

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	15 th Aug 2010
Location	Abbeyleix District Hospital, Co. Laois
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	John Lawless. John's son Matt also present.
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1911 Home County: Laois
Education	Primary: Durrow NS, Co. Laois.
Family	Siblings: 1 brother and 1 sister Current Family if Different: 3 sons and 3 daughter
Club(s)	Kyle GAA [Laois]; Durrow GAA [Laois]
Occupation	Agricultural Worker and Riding Whip for the Hunt on the Moyne Estate; Truck Driver.
Parents' Occupation	Agricultural Worker on the Moyne Estate [Father]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fine Gael
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

REFERENCE NO. LS/1/5

Date of Report	23 rd July 2012
Period Covered	1911-2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Laois
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Material Culture, Education, Media, Emigration, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, Irish Language, Culture, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish, History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Violence, Politics, The Troubles, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Professionalism, Socialising, Relationships, Economy/ Economics
Interview Summary	<p>John talks about his life and involvement with the GAA. Born in 1911 he grew up in an area of Laois where hurling was prominent. He describes playing with his friends growing up and making their own hurleys. He lined out for the Kyle team and later with Durrow, enjoying some success along the way. John also talks about the social and historical background to those times. There was much political instability and people lived in fear of the Black and Tans. For a lot of his life there was no electricity and when the motor car arrived it was a great novelty. He also describes his trips to Croke Park - occasionally on his bicycle but mostly on the train from Abbeyleix, where a good time was always had by the many passengers on board.</p> <p>00:00 Born in 1911. Lived in Kyle. Lots of good hurlers there. 01:15 Six Hetheringtons on one team. 01:50 Junior team in Kyle in the 1920s and 1930s he was on with his brother and Paddy Fitzpatrick. Mikey Farrell also played. 03:05 Training in Cantwell's field. 03:40 Family involvement in the GAA. 04:25 The Troubles going on at the time. Ballacolla, Durrow, Abbeyleix other teams. 05:20 Other games people played, like cricket. Moyne had a team. 06:00 Estate nearby where his father worked. Dunmore was another estate in the area, as was De Vesci. 07:05 Work his father did on the estate. 08:10 What the estate owners were like. 09:10 Ballygeehan selection. Johnny Cashin, Joe Power,</p>

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	<p>Jackie Daly and the Hetheringtons playing. 10:00 Training they did. 10:30 Making his own hurleys and how he did that. 12:35 Use of broken glass in hurley making. 13:00 People asking him to make hurleys. Selling them and what he charged. 14:05 What his father's generation hurled with. 14:50 What they wore when they played. Other teams' colours. 15:25 Hurling boots and studs. Where they got them. 16:15 Father playing hurling. 16:55 What hurling was like when he was young. 17:15 Camogie in Kyle. 18:05 Players he admired. 18:55 Lory Meagher a well-known player. 19:25 Playing every Sunday. 20:05 Introduction of the motor car and its impact. 20:40 Cycling to Dublin. Time that took. Getting punctures. 22:00 First time in Croke Park. Taking the train from Abbeylax. 23:20 Singing on the train. 23:45 Kilkenny playing in Croke Park the first time he went. 24:25 Lory Meagher playing. 25:05 Junior team in the area. 25:25 Rathdowney and Ballygeehan their rivals.</p> <p>26:10 Songs that were sung on the way back from Croke Park. 26:40 Position he played on the pitch. 27:05 Training themselves. 27:35 Durrow and Rathdowney had a proper pitch. 27:50 Having to put up their own goalposts. 28:00 Many Delaneys in Stradbally. Hurling prominent there. Tommy Murphy a talented player. 28:30 Listening to games on the radio. Micheál Ó hÉihir commentating. 29:45 Coverage in local newspapers. The Nationalist. The Leinster. 30:25 Mikey Farrell working on an estate. 30:45 Jack Keane. 31:00 Success they enjoyed on the pitch. Winning medals. 31:35 Celebrations they had. 32:30 Dances held in houses. 34:55 People speaking Irish. Nationalist aspects of GAA. 35:35 GAA during the Troubles. Black and Tans. 36:55 Following the Laois team. 38:15 Meeting his wife at a dance. Where they lived when they got married.</p>
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	<p>40:20 Estate owners interested in other sports. 40:40 Difference between hockey and hurling. 41:00 Ballygeehan a great Laois team. 41:35 Playing for Durrow. 41:55 Changing from the Kyle team to Durrow. 42:40 Different dances going on. 44:45 Visiting other houses. Playing cards. 44:35 Changes he has seen over the years. 45:30 Electricity coming in. 46:15 Ground hurling when he was playing. 46:40 Mick Mackey and the Limerick team. 47:10 Fighting at games. 47:35 Acting as an umpire. 48:40 Administrative involvement. 49:25 O'Moore Park when he was younger. 49:55 Football in Stradbally. 50:25 Awareness of the Ban. 50:55 Lory Meagher a good player. 51:20 Hunting foxes. 51:55 Role of the GAA in his life. 52:10 Emigration in his time. Hurling team suffering. People playing in England. 53:50 Prospect of professionalism.</p> <p>Matt Lawless continues:</p> <p>54:30 Living behind a hurling field near Durrow. Family carrying on the GAA tradition. 54:50 Playing GAA every evening. 55:40 Training they did. 55:55 Hurling at Durrow school. 56:20 Mr Hassett and Tommy Shepherd's involvement. 57:05 Tom Flynn, Martin Brophy good hurlers in the 1970s. 57:20 Breadman in Durrow bringing them to games in the 1960s.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input checked="" 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 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>Played for approx. 15 years.</p>

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Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	N/A
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 00:57:56
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: Regina Fitzpatrick

Date: 23rd July 2012