

**GAA Oral History Project**  
**Interview Report Form**

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Regina Fitzpatrick
<b>Date of Interview</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> March 2011
<b>Location</b>	Interviewee's home, near Newry, Co. Dublin
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Dan McCartan
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1946 <b>Home County:</b> Down
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Sheeptown PS; Saval Abbey CBS Newry. <b>Secondary:</b> St Colman's College, Newry <b>Third Level:</b> NUI Maynooth
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 2 brothers & 2 sisters
<b>Club(s)</b>	Saval GAA [Down]
<b>Occupation</b>	Retired Teacher
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Teacher [Mother]; Publican [Father]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	N/A

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<b>Date of Report</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	1920s - 2011
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Down, Dublin, Armagh
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Material Culture, Education, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Identity, Rivalries, Irish Language, Culture, Scór, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Opening of Croke Park, Ban on Security Forces, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Socialising, Food and Drink, Purchase of Grounds, Economy/Economics
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>00:30 Dan describes his early life. Born in 1946 in Ballymaginthy in the parish of Leitrim in Co. Down. Local club was Leitrim Fontenoys. Moved to Saval in the 1950s.</p> <p>01:24 Talks about his family's involvement in the GAA. Uncle played for Leitrim club in 1921, winning the county championship in both football and hurling. Handball was popular.</p> <p>02:05 Talks about his uncles Dan and Johnny Fitzpatrick, Tamery Hilltown from Tamery near Hilltown who played for John Attey's Men taking him to games.</p> <p>03:20 Recalls his school days, no games in the school.</p> <p>03:49 Discusses the place and history of the GAA club in Saval, founded in 1949 by Father Pettit, president of the Ulster Council in later years. Mentions Paddy Poland, club meetings held in his kitchen.</p> <p>05:00 Talks about Father Pettit and his role in promoting Gaelic games. Rostrevor GAA pitch named after him.</p> <p>05:45 Talks about his early involvement in Gaelic games, going to watch his brother play in the late 1950s. Club competitions. Saval played in a field belonging to</p>

	<p>the Carmelite nuns.</p> <p>07:18 Recalls how no other sports were played in the parish apart from Gaelic football in the early years.</p> <p>07:47 Discusses his secondary school days in St. Coleman's College. Talks about their record in the Hogan Cup and McGorey Cup. Mentions Father John Trainer and his role in Gaelic football in the school. Promotion of Gaelic culture and games. Mentions Kevin Mussen.</p> <p>11:10 Talks about the rivalry between Coleman's and Abbey CBS. Students mainly from Down and south Armagh.</p> <p>12:06 Recalls the successful Down team of the late 1950s and early 1960s. Role of St Coleman's College. Winning the All-Ireland in 1960 and the impact on Down people.</p> <p>13:40 Going to watch Down in Croke Park. Uncles bringing him to games, talks about going to Clones for matches. Being on Nuns Hill in Clones. Eating places set up for spectators. Mentions 'meat tea'.</p> <p>15:19 Describes the ways they travelled to games, cycling or minibus, if Croke Park, a train and then cycling.</p> <p>15:58 Being in Croke Park when Down won in 1960. Standing in the Cusack Stand when it was a terrace.</p> <p>16:45 Describes his friend trying to get over the wire fence and pretending to faint.</p> <p>17:29 Recalls Down's homecoming in Newry and coming over the border. Impact of the win. Mentions Jarlath Burns. The influence of the win on his life. Majority of his parish was Unionist and Protestant but celebrated with them.</p> <p>20:13 Father died in 1952, raised by his mother. Lived and ran a pub.</p> <p>20:52 All-Ireland success bought community together. Relationship between the GAA and the Protestant</p>
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	<p>community.</p> <p>21:50 Talks about the make-up of Saval, mixture of Catholics and Protestants.</p> <p>22:29 Describes how soccer was played around the Newry area but his parish was mostly Gaelic games.</p> <p>23:06 Talks about going to university in Maynooth, didn't get involved in the GAA there. Became secretary of the club in Saval when he returned home in 1969.</p> <p>23:37 Discusses his role as secretary. Meetings held in Loughorn Hall. Mentions John McConville. Talks about club administration.</p> <p>25:18 Talks about having the first lady secretary in the county, Attracta McConville in the early 1970s. Her sister later became secretary.</p> <p>25:50 Discusses his role as secretary. Starting a weekly newsletter for the club.</p> <p>27:20 Recalls the Saval club in the 1970s. becoming chairman in 1970. Saval winning their first junior championship in the same year. The development of the club.</p> <p>29:00 Facilities of the club. Same families staying involved.</p> <p>29:53 Talks about the facilities in the 1970s. Used John McCarthy's field and John Digny's field. Moved to current pitch later, in the centre of the parish.</p> <p>31:18 Discusses becoming registrar for South Down in 1971. Later became secretary. Then assistant secretary of the county committee, later youth officer. All during the 1970s. Youth movement in the county during this period.</p> <p>32:50 Role of the youth officer during the 1970s, promotion of youth involvement. Conventions held. Mentions Father Tommy Maher of St Kiernan's, Eddie Kerr, Eugene McGee. Comeptitions organised like Feile na nÓg.</p> <p>34:11 Talks about his impression of the administration</p>
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	<p>side of Down county board. Attending a leadership course in 1969. Mentions Seamus O'Riain, Pat Fanning, Alf Murray, Con Murphy, Pdraig McFlynn. Focus on the GAA becoming the centre of the community.</p> <p>36:58 Discusses the relationship between those who wanted to just play games rather than expand in the community and undergo major development.</p> <p>38:48. Talks about the influence of Seamus Ó Riain had.</p> <p>39:14 Discusses Pat Fanning and lifting the Ban on Foreign Games. Many Down delegates were tolerant and balanced but didn't want to drop the ban in fear of losing ground. Difference between younger and older generation.</p> <p>41:14 Talks about the other bans, membership of the police and opening of Croke Park. Views of those against and for the ban. Describes how those who were against the opening of Croke Park were not extremists.</p> <p>43:35 Discusses the idea that the counties in the North were more ardent in their opposition than counties in the South.</p> <p>44:50 Talks about his position as delegate council member in the early 1980s. Elected chairman at the county convention in 1982.</p> <p>45:40 Recalls the Hunger Strikes during the early 1980s. Talks about the GAA's role. Mentions Pdraig McFlynn. The need for the GAA to remain neutral. Describes the tension and the sadness at the time.</p> <p>48:10 The role of the GAA during this time and the relationship between the two communities.</p> <p>48:45 Describes his role as chairman of the county board. Preparing for the 100 year centenary in 1984. Recalls the Lá na gClub initiative and its impact on the community.</p> <p>50:30 Recalls the dominant issues during his time as chairman of the county board. Was a teacher in St Coleman's at the same time.</p> <p>52:30 Discusses his time as a teacher in St Coleman's</p>
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	<p>and coaching GAA teams there. Trained a Cór na nÓg team. Became more involved in administration in later years.</p> <p>53:35 Talks about the student/teacher relationship in the school and the favourable treatment of those who played football. Mentions Raymond Morgan and Breen Morgan.</p> <p>54:50 Recalls the election of T.P. Murphy as trustee in 1982 during Paddy Buggy's presidency. Dan was then elected to the Central Council and remained there for 28 years.</p> <p>56:00 Discusses his time on Central Council and the changes and developments he witnessed. Talks about the development of Croke Park. Mentions Liam Mulvihill, Kerry's Ger McKenna, Mick O'Dwyer.</p> <p>59:49 Talks about his time on the Management Committee from 1993 to 1995. The end of Peter Quinn's presidency and the beginning of Jack Boothman's.</p> <p>01:00:29 Describes the level of professionalism in an amateur organisation and the relationship with volunteers.</p> <p>01:03:23 Recalls the key discussions during his time on Central Council, the development of Croke Park and rule regarding policing.</p> <p>01:05:30 Discusses the differences between the presidents of the GAA that he worked under during his time on Central Council and gives his opinion on them. Mentions Liam Mulvihill.</p> <p>01:07:05 Talks about his proudest moments during his time during the GAA. Highlights the work of his own club in Down and their work in the local community.</p> <p>01:08:30 Talks about the difficulty in staying involved in his local club while on Central Council.</p> <p>01:09:50 Recalls his other various roles while on Central Council, working on sub-committees like Coiste na gClub, National Insurance Workgroup, the National Referees Committess, Rulebook Taskforce. Mentions Paddy McFlynn.</p>
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	<p>01:11:29 Describes how the GAA became a way of life for him.</p> <p>01:12:47 Talks about his favourite role on the Central Committee. Discusses working with referees and the respect that he has for them.</p> <p>01:15:10 Recalls decisions he didn't agree with. Talks about his time as chairman of the Games Administration Committee. How he interprets criticism.</p> <p>01:17:45 Talks about Down's 2010 All-Ireland football campaign, losing to Cork in the final. Mentions James McCartan.</p> <p>01:19:39 Discusses the level of training of players undergo.</p> <p>01:21:54 Gives his opinion on the Gaelic Player Association.</p> <p>01:24:00 Discusses the major future issues for the GAA. Talks about the amateur status of the Association and the relationship between volunteers. Mentions challenges in urban areas. Financial issues facing the GAA.</p> <p>01:25:56 Describes what about the GAA that makes him most proud, mentions the role and the work of local clubs. Working on a committee dealing with clubs wanting to expand and develop further.</p> <p>01:27:57 Talks about the impact of the GAA on his identity and the work that it does nationally.</p> <p>01:30:40 Discusses the changes in the relationship between the GAA and nationalism and Irish culture over the years. Talks about Scór. The importance of culture.</p> <p>01:33:12 Describes what the GAA means to him and to Irish people.</p>
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<p><b>Involvement in GAA</b></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): <u>Umpire</u></p>
<p><b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>Played underage with Saval GAA.</p>
<p><b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>Several positions within Down County Board.</p>
<p><b>Format</b></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual</p>
<p><b>Duration</b></p>	<p>Length of Interview: 1:34:19</p>
<p><b>Language</b></p>	<p>English</p>

**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: 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2012.