

## GAA Oral History Project

## Interview Report Form

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Regina Fitzpatrick
<b>Date of Interview</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2010
<b>Location</b>	Micheál's home, near Baganelstown, Co. Carlow.
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Micheál Jones. Also present David O'Brien
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1920 <b>Home County:</b> Carlow
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> St Bridgets, De la Salle.
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 9 siblings <b>Current Family if Different:</b> Wife (Chris), 3 sons and 4 daughters
<b>Club(s)</b>	Portlaoise Hurling Club; Erins Own, Muine Beag; St. Andrews GAA Club
<b>Occupation</b>	Building/Plastering
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Building Firm
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	Fianna Fáil
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	President of Organisation of National Ex-Servicemen (O.N.E.)

**REFERENCE NO. CW/1/11**

<b>Date of Report</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	1931 – 2010
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Carlow, Kilkenny, Cork, Limerick, Antrim, Laois, Cavan, Kerry, Mayo, Roscommon, Waterford, Americas, New York
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Supporting, Facilities, Playing, Managing, Administration, Celebrations, Education, Emigration, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Career, Challenges, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Opening of Croke Park, Relationships
<b>Interview Summary</b>	Michael discusses his childhood in Bagenalstown his parents' interest in the GAA. He talks about his time in the army and playing hurling and football. He talks about school and the Christian Brothers. He then discusses his earliest memories of the GAA before talking about his playing career and his training. He talks of bringing hurleys to hurlers in Antrim. He talks of the local clubs and being President of both and what that means to him. He talks of his time in administration and of the importance of amateurism and volunteers. He discusses the place of the club in the community and the role women play in it. He talks about the decisions made by the GAA and his optimism for the GAA as well as Ireland. Finally, he tells of not being able to name the best team he ever saw as too much has changed over the years.
<b>Involvement in GAA</b>	<p>00:30 Michael talks about being born and raised in Bagenalstown and of the story behind the name of the town which he knows as Muine Bheag.</p> <p>01:54 Talks of his parents and their interest in Gaelic games with his father hurling with the army in the 1920's. Mentions that he played locally with Muine Bheag and taught him how to hurl.</p> <p>03:17 Speaks of his mother being from Kilkenny and supporting the county team.</p> <p>04:10 Recalls what it was like growing up in Bagenalstown. Mentions the local mill, shops and stonecutters including Neddy Byrne. Also mentions the chisel sharpener, Cathal Bolger whose grandson managed the minor team hurling team that won this year's championship</p> <p>06:29 Recalls playing football in the back lane. Mentions John Finn a local footballer.</p>

	<p>07:33 Talks about his father being a Sinn Fein man interned in Ballykinler in 1922 and then in the Curragh in Eyre Park.</p> <p>08:16 David speaks of his grandfather who also would not talk about his experiences of the 1920's.</p> <p>09:00 Michael talks of his time in the army and mentions a Cork man who played for Cavan as a fullback and a Kerryman kicking ball together and eventually facing each other on the field.</p> <p>10:00 Talks of the 1947 game in New York and John Joe Reilly who captained the Cavan team and was a Captain in the army with Michael. Mentions that he died of a football injury to his kidney. Also mentions Danny Douglas who was a Sergeant Major.</p> <p>11:18 Recalls the army teams and how they all had All-Ireland players. Mentions Paddy Sullivan and Brian O'Rourke who were both in the army and were on the Carlow team of 1944. Also mentions Mickey Fanning.</p> <p>11:59 Speaks of attending John Jo Reilly's funeral and of the song that was written about him. Mentions Joe Cahan and Mick Mackey an All-Ireland winning Limerick hurler.</p> <p>14:50 Talks of playing an army semi final in Islandbridge with Bill Wall a Waterford soccer player.</p> <p>17:06 Speaks of joining the army in 1940 during the Emergency along with almost 80 from the town.</p> <p>18:25 Recalls his army training and his five and a half years in the army. Mentions Georgie Davis.</p> <p>20:56 Tells of the activities carried out while in the army. Mentions cycling around the coast checking for any foreign troops. Also mentions two of the Germans staying on after the war and opening a factory.</p> <p>23:48 Speaks of the part played by Gaelic games in army life. Talks of the structures within the army and the teams they entered in the command championship and on up until one team became the army champions. Mentions also being part of a rugby team and basketball being played also.</p> <p>26:00 Tells of the ban on foreign sports not being enforced while in the army. Speaks of the basketball championships being set up by Snowy Barnaby.</p> <p>26:59 Speaks of the rivalry between the different battalions. Mentions being invited to play various county teams around</p>
--	--

	<p>the country. Also mentions being the only Leinster man to play against every team in Leinster.</p> <p>28:53 Talks of there being very strong army teams at the time.</p> <p>29:17 Speaks of going to school in Saint Brigid's De la Salle. Mentions playing rounders and enjoying running, hurling and football.</p> <p>30:27 Talks of Brother Patrick, a Christian Brother from Cork who got him into Gaelic games. Mentions Brothers Hillary, Mark, Kileen, Francis, Jerome, Clement, Leo and Damian who all loved the game. Also mentions Pym Quinlan.</p> <p>31:47 Talks of two of the Brothers cycling out of town then transferring to a car and driving to a hurling match where they played under assumed names.</p> <p>32: 47 Talks of playing in school and with his eight siblings, five boys and three girls.</p> <p>33:29 Speaks of his first time playing with the junior team in Muine Bheag in 1937 until he moved to Laois in 1945 where he played football and hurling finishing his playing days in 1966 in Carlow town in a pub championship.</p> <p>35:09 Talks of his earliest memories of the GAA in 1931 attending the All-Ireland final with his father. Mentions the two draws and the replays between Kilkenny and Cork. Also mentions Lowry Maher and Morrissey playing for Kilkenny both being injured. Morrissey was badly injured and ended up in a wheelchair and was set up in a pub by the Kilkenny county board.</p> <p>36:48 Speak of his love for Kilkenny hurling and the players of the time.</p> <p>37:38 Talks of travelling by car and train to Croke Park and how it was just like any other playing field at the time.</p> <p>38:40 Speaks of attending the 1939 "Thunder and Lightning" All-Ireland. Mentions losing his coat having thrown it in the air after a score. Also mentions hearing about the declaration of war that morning.</p> <p>40:17 Talks of his playing career and the advice and encouragement he received from older players. Mentions Jack Bolger, Paddy O'Brien, Leddy Lillis, Paddy Johnson, Tom Kinsella and Tony Walsh.</p> <p>42:48 Speaks of going to Valentia and meeting up with Tony</p>
--	--

	<p>Walsh last year.</p> <p>44:13 Tells of playing football with Carlow and then with Laois in 1946 with Paddy Keogh. Mentions Bill Delaney and Jack Chairman of the Laois County Board.</p> <p>46:41 Talks about the Delaney's a famous footballing family from Stradbally with four brothers and an uncle on an All-Ireland team. Mentions Tommy Murphy who was playing Senior Football at sixteen.</p> <p>47:42 Talks of playing with Ballyroan while playing with Laois. Mentions Kilminty And Clonad. Also mentions playing against Carlow.</p> <p>49:07 Tells of there being no collective training and only training at home. Mentions Dr. Cullen Park opening in 1932.</p> <p>49:47 Speaks about how Muine Bheag never won a Senior Championship. Mentions Eirn's Own Hurling club and watching them in Croke Park</p> <p>50:56 David asks when the club started playing in the field in the bog and Michael states from 1930's to 1951 when the field was donated to the club by the two Brown men from the Church of Ireland. Mentions Billy Codd and Willie Stevenson.</p> <p>52:22 Michael tells that the club has only played in two locations.</p> <p>52:58 Talks of playing on the Laois team with the Delaneys who he describes as the greatest family of brothers never to win an All-Ireland. Mentions Tom Murphy, Jim Slater and Mick Hockney.</p> <p>53:54 Speaks of playing in the last Oireachtas championship final in 1948 ever when Antrim beat them in Casement Park. Mentions it being a bit "dicey" travelling in the North.</p> <p>54:58 Tells of bringing two hurleys each with them and leaving them with the Antrim County Board as it was illegal to bring hurleys across the border. Mentions Kilkenny being beaten by Antrim in the All-Ireland semi-final 1943 in Belfast and the yarn that was spread about the hurleys.</p> <p>55:56 Speaks about the trainer of the Laois team at the time. Mentions 'Old' Jack Delaney who was chairman of the county board and 'Young' Jack Delaney who was chairman of the football board. Also mentions Tommy Cribben, Paddy Campion and Sean Broderick.</p> <p>56:54 Talks of beating Kildare in the Leinster final in Croke</p>
--	---

	<p>Park. Mentions Tommy Murphy scoring nine points and Brendan Lynch.</p> <p>57:54 Recalls the celebrations after the match which consisted of a few pints on the way home. Explains that while Laois were not even training together the Kildare team had moved into a house together in French Park before the match.</p> <p>58:41 Tells of not meeting from the time they won the Leinster final until the All-Ireland semi-final against Roscommon. Mentions the 98 tournament celebrating the 1798 Rebellion.</p> <p>59:55 Talks of leaving Laois to come home in 1950 and work in his father's business as his father was unwell. Mentions meeting his wife whose father had won an All-Ireland medal in 1919 with Kildare.</p> <p>01:01:03 Speaks of the GAA scene in Muine Bheag in the 1950's. Mentions the two town teams, Eirn's Own football team and Muine Bheag team, and how they met in the semi-final of the championship and a fight broke out. The outcome was a single town football club Saint Andrew's and one hurling club Eirn's Own. Mentions Jim Butler and Pat May and winning the Junior Championship that year.</p> <p>01:05:38 Tells of being President of both clubs and how good they are to him.</p> <p>01:06:02 David talks of Michael attending the AGM of the club and the young players still talking about the passion of his speech.</p> <p>01:07:17 Michael tells of the delight of returning home but of his love for Laois. Mentions Mick and Millie Gaynor and attending the 1944 Leinster final.</p> <p>01:07:56 Talks of the founder members of Eirn's Own, Jim Butler, Pat May and himself.</p> <p>01:08:46 Speaks of the club through the 1950's and 1960's. Mentions the Hogans, McGovern, John Mitchell and Dickey Hickey.</p> <p>01:10:06 Talks of his memory of John Mitchell and bringing him to Croke Park for his first visit. Mentions John Mitchell playing with Carlow against Cork. Also mentions Mark Mullins who captained Cork in a Munster final.</p> <p>01:11:59 David discusses Mark Mullins' GAA career.</p> <p>01:12:43 Michael talks of Paddy Ruschitzko playing for Laois</p>
--	---

	<p>and discusses his career.</p> <p>01:14:10 Speaks of the committees running the hurling and football clubs. Mentions the Eirn's Own club colours and how they were chosen. Also mentions Saint Andrew's choosing the Muine Bheag colours.</p> <p>01:15:54 Tells of emigration and how it affected Muine Bheag in the 1950's. Mentions Sean Clarke and others.</p> <p>01:16:40 Recalls being told to 'put the boot into' a particular player when he was playing and how he feels that this is wrong and wouldn't happen today.</p> <p>01:16:59 Talks of playing for Carlow for five years. Mentions Jim O'Rea, Buller Moore, Peaney Whelan, Mickey Whelan, Jim Hayes and Willie O'Connor and Jim Keogh. Also mentions no collective training or organised training.</p> <p>01:18:57 Speaks of there being no tactics as such in his day simply get the ball.</p> <p>01:19:17 Talks of how well the county team were looked after and of how the current teams are looked after.</p> <p>01:20:16 Speaks of training teams including the county team. Mentions his approach to training involving plenty of exercise and hurling the ball.</p> <p>01:21:37 Talks of Martin Duffy and how he got Michael back to train the Junior football team that David played on in 1986. Mentions Pat O'Driscoll and Father Gardiner going to Limerick to see Mayo play Kerry.</p> <p>01:23:38 Talks of his works on committees over the years and how changes that have happened have been for the better.</p> <p>01:24:26 Speaks of the GAA being an Irish Nationalist organisation. Mentions the problems that money can bring into sport and how soccer supporters have to be kept apart while GAA supporters can be side by side supporting their own counties.</p> <p>01:25:42 Talks of amateurism and volunteerism being the lifeblood of the GAA. Mentions it being people that are important.</p> <p>01:27:19 Speaks about the important position held by the club in the community.</p> <p>01:27:59 Talks of the idea of club players being given jobs as</p>
--	---

**REFERENCE NO. CW/1/11**

	<p>false because there were not enough employers involved in the GAA. Mentions Dick Brett and an article about hurling.</p> <p>01:29:45 Tells of the involvement of women in the club over the years. Mentions Kitty Monaghan, wife of club founder Jack Monaghan, who not only washed the kit for the club but marked the pitch and made tea for halftime. Also mentions her family's involvement in the club.</p> <p>01:31:30 Talks of Jack being presented with the cup for the Junior Hurling Championship and falling of his bike and flattening it.</p> <p>01:32:12 Speaks of going to a pub after a match and singing rebel songs with the Christian Brothers and other team mates. Mentions a Mrs Maloney whose husband was killed by the Black and Tans and how the GAA hurling and handball clubs helped her pay for his funeral.</p> <p>01:35:12 Talks of the lifting of the ban on foreign sports in 1971 and how the GAA are envy every country.</p> <p>01:35:47 Speaks of the opening up of Croke Park.</p> <p>01:36:12 Tells of the biggest change in the GAA being the discipline involved.</p> <p>01:37:04 Speaks of the leaders in the GAA he has admired over the years and those who just want to get their names in the papers.</p> <p>01:38:24 Talks of the GAA never disappointing him and recalls meeting Jim Handrigan of Kilbride and bringing him home.</p> <p>01:39:57 Speaks of not knowing what he would have done without the GAA.</p> <p>01:40:24 Talks of his optimism for the GAA, the village and the country.</p> <p>01:40:51 Speaks about not being able to name the best football and hurling teams he ever saw as so much has changed over the years.</p> <p>01:42:08 Talks of Billy Harte and Kevin Power from Kilkenny.</p> <p>01:42:56 Thanks Regina for taking the time to come and speak to him.</p>
<p><b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>Played Intermediate and Junior Football with Muine Beag and St Andrews, Bagenalstown.</p>



**REFERENCE NO. CW/1/11**

	<p>Won junior championships in 1936, 37, 39, 40, 42-5. Played hurling with Erins Own, Bagenalstown.</p> <p>Played Minor Gaelic Football with Carlow, 1936-38.</p> <p>Played Junior Gaelic Football with Carlow, 1941.</p> <p>Played Senior Gaelic Football with Carlow, 1950-53.</p> <p>Played Senior Club Football with Ballyroan, Co. Laois, 1948.</p> <p>Played Intermediate Club Hurling with The Rovers, Portlaoise, 1948.</p> <p>Played Senior Gaelic Football with Laois, 1945 and won a Leinster title with them that year.</p> <p>Won Limerick Senior Football Championship playing with Pallaskenry in the early 1940s.</p> <p>Won Waterford Junior County Championship playing with Galtees in the 1940s.</p> <p>Played with Cahir Slashers in Co. Tipperary.</p>
<p><b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>Trained Carlow County Football team in the 1950s for one year.</p> <p>On Erins Own and St Andrews' committees for many years.</p> <p>Chairman of Erins Own and St Andrews for many years</p> <p>Currently President of Erins Own and St Andrews.</p> <p>Registrar for Carlow County Board in the 1970s.</p>
<p><b>Format</b></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio      <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual</p>
<p><b>Duration</b></p>	<p>Length of Interview: 1:43:13</p>
<p><b>Language</b></p>	<p>English</p>

**REFERENCE NO. CW/1/11**

**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: 18<sup>th</sup> May 2012