

## GAA Oral History Project

## Interview Report Form

|                                                     |                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Name of Interviewer</b>                          | Arlene Crampsie (Pat Kierans also present)                                                                                         |
| <b>Date of Interview</b>                            | 29 <sup>th</sup> July 2010                                                                                                         |
| <b>Location</b>                                     | West Court Hotel, Drogheda, Co. Louth                                                                                              |
| <b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname) | Michael Matthews                                                                                                                   |
| <b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>   |                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Gender</b>                                       | Male                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Born</b>                                         | <b>Year Born:</b> 1931<br><b>Home County:</b> Louth                                                                                |
| <b>Education</b>                                    | <b>Primary:</b> CBS Drogheda, Co. Louth<br><b>Secondary:</b> CBS Drogheda, Co. Louth                                               |
| <b>Family</b>                                       | <b>Siblings:</b> 4 brothers & 2 sisters<br><b>Current Family if Different:</b> Married to Margery (RIP) with 4 sons and 1 daughter |
| <b>Club(s)</b>                                      | Oliver Plunketts, Drogheda                                                                                                         |
| <b>Occupation</b>                                   | Factory Worker                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Parents' Occupation</b>                          | Soldier [Father]; Housewife [Mother]                                                                                               |
| <b>Religion</b>                                     | Roman Catholic                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>           | N/A                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>             | Founder member of the Credit Union                                                                                                 |

|                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Date of Report</b>             | 27 <sup>th</sup> June 2012                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Period Covered</b>             | 1942 – 2010                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Counties/Countries Covered</b> | Louth                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Key Themes Covered</b>         | Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, 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, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Politics, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Opening of Croke Park, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Retirement, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy/ Economics                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Interview Summary</b>          | <p>Mick talks about the GAA in Louth and about his involvement with the Oliver Plunkett's club. He began playing with them shortly after they formed and over time they had a team with some talented players, although they did not achieve as much as Mick felt they should have. He also played on the Louth junior team and recalls his memories of those days. After his playing days he continued his involvement with the club, choosing to focus on working with underage teams, which he felt was vitally important. He talks about the progress made in that area over the years, with development squads making a huge difference. Mick made many friends through the GAA and they had great times socialising at dances and carnivals. He was also a big fan of the Louth senior team, and remembers the heartache of the 1950 All-Ireland loss and, more recently, the 2010 Leinster final loss. He has fond memories of the 1957 All-Ireland win, however, and despite the painful losses over the years he takes great pleasure from going back out on to the field to train underage teams, watching over the development of Louth's inter-county stars of tomorrow.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:25 Club formed in 1942 and he won his first medal in 1943.</p> <p>00:40 Family involvement.</p> |

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p>01:00 Football in Drogheda when he started playing. Lack of training facilities. How they trained.</p> <p>01:45 Becoming good fielders.</p> <p>02:05 Playing for the county at junior level.</p> <p>02:25 Louth in the 1950 All-Ireland against Mayo. Heartache. A Flanagan man from Mayo over-carrying. Referee Simon Deignan's comments after the game.</p> <p>03:30 Jimmy McDonnell, Stephen White and Tom Connolly playing for Louth in 1957, when they won the All-Ireland.</p> <p>03:45 Standard of club football in 1957. Cooley and Dundalk weak.</p> <p>04:20 Mid-Louth players. Ardee having a strong team featuring inter-county players like Kevin Beahan, Johnny Ross, Dermot O'Brien, Patsy Coleman, Jim Roe, Paddy Mackey, Paddy McArdle.</p> <p>05:25 Spread of inter-county players around mid-Louth. Ollie Reilly. The McDonnells – Jimmy and Michael. Stabannon – Tom, Jim and Matt Conlon. Club players Tom Sherman and Bunny Bohan, Mickey and Brian Reynolds were ex-county players.</p> <p>06:20 Standards in Drogheda. Naomh Mhuire winning a county championship. Red Meehan, Alfie Monks, Jimmy Gahan. From the Blues – Peter, Oliver and Blackie Judge. Terry Doolan, Peadar Smith, Georgie Carroll at his own club, Oliver Plunkett's. Winning a club championship.</p> <p>07:35 Coaching underage football. Being a Louth junior selector.</p> <p>08:25 Paul McKenna of Naomh Mhuire, Bobby McDonnell of the Blues, Benny Mac of O'Rahilly's and Felix Hackett doing a lot of work for underage football.</p> <p>09:00 Interest in underage football. Feeling they weren't doing enough work.</p> <p>09:35 Improvement in facilities in Drogheda and in underage structures.</p> |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p>10:25 Support for development squads.</p> <p>11:05 Playing intermediate football.</p> <p>11:40 Formation of Oliver Plunkett's. St Joseph's (The Joe's) amalgamating with the Ramblers. Phil Clarke, Sean Murray and a Ward man involved.</p> <p>12:40 Peadar Smith, Paddy Matthews, Frank Taafe inter-county players to emerge from the club.</p> <p>13:00 Getting a pitch.</p> <p>13:15 Terry Maher becoming secretary and county board chairman. Seán Murray working hard. Thomas Carroll involved.</p> <p>14:00 Travelling to games by bicycle. Playing at carnivals.</p> <p>14:45 His friend working in Birmingham, England, and going to a dentist. Dentist knowing people in Drogheda and having played with Oliver Plunkett's.</p> <p>15:55 Man talking about the two clubs in the town and the difference between the two.</p> <p>16:25 Making friends through the GAA.</p> <p>17:15 Socialising. Going to dances. Singing songs. Thomas Carroll, a breadman, bringing them to different places for games.</p> <p>17:55 Cycling to Syddan and Rathkenny.</p> <p>18:25 Rivalry between clubs that amalgamated. Rivalry with Naomh Mhuire, Newtown Blues and Parnell's. Street Leagues. Run-ins with Bobby McDonnell of Newtown Blues.</p> <p>20:55 Not realising their potential as a team over the years.</p> <p>21:55 Grounds they played in. Facilities. Snow falling on their clothes.</p> <p>23:00 GAA facilities improving in the 1990s.</p> <p>23:15 Development squads. Paddy Keenan and Andy McDonnell players that came through the squads.</p> |
|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p>24:00 Inter-county teams doing well. Prospects for the future.</p> <p>24:55 Nursery in his club and how it works. Administrative people involved in coaching.</p> <p>26:10 Work of Danny Nugent for underage football.</p> <p>26:55 Getting involved in underage football after Phil Clarke asked him.</p> <p>27:55 His children playing and arguing after games.</p> <p>29:30 Coaching his grandchildren.</p> <p>31:10 Winning the county championship. Jim Roe, Patsy Coleman inter-county players with the opposition, Ardee. Playing them the following week in the Cardinal O'Donnell Cup. Kevin Beahan playing for Ardee in that game.</p> <p>32:35 His sons losing an intermediate final to a Down team.</p> <p>33:15 What it felt like to win a county medal.</p> <p>33:35 Style of play at the time. Physical nature of the exchanges.</p> <p>35:55 Playing on the county junior team and what that was like. Fr McDonnell and Johnny McDonnell on the team. Fr Connolly a selector. Paddy Dixon and Paddy Kirk on the team.</p> <p>39:00 Running a draw to make money. Purchasing a pitch at a good price.</p> <p>40:00 Fundraising events. Having a bridge night and needing sponsors. Fashion shows and dances.</p> <p>42:20 Getting involved in administration. Roles he occupied.</p> <p>42:45 St Magdalen's club joining them. Jimmy Shreenan, Mick Higgins and Fr Carroll playing with them.</p> <p>43:40 Terry Doolan joining the club. Doolan playing for different counties. Doolan playing a game in Monaghan and seeing Brendan O'Dowd.</p> <p>45:15 Billy and Tom Bohan coming from Magdalen's, and Bob McGuffen.</p> |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p>45:25 Success they enjoyed.</p> <p>46:45 Fr Patsy McDonald playing for the team. Not being able to play a game on the day of his ordination.</p> <p>48:10 Role of clergy in GAA in the area. Fr Connolly promoting athletics and training the team before a final.</p> <p>49:55 Fr McDonald taking an interest, getting involved with the Dominic's and county administration.</p> <p>50:35 Role of teachers. Hugh O'Donnell playing with them.</p> <p>51:20 1957 All-Ireland. Going to the game. Getting a taxi to the stadium. Atmosphere after the game.</p> <p>53:00 Atmosphere in Dublin on the day. Many people on the sideline.</p> <p>53:35 Clubmen Blackie Judge, Jackie Reynolds on the Louth team.</p> <p>54:30 Celebrations back in Louth.</p> <p>55:25 Meeting with people and talking about the win in 1957.</p> <p>56:10 Strength of soccer in Drogheda and relationship with their clubs.</p> <p>56:30 His club proposing to get rid of the Ban.</p> <p>56:55 Improved relationship with soccer clubs. Gary Kelly and Ian Harte successful soccer players from the area.</p> <p>58:50 Vigilantes in the area looking for people playing soccer. Paddy Gavin playing soccer with Dundalk and then going to England.</p> <p>59:50 Children playing more and more sports. Rugby popular in the town.</p> <p>01:00:25 Shamrocks hurling team in the area. JJ Matthews involved.</p> <p>01:01:25 Difficulty in getting players to continue playing GAA.</p> <p>01:02:10 Listening to games on the radio. Micheál O'Hehir</p> |
|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p>broadcasting.</p> <p>01:03:10 Admiration for people working in GAA administration.</p> <p>01:03:30 Involvement in Drogheda minor leagues. Johnny Kieran's, Terry Maher, Pat Healy involved.</p> <p>01:04:25 Enjoying role as chairman of minor committee. Problems he encountered</p> <p>01:05:50 Effect of emigration on Gaelic games in the area.</p> <p>01:07:55 Role of women. Mrs Maher treasurer for many years.</p> <p>01:08:30 Terry a prominent clubman and heavily involved in administration.</p> <p>01:09:30 His wife's involvement.</p> <p>01:10:20 Coaching a team on the day of his daughter's wedding.</p> <p>01:11:55 Doing odd jobs around the club. GAA hiring a man to do those jobs.</p> <p>01:13:30 Role of volunteers within the GAA. Everybody working hard.</p> <p>01:15:30 Professionalism in the GAA.</p> <p>01:16:35 Pay-for-play system.</p> <p>01:17:35 Relationship with the GAA as an organisation. Difficulties in scheduling club games and losing players as a result.</p> <p>01:20:25 Involvement in Scór. Club winning an All-Ireland in singing. Pat Mooney and his daughters winning.</p> <p>01:21:30 Importance of Scór and cultural activities. Why they are not as involved as they should be.</p> <p>01:22:25 Trying to gather the young people of the area together in a field.</p> <p>01:24:05 Difficulties faced by urban clubs. Popularity of</p> |
|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**REFERENCE NO. LH/1/6**

|                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                     | <p>soccer.</p> <p>01:25:40 Opening of Croke Park and his feelings on that. Special Olympics.</p> <p>01:28:30 Admiration for Mick O'Connell as the best player he ever saw.</p> <p>01:28:50 Best GAA memory is 1957.</p> <p>01:29:25 Biggest disappointment is the Leinster final of 2010 when Louth lost narrowly to Meath.</p> <p>01:29:45 How he gets over club disappointments.</p> <p>01:30:25 Being in Navan talking to Eugene Judge and wondering if he would ever see Louth in a Leinster final ever again.</p> <p>01:31:10 What the GAA has meant to him.</p> |
| <b>Involvement in GAA</b>                                           | <p>✓ Supporter    ✓ Player    ✓ Manager    ✓ Coach    ✓ Steward</p> <p>✓ Chairperson    ✓ Committee Member    ✓ 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>                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Record as a Player</b><br>(Titles won; Length of time played)    | Michael played from 1943 – 1961. He won a senior club championship in 1957 and a Cardinal O'Donnell Senior League.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Record as an Administrator</b><br>(Positions held; how long for) | <p>Club: Chairman (for two periods); Minor Committee Member (10 years)</p> <p>County: Minor Board delegate from Club (10 / 20 years)</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Format</b>                                                       | <p>✓ Audio            <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Duration</b>                                                     | Length of Interview: 01:31:54                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <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: \_\_\_\_\_Arlene Crampsie\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_27/06/12\_\_\_\_\_