

GAA Oral History Project
Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	31 st Aug 2010
Location	Interviewee's home, near Bailieborough, Co. Cavan
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	MJ Clarke
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1955 Home County: Cavan
Education	Primary: Tunnyduff NS, Co. Cavan Secondary: Bailieborough Vocational School, Co. Cavan Third Level: Bolton Street College of Technology; UCD
Family	Siblings: 5 brothers and 1 sister
Club(s)	Knockbride
Occupation	Self-employed in marketing
Parents' Occupation	Shopkeeper [Father]; Nurse; Shopkeeper [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fianna Fáil
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Music Rights Organisation (IMRO)

REFERENCE NO. CN/1/12

Date of Report	5 th July 2012
Period Covered	1960s – 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Cavan
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, Involvement in GAA abroad, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, Scór, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Northern Ireland, Opening of Croke Park, Professionalism, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy / Economics
Interview Summary	<p>MJ talks about the GAA in Cavan down through the years. He played football when he was a boy and later lined out for his local club, Knockbride. His career was short and he didn't play to the highest standards, but he maintained his involvement with the GAA through his work on local radio, where he hosted a sports programme. He talks about the great Cavan teams of the past and of his admiration for them - and recalls writing a song about legendary captain Charlie Gallagher, which was recorded by different musicians. MJ is forthright in his opinions on many aspects of the Association, such as what he sees as an over-emphasis on coaching, the prospect of players being paid, and the need to revitalise the All-Ireland Championships - all issues which he regards as being essential to the future well-being of the GAA.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:20 Going to local games when he was young.</p> <p>00:35 Going on a bus to see Cavan play Down in the Ulster final in Casement Park, Belfast. Writing a song about the captain, Charlie Gallagher. Why he did that.</p> <p>01:50 What Casement Park was like then.</p> <p>02:35 Celebrations afterwards.</p> <p>03:50 Drought for Cavan football after 1969.</p> <p>03:10 Knockbride his local club. Three of their players - Larry,</p>

	<p>Peter and Michael Reilly - on the Cavan team that played Derry in St Tiernach's Park, Clones in 1997.</p> <p>03:45 What the 1997 game was like.</p> <p>04:05 Doing work at a local radio station.</p> <p>04:45 Talking to Paddy Farley from Laragh about football. Deciding to write a song about Charlie Gallagher. Working with Eddie Fitzsimons from Gowna and Paul Sheeran on the song. Recording in Mullingar.</p> <p>06:30 Song played on the radio and later recorded in Nashville.</p> <p>07:00 Charlie Clerkin recording the song and including it on an album. Performing it in New York on the 50th anniversary of Cavan's 1947 All-Ireland win over Kerry.</p> <p>08:05 Ian Corrigan having a song about 1947 captain John Joe Reilly 'The Gallant John Joe'.</p> <p>08:40 Charlie's album 'The Gallant Men of 1947'.</p> <p>09:00 Writing a song called 'The Blues are back in town' after the Ulster Final of 1997. Martin McHugh and Stephen King mentioned in the song.</p> <p>09:55 Other songs recorded by Charlie Clerkin.</p> <p>11:05 Ladies football team at the club. Success they had. Beating Carrickmore in an Ulster final.</p> <p>11:40 Publicising ladies football on the radio.</p> <p>12:10 Workload involved in working on the radio.</p> <p>12:55 Facilities in Knockbride when he was growing up. Improvement over the years.</p> <p>14:05 Commitment of good GAA players.</p> <p>15:15 Fields they played in when he was young - Turlough Lynch's field and Leddy's field, both in Beglieve.</p> <p>15:45 Playing in 'The Branch' in Mountain Lodge when he was in primary school.</p>
--	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

REFERENCE NO. CN/1/12

16:45	Development of the new pitch. Turlough Smith's involvement. Turlough's uncle, Paddy Smith, a politician.
17:50	Ministers Jim McDaid and John O'Donoghue approached for funds. Other fundraising efforts.
19:15	Declining fortunes of Cavan team and knock-on effects of that.
20:00	John Wilson playing for Cavan in 1947. Later Tánaiste. Opening their local festival.
22:05	Role of the GAA when he was at school.
23:10	His brothers Kevin and Brendan Clarke on a successful Knockbride schools team.
23:30	Playing at underage level.
23:45	Playing for the club.
24:05	Enjoying role on the radio.
24:20	Cavan playing Tyrone in an Ulster final. Working on the radio from the sidelines that day. Mentions Val Andrews.
26:00	Playing junior football and why he stopped.
26:40	Attending games when he lived in Dublin.
27:30	Being PRO for Macra na Feirme.
28:05	Role of the clergy in the club. Fr Seán Brady a former Cavan and Laragh player.
29:45	Over-emphasis on coaching.
32:40	Role of volunteers in the Association and prospect of pay-for-play.
35:00	Soccer compared to football.
36:35	Structure of the All-Ireland series and how it could be improved.
40:35	Cavan's last Championship appearance at Croke Park.
40:55	Inadequacies of the back-door system.

	<p>42:50 Impact of television coverage on attendances at games.</p> <p>43:30 Identity and provincial championships.</p> <p>44:25 Cavan's location on the border with Leinster and Connacht.</p> <p>44:50 Opinion of Scór. Success of All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil in Cavan in 2010.</p> <p>46:05 Scór within the county.</p> <p>47:30 Father from Meath. Mother's brother, Johnny Lynch, involved with Cavan team in Philadelphia, Kill Shamrocks and Cootehill Celtic teams in Cavan.</p> <p>48:55 Mother going to Ulster finals by train.</p> <p>49:45 Emigration from the area down the years.</p> <p>51:05 Linking up with people in the United States through the radio show.</p> <p>52:05 Rule changes in the GAA and his opinion on them. Need for technology.</p> <p>54:00 2010 Leinster final between Louth and Meath.</p> <p>55:00 Opening of Croke Park.</p> <p>57:00 Impact of the Troubles in Northern Ireland on the GAA in Cavan. Going through checkpoints.</p> <p>59:20 Reading a book about the Civil War in Kerry and football still being played.</p> <p>01:00:40 Turlough Smith being a useful contact.</p> <p>01:01:40 Role of women in the GAA in the area.</p> <p>01:02:40 Success of ladies team.</p> <p>01:04:00 How local radio in Cavan could be improved.</p> <p>01:06:25 Broadcasting on Breffni Radio. Planning to broadcast a county final and county board objecting.</p>
--	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

REFERENCE NO. CN/1/12

	<p>01:08:05 Covering underage competitions for local radio.</p> <p>01:09:20 Biggest GAA disappointment.</p> <p>01:09:45 Admiration for Charlie Gallagher.</p> <p>01:11:50 Being invited onto a Paschal Mooney programme on RTE to talk about Charlie Gallagher. Brendan Kennelly there.</p> <p>01:13:15 Grounds Tournament held in Wembley Stadium in England. Charlie Gallagher playing and scoring a lot.</p> <p>01:14:20 What the GAA has meant to him. How it could improve.</p>
Involvement in GAA	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input checked="" 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>
Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	Played from Under 14 level until he was 17/18.
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: 01:19:28
Language	English

REFERENCE NO. CN/1/12

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: _____05/07/12_____