

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	28 th May 2010
Location	Interviewee's home, near Killimor, Co. Galway.
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Tom Joe Larkin
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1942 Home County: Galway
Education	Primary: Killimor NS
Family	Siblings: 2 sisters and 2 brothers Current Family if Different: Wife (Bridie), 4 daughters and 2 sons
Club(s)	Killimor GAA [Galway]
Occupation	Hurley-Maker and Farmer
Parents' Occupation	Hurley- Maker and Farmers
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fianna Fáil
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Irish Guild of Irish Hurley Makers Pioneers Total Abstinence Association Killimor Parish Council

REFERENCE NO. GY-1-6

Date of Report	28 th May 2012
Period Covered	1800s-2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Galway
Key Themes Covered	Material Culture, All-Ireland, History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Economy / Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Tom Joe talks about his life in the business of hurley making, which is a family tradition stretching back to the 1800s when his granduncle made them. Later his father made hurleys and in time Tom Joe did too. He talks about changing methods over the years and what kind of raw materials they would use. He also describes the process of hurley making and how his business has expanded and has been aided by technological developments. Club and inter-county players frequently call to his workshop with their specific requests, and he regularly ships batches of hurleys to all four corners of the globe.</p> <p>00:15 Born in 1942. Earliest memories of GAA are when he was six years old. The game was faster and hurleys were made by hand.</p> <p>01:20 Hurley making in his family goes back to before the GAA. There were landlords in Killimor. Castle team starting in Portumna. Paddy Larkin helping to found Killimor and writing a book on rules of the GAA. His granduncle, Philip Larkin working for landlords, the McDermotts of Ramore and making hurleys. Tom Joe's father making hurleys.</p> <p>03:00 How they found wood and made hurleys. Using the roots of trees. Tools they used.</p> <p>05:00 How his father made hurls. Usefulness of young and old trees. Best time of year to get wood. Good places to find ash trees.</p> <p>07:40 Superstitions about where you would take ash from.</p> <p>08:40 How his granduncle made hurleys. How his father would do it differently.</p> <p>10:20 Problems his father encountered when making hurleys. Differences between how Tom Joe would make them and how his father would make them. Bringing hurleys to secretary of the county board Jack Whelan at school. His first attempt at making hurleys. Getting machines from McGinn's of Dublin. Dimensions of hurleys.</p> <p>14:45 Getting ash from Coillte. Wood coming from Laois, Freshwater in Kilkenny, Terryglass in Tipperary. Advantages of using Irish wood. Percentage of his hurleys made from Irish ash. Times when ash was scarce and reasons for that. Work done by Coillte. Trying out other wood.</p>

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	<p>19:05 Changes in popularity of hurling. Orders coming from abroad. Hurlers from different counties coming for hurleys.</p> <p>20:45 Changes in the shape of the hurley. Different styles of hurleys. Goalkeepers using numerous hurleys. Best hurleys for different positions and functions. Hurlers being particular about hurleys.</p> <p>26:45 Collecting planks at the sawmill. How much timber they use in a year. Process of making hurleys. Balance on a hurley. Individual requirements of customers.</p> <p>30:30 Making hurleys for camogie and how they have changed over the years.</p> <p>31:00 People pucking around to try out the hurleys. People coming in and out of the workshop. Hayes and Canning brothers calling for hurleys. In the past players like Joe Rabbitt, the Hayes brothers of Kiltormer, the Lynch brothers of Portumna, the McCann brothers calling. Customer loyalty. Seeing people play with his hurleys.</p> <p>34:45 Different styles in different counties. Recognising hurleys from different counties. Particular style of Cork hurleys.</p> <p>37:40 Length of time it took his father to make a hurl and how that compares to 2010. Making a living out of the business. Cost of a hurley. How much his father sold hurleys for. What it is like in the household with people calling. Busiest time of year.</p> <p>40:05 How his father ended up taking over from his granduncle. How long his father made hurleys until. His uncle making hurleys until he was 95. Tools they used. His father's brother Philip Larkin making a special axe.</p> <p>43:35 Guild of hurley makers. Technological advancements. Technical nature of making hurleys. His sons Francis and Damien making hurleys. Meeting the President of Ireland and former GAA President Nicky Brennan. Giving Liam Mulvihill a hurley. Taking on apprentices. Working in winter conditions. Uses for waste from making ash.</p> <p>49:00 Changes he has seen in his lifetime. What hurling means to him. Advantages of mobile phones. Accidents.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____</p>

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Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	Played for 7 or 8 years with Killimor GAA Club
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	Killimor delegate to Galway County Board for 6 years Vice-Chairman of Killimor GAA for 4 or 5 years Managed U14 and U16 teams Trustee of Killimor Hurling Field.
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 00: 53:01
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: Regina Fitzpatrick

Date: 28th May 2010