

GAA Oral History Project

**Interview Report Form**

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Oliver Murtagh
<b>Date of Interview</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> Jan 2011
<b>Location</b>	N/A
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Felix Daly
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> N/A <b>Home County:</b> Armagh
<b>Education</b>	N/A
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> N/A <b>Current Family if Different:</b> Married with children
<b>Club(s)</b>	Lissummon GAA [Armagh]
<b>Occupation</b>	N/A
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	N/A
<b>Religion</b>	N/A
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	N/A
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	N/A

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<b>Date of Report</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> July 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	1960s – 2000s
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	Armagh, Down
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Officials, Administration, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Education, Emigration, Involvement Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Rivalries, Culture, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Professionalism, Retirement, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy / Economics
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>Felix Daly served as secretary of the Lissummon GAA club for thirty years. Growing up in Poyntzpass, he talks about his early experiences of Gaelic games in primary and secondary school, his family connections to Down and watching the successful Down county team of the 1960s. He explains his reasons for joining the Lissummon club, four miles from Poyntzpass, and the acceptance of him as an outsider. Daly would soon become club secretary, a post he held for thirty years. He discusses the highlights of the club's recent history and his varied work as club secretary – from attendance at county board meetings to the development of club facilities. With his own children now members of the O'Hanlon's club in Poyntzpass, Daly considers the contribution the GAA has made to the Lissummon area and reflects on the issues such as the role of women and the threat from growing professionalism and emigration. Finally, he ponders the GAA's contribution to his own personal and professional development.</p> <p>00:00:00 Introduction to Felix Daly</p> <p>00:00:25 Earliest memories: Talks about living in Poyntzpass where the local club is O'Hanlons and going to games every Sunday with his parents as a child.</p> <p>00:00:55 As a child he wouldn't watch the matches but play with other children 'around the fringes of the park'.</p> <p>00:01:03 Recalls when O'Hanlons were playing along the canal bank near his home and Lissummon people, like Phelim Quinn, coming to support them as they had no team</p>

	<p>at the time. Recalls playing with Phelim's boys. This was the mid 1960s.</p> <p>00:01:40 Comments on Down's success in the 1960s and listening to the 1968 All-Ireland final on the radio. Mentions that his mother was from Co. Down and three or four of her family played for the Glen club.</p> <p>00:02:14 Says that he would have gone to Down matches that were local. Recalls being in Croke Park with his Uncles supporting Down.</p> <p>00:02:25 GAA heroes: mentions looking up to Joe Lennon, Sean O'Neill. Mentions also that it was not until 1977 that they got know the Armagh team. Remarks that he went to school with Jimmy Smyth, who was a 'hero' to him. Also Colm McKinsty, Peter Loughran.</p> <p>00:03:00 Refers to living very close to Down, having a mother from Down, but being an Armagh supporter.</p> <p>00:03:10 Reflects on the Down-Armagh rivalry. Mentions that Armagh had little to brag about until 2002. Recalls also 1977 when Armagh were in the senior final and Down were in the minor final – both counties supported each other.</p> <p>00:04:05 Recalls playing games in primary school against other schools. Played in the Athletic Grounds.</p> <p>00:04:36 Emphasis on throwing the ball in and getting on with it than coaching.</p> <p>00:04:50 Remarks that he would have got more coaching from Uncles from Down, with whom he stayed. They had football posts erected behind the house and they played there every summer evening.</p> <p>00:05:05 Talks about club team going out of existence, not being good enough to play with school team and being in class with Mark Turley, later a Down footballer. Remarks that players not good enough to make the St. Colman's team were 'overlooked as far as football was concerned...If you were good enough, you were well looked after.'</p> <p>00:05:45 Recalls being in school when Lissummon had started and Fr. Hackett, a teacher in Lissummon, talking about the club. Mentions friends Martin and Charlie Murtagh playing with Lissummon, taking him to a few matches and getting started with the club.</p> <p>00:06:05 Says that Lissummon is four miles from his home in</p>
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	<p>Poyntzpass.</p> <p>00:06:14 First memory of playing with Lissummon was on the 'green road', opposite St. Paul's school – notes that the club didn't have ground at the time.</p> <p>00:06:35 Mentions that there was no much success in the early days – they were up against other teams that were coached and had better players. Winning the odd match was like winning a tournament or cup.</p> <p>00:07:10 Remarks on the 'craic' that was had and being well accepted in Lissummon.</p> <p>00:07:25 Refers to men he looked up to in the club: Phelim Quinn, Hugh Meehan, Peter O'Hagan. They 'looked after you very well' and 'always encouraged you'.</p> <p>00:08:05 Remaining with Lissummon throughout his playing career and beyond. He became Secretary of the club within four years of joining and held post for 30 years.</p> <p>00:08:53 Attendance at county board meetings. Reflects on being from a small club with little say – remarks that big clubs influenced many of the decisions. Says they had better speakers and tended to be listened to more, but this changed over time. Recalls the meetings as long with many arguments.</p> <p>00:09:50 Reflects on changes in club facilities: recalls club having only jerseys and a ball, that they rented a field used for grazing and that cow-pats were on field. 'We competed with the cows for a patch of grass'.</p> <p>00:10:55 Recalls the fun and the amenability of the farmer when they put up the back of a lorry for changing rooms. 'It was absolutely brilliant', as before that they were changing in the backs of cars and beside ditches.</p> <p>00:11:22 Describes the body of a lorry, with a shutter at the back, that was used as changing rooms.</p> <p>00:12:01 Considers subsequent developments in the club: success in the late 1980s led them to purchase a piece of land and developing it – developing the field, changing rooms, sports hall.</p> <p>00:12:45 Considers the value a GAA club brings to the club: mentions discussions he's had with rugby and soccer players and talking about what makes the GAA different. Mentions playing for the club in their area, identifying with the area and,</p>
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	<p>if you were good enough, playing for your own county.</p> <p>00:14:03 Mentions Armagh's one All-Ireland meant more than twenty in Kerry.</p> <p>00:14:23 Says it's the same with the club: they haven't much, but what they have they 'treasure'.</p> <p>00:14:35 Mentions not encouraging his children to play with Lissummon when they have a team in their own area – he had joined the club because there was none in his area at the time.</p> <p>00:15:35 Remarks that children grew up in Poyntzpass and with the O'Hanlon's lads so it was 'natural' that they should play with them.</p> <p>00:15:55 Stand-out moments: recalls reaching final of junior championship in 1987 and playing in a tournament in O'Hanlon's and winning it – that was 'a memorable night'. Mentions also winning south Armagh cup, beating Cullaville in the final at St. Pat's, Cullyhanna. Recalls all his family being there.</p> <p>00:16:55 Opening the new pitch, when Armagh played Down. Armagh had won the All-Ireland the year before and two Lissummon players with the county on the day. Says he was part of the organising committee.</p> <p>00:17:53 Mentions that the opening of the new sports hall was also a big day.</p> <p>00:18:00 Remarks that he wasn't 'fussy' about people being paid. His focus was on helping young people, giving them a focus to put their energies into. Mentions that it was a 'service to the community'.</p> <p>00:19:19 Doesn't believe there is a space in the GAA for professionalism. Remarks that he would have given anything to play for the county and imagines what it must have been like to have been on Armagh's All-Ireland winning team. They'll never be forgotten: 'That's payment enough'.</p> <p>00:20:17 Mentions how short playing careers are and the opportunity of playing for county being reward enough.</p> <p>00:20:45 Considers the future of small rural GAA clubs. Remarks that facilities may not improve, but do they need anymore? Says the club is providing a facility for girls and boys and old people. Asks if the football stopped and the hall closed 'Would you know your neighbours?'</p>
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	<p>00:21:55 Says there no longer striving for big money.</p> <p>00:22:05 Accepts that there is always a place for small rural clubs.</p> <p>00:22:20 Remarks that the GAA is a 'cheap source of entertainment' for members.</p> <p>00:22:40 Considers the impact of emigration. Remarks that his son has emerged from college and may have to go away to get work in building and construction. Says he doesn't want to go and his leaving will affect the local club.</p> <p>00:23:10 Considers the changing role of women: Mentions that Lissummon was 'unique' in always having women on committee and always having a Ladies football team. Mentions the ladies are running youth clubs and providing dancing and other things. Remarks that club has also had a lady chairperson, which at the time was 'unheard of'.</p> <p>00:24:35 Imagines his future involvement: says he will help out where he can. Mentions that never enjoyed a dinner dance when he was secretary because of the pressure in organising it.</p> <p>00:25:45 Reflects on the contribution the GAA has made to his personal and professional life: says it has made him 'more confident' and able to speak up for himself. Remarks that he works in education and the GAA has given him confidence.</p> <p>00:26:40 Comments on the help the GAA has provided to young people, girls and boys. Mentions that it helped them 'come out of themselves', overcome shyness.</p> <p>00:27:05 Reiterates that he served for 30 years as secretary of Lissummon GAA club.</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 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><b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>Winner of a south Armagh cup; winner of a Tournament in O'Hanlons; and Junior championship runners-up in 1987.</p>
<p><b>Record as an</b></p>	<p>Secretary of the Lissummon GAA club for thirty years. Also</p>

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<b>Administrator</b> (Positions held; how long for)	served as club representative at county board meetings.
<b>Format</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Audio <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
<b>Duration</b>	Length of Interview: 00:27:32
<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:      Oliver Murtagh

Date:      31<sup>st</sup> Jan 2011