Dalton Cup for the school in a bad tempered, close final. This was a big success for the school back in the day. The team was managed by Brother Jennings.

At 25 years of age I had a very bad injury to my back in a game against Saint Galls which resulted in a stay in Musgrave Park Hospital for two months and out of work for eight months. During my stay in hospital Gerry came to see me several times and we talked about various games we were involved in.

It was during one of these chats that I decided I had to come clean on something that had happened several years earlier during a minor championship semi -final game between Saint Endas and Saint Johns at Corrigan Park.

Aidan Gough and myself were doing midfield for Saint Johns and were marking the talented Devlin brothers of Gerry and Kevin. About ten minutes into the second half the four of us were competing for a high ball and as I raised my arms to jump for the ball I realised I had Gerrys balls in my right hand. Being the gentleman that I am I gave them a good squeeze which resulted in Gerry dropping to the ground with a loud yell. Shortly afterwards he was carried off and a sub put on in his place. The match finished with a Saint Johns victory and a place in the county final which we won, beating a very good Rossa team by a point.

The thing is that Gerry was convinced it was Aidan Gough who had squeezed his crown jewels and every time we played Saint Endas, Gerry and Kevin would deliberately target Aidan to give him a hammering. He couldn't believe he had got it wrong all those years but did he really think I was going to hold my hand up and say it was me? Absolutely no chance! He nearly wet himself laughing and called me a bollocks. Here he was going out of his way to visit me way across Belfast from Glengormley. A true loyal friend. That was Gerry Devlin. Gone but not forgotten. A fellow Gael.

(Guilty as charged)

Dagda Éanna - Taoiseach Fear

Gerry Devlin: St Enda's Dagda - a Leader of Men

This week marks the twentieth anniversary of the first visit to the man by the recently inaugurated President of Ireland, Mary McAleese. Just four weeks after being installed in Áras an Macaois, she chose to make the historic visit to her homeland.

On the morning of Friday 28th December 1997 she flew into Belfast City Airport and headed for her alma mater, St Dominic's. After lunch she commended what she termed as her notes. After she performed the official opening of the Daidin Thread Art Gallery in the Flax Trust in Enniscorthy Mill on Church Road, Fr Mylas McGeehan was the manager of the Flax Trust and it was he who organised this leg of the presidential visit. When it was his turn to speak, he outlined the support of the many artists and craftsmen who had worked in the mill. In particular he commended Eamon Maguire to do a carving in bog oak.

I remember him telling Eamon: "You decide what form it takes. It's not your judgement" in less than two weeks Eamon had it done. What to do and in what form he had it finished on time. I remember his carrying his stool of bog oak which had been cut from the lowlands surrounding Lough Neagh between a ferry stop and brought it into his workshop. Eamon then produced his carving but for almost two weeks he concentrated on his carving. He was a keen student of Celtic mythology and he decided to carve the figure of Dagda who was High King of the Tuatha De Danann. Bog Dagda was all powerful, Eamon considered that if a carving of him would be a tribute to the leader of the Irish people. I was in Eamon's workshop daily and was mesmerised as the figure began to appear from the 2000 year old bulk of bog oak. It was a magnificent piece of work. When Fr Mylas presented it to President McAleese she was visibly delighted with the carving and most appreciative of the thought put into it and the quality of the workmanship. She thanked a beaming Fr Mylas and later personally thanked Eamon Maguire. Later, an honourable Fr Mylas told Eamon: "I was a 'Dagda' day."

Mrs McAleese had been a director of the Flax Trust and said the group had led the way in cross community work. "The Flax Trust is a very good example of a bridge building activity that has been going on for many years." In all her interviews she stressed her role as a bridge builder. Her message was enthusiastic



Now and Then with Liam Murphy

about the presidential visit. Indeed there were stories who set out from 2001 the headlines from the President.

Having left the Robin Hood centre 30 pm where everyone was in high spirits I moved closer home and started the Belfast News. Shortly after seven o'clock I saw Peter Sheehan walk up the hill. His face was like thunder. I immediately knew something was amiss. He remained in me to come outside where he relayed the terrible news that St. Enda's senior football manager had been shot dead as he arrived at the clubhouse. Peter had been too leg and moved at St. Enda's shortly after 11pm, just minutes after Gerry had been murdered. Gerry was aged 35, married to Hazel with a family of two boys, Aidan and Gavin, then 14 and 12.

That morning gathered as the first news spread but the police had erected a barricade at the entrance gate on the Highcross Road. This was the bog we used in the distance as St. Enda's were about to move to new premises. A function to mark the closure of the bog clubhouse was to be held the following night was cancelled.

St. Enda's had suffered a string of attacks and crimes over the years but with the ceasefire in place it was felt that a career had been burned but it was not to be so. A wave of sectarian spread throughout the community. The murder was widely condemned by local politicians. Jimmy McGuire, Sinn Féin, and Jim Rooney Alliance and by High Foreign Minister, David Andrews. Sinn Féin MP called the league casefiles a "fomoroscaire". It was three days before local Westminster MP, Gáire Foythe acknowledged the first case. South Tyrone MP Ken Maguire chose not to consider the murder but raised parliament concerns to Republicans in looking for a solution. Earlier that week David Trimble stated that GAA parades had prevented Protestants from getting to their church services in an unmarked village. He said that the GAA had taken over the centre of the village and called for new legislation to prevent such "provocative" demonstrations. It happened he was speaking about Pomeroy and it was later learned that neither the GAA nor the Church of Ireland in the



The funeral of Gerry Devlin.

village were aware of any danger. The Sinn Féin refused to apologise who was responsible for the murder but it was widely believed to be the UVF. This organisation was defended by the DUP. Roy Ian Paisley claimed that the police and loyalist paramilitaries had colluded to destroy the UVF as that the DUP/DUP could win in the talks which were then taking place. Ian Paisley also said they had received information that they could stand over that the UVF were

not involved but would not reveal their sources. Further witness statements in the Devlin family.

The funeral was the biggest ever seen in Glengormley. No representation of any political parties attended but scores of Protestant people were there. One man remarked he had travelled thirty miles to be there "to show the world that they are good people."

St. Enda's has a proud tradition of memorialising and remembering those who have

contributed to the success, integrity and moral fibre of the club. The 2012 Report arising from the Community Inquiry held into the murder of Irish soccer footballer David Weir in 2012, will form the basis of the family tradition in the long awaited inquest when that is convened. A primary school Gaelic football competition for schools in the parish is held every year in Gerry's name. The name of Sean Fox (73), club president when murdered in his own home in 1983 is

remembered yearly by all children in the club as they grow up with happy memories of the annual family family named in Gerry's memory. Post president Terry McManus was given a beautiful send off by the club's players and children of Cusack's Barrow at his funeral earlier in the year.

And the Saturday Gerry Devlin's memory will be recalled with pride as over 50 Gerry's senior footballers who had all played with or for Gerry in the 1950's and 1960's, will convene from the four corners of Ireland to play a reunion but competitive 12 a side competition for two teams each named by Gerry's children, Michael, Kevin, Eamon and Liam. The teams will gather on Saturday night for a night of happy memories with games and reputations immortalised with pictures of enjoyment.

Unfortunately for those with a fondler memory their fate might otherwise proceed. Gerry was a meticulous and ordinary football manager. He recruited a detailed diary of who attended training and who had an accident, who played well and scored who in the games. This diary, retained in immaculate condition by Kevin, has been reproduced in part in a beautiful memorial booklet will also be presented on Saturday. It contains many beautiful testimonials from people such as Doctor Steele, Michael Scott, Paul Gerry, Eamon Pinner, Niall Murphy and Martin Skellock.

The book bears testament to Gerry's life as a father, husband, brother, a player, coach and manager.

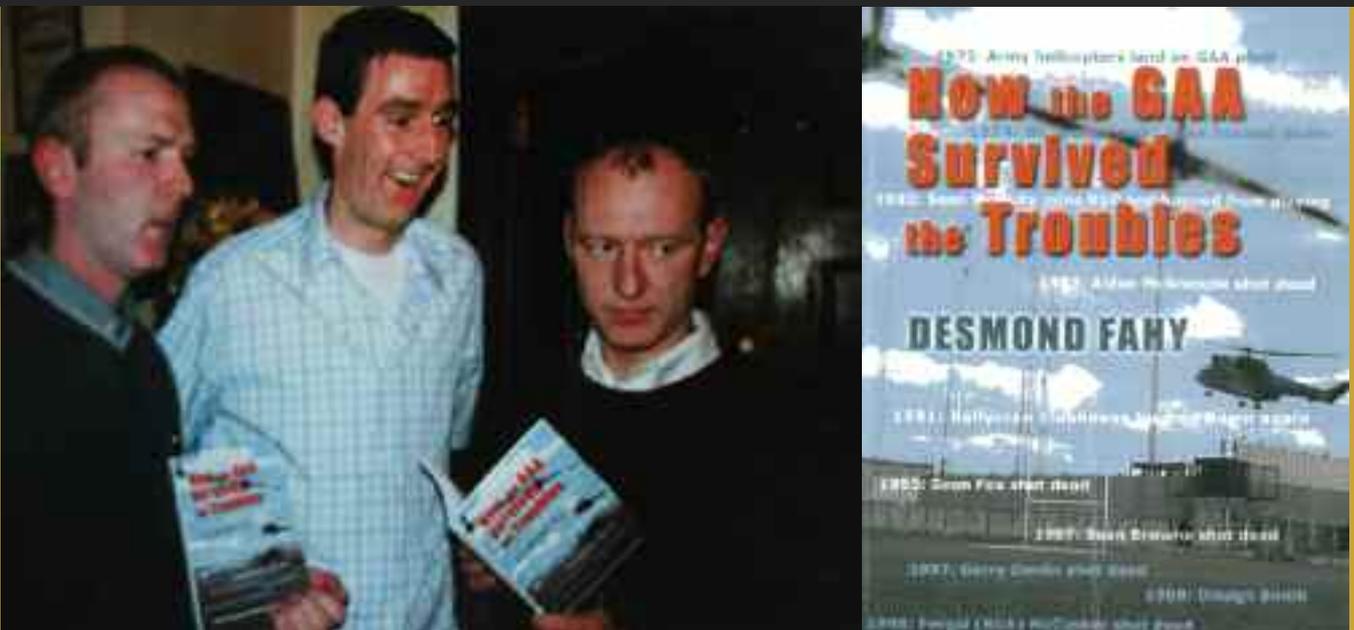
St. Enda's Dagda - a leader of men.



ON THE EDGE OF EVERYTHING

How the GAA Survived the Troubles

Des Fahy



Kevin Devlin sits in an armchair in the living room of his north Belfast house. Outside in the hall there is a kit-bag with a pair of well-worn football boots wedged in at the side. A Chelsea match is on television. The sound on the set in the corner is turned down. Kevin is absent-mindedly looking at the screen but in his mind he is miles away.

All the time he is talking - talking about the way in which the history of his family has been so closely intertwined with that of the St Enda's Club just a short walk away; talking about all the good times, all the hard, honest effort; talking about the pain of the loss of a brother and friend.

The Devlin family arrived in Glengormley as part of the second wave of migration from the centre of Belfast. They brought with them an ingrained sense of the importance and value of the GAA - the celebration of that had always been part of the Devlin way. Kevin recalls:

I can only speak say from 1971 onwards but my father was always a GAA man before that. We'd been to a lot of matches before moving up here. We had followed Antrim's under 21s in 1969 - the year they won the All-Ireland - down to Cork for their semi final. It sounds maybe daft to people but really when you're GAA-minded you enjoy all those times. I went to a Christian Brothers school as well and that really would have put another aspect into everything in terms of Gaelic games and that kind of thing.

It was only natural that one of the first things the Devlins would do as soon as they had settled down into their new surroundings would be to gravitate towards the local GAA club. St Enda's was still a relatively young club and this injection of enthusiasm and new blood came at the perfect time. The social fabric of the whole area was changing subtly but inexorably, and the make-up of the club was an indication of that.

Kevin Devlin is still talking:

When we first came to Glengormley in the 1970s and the juvenile team was just starting to take off there weren't the housing developments there are now. We were lucky if we had maybe 15 or 16 youngsters at under 16. Up here was very much countryside at that particular time and I would say in relation to religion it would have divided up 70:30, Protestants to Catholics. Now its down to 60:40, and maybe 50:50, so there is a good catchment area as regards the GAA and plenty of support and back-up for St Enda's now.

Back in the early 1970s, however, the situation was more fluid. Nobody could be sure whether the political violence of the time would endure, and the all-enveloping tension that was to permeate the next thirty years was not yet a part of daily life. Kevin has fond memories of those much more innocent days:

Again it might seem a bit strange but when I was coming up to the club in 1971 and 1972 to play games for the club it seemed like very happy times. We had sports days and tournaments, that kind of thing, and when we were coming up to play for the juveniles there were maybe 15 or 1 of us altogether in the area that wanted to play Gaelic. You didn't feel threatened or anything, you just went up. We were a big family and the club started to take off when families like ours came in. They started then to field a couple of under-age teams at under 12 and under 14.

The strand that connected the new club with its country roots still ran strongly through St Enda's at the time. That level of continuity was important as the older men shepherded their sons and grandsons along.

There did seem to be a lot more older people around the club then - 50-, 60-, 70-year-old. More so that now. There was no gate, just Paddy Lavery going around with a cap and that's all the money the club would have lifted.

St Enda's provided a sporting and cultural reference point for a new, uncertain Catholic community in that part of Belfast; young boys like Kevin Devlin and his brothers gained self-confidence from that.

As youngsters we certainly felt very proud to be Irish and you made a big thing about the tricolour and that sort of thing. You felt a lot more Irish if you did play Gaelic - I certainly did when I was young - because it is an All-Ireland sport.

However, the harshness of the political situation that was rapidly unfolding and unravelling was pressing on the club all the time. It quickly became apparent that the old value system was slipping away. The badge of identity that came as part of the GAA package was also a signifier of difference. It was a time when the GAA in Belfast began to suffer as a result of its own success; that was felt most keenly among the young rank and file players.

"I know I felt proud", says Kevin Devlin, "but you did realise that people possibly didn't like you or didn't want you and you then develop a bit of fear because of that".

The geographical isolation of the football field and the club-rooms was a problem for St Enda's right from the start of the Troubles. Whereas now there are over 1000 homes on either side of the Hightown Road where the club is situated, then it was all undeveloped farm land. There were no street lights and no footpath on the way up to the club. The young boys walking up for training or a match soon became easily recognisable targets. That vulnerability was to ensure for a generation.

According to Kevin Devlin:

If you were actually going up the road, the only place you were going was to the club. There was no way you would have just been walking around up there with hurley sticks or anything like that in the early days. No way. You would have been told by your parents or the people in charge of the team that you would be picked up and left back home. Or else you'd all meet up somewhere to get a minibus if we were going across town for matches. You certainly weren't allowed to stand on the street corners or anything like that. My father took a lot of the teams. Because we were a big family he drove an estate car and there was no way he would have left anybody to walk even one or two streets.

This emphasis on personal security was to become as much a fact of GAA life at St Enda's as marking the pitch. Saturday morning training sessions and fund-raising dances. To the outsider it might seem like the ultimate subversion of the sporting ideal, but pragmatism ruled in 1970s Belfast.

People soon adjusted to the new rhythm, and Kevin Devlin's earliest memories of his journey with the club are as much about being under attack as they are about under-age heroics. It is as if much of the innocence that is so much a part of growing up in the GAA in other parts of the country was simply ripped out.

In the early days we had an old stone house, like a chicken-house kind of thing, which we turned into a bit of a clubhouse. I remember being in it one day when I was eight or nine years of age. There were shots fired and a blast bomb left outside. We were told to hide under this big bit of wood that we used as a table tennis table at this time. The lights went out and all I can't remember is machine-gun fire right at the front door. Later my father told me that they thought most of the firing was straight over the club roof because not one bullet hit the premises. If that was the case its obvious it was all about intimidation. They weren't out to actually kill that particular night - just intimidate.

The club and what it stood for quickly became a focal point within the local community. But despite being under considerable and persistent pressure, it managed to remain aloof from the political situation that was fermenting outside. Without some level of detachment from that – however tenuous it might be in reality – the club would have struggled to survive. Kevin Devlin remembers some hard-fought debates.

There might have been people who would have wanted to be connected with the Republican movement and that was fair enough. But I think the fact is that St Enda's did not have any politics or allow any politics to creep into the club. There were meetings of the committee and anything that was asked for from outside the club or any requests that were made, they were always turned down. There was one particular time when they had to have a vote on it and it was decided that there was no way the club was going to have anything to do with holding outside meetings.

The absence of any sectarian or political dimension within the fabric of St Enda's was vital; it destroyed any possible legitimacy that might be claimed for the campaign of intimidation and attack waged against it. Instead, the club functioned as a kind of pressure valve for the release of cultural tensions that might otherwise have been diverted elsewhere. St Enda's was not alone in this, of course, as GAA clubs throughout Northern Ireland struggled to keep young members away from protest and violence. But the stakes were particularly high in north Belfast at the height of the Troubles.

Kevin Devlin says:

The men on the committees during those days were great ambassadors for the games as far as I was concerned. With the time, effort and commitment they put into try and make a club and make a team and teach the culture, they didn't have time for anything else. They weren't paramilitaries hanging around street corners or anything like that. Any spare time was spent up at St Enda's. One thing that the GAA does say to its members is that it's non-political and non-sectarian. And I have to say that I do not remember anything political or sectarian in our club over all the years I've been involved.

In the main, this was respected. There were some mixed pubs in Glengormley, and the way the St Enda's men used to gather in one corner to hold impromptu committee meetings about this team or that fund-raiser became an accepted part of life in the area. In many quarters there was clear, unequivocal respect for the GAA. But outside that enlightened consensus darker skies were gathering.

Harassment of the GAA members by the security forces was widely reported. This could take the more subtle form of road blocks outside the grounds, but could also extend to thinly veiled threats and even violence. The net effect of both was the same. GAA life was made difficult and, at times, frightening.

The UDR when they were formed gave us a hard time. The 16, 17 and 18-year-olds were arrested and searched every night of the week. And they would maybe drive up through the pitches and through the goals and pull the nets down with the jeeps. It probably was very dangerous in those days but people didn't maybe realise just how dangerous it really was.

By now the Devlin family was an established fixture at the club, part of the core group of players and administrators who helped steer St Enda's through those difficult times. As the Devlins became immersed in the club, so they became immersed in the emerging Glengormley community. The club was gradually becoming strong at under-age level, and Kevin and his brother, Gerry, were making the same journey together.

He was exactly the same as myself. He was up there at the club from no age as well - there was a year-and-a-half or so between us. The older ones in our family would have been at the GAA matches with our father in those days and so we would have been first up to the club to play in the teams.

As Gerry Devlin moved from the under-age teams to adulthood, he quickly became an important part of the senior set-up. On the football field, St Enda's was making progress, and Gerry was one of those helping to lead the charge. From an early stage he had established himself as a leader – a figure to be looked up to and respected. However, a cruciate ligament injured represented a severe set back.

The surgery and subsequent recovery period can be daunting for professional sportsmen and women, never mind an amateur Gaelic footballer trying to keep a full-time job. But Gerry threw himself into it with characteristic perseverance and dedication.

A health care scheme at work took care of the operation and, to help with his recuperation, Gerry had a chair specially made with a small iron bar across it. Kevin remembers going to visit his brother at the time, and while they were talking together, Gerry would be exercising his leg back and forwards over the iron bar and strengthening the torn knee muscles.

The initial prognosis had been poor but nobody was surprised when Gerry Devlin returned to football within a year. He started first with the reserves and discovered a real talent for nurturing the young talent on that side and coaxing and cajoling the best out of those around him. This was a revelation that was to serve him and St Enda's well in the future. Within another year, Gerry was back playing on the senior team. Then his football life took another twist. Kevin recalls:

In the second match of that season, he damaged the other knee, the cruciate again, and he said to me that was it. After what he put into get back playing in the first place, to do the other knee was just far too much for him.

However, the GAA and Gaelic football had got too close at this stage. They were so much part of him that, try as he might, Gerry Devlin was always going to be drawn back in; he just couldn't leave all that behind. So, he moved into management and took charge of the St Enda's senior side. Looking back, his brother feels that he was already ahead of this time.

He was 26, 27 at the time, so when he did go into management it was very early. But he had started to see the way that football was changing during the 1980s and he noticed it getting a bit faster and the players getting a bit fitter. I think Gerard was one of the first to cotton on to that.

Beyond the day-to-day business of devising training schedules and plotting tactics, Gerry Devlin also uncovered a particular gift for man-management. St Enda's had traditionally been a strong hurling club but now the fortunes of a moribund football team were being radically transformed and he was right there at the heart of it all.

I think he just knew where to draw the line with most people. Some people you can give a rollicking to, some people you can't. We didn't win a senior championship match for three or four years but Gerry was working away and thinking about it. He got other coaches in from all over the county to take the odd session before championship matches – that had never been heard of at the club before, an outsider coming in like that. The other thing about him was he liked the 'bus run'. Before the season started we'd head off somewhere for a challenge game to build up a bit of team spirit for the coming year.

Another year we did a sponsored cycle in relays to Dublin and all that sort of thing to build up spirit. That was shown then on the pitch later on.

Gerry and Kevin Devlin also realised the threat to the very future of the club that the ongoing cycle of arson and bomb attacks represented. The situation had deteriorated dramatically with the murder of Sean Fox, and the brothers could see confidence and a sense of well-being seeping away from St Enda's. They decided to act and try to set some sort of example for others to follow.

Once the decision had been made to travel to Sean Fox's funeral in Coalisland, Gerry encouraged as many of the senior footballers as he could to travel down with him. Some of the hurlers went as well, and the communal act of paying their respects bound the club together at a time when it looked like it might fall apart altogether. Looking back now, Kevin realises that that simple gesture may have saved the club from disaster.

I remember the week after Sean Fox had died and the club was opening again. It was empty, nobody would go up. Gerard, me and another fella decided to go up one Friday night and then the Friday after that again. We kept that going for a few weeks had our pints and just locked up early. We would never let the barman lock up on his own or anything like that. We would maybe get a lift with him and, by god, I remember standing waiting to get into the car at night after locking the gates and just waiting and waiting. Frightening times. The fear in that club at that particular time was second to none but we were just making a stand by going up those Friday nights.

By the end of 1997, Gerry Devlin had settled into his new role and his thoughts were turning to the new year and the upcoming football season. There was a lot to be optimistic about and he had already started to put together a plan of campaign. Off the field St Enda's was making progress as well. The old, much targeted club house was due to be replaced in a few months' time by a new hall, bar and dressing room complex.

Friday, 5th December, was a special occasion and some of the St Enda's members had decided to give the old clubhouse a good send off.

Kevin went up on his own. The ritual was the same. A steel door and buzzer at the gate had been fitted for security reasons and these had to be negotiated before he got inside.

It was planned that it would be the last weekend of the old clubhouse. It was one terrible night, weather-wise, I remember that. Gerard had been off the drink for three or four weeks at the time.

The plan was that Gerry would come up a bit later, maybe to join them and to give some of them a lift home. When he arrived, just before 11pm, an LVF gunman was waiting. A short time later, Gerry Devlin's body was found by a club member just outside the security gate. He had been shot seven times. Kevin Devlin was one of the first people on the scene as people came out of the club. The funeral a few days later was a traumatic occasion and almost three years later the grief and loss still echo around Kevin Devlin's living room.

I happened to maybe scream a few words at the graveyard myself. I think what I said was along the lines that we would never be beaten and that we will open the club again and we will open the pitch. Those were things I felt I had to say. I believed them myself and I believed Gerry would have said that. Just to keep the club going. I was numb after all of that, maybe numb for a year after. I would say that the club then would have gone down the drain, just like that, only for the work of the people at the club itself.

Kevin and the rest of the family struggled through the aftermath of Gerry's murder, often finding some solace in unlikely places. It was only in the months after his death that Kevin began to fully understand the way in which his brother had immersed himself so completely in their GAA club, in their St Enda's.

He kept books when he was manager – I specifically asked for them when he died. For every match when he was in charge he kept a record, this big A4 diary. He would have had the team picked, and the subs, two days before he had the fixture highlighted in the Irish News and then when you flicked the page over, the result was there from the paper as well.

The attention to detail, right down to the minutiae of preparing the team, was a wonderful and treasured thing for Kevin to see. There in black and white was a permanent memorial to Gerry's dedication and service to the GAA.

There was a record of all the people at training on the Wednesday, and stapled at the back he had a note of the holidays that everyone was taking so he could plan ahead. It's amazing – and don't forget he was only 30 years of age or so at the time. He was always thinking – it must have been all day, every day for him.

Gerry Devlin's murder took all that away. It also had a terrorising effect at three different levels. Firstly, the Devlin family lost a son, brother and father. Secondly, following on from the death of Sean Fox, Gerry's murder rocked the St Enda's club to its very foundations. And finally, it sent shockwaves through the entire GAA community, highlighting the members' terrible vulnerability in the face of such random violence.

Just seven months previously, Sean Brown had been murdered in South Derry; attentions now appeared to have turned towards Belfast. The inescapable implication was that no GAA member anywhere in Northern Ireland could feel totally safe. Kevin Devlin lost both a brother and a fellow GAA member, but for him the loss was essentially simply a human one.

The way I see it is that they got a good one that night. I know that maybe sounds a bit selfish but to me it made it harder for us and better for them that they got one of the good ones from the GAA in Gerry. There's nobody goes up to that club any better or less a person than anyone else but they certainly got a good one when they got Gerry. He was just a dedicated GAA man.

The walls of St Enda's club House are papered with all the usual posters and messages. There is news of upcoming fund-raising events, the indoor hurling league that is played during the winter, and notification of the training sessions for the senior and reserve players. St Enda's is a busy city club and its message board is just the same as those you could expect to see in the GAA clubs up and down the country.

There are photographs as well, of awards presentations and team line-ups. Again, there is nothing particularly unusual in that. But one stands out. It was taken at Trench House in Belfast and is dated 12 January 1975. In fact, it could not have been taken at any other point in history. The three give-aways are the standard-issue wing colours of the time, which have been grafted onto the light coloured football shirts, and the tousled, unruly 1970s haircuts. Clothes and hairstyles clearly date young Gaelic footballers in the same way that they date everyone else.

There are twenty two young faces in the photograph; twenty are members of the St Endas under 12 team, and there are two mentors at either end of the back row, although they don't look much older than the players beside them.

The photograph was taken on the day the side won the local league competition for that age group. Each boys face in fresh, unlined and bursting with youthful innocence - full of enthusiasm for the future that appears to be stretching out in front of everyone of them.

In other, bigger and more established clubs, this event - the winning of an under 12 league - might have gone by relatively unnoticed. But back in the mid 1970s St Enda's was only a young club, unused enough as yet to leagues or championships, so when they did come they were celebrated eagerly. The boys look shy and just a little awkward. It is almost as if they have been encouraged to pose under false pretences; the photographer seems to have captured them in all their slightly uncertain glory without their express permission. Some of them appear bemused - as if this photograph had caught them right in the middle of that limbo period between childhood and adolescence, and they don't like the intrusion one little bit.

As a piece of club history all of this makes the photograph significant enough. But the role call printed underneath hammers home its importance as a valuable social document. This picture has its own stories to tell.

Among the names of the boys standing in the back row are those of Liam Canning and Gerry Devlin. They stand out from the rest because they are followed by three stark letters in blunt, black type. RIP.

Gerry Devlin must have been just over-age for his under 12 team because he is wearing a pair of flared jeans and standing guard at the left hand side of the back row. His clothes make him look older than the boys on the team, but his face is still youthful and vulnerable. Kevin Devlin, meanwhile, is squatting in the crowded front row.

Gerry's story has been told. Liam Canning's fate is less well known.

On the morning on the 9th August 1981, Liam Canning was walking along Alliance Avenue in North Belfast with his girlfriend. An off-duty UDR man in a derelict building nearby fired shots at them with a pistol that had been issued to him a month earlier, for personal protection. Liam was hit in the head and back and died three days later in hospital. In January 1983, the 34 year old UDR soldier was sentenced to life for murder. In the course of that trial he admitted to wounding another man hours before the attack on Liam Canning.

So, two of the boys peering innocently out of that 1975 photograph died violently in the Troubles. Another team member just escaped with his life after he survived a gun attack intended to kill him. That casualty rate would not be untypical of GAA clubs in the Belfast area during the worst years of the political violence. The most poignant thing is that it was usually the younger members of the teams who were targeted. The killings threatened to rip the heart out of many clubs and the amazing thing is that so many survived, and then thrived as the worst excesses of that time slowly faded into the background.

The effect of what happened on the surviving young boys from those scores of photographs throughout Northern Ireland - those who have lived to see the beginnings of a peace settlement - can only be guessed at. They must have been damaged in one way or another by the violent deaths of young team-mates. That is something they will carry with them to this day and beyond. And the clear message which was being sent out by those deaths would not have escaped them either.

In the Belfast of the 1970s and 1980s membership of the GAA, was enough to set you apart and, to use the terrorist parlance, make you a legitimate target for violence and even death. Such was the antagonism towards and mistrust of the GAA that was allowed to prevail.

For years, this was never properly acknowledged. Of course, there were more malevolent and more potent forces at work in the society of the time but even that does not explain the repeat refusal to address the way in which the GAA members were being deliberately targeted.

There went enough voices to stand up in protest and those who did stand up struggled to be heard. What ensued as a result of that inaction is both shocking and shameful in equal measure.

The other Devlin family members were just as much victims of this as was Gerry himself. But during the most difficult times they drew on the support of the wider GAA community in exactly the same way that Sean Fox's family had looked to them and others like them 14 years before. Cards and messages of condolence streamed into the Devlin family home from GAA clubs all over Ireland, the US and Canada.

At the time, much of it passed by in a blur. But with some distance now separating him from those terrible days after Gerry's murder, Kevin Devlin is in a better position to assess the value and importance of that support. He is also looking to the future and ways of marking Gerry's life with a more permanent memorial.

All those cards were important to have. It is like one big family, you know. And I've written a letter to all the members of the club suggesting that the ground now be named after Gerry. It's the members who are the club and it's them who do all the work behind the scenes.

Kevin Devlin is convinced that these are better times for the GAA. The killings and the bomb-attacks have stopped, and the St Enda's club can get on with the job of providing a cultural outlet for one of the fastest growing areas in Belfast. GAA business has never been so good and the club boasts thriving under age structures - a whole new generation of under 12's just like that photograph of sixteen years ago.

Of course, the antagonism towards the GAA still simmers on in some quarters - glass is still strewn on football pitches, goal posts are still cut down and arson attacks are still attempted - but the situation has improved beyond recognition. The GAA in Belfast can now stand prouder than ever before; that in itself is a cause for optimism - guarded optimism, but optimism all the same. Kevin Devlin reflects:

Definitely, when you compare it to the time not too long ago that the GAA and its members were named on the list of loyalist targets... They said they were going to start then but to me they had been targeting the GAA for twenty years. The terrible thing is that we did lose people, members, who just didn't go up to the club during those times.

Kevin Devlin's commitment to the St Enda's club has never wavered, even after the death of his brother. The brothers were the first to go back up to the club after the pattern of sectarian murders looked like draining all the confidence out of the fretful and anxious membership. So it was after Gerry died, and Kevin remains as involved as he ever was - maybe more so. The club, he says, has been strengthened by what it has been through, and its innate survival instinct has been a real source of inspiration.

The club gains a bit from those days, I think. Overall, we can only get bigger and stronger. Look at the set-backs we've had. We lost premises, built them again. We got our President shot and then we got our team manager shot outside the gates. I don't think there are too many GAA clubs that could have continued after all that, especially with the small number of members we have.

If the attacks and the murders have had an effect on St Enda's it has been at the older end of the spectrum. The age profile of today's membership is predominantly young, the threats and intimidation led to a haemorrhaging of members during the more difficult periods.

In a deteriorating political situation it was hardly surprising that some became so concerned about their personal safety that the risk of being identified with St Enda's and the GAA was simply one that was too big to take. Many of them have never been replaced and that has had implications for the make-up of the club. According to Kevin:

This club is second to none with regard to showing its character and coming back. But the problem I see is that we don't have as many of the older guys anymore – the 60- and 70- year olds to guide the younger ones the way we were looked after during the early 1970s.

The cost, as ever, is a human one.

As the May Day sun begins to hide itself bit by bit behind the hills, the people of St Enda's are getting ready for the night to come. The Fox and Devlin families have been here all day, as integral a part of the modern life of St Enda's as Sean and Gerry were when they were alive.

The prosperity of the club and its bright future are good reasons for everyone to celebrate. But this has been an occasion for looking back as well, and there is no shame in that. The cost to both families of involvement with the GAA has been immense, and that nagging sensation of the loss of a father, a son or a brother is one that never really goes away.

Nonetheless, that is something the Foxes and Devlins have to come to terms with. That is what Kevin Devlin is doing, and when he remembers, he remembers with fondness and tenderness. There is no bitterness.

Any acknowledgment of Gerard, especially when its related to the GAA, is very welcome for the whole family. My mother's still living and she's a great GAA woman because when my father was alive she had no choice really. There were just two or three sets of jerseys to be washed and then all our gear as well and that was it.

The pain, though, never recedes completely.

As you can imagine, the GAA was a big part of our lives, so any recognition would definitely make my mother very proud. It must have been very hard for her. I lost my best friend and brother. But I still think its even worse to lose a son in circumstances like that. Its very difficult for people.

The games are over now, the Sean Fox Memorial Shield has been presented, and almost everybody has gone back inside. The big day out for St Enda's is over for another year. Even the ice cream man has packed up. But out on the pitch are a few young hopefuls, aged maybe six or seven. Carrying hurls almost the same size as themselves, they are pulling and pucking to each other. To and fro. To and fro. The next generation. They look like they could keep going for hours yet, or at least until they're told its time to go home. Sean Fox and Gerry Devlin would approve.



Reflections

Martin Scott



Realization of the premature end of Gerry's football days due to a serious cartilage injury did not deter him from playing sport - Gerry took to the rehabilitation of his knee injury as he only knew and that was with methodical sessions of home-devised physio to get himself back to a level of physical fitness however this was not to lead to a rejuvenated come back on the field but it did lead him to the introduction of a new passion in his sporting life the GOLF COURSE!

Gerry was by no means a natural at the game but he possessed grit and determination to push himself to his own limits set by his usual high standards.

He struggled on the tee box with the Driver and soon surrendered the weapon for a new found club, an 1 iron which he used proficiently well, off the tee - the club which he affectionately referred to as his "Silver Hurl"

Gerry regularly went with Rotary to Donegal outings and one year we had coincidentally booked Ballyliffin on the same weekend - My memories were few to do with the golf but we had a couple of late nights on the razz when Rolling Rock was the new beer out at the time - We downed our fair share only to spot the best before was well out of date but it did get us a few on the house at the end of the night - Gerry took his golf serious but at the end of the day weekends like these are all about the company and friends you are with and also meet and that epitomized Gerry he knew how to enjoy himself.

We also ventured on a "St Enda's" golf outing one December about 1996 to Ballybofey in Donegal - The bus was driven by none other than Kevin Curran and only the old school will remember the old red bus which we travelled in - If that bus could talk it could tell some stories! I recall swapping KDs golf ball by the inducement of a tinny and we replaced his ball with a exploding golf ball - After the ball exploding into pure white dust trying to convince KD that it was a penalty shot amongst the laughter was a task we were never going to win.

Anyway the golf wasn't great but the craic mighty and the next day the golf was snowed off but we improvised with a putting game with pint glass as a hole - Brilliance at its best and not a fore to be heard!! Just whose shout is it!!

Gerry never got round to joining a golf club but I have no doubt he would have and that this would certainly have contributed to his improvement in the game. Instead Gerry continued playing in society outings with Rotary and with McL&H Society and also with selected invites via his work.

Since his passing in 1997 we decided on how best to remember Gerry's life with his friends and work colleagues - This lead to annual outings in or around Gerry's birthday in August - The first outing was held in 1998 and was won by Neil McCleery of a somewhat dubious handicap!! The Perpetual plaque was donated by the late Christy Craig and to this day 20 years on we continue to compete for the Gerry Devlin Trophy and the determination to get your name on the trophy is still as competitive as it was in 1998 - This is a testimony to Gerry by those who knew him and also importantly to those who participate in present day and want to know about his legacy.

As part of proceedings on the day everyone has to tee off on the first hole using Gerry's very own "Silver Hurl" and we all now know it's not the most forgiving of clubs - let's just say there have been a fair few air shots!!

Let's all hope Gerry's Day keeps going well into the future and we continue to commemorate the man who is always referred to as the man ahead of his times in terms of his coaching methodology and his attention to detail something all those who knew Gerry will always remember.

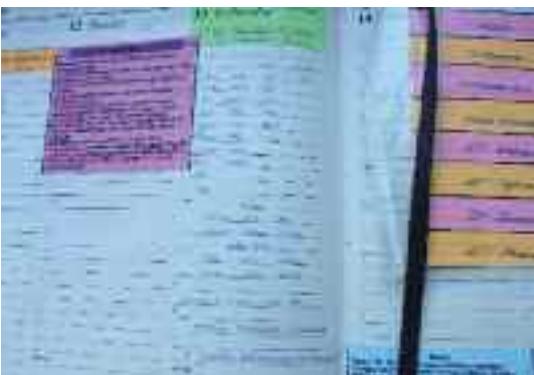


Golf tribute to Gerry

The Hilton hotel

For all who trained under Gerry's expert eye, we were always aware of his meticulous approach to constant monitoring and evaluation of players effort, commitment, development and attendance. Gerry maintained a scrupulous record to inform his own natural judgement but also to ensure fairness and accountability. A disgruntled player not selected could have some evidence based home truths delivered in immediate fashion. Kevin has very generously allowed us to reproduce some of the detail in his diary which are not only a Devlin family heirloom but a club treasure.

Forward Planner 1998	January - June							July - December										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
ALFE DIV 1A CASHENT V ST JONAS	JUN 1	DE	KB	CG	MF	AD	GN	MM	SOC	WKS	MG	TK	FD	FD	MG	MM		
ALFE DIV 1A MOUNTAIN V SAN JAMES	JUN 2	FD	KB	CG	MF	AD	GN	MM	SOC	WKS	MG	TK	FD	FD	MG	MM	WKS	MM
ALFE DIV 1A MOUNTAIN V ST JAMES	JUN 3	DE	KB	CG	MF	AD	GN	MM	SOC	WKS	MG	TK	FD	FD	MG	MM	WKS	MM
ALFE DIV 1A CASHENT V ST JAMES	JUN 4	DE	KB	CG	MF	AD	GN	MM	SOC	WKS	MG	TK	FD	FD	MG	MM	WKS	MM
ALFE DIV 1A CASHENT V GLENMOUNT	JUN 5	DE	KB	CG	MF	AD	GN	MM	SOC	WKS	MG	TK	FD	FD	MG	MM	WKS	MM
ALFE DIV 1A GLENMOUNT V THE MOUNTAIN	JUN 6	DE	KB	CG	MF	AD	GN	MM	SOC	WKS	MG	TK	FD	FD	MG	MM	WKS	MM
ALFE DIV 1A CASHENT V CARBON	JUN 7	DE	KB	CG	MF	AD	GN	MM	SOC	WKS	MG	TK	FD	FD	MG	MM	WKS	MM
ALFE DIV 1A CASHENT V ST JAMES	JUN 8	DE	KB	CG	MF	AD	GN	MM	SOC	WKS	MG	TK	FD	FD	MG	MM	WKS	MM
ALFE DIV 1A CASHENT V SAN JAMES	JUN 9	DE	KB	CG	MF	AD	GN	MM	SOC	WKS	MG	TK	FD	FD	MG	MM	WKS	MM
ALFE DIV 1A GLENMOUNT V GLENMOUNT	JUN 10	DE	KB	CG	MF	AD	GN	MM	SOC	WKS	MG	TK	FD	FD	MG	MM	WKS	MM
S.F.C. CASHENT V ST JAMES	JUN 11	DE	KB	CG	MF	AD	GN	MM	SOC	WKS	MG	TK	FD	FD	MG	MM	WKS	MM
ALFE DIV 1A MOUNTAIN V ST JAMES	JUN 12	DE	KB	CG	MF	AD	GN	MM	SOC	WKS	MG	TK	FD	FD	MG	MM	WKS	MM
ALFE DIV 1A TOWNS V CASHENT	JUN 13	DE	KB	CG	MF	AD	GN	MM	SOC	WKS	MG	TK	FD	FD	MG	MM	WKS	MM



26 Wednesday

James C. ...

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27 Thursday

CLUB GOLF

By John ...

Gregory club St Enda's are to recover from the blow of losing the ...

... departure to the Duwa ...

... best for his work in the ...

After a lot of searching, Gerry ...

appointed as Frank's successor ...

... the team and during his ...

... from a mediocre position two ...

... status.

St Enda's assure get off to a ...

... victory over St John's

1 FL: Falls PK: Gortnamona v St ...

1 FL: Dews Road: Rossa v St John's ...

1 FL: Gortnamona v St Paul's ...

1 FC: Sarsfields v St Paul's ...

1 FC: Milltown: St Gall's v Rossa ...

1 FC: Sarsfields v Davitts ...

1 FC: Hightown: St Endas v Ardoyna ...

1 FC: Milltown: St Gall's v St Endas ...

1 FC: Ardoyna: Larn Dhearg - Dyl ...

1 FC: Rossa v St Peter's, Falls Park ...

1 FC: Sarsfields v Davitts

R. O'Connell ...

... 13 ...

Notes

ST. JOHN'S - L. ...

ST. PAUL'S - ...

ST. ENDAS 0-10 - 0-16 ST. ...

... ..

... ..

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A selection of the many kind letters of sympathy sent to Gerry's family after his tragic death.

Many came from the GAA community, both local and far reaching places around the world.





Gerry's 50th Birthday

August 2011

Ní dhéanfaidh Gaedhil dearmad oraibh go bráth na breithe
The Gael Will Never Forget You, Until the End of Time

On the occasion of what would have been Gerry's 50th Birthday, a group from the club, joined Gerry's family for a trek to the top of the Mourne Mountains to commemorate the memory of an important Gael and club man, Gerry Devlin. On the 8th August, Gerry would have celebrated his 50th birthday. As important a man as he was to his friends and colleagues at St Enda's, he was and is a much loved and missed father to his sons Gavin and Aidan and husband to Hazel. Gerry Devlin was the senior football manager of the St Enda's senior football team when he was murdered by the LVF at the club house at 2300 on 5th December 1997.

It was a Friday night and was in fact the last night that the club would occupy its old fortress type club house, as the new premises which the club presently enjoy was ready to be inhabited. The Friday night was a leaving night for the clubs stalwarts who had stewarded the club through the dark and difficult obstacles presented by the Troubles throughout the 70's / 80's and 90's.

Just 6 months previously, the LVF had kidnapped and murdered the Chairman of Bellaghy Wolfe Tones, Sean Brown, and it appeared the GAA was under attack. The St Enda's club was on the brink of a new generation in its history and the hopes and dreams which the future held were struck by the fact that one of the main architects of the clubs ambition would not be there to guide and enjoy their fruition.

St Enda's, as they had done after the murder of their President Sean Fox in 1993 rallied to the Devlin family as did the wider GAA family. The Bellaghy club and the Browne family provided personal succour and sympathy.

Then GAA President, Joe McDonough, in attendance at Gerry's funeral, said *"The GAA is a large family and I urge Irish people at home and abroad to stand by those such as St Enda's who are in most need at this time of fear"*.

The Devlin family are one of the many stalwart families, without whom, clubs would not exist. Since the early 1970's Seamus Devlin imbued in his children with a Gaelic ethos. Indeed, whereas the Devlin family are readily identified as a football people with all 5 sons, Michael, Gerry, Kevin and twins Liam and Eamon having represented St Enda's with distinction in senior football, (as well as sisters Una and Angela in camogie) it is a fact which the family take great pride in, that their father Seamus was one of the pioneer juvenile hurling coaches in the 70's, which is marked by the fact that the minor hurler of the year still receives a trophy in his name. One of Kevin's earliest memories of his gaelic identity is the travels that were undertaken in 1969 following the Antrim under 21 team which would win Antrim's only All Ireland football title. Kevin recalls how he and Gerry kept a scrap book of the press clippings of the wins.

Gerry quickly marked himself out as a footballer of distinction. He played minor county football, on the same panel as Ger Rogan, and graduated very early to the senior team of the early 1980's. The St Enda's teams of the mid 1980's was peppered with exceptional talent, in addition to the Devlin brothers, there were four Prenter brothers Eamon, Ciaran, Fergal and Brendan, John and Eugene Burns, Mickey Lemon, Danny McGrinder, Ray Kid Farrell, Dermot McCoy, Ray Rafferty, Liam Goodfellow and Sean Hughes

In 1988 St Enda's would win the ACFL Div 2, winning the final game of the season at St Pauls in January 1989. Independent reports reveal that Gerry single handedly insured victory that day. The 1988 season was a season where only 2 games were lost, one league game in mid week in Ahoghill which was avenged at Hightown, and then losing the IFC final to Ballymena having beaten them twice in the league. After 32 years in existence St Enda's had finally secured tenancy in the premier league of Antrim football.

Gerry would unfortunately suffer from the modern day phenomenon of the curse of the cruciate injury, twice. The first injury was met with a resistance typical of Gerry. The surgery and subsequent recovery period can be daunting for professional athletes with all that modern science has to offer, much less an amateur Gaelic Footballer in the 1980's, trying to keep a full time job. But Gerry threw himself into it with characteristic perseverance and determination. Gerry had a chair specially made with a small iron bar across it. Kevin remembers going to visit and while they were talking Gerry would be exercising his leg back and forwards strengthening the key muscles around the knee. The initial prognosis was poor but nobody was surprised when he returned to senior football within a year. He started with the reserves and quickly discovered a real talent for nurturing the young talent and cajoling the best from those around him. During his second match back, he injured his other knee, again the dreaded cruciate, and from then on Gerry assumed a calling for management, indeed he was ahead of his time. Kevin recalls:

"He was 26 or 27 at the time, so when he did go into management it was very early. But he observed how football was changing, that it was getting faster and the players were fitter, Gerry demanded respect, but also returned it to players. Players weren't told not to drink before matches, they were expected not to. He would get other coaches in from all over the province to take a session, which would have been unheard of at that time. He kept A4 diaries, which record who attended training, who was late for training, who scored what in the matches, who played well, and badly. He would have the team written out 2 days before a fixture, and the division's results from the Irish News the day after, keeping an eye on teams to watch."

Gerry recognised the need of a team bond, and the confidence which comes from camaraderie. Gerry organised sponsored cycles to Dublin, as well as many a pre season 'bus run', legendary 7's weekends in Letterkenny, but always kept focus on the importance of preparation.

Indeed such was his attention to detail, he appreciated by the end of 1994, and a top half league finish, that perhaps a fresh approach and input was required. He took a magnanimous decision to invite Frank Dawson to take the team, with Gerry assisting, for the 1995 season. St Enda's were by now a regular fixture in the senior club championship, dominated by St Johns, St Pauls and Cargin, and the 95 season ended a semi final championship, the furthest St Enda's ever progressed, losing to the eventual winners St Pauls. Dawson was later snapped up by the Down county hurling team and Gerry returned to the senior management role, again promoting and nurturing young players such as Pearse McCallan, Mickey Coogan, Kevin McKeown, Charlie O'Kane, Tommy Kelly, all of whom would take St Enda's through to the new century.

After Gerry was murdered, the first decision taken by the senior football panel was to name the player of the year in his memory. It is still the most prestigious honour awarded every year at the club's Annual Dinner. A plaque was also erected and sits proudly at the front of the club, marking forever, Gerry's memory and importance to St Enda's. The Bellaghy club have also remained constant in their bond with St Enda's. During the 50th Anniversary celebrations of 2006, Bellaghy senior footballers willingly accepted an invitation to play in a Gerry Devlin Memorial Tournament at Easter, along with Omagh St Enda's and then reigning Ulster champions St Gall's. St Gall's and Bellaghy won through to the final to recreate the previous year's Ulster SFC final, St Gall's won the trophy but the imperious Ronan Rocks stood alone as player of the tournament. This year Bellaghy have agreed to return with their under 14's and will play the All Ireland Féile winning St Enda's under 14's at 1400 this coming Sunday. The centre focus of the weekends celebrations will be the return of the Mourne Mountaineers to the club where all will enjoy a hard earned BBQ which will also be celebrated by many of Gerry's former team mates, and charges.

It is in the spirit of solidarity that Brian Curran and Ciaran McCavana have organised this year's commemorative walk. There are still places available to partake, and anyone interested should phone Brian on 07803854331. Brian states that he and Ciaran were inspired by the inscription on the club Memorial Stone, a quote from Pádraig Pearse, which stands proudly at the front door of the club,

Ní dhéanfaidh Gaedhil dearmad oraibh go bráth na breithe

The Gael Will Never Forget You, Until the End of Time

St Enda's have not forgotten their fallen Gael, Gerry, nor do I think they ever will.

(Liam Murphy) North Belfast News Thursday 11th August 2011



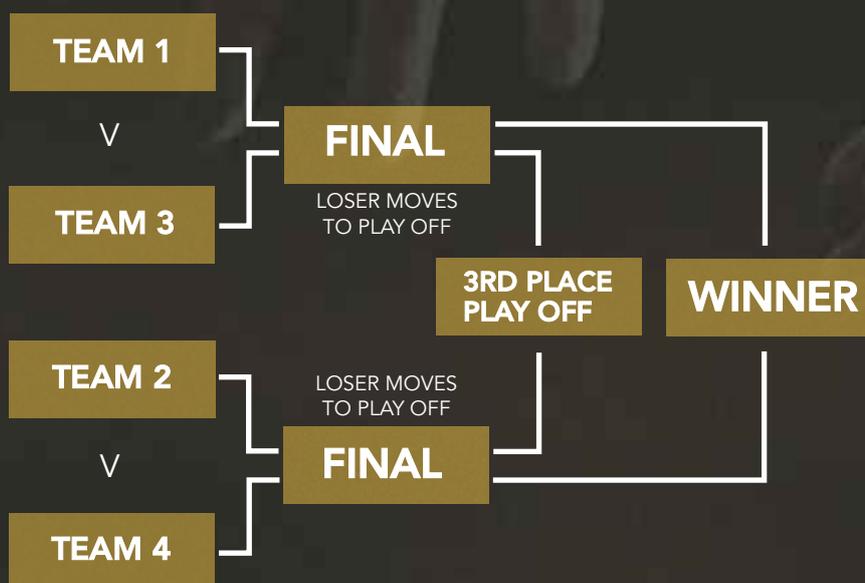
The Teams

TEAM 1 - MICKEY DEVLIN - MANAGER

TEAM 2 - EAMON DEVLIN - MANAGER

TEAM 3 - LIAM DEVLIN - MANAGER

TEAM 4 - KEVIN DEVLIN - MANAGER





The Players

TEAM 1 - LIAM DEVLIN (MANAGER)

JOHN FINUCANE
ENDA HAYES
PETER KANE
DAMIAN GAULT
BARRY LEMON
PAT O'HARA
CHRIS CRAIG
CIARAN MCCAVANA
BRENDY PRENTER
GERMANUS MCGRINDER
SEAN O'CONNOR
JAMES HIGGINS
DEE MC NAMEE
LARRY GOURLEY
GERDY MCMAHON
DANNY MCGRINDER

TEAM 3 - MICKEY DEVLIN (MANAGER)

PAUL COPELAND
NIALL DEVLIN
TOMMY KELLY
MICKEY COOGAN
RAY FARRELL
STEVIE DOWDS
MARTIN SCOTT
EAMONN PRENTER
NIALL MURPHY
PADDY COOGAN
JOE BRIERS
MARTY QUINN
KEVIN MCKEOWN
BRENDY MCGINN
CIARAN BROWNE

TEAM 2 - EAMON DEVLIN (MANAGER)

JOE MCCARVILL
KEVIN DEVLIN JNR
PHIL CURRAN
MAURICE WALSH
BRENDY O'HARA
NEIL MCCLEERY
JAMES ROGERS
KIERAN PRENTER
DERMOT MAGUIRE
DECLAN STEELE
DIXIE MCATEER
JOHN CURRAN
MICKEY FERGUSON
THOMAS MCNULTY
GAVIN CURRAN
CONOR HEANEY

TEAM 4 - KEVIN DEVLIN (MANAGER)

MICKEY LEMON
CONOR DEVLIN
CHARLIE O'KANE
PADDY DORNAN
MICKEY SCOTT
SEAN HUGHES
VINNY MCCAFFREY
FEARGHAL PRENTER
PEARSE MCCALLIN
MARTIN SHERLOCK
MARK MOONEY
PAUL DARBY
BRENDAN MCCANN
DAMIAN O'KANE
GERARD MCNULTY
MICKEY NAGLE
PHILLY SMYTH

Gerry Devlin

Player of the Year Award

From 2000...

2000	- MICHAEL COOGAN	2009	- GERARD MCNAMEE
2001	- MICHAEL COOGAN	2010	- PADDY COOGAN
2002	- CHARLIE O'KANE	2011	- DAMIEN GAULT
2003	- PAUL DARBY	2012	- DAMIEN GAULT
2004	- DAMIEN GAULT	2013	- DAMIEN GAULT
2005	- TERRY MCGOLDRICK	2014	- RYAN KENNEDY
2006	- CARL CUNNINGHAM	2015	- CONOR MAXWELL
2007	- GERARD CROSSEY	2016	- SEAN MCCULLAGH
2008	- PETER MCKILLEN		



2000/2001
MICHAEL COOGAN



2002
CHARLIE O'KANE



2007 - GERARD CROSSEY



2008 - PETER MCKILLEN



2009 - GERARD MCNAMEE



2010 - PADDY COOGAN



2004/2011/2012/2013 - DAMIEN GAULT



2014 - RYAN KENNEDY



2015 - CONOR MAXWELL



CONOR MAXWELL RECEIVING - GERRY DEVLIN AWARD



2016 - SEAN MCCULLAGH





Ní dhéanfaidh Gaedhíl dearmad
ort go bráth na breithe



The Gael Will Never Forget You,
Until the End of Time

St Enda's have not forgotten their fallen Gael, Gerry,
nor do I think they ever will.

Kevin Devlin

Many of us here today perhaps don't realise that they were part of history for this club 20 years ago.

On the first weekend of December in 1997 we were supposed to be saying goodbye to the old club and hello to our new premises, but those plans were changed cruelly, with the murder of Gerry.

The first time we collectively gathered in our new facilities was for our Gerry's post burial reception. Our fellow member, senior football manager, committee man, friend, brother, father and son had just been led to rest in Carnmoney Cemetery and the very first day this club opened, we were having a funeral.

WHAT WERE OUR THOUGHTS THEN?

That was a dark and difficult time for all of us. I don't know how we got through it.

Today we are again making history, but this time for all the right reasons. We are here celebrating Gerry's life, his family life, club life and social life.

I cannot say thank you enough to so many people, but will say on behalf of the family, that we are all overwhelmed by the support, actions, words of all who took part in this occasion, (playing, refereeing, writing memories, organising events, supplying food, decorating or serving food and drink)

A special thanks most go to Charlie, Niall, Martin and Ciaran for without them this would not have happened. THANK YOU.

They say time is a healer. I say you can't beat family, friends, team mates, club mates all together make it better. Being part of a club, a club like St.Endas, a unique club in its own right, gives us the strength.

I am so proud to be a St Enda's man and I know 3 other special people, Dad, Mum, and Gerry would also be very proud today.

A big THANK YOU again to all concerned, let's keep improving and moving forward (like Gerry) our unique and special club.

Naomh Éanna Abú
Gerry Devlin Abú

Go raith maith agaibh

naomh éanna
suanaithe 1956

naomh éanna gaeilic dearmad ort go raibh do breithe



ad fíorh réad ó aird
och sábháil misereach inár gcraicbe
dúine ar chuid na dáiré gaeilic
naomh éanna gaeilic dearmad ort
naomh éanna gaeilic dearmad ort
naomh éanna gaeilic dearmad ort
naomh éanna gaeilic dearmad ort

A tribute to the brave men and women whose Dedication and Courage
enabled many of us to enjoy the life we have today. We are proud of you and hope





ST ENDA'S FIRST EVER SENIOR FOOTBALL
CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM - SEPTEMBER 1993



ALL COUNTY
1984 DIVISION 3
WINNERS MEDAL



GERRY DEVLIN
MEMORIAL MEDAL



ALL COUNTY
1988 DIVISION 2
WINNERS MEDAL



Ní dhéanfaidh Gaedhil dearmad
ort go bráth na breithe