

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	3 rd Nov 2010
Location	Baxter Healthcare, Castlebar, Co. Mayo
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	John Caulfield
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1952 Home County: Mayo
Education	Primary: Breaffy NS, Co. Mayo Secondary: St. Gerald's College, Castlebar, Co. Mayo Third Level: UCG / NUI Galway
Family	Siblings: 4 brothers & 1 sister Current Family if Different: Married to Mary Byrne with 2 daughters and 1 son.
Club(s)	Breaffy
Occupation	European HR Director, Baxter Healthcare
Parents' Occupation	Farmer [Father]; Local Bacon Factory [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fianna Fáil
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Squash

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Date of Report	9 th July 2012
Period Covered	1906 – 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Mayo, Dublin
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Fundraising, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Identity, Rivalries, Irish Language, Culture, Scór, All-Ireland, Club History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Impact on Live, Challenges, Alcohol, Violence, Politics, Northern Ireland, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Food and Drink, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Economy/ Economics
Interview Summary	<p>John talks about his association with the GAA from organising fundraising events to being a referee. He talks about how clubs and the GAA have changed over the years in areas such as technology, organisation, rules and politics. John also mentions the role of women, the church and culture in the GAA over the years. John describes how the community, the GAA and local clubs all interact with each other and the positive and negative aspects of the relationships. Also, the interview hits on the points of volunteering versus professionalism as well as things the GAA should do to improve.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:33 John's earliest GAA memory is being involved with the club in Breaffy doing fundraising which involved organising a dance on the night that the ESB was out.</p> <p>02:18 He describes how the concept of a Bord na nÓg has evolved through the years.</p> <p>03:03 How his skills were better suited to organising and management rather than playing the sport itself.</p> <p>03:22 His family history with the club in Breaffy, with his grandfather being involved in county meetings in 1906.</p> <p>04:10 He talks about the history of the club in Breaffy and its official beginning in 1953.</p> <p>04:38 Mentions the division between town and country, with proximity to Castlebar and how that has evolved. There are</p>

	<p>three areas in the parish – Castlebar, Breaffy, Ballyheane.</p> <p>05:30 Returns to the history of Breaffy and about the Browne family of Breaffy and Fitzgerald family of Turlough that owned the land.</p> <p>06:16 Major Browne became more open to working with the locals to set up a sporting field, and the development of the land since then.</p> <p>08:22 How the land for sporting events in Breaffy became owned by the club itself, and the issues surrounding money and the land commission.</p> <p>09:25 The current condition of Breaffy and the different levels of clubs that are in operation today and the growth of the grounds and club.</p> <p>10:20 His time as the secretary for the club, and the differences between club organisation and functions then and now.</p> <p>11:00 How money and supplies have grown through the years.</p> <p>12:00 Describes the annual fundraiser in the local bingo hall.</p> <p>13:20 Other events they would hold to gain money for the club.</p> <p>13:50 How the town and the country started to merge together in the late 1970s and early 1980s.</p> <p>14:12 Festivals in the summer revolving around football and hurling tournaments, and going in front of a judge to get extensions for the festivals.</p> <p>15:48 They also held a sports day for children, which was a focal point for the chairman at that time, Tommy Lyons, who was involved in the wider GAA too.</p> <p>17:10 How in the late 1970s the club became involved with Scór.</p> <p>17:50 Mentions The Barney Set Dance Group and their success.</p> <p>18:14 How it became fashionable to talk about your Irishness again.</p> <p>19:00 How the sports were a part of the social fabric of the community.</p>
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	<p>19:31 Dr. Mickie Loftus, the president of the GAA, and how he was opposed to alcohol.</p> <p>20:00 The differences in the players and how some were easier to manage than others.</p> <p>20:30 The rivalry between Breaffy and Castlebar, and how those barriers have been broken down over the years.</p> <p>21:53 He talks about the Jordan brothers – Vincent and Kevin, who played for Breaffy and were tough players on the field. Their sisters played Camogie for Breaffy too.</p> <p>22:30 How politics were involved in the GAA, and how political and religious connections would allow you to have more opportunities.</p> <p>23:40 How immigration impacted clubs, but not so much in Breaffy.</p> <p>25:15 The growth of the area of Breaffy and how it progressed through the years.</p> <p>26:13 The emergence of other sports meant that GAA clubs had to compete against sports such as soccer.</p> <p>26:45 How current facilities allow for multiple sports to be played there and it gives people a choice to play what they are good at.</p> <p>27:12 John talks about how the club started with football then added hurling, camogie, and rounders. Today the club plays ladies football.</p> <p>29:25 The first match he saw was in Breaffy which he walked to, and he also would go to Castlebar with his father to see larger events.</p> <p>29:50 How Mayo and especially Galway were successful.</p> <p>30:29 Describes connections with people such as Joe Langan, Mick Byrnes, Dermot Earley, Father JJ Cribben.</p> <p>31:12 The centennial celebration in 1984, and the open air mass that their club organised.</p> <p>32:02 How Connacht final matches would attract a variety of people to Castlebar, and the large numbers of bars in the town.</p> <p>33:28 How GAA games have become more business like in modern times compared to the past. Talks about a match with</p>
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	<p>Ballintubber.</p> <p>34:40 The success of the Breaffy club and a brief history. First junior title won in 1966 and 1971. How difficult it was to even win the West Mayo. Mentions Crossmolina, Ballintubber and Castlebar.</p> <p>36:00 He describes celebrations after Breaffy wins, and how certain events have changed over the years. How dinner dances have grown into a community wide event.</p> <p>37:50 He talks about how today there are proper facilities for the Breaffy club, and the need for a higher standard.</p> <p>39:00 John talks about the changing role of women in the Breaffy club. At the beginning women would sell tickets, help cater events, and wash jerseys.</p> <p>39:50 Women have become more equal partners in the running of GAA clubs</p> <p>40:30 The Breaffy club currently has a professional relationship with the county board, in the past it was more defensive.</p> <p>41:00 The influence of media and how fast the news from meetings can be broadcast.</p> <p>41:40 The GAA has become stricter with rules, especially with foul play.</p> <p>42:20 The relationship that the Breaffy committee had with the players.</p> <p>43:57 How the idea of having professionals rather than volunteers impacts clubs and the GAA at all levels, he also talks about the importance of volunteering.</p> <p>46:20 The local clergy were the life blood of local clubs, along with other people working in the public sector.</p> <p>49:00 Increases in media and technology have provided advantages in organisation, but he is conflicted whether or not officials should use advances in technology.</p> <p>50:50 His best memory being involved in the GAA was the addition of Scór, and how Bord na nÓg's have had positive influences.</p> <p>51:53 Does not believe the GAA should make learning Irish compulsory, but rather leave it until the time is right.</p> <p>53:10 His local GAA heroes were Tommy Lyons and Dr.</p>
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	<p>Mickie Loftus, and he gives the reasons why.</p> <p>54:15 He always tries to make it home, and to Croke park to watch the All-Ireland finals, and how he gets to the park today.</p> <p>56:15 How the GAA was able to do things when most of the country was unable to do so.</p> <p>57:09 The GAA needs to react more quickly to public perception.</p> <p>59:15 The Breaffy GAA club was able to work well with people from other countries and religions, and how relations are changing for the better all over Ireland.</p> <p>1:00:58 The GAA was a learning experience for him in learning how to organise and run programs as well as learning to referee.</p> <p>1:02:42 He describes a specific game in which he was a referee in Castlebar. Mentions Henry Gavin and Michael Gavin his cousins.</p> <p>1:03:30 How they would always try to limit their costs by driving to events and not hiring busses, Mentions the fear of returning children home who have been injured in matches.</p> <p>1:04:50 John describes the differences between refereeing a football game and a camogie game.</p> <p>1:05:35 The politics of acquiring facilities for the Breaffy club.</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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input checked="" 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>Played from Under 16 to around 18. Won a Flanagan Cup medal.</p>
<p>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>John was club secretary and delegate to the county board from 1973 – 1979. He has been a committee member and involved in club fundraising.</p>

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Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 01:07:02
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: _____ Arlene Crampsie _____

Date: _____ 09/07/12 _____