

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	22 nd Sept 2009
Location	Interviewee's home, Ballina, Co. Mayo
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	PJ Clarke
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1939 Home County: Mayo
Education	Primary: Boys NS, Ballina, Co. Mayo Secondary: Vocational School
Family	Siblings: 5 sisters & 2 brothers Current Family if Different: Married to Ann with 3 sons and 1 daughter
Club(s)	United; Ballina Stephenites
Occupation	Lino Type Operator and Proof Reader with Western People
Parents' Occupation	Miller [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fianna Fáil

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Date of Report	20 th August 2012
Period Covered	1885 – 2009
Counties/Countries Covered	Mayo, Dublin
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Coaching, Celebrations, Media, Emigration, Volunteers, All-Ireland, Earliest Memories, Childhood, Career, Rivalries
Interview Summary	<p>PJ talks of his days playing in street leagues before being called to play for the Ballina Stephenites. He talks about rivalries within the town as a result. He tells of playing for Mayo for a number of years and of moving on to play in a band. He talks of parents getting involved in their children's clubs. Then he tells of songs associated with the local clubs.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:26 Talks of his earliest memories to do with the GAA. Mentions Lord Edward Street and the United football club an offshoot of the Stephenites. Also mentions the Celtics, St. Patrick's, the Geraldines and Ardnaree.</p> <p>01:10 Speaks of the street leagues and not having access to footballs. Mentions Gerald Courell selling footballs. Also mentions being taught to kick with both feet and Willie Casey and Mickey O'Boyle.</p> <p>03:48 Talks of being selected to play with the Stephenites and playing Belmullet in Belmullet and playing two other matches over the next three days. Mentions Castlebar, Crossmolina and Ballyhaunis.</p> <p>05:09 Tells of the ball they played with and his work in the Western People. Mentions breaking his little finger but getting nothing done with it.</p> <p>06:39 Talks of travelling to matches on small busses or on a CIE bus. Mentions travelling by car to Bonnicolton.</p> <p>08:19 Tells of travelling to Croke Park when Mayo minors won the All-Ireland final. Mentions having a replica of the Sam Maguire Cup.</p> <p>10:52 Talks of celebrating in a cafe in Castlebar after winning the 1956 county final. Mentions Paddy Gahan.</p> <p>12:42 Talks of the same team bar two winning the county final</p>

	<p>the following two years.</p> <p>13:37 Speaks of the street leagues in Ballina. Talks of United (West), Celtic (South), Ardnaree (East), St. Patrick's (South West), the Fitzgeralds (Centre) and the Quay. Mentions the United team building their own clubhouse. Also mentions the ritual of entering the field and making noise to intimidate the opposition. Mentions Tom Langan and John Forde and Mayo and Kerry.</p> <p>19:06 Talks of the street leagues using the Stephenites grounds. Tells of the United club having their own field and learning cricket, basketball, golf, handball, high jumping and long jumping there. Mentions Sean Healy, who played with United and whose family owned the field. Also mentions Ger O'Hora. Tells of the finances being on the back of a matchbox but the club owing nothing. Mentions the voluntary work carried out by all. Also mentions Micko Brown, Paddy Roe.</p> <p>26:07 Speaks of the opening of the clubhouse.</p> <p>27:11 Talks of moving from United to play for the Stephenites. Mentions Michael O'Malley, Mikey O'Boyle, Leo Clarke, Tommy Duffy, Paddy Joe Cunningham, Macaulay Meenahan and Dessie Murray.</p> <p>29:16 Speaks of the training regime. Mentions John O'Mahony, Colm Cooper and Padraig Joyce.</p> <p>33:02 Tells of finishing his football career and joining a band.</p> <p>34:16 Talks of his son Paul being involved in the GAA. Mentions Crossmolina and Peter Moore.</p> <p>37:22 Tells of why football deteriorated in the town. Mentions an amalgamation of teams and how this split the players. Also mentions the spectators not being as interested and not supporting their children in the clubs.</p> <p>42:51 Talks of the internal politics within the running of the club. Mentions the exodus of people in the 1950's who never returned and the effect it had on the GAA. Tells of his father going to England but not working for any Irish foremen.</p> <p>45:58 Speaks of not knowing the best game he ever saw. Tells of his frustration with the way games are played today.</p> <p>47:33 Talks of the role played by the media in the GAA. Mentions people not wanting to go to Dublin for games and tells of an incident on a train recently.</p> <p>49:13 Tells of his mother knitting a jumper in the Mayo</p>
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	<p>colours. Mentions Hogan's hotel and Sean Mulderrig.</p> <p>51:30 Talks of Willie Casey being his GAA hero. Mentions Liam McHale, Eamon Mongey.</p> <p>53:03 Talks of his best time in the GAA winning his county medal. Although he was not happy about the way he was not given a try out for the Mayo minor team and this was his biggest disappointment.</p> <p>56:26 Speaks of the songs that the club had in his day. Sings a song written by Larry Doolan. Also mentions the Croke Cup.</p> <p>01:01:57 Talks of the Ballina Commercials Club started in 1885 which was the first club and artisans/labourers were not allowed to join. Tells of more of the songs.</p> <p>01:04:57 Speaks of the social aspect to the clubs long ago. Mentions the Ardnaree dinner dances in early January.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input 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 from 1947 to 1961. Won a county title with Ballina.</p>
<p>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Format</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual</p>
<p>Duration</p>	<p>Length of Interview: 01:06:31</p>
<p>Language</p>	<p>English</p>

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To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: _____Arlene Crampsie_____

Date: _____20/08/12_____