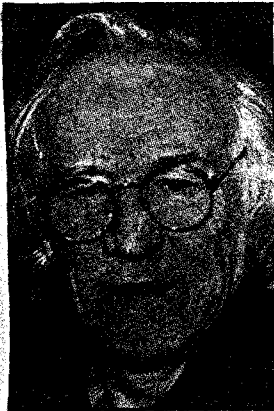


① Limerick Leader 2/11/02

HARRIS DENIED BY TWO VOTES

By EUGENE PHELAN
Leader Exclusive



Snubbed: Richard Harris. Revelation: Ald Kennedy

RICHARD Harris was delighted when told that efforts were being made to make him a Freeman of Limerick—but two city councillors scuttled his hopes, it was revealed for the first time this Thursday.

Former Mayor Ald Pat Kennedy confirmed that he made "every effort" to have the freedom conferred on the richly-talented actor who died at the weekend.

"Unfortunately, my proposal was strongly opposed by two members of the City Council and a few more were lukewarm on the idea," he revealed.

He said that in the circumstances he had to abandon the idea because the conferring of the freedom required the unanimous or at least the almost unanimous approval of the City Council.

"This was all the more regrettable because it was intimated to me at the time that Richard would be delighted to receive the freedom of Limerick," he added.

This happened during Ald Kennedy's mayoralty in 1985/86.

"I would support any proposals to make amends to Richard Harris and his family and the people of Limerick by granting him the freedom of Limerick posthumously as suggested by the editor of the Limerick Leader in his editorial," he added.

Ironically as a result of the problems in giving Richard the freedom, the City Council changed its rule and now only 12 out of 17 councillors need approve a name put forward.

Members of the Harris family and the general public are annoyed that the great actor was never officially honoured by his native city.

Noel Harris, the actor's brother, who lives in Dublin, has spoke of family resentment over the fact that Limerick never officially honoured the famous actor who got two Oscar nominations.

"I am very disappointed in my city. I can't imagine anyone who deserved it more than he did," said Noel. "He has done more than any Irish actor ever did. I know the people of Limerick have thought about honouring him. Perhaps now they will regret that they didn't while he was alive."

EDITORIAL: P8
SALUTE: P14, 15



Pretty spooky . . . Preparing for Bóthar's Halloween fundraiser (from left): Niamh Lillis

Scare to show you ca

By ALAN JACQUES

TRICK-or-treaters are creeping about the city this Halloween weekend to raise funds for families in developing countries.

Local-based development aid agency Bóthar have organised a gigantic Community Halloween fancy dress party to raise money for their projects in Africa. The theme of the fancy dress party is Scare To Show You Care.

Thousands of people in schools and

offices throughout Limerick will participate in the fundraising event by dressing up as ghouls, goblins and vampires. All proceeds will go towards buying livestock for impoverished families in Third World countries.

According to Bóthar's marketing manager Allison McNamara, all businesses and schools have already received a party pack to help organise their own party. She said the event will give people the opportunity to have some fun, while enabling poverty-stricken families in developing countries to become self-

sufficient. "We at hundred on all of people care by costume their own Miss Mc "What is that v donatio differen event w familie:

Homeless ex-prison lives in city rail stati

By MAIRÉAD NÍ CHAOIMH

A 34-YEAR-old Limerickman—just released from prison and sleeping rough in Limerick train station—says he will return to jail unless he is given a roof over his head soon.

Since last Thursday night Andrew Fitzgerald has been huddling inside a sleeping bag every night for warmth on a bench.

He claims that the Mid-Western Health Board have failed to find him a place to live. However, a spokeswoman for the Health Board disagreed, saying that Mr Fitzgerald had not asked them for assistance with housing, telling them he was staying with friends.

Mr Fitzgerald told the Limerick Leader:

"While I was in prison at least I had meals and a roof over my head. Now I spend my days walking around the town.

"The only comfort is in the drink. All I want is a place to live.

"The Health Board has told me all the hostels and B&Bs are full. They wanted to send me to the homeless place down by Rixtown but there is no room there either, I was told.

"I just want to get on with my life. I left Limerick prison with €40 and a small bag of my possessions, a pair of jeans and a few shirts.

"I have to sign on the dole office every day and I am living off €118.80 weekly.

"I have been locked up since I was 15. I have been in and out of prison for the past 19 years.

"The last stint in prison I did was for 18 months. If I don't get a place soon I will just go back to prison."

Mr Fitzgerald told how he was touched by the kindness of a Limerick priest.

"One of the priests inside in the Dominicans' gave me €20 the day I went in," he said. "I was so delighted. I went off to a cafe and treated myself to a feed of bacon and cabbage.

"I have seven brothers and six sisters, and I am the eldest in the family. One of my sisters died in a car crash last July. She was 31 years of age, and she left kids behind her.

"I would prefer to sleep out rather than stay with my family. They have their own lives and families, and I don't want to get in their way. I am out on

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Return ticket to jail? Andrew Fitzgerald sleeps rough in Colbert Station

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