

## GAA Oral History Project

## Interview Report Form

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Arlene Crampsie
<b>Date of Interview</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2011
<b>Location</b>	Boston College-Ireland, 42 St. Stephens Green, Dublin 2
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Sean Kelly
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1952 <b>Home County:</b> Kerry
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Kilcummin NS and Tralee CBS, Co. Kerry <b>Secondary:</b> St. Brendan's, Killarney, Co. Kerry <b>Third Level:</b> St. Pat's, Drumcondra, Dublin; UCD
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 5 brothers & 1 sister <b>Current Family if Different:</b> Married to Juliette with 2 daughters and 2 sons
<b>Club(s)</b>	Kilcummin [Kerry]; Kerins O'Rahilly's [Kerry]; Fossa [Kerry]; Erin's Hope [Dublin]; Parnells [Dublin]; Belgium [Belgium]
<b>Occupation</b>	MEP, Teacher
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Farmer and Psychiatric Nurse [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	Fine Gael
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	Legion of Mary, ASTI, INTO, Rugby – Honorary Vice-President of Shannon Rugby and Tralee Rugby club.

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<b>Date of Report</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> August 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	1930s – 2011
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Kerry, Cork, Dublin, Kildare, Clare, Waterford, Tipperary, Kilkenny, Meath, Antrim
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Facilities, Playing, Administration, Celebrations, Religion, Role of Clergy, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Identity, Culture, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Politics, Opening of Croke Park, Politics, Professionalism, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>Sean recalls his earliest memories of the GAA. He talks about his family's involvement in the Association, and discusses his home club, Kilcummin. He talks about the connection between the Catholic Church and the GAA, before discussing his playing career. Sean discusses his administrative career in the GAA, from local level up to the presidency of the Association. He provides anecdotes along the journey, explaining what drove him on to the highest office in the GAA. He discusses the opening of Croke Park to rugby and soccer when he was in office, detailing the complex technical nature of the process. He also talks about the repercussions for him personally following the change to this rule, Rule 42. Sean talks about the role of women in the GAA before discussing the interaction between the GAA and politics. He recalls some of the highlights of his involvement with the GAA, as well as discussing what the GAA could change. He concludes by remarking on issues such as professionalism and the payment of managers, before recalling some incidents from his earlier days in the GAA.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:30 Sean recalls his earliest memories of the GAA. Mentions Kilcummin, The Cross, Tish Healy, Mícheál O'Hehir and Mick O'Connell.</p> <p>01:35 Recalls his family's involvement in the GAA. Mentions his grandfather and the purchase of the pitch, his uncle Sean who played with Jack Lynch with Civil Service in Dublin. He also mentions his uncle Fr Brian Kelly, and recalls his coaching career with Glenbeigh, Mid Kerry and Kilcummin, which included an O'Donoghue Cup victory. Also mentions Allihies, near Castletownbere in West Cork. Recalls his</p>

	<p>father's football career, and uncle Fr Laurence.</p> <p>05:08 Discusses his uncles Fr Brian and Fr Laurence and their playing careers in the context of the ban on clerics playing for their clubs.</p> <p>05:51 Recalls story concerning his brother Fr Larry and the 1973 O'Donoghue Cup Final replay against Glenflesk. Mentions Tim Sheehan and Derry Crowley. Also mentions his uncle Brian and Dan Dwyer.</p> <p>09:16 Recalls stories passed down by his grandparents regarding the GAA. Recalls parish league contests. Mentions Pat O'Connor and Gene Moriarty.</p> <p>10:52 Recalls facilities at the club when he began playing. Recalls making a football with his brother Brian from a pig's bladder.</p> <p>12:54 He discusses Gaelic football at the school he attended. Mentions Tom Sullivan and Pdraig Kelly.</p> <p>13:25 Recalls his late brother Pdraig's involvement with De La Salle Waterford, St. Gall's and Skibbereen. Mentions an annual tournament between St. Brendan's, Killarney and St. Fachtna's Skibbereen in memory of his brother. Recalls Br Leopold of St. Galls.</p> <p>15:15 Discusses the connection between the Catholic Church and the GAA. Mentions the Christian Brothers, De La Salle and St. Brendan's College in Killarney. Also mentions Fr Jim Kennelly, his brother Fr Larry Kelly, Fr Ollie Hughes and Fr Cremin of Moate.</p> <p>17:19 Discusses his playing career. Mentions Jimmy Deenihan and 150<sup>th</sup> celebrations at St. Brendan's College. Mentions St. Patrick's College in Dublin and Kilcummin. Credits Gerald McKenna and Dr Dave Guiney who brought in county leagues. Recalls treasurer John Joe Dunlea. Recalls successes with Kilcummin. Recalls beginning hurling at the age of 30 as he oversaw its development in Kerry. Mentions Johnny Culloty, Pa Doyle and Michael O'Connor of Fitzgerald Stadium. Recalls introducing seven-a-side hurling tournament, played against Mick Galwey. Mentions St Pats of East Kerry and Pa Doyle. Recalls hurling medals he won, mentions story concerning Brian Cody.</p> <p>22:31 Talks about the history of hurling in Kerry. Mentions tradition.</p> <p>24:00 Speaks about county boards who favour one sport over</p>
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	<p>the other, comparing them to dual counties. Mentions the introduction of the Christy Ring and Nicky Rackard cups. Also mentions the Tommy Murphy Cup that he introduced.</p> <p>26:30 Explains how and why he became involved in administration in the GAA. Mentions Fr Linnane of St. Brendan's College. Discusses the skills that administration develops.</p> <p>30:41 Describes some of the early East Kerry Board meetings he attended. Mentions Park Place Hotel and Mickey 'Doc' of the O'Donoghue family.</p> <p>33:02 Recalls what club meetings were like. Recalls survey mentioned by his brother Fr Larry. Mentions Billy Doolan, Michael O'Callaghan, John Dunlea and Johnny Coffey. Recalls progress that the club has made. Mentions Mike McCarthy.</p> <p>35:30 Discusses his first role with the Kerry County Board. Mentions contest for vice-chairmanship with Liam Sayers and Tom McCarthy. Describes busy schedule due to involvement with the GAA.</p> <p>37:06 Discusses his time as chairman of Kerry County Board. Mentions Mickey 'Ned' O'Sullivan and his role at juvenile level. Mentions Páidí Ó Sé and his time as manager. Mentions 1997 All-Ireland Football Final victory. Recalls abuse he received during his time as Kerry County Board chairman. Mentions Paddy Bawn Brosnan's funeral.</p> <p>46:10 Recalls preparations for the 1997 All-Ireland Football Final against Mayo. Recalls the homecoming, mentions Tralee and Killarney. Describes effect of that victory on young people.</p> <p>48:15 Discusses the theories regarding a possible geographical bias regarding the selection of Kerry teams.</p> <p>49:57 Discusses his involvement with the Munster Council. Mentions Donie Nealon, Fr Gardiner, Declan Moylan, Christy Cooney and Noel Walsh. Mentions the old disciplinary system that was in place.</p> <p>51:28 Recalls controversy regarding Colin Lynch of Clare. Mentions 1998 Munster Hurling Final between Clare and Waterford. Recalls Paul Flynn free in drawn match. Speaks of his regrets regarding the handling of the situation. Also recalls controversy regarding Clare and Offaly All-Ireland Hurling semi-final in 1998.</p>
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	<p>54:19 Discusses his determination to change GAA disciplinary system when becoming Uachtarán CLG. Mentions Liam Mulvihill, Frank Murphy, Supreme Court Judge Hugh Flaherty, Mícheál Ó Conaill and Liam Keane. Mentions DRA and CCCC.</p> <p>55:56 Discusses his ambitions to run for the presidency of the GAA. Mentions Gerald McKenna, Michael O'Callaghan of Roscommon.</p> <p>58:03 Recalls when he decided to run for the presidency of the GAA. Discusses his campaign. Mentions Tony O'Keeffe and Sean Walsh.</p> <p>01:02:37 Discusses importance of having a contest for office of President of the GAA. Mentions Liam O'Neill.</p> <p>01:04:13 Describes celebrations when he was elected president of the GAA. Mentions Billy Doolan and Kilcummin. Mentions poem from local poet Pat Culloty, celebrations in Caste Ross Hotel and Fossa.</p> <p>01:06:33 Explains how he chose his appointments to various committees. Mentions Pat O'Neill from Meath, Liam Keane and Brendan Dempsey. Recalls meeting with Liam Mulvihill in Malton, Killarney. Recalls committees he established. Mentions Ger Loughnane, Liam Griffin, Nicky English, Cyril Farrell, PJ O'Grady, Pat Dunney, Pat Daly and Paudie Butler. Discusses importance of people being appointed to committees, mentions Pat Healy of Kerins O'Rahillys and Hugh O'Flaherty.</p> <p>01:13:18 Discusses the CCCC.</p> <p>01:14:13 Recalls his years as President of the GAA. Mentions the GAA overseas. Mentions interaction with the government regarding the opening of Croke Park to soccer and rugby. Mentions the Bertie Bowl, John O'Donoghue, Charlie McCreevy, Jack Boothman, Bertie Ahern and Mary Harney.</p> <p>01:19:11 Discusses the opening of Croke Park to soccer and rugby and the process involved. Mentions Danny Lynch, Anthony Delaney, Noel Walsh, Tony Kilcoyne, Donal Manning, Pat Fanning, Colm Keys and Jim Duffy. Recalls the procedures and hurdles that had to be overcome. Mentions Peter McKenna, Dave Mackey and the negotiations that took place regarding the terms and conditions of the use of Croke Park.</p> <p>01:34:00 Explains why changing Rule 42 was the highlight of his time as President. Mentions the Queen coming to Croke</p>
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	<p>Park and the English rugby team coming to Croke Park.</p> <p>01:34:41 Discusses the intermediate and junior club championship finals being played in Croke Park. Mentions St. Mary's Cahirciveen, Jack O'Shea and Maurice Fitzgerald. Discusses the importance of the competitions for the Association.</p> <p>01:35:58 Discusses criticism he received regarding the opening of Croke Park to soccer and rugby. Recalls incident at Scór finals in Killarney.</p> <p>01:38:30 Talks about the technical structures of the GAA. Refers to the Five Year Rule, mentions Dónal Fitzgibbon and Noel Walsh.</p> <p>01:40:46 Discusses the role of women in the GAA. Mentions ladies football and camogie.</p> <p>01:42:52 Discusses the GAA's child protection policy. Mentions Danny Lynch's role.</p> <p>01:45:41 Discusses interaction between GAA and politics. Mentions Michael Ring and Leo Varadkar.</p> <p>01:48:20 Discusses the influence his involvement in the GAA has had on his political career.</p> <p>01:49:36 Talks about his desire to train teams in the future.</p> <p>01:50:52 Discusses sacrifices that his family have made due to his involvement in the GAA.</p> <p>01:52:57 Describes life after the presidency of the GAA. Recalls sense of satisfaction.</p> <p>01:55:31 Discusses the role and influence of Liam Mulvihill as Ard Stiúrthóir.</p> <p>01:58:44 Talks about achieving most of his goals as President. Refers to the Tommy Murphy Cup, Nicky Rackard Cup and Christy Ring Cups</p> <p>02:00:10 Recalls his best memory from his involvement in the GAA. Mentions the O'Donoghue Cup, Kerry winning 1997 All-Ireland Football Final and Croke Park being opened to other sports. Also mentions day of England v Ireland rugby match in Croke Park.</p> <p>02:01:18 Discusses his GAA heroes. Mentions Mick O'Connell and Christy Ring. Recalls watching Christy Ring playing in Railway Cup on television in parish hall, Kilcummin.</p>
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	<p>Also mentions Tony Doran, the Cork and Tipperary hurlers. Mention 2010 All-Ireland Hurling Final, mentions Lar Corbett. Also mentions Con Murphy, former GAA President.</p> <p>02:04:50 Discusses changes he would like to see in the GAA.</p> <p>02:06:32 Discusses professionalism in the GAA. Mentions the GPA and Dessie Farrell.</p> <p>02:07:50 Discusses the issue of administrators and managers being paid in the GAA. Refers to Tipperary's proposal for John Evans to become Director of Football in the county.</p> <p>02:11:49 Discusses disappointments, if any, he has had with the GAA. Mentions weaker counties.</p> <p>02:13:49 Explains what his involvement in the GAA has meant to him.</p> <p>02:17:42 Mentions going to school in Tralee CBS, and mentions Br Griffin. Recalls playing for Kerins O'Rahillys against Austin Stacks. Mentions John Dowling, Kerry captain from 1955.</p> <p>02:19:00 Mentions stewarding in Fitzgerald Stadium, recalls 1971 Munster Hurling Final and also stewarding at Congress held in Killarney.</p>
<p><b>Involvement in GAA</b></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): __President of the GAA_____</p>
<p><b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>Played from 1962 to 1992. Won School leagues, UCD Duke Cup, O'Donoghue Cup (1973), 2 county junior championships, 3/4 county leagues, 3/4 East Kerry leagues, a South Kerry senior hurling championships and a number of tournaments. With St. Pat's he won 2 county intermediate hurling championships.</p>
<p><b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>Has been involved in administration since 1975.</p> <p>Club: Kilcummin Chairman (1976 – 1977) and Delegate to East Kerry Board; Belgium President (2009+); Fossa President</p> <p>East Kerry: Bord na nÓg Chairman (1975 – 1978), Chairman</p>

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	(1978 – 1987)  County: Vice-chairman (1982 – 1987), Chairman (1987 – 1997)  Munster: Vice-chairman (1994 – 1997), Chairman (1997 – 2000)  Central: Management (1997 – 2000); Chairman Overseas Committee (2000 – 2003); Finance Committee, Ard Stiúrthóirs Review Committee; Chairman of Ladies Integration Committee (2003 – 2009); Chairman of Dublin Development Sub-Committee (2003 – 2006)  President of the GAA (2003 – 2006).
<b>Format</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
<b>Duration</b>	Length of Interview: 02:19:57
<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:                      \_\_\_\_\_ 18/08/10 \_\_\_\_\_