

# BIRD FLU FAIL

By BARRY DUGGAN

**A LIMERICK doctor has blasted the emergency services and Government departments over the response she received after she reported a dead swan on Sunday afternoon.**

European countries are on high alert this Monday after France confirmed their first case of bird flu at the weekend.

Dr Nicola Stapleton of Raheen, who is based in Dublin, said that the response from emergency services and the local authority when she alerted them of the dead swan was completely inadequate.

"I rang Terenure Garda Station twice, the ISPCA, Dublin City Council and a number of Government Departments using the emergency numbers provided. None of them were the slightest bit bothered—they didn't care," said Dr Stapleton.

The Limerick GP found the dead swan which she believes to be just over a year old along the Grand Canal near Harold's Cross while walking through the area at 3.30pm on Sunday afternoon.

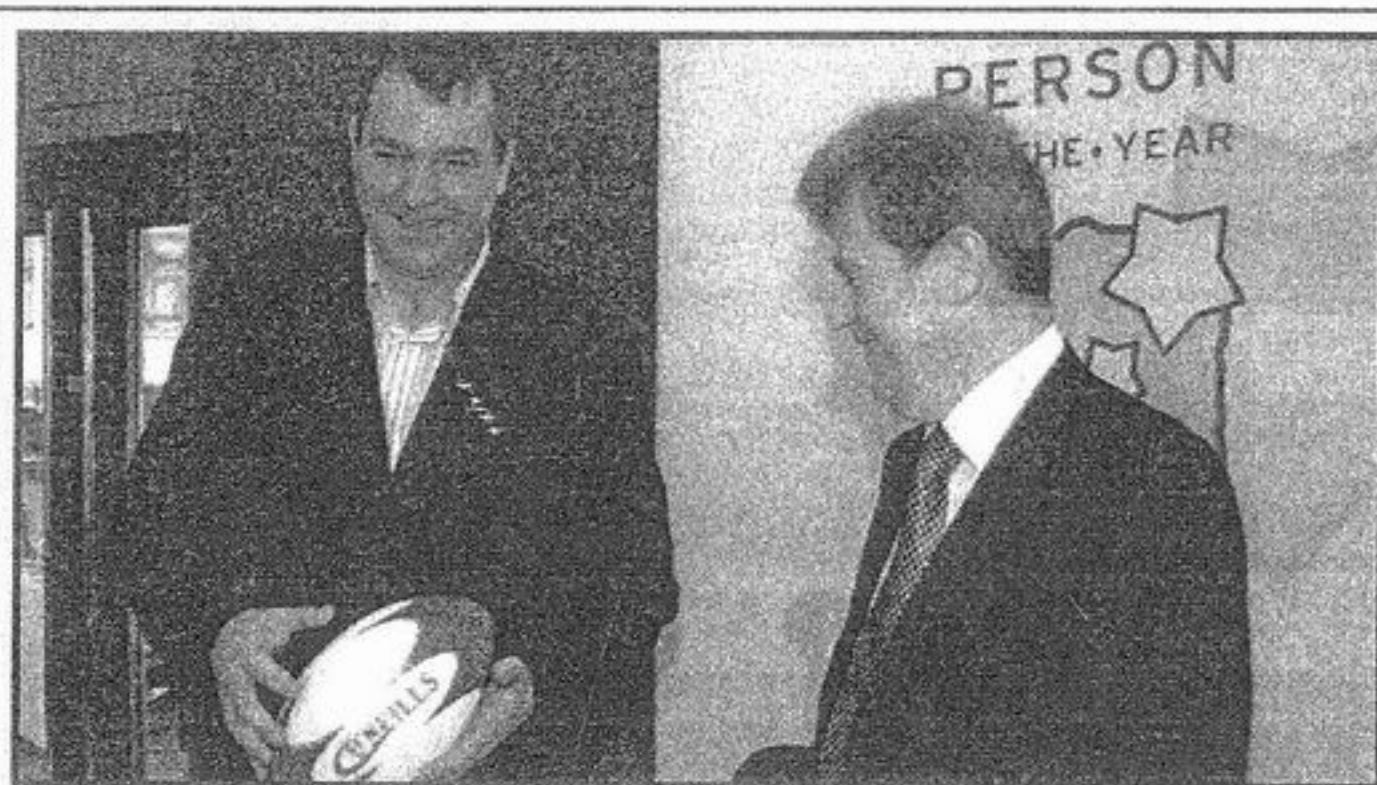
"It is unusual to see anything like this and it was the first time I have seen a dead swan. With all the warnings across Europe about bird flu, I thought it was important to let the

authorities know," said.

"I rang all the relevant authorities and they just rang out. I issued an issue and mentioned it to anyone I could get a response from. I was eventually told that the response was inadequate."

Eventually, Agriculture and the Environment Department said a number of people had reported dead swans but they were just not talking to the right people, Dr Stapleton.

The cause of the deaths is still unknown. In Britain, the first case of dead swans was reported in recent weeks over the possibility of bird flu.



Limerick Person of the Year, Anthony Foley with JP McManus, recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award (LL)

## Limerick honours JP and Anthony Foley

By MIKE DWANE

**BUSINESSMAN** JP McManus has said he feels "guilty" to have received a Lifetime Achievement Award for his generosity to charitable causes in Limerick.

The philanthropist received the special tribute at the Limerick Person of the Year awards over the weekend and made clear he was accepting it on behalf of all those Limerick people "who work in the community day in, day out without getting the plaudits I do."

"I feel guilty because I think there are so many people who deserve to get this award, who do so much work for the sick and the needy, the elderly, the

underprivileged and the less fortunate people in our society and I'm accepting this award on behalf of those people; they are my heroes," said Mr McManus, who has donated an estimated €70 million to Limerick charities and voluntary organisations. The three JP McManus Invitational Pro-Am golf classics alone have raised a staggering €50 million in recent years.

An Tánaiste Mary Harney, who was in Limerick to present the awards, said "everybody who has been in Government over the last number of years has had reason to be grateful for JP McManus. We only wish there was a JP McManus in Galway, Dublin, Cork and everywhere else."

Over 120 guests attended Friday's awards lunch at the Clarion Hotel, who co-sponsored the annual event with the Limerick Leader and Southern Advertising.

This year's outright winner was Munster rugby captain Anthony Foley. Before presenting the award, An Tánaiste warned Anthony "not to add to the pressures I already have in the health system by getting people too excited."

"Axel", as he is known on the terraces, said that he felt humbled to have received the overall award and dedicated it to teammates past and present, to his parents, wife Olive and his seven-month-old son Tony, who has just recovered from illness.

## 'Joyriders' Bank project

**JOYRIDERS**, arsonists and vandals are ruining a multi-million investment at one of the city's beauty spots, writes Barry Duggan.

For a third time since last month, part of the canal bank has been destroyed by the city's so-called joyriders who burnt out and pushed stolen cars into the canal at the weekend.

Fourteen trees along the canal were vandalised as well.

The two cars were stolen from a hotel in Castletroy on Saturday night and were abandoned at the canal. One was completely burnt out while the other vehicle was pushed into the water.

"It happened near the old Guinness place along Clare Street. They are at this all the time and it is a disgrace. They destroyed 14 small trees along the river also. They have done the same here over the past weeks," said one resident.

The young saplings were planted recently by contractors. The two cars were due to be removed from the area later today.

Plans to restore the Canal Bank at a cost of €1.4m began last year and are being overseen by Limerick City Council and Shannon Development.

Once the restoration



The project is walkers, cyclists, and canoeists among those who use the canal as a leisure area. The project is part of the Limerick Waterways and is set to be a major city attraction. The Park Limerick was the late 17th century commercial port. It was used for shipping goods to and from Limerick.