

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Anne Finn
Date of Interview	10 th June 2011
Location	Interviewees home, near Fethard-on-Sea, Co Wexford
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Tom Neville
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1936 Home County: Wexford
Education	Primary: Poulfur N.S., Co. Wexford Secondary: St. Peter's College, Wexford
Family	Siblings: 1 brother; 1 sister Current Family if Different: Married; 2 sons; 2 daughters
Club(s)	St. Mogue's [Wexford]; Gusserane GAA Club [Wexford]; Horeswood GAA Club [Wexford]
Occupation	Publican
Parents' Occupation	Publican/Grocer/Drapery/Hardware
Religion	N/A
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A

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Date of Report	12 th July 2012
Period Covered	1940s – 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Wexford
Key Themes Covered	Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Religion, Emigration, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers
Interview Summary	<p>Tom discusses his lengthy involvement with the local club and his wider experiences of Wexford hurling. He talks about the origins of his club, and how it was built up during the years of his involvement. He explains how his club sourced grounds to play on and jerseys to tog out, as well as his experiences of his initial trips to Leinster matches and to Croke Park. He also expresses his opinions on the modern game and how the GAA runs its affairs.</p> <p>00:00.46 Introduction</p> <p>00:00.50 Recalls earliest memories of growing up; involvement of local team playing Gusserane in a field; story of game being abandoned because of ball landing in a field of corn.</p> <p>00:00.58 His interpretation of expression “all over bar the shouting”</p> <p>00:02.14 Explains expression “Give it the Hearne and Cahill” (bootmakers in Waterford)</p> <p>00:02.54 Discusses his interest in Roscommon football because of local connections with that county.</p> <p>00:04.30 Had an interest in Mayo football because of someone who holidayed in the Fethard area.</p> <p>00:05.04 Wexford Hurling 1950</p> <p>00:05.14 Recalls listening to stories of older people as he was growing up. The 1915-1918 Wexford Senior Football Team was often discussed because a member of the team – Jim</p>

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	<p>Byrne – had been a teacher in the local school – Poulfur.</p> <p>00:06.15 Remembers hearing about great Kilkenny/Cork games; a topic of conversation was the excitement generated by Michael O’Hehir.</p> <p>00:06.34 Discusses his parent’s occupation – grocery, drapery, hardware and publican.</p> <p>00:07.40 Eldest of three children; one brother and one sister.</p> <p>00:07.53 Growing up in Fethard-on-Sea</p> <p>00:08.05 Attending St. Peter’s College</p> <p>00:08.13 Discusses involvement in local club; listening to radio broadcasts of matches; ensuring radio was “in order” for Sunday games.</p> <p>00:09.16 Discusses local club which, while participating in competitions, didn’t win much, but was equal to opponents.</p> <p>00:09.40 First big game he recalls was between Wexford and Kilkenny, in Nowlan Park, in 1950. It was a hard game, Wexford beaten by 3 points but showed their metal.</p> <p>00:10.12 Recalls 1951 All-Ireland hurling Final; Wexford beaten by Tipperary.</p> <p>00:10.35 Remembers new Hogan Stand – 1958; wrote to Croke Park for tickets and got them. Kerry and Dublin were playing All-Ireland Football Semi-Final.</p> <p>00:11.04 On the way to the match he had no idea who Mick O’Connell was, but he certainly knew on the way home.</p> <p>00:11.18 Discusses importance of 1955 All-Ireland for Wexford; still hadn’t beaten Cork or Tipperary; it was only when Wexford beat Cork in an All-Ireland (1956) and Tipperary in a League Final that they had finally arrived.</p> <p>00:12.24 During the early 1950’s there was no under-age team in the area, players played hurling with Campile, under John Kenny; they played football with Gusserane under John Colfer. Discusses local rulings which were practical and gave players opportunities to play.</p> <p>00:15.15 Remembers his first pair of football boots-</p>
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	<p>purchased at Halliday's of Dundalk.</p> <p>00:15.35 St. Mogue's club went out of existence when Jim Byrne left the area.</p> <p>00:16.20 First jerseys club had were red and black.</p> <p>00:17.08 Recalls Mikie Barden and Paddy Finn; if volunteering had stopped things would have fallen apart.</p> <p>00:17.48 Discusses role of volunteers; not always given credit, especially at under-age level.</p> <p>00:18.56 The GAA was the only organisation he was aware of when growing up.</p> <p>00:19.36 Discusses games at secondary school level.</p> <p>00:19.56 Recalls Inter-Provincial Colleges games; remembers a trip to Kerry and Banna Strand.</p> <p>00:24.56 Has been a player, captain and secretary at club level; nothing compares with playing with local club.</p> <p>00:26.22 Discusses the 7 Aside Competitions and regrets that the GAA didn't take it on board officially.</p> <p>00:27.02 Discusses 1956 onwards</p> <p>00:29.55 Recalls rivalry of local clubs</p> <p>00:30.52 Discusses effect of club on community.</p> <p>00:32.23 Discusses the emigration of 1940's and 1950's and difficulties of forming a team.</p> <p>00:33.57 Recalls the development and revival of St. Mogue's Club; declined during early 1960's; revived later that decade. Describes a trip to Dublin to purchase a set of jerseys. A set was purchased at a good price (red/blue with white collar) a spare set for Clontarf Rugby Club!</p> <p>00:38.10 Refers to present day Croke Park and the work of Peter Quinn and Sean Kelly.</p> <p>00:40.01 Discusses lifting of ban and work of Pat Fanning</p> <p>00:42.00 Recalls St. Mogue's playing in Croke Park in 1950's against a team from the College of Surgeons.</p>
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	<p>00:42.48 Recalls the All-Ireland Football Semi-Final of 1945; Wexford V Cavan. Two local men, Johnny Rowe and Tom Hickey cycled to Croke Park.</p> <p>00:43.30 Doesn't recall politics being involved with GAA</p> <p>00:45.00 Earliest memory of supporting County was the Leinster Final of 1950; recalls the flask, sandwiches, Baby Fords and cars overheating.</p> <p>00:46.34 Remembers hearses being used to bring players to matches and credit being given in shops to facilitate people.</p> <p>00:47.13 Describes his father drawing a rectangle of pitch and then listening to Michael OHehir describing the ball in Section 1; Tom wonders if other people have this memory.</p> <p>00:48.20 Recalls the 1996 All-Ireland Hurling Final for Wexford. His wife is from Limerick (Wexford's 1996 opponents); as publicans they were entitled to one ticket for game; relates correspondence with Guinness as to which one should use the ticket!</p> <p>00:49.38 Memories of stories from 1996 when Liam Griffin managed the Wexford Senior Team and the interest generated throughout the county.</p> <p>00:51.11 Discusses changes in support for teams, modes of transport.</p> <p>00:52.00 Memories of Nicky Rackard; impossible to realise his importance to Wexford hurling. Mentions Christy Ring.</p> <p>00:53.38 Discusses media coverage of games.</p> <p>00:55.08 Discusses importance of knowing the rules (of football)</p> <p>00:56.43 Discusses personal identity and membership of GAA.</p> <p>00:57.38 Remembers the flag sellers, hat sellers and the hawkers</p> <p>00:58.30 Discusses Tom Williams book on Wexford hurling (1996) mentions the reference to a sign erected at New Ross bridge (linking Counties Wexford and Kilkenny) "You are now</p>
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	<p>entering a Trophy Free Zone.”</p> <p>01:01.06 A great memory is the acquisition of own grounds by the local club, together with all the facilities. Remembers the work of Willie Mernagh, Tom Hickey and the Nevilles. When people want to do something, the support at local level can be more than is expected.</p> <p>01.02.36 Discusses use of Irish language within the GAA.</p> <p>01.03.27 In summing up Tom believes that if the day comes when someone asks if he is going to watch the match and he says “what match” it will be a sorrowful day.</p> <p>01.04.04 Refers to his namesake Tom Neville, who by age 21 had won an All-Ireland Hurling Medal, even though there was very little hurling in the area. He, himself, was lucky to be on the selection (sub) for All-Ireland Colleges Final and won an All-Ireland Medal</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</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 type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" 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>
<p>Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>Played Juvenile Hurling with Horeswood. 1951 and 1952 Played Juvenile Football with Gusserane 1951 and 1952 Played with the same clubs in Minor competitions in 1953 and 1954 Won a Co. Junior Football Medal with Gusserane in 1965 Played Senior and Minor Football with Wexford All-Ireland Colleges Medal for Football</p>
<p>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>Committee Member and club secretary</p>

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Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 01:06:00
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: Anne Finn

Date: 20th Nov 2011