

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	6 th Oct 2010
Location	Joe's home, near Armagh City
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Joe Sherry (Joe Jordan also present)
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1927 Home County: Armagh
Education	Primary: Banbrook Hill, Armagh City. Secondary: CBS Grammar School, Armagh City.
Family	Siblings: 7 sisters Current Family if Different: 1 daughter (Kathleen) and 1 son
Club(s)	None
Occupation	Fruit Shop owner
Parents' Occupation	Cattle Dealer [Father]; Nurse [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Armagh Athletics Club

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Date of Report	19 th July 2012
Period Covered	1940s - 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Armagh, Kerry, Cavan, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Dublin , Derry, Louth, Monaghan.
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Celebrations, Material Culture, Education, Rivalries, All-Ireland, County History, Earliest Memories, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Violence, Politics, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Food and Drink, Socialising, Relationships, Economy/Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Joe Sherry and Joe Jordan discuss their passion for Armagh football. They describe their GAA highlight: Armagh winning the 2002 All-Ireland Senior Football Final. They also reflect on travelling around the country for matches, the food they ate on the way, and the people they met. Joe Sherry recalls his involvement in athletics and his success at athletics meetings around Ulster. In addition, he considers how The Troubles affected his business and outlines the political situation in Armagh during that time. Finally, he discusses his hopes that more Protestants will get involved in the GAA.</p> <p>00:25 Joe Sherry discusses his passion for football, playing as a schoolboy. Born 1927.</p> <p>00:57 Joe Jordan describes his involvement in football Christian Brothers Grammar School Armagh Cor na nÓg team in 1958</p> <p>01:27 Joe Sherry recalls his first GAA memory. Mentions Arthur McInerney getting petrol at end of war, at a time of ration books. Taking Joe to Corrigan Park to watch Armagh play Antrim. Watching hero Jim McCullough breaking his arm. Describes watching match in Oriel Park in Dundalk, Paul Russell refereeing Dublin vs Armagh game, row between Russell and Jim McCullough, physical violence. Recalls various disappointments for Armagh. Mentions travelling to Croke Park with his sister Dolly, Joe Corr, and Augustus Caffola in Caffola's ice cream van. Also mentions Ned McGuigan.</p> <p>05:12 Discusses his parents lack of interest in GAA and sport in general. His mother a Methodist from England, his father a cattle dealer. Discussion of Young Irelanders playing in Armagh. Recalls John Armstrong, Gerry McCusker, Frank</p>

	<p>McAvenchy. Also mentions Barney Toner.</p> <p>06:47 Traces family roots back to pre-Reformation. Family grave in Armagh's Protestant cathedral.</p> <p>07:25 Describes sports meetings every Sunday when he was growing up in Emyvale, Middletown, Nappagh, Crossmaglen. Athletics and football. His own spiked shoes and gear, others running in socks. Had his shoes handmade in England.</p> <p>08:46 Joe Jordan recalls the sports days in Middletown. Sprinting, javelin, discus, long jump, high jump, hop skip and jump, bicycle races, football match. The only football league they had.</p> <p>09:55 Joe Sherry recounts story involving Dougie Hutchinson in Oriel Park. Hutchinson a friend of Ian Paisley. Some Protestants attending matches. His views on encouraging Protestants to play Gaelic football.</p> <p>11:33 Joe Jordan recalls surge of interest among Protestants in the GAA following Down's victory in the 1960 All-Ireland Senior Football Final. Mentions Tom Nicholl and Wesley Bird cycling to matches in 1950s. Parish football league starting in Middletown in 1969, Protestants playing, UVF sending threatening letter from Captain Black to one of the Protestant players. Mentions buying Joe Bracken's medals in Dundalk.</p> <p>15:45 Joe Sherry recalls Tommy Bowe rugby player playing for Emyvale GAA Club. Joe Jordan mentions Tír na nÓg GAA Club in Armagh. Arthur McInerney introducing Joe Sherry to football. His participation in the annual General O'Duffy Cup, athletics.</p> <p>17:26 Joe Sherry recalls how he got into athletics. Running with Armagh City Harriers. Sprinter. Cycling 30 miles with Peter Gilmartin to Rostrevor, competing. Used to be beef butcher. Mentions Mick Toner and Patsy Foster. Winning taxi fare home in cash prizes at athletics meeting in Lissen Meeting Pappy Logan there to handicap. Parish priest organising these events.</p> <p>23:39 Joe Jordan explains how the GAA clubs were run by parish priest and schoolmaster.</p> <p>24:26 Joe Sherry recalls going to Barnbruck School, then to the Christian Brothers for a year. Working as a butcher. His sister May introducing him to the fruit trade. Mentions his cousin Jack Nugent who married a Protestant. Mentions Joe Scott of Forbes's. Land disputes.</p>
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	<p>27:14 Getting his own car in the 60s and 70s. Recalls driving to such places as Killarney and Tralee to watch match, sandwich and cup of tea, driving home on the same day. Travelling to matches by train or bus before that. Discussion about Arthur and Vicent McInerney, lorry dealers, used cars from garage to drive to matches. Also had access to petrol. Railway in Armagh until 1958. Joe Jordan recalls being county chairman, flying down to Tralee. Mentions Joe Sherry and Joe McManus.</p> <p>30:18 Stopping in Mount Brandon, Tralee. Staying in Stradbally when Crossmaglen played in Portlaoise. Discussion of length of journeys. Joe Sherry recounts story involving Seamus McCreesh from Milford, and Michael McKenna's pipe shop. Driving McCreesh to match.</p> <p>33:29 Joe Jordan explains that the 1960s were bad years for Armagh football. Joe Sherry recalls a sports day in Draperstown, the Olympics of the North, Armagh playing Roscommon on same day on 1977, draw.</p> <p>34:34 Discussion of Armagh's greatest rivals. Recently Tyrone. Cavan in 30s and 40s. Also Antrim. They mention Tony Tighe, Simon Duignan of Cavan. Railway Cup, like All-Stars today. Passion for seeing Ulster. Crowds on St. Patrick's Day in Croke Park in the 50s and 60s. All-Stars in early 1970s negatively impacted Railway Cup.</p> <p>36:54 Joe Sherry recounts story of going to Tipperary one Sunday for a match. Mentions twins nicknamed The Cannonballs. Tyrone playing them. Mentions Mark Grimley, Larkin.</p> <p>38:54 Discussion of their Armagh heroes. The 2002 team. They mention the McEntees, Francie, John Donaldson. Also mention Jim Larkin, Johnny McGeary of late 1950s, early 60s. Joe Sherry describes going to Killorglin with Joe Oliver and Kevin Smith, stopping in Tralee to eat. Kerry vs Armagh. Kieran McGurk scoring.</p> <p>42:40 Joe Sherry mentions close match between Armagh and Fermanagh. Mentions John Grimley and Danny Hollywood scoring goals. Mentions steward Paddy Donnelly. Fermanagh manager King.</p> <p>44:09 Joe Sherry recalls Armagh beaten by 18 points in the 1980s by Kerry. Recounts another match, Armagh playing Donegal in Cavan. Poor performance. Eating bars of chocolate. Mentions John Rafferty.</p>
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	<p>46:35 Joe Sherry explains why he travels so far to matches. Loves camaraderie. Eating meals.</p> <p>47:33 His disinterest in club football, only county. His views on the advisability of staying impartial as a businessman. More interested in running than playing football. Only played in schoolyard with six-penny ball.</p> <p>48:38 Reflects on food for journey. Ham sandwiches, flask of water, jar of Bovril.</p> <p>49:04 During The Troubles, routine checkpoint stops on way to matches.</p> <p>49:57 His hope that Protestants play football.</p> <p>50:44 Discussion of how The Troubles affected his business. Didn't let political situation affect his match attendance. His own shop blown up in late 60s, early 70s. Bombs or bomb alerts on Saturdays. His views on the Provisional IRA. Recounts story of being asked to close shop for Republican funeral, seeing Provos' wives shopping in Protestant shop.</p> <p>55:54 Meeting most mornings in Rainbow Cafe with friends for discussion about football.</p> <p>56:34 Reflects on the bias of Southern referees. Mentions Kieran McGeeney.</p> <p>58:15 Discusses the changes he's witnessed in football. Soccer and rugby rules complicating the game. Penalty kicks changed.</p> <p>59:57 Has never been to Thurles, been to all other big pitches. No interest in hurling.</p> <p>01:00:28 Mentions 2002 as his football highlight: Armagh winning the All-Ireland Senior Football Final.</p> <p>01:00:50 His family's lack of interest in the GAA. His daughter's health problems.</p> <p>01:01:40 Watches Commonwealth Games, mostly football. Enjoys physicality of game. His views on Northern Ireland soccer.</p> <p>01:02:44 Enjoys banter of crowds at matches. Mentions Mickey Joyce and Joe McManus who writes for <i>The Armagh Observer</i>.</p> <p>01:03:47 Ponders his optimism about the future of Armagh GAA. The skill of the current Under-21 team.</p>
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Involvement in GAA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input 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)	N/A
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: 01:05:25
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: 19th July 2012