

Sat - May 26th 2004

Limerick Leader



JURYS HOTEL LIMERICK

City's heritage can place its trust in Hiram

By ALAN JACQUES

LIMERICK Civic Trust has an impressive number of achievements since it first came to fruition in 1983.

The Trust has played a key role in looking after Limerick's rich architectural heritage over the years.

And it continues to play an important role in making Limerick the city of culture it is.

They have preserved and restored much of the city's past, including the Bishop's Palace, the Georgian Building at 2, Pery Square, the Potato Market, The Crescent, and Merchant's Quay.

Its chairman, Hiram Wood, received this month's Jurys Hotel / Limerick Leader Achievement Award on the Trust's behalf.

"We are involved in five main areas: restoration, preservation, civic, environment and research," he said.

"The two main jobs that stick out in my mind personally over the years are the Bishops Palace and The Georgian Building at 2, Pery Square.

"The Bishop's Palace was our first real challenge. It was a totally derelict building and there was a demolition order against it. It was going to be knocked and we saved it. That has developed in to our headquarters and it is now part of our identity," said Mr Wood.

"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 sparked a lot of development in the Georgian areas. It was a very exciting project to be involved in," he said.

Limerick Civic Trust became Ireland's very first trust in 1983. Since then it has gone on to help set up a further 13 of the 19 civic trusts around the country. The Trust employs up to 85 people who work on schemes around the city restoring, preserving and maintaining the city's heritage.

"At the moment we are working on St John's Church of Ireland Church in St John's Square. We are also working on the restoration of the buildings in the People's Park," said Mr Wood.

"Part of our job at the Trust is to maintain projects we have done in the

past. We constantly have a group of people maintaining the graveyards—St Michael's, the Jewish graveyard and the Quaker's graveyard. This is an important aspect of the business, because if we restore something there is no point to it unless it is maintained," he said.

As a new venture Limerick Civic Trust is planning to use the Georgian Building as a concert venue in the future.

"The Liszt concert last year at the Georgian House was a very exciting project. We are planning another concert in July featuring cellist Guy Johnston who won the BBC Young British Musician of the Year. He will also be the leading soloist in the BBC Proms at Albert Hall this year. This is a new venture for us to try and get in to the music side of things.

"We feel the Georgian House is something very special. It offers very good interaction with people as the performer is right under the audiences nose and it can hold a big number of people," said Mr Wood.

"We have many exciting projects in the pipeline for the future. We would not be able to continue to protect the

city's rich architectural heritage if it wasn't for the co-operation of the people of Limerick.

"Limerick Civic Trust is a great success story and a credit to the people who have backed it from day one," he said.



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