

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	16 th Feb 2010
Location	Interviewee's home, near Ballinamore, Co. Leitrim
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Seamus Prior
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1952 Home County: Leitrim
Education	Primary: Drumbiben NS, Co. Leitrim Secondary: Ballinamore, Co. Leitrim
Family	Siblings: 1 brother Current Family if Different: Married to Teresa with 2 sons and 2 daughters
Club(s)	Aughnasheelin
Occupation	Overseer Leitrim County Council
Parents' Occupation	Small Farmers
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Parish Council, School Board of Management, Group Water Scheme, Park Committee

REFERENCE NO. LM/1/5

Date of Report	15 th August 2012
Period Covered	1889 – 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Leitrim, Dublin, Down, Meath, Derry, Cork, Monaghan, Donegal
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Facilities, Playing, Training, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Fundraising, Role of Clergy, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Identity, Scór, All-Ireland, Club History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Bribery, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Purchase of Grounds
Interview Summary	<p>Seamus talks through his GAA career – from playing in his younger days to his involvement in administration at club, county and provincial level. He also focuses on his time as a referee, recalling notable matches over which he officiated, including the All-Ireland Football Semi Final in 1988 and the All-Ireland Football Final in 1991. He also discusses people’s attitudes towards referees in general and the support provided for them by the GAA. He gives an overview of the half-parish of Aughnasheelin and the tradition of the Gaelic games there. He tells of successes and disappointments, remembers the club purchasing and developing its grounds and describes the nature of the relationship between clubs and the Leitrim County Board. All through the interview he stresses the importance of his club, Aughnasheelin, as the cornerstone of his GAA experiences.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:24 Seamus talks about his early memories of Aughnasheelin GAA club. Discusses the relationship between Aughnasheelin and Ballinamore. Mentions Oughteragh.</p> <p>02:05 Gives a brief overview of the history of Aughnasheelin GAA. Refers to recent success in Junior and Intermediate Championships.</p> <p>02:45 Tells of the club getting the use of a field from Mick Gilhooley and subsequently buying land and developing facilities.</p> <p>04:05 Remembers walking to training. Refers to a Junior Championship Final in 1965 in Manorhamilton. Mentions Gerry Mahon and Tommy Moran.</p>

	<p>05:10 Talks about playing underage with Ballinamore and returning to Aughnasheelin.</p> <p>06.10 Discusses the tradition of hurling in the parish. Refers to people from other counties who worked in the area. Recalls a Minor Hurling Final against Carrick-on-Shannon in the late 1960s. Mentions Sean Flaherty from Spiddal.</p> <p>08:40 Talks about the importance of Scór to the club and to the GAA in general. Refers to club success at the All-Ireland.</p> <p>10:05 Highlights the difficulties of being a rural club. Tells how he came to be a referee. Discusses his career as a referee. Mentions Gerry Mahon and Pat Cull.</p> <p>12:00 Recalls refereeing the 1987 National League Final between Dublin and Kerry in Croke Park.</p> <p>14:20 Tells of refereeing the All-Ireland Senior Football Final in 1991 between Down and Meath. Remembers the aftermath of the match. Mentions Fr Dan Gallogly.</p> <p>16:30 Remembers representing Leitrim on Connacht Council and refers to becoming Development Officer. Emphasises the importance of development. Mentions soccer.</p> <p>17:58 Talks about the relationship between ladies' football and the GAA.</p> <p>18:50 Describes how he communicated with players during his tenure as club secretary. Recalls an incident at a Leitrim County Board meeting. Refers to fixtures. George O'Toole and Pat Cull. Mentions An Garda Síochána and the IRA.</p> <p>19:40 Tells of refereeing in Northern Ireland. Talks about the Troubles. Refers specifically to an All-Ireland Club Semi-Final in Celtic Park, Derry between Thomas Davis GAA and Lavey GAA. Mentions the Brandywell.</p> <p>22:10 Remembers an incident at a checkpoint travelling across Derry. Mentions Gerry Mahon, Kevin McWeeney. Mentions Swanlinbar.</p> <p>23:25 Recalls an All-Ireland Club Championship Semi Final between O'Donovan Rossa GAA and Lavey GAA in McGlinchey Park, Ballinascreen. Mentions Draperstown. Mentions Johnnie McGurk, Hughie McGurk, Tony Davis, Tom Riordan, Mícheál Ó Muirheartaigh, Patsy Devlin.</p> <p>30:30 Tells of his love of refereeing in the North.</p> <p>31:25 Talks about the Connacht Championship 1994. Tells of</p>
--	---

	<p>his opinions of the current Leitrim team. Mentions Mickey Moran and John Morrison, Conor Counihan.</p> <p>33:20 Refers to the importance of preparation. Highlights a difficulty with training facilities in Leitrim. Refers to finances and fundraising. Mentions the opening of Croke Park. Mentions Annaduff. Mentions soccer.</p> <p>35:20 Discusses to the role of the club in the community.</p> <p>37:10 Talks about the club members who have played with the county over the years.</p> <p>37:50 Recalls the facilities in the club when he was young. Mentions Seán O’Heslins GAA. Mentions Mick Gilhooley. Mentions Poll an Eas.</p> <p>40:00 Describes the process of buying and developing land. Talks about facilities available for young people. Mentions Pat Joe Mulvey, Pat Cull, Peter Flynn, Sean Flaherty.</p> <p>41:50 Discusses club expenses and fundraising. Describes the lotto, draws and bizarres. Mentions Fr Hugh Brady.</p> <p>45:10 Remembers a petrol shortage in the 1970s. Tells of how people were able to travel from Dublin for matches during this time.</p> <p>46:15 Elaborates on the fundraisers. Mentions plays during Lent and refers to Tommy Moran.</p> <p>47:20 Talks about the influence of the clergy on Gaelic games in the area. Mentions Fr Hugh Brady.</p> <p>49:30 Describes the process by which he became secretary, chairman and a referee. Stresses the importance of the five-year rule in administration. Refers to emigration. Mentions Sean Flaherty.</p> <p>51:43 Discusses the relationship between the County Board and the clubs. Describes his roles on the Leitrim County Board and on Connacht Council. Mentions Pat Cull.</p> <p>54:35 Highlights the need for training facilities in Leitrim. Talks about the Club Grounds of the Year Prize in Connacht. Mentions Allen Gaels and Ballinamore Sean O’Heslins.</p> <p>56:48 Stresses his intention to return to his club when his time with the County Board is finished.</p> <p>58:06 Talks about his role in the development of underage football in Aughnasheelin. Tells of success at Under 12,</p>
--	---

REFERENCE NO. LM/1/5

	<p>Under 14 and Under 16. Mentions Pat Cull. Mentions Croke Park.</p> <p>01:00:15 Remembers the first time travelling to Croke Park with an underage team and meeting people from Aughnasheelin who were living in Dublin. Mentions Ballyboden St Endas. Mentions Pat Cull and Willie Conway.</p> <p>01:03:42 Describes his training and preparation for refereeing matches. Tells of the stress of refereeing and of the impact this had on him and his family. Mentions Tommy Moran and Gerry Mahon.</p> <p>01:08:20 Remembers travelling to Dublin on the morning of the All-Ireland Final in 1991. Mentions his wife Teresa and his sons, Cathal and Gary.</p> <p>01:09:45 Gives his opinion of the rules and how rule changes have affected the game.</p> <p>01:12:50 Questions the necessity of the number of committees that there are in the GAA.</p> <p>01:13:44 Talks about the support available for referees over the years. Remembers controversy surrounding an All-Ireland Semi-Final he refereed in 1988 between Cork and Monaghan. Mentions Larry Tompkins and Brendan Murray.</p> <p>01:16:18 Highlights the media exposure to which referees and their families can be subjected. Refers to Paddy Russell's book. Mentions Mick O'Dwyer, Mícheál Ó Muircheartaigh and Des Cahill.</p> <p>01:20:44 Talks about the possibility of match-fixing in GAA.</p> <p>01:22:37 Tells of his family's trip to Croke Park on the day of the National Football League Final in 1987. Mentions Dublin. Mentions his son Gary and his wife Teresa.</p> <p>01:24:30 Stresses the importance of his club in his life.</p> <p>01:25:25 Explains why Mikey Sheehy is his GAA hero. Also mentions John Egan and Peter Canavan.</p> <p>01:26:35 Elaborates on his disappointment with the All-Ireland Semi Final in 1988. Also remembers an incident on the way home from a match against Galway in Carrick-on-Shannon in 1995. Mentions Peter McArdle, Pat Egan.</p> <p>01:31:33 Highlights his frustration with the treatment of referees. Remembers Donegal winning the All-Ireland in</p>
--	--

REFERENCE NO. LM/1/5

	1992. 01:33:10 Talks about the time he has spent involved in the GAA has meant to him over the years and what he has learned from it. Refers to the social benefits.
Involvement in GAA	<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 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person <input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input checked="" 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 20 years. Won Under 14, 16, 3 Minor championships and senior league with Ballinamore; senior league with Aughnasheelin and 2 junior leagues and senior hurling championships with St. Brigid's (an amalgamation of Ballinamore and Aughnasheelin).
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	Has been involved in administration since 1971. He has been Club Secretary (14 years) and Chairman and a Connacht Council delegate. He's been involved in Referee's Administration and is Leitrim Development Officer.
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 01:36:46
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: _____15/08/12_____