

## GAA Oral History Project

**Interview Report Form**

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Anne Finn
<b>Date of Interview</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2010
<b>Location</b>	Interviewees home, near Wexford.
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Ned Wheeler
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1932 <b>Home County:</b> Wexford (Born in Co. Laois)
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Sliabh Rua, Co. Kilkenny
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 1 brother <b>Current Family if Different:</b> wife/ 4 daughters
<b>Club(s)</b>	Faythe Harriers, Wexford
<b>Occupation</b>	Retired Oil Salesman
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Victualler, Clover Meats
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	None

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<b>Date of Report</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> July 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	1954-1964
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Wexford, Laois
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Administration, Material Culture, Education, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, All-Ireland, Club History, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges
<b>Summary</b>	<p>In this interview Ned talks about his life and the GAA. He traces his hurling career from underage to senior level. He talks at length about All-Ireland success in the 1950s. He discusses playing for his club and for Wexford and the changes he has seen in the GAA throughout the years.</p> <p>00:.00 Introduction</p> <p>00.37 Born in Rathdowney, Co Laois, lived there for 5 years.</p> <p>00.41 Moved to Sliabh Rua, South Kilkenny in 1937 as his father worked with Clover Meats in Waterford.</p> <p>01.02 He remembers Martin White, now over 100 years old.</p> <p>01.19 Recalls attending Walsh Park in Waterford to watch the All-Ireland Hurling winners/finalists play a fund-raising game for Ballybricken Church in Waterford.</p> <p>01.40 Attended National School in Sliabh Rua, met future Kilkenny players there.</p> <p>01.48 Clover Meats opened a plant in Wexford. His family moved there. Other families also moved, including Jim Buggy whose sons played hurling and handball for Wexford.</p> <p>02.25 His first club was Piercestown. He hurled at minor and juvenile level. Won a Junior medal in 1946.</p> <p>02.48 Married in 1946, moved to Wexford town and joined Faythe Harriers Club.</p> <p>03.03 Had one brother who died 25 years ago. Has 4 daughters.</p> <p>03.26 His mother was from near Johnstown, Kilkenny. His uncles Paddy, Willie and Joe Wheeler played hurling at various levels for Laois. His father played for his local club</p>

	<p>and Clover Meats.</p> <p>04.00 He recalls walking from Sliabh Rua to Walsh Park in Waterford to watch games every Sunday</p> <p>04.33 He remembers radio commentaries using wet/dry batteries. The wet battery had to be charged on Saturday for Sunday's commentary.</p> <p>05.02 He recalls local Sliabh Rua heroes. In National School hurling was part of their education. During summertime they played hurling, no coaching.</p> <p>06.30 At Club Level he played at Junior and Minor level.</p> <p>06.59 Fund-raising events were not held. The club collected money.</p> <p>07.20 Transport was either by bicycle or walking</p> <p>08.02 Hurling was the main focus of Piercestown (St. Martin's) club. He played senior hurling with St. Martin's until 1955</p> <p>09.15 He recalls how he used to look at photos of Wexford players, never believing he would achieve so much himself. He played in the 1949 Minor league game against Tipperary in Thurles. Recalls his first game against Kilkenny at Wexford Park.</p> <p>10.30 He recalls how the older players made him feel at home.</p> <p>10.50 He always wanted to wear some County jersey</p> <p>11.13 He recalls the early training of the County team. No coaching but trying to improve all the time.</p> <p>12.49 He contrasts the training of modern times.</p> <p>13.06 With regard to his own special ability he speaks of his amazement at overhead striking. Relates how the Kilkenny hurler, Jack Garrigan, skilled at overhead striking, gave his hurley to Ned's father. Ned then explains how he practised overhead striking using this hurley.</p> <p>14.50 He remembers other players – Joe Salmon, John Sutton, Jim Morrissey and Pat Stakelum, who also displayed overhead striking. Years later they have discussed the skill.</p> <p>15.58 He discusses the changes in hurling – catching, tapping, and hand-passing.</p>
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	<p>16.54 He has watched children training, believes natural development should take its course without too much early coaching</p> <p>19.40 Tim flood, Mick Hanlon and Ned were the first Wexford men to win Railway cup medals (1954) Describes the game.</p> <p>21.39 The Railway Cup and Oireachtas were fantastic competitions. Sharpened player's skills.</p> <p>22.19 Amongst his toughest opponents were Billy Rackard, Joe Salmon and Josie Hartnett</p> <p>22.50 He discusses the Wexford games of 1960 and then back to the games of the 1950's</p> <p>26.20 He remembers Wexford beating Galway in the 1955 All-Ireland Final. GAA pundits said Wexford weren't worth a goddam, they didn't beat a Munster team!</p> <p>26.38 In 1956 Wexford beat Tipperary in the League final,(It was described as the big wind day, there was only a slight breeze over the canal end) They beat cork in the All-Ireland Hurling Final and had a number of players on the team which beat the pick of Munster in the Railway Cup Final. Wexford were finally regarded as worthy All-Ireland Winners.</p> <p>28.40 He recalls the homecomings, wins and defeats were all celebrated. Wicklow always showed their support to Wexford en route to Croke Park</p> <p>29.58 He believes the backdoor system is good</p> <p>30.25 He would not like the games to change from amateur status</p> <p>31.01 He speaks of pride in the jersey. Recalls a Minister for Sport from England visiting Croke Park and being amazed at no segregation of supporters.</p> <p>31.40 He is pleased at opening of Croke Park to rugby</p> <p>33.10 He regards media coverage of games as fantastic. He enjoys games analysis.</p> <p>33.40 He compares earlier coverage of games. Michael O'Hehir could make a bad game sound good.</p> <p>36.22 A great memory is the opening of Croke Park to rugby. All are Irish and proud to wear the green jersey</p> <p>37.20 The amateur status of the games makes him proud. The GAA has survived war and waves of emigration. The</p>
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	<p>faceless backroom people are the kernel of the GAA</p> <p>38.05 In recalling great teams he believes that to get where they were they all had to be great.</p>
<b>Involvement in GAA</b>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input 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>
<b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)	<p>Railway Cup titles 1954, 1956, 1964</p> <p>All-Ireland Hurling titles 1955, 1956, 1960</p> <p>Junior Club medal 1946</p>
<b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)	N/A
<b>Format</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
<b>Duration</b>	Length of Interview: 00:38:47
<b>Language</b>	English

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**To be filled in by Interviewer:**

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Signed:      \_\_\_\_Ann Finn\_\_\_\_

Date:        \_\_\_\_19/05/2010\_\_\_\_