

# Success story of Limerick author Joy

By PATRICIA FEEHILY

LIMERICK-BORN journalist, Joy Martin, has gone a long way since the day when she cycled to Glenstal on her first assignment for the now defunct *Limerick Weekly Echo*.

She has just had her second historical novel published in hardback by Grafton Books, who have also published her first "A Wrong to Sweeten" in paperback.

Now, her pen is poised to produce "a novel a year", from her recently acquired residence on the shores of Lough Derg, near Scarriff.

The former Joy Greene, from Knockalisheen, her journalistic career took her from the Echo, to South Africa and Zambia and back again to the BBC, and she still works as a freelance journalist in London.

But for some time now, she and her husband John have been commuting nearly every week to their cruiser on Lough Derg, and now spend long periods in their new lakeside home.

Since the success of her first novel, based on her ancestral O'Briens of Thomond, she has been acclaimed as a fine epic writer. But her greatest strength, evident in her latest work, is her journalistic competence.

"The Moon is Red in April" isn't the "pure work of fiction" she modestly claims it is. Behind it is a background



Limerick-born novelist Joy Martin.

of tedious historical research, that has characters reacting to authentic events rather than creating them.

"But the romantic story *IS* pure fiction," Joy declares.

It is the story of an 18th century

entrepreneur, one of the "Wild Geese", who, wounded at the battle of Fontenoy, was given cognac to sustain him, sent some home to his father in Co. Cork, and thereby founded an empire.

So accurate is the military and business side of the story, that it has even passed the present head of the Hennessy empire, who read it as she wrote it. She arrived on their doorstep in Cognac unannounced, believing that a mutual friend had informed them of her coming.

"They had never heard of me," she recalls, but nevertheless they not only opened their hearts to her, but also their family records—they even gave her the recipes.

"It's so important to get it right," says the author, who then went home to invent the characters and weave a saga of romance around them, and an interesting saga it is.

This new voice in the world of romantic fiction has also opened a window on the country's past, and if it could be argued up to this, that it has been inhabited by the yuppies of yesteryear, then Joy Martin has an interesting book in the pipeline, based on the fate and fortunes of the offspring of an unscrupulous landlord of the 18th century and a local servant girl.

"The Moon is Red in April" by Joy Martin is published by Grafton Books at £12.95.

## 'Lying on the roadway'

John Dinan, Laurencetown, Kilfinane, was fined £2 at Kilmallock court for urinating in a public place. He was prosecuted by Garda D Moore.

He was also fined £25 for another occasion in which Garda D Holly found him lying on the roadway at Kilmallock, a danger to himself and to traffic.

## 'Car sold'

A £20 fine was imposed at Shanagolden court on Mary Kiely, Doonard, Tarbert for driving without tax. Justice Peter Smithwick was told that the defendant had not owned the car, that it had since been sold and that there had been no loss of revenue to the State.

# 'PRESSURE ON THE HOSPITAL SYSTEM'

By LEADER REPORTER

HEALTH BOARD cutbacks are beginning to bite deeply in local hospitals, and as more and more people join the queue for services, CEO, Mr Denis Doherty has admitted.

"We will be put to the pin of our collars to retain the beds we have. There is a lot of pressure on the system at the moment", Mr Doherty told the board, as medical representatives from all over the region conveyed the message that the hospitals are struggling to cope with admissions.

Councillor Patricia McCarthy said "The health services are disintegrating before our very

eyes."

## Patients

Dr Brian Lemass said that in Nenagh Hospital, with the staff they had they couldn't look after the patients properly, and sick people were finding it difficult to get into the hospital.

He was supported by Dr Maureen Carmody and Dr J. Hennigan.

Dr Tom Peirce, a consultant at the Regional Hospital, said that the situation was no different in the Regional Hospital — the hospital designated the "flagship" of the region.

The CEO hinted that the board's decision to retain three

acute hospitals within twenty miles of each other had put a strain on the board's economy.

"If you have to maintain three hospitals the pressures you are now experiencing will come," Mr Doherty said.

Councillor Michael Collins said that the retention of two general hospitals within twenty miles of Limerick "because of parochialism and politics" had left them in the position in which they had found themselves.

Councillor Collins said that the board had "a triplication of services."

Councillor McCarthy said: "We've been down that road before", pointing out that the closure of Barrington's hadn't resulted in any cash flow to the Regional.

Councillor Collins' attempt to dispel the "doom and gloom", was described by Councillor McCarthy as a "denial of reality."

Both Councillor McCarthy and Dr Hennigan criticised the CEO for allegedly putting forward the idea of closing a hospital, which they said had been taken up by

By LEAD

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