

Ciarán Carr Foundation



Newsletter April- June 2013

A Special Message

Since our launch on April 4th this year, we have been busy fundraising for the Foundation. To begin with after the success of A Night for Ciarán in 2012, which raised a substantial amount for CRY, we organised another fundraising night in our Club, and what a super night it turned out to be. We had a gathering of family, friends and supporters with many displaying their musical talents from the young Colm Gavin to the slightly older Farmer & Friends. Our CD, ‘Carrsie’s Song’, was also launched on this night. This song was written by our own Conor Mc Grath, who played with Ciarán on the senior football team, and is lead singer and saxophone player with “The Fitzafrenics”. It all came about one evening following Ciarán's passing when all the team had gathered in the club and Conor pulled out his guitar. The rest is history. When we heard the song we decided to have it recorded and it has been a great success. Many thanks to all who gave their time that night, we truly appreciate all your support.

On June 3rd last 55 family, friends and neighbours completed the mini marathon. We had a great day helped along by some beautiful weather. A thousand thanks to all that competed for us and needless to say we are in shock as we have by far exceeded our expectations.

Recently, we received a gift of a defibrillator from Heart Safety Solutions. We are delighted to announce that this will be going to Scruleen National School and the Foundation has also undertaken to train six of the teaching staff in its use.

Since we started the Foundation we have been blessed with the amount of support we have been getting from many different people. Round Towers Senior

Football Team did a sponsored run which took place in Liffey Valley which raised €1,000, many thanks again lads. Colaiste Bride had a Talent Night, and donated €715, this money has been put towards their second defibrillator which they will have before the start of the coming school year. Many thanks to Clondalkin Credit Union for their kind donation of €250 and also to Louise Scott who organised a fundraiser in Towers and donated €283. The GAA for Dads had a challenge game against the 1993 Feile winners which was a very entertaining match and they also donated. Many thanks to you all.

At present we are doing very well and hopefully it will continue that way, thank you to all who have constantly supported us ever since we lost Ciarán. We hope that you will continue to keep the Foundation close to all your hearts.

Gemma & Philip Carr

A Family Friend

It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of Catherine Kelly after a short illness. Eamonn, Catherine's son, grew up playing for Round Towers with Ciarán. Catherine was a dear friend who opened the doors of her home in Wicklow to Ciarán and his teammates on a number of occasions when they were growing up so they could enjoy the pool and local beach. Our families also holidayed together on a number of occasions and we hold dear the memories from these occasions.

Catherine battled bravely against her illness and never lost her sense of humour, even in the closing stages of her life. She died surrounded by her three children, Amy, Craig and Eamonn. She truly was an inspiration to us all and will remain in our hearts forever.

Foundation Launches in Croke Park



On April 4th, 2013 the Ciarán Carr Foundation was officially launched in Croke Park by Ciarán's parents, Gemma and Philip, Dublin senior football manager and Clondalkin native Jim Gavin and teammates, family and friends of Ciarán.

Philip spoke of the difficulty of losing an only child but added "If there was any consolation it came in the fact that he died doing what he loved alongside his friends and the support we have received from so many in the period since, has been immense." This support led to a huge fundraising effort in March 2012 which raised over €24,000 for the CRY unit in Tallaght Hospital.



Following on from this success it was decided that a charity in Ciarán's own name should be established. "We launch this initiative with the intention of not only honouring Ciarán but in the hope of making a tangible difference by informing people of this condition and also by educating them about how to deal with it should they be faced with this prospect." Philip also urged any youngster who may be feeling unwell to speak out, whether they are entering a sporting arena or otherwise.

Dublin manager Jim Gavin, who attended with Dublin corner back Kevin O'Brien, spoke of his memories of Ciarán when he had played under him for the Dublin u21 team. "On the night of January 12 2011, Ciarán Carr played at right corner forward for the Dublin U21 football team during a challenge game against Derry. That night Ciarán displayed all the skills he had honed on the playing fields of Clondalkin, and I vividly remember catching the eye of his proud parents Philip and Gemma as they stood on the sideline, watching their son don the sky blue jersey."

He went on to say his loss was deeply felt by the Dublin GAA community but the strength and courage shown by Gemma and Philip has been inspirational.

"SADS has had a devastating impact on the sporting fields of this island. The Ciarán Carr Foundation encourages all sports managers and trainers to become proactive about learning about SADS. It encourages clubs to properly resource their training and playing facilities with the necessary equipment to fight SADS, so when the time comes a life can be saved; not lost."

Special thanks to Alan Milton for his exceptional work in organizing the event.

Launch Night in Round Tower GAA Club

A huge crowd turned out to support the launch of the Ciarán Carr Foundation on Saturday April 6th. There was music from Farmer & Friends, Colm Gavin and to top it off Conor McGrath performed 'Carrsie's Song'.

Conor, in the week following Ciarán's death in January 2012 wrote a song. It went down better than expected and became an instant hit among Ciarán's teammates, friends and family. After numerous performances in the clubhouse it was decided that the song should be recorded to preserve a bit of Towers history, it being the only song ever to be penned about the senior football team.

The song itself is based on a game in the summer of 2011 where the senior team travelled to Fingallians GAA grounds to take on the Swords side. On a sticky June night Towers struggled to get their rhythm going and Ciarán was introduced as a second half substitute. After some impressive build up play Ciarán scored a memorable goal from distance, which put the Towers ahead in the game. Unfortunately they could not hold on and slipped to a two point defeat. However the memories of that goal lived on.

The CD which featured some of Ciarán's teammates for the final chorus went on sale on the night and all funds went to the Foundation.

Overall the night was a massive success and a worthy sum was raised.

Donation of Defibrillator from Heart Safety Solutions

Round Towers have enjoyed a long relationship with the lads in Heart Safety Solutions. They provide defibrillators, accessories and also provide training.

In the coming months the Foundation and Heart Safety Solutions will come together to launch the Fones4Life campaign, a worthy cause that has been run by Heart Safety for many years.

In a show of goodwill they also donated a defibrillator to the Foundation to be distributed to another worthy cause. After much deliberation it was decided that this defibrillator should go to Ciarán's former school, Scruleen National School, Clondalkin. The Principal Liam Kelly, was delighted to accept this offer as the school, with a large student base, did not have one to hand.

Michelle Walsh has now trained six teachers in the use of this device and it will be situated in the school when the new school year begins.

Once again a big thank you must go to Heart Safety Solutions for all their help, we hope that we will enjoy a lasting relationship with this local business.

Training Begins



A key aim of the Ciarán Carr Foundation is to train managers, coaches and players in the use of CPR and how to use a defibrillator. For a number of years prior to Ciarán's death this work was carried out by Michelle Walsh in her capacity as the club's medical officer. Her relentless efforts brought two defibrillators to the club and she gave up her time to train many people how to use them.

This effort was justified on January 20th 2012, the night Ciarán collapsed and died. Although he could not be saved there were numerous people on hand to help him, the majority of who had been trained by Michelle.

Michelle teamed up with the Foundation from the beginning and her skills are vital in advancing the goals of this charity. There is a chronic shortage of people who are trained to mentor people in the use of a defibrillator and private firms offer this service at a cost of over €600.

With the help of the Ciarán Carr Foundation Michelle can now offer training for as little as €10 for club members.

Round Tower GAA Club have a code of best practice which recommends that all mentors have training in CPR and in the use of a defibrillator. The Foundation aims to train these mentors but they must be willing to meet us halfway and turn up at the designated times. Standing idly by while a player fights for their life is not acceptable in any walk of life and it cannot be accepted in a sporting club who have already paid the ultimate price.

Anyone who would like to avail of this training please contact the Foundation at ciarancarrfoundation@gmail.com or on Facebook or Twitter

Screening Our Players

In the aftermath of Ciarán's untimely death his senior football teammates were required to fill in the GAA approved cardiac questionnaire and were screened by a local doctor using a twelve point ECG. Thankfully each player received the all clear and required no further tests.

In January 2013 all players who came to the club to be registered were required to fill in the GAA questionnaire. This poses a variety of short questions which cover a number of known symptoms which can lead to complications. Gemma, Ciarán's mother, Betty Ward, Catherine Moran and Noel Kelly all took the time to talk players and parents through the process which took only a couple of minutes. On foot of this each questionnaire was examined by a medical professional and any follow up enquiries were made on a confidential basis. Any players who raised concerns were encouraged to see their GP.

It is vital that players and parents are aware that further treatment is readily available if a person requires it. In the majority of cases further tests reveal that there is nothing to be alarmed about. However, it is the small majority that concern us. Medical advances in this area allow people who suffer from a condition in this field to go on and lead a perfectly normal life. Fabrice Muamba, the British footballer who collapsed in March 2012, is testament to this. He has gone on to get married, father a second child and raise awareness about SADS in the United Kingdom.

Below is a link to the GAA player welfare page and the questionnaire. If you would like the Foundation to review the questionnaire please get in contact with us http://www.gaa.ie/content/documents/publications/player_welfare/Cardiac_Screening_GAA_Updated_Dec21.pdf

A Third Defibrillator

Sally Gilligan and Carol Cryan, prior to the establishment of the Foundation, ran collection initiatives in order to raise funds to purchase a third defibrillator. Due to the sheer number of teams and the demand for pitches the Club have to make use of pitches in a number of different locations, Monastery Road, Moyle Park, the Community Centre and Corkagh Park. The first two have defibrillators that are readily accessible. Unfortunately the remote location of the pitches in Corkagh Park and also the Community Centre make it difficult to access a defibrillator within a reasonable time period.

The third defibrillator has gone some way to rectify this as it is mobile. However it requires that a team manager takes responsibility for it and ensure that it is not misplaced.

In the coming months the Foundation along with its partners on the executive of Round Towers will be actively seeking to put in place an effective method which will allow this third defibrillator to be in attendance at the vast majority of matches.

Flora Women's Mini Marathon

The Mini Marathon is a key event in the diaries of charities all over Ireland. It offers competitors the chance to have a great day out and also raise money for a great cause. For the past couple of years the weather has been excellent on marathon day and this year was no exception. With the sun splitting the rocks over 40,000 ladies (some suspiciously masculine) took to the 10k track. Gemma had assembled fifty five ladies to take part in aid of the Ciarán Carr Foundation and true to the cause each completed the 10k in excellent time.



Afterwards, along with the ladies who competed for Round Towers and the Irish Cancer Society, a barbeque was held in the clubrooms and the competitors were able to replace some of the lost fluids!

Well done to all who took part. If you have any queries regarding returning sponsorship cards please do not hesitate to email us or get in contact with us via Facebook.

Other Fundraising Initiatives

Colaiste Bride, the local girls school, raised €715 when they held a talent show in the school in May. This amount has gone towards providing the school with a second defibrillator which will be available when the new school term starts. This state of the art secondary school, recently renovated, is a huge building and having two defibrillators is essential.

Many thanks to Louise Scott who held a fundraising night in the club in June at which various make up accessories were sold and the proceeds donated to the Foundation.

Future Initiatives

This is an exciting period for our growing charity. In the coming months we hope to launch other initiatives which will impact Clondalkin and its surrounding areas and also the wider GAA community. Here are just a few examples of what we have lined up in the coming months.

- In partnership with Heart Safety Solutions we will be inviting GAA clubs across the country to enter into the Fones4Life campaign. This worthy venture will allow GAA clubs to get a defibrillator by collecting used mobile phones. The boxes are distinctive so look out for them!

- In the coming months we hope to announce a joint fundraising venture, keep an eye on Facebook for more details.

- We hope to continue training and providing refresher classes to all members of Round Tower GAA Club.

Thank you