

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	19 th Jan 2011
Location	Seamus's home, near Ballycommon, Co. Tipperary
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Seamus Flannery
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1920 Home County: Tipperary
Education	Primary: Carrick NS, Ballycommon, Co. Tipperary
Family	N/A
Club(s)	Kildangan GAA [Tipperary]
Occupation	Farmer
Parents' Occupation	Farmers
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fianna Fáil
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

REFERENCE NO. TP/1/18

Date of Report	20 th June 2012
Period Covered	1930s - 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Tipperary, Kilkenny, Cork, Limerick, Dublin, Cavan, Offaly, Scotland, Great Britain, USA, Americas, Australia, Australasia
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Material Culture, Education, Role of Teachers, Media, Emigration, Role of the Club in the Community, GAA Abroad, Rivalries, Irish Language, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Alcohol, Violence, Politics, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Relationship with the Association, Socialising, Economy/Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Seamus discusses his hurling career with Kildangan GAA Club, Tipperary. He recalls his Miller Shield successes alongside his brothers Paddy and Nick, and he describes his disappointment at not being picked for the Tipperary team. Seamus outlines Kildangan's wins and losses during his playing days and describes the contribution he continues to make to the club in terms of fundraising. He also recalls the harsh physical challenges of farm work and the impact it had on his physical fitness. Furthermore, he considers the differences between hurling during his career and hurling today, the challenges of life in the war years, and the significance of the GAA in his life.</p> <p>00:17 Born 1920. Describes hurling tradition in locality, success of Kildangan GAA Club in 1930s and 40s. Hurling minor in 1937 and 1938 in North Tipperary final. Playing with his brothers Paddy and Nick Flannery. Winning 1943 North final at senior level.</p> <p>02:22 Reflects on his father's interest in football. Miller Shield team, winning 3 years in a row. Not selected for county team. Also Thomond Shield in 1940s. Mentions Paddy Murray. Mentions Mick Mackey.</p> <p>04:29 Explains why he wasn't picked for Tipperary team. Dominance of mid-Tipperary.</p> <p>04:49 Mentions clubs in locality that played hurling, including Newport, Kilruane, Roscrea, Shannon Rovers.</p>

	<p>05:27 Discusses his father's interest in football.</p> <p>05:48 Recalls playing hurling in national school. Mentions teacher Pat Hogan's interest in hurling. Buying hurls in Nenagh, having hurls made. Farming.</p> <p>07:32 Mentions line-out of Miller Shield team: Paddy Murray, Paddy McKenna, Jack Maher, Nick Flannery, Danny Casey, Johnny Hogan, Matt Coen, Philly Rider (Sallycap), P Whelan, Billy Brussels, Sean Collins, Paddy Hickey, Sean Kelly, Dinny Dooley.</p> <p>08:38 Playing in a minor North Tipperary final in 1937 and 1938 with his two brothers. Beaten. His brothers minor county players. The brothers finishing in the 1950s. Politics in North Tipperary, bias of referees.</p> <p>10:25 Mentions hurler Martin Kennedy as a major influence on him in Castlesheela. Also mentions Christy Ring. Explains how Kennedy influenced his own hurling. Kennedy's talent and tactics. Kennedy's career from 1919 to 1943. Recalls hurling in Flannery's field.</p> <p>12:04 Describes starting farm work at 8:00 in the morning. Ploughing with horses. Physically fit from farm work, no need for training. Working till 6:00. Walking or running 4 miles to hurling field. Mentions different fields he hurled in.</p> <p>13:58 Describes hurling training. Sprints. Hurling boots and shin guards. Learning skills from Martin Kennedy. Comparison with hurling today. Mentions Henry Shefflin, Brian Cody of Kilkenny. No overhead hurling or ground hurling today. More physical in the past, man-to-man hurling. No drop-shots now.</p> <p>17:43 Differences between ball then and now. Advice given by mentors in his playing days. Mentions visit from Tipperary manager Liam Sheedy. Recalls advice he gave Sheedy. Beating Kilkenny.</p> <p>19:47 Recalls travelling to match in 1934 in Ballinderry by bicycle. No cars, all bicycles. No money to stop in pubs on way home. Crowds at matches.</p> <p>21:34 Mentions rivals Roscrea. Describes tough matches in his day. Mentions Martin Loughnane, Billy Brussels, Joe Fletcher. Violence at matches, limited to field. Injuries at matches, recalls broken finger. Minor injuries not affecting playing. No hamstring injuries, physical farm work. No physiotherapists, dressing rooms. Toggling out in ditches.</p>
--	--

	<p>23:57 Reflects on parish organisations: Question Time teams, Muintir na Tíre, Macra na Feirme. Dominance of farmers on team.</p> <p>24:39 Recalls homecoming celebrations after winning North finals. Drinking, dancing. In early 1930s, playing football on frozen Lough Derg, Drumaneer. Recalls going by turf boat from Drumaneer to Whitegate across Shannon to play games.</p> <p>26:53 Discussion about illegal playing in different counties. Recalls tournaments in Birr against Drumcullen, Coolderry. Mentions Offaly players Dooleys, Mick Spain. Skill of Offaly.</p> <p>27:31 Describes tournaments at Birr and Whitegate. Challenge matches. Prizes: medals.</p> <p>28:13 Reflects on the war years. Difficulty of buying tea. Black Market, ration books, no cars in the town. Joining the FCA, LDF, practising manoeuvres. Games continuing during war years.</p> <p>29:58 Recalls supporting Tipperary. Not travelling to Dublin. Cycling to Limerick to watch matches. Ploughing competitions. Mentions ploughman John Slattery, his brother Mick Slattery. Travelling by car to competitions.</p> <p>31:00 Describes listening to matches on radio. Mentions Micheal O'Hehir. Battery-operated radio. Mentions Martin Keady, Donie Nealon's father, Rody. Tipperary's success in 1930.</p> <p>32:32 Travelling to Thurles by bicycle to watch matches. Musicians, hawkers at matches. Describes grounds in Thurles. Cinders from sugar beet factory. Hardship of beet farming.</p> <p>35:29 Reflects on presence of women at matches, especially younger women. No camogie in the past. Going to dances. GAA dances, céilís.</p> <p>36:33 Recalls some Irish language used in club during his playing days. Mentions Matt Hassett, Jimmy Doyle, Mackey McKenna, Donie Nealon.</p> <p>38:00 Discusses tactics used in Mick Mackey's solo run.</p> <p>39:01 Pipe bands in Thurles. National anthem.</p> <p>39:48 Mentions winning North championship.</p> <p>40:05 Describes lack of significance of ban on foreign games</p>
--	---

	<p>and dances in Tipperary. Mentions Liam Carroll, also Kilkenny's John Tennyson.</p> <p>41:08 Kildangan the first team in the country to win an All-Ireland intermediate club title, against Carrickshock GAA Club. Mentions John Power. Joy of winning the All-Ireland. Describes match against Clare in Nenagh. Also mentions St. Catherine's in Cork.</p> <p>43:23 Mentions colour of Kildangan jersey: blue and gold. Making rugs for club to raffle. Expense of running club today, high insurance for juvenile teams. Fundraising with pools and lotto. Mentions learning rug-making from Mick Egan.</p> <p>45:58 Considers the various changes he's witnessed in the club. Recalls bringing his children to matches. Hurling household. Travelling to All-Irelands in Croke Park by car in the 1960s.</p> <p>48:13 Recalls reading match reports in such newspapers as <i>The Cork Examiner</i>, <i>The Tipperary Star</i>.</p> <p>49:32 Comparison between hurls and sliotars of his playing days and today. More like Scottish shinty sticks in the past. Rough fields for club matches. Poor drainage in field in Nenagh. Description of Kildangan's visit to Scotland to play shinty after 2005 All-Ireland win. Differences between hurling and shinty. Organisational failures of the weekend. Mentions Sean Fogarty of Munster. Club's trip to New York to play, links with Kildangan club members living in New York. Description of pitch in New York.</p> <p>57:02 Role of club in parish. Kildangan named Club of the Year in North Tipperary several times in recent years. Rural nature of club. Problem of losing children to club in Nenagh town. Lack of impact of emigration on club. A player emigrating to Australia. Mentions Conor Hayes in New York, Niall Kelly living in San Francisco. Also mentions Paddy Lynch.</p> <p>59:49 Description of role of chairman in club. Seamus's contribution to club even at 91 years old.</p> <p>01:01:01 Seamus ponders the significance of the GAA in his life. Pastime of fishing in locality, shooting on island.</p>
--	--

REFERENCE NO. TP/1/18

Involvement in GAA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward <input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input 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 with Kildangan from 1937 – 1950. Won 1943 North Tipperary Senior Hurling Championship; won Tipperary Minor Shield 1944, 45, 46.
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	N/A
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 01:03:00
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: 20th June 2012