



Mayor Sadlier addresses the crowd at the conferring of the Freeman of the City awards in blazing sunshine, with the Clare Hills in the background. Pictures:DERMOT LYNCH.



The attendance at the ceremony.

Three pioneers of Mid West are honoured

By DYMPHNA BRACKEN

THE city conferred its highest honour on Ted Russell, Dr Brendan O'Regan and Dr Edward Walsh, three men who made an outstanding contribution to the business, commercial and educational life of the city over the past 50 years, at a special function in

Michael Lannigan, Mayor of Kilkenny, Pat Cox MEP, John Cushnahan MEP, Michael Guerin, president of the Chamber of Commerce, former city manager, Jack Higgins, Supt Pat O'Boyle, Roxboro, Supt Tony Kenneally, Henry Street, and members of City Council, who robed for the occasion. Mayor Sadlier, said the three men had made an outstanding contribution to

ensured that its benefits were maximised for the region. He described the development of the university as the single most important development in the region in the past number of years. "Its success has answered its detractors," he added. Dr Walsh, he said, co-founded the pundits, and has ensured that the university has become one of the most distinguished educational institutions in the country. Cllr Frank Prendergast, who proposed that M-

nities. "It is sad to see so many young people out of work," he said. "The problem must be tackled at both local and national level" he added. He called for more power to be devolved from the centre to allow areas outside of Dublin to grow and create opportunities for people in their own local areas. "I cannot understand why the Limerick city boundary has not been extended," he said.



Following the script . . . councillors John Quinn, left, Frank Prendergast, Gus O'Driscoll, Pat Kennedy, and John Ryan, without the city robes, with city manager, Jack Higgins.

tance address, said he felt particularly fortunate to be a part of the Mid-West region "a region which enjoys the quality of life that now makes it capable of doing things for itself than no other part of the university and paid tribute to the personalities involved. He paid a particular tribute to Dr Walsh for his efforts in the development of the concert hall and said "it is the envy of the



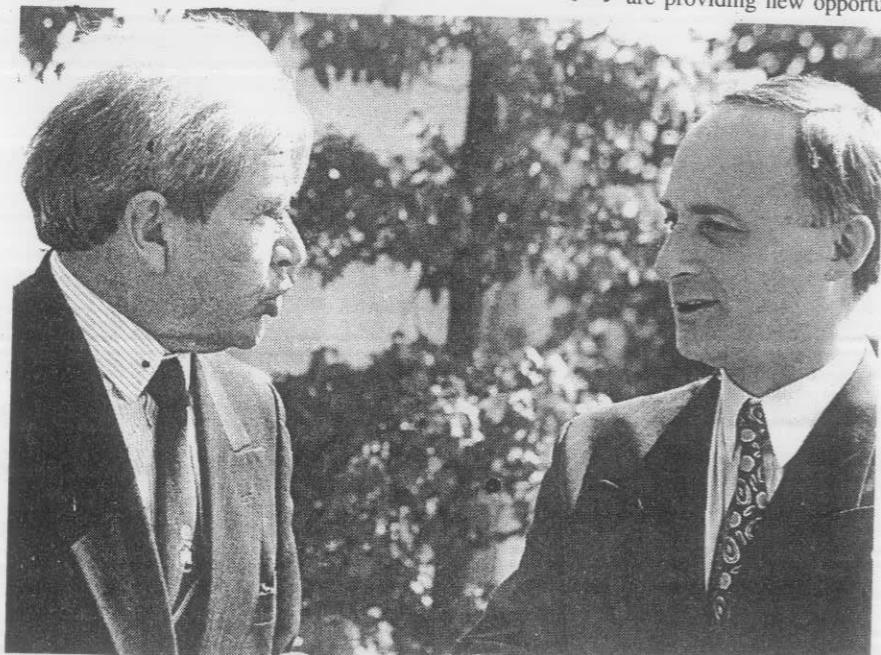
dition which our university and its associate organisations, is now achieving is a tribute to their hard work and endeavour," he said. Even though the univer-

men who made an outstanding contribution to the business, commercial and educational life of the city over the past 50 years, at a special function in City Hall.

The special ceremony in the grounds of City Hall, on the banks of the Shannon and overlooking King John's Castle and St Mary's Cathedral was attended by representatives of the business, religious, education and political world, including the Bishop of Killaloe, Most Rev Willie Walsh, Mons Michael Lane, the Bishop of Limerick and Killaloe, Dr Darling,



Dr Brendan O'Regan signs the Freeman's Roll watched by Mayor Sadlier. (LL)



After they were conferred with the Freedom of Limerick on Friday last, Dr Edward Walsh, Dr Brendan O'Regan and Mr Ted Russell. (LL)

Kenneally, Henry Street, and members of City Council, who robed for the occasion.

Mayor Sadlier, said the three men had made an outstanding contribution to business and educational life in the region.

It was fitting, he said, that they should be honoured in their own lifetimes.

The Mayor described Mr Russell as a man who made an "unparalleled" contribution to not just to the business and political life of the city, but to many voluntary efforts as well.

"His long lasting achievements will serve as a role model for many others," he claimed.

Dr O'Regan, said the Mayor, pioneered the duty free shop concept and

Dr Walsh, he said, founded the pundits, and has ensured that the university has become one of the most distinguished educational institutions in the country.

Cllr Frank Prendergast, who proposed that Mr Russell be conferred with the Freedom of the City, said he believed that a careful study of the distinguished list of Freeman would reveal that few, if any, of them have given a great or more sustained contribution to the city than Mr Russell.

The concepts that come most readily to mind when describing Mr Russell, according to Cllr Prendergast, are public service, vision, statesmanship and generosity of spirit.

The city and its people, said Cllr Prendergast, has benefited enormously from each of these facets of Mr Russell's character.

Although the honour of Freedom is largely symbolic, Cllr Prendergast said that in this age of rampant materialism, "symbols when reflecting civic virtues can have an inspiring and enduring significance".

Mr Russell said he regarded the Freedom as a single honour evidenced by the fact that to date only 50 have been conferred.

He described public service as all about community service.

People with material things and education, he said, can decide to do things or not to do them.

"I decided to try and do something," he said.

He referred to changes in the city over the years, and in particular to the closure of some of the old family industries.

He welcomed the fact that industrial parks and educational facilities spearheaded by his co-recipients are providing new opportu-

ties.

In 1955, with Dr O'Regan's reputation as an innovator well established, Cllr O'Driscoll said he was appointed a member of the Irish Tourist Board and later became its chairman, a position he held for 15 years.

It was Dr O'Regan and his team, he said, who thought up the brilliant idea of restoring Bunratty Castle and hold medieval banquets there.

Dr O'Regan, also he said, pioneered the rent-an-Irish cottage vacation scheme, increasing tourist revenue and preserving the Irish traditions in the small country villages.

side of Dublin to grow and create opportunities for people in their own local areas.

"I cannot understand why the Limerick city boundary has not been extended," he said.

In accepting the Freedom of the City, Mr Russell said he was aware that there are many unsung heroes working with the sick, the aged, the handicapped and with young people.

"I would like to pay all those people a tribute on this occasion," he added.

Cllr Gus O'Driscoll, proposing Dr O'Regan, said his pioneering spirit has been a boost to the Mid West since the Forties.

Under his leadership, he said, the world's first duty free shop was established at the airport, and later copied by scores of airport authorities around the world.

This venture subsequently led to the Shannon Mail Order Service which became a multi-million dollar earner for this country.

Cllr O'Driscoll said he could not let the occasion pass without mention of the delicious beverage, Irish Coffee, devised by Dr O'Regan and his chef, Joe Sheridan.

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In the late 1950s jet travel came of age, and with it the threat to by-pass Shannon, and again claimed Cllr O'Driscoll, it was Dr O'Regan who was assigned by the Government to implement the concept of the free industrial zone at the airport.

In 1959, Shannon Free Airport Development Company was formed, and Dr O'Regan was its chairman and chief executive for many years.

People who were involved in working with Dr O'Regan in those pioneering days, according to Cllr O'Driscoll, say that he inspired in them a keen sense of motivation and achievement.

When Dr O'Regan retired from the corporate sector, Cllr O'Driscoll said he continued to motivate

Dr Walsh, he said, founded the pundits, and has ensured that the university has become one of the most distinguished educational institutions in the country.

He spoke of the great challenges facing the country as a member of the European Community and said that solutions to unemployment would be best found in the local villages and communities.

Cllr Jack Bourke, who proposed Dr Edward Walsh, said the establishment of the university was a significant milestone not just for Limerick but for the entire country.

The levels of expertise in commerce, research and development being developed in the university, said Cllr Bourke augured well for the creation of enterprise in the region.

He traced the history of the establishment of the

university and paid tribute to the personalities involved.

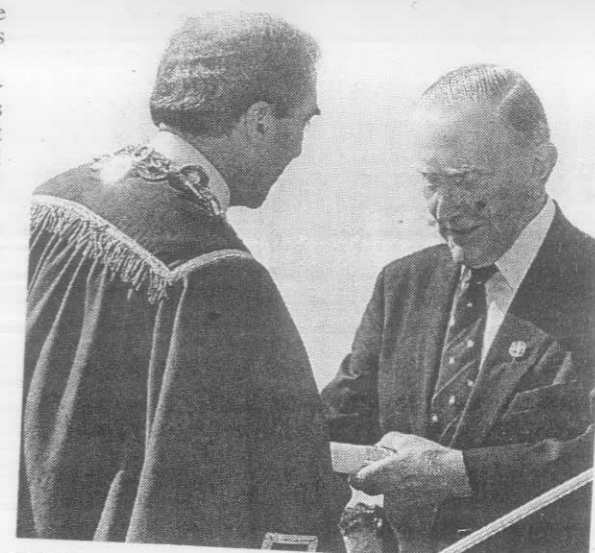
He paid a particular tribute to Dr Walsh for his efforts in the development of the concert hall and said "it is the envy of the nation".

Dr Walsh, he said, has recently set up a committee to hold provide educational opportunities for underprivileged people.

"I have no doubt but that venture will be as successful as his successes to date," he added.

In his acceptance address, Dr Walsh said he saw the honour as a formal expression of the city's appreciation to the many who worked tirelessly over the years to establish the university.

This honour, he said, is shared with the many who have given their time and funds unselfishly to the campaign of the Limerick University Project committee, with the planning board who worked for five years



Ted Russell accepts the Freeman-of-Limerick scroll from Mayor Sadlier. (LL)

Men with a vision that goes beyond Mid West

TED Russell, Dr O'Regan and Dr Walsh can be regarded as three men with a vision, not just for Limerick and the Mid West, but for Ireland as a whole.

Mr Russell, born on April 9, 1912, was educated at the Crescent College and later at Stonehurst College in England.

Chairman of Silvermines from 1950 to 1988 and currently president of the company, Mr Russell was elected to the City Council in 1942 where he served until 1979 which included being elected mayor of the city on five occasions.

He was a member of Dail Eireann from 1957 to 1961 and a member of Seanad Eireann from 1969 to 1977.

He was chairman of the Irish Cancer Society from 1950 to 1961.

He is currently a member of the Chamber of Commerce and the Limerick Harbour Commissioners. He served as chairman of the commissioners from 1966 to 1992.

In recognition of his services to the Board, Limerick Harbour renamed the main dock in the harbour Ted Russell Dock.

Mr Russell who lives with his wife Dervilla, on the North Circular Road donated land at

was given an Irish final trial in 1938 also enjoys golf, walking, and reading.

Dr Brendan O'Regan, born in Sixmilebridge, in 1917, served as catering comptroller at Shannon airport from 1943 to 1973 during which time he pioneered the duty-free shop

Shannon Development from 1957 to 1959 and chairman from 1959 to 1978.

He is a founder member of Co-Operation North, The Irish Peace Institute and the Centre for International Co-operation.

In the past he has been

and with those in the city and region who assisted the efforts to establish the university. With the first 113 and the first 24 staff, with the chairman Paul Quigley, and members of the first governing Body, with our

current chairman, John A Daly and member of the Governing Body, with the 700 faculty and staff, and over 7,000 students who now constitute the university.

"The international recog-

Dr O'Regan who lives with his wife, Rita, in Newmarket-on-Fergus likes

(LL)

dition which our university and its associate organisations, is now achieving is a tribute to their hard work and endeavour," he said.

Even though the university is in its infancy, Dr Walsh said, it is very encouraging to realise that demand for admission ranks with the oldest or the largest university in the country, and in size is already larger than one of the Queen Colleges, which, this year, celebrates its 150 year.

It would be foolish to believe, he said, that such achievement can of itself sustain into the future.

Dr Walsh revealed that in celebrating the 25th year of the commencement of planning, all members of the university community are now involved in Vision 2020 designed to ensure that the university is amongst the first rank of European universities and in selected areas, the leader.

trial development.

Dr Edward Walsh, president of The University of Limerick, was born in Cork in 1939 and holds a number of degrees and doctorates in laws, science and engineering from both Irish and American universities.

A fellow of the Institute of Engineers of Ireland he is also a member of the Royal Hibernian Academy of Arts.

He is currently a vice-president of the International Association of University Presidents, chairman of the National Self-Portrait Collection of Ireland and vice-chairman of the National Technological Park.

Dr Walsh is currently director of a number of bodies including Shannon Development, Hunt Museums Trust, The Irish American Partnership, Irish Peace Institute, Local Employment Action Programme Fund, National Committee on American foreign Policy and the Irish American Cultural Institute Board.

Dr Walsh who has over 40 publications to his credit, has also acted as a consultant to American Electric Power company in Virginia USA.

A registered silversmith,