

Limerick artist, Martin, on show

THIRTY-two paintings by Limerick artist, Martin Finnan, will go on exhibition at Limerick Print-makers on Robert Street from this Tuesday.

The former Limerick School of Art and Design student has exhibited in numerous countries and the refurbished Cork Opera House have acquired a triptych by the St Mary's Park artist.

Martin has been working in Cork for the past number of years and has enjoyed exposure at national and international level.

He has been described as "the most innovative and exciting artist currently in Ireland" by the Irish Times.

His work deals with a range of pure emotions.

The essence of which, if one is fortunate and unfortunate in life, one will experience.

The exhibition, entitled *The Big Picture*, is a selection of his recent works, offering equilibrium to his repertoire and integrating the risk of existence with a compassionate insight into the serenity of redemption.

The exhibition will be officially opened by Peter Murray, curator of the Crawford Municipal Gallery in Cork.

For further information contact Limerick Print-makers on 311806.

Meeting

THE annual general meeting of the Limerick branch of the Arthritis Foundation will take place next Thursday.

Chairman and former mayor, John Quinn, and his committee intend the Limerick branch to become a productive group working for better facilities and support for those sufferers and carers in the Mid-West region.

The meeting will take place on October 26 at 8pm at the Social Service Centre, Henry Street.

On November 28, Dr Robert Coughlan will deliver a lecture on osteoporosis at the same venue.

Further lectures are planned for early 2001.

WHERE is the core historical area of Limerick?

Shannon Development has identified it as the *King's Island*.

But others believe the real core historical area of Limerick is the Newtown Pery.

One of them is Judith Hill, the conservation officer of the Irish Georgian Society, Limerick chapter.

She explained that Newtown Pery is the area in the city that still has the streets standing as they were built in the 1790s and 1800s.

King's Island has largely modern buildings and there has been a lot of development there over the years. It is just around Nicholas Street and Castle Street that the real historical buildings remain.



Georgian Limerick: the real core of Limeick city

(LL)

Heart of the matter



The best laid PLANS

BILLY KELLY takes a weekly look at planning issues in the city and suburbs

The Georgian part of Limerick, on the other hand, is extensive. And, it is the biggest Georgian area remaining outside of Dublin.

The Corporation has listed a large part of the Newtown, from Barrington Street to Mallow Street. But outside of that area there is a large number of buildings which should be preserved, but are not listed.

And they were never in more danger than they are today.

The Celtic Tiger is fuelling enormous re-development in Limerick at the moment.

There was a time, and not that long ago, when Limerick was a run-down and shabby city. It was full of derelict buildings and eyesores.

Then, over the past 15 years or so, the city has really taken off. Every part of the city has seen large re-developments and we all agree that the place is looking far better than it ever did.

However, there is a danger now that people will begin to think that all re-development is good. That is not the case. The destruction of Georgian buildings in the city centre is almost always bad.

And developers seem to think of demolition and re-building as a matter of course.

The Irish Georgian Society looks at any applications which involve demolition of a Georgian or older

building, or even Victorian, and will consider putting in an objection.

As a result of their efforts a number of buildings which faced demolition have been preserved, including the single story red-brick building in Barrington Street beside the youth hostel, the Limerick Youth Service building on Lower Glentworth Street, and the buildings at the Curragower pub on Clancy Strand.

"If people have an old building they want to develop, they tend to think of demolition rather than renovation," Ms Hill commented.

She said that any other European city would be thinking in terms of preserving its core area.

The Local Government Act of 1999 provides for grants for the renovation of protected buildings. But it depends on the local authorities

recognising the buildings and agreeing that they are protected structures.

"Limerick Corporation has a very limited view of

which Georgian buildings should be protected," Ms Hill explained.

"There are isolated examples plus that area from Barrington Street down to Mallow Street. That really ignores two-thirds of Georgian Newtown. The people in those buildings are not eligible at the moment. It is really up to the Corporation to make those into protected structures, so that those people are eligible for grants," she said.

The point about Georgian Limerick is that everyone can enjoy it. We just have to step onto the street to experience it. When we protect our Georgian heritage we are doing it for everyone.

I am sure our children won't thank us for letting any of the remaining Georgian buildings in Limerick be demolished.

So perhaps it is time for us to stop looking at the King's Island as the city's historical core and, as our ancestors did in the past, turn our attention to Newtown Pery.

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