

GAA Oral History Project

**Interview Report Form**

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Arlene Crampsie
<b>Date of Interview</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> Feb 2011
<b>Location</b>	Syddan Clubhouse, Co. Meath
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Patsy Duff
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1929 <b>Home County:</b> Meath
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Newtown NS
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 2 brothers <b>Current Family if Different:</b> Married with one daughter and one son
<b>Club(s)</b>	Syddan GFC
<b>Occupation</b>	Farm Worker
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	County Council [Father]; Housewife (Mo)
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	Fianna Fáil
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	Gun Club

REFERENCE NO. MH/1/11

<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Paddy Meegan
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1922 <b>Home County:</b> Meath
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Newtown NS <b>Secondary:</b> St. Finian's, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 1 brother & 1 sister <b>Current Family if Different:</b> Married with 1 son
<b>Club(s)</b>	Syddan GFC
<b>Occupation</b>	Farmer
<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

REFERENCE NO. MH/1/11

<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Paddy Sheehy
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1940 <b>Home County:</b> Meath
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Herstown NS
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 7 brothers & 1 sister <b>Current Family if Different:</b> Married with 3 daughters and 1 son
<b>Club(s)</b>	Syddan GFC
<b>Occupation</b>	Meath Potato Company, Farmer
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	County Council [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	Gun Club

REFERENCE NO. MH/1/11

<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Pat Dillon
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1938 <b>Home County:</b> Meath
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Newtown NS
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 3 brothers & 2 sisters <b>Current Family if Different:</b> Widowed with 3 sons
<b>Club(s)</b>	Syddan GFC
<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

REFERENCE NO. MH/1/11

<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Gerry Dillon
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1974 <b>Home County:</b> Meath
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Newtown NS <b>Secondary:</b> Ardee Community School
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 2 brothers <b>Current Family if Different:</b> 1 son
<b>Club(s)</b>	Syddan GFC
<b>Occupation</b>	Unemployed
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Farmer [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	Sinn Féin
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	Sinn Féin

**REFERENCE NO. MH/1/11**

<b>Date of Report</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> August 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	1891 – 2011
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Meath, Louth, Dublin
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Playing, Training, Coaching, Refereeing, Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Administration, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Education, Role of Clergy, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Identity, Culture, Volunteers, Rivalries, Media, Religion, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Club History, County History, Purchase of Grounds, Relationship with the Association
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>Patsy Duff, Pat Dillon, Gerry Dillon, Paddy Sheehy and Paddy Meegan talk about their earliest GAA memories, playing football in Syddan. They discuss the lack of facilities and the forms of transport used to travel to matches. They recall travelling to Croke Park for All-Ireland finals and the excitement in Syddan in 1949 and 1954 after the Meath All-Ireland victories. The men talk about their involvement in administration within Syddan club and at county board level. Paddy Meegan talks about his inter-county football career. They discuss what GAA has meant to them in their lifetime and their hopes for Syddan club into the future.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:50 Pat talks about his earliest GAA memory – playing juvenile football in Kells. Recalls travelling to matches by bus.</p> <p>02:02 Patsy recalls his earliest GAA memories – winning the Under 14 championship. Recalls travelling to matches by pony and trap. Recalls football being called off during the war years (World War Two) from 1941 to 1946.</p> <p>03:45 Patsy recalls a school teacher in Newtown taking some of the team to matches in his car.</p> <p>04:30 Discusses Syddan winning the championship in 1941. Mentions Tom Keegan.</p> <p>05:29 Paddy talks about his earliest GAA memory – playing juvenile football in 1950. Recalls 2 lorries from the community travelling to Croke Park in 1949 for the All-Ireland.</p> <p>06:28 The men discuss the rivalry between Louth and Meath in the late 40s and early 50s.</p> <p>08:37 Gerry talks about his earliest GAA memories – the</p>

	<p>successful Syddan team of the late 70s and early 80s. Recalls attending the All-Ireland final in 1987.</p> <p>11:30 Patsy lists men within Syddan that have won awards at county level.</p> <p>16:15 The men discuss the history of the club. Talk about the formation of the club in 1891 – Syddan Emmets.</p> <p>17:23 The men discuss characters involved in the formation of the club – mention Bill Dillon, Mick Farrelly, Andy Dardis and Tommy Geraghty.</p> <p>19:20 The men talk about early football in Syddan. Recall an amalgamation with Lobinstown for a short time.</p> <p>20:50 Facilities in the early days – very poor. Recall using local farmer’s fields to play matches.</p> <p>22:55 Pat recalls lining the fields and putting up goal posts before matches.</p> <p>23:59 Paddy S talks about attending the All-Ireland final in 1960. Mentions a crowd of 91,000 in attendance.</p> <p>24:35 Patsy talks about rows at matches in the early days among spectators.</p> <p>25:20 Pat recalls being at the 1960 All-Ireland.</p> <p>27:21 Paddy S talks about Down introducing a different style of football in 1960 – fast moving ball.</p> <p>29:15 The men discuss the development of the club. They talk about the purchase of grounds in the late 1960s. Recall the opening of the pitch in 1971.</p> <p>30:15 Gerry mentions that Syddan have complete ownership of their facilities and pitch – Meath County Board have no say over the pitch.</p> <p>31:20 Paddy Meegan joins meeting. Recalls his earliest GAA memory – attending Newtown school in late 1920s. Mentions Fr Drake and his involvement in juvenile football.</p> <p>32:20 Paddy M recalls Syddan club becoming defunct in the late 1920s. Mentions Bill Dillon – notes that he played with Castletown in these years. Recalls that Bill won a Feis Cup.</p> <p>35:15 Talks about the revival of the Syddan club in the mid 1930s. Recalls the progression into intermediate football in 1939.</p>
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	<p>36:15 Discusses the death of Tom Keegan during an intermediate match in 1939.</p> <p>37:44 Paddy M recalls that Syddan were confined to Newtown Parish. Teams at the other end of the parish made up The Bog Larks club. Fierce rivalry.</p> <p>39:27 Recalls an amalgamation with Lobinstown in 1947. Recalls winning a senior championship in 1949.</p> <p>44:20 Paddy M discusses the Feis Cup – a longstanding tournament for senior and intermediate teams in Meath.</p> <p>45:35 Paddy M recalls being present at the purchase of the Keegan Cup, a second hand cup from a London horseshow.</p> <p>49:23 Recalls the Keegan Cup being presented to Fr Tully on the Meath County Board in 1953. Navan O'Mahony's were first team to win the cup. Syddan won in 1956.</p> <p>50:30 Paddy M talks about the purchase of grounds for Syddan club. Mentions Tom Ludlow – bought land and donated field to the club and land to the church.</p> <p>52:55 Paddy M – Rivalry with Skryne. Talks about the formation of the North Meath Team, an amalgamation of 7 teams. Recalls the proposal being brought to the Meath County Board.</p> <p>55:37 The North Meath team comprised of Drumconrath, Nobber, Castletown, Kilmainhamwood, Rathkenny, Meath Hill, The Bog Larks. Only lasted about 3 years.</p> <p>58:09 Paddy S talks about the cessation of the North Meath team.</p> <p>59:20 Paddy S and Pat recall their playing days with Syddan.</p> <p>01:00:04 Patsy talks about Syddan men who played on the Meath county team.</p> <p>01:03:32 Paddy M talks about his playing days – 2 All-Ireland wins in 1949 and 1954 and his Railway Cup successes.</p> <p>01:05:42 Paddy M talks about his call up to the county team. Recalls being selected after an intermediate championship match with Syddan. Played from 1942 – 1954 and never missed a championship match.</p> <p>01:07:21 Discusses training on the county team.</p> <p>01:08:30 Recalls staying in Gibbstown for a fortnight before</p>
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	<p>the All-Ireland final in 1949 – collective training.</p> <p>01:11:00 Discusses the All-Ireland final in 1949 – recalls suffering from a sprained ankle.</p> <p>01:11:50 Talks about the celebrations that ensued after the All-Ireland victory.</p> <p>01:13:34 Paddy S recalls celebrations in Meath.</p> <p>01:14:14 Paddy M tells a story of Mickey Murphy.</p> <p>01:19:15 Patsy discusses his playing career. He recalls playing football at minor level but injuring his knee. Mentions that there was no support from the GAA in those days.</p> <p>01:20:40 Discusses his tenure on the county board for 20 years.</p> <p>01:21:09 Patsy talks about the difference in the structure of football today compared to his early playing days.</p> <p>01:22:15 Patsy recalls travelling to minor county board meetings in Navan by bicycle.</p> <p>01:24:15 Gerry talks about his role in administration. Talks about the importance of young people becoming involved in the administration side of the club.</p> <p>01:28:10 Gerry discusses the expenses of running a club today.</p> <p>01:29:30 The men discuss fundraising efforts within the club.</p> <p>01:30:08 The men discuss past fundraising efforts – recall that not as much money was needed in earlier years.</p> <p>01:32:32 Paddy M notes that he represented Syddan at county board level on several occasions. Recalls objecting to venues and referees.</p> <p>01:33:30 Pat and Paddy S discuss their involvement with the club.</p> <p>01:34:20 The men discuss the lack of hurling in the community. They recall a teacher in Newtown bringing hurling into the school for a short time.</p> <p>01:37:10 The men talk about football being played in Syddan before the formation of the GAA.</p> <p>01:38:20 The men discuss the impact of World War Two on the GAA.</p>
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**REFERENCE NO. MH/1/11**

	<p>01:41:52 Gerry reads a poem associated with Syddan club.</p> <p>01:45:30 Paddy M recites his poem “Builders”.</p> <p>01:49:29 Paddy S discusses his best memories of being involved in the GAA – recalls the bonfire after the All-Ireland win in 1949.</p> <p>01:51:23 Gerry discusses his highlights of being involved in the GAA – Meath’s 4 All-Ireland successes, being Chairman of the club in 1999 when Syddan won the championship.</p> <p>01:52:46 Pat talks about his best memories of involvement in GAA – talks about Meath’s All-Ireland victories, Syddan’s championship victories.</p> <p>01:53:38 Paddy M talks about his highlights of being involved in the GAA – being involved in the All-Ireland team of 1949 and Syddan winning their first championship.</p> <p>01:54:13 Patsy discusses his best memories of being involved in the GAA – the play that led to Meath beating Dublin.</p> <p>01:55:23 The men discuss their biggest disappointments within the GAA.</p> <p>01:57:56 The men talks about their GAA heroes. Mention John Joe O’Reilly, Tony Tighe, Mick Higgins, the Gunner Brady of Cavan. Also mentions Sean Purcell of Galway, Mick O’Connell and Jack O’Shea of Kerry.</p> <p>02:06:32 Paddy M recalls being picked to play centre field with Leinster.</p> <p>02:09:00 Paddy M tells a story of local man Alec Donegan.</p> <p>02:12:49 The men discuss what their involvement in the GAA has meant to them in their lifetime.</p> <p>02:17:00 Paddy S and Pat talk about their current involvement in umpiring.</p> <p>02:17:38 Gerry talks about his hopes for Syddan club in the future.</p> <p>02:19:15 Patsy talks about ladies football in the club.</p>
<p><b>Involvement in GAA</b></p>	<p><b>Patsy:</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager   <input type="checkbox"/> Coach   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steward</p>

REFERENCE NO. MH/1/11

	<p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caterer   <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer   <input type="checkbox"/> Referee   <input type="checkbox"/> None  <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): ___Selector (27 years)_____         </p> <p><b>Paddy M:</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  <input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person  <input type="checkbox"/> Caterer   <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Referee   <input type="checkbox"/> None  <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____         </p> <p><b>Paddy S.:</b></p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player   <input type="checkbox"/> Manager   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steward  <input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caterer   <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer   <input type="checkbox"/> Referee   <input type="checkbox"/> None  <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____         </p> <p><b>Pat:</b></p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player   <input type="checkbox"/> Manager   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steward  <input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caterer   <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer   <input type="checkbox"/> Referee   <input type="checkbox"/> None  <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____         </p> <p><b>Gerry:</b></p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach   <input type="checkbox"/> Steward  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caterer   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer   <input type="checkbox"/> Referee   <input type="checkbox"/> None  <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____         </p>
<p><b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p><b>Patsy:</b> Played from 1939 – 1948. Won a juvenile medal.</p> <p><b>Paddy M:</b></p>

**REFERENCE NO. MH/1/11**

	<p>Colleges: Leinster Colleges Medal with St. Finian's, Mullingar and Provincial medal with Leinster Colleges.</p> <p>Club: 4 Meath Senior Football Championships, 1 Intermediate Championship</p> <p>County: 5 Leinster Titles, 2 Senior All-Ireland's, 1 National League, 4 Railway Cups with Leinster</p> <p><b>Paddy S.:</b> Played from the age of 12 to 36. Won a number of tournaments.</p> <p><b>Pat:</b> Played from the age of 12 to 32. Won a number of tournaments.</p> <p><b>Gerry:</b> Played for 14 years. Won a junior championship in 1992.</p>
<p><b>Record as an Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)</p>	<p><b>Patsy:</b> Was involved in administration from c. 1945 – 1995.</p> <p>Club: Chairman (3 years), Vice-chairman, Minor Committee Chairman and Minor Committee Secretary (12 years).</p> <p>County: Disciplinary Official Minor County Board (3 years)</p> <p><b>Paddy M:</b> Was involved in administration from 1946 – 1960 as a club committee member and Delegate to County Board.</p> <p><b>Paddy S.:</b> Has been involved in administration since 1956 / 1957.</p> <p><b>Pat:</b> Has been involved in administration since 1956 / 1957.</p> <p>Club: Juvenile Treasurer (30 years+).</p> <p><b>Gerry:</b> Has been involved in administration since 1994.</p> <p>Club: Chairman (7 years), PRO (4 years))</p>

**REFERENCE NO. MH/1/11**

<b>Format</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
<b>Duration</b>	Length of Interview: 02:22:03
<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:      \_\_\_\_\_Arlene Crampsie\_\_\_\_\_

Date:      \_\_\_\_\_06/08/12\_\_\_\_\_