

Limerick Boat Club honours Dick Roche

By PADDY MORONEY

IT WAS Dick Roche's night: the annual dinner of Limerick Boat Club marked his 50th anniversary of membership - he is a life vice-president - with the presentation of a silver salver.

And then it was speeches of tribute to his half-century of dedicated service, not only to club activities (he started as an oarsman) but to rowing generally, as a stalwart of Limerick Regatta Committee.

The honour fell to life-long colleague - also a life vice-president - Mr. Brendan Hanrahan to speak his praises, in sum: "A life-long friend, a true oarsman and a very knowledgeable one".

Captain

He added: "There are not many clubs where you have members 50 years in the club. He joined in 1936 and rowed for five seasons, winning maiden and junior races; he started coaching in 1942 to 1944 before being elected captain in 1945.

"He had five wins at Limerick Regatta, and in 1947, he was appointed the coach to the maidens and be their cox also - he was unbeaten that year - Limerick, Galway, Cork, Waterford and Limerick Head of the River".

The functions at the club premises, was attended by many notables: Mayor Pat Kennedy, District Justice Michael Reilly, Supt. Michael Creaton and representatives from the I.A.R.U. and sister clubs in Limerick and Castleconnell.

Continuing, Mr. Hanrahan said: "In 1948, Dick was coach to the juniors, winning in Limerick, Killaloe and Galway. In 1949, he had wins in Limerick, Killaloe, Galway and Dublin.

"On the administrative side, Dick was on the Regatta Committee, on and off, for 30 years, starting as an umpire and a judge. He was a member of the dance committee for many nights at the Stella Ballroom, and on Friday nights at the skating rink.

"He was president three times and was elected vice-president for life. In 1965, he brought the four Limerick clubs together and formed a committee to organise and obtain the services of a professional coach from England - the money was raised by the clubs and the I.A.R.U. In 1970 - the centenary year - he was elected treasurer of the club, a very big undertaking that year.

Fours league

"Dick also introduced a 'fours' league in order to provide an early season rowing competition for two years with Paddy Treacey of St. Michael's. He introduced and ran '45' drives in the club and was elected honorary bar secretary - he still holds the office".

Mr. Hanrahan concluded: "In



Left to right: Supt. Michael Creaton, Henry Street; William Carmody, president, St. Michael's Boat Club; Senator Pat Kennedy, Mayor of Limerick, and Michael Wixted, Los Angeles.

the 115 years we have been here, and never once off the water, he was one of the greatest overall Limerick Boat Club men of all time".

Club president, Mr. Paddy McKenna, who proposed the toast to "Ireland", formally handed the inscribed salver to Mr. Roche.

Replying, Mr. Roche said that it was essential that crewmen should not row for merely a season or two, but remain on and persist until success was finally achieved.

He advocated that the club get back down to the fundamentals of rowing. "The oarsmen are Limerick Boat Club", he declared, "but I would like to see a little more discipline among the junior members - rowing is not a one-man sport; it takes four plus one to man a boat".

Mayor Kennedy, who also joined in the tributes, and also gave a history of the club, said that it was a Mayor of Limerick, William Spillane, who was a founder member of "Limerick"; three other Mayors, Hall, Bate and Counihan, were members of the club in its first ten years, 1870 to 1880.

He said that on February 3, 1870, at the Arheneum building, a meeting was held in the reading room where it was decided to form a Limerick Boat Club: £50 was raised plus £10 from the then mayor, and Limerick Harbour Commissioners granted a site the

same year. On April 4, 1870, Mayor Spillane laid the first stone.

Spectators

A total of 15,000 people attended the first two regattas, and the spectators were treated to such extraordinary fare that the success of the Limerick Regatta was assured. The club was Limerick's first to install an indoor tank for training.

The club had many notables, such as Bruce Murray, who was its secretary for over 50 years. On the occasion of his golden jubilee, the late Alfie Goodwin presented a new president's badge of office in 1956; a later president, Jim Sheahan, presented the chain, on which the names of the presidents since 1870 were inscribed.

Mr. Tony Tynne, life vice-president, also paid tribute to Dick Roche. Proposing the toast to the club, he gave insights into its history over 115 years. He said: "Limerick Boat Club was founded in the library of the Athenaeum Building in February 1870. Its aims were rowing in its various phases, sailing and Rob Roy canoeing and to enable those interested in the above brands of sport to meet together and enjoy social reunion; the colours of the club to be black and white.

"In 1870 Limerick Harbour Board gave us this present site on Wellesley Pier. Our first boath-

ouse built here in that year cost £81. 4s. and it was big enough to hold fours, pairs and pleasure boats. The slipway was built under the guidance of William Molloy, civil eng., at a cost of £47. 1/s. and the total expenditure for the year 1870 amounted to £253 and income was £216, which left the club £37 in the red, which debt worried the committee at that time, so today's committee take heart.

This year

"In 1880 this clubhouse was built and no major renovations have taken place until this year. We in Limerick Boat Club will place on public record our thanks to AnCO management and staff for the first-class work in restoring our boathouse and clubhouse, you could say both buildings have almost been replaced totally, particularly the clubhouse.

"To the members may I say your committee worked very hard in 1985. 50 meetings were held (a club record) and I know you will give them every support for their ventures during the coming year to help reduce the club debt.

"Tonight we have paid tribute to Dick Roche who has reached his 50th year as a member, one of the great boat men in our 115 year history and a man who has always led by example. And on a personal note, Dick, may I thank you for introducing me to Limerick Boat Club 28 years ago.

"William Murray, Archibald Murray, Niall Brophy, T. H. Denny, Michael Neiland, Tom Egan, David Tidmarsh, M. J. de Courcy, our founder members in that far off evening in 1870, would be very proud of our achievements I'm sure in 1985. The future is bright, your committee has ensured through the recent renovations that the coming generation of oarsmen, many of whom are here tonight, will wear the Black and White with pride and distinction and take us to our second centenary".

The night Santa Claus laid down his arms

By LEADER REPORTER

SANTA CLAUS had a distinct military bearing, and even the Christmas pudding, played in by an Army piper, was a rousing sight at Sarsfield Barracks this week.

But the men of the 12th Infantry Battalion, under Comdnt. Liam Fitzgerald, had laid down their arms and were pulling Christmas crackers instead with the 160 members of the Limerick Wheelchair Association at their annual

Pipeli

From pag

as refurbishment version of equipm the gas proceed. employment in tl dustry", he add

"But, it is in the that the real bene felt. Natural gas ensure the sury growth of the ga; bringing a valu versatile native fi consumers of Lim

"A healthy el competition will duced to the ener; and consumer cho widened. The pos future supplies fo the Limerick area the pipeline rout be enhanced.

"Industry in will have access t efficient and hig fuel which has be very suitable for nology proces here".

The appliances customers will be during the first h at a cost of £2! according to a p ment from B.G.F

The city's ne also be consid tending. This wo volve the extens feeder main from ern suburbs via ra to the Kilma and a further pij Hyde Road vis gasworks to the l and Hassett's Cr

Man for

THE DOORS Manor were o Saturday for t social function departure of t Dunraven fan occasion: the reception of M O'Rourke, H and Mr. Chris Grassick, Du

Fiona, a solici daughter of Mr. a William O'Rourk Christopher, is m Coolmore Stud. ceremony was pe Very Rev. Miche P.P., Patricksw Parish Church. N O'Rourke, a wel figure in the hor

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(right), president, L.B.C., dent. On the left is Brendan dent.



Amateur Rowing Union; McKenna, president, L.B.C., teilly.



with (from left), Denis McKenna, president, L.B.C.; Donovan, chairman, A.B.C.



t, Castleconnell Boat Club; ig' Club; Paddy McKenna, ck, L.B.C.

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