

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	17 th Aug 2010
Location	Interviewee's home, near Scotstown, Co. Monaghan
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Sean McCague
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1945 Home County: Monaghan
Education	Primary: Urbleshanny NS, Co. Monaghan Secondary: Colaiste Íosagain, Ballyvourney, Co. Cork Third Level: St. Pat's, Drumcondra, Dublin
Family	Siblings: 3 sisters & 5 brothers Current Family if Different: Married to Bernie with 5 daughters
Club(s)	Scotstown
Occupation	Retired Teacher
Parents' Occupation	Garda Superintendent [Father]; Grocer and Publican [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	St Vincent de Paul; Golf Club

Date of Report	1 st July 2012
Period Covered	1900s – 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Monaghan, Cork, Dublin
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Politics, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Ban on Security Forces, Relationship with the Association, Retirement, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy / Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Sean looks back on his GAA experiences down through the years and the path that he travelled from a small community in Monaghan to the very pinnacle of the Association. A lifelong member of the Scotstown club, he describes growing up in an area where there was great passion for Gaelic games but also harsh economic conditions which forced many to emigrate. Sean played for his club growing up, and later in Cork and Dublin as he pursued his education. He talks about his return to Monaghan and subsequent involvement in the GAA at schools, county, administrative, provincial and national level. Sean shares his memories of his time as GAA President and reflects on the major projects he helped oversee. His clarity of vision and unfailing modesty were clearly valuable assets as he set about leaving an indelible impression on an Association that remains very close to his heart.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:20 Earliest GAA memory. Listening to radio commentator Micheál O’Hehir.</p> <p>00:55 Local club is Scotstown, in the parish of Tydavnet.</p> <p>01:20 Problems of emigration in the 1950s result in amalgamation of Tydavnet, Knockatallon and Scotstown clubs. Players migrating to Luton, England.</p> <p>03:20 Process of amalgamation. Players from Northern</p>

	<p>Ireland moving to Monaghan area.</p> <p>04:15 Scotstown club first started before 1900. Townland rather than club teams in vogue then. Travel restrictions at the time. Lack of stabilisation until 1945.</p> <p>06:25 Family involvement. Six boys in the family. Playing games for recreation.</p> <p>07:30 Uncle a football player in the 1930s.</p> <p>07:45 Being reared in a public house. Stories he heard. People listening to games on the radio. Wet batteries.</p> <p>09:10 Stories he heard in the pub about games played in the past and efforts people made to attend them.</p> <p>11:00 First senior championship won in 1960. Players looked up to by people of Scotstown.</p> <p>12:15 All-Ireland club final against Nemo Rangers in Croke Park. Playing Walsh Island in Tullamore in the semi-final. How the final panned out. Severe weather issues. Transport hassles.</p> <p>14:10 Under-14 team started in 1957. Playing on that. Underage structures blossoming over the years.</p> <p>15:55 Facilities when he was playing. Relying on farmers for use of their fields. Grounds Scotstown purchased in the 1950s. Developing what they had. Necessity for more space and consequent expansion.</p> <p>17:55 Fundraisers they held for projects. Work that the committee did. What they did with money received.</p> <p>19:00 Fundraisers to support purchase of pitch in 1950s. Carnivals and how they worked.</p> <p>21:10 His own playing days. Winning an Under-14 title in 1959. Joy that brought. Seán Hegarty taking teams to games. How they travelled. Alternative means of transport.</p> <p>23:35 Man in 1930s bringing team to a game in Clones. How many he fitted in his car.</p> <p>24:15 Jerseys they wore. Where they came from. Colours they wore. Change in colours in the 1960s. Reason for that. Colours Tydavnet and Knockatallon wore.</p> <p>26:35 Year of amalgamation. How it benefited the club.</p> <p>27:15 Playing into his late teens. Teammates emigrating.</p>
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	<p>Where they went.</p> <p>28:40 Back problems when he was 20. Drifting away from the game.</p> <p>30:05 Going to secondary school in west Cork in Baile Mhuirne (Ballyvourney). Fellow students mainly from Gaeltacht areas including West Kerry and Gweedore in Donegal. Playing in colleges competitions. Teammates going on to represent Cork and Kerry. Playing in Corn Uí Mhuirí Munster colleges competition. Winning the Simcox Cup.</p> <p>34:55 Going to St Pat's teacher training college in Dublin. Drastic change in regulations and how he reacted to that.</p> <p>36:45 Playing GAA at St Pat's.</p> <p>38:35 Taking up a teaching post in Monaghan Town. Becoming a principal. Corporal punishment and what he thought of that.</p> <p>40:50 GAA involvement as a teacher.</p> <p>41:50 Maintaining his involvement with the local club through the years. Working with Monaghan County Board, Ulster Council and Central Council.</p> <p>43:45 Becoming club secretary and his administrative career developing from there.</p> <p>45:00 Lack of facilities when he was playing and how that changed. Being a part of that process as an administrator.</p> <p>47:00 Managing county teams. Going on an All Stars trip.</p> <p>47:55 Sacrifices he has had to make. Work Pat Fanning and Alf Murray did.</p> <p>49:20 First foray into managing team affairs at the club. Success in the 1970s and 1980s. Involvement with county team. Titles they won. 1979 loss to Kerry. Taking a break. Returning to the county team for a second and third time. Players honoured at an Ulster final in Clones 25 years after a famous victory.</p> <p>52:45 What he brought to the role of manager. Methodology. Concept of team manager a novel one at the time. Enlisting help of people he trusted.</p> <p>54:15 Support county team had when he was in charge. Impression it made on players. Excitement amongst supporters due to long wait for success. Going close to</p>
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	<p>winning an Ulster title in 2010. Success of Tyrone, Donegal, Down, Armagh and Derry.</p> <p>57:15 What GAA participation gives to people.</p> <p>58:10 Winning the National League and importance of that.</p> <p>59:25 Path to GAA presidency. Not feeling suited to the Ulster Council. Drifting into more senior positions.</p> <p>01:01:35 Restructuring Croke Park during his tenure. Work of Liam Mulvihill and the staff at Croke Park such as Joan Cooney and Pat Daly.</p> <p>01:04:05 Negotiating with the Government as GAA President. Politicians such as Bertie Ahern and Charlie McCreevey interested in sporting matters. Central Council discussions on acceptable debt levels. Property boom at the time.</p> <p>01:06:45 Other big issues that cropped up such as restructuring of competitions. Dealing with such things. Vision of Liam Mulvihill.</p> <p>01:08:15 Removal of Rule 21 during his time as President. His Ulster connections proving useful.</p> <p>01:11:20 Involvement with Compromise Rules team alongside Eugene McGee. Trip to Australia. Exchanging ideas with AFL people. Hybrid game developing over the years. Difficulties with that. Appropriate levels of physicality.</p> <p>01:14:30 Post-presidency involvement with GAA. Keeping his distance once Seán Kelly took over the role.</p> <p>01:16:50 Friendships he made throughout his GAA involvement. Séamus Ó Riain, Pat Fanning, Con Murphy, Paddy MacFlynn important figures.</p> <p>01:19:30 His GAA hero – the GAA volunteer. Meeting a volunteer in Carlow. Admiration for him.</p> <p>01:21:30 Going to a game in Clones as a child. Watching from atop a hill. Huge crowds.</p> <p>01:23:00 Dealing with disappointments.</p> <p>01:23:45 What the GAA has meant to him.</p>
Involvement in GAA	<p>✓ Supporter ✓ Player ✓ Manager ✓ Coach ✓ Steward</p> <p>✓ Chairperson ✓ Committee Member ✓ Grounds-person</p>

REFERENCE NO. MN/1/9

	<input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _President of the GAA_____
Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	Played from juvenile level to Under 21 when his back started to give him trouble. Won a few juvenile and underage titles and a B title at adult level.
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	Sean has been involved in administration since 1965. Club: Secretary, Chairperson County: Delegate from Club, Joint County Secretary Ulster: Delegate from Monaghan, Disciplinary Appointments & Referees Central Council: Delegate from Monaghan, Games Administration Committee (15 years), President of the GAA; Benevolence Committee
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 01:26:35
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: _____Arlene Crampsie-_____

Date: _____01/07/12_____