

## GAA Oral History Project

## Interview Report Form

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| <b>Name of Interviewer</b>                             | Regina Fitzpatrick   |
| <b>Date of Interview</b>                               | 12 <sup>th</sup> April 2011  |
| <b>Location</b>  | Seamus's home, near Tullamore, Co. Offaly.   |
| <b>Name of Interviewee</b><br>(Maiden name / Nickname) | Seamus O'Dea   |
| <b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>      |  |
| <b>Gender</b>  | Male   |
| <b>Born</b>  | <b>Year Born:</b> 1924<br><b>Home County:</b> Tipperary  |
| <b>Education</b>                                       | <b>Primary:</b> Loughmore-Castleiney NS, Co. Tipperary<br><b>Secondary:</b> CBS Templemore, Co. Tipperary<br><b>Third Level:</b> UCD |
| <b>Family</b>  | <b>Siblings:</b> 5 sisters & 3 brothers<br><b>Current Family if Different:</b> Wife (Mary), 4 sons & 1 daughter                      |
| <b>Club(s)</b>   | Templemore Éire Óg GAA [Tipperary]   |
| <b>Occupation</b>                                      | Secondary School Teacher   |
| <b>Parents' Occupation</b>                             | Teacher [Mother]; Hackney Driver [Father]  |
| <b>Religion</b>  | Roman Catholic   |
| <b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>              | None   |
| <b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>                | Conradh na Gaeilge; St Vincent De Paul   |

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| <b>Date of Report</b>             | 25 <sup>th</sup> July 2012   |
| <b>Period Covered</b>             | 1884 – 2011  |
| <b>Counties/Countries Covered</b> | Offaly, Tipperary, Dublin  |
| <b>Key Themes Covered</b>         | Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Media, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Identity, Rivalries, Irish Language, Culture, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Politics, Retirement, Food and Drink, Socialising, Relationships, Economy / Economics   |
| <b>Interview Summary</b>          | <p>Séamus grew up in a Templemore family that was steeped in GAA tradition. As a young boy he enjoyed playing football with his brothers, and later they played for Éire Óg. After studying at UCD he found a permanent job in Tullamore and over time became increasingly involved with the GAA in his new home. Séamus joined the coaching set-up with the school team and they went on to win numerous titles as Offaly football began to assert itself, culminating in the county team's All-Ireland win of 1971. Séamus recalls some of the characters he met as he made his way to games around the country - by bicycle, train and car - and watched various teams from both Tipperary and Offaly in action.</p> <p>00:20 Been in Tullamore since 1955. Has coached teams over the years.</p> <p>00:45 Born in Templemore, Tipperary, in 1924. What it was like growing up there. Templemore a garrison town. Playing handball and football with his friends.</p> <p>02:20 Christian Brothers arriving in 1933. Football the main sport there and in Loughmore, Castleiney, Templetohy. Hurling popular further afield.</p> <p>03:45 Family involvement in athletics. Grandfather and namesake winning a gold watch in an 1884 Munster championship. What became of the watch.</p> <p>05:00 Father, he and his brothers playing for Templemore Éire Óg. Brother on Tipperary minor team. Brother, Niall, on senior team and representing Munster in 1957.</p> |

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|  | <p>05:55 Playing football in national school in Loughmore. Hurling in school by the time his brother arrived four years later. Brother getting a trial for the Tipperary hurling minor team. Granduncle a teacher at the school and encouraging the playing of Gaelic games. Granduncle playing for Erin's Hope in Drumcondra, Dublin. What he heard of those experiences. Uncle playing junior football for Tipperary in the 1920s. Son playing for Offaly at Under-21 level many years later.</p> <p>09:00 Mother a teacher at school in Loughmore. Studying local history and origin of the place name. What he discovered about a problem with a boar and a Purcell man trying to fix things. Folklore Commission and work with them in University College Dublin. Play produced about the McCormack brothers. Granduncle telling him about executions in Nenagh that featured in a ballad.</p> <p>15:00 Pastimes when he was growing up. Playing with chestnuts. Fishing. Less underage structures at clubs. No rural schools competitions.</p> <p>17:20 Listening to Micheál Ó hÉihir on the radio. Watching Munster hurling finals between Limerick and Cork. The Mackeys playing for Limerick.</p> <p>18:30 Getting a puncture while cycling home from a game in Thurles. Man offering to help. Watching a game between Galway and Kilkenny with 12 minutes overtime. Jim Langton playing. Age he was when cycling to Thurles. Number of bicycles on the road.</p> <p>20:50 Cycling from Templemore to Ballinasloe on a tandem with his brother to see a Connacht final between Roscommon and Mayo in 1946. Where they got the bike from. Stopping for food in Banaher.</p> <p>23:15 Following both football and hurling. Toomevara a team they admired. Tommy Treacy a local hero of his. Tommy wearing a blood-stained bandage the day after an All-Ireland final with Tipperary. Seeing him play with Young Irelands in Dublin many years later. Hurlers playing for Faughs in Dublin. Cullen man from Templemore co-founder of Faughs hurling club.</p> <p>26:50 Garda college in Templemore and what it brought for the town.</p> <p>27:30 Attending Templemore CBS in 1933 and what that was like. Second-level education a novelty for many. Superior was</p> |
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|  | <p>a Clare man who encouraged Gaelic games. GAA pitch in a town park.</p> <p>29:50 Playing against Clonmel in a final with the school. Participating in street leagues. Involvement with Éire Óg club and what set-up there was like. Bill Grant, Kieran Holland playing for the Tipperary footballers. Gala in Tullamore in 1937 as Tipperary were playing Cavan in an All-Ireland semi-final.</p> <p>32:40 Playing for club teams. Haphazard nature of set-up.</p> <p>32:15 First All-Ireland he attended in late 1930s. Cavan playing Kildare.</p> <p>34:25 'Clerys excursion' on December 8 each year. What it cost to take the train to Dublin.</p> <p>34:45 Tipp's All Star minor team in 1945. Playing in Dublin and many of them unfamiliar with the city. Success of team at senior level.</p> <p>36:40 His own playing career. Last senior match in 1949. Going to college in UCD in the 1940s. Teaching from 1950. Getting a permanent job in Tullamore.</p> <p>37:40 Football the main sport at UCD. Team competing in Sigerson Cup. Templemore man Seán Short playing in goals for the team. His attributes. Seán Flanagan of Mayo team captain and later a Fianna Fáil minister. Games played in Belfield. Playing for UCD one day because they were stuck. Devlin man from Tyrone a friend of his on the team. Living on Rathgar Road. Studying Irish, Latin and History. How he found studying Irish. An Réalt organising céilí nights.</p> <p>44:45 Taking Irish classes and realising that others had little knowledge of the language. Membership of Conradh na Gaeilge.</p> <p>47:45 Arrival in Tullamore, 1955. Renting a house. What the school was like. Superior a GAA man from Limerick. What superior said to him about the school. Some of the pupils cycling from Kilbeggan, Clara and Gíseal. Training some of the pupils. Brother Murphy from Kerry, interested in football. Patsy Rouse also involved. Reaching a semi-final. Brother telling him that one pupil, Tom Furlong, would end up playing for Offaly. Peter Nolan another talented player at the time.</p> <p>55:45 Offaly playing well in the mid-1950s. Youth looking up to players on the team.</p> |
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|  | <p>56:55 Watching soccer games in Dublin.</p> <p>57:25 Teaching at a school in Monkstown Park, Dublin, at the instigation of Bishop McQuaid. Bishop wanting rugby played at the school. Reason for that. Pupils at school from well-to-do families. One pupil driving a car. Lay teacher suggesting that they introduce hurling. How that was received.</p> <p>01:00:20 CBS playing a team from the rest of Offaly in a trial match. Brother Murphy instilling self-belief in players. Brother Murphy's eye for a player.</p> <p>01:07:05 Offaly winning 1964 minor football All-Ireland. Senior team winning in 1971. Brother Giffney announcing that school would be cancelled on Monday if Offaly won the All-Ireland in 1971. Three Furlong brothers playing for Offaly. Tom Furlong leaving for the USA. Peter Nolan another key player.</p> <p>01:10:45 Celebrations in 1971. Furlongs' father still alive at the time. Martin Furlong going on to win three All-Irelands in total.</p> <p>01:12:35 Listening to Tullamore win an All-Ireland from his daughter's house in New York. Paul Rouse on the radio.</p> <p>01:13:30 His approach to coaching. Carmelite School of Moate big rivals of theirs. Getting into an argument with a priest. Portlaoise another good team, as were Freshford.</p> <p>01:18:40 Winning Leinster junior and senior titles. St Mel's College of Longford the top team in Leinster. Some teams inclined to field illegal players. Brother Murphy's opinion on that.</p> <p>01:21:30 Impact of success on school morale. St Kieran's of Kilkenny and Sallins of Ennis teams with strong GAA traditions. Good relationship with students as a result of working with them outside of the school. One player getting an injury that turned cancerous. GAA supporting him through illness.</p> <p>01:25:40 Peter Nolan arranging an informal reunion with players.</p> <p>01:26:50 Jimmy Kennedy a talented Tipperary hurler who played alongside John Doyle. Sharing a room with him when they were students. Friendship with the Devlins of Tyrone. Jim Devlin shot during the Troubles.</p> <p>01:28:25 Relationship between the school and the club.</p> |
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|  | <p>01:29:55 Father travelling from Templemore to watch his son in a minor final. Father convincing his son to give up cigarettes.</p> <p>01:31:45 Offaly doing well to win All-Irelands seeing as they had a small pick of clubs. Birr supplying many players in the past. Brother Denis working at Presentation School in Birr. Doing oral Irish exams there. Students saying that Jimmy Doyle of Tipperary was a favourite hurler of theirs. Reason for that. Talking to former GAA Director General. Liam Mulvihill at the school.</p> <p>01:35:00 Offaly's 1971 All-Ireland win a highlight of his GAA experiences. Watching Tipperary winning an All-Ireland in 1945.</p> <p>01:36:05 Seeing more of a game on television than at stadium in Croke Park.</p> <p>01:37:00 Man who lived in his house before him was from Moyne in Tipperary. Going to GAA games with him. Kilkenny winning an All-Ireland in 1967 and the man's reaction. Meeting Tipperary manager Paddy Leahy.</p> <p>01:39:30 Rivalry between Offaly and Tipperary. Fractious junior All-Ireland game between the two. Reason for Rivalry.</p> <p>01:41:20 Going to Killarney for a Munster hurling final between Limerick and Tipperary. Meeting Nesbitt from Doheny and Nesbitt's pub in Dublin. Nesbitt originally from Loughmore. Hugh Cleary a hurler from Drom who worked in a Dublin pub and played for Young Irelands. Catching train to Killarney from Portlaoise. Rain in Killarney. Going to pubs in the town and being charged different prices. Friend commenting on that.</p> <p>01:45:00 Wondering would they ever see Tipperary in an All-Ireland when he was young. Tipp playing in Killarney in 1937. Too young to attend.</p> <p>01:46:25 Going to see less games as time goes by. Enjoying Cork-Limerick games over the years. Match day in Thurles. Banter. Mick Mackey entering a pub in Thurles after he had retired from the game. Reception he got.</p> <p>01:49:40 Cork legend Christy Ring a determined hurler. Ring legend visiting Tommy Doyle whenever he was in Thurles. Man he knew, Jimmy Hurley, getting a lift to Mitchelstown with Christy Ring.</p> |
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| <b>Involvement in GAA</b>   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward<br><input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person<br><input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ |
| <b>Record as a Player</b><br>(Titles won; Length of time played)    | Played football with Templemore until 1949; played junior football with UCD  |
| <b>Record as an Administrator</b><br>(Positions held; how long for) | Coached and trained many Tullamore CBS teams.  |
| <b>Format</b>   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual  |
| <b>Duration</b>   | Length of Interview: 01:51:58  |
| <b>Language</b>   | 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: 25<sup>th</sup> July 2012