

## GAA Oral History Project

## Interview Report Form

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Arlene Crampsie
<b>Date of Interview</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> April 2010
<b>Location</b>	Interviewee's home, Dungannon, Co. Tyrone
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Art McRory
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1940 <b>Home County:</b> Tyrone
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Presentation Brothers PS, Dungannon, Co. Tyrone <b>Secondary:</b> St Patricks Boys Academy <b>Third Level:</b> St Josephs Training College, Belfast
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 3 brothers & 2 sisters <b>Current Family if Different:</b> Married (to each other) with 2 sons and 1 daughter
<b>Club(s)</b>	Thomas Clarke GFC, Dungannon
<b>Occupation</b>	Teacher
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Farmer [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	None
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	Dungannon and District Coursing Club; Basketball

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<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Helen McRory
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Female
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1940 <b>Home County:</b> Tyrone
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Convent of Mercy, Dungannon, Co. Tyrone <b>Secondary:</b> St Joseph's Convent, Donaghmore, Co. Tyrone <b>Third Level:</b> Queen's University Belfast
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> Only Child <b>Current Family if Different:</b> Married (to each other) with 2 sons and 1 daughter
<b>Club(s)</b>	Thomas Clarkes GFC, Dungannon
<b>Occupation</b>	Teacher
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Stonecutter [Father]; Secondary Teacher & Housewife [Mother]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	None
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	Dungannon Musical Society; Gaelic Society; Conradh na Gaeilge; An Cór Gaelach

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<b>Date of Report</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> June 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	1950s – 2010
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Tyrone, Down, Derry, Dublin, Mayo, Galway, Meath, Great Britain, England, Americas, USA
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Media, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Identity, Rivalries, Irish Language, Culture, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Violence, Politics, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Retirement, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy/ Economics
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>Art and Helen McRory reflect on their involvement in the GAA, with particular reference to Art's tenure as manager of the Tyrone football team. They ponder the role of their club, Dungannon Thomas Clarke's GFC, in the community and discuss the reasons for its decline. Art explains how he got involved in managing teams and discusses the challenges of managing both minor and senior teams at county level. He also outlines his playing career, culminating in representing his county in the 1960s. Helen describes the impact of Art's managerial role on family life and discusses the rise of ladies football in Dungannon and surrounding areas. Furthermore, they consider the impact of The Troubles on the GAA in Tyrone, their pride in their children's involvement in the GAA, the issue of funding in the organisation, and media portrayal of Gaelic Games.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:32 Art describes playing football after school with one of the Brothers in the Presentation College. No organised coaching. Renowned club, Dungannon Thomas Clarke's GAA Club. No underage except Under-16 championship. Also on school teams in St. Patrick's Academy.</p> <p>01:59 Helen recalls her father playing football. Tradition in community. Watching football, never played. Mentions Foresters Band processing with team. Mentions Gaelic League. Her mother an Irish speaker. Band playing The</p>

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	<p>O'Neill's March, Twenty Men From Dublin Town. Feis in Dungannon.</p> <p>04:13 Helen mentions individuals involved in the Feis and GAA: Paddy O'Neill, John McQuaid, Art McCaughy. Strength of Tyrone football team in 1950s.</p> <p>05:08 Art discusses his mother's family, the Toals from Carrickmore, GAA family. Involved with Carrickmore club, Art's uncle playing for county. Recounts story involving Johnny Begley playing game with broken leg. Art's aunt Kathleen secretary of club, emigrating to Australia. Also mentions Kevin Canavan. Violent incidents at matches.</p> <p>08:57 Helen discusses her father's playing career for The Lilywhites. First meeting of GAA club in her grandfather's hotel, McAleers, in Dungannon. Recounts story about Billy Young driving team to match. Also mentions Willie McNally.</p> <p>11:45 Describes photograph of Lord Ashbourne leaving the hotel with nationalist MP Joe Stewart, Pdraig McElwee her mother, Vincent Quinn, president of the Gaelic League in Dungannon. Also mentions county footballers Dr. Tommy Campbell, Iggy Jones. Cooking teas for family after matches.</p> <p>13:35 Art describes Feis organised by Paddy "PK" O'Neill. O'Neill's various roles within the GAA. Finals of GAA matches at Feis. Death of O'Neill the year Tyrone reached All-Ireland Senior Football final. Helen mentions Sean Manning. Also mentions stewarding role of Jimmy Casey and members of Clarkes GAA club.</p> <p>15:40 Art recalls lack of coaching in the 1950s. No other passtime in town. Playing with school. Mentions contribution of Jim McKeever, head of PE, to Gaelic Games. Explains school system in Northern Ireland. Describes how Tyrone's first Ulster Championship win in late 50s boosted his interest in football. Mentions Iggy Jones, Pat Donaghy, Tommy Campbell. Recalls going on buses to Tyrone matches. Fewer matches then. Mentions Dr Lagan Cup.</p> <p>19:14 Art reflects on the impact of Tyrone's trip to Croke Park in 1956. Tyrone going on tour of America. Rise of Down in the late 1950s. Down's All-Ireland Senior Football win in 1960. Popularity of football in Tyrone then. Art playing county football, run by county board. Lack of preparation or training. No team managers, insufficient funding, inadequate publicity. Comparison with situation today.</p> <p>21:39 Art recalls playing for Tyrone in the 1960s. No success.</p>
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	<p>Development of his interest in coaching. PE teacher. His role in the formation of the Ulster Secondary Schools Association. Failed attempts to affiliate with colleges. All-Ireland Vocational Schools project, running county teams. Mentions Pat McCartan. Art training county minor team in 1970s. Training senior team between 1980 and 2002. Recent knee replacement operation.</p> <p>25:33 Helen ponders the enjoyment and camaraderie of involvement in the GAA. Significance of GAA in the community. Her identity in community as Art's wife. Their children's involvement in Gaelic games.</p> <p>27:11 Discussion about the role of the club in the community and its changes over the years. Helen describes the success of the schools in the 70s. Art explains how the urban location of Thomas Clarke's GAA Club affects it. Comparative strength of rural clubs. His views on the GAA's failure to help urban clubs. Urban initiative. Current efforts to revive club. Its heyday before 1956. Fundraising night in 2006. Explains current state of club, considers reasons for its recent failures. Lack of progress in the community. Distractions of soccer and rugby.</p> <p>30:56 Tyrone's strength at juvenile football. Role of 1986 final, Peter Canavan factor in popularising the sport. Their son captaining a winning Under-21 team in the county. Their son's successes. Current efforts to get young children and new Irish involved.</p> <p>34:15 Description of Thomas Clarke's pitch and facilities. Helen discusses the origin of the club's name, Clarke's connections with Dungannon. Also mentions Lilywhites, Craobh Rua, Dungannon Gaelic Team, their grounds. Art laments the lack of facilities. Hurlers, Ladies Footballers, Camogues, and Footballers competing for pitch space. Source of tension in club. Current club fundraising efforts, including a race night. Their son Ciaran on development committee.</p> <p>38:43 Discussion of plans to develop current facilities. Problem of location close to housing estate. Inadequate facilities. Cost of development.</p> <p>40:33 Art describes separation of hurling and football clubs. Success of hurling club, low quality of hurling in the county. Comparison of football and hurling training in club. Tradition of hurling in Dungannon.</p> <p>42:20 Helen reflects on start of ladies football and camogie.</p>
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	<p>Mentions Anthony Donaghy's involvement with camogie. Move of camogie to Eglish St. Patrick's GAA Club. Attempts to start ladies football team in Eglish, resistance. Strength of Thomas Clarke's ladies football team, rise of the sport. Ladies football teams in schools in Dungannon. Challenge of getting people involved in administration and coaching.</p> <p>46:04 Discussion about the importance of teachers in the GAA. Helen mentions female teachers devoting time to Gaelic games. Art considers the dwindling influence of teachers in the GAA, lack of time and commitment, pressure of job nowadays. Comparison with his playing days, when teachers were most prominent. Role of PE teachers. Choice of sports for children nowadays. Mentions Fr Dennis Faul, principal in St. Patrick's Academy, allowing rugby in school. Fr. Faul's rationale for this decision.</p> <p>49:45 Helen considers how the hype surrounding soccer and rugby on television affects boys' decisions to play sport. Art discusses the money spent marketing soccer and rugby. His views on the need for money to be spent on the GAA in Dublin.</p> <p>51:28 Art compares teaching school teams with other teams. Financial differences. Winning vocational schools Under-16 All-Ireland in 1983, ease of training teams. Logistical challenge of organising cars for training of minor county team. Helen describes constant phone calls at home.</p> <p>55:58 Art describes his time as trainer. Different depending on time of year and success of team. Enjoying championship season. Nerves of players. Heavy training before championship. Helen recalls challenges crossing border during The Troubles.</p> <p>57:35 Recounts incident at checkpoint. Explains how hearing verbal abuse at match between Antrim and Tyrone discouraged her from attending matches. Her role of answering phone calls, dealing with visitors, cooking post-match meals. Mentions Begleys Sports, Dungannon. Recounts incident involving running from UTV crew at time of All-Ireland.</p> <p>01:02:51 Art reflects on his managerial style. Prioritising players. Not playing injured players. Importance of players' welfare. Purity of football style. Recalls being beaten by Meath in Croke Park in 1990s.</p> <p>01:06:55 Ponders cost of entrance fee to games. Considers issue of amateurism, injustice of players not being paid.</p>
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	<p>Challenge of fundraising in club, lack of funding from Croke Park. Mentions Liam Mulvihill. Also mentions Paraic Duffy.</p> <p>01:09:00 Issue of committee change every three years, change of focus. Some individuals' frustration with rule changes. Development of the GAA, potential for improvement. Mentions Peter Quinn's role in developing Croke Park.</p> <p>01:11:37 Art ponders the importance of money in the GAA. Amount of people employed by the Ulster Council. Praises coaches Tony Scully, Terence McWilliams, Philip Kerr. Expense of employing people full-time. Mentions Danny Murphy of the Ulster Council.</p> <p>01:14:10 Importance of organising competitions, providing facilities for young people. Art's preference for community groundwork over results. His frustration with lack of club football in summer. Mentions Mickey Harte. Issue of disorganisation of fixtures. Their daughter Aoife playing football with boys when she was young.</p> <p>01:17:22 Helen recalls Gaelic games being played in convent school she was principal of. Strong Irish department. Start of Ladies Football team. Mentions Annette McGleenan, wife of Tyrone footballer Mattie McGleenan, training team. Thriving sport. Supportive parents.</p> <p>01:20:11 Discussion of qualities needed for good player, including temperament, talent, grit, attitude. Art mentions Peter Canavan. Qualities required for good manager: knowledge of aims and how to achieve them, adapting skills, leadership. Mentions Kevin Heffernan. Also mentions John O'Mahony. Art ponders the problems with county managers nowadays. Cost of team doctors, physiotherapists, masseurs.</p> <p>01:24:52 Art reflects on the biggest challenge he faced as a manager: giving players self-confidence to persevere. Winning Ulster Championship in 1984, heavy training for following year's championship. Higher expectations of Tyrone players now.</p> <p>01:27:49 Art recalls his disappointment in giving up his managerial role in 2002.</p> <p>01:28:12 Description of celebrations in county after Tyrone won the 2003 All-Ireland Senior Football Final. Art's disappointment at the team's homecoming in Omagh. East Tyrone football hub. Complacency after success.</p> <p>01:30:24 Discussion of the impact of The Troubles on the</p>
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	<p>GAA. Mentions killing of Aidan McAnespie. Challenge of getting to training. Art explains how the start of internment and The Troubles negatively affected Ulster GAA. Current revival of Galway and Mayo in Connacht football after decline. Decline of Leinster football, popularity of soccer. Skill of Dublin football.</p> <p>01:33:57 Art recalls his GAA highlight: beating Galway in the first All-Ireland semi-final, beating Derry with 13 players. Helen's highlight: the first night Art's team won the Ulster championship, bringing cup back to town, celebrations, family gathering.</p> <p>01:36:26 Art reflects on his biggest disappointment in the GAA: having to retire his managerial role when Tyrone was on the cusp of success.</p> <p>01:37:07 Art mentions his GAA heroes: PK O'Neill, Iggy Jones, Frank McGuigan, Peter Canavan, Eugene McKenna, Seán Purcell.</p> <p>01:39:02 Helen mentions her GAA hero: Art McRory.</p> <p>01:39:29 Art recounts story involving Donal Donnelly working on minor team with him.</p> <p>01:40:29 Art considers what the GAA has meant to him. Mentions JP Doherty.</p> <p>01:41:25 Art discusses his frustration with the cost of entrance fees to the GAA, negativity from sections of the media that do not understand the GAA. Helen mentions Frankie Donnelly.</p> <p>01:43:19 Art recounts story about rivalry between Derry and Tyrone.</p>
<p><b>Involvement in GAA</b></p>	<p>Art:</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 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 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>Art: Played from the age of 17 to 37. Won an All-Ireland Junior Championship with Clarks.</p>
<p><b>Record as an</b></p>	<p>Art: Was a committee member for one year other than that he</p>



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<b>Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)	never got involved in administration. He was team manager of the club U-16s, minors and seniors 2/3 times. He also managed the minors in the 1970s and seniors. He was involved with the county senior team in one way or another from 1980 – 2002.
<b>Format</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
<b>Duration</b>	Length of Interview: 01:45:07
<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:      \_\_\_\_\_Arlene Crampsie\_\_\_\_\_

Date:                      \_\_\_\_\_15/06/12\_\_\_\_\_