



Members of Junior Chamber Limerick pictured at the visit of Junior Chamber International vice-president, Alex McDonald. Front row: Mary Harty, senator; Alex McDonald, IVP from Bermuda; Catherine O'Farrell, president, JC Limerick; Margaret O'Neill, president, Junior Chamber Ireland; Edward Irwin, senator; Pam Byrne, deputy president, JC Limerick. Back row: Matt Heffernan, senator; Marie Stapleton, Charles Irwin, Audrey Byrne, Jamie O'Leary, Miriam McNamara, Elenora Hogan, Mary Grogan, Kieran Joyce, Sandra Geary, John Stapleton, senator.

Mid West Wildlife Diary By Fear Tuaithe

THIS is the time of year when most river plants and waterside vegetation are coming into full bloom, spreading a carpet of greenery across river and pond. Most of these plants are very often mistakenly considered to be in the weed category.

Perhaps the most common of this delicate vegetation is crowfoot swaying now in abundance in shallow rivers and streams. Apart from the white flicks at the end of its stems it also produces a delicately shaped buttercup type flower.

Elvers on their way from the estuary sometimes cling to the branches of the crowfoot or bed themselves in the gravelly bottom from which it roots.

The broadleaved waterlilies are, of course, the easiest to recognise, recalling fears of childhood swimming escapades. Quite accurately it was said they covered very deep water but not so true was the sermon that if you clung to them you'd drown.

tongrass is in bloom. A whiff of a child's breath on its fluffy head and its seedlings drift aloft across the countryside. Now much scarcer cottongrass or boy-cotton came under threat during the land reclamation drive and when an area where it grows is drained it soon disappears.

Sedges, rushes and watergrasses abound by the lakeside — the varieties are numerous. There are over 80 different type of sedges alone, most thriving on land which is mostly under water.

YOU may think it unusual that I should begin a Limerick art review by writing of an event that takes place in Dublin.

The Royal Hibernian Academy of Arts annual exhibition at the Gallagher Gallery, Dublin, now in its 163rd year, has a direct bearing on the Limerick Art Society's annual show, now residing in the City Gallery in Limerick.

The connection between the two events used to be much stronger. The Art Society's president, Thomas Ryan, was the president of the RHA but this is no longer so. He's moved from being a PRHA to a PPRHA, a

Limerick Art Society annual exhibition at Limerick City Gallery of Art.

past president, since he was replaced by Carey Clarke last year.

Secondly, members of the Art Society used to feature strongly in the RHA's annual Dublin extravaganza. This is also no longer so.

There has been a weeding out of 'local amateurs' in this year's selection, and I count eight Mid-West-based artists in the present RHA exhibition, four of whom are resident

in Limerick.

One of these is Walter Verling who has been given a one-person exhibition as part of the Limerick Art Society's present show. He deserves it, being head and shoulders in quality above anyone else exhibiting in their summer exhibition.

The Art Society is not, and never has been, for professional artists. Artists who have professionalised themselves

when members, have moved away from the confines of the Society to pursue different goals, goals that refer to self-assessment rather than mutual or local appreciation.

Verling is one of them.

So, what we're seeing in the City Gallery is the Limerick Art Society being forced to take stock of itself, to recognise its necessary limitations.

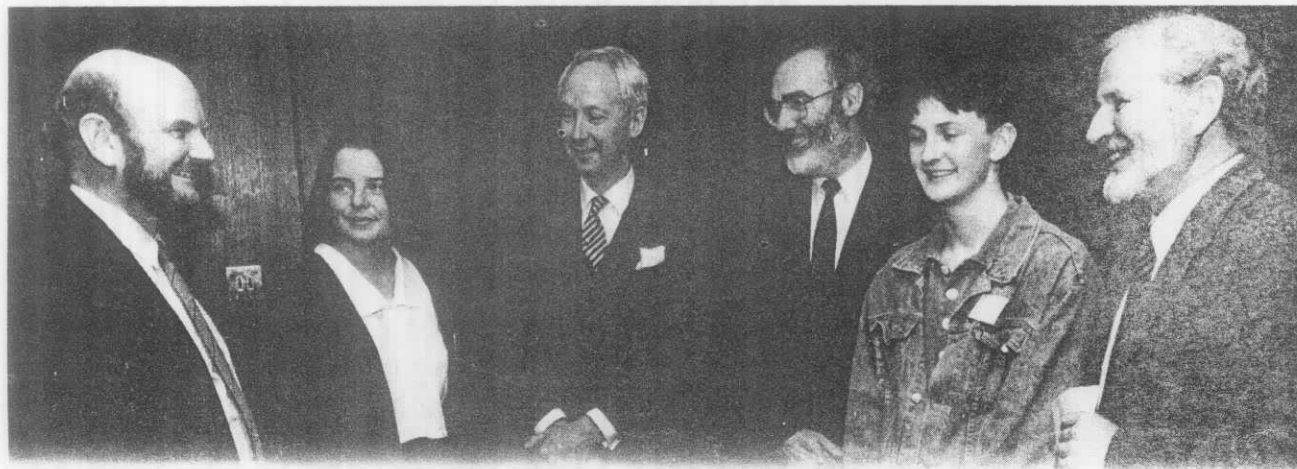
It can no longer assume a supposed influence or even a relationship with the 'big brother' in Dublin. It's a local show and it has local priorities.

It provides a very acceptable platform for amateurs in Limerick to show their work, nothing more, nothing less; and it has no affect whatsoever on the national art scene.

Yet, it's still worth noting a few artists in the annual exhibition, notably Tom Greaney's and Thomas Ryan's consummate, technical skill; Darren McKenna's photographic qualities which inadvertently refer to post card views, and Tom O'Farrell's unintentional surreal views of Limerick.

They at least give pause for thought.

Samuel Walsh



Take a Break