

John Haughey

1929 - 2023

John Haughey passed away peacefully, surrounded by his loving family, at the Northwest Hospice, Sligo on April 25th 2023, five days after his 94th birthday.

John was a learned and gracious gentleman, an engaging story teller and conversationalist. His hearty laugh, genial courtesy and sense of style were among his outstanding features.

He amassed a wealth of experience during his 44 year career in forestry. He was noted for his sound judgement and the high standards he set for himself and for all who worked with him.

His subsequent 29 years of retirement were equally productive and fulfilling.

John was born on 20th April 1929 to James and Kitty Haughey (nee Cassidy). He was the youngest of the family of seven children (Susan, Paddy, Francis, Mary Kate, Briege and James). His father was a fish exporter.

John grew up as a Gaeilgeoir in Cappagh, Teelin beside Sliabh Liag (Slieve League) in Southwest Donegal. He signed official documents as John Columba Haughey or, more usually, John C. Haughey. The name “Columba” (St. Colmcille) with its ancient and current links to the heritage of his birthplace was very important to him. An interesting aside is that he lived the final 53 years of his life and has his final resting place in the parish of Drumcliffe, Co. Sligo. It was here that St. Colmcille founded a monastery in about 575. Remnants of the monastery that still exist on the site (adjacent to W.B. Yeats’ grave) are an Irish High Cross dating to c. 1100, and the remainder of a 10th or 11th century round tower.

John received his primary education at Teelin National School and his secondary education at St Patrick’s Agricultural College in Monaghan. He began his forestry career at Avondale in 1950 and completed his course and graduated in 1953.

His forestry career after Avondale initially included terms in Co. Wicklow (Carnew Forest) and Co. Wexford (Bunclody Forest). He was later transferred to Counties Laois and Kilkenny as well as to east Galway. He was Forester in Charge of Meeniroy Forest, Co. Donegal when he stayed in Glenswilly from 1957 to May 1960. He was transferred in 1960 to Glenfarne Forest and from there to the nearby Swanlinbar Forest in 1963.

He was promoted to Forest Inspector in the then Forest and Wildlife Service in 1970 and on that promotion joined Jack Durand and Ian Sherriff in the Amenity



Inspectorate. Jack Durand dealt with the east of the country, Ian Sherriff the south and John the north and west.

John's work as Amenity Inspector from 1970 to 1989 included major developments such as the Forest Parks at Killykeen, Kingscourt, Rossmore and Ards as well as many other smaller forest amenity developments. These developments have continued to be popular recreation areas for enjoyment, health and wellbeing as well as a testament to the vision, imagination, practicality and attention to detail of all involved.

John joined Coillte on 1st Jan 1989. From that date until October 1991 Coillte's professional staff advised and inspected private afforestation for the Forest Service on an agency basis. John was the inspector in that role for counties Sligo, Leitrim and west Cavan.

John transferred to the Forest Service in October 1991. He was the Forest Service Inspector for counties Leitrim, Sligo, and West Cavan until his retirement on his 65th birthday in April 1994.

He met the love of his life, Tess Cleary, in the Astoria Ballroom in Bundoran in 1960. Tess was a nurse in the Sheil Hospital, Ballyshannon. They toured the dancehalls of the country and were the epitome of style. They got married in Bundoran, on September 28th 1964. Tess and John started their married life in the forester's house in Bawnboy until their move to Sligo in 1970. They built their house in Rathnashee, Teesan, Co Sligo and moved there in 1971 and spent the rest of their long and happy married life there. They provided a loving, nurturing home to their two sons, Ciaran and Ronan, who grew up to meet Caroline and Stephanie, and carry on the legacy with five wonderful grandchildren – Lisa, Eoin, Ciara, Sara and Conall.

John's 29 years of retirement were happy and productive ones. He established a mixed forest on 5.46 hectares at his former home place in Teelin Co. Donegal in 1995 and delighted in managing it as a Continued Cover Forest (CCF).

A decade ago he put huge effort into researching, co-authoring and publishing the book "From Haughey to Haffey, The Descendants of Patrick Haughey of Teelin, County Donegal, Ireland" by John C. Haughey and Perry T. Ryan. This was a transatlantic collaboration, John wrote and compiled the Irish portion while Perry T Ryan wrote and compiled the American side. The title refers to how the original Irish clan name O'hEachaidh was anglicised as Haughey in Ireland and Haffey in the U.S in the case of this family tree. He was an active contributor in the community around his local parish of Drumcliffe and was highly involved in fundraising for the Oxfield Sport and Leisure Centre there.

John loved to collect antiques, particularly antique books and his home is full to the brim with them. He had a fantastic mind and a wonderful ability to connect

with people and tell stories that captured the imagination. He had a wonderful sense of humour and a smile that lit up the room. His counsel was erudite and valued. He lived a very full life with an active body and a sharp mind right up to a very short time before his death.

To his wife Tess, sons Ciaran and Ronan, daughters-in-law Caroline and Stephanie, and his grandchildren Lisa, Eoin, Ciara, Sara and Conall we offer our sincere sympathy.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam uasal.

Noel Foley