

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Padraic O'Connor
Date of Interview	6 th Oct 2010
Location	St. Patrick's Clubhouse, Lordship, Co. Louth
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Jim Burns
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1930 Home County: Louth
Education	Primary: Dulargy NS, Ravensdale, Co. Louth
Family	Siblings: 3 brothers & 3 sisters Current Family if Different: Married to Maureen (RIP) with 2 sons; 1 daughter and 2 grandchildren
Club(s)	St. Patrick's, Lordship; St. Finbarr's, Coventry
Occupation	Farm Labourer; Cloth Dryer in Ravensdale Dying and Finishing Works; Salesman Pre-Packed Coal; Dunlop & Jaguar Plant Workers in England; Paths & Gardens in FÁS
Parents' Occupation	Ganger with Council [Father]; Hotel Cleaner [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Republican
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Athletic Club

REFERENCE NO. LH/1/3

Date of Report	28 th August 2012
Period Covered	1880s – 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Louth, Dublin, Cork, Great Britain, England
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Media, Material Culture, Involvement in GAA abroad, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism
Interview Summary	<p>Jim Burns recalls his earliest memories of travelling to games in Louth and further afield. The sporting allegiances of his family are discussed as is his extraordinary record in attendance at All-Ireland finals. Jim addresses the history of Gaelic games in the local area up to and after the foundation of the St. Pat's club in the 1950s. The importance of the volunteers and the quality of local leadership are touched upon, as is his involvement with the GAA in Warwickshire in the mid to late 1960s.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:10 Jim Burns of Dundalk is introduced as a founder member and current President of St. Patrick's GFC.</p> <p>00:30 Discusses his early memories of the GAA, the influence of grandfather (Neil Dooley) talking about football and asking to attend a game. Recalls travelling to county final in 1939 where Cooley were playing the 'Blues'. Travelled in back of a pony and cart with neighbours. Describes entering the ground, climbing a chestnut tree so he could get a good view of the Cooley No. 3 – Eddie Boyle.</p> <p>03:00 Recalls that Cooley won a game and that it was Eddie Boyle's last appearance. Says he subsequently moved to Dublin and got a job in Boland's Mill, driving bread to Wicklow.</p> <p>03:40 Mentions that his family had no involvement with the GAA. His two uncles were into soccer. Remembers going to Dublin to see Louth play in Croke Park on the same day as Ireland were playing a soccer international – his two uncles went to soccer and he went to Croke Park. Says it was his first time to declare what side he was taking.</p>

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	<p>05:00 Discusses supporting club and county teams. Refers to circumstances of club's founding and the fact that he never played underage football. Refers to the prevalence of soccer at the time and explains why St. Pat's played a part in changing the sporting outlook of people. Mentions the role of Fr Hardy and others in developing teams among young people.</p> <p>07:45 Refers to reaching a minor final in 1954 against Clan na Gael – digresses to mention a Ravensdale Mountaineers team from 1887 which was affiliated to the Louth county board, but played only challenges. Remarks on how teams then would march behind bands and travel across the county boundary to play games in Armagh.</p> <p>09:00 Refers to attending over 134 All-Irelands between football and hurling. Recalls how, in the year Dublin and Meath played four games in the first round of the Leinster championship (1991), he attended Croke Park 23 times.</p> <p>10:00 Recalls a recent game where a good friend, George Hughes, suffered a heart-attack at a game. Refers to the pride of seeing Paddy Keenan leading Louth in Croke Park.</p> <p>11:00 Discusses the impact of the GAA on his life – refers to his involvement in the Association in Warwickshire where he was the founder of juvenile football in the mid to late 1960s. Mentions bringing a team of second generation Irish to Croke Park to play an underage Dublin team.</p> <p>12:20 Discusses role of the GAA in the local community – refers to older clubs in the area, to the emergence of St. Pat's and the movement of players between clubs in 1954 and 1955.</p> <p>14:40 Remarks on being a 'dyer' by trade, the decision of the club to adopt green and white as the colours for the club jersey and the acquisition of the first set of jerseys. Worn for the first time in 1955 against Newtown Blues.</p> <p>15:45 Admiration for grassroots membership of the GAA and remarks on the qualities of early administrators in St. Pat's who 'sounded and looked like professors they were so good...'</p> <p>16:40 Comments on the camaraderie to be found across the country – 'everyone spoke the one language'.</p> <p>17:00 Objection to picking a best-ever St. Pat's team and remarks on how Kerry memorialise their best players.</p>
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	<p>18:00 Discusses the rule changes in the GAA and comments positively on Cork V Down All-Ireland final of 2010. Remarks on some of the past teams and their styles of play and on the time-wasting tactics that were often deployed.</p> <p>19:55 Observes growth in GAA autobiographies. Mentions Brendan Fullam's book 'Lest ye Never Forget' and Louth's place within it.</p> <p>21:00 Difficulty in criticising the GAA.</p> <p>21:22 Importance of rivalries to St. Pat's and relationship with Cooley.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input 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): __Selector_____</p>
<p>Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>N/A</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: 00:22:08</p>
<p>Language</p>	<p>English</p>

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: _____Padraic O'Connor_____

Date: _____28/08/12_____