

Denis Leonard, RIP

'Outstanding citizen' has left vast and important legacy

Petula Martyn

RICH Tributes have been paid to Denis Leonard expressing a resounding gratitude for what he did for Limerick City.

President of University of Limerick Professor Don Barry, who earlier this year bestowed an honorary doctorate on Mr Leonard, said, "Denis Leonard's contributions to the heritage of the city of Limerick will benefit generations to come. He has been the energetic force behind remarkable redevelopment which has revealed the beauty and grace of a city which has suffered from an unjust profile.

"It has been Limerick's privilege to have had Denis work on its behalf for many years. Denis has reminded us that the future, too, is inscribed in the past. We would like to offer our condolences to the Leonard family at this very sad time."

Shannon Development executives who have enjoyed a close working relationship with Mr Leonard and the Civic Trust, since its involvement in the Trust's foundation 25 years ago also paid tribute.

Dr Vincent Cunnane, chief Executive of Shannon Development, said Limerick "has lost an outstanding citizen. His work

with Limerick Civic Trust in restoring the city's built environment will be a lasting testimony to his memory."

Harry Fehily, President of Limerick Chamber said, "The effect that Denis Leonard has had on our city is immeasurable. "Since he founded the Civic Trust in 1983, he has personally overseen some of the most significant restoration projects in Limerick including the stunning restoration of the Bishop's Palace and the Georgian House and Garden and No. 2 Pery Square.

"Denis' life's work was all about protecting our heritage

and he has left behind a vast and very important legacy."

Businessman Tadhg Kearney, who served on the executive board of the Trust, said it was "an act of patriotism" that Dr Leonard dedicated the bulk of his working life to the promotion of Limerick's heritage and the preservation and restoration of many of Limerick's landmarks, large and small, "and many that would have been forgotten had it not been for Denis' keen eye".

"Amongst his greatest contribution was the pride he instilled in the hundreds of people who have worked on FAS

schemes with Limerick Civic Trust over the past quarter of a century. They learnt much about the history of their city and more importantly learnt practical skills in archival research and restoration. Many of these skills and crafts had become almost obsolete and forgotten and were revived by the work of the Civic Trust."

Mr Leonard is survived by his wife Deirdre, daughters Rachel, Sarah and Kate. He is also survived by his brother Brian of Leonard's Menswear on O'Connell Street, and his brother Richard who is a well-known accountant in Limerick.



Prof Don Barry: Limerick has been privileged to have Denis Leonard work on its behalf

Mourners hear the late Denis was 'proof of how fine a person can be'

Petula Martyn

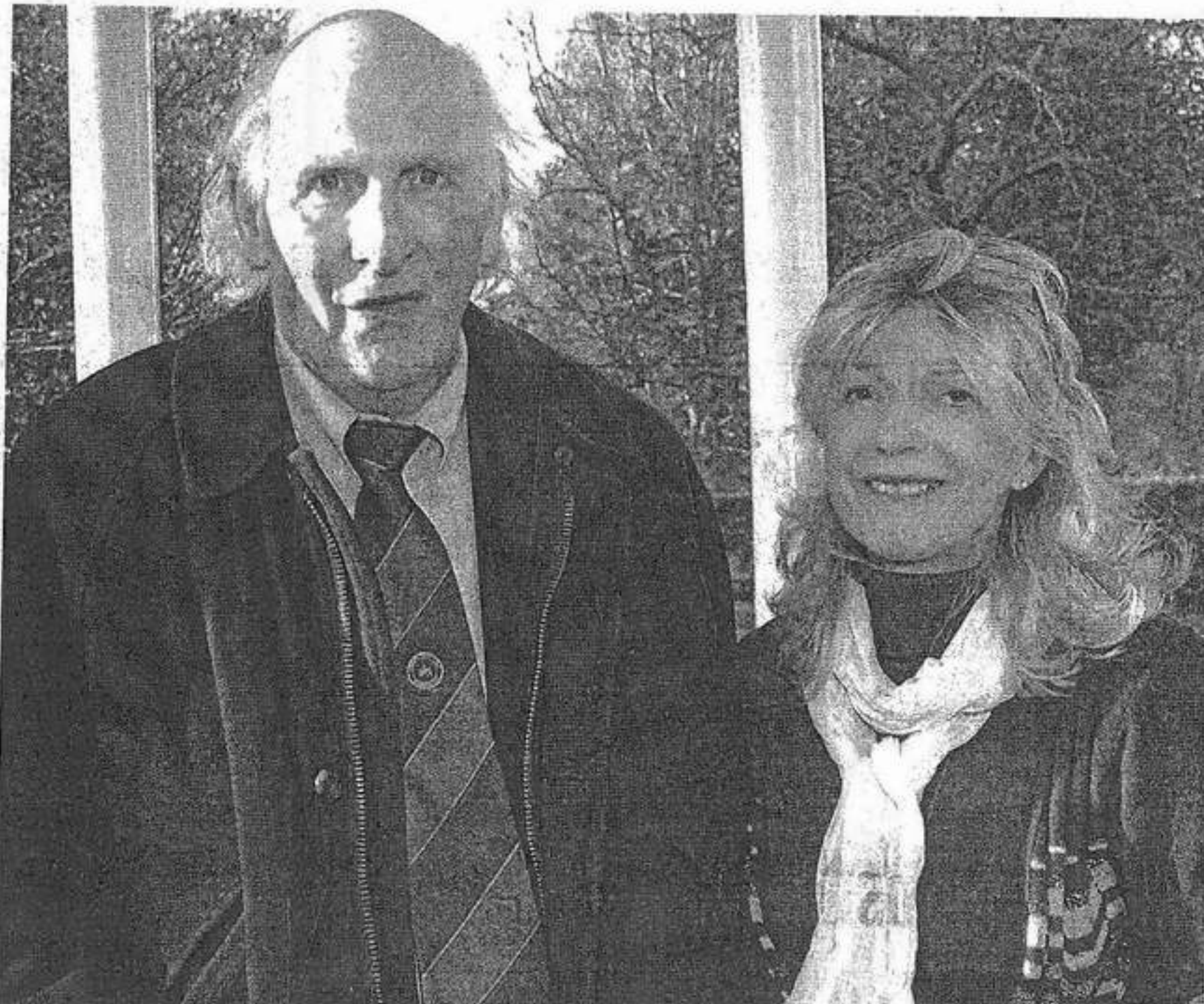
"HERE was a life that demands notice; a life that exemplified kindness, that inspired emulation."

These were the words of Kieran Wood, a former chairman of Limerick Civic Trust, speaking at the funeral mass of Denis Leonard at St Paul's Church, Dooradoyle, on Wednesday.

Mayor Kevin Kiely and city councillors, dressed in their ceremonial robes, as well as the city manager, Tom Mackey, were in attendance to pay their respects to a "true citizen" and to support his family following his sudden death after a brief illness at the weekend.

Fr David Leonard, a first cousin of Mr Leonard, concelebrated mass with parish priest Fr John Leonard, Fr Donal Arbour and Fr Dermot Murray of the Jesuit Order, Fr Donagh O'Malley from St Mary's Parish, and Fr Liam Ryan of the Augustinians.

The great affection in which Mr Leonard was held could be heard in the gentle laughter as Fr



Mr Leonard's coffin is removed from St Paul's church at the funeral in Dooradoyle PICTURES: SEAN CURTIN/PRESS22



Michael Noonan TD greets Joe Griffin at the funeral of Denis Leonard, director of Limerick Civic Trust

