

TOP OF THE POPS

Happy Father's Day to all the great dads out there!

YOUR 8-PAGE FATHER'S DAY PULLOUT

TODAY, in homes all around the country, dads and granddads will be feted by their nearest and dearest as we celebrate Father's Day.

However, amid all the joy and fun, it will also be a poignant day for many families who have lost beloved paternal figures.

They include the children and grandkids of Ireland's godfather of comedy, Brendan Grace, showband superstar Brendan Bowyer and the greatest Irish radio DJ of them all, Larry Gogan.

The three Irish legends, who brought colour and fun into our lives for decades, have all died since last Father's Day.

BY **EDDIE ROWLEY**



In fact, the first-ever Father's Day, which took place in 1908 at a West Virginia church, was held to honour the hundreds of men who died in the worst mining accident in US history.

It then became a day to honour fathers, both alive and dead.

However, it was Sonora Dodd from Washington who became the mother of the Father's Day revolution in the US.

To honour her father who had raised her and her five siblings after their mother died in childbirth, Dodd pushed the idea of creating a holiday that mimicked the already nationally accepted Mother's Day.

On Sunday, June 19, 1910, Dodd held her Father's Day celebration when young women handed out red roses to their fathers during a church service, while white roses were distributed to remember the dead.

Father's Day has been held on the third Sunday of June ever since.

In 1972, President Richard Nixon established Father's Day as a national holiday.

Here in our Top Of The Pops special, Brendan Grace's daughter, Amanda, poignantly recalls last year's Father's Day meal in a Galway restaurant with the comic legend. It would be Brendan's last day out with his family. Sadly, he died the following month from lung cancer.

Aisling and Clodagh Bowyer recall the amazing life of their iconic showband star dad Brendan and remember him as a doting dad.

And Larry Gogan's son David also reveals how his dad shunned the showbiz lifestyle in favour of his family.

Plus, our top columnist Deirdre Reynolds gives us her unique view of this day of days.



Exclusive family pictures

■ **BRENDAN GRACE** ■ **LARRY GOGAN** ■ **BRENDAN BOWYER**