

for children.  
Over 100,000 children  
attend each year.  
The hospital now

it.  
Over the past year  
£600,000 has been raised  
nationwide with Limerick

length and breadth of Ireland  
to raise funds.  
This cycle will come  
through the city on Friday

scanner at our Lady's  
Hospital will mean that  
seriously sick children will  
no longer have to be

Murphy, Betty Morrissey,  
Ralph Parkes, Helen  
Tuohy, Gerry Laing and Fr  
Joe Young.

# Big name businessman at the top of the class

By JIMMY WOULE



Mid-West Business Institute's Tony Curtin (chairman) and Fergus Rea (director), show the way from 6/7 Rutland Street, to their new premises at Town Hall Centre, three doors away. (LL)

AS A business executive, Tony Curtin went to the top, heading the multi-million pound dairy giant, Golden Vale, for five years.

On retirement, he launched himself into a new career when others might have been tempted to spend their days on the golf course or in other leisurely pursuits.

Tony, who celebrated his 57th birthday last week, proves that success in a new business is not the preserve of the whiz kids.

He heads the Mid-West Business Institute, which is now one of the top third-level business colleges in the country.

A native of Mount Pleasant Avenue, Limerick, he ventured into the business world straight after leaving CBS Sexton Street at 17. He got a job in the office at Limerick Motor Works.

After work, he burned the midnight oil studying accountancy. After a year working in Bristol, he returned to work with the Thomond Cabinet factory, and it was while working there that he qualified as an accountant.

"I then went into the dairy industry with the Condensed Milk Company," he said, "and I was there five years as chief accountant. After that, I went to Halpins Tea as financial controller, and

then I joined Golden Vale, where I was chief executive for five years."

On leaving the Charleville-based co-op in 1985, Tony set up a very successful consultancy practice in O'Connell Street, Limerick.

"I had been lecturing part-time, for many years," he continued. "I lectured at the University of Limerick, and I lectured with the VEC for 20 years.

"Gradually, I got the idea of developing the teaching. I did some market research into the idea of setting up a business college, and I spent two years putting it all together, and we enrolled our first students in September, 1989.

"It has developed much faster than we had anticipated," commented Tony, "and, last year, we were the first in this country to be validated for the higher national diploma in business and finance.

"This course is normally done in the polytechnics and universities in the UK."

Running a variety of business courses, Tony says that it is imperative to

ensure that standards are maintained and, to this end, there are external moderators who carry out ongoing checks on the college courses.

"Our results are very good, and the reports from the moderators are very good," he revealed. "For instance, our secretarial course moderator said that we were in the first three or four in the country. That's very encouraging, and it reflects the philosophy here that quality will count."

There are seven different two-year business courses at the college, and the appeal of these courses has led to a dramatic increase in the enrolments.

Student numbers will rise from 190 to 250 in the coming year. And the night courses also have a wide appeal.

"We have a good placement record," he said.

The expanding numbers of students has also meant recruitment of more teachers and the teaching staff now numbers 25.

The Institute is owned by a company of which Tony is chairman, and the other

board members are Fergus Rea, Carmel Browne and Joe McDonnell.

As the de facto chief executive, Tony concentrates on the administration of the institute.

"But I still lecture in management accountancy — I wouldn't like to lose touch as I enjoy it," he added.

The school is ready for a move from its current location in Rutland Street to the old Town Hall building, a few doors up. The building has been totally renovated and rebuilt inside, specifically designed to cater for the needs of the college. The institute has a leasing arrangement with the developer.

The manner in which the institute has grown has surprised Mr Curtin.

"We envisaged building it up over a five-year period. Now, after three years, we are at that point at which we had aimed. This has meant bringing forward plans more rapidly."

Now the institute is preparing to launch its full business studies degree course.

And they also have an application to the National Council for Education Awards for validation under the NCA Act of 1979. This is an important step for the institute, as it would enable them to widen their range of certificate and degree courses, and it would also make students eligible for grants, if the present grants were extended to students attending private third-level colleges.

"We are very excited about the way things are going," Mr Curtin remarked.

He revealed that a big percentage of their students worked part-time to earn their fees.

The institute night classes are attracting people who are looking for opportunities to move on to a new career in the business sector area.

"Our night class students have done well, and there is great commitment," he declared.

Two of Tony's three children, Sheila and David, are accountants, and Ruth is a bank official in Ennis.

## Sheep all set again

FIT AND active sheep throughout the country were putting in last minute practice runs this week in preparation for the All Ireland sheep run at Galbally Garden Fete, this Sunday.

This is the third year of the event which has proved immensely popular and attracted entries from throughout the country.

This year over 50 aerobic sheep are expected to take their mark in Galbally.

The race will be a 50 metres dash.

The sheep will be placed on the line by their owner and when the gun goes

off it will be all up to the sheep.

There is a perpetual cup and over £100 in prizes for the winners.

The sheep race is just one of the many attractions in Galbally on Sunday.

Louise Morrissey and the Anglesboro Pipe Band will entertain the crowds.

There will also be camogie, and open air bingo.

The proceeds of the day will go to the local community centre and sports field.

The organising committee are Jim Fitzgerald, chairman; Mary Richardson, secretary; Willie Ryan, treasurer, and life president, Canon Hennessy.



Flashback: Galbally I