



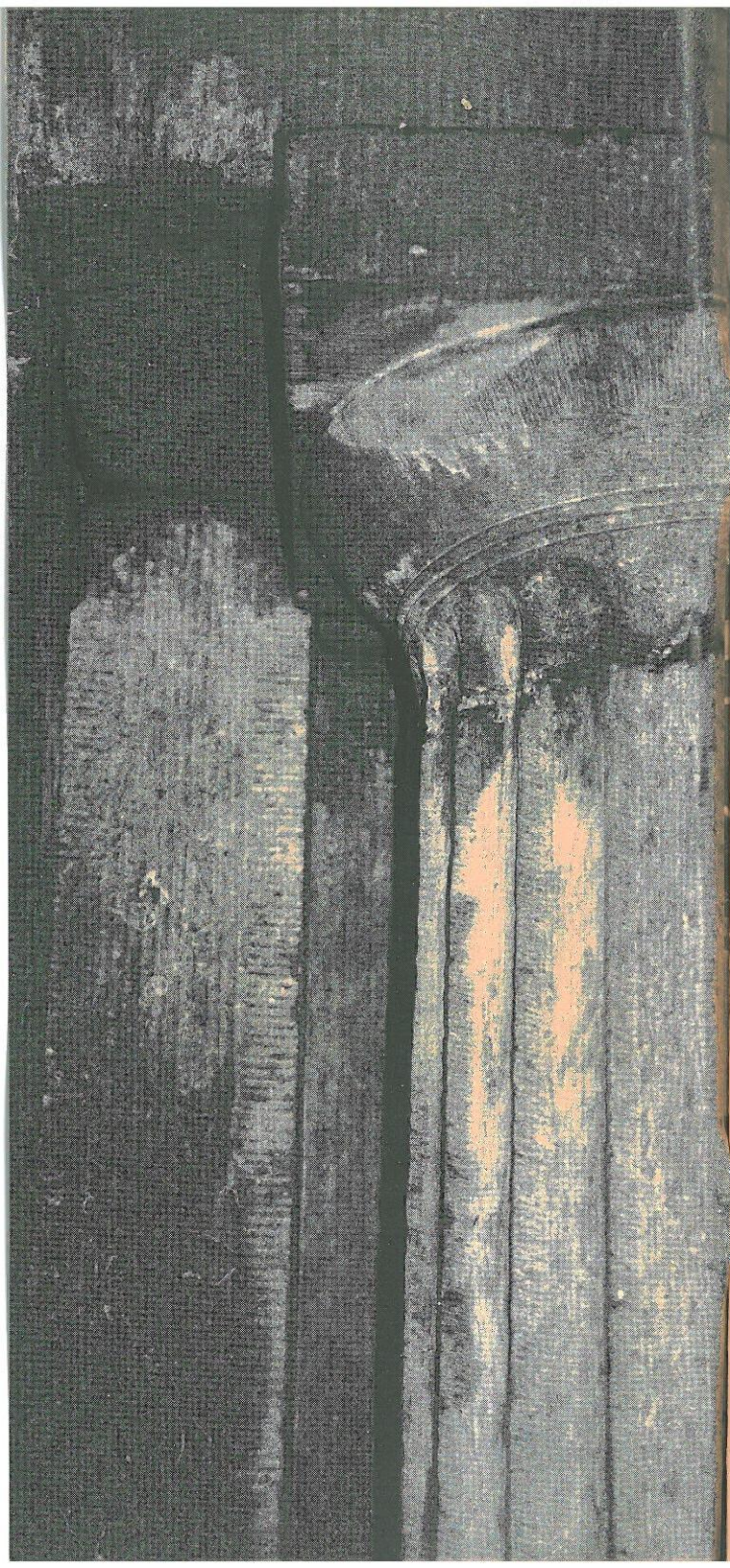
№2

PERY SQUARE
L I M E R I C K

The Story of an Irish Georgian Building



A Limerick Civic Trust Souvenir Publication for the official opening of the Georgian House & Garden Project, Tontine Buildings, Limerick City.



No. 2, Pery Square, Limerick completed in 1838 was built by the Pery Tontine Company - the Georgian equivalent of a Modern day Development Company. This terrace was the last Georgian Terrace built in Limerick. Limerick Civic Trust is restoring not only the house but also the garden and its original mews building. This lends further importance to the project as a complete example of a Georgian Town House.


The symmetrical terrace of six houses is 4 storeys over basement and faces the 'The People's Park' with finely executed ashlar work in limestone on the Basement and Ground Floor. The Balconies which run along the elevation at the first Floor level give a sense of unity to the overall terrace. One of the unusual features of the building is the Mezzanine floor between the Basement and Ground Floor which is believed to be unique to Georgian Limerick.

During the restoration, original marbling was discovered in the Front Hall and Main Stairwell. This has been carefully restored as a rare example of what was a very fashionable wall covering in the early part of the 19th Century.

There are two fine Reception Rooms on the First Floor, both with original fireplaces. The moulded skirting boards which are surprisingly high throughout this building are original and together with the ceiling roses and extensive plaster cornicing contribute to the overall elegance of these rooms. The wallpapers and colours used throughout the building have been researched and are based on authentic reproductions of colours and patterns of the Georgian era.

The Ordnance Survey map of 1840 has been used together with archeological investigation to complete an authentic plan for the garden and all plant material used is as close as possible to varieties and species available in Ireland at the time.

It has been a great privilege to have had an opportunity to work on the Georgian House Project at Pery Square and hopefully it will become an important educational resource for the people of Limerick and visitors alike.



I am delighted to send warm greetings to the members of Limerick Civic Trust, on the opening of your beautiful House and Garden, at Pery Square.

This restored Tontine Building will be a lasting monument to the genius of it's Architect, James Pain and to the extraordinary skills of the early 19th century craftsmen. It is also a testimony to the present day skills and dedication of the 19 people who worked on this restoration project for the past three years. The members of Limerick Civic Trust and the many people who were involved with the project can take just pride in what they have achieved. Limerick now has a Georgian Visitor Centre, which can take its place amongst some of the best examples of Georgian Architecture and I commend their initiative in bringing this huge undertaking to a successful conclusion.

I wish the Georgian House and Garden, Limerick Civic Trust and all associated with it every future success. Guím rath séan ar bhur gcuid oibre.

MARY McALEESE
PRESIDENT OF IRELAND

On behalf of the people of Limerick, I extend a very warm and friendly welcome to the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese. This is a very noteworthy occasion, not only for Limerick Civic Trust, but for Limerick in general.

Limerick has a very rich and well admired Georgian architectural heritage in Newtown Pery, which was planned by Edmund Sexton Pery and his contemporaries in the mid eighteenth century. The Newtown developed into one of the most glamorous cities of it's time and has maintained it's appeal down through the centuries.

Limerick Corporation has encouraged, assisted and financially supported the restoration of No. 2 Pery Square. We regard this as a flagship project in our plans for a greater revival of the Georgian Preserve between Barrington and Mallow Streets. We believe many more restorations of this nature will follow and this is a policy which we will be actively pushing

Since Limerick Civic Trust was founded in the early 1980's, I have been a strong admirer of their commitment to the betterment of Limerick and for the improvement of the city's architectural heritage. In a short time they have established a portfolio of successful projects, which is the envy of Ireland. I'm not surprised to know that Limerick Civic Trust has helped to start 13 other Civic Trusts throughout Ireland.

The restored Georgian House will be a great asset and civic amenity for Limerick. It will bring many new visitors to our city. I heartily congratulate the Trust on this outstanding successful project and loudly praise the many people associated with it.

Cllr. Jack Bourke,
Mayor of Limerick.

This is the most auspicious occasion in the history of Limerick Civic Trust. The Trust is very honoured that Mary McAleese, President of Ireland is formally opening the restored Georgian House and Garden.

Over seventeen years we have successfully completed 83 projects. Each and every one of them, irrespective of their size, was an important contribution to Limerick's development as one of the major modern cities in Europe. However this Georgian House Project is our pièce de résistance. Our biggest and most ambitious project by far which involves an expenditure exceeding £1,000,000.

I very sincerely thank all the major sponsors, room sponsors, professional advisors, those who contributed badly needed supporting funds, architectural salvage material and most importantly all who offered constructive advice and encouragement. I cannot praise high enough the team spirit, dedication and 100% commitment of the twenty or so FÁS employees who worked on this project for the last three years. The quality of their workmanship, evident throughout this house, has set a standard of excellence which will be hard to follow.

Senan O'Connor
Chairman. Limerick Civic Trust



The acquisition and loving restoration of No. 2 Pery Square is the latest, and highly commendable initiative of Limerick Civic Trust. On its completion Georgian Limerick becomes more than a handsome facade; its ambience and working environment are re-created. This took imagination as well as skill, hard work and determination in completing the funding. The quality of the project is attested by the AIB Heritage and Environment Award.

I am delighted to have been able to support this project. The heritage of Georgian Limerick, designed and developed by the great Speaker Pery, with whom I am proud to claim kinship, is significantly enhanced.

Patrick Pery
The Earl of Limerick, K.B.E.

The Irish Georgian Society has been deeply interested in the restoration of No 2 Pery Square, since it's inception. It has been a great pleasure co-operating with Denis Leonard, and his hard working team in Limerick Civic Trust.

It was so fortunate that this particular house came up for sale, with all it's interior features intact, and not bowdlerised in any way. I remember the excitement when the original marbling on the staircase was discovered, under layers of wallpaper. I would also like to highlight the meticulous work carried out on the plasterwork, by FÁS trainees.

The Irish Georgian Society is proud to have been able to assist in this ambitious and vastly important project. We see it as a flagship venture for the badly needed restoration of the surrounding streets of the Newtown Pery.

The Irish Georgian Society wholeheartedly congratulate Limerick Civic Trust on this day of celebrations.

Desmond FitzGerald
Knight of Glin
President Irish Georgian Society

FÁS is delighted and proud to be associated with the Georgian House and Garden Restoration Project undertaken by Limerick Civic Trust. The restoration of No. 2 Pery Square is an important milestone in the preservation of historic Limerick and will ensure that future generations will be able to experience the grandeur of the Georgian architecture in its original state.

The team responsible for this magnificent restoration job was long-term unemployed people participating in a FÁS Job Initiative Programme. The project gave them a chance to use their skills in a work environment and to acquire new knowledge and skills via the training and development modules, which are an important part of the Job Initiative Programme. In total, 19 people who were long-term unemployed have been prepared to re-enter the Labour market. From a FÁS perspective this has been a highly successful project. The high standard of workmanship, attention to detail and overall efficiency and management will be used as an example for other training projects throughout Ireland. It is well known that the lack of knowledge and availability of skilled restorers has been a major contributory factor in the decline of our architectural heritage. This project will go a long way towards supplying the market place with some very skilled people.

FÁS and Limerick Civic Trust have continued for many years to undertake a wide range of projects throughout Limerick. We have five current projects in operation with the Trust giving employment and training opportunities to 90 people. It has been a very successful and productive partnership and over the years many people have been given work on Limerick Civic Trust projects.

On behalf of FÁS I extend our congratulations to all associated with the Georgian House and Garden Project and wish it every success as a visitor centre when it is opened to the public during Millennium year.

Christy Cooney
Regional Director Mid-West

As Minister for the Environment and Local Government, I wish to be associated with this souvenir booklet commemorating the magnificent restoration of No.2 Pery Square, Limerick.

I am pleased that my department was in a position to provide significant funding for this conservation project from the conservation sub-programme of the EU Operational Programme for Local Urban and Rural Development 1994/99. This funding enabled Limerick Civic Trust to purchase the building and undertake its faithful restoration to its former glory. This restored building will act as a demonstration of best practice in conserving our architectural heritage.

I would also like to congratulate Limerick Civic Trust on their many achievements over the years in preserving the architectural heritage of Limerick. Their efforts are a shining example to other conservation bodies of what is achievable by enthusiasm, commitment and hard work.

Noel Dempsey, T.D.
Minister for the Environment
and Local Government



THE RESTORATION STORY

Denis M. Leonard, Director Limerick Civic Trust

As you walk around the restored building admiring the graciousness of the Architectural splendour of this Georgian gem, spare a thought for the 19 or so 'fellas' and their project supervisor "is she there" or otherwise known as Dorothy. On more than one occasion the question was asked "are we restoring a jewel in the crown? or a crown of thorns" - 95 steps of stairs from top to bottom, 23 rooms and 7,000 sq. feet. The jovial Mr. Johnston, of FÁS fame used ramble in on occasions asking - "is it finished yet?" - "are you busy?" - good! I'll do an audit". The restoration started with an audit of a different kind. Eamon Mathews and his students from L.I.T. surveyed every nook and cranny and produced 13 sheets of detailed drawings. Otherwise known as the Blue Print, which David Thompson changed into the master plan, Senan O'Connor put his structural imprimatur on it and Don O'Malley electrified it, but "the lads" did it.

Two years of solid work which will never be fully appreciated is unseen. The back of the building had to be re-built such was the rot and other nasties associated with old buildings. Steel beams were built into the floors, layers of old wallpaper, paint and other modern alterations were 'lovingly' removed. The house was eventually re-instated back to it's original state. The only mistake we made was not getting a sponsorship from Colgate for the hundreds of toothbrushes which were worn out in cleaning the plasterwork.

Then, it was time to roll in the 'heavies' the Knight of Glin, affectionately known as the KGB, ably flanked by John O'Connell a renowned Dub. These boys had no problem in motoring through a second million - if they were let! - Persian rugs here, Skinner wallpaper there - get Nat Clements to restore the marbling - buy this mirror for £4,000, Chandeliers here, Argand lamps there. They must eat a Celtic Tiger for dinner. It was mind boggling especially when neither would introduce us to some rich Sheik or the likes to bankroll us.

However when all is said and done and the tons of dust settled, No. 2 Pery Square has been restored to its former splendour. Enjoy not only the workmanship of yesteryears but also the workmanship of the dedicated people who have toiled passionately for the past three years to achieve the best possible recreation of a Georgian Showhouse. It is a very fitting honour for all concerned with this restoration project that Mary McAleese, President of Ireland officially opens the restored building on 10th December 1999

GEORGIAN LIMERICK

David Lee, Limerick Chapter, Irish Georgian Society

During the early years of the Georgian era Limerick was a small provincial fortified town enclosed within medieval walls that served no military purpose and confined merchant and labourer alike within stifling, unhealthy streets. The fortunes of the city changed in the mid-eighteenth century when the mercantile classes began to prosper on the account of the city's growing provisions trade with Britain. In 1760 Limerick was declared to be no longer a fortress city and within a few years the restrictive city walls were thrown down, an act of both practical and symbolic importance releasing creative forces of enterprise and initiative.

Around this time the building of a new Georgian town began involving the construction of new quays, warehouses and terraced Georgian houses to accommodate the prospering middle classes. Built to the south of the old medieval city on lands owned mostly by Edmond Sexton Pery, this Georgian district became known as Newtown Pery, a name it still retains today. The New Town was divided into various plots and sites that were leased out to developers who laid out their properties in accordance with a street plan drawn up in 1769 that was based on a gridiron pattern of wide streets intersecting at right angles. Georgian Limerick still retains this pattern of streets and Newtown Pery is one of the finest examples in Britain and Ireland of coherent and well regulated eighteenth century town planning.

Newtown Pery was built over a period of eighty years from approximately 1760 - 1840 as the city experienced a fairly sustained burst of growth - the economic opportunities and spacious new houses attracted entrepreneurs, professionals and members of the gentry to the city.

The last of the Georgian-style terraces to be built in Limerick were in fact the Pery Square Tontines (1838), of which No. 2 has been splendidly restored by Limerick Civic Trust and will serve as a restoration reference point for the owners and occupiers of Georgian properties in Limerick. Today, over 400 Georgian period buildings still remain standing in Limerick, most of them terraced houses, making the streetscape of the city centre distinctive and unique among Irish cities and towns.

The Limerick Chapter of the Irish Georgian Society is very proud and protective of this built heritage, ever mindful of the fact that the current feeding frenzy among property developers poses a constant threat to Georgian Limerick and other period buildings in the city and environs. The Limerick Chapter has in the past, and will in the future, oppose all inappropriate building developments that erode the character of Georgian Limerick. We enthusiastically welcome the positive action taken by Limerick Civic Trust in restoring No.2 Pery Square for the Trust has struck a mighty blow in defence of Georgian Limerick, an act of faith that will prove a decisive turning point in how the citizens of Limerick view and appreciate their Georgian heritage.

THE PERY SQUARE TONTINE - NOTABLE DATES

- 1769 Christopher Colles map showing the lay out for Newtown Pery.
- 1807 Acts of Parliament passed to establish St. Michael's Parish Commissioners.
- 1820 Thomas Spring-Rice defeated Colonel Vereker in the Parliamentary Elections.
- 1834 A meeting in Daniel Barrington's offices of a small group of investors established the Pery Square Tontine Company.
- 1836-39 Construction of the Pery Tontine Terrace of six houses at a cost of £10,680. James Pain was the Architect
- 1840 All six houses were rented to tenants of upper middle class, professional or business background at a cost of £120 per annum per house.
- 1840 The Pery Square Tontine Company was fully paid up with 23 people owning the 89 shares at £120 per share.
- 1841 Franz Liszt gave a public concert in Limerick. He stayed at Major Vokes house No 6 Pery Square.
- 1883 The Vanderkiste family owned 41% of the shares having bought out the Barrington interests.
- 1890 The number of shares had reduced to 41 and 13 owners.
- 1900 The number of shares were 22 and 12 owners.
- 1910 There were 8 owners of the 10 surviving shares.
- 1913 Joseph Thomas Barrington, the life nominee for share No. 28 died. There were then 6 surviving shares and the Tontine was wound up.
- 1914 The Pery Tontine houses were distributed between the 4 owners of the six surviving shares. Mrs. Sophia Vanderkiste got No's.1, 2 and 3, Sir Vincent Nash No 4, George and John Harvey No 5 and Colonel Cecil Pery No 6. Thus for the first time the Pery Square Tontine buildings were in private ownership.
- 1996 Limerick Civic Trust acquired No 2 Pery Square.
- 1999 Launch of "The Pery Square Tontine" publication.
- 1999 Mary McAleese, President of Ireland formally opened The Restored Georgian House and Garden on 10th December 1999.

THE GEORGIAN GARDEN

The 1840 ordnance survey map provided very valuable evidence of the formal layout of the gardens at the rear of the Georgian buildings throughout, Limerick. We are extremely lucky that the garden area at the rear of No.2 escaped the tarmac blitz and it was never used as a car park. The garden in the 1980's differed greatly to the 1840 layout and was mostly overgrown.

Good fortune continued to favour the project when a student archaeologist Damien Sheils applied for a position on our Student Summer Scheme in 1998. He led a team, which carefully removed the grassed areas and the modern pathway. He located the foundations of the original pathways, the brick wall across the rear portion, the privvys and some cobbled surface. All his findings concurred with the os map. Damien wrote a comprehensive report on his findings which proved to be an invaluable document for the well known historic garden expert and designer Belinda Jupp, who was commissioned to recreate the Georgian garden at No. 2. Belinda drew up a design reinstating the original layout and prepared a planting schedule, which would be in keeping with Georgian times. In her report she noted that the reinstatement of the Georgian garden would be a unique feature. Very few gardens of its size were still in existence and none were open to the public in Ireland. She cited the Georgian garden in Bath, England, as one of the few town house gardens in existence and open to the public.

The garden project was not a part of our original plans however the prompting of Lady luck and the exciting prospect that we would be able to reinstate an original feature of great importance with great accuracy made our decision easy. The restoration of the mews building will be the next development, which will complete the Georgian House complex.

LIMERICK CIVIC TRUST

"Improvement of our environment by positive action"

On 17th February 1983 Limerick Civic Trust was formally inaugurated at a public meeting, chaired by Cllr. Tony Brommell, Mayor of Limerick at the Mary Immaculate Training College. Mr. Michael Noonan, T.D. Minister for Justice, officially launched the Trust. Professor David Fletcher, President Colder Civic Trust, was the guest speaker at the meeting which was attended by over 150 people.

Limerick Civic Trust was the first Civic Trust to be established in Ireland. Since then we have helped to establish thirteen similar Trusts throughout Ireland. It is a self-funding Trust, which initiates and undertakes schemes for the general improvement of our environment in co-operation with local authorities and other interested parties. It is an independent non-profit making, voluntary society and is registered as a charity.

The Trust specialises in giving exemplary example in the restoration / preservation of our architectural environment and heritage. These objectives of Limerick Civic Trust are illustrated in our crest with the castle depicting heritage and the flower box representing our environment.

It is now generally recognised that local authorities and other state agencies can no longer be expected to meet all of society's needs in relation to the protection and enhancement of the environment and heritage. As our motto states, Limerick Civic Trust is an action-driven organisation, which undertakes a wide range of projects to improve/preserve Limerick's architectural environment and heritage. With the assistance of five FÁS Employment Grants the Trust's projects can provide work opportunities for over 90 people. In addition a significant amount of work is given to sub-contractors and small manufacturing concerns.

Since 1983 Limerick Civic Trust has completed 83 projects. It is only through the support we get from Government, state agencies and the private sector, that we can plan and undertake meaningful projects which will benefit present and future generations.

Limerick Civic Trust is now the biggest and most active Civic Trust in Ireland "Working full-time for the Betterment of Limerick and it's Community".

AWARDS

The begrudger could flippantly dismiss awards as a "pat on the back, here's a few bob and a trophy to collect dust, well done keep up the good work". The reality is quite different, first of all there are usually hundreds of excellent projects vying for the various prizes each year and secondly only a small minority of the entries can be winners.

Since our foundation in the early 1980's Limerick Civic Trust has enjoyed considerable success in award competitions. Our 'trophy cabinet' had up to this year one European Award and one National. The Georgian House and Garden Project has been a spectacular success with a growing list of awards to date of which two national titles top the list. The great achievement has to be winning the Heritage Category of the AIB Better Ireland Awards, which included a magnificent Waterford Glass Trophy and a cheque for £25,000

The Trophies, cash prizes and the pat on the back are very important and are great recognition for the projects. The spin off media publicity is an added bonus. But the unnoticed underlying benefits of awards is that a National panel of independent, neutral judges have selected your project as the best of the entries. Their endorsement of the merits and standards of the project is the all important factor. The undertakers of the project, the financial backers and the workers are all given a sincere vote of confidence and confirmation that everything is the best possible about the project in question. To win an award also confirms the decision to undertake the project was right and also that the execution of the work was up to the highest standards. To date the Georgian House and Garden has won the following awards

1998

AIB Nationwide Better Ireland Awards

Heritage & Environment Category

1. Local Award

2. Recognition Award

3. National Category Winners

1999

The Heritage Council Awards

The Georgian Garden was a winner in the Heritage Section

1999

The FÁS Community Initiative Awards

Regional Winners of the Heritage and Arts Category

1999

ESB Community Environment Awards

National Winners of the Heritage Category

1999

AIB Nationwide Better Ireland Awards

Past finalist category

Joint National Winner.

THE RESTORATION TEAM

Project Management Limerick Civic Trust

PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS

Architects	John Thompson & Partners
Structural Engineers	Gibson O'Connor
Electrical Engineers	Don O'Malley & Partners
Quantity Surveyors	O'Reilly Hyland Tierney
General Advisors	Irish Georgian Society
Georgian Garden	Belinda Jupp

SPECIALIST ADVISORS

Architectural Salvage	P.J. Merrick
Building Survey	Limerick Inst. of Technology
Damp Proofing	GlenWood Preservations Ltd.,
Decorative Plaster	Seamas O'hEocha Teoranta
Decorative Plaster	Office of Public Works
Fire Engineers	ML. Slattery & Co.,
Fire Protection	Fireseal Ltd.,
Interior Design	J. J. O'Connell Arch.
Lighting	Falks Lighting
Marbling	Clements & Moore
Metalwork	James J. O'Donnell Ltd.,
Tanking	Sovereign Ireland
Underfloor Heat	Ross Technical Services
Wallpaper	David Skinner & Sons

GENERAL ADVISORS

Employment	FÁS
Job Initiative	Limerick Civic Trust
Financial	Grant Thornton
Insurance	Birmingham & Company
Legal	Dermot G. O'Donovan & Ptrs

"THE RESTORERS"

NOV 1996 - 1999

JOB INITIATIVE

Dorothy Meaney (Supervisor)

Richard Doyle
Harry Droog
Martin Griffin
Michael Hanrahan
John Hayes
Gerard Hogan
Willie Keane
John Kelly

Frank McMahan
John McMahan
Christy Mullins
Michael O'Dea
Patrick Moore
Dermot Wallace
John Woodland
Cecil Prendergast
Paddy McNamara
Joe Stenson

OTHERS

Frank Barry
Celine Cahill
Jim Doyle
John Flynn
Tommy Hughes
Ger Imbusch
Gillian Kenny
Shaun Mescall
Bernard O'Reilly
Siobhan O'Reilly
Niall O'Shaughnessy
Des O'Sullivan
Tom Rice

RESEARCH

Bob Kelly
James McMahan

SPONSORS

PRINCIPAL SPONSORS

FÁS

The Department of The Environment
European Regional Development Fund
Limerick Corporation
Shannon Development
AIB Better Ireland Awards
Boart Longyear

MAIN ROOM SPONSORSHIP

The Earl of Limerick (Patrick Pery)
Irish Georgian Society
Richard & Brian Leonard
Fred Krehbiel, Molex
James McMahan Ltd.
National Foods Ltd.
J.J. O'Toole Ltd.
Unilever plc

MEZZANINE ROOMS

Bank of Ireland
Limerick Bar Association
The Wood Family

GENERAL SPONSORSHIPS

Arm Alarm
The Enterprise Board
E.S.B.
Gibson & O'Connor
Seamus Gubbins
Grant Thornton
Tom Hayes Ltd.
The Heritage Council
Paddy Hoare
Info - Labs Ltd.
Tadhg Kearney
Limerick Art Society
Limerick Institute of Technology
Dermot G. O'Donovan & Partners
Don O'Malley & Partners
O'Reilly Hyland Tierney
Office of Public Works
Michael Slattery & Assoc.
John Thompson & Partners
Primrose Wilson

PRINCIPAL GUESTS
AT OFFICIAL OPENING

Her Excellency Mary McAleese
President of Ireland

His Worship Cllr. Jack Bourke
Mayor of Limerick

Mr. Senan O'Connor
Chairman Limerick Civic Trust

Right Rev. Edward Darling BD
Bishop of Limerick & Killaloe
Most Rev. Donal Murray DD
Bishop of Limerick

Mr. Brendan Keating
Limerick City Manager
Cllr. Michael O'Kelly
Chairman Limerick Co. Council

Mr. Paul Sheane
Chief Executive, Shannon Development Co.

Prof. Roger Downer
President, University of Limerick
Mr. G.E. (Ted) Russell
Freeman of Limerick

Mr. Jim Kenny
President. Chamber of Commerce.
Dr. Martin McAleese

Patrick Pery
The Earl of Limerick K.B.E.

Sylvia Pery
Countess of Limerick
Desmond FitzGerald
Knight of Glin, President I.G.S.
Willie O'Dea T.D.

Minister of State, Dept. of Education
Mr. Christy Cooney

Regional Director - FÁS
Mr. David Thompson
John Thompson & Partners, Architects.

Ms. Dorothy Meaney
Supervisor. The Georgian Project
Mr. Denis Leonard
Director, Limerick Civic Trust.

