

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	5 th Nov 2008
Location	Brandon House Hotel, New Ross, Co. Wexford
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Honora Kavanagh Martin
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Female
Born	Year Born: 1944 Home County: Kilkenny
Education	Primary: The Rower National School Secondary: Mercy Convent Secondary School, New Ross Third Level: UCD
Family	Siblings: 5 brothers Current Family if Different: Married with two sons
Club	Geraldine O'Hanrahans
Occupation	Retired Teacher
Parents' Occupation	Teachers
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A

REFERENCE NO. KK/1/2

Date of Report	9 th Oct 2009
Period Covered	1930s - 2008
Counties/Countries Covered	Kilkenny, Wexford, Dublin, Cork, Antrim
Key Themes Covered	Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Education, Family Involvement, Childhood, Earliest Memories, Grounds, Facilities, Travel, Playing, Coaching, Career, Irish Language, Material Culture, Northern Ireland, Volunteers, Club History, All-Ireland, Role of Clergy, Supporting
Interview Summary	<p>Honora Kavanagh Martin was born in Dublin and brought up in Kilkenny. She now lives in New Ross and is a member of Geraldine O’Hanrahans club, having been a member of the Rower-Inistioge in her youth. She played camogie for UCD and while she worked as a teacher she coached hurling, football, camogie and handball. She describes the importance of camogie while she was at college, the Ashbourne Cup weekends and the difficulties she faced in gaining acceptance as a woman coach in her early teaching career. She talks about the changes in camogie, playing illegally for two clubs, supporting her sons in their playing career, the strengths of Kilkenny hurling and her various administrative roles. Honora also discusses the changing role of the clergy, the role of teachers, the importance of volunteers, and travelling to matches, particularly to the North in the 1960s.</p> <p>0.00 Introduction</p> <p>0.20 Honora was born in Dublin, reared in Kilkenny and works in Wexford. Her club is Geraldine O’Hanrahans in New Ross.</p> <p>0.45 Earliest memory is going to matches with my parents, my brothers played hurling underage U-14, U-16, U-18. ‘We would have gone en familie to all the matches ... we won some and we lost some. I had five brothers four of them played hurling so it was the thing to do.’</p> <p>1.25 Father was chairman and manager of the local club, mother was supporter and washed the jerseys on occasion. She came from a West Cork hurling family, dad played hurling with UCD.</p> <p>1.50 ‘We had a field, our own field at home and we used to have our own matches and one of my brothers and I were always in the goal because we were never as active as the other four.’</p>

	<p>2.10 Father played with Geraldine O’Hanrahans and was one of founding members. ‘There were two clubs in New Ross the O’Hanrahans and the Geraldines. They were very strong in the late 30s and 40s and they amalgamated and became the Geraldine O’ Hanrahans and I always remember that he told us he bought the first set of jerseys for them because he was a teacher and he had a very good salary in the late 30s and early 40s so he was able to set them off.’</p> <p>2.45 ‘We grew up loving it.’</p> <p>3.10 ‘I still don’t read reports of matches I just go and see and that’s it.’</p> <p>3.20 No nicknames</p> <p>3.25 She used to hurl with her brothers, there was no club at home so when she went to UCD she joined the club there. When she came back from UCD she played with two nearby clubs one in Waterford and one in Kilkenny.</p> <p>3.50 They set up their own club and entered the Kilkenny intermediate championships and did ok for awhile.</p> <p>4.10 Involvement in UCD: We trained and took part in the Ashbourne Cup and the Dublin League and Championship, it was every weekend really. Our matches were held in the Phoenix Park.</p> <p>4.20 ‘It was a big part, we were very involved, the social side was important as well, we made some great friends, it was big and we supported the hurlers and footballers and they supported us.’</p> <p>4.45 They would always go to Croke Park if one of their friends were playing inter-county.</p> <p>4.55 ‘We were smaller in numbers than today you knew everybody practically in the hurling, football and Camogie clubs ... kind of a small family almost.’</p> <p>5.15 There were about 50 involved in Camogie in UCD at the time. The senior team was made up of past graduates of the college, the team they were on was made up of students. They had maybe two or three teams.</p> <p>6.00 ‘Facilities were fantastic you know they were top of the range at the time.’ They didn’t go in for the heavy training sessions and gym work that they do now.</p> <p>6.20 ‘We were based in Earlsfort Terrace so we went out to Belfield to the grounds out there and then our matches were</p>
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	<p>generally played in Phoenix Park ... in the community grounds out there.'</p> <p>6.50 Ashbourne Cup was just UCD, UCC, UCG and Queens. In the Dublin championship you would play other Dublin clubs. We had matches every weekend.</p> <p>7.25 'We had big long skirts to the stage where when you were playing in the goal the ball got caught in your skirt.'</p> <p>7.50 'Some of us decided the skirts were too long so we shortened them, and a lot of the other teams were saying oh dear the mini-skirted UCD girls are coming.'</p> <p>8.10 Biggest rivals were UCC 'they were a powerhouse ... and they wore red and a skull and cross bones.' There were just the four colleges involved, the weekend of the Ashbourne was fantastic.</p> <p>8.50 UCD wore a rusty orangey gym with a white blouse and black tights.</p> <p>9.05 'If you were away it was great, you went off on the Friday by train to Cork or Galway or Belfast to Queen's and you were booked into a top class hotel ... generally two per room. You did nothing that night, then the Saturday the two semi-finals were on ... and then on the Sunday you had the final and you had the third place play-off ... that night then you had the dinner and everybody dressed up and sometimes the hurling club guys would come for the meal as well, you'd invite them along and they would come and the presentations were made and the camogie team of the tournament was picked ... and then Monday you went home exhausted cos you never went to sleep on Sunday night.'</p> <p>10.40 'We all have friends scattered all over the globe now through sport at college.'</p> <p>11.00 Families were main supporters apart from hurlers and footballers and boyfriends or girlfriends.</p> <p>11.25 'We would have supported my brothers, we would have gone to Belfast to see them playing from here, so families did support you big time.'</p> <p>11.45 Not much support within college structure as they were such a small group.</p> <p>11.55 'When I was there we won two Ashbournes, which is big, and I didn't play senior Dublin championship but I think they probably won them they were fairly handy and I won a</p>
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	<p>Junior A and Junior B Dublin championship.'</p> <p>12.20 Travelled by train to away matches.</p> <p>12.40 She started coaching the school football team when she taught in the Vocational School in New Ross. 'I felt it was important for the boys.' This went on for about four or five years and then got involved with the hurling. Eventually there was another teacher appointed with responsibility for games so I was sidelined.</p> <p>13.18 'That's all they played, a little bit of soccer in latter years.'</p> <p>13.35 She also played with local club at home then – The Rower-Inistioge. They had little success. 'We varied in age from about 14 to about 30.' They were totally dependent on parents and friends to take them to matches.</p> <p>14.25 Facilities: 'Didn't exist, you changed in the car, you parked your car in the field or on the side of the road and you just changed in the car, sometimes we did actually go already dressed except for the boots and you just changed when you came home then – if you got wet, you got wet.'</p> <p>14.50 Played in hurling pitches, the pitches in Kilkenny have always been fairly ok.</p> <p>15.15 When she was playing it was twelve a-side.</p> <p>15.35 'So the pitches would be big sometimes, so you'd be moving in the flags to make the pitches smaller and the goal mouths then were massive.'</p> <p>16.08 You might only get three or four matches at club level a year. 'It was a social occasion, you went to the village in the evening.'</p> <p>16.30 Apart from playing the games the club didn't play a huge role. 'When there was a match on practically the whole parish would be there ... because it was the parish, you did it for the sake of the parish.' Only two pubs, post office and two shops in my end of the parish, and that was it, so everybody went to the match. Chatted to people before leaving the field or sitting on a wall.</p> <p>17.45 Clergy sometimes were selectors, but nearly always president. 'People would always depend on them to bring a load, three or four players, to a match ... A lot of the villages depended on the local teachers who would be free at 3 / 4 o'clock, and the parish priest or local clergy and they</p>
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	<p>generally would fill up the car and bring the team. You could bring a whole team and a sub in four cars, which wouldn't be seen or heard of or put up with nowadays.' Fathers or parents would have driven too. I don't ever remember us going on a bus.</p> <p>19.00 Furthest she ever went to a match was the Glens of Antrim, last February, to watch her son play with Wexford. It took two days and nights to get there.</p> <p>19.20 Club used to go to England, she was over once. They played matches in London.</p> <p>19.50 'I was playing squash and I was secretary of the squash club and the chairman of the hurling club got to know me and he thought I'd be handy as the secretary. I was running the school thing as well.' Secretary for two or three years: 1977 – 1979.</p> <p>20.25 Trips to England involved one or two matches and then the social side.</p> <p>20.45 As secretary she wrote out 'teams in duplicate in Irish, writing reports, attending meetings, going to functions, organising the annual dinner dance.' Organised the end of year dinner dance with presentations. 'It was very popular, people liked it.'</p> <p>21.30 'Everybody thinks teachers have lots of free time and are great organisers.'</p> <p>21.45 'I coached in school football and hurling with the U-14, 16 and 18 for the vocational school in New Ross and I was a co-selector with the county football vocational team and then I organised a camogie team, we only played two years.'</p> <p>22.35 'I took a handball team to Croke Park every year in the vocational colleges competition, U-14, U-16 and U-18 with some success ... used take them coaching then out to the handball alleys around the area.</p> <p>23.00 Handball is very big sport in area. Famous inter-county players like Ned Buggy live nearby. Handball is popular in the whole of Wexford.</p> <p>23.30 She played with a club in Waterford because two friends of hers were there and she also played with a club in Kilkenny because she had nobody else to play for.</p> <p>24.00 There might have been only one or two matches in year if you got out knocked, so many people played for more</p>
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	<p>than one team, but the camogie scene is much more organised now.</p> <p>24.35 Clubs are organising weekend visits to one another, they stay overnight and play a match both days. 'It's much more common nowadays.' 'It would have been lovely' to have had that when she was playing.</p> <p>25.30 Role of Women: Now there are girls doing interviews on TV. 'I remember when I went for the interview for my post in school in County Wexford VEC one of the panel said to me how could you possibly pick a football team, what do you know about football, you're only a woman? ... I said I grew up at the end of a hurling stick and I have inter-county players as uncles.'</p> <p>26.13 There was only one other teacher in the county in that role, 'but they got used to me.'</p> <p>26.35 'They couldn't handle it, it was something strange, something new, it was strange, it was new. I was probably encroaching on their territory, what they deemed their territory, it didn't seem strange or new to me because I was involved since I could hold a hurley, having grown up in a family with football and hurling all my life.'</p> <p>27.15 Even when we went away to the coaching there were always a few other girls there. 'The fellas treated us the very same, we were just another one, they got stuck in and we got stuck in ... it just became 'why shouldn't we'.'</p> <p>27.50 Coaching for hurling, football, camogie and handball – they were all the sports in the school.</p> <p>28.15 Hurling team 'You would have a core group who would be playing on the U-18 team and possibly the U-16 team and they would be the same guys who would be on the football and hurling team and possibly also the same two or three that would be the handballers. We were small in numbers, but we had some kids who were fantastic all round sportsmen.' They would have played with their own home clubs as well.</p> <p>29.20 I'd like to have won a camogie All-Ireland medal.</p> <p>29.40 Her son Éanna is on the Wexford panel, both her sons play for UCC. 'It means going to all the matches, wherever they play we just go.'</p> <p>30.25 'We like to support them and I think they like us to be there.'</p>
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	<p>30.45 Her husband played from the age of 5 until he was 45 or 46. She doesn't coach her sons.</p> <p>31.30 As a child: 'We'd head off really early on a Sunday, mother would be up early making all the sandwiches and we'd drive off ... there was a time when they would bring boxes to stand on the Hill 16 so that they'd be that little bit higher than the other people.' 'When we go now, we actually make two days of it. We go on Saturday and we generally take in one of the seven-a-sides at St Judes or the senior one at Kilmacud Crokes and we do something Saturday night and go to the All-Ireland on Sunday.'</p> <p>32.25 The inter-provincial was 'a big, big event.' 'It was one of the big things for us as kids.'</p> <p>32.45 They travelled by car – 'Daddy always drove.'</p> <p>33.10 'Mammy would make ham sandwiches and tomato sandwiches and we'd buy minerals then or a flask of tea ... we'd arrive wherever we'd park the car, generally Clonliffe road and then as we got older we'd go to the Clarence Hotel on the quay and have something to eat in the evening before we'd go home.'</p> <p>33.55 Views on Kilkenny Success: 'It's taken for granted.' 'It's the first thing every kid gets nearly is a hurley.'</p> <p>34.15 They're encouraged and there's great support. The success at the moment is because it's so competitive – 'if you know that there's a number six there waiting to take over your position you're going to play twice as hard ... other counties could learn from it.'</p> <p>35.20 Attitude and confidence are important in success. Children admire players and aspire to be like them. 'They play them in their imaginary games when you watch little ones playing they're on the field and they're like I'm Shefflin taking my shot at the goal, they play them in their imaginary games it's not cowboys and Indians anymore.'</p> <p>36.00 The players are available, it's a small county, you can meet them and talk to them.</p> <p>36.45 Media coverage is a plus 'It's now seen as the thing to go to.' It's become fashionable to wear the gear now. The new ones are nice and interesting and colourful. Posters also help the kids.</p> <p>38.15 Hurling club ran tournaments to raise money. You'd get somebody to sponsor the prize and then charge into the</p>
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	<p>match. 'Nothing was as expensive then as it is now, even hurleys, they didn't wear helmets, and one pairs of boots, one pair of socks, one skirt or one knicks probably covered you, one set of jerseys did everyone in the club down along, apart from maybe U-14s.'</p> <p>39.50 Her mother may have washed jerseys now and again, but she was mainly a supporter, she never remembers her making sandwiches for the tea for visiting teams.</p> <p>40.15 Inter-county rivals – Cork. Bennetsbridge were the club rivals of the Rower-Inistioge.</p> <p>41.00 Irish: 'If you ever made an objection, you had to make it in Irish.' Not a problem for her as the family was bi-lingual. She doesn't remember a Scór competition in the club.</p> <p>41.50 Local politics: 'only way it would have been obvious was who was picked on the team and who wasn't.' 'That still goes on.'</p> <p>42.20 'Late 1960s we went by train to Belfast and we had to open our cases at the Custom house and they were looking at our ... camogie sticks and they were fascinated with these things - where were all these women going with this kind of gear ... it was kind of eerie going round and we weren't very happy wandering around Belfast really for some reason or other.'</p> <p>43.10 Didn't effect her identity – 'Irish and proud of it and I love my GAA, hurling, football, camogie and handball and the music and the language is part of it.'</p> <p>43.35 GAA could do more to encourage the Irish language.</p> <p>44.00 County loyalties lie with her son whenever he's playing. If not – may the better team win.</p> <p>44.18 Best memory was the club winning the county senior hurling with four brothers playing and her father as manager.</p> <p>44.35 'We came down from Dublin and my friends came down as well ... it was a two day event, which didn't happen in little villages like the Rower-Inistioge, but it was fantastic and the fact that the brothers were playing made it all the sweeter.'</p> <p>45.20 No club songs that she knows of.</p> <p>45.40 Can't think of a disappointment.</p>
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	<p>46.00 Admires a lot of people, but no one hero.</p> <p>46.15 'So many people did a tremendous amount of work for years and years and years and got very little recognition and others you know because of modern coverage get an awful lot more recognition, their names are on the paper, everybody talks about them, but just go back a few years and there are people there who played their hearts out and maybe never won an All-Ireland but were fantastic for their club and county.'</p> <p>47.05 People who were good enough made it.</p> <p>47.15 Qualities of a player: skill, commitment and dedication. Coach: Patience, understanding, commitment and dedication and knowledge of the game.</p> <p>47.55 'It's been part of my life, from the time I can remember. I played at home, in the yard, in the field with my brothers from the time I could walk. Since then I've played for years and years, and coached in school, was a supporter, am now a supporter ... it's just been part of my life like my books and my music. It's just very much part of my life. I love going to matches and I love watching the skill and the commitment and the talent of, you know, some of the great players both hurling and football, camogie and ladies football and everything. They're very skilful, it's a fantastic sport.'</p> <p>49.05 Volunteers are crucial – they keep it going. 'Unfortunately sometimes when some of the volunteers should step aside they don't, some of them believe they're indispensable ... there are times when people should move on and let the new ideas come in ... nothing is better than experience, but as you get older there's time to move on and mature and let the new ones come in, but be available for advice.'</p> <p>50.05 Sport should be left amateur, but if officer is full-time then there needs to be some form of payment.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input 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>Record as a Player (Titles won; Length</p>	<p>She played from she was very young child until her late 20s. She won two Ashbourne Cup Medals and a Dublin Junior A</p>

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of time played)	and B.
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	Treasurer of County Camogie Board for one year Secretary of Geraldine O’Hanrahan’s Hurling and Football Club from 1977 – 1981.
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 51min 7secs
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: Arlene Crampsie

Date: 09/10/09