

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Seamus Donnelly
Date of Interview	15 July 2009
Location	Interviewee's home, near Coalisland, Co Tyrone
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Seamus Donnelly
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1959 Home County: Tyrone
Education	Primary: Aughamullan Primary School Secondary: St Joseph's Coalisland
Family	Siblings: 3 brothers; 1 sister
Club(s)	Brocagh GAA [Tyrone]; Robert Emmets GAA [Derry]; Derrylaughan Kevin Barrys GAA [Tyrone]
Occupation	Architectural Technologist/ Draughtsman
Parents' Occupation	N/A
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A

REFERENCE NO. TY/1/4

Date of Report	29 th July 2009
Period Covered	1959 – 2009
Counties/Countries Covered	Tyrone, Derry, Armagh
Key Themes Covered	Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Managing, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, Role of Clergy, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Identity, Rivalries, Irish Language, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Northern Ireland
Interview Summary	<p>00:40 Personal and family background</p> <p>01:54 Earliest memories- talk of Derrylaughan winning the 'cup' in house</p> <p>02:37 Parish rivalry while growing up</p> <p>02:46 O'Neill Cup visits house with cousin Harry Donnelly (Clonoe O'Rahilly player)</p> <p>03:53 GAA in Aughamullan Primary School- influence of Jim Treacy as a teacher over sport in the school.</p> <p>04:29 Failure in the Canon Mac Namee Cup</p> <p>04:50 GAA in Saint Joseph's Coalisland.</p> <p>05:06 Captained St Joseph's in Ulster Final in 1975.</p> <p>05:37 Memories from the match. Bad decision from umpires. Upset after match.</p> <p>06:20 Travel to first match. County final between parish rivals in Dungannon. Mid 1960s.</p> <p>07:00 Travel to 1972 Ulster final and then first visit to Croke Park 1973 All Ireland semi final between Tyrone and Cork.</p> <p>07:30 Memories of very physical county final between Derrylaughan and Clonoe</p> <p>07:55 Eddie Hanna's influence on team</p> <p>08:30 First trip to Croke Park</p> <p>08:54 Fr Sean McGrath using priest position to park closer</p>

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	<p>to Croke Park</p> <p>09:08 Association with Brocagh Emmets (Mountjoy Emmets)</p> <p>09:37 Personal memories of game against Aghaloo when scored winning goal</p> <p>10:23 Playing East Tyrone Under 16 league final beating Donaghmore in Dungannon.</p> <p>10:40 Playing against future club Derrylaughan</p> <p>11:08 Reason for transfer to Derrylaughan- Brocagh game abandoned with Drumragh</p> <p>12:25 Move to Derrylaughan in 1977</p> <p>13:03 Memories of early matches- Newbridge, (Derry) and Clonoe.</p> <p>13:50 Minor Championship winning season memories</p> <p>14:05 Style of play similar to the Dublin team of the time</p> <p>14:31 Comfortable victories in the championship over the course of the season</p> <p>14:43 Minor Championship Final in Coalisland prior to Tyrone and Antrim league game. Opponents were Killyclogher.</p> <p>15:06 Memories of game. Scored 1-2 including possibly the best goal he's scored in his career</p> <p>15:30 Low key celebrations, stayed for Tyrone game and went home. Cars did blow their horns en route home.</p> <p>15:48 Lost League game in controversial circumstances. No protection afforded to goalkeeper Peter Kennedy as Charlie O'Hagan bundled him over the line.</p> <p>16:29 Star Player Gerry Taggart received 18 month suspension for striking referee.</p> <p>19:44 Under- 21 success with Clann Éireann (Clonoe Parish team)</p> <p>17:10 Reflections on best players played with and against.</p>
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	<p>Kevin Kennedy and John Canavan singled out from the minor team.</p> <p>17:25 Kevin McCabe singled out as the best Under 21 player. Future All Star</p> <p>17:34 Difficult players to play against. Aidan Quinn and Audi Hamilton from Dungannon, Micky Glackin from Cookstown and Seamus Bell from Ardboe where all singled out</p> <p>18:10 Disappointments in 1978 and 1979</p> <p>18:33 Success in tournaments during GAA weeks</p> <p>18:50 Success in Dungiven GAA week in 1982 or 1983 particularly stands out. Received £500 as winners. Beat Banagher in final. Number of Derry players playing for Banagher.</p> <p>19:36 Donal O'Neill takes over club senior team</p> <p>19:50 Dropped for championship, but due to absentee asked to play out of position in at left half back.</p> <p>20:29 Picks up back injury, played only a handful of matches in 1980</p> <p>20:40 Didn't see eye to eye with Donal O'Neill</p> <p>20:49 Mena Devlin takes over team</p> <p>20:55 Needs treatment for 6 months on back. Sees physio Billy Waters in Belfast.</p> <p>21:12 Thoughts on relationship with Mena Devlin</p> <p>21:40 Reflections on Mena Devlin as chairperson, player and manager in 1967 and respect he had from the players.</p> <p>22:48 Memories of 1981 season. Difficulties given the Hunger Strikes taking place at the time</p> <p>23:00 Training patterns altered as a result. Difficulties in getting player out</p> <p>23:18 Nightly marches in Coalisland saw training shaped around them.</p>
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	<p>24:05 Training stepped up- began training on Sunday's if there wasn't a match for the first time.</p> <p>24:25 Start to league season</p> <p>24:35 Team meeting prior to Moortown game saw Mena Devlin air the teams faults and failings for an hour prior to throw in.</p> <p>24:58 Injures ankle three weeks prior to championship.</p> <p>25:17 Game versus Ballygawley- championship round 1-1981</p> <p>25:36 Story about referee- betting on Derrylaughan after first round match</p> <p>25:54 Return of Gerry Taggart from America. Mena Devlin's pre match speech</p> <p>26:27 Game versus Ardboe- championship round 2. Ardboe's confidence leading into game. Scored winning goal.</p> <p>27:33 Game versus Omagh- championship semi final. Thoughts on match.</p> <p>28:18 League game against Ardboe results in a number of injuries especially to key player Gerry Taggart.</p> <p>28:43 Delay of final- Appeal to county board. Large number of injuries.</p> <p>29:13 County final Dungannon. Large crowd, poor conditions.</p> <p>29:23 Preparations for final. Comment on training style and techniques.</p> <p>29:52 County Final 1981- Carrickmore- preparations on day of game. Lift to game and memories of minor final beforehand.</p> <p>30:43 Warning from manager that nerves would set in after national anthem.</p> <p>31:09 Reflections on final- Scoring goal in final and failing to receive pass that may have led to score stood out.</p>
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	<p>Carrickmore miss late free to tie the match up.</p> <p>32:26 Post match and evening following game.</p> <p>33:22 Injuries experienced</p> <p>34:29 Ulster Club championship experiences</p> <p>34:53 Reflections on the team of 1981</p> <p>35:12 League campaign then in 1982.</p> <p>35:49 1982 Championship- round 1- versus Trillick- match up between 1980 winners and 1981 winners</p> <p>36:02 GAA weeks- went to too many, lack of training</p> <p>36:53 Played Trillick to packed ground- remembers scoring last minute goal to win match.</p> <p>37:20 Championship- round 2 Augher- Augher had Eugene McKenna amongst their ranks. Caught Derryaughan 'cold' beat them well.</p> <p>38:04 Emigration- players leave for America and Saudi Arabia, while others retire.</p> <p>38:26 Manager getting too friendly with team- drinking together</p> <p>38:50 Team also hit by Troubles- players getting arrested, going on the run</p> <p>39:30 Emigration hitting the team. Loss of Hugh O'Hagan important. One of the best performers in 1984 Ulster final best remembered for Frank McGuigan's performance</p> <p>40:08 Best players played with- the O'Hagan brothers, Hugh, Paul and Aidan singled out. Gerry Taggart though the best player he played alongside</p> <p>41:18 'Honour' of marking Frank McGuigan</p> <p>42:12 Aidan McMahan also identified</p> <p>43:10 GAA offered support during the Hunger Strikes. Stood up for members.</p> <p>43:55 GAA membership made members targets to loyalists.</p>
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	<p>Only changed in later years</p> <p>44:27 Problems travelling to and from games. Perhaps up to three quarters of an hour</p> <p>44:54 Learnt to leave for matches early to ensure that even if there were problems time could be set aside</p> <p>45:14 Specific problems for active republicans</p> <p>46:23 Local memories- changes in facilities. Remembers changing alongside a hedge and pushing bag under it so clothes didn't get wet.</p> <p>47:17 Organisation of the GAA starts at grassroots level. Clubs a testament to that.</p> <p>47:30 Worried about clubs developing bars- potential pitfall</p> <p>48:00 Worst moment seeing Tyrone beaten in Croke Park in 1973</p> <p>49:09 GAA in Tyrone on the crest of a wave</p> <p>49:45 Best local teams- 1981 team that won the championship for the club</p> <p>50:04 Kerry team of 1970s and 1980s best team he ever witnessed</p> <p>50:30 Frank McGuigan all time GAA hero</p> <p>50:59 Pride in GAA- uniquely Irish.</p> <p>51:15 Doesn't like the manner in which volunteers may be ignored when tickets etc are distributed.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" 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>Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>Tyrone Minor Football Championship- 1977</p> <p>Tyrone Under- 21 Football Championship (Clann Éireann)</p>

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	1977 Tyrone Senior Football Championship- 1981
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: 51 min 24 secs
Language	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: Seamus Donnelly

Date: 15th July 2009