

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	23 rd Aug 2010
Location	Supervalu, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	John Scully
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1951 Home County: Meath
Education	Primary: Slane NS, Co. Meath Secondary: Navan Technical School, Co. Meath
Family	Siblings: 2 brothers & 2 sisters Current Family if Different: Married to Catherine with one daughter
Club(s)	Carrickmacross Emmets [Monaghan]; Corduff [Monaghan]; Slane [Meath]; Donore [Meath]
Occupation	Store Manager
Parents' Occupation	Slane Castle Farm Labourer [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Carrickmacross Film Society

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Date of Report	4 th July 2012
Period Covered	1960s – 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Monaghan, Meath
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Commiserations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Material Culture, Media, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Identity, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Politics, The Troubles, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Retirement, Food and Drink, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy / Economics
Interview Summary	<p>John talks about a GAA career that saw him work with many clubs and in a variety of positions. Originally from Slane, County Meath, he played football with Donore due to rule complications but was able to switch to Slane when he turned 18. He later moved to Monaghan and lined out for Corduff before an injury curtailed his career. It was then that he got involved in administration, becoming club secretary and the chairman and overseeing certain developments within the club. Later he joined Carrickmacross Emmets and, as he could not play anymore, he became a referee - a career he enjoyed until his options were restricted because of an incident after a particular game. His administrative career continued apace, however, and he was made assistant secretary and then secretary of the Monaghan County Board. It was an exciting time for the county as Seamus McEnaney was taking up the reins as manager and the team went on to achieve notable success on the pitch. After that he became chairman of Carrickmacross Emmets and also found time to be involved with the Monaghan referees' body and also carry out work as an assessor. In his spare time he worked on the history of Carrickmacross Emmets. John is candid about his experiences over the years, shedding light on the goings-on behind the scenes at administrative level, addressing the thorny issue of creeping professionalism within the GAA, and providing an insight into what life within the Association is like for the many referees in the game.</p> <p>00:20 Earliest GAA memory - playing at home and at school in Slane, County Meath.</p> <p>00:50 Little underage structures at the time. Playing at Under-</p>

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	<p>14 level.</p> <p>01:25 Playing for Donore near Drogheda because of the parish rule. Slane wanting him to play for them. Issue going to a county board meeting.</p> <p>02:05 Transferring to Slane when he became an adult.</p> <p>02:25 Playing against members of the Meath team of 1966/67 like the Quinns.</p> <p>02:45 Winning an intermediate championship with Slane.</p> <p>03:00 Moving to Carrickmacross in 1974. Reasons for that. Finding it difficult to play for Slane.</p> <p>03:45 Being encouraged to join Corduff. Making the transfer. Playing with inter-county referee Pat McEnaney.</p> <p>04:30 Frequency of games. Size of club.</p> <p>05:00 Reaching a junior semi-final.</p> <p>05:10 Club disbanded in the 1960s and later resurrected.</p> <p>05:40 Becoming secretary of the club and later chairman in 1987.</p> <p>06:30 Buying a site for a new pitch in the early 1980s. Building a community centre.</p> <p>07:10 Monaghan and Cavan playing a challenge match when they opened the pitch. Páraic Duffy there.</p> <p>07:40 Ownership of site and facilities split between club and community. Problems.</p> <p>08:20 Facilities redeveloped years later.</p> <p>08:40 Injury curtailing his playing career. Refereeing instead.</p> <p>09:20 Joining Carrickmacross Emmets. Liam Gartland urging him to join.</p> <p>10:15 Refereeing a senior county final in 1987 between Ballybay and Monaghan Harps. Memories of that. GAA President Dr Loftus present.</p>
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	<p>11:25 Inter-county refereeing and his experience of that.</p> <p>11:40 Incident in Omagh after a game. Umpire confronting an official. Impact on his inter-county refereeing career.</p> <p>13:40 Being assistant secretary of the Monaghan County Board in the 1990s. How that came about. Páraic Duffy chairman of fixtures at that time. John Heaphey of Kerry secretary at the time.</p> <p>15:25 John Heaphey resigning in 1999. People telling him to go for position of secretary. Being unsure as to what to do.</p> <p>16:55 First function as secretary at Millennium Ball in 2000. Sitting beside Bishop Joe Duffy.</p> <p>17:55 Adapting to technological developments in his role as secretary. Setting up an office.</p> <p>19:30 Lady working with him as clerical back-up. Heavy workload. Being asked if he would consider being a full-time secretary. His thoughts on that.</p> <p>22:25 Numerous meetings he regularly attended.</p> <p>23:05 Being secretary in the first year that Seamus McEnaney was Monaghan senior football manager. Seamus asking for his support when going forward for the role. Colm Coyle his predecessor as manager.</p> <p>24:50 Declaring his support for McEnaney.</p> <p>25:25 McEnaney's first year as manager. Playing Meath in a National League final. Seán Boylan manager of Meath.</p> <p>25:55 Monaghan support at Croke Park. Paul Finley lobbing a ball into the square and a Meath man scoring a goal by mistake. Celebrations.</p> <p>28:05 Going back to Monaghan on the Monday. Reception they got. Fans' hunger for success.</p> <p>30:30 Being an umpire at Croke Park and at Ulster finals.</p> <p>30:50 Marvelling at Croke Park and its facilities.</p> <p>31:30 What Seamus McEnaney brought to the team.</p>
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	<p>31:45 Emotion of the occasion.</p> <p>32:20 Monaghan reaching an Ulster final against Tyrone. What that was like.</p> <p>33:10 How the game went. Vinny Corey switched to full-forward and how that worked out.</p> <p>34:20 Atmosphere after the game.</p> <p>34:40 Monaghan steadily improving as a team. Good back-up team and support. Team going to Portugal.</p> <p>35:30 Getting a letter from the Ulster Council about having to change jerseys for the final. Difficulty locating the appropriate jerseys. Reaction of Ulster Council. His own thoughts on the matter.</p> <p>37:20 Getting a fine from the Ulster Council. Demanding a meeting. Attending a meeting in Fiddlers in Carrickmacross. Giving Seamus McEnaney a letter. Reaction to that.</p> <p>38:30 Appealing the fine to Croke Park. Outcome.</p> <p>39:05 His reflections on the jersey issue and related matters.</p> <p>39:40 Factions developing.</p> <p>40:35 Developments they had overseen in Monaghan over the years in terms of facilities.</p> <p>41:35 Going through the qualifiers that year. Reaching an All-Ireland quarter-final against Kerry.</p> <p>42:10 Being confident ahead of the game.</p> <p>42:50 How the game went. Feelings afterwards.</p> <p>44:10 Meeting Kerry again the following year.</p> <p>44:40 Opinions on his time as secretary.</p> <p>45:50 Being asked to go forward for assistant secretary. Making little effort to secure the post. Reasons for that.</p> <p>46:00 Carrickmacross starved of success since 1919. Losing a final in 1999.</p>
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	<p>46:25 Becoming chairman of Carrick Emmets.</p> <p>46:55 Players they had.</p> <p>47:10 Stephen White from Louth becoming manager, having played with Castleblayney in the past and beaten Inniskeen in a final which John had refereed.</p> <p>48:05 Memories of that final. Wondering if he should have awarded a penalty.</p> <p>49:45 Deciding to do a report on every Carrick Emmets game when he was chairman.</p> <p>50:10 First game against Knockbridge in Louth.</p> <p>50:20 Progress they were making. Reaching the semi-finals. Playing Castleblayney in the final of the senior league in Drumhowan.</p> <p>51:35 Drawing the first game.</p> <p>51:55 Replay. Pitch soggy. Playing under lights in Emyvale. Winning.</p> <p>52:45 How he felt about the win.</p> <p>53:15 Losing a county final in Clones previous to the league final.</p> <p>54:20 Drawing Magheracloone in the county championship in his final year as chairman. Drawing Latton in the quarter-final. Players less committed after that.</p> <p>55:25 State of the club in 2010.</p> <p>56:25 Doing his own research on the club's history. Talking to people.</p> <p>57:10 Ulster finals played in Carrickmacross.</p> <p>59:05 Reading about the Carrickmacross four-in-a-row team and the founding of the Monaghan County Board.</p> <p>59:30 Selling their local pitch and buying new land. Being owed money by a developer.</p> <p>01:01:00 Not sure if they will get the money they are owed.</p>
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	<p>Possible plans for the future.</p> <p>01:02:05 Pitch in Emmet Park over-used.</p> <p>01:02:50 Location, size and price of new site.</p> <p>01:04:00 Carrickmacross Emmets playing against Bailieborough in Shercock in 1887.</p> <p>01:04:30 Carrickmacross Sextons and Carrickmacross O'Briens also around at the time. Political dimension to that. Splits occurring.</p> <p>01:05:30 Inniskeen the first county finals, having won in Rocksavage, which was owned by the Plunkett Kennedys.</p> <p>01:06:15 Tournament held in Rocksavage to raise funds for Inniskeen to play in the All-Ireland semi-final in 1887.</p> <p>01:07:00 Currin the only club in Monaghan for a period.</p> <p>01:00:10 Emmets reformed in 1903 on the anniversary of Robert Emmet.</p> <p>01:08:20 Being secretary when Fergal O'Hanlons, the youngest club in Monaghan, was formed. Launching the club as county secretary. Mentions Killany, Innsikeen, Corduff and inability of Carrickmacross to have two teams. Pitch Fergal O'Hanlons got.</p> <p>01:10:50 Impact of the club over their ten years in existence.</p> <p>01:11:35 Reaction of Monaghan Harps to the new club.</p> <p>01:13:35 Changes in dedication of players over the years.</p> <p>01:14:35 Commitment involved in playing for a club</p> <p>01:14:55 Fun players and serious players.</p> <p>01:15:50 Work involved for GAA volunteers to keep the Association going. Pressure.</p> <p>01:18:25 Professionalism in the GAA. Players' attitudes.</p> <p>01:20:10 Players having more of a say in what happens.</p> <p>01:21:55 Suspicions about money being spent on county</p>
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	<p>teams that is unaccounted for. County boards not having the money to finance county teams. Need for more honesty.</p> <p>01:23:55 Importance of club lotto. Need for a strong lotto committee. 12-month commitment.</p> <p>01:24:45 Holding an auction and money they made.</p> <p>01:25:25 Where money that goes into county teams comes from.</p> <p>01:26:45 Players being aware that money is coming in.</p> <p>01:27:10 Impact of personalities on the workings of the GAA.</p> <p>01:28:10 Impact of politics on the workings of the GAA.</p> <p>01:29:00 His schoolmaster when he was a boy putting up goalposts for them. Playing during lunch.</p> <p>01:30:00 Playing with Donore. Facilities they had.</p> <p>01:30:25 Travelling by car to juvenile games.</p> <p>01:30:40 Playing in Páirc Tailteann.</p> <p>01:30:50 Playing on Slane Castle lawn. Henry Mount Charles opening up the grounds.</p> <p>01:31:50 Being able to drive into pitches in Meath and watch a match. More clubs in Meath than Monaghan.</p> <p>01:32:15 Monaghan a small county and difficulties associated with that.</p> <p>01:32:45 Facilities in Meath.</p> <p>01:33:10 Involvement with different clubs and its effect on his identity.</p> <p>01:34:25 Verbal abuse as a referee.</p> <p>01:35:20 Wondering if he had made the right decisions during games.</p> <p>01:35:40 Refereeing a game in Latton. Violent scenes after the game. Trying to navigate his way through that. County secretary ringing him afterwards about the referee's report.</p>
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	<p>01:38:10 Referees being approached about a red card he had given and the prospect of a suspension.</p> <p>01:39:05 Being secretary of the referees in Monaghan. Hearing their problems.</p> <p>01:39:35 Assessing referees at club level.</p> <p>01:39:50 Problems referees would discuss.</p> <p>01:40:15 Some referees not suitable for the job.</p> <p>01:42:10 Referees in competition to be awarded games.</p> <p>01:42:30 Refereeing a high profile game between Scotstown and Castleblayney not long after he had started out. Other referees' reaction to that decision.</p> <p>01:44:40 How he felt after the match.</p> <p>01:44:55 Getting involved as an assessor. What he looks out for as he goes about that task. How he finds that job.</p> <p>01:46:55 Seeing Meath win four All-Irelands. How that feels.</p> <p>01:48:00 Monaghan losing the 1930 All-Ireland final to Kerry. Watching the film of that game.</p> <p>01:48:45 Opinion on level of training and assessing that referees get.</p> <p>01:49:25 Satisfaction after refereeing a game well.</p> <p>01:49:45 Knowing referees who have been threatened.</p> <p>01:51:00 Impact of his GAA involvement on family life.</p> <p>01:52:40 Monaghan winning the Division Two League final a special memory.</p> <p>01:53:30 Disappointment that his refereeing career stalled. Losing his hunger.</p> <p>01:55:35 Refereeing in open pitches.</p> <p>01:56:45 Going to Portugal with manager Colm Coyle. Where they stayed.</p>
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	<p>01:57:50 Admiration for former Meath manager Seán Boylan, for Monaghan administrators Sean McCague and Páraic Duffy, All Star Nudie Hughes, Mick O'Dwyer.</p> <p>01:59:25 What the GAA has meant to him.</p> <p>02:01:10 1987 a good year for him. Reasons for that.</p> <p>02:02:00 Positive work GAA does for the community.</p> <p>02:03:10 Minority sports' facilities not well used in the town. Less government support for the GAA. How that might change in the future.</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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input checked="" 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)	<p>Played from age 13 to 30. Won a junior league with Corduff.</p>
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	<p>John was involved in administration from 1985 – 2009.</p> <p>Club: Corduff Secretary; Corduff Chairman; Carrick Emmets Chairman</p> <p>County [Monaghan]: Assistant Secretary; Secretary; Secretary Monaghan Referees; Secretary Fixtures Committee</p>
Format	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual</p>
Duration	<p>Length of Interview: 02:04:37</p>
Language	<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: _____04/07/12_____

