

Brendan Kelly's Eulogy at his father's funeral on Easter Sunday 17 April 2022

Welcome

On behalf of Mum , Susan , David , Colm & myself and all our extended families we would like to thank you all for coming today to join us in this celebration of Dad's life

Following this funeral mass , Dad will be interred in Glasnevin Cemetery with his parents and all are welcome to join us afterwards in Royal Dublin Golf Club for a bite to eat

Thank You

- Fr Brendan for beautiful and fitting memorial service
- Lovely music Nicola and Evelyn
- Carmel & Trish
- Especially we would like to thank all the staff in the Hermitage for the incredible care they gave to Dad over the past 8 weeks ... Words cannot even begin to describe how brilliant they were to Dad.
- To Drs Cheema , Gallagher and Denton for all their efforts in looking after Dad over the years
- Particularly we would like to thank Dr. Liam Cormican for his trojan efforts leaving no stone unturned for Dad over the past 8 weeks – Liam you went way beyond the call of duty and We owe you a debt of gratitude that we as a family can never repay
- To everyone who called , texted , lit candles , sent messages etc we are humbled by your support
- To everyone who visited Dad in the Hermitage over the past 8 weeks , your love for Dad helped us through an incredibly tough period – particularly to our close family friend Anne Marie who visited him 2 weeks ago ... I know Anne Marie that Dad always considered you as part of his extended family and that you share the pain we feel today.

Last 8 weeks

The last 8 weeks have been particularly difficult for us as a family

- As most of you will know Mum had a serious operation in Beaumont a few weeks back and thankfully it was a complete success and she is almost back to her usual self - Dad was so worried about her and all he was concerned about was Mums wellbeing , not his own

Dad had many virtues – but Patience wasn't one of them ! And for those who know me , I know what you are thinking ,, The apple doesn't fall far from the tree

- So over the past 8 weeks I have now become an expert in the refuse collection process in Dublin 15 ! and he used to harangue me constantly about which bin to put out and on which day
- Last Friday morning when Dad had commenced the final journey ,.. he woke up in the middle of the night shouting my name
 - o I expected some words of sage advice about the meaning of life or the 3rd secret of Fatima
 - o Instead I got “Bren ! , Bren !..... have you put the bins out yet“

What was particularly difficult for us over the past 8 weeks was we heard what the doctors were telling us , but our eyes told us a different story All we could see in front of us was this vibrant , intelligent man laughing and joking like he always did

Dads Life

Up to 18 :-

- Dad was born in the Rotunda Hospital on Monday March 1st 1937
- He spent the first 17 years of his life at 168 Coast Road Clontarf
- Went to school in Joey's in Fairview where his contemporaries included Charlie Haughey
- Dad adored his mum , who was a dressmaker and told me stories of delivering dresses to his mum's clients on his bicycle all over the city (He didn't like the posh ones on the Southside!) – including the wife of a Nobel Prize Winner !
- However tragedy struck the Kelly Household when Dad was just 18 , with the death of his mother Nora And dad spent a lot of time over the past 8 weeks talking about her
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Brookwood Ave :-

- With the loss of his mum , dad moved to his sister Nuala's house in Brookwood Ave Artane along with his Dad (also called Tommy) And he reminisced a lot about the sacrifice Nuala made in taking in Dad and his father in a 3 bed house , with her own husband and 2 kids in situ
- As a result Dad always had an incredible affinity with our Hegarty cousins and equally treated them as his surrogate children ... So Therese , Mary , Carmel , Trisha , Fran & Peter – I know you also share the pain we are feeling today

Meeting Mum:-

- Dad met mum in the CIE Club on Marlborough St. at Halloween in 1958
- He told me their first dance was "Ladies Choice" ... I thought he was joking , but it turns out he was right !
- Their first official date didn't quite go to plan They met , as was custom , under clerys clock ... and went to see a Danny Kaye movie at the Ambassador The movie ended late and dad had missed the last bus home . Mum was staying with her friend Joan in Parnell Square , so she loaned dad her bike
- They arranged to meet the next night and Dad turned up looking sheepishly ...turns out he had left the bike outside work at the Irish Press , but it had been stolen !
- Nonetheless romance blossomed and they were married on the 18th June 1962

Trim:-

- Mum and Dad initially started their married life in Drogheda , but moved to Trim shortly after Dad got appointed as District Court Clerk in Trim
- Susan was born in 1964 , followed 2 years later by myself , David in 1968 and Colm in 1972
- As a city boy , life in a rural town took a bit of getting used to for Dad
 - o He decided one day that he was going to go all Richard Briers in The Good Life and start growing his own vegetables
 - o Thus he went to the local hardware store (Leonard's) looking for "potato seeds" – when they gave him the small sprouting potatoes he said "No I want the seeds, not the grown potatoes!" Im sure the proprietor Connie had a good laugh at Dad's

expense ...Nonetheless a life long friendship started between Dad and Connie , that has survived to this day

- Dad threw himself into rural life and was active in so many aspects of the community – The local credit union , Swimming pool committee , pitch & putt club , Trim Golf Club and the condolences we have received in recent days from people who knew him back then is testament to the man he was

Castleknock:-

- In 1986 , Dad was promoted to the position of Chief Clerk of the Circuit court in the Four Courts ,,and as result Mum & Dad moved to Laurel Lodge
- Mum & Dad were surrounded by some wonderful neighbours on Castleknock Ave – in particular Fran & Anne , Terry & Margaret and Paul & Michelle
- Dad loved living in Laurel Lodge and again threw himself into the local community through Golf and the various Bridge clubs he was a member of
- Dad rarely missed Sunday mass here in Laurel Lodge , did readings here on numerous occasions , and was part of Church fundraising by having a pew dedicated to our family
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Solicitor:-

Dad was very modest and humble , so he would go nuts if he knew I was mentioning this But he taught us all that age is just a number

Remarkably at the age of 63 , dad qualified as a solicitor ,,, having spent many years at night school travelling up and down from Trim initially , whilst also working .

Being the humble man he was , despite his letterhead saying “Thomas J.Kelly esq” ,, he always signed his legal letters as “Tommy” cos he felt the formal signature was too pretentious.

Even to this day he continued to dabble in the Legal world , working for Colm and for his good friend Eugene Dunne in Dunboyne

Indeed he continued to work for Colm from his hospital bed over the past 8 weeks .

Travel / Sports / Hobbies

Dad loved to travel and in particular he would always ensure he would turn up at airport hours in advance of a flight With the current delays in Dublin Airport he would probably have mum there 24 hours in advance !

I am pretty sure there is no one in the congregation today who has a travel bucket list like dad has had

- He has been to Moscow twice
- He has been to Kiev
- Spent a month in Zambia in the 1970s
- Florida twice
- He loved his trips to the West Midlands in particular
 - He loved the cosmopolitan nature of life in Birmingham
 - He loved the Stately Home visits
- Kerry & London & Birmingham on countless occasions

- Dad adored his trips to Louisburgh Co Mayo , the music in Mossie's (not that he was a drinker) and especially the days on Silver Strand & Carrowniskey beach watching his Grandchildren surfing

He loved attending sporting events ..He has been to

- Wembley Stadium
- Croke Park
- Villa Park on numerous occasions with David
- He's watched the Orlando Magic NBA team
- He's seen the Boston Red Sox play baseball
- He's seen Tiger Woods sink the winning putt on the 18th at Bay Hill – not once , but twice
- He's one of the few people alive to have seen Mayo win an All – Ireland

GOLF

He loved his 18 holes at golf whether it be in

- Trim with Connie & Teresa
- Hermitage / Black Bush with Mona & Chris
- Hollystown
- And most recently as a member of Castleknock Golf Club

In his early days in Trim he was also a keen Pitch & Putt player and won many trophies

BRIDGE

- He took up Bridge c. 20 years and was a keen member of not less than 4 Bridge Clubs ... St Bridgets Blanchardstown , Castleknock , Cnucha Laurel Lodge & Dublin 15 Club Laurel Lodge – the latter of which he was Auditor .
- He loved the weekends away to Kerry & Mayo with mum for bridge tournaments
- Even during the Pandemic , Bridge kept him occupied via the bbo.com website

Football

Above all Dad loved his football and passed on that love of the Beautiful game to me .

Last Tuesday week we watched our last football match together – and what a cracker it turned out to be with Chelsea narrowly losing out to Real Madrid in the Champions League after extra time .

His football brain was as sharp as a razor to the end , and he tried to explain to me how Chelsea playing 3 at the back was never going to work against Real Madrid's forward line !

He then proceeded to tell me about all the famous players he had seen live over the years ... Hideguti , Puskas , Stanley Matthews , Tom Finney , Nat Lofthouse , Bobby Charlton , Michele Platini and Diego Maradona to name but a few And then he went and ruined it all by telling me his favourite player of all time was Tony Cascarino !

For a True Blue Dub , he oddly was a huge fan of Mayo GAA .. Though maybe not that odd considering his Ballyhaunis heritage and that Susan married into the Mayo Moran Mafia. ! ... Now

that dad is going to the great All Ireland in the sky ... Get our bets on as Mayo are nailed on certainties for Sam this year.

He recently had become a big supporter of the Dublin under 16 Ladies football team

Grandkids

Dad had 10 Grandchildren that he adored .

So in particular I want to say to Marina, Tommy, Seán, Aisling, Daragh, Paul, Maeve, Daniel, Conor and Elizabeth... your Granddad left you an incredible legacy that I hope you will carry with you through the rest of your life ..

In these days of Fake News , Social media likes , posts , polarising opinions etc , we have forgotten what it is like to be a decent human being .

So when you think of Granddad , I want you to think of words like :-

- Integrity
- Humility
- Authenticity
- Decency
- Generosity
- Kindness

Your Granddad had more of those qualities in his little finger than most people you will meet in your life .

Indeed one of the condolences we received on RIP.ie , summed up dad completely with the simple phrase ... “He was a gentleman , and a gentle man”

Sickness

Under the expert care of Dr. Cormican and the Hermitage staff , Dad refused to give up and fought the disease until the end . A final attempt to delay the inevitable was made in Beaumont hospital last week , which proved futile . Dad went to sleep at 11pm on Thursday night last , only waking briefly over the ensuing days – primarily when Mum came to visit him .

He took his final breath last Sunday at 6pm surrounded by his 4 children and incredible amount of love.

Ending

People have asked me if Dad knew he was as sick as he was The doctors and nurses didn't seem to think so .

But I knew my Dad , I could see it in his eyes He knew he was on his final journey , but if he was scared , he didn't let on ,... he did that to protect us ,,,, he was that kind of man .

The doctors told me his heart was as strong as an Ox , but they left out one important detail His heart may have been as strong as an Ox , but more importantly it was as big as an Ocean .

God Speed Dad agus Comhladh samh