

Mayo Cheshire Home

Paul O 'Dwyer demolished his family home following his sister Mary's demise. He replaced it during the 1970's with The Cheshire Home for thirty patients & sixteen Staff members. At the sod – cutting Ceremony he stated that *'I am happy that I can do something for people who have not been fortunate in life.'* [\[lvi\]](#)

He later developed a home for physically disabled adults on his family home site. (*Clines*) [\[lvii\]](#)

Paul O 'Dwyer established & funded the O 'Dwyer Cheshire Home for physically disabled adults on his old family homestead in Bohola, Co. Mayo. (*The Connacht Tribune*) [\[lviii\]](#)

Interests

Paul O 'Dwyer enrolled as a member of The Mayo Men's Association of New York. He travelled overseas to Buenos Aires, Rio, Santos also Montevideo. [\[lix\]](#)

Forestry Foundation

The O 'Dwyer Forestry Foundation was established as a charitable organization in Ireland. His foundation planted six hundred – fifty acres of trees throughout the five counties of Connaught. At his direction the foundation became a thirty – two - county entity. [\[lx\]](#)

He established the O 'Dwyer Forestry Foundation. (*The Connacht Tribune*) [\[lxi\]](#)

Paul O 'Dwyer was determined that a charitable purpose would be of benefit to his old family home in Bohola, Co Mayo. With determination, drive, ambition he overcame numerous bureaucratic obstacles that enabled him to establish the O 'Dwyer Cheshire Home at Lismirrane. A home that catered for thirty physically disabled persons also he provided employment for sixteen staff members. Paul O 'Dwyer cut the first sod for the development of the O 'Dwyer Cheshire Home. His foundation has planted six hundred & fifty acres of trees throughout the five counties within Connaught. The Foundation was to become an all - Ireland thirty – two county entity. [\[lxii\]](#)

Mayo Man of the Year

Paul O 'Dwyer was named as *'Mayo Man of the Year'* during 1974. (*The Connacht Tribune*) [\[lxiii\]](#)

During 1974 he was elected *'Mayo Man of the Year.'* [\[lxiv\]](#)

Ill – Health

Following a stroke O 'Dwyer continued on with his professional interests (*although confined to a wheelchair*) with one important aspect: his support for the Good Friday Agreement in Ireland. He celebrated his ninetieth birthday at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City during May 1997. Paul O 'Dwyer was honoured by Mayor Rudolph Giuliani for *'making a better life for tens and thousands of other people'* also that he was *"an exceptional example of a great New Yorker.'* [\[lxv\]](#)

The celebration of Paul O 'Dwyer's ninetieth birthday at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York during May 1997 was a memorable & very deserved celebration of his great life. [\[lxvi\]](#)

Quotes

O 'Dwyer once recalled that in his youth children were expected to work without pay; *'I don't remember really liking full work; I don't remember resenting it either.'* In his Autobiography he penned that *'here and there in Bohola you could see the ruins of abandoned dwellings – mute evidence that hunger, the battering ram, the landlord's dreaded demolition machine, had overcome these occupants during famine and eviction.'* *'You could say we blazed the way for the Ireland fund.'* He also stated that; *"The one issue is fair play over the period of a lifetime.'* *'If I've had any success at all, its been a large measure from listening to young people.'* *'The ideals should always come first.'* (Cronin) [\[lxxi\]](#)

'If I thought at the end of the year that all I did was make a living, I'd regard it as a pretty incomplete year," he said of his rich life as an agitator within the system'. [\[lxxii\]](#)

Another quote was *'Politics is the only machinery on which you can really straighten things out.'* (Cronin) [\[lxxiii\]](#)

Demise

Paul O 'Dwyer's demise occurred during his ninetieth year at his residence in Goshen, New York on 24th June 1998. He was interred at the old cemetery at Bohola, Co. Mayo. [\[lxxiv\]](#)

Paul O 'Dwyer's demise occurred six days prior to his ninety - first birthday on 23rd June 1998: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_O%27Dwyer

His demise occurred on 24th June 1998 in Goshen. Paul O 'Dwyer's ashes were scattered at his birthplace of Bohola, Mayo. (*The Connacht Tribune*) [\[lxxv\]](#)

Publications

In his autography *Council for the Defence* 1979 (*Simon & Schuster New York*): he described his long career in support of progressive causes. Copies are housed within the National Library of Ireland both in Dublin, Galway, England & Germany. [\[lxxvii\]](#)

Paul O 'Dwyer wrote in a memoir *Counsel for the Defence* that *'the eleventh and last O 'Dwyer in an already overcrowded five-room house, and while I know my deeply religious mother proclaimed me to be a gift from heaven, I doubt that the other members of the family subscribed to this view'.* (Cronin) [\[lxxviii\]](#)

In his autobiography *Counsel for the Defence* Paul O 'Dwyer provided glimpses of the political & social ideas that shaped his highly intelligent also his well thought out views on Ireland. [\[lxxix\]](#)

He published an autobiography *Counsel for the Defence* during 1979. He edited the memoirs of his brother William *'Beyond the Golden Door'* in 1986. (*The Connacht Tribune*) [\[lxxx\]](#)

Tributes

Many tributes were attributed to Paul O 'Dwyer following his demise including these; Ireland's former President Mrs. Mary Mc Aleece paid tribute in a speech at The Irish Voice *'Dreamer of Dreams'* Event. *'He appreciated the individuality of people also passionately believed in the rights of others.'* Sean Cronin stated that *'O 'Dwyer was an advocate for countless causes but essentially, he was Ireland's Advocate in the U. S.'* (Cronin) [\[lxxxvi\]](#)

Paul O 'Dwyer was described as *'the Conscience of New York Politics'* (*Newsday* 25th June 1998) He was courageous in his consistent commitments to freedom of conscience also to social &

racial inclusion. He expressed his opposition to various episodes of American overseas military intervention. [\[lxxvii\]](#)

An *Irish Echo* editorial recalled Paul O 'Dwyer as a 'man of principle who wished to be right not popular.' [\[lxxviii\]](#)

'To his deathbed, Paul O 'Dwyer, a white – maned, fiercely browned advocate, embraced a raft of minority causes, identifying with indigents and immigrants, progressives and underdogs well beyond America – from the guerrilla fighters for a Jewish home state to the diehard rebels of his beloved Ireland.' (Cronin) [\[lxxix\]](#)

Callaghan Jim in the *'Irish Echo'* stated that for Paul O 'Dwyer 'Principle, not the lust for Power drove his agenda. He was to be sure a man in politics, not of politics.' 'He built his Law and his political career pushing issues that mattered to his natural constituency of working – class, powerless, also oppressed peoples worldwide.' [\[lxxx\]](#)

The Paul O 'Dwyer Memorial Award is awarded annually to worthy recipients with President Bill Clinton as the original recipient during 2018: Markel Flannell Eileen (Vice – President of the Central Royalty Container Collection Fund of the Longshoremen's Association & Maritime Alliance) won the award. [\[lxxxii\]](#)

Paul O 'Dwyer Peace & Justice Award was established following his demise. [\[lxxxiii\]](#)

Paul O 'Dwyer's papers & documents are stored within St John's University, Long Island, New York. (*The Connacht Tribune*) [\[lxxxiiii\]](#)

'Paul O 'Dwyer was the former president of the New York City Council, a prominent democrat, New York Commissioner to the United Nations, a humanitarian, civil rights activist, lawyer, advocate for many causes; but above all a great friend.' [\[lxxxv\]](#)

The Irish American Heritage Museum at 370 Broadway, Albany, New York City has a library dedicated to Paul O 'Dwyer that houses his books, numerous letters as well as hundreds of volumes that relate to Irish history, culture & customs that have been donated by several individuals. It has been designated by the National Board of the Ancient Order of Hibernians as a repository of their history. Documents at the library include microfilms also printed copies that date from the early 1920's. [\[lxxxvi\]](#)

The Irish American Heritage Museum's Paul O 'Dwyer Library at 21 Quackenbush Square Albany, New York contains numerous volumes of this world - renowned Irishman's papers & books. It contains hundreds of volumes that relate to Irish history, culture & customs that have been donated by the public. The generosity of his family also 'The Mayo Foundation in Ireland' deemed it very successful: <https://www.irish-us.org/resources/paul-odwyer-library>

Further Information

A country retreat in Goshen, New York that overlooked the Hudson River Valley (forty miles from the city) became his final permanent residence (*The Connacht Tribune*): <https://www.dib.ie/biography/odwyer-paul-a673>

The Connaught Telegraph of 23rd June 2020 included an article *A Mayo Outlook* by Tom Gillespie that detailed Paul O 'Dwyer's life. (page 22)

Paul O 'Dwyer brother of William O 'Dwyer is referenced in *The Connaught Telegraph* 21st July 2020 as 'One of the great Bohola Men' by Johnny Mee in his article *Auld Stock*.

In his article of *Auld Stock* in 'The Connaught Telegraph 26th January 2021: Johnny Mee stated that 'Paul O 'Dwyer was born in Lismirrane, his father Patrick was the first principal of the local national school. He married the assistant teacher Bridget Mc Nicholas. Paul emigrated to America during 1926. He obtained a law degree at St. John's University on Long Island, New York. He was one of the city's leading lawyers also featured in several high-profile court cases. He was elected as Mayo Person of the Year during 1974. He was a leading member of the Democratic party. He held positions on New York City Council & acted as President of NYC Commissioners. He was brother of the Mayor of New York; both brothers were proud sons of Bohola.' (NBC)

O 'Donovan Donal's 1984 *Dreamer of Dreams Portraits of the Irish in America* referenced Paul O 'Dwyer (pages 151 - 160) (*Irish Printers Ltd*): <https://www.kennys.ie/history/dreamers-of-dreams-portraits-of-the-irish-in-america>

This PDF references Paul O 'Dwyer. It may be viewed at this siter:
<https://www.congress.gov/105/crec/1998/06/26/CREC-1998-06-26-pt1-PgE1270.pdf>

Paul O 'Dwyer Papers are available to peruse at Tamiment Library & Robert F. Wagner labour archives at New York University Special Collections:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_O%27Dwyer

Staten Island Advance 'Our borough historians: The past is their passion' (Retrieved 19th June 2019):
https://www.silive.com/memories_column/2010/07/our_borough_historians_the_past_is_their_passio_n.html

'Paul O 'Dwyer speaks about the 10th Anniversary of the Hunger Strikes' (Retrieved 5th September 2020): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_O%27Dwyer

Footnotes

[lvi] Paul O 'Dwyer – The Irish Times (<https://www.irishtimes.com/>) [Accessed 28th June 2019]

[lvii] Paul O 'Dwyer (<https://www.nytimes.com/>) [Accessed 27th June 2019]

[lviii] Paul O 'Dwyer (<https://www.dib.ie/biography/odwyer-paul-a673>) [Assessed 13th April 2019]

[lix] New York Mayo Men's Association Journal, Jubilee Edition 1954

[lx] Paul O 'Dwyer – The Irish Times (<https://www.irishtimes.com/>) [Accessed 28th June 2019]

[lxi] Paul O 'Dwyer (<https://www.dib.ie/biography/odwyer-paul-a673>) [Assessed 13th April 2019]

[lxii] Paul O 'Dwyer (<https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/paul-o-dwyer-1.172758>) [Accessed 27th June 2019]

[lxiii] Paul O 'Dwyer (<https://www.dib.ie/biography/odwyer-paul-a673>) [Assessed 13th April 2019]

[lxiv] Paul O 'Dwyer (<https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/paul-o-dwyer-1.172758>) [Accessed 27th June 2019]

[lxv] Our Campaigns Candidate (<https://www.ourcampaigns.com/>) [Accessed 28th June 2019]

[lxvi] Paul O ‘Dwyer (<https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/paul-o-dwyer-1.172758>) [Accessed 27th June 2019]

[lxvii] Council for the defence (<https://www.worldcat.org/>) [Accessed 28th June 2019]

[lxviii] An Advocate for Ireland (www.irishtimes.com/) [Accessed 27th June 2019]

[lix] Paul O ‘Dwyer (<https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/paul-o-dwyer-1.172758>) [Accessed 28th June 2019]

[lxx] Paul O ‘Dwyer (<https://www.dib.ie/biography/odwyer-paul-a673>) [Assessed 13th April 2019]

[lxxi] An Advocate for Ireland (www.irishtimes.com/) [Accessed 27th June 2019]

[lxxii] Paul O ‘Dwyer (<https://www.nytimes.com/>) [Accessed 27th June 2019]

[lxxiii] An Advocate for Ireland (www.irishtimes.com/) [Accessed 27th June 2019]

[lxxiv] Paul O ‘Dwyer (<https://www.irishtimes.com/>) [Accessed 28th June 2019]

[lxxv] Paul O ‘Dwyer (<https://www.dib.ie/biography/odwyer-paul-a673>) [Assessed 13th April 2019]

[lxxvi] An Advocate for Ireland (www.irishtimes.com/) [Accessed 27th June 2019]

[lxxvii] Paul O ‘Dwyer (<https://www.dib.ie/biography/odwyer-paul-a673>) [Assessed 13th April 2019]

[lxxviii] *New York Mayo Men’s Association Journal Jubilee Edition 1954*

[lxxix] An Advocate for Ireland (www.irishtimes.com/) [Accessed 27th June 2019]

[lxxx] For O ‘Dwyer, Principle (<https://www.irishecho.com/>) [Accessed 28th June 2019]

[lxxxii] Paul O ‘Dwyer Memorial Award (<https://thetablet.org/>) [Accessed 28th June 2019]

[lxxxiii] Our Campaigns Candidate (<https://www.ourcampaigns.com/>) [Accessed 28th June 2019]

[lxxxiiii] Paul O ‘Dwyer (<https://www.dib.ie/biography/odwyer-paul-a673>) [Assessed 13th April 2019]

[lxxxiv] Paul O ‘Dwyer (<https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/paul-o-dwyer-1.172758>) [Accessed 27th June 2019]

[lxxxv] An Advocate for Ireland (www.irishtimes.com/) [Accessed 27th June 2019]