

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

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Arlene Crampsie
<b>Date of Interview</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2009
<b>Location</b>	Riverdale Steak House, the Bronx, New York
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Terry Connaughton
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1933 <b>Home County:</b> Roscommon
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Athleague NS, Co. Roscommon
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 3 brothers & 1 sister <b>Current Family if Different:</b> 3 sons and 2 daughters
<b>Club(s)</b>	Athleague [Roscommon]; Roscommon [New York]; Clare [New York]
<b>Occupation</b>	Policeman, Bar Owner
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Hackney Driver [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	Fianna Fáil, Democrat

<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	John Phelan
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1935 <b>Home County:</b> Waterford
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Bennett's Church NS, Co. Waterford <b>Secondary:</b> Dungarvan CBS, Co. Waterford <b>Third Level:</b> New York Institute of Banking
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 3 brothers & 3 sisters <b>Current Family if Different:</b> Married with 3 sons and 2 daughters
<b>Club(s)</b>	Fourmilewater [Waterford]; Waterford [New York]; New York Rangers FC [New York]
<b>Occupation</b>	Accountant
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Farmers
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A

<b>Date of Report</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> August 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	1914 – 2009
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Americas, USA, Roscommon, Waterford
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Religion, Media, Emigration, Involvement in GAA Abroad, Role of Clergy, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Outsider's Perspectives, Violence, Politics, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Food and Drink, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy / Economics
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>Terry and John talk about their GAA experiences, mainly in New York. Terry was from Roscommon and John from Waterford. Both were keen hurling men who emigrated to New York and played for various teams there before getting involved in administration. Terry eventually became President of the New York Board while John twice missed out on being elected to the position. Terry and John describe the political ins and outs of the GAA in New York where infighting, strategic manoeuvring and one-upmanship were commonplace. They also address the issues of players going over from Ireland to play illegally and certain players being paid to represent teams in the US. Terry and John have got great enjoyment out of the social side of GAA life in New York and the Association has played a central role in both of their lives for decades.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:40 Terry talks about earliest memories of playing hurling as a boy before breakfast in Athleague, Roscommon. Prominence of hurling there.</p> <p>01:30 John's earliest memory is of being eight years old in 1943 and his father going to a Waterford v Cork game in Dungarvan in a pony and trap. John Keane being a prominent hurler at the time and Christy Ring marking him in the game.</p> <p>03:10 John was taken to a Waterford v Tipperary game the following year.</p>

	<p>03:25 John's local club being Fourmilewater.</p> <p>03:35 John's family's GAA involvement. His uncle Jack Phelan arriving in New York through Canada in 1923 and playing and refereeing there.</p> <p>04:10 His cousin Willie Barron playing for Waterford.</p> <p>04:30 John's mother going to games in Jones Road to see teams like Cork and Kilkenny, and going to All-Irelands in Dungarvan along with her father.</p> <p>06:00 John's uncle Jack being mentioned in a book by Fergie Hanna for refereeing a Galway hurling game in New York and being hit by a player.</p> <p>06:45 Terry's brothers playing hurling. His father playing football and being involved with the IRA.</p> <p>07:35 Terry's GAA involvement in the GAA before leaving Ireland. Playing for club and Roscommon minor and junior teams.</p> <p>07:50 Terry playing for Cork in New York. Playing in a junior final between Cork and Connecticut in Gaelic Park in 1980. Getting injured in the game.</p> <p>08:50 Terry winning championships with Clare in New York. His brothers also playing with Clare.</p> <p>09:40 Terry playing for New York against Wexford.</p> <p>10:30 John trying to break into the local team in Ireland. Attending a meeting in 1955 where club structures were changed. Beating Tom Cheasty's team in a county final. Experience of playing against Tom Cheasty in that game.</p> <p>13:10 A man in John's village being a delegate to the county board and acting as a selector as well. John being selected on the junior county team and then playing a Clare team in Ennis.</p> <p>14:05 John then going to play in Killarney.</p> <p>14:40 Terry being selected to play for New York against Wexford and marking Jim English. Norman Allen from Dublin playing in the game. Terry Leahy also playing. Art Foley in goals.</p>
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	<p>15:40 Terry playing for Clare against Waterford against Clare in Gaelic Park. Christy Moynihan playing in the game. Terry having to go off injured and years later hearing about what Waterford's strategy was in that game.</p> <p>16:40 John playing for Waterford against Clare. Terry, Jim Carney and a McKenna man playing for Clare. John marking Paddy Kirby. Mike Pender marking Jim Carney.</p> <p>17:30 (Terry) Gaelic Park being a smaller pitch than in Ireland. The physical nature of games there.</p> <p>18:05 John playing in Ireland in 1969 and the pitch seeming to be much bigger than in New York.</p> <p>18:30 Terry playing a team in Ennis and the field seeming much bigger.</p> <p>19:00 Terry going to New York in 1952. His brother Benny was already there. The brothers sharing a suit and the story making the New York Times.</p> <p>19:30 Terry quickly getting involved in the GAA in New York. The GAA as the main pastime for Irish people in New York.</p> <p>20:10 John leaving for the United States in 1956 and going to Rhodesia on the way. John living in London and arriving in New York in 1957.</p> <p>21:00 John going to end-of-season games in Gaelic Park on his first Sunday in New York.</p> <p>21:20 John helping to found a Waterford club and going to a meeting in 1958.</p> <p>21:50 No GAA when John was in Rhodesia. Travelling around Rhodesia with his friend in a car and then returning to London.</p> <p>23:40 John travelling from Southampton to New York in a ferry.</p> <p>23:55 (Terry) Differences between the GAA experience in New York and in Ireland.</p> <p>24:45 John struggling with the heat in New York.</p>
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	<p>25:25 Terry feeling lucky that the Irish had the GAA in New York.</p> <p>25:50 John and friends meeting girls in Gaelic Park. Social aspect of GAA.</p> <p>27:20 Terry meeting his wife in Gaelic Park.</p> <p>27:25 Terry going to a job interview with bandages over his eyes after being injured in a game. A man from Cork named Barry facilitating the interview.</p> <p>28:15 Terry getting a job through Paddy Sullivan from Cork.</p> <p>28:30 Role of people one met through the GAA in finding work in the US Denis Crotty being well-known in New York.</p> <p>29:05 Terry joining the army and getting his citizenship. Going on police force afterwards.</p> <p>30:00 John mentions newspaper articles on hurling which he felt were not complimentary.</p> <p>30:20 Political standing of Irish in New York. Bobby Kennedy meeting Christy Ring in 1968 and Donal Keenan being President at the time. Politicians visiting Gaelic Park, including Michael Dukakis.</p> <p>32:05 (John) Gaelic Park having a clock during games. Differences in how players lined out on the field for throw-in.</p> <p>34:00 (Terry) Procedure for making changes to the rules in New York when it was felt they needed to be made.</p> <p>34:20 John recalls a clash with a goalkeeper, Mick Cully, in a county final game in Ireland. Changes in protection afforded to goalkeepers over the years.</p> <p>36:50 Role of the clergy. People like Canon Hamilton and a Tipperary man throwing in the ball in Ireland.</p> <p>37:25 (John) Occasional appearance of a cardinal or bishop at a game in Gaelic Park.</p> <p>37:50 (Terry) Facilities in Gaelic Park when they arrived and how they compared to facilities in Ireland.</p> <p>38:50 (John) When clothes got wet during a game in Ireland.</p>
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	<p>39:15 (Terry) Functions, banquets and dances in New York.</p> <p>40:00 (John) County dances in the past which would be on over two floors and with large numbers in attendance.</p> <p>40:50 (John) Procedures to be gone through to successfully emigrate to the US after World War Two.</p> <p>41:40 Terry running for president in 1988 and votes taking place in Gaelic Park. Problematic issues arising when it came to declaring the result. Arguments on the floor over what would happen to the box of votes.</p> <p>45:30 Terry recalls a warning from Croke Park on the consequences of not affiliating themselves. Terry going to Croke Park for a meeting on the issue.</p> <p>46:10 Terry had been vice president from 1971 to 1973 and president in 1974.</p> <p>46:35 (John) Differences between a president in the US and a chairman in Ireland.</p> <p>47:15 Terry's earliest involvement in the administrative side of the GAA in New York. Being elected trustee.</p> <p>48:20 John attending meetings and deciding to run for office. Running twice for president and losing. Reflections on why he lost.</p> <p>49:30 Terry's reflections on why John lost. Observations on voting patterns in elections.</p> <p>50:05 Jackie Salmon was the man in third place when John ran. O'Donnell the man who came first.</p> <p>52:10 John runs through the positions he has held. Recalls hearing an objection over a county final between Donegal and Sligo in 1987. They had affidavits over the legality of certain players. Certain officers not attending an important meeting on the issue. John's role as chairman.</p> <p>55:00 (John) Pat Spillane playing for Donegal and question marks over whether he could play both junior and senior. Sligo unhappy with the outcome. Changing the modus operandi of the executive after the issue was resolved.</p>
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	<p>57:50 Terry recalls Oliver O'Donnell being president and a final going to a replay. John Kerry O'Donnell owned Gaelic Park and an agreement could not be reached on the admission for the replay.</p> <p>59:50 John talks about rules on voting delegates which sometimes led to problems. He lost both his elections by four votes.</p> <p>01:01:50 John feels that in New York people in the GAA are more closely involved with each other - through work and marriage - than they would be in Ireland.</p> <p>01:02:45 Union people were perceived to have had influence when it came to votes.</p> <p>01:03:35 (Terry) The legality of players was always a contentious issue.</p> <p>01:04:40 John recalls the announcer at games and the cup being presented to the players at a distance from the fans.</p> <p>01:06:00 John recalls being in Rockland and Waterford playing Westmeath in a junior hurling final. Waterford had three Antrim players, including Jim Cross and Ciarán Barr. Sambo McNaughton of Antrim wanting to play too and John approaching Brendan Keane who was secretary at the time.</p> <p>01:08:10 John talks about teams trying to outdo each other when it came to bringing over players from Ireland.</p> <p>01:08:35 Players from Cavan and Tyrone going over, and Kerry players Jack O'Shea and Páidí Ó Sé also playing.</p> <p>01:09:00 (Terry) Changes in rules on players coming from Ireland over the years.</p> <p>01:09:40 (Terry) Issue of players who went to New York being paid. Speculation on what was acceptable to give a player.</p> <p>01:10:40 (John) Sacrifices that visiting players have to make in order to make it over.</p> <p>01:11:00 (John) Issue of players being paid in cities other than New York - Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco.</p> <p>01:11:20 (John) Compact season in other cities.</p>
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	<p>01:11:50 (John) Issues of established county players going to play in the US mid-summer. Back door system keeping players in Ireland for more of the summer.</p> <p>01:12:45 (Terry) Differences in rules governing New York and the North American Board.</p> <p>01:13:20 New York being independent of the North American Board.</p> <p>01:14:20 Decreasing number of participants in GAA in New York in 2009. Numerous teams forced to drop out within one 12-month period.</p> <p>01:15:30 (John) Kilkenny, New Jersey, Tipperary, Offaly and Galway as the only hurling teams.</p> <p>01:15:50 (John) Timing of the redevelopment of Gaelic Park.</p> <p>01:15:55 (Terry) Issue of low number of players and spectators in the 1970s before a surge in the 1980s.</p> <p>01:16:40 (John) County field days that used to be held in Gaelic Park when John O'Donnell was owner. Politics that were associated with that.</p> <p>01:18:30 (Terry) Transfer of lease for Gaelic Park to Manhattan College. Mayor Giuliani's connection to Manhattan College.</p> <p>01:19:50 (Terry) Improvements being made by minor, junior boards and ladies football and challenges that they face. Popularity of underage game.</p> <p>01:22:15 Importance of GAA to Terry. Terry's role as honorary life president of ladies football in New York.</p> <p>01:22:50 Importance of GAA to John. Social circle it creates.</p>
<p><b>Involvement in GAA</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Supporter   <input 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><b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p><b>Terry:</b> Played from the age of 6/7 up to 1980. Won 3 senior hurling and 1 junior hurling title with Clare NY and a Connacht junior hurling championship with Roscommon.</p> <p><b>John:</b> Played from 1945 – 1973. Won a Waterford junior hurling championship and in New York junior football and hurling titles.</p>
<p><b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p><b>Terry:</b> Has been involved in administration since 1971.</p> <p>New York GAA: Vice-President (3 years), President (1974, 1988 and 1989), Chairman of junior football division, 1<sup>st</sup> Chairman and Co-founder of Ladies Football, Honorary Life President of New York.</p> <p><b>John:</b> Has been involved in administration since 1960.</p> <p>New York GAA: Vice-President, Registrar, Treasurer.</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: 01:24:41</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: \_\_\_\_\_ Arlene Crampsie \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 19/08/12 \_\_\_\_\_