

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Ann-Marie Smith
Date of Interview	4 th Sept 2008
Location	Swords, Co. Dublin
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Annette Coyle, nee O'Connell
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Female
Born	Year Born: 1944 Home County: Kildare
Education	Primary: Cross and Passion, Kilcullen, Kildare Secondary: Cross and Passion Kilcullen, Kildare
Family	Siblings: 3 sisters and 2 brothers. Annette is the eldest Current Family if Different: Married
Club(s)	Kilcullen, Kildare
Occupation	Tour Guide, GAA Museum
Parents' Occupation	Shopkeeper and baker [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	PD

Date of Report	20 th Oct 2008
Period Covered	1950s-2008
Counties/Countries Covered	Kildare, Kerry, Cavan, Tyrone, Down, Offaly
Key Themes Covered	Childhood, Earliest memories, Family involvement, Travel, Media, Radio, Role of women
Interview Summary	<p>The interview concentrated on Annette's memories and her lifelong love of the GAA. She spoke about the love her father had for the association and travelling to matches with him. She spoke about her earliest memories, going to matches down through the years, her hero Mick O'Connell, her personal highlights and lowlights. She also commented on the many changes that have taken place in the association over the years.</p> <p>Start: Introduction to interview. Name of interviewee.</p> <p>0.43: Date of Birth</p> <p>0.55: Father was a shopkeeper and a baker from Kilcullen. Annette's grandfather was from Valentia.</p> <p>1.57: Annette's mother was from Tyrone, she was smuggled out of the Tyrone when she was a young girl because her father was involved in the IRA. She grew up in the Aran Islands and was a native Irish speaker.</p> <p>2.30: Annette has 3 sisters and 2 brothers and Annette is the eldest.</p> <p>2.54: Joined the Hibernian Bank. Retired 2003.</p> <p>4.07: Joined the staff of the GAA Museum.</p> <p>4.43: Earliest GAA memory is seeing John Joe O'Reilly of Cavan in her house in 1952; he was climbing up the stairs on his hands and knees in pain. He died a month later.</p> <p>6.47: Father's family all went to rugby schools. Annette's father stayed at home to help out in the business, as a result he was the only one of the family interested in the GAA.</p> <p>7.22: Her father was the first Kilcullen man to make the Kildare minor team.</p>

	<p>7.45 Father was a selector on the Kildare County Board, he attended all Congress meetings. He would go to 2 or 3 matches a day. The GAA was his sole interest. He was disappointed that his first three children were sons and because Annette was the eldest, she was brought to matches. She went because she got money and ice-cream and then she got hooked.</p> <p>8.34: Attended matches at carnivals at the age of 4 or 5.</p> <p>8.47: First big match was in 1951 at Newbridge and Kildare was playing.</p> <p>9.33: In 1956, Kilcullen won the Intermediate Final and the heroes on the team were Kevin O'Malley, Pa Connolly and two men both with the name Paddy Moore.</p> <p>10.52: GAA hero is Mick O'Connell. Annette's brother is called Mick O'Connell and she used to go to Tralee as a young girl and people would be talking about this Mick O'Connell and she latched onto the name.</p> <p>11.57: Annette recites poem "Kingdom's King" about Mick O'Connell.</p> <p>14.02: Travelling to games with the Kildare team on the train. She would often wonder how she found her way back, because her father would be so caught up with the chat and the game that he would forget about Annette.</p> <p>15.42: A great GAA highlight was in 1998 when Kildare beat Kerry by 1 point in the All Ireland semi final. She said it was the greatest day of her life because her two favourite teams were playing and Kildare won.</p> <p>16.12: In the 1953 All Ireland Final, bottles were thrown onto the pitch and Annette was frightened.</p> <p>16.37: Annette was also frightened during the 1960 All Ireland Final when 90,000 people attended the game between Down and Offaly. The people behind her on Hill 16 started pushing into her and many people were fainting in front of her.</p> <p>17.22: She recalls listening to the 1947 All Ireland Final on the radio and hearing the name of John Joe O'Reilly. Her mother cried when she heard his name, she was so delighted as he was a friend of the family.</p> <p>17.48: The GAA has totally shaped her identity; her whole interest in life is the GAA. She used to take her brothers and the young lads up to the field and train them. Her brother</p>
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	<p>Mike and another of the boys made the Kildare minor team. In her Leaving Cert year, she remembers a teacher coming down to her desk during class to see what she was doing. Annette was busy picking a Leinster Railway Cup team.</p> <p>19.20: The opening up of Croke Park was a good idea. Delighted to see the ban lifted.</p> <p>20.01: One of her fondest GAA memories is seeing Mick O'Connell soar into the sky for a ball in a grounds tournament game in Croke Park in 1962. Everyone in Croke Park stood up and applauded him. Annette never saw anything like it.</p> <p>21.13: Worst memory was the bottles thrown during the 1953 All Ireland Final.</p> <p>22.50: The Kerry teams in of the late 1970s and 1980s were the best teams, they were sheer class.</p> <p>23.31: Mick O'Connell, all time greatest GAA hero. He was like poetry in motion.</p> <p>24.47: Everything about the GAA makes Annette proud. People are completely committed to the games and yet they are not paid and the fact that they have to go to work the next day after a match. They play the games for the honour and glory of their county.</p> <p>27.12: Annette's sister was the best footballer she ever saw. She could run rings around the men. Annette believes the main obstacle to women in the GAA is women themselves.</p> <p>28.35: Annette believes that the government should give players a tax free allowance.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input 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>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	

REFERENCE NO. KE/1/1

Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 29 mins 15 sec
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: _Ann-Marie Smith_____

Date: __8th December 2008_____