

## GAA Oral History Project

## Interview Report Form

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Aoife Doherty
<b>Date of Interview</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> August 2010
<b>Location</b>	Crossmaglen
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Joe Kernan
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1954 <b>Home County:</b> Armagh
<b>Education</b> (Optional)	N/A
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 5 brothers
<b>Club(s)</b>	Crossmaglen Rangers GAC [Armagh]
<b>Occupation</b>	Estate Agent
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Sales Representative [Father]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	Nationalist
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	Golf Club

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<b>Date of Report</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> July 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	1926 - 2010
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Armagh, Kerry, Down, Derry, Offaly, Dublin, Great Britain, Australia, Australasia.
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Celebrations, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, Involvement in GAA abroad, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, Irish Language, Culture, Scór, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Politics, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Retirement, Socialising, Relationships
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>Former Crossmaglen and Armagh player and manager Joe Kernan discusses his life, and that his club and county, in football. Speaks of his family background, the highs and lows of his sporting careers and the unique difficulties that the Crossmaglen club faced as a result of the Troubles and the British army's occupation of part of their grounds.</p> <p>00.00 Introductory remarks and interviewee details.</p> <p>00:00:27 Describes his introduction to the GAA and how, in Crossmaglen, you are 'nearly born into it.' Recalls kicking football in the street and progressing onto the football fields when he was 9 or 10 years old.</p> <p>00:00:43 Outlines his family involvement in the GAA, mentioning his Uncles and cousins. His Uncle Jamesie played on the Armagh team which won the All-Ireland junior championship winning team in 1926, while his cousin Frank won an All-Ireland minor medal with Armagh and represented the county in the senior All-Ireland final of 1953. His sons played the game as did- and still do – Joe Kernan's sons.</p> <p>00:01.12 Notes the similarities and differences between the GAA of his childhood and the GAA of 2010. Comments on friendships, team nature of game and team preparations</p> <p>00:01.30 Charts the evolution of games development from his own time playing the game and the changes in team preparations.</p> <p>00:01:58 Discusses the influence of Michael O Hehir on radio.</p>

	<p>Mentions some of the great names of Gaelic football – Mick O’Connell, Sean O’Neill, Colm McAlarney, Jim McKeever, Joe Lennon and Willie Bryan.</p> <p>00:02:30 First Senior game for Crossmaglen Rangers at 16. Starting off playing street leagues and progressing up through the ranks – from Under 16, Minor, Under 21 and Senior.</p> <p>00:02:48 Discusses the catch and kick football philosophy of his youth.</p> <p>00:03:12 Mentions how, as he got older and more experienced, the approach to the game changed.</p> <p>00:03:30 Discusses his achievements as a player for club and county.</p> <p>00:04:10 Describes the move into management and the ensuing achievements.</p> <p>00:04:30 Refers to the sense of honour and pride in Crossmaglen’s achievements. Joy in the town and the wider county. Support received from all over Ireland in 1997 and the reasons for it.</p> <p>00:05:05 Armagh 2002 All-Ireland title. Reaction and lessons for other counties.</p> <p>00:05:23 Build-up to Armagh All-Ireland final meeting with Dublin in 1977. Being interviewed by RTE in a hotel in Dundalk. Growing number of spectators attending training in the count down to the final.</p> <p>00:06:20 Arriving in Croke Park in 1977 to a ‘sea of orange’.</p> <p>00:06:35 Reaction to losing the 1977 final. Reasons for defeat and lessons learned.</p> <p>00:07:10 Winning All-Stars in 1977 and 1983.</p> <p>00:07:35 Impact of the British occupation of part of Crossmaglen’s club grounds. Support received from Croke Park and the wider GAA community. Insistence on keeping the club going in difficult times made them ‘better people’. Mentions how worthwhile the struggle was in view of the facilities that they now enjoy.</p> <p>00:08:45 Relationship between the Crossmaglen club and the Crossmaglen community.</p> <p>00:09:15 Talks about British Army occupying part of the club’s land as a way of getting at the community and perhaps</p>
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	<p>feeling safer. Says that the British Army didn't care about the community. Talks about the reaction of club people and their struggle to reclaim the club grounds.</p> <p>00:09:55 Addresses the question as to whether there was a link between sport and politics.</p> <p>00:10:10 Reasons for club's triumph over adversity.</p> <p>00:10:30 Talks about emigration and how he had to go to work in England for a couple of years, returning home to play football.</p> <p>00:10:55 Playing football in England and difference with home. Coming home.</p> <p>00:11:15 Impact of the GAA on personal identity. Mentions the educative influence of the GAA and how it moulds you into a better person. Also mentions the friendships and social opportunities afforded by GAA involvement.</p> <p>00:12:00 Living abroad and impact of GAA on sense of Irishness.</p> <p>00:12:35 Regrets lack of facility with the Irish language, while mentioning that knowledge of the language across the Crossmaglen club had improved. Disappointment that not enough people in the club drove the language agenda.</p> <p>00:13:38 Importance of language to Irish national identity.</p> <p>00:14:00 Retirement as a player in 1987 – after 17 years involved with Armagh teams.</p> <p>00:14:42 Discusses the transition into management. How it came about, who he managed and what the experience was like.</p> <p>00:15:36 The role of the manager as an organiser of people. Similarities with running a business.</p> <p>00:16:25 Mentions the impact of management on his life and how it made him 'public property'.</p> <p>00:17:08 Refutes the notion of management as a 'coping strategy' for retirement from playing, but says it is part of life's natural progression – the 'next stage'. The responsibilities and pressures of the management role.</p> <p>00:18:29 Mentions the ease in motivating players in Crossmaglen and Armagh because there were always more trophies to be won.</p>
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	<p>00:19:17 The importance of mental preparation over tactics.</p> <p>00:20:16 Aftermath of Armagh's 2002 All-Ireland triumph – there were 'a thousand jobs to be done in a day and 1,000 places to go to.'</p> <p>00:20:55 Mentions some of the great names of that Armagh team – Kieran McGeeney, Diarmuid Marsden, Paul McGrane, Tony and John McEntee, Francie Bellew and Oisín McConville. Mentions the importance of leadership qualities in players. Praises those – like Barry Duffy and John Donaldson – who didn't secure a regular place on the team, but who made a significant contribution.</p> <p>00:20:04 Discusses the highlights of his involvement in the GAA, citing the special achievements with club and county. Mentions family dimension to the Crossmaglen success.</p> <p>00:22:55 Discusses the lowpoints of his GAA involvement – losing with Armagh the 2003 All-Ireland final, losing the 2005 All-Ireland semi-final to Tyrone, losing the 2006 All-Ireland quarter-final to Kerry. And losing with Crossmaglen to Errigal Chiarain after winning their first club All-Ireland, losing to Castleblaney in his fifth year of management.</p> <p>00:23:28 Discusses his pride in the GAA – the building of a great stadium, the lack enmity among supporters etc.</p> <p>00:24:11 Mentions the Kerry team of the 1970s and 80s as the greatest team he saw in his lifetime and refers to his friendship with many of them.</p> <p>00:25:00 Reflects on his good fortune to be involved in many good times. Refers to opportunity to go to Australia when he was 21 or 22 years of age, where he had two sisters and a brother and where his mother spent much of her time. Reflects on his decision to stay.</p>
<p><b>Involvement in GAA</b></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 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>

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<b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)	Armagh Player, 1971-87
<b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)	N/A
<b>Format</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
<b>Duration</b>	Length of Interview: 00:25:30
<b>Language</b>	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:      Aoife Doherty

Date:      3<sup>rd</sup> Aug 2010