

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	8 th Mar 2012
Location	Paul's home, near Downpatrick, Co. Down
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Paul Kelly
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1957 Home County: Down
Education	Primary: Killyleagh PS and St Patrick's BS, Downpatrick, Co. Down Secondary: St Patrick's Grammar School, Downpatrick
Family	Siblings: 2 brothers Current Family if Different: Wife (Vivienne), 2 daughters
Club(s)	Russell Gaelic Union, Downpatrick [Down]
Occupation	Bank Official
Parents' Occupation	Teacher [Mother]; Insurance Agent [Father]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	SDLP
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Downpatrick Golf Club

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Date of Report	23 rd July 2012
Period Covered	1957 – 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Down
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Administration, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Media, Emigration, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Politics, Northern Ireland, Relationship with the Association, Socialising, Relationships, Economy / Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Paul talks about growing up in Killyleagh and developing an interest in GAA, which really took off following his move to Downpatrick where he quickly became involved in the development of ladies football. He dedicated himself to establishing a young team and training them to become a force while also working to improve the underage structures within the club. Paul recounts the many obstacles they faced, such as gaining recognition from fellow club members, maintaining the interest of players and ensuring that things were kept ticking over financially. Following success at club level he became involved in both an administrative and coaching capacity at county level, his strong work ethic and sense of pride in what ladies football was striving to achieve helping him to break down many barriers as he sought to provide the sport with a solid footing within the GAA and wider sporting community.</p> <p>00:15 Born in 1957 in Killyleagh County Down. Type of place that was as he was growing up. Catholics and Protestants there.</p> <p>00:55 Father involved with the GAA and a strong runner.</p> <p>01:25 Early GAA memories. Trip to Croke Park.</p> <p>02:00 Killyleagh a small club that slipped out of existence before it was revived.</p> <p>02:25 Moving to Bangor. St Paul's Hollywood a nearby club.</p> <p>03:00 Prominence of GAA at Killyleagh school.</p> <p>03:40 Level of interest he had in GAA growing up.</p>

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	<p>04:10 Moving to Downpatrick. Brian Quinn the chairman there. Being asked to start up girls' football at the club in 1997. Further steps taken. Teaming up with Michelle Clancy, a prominent trainer.</p> <p>06:40 Key to their success over the years.</p> <p>07:25 Age of the girls when the team was started.</p> <p>07:50 Castlewellan a top team at the time. Bringing his team to play them. How that went.</p> <p>08:45 Teething problems with the players.</p> <p>09:50 Numbers that they had at training.</p> <p>09:55 Joining leagues at various levels. Developing underage</p> <p>11:00 Success they enjoyed on the pitch.</p> <p>11:15 Winning a junior championship in 1999. Players carried off due to injury.</p> <p>12:55 Winning the intermediate league and later a double.</p> <p>13:20 Playing in the senior league.</p> <p>13:40 Sporting background of players on their first team.</p> <p>14:05 Camogie within the club. Margaret McNabb a prominent camogie player. Her view on camogie in the club.</p> <p>15:40 His proposals about how to run camogie training. How they were received.</p> <p>17:00 How females were viewed by male members within the club.</p> <p>18:45 Female players' level of involvement in the club. Impact that their presence has had on the club. Benefits to the players themselves.</p> <p>20:55 Players leaving for university.</p> <p>22:30 Trouble over a player who had been sent home. Mother showing up at training the following night.</p> <p>24:05 Level of co-operation from players.</p> <p>25:00 Taking coaching courses.</p> <p>26:00 One of his daughters defying him at training. How he dealt with that.</p> <p>28:10 Maeve McConville, Karen Keohane and Brona</p>
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	<p>McCurrie, Louise Kelly, Olivia Gilchrist playing for the county team.</p> <p>29:05 The 1999 season and how that went. Playing Bright, Loughmacrory.</p> <p>31:00 Involvement with the Under-16 county team and county board.</p> <p>32:50 Tough decisions he had to make on his first night as a county board chairman. Players threatening to decamp to Armagh. How he dealt with the situation.</p> <p>36:40 Katie Traynor and Michaela Downey famous players in the county.</p> <p>37:10 Downsides of ladies football. Ailish McConville suffering a setback. Other injuries suffered by sisters Maeve and Deirdre.</p> <p>40:25 Training boys' team ahead of a game against Bryansford.</p> <p>44:10 Improving the fortunes of the team and how that was achieved.</p> <p>45:00 Missing coaching teams since he stopped doing it. Reason for that.</p> <p>46:25 Growth of ladies football over the years. Obstacles that have been overcome.</p> <p>47:50 Writing reports for the Down Record and Down Democrat newspapers.</p> <p>48:45 Problems with finances and reasons for that. Raising money for a New York trip.</p> <p>50:40 Impact of TG4 coverage of ladies football. Attendance issues.</p> <p>55:20 Prospect of amalgamation between associations. Meeting with former GAA President Seán Kelly. Issue over sandwiches. His opinion on amalgamation.</p> <p>58:30 Time-consuming nature of his involvement.</p> <p>59:05 Difference between GAA and a business.</p> <p>01:00:05 Things that need to be addressed going forward.</p> <p>01:01:30 Belfast Urbanisation Committee he is involved with along with Kathy Gallagher and Seán Óg McAteer. What it</p>
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	<p>aims to achieve. Gabriel McCaffrey helping him out in his efforts.</p> <p>01:07:00 What the GAA means to him.</p> <p>01:08:45 Reflections on his involvement over the years.</p>
Involvement in GAA	<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 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>
Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	<p>Played at school level</p>
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	<p>Russell Gaelic Union:</p> <p>1999 – : Club executive</p> <p>2000-2001: Vice Chairman</p> <p>2006- : Chairman of Lotto Committee</p> <p>2008 - : Treasurer</p> <p>2008- : RGU Delegate to Down County Board</p> <p>Ladies Gaelic Football:</p> <p>2001-2003: Down County Registrar</p> <p>2003-2010: Down Representative on Ulster LGF Council</p> <p>2003-2007: Chairman of Down LGF County Board</p> <p>2007-2011: Treasurer of Down LGF County Board</p>
Format	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual</p>
Duration	<p>Length of Interview: 01:10:11</p>
Language	<p>English</p>

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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: 23rd July 2012