

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	20 th Jan 2011
Location	Hollyrood Hotel, Bundoran, Co. Donegal
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Brian McEniff
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1942 Home County: Donegal
Education	Primary: St. Macartan's NS, Bundoran, Co. Donegal Secondary: St. Macartan's, Monaghan, Co. Monaghan Third Level: College of Catering, Cathal Brugha Street, Dublin
Family	Siblings: 3 brothers & 1 sister Current Family if Different: Married to Cautie with 7 daughters and 3 sons
Club(s)	Bundoran [Donegal]; St. Joseph's [Donegal]; Clanna Gael [Dublin]; Cavan [New York]; Kerry [New York]; Toronto [Canada]
Occupation	Hotelier
Parents' Occupation	Business Man [Father]; Nurse [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fianna Fáil
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Parents and Friends of Donegal Mentally Handicapped Association (Secretary for 7 years); St. Vincent De Paul; Executive Director Accommodation Life Insurance; Director Knock Airport; Former Bundoran Town Councillor and Donegal County Councillor

REFERENCE NO. DL/1/15

Date of Report	26 th July 2012
Period Covered	1860s – 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Donegal, Tyrone, Monaghan, Dublin, Great Britain, Scotland, Americas, Canada, USA, Australasia, Australia
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Material Culture, Education, Media, Emigration, Involvement in GAA abroad, 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, Alcohol, Violence, 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	<p>Brian talks about his involvement in the GAA over the years. He talks about playing football in national school before going to St. Macartan's College in Monaghan and playing there also. He discusses playing with the Bundoran club and playing soccer for Sligo Rovers under a different name. He talks about the history of the club and how it has developed over the years. Brian discusses playing with, and the success of, the St Joseph's club, an amalgamation of Bundoran and Ballyshannon. He talks about moving to Canada and getting involved with the GAA there before playing for a Kerry team in New York. Brian talks at length about his playing and managerial career with Donegal, the culmination of which was the winning of the 1992 All-Ireland football final. He describes what that was like and the build-up to the final. He talks about his administrative career and the work involved from club to national level. He gives his opinion on various aspects of the GAA over the years including the issue of professionalism within the Association and also the removing of Rules 27 and 42. Brian describes the role of the GAA in his life and talks about what the Association means to him.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:27 Brian talks about his earliest memories of the GAA. Discusses his uncle Johnny Begley's involvement and how he</p>

	<p>played for Tyrone. Playing football in Carrickmore and going to a country school. Mentions Eoin McGuinness and organising school leagues based on street areas. Recalls his father buying him a pair of boots. Going to see Sligo Rovers. Playing in goals first before playing outfield. Mentions Robbie Cullen. Describes the Ballyshannon style of play.</p> <p>04:35 Recalls going to watch Donegal matches with his father and the players on the team from the 1950s on. Mentions Frank O'Donnell, Frankie Brennan, Jim Gallagher, Jackie McDermott, Peadar McGeehan, Colm Tobin, Hughie Tim Boyle and Sean O'Donnell. Going to school in St. Macartan's College in Monaghan. Talks about his father's Glasgow connections and supporting Glasgow Celtic and continuing to watch Sligo Rovers.</p> <p>06:39 Talks about listening to Michael O'Hehir on the radio and becoming a Wexford hurling supporter. Mentions the Rackard brothers and Jim Morrissey. Mentions golf and tennis.</p> <p>07:24 Discusses the role of the GAA in St. Macartan's College. Recalls his interest in soccer and having to make a football because his was confiscated by Fr Enda McCormack. Notes how he played for Sligo Rovers under the name of John Rooney and how he didn't play soccer after the Ban was lifted. Mentions Ardara and Killybegs.</p> <p>08:40 The amalgamation with Ballyshannon and playing with the St. Joseph's club. Played Ranafast and McRory Cup with St. Macartan's. Mentions his divided loyalty in a match against St. Eunan's.</p> <p>09:55 Discusses playing illegally with Clanna Gael in Dublin. Mentions St. Vincents, Na Fianna and Sean Ferriter. Played Sigerson Cup for Trinity College (also illegally).</p> <p>10:40 Playing with Bundoran before moving to Canada and getting involved in the GAA there with the Clann na nGael club. Winning a hurling final in Toronto.</p> <p>11:39 Talks about coming home in the 1960s and playing with St. Joseph's, an amalgamation of Bundoran and Ballyshannon. Discusses getting picked for Donegal and playing against Longford, Cavan and Down. Beating Crossmaglen to win an Ulster Final having beaten Carrickmore in the semi-final. Recalls his mother divided loyalties.</p> <p>13:40 Discusses the setting up of the minor board in Donegal</p>
--	---

	<p>and becoming manager for the Donegal minor team. Mentions John 'the Dodger' McDermott, Martin Carney, Kieran Keeney and PJ McGowan. Recalls being sacked. Talks about being on the Ulster Council at the same time. Getting picked on the Ulster team for the Railway Cup and going to San Francisco with the All-Stars in 1971.</p> <p>15:43 Talks about buying a hotel during the Troubles. Describes his interest in the GAA and how it became a way of life.</p> <p>17:55 Discusses being involved with the Donegal team during the 1970s. Getting beaten by Leitrim and approaching Mick Higgins and going for player/manager. Winning the Ulster championship in 1972. Recalls travelling to Cork to see his brother and being recognised by a man on his way to Doneraile. Mentions getting drawn against Tyrone to play the first game in Healy Park, Omagh. Beating Down. Talks about travelling to New York to play with Kerry. Mentions John Kerry O'Donnell and Jim Daly. Returning home and being sacked. Playing under John Hannigan. Discusses retiring from playing with Donegal. Mentions Brendan Dunleavy and Sean O'Donnell.</p> <p>24:22 Talks about playing and managing Bundoran after St Joseph's broke up in the late 1970s. Discusses getting back involved in the Donegal team in 1980. Match against Tipperary, only team lower was Kilkenny. Mentions Martin McHugh.</p> <p>26:50 Playing Tipperary in Emly. Recalls Donegal's campaign in 1982. Mentions Frank Rush.</p> <p>28:05 Talks about winning the Ulster Senior Championship in 1983. Being sacked after 1976. Playing Armagh, mentions Charlie Mulgrew, Eunan McIntyre and Paul McGettigan. Being involved in the Ulster Railway Cup team at the same time. Being sacked for the third time. Tom Conaghan taking over. Becoming Donegal manager again in 1989. Winning the All-Ireland in 1992. Talks about retiring in 1994.</p> <p>31:55 Discusses his role in administration at national and provincial level and being appointed Ireland manager for the International Rules against Australia in 2000.</p> <p>32:35 Talks about becoming Donegal county chairman in 2002 and again becoming county manager. Discusses the team's campaign that season. Getting to the All-Ireland semi-final.</p>
--	---

	<p>41:58 Recalls Donegal's 2004 campaign. Mentions Cormac McAnallen. Talks about the people he worked with. Discusses his work with Ulster Council and Central Council. Talks about his work with Louth in 2010 and going back to the Bundoran club to help out. Describes his interest in anything to do with the GAA.</p> <p>50:40 Discusses his involvement in the Louth team in 2010. Mentions Sylvester Maguire, Martin McQuillan and Peter Fitzpatrick. Stopping in Newbliss on way over and back. Talks about the people involved and the Leinster final against Meath. Mentions Peter McDonald and Benny Tierney. The problem putting on the Louth tracksuit.</p> <p>53:05 Recalls going to watch Tyrone play Louth in 1957. Travelling by train with Art McRory. B-Specials entering the train on way back to Carrickmore.</p> <p>54:26 Talks about working with the Sligo county team.</p> <p>56:23 Describes the difference between working with Donegal and with other teams.</p> <p>58:15 Recalls playing soccer with Sligo Rovers under a different name in the 1960s and nearly getting caught by the Vigilance Committee. Playing with Toronto Omagh. Mentions Sean O'Donnell and Patsy McGowan. Trial for Shelbourne against Shamrock Rovers in Dublin and ended up playing with a Church of Ireland team in Sligo called Carrowroe and getting picked for the Sligo-Leitrim AUL team. His father's death.</p> <p>01:02:10 Talks about his mother and father's interest in the GAA. Describes their Cork connection. Discusses his interest in rugby.</p> <p>01:04:22 Talks about the type of GAA facilities in Bundoran when he was growing up. Discusses the role of Eoin McGuinness in the GAA in the area. Describes the development of the facilities over the years.</p> <p>01:08:15 Discusses the history of the Bundoran club. The importance of the railway in bringing football to the area. Recalls the old railway area and the playing of hurling on the beach. Playing against Burt in Donegal Hurling Final. Mentions two Saddler Brothers and two Auchinlecks, Church of Ireland people from Kinlough. The Bundoran Sinn Féiner's club. Playing the county final in Derry in the Brandywell against Red Hughs, Killygordon.</p> <p>01:10:28 Talks about the impact of the Second World War.</p>
--	--

	<p>Discusses the collapse of the club due to a lack numbers.</p> <p>01:13:06 Describes what the GAA was like in Toronto. Talks about Clann na nGael's rivalry with the Garryowen club. Mentions Mike Reilly. Playing in the Mid-West League with teams from Chicago, Boston, Cleveland, Syracuse, Detroit. Playing in New York.</p> <p>01:14:59 Talks about becoming the secretary of Bundoran when he came home to Donegal. Recalls trying to make the Bundoran pitch a county pitch. Discusses the club's successes over the years. Mentions Eddie Quinn.</p> <p>01:18:28 Describes the types of celebrations during St Joseph's successful period. Talks about playing with Donegal and working at the same time.</p> <p>01:22:00 Talks about the difference in playing for the county team and for the club.</p> <p>01:23:20 Discusses the type of training he did with the county team and the changes over the years. Recalls the type of people that taught him training techniques.</p> <p>01:28:25 Talks about the difference in training when he was playing and when he was managing the Donegal team.</p> <p>01:30:53 Recalls playing with the old leather footballs and describes what they were like. Talks about playing in the Belcoo seven a side tournament in 1973 and an incident in a match and stealing their ball. Mentions Paddy Devlin, Fr McDaid, Fr Havlin, Mossy Ferguson, McPartlands and Paucic McShane.</p> <p>01:36:10 Talks about the issue of parish boundaries.</p> <p>01:38:35 Gives his opinion on what makes a good player. Talks about his own abilities.</p> <p>01:41:30 Talks about what makes a good manager and what's involved in the role. Discusses the problems in raising money.</p> <p>01:46:25 Discusses the problems with fundraising for the GAA. Talks about the Donegal supporters club. Mentions Danny McNamee. Talks about suspending players in the past. Regrets suspending players in 2004. Highlights the importance of socialising for players.</p> <p>01:52:42 Talks about Donegal's All-Ireland win in 1992 and recalls the team's campaign to the final. It started from 1989. Mentions Meath, Kildare, Down, Dublin, Cork. Issue of late</p>
--	---

	<p>goals.</p> <p>01:55:10 Training in the rugby club Donegal Town. Mentions Brian Murray and Gary Walsh. Mentions Fermanagh, drawing with Cavan in Breffni. Players' fitness. Ulster final against Derry. Mentions Martin McHugh, Tommy Ryan, Tony Boyle and John Cunningham. Playing Mayo, fear of winning, putting on Manus Boyle. Mentions Art McRory, John O'Mahony. Trying to keep players away from the press. Using Sean Ferriter.</p> <p>01:59:05 Being told that Joyce McMullan's brother had died on day of the All-Ireland. Having stopped in Pettigo on the way to Dublin. Mentions Naul McCole, Anthony Molloy, Donal Reid. Mentions the Waves of Tory. Talking to Sean O'Neill, Martin McHugh. Being cross about mistakes made that day. Martin Shovlin's injury. Holiday to the Canaries.</p> <p>02:05:05 Anthony Molloy's knee issues. Problems with knees in Donegal. Blames the sand based pitches. Playing Mayo and Derry in Glasgow.</p> <p>02:07:53 Describes the types of issues he came across during his time in administration. Talks about Rule 27 and Rule 42, the ban on foreign sports and the opening of Croke Park for non-Gaelic games.</p> <p>02:11:00 Talks about the importance of volunteers in the GAA. Discusses the structure of the championship and the national league.</p> <p>02:12:35 Discusses the issue of professionalism in the GAA.</p> <p>02:14:52 Talks about the issue of politics in the GAA.</p> <p>02:19:45 Gives his opinion on the role of the Irish language and politics in the GAA.</p> <p>02:21:42 Chooses the 1992 All-Ireland final as his best memory from his time in the GAA. Describes the aftermath of the match. The train journey home through Dromad, Sligo, Bundoran. Talks about Joyce McMullen and finding out after the match that his brother had not died.</p> <p>02:27:10 Talks about his GAA heroes and favourite players. Highlights the work of county administrators. Mentions Martin McHugh, Anthony Molloy, Peadar McGeehan, Frankie Brennan, Sean Purcell, Sean O'Neill, Frank Mulligan, Peter Canavan. In administration mentions Hugh Daly, Noreen Doherty and Naul McCole.</p>
--	--

REFERENCE NO. DL/1/15

	<p>02:32:44 Discusses his biggest disappointments in the GAA.</p> <p>02:35:00 Talks about the role of the GAA in his life. His feelings towards the grounds in Ballybofey.</p>
Involvement in GAA	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____</p>
Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	<p>Played from Under 12 until he was 54. At club level won 1 minor championship, 2 junior championships, 2 junior leagues, 1 intermediate championship, 9 senior championships, 3 Ulsters and 1 All-Ireland. In Canada won 3 senior championships, 4 senior leagues and 2 hurling championships. He also won 1 Dublin senior league.</p> <p>At county level he won 2 McKenna Cups, 2 Lagan Cups, 2 Railway Cups and a National League.</p>
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	<p>Has been involved in administration since 1963.</p> <p>Club: Toronto Secretary; Bundoran Secretary, Treasurer, Chairman</p> <p>County: Chairman, Delegate to Ulster Council, Delegate to Central Council, Chairman of Donegal Strategic Review</p> <p>Ulster: Activities Committee</p> <p>Central: Games Administration Committee, Management Committee</p> <p>Inter-County Manager: 5 Ulster Championships, 3 McKenna Cups, 1 All-Ireland, 13 Railway Cups and 1 Connacht Championship</p>
Format	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual</p>
Duration	<p>Length of Interview: 02:39:34</p>
Language	<p>English</p>

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: _____Arlene Crampsie_____

Date: _____26/07/12_____