

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	20 th April 2010
Location	Liam's home, near Tournafulla, Co. Limerick
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Liam Lenihan
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1950 Home County: Limerick
Education	Primary: Mountcollins NS, Co. Limerick Secondary: St Ita's, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick Third Level: St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, Dublin
Family	Siblings: 2 brothers & 2 sisters Current Family if Different: Wife & 2 sons
Club(s)	Mountcollins GAA [Limerick]; Tournafulla GAA [Limerick]; Clan na Gael Fontenoys GAA [Dublin]
Occupation	Retired Teacher
Parents' Occupation	Farmers
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fianna Fáil
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Golf Club; Tidy Towns; Local development association

REFERENCE NO. LK/1/3

Date of Report	15 th June 2012
Period Covered	1903-2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Limerick, Dublin, Kerry
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Fundraising, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Politics, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Opening of Croke Park, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Food and Drink, Socialising
Interview Summary	<p>Liam talks about growing up in Limerick, close to the border with Kerry. Football was everything to them and they loved to play games and listen to commentaries on the radio. He played with his local club Mountcollins and went to carnivals that were held where he got to see some of the best footballers of the day in action. He later went to train as a teacher in Dublin and got to see a lot of GAA games live, and he became involved in administrative work. He returned to Limerick to work as a teacher and his GAA involvement continued. He filled all sorts of administrative positions, coached teams, acted as a Limerick selector and was an integral part of a campaign to revive interest in hurling amongst the young people of Limerick. For Liam the Association is an integral part of his life, and it binds communities together across the country and beyond.</p> <p>00:20 Earliest memories are listening to Micheál O hÉithir.</p> <p>00:30 He is from Mountcollins, a football area, so much of the talk when he was young was about the Kerry team.</p> <p>00:40 He can remember the 1959 All-Ireland, and the 1962 All-Ireland. He was born in 1950.</p> <p>00:55 The only game they played was football and once his work was done on the farm he went out playing football.</p> <p>01:25 At 13 he went to his first club meeting. People asked the treasurer how much money they had.</p> <p>01:40 They had no field and it was tough trying to get a football.</p> <p>01:45 He played Under-14 football and eventually they drew a</p>

	<p>game with Abbeyfeale, a great achievement.</p> <p>02:05 They often went to Mountcollins on Sundays to play a team from Brosna.</p> <p>02:45 The first time he saw adults playing was in carnival matches, which raised a lot of money.</p> <p>02:55 They went to Tournafulla by horse and trap to watch the games. Crowds were huge. Local teams played, like Tournafulla, Rockchapel, Mountcollins and Kileedy.</p> <p>03:25 They also played north Kerry teams like Moyvane, Knocknagoshel, Desmonds, Duagh.</p> <p>03:50 He played Under-16 and Under-18 with Mountcollins.</p> <p>03:55 The first hurling game he saw was in Tournafulla when he was ten. He played his first hurling game in 1969 when he was 18. He played in Dublin for a few years.</p> <p>04:20 His neighbour, Jack the slate Sullivan, put a lot of people into the back of his pick-up truck to go to his first hurling game.</p> <p>04:45 He played in the Oireachtas final in the 1960s. They reached Munster finals but didn't win anything.</p> <p>04:55 He went to college in Dublin in 1969 and went to games all over the country - Nowlan Park, Wexford Park, Ennis, The Mardyke, Páirc Uí Chaoimh.</p> <p>05:25 Limerick won the All-Ireland minor title in 1958 and that was very exciting - Pat Hartnett from his club was on the team.</p> <p>05:35 The supporters had hobnail boots, long coats, caps and sandwiches in their pockets. There was great slagging at the games and some women had great voices for shouting.</p> <p>06:20 When he played they had no showers and togged out on the side of the road. After the game they went to the pub and then a dance.</p> <p>07:05 A man called Mick Murphy used to come in at half-time with oranges.</p> <p>07:20 They always aimed to get to play in Newcastlewest. He got a drive to a game and went to the pub after. He liked to listen to the people talk about football.</p>
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	<p>08:10 Neilas O'Connell of Abbeyfeale started the All Stars in Abbeyfeale in the 1960s and they got to see players like Paddy Doherty, Dan McCartan, Jim McCartan and Kevin MUSSEN of Down. Mick O'Connell of Kerry played. Bernie Callaghan and Denis Kelleher played.</p> <p>09:10 Brian McMahon's son Gary told him that Abbeyfeale and Listowel played a game in Kerry in 1923. The game was getting out of control and the referee pulled out a gun and shot it in the air.</p> <p>10:00 The GAA has always done what is best - in relation to the Ban and Rule 42. They always made the right decision.</p> <p>10:30 His father played football but had to farm as well. His uncle won a Sigerson Cup medal with UCC. His father cycled to games and his uncle travelled in a lorry.</p> <p>11:00 They listened to Micheál Ó hÉithir and he was very good at what he did. They heard about Mick Mackey and Christy Ring.</p> <p>11:50 Eamon Cregan of Limerick was a great hurler, as was Joe McKenna, Ciarán Carey, Mike Houlihan.</p> <p>12:20 Eamon Grimes, Eamon Cregan, Sean Foley went on from the CBS team to play for Limerick and win an All-Ireland in 1973.</p> <p>12:30 Liam was teaching in Dublin at the time and a Brother Allen gave him a ticket.</p> <p>13:00 The GAA was the main social outlet for the community when he was growing up.</p> <p>13:40 To play for Mountcollins was a huge honour.</p> <p>13:55 He was driven to a game by Paddy Carroll and there were 13 in the car. He threatened Liam at half-time because he was straying into the wrong area of the field.</p> <p>14:15 All the games were knockout - there were no leagues. It consumed their whole life.</p> <p>14:50 He went for a hurling trial to St Patrick's training college in Dublin in 1969 and fared poorly, so he joined Fontenoy Clanna Gael in Ringsend instead from 1969 to 1974.</p> <p>15:40 He was in Sydney in 2009 and went to watch his son's GAA team training in Centennial Park. They had a great bond.</p>
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	<p>16:10 Frankie Stapleton was in charge of the team and he was doing a great job.</p> <p>16:45 Tournafulla is the smallest hurling club in Limerick. The only player to play in two senior All-Irelands in one day is from the club. He was Timmy Dooley from Killaculleen. He played for a London team that defeated Redmond's of Cork and played for London Hibernians, who lost to Dublin in the 1901 final.</p> <p>17:40 Des Ferguson and a few others played in two Railway Cup finals but not All-Irelands.</p> <p>18:05 Recalls Con Houlihan writing about Tournafulla and their goalkeeper Seamus Horgan before the 1973 final.</p> <p>18:35 He was a Fontenoy delegate to the junior board and used to go to North Great George's St in Dublin for meetings.</p> <p>18:45 He was club secretary, chairman, vice-chairman, PRO, treasurer at his local club.</p> <p>18:55 He was involved with the West Board and was seven years as chairman and then was vice chairman of the county board.</p> <p>19:15 Mentions a 'Lifting the Treaty' campaign they started to get young people to play hurling and he is very proud of that. It was about a change of approach to the game.</p> <p>20:35 It's not easy in a time of crisis - like the fall-out over the position of 2010 hurling manager Justin McCarthy - but you have to do what you feel is right.</p> <p>20:50 Rugby is well-branded in the city and they did it well.</p> <p>21:00 The youngest club in Limerick is in Moyross and they have two officers in the north and south of Limerick working to drum up interest in the game.</p> <p>21:50 There are a lot of people playing handball in Moyross.</p> <p>22:15 It's a full-time job and volunteers are everything. He was 21 years coaching Under-12 teams.</p> <p>23:20 He would be lost without the GAA.</p> <p>23:45 He was a selector with Limerick from 1993 to 1997.</p>
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REFERENCE NO. LK/1/3

Involvement in GAA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steward <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person <input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____
Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	Played for 15 years and won 3 trophies, all in football.
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	Chairman of Tournafulla GAA for 2 years; Secretary of Mountcollins GAA for 2 years; Chairperson of West Limerick Board for 7 years; Current Chairperson of Limerick County Board (3 years ongoing); Formerly as representative for Clan na Gael Fontenoys on Dublin Junior Board.
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 00:24:08
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: Regina Fitzpatrick

Date: 15th June 2012