

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of Interviewer | Laura Melia |
| Date of Interview | 25 th April 2010 |
| Location | Kilcormac |
| Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname) | Keith McConville |
| <u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u> | |
| Gender | Male |
| Born | Year Born: 1981 Home County: Offaly |
| Education | Primary: Kilcormac Boys NS Secondary: Kilcormac Vocational School Third Level: Limerick IT |
| Family | Siblings: 1 brother |
| Club(s) | Kilcormac-Killoughey GAA [Offaly] |
| Occupation | Quantity Surveyor |
| Parents' Occupation | N/A |
| Religion | N/A |
| Political Affiliation / Membership | N/A |
| Other Club/Society Membership(s) | N/A |

REFERENCE NO. OY/1/3

| | |
|---|---|
| Date of Report | 26 th August 2012 |
| Period Covered | 1981 – 2009 |
| Counties/Countries Covered | Offaly |
| Key Themes Covered | Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Officials, Administration, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, All-Ireland, Club History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life |
| Interview Summary | Keith talks about his experiences of the GAA throughout his life. See script below. |
| 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) | U14 Féile County Medal; 3 U21 County medals; 5 U18 county medals; All-Ireland Vocational Schools medal. |
| 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: 0:07:30 |
| Language | English |

REFERENCE NO. (OFFICE USE ONLY): 04/1/3

Q1: Describe your earliest GAA memory and how you became involved in the GAA?

Playing under 12 championship match and being beat by five points.

Q2: Did your family have a tradition or history of GAA involvement?

None prior to his involvement.

Q3: Did your relatives discuss their GAA experiences with you? What were they?

Yes they did. The earliest experience he remembers his parents describing was Offaly winning the hurling and football in the 80's before he was born and the sheer crowds of people welcoming home the winning team.

REFERENCE NO. (OFFICE USE ONLY): 02/1/3

Q4: Tell me how GAA affected your family life?

At the moment he can't go out and have a drink at he weekends.

At the age of about 12 – 15 he has early starts on Saturday and Sunday mornings, travelling from parish to parish with family and friends to matches and having great days out.

Q5: Tell me what it was like to support your club/county when you were young and down through the years (travelling to games, prices of tickets, food, grounds visited, clothes worn, match-day traditions, local celebrations and traditions).

The younger years were very exciting, travelling to Croke Park, the pre-match conversations with friends in Dublin while getting something to eat before the match and then going to look at the match.

REFERENCE NO. (OFFICE USE ONLY): 02/1/3

Q6: If you had to choose just one game from all you've experienced, which would you choose? Why?

Offaly vs. Limerick in the 1994 All Ireland Hurling Final, it was the greatest come back he has ever witnessed to date.

Q7: What impact has the GAA had on your life?

It has provided a great way to meet friends and giving you a healthy lifestyle from continued training. As kids it provided an active lifestyle and keeps you out of trouble.

REFERENCE NO. (OFFICE USE ONLY): 07/1/3

Q8: What place and role does your club have in your community?

The club acts as a gathering ground for families and friends at weekends and it's a great way for kids to get to know each other. Over all it is a good social gathering for families and friends.

Q9: What role did the GAA play as part of your school and/or college life?

In collage it provided an opportunity to meet new people from all over Ireland. It also provided a very good way of settling in to collage especially if it was your first year away from home.

Q10: Who do you admire most in the GAA and why?

Presently – Dessie Farrell, for the work he's doing for players' welfare as part of the GPA.

REFERENCE NO. (OFFICE USE ONLY): 01/1/3

Q11: In your experience what have been the biggest changes in the GAA?

The GPA forming – some people think this will lead to the game becoming a professional sport. Personally he thinks that the GPA is just looking out for the players' welfare.

Q12: Have changes in your community affected your club and how?

Yes. Due to the economy players have to travel to America and other countries for employment. E.g. Students having to live abroad for the summer months to get employment, which results in team numbers dropping.

REFERENCE NO. (OFFICE USE ONLY): 07/1/3

Q13: Do you think the role of women in the GAA has changed over the years and how?

Yes. Women are now getting the respect they deserve in the GAA. E.g. The great coverage that camogie and Ladies' Football are now getting and the recognition they are also receiving.

Q14: Describe the role of the churches and clergy in your club and how it has changed over the years?

REFERENCE NO. (OFFICE USE ONLY): 0Y/1/3

Q15: Was there a connection between politics and the GAA for you, if so what?

No.

Q16: What have been the main disappointments you have had with the GAA?

Losing the Senior County Final last year.

Q17: Did the GAA shape your own identity in any way?

Yes. It has made him more out going and provided him with confidence as you have constant interaction with various people through the GAA.

Q18: What role has Irish language and culture had in your club and on your personal involvement with the GAA?

Language – none.
Culture – The GAA involves people from all walks of life and places them on a level playing field.

Q19: How important are rivalries within the GAA and what are yours?

A bit of rivalry between two clubs is healthy and leads to a cracker of a game, but only as long as the rivalry lasts for the 60 minutes playing on the field.
Some of his rivalries within the GAA are Coolderry, Birr and St..Rynaghs.

Q20: Comment on the role of volunteers within the GAA?

Q21: Describe your experience with teams as a player, manager, committee member or supporter.

His best experience as a player to date would be on the Senior County Final day, walking behind the band and feeling the level of achievement to represent your family and club.

Q22: Describe your experiences, if any, with the GAA outside Ireland.

None.

Q23: Describe how media coverage of GAA in your lifetime has changed.

It has changed drastically in the last few years since the involvement with TG4, with the great coverage of the games each weekend.

REFERENCE NO. (OFFICE USE ONLY): 07/1/3

Q24: What in your opinion are the biggest challenges facing the GAA in the future?

Trying to prevent GAA sports becoming professional sports.

Also emigration due to the downturn in the economy which may lead to potentially great players having to move away to secure employment.

Q25: What does the GAA mean to you?

REFERENCE NO. (OFFICE USE ONLY): 07/1/3

Q26: Do you have any pictures, documents, video etc. that you could share with us? Please provide a brief description.

Do you know any songs or poems about the GAA in your local area that you can send us or write in here?

Can you think of anyone else in your locality or in your family circle who we should contact for this project? Who are they and why?

No.

Q27: Is there anything else you would like to say about the GAA?

Q28: How did you hear about this project?

I hereby assign the copyright of the answers 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 questionnaire.

Signed: Care Melia Date: 25/04/2010

Please Note: If you are aged 18 years or younger this must be signed by your parent / guardian. Failure to do so will mean that we are unable to include your responses in the Archive