

## GAA Oral History Project

## Interview Report Form

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Regina Fitzpatrick
<b>Date of Interview</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2010
<b>Location</b>	Mahony's home, near Vicarstown, Co. Laois
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Martin 'Mahony' Stapleton
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1916 <b>Home County:</b> Laois
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Vicarstown NS
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 2 brothers & 6 sisters <b>Current Family if Different:</b> Wife (Kathleen), 1 daughter & 9 sons
<b>Club(s)</b>	Annanough GAA [Laois]
<b>Occupation</b>	Farmer
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Farmers
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	Fianna Fáil
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	LDF

REFERENCE NO. LS/1/16

Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Martin Stapleton
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1952  <b>Home County:</b> Laois
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Vicarstown NS, Co. Laois  <b>Secondary:</b> CBS Athy, Co. Kildare  <b>Third Level:</b> Carlow Regional Technical College; UCG
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 8 brothers & 1 sister  <b>Current Family if Different:</b> Wife (Mary), 3 sons & 1 daughter
<b>Club(s)</b>	Annanough GAA [Laois]
<b>Occupation</b>	Quality Assurance Manager, Glanbia
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Farmers
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	Fianna Fáil
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	N/A

REFERENCE NO. LS/1/16

<b>Date of Report</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> June 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	1891 -2010
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Laois
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>Mahony and his son Martin discuss their involvement in club and county football in Laois. They recount their experiences playing for Annanough Football Club, Martin's brothers' participation in football, and that of his sons. They recount the successes and failures of the Annanough and Laois football teams over the years, Annanough's representation on Laois teams, and local efforts to raise money for the field in Vicarstown. They also describe the benefits of involvement in the GAA, both on a personal and community level.</p> <p>01:08 Mahony recalls a family interest in football, his uncle Martin following football. Not a hurling area in Moyanna.</p> <p>01:48 Mahony describes the lack of success of the local football team, Moyanna. Winning a championship in 1891. The amalgamation of the teams in Moyanna and Vicarstown in 1920, to form Annanough. Recalls the championship in 1924, 1925 and 1926 that Annanough won. Mentions Dick and Robert Miller. Also James and John Miller, Paddy and John Miller, Jack Brown, Jack Shaw, and Matt Delaney from Stradbally.</p> <p>03:49 Mahony discusses the well-known Delaney family of the early 1920s.</p> <p>03:57 Martin explains Graiguecullen won everything in Carlow before coming into the Laois side of the Barrow. Describes big battles between Graiguecullen and Stradbally in the 1930s, forming the backbone of the Laois football team that contested the All-Ireland in 1936. Winning three Leinster finals in 1936, 1937, and 1938, and again in 1946, the last one until 2003.</p> <p>05:07 Martin discusses Bill Delaney of the 1936 team, and his brothers, Jack, Chris, and Mick Delaney, and their uncle Tom Delaney. Also Tom Murphy. Also, from Graiguecullen: Jim Slater. Rexie McDonald. Also The Mallot McDerby.</p> <p>06:29 Mahony recalls riding a bicycle to Kilkenny, Carlow, and Tullamore to attend matches, 25 or 30 miles to Kilkenny. During the war, a scarcity in tyres, neighbours wrapping twine</p>

	<p>around tyres.</p> <p>07:57 Mahony recalls travelling by bicycle in 1929, aged 13, to a game in Portarlinton between Annanough and Stradbally in 1929. Mick Neary bringing Annanough team by lorry he used to transport pigs.</p> <p>09:16 Martin mentions the Nearys were great footballers: Fran Neary played in 1946 when they won the Leinster final, in the 50s when Annanough won 2 senior championships the Nearys played. Also mentions Fran's son Brian, who played for Laois, and Frankie and John. Also a son of Brian's playing for Portlaoise now.</p> <p>10:08 Mahony recalls Mick Neary bringing them up to the power station Poolaphouca in Wicklow.</p> <p>11:09 Mahony recalls going to national school in Vicarstown, which was founded by Lady Grattan Bellew and closed in 1969. The old Grattan school used as a hall until 2003, when a new community hall was built on field bought off Terry Connell.</p> <p>11:44 Martin explains that Courtwood started a football club in 1962. Courtwood are Annanoughs main rivals.</p> <p>12:50 Mahony recalls Annanough starting playing in The Grove, the Vicarstown team playing in Pouladuff. Martin mentions Dick Miller, the founder of Annanough, who captained Laois to win the first National Football League in 1926.</p> <p>14:03 Mahony explains The Grove was the Millers' field, where they played up till the 70s. Martin recounts how the club bought a field from Terry Connell in Vicarstown before the GAA centenary. Mentions Connell played for Annanough, Laois, and Leinster in the 50s. Also mentions Chris Miller, chairman of the club, son of Bob Miller, on the club committee, and six Millers, Tom Dunne, and Tom Gorman, who had played in the 50s. Explains how they raised the money for the field through donations and barn dances. Mentions Alf and Ron Fraser, who lent their haybarns. Describes concerts held for fund-raising.</p> <p>19:55 Martin describes the area covered by Annanough, Vicarstown, and Moyanna, which belong to Stradbally parish. Explains how juveniles in club competitions have played under Stradbally since 1997. Children up to Under-10s in Annanough.</p> <p>22:04 Martin discusses membership of Annanough, over 100</p>
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	<p>people. Few playing members. Intermediate and junior C football team. Around 40 players. Have intermediate team since 1995. Mahony discusses the success of Annanough in the 40s and 50s. Martin mentions 1978 as the last championship they won, at intermediate level. Mahony mentions Courtwood, which broke away from Annanough in 1962, at the Rath end of Emo parish.</p> <p>24:06 Mahony recalls playing football in national school in the 1920s. Mentions Darney Cole who taught them, and his brother Ignatius who taught from 1926 till 1966. Mahony also mentions Mrs Brown and Mrs Murray, Miss Glynn. Explains teachers had no interest in football. Mentions Jack Brown and Har Brown, sons of teacher.</p> <p>27:24 Mahony recalls going to Dublin in 1936 and working with his uncle building houses, till he returned home when the war started. Describes living with his aunt in Coolock, who started a nursing home, Coolock House. Describes going to Croke Park in 1936. Recounts a story of the 1934 All-Ireland Minor Huroing Final in which Laois lost to Tipperary, unfairly he believes. Mentions Billy O'Neill. Also the Mackeys of Limerick who were playing the senior game afterwards. Also Christy Ring who started in 1939, the Coughlans who hurled for Cork. Mentions watching Ring playing minor.</p> <p>32:07 Mahony describes Croke Park in the 30s. No Cusack Stand. Hill 16 was where Artane industrial schoolboys went, cost a shilling. Artane Boys Band.</p> <p>34:24 Mahony recalls starting playing football in the late 30s, early 40s. Martin describes Annanough honouring Mahony at Easter 2011 for being the oldest living member of the club.</p> <p>35:00 Martin describes his father bringing the family to matches by car to Mullingar, Tullamaore, Newbridge, Athy. Mahony recalls cycling by bike to Carlow, Kilkenny, Tullamore, and Dublin. 3 and a half hours to Dublin. Mentions cycling with Mike Shortall to Croke Park for a Leinster final in 1946, when Matt Dunne of Annanough played for Laois. Also mentions John Mahon.</p> <p>38:20 Martin discusses Annanough's representation on Laois teams. Mentions Matt Dunne, Mick Dunne, and John McGlynn on the 1946 Laois team. When Laois won the Senior Leinster championship in 1951, Terry Connell, Tom Gorman, Jack and Jim Nearny, Tom and Billy Murphy represented Annanough.</p> <p>40:15 They explain that mostly farmers played for Annanough</p>
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	<p>and lads who worked in Bolands shop and on farms. Mentions Willie Kelly from Kilkenny, Billy Blackburn from Wexford. Martin recalls a team in Ballymanus, which lasted a couple of years. Mentions Dan Coughlan, the Kellys, the Frasers, the Gormans. Mentions Alf Fraser, of the Church of Ireland, who played for Ballymanus, which was unusual for the time. Describes good relations between Catholics and Protestants in the area.</p> <p>42:39 Mahony discusses locals emigrating to England. Mentions Mick Carty a Laois footballer who went to England in the 60s. Also Chris Carty. Martin explains that because it was farming area, there wasn't much emigration. Describes how, in the 70s, several families kept the club going. Advantages of playing with a close-knit team. Mentions Tom Prendergast, who played for Portlaoise. Explains how, in 1995, Annanough moved to intermediate and is still trying to get out of it. Potential of the current team. Sammy Kelly training them. Have qualified for semi-final this year. Describes relegation system in Laois.</p> <p>46:14 Martin describes the involvement of himself and his 8 brothers in the GAA: John, Michael, Martin (who played under-21 for Laois), Dan, Liam, Pat, Christy, Dominick, and Ger. Mentions the six Millers of the Grove they played with: Chris, Dick, Pat, Johnny, Jim, and Robert.</p> <p>52:22 Martin discusses the lack of hurling in the area. Mahony recalls his father saying cricket was played years ago in Lahinch Cross, when the GAA was just starting up. Also mentions tug of war at sports days: running, jumping, sheaf-throwing.</p> <p>55:05 They discuss football tournaments in Ballybrittas in summer.</p> <p>55:47 Mahony recalls dances in Vicarstown Hall. Housedances in Conroys, dancing half-sets in the kitchen.</p> <p>56:40 Mahony describes celebrations after winning: dance, tea. Martin recalls bonfires in 1978 after the intermediate team's victory.</p> <p>57:40 Martin recounts his experiences of playing Under-21 for Laois. Describes Annanough team beating St. Joseph's to win the championship in 1970. Mentions Ned Flynn from Courtwood and some from Timahoe. Being picked to play for Laois after that. Drawing against Offaly in the Under-21 championship in Tullamore. Mentions Kevin Kilmurray playing for Offaly. Losing the replay. Mentions Laois player Bobby</p>
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	<p>Miller. His pride in wearing the jersey. Mentions his Laois heroes: the Delaneys, Jack Kinnane, Noel Delaney, Ollie Fennel, Paddy Bracken. Mahony mentions the Tynans of Abbeyleix, the Delaneys of Stradbally, and the Millers of Annanough: the main footballing families in Laois.</p> <p>01:01:02 Mahony describes the <i>Sunday Press</i> and the <i>Irish Press</i>, the most popular papers. Also the <i>Irish Independent</i>. Locally <i>The Nationalist</i> and <i>The Leinster Express</i>.</p> <p>01:01:46 Mahony recalls going to an ex-schoolteacher in Rath, to listen to matches on battery-operated radio. Commentary by Micheal O'Hehir.</p> <p>01:02:58 Mahony recounts how, in 1947, he heard the match between Kerry and Cavan from the Polo Grounds in New York. Mentions listening to Mike Shortall. Mentions some Cavan players: John Joe Reilly, Mick Higgins, P.J. Duke, Wilson, Simon Duignan.</p> <p>01:05:17 Mahony describes listening to hurling finals on the radio. Martin mentions Kilkenny hurler Lory Meagher.</p> <p>01:06:12 Martin describes making footballs out of rags when they were making hay.</p> <p>01:07:15 Mahony compares football today with that of his time: rougher then, not as stylish as today. Mentions a dispute during a game in 1929 between Annanough and Stradbally.</p> <p>01:08:40 They discuss the centrality of the GAA to community life. Martin mentions the role of the ICA in women's lives. Annual sports days in Emo and Ballyroan.</p> <p>01:10:34 Martin explains the role of the GAA club and the ICA in the parish: its involvement in the local school and church.</p> <p>01:12:50 Martin mentions the Grattans. Landlord Henry Grattan's involvement in the area. Recounts local history.</p> <p>01:16:55 Martin discusses rivalry between Laois and Kildare. Recounts Kildare's All-Ireland Senior Football final victories.</p> <p>01:17:39 Martin recalls an Under-21 All-Ireland Football Final between Laois and Kerry in 1964, which Kerry won. Mentions Pascal Delaney who was sent off, Eamon Mulhall of Ballyroan, Danny Brennan of Arles, Dick Miller of Timahoe. Describes the atmosphere in the CBS Athy when Kildare won the Under-21 championship the following year. Mentions Kildare players Jack Donnelly, Ollie Crinnigan, Pat Mangan,</p>
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	<p>and Pat Dunney in 1965 team. Also mentions Mick Hannon and Mick Kelleher, teachers in the CBS.</p> <p>01:19:50 Martin explains how strong football was in CBS Athy. Playing football leagues in Chanterlands. Winning the B Leinster final in 1966, beating St Mary's Mullingar with Bosco Connell, Brian O'Doherty, Jim Miller, his brother Dan, Christy Delahunt. Mentions Mick Kelleher from Macroom, influential teacher in football. Strong tradition of football, rugby, soccer in CBS Athy. Recalls cycling 9 miles to school, until a bus went from Vicarstown.</p> <p>01:23:35 Mahony discusses the origins of his nickname. Martin mentions his uncle, Father Michael Coughlan, who played for Ballymanus and gave them presents of football boots.</p> <p>01:26:19 Martin recounts the story of his son Rory playing minor for Laois in first round of Leinster championship in Tullamore in 2003. Mentions Rory marking Kildare's Mikey Conway. Also mentions Aidan Relihan of Dublin. Also Sean Dempsey the team manager. His other sons Martin and Shane also play football, Martin won a colleges football medal with the Trench Cup playing for Trinity, Rory played for St Patrick's College Drumcondra. His wife, Mary, loves hurling, comes from a hurling background in Coolderry.</p> <p>01:31:00 Martin discusses the importance of football in life: discipline, fitness, ability to lose well.</p> <p>01:32:12 Martin discusses Rory's football career playing for Annanough, Laois and, St Pat's. Mentions Cork's Daniel Goulding Rory was marking.</p> <p>01:35:36 Martin describes the intense training involved in playing at intercounty level. The commitment of his wife: washing gear and cooking the right foods.</p> <p>01:38:57 They discuss their optimism for the future of Annanough. The need to get out of the intermediate level.</p>
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<p><b>Involvement in GAA</b></p>	<p><b>Mahony:</b></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 type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input 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> <p><b>Martin:</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____</p>
<p><b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p><b>Mahony:</b> Won Laois Intermediate Football Championship with Annanough in the 1940s</p> <p><b>Martin:</b> Played football with Annanough from 1966-1989; won Laois Intermediate Football Championship in 1978; member of Laois U21 Football team in 1972; member of Laois Senior Football team in 1978.</p>
<p><b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p><b>Mahony:</b> N/A</p> <p><b>Martin:</b> Member of Annanough GAA committee since 1966; Secretary, 1982 – 84; Chairman 2003; member of fundraising committee; finance committee; social committee; field committee. Coached many Annanough teams between 1996-2008</p>
<p><b>Format</b></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual</p>
<p><b>Duration</b></p>	<p>Length of Interview: 1:40:15</p>
<p><b>Language</b></p>	<p>English</p>

**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: Regina Fitzpatrick

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> June 2012