

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Anne Finn
Date of Interview	14 th April 2010
Location	Interviewees home, near Bunclody, Co Wexford
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Patrick Doyle
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1943 Home County: Wexford
Education	Primary: Bunclody N.S. Secondary: St. Peter's College, Wexford Third Level: UCD Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin
Family	Siblings: 3 brothers, 1 sister Current Family if Different: wife Ann, 2 sons, 1 daughter
Club(s)	Halfway House Bunclody GAA Club [Wexford]
Occupation	Semi-Retired Sales Rep.
Parents' Occupation	Hauliers
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fianna Fáil

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Date of Report	20 th April 2011
Period Covered	1950's – 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Wexford
Key Themes Covered	All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, The Ban, Relationship with the Association, Travel, Supporting, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Emigration, GAA Abroad
Interview Summary	<p>Pat talks about his life in the GAA, and his passion for his club and county. He talks about his early years involved in the club and the various relatives who shared his passion. He describes playing at school, and how he progressed to being a club player and the championships that he won. He explains the history of his club, the main characters involved and the key moments in building up the club. He explains how he feels about the GAA in the contemporary world and the positive and negative aspects of modern players and the power of Croke Park. He concludes by explaining how his life was enriched by the GAA.</p> <p>00:00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:00:37 Born in Bunclody in 1943 where he has spent most of his life apart from a few years in England. The parish is known as Bunclody/Halfway House. His father was from Our Lady's Island, was a pig buyer/haulier. The family moved to Bunclody in 1926. His mother's maiden name was Byrne.</p> <p>00:02:04 His grandfather – Jim Byrne, was GAA minded and republican.</p> <p>00:02:15 Pat is the eldest of 5 children, 1 sister, Gay, and 3 brothers, Gerard, Martin and Willie.</p> <p>00:03:25 Pat and brother Willie were the two family members most involved in GAA</p> <p>00:04:26 His Uncle Nick was a selector for the Wexford football team of the 1940's</p> <p>00:04:34 Pat went to St. Peter's College in 1956 and then to University in Dublin for 1 year. He worked as a substitute</p>

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	<p>teacher for 5/6 years and then went to England.</p> <p>00:05:03 Due to illness of his father and uncle he returned home to manage the family business, hauling beet, corn and pigs.</p> <p>00:05:35 His father and uncle died in early 1970's. Pat continued in the family business and then worked with Halpin's Tea, Donohue's of Enniscorthy and Buttle's Bacon and later became self-employed. He also works as a volunteer with Adult Literacy.</p> <p>00:08:50 His earliest memory of the GAA is playing ball in the "bridge meadow" - a field out towards Carnew, which belonged to a local landlord. The ground was also used for playing of cricket.</p> <p>00:09:52 He recalls how every Thursday (when local business took a half-day) and every Sunday adults and children would kick football. They also swam in the River Slaney.</p> <p>00:10:26 In 1954 Nicky Rackard came to live and set up business in Bunclody. Nicky was regarded as a hero.</p> <p>00:10:56 A Kilkenny hurler – Nick Clohessy worked in the bank in Bagenalstown (Muine Bheag); He used to cycle to Bunclody to meet with Nicky Rackard and to puck around the ball in :</p> <p>00:11:56 In 1954 Pat played his first hurling match; it took place in Shilleagh, his Uncle Jimmy provided the transport in the back of a lorry.</p> <p>00:12:25 He recalls that his mid-field partner was the father of Stephen Nolan (Faythe Harrier's) who recently played centre-back for Wexford.</p> <p>00:12:50 He recalls how a few local people got a team together but there was a small population with no transport or training facilities</p> <p>00:13:29 At St. Peter's College (1956) hurling and football training was organised. Pat was on the Junior team which brought a first Leinster Hurling Title to the college in 1958</p> <p>00:14:30 Ned Power was a great coach and was probably</p>
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	<p>ahead of his time. He was also a great musician and a Kilkenny man!</p> <p>00:15:25 His first time in Belfield Park (Enniscorthy) was in 1955 at a Walsh Cup League match.</p> <p>00:15:47 His first trip To Croke Park was in 1956 when Wexford played and were beaten by Kildare in football. He remembers the old Hogan Stand and the Dublin traffic</p> <p>00:16:50 In 1959 his local club had a minor team. "Little" Sean Cowman kept it going and in the early 1960's they had a Junior team</p> <p>00:17:50 He recalls at age 16, being brought on as a sub. in Belfield Park. The message to the injured player was "Lie down, you're hurt"</p> <p>00:18:20 The club developed during the 1960's, mainly football, and in 1968 won the County Junior Football title. The previous win by the county was in 1913 with the Insurgents.</p> <p>00:19:26 He recalls that club players included the first of the settled travellers – Johnny and Mickey Connors</p> <p>00:19:55 The club didn't have its own playing field</p> <p>00:20:11 The name of the club became St. Mary's GAA Club, Bunclody</p> <p>00:20:26 After 1968 it was felt one end of parish wasn't getting a fair deal, it broke away and formed a Junior team. In 1974 the club reunited and became known as Halfway House/Bunclody GAA Club</p> <p>00:21:37 During the 1970's a local builder, Patsy Furlong, who built schools and halls, took on apprentices. There was less emigration and the club had some successes winning senior football in 1982 and 1985 and hurling in 1982</p> <p>00:22:50 He recalls the "Lucozade Hurl" Labels from bottles could be collected in order to purchase a hurl with a laminated bosh</p> <p>00:23:37 He discusses his club success versus other clubs</p> <p>00:25:06 Because young people had less to do and less</p>
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	<p>money the field was a haven.</p> <p>00:25:50 The club bought its first pitch in 1977, now has three pitches</p> <p>00:26:25 Volunteering/fund-raising has been of great importance. At one point 20 ewes, followed by a further 80, were purchased. The scheme meant that when a ewe lambed the farmer gave lamb value to the club. Cloughbawn Club had a similar heifer scheme. Local people also gave interest free loans. Pat feels that winning medals/club success repays the kindness of people's generosity.</p> <p>00:29:20 He feels it is now more difficult for young people to decide between sports and is also more difficult to get volunteers</p> <p>00:31:00 He believes bigger teams benefit more from "Celtic Tiger" Success.</p> <p>00:31:30 He feels that membership of the GAA has great advantages socially and forms lifelong friendships. It also helped in his work as a salesman. A disadvantage is the amount of time given but his wife has been understanding, she is the daughter of a Wexford footballer of the 1914 – 1918 era (Val Connelly) Pat has Val's medal.</p> <p>00:37:00 While Pat was in England he played hurling with Father Murphy's and football with Round Towers. People didn't travel home very much for games but students working in England during the summer played under assumed names</p> <p>00:40:20 On the administrative side Pat has worked as a selector and club secretary. He has worked as Assistant County Board Secretary 1980 -1995 and has been a member of the Leinster Council 1989 – 2009 apart from a few years.</p> <p>00:47:16 Membership of the GAA identifies his Irishness. He likes history and used to visit Michael Hogan's grave at Grangemockler in Tipperary. He has a few stones from there "lest I forget"</p> <p>00:48:00 Medals include Junior with New Ross 1968 Intermediate Football 1976 Junior B Hurling early 1980's Leinster College Medals x 2</p>
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	<p>00:52:35 He believes that sponsorship and corporate boxes at Croke park are the way forward. It is a commercial venture. Jerseys, hurleys, etc. are expensive now and younger players have higher expectations so sponsorship is necessary</p> <p>01:00:00 He feels that media coverage of games is good. He recalls how in earlier commentaries the name of a player wasn't mentioned during an incident. TV coverage is good; he mentions TnaG and Setanta Sport. Technology has contributed greatly to availability of games/results internationally.</p> <p>01:04.00 His great memories are of the club winning its first County title in 1968. Also the County beating Dublin in the Football League Final in Croke Park in 1985 and the All-Ireland Hurling Final win of 1996.He recalls how hurling has changed, in a recent chat with Tony Doran they recall how the plan was "get it into the big fellow – no big fellow now"</p> <p>01:07:04 Believes the backdoor system is good financially but it puts club games into smaller window</p> <p>01:09.45 With pride he looks at the development of Croke Park and at every club in Co. Wexford which has its own pitch. "Don't go back but look back"</p> <p>01:10:42 He tells a story of picking up a young lad hitching from Waterford to Wexford. The young lad had been waiting a long time for a lift. He hurled with a club in Wexford. Pat advised him to bring a hurl and to lean on it while hitching and he wouldn't be left waiting. A couple of years later he picked up the same young lad who said to him "I never was a half-hour waiting"</p> <p>01:12.05 In conclusion Pat believes it has been an honour to do something for club and county. It has brightened dull summers and he wouldn't change anything.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input 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>

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Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	1954-1983 played at club level, excluding 1968 -1974 2 Junior B hurling Medals (County) 2 Leinster College Medals 1 Football/1 Hurling
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	Member of Leinster Council 1989 – 2009 apart from a few years Assistant County Secretary 1980 – 1995 Currently Vice-President of Club Currently Wexford County Development Officer
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 01:15:00
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: Anne Finn

Date: 14th April 2010