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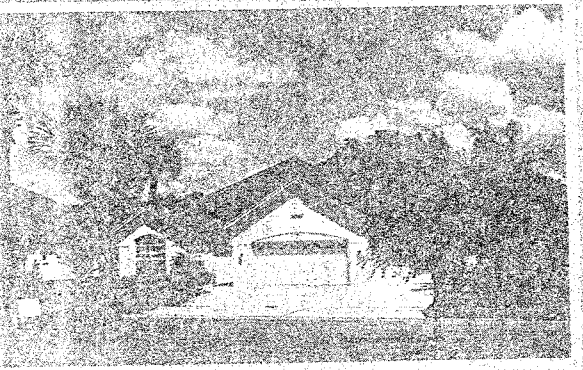
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# Harris snubs Brit Awards 'to be with his own'

By LEADER REPORTER

LIMERICK actor Richard Harris snubbed this year's Brit Awards to be among his own.

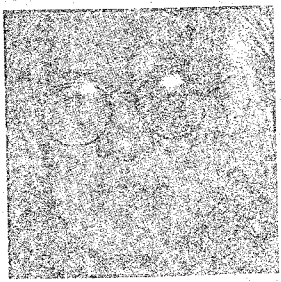
Harris received an award for his contribution to the world of arts and entertainment at the Irish World Awards Gala in London organised by the Irish World newspaper.

The star-studded banquet in the Aran Suite of Cricklewood's Caltmore Complex was attended by sport stars and artists.

But the gala fell on the same night as the Brit Awards.

However, Harris told the audience: "It's absolutely wonderful to be here for this event. I was invited to attend the Brit Awards this evening but I would much prefer to be here among my own and I've no reason so far this evening to regret that decision.

"Just in case anyone of you who doesn't know already, I come from Limerick and I love Limerick and wherever I go throughout the globe I don't make any secret of that fact," he said.



Richard Harris: Limerick and proud of it (L.R.)

Harris spoke of his love of rugby and of his many life interests and left the stage to a standing ovation.

Also recognised was former Garryowen and Munster rugby player, Barry Everitt who now plays for London Irish.

Another Limerickman honoured was country songwriter Jimmy Buckley from Doon.

He said that to be recognised on the same platform as Limerick icon Richard Harris was the stuff dreams were made of.

"I am absolutely thrilled to receive this award in recognition of my service to country music," said Jimmy Buckley, who has written hits such as Cottage by the Sea and A Mother's Love.

"It is also wonderful for me to be part of such a

marvellous occasion and to be considered for an award in the company of so many great Irish sport-stars and artists such as Richard Harris," he said.

Mr Buckley got his big break aged 21 when he won £10,000 worth of musical equipment on Gerry Ryan's television show called Secrets in the early 1990s.

He now tours with his own band and is very popular throughout England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Midlands. He will perform in Spain for the first time this summer.

Mr Buckley is based in Galway with his wife, Clarice, and two children, Claudia and Michael, but he still manages to keep in touch with his parents, Mary and Mike; brothers Mike, who owns Buckley's pub, Main Street, Doon; Pat, Tadhg, sisters Siobhan, Ann, Mairead and Molly, and his cousins who run the bakery in Doon.

"To be honoured in this way is very special, but to be recognised with such icons as Richard Harris is the stuff dreams are made of," he said.

Therese Doyle from Borrisoleigh, Tipperary, who took the camogie award.