

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Arlene Crampsie
Date of Interview	7 th March 2011
Location	Interviewee's home, near Leixlip, Co. Kildare
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Eamon Fennelly
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1954 Home County: Kilkenny
Education	Primary: Kilmanagh NS, Co. Kilkenny Secondary: St. Kieran's, Kilkenny Third Level: St. Pat's, Drumcondra, Dublin
Family	Siblings: 4 brothers & 5 sisters Current Family if Different: Married to Connie with 2 boys and 2 girls
Club(s)	Graigue [Kilkenny]; Confey [Kildare]
Occupation	Teacher
Parents' Occupation	Creamery Operative [Father]; Housewife [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Not Fianna Fáil
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

REFERENCE NO. KK/1/19

Date of Report	6 th August 2012
Period Covered	1930s – 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Kildare, Kilkenny, Dublin, Roscommon, Tipperary, Europe, Spain
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Coaching, Administration, Celebrations, Fundraising, Education, Media, Role of Teachers, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, Irish Language, Culture, All-Ireland, Club History, Family Involvement, Impact on Life, The Troubles, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Opening of Croke Park, Professionalism, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds
Interview Summary	<p>Eamon recalls his earliest memories of the GAA growing up in Kilkenny. He recalls the history of his local club, and discusses the role of hurling in the schools system in Kilkenny. He recalls his time in college in Dublin and the hurling structure that was in place there. Eamon describes moving to Kildare and how his involvement in the GAA there evolved with the formation of a new club in the area. He talks about his different roles within the club, the role of the club in the community, and the part that the GAA has played in his life as a whole. He concludes by explaining what the GAA means to him personally.</p> <p>00:00 Introduction</p> <p>00:22 Eamon recalls his earliest memories of the GAA. Mentions the rivalry between Kilkenny and Tipperary. Mentions Graigue and Graigue-Ballycallan. Mentions that the Graigue club was established in his grandfather's forge in 1937.</p> <p>01:32 He recalls his family's involvement in the GAA. Mentions Confey GAA club.</p> <p>02:15 Recalls stories he heard concerning Graigue's history.</p> <p>02:57 Discusses the first meeting of the Graigue club. Mentions club being named after Graigue Cross.</p> <p>03:26 Describes facilities in the early days of the Graigue club. Mentions Teehan family supplying the pitch.</p> <p>03:47 Discusses his own playing career. Mentions coming to live in Dublin and playing for St. Patrick's College,</p>

	<p>Drumcondra.</p> <p>04:17 Discusses the role of the club in the community. Mentions the amalgamation of the two clubs that were in the Graigue parish. Mentions facilities in modern times.</p> <p>04:59 Discusses Gaelic football's role in the club.</p> <p>05:22 Describes getting his hurleys when young.</p> <p>05:42 Recalls the role that hurling played in his school days. Mentions St. Kierans, Nickey Brennan, Brian Cody. Discusses the hurling structure in St. Kieran's. Recalls travelling to Carlow, Athy and Croke Park to support the school team. Recalls the way players on the school team were treated.</p> <p>07:49 Recalls the hurling structure in St Pats, Drumcondra. Mentions Ger Loughnane from Clare and Brian Cody. Played under the name Erin's Hope – won Dublin Under 21 titles. Other sports in the college such as football, rugby and badminton.</p> <p>09:05 Describes playing badminton at St. Pat's. Also played soccer but not rugby. Refers to the influence of the 1966 and 1970 soccer world cups. Mentions The Ban.</p> <p>10:02 Discusses his involvement in GAA in Dublin. Mentions living in Terenure, Rathgar and Rathmines.</p> <p>10:23 Discusses involvement in GAA in Kildare. Mentions St. Mary's Leixlip and Confey. Recalls how he became involved with the GAA club in Confey. Describes the first meeting of the new club. Mentions Jack Wall, Kildare County Board Chairman. Recalls there were some objections to the new club – mentions Leixlip and Celbridge.</p> <p>13:14 Explains the parish set-up in Leixlip and how Confey GAA club was established. Mentions Leixlip previously being a part of Maynooth. Mentions areas of Confey such as River Forest, Glendale and Glendale Meadows. Mentions schools being established in the area, such as Confey College. Mentions Jack O'Shea playing for Leixlip. Describes reaction of Leixlip and the county board to the establishment of Confey. Mentions Jack Wall and Seamus Aldridge from the county board.</p> <p>15:40 Recalls the initial steps once the club was officially established. Mentions the 1990 world cup in Italy. Confey dubbed "The Cameroons of Kildare". Recalls assistance of</p>
--	--

	<p>local teams such as Maynooth and Kilcock.</p> <p>17:01 Recalls purchase of land for club's pitch. Mentions Jimmy Creighton from Roscommon and John Coyle from Monaghan. First chairman was from Galway. Mentions Larry Keenahan from Confey. Discusses fundraising initiatives for Confey GAA club. Recalls negotiations for the purchase of the pitch – mentions Larry Keenahan.</p> <p>19:33 Discusses the underage structure in Confey and how the club progressed.</p> <p>20:00 Discusses the sports played at the club – Gaelic football, hurling and ladies football. Remarks on minor hurling team amalgamation with Leixlip. Refers to population change in Confey. Mentions the bordering areas of Leixlip, Celbridge and Maynooth.</p> <p>21:30 Discusses his involvement with Confey. Mentions Scoil San Carlo and former Principal Paddy Keegan. Also mentions Noel O'Sullivan. Mentions roles of PRO and secretary, as well as Syl Merrins. Describes what the role of PRO entailed. Recalls the support of local newspapers. Describes the role of secretary also. Mentions the 1998 All-Ireland Football Final which Kildare reached – recalls the difficulty of accommodating club members' requests for tickets. Mentions then Kildare County Board Secretary Richie Whelan.</p> <p>27:02 Recalls the impact of changes in technology on the role of secretary.</p> <p>27:27 Describes the characters in Confey GAA club. Mentions Larry Keenahan. Recalls an exhibition that was held to mark the club's 20th anniversary.</p> <p>28:14 Explains the colours that Confey wear.</p> <p>28:48 Discusses sense of identity in a club such as Confey. Mentions people coming to support the team in county finals in Newbridge.</p> <p>29:54 Recalls the impact of his involvement in the GAA on his teaching career.</p> <p>30:31 Describes the influence of the GAA on school life in Confey.</p> <p>30:53 Discusses street leagues in Confey. Mentions Glendale and River Forest.</p> <p>31:47 Discusses his roles with the club.</p>
--	--

	<p>32:12 Recalls where meetings were held when the club was first formed.</p> <p>32:35 Discusses the facilities at Confey GAA club.</p> <p>33:32 Recalls the successes that the club has had in Gaelic football and hurling.</p> <p>34:53 Discusses the first adult teams at Confey. Mentions their first win against Kilcock. Refers to a book on the club written by Michael Kenny for the opening of the clubhouse.</p> <p>35:37 Describes celebrations in the area when Confey are successful. Mentions Celbridge and Leixlip.</p> <p>36:16 Discusses rivalry between Confey and Leixlip as well as Confey and Celbridge.</p> <p>37:46 Discusses the competition structure in Kildare. Refers to North Kildare and South Kildare.</p> <p>38:08 Refers to a perceived bias in selection of Kildare county teams.</p> <p>38:25 Discusses Confey players being selected for the county football team. Mentions Hugh Lynch. Recalls the effect it has on the club as a whole. Also mentions James Gately.</p> <p>39:26 Describes the relationship between the club and county board. Mentions dealings between the club and the Leinster Council.</p> <p>40:13 Describes the ethnic dimension to the club. Also discusses people from different religions being part of the club.</p> <p>40:59 Discusses ladies football in the club. Recalls their successes.</p> <p>41:52 Talks about the role of the media in the GAA. Mentions Dublin County Board and Croke Park. Discusses the effectiveness of newspapers.</p> <p>42:55 Recalls the assistance he received from the GAA in preparation for his roles with the club. Also discusses the importance of experience.</p> <p>43:19 Discusses the big issues that have confronted the club.</p> <p>44:20 Refers to the payment of managers/trainers. Discusses the issue of professionalism in the GAA. Mentions Peter Quinn and Liam O'Neill.</p>
--	---

REFERENCE NO. KK/1/19

	<p>46:02 Discusses fundraising initiatives by the club. Refers to a sponsored walk from Confey Bridge to Croke Park, similar to Maynooth's idea.</p> <p>47:08 Discusses the removal of The Ban and the opening up of Croke Park to other sports. Refers to Civil War politics. Mentions some of the attitudes locally to the opening up of Croke Park.</p> <p>48:09 Discusses playing rules changes in the GAA. Refers to the tackle in Gaelic football – mentions comments by Eugene McGee. Refers to Tadhg Kennelly's tackle at the beginning of the 2009 All-Ireland Football Final against Cork.</p> <p>49:06 Discusses the role of the Irish language and culture in the club.</p> <p>49:45 Provides his views on the future development of the club.</p> <p>50:42 Recalls his best memory from his involvement in the GAA. Mentions his sons winning the Kildare Senior Hurling Championship with Confey in 2007. Refers to a Féile win in 1998.</p> <p>51:16 Discusses the role that the GAA plays in his family life.</p> <p>52:11 Recalls his biggest disappointment in the GAA. Refers to Kilkenny not winning five-in-a-row All-Ireland titles. Also mentions the county final that Confey lost when he was a selector.</p> <p>52:52 Discusses his GAA heroes. Mentions Eddie Keher from Kilkenny and Gerry O'Malley from Roscommon. Describes the first All-Ireland Hurling Final he watched on television, in 1963 – Kilkenny v Waterford. Mentions Jimmy Doyle from Tipperary, the Dublin football team from the seventies – mentions Kevin Heffernan and Jimmy Keaveney.</p> <p>54:35 Mentions having visited 54 of the 57 GAA grounds in Kildare.</p> <p>54:51 Discusses his daughter playing ladies football in Barcelona.</p> <p>55:15 Explains what his involvement in the GAA has meant to him.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p>✓ Supporter ✓ Player ✓ Manager ✓ Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p>

REFERENCE NO. KK/1/19

	<input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____
Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	Played from 9/10 to 18.
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	Has been involved in administration since 1993. Club: PRO, Secretary Hurling Committee North Kildare: Treasurer (2 years)
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 00:56:10
Language	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 _____