

## GAA Oral History Project

## Interview Report Form

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| <b>Name of Interviewer</b>                          | Paul Rouse  |
| <b>Date of Interview</b>                            | 29 <sup>th</sup> April 2010                         |
| <b>Location</b>                                     | Na Fianna Club House, Dublin                        |
| <b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname) | Seán Clerkin  |
| <b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>   |   |
| <b>Gender</b>                                       | Male  |
| <b>Born</b>   | <b>Year Born:</b> N/A<br><b>Home County:</b> Dublin |
| <b>Education</b>                                    | N/A   |
| <b>Family</b>                                       | N/A   |
| <b>Club(s)</b>                                      | CJ Kickhams [Dublin], Na Fianna [Dublin]            |
| <b>Occupation</b>                                   | N/A   |
| <b>Parents' Occupation</b>                          | N/A   |
| <b>Religion</b>                                     | N/A   |
| <b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>           | N/A   |
| <b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>             | N/A   |

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| <b>Date of Report</b>             | 23 <sup>rd</sup> August 2012   |
| <b>Period Covered</b>             | 1930s – 2010   |
| <b>Counties/Countries Covered</b> | Dublin, Monaghan, Westmeath, Wexford   |
| <b>Key Themes Covered</b>         | Travel, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Refereeing, Administration, Celebrations, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Identity, Irish Language, Culture, Club History, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Violence, Politics, Retirement, Food and Drink, Socialising   |
| <b>Interview Summary</b>          | <p>Seán discusses growing up in Monaghan before moving back to Dublin. He recalls his GAA career in his school days before discussing his adult playing career. He recalls playing for the CJ Kickhams club, mentioning some of the tournaments they participated in and the venues they played. Seán details the split that occurred in the club, leading to the formation of Na Fianna. He discusses his involvement in handball, and mentions some incidents and characters in the association. Seán discusses his vision of the GAA as being more than a sporting organisation, detailing how Na Fianna caters for other activities, such as céilís and drama. He concludes by discussing his brief involvement in politics.</p> <p>00:35 Seán speaks about being born in Dublin and brought up in Monaghan until he was seven. Mentions 1938 All-Ireland Football semi-final between Monaghan and Galway in Mullingar, first match that Micheál Ó hEithir commentated on. Seán's uncle Terence played in the game.</p> <p>01:25 Recalls his school days. Went to Annaneese National School in Ballybay, then went to St Francis Xavier's on Dorset Street and on to St Canice's CBS on the North Circular Road. Mentions going to secondary school in O'Connells.</p> <p>2:00 Discusses his involvement in Gaelic games in school. Recalls playing Gaelic football in St Canice's, mentions Brother Duggan. Didn't play hurling. Recalls a Herald Cup final against Crumlin. Mentions school song "Scoil Cainneach Naomh Abú". Recalls Crumlin players arriving in messenger bicycles. Mentions Joe Lawlor, goalkeeper. Recalls being selected for a Leinster schools team in 1953.</p> <p>03:57 Recalls playing for Dublin. Won a Leinster Junior title in 1965. Recalls role of St Vincents on Dublin teams at that time.</p> |

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|  | <p>04:45 Describes winning three Dublin minor football championships with CJ Kickhams.</p> <p>05:10 Recalls playing for CJ Kickhams. Mentions Glengariff Parade, Cathal Ó Finéan and street leagues. Mentions Sean O'Neill and tournaments in Howth - travel from Amiens Street train station up to the Binn Éadair club. Recalls slope of their football pitch and proximity to the sea. Mentions Sean Moynihan. Recalls match against St Pappins from Ballymun in the Phoenix Park. Mentions winning three consecutive minor championships.</p> <p>08:53 Recalls playing at adult level for CJ Kickhams. Mentions playing Guinness' in a Junior C league final in 1953. Also played on intermediate team in that year, winning the league.</p> <p>10:10 Refers to dispute in 1954 which led to CJ Kickhams being suspended from competition for a year. Mentions Sean O'Neill, Charlie Feeney, Tommy Norton and Tommy Fitzpatrick at underage level. Refers to Arnotts and Clearys, players being drafted in from outside.</p> <p>11:25 Describes new club being formed. Mentions then GAA General Secretary Paddy O'Keefe's ruling. New club Na Fianna founded, named by Cathal Ó Finéan.</p> <p>12:40 Recalls in the early days Na Fianna playing most of their matches in The Phoenix Park. Mentions venue such as Islandbridge and Parnell Park.</p> <p>13:01 Recalls final match they played under the CJ Kickhams name, a Loving Cup final. Mentions Jarlath Fahy being the only non Na Fianna man on that team.</p> <p>13:45 Recalls winning the St Margarets Tournament.</p> <p>14:00 Mentions playing St Vincents, marking Ollie Freeney in Croke Park. Mentions playing against Kevin Heffernan. Mentions match in Parnell Park and punching him in the jaw. Refers to 1958 championship semi-final against Erin's Hope and Mattie McDonagh. Discusses reaction to decision of referee from St Josephs to award a penalty. Describes altercation with Kevin Heffernan during a match.</p> <p>17:42 Describes style of football played in the fifties and compares it to modern version. Mentions Donal Hickey, Brendan Duignan, Jimmy Gray.</p> <p>19:47 Recalls retiring from playing. Last match against Avilla Gaels, itinerants club. Son Declan on the same team as him</p> |
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|  | <p>that day. Mentions Avilla Gaels player called Major and incident that made him consider retirement.</p> <p>20:51 Recalls his administrative roles in the GAA. Explains why he became involved. Mentions Sean O'Neill, Donal Hickey and Jimmy Gray. Recalls handball alley in Glengariff Parade. Mentions Tommy Norton and player called Bergin who won an All-Ireland handball title. Mentions Austin Clarke from the handball board, Sylvie Mitchell from the Emeralds club.</p> <p>25:10 Refers to his interest in hurling.</p> <p>25:32 Recalls the social aspect to Gaelic games when he was playing. Mentions céilís in the Mansion House organised by Matt Malady. Mentions dances at Red Island in Skerries. Mentions players from the Phibsborough area. Also mentions Ronnie Devon and Blackrock rugby first team.</p> <p>27:33 Recalls roles as chairman of Dublin Handball Board and PRO of Irish Handball Council. Wrote handball articles for The Irish Times, The Irish Press, The Irish Independent and The Gaelic Weekly. Mentions Tommy Norton and becoming chairman of Na Fianna. Also mentions his own wife Stacia.</p> <p>29:03 Describes what the GAA movement is about. Refers to language and culture. Mentions former club chairman Dermot McNulty.</p> <p>29:53 Recalls organising céilís with Dermot and Patricia McNulty. Mentions venues, such as the Shandon Pitch and Putt club, Whitehall, North Great George's Street, The Laois Men's Association, Moran's Hotel, The Irish Club. First céilí at the newly built Na Fianna clubhouse in 1972. Recalls using the Irish language at club meetings. Recalls his father establishing a drama group in 1968, Na Fianna Players – name changed subsequently to The Fionn MacCumhaill Players, then changed again to Draíocht. Mentions Tommy Norton referring to them as "Clerkin's Circus".</p> <p>33:57 Recalls incident at match against Erin's Isle in Finglas one Sunday morning in the late fifties. Also mentions Bertie O'Boyle and a seven-a-side competition in Moate.</p> <p>34:54 Discusses his vision of the GAA.</p> <p>35:44 Discusses his life in politics. Mentions the Christian Centrist Party. Mentions Fergus D'Arcy. Recalls running in the local elections and losing out to Jim Mitchell for the last seat.</p> |
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**REFERENCE NO. DB/1/16**

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| <b>Involvement in GAA</b>   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward<br><input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person<br><input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ |
| <b>Record as a Player</b><br>(Titles won; Length of time played)    | N/A  |
| <b>Record as an Administrator</b><br>(Positions held; how long for) | N/A  |
| <b>Format</b>   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual  |
| <b>Duration</b>   | Length of Interview: 00:38:21  |
| <b>Language</b>   | English  |

**To be filled in by Interviewer:**

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Signed:      Paul Rouse

Date:          23<sup>rd</sup> August 2012