

## Jim Dwyer

### 1935 – 2022

Jim Dwyer passed away peacefully at Tullamore Regional Hospital, Co. Offaly on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022, in his 88<sup>th</sup> year.

He was born on 8<sup>th</sup> February 1935 to James and Mary (née Guilfoyle) at Ballinard, Grantstown, Co. Tipperary, the sixth born in a family of ten.

He received his primary education at Donaskeagh National School and his secondary education at The Abbey CBS in Tipperary Town. On completing his secondary education, Jim spent a year at the Albert College, Dublin which was then part of UCD and is now DCU.



After that together with two of his Co. Tipperary neighbours, the late Seán Farrell and the late Seán Ryan, he headed for Kinnitty, Co. Offaly to begin his forestry career. He completed his forestry studies in Shelton Abbey, Co. Wicklow in 1959.

His initial assignment in 1959 was to Gort Forest, Co. Galway; in 1961 he transferred to Ballybofey Forest, Co. Donegal and in 1962 to Curraghmore Forest, Co. Waterford. He was promoted forester in charge at Ballinagee Forest, Co. Wicklow in 1966. While here, he met and married Anne (O'Sullivan) in 1968 and he began to raise their family. In 1974, he transferred to Roscrea Forest, Co. Tipperary where he remained until his retirement in 1997. He spent a brief period prior to his retirement on private planting. Jim enjoyed every one of the postings he was assigned to and had no regrets.

In remembering Jim, the attributes that come to mind are a man of huge integrity, quiet confidence and absolute calmness. He was an extremely easy man to work with and always treated his staff with respect and empathy. He was a committed and confident forester; assistant foresters only had 'their own work to do' when assigned to Jim – an arrangement that was by no means universal at the time. Jim had a profound respect for, but no fear of authority; he never felt the need to impress anybody. Nowadays he would be described as a man who was 'happy in his own skin'. There is a well-known saying that one should never speak ill of the dead, Jim applied that principle to the living as well and the views he expressed about others were always kind and positive. He loved to relate stories from events that occurred in the earlier part of his career when forestry was so different from what it was like in his later career.

Jim had an immense pride in his home place and the many and varied achievements of his extended family. After his year at the Albert College, where he said he learned more than in any other year of his life, Jim took what is now called a ‘Gap Year’ and returned to Ballinard to assist his siblings on the farm as this was the era of compulsory tillage and there was plenty of hard physical work on the farm.

While he loved to reminisce about the ‘old days and the old ways’, he was always more than willing to give the ‘new ways’ a fair chance. When Jim worked in Ballinagee Forest the main species planted there were Sitka spruce and lodgepole pine, then he transferred to Roscrea where Norway spruce and Scots pine were the preferred species in this frost prone area. Jim felt that Sitka spruce would greatly reduce his establishment costs and so Sitka spruce was introduced successfully to the area.

A great conversationalist, he had the ability to talk to everyone, young or old and on any topic. I worked with Jim in the pre-mobile phone era so occasionally he may ring our house phone in the evening and one of the children might answer, they still remember how he always took an interest at what they were involved in at that particular time.

Of course, as a Tipperary man he had a keen interest in all aspects of the GAA, especially Tipperary hurling at both club and county level. Jim considered himself incredibly lucky to have lived through the golden age of Tipperary hurling.

He took a great interest in farming and was a fine judge of animals. Most of all Jim had an interest in people and always had a friendly and sincere welcome for everyone. Due to a birth registration error, he was known as Jim Dwyer but he made sure that all his children were *O’Dwyers* - thus his son is Colm O’Dwyer, BAU Manager with Coillte in Donegal.

Jim was pre-deceased by his brothers Jack, Denis, Fr. Dan and his sisters Breda, Mary, Kitty and Josie. Sadly Jim’s wife Anne passed away on 2 February 2023, to their sons Neil and Colm, daughter Clodagh, grandchildren Áine and Séamus, and brothers Tom and Pat we offer our sincere sympathy.

Christy O’Dea