

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Aidan O'Donoghue
Date of Interview	6 th Oct 2011
Location	Kerry
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Fr James Linnane
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: N/A Home County: Tyrone
Education	N/A
Family	N/A
Club(s)	N/A
Occupation	N/A
Parents' Occupation	N/A
Religion	N/A
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

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Date of Report	23 rd August 2011
Period Covered	1940s - 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Kerry, Cork, Dublin
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Fundraising, Education, Religion, Media, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Identity, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Opening of Croke Park, Socialising, Relationships
Interview Summary	<p>Fr. James Linnane, from Ballydonoghue in Co. Kerry, opens the interview with reference to his family background and his informal introduction to Gaelic football. Organised competition began at secondary school at St. Brendan's College in Killarney, where he was boarder. Linnane would also play Minor and senior for his club and senior for his clubs during the 1950s, his participation with the club often confined to summer holidays. From St. Brendan's, Linnane entered Maynooth and he reflects on the on the place of Gaelic games and other sports in the life of Maynooth, in particular the organisation of internal competitions around classes. After Maynooth, Linnane returned to his old school in Killarney as a teacher in 1961-62, becoming immediately involved in the coaching of the senior Gaelic football team. The following year, 1963, they reached a Hogan Cup final and six years later again, in 1969, the college won its first all-Ireland colleges title. Training methods, as well players and games are discussed in this part of the interview. Outside of the school, Linnane explains his involvement in administrative duties with the Fitzgerald Stadium development committee, as well as with Bord na nÓg Ciarraí in the 1970s. He was also the county board's first youth officer.</p> <p>On leaving Killarney in 1984, Linnane association with the GAA in the town ended. He later served as parish priest in Duagh, a club which later qualified for an All-Ireland club intermediate final in Croke Park. That event, Linnane reflects, epitomised the importance of the GAA to local community identity. There are musings on the importance of volunteerism and commitment, as well as on the great changes – for good and ill – to both the way the GAA is administered and the games are played over the years. Throughout his life,</p>

Linnane has been a keen supporter of Kerry teams, his interest as a child in the 1940s being whetted by the involvement of three Ballydonoghue men on the Kerry team of that decade. Linnane's first All-Ireland to attend was the 1946 All-Ireland football final replay and he recounts the experience of travelling up for the game. Another moment he recalls, for different reasons, was the 1982 All-Ireland football final against Offaly and he recounts an exchange with a former Offaly player in the Hogan Stand in the aftermath of that famous match.

In addition to all of the above, Linnane touches on the role of the media in the GAA, the ban, the opening of Croke Park, the introduction of All-Ireland junior and Intermediate club finals in Croke Park. The interview concludes with reflections on the impact the GAA has had on his own life.

00:00:01 Introduction by Aidan O'Donoghue. Interview takes place in the Carlton Hotel, Tralee.

00:00:15 Interviewee spells name and says he is originally from Ballydonoghue in Co. Kerry.

00:00:40 Parents background: father was a small farmer and mother a national school teacher. Presumes that his father played gaelic football.

00:01:00 Talks about 'kicking a ball around' as a young fella. Says there were no inter-school competitions for primary schools.

00:01:30 First experience of organised football at St. Brendan's, Killarney – he left this school in 1952.

00:01:55 Mentions being beaten in the first round of Munster championship with St. Brendan's – says that training was minimal.

00:02:30 Says he played in the forward line.

00:02:48 Mentions that the captain of his school team, Bernie O'Sullivan from Allihies, was a future Cork footballer.

00:03:09 Mentions playing Minor and senior football for his club up until his ordination – says he also played in college. Comments that in Maynooth, all the competitions were internal, within the college.

00:03:48 Refers to being a boarder at the Sem (st. Brendan's) and that club football was played during the holidays.

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	<p>00:04:00 Travelling to games with club – getting lifts by car.</p> <p>00:04:35 Talks about attending first Kerry match and three Ballydonoghue club members playing on the Kerry team – refers to the involvement of club players in the 1947 All-Ireland final in New York.</p> <p>00:05:10 Mentions starting to play senior club football in 1953-54 and continuing to play during summer holidays until his ordination in 1959.</p> <p>00:05:25 Refers to the Ballydonoghue players who would have played with Kerry during this period: Eddie Dowling, Gus Cremin and Mick Finucane.</p> <p>00:05:40 Talks about first visit to Croke Park in 1946 for All-Ireland final replay as a primary school – how he travelled, who he stayed etc.</p> <p>00:06:30 Impressions of Croke Park, Gus Cremin coming on as a sub in replay and his influence on the game.</p> <p>00:07:14 Mentions his preference for local players.</p> <p>00:07:25 Refers to the playing of football and hurling and soccer in Maynooth. Refers to the competitiveness of football and the presence of inter-county minor and senior in the college.</p> <p>00:08:10 Discusses the internal competitions in Maynooth.</p> <p>00:08:50 Leaving Maynooth and heading to Wales for a year, returning to Maynooth for h Dip. Mentions getting Irish newspapers in Wales.</p> <p>00:09:35 Going to teach in St. Brendan’s College, Killarney in 1961-62 and coaching the senior team. Talks about his coaching philosophy – refers to commitment, teamwork. Says that at times during the year they would train ‘most evenings after school.</p> <p>00:10:37 Talks about the performance of the school team in competitions, including the winning of Munster Colleges in 1963, defeating St. Jarlath’s in All-Ireland semi-final and being beaten by St. Mel’s in Hogan Cup final – mentions that Liam Mulvihill played on the successful St. Mel’s side.</p> <p>00:12:10 Mentions getting to know Mulvihill later in administrative role, serving on Central Council.</p> <p>00:12:30 Interest in St. Brendan’s performances in Killarney and Kerry. Mentions that team was captained by Batt</p>
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	<p>O'Keeffe, later a TD and Minister.</p> <p>00:12:45 Winning the Hogan Cup with the 'Sem, 1969. Talks about teams played and beaten, including St. Mel's and St. Mary's Galway.</p> <p>00:13:25 Refers to losing Hogan Cup semi-final in 1966.</p> <p>00:13:35 Celebrations for 1969 Hogan Cup victory – the college's first.</p> <p>00:14:04 Discusses some of the inter-county players he coached through the years – John and Ger O'Keeffe, Paudie Lynch, Paudie O'Mahony, Tony O'Keeffe, John Long. Mentions also some of the well-known players who went through the college after his time – he finished in 1971.</p> <p>00:15:19 Involvement in the GAA post-St. Brendan's. Refers to the role of Michael O'Connor in spearheading development of Fitzgerald Stadium and his own involvement with the project – serving on committees and as Joint Treasurer of the development etc. Talks about attending meetings in Dublin at Croke Park, at Kilmacud Crokes.</p> <p>00:17:00 Says purpose of meetings in Dublin was to see how others did it.</p> <p>00:17:40 Mentions leaving Killarney in 1984 and ending his GAA involvement in town. Becoming parish priest in Duagh and the nature of his involvement with the GAA there.</p> <p>00:18:19 Serving on colleges Central Council, contacts with Sean O Siocháin and Liam Mulvihill.</p> <p>00:19:30 Mentions the involvement of clergy in schools and clubs. Says clerical involvement helped with their relationship with rural communities.</p> <p>00:20:05 Considers changing relationship between clergy and the GAA.</p> <p>00:20:20 Says there was not much politics involved in the GAA at his level.</p> <p>00:20:38 Discusses the changes in the GAA over the years – refers to growth in the number of competitions.</p> <p>00:21:05 Mentions his involvement in Bord na nÓg Ciarraí – a founder member and chairman on Kerry county board, Kerry's first Youth officer in late 1970s. Talks about his enjoyment and his sense that he was contributing to club and</p>
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	<p>community.</p> <p>00:22:30 Claims that the GAA was 'one organisation' which local people identify with. Refers to Duagh getting to All-Ireland junior final and what it did for the community – tells of meeting people from Duagh who had come over from England to attend final in Croke Park.</p> <p>00:24:30 Reflections on the ban and the opening of Croke Park to soccer and rugby. Mentions Sean Kelly for doing a lot of 'good' for opening of Croke Park, but highlights his role in bringing Intermediate and junior championships to Croke park.</p> <p>00:25:50 Voices criticism at standard of refereeing at inter-county level and the inconsistency in the disciplinary process.</p> <p>00:26:48 Talks about the commitment and volunteerism at local level.</p> <p>00:27:05 Considers some of the changes in how Gaelic football is played – criticises blanket defences, over use of handpass and draws unfavourable comparison with hurling in terms of its entertainment value. Mentions going to All-Ireland hurling finals and his admiration for the skill required for the game.</p> <p>00:27:53 Best GAA memory: winning the Hogan Cup in 1969 and the paucity of success for Kerry colleges teams.</p> <p>00:28:40 Reflects on the changes in GAA coverage of Gaelic games. Mentions growing up in 1940s and the number of households with radios, listening to football and hurling match commentaries.</p> <p>00:29:40 Worst GAA memory: Seamus Darby's goal to deny Kerry a 5 in a row in 1982. Recalls exchange with Tony McTague in Hogan Stand after game; recalls also the atmosphere among Kerry supporters on night of final.</p> <p>00:31:17 Talks about what the GAA means to him, the enjoyment he derived out of it and the people he has met through it.</p>
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<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p><input 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>N/A</p>
<p>Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Format</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual</p>
<p>Duration</p>	<p>Length of Interview: 00:33:31</p>
<p>Language</p>	<p>English</p>

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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: Aidan O'Donoghue

Date: 23rd August 2012