

News

Long calls for O'Brien house to be preserved

■ Spanish village honours Limerick-born author

KATE O'BRIEN

Alan Owens

DEPUTY Mayor Jim Long this week put forward a motion to Limerick City Council for the preservation of the birthplace of Limerick-born author Kate O'Brien, which, he claimed, was "near a state of dereliction".

The motion came after the he attended a ceremony last weekend in the small village of Gotarrendura in the Avila region of Spain for the official naming of a street after the famous author.

The deputation from Limerick, which included members of the Kate O'Brien committee who run a weekend in the author's honour every year, joined the Mayor of Gotarrendura, Fernando Martín, and the Irish ambassador to Spain, Peter Gunning, at the ceremony.

There ceremony was attended by over 300 people, including locals, other dignitaries and assorted media.



The Mayor of Gotarrendura, Fernando Martín, with the Irish ambassador to Spain, Peter Gunning, and deputy Mayor Jim Long at the Kate O'Brien street naming ceremony in the Spanish village

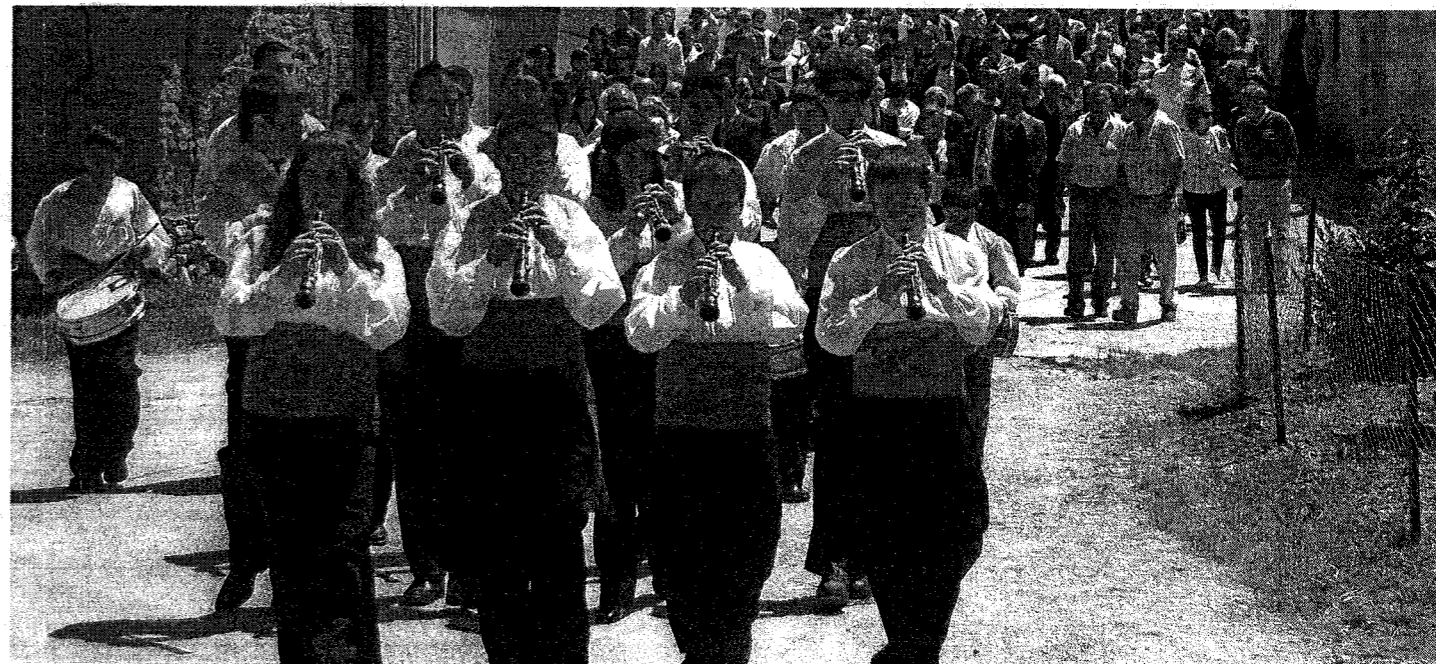
"I was over-awed by the whole ceremony," said Cllr Long. "The villagers spent two weeks preparing the village, building a stage and organising the entertainment. It was most

impressive and they deserve huge credit for this."

Members of the political parties of the region voted unanimously last October to name a street in the village after the writer to mark her long association with Spain and the land of

St Teresa of Avila, about whom she wrote a short biographical monograph in 1951.

Mr Gunning unveiled a street plaque in honour of Ms O'Brien, after which Cllr Long told the gathering that "by honouring her you honour us as well.



The procession makes its way through the village of Gotarrendura before the street-naming ceremony to honour Kate O'Brien

"That was received with extreme applause and it is true, by honouring her, they are honouring Limerick."

"I was particularly taken with the association they made between Kate O'Brien and St. Teresa of Avila and in order to get to

St. Teresa's residence, you now have to travel down Kate O'Brien street."

As a result of the gesture by the Spanish people, Cllr Long is calling for the preservation of Boru House on Mulgrave Street, where the author was born in 1897, and which he

claims is falling into disrepair.

"As a result of what they did, only today I have moved a motion to Limerick City Council to take over Kate O'Brien's house on Mulgrave Street. We are looking for it to be turned into a writers cen-

tre," he said.

"It is very near a state of dereliction. We will have to purchase it, but I have committed myself to the Kate O'Brien committee and I believe I will gain tremendous support because this is an absolutely fabulous fairy-

tale story that is 30 years in the making and long overdue."

Mayor Ger Fahy recently stressed to the Limerick Leader that his wished to remain separate from any debate about a similar commemoration taking place in Limerick.

Civic trust on Nationwide

Gerard Fitzgibbon

A SPECIAL feature on Limerick Civic Trust will be the centrepiece of RTE One's Nationwide programme this Friday, which will be specially presented from Limerick.

The trust is celebrating 25 years of restoring and preserving some of the

19th century soprano Catherine Hayes' childhood home on Patrick Street.

Pallaskenry documentary makers Matt Kelly and Marian Malone were commissioned by RTE to produce the special segment.

"They've done a serious amount of work in these 25

places for arts, heritage, music and meetings," said Mr Malone.

Mr Kelly added that the trust was typified by the energy of its director, Denis Leonard, and chairman Martin Bourke.

Mr Bourke said that the trust was delighted to have its 25-year milestone recognised on RTE. "It's a great

Pembroke College graduates are looking forward to a bright and beautiful future

Aine Fitzgerald

BEAUTY is in the eye of the beholder, they say, and for Sarah Dooley from Oshesha, the old adage

