

Chief lauds generosity



...president, Limerick Shannon Rotary Club (right), and (from ... past president; Dr. Colm Toland, secretary, Barrington's; Dr. ... y, surgeon, Barrington's, with the blood gas analyser.



...advantages of the new blood gas analyser (from left): Pat ... technology; Debbie O'Flynn, president, Ladies Guild; Ald. ... ll, chairman of Barrington's; and Anna Casey, Matron.

Our debt to Dan Doyle, RIP

AN APPRECIATION

ONLY PEOPLE who knew him well can appreciate Dan Doyle's contribution to the life of his adopted city and county. His interests were numerous and his dedication and involvement enormous.

He was our first county librarian and during 38 years in that position dozens of outlets for the library service were opened. He was the first librarian in Ireland, if not in these islands, to institute the lending of records. He oversaw the building of new branch libraries, notably and distinctively in Dromcollogher and Adare, and the adaption and refurbishing of a score of their buildings for library use. Before the word environment became a catch phrase, I remember his pride in the Adare building because of how well it fitted into its surroundings.

Theatre

His interest in the theatre was great. He was a member of the College Players and one of the first members of the Limerick Poetry Circle. It was through his good graces and the kindness of the county manager, the late P. J. Meghen, that the Poetry Circle was allowed to meet and rehearse in the basement of the Library headquarters at 71 O'Connell Street.

As an actor he played Tatters Jack in his fellow librarian's (the late Paddy Madden) verse play "Barebones" at the first Feile Luimni; Terisius, the Soothsayer, in Paddy's adaptation of Sophocles's "Antigone"; the friar in Yeats's "Land of Heart's Desire" and the gravedigger in "Hamlet".

In 1950 he was one of only two people from Ireland who attended a seminar on theatre in Salzburg. One of the lecturers there was Marcel Marceau, the now internationally celebrated mime artist. In those days Marceau was hardly known outside Fance.

When Marceau came to Dublin the following year it was typical of Dan that he should gather a few people he knew would be interested, Kitty Bredin and the late Tadgh O'Cheallaigh among them, and bring them to see the show at the Gaiety. A memorable meal later with Marceau was added for good measure. What he liked and admired he wanted to share with his friends.

It is, however, as an organiser and worker that we should appreciate him most. He was on the executive committee of Feile Luimni for many years. P. J.

Meghen was chairman and the indefatigable late Frank Lyddy, secretary. To this triumvirate of Limerick men, wherever their place of birth, the people of city and county, and indeed the country, owe a tremendous debt, because of their work for Muintir na Tire.

Many times I accompanied Dan to his lectures on various subjects to hear him adjudicate at drama festivals, to see him act as chairman in public speaking competitions and at what perhaps he probably enjoyed most of all, chairing the "County Brag" sessions at Muintir Rural Weeks, where the serious business of praising your own place was lightened with a song now and then.

There was no better person that he to keep the fun going on such occasions. "Johnny I Hardly Knew You", "A Little Beggerman" and "An Poch Ar Buille" were three of his most demanded contributions. He was so full of life and energy that his listeners became imbued with his enthusiasm. He loved meeting people and being involved with them.

It is as a friend I shall miss him most because of his interest, consideration and outlook on life. On several occasions in almost 40 years of friendship he said to me: "So far, I have had a full and interesting life. If God grants me x more years as full as those I have already lived, I'll be content and not ask for another five minutes."

Telephone

That was his view on life and when I received a telephone call after Christmas to say that he was very ill and probably would not recover, the call was at Dan's request, so that his friends in Limerick would not read the news of his death in the papers without prior warning. He died as he lived, content and considerate of others. Ar dheis laimh De go raibh se.

— A. O'L.

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