

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	21 st July 2012
Location	Mick's home, near Galmoy, Co. Kilkenny
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Mick Fitzpatrick (also present Ciss Fitzpatrick)
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1936 Home County: Kilkenny
Education	Primary: Galmoy NS, Co. Kilkenny
Family	Siblings: 1 brother & 4 sisters Current Family if Different: Wife (Ciss); 1 son (Declan), 2 daughters (Michelle & Regina)
Club(s)	Galmoy Hurling Club [Kilkenny]
Occupation	Retired Shopkeeper
Parents' Occupation	Farm labourer [Father]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Various Parish Committees, Galmoy Set dancers.

REFERENCE NO. KK/1/30

Date of Report	25 th August 2012
Period Covered	1930 – 2012
Counties/Countries Covered	Kilkenny, Tipperary, Laois, Wexford, Cork
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Refereeing, Celebrations, Emigration, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Food and Drink, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds
Interview Summary	<p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:44 Talks about his upbringing in Rathbane outside of Galmoy, one field away from the Laois border.</p> <p>01:08 Description of Galmoy village in his childhood – Judy Cahill's pub, Hennessy's pub, Fennelly's post office, Mrs Harte's shop, Costigan's shop.</p> <p>01:51 Rationing during the war – going from shop to shop to try to get supplies, cigarettes, candles etc. Shortage of paraffin oil.</p> <p>02:30 Discusses the history of his shop which had previously been Molly Long's shop and then Miss Ryan's shop.</p> <p>03:20 Galmoy mainly a farming area. Many small farmers in the area in his childhood. Decline of the population of the area as families used to be bigger.</p> <p>04:15 Galmoy NS built in 1939, Mick started there in 1942.</p> <p>04:42 No history of playing hurling in Mick's family but always an interest in matches.</p> <p>04:49 No hurling fields when he was growing up, people made up their own fields and their own teams in different townlands.</p> <p>05:40 Galmoy hurling club starting in the 1930s. Mentions Peter Leahy, the Brophys, Dick Scott and Johnnsie Harte as prominent people in the club in his childhood. Johnnsie was secretary of the club.</p> <p>06:23 First memory of seeing Galmoy playing was in 1949 when they started up a team again after a lapse of a couple of years. Previously Galmoy had a county final overturned on</p>

	<p>them because they brought players in from Rathdowney and Moyne.</p> <p>08:05 Mick remembers when the team got back together again in 1949. No schools or minor team in his childhood, underage hurling was very limited in North Kilkenny at the time,</p> <p>08:44 Hurling everyday at lunchtime in school – they played Kilkenny v Laois games as there were so many pupils from Laois. Playing with Scott’s broken hurls. Children playing with crooked sticks.</p> <p>10:02 The acquisition of Bob Shea’s field from a relative of his in America for the parish by Fr Guinan. School and hurling field developed on the site.</p> <p>11:16 Fields around the village where hurling had previously been played included: Seánie Phelan’s field and a field up near Costigans.</p> <p>12:55 Galmoy’s progress from 1949 after they had been beaten in the 1949 County Final. Galmoy joining with Johnstown and Urlingford under the three parish rule.</p> <p>13:31 Tullarone, Éire Óg, Dicksboro, Tullaroan, Graigue-Ballycallan, Mooncoin and Carrickshock were the only senior teams in Kilkenny at the time. Galmoy players playing with Tullaroan including Billy Cositngan and Paddy Spenser.</p> <p>15:34 Beginning of the parish rule in 1954. Billy Costigan and Willow Gannon returning to play from Galmoy. Narrowly beaten by Carrickshock in the county final of that year.</p> <p>16:44 Excitement of going to matches on the bus, few cars at that time. Kavanagh’s bus or Tom Renihan’s bus used, later Jack Brophy hurled himself and brought the bus. People also cycled to matches to places like Freshford. Cars only became popular in the 1950s.</p> <p>18:25 Railing around the hurling field in Freshford. Charge of 1 shilling for the match and half a crown for the bus. Running in with the players to get to sit on the sideline as a child. Billy Dollard would get them on to the bus.</p> <p>19:45 Stopping at Hop Doyle’s in Freshford for tea, others would go to the pub.</p> <p>20:12 Being on the bus with Murt and Nicholas Ryan, Michael Hennessy and the McCormacks.</p> <p>20:50 Freshford was the main venue for matches in North</p>
--	---

	<p>Kilkenny at the time.</p> <p>21:09 Nowlan Park at that time being like Croke Park for Galmoy, South Kilkenny teams favoured at the time.</p> <p>21:47 Had some success in Nowlan Park, had a reasonably good Junior team in the 1950s. Beaten in the county final in 1954.</p> <p>22:15 Players on the 1954 team: Willow Gannon, Ger Daly, Joe Scott and Tommy Brophy, Tommy Lennon, Rody O'Neill and Murt Ryan, Dick Cormack, Billy Costigan, Bunty Costigan, Jack Brophy, Billy Dunne, Michael and Seamus Hennessy and Jack Brophy. Subs: Ker Murphy, Charlie Doherty, Mattie Phelan, Fr Delaney.</p> <p>23:45 Johnstown had a strong team in 1955. Row at a match between Galmoy and Johnstown at a match in Freshford. Replayed two weeks later and Galmoy won. Galmoy beaten later that year.</p> <p>25:36 In 1964 Galmoy got to a county final and were beaten by The Rower Inistiogue. Match played late in the year and so Eddie Keher was out and Fr Tommy Murphy could not get out of college so Galmoy beat them after and the following year The Rower won against Galmoy.</p> <p>26:30 1966 Beating Danesfort to win the County Final, celebrations for the rest of the week in McGuire's and Judy Cahill's pubs. Songs written in celebration.</p> <p>28:10 Mick never played on a team but played in the hurling field. Mick's brother Billy may have gone on to be a good player had he not emigrated to London.</p> <p>28:29 Start of a minor team in 1955, Mick was 1 year too old at the time. Shortage of players in the village at the time.</p> <p>28:53 Players would mainly have been farmers or farm labourers in his youth. Outlines jobs that different players had at the time.</p> <p>30:28 Sports in Johnstown – running etc. Minor football team started up by Fr Moran from Co. Mayo. Team brought together players from Galmoy, Johnstown Lisdowney and won a county final against Tullogher that year. Names players on that team: John and Thomas McCormack; Mickey Ryan, Charlie Doherty, Jim Houlihan, Paddy Gillen, Paddy and John Dunne, Liam Holland and John Broderick, Mick Dalton, Hilary Quirk, Liam Glendon.</p>
--	--

	<p>32:12 Fr Moran filming all the matches and later showing them in the parochial hall in Galmoy as an introduction to the Sunday night film. Projected using a petrol motor projector projected onto a sheet. Mainly Western films shown, eg. 'The Winds go By', also Laurel and Hardy, The Marx Brothers, etc.</p> <p>34:10 Travelling shows coming every winter, arriving in caravans into the village and putting on plays and shows in the hall before moving on. Years earlier than groups coming to Ducky Brophy's Cross where they would erect a large tent and show silent films for 9 pence a show, films included 'John Lee the Man they Couldn't Hang'.</p> <p>35:54 Galmoy was one of the best dance halls in the locality. Dances about one every month. Starting at 8pm and finishing at 12am, or on special occasions 9pm-1am. People coming from Johnstown, Urlingford, Templetohy, Rathdowney, Gathabawn etc., bikes everywhere.. As a child looking in through the windows at the dances. Bands included: Jimmy Fahy's band from Roscrea, The Riverside Jazz Band, Billy Ryan and Billy Smeathon from Rathdowney. Types of dances included waltzes, foxtrots etc. Big events included: Annual Dances, Show Dances, Hunt Balls. Description of the dances.</p> <p>40:15 Tournaments starting in the 1960s, starting with the Durrow Carnival, then Rathdowney started and then Urlingford. Eventhough Galmoy was a junior team they could compete well against the Laois senior teams like Camross, Cullahill or Borris-in Ossory.</p> <p>41:20 Galmoy having a good team in the 1960s and turning senior in 1966 where they remained until the 1980s. Playesr included: Charlie Brennan, Tommy Phelan, Lottie and Billy Harte, Joe Doherty, Francie Harte, Jack Phelan, Willow Phelan, Paddy Phelan, John McCormack, Liam Hanrahan</p> <p>42:50 Billy Harte getting a run on the Kilkenny team after the 1975 county final. Tommy Phelan, Liam Hanrahan, Jack Phelan, Joe Doherty and Murt Ryan got onto the Kilkenny Junior hurling team</p> <p>44:00 The local derby with Johnstown. Rivalry between Beggar Cross team and Johnstown teams. Johnstown started with a good team in 1968 and their fortunes from there. Good hurlers such as the Hendersons, Billy Fitzpatrick. Rivalry between Galmoy and Johnstown – always a tough hard game between the two. Tournaments keep the hurling going throughout the summer if you were knocked out of the</p>
--	---

	<p>championship.</p> <p>48:40 Seeing Kilkenny play for the first time beating Wexford in Nowlan Park. Getting a lift to the match with the Scotts. Kilkenny beaten in the All-Ireland later that year.</p> <p>49:15 Description of Nowlan Park at the time. Players that day including: the Rackards, Jim Langton, Diamond Hayden, Terry Leahy.</p> <p>50:16 Running around as children in Nowlan Park collecting hurling balls.</p> <p>50:50 Duals between Nickey Rackard and Paddy 'Diamond' Haydon. Physicality of hurling at the time. Ned Wheelers also mentioned, as his father was from Rathdowney. Shem Downey, Peter Prendergast, Paddy Buggy, Liam Reidy, Bill Walsh, Denis Heaslip, Rody O'Neill and Billy Costigan all mentioned.</p> <p>52:25 Kilkenny winning a junior All-Ireland in London against a London team. Strong London teams at that time.</p> <p>52:49 Mick admired players such as Terry Leahy, Jim Langton, Shem Downey, The Diamond Hayden, Jimmy Hogan, Mark Marnell and Jack Mulcahy.</p> <p>53:16 Micheál Ó hÉithir commentating on matches. Listening matches in Scott's yard and later going to Fogarty's and Tynan's to listen to matches. Radios were very scarce and only became popular when the electricity came in 1958.</p> <p>54:02 Rural electrification and its impact. Buying a KB Radio in 1958.</p> <p>54:54 Going on the train to the 1957 All-Ireland when Kilkenny beat Waterford.</p> <p>55:59 Kilkenny not as successful then as they were now, mentions 1947 and 1957 All-Irelands</p> <p>56:29 Going to Croke Park for the first time in 1955 when he was up in Gormanstown at an FCA camp – Glway v Meath in an All-Ireland Football Semi-Final.</p> <p>57:08 Talks going to his first All-Ireland in 1956 First impressions of Croke Park having heard so much about it from the radio.</p> <p>58:25 Going up on the train – singing and craic with each other on the way up and down.</p>
--	--

	<p>59:54 Going to the two all Ireland in 1959, re-play against Waterford. Thumbing to Dublin to matches with McCormacks. Going to Tommy Moore's pub. Going to the National Ballroom on Parnell Square and the Irish Club for dancing. The best céilí bands used to play like the Galloglass Céilí Band.</p> <p>1:03:05 Hennessy's pub 'The Sunset', a Galmoy pub. Getting bus from O'Connell Street to Heuston Station or walking there. Tea and sandwiches being sold out of houses in Summerhill. Matches would be held earlier and trains would be later so there was more time for hanging around Dublin.</p> <p>1:04:41 Kilkenny-Tipperary rivalry. Tipperary team of the 1950s and 1960s. Physicality of Tipperary and Wexford teams in that period. Waterford a lovely team.</p> <p>1:06:24 Kilkenny team of the 1970s and 1980s and their fortunes. Success of Galway and Offaly in the 1980s.</p> <p>1:07:55 Starting to take his son Declan to matches in the 1980s to see Kilkenny. Going on the train with his friends. Making sandwiches the morning of matches.</p> <p>1:08:10 Taking school teams to matches in the back of his van. Putting seats in the back. Took teams as far as Pilltown and The Rower, schools hurling and camogie teams.</p> <p>1:10:40 People going into Mick's shop after training and on the way home from matches.</p> <p>1:11:20 People talking about matches in the shop on Monday mornings.</p> <p>1:11:45 Mick reflects on the best hurlers he has seen in his lifetime. Mentions Eddie Keher, Bennettsbridge hurlers, Chunky O'Brien, Johnstown players like Pat and Ger Henderson, Billy Fitzpatrick, Joe Hennessy, James Stephens players like Brian Cody. Also mentions John Power.</p> <p>1:13:15 Changes in the game of hurling - more pace, speed and skill; more hurling in the air.</p> <p>1:14:14 Disapproves of the use of cards in amateur games, and putting players off believe it's unfair.</p> <p>1:15:49 Watching his son Declan play and now watching Declan's sons playing, happy that they have an interest in hurling.</p>
--	---

REFERENCE NO. KK/1/30

Involvement in GAA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward <input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person <input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____
Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	N/A
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	N/A
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 1:16:35
Language	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: 25th August 2012