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Prendergast slates city's developers

By JEROME O'CONNELL

A FORMER Mayor has denounced some of the city's builders and developers of snobbery and ignorance.

Frank Prendergast made his comments when giving a lecture as part of a Public Series in the City Library, entitled, Limerick's Placenames and Language.

Mr Prendergast denounced in trenchant terms the modern trend of some builders and developers to change very old street names. Cabbage Market and Chapel Lane he pointed out, are now known as Chapel Street.

He attributes this to snobbery and ignorance of the cultural and historic value of these names in sharp contrast to practice



Frank Prendergast

all over the cities of Europe where such names were deemed to be more important than some of the civic buildings.

The Irish Placenames Commission member was addressing 150 people, when stressing the antiquity of some of our local placenames.

The former Mayor also lamented the changing of placenames from another angle "sadly, it was a mat-

ter of regret that some other centuries old beautiful placenames such as Thomondgate, Glounagross, Ban Mor and Gouldavohr were being corrupted in pronunciation to Thoemondgate, Glengross, Bawnmore and Gouldavohr by people outside Limerick who had no knowledge of their meaning or significance".

Mr Prendergast did however have praise for more of the builders. He hopes that common sense will prevail and praised such local builders as John Whelan Ltd who adopted a suggestion that the estate on the Dublin Road at the University Roundabout should be named after its local ancient name, Curragh Birin. He said that he was "gratified to note that this had now been included in the recent Ordnance Survey Map of Limerick, thus extending and preserving an ancient placename for prosperity."

He said that Limerick did have wonderful examples in accord with the action of recent ministers for the environment, who had introduced a policy obliging all developers to name their projects in accordance with the history, heritage and tradition of the areas being developed.

There was also praise for Limerick Corporation, who he described as being as model for all other local authorities in Ireland with the bi-lingual system of street names. This was he said in keeping with the city's policy for nearly a century since it became the first city in Ireland to introduce street-names in Irish and English.

Concluding the lecture, Mr Prendergast said he hoped that "Limerick will long continue to preserve its unique heritage of rich, colourful, expressive language."