

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	12 th March 2010
Location	Interviewee's home, Longford Town
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Seamus McRory
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1944 Home County: Derry
Education	Primary: Lissan No. 1 PS, Tullynure, Cookstown, Co. Tyrone Secondary: St Patrick's, Armagh Third Level: St Joseph's Trinity College & Queen's University Belfast
Family	Siblings: 1 brother & 1 sister Current Family if Different: Married to Olive with 1 son and 1 daughter
Club(s)	Longford Slashers [Longford]; St Michael's GAC, Lissan [Derry]
Occupation	Teacher
Parents' Occupation	Farmer [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Founder Member of SDLP
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	SDLP; Credit Union; Historical Society; National Honorary Secretary of Pioneers Total Abstinence Association, 2000 – 2003

REFERENCE NO. DY/1/9

Date of Report	12 th June 2012
Period Covered	1940s – 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Derry, Tyrone, Longford, Antrim, Armagh, Dublin, Galway, Wexford, Leitrim
Key Themes Covered	Supporting, Coaching, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Education, Religion, Rivalries, Culture, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Outsider's Perspectives, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Opening of Croke Park, Ban on Security Forces, Relationship with the Association
Interview Summary	<p>Seamus charts his GAA experiences from South Derry to Armagh to Belfast and down to Longford. He helped to set up his local club in the 1950s, inspired by the success of neighbours Tyrone and his native Derry in football. He became further involved in the GAA whilst at school in Armagh, and again as a teacher in Belfast and Longford. He coached vocational schools' teams and also became involved with the GAA at an administrative level. Seamus also found time to write about the GAA, and he later researched and published several books on different aspects of the association. His involvement with the GAA has been constant throughout his life, and it means a great deal to him.</p> <p>00:15 Talks about his youth in South Derry in the 1940s. There was no GAA team in his locality, Lissan, but the success of their neighbours Tyrone in the 1950s, combined with an Ulster title for Derry in 1958, helped to increase the popularity of the GAA in his area.</p> <p>00:55 In 1957 he and a group of school friends decided that there was a need for a football in the parish. They approached some older people such as Paddy Larkin, who was a GAA Central Council man and member of the Derry County Board and they organised a schoolboy team. In 1962 they became an adult club.</p> <p>01:25 In 1958 Seamus went to school in St Patrick's College in Armagh and the GAA was hugely popular there. Immediately they were shown a reel of the 1946 All-Ireland Colleges' final between the school and St Jarlath's of Tuam. Iggy Jones was the star that day, scoring three goals.</p> <p>02:05 He became a chairman in 1970 and got involved in</p>

	<p>coaching in schools, as he taught in a school in Belfast, before moving south in 1974 to teach and coach at Lanesborough Vocational School in Longford. He also coached the county vocational schools team, and they got to the All-Ireland Vocational Schools final in 1976, where they lost to Galway.</p> <p>03:05 He got involved with Longford Slashers in 1977 and has been doing administrative work for them ever since. He is a member of Longford County Board since 1996.</p> <p>04:00 He started writing about the GAA and in 1997 he brought out a book called 'A Voice from the Sideline' and in 1999 'The Road to Croke Park'. In 2005 he wrote 'An All-Ireland Dream', and he has a biography of James McCartan in preparation for 2010. His books feature GAA people like former Fermanagh footballer and GAA President Peter Quinn, referee John Bannon from Longford, Packie McGarty from Leitrim and Sligo man Mickey Kerins.</p> <p>06:10 The Longford Slashers team was founded in 1954. It was a coming together of two clubs which had previously operated independently of one another, Longford Wanderers and Troy Slashers. Transcripts from Noel Caslin tell the story in detail. Well-known Longford Slashers players include Padraic Gearty, Dessie Barry and Sean Donnelly.</p> <p>08:25 He loved to interview Liam Griffin of Wexford, a passionate man. He also admired John O'Mahony, who guided Leitrim to a Connacht title. Eddie Keher and John Doyle also had good stories.</p> <p>10:40 There was a lot of rivalry between northern teams. After a 1984 Ulster Championship match between Derry and Down the banter got out of hand between rival supporters and James McCartan got shoved.</p> <p>12:00 His GAA experiences in Derry and Longford were very different - in Derry you were not as free to express your GAA identity and he had some problems, especially in 1964 as a student at Trinity College Belfast. People were stigmatised for expressing their identity. People in the Republic were very complimentary about the work being put into keeping the GAA alive in Northern Ireland, but if a northern team beat one from the Republic, their attitude would change.</p> <p>13:55 He was always against any bans within the GAA and supported the opening up of Croke Park to other sports.</p>
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	<p>15:15 His best GAA memory is when the full-time whistle went in the All-Ireland football final in 1993 and Derry had won the title and when Eamonn Coleman got back to Maghera with the Sam Maguire the next day. He mentions Dinny McKeever, Harry Gribben and Mickey Moran. The worst memory is the following year in Celtic Park when Derry crashed out. It was the month of May so their reign as champions was over sooner than he would have liked.</p> <p>17:30 The GAA is hugely important to him; as far as he is concerned he was born into it.</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 type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input 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 Under 12's until he was 28.</p>
<p>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>Derry: Chairman of St Michaels, Lissan for 3 years. Longford: Committee Member Longford Slashers for 15 years (he's been a member since 1976); Longford Slashers Representative on County Board. He was a member of the Referees Fitness Sub-Committee and the National Referees Forum.</p>
<p>Format</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual</p>
<p>Duration</p>	<p>Length of Interview: 00:17:51</p>
<p>Language</p>	<p>English</p>

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To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: ___Arlene Crampsie___

Date: ___12/06/12___