

Tom Mc Hugh

1926 – 2017

Tom Mc Hugh died on 25th November 2017 in Barna, Co. Galway, in the presence of his family, following a short illness. He was in his 92nd year.

Tom was born in Cahernahenna, Caherlistrane, near Headford in Co. Galway on 24th August 1926 to John and Mary McHugh, née McDonagh. He was the youngest in a family of six, four boys and two girls. His parents were small farmers, but the land was good, so a good living was able to be made. His father died when he was only three years old. Life was hard at a time when there was very little support from the State.



He attended the local national school and won a scholarship to the De La Salle Brothers in Castletown, Co. Laois. After completing his Intermediate Certificate, he returned home and attended the local CBS in Tuam, Co. Galway. After completing his Leaving Certificate, he did the Civil Service examination and was rewarded with a place in Avondale Forestry College in 1945.

During his training he spent some time getting practical experience in Dundalk and Mountrath Forests. On completion of his training he was first appointed to Glenealy Forest in Co. Wicklow in 1948-49. This was followed by further transfers to Killakee Forest, 1949-50, Cong Forest 1950-51, Maam Forest, 1951-55, Anner Forest 1955-56, Donadea 1958-68. His final move was to Ossory Forest in Co. Laois in 1968 where he remained until he retired in 1988.

During these moves he met Bríd Flaherty and they married in 1957. Bríd was from Furbo, Co. Galway and was a National Teacher. When he retired in 1988 they returned to live in Bearna, Co. Galway.

Tom was a noted footballer and hurler. Tom's intercounty career began when he was selected to play for Wicklow in 1946. They played Laois in the Leinster Championship and caused a major upset by defeating the then Leinster champions. During this time, he played both hurling and football for Wicklow and won a Leinster Junior title in 1949. He was selected to play for Galway in 1951 and played his last match for them in 1957. They won Connaught titles in 1954 and 1956. They were beaten by Kerry in 1954. All was put right in 1956 when, in the All Ireland Football Final they defeated Cork, a team that included Billy O'Neill, a brother of the late Paddy O'Neill, forester in charge Cappoquin forest. Tom's final year with Galway was in 1957 when they won the National League. This qualified him to play in New York

in the final for the St. Brendan's Cup. Sadly, this was Tom's last match for Galway. He continued to play club football and played his final competitive game with Mountrath Junior Football team in 1970.

Tom was a thorough gentleman. He had a quiet and unassuming disposition. These were qualities that he brought into his professional life. His excellent interpersonal skills ensured that he got maximum support from his staff. The beautiful, well managed forests that he passed on to his successors stand testament to his professional capabilities as an excellent forester. However, Tom could also be assertive when necessary, perhaps a throwback to the qualities required to play hurling and football at the highest level!

To his wife Bríd and family Máire, Seán, Dermot and Triona we offer our sincere sympathy.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dilis.

Arthur Buckley