## RECOVERY

## **REVIEW**

# Rescuing the Beast

Editor's Note: During President Obama's visit to Ireland in May, as a presidential armored limousine was leaving the underground parking area of the U.S. Embassy in Dublin, the vehicle topped a steep grade and bottomed out on a

piece of metal protruding from the ramp. Video of the incident widely appeared on news reports and YouTube. (The president and first lady were in another limousine.)

Kelly Recovery Limited was on standby to serve the motorcade and responded to this unusual recovery. Eilis Murray, who along with her brothers Eamon and Liam, own Kelly Recovery Limited of Kilmacanogue, Co. Wicklow, Southern Ireland, contacted Tow Times with the following account just after the recovery was completed:

ou've heard the phrase "it's either feast or famine," well Ireland has just had a "feast": The historic visit of Queen Elizabeth II followed a few days later by American President Obama and the first lady to our shores. Ireland was in the news this time, our green, white and yellow flag hung side-by-side with the stars and stripes.

Bailouts, recessions and the doom and gloom we have experienced over the past few years were temporarily forgotten. Ireland was proud to show herself off on the world stage. Media from around the world descended on our capital Dublin, trying to capture every movement the two heads of state made and send wonderful scenes of the Irish welcome back home.

We at Kelly Recovery had the contract for both of the state visits. Our staff had extensive security checks done before the visits, but we never thought for a minute that we would be called to recover the presidential limo named "The Beast" with a reported weight of 12 tons.



Kelly Recovery Limited of Kilmacanogue, County Wicklow, Ireland, was on call to serve the motorcade, and responded to assist the stranded limo.



During a U.S. presidential visit to Ireland in May, an armored limo in the president's motorcade became stuck at the entrance to the U.S. embassy in Dublin.

When the president and his wife went to the American Embassy in Ballsbridge, Dublin, nobody expected that a gate spud (the small piece of metal that sticks out of the ground to keep a gate closed) could do so much damage.

There is a ramp leading out of the embassy, and as the motorcade was leaving, the escort vehicle caught the gate spud. The Beast was following and as a result it caught the cross member on the suspension. There was a loud bang, and the vehicle was immobilized. Car doors flew open and the U.S. Secret Service jumped out not knowing what was going on. I am sure many thoughts ran through their heads at that moment. Can you believe The Beast is bulletproof, rocketproof but not "Irish Gate Spud Proof"?

To the relief of the Secret Service, Keith Quinn (my nephew) was on standby and had the honor of recovering The Beast. Because of the extensive damage to the car, it was unable to be lifted by the suspensions, as both front suspensions had collapsed. We lifted it with our Miller/Boniface Century 9055 with low rider under-lift using "spring slippers" on the two towing eyes underneath, as the underside of this vehicle was incased in metal so there was nowhere to fit our forks.

Keith had to modify the equipment to lift the limo off the gate spud. When the limo was lifted free it was taken back down into the embassy car park where two aluminum blocks were manufactured in the local engineering shop to prop the suspensions back up. We then put it on a low loader manufactured by Boniface U.K., whose parent company is Miller Industries.

The limo was taken to a secret location overnight, and the

next morning Keith took the limo to the Dublin airport to be loaded on a Hercules C5 transport plane. The vehicle was removed from the low loader, and the U.S. Air Force winched it into the plane for its return back to America for repairs.

Keith is 21 years old and what a great honor it was for him to do such a high-profile job. He won the Young Recovery Technician Award in 2008 from the Association of Vehicle Recovery Operators (AVRO) in the United Kingdom, and he has a great story to tell in years to come.

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United States Secret Service agents were extremely attentive to the recovery operators handling of this specially-designed version of "Air Force One on wheels."





Kelly Recovery moved the vehicle back to the embassy for emergency repairs, then transported it to a secret location overnight. The following day, they transported "The Beast" to Dublin airport where an Air Force Hercules C5 transport plane awaited to fly it back to the U.S.



Keith Quinn of Kelly Recovery Limited got the call on this high-profile recovery.

### **Presidential Limousine: Air Force One on Wheels**



The 2009-10 Cadillac presidential limousine joins a long tradition of presidential Cadillacs, said to be the automotive equivalent of Air Force One. The Secret Service guards the 2009 vehicle's specifications and classified features, but the vehicle is said to be based on the GMC Topkick truck platform, and security includes highstrength ceramic armor, five-inch thick bulletproof glass, armor-plated and foam-filled fuel tank, Kevlar-reinforced tires, night vision cameras and cell phone jammers.

"Although many of the vehicles' security enhancements cannot be discussed, it is safe to say that this car's security and coded communications systems make it the most technologically advanced protection vehicle in the world," said Nicholas Trotta, assistant director for the Secret Service's Office of Protective Operations.