

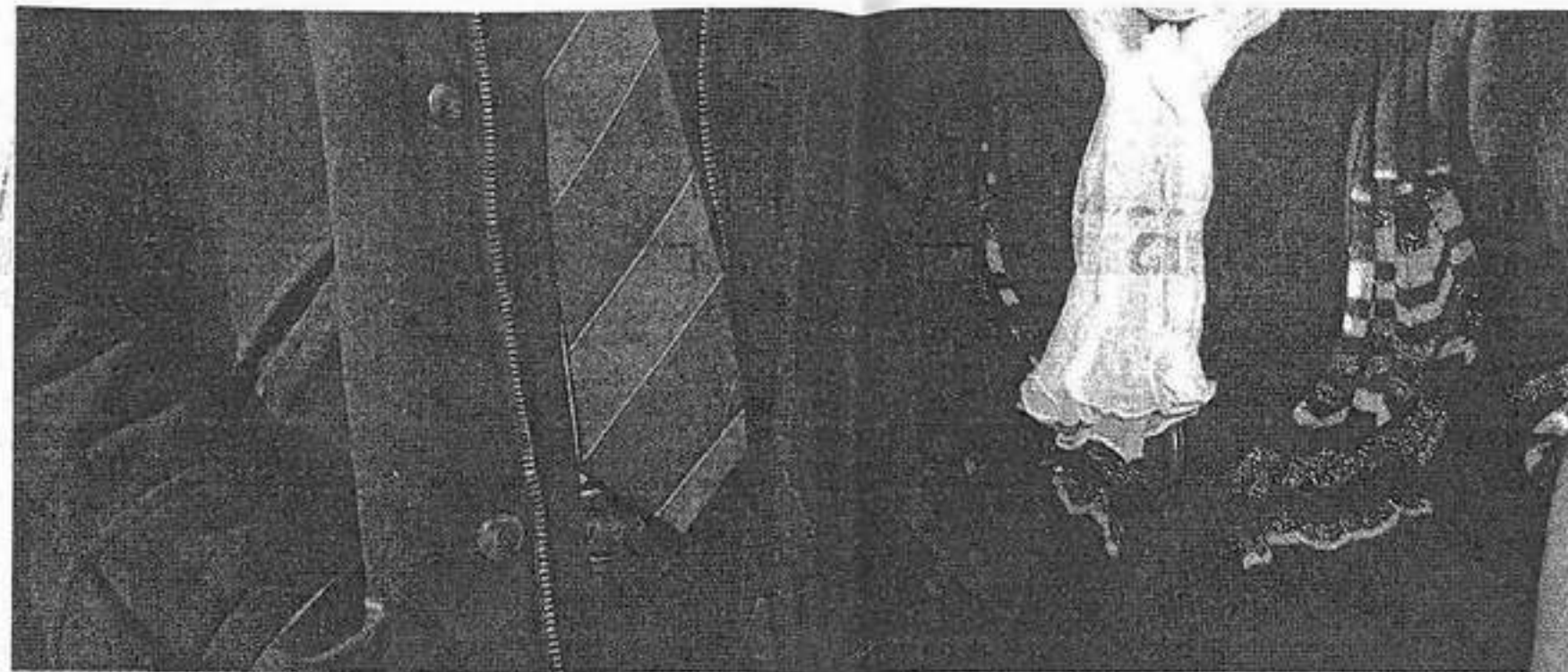
celebrated mass with parish priest Fr John Leonard, Fr Donal Arbour and Fr Dermot Murray of the Jesuit Order, Fr Donagh O'Malley from St Mary's Parish, and Fr Liam Ryan of the Augustinians.

The great affection in which Mr Leonard was held could be heard in the gentle laughter as Fr Leonard described the many photographs of his cousin and staff at Limerick Civic Trust and their successes, because "you would notice Denis because of his distinctive hair style".

He said Mr Leonard had been awarded Semper Fidelis for never missing a day at school as a child, and he never missed a day at Limerick Civic Trust until his illness.

"It has been a great shock for Deirdre and all the family, his illness came on so quickly.

"Many people must be feeling that Denis deserved some years of retirement after all his hard work," he said, and added that perhaps there was consolation that Mr Leonard's wife, Deirdre, and his daughters, Rachel, Sarah and Kate,



The late Denis Leonard with his wife, Deirdre at the opening of the Richard Russell Fountain

PICTURE: ADRIAN BUTLER

were with him for the last few days.

During a heartfelt eulogy, Mr Wood said "Denis was living proof of how fine a person can be".

"Today we are here because a true citizen of our city has passed away."

He said Mr Leonard's whole life was tied up with duty to Limerick city.

"The value of a man should be seen in what he gives and not in what he receives. Denis Leonard was a man who gave, a man who led."

The support of his family sustained him throughout his life and at the end, Mr Wood acknowledged, adding, "what great stories and tales" his granddaughters, Katie and Zoe, will hear of their granddad in years to come.

He remembered all the people who had given their services free of charge for heritage projects in Limerick "because everyone knew that Denis could be trusted. His only concern was the betterment of the city".

Mr Wood recalled calling upon a man in the hopes of securing a drawing of a Limerick building, along with Mr Leonard. They were firmly told they could not have the piece and to stop asking but when they left the man's home Mr Leonard said: "He'll probably be more agreeable when we call on him again next month."

"He had an elastic interpretation of words," Mr Wood smiled. "The word 'no' meant 'possibly' or 'probably' to Denis. It

never meant 'no'. Persistence was one of his great traits. Once he had a project in mind, it was impossible to divert him."

He noted that "you only have to walk down a street in Limerick to see Denis Leonard's handprints."

He could always see what buildings needed to be enhanced and "he could see a potential donor 100 yards down the street".

Messages of sympathy have been received by Limerick Civic Trust from around the world including



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

Present and former mayors of Limerick Kevin Kiely and John Gilligan at the funeral this Wednesday

Edmund, the Earl of Limerick who wrote: "I am simply devastated to hear of the untimely death of Limerick Civic Trust Director Denis Leonard."

Lord Limerick said he would always be remembered by the Limerick family. "I've lost someone I much admired and whose friendship I treasured."

Mr Wood told the congregation that he once asked Mr Leonard what was his favourite achievement with Limerick Civic Trust. Mr Leonard replied

"human development". Over a thousand people have worked on Trust projects including people who worked with FAS on restoration work, and the publication of books.

"In the final analysis people and their welfare was the most important thing to Denis," he said.

He concluded by saying that the staff at the Trust would like the family to know "how much they are going to miss him".

"We will treasure his memory."

## Denis' passion woven into fabric of the city

Petula Martyn

A STROLL around Limerick will reveal the extent of Denis Leonard's contribution to our city in his role as director of Limerick Civic Trust.

Working to a motto of 'improvement of our environment by positive action', the Trust, under the stewardship of Mr Leonard has embarked on preserving Limerick's architectural environment and heritage since 1983.

The Bishop's Palace within the historic King's Island was due to be demolished to make way for the proposed new northern ring road, but when those plans were abated, Limerick Civic Trust bought and restored the building which is now the headquarters of the Trust and a testament to Mr Leonard's foresight and dedication to protecting and enhancing Limerick's heritage.

The Bishop's Palace is one of over 150 successful projects undertaken by Mr Leonard and Limerick Civic Trust.

A stone's throw away, stands St Munchin's Church. Limerick Civic Trust has fully renovated the belfry, repaired the pinnacles and stone features and re-roofed the tower.

Walk back to Merchants Quay and take a look around. The stone boundary wall around St Mary's Cathedral was restored and the landscaped amenity at the quay was developed. Even the Potato Market was dramatically improved thanks to the Trust. It was in a poor state of repair until Limerick Civic Trust took on its restoration, in association with the Limerick



The Bishop's Palace was saved and is now the headquarters of Limerick Civic Trust

Market Trustees.

The Sylvester O'Halloran Bridge which links the Potato Market to the Custom House Park was installed by Limerick Civic Trust.

Moving across the city to the Peoples' Park which has won national awards in 2004 and 2005 as Ireland's best public park - thanks in no small part to Mr Leonard.

The park now has a new pedestrian wheelchair entrance at the corner facing Limerick Railway Station which was paid for by a gift of €75,000 from Edmund, the Earl of Limerick to Limerick Civic Trust. And only one month ago, Mr Leonard stood proudly beside the Richard Russell fountain in the park when the structure was unveiled after being restored.

A popular project with the people of Limerick is the refurbishment of the Park



Denis with Civic Trust staff in one of their finest achievements, The Georgian House

Kiosk where once the O'Sullivan family sold newspapers, boiled sweets, tobacco and ice cream. The red and white signs were returned to Bob O'Sullivan who gave them to Limerick Civic Trust to reinstate.

Beside the Peoples' Park is The Georgian House on Pery Square. The building, the garden and the coach house was completely restored and it used as an exhibition area which is now open to visitors.

Mr Leonard and staff at Limerick Civic Trust were spearheading the restoration of No 4 Patrick Street which was the birthplace of the famous Limerick soprano Catherine Hayes, as part of the Opera Centre development.

It was just one of the many projects outlined during the Trust's 25 year celebrations that Mr Leonard felt passionately about.



St Munchin's belfry, pinnacles and tower were all restored by the Civic Trust



The People's Park fountain's restoration was spearheaded by the Civic Trust

t Hotel

2009  
mas Bingo

00  
stars

noon  
ember

€25  
€32  
INCLUDE A  
€4000 GAME