

## GAA Oral History Project

## Interview Report Form

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Regina Fitzpatrick
<b>Date of Interview</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> May 2010
<b>Location</b>	Interviewee's home near Gortymadden, Co. Galway
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Tom Lowry
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1950 <b>Home County:</b> Galway
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Kilcooley NS <b>Secondary:</b> CBS Loughrea
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 3 sisters <b>Current Family if Different:</b> Wife (Ita), 7 children and several foster children.
<b>Club(s)</b>	Mullagh GAA
<b>Occupation</b>	Retired Farmer
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Farmers
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	None
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	Irish Foster Care Association; Macra na Feirme; Mullagh Badminton Club.

REFERENCE NO. GY/17

<b>Date of Report</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	1920s - 2010
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Galway
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Fundraising, Media, Emigration, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Identity, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish, Alcohol, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Challenges, Sacrifices, Professionalism, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy/ Economics
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>Tom talks about his GAA experiences in Mullagh Galway, where he grew up and played hurling for the club. There was a strong hurling tradition in his family and his grandfather played for Meelick in the first ever All-Ireland final. Tom played at minor and Under-21 level for Mullagh and won a county title along the way. He was also involved with Féile na nÓg, became secretary of Mullagh and at 19 he was chairman of both the club and the local branch of Macra na Feirme. Tom is from a small rural community where people work together and the GAA is an integral part of their identity. He recalls watching some of the great Galway teams and gives his opinions on topical GAA matter such as refereeing standards and player power.</p> <p>00:15 Born in 1950. Earliest memories. Going to Galway to a football match in Pearse Stadium. Parking car and walking a long way. Going to a county final.</p> <p>02:15 Father managing Mullagh team to a county title in 1932. His grandfather, John Lowry, playing in the first ever All-Ireland for Meelick. A neighbour of his grandfather dying the day before the final and his grandfather breaking an embargo on playing by walking to Banagher in an attempt to get to the game. Events at the game. That story being talked about in the community.</p> <p>09:15 Playing in national school in Leitrim. Later with Mullagh at minor and Under-21 levels. Winning the county title.</p> <p>10:15 Mullagh as a club and what it is about. Facilities. People involved.</p> <p>12:00 Role of GAA in parish. Fundraising. Annual marquee. Recalls being charged to get in to the marquee when he was young and not liking that fact.</p> <p>13:25 Macra na Feirme in the parish. Performing plays of John B Keane and 'The Dead Man's Shoes'. Overlap between GAA members and Macra na Feirme members.</p>

	<p>15:30 Camogie starting up in the 1980s. His daughter involved in the Féile na nÓg team. Being at the final with a boys team in Cork. Format of competition.</p> <p>17:25 Walking to training when he was young. Iggy and Joe Clarke and Timmy Cahalan living in nearby village Castlenancy. Having a game before training. Playing soccer after training. Infrequency of injuries. Social life around the team</p> <p>19:45 Stopping playing in 1972. Becoming secretary of the club at 17. Defending players who were in trouble over disciplinary matters. Recalls meeting the county board over a player they felt was sent off unfairly. Communicating in Irish.</p> <p>22:40 Becoming chairman of the club aged 19. Being chairman of the Macra branch at the same time. Feelings on public speaking. Difficulties involved in being chairman. Need for diplomacy.</p> <p>25:00 Meeting in the national school in Mullagh. Meeting in a local farmer's loft for Macra meetings. Looking for funds and grounds for a site for a community. Offaly's famous All-Ireland win over Galway in 1981 and having a raffle based around this. Going to Clareen in Offaly selling tickets. Getting home at 5am. Building the centre eventually.</p> <p>28:20 Galway winning the All-Ireland in 1980 and being at the game in Croke Park. Playing hurling with Galway player Iggy Clarke. Celebrations after the All-Ireland win. Bonfires and alcohol. Effect of win on county.</p> <p>30:00 Portumna's prominence on the county scene. Size of Mullagh club and surrounding area. His village is Baile Na Mór Dún.</p> <p>32:20 Doing the thrashing when he was young. Killing their own pig. Community cutting turf together. Effect of emigration on the area over the years. Sisters emigrating to the U.S. and Australia. Uncle of Iggy and Joe Clarke dying in the Bronx, New York at the age of 103. His sister Teresa Savage emigrating and coming back. Her son Derek won an All-Ireland in 1998. Emigration affecting the Mullagh team. Immigration to nearby town Loughrea.</p> <p>36:55 Mullagh's rivals included Castlegar in the 1920s and 1930s. Role of politics in the rivalry. Later Tommy Larkins, Killimor and Kiltormer were their rivals.</p> <p>38:15 GAA as part of his identity. Meeting new people.</p> <p>39:00 Changes he has seen in the GAA. Finances needed to run a club. Injuries now compared to when Tom was young.</p> <p>40:20 Watching Galway three-in-a-row team of the 1960s on a television in a neighbour's house.</p> <p>41:25 His children's GAA involvement. Son's golfing involvement.</p> <p>43:00 Aspects of the GAA that disappoint him. Issue of</p>
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**REFERENCE NO. GY/17**

	<p>training referees. Visiting teams providing referees at underage level. Controversy in a Mullagh county semi-final over the referee's decisions. Crowd reaction.          47:45 Issue of player power.          48:55 Tony Reddin the famous goalkeeper lives near him. Galway's Jimmy Duggan was another good player. Tom saw Joe Salmon and John Connolly play for Galway. Joe Canning a great hurling. Prominence of hurling in north Galway.          50:00 Issue of referees a topic of conversation.          51:20 What he likes about hurling and the GAA.          52:20 What the GAA has meant to him.</p>
<p><b>Involvement in GAA</b></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 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><b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>Played hurling for Mullagh GAA Club and played U21 hurling for Galway.</p>
<p><b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>Chairman of Mullagh GAA Club (3 years)  Secretary of Mullagh GAA Club (2 years)</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: 00:54:00</p>
<p><b>Language</b></p>	<p>English</p>

**REFERENCE NO. GY117**

**To be filled in by Interviewer:**

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Signed: Regina Fitzpatrick

Date: 28<sup>th</sup> May 2012.