

GAA Oral History Project

**Interview Report Form**

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Regina Fitzpatrick
<b>Date of Interview</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2011
<b>Location</b>	Rapparees/Starlights GAA Club, Bellefield, Enniscorthy.
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Pat Hall
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1940 <b>Home County:</b> Wexford
<b>Education</b>	N/A
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 5 siblings
<b>Club(s)</b>	Rapparees/Starlights GAA [Wexford]
<b>Occupation</b>	Civil Servant
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Restaurant Owners
<b>Religion</b>	N/A
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	N/A

REFERENCE NO. WX/1/33

<b>Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)</b>	Michael Doyle
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1948 <b>Home County:</b> Wexford
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Enniscorthy CBS <b>Secondary:</b> Enniscorthy Vocational School
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 6 siblings
<b>Club(s)</b>	Rapparees/Starlights GAA [Wexford]
<b>Occupation</b>	Hackney Driver
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	N/A
<b>Religion</b>	N/A
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	Shamrocks

<b>Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)</b>	Maria Nolan
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Female
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1957 <b>Home County:</b> Wexford
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Presentation Convent, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford. <b>Secondary:</b> Coláiste Bríd, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 5 siblings
<b>Club(s)</b>	Rapparees/Starlights GAA [Wexford]
<b>Occupation</b>	Civil Servant
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	N/A
<b>Religion</b>	N/A
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	N/A

<b>Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)</b>	Eddie Nangle
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1946 <b>Home County:</b> Wexford
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> St Mary's CBS, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford. <b>Secondary:</b> St Mary's CBS, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.
<b>Family</b>	N/A
<b>Club(s)</b>	Rapparees/Starlights GAA [Wexford]
<b>Occupation</b>	Retired Teacher
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	N/A
<b>Religion</b>	N/A
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	N/A

<b>Date of Report</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> June 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	1900s - 2010
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Wexford, Dublin, Kilkenny, Limerick, Tipperary, Australasia
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Fundraising, Education, Media, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Identity, Rivalries, Scor, All-Ireland, Club History, Irish History Childhood, Impact on Life, Food and Drink, Socialising
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>In this interview the formation of the Rapparees-Starlights GAA club is discussed including a brief history of the four clubs involved in the amalgamation. There is also talk of the fundraising events that are used to fund the club as well as the role played by the club in the community. They then talk about the widespread use of the grounds because of its geographical location. The various functions and events that take place in the club and the organisation required is then discussed. The next discussion deals with the difference between rural and urban clubs followed by talks of the other club in the town and how their rivalry has grown. The diversity of sports available to young people and how this affects the GAA is looked at next. They tell of the administrative structures within the club and of the place within the club for Scor and other sports. They finish by talking with pride of the Wexford wins and the celebrations that followed.</p> <p>00:39 Michael speaks of the forming of the club through an amalgamation of two football clubs and two hurling clubs.</p> <p>01:43 Pat discusses the hopes that the clubs had to build a pavilion and the Starlights being the only one of the four to have their own ground and the pavilion being built there.</p> <p>02:43 Maria talks of the place being in the GAA for over seventy years. The club was opened in 1974 and the committee being formed in such a way as to protect the premises in the GAA.</p> <p>04:30 They speak of the way the clubs were brought together in the hope of keeping the club going, however the Shamrock club was reformed and they are now in the same situation as they were before the amalgamation although not to the same extent. Mention is also made of the town being divided by the river and the rivalry this gave rise to with a 'them and us' attitude from both sides. Also mentions a boxing tournament</p>

	<p>which may see this rivalry rekindled.</p> <p>06:30 Maria talks of the Féile hosted in 1999 and the Rapparees playing in the Shamrocks pitch and even though she was Secretary of the club not being allowed on to the sideline and doing the same herself when the Shamrocks played later on the Rapparees pitch.</p> <p>07:08 Tells of the town being one parish and uniting the four teams until Bishop Herlihy, a Kerryman divided the town down the middle into two parishes in the late 1970's. Mentions Fr. Eustace former chairman of the club finding out by letter about the change.</p> <p>08:31 Talks of the Shamrocks name being taken by a new group who formed a club in the new parish. Mentions not objecting at the time and in hindsight this being a mistake. Also mentions this new club claiming the victories of old Shamrocks club that is now part of the Rapparees.</p> <p>10:12 They talks of the history of the Starlights going back to the early 1900's and the name stemming from some of the founders standing outside the house the club was formed looking at the sky. Mentions them having a hurling team in the 1930's and Nicky Rackard playing for the Starlights in the 1930's.</p> <p>13:27 Talks of the club being associated with a particular area of the town. Other clubs included Ross Road, John Street Volunteers, Slaney Harriers and the Shamrocks.</p> <p>14:36 They discuss the Aidan's hurling club that also played in football in the 1950's.</p> <p>15:00 Tells of players deciding which club they would play with based on who had the best chance of winning. Mentions the Boys Club in the late 1950's and the PH Purcells in the 1940's and Clan Loingsigh.</p> <p>16:11 Talks of the Clan Loingsigh's record of not being beaten but not knowing at what level. Mentions Brother Lynch and his role in the club and him being a brother of Liam Lynch Commander in Chief of the IRA in the Civil War. Also mentions the Clan Loingsigh cup turning up after many years.</p> <p>18:37 Talk of the Red Rapparees being the first club that was formed in the town and using the name for the united club. They then discuss the various colours within the club.</p> <p>20:42 Speaks of a county final in Wexford and how well a player performed. Mentions another match in which a fight</p>
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	<p>broke out and a player was knocked unconscious and left in the dressing room to recover while the game went on.</p> <p>23:10 Maria talks of watching the local doctor, Bob Bow, stitch up players on the sideline and they would return to the game</p> <p>23:41 Talks of Bellefield being the central pitch in the county in the 1950's and 60's. Mentions a quarter final of the Leinster Senior Football championship being played in Bellefield and Michael O'Hare commentating live from a dray.</p> <p>25:54 Speaks of Limerick breaking away from the parade in the All-Ireland and a comment about a band when they played in Bellefield. Mentions Terry Wogan visiting Bellefield when recording a programme for the BBC and a row on the sideline threatening to damage the camera equipment.</p> <p>28:13 Talks of the town being a stage start for the Tour de France and leaving from the field the same time that France won the World Cup. Mentions the facilities that were constructed on the pitch such as hair dressers, bureau de change and restaurants.</p> <p>29:40 Speaks of the Vinegar Hill day in 1998 and the back field being the staging point for the 3,000 pikemen. Mentions it also being used as a campsite for two Fleadhs as well as circuses and other events. Also mentions that the most important thing was protecting the pitch and how some caretakers have been unhappy with the condition of the pitch after some events.</p> <p>34:42 Talks of the caretakers putting water on the pitch and calling the referee to say that the pitch was flooded in order to keep players off the pitch.</p> <p>35:58 Speaks of the club being community based and being used for all sorts of functions by those in the community. Mentions the community feeling an ownership of Bellefield. Also mentions bridge and bingo being run as well as lotto and a savings club.</p> <p>38:49 Talks of an art group meeting in the club as well as youth reach. Mentions the revenue this generates and the club costs of about €85,000 to run per year. Also mentions the expectations of players being higher and needing to take a more professional approach.</p> <p>40:15 Speaks of the development of the site which is almost the geographical center of the county. Mentions it being part of Lord Portsmouth's estate and the Starlights buying it for</p>
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	<p>£17 in about 1917. Also mentions the old dressing rooms and one member of the club who kept to them even when the new building was opened.</p> <p>42:44 They talk of the new clubhouse and being the first club in the county to provide a covered press area. Mentions some mishaps with a dressing room and some wicket gates. Also mentions the location of the pitch being of benefit to the local retailers.</p> <p>49:03 Speaks of the tradition of some locals, the Tyrell's and the O'Connors, bringing baskets of chocolates and fruit to sell at the matches before there was a shop available.</p> <p>50:56 Talks of walking to Bellefield for a match with her siblings and mother and then being let run loose as it was so safe.</p> <p>52:17 Speaks of Enniscorthy being strong in the games and also having two senior football teams due to having such a strong GAA ethos. Mentions the strong hurling clubs in the area and how they come to Bellefield to play and some of them consider it their 'home' ground.</p> <p>54:12 Tells of the pitch being redone two years ago and the large fall being taken out of it. Mentions Wexford always beating Tipperary in Bellefield on the old pitch. Also mentions the old pitch being classed as narrow.</p> <p>57:12 Speaks of a bar coming onto the club in 1974 and it being the first one in Wexford. Mentions the work involved in the bar taking good people from other work that is needed although they appreciate that it is a good revenue earner. Also mentions having the first indoor handball alley.</p> <p>01:00:03 They talk of local people seeing the club as theirs but not necessarily focussing on the sport. Mentions a group of dancers using the club who won't really identify the centre as a GAA club. Also mentions there being misinformation regarding revenue earned for the use of the pitch for county championship games.</p> <p>01:03:02 Speaks of what it means to run a club in a town when there are so many options available to young people. Mentions different clubs having good relations as seasons overlap only a little, so if they are doing well the other sports club would leave the players until the others season is over. Also mentions Gaelic games being the third most popular sport in the area behind soccer and rugby.</p> <p>01:06:00 Talks of the traditional family names from the area</p>
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	<p>are coming back into Gaelic games and don't play any other ball games. Mentions college education costing them players who do not return to the club in the way rural club players do after college.</p> <p>01:08:41 They talk of the other club, Shamrocks and how they seem to be the nearest thing to a rural club in an urban area in terms of player loyalty. Mentions the impact of a social life on the ability to play Gaelic games over soccer. Also mentions the rural areas having less distractions and hence more loyalty.</p> <p>01:12:02 Talks of the importance to parents of their child getting a match every week and this will happen in soccer and rugby but not in Gaelic games.</p> <p>01:13:20 Speaks of the diversity of sports in schools and the loss of the Christian Brothers focus on only Gaelic games.</p> <p>01:15:03 They tell of being brought up in GAA families and knowing nothing else. Mentions clubs needing rejuvenation from the GAA and the problem being at county board level.</p> <p>01:16:50 Talks of the three towns being involved in the final and semi-final at juvenile level. Mentions the development squads and not being totally in favour of them. Also mentions the GAA doing nothing anything for the average player and those in the development squads being turned into prima donnas.</p> <p>01:21:24 Talks of the good players from each club being drawn by the schools for their teams and county and how it can lead to burn out.</p> <p>01:23:27 Maria talks of being secretary of the club since 1993 any only being contact once by the GAA to see if they needed help with promoting GAA.</p> <p>01:24:14 Tells of the members of the club and how they hold on to their individual old club identities. Mentions the Aidan's club being the strongest in the area at the time and Mick O'Donnell, Podge Keogh, Arty Foley, Ted Bolger, Tom Ryan, Tom Dixon. All of whom were the backbone of the Wexford team. Also mentions how these men would not set foot in the new club.</p> <p>01:26:27 Tells of losing people when the amalgamation was being set up. Mentions there being no animosity between the old and new but that Podge Keogh would not even attend his sons' presentations due to lack of interest.</p>
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	<p>01:27:57 Talks of a suggestion for having one jersey for the club and how it caused uproar and some falling out.</p> <p>01:28:55 Speaks of an attempt to bring back the Aidans twelve years ago which came to nothing.</p> <p>01:29:48 They talk of the Starlights being lucky in having their name retained in the new club and how this was due to the fact that there was not the same rivalries with the Emmet's football club at the time of the amalgamation.</p> <p>01:31:02 Talks of selling flags for the Starlights and not realising they were trying to sell to Emmet's fans. Maria talks of her father being stoned by opposition fans before the amalgamation of the clubs when crossing to the far side of the town. Mentions there being a definite divide in town with some exceptions</p> <p>01:34:26 Talks of the management of the amalgamation at an administrative level. Mentions the meeting taking place with the two hurling clubs in separate rooms with representative going from one to the other to explain their situation and only three of the Shamrocks objecting to the amalgamation. Also mentions the football amalgamation being easier and the joint amalgamation of football and hurling also being a simpler affair.</p> <p>01:38:18 They talk of the personalities involved on both sides and how this worked in a joint venture. Mentions Patrick's park being leased to the club and after the move the lease was let go. Also mentions this park being leased to the county board now.</p> <p>01:41:56 Talks of the committee structure and how it has changed over the years and how it is now difficult to get people to take on the jobs. Mentions the one man winning the chairmanship most years until he walked out and went to the golf club.</p> <p>01:44:40 They discuss the formation of camogie and ladies football within the club. Mentions them being under the club umbrella and not separate as in other clubs. Also mentions the ladies football being viewed as a threat to camogie but it being set up as several of the camogie players were going to leave to join other ladies football clubs.</p> <p>01:47:42 They talk of the strong handball tradition at one stage in the club but how it fell away after a change in facilities. Mentions Joey Maher and Pat Kirby playing there but of it being limited with a small viewing area.</p>
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	<p>01:49:45 They talk of Scor within the club and the two local dancing schools being involved but there being some tension between the two schools one of which now dances with the new Shamrocks. Mentions winning Leinster titles but not winning All-Irelands as the Wexford Set was not popular.</p> <p>01:52:21 They talk of Scor becoming more popular again as Irish dancing has become more popular although those clubs that gave it up don't seem to be getting back into it. Mentions there being so much involved in organising it and the different acts required. Also mentions being asked to sing one night as they were an act short as five are required, but being saved by the bell when the actual singer arrived.</p> <p>01:55:09 They talk of the impact on family life over the years and how they have been lucky enough to have their family support. They mention the love of the games and how it motivates them to keep going. Also mentions the All-Ireland wins and the celebrations at the homecomings and a photo of a group from the co-op setting off to Dublin on the back of the co-op lorry all done up for the match.</p> <p>02:00:12 Tells of this being the case with many of the local companies, when employees would borrow a truck, clean it out and set off slowly to the match. Mentions some who used to cycle to the matches in Dublin and sleep somewhere on the way back arriving home just in time for work the next day. Also mentions his daughter coming home from Malawi for the All-Ireland and a Waterford taxi driver in London commenting on her long journey.</p> <p>02:02:24 Maria talks of jokes made when she worked in Kilkenny about Wexford hurling.</p>
<p><b>Involvement in GAA</b></p>	<p><b>Pat:</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 type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input checked="" 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>Michael:</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>

**REFERENCE NO. WX/1/33**

	<p><input checked="" 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><b>Maria:</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input 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><b>Eddie:</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input 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><b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p><b>Pat:</b> Played underage in Wexford and with the Port Docks in Dublin</p> <p><b>Michael:</b> Played for 8 years at adult level</p> <p><b>Maria:</b> N/A</p> <p><b>Eddie:</b> N/A</p>
<p><b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p><b>Pat:</b> Chairman of Rapparee/Starlights (9 years); Also served as Treasurer.</p> <p><b>Michael:</b> District Secretary (8 years); Assistant County Secretary (3 years); Rapparees/Starlights GAA Chairman (6 years); Rapparees/Starlights GAA Secretary (3 years)</p> <p><b>Maria:</b> Secretary of Rapparee-Starlights GAA, 1993 – 2010</p> <p><b>Eddie:</b> Rapparees/Starlights GAA committee member (4-5 years); PRO (5-6 years).</p>

**REFERENCE NO. WX/1/33**

<b>Format</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
<b>Duration</b>	Length of Interview: 02:03:11
<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:            Regina Fitzpatrick

Date:              27<sup>th</sup> June 2012