

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	12 th April 2011
Location	Interviewee's home, near Causeway, Co Kerry
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Gerald Whyte
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1938 Home County: Kerry
Education	Primary: Kilflynn, St. Teresa's NS, Co. Kerry Secondary: CBS Tralee, Co. Kerry Third Level: UCD
Family	Siblings: 4 brothers and 1 sister (RIP) Current Family if Different: Married to Nuala with 1 son and 3 daughters
Club(s)	Kilflynn; Castlegregory; Crotta O'Neills; Causeway; St. Senan's FC
Occupation	Teacher
Parents' Occupation	Garda, Farm Labourer, County Council Worker [Father]; Housewife, Handwoman [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Samaritan; TUI

REFERENCE NO. KY/1/20

Date of Report	17 th August 2012
Period Covered	1912 – 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Kerry
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, Irish Language, Culture, Scór, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Alcohol, Politics, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Opening of Croke Park, Ban on Security Forces, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Retirement, Food and Drink, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy / Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Gerald talks about his GAA experiences over the years, sharing his extensive knowledge of GAA matters in Kerry. A native of north Kerry, he recalls his memories of growing up in a rambling house and of local gatherings to listen to All-Ireland finals on the radio. Kilflynn was his local club and he discusses their amalgamation with Crotta O'Neills's and the politics that surrounded that issue. An avid hurling man, Gerald explains why hurling is popular in north Kerry - and recalls a time when it was popular in many other areas of the county. During his involvement with the Association he has occupied countless administrative roles related to the North Kerry Hurling Board, the Vocational Schools Board, the Kerry County Board and local club committees. Gerald also spent some years in Dublin and over time he has worked with many of the most prominent administrators within the GAA. He also spent time as Kerry County Board Secretary during the 1980s, a period when the county footballers enjoyed much success. A dedicated GAA man, Gerald places most value on the elements that he feels underpin the Association's continued endurance over the decades - honesty, respect, friendship, integrity and, above all, a sense of community.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:35 Earliest memory. Going to a county final in Tralee with his father in the early 1940s. Going from Kilflynn by horse and</p>

	<p>car. Where they got that from. Number of people travelling.</p> <p>01:20 Asking his father who a Crotta O'Neill's player was at a game. Illegal players in games.</p> <p>02:20 Players from Kerry playing with Limerick clubs in the 1940s and 1950s under false names. Best Kerry hurlers at the time both midfielders and playing in a Limerick final. Lining up against their lesser-known club-mates. Some of them asked to represent Limerick juniors. Reason players played games with clubs in other counties. Man playing in seven county hurling finals in one year. Man from Ballyduff playing with him.</p> <p>04:45 First county final he attended was between Shannon Rangers and Dingle. Gus Cremins taking a penalty. Paddy Bawn Brosnan of Dingle challenging him.</p> <p>05:50 Kerry playing Mayo in a league game in Tralee in the 1950s. Kerry forward from Tralee sent off along with a Mayo player. What the two of them did after being sent off.</p> <p>07:15 Crowds that attended county football and hurling finals. Ballyheigue, Kilmoyley, Ardfert, Abbeydorney, Lixnaw, Ballyduff, Causeway all making up an area where hurling was widely played. Hurling also popular in Kenmare and Kilgarvan. Hurling popular in Killarney in 1969. Johnny Culloty, Brendan Lynch, Derry Crowley Kerry footballers playing with that team. Killarney beating Austin Stacks, who featured Niall Sheehy. John Barry a Kerryman reporter who played hurling with Austin Stacks and Kerry.</p> <p>09:15 Micksie Palmer playing against Crotta O'Neills in advance of a Munster football final in the 1950s. Need for modern-day players to be allowed to play with their clubs in advance of inter-county games.</p> <p>10:55 Kilflynn his first club. Later amalgamating with Crotta O'Neills. Frequency of matches and how they travelled to them. Maurice Fuller bringing players to games. Meeting new people at games.</p> <p>12:35 Listening to the 1947 All-Ireland football final in New York between Cavan and Kerry on the radio. Canon Hamilton promoting the idea at Congress. Listening to it in Shanahan's house. People barefoot. Reason for that. Micheál O'Hehir saying something and a man reacting resulting in him sustaining an injury. People blaming Micheál O'Hehir for the loss.</p> <p>14:35 Pubs closed on Sundays. Listening to the radio from</p>
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	<p>outside the pub. Going to the cross in Kilflynn and people discussing the game. Two men arguing.</p> <p>16:10 Facilities when he was young. Where people togged out for games. People hurling in plain clothes before a match.</p> <p>17:35 Making a complaint at a county convention about not getting to play enough matches. County leagues coming in later. Gerald McKenna the instigator when he made Dave Geaney chairman of fixtures committee. Number of matches played in 2011.</p> <p>18:40 Pitch in Kilflynn. Relying on the farmer who owned the land. Finals played in winter on muddy fields. People illegally introducing extra balls into a game.</p> <p>20:40 His house a rambling house, people playing cards and talking about hurling. Learning about the history of the club. What he remembers of that.</p> <p>22:25 Father originally from west Cork and interested in bowls. Father taking him to big GAA games. Economic hardship in the 1940s and 1950s. Poverty widespread. Bartering. People helping each other on the farms. Feeling effects of World War II. Leaving Kerry for Dublin. Family members emigrating to England and the United States.</p> <p>27:10 Amalgamation with Crotta in 1968. Working as secretary of the North Kerry Hurling Board. Crotta playing Ballyduff in a North Kerry Under-21 hurling final. Chairman of North Kerry Hurling Board from Ballyduff. Collecting the cup from Ardfert. Chairman asking him about a particular player, Thomas Leane. Patrickswell in a Limerick Under-21 final. Gary Spillane objecting to some of the Patrickswell players as he recognised them from another final. This leading to problems between Crotta and Kilflynn. Meeting of the two sides. Agreement reached. Coming together. Lack of county championship success since. Leonard Enright a talented player. Enright playing for Munster in the Railway Cup. His relationship to Thomas Leane.</p> <p>33:10 Wearing boots because he had a club foot. Operations in Cappagh Hospital, Dublin when he was young. Playing minor football with St. Senans. Not playing when he lived in Dublin. Playing minor hurling with Kilflynn, and later with Castlegregory and Crotta. Going to play Ardfert with only 12 players. Agreeing to tog out.</p> <p>35:45 Administrative involvement. Donie Costello, Paddy Healy and he getting a team going in Castlegregory. Later</p>
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	<p>moving to Listowel. Donie ending up teaching in Ballybunion. Attending North Kerry Hurling Board meetings as a delegate from Castlegregory. Nominated for position of secretary. How he became a Castlegregory delegate originally.</p> <p>37:35 Becoming secretary of Crotta club and chairman of North Kerry Hurling Board. Moving to Causeway and joining their club. Becoming chairman of that club in 1975. Reaching a county championship final that year and in 1978. Four-in-a-row run. Later involvement as a selector. Reason he opted out of that position. Point of principal. Son involved with Ballinhassig club in Cork in administration. Also a referee. Son's brother-in-law playing for Cork minors against Kilkenny and marking Richie Power. How that went.</p> <p>41:05 Becoming chairman of Kerry Vocational Schools in 1972. Kerry winning a Vocational All-Ireland. Beating Mayo in Croke Park. Being a selector for the team. Returning to the post of chairman in 1997. Beating Tyrone in a final.</p> <p>42:15: Becoming vice-chairman of the county board in 1989, and secretary in 1982. Where his office was. Predecessor Andy Molyneaux dying prematurely in 1981. Tim Lenihan of Rathmore also in the position. Andy there as Kerry won three All-Irelands in-a-row. Andy asking him for advice. Tony O'Keefe going forward after Tim Lenihan.</p> <p>45:55 Kerry footballers losing in their bid for five-in-a-row in 1983. Offaly superior. Administrator John Dowling and trainer Eugene McGee of Offaly deserving of praise. McGee's impact on GAA scene at UCD. Watching games in the Phoenix Park, O'Toole Park and Croke Park on Sundays. In Dublin from 1958-1967.</p> <p>48:05 All-ticket system for All-Ireland finals brought in in 1984. Distributing the tickets. People driving from far and wide to look for tickets from him. Ringing Gerald McKenna for advice. Tony O'Keefe doing the county league draw. Kerry County Board heavily in debt that year. How they clawed their way out of it. Worrying about his health. Tony O'Keefe replacing him as secretary of Kerry County Board. O'Keefe's brother Ger a multiple All-Ireland winner and later a Kerry selector.</p> <p>51:25 Being a selector for Kerry hurling team. Participation in B All-Ireland Championship. Appointing Frank Thornton as a trainer. Thornton failing to show up for training. Sharing the training pitch with the Kerry footballers. Thornton showing up eventually. What he said. Hurlers beating Laois in Tralee. Tom Nolan scoring a crucial goal. Beating London in the All-Ireland final at Croke Park. Playing Galway in 1976 All-Ireland</p>
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	<p>quarter-final. Not feeling suited to role of trainer. Reason for that.</p> <p>55:45 Controversy during his time as county board secretary. Kerry footballers playing Waterford in the 1980s. Certain players given permission to play for their clubs the day before. Players refusing to play in the club games. What happened then. Players appealing to county board later. What was decided.</p> <p>58:20 Kerry winning the 1891 All-Ireland hurling club final. Ballyduff their representatives that year. Popularity of hurling in Kerry at the time. Hurling played in Caherciveen and south Kerry. Man from Derrynane winning a colleges title with St Kieran's College, Kilkenny. Hurling popular in Killarney with Johnny Culloty a talented player in the town. Culloty, Tom Prendergast, Mick O'Dwyer and Mick O'Connell and Niall Sheehy all retired by 1967. County board asking them to return. Niall Sheehy a hurler with John Mitchels and a footballer with Austin Stacks. Players told to decide between hurling and football. Some of them opting for hurling. Kerry winning the 1968 All-Ireland. Niall Sheehy in county final against Crotta. Killarney playing Austin Stacks in a county hurling final. Brendan Lynch, Tom Prendergast, Derry Crowley, Johnny Culloty lining out for Killarney. Hurling slowly fading out in many areas. Reason for that. What he feels should be done to prevent this.</p> <p>01:05:20 How hurlers were treated at county level. Commitment hurlers gave to the county. Footballers more humorous. Training footballers did. Players running at Banna beach. O'Dwyer making players run.</p> <p>01:08:15 Where Kerry Hurling Board met. Going to his first meeting in Causeway on behalf of Causeway. Argument in progress at the meeting. Action taken by chairman. Chairman deciding on issue they wanted resolved. What he said to chairman. Secretary commenting on the matter. Resolution.</p> <p>01:12:10 Playing in goals in a final against Lixnaw. Other man in his place in goals when he arrived. His brothers playing. Outcome of the match.</p> <p>01:13:40 Characters in Kerry hurling. Johnny Conway, Johnny Bunyan, Michael and John Carroll, John Brady of Ballyduff all good company. Brady winning Sigerson and Fitzgibbon cups with UCC, as well as a Cork championship with Blackrock. Brady also training Ballyduff.</p> <p>01:14:40 Playing a team up the country in the 1980s.</p>
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	<p>Goalkeeper had a stammer. Trying to take that into account when deciding on a game plan.</p> <p>01:16:35 Playing in Westmeath with two brothers the day after one of them got married. What one brother said to the other.</p> <p>01:17:15 Playing in Down and staying in Dundalk. Everyone staying on the ground floor. Making sure players went to bed. Some of them sneaking out. Feeling duty bound to play games in Northern Ireland. One player hungover during the game. Move to substitute him. What action he took when he realised this.</p> <p>01:19:20 Stopping at a market in Jonesborough. Selector missing a ferry to Portaferry as a result. Match delayed. Stopping at Annie's pub in Birdhill, Tipperary on the way home. Sing-songs. Man organising the sing-song. Woman from Birdhill on holidays in Kerry and buying a round for the hurlers.</p> <p>01:21:30 Kerry football selector driving players to a match. Praying in the car. Making the players get out of the car and walk. Reason for that.</p> <p>01:22:25 Hurley-making in Kerry. Cutting down ash trees. How that has changed. Tadhg Flynn making hurleys and selling them. When the ash trees were cut. When the hurleys were made. Repairing hurleys.</p> <p>01:24:05 District board buying sliotars for games. Sliotars disappearing. Umpire hoarding sliotars. Where they get sliotars in 2011.</p> <p>01:26:10 Being secretary of referees committee, fixtures committee and many other committees. Attitude to the job. Roles different in 2011. Demands of the job. Work of hearing committee. Toughest job he had.</p> <p>01:27:50 Daily routine as county secretary. Kevin Griffin of Glenbeigh a county football selector. Going to Munster Council meetings. Attending conventions. Committee meetings. Writing up minutes. Not much technology to assist him in his time. Getting a photocopier.</p> <p>01:32:05 Impact of GAA involvement on family life. Father-in-law a former player with Owen Roes in Dublin. Wife a Kilkenny supporter. Daughter involved in Scór.</p> <p>01:33:55 Cultural element of GAA. Importance of Scór.</p>
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	<p>01:35:10 Role of women in GAA and how that has changed. Female officers in clubs. Women's role within clubs in the past. Mrs Conway in Lixnaw washing jerseys. Women expressive when watching GAA games.</p> <p>01:36:30 Maureen O'Shea an officer on the county board, as well as Bernie Reen. Maureen handball secretary for many years and living in Ballymacelligott. Strength of handball in Kerry. More popular in years gone by. Eamonn Horan an All-Ireland champion in the 1950s.</p> <p>01:38:05 Playing rounders when he was young. Former county board secretary Micheál Ó Rourke interested in rounders. Playing behind Condon's shop in Kilflynn.</p> <p>01:39:00 Leather footballs and what they were like to play with. Weight of balls an issue. Modern-day balls being introduced. Brother-in-law getting knocked out with an old-style football.</p> <p>01:40:30 People playing in long trousers. Kilflynn winning titles in the late 1930s. Older players wearing long trousers during games in the 1950s. Not switching to the other side of the field for the second half of games.</p> <p>01:42:10 Politics and GAA administration in Kerry. Families trying to dominate clubs. National politics and local GAA. Kilflynn winning county championships in 1937 and 1938. Some of the team members interned in the 1940s. O'Neill part of Crotta O'Neill's is because of Maurice O'Neill. Sinn Féin part of Crotta O'Neill's breaking away.</p> <p>01:44:10 Man on Crotta side a garda. His parent's shop boycotted. Gerald McKenna knowledgeable on local GAA history.</p> <p>01:45:15 Con Murphy in Cork anti-foreign games but accepting of democratic decisions. Frank Murphy and Pádraig Fanning in Waterford holding strong opinions but also democratic.</p> <p>01:46:50 The Ban and his opinion of that. Watching Shamrock Rovers play Waterford in Milltown, Dublin. The McHales, Paddy Coad playing. D'Arcy man a goalkeeper for Drumcondra. What his nickname was. Shelbourne a team he used to watch. Foreign games abused in order to get somebody suspended. Vigilantes and rough justice. Tralee Christian Brothers school once a fair field. People getting in trouble for being near there. Mick Mackey of Limerick going to soccer matches. Solution Limerick County Board came up</p>
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	<p>with for him.</p> <p>01:50:25 Opening of Croke Park and lifting of ban on security forces in Northern Ireland. RUC members playing for clubs in Fermanagh before the ban was lifted. Donal Keenan GAA President at the time. His attitude to the issue. Former Ireland soccer goalkeeper Packie Bonner playing football for Donegal. Former Ireland soccer player Niall Quinn playing with Dublin minor hurlers. His father Billy winning All-Ireland hurling medals with Tipperary. Hurlers playing for clubs in Dublin - Young Irelands, New Irelands, Owen Roes, Seán Ó Callacháin playing for Owen Roes, as did Kevin Matthews. Seán Ó Callacháin winning a title with a team in Fermanagh.</p> <p>01:53:45 Attending All-Ireland finals. Problems he has with walking and attending stadiums. First trip to Croke Park. St. Brendan's Cup final between Wexford and New York in 1958. How much money he had in his pocket. Cost of train. Staying with his friend Tony Twomey's mother. Telling his mother a lie. Going to Mount Pleasant Square in Rathmines. Attending the game in Croke Park. Brendan and Michael Hennessey of Ballyduff playing for New York. Whelan and Morrissey playing for Wexford. How the game panned out. Atmosphere at the came. Watching from under the Cusack Stand. Mistake he feels GAA made in relation to that stand. Comments spectators made at games.</p> <p>01:59:05 Time as Kerry County Board secretary. Missing one game in three years. Reason he did not go to all the county games when he was chairman.</p> <p>02:00:25 Characters involved with the Causeway club. John Canty a past chairman. His son John Joe managing the hurling team. Andrew Diggins looking after the field and the equipment. His dedication. Neilas Flynn captaining Causeway in 1932 and St Brendan's - an amalgamation of Causeway, Abbeydorney and Ardferf - in 1936. Hearing stories about him. Joseph O'Connell and Josephine O'Connell passing away in the United States. Joseph's GAA involvement in Kerry.</p> <p>02:04:10 Causeway missing out on a five-in-a-row.</p> <p>02:04:35 Causeway club formed in 1912. Joining up with other clubs like Ballyduff, Ballyheigue and St Brendan's over the years. Paddy Seán O'Connell, John Lyons and Andrew Diggins developing underage teams in the late 1960s. Those teams going on to achieve success. Francie Canton a local shopkeeper.</p>
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REFERENCE NO. KY/1/20

	<p>02:06:25 Role of club in the community. Events held during the summer. GAA, ICA and Macra na Feirme helping people out.</p> <p>02:07:00 Joe B O'Connell's mother known as 'Mrs camogie'. Causeway, Ballyduff, Castlegregory, Castleisland, Clahane all having camogie teams in the 1970s. County final played in Tralee. Mary Geaney playing with Castleisland and Cork. Two players clashing in the county final in Tralee. Player sustaining eye injury. Impact of that on camogie in the area. Causeway and Killard promoting camogie in 2011. May O'Connell giving teams tea and sandwiches before games.</p> <p>02:09:50 Facilities within Causeway club. Agreement between Causeway and the vocational committee in relation to a field. Gerald McKenna involved in that. What agreement involved. Applying for a Munster Council grant. Former GAA President Jack Boothman chairman of Leinster Council. Boothman visiting his house. Billy McCarthy a friend of Boothman's. Giving him an overview of hurling in the area. Sharing problems with Boothman. Offer of assistance. Central Council becoming involved. Admiration for Boothman, who went to school at King's Hospital.</p> <p>02:15:10 Admiration for John Dowling of Offaly. Dowling arriving to the area in a helicopter. Admiration for Paddy Buggy.</p> <p>02:16:00 Being chairman, secretary and selector of Kerry Vocational Schools. Winning All-Ireland B championships. School also winning titles. All-Ireland success at Under-16 level. All-Ireland football success. Becoming president/chairman of All-Ireland vocational schools.</p> <p>02:17:35 Grand National called off in 1993. Reason for that. Secretary at the time from Meath ringing him that day. People refusing to play a match. Advice he gave him. Irish golfer Rory McIlroy performing poorly at the US Masters. Putting things in context.</p> <p>02:20:25 Being chairman of the VEC. Peter Quinn GAA President. Jimmy Grey chairman of the Leinster Council. Move to amalgamate colleges and vocational schools. Meetings held in different counties on the issue. Lack of support for proposed initiative. Meeting with Management Committee at Croke Park. Why there was resistance to amalgamation. St. Jarlath's of Tuam and St. Brendan's College Killarney dominating colleges football scene. St Kieran's Kilkenny and St Colman's Fermoy dominating colleges hurling scene. Charge made against him at meeting.</p>
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REFERENCE NO. KY/1/20

	<p>His response. Tipperary man TJ Egan at the meeting. Waterford man Pat Daly too. What Peter Quinn said. Organisations later coming under the one umbrella. Structures they introduced.</p> <p>02:27:15 Role of teachers within the GAA and how that has changed over the years. Benefits of teacher involvement.</p> <p>02:28:25 Best GAA memory. Camaraderie. Transient nature of winning and losing. Kerry and Dublin rivalry. Friendship off the pitch.</p> <p>02:29:30 GAA heroes. What Con Murphy was like.</p> <p>02:30:35 Disappointments. Comment he made to the Evening Herald newspaper. Feelings on Offaly's 1982 All-Ireland football final win over Kerry. Eugene McGee, John Dowling, Johnny Mooney doing a good job for Offaly. Repercussions of that day for Kerry.</p> <p>02:32:55 What his GAA involvement has meant to him.</p> <p>02:33:55 His opinions on administration and the modern-day GAA. Admiration for Jimmy Smyth, Liam Mulvihill, Seán Ó Síocháin. Being at Congress with Seán Ó Síocháin. Fr Gardiner saying mass. Sharing a joke. Working in the Stephen's Green club in Dublin. President of Students Council. Meetings held at Newman House in Stephen's Green. Ó Síocháin singing.</p> <p>02:36:45 Brendan Lynskey a forward for Galway while John Dowling was GAA President. Barney Winston vocational schools delegate. Lynskey sent off in a pub tournament and getting suspended. Getting a phone call from GAA President Joe McDonagh. What was said. Barney Winston out of the country at the time. Meeting at Croke Park regarding suspension. Resolution. How Galway fared in the Championship. Being asked to make a speech.</p> <p>02:41:10 Suspending a player when he was secretary of the North Kerry Board. Other administrators reluctant to chair the meeting. Suspension handed down. Regretting decision he made. Same player coming before him years later in Causeway. Suspension handed down. Result of that. His opinion on suspensions within the GAA.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p>✓ Supporter ✓ Player ✓ Manager ✓ Coach ✓ Steward</p> <p>✓ Chairperson ✓ Committee Member ✓ Grounds-person</p>

REFERENCE NO. KY/1/20

	<input checked="" 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 for 12 years and won a junior hurling divisional board championship in 1957
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	<p>Has been involved in administration since the age of 18.</p> <p>Club: St. Senan's Delegate to North Kerry Football Board; Secretary Kilflynn; Secretary Crotta Hurling Club; Castlegregory Delegate to North Kerry Hurling Board; Causeway Chairman (1975 – 1979).</p> <p>North Kerry Hurling Board: Chairman, Secretary, Delegate to County Board</p> <p>County: Vice-chairman, Secretary (1982 – 1984), Munster Delegate (10 / 11 years)</p> <p>County Vocational Schools: Chairman, Secretary, Munster Delegate</p> <p>All-Ireland Vocational Schools: Chairman of National Committee and President</p>
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 02:46:48
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: _____Arlene Crampsie_____

Date: _____17/08/12_____