

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	7 th March 2011
Location	Interviewee's home, near Leixlip, Co. Kildare
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Tom Ryan
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1948 Home County: Offaly
Education	Primary: Ballinahown NS, Co. Offaly Secondary: St. Saran's, Fermoy, Co. Offaly
Family	Siblings: 4 brothers & 4 sisters Current Family if Different: Married to Mary with one daughter
Club(s)	Doon [Offaly]; Leixlip [Kildare]
Occupation	Assistant Principal Officer, Customs and Excise
Parents' Occupation	Farmer, Truck Driver [Father]; Housewife, Farmer, Organiser [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fine Gael
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Residents Association

REFERENCE NO. OY/1/6

Date of Report	6 th August 2012
Period Covered	1900s – 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Kildare, Offaly, Dublin, Westmeath
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Refereeing, Administration, Celebrations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Media, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Identity, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Career, Professionalism, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships
Interview Summary	<p>Tom talks of his first trip to Croke Park and his father and uncles involvement with the club and the club facilities. The parish and other clubs are discussed as are the successes of the club. He talks of his playing career for Offaly and of moving to Dublin for work and playing in Kildare. The club in Leixlip along with the characters involved are covered as is Tom's time on the various committees. Camogie in the club is then discussed and his involvement in ladies football. Comparisons are made between ladies football and the GAA. His best memories are then covered and he goes on to encourage youngsters to play sports.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:30 Talks of his earliest memory in Dublin at Croke Park but cannot remember who was playing. Mentions six or seven years later and listening to a club meeting in his house.</p> <p>02:39 Tells of his father being secretary and manager of the Doon club in 1944 and in 1994. Mentions his three uncles playing in 1944 when the club won their first medals. Also mentions his father's modesty regarding his role.</p> <p>03:47 Tells of his father being treasurer in the 1960's but stepping back from the club when Tom and his brothers got involved. Mentions his sister also playing and the roles played by his brothers in Doon club.</p> <p>05:52 Talks of the facilities of the club, the nine acres field owned by the Mooney family. Tells of not being allowed to erect goalposts and playing all their matches away. Mentions being offered a different field, the Lawn, in the 1970's with goalposts. Also mentions having access to other fields on a</p>

	<p>one off basis. Going to Ferbane.</p> <p>08:17 Speaks of their being three clubs in the parish, Erin's Rovers, Ballycomber and Doon, and the rivalries. Mentions that part of the parish were in County Westmeath. The cross over of players.</p> <p>08:49 Talks of the club drawing from the same population today as then with some fluctuation due to emigration over the years. Mentions the club colours over the years.</p> <p>10:26 Talks of the first championship win and the training beforehand. Mentions how they lit the field to train at night and the changing area.</p> <p>11:57 Talks of a former army man training the team. Mentions one player, Frank Fitzpatrick, with a bad knee and another, Kieran Rohan, who would pop it back in.</p> <p>13:39 Tells of the club dating back to the 1900's but not always fielding a team. Speaks of the successes of the club and the parish. Mentions a Paddy Hanamey, a Doon man, who captained Offaly to their first minor win.</p> <p>15:07 Tells of Iggy Jones captaining the Tyrone team that beat the Offaly minors. Mentions being reminded of that Doon teams successes when he was playing.</p> <p>16:26 Speaks of travelling to matches by bicycle, truck and car and trailer.</p> <p>18:29 Tells of the hurling team not surviving until he joined the club. Mentions various attempts to get hurling going in the parish and a joint club being formed named Brosna Gaels. Tubrid club is part of it too.</p> <p>20:25 Talks of Doon club being operational and doing well. Kieran Rigney, Vinnie and David Claffey and Willie Ryan.</p> <p>21:16 Speaks of his time playing for the county from Minor to Junior levels. Mentions the call for the minors being hugely important to the family. Also mentions a neighbour filming him in a match against Kildare in Portlaoise.</p> <p>22:54 Talks of the difference aspects of club and county football including the training.</p> <p>24:14 Speaks of the sense of camaraderie amongst the county players. Mentions being from South Offaly. Discusses how the different parts of Offaly sometimes stuck to themselves. Also mentions Fr. Tom Gilhooley managing the</p>
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	<p>team and trying to organise play.</p> <p>26:09 Talks of the different identity between clubs as well as divisions within the county. Tells of the events on the sideline getting out of hand but almost never on the pitch. Mentions one bout of fisticuffs between Paddy Molloy and Jackie Egan two schoolfriends.</p> <p>28:18 Tells of the GAA not playing a big role in his schooldays. Mentions St. Saran's in Ferbane and playing Clara Community school once a year.</p> <p>30:10 Talks of moving to Dublin and then to Kildare and training in Leixlip before joining them permanently. Mentions ending up on two committees at an AGM. Also mentions it being a wrench leaving Doon although many of his teammates had moved away.</p> <p>33:14 Speaks of the differences between Doon and Leixlip. Talks of the successes of Leixlip teams.</p> <p>35:44 Talks of being on the football committee and the development committee. Speaks of the plans the club had and his role within it. Mentions the volunteers clearing the site and pouring the foundations etc. Also mentions John Ryan a Galway man who became chairman.</p> <p>39:07 Tells of the building opening in 1976. Talks of the laying of the foundation stone by the President of Ireland, Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh and the various speeches. Importance to Leixlip, describes how Leixlip had developed.</p> <p>41:26 Mentions two years later when the club opened there were queues to join. Also mentions it possibly being the first club in Kildare to have a bar and John McCarthy secretary of the club who went on to hold many positions at both county and Leinster level.</p> <p>43:14 Talks of Luke Shinnors who took over as secretary who was buried today.</p> <p>44:11 Speaks of the club playing a small role in the social aspect of the community but that this grew with the opening of the clubhouse. Mentions not taking a drink himself. Also mentions his wife joining the ladies committee.</p> <p>47:32 Tells of some of the characters involved in the Leixlip club, Matt Farrell, Jack Keefe, Paddy Dempsey, Ned Malone and Paddy Ardiffe. Mentions Luke Shinnors, Larry McCormack, Lorcan McCormack, John and Michael Geoghegan. Going to Junior A. Mentions playing against</p>
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	<p>Tommy Carew, Pat Dunney and Pat Mangan. On the team were 'Toss' Walsh, Jack O'Connor (now manager of Kerry), Billy Morgan and Sean O'Toole.</p> <p>54:33 Speaks of the ease of building up a club identity even with players changing but team spirit not being as easy to foster.</p> <p>55:52 Talks of the role played by women in the Leixlip club over the years. A cultural committee developing. Mentions a lady who had played camogie in Antrim and revived the camogie club, met her husband in the process and became Loretta Shinnars.</p> <p>58:36 Speaks of how the original camogie club went out of existence. Mentions the Malone family, Ned and Tom Malone and a man, Boisey Malone, playing on the camogie team and being found out after a tackle.</p> <p>01:00:35 Tells of the ladies who joined in to reform the club including Phil and Bernadette Shinnars, Mary Ryan (Tom's wife) and Betty Heffernan. Mentions Phil's daughter Clodagh who plays for Kildare. Also mentions some of the footballers playing camogie again such as Aisling Savage, Maria Moolick and Joanna Timmons.</p> <p>01:02:57 Talks of getting involved in ladies football himself after his playing career ended. Mentions working with handball in the club and then moving on to be secretary of ladies football. Also mentions one player, Anto Mooney and how good she was.</p> <p>01:07:30 Tells of his daughter being in a show and June Burke's daughter being in the same show. Speaks of being offered a nomination to chairman of the Kildare Ladies Football County Board. Mentions holding a number of positions and the hard work involved. Also mentions the assistance received from family and colleagues.</p> <p>01:09:58 Talks of his initial time as chairman and knowing very little of the teams involved. Mentions Tony Mooney and Frank Delaney who became selectors. Also mentions Tommy Kiernan from Confey, Martina Byrne, Seamus McCabe from Sarsfields club, Ursula Delaney and Joe Donovan from Grange.</p> <p>01:14:56 Describes the history of ladies football in Kildare. Speaks of clubs from the 1970's and '80s, Castledermot, the Curragh, Ellistown, Rathangan, Ballyteague and Eadestown. Mentions Michael and Patricia Delaney, Locky Byrne, Mary</p>
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	<p>Clare Byrne, Mary Bastick, Catherine Murphy, Rita Sergeant, Mary Fitzpatrick and Frankie Byrne.</p> <p>01:19:00 Talks of Kilcock and Leixlip already having ladies football clubs. Kilcock had been playing in Meath competitions, Leixlip in Dublin. Mentions Donal Fallon, Linda O'Connor, Brendan Dardis, Catherine Donohue, Michael Delaney and Michael Fitzpatrick and the start of the county board. Also mentions Martina Byrne, June Burke, Ciaran Burke and Gemma Black.</p> <p>01:22:11 Tells of the Kildare ladies not winning any matches in the first year but entering the Under 14 blitz and had 57 players in the second blitz. Mentions Louth, Meath, Donegal, Carlow, Roscommon. Also mentions it was 1994 when they won a game against Wexford in a Leinster Blitz and in 2000 an Under 12 team won the first medals.</p> <p>01:24:07 Talks about the Ladies junior team winning in 2000 and retaining the title for the next four years. Mentions Brianne Leahy of St. Leos and her two All Stars. Also mentions her boyfriend (Martin Haydon) being elected as a TD and her sister Kate.</p> <p>01:25:52 Talks of the steep learning curve involved in his role as chairman of the county board.</p> <p>01:33:27 Speaks of there not really being a relationship between the ladies football county boards and the GAA county boards as they are separate entities. Mentions pitch allocation being one area of conflict at times. Also mentions Richie Whelan giving gear bags to the ladies team and they co-operate with medals. Mentions Syl Merrins and his daughter's involvement in ladies football with Kildangan Nurney. Mentions Andrew O'Sullivan and Padraig Ashe.</p> <p>01:39:10 Talks of there being no direct contact between ladies football and camogie. Mentions this becoming a problem with dual players and fixtures clashing and how it was solved through cooperation. Discusses their Good Friday Agreement. Also mentions Christy Horan, Margaret Sexton and Joan O'Flynn. Having a joint county final.</p> <p>01:43:46 Tells of looking forward to the time when ladies football and the GAA come together.</p> <p>01:44:51 Talks of ladies football being completely integrated in the Leixlip club. Mentions Kathleen Moolick taking a seat on the club executive Mentions Susan O'Connor and Denis O'Connor and the clubs in Confey, Sarsfields, Naas and</p>
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	<p>Ballykelly. Also mentions parish clubs that are made up of players from many clubs, Na Fianna in Allen Parish where players come from Allenwood, Robertstown and Ballyteague. Milltown have their own club.</p> <p>01:48:34 Speaks of the differences in dealing with a mainly male committee and a mainly female committee. Mentions switching from paper to digital forms of communications in ladies football and how it was easier than if he had tried the same thing in the GAA. Also mentions his own club asking for seven days written notice under the rules but not getting it.</p> <p>01:55:48 Tells of holding all his records on a USB memory stick and not keeping a minute book.</p> <p>01:56:58 Speaks of the ladies wanting things done quicker than their male counterparts. Mentions them not being as easy to deal with via sub-committees. Also mentions Jackie Whelan PRO for Kildare Ladies GAA and their Facebook page and the Kildare GAA website.</p> <p>02:00:13 Talks of the split in the parish in 1989 between Leixlip and Confey and the Community games. Mentions difficulties with teams when players from different areas were told they could not play for their chosen teams. Also mentions there being some objections but the two clubs coming to terms with the situation as there were more than enough players for both clubs. Mentions Paddy Keegan, Eamon Fennelly and Liam Dowd.</p> <p>02:07:55 Talks of his best memory of his involvement in Gaelic games being winning the 1970 Offaly junior championship and winning the 1980 Kildare junior championship along with the Kildare ladies winning the junior All-Ireland in 2004.</p> <p>02:09:14 Tells what his involvement in Gaelic games has meant to him. Mentions wanting to be involved and it being who he is and what he is. Also mentions Brendan 'Ginger' O'Brien who he played soccer with and his sons Kevin and Niall who are Irish cricketers.</p> <p>02:12:36 Recalls going to over sixty Senior All-Ireland Football and Hurling finals. Talks of his one regret being that he was not a good hurler and encourages youngsters to play any sport, but preferably a GAA sport.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steward</p>

REFERENCE NO. OY/1/6

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____
Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	Played from the age of 12 to 35. Won an Offaly junior football title 1970, Kildare junior football title 1980, few Kildare Division 2 and 3 League Medals.
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	<p>Has been involved in administration from the age of 26.</p> <p>Club: Leixlip Secretary of Development, House, Coaching and Football committees, Secretary, Delegate to County Board.</p> <p>County: Communications Committee</p> <p>Ladies Club: Secretary (1 year); Delegate to County Board</p> <p>Ladies County: Chairperson (4 years), Secretary (5 years), PRO, Development Officer, Delegate to Leinster Council (9 years) and Delegate to Central Council (9 years).</p>
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 02:14:03
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: _____Arlene Crampsie_____

Date: _____06/08/12_____