

## GAA Oral History Project

## Interview Report Form

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Eileen Ryan
<b>Date of Interview</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2011
<b>Location</b>	Interviewee's home, near Ladychapel, Co Kildare
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Seamus Kirwin
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> N/A <b>Home County:</b> Wexford
<b>Education</b>	N/A
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 2 sisters <b>Current Family if Different:</b> Married; 3 sons (1 deceased)
<b>Club(s)</b>	Ard Colum GAA Club [Wexford]; Olyegate Glenbrien GAA Club [Wexford]
<b>Occupation</b>	Irish Distiller's, Retired
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	N/A
<b>Religion</b>	N/A
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	N/A

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<b>Date of Report</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> July 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	1950s – 2011
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Wexford, Dublin, Kildare, Great Britain, England
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Grounds, Facilities, Training, Role of Clergy, Culture, Impact on Life, Earliest Memories, Childhood, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Irish Language, Media, Refereeing, Politics, Travel, Socialising, Volunteers, Family Involvement, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Material Culture, Religion, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, All-Ireland, County History, Career, Alcohol
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>Seamus talks about his playing days, beginning with Ard Cholm and later playing for Oylegate-Glenbrien. He recalls his playing years and discusses the various places he played hurling and the types of facilities available. Seamus discusses the impact that the All-Ireland Championship Wexford team of 1955 had on him and the strength of hurling in the county during the 1950s. He describes the important role that the GAA has played during his life and discusses the various issues that have arisen over the years.</p> <p>00:26 Talks about earliest memories of the GAA. Playing hurling by himself, no underage teams in local area.</p> <p>01:22 Discusses joining another local club Ard Colum to play underage hurling and later joined the Oylegate-Glenbrien junior team.</p> <p>01:57 Recalls winning Intermediate and Junior county titles.</p> <p>02:28 Discusses how hurling was great for giving him a pastime and keeping him out of mischief when he was young.</p> <p>03:04 Talks about how people working in the background of the club are not recognised.</p> <p>03:32 Recalls going to work in Dublin and having to travel down to play in Wexford at the weekends.</p> <p>04:32 Recommends getting involved in hurling to anybody.</p> <p>04:35 Talks about the great players that influenced him and the strength of hurling in Wexford during the 1950s. Mentions the Rackard brothers, Jimmy English and Padge Kehoe.</p> <p>06:38 Describes the changes in fortune of Wexford hurling in</p>

	<p>recent years.</p> <p>08:05 Discusses his family's involvement in the GAA. His father and uncle both played at club level.</p> <p>09:00 Talks about the influence that the GAA has had on his life.</p> <p>10:00 Speaks about how hurling can always be a topic of conversation amongst friends.</p> <p>10:20 Talks about local club rivalries with the Faythe Harriers and marking Wexford player Oliver 'Hopper' McGrath and the challenge in marking him.</p> <p>11:54 Recalls playing a memorable match against St. Aidan's of Enniscorthy.</p> <p>12:20 Describes the type of training in hurling and the simplicity in comparison to today. Recalls how he and 5 or 6 of the team worked in Dublin and trained in Phoenix Park.</p> <p>14:26 Describes the different fundraising events and social occasions based around the club. Talks about how he and some others missed out on these living in Dublin.</p> <p>15:30 Talks about the role of the clergy in the club. Recalls how one priest came to be supportive of the club.</p> <p>17:04 Discusses the development of professionalism in the game and the amount of dedication from players. A lot more support for players. Mentions D.J. Carey.</p> <p>19:14 Gives his opinion on the different rule changes over the year. Talks about how the game could benefit from going back to some of the older styles of playing.</p> <p>21:11 Talks about how the game has improved, less injuries and better sliotars.</p> <p>22:14 Discusses the difficult job that referees have.</p> <p>22:46 Talks about his best memories of the GAA, Wexford winning the All-Ireland in 1955. Recalls the celebrations after and how that team should have won more.</p> <p>24:44 Describes the important role that supporters have in the game.</p> <p>25:45 Talks about playing matches and the lack of facilities, such as dressing rooms.</p> <p>26:20 Recalls playing in a tournament and cattle broke out on</p>
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	<p>to the field.</p> <p>27:17 Describes the difference in facilities between Wexford Park, Belfield and the club facilities</p> <p>27:47 Discusses travelling to matches on special trains. Describes the differences between the 1950s and today.</p> <p>29:24 Travelled to local club games on bicycle or an occasional lift with a neighbour.</p> <p>29:56 Not many traditions in the club, not anything big ever really happened in the club.</p> <p>31:12 Discusses rivalries at inter county level and how the levels of rivalry depended on success.</p> <p>33:00 Talks about the positive influence that television has had on the GAA.</p> <p>33:50 Speaks of hopes that game will always maintain amateur status but players should be compensated for injuries. Gives his opinion on the amateur status of the GAA.</p> <p>35:14 Discusses his disappointments within the GAA.</p> <p>36:10 Describes the advantages of playing, being fit and pride in playing.</p> <p>36:48 Talks about how the GAA shaped his idea of Irishness, especially when living in England.</p> <p>38:28 Discusses the relationship between the Irish language and the GAA.</p> <p>39:30 Talks about the relationship between politics and the GAA.</p> <p>40:14 Gives his opinion on sponsorship within the GAA and how it can have a negative impact on some players.</p> <p>41:39 Talks about the idea of players releasing autobiographies and the advantages of it.</p> <p>42:52 Feels that he has no major disappointments with the GAA, tried not to focus on the negatives whilst playing, only focused on playing with the club.</p> <p>43:56 Regards the 1955 Wexford team as the greatest team in his lifetime. Also holds four in a row Kilkenny team in high regard, excited to see other teams, such as Tipperary emerging again. Believes that it makes for a better</p>
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	<p>competition.</p> <p>45:14 Gives advice to younger players, to keep fit and to start practicing young.</p> <p>47:00 Talks about keeping in touch with former team mates, and how it is nice to keep in touch.</p> <p>48:04 Encourages young people to get involved in GAA in any way that they can.</p>
<b>Involvement in GAA</b>	<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 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>
<b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)	Junior and Intermediate County titles, 1948; 1962/3
<b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)	N/A
<b>Format</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
<b>Duration</b>	Length of Interview: 00:49:00
<b>Language</b>	English

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**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: Eileen Ryan

Date: 14<sup>th</sup> Jan 2011