

## GAA Oral History Project

## Interview Report Form

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Regina Fitzpatrick
<b>Date of Interview</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2013
<b>Location</b>	Springhill Hotel, Kilkenny City.
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Henry Shefflin
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1979 <b>Home County:</b> Kilkenny
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> St Patrick's National School, Ballyhale, Co. Kilkenny <b>Secondary:</b> St Kieran's College, Kilkenny. <b>Third Level:</b> Waterford Institute of Technology
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> Parents (Henry and Mae), three sisters and three brothers. <b>Current Family if Different:</b> Deirdre (wife), two daughters and one son.
<b>Club(s)</b>	Ballyhale Shamrocks GAA Club.
<b>Occupation</b>	Sales Manager, Bank of Ireland
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Retired Farmers and Publicans
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	None
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	Mount Juliet Golf Club

<b>Date of Report</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> November 2013
<b>Period Covered</b>	1979 – 2013
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Kilkenny, Waterford, Dublin, Tipperary, Offaly, Galway, Cork, Wexford, Laois
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	All-Ireland, Career, Celebrations, Challenges, Childhood, Club History, Coaching, Commiserations, County history, Earliest Memories, Education, Family involvement, Food and drink, Fundraising, Grounds, Impact on life, Media, Playing, Relationships, Rivalries, Role of club in the community, Socialising, Supporting, Training, Travel
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>00:00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:00:24 Description of Ballyhale, Co. Kilkenny where he was raised. Growing up in the family pub, his siblings and his place in the family. Description of daily life with the farm and the pub.</p> <p>00:01:17 Mother from Glenmore and father's family from Ballyhale back through the generations. His father working in England for a period of time and then coming home to take over the family pub.</p> <p>00:02:05 Family history of involvement in Gaelic games. His father playing hurling for Warwickshire in England and playing in a Junior All-Ireland for them in 1957. Mentions the amalgamation of Ballyhale, Knocktopher and Knockmoylan into Ballyhale Shamrocks. His mother playing camogie. Mentions Monsignor Paul Fitzgerald, his mother's brother who played minor hurling for Kilkenny.</p> <p>00:03:30 Hurling as their primary pastime as children. Looking up to his brothers playing hurling and sisters playing camogie. Playing in the national school grounds. Always having a hurl and ball with them doing farm work etc. Success of Ballyhale Shamrocks when he was growing up. The age gap between him and his older siblings.</p> <p>00:04:58 Going to St Kieran's College matches and watching his brother play with Charlie Carter, Pat O'Neill and DJ Carey. These matches having a great influence on him growing up.</p> <p>00:05:25 Going to club matches, the success of Ballyhale Shamrocks at the time. Rushing home to work in the pub after matches. Listening to men talking about hurling in the pub.</p> <p>00:06:13 The place of hurling in St Patrick's National School.</p>

	<p>Mentions Joe Dunphy, the principle who drove hurling in the school and who would have trained the Fennellys, Aidan Cummins, Cha Fitzpatrick, TJ Reid etc who were all past pupils of the school. Going to school matches in the evenings. Remembers from a young age trying to get on teams. Hurling was the main sport of the school which was down to Joe's influence. Seeing his own 6 year old daughter now starting to play and comparing her experience now to when he was that age.</p> <p>00:08:05 Playing at lunchtime in school. Mentions the school leagues as a huge deal when he was in school.</p> <p>00:09:05 Hurling tradition in the area, the success of former teams, the Fennellys etc. Ballyhale Shamrocks being relegated. Famous players as part of daily life in the locality. Looking up to the Fennellys and Paul Phelan who scored the winning goal in a county final when he was child. Talks about the rivalry between the Shamrocks and his mother's club, Glenmore who had players like Christy Heffernan and the O'Connors.</p> <p>00:11:52 First All-Ireland he remembers is the 1987 All-Ireland when Kilkenny were defeated. Remembers 1990 when his father was a selector with Kilkenny along with Pat Delaney and enjoying being part of the county set up and playing with Pat's son Podge. Going to matches as a teenager with his friends. Remembers going to the Kilkenny home coming celebrations in 1992 which was the same day he started in St Kieran's College. Success of Kilkenny in subsequent years.</p> <p>00:13:30 Going to St Kieran's College. Influence of his uncle and his older brothers who had also been students there. Really wanting to go to school there having gone to see his older brothers play in college matches. Repeating 6<sup>th</sup> class and getting an extra year of hurling in at national school level. Starting in St Kieran's in the same class as his brother. Mentions other hurlers who were his friends including Pat Tennyson and JP O'Neill. Playing wall ball. Getting a lift to school with Willie Dermody. Thumbing home from school after training.</p> <p>00:16:10 Hurling having a big part of school life from first year onwards. Mentions under-14 competition. Mr Walsh, Tom Hogan, Tommy Lannigan, Nickey Cahsin, Denis Philpot and Adrian Fynan all involved in training teams in St Kieran's at that time. Success of Ballyhale NS at the end of his time there. Competitiveness of getting on teams in St Kieran's. Going from being a key player in National School team to</p>
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	<p>having to work very hard in St Kieran's to get on teams. Winning All-Ireland Colleges title against St Colman's, Cork in 1996. Losing Leinster Final to Good Counsel, Wexford in 1997. Getting on to St Kieran's College senior team as a key moment for him. School spirit around the hurling matches. Injury sustained in a match against St Peter's, Wexford. Faith of Denis Philpot in him. His own development as a player in St Kieran's College.</p> <p>00:20:39 His team mates on the senior team at St Kieran's - Seán Dowling, David Carroll, Michael Kavanagh, Podge Delaney, Willie Maher (Tipperary), McEvoy (Laois), Tomás O'Dowd.</p> <p>00:21:34 Talks about rivals in the colleges competition at the time – Good Counsel (Wexford) and Birr (Offaly). Celebrations when they won All-Ireland Colleges Final. Treatment of players in the school, getting time off from class to go to matches. Playing Gaelic football as well. Training after school and during school holidays.</p> <p>00:23:45 Relationship between the St Kieran's College senior team and the Kilkenny minor hurling team set up. Starting to play for Kilkenny minors with Aidan Cummins (nephew of Frank Cummins).</p> <p>00:25:22 The minor set up in Kilkenny when he stated playing with them. Liam Fennelly from Ballyhale as a selector and Fr Liam Barron from around Mullinavat/Glenmore as trainer at the time (1996).The 1995 minor team having been defeated by Cork with players like Seán Óg Ó hAlpín and Dónal Óg Cusack. Struggling initially in the Kilkenny minor team, being sub-goalie. Playing in goal with Ballyhale at the time and having a bad day in that position leading to him being moved out the field. Mentions Patrick Holden who was the minor goalie and the St Kieran's goalie at the time. Being picked to play corner forward for the Leinster final having done well in that position in a club match two weeks previously. Being taken off and being a sub the next day when they were defeated in the All-Ireland semi final.</p> <p>00:27:55 Positions he played in St Kieran's College, his ability at that stage in terms of skill and speed. Playing squash and wall ball with his brother Paul in the squash court at the back of their house and honing his skills there – eye-hand coordination, first touch hurling, hitting targets etc.</p> <p>00:30:09 His brothers John and Tommy as successful hurlers in their own right, playing minor and under-21 for Kilkenny.</p>
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	<p>00:30:44 1997, his second year playing minor for Kilkenny. Playing corner forward, defeating Offaly in the Leinster Final. Celebrating in Egan's Bar in Kilkenny afterwards. Being defeated by Clare in the All-Ireland semi-final, having a bad match that day, missing some frees and being disappointed to go out on a whimper.</p> <p>00:32:00 The minor training schedule. Training in places like Callan. Enjoying the food after training. Fr. Barron taking them training. Enjoying hanging around with his friends after training.</p> <p>33:28 The disappointment of the loss against Clare in 1997, chatting to Noel Hickey that night about it. Being out late that night and getting up early to go to work the following morning for Waterford Stanley and then playing a challenge match for the club that night.</p> <p>35:04 That year (1997) being a pivotal year for Ballyhale Shamrocks and for him personally as a player. Winning minor Roinn A against James Stephens and the following week winning the Intermediate county final and being promoted back up to senior hurling. Playing well on both days and getting confidence from that.</p> <p>00:36:00 Becoming a student at WIT and playing Fitzgibbon Cup hurling there. Developing as a hurler there. Playing UCC in the Fitzgibbon Cup Final in his first year there. Mentions players he looked up to who played in that competition including Joe Deane, Seanie McGrath, Colm Cassidy. Training going up a notch in WIT. Mentions Pádraig Fanning as a big influence and Colm Bonar. Playing in both the Freshers and the Fitzgibbon competition at the time. Training during the Christmas holidays in WIT. Toughness of the Fitzgibbon weekend – high standard of hurlers. Winning Fitzgibbon Cup in 1999 and 2000. Mentions Eamon Corcoran. Playing the Garda team in Templemore. Parents attending the Fitzgibbon final weekend. How central hurling was to his life in WIT.</p> <p>00:41:16 Managing training for college, club and county. Playing intermediate for Kilkenny, Noel Skeehan training them. Training on his own as well as training with the various teams.</p> <p>00:42:58 1998 Kevin Fennelly was managing the Kilkenny under 21 team at the time. Getting a place on that team and being charged with taking frees. Having a good match against Offaly who defeated them in the All-Ireland Final but standing</p>
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	<p>out as a good player that day.</p> <p>00:44:27 Brian Cody getting the job of manager of the Kilkenny senior hurling team in the winter of 1998. Picked Henry for the panel for 1999. Mentions Johnny Walsh who was a selector that year and from Ballyhale and who phoned Henry to ask him if he would join the senior panel for the 1999 season.</p> <p>00:45:32 Going into training the first night. Mentions Mick O'Flynn who worked in the CBS in Kilkenny where they had training his first night. Mentions Michael Kavanagh who he was already friends with. Also mentions Pat O'Neill, Philly Larkin who he also knew from working at Suir Electric. DJ Carey coming over to him and wishing him well. Keeping his head down for the first while.</p> <p>00:47:11 Being very fit when he joined the team. Differences in fitness levels of players at the beginning of the season, then and now. Mentions Joe Dermody and Pat O'Neill.</p> <p>00:47:55 Training schedules – changes in approaches to training since then. Running in Gowran Park and Bennettsbridge – influence of the methods of Clare hurling training. Mentions rest and recovery approach of today. Peter Barry giving himself and Michael Kavanagh a lift to training from Waterford. Enjoying training.</p> <p>00:49:40 Brian Cody's approach. Building spirit and unity in the team.</p> <p>00:50:25 Mentions Andy Maloney who had a very similar approach to training in WIT.</p> <p>00:51:07 Noreen Roche, the dietician for the Kilkenny senior hurling team having everyone write a food diary. Mentions Langton's taking care of the after training food for the team. Looking after himself for training.</p> <p>00:52:32 Narrative of his experiences on the Kilkenny senior hurling team. Getting the chance to take the frees from the very beginning, DJ Carey's generosity in stepping aside to let him do that. Losing in the All-Ireland to Cork in 1999. Winning the U21 All-Ireland the following week. Early stages of his career trying to hang in there and work hard. 2000 season having a shoulder injury but getting very fit through running. Defeating Offaly in the 2000 All-Ireland and winning his first All-Star that year. Mentions Willie O'Connor who was captain that year and who played on in the All-Ireland with a broken rib.</p>
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	<p>00:56:24 Gaining confidence from his successes in 2000. 2001 not a very successful year. Having difficulty marking Gregory Kennedy of Galway and learning a lot from that experience. Brian Cody preparing for the 2002 season, big turnover of players, fresh start for the team. Henry feeling very hungry for success that year. Winning Hurler of the Year in 2002. Finishing college that year, studying hard. Walking in and out to college for fitness purposes.</p> <p>00:59:47 Daily routine at that time. Working for Bank of Ireland. Travelling a lot with work, having time to think while driving around; training a lot on his own; training with the team.</p> <p>1:01:16 Routine coming up to a big match and on the day of a big match. Trying to stay away from the newspapers. Travelling on the bus to matches, changing positions in the bus as time went on.</p> <p>1:03:38 Pre-match preparation before a big match. Soaking up the atmosphere. Each player having their own place in the dressing room. Players having physio work, going into warm up area, listening to music etc. Pre-match talk.</p> <p>1:05:23 His own changing role in the team. 2002 being a pivotal year and starting develop leadership qualities after that.</p> <p>1:06:48 The development of the Kilkenny senior hurling team 2002-2013. Successful minor set up, players like Ritchie Power, Cha Fitzpatrick, John Tennyson coming through. Strong nucleus to the team on top of that. Having a sustained period of hunger, Brian Cody's role in that – maintaining the desire to keep winning. Players being grounded individuals who really wanted to play and win. Importance of Brian Cody. Reflection on 2013 season. Always looking forward to the next season.</p> <p>1:09:16 Sustaining energy, hunger and fitness. Brian's role in maintaining all of those aspects. Development in sport science. Preparing himself mentally. Having the luxury of a very strong panel. Importance of instilling unity of purpose in each player.</p> <p>1:11:13 His own proudest moments in his career to date including winning the minor all-Ireland, captaining Kilkenny, winning the 2006 Kilkenny county final with Ballyhale Shamrocks and winning the 2012 All-Ireland.</p> <p>1:13:16 The low points of his career including the 2005</p>
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	<p>county final, injuries over the last three years; 2013 as a frustrating year.</p> <p>1:14:27 Balancing family life with his playing career. Support of his wife Deirdre. Injuries particularly challenging with young children. The enjoyment that they have gotten out of the GAA as a family.</p> <p>1:16:08 Keeping grounded amidst the notoriety. Importance of family life.</p> <p>1:17:47 The experience of watching the 2013 All-Ireland. Currently injury free, sitting down to think about 2014 now.</p>
<p><b>Involvement in GAA</b></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" 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><b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>St. Kieran's College: All-Ireland Senior Colleges' Hurling Championship: Winner 1996; Leinster Senior Colleges' Hurling Championship: Winner 1996, 1997.</p> <p>Waterford Institute of Technology: Fitzgibbon Cup winner: 1998–99, 1999–00.</p> <p>Ballyhale Shamrocks: All-Ireland Senior Club Hurling Championship: Winner: 2007, 2010; Leinster Senior Club Hurling Championship: Winner: 2006, 2008, 2009; Kilkenny Senior Hurling Championship: Winner: 2006, 2007 (inj.), 2008, 2009, 2012; Runner-up: 2005, 2011.</p> <p>Kilkenny: All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship: Winner: 2000, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012; Runner-up: 1999, 2004, 2010; Leinster Senior Hurling Championship: Winner (12): 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011. National Hurling League: Winner: 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2009; Runner-up: 2007; Walsh Cup: winner: 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009.</p> <p>Leinster: Railway Cup: Winner: 2002, 2003, 2009; Runner-up: 2000.</p> <p>Individual: All Stars: 11: 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012; Texaco Hurler of the Year: 2002, 2006, 2012; All Stars Hurler of the Year: 2002, 2006, 2012; GPA Hurler of the Year: 2002, 2006, 2012; RTÉ Sports Person of the Year: 2006.</p>



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<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: 1:19:37
<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:      Regina Fitzpatrick

Date:      6<sup>th</sup> November 2013