

Heritage house puts Georgiana on our minds in Limerick city

By ALAN JACQUES

RISING from the ashes in all its former glory, The Georgian House at 2, Pery Square has proved an authentic glimpse

back to another era in the city.

Since opening its doors almost two years ago the fully restored Georgian building has proved hugely popular to tourists from all over the world.

In the heart of Frank

McCourt's Limerick, the architectural detail and decor of the period has been accurately reinstated in all its splendour.

Limerick Civic Trust with the help of a FAS Job Initiative Scheme, and numerous museums, researchers and sponsors brought the building back to life over a three-year period.

During the restoration project, the building disclosed her secrets giving a rare peep into the 19th century. The original wall marbling, fireplaces and the mezzanine floor which is believed to be unique to Georgian Limerick were all unearthed during the restoration.

Manager of The Georgian House, Dorothy Meaney said: "The idea in restoring the house was to bring it back to the Georgian period at a modern standard without ruining the architecture. We didn't want the house to be freezing like it would have been at the time.

"The project was hard-work, but a real joy to be involved with. There was bedsits here for years and we had to get rid of all the modern fixtures.

"It's funny actually, but I often get people come in who lived here in bedsits and they just look at the building in awe.

"As soon as you step into the lush surrounds of the Georgian building you feel as if you have travelled back in time. Steeped in history, the house is a rich source of Limerick's social past.

"From the luxurious warmth of the reception rooms, the damp and dark of the servants quarters to the absolute poverty of the McCourts, it's all here. The Ashes exhibition in the old coach house at the rear of 2 Pery Square with its life-size reconstruction of the McCourts home has proved a very popular attraction.

"We had two couples from Israel here recently who had travelled to Limerick because they had read Angela's Ashes. The only reason they were in Ireland, don't mind Limerick was because of Frank McCourt."

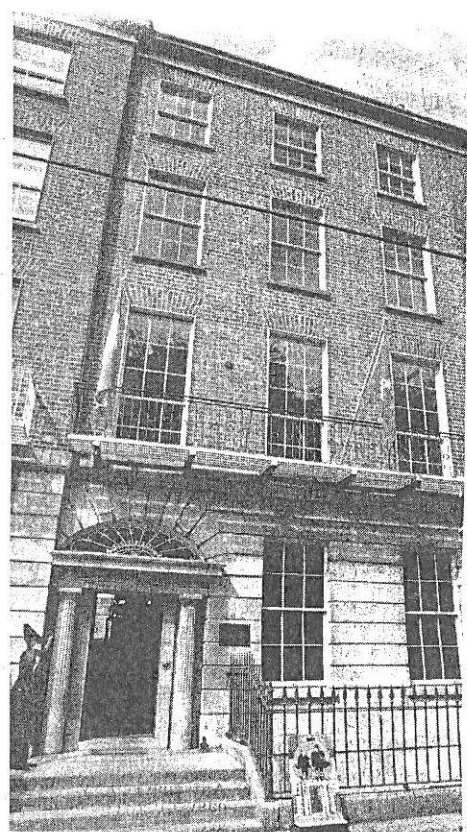
As well as offering tours of the Georgian building, the house can be booked for private functions and corporate meetings. In the last few months Limerick Civic Trust have begun to use the building as a concert venue.

"The Georgian House has been a marvellous success story. We feel that it will be a great amenity for Limerick in the future and it has already sparked further development in the Georgian areas of the city," said Limerick Civic Trust, chairman, Hiram Wood.

"We feel the Georgian House is something very special and concerts are

a new venture for us. The house offers great interaction between the audience and the performer and we hope to maximise this facility in the future," he said.

For those of you who have not made the trip to this wonderful historic building, you should. The Georgian House, 2 Pery Square is open from Monday to Friday between 10am to 4.30pm. Bookings for functions, meetings and private tours can be made by calling 061-314130.



Limerick Georgian heritage: 2, Pery Square (LL)



Edel Madden, St John's Square, receptionist at the Georgian House (LL)

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