Carryduff GAC

Culture Report 2019-2020

The culture committee decided to take a broader approach to developing the scope of culture activities for 2019-2020 with the aim of having a wider reach to club members and also to what culture means.

We continued with our music and irish language classes on Wednesday evenings with numbers being smaller than previous years but steady commitment from all involved. We have now linked with the new Irish Language Officer in the Ulster Council and hope to develop this further over 20/21. Unfortunately, our young people were not able to attend Gaelteacht this year due to COVID-19 but our support for County Board, Liofa, Feis an Dún and Club scholarship funds will be available in the future. We have made links with the Joe McDonagh Foundation and were planning to engage in their award scheme to access funding. We will continue to pursue this when appropriate. However, one of the aims that can be achieved over the next year is the development of bilingual signage within the club grounds. Thank you to Matthew Adams and Dara McCaughey for your great skills and teaching. We are richer for the time you spend with us all.

We restarted our singing circle with many new members. John Toal encouraged everyone to find their voices and taught a wide range of songs. The research behind group singing is developing and it is reported to be very beneficial for mental, physical and brain health.

There was minimal participation in Scór this year and this will be revisited in the year ahead.

Briege Moley’s series of four history lectures was a new item for the Culture calendar and was extremely successful with participants of all ages and codes attending. Many people have requested further lectures and we plan to run this over the winter months via zoom.

St Brigid’s Day – make and take Workshop in the Hub was another huge success. Rushes were cut from all round Carryduff and set up in the Hub. We had a guest teacher with Cathy and Margaret O’Hare also joined us to support the teaching. More than 70 people joined the session and the Hub was buzzing with activity. Happy people of all ages rediscovering or learning new skills.

Margaret McCann was due to launch her series of Connections in Irish Poetry lectures at the beginning of March just as COVID-19 arrived and all face-to-face activity had to cease.

As we gathered ourselves together, new activities were launched online to continue keeping connections. Thank you to John Toal, Mark Hollywood and Ed McQuillan for the weekly family quiz. This also allowed us to showcase the film making and dancing talents of some of our younger club members.

Paula McIntyre’s online classes also brought club members together for a fast and furious cooking 45 minutes for a number of weeks. Great fun and great food. Thank you Paula.

Guerrilla gardening was a new activity for the club and again had great participation from members on a number of Saturday mornings planting bulbs for a spring display.

Thank you to Mark McCartan for inviting myself and John Toal to participate in the “Hit the Mark” series to chat about our work within the Culture Committee and programme of events.

Online platforms have been challenging for music and irish language class delivery. However, we will continue to plan and deliver a broad range of activities within the context of COVID-19.

We were very saddened this year with the passing of two good friends within our culture groups. Michael McGlynn was a longstanding musician in our senior session group. A true gentleman who is greatly missed.

Seamus McKeating was our esteemed Irish Language Tutor for a number of years and passed away in September. We will always remember his incredible linguistic skills and his passion for the Irish Language.

Ar dheis De go raibh a anam

Thank you to everyone who has attended and participated in culture activities this year. We will continue with our programme of events throughout the year, welcome ideas and feedback and will continue to promote culture and lifelong participation (GAA Mission Statement)

Ana Marie Magorrian