

# Sea rescue hero's widow donates funds to ISPCC

By Sarah Slater

THE widow of Captain Mark Duffy who died when Coast Guard helicopter Rescue 116 crashed off the Mayo coast has donated funds raised to support her family to the ISPCC.

Hermione Duffy lost her 51-year-old husband in the tragedy which also claimed the lives of his three colleagues on board, 17 months ago, on March 14 last year.

Captain Dara Fitzpatrick, along with the winch team of Paul Ormsby and Ciaran Smith, were also onboard the helicopter.

Last June Airport Police and Fire Service staff, together



Lost his life: Mark Duffy

with members of the gardai and the Irish Aviation Authority, were joined by some family members of the Rescue 116 crew to cycle Dublin Airport's

perimeter to raise funds in the wake of the tragedy.

But Mrs Duffy took to her official Facebook page yesterday posting: 'We decided to give our share to charity - €2,260 was given to the Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.'

The Air Accident Investigation Unit established that the flight's warning system did not include the rocky Atlantic outcrop of Blackrock Island and its lighthouse in its database.

The bodies of Captains Duffy and Fitzpatrick were recovered from the sea soon after the crash, but despite extensive searches, Mr Ormsby and Mr Smith are still missing.

# Dr Mark Dooley



## MORAL MATTERS

# Why choose smog instead of world filled with beauty?

**I** AM not merely a tree that sits in your garden. I stand as a symbol of creation's miraculous ability to produce something glorious from a simple seed. Without me, you would be powerless against the sun, defenceless against the hail.

Without me, your small Eden would seem so desolate and bare. They say I cannot communicate, and yet how else but through me can you sense the changing seasons? And when autumn comes, don't I invite you to feast on my juicy abundance?

I am more than bark and timber, leaves and branches. I am a home to the guardians of the skies, those colourful creatures that serenade you into each spring morning. I am the reason why, despite the corruption of your beautiful planet, you can still inhale pure air.

I am not just a flower that comes and goes with the seasons. In each of my forms, I offer the world beauty, wonder, healing and joy. I herald the dawn of spring and, as a rose, I bring to completion a hot summer. Red, white, yellow, pink - take your pick, for I am always sweetness and light.

Without me, the bees could not do their vital work to nourish and replenish the planet. And, yes, I am a symbol of love and peace, a token that wipes away sorrow and a reminder of eternal promises. Even Christ Himself said that Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one such as me.

I brighten up every room and am there to banish all illness and pain. I line the red carpet along which they walk to make their sacred vows. And, when they lie down for the last time, I lie next to them as a sign that the angels have come and gone.

I am not just soil, mud, dirt or clay. I am the foundation of everything that emerges from the earth. I am the source of the flowers and the trees, their womb, mother and support.

Before the artist paints a fresco, he has but a wall of wet plaster. When the masterpiece is complete, you no longer see the plaster. But without the rough plaster, there could be no masterpiece.

Without me, you would have no fields, plains or meadows, no roses

or blooms of any hue. When treated properly, I am the source of all growth, food and habitation. Upon me, you build your castles, cathedrals, hotels and homes.

I am there for the pleasure of all children, much to the frustration of their parents. These little ones see wonder in me, just as they do in the outstretched arms of the mighty oak whose roots I nourish and sustain. Getting down and dirty with me is, for many, their first experience of true play.

And then, when the curtain closes on your earthly journey, I shall be there to receive you. I shall be there until that most vital aspect of your being is escorted elsewhere. For I do not signify decay but only growth, life and hope.

You walk on us, wrench us from our roots, cut and pick us. You swing and play on us, build and trample across us. But you also care for us by planting, pruning, sowing and cultivating.

Always know that we are there, not only for your pleasure, but for your health and that of all creation. We are there not merely as decoration, but as essential gifts without which you cannot truly flourish.

They say you can live without flowers and trees, but what person would opt for a painting of a rose when they could, with one breath, inhale the aroma of paradise? Who would really choose a world of wires, a world of smog and pollution, when they could rest beneath a canopy of cleansing leaves?

**W**E have been here since the beginning. We have been here cleaning, feeding, pleasing, housing and nourishing all those who have made this Earth their home. Until recently, this was our dominion and we freely gave of ourselves for millennia.

But now it seems we are at your mercy, for we are in competition with machines and gadgets. We are victims of what they call 'progress' and lifestyles based on convenience. We are widely considered an optional extra.

Take the axe to us if you will, but remember you need us as much as we need you.

So, learn to love us once again and we shall show you the true meaning of miracles.

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