



Paddy Sugrue, Managing Director of Kelliher's Electrical is awarded the EFI Lifetime Achievement Award

Magdalen Kelliher assumed the responsibility of looking after the Kelliher business in Kerry when her husband John died in 1978. She sought the advice of her close friends Denis and Kit Sugrue to successfully manage the Kelliher business which at that time consisted of an animal feed mill and a small electrical business.

She approached their son Paddy Sugrue, a chartered accountant, formerly employed by Arthur Andersen in Dublin, and asked him to undertake a financial analysis of the Kelliher business as well as to actively explore any future potential commercial opportunities!

Paddy was subsequently asked to move back to Tralee in 1979 to assume the position of Managing Director of the company. Paddy was the first and only non-family member in Kelliher's long history to assume this role.

Magdalen Kelliher continued to work in the company as Company Chairperson. She firmly believed that 'you must remember that the single most important emphasis at Kelliher's is servicing the customer requirements' and that attitude

was duly passed on to Paddy and is ingrained throughout the whole organisation to this day!

While Kelliher's was originally an Agri business, Paddy switched focus and began to expand the electrical side of the business from its Tralee base, firstly to Cork, followed by Limerick & Waterford. The Kelliher's legacy continued to grow during the 90's with the acquisition of the West of Ireland's largest electrical wholesaler CT Electric and Fitzpatrick's Electrical in the north east.

During the 90's Kelliher's continued to expand to the East Coast, starting with Dublin. There are now 8 branches covering an area from Bray to Dundalk. Paddy gives great credit to all the team who, by their dedication to customer service, have enabled the company to grow throughout the past 40 years.

GE - 1998

Kelliher's status as one of the country's leading electrical wholesalers did not go unnoticed and, in 1998, attracted the attention of the global conglomerate General Electric.

At one stage during GE's tenure and during the boom years in Ireland, Kelliher's had almost 30 branches nationwide which showed the phenomenal growth path Kelliher's had been on, in only 20 years.

Kelliher's strong association with GE then ended in 2006 when the American company sold its electrical division to Rexel, France, one of the biggest electrical wholesale companies in the world.

This was at a very difficult time for Kelliher's, as it was during one of the worst recessions to hit Ireland. Many branches had to be closed and unfortunately staff had to be either laid off or given reduced hours. Paddy endeavoured to manage the whole process with dignity and fairness to everyone throughout the company.

However, as the economy has begun to improve over the past few years, Kelliher's has turned a corner from the dark days of the recession and Paddy and his team has spearheaded the company to success once again with new branches in Finglas and Bray opening over the past 2 years. Additionally, in 2009, RISS (Rexel Industrial Supply Solutions) came under the Kelliher's/Rexel Ireland

business. Under the strong guidance of Pat O'Brien, it has grown dramatically over the past few years in the MRO space servicing a range of high-profile multinational companies.

Paddy will be leaving the company in a strong position to continue its growth over the coming years. A growth that started in one branch, rose to 30 branches during the boom and now has to present day 22 branches nationwide with the one important mantra that will continue after he leaves "you must remember that the single most important emphasis at Kelliher's is on servicing the customer's requirements".

Personal Life

Happily married for 41 years to Deirdre who has supported him throughout his career and they have 3 children (Conor, Brian and Niamh).

Hobbies

Paddy has many interests, but it would be fair to say that his main hobby in life is his devotion to ol' blue eyes himself, Frank Sinatra whom he met in Las Vegas in 1993 on a Philips dealer trip!

He actively goes to race meetings across the country and loves attending Irish rugby internationals with his family! He's also known to enjoy dinner and a few glasses of wine with his close friends and family.

**We wish him
all the best in his
retirement.**