

Children's art at Lough Gur a great success

THE ambitious week-long Lough Gur Mid-Summer Fest got under way on Saturday when the children's art competition was judged. It was the first year that an art competition formed part of the festival.

The winners were selected by Raoul Peter Jackson, a local artist, who has been involved in the festival for a number of years.

Pupils from the national schools in Herbertstown, Hospital, Lough Gur, Knockainey, and Bruff (Boys) all participated in the competition.

The new county arts officer, Joan MacKernan, was present for the presentation of prizes to the winners and she said she was very impressed at the extremely high standard of entries.

The children taking part had to paint something on their heritage and Joan said the event helped make them aware of their environment.

"It was an ideal combination of creativity and developing an awareness of their heritage," she pointed out.

"As county arts officer this is the sort of activity which I am trying to encourage and promote in county Limerick and I am very happy to be associated with the festival's art competition.

"It is excellent to see art being a part of a festival like this one and also it is very important to involve young people," she felt.

The idea for the exhibi-



Joan MacKernan, county arts co-ordinator, with prize winners in the Lough Gur children's art competition, James Hayes, Nigel Finch and Donal Murnane, and the competition organiser, Lough Gur artist, Raoul Peter Jackson.

tion came from artist Raoul Peter Jackson, who felt it was necessary to encourage art among young people in the area.

"I came to Lough Gur to paint and it is very important to involve young people in this creative activity," he explained.

"There was a tremendous interest in the event and we had a huge entry from the school children.

"There were so many fine paintings that it was very difficult to pick out winners."

Mr Jackson has a studio and gallery in Lough Gur and plans to exhibit the works of local mature artists there during the summer.

The art competition winners were: In the nine to 12 years age category: first, Nigel Finch, Lough Gur

national school; second, Leah Canty, St Joseph's national school, Hospital; third, Moira Dooley, Herbertstown national school.

In the five to eight years age category: first, Donal Murnane, Lough Gur national school; second, James Hayes, Lough Gur national school; third, Aimee Carmody, St Joseph's national school.

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