

## WEALTHY BUSINESSMAN BUYS PRIME BEAUFORT FARM

# 'Back from dead' to snap up €2m farm

■ Not expected to survive after brain haemorrhage

■ Went to England with uncle in 1971

A WEALTHY businessman who 'returned from the dead' after a brain haemorrhage two years ago, has paid just under €2million for a farm near Killarney.

BY NEIL MICHAEL

Glenbeigh native Dan Tim O'Sullivan, who made his fortune in construction in England, snapped up the 110-acre farm at Whitefields, Beaufort, in an auction in Killarney's Royal Hotel on Friday last.

Until the sale, Whitefield Farm was owned by the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood (FMDM) religious congregation.

It had been donated to them by couple Denis and Mary Doyle in the 1960s.

The sale was conducted by Killarney auctioneer Tom Spillane and bids started at €800,000 and there were five bidders in total who each increased their offers by €50,000 as the price rose to €1 million.

It slowed slightly to various €25,000 increases before reaching €1.2 million and then, after a further 30 bids, it reached €1.925 million.

Mr Spillane told *Kerry's Eye*: "I am delighted with

the result.

"It was a very strong price and it is a sign of a good farm making a good price.

"The winning bid for the dry stock farm is a local businessman with farming interests in the area."

He declined to say who the businessman is but local sources later confirmed it is Mr O'Sullivan.

The 65-year-old's fortune comes from the civil engineering conglomerate Danny Sullivan Group, which he founded in 1986.

Today, the company has a £84 million-plus turnover and employs 1,500 people.

Mr O'Sullivan emigrated to the UK with his uncle when he was just 16 in 1971, starting out on the building sites alongside the tens of thousands of other Irish men who left Ireland to work on building sites.

He set up his own firm providing workers and specialised at first in supplying labour to the rail and transport sectors.



Dan Tim O'Sullivan, winning bidder, is congratulated by his son Daniel at the auction of 110 acres of land in Beaufort for nearly €2million at the Royal Hotel, Killarney on Thursday l-r: Daniel O'Sullivan, Tom and Conor Spillane (Auctioneers), Patsy and Dan Tim O'Sullivan.

In June 2017, the veteran cyclist suffered a cerebral haemorrhage while training for the Ring of Kerry and was not expected to survive.

He was hospitalised in intensive care for four months and ended up having to learn how to walk, talk, and eat again.

"It was like coming back from the dead," the married father-of-five would later recall.

Indeed, in 2018, the Glenbeigh native threw a large party in Kerry to celebrate being alive.

There are 55 Irish members of the FMDM, which established and helped run Galway's Portiuncula Hospital before they transferred authority for the hospital to the HSE 19 years ago.

Members have an age range of around 36 to 100 and only about 20 of them are currently in some form of active ministry.

The sisters live in private residences throughout Drogheda, Dublin, Kerry and Ballinasloe. The remaining 40 Sisters are elderly and retired.

The land sale is the latest in a string of land sales by religious orders or congregations.

They include the sale of just over 10 acres in Ranelagh, Dublin 6, which are expected to raise €55 million.

The Sandford Road land and properties for sale are part of the Jesuit Order's Milltown Park site.

The Sisters of Charity are also selling their Stella Maris Retreat Centre in Howth, Co. Dublin.

Valued at more than €3

million, they are giving up due to its high maintenance costs and a drop in the number of people using it since it opened 125 years ago.

The retreat is being sold by the congregation with some seven acres of land along with other buildings, including a chapel built in 1929.

Others selling up include the Daughters of Wisdom who are selling Cregg House and its surrounding lands in Sligo.