

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	7 th Jan 2011
Location	Interviewee's home, Belfast, Co. Antrim
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Tommy Hall
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1931 Home County: Antrim
Education	Primary: St. Finian's, Falls Road, Belfast, Co. Antrim Secondary: St. Malachy's College, Belfast, Co. Antrim
Family	Siblings: 7 brothers & 3 sisters Current Family if Different: Married to Una with 4 daughters
Club(s)	St. John's; Éire Ógs; St. Joseph's
Occupation	Sales Manager Bass Ireland & Tennent's Ireland
Parents' Occupation	Docker [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Young Christian Workers

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Date of Report	18 th July 2012
Period Covered	1929 – 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Antrim, Roscommon, Donegal, Cavan, Down, Dublin, Monaghan, Armagh, Derry, Fermanagh, Limerick, Offaly, Sligo, Tipperary, Tyrone, Wexford, Americas, Canada, USA, Australasia, Australia
Key Themes Covered	Managing, Refereeing, Administration, Celebrations, Fundraising, Education, Religion, Media, Involvement in GAA Abroad, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA abroad, Rivalries, Culture, All-Ireland, Club History, Earliest Memories, Career, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Retirement, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships
Interview Summary	<p>Tommy speaks about his involvement in the GAA initially with mainly minor teams at St. John's in Antrim. He talks about moving into umpiring and refereeing and goes on to discuss the setting up and development of the Streets League in Belfast and Bord na nÓg. Tommy then talks about managing the Antrim football team that went on to win the 1969 Under 21 All-Ireland football final. He emphasises the importance of this win to Antrim and Ireland at the start of the Troubles. He talks about the players he has known over the years and how they have developed and the roles they now play in the GAA. He goes on to talk about his part in selecting Railway Cup teams. He speaks about his career in the brewing industry and the GAA men he met through the breweries. Tommy talks about being chairman of his club and after retiring being made president of the club. He then talks about the history of the club and the acquisition of Corrigan Park. He goes on to talk about the generations of players that continue to play at the club. He talks about St. John's and the Ulster Club Championships. He goes on to talk about the experience he brought to the management of teams and to the importance of the management team. Tommy then discusses the developments from the referee's committee. He talks about the impact of the Troubles on St. John's club. He goes on to discuss his best memories of the GAA and his heroes. Finally, he tells of what the GAA has meant to him over the years and returns to the 1969 team and their contribution not just to football but at a national level as ambassadors.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:24 Describes his earliest memory of St. John's as standing</p>

	<p>on the sidelines aged twenty when his friends were playing for St. John's minor team and how three years later he was secretary of the club and then started playing. Mentions the South Antrim football and hurling minor board in the Ard Scoil in Belfast and positions he held on the county executive.</p> <p>01:41 Tells of being invited to umpire an All-Ireland hurling final in Croke Park in 1960 which was the first in technicolor. Mention Jimmy Duggan from Galway another umpire and the second half starting without them. Also mentions the Artane Boys Band, James Mason and George Peppard being stuck under the stand with them.</p> <p>03:33 Tells of being involved in refereeing and minor football and managing the team in St. John's and being involved in the selection of the Antrim minor team in 1956 that was beaten by Dublin in the All-Ireland semi final. Mentions John Gough who refereed the All-Ireland final between Dublin and Galway. Also mentioned Jim McDonald who later trained the Antrim Under 21 team.</p> <p>05:01 Speaks of his experience looking after the minors in Antrim for many years and how in 1968 while involved in hurling he helped set up a streets league in the Falls Park.</p> <p>06:16 Tells how the eleven plus was detrimental to the games as the schools were amalgamated into one school, St Thomas's on the Whiterock Road and less schools meant less interest. Previous to this the Christian Brothers and De La Salle Brothers would have had players in the park. Mentions discussing this on the county executive with Brother Nannery.</p> <p>07:46 Talks about the streets league with eleven streets fielding a team each. In 1968 moved on to the Antrim Senior Football team. Mentions Nipper Quinn and Brother Nannery and how the street league developed with other areas and came into districts Commedagh, Springfield and Ballymurphy joined and Bord na nÓg.</p> <p>10:13 Speaks of Sarsfield nominating him to manage the Antrim football team. Mentions Malachy McMahon, Jimmy Roe and Patsy Totten.</p> <p>11:09 Recalls how the Antrim Senior team of the time were tired and were playing Down and Donegal. Mentions Ferriters, Brian McEniff, McLoones and Charlie Gallagher of Cavan.</p> <p>12:33 Talks of seeing good players coming through and being</p>
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	<p>given a chance on the team. Mentions Al McMurray secretary of the County, Brian Moore and Jack Rooney and the need for a competition to bring on the team. Also mentions the McKenna Cup matches and the Lagan Cup / National League.</p> <p>13:39 Tells of organising a tournament in Casement Park with Antrim, Dublin, Sligo and Armagh. Antrim were the winners.</p> <p>14:30 Talks of 1968 and introducing seven new players onto the county team at once.</p> <p>15:22 Speaks of only having one pavilion to get them to mix. Mentions Mickey Harte and playing Monaghan at Castleblayney with Gerry McCann, Andy McCallin, William Miller, Seamus Killough and John Byrne.</p> <p>17:00 Speaks about Derry and Monaghan and the games they played against Antrim. Mentions Adrian McGoogan, Father Shields who broke his leg going onto the pitch at Casement Park. Also mentions the Troubles and the interest in the GAA.</p> <p>20:33 Tells of playing Fermanagh and talks about Peter McGinnity, Liam Boyle and Terry Dunlop.</p> <p>21:57 Talks about playing Down in the Ulster final in Lurgan. Mentions Colm McAlarney, Mickey Cole, Andy McCallin, Aidan Hamill, Gerry McCann, Gerry Nellis, Liam Boyle, Terry Dunlop, Mickey Harte, Paddy O'Hara, Kevin Armstrong and Paddy Devlin the referee.</p> <p>25:03 Talks of being in Davitt Park and discussing the next game against Cork with a Down official. Mentions the Troubles and Brian Moore and Al McMurray. Also mentions never talking about the Troubles in the Casement Park and players from Moneyglass, Dunloy, Belfast and Glengormley.</p> <p>27:09 Speaks of going to Casement Park after the Down game and Sean Ryan was there and he organised a flight from Belfast to Cork. Mentions some of the team having never been on a plane before.</p> <p>29:15 Tells of the good craic on the plane going to Cork. Mentions Kevin Armstrong and the Lord Mayor of Cork.</p> <p>30:39 Sean Moloney refereed the game against Cork and they won by a point and were through to the All-Ireland final.</p> <p>31:53 Tells of being unable to get home because of the barriers erected due to the Troubles and having to climb over</p>
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	<p>barriers on returning from Cork.</p> <p>33:45 Speaks about the All-Ireland Under 21 final against Roscommon and the violence due to the Troubles. Mentions how the team outlook was positive.</p> <p>35:41 Recalls a story about motivating the team and Din Joe McGrogan scoring two goals in the Cork game.</p> <p>36:07 Talks of Din Joe McGrogan being killed in a bombing in the White Fort Bar on the Stewartstown Road.</p> <p>37:20 Talks of playing Roscommon and travelling down on the Sunday rather than Saturday. Tells of the bus missing the turn for Croke Park and having to turn the bus around on the main Drumcondra Road.</p> <p>39:22 Tells how as they were late the players were rushed and did not have time to dwell on the game. Discusses the game and mentions Dermot Earley, Liam Boyle, Seamus Killough, Andy McCallin and Tom Fraine.</p> <p>44:00 Recalls his reaction to the win and the fans celebrating on the field at Croke Park. Mentions them carrying Liam Boyle and singing 'we shall overcome' the civil rights song.</p> <p>46:30 Speaks about returning to Belfast and wanting to take the bus down the Lower Falls Road area but being dissuaded. Soldiers on the streets at this time. Mentions shootings and Sarsfield's club being burned down on Dover Street. Mentions Liam McDowell a reporter. Recalls arriving at Saint Teresa's and being greeted by what looked like a thousand people.</p> <p>49:24 Talks about bringing the cup to schools in Lisburn with Liam Boyle. Mentions creating a bit of peace in 1969.</p> <p>50:01 Tells of being beaten in the 1970 Ulster Senior final by Derry who also beat them in the quarter final of the National League that year. Mentions Mickey Harte.</p> <p>50:49 Talks of Gerry McGuigan a reporter with the Belfast Telegraph and the Independent and his views on what Tommy was doing for the people.</p> <p>51:42 Tells of moving on to being a selector for the Railway Cup and meeting Mick Higgins and TP Murphy. Mentions winning the Railway Cup with Sean O'Neill and Andy McCallin. Also mentions losing to Leinster the following year.</p> <p>52:44 Speaks of working in Lurgan and all around as a</p>
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	<p>salesman and of marriage and setting up home.</p> <p>53:37 Talks of moving to Donegal and opening a brewery in Mountain Top with Geordie Bell and Clem Harvey. Mentions Clem's pub near Gallagher's Hotel. Also mentions Brian and Sean McEniff, Charlie Mulgrew, Martin Carlin, Mark Bradley, Martin McDonald (Jim McDonald's son), Eugene 'Nudie' Hughes (Monaghan) and Steven King (Cavan).</p> <p>55:35 Discusses the Tennent's All Star team with Pat Gallagher and Mickey Donaghey. Mentions playing in Armagh, Monaghan and Ballinasloe in charity matches. Also mentions Nudie Hughes, Steven King and a match in St Eunan's where the Tennents All Stars played the Donegal Team.</p> <p>57:30 Speaks about returning to his own club as Chairman with Neily Crawford and Eamon Grieve.</p> <p>58:24 Tells of retiring in 1998 and that he is now president of the club. Mentions Ray McElroy (goalkeeper), Gerry McCann and Andy McCallin who are all looking after teams now.</p> <p>59:18 Speaks of one player going to Toronto and his involvement in GAA there. Mentions the youngest player on the 1969 team Gerry Nellis who is now sixty.</p> <p>01:00:00 Talks of playing with St. John's at junior, intermediate and senior level and of playing once for the county as goalkeeper in a friendly match. Mentions winning three Senior championship medals.</p> <p>01:00:37 Talks of his work as Chairman of the referee's board in Antrim and on the central council referee's committee drawing up new rules. Mentions Jim McKeever and Sean Moloney.</p> <p>01:01:27 Tells of the pride of winning his first senior championship medal in Antrim. Mentions playing football for Éire Óg and playing table tennis and transferring from St. Joseph's to St. John's.</p> <p>01:02:59 Speaks of the roles he played in the administrative side and praised the GAA for how they are approaching this side of things.</p> <p>01:04:03 Tells how his own club is trying to get young people involved on the administrative side running a club.</p> <p>01:05:14 Talks about Tommy Rice, Éire Óg and St. Joseph's in Beechmount. Mentions Pat Gallagher, Paddy Morgan and</p>
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	<p>Liam Donnelly.</p> <p>01:06:52 Talks about the area covered by St. John's, Beechmount, the Falls Road and Iveagh. Mentions the seven Gallaghers playing on the same team, Henry to Eamon, six of whom played on the senior football and hurling team. Also mentions Paddy Morgan, Liam Donnelly, Kieran Traynor, John Stewart, Paul Morgan.</p> <p>01:08:13 Speaks of those players grandchildren who are now travelling in from Stewartstown and Glengormley to play. Mentions St. Gall's club in Clonard and Mick Gribben, Andy McCallin, Bob Foley and Jimmy Feeney.</p> <p>01:09:47 Talks about the founding of the club in 1929 some say outside the Rock Bar on the Falls Road. Some say Hawthorn Street in St. Paul's district but Bob Foley says that it was at La Salle beside the huts.</p> <p>01:11:30 Tells of the need for another club in 1929 and how it developed into Beechmount. Mentions the need for a history to be written and Hugh Lawell.</p> <p>01:12:59 Talks about the building of the youth club in Beechmount. Mentions McGladery's brick works and getting the land for one penny a year. Recalls a famous meeting in Ballycastle after a hurling match. Also mentions Casement Park and Corrigan Park.</p> <p>01:16:20 Speaks about the renovation of Corrigan Park with the help of Mick Gribben, Colm Brennan and Jimmy Feeney and how it brought the club together.</p> <p>01:17:27 Tells of the development plans for Casement Park and this might see Corrigan Park being developed first. Mentions Danny Murphy and the Ulster Council.</p> <p>01:19:04 Talks about the Ulster Club Championships which was set up for the top four teams by St. John's with a club Irvinestown. Mentions St. John's winning seven championships in a row.</p> <p>01:20:19 Tells of paying sixpence into these matches and how this developed into the Ulster Club Championships. Mentions Donegal and Ballyshannon.</p> <p>01:21:13 Talks about developing seven a side football in St. John's.</p> <p>01:22:02 Speaks about the enjoyment and participation of all and of fundraising through bingo etc.</p>
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	<p>01:22:29 Talks about the clubs biggest rivals Rossa Club in the early days with Malachy McMahon. Mentions today's rivals St. Gall's and a good healthy rivalry that it was.</p> <p>01:23:55 Talks about managing minor teams in St. John's and the successes they had. Also mentions minor hurling teams he has managed and the successes in county championships and South Antrim leagues.</p> <p>01:25:15 Tells of his wish over the years to develop more Gaelic men more Saint John's men. Mentions Gerry McCrory, Sean O'Neill, Gerry McCann and Andy McCallin.</p> <p>01:26:38 Speaks of winning every championship in south Antrim.</p> <p>01:27:13 Tells of having great fun with some of the terrible teams who were not winning anything.</p> <p>01:27:51 Talks about the Gallagher family and their achievements. Mentions Eugene, Herbie, Eamon, Seamus Henry and their nephew Gerry Armstrong who ended up playing soccer after Gaelic football. Also mentions Frank McGuigan.</p> <p>01:29:14 Tells of Michael O'Hehir interviewing Paddy O'Shea and how he rated Gerry Armstrong. Mentions him playing against Dublin in Croke Park in 1974 and Kevin Heffernan, Doherty, Paddy Cullen in goals.</p> <p>01:31:11 Recalls 1968 Down playing Offaly sitting with Pat Gallagher in Croke Park and offering him a place on the Antrim team. Mentions offering another player a place on the team when he was coming off the field at Casement Park.</p> <p>01:33:30 Discusses teams being invited to Croke Park to meet the President and the lack of recognition that the Antrim players got after winning the All-Ireland as they are in his view National Heroes. Mentions Colm Murray from Roscommon speaking to him after the match and Charlie Gallagher from Cavan.</p> <p>01:37:18 Talks of the enjoyment you get from looking after teams over the years. Mentions St. John's teams, county teams and Railway Cup teams.</p> <p>01:38:52 Discusses how even today people talk about 1969 for the right reasons, not because of the killings, bombs and burnings of the Troubles.</p> <p>01:39:26 Talks about the experience he brought to managing</p>
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	<p>teams and of knowing the players themselves. Mentions Andy McCallin and Gerry Brown and being a good listener. Also mentions being able to disregard what was happening outside the pavilion.</p> <p>01:41:30 Talks about the importance of the management team behind the players and of patience waiting for your time to come.</p> <p>01:44:25 Talks about choosing the right players for a team from the many good players available.</p> <p>01:45:16 Discusses the changes from the referee's committee such as the third man tackle. Mentions Foley, Sean Moloney, Jim McKeever. Also mentions watching a University game in Casement Park.</p> <p>01:47:06 Talks of refereeing an Ulster final between Derry and Tyrone. Mentions Martin O'Neill and Joe Earley and St. Malachy's College.</p> <p>01:48:29 Talks about the experience of meeting referees from all over the country at meetings. Recalls a hurling match where the grass was too long and bringing this up at a meeting.</p> <p>01:49:40 Other developments were to do with the amount players on the line for a 21 yard free in hurling. Mentions penalties, goalkeepers, hurleys and substitution. Also mentions Wexford playing Limerick and Mick Mackey and Padge Keogh being injured and Mickey O'Donnell and John Doyle of Tipperary.</p> <p>01:53:21 Tells of the impact the Troubles had on St. John's club but also how it brought the club closer together. Mentions the importance of the social club 'The Green Hut'. Also mentions Ballymurphy and shootings there.</p> <p>01:55:06 Talks of the GAA governing themselves very well and how they kept going.</p> <p>01:55:50 Talks of the impact of emigration on the club with players leaving for Australia and America.</p> <p>01:56:55 Speaks of his best memories of the GAA such as winning the All-Ireland in 1969 and being involved with county teams and being chairman of his own club. Mentions watching the Under 16's collecting their medals and the joy in their eyes and winning his first senior medal with St Johns.</p> <p>01:58:53 Tells how all this is topped by being president of his</p>
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	<p>own club.</p> <p>01:59:33 Talks of the honour of meeting people over the years like Kevin Armstrong, Malachy McMahon, Pat Gallagher, the Crawfords and travelling to other counties meeting Sean Ryan, Paddy Buggy, Mick Higgins and TP Murphy.</p> <p>02:00:29 Talks of taking a team to Toronto, Canada and the great satisfaction of feeling at home anywhere in the Gaelic Games world. Also mentions the Tennent's Ireland team and Eugene 'Nudie' Hughes.</p> <p>02:01:43 Speaks about his GAA heroes, the 1969 Antrim All-Ireland winners, Seán Purcell, Mick Higgins, Kevin Armstrong, Gunner Brady, Eugene 'Nudie' Hughes, Sean Byrnes, Christy Ring and Seamus 'Stout' McDonnell.</p> <p>02:04:54 Tells of how he has never been disappointed with the GAA. Mentions the difficulty in getting a ticket for an All-Ireland final.</p> <p>02:06:49 Talks of going to an All-Ireland final with Pat Gallagher to Croke Park on Hill 16 and how Seamus McFerran, GAA President had Brother Benignus who taught hurling in St. Finian's School brought up to a seat.</p> <p>02:09:16 Tells how he feels the GAA is the greatest association that any young person can attach themselves to as it is unique. Mentions how religion should not be brought into it.</p> <p>02:10:34 Tells what his involvement in the GAA has meant to him over the years such as friendship, fun and thinking about the enjoyment, disappointment and pleasure.</p> <p>02:12:16 Speaks of the 1969 team and how they did more than just win an All-Ireland and they deserve to go down in the history of the GAA as tremendous ambassadors.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input checked="" 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>Played for 20 years. Won 3 Senior football championship medals and a league.</p>

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Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	Has been involved in administration since 1954. Club: Secretary, Chairman (2 terms); President; delegate to South Antrim Board County: County Registrar
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 02:14:04
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: _____ Arlene Crampsie _____

Date: _____ 18/07/12 _____