

REFERENCE NO. (OFFICE USE ONLY):

Q1: Describe your earliest GAA memory and how you became involved in the GAA?

U14 hurling tournament in borrisokane, I was ten and I scored 2 goals and a pint. My father was selector

Q2: Did your family have a tradition or history of GAA involvement?

My father and uncle's ran cross country for Tipperary, my uncle Mick Cleary won 8 senior All-Ireland cross country medals back in the forties and fifties, my uncle Mick Minouge won 5 county senior titles with Roscrea and the first All-Ireland against St.Rynaghs of Banagher, he also trained Tipperary U21,s to 5 all Ireland titles in 1979,80,81,85 and last in 89 against Offaly as well as training Moneygall to win the 1975 north and county Senior titles

Q3: Did your relatives discuss their GAA experiences with you? What were they?

Mick Cleary won his 1st All-Ireland cross country in Belfast in 1944 as 17 year old as a private in the army in Clonmel. Mick won his first county senior medal in 1968 with a team that won 3 in a row.

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Q4: Tell me how GAA affected your family life?

We used to cycle to the hurling field and sometimes run, Then we had U12 matches my father would load up 5 or 6 in the car. My dad was always on the road bringing me from match to match. GAA matches would take up every weekend and the highlight was to see Tipperary hurl.

Q5: Tell me what it was like to support your club/county when you were young and down through the years (travelling to games, prices of tickets, food, grounds visited, clothes worn, match-day traditions, local celebrations and traditions).

It was always a great feeling to support our local club, as we were a junior club with small numbers. Back then it was 1 pound 50 to get in to matches and food was about 10 pence. It was always a great feeling to support Tipperary.

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Q6: If you had to choose just one game from all you've experienced, which would you choose? Why?

Probably the 1984 Munster final in hurling between Cork and Tipperary in Thurles because it had been 13 years since Tipperary won their last Munster title, unfortunately we lost because of 2 late goals by Seanie O Leary

Q7: What impact has the GAA had on your life?

Its been great to meet so many people as a player and a referee and a coach

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Q8: What place and role does your club have in your community?

It brings the whole parish together as it's the only sporting outlet we have and we have many great social occasions.

Q9: What role did the GAA play as part of your school and/or college life?

I enjoyed playing with my school as a young man.

Q10: Who do you admire most in the GAA and why?

I admire Brian Cody and Mickey Hart because of their ability to motivate players

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Q11: In your experience what have been the biggest changes in the GAA?

The speed of the game, The fitness is a key factor, the size of stadiums how compared to years ago, with new floodlights.

Q12: Have changes in your community affected your club and how?

Immigration has been a big program over the years

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Q13: Do you think the role of women in the GAA has changed over the years and how?

Yes because they are more on the playing field now than in the kitchen making sandwiches. Camogie and football has become very strong over the last 20 years.

Q14: Describe the role of the churches and clergy in your club and how it has changed over the years?

It is not a big factor as we have no direct parish priest

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Q15: Was there a connection between politics and the GAA for you, if so what?

I never allowed politics into the GAA

Q16: What have been the main disappointments you have had with the GAA?

Probably losing a county final that we should have won but other than that no major disappointments

Q17: Did the GAA shape your own identity in any way?

Yes it made me tougher and more fair as a player and referee

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Q18: What role has Irish language and culture had in your club and on your personal involvement with the GAA?

Not revelant

Q19: How important are rivalries within the GAA and what are yours?

They are big because in my opinion it gives clubs an identity and rivalries are very good because it keeps people competitive

Q20: Comment on the role of volunteers within the GAA?

Volunteers are very important in the running of the clubs because they are the heart and soul of every club

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Q21: Describe your experience with teams as a player, manager, committee member or supporter.

As a player the high's and low's of winnings and losing and doing it all over again year after year. As a manager to train a team to its best of their abilities and to see them hurl on a field the way you trained them to hurl gives you great pride

Q22: Describe your experiences, if any, with the GAA outside Ireland.

I played in New York in the Gaelic park with Tipperary in 1987 and won a junior and senior all Ireland that year

Q23: Describe how media coverage of GAA in your lifetime has changed.

Back then the only match that would be televised was the All-Ireland final other than that you would listen to it on the radio. Now they televise all matches and the newspaper coverage is a lot better now

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Q24: What in your opinion are the biggest challenges facing the GAA in the future?

Immigration, rugby, the of professionalism for e.g. Aussie rules, Soccer and rugby

Q25: What does the GAA mean to you?

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Q26: Do you have any pictures, documents, video etc. that you could share with us? Please provide a brief description.

Do you know any songs or poems about the GAA in your local area that you can send us or write in here?

Can you think of anyone else in your locality or in your family circle who we should contact for this project? Who are they and why?

Shane brophy the Lorrha PRO and journalist for the Nenagh guardian

Q27: Is there anything else you would like to say about the GAA?

Q28: How did you hear about this project?

My son told me

I hereby assign the copyright of the answers 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 questionnaire.

Signed: John Cleary Date:9/3/2010

Please Note: If you are aged 18 years or younger this must be signed by your parent / guardian. Failure to do so will mean that we are unable to include your responses in the Archive

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Data Protection Information

The GAA Oral History Project aims to record the fullest possible picture of what the GAA has meant to the Irish people, in their own words. The project will record face-to-face interviews with thousands of people in Ireland and internationally, including GAA members and supporters, current and former players, managers, officials and administrators; anyone who has ever had any contact or involvement with the GAA. In addition, in order to reach the largest number of people possible, the GAA Oral History Project is also requesting that people fill out one of the questionnaires or send the project a letter or email about the place of the GAA in their life.

At the start of each questionnaire are a number of biographical questions, which we hope will be completed by each respondent. By including this section we aim to build up a profile of the socio-economic, religious and political composition of the people involved in the GAA. As this project aspires to be the largest public history project carried out in the state to date, the material collected will provide possibly the richest source of material to the sociologists of the present and the historians of the future. By including biographical information such as religion, political affiliation, education and occupation this project will allow academics, family or local historians and interested individuals to build up a picture of the composition of the GAA in a locality, a county and in the country. The interviews that are conducted and the questionnaires that are collected will allow current and future family members of participants to hear and see their ancestors, to view their handwriting, to learn about how they lived and the place of the GAA in their lives.

The interviews, questionnaires, letters, documents, recordings and photographs gathered will be preserved as the GAA Oral History Project Archive – a permanent resource on the history of the GAA in particular and Irish society in general. Samples of the collected material will be made available to the public on our website www.gaahistory.com and may be used in: public performances, lectures or talks; publications, including print, audio or video cassettes or CD ROM; public reference purposes in libraries, museums and archives; on radio or television; in educational establishments, including use in a thesis, dissertation or similar research; publication worldwide on the internet.

The entire GAA Oral History Project Collection, i.e. the full length interviews, questionnaires, letters, photographs, documents and recordings, will be made available to the public through the GAA Museum and Archive.

It should be noted that all contact details provided will be kept entirely confidential and will be accessible only by the staff of the GAA Oral History Project Team. Your contact details will only be retained so that we can contact you to clarify factual information, to send out a thank you note for your contribution, or to request clarification on items that you may have donated. Under no circumstances will your details be passed on to a third party, without your prior consent.