

Independent probe scotches 'Nazi' art claims levelled at Limerick family

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THE Hunt Museum has welcomed the findings of an independent review, which has refuted allegations that John and Gertrude Hunt dealt in material seized by the Nazis during World War Two.

The evaluation report by Dr Lynn Nicholas of the Royal Irish Academy emphasised that there is "no proof that John and Gertrude Hunt were Nazis, that they were involved in any kind of espionage or that they were traffickers in looted art".

Museum Virginia Tee-

han said that all involved are satisfied that the inquiry has reached a conclusion and "the report is very balanced so we are happy to concur with its findings".

She added that members of the Hunt family were also very pleased with the outcome.

The allegations questioning the ownership of items in the museum were first made in 2004 by international Jewish human rights organisation, the Simon Wiesenthal Centre, and the review also discussed the evidence in the case largely based around a single army intelligence file.

"In a press release is-

sued in June 2006 Dr. Shimon Samuels from the Simon Wiesenthal Centre states that letters in this file prove a connection between the Hunts and Emil Bührle...The name used, four times in one letter, is Buhl, not Bührle, and the individual described, certainly bears no resemblance to the extremely rich collector and armaments manufacturer Emil Bührle. This is a grossly serious error of fact and mistaken identity," read the report.

The file contained letters to the Swiss dealer Alexander Von Frey but establishes no transactions between this man and the Hunts.

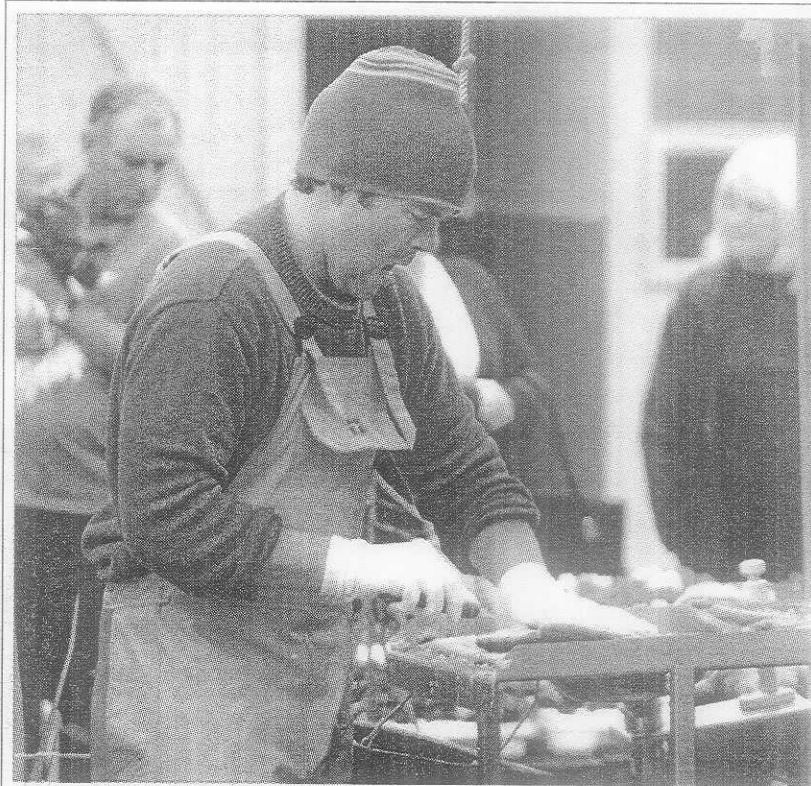
The review said that the allegations caused "inexplicable pain to the Hunt family and severely damaged the reputation of John and Gertrude Hunt" and that it was "alarming" that the "unfounded" claims were

based on one file.

"There has been much talk about moral obligation during this inquiry. It is, of course, important to recover and return items unlawfully taken during World War II, but it is equally obligatory, in the pursuit of justice, to protect people and institutions from unproven allegations," it added.

The review complimented the museum for setting up an internet catalogue and giving people everywhere the chance to enquire about the "provenance of any individual item" if they wished. No one has raised any doubts about the origins of items since the website was set up two years ago.

The Simon Wiesenthal Centre was criticised for not revealing information about the evidence sooner while the Hunt Museum asserted that there was a "distinct lack of co-operation" by the organisation.



HARD GRAFT: Sean O'Driscoll, the West Cork Fish Company filleting a fresh lemon sole for a customer at the Saturday Market.

Picture: Keith Wiseman

Appeal for support for Share a Dream event

MEMBERS of the public in Limerick are being urged to support the Share A Dream Foundation, which holds its annual National Children of Courage Awards in the mid-west in November.

This year's event will take place at the Shannon Shamrock Hotel in Bunratty on Saturday, November 17 next at 7pm and will see children from all over the country honoured.

The Black tie affair is set to be another successfully rewarding awards ceremony for those involved and for those who will receive their awards.

Organisers are encouraging people to get involved and help support the event.

"For just €100 for one or €1000 for a table of 10 you and your friends can join in the magic of making dreams come true for eight of the most courageous children in Ireland at the Dream Ball. You will enjoy a delicious four

course meal, preceded by a drinks reception, a magical evening of top class entertainment, music, dancing till late and lots of happy memories knowing you made a difference," said a spokesperson from the Share A Dream Foundation, which is based in the mid-west.

"All Children are entitled to a happy, healthy life but not all children are so lucky. Childhood for some is short lived. Their lives threatened by terminal illness or disability can be filled with loneliness, pain, heartache and frustration. It's hard for those of us who have perfectly healthy children to really appreciate or understand how life can be for the children and their family. It is a lonely and heartbreaking place to be. Share a Dream Foundation is trying to bring a little bit of magic and sunshine into the lives of these families and give them a little hope for a better tomorrow by

having their fondest wishes come true," added the spokesperson.

Organisers are also asking people if they'd like to support the event as Christmas party outfit for their companies.

"What better way to celebrate while making dreams come true for special children. To reserve your seat or table at the Dream Ball and support this very worthwhile event please contact us at 061-843434 or email dreams@iol.ie," said the spokesperson.

If you think you know child with a life threatening illness or disability or chronic disease who has shown tremendous courage and bravery despite their suffering, then you can nominate them for National Child Of Courage Award.

Write 200 words or why you think her or she is a child of courage and send it to Share a Dream P.O. Box 66, Limerick.

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Patients to benefit from new centres

LIMERICK cancer patients will benefit from the use of one of eight new specialist cancer centres as a new facility is promised for the Mid Western Regional Hospital in the next two years.

Each HSE region in the West, South, Dublin North East and Dublin Mid-Leinster, will get two centralised facilities and each of the eight will be ex-

pected to cater for populations of at least 500,000 people.

Limerick East TD Peter Power said that the range of cancer services at the hospital would "expand significantly" as services nationwide are centralised at the new centres.

"Limerick Regional Hospital will provide treatment for all forms of cancer,

including breast cancer, involving diagnostic surgical, medical (systemic) and radiation oncology services," said Deputy Power.

The Irish Cancer Society (ICS) welcomed the changes because international evidence showed central approach to cancer treatment can improve outcomes by as much as 20%.

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Hunt Museum