

GAA Oral History Project Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Eddie Nangle
Date of Interview	22 nd Dec 2011
Location	Interviewee's home, near Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Richie Peare
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1942 Home County: Wexford
Education	Primary: CBS, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford. Secondary: CBS and VEC, Enniscorthy
Family	Siblings: 2 sisters & one brother Current Family if Different:
Club(s)	St Aidan's GAA Club [Wexford]; Rapparees-Starlights GAA [Wexford]
Occupation	Retired Sales Rep
Parents' Occupation	Mill Worker & Shop-keeper
Religion	N/A
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Enniscorthy Golf Club

REFERENCE NO. WX/1/57

Date of Report	22 nd Dec 2011
Period Covered	1950 – 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Wexford, Kildare, Britain, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Cork, Offaly, Westmeath, Sligo and Monaghan
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, Involvement in GAA abroad, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Professionalism, Retirement, Purchase of Grounds, Economy / Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Richie Peare outlines his family background in the GAA and his experience of growing up in 1950s Wexford, playing Gaelic games on the street and in school and of the excitement and glamour associated with successful county hurlers of that decade. Peare reflects on the geography of Gaelic games in Wexford and Enniscorthy's place within it. Club relations and club developments in the area are also addressed. In addition, Peare discusses the issue of emigration, especially in the 1950s; travelling abroad with club teams; the problems of maintaining participation beyond under age levels; the roles of the clergy and women in GAA life and the place that the Association occupies within the community. Finally, he recounts the highs and lows of his GAA experiences, opines on his favourite teams and the changes he would like to see in the future.</p> <p>00:00:33 Mentions being born and reared in Enniscorthy and the GAA as being 'part and parcel' of family life. Refers to father's connection with county teams and to the association of Sundays with mass and the GAA.</p> <p>00:00:57 Born in 1942.</p> <p>00:01:05 Discusses father's GAA background: playing for Kildare junior team in 1927, founder of Kilbride GAA club outside Athy. GAA conversations in the household and mother's interest in the sport.</p> <p>00:01:45 Mentions that he is the eldest of four children, with 2 sisters and a brother. Refers to brother and one sister's involvement in hurling and camogie.</p> <p>00:02:18 Reference again to Sunday as dedicated to mass and games.</p>

REFERENCE NO. WX/1/57

	<p>00:02:36 Earliest memories: recalls being a child in 1950s when Wexford hurling came to prominence. Mentions the positive impact of county team's success on the club scene.</p> <p>00:03:33 Recalls Wexford winning 1951 Leinster hurling final and the subsequent shift in emphasis from football to hurling.</p> <p>00:04:00 Discusses the geography of Gaelic games in Wexford and to hurling being played in 'pocket' and the prominence of football in parts of the north and far south of county.</p> <p>00:04:42 Refers to the charisma and profile of some of the Wexford hurlers of the 1950s.</p> <p>00:05:25 Discusses poor facilities used by teams growing up. Refers to a sub-standard field used by the St. Aidan's championship winning team and going up as a child to 'throw in' a ball for them.</p> <p>00:07:05 Talks about hurling on the street, now the main N 11 road from Dublin to Wexford. Mentions the infrequency with which games on the street would be disturbed by cars.</p> <p>00:08:11 Discusses street leagues and how 'tough' they were. Refers to rows in school rows being resolved in street leagues.</p> <p>00:08:55 Comments on his lack of knowledge of family involvement with GAA prior to his father and speculates as to the earlier popularity of the GAA.</p> <p>00:09:43 Discusses involvement of Uncles in the GAA in Piercestown and that they were also involved in tug o' war. Refers also to a cousin, Roy Coleman, who played for the county.</p> <p>00:10:20 Remarks on Sundays as a GAA day and to mother's remark about it being a 'no go area'.</p> <p>00:10:55 Mentions father's involvement in the county board and to being in charge of hurleys and equipment for Wexford senior hurling teams. Story about father doing the line against Laois in 1951 Leinster championship and being 'smuggled' into the dressing-room afterwards.</p> <p>00:12:36 Talks about the profile of GAA in schools past and present. Mentions the impact of the 1950s team on schools and how internal and inter-school leagues were organised.</p>
--	--

REFERENCE NO. WX/1/57

	<p>00:14:22 Comments on the drain of young men to England and the impact of emigration on the GAA.</p> <p>00:15:10 The importance of the schools to the GAA in the 1950s. Talks about personal experience of playing for class and school and winning county-wide competition, age 11 or 12. Recalls that a special train was laid on for a schools' final and commends the influence of the Christian brothers.</p> <p>00:17:50 Discusses the main local clubs in Enniscorthy when he was growing up – St. Aidan's – and mentions local men who won All-Ireland medals with Wexford and their influence on youngsters.</p> <p>00:18:35 Discusses the emergence of the Shamrocks team and playing with them at minor and senior levels.</p> <p>00:19:24 Reflections on his decision to transfer to St. Aidan's in 1964.</p> <p>00:20:50 Discusses St. Aidan's failure to 'look to the future' by failure to look after 'second string' or youth and the emergence of Shamrocks. Contrasts St. Aidan's approach to that of Rathnure and Harriers.</p> <p>00:22:38 Comments on the rapid demise of St. Aidan's and eventual amalgamation with Shamrocks in 1971.</p> <p>00:23:20 Balancing GAA with work and family commitments. Mentions playing senior football and hurling for 20 years and tells short story to illustrate the choices faced between domestic jobs and meeting GAA commitments.</p> <p>00:24:50 Comment on the societal benefits from involvement in sport.</p> <p>00:25:47 Recalls the homecomings for Wexford All-Ireland winning teams in the 1950s and attending the league final in 1956 with friends. Talks about sitting on wall on Hill 16 and watching Wexford defeat Tipperary after being 12 points down.</p> <p>00:27:30 Mentions popularity and profile of the Wexford team.</p> <p>00:28:20 Discusses the friendships forged through the sport.</p> <p>00:29:30 Reflects on retiring and how the decision is reached – the impact of age on the body.</p>
--	---

REFERENCE NO. WX/1/57

	<p>00:31:27 Remembers going out to play last game in 1980 and subsequent request to tog out with Rapparees Starlights – a club formed out of the</p> <p>00:33:00 Talks about the various administrative roles he held unification of hurling clubs Aidan’s and Shamrocks and two football teams, Emmets and Starlights.</p> <p>00:34:25 Mentions being selector with an under 21 team on a number of occasions and reluctance to commit unless he give it 100%.</p> <p>00:35:04 Discusses travelling to play games outside the county and players willingness to bear the expense of running a car etc. Contrast his experience and attitude with that of current crop of players.</p> <p>00:37:00 Comments on reluctance of younger players/members to contribute to their clubs.</p> <p>00:39:10 Discusses the role of women in club and wife’s involvement in a social committee.</p> <p>00:40:19 Comments on the existing higher profile of camogie than in the 1950s and 60s. Also refers to rise of Ladies football and to greater female involvement.</p> <p>00:41:00 Mentions officer positions in club – eg. Treasurer – held by women, but expresses a reservation that their influence might become too great.</p> <p>00:41:58 Talks about going on club tours – travelling to London, Birmingham and Cardiff – and mentions the connections Cardiff and Birmingham had with Enniscorthy. Comments on the welcome received from Irish emigrants.</p> <p>00:43:09 Remarks on missed opportunity by GAA in the 1940s and 50s given the numbers of emigrants settled in Britain. Refers to quality of players in Britain and lack of organised competition.</p> <p>00:44:55 Reflects on the drop-off in players after minor and under 21 and considers why young people lose interest in sport. Also contrasts the commitment required of football and hurling to that required for amateur soccer.</p> <p>00:47:40 Expresses incomprehension at lack of interest in wanting to be in the field training and playing.</p> <p>00:48:00 Talks about role of the clergy in the GAA generally</p>
--	---

REFERENCE NO. WX/1/57

	<p>and the tendency for parish priest to served as club patrons.</p> <p>00:48:30 Considers the place of the club in the local community and how it has changed over time. Includes reference to club as a 'meeting place' and to interest of girls in what happened there.</p> <p>00:49:20 Discusses the impact on emigration from the 1950s up to 2011.</p> <p>00:50:17 Contrasts the expectations of players past and present in respect of facilities. Talks wanting to have a 'pool' for players provided at the time of a development of dressing-rooms in the 1970s.</p> <p>00:51:58 Recent development of grounds, levelling field. Tells story about Bellefield being 'the only proper football field left in Wexford', contrasting the required dimensions of hurling and football fields.</p> <p>00:53:55 Discusses Bellefield importance as the home to county finals and its positioning at the 'centre of the county'. Tells story of 1954 or 1955 Leinster championship game between Wexford and Wicklow, the crowds and seeing Michael O'Hehir commentating.</p> <p>00:55:10 Best memories – Recalls Wexford winning All-Ireland in 1955; also playing with primary school team in that year, the school closing down for a presentation of medals and the pride in walking home with trophy.</p> <p>00:57:29 Worst memory: Tells story of the 1960 county minor final when he was playing for Shamrocks, a game lost as a result of a referee's timing mistake. Reflects on aftermath of that final – the referee and county board's attempts to make amends and the impact it had on his future sporting career.</p> <p>01:00:20 Greatest club team: recalls the achievements in hurling and football of the St. Aidan's team of the 1950s. Refers also to Bennetsbridge of Kilkenny and Thurles Sarsfields in Tipperary, Mount Sion of Waterford and St. Vincent's of Dublin, among others. Also mentions Dunhill club tournament in Waterford and its popularity. Compares it to an All-Ireland club championship.</p> <p>01:02:00 Greatest county team: talks about the display of Kilkenny in the 2008 All-Ireland final against Waterford. Compares with Kilkenny team of 200s favourably with previous teams from Wexford in the 1950s, Tipperary in the 1960s, Cork in the 1970s and Offaly later on.</p>
--	---

REFERENCE NO. WX/1/57

	<p>01:04:08 Discusses the meaning of the GAA to the community and society. Also comments on what he would like to preserved and changed about the GAA – refers to professionalism, the use of the ‘fast ball’ in hurling and the overuse of the handpass in football.</p> <p>01:05:52 Mentions a visit to the GAA museum and to learning about new clubs abroad – Asia, England and Newfoundland.</p> <p>01:06:20 Expresses desire to see GAA develop in certain counties (mentions hurling in Westmeath, Sligo and Monaghan) and to see their interaction with units overseas.</p> <p>01:07:03 Remarks on his willingness to remain involved with the GAA into the future.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</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> <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>Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>1 Wex. SH Title ('78) 1 Juv F. Title ('55)</p> <p>1 Wex. Int F Title ('76)</p> <p>1 Wex Sp. Int. F Title ('64)</p>
<p>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>1974 Treasurer St. Aidans/Shamrocks</p> <p>1975 PRO, St. Aidans/Shamrocks</p> <p>1979 PRO Rapparees/Starlights</p> <p>1971-80 and 2003-08; Comm. Member, Rapparees-Starlights</p> <p>2001: U21 Hurling Selector</p>
<p>Format</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual</p>
<p>Duration</p>	<p>Length of Interview: 01:07:44</p>
<p>Language</p>	<p>English</p>

REFERENCE NO. WX/1/57

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: Eddie Nangle

Date: 22nd Dec 2011