

GAA Oral History Project
Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Joe Jordan
Date of Interview	23 rd Feb 2011
Location	Interviewee's home, Middletown, Co. Armagh
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Bernie McBride
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Female
Born	Year Born: 1954 Home County: Armagh
Education	Primary: St. Joseph's, Madden, Armagh Secondary: Armagh College of Education
Family	Siblings: 3 brothers, 6 sister Current Family if Different: 2 daughters, 2 sons
Club(s)	St. Joseph's Camogie Club [Armagh]; St. John's Camogie Club, Middletown [Armagh]
Occupation	Retired Secretary
Parents' Occupation	Farmer [Father]; Housewife [Mother] (both deceased)
Religion	Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	None
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	Middletown GAC

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Date of Report	15 July 2012
Period Covered	1930s - 2011
Counties/Countries Covered	Armagh
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Coaching, Officials, Administration, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Material Culture, Education, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, Rivalries, Culture, Scór, Club History, County History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Career, Challenges, Relationship with the Association, Socialising, Relationships
Interview Summary	<p>In this interview, Bernie McBride discusses her playing career and the development of Camogie in Madden and Middletown, the two Armagh clubs with which she has been associated throughout her life. One of eleven children, McBride opens the interview by discussing her father's involvement with the Madden GAA and the role of her brother in encouraging the emergence of Camogie in Madden in 1961. McBride talks about the early years of Camogie in the club in the 1960s, how it was funded and where it played. McBride recalls started to play competitively on adult teams as a teenager and remarks on the absence of underage activity. Madden won three senior championships in the late 1970s and early 1980s, captaining the team in 1976. She recalls moving to Middletown in the early 1980s, but continuing to play with Madden – and the county – at the time.</p> <p>It was the early 1990s when McBride became involved in the revival of Camogie in Middletown. It began at a parent teacher meeting in the local primary school where her daughters attended. McBride recalls those involved in the schools team initiative and mentions how it gave rise to a demand for a Camogie club in the area. The re-emergence of a Camogie club is discussed, with McBride setting out the names of those involved in the first committee, including herself as Chairperson. The club began by fielding only a senior team winning a junior championship in 1996. McCardle comments on the players involved and their subsequent contribution to underage development in the club. In addition, she discusses the important social role of Camogie in the area - 'Life would be dull without it – and the various fundraising initiatives undertaken to keep it going. She considers the contribution of Middletown to county Camogie teams and reflects on how the game has changed since her</p>

	<p>own playing days. Finally, the achievements of the Middletown club at various levels are outlined and the relationship between Camogie and the GAA discussed.</p> <p>00:00:20 Bernie McBride introduces herself. Talks about being born in Madden, one of 11 children: 8 girls and 3 boys.</p> <p>00:00:30 Mentions her father's involvement in football in Madden. Remarks that he died young and that she doesn't recall him playing.</p> <p>00:00:50 Talks about Camogie starting up in 1961. Mentions her brother Frank was training a Blackwatertown team and 'came up' to talk to her older sisters - Sheila and Una - about starting Camogie. Told them the rules and how the game was played.</p> <p>00:01:15 Mentions that they got people together and held meetings between her house and Beltons. Says her father helped them with administration.</p> <p>00:01:30 Running a ceili as a fundraiser.</p> <p>00:01:48 Recalls the 'girls going to the field with sticks in their hands' and going with them. Says they walked. 'There was no cars...'</p> <p>00:02:05 Talks about the first pitches used, mentioning that she played her Camogie at the field on the Monaghan Road.</p> <p>00:02:22 Mentions that Madden had only a senior team and that she was 14 or 15 before she started playing. Doesn't recall there being any underage teams in the early 1960s.</p> <p>00:02:50 Interviewer talks about the situation with low numbers, emigration and the clubs coming together to field Minor teams.</p> <p>00:03:00 Bernie mentions that they did start underage teams after she started playing.</p> <p>00:03:20 Remarks that Madden was a big club and won senior championships in 1976, 1977 and 1981.</p> <p>00:03:30 Recollections of the first team she played on – refers to players Anne Keenan (later Grimley) and her sisters Teresa and Rita, Teresa Curry and Bernie's own sisters.</p> <p>00:04:05 Remarks that looking back at photographs, six of the girls in the family played together at one time. Talks about other families involved: the Rafferty's, the Greens, the</p>
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	<p>Beltons.</p> <p>00:05:00 Mentions captaining Madden championship winning team in 1976. Refers also to an earlier success when they beat Blackwatertown after they had won it for 12 or 13 years in a row. Mentions that Fr. Connolly was involved with the Madden team at the time: 'He may not have known a lot about Camogie, but he got them fit.'</p> <p>00:05:47 Returns to captaining the Madden team in 1976, winning two more senior titles in 1977 and 1981.</p> <p>00:06:00 Talks about playing on with Madden after moving to Middletown and the honour of playing for the county in the early 1980s. Refers to some of the players she played alongside with Armagh – e.g. Margaret Delaney.</p> <p>00:06:50 Interviewer discusses Armagh's performances in the 1980s – playing in junior championship and</p> <p>00:07:25 Mentions that by the early 1990s, Camogie in Middletown had been out of action for a 'number of years'.</p> <p>00:07:30 Discusses the re-organisation of Camogie in Middletown. Talks about attending a parent-teacher meeting in the local girls Primary school and being asked - with two others Eileen McCardle and Pauline McConnell - to help start a team in the school.</p> <p>00:07:55 Mentions starting first team in the school year, 1992-3. Remarks that her own girls were playing as were the McCardle and McConnell girls – so they had an 'incentive' to become involved.</p> <p>00:08:20 Mentions that Pauline McConnell had played with Ballymacnab and they had a big rivalry with Madden. Laughs that the two would end up living in the same parish.</p> <p>00:08:40 Remarks on the 'great interest' in the Camogie and people approaching them about starting a tea. Mentions that they called a meeting in early 1993 and 'got a crowd together'.</p> <p>00:08:58 Says they started with a senior team at first and reads out the names the names of the officers of the newly established committee, with her as Chairperson, Eileen McCardle as Vice-Chair, Millie McMcKiernan as secretary and Teresa McCann as Assistant secretary. Treasurer was – and remains - M. Taylor, with Aine McCardle as Assistant Treasurer. Other committee members are also named.</p>
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	<p>00:09:45 Starting with senior team. Says they 'done well', winning first championship in 1996, defeating Silverbridge with Caroline Lappin as captain. Interviewee reads out the championship winning team and mentions that they were trained by Dessie McConnell. Mentions that jerseys were sponsored and that the final score in the final was 4-4 to 0-0 victory for Middletown.</p> <p>00:10:40 That championship would have been in the junior grade. Discusses the adult gradings for Camogie in Armagh and the progression to senior status.</p> <p>00:11:00 Mentions the achievement of winning junior championship after 3 years and remarks on the encouragement it provided to future development – many of the girls from that team returned to train underage teams.</p> <p>00:11:18 Comments that they kept the underage scene going because they had the primary schools team.</p> <p>00:11:30 Mentions that over the years the primary team progressed to Under 14, Under 16 and Minor teams. Stresses the importance of keeping the primary team going to maintain a throughput of players.</p> <p>00:11:50 Refers to losing girls during their teenage years.</p> <p>00:12:15 Mentions Caroline Lappin being presented with the High Trainor Cup.</p> <p>00:12:30 Reflects on the fundraising initiatives: a weekly hamper draw, going around houses and local pubs; pub quizzes; a 'trolley run'. 'Fundraising had to be kept going' with costs getting greater. More girls meant more sticks and more transport. Refers also to the cost of insurance and to county board fees.</p> <p>00:14:20 Remarks again that most of the girls from 1996 came back to help with underage teams. Mentions underage success: winning a post-primary championship in 2005, an Under 16 league in 2008. Highlights these achievements and stresses the challenge of playing teams from Keady and Ballymacnab, with bigger populations.</p> <p>00:15:10 Discusses the 'powerful' social dimension to Camogie. Comments on the holding the feile in 2000 and having girls stay with local families and organising events for them. Mentions also that going to training and matches was a 'night out'.</p>
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	<p>00:16:20 'Life would be dull without it...'</p> <p>00:16:25 Interviewer mentions the tradition of Camogie in Middletown, starting in the 1930s and remarks on his hopes that the game will be able to celebrate its centenary when the time comes.</p> <p>00:17:10 Mentions the success of the 'Strictly Come Dancing' and the organisation of her daughter Sarah, Geraldine O'Halloran and Emma Taylor – describes as the 'best fundraiser' they ever had.</p> <p>00:17:45 Talks about the increased demands on a club, in particular the need for equipment for indoor and outdoor training. 'You need money to buy this equipment' and to keep 'up to date'.</p> <p>00:18:05 Interviewer mentions the necessity of providing helmets for players.</p> <p>00:18:20 Considers the developments in Camogie over her lifetime: recalls that they used to walk to the field, that they would meet girls on the way and play until it was dark. Says there is 'no such thing as walking' now and the girls expect a lift to the field.</p> <p>00:19:22 Mentions that when she started Camogie was 12 a side and now it is 15 a side. Mentions that it's difficult to fill teams at Under 12 and Under 15. Against that, there is no longer the hassle of having to shorten fields, so there is no longer as much work involved.</p> <p>00:20:28 Interviewer speculates as to when the teams were increased from 12 to 15 a side.</p> <p>00:20:50 Bernie mentions that sometimes they ran out of white lime and used flour as pitch markings.</p> <p>00:21:10 Considers the present state of Camogie and suggests that it would be better if it was brought under the umbrella of the GAA. Says it would be better if they 'all worked together'. Mentions also that they already used the one pitch.</p> <p>00:21:50 Says it would be 'easier all round' and explains why.</p> <p>00:22:09 Interviewer remarks that in rural areas it's all the same anyway in that it's the same families involved and same fields used.</p> <p>00:22:45 Bernie mentions that the Camogie club gets great help from Middletown. Says there were a lot of men who</p>
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	<p>helped with the training, including Des McConnell who helped at the start. Refers also to Paul Lappin, Declan McBride, Sylvester McConnell.</p> <p>00:23:12 Interviewer mentions Bernie McCann and Anne Casey's involvement with Camogie in the 1970s.</p> <p>23:15 Bernie comments on Camogie's role in keeping the girls together and in forging of friendships.</p> <p>00:23:40 Mentions that senior team won Intermediate in 1999 and 2005 and reached senior final, losing to Keady in 2009.</p> <p>00:24:20 Comments on Anne McGuigan who captained Queen's University and won a Purcell Cup. Mentions that she was also the chairperson of Queen's.</p> <p>00:24:35 Refers to the 'county girls': Joanne and Paula Mallon, Anne McGuigan and Orla Curry. Remarks on the 'honour' it brings to the club to have these girls play with the county.</p> <p>00:24:50 Mentions that Joan Mallon captained the county team.</p> <p>00:25:05 Comments that she would like to see the senior team win a county championship in the near future.</p> <p>00:25:15 Refers to Trish Mulvey captained an Under 14 county team in 2004, winning an Ulster blitz.</p> <p>00:25:34 Interviewer recalls the performance in the county final against Keady and the failure of the girls to 'drop the head'. Mentions his one ambition was that Middletown hurlers and footballers would win championships in the same year because no other club could do it.</p> <p>00:26:49 Bernie mentions having a long career and the enjoyment she derived from it. Mentions getting to know people through the GAA. 'We all pull together'.</p> <p>00:27:35 Mentions Camogie club taking part in Scór and refers to Anne McCann representing Armagh and Ulster in All-Ireland final for solo-singing.</p> <p>00:27:57 Mentions Raymond Donnelly providing them with jerseys. Toal trucks did the same.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p>✓ Supporter ✓ Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager ✓ Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p>✓ Chairperson ✓ Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p>

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	<input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input checked="" 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)	3 Senior Armagh Camogie Championships.
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	Chairperson of Middletown Camogie club for 5 years Committee members for 13 years
Format	<input type="checkbox"/> Audio <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 00:28:42
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: Joe Jordan

Date: 23rd Feb 2011