

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	9 th March 2011
Location	St Bronagh's GAA and Social Club, Rostrevor, Co. Down
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Charlie Daly
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1944 Home County: Down
Education	Primary: Convent of Mercy, Rostrevor; St Mary's BS, Rostrevor Secondary: St Colman's College, Newry, Co. Down
Family	Siblings: 2 brothers & 6 sisters Current Family if Different: Wife, 3 sons & 1 daughter
Club(s)	St Bronagh's GAA [Down]
Occupation	Retired Civil Servant
Parents' Occupation	Builder/Labourer [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	None
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Neighbourhood Watch

Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Val Murphy
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1939 Home County: Down
Education	Primary: Convent of Mercy Rostrevor, St Mary's BS, Rostrevor Secondary: St Colman's College, Newry, Co. Down Third Level: De la Salle College, Manchester, UK
Family	Siblings: 2 brothers & 3 sisters Current Family if Different: Wife, 2 sons & 2 daughters
Club(s)	St Bronagh's GAA [Down]; Four Masters GAA, Birmingham [Great Britain]; DE La Salle GFC, Manchester [Great Britain]
Occupation	Retired Teacher
Parents' Occupation	Carpenter/Joiner [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	None
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Pioneers Total Abstinence Association, Credit Union

REFERENCE NO. DN/1/5

Date of Report	21 st August 2012
Period Covered	1939 - 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Down, England, Great Britain
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, Involvement in GAA abroad, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, Irish Language, Culture, Scór, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Outsider's Perspectives, Alcohol, Violence, Politics, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Opening of Croke Park, Ban on Security Forces, Relationship with the Association, Retirement, Food and Drink, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy / Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Val and Charlie share their lifetimes' experiences of a richly rewarding relationship with the GAA. Both played for the Rostrevor club when they were growing up and went on to attend the renowned St Colman's College when they were teenagers. They recall the GAA ethos at the school and reflect on the groundbreaking methods of well-known GAA coach Fr Traynor. Economic hardship was the norm in the 1950s and many people were forced to emigrate. Val and Charlie both left for England and they offer insight into the emigrant's life in England - an existence which, although intrinsically social for most, can also be incredibly lonely. They remember fondly the Down footballers of the 1960s and the joy that they brought to the people of the county. In time they returned to Rostrevor, working as teachers and immersing themselves in GAA activities. Structures were put in place, land was bought and developed, and the club did its utmost to reach out to all sectors of the locality. From the 1970s onwards they had to contend with the Troubles and all the misery that that brought. There was little to be grateful for during that period, although the GAA acted as a beacon throughout, providing people with a sense of cultural identity that they cherished dearly. For Val and Charlie the Association has been an ever-present force for good, binding the entire community together and enhancing the lives of individuals as it does so.</p>

REFERENCE NO. DN/1/5

	<p>00:15 Val born in 1939, Charlie in 1944.</p> <p>00:40 (Val) Born in Rostrevor. Early interest in football. Playing in the village when he was young. Police sometimes fined people for playing on the street. Going with Down player Danny Cole to watch Down play Antrim.</p> <p>01:55 (Val) No organised football when he was at school. Playing on gravel. What they did for a ball. Son not believing that until he was in Tanzania. Under-15 and minors the only underage teams when he was young. Breaking his wrist during a game. Playing at St Colman's College alongside All-Ireland winners Leo Murphy, Patsy O'Hagan, Pete Treacy. Losing a Hogan Cup semi-final at Croke Park.</p> <p>03:40 (Val) Going to England. Playing in Birmingham. Returning by boat to watch Down in 1960 and 1961 All-Ireland finals. Cousin, Michael Cole, playing for Down in 1968 All-Ireland final.</p> <p>05:00 (Val) Ordinary people of Rostrevor involved in GAA. Why he got involved. Spiritual dimension.</p> <p>06:00 (Charlie) Born in Ballymoney. Annual sports day in Rostrevor when he was young. Sometimes held in Kilbroney Park. Inter-parish tournament. Children participating in obstacle races.</p> <p>08:05 (Charlie) Family moving to St Colman's Gardens estate in the town in 1952. Ratio of children to houses. Playing hurling and football on the road.</p> <p>10:00 (Charlie) Running water and electricity a novelty when they moved to estate. What old house in country had been like. Sheep on the roof.</p> <p>11:30 (Charlie) Attending St Mary's boys school. Under-14 football competition. Warrenpoint, Greencastle, Ballymartin, Hilltown, Burren, Mayobridge all competing.</p> <p>12:15 (Val) Travelling in Leonard Cahill's van to games.</p> <p>12:35 (Charlie) Curate was Fr Pettit. Going to games in his car. Coming home from a game at night. Encountering B-Specials. Questions asked.</p> <p>14:10 (Charlie) Club hiring Ulster Transport Association bus to go to senior games. People who travelled. Facilitating extra supporters. Ensuring he made it onto the bus. Travel fee. No kitbags.</p> <p>15:45 (Val) Where the bus picked people up. Songs that were</p>
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	<p>sung. Stopping outside the RUC barracks and singing a song. Risk of being fined at the time. GAA people as 'third-class citizens'. Why people did not rise up in the 1950s.</p> <p>17:15 (Charlie) Going to St Colman's. Training that was done there. Day pupils and boarders.</p> <p>17:55 (Val) What they had for lunch. Walking to school. Protecting one's lunch from the boarders.</p> <p>18:45 (Charlie) Football as 'a religion' at St Colman's. Boarders' involvement in football.</p> <p>19:25 (Val) Priests' bringing a new approach to the game. Fr Traynor to the fore. Winning Hogan Cups and Mac Rory Cups. Kevin Busman, Leo Murphy, Dan McCartan going on to win senior All-Ireland medals with Down. Meeting those players regularly for a drink. What they talk about.</p> <p>20:55 (Charlie) Fr Traynor's responsibilities. Corn na nÓg. McRory Cup. Rannafast Cup team. Stiff competition for places. St Colman's winning tradition.</p> <p>22:00 (Val) Cheelan Mooney on the Hogan Cup team and Down minor team in 2011.</p> <p>22:30 (Val) Attitude to other sports at the school. Handball.</p> <p>23:00 (Charlie) Abbey Christian Brothers of Newry their main rivals.</p> <p>23:10 (Val) Supporting St Colman's long after they had left the school.</p> <p>23:25 (Charlie) Sons going to St Colman's.</p> <p>23:50 (Val) Reason people sent their children to attend St Colman's. Parish priest promoting the school. Vincent McDonald, Séamus Farrell going there in 1952. That seen as a breakthrough. Economic hardship in those days. His father cycling to St Colman's college in 1938 to work there.</p> <p>25:35 (Charlie) How they travelled to games.</p> <p>25:50 (Val) Travelling to a Hogan Cup game in Dublin against Gormanstown. Stopping along the way. Reason for that.</p> <p>26:35 (Charlie) Where Fr Traynor got his methods from. St Patrick's of Armagh and St Jarlath's of Tuam popular at the time. Fr Traynor's inquisitive nature.</p> <p>27:20 (Charlie) Fr Traynor his French teacher. Talking about</p>
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	<p>football in class.</p> <p>28:20 (Val) Alexian brothers in Warrenpoint. Brother Joseph doing physiotherapy-type work at a care home. Fr Treacy from Fermanagh sent to Brother Joseph.</p> <p>29:20 (Charlie) Playing minor football for Rostrevor at the time. Playing against Hilltown, Warrenpoint, Mayobridge, Longstone, Ballymartin, Greencastle. Getting to know their opponents over the years.</p> <p>30:10 (Charlie) Warrenpoint their main rivals. How that rivalry has changed over the years.</p> <p>30:35 (Val) GAA as an educator. Travelling to places like Downpatrick, Portaferry and the Ards.</p> <p>31:25 (Val) Playing Warrenpoint in 2010 and a player, Patrick Dinsmore, dying on the pitch. Trying to revive him. Effect that that had on the rivalry and on the people in the Rostrevor and Warrenpoint communities.</p> <p>32:50 (Val) GAA and funerals. Respect. Communion of people.</p> <p>34:15 (Charlie) Playing senior hurling and football with the club. Leaving for England. Returning in the early 1970s and getting involved with the football reserves team. Why he enjoyed it. Involvement in club activities off the pitch. Time-consuming nature of that. Senior players involved on committees in 2011.</p> <p>36:25 (Charlie) Hurling tradition in the area. Team set up at the club. People from Antrim joining the club. Players from Warrenpoint, Newry and Laois joining. First game was against Ballyvarley. How that game went. Why hurling faded out in the area over the years.</p> <p>39:05 (Val) Lots of gentry in Rostrevor. Difficult to get land that was suitable for Gaelic games. Leasing a pitch. What they did for goalposts. Cattle in fields. Fr Pettit instigating purchase of land in 1959. What was paid. Developing the land into what would become Pettit Park.</p> <p>41:05 (Val) Needing a social hub for the club. Using parochial hall temporarily. Buying property in 1975. What they paid. Redeveloping the property. Buying more property in 1980. What that cost.</p> <p>42:20 (Charlie) Social activities that had been held in the area. Wanting to grow. Discussing idea of buying property at</p>
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	<p>committee level. Some members alarmed at money being spent. Approaching the bank for financial assistance. How much land they owned at the end of it all. Expanding original premises during the 1980s. Developing facilities. Cost of that. Interest rate. Being treasurer at the time.</p> <p>48:00 (Charlie) Fr Pettit acquiring land in the 1950. Some people outraged at the amount of money he was spending. Fundraising around the parish. Response of local people. Volunteers helping to develop land. Sponsors.</p> <p>47:25 (Val) Returning from England and the 'golden chance' fundraiser. What that involved. Home bingo. How that worked.</p> <p>49:00 (Charlie) Investigating idea of switching to a club lotto system when he was treasurer. Starting one in 1996. How it has helped them. Amount of money it brings in each year. Popularity of lotteries within sports clubs.</p> <p>50:35 (Charlie) 'Friends of Rostrevor' scheme and how that works. Annual gala. Total fundraising income annually.</p> <p>52:05 (Val) Annual duck derby during Fiddler's Green festival. What that is like. Pig racing. County colours on pigs' backs. Betting on individual pigs.</p> <p>54:40 (Charlie) Scór within the club. Need to focus on social aspect of club in 1960s. Anthony Williamson instrumental in setting up. Popularity in the 1970s. Events held in Castlebellingham. What happened there. Reaching Ulster and All-Ireland finals. Cultural benefits of Scór. Impact that it had on the club. Identity. Respect. Dip in popularity of social clubs in 2011.</p> <p>58:40 (Charlie) Social events attracting more people to the club. Enthusiasm they brought. Club activities expanding. gathering momentum.</p> <p>01:00:00 (Charlie) GAA as an expression of cultural identity in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>01:00:20 (Val) The Troubles in the 1970s. Being branded 'terrorists'. Impact of that. Northern Irish people being resented in the south and how that makes him feel. Sinn Féin leader. Gerry Adams running for election in Louth.</p> <p>01:01:55 (Val) Impact of the Troubles on the club. Different political movements. GAA as a unifying force.</p> <p>01:03:45 (Charlie) Trying to steer a middle course. Difficulties</p>
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REFERENCE NO. DN/1/5

	<p>of that.</p> <p>01:04:20 (Val) GAA as a non-sectarian organisation.</p> <p>01:04:00 (Val) Hunger strike. Disagreements within GAA over what stance to take. Relationships breaking down.</p> <p>01:05:30 (Val) Police advising them on security measures to take. Local people victims of violence.</p> <p>01:06:25 (Val) Indifference to a person's religion. Non-Catholics like Raymond Clemence playing for the club in the past.</p> <p>01:07:25 (Val) Popularity of soccer in the area in the past. American and British soldiers based in the area during World War II. Playing a game against Saul and Down footballer Dickie Murphy unable to play for Saul. Reason he could not play. Disbelief.</p> <p>01:08:50 (Charlie) Ban on foreign sports and degree to which that was implemented. Assumed names. County players involved in other sports.</p> <p>01:09:30 (Val) Céilí dancing and antipathy towards English dancing.</p> <p>01:09:55 (Val) Ban as a negative thing. What happened if you were seen playing soccer.</p> <p>01:10:50 (Charlie) Successful players within the club. Representatives on county teams. from Rostrevor. Danny Cole, Eddie Cole talented players.</p> <p>01:12:20 (Val) John McAuley, Henry McGrath Mickey Cole, Mickey Daly, Aidan Farrell, Liam Austin, Colin Murray, Martin Cole all on Down teams over the years.</p> <p>01:13:05 (Val) Leo Murphy, Patsy O'Hagan, Dan McCartan on the famous Down team of 1960. Watching Down playing in Wembley, London in 1959. Kilkenny playing Tipperary in hurling as well. Down playing Galway in football. Missing the celebrations after 1960 All-Ireland win. People listening to games on the radio.</p> <p>01:15:00 (Charlie) Listening to Micheál Ó Heiber commentating on 1960 final on the radio. Down winning an Ulster title in 1959. Playing Galway in the semi-final. Franks Stockwell and Seán Purcell playing for Galway, who taught Down a lesson. 1960 final. Lessons learned. Scarcity of tickets or means of transport for 1960 final. Neighbour's tape recorder and how that was used. Neighbour Petey Clerkin</p>
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	<p>replaying tapes of commentaries for years afterwards. Listening to Down games on the radio in London in later years. Congregating in Hyde Park or Clapham on Sunday afternoon. Transistor radios. Putting an aerial into the tree. Spontaneous gatherings. Number of people there. Listening to Seán Óg Ó Ceallacháin on the radio from his bedsit on London.</p> <p>01:19:00 (Val) Options a person had upon leaving school when he was younger. Wanting to be a teacher. Path he took. People emigrating from the area. Valued members of the community leaving. What local GAA players work as. People becoming more educated and confident.</p> <p>01:21:40 (Val) Flying somebody home for a match in the 1950s. People talking about it. Being sad that he could not be involved because he was in England. How long it took for local results to reach him in England.</p> <p>01:24:05 (Val) Moving to England and arriving in Birmingham. Playing football with Four Masters. John Mitchells also prominent. Glebe Farm the place where footballers gathered. Coming across John O'Hanlon from Rostrevor there. GAA as a network for Irish people abroad.</p> <p>01:26:00 (Charlie) Having to work weekends in London. How much he was paid. Expenses. Where he stayed. Dance hall scene in London. Being told of a Catholic-only Irish centre in London. Protestants accompanying them there. Questions asked when they tried to gain admission. Atmosphere inside there. Meeting a Rostrevor man there, Joe Doyle.</p> <p>01:29:45 (Val) Wembley tournaments and number of people in attendance. Down preparing for their All-Ireland charge there. Rostrevor man at a match with a black man.</p> <p>01:31:50 (Val) Bond to Rostrevor never breaking. England an alien environment.</p> <p>01:32:45 (Charlie) Going to Belfast as a teenager and feeling homesick.</p> <p>01:33:35 (Val) Centrality of faith and GAA to his life.</p> <p>01:34:45 (Val) Some Irish in England with no interest in GAA.</p> <p>01:35:15 (Charlie) Camden Town, Kilburn, Paddington containing concentrations of Irish families. Irish people buried in London cemeteries.</p> <p>01:36:50 (Val) Second-generation Irish playing at De La Salle</p>
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REFERENCE NO. DN/1/5

	<p>College in Manchester. Playing hockey. What that was like. Many Irish people pioneers. What they drank instead at social events. Integration of English people into social circle.</p> <p>01:38:30 (Val) Returning to teach at St Michael's School. Positions he held there. GAA ethos there. School winning Ulster titles. Number of pupils at the school. Learning from the children. GAA involvement improving their relationship with students.</p> <p>01:40:55 (Charlie) Non-footballers getting involved in GAA activities in the school. Importance of giving them a sense of involvement. Teamwork.</p> <p>01:42:40 (Val) Relationship between school and GAA club.</p> <p>01:43:30 (Charlie) Club taking an interest in how children were faring at school. Nurturing talent as they grew older.</p> <p>01:44:50 (Charlie) Ladies football teams at the club. How they were set up.</p> <p>01:46:25 (Val) Ladies teams enhancing the club in terms of vitality.</p> <p>01:47:00 (Val) Art club held within the club. Selling paintings to raise funds. Exhibition at the annual Fiddler's Green festival.</p> <p>01:49:05 (Val) Patsy Twomey social club chairman. His daughter asking Patsy a question. Amount of time they have given over to the GAA over the years.</p> <p>01:50:35 (Charlie) Level of commitment his GAA involvement requires. Technology and emails. Reading through them. How his family felt about his involvement.</p> <p>01:52:35 (Val) Children getting involved in the GAA. Benefits of that. Juggling demands. GAA involvement as life-enhancing.</p> <p>01:54:30 (Charlie) Satisfaction he gets from his GAA involvement.</p> <p>01:55:35 (Val) Centrality of GAA to parish life. Woman washing jerseys for years and being given recognition by the community. Positive benefits of that. Influencing people's lives.</p>
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REFERENCE NO. DN/1/5

<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p>Charlie:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input checked="" 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>Val:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input checked="" 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>Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>Charlie:</p> <p>Played football and hurling from schoolboy level up along, stopped played age 37/38. 11 year gap in the middle. Played at St Colman's in Newry.</p> <p>Val:</p> <p>Played from childhood until he was 41. Won Down Senior Football Championship with St Bronagh's in 1956 and Intermediate SFC in 1976.</p> <p>1957: Played MacRory Cup with St Colmans, winning in 1957</p> <p>1959-62 – Played with Four Masters in Birmingham and Warwickshire.</p> <p>Played with De La Salle</p>
<p>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>Charlie:</p> <p>Member of St Bronagh's committee from 1960. Held various positions including: chairman, vice-chairman, treasurer, secretary, trustee.</p> <p>Val:</p> <p>Member of St Bronagh's committee from 1967.</p> <p>1975: Chairman of St Bronagh's (2 years)</p>

REFERENCE NO. DN/1/5

	PRO of St Bronagh's (10 years) Trustee of Club
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 01:58:13
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: 21st August 2012