

## Jerry Fleming 1937 – 2022

The forestry community was deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Jerry Fleming on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2022. Jerry died peacefully, surrounded by his family, at Cavan General Hospital shortly after his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday.

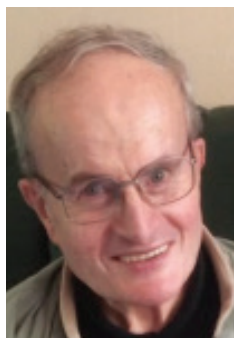
Jerry was born in Ardagh, Kilcummin, Co. Kerry on 31<sup>st</sup> January 1937 to James and Julia Fleming (née Coakley) the younger of two siblings. His brother Charles had predeceased him.

He received his primary education at Kilcummin NS and his secondary education at St Brendan's College, Killarney. He began his forestry career at Kinnitty Castle, Co. Offaly in 1958 and completed his training at Shelton Abbey Forestry College, Co. Wicklow in 1961.

His first appointment as assistant forester was to Glenealy Forest, Co Wicklow. Shortly afterwards, he was assigned to the first Assessment of Woodlands (now known as the National Forest Inventory) where he spent most of his time in the south of the country before being transferred to Donadea Forest, Co. Kildare. In 1971 he was promoted as forester in charge to Belturbet Forest, Co. Cavan where he spent the remainder of his career. In 1993, Jerry availed of the voluntary retirement package offered by Coillte and thereafter turned his attention to the development of his own forest enterprise. When he inherited the family farm in Co. Kerry, following the death of his brother, he planted it since he firmly believed in the multiple benefits of forestry and so he decided to put into practice what he believed was right. Some years later, Jerry developed other forests nearby and lost no time incorporating many of the ideas he had learned while on Society tours abroad.

Jerry always maintained a keen interest in the Society of Irish Foresters and was a regular attender of our field days and conferences in Ireland and a dependable stalwart on the annual study tours abroad. His last tour was to Lithuania in 2018. He is fondly remembered as a fine companion on the Society study tours both at home and overseas.

At his funeral service it was said that Jerry believed in the 'Four Fs' – viz. family, faith, forestry, and football. Football of course meant only one thing to Jerry and that was Kerry football. Each year he followed the Kingdom's progress and took great pleasure in seeing Kerry demolish Dublin in Tralee, even though at that stage he was ill in hospital. Incidentally, the priest who celebrated his



funeral Mass was Fr. Jim Moore, a son of the late Bill Moore, who was onetime forester in charge in Scotstown, Co. Monaghan.

While Jerry was a gentle, retiring spirit he was also an extremely astute person; he always listened to and heeded advice from people he respected. In return Jerry gave very solid advice to anyone who sought it. He was always courteous, helpful, and kind to everyone. A keen beekeeper and a great gardener, his friends and colleagues remember him as a kind, patient, and gentle person. Jerry managed his forests in textbook fashion; indeed he was an exceptionally fine manager in everything he did.

To his wife Gabrielle, his daughters Annmarie and Elaine, his son Brendan, his grandchildren Aoife, Maria, Cara, and James, we offer our sincere sympathy.

*Suaimhneas síoraí dá anam*

Tom Kissane