

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Regina Fitzpatrick
<b>Date of Interview</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2012
<b>Location</b>	Tony's home, near Dungarvan, Co. Waterford
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Tony Mansfield
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1939 <b>Home County:</b> Waterford
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Ballinacourty NS; Abbeyside NS, Co Waterford.
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 3 brothers & 1 sister <b>Current Family if Different:</b> Wife (Myra), 2 sons & 1 daughter
<b>Club(s)</b>	Abbeyside-Ballinacourty GAA [Waterford]
<b>Occupation</b>	N/A
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Garda [Father]; Teacher [Mother]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	N/A

REFERENCE NO. WD/1/11

<b>Date of Report</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> June 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	1930 - 2010
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Waterford, Cork, Tipperary, Kilkenny
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Alcohol, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Retirement, Food and Drink, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy/Economics, Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Material Culture, Media, Emigration, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, Culture
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>Tony talks a lot about the history of his club, Abbeyside/Ballinacourty, and also of his involvement in the club on a number of different levels. He went from being a player to a manager to a councilman so he has insight on many different aspects of the club and county. Tony also describes how he uses his experience from working for labour unions to learn methods for coaching and being a councilman. He offers an in-depth account of the struggles of being a manager and councilman but also in understanding the club is bigger than any one single person. Tony offers his opinions on many issues in the GAA including professionalism and dual players among other.</p> <p>00:20 Born in 1939 in Dublin where his father was a Garda before moving to Ballinacourty.</p> <p>1:00 Having a windmill to generate power as a child.</p> <p>1:20 Tony's father's involvement in the GAA and the War of Independence, and also being forced to emigrate to America.</p> <p>2:20 His father following games in America and going to matches in Dublin when he worked for the Garda.</p> <p>2:35 Memories of the 1948 All-Ireland Hurling Final.</p> <p>3:25 Memories about his father coming with him to the Munster Final in Thurles in 1957 and being the grounds man of the club's first owned pitch.</p>

	<p>4:30 Tony's house being somewhere people would come to listen to matches, including the 1947 broadcast from New York by Michael O'Hehir.</p> <p>5:00 Description of Ballinacourty and a story about his uncle buying a football for Tony that he let the club use.</p> <p>5:45 Ballinacourty football club being formed in 1947.</p> <p>6:20 Travelling to games in Dungarvan in a vegetable lorry.</p> <p>7:05 Being fortunate in having Michael Foley, a former Waterford assistant trainer, as a trainer in school.</p> <p>7:35 His first involvements as a player in hurling.</p> <p>8:20 Hurling being his first game but tells a story about a controversial Gaelic Football match against Stradbally</p> <p>9:30 Dungarvan being a bigger rival for Ballinacourty than Stradbally Is.</p> <p>10:10 How the rivalry with Dungarvan manifests itself and a few famous games between the two clubs.</p> <p>11:00 Playing for your own place and how supporters of the club act.</p> <p>11:35 Tony's feelings about the GAA getting publicity from the major television and radio channels and comparing it to rugby and soccer.</p> <p>12:15 The benefits and disadvantages to the knockout stage and getting along with your rivals.</p> <p>12:45 Losing both Senior County Finals in 2008.</p> <p>13:15 Overcoming a long drought to win the Senior Football Championship in 2007.</p> <p>13:40 Playing against Sean Kelly's club in Kilcummin when Mike McCarthy was playing for them.</p> <p>14:10 Tony's relationship with Martin Foley while working for the club committee.</p> <p>14:40 Being lucky to become a member of the club committee at an early age and eventually becoming the delegate for the club.</p> <p>15:20 The changes in how the format for the championships is decided.</p>
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	<p>15:40 Feelings about the ban on foreign games.</p> <p>16:00 Story about his brother being suspended due to the ban.</p> <p>16:40 The people who do the less noticeable jobs being just as important to the GAA as the players.</p> <p>17:30 The GAA being an incredibly tight linked organization for everyone involved.</p> <p>18:00 Going through Dungourney and seeing support for the club team all throughout the town.</p> <p>18:45 Lesson learned from Matt Merrigan.</p> <p>19:05 The club not being his, but being separate from him.</p> <p>19:35 How Tony measures success for the club.</p> <p>20:05 The club adding a third hurling team and their early success.</p> <p>20:35 Also adding two Under 12 teams and how it allowed more people to play hurling.</p> <p>20:55 Almost selling the club's grounds during the Celtic Tiger.</p> <p>21:25 Improvements to the pitch since the Celtic Tiger and raising money for the improvements.</p> <p>22:15 Still needing more money and land to improve on the club's grounds.</p> <p>23:00 Not being able to rely on government grants for improvements besides a small grant from the Munster Council.</p> <p>23:30 Volunteers from the community helping to work on the pitch in order to save money.</p> <p>24:30 The changing mindset for children playing in the GAA and the distinction between winning and enjoyment.</p> <p>26:05 Playing for the school team first for Tom McHugh and travelling in lorries to games.</p> <p>27:05 Being rivals with Ballygunner for school championships.</p> <p>27:20 Playing for the minor team after the school team and not being able to afford a hurley.</p> <p>28:35 The reasons for increased participation in hurling since</p>
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	<p>the time Tony played.</p> <p>29:00 Story about playing a challenge match against Tipperary in Templemore.</p> <p>29:40 Comparing the publicity rugby gets compared to publicity for the GAA.</p> <p>30:15 Opinions on the GAA becoming a professional organization.</p> <p>30:30 An example of a member of the club, who was also a good soccer player, signing with a soccer club and not being able to play for GAA club anymore.</p> <p>31:20 Feelings about the opinions of most people in Ireland on paying players in the GAA.</p> <p>31:45 Tony's opinions on how the media treats inter-county GAA players.</p> <p>32:50 The importance of training players on how to handle the media.</p> <p>33:10 The likelihood of the GAA becoming pay-for-play in the future.</p> <p>34:00 Finding ways to treat the players well and looking after them without making the GAA professional.</p> <p>34:50 Playing with some great hurlers in his own club including, Austin Flynn, Don Whelan, the McGovern's, the Enright's and the Cashins.</p> <p>35:40 Talks about Abbeyside adding a minor hurling team in 1949 and their immediate successes.</p> <p>36:05 Playing in a final in 1955 on the same day of an All-Ireland Final between Wexford and Galway and his memories of the day.</p> <p>37:00 Being the captain of the minor team in 1957 but not being able to play in the final because he was sick.</p> <p>37:45 Playing in the senior final that same year, and also in 1964 and 1969, always against Mount Sion.</p> <p>39:00 Ballinacourty adding a hurling team in 1959 and Abbeyside following by adding a football team.</p> <p>39:40 Having people from Abbeyside involved with the Ballinacourty hurling team and Tony's personal involvement</p>
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	<p>with the team.</p> <p>40:30 Tony's parish having a connection to Kilgobinet dating back to the 1800's.</p> <p>40:50 Encouraging the children in Ballinacourty to play hurling and the team's eventual success.</p> <p>41:25 Going to coaching courses at Gormanston College taught by Fr. Tommy Maher, Des Ferguson, and Don Needle.</p> <p>41:50 Memories of Pat Fanning and feelings and opinions of him as a man and a coach.</p> <p>42:10 Comparing the training techniques and coaching of Kilkenny and Waterford in the early 1960's.</p> <p>42:50 Memories of Joe Lennon and his Down team that won the All-Ireland against Kerry in 1960.</p> <p>43:25 Watching the Down team train for the All-Ireland semi-finals in 1965 and their new way of training.</p> <p>44:30 Help received from Paddy Daly with training the team and finding grounds to train on.</p> <p>45:35 Training at night with lights from running cars.</p> <p>46:00 Being secretary of both Ballinacourty and Abbeyside in 1966 and working towards merging the clubs.</p> <p>46:50 Becoming chairman of 6 unions Going for a pension scheme.</p> <p>47:30 Working with the clubs and the process it took to amalgamate.</p> <p>48:00 The addition of the Pike Club to the Parish after Ballinacourty and Abbeyside amalgamated.</p> <p>48:30 The focus of the club each year being to remain united.</p> <p>49:00 Successes of the club in the early 2000's.</p> <p>49:50 Successes and disappointments during 2010 for teams in the club from the Under 10's all the way to the senior team.</p> <p>50:45 Difficulties of having both hurling and Gaelic football in the same club.</p> <p>51:40 Tony's opinion on dual clubs and his suggestions for correcting the problems.</p> <p>52:45 The amount of players who play both hurling and</p>
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	<p>Gaelic football for the club and their choices when it comes to matches for the sports.</p> <p>53:25 The struggles of the hurling team because football is often put first for the players.</p> <p>54:00 Struggles of the football team in the Munster final and a disagreement between the team management and the club board.</p> <p>54:35 Tony's thoughts on leadership and his techniques for being a leader.</p> <p>55:25 Not remembering exactly how he got involved in the administration of the club and being grateful because of a labour dispute he was in at the time.</p> <p>56:35 Becoming chief spokesman for a workers union and comparing that job to working in the administration for the club.</p> <p>57:35 A dispute at the tannery where Tony worked involving people being laid off and there not being a union meeting about it.</p> <p>58:20 Family's involvement in unions, including that of his father and uncle.</p> <p>59:30 Story about men who worked in a leather factory in the 1940's who were in a dispute over forming a union.</p> <p>1:00:20 Story about the Curry family in New York and Tammany Hall and where the opposition is for an organization.</p> <p>1:01:40 Learning from his father about working in the union and retiring from it while maintaining respect from the community.</p> <p>1:02:25 Helping children understand the most important parts of playing sports.</p> <p>1:03:00 Remembering great wins against Cork and Galway after he took over the county hurling team.</p> <p>1:04:45 Going out after the game with Seamus O'Brien and Michael O Muircheartaigh and a description of Michael.</p> <p>1:05:20 Respect between clubs for their successes and the work being done at each one.</p> <p>1:06:05 Tony shows pictures or articles of his involvement</p>
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	<p>with the GAA.</p> <p>1:07:05 Talking about the club history book and his friendship with Seamus Ó Braonáin.</p> <p>1:07:45 Tony's interest in photographs taken by Seamus Ó Braonáin.</p> <p>1:08:30 Talking about a picture he received from the O Braonain's and uploading it online.</p> <p>1:09:30 Enjoying documenting the past of the club and using the pictures to help reach out to families who have been a part of the club.</p> <p>1:10:25 Making connections in the GAA through different ways and being involved in the media aspect of the GAA.</p> <p>1:10:45 Connections to Raymond Anthony.</p> <p>1:11:45 Opinions of the 2010 All-Ireland Hurling Final.</p> <p>1:12:35 Bordering three hurling superpowers in Cork, Tipperary, and Kilkenny, and beating Cork in the Munster championship semi-final in 1989.</p> <p>1:13:10 Opinions on relationships with players as a manager.</p> <p>1:13:45 Story about driving home after the game against Cork in 1989, involving Teddy McCarthy.</p> <p>1:14:40 Relationship with Cork after winning the game in 1989, and a story about working in Mayfield and Mick O'Reilly.</p> <p>1:16:15 Playing for the Waterford hurling team and not making the team in 1963.</p> <p>1:16:45 Opinions of the Waterford hurling panels during the late 1950's and early 1960's.</p> <p>1:17:15 Story of playing for the club team when he was 14 or 15 dealing with substitutions.</p> <p>1:18:20 The talents of the team that played in the 1963 senior championship.</p> <p>1:19:00 Playing in a few matches in 1963 and against Christy Ring in his last match for Cork.</p> <p>1:19:40 Relationship with Christy Ring and memories of Christy.</p> <p>1:20:30 Remembering a match against Cork and there being</p>
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	<p>rumours of Christy Ring playing again.</p> <p>1:21:25 Thoughts on being a selector for county or club teams and the difficulties of it.</p> <p>1:22:20 Training teams outside of his own club for experience and to help for when he trained the county team.</p> <p>1:22:50 Tony's opinion of what the sign of a good manager is.</p> <p>1:23:05 Memories of the All-Ireland Under-21 Final in 1974.</p> <p>1:23:50 Being involved with the senior team in 1963.</p> <p>1:24:30 Memories of defeating Clare in the Munster Under-21 Final in 1992.</p> <p>1:25:00 Beating Antrim in the semi-finals, not wanting to bring the team to Dublin on a Saturday night, and the responsibilities of travelling with the Under 21 team.</p> <p>1:26:00 Making changes to the team before the Under 21 Final.</p> <p>1:27:00 Controversy over whether to play Paul Flynn in the replay match against Offaly.</p> <p>1:28:00 Division among the selectors and manager and its affect on the team.</p> <p>1:28:20 The results of the replay, Tony's opinion of the game, and being lucky to win an All-Ireland.</p> <p>1:29:00 The approach necessary for winning any sort of final.</p> <p>1:29:20 Losing the Under 21 Final in 1974.</p> <p>1:30:00 Tony's memories of taking coaching classes at Gormanstown and some of the things he learned there.</p> <p>1:31:10 Comparing coaching to an experience he had with a manager at the leather factory.</p> <p>1:32:00 Talking about the mistakes of some businessmen.</p> <p>1:32:30 Using what he learned at Gormanstown while coaching a school team that won the Sheehan Cup.</p> <p>1:32:55 The training and tactics used by the Down football team that he watched train when he was at Gormanstown.</p> <p>1:33:20 Different theories about training.</p> <p>1:34:05 Story about the 1996 Intermediate County Final.</p>
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	<p>1:34:55 Comparing things under the manager's control and things that are not.</p> <p>1:35:35 The importance of organization for a manager to be successful.</p> <p>1:36:00 Tony's opinions of Kilkenny's hurling talents.</p> <p>1:36:30 Implementing the keys to coaching at the local level and the successes of his club after he implemented what he learned at Gormanstown.</p> <p>1:37:35 Showing a picture of the team that won the cup in 1974.</p> <p>1:39:05 Quotes from Pat Fanning about the Abbeyside/Ballinacourty club.</p> <p>1:40:05 The timing of Pat Fanning's comments being around the successes of the club.</p> <p>1:40:30 The drive to win the Senior Final and talking about how to "keep the flag flying."</p> <p>1:41:30 The difficulties of maintaining a team spirit and getting players to like the people training them.</p> <p>1:42:05 Maintaining a balance between distance and connection to the players and the importance of that balance when it refers to playing for a championship.</p> <p>1:42:50 Setting up sub-groups that deal with disputes within the club over things like training and use of the pitch.</p> <p>1:43:20 The impact the sub-group policy had on relationships in the club.</p> <p>1:43:55 How arguments over which team should be allowed to train at a certain time are handled.</p> <p>1:44:35 The importance of bringing in an outside presence to the team, like a coach from another county.</p> <p>1:45:30 Valuing the period of time when you will not have to break up your team, and the repercussions of breaking up the team.</p> <p>1:46:00 The difficulties of dropping players from teams.</p> <p>1:46:30 Facing more negative reactions from supporters than players when making selections for teams.</p> <p>1:47:00 Tony's approach to forming a team and how that</p>
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	<p>motivates the players.</p> <p>1:47:35 Making a decision about who starts or does not and reactions about those decisions from the supporters.</p> <p>1:48:05 Story about a match in Cappoquin involving the coach of Stradbally, Sean Ahearne.</p> <p>1:48:50 Supporters only being interested in winning and always feeling like you could achieve more.</p> <p>1:49:25 Memories of negotiating the closure of Quigley Magnesite, including an interaction with Jim Treacy about the Ballyhale Shamrocks.</p> <p>1:50:40 The Ballinacourty Football team beating Kilcummin and Waterford beating Kerry and how the wins affected the players and supporters.</p> <p>1:51:10 Tony listing off some of the titles he won as a manager.</p> <p>1:51:55 Wishes of getting Waterford an All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship but being proud of the work he did as manager.</p> <p>1:52:20 Reasons for having a chance to beat the best counties in the Under-21 level and the difficulty of winning the All-Munster final first.</p> <p>1:53:00 Waterford playing against Kilkenny in a challenge and working with John Henderson to play again the following week.</p> <p>1:53:35 Playing against Kilkenny in a tournament in Coventry in 1989 and talking to Dermot Healy about the differences between managing club and county levels.</p> <p>1:54:30 Story about playing against Kilkenny in another challenge and how the extra game helped the team come together.</p> <p>1:55:15 Playing against Clare in the All-Munster Final in 1992 and how organization played a role in Waterford's success with help from John 'Jackson' Kiely and Burt O'Donnell.</p> <p>1:55:45 Putting a picture of the 1974 Waterford team that beat Clare into the program.</p> <p>1:56:10 Needing help for the club to be successful and receiving help during his time with the club from people such as Vincent Mulligan and Danny Lenihan.</p>
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	<p>1:56:45 The necessity of bringing in new people to the club and the reasons why it is necessary.</p> <p>1:57:25 The importance of having a club constitution in order to keep unity.</p> <p>1:58:15 Tony's beliefs of how to unite Parishes and why many people do not work towards uniting them.</p> <p>1:58:40 Being frustrated with players not following his beliefs and managing style.</p> <p>1:59:05 Story about bringing the team together through buying new jerseys and using the jerseys to motivate them.</p> <p>2:00:50 Tony's experience with preparing for an interview for the trade union job.</p> <p>2:01:45 The importance of taking care of the players and having the board understand that importance.</p> <p>2:02:25 The practice of swapping jerseys and stories about the practice in matches against Clare and Cork.</p> <p>2:03:30 The GAA being able to afford to look after the players.</p> <p>2:03:50 Receiving sponsored jerseys for the Munster Final and allowing the players to keep the jerseys.</p> <p>2:04:50 Moving with the times in terms of looking after the players and doing what is necessary for them.</p> <p>2:05:15 Dual players for the Under-21 Waterford teams and their success in 2008, including beating Tipperary in Thurles.</p> <p>2:05:55 The people in charge not giving jump suits to the dual players before the Munster Under-21 Hurling Final.</p> <p>2:06:20 Tony's change in views on how the players should be fed and how much food such be provided for them.</p> <p>2:06:50 Playing against Laois in Portlaoise in 1986 and the problems with training.</p> <p>2:07:40 The importance of winning early on for a manager.</p> <p>2:08:15 Playing in Ennis against Clare the week after playing Laois and the importance of the game.</p> <p>2:08:45 Story about tea not being provided for players who had brought girlfriends to the match.</p> <p>2:09:30 Talking about stepping down once he thought his</p>
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	<p>time was up.</p> <p>2:09:50 Talking about bringing his club sponsorship and the county championship being sponsored.</p> <p>2:10:25 His opinions on what things can be divisive for a team and the mistakes made by officials.</p> <p>2:10:50 Tony's views on the appointment of managers and how long they should be appointed for.</p> <p>2:11:25 The ability for players to be able to go to the media with complaints and how that affects the manager's job.</p> <p>2:12:05 The importance of having someone to handle the media, using an example from Under-21 Final in 1992.</p> <p>2:13:05 How players are looked after now and the change in eras in relation to how the players are treated.</p> <p>2:13:40 Rules about contacting players under a certain age and coaches being vetted by the Garda.</p> <p>2:14:45 Talking about the juvenile subcommittee part of a club.</p> <p>2:15:25 Tony talks about an experience dealing with people being laid off and being entitled to redundancy.</p> <p>2:16:10 Not having any particular goal when he began his time working as an administrator and being able to rely on the people around him.</p> <p>2:16:50 Reasons for standing for county chairman and how Tony judged it a success.</p> <p>2:17:20 The importance of standing up for what is right and how hard it can be at times.</p> <p>2:17:50 Tony tells a story about dealing with a strike in a Creamery and being able to find a balance to do what is right.</p> <p>2:18:40 Being asked to be club chairman in the late 1960's and after 5 years becoming juvenile chairman.</p> <p>2:19:00 Working for the club now that he is retired but only on a year to year basis and knowing when to step down as chairman.</p> <p>2:19:30 The next person to take over as chairman being entitled to style the club in whatever manner they deem fit.</p> <p>2:20:00 The difficulty of installing a club and Tony choosing</p>
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	<p>two children who were recovering from cancer.</p> <p>2:20:30 Accepting that you don't know everything and not trying to dominate everything in order to be a good administrator.</p> <p>2:20:50 Tony's keys to success for a club.</p> <p>2:22:05 A situation in which Tony had to deal with one of the players for the Minor team dealing with an illness and how he dealt with it as an administrator.</p> <p>2:24:00 Most disappointing moments in his time with the GAA being the matches he lost but using them as learning moments.</p> <p>2:24:25 Most proud moment in working in the GAA would be uniting the clubs in the Parish and the large contributions made by the community.</p> <p>2:26:10 Uniting the club being a bigger personal achievement for Tony than winning championships.</p> <p>2:26:45 The meaning of the GAA for Tony and how it is connected to "Irishness".</p> <p>2:27:40 Losing to Ardmore in a final recently and the excitement for Ardmore, and losing to Kilrossanty in the first round of the senior football championship this year and their excitement after winning.</p> <p>2:28:05 Tony's club learning from what winning meant to the Ardmore and Kilrossanty teams.</p> <p>2:28:30 Working hard for success and everyone who is a part of the club being important for that success.</p>
<p><b>Involvement in GAA</b></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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____</p>
<p><b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>The Pike: Played minor, junior and senior football.</p> <p>Abbeyside: Played minor, junior and senior hurling.</p> <p>Ballinacourty: Won Waterford Intermediate Football Championship in 1965.</p>

**REFERENCE NO. WD/1/11**

	Waterford: 1959 and late 1960s member of Waterford senior hurling panel
<b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)	Manager and selector for many teams across Waterford and also for Waterford county teams.  Abbeyside-Ballinacourty GAA: Chairman (1969-73); Secretary of both clubs before amalgamation; Chairman of Abbeyside GAA (1998-2010).  Waterford: Chairman of Waterford Bord na nÓg for 8/9 years.
<b>Format</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
<b>Duration</b>	Length of Interview: 2:28:32
<b>Language</b>	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:              21<sup>st</sup> June 2012