

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	27 th Jan 2011
Location	Meagher's Pub, Ballingarry, Co. Tipperary
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Dick Butler
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1923 Home County: Tipperary
Education	Primary: Ballingarry NS, Co. Tipperary
Family	Siblings: 1 sister Current Family if Different: Wife (Kathleen), 2 daughters & 2 sons
Club(s)	Ballingarry GAA [Tipperary]
Occupation	Farmer
Parents' Occupation	Farmers
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fianna Fáil
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Creamery Milk Suppliers Association, Ballingarry Amateur Dramatics Society, Ballingarry Choir, Ballincurry Athletics Club

Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Martin Maher
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1950 Home County: Tipperary
Education (Optional)	Primary: Sliabh Ardagh NS, Co. Tipperary Secondary: St Kieran's College, Kilkenny Third Level: UCD
Family	Siblings: 1 brother & 4 sisters Current Family if Different: Wife (Ann), 4 daughters & 1 son
Club(s)	Ballingarry GAA [Tipperary]
Occupation	Retired Bank Manager
Parents' Occupation	Farmers
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fianna Fáil
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Agricultural Science Association; Institute of Bankers Ireland; Ballingarry NS Board of Management and various parish committees

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Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Paddy O'Connell
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1927 Home County: Tipperary
Education	Primary: Sliabh Ardagh, The Commons NS, Co. Tipperary
Family	Siblings: 4 brothers Current Family if Different: Wife (May), 4 daughters
Club(s)	Ballingarry GAA [Tipperary]
Occupation	Fitter in Ballingarry Coal Mines
Parents' Occupation	Labourers
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fianna Fáil
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Ballincurry Athletics Club

Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Jimmy Maher
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1951 Home County: Tipperary
Education	Primary: Sliabh Ardagh The Commons NS, Co. Tipperary Secondary: Thurles CBS, Co. Tipperary Third Level: UCD
Family	Siblings: 1 brother & 4 sisters Current Family if Different: Wife, 1 daughter & 2 sons
Club(s)	Ballingarry GAA [Tipperary]
Occupation	Publican
Parents' Occupation	Farmers
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fianna Fáil
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Civil Defence

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Date of Report	20 th June 2012
Period Covered	1848 - 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Tipperary, Kilkenny, Cork, Dublin, England, Great Britain, Americas
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of the Club in the Community, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Outsiders' Perspectives, Alcohol, Violence, Politics, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Opening of Croke Park, Relationship with the Association, Food and Drink, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy/Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Members of Ballingarry GAA Club discuss their involvement with the GAA and their passion for hurling and football. They explain how the location of Ballingarry close to the Kilkenny border has affected the club, and they outline the history of the club. They consider how the GAA has acted as a unifying force in their locality, and across the nation, in the wake of the civil war. They also describe their earliest memories of attending matches and the involvement of various family members in the organisation. In addition, they mention several individuals who have significantly influenced their club, for example Dan O'Connor and Monsignor Peter O'Sullivan. They explain how the formation of a rugby club in Ballingarry in 1970 was a factor in the GAA club's opposition to the lifting of the ban on foreign games and dances, and they consider how the lifting of the ban and the opening of Croke Park has impacted on the organisation.</p> <p>01:01 Discussion about history of the club. Cruthan founded in 1887. List of different club locations, including Smith O'Boynes, The Commons, Cappagh, Ballintaggart, Slieveardagh. Before the parish rule in the 1950s. Reasons for teams forming in certain areas: strong players from certain areas. Football team in 1930s comprising Hanrahan's, Daltons, Cormicks, Mullalys. Also mentions Jackie Walsh, Bill Kelly, Jim Molloy. Winning county junior football final in 1933. Mentions county players The Bowler Hanrahan, John Dewet.</p> <p>03:52 Description of sports played in different parts of parish:</p>

	<p>football and hurling. Mentions influence of Kerry teacher Dan O'Connor on local hurling in late 40s. Also mentions Dinny Roche and Tom Lynch.</p> <p>05:41 Dick recalls playing for Ballingarry. Winning minor in 1938 aged 15. Captaining first senior team to South hurling final in 1949.</p> <p>06:23 Description of fields used for training. Tobins' field in Ballingarry. Condition of field. More tournaments in the past. Also mentions Dick Vaughan's field in Clashduff used from 50s to 70s. Shop beside field, buying ice cream and lemonade. Also mentions Foxes' field in the 70s, also Britts' field. No charge for field. Also The Bull Field. Mentions Mick Barry of Wilford.</p> <p>09:48 Discussion about local employment. Coal mines from 1940s till 1970s. Strong tradition of coal mining in area. 300 employed in 70s. Bank strike in 70s, cheques bouncing, closure of mines.</p> <p>12:26 Paddy recalls his job as a fitter in the mine. Description of conditions. Mentions owner Tommy O'Brien.</p> <p>13:28 Workers coming from such counties as Donegal and Clare to work in mines. Emigration in parish too. Lack of impact of immigration on GAA club. Impact of war on club: players leaving to join British and Irish armies.</p> <p>15:09 Mention of 1848 rebellion of Young Irelanders locally. Battle at the Widow McCormack's house. Miners with experience in explosives. Mentions Smith O'Brien, Mr Cullen.</p> <p>16:51 Discussion about local activity during War of Independence and Civil War. IRA and Black and Tans. Divisiveness of civil war. Role of GAA clubs in unifying parish after civil war.</p> <p>20:19 Dick describes his father's role in the Irish Guards in the British Army, fighting in France, playing with Ballingarry with Willie Corcoran in 1925. His father's involvement as trainer and selector with 1950s teams.</p> <p>21:37 Paddy describes his role of masseuse with Holycross and Tipperary teams of the 50s. Mentions James Murray, Dick Blake, Mick Laffin, Tom Lahart Mentions Pat Stakelum and John Doyle. Learning massage at Ballincurry Athletic Club. Mentions John Barry, Patsy Pitts, John Bowe, Noel Gaynor. Overlap between athletes and GAA players. Mentions John Joe Barry of the 1940s, The Ballincurry Hare, World Champion athlete, first scholarship to Villanova. Mentions</p>
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	<p>Eamon Coughlan. Recollections of Barry's skill. Also mentions Roger Bannister.</p> <p>26:33 Paddy's massaging technique. Rubbing wintergreen and olive oil into athletes, mixed with poitín. Loosening up muscles. Common injuries. Players running barefoot. In 1950s. Recollections of injuries incurred running cross-country. Dick winning junior All-Ireland medal, hospitalised for frostbite.</p> <p>29:28 Paddy discusses different injuries. No hamstring injuries then. Mentions Nicky Byrne. Risks of trying to get fit quickly today.</p> <p>30:48 Recollection of playing match in 1937 minor hurling team. Description of gear brought on bicycle carrier. Paddy recalls living in the convent in 1941, being carried on bar of Jimmy St. John's bike.</p> <p>32:52 Dick describes attending 1939 All-Ireland Senior Hurling Final. Borrowing his sister's bike to cycle to Kilkenny, his father cycling on Dick's bike. Train to Dublin. Describes thunder and lightning at match. Cork vs. Kilkenny. War breaking out that day. Remembers seeing headling in <i>The Irish Press</i>, "War Breaks Out."</p> <p>34:53 Description of war years. Scarcity of white bread, tea, sugar. Rationing. Shortage of cigarettes, petrol. Impact of war and foot and mouth on match fixtures. Recollection of being driven in creamery lorry to match, driver couldn't drive into Clonmel, walking to Clonmel to tog out. Camaraderie on lorry.</p> <p>37:00 Discussion of Ballingarry's rivals in the 40s and 50s: Killenaule, Mullinahone, St. Pats. In mid-division in 1952. Reasons for move. Moving back to South the year after.</p> <p>38:28 Description of influential individuals in the club in 1940s. Mentions Paddy Dalton secretary, Willie Brennan, Jack Vaughan. Training in The Carhouse. Push-ups. Running. Playing hurling and football. Dick playing for Tipperary, junior football and hurling. Recollection of matches in the 40s. Playing junior hurling and football the same day in Listowel. Players crowded into car. Mentions hackney man Keely from Callan. No collective training with county team.</p> <p>43:16 Discussion about divisions in Tipperary: 4 divisions. South and West traditionally football divisions, changes. North and Mid traditionally hurling.</p> <p>44:14 Club's relationship with county board. In early 1900s, secretary of county board from Ballingarry, Martin Brennan.</p>
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	<p>Tipperary winning 4 senior football titles. Mentions on 1900 Tipperary team Mick Aylward. Also mentions Mick's son Jim. Also mentions Tommy Barrett county secretary. Also mentions Frank Murphy of Cork. Also mentions Mick Barrett, athlete. Also Lanigan family involved in athletics.</p> <p>47:48 Discussion about Dan O'Connor's influence on the GAA. Administrator and trainer of juvenile section of club in 50s and 60s. Involvement in hurling. Close to winning two minor titles in 60s. Winning first minor county title in 1994. Mentions Ballingarry and Slieveardagh, among other schools involved in GAA. Secondary schools: Presentation College. Contribution of schools toward fostering Gaelic games.</p> <p>50:05 Camogie teams, strength of camogie team in 1960s. Mentions Ann Carroll. Strong tradition of handball. Ball alley in The Commons. Mentions Bowler?? Healy from 1920s to 1950s. New alley built in 1960s. Mentions Delaneys of Kilkenny, Paddy Downey, John Ryan. Betting on handball, alcove in wall of old handball alley for wager.</p> <p>53:24 Discussion about tournaments in Ballincurry. Teams from Bennettsbridge, Graigue, Oulart, Moycarkey, Sarsfields, Killenaule. Final coinciding with Munster final in Thurles. Mid-50s to 60s. Challenging to referee matches. Prizes: suit-lengths and gold watches. Mentions Wexford's Podge Kehoe, the Rackards. Sports day with athletic events, matches in evening. Fundraiser for athletics club. Teams invited to tournament.</p> <p>56:47 Dick recounts story about refereeing matches at tournaments. Mentions Boherlahan.</p> <p>58:28 Discussion about parish location near Kilkenny border. Near Graigue and Tullaroan. Intense intercounty rivalry.</p> <p>59:35 Dances held in Ballingarry, fundraisers for club. McGraths' Hall. Céilís, foxtrots, waltzes. Crowds at dances. Mentions Jim Aylward. Lemonade for sale. Fights at dances among drunk men. Platform dances in new handball alley in 60s and 70s. McGraths' hall owned by local family. Parish hall built in 70s.</p> <p>01:03:03 Outline of development of club. Martin discusses purchase of land in mid to late 90s. Dressing rooms built in 2000. Village-based club, good location. Fundraising efforts: local club lotto, golf classic. Priority to pay off club debt. Dick's previous role of treasurer in simpler times: he mentions church gate collections.</p>
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	<p>01:06:17 Martin reflects on his earliest hurling memories: club games at The Steeple in the 50s. Attending Munster final in 1960 with his father, Cork vs. Tipperary. Mentions Christy Ring, Paddy Barry. His efforts to see the match, mentions Dick Maher. Semple Stadium. Mentions Tom Ryan of Killenaule.</p> <p>01:09:05 Martin's son the first from South Tipperary to captain winning minor team. Mentions other south Tipperary players: Tommy Brennan, Nicholas Loughlin, Michael Ivors, Liam Cahill, Nigel Cleere, Adrian Cleere, Trevor Ivors, Philip Ivors, Tommy McGrath, James Logue, Georgie Hayes. Nicholas Loughlin moving to England. Martin's family connection to 1920s player John Joe Callanan. Team travelling to America. His daughter marrying Tipperary captain Eoin Kelly.</p> <p>01:11:45 They reflect on the positive impact on club of local players playing at county level. Dick recalls making hurleys. Describes the ash trees he'd seek out, technique. Mentions hurley makers Jimmy Ryan of Killenaule, Jim O'Brien of Drangan, Don Lyons, Eamon Cahill, Joe Duggan. Martin recalls his first hurley. Comparison of longevity of hurleys in the past with throwaway culture today.</p> <p>01:15:51 Martin describes start of rugby club in parish in 1970. The Ballingarry Wasps. Controversial, before ban lifted. Lasting 10 years. Building own pavilion. Dress dances in late 70s. Decline of rugby club due to lack of new players. Playing in Thomond Park against Young Munster. Evans Cup finals. Mentions rugby player Willie Duggan playing in local club.</p> <p>01:18:25 Martin discusses GAA club's reaction to the rugby club. Voting in favour of retaining ban on foreign games, in response to rugby club. Mentions Dick Molloy. Impact of the lifting of the ban. Players playing both hurling and rugby. Martin explains how playing rugby helps hurling: winter training, discipline.</p> <p>01:21:19 Discussion about objections to lifting the ban. Objecting to a rugby club in a rural area. Fears rugby would wipe out GAA. Use of rugby club by Kilkenny people for social events. 1971 celebrations to mark 20th anniversary of football championship win held in rugby club. Hurling match between Kilkenny and Tipperary in former rugby field, now parish field in 1984. Mentions referee Bill Martin. Mentions Danny Kehoe, Joe Tuohy.</p> <p>01:24:34 They reflect on the changes they have witnessed in the GAA over the years. Martin mentions a resurgence of hurling, increase in popularity, rise of college hurling.</p>
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	<p>Improvements brought by money. Sponsorship. Opening of Croke Park, building of Croke Park boosting confidence of organisation.</p> <p>01:27:19 Martin describes role of banks in sponsoring the GAA. AIB championship.</p> <p>01:28:12 Discussion about role of Monsignor Peter O'Sullivan in club. Also mentions Monsignor Tom O'Sullivan. Monsignor Peter's donations to GAA county board in 70s and 80s, also to Ballingarry. Playing football with Ballingarry in 20s, also his brother Michael O'Sullivan. Mentions actor Ryan O'Neal who studied under Monsignor Peter in California.</p> <p>01:31:05 Description of the significance of the GAA in their lives. Unifying factor in community, pride in parish jersey, benefits to young people. Mentions 2007 Ballingarry winning junior B All-Ireland in County Cork, parishioners travelling to support. Importance of winning club All-Ireland.</p> <p>01:34:08 Martin recalls his son captaining a minor Tipperary team.</p> <p>01:34:29 They reflect on their optimism for the future of GAA in Ballingarry. Winning this year's All-Ireland hurling final inspiring young people. Outlines various successes, hopes for the future.</p> <p>01:35:34 Description of winning junior All-Ireland match. GAA playing being passed down the generations. Pride in their family members' involvement in the GAA.</p> <p>01:36:48 Recollection of 1920s football team playing in Thurles, passengers travelling by horse and cart. Mentions Thomas Cleere. Also mentions Bobbin Healy. Also mentions Father Quinn. Various stories about Bobbin.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p>Dick Butler:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input 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>Martin Maher:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____</p> <p>Paddy O'Connell:</p> <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 type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): Masseur</p> <p>Jimmy Maher:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input 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>Dick Butler:</p> <p>Ballingarry: Played from underage until 1964; Played minor (1938); junior hurling and football (1947). Won Tipperary Senior Football Championship, 1951</p> <p>South Tipperary: Played minor hurling (1938); Captained Senior hurling team in 1949.</p> <p>Tipperary: Played junior hurling and football, 1943-44. Played minor hurling in 1940.</p> <p>Martin Maher:</p> <p>Played with Ballingarry GAA, 1960 – 81. Played hurling and football in St Kieran's College, 1963 – 68.</p>

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	<p>Paddy O'Connell: Played junior hurling with Ballingarry GAA</p> <p>Jimmy Maher: Played with Ballingarry for 20 years</p>
<p>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>Dick Butler: Member of Ballingarry GAA committee for many years hold various positions including Chairman (1960s – 1979); Secretary; Treasurer; managed Ballingarry teams. Selector for Tipperary U21 and Junior teams in 1976.</p> <p>Martin Maher: Member of Ballingarry GAA committee for many years hold various positions including Chairman; Treasurer; managed Ballingarry teams. County Board liaison officer, 1996-97.</p> <p>Paddy O'Connell: Involved with Ballingarry GAA for 20 years; member of the club history committee since 1987; member of many committees in Ballingarry GAA.</p> <p>Jimmy Maher: Member of Ballingarry GAA committee for many years hold various positions including Chairman; Treasurer; PRO</p>
<p>Format</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual</p>
<p>Duration</p>	<p>Length of Interview: 01:40:03</p>
<p>Language</p>	<p>English</p>

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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