



Miss Limerick, Laurna Felton of Garryowen, toasts her win.
 □ McCormac: p15.

Weather

THIS Friday evening in the Limerick region will be mild and dry, with winds light to moderate north-westerly. The night will remain dry with broken cloud and light north-westerly winds. Dry and mild on Saturday with variable cloud cover and slacker winds. Saturday night will become mostly overcast; patches of drizzle may appear. On Sunday, winds will freshen from a westerly direction; a lot of cloud about, and a little drizzle or light rain may occur at times; mild and close; to the south of the Limerick region, there is the possibility of some warm sunshine for a time. The early days of next week will be fresh, with westerly to north-westerly winds and a mixture of sunshine and showers; a few degrees below normal.

Frank blasts at his critics

McCourt: They don't know how to read a book

By GILLIAN DEVLIN

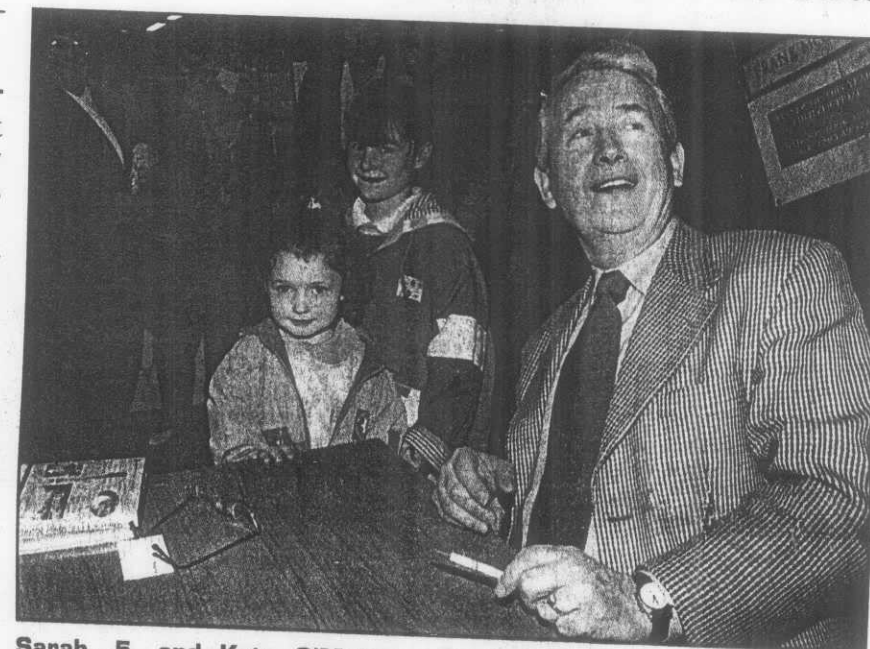
FRANK McCourt has reacted strongly to criticism of his Pulitzer Prize novel, *Angela's Ashes*—claiming his critics do not know how to read a book.

He was speaking in a Limerick Leader interview at the special viewing of a postage stamp to commemorate the centenary of Kate O'Brien's birth, hosted by Deputy Mayor, Ald Jim Kemmy, at City Hall.

Rev Sean O Longaigh, Askeaton, complained that the book is vehemently anti-Catholic, said the tone is one of "barbed aggression".

"He doesn't know what he's talking about," said Mr McCourt, "and he completely misread my book."

"I'm not trying to blame anyone, not the Church nor the Government. If I wanted to blame anyone it would be my father for his drinking."



Sarah, 5, and Kate O'Mahony, 3, Farranshane, with best-selling author Frank McCourt at his book-signing at Easons.

□ Picture: DERMOT LYNCH (LL)

"I blame certain priests for being anti-Christian but I'm not trying to take a stab at the Church."

Limerick's newest literary star did not accept suggestions made by some critics that he had exaggerated stories of poverty in the city.

He claimed these people had not seen his family's circumstances first-hand.

"If you are overly defensive about Limerick and Ireland, then you will be insulted by the book, but the critics either don't know how to read a book or they misread it," he said.

Mr McCourt also claimed that critics asking if he was going to share his new-found wealth with the poor was a "cheap shot".

"Do they share their wealth around?" he retorted.

Several Hollywood stars, including Mel Gibson and Pierce Brosnan, have expressed interest in making the book into a film, but no plans have been finalised as yet.

Mr McCourt has confirmed that a sequel to *Angela's Ashes* will be published sometime next year.

□ KATE O'Brien would approve wholeheartedly of the local controversy over *Angela's Ashes*, according to Ald Kemmy. He said Kate O'Brien had put Limerick on the international literary map and Frank McCourt is helping to keep it there.

"Limerick's most famous woman writer was largely overlooked by Limerick during her lifetime," he added. He called for this to be redressed, saying it was time her name was immortalised in the city by naming a street or public park after her.

It was suggested that the writer's birthplace, Mulgrave St, which was named after the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, could be renamed Kate O'Brien St, with the consent of the residents.

Kate O'Brien did not receive the Freedom of

Limerick during her lifetime, despite intensive lobbying on her behalf by Mrs Mary Hanley. Three mayors of the city declined to help in Mrs Hanley's campaign.

Her work attracted considerable controversy, and two of her novels, *The Land*

of Spices and *Mary Lavelle*, were banned. Political parties were not enthusiastic about the proposal to bestow the Freedom of Limerick on her as they did not look favourably on "her independence of mind, broad political outlook and her cosmopolitan lifestyle."

Ald Kemmy said.

He added that like Kate O'Brien, Frank McCourt has received international acclaim but has attracted harsh criticism closer to home.

Critics have said the book exaggerates stories of poverty and hardship in Limerick, and Rev Sean O Longaigh, Askeaton, complained that the book takes an unfair anti-Catholic stance.

However, the large turnout at a special reading and book signing this Thursday in Easons, where the author was once employed, showed that the book has been very popular with many Limerick people.

"Angela's Ashes changed my life," said Trina Hinchy, Hillcroft, "I never realised the extent of the poverty in Limerick. It was very personal for me as I once lived in the area where much of the story was set."

Peggy Carmody, St Joseph's St, described it as contagious reading, and Hazel O'Connor, Old Cork Road, said she loved the book and is looking forward to reading the sequel.



BABEHEART: Maud Carr-Limerick, is appearing in this festival.

Festival

SPECIAL traffic arrangements will be in operation in the city over the weekend to accommodate the city's medieval street festival.

According to the Gardai, on this Friday July 4 between 5pm and 9pm and on this Saturday between 1.30pm and 5pm

no traf into th Baalst being juncti Street toward traffic into the Bridge around

Hail the Hunts

By DYMPHNA BRACKEN

JOHN and Trudy Hunt, whose parents' collection of international art is one of the Limerick's proudest possessions, are this Friday evening being conferred with the Freedom of the City by Mayor Kieran O'Hanlon.

The unanimous decision of the City Council to grant the honour is in recognition of the part played by the brother and sister in ensuring that the collection was secured for the city where their parents had long associations.

John Hunt was born in Limerick in 1957. He and his wife Patricia and their children Jack, Paddy and Miriam now live in Dublin.

He has been closely involved with the Craggaunowen project since its was established by his parents in 1975.



Trudy and John. (LL)

Working initially as a guide, he then went on to further develop the site as one of the country's premier archaeology parks.

Trudy was born in Dublin in 1958 and currently lives in Sutton. She is a past pupil of Laurel Hill FCJ, Limerick.

She is on the Board of the Hunt Museums Trust and is a member of the Craggaunowen project executive.

John and Trudy always had a desire to fulfil their parents' ambitions for the Hunt collection and so subsequently become actively involved in the project to secure a permanent home for it.

John became a member of the board of directors of the Hunt museum Ltd which was established by the Hunt Museums Trust to convert the Custom House into a suitable home for the collection and to operate the Hunt Museum.

Trudy devoted herself to cataloguing the entire collection and also established the Hunt museum library which specialises in European medieval art books.

The purpose of the library is to act as a research resource for the museum.

Among the many important pieces in the collection is a coin revered since the Middle Ages as being one of the 30 pieces of silver.

There are also paintings by Renoir, Picasso and Yeats.

Little Dazzler meets Big Jim



Robert Noble of Littleover Dazzlers schoolboy soccer team from Derby, England, with Deputy Mayor Jim Kemmy at a reception at City Hall. Also included are David and Josephine O'Connor, Fairgreen, Sean O'Connor, Lynwood Park, Paddy and Marcella Owens, Glendale, Lifford Gardens, and Michael Noble, Derby and Limerick. The Dazzlers were here to play local clubs.

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