

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	29 th Oct 2008
Location	Interviewee's Home, Headford, Co. Kerry
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Denis Lucey (also present his son Danny Lucey)
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1964 Home County: Kerry
Education	Primary: Raheen NS, Headford, Killarney, Co. Kerry Secondary: Rathmore, Killarney, Co. Kerry
Family	Siblings: 2 sisters, 2 brothers Current Family if Different: Married with two boys
Club	Glenflesk
Occupation	Self-Employed – Planter
Parents' Occupation	Farmer [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fianna Fáil

Date of Report	15 th Oct 2009
Period Covered	1913 – 2008
Counties/Countries Covered	Kerry, Cork, Dublin, Tyrone
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Club History, Family Involvement, Earliest Memories, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Fundraising, Sponsorship, All-Ireland, Education, Role of Women, Scór, Role of Clergy, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Identity, Rivalries, Impact on Life, Northern Ireland, Irish Language
Interview Summary	<p>Denis was born and reared in County Kerry, his club is Glenflesk. Denis has two children who are all involved in the GAA, both he and his wife volunteer with fundraising efforts at the club. Denis played football for the local club until the bus stopped coming to bring him to training. He discusses travelling to Munster Finals with his father on board a CIE bus and travelling to All-Irelands in the 1980s and the difference to the present. He talks about the opening of the club pitch, the influence of a local guard in setting up the club and the development of facilities. He comments on the changing role of women in the club, fundraising for the club, club sponsorship and the role of the club in the community. He discusses underage training and support, rivalries, the club's Scór participation and the role that the GAA plays in his, and his family's, lives.</p> <p>0.00 Intro</p> <p>0.18 His club is Glenflesk and his home county is Kerry</p> <p>0.50 His father was a farmer and his mother was a housewife. His father played with Glenflesk. Before Glenflesk was formed the nearest club was Crokes. They made up their own teams and could play with Crokes too, which his father did.</p> <p>1.40 His father told him about local games and local fellows. There were 'no rules or no referees you just made up your own team, picked some fella on the sideline to ref and away you went'.</p> <p>2.05 His earliest memory is 1972 when Kerry and Offaly drew the All-Ireland final. He was eight years old and watched it on a black and white TV of his neighbour's. Neighbour of their own in Glenflesk Danny [?] Crowley came on.</p> <p>3.15 His brothers and sisters all played underage with</p>

	<p>Glenflesk. When they were 10/11 years old and all at Raheen National School they all played. Anybody who had an interest in football just signed up for club. The club wanted any fella they could get; there wouldn't be big numbers then.</p> <p>3.50 'They all started doing early retirement when they came to 15, 16, 17 they started going out and going to dances and that sort of finished the football.'</p> <p>4.05 Denis played until he was 16. He lived the farthest away from the field, and when other fellas used to go they sent a bus for them. 'I finished up alone, so they didn't think it was viable to send a bus for one fella so they cancelled the bus and I cancelled football.'</p> <p>4.35 He played for another few years at Rathmore School until he was 17.</p> <p>4.50 His father used to take him to the Munster Finals then they used to organise a bus from Ballyduff. 'There was a local fella, he used to drive a CIE bus and he'd hire out the bus for the day for the Munster Final, so he'd just organise a crowd from the local bar.' No talk about tickets.</p> <p>5.38 Wasn't as much crowd control at the matches then, it's harder now with tickets and accommodation than it used to be.</p> <p>5.55 Around 1984, 85, and 86 he used to get the train up on a Sunday morning and remembers that 'you'd stand probably all the way to Dublin'.</p> <p>6.05 If they did stay up 'we went up to a place called the Iveagh Rooms, you just give in a fiver, you'd get a ticket, and that just left you staying and you had no bed or anything, you just get in there, you'd get a breakfast in the morning, Monday morning, and you'd always seemed to get a ticket somewhere round the place.'</p> <p>6.27 He feels it puts people off now 'A lot of families find it ... hard to get tickets for everyone.' Then again at least now they get a seat on the train.</p> <p>7.08 They went to the Munster Final the same route every year. They used to stop in a place called Dempsey's for soup and sandwiches for lunch and some people would have a few drinks, they went into their match and out and then they'd stop for more soup and sandwiches on the way home.</p> <p>7.45 'You'd have to go through a lot of Cork villages and towns with a Kerry flag hanging out the back window</p>
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	<p>especially if they had won it which they had the most of the times, and sure you'd have a bit of banter with them.'</p> <p>8.05 Denis's celebrations were with a glass of orange.</p> <p>8.19 He'd rather if the Munster Final was in Killarney and so would a lot of Cork people. The town is small so the crowd would be closed in better. In the city they don't mix as much and there'd be better celebrations if Kerry won.</p> <p>9.00 Club plays an important role in the community. Once you're 7/8 years of age you join the club. The club was formed in the early 50s.</p> <p>9.30 There was a guard in the parish from Tipperary 'he suggested that they wear the colours blue and gold.'</p> <p>9.45 They opened a new field in 1976. They had a match against Kerry, it was just before the Munster Final so it was like a training session for Kerry. They had won the parish league the same year and they marched round after the team. They have no pictures or anything from it.</p> <p>10.30 Dressing rooms were opened a couple of years after and then they built another little field for underage players a few years later again.</p> <p>10.51 The children start off at U-8 level and their parents get involved.</p> <p>11.08 'It's sort of like a big family.'</p> <p>11.15 It's a member of the club that takes the underage children to their matches.</p> <p>11.30 Competitions start in March so the training starts and then matches are organised. The club doesn't use buses to take the children to matches. Denis thinks this is a good idea because it brings the parents out and you get a better following at away matches.</p> <p>12.08 Otherwise there's very little support.</p> <p>12.37 They enjoy it and look forward to it even though they might have to leave work early.</p> <p>12.50 His father and mother are pensioners and they go to the matches too, so sometimes their family brings two carloads to a match.</p> <p>13.15 'It's a six month of the year thing football. It's a big thing in our lives. It takes up the whole summer.'</p>
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	<p>13.35 When they go to the pub the first thing people talk about is football 'It's nearly more natural to talk about football here than the weather so it is. Football is like everything here it's as natural as religion.' It helps to break down barriers too. A lot of people from England bought houses in the area and it's a great way for them to get to know people. Their children get taken by neighbours to matches.</p> <p>14.55 Denis talks about a local man who died this year 'Denis Donoe, he was all his life involved in the GAA, one of the founding members and went to every match up until a month before he died and his sons played and his grandsons are playing now.' He was a big loss. The club had a guard of honour for him.</p> <p>15.30 There are big rivalries in East Kerry. Current rivalries depend on what clubs you're having the tightest games with. The Spa team would be Denis's sons' biggest rivals. The players are 'after getting to know each other, a lot of them going to secondary school together now which makes the rivalry worse'.</p> <p>16.10 Rivalry among senior clubs would be between Glenflesk and Gneeveguilla. Crokes and Glenflesk are also big rivals when Glenflesk are playing in Division One.</p> <p>16.33 Their rivalries change from time to time depending on what teams are strong.</p> <p>16.50 At inter-county level Kerry's biggest rivals are Cork, it was Dublin in the 1970s, Tyrone now the last few years and Armagh.</p> <p>17.09 Cork always rivals and more so in the area Denis lives because they're so close to the border. He feels it has given him a better sense of identity, he's proud of where he's from.</p> <p>18.20 Role of the Media can be both bad and good. He thinks they're 'concentrating very much on a lot of negative stuff now'</p> <p>19.00 The role of women in the GAA has changed massively. 'A lot of the work behind the scenes in our club is done by women and there'd be probably, in the committee itself, there must be maybe a 1/3 of it, made up of women and they're very involved in it and very good at it.'</p> <p>19.40 The women come out to support and drive teams to matches.</p> <p>19.55 In the past they used to mix girls and boys on the</p>
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	<p>underage teams, but now the girls are fielding their own teams and some of the senior players are training them. Ladies football is one of the fastest growing sports in Ireland at the moment. Denis feels this is due to its being better highlighted in the media.</p> <p>20.46 'There was a time there Kerry won nine All-Irelands in a row in the Ladies and no one even knew the team, sure if that was there now they'd be heroes.'</p> <p>21.05 Ladies in the club organise walks and other fundraising activities for Coiste na nÓg and blitzes for the U-8s and U-10s. They make sandwiches the night before and they invite local teams, sometimes from Cork – sides like Macroom.</p> <p>22.00 The walks are held on a Sunday morning. They send letters and texts to club members that the walk is on, they give sponsorship cards to the young fellas, the walk is about 5km along a scenic route. Afterwards everyone goes back to the clubhouse and they'd have a fun evening for the children.</p> <p>22.50 It gets older people together, including strangers that have moved in to the area.</p> <p>23.14 'The clubs are always looking for money'. The lotto is the biggest earner and they have a draw every fortnight.</p> <p>23.30 They hold a church collection for the club once a year and they depend a bit on sponsorship. The sponsors would throw them a few jerseys once a year.</p> <p>23.50 The Senior team is sponsored by the local Mitsubishi dealer, Mike Murphy, he's also sponsor for the U-21 and junior team. Another business, JR Spears, sponsors the U-16 team. Glenn Thorn sponsors the U-14s and his brother a builder sponsors the U-12s. They just put their names on the jerseys and probably give them a set of jerseys.</p> <p>24.40 Originally the club was sponsored by 'Tighe Bros which was a local quarry, I think he was probably the first sponsors maybe sometime from the 80s on and he died back about 5/6 years ago and that sorta finished that sponsorship. Then as I said Mike Murphy took up the sponsorship.'</p> <p>25.10 There are more expenses now than there used to be.</p> <p>25.40 The role of the clergy is dependent on the parish priest and if they were interested. The current priest is more of a hurling man.</p> <p>26.15 There was also the guard from Tipperary who was</p>
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	<p>involved in setting up the club.</p> <p>26.30 Denis visited Tyrone about 3 years ago. They were brought into the clubhouse and got a warm reception. They gave them the history of their club and they met their groundsmen. They wanted to know what it was like in Kerry, so they swapped stories. 'Most of the grassroots are run the same way but they just like to swap stories anyway.'</p> <p>27.50 They travelled to England in 1998 to see Kerry play against London in Ruislip. It was like a mini-holiday.</p> <p>28.20 They ran a competition called the Millennium Cup in 2000. Glenflesk won and were entitled to represent Kerry in the club championship. They were beaten by Nemo Rangers in the final and went to Spain after that. Denis didn't go with them because he was getting married shortly after.</p> <p>29.05 Irish language is not very strong in the area as it's not part of the Gaeltacht. 'I like the way they talk to the players in Irish ... it's nice to hear it.'</p> <p>29.50 The club is involved in Scór in a big way and they have won a few All-Ireland medals in dancing. They also have people involved in singing and story telling.</p> <p>30.20 Not everyone is involved in the physical side and Scór brings a lot of ladies into it.</p> <p>30.55 Denis's best memory is Seamus Moynihan captaining Kerry in 2000.</p> <p>31.06 His worst memory is probably the five in a row with Seamus Darby's goal and Armagh's defeat in 2002 and then Tyrone's. 'I think that team deserved 5 in a row.'</p> <p>31.53 Football wouldn't be as strong if it wasn't so successful. 'Anytime there's a county team successful it's bound to get the young fellas interested.' You're competing with soccer and rugby, a county team going well generates interest.</p> <p>32.15 He doesn't know of any prayers, songs, poems etc. They did bring out a song for 2000 called "Glenflesk if you were proud' you'd hear fellas singing that about 12 o'clock at night after a few pints'.</p> <p>33.18 Farthest back in local GAA history Denis can go is to Paddy Healy, a local man who played with Kerry in 1913/1914. There was no club in Glenflesk at that time, so he would have played with Headford. 'There was a local fella, Paddy Healy, he played for Kerry ... he played with Kerry</p>
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REFERENCE NO. KY/1/2

	<p>1913 or 1914 he won two All-Ireland medals with them. So he'd have been a hero round here. But they used to say that they didn't do much training that time. The fellas round here made a living that time by cutting turf in the bog and you know the war years were on and I think there was big demand for turf so I'd often hear them saying that he'd come from work in the evening and he'd just throw his two boots up on the bar of the bicycle and he'd cycle on to Killarney and play the match and there wouldn't be heard about training or getting ready or fitness or drinks or anything.'</p> <p>34.25 His GAA hero is Seamus Moynihan.</p> <p>34.30 'GAA at the moment is almost half our life, because from March til October there's probably no week but we don't go to some 2 or 3 matches. We probably go to mass Sunday for a half an hour and we might finish up doing 3 hours going to football matches.'</p> <p>34.55 They look forward to the League starting.</p> <p>35.19 They run their lives around the GAA between senior and underage games.</p> <p>35.47 Denis's son, Danny, likes football, not so much hurling. The closest handball alley is Ballydesmond so he doesn't bother with that.</p> <p>36.35 He has 'Friends from everywhere'.</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 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): <u>Club Member – driving kids to matches</u></p>
<p>Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>Denis played from the age of nine to seventeen.</p>
<p>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>N/A</p>

REFERENCE NO. KY/1/2

Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 36min 44sec
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: ___Arlene Crampsie_____

Date: ___15th Oct 2009_____