



County: Mayo

Nominee: Mary McGreal

The spirit of volunteering in Mary's community of Cathair na Mart was always important to her, and when the Community Games was been developed in County Mayo in the early seventies she felt a duty to get involved in her area of Westport and a couple of years later at county level. The number of events Westport took part in back then were few ie., GAA, Soccer and Athletics. The athletics were ran off in the local GAA pitch and as a result of the success of Community Games athletes an athletic club was formed approx. 1980. Westport area grew and developed and by the mid-eighties they were competing in over twenty events. The very committed local committee consisted of parents, teachers and local community people.

She have enjoyed her years in community games, whether it was at local level, County, Provincial or National. She wishes to thank everyone, my family, local committee, county and provincial officers and all volunteers who have helped me in any way over the years to make community games successful.

Her own children competed in the games. She had twelve years of marathon runners in Mosney but they also helped running the games at local and county level and did their terms as county and provincial youth officers. Now they have their own children competing so they are still involved.

Attending the National AGM as a voting delegate from County Mayo and having an in depth knowledge of motions for discussion which would have been discussed at County Executive level and direction given on how to vote also gave her an opportunity to renew friendships with other county delegates. The camaraderie of volunteers in Community Games no one could ever evaluate.

Mary is honoured to have known Joe Connolly and his colleague Mick Kavanagh, founders of Community Games and their wives, Joe's daughter Joyce and her daughter, who was a medal presentation girl alongside Mary's daughter Noreen.

The highlight for the children participating in Community Games was to qualify for Mosney. Wearing their county tracksuit Mayo travelled by special train from all over the country and arrived at Mosney train station and the thousands of competitors, youth and adult volunteers (some of which were County Managers, local area managers and others who would officiate to help run the finals) making their way across that large green area to the chalets and then eagerly waiting to see what county was going to neighbour Mayo over the weekend. Then the disco on the Friday night was the first disco attended by many a child.