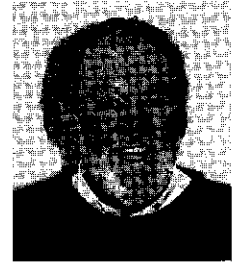


Michael Lillis 1948 - 2006

The untimely death of Michael Lillis, our esteemed fellow member of the Society, took place on July 16th 2006 in Kilcloone, Co. Meath in the loving care of his family. Born in Lisaleen, Patrickswell, Co. Limerick on August 8th. 1948 he was educated in the nearby Adare Christian Brothers School up to Leaving Certificate and spent a year in Pallaskenry Agricultural College before entering the Forestry Training School at Kinnitty Castle, Co. Offaly in 1967. He completed his studies at the Shelton Abbey School in 1970. Michael during his studies showed himself to be a bright, intelligent and forward thinking young man so much so that his contemporaries saw him as an influential visionary.



Michael's career as a forester saw him posted to forest centres at Athenry Co. Galway, Anner Co. Tipperary, Killorglin Co. Kerry, Ross Co. Galway and Lough Graney Co. Clare in the first six years of his service. He spent fourteen years working in Lough Graney during which time he was secretary of the State Foresters Association of the Union of Professional and Technical Civil Servants and was a significant contributor in the greatest change involving Irish Forestry when the commercial state company Coillte was incorporated.

In 1990 he was promoted to Staff Development Manager in Coillte and he took on this new challenge with youthful enthusiasm and subsequently led him to make further impact on the changing landscape of public and private forestry in Ireland. He saw continuing education as an important aspect in the life of employees of the forest industry and he personally exemplified this by graduating with a Management degree from the Irish Management Institute and a Masters degree in Adult and Community Education from the National University of Ireland Maynooth. He was instrumental in and facilitated the awarding of a formal qualification to foresters that received their training in the public service schools.

He promoted the aims of the Society in all his dealings with forestry people and actively recruited new members.

Michael was a key activator in the many contacts between Finland and Ireland, especially between the forestry companies Metsähallitus and Coillte, and initiated many personnel exchanges between the two countries of both forestry students and foresters alike. He was an esteemed ambassador of Irish forestry at the University of Applied Sciences in Oula, Finland where he encouraged them in their first steps in internationalisation and participated in an European Union project with input from five European countries concerned with enhancing the teaching of collaborative planning of natural resources. Michael had an extraordinary interest in the literature,

traditions and cultures of people living in the countryside be that in Ireland or Finland. He was a committed exponent of the Irish language and always felt privileged when given an opportunity to use it. He loved sport and gave much of his life to Cumann Lúthchleas Gael and his leadership and inspirational qualities are testified in both the Feakle, Co.Clare and Blackhall Gaels Co. Meath clubs. In failing health and two months before he died he was more than pleased as a proud son of Munster to be present in the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff when his beloved team were crowned European Rugby Champions.

Ba rnhaiith liom combhrón a thabairth ar son Cumann Foraoiseóirí na h'Éireann, agus ar son rnhuintir foraoiseóirí go léir ar bhás Michéal O'Laighléis lena rnháthair Patsy, lena,dheartháireacha is a dheirfiúracha agus go mór rnhór lena bhean chéile Marie agus a thriúr iníonacha Cíara, Siobhán agus Róisín.

Bhí tú uasal, dílis, gránhar i gcónaí, agus ní dhéanfaimid uilig dearmad ort go deo.

A Mhichíl, a chara, go luífidh tu faoi shuairnhneas i dtalarnh chaoin chneasta na Mí.

Ar Dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.

Joss Lowry