

## GAA Oral History Project

## Interview Report Form

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Regina Fitzpatrick
<b>Date of Interview</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
<b>Location</b>	Páirc Uí Chaoimh, Cork City
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Frank Murphy
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1944 <b>Home County:</b> Cork
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> St Maries of the Isle Convent of Mercy, Cork City <b>Secondary:</b> CBS, Sullivan's Quay, Cork City. <b>Third Level:</b> University College Cork.
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 1 sister (Alice) and 1 brother (Kevin)
<b>Club(s)</b>	Blackrock GAA Club
<b>Occupation</b>	Secretary of Cork County Board (1972 – current)
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Grocery Trade (Lipton's Cork and subsequently supermarket manager) [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	Fianna Fáil
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	N/A

<b>Date of Report</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
<b>Period Covered</b>	1844s – 2013
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Cork, Kilkenny, Dublin, Kerry, Tipperary, Derry, Antrim, Limerick, Americas, Asia, Australasia
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Administration, Alcohol, All-Ireland, Career, Celebrations, Challenges, childhood, earliest memories, Economy/economics, education, family involvement, Emigration, Fundraising, Facilities, Impact on life, Irish history, media, Northern Ireland, officials, playing, politics, professionalism, purchase of grounds, refereeing, relationship with association, relationships, rivalries, role of clergy, role of teachers, role of club in community, Scór, sponsorship, supporting, The Troubles, training, travel, violence, volunteers.
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>In this interview, Frank reflects on a lifetime of involvement in the GAA. He starts by recounting the involvement of his parent's generation in Cork and in Kilkenny and the long tradition of hurling in Blackrock. He describes his early involvement in GAA administration as a thirteen year old, early mentors and how his interest in games administration developed. He reflects on a career in GAA administration mainly focussing on his role as Cork County Secretary a position which he has held for forty years. He also provides a narrative of his involvement at club, provincial and national level along with his refereeing career. Throughout the interview he shares on his views on the GAA nationally and in Cork itself with a focus on the development of rules, facilities and on the community, amateur and voluntary ethos of the association.</p> <p>00:00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:00:25 Born in Ballinlough Parish, which was part of Blackrock Parish originally. Mother's family from Ballinlough. Father, Ambrose, from Kilkenny and played hurling with James Stephen's Club before moving to Cork and playing with the Blackrock Club.</p> <p>00:01:42 History and tradition of hurling in Blackrock going back to 1844. Inevitability of having an interest in hurling being from Blackrock. References quote relating to Blackrock from John P. Power's <i>History of Champions</i>. Mentions other city clubs from the early days including St Finbarr's GAA Club who were great rivals of Blackrock. Glen Rovers and Na</p>

	<p>Piarsaigh came later.</p> <p>00:03:28 Always a deep family interest in the games. Getting involved in organising the Ballinlough parish leagues as a child and representing his part of the parish in meetings. The beginnings of his interest in administration. Representing the club on Cork city under-15 board, aged 15. Board run by Capuchin father called Fr. Nessian (Chairman) and Derry Maher (Secretary) a former Blackrock hurling and father of Tony Maher (Cork hurler). His first ventures into the County Board offices in Cook Street.</p> <p>00:06:25 Father as an ardent Kilkenny man, getting the <i>Kilkenny People</i> every week. Mentions John Farnham. Going to his first all Ireland as a child to support Kilkenny. Attending championship matches in Nowlan Park as a child. His uncle Ned Murphy associated with Nowlan Park in early days.</p> <p>00:08:00 Playing hurling on the road in Ballinlough. Watching out for An Garda Síochána. Mentions Garda Eugene Monaghan who had been a Galway hurler. Tells story about Kevin Cummins and road hurling.</p> <p>00:09:50 Hurling traditionally played at CBS Sullivan's Quay. Mentions Harty Cup victory. Small school compared to North Monastery. Mentions Coláiste Iognáid Rís. Brother McInerney (Clare) very devoted to hurling when he was there. Also mentions Brother Maloney (Tipperary) who was a great promoter of hurling. Mentions Brother Cleary (Tipperary) who was very involved in hurling with Frank when Frank was a teacher there.</p> <p>00:12:50 Hurling really the primary pastime in Blackrock when he was growing up. Gaelic football hadn't taken hold at that point. Challenges of organising football teams as part of underage structure run by hurling club. Recent success of Blackrock GAA Club, particularly at underage level. Lists records held by Blackrock GAA club.</p> <p>00:16:25 Talks about Derry Cremin who was the main organiser of the Blackrock club when Frank was growing up. Mentions Jock's house which was the family home of John Curtis Murphy and which was made available to the Blackrock club for meetings. Being secretary of underage club. Winning Cork Minor Hurling Championship in 1963, defeating St Finbarr's. Victory again in 2013 fifty years on. Mentions the work of Tom Clancy, Ned Kidney and Billy Daly in building the foundations for great club success in the 1970s.</p>
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	<p>00:20:00 Derry Cremin as a mentor to Frank. Senior club run by Ned Cotter. Had been Vice-Chairman of county board for many years, was president of Cork County Board when he died.</p> <p>00:21:50 Description of under-15 board meetings in Cook Street. His initial attraction to GAA administration - being secretary of parish leagues, writing up notes for local paper etc. Continued involved in Blackrock Management Committee.</p> <p>00:25:25 Narrative of roles held within Blackrock GAA club. Includes reference to being minor secretary and senior secretary. Level of organisation and facilities in the club at the time, success of club at the time. Success in the 1970s. Focus on underage teams in 1960s. Describes current facilities and membership of the club. Mentions St Michael's football club.</p> <p>00:28:16 Duties in various roles in the club. Mentions being on selections teams with Eudie Coughlan and John Quirke. Involved in later selection teams with Mick Cashman and John Bennett</p> <p>00:30:28 Childhood heroes of the game. Mentions going to matches with his father, his brother and Paul Dillon. Talks about seeing Christy Ring play and being on a Cork selection committee with him in later years (1970s). All-Ireland victories in 1976, 77 and 78. Description of and stories about Christy Ring.</p> <p>00:43:02 Frank's approach to being on selection committees. Giving pre-match talks and instructions. Mentions Canon Bertie Troy and Canon Michael O'Brien. Success with teams down throughout the years – 61 All-Irelands and 133 Munster championships in his time as Secretary of Cork County Board.</p> <p>00:45:40 Approach to giving prep talks to teams. Emphasis on 'traditional' Cork hurling. Development of hurling as a game – discusses skills and pace. Talks about Eudie Coughlan - his prowess as a player and the records he kept as a player.</p> <p>00:50:50 First impressions as a Blackrock delegate to Cork County Board. Mentions Paddy O'Shea from Adrigole on the Beara Peninsula (and in passing Paddy's nephew Pierce Murphy current county Treasurer). Stories about Dennis Conroy of Carrigtohill club and his contributions at both county board and national congress level. Mentions Weesh</p>
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	<p>Murphy (father of Con Murphy) and Donal Keenan. Mentions British Army occupancy of Casement Park, Belfast.</p> <p>00:57:42 Talks about characters he's met along the way including Gerald McKenna from Kerry. Talks about re-development of Páirc Uí Chaoimh in the 1970s. Story about the dressing rooms in Páirc Uí Chaoimh when the stadium re-opened.</p> <p>1:03:25 Narrative of refereeing career, starting with refereeing in parish leagues. Mentions Michael O'Flaherty. Refereeing National League Hurling Final, Munster Hurling Final, All-Ireland Hurling Final and All-Ireland Club Hurling Final all in 1971 his first year as a senior inter-county referee. Working hard at refereeing, advice he received and his approach to officiating at matches. Mentions Charlie Conway, Paddy Cronin, Mossy Walsh and Pat Stakelum. Discipline in matches in the 1970s and 1980s. Analysing his performance after refereeing matches. Importance of being consistent. Mentions a foul by Fan Larkin in a National League Semi-Final between Wexford and Kilkenny.</p> <p>1:15:18 Mentions refereeing an All-Ireland Club Final between St Ryanagh's and Roscrea held in Birr that stands out in his memory. Mentions particularly tough matches in Co. Clare and two in particular held in Ennis and Crusheen. Mentions a tough match between Glen Rovers and Na Piarasaigh in Cork. Mentions an amusing follow-up to that game involving John Kit Cronin and a team trip to Morocco.</p> <p>1:21:06 Tells a story about refereeing a match in North Kerry. Mentions two of his umpires on the day Paul O'Donovan and Kevin Cummins.</p> <p>1:24:28 Dealing with the pressure and media attention of refereeing. Preparing to referee a match. Running training courses in refereeing. Importance of maintaining control of a match. Cork in a period of dominance during his career - withdrawing from refereeing certain matches in the name of impartiality. Overview of refereeing career. Mentions officiating at a Kilkenny football county final. Mentions Paddy Grace.</p> <p>1:28:28 Refereeing football matches. Involvement in drafting of rules for compromised rules series. Mentions working with Ronan Sawyers of Australia in the first Compromised Rules games. Refereeing all over the world. Refereeing the first International Rules games. Appointment to disciplinary committee for the compromised rules by the AFL on a trip to</p>
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	<p>Australia. Learning about AFL procedures.</p> <p>1:32:05 Involvement in the Rule Book Task Force in Croke Park. Mentions legal team on that task force including Michael O'Connell (son of Mick O'Connell, Kerry), Hugh O'Flaherty, Dan McCartan and Liam Keane.</p> <p>1:34:34 Serving as Chairman of the Games Administration Committee during Joe McDonagh's presidency. Approach to that role. Talks about Rules Advisory Committee. What interests him about the nature of this work. Mentions the Disputes Resolution Authority.</p> <p>1:37:28 Becoming Secretary of Cork County Board in 1972. Mentions Con Murphy, Pádraig O'Caoimh and Seán Murphy. Talks about application procedure, mentions Pat Fanning. Mentions Jim King, Secretary of Dublin County Board.</p> <p>1:40:36 Outline of the big issues at the time he became Secretary. Guidance he received from Con Murphy who had remained on as Honorary Secretary. Financing of the Development of Páirc Uí Chaoimhin 1973. Mentions Siamsa Cois Laoi and artists who performed at the concerts including John Denver, Don McClean, Michael Jackson, U2, The Wolfetones, The Dubliners, The Fury Brothers, Stocktan's Wing and Christy Moore. Mentions Oliver Barry who was the main organiser of these events. Michael Jackson concert ultimately financing the purchase of 'The Flowerbeds' from the Ancient Order of Hibernians which became Páirc Uí Rinn. Developing Páirc Uí Rinn.</p> <p>1:46:57 Recent acquisition of old Christian Brother's grounds at North Monastery. About to undertake the re-development of Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Partnerships in place to finance the re-development. Getting support from clubs to undertake large scale projects. Talks about large scale projects that have been undertaken by clubs in the county. Number of teams and games that Cork County Board are catering for. Talks about various fundraising schemes to raise money for the development of the stadium. Mentions the re-development of Croke Park and praises the vision and decisiveness of Liam Mulvihill and the GAA presidents of that era.</p> <p>1:53:47 Changes in his role and in the GAA in Cork in his time as County Secretary. Increases in numbers of teams, games and competitions. Formation of the Minor Board, initially chaired by Con Murphy. Talks about the structure of Coiste na n-Óg and their responsibility for minor and underage teams. Explains regional division system in Co. Cork. Mentions work of Mark Sheehan and Jim Healy in</p>
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	<p>underage structure. Also mentions Jim Forbes, former Chairman of Cork County Board and of the Central Appeals Committee at National level who is currently Chairperson of the Central Juvenile Committee in Cork. Admires the contribution that former presidents have made back in their home counties after their presidency, e.g. Con Murphy and Christy Cooney. Talks about voluntary service in the GAA more broadly.</p> <p>2:01:15 Working with various different County Chairmen. Mentions Bob Ryan, current county Chairman as his fourteenth.</p> <p>2:02:13 Highlights of his career: Raising money to pay for Páirc Uí Chaoimh; the purchase and the development of Páirc Uí Rinn; successes and defeats of Cork on the field of play; Cork winning the two All-Ireland's in 1990. Denis Conroy was Chairman of the board at the time. Mentions the same feat being achieved in 1890 under two different county Chairmen.</p> <p>2:05:36 Being afforded the freedom to also serve at club level particularly in the 1980s when they had some difficulties around field acquisition. Also being allowed to serve at national level during his time as County Secretary, firstly on the National Development Committee under Mick Loftus. Mentions development in Tallaght and Derry City. Talks about how Derry's Celtic Park development came to happen, mentions Seán Bradley and Con Murphy's involvement. Talks about officially opening the stand dedicated to Seán Mellon.</p> <p>2:09:53 Outlines his various roles at national level – Secretary of Playing Rules Committee under Peter Quinn; on Hurling Development Board under Jack Boothman and getting sponsorship from Guinness for the hurling championship during that time; Chairman of Games Administration Committee and of the Rules Disciplinary Committee under Joe McDonagh; Secretary of Inter-County fixtures scheduling under Seán McCague; Member of Rule Book Task force under Seán Kelly, Nickie Brennan, Christy Cooney and now under Liam O'Neill. Mentions the support of the board and the assistance of the staff in Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Sees these roles as part of his voluntary service. Talks about how those in paid roles in the Association should also serve in a voluntary capacity.</p> <p>2:12:32 Tells a story about the workings of the Games Administration Committee – 'Under the lamp' meetings.</p> <p>2:14:54 Story about the selection of a delegate from</p>
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	<p>Blackrock for the county minor selection committee and the controversy that followed.</p> <p>2:17:35 Discusses serving on Munster Council. Mentions Con Murphy, Jack Barrett, Denis Conroy and Pierce Murphy. Talks about their role in development of club and county grounds, games development, running of provincial championships.</p> <p>2:20:01 Talks more generally about how the GAA organises their games and finances and their role as a community body. Outlines his view on pay for play and payment of coaches at club and county level. Emphasises the GAA's commitment to the community, amateur and voluntary basis.</p> <p>2:26:27 Balancing amateur status with professional standards. Treatment of players locally and nationally in terms of expenses, welfare and the provision of an acceptable standard of facilities. Compares the GAA to other sporting bodies in Ireland and the importance of remaining focussed on the ethos of the GAA – specifically the community and cultural aspects of that ethos. Mentions the recent acknowledgement of the First Minister in Northern Ireland of the peacekeeping role of the GAA there.</p> <p>2:30:55 Outlines his views on the disputes in Cork GAA in the 2000s. Personal toll on him and his family. Resonance of that dispute in Cork.</p> <p>2:34:10 Reflects on the job description that was given to him when he took on the role of County Secretary and how that role has changed and expanded. Mentions development of grounds; running the two stadia; the development of sponsorship including that of Barry's Tea, Esat Digifone; O2; Chill, TSB the the Evening Echo; financial and organisational commitment; moving forward as an association in one voice.</p> <p>2:38:33 Early ambition in life was to be a teacher, also worked as a regional manager for a publishing company. Growing into the job of County Secretary. Interest in local history still.</p> <p>2:40:28 Daily routine – dealing with disputes and working long hours. Mentions the appointment of new senior administrator, Diarmuid O'Donovan who deals with fixtures, strategic reviews etc. alleviating some of Frank's workload. Talks about the workload associated with the new re-development of Páirc Uí Chaoimh and working with the various stakeholders involved - discussions with city council, local residents, the</p>
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	<p>government, the GAA centrally.</p> <p>2:45:25 Time commitment of the role of County Secretary.</p> <p>2:46:18 Lack of interest in the role of GAA President. Talks about the joy of loving a sport and working for its development. Mentions camogie and ladies football.</p> <p>2:49:16 Reflects on the heart of his interest in the GAA. Mentions the national aspect, the community aspect and the diaspora aspect.</p> <p>2:50:33 Proudest moments – referring All-Ireland Senior Hurling Finals; celebrating two All-Ireland in the same year (1990) ; proud of the contribution Cork has made at national level. Talks about the ups and downs of his involvement with the GAA and friendships made along the way.</p>
<p><b>Involvement in GAA</b></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____</p>
<p><b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>Played hurling at underage and Junior B level.</p>
<p><b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>Secretary of Ballinlough Parish league Committee aged 13; Blackrock juvenile delegate to Cork City under 15 board aged 15; Minor secretary of Blackrock GAA Club (1960s); Senior Secretary of Blackrock GAA Club (1960s); Minor selector for Blackrock (1960s); Senior selector with Blackrock (1970s)</p> <p>Blackrock delegate to Cork County Board (1960s); Elected to the executive of Cork County Board (1960s); Selector with Cork underage teams (1960s-70s); Secretary of Cork County Board (1972 – current).</p> <p>Cork delegate to Munster Council (1978 – current); Chairman of Munster Referees Committee.</p> <p>Member of National Rule Book Task Force under Nickey Brennan; Member of National Rules Advisory Committee under Christy Cooney and Liam O’Neill; Chairman of National Rules Drafting Committee. Also has been a member of the following national committees: Games Administration Committee; Fixtures Committee; Hurling Development Committee; Referees Committee; International Rules</p>

**REFERENCE NO. CK/1/34**

	Committee. <b>Refereeing:</b> Started refereeing at the age of 15. Has refereed at all levels including the All-Ireland Senior Hurling Finals (1971 and 1981); All Ireland Senior Club Finals (1971); All Ireland Minor Hurling Final (1984); Leinster and Munster Finals; club and county fixtures at all levels.
<b>Format</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
<b>Duration</b>	Length of Interview: 2:53:57
<b>Language</b>	English

**To be filled in by Interviewer:**

I hereby assign the copyright of the content of the above to the GAA Oral History Project on the understanding that the content will not be used in a derogatory manner. I understand that I am giving the GAA Oral History Project the right to use and make available to the public the content of this interview.

Signed:            Regina Fitzpatrick

Date:              24<sup>th</sup> October 2013