

## GAA Oral History Project

## Interview Report Form

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Gerard Devine
<b>Date of Interview</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Mar 2011
<b>Location</b>	Aghyaran GAA Centre
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Seán Harvey, Seán McGoldrick, James Patrick Collins, Patsy Connolly, Gerard Devine, Thomas Dolan (St Davog's GFC, Aghyaran)
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee:</u></b> Seán Harvey	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> N/A <b>Home County:</b> Tyrone
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Corgary National School, Co. Tyrone
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 3 brothers; 4 sisters
<b>Club(s)</b>	Aghyaran St Davog's GAA Club [Tyrone]
<b>Occupation</b>	Retired HGV and bus driver
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Farmer [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	N/A
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee:</u></b> Sean McGoldrick	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> N/A

	<b>Home County:</b> Tyrone
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Corgary National School <b>Secondary:</b> Strabane Technical College
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> None
<b>Club(s)</b>	Aghyaran St Davog's GAA Club [Tyrone]
<b>Occupation</b>	Shop Owner
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Farm labourer [Father]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	N/A
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee:</u></b> James Patrick Collins	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> N/A <b>Home County:</b> Tyrone
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Tullycar National School
<b>Family</b>	N/A
<b>Club(s)</b>	Aghyaran St Davog's GAA Club [Tyrone]
<b>Occupation</b>	Retired Forestry worker
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Farmer [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic

<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	CCE
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee:</u></b> Patsy Connolly	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1945 <b>Home County:</b> Tyrone
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Carrycoughan National School
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 2 brothers
<b>Club(s)</b>	Aghyaran St Davog's GAA Club [Tyrone]
<b>Occupation</b>	Farmer
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Farmer [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	N/A
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee:</u></b> Thomas Dolan	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> N/A <b>Home County:</b> Tyrone
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Carrycoughan National School <b>Secondary:</b> St Columb's College, Derry <b>Third Level:</b> Strawberry Hill, London
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 5 brothers; 3 sisters

<b>Club(s)</b>	Aghyaran St Davog's GAA Club [Tyrone]
<b>Occupation</b>	Retired School Teacher
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Farmers
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	N/A
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee:</u></b> Gerard Devine	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1947  <b>Home County:</b> Tyrone
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Carrycoughan National School  <b>Secondary:</b> Strabane Technical College
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 6 brothers; 3 sisters
<b>Club(s)</b>	Aghyaran St Davog's GAA Club [Tyrone]
<b>Occupation</b>	Retired Psychiatric Nurse
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Farmer; Bread man; Shoe repairer [Father]; Housewife  general land worker [Mother]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	CCE

<b>Date of Report</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2011
<b>Period Covered</b>	1950s – 2011
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Tyrone
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Fundraising, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Identity, Rivalries, Irish Language, Culture, Scór, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Challenges, Alcohol, Violence, Politics, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Relationship with the Association, Socialising, Relationships, Economy/ Economics
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>All the interviewees are members of Aghyaran St Davog's, which was founded in 1956. The group discuss both the emergence and early days of the club, whose birth coincided with the coming to prominence of Tyrone as a force in Ulster football. Key individuals in the stories of club and county are mentioned, as are personal recollections of journeys to club and county games and the influence of radio and match commentaries. The history of the club through the 1960s and 70s and beyond is discussed, with light being shone on a broad range of themes and issues, including the performance of teams; the importance of 7-a-side and tournament competitions; the social life of the club; relations with the county board and its officials; links with local schools ; the emergence of Scór and the development of grounds and facilities. The interview concludes with each interview reflecting on the influence the GAA has had on their own lives and their concern for the future, which include reference to issues of finance and emigration</p> <p>00:00:10 Gerard Devine, interviewer and discussion participant, introduces the other interviewees as individuals who would have been involved with Aghyaran St. Davóg's since its foundation in 1956.</p> <p>00:00:59 (Sean Harvey) Becoming involved with Aghyaran club in 1956. Talks about listening to Michael O'Hehir on radio and awakening interest.</p> <p>00:01:40 Discusses organising a match and Jimmy Owens refereeing and the beginning of football in Aghyaran. Talks</p>

	<p>generally about the Gaelic games in the area in the late 1940s and seeing a bus for the first time.</p> <p>00:03:15 Talks about some of the players who would have been involved in Gaelic games at the time, including Packie Kelly.</p> <p>00:04:14 Recollections of putting up goalposts in the mid 1950s.</p> <p>00:04:55 Discussion of the meeting in 1955, a 'mission' of that year and the role of Fr. Morris. Mention is made of individuals who attended meeting in hall and the local interest in establishment of a GAA club. Reference is made of the area's connection to Seamus McFerran, then GAA President.</p> <p>00:06:19 Discussion over the choice of the club name as St. Davóg.</p> <p>00:07:05 Thomas Dolan, also involved with the club since its inception, joins the discussion at this point.</p> <p>00:07:40 (Thomas) Talks about attending the meeting in Aghyaran hall to establish the club. Describes the scene and names some of the individuals present. Mentions the backdrop of Tyrone's first Ulster championship success in 1956.</p> <p>00:09:00 Discussion of the Ulster final day in 1956 and how they got to Clones for match.</p> <p>00:10:04 (James Patrick) Explains how, though not a player, he became involved with Aghyaran club.</p> <p>00:10:50 Mentions going to godmother during summer and seeing informal football matches, 30 a side, in field.</p> <p>00:11:35 Talks about attending St. Columbs in 1954 and remaining there until 1960 when he went to England. Comments on the contribution of Jimmy Owens in keeping club going - he picked team, took training and was 'the only man who knew anything about going to meetings'.</p> <p>00:12:40 Reference to only being interested in kicking a football, not understanding what GAA meant.</p> <p>00:12:50 Role of Jimmy Owens, his knowledge of Irish etc.</p> <p>00:13:21 Discussion of the importance of radio and Michael O'Hehir. One interviewee tells story of coming out of a match in Ballybofey and crowds gathered around a window to listen to radio. Michael O'Muircheartaigh and Seán Óg Ó</p>
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	<p>Ceallacháin are also mentioned.</p> <p>00:14:32 Recollection of seeing Aghyaran's name in Sunday press for the first time.</p> <p>00:14:55 Discussion about how information was conveyed to community – media and the pinning of notices of team selection outside chapel.</p> <p>00:15:40 Discussion of some of the key players in the Aghyaran club over the years. Mention of one player who would cycle 25-30 miles to get a bus to a match.</p> <p>00:17:20 Mention when it was difficult to keep team going in the late 1950s and early 1960s and players from elsewhere were needed. Mention is made, for example, of players from Castlederg who lined out for Aghyaran.</p> <p>00:19:45 Remarks on the precariousness of the club's existence in its early years. Stories are also told of games played and the playing record of the club in the early 1960s.</p> <p>00:21:50 (Patsy) Talks about the inter-county players he admired in the late 1950s – Jackie Taggart, Iggy Jones, Frankie Donnelly, Mick Cushnan, Jim Devlin, Eddie Devlin. Recalls first game he attended (Ulster final 1956), aged 10 or 11, and being close enough to touch a county player.</p> <p>00:22:45 Discussion about who played in the 1956 Ulster final.</p> <p>00:23:35 Discussion of Tyrone football in the 1950s and the missed opportunities. Reference to impact of county team on the emergence of the GAA in Aghyaran.</p> <p>00:24:25 Discussion about high profile players from outside Tyrone in the 1950s, including Jim McKeever.</p> <p>00:25:09 Mention that Tyrone had never been on radio before 1956.</p> <p>00:25:35 Influence of the rise of Down football on Tyrone GAA.</p> <p>00:26:09 Reference to getting bus to 1956 Ulster final and discussion about that game.</p> <p>00:27:20 Starting Aghyaran in 1956 and playing one game in St. Enda Cup in November of that year.</p> <p>00:28:15 Fundraising in Aghyaran. Recalls Ceiliú's, first sports in 1958.</p>
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	<p>00:29:02 Discussion of the first game of re-convened club in 'Connolly's field' on 1 September 1956, the same day as Wexford played Cork in All-Ireland hurling final.</p> <p>00:30:00 Discussion around Challenge games that were organised in 1956 and how they came about.</p> <p>00:30:40 Reference is made to Tommy Dolan's house, which is described as a 'hub' for organising club activities. A story is also told of Fr. Mick throwing his hat in the air at end of an Ulster final in Clones.</p> <p>00:32:15 Conversation about Fr. Mick's involvement in GAA.</p> <p>00:32:28 Mention of the importance of the Dolan family and Mrs. Connolly, who provided a field, to the club's early development.</p> <p>00:32:50 Discussion of local efforts to get club going. Reference is made to putting up posts and to the contribution of individuals who were not even playing.</p> <p>00:33:32 Discussion about funding in the early 1960s – mention is made of a turnover of £30-40 a year – and the fundraising events that were held.</p> <p>00:33:34 Recollections of early club dinner dances, which began in the mid 1960s – discussion about the price of tickets, the food, the guests, the music and other entertainment.</p> <p>00:37:40 Short discussion of the role of women in the early days of Aghyaran – their absence from active club roles or as supporters of the team and their contribution as tea-makers.</p> <p>00:38:56 Discussion about the role of teachers in the club – individuals are named, among them Charlie Kerr, who is described as a 'good footballer' and the first club secretary.</p> <p>00:40:11 Contribution of clergy to early history of club, including Fr. Morris, first club chairman.</p> <p>00:41:00 Recollections of 7-a-side competitions and tournaments during early years of club – mention is made of their importance to the club, the places they played and the opposition they met.</p> <p>00:42:53 Reference is made to the progress made by the club in the 1960s and to the record of the club in the early 1970s.</p> <p>00:43:35 Conversation about the guest players who played in</p>
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	<p>tournament competitions.</p> <p>00:45:19 (Gerard and others) Says for time he saw Aghyaran with a good team was 1963. Mentions that other interviewees were part of that team. Other individuals involved during that period are also discussed by the group and stories told about them.</p> <p>00:49:10 Sound is interrupted by a music and MC from a set-dancing class in an adjacent room.</p> <p>00:49:32 Mention is made of Jimmy McCourt from Pomeroy, who went to America, who was an exceptional 7-a-side player. Dessie Griffin and Mickey Joe Forbes are also mentioned.</p> <p>00:50:09 Differences between 7 a side and 15 a side football.</p> <p>00:50:25 Recollections of winning an Intermediate league in 1965 and going senior in 1966. The contribution of Brendan Dolan, a county player, is recalled.</p> <p>00:52:30 (Gerard) Reference to the impact of emigration on the Aghyaran team in 1966 – a ‘good number’ of the team emigration. Two players were in Scotland.</p> <p>00:53:05 Mention is made of a individual – ‘Colm’ – who was sent off three times by the one referee in one year. Story is told of an exchange with a priest who was doing the line at a match.</p> <p>00:54:08 (Gerard) Discussion of performance of Aghyaran in 1967 West Tyrone senior league. Story is told of an effort to dredge up a team for a league game after ‘late mass’.</p> <p>00:56:00 (Gerard) Discussion of slight upsurge in club’s fortunes in 1968 and story about ‘infamous’ championship defeat to Carrickmore 2<sup>nd</sup> team.</p> <p>00:57:20 (Gerard) Mentions that in 1969 Aghyaran ‘started to come good’ and five good years followed. A group discussion follows of memorable games and incidents during these years. There is also a discussion around the reasons why Aghyaran didn’t achieve more at this time.</p> <p>01:01:23 (Gerard) Reference to tragedies that struck the club in the early to mid 1970s – the loss of two members.</p> <p>01:10:23 Discussion around politics in the club – there is a denial of its impact, although reference is made to Sam Maguire crossing the border with Down’s in the early 1960s.</p>
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	<p>[Sound quality is poor at this point]</p> <p>01:04:29 (Gerard) Recalls Ahane from Limerick bringing a football team to play in Aghyaran in Féile na nÓg in 2004.</p> <p>01:05:25 (Gerard) Recalls Aghyaran visiting New Inn in Tipperary and story of clubman, Arthur [...], being part of the travelling party.</p> <p>01:05:41 Story about the aforementioned Arthur acquiring a ticket for 2003 All-Ireland final.</p> <p>01:06:10 (Gerard) Mentions 3 Aghyaran players on Tyrone minor team in 2000 and attending 'most of the matches'. Story about visiting hotel in Clones and attempting to get dinner. [Laughter]</p> <p>01:07:16 Recollections – barely audible - of travelling to Dublin in the 1960s and stops for food along the way. Discussion of Arthur and his involvement with the club.</p> <p>01:10:11 (Seán) Talks about acquiring the first set of club jerseys in the 1950s. There is a group discussion of the colours of the jerseys and the feel of them on wet days. There is a reference to trying to get the same colours as Glasgow Celtic.</p> <p>01:12:30 (Gerard) Recalls borrowing the Omagh Academicals rugby jersey for a match against Dromore.</p> <p>01:13:25 (Gerard) Mentions Cork beating Tyrone in All-Ireland semi-final in 1973 and Tyrone lending Cork a set of jerseys for All-Ireland final.</p> <p>01:15:10 Story about a friendly match against Belleek or Devenish when one of players boots fell out of the mini-bus on the way home – it was subsequently posted to him in America where he was heading the following day.</p> <p>01:15:50 Discussion about transport and the role of Michael Dolan, after whom the club pitch is named. A story is told of a trip to Dublin where Dolan's car sustained six punctures. Mention is made of the financial cost to him. Other stories about travel and transport are also told, mostly about Michael Dolan. One of the stories concerns an occasion where the brakes of his car/bus broke.</p> <p>01:22:00 (Gerard) Recalls training at Protestant school c. 1964 when one of the players injured his knee – lack of sympathy from father when he got home.</p> <p>01:22:50 Discussion about lack of facilities in the early days</p>
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	<p>of clubs. Mention of a meeting in local hotel to discuss lack of home matches because of absence of dressing rooms c. 1969. Story about the installation of first dressing rooms.</p> <p>01:24:15 Reference to pressure on club to abandon its original field for better facilities and the relationship with the County Board and various officials. The club retained its original field from 1957 to 1978.</p> <p>01:25:13 Mention of a 'particular hatred' one named member had for a P.K. O'Neill on the county board.</p> <p>01:25:45 (Sean) Talks about the influence of the GAA on his life and the friendships he made. Mentions that he refereed in Donegal and Tyrone.</p> <p>01:27:11 (James Patrick) Considers the impact of the GAA on his life.</p> <p>01:27:19 (Patsy) Influence of GAA on life: 'What else could you chat about, only football...The only way you got to know anybody was through the football.' Mentions a recent meeting of an old acquaintance through the GAA. 'It's the main influence on your life', he says.</p> <p>01:28:15 (Thomas) Discusses the financial challenges facing the GAA over the coming years. Reference is made to the costs of running clubs and moves toward the amalgamation of underage structures of club to reduce costs.</p> <p>01:29:27 (Gerard) Talks about the 'more innocent' GAA of the past and the more litigious culture that now prevailed.</p> <p>01:29:50 Discussion about the potential impact of emigration on club in the coming years. Reference is made to the impact of emigration on other clubs.</p> <p>01:30:15 (Gerard) Mentions small numbers in club and the contribution a local school makes them – estimates that 90% of schools boys and girls are playing football with Aghyaran. This is compared with the experience in other clubs.</p> <p>01:31:06 Comment on the indebtedness of clubs – specific mention is made of the Thomas Davis in Dublin, Portlaoise and Down County Board.</p> <p>01:31:41 (Patsy) Discusses the club's first participation in Scór on the night of Bloody Sunday, 1972. Talks about collecting team to go to Castlederg and what event each individual participated in. Refers to news reaching them about events in Derry on that day.</p>
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	<p>01:34:55 Discussion about Comhaltas, its similarities to the GAA and its history in Aghyaran.</p> <p>01:35:25 Group talk about the struggle to keep the alive – reference is made to the importance of the ‘white mini-bus’, as well as to the influence of Fr. Chesney, a curate in the area from 1961-3; and to Fr. Campbell. A remark is made about the influence a clergyman might exert.</p> <p>01:36:20 (Gerard) Stresses the importance of local people ‘putting shoulder to wheel’ and non reliance on teachers or priests from outside.</p> <p>01:36:42 The contribution of various individuals to club is recalled, touching on the social life of the club and to the activities of club linesmen and umpires.</p> <p>01:40:05 (Gerard) Comments on the reputation – the ‘good name’ - the Aghyaran club has established and what contributed to it.</p>
<p><b>Involvement in GAA</b></p>	<p><b>Seán Harvey</b></p> <p>✓ Supporter ✓ Player ✓ Manager ✓ Coach ✓ Steward</p> <p>□ Chairperson ✓ Committee Member □ Grounds-person</p> <p>□ Caterer □ Jersey Washer ✓ Referee □ None</p> <p>□ Other (please specify):</p> <hr/> <p><b>Seán McGoldrick</b></p> <p>✓ Supporter ✓ Player ✓ Manager ✓ Coach ✓ Steward</p> <p>□ Chairperson ✓ Committee Member □ Grounds-person</p> <p>□ Caterer □ Jersey Washer □ Referee □ None</p> <p>□ Other (please specify):</p> <hr/> <p><b>James Patrick</b></p> <p>✓ Supporter ✓ Player ✓ Manager ✓ Coach ✓ Steward</p> <p>□ Chairperson ✓ Committee Member ✓ Grounds-person</p> <p>□ Caterer ✓ Jersey Washer ✓ Referee □ None</p> <p>□ Other (please specify):</p> <hr/>

	<p><b>Patsy</b></p> <p>✓ Supporter   <input type="checkbox"/> Player   <input type="checkbox"/> Manager   <input type="checkbox"/> Coach   ✓ Steward</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson   ✓ Committee Member   ✓ Grounds-person</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Caterer   ✓ Jersey Washer   ✓ Referee   <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):</p> <hr/> <p><b>Gerard</b></p> <p>✓ Supporter   ✓ Player   ✓ Manager   ✓ Coach   ✓ Steward</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson   ✓ Committee Member   <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Caterer   <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer   ✓ Referee   <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):</p> <hr/> <p><b>Thomas</b></p> <p>✓ Supporter   ✓ Player   ✓ Manager   ✓ Coach   ✓ Steward</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson   ✓ Committee Member   ✓ 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> <hr/>
<p><b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>Sean Harvey: won 4 league titles; won 1 Inter-County Championship</p> <p>Sean McGoldrick: won 3 league titles</p> <p>James Patrick Collins: None</p> <p>Patsy Connolly: 4 league titles; 1 Inter-County Championship</p> <p>Thomas Dolan: 3 league titles</p> <p>Gerard Devine: played for 21 years; 5 league titles; 1 Championship title</p>
<p><b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>Sean Harvey: Club Vice-Chair for 2 years; Treasurer for 2 years; PRO for 10 years; Club Selector for 4 years; Referee for 25 years</p> <p>Sean McGoldrick: Held most committee positions in the club and was greatly involved in foundation of club</p> <p>James Patrick Collins: Treasurer for 4 years; member of</p>

**REFERENCE NO. TY/1/26**

	grounds committee since the 1970s  Patsy Connolly: Treasurer for 15 years; Social Club Secretary for 15 years; Fundraising Committee for 20 years  Thomas Dolan: Has held every committee position in the club at some point since 1956  Gerard Devine: Club Secretary for 18-20 years; Team Manager for both underage and senior teams
<b>Format</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
<b>Duration</b>	Length of Interview: 01:44:44
<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:      Gerard Devine

Date:      2<sup>nd</sup> March 2011