

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	21 st Dec 2010
Location	Croke Park, Dublin
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Sean Kilbride
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1950 Home County: Roscommon
Education	Primary: De La Salle, Ballaghaderreen Secondary: St. Nathy's College, Ballaghaderreen Third Level: Cadet School
Family	Siblings: N/A Current Family if Different: Married with 2 sons
Club(s)	St. Brigid's [Roscommon]; St. Croan's [Roscommon]; Ballaghaderreen [Mayo]
Occupation	Retired Army Officer; Project Officer Social Initiative GAA
Parents' Occupation	Electronic Engineer, Publican, Politician and Auctioneer [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Village Development Committees

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Date of Report	17 th July 2012
Period Covered	1950s – 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Roscommon, Mayo, Asia, Lebanon, Kosovo, Americas, USA
Key Themes Covered	Clergy, Training, Facilities, Role of the club in the Community, Coaching, Family Involvement, GAA Abroad, Role of Women, Northern Ireland, the Troubles, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Administration, Commiserations, Relationship with the Association, Relationships, Identity, Rivalries, Irish Language, Culture, Travel, Playing, Officials, Administration, Impact on Life, Sacrifices, Childhood
Interview Summary	<p>Sean talks about his earliest memories of being involved with the GAA. He recalls playing at school, for his club Ballaghaderreen, being picked for the Mayo minor panel and progressing onto the senior panel before moving to play for the Roscommon county team. He also transferred clubs to St Croan's. He describes his memories of playing with Dermot Earley and his involvement with the army team in the Curragh Camp. He refers to different games he has played and the teams he played against. He recounts how he became involved in coaching and managing with St Brigid's in Roscommon and the various roles he has held in the GAA. He describes his involvement with the GAA based social initiative and gives his opinions on the issues of amateur status and the role of women, as well as the Irish language and culture.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:27 Earliest memory - playing football for the De La Salle Brothers National School and attending Ballaghaderreen senior matches. Talks about the club using Charlestown pitch because of poor pitches.</p> <p>01:14 Describes the Mayo/Roscommon divide in the town.</p> <p>01:46 Recalls the development of Ballaghaderreen, the underage set up, poor training facilities. Mentions club chairman Tom Walsh.</p> <p>03:23 Discusses the development of skills in his school, St Nathy's. Highlights the influence of the arrival of a new Guard, John Morley to the town.</p> <p>03:41 Talks about playing his first game for Ballaghaderreen at the age of fourteen. Winning the East Mayo and Mayo</p>

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	<p>junior championship in 1968, the intermediate in 1971 and the senior in 1972.</p> <p>04:31 Discusses the involvement of the clergy, Fr. Tom Lynch as a trainer for number of years.</p> <p>04:45 Discusses playing on St Nathy's school team. Had the potential to win a School's All-Ireland in 1968. The dominant team was St. Jarlath's.</p> <p>05:10 Highlights the influence and involvement of local Guards in the club structure including John Morley, Jim Fleming and Tom Walsh.</p> <p>05:38 Talks about being picked for Mayo Minor panel in 1966 and winning an All-Ireland. Marked Colm McAlarney in the final against Down. Going on to play for Mayo at all other levels.</p> <p>06:28 Recalls moving to near Castlerea after the death of his father in 1975 and playing senior football for Roscommon. Played club football for St Croan's. There were divided loyalties in the club, half in Galway and half in Roscommon. Managed by Tom Quinn. Mentions Michael Holland.</p> <p>08:36 Discusses his involvement in underage coaching in 1980. Won underage titles.</p> <p>09:40 Describes moving to the St. Brigid's area in Kiltoom in 1994 and getting involved in club and county football, coaching and selecting. Discusses family involvement in GAA.</p> <p>11:00 Recalls his experiences at St. Nathy's school, playing football there and the facilities. Conditions prepared him well for the army.</p> <p>12:55 Talks about the slightly elevated status in the school that went with being a footballer the history of the school.</p> <p>14:00 Describes the difference in training between St. Nathy's and Ballaghaderreen. There was no structure to training at club level. At school level there was no real structure or drills, skills and fitness came through playing everyday. Tom Lynch as coach.</p> <p>15:05. Recalls the club only having one football but believes that was a common feature of the time.</p> <p>15:45 Discusses how playing practice matches in school helped him develop his skills for playing highball.</p>
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	<p>16:12 Talks about how parents had no real interest in the GAA. Father used to go to matches to bring food.</p> <p>17:22 Explains that he was an only child and that there was very little else to do in Ballaghaderreen but play football, it was the pastime. Mentions Philip and Connie Moynihan, Frank Burns and Johnny McKenzie.</p> <p>18:26 Discusses the Mayo/Roscommon divide in Ballaghaderreen.</p> <p>19:20 Recalls the influence and impact of John Morley on the development of the club.</p> <p>21:32 Discusses the development of the club pitch.</p> <p>21:50 Talks about Dermot Earley, ahead of him in Nathy's and playing on army teams. They became very good friends, and served in the Lebanon together.</p> <p>23:17 It was evident from his young teens that Dermot Earley would be a strong football talent. Mentions Jimmy Duggan.</p> <p>24:32 Talks about the role of football and sport within the army.</p> <p>25:50 Discusses playing football and hurling in the Lebanon, his last game of football was in Tibnin, Lebanon.</p> <p>28:47 Hurling not big in Ballaghaderreen.</p> <p>29:12 Discusses the lack of training for underage GAA in Ballaghaderreen and recalls playing one game every year. Played against local teams like Swinford, Ballyhaunis, Kiltimagh and Aghamore.</p> <p>30:14 Describes the growth in interest in the GAA in Ballaghaderreen.</p> <p>30:30 Talks about getting a lift to matches in Johnny O'Connor's cattle truck.</p> <p>31:02 Recalls celebrating after teams won by lighting bonfires and how a pub got closed by a Garda sergeant, preventing celebrations after a victory against Claremorris in 1972. There were similar celebrations when he moved to Ballintubber and later to St. Brigid's.</p> <p>32:42 He didn't travel to many inter-county matches when he was young as his family did not have much interest in the GAA.</p> <p>32:59 Recalls playing for the marching band in</p>
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	<p>Ballaghaderreen and used to play at Charlestown before inter-county games. Before a Roscommon and Sligo match he got to march in front of one of his heroes Gerry O'Malley.</p> <p>33:30 Talks about training and what was involved at county levels and the difficulties with many players not living in the locality. He lived in the Curragh Camp.</p> <p>34:00 Discusses the advances in training methods after the arrival of the Dublin team of 1974 and Kevin Heffernan giving a workshop in Gormanstown. Mentions Tom Humphries and Mick O'Dwyer.</p> <p>35:24 Recalls finding out he had made the Mayo team.</p> <p>36:53 Talks about being on the Mayo team of 1970 and playing in the championship, having been unavailable for the league because of his career in the army.</p> <p>37:09 Recalls his trial for the Mayo minor team. Mentions Aidan Kelly, Kiltimagh.</p> <p>37:54 Discusses the change in the style of football during his playing career.</p> <p>39:42 Talks about how the county secretary Johnny Mulvey informed players each week if they were playing. Recalls finding out that he made the Connacht team while reading the paper.</p> <p>40:30 Recalls Mayo manager Johnny Carey informing him that he was being dropped from the team.</p> <p>41:05 Talks about how he went to play for Roscommon after being dropped from the Mayo panel and describes the change for him to play for Roscommon.</p> <p>43:38 Discusses the start of his Roscommon career, describes playing his first championship game for Roscommon against Mayo. Mentions Tony Whyte, Ger Feeney and Tommy O'Malley.</p> <p>44:40 Talks about the response from Mayo and the fans to him playing for Roscommon.</p> <p>45:16 Discusses the mixed reaction in Ballaghaderreen to him playing for Roscommon. Recalls that there was more disappointment with him moving to play for St Croan's. Reputation in Mayo.</p> <p>46:22 Talks about settling into the Roscommon panel.</p>
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	<p>47:27 Recalls playing with and against Dermot Earley.</p> <p>50:13 Talks about the different styles of training in playing for Roscommon and Mayo.</p> <p>52:06 Discusses winning his first Connacht title with Roscommon against Galway in Pearse Stadium in 1978.</p> <p>53:18 Talks about playing in Croke Park at various levels. Mentions Danny Murray, Pat O'Neill and Tommy Drumm.</p> <p>54:59 Recalls his first experience of playing at minor level in Croke Park for Mayo in 1966. Describes the atmosphere in the stadium and the facilities in the stadium at the time.</p> <p>57:27 Describes travelling to Croke Park with a priest from St Nathy's, Father Giblin, for the minor match and staying in the Ormond Hotel. Nearly getting lost on the way to the match.</p> <p>58:23 Discusses his most memorable match. Mentions the 1979 Connacht Final for Roscommon against Mayo. Also winning the club county championship with Ballaghaderreen and the intermediate with St Croan's.</p> <p>01:00:07 Talks about other memorable games playing with St Croan's and the regrets that the team did not go on to win the minor title.</p> <p>01:01:01 Describes the honour in being picked for the provincial team for Connacht in 1973 and playing in the Railway Cup.</p> <p>01:02:05 Discusses the decline in the popularity of the Railway Cup and how the changes in club and inter-county structures have impacted the competition.</p> <p>01:03:33 Recalls his disappointment and regret in being unable to take part in the 1980 All-Ireland final against Kerry due to injury. Mentions Paddy Francis Dwyer.</p> <p>01:04:55 Discusses the team's travel and accommodation arrangements before the All-Ireland final. Staying in the Green Isle Hotel. Team travelled by train.</p> <p>01:05:29 Talks about the journey home after the final and the reaction following defeat. First match televised on the BBC. Discusses the nature of the final.</p> <p>01:08:15 Discusses his involvement with St Croan's and describes the development of the club. Training and playing. Mentions Tom Quinn, manager.</p>
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	<p>01:09:07 Recalls getting involved with training in the underage structure while still playing. Happiest time in his football career.</p> <p>01:10:07 Talks about how these underage teams won underage championships and restoring pride in the parish.</p> <p>01:10:21 Talks about being unable to play in the club championship of 1989 because of injury.</p> <p>01:10:46 Discusses the club's lack of success in the championship until 2009.</p> <p>01:11:01 Talks about their relationship with other local clubs, Ballymoe from Galway and Ballintubber. Sense of community within the club.</p> <p>01:11:30 Recalls how he became involved with selecting, managing and coaching at senior level with St. Brigid's after moving to the area in 1994. Mentions John O'Mahony.</p> <p>01:12:05 Talks about the success at underage level and recent senior success.</p> <p>01:13:05 Describes the anxiety that is involved in watching his children play, more so than playing or managing.</p> <p>01:13:24 Talks about how outsiders integrate into the club and how he believes that this contributes to the clubs success.</p> <p>01:14:05 Discusses the differences between urban and rural teams and the make up of St. Brigid's GAA.</p> <p>01:15:43 Highlights the importance of rivalries within the structure of the GAA.</p> <p>01:17:56 Discusses the role that the GAA has played in forming local, county and club identity.</p> <p>01:20:38 Recalls travelling from the Curragh Camp to Roscommon to train teams and to play.</p> <p>01:21:34 Talks about how involvement with the GAA was never regarded as a sacrifice.</p> <p>01:22:05 Discusses playing rugby, soccer and basketball and the appeal rugby held, especially with the way the GAA schedule is organised. Also discusses the development in training.</p> <p>01:24:05 Talks about his days involved with county management and the invitation by Martin McDermott to get</p>
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	<p>involved with the Roscommon team alongside John Kelly from 1988 to 1991.</p> <p>01:24:47 Discusses losing the Connacht final in 1988 and 1989 and then winning it in 1991.</p> <p>01:25:40 Talks about the sense of unity within the panel.</p> <p>01:26:08 Recalls how he became to get involved in coaching. Writing articles for magazines in the 1970s.</p> <p>01:27:13 Talks about being invited to the Coaching Advisory Council in Croke Park as a player representative with Brendan Lynch. And being somewhat intimidated by the other members, Joe Lennon, Kevin Heffernan, Fr. O'Brien from Cork, Tommy Maher and Jim McKeever. Football and hurling managers.</p> <p>01:27:58 Discusses the workings of the Coaching Council and working to set up a coaching structure within the GAA.</p> <p>01:28:56 Talks about the first coaching seminar in Gormanstown College with Joe Lennon and Kevin Heffernan.</p> <p>01:29:46 Explains why Gormanstown was chosen as a venue for the coaching seminar.</p> <p>01:30:10 Discusses travelling to the North for football during the Troubles and being checked at the border.</p> <p>01:30:40 Talks about the differences in the perception of football in the North as compared to the South.</p> <p>01:31:40 Discusses how football in the North has developed quite strongly in the aftermath of the Troubles, and particularly in recent years.</p> <p>01:32:16 Describes how the Northern teams can no longer be seen as an easy challenge in football terms, especially with the achievements of the past decade. Teams like Down, Armagh and Tyrone are now very strong.</p> <p>01:33:25 Highlights the critical role of the media in GAA in promoting the game, especially when competing for attention against the glamour of soccer and rugby.</p> <p>01:35:00 Discusses the social initiative and its aim to get elderly men more involved once again in community life. Mary McAleese is working with the GAA to encourage clubs to organise social events to reach out to the older generation.</p> <p>01:38:12 Talks about inviting the local clubs to get involved in</p>
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	<p>the social initiative.</p> <p>01:38:40 Describes the work that the GAA needs to do to keep its older generation involved with the Association.</p> <p>01:40:35 Talks about how the GAA is involved in supporting players who get injured while playing for their clubs or counties, although it is not level across the board.</p> <p>01:41:27 He believes that the GPA is a positive development in looking after players.</p> <p>01:42:13 Discusses the growth in professionalism within the GAA and how he is completely opposed to pay for play, but is supportive of administrators being paid for their involvement. How it could ruin the ethos of the Association.</p> <p>01:44:01 Describes the change in the role of women in the time that he has been involved with the GAA, and how it is a positive development.</p> <p>01:45:10 Discusses the role that the Irish language and culture plays in the GAA, and compares this to Welsh rugby teams.</p> <p>01:47:12 Talks about his best memories of being involved with the GAA, in particular friends and community.</p> <p>01:48:06 Chooses Dermot Earley and John Morley as his biggest GAA heroes.</p> <p>01:48:17 Discusses his biggest disappointment in the GAA, missing out on the 1980 All-Ireland final. Most of his concerns with the GAA from when he was young have been rectified. Importance of Croke Park as an inspiring monument to the GAA.</p> <p>01:49:33 Talks about watching GAA games in Kosovo, Lebanon, the Middle East and in the United States.</p> <p>01:50:09 Describes what the GAA has meant to him in his lifetime, friends, family and community.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____</p>

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Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	Played from the age of 10 to 39. Club: Won 4 county championships with Ballaghaderreen and 2 with Croan's. County: Won an All-Ireland Minor, 2 Under 21's and a Connacht Junior title with Mayo. Also won 2 Connacht titles and a National League with Roscommon.
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	Got involved in administration in 1976 and was a member of the National Coaching Council (1976/1977). He was chairman of St. Croan's in 1997.
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 01:50:47
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: _____ 17/07/12 _____