

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

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| Name of Interviewer | Regina Fitzpatrick |
| Date of Interview | 17 th Nov 2010 |
| Location | Horeswood GAA Club |
| Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname) | Denis Cadogan |
| <u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u> | |
| Gender | Male |
| Born | Year Born: 1954 Home County: Wexford |
| Education | Primary: St Leonards NS, Co. Wexford Secondary: St Peter's College, Wexford Third Level: St Patrick's College, Drumcondra |
| Family | Siblings: 1 brother Current Family if Different: Wife & 2 children |
| Club(s) | Gusserane GAA [Wexford]; Horeswood GAA [Wexford] |
| Occupation | National School Teacher |
| Parents' Occupation | Farmers |
| Religion | Roman Catholic |
| Political Affiliation / Membership | Fianna Fáil |
| Other Club/Society Membership(s) | N/A |

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| Date of Report | 27 th June 2012 |
| Period Covered | 1880s – 2010 |
| Counties/Countries Covered | Wexford, Great Britain, England |
| Key Themes Covered | Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Coaching, Refereeing, Administration, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Education, Emigration, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Identity, Irish Language, All-Ireland, Club History, Earliest Memories, Impact on Life, Challenges, Violence, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Economy/ Economics |
| Interview Summary | <p>Denis discusses his involvement with the GAA throughout his teaching career. He describes his various administrative roles in the Horeswood GAA Club and his training of both football and hurling teams at a juvenile level. He reflects on the impact of the amalgamation of four local national schools on the success of Scoil Mhuire's GAA teams. He also praises the significant role of parents in improving juvenile teams, and he outlines the fundraising efforts involved in building better club facilities.</p> <p>00:34 Discusses his upbringing on a small farm in Gusserane parish. His father didn't attend games but listened to them on radio and watched them on television. His mother's brothers, the Colfers, heavily involved in GAA. His first cousin playing Under-21 hurling for Wexford.</p> <p>02:02 Outlines the history of the GAA in Gusserane parish, dating back almost to the founding of the GAA. Teams from the 1880s. Gusserane mainly a football parish. Winning three consecutive titles in the 1940s. Mentions Paddy Kehoe on that team. Horeswood mainly a hurling parish. In 1940s and 50s, footballers from Horeswood played with Gusserane GAA Club, including Paddy Kehoe who won a junior hurling medal with Horeswood in 1947. Both hurling and football played in Gusserane today. Doesn't recall any juvenile or minor hurling teams.</p> <p>03:06 Explains that in the 1950s, hurling started in Gusserane. Significant improvement in the late 60s and 70s. Winning Junior B in the 1970s. Strong today at underage level.</p> <p>03:38 Recounts his earliest memories of Gaelic Games: attending St. Peter's College, Wexford in 1967. Wexford</p> |

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| | <p>winning the All-Ireland Senior Hurling Final in 1968, going to the final in Croke Park by bus. Mentions the captain of that team from the parish, whose daughter played minor football for Wexford in 2009.</p> <p>04:17 Recalls playing football in St. Leonard's National School. Teacher Fintan Whelan who taught football. Played with parish team Tintern with Rackard League. Mentions trainer in Gusserane, Tim Foran. Foran's dedication.</p> <p>04:58 Recalls hurling at home, using the handle of a pick as a hurl. Mentions playing in Farley's field. John Farley played football for Wexford; his son Liam also played football for Wexford and was senior manager for Wexford. Older men playing skittles in Farley's field while they hurled. Ten or twelve playing. Aged 14 or 15, playing seven-a-sides between Tintern, St. Leonard's, and Ballycullane.</p> <p>06:33 Explains that he had no sporting heroes because he didn't see them on television. Recalls watching his first televised All-Ireland Senior Hurling Final between Wexford and Tipperary in 1968. No television at home, watching it in sitting-room of Murphy's in Taylorstown. Room packed with people. Excitement when Wexford made a comeback to win.</p> <p>08:01 Outlines his routine as a boarder in St. Peter's College. 250 or 300 boarders. Handball alleys, recalls playing handball in the morning before class.</p> <p>09:38 Explains what a significant role hurling played in St. Peter's College. Wexford winning in 1967, 1968, and 1973. Wexford also strong in football at the time, but hurling their biggest success. Mentions hurlers Martin Quigley, Larry Byrne who were in St. Peter's at the time. Also Ned Power, a teacher from Kilkenny who was interested in hurling. Denis never played hurling himself. Also Fr Paddy Curtis, heavily involved in football.</p> <p>11:11 Describes going to the All-Ireland Senior Hurling Final in Croke Park in 1968. First time he went to Dublin. Playing as a sub once on a team in the Keevans Cup, started by Seamus Keevans. No ambitions to be on team but trained with footballers. Mostly played handball.</p> <p>12:45 Couldn't follow inter-county matches in college because of lack of radios.</p> <p>13:04 Describes his time in St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra, from 1972. Mentions Brian Cody, Kilkenny hurling manager in his year. Also Ger Loughnane from Clare</p> |
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| | <p>in the year ahead. Discusses their progress. Recalls playing athletics and tennis. Describes also badminton, table tennis and volleyball being available in St.Pat's. Lack of emphasis on P.E. at that time.</p> <p>14:48 Describes returning to Horeswood to teach in June 1974. Lack of playing fields. Mentions John Davitt, principal. Cummins' field behind school. Recalls starting training a team in 1975. Becoming secretary of the development committee set up to buy a field. Mentions playing in O'Brien's field, also Ryan's. Lack of success of juvenile team initially until they won a district title in 1977. Flourishing of the sport after playing three county finals in 1981. Outlines subsequent successes of the school: winning 34 titles between 1982 and 1990. Explains how the amalgamation of four small schools in 1979 to form Scoil Mhuire improved the team. Playing field beside school bought in 1977.</p> <p>18:05 Recalls GAA grounds being bought from Johnny Ryan in 1977. Mentions Jimmy Murphy who in 1979 sold field to parish for school. In 1986, buying a second pitch for underage teams. Describes how, in 1984, at the All-Ireland Féile na Gael in Wexford, the school reached the hurling final. Flourishing in the 80s and 90s, representing the county in Féiles.</p> <p>19:58 Explains that there was no underage structure early on. Mentions Fr Paddy Stafford helping to train teams. Establishing underage committee in 1981, he was chairman. Handpicked parents to look after teams. Strong parental involvement. Mentions the winning the Jim Byrne Cup, with a prize of a trip to London, in 1988. Fundraising for this trip. Parents socialising together.</p> <p>21:30 Outlines the underage teams' successes. Describes trips to London. Mentions Tommy Harlan from Wexford, secretary in London, still involved in London. Visiting Madame Tussauds, the Galtymore Ballroom, Wembley Stadium. Fundraising for the trip: hosting cabarets. Staying in hostels, six to eight in one room. Mrs Flannery from Clare in charge of the hostel.</p> <p>25:37 Explains that many talented juvenile players emigrated to America in the 90s and didn't progress to senior level.</p> <p>26:28 Going to coaching courses for teachers in Wexford. Mentions coaches Mick Kinsella, county secretary; Brother Michael O'Grady. Reading <i>Coaching News</i>. Later attending coaching courses in Croke Park and DCU.</p> |
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| | <p>27:27 Describes his approach to coaching: his emphasis on skill in football and hurling, kicking with both feet, equipment, drills, new ideas.</p> <p>28:17 Discusses the underage committee from 1981. Fundraising: holding a talent contest. Not dependent on adult club for funds.</p> <p>29:06 Recalls challenge of travelling to games without minibuses or buses: dependent totally on parents, many of whom didn't have cars.</p> <p>30:06 Discusses the challenge of dealing with parents nowadays who are excessively emotionally involved. Impact of child protection laws, not being able to drive a child alone.</p> <p>31:06 Reflects on his roles as teacher and trainer. Relationship with former players. Mentions players on the 1979 team who are involved with the club today: John Kenny, club chairman; John Wallace, club treasurer; Charlie Rowe, on committee with Denis.</p> <p>32:20 Discusses the underage committee structure. Recalls being chairman from 1981 to 2005. No AGMs for years. Picked his own committee of parents, selectors, and team managers. Discusses successes of the club, which brought about more volunteers and financial support.</p> <p>34:57 Describes how, in the 80s and 90s, players got few games, little coaching. As county chair of the Coiste na nÓg, observes a more organised structure today. Improved organisation of coaching. More divisions, giving weaker teams more opportunity. Discusses introduction of Go Games to Wexford in 2010, which helps weaker players. Pros and cons of the Go Games.</p> <p>37:53 Recounts an incident in 1977, when as referee he decided to abandon a violent Under-14 football match. Aggression from opposite team. Recounts various incidences of aggression from players and supporters at juvenile level.</p> <p>39:49 Explains that in 1974, he came to Horeswood. Playing soccer for a couple of years and secretary of soccer club. Paddy Stafford setting up committee to buy pitch, Denis becoming secretary in his 20s. The challenge of getting young people on committees today. Mentions Mick O'Hanlon on committee, Dominic Hearn, Matty O'Reilly from Cavan, Derry Clancy who later became club president. No borrowing money to buy the pitch; fundraising instead. Asking each household for donations. Mentions treasurer Paddy Grehan</p> |
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| | <p>Sowing beet and selling it to raise money. Building clubhouse voluntarily. Mentions local electrician Jack Forrest, chairman of the football club.</p> <p>43:57 Recalls his time as chairman of the club in the 1980s. Difficulty to get juveniles playing time on the pitch with seniors getting preference. Ladies football starting in the early 80s. Fundraising to buy a second pitch: holding a draw to raise funds. In 1983, setting up committee to build a handball alley. Holding mayoral elections to raise funds, mentions participants Matty O'Reilly, Jim Foley, James Furlong (whose son Tadhg played rugby for Ireland, plays for Clontarf), and Sean O'Brien. Mentions the following year's participants: Peggy Ryan and Marie McWilliams.</p> <p>47:02 Discusses his ambition to build an indoor playing field after seeing one in Duffry Rovers in 2000. Formation of development committee, he was secretary; Michael Duffin, chairman; Billy Molloy treasurer. Mentions the late Ann Parker, architect, involved in Ladies Football, her husband, Alan, a quantity surveyor, who did the plans voluntarily. childcare facility, dressing rooms, floodlights, gym. Partly funded by the National Lottery in 2005.</p> <p>50:36 Discusses sponsorship from local companies. Great Island Power Station financed building of viewing area in clubhouse. Winning three senior football titles. Numbers falling in national schools in 90s, rising today.</p> <p>52:40 Outlines the ups and downs of ladies football. Four years ago, Majella Cummins started a camogie Under-10 team. Thriving of juvenile camogie now.</p> <p>53:21 Describes starting handball in 1984. Mentions Val Flanagan, an international squash player from New Ross, who advised against building a squash court in favour of a racquetball court, which thrived in the 1980s. Building a handball alley. Many playing handball today in the club and in Wexford. Involvement of travellers in Wexford - social inclusion.</p> <p>56:42 Explains that his involvement with juvenile teams was his most satisfying role. Commitment of children. Playing hurling and football at lunchtime with students.</p> <p>57:56 Describes the predominance of female teachers in schools, which decreases involvement at lunchtime sports. Mentions two female teachers involved in training girls for the Rackard League: Margaret Kavanagh and Melissa Walsh, who played football for Waterford. The success of the girls'</p> |
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| | <p>teams.</p> <p>59:22 Discusses the lack of formal Department of Education support for Gaelic Games.</p> <p>01:00:17 Reflects on the importance of national games, music, and language for Irish identity. Importance of participation in sport for health. Involvement of several retired parents in training teams at lunchtime.</p> <p>01:02:03 Discusses his frustration at parents during matches. Their interference with referee decisions. GAA's high tolerance for parental interference compared to other sports. Some improvement compared to 20 or 30 years ago.</p> <p>01:03:30 Ponders the improvement of the structure of the GAA. More democratic. More resources. More coaching support.</p> <p>01:04:42 Reflects on what the GAA means to him. Refers to his project called A.S.H., which aims to boost juvenile hurling in the area. Friendships he made through the GAA around the county.</p> |
| Involvement in GAA | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person <input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ |
| Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played) | Played with Gusserane at underage and with Horeswood at adult level. |
| Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for) | <p>Development Secretary of Horeswood GAA (1975; 2005 – 2010); Horeswood GAA chairman, secretary, PRO, underage chairman, secretary and PRO; Handball Secretary for Horeswood GAA.</p> <p>District chairperson and secretary of Bord na nÓg.</p> <p>Wexford Registrar of Bord na nÓg; Chairman of Coiste na nÓg.</p> |

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| Format | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual |
| Duration | Length of Interview: 01:07:05 |
| Language | 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: 27th June 2012