

## GAA Oral History Project

## Interview Report Form

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Seamus Donnelly
<b>Date of Interview</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2009
<b>Location</b>	Interviewee's home, near Coalisland, Co Tyrone
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Charles Oliver Corr Locally known as Oliver Corr Nickname- 'Cha'
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1947 <b>Home County:</b> Tyrone
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Primate Dixon Primary School, Co. Tyrone. <b>Secondary:</b> Dungannon Technical College, Co. Tyrone.
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 3 Brothers; 3 Sisters
<b>Club(s)</b>	Coalisland Na Fianna [Tyrone]
<b>Occupation</b>	Civil Servant
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Railway Lines man/ Dept. Of Environment Supervisor [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	N/A

<b>Date of Report</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> July 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	1947 – 2009
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Tyrone
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Club History, Role of the Club in the Community, Scór, Volunteers, Role of Women, Travel, The Troubles, Education, Family Involvement, Playing, Managing, Emigration
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:35 Born Stewartstown road, Coalisland in 1947. 'Year of the big snow'</p> <p>00:55 Born alongside railway where his father worked on the Great Northern Railway along with three generations of the Corr family. Up until 1964.</p> <p>01:09 Born on the railway, 'and we were all railway children'. Father worked on railway for 38 years.</p> <p>01:16 When the railway closed down father went to work for the DOE (Department of the Environment) as supervisor working on road repairs and so on.</p> <p>01:27 Mother a housewife although she made curtains to keep family 'afloat'.</p> <p>01:45 Four boys and three girls in the family</p> <p>01:48 Marie the oldest, died aged four years old</p> <p>01:55 Of six that are living, the three boys are the three oldest and the three girls are the three youngest.</p> <p>02:02 Names – Sean better known as John L.</p> <p>02:07 Peter known as 'the butler'</p> <p>02:12 Oliver, or Charles Oliver better known as Cha because Cha was a shortened version of Charles.</p> <p>02:22 Three sisters were called Joan, Brigid, Margaret</p> <p>02:26 Marie oldest of family died aged four</p> <p>02:37 Education; primary school, secondary school and then on to the Tech (Technical College in Dungannon)</p> <p>02:46 Left Tech and went on to do City and Guilds in</p>

	<p>Engineering which took him to Belfast for 18 months</p> <p>02:55 Went to work for German company in Dungannon for 9 years, which closed in 1975 during the oil crisis.</p> <p>03:09 Applied and was accepted into the civil service where he worked for 31 years until retirement just over two years ago.</p> <p>03:30 'Our house would have been a ceili-ing house', 'everybody and anybody would have called. There would have been many discussions but the GAA would always have been the focus especially on a Friday and Saturday night and then we'd have the inquest if you would like to call it that then on a Sunday night'</p> <p>03:58 Earliest memory around 5 years old.</p> <p>04:05 The time of the 'dry battery'. Radio's were 'few and far between' and you had to get the radios charged.</p> <p>04:15 Shop in Coalisland called Hughes'. Batteries were left there mid-week to get into the queue early and picked up on a Saturday morning or a Saturday evening.</p> <p>04:28 Radios used to 'catch up with Micheal O' Hehir and all that was on the radio during the GAA calendar.</p> <p>04:40 Neighbour Paddy McGirr was the only one with the radio. Two or three neighbours including Oliver's father would have had dry batteries to ensure that should the battery run out of 'juice' there was always one on standby</p> <p>05:03 The windows of the living room/ sitting room where pulled up so that neighbours could come on sit on stools, chairs or apple boxes.</p> <p>05:22 Created the atmosphere of a live studio</p> <p>05:28 Once it came to half time especially in the hurling matches the tea and the sandwiches where handed out. Almost like a 'guest tea'.</p> <p>05:46 Coalisland na Fianna started off in 1903 and apart from 2 years, there has been a member of the Corr family on the committee. Including great grandfather, grand uncle</p> <p>06:30 First memory of going to a club match was walking to a match at the Moor Bridge in Clonoe with his uncle Francie and deceased Tyrone player Tom Fox. Francie has been in Northampton for 50 years.</p>
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	<p>06:54 First re-collection was the two boys putting him up on their shoulders to take apples from an over hanging orchard. They were a famous apple which where ready before the normal crop which was 'Blood of the Boyne'.</p> <p>07:14 Put into a bag, but they weren't eaten until after the match. 'I'll always remember my uncle Francie saying, that's for coming home and we'd about a mile and a half, two mile walk back and I remember getting as many apples as I ever wanted.'</p> <p>07:45 Played football on 'half an acre or so at the back of the house'</p> <p>08:03 There were 'local lads' and we had street leagues and there were different families playing.</p> <p>08:12 Going back to play football which would have been in primary school at age 6 or 7 but competitively it would have been 10 or 11 before he started.</p> <p>08:21 Used to play for a Cup, called the Jimmy McElhill Cup. Was a neighbour who used to work for the post office and he put up cup which he still has</p> <p>08:36 'We would have played all the local families. We would have come together at that stage with our cousins and we'd have played 7or 8 or 10 aside whatever was available'. Had quarter final semi finals and a final.</p> <p>08:50 Final always played on a Sunday evening after maybe a league match or a championship match for the adults. 'I do remember a couple of hundred people' watching the matches.</p> <p>09:13 Went to Primate Dixon primary school which had about 550 pupil on average. There were three teachers there that helped.</p> <p>09:31 Three teachers Master Looney, Master Bradley and Mick Currie. Steeped in GAA themselves. Their uncles nephews and nieces where all involved. Naturally it was the first start for many pupils.</p> <p>09:59 The school field wich wasn't very big, but they got around this</p> <p>10:15 First hero I had would have been my uncle Francie.</p> <p>10:30 'For extra training he would have ran through the sand banks.' In the area that Oliver lived there was a</p>
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	<p>railway on one side and sand pits on the other.</p> <p>10:55 He would tell the children you need to go up the hills and down the hills to get the power in your legs.</p> <p>11:06 Uncle Barry was on the Tyrone minor team that won the county's first All Ireland in 1946/7. 'In later years you wanted to find out about him.'</p> <p>11:19 In later years he would have looked up to 'the great Eddie Devlin and then in the 1950s and 60s Jody O'Neill.</p> <p>11:37 Jody O'Neill had captained the Tyrone and Ulster team aged 19. 'That would have been a dream. You never would have made that, but it was something for you to look up to.'</p> <p>12:04 There was no football until under 14 and it was quite a short season. There was however other 'local' football.</p> <p>12:20 During the school holidays and coming from a rural community 'we would have been helping people on other farms... but in the evening there was always the kickabout'. This was the start of the Jimmy McEnhill Cup tournament.</p> <p>12:43 Played under 14, under 16 and then minor. At this point there was no under 21 or reserve football.</p> <p>12:56 'I was on and off the team. You were getting playing in the old tournaments'.</p> <p>13:05 'In those years in the late 1960s Coalisland had a great crop of footballers and you can imagine that there was 5 county players playing for them. You had the Devlin's and Jim Mulgrew and Jody O'Neill and so on and it wasn't easy getting on it... We were glad to see the reserve football coming in in later years but it was too late for me then.'</p> <p>13:39 Home club Coalisland Fianna. It was up a lane a three field lengths away. Around half a mile.</p> <p>13:55 Called MacRory Park then, now called Father Peter Campbell Park.</p> <p>14:05 'It was a county ground so you always as a young lad would have got the wee jobs, clearing up after, gathering the papers gathering whatever bits and pieces of rubbish. We always tried to do the clean ups after the match or the next day.' On cleaning ground in 1950s and 60s.</p> <p>14:29 As you got older always more to do. Painting became</p>
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	<p>important to keep the ground 'spruced up'.</p> <p>14:42 It gave you a taste for the 'bigger part'. Being part of and belonging to. Recognised this as the beginning of his understand of the volunteering and 'doing your bit'.</p> <p>15:11 A lot of changes in the club. Whereas he was only able to play football from under 14 up now they were able to play football from go games at under 8, the summer schools and ladies football.</p> <p>15:37 Thoughts on ladies football. I think it's a great thing. 'Out of ladies football and so on we have found great administrators for the club'.</p> <p>15:55 Had 3 secretaries and 2 treasurers over the last 10 years, 'that would have been unheard of'.</p> <p>16:06 A sense of a greater family orientation as a result.</p> <p>16:32 Mid- 50s saw a major drain on football teams. Within catchment areas a good few teams had folded</p> <p>16:54 Teams had folded during the 30s, started up again and folded again in the 1950s. 'There just wasn't any work. People followed the work and followed the pound.'</p> <p>17:07 'They went to England or went to America if they had relations there. We lost a lot of good footballers'.</p> <p>17:17 Can't escape the Troubles.</p> <p>17:49 Two of them are now in America and have contributed a lot to football there both as footballers and as coaches. 'Certainly big loss for us but then it's a gain for the wider GAA family'</p> <p>18:15 Increasing prosperity benefited the club. From the late 1980s work became more plentiful</p> <p>18:35 Before talked of a degree plus £2000 would get you to America. The end of this 'brain drain' has helped in a big way.</p> <p>18:47 Strong underage teams. Checking record will show Coalisland heading lists of under 16 and under 18 success but they didn't win a senior championship from 1956 to 1989.</p> <p>19:24 'In the run up to 1998 (sic- 1989) we won 2 minors, 5x under 21 and went onto win 2 senior.</p> <p>19:35 Indication that people where coming back to live.</p>
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	<p>People that had went away where coming back with young children</p> <p>19:45 Effort made to get people involved in the parish or in the football club. These were big changes for the better.</p> <p>20:23 In the 1950s the pitch was rededicated, perhaps 1953 or 1954 when it became MacRory Park.</p> <p>20:49 Tyrone played a Wexford select to open the pitch. Judging by the old photographs and reports there were supposed to have been 27,000 at the match. Has grave doubts about that.</p> <p>21:08 A lot of work done to the pitch, maximum attendance would be 19,000 and health and safety may mean this is even less.</p> <p>21:23 In 1974 we had the re-dedication of the pitch to Fr Peter Campbell. He was a priest whose family had given a lot to the club. Joe Henry Campbell was President and chairman for years.</p> <p>21:45 There were four or five brother and the family and they did all they could for Coalisland Fianna and it was only right to dedicate to an ex player and an ex county player.</p> <p>21:57 Built a new club house just over 12 years ago, which was state of the art with treatment rooms meeting rooms and a social centre.</p> <p>22:35 The social centre is a meeting place. Somewhere to have a bit of craic, play cards and practice for scór. It's a hub. Found that over the years social doesn't need to mean drink, social means meeting.</p> <p>23:25 Have always had representatives of Coalisland Fianna playing on the county team especially at under age.</p> <p>23:45 Always have 2 or 3 on the county minor team. There were 3 or 4 years when they didn't have any.</p> <p>24:04 As recently as last year (2008) had four on the Tyrone minor team that won the Tom Markham Cup. Feel that the youth policy in place from Go games up works</p> <p>24:33 Given the nature of East Tyrone, in spite of the lack of a league structure rivalry still strong. Parish rivals.</p> <p>24:49 Brackaville also in parish, reached senior football recently but back to junior. Stewartstown also in the parish</p>
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	<p>and they have won one O'Neill Cup</p> <p>25:08 Clonoe the 'arch rivals'. Bragging rights are very important every year. 'If Clonoe beats Coalisland at skittles, a wins a win, we would treat it the same way'.</p> <p>25:30 Younger players now are more inclined to be mixing with each other, going to school together and socialising with each other.</p> <p>25:42 While there is a rivalry, it's not the rivalry I remember from the 1960s and 1970s 'where it was win at all costs and I really mean at all cost. There was an awful lot of black eyes and bloody noses along the way.'</p> <p>25:59 Today players fitter and better mentality and while the rivalry still exists there is a lot of the players very good friends.</p> <p>26:11 Being a rural town there have been a lot of inter marriages over the years and there is every possibility you could be playing against your cousin.</p> <p>26:33 Some managers are inclined to make one cousin mark the other cousin due to the personal battle between other.</p> <p>26:44 Then you have Derrylaughan, Derrytresk and Brocagh within a small geographic area. There are alot of clubs.</p> <p>27:06 Unsure of how the area can sustain so many clubs because families are not as big as they once were.</p> <p>27:10 We have 'people from other countries in now, Poland, Lithuania, East Timor and so on and it's amazing that they are starting to come out of the primary schools and go to the go games and the summer schools'.</p> <p>27:46 The match that most sticks out is 'the famous one' from 1967 between Coalisland and Clonoe. Coalisland hadn't beaten Clonoe in 13 years in the championship.</p> <p>28:12 Coming up to Oliver's era. Between his family and cousins there were seven Corr's on the team.</p> <p>28:28 Disagreement breaks out. Match started at half three and eventually finished at 5.20pm. 'The fisticuffs probably ended about half seven down the town.'</p> <p>28:48 'My brother Petsey who was playing full back, and may I say it a good full back we was. He had plenty who</p>
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	<p>wanted to take him on. He was a pretty tight guy. He was a very quiet guy off the field but he wasn't afraid to look after his corner. He was getting married on the Friday and he got married with a black eye and a busted lip. My brother who was his best man John L also had a black eye. But I'm not even going to endeavour to tell you what the other guys had that where on the receiving end.'</p> <p>29:32 After this match Coalisland beat Clonoe at senior level ever time for seven years.</p> <p>29:48 From this game the rivalry has been a little more friendly with the clubs lending each other pictures.</p> <p>30:20 Role of schools in the club- important to have the teachers there. Problem that there are less and less male teachers.</p> <p>30:50 Problem within the schools in that teachers live well outside club catchment areas and give nothing back to the local area. 'Probably selfish from a football point of view'.</p> <p>31:23 The tide is beginning to turn locally with ex-players or the sons of ex players teaching in schools over the last 3-4 years</p> <p>31:43 Have to work very hard in schools or the students can be lost to other sports in particularly soccer.</p> <p>31:56 Found that those that can't play gaelic start soccer teams. At a local level runs for nearly the whole year.</p> <p>32:20 With Christian Brothers disappearing there would be very little religious interest now.</p> <p>32:35 Our Parish priest for a number of years Monsignor McEntaggart, 'to this very day even though he is retired and living in Dungannon, he still doesn't miss a Fianna match and he doesn't miss any Tyrone matches, being a Louth man originally.'</p> <p>32:58 Would have ensured that club notes were in parish bulletin and he was very good spiritually. Haven't replaced him.</p> <p>33:18 With shortage of priests they may have other things to deal with rather than the GAA.</p> <p>33:51 Being close to Derry and there are rivalries there however over the last few years are so it is now very much Armagh</p>
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	<p>34:15 Given that the Moy borders Armagh and the sizable Moy contingent on the Tyrone team including Sean and Colm Cavanagh, Phillip Jordan and Ryan Mellon rivalry strong</p> <p>34:48 Sean Cavanagh would have went to school in Armagh and that would be the big rivalry.</p> <p>35:00 It's friendly rivalry though. ' I remember distinctly that when we beat them in the final in 2003. They were the first to turn around and shake hands and say well done. Enjoy the year as we enjoyed 2002. The real Armagh supporter'</p> <p>35:01 The other fans that get involved at the semi final stage might find it harder to let go</p> <p>35:37 Before that the rivalry may have been Down or Derry</p> <p>35:44 Increasing mobility perhaps leading to a lessening of the parochial attitude. Buses are good and people have good cars and because of this 'maybe we listen a little better and tolerate a bit better'.</p> <p>36:15 Speaks about the idea of the old pipe smokers round a turf fire having their aim but that is long gone and the GAA is much the better for it.</p> <p>36:45 Father worked on railway line and first trip to Croke Park was in 1956.</p> <p>36:57 'I'll make no secret of it now, whilst there was three boys in our house, our first trip to Croke Park in 1956 Charlie Corr my father had 9 sons. Nine Corrs, i.e. all the relations went on the free ticket to Croke Park'.</p> <p>37:15 Trip to Croke Park was amazing. Whilst known as railway children and had been to Belfast and Bundoran it was our first trip to Dublin.</p> <p>37:33 Took father, mother and uncle all their time looking after the children.</p> <p>37:42 Remembers going to Butlers on O'Connell street for breakfast and the children kept accepting the offers of more sausages and eggs. Brother Petsey 'must have had half a dozen eggs, certainly half a pound of bacon and maybe a pound of sausages'.</p> <p>38:34 Going to the match was Tyrone against Louth and we were back the next year 1956 against Galway and that's when we really started to spread our wings. That year saw them in Casement Park and Clones and if it wasn't for the</p>
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	<p>fathers free pass they couldn't have afforded it</p> <p>39:13 Had relations in Killyleagh and Downpatrick in Down and they were in Croke Park in 1960 and 1961 for Down. 'I remember being in the Canal End and the sway, the crowd swaying'</p> <p>39:39 'I remember a man lifting me... and the sway against the barriers... but I remember him lifting myself and my brother and putting us in front of the barrier so the sway wouldn't affect us.'</p> <p>40:10 Success breeds success. Chatting with good friends Benny Corr and Vinny Hamilton and they were re-collecting travelling up the road after games having been beaten year after year.</p> <p>40 :48 'We started to win an odd Ulster and then we move on from that and we started to look forward to- we were going to win Sam in 1986 and we did win Sam in 1986 for the first 45 minutes or so'. Plunkett Donaghy free that wasn't blown up and then Pat Spillane scoring a goal and the rest was history.</p> <p>41:28 Following on from that everyone was on a high and thought Tyrone would be back again within the next couple of years and a lot was learned from that. The panel spent too much time fundraising etc. Lost sight of most important things</p> <p>41 :50 Had a good team with Peter Canavan and Oliver's nephew Ciaran Corr was the captain. Another disputed decision and Tyrone could have had an All Ireland in the 1990s again.</p> <p>42 :13 There were some great games in 1990s and credit has to be given to Down, Donegal and Derry for winning.</p> <p>42 :20 Not out of time when after all the success Tyrone had had at minor and under 21 that they 'moved on up' to senior success under Mickey Harte. Gave football an amazing lift in Tyrone</p> <p>42 :42 Going to mass on a Saturday night or a Sunday morning to see the amount of GAA tops for every club and every county. It's good to see GAA jerseys mean the Brazil, Manchester United and Liverpool jerseys slowly disappear.</p> <p>43 :31 Speaking about Damien O'Hagan, 'Damien was someone that everyone in our club looked up to because he gave it 100 per cent. Damien was a fine player. He was</p>
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	<p>never afraid to give the ball off to the best man. He was a team player even though individually he was exceptional player. He was a great team player.'</p> <p>44 :06 When his day had finished at the football he got himself involved. He was our secretary, our chairman and he trained our under 16s and minors.</p> <p>44 :25 He had great help from Peter Herron and Martin O'Farrell. Martin had great success with the Academy (St. Patrick's Dungannon).</p> <p>44 :36 Damian has given a lot back and he has two good sons coming up through the ranks now as well.</p> <p>44 :58 The big thing for Oliver was watching players develop through time from their time at school.</p> <p>45 :15 A neighbour of Oliver's father Martin O'Farrell had a son Patrick. Can always remember watching him playing in the garden. He would have been over in Oliver's father's house every day.</p> <p>45 :50 Would ask Oliver's father, 'how do you think I'm doing'. Father would tell him he'd be playing for Coalisland and after a few years he'd tell him he'd be playing for Ireland.</p> <p>46 :10 Patrick in turn growing up and watching him progressing and watching him winning minor and under 21 titles was rewarding. He never left the ball out of his hand.</p> <p>46 :32 Story about Peter Canavan. Kicking ball through ever decreasing tyre size</p> <p>47 :13 You watch and hear these stories and to see it 'coming to fruition'. You know that it's through work and effort that you eventually get there.</p> <p>47 :31 Cormac McAnallen said he just wanted to be better year on year. Donal, the brother probably a better footballer</p> <p>48 :21 Lowest point – Tyrone had just been beaten by Kerry in the All Ireland final and everyone was on a high</p> <p>48 :35 Went to Pearse Park in Longford in the national league and came away with one of the 'biggest hidings' the county had ever received.</p> <p>48 :57 All but three of the team that lined out in the final were sitting in fine suits along the sideline while Longford</p>
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	<p>with not a very good team gave Tyrone a 'going over'.</p> <p>49 :19 Brought fans back down to earth and brought the management team back to earth. 'That was one of the very, very low points'.</p> <p>49 :34 I went to Croke Park. There was just myself and my wife because we had booked a week in Kilarney and we went thinking naturally we'd win the match against Sligo and head on and enjoy the week in Kilarney. That was not to be. My wife Winnie will tell the story that I got into the passenger seat and said drive me out of Dublin... She was about five miles outside Portlaoise before I actually spoke and at that stage all the question I asked was have you anything to drink in the car'.</p> <p>50 :31 While Tyrone were beaten we still had the bones of a very good team.</p> <p>51 :01 Got involved with the organisational side of the GAA in the 1970s coming onto the committee at that stage.</p> <p>51 :25 'I carried out a number of roles. I was secretary, I was treasurer, I was vice chairman. I never wanted to be chairman because I was a bit of a worker rather than somebody who was giving out the work.'</p> <p>51 :43 There were a couple of years he opted out because he was working in Belfast. Getting home at night he was pretty tired. Years 1977- 1979 not involved.</p> <p>52:08 1980 back in again as assistant secretary. Secretary health problems. Took over role for a couple of years before a new secretary was found. Remained on committee.</p> <p>52 :32 Got involved in cultural side of it. Been involved in club and county on the county cultural committee for scór and the language in excess of thirty years now.</p> <p>52 :55 'That's a bit that I really really enjoy because you don't have to play football, but we talk about the GAA family, it's those that can sing, can dance can participate for their club. There are those that are great footballers but there are also those that are good dancers and again it's that sense of belonging. Those people can give a lot back. I think of your annual mass, your fundraising concert and apart from that you are giving people, young people and adults ... a bit of self esteem'.</p> <p>53 :42 There are people who have moved onto better</p>
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	<p>things from it.</p> <p>53 :49 Late 2006 health took a major dip. In hospital for 2007 AGM. Involved as a county delegate and still involved in scór.</p> <p>54 :24 Meet a lot of people and you learn from it</p> <p>54 :49 Club history- 'labour of love'. It was 'painstaking work, but a labour of love you couldn't get better and the best experience anyone could ever have.'</p> <p>55 :24 62 now and doesn't remember the early days but being able to go back and find photographs from 1903-1904 in Dublin and using the new technology. It was definitely worth the bother.</p> <p>56 :18 When planning design it had to be about photographs. Writing history gets boring. Synopsis taken from book from 1984 and built book around that.</p> <p>56 :49 Club still have the very first Tyrone senior championship medal</p> <p>57 :18 Have a powerful archive of old photographs. Thinks he has around 1800 old photographs trying to put into bank.</p> <p>58:11 With club having won two minor championships and 5 under 21s in a row. Knew had the makings of a good team. That was a record.</p> <p>58:47 Going on to see the O'Neill Cup coming into Coalisland again in 1989. 'We were beaten in 6 or 7 finals and beaten in something like 21 semi finals.' To see cup coming back again the next year and the league. 'First one is the sweetest'.</p> <p>59:45 I was treasurer that particular time and we had to get new sponsors. 'At that particular time money would have been tight enough within the club. We were only after building the clubhouse, which was a massive outlay'.</p> <p>01:00:12 Getting sponsors and putting packages together. Asking for sponsorship. Getting excellent response.</p> <p>01:00:38 'I had the jerseys, the togs ... the kitbags sorted out. I always remember I done it on a Friday evening. Took a half day of work and by three o'clock, before the banks closed at half three I had my deal in place for it'.</p>
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	<p>01:00:58 GAA family very good at giving.</p> <p>01:01:04 Produced booklet to commemorate getting to the final. Used booklet as a means of fundraising. Explained club history and a great momento.</p> <p>01:02:13 In 1990 not only did we win the senior championship but in the curtain raiser we won the minors as well.</p> <p>01:02:24 Minors three best players for the minor where from three families that had nothing to do with Coalisland or the GAA down through the years.</p> <p>01:02:46 Three players 'courted' from primary school because they'd been spotted. Start of a new generation. Webb family an example</p> <p>01:03:46 GAA big business now. If there weren't so many volunteers- biggest employer?</p> <p>01:04:00 Become so big the administration has to grow with it. People think may be over administered. Argues need all the 'good heads' around at a time of growth.</p> <p>01:04:22 Looks to the foresight of Peter Quinn. 'His dream was of this Croke Park. I sort of remember being at a match in Enniskillen and he was talking sort of loosely about it and I was thinking is he real. But 10 -12 years down the line he is very real and so is his dream. And when you sit now in Croke Park especially in the Cusack stand... all is there that one would want.'</p> <p>01:05:17 Paying a price for it in the admission charges and so on.</p> <p>01:05:23 Some might say, there are too many committees you never get a decision but with the big organisation you need it.</p> <p>01:06:00 Rule 21- I can see where that came from. In the north and in Tyrone, suffered a lot</p> <p>01:06:19 'I could see people's attitudes hardened on it and for good reasons. There were very few families in say east Tyrone that wouldn't have been touched in some way with a relation, a brother a sister or whatever it may be involved in some way. You could see where they come from'</p> <p>01:06:44 Light at end of political tunnel. People started to soften approach. Began to look at next generation. Would</p>
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	<p>have backed its removal. Good to get it out of the way.</p> <p>01:07:18 Foolish- British soldiers wouldn't want to play for Coalisland Fianna and Tyrone. Rule that had to go- it was out dated.</p> <p>01:07:45 Rule 42 totally against it initially. The more he thought about it and the money it brought into the association the more he was inclined to agree.</p> <p>01:08:30 Doesn't agree with the concerts in Croke Park. Problems at the time regarding U2 and dismantling the stage</p> <p>01:08:44 Problem when residents can't live their normal lives Monday to Friday</p> <p>01:09:30 Apart from fundraising with Concern and Goal over the years</p> <p>01:09:38 From 1993 to 2003 helped run Coalisland International Music festival. Lead fundraiser for that.</p> <p>01:09:52 It was an idea that started following three community festivals in 1988, 1989 and into 1990</p> <p>01:10:10 It was at a stage when things were beginning to settle down in the Troubles and it was time to give the area a bit of a better name. Town splashed across news for many years even when the events took place many miles away.</p> <p>01:10:52 'So we started off an international music festival, because we have a Silver Band in Coalisland which would be very high quality.' Band would have been invited to Europe in the late 1980s.</p> <p>01:11:13 'We started up this festival in 1993 bringing a band from Lithuania' finding the band host families. GAA families the best people to help you out.</p> <p>01:11:20 He festival over the first three years just kept growing and growing until there were 6 or 7 bands from right across Europe, with them coming a large travelling party.</p> <p>01:11:50 From the lough shore right up to Edendork kept right up to 500 people. 'Looked after them like they were their own'.</p> <p>01:12:06 Reached the stage after 10 years but the cost of running it spiralled over the course of 10 years, from</p>
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	<p>£12,000 to £48,000. Had to go back to the same countries year after year while government agencies were happy to bring in tourists but they wouldn't back it up with cash.</p> <p>01:12:46 This year there has been pressure again to do something big in 2010, but it was a pity it wasn't done for 2009 for the GAAs 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary.</p> <p>01:13:20 Shane Corr- Oliver's cousin was an inter county referee for three or four years. 'Myself, John L., cousin Benny and Hugh Pat O'Neill of Derrytresk, the hill, where his tried and tested four man team for about 12 years</p> <p>01:13:49 It was enjoyable in one sense but there was a lot of pressure. We worked well together as a team. He was very much a common sense referee.</p> <p>01:14:07 When refereeing within Tyrone and because he had played so much football himself, he knew a lot of the players</p> <p>01:14:24 One game stands out as something they shouldn't have done. There was a championship match and there were only three umpires.</p> <p>01:14:49 Hugh Pat O'Neill's vehicle broke down having been working in Belfast. Assumed he was a little late and he would follow the others on to the match in Pomeroy.</p> <p>01:14:55 Brocagh playing Beragh with Oliver on the one goal on his own doing umpire</p> <p>01:15:05 On the Tuesday night, Shane rang to say there had been a protest in because there had only been one umpire on the 'top' goals. There were no controversial decisions during the game. All clear decisions.</p> <p>01:15:55 The worst part was, the team that won the first night by two points lost the second night. You learn from that.</p> <p>01:16:35 Scór was very strong in the 1970s, then along came the disco era. Young people then started to drift away and there was a 'dip'.</p> <p>01:17:00 Involved a club level and the club have been involved for 32 years out of the 40.</p> <p>01:17:25 There were a lot of others things taking people away. Wasn't seen to be the thing to do.</p> <p>01:17:45 Had to work very hard on it. Sat on the county</p>
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	<p>committee. Along with Michael McCaughey wrote to every club and visited every club in the county to try and persuade them to have a language/ cultural officer about 12 years ago.</p> <p>01:18:15 Feedback was pretty good and people expressed an interest in taking part. At AGMs often language officer only there due to their ability to speak Irish.</p> <p>01:18:45 Have turned this situation around. Last in year in Tyrone, 43 out of 57 clubs involved in Scór na nÓg and 37 clubs involved in Scór Sinsear</p> <p>01:19:00 Had great results at county, Ulster and All Ireland. Either in joint first or one in front in terms of number of All Ireland titles won at Scór Sinsear.</p> <p>01:19:35 Fortieth year putting in an extra effort. New centre of excellence- tried to ensure that the cultural side of the association was built into the centre</p> <p>01:20:09 Want to link a museum into the building to allow for school visits and tell people all about scór.</p> <p>01:20:25 Loves scór. Get very high attendances in Tyrone. Have put an awful lot into it</p> <p>01:20:45 'The county executive would recognise there is a fair bit going on but wouldn't know an awful lot about it... but we're very determined to do well.</p> <p>01:20:57 'We are also very determined that at least in clusters in clubs right around the county and we're talking about probably 12 venues get back into the Irish language'. Getting help from the Irish language officer in the councils.</p> <p>01:21:31 'The language is getting stronger and stronger... and we're working very hard on it in Tyrone'</p> <p>01:21:54 An awful lot of people would have had some Irish and lost it, similarly to the music.</p> <p>01:22:20 Highlights at Scór na nÓg in 2008. Tyrone won 7 of the 8 titles and 2 All Ireland's at both senior and scór na nóg.</p> <p>01:22:47 For a large county geographically it's a very rural county and it's nice to think Tyrone are doing better than a lot of other counties. Like to see the success Tyrone are having mirrored across the country.</p> <p>01:23:27 Effects during Troubles. Lost full back line in the</p>
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	<p>early 1970s.</p> <p>01:23:47 Club affected badly during the hunger strike. Meeting had to be called to a halt because it was getting slightly out of hand.</p> <p>01:23:54 'Some of those on the committee wanted to vote to pull out of football because of various things that were happening.' It was a time for cool heads.</p> <p>01:24:30 Could have taken same approach. Own family touched by the Troubles.</p> <p>01:24:42 Complaints should be made through other channels. Had the potential to damage the club</p> <p>01:25:02 One club lost a large number of their members and their players over a two year period</p> <p>01:25:23 There were problems but we weathered the storm. Those 'pushing the politics down your throat fade away once they don't their way they disappear'.</p> <p>01:25:43 During the 1970s. 1971- 1980 would have been tough tough times within football clubs. The IRA were strong in the area. Had to think about those that were coming behind you.</p> <p>01:26:37 Going to play match in Trillick, stopped three times along the way. Stopped on either side of Dromore.</p> <p>01:27:05 Both players and supporters on bus where taken out for the second time. Tempers flared.</p> <p>01:27:25 'We went out the Trillick side of Dromore and we were all taken out again and tempers flared. I remember and incident, not naming who... the UDR [man] said to the person, one of our footballers, ...if you don't get out of the bus "I'll blow the head off you". And he really said, "I'll blow the head off you". The player then asked the UDR man 'would you be as good without the gun, set that gun down and we'll see. The UDR man set his gun down and low and behold he was in the hedge in just about two seconds'.</p> <p>01:28:25 Cool heads from three or four others prevented anything worse happening.</p> <p>01:28:40 Eventually got on to match and got onto field thirty five minutes late. Match played and was won 14-7 but lost it at the next county board meeting for fielding late. One story of many.</p>
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	<p>01:29:05 Went to play tournament in Irvinestown and being stopped in Clogher and Fivemiletown just a few miles apart.</p> <p>01:30:07 Best moment in GAA when final whistle went in 2003 All Ireland final. Remembers nearly tramping over wife when the final whistle went.</p> <p>01:30:51 Worst memory trip to Longford or getting beat by a point in Leitrim.</p> <p>01:31:37 GAA means to me- having retired being able to go to football after two very bad years in terms of health</p> <p>01:32:21 The day we stop volunteering- it won't mean anything anymore</p> <p>01:33:14 When he sees what it means to the groundsman at the local club. See people in the newspaper getting awards for work at their club and he thinks to himself 'it should be Charlie Hurl is in there'.</p> <p>01:34:20 Contrast with what happens in soccer. The manner in which it is driven by money even at a grassroots level.</p> <p>01:35:22 Involved in volunteering at the gates at the championship or league matches, and he wouldn't do it if we was getting paid for it.</p> <p>01:25:38 Really doesn't want to see concerts in Croke Park. There are other ways of raising money that may be dirtier or harder.</p> <p>01:35:47 Centrality of the club even for player involved at an inter-county level.</p> <p>01:36:10 Mickey Harte spoke at youth conference, but never mentioned the role of the county manager. Asked the young players to thank the coaches who had taken them on a Saturday morning.</p>
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**REFERENCE NO. TY/1/5**

<b>Involvement in GAA</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steward <input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): Umpire, Press Officer, Public Address announcer
<b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)	2 Tyrone Under 16 championships
<b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)	Club Secretary- 7 years Treasurer- 5 years Youth Officer- 4 years County Board Delegate- 4 years Has sat on Scór sub- committee in Tyrone for 31 years
<b>Format</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
<b>Duration</b>	Length of Interview: 01:37:39
<b>Language</b>	English

**To be filled in by Interviewer:**

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Signed:        Seamus Donnelly

Date:         31<sup>st</sup> July 2009