

GAA Oral History Project
Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Regina Fitzpatrick
Date of Interview	23 rd Mar 2010
Location	Interviewee's home, near Sandymount, Dublin
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Derry O'Donovan
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1945 Home County: Cork
Education	Primary: Ballinspittle NS Secondary: St Francis College, Rochestown Third Level: Pallaskenry Agricultural College; UCC; UCD
Family	Siblings: 1 brother & 3 sisters Current Family if Different: Wife (Mary); 1 son & 1 daughter
Club(s)	Coursey Rovers [Cork]
Occupation	Retired Senior Business Advisor, AIB
Parents' Occupation	Farmers
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Fianna Fáil
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Chairman of Red Cross Society, Board Member of ESB, President of Kilkenny Rotary Club, Irish National Commission for UNESCO, Founding Director of International Breast Cancer Foundation, Board Member of St Luke's National Cancer Hospital

REFERENCE NO. CK/1/18

Date of Report	22 nd May 2012
Period Covered	1920s-2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Cork, Kilkenny, Dublin, Roscommon, Wicklow
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Education, Media, Role of Teachers, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Identity, Rivalries, Irish Language, Culture, Scór, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish, History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Alcohol, The Troubles, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Opening of Croke Park, Professionalism, Retirement, Food and Drink, Socialising, Relationships, Economy / Economics
Interview Summary	<p>00:15 Living in Sandymount, Dublin. Originally from Ballinspittle, Cork. Born in 1945.</p> <p>00:40 Club in Cork is Courcey Rovers, named after a De Courcey man.</p> <p>00:55 First Irish national school built in Ballinspittle in 1833. Oldest church in Cork there. A king resided there thousands of years ago, where the Old Head of Kinsale Golf Links is in 2010.</p> <p>01:30 Jim O'Regan the most significant man in the club's history. His background as a player for Cork, winning All-Ireland medals and beating Kilkenny and Lory Maher.</p> <p>01:55 Derry born in 1945. Hurling the main sport in his parish. Courcey Rovers club formed in 1947. What club did for the community.</p> <p>03:30 Club winning county junior title in 2001. Strength of club in 2010.</p> <p>05:10 Involvement of family in GAA. Father involved in club administration. Uncle, Dr Charlie O'Donovan, in UCC in the 1920s with Cork hurler Jim Hurley, making a proposal to abolish the Ban in 1924 at the Cork County Convention. Seconded by John Calnan, whose son was a Cork footballer named Dr Nudge Calnan.</p> <p>06:25 Uncle emigrating to Galway. Friendship of uncle with Cork County Board secretary Pádraig Ó Cuiv, who became General Secretary of the GAA and was succeeded by Seán Ó</p>

	<p>Síocháin. Seán's daughter Orla playing camogie. Her marriage to former Tipperary hurler Jack Ryan, who was the son of Séamus Ó Riain, former GAA President. Their son Shane Ryan playing with Dublin in hurling and football.</p> <p>07:25 Uncle organising first hurling game played in Ballinspittle under GAA rules in 1920. War of Independence going on.</p> <p>08:30 Derry's first playing experience playing against an industrial school in Upton. What players wore. Progression through underage ranks. winning titles. Playing with UCC against Carraig Donn, Mount Sion, Glen Rovers and Christy Ring in the Mardyke. All-Ireland winners John O'Halloran and Sean Barry playing alongside him.</p> <p>10:45 Playing in Roscommon. Living in Kilkenney and working with Eddie Kerr. Meeting Billy Fitzpatrick, Pat Henderson, Fan Larkin, Mick Crotty.</p> <p>11:35 Moving to Dublin and working with Nicky English.</p> <p>12:05 History of Ballinspittle. Ballinadee nearby. Jim O'Regan establishing club in 1947. Growing up in Ballinspittle. Sport at school. Background of school.</p> <p>14:20 Listening to Railway Cup on radio. Micheál Ó Heiher and Micheál Ó Muirheartaigh commentating. Talk of Christy Ring, Nicky Rackard on radio.</p> <p>15:15 Sense of equality within the GAA. Importance of performing well on the pitch.</p> <p>16:00 Recalls playing at Under-21 level for the club whilst at UCC. Playing in a final.</p> <p>16:50 Local pitch renamed Páirc Uí Riagáin. Writing an article at the time and the Cork Examiner printing it. Denis Conroy chairman of the county board at the time. Local woman criticising his hurley skills.</p> <p>18:15 Playing football with UCC and the club. Trials for Carbery Division.</p> <p>19:00 His brother, Cathal, a good hurler and captain of the Carbery team for a period. Playing hurling all the time. Working on the farm. Playing games and facilities there. Going dancing.</p>
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	<p>21:45 Going to UCD and returning to Cork for games. Thumbing home from New Land's Cross Going back to Dublin dirty after games. Living in Glasnevin and attending classes at what in 2010 is DCU. Going for a bath in Tara St.</p> <p>24:10 Prominence of hurling at UCC. All-Ireland winner Jim Hurley - who played with Jim O'Regan - heavily involved. His wife Peig being at UCC with Derry's uncle. Their son Brian, a Sigerson and Fitzgibbon Cup winner, at UCC with Derry. Their other son, Eoin, also involved.</p> <p>25:25 Glen Rovers, Blackrock and St Finbarr's the main clubs in Cork in the 1960s. UCC competing with them. Mick McCormack a prominent player - former Kerry player Mick O'Connell is a brother-in-law of his. John O'Halloran and Seán Barry also playing for UCC. Willie Cronin captaining UCC to the Fitzgibbon Cup in 1966 and with UCD in 1968. Strength of GAA. Jim Hurley's influence. Ned RAE?? playing with Limerick.</p> <p>26:50 Supporting camogie team in Ashbourne Cup. Social aspect of GAA. Differences between UCC and UCD experience. Socialising.</p> <p>30:05 Taking notes on games on the train back to Dublin from Cork.</p> <p>31:30 Relationship with Seán Ó Síocháin, Liam Mulvihill and Joan Cooney. Going to dinner parties in Dublin 4 and people talking about rugby. Rugby people attending Croke Park for the first time.</p> <p>33:00 Compares GAA to the ESB. Importance of GAA.</p> <p>33:50 Role of GAA in urban areas. GAA in Dublin 4. Clan na Gael Fontenoy club. Problems of urbanisation. Pro-GAA network in rural Ireland.</p> <p>34:30 Prominence of GAA in St Kieran's College Kilkenny. Prominence of rugby in Belvedere, Blackrock, Michael's, Gonzaga. Irish rugby players beginning their careers in the GAA. Munster finals in Thurles and rugby players attending. Munster rugby supporters and their GAA backgrounds.</p> <p>35:40 Former Irish rugby player Keith Wood talking to Ryan Tubridy about his GAA roots. Ronan O'Gara, Paul O'Connell, Denis Leamy attending GAA games.</p>
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	<p>36:40 Perception of GAA as a result of opening of Croke Park. Former GAA President Con Murphy's point of view on modernisation. Former GAA President Seán Kelly's views on how the GAA ought to move forward. Experiencing games in Nowlan Park, Semple Stadium, Páirc Uí Chaoimh, Croke Park.</p> <p>38:50 GAA backgrounds of Ian Dowling, Willie Duggan, Ned Byrne of Kilkenny.</p> <p>40:05 Ban ending under Pat Fanning's presidency. Derry's uncle proposing that it be abolished. Uncle's friendship with Pádraig O' Keefe. Political and economic strike in the 20th Century. Ireland joining the European Union. Vision of Liam Mulvihill and Peter Quinn.</p> <p>43:00 GAA as a social and cultural movement. Role of Scór. Need to modernise Irish music. Seán Ó Riada's work on Mise Éire. Farnleigh Summit and Dermot Desmond.</p> <p>46:20 Working as an agricultural adviser in Boyle, Roscommon. Playing with the football club in the late 1960s. Playing with John Joe Nerney, who won an All-Ireland with Roscommon in 1944 under Jimmy Murray. Donal Costello, son of General MJ Costello who was head of the Sugar Company in the 1950s, playing hurling. Offaly man Bob Ryan as chairman of the hurling board and having a timber business in Ardcarne. GAA clubs everywhere he went in Roscommon. Gerry O'Malley a prominent Roscommon player in the 1950s. Dermot Earley playing in the 1970s. Going training in the evenings.</p> <p>48:55 Working in industry and moving to Arklow. Watching Arklow Rocks and Carnew Emmets play. Rory O'Shea, who is married to Margo O'Donovan playing. Going to games in Thurles, Killarney and Croke Park to watch Cork play. Cork winning an All-Ireland in 1973. Being friends with Billy Morgan.</p> <p>49:55 Going to boarding school in St Francis College Rochestown and All-Ireland winner Justin McCarthy his classmate. Playing hurling with the college team. Justin McCarthy winning an All-Ireland medal after beating Kilkenny.</p> <p>51:10 Moving into banking in 1973 and moving to Dublin. Going to Kilkenny in the 1970s and working for AIB. Eddie Kerr working there. Popularity of hurling in Kilkenny. Derry's</p>
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	<p>son being taught by Brian Cody in St Patrick's National School. Teresa Mullins looking after his kids. Billy Murphy, All-Ireland winner with Kilkenny - as was his brother Tommy - bringing his Wicklow girlfriend home to Kilkenny and the neighbours talking. GAA knowledge as currency in Kilkenny. Meeting referee Dicky Murphy at a social event and saying he knew Adrian Fenlon of the Wexford team in the 1990s to establish a contact point.</p> <p>57:15 Value of GAA players as employees to the bank. Opinions of people on Eddie Kerr. Eddie being transferred to Carlow. Going to the funeral of Tom Hogan, father of FINN, in Kilkenny with Eddie. Tom and his brother Jim playing hurling and being nephews of Lawrie Maher of Tullaroan.</p> <p>01:00:05 Ultan Macken, son of Walter Macken, writing a book on Eddie Kerr in the 1970s. AIB reluctant to pay for it. Carroll's disengaging from sponsoring the All Stars and Bank Of Ireland taking over. Bob Ryan, PR Manager and father of 2010 Minister for Communications Eamon Ryan, calling to say AIB would sponsor the book launch in Kilkenny Castle. Philly Grimes, Rattler Byrne, Theo English, Babs Keating attending the launch. Man greeting people at the door not recognising many of the famous hurlers arriving. Christy Ring attending. GAA President Con Murphy, Jimmy Langton, Paddy Grace, Ted Carroll, Pat Henderson, Frank Cummins, Seamus Cleere, Billy Fitz attending.</p> <p>01:04:00 Benefits of sponsoring Club of the Year and the All-Ireland club championship. Henry Shefflin, Cha Fitzpatrick, the Reades playing with Ballyhale, the Cannings with Portumna, Newtownshandrum, Blackrock and Nemo Rangers all winning. Benefits of being associated with these clubs for AIB.</p> <p>01:07:00 Enduring appeal of GAA. Volunteerism. Work done by officials within the Association.</p> <p>01:08:50 Presidents of the GAA and their contribution. Donal Keenan, Séamus Ó Riain, Con Murphy, Nicky Brennan. Peter Quinn stands out the most for Derry. Liam Mulvihill's work for the GAA. Friendship with Liam's brother Tom. Seán Ó Síocháin from Cill na Martra. Pádraig Ó Cuiv. Jack Bootman, Dr Mickey Loftus from Crossmalina.</p> <p>01:11:20 GAA at county level. Teachers in the GAA. Difficulties associated with leadership. Pitches around the country. Development of pitch in Ballinspittle. Communities</p>
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	<p>working together.</p> <p>01:15:10 GAA's contribution to the youth of Ireland.</p> <p>01:16:30 Volunteerism. Amateurism in the GAA. Prospect of professionalism. Club scene in rugby. Declining popularity of Railway Cup. Attending a Railway Cup game in Freshford. Paying GAA players.</p> <p>01:19:05 Challenges facing the GAA. Urbanisation and free time. Commitment of teachers. Rule changes. Confidence in GAA to meet future challenges.</p> <p>01:22:45 Being disappointed in the GAA. Attending a game that was abandoned. Physicality of Gaelic games. DJ Carey telling him a story about playing for Young Irelands and getting hit.</p> <p>01:25:20 Modernisation of GAA club facilities.</p> <p>01:26:25 Attending Kilmacud Crokes events in Dublin. Acquaintance with Tom Barry and Sean Donnelly. Non-GAA commitments.</p> <p>01:27:25 Attending All-Irelands. Going to Nowlan Park. Meeting people at games. David Hanley interviewing Mark Killilea about 'the real people of Ireland'.</p> <p>01:28:40 His children's interest in the GAA. Philly Larkin in his son Donagh's class. Going to an All-Ireland in the early 1980s with his son and daughter. Meeting a man outside the Gresham Hotel. Talking to Kilkenny captain Brian Cody before the game. GAA as family.</p> <p>01:31:15 Book he wrote on Ballinspittle. Importance of local GAA club in Ballinspittle and Ballinadee. What the GAA means to him.</p> <p>01:33:40 Moving statue in Ballinspittle. Being asked to say the Rosary over the loudspeaker. Councillor Denis O'Reilly being there. Doing an interview with Pat Kenny on the radio. Worldwide coverage of Ballinspittle and his feelings on that. Spirituality and the moving statue.</p> <p>01:39:50 Enthusiasm for the GAA. Having Nicky English's jersey. Making friends in the GAA. Link to his home. Pride in what he has done. Reading the local newspaper. Being related to 2010 Cork senior football manager Conor</p>
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	Counihan. Reading GAA books by Tom Williams, John Scally, Nicky English, Eddie Kerr, Ned Power and Val Dalkins. Being friends with Waterford hurler Mick Hayes.
Involvement in GAA	<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 type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____
Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	Played with Courcsey Rovers; Rochestown; Pallaskenry; UCC; UCD.
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	Various club committees
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 01:44:20
Language	English

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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: Regina Fitzpatrick

Date: 22nd May 2012