

## GAA Oral History Project

## Interview Report Form

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Arlene Crampsie
<b>Date of Interview</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2011
<b>Location</b>	Interviewee's home, near Irvinestown, Co. Fermanagh
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Malachy Mahon
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1930 <b>Home County:</b> Fermanagh
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Irvinestown Boys PS, Co. Fermanagh <b>Secondary:</b> St. Macartan's College, Monaghan <b>Third Level:</b> UCD; St. Mary's Training College, Belfast
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 8 brothers & 3 sisters <b>Current Family if Different:</b> Married to Brenda with 2 sons and 3 daughters
<b>Club(s)</b>	St. Molaise GAC [Fermanagh]; UCD [Dublin]
<b>Occupation</b>	Teacher
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Farmer / Publican
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	SDLP
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	N/A

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<b>Date of Report</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> August 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	1930 – 2011
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Fermanagh, Donegal, Antrim, Down, Armagh, Tyrone, Monaghan, Cavan, Kerry, Dublin, Americas
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Playing, Training, Coaching, Refereeing, Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Administration, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Education, Role of Clergy, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Identity, Culture, Volunteers, Rivalries, Media, Religion, The Troubles
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>Malachy discusses the early days of hurling and football in his club, St Molaise Irvinestown, Fermanagh. He describes family involvement in the GAA and the development of his interest in football whilst attending a boarding school in Monaghan. Malachy talks about the role of the clergy in his community and the development of facilities at his club and around the county. He talks about his administrative career in the GAA and the issues that the GAA faced in these times. Malachy reflects upon the effects of The Troubles on the GAA in Fermanagh. He describes the importance of the GAA and what it has meant to him in his lifetime.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:26 Earliest GAA memory – his father taking him into the countryside to search for sticks to make hurls in the 1930s.</p> <p>01:25 Recalls that hurling was played in Irvinestown before the formation of the GAA. Mentions that people of all denominations played.</p> <p>01:58 Discusses Irvinestown’s reaching the Fermanagh junior football championship in 1940. Recalls the community involvement in the lead up to the final. Mentions his brother Dermot, a priest and Fr Eugene Lennon.</p> <p>04:02 Describes making flags and pins in Irvinestown’s colours for the final.</p> <p>04:34 Discusses his family’s involvement in the GAA.</p> <p>04:58 Talks about his brother Dermot’s involvement in GAA. He played in All Hallows and alongside successful Kerry players. Recalls him being given a pair of green and gold socks from a Kerry player after an All-Ireland win.</p>

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	<p>05:55 Mentions Willie the drummer from the Orange Lodge Band who borrowed the socks for the 12<sup>th</sup> of July parade.</p> <p>07:07 Mentions that his brothers attended the Christian Brothers school in Omagh. Recalls that Vin played minor hurling with Tyrone. Mentions Des, Vin and Kevin playing rugby too.</p> <p>08:10 Discusses being involved on the 1947 Irvinestown team that won the Fermanagh senior football league. Kevin playing with Dowra, Clones.</p> <p>08:32 Mentions that his interest lay in hurling in his younger days. Talks about the early days of hurling in Fermanagh and Irvinestown.</p> <p>09:38 Recalls attending St Macartan's College in Monaghan. Talks about his involvement in football.</p> <p>10:21 Recalls becoming ill in his first year at school and losing the power of his legs. Discusses being sent home for a term to recuperate. Recalls playing football outside in the evenings.</p> <p>12:02 Discusses experiences of his time in St Macartan's College. Recalls Fr Molloy training the school teams.</p> <p>14:54 Talks about the importance of GAA to his life in St Macartan's. Discusses the successes of the college in the school competitions – the Rannafast Cup and MacRory Cup.</p> <p>16:35 Recalls the opening of the St Molaise Park in Irvinestown. Mentions being allowed out of school to attend the opening. Mentions Dr Reilly from Dromore taking him home and missing the start of the 100 yards race.</p> <p>17:52 Talks about his years at St Macartan's College. Mentions the friendships and camaraderie. Recalls arranging matches for underage games during the summer.</p> <p>19:04 Discusses travelling to Dromore by train to play underage matches during the summer.</p> <p>20:29 Discusses his early introduction into the administration side of GAA. Mentions his involvement in setting up the Fermanagh Youth Board and developing underage competitions.</p> <p>21:53 Discusses life at St Macartan's College. Gives his opinion that there was no favourable treatment given to the players in the school.</p>
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	<p>24:06 Discusses the impact of World War Two on GAA activities in Irvinestown. Mentions that travel was curtailed.</p> <p>24:40 Describes the outburst of activity after the war ended. Mentions the train network. Recalls the efforts of Gerry McGee and Fr Jimmy Duffy to revive football in Fermanagh after the war ended.</p> <p>27:01 Talks about Tony Tighe's involvement in Fermanagh's first Ulster final in 1945.</p> <p>28:11 Discusses the improvement in the economy in Irvinestown during World War Two.</p> <p>29:00 Mentions that there were Irish men, working in the British RAF, stationed in Irvinestown, played football illegally with the local clubs. Recalls the RAF having their own team. Mentions Fr Lappin. Civilian workers like Seamus O'Rourke, John Dunne also got involved when they were building the aerodrome.</p> <p>31:00 Recalls experiences of local characters in Irvinestown. Mentions the Creighton Hotel in Clones.</p> <p>33:50 Describes travelling to Ulster final matches in Clones. Recalls his interest in Antrim football in their successful years in the late 1940s.</p> <p>34:34 Talks about the opening of St Molaise pitch in Irvinestown. Recalls Antrim beating the reigning All-Ireland champions, Roscommon, in a challenge match. Mentions Dan O'Rourke, GAA President opening the pitch and JJ Fallon breaking his leg.</p> <p>37:33 Discusses the effects of the success of Antrim in the 1940s – talks about the subsequent successes of teams in Ulster.</p> <p>38:13 Talks about refereeing Ulster finals. Mentions an umpire, Billy Charlton. Recalls an experience of refereeing an Ulster final match.</p> <p>41:15 Discusses his approval of entertainment at half time in matches nowadays.</p> <p>43:00 Talks about the tradition of hurling in Fermanagh. Mentions tales of involvement of the local gentry in hurling – families at Crom and Florencecourt.</p> <p>46:58 Discusses the history of GAA in Irvinestown. Talks about Sean B McManus' involvement in setting up a club, the Michael Barrett's in the earlier years. Mentions Vaughan</p>
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	<p>School in Tubrid, near Ederney. Discusses why the club was named after Michael Barrett, a Fenian involved in a prison breakout in England. Mentions that the club name was changed to St. Molaise GAA in later years. Mentions Fr McQuaid, Cahir Healy and Quinlivan.</p> <p>52:12 Notes that St. Molaise GAA was initially set up as a hurling club. Talks about the greater influence of football in the northern parts of Fermanagh – Teemore and Newtownbutler. Talks about the involvement of Dr Cormac Reilly in the first football match to be played in Fermanagh.</p> <p>54:25 Mentions that St. Molaise won the senior championship in 1918. Talks about the decline of GAA during the War of Independence. Mentions a law that prohibited games being played.</p> <p>56:25 Discusses St. Molaise GAA in the early days. Talks about the strong administrative presence in the club. Mentions a local curate, Gerry McGee and John McElholm were all chairmen of the county board. Mentions the impact of having the county grounds on the club.</p> <p>58:15 Mentions that the Ulster Club championship originated in Irvinestown. Talks about the relationship with the O’Connell’s club in Belfast. Mentions Gerry Arthurs and issues with the naming of it.</p> <p>01:00:05 Talks about his approval of club championships today. Discusses the importance of underage development. Mentions Lisnaskea.</p> <p>01:00:58 Discusses fundraising in the club. Recalls establishing an inter-firm competition. Mentions the Mayor O’Dwyer Cup, a Mayo man who became Mayor of New York. Joe Maguire and the Fermanagh Men’s Association in New York put up the trophy. Mentions the Drama Festival.</p> <p>01:04:08 Talks about the success of the inter-firm competition. Mentions participation from large businesses. Recalls that each team was allowed to take in 3 guest players.</p> <p>01:06:58 Discusses the cup that was presented to the inter-firm winners.</p> <p>01:08:16 Talks about the “Red League” in the 1930s. Mentions a dispute between the Fermanagh County Board and the North Fermanagh clubs and the Tyrone County Board and the West Tyrone clubs. The clubs seceded from their counties and ran the Red League as an illegal</p>
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	<p>competition. Ulster Council had to settle the matter.</p> <p>01:10:10 Recalls Irvinestown playing a match against Errigal Ciaran in Tyrone. Mentions Peter Canavan and the Harte players.</p> <p>01:11:44 Discusses his early days in administrative roles within the GAA. Recalls being captain of the intermediate football team in UCD. Mentions his involvement in setting up a regular football competition in UCD.</p> <p>01:15:39 Discusses his role as linesman in matches in Croke Park. Recalls doing linesman for a Railway Cup match between Ulster and Connaught. Mentions Tom Fee and his involvement in GAA.</p> <p>01:17:26 Talks about his first teaching post in Newtownbutler. Mentions Canon Maguire, a great GAA man, who offered him the job. Recalls being sacked from the job for not playing with Newtownbutler club.</p> <p>01:20:29 Discusses his involvement in organising local underage competitions in Irvinestown. Mentions drawing up a ten year plan and presenting it to Fermanagh County Board in relation to youth competitions and becoming involved with the county.</p> <p>01:21:25 Talks about the time consuming aspects of being involved in administration. Mentions support from his wife and family.</p> <p>01:22:33 Talks about Tom Campbell, a Fermanagh County Board committee member, from Belleek. Had been part of Corlea and had been interned. Recalls a dispute between Irvinestown club and the Fermanagh County Board in the 1950s.</p> <p>01:25:29 Mentions being called upon to speak to the Ulster Council on behalf of Fermanagh County Board in relation to a dispute. Fermanagh were graded junior and always had to play in Round One of the Ulster Championship. Mentions Alf Murray, Sean Arthurs and Seamus McFerran.</p> <p>01:27:22 Discusses his role as secretary to St. Molaise Irvinestown. Talks about big issues that were raised during his time on the County Board committee. Discusses the development of facilities in Fermanagh.</p> <p>01:29:02 Describes the Gaelic Field in Enniskillen where county matches were played before Brewster Park was</p>
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	<p>developed.</p> <p>01:30:47 Mentions the contribution of Gerry McGee in the efforts to develop facilities in Fermanagh. Talks about facilities in clubs around the county.</p> <p>01:34:51 Talks about the introduction of the Scór competition during his tenure on the county board. Talks about the successes of Fermanagh in the competition. Mentions Charlie McNally from Maguiresbridge and set dancers.</p> <p>01:35:42 Recalls the county board becoming involved with an organisation called Ciste Gael, a fundraising organisation set up by the GAA.</p> <p>01:37:37 Talks about efforts to build a relationship with the BBC and UTV.</p> <p>01:39:34 Discusses efforts to raise money at both club and county level. Talks about the development of Brewster Park and the fundraising initiatives involved.</p> <p>01:42:00 Mentions large fundraisers organised by Fr Vallely, Kevin Murphy and Terry O'Hagan. Recalls holding a large draw, the prize being a house, to raise money for the development of the Irvinestown club. Mentions that the draw was illegal and discusses the trials of organising ticket sales.</p> <p>01:49:48 Discusses negativity within the media towards the draw. Talks about the success of the draw.</p> <p>01:51:28 Talks about the repercussions of holding the illegal draw. Notes that the club was taken to court. Mentions Fr Timony and supporters in America running a dance.</p> <p>01:52:29 Talks about a local character, Barney Curley. Discusses his involvement in horse racing. Notes his later contribution to charity work. Mentions Barry Brogan.</p> <p>01:58:06 Discusses the success of the Irvinestown team in 1952. Recalls studying in Dublin and travelling back to the matches. Tells a story of hitchhiking from Dublin to Fermanagh for a county final.</p> <p>02:02:30 Discusses the impact of The Troubles on the GAA in Irvinestown and Fermanagh. Recalls travelling to Long Kesh to visit past pupils that were interned.</p> <p>02:03:23 Talks about a feeling of division among the community in relation to collections at GAA matches for political prisoners.</p>
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	<p>02:06:21 Mentions that politics was kept separate from GAA as much as possible. Talks about elections in Fermanagh.</p> <p>02:08:12 Discusses his involvement in the Civil Rights Movement before he took up the role of secretary to the County Board. Discusses major incidents in Fermanagh during The Troubles. Mentions the murder of Louis Leonard in Lisnaskea.</p> <p>02:12:36 Reflects upon his best memories of being involved with the GAA – establishing a field and pitch facilities for the Coa team while he was in a teaching position in the school.</p> <p>02:17:08 Talks about his GAA heroes – Mentions Paddy Doherty - recalls refereeing a McKenna Cup final in Castleblayney between Down and Cavan. Mentions James McCartan, Dan McCartan and Liam Maguire a guard.</p> <p>02:20:40 Recalls playing for UCD against Civil Service. Mentions Jackie Lyne and PJ Duke. Recalls playing against another hero, Paddy ‘Fisher’ McCaffery in Mulleek.</p> <p>02:23:31 Discusses his biggest disappointments within the GAA – the growing professionalism of the game and the decline of hurling. Talks about the problems that face the GAA in trying to develop hurling at underage level.</p> <p>02:26:11 Recalls his interest in hurling while he studied in Dublin. Tells of an experience of being drafted in to play in a match in Phoenix Park.</p> <p>02:28:38 Describes what his involvement in the GAA has meant to him in his lifetime. Mentions the camaraderie and friendships forged.</p> <p>02:31:30 Talks about volunteering efforts within the GAA and the support of the GAA community.</p> <p>02:34:28 Discusses a match in the 1950s between Irvinestown and the New York Gaels at the opening of the Devenish pitch. Mentions Frank Maguire.</p>
<p><b>Involvement in GAA</b></p>	<p>✓ Supporter ✓ Player ✓ Manager ✓ Coach ✓ Steward</p> <p>✓ Chairperson ✓ Committee Member ✓ Grounds-person</p> <p>✓ Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer ✓ Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): ____Club President_____</p>
<p><b>Record as a Player</b></p>	<p>Played from the age of 14 to 35. Won senior football</p>



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(Titles won; Length of time played)	championship (1952), senior league (1947 and 1952).
<b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)	Has had a long involvement with administration.  Club: Secretary of Mayor O'Dwyer Cup, Chairman, Secretary, Delegate to County Board, President.  County: Secretary of 1 <sup>st</sup> Fermanagh Youth Board, Secretary, Ulster Council Delegate  Ulster: Chairman, Vice-chairman, Secretary  Central: Central Council (3 years)
<b>Format</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
<b>Duration</b>	Length of Interview: 02:36:07
<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:        \_\_\_\_\_Arlene Crampsie\_\_\_\_\_

Date:            \_\_\_\_\_06/08/12\_\_\_\_\_