

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	12 th Jan 2010
Location	Enda's home, near Rocrea, Co. Tipperary.
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Enda McDonnell
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1951 Home County: Tipperary
Education	Primary: Templemore CBS, Co. Tipperary Secondary: Templemore CBS, Co. Tipperary
Family	Siblings: 2 brothers & 2 sisters Current Family if Different: Wife (Olive), 2 daughters & 1 son
Club(s)	Éire Óg GAA, Templemore [Tipperary]; JK Brackens GAA [Tipperary]; Brisbane GAA [Australia]
Occupation	Building Contractor
Parents' Occupation	Plumber [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	None
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Ladies Gaelic Football Association; Templemore-Clonmore Drama Group; Macra na Feirme; Muintir na Tíre; Templemore Boxing Club; Aussie Rules Football Club, Brisbane.

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Date of Report	20 th June 2012
Period Covered	1884 - 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Tipperary, Australasia, Australia, Americas, Canada, Asia, Vietnam
Key Themes Covered	Grounds, Facilities, Training, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, 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, Irish Language, Culture, Scór, All-Ireland, Club History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Career, Relationship with the Association, Relationships, Economy/Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Enda discusses the development of ladies football in Tipperary and his involvement in it as well as his time in the GAA both in Ireland and in Australia. He also discusses playing Australian Rules Football and his son following in his footsteps. He talks about his daughter and her involvement in both camogie and ladies football. Enda speaks of Ladies Football being the fastest growing sport in the world with teams being formed all over the world. He speaks about his involvement in Scor and finishes by talking of what the GAA means to him in terms of identity.</p> <p>00:33 Talks of the development of Ladies football in Tipperary from its official start in Thurles 1974 although it was played in 1968. Mentions it being a focus for fundraising around the Biafran war.</p> <p>01:38 Speaks of clubs being formed around Clonmel, Spicers, Post Office, County Council, Bulmers, Cidona, Showerings and then into parishes. Mentions the parish fates and tournaments at the time and the involvement of Dan O'Mahony as an organiser. Also mentions Ardfinnan and Kilurney putting teams in.</p> <p>02:50 Speaks of the man credited with officially starting Ladies Football, Jim Kennedy, an army sergeant, being the trainer of the Ardfinnan team. Mentions how he went on to train the first Tipperary Ladies Football team to win the All-Ireland in 1974. Also mentions Der Shanahan, Fr Lucey, John Almer and John Donovan.</p> <p>03:45 Talks of Tipperary winning the first two All-Irelands in '74 and '75 were in the finals in '77 '78 '79 and won again in</p>

	<p>1980, Liam Shinnock trained the team in 1980. Mentions only eight teams contesting the championship.</p> <p>04:53 Tells of Tipperary also winning the first three U16 All-Ireland but with all this success by 1983 ladies football had almost disappeared from Tipperary. Mentions that the cause may have had something to do with the families that were involved.</p> <p>05:34 Tells of the main clubs involved being, Ardfinnan, Drangan, Kilurney, Newcastle, Saint Lukes and Powerstown. Mentions there being 11 clubs by 1975 and talks of a match with the Mulinahone ICA team.</p> <p>06:36 Speaks of Tipperary winning the first national football league in 1978. Mentions there being a lot of crossover with camogie players.</p> <p>07:09 Talks of the revival in 1993 when Tom O'Dwyer, Ann Burke, Peggy Kennedy and John Ryan took over in the running and took ladies football up to 23 clubs. Mentions Roberta O'Brien playing for 1994 Tipperary U14's who the first lady to command an Irish naval vessel. Marion O'Riordan who was also on the same team became an international golfer.</p> <p>08:47 Talks of Pauline Russell taking over and putting a structure on Ladies Football in Tipperary. In 1996 there were 640 registered players this rose to 2000 in 2010.</p> <p>09:30 Talks of his own involvement in ladies football in 1994 through Templemore camogie club. Mentions contesting a few county finals at juvenile level and winning in 1996.</p> <p>10:47 Speaks of Tipperary entering an adult team in the national league in 1998. Mentions 2000 and the ladies football falling into disarray but being saved by a new county board. Also mentions them winning their first national league in 2003 since 1978.</p> <p>12:04 Talks of 2002 when Cappagh White won the first Munster Junior Club Championship. Mentions that in 2003 Tipperary won their first Munster Junior Championship since the 1980's.</p> <p>12:30 Speaks of 2003 when Edel Hanley being the first Tipperary lady to be picked on a Munster ladies football team for almost thirty years. Mentions the many wins of the Tipperary Ladies football teams at different levels.</p> <p>14:21 Talks of the 2008 Intermediate team winning their first</p>
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	<p>All-Ireland.</p> <p>15:19 Speaks of the U16 team winning the All-Ireland along with various other Tipperary teams who were not as successful.</p> <p>15:54 Talks of 2010 and Tipperary winning the U14, U16 and U18 B championships but unfortunately being beaten by Wexford in the U14 and U18 and by Mayo in the U16. Mentions the Senior team having a good run in the National League but failed to qualify in division 2.</p> <p>17:22 Speaks of growing from five clubs to the current twenty two. Mentions Bidy Ryan and Kitty Savage nee Ryan from Ardfinnan.</p> <p>18:55 Talks of the difficulties in promoting Ladies football in Tipperary as most of the football was in the south of the county. Mentions there being only one mid county team at the start Moycarkey-Borris GAA club and how this has risen to eight.</p> <p>20:47 Talks of some clubs falling by the wayside primarily because they were only adult clubs without juvenile sections. Mentions hoping to establish clubs in Nenagh, Roscrea, Ballina, and Newport.</p> <p>22:03 Talks of the assistance from Croke Park in developing the clubs. Mentions Tara Ryan and Gaelic for Girls a ten week programme hoping to establish clubs. Also mentions Will Harman. And Gaelic for Mothers and how those involved want to play challenge matches but that there are insurance issues.</p> <p>25:31 Talks of Ladies football being the fastest growing sport in the world. Mentions clubs in Peking, Shanghai, SE Asia, Cape Town, Australia, Canada, America and Europe. Also mentions the possibility of having Ladies Gaelic Football as a demonstration game in the 2032 Olympics.</p> <p>26:50 Talks of Tipperary hosting 2005 Ladies Football Congress in the Abbey Court Hotel.</p> <p>27:58 Talks of representatives from New York, London and Europe attending. Mentions Australia and how Ladies Football has rejuvenated interest in Gaelic football in general. Also mentions that 80% of those playing in Australia, America and Canada are not Irish.</p> <p>29:39 Speaks of the attraction of Ladies Football to ladies across the world. Mentions a club in Vietnam with no Irish</p>
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	<p>involvement at all.</p> <p>30:50 Talks of why Ladies football took until the late 1960's to establish itself. Mentions women having a greater sense of independence, free time and changes in the economy.</p> <p>32:20 Talks of the relationship between Ladies football and Camogie in Tipperary. Mentions the attitude of officials and how vital it is to good relations. Also mentions players who played both football and camogie such as Angela McDermott and her playing success and Maeve Corcoran.</p> <p>35:05 Speaks of the crossover between Camogie and Ladies football not occurring too often due to the regional nature of the sports within Tipperary with Camogie being played predominantly in north and mid Tipperary while Ladies football is found mainly in the south of the county.</p> <p>36:03 Talks of the relationship with the GAA being very good. Mentions only requiring the use of referees and playing facilities from the GAA and fundraising and organising everything else themselves.</p> <p>37: Talks of Dr Morris Park the centre of excellence for Tipperary Football and Hurling being opened up to Ladies football over the last few years due to Enda's positive attitude towards the officials in charge.</p> <p>37:56 Speaks of club life and how they share the pitches and facilities. Mentions the demand on club facilities and how the squeeze in a slot for Ladies Football.</p> <p>38:55 Talks of the possibility of Camogie and Ladies football having their own separate governing association or falling under the GAA. Mentions them remaining separate at national level but co-operation being the key at local level. Also mentions how camogie and ladies football clubs could be swallowed up and lose their independence.</p> <p>40:12 Talks of the problem at the moment being that girls can find themselves paying three memberships, one to GAA, one to the Camogie club and one to the Ladies football club. Mentions this being the reason they will come under one umbrella organisation.</p> <p>40:44 Speaks of the professionalism within Ladies football in strategic planning and in sponsorship with TG4. Mentions it being a beacon that has promoted ladies football putting it into every house. Also mentions it being now more successful than camogie and Helen O'Rourke and Paula</p>
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	<p>Prunty.</p> <p>43:56 Talks of the challenges facing Ladies football being bridging players from the juvenile game to the adult game. Mentions the recession and the cost associated with running clubs. Also mentions Michael Frawley getting Ladies football into Croke Park.</p> <p>46:45 Tells of the profile of Ladies football and its coverage in the media. Mentions how the clubs need to do more for themselves. Also mentions RTE not showing much as TG4 are involved.</p> <p>49:08 Talks of the gender balance in administration in the county with men holding the main positions. Mentions it being a young sport and talks of a mother and daughter Marion O'Shea and Loraine O'Shea both winning All-Ireland medals. Also mentions losing administrators as talented players move on with family life and are no longer involved.</p> <p>51:53 Speaks of his time in administration in the GAA and compares the two. Mentions the similarity in meeting and problems being brought before committees. Also mentions how successful Ladies football has been compared to his involvement in the GAA.</p> <p>53:38 Talks of his wife being involved also in Ladies football and how this would not be the case in the GAA.</p> <p>54:50 Tells how as a female sport women are much more welcome at the meetings.</p> <p>55:25 Speaks of the attitude at both GAA and Ladies football being similar but feeling welcome at all levels in ladies football. Mentions the five year in the GAA and how it is a good thing apart from the case when a good administrator is forced out after five years.</p> <p>57:39 Speaks about his GAA career with Templemore. Talks of his father playing and his brothers playing and winning All-Ireland Garda and Army medals.</p> <p>58:10 Talks of his father being the first treasurer of Templemore Éire Óg Juvenile club in 1963. Mentions him always being available to help the club and his pride at receiving a Sean-Ghael award from Tipperary county board.</p> <p>59:31 Talks of five generations of his family being involved in the GAA as shown in Martin Bourke's history of Mid-Tipperary GAA. His grandfather, uncles, his brothers and himself and</p>
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	<p>his daughters and grandson are all involved in their own way.</p> <p>01:02:30 Talks of his earliest memory being in the primary school in Templemore and being shown the basics by the Christian Brothers in 1961.</p> <p>01:03:22 Talks of watching county finals and helping out as a child. Mentions being taken to an inter-county game, a Munster final in 1963 between Tipperary and Waterford in Limerick. Also mentions watching his father play Junior hurling.</p> <p>01:04:37 Tells of his playing career from juvenile level under trainer, Benny Keating up to Under 21 with Tipperary. Mentions very little collective training taking place. Also mentions playing hurling in the North Tipperary vocational school team and playing an All-Ireland final in Croke Park in 1969.</p> <p>01:07:00 Talks of the 1969 All-Ireland national hurling league final between Tipperary and Kilkenny in which players were suspended after the game due to the melee on the field during the match. Mentions Ollie Walsh, Sean McLaughlin and John Gleeson.</p> <p>01:07:35 Talks of playing football for the North Tipperary vocational schools also.</p> <p>01:08:07 Speaks of emigrating to Australia and continuing to play there. Mentions the structure there not being very strong.</p> <p>01:08:59 Talks of the clubs in Australia today and of playing Australian rules football while there in a semi professional capacity.</p> <p>01:10:05 Tells how the Australian rules football suited his game and playing for three years but missing out on a grand final due to injury.</p> <p>01:11:24 Tells of this being before the organised compromised rules game being developed. Mentions the gaming laws in Australia being changed and how this affected the clubs and the structure.</p> <p>01:14:31 Talks of also being involved in cross country running, badminton and senior football.</p> <p>01:15:33 Speaks of being chairman of the hurling and football club in Brisbane at the time. Mentions three or four Irish priests and Irish teachers along with construction workers,</p>
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	<p>prison officers and some aboriginals being involved in the team. Also mentions travelling to Sydney to play in tournaments and Queensland entering a team in the Australasian Championship in 1975.</p> <p>01:18:33 Speaks of the hurling being a bit rough especially having travelled 700 miles in cars to get to the match and spending half the night drinking.</p> <p>01:18:56 Talks of being flown to various locations in Australia and put up for the weekend to play football in club championships. Mentions being in Australia for only a few weeks and meeting Peter Brohan and Seamus O’Sullivan who became president of the Australasian Gaelic Athletic Association.</p> <p>01:20:47 Speaks of his motivation for getting involved in GAA abroad being for nationalistic and social reasons rather than simply for sport. Mentions playing with Seán Óg Ó hAlpín’s father Johnny Halfpenny. Also mentions not following the work as many of the construction worker did.</p> <p>01: 23:05 Talks of returning to Australia and seeing the improvements in Brisbane GAA. Mentions the input of women to the games. Also mentions the lack of Irish people going to Brisbane and how this has been offset by the amount of non Irish now involved.</p> <p>01:24:33 Talks of the altering of the rule book to allow PE teachers to teach Gaelic games in secondary schools.</p> <p>01:25:23 Talks of coming to Ireland with Australian teams to play Army and Garda selections and different club teams.</p> <p>01:26:46 Speaks of bad flooding in Brisbane, Australia in 1974 and working on the dam. After this he chose to come home as the house he had been going to buy was submerged by the floodwaters. Mentions his son, Fergal, being an Australian citizen and going out there and playing with East Celts GAA club, trained the Ladies football team and played with Australia. He is now a selector with Tipperary Minor footballers and coaches the development squads.</p> <p>01:30:07 Speaks of how he got back to Tipperary from Australia on the Saturday night and was playing a senior football challenge match on the Sunday. Mentions training several teams and playing football until he was thirty six having stopped hurling six years earlier.</p> <p>01:32:04 Talks of his involvement with ladies football starting through his daughter playing with Our Ladies secondary</p>
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	<p>school. A selector said she should be playing county football but there wasn't a club for her to play with. Mentions she played with Moycarkey for two years and then Templemore organised a football team. This led to the development of a successful adult ladies football team in the club.</p> <p>01:33:28 Talks of his son, Fergal, returning from Australia and taking over the running of the team after which Enda started up a juvenile club for U12 which were also very successful. Mentions that this led to being involved with teams of all grades and with county board.</p> <p>01:33:58 Talks of becoming Chairman of the county board and relinquishing his ties to the Templemore club and his hopes of renewing those links when he steps down as chairman.</p> <p>01:34:37 Speaks of his administrative career in the GAA which started on the way back from a Confraternity meeting when he was asked to be secretary of Templemore Éire Óg club. Mentions four five penny stamps being the value of the club at the time and Billy Kelly helping him. Also mentions being responsible for the maintenance of Páirc Shileann.</p> <p>01:36:28 Talks of being on the committee of Éire Óg on returning from Australia and working on fundraising for Martin Burke's History of Gaelic games in Templemore, Clonmore and Killea.</p> <p>01:38:02 Speaks about commemorating Templemore contesting two senior county footballs finals and his hope that Templemore parish would unite the three clubs, Templemore Eire Og Football club, Clonmore Hurling club and Killea Hurling club. Also mentions J K Bracken and commemorating his role in the GAA.</p> <p>01:39:38 Talks of inviting Tipperary county board to appoint someone to bring the three clubs together as J K Brackens GAA club. Mentions John Costigan being appointed the first Chairman.</p> <p>01:41:58 Speaks of J K Brackens being formed in the early 1990's, the work of the volunteers and the improvements in facilities.</p> <p>01:43:10 Talks of the resistance to the amalgamation which did not come from the players but from the elder statesmen of the Killea club. Mentions it being brought to the High Court.</p> <p>01:45:14 Speaks of J K Bracken and his history and his involvement in the GAA. Mentions him being an old fenian</p>
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	<p>and being invited to the first GAA meeting in Thurles.</p> <p>01:47:24 Talks of Bracken's son Brendan leaving Ireland for Australia and England and became war secretary to Churchill during WWII. Mentions him founding the Financial Times. Also mentions how all of this did not sit favourably with his father's position relating to the GAA.</p> <p>01:49:06 Talks of the stigma that attached to Bracken's name but of his pride that they decided to name the club after J K Bracken.</p> <p>01:50:21 Speaks of his involvement in Scór and the setting up of Scór in Templemore. Mentions involvement in question time within Scór with Noel Joyce, Mary Fogarty and himself. Also mentions the novelty acts and set dancers.</p> <p>01:53:50 Talks of what keeps him motivated in the GAA being no one thing in particular.</p> <p>01:55:42 Speaks of the GAA being part of his Irish identity. Mentions his father attending four or five matches a week and how this influenced him. Also mentions the camaraderie involved in being part of the GAA.</p> <p>01:57:18 Tells that he has no negativity towards the GAA where many want the GAA to do something for them he would rather see what he can do for the GAA. Mentions the disconnect between the top and bottom of the GAA and the cost of attending matches in the current economic climate.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____</p>
<p>Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>Played football from age 13yrs until 36yrs. Played juvenile and adult football for Templemore Éire Óg; played adult hurling with Clonmore and Killea; played football with Brisbane GAA, 1973 – 77. Won Tipperary Junior Football Championship in 1962; Won 4 Mid-Tipperary Minor Football Championships, 1965, 66, 67,68. Won Mid-Tipperary U21 football championship. Played minor football for Tipperary, 1968, 69; U21 football with Tipperary, 1970, 71; won All-Ireland vocational schools hurling medal playing with North Tipperary in 1969. Played football for North Tipperary Vocational Schools. Played for Brisbane GAA and also for Australian</p>

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	Gaelic Football team.
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	Templemore Éire Óg GAA: Chairman (1980s); Secretary (1969 – 72). JK Brackens GAA: PRO (1980s) Tipperary Ladies Gaelic Football: Chairperson (2006 – ongoing); Vice-Chairman (2003 – 2006); Fixtures Secretary (many years). Brisbane GAA: Chairman (1973-77).
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 01:58:34
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: 20th June 2012