

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	9 th March 2011
Location	PJ McGee's home
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	PJ McGee
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1950 Home County: Down
Education	Primary: Dechomet PS Secondary: St Colman's College, Newry Third Level: St Joseph's College of Education, Belfast
Family	Siblings: 1 brother Current Family if Different: Wife, 2 daughters & 1 son
Club(s)	Liatroim Fontenoys GAA [Down]
Occupation	Teacher [Retired]
Parents' Occupation	Civil Servant [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

REFERENCE NO. DN/1/7

Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Mary McAleenan
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Female
Born	Year Born: 1931 Home County: Down
Education	Primary: Legananny PS
Family	Siblings: None Current Family if Different: 8 sons & 2 daughters
Club(s)	Leitrim Fontenoys GAA [Down]
Occupation	Housewife
Parents' Occupation	N/A
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	None
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	None

REFERENCE NO. DN/1/7

Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Máirín McAleenan
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Female
Born	Year Born: 1971 Home County: Down
Education	Primary: Legananny PS Secondary: Assumption Grammar School, Ballinahinch Third Level: University of Ulster, Coleraine
Family	Siblings: 8 brothers and 1 sister
Club(s)	Liatroim Fonteoy's GAA [Down]
Occupation	Irish Medium Primary School Teacher
Parents' Occupation	Farmers
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

REFERENCE NO. DN/1/7

Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Michael McCartan
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1955 Home County: Down
Education	Primary: Legananny PS Secondary: St Malachy's Secondary School, Castlewellan Third Level: St Patrick's College, Downpatrick
Family	Siblings: 1 brother & 3 sisters Current Family if Different: Wife & 2 children
Club(s)	Liatroim Fontenoys GAA [Down]
Occupation	Retired Civil Servant
Parents' Occupation	N/A
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Dromore Historical Society

REFERENCE NO. DN/1/7

Date of Report	16 th July 2012
Period Covered	1888 - 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Down, Dublin, Monaghan, Tipperary, Antrim
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Fundraising, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Identity, Rivalries, Irish Language, Culture, Scór, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Outsiders' Perspectives, Violence, Politics, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Relationship with the Association, Retirement, Food and Drink, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy/Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Members of Liatroim GAA Club, Co. Down, discuss their involvement with the club and its performances over the years. They reflect on their various administration and sporting roles at both club and county level, with particular emphasis on Máirín's achievement of the club's first All-Star Award for camogie. They also consider the impact of The Troubles on the club and describe the flourishing of Scór in the 70s and 80s as a non-violent way to promote a nationalist identity. In addition, they discuss the involvement of non-nationals in the club as well as the impact of emigration on the club in the 50s and today. They mention a number of club footballers, hurlers, and camogs who played for county teams, and they consider the major contribution of Charlie Keown to the club. Finally, they ponder</p> <p>00:51 Discussion about founding of club in 1888. Claims that it's the oldest GAA club in Co. Down. Mentions founders Thomas, Joseph, and Patrick McAleenan, J.L. Savage. Two founders meeting and influenced by Michael Cusack and Maurice Davin in Dublin.</p> <p>03:13: Description of location of Leitrim, Co. Down. Mountainous. Large Unionist population, not involved in GAA club. Rural area: farming.</p> <p>04:32 Discussion about origin of name Liatroim Fontenoy. Ballad of Fontenoy. Mentions Mick Keown. Battle of Fontenoy in 1745, success of the Irish Brigade in that battle. Patriotic intention of naming club after Fontenoy. First club colours:</p>

	<p>red, white, and blue.</p> <p>06:19 Description of club's 1892 success in Dublin against St. Catherine's GAA Club. Travelling by train. Significance of victory of rural club against urban club. Clonturk Park. Mentions Cavan Slashers, Armagh Harps.</p> <p>09:29 Earliest field used: McCartan's Meadow in townland of Upper Clarkhill. Opening of Fontenoy Park in 1969.</p> <p>10:15 Michael recalls his family involvement in the GAA. Eoin McCartan one of the first treasurers, his father, Mick McCartan, winning senior hurling and football county championship with his club. Special gold medals. 1921. His father also hurling goalie for the province. Mentions Joe McKinney of the 1920s, county secretary, interned on the prison ship <i>Argenta</i> on Belfast Lough during The Troubles.</p> <p>13:34 They reflect on prominence of GAA club in rural life. No other sports in area: just Gaelic games. Start of camogie in 1934, decline, revival in 50s, thriving in 1974. One of the most successful camogie clubs in Ulster. Maureen reflects on various successes of the 90s. Down winning All-Ireland Junior Camogie Final in 1991, dominance of Liatroim players on team. Club winning 18 consecutive championships in 90s.</p> <p>15:53 Discussion about Fr Doran's role in reviving camogie in 1934. Also mentions Fr Mick McCartan's contributions to the sport in the 1950s. Mentions the Torleys.</p> <p>17:22 Tradition of hurling in area, predating the founding of club. Strength of hurling in 1920s, club winning 3 senior county championships that decade. Decline of club, its subsequent revival. Thriving since mid-60s. Peter discusses disadvantages of being a dual club: costing championships. Small population of players to draw from.</p> <p>19:48 Recollections of GAA. Playing football in primary school. Mentions teacher Mrs O'Hare. Also mentions Pat Doyle and his brother Willie Doyle, their contribution to local GAA. Mentions listening to Micheal O'Hehir, Micheál Ó Muircheartaigh. Attending 1961 Ulster Final, mentions James McCartan. Mentions Dan and Breen Morgan. Mentions Fr Petit driving packed car of players. Schoolboy football, no dressing rooms.</p> <p>24:54 Discussion about teachers who encouraged Gaelic games: George McKeown, Paddy O'Donohue, Leo McNeill. Also mentions Sean Blaney, father of Greg Blaney. Also mentions PJ McElroy and Kevin Mussen.</p>
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	<p>27:42 Purchase of Fontenoy Park in 1967 from Protestant man who was thrown out of Orange Order, ostracised by Unionists. Mentions Joe McCrickard's contribution to the club.</p> <p>28:54 Mary recalls the development of pitch. Mentions Joe Morgan. Significance of getting grounds, rare in the 60s. Reflects on Down playing Antrim in challenge match to mark opening of pitch. No organised juvenile Gaelic games when she was in school. Mentions Fr McCartan. Playing camogie in 1952. Also mentions contribution of Keown family to club: Matt Keown, his nephew Charlie. Charlie's leadership qualities, instilling discipline into club players in 70s, improving relationship with county board. Charlie's various roles. His respect for both hurling and football, encouragement of camogie, contribution to marching band, encouragement of Scór and Irish language classes.</p> <p>36:08 Discussion about camogie in club. Operating independently until Charle Keown's time. Fully integrated now. Relationship between camogie and main club. Prominent role of women in the club. Mentions Ann Cunningham. Charlie suggesting pilgrimage to Fontenoy in Belgium.</p> <p>39:11 Cross-community senior citizens club in GAA Club, suggested by Charlie Keown. Discussion about improvement in relations between Protestant and Catholic communities. Cross-community playschool.</p> <p>41:34 Reflection on the impact of The Troubles on the club. Internment of influential player, juvenile coach, and committee member Joe McCrickard. Concerns for safety at night in club. Memories of being stopped at checkpoints, car and body searches, delayed going to matches. Mentions Ballycran hurling club being burned down several times. Leitrim a nationalist area, less hostility than other areas.</p> <p>44:22 Impact of the Hunger Strikes on the club. Sympathy for the hunger strikers. Tension in the area at the time. Charlie Keown chairman then. Mentions hunger striker Kevin Lynch, captain of Under-16 Derry hurling team in 70s. Memories of withdrawals of some clubs from competitions due to hunger strikes.</p> <p>48:56 Discussion about cultural relevance of the GAA club in The North. Uniting Nationalists during The Troubles, providing an alternative to the armed struggle. An outlet for expression of nationalist identity when it was restricted.</p> <p>50:54 Máirín recalls starting to play camogie in the late 70s.</p>
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	<p>Remembers her brother John making her a stick. One of ten children. Playing on street in front of house. Watching games on TV with hurls ready to play at half-time. Mentions Breen Morgan and Michael's sister Sheila McCartan. Reflects on playing her match aged 13, being called to play for club.</p> <p>53:35 Máirín ponders Sheila McCartan's contribution to camogie in the club from the 70s. 1984 first Ulster senior title. Mentions Nuala McCartan, Bernie Brown, Nóirín McCrea, Rita Owens, Cleny and Margaret O'Crea, Roisin Greer. Reasons for camogie success in 70s. Also mentions Bernie Malone. Máirín's All-Ireland medals: Under-14, also 2004 and 2005. Also mentions Rosaleen McCartan's contribution to camogie in the club. Máirín achieving club's first camogie All-Star. Also mentions Colm McAlarney's All-Star in football.</p> <p>57:02 Máirín recalls inspirational players at senior level, their encouragement. County champions most years. Mentions Máirín O'Higgins. Mentions other dominant camogie clubs: Ballycran, Portaferry, Kilcoo, An Ríocht, Atticall, Clonduff in recent years. Contribution of third-level colleges to development of camogie.</p> <p>59:23 Máirín recalls dominance of Liatroim in Down GAA. Mentions teammates Donna Greer, Monica McCartan, Monica Owens. Ponders her appreciation of getting an All-Star in the first year of Camogie All-Stars. 2004 Centenary of camogie association, decision to start All-Stars. Winning All-Ireland Club Junior Championship that year. Good relations between players in camogie. Memories of All-Star Awards presentation. Michael Lyster presenter. Mentions fellow nominees Jennifer O'Leary and Claire Grogan, teenagers, while she was 33.</p> <p>01:03:46 Reluctance of club to start ladies football due to dominance of camogie. Mentions chairman Tony Clarke. Local clubs Bryansford and Castlewellan playing ladies football. Mentions dual players Rosaleen Minny, Annie McCeery.</p> <p>01:05:06 Mentions Seán McCartan researching McCartan genealogy. Connection of French president Charles de Gaul to McCartans. Also mentions Anthony Joseph McCartan, son of John McCartan who fled Ireland after Treaty of Limerick to fight with Irish regiment in France. Portrait of Anthony Joseph, a doctor at Battle of Fontenoy, by Jacques Francois Momal, who married Angelique McCartan. History of McCartan family. Outlines link to General de Gaulle. Charlie Keown's uncle Mick's role in naming club.</p> <p>01:12:11 Mention of four other Fontenoy clubs in Ireland:</p>
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	<p>Monaghan, Cork, Tipperary, Dublin. Recollection of playing Clanna Gael Fontenoy GAA Club in Dublin in 1995, hurling and camogie matches. Mentions chairman Liam Murphy. Also mentions Patrick McCartan, previous chairman and sculptor, making granite plaques for the winners. Also mentions Cormac Doyle. Game to mark the 350th anniversary of the Battle of Fontenoy.</p> <p>01:14:48 Description of travelling to play challenge matches in various places. Emyvale in Monaghan. Mentions Willie Doyle. Also mentions Seamus McCloskey, his family connection to Emyvale.</p> <p>01:16:44 Discussion about development of club since opening of grounds in late 60s. First games in Down played in Leitrim, first set of floodlights in county. Success of Down in Kilmacud Sevens, attraction of Sevens in 60s and 70s. Mentions Paddy Doherty refereeing.</p> <p>01:18:49 Discussion about club's strong senior football team in 60s and 70s. Lack of discipline of team. Mentions club players on county team: Seamus Keown, Colm McAlarney, Joe Moorhead, Willie Doyle, Colm Shea. Failure of senior team to succeed. Success of juvenile football teams in 70s. Improvement in late 90s, winning Down intermediate football and hurling titles. Mentions Liam Doyle. Dominance of Bryansford in the 70s. Also mentions Mick O'Dwyer and Mick Gleeson.</p> <p>01:22:54 Description of social and fundraising events in club. Mentions Tony Clarke's idea for festival starting in mid-90s. Also mentions chairman Liam Murphy. Annual 4-day festival in August. Big profits. Also lotto. Mentions Micheal Magill.</p> <p>01:27:39 Discussion of club participation in Scór. Mary recalls winning All-Ireland CCD medals with Michael's father and Teresa O'Hare in 1987 in quiz event. Mentions Rosaleen McCartan winning All-Ireland medal. Also mentions Brenda Gallagher. Less emphasis on Scór in club nowadays, more prominence in 70s and 80s during time of The Troubles. Links with nationalist sentiments. Decline of cultural aspect of club. Recent start of instrumental group. Also recent Irish language quiz run by Down County Board. Mentions McEvoy girls, Sharon Ward, Jerry Quinn, Fr McConville. Mentions Comhaltas. Mary mentions Anthony Quinn.</p> <p>01:32:18 Discussion about international nature of club membership in recent years. Iranian member's involvement: starting jujitsu, first aid officer, youth officer. Mentions Mickey Linden, Terence McWilliams, Jarlath Burns. Mentions Jarlath</p>
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	<p>Burns' piece on Reza Shahmohammadi in <i>Gaelic Life</i>. Also mentions Argentinian trainer Fernando Lugei, who trained 1988 senior football team. Description of Lugei's approach to coaching. Mentions Marion Morgan.</p> <p>01:41:44 Reflection on what the GAA has meant to them. PJ discusses his involvement in coaching after his knee injury. Michael discusses his enjoyment of playing, subsequent involvement in administration. His best memory: winning junior hurling championship in 80s, his first title with club. Mentions Ownes, McCrickard, Keown families. Mary mentions Declan Owens. Her best memory: celebrating her golden wedding anniversary in the club in 2007. Máirín recalls her enjoyment of playing, friendships with players, satisfaction of league matches. PJ's happiest memories: being asked to play football, winning county Under-16 title. Mentions Mick Cassidy, Pat McGreevy bringing orange juice to matches for half-time. Mentions GAA presidents Con Murphy and Pádraig Mac Floinn.</p> <p>01:51:41 PJ and Michael discuss their biggest disappointment: losing 1980 junior final to Bryansford. Lack of training of Liatrom. Mentions Mickey Shiels on panel.</p> <p>01:54:08 Discussion about the great hurlers in club: Joe McCrickard, Michael's father, Gerry McAlarney, the Dornans, Wards (Paddy), Paddy McAleenan, Paddy O'Donohue, Pat McVeigh, Colm Brown, Peter Owens, Shamie "Ramsey" Bannon, and John Joe, Jerome, Pierce, and Barry McCrickard. Also Brian and Seamus McAleenan, their uncles Patrick and Tommy McAleenan. Also Jerome and Thomas Cunningham. Also Mick Fannin and Hugh Smith of the 1920s. Michael winning Hurler of the Year. Mentions Peter and Brian Owens, Gerry McEvoy, Charlie and Seamus Keown. Also Paul Doogan.</p> <p>01:59:22 They mention the best footballers in the club: Mick McAleenan, Mick Keown, PJ McElroy. Impact of emigration on club in 1950s. Also mentions Joe McCrickard, Willie Doyle. Describes Colm McAlarney marking Mick O'Connell in 1968 All-Ireland Senior Football Final, winning medals in three different decades. Also mentions Seamus Keown, Joe Moorhead, Colm Shiels. Also mentions Tommy Armstrong. Also of current generation of county players: Aidan Rice, Patrick Pearse McCartan, Aidan O'Prey, Collie McCrickard, and Liam Doyle. Also mentions Willie Doyle, Michael O'Higgins, Seamus Bannon, Paddy Brown, Greg Blaney, Mickey Bannon.</p> <p>02:05:48 Reflection on hopes for future of the club. Hopes for</p>
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	<p>starting a juvenile coaching program, lack of assistance. Also less players. Negative impact of emigration on club. Possibility of amalgamation of clubs in the future. Healthy financial status of club. Good facilities and pitch. Mentions song Céad Bliain ag Fás on tape of oral history of club. Shinty stick. Hopes for forthcoming 125th anniversary celebrations of club. Video of club's centenary banquet. Mentions president John Dowling. Recounting story of presenting medals to 1958 team, 50 years after the match was played. Former teammates travelling from England and Ireland to collect medals.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p>PJ:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input 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> <p>Mary:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input 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> <p>Máirín:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input 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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	<p>Michael:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input 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>
<p>Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>PJ: Played U16, Minor, Senior over 16 years.</p> <p>Mary: N/A</p> <p>Máirín: Played from mid-70s – 2009. Won 20 Down Senior Camogie titles, 2 All-Ireland club titles with Liatroim Fontenoys, won camogie All-Star Award in 2004.</p> <p>Michael: Played for 20 years, won a junior and intermediate hurling title.</p>
<p>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>PJ: Chairman of Down Youth Board for 4 years in the mid-70s Chairman of Club History Committee, 1981-88 (McNamee Award winner) Chairman of Down Communications Committee, 1982-084. (winner of McNamee Award for Down Yearbook 1982) Secretary of Down Vocational Schools for 8 years PRO of Ulster Schools for 5 years Committee member of Ulster Vocational Schools for 30 years Down Vocational Schools Repo on Down County Board for 8 years.</p> <p>Mary: Secretary of Leitrim Fontenoys from June 1992 until November 2005</p> <p>Máirín: Liatroim Fontenoys: Coaching committee, 2002-2011; Child Protection Officer in Club, 1999-2011 and for county 2002-2010. Camogie Club secretary 2002-2007.</p> <p>Michael: Club Secretary for 7 years, 1976-82. Member of Co. Down Centenary Committee, 1983-84</p>

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Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 02:17:55
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: Regina Fitzpatrick

Date: 16th July 2012