## GAA Oral History Project

# **Interview Report Form**

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2010
Location	Tommy and Christina's home, near Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Tommy Murphy
<u>!</u>	Biographical Summary of Interviewee
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1923
	Home County: Sligo
Education	Primary: Tubbercurry Boys School, Co. Sligo
(Optional)	<b>Secondary:</b> Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, Western Road, Co. Cork
	Third Level: UCC
Family	Siblings: 2 sisters
	<b>Current Family if Different:</b> Wife (Christina), 6 sons & 2 daughters
Club(s)	Tubbercurry GAA [Sligo]
Occupation	Auctioneer in Mart
Parents' Occupation	Housewife [Mother]; Shopkeeper [Father]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fianna Fáil
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Tubbercurry Golf Club

Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Christina Murphy
B	Biographical Summary of Interviewee
Gender	Female
Born	Year Born: 1930
	Home County: Sligo
Education	Primary: Mercy Convent, Sligo City
	Secondary: Ursuline Convent, Sligo City
	Third Level: Sion Hill, Dublin
Family	Siblings: 1 brother & 3 sisters
	<b>Current Family if Different:</b> Husband (Tommy), 6 sons & 2 daughters
Club(s)	Tubbercurry GAA [Sligo]
Occupation	Home Economics Teacher
Parents' Occupation	Farmer and Businessman [Father]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fianna Fáil
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

Date of Report	18 <sup>th</sup> June 2012
Period Covered	1923 – 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Sligo
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Fundraising, 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, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish, History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, OViolence, Politics, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Opening of Croke Park, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Retirement, Food and Drink, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy / Economics
Interview Summary	Tommy and Christina talk about their shared lifelong passion for the GAA. Tommy grew up in Tubbercurry and from a very young age developed a keen interest in Gaelic games. He travelled to watch games and played himself with Tubbercurry, and eventually with Sligo. He spent some time in school in Cork where he was exposed to a lot of hurling and to legends like Christy Ring and Jack Lynch. His wife Christina has lived and breathed the GAA all her life, as her family were always deeply involved. Her father, Jack Brennan, was chairman of the county board and was also on the Connacht Council. She recalls meeting many historical figures growing up through her father, who was an umpire in the 1947 All-Ireland football final in New York. Christina spent some time in Dublin attending Sion Hill, and this allowed her to pay regular visits to Croke Park. Back in Sligo she put her experiences to good use and wrote a history of Tubbercurry GAA. Together Tommy and Christina recalls faces and places they have come across over the years. They have rubbed shoulders with political figures and past GAA presidents, and lived through the post-Civil War era and the Emergency, when life in Ireland was not easy for anybody. They recall stories and characters that stand out in their minds, and reflect on how the Association has changed since the days when they were growing up. 00:30 Tommy born in Sligo in 1923. Father died when he was
	experiences to good use and wrote a history of Tubbercurry GAA. Together Tommy and Christina recalls faces and place they have come across over the years. They have rubbed shoulders with political figures and past GAA presidents, and lived through the post-Civil War era and the Emergency, when life in Ireland was not easy for anybody. They recall stories and characters that stand out in their minds, and reflect on how the Association has changed since the days when they were growing up.

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	was three.
	01:10 (Tommy) Noones were their neighbours and he was friends with them. Mickey Noone a talented footballer.
	02:00 (Tommy) Patsy Noone sold cattle in England.
	03:20 (Tommy) Going to games with the Noones by car.
	03:40 (Tommy) Mickey, Tommy and Batty Noone played for Tubbercurry; Mickey played for Sligo and for Connacht.
	04:20 (Tommy) Tom Brennan another good footballer in the town who played for the county and for Connacht. Nicholas Devine also played for the county.
	05:15 (Tommy) GAA strong in Tubbercurry.
	05:40 (Tommy) Mick Kilcoyne and Tommy Kilcoyne were prominent.
	07:15 (Tommy) Hearing stories of the GAA in the area before his time.
	07:35 (Tommy) Not being taken to a game in Castlebar against Mayo when he was ten and being disappointed. Mrs Noone helping him out.
	08:45 (Tommy) Going to games around Roscommon.
	09:25 (Tommy) Kavanaghs were good footballers.
	09:45 (Tommy) Going to local games and meeting people.
	10:25 (Tommy) Going to Northern Ireland via Killooney, where there was a train. Patsy selling cattle.
	11:40 (Tommy) Going to Claremorris in the car.
	12:10 (Tommy) Some people cycling to games.
	12:55(Tommy) Many games on in Killooney.
	13:10(Tommy) Pitch rented on the Ballymoate Road.
	13:20 (Christina) Killooney was Quigley's field, Tubbercurry was O'Connor's field, Oxfield was in Grange. They got their own field in 1964.

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	13:55 Going to school on the Western Road in Cork. GAA prominent. School moving to Carrignavar.
	15:10 Son going to St Nathy's in Ballaghaderreen.
	15:30 Inter-county footballer Jimmy White in his class.
	16:05 His sons going to Carrignavar and playing games all over Munster.
	16:40 (Christina) An tAthair Donnachadha McAughrey president of the college at the time.
	17:35 (Christina) Sons moving to St Nathy's Collge when 'weekly border' system was introduced at Carrignavar.
	17:55 (Christina) Born in 1930. Father, Jack Brennan, chairman of county board for 16 years, and Connacht chairman also.
	18:35 (Christina) Connacht final of 1948 a draw. That disrupted the All-Ireland semi-final. Problem with replay because traditionally games were not held on the Sunday people went to Croagh Patrick. Dan O'Rourke from Connacht was GAA President. Father asking him to postpone game.
	20:25 (Christina) Not going to all the games due to lack of petrol during the Emergency. Father travelling to games with taxi man Jimmy Sweeney. Picking up Tommy Kilcoyne's father.
	21:35 (Christina) Mother hiring a car for the big games.
	21:45 (Christina) Going to first All-Ireland football final in 1946 at 16. Traveling by bus.
	22:25 (Christina) Father an umpire at the 1947 All-Ireland in the Polo Grounds, New York.
	22:55 (Christina) Worrying about her father's health. Seeing the news reel from New York in the cinema.
	23:40 (Christina) Meeting father on his return from New York in Dun Laoghaire. Going for breakfast in Monkstown.
	24:25 (Christina) Dublin mayor was PJ Cahill and he gave them chocolates. Micheál Ó Heiher asking for chocolates for

	another girl.
	25:50 (Christina) Having tea with Seán T O'Kelly in Áras an Uachtarán.
	26:00 (Christina) Banquet at The Gresham Hotel that night.
	26:35 (Christina) Cavan team at the Mansion House.
:	27:05 (Christina) John Joe Reilly's house covered in flags.
	27:35 (Christina) Canon Hamilton of Killaloo proposing game at the Polo Grounds. Father selected for a scouting mission but reluctant on health grounds. Proposing Tom Kilcoyne instead.
	28:40 (Christina) Father and Tom Kilcoyne umpires at the game itself in September.
	29:35 (Christina) Barrack maid Mary McGlin, a keen follower of the horses who never left the area she grew up in and gave Christina's father a photo of her nephew in case he spotted him in New York.
	31:20 (Christina) Tubbercurry's record of success. Soccer strong in Sligo Town.
	32:10 (Christina) Lack of a pitch in Sligo Town. Renting the Showgrounds.
	32:25 (Christina) Kerry visiting for a League game in 1948 and being met with a torchlight procession. Mayor was Andy Dolan at the time.
	33:20 (Christina) Seán Fallon playing for Sligo at the time. Paddy Bán Brosnan, the Lynes and O'Keefe playing for Kerry. Fallon scoring two quick goals.
	34:10 (Christina) Being in Sion Hill in Dublin. Writing letters to her father and going to watch GAA games often.
	35:05 (Christina) Father writing to her about the Kerry game. Rent they were charged by Sligo Rovers for the field.
	35:40 (Christina) Relationship between Sligo Rovers and the GAA. Ban in effect at the time. Problems related with that.
	36:20 (Christina) Sligo and Antrim the only two counties

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	objecting to the Ban.
	36:35 (Christina) Her cousin married to Cork footballer Weeshie Murphy. Cork visiting for a challenge game.
	37:30 (Tommy) Neasa O'Dowd a talented local footballer.
	38:25 (Christina) Father on the road a lot.
	39:25 (Christina) Hanging a black flag out the window after a defeat.
	40:00 (Christina) No ladies football at the time. Being at Congress in Malahide when that was discussed. Donal Keenan President at the time.
	40:25 (Christina) Playing camogie at the convent. Playing in the Dublin championship while at Sion Hill. Refereeing.
	41:00 (Christina) Fr Tommy Maher of Kilkenny ordained while she was at Sion Hill. Fr Tommy posted at a convent before going to Crumlin. Clubhouse in Crumlin burned down.
	42:30 (Christina) Fr Maher getting a stroke the day of the 1999 All-Ireland hurling final, which Kilkenny lost.
	43:00 (Christina) Fr Maher going to Mullinavat and being cared for. Going to visit.
	44:05 (Christina) Fr Maher running FÁS schemes.
	45:05 (Christina) Fr Maher getting his appendix out and having trouble getting a seated ticket for a game. Going to Crumlin with the ticket to give it to him.
	46:25 (Christina) Camogie at the time.
	46:35 (Tommy) Ladies camogie committee in the town in the 1930s.
	46:55 (Christina) Team called Clann Lir 47:25 (Christina) Peter Hart and Jimmy Colleran from nearby Curry. Colleran brothers challenging any seven brothers in Ireland to a game.
	48:05 (Christina) One of the Colleran brothers going for the priesthood and being sent to Scotland. County board chairman Patrick Brennan making presentation to Peter Hart

and Jimmy Colleran before they left the area.
50:00 (Tommy) Playing football near Peter Hart's house when they were younger.
50:50 (Christina) Rules about what county people could play for during the Emergency. Tubbercurry man playing with Louth and winning a minor All-Ireland in 1940.
52:10 (Tommy) Practicing with him locally before the All- Ireland final.
52:35 (Tommy) Neasa O'Dowd a talented player.
53:05 (Tommy) Winning championships with Tubbercurry. Winning the league and championship in the same year. Playing for the county.
54:05 (Tommy) How he felt about representing the parish. Influence of the Noones.
54:35 (Christina) Tommy missing a county minor game because he had to do the Metric.
55:10 (Tommy) Disappointment at missing out on the minor team.
55:25 (Christina) Many inter-parish tournaments at the time. Lack of football boots and club strips.
56:00 (Christina) Flour factory in Ballisodare and togs being made out of the flour bags.
56:35 (Christina) Not many radios in the area. No electricity or telephones in the village.
57:30 (Tommy) Other sports in the area. Annual sports day and events held there.
58:45 (Christina) Hamstring injuries unheard of until the 1970s.
59:45 (Christina) Rev Dr Lavin county board president when the local pitch was opened. John Joe Lavin taking part in the athletics. Fr Lavin talking about Mick Kilcoyne when he blessed the pitch. Mick Kilcoyne and Fr Lavin competing in athletics.

01:02:10 (Christina) Prize in Summerhill College for best student, best musician and best athlete. Tommy Lavin winning best athlete award.
01:04:25 (Tommy) Strength of GAA in Tubbercurry.
01:04:50 (Christina) Long gap since Tubbercurry won their last county championship.
01:05:10 (Christina) Problem of emigration in the 1960s. People leaving for England and the United States. Train starting in Sligo and people leaving the area on that.
01:06:45 (Christina) Team doing well again in 1974 and the following years.
01:07:40 (Tommy) Lots of professional people in the area.
01:08:20 (Christina) Sligo winning a junior All-Ireland in 1935. Regretting not having asked her father more about it.
01:09:15 (Christina) GAA correspondent Anthony Price in the area in the 1930s. Asking him about 1935. Price sharing a room with vice-chairman of the county board Michael O'Grady and being told a story by O'Grady about the Grand National.
01:12:45 (Christina) Clerical students on the team, Gerry Henry and Pádraig McGovern. Some players having to go to Maynooth before the final. McGovern going on retreat. Nobody knowing the result of the match.
01:14:40 (Christina) Objections being lodged with a pound note. Tubbercurry lodging an objection and Martin Sweeney taking issue with the fact that the pound note lodged was an English pound note. The incident making the newspaper.
01:16:10 (Christina) Going to Sion Hill in 1947. Father on Central Council at the time. Meeting the O'Keefes regularly at games and spending time at their house.
01:17:05 (Christina) O'Keefes moving to Terenure and then Orwell Park. Looking after the house they were leaving on moving day.
01:17:50 (Christina) Nuala and Máire were the O'Keefe's daughters. Nuala having to enter school on the third Sunday in September. Mr O'Keefe missing the All-Ireland final as a result.

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01:18:50 (Christina) Maintaining the friendship with the O'Keefes. Son Pádraig travelling the country visiting friends.
01:19:35 (Christina) Impressions of Paddy O'Keefe.
01:20:40 (Christina) Paddy telling him a story of an encounter with a man who didn't know who he was in Croke Park.
01:21:20 (Christina) Paddy as chief steward at the Eucharistic Congress.
01:22:40 (Christina) Paddy's influence in Ireland. Getting tickets from him.
01:24:45 (Christina) Admiration for former President Con Murphy. Going to his funeral and Pat Dockery of Mallow buried on the same day.
01:26:15 (Christina) Opinion of Con Murphy.
01:27:00 (Christina) Being cousins with a Dr Con Murphy.
01:27:20 (Christina) Admiration for former President Joe McDonagh and his ability to speak Irish.
01:27:55 (Christina) Admiration for former President Paddy Buggy. Him calling to a school where she was working.
01:29:20 (Christina) Former Presidents Donal Keenan and Mick Loftus.
01:29:40 (Christina) Tubbercurry initiating an anti-drugs campaign.
01:30:05 (Christina) Role of GAA President changing over the years. Increased number of committees.
01:30:55 (Tommy) How the GAA and the role of President changed.
01:31:20 (Christina) Less money in the GAA in the past. No expense accounts in her father's time.
01:32:40 (Christina) Family talking about GAA all the time.
01:34:05 (Tommy) Advantages of being involved in the GAA.

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01:34:45 (Christina) Mickey Kierans a talented footballer.
01:35:10 (Tommy) Mickey Kierans not attending meetings.
01:35:30 (Christina) Making friends through the GAA.
01:36:50 (Christina) Her son, John, playing in goals at UCD. Her son captain of the team when they lost to Galway. Winning titles after that.
01:38:40 (Christina) Being Irish officer for Tubbercurry GAA. Moving aside for Eamon McGinley of Donegal. Going to meetings.
01:39:30 (Christina) How she was treated as a woman.
01:39:50 (Christina) Getting involved in the history of Tubbercurry GAA. Micheál Ó Muircheartaigh launching her book and the children flocking around him.
01:41:10 (Christina) Impact of her book on the club and its members.
01:42:25 (Christina) Tubbercurry's prospects for success. David Kelly, Stephen Gilmartin and Colm Magee on the county team.
01:43:10 (Christina) Losing games narrowly in the past
01:43:50 (Christina) Living through two Connacht title successes.
01:44:40 (Tommy) Importance of the GAA club to the community.
01:46:05 (Christina) Carnival in the area in the 1960s. Events there.
01:48:25 (Tommy) Changes in the ethos of the GAA.
01:48:40 (Christina) Politics and the GAA.
01:49:35 (Christina) Liam Lipsett a minor when her father was county board chairman. Opposing team objecting to Lipsett How her father solved the argument.
01:51:25 (Christina) GAA bringing people together.

01:52:00 (Tommy) GAA as cultural movement.
01:52:20 (Christina) Changing ethos of GAA and its members. Less emphasis on Gaelic aspect of GAA.
01:53:20 (Tommy) Importance of soccer in society.
01:54:05 (Christina) Quicksilver television programme on in Sligo in 1968 and being unable to go as she was pregnant. Going to it in Ballina some time later. Winning money that night and questions she answered.
01:58:35 (Tommy) Women in the GAA.
01:58:50 (Christina) Changing role of women in the GAA.
01:59:35 (Christina) Going to All-Ireland football finals since 1946.
01:59:45 (Christina) Meeting Gerry Arthurs from Armagh at a final.
02:00:35 (Christina) Down final in 1960 sticking out in her mind.
02:00:45 (Christina) Security at Croke Park and Mr O'Keefe overseeing it.
02:01:55 (Christina) Work done by people in Croke Park. Bridie Moriarty in charge of tickets.
02:02:50 (Christina) Someone she knew looking after a team and putting in a claim for babysitting.
02:03:35 (Christina) Issue of GAA people being paid.
02:04:20 (Christina) Less Irish spoken at meetings.
02:04:30 (Tommy) Less people helping out 'for the love of it'.
02:04:55 (Christina) People claiming for mileage.
02:05:25 (Christina) No minor board in Sligo in 1964. Fr Tommy Flynn involved in formation of a minor board and putting forth specific proposals for how it should function. Fr Flynn later becoming a bishop.
02:07:05 (Christina) People standing in for other people in

matches in the 1930s. A priest suggesting how to combat this. Mickey Frank Regan pointing out that it would not work.
02:08:20 (Tommy) Major changes in the GAA.
02:08:35 (Christina) Less of a following at club level.
02:09:25 (Christina) Sligo having a good following at inter- county level. Tommy going to a lot of Sligo games and not wanting to go to Dublin again for the hurling final. Christina going to the game.
02:11:05 (Tommy) Interest in hurling. Seeing Christy Ring and Jack Lynch play when he was based in Cork.
02:11:45 (Christina) Family of footballers living nearby. One of them playing with Civil Service in Dublin. Finding an old picture with him in it.
02:13:30 (Christina) Changes in media coverage of the GAA.
02:14:30 (Tommy) Changes in media coverage. Reporter who used to work for the Sligo Champion. Change in that newspaper's coverage of the GAA.
02:16:15 (Christina) Change in ownership of the Sligo Champion.
02:16:25 (Christina) Honouring the 1946 Tubbercurry when her book was launched in 1996. What they did.
02:18:35 (Tommy) Playing for the county. The Noones also playing for the county.
02:21:15 (Christina) ***Talks about photos of Tubbercurry players she is looking at***
02:23:00 (Christina) John Joe Reilly's military funeral.
02:24:35 (Christina) Donal McAnallen coming to her for information about players from Sligo.
02:28:00 (Christina) Being asked about Mick Kilcoyne winning a Sigerson Cup medal.
02:29:05 (Christina) Local ground being purchased. Mickey Brett working on the development of the ground.

02:20:25 (Christina) Friends of Tubbercurry at the Curragh in 1996 raising money. Colm Murray of RTÉ there. A Magee
man organising it for them. Selling tickets. Cork man Billy Murray's horse winning.
02:34:30 (Christina) Tommy on Central Council with Liam Mulvihill.
02:34:50 (Tommy) How he found being on Central Council.
02:35:15 (Christina) Seeing Mick Frawley at a Tommy Murphy Cup presentation. [Christina subsequently called the project to correct this, Mick Frawley was from Tipperary]
02:36:00 (Tommy) Major rule changes in the GAA.
02:36:15 (Christina) Cousins Matt and Jim Marrinan being good players with short careers whose style of play might not be legal in the 21st Century.
02:37:10 (Tommy) Opening of Croke Park and his thought on that.
02:38:10 (Christina) Objection to opening of Croke Park.
02:40:00 (Christina) Hopes for the future of the GAA.
02:42:00 (Tommy) What the GAA has meant to him.
02:43:20 (Christina) She and Tommy having the GAA in common.
02:44:45 (Tommy) Importance of their children's involvement.
02:45:30 (Christina) Their son, James, managing a team in Sydney. Family involvement in GAA.
02:47:00 (Christina) Tommy Lyons of Dublin training a team their grandson is on.
02:48:00 (Christina) Their daughter's husband, an Englishman, going to a game in Croke Park and his impressions of that.
02:49:35 (Tommy) GAA's role in their lives.
02:50:45 (Christina) Holding a town league in 1984 for the GAA Centenary. Her sons playing on different teams.

	02:52:50 (Christina) Crossmolina winning a championship in 1949 and being honoured in 1999. Accepting a statuette on behalf of Shane Tansey. Titles Shane won.
	02:53:40 Where former Dublin manager Tommy Lyons' family are originally from.
Involvement in	Tommy:
GAA	✓ Supporter ✓ Player ✓ Manager ✓ Coach ✓ Steward
	✓ Chairperson ✓ Committee Member ✓ Grounds-person
	✓ Caterer □ Jersey Washer ✓ Referee □ None
	Other (please specify):
	Christina:
	✓ Supporter ✓ Player □ Manager □ Coach □ Steward
	Chairperson Committee Member Grounds-person
	✓ Caterer ✓ Jersey Washer ✓ Referee □ None
	Other (please specify):
<b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)	Tommy:
	Played football with Tubbercurry – won 1940 Sligo Minor Football Championship and 1942 Sligo Senior Football Championship; Captained Tubbercurry Football team in 1950/51 and won Sligo Football league and other titles. Member of the Sligo Gaelic Football team, 1951 – 54.
	Christina:
	Played camogie in the Ursuline Convent (5 years); Played camogie with Sion Hill in the Dublin Championship (4 years)
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	Tommy:
	Member of Tubbercurry GAA committee for many years, held several positions including Chairman. Delegate to Central Council in the late 1970s.
	Christina:

	Irish Language Officer, Tubbercurry GAA in the 1970s.
Format	✓ Audio □ Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 02:55:34
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: 18<sup>th</sup> June 2012