

## GAA Oral History Project

## Interview Report Form

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Regina Fitzpatrick
<b>Date of Interview</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> July 2010
<b>Location</b>	Tony's home, near Churchtown, Dublin 14
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Tony Herbert (also present Eamonn Rea)
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1920 <b>Home County:</b> Limerick
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Rich Hill NS, Limerick <b>Secondary:</b> Sexton Street CBS, Limerick
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 3 brothers and 3 sisters <b>Current Family if Different:</b> 2 sons and 3 daughters
<b>Club(s)</b>	Ahane GAA [Limerick]; Faugh's GAA [Dublin]
<b>Occupation</b>	Civil Servant
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Carpenter [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	Fianna Fáil
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	St Vincent de Paul Society

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<b>Date of Report</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> June 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	1904 – 2010
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Limerick, Dublin
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Administration, Celebrations, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Media, Involvement in GAA abroad, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Alcohol, Violence, Politics, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Opening of Croke Park, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Retirement, Food and Drink, Socialising, Relationships, Economy / Economics
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>Tony shares his memories from a lifetime's involvement with the GAA. Born in Limerick in 1920, he grew up in a time of strife when money was scarce and things were volatile politically, with sporadic violence breaking out and many people on the run from the authorities. Tony played hurling with his local club Ahane, who boasted many fine hurlers. The game was quite physical at the time but he was a talented player who went on to represent his school in different competitions. He played for Limerick for many years until he moved to Dublin in the 1940s, where he played for the Faughs club and the county team. Tony recalls travelling all over the country for games and encountering many of the GAA greats on his travels. He talks about the memories they shared and offers anecdotes about the characters he crossed paths with. Although not particularly interested in GAA administration, he did forge a political career for himself, rubbing shoulders with well-known historical figures along the way - many of whom were also GAA people. Playing in the Association was a relief to people like Tony as it offered a break from much of the infighting that was prevalent in society as he was growing up. Some of his acquaintances went on to prosper while others lost their lives needlessly as a result of ongoing conflict. His recollections are wide-ranging and personal, offering us a unique take on life at the coalface of 20th Century Irish history.</p> <p>00:05 Born in 1920 in Annacotty in Limerick.</p> <p>00:20 Many famous hurlers from the area - the Mackeys,</p>

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	<p>Timmy Ryan, Mick Ryan.</p> <p>00:35 Playing on the road as a boy. Using 'scoobs' instead of hurleys. How they were made.</p> <p>01:30 Family's GAA involvement - Carrolls and Herberts. Seán Carroll playing with Limerick in 1904. Father playing with Castleconnell.</p> <p>02:15 Seán Carroll head of the East Limerick IRA brigade.</p> <p>02:40 Grandmother raising six sons alone and running a pub. Games played in Coffey's field near the pub. Someone asking his grandmother for a hurley.</p> <p>04:00 Mick Dunne writing a book on the GAA in the area.</p> <p>04:30 Paddy Kelly - who once played with Ahane - telling stories.</p> <p>04:55 Going to Mass in Willie Ryan's car and passing men in a field.</p> <p>05:50 People making a living from cutting and selling turf and firewood.</p> <p>06:30 Road built on the old bog and starting to sink.</p> <p>07:15 Father a carpenter. Uncles' professions.</p> <p>07:40 Pub burned down by the Black and Tans in 1920.</p> <p>08:10 People collecting for the IRB.</p> <p>08:55 Hearing stories from people about that time.</p> <p>09:45 Uncles arrested during the Civil War.</p> <p>10:00 His uncle, Joe Herbert, secretary of Limerick GAA and being arrested along with men from Kerry and Mayo.</p> <p>10:50 Father making hurleys with elm.</p> <p>11:05 Playing a game as a teenager and his elm hurley getting broken in a clash with one of the Mackeys.</p> <p>11:55 Elm not as good as ash for hurleys.</p>
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	<p>12:30 Civil War and the GAA. Parish split. IRA men under Seán Carroll in the parish.</p> <p>12:55 Stradbally hurling club splitting up as a result. Reforming as Ahane in 1927.</p> <p>13:20 A bridge in Annacotty being blown up.</p> <p>13:45 Earliest hurling memories.</p> <p>14:10 Brother Canty making them play rugby. Playing against a college from Dungarvan</p> <p>15:05 Having hurling teams in the school.</p> <p>15:20 Going on holidays to Kerry, where his cousin Teddy Connor played.</p> <p>15:35 Playing football for Lehanes and winning titles. The Mackeys, Jimmy Hassett and a man from Kildare playing.</p> <p>16:25 Brother Flatley from Mayo taking charge of games at school and ending rugby in the school. Paddy Reade, Mick Welsh and Tom Clifford moving to another school so that they could play rugby.</p> <p>17:15 Brother Keogh training hurling teams.</p> <p>17:45 Their natural ability for hurling. Playing on the Dublin-Limerick road regularly.</p> <p>18:40 No organised training.</p> <p>18:45 Playing on a Christian Brothers Harty Cup team and training himself.</p> <p>19:55 Skills needed at the time to play hurling. Mick Mackey introducing the solo run.</p> <p>20:45 Playing against Rockwell College, Kells in Kilkenny and Thurles Sarsfields. Travelling by bus to games.</p> <p>21:30 Eating in Langton's in Kilkenny.</p> <p>22:05 Playing with Jack Mulcahy, Jimmy Langton of Kilkenny. Eddie Byrne, Paddy Byrne, Peter Mansfield and Jimmy Connell all Kilkenny players he admired.</p>
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	<p>23:00 Playing games to open churches. Playing Kilkenny regularly.</p> <p>23:40 Lory Meagher, Seán Óg Murphy, Dinny Barry Murphy, Jim Regan and 'Lovely' Johnny Dunne players he admired.</p> <p>24:35 Story of players returning after an All-Ireland semi-final in Kilkenny and drinking with Cork players.</p> <p>26:35 Some of the players taking part in armed conflict at the time. Tommy Barry on the run from the Black and Tans.</p> <p>27:35 A courier, Seán Hogan, sent to deliver a message to the IRA in Cork about plans to target a British soldier. A train being ambushed and police officers being shot. Song 'The Station of Knocklong' written about it.</p> <p>29:20 Meeting Seán Hogan later in Dublin.</p> <p>29:55 Paddy Leahy on the run and his sister bringing him his dinner on the banks of the Suir.</p> <p>30:40 Paddy Leahy in the yard and people arriving on pony and traps. Shooting a man and swimming across the Suir to escape.</p> <p>32:10 Man on the run calling to his home. His father vouching for the man.</p> <p>33:45 Ahane hurling club when he was growing up. Winning a minor title in 1928 and Mick Mackey playing. Johnny Hurley a talented player.</p> <p>35:55 Some players lining out for Newport in Tipperary.</p> <p>36:15 Paddy Hillard, Denis O'Malley joining from Cappamore.</p> <p>36:40 Butler Coffey joining.</p> <p>37:00 Meeting in a school house on Rich Hill. Jack Kane there.</p> <p>37:25 Paddy Scanlon playing with Young Irelands, Jack Kane with Cloughaun teams split along political lines.</p> <p>30:05 Brother, Mick, playing with Ahane and winning titles.</p> <p>38:25 Limerick County Board unable to afford medals.</p>
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	<p>Eventually presenting all medals owed at a dance hall.</p> <p>39:05 Realising he had a talent for the game. Playing with older players. Developing his skills.</p> <p>40:00 Playing against other schools.</p> <p>40:40 A lot of Limerick minors playing with Doon - Mickey Ryan Miller, Dick Stokes.</p> <p>41:25 Ahane beating Doon thanks to a Jackie Power goal.</p> <p>42:10 Watching hurling games in a field every Sunday when he was young. Physicality of games.</p> <p>43:00 Ahane minor team playing a Christian Brothers team and Johnny Power playing well.</p> <p>44:35 Playing in a colleges athletics competition in Limerick featuring Crescent College, St Munchin's and the technical school aged 18. Winning a race. Tommy Casey inviting him to play for the Limerick hurlers.</p> <p>46:00 Playing against Cork and borrowing Tommy Mason's gear. Playing against Cork's Seán Barrett.</p> <p>47:05 Playing in a tournament in Kenmare featuring Cork, Kerry, Laois and Limerick. Marking Bobby Ring.</p> <p>48:25 How he felt about playing for Limerick.</p> <p>49:30 His brother Seán on the minor team and suspended for a final because he had been playing rugby.</p> <p>53:45 Robbie Lawlor training Limerick when he started out.</p> <p>55:00 Training they did. Playing rounders.</p> <p>57:40 Diet at the time. His mother cooking.</p> <p>59:45 Checking the newspaper for training times. Taking taxis to training.</p> <p>01:01:05 Playing Kilkenny in Nowlan Park. Hurling in Dublin with Faughs and playing for Limerick at the same time.</p> <p>01:05:10 Being sacked from his job in Dublin because he could not get a train back from Limerick in time. Ringing Mick</p>
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	<p>Halbert, who had a cafe on Bachelor's Walk, for help.</p> <p>01:05:15 Going to the United States in 1977 with the Kilkenny hurlers and the All Stars footballers. Seán Purcell in charge of the footballers. Visiting San Francisco, New York and Los Angeles.</p> <p>01:07:30 Moving to Dublin in 1943. Getting a job with New Ireland's because of his hurling skills. Going to Faughs the following year. New Ireland's blocking his transfer. Not being able to play for 12 months.</p> <p>01:10:40 Hearing of Faughs before moving to Dublin.</p> <p>01:11:50 Telling New Ireland's he was leaving.</p> <p>01:12:00 Joining the Civil Service. A Shanley man helping him to get called for the job.</p> <p>01:15:20 Travelling by taxi from Dublin to Cork. Stopping off at the Horse and Jockey in Tipperary.</p> <p>01:16:50 Last game for Limerick in 1942. Played for Dublin from 1945 onwards. Reason for that.</p> <p>01:17:20 Talking to Cork's Jack Lynch during a game about travel expenses from county boards.</p> <p>01:18:15 Limerick team of the 1940s. 1936 Limerick team featuring Jackie Connell, Stevie Cloughesy.</p> <p>01:19:00 Wearing the number 17 jersey. Cloughesy getting injured and calling for Tony to come on the field. Jackie Power playing.</p> <p>01:19:45 Position he usually played. Training hard.</p> <p>01:20:20 Absence of tactics in those days.</p> <p>01:20:55 Approach to the game.</p> <p>01:21:55 Marking Tommy Doyle and what he was like.</p> <p>01:22:20 Marking Kilkenny's Jack Mulcahy and containing him.</p> <p>01:22:50 Keeping in touch with players' wives - Tom Cheasty's wife Kathleen, Billy Rackard's daughter Sue.</p>
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	<p>01:23:40 Friendship with Willie John Daly of Cork.</p> <p>01:24:30 Battles with Tony Young and Jock Haughey.</p> <p>01:25:00 Visiting Philly Ryan, a former opponent, in hospital. History between them.</p> <p>01:27:15 Difference between playing in Limerick and playing in Dublin.</p> <p>01:28:10 Being taken to the opera and bumping into Paddy Lawlor and Tom O'Brien from Kerry busking.</p> <p>01:29:20 Getting a punch from Paddy Lawlor of Laois in a Leinster championship game. Giving Paddy Rusticoe a shoulder.</p> <p>01:30:15 Paddy Lawlor of Abbeyleix working on trains. Going to see him with Tommy Moore to get his vote to build the Cusack Stand in Croke Park, built by the McKennas.</p> <p>01:32:35 Type of club Faughs was. Ned Campion, Tommy Moore, Mick Sheffrey and Jim Nolan running the club.</p> <p>01:33:25 Inter-county players on the team, like Mick Butler and Christy Ford. Christy Ford in the army. Getting him a job in Islandbridge in Dublin. Getting his daughter a job with Campbell Catering.</p> <p>01:35:40 Involvement in politics. Rallies after the first election after the Civil War. His brother named after Eamon de Valera.</p> <p>01:37:40 Toughness of men who fought in wars at the time of the foundation of the State.</p> <p>01:39:15 Getting elected as secretary of Ahane Cumann. Joining a Cumann in Phibsboro in Dublin.</p> <p>01:39:45 Maurice O'Neill from Kerry due to be executed at Mountjoy. Organising a march. Bridge in Kerry opened in his name. What he was arrested for.</p> <p>01:43:20 Being outside the prison when he was executed. Special Mass at Berkley church.</p> <p>01:44:35 O'Neill later proved innocent. Giving out to Gerry Boland afterwards.</p>
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	<p>01:46:30 O'Neill's abilities as a footballer.</p> <p>01:47:30 GAA involvement helping him in his political career.</p> <p>01:47:50 His brother's involvement in politics.</p> <p>01:48:20 Friends with Henry Kenny, who played for Mayo. Visiting him in hospital and talking about Myles Staunton.</p> <p>01:50:30 Going on a trip to the Lebanon with Staunton. Meeting Yasser Arafat. Sightseeing.</p> <p>01:51:55 John Doyle TD playing for Tipperary. Mick Lanigan a GAA man, as was Billy Kennedy of Waterford.</p> <p>01:52:35 Most politicians were GAA people. Meeting Tom Clifford's grandson.</p> <p>01:54:05 GAA network getting him elected.</p> <p>01:54:30 Henry Kenny giving him his number two vote.</p> <p>01:54:55 Politicians benefiting the GAA.</p> <p>01:56:10 Non-interest in GAA administration.</p> <p>01:57:00 Stopping playing hurling in 1957 and what that was like.</p> <p>01:58:05 Being targeted in a game by Jock Haughey and Paddy Donnelly and the two men colliding with one another.</p> <p>01:59:30 Training teams with Fr Maher at St Columba's hurling club in Dublin. Success they had.</p> <p>02:00:45 Adherence to the Ban in Dublin and Limerick. Mick Mackey accused of being on a vigilance committee.</p> <p>02:01:50 Changes he has seen in the GAA. Opening of Croke Park.</p> <p>02:03:05 Key rule changes in the Association over the years.</p> <p>02:04:25 How he finds watching modern-day games.</p> <p>02:07:05 Player dispute in Limerick in 2009/2010.</p>
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	<p>02:08:50 IRA and Fenian people involved in the foundation of the GAA.</p> <p>02:10:00 Role of the GAA in his life.</p> <p>02:10:45 Kerry refusing to play in an All-Ireland final in 1935.</p> <p>02:11:55 What the GAA has meant to him.</p>
<b>Involvement in GAA</b>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input checked="" 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>
<b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)	1937-43/44: 3 Limerick football and 5 Limerick hurling championships with Ahane; 1940 Munster Championship; 3 Dublin Senior Hurling Championships with Faughs;
<b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)	Chairman of Faugh's Hurling Club; President of the Railway Cup for Leinster.
<b>Format</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
<b>Duration</b>	Length of Interview: 02:12:10
<b>Language</b>	N/A

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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: 11<sup>th</sup> June 2012