

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Ann Marie Smith
Date of Interview	21 st Nov 2008
Location	Interviewee's home near Derry
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	John Patrick Murphy
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1926 Home County: Derry
Education	N/A
Family	N/A
Club(s)	N/A
Occupation	N/A
Parents' Occupation	N/A
Religion	N/A
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

REFERENCE NO. DY/1/5

Date of Report	8 th Dec 2010
Period Covered	1930s - 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Derry, Dublin, Armagh, Kildare, Canada, Americas
Key Themes Covered	Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Administration, Fundraising, Education, Emigration, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Alcohol, Socialising, Relationships, Economy/ Economics
Interview Summary	<p>In this interview, John talks about his childhood and school life, the highlight of which was playing on an McCrory Cup team in St Patrick's College. He talks about his teaching career and his football career playing for Queens, Derry and Ulster. John discusses travelling to matches, friends he met and victory celebrations. Finally he reflects on what the GAA means to him, but not before reciting the self-composed 'Rallying Song'</p> <p>0:00 Introduction</p> <p>0:40 John talks about his birth and upbringing. His speaks about his father teaching Seamus Heaney in Onahourish primary school and the extra subjects offered there.</p> <p>2:04 He remembers his start at St. Patrick's college in Armagh where he learned to play football and played as goal keeper on the McCrory Cup team for several years.</p> <p>3:04 Fr. Connie Murphy, known as 'chappie', had a system that when playing Dundalk, after travelling down, the home team must win.</p> <p>4:10 His father was trained in Drumcondra. Dublin and played a bit of Gaelic there.</p> <p>4:35 John enjoyed cycling to watch his idols like Mick McKenna and Barney Murphy play as Newbridge had a very good senior football team.</p> <p>5:20 He remembers they used to play at Barnmon but in later times John helped to get them a new field.</p> <p>5:48 John reminisces about the mixed reaction he had to a football his father gave him as a child at Christmas.</p>

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	<p>6:20 He credits a decision as a 7 year old to practicing kicking with both feet as a large part of the reason he became such a versatile player, it allowed him to play up to 10 different positions with Derry and all 15 positions with his local club.</p> <p>7:25 He remembers playing football in his primary school days and the 5 cups they won.</p> <p>8:00 Playing for Armagh College in Secondary school brings back memories of goal keeping, his 'fierce introduction' to Dundalk's Tony Tigh and his disappointment at letting in 4 goals.</p> <p>9:10 A great friend and footballer, the late Cardinal Phee, John remembers him going to all the matches when John was a county player.</p> <p>10:10 There was not a lot of training, even for the 1947 All-Ireland final, he remembers them going running in Castle Dawson at night time and says how different it is to now.</p> <p>11:35 Travelling to games, there was great fun as the back seat of the bus would be transformed into a poker club.</p> <p>12:15 After St. Patrick's, John went to Maynooth college for three years but decided after a retreat he wanted to become a teacher, like his father, stepmother and two sisters, however, he learned how to 'take care of himself' on the football field.</p> <p>14:20 At a match, after discovering his own football shoes missing he borrowed a slightly smaller pair for the match the following day, however, on a penalty kick he didn't score but instead hit the now M'ôn senior Paddy Kelly and he had to be hospitalised. Fr. Séamus Shields was refereeing at the match and didn't count the score as it was supposed to be an indirect free kick.</p> <p>18:00 St. Finian's Christian Brothers Boy's School on the Falls Road in Belfast was his first teaching position with 59 students in his class. A brother who was vice principal would leave on a Friday afternoon and appointed John to take his Art class, which subsequently led to an offer to illustrate for a magazine which he was paid £5 for, which at the time would have been an awful lot of money.</p> <p>20:30 During his teaching position, he stayed with cousins with the surname Hurl on a side street off the falls road. He returned to New Bridge every week to play matches.</p> <p>22:25 Malochy O'Neill encouraged him to emigrate to Canada</p>
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	<p>for a time, he enjoyed temporary teaching in Stony Plain for 6 months and moved onto another post due to the shortage of teachers there at the time.</p> <p>29:00 John actually founded a team in Canada, he got to know a Louth right-back player, Ted Boyle and convinced several other players to take part in an exhibition match to raise money for a hospital. He subsequently made a television appearance and gave a trophy to the hospital that he had won during his time at the New bridge club.</p> <p>30:50 Playing G.A.A. with people from home gave him the connection he needed.</p> <p>31:10 He returned to Ireland in 1962, firstly going to Drayberstown, he asked 'a great G.A.A. man', Fr. Collins helped him to achieve the position. Séan McCain succeeded him as principal winning an array of trophies.</p> <p>36:00 John talks about his transition from Derry Juniors to Seniors in 1950, his first game was against Longford. He was helped onto the Ulster team by the Down players who liked the way he played on Paddy O'Hara, Séamus Keenan informed him later after Derry Committee member, Pierce Griffin had congratulated John on the way to New bridge Chapel.</p> <p>39:50 Pat Keenan was captain of the team in 1947 and made use of his 6 frees by scoring on all 6 tries. Francie Neblock and Fr. Lorry Higgins, who John considers an exceptional footballer, from the Mackerfelt group, Centre half, Sonny McKenna, Thomas Edward McClusky, Goal keeper Charlie Moran, it was a rough match. The Clare men had marked out the danger men. Neblock lost several teeth and returned to the pitch to finish the match. On his return "Roddy Griffin's lying out for the count in the middle of Croke Park!". You adopt the kind of attitude, Do to others as they'd do to you, only do it first, he says. After going for a ball against a Monaghan player, John dislocated his shoulder, although he was told in advance that he would be targeted. Joe Devlin, bone setter with 'Short Tommy' from the Derry team.</p> <p>46:50 John talks about his joyous experiences playing for Derry and Queens in Croke Park.</p> <p>48.00 John reminisces about his and the teams celebration after matches, he remembers one time in particular when Roddy Griffin, Jimmy McKeever and himself went into Barry McGuigan's Hotel in Clonnis.</p>
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	<p>49:00 John talks about the different ways of scoring goals and points, working with the wind and going low, throughout the years.</p> <p>50:15 Talking about a trip abroad with the G.A.A., he went to Scotland and says the difference in pitch quality was very different. He further reminisces about things that happened while there such as a poker game.</p> <p>54:45 John wrote a poem about 1947 called Rallying Song.</p> <p>Oh hail those fifteen Derry men, who came with courage strong.</p> <p>Verse 1</p> <p>From the Oak leaf county north and south and from the banks of Foyle.</p> <p>They came to 'rest the All-Ireland crown from the men of county Clare.</p> <p>And when that game was over, Derry's cheering ripped the air.</p> <p>Chorus</p> <p>That '47 team, won victory oh so hard,</p> <p>They fought and they lowered Clare's flout flags,</p> <p>From Croke park's famous sward.</p> <p>Verse 2</p> <p>In goals was Charlie Moran, a keeper with safe hand.</p> <p>In the full back line, Séamus Keenan starred,</p> <p>with Big Jack and Hurley grand.</p> <p>An' McClusky and young John Murphy,</p> <p>With McCannon three half-backs sound,</p> <p>And at mid-field Roddy and McNulty had no equals in the man.</p> <p>Verse 3</p> <p>The Mackerfelt three-quarter line ran riot as Clare fell,</p> <p>Neblock, Keenan and the fleet Higgins lad, all showed how to excel.</p>
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	<p>McAlraine, Mullen and Jimmy Cassidy, as full-forward shone so bright,</p> <p>And those Derry lads had four points to spare,</p> <p>When the ref called off the fight!</p> <p>57:35 John retired from football in 1956 but never considered a management role as he was so busy. After retiring, he appreciated the G.A.A.'s hospitality and generosity towards their '47' and '58 players and the retirees. Over the years they have held dinners and presented people with tokens of gratitude, even moving microphones to tables of people who found it difficult to climb the stairs to the podium.</p> <p>1:01:45 On the impact G.A.A. had on his family life, John says he enjoyed watching his sons play and giving them pointers.</p> <p>1:04:00 John talks about Mick O'Dwyer and his favourite team, which was probably one of the Kerry teams.</p> <p>1:06:45 A placement in Listowel led to him being put in charge of Big Joe Keohane and met an American who'd come over to 'circulate'.</p> <p>1:09:00 John speaks about his opinion on the opening of Croke Park to other sports, he continues to talk about Australian Rules in relation to Gaelic.</p> <p>1:10:45 He believes that he didn't lose out on anything because of his involvement with the G.A.A.</p> <p>1:11:35 He thinks about his relationship between himself and other Protestant people during his life time. However, he didn't like the approach of some Mounties in Canada to the different religions.</p> <p>1:14:20 John speaks about the pride that the G.A.A. has instilled in him over the years. He regards the G.A.A. as one huge family.</p> <p>1:17:00 He has met an awful lot of people during his time playing and affiliated with the G.A.A. After a match against Meath, Frankie Byrne and John talked on the way home. He remembers meeting others in Fatima.</p> <p>1:20:45 John speaks about his views on the prices of tickets to league matches.</p>
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Involvement in GAA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward <input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person <input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____
Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	N/A
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	N/A
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 00:01:22
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: Ann-Marie Smith

Date: 8th Dec 2010