

Dominic (Dom) Ryan

1932 – 2018

It was with great sadness that the people of Rathdrum, and indeed much further afield, received the news of the passing of Tipperary native and Rathdrum stalwart, Dominic (Dom) Ryan. He passed away peacefully, surrounded by his family, on 17th April 2018 in St. Coleman's Hospital, Rathdrum.



Dom Ryan was born on 4th August 1932 in Gortagarry, Toomevara, Co. Tipperary to Thomas and Brigid (née Fitzpatrick). He was a younger brother of Micksy and a twin of Paddy, both of whom predeceased Dom.

Growing up in the heart of Tipperary, he attended national school in Toomevara. From a farming family, he pursued the fine tradition of Tipperary hurling. A hurler of note, he played on the first Gortagarry team to win a Junior Hurling Championship. Later, as his forestry career took him around the country, he played hurling at Senior level in Limerick and Clare, and when he moved to Rathdrum, he played with the Avondale Club. Dom was also a keen cross-country runner and he represented his native Tipperary on several occasions at cross-country events around the country.

From an early age Dom was involved in forestry, beginning in Latteragh Forest, Co. Tipperary. In the early 1960s he joined Irish Forest Products Ltd. and one of his early postings was to Glengarriff in West Cork. Dom went on to work in many areas around the country, including Kerry, Limerick, Clare, Galway, Cavan, Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford.

It was in Glengarriff that he met his beloved wife, Joan, whom he married on 6th September 1969 and they settled into married life in Rathdrum where they reared their family. Though always proud of his Tipperary roots, Dom integrated quickly into his adopted town of Rathdrum.

In the mid 1970s there was a huge increase in timber production from the maturing forests of Co. Wicklow. Woodfab Sawmills in Aughrim was expanding rapidly and needed reliable people to procure and manage their log supply. With his vast experience, Dom was the ideal candidate for this job. He joined Woodfab in 1975 as Forest and Procurement Manager and was highly respected by all who dealt with him throughout his career until he retired in 1996.

Dom was a founder member of the Wicklow Timbermans' Social Club which, for many years, ran an annual chainsaw competition that pioneered new skills in safety, tree felling techniques and log presentation. It also organised an annual dinner dance

which became a major event in the annual social calendar and was attended by the entire industry – foresters, timber contractors, hauliers and saw-millers.

Dom was deeply involved in many aspects of the local community, particularly the St. Vincent de Paul and Rathdrum Youth Club. He was an important fundraiser for St. Coleman’s Hospital. He was a founder member and lifelong supporter of Rathdrum Development Association. He was the driving force behind the magnificent Parnell Memorial Park at the entrance to the town. Dom worked quietly behind the scenes to promote the betterment of the community. He always looked out for and supported the deprived and underprivileged.

In 2003, Dom founded Rathdrum Walkers Club which organised walks in the grounds of Avondale Forest Park every Thursday evening. He introduced more than 25 different walks into his calendar and encouraged people of all ages to join in these walks over the summer months. In this way Dom introduced many people to the joys of hillwalking and to the great natural beauty of Co. Wicklow. He also found time to compile the “Rathdrum Notes” in the Wicklow People for many years.

Dom was one of life’s true gentlemen. In his quiet and unassuming manner he selflessly served his community and its many local clubs and committees. He always shunned the limelight and involved himself solely to make life better for those he served. The local community will be forever grateful to him for his generous spirit. A kindly, soft-spoken man, he will be sadly missed. He was a lifelong teetotaler and a member of the Pioneer Association.

To his wife Joan, son John, daughters Sinead and Susanna, we offer our sincere sympathy.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.

Mark Hogan