

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	12 th Jan 2011
Location	Pat's home, near Templetuohy, Co. Tipperary
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Pat Cullen
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1941 Home County: Tipperary
Education	Primary: Loughmore NS, Co. Tipperary Secondary: Templemore CBS, Co. Tipperary
Family	Siblings: 1 brother & 1 sister Current Family if Different: Wife (Patricia); 2 sons & 2 daughters
Club(s)	Loughmore-Castleiney GAA [Tipperary]
Occupation	Retired Farmer
Parents' Occupation	Farmers
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fine Gael
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Macra na Feirme, Pioneers Total Abstinence Association

Date of Report	22 nd August 2012
Period Covered	1800s - 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Tipperary, Cork, Kilkenny, Galway, Dublin, Great Britain, England
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Fundraising, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, 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, Alcohol, Violence, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Retirement, Food and Drink, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy/Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Pat discusses his involvement with Loughmore Castleiney GAA Club and with the GAA in the county during his lifetime. He outlines the history of amalgamation and separation of Loughmore and Castleiney and considers the incongruity of Loughmore Castleiney being a football club in a predominantly hurling area. Pat also describes his various roles within the GAA, including club chairman, mid board chairman, selector, steward, and referee. He ponders the changes he has witnessed in the 30 years he has been refereeing. In addition, Pat discusses his opposition to the ban on foreign games, the increased role of the club in the community, the positive impact of increased female involvement in the club, and his involvement in Macra na Feirme.</p> <p>00:30 Discusses his involvement with Loughmore Castleiney GAA Club, Co. Tipperary. His parents' origins. His father's uncle, also Pat Cullen, president of Faughs GAA Club in Dublin, donating money when Croke Park purchased by Frank Dineen.</p> <p>02:40 Ponders history of Gaelic games in Loughmore. Before founding of the GAA. Mentions Baron Purcell of Loughmore, hurling played in field beside Loughmoe Castle between gentry and peasants.</p> <p>03:50 Describes history of Cormack brothers hanged for shooting a land agent in 1850s. Ballad and plays about the brothers, pageant in 2008. 1910 re-internment of McCormack</p>

	<p>brothers from Nenagh to Loughmore.</p> <p>06:35 Recounts his father's memories of the re-internment: cortege of horses and traps, ponies. Huge crowds.</p> <p>07:36 Recalls his earliest memories of the GAA. Attending All-Ireland Senior Hurling Final in 1949 between Tipperary and Laois. Tipperary's victory. Mentions Polish player Paddy Ruschitzko on Laois team. Mentions players John Doyle and Kieran Carey. Travelling in his father's car to Croke Park. His father writing to Croke Park and sending money for tickets. Thunderstorm on way home. His mother also going to matches, also his cousin Billy Lahan. Children getting in free. Bringing sandwiches and tea or eating in Naas. Most people travelling by train. Mentions his cousin Johnny Everett on winning All-Ireland panel. Recalls travelling to Killarney, Limerick etc for matches with his father. His mother sitting in car during match reading or knitting.</p> <p>11:39 Few women at matches in the 40s and 50s. Contrast with nowadays.</p> <p>12:09 Mentions his hurling heroes Tony Reddin, Pat Stakelum, Christy Ring, Jimmy Doyle, John Doyle. Recalls his own hurling days, no big hurleys for goalies then. Also mentions Mick Roche, Nickey English, Eoin Kelly, Henry Shefflin, Noel McGrath, his father, Pat McGrath. Also mentions Bobby Ryan.</p> <p>15:03 Reflects on sports played in his schooldays. Only football in club then. Senior club for first time in 1980. Under-15 Rural Schools, knockout competition. Loughmore the only school in rural schools competition.</p> <p>16:37 Explains why Loughmore is a football club in a pre-dominantly hurling area. His own preference for hurling. Success at senior football compared to senior hurling. Bloody Sunday connection: Bill and Jim Ryan both playing on day Michael Hogan was shot. Not restricted to playing for parish then. Parish rule introduced in late 50s, early 60s. Only junior hurling played. Rules in 70s for progressing into senior.</p> <p>18:31 Reflects on Bloody Sunday. Michael Collins' men shooting British soldiers, Michael Hogan shot in retaliation.</p> <p>19:35 Mentions role of schools in encouraging Gaelic games. No schools competitions. Mostly female teachers with no interest in hurling. Only club competitions. Mentions Mr Ryan and Mr Barry.</p> <p>20:55 Considers role of clergy in promoting GAA. From 70s to today, golden era for club. Mentions contribution of Fr. O'Rourke to Gaelic games. Impact of population increase on club. Mentions Jim Maher, Pat McGrath, John Cormack, Tom</p>
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	<p>McGrath. Success of that Under-12 team.</p> <p>24:00 Reflects on his own playing career. Starting aged 13. County medal for minor football in 1956 aged 15. On combination team. Beating South Tipperary team. Training every night, no other passtimes. Start of Macra na Feirme in mid-60s, his involvement in that organisation, county chairman. Quizzes, debating.</p> <p>26:21 Considers role of the GAA in parish life when he was growing up. Less of a role in the community than today, less women involved then. Comparison between amount of competitions today and then.</p> <p>27:39 Describes following Tipperary team when he was growing up. Less prominent then. Domination of Cork and Kerry in football then.</p> <p>28:59 Mentions footballers he admired growing up: Mick O'Connell, the Down team of the 60s. Recalls listening to matches on radio, dry batteries. Mentions Michael O'Hehir. Pat's family getting electricity at the end of the 40s.</p> <p>31:01 Describes amalgamation of Loughmore and Castleiney. Split in 50s. Rule at end of 50s about one club per rural parish, amalgamation. His support of the amalgamation, older generation's opposition. Previous rivalry between clubs.</p> <p>33:26 Discusses taking a break from the GAA to get involved in Macra na Feirme in the mid-60s. Various competitions: cattle, baking, fashion. Socialising. Also involved in drama. Camaraderie with other Macra members.</p> <p>35:50 Returning to the GAA in the mid-70s. Mentions Seán Mockler and himself acting as chairmen. Also selector role. His involvement with juvenile team. Recalls cycling to matches in 50s to Holycross. Lack of organisation in relation to transport to matches. Lack of facilities. Using field received from Land Commission. Purchase of field in mid-70s. FÁS scheme to build dressing rooms and showers in mid-80s. Fundraising with guide dogs charity: sponsored walks. Receiving large donations during the Celtic Tiger. Negative impact of recession on donations.</p> <p>42:29 Describes fundraising activities in 70s and 80s. Church-gate collections. Selling original field. Card games. County and divisional board and Munster Council grants.</p> <p>43:42 Discusses time commitment of being club chairman. Refereeing. Impact on his family. Attending training, meetings. Compromising on fixtures. Mentions his efforts to abolish ban on foreign games in 60s, mentioned in <i>Tipperary Star</i>. Conflict in parish, priest's opposition to removing ban. Mentions Mick Lanigan. Pat's reasons for opposing ban:</p>
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	<p>losing players to suspensions. Inconsistent enforcement of rule. Undercover vigilance committees. Mentions Bertie Ahern's Croke Park promise.</p> <p>49:53 Reflects on his administrative roles as chairman of the mid board, involvement in fixtures committee, attending county board meetings. Camaraderie. First meeting aged 17.</p> <p>51:58 Explains how he became chairman of the mid board. Mentions politician Michael Lowry. Fewer clubs in northern division than southern one. Mentions Fr Duggan, chairman of Semple Stadium. Also mentions Tom O'Hara. Discusses challenge of administration without mobile phones and email. Mentions Tommy Barratt and John Doyle. Socialising after meetings in hotel after county board meetings. Describes some views of preferential treatment of hurling years ago. Underage success of football in Tipperary, lack of success at older levels. Difference in county board meetings now: executive committees, CCC.</p> <p>58:31 Considers lack of senior football clubs in Tipperary.</p> <p>01:00:05 Recalls county board discussions of removal of ban on foreign games. Passing of motion in Belfast in 1971. Mentions then GAA president Pat Fanning. Describes efforts to start soccer team in Loughmore. Mentions winter football league in 70s and 80s. Discusses good state of GAA facilities currently.</p> <p>01:03:32 Ponders the biggest changes in the GAA he has witnessed. Run more professionally. Benefits of mobile phones and Internet. Influx of women into the organisation: involved in more significant roles. Parents accompanying juvenile teams to away matches. Less discipline with children nowadays.</p> <p>01:06:39 His views that Croke Park is removed from the club. Lack of choice of players for clubs, favouring of county teams. Mentions GAA presidents Peter Quinn, Liam Mulvihill. Discusses his dissatisfaction with the current GAA setup.</p> <p>01:09:30 Mentions his admiration of GAA president Seamus O'Riain. Recalls meeting O'Riain on the train. Mentions O'Riain and Tommy Barratt starting Féile na nGael. Also mentions Sean Kelly.</p> <p>01:11:17 Recalls his refereeing days from the 70s. Putting players in the sin bin to cool off. Few expenses given. Little training given at his level. Describes natural fitness years ago due to more manual labour. Explains how he dealt with abuse at matches.</p> <p>01:15:26 Describes his approach to refereeing. Mentions approach of referee John Moloney. Challenge for inter-county</p>
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	<p>referees of dealing with television replays and analysis on <i>The Sunday Game</i>. His sympathy for inter-county referees. His belief in a consistent approach. Importance of referee's appearance.</p> <p>01:18:55 Reflects on his continual consultation of the rulebook. His views on rule changes: the hand pass. Less physicality now. Issue of helmets. Lighter ball now in hurling.</p> <p>01:21:30 Recalls feeling intimidated after refereeing matches on several occasions. His belief in not sending off players. His regrets at being too lenient on several occasions.</p> <p>01:23:29 Discusses changes he's witnessed in players' attitudes in his 30 years of refereeing. Worsening attitude. Difficulty of dealing with players aged 14 to 18, less discipline, querying decisions. His daughter's criticism of referees.</p> <p>01:26:02 Considers his views on the monitors in the stands. Referees' fears of being assessed. John Moloney's views on using common sense.</p> <p>01:28:00 Discusses changes in payment of referees. €40 for refereeing adult match, €30 for juvenile. Covering expenses. Recent mileage allowance. Referees getting pass to matches in county. Aged 70, no intention of retiring. Mentions Kilkenny referee Podge Butler.</p> <p>01:30:01 Reflects on differences in refereeing ladies games: camogie and ladies football. Less criticism from girls, easier to referee.</p> <p>01:31:15 Ponders his passion for the GAA. Mentions his late friend John Mockler. Recalls watching 6 matches in one day.</p> <p>01:32:34 Describes his family interest in the GAA. His wife following Kilkenny, his children's involvement. His daughter playing camogie and hockey in school. Another daughter developing an interest in the GAA since she emigrated to England. A son mid-divisional secretary. His pride in passing on the tradition to his children.</p> <p>01:35:05 Considers the importance of the GAA in a rural parish. The importance of winning for providing a boost to clubs. Excitement of winning junior B football in the 90s. Recalls pride of winning first county final in senior hurling, also Munster club senior hurling. Outlines successes in football too.</p> <p>01:39:55 Discusses impact of suicide of player on club. Concerns about copycat suicides among young people, efforts to provide counselling. Importance of the GAA in tough times, support for family. GAA providing guards of honour.</p>
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	<p>01:43:07 Reflects on his optimism for the future of the club. Parental involvement, community spirit. Impact of population decline in parish on club. Strength of current minor team. Mentions Joe Brady. Describes importance of winning Féile na nGael and Peil na nÓg. Success at Under-14, representing county in hurling and football, travelling to Cavan and Kilkenny. Pat acting as umpire. Mentions Christy Ring's contribution to the GAA. Also mentions Noel McGrath's support for Loughmore Castleiney GAA Club.</p> <p>01:48:37 Considers lack of clubs in towns, young players playing soccer instead. Mentions his second cousin soccer player Niall Quinn. Pat's preference for hurling over soccer or rugby. Mentions stewarding in Croke Park, time-consuming. Stewarding in Thurles for 25 years.</p> <p>01:50:34 More competition for the GAA now to attract people, popularity of rugby. Recalls attending suit-length tournament between Tipperary and Kilkenny.</p>
Involvement in GAA	<p>✓ Supporter ✓ Player ✓ Manager ✓ Coach ✓ Steward</p> <p>✓ Chairperson ✓ Committee Member ✓ Grounds-person</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer ✓ 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 Minor hurling and football in Loughmore 1956; played at level junior 1964 – 69; won Mid-Tipperary Senior Football Championship in the 1960s and Mid-Tipperary Junior hurling in 1966 & 67.</p>
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	<p>Chairman of Loughmore-Castleiney GAA 1970-1990; Chairman of Tipperary selectors committee in the 1980s; Mid-Tipperary Chairman, 1985-87; Trustee for Mid-Tipperary GAA; Tipperary County Board Delegate for 20 years; Member of the Tipperary GAA fixtures committee for 20 years.</p>
Format	<p>✓ Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual</p>
Duration	<p>Length of Interview: 01:52:08</p>
Language	<p>English</p>

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: Regina Fitzpatrick

Date: 22nd August 2012