

## GAA Oral History Project

## Interview Report Form

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Eileen McCallion
<b>Date of Interview</b>	18th Dec 2011
<b>Location</b>	Interviewee's home, near Lissan, Co.Derry
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Peadar Ó Túatain
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1942 <b>Home County:</b> Antrim
<b>Education</b>	<b>Secondary:</b> Magherafelt Technical College, Ballymena Technical College, Co. Antrim <b>Third Level:</b> St Joseph's Training College, Belfast. Jordanstown University, Belfast
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 3 Sisters/5 Brothers <b>Current Family if Different:</b> Married with 2 Girls/2Boys
<b>Club(s)</b>	Erin's Own, Cargin [Antrim]; St. Michael's, Lissan [Derry]
<b>Occupation</b>	Retired Teacher
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Linen Factory Worker [Mother]; Roads worker for local district council [Father]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	Air Corp, Baldonnell, Dublin; St Joseph's college (handball and hurling)

**REFERENCE NO. AN/1/16**

<b>Date of Report</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2011
<b>Period Covered</b>	1950s – 2011
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Antrim, Derry, Donegal, Monaghan, Cavan, Tyrone, Down, Dublin, Wexford, Carlow, Laois, Tipperary, Scotland, England, Wales, USA, Canada
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, Involvement in GAA abroad, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, Irish Language, Culture, Scór, All-Ireland, Club History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Sacrifices, Alcohol, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Food and Drink, Socialising, Relationships, Economy / Economics
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>The interview begins with an account of ó Túatain's sporting upbringing in the Cargin area of Co. Antrim. The influence of family was crucial: both his parents were GAA enthusiasts and he recounts experiences of listening to games on the radio, to playing underage football and hurling with the Erin's Own club and to the other social activities, céilís in particular, which were promoted by the club. The lack of alternative sporting or recreational opportunities in the area is discussed, as is popularity of Scór and the failed efforts to promote the Irish language. The sport with which ó Túatain is most associated is Rounders and much of the interview is taken up with a discussion of his involvement in its promotion and development at schools, club, county and national levels. Indeed, it was through his efforts to develop the game in schools that he met his future wife, a teacher who also became a keen supporter of Rounders. Their children also acquired an interest in the game, all of them winning All-Ireland medals at various levels.</p> <p>The consolidation of Rounders in Ulster in the 1970s, the emergence of a mixed game in the 1980s, the development of national competitions, the establishment of an all-stars awards scheme, support from Croke Park and attempts to foster an international dimension are themes all touched upon. ó Túatain himself served as national Secretary for the sport for fifty years, relinquishing the role only to take up the job of Development Officer. He explains what is involved in this role and the challenges faced. He explains, too, the organisational set-up of Rounders and the place of the sport</p>

	<p>within the wider GAA family.</p> <p>Alongside the Rounders, the other sport that features prominently in the interview is handball and ó Túatain reflects on the role of handball in the St. Michael's club in Lissan. In addition to all of this, ó Túatain recalls the highs and lows of his GAA experiences, which include being the recipient of a special award in the GAA Centenary year of 1984 and, later' being the recipient of a special GAA President's award. Other themes discussed are the roles of the clergy and women in the GAA; developments in GAA facilities; and the place of the GAA within his own life and that of his family and community.</p> <p>00:00:03 Interviewee introduces himself as member St. Michael's GAC, Lissan, Co. Derry.</p> <p>00:00:35 Mentions his parents involvement in Erin's Own GAA club in Antrim and attending matches in the Cargin area.</p> <p>00:01:00 Recalls playing Under 14 hurling and football for club.</p> <p>00:01:05 Says father played football, but doesn't recall seeing him play.</p> <p>00:01:18 Refers to mother playing Camogie and picking up hurling skills from her.</p> <p>00:01:30 GAA as part of family life: refers to having 'eight siblings' and the levels of their interest.</p> <p>00:01:50 Comments on the lack of Gaelic games in school.</p> <p>00:02:06 Talks about 'picking up' names of well known GAA players from the radio growing up: Iggy Jones of Tyrone.</p> <p>00:02:35 Listening to matches on the radio, going to the house of a relative with his father.</p> <p>00:02:50 Discusses the nature of his involvement with Erin's Own club: linesman, club officer.</p> <p>00:03:00 Remarks again on playing underage with the club team in Erin's Own, Under 14 and under 16.</p> <p>00:03:22 Considers changes in the GAA since his childhood with reference to facilities. Reflects on togging out under trees.</p> <p>00:03:50 Playing days: says he played in goals in hurling and left-half back in football.</p>
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	<p>00:04:02 Talks about the frequency of training and games.</p> <p>00:04:20 Travelling to local games never involved a journey of more than 30 miles.</p> <p>00:04:30 Mentions that Erin's Own shared parish of Duneane with Moneyglass and remarks on the intensity of the local rivalry – it 'produced rough enough outcomes'. Says that three other clubs bordered the parish: Kickhams Creggan, St. Mary's Ahoghill, Casements Portglenone.</p> <p>00:05:25 Discusses the size of the club and the activities it supported: football, hurling, Scór. Recalls running céilí's as fundraisers and the involvement of his parents in these events, making sandwiches for the band.</p> <p>00:06:00 Remarks on the frequency of the céilís and the lack of alternative social distractions in the locality.</p> <p>00:06:20 Mentions the role of volunteers, charging admission to céilí's, paying the céilí band, travelling to céilís by bicycle or on foot.</p> <p>00:06:50 Emigration and the club: says he doesn't recall it having a major effect on Erin's Own. Recalls only one family uprooting for Brisbane in Australia, but says they weren't involved in the club. The father in the family, John McShane, was a mandolin player with the Roddy McCorley céilí band. Interviewee says that he learned the mandolin from McShane.</p> <p>00:07:40 The role of women in the club: recalls that women in Erin's Own would have been involved in making teas, washing jerseys and playing camogie. Remarks that Erin's Own is generally a football club now and that in his present club, St. Michael's, women have served as secretaries and assistant secretaries.</p> <p>00:08:35 Mentions that he later became a photographer and his seeing old photographs of junior winning teams from the late 1950s and 60s.</p> <p>00:09:00 Can't recall big, formal celebrations, but remarks that people would have visited pubs after nig victories.</p> <p>00:09:22 Other sports in the area: mentions that in the Toome area, all clubs would have been GAA clubs, mostly football-focussed. Says there were no soccer or athletic clubs in a radius of 30 miles around.</p> <p>00:09:50 Interaction between church and local club: says</p>
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	<p>most curates would have been interested in the GAA and refers to the occasional curate playing football and the use of the GAA hall for church events.</p> <p>00:10:20 Talks about changes in Erin's Own: the increased focus on football, the development of pitches and facilities and the renting out of these to other clubs; the club bar.</p> <p>00:11:00 Disappointment at the lack of Irish language use in club and attempts to establish beginners lessons. Remarks that enthusiasm was not maintained and that effort was primarily channelled into the organisation of games.</p> <p>00:11:30 Participation in Scór from 1970 to mid 1980s. Refers to the strength of Scór na nÓg, the enthusiasm for the quiz and the team dancing. Mentions the involvement of his mother – Sarah McLaughlin – in the quizzes.</p> <p>00:12:37 Discusses transport to games and talks about travelling with the Devlin family in a full car to a game.</p> <p>00:13:14 Joining St. Michael's in Lissan. Talks about spending time away, playing hurling with the Air corps in Dublin (where he worked for 5 years) in the late 1950s, early 1960s. Mentions also the football stars who played with the Air Corps at the time, inter-county players such as Benny Barden, Harry Donnelly.</p> <p>00:14:13 Talks about his interest in Rounders and founding a team in the Air corps.</p> <p>00:14:40 Returning from the Air corps and entering teacher training college, returning to Erin's Own club and establishing a Rounders club for boys and girls. Says this was the start of the Rounders revival from 1970.</p> <p>00:15:25 Moving to Lissan in January 1971 and joining the club in 1975 after he got married. Mentions he had already been supportive playing hurling and Rounders in the school and with the club – 'we just moved the kids onto the football field and played as club members'.</p> <p>00:16:00 Says that Rounders became a 'big thing' in his 'present club'. Talks about playing Rounders in Killeenan, Kildress and Mary McGarvey, a teacher, who saw the kids having fun and wanted her own school involved. Tells of demonstrating the game in Killeenan and the subsequent dominance of that primary school. Remarks that the game was consolidated in the early 1970s and reflects on the nature of the schools game.</p>
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	<p>00:17:35 Talks about meeting one of the teachers from Donaghmore who had brought a squad over to see what was going on with the Rounders. 'By 1975, we had worked enough together to get married.'</p> <p>00:18:02 Discusses the spread of the game to include approximately 20 schools. Remarks on the influence of the teachers, the administrative work involved, the support of GAA clubs making fields available, the role of volunteerism.</p> <p>00:18:50 Travelling to play Rounders matches in the 1970s and 80s and the distances involved: says it would have stretched from Pomeroy to Toome, Co. Antrim, distances of 40-50 miles across three counties, Derry, Tyrone and Antrim.</p> <p>00:19:10 Refers to schools hiring buses or teachers using their own private cars to travel to games.</p> <p>00:19:35 Remarks that around 1970, about 20 schools in the Toomebridge area for a representative group and contacted Fr. Horan in the Oblate Fathers in Inchicore in Dublin, who had been playing Rounders, under English form of the rules it emerged. Tells of travelling to Dublin on 4 October 1970 to play Rounders games under the two sets of rules.</p> <p>00:20:25 Says the team that travelled represented the following clubs: Erin's Own, Kickhams Creggan and Moneyglass. Mentions also the Anahorish school in Toome and the Newbridge club in Derry.</p> <p>00:21:00 Mentions that the games in Dublin involved girls only. Mentions also that games started as boys only and girls only until a proposal from Tyrone (Wolfe Tone, Kildress club) in 1985 looking for mixed competition. Talks about how the various schools competitions have developed and the trophies awarded for them.</p> <p>00:22:25 Discusses the profile of Rounders in the schools in Antrim, Derry and Tyrone, Donegal, Cavan and Monaghan and refers to split in support for GAA and Community games organisation.</p> <p>00:23:05 Recalls the late 1970s and the formation of a team in Arravale Rovers in Tipperary. Mentions the demand for more competition and arranging for a trip from Lissan to Tipperary and then to Dublin. Recalls staying with youth clubs and in halls. Mentions a visit to Galtee Rovers in Bansha and staying in club premises. Mentions also players staying with host clubs.</p> <p>00:24:40 Mentions that other clubs followed St. Michael's</p>
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	<p>example and travelled to Dublin and beyond.</p> <p>00:25:13 Discusses the educative value of the trips, learning the names of towns, rivers, mountains.</p> <p>00:25:55 Discusses the continuing influence of Rounders on his life. Says he was acting secretary at National level for over 50 years and moving to take up job of Development Officer.</p> <p>00:26:44 Visiting schools and clubs in his role of Development Officer. Refers to the interest in Rounders during club 'Have a go' days and suggests reasons for it.</p> <p>00:27:10 Discusses the typical process by which schools and clubs are approached. For example, receiving requests from schools for an introduction to the game. Cites the example of Donegal where funding is made available to invite coaches to schools. Refers also to the difficulty to 'nurse' a game if there isn't another club or school in area promoting it.</p> <p>00:28:08 Recent developments where GAA employ coaches to develop the game. Mentions the organisation of 'blitz days' involving a number of schools and says he would like to receive a report on this work so he could follow it up.</p> <p>00:29:00 From first visit of Erin's Own to Naomh Mhuire in the Oblates in Dublin in 1970, he says there was a follow-up to encourage inter-county activities. Mentions that in 1974 Gael Linn provided a cup for a Ladies competition, which still runs as the Senior Ladies championship. Mentions that the men started up the following year and that, several years later, a senior mixed championship at senior level was started.</p> <p>00:29:55 Outlines the array of Rounders competitions that are now held annually and refers to the number of teams involved. Mentions how, as a result of development work by Joe O'Donoghue in Leinster there are 6 new clubs participating.</p> <p>00:30:40 Discusses plans for development in Ulster, highlighting the potential in Omagh, in Hilltown (Co. Down), and various locations in Co. Antrim.</p> <p>00:31:19 Talks about running championships on round-robin format and the expense involved for teams in travelling long distances. Suggests a return to a provincial approach.</p> <p>00:32:16 Access to Croke Park. Talks about the ease of access for finals in Croke Park, traditionally on the day before the All-Ireland camogie final. Recalls the interviewer's club</p>
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	<p>playing in an All-Ireland senior Ladies final in Croke Park in early 1980s and reflects on a controversy between Wolfe Tones Kildress and Magherafelt, which involved an appeal and a replay, 1984. Says the controversy led to a 'token' final being held.</p> <p>00:34:32 Discusses the 'token final'. Comments on a talented girls team from the Crasslough area of Monaghan and a complaint about long grass in the old Gavin Duffy Park when they played against a team from Enniscorthy. Recalls that match was replayed in Enniscorthy after cup and medals had been awarded, ca. 1985</p> <p>00:35:45 Discusses the origins of all-stars awards programme for Rounders. The idea came from a proposal from Seán Hughes from the Gowna club and former Ulster Rounders chairman. Says that each year 9 ladies and 9 men's players are selected by playing positions, with a presentation night, usually in Croke Park.</p> <p>00:37:05 Talks about how players are selected and how the system has evolved. Talks about the scoring of games, the statistics gathered etc.</p> <p>00:38:40 Talks about the composition of the Central Rounders Council – President, chairman and executive. Refers to current chairman, Joe O'Donoghue from Carlow; Martina Nolan who succeeded him as secretary; Alice Clarke from Carlow, the assistant secretary; members of the Council include Caroline Whelan from the Heath club, near Portlaoise. Each province has an automatic representation on Council, but notes that there are only two provincial councils.</p> <p>00:40:20 Remarks on the frequency of council meetings – says they are held every 5-7 weeks, but additional meetings would be held for all-stars or in preparation of national convention.</p> <p>00:41:20 Mentions some of the awards he has received from clubs and the GAA. Recalls Shay Fagan and himself being awarded a special certificate for services to Rounders in 1984. Mentions also receiving a President's award for services to Rounders from Nicky Brennan at a function in Croke Park – recalls the speeches, the photographs, the food, the music in Croke Park on the night.</p> <p>00:44:10 Comments on the increased recognition for Rounders and perceptions of the sport within the GAA in the past.</p>
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	<p>00:44:50 Discusses his involvement in the arranging of international matches – similarities with softball and baseball and attempts to host and travel to Scotland, England or Wales to play games. Recalls an event involving Ireland, Scotland and England – held in Cookstown in 2005. Remarks on the discipline of the English team and similarities between the Welsh and the Irish and the difficulties in establishing links with Scotland.</p> <p>00:47:00 Refers to the starting of season – late 2000s - with a game between Rounders all-stars and a selection of baseball players from Dublin area. The game was played in Carlow. Talks about the differences in dress, the compromise rules adopted and the outcome. Remarks on the difficulties which baseball players experienced trying to catch the ball with bare hands.</p> <p>00:49:04 Discusses the make-up of the Irish team, which Patrick Coey from St. Michael's. Refers to other representatives from Bagnelstown, Carlow.</p> <p>00:50:00 Comments on his ambitions for the international game and reflects on request from Croke Park for an exhibition match in Rounders in 2008 and subsequent years. Reflects on the positives and negatives of this opportunity.</p> <p>00:51:47 Discusses his family's involvement in the GAA and comments that all of his children have won an All-Ireland medal for Rounders. Mentions that the two older children – Ronan and Fionnula - were part of a particularly committed group in their youth. Fionnula is the winner of a couple of All-stars and played for Ireland; Ronán moved away from the game after having an accident; Bronagh played and won an All-Ireland medal at under 18; Cormac, his youngest child, won two all-stars and played in exhibition games in Croke Park. All of children also played handball, with Fionnula playing in an All-Ireland doubles final. Bronagh played in a junior ladies handball semi-final.</p> <p>00:53:50 Recalls 1997 when club won senior men's and mixed seniors. Says he played (as a pitcher) with Ronán on the men's team and with both Ronán and Fionnula on the mixed team.</p> <p>00:54:20 Pride in passing on to family 'some aspect of the Association'.</p> <p>00:54:30 Impact of GAA on family life. Reflects on his involvement and the fact that most days involved some work</p>
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	<p>in relation to Rounders or handball.</p> <p>00:55:00 First ever broadcast of Rounders on Irish language programme in RTE, produced by Liam Campbell who, like interviewee, met his wife playing Rounders.</p> <p>00:55:25 Talks about his wife, Patricia and her work in the 'foreground and the background'. Mentions her support in various roles – in coaching, as a 'tax-driver.</p> <p>00:55:40 Mentions continued involvement of his daughter, Fionnula, as Ulster secretary and a member of the Central Rounders Council.</p> <p>00:55:55 Impact of Rounders on holidays: talks about travelling to America to watch baseball events.</p> <p>00:56:32 Recalls National School and teacher organising an improvised game of Rounders.</p> <p>00:57:06 Mentions doing research in the early 1980s and visiting Byrne's sports shop in Draperstown and hearing about Rounders being played in Ballinascreen area in the early 1900s in preference to football or hurling.</p> <p>00:57:40 Discusses the nature of his involvement with Lissan club since the mid-1970s. Remarks that his involvement was based around the 'care' of children and talks about playing football, hurling and Rounders in school. Talks about getting Rounders going and the success they enjoyed.</p> <p>00:59:03 Talks about the profile of handball in Lissan; access to a nearby ball alley; success of local players in All-Ireland competitions.</p> <p>00:59:50 Mentions Siobhan Graham who reached a World Doubles semi-final in 1994 with a partner from Dungiven; Roisín O'Neill competed in World championships in Winnipeg.</p> <p>01:01:02 Reflects on the current strength of handball in the Lissan club and the relative difficulties of promoting it among boys and girls.</p> <p>01:01:23 Selects the 1984 award and the Presidential award as highlights of his GAA experience.</p> <p>01:01:50 Considers 'local animosities' sometimes generated. Recalls being called to a county board disciplinary meeting after 'false information' was given.</p> <p>01:03:00 Selects the Clare hurlers of the 1990s and the Tipperary hurlers of 2010 as standout teams during his</p>
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	<p>lifetime. Locally, he chooses the Rounders team of 1997, when they won their first adult championship.</p> <p>01:03:40 Discusses what the GAA means to him: highlights the importance of voluntarism, the community-based nature of the organisation and the satisfaction of promoting our own games.</p> <p>01:04:05 Considers his future involvement with the Association, describing it as 'part of me'.</p> <p>01:04:40 Special memories: tells story of trying to get a Kildress or Tyrone team together in 1973/74 for a tournament. Recalls visiting Frank Brady, principal of St. Joseph's school in Killeenan and being directed to Patricia Hagan, a teacher in another school. This was the woman he married two years later.</p> <p>01:05:40 Recalls first match in June 1958 for GAA-organised Rounders game and borrowing a pick-axe handle from his father. Tells story of returning home without the pick-axe handle.</p>
<p><b>Involvement in GAA</b></p>	<p>✓ Supporter ✓ Player ✓ Manager ✓ Coach ✓ Steward</p> <p>✓ Chairperson ✓ Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> 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> <p>_____</p>
<p><b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>West Antrim Minor Football Championship – 1959</p> <p>2008 – Presidents GAA Award</p> <p>2008 - Gold Jubilee Award for Rounders</p> <p>1979 - Lochaber Referee Award – (Lissan Rounders)</p>
<p><b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>Various Rounders Committees</p> <p>Lissan GFC – Chairman + Secretary</p> <p>Erin's Own – Assistant Secretary + Acting Secretary</p> <p>Rounders Development Officer – 1958 – Current</p> <p>Ulster Rounders Secretary - Current</p>

**REFERENCE NO. AN/1/16**

<b>Format</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
<b>Duration</b>	Length of Interview: 01:07:05
<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:      Eileen McCallion

Date:      27/12/11