

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	12 th April 2011
Location	Killeen's Pub, Rhode, Co. Offaly
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	John Glennon
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1957 Home County: Offaly
Education	Primary: Ballybryan NS, Co. Offaly Secondary: Edenderry Vocational School, Co.Offaly
Family	Siblings: 5 brothers & 4 sisters
Club(s)	Rhode GAA [Offaly]; Wolfetones GAA [Clare]
Occupation	ESB employee
Parents' Occupation	Farmers
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	None
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

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Date of Report	18 th June 2012
Period Covered	1888 - 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Offaly, Clare, Kerry, Westmeath, Cork, Laois, Meath, Limerick, Antrim, Armagh, Dublin
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Managing, Refereeing, Administration, Celebrations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Education, Religion, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of the Club in the Community, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Earliest Memories, Politics, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Ban on Security Forces, Relationship with the Association
Interview Summary	<p>John Glennon talks about the strong history of Gaelic Football in and around Rhode, County Offaly. He discusses the representation of school club players on the County team and how much these successful players put back into the club over the years. Talks of his own time playing with and against some of the same players. Also discusses playing at county level in both Offaly and Clare. Goes on to discuss some of the celebrations and disappointments over the years. Speaks about his work in various administrative positions on numerous committees. Finally, speaks about the challenges facing the GAA and about his most memorable moments.</p> <p>00:35 Talks of the history of Gaelic Games in the parish of Rhode from 1959 onwards in Ballybryan school. Mentions Master Gerry Reidy and Stephen Darby the current principal who won an All-Ireland Football medal with Offaly in 1982. Also mentioned is Seamus Darby who scored a famous goal against Kerry also Johnny Mooney and Eugene Mulligan.</p> <p>01:33 Tells of the fourteen All-Ireland Senior medal holders associated with the Ballybryan school.</p> <p>02:07 Speaks of his families support for the local club and for Offaly GAA.</p> <p>02:26 Talks of his earliest memories of playing football and hurling in a local field with his brothers and in the Ballybryan National School. Then on to playing on the pitch in Rhode and the schools team in Edenderry.</p> <p>02:50 Talks about Gerry Reidy and Seán Murphy and the work they did for Gaelic football in the area.</p> <p>03:25 Speaks of the post primary games Under 14 level in the</p>

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	<p>1960's. Also mentions his brothers playing over the years.</p> <p>04:35 Talks of Mick Casey in 1960 and 1961. Also mentions local members of the All-Ireland winning Offaly Minor team Eugene Mulligan, Mick Byrne and Jody Gunning two of whom went on to win the All-Ireland Senior Football final in 1971 and 1972 with Seamus Darby who was also on the 1982 team. Also mentioned are Paddy McCormack and Martin Heavey.</p> <p>05:32 Talks of schoolmates who went on to win All-Ireland medals, Johnny Mooney and Charlie Conroy.</p> <p>06:02 Speaks of travelling to all the matches and the club winning three Senior Offaly Championships in a four year period 1966, 1967 and 1969 winning again in 1975 when John himself was a substitute on the team and was playing for the Minor Team.</p> <p>06:52 Speaks of the formation of the club in 1888 and winning its first Senior Championship in 1900 and winning another 24 since. Mentions a priest, Father Kelly and the purchase of a football and the first game against Portarlinton in 1888. First county final in 1900.</p> <p>07:52 Talks of the club winning the first seven finals in which they played, 1900, 1917, and three in a row in the 20's.</p> <p>08:12 Talks of players travelling to Tullamore on bikes or walking along the canal or by horse and cart.</p> <p>08:50 Talks of the absence of hurling and handball in the area at the time. Mentions handball increasing in popularity in the 1950's. Speaks of Fahy's Cross Handball Club and Mastersons, Hopes and Mooneys as families that played handball.</p> <p>10:05 Talks of the local people maintaining the handball alley, outside the village.</p> <p>10:18 Discusses moving on to Edenderry Vocational School (now Oaklands Community College) and playing football there. Mentions some teachers, Mr. Spain, Mr. Cummins. Talks of winning school championships and playing with school teams.</p> <p>11:04 Talks of the rival schools at the time, Tullamore, Clara and Ferbane, who won the All-Ireland Senior Vocational School Championship this year.</p> <p>11:40 Speaks of meeting others from Carbury, Johnstown</p>
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	<p>Bridge, Ballinabrackey, Meath, Ballymoate and Cloghernarinka.</p> <p>12:04 Mentions travelling by bus to matches.</p> <p>12:27 Talks of playing for both the school and for the club at the same time. Speaks about the role of the teachers in encouraging the youth to join the GAA.</p> <p>13:47 Discusses playing with and against the same players in different matches. Mentions Edenderry, Walsh Island, Clonbullogue, Ballyfore, Carbury, Johnstown Bridge, Ballynabrackey, Enfield.</p> <p>14:12 Talks of the local rivalry between Offaly, Kildare and Meath at school level. Mentions Rochfordbridge from Westmeath.</p> <p>15:03 Recalls the 1964 Minor final when he was seven watching the match on television at home. It was the second year games were televised and he mentions Tony McTigue taking a fifty against Cork in his bare feet.</p> <p>16:04 Talks of the celebrations and bonfires after this, Offaly's first win at All-Ireland level.</p> <p>16:49 Speaks of the disappointment and disbelief at losing in 1969.</p> <p>17:03 Talks of the elation of Offaly winning the All-Ireland Senior Football Championship in 1971 and 1972. This was added to in 1971 as five of the local team were on the winning Offaly team.</p> <p>17:15 Speaks of the celebrations locally when the team brought home the Sam Maguire Cup. Mentions Paddy McCormack, Eugene Mulligan, Jody Gunning, Martin Heavey and Seamus Harvey a substitute who played the following year.</p> <p>18:18 Talks of the media coverage at the club. Mentions Seamus Downey, Mick Dunne, Pádraig Purcell.</p> <p>19:06 Speaks of the impact this win had on everyone in the county young and old.</p> <p>19:57 Brought the young people to the club even though it was always vibrant.</p> <p>20:52 By 1975 the club had won eighteen Senior Championships.</p>
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	<p>21:14 Talks of the 1950s and 1980s when emigration hit the club. Mentions a team in London that was made up of players from Rhode.</p> <p>21:44 Speaks of currently fielding three adult teams at Junior Intermediate and Senior level along with children's teams from Under 6 up from a population of between 1700 and 1800.</p> <p>22:06 Talks of the facilities in the club in the 1960's and the developments that have happened since in terms of pitches, dressing rooms showers etc.</p> <p>23:17 Talks of getting involved in the committee at the age of eighteen and his involvement ever since.</p> <p>23:57 Discusses his career over the years.</p> <p>24:25 Talks of playing at Minor and Under 16 level with the club and Under 16 with county Offaly and then with Wolfetones in Shannon and the Under 21 Clare Football team in 1976. Mentions being beaten by Kerry in the Munster Championships and Kerry going on to win the All-Ireland.</p> <p>24:57 Speaks of returning to Rhode in 1978 and playing at Junior, Intermediate and Senior levels.</p> <p>25:16 Discusses the development squads and being brought for example to Port Laois or Mountmellick to play Laois or to Trim to play Meath.</p> <p>25:52 Talks of training with the Clare Under 16 team in Saint Flannan's College and beat Limerick in Munster quarter final and Kerry beat Clare in the Semi-Final in Ballylongford. Mentions Jack O'Shea and Spillane.</p> <p>26:20 Talks of the county setup and Fr. Pat Cotter training them.</p> <p>26:58 Talks about Wolfetones in Shannon and the makeup of the team at the time with players from Antrim, Armagh and Shannon. Mentions the development over the last number of years.</p> <p>28:30 Speaks of his affiliation with Wolfetones as a former player and of still following the Wolfetones Team and attending matches if they reach a county final.</p> <p>29:05 Talks of returning to Rhode and being a substitute on the 1978 and 1979 Senior Teams and being beaten by Walsh Island in the finals then and in 1982.</p>
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	<p>29:30 Talks of moving into management of the parish Under 21 team. Mentions Johnny Mooney and being beaten in two finals.</p> <p>30:17 Discusses training the parish team along with Johnny Mooney and Eugene Mulligan and keeping the players happy.</p> <p>31:07 Discusses the ease of communication today as opposed to years ago having to go to the players to tell them anything.</p> <p>31:40 Talks of the satisfaction of being over a team and the craic after the games.</p> <p>32:26 Talks of the pride and passion in the club at all levels.</p> <p>32:48 Speaks of the impact of emigration on the selection process at the time and fears of the same happening again.</p> <p>33:47 Talks of the difficulty of having county players on the club team while the prestige was great the club could lose out to the county commitments. Mentions size of panels then and now.</p> <p>34:31 Speaks of the increased chance of employment for county players.</p> <p>35:00 Talks of the involvement of former county players with the local teams. Mentions Paddy McCormack, Martin Heavey, Eugene Wooding Seamus Darby and Jody Gunning.</p> <p>35:55 Discusses the success in 1982 and the build up to it from 1978 and 1979 when Jimmy Keaveney of Dublin was sent off in the Leinster final. Mentions winning the 1980 Leinster final and Eugene Wodding, Seamus Darby, Johnny Mooney, Charlie Conroy and Stephen Darby. Also won the Hurling Leinster final that year.</p> <p>36:47 Talks of winning the hurling in 1981 and winning the All-Ireland Football final in 1982 with Seamus Darby scoring.</p> <p>38:04 Discusses the role of the club in the local community and its importance with no soccer or rugby in the area.</p> <p>39:41 Talks of the formation of the Ladies Football team eight years ago and their success winning two of the last three Championships.</p> <p>40:37 Talks of the changes in the administration of the club over the years with the advent of the computer and technological advancement.</p>
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	<p>42:28 Discusses the increase in the workload of the roles within the administration.</p> <p>43:22 Talks of attending approximately thirty of the last thirty five Conventions.</p> <p>44:05 Speaks of the lifting of the ban on the Security Forces and on the opening of Croke Park to other sports.</p> <p>46:10 Talks of some people canvassing for votes to get on to county boards and the possible party political influences.</p> <p>47:17 Talks of the relationship between Rhode and the county board.</p> <p>48:03 Talks of his involvement with the Offaly CCC Committee. Mentions Pat Teehan And looking at broader issues such as fixtures and discipline.</p> <p>50:17 Discusses his involvement in the Referee's Administration Committee and the rules of the games and the changes over the years.</p> <p>51:26 Talks of the work carried out by the Referee's Administration Committee. Mentions encouraging people to take up refereeing.</p> <p>52:55 Talks of how this involvement give a greater insight into the broader picture and gives skills that can be transferred to other aspects of life.</p> <p>54:30 Discusses bridging the gap between club football and Croke Park and bringing the two together.</p> <p>55:32 Talks of the time involved in the many aspects of his involvement in the GAA.</p> <p>56:05 Speaks of his most enjoyable role in the GAA that of playing the game. Mentions the many social aspects of the GAA.</p> <p>57:23 Talks of the uniquely Irish element that is the GAA.</p> <p>57:58 Talks of the Plan for Offaly GAA spearheaded by Joe O'Brien.</p> <p>58:59 Discusses the challenges facing the GAA at all levels.</p> <p>59:38 Talks of his optimism in terms of Rhode GAA at all levels.</p> <p>01:00:11 Talks of his happiest GAA memory winning the Leinster Championship in 1997. Mentions local man Roy</p>
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	Malone scoring two goals.
Involvement in GAA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input checked="" 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)	Played football from 8yrs – 31 yrs, mostly with Rhode but for 1 year with Wolfetones
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	Has been a member of Rhode GAA committee since he was 18 yrs. Senior club secretary (11 years); PRO (35 years); minor club secretary. Selector and Manager for various Rhode teams; member of Offaly CCC committee, Offaly Referees Administration committee and Offaly GAA Strategic Plan committee.
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 01:00:59
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: 19th June 2012