

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	5 th July 2010
Location	The Irish Pub, Frankfurt, Germany
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Ray Coleman
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1974 Home County: Westmeath
Education	Primary: St. Mary's, Collinstown, Co. Westmeath Secondary: Castlepollard Vocational School Third Level: Regional Technical College, Dundalk, Co. Louth
Family	Siblings: 1 brother & 3 sisters
Club(s)	Lough Lene Gaels [Westmeath]; Frankfurt Sarsfields [Germany]; Edmonton Wolfe Tones [Alberta, Canada]
Occupation	Banker
Parents' Occupation	Farm Labourer [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Badminton; Pitch 'n' Putt; Soccer – Glen Rangers

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Date of Report	15 th June 2012
Period Covered	1950s – 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Westmeath, Americas, Canada, Europe, Germany
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Education, Media, Emigration, Involvement in GAA abroad, Role of Women, 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, Challenges, Outsider's Perspectives, Alcohol, Relationship with the Association, Food and Drink, Socialising, Relationships, Economy / Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Raymond talks about his GAA experiences in Ireland and abroad. He recalls following and playing for his local club, Lough Lene Gaels, in his youth, and the central role played by the club in the community. When he was older he was a student at Dundalk RTC and played hurling there, before moving to Canada and becoming involved with the local GAA club. After moving back to Ireland he made his way to Frankfurt in Germany where, along with some friends, he helped to resurrect the Frankfurt Sarsfields club. They put a football team together and before long were competing in tournaments all over Europe. Raymond discusses the challenges faced by GAA clubs overseas - lack of suitable training facilities, difficulties in raising sufficient funds, problems in persuading people to get involved. He also touches on the social function of the GAA in Frankfurt, and how the Association contributes to an Irish person's sense of identity when living in a foreign land.</p> <p>00:30 Earliest memory is going to see the Westmeath hurling county final as a boy. Ritual on that day.</p> <p>01:25 His club getting to one final when he was young. Team visiting primary school with snacks. Getting the day off if the local team won.</p> <p>02:15 Team was Lough Lene Gaels hurling club in Collinstown, near Mullingar.</p> <p>02:30 Camogie played at the club also.</p>

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	<p>02:45 Family's GAA involvement. Father playing in the 1950s when there were a lot of clubs in north Westmeath, like Gleneiden and Rickardstown.</p> <p>03:50 Clubs amalgamating in the 1970s.</p> <p>04:00 Lough Lene Gaels' lack of success when he was young.</p> <p>04:25 Father living in England when the amalgamation was taking place.</p> <p>04:50 Rivalry between the clubs that later amalgamated.</p> <p>05:05 Older men in the village saying that it was right to amalgamate.</p> <p>05:40 Gleneiden had no official ground.</p> <p>06:35 Underage structure at Lough Lene Gaels. Dedication of trainers.</p> <p>07:35 Trainers trying to get boys who were working on the farm to go and play matches.</p> <p>08:35 Playing in an Under-12 final and trying to locate their corner forward. The trouble that ensued.</p> <p>09:40 Travelling by car to games.</p> <p>10:15 Club starting a fundraising committee and being able to afford to use buses.</p> <p>11:05 Hurling tradition in the area.</p> <p>11:50 Core of families who were the backbone of the clubs in the area - the Williams, the Murtaghs, the O'Farrells, the Lynchs, the Cosgroves.</p> <p>13:45 Playing with the club until he was 21 years old. Going to college at the RTC in Dundalk and playing hurling there.</p> <p>14:35 Going abroad in the summer.</p> <p>14:55 Going to Edmonton in Canada and playing football with the Edmonton Wolfe Tones there. Competing in tournaments. Christy Whelan from Raharney in Westmeath running the club. Playing for two seasons. Becoming PRO.</p>
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	<p>15:40 Returning from Canada in 1996 before going to Germany as an erasmus student.</p> <p>17:25 Going back to Ireland in 1998 and working in Dublin, where he played soccer.</p> <p>18:10 Westmeath footballers doing well at that time and going to see the games. Travelling around Ireland to see games.</p> <p>19:50 Moving to Frankfurt and there was a team in Wurzburg, which was a distance from Frankfurt.</p> <p>20:55 Talking to Robert Bashford and Stephen Lynch about restarting the Frankfurt football club.</p> <p>21:40 Robert Bashford invited to Amsterdam in 2007. Players needed for a tournament. Andy Smith inviting Bobby up to play.</p> <p>22:35 Robert and Stephen being asked the following summer to travel to Budapest with the Amsterdam team. Deciding on the way back to resurrect the Frankfurt Sarsfields club.</p> <p>23:25 Agreeing to be secretary of the new club in 2009.</p> <p>23:45 Irish population in Frankfurt increasing. Publicising the new club and applying to set up a new team.</p> <p>24:20 Ray Madden, who owned a pub, sponsoring the team and paying for jerseys, designing them and ordering them from O'Neills.</p> <p>25:20 Preparing for a tournament for Munich. Enda O'Connell from Galway collecting the jerseys on a trip home to Ireland.</p> <p>26:15 Game in European league was 11-a-side.</p> <p>27:10 Toggging out on the train to Munich.</p> <p>27:35 Playing Copenhagen in their first game and winning.</p> <p>28:30 Playing a French team from Brittany and all the players were French.</p> <p>29:40 Playing Belgium B and winning.</p> <p>30:00 Playing Amsterdam and winning. Losing Jimmy Doran</p>
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	<p>from Belfast, their best player, to injury.</p> <p>31:00 Playing Munich in the final.</p> <p>31:35 Being pleased with how they had performed.</p> <p>31:55 Difficulties associated with training in Frankfurt.</p> <p>32:20 Playing soccer for a soccer team with James Staunton and Graham Walsh. GAA team training on their pitch.</p> <p>33:40 Frankfurt rugby team unwilling to lend the GAA team their pitch.</p> <p>34:00 Need to get their own GAA goalposts.</p> <p>34:20 Playing more tournaments in Europe. Meeting the Brittany team – Liffrés again in Rennes.</p> <p>35:20 Playing in Maastricht.</p> <p>36:35 Playing in Luxemburg against stronger opposition.</p> <p>37:30 Regional tournaments. Playing in the Benelux region with Amsterdam, Belgium, The Hague, Maastricht and Luxemburg.</p> <p>38:25 Munich in Central Europe region with Budapest, Vienna, Prague and Warsaw.</p> <p>39:05 Trying to build up a sense of club amongst the members. Communicating via email. Meeting socially.</p> <p>40:00 Fundraising.</p> <p>40:30 Irish community in Frankfurt smaller than it was in the 1990s. Small numbers when he first moved over in 2003.</p> <p>41:20 Irish people working with AIB in Frankfurt, and with the European Central Bank. People coming and going. Small number of Irish in Frankfurt.</p> <p>44:00 Advertising the club. People getting in contact.</p> <p>46:15 German women's interest in the GAA. Sending a German woman to the European Convention with her Irish boyfriend.</p>
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	<p>47:10 Lack of hurling in the club.</p> <p>47:45 Young Germans starting a hurling club in a suburb of Frankfurt.</p> <p>48:20 Martin McConnell from Cork in Frankfurt taking a refereeing course and officiating at games.</p> <p>50:10 Age profile of club's membership. Trying to get older people involved.</p> <p>52:00 How the name came about. Fergal Egan from Limerick starting the club.</p> <p>52:50 Club crest and colours.</p> <p>53:45 What locals make of the sport.</p> <p>54:30 Lack of German players in the club.</p> <p>56:15 Standard of football in Europe.</p> <p>57:50 People visiting participating in games and their impressions of the set-up.</p> <p>58:35 Referees flown in from Ireland officiating at a tournament.</p> <p>58:50 Prospect of paying players to play in Europe.</p> <p>01:00:00 Relationship between committee members. Frequency of meetings. Things they have to organise.</p> <p>01:01:10 Interaction with the GAA in Ireland.</p> <p>01:01:30 European County Board affiliated with the Leinster Board.</p> <p>01:02:05 What the GAA in Ireland could do to improve the situation in Europe. Difficulty in raising money.</p> <p>01:04:15 Reason for his involvement.</p> <p>01:06:15 Vision for the future of the club in Frankfurt.</p> <p>01:08:10 Impact of media on the GAA in Frankfurt. People watching games in their own homes.</p>
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	<p>01:09:40 Difference between GAA experience in Canada and that in Frankfurt.</p> <p>01:11:05 Playing in goals in a game in Canada and a melee breaking out.</p> <p>01:12:45 Canadian trainer working them hard.</p> <p>01:13:55 Enjoying the roadtrips in Canada.</p> <p>01:14:30 Having a party in a hotel room in Canada.</p> <p>01:17:20 Admiring Michael Cosgrove from his home club in Westmeath.</p> <p>01:19:00 Being a fan of the Kerry football team in the 1980s, with players like Pat Spillane and Páidí Ó Sé. Admiring Dublin footballer Barney Rock.</p> <p>01:19:35 Admiring Tipperary hurler Nicky English.</p> <p>01:20:00 Admiring Tony Flaherty the Offaly hurler.</p> <p>01:20:40 Best GAA memory is beating Castlepollard in a minor final - a rare occurrence. Going to Mullingar in a bus for a meal afterwards. Getting a great reception from the people of the community.</p> <p>01:23:35 Disappointments include Westmeath coming close to beating Meath in football and falling short.</p> <p>01:24:55 What the GAA has meant to him.</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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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>Ray played between the age of 11 and 21. He won a Westmeath Minor Hurling Title and 2 U-21 titles. With Frankfurt he's played football since 2003 and won a European Shield in 2009.</p>
<p>Record as an Administrator</p>	<p>He is club secretary of Frankfurt Sarsfields since 2009.</p>

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(Positions held; how long for)	
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 01:28:14
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: _____ Arlene Crampsie _____

Date: _____ 15/06/12 _____