

SALE OF CHURCH STARTS A STORM

THE DECISION of Limerick County Council to dispose of the 100 year-old former Presbyterian church in Henry Street—it was sold at public auction on this Thursday for £148,000—was described this Friday by a former minister of the church as "an act of betrayal."

Though the new owners have not been named, it is understood they have strong connections with the entertainment and night club scene.

Rev. William Mills, who ministered in Henry Street from 1954-77, said that the 70-family Presbyterian community in Limerick were angered and saddened that the council did not keep to their original promise.

"As a gesture we sold it to them for a nominal sum in 1977 on the understanding that it would be used either as a library or community hall. We wanted the building preserved for the people of Limerick to enjoy and, since we had no further use for it, thought the County Council would utilise and care for it".

Now, he said, they had betrayed the trust shown in them.

Mr. Mills was backed up by the present Presbyterian Minister, Rev. Tony Davidson, who said that when negotiations were first conducted with the Council it was agreed that something appropriate would replace the church.

'Injustice'

"This decision hurts us deeply", he told the Limerick Leader this Friday.

When told that it had been sold in trust to a local solicitor at public auction, Mr. Mills said he felt an injustice had been done to Presbyterians.

"We gave it away for practically nothing at £30,000 when, had we put it up for sale, we could have realised a much better price," he said.

At the time, he recalled, a number of local businessmen, including a restaurant owner, made approaches to the church authorities to sell. "But we were not in it for a commercial killing and showed community spirit in giving the County Council first option at what we considered a give-away price," he added.

The intention was, he said, to relocate the library there.

He was annoyed that some time ago he was called to a meeting in the County County offices about the future of the building. "It was only a window dressing exercise and the impression given over dinner was that there were no immediate plans to do anything with it".

He accused the Council of not having come clean with them.

The Presbyterian community, he continued, would be keeping a watching brief on what the new owners had in mind.

"The building has great character and should be preserved...it would be a terrible shame if it was to be altered structurally," he commented.

The County Council, continued Mr. Mills, should have followed the example of their Clare counterparts.

Europe

"They bought our old church in Ennis and made it into a Library and Museum—at least they kept to their word", he said. He also felt that had the Council bothered they could have got money from the European Community to convert the church into a library or community hall.

"No, they have let us down and we are very disappointed with them," he concluded.

Meanwhile, County Council secretary, Mr. Ger Behan, defended their decision to sell the property.

"We have spent a lot of money on the church and had to recoup at least £100,000 to recover our losses," he said. He confirmed that the De-

Flanker comes to a head in private

By LEADER REPORTER

LIMERICK City Council were meeting in private this Friday afternoon to discuss "progress" on the provision of halting sites for travellers, amid renewed opposition to the new Flanker site for which a contractor is expected to be appointed within a week.

The site close to the existing Clonlong site is scheduled to cater for the extended O'Reilly family, now parked at the roundabout on the entrance to Children's Road.

Plans were prepared by the NBA and advertised for tender. Corporation housing



Standing firm this Friday: Cllr Bourke

officer, Mr Sean Moran, said that a contractor was expected to be appointed within a week. He added that the site was

agreed by the City Council. Councillor Jack Bourke, who insists that he had never agreed to another site at Clonlong, said: "It will be a brave city manager or housing officer who will beat Jack Bourke at a meeting."

"I am not an intransigent person but I want things done by agreement, and I don't think a contractor can be appointed to the site without the agreement of the city council".

Residents

Local residents continue to object to the siting of a second halt at Clonlong.

Mr Pat Cotter, proprietor of

Turn to page 2

Brid Quinn, chairperson, I.N.T.O., Limerick City Branch, presenting Greaney to John White, Plassey Avenue, Corbally — who had a representative for Limerick and Kerry district 13th on the I.N.T.O. Central Committee at the branch A.G.M. at Jury's Hotel this Thursday night. Also included Tom O'Sullivan, secretary.

Rape Crisis Centre anger

LIMERICK Rape Crisis Centre has bitterly criticised the Budget, angry at the allocation of £100,000 to the Rape Crisis Centre in Dublin and the complete ignorance of its own demands. Said administrator, Ms. Dorothy Morrissey: "It's unbelievable. We've done so much to make our point. It's the usual story of Dublin equals Ireland."

She added that the Limerick centre had a caseload similar, per capita, to that of Dublin. In the last 3 years it has treated 550 rape cases. It has no paid workers; the Dublin centre has 11, including a full-time PRO and fundraiser. "We are very badly underfunded, underfunded is an understatement," Ms. Morrissey concluded.

Radio 'first'

The Independent Radio and Television Commission has announced that the Limerick City and County local radio licence is one of seven which will be awarded first. The others are Dublin City and Co., Cork City and Co., Cork City, Cork North, Galway City and Co., Donegal North and Louth/Mean North.

Mayo failte

The annual general meeting of the Mayo People's Association, Limerick and Region, will be held at the Limerick Inn Hotel on Wednesday next at 9 p.m. New members will be especially welcome.

NOW WATER TURN-ON IN CITY COSTS £150

By PATRICIA FEEHILY

LIMERICK Corporation has got its own back on water rate defaulters who had reconnected themselves after their supplies had been officially turned off. After being disconnected a second time, they now have to pay a massive £150 fee before the taps will flow again.

Alderman Tim Leddin has described it as "outrageous" and says that at this rate some people will have to do without a basic requirement of a decent life—a water supply.

"It's the equivalent of a year's water charge," he pointed out.

But a Corporation spokesman said that the fee was to cover the cost of "bringing out a compressor and putting in a new stop cock".

Water charge defaulters who had been turned off generally had to pay £25 for reconnection, he said.

"But some people have availed of the services of a group who have reconnected their supplies. These are the people we have to disconnect again and in this case we have to charge £150 if they want a reconnection," he said.

He confirmed that a large number of householders had been disconnected in the past week.

Alderman Leddin claimed that the whole disconnection procedure was being done "with a great lack of finesse".

"Before any water supply is cut off," he said, "every effort should be made to explain the situation to the householder".



WEATHER

Rain and up to gale force winds were forecast in the Limerick region Friday evening. Cleco cooler weather will sweep from the west over with a risk of ground frost some areas. The full outlook, according to Met. Office at Shannon for the dry weather continue over the week with ground frost night.

Moonwalker

The Michael Jackson "Moonwalker" film a Carlton Cinema has general certificate and confined to over 18 advertised.

50,000 SATIN TO HALAN

Limerick gives 'thumbs down' to mixed Budget

By LEADER REPORTERS

IN A SNAP survey conducted by the Limerick Leader the people of Limerick have given the "thumbs down" to this week's "give and take" Budget.

JOHN CRONIN, Henry Street, machinist with SPS in Shannon: "I don't like the Budget and I don't like the politicians either. The hard-working man always gets hit with the pint and cigarettes. It's not the price of the pint itself — it's the taxation on it that's killing it. People will have to cut down on it, but they'll still have their odd pint. They shouldn't touch it at all in the next Budget. The tax concessions are ridiculous. I'm in the middle band. I got nothing at all."

CHRISTY DOHERTY, Garretown, also with SPS: "The price of the pint has gone beyond the beyonds. The publicans put it up last week and it's the Government this week. We're out all night working, all we have is a couple of pints. Don't forget the cigarettes! They've gone out of the working man's reach — the two of them are a luxury now. A packet of fags and two, ints is a liver. That's too steep altogether."

ROBERT BUTLER, Monaleen, property developer: "The reduction in mortgage relief is very bad. It will affect the sale of houses and that will affect me. It's a typical election Budget, they must be expecting to leave office shortly. There's nothing new in it, nothing."

PAT CHESSER, Monaleen, city auctioneer: "I don't think it will have much effect, it's a very easy Budget. Only Fin-



John Cronin (left) and Christy Doherty



They've dropped mortgage relief. That's OK, but if money gets more expensive there should be something in

the Finance Bill to cover it. I think it's bad that they put up social welfare payments. It's a discouragement to work. The money gap between working and staying on the dole is getting narrower. I think it's disgraceful."

AUSTIN MCCOY, James Street, unemployed: "It's a cat. 12% for the unemployed will only work out at about a fiver a week. It was a gesture, but what's 12% of £42? We're not getting the increase for months but the fags and liquor went up last night. If anything it'll make things worse. You can see the boats full with young Limerick people going to England again."

MICHAEL O'REILLY, Lenihan Avenue, Prospect, unemployed: "I'm married with three kids. The dole money is hard to live on. You're living from week to week, waiting for money. It won't do me any good, it's not going to help anybody. You're getting an extra few bob but everything's going up."

NICOLA SHANNON, 17, Clarecastle, student at High School Secretarial College: "It's a load of rubbish. That allowance for deserted husband — there was nothing about it when it was deserted women."

LORNA CONNOLLY, 17, Clarecastle, student at High School Secretarial College: "I never even listened to it."

IMELDA CLOONAN, Lisnagry, housewife:

"I don't think they gave very much to the poor, to those below the poverty line. And they didn't put enough on cigarettes and alcohol. People in very high income brackets, £40,000 or £50,000, should be taxed a bit more. I think

(Turn to page 2)

TB rumours quashed

Mid-Western Health Board community care director, Dr. James Kiely, in a statement this Wednesday said that "there is absolutely no foundation for rumours that TB is prevalent in any Limerick institution."

St. Camillus' Hospital has confirmed that one member of its domestic staff has contracted the disease, but Dr. Kiely says that its ongoing monitoring for infectious diseases has indicated that there is no noticeable incidence of TB "and there hasn't been for many years."

Limerick promotions

Two officers at Sarsfield Barracks, Limerick — Comdt Billy Fitzgerald and Comdt Eamonn Moriarty — have been promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, it was confirmed by the Army press Office in Dublin.

Another, Lt. Col. Bernie O'Donovan, at present a staff officer with Southern Command in Cork, is transferring to Limerick on promotion to full Colonel.

More city Gaelscoil?

The decision of Education Minister, Mary O'Rourke, T.D., to grant "provisional recognition" to the Southill Gaelscoil "should be encouragement to other communities to follow suit," according to Senator Tony Bromell. "I met with the Minister last week and saw her again on Wednesday and am glad that she has given this recognition," he said.

Extra few bob but everything going up!