



# Patrick Gerard McDonnell

OCT 30, 1960 - JUN 3, 2023



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# Table of Contents

<b>Obituary</b> .....	Page 3
<b>Events</b> .....	Page 5
<b>Tribute Wall</b> .....	Page 6



# Patrick Gerard McDonnell

OCT 30, 1960 - JUN 3, 2023

**P**atrick Gerard “Gerry” McDonnell (62) passed away peacefully on June 3, 2023, at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centre in Manhattan.

Born October 30, 1960, to Brid and Eugene McDonnell, Gerry grew up in the town of Castlebar, Ireland with nine siblings: Dermot, Eugene, Joseph, Mary, Pearse, Noelle, Niall, Seamus and Edel.

As a teenager Gerry was an exceptional chess player. He played on county teams and represented his country at international level. At one stage he was the third ranked chess player in Ireland.

He graduated as a civil engineer from Galway University in 1980. He worked for Mayo County Council before the lure of the US saw him depart Ireland for New York in 1986.

He spent many years working for Langan Engineering before starting his own consultancy business, Elan Engineering, in 2016. Of the many projects he worked on the one in which he took the most pride was Four Freedoms Park on Roosevelt Island.

Gerry made many good friends at the Marble Collegiate church social events in New York, and these friendships remained steadfast until his passing. Like many others, he volunteered with the Red Cross in the 9-11 recovery effort.

He developed a passion for mountaineering and ascended Kilimanjaro, Aconcagua and Elbrus. Two of his less talented brothers fearfully recall an occasion when Gerry led them on a daring climb of Nephin in the midst of one of those Atlantic storms that regularly batter Mayo in the depths of winter.

Gerry loved soccer and played in a number of soccer leagues. He spoke often about team camaraderie and of the wonderful friends he made there.



## Obituary

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When cancer came calling in 2022, Ger faced it with courage and good grace. He carried himself with dignity into the toughest battle of his life. He enrolled on a trial of a new experimental treatment. Regardless of the outcome, he knew that it would help advance the cause of science. Sadly, it was his last challenge.

Gerry's family would like to express their deep appreciation to those friends who helped him in the last six months and especially to Kerry for the love and dedication she showed him over the course of his illness.

A visitation service will be held for Gerry at Hennessy Heights Funeral Home (Hasbrouck Heights, NJ) from 6-8pm on Wednesday June 7. He will be buried in Castlebar cemetery in his hometown in Ireland. He leaves behind his Mother Brid, nine siblings, nieces and nephews and many wonderful friends on both sides of the Atlantic. He will be dearly missed by all.



# Events


**Patrick Gerard McDonnell**

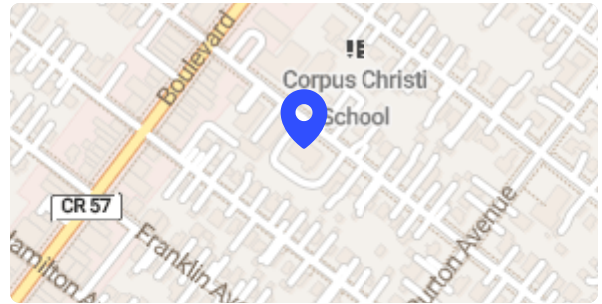
OCT 30, 1960 - JUN 3, 2023

## Visitation

 **Wednesday**, June 7, 2023

 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM ET

 **Hennessey Heights Funeral Home**  
232 Kipp Ave, Hasbrouck Heights NJ





## Tribute Wall

**Patrick Gerard McDonnell**

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JS

**Jia Shue** posted:

I met Gerry more than 30 years ago. We worked together on almost all the waterfront projects along Hudson River in Jersey City, also including Four Season Park in New York. It was very pleasant to worked with Gerry. We accomplished all of these projects very successfully. Gerry's engineering career mainly dedicated to all the promenades of Jersey City. I am sure people living in that city will remember him. I met him once since he started his own firm, I received Gerry message through WhatsApp occasionally, but no mail about a year. When I am wondering what's happen to him, I saw this obituary. I am shocked at the news of his departure.I am grateful for his friendship for more than 30 years. I will always miss Gerry. God bless Gerry and his family!Alex Shue

July 3 at 7:16 PM

SH

**Sheila Houlihan** posted:

Sincere sympathy to Gerry's large Irish family. Gerry always had a welcome smile for his many friends at Dennis's MeetUps, whether an All-Ireland soccer match at the Abbey Tavern or a music session at Paddy Reilly's. He was a lovely man and he will be dearly missed. I will send a donation to St Jude's Cancer Hospital in his name. He is gone too soon. Go ndéana Dia trocaire air. 🙏🌸❤️  
Sheila Houlihan

June 9 at 9:18 AM

DF

**Declan Fitzpatrick** posted:

I met Gerry through a Biotech investing forum around twelve years ago. He led a group of around seven investors who shared investment ideas and strategies online. Gerry was our leader and his knowledge was unmatched. Together we went to many biotech investment conferences and he was known for his probing questions and polite manner. Over the years we got quite close and I always enjoyed his company and his good humor.We somewhat lost touch over the past couple of years as I moved back to Ireland and dropped off the investment board. It was with shock that I learned of his passing this week. Farewell my Captain and Thanks for all the wisdom and memories. I am so sorry that I wasn't around for you over the past few difficult months and I will miss you greatly!

June 9 at 5:11 AM

DC

**Dennis C.** planted a grove of 3 Memorial Trees in honor of Patrick.



June 8 at 12:41 PM



## Tribute Wall

**Patrick Gerard McDonnell**

OCT 30, 1960 - JUN 3, 2023



**Dennis Callaghan** posted:

I knew Gerry for only the last 6-7 years of his life after he joined a meetup group I ran in New York City. He soon became a regular part of our group, whether it was checking out a traditional Irish music session at a pub in the East Village, a singer-songwriter in midtown, Mayo Day festivities near Times Square, New Year's Eve at Paddy Reilly's, or countless Irish soccer and rugby matches on the big screen. We both looked forward to the Six Nations every year, even though I often needed him to explain to me what was going on. If there's one word I would use to describe Gerry, it was generous. You'd never have to worry about him not buying a round, he'd be more likely to pick up the whole check before anyone else could open their wallets. When I was in between jobs, he'd never let me pay for anything. I couldn't wait to get back to work so I could repay his kindness. We will all miss him, but I am grateful for his friendship in the relatively short time I knew him.

June 8 at 12:38 PM



**Mike Dowling** posted:

Gerry and I met in the early 1990's, a few days before Christmas, at JFK airport, waiting for an American Trans Air charter flight to Shannon Ireland. Since then, Gerry and I have met many times a year to share hopes, frustrations, life strategies and lessons, plans, travel experiences, movies, books, and the respective people in our lives. Gerry was one of my longest and closest friends here in the U.S., He was intelligent, courageous, generous, loyal, goal-oriented, and had a sense of humor. He could laugh at himself when plans didn't work out. Gerry had a talent for making friends in just about every place he spent any time. When he had a goal, or an interest to pursue, he could be indefatigable. He helped me move to a new apartment with my now wife back in 1999 despite the incessant rain. Soccer was one of his passions. Gerry and I watched every World Cup soccer final since 1994, in Manhattan venues that promised an atmosphere designed to enhance the excitement. We also made sure to catch the Champions League final every year in May. Gerry's courage was evident in the past few months as he faced this ultimate challenge, fully knowing the odds were stacked against him. Whether volunteering at Ground Zero after 9/11, or protesting racial injustice, Gerry knew the right thing to do. He was a loyal, generous, and courageous friend. I will miss him greatly. Mike Dowling

June 8 at 12:16 PM



**Anonymous** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Patrick.



June 8 at 3:58 AM



# Tribute Wall

**Patrick Gerard McDonnell**

OCT 30, 1960 - JUN 3, 2023



**Dan Badgley** planted a grove of 3 Memorial Trees in honor of Patrick.

June 7 at 9:58 AM



**Anonymous** sent a Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum to the McDonnell family.

June 6 at 5:26 PM



**Anonymous** sent a Rose Impression Casket Spray to the McDonnell family.

June 6 at 4:49 PM



**Anonymous** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Patrick.

June 6 at 4:49 PM





## Tribute Wall

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JH

**John Horchner** posted:

I first met Gerry back in 1995, in Northwest Connecticut at a Marble Collegiate church retreat. The group was a lot of fun. After the presentation to about 60 of us we decided to explore the town of Litchfield Hills, CT where the retreat center was located. As we walked around the lovely town square, one of the places we went into was a pizza place. We took several tables. As we were sitting around talking, a guy who was the spitting image of Rod Stewart walked in — complete with platform shoes, sequin outfit, and raised hair. Each table started talking amongst themselves, whispering really. My table was partly convinced it was Rod Stewart, and Gerry was leading another table insisting that it couldn't be. So, it came down to his accent. We chatted with him, and Gerry placed the accent in a certain part of England or maybe even Ireland, arguing that it couldn't be Rod Stewart. I, however, kept pushing the Rod Stewart angle and got the guy to sing a few bars of one of Rod's tunes to try to convince Gerry that it really was Rod Stewart. In the end, Gerry and I agreed to disagree, even years later when we discussed it! Camping in Western New York was another place Gerry would show his lighter side. Gerry was amazed to see the Amish people, having never seen them in Ireland. On one trip, he suggested going northeast an hour and a half to Letchworth State Park, the "Grand Canyon of the East," saying it would be worth the trip. It was his first trip there as well as ours, and we were really amazed and enjoyed the scenery. That night, we set up all our stuff, but in the wrong cabin, as a large family had taken our cabin. At 2:00 in the morning, however, a trooper had us switch cabins even though we had a small child, even though we weren't the ones who started this whole mess of rotating cabins. Gerry didn't let the experience diminish his view of the park. I also remember more serene times, like watching a feature length film with just a few words of dialogue called "Gerry" that I am sure tested his patience. The 2002 movie stars Matt Damon and Casey Affleck, who both play characters named Gerry and are on an endless, mostly silent, trek through the desert. Of course, there are many other stories to tell. From back country ski trips to golfing in unknown places – Gerry was always up for an adventure.

June 5 at 4:54 AM

BE

**Bahadir Eksioglu** posted:

Gerry and I worked together over 20 years on numerous projects including the award winning Four Freedoms Park Memorial. Gerry was a practical engineer with uncommon wisdom. He spoke softly and precisely with a British accent and these were sufficient to impress all other professionals around him. He knew how to remain calm even when he was facing difficult problems including his latest health problem. The only place he was not that calm is the soccer field where he expressed his talent and feelings passionately. We, his soccer friends at Fair Lawn Soccer Association, will remember his speed and numerous goals in the field and his courteous personality beyond the field. Gerry ; You were a true gentleman. I will miss you and our conversations. God bless you and your family. Rest in peace until we meet again !Bahadir Eksioglu

June 6 at 12:17 PM



## Tribute Wall

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**Mike Nevins** posted:

Gerry and I worked together for almost 30 years at Langan Engineering. He as a civil/waterfront Engineer and I was natural resource permitting specialist that helped obtain permits for his projects. Some of the more memorable projects we worked together on that I particularly recall were a number of NYC School Construction Authority projects and several projects on Roosevelt Island, not the least of which was the FDR Four Freedoms Park, a memorial to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt at the southern tip of the island. If anyone is not familiar with the FDR memorial, you should look it up. Gerry was instrumental in the engineering for that beautiful waterfront project. Gerry it was a pleasure knowing you and working with you. You will be missed my friend. God Bless you and your family. I will keep you in my prayers.

June 5 at 7:48 AM



**Anonymous** sent a Treasured Lilies Spray to the McDonnell family.



June 5 at 6:14 AM



**Jose A. Valencia** posted:

I first knew Gerry over 30 years ago, when he was part of Langan Engineering, and we were part of the consulting team designing schools for the New York City School Construction Authority with Mitchell Giurgola Architects. I had great admiration for his incredible ability to resolve complex construction matters and his professionalism in dealing with all parties. Later on life I found that we shared love and passion for the game of soccer, and we played regularly on Sunday mornings at the Saddle Brook Park with with a group of amazing guys that are mostly from Fair Lawn. RIP Gerry and I will dearly missed your my friend!

June 5 at 4:54 AM



# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Patrick by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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