

Harney urges Foley not to add to the stress in the life of Brian

TÁNAISTE Mary Harney has come up with her own nomination for the Limerick Person of the Year—her husband Brian Geoghegan! writes Mike Dwane.

The Minister for Health was guest of honour at the event and presented the overall award to Munster rugby captain Anthony Foley.

Minister Harney recalled that the last time she did the honours at the awards was in 2000 when “I

would have envisaged that Brian Geoghegan would have won it the following year for marrying me!”

To much laughter the Progressive Democrats leader also recalled the Limerick Leader headline of December 8, 2001: “Former Fairview Goalie Marries Mary Harney.”

Mr Geoghegan, formerly of the Ballysimon Road, has since gone on to distinguish himself off the field of play having served as chair-

man of FÁS and IBEC’s director of economic affairs.

A regular visitor to Shannon-side, Minister Harney said Limerick had become even closer to her heart since the wedding four years ago.

Tongue-in-cheek, the Tánaiste said she was delighted with all the favourable publicity she and the Government have been getting in the local press ever since.

Minister Harney said she also

wished Brian could take a leaf from the book of JP McManus, who she presented with a Special Lifetime Achievement Award for his generosity to charitable and voluntary organisations in Limerick and further afield.

“I heard that when negative publicity started appearing in the papers about the new house that JP was keeping the papers away from (his wife) Noreen. I hope that Brian can take a leaf from JP’s book and

keep the papers away from me on a Sunday morning,” she said.

The Tánaiste also revealed that the “former Fairview goalie” can still get exercised by events on the pitch and gets especially worked up when Munster play rugby.


“I’ve taken the opportunity today to warn Anthony Foley and Munster not to add to the pressures I’m already facing in the health system by getting people too excited,” the Tánaiste quipped.

Before presenting “Axel” Foley with the award, she also recalled her early days in politics when she often had to judge bonny babies competitions. The tactic she then used was to always “pick up the fattest baby because I thought they were at the greatest disadvantage.”

Not to be upstaged by the wise-cracking Tánaiste, the Munster captain said “thanks very much but I thought I’d actually lost weight!”



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McManus gets lifetime award for lifetime of helping others

By MIKE DWANE

ONE of Limerick’s best-loved sons, financier and philanthropist JP McManus, now has a Special Lifetime Achievement Award to add to the Freedom of the City award he picked up five years ago.



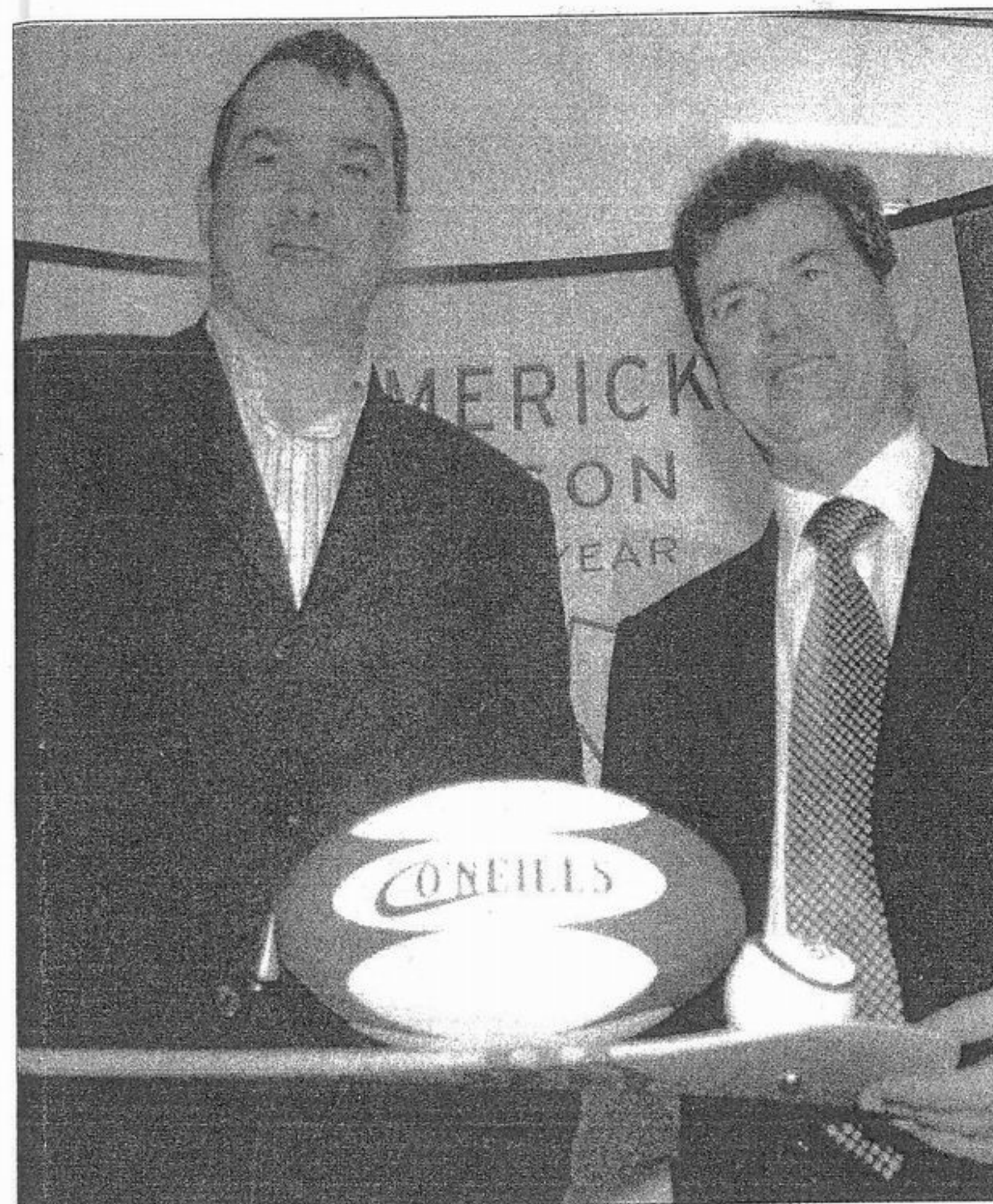
An Tánaiste Mary Harney, making a presentation

where else,” she said.

But the Tánaiste added that what struck her most about Mr McManus was “what an ordinary guy he is”.

Not to be outdone by his number two, An Taoiseach Bertie Ahern also sent a message of congratulations to Mr McManus.

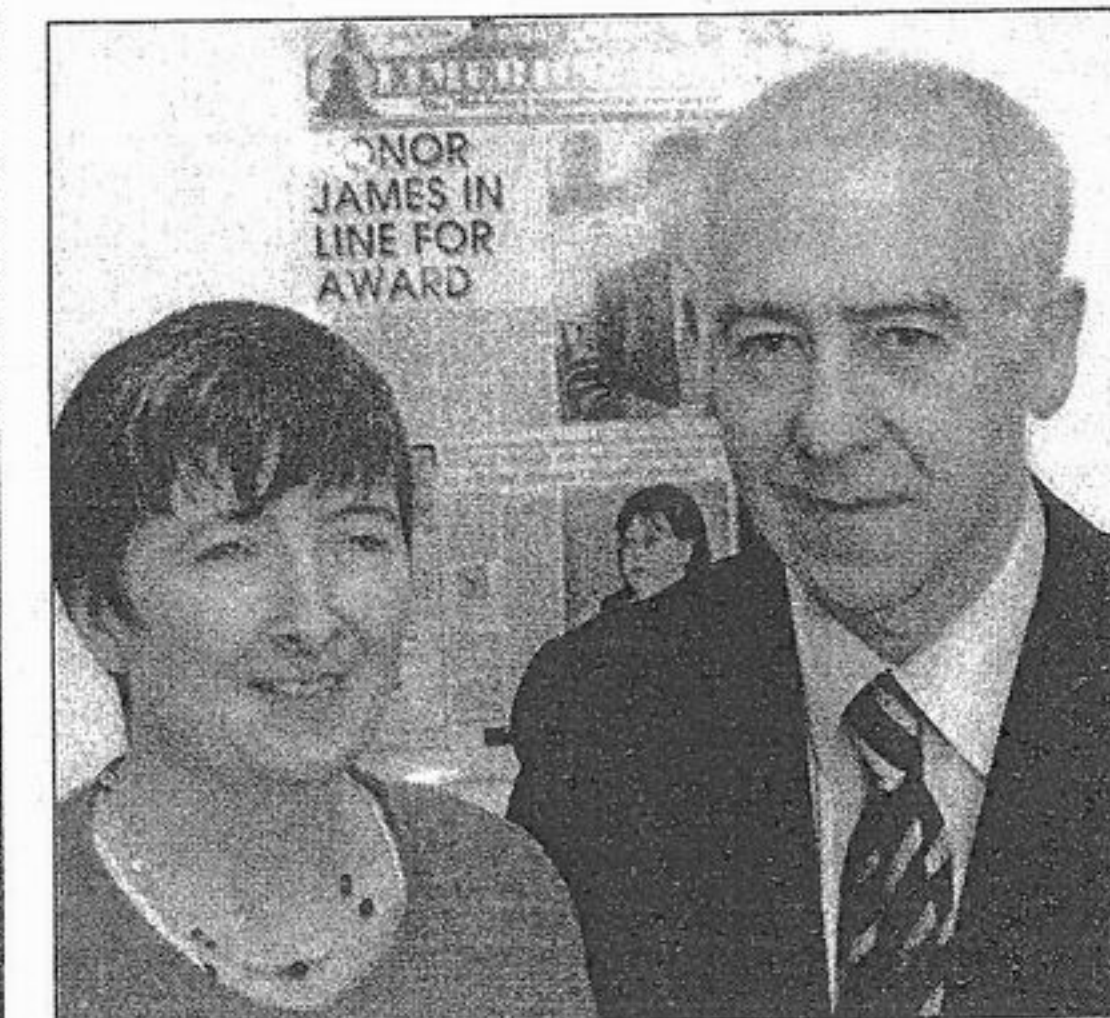
“JP McManus holds a special place in the hearts of Limerick people and of Irish people everywhere. His extraordinary generosity, commitment and



The Limerick Person of the Year, Ireland and Munster rugby star Anthony Foley, with JP McManus, recipient of the lifetime Achievement Award (LL)



Kieran MacSweeney, August award winner, with Andrew Mawhinney, Limerick Co-Ordination Office (LL)



Limerick minor hurling team manager Timmy O'Connor, and his wife, Kathleen (LL)



for lifetime of helping others

By MIKE DWANE

ONE of Limerick's best-loved sons, financier and philanthropist JP McManus, now has a Special Lifetime Achievement Award to add to the Freedom of the City award he picked up five years ago.

The racing magnate was presented with the honour by An Tánaiste, Mary Harney, at the Limerick Person of the Year Awards at the Clarion Hotel on Friday in recognition of his boundless generosity to charitable and voluntary organisations.

But Mr McManus immediately said he was guilty to have received the tribute, which he said he was accepting on behalf of those "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," Mr McManus said.

He could have been talking about some of the nominees for the Person of the Year Awards, like Anne Curley, who has spent over three decades working with the youth in the Ballinacurra Weston / Prospect area of the city; or Limerick sol-



An Tánaiste Mary Harney, making a presentation to JP McManus, recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award (LL)

dier Tony DeLoughrey who organised the rebuilding of a derelict boxing club while on a UN peacekeeping mission in Liberia.

People like James Hickey, who has donated over 110 units of blood to the Irish Blood Transfusion Service over 30 years and who has quietly organised around 100 donors in the Caherconlish area; Dromcollogher native Sr Nora Wall, 60 years in the Mercy Order and one of the inspirational figures behind the local refugee and asylum-seeker support service Doras Luimní; or Dr Andrew Kelly, the Raheen-based GP who has been involved with the Irish Red Cross since he was 14.

"I'm fortunate," said Mr McManus, "that I'm in that position where I'm able to help. There's an awful lot of people out there who help in many, many ways and they don't get recognised for it."

But Limerick, too, is fortunate that JP McManus has been in a position to help.

Mary Dundon, Limer-

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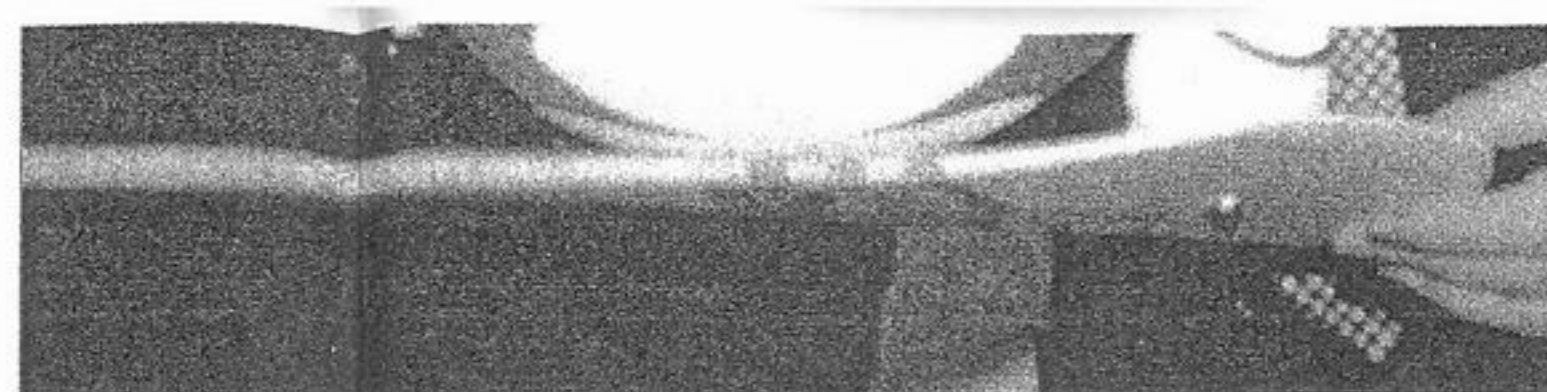
"JP McManus holds a special place in the hearts of Limerick people and of Irish people everywhere. His extraordinary generosity, commitment and vision in every one of his many undertakings is an inspiration to us all. He is a shining example of how we can use our talents and resources in a way that positively benefits those around us," the Taoiseach said.

Joe Gleeson, managing director of the Limerick Leader, co-sponsors with the Clarion Hotel and Southern Advertising, said: "I first met JP some three years ago and in the course of conversation with him we established we had a few things in common."

"We shared the same initials, JP; we went to the same school, CBS Sexton Street; and we also had the same teacher, Bryan McMahon, who incidentally is a brother of Ciarán (Mac Mathúna), one of today's nominees."

"Now unfortunately for me all similarities with JP end at this point but I am keeping my fingers crossed," said Mr Gleeson, before handing over to the Tánaiste to present the award.

Mr McManus received two standing ovations from the 125 guests who attended the ceremony.



The Limerick Person of the Year, Ireland and Munster rugby star Anthony Foley, with JP McManus, recipient of the lifetime Achievement Award (LL)



Limerick minor hurling team manager Timmy O'Connor, and his wife, Kathleen (LL)



JP McManus, recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award, with An Tánaiste Mary Harney, and Kay McGuinness and Dave O'Hara, Southern Advertising, sponsors (LL)



Majella O'Rourke, wife of December award winner Ger, with Maggs O'Rourke and Nora O'Rourke (LL)



Monthly award winner James Hickey with his wife, Betty, and Aileen Brown (LL)



Joe Gleeson, managing director, Limerick Leader, sponsors, with JP McManus, recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award, and January award winner Patrick Collison (LL)



February winner Tony DeLoughrey with his wife, Joan, and daughters Olivia and Joanne (LL)

