

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Eileen McCallion
Date of Interview	14 th May 2011
Location	Interviewees Home, Cookstown
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Colum McCaffrey
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1945 Home County: Tyrone
Education	Primary: St Mary's Boys Primary, Cookstown, Co, Tyrone. Secondary: St Patrick's Academy, Dungannon, Co. Tyrone. Third Level: St Joseph's college of Further Education, Belfast
Family	Siblings: 3 Brothers, 6 Sisters Current Family if Different: Married, 1 son; 3 daughters
Club(s)	Fr Rocks GFC, Cookstown [Tyrone] St Patrick's GAA Club Donaghmore [Tyrone]
Occupation	Retired Teacher
Parents' Occupation	Dressmaker [Mother]; Factory Worker [Father]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

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Date of Report	11 th July 2012
Period Covered	1956 – 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Tyrone
Key Themes Covered	Managing, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Fundraising, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Identity, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Violence, Politics, Professionalism, Economy/ Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Colum talks about his lifetime of involvement in the GAA in Tyrone. He explains how his family was involved in the GAA and he followed. He covers a wide range of topics including his heroes from the various Tyrone teams, travelling to games, the facilities at various clubs, the Northern context of his GAA experience and the social nature of the GAA. As someone who has performed as a musician, Colum explains how that part of his life has fit alongside his involvement with the GAA, and ends the interview by reciting one of his own poems.</p> <p>00:00:03 Member of Fr Rocks club in Cookstown, Co Tyrone</p> <p>00:00:45 Vividly remembers 1956 Tyrone v Galway AI semi final in Croke Park</p> <p>00:02:35 Describes how he travelled to match with his father and brother by car and stopping in Dundalk for food on way home which was unusual in those days</p> <p>00:03:45 Father worked for Fishers factory and played Gaelic for their team</p> <p>00:05:00 Describes how there was no emphasis in playing football in primary schools in the 50's</p> <p>00:06:20 Describes how Iggy Jones who played for Tyrone was his hero.</p> <p>00:07:00 Recalls playing for Cookstown in 1946/47 and participating in AI minor final along with Barney Eastwood and Malachy Dargin</p>

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	<p>00:08.00 Describes the dramatic changes to the Cookstown club facilities, recalls how they used to get changed in huts and vans or come to match already kitted out.</p> <p>00:09.37 Recalls the late Paddy Cullen who was chairman, treasurer, groundsman and covered all aspects of the Fr Rocks club in the late 50's. He also became chairman of the Tyrone County Board.</p> <p>00:11.00 Colum performed a song written by Paddy Cullen about the late Iggy Jones</p> <p>00:12.32 Colum recited a poem written by Paddy Cullen about an unknown player wishing to gain a starting place on the team.</p> <p>00:13.43 Describes how football low profile in St Joseph's college and how Jim McKeever from Derry tried to promote it with no great success.</p> <p>00:16.15 Describes how in 62-64 he would travel from Belfast to play for Fr Rocks Intermediate football</p> <p>00:17.00 Describes how they beat Stewartstown in the final of the Intermediate in 1964 – Cookstown's first success</p> <p>00:18.00 Describes how in 2009/2010 year Cookstown won the Division 2 All Ireland Championship and what it meant to the people of the town and the home coming.</p> <p>00:21.55 Describes the first time he trained in gym was in Belfast at college and how he would hitch a lift home at week-end to play.</p> <p>00:24.29 Recalls the presentation of the medals in local hall but how low key the event was.</p> <p>00:25.00 Recalls the local rivals in those days were Kildress, Stewartstown, Moortown and Ardboe.</p> <p>00:26.00 Recalls how two men would have settled a disagreement when the match was over and how the other players would form a ring round them and how after the fight they would shake hands and go home.</p> <p>00:27.19 Describes the impact of immigration on clubs during</p>
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	<p>the early '50's as many left home as there were no jobs.</p> <p>00:29.00 Describes how women did not use to be associated with clubs and how they didn't even attend matches.</p> <p>00:30.57 Explains how the priest Fr John Rocks changed the name of the Cookstown Club in 1930s to Fr Rocks</p> <p>00:31.47 Explains that Cookstown was the first club to be formed in Tyrone was in 1890's called Brian Og's</p> <p>00:34.09 Describes how he became involved semi professionally in music and due to his travel commitments he was not able to play football.</p> <p>00:37.12 Describes how he met and played with county players when attending St Joseph's college in Belfast.</p> <p>00:38.21 Recalls that there were no training methods, no tactics, no nutrition and no injuries in his day and doesn't understand why so many injuries these days</p> <p>00:41.00 Recalls that playing was simply travelling to match, getting half an orange at half time and finishing the match and coming home.</p> <p>00:41.53 Recalls the low key celebrations after Cookstown Fr Rocks won the Intermediate championship in '62.</p> <p>00:45.00 Provides his view on the professionalism aspect of gaelic games</p> <p>00:48.22 Recalls the low media coverage of games in the 50's and 60's and how crowds would gather in one house to listen to radio</p> <p>00:49.22 Recalls listening to Michael O'Heir on radio and leaving windows open so that neighbours and friends could hear</p> <p>00:52.00 Describes how as a teacher in Donaghmore St Patricks Primary school he coached the children in gaelic football during the late 60's and 70's.</p> <p>00:54.10 Speaks about his thoughts on the difference in the rural/urban clubs success</p> <p>00:56.10 Suggests how the GAA as an organisation should</p>
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	<p>look at promoting gaelic games in Urban areas.</p> <p>00:59.18 Describes how he feels that Sport unites people, parishes and communities.</p> <p>01:00:00 Describes how he feels that Tyrone main rivals are Derry because of the bordering county</p> <p>01:00:00 Describes how in the 1960's he supported Down bringing Sam into the North</p> <p>01:03:00 Describes how supporting Tyrone Gaelic football forms his identification especially after reaching the heights of the last decade and how the 1956 semi final was a major influence on him</p> <p>01:03:00 Describes the opportunities for young people today and how they develop their skills and play at high levels</p> <p>01:03:00 Describes the build up to Tyrone winning the All Ireland final in 2003 and the effect winning the All Ireland had on him</p> <p>01:07:00 Describes the home coming of Sam in 2003 and how he travelled up after the team and how they took Sam to Cookstown Fr Rocks Club</p> <p>01.08.00 Describes how the Cookstown Fr Rocks Club is delighted that their club member Owen Mulligan has 3 All Ireland medals.</p> <p>01:09:00 Describes the achievements of two young members of the Fr Rocks Club: Ryan Pickering and Shea McGarrity have won trophies at every level: McRory Cup, Hogan Cup, Ulster and All Ireland titles</p> <p>01:12:00 Describes how he feels that success breeds success and how the enthusiasm is not always there when clubs are not doing well.</p> <p>01:13:00 Describes how as a teacher in St Josephs he promoted gaelic games and how St Patricks GFC in Donaghmore supported and provided the transport for the Children.</p>
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	<p>01:16:00 Describes how funding was not available for gaelic games in Northern Ireland schools and how funds had to be raised by concerts etc.</p> <p>01:18:00 Describes how Cookstown Fr Rocks club rooms were damaged by fire, the impact of this and how they rebuild it.</p> <p>01:20:00 Describes his best memory as Peter Canavan lifting the Sam Maguire in 2003 and his worst memories was of the death of Paul McGirr (Tyrone Minor), Cormac McAnallen and Michaela Harte</p> <p>01:22:0 Describes the great teams of 1956 and 2003 and how the 1956 team should have won only for Galway's great goal save.</p> <p>01:23:00 Describes how his all time GAA hero was Iggy Jones and the influence Iggy had on him.</p> <p>01:23:00 Recalls his memories of Iggy Jones</p> <p>01:25:00 Interviewer points out that the Man of the Match award in the McRory Cup is named after Iggy Jones</p> <p>01:26:00 Donates picture taken in 1986 All Ireland semi final when he met Iggy Jones on his way into Croke Park. In this picture is Mr Bertie Foley, Colum McCaffrey, Eugene Rodgers, Bro Oliver (Principal in Dungannon), Mark McCaffrey, Dana Foley, Iggy Jones and the Foley Children.</p> <p>01:28:00 Donates the words of the song composed by Paddy Cullen, (known to some as Mr GAA) on Iggy Jones and the poem composed by Paddy Cullen on an unknown player wishing to gain a starting place on the team. Also donates the typed newspaper report of Fr Rocks Cookstown winning Tyrone Intermediate Championship in 1964.</p> <p>01:29:00 Colum recited and sang a song that he himself wrote to commemorate Tyrone beating Kerry in the All Ireland in 2008.</p>
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Involvement in GAA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward <input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person <input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____
Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	Won Tyrone Intermediate Championship 1964
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	N/A
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview:01:30:00
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: Eileen McCallion

Date: 14th May 2011