

**REFERENCE NO. (OFFICE USE ONLY):**

<b>Q1: Describe your earliest GAA memory and how you became involved in the GAA?</b>
I became involved in GAA (Camogie) when I started Secondary school. My earliest memory was the delights of being selected for the senior team when I was a 1 <sup>st</sup> year student.
<b>Q2: Did your family have a tradition or history of GAA involvement?</b>
My Father played Hurling when he was young. My brothers and sister were also involved in playing GAA sport.
<b>Q3: Did your relatives discuss their GAA experiences with you? What were they?</b>
You would always hear some stories about the games played and the tactics used. I remember my brother showing me how to pick up the ball between my foot and the hurl instead of bending and risking the thump/push you may get from an opposition player. I was also told to always protect my hand with the hurl when catching the ball in the air. Always keep playing until you hear the referee whistle blowing.
<b>Q4: Tell me how GAA affected your family life?</b>
<p>GAA was the only sport available in our area when we were growing up.</p> <p><b>There was no:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>stage schools,</li><li>speech and drama classes,</li><li>Karate</li><li>Spleodar Club</li><li>Irish Dancing</li><li>Singing school</li></ul> <p>There was only a GAA club for the boys in the Carnew area other than the Carnew Secondary school doing camogie. I had to travel to Annacurragh a good 25 minute journey to be part of their camogie club. I won an all Ireland with Annacurragh in 1984, it was the under 14 feile. The Feile was hosted by Wexford that year.</p>

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**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).**

I was brought to Croke Park a few times when I was younger for the Wexford matches. All my family are Wexford people and my uncle would bring my brother and I to Dublin to see a few of these matches.

There was a picnic packed and put into the boot of the car for the journey home.

I can't remember what price tickets were and the only colours I would have, would be the Purple and Gold flag, the same one that would be taken out every year.

It was always a rush to get out of Dublin to see the match again on TV so that the errors of the ref or players could be confirmed.

It was the generosity of our uncle which allowed us go.

I have brought my children to Croke Park a few times, but to be honest it is a very expensive day out. I know GAA offer cheaper seats for children in the Canal end etc, but then that means If I want a good seat on the Cusack or Hogan I have to leave my children (10 and 15) unattended in a crowd. NO THANKS. Children from Dublin and other cities may be used to fending for them selves but the country child does not have these experiences.

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

Camogie: It's a great game and I have very good memories of the fun and fitness.

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

I gained a large number of new friends, I gained confidence and was chosen and awarded a few times as player of the match. It was a very special achievement to have been chosen as player of the year for Annacurragh, a community which I was adopted into just because of camogie.

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

?? I have not played since I immigrated to UK in 1989.

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

Camogie in school was practiced every Wednesday. Matches could be played any day of the week. The schools in Co. Wicklow would be playing against each other to see who would win the county

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

I admire my trainer (Kathleen McAllister) and Secretary (Mrs Agnes Byrne) who organised for me to get from school to training. This included Agnes sitting me down and serving me dinner before she brought me to training or a match. These people gave up their time and looked after all of us as if we were their own children.

I still to this day keep in touch with Kathleen and Agnes who are wonderful people and who I will never forget as they did adopt me from an area 10-15 miles away.

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

Now we have a Ladies football team in Carnew. This is great for the girls and does improve girl's fitness. I am a bit concerned that the Ladies don't get the same level of support as the men. I now refuse to sponsor GAA by buying tickets because the money for these tickets is only for the men. I do think funds raised for GAA should be for both men and women.

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

I don't know much about the local club for men.

The ladies have only had a football team in the past few years. My 15 year old does not play football as there is no trainer.

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

I don't know really, it used to be the women only catered for functions by providing tea and goodies, but now you would see them coaching, doing some first aid on the side. I guess this is because of the tight restrictions there is now when working/being involved with children.

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

I have never seen the priest in the GAA grounds when Ladies training. I do know he is a keen GAA man

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

NO

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

The cost for girls to register. Men's funds help cover their members' costs. Parents are not as actively involved and therefore busses have to be organised to get the team to and from the matches and when that happens then you have very little supporters on the side line.

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

NO

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

Score na nog.

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<b>Q19: How important are rivalries within the GAA and what are yours?</b>
None
<b>Q20: Comment on the role of volunteers within the GAA?</b>
People who give up their time and energy are very few, but those who do should be shown some sort of appreciation.
<b>Q21: Describe your experience with teams as a player, manager, committee member or supporter.</b>
Most people are very friendly, as with all walks of life you will always find the few who make things difficult.
<b>Q22: Describe your experiences, if any, with the GAA outside Ireland.</b>
No experience
<b>Q23: Describe how media coverage of GAA in your lifetime has changed.</b>
No comment as I do not keep in touch with newspaper reports now.
<b>Q24: What in your opinion are the biggest challenges facing the GAA in the future?</b>
The biggest challenges I think GAA will have in the future will be the lack of volunteers to train under age teams. People won't be able to afford to bring their children to the big finals in Croke Park and hence lack of interest in the coming years in participation from those kids.
<b>Q25: What does the GAA mean to you?</b>
<p>It's a sport, which is fun and enjoyable. It keeps a lot of kids off the street. It gets children involved in other areas such as Score and quizzes.</p> <p>For me it does not mean too much as I have two daughters and their interests are music (singing and playing piano) and the other enjoys Horses.</p>

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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?**



Ms Kathleen McAlister would have a lot of information on the Annacurragh club.

Picture above taken in 2008 which was the U14 team in 1984 which won all Ireland.



Me and my girls at Croke Park 2008 – unfortunately Wexford did not win that day.

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1992 I think the company I work for organised to meet another company for a friendly and a day out. Maybe this would be something GAA should be promoting as I really enjoyed the day and it was a good exercise for team building.

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

**Overall the GAA is a good hobby; I just hope that everyone can stay interested in the children. I know a lot of families have had both parents working and that may have contributed to people not having the time to stay in the sports field while the children were training and playing matches, maybe this will change now that a lot of people have lost their jobs and maybe give them another focus.**

**Q28: How did you hear about this project?**

My cousin asked me to participate in this project.

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: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*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](http://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.