



Raymond Keaveney, director of the National Gallery of Ireland is shown this bronze age cauldron, dated 750 BC which originated from Ballyscullion, County Antrim, by Mairead Dunleavy, director of the Hunt Museum.

More national treasures for Limerick

By EUGENE PHELAN

THE Hunt Museum, currently based in University of Limerick, has just received 35 objects from the 13th to 18th century from the National Gallery of Ireland.

Raymond Keaveney, director of the National Gallery of Ireland, announced at a meeting of the Friends of the Hunt Museum that the bequest of 35 objects made by John Hunt to the National Gallery of Ireland in 1977 is now being made available on loan to the Hunt Museum for the Custom House, Limerick.

A spokesman for the University pointed out that when the Hunt collection moves to the Custom House building in two years time, the Hunt Museum at the University will remain open.

"While 80% of the Hunt collection will go to the Custom House we will have plenty of items here not just from the Hunt collection," explained the spokesman.

The gesture by the National Gallery is to encourage the aspiration to develop a decorative arts museum of national status in the city of Limerick.

It is also, according to Raymond Keaveney, intended to honour the spirit of the Hunt family who through their generosity made this internationally important collection of 14th to 18th century items available in Dublin at a time when there was no suitable centre available in the Limerick/Clare region - that area for which the family

had so much affection.

Welcoming this generous offer Mairead Dunleavy, director of the Hunt Museum, said that this will be an important addition to the Hunt Museum in Limerick.

This collection of the highest quality are objects

which has been superbly preserved by the National Gallery, has unique material which will be of interest to the students of art and design. An example is Charles II's writing case, a French 17th century shaving set, a travelling medicine chest made in Augsburg and a rock crystal cross with its original leather case which was made for the Dauphin of France in the late 17th century.

John Hunt Jr praised Mr Keaveney for generously understanding his parent belief in the love for Limerick/Clare and their aspiration to develop in this region a major museum of decorative art. The loan of this important collection to the Custom House will be, he said, of great benefit to students and will help the museum to become a major national tourism attraction.