

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	5 th Jan 2011
Location	Ahoghill Clubhouse, Ahoghill, Co. Antrim
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	John Friel
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1974 Home County: Antrim
Education	Primary: St. Joseph's, Ahoghill, Co. Antrim; St. Mary's Portglenone, Co. Antrim Secondary: St. Louis, Ballymena, Co. Antrim Third Level: Queen's University Belfast
Family	Siblings: 3 brothers & 2 sisters
Club(s)	St. Mary's GAC, Ahoghill
Occupation	IT Consultant
Parents' Occupation	Civil Servant [Father]; Charity Manager [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Lough Swilly Sea Angling Club; CRDA – Cloney Rural Development Association

REFERENCE NO. AN/1/7

Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Neil O'Connell
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1955 Home County: Antrim
Education	Primary: All Saints, Ballymena, Co. Antrim Secondary: St. Patrick's High School, Ballymena, Co. Antrim Third Level: Ulster Polytechnic, Jordanstown, Co. Antrim
Family	Siblings: 4 brothers & 7 sisters Current Family if Different: Married with 4 daughters and 6 sons
Club(s)	St. Mary's GAC, Ahoghill; St. Mary's GAC, Rasharkin
Occupation	Housing Executive (Local Government)
Parents' Occupation	Mechanic [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	SDLP
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

REFERENCE NO. AN/1/7

Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Mary Martin (née Keenan)
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Female
Born	Year Born: 1930 Home County: Antrim
Education	Primary: Cloney PS, Co. Antrim Secondary: St. Louis, Ballymena, Co. Antrim
Family	Siblings: 3 sisters & 10 brothers Current Family if Different: Married with 1 daughter
Club(s)	St. Mary's GAC, Ahoghill
Occupation	Retired Nurse
Parents' Occupation	Farmer [Father]; Farmer's Wife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society	N/A

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Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Patrick McGarry
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1931 Home County: Antrim
Education	Primary: Cloney PS, Co. Antrim
Family	Siblings: 4 brothers & 4 sisters Current Family if Different: Married with 2 sons and 3 daughters
Club(s)	St. Mary's GAC, Ahoghill
Occupation	Truck Driver
Parents' Occupation	Farmer [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Nationalist
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

REFERENCE NO. AN/1/7

Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	John McGuigan
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1941 Home County: Antrim
Education (Optional)	Primary: Ahoghill, Co. Antrim
Family	Current Family : Married with 3 daughters
Club(s)	St. Mary's GAC, Ahoghill
Occupation	Bacon Factory
Parents' Occupation	Factory Workers, Watermill Workers
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Nationalist
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

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Date of Report	17 th July 2012
Period Covered	1940s – 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Antrim, Armagh, Derry, Dublin
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Emigration, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Identity, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Outsider's Perspectives, Alcohol, Violence, Politics, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Relationship with the Association, Retirement, Food and Drink, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy / Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Members of St Mary's GAC, Ahoghill, talk about their involvement in the GAA. John Friel, Neil O'Connell, Mary Martin, Patrick McGarry and John McGuigan all discuss the role of the GAA in their lives. They talk about the history of the club in the area and the different games that were played. They recall their earliest memories of the GAA and how they became involved in the Association. They talk about the development of the club over the years and how the club's ground and facilities have been improved. Mary discusses her camogie career and how she became involved in the sport. They describe the major impact that the Troubles had on the club and on the area and what it was like for the GAA during that period. They highlight the small size of the club and the important role that the GAA plays in the community. Towards the end of the interview they talk about what the GAA means to them in their lives and John Friel discusses the club's appearance in the junior All-Ireland club final in 2007 and what that meant to the community.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:56 (John McG) John talks about his earliest memories of the GAA. Going on a bus to see Ahoghill play a camogie match.</p> <p>02:19 (Patrick) Recalls how his father was a founding member and first chairman of the Ahoghill club in 1943. Playing Gaelic games in a local field. The development of the</p>

	<p>club over the years.</p> <p>05:28 Talks about the founding of the club in 1943. Mentions Father McGuigan, John Duggan, Paddy Harley. Notes that Ahoghill were the first GAA club in Antrim to own their own grounds.</p> <p>06:26 (John McG and Patrick) Discuss the club's purchasing of the ground.</p> <p>07:32 (Mary) Talks about her involvement in camogie. The role of a teacher in her school in starting camogie. Using wrapped up newspaper as a sliotar. Local camogie team nearby. Riding bicycles to Ballymena to get a train to a match.</p> <p>10:00 Recalls the type of uniforms they wore.</p> <p>10:30 Talks about how camogie was played first in Ahoghill and the reaction of the locals to the game.</p> <p>12:30 (All) They talk about Ahoghill players who won camogie All-Irelands with Antrim. Mention Mary Butler (McFall), Bridget Clean, Moya Forde, Nuala Forde, Lily Scullion.</p> <p>13:43 (John McG) Tells a story about tea.</p> <p>15:18 (Neil) Discusses his earliest memories of the GAA. Growing up in Ballymena. Playing his first game for Ahoghill on the night of the cattle show in Ballymena. Everyone travelling in Bertie Flake's taxi.</p> <p>17:08 Talks about how Ballymena had teams in the past but none when he was young. Mentions Robert and Seamus McKillop.</p> <p>17:54 (John F) Recalls his earliest GAA memories, his father Philip telling him stories about winning an All-Ireland with Derry minors.</p> <p>20:28 (Patrick) Discusses Ahoghill before the club was formed.</p> <p>21:30 (All) They tell various stories about Father McGuigan, who was from Draperstown.</p> <p>24:10 (Neil) Recalls 12 players leaving the team in the early 1970s due to internal splits.</p> <p>25:00 (All) They talk about people from different areas playing for Ahoghill and why people played for certain clubs. Mentions people from Moneyglass, Portglenone and Frank Neeson.</p>
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	<p>27:18 (Mary) Discusses her family's interest in the GAA.</p> <p>28:30 (Neil) Tells a story about Malachy Hardy. Mentions John Henry McGee</p> <p>29:13 (Mary) States that anyone could play for the club due to lack of numbers. Football was the main sport.</p> <p>29:50 (Patrick) Talks about hurling in the club.</p> <p>30:15 (All) They talk about the main families involved in the club.</p> <p>30:40 (John McG) Recalls a story about Tommy Quinn from Ballycastle. Getting a Protestant to play a match and having to hide the jerseys from his father. Tells a story about Joe Redmond playing illegally against Pearse's in Casement Park. Mentions Liam Friel, Jimmy Quinn, John Joe McGuigan.</p> <p>34:50 Talks about a league final against Rossa. Mentions Paddy Joe Logan, Croker Morey, PJ McLoughlin. Recalls another match in Macrory Park. Mention Dan Joe Cassidy.</p> <p>37:30 Recalls a story about Paddy's brother, Thomas Anthony, and a match against Sarsfield in Corrigan Park. Mentions Sonny Liston.</p> <p>38:45 (All) They describe the reaction to having a Protestant playing with the club. Mentions Tom Scott and Willie Gribben.</p> <p>40:34 (Mary) Discusses playing camogie for Antrim. Mentions Jimmy Quinn, Frank Kerr and Jimmy Scullion.</p> <p>42:20 Talks about the lack of training and managing in Ahoghill. Going to Belfast for a match on Easter Sunday. Recalls a story about going to Croke Park for an All-Ireland final and the days after it. Mentions Brigid McGee née McFall and Mary McFall, Molly Neeson.</p> <p>46:52 Talk about her team mates. Moving to Glasgow to study nursing. Mentions Ita Reilly, Father McGuigan.</p> <p>47:43 (John McG) Discusses the development of the club over the years. New pitch opened by Senator Andy O'Brien in 1972. Recalls how the goal posts were cut down on their old pitch. Getting new posts from a monastery. Mentions, Father McHenry, Harry Boyd, Joe Downey, Gilly Quinn, Roy Gillespie, Pat O'Boyle.</p> <p>50:20 (Neil) Talks about Roy Gillespie making a complaint</p>
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	<p>about the club. Building training pitches and fundraising.</p> <p>51:48 (John F) Discusses the current development of the club's facilities. Receiving funding from Ballymena council and fundraising.</p> <p>53:45 (Neil) Describes the size of Ahoghill and its population.</p> <p>54:35 (All) They talk about the differences in fundraising between the past and now. Neil reads an old fundraising advert.</p> <p>56:45 (Mary) Discusses the concept of box tea fundraising.</p> <p>58:15 (All) Talk about the role the GAA played in the social lives of the people in Ahoghill. Describe the concerts and plays held in the village. Mentions Paddy Scallion, Paddy Boyd, Joe Downey, Hughie McGee, Kate McGaffey.</p> <p>01:00:55 (John McG) Recalls a tournament they used to hold in the village with Moneyglass, Portglenone and Creggan. Mentions Joe Downey, Gerard Quinn, John Kane.</p> <p>01:03:15 (Neil) Tells a story about Pat Donaghy and John Neeson.</p> <p>01:03:49 (All) They talk about soccer in the area and the Vigilance Committee. Chapel played the Church of Ireland. Mentions Mick Tierney from Kildress.</p> <p>01:05:08 They discuss the ban on foreign games.</p> <p>01:05:28 They talks about the role of teachers in the GAA. John Friel talks about the role of the GAA in schools.</p> <p>01:08:24 (All) They discuss the impact of the Troubles on the club. Mention Willie Strathearn.</p> <p>01:12:30 (John McG) Recalls a story about being with his daughters and being mocked for carrying prayer books. An incident with two girls.</p> <p>01:16:00 (Neil) Talks about what the GAA has meant to him over the years.</p> <p>01:16:23 (John F) Recalls his best memory in the GAA, playing in Croke Park with Ahoghill in the junior All-Ireland club final in 2007. Describes his worst memories of his time in the GAA. Talks about what the GAA has meant to him.</p> <p>01:18:14 (Mary) Discusses her pride in the club's facilities and the work the members have done. Describe her worst memory of her time in the GAA and the role of the GAA in her</p>
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	<p>life.</p> <p>01:20:28 (John McG) Talks about his best memories in the GAA. Ahoghill's All-Ireland run in 2007.</p> <p>01:21:24 (Paddy) Discusses his best memories in the GAA. Seeing the club develop over the years from nothing. Seeing the Ahoghill hurlers lose to a team from Kilkenny in Croke Park.</p> <p>01:22:55 (John F) Talks about the impact of the club's trip to Croke Park for the junior All-Ireland club final in 2007.</p> <p>01:24:11 (All) They discuss the club changing colours from green and white to red and black. John McG talks about going to an All-Ireland final. Mentions Father McGuigan, Ed Harney, Harry and John Graham, Foncey Higgins, Hughie Downey and Harry Gribben.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p>John F:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____</p> <p>Neil:</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 checked="" 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>Mary:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input checked="" 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>Patrick:</p>

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	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input checked="" 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>John McG:</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>John F: Has been playing since he was 15. Won Antrim Junior football championship (1992), Intermediate football championship (2009), Division 2 football league; Antrim Junior hurling championship (1989, 2006), Division 3 and Division 4 hurling league; Ulster junior hurling club (2006). At county level with Antrim he has won an Ulster and an All-Ireland junior hurling club (2002).</p> <p>Neil: Played for 20 years. Won an Antrim hurling championship in 1989.</p> <p>Mary: Played at primary school, but then went to Scotland. She played for another 5 / 6 years when she came back. Won colleges medals and an Ulster and All-Ireland Camogie Title in 1947.</p> <p>Patrick: Played from the age of 17 to 36. Won a Junior championship and 3 leagues.</p> <p>John McG: Played for 14 years. Won a Junior championship, 3 leagues, Irish News cup and a South West championship.</p>
<p>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>John F: Has been involved in administration since 2003 and is in his second term as club secretary (2003 – 2007, 2010 +).</p> <p>Neil:</p>

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	<p>Has been involved in administration since 1975.</p> <p>Club: Secretary, Chairman, Camogie Club Chairman, Delegate to County Camogie Board</p> <p>Camogie County: Chairman and Secretary, Delegate to Ulster Council and Congress.</p> <p>Mary: N/A</p> <p>Patrick: Got involved in administration at the age of 18 / 19. He was club treasurer in 1957 for 3 / 4 years. He went to England then and had no further involvement.</p> <p>John McG: Was involved in administration from c. 1960 to 2000. He has been club chairman, treasurer and county board delegate.</p>
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 01:27:43
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: ___Arlene Crampsie_____

Date: ___17/07/12_____