



**THE
CAMOGIE
ASSOCIATION**
An Cumann Camógaíochta

TELL THEIR STORY





About the Author

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Linda Kenny: Passing the proud tradition of Camogie through the generations

By Alanna Cunnane

Linda Kenny has done it all in Camogie administration terms, and learnt many lessons along the way too.

As she helped to establish a club from the bottom up, guided Carlow Camogie to thrive and has just recently finished her term as Chairperson of Leinster Camogie Council, she points to the people at the core of the work as her main motivator and the reason she does it all.

Inspired and aided by a mentor in her life, Pat O'Brien, Burren Rangers was founded in 2009, setting in motion a series of events that would see Kenny become invested in Camogie within the county.

From PRO at Coiste na nÓg to head of fixtures, secretary, chairperson and treasurer at

the county board, she's also accumulated over 10 years of experience at provincial level, representing the "proud tradition" of Camogie within Carlow.

"When I started out things weren't in great shape. A group of committed people tried our hardest and kept trying and trying, but we actually ended up pulling out of the adult intercounty championship in 2011," she says.

"A few of us got together, with the help of the Leinster Executive at the time and got the Intercounty team back up and running, which took a lot of work but we were glad to see it eventually pay off.



“We set up Under 14 development squads, we built teams to win All Irelands at Under 16 and Under 18 levels, in 2016 and 2017. At adult level then we went on to win the All Ireland Premier Junior Final in Croke Park in 2016 at the first attempt.”

Implementing new structures, a fresh culture and more resources to aid the development of their players and coaches on a limited budget, Kenny can reflect now on just how far things have come.

“We came from a very low base, so when you’re coming from a very low base I suppose any achievement is a big achievement,” she says.

“Winning that raised the profile, we got in a County Sponsor, Sean Swan, which we never had before, and he was so keen to get the name out there, get Camogie out there and it gave us some revenue and additional funds to do things we couldn’t do before.”

Government grants and inspiration bestowed onto the next

generation followed, the fruits of which are still emerging to this day.

“When you have success then there’s more people buying into the story and everyone wants to play Camogie. When we went around to the schools after winning the All Ireland in 2016, there were girls who maybe would have been in first and second class then now coming into our development squads,” she says. “They remembered that and

they bought into wanting to play Camogie.”

One of the important factors in all of this for Kenny were those who accompanied her on that journey.

“One thing about me was I like to bring people with me, and I’ve managed to do that I think in most places,” she says.

“We work together. I don’t like negativity, I’m not into negativity, I always try to see the positive. No doubt there have been bad days but I’ve always stuck with it and





thought that we have to keep going no matter what obstacles are in the way, what bumps in the road there are, because there are too many girls that lose out if we all down tools.

“So many amazing people, administrators, referees, staff and volunteers. I feel we need to have more recognition and supports for volunteers as they are backbone of the Camogie Association,” she says.

Kenny’s work in the space was recognised with the GAA President’s Awards in 2021, an accolade she describes as a “fantastic honour”, so much so that you can literally feel the emotion behind it when she recalls that period in her life.

“It was just after my father had died, early in 2021. I couldn’t believe it, I just kept wondering, ‘why me?’ There were so many other people

more deserving but it’s one that I’ll really treasure to be honest,” she says.

“It’s not about the recognition but it is touching and it does mean a lot to get those on behalf of all the work for the young people in Carlow. I do it for the love of the sport, the love of the game and to ensure that young people, particularly girls, are given the best opportunities they can within Camogie.”

In her work as Leinster Chairperson she did pursue those very goals, alongside additional projects such as the Leinster Camogie Coaching Academy, Caman to Leinster, Social Camogie, encouraging female referees and more. As she says herself, “we’re small in numbers but we’re big in heart,” so there’s no doubt that there’s plenty to come just yet.



Tell Their Story

