

GAA Oral History Project

**Interview Report Form**

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Arlene Crampsie
<b>Date of Interview</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2011
<b>Location</b>	Casement Park, Belfast, Co. Antrim
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Gerry McClory
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1949 <b>Home County:</b> Antrim
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> St. Mary's, Belfast, Co. Antrim <b>Secondary:</b> Glen Road CBS <b>Third Level:</b> Queens University Belfast
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 1 sister <b>Current Family if Different:</b> Married to Margaret with 2 sons and 1 daughter
<b>Club(s)</b>	St. Teresa's; St. John's
<b>Occupation</b>	Urban Community Development Officer
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Pattern Maker, Shipyard [Father]; Silver Service Waitress [Mother]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	Republican
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	Edenmore Golf Club, British Association for Counselling and Psychology

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<b>Date of Report</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> July 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	1930s – 2011
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Antrim, Dublin, Cork, Europe, Italy
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Media, 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, Professionalism, Food and Drink, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy / Economics
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>Gerry talks about his involvement in the GAA over the years. He discusses his family's involvement in the GAA and how his grandfather was a founding member of the Lámh Dhearg club while his father was involved with Henry Joy McCracken's. He talks about growing up in Belfast the role of the GAA in his life as a child. He discusses the setting up of St. Teresa's and the club's involvement in the Troubles and the Hunger Strikes. Gerry talks about the relationship between the Catholics and Protestants in the GAA and outsiders' perceptions of the Association. He describes the type of work he does as Community Relations Officer for the Ulster Council and working with children from the Shankill Road. He discusses his refereeing career and talks about the highlights of his career. He talks about the development of the St Teresa's club and how the GAA in Belfast has changed over the years. He gives his opinion on the issue of professionalism in the GAA and the various rule changes over the years. Towards the end of the interview, Gerry talks about the important role the GAA has played in his life and what the Association has meant to him down through the years.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:20 Talks about his earliest memories of the GAA. Growing up in Belfast, where his local club was Henry Joy McCracken's. Discusses his family involvement in the club.</p>

	<p>Recalls the club winning a cup and the celebrations after. Listening to Michael O’Hehir on the radio.</p> <p>01:30 Notes that his grandfather was a founding member of the Lámh Dhearg club. Going to the ‘Rock’. Recalls going to secondary school and seeing soccer for the first time. Getting suspended by the Vigilance Committee for playing soccer.</p> <p>04:23 Discusses his grandfather’s involvement in Lámh Dhearg. Describes his first football boots and the type of facilities available when he was young. Mentions George Breathnach.</p> <p>07:00 Talks about his uncle Jimmy and the stories he told him. Grandfather was James Finnegan. Recalls playing for St Teresa’s against Lámh Dearg in 1970. The British Army taking over the ground.</p> <p>10:00 Talks about his father’s involvement in the Henry Joy McCracken’s club. Going to primary school in St Mary’s.</p> <p>11:55 Recalls being invited to play in a tournament when he was chairman of St Teresa’s by Michael Hanly.</p> <p>13:03 Talks about the role of football during his school days. Going to the CBS. Recalls playing in an Ulster College’s final. Believes that the GAA has been damaged by the demise of the Christian Brothers in Belfast.</p> <p>15:38 Discusses the GAA in his area in Belfast. Talks about the different clubs in the area. Getting interested in hurling in the CBS. Playing in street handball tournaments.</p> <p>20:00 Gives his opinions on rounders.</p> <p>20:29 Talks about Henry Joy McCracken’s training in Falls Park. Club based in a local pub.</p> <p>22:15 Discusses travelling with his father to Macrory Park, Greencastle and Corrigan Park for matches.</p> <p>23:45 Talks about the setting up of St. Teresa’s. Joining St. John’s before. Recalls the people involved who wanted to set up a team. Describes their first matches and the club’s quick success. Talks about the development of the club and getting facilities. Operating a ‘shebeen’.</p> <p>31:25 Describes the club’s current facilities and the state of the club at the moment. Talks about the families in the club and playing senior hurling when he was 52.</p> <p>34:30 Discusses the Hunger Strikes and the naming of the</p>
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	<p>club's grounds after members that were involved. Recalls how a player died during a match and how the club remembers him. The sense of community within the GAA.</p> <p>37:55 Describes the reaction of other clubs to the setting up of St. Teresa's. Talks about Belfast street leagues. Recalls refereeing the 1988 All-Ireland club final and getting abused by a supporter.</p> <p>40:00 Talks about the Irish culture in Belfast when he was growing up. Going to Céilí Mórs.</p> <p>41:38 Recalls how St. Teresa's got their first ground. Squatting on a field. Mentions Hugh O'Neill. Trying to amalgamate with John Mitchel's. Talks about a row with Mitchel's.</p> <p>45:25 Talks about his affinity for Cork. Mentions Jimmy Barry and Hugh McPoland. Cork playing at the opening of the grounds.</p> <p>47:37 Discusses the type of fundraising they did. Organising a ladies' committee. Notes the support from Sinn Féin and the changing political landscape in Belfast.</p> <p>51:05 Recalls how he was known as 'Fenian' Gerry. Recalls an incident in 1987 and how the UVF attempted to shoot him but he wasn't where he was supposed to be.</p> <p>53:00 Talks about the impact that that incident had on him. Discusses how the GAA was perceived to be the 'IRA at play'. Gives his feelings on this perception.</p> <p>57:20 Discusses his work relationships. Talks about coaching on the Shankill Road. Describes the Poc Fada at Stormont.</p> <p>01:00:20 Talks about his role as community relations officer.</p> <p>01:03:25 Discusses the involvement of non-Catholics in the GAA when he was growing up. The relationship between the communities. Mentions Jack Boothman.</p> <p>01:05:30 Talks about being safety officer for Casement Park. Working with Steve McQueen. Describes his passion for west Belfast and the importance of the GAA in the community. Giving young people a sense of identity. Talks about his role in suicide and alcohol abuse prevention.</p> <p>01:09:50 Discusses the role of the PSNI in the GAA.</p> <p>01:13:40 Talks about getting involved in refereeing. Mentions</p>
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	<p>Hugh McPoland, Jimmy White.</p> <p>01:15:58 Recalls how referees were picked for matches. Mentions Oliver Kelly.</p> <p>01:17:35 Talks about being appointed for a Dublin v Wexford hurling match. Being recognised in France a few days later.</p> <p>01:20:00 Recalls his first referee's assessment by Father John Traynor. Gives his opinion on assessing referees. Talks about the issue of video refereeing and referees being biased. Mentions Mrs McAleer from Ardoyne.</p> <p>01:28:10 Describes how he prepares for a match. Recalls the various matches he has refereed. Talks about refereeing a match in Carrick-on-Shannon between Leitrim and Fermanagh and only six spectators turned up.</p> <p>01:33:10 Talks about his work as community development officer with Ulster Council in Belfast.</p> <p>01:36:10 Describes the Ballymurphy area and the problems there. The role of the GAA in that area.</p> <p>01:39:09 Discusses the differences in the experience of the GAA in Belfast between different communities during the times of the Troubles. The importance of keeping the Irish culture alive.</p> <p>01:43:28 Gives his opinion on the work of the GAA to promote the Irish culture and language.</p> <p>01:44:08 Discusses the work of St. Teresa's during the Hunger Strikes.</p> <p>01:45:40 Talks about the changing of St Teresa's club colours.</p> <p>01:47:03 Discusses his handball career. His involvement in setting up a handball club. The facilities at the time. Recalls winning a final and his wife using the cup for a plant.</p> <p>01:51:32 Talks about the impact of the GAA on his family life. Discusses his career in administration and the roles he has held. The role of the GAA in his life. His pride at seeing young people wearing GAA jerseys in Belfast city centre.</p> <p>01:56:10 Describes the type of sacrifices his family had made because of his involvement in the GAA. Recalls why he named his son why he did and how his reputation affected his children.</p>
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	<p>02:01:00 Talks about setting up the Poc Fada in Stormont. Mentions Maura Grogan and Gerry Adams.</p> <p>02:05:45 Discusses the issue of professionalism in the GAA and pay for play. Gives his opinion on the opening of Croke Park.</p> <p>02:08:30 Talks about the role of the clergy in the GAA in Belfast.</p> <p>02:09:40 Gives his opinion on the media's coverage of the GAA.</p> <p>02:11:42 Describes his best and worst memories in the GAA. Losing a championship final in 1976, winning the championship in 1979. Talks about his refereeing his first All-Ireland final. Recalls going to New York. Describes the pride of seeing his son play for St. Teresa's and children from Shankill playing.</p> <p>02:12:55 Discusses his biggest disappointments in the GAA. Not being elected county chairman.</p> <p>02:14:40 Talks about his GAA heroes, the important role of Hugh McPoland in his life.</p> <p>02:17:00 Describes refereeing a hurling match in Milan at the back of the San Siro. Also in Gaelic Park in New York.</p> <p>02:18:31 Talks about this involvement in the GAA and the role of the Association in his life. Being elected divisional board chairman. The pride of training young people.</p>
<p><b>Involvement in GAA</b></p>	<p>✓ Supporter ✓ Player ✓ Manager ✓ Coach ✓ Steward</p> <p>✓ Chairperson ✓ Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p>✓ Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer ✓ 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>N/A</p>
<p><b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>N/A</p>

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<b>Format</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
<b>Duration</b>	Length of Interview: 02:23:20
<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:       \_\_\_\_\_18/07/12\_\_\_\_\_