

LIMERICK LEADER

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Hundreds see unveiling of Frank McCourt bust as wife Ellen thanks Limerick for 'wonderful tribute'



Brothers Malachy, Michael and Alphie McCourt with the bronze bust of Frank at its unveiling this Thursday.

HUNDREDS of people attended the unveiling of a bust of the late Frank McCourt outside his former school on Hartstonge Street yesterday. His widow Ellen McCourt, who was diagnosed with breast cancer shortly after Frank's death, told the crowd: "I cannot thank you all enough for this wonderful tribute to Frank."

"I can't think of a more fitting place to have this bust reside," she said, noting that Frank's chosen profession was, after all, teaching.

People from the worlds of arts, culture, education and politics gathered outside Leamy's to witness the eagerly anticipated unveiling, including McCourt's literary agent Molly Friedrich, Deputy Willie O'Dea, model agent Celia Holman Lee, deputy Mayor Maria Byrne, former classmates Billy Campbell and Eric Lynch were in attendance at the unveiling.

Artist Una Heaton, whose family own the building, said "of all places to have it, I think Frank would be happy to have it here today." Sculptor Seamus Connolly worked on the bust for six weeks.

A museum in honour of Limerick's most famous author is also being planned.

Professor Don Barry, president of the University of Limerick, announced that a chair in creative writing will be established in his memory.

Bagpipes were played as the bust was unveiled by Ellen McCourt, who planted a kiss on the bust of her late husband.

"He's not wearing a tie," shouted Malachy McCourt, as it was uncovered.

Malachy McCourt, 78, who last visited Limerick some three and a half years ago, said it was great to be back.

"Limerick is making amends, Limerick is saying welcome and 'We're glad to see you'," said Mr McCourt.