

Paddy McGuire 1922 - 2011

Paddy McGuire passed away peacefully on 26th March 2011, just short of his eighty ninth birthday. He was born on 12th April 1922 in the townland of Tullig, on the Loop Head peninsula in Co. Clare, where his father Arthur had bought a farm on his return from America in 1918. Paddy, or Packie as he was known in Co. Clare, was the third eldest in a family of three brothers (John Joe, Seamus, and Hugh, who was also a forester) and two sisters (Mary and Bridget).



Paddy received his early education at the nearby Cross National School and later at the Christian Brothers School in Kilrush, Co. Clare. He attended Athenry Agricultural College between 1941 and 1942, before entering the Forestry Training School at Avondale, Co. Wicklow on 18th November 1942. Here his class-mates were Denis Conway, Tomás de Gruinel and Finian Moriarty.

On completing his forestry training three years later, he was appointed as a Forest Foreman to Ballybofey Forest in October 1945. Between the years 1945 and 1950 Paddy served as a forester in Ballybofey, Co. Donegal; Enniskerry, Co. Wicklow; Rathdangan, Co. Kildare and Ballymahon, Co. Longford where he met his wife Anne (nee Fagan).

In November 1950, he was appointed Forester in Charge at Ross Forest, Co. Galway and he remained there for ten years until he was transferred to Killavullen, Co. Cork as Forester in Charge -Grade I, in December 1960. Paddy was promoted to Forestry Inspector -Grade III in August 1968 and was assigned to the Acquisition Section in Mullingar, Co. Westmeath. At this time, Ireland's planting programme was expanding rapidly and Paddy's agricultural background, his understanding of the rural psyche and his genuine interest in people, proved invaluable assets in helping to acquire the land required to service the burgeoning planting programme of the following years.

In June 1977, Paddy was promoted again, this time to the rank of Forestry Inspector -Grade II where he was in charge of Work Study in the Mullingar Division.

Apart from his family and his work in forestry, Paddy enjoyed many other interests. He was particularly interested in the GAA and played football with several different counties over a long career. He played at senior county-level with both Donegal and Kildare for brief periods. However, frequent transfers around the country prevented a longer career with either county.

Irish music and set dancing were favourite pastimes of his; and of course there was no music or dancing better than that of Co. Clare! He also had a grá for the Irish language and particularly enjoyed his time in Ross Forest near Oughterard, Co. Galway where Irish was widely spoken and many of the forest workers conversed "as Gaeilge". He also had a great love of the land, the study of soils and plant identification which he used to good effect in his Forester in Charge and Acquisition days.

As well as the love of his native Clare, Paddy had a great fondness for Galway

(Moycullen) and Cork (Killavullen) where he spent much of his forestry career. Both he and his family made lifelong friendships there and he regularly revisited both counties throughout his lifetime.

It was always a particular source of pride for Paddy that no fewer than three of his children (Aiden, Senan and Deirdre) followed in his footsteps and pursued careers in forestry. Aiden is a long serving member on the Council of the Society of Irish Foresters.

A true gentleman who was always willing to offer advice and a helping hand, Paddy was predeceased by Anne, his wife of 52 years, in 2005 and is survived by his children Rita, Imelda, Paddy, Aiden, Deirdre, Senan and Regina. To his family we extend our sincere sympathy.

Pat O'Sullivan