

Obituaries

Patrick Kevin (Pat) McLoughlin 1946-2015

Pat McLoughlin passed away on 15th November 2015 after a long illness borne with great courage. Throughout he relied on his hallmark good humour to minimise the very serious difficulties that he was enduring: "I'm grand out thanks, but I'm very busy going for check-ups!" was his usual response.

Pat was born on 6th September 1946 in Westport, Co. Mayo to Edward and Maureen (née Davitt). His father, who worked for CIE, was transferred to Dublin when Pat was three years of age and he began his schooling there. Unfortunately, he was unimpressed with his first visit to school and decided not to attend again!



Pat's family moved house several times over the course of his father's career. After Dublin their next move was to Tralee and, in spite of spending only one year here, he developed a huge admiration for the skills of Kerry football. At an early age, Pat was introduced to these skills while playing football on the street with neighbouring children. The next move was to Newport, Co. Mayo, the birthplace of Pat's parents, where they remained until he was ten. Their final transfer was to Claremorris where Pat spent the remainder of his life.

Pat attended St. Colman's Secondary School in Claremorris. He was a keen footballer at school and also with his local club, Garrymore, where he was a member of the team which won the Mayo Intermediate Championship. In 1965 he began his studies in UCG where he also played football. However, as it was not permissible in those days to play for the College and his own club simultaneously, Pat opted to continue playing for Garrymore. However, injury brought his footballing career to a premature end whereupon the club appointed him manager of their senior team. He was extremely successful in this role and under his leadership Garrymore won the Mayo County Championship, the Connaught Championship and were narrowly beaten in the All-Ireland Club Championship Final.

After two years studying Agricultural Science in UCG, Pat decided to specialise in forestry so he transferred to UCD in 1968 as UCG did not provide forestry as an option. His heart however, was always in Mayo and he invariably returned home to Claremorris every weekend to his family and to his beloved girlfriend, and later wife,

Bridie. Such were the attractions of Mayo for Pat that these weekends were often a little longer than the Professor of Forestry might have wished. However, Pat did spend two very enjoyable and successful years in UCD, graduating in 1970 with an honours degree.

He began working in the Forest and Wildlife Service in 1970. His outgoing personality made him a natural for work in land acquisition and he remained in this area until 1983, serving in Limerick, Sligo and finally ending up back in his beloved Mayo. With his twinkling eyes, his charm and above all his innate empathy for people and concern for their welfare, he could usually find a way through seemingly insuperable problems: "Listen, sure I'll make you a little offer anyway, and who knows you might be tempted or you might not".

In 1983, Pat transferred to forest management when he was appointed District Inspector in the Castlebar area and later Acting Region Manager in Galway. In both of these roles he was very successful. He had a particular interest in the quality of the end product and the need for improved timber production standards, all aimed at widening the use of Irish timber in the construction sector. Many of his former colleagues remember the many forceful presentations he made on this subject at Coillte's annual conferences.

Pat was above all a family man. In spite of suffering poor health in recent years he loved pottering about fixing things in the house and most of all loved the company of his grandchildren and in the words of Bridie, his wife, "loved annoying them with daft chat".

To Bridie, his children Pat, Anne, Claire, Marian, Eddie and Treasa, his grandchildren, and all his family we extend our deepest sympathy.

Dermot O'Brien and Paul Clinch