

GAA Oral History Project
Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	10 th Feb 2011
Location	Armagh Athletics Grounds
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Joe Jordan
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1945 Home County: Armagh
Education	Primary: Manooney National School Secondary: CBS Grammar School, Armagh City.
Family	Siblings: 1 brother and 1 sister. Current Family if Different: Sadie (wife), 3 daughters and 1 son.
Club(s)	Eoghan Rua GFC [Armagh]
Occupation	Ulster Bus Driver and later Inspector
Parents' Occupation	Labourer – farm, Co. council, Great Northern Railway [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	SDLP
Other Club/Society	Middletown-Tynan Historical Society.

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Date of Report	23 rd July 2012
Period Covered	1890s - 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Armagh, Tyrone, Down, Dublin
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Material Culture, Education, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Identity, Rivalries, Irish Language, Culture, Scór, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Socialising, Food and Drink, Purchase of Grounds, Economy/Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Joe talks about his involvement with the GAA over the years. He talks about growing up in Killylea and what life was like there. He describes how left school to work in a garage before becoming a bus driver with Ulster Bus. Joe discusses the impact of the Troubles had in his area and what life was like during this difficult period. He talks about his first introduction to the GAA and its role during his school days. He describes the impact of emigration on his local club and clubs in the surrounding area and how many teams folded. He talks about coaching under age teams before joining the administration side of the club and describes the various roles he has held from club secretary to county chairman. Towards the end of the interview Joe discusses what the GAA has meant to him over the years and how the Association has helped many young people he knows. He highlights the importance of the GAA in the community and the influence many of its members have had on him.</p> <p>00:24 Joe talks about his early life, growing up in Manooney, beside the village of Killylea in the parish of Tynan.</p> <p>01:05 Discusses leaving school at junior cert level and going to work in a garage. Mentions Peter Donnelly.</p> <p>02:53 Talks about becoming a bus driver in 1974. Going to the Ulster bus driving school in Belfast during the Troubles. Working in Lurgan and Craigavon.</p> <p>04:50 Describes the large estates in Craigavon. People moved there from Belfast because of the Troubles. Talks</p>

	<p>about the problems he faced.</p> <p>06:25 Recalls various memories of being a bus driver. Mentions Christy Traynor and his sons and Traynor's scrap yard.</p> <p>09:30 Discusses the Troubles. Recalls the 'Kingsmill Massacre'. Mentions various shootings, the Reavey and O'Dowd killings. Talks about driving to Newry with mostly Catholics on the bus. People boarding up their houses in the countryside.</p> <p>13:38 Recalls a car chase and shooting between the IRA and the police in Lurgan.</p> <p>15:04 Describes the areas where his parents were from. Both from Tynan. Mother was from Sheetrim near Derrynose and his father was from Toorey near the Tyrone border.</p> <p>16:00 Talks about the make-up of the area, mix of Catholics and Protestants. Mentions his neighbours the Warden family and Sam Warden. Getting paid helping out on their farm.</p> <p>17:27 Recalls a story about one of the Warden sons. Showing him how to drive a tractor. Learning how to plough. Talks about Bob Warden using horses to plough. Family had the first Massey Ferguson in the area.</p> <p>21:45 Describes how his generation were the first own cars.</p> <p>22:00 Discusses his family's involvement in the GAA. Mentions his uncles Patrick Loughran from Sheetrim and Eddie Loughran and their sporting past and his father's brother Ned Jordan.</p> <p>23:40 Recalls getting a new teacher in school who replaced their old teacher Annie Kate McGee from Mayo. Their new teacher was Eithne O'Neill, the daughter of P.J. O'Neill. She introduced football to the school.</p> <p>25:00 Going to Eoiny Mulls field to play football on Sundays. Getting on the Cor na nÓg team in the CBS. Talks about the teams they played against, Dungannon Academy, Dundalk and St Coleman's. Mentions Iggy Jones. Street Leagues in school.</p> <p>27:15 Playing minor with Derrynoose. Mentions Jim Loughran.</p> <p>27:47 Talks about listening to matches to the radio. Wet and dry battery radios. The breadman took them away to get charged. Mentions Sean Óg O'Callaghan. Gathering in Peter</p>
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	<p>Woods' shop in Middleton.</p> <p>29:50 Electric wireless came in the 1950s. Listening to Michael O'Hehir. Watching Kerry on television in 1960. Seeing the players for the first time.</p> <p>31:15 Going to Dublin on a pioneer trip in 1959. Passing Walton's music store. Seeing Trinity College and the American Embassy.</p> <p>32:08 Travelling to Croke Park for matches with the taxi man Joe Simpson and his Austen 16 car. Stopping for mass on the way. Getting breakfast in Wimpy Bar on Dorset St. Price was one and six for schoolboys into Croke Park.</p> <p>34:59 Talks about the role of Gaelic games in the CBS in Armagh. Mentions Brother Reehil and his interest in Michael Collins. Also mentions Brother O'Shea, Connelly and Ledgewhitch and Donal Garvey. First trained PE teacher in the school was Jimmy McKeown.</p> <p>38:26 Recalls travelling around to matches in Hughie Traynor's showband bus.</p> <p>38:51 Talks about travelling to Derry to the Brandywell. The food they had to eat. Seeing families living in huts on an army camp. Links this to the civil rights march in Derry.</p> <p>40:45 Discusses his playing career after school. Middleton club folded due to emigration in the 1950s. Many clubs in Armagh fell apart in the 1960s.</p> <p>41:19 Talks about how changes in farming meant resulted in unemployment. Closure of the flex industry in the mid-1950s.</p> <p>43:02 Describes how many Protestants in the area emigrated to Canada while Catholics went to places like Birmingham or Glasgow.</p> <p>43:29 Discusses his involvement in Middleton GAA in the late 1960s. Becoming a minor coach. Losing players to work.</p> <p>45:30 Talks about council houses being built after the Civil Rights movement, brought workers back to the area in the early 1970s. Winning the fourth division. Recalls breaking his leg in a match.</p> <p>46:15 Discusses his involvement in administration with the club. Mentions Gabriel Mall.</p> <p>47:16 Talks about his gift for organisation and getting the club structured. Mentions Alf Murray and the building of a new hall.</p>
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	<p>Getting a new constitution.</p> <p>49:55 Recalls trying to convince committee members to accept a new constitution. Getting a bank account for the club.</p> <p>51:31 Discusses the government putting money into youth clubs to keep kids off the street. Talks about the local parish priest Peter Crilly and trying to convince him of the benefits of the new constitution. Mentions Jim Hughes.</p> <p>53:30 Building a new field and facilities for the club. Talks about the history of the field. Nearly 100 years old. One of the original Dr Croke's field. Mentions Cardinal McRory, Father Rafferty and Cardinal O'Fiaich. New priest Michael Toll came in the 1980s.</p> <p>56:25 Father Toll transferring the field to Middletown GAA. Joe was vice chairman of the club at the time. Mentions John McGuinness, Jimmy McKiernan, Leo Hanlon and Gerry Arthurs.</p> <p>59:35 Discusses the history of the GAA field over the years. Levelling the pitch in 1986. One of the only GAA teams in Armagh still on their original grounds.</p> <p>01:01:34 Discusses his administrative career. Becoming assistant secretary in 1969 and secretary in 1970. Mentions Pat McCann. Taking the club to division one by 1975, winning the junior intermediate championship.</p> <p>01:03:54 Talks about boards being re-established in 1972 for underage football. Recalls how John O'Reilly, Tom Lynch, Gerry Fagan and Joe Canning arrived at his house and asked him to be secretary of the mid board of Armagh and his experience of this work.</p> <p>01:06:55 Gives his opinion on those involved in the GAA during the 1950s and on. Mentions Alf Murray, Bobby Fern, Gene Larkin and Gerry Arthurs.</p> <p>01:07:44 Talks about becoming chairman of the Football Board in Armagh in 1993. Becoming county chairman in 2001.</p> <p>01:11:00 Discusses his work as county chairman. Working to win the All-Ireland. Getting John McCloskey as county trainer.</p> <p>01:14:04 Recalls issues over Armagh's trip to La Manga in 2002. Trying to find problems with the team. Getting the England rugby kicking coach Michael Alright. Mentions</p>
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	<p>Peadar Murray and Eamonn Mackel. Mentions several Armagh players that won the All-Ireland.</p> <p>01:20:00 Talks about the county board meeting when they returned from the training camp in La Manga.</p> <p>01:21:28 Discusses Armagh's campaign that year. First match against Tyrone and then Dublin. Recalls being the bus driver for the 1977 Armagh All-Ireland team and the problems they faced that year. Trying to solve those problems for 2002.</p> <p>01:24:23 Talks about planning for the homecoming that year.</p> <p>01:25:00 Recalls trying to write the speech for before the match. Talks about his feelings before and during the 2002 All-Ireland final.</p> <p>01:27:45 Discusses how successful his term of office was. Winning the 2004 Under 21 All-Ireland final. Mentions Peter Rafferty.</p> <p>01:29:46 Talks about becoming part of the Armagh minor board and his experiences of this. Talks about the success they had and the work he did to try and improve their chances of success in the All-Ireland. Mentions Paul McShane.</p> <p>01:38:08 Discusses his most enjoyable administrative role. Describes how he enjoyed coaching young people, especially during the Troubles, and how the GAA helped keep them on the right path.</p> <p>01:40:08 Talks about being county PRO and what motivates him to keep going in the GAA. The influence Gerry Arthurs had on him. Trying to help young people.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p>✓ Supporter ✓ Player ✓ Manager ✓ Coach ✓ Steward</p> <p>✓ Chairperson ✓ 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>Played football with CBS Grammar School Armagh – Corn na nÓg. Won mid-division league twice (1975-1976); Played minor football with Derrynoose. Joined Middletown aged 13 in 1968.</p>

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<p>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>1969: Assistant Secretary, Middletown GAA</p> <p>1970-79: Secretary, Middletown GAA</p> <p>1982-89: Vice-Chairman, Middletown GAA</p> <p>1990-93: Chairman, Middletown GAA</p> <p>2011 - : Honourary Vice- President, Middletown GAA</p> <p>1973-77: Secretary of Mid-Armagh Board</p> <p>1977-84: Vice- Chairperson of Mid-Armagh Board</p> <p>1984-92: Chairman of Mid-Armagh Board</p> <p>1992: Chairman of Armagh Football Board</p> <p>1992: Vice-Chairman of Armagh County Board</p> <p>2001-06: Chairman of Armagh County Board</p> <p>2008 - : PRO of Armagh County Board</p> <p>2008 - : Armagh Representative on Ulster Council</p>
<p>Format</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual</p>
<p>Duration</p>	<p>Length of Interview: 01:44:26</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: Regina Fitzpatrick

Date: 23rd July 2012