Taoiseach leads the tributes to Mick Herbert

BY NORMA PERNIA

THE Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, this week led tributes to the late Michael Herbert, former Fianna Fail TD and MEP, who died on Monday and will be buried this Friday.

"He was passionate about politics, about farming and the farming community and was an outstanding sportman," he said.

Defence Minister Willie O’Reilly described him as a man of great energy and determination, a hardworking and assiduous public representative and a frequent and fiery contributor to Dáil debates.

And he has been characterised by those who knew him as a very intelligent and a very witty man, a man of probity who was committed to the ideals of Irish nationalism and of public service.

But for many who were his constituents or of his political persuasion, it is Mick Herbert the hurler who will be best remembered.

Born in Anacotty in May 1955, he joined Ahane GAA Club at a young age, winning county minor medals with the club in 1969 before going on to secure seven successive county championship medals with the senior club between 1974 and 1980. Wearing the county colours, he played in a number of Munster finals and was a member of the historic National League team of 1979.

But in 1989, in a well-documented incident at half-time during a match, Mick sustained serious head injuries which ended his hurling career. But he continued to contribute to his beloved Ahane and the GAA, as a selector and one of the last acts of his life was to listen to a match broadcast on Sunday.

After his retirement from public life in 1983, Mick Herbert continued his interest in politics and his support for the then leader Charlie Haughey whom he supported by a mere week.

In his last days in hospital, he followed the State funeral for Mr Haughey with deep interest. Physically incapacitated over the past four years as a result of his 1989 injury, Mick Herbert however remained intellectually sharp to the end.

His death was a peaceful one.

Mr Herbert's remains repose at his home this Thursday and will be buried in St Joseph's graveyard, Castleconnell, following Requiem Mass on Friday.

He is survived by his wife, Brid, daughters Bláthadh, Cathy and Mary, sons Aidan, John, Diarmuid, Gearóid and Turlogh, son-in-law, daughters-in-law, grandchildren, sisters Helen (Mackey), brothers, Tony and Eamon, sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law, many other relatives and a large circle of friends and comrades.

MICHAEL HERBERT: TD, MEP and sportsman.

Limerick to put on its dance shoes

ALL THE BIGGEST AND BEST BRAND NAMES

AND THE VERY BEST PRICES

Michael Herbert in his playing days

...we will...