

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	27 th Jan 2011
Location	Interviewee's home, near Eglington, Derry
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Paddy Heron
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1934 Home County: Derry
Education	Primary: Draperstown PS, Co. Derry Secondary: St. Pat's, Armagh Third Level: Belfast College of Technology
Family	Siblings: 7 brothers & 3 sisters Current Family if Different: Separated with 1 sons and 2 daughters
Club(s)	St. Colm's GAC, Ballinascreen
Occupation	Pharmacist
Parents' Occupation	Carpenter [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	SDLP
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Flying Clubs; Golf Clubs; Motoring Clubs; Credit Union; SDLP

REFERENCE NO. DY/1/16

Date of Report	2 nd August 2012
Period Covered	1930 – 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Derry, Armagh, Tyrone, Antrim, Great Britain, England, Americas, Canada
Key Themes Covered	Playing, Managing, Coaching, Travel, Supporting, Administration, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Role of Clergy, Volunteers, Rivalries, Scór, Culture, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Refereeing, Education, Media, Religion, Facilities
Interview Summary	<p>Paddy talks about his early days playing football with his school and with Ballinascreen GAA Club. He recalls his career on the Derry minor team. Paddy talks about the development of Ballinascreen GAA Club over the years and the efforts to improve facilities. He discusses his involvement in administrative roles within the GAA, the effects The Troubles had on GAA in Derry and the challenges that face the GAA going forward.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:20 Describes his earliest memory of the GAA – playing football with St Patrick’s College in Armagh.</p> <p>01:50 Discusses his playing days with St. Patrick’s College. Recalls that playing football made life at school “bearable”.</p> <p>03:20 Describes his daily involvement with football in St Patrick’s College.</p> <p>04:14 Discusses the role of the teachers in training the teams. Recalls a high level of training.</p> <p>06:15 Recalls the lack of facilities when he entered club football.</p> <p>06:32 Discusses the advantages of playing football in St Patrick’s College. Mentions favouritism from teacher.</p> <p>07:22 Discusses playing in goals on the senior team with the college. Recalls experiences of playing in MacRory Cup finals.</p> <p>10:50 Recalls students travelling to matches by bus to support the team. Mentions Ballybay, slabs of toffee and Jim Aiken.</p>

	<p>12:20 Discusses moving back to Draperstown. Recalls limited career opportunities for Catholics.</p> <p>12:45 Mentions Fr. Michael Collins, the parish priest. Recalls his involvement in the local club.</p> <p>14:10 Discusses his involvement at minor county level.</p> <p>15:00 Talks about securing a job in a local pharmacy and remaining on the local club team.</p> <p>16:02 Discusses being called for a trial for the Derry minor team in 1952. Recalls sustaining an injury which hindered his involvement. Mentions Peter Smith.</p> <p>17:10 Talks about a second trial for the Derry minor team and securing a position at right half forward in 1953. Recalls winning the Ulster Championship. Mentions Francie Niblock.</p> <p>18:35 Discusses entering into the Derry senior team in 1953.</p> <p>19:40 Recalls going to the Isle of Man for a summer after finishing his pharmaceutical apprenticeship. Mentions gradually taking a step back from football.</p> <p>22:00 Discusses returning to Ballinascreen to take up a position as a pharmacy manager and returning to club football at a lower level.</p> <p>23:25 Discusses the differences in style of play compared to nowadays. Mentions his interest in motor cars and flying.</p> <p>24:40 Talks about playing with Ballinascreen GAA Club while in college. Mentions Micheál McCallion.</p> <p>26:27 Discusses sustaining an injury which hindered his involvement in club football for a time. Recalls receiving very little treatment. Mentions going to Falls Road to Joe McGuigan a former Celtic trainer.</p> <p>27:23 Talks about the club facilities at the time – no changing rooms, shower facilities.</p> <p>27:55 Talks about rival clubs in the area. Strength of club in 1934, but declining during the Second World War. Mentions Newbridge and Bellaghy.</p> <p>29:20 Describes “characters” within the club. Mentions families involved – Herons, McGuigans and O’Neills. Talks about Jim McGuigan, a former Treasurer of the Ulster Council.</p> <p>31:13 Describes experiences of refereeing matches once he</p>
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	<p>finished playing football. Mentions refereeing Magherafelt, Newbridge and Glen. Recalls stories of Jim and Colm McGuigan. Mentions Harry Gribbin, Willie 'Dodger' Gribbin, Derek Highstead.</p> <p>35:25 Recalls playing on the club minor team. Mentions playing Bellaghy.</p> <p>37:00 Discusses the positive social aspects of the GAA.</p> <p>37:13 Talks about the history of the Ballinascreen Club. Mentions Sean MacDiarmada. Recalls how Ballinascreen was one of the last areas of the country where Irish was spoken and talks about his uncle Pat Heron.</p> <p>39:14 Discusses the formation of a GAA club in Ballinascreen in 1933. Mentions that soccer was dominant in the area at that time.</p> <p>39:52 Discusses the successes of Ballinascreen in the initial years. Mentions that the club won both football and hurling county championships in the 1930s.</p> <p>41:35 Recalls that hurling was not played in Ballinascreen when he began his football career with the club. Talks about the revival of hurling in the club in the mid 1970s and the strength of the current hurling team.</p> <p>43:18 Talks about the strength of camogie and ladies football in Ballinascreen GAA Club.</p> <p>44:12 Discusses financial difficulties within the club. Talks about small fundraising efforts and the decline of sponsorship nowadays.</p> <p>46:18 Discusses the changing of the club colours from green and white to maroon and white.</p> <p>47:15 Talks about the development of the new pitch in Ballinascreen. Mentions Fr. Collins. Recalls that the pitch became a designated ground for county games.</p> <p>48:43 Recalls the lack of facilities within the club.</p> <p>49:34 Talks about the development of the stand on the grounds of the club and the clubhouse.</p> <p>51:07 Discusses the facilities available in the club today. Mentions a weights room, hurling ball alley. Talks about the support of the parish in raising funds.</p> <p>53:07 Describes the fundraising efforts involved in paying for</p>
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	<p>the clubhouse. Talks about the role of women in the parish in generating money.</p> <p>55:20 Talks about the changing role of women in Ballinascreen club through the years. Recalls that there were no women involved when he first joined Ballinascreen GAA club. Talks about the importance of women in the club.</p> <p>56:48 Describes the events that were organised to recoup the money borrowed to build the clubhouse.</p> <p>57:37 Discusses the naming of the park to Dean McGlinchey Park, named after a local priest.</p> <p>57:57 Talks about Fr. Michael Collin's role in developing and promoting Ballinascreen club. Mentions the McNally stand named after Fr McNally and mentions Thomas McKenna and Kevin Kelly. Talks about purchasing the pitches and their development.</p> <p>59:26 Discusses the role of the clergy in the club.</p> <p>01:00:07 Discusses the influence of soccer in Ballinascreen.</p> <p>01:01:10 Recalls a soccer ban when he was playing football. Mentions being involved with the County Board when the ban was lifted.</p> <p>01:02:20 Discusses the hesitance in the club at lifting Rule 21, allowing member of the British forces to play GAA. Gives his opinion on the positive aspects of this within the community.</p> <p>01:05:30 Recalls working in London for a time and joining a GAA club.</p> <p>01:06:50 Discusses playing county football with Derry. Recalls the lack of training. Mentions Patsy Breen and Larry Regan. How he got notification to play. Mentions North Derry and South Derry divide. Mentions Mickey McNutt and Coleraine.</p> <p>01:08:26 Recalls that his parents took no interest in GAA until the children began to play. Recalls that 4 of his brothers played at county minor level.</p> <p>01:10:00 Talks about management at county level. Mentions Roddy Gribbin.</p> <p>01:10:45 Discusses becoming involved in an administrative role within the club after finishing his playing career. Talks</p>
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	<p>about the changes in the club over the years.</p> <p>01:14:18 Talks about the lack of involvement of the Protestant community in Ballinascreen in GAA.</p> <p>01:15:52 Talks about the dominance of GAA in South Derry. Notes the soccer influence in Derry City.</p> <p>01:18:00 Discusses the impact of The Troubles on Ballinascreen GAA Club and the community.</p> <p>01:20:12 Discusses the political influences on the GAA. Mentions Tommy Mellon and his positive influence in keeping the GAA a sporting organisation.</p> <p>01:23:29 Recalls past successes of the club in the Scór competitions. Discusses his hopes of a revival of Scór.</p> <p>01:24:58 Talks about the decreasing role of teachers in GAA in Ballinascreen. Discusses the importance of promoting football in secondary schools.</p> <p>01:28:25 Discusses the importance of media in promoting GAA. Mentions the reach to a broader audience.</p> <p>01:29:20 Mentions proposing a motion to investigate electronic means of ascertaining if a ball goes wide or over the bar.</p> <p>01:31:08 Talks about the growing professionalism within the GAA. Notes that it is his opinion that paying players would not be beneficial. Mentions the financial impact this has had on rugby.</p> <p>01:33:40 Discusses the growing professionalism within the administrative side of the GAA.</p> <p>01:34:48 Discusses the challenges facing the GAA. Mentions following the International Rules and going to Australia. Discusses the need to develop GAA in England, Europe, America and Canada.</p> <p>01:37:04 Talks about the importance of the GAA as a cultural organisation. He does not approve of the National Anthem being played at every club match, gives his reasons why.</p> <p>01:39:00 Discusses his best memories of being involved in the GAA. Mentions his club winning a county championship.</p> <p>01:40:01 Talks about people he admired in GAA through the years. Mentions DJ Carey, Peter Canavan, Jim McKeever. Talks in particular Mickey Harte and what's he gone through.</p>
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REFERENCE NO. DY/1/16

	<p>Mentions Robby Gribbin and Francie Niblock.</p> <p>01:42:27 Discusses his biggest regret - disappointment at not winning a county championship.</p> <p>01:42:50 Talks about what the GAA has meant to him. Discusses friendships, camaraderie.</p> <p>01:44:20 Describes the importance of GAA from a physical and mental point of view. Discusses the sense of ownership.</p>
Involvement in GAA	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input checked="" 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): ___Club President_____</p>
Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	<p>Played from the age of 14 to 36. Won South Derry Larkin Cups; Minor League; 7-A-Sides Minors</p>
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	<p>Has been involved in administration since 1960.</p> <p>Club: Chairman, Delegate to County Board, Delegate to South Derry Board, Club President.</p>
Format	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual</p>
Duration	<p>Length of Interview: 01:46:31</p>
Language	<p>English</p>

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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REFERENCE NO. DY/1/16

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: _____02/08/12_____

