

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	21 st April 2010
Location	Harry's home, near Herbertstown, Co. Limerick
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Harry Greensmyth
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1936 Home County: Limerick
Education	Primary: Knockea NS, Co. Limerick
Family	Siblings: 1 brother & 4 sisters Current Family if Different: Wife (Christina)
Club(s)	Hospital-Herbertstown GAA [Limerick]; South Liberties [Limerick]
Occupation	CIE employee
Parents' Occupation	Labourer [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

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Date of Report	15 th June 2012
Period Covered	1936 - 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Limerick
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Coaching, Administration, Celebrations, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, Involvement in GAA abroad, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, Irish Language, Culture, Scór, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish, History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Outsider's Perspectives, Politics, Northern Ireland, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Opening of Croke Park, Socialising, Relationships, Economy / Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Harry shares his GAA memories from down the years. He grew up in Limerick, an area dominated by hurling. Although there were no underage structures at the time he loved to play with his friends and at school. He recalls the great Tipperary-Cork rivalry of the 1950s and watching them battle it out at the Gaelic Grounds in Limerick. When he was older Harry played for his local club South Liberties. He also worked on the histories of local clubs and wrote match reports for the local newspapers. At administrative level, he did PRO work for his club and for the Limerick County Board, and was also involved in Bord na nÓg and in Scór in the Limerick area. When he was younger Harry spent some years working and living in London, where attending GAA games on a Sunday was the highlight of his week. He talks about all aspects of his GAA experiences through the years, reflects on how the Association has changed and on how rugby has managed to gain a strong foothold in Limerick City, and discusses what he feels are the future prospects for the GAA.</p> <p>00:15 Born in 1936 in Balladee, Co. Limerick.</p> <p>01:50 South Liberties his local club.</p> <p>01:20 No underage structures when he was younger.</p> <p>02:05 Type of club it was.</p> <p>02:15 Travelling to games by bicycle. Distances they cycled.</p>

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	<p>02:55 Cycling to a Munster-Leinster game in Abbeyfeale. Stopping along the way.</p> <p>04:00 Family's GAA involvement. Father supporting Fedamore Paddy Cloughesy playing for them.</p> <p>04:35 Con Sheehan not getting a pension until he was 90. Reason for that.</p> <p>05:20 First inter-county game he saw. Limerick against Antrim in Croke Park in the 1950s. Travelling by train.</p> <p>06:30 First impressions of Croke Park.</p> <p>06:45 Going to a game in 1949 between Croom New Irelands and Ahane. Mick and John Mackey playing.</p> <p>07:50 Mike Butler going to the Gaelic Grounds in a pony and trap and Harry going too.</p> <p>08:55 Cork and Tipperary meeting in Limerick. Christy Ring playing. Cycling in to watch the game. Big crowds.</p> <p>09:55 Cork supporters arriving late for a game and trouble ensuing.</p> <p>10:15 Impressed by Tony Reddin in goals for Tipperary.</p> <p>10:25 Galway playing in Limerick - Mick Burke and Joe Salmon on their team.</p> <p>10:30 Tipperary a strong team - John Doyle, Mickey Burns playing.</p> <p>10:50 Cork-Tipperary rivalry. Everybody talking about it.</p> <p>11:15 Limerick's rivals.</p> <p>11:40 South Liberties rivals included Doon and Pallasgreen.</p> <p>11:55 1967 team opting to play senior and reaching a final against Kilmallock.</p> <p>12:40 His own playing career. Winning a minor hurling final against Cappamore, who had Limerick players Fr Liam Ryan and Seamus Ryan on the team.</p> <p>13:45 Hurling all the time when he was young. Going to</p>
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	<p>Knockea National School.</p> <p>14:00 Hurleys scarce at the time. Using spochs instead.</p> <p>14:50 Where they got the spochs from.</p> <p>15:30 His first proper hurley. Bought in Woolworths.</p> <p>16:00 Playing hurling at school.</p> <p>16:35 Jack Lee their teacher. His interest in hurling. Fr Wall playing with them one day.</p> <p>17:05 Girls playing rounders.</p> <p>17:30 Knockea playing Carnane in an annual game.</p> <p>18:45 Going to Tommy Clifford's to listen to games on the radio.</p> <p>19:40 Playing with South Liberties.</p> <p>20:00 Teacher collecting money to buy a football.</p> <p>20:40 Limerick City at the time. Prominence of hurling there. Cloghane, Treaty Sarsfields, St Patrick's. Success of Treaty Sarsfields.</p> <p>22:10 Big crowds watching club tournaments.</p> <p>22:25 Thomond Shield competition.</p> <p>23:00 Limerick playing Kilkenny in Croke Park in 1913 for Cardinal Aglardi medals. Game in aid of the Fr Matthew Project in Cork. Poem written about it.</p> <p>24:15 Fighting at games.</p> <p>24:40 Coaching South Liberties teams and how he found that. Success they had.</p> <p>25:35 Working on the history of local clubs - South Liberties, Knockainey, Garryspillane, Blackrock, Croom.</p> <p>25:55 Book he wrote on Frank Dineen. GAA President Christy Cooney launching it.</p> <p>26:40 Frank Dineen's life and times.</p>
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	<p>30:55 Interest in history.</p> <p>31:10 Writing for The Limerick Leader and for a local paper.</p> <p>32:15 Reading The Irish Press and Irish Independent for GAA reports. Pádraig Purcell writing. Married to Agnes Hourigan of the Camogie Association.</p> <p>33:10 How he writes his match reports.</p> <p>33:55 Finn and the Fianna in Knockainey. Hurling game there.</p> <p>34:40 Hurling in the United States. The sliotar hitting an electric transformer.</p> <p>35:40 People emigrating when he was young. Going to England. What that was like.</p> <p>37:10 Man from Derry dying at a Fleadh Cheoil in Clonmel.</p> <p>37:40 Staying with his sister in England.</p> <p>37:50 Orange man from Armagh staying where they were and liking Irish music.</p> <p>38:10 Seán Power from Kilkenny a good hurler in England.</p> <p>38:35 Going to games every Sunday.</p> <p>39:55 Brother Pearses a team in London.</p> <p>40:15 Role of GAA in emigrant life in London. Bumping into people at games.</p> <p>41:45 Going to the feis in Kilburn. Competitions that were held there.</p> <p>42:45 Not liking it in England.</p> <p>43:15 Coming home and getting a job with CIE in Limerick.</p> <p>43:35 CIE having an inter-firm team. John Shanahan and Pat Crims from South Liberties winning an inter-firms All-Ireland.</p> <p>44:10 Inter-firms when he was younger.</p>
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	<p>45:55 Soccer becoming popular.</p> <p>46:10 South Liberties losing an All-Ireland to St Loughnan's in Thurles in 2010.</p> <p>46:55 Leaving South Liberties to move to Herbertstown.</p> <p>48:00 Getting involved in administration. Being PRO of the South Limerick Board. How that role has changed.</p> <p>49:15 Submitting material to be published by The Limerick Leader.</p> <p>50:00 Change in amount of GAA coverage in The Limerick Leader.</p> <p>50:15 Work with Scór.</p> <p>51:25 Strength of Scór in Limerick.</p> <p>52:20 GAA's work to promote Irish language and culture.</p> <p>53:55 Former Tyrone All-Ireland winning captain Cormac McAnallen involved in Scór.</p> <p>54:25 How the GAA has changed over the years.</p> <p>55:10 GAA as part of his identity.</p> <p>55:25 Going to céilís in England.</p> <p>56:10 Lifting of the Ban and what he thought of it.</p> <p>57:10 Financial side of the GAA. People wanting expenses at club level.</p> <p>58:15 Income of the South Liberties club in the 1950s.</p> <p>59:00 JP McManus South Liberties chairman in 1972 when the club won the county championship.</p> <p>59:25 Players wanting a second set of jerseys for the final. Getting jerseys from Camóg Rovers.</p> <p>01:00:00 JP McManus sponsoring the club for jerseys.</p> <p>01:00:30 Clubs with no money winning things.</p>
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	<p>01:01:50 Impact of rugby's popularity in Limerick City on the GAA there.</p> <p>01:02:50 Future prospects for GAA in the city.</p> <p>01:03:35 Kilkenny playing Limerick in Askeaton. Covering the game. Kilkenny team arriving in taxis.</p> <p>01:04:20 Opening of Croke Park and what he thought of that.</p> <p>01:05:50 Prospect of GAA pitches being opened to other sports.</p> <p>01:06:40 Being PRO on the Limerick County Board. Limerick reaching the All-Ireland in 1994. Experience of the game.</p> <p>01:07:50 Experience of administrative work.</p> <p>01:08:30 Political nature of the GAA.</p> <p>01:09:05 Limerick hurling dispute. Justin McCarthy.</p> <p>01:10:15 Seamus Hickey a talented Limerick hurler.</p> <p>01:10:50 Future of the GAA in Limerick.</p> <p>01:11:40 GAA in the schools in Limerick. Gerry Bennice doing a lot of work.</p> <p>01:12:15 Changed structure of Bord na nÓg and what he thinks of that.</p> <p>01:14:30 South Liberties playing an Under-16 team. Taking off a forward who later went on to win an All-Ireland.</p> <p>01:15:25 Being secretary and PRO of Bord na nÓg. Postal strike when he was secretary.</p> <p>01:16:10 Writing match reports for camogie and hurling.</p> <p>01:17:05 Meeting his wife through camogie. His wife playing with Croke.</p> <p>01:18:30 Bridie Martin playing camogie for Kilkenny.</p> <p>01:19:10 Lise Howard a good Tipperary player.</p> <p>01:20:20 Media coverage of camogie.</p>
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	<p>01:21:20 Coming across illegal players when he was covering games.</p> <p>01:22:05 Winning the county championship in 1972. Patrickswell their opponents in the final. Tony O'Brien trying to find out the weather forecast.</p> <p>01:24:20 What the GAA has meant to him.</p> <p>01:25:10 Being happy to see teams from Northern Ireland winning All-Irelands.</p> <p>01:25:35 Going to Cushendall in Antrim. Prominence of hurling there. Sambo McNaughton from the area.</p> <p>01:26:30 Antrim people having to hide the hurls whilst travelling to games.</p> <p>01:27:20 Kilkenny team in 2010 and his admiration for Henry Shefflin and Tommy Walsh.</p> <p>01:29:15 Hopes for the future of the GAA.</p> <p>01:30:15 Admiration for John Lahey.</p> <p>01:31:20 Opinion of the hurleys used in Limerick.</p> <p>01:34:00 St Martin's of Kilkenny playing Rathkeale in a final. Covering the game. Asking some people who St Martin was and where the name of the club came from. What he was told.</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 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 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 with South Liberties in Limerick City for a few years and won a divisional hurling and football final in 1953.</p>
<p>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>PRO of South Limerick Divisional Board (currently); Formerly PRO of Limerick Bord na nÓg; PRO of Limerick County Board (3 years)</p>

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Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 01:38:23
Language	English

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: 15th June 2012