

# THE HISTORIAN WHO GRACED BUNRATTY

TOM BROWNE  
in SHANNON



The late Mr. John Hunt speaking at the official opening of Phase 1 of the Craggaunowen Museum Project near Quin last June.

THE NOTED art historian, Mr. John Hunt, who has died aged 75 years, played a central role in the purchase and restoration of Bunratty Castle and in the establishment of the Craggaunowen Museum Project at Quin.

He was the son of John Hunt, of Co. Limerick, and Effie Jane Sherry, who came from near Newmarket-on-Fergus. He studied medicine, art, history and archaeology at U.C.C., graduating with a master of arts degree.

During his lifetime, Mr. Hunt was adviser to various important collectors and collections, and consultant on mediaeval and early Celtic art to Sotheby & Co., London.

He undertook mediaeval area excavations in the south of Ireland, and the most recent of his many published works on antiquities was his "Irish Mediaeval Figure Sculpture, 1200-1500", which was published in 1974.

Mr. Hunt was instrumental in persuading the late Lord Gort to purchase Bunratty Castle, and there arranged Lord Gort's collection of 16th and 17th century furniture and tapestries. Mr. Hunt was hon. curator of Bunratty Castle.

Later, when it became necessary to remove an old farmhouse to make way for a runway extension at Shannon Airport, Mr. Hunt had the cottage accurately reproduced close to Bunratty Castle and fitted the replica with his collection of traditional Irish cottage furnishings and farm implements.

This was the first unit of Bunratty Folk Park.

In 1965, Mr. Hunt purchased Craggaunowen Castle, where part of his vast collection of medieval and Celtic antiquities is housed.

In a tribute this week, Shannon Development's chairman, Mr. Brendan O'Regan, described Mr. Hunt as "a brilliantly imaginative man of great culture with an abiding love for Ireland and things Irish."

He added: "In all his contacts with me and Shannon Development over the years, John Hunt was motivated by a strong desire to do something of cultural significance for the country. I hope that in his final illness Mr. Hunt felt that his lifetime ambition to leave some significant sign of his love for Ireland had been fulfilled in the establishment of the Craggaunowen Project."

## 'Penny-pinching'

THE GOVERNMENT'S decision to abolish the rates relief of £17 per year allowable to farmers for employing male workers on their land has been described by Mr. Brendan Daly, T.D., during a visit here this week as penny-pinching in the meanest form.

Mr. Daly said that the

the secretary, Mr. Michael Hillery. The pool closed last October after a five months' run.

Spokesman for the sub-committee, Mr. Paddy Purcell, commented: "All school principals have been approached to co-operate in this worthwhile civic venture, to which all have gladly agreed. The sub-committee is confident that the funds can be raised within the community."

Mr. Purcell said that the pool had been completely paid for, but the running costs, at £1,000 in the summer and £1,500 in winter, were not being covered.

Other members of the sub-committee are: Mrs. Marie Murphy, Mrs. Lena Coughlan, Mr. Peter O'Neill and Mr. Ron O'Leary.

## Shannon ONE

RESOLUTIONS concerning the re-structuring of the national executive and financing of the area council have been tabled by the James Fitzmaurice Airport branch of O.N.E. for discussion at the southern area council meeting in Clonmel on February 15.

Secretary, Mr. Brendan Regan, tells me that there is a brisk demand for tickets for the branch's annual dinner in Ballykilty Manor on February 6, when "old soldiers" from all over Munster will attend.

At a recent branch meeting here, Mr. Matt Roche, chairman announced that a new branch had been launched in Corofin.

Shannon branch has enrolled three members from Birmingham: Mr. Denis Neenan, Mr. Peter McGlynn and Mr. Frank McKenna.

## New president

A FURTHER year of expansion has been planned by the new president of Shannon Junior Chamber, Mr. Dermot Walsh, press and public relations officer with Shannon Development, who took over office this week.

Mr. Walsh paid tribute to the outgoing president, Mr. Austin Collins, particularly for the manner in which he guided the Chamber's participation in the Expo exhibition.

Other officers: deputy president, Mae McLoughlin; vice-president, Austin Collins; secretary, Kay Dillon; treasurer, Pat Curran; council members, N. Ennis, Anne Bridgeman, Tom FitzGibbon, Pat Byrne, Ina Reddan, Bernard Dinneen and Coleman Garrihy.

## Pool campaign

A MASSIVE campaign to create a greater awareness of the swimming pool has been launched by a sub-committee elected to raise £6,000 for the coming season.

The move follows a meeting of the Pool Association when the "sorry plight" of the £71,000 pool was outlined by

# SPEED UP SCHOOL: CAHERDAVIN CALL

RESIDENTS in the Caherdavin area of Limerick have called on the Minister for Education to speed up the construction of the Moylish community school.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the Caherdavin branch of Fine Gael.

This is because it was pointed out, in the words of the proposer, Cllr. Con McGrath, that the delay in opening the school

was causing concern among the parents.

Cllr. McGrath said he was worried about the growing number of young children not attending school who should be doing so.

"These will grow up illiterate, destructive and cynical he pointed out," and will never be able to better their station in life"

# 50 local workers to lose their jobs

BY LEADER REF

## ABOUT FIFTY workers Pressed Steel plan to lose their jobs, it was disclosed

The union and management have worked out final details of the proposal which has cast a gloom across the back-

S.P.S. International, based in Jenkinstown, Pennsylvania, has headquarters at Jenkinstown, Pennsylvania.

It was one of the earliest companies to establish a plant in the early 1960s.

It manufactures precision fasteners and tools and some of the bolts and rivets made in the plant have been used in space ships and jet aircraft.

In recent years, however, the plant has been

# ADARE CONRADH THANK CITY

ADARE'S BRANCH of Adare Conradh na Gaeilge — the youngest in the county — had received a powerful impetus from Limerick city An Realt in its campaign to revive popular interest in our native dances, an tUasal Nollaig Ó hAirtneide, secretary of the Adare Conradh branch, said at An Réalt Luimnigh's annual dress dinner ceili at the Parkway Motor Inn.

An tUasal Ó hAirtneide, who headed a large party from Adare Conradh at the function, added that 60 local young céili enthusiasts were learning our native dances at weekly céili sessions in Adare conducted by a panel of céili teachers from Limerick City An Réalt: Máire Ní Thiarnaigh (president), Seán O Lochráin (vice-president), Paddy Benson, Máire Baker, Oliver and

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