

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	20 th June 2010
Location	Dick's home, near Waterford City.
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Dick Roche
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1935 Home County: Waterford
Education	Primary: Mount Sion CBS, Waterford Secondary: Mount Sion CBS, Waterford
Family	Siblings: 2 brothers Current Family if Different: Wife (Chrissy), 3 sons & 3 daughters
Club(s)	Mount Sion GAA [Waterford]
Occupation	Retired Waterford Stanley employee
Parents' Occupation	Painter [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

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Date of Report	20 th June 2012
Period Covered	1946 - 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Waterford, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Cork, Wexford
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Administration, Celebrations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Media, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Alcohol, Violence, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Food and Drink, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy/Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Dick reflects on his career playing hurling for Mount Sion GAA Club and for Waterford at senior level. He outlines the history of the club from its inception in Mount Sion CBS and describes the development of the grounds and facilities. He recalls his pride in being chosen to represent his county and discusses the team's performance at provincial and national levels. In addition, Dick describes his participation in the street leagues while he was at school and the Inter-Firm leagues while he worked at Waterford Stanley. He recalls the various positions he played in throughout his hurling career and his preference for certain positions. Finally, Dick considers the changing role of women within the club, what the GAA has meant to him, and his hopes for the future of hurling in Waterford.</p> <p>00:44 Dick discusses the key employers around Cannon Street, where he was born: Clover Meats, Waterford Jute Factory, Denny's, building sites. His father and brothers painters.</p> <p>01:25 His father playing soccer and cricket. Also road-running, no interest in Gaelic Games. Dick's initial interest in football when they moved to Cannon Street. Later hurling. Also involved in running, soccer, and boxing. Dwindling popularity of cricket as he grew up.</p> <p>03:54 Recalls playing hurling in the street leagues in school, Mount Sion CBS. Winning Street league in 1946. Playing with club. Christian Brothers heavily involved in GAA. Mentions Brother Hamill, Brother Keller, Brother O'Brien, Brother McGill.</p>

	<p>05:26 Hurling, football, and handball played in CBS. Hackett Cup, Dr Harty Cup, Rice Cup. Explains age groups of different cups. Outlines hurling training in primary and secondary school.</p> <p>07:25 Explains organisation of street leagues. Eight teams in primary school. Also street league committee outside of school, playing teams from others schools. Serving on committee himself until late 1960s. Highly competitive. Main rivals Griffith Place and Morrison's Road. Describes when they trained.</p> <p>10:24 Playing against other CBS schools with Rice Cup, including CBS Callan, Kilkenny, Dungarvan, Carrick-on-Suir, Clonmel. Harty Cup all schools.</p> <p>11:33 Discussion of hurling rivals: De La Salle in the city, Dungarvan, Tramore.</p> <p>12:17 Explains connection between Mount Sion CBS and Mount Sion GAA club. Erin's Own GAA Club's prominence in the late 1920s, early 1930s. Only junior and senior levels. Brother Malone and Brother O'Connor forming minor team in 1932 in monastery. Winning 1932 and 1933 minor championship. Mentions Michael Dowling, surviving founder member of club. Also mentions Pat Fanning.</p> <p>14:35 Progression from junior to senior. Outlines how the club fared. Winning three in a row, 1938 - 1940. Comparison with Erin's Own in the 1950s, their main rivals in the city. Mentions Ballygunner. Lists Mount Sion GAA Club's successes, for example, winning 35 senior and 27 minor titles. Also had players on All-Ireland senior hurling teams. Mentions Andy Fleming who played in 1948 Senior All-Ireland Hurling Final.</p> <p>16:58 Mentions Michael Dowling, founder of club; Pat Fanning club chairman and later president of Munster Council; Paddy Greene, Jim Greene's father; Jack Flahavan, Michael Doyle, Pat Kelly.</p> <p>18:04 Discussion of grounds. No grounds until 1950. Sharing Walsh Park with Erin's Own. Buying Marian Park from Waterford Corporation. Current facilities: Clubhouse, hurling alley, all-weather pitch. Upgrading clubhouse in 1994. Renamed for Pat Fanning. Mentions travelling to play in Butlerstown and Dunhill.</p> <p>20:16 His progress with club. Starting on minor team in 1953, progressing to junior and senior levels. Goalkeeper in 1956. Mentions Johnny O'Regan and Jim Flannelly, Waterford</p>
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	<p>goalkeepers. John Keane asking Dick to play in goal. Describes playing on goal against Kerry, being picked for panel on Waterford team. Outlines playing positions until 1975.</p> <p>22:31 Preference for playing out the field. Playing in goal as he aged.</p> <p>23:11 Strength of 1953 minor team, challenge of retaining place on team. Competitiveness of senior team. Club always represented on county team.</p> <p>23:52 Mentions John Keane. Playing with Pat's brother Larry Fanning, Pat's brother; Philly Grimes, Séamus Power, Mick Flannelly, Martin Óg Morrissey, Frankie Walsh. Difficulty of getting on club team.</p> <p>25:27 Mentions trainers John Keane, Paddy Greene. Later Seamus Power and Martin Óg Morrissey.</p> <p>26:35 Description of John Keane and Paddy Greene's approach to training. Outlines typical training session: laps of field, sprints, match. Focus on skills then, comparison with today. Frequency of training. Permission to play for county and club then.</p> <p>30:09 Lack of awareness of nutrition while he was playing. Told not to drink alcohol. Rivalry for positions in senior club. Pride.</p> <p>31:30 Recalls playing against childhood hero Christy Ring, with Glen Rovers Cork. Also playing against heroes Wexford's Nicky Rackard and Tipperary's Jimmy Doyle. Also mentions Tom Cunningham, Austin Flynn, John Kiely, Tom Cheasty of Waterford.</p> <p>33:18 Reflects on being picked for Waterford team. Playing Dublin in Croke Park. Replacing Johnny Cawley from Dungarvan in goal. Johnny going to America and Dick in goal regularly then.</p> <p>34:20 Recalls playing in Croke Park. Advice from older players. Mixing of different clubs.</p> <p>35:39 Recalls his first match, National League match in Croke Park. Not many people watching. Atmosphere in dressing rooms. John Keane training team. Other mentors Jackie Goode from Dungarvan, Mickey Feeney from Ballyduff Upper, Seamus O'Brien from Abbeyside, and Pat Fanning. Fanning and O'Brien selectors.</p>
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	<p>37:46 Describes rhetorical styles of Pat Fanning and John Keane. Recalls the influence of Fanning's speeches.</p> <p>40:48 Reflects on Pat Fanning's influence on the club. As chairman of Munster Council, getting grant for club. His financial approach as chairman of club: working within their means.</p> <p>42:35 Representation of Mount Sion on county team.</p> <p>43:09 Discussion of relationship between club and county. Former county players training juvenile teams now. Tournament for John Keane Cup. Mentions John Meaney Barry Gray, former county players mentoring young players. His own involvement with juveniles and minors.</p> <p>46:39 Recalls starting inter-county in 1956. Outlines his inter-county career in various positions. Captain in League in 1962. Participation in All-Irelands.</p> <p>47:33 Discussion about lack of gear. Getting new hurley for the championship in 1957. Travelling by hackney car. Sandwiches in pub after training sessions in Dungarvan. Shaws sponsoring socks for All-Ireland. Comparison with abundance of gear today. Outlines training in Dungarvan and Walsh Park, comparison with training with lights in winter today, meals after training sessions. His two grandsons playing minor hurling for Waterford.</p> <p>51:23 Description of washing of gear. Man in charge of washing county jerseys, ladies committee responsible for club jerseys. No doctor travelling with them. Dr. Shelley looking after county team. Mentions Jack Furlong giving massages to team from 1940s to 60s.</p> <p>53:37 Discussion of injuries when he was playing. Playing while injured. Comparison with recovery time nowadays. Recounts story of John Keane bandaging his uninjured knee to trick Limerick players. Dick's own injuries.</p> <p>57:20 Outlines success of Waterford hurling team before he was playing. Winning 1948 All-Ireland, Jim Weir injured, Paddy Waters from Mount Sion taking over in goal. Failures in 1950s until 1957. Mentions Larry Guinan, John Barron and Dick getting to All-Ireland. Describes journey to All-Ireland. Breaking his shoulder in semi-final against Galway, violent match.</p> <p>01:00:29 Travelling to Dublin by hackney car the night before All-Ireland. Staying in the Grand Hotel in Malahide. Sunday morning: breakfast, Mass, walk on beach, practising on green</p>
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	<p>in front of hotel. Not allowed to practise in Croke Park then. Sliothar confiscated from Philly Grimes before game. Importance of practising before game to settle nerves.</p> <p>01:04:13 Recalls Larry Guinan's nerves in the 1957 semi-final against Galway in Croke Park, Guinan's first time in Croke Park. Dick and Frankie Walsh calming him. Guinan scoring first goal.</p> <p>01:05:29 Discusses players' superstitions: Declan Goode bringing rosary beads onto pitch, another player had miraculous medal stitched onto gear. Pat Fanning making main speech.</p> <p>01:07:12 Description of the 1957 All-Ireland Senior Hurling Final. Losing by a point. The shooting of the film <i>Rooney</i>, starring John Gregson. Mentions Dublin's Dessie Ferguson of Dublin. Waterford denying permission to film the dressing room. Making the film. Also mentions Noel Purcell, Eddie Byrne. Popularity of <i>Rooney</i>.</p> <p>01:12:25 Discussion of Mount Sion's successes. Reasons for success. Hunger to win. His grandson playing on senior team now. Tactics.</p> <p>01:15:47 Mentions rival club Abbeyside, playing them in four finals in 1950s and 60s. Mentions Austin Flynn and Donal Whelan on Abbeyside team. Also mentions rivals Dungarvan, Cappoquin, Ballygunner, Erin's Own.</p> <p>01:17:36 Playing junior until 1985 aged 50. Playing senior until 1977. Playing with Inter-Firms on Waterford Stanley team. Trainer and selector of Waterford Stanley, winning junior and senior All-Irelands Inter-Firms Hurling Finals in 1990s.</p> <p>01:19:03 Transition from playing to management and training. Factories playing, for example, Clover Meats. Dick's team The Foundry. Mentions Waterford's Tony Browne and Fergal Hartley on team. Also mentions Kilkenny All-Ireland players on The Foundry team: Eddie O'Connor, Liam McCarthy, Michael Phelan. Effect of decline of construction industry on builders' team.</p> <p>01:22:33 Impact of Inter-Firms on working life. Waterford Stanley managing director Eoin Conway and personnel manager Tom Kennedy interested in hurling. Giving players meal in hotel, drinks. Explains how involvement in hurling improved job prospects. Beating Avonmore of Kilkenny in All-Ireland senior Inter-Firm final. Mentions Shannon Diamonds</p>
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	<p>of Clare.</p> <p>01:27:07 Describes his approach to training. Difficulty of taking over training juveniles. Importance of enjoyment of training.</p> <p>01:28:15 Discussion of being a selector. Importance of honesty in selecting for county, not just selecting club players. Disputes. Negative reactions from supporters over choice of players.</p> <p>01:31:00 Recounts dispute in selecting for Under-21 game.</p> <p>01:33:19 Recalls his participation in fundraising efforts. Getting ground in 1950 from Corporation, dressing rooms built and pitches cleared voluntarily. No facilities, lots of vandalism. Building shutters to stop vandalism. No electricity until 1972. Grant from Munster Council, fundraising activities: Sonny Knowles, Danny Doyle performing. Burglaries in new facilities, alcohol and cigarettes stolen. Improvements to security in 1993.</p> <p>01:40:49 Ponders reasons for all the break-ins, in club and his own house. New hurling alley opening in June, railings around.</p> <p>01:42:35 Reflects on the change from volunteerism to employing painters etc. Paying for services from bar profits. Description of various social events held in function room. Mentions manager Michael Ryan.</p> <p>01:45:24 Considers the changing role of women in the club. No women involved when club started. Development of the ladies committee. Making sandwiches, running talent competition. No participation in playing. Some women involved in junior teams, also Ladies Football.</p> <p>01:47:16 Discusses positive impact of women's teams on club. Girls starting to play darts. Link between Mount Sion and Ardkeen in camogie. Mentions Danny Bowe's involvement in camogie.</p> <p>01:49:52 Two grandsons playing with Mount Sion GAA Club, another grandson playing with Roanmore GAA Club. Importance of passing on love of hurling. His own sons' involvement in sport: Peter playing football, Christopher playing soccer, Dick playing hurling up til minor.</p> <p>01:50:59 Ponders what the GAA has meant to his life. Making friends in different counties.</p>
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	<p>01:52:09 Making friends in Mount Sion, watching matches at weekend. His love of other sports. Discussion of the men on his street who played in senior All-Ireland hurling finals: Larry Guinan, Jimmy Byrne, Michael Dempsey, Sonny Walsh, Freddie O'Brien. Also mentions soccer players on street: brothers Alfie, Harry, Dixie, and Georgie Hale. Also mentions Johnny Barnes and Teddy Brett. Also mentions Sonny Walsh's father both playing in All-Irelands.</p> <p>01:55:22 Considers ban on foreign games in the context of the Hale brothers choosing soccer over hurling. Playing international. Dixie Hale playing for Swansea City.</p> <p>01:56:15 Ponders Waterford's chances of winning an All-Ireland Senior Hurling Final. His views on young talent emerging. Tony Browne, Ken McGrath at end of their careers. Losing Dan Shanahan, John Mullane. Need for experienced players alongside young players.</p> <p>01:58:22 Recalls playing in 20 county senior finals, his wife seeing him in four. No tradition of women attending matches in those days.</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 checked="" 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>Mount Sion GAA: Played with Mount Sion from 1952 and won 13 Waterford Senior Hurling Championships and 3 Waterford Senior Football Championships. Won 1 Waterford Minor Hurling Championship. Finished playing junior hurling in 1985.</p> <p>Waterford: Played on the Waterford Senior Hurling team, 1956 – 64; won 1 Munster Senior Hurling Championship, 1975.</p>
<p>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>Member of the Mount Sion GAA committee for many years holding many positions including social director for 4 years in the 1970s, member of fundraising committee, manager and selector for many teams; currently Vice-President of the club.</p>

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Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 01:59:29
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: Regina Fitzpatrick

Date: 20th June 2012