

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	20 th April 2010
Location	John's home, near Tournafulla, Co. Limerick
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	John Lenihan
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1911 Home County: Limerick
Education	Primary: Mountcollins NS, Co. Limerick.
Family	Siblings: 1 brother & 1 sister Current Family if Different: Wife, 2 sisters & 2 sons
Club(s)	Mountcollins GAA [Limerick]
Occupation	Farmer
Parents' Occupation	Farmers
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Young Priests Society

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Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Michael Lenihan
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1985 Home County: Limerick
Education	Primary: Mountcollins NS, Co. Limerick. Secondary: St Ita's, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick Third Level: Tralee Institute of Technology
Family	Siblings: 2 sisters
Club(s)	Mountcollins GAA [Limerick]
Occupation	Hardware sales
Parents' Occupation	FÁS employee [Father]; Nurse [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Mount Collins Soccer club

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Date of Report	15 th June 2012
Period Covered	1890s - 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Limerick
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Administration, Celebrations, Fundraising, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Emigration, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, Irish Language, Culture, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish, History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Challenges, The Troubles, Relationships, Economy / Economics
Interview Summary	<p>John talks about growing up in Limerick in the early 1900s. Born in 1911, there was much strife in the country during his younger days, but there was still a place for Gaelic games, which John feels were a force for good. Clubs came and went in those days, and when John played with teams they often played against other teams in Limerick, or those over the border in Kerry. He recalls making hurleys from wood in the area, saving up with friends to buy a football, and collecting from local people so that they could afford jerseys. He sometimes went to Croke Park for the All-Ireland final, which was a major excursion. John talks about the talented players he saw in action and remembers people being forced to emigrate, often never to be seen again. The GAA has endured through the years as has his enthusiasm for Gaelic games. He is joined by his grandson Michael, who keeps the family tradition alive playing by lining out with his local club Mountcollins.</p> <p>00:30 Early GAA memories. Talk of first team in his parish in 1890s. Fr O'Mahony starting a hurling team.</p> <p>01:20 Ash tree cut to make hurleys.</p> <p>01:55 First junior football team in his parish in 1925 reaching a final.</p> <p>02:25 Club bringing people together.</p> <p>02:55 Fr Casey's football team in Abbeyfeale.</p> <p>03:35 He was born in 1911.</p> <p>03:50 Tournafulla having a hurling team. Playing with</p>

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	<p>Monkhalla</p> <p>04:15 Glen county champions for seven years.</p> <p>04:35 Playing against Kerry teams like Brosna and Knocknagoshel. Also playing Abbeyfeale and Knockchapel</p> <p>05:00 Many students on Abbeyfeale team.</p> <p>05:35 Playing games in Cork.</p> <p>05:50 GAA as a gift for young people.</p> <p>06:10 Burning Limerick and going to a quarry. Being tired as he had been playing football.</p> <p>07:25 What they wore when they were playing.</p> <p>07:40 Making hurleys with wood from the bog.</p> <p>07:50 Fr O'Mahony training The Shamrocks in the 1880s.</p> <p>08:10 Going to watch games when he was a boy and then the Black and Tans coming on the scene.</p> <p>08:35 Effect of war on sporting events.</p> <p>08:55 Recollections of those times and men being on the run.</p> <p>10:00 Going to an All-Ireland final between Kerry and Cavan in 1936/1937. Impressions of Croke Park. Seeing Kerry play Monaghan, and also Down.</p> <p>11:55 Being met at the train station in Dublin by his aunt.</p> <p>12:50 How long the journey took and what route the train took.</p> <p>13:50 Seeing Mick Mackey and Limerick play hurling against Cork in Thurles.</p> <p>14:30 GAA heroes included Paddy Cloughesy of Limerick.</p> <p>15:10 Family's GAA involvement.</p> <p>15:30 Role of priests, like Fr Casey and Fr O'Mahony.</p> <p>16:25 Local carpenter making hurleys.</p> <p>17:05 His grandson winning a junior football title.</p> <p>17:30 Playing a county final against St Patrick's of Limerick in 1939.</p> <p>17:40 His brother playing football with Wexford.</p>
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	<p>18:15 1939 county final played in Newcastle West. Some Kerry players on their team illegally. Mountcollins poaching Kerry players.</p> <p>19:10 World War II and its effect on the GAA.</p> <p>20:30 Big crowds at games when he was younger. Admission prices at games.</p> <p>21:30 Trains full of people.</p> <p>21:45 Going to O'Connell St and encountering Kerry fans.</p> <p>22:45 Cork and Kilkenny were Limerick's rivals.</p> <p>23:15 Killeedy Tournafulla main rivals. Fitzmaurices playing for Killeedy. Seamus Horgan in goals for Limerick in 1973.</p> <p>24:45 Tournafulla winning an intermediate final.</p> <p>25:25 Mount Collins the local football club.</p> <p>26:00 Tournafulla a hurling area.</p> <p>26:45 Abbeyfeale's sports field located in Kerry.</p> <p>27:55 Paying for a football when they were growing up.</p> <p>28:30 Playing in local fields.</p> <p>28:55 Training they did.</p> <p>29:05 No trainer at the time.</p> <p>30:10 Going to games in hackney cars or by bicycle.</p> <p>30:30 Playing in Coiscéim and Scartaglen and travelling in a lorry.</p> <p>31:30 Changes he has seen in the GAA.</p> <p>32:05 Collecting money to buy football jerseys.</p> <p>32:30 Role of football team in Mountcollins.</p> <p>32:35 People emigrating to England or joining the army.</p> <p>33:30 People going to the United States and playing GAA there.</p> <p>33:50 New York team playing in Croke Park.</p> <p>34:20 Leaving school at 13 and working on the farm. Brother sent off to school in Dublin.</p>
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	<p>35:10 Playing in school and taking on other schools.</p> <p>36:15 Few children going on to secondary education.</p> <p>36:45 American wakes.</p> <p>37:40 People sending money from the United States back to the parish.</p> <p>38:40 Different trades at the time (1920s).</p> <p>39:15 People speaking Irish when he was young.</p> <p>39:30 Kerry woman coming to parish and marrying a local. Their son becoming a professor of the De La Salle training college in Waterford.</p> <p>40:45 Others joining the clergy.</p> <p>41:35 Black and Tans going to a nearby house.</p> <p>41:50 Music in the area. Being in a piper's band.</p> <p>42:50 Meeting his wife at a dance in Mountcollins. Raising a family.</p> <p>43:55 His grandson, Michael, talks about his own GAA involvement.</p> <p>44:35 (Michael) Winning their first county title. Beating Tipperary champions Knockavilla Kickhams. Going to Dungarvan to play Kilgobnet. Playing Castlegregory.</p> <p>45:15 (Michael) Celebrations.</p> <p>46:10 (Michael) What success meant to the parish.</p> <p>47:10 (Michael) Reasons for success.</p> <p>48:15 (Michael) Effect of recession on the team and on other clubs.</p> <p>49:15 (Michael) What the GAA means to him and his sisters.</p> <p>50:05 (Michael) GAA in the area going back generations.</p> <p>50:25 How he feels about seeing his grandchildren playing.</p> <p>51:30 GAA as part of his sense of Irishness.</p> <p>51:45 (Michael) What the GAA means to him as an Irish person.</p> <p>53:35 His father going to games when he was young and he</p>
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	<p>going too.</p> <p>54:00 Interest in the GAA when he was young.</p> <p>54:20 Memories of 1916.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p>John:</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): _____</p> <p>Michael:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input 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 checked="" 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 of time played)</p>	<p>John: Played football with Mountcollins for many years; Won West Limerick Junior title in 1939 (captained team)</p> <p>Michael: Played underage football and hurling with Tournafulla; Played fresher, intermediate and senior football with Tralee IT; Won 1 West Limerick U21 Football championship; 1 Limerick U21 Football championship; 2 West Limerick and 1 county junior football championship (2009)</p>
<p>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>John: N/A</p> <p>Michael: Mountcollins GAA: Chairman (2 years); Vice-Chairman (current); Secretary (1 year); Trains U10 team</p>

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Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 00:55:29
Language	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: 15th June 2012