



The late Dermot Earley, RIP, 1948–2010

TRIBUTES:

'He wasn't a good manhe was a great man'

■ Compiled by Seamus Duke

Michael McGuire (Chairperson, Roscommon County Board)

"It's a very sad day for Roscommon and all Roscommon people because we have lost one of our finest. But most of all it is a massive loss for his family to whom I extend my deepest sympathy. Not alone was Dermot a great Roscommon man but he had a huge career in the army and he was a highly distinguished Irishman at home and abroad. We were all very proud of what he achieved.

"Dermot played a huge role as a player as we all know but he played a massive role after he retired, serving as a team manager and mentor and in recent years there was hardly a club in the county who didn't have Dermot at their social occasions. He was a very proud Roscommon man who will be missed by everyone who knew him."

Seamus Hayden (former Roscommon footballer)

"We knew that it was coming but when the news came it was still a shock because death is so final. It's hard to take that such a fine man could be taken from us at such an early age. It is so sad to realise that he is gone after all we went through.

"Dermot Earley had a positive effect on everyone who met him. His warm handshake and genuine interest in everyone he met meant that when you met Dermot you left feeling a better man for the experience. He had time for everyone, regardless of who they were.

"Talking to the lads in the army he was the same way with them too. He would talk to the lowest ranked people in the army and make them feel at home and he is a huge loss to everyone that knew him.

"He was a legend on the field but he was also a legend off the field. He was a brilliant player and a big strong and powerful man. It was a pleasure have known him and we are all stunned that he is gone from us."

Tony McManus (former Roscommon footballer)

"It is so very sad to lose such a great man. We visited him around Christmas time and we knew that he probably would not recover, but it was still a shock to get the news that he had passed away.

"He had such a positive effect on Roscommon people. I met a few Roscommon people today with tears in their eyes as they spoke about him. He was an iconic Roscommon figure both on and off the field.

"We all know about his football career and every time that Dermot appeared on TV talking about his army work, Roscommon people felt that little bit of extra pride.

"He was a great colleague on the field



and a great man off the field and a great role model for Roscommon people and for everyone who knew him. It's very sad for everyone and especially for his family, to whom I extend my deepest sympathy."

Gay Sheeran (former Roscommon player and manager)

"Dermot was a great man every way you took him. He was an inspiration to every one of us who played with him.

He was a leader in the dressing room and then he went out on to the field and did it there too.

"I remember going training for the first time and meeting guys like Dermot and Harry Keegan and Pat Lind-

say. We learned stuff from them that lasted us a lifetime.

"He had a great way about him. There was no roaring or shouting. He was gentle but firm. When he won he never gloated. When he lost he took it on the chin and was always ready to console other players.

"He remarked in his autobiography 'The Earley Years' – that he would like the words – 'he was a good man' – on his gravestone. Dermot Earley wasn't a good man. He was a great man."

Críostóir Ó Cuana, (GAA President)

Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael Críostóir Ó Cuana has paid tribute to former Roscommon player and manager Dermot Earley on the occasion of his sad passing.

The Michael Glavey's clubman was a member of the Roscommon senior inter-county team from 1965 until 1985, while he also later served as Manager of both the Roscommon and Kildare senior football teams. He also played with the Sarsfields club in Kildare winning a Kildare Senior Football Championship in 1982 and went on to become Chairman.

"Earley was a true GAA stalwart and enjoyed a successful career which resulted in him winning five Connacht Senior medals, two All Star Awards, one National League medal, one U21 All Ireland medal, an All Ireland runners up medal (1980) and two Railway Cup Medals. His provincial haul makes him Roscommon's record holder for Connacht medals.

"He was only 17 years-old when he made his senior debut for Roscommon in 1965 but had to wait seven years to achieve his first Connacht title at that level - helping his native County overcome Mayo.

"Dermot's commitment and real passion for Gaelic Football was always there for all to see and in 1966 he represented the Roscommon Minor, U21, Junior and Senior teams in one season.

"Dermot made an immense contribution to the Association over the course of his life, a contribution that is still felt and appreciated today, in Kildare and Roscommon in particular.

His passion for life and his desire to be to be supportive and helpful, particularly in encouraging players at local level, makes him stand out as an extraordinary person.

"While his contribution to the GAA has been hugely significant, his contribution to Irish life, in particular to the Defense Forces has been remarkable. We will miss him greatly" added an tUachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael."

The GAA President offered his condolences to his wife Mary and their six children, his Mother Kitty, as well as the wider Earley family.