

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Claire Finlay
Date of Interview	4 th Dec 2011
Location	N/A
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Paul Finlay
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1984 Home County: Louth
Education	Primary: N/A Secondary: N/A Third Level: BSc in Building Surveying
Family	Siblings: 1 sister
Club(s)	Seán McDermotts GAA Club [Louth]
Occupation	Building Surveyor
Parents' Occupation	N/A
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Society of Chartered Surveyors, Ireland

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Date of Report	16 th July 2012
Period Covered	1990s – 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Louth
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Playing, Administration, Celebrations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Education, Media, Emigration, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Identity, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Retirement, Relationships, Economy/ Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Paul Finlay discusses his early involvement with the GAA and his move into club administration after deciding to quit playing Gaelic football as a teenager. He charts the recent history of the Sean McDermotts club of which he is a member and reflects on his experiences of supporting Louth teams in inter-county competition. In addition, Finlay discusses the impact of economic recession and emigration on his own club and considers both the importance of amateurism to the GAA and the place of the GAA in his own life.</p> <p>00:00:25 Mentions that he is a member of the Sean McDermotts club, based just outside Ardee, Co. Louth.</p> <p>00:00:32 Earliest memory: talks about playing underage football and training on a Friday night. Refers also to participation in mid-Louth Under 13 competition.</p> <p>00:01:16 Playing with the school and the success enjoyed in Cumann na mBunscol tournaments.</p> <p>00:01:40 Talks about decision to quit playing as a teenager – refers to lack of playing talent, to merger of clubs and to unwillingness to ‘sit on bench’.</p> <p>00:02:20 Discusses the ‘merger’ and the clubs involved.</p> <p>00:05:52 Involvement with the club after quitting playing – discusses role as supporter and, aged 16, joining committee. Outlines subsequent roles as Assistant secretary and club secretary.</p> <p>00:03:42 Discusses the demands of club secretary – mentions the time demands, the frustrations and the enjoyment of being involved.</p>

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	<p>00:05:20 Importance of volunteers to the club and the reasons for being involved.</p> <p>00:06:20 Favourite memory: mentions the transformations in the club's fortunes since the late 1990s. Mentions the arrival of Tommy Kerr as a trainer, getting to the final of a winter league, winning league to go Intermediate and reaching Intermediate final in 2001. Recalls some of the highlights of that championship campaign and the impact on the local area.</p> <p>00:08:40 Charts playing fortunes of club since 2001. - relegation and reaching junior final in 2010.</p> <p>00:10:05 Supporting the county team: recalls Louth drawing with Tyrone in Navan in the 2000s.</p> <p>00:11:58 Supporting Louth: discusses the 2010 season, the victory of Kildare in Navan.</p> <p>00:12:58 Talks about admiration for various players: Paddy Keenan of Louth, Maurice Fitzgerald of Kerry, Seamus Moynihan of Kerry, the O'Shea brothers from Kerry, Michael Donnellan and Kevin Walsh of Galway, Declan Browne of Tipperary, DJ Carey, Henry Shefflin and Tommy Walsh of Kilkenny.</p> <p>00:14:55 Discusses impact of economic recession on club: talks about fundraising initiatives pre and post economic collapse and the reliance on the same people.</p> <p>00:16:25 Discusses past impact and potential future impact of emigration on club.</p> <p>00:17:07 Reflects on the history and importance of amateur status on the GAA. Contrasts place of GAA in Ireland with rugby and soccer. Talks about pride in Croke Park and the problems associated with professionalism.</p> <p>00:18:50 Reflects on the place of the GAA in his own life ad the feeling of being caught up in watching an exciting game. 'It's something special you have to be caught in to understand.'</p>
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Involvement in GAA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward <input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person <input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____
Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	Underage player
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	Club Assistant Secretary, 2003-07; Secretary 2007-11
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 00:20:35
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: Claire Finlay

Date: 4th Dec 2011