

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Regina Fitzpatrick
<b>Date of Interview</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2010
<b>Location</b>	St Augustine's College, Abbeyside, Co. Waterford
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Brother Finbarr Spring OSA
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1938 <b>Home County:</b> Kerry
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Castlemaine NS, Co. Kerry <b>Secondary:</b> Tralee CBS, Co. Kerry
<b>Family</b>	N/A
<b>Club(s)</b>	St Patrick's Handball Club [Dublin]; An Ríocht GFC [Dublin]; St Augustine's College Handball Club [Waterford]; Friary/Abbeyside/Ballinacourty Handball Club [Waterford]
<b>Occupation</b>	Member of Religious Order
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	N/A
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	N/A

<b>Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)</b>	Ray McAndrew
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1948 <b>Home County:</b> Sligo
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Ballymoate NS, Co. Sligo <b>Secondary:</b> Ballymoate St Mary's Ard Scoil, Co. Sligo <b>Third Level:</b> University of Limerick; National College of Industrial Relations
<b>Family</b>	N/A
<b>Club(s)</b>	Ballymoate Handball Club [Sligo]; Garda Handball Club [Dublin]; Friary/Abbeyside/Ballinacourty Handball Club [Waterford]
<b>Occupation</b>	Retired Assistant Commissioner of An Garda Siochána
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	N/A
<b>Religion</b>	N/A
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	N/A

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<b>Date of Report</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> June 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	Mid 1940s - 2010
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Kerry, Sligo, Waterford, Dublin, Limerick, Americas
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training,, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Media, Involvement in GAA abroad, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, Culture, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Opening of Croke Park, Relationship with the Association, Food and Drink, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy / Economics
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>Finbar and Ray discuss how they became involved in Handball. Finbar describes his involvement in Handball when he was growing up in Kerry and Ray describes his involvement in Handball when he was growing up in Sligo. Finbar discusses his involvement with Handball and the GAA as a member of the clergy and Ray discusses his as a member of the Garda Síochána. They both discuss their involvement with handball in Dungarvan, Waterford. They talk about the International aspect of Handball and their experiences of it. They give an account of their early and best memories of the GAA and give their opinions on what challenges they believe to be facing the GAA and Handball in Ireland and abroad.</p> <p>00:55 (Finbar) Tells how he came to St Augustine's College Dungarvan in 1989 and discusses how he became involved in Handball there. He talks about Kilgobnet, Midelligo and Stradbally alleys.</p> <p>01:32 (Finbar) Discusses how St Augustine's College opened a new alley in 1994 and tells how they got the children interested in Handball. He mentions Mick Dunne. He discusses the school and club's various successes.</p> <p>02:09 (Finbar) Talks about the opening of the new alley in 2003 and mentions Fr Ray McAndrew.</p> <p>02:45 (Finbar) Talks about other strong handball schools and clubs throughout the country.</p>

	<p>03:18 (Finbar) Describes how he became involved with Handball. He talks about an alley in Tralee in the 1950s. He mentions Fr Jones, a world champion in Handball, and An Riocht in Ballyboden.</p> <p>04:24 (Finbar) Discusses playing Handball for St Patrick's GAA in Dublin. He mentions Hill 16 and the handball alleys in Croke Park. He discusses the merits of the 40x20 and the 60x30 alley.</p> <p>05:42 (Finbar) Talks about playing with Declan Mulcahy in several All-Irelands.</p> <p>06:24 (Finbar) Describes the 60x30 alley he played in when he was growing up in Kerry.</p> <p>07:39 (Finbar) Discusses the popularity of Handball in Kerry when he was growing up. He mentions Tralee and Castlemaine.</p> <p>08:32 (Finbar) Talks about the level of Handball when he lived in Dublin and discusses Handball in Croke Park. He mentions Crumlin, Drimnagh, and Sundry Road.</p> <p>09:42 (Finbar) Talks about playing Handball in Maynooth College and describes the alley there.</p> <p>10:01 (Finbar) Talks about clubs in Dublin involved with Handball. He mentions Brian Boru's and playing in Rush.</p> <p>10:38 (Finbar) Discusses why the clergy were not allowed play for a club. He explains how Handball was a minority sport.</p> <p>11:42 (Finbar) Recalls playing in the All-Ireland Juvenile Finals in Garryhill. Discusses the length of Handball games.</p> <p>12:47 (Ray) Talks about handball in Ballymote in Sligo where he grew up. He describes the 60x30 alley in Ballymote. He mentions Keenan's from Bagenalstown.</p> <p>13:35 (Ray) Talks about playing handball in Ballymote when he was growing up. He mentions Dessie Walsh, Jimmy Finn, Tony Hannon, Marcus Henry and Joey Maher.</p> <p>14:57 (Ray) Describes how many people used to watch local matches on a Sunday afternoon.</p> <p>15:54 (Ray) Talks about the level of support for Handball in Sligo. He mentions Ballymote and Killooney. Lists his heroes of handball.</p>
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	<p>17:00 (Ray) Talks about Eoin and Eugene Kennedy.</p> <p>17:33 (Ray) Discusses the building of the new development of the alley and how money was raised.</p> <p>17:54 (Ray) Describes the association with the Handball alley and the local GAA club.</p> <p>18:25 (Ray) Talks about his involvement in Handball. He tells how he won a Connaught Minor title and talks about an alley with a glass background in Roscrea in 1966.</p> <p>19:49 (Ray) Explains how he became a Gard and played Handball in Templemore. He talks about working as a Garda in Dublin and playing Handball there. He mentions rivals such as Na Fianna and Naomh Pádraig.</p> <p>21:11 (Ray) Talks about playing in the Handball alley the Gardaí have in the Phoenix Park and the Guinness alley in Crumlin.</p> <p>22:03 (Finbar) He lists good Handball counties and strong Handball schools throughout the country. He mentions McCarthy from Westmeath.</p> <p>25:19 (Ray) Describes the affect he feels handball has on young people.</p> <p>26:12 (Finbar) Discusses the mind frame of people who play Handball. He tells a story about two juveniles playing in a minor tournament in Thurles.</p> <p>30:20 (Finbar) Talks about how handball was played originally in the squash courts and how handball was established in Dungarvan. He talks about female involvement in Handball.</p> <p>32:01 (Finbar) Talks about how Handball players are coached. He mentions Féile. He talks about the 40x20 alley.</p> <p>33:51 (Finbar) Discusses the difference in playing Handball and Squash.</p> <p>34:09 (Finbar) Talks about the changes in Handball that have been made since he was growing up. He describes the rules of Handball and the extent to which they have changed.</p> <p>37:37 (Finbar) Discusses the difference in how people learn to play handball today compared to when he was a growing up in Kerry.</p> <p>38:18 Finbar and Ray describe what makes a good Handball. Finbar compares Handball and Hurling.</p>
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	<p>39:45 (Ray) Discusses Handball being played in St John Castle, which was taken over by the Garda Síochana in 1987. He mentions he was a Superintendent in 1989. Finbar tells how there was an alley in the old Friary Colleges.</p> <p>40:24 (Finbar) Tells how when he was growing up when someone was winning they held the alley. He mentions Ducksie Welsh.</p> <p>41:09 (Finbar) Talks about the level of fitness achieved by Handball.</p> <p>41:42 (Ray) Tells how the club gives annual awards to people for different achievements.</p> <p>42:08 (Ray) Discusses the level of underage referees in the club and talks about the junior European World Championships in 1999 and the underage involvement in its organisation.</p> <p>44:07 (Finbar) Talks about travelling to the United States to play Handball with junior teams. Talks about how the style of the game changes between the Irish and American Handball players.</p> <p>45:02 (Finbar) Tells a story about two girls from England and America playing handball against two girls from the Friary, Laura Keavers and Aoife Landers, in the World Championships in Portland, Oregon in the United States.</p> <p>46:26 (Finbar) Describes how America established elderly age-groups for people playing handball, such as over-80 categories.</p> <p>47:04 (Finbar) Discusses the student interest in the international aspect of handball.</p> <p>47:25 (Ray) Discusses the challenges facing Handball in schools. Finbar discusses this also and mentions Soccer.</p> <p>48:17 (Finbar) Explains that Dungarvan had no history of handball. He mentions Kilgobnet.</p> <p>48:35 Finbar and Ray talk about the development of the new alley in Dungarvan and how it was decided upon. He mentions the GAA, the County Board and the Munster council and the National Lottery.</p> <p>50:57 (Ray) Describes the facilities of the new development. Tells how Finbar maintained a photographic record of the proceedings.</p>
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	<p>53:04 (Ray) Explains the negative elements of how Handball is marketed.</p> <p>53:42 (Finbar) Discusses Mary McAleese meeting the players of a Handball All-Ireland.</p> <p>54:20 (Finbar) Tells who built the new facilities. Talks about having to have an architect.</p> <p>55:43 (Ray) Discusses an awards night that was held and the number of people who attended.</p> <p>56:05 (Finbar) Talks about Abbesside GAA club and other sports in the club. Ray discusses the County Board and the Munster Council and their dealings with them.</p> <p>57:52 (Finbar) Discusses Handball's place within the GAA. He mentions the Munster Council and Congress.</p> <p>58:30 (Finbar) Talks about playing within teams.</p> <p>59:07 (Ray) Describes how he feels about Handball being considered as part of the GAA family. Explains how he feels Handball could be improved.</p> <p>01:00:29 (Finbar) Talks about the difference between Football, Hurling and handball. He mentions Garryhill, Lough Na Crory, and Belfast.</p> <p>01:01:25 (Finbar) Tells how they have a one wall alley and discusses its merits.</p> <p>01:02:09 (Finbar) Tells how he felt about handball being a minority sport and the focus being on Hurling and Football. He mentions Willie Roche, Croke Park, and discusses the financial aid given to Handball compared to Hurling and Football.</p> <p>01:04:58 (Finbar) Discusses sponsorship for Handball. He mentions Pat Flynn.</p> <p>01:06:13 (Ray) Discusses the link between Handball and Irish culture and identity. They discuss the social aspect of Handball.</p> <p>01:07:37 (Finbar) Discusses how handball has affected his involvement in the community of Dungarvan.</p> <p>01:08:16 (Ray) Discusses his children's involvement in handball. He discusses the level of support handball has received in the community.</p> <p>01:09:56 (Ray) Talks about a competition held one</p>
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	<p>Christmas.</p> <p>01:10:53 (Ray) Talks about how friendships develop through handball.</p> <p>01:11:27 (Finbar) Tells how there was no handball tradition in Dungarvan and previously played in Kilgobnet.</p> <p>01:12:55 (Finbar) Describes his best memories of the GAA. He tells a story about playing Limerick and mentions Eddie Corbett.</p> <p>01:14:21 (Finbar) Discusses Eddie Corbett and his involvement in the club.</p> <p>01:15:04 (Ray) Discusses his best memories of the GAA. He talks about Ballymote and tells a story about juniors playing in the one wall championship in Roscommon in Knockcroghery.</p> <p>01:17:03 Finbar and Ray describe their hopes for the future of handball.</p>
<p><b>Involvement in GAA</b></p>	<p><b>Brother Spring</b></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 type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____</p> <p><b>Ray McNamara:</b></p> <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 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 checked="" 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>Brother Spring:</b> Won a Dublin Junior Football Championships playing with An Ríocht. Has won 4 All-Ireland handball titles; has played in 7 handball All-Irelands; has won various county and provincial titles</p> <p><b>Ray McNamara:</b> Has played handball for over 20 years; won Connaught Minor Doubles Handball in 1966; Has won Garda Titles and John Player Handball Competitions 3 years in a</p>



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	row in the 1970s.
<b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)	<b>Brother Spring:</b> Chairman of Friary/Abbeyside/Ballinacourty Handball Club. <b>Ray McNamara:</b> Member of development committee to build Friary/Abbeyside/Ballinacourty Handball alley, project managed the build.
<b>Format</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
<b>Duration</b>	Length of Interview: 01:18:55
<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:            Regina Fitzpatrick

Date:              21<sup>st</sup> June 2012