

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	22 nd Nov 2011
Location	Interviewee's home, near Donnycarney, Dublin 9
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Ann-Marie Smith
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Female
Born	Year Born: 1977 Home County: Dublin
Education	Primary: St Vincent de Paul PS, Marino, Dublin. Secondary: Maryfield College, Drumcondra, Dublin 9. Third Level: University College Dublin
Family	Siblings: 2 brothers
Club(s)	N/A
Occupation	Museum Supervisor
Parents' Occupation	Civil Servant [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

Date of Report	22 nd May 2012
Period Covered	1947 – 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Dublin, Cavan, Kerry, Monaghan, Tyrone
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Playing, Training, Celebrations, Commiserations, Education, Religion, Media, Role of Teachers, GAA Abroad, All-Ireland, Family Involvement, Childhood, Northern Ireland
Interview Summary	<p>00:36 Talks about her childhood in Donnycarney and Cavan. Mentions her mother and father moving from Cavan in the 1970's.</p> <p>02:40 Speaks of her mother's interest in the GAA being sparked by her father. Mentions Cavan being the only county to win an All-Ireland outside Ireland. Also mentions his father's pride in Cavan GAA and travelling all over Ireland to matches.</p> <p>04:45 Talks of her father assisting the county players when they came to Dublin. Mentions travelling by car to matches all over Ireland and knowing all of the pitches.</p> <p>06:03 Speaks of loving Cavan when she was young but as a teenager wanting to stay in Dublin because of friendships.</p> <p>07:17 Talks of her father training a team in Dublin and him never missing a match. Mentions him being buried in Cavan.</p> <p>08:20 Speaks of the Cavan association in Dublin and her father's involvement in it. Mentions him always driving a Cavan registered car from Brady's in Arva.</p> <p>10:24 Talks of the match day routines, bags of sweets at the match and studying the programme to see who was playing. Mentions having to leave her father and walk around as her father would be swearing and giving out. Also mentions going to the hotel to meet the team and have 'Cavan cola' and reliving the match on the way home before listening to Seán Óg O'Ceallacháin for the results.</p> <p>13:04 Tells how he could be silent for days if they lost, a trait which Ann-Marie has taken up herself.</p> <p>13:19 Talks of her mother going to all the matches and, for a quiet lady, shouting louder than anyone else. Mentions in 2008 going to the All-Ireland and her mother sitting beside Maurice Fitzgerald. Also mentions her mother meeting the Tyrone team in the players' lounge, and seeing the dressing</p>

	<p>rooms and Mickey Harte.</p> <p>16:26 Talks of her mother's pride at Ann-Marie working in Croke Park and all that is associated with it. Mentions her mother becoming emotional when 'the Hill' would start singing</p> <p>17:53 Speaks of being a Cavan supporter when young and knowing very little about the Dublin team. Mentions supporting Kerry over Dublin when they played in the All-Ireland final as she had grown up with 'the dirty Dubs'.</p> <p>19:45 Talks of the GAA heroes of her youth being Jack O'Shea, Maurice Fitzgerald, Jim Reilly, Joe Dillon and being invited to their weddings. Mentions not talking to Joe Dillon when he proposed to his wife as she was convinced he would marry her. Also mentions Brian Mullins and Barney Rock being rough.</p> <p>21:40 Talks of being the only little girl in her primary school being interested in football.</p> <p>23:02 Speaks of the GAA being the central outlet for the family. Mentions a photo of herself in her communion dress and her dad and brother both in Cavan tracksuits.</p> <p>24:36 Talks of being brought up to only focus on GAA and not on any other sports. Mentions him training a team in the civil service league for the Department of the Marine. Also mentions him being a member of Whitehall Colmcille GAA club.</p> <p>26:12 Talks of playing camogie briefly in Saint Vincent de Paul in Marino. Mentions training twice a week and buying all the gear. Also mentions not being able to play very well and getting to know the girl she was marking and liking them so not wanting to tackle them.</p> <p>27:56 Recalls the camaraderie on the team and playing in Parnell park in the final of a primary school competition for about a minute.</p> <p>29:18 Talks of going to Maryfield secondary school and giving it up. Mentions Mary Kavanagh training them in primary school and Mick Dunne training the team in Maryfield.</p> <p>31:19 Speaks of there being no Ladies football in either primary or secondary school.</p> <p>31:42 Talks of being in Parnell park as a teenager with her parents and Dublin and Cavan playing and shouting for Dublin which came as a shock to her father.</p>
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	<p>33:31 Tells of family friends still shocked at her supporting Dublin.</p> <p>34:43 Talks of not having an interest in hurling despite how well they might be doing.</p> <p>35:31 Talks of supporting the Dublin football team especially after starting in the GAA museum in Croke Park. Mentions being known as the queen of Croke Park.</p> <p>37:10 Speaks of living close to Parnell Park and going to watch club games all year around. Mentions the ritual of watching the Sunday Game.</p> <p>38:35 Talks of leaving work and travelling alone to matches in Armagh and then returning late at night in bad conditions.</p> <p>39:22 Speaks of working in the GAA museum from 2005 having been working in Kilmainham. Mentions starting in August 2005 as events and education officer and tour guide. Also mentions the excitement of being there on the All-Ireland final day and mass before the match in the players' lounge followed by breakfast.</p> <p>43:17 Talks of the preparations for match day and the work involved.</p> <p>44:58 Talks of holding the Sam Maguire and Liam McCarthy cups. Mentions the opening up of Croke Park and dealing with international groups and telling them of the amateur status of the games.</p> <p>46:16 Talks of the museum being open seven years before she arrived. Mentions Joanne Clarke and Peter McKenna. Tony McGuinness, Maria Gorman ran the shop in Croke Park and Deirdre Flood ran the archives and Kevin was another tour guide.</p> <p>49:23 Talks of the development of more structured roles and moving into different roles.</p> <p>50:50 Speaks of the different types of visitors to Croke Park since the opening of the park to other sports. Mentions the level of threats that came before the Ireland England match and the huge demand for tickets.</p> <p>53:03 Recalls listening to the national anthems being played on the day.</p> <p>53:44 Talks of bomb scares when the Ulster finals were being played in Croke Park.</p>
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	<p>54:44 Tells of her own feeling on the opening up of Croke Park and wonders what her father would have said about it. Mentions it bringing the GAA onto the world stage.</p> <p>57:44 Speaks of not wanting to see pay for play and the importance of the amateur status of the GAA.</p> <p>58:50 Talks of the museum during the time of the Ireland England match and the positive exposure.</p> <p>01:00:31 Speaks of there being no negative response to the museum.</p> <p>01:01:11 Talks of the great camaraderie in the museum and being brought onto centre field on her last day and Paul Caffery coming into see her. Mentions making great friends and all having a great love for the GAA.</p> <p>01:04:10 Speaks of living the GAA while working in the museum. Mentions there being some difficulties but they were overcome. Also mentions the cards and tributes she received when she left the museum and the family atmosphere.</p> <p>01:07:03 Talks of the groundsmen and how they think of the pitch and the dedication. Mentions there being about 80 to 100 working in Croke Park at the time.</p> <p>01:08:11 Speaks of the social life while working in Croke Park. Mentions Pauric Duffy and joint Christmas parties for all those working in Croke Park. Also mentions going for drinks with the staff and the characters that were involved.</p> <p>01:10:54 Tells of working in Croke Park being the topic of conversation when meeting strangers.</p> <p>01:11:20 Talks of the Bloody Sunday event and papers.</p> <p>Mentions the concerts and getting free tickets for them as well as free tickets for all matches except the All-Ireland.</p> <p>01:13:28 Tells of Croke Park being voted the best music venue by Billboard magazine in 2008.</p> <p>01:13:46 Talks of moving on to work on the GAA Oral History Project despite being sad at leaving the museum. Mentions the Kilkenny ploughing championships.</p> <p>01:16:28 Speaks of everyone having something to say about the GAA and this project being of great value to the history of the association.</p>
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	<p>01:17:30 Tells of attending the ploughing championship and not being prepared for the conditions. Mentions being there to sell the project within the first three weeks of the project.</p> <p>01:19:21 Talks about her role within the project being on the schools side of things. Mentions some abuse on the phone from school in Northern Ireland. Also mentions seeing the lengths some of the schools would go to in order to help. Mentions working with the volunteers and interviewing including Mick Higgins of the 1947 Cavan team.</p> <p>01:24:28 Recalls calling her mother to tell her she had interviewed Mick Higgins, who knew her father. Mentions attending his removal and his wife remembering the interview.</p> <p>01:26:40 Tells of her biggest regret being not interviewing her mother.</p> <p>01:27:18 Talks of Mick Higgins not wanting to be interviewed but because of her Cavan connections he agreed.</p> <p>01:29:10 Recalls some of the stories people told and the way she was treated while interviewing.</p> <p>01:30:10 Talks of the training she received, working with the team and hitting the ground running. Mentions representing the face of Boston College and the GAA.</p> <p>01:33:52 Speaks of losing her mother in the middle of her time with the project and how she was supported.</p> <p>01:35:06 Tells of fitting the project into a school curriculum and using Saint Fagan's in Wales as a resource. Mentions there being limited resources and getting assistance from the GAA museum.</p> <p>01:37:13 Talks of the schools' responses to the project. Mentions the GAA sending out material but not including the project in it. Also mentions the club day in 2009.</p> <p>01:39:37 Speaks of the schools being sent too much material and maybe not getting oral history. Mentions the technology possibly being a problem. Also mentions there being a disassociation between the adult and school questionnaire and the lack of links between the two groups.</p> <p>01:41:31 Speaks of Aid Action Ireland and the GAA Social Initiative. Mentions working with various groups involved. Also mentions being able to utilise connections to assist the project.</p> <p>01:44:36 Talks about the book research and meeting in the</p>
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	<p>board room one day from 8am to 10:30pm working through the various discoveries people had made and clarification of several key items.</p> <p>01:47:20 Talks about going out and interviewing people for the project and the nervousness before an interview. Mentions the wonderful people and stories she came across. Also mentions travelling around and not knowing where you were going or how long it would take and the transition back to a 9 to 5 position.</p> <p>01:50:18 Tells of moving on from the project and the Dublin football team coming good. Mentions becoming more involved in the GAA and how it has helped her. Also mentions going to every Dublin league match bar one including one in Monaghan that she attended on crutches after a knee operation.</p> <p>01:53:52 Talks of the club championship and Bernard Brogan scoring. Tells of her immersion in the GAA and making the most of every opportunity to talk about it. Mentions praying at her mother's graveside that Dublin would beat Tyrone. Also mentions the other matches on the way to the All-Ireland final and the team training in Parnell Park then getting a ticket for the final and Dublin winning.</p> <p>02:01:40 Recalls watching 'Up for the match' as she had with her mother for years only now it was with Dublin.</p> <p>02:02:48 Talks of going to the match wearing all her 'regalia' and watching Dublin lose the minor match and then win the Senior final. Mentions Gerry Grogan welcoming the team and 'the Hill' starting up.</p> <p>02:05:01 Speaks of Dublin being down by four points and Kevin McMenamin scoring a goal and Cluxton scoring the free.</p> <p>02:05:50 Describes the celebrations after the win and Brian Cullen lifting the Sam. Mentions it lifting Dublin and the celebrations in the city and what it has done for Dublin GAA.</p> <p>02:08:46 Talks of the fans of some counties leaving the grounds before the trophy has been lifted. Mentions going to level 5 for a drink and then to the hotel and going home to watch 'the Sunday Game'.</p> <p>02:10:39 Tells of it being her main highlight among others.</p> <p>02:11:38 Speaks of what the GAA means to her how it's like a friend to her and it is always there for her and has given her</p>
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	<p>so much enjoyment. Mentions it being a wonderful organisation and how she could never see herself not having an interest in it. Also mentions never taking holidays during the Championship.</p> <p>02:14:02 Tells of it being part of her family and long may it grow from strength to strength.</p> <p>02:14:21 Recalls a story when a little boy at a league match asked his father if the recession was over as everyone was so happy when Dublin won.</p> <p>02:15:18 Talks of her interest in getting involved in a club, possibly her local club Craobh Ciaran GAA club. Mentions Alan McCrabbe.</p> <p>02:16:27 Recalls the memories and stories and how fortunate she has been to work not only for the GAA in Croke Park but also on the Oral History Project. Mentions the corner of the office being a shrine to Dublin football. Also mentions the second book and looking forward to seeing it in use in the museum by generations to come.</p>
Involvement in GAA	<p><input checked="" 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 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>
Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	1988-1990 played camogie with St Vincent de Paul Primary School. Won Dublin primary schools medal.
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	N/A

Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 02:19:16
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: Regina Fitzpatrick

Date: 22nd May 2012