

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	24 th Feb 2011
Location	Interviewee's home, near Bettystown, Co. Meath
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Pat O'Neill
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1938 Home County: Meath
Education	Primary: Laytown NS, Co. Meath Secondary: St. Macartan's College, Monaghan Third Level: UCD
Family	Siblings: 3 sisters Current Family if Different: Married to Margaret with 1 son and 8 daughters
Club(s)	St. Colmcille's [Meath]; St. Dympna's GFC [Luton]; Welwyn Garden City [Hertfordshire]
Occupation	Dentist
Parents' Occupation	Engineer [Father]; Teacher [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Golf, Tennis

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Date of Report	6 th August 2012
Period Covered	1938 – 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Meath, Dublin, Louth, Mayo, Monaghan, Australasia, Australia
Key Themes Covered	Playing, Training, Coaching, Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Administration, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Education, Role of Clergy, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Identity, Culture, Volunteers, Rivalries, Media, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Relationship with the Association, GAA Abroad, Club History, County History, Career, Impact on Life, Involvement with GAA Abroad
Interview Summary	<p>Pat talks about his early football playing days in Bettystown. He discusses family connections within the GAA – in Monaghan and Mayo. He talks about his roles in administration within Meath and his involvement in the Drogheda Minor Board. He discusses issues that were raised during his term as Chairman on the Meath County Board. He talks about the development of relations with Australian Rules and his role in establishing what has become known as the International Rules Series. Pat reflects on his best and worst memories of his involvement in GAA and what that involvement has meant for him.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:27 Earliest GAA memory – going to local matches in Bettystown, moving from one field to another to play matches. Mentions that he attended a match in Croke Park the year after his birth in 1939 to watch his uncle, Paddy Moclair from Mayo, play.</p> <p>02:02 Discusses the facilities in Bettystown in his early playing days. Names the playing fields – Orchard Hill field, McDonagh’s field, Colonel McClintock’s field (wouldn’t let them fly tricolour), and Mornington in Dessie Smiths field.</p> <p>03:02 Recalls a lack of underage football in Bettystown in his early playing days.</p> <p>03:28 Talks about the history of the Bettystown club. Mentions championship successes in 1908 and 1958. Recalls his participation on the 1958 team.</p> <p>04:40 Discusses his move to England in 1964 to study</p>

	<p>dentistry. Talks about playing football with St Dymphna's in Luton and Welwyn Garden City.</p> <p>07:02 Discusses his return to Bettystown in 1969. Mentions St. Mary's. Mentions Ken Lougheed, a club man who won a Leinster minor championship medal with Dublin.</p> <p>09:47 Talks about characters within the GAA.</p> <p>11:52 Discusses the style of football in his playing days. Talks about training in university.</p> <p>12:32 Talks about the high level of football in St Macartans College. Discusses family involvement in the GAA. Talks about Gerry Brennan and Paddy Moclair. Talks about his Monaghan connections – mentions the Moyna brothers.</p> <p>17:33 Tells experiences of Moclair playing football with the Clare minors.</p> <p>18:37 Talks about Moclair playing with Mayo in New York.</p> <p>21:54 Discusses Moclair's Republican background. Talks about a raid on a barracks in Armagh.</p> <p>23:39 Mentions Fergal O'Hanlon from Monaghan who was shot in Lisnaskea.</p> <p>24:45 Recalls his football days in Welwyn Garden City. Mentions Billy Joyce and Michael Hurley.</p> <p>26:03 Discusses the difference in the style of football in England.</p> <p>27:30 Discusses his step into administration within the Meath County Board.</p> <p>29:59 Recalls his role as Chairman for the Drogheda Minor Board from 1972 – 1974.</p> <p>32:11 Recalls a convention in Meath in 1974. Discusses splitting the county into rural and town areas for competitions.</p> <p>33:24 Recalls organising a football camp in 1975 in Gormanston College over the Easter holidays.</p> <p>33:50 Discusses the North East Minor League – participation from Louth, Meath, Armagh and Down to get ready for the championship.</p> <p>35:07 Talks about Paddy Clarke from Louth, his interest in soccer and his training methods which were ahead of the</p>
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	<p>times.</p> <p>36:03 Discusses the important role of Br John Hannon on football in Louth within schools and street leagues.</p> <p>39:05 1975 – Chairman of Meath Minor County Board – won Leinster Under-14 championship.</p> <p>40:24 Recalls his role as Chairman of the Meath County Board. Discusses the difficulties that came with the role.</p> <p>44:35 Talks about the issues that faced Meath County Board in his tenure as Chairman – finances, grants, quality of medals, suspensions.</p> <p>46:01 Talks about stepping down as Chairman in 1978. Mentions Jack Fitzgerald.</p> <p>47:23 Discusses the importance of knowing the rules of football while in an administrative position.</p> <p>48:23 Recalls taking a break from administration in 1979. Resumed the role of Chairman on the Minor County Board in 1980 until 1990. Mentions his roles on the Central Council and the Disciplinary Committee.</p> <p>49:32 Talks about his involvement on the Disciplinary Committee.</p> <p>50:01 Discusses his role in launching the International Rules. Recalls Australia coming to Ireland to play Meath and Mayo in the late 1960s.</p> <p>51:30 Recalls the Kerry team travelling to Australia in 1970.</p> <p>53:48 Recalls putting a motion to the Meath County Board to set up a committee to develop a liaison with the AFL and the GAA. Passed in 1982 in Congress.</p> <p>57:00 Talks about the compromised set of rules.</p> <p>57:33 Discusses the centenary of the GAA in 1984. Recalls the match between Australia and Ireland, played in Cork.</p> <p>58:14 Discusses the skills inherited by GAA players today from the Australian style of football.</p> <p>01:00:14 Recalls experience of travelling to Australia in 1986. Mentions Teddy McCarthy.</p> <p>01:05:42 Discusses his best memory of being involved in the GAA – mentions Meath winning the All-Ireland in 1987.</p>
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	<p>01:07:53 GAA hero – Paul Kenny, Fr. Nicholas Clavin.</p> <p>01:09:05 Discusses the rule changes within the GAA. Mentions Liam Harnon. Discusses the hand-passing issue.</p> <p>01:12:20 Describes his biggest disappointment with the GAA. Mentions Paul Brady being called before a disciplinary committee.</p> <p>01:15:25 Explains what his role in the GAA has meant to him.</p> <p>01:17:05 Mentions Frank Dineen and how important his decision to borrow money to buy Clonliffe Road has been for the GAA.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input checked="" 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>Played from the age of 13/14 to 32/33. Won an intermediate championship with St. Mary's, East Meath.</p>
<p>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>Has been involved in administration since 1970.</p> <p>Club: Chairman, Delegate to County Board, President</p> <p>County: Chairman; Minor Board Chairman, Leinster Council Delegate and Central Council Delegate</p> <p>Central: Disciplinary Committee</p>
<p>Format</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual</p>
<p>Duration</p>	<p>Length of Interview: 01:17:50</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: _____Arlene Crampsie_____

Date: _____06/08/12_____