





National League Review
Page 11



Irish Peace Society in the Lebanon
Page 26



National Student Race Day
Page 1 & 28

INSIDE

Stables and Scholars Reopen

NEWS

Mitchell McLoughlin
Page 6

Europes new Constitution
Page 7

War on Iraq
Page 8

The Principality of Castletroy
Page 9

The Future of UL
Page 12

Entertainments
Page 16

CLUBS & SOCS

Clubs & Socs Event Guide
Page 18

Irish Peace Society
Page 26



The Stables and Scholars Club face an appeal on the 9th of April

by Paddy Buckley

The Stables and Scholars Clubs both received permission from the court to serve alcohol again last Thursday week, the 13th of February, after being unable to serve alcohol to their members since the preceding Friday. This followed an application for clemency made by Pat Barriscale,

the solicitor representing the Stables and Scholars Club. Mr Barriscale appeared before Judge Moran of the Circuit Court, and asked that the Clubs be given leave to serve alcohol until such time as the appeal against Judge O'Reilly decision could be heard in the Circuit Court.

Citing precedent, Mr Bariscale pointed out to the Judge that if a pub

had its licence application refused, then the pub would be allowed to continue selling alcohol until such time as the appeal was heard. Mr Barriscale informed the Judge of the serious implications of the ruling, particularly with regard to job losses. The Judge accepted this argument and granted both the Stables and Scholars clubs leave to sell alcohol.

continued on page 6

Student Race Day a Great Success

by Anthony Kilpatrick

"Don't bother your arse looking at that race form boy. Just put your money on that yoke there boy. She has the grandest pair of legs I've ever seen boy! Where are the jacks boy? I'm dying for a slash now boy!!" (A very experienced U.L student race goer informs his Cork buddy on what horse to bet on within the parade ring last Wednesday!!)

The Student race day took place on Wednesday last at the Greenmount racecourse in Patrickswell. Thousands were expected from Colleges throughout the country to the event, which was unfortunately

cancelled last year due to bad weather. This year once again the weather appeared to be heading in a cloudy and wet direction. This didn't hamper the spirits of the people that were at the picturesque setting in Patrickswell however, all of who seemed to be having a great time altogether. I managed to catch up with some of our Erasmus student's also on the day, and they were in love with every minute of the day in question: Camera's were flashing on a rather excessive basis from the French lads I must admit though!!

Prior to last Wednesday, I had never actually travelled to a horse race

continued on backpage

**ATTENTION
ALL
STUDENTS**

If you have not already applied for membership of the Stables & Scholars club, please vist

www.ulsu.ul.ie/club

and do so as soon as possible.

**Win!!
50 Euro**

An Focal is offering a 50 Euro prize for the best article in each edition. Email submissions to:

sucommunication@ul.ie

**LAST WEEKS WINNER
Jody Clake for
"Goodby to the Smartie Man"**

President - Eoin Ó Broin

Well Well Well,

For the second time in a fortnight the siucra has hit the fan. This time it's internal issues within the Union. The order of business at class reps council on Tuesday night was suspended to deal with the problems highlighted by equality officer Patrick McHugh's officers report. More about this later.

Exam results were delayed by 3 days last week due to problems faculty staff had with data being furnished to them by SIGMA, the new student record system employed by student services. Faculty couldn't look at the average class QCA to analyse overall class competency with the module being examined. The data was eventually forthcoming though a few days late. This is another of the litany of problems that have been associated with the changeover from SRAS to SIGMA. The University has to turn its focus on Student Welfare on Campus as much as it does on the fabulous new buildings that are in store for us to stop problems such as this continuously arising. Student Services (including grant processing), the Co-OP office, the Medical Centre, the Accommodation Office and Student Personal Services are some of the areas that comprise the welfare services for students here. Unfortunately UL does not lead the way in the provision of these services. UL has always been at its best when it is the best, be it in the courses it offers, the facilities or its Co-op. If UL drops the ball on this issue it will tell in the satisfaction levels that students from here pass on to others.

Another issue UL has to give serious attention to is its PR policy. With the adverse publicity Limerick has got in the press over the last few weeks

and with this being further compounded by the issue of the on campus clubs being closed the word is that numbers entering UL next year may be down. While UL has a good team under Dr. Seán Reidy visiting 5th and 6th year students in the counties around Limerick and encouraging them to go mid-west, this is not enough to counteract the negative publicity that has been generated about the region in the media. What UL and the other Limerick colleges have to do is go on the offensive with the mainstream media and with the Limerick Leader to highlight the good reasons to study here. Allegedly it is in the Limerick Leader where the mainstream media first picks up a lot of the negative stories. Now I know we can all tell our siblings and their friends that UL is the best place to study for lots of reasons though we need the support of the University through proactive media work to back this up.

Class Reps Council on last Tuesday night brought the SU Exec. under the microscope. The reps wanted to know what was going on? Why did Mr. McHugh want to resign? So what of the SU Exec?

In my opinion the Students' Union executive should be a think tank for implementing the ideas brought to the Union by class reps. There should be a diverse range of personalities and ideas due to there being 13 people around the table representing such diverse constituencies and portfolios as clubs, societies, equality on campus, community relations off campus, student teachers issues and first years issues. These diverse ideas and opinions can be jelled by good facilitation & chairing to arrive at exec. positions and consensus on issues. Unfortunately this has not been happening as well as it could be



this year. Campaigns have been supported by some and not others. Tactics for dealing with certain issues that have arisen have led to serious differences of opinion that have coloured co-operation on other issues. Certain officers have not felt that support is forthcoming from the exec. for their own agendas.

It's not all doom and gloom though. Yes officers have resigned but officers have resigned before too. In fact in my opinion all of the part time officers have already done as much if not more than their counterparts did in other years. There is plenty of proposals, campaigns and events still to come. To address the problems outlined above the exec has organised a series of team building training sessions and exercises. The first one was held last Wednesday. It involved the exec. piecing together a Group Contract/Charter - a set of rules and guidelines to go on for the exec. to refer to to ensure respect, empathy and support for the diverse opinions.

At other informal exec. discussions it has more or less been agreed that additional training is necessary, a set of policies and job descriptions for exec is needed and that it was best to

concentrate on one or two issues for the rest of the semester, namely student services and the anti fees campaign. If anyone wants clarification on any of these issues or to see if the exec. have put their differences aside I suggest attending Class Reps Council on March 4th. I have no doubt that this will happen as we have to many common areas to work on to allow this to happen. The squabblings of a few individuals should not affect the professionalism of the Union towards the thousands of students they represent.

Congratulations to UL Rugby Club for winning the annual College colours match with LIT. The level of skill shown at the match was impressive. Congrats too, to UL Kayak club for hosting the intervarsities this year with a good variety of events for the participant and spectator and lastly congrats to UL Racing Society for hosting their own version of an intervarsity the student Race Day held last Wednesday. By all accounts there was a huge turnout from all over the country. At least 300 students from UL alone! Possible the biggest intervarsity ever? Brilliant!

Slán,
Eoin

Welfare/Deputy President - Gráinne Heffron

Dia Dhaibh

The last two weeks have been eventful to say the least, dry bars, court visits, late results, and resignations. There have been three resignations tendered by part time officers on the students union executive for various reasons. It seems that things in the Students' Union have reached some sort of turning point. As an executive we have met since Class Reps Council and tried to iron out some of our difficulties, which are due in the main to preconceptions, a lack of trust and sometimes diametrically opposing viewpoints. This year most of the executive were friends or had been involved in the union previously and in my opinion this led to people thinking that votes were being taken on block but the truth is that there happened to be a majority of people on exec with similar opinions, not on every issue but on a number of issues.

I will admit that I have been to blame

for some of the problems, not making enough of an effort to overcome my own prejudices. I think that there is an idea in Class Reps that the union is in meltdown and I don't believe this to be the case. I think that although there are differences people are willing to put these aside for the greater good. We only have a few months left and a number of things to achieve. We need to stop the bitching and the backbiting and get down to business.

I would like to address people who were at Class Reps the other night or people who are thinking of running for Students Union positions this year. Don't be discouraged by what you heard. Every union has a political element and differing opinions, which in itself is a healthy thing. It is when these things are allowed to fester and get out of control that things begin to unravel. Elements of my position as welfare officer are extremely satisfying but the politics can get you down. Therein lies the challenge. As your elected welfare officer I will do



all in my power to overcome my prejudices and serve you the students. I ask that every other member of the executive do the same without compromising their own integrity.

Slán go foill
Gráinne

Education - Margaret Ryan

I know that most of you don't know me personally, so you're not used to my idiosyncratic views on everything. One of the things that I strongly believe is that all public representatives (and I'm carefully avoiding the word politician here, because of its pejorative associations) should be decent and honourable people. My greatest wish is that the level of public service (if sometimes not exactly the sentiments) espoused by The West Wing would become the reality of realpolitik today.


I want all politicians to be honourable and true to the people that elected them. Sometimes there is a huge conflict of interest between the two though, and that's where the really interesting things happen. Across this world today, there are people who are truly doing what they believe to be right; whether we agree with them or not is another issue. Such people

as Dana Rosemary Scallon, who speaks out on issues such as divorce and a woman's right to choose, no matter what will be written in the media about her. Tony Benn, who is not known for changing his position on contentious issues, and who renounced a peerage so he could sit in the House Of Commons. Nelson Mandela for his stance against apartheid in South Africa. Mahatma Ghandi for his stance on Indian Independence. Steve Biko, again in South Africa, and again for anti-apartheid stances. There aren't too many more examples in modern-day politics.

The next thing I would love is that parties represent the views of their members, and act on those views, rather than paying advisers to think up policies. If you want to know how to get elected, ask your members. They are the people who will primarily vote for you. More



importantly, they are the people who will canvass for you and persuade other people to vote for you. You wouldn't have a Leinster House address only for the efforts of these people. I am sure that you have heard rumours about tensions in the Students' Union. At last Tuesday's



Scholars CLUB

UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK
TEL: 061 330190
FAX: 061330710
EMAIL: info@scholarsclub.ie
WEB: www.scholarsclub.ie

Breakfasts 9am to 11.30am
Lunches 12 noon to 4pm
Evening Meals 5pm to

WEEK 3

MON PREMIERSHIP FOOTBALL

TUES HIP HOP, R & B AND REGGAE!!
DJ CONOR CRONIN (THE MARKET), 8PM
MURPHYS COMEDY CLUB
DANNY BHOY. DOORS 9PM


WEDS
DJ JAMES KAVANAGH (BUNKER 4)
HOUSE MUSIC FROM 8PM

THURS
“ESCAPADE” LIVE
DJ JOHN KELLY 8PM IN THE BAR

FRI DJ KEITH PIGOTT, 7PM
INDIE & STUDENT ANTHEMS !!
COMPLIMENTARY FINGER FOOD
HAPPY HOUR 5 - 7PM

SUN BREAKFAST BRUNCH 12 – 4PM
CHILL OUT WITH COMFY COUCHES, CANDLES, FREE SUNDAY NEWSPAPERS !!
AN PHLUAIS AVAILABLE FOR 21ST BIRTHDAY PARTIES, TABLE QUIZES & CLASS PARTIES

Did you know that you can book 'An Phluais' free of charge?
www.scholarsclub.ie



DOLAN'S WAREHOUSE

Every Thursday

Soul Clinic
@
Dolans Warehouse

Doors @ 12am Tickets: €10 Students: €9

Tickets available in advance from Dolan's Pub, 3/4 Dock Road, Limerick
061-314483 / info@dolanspub.com / www.dolanspub.com

Class Reps meeting, the Equality Officer, Mr Patrick McHugh resigned, citing a threat of block voting and pressure of work as two of his reasons. This threat was made by a Sabbatical Officer. Patrick had the good grace not to name names. Well, as I'm sure you've guessed by now, that officer was me. While I don't take

all the blame for this rift, I do accept that part of it is my fault.

Let me state now that I do not believe that block voting has ever taken place in this Students' Union. I am heartily sorry that I been part of the cause of the current rift in the Exec. This organisation has given me much

more than I have ever given it. The damage I have done, we are working on through team-building exercises, and I think we are making progress.

Communications - Paddy Buckley

We got lucky last week. I was in the courtroom when Pat Barriscale made his appeal, to allow the Stables and Scholars Club to sell alcohol until such time as the appeal against the District Court decision can be heard. And I wasn't hopeful. To be honest, this day has been coming for a long time. As long as objections are being mounted to the renewal of the licences, then it was always likely that someday the rules of the Clubs would be put under the microscope. The Students' Union has been pointing it out for the last 3 years. The ID cards that were produced 2 years ago were an attempt to plug the very hole that lead to Judge O'Reilly ruling.

But, Judge Moran gave the Clubs leave to serve (with conditions), and so the immediate concern of having no Clubs on campus for the semester was averted. There is still a lot of work to be done though. The immediate priority must be getting the rules in order, so that we are in a position to win the appeal. Everyone on the Management Committees of both clubs is focussed on that at this stage, and in fairness a lot of good work is being done.

However, it will mean some inconveniences for everyone. At the moment, I'm asking everyone to visit www.ulsu.ul.ie/clubs

and apply to be members of the Clubs. In the long run, we are going to have to look at introducing a separate ID Cards for the Clubs, to prove membership. I know things like this, and signing in your friends, etc are a hassle, but we are stuck with them for the moment. We are looking at ways at other ways of solving the problems with the rules, but they'll all take time.

Congrats to the Radio Soc and Peter Burrows for getting the televisions in the SU and the canteen back up and running. I gave Peter some help with this, but in fairness, he has pushed it most of the way and deserves the credit for it. We parted ways with Wired FM this year, but I hope the new system will allow the Radio Soc to get back on its feet. As well as that, the provision of a visual service, as is provided by the TV's will hopefully be a great benefit to everyone.

Finally, onto the whole Class Reps meeting of last week. First of all, there have been disputes in the Students' Union this year. No one



person is to blame, and no one person is faultless. The thing is, there always are, at least in my experience of situations like this. Maybe they are worse this year and maybe they're not. There have been plenty of fights in the Students' Union down through the years, the difference is this one was brought into the open. Either way, we're sorting it out, through teambuilding, which should have been done a lot earlier in the year in fairness. I will say this much, while

the disputes might have affected the teamwork, I don't think it affected people's jobs. As far as I'm concerned everyone in the Students' Union did their job this year, as well as if not better than most years. We're here to do the particular job we were elected to do, and to represent students.

Small Ads

Looking for a house?
Looking for a housemate?
Want to sell something?
Want to buy something?

For inclusion in the An Focal small ads section, Email submissions (Max 30 words) & contact details to sucommunication@ul.ie

WANNA WRITE?

Articles, Questions, Comments, Queries & Theories to

sucommunication@ul.ie

Dear Editor,

I write to you today, demanding a retraction of an article written by a one Ruth Bagnall in the last issue of your publication 'An Focal'.

I found the article 'Sex UL' to be very much inappropriate, and against the Students' Union policies regarding the advertising of our clubs and societies here on campus.

Without even reading the text of the specific article in question, we can already witness an extremely graphic and obscene representation of what audience this society is being aimed at. For starters, the headline 'Sex UL' is a tad extreme for not only the title of an article in a newspaper, but also for the entire society in general. I'm opposed to this particular name being used with the families of prospective new students in mind. I say this because if this society is recognised officially by the Students' Union, that means the name 'Sex UL' shall be placed amongst the other clubs and societies names in not only the new academic diary in September, but also the ULSU website. I feel that if parents of new students' view a society by the name proposed by Ms. Bagnall, it will automatically give the wrong impression about our student life here at the University.

Moving on from the unjust headline, we next have a photograph that wouldn't even be included on one of the Page three tabloids. Both a man and a woman 'groping' each other if you will, once again portrays the intent behind the society in question. And again may I point out that if a parent who might happen to be reading An Focal, views a grotesque picture such as the one used, I would imagine their opinion of the University would decline somewhat.

Without even touching the literature of the article, I have provided quite enough evidence to accompany my claim that Ms. Bagnall's piece be retracted. But I shall continue regardless.

" Perhaps it's time you reconsidered your scoring technique. Sex UL is an up and coming society..."

" Man-trapping (a sport enjoyed by hundreds of women) is just not as fun as it used to be... How else is a girl supposed to score? ... Sex UL is here to solve your problems"

These are two quotations I have chosen to demonstrate just what 'Sex UL' has set on its hectic agenda: aiding you with the task of "scoring", "scoring" and you guessed it "scoring". And another point I would like to make; this society is aimed at people between " 9 and 90" as stated in the article. Why is Ms. Bagnall aiming a society sexually orientated to 9 year olds? And also, why is she aiming a club that has weekly meetings over "a glass of wine" to 9 year olds? Surely this alone deserves not only a retraction, but also a block on such a society being set-up.

Well if my opinion is overlooked in this matter, and the society Sex UL is established, events its members can look forward to include 'Scoring at the 35's' and 'Pulling with clubs'. Fantastic way to portray our top European University don't you think?

I realise that I may be criticised for writing a letter on such a delicate matter, especially as a student here at the University of Limerick, but I am merely viewing the situation from the University's point of view. I thank-you for taking the time to read this, and would like to offer my gratitude to a Mr. Patrick Buckley for providing me the window to publicly express my views on this matter.

Yours faithfully,
Anthony Kilpatrick.

Dear Sir,
Unfortunately I noticed an error in an article that I had written for An Focal, Week 1, Semester 2, 2003. The article was entitled Sex UL. In the fourth paragraph the article read, "The society is open to all mean and women, 9 to 90," whereas, in fact, I had meant it to read "The society is open to all mean and women, 19 to 90," I do apologise for any hurt or anguish this mistake of mine may have caused.

Also, I would like to correct the spelling of my own name!

Yours truly,
Ruth Bagnell.



GRANT INFORMATIO

ARE YOU RECEIVING AN ORDINARY MAINTENANCE GRANT FROM YOUR LOCAL COUNTY COUNCIL / CITY COUNCIL??

IF YOUR INCOME (MATURE STUDENTS) OR YOUR PARENTS INCOME IS NOT MORE THAN €9,190 FOR THE TAX YEAR 6TH APRIL - 31ST DECEMBER 2001

AND

THIS INCOME INCLUDES A SPECIFIED SOCIAL WELFARE / HEALTH BOARD PAYMENT, YOU MAY BE ENTITLED TO A TOP-UP GRANT ON YOUR ORDINARY GRANT OF €1,490

CALL IN TO GRÁINNE IN WELFARE OFFICE IN THE STUDENTS' UNION FOR MORE DETAILS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE



UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK
STUDENTS' UNION

SECOND HAND BOOKSHOP

STUDENTS UNION RECEPTION
STUDENTS CENTER
11 - 5 DAILY

BUY AND SELL ACADEMIC BOOKS
FOR THE NEW SEMESTER

CONTACT STUDENTS' UNION RECEPTION FOR
MORE INFORMATION

Closure of the Stables and Scholars

continued from frontpage

In granting the temporary reprieve, the judge specified two conditions upon the Clubs. The judge directed that the Clubs were not to seek or be granted any extension. The second was that the Clubs were to comply fully with the licencing laws until such time as the appeal could be heard. He said that a breach of either of these conditions would have the gravest implications for the appeal.

While the decision was undoubtedly welcomed by most students in the University of Limerick, it is only the first in a long step of legal precedings which must be followed before the Clubs can regain their licenses. The next step is the actual appeal itself, which is scheduled to be heard on the 9th of April. This appeal will essentially be a rerun of the original hearing in the District Court. Should the Stables and Scholars fail to be granted their licenses at this hearing then both Clubs must face the possibility of immediate closure for a

very long time.

The major grounds upon which Judge O'Reilly based his ruling on was the nomination procedures used by both pubs. In previous court cases, the procedures used to induct new members have met with the favor of the court, however Judge O'Reilly pointed out that this procedure was in violation of the Clubs rules. The Management Committees of both the Stables and Scholars Clubs have taken immediate steps to rectify this

situation. In particular, the Management Committee would like to ask all students to visit the website www.ulsu.ul.ie/clubs/register.html as soon as possible and apply to become members of the Stables and Scholars Club. This is the first in a series of measures being undertaken in order to prepare for the appeal on the 9th of April, and the Committees would appeal to every student to co-operate as much as possible, so that the future of the Clubs will be safeguarded.

Interview with Mitchell McLoughlin

by Donal O Driscoll

Mitchell McLoughlin, Chairman of Sinn Féin, recently made time in his already busy schedule to talk to students of UL. The talk took place on the Wednesday of week 2. The proceedings were chaired by the head of Ógra Sinn Féin in Limerick, who introduced Mr McLoughlin. UL Sinn Féin chairman, Donal Dennison was also present. A reasonable sized crowd was in attendance as Mr McLoughlin spoke on the problems facing the peace process, from a Republican perspective. Mr McLoughlin introduced the subject by outlining the problems faced by nationalists and republicans, throughout the six counties, during the history of the state. He spoke of what he saw as unionist insecurity about their position within Northern Ireland. He then proceeded to speak about the unionists' difficulties in

implementing the Good Friday Agreement, which he later described as the "only show in town".

Mr McLoughlin emphasised the growth of Sinn Fein in both the north and south, and spoke of what he believed to be the attempt by the establishments both in Britain and Ireland, to stomp this growth. He said how he understood unionist grievances, but that they had to co-operate fully in order to create stability.

A lively questions and answers session ensued, where it became clear that critics, as well as supporters of the Sinn Féin position, were in attendance. The first question asked regarded an earlier statement in which Mr McLoughlin spoke of the 'so called democracy' in the republic. The questioner believing that Sinn Féin were not in a position to critique democracy. The

Sinn Féin chairman responded by talking about the inherent corruption evident in Irish political life for long periods. He emphasised that he did not believe all politicians were automatically corrupt, he also spoke of Sinn Féin's role as a party of the radical left, in the Irish political scene.

When asked about whether or not he



Mitchell McLoughlin

saw any way of counter-acting the anti-republican media, which had gone unchallenged since the sale of the Ireland on Sunday to the mail group, Mr McLoughlin seemed pessimistic about the possibility of such a move. He described the Irish media as 'very right-wing'. He did acknowledge the nationalist sentiment of the old Ireland on Sunday and said there was promise in the Sunday Business Post, which at times he said, uniquely combined Irish business news with good political analysis. He stated that he did not know if anyone would challenge the status quo in the media.

One speaker asked a number of questions, ranging from the socio-economic implications of Irish unity, to the changing face of republicanism since the time of Wolfe Tone. Mr McLoughlin responded by saying that economists have backed up republican claims that the Irish state would be more viable as a single economic unit. He also spoke of understandable unionist fears about a united Ireland. On a later question by a different person linking the issue of a United Ireland to a possible merger with the PUP at some stage post unity, Mr McLoughlin agreed that unity could occur very quickly but that it was better to wait a while longer if that meant unionism could be made more comfortable with the idea. He described the PUP as a radical party, and spoke of the good co-operation between the two parties, but said only time would tell if such close co-operation could occur in a united Ireland, a situation, he emphasised, that the PUP as Unionists would not desire. Back to the issue of Wolfe Tone, he rejected any suggestion that modern republicans were less republican than Wolfe Tone had been "Wolfe Tone also engaged in armed struggle" he stated. Proceedings then drew to a close and the Sinn Féin chairman was thanked for taking time out to speak to the college.

Noel Dempsey in Limerick

by Eoin O'Broin

Minister for Education Noel Dempsey is in Limerick tonight Monday 24th on the latest leg of his road show meetings relating to teachers issues. His engagement is in the South Court Hotel at 7:30pm. This is another opportunity for students to let the Minister know their opinion on tuition fees. So far this year UL students have protested when Síle De Valera Minister for State at the Dept. of Education came on campus to open Drumroe Village, when Taoiseach Bertie Ahern came to Limerick to open HOMEBASE, at the March for free Education in Limerick in October and at the National Anti-Fees Demonstration in Dublin. By meeting Dempsey when he arrives in Limerick students will have told all concerned parties about their feelings on the issue.

Fees are not the only issue students have with Minister Dempsey and the Dept. of Education. How many

schools around Limerick have not been upgraded due to the cuts? Mary Immaculate Students' Union say that their college has not received sufficient capital for renovations for years. Our own student teachers have long sought grants for materials and for the cost of their accomodation while on teaching practise. Even if the Minister has no



Noel Dempsey

money for these things he should be actively seeking it from the Dept. of Finance rather than accepting the cutbacks that are across all sectors. Education should be a priority. If it isn't, Ireland is in trouble.

The latest tactic in the anti fees campaign from the 4 Limerick colleges, UL, LIT, Mary I and LSAD is to lobby the government backbenchers and Ministers to support the cause. Students are encouraged to do this by writing to their local Fianna Fáil or Progressive Democrat T.D.'s backbenchers using the letters and envelopes provided by the Students Union. The jist of the argument is that third level students should not be billed for the shortfall in funding at first and second level. This funding should come from the collection of tax by the Department of Finance. Make sure to get a letter written next week at one of the stands around campus.

Constitution of Europe

Forum on Europe at the University of Limerick

by Elaine Byrne

Sounds like a bit of a mouth full? Well it is! Brief run down. For all of you who were passionately pro-Nice, passionately anti-Nice and passionately I couldn't give a f**k about Nice, well folks this is bigger than Nice, much bigger, and it will hit us like a John Kelly try in the dying minutes of a Munster V Gloucester game in Thomond park. In other words, we won't know what's happening because it will have happened so fast... It has happened already.

Haven't a clue about it? Here goes. Bear with me through the technicalities of membership, there's some interesting news at the end which directly concerns UL.

The 'Convention on the Future of Europe' is currently sitting in Brussels. The Convention was established at the European Council 2001 Laeken meeting. It was set up to answer three basic questions: How can the EU be brought closer to its citizens, how can it become more effective and efficient, and how can it play a more positive role in the wider world? Essentially, it's an attempt to make the rules about how to make the rules. Follow? Its purpose is to determine what direction the EU will take and an attempt to propose a new framework and structure for the EU. In other words a draft constitutional Treaty on the way in which Europe is to be governed in the future. This draft constitutional treaty will then be brought to an Inter-Governmental Conference (IGC) for discussion, negotiation and

Europe (Council), frightens me to be honest, in fact, the thoughts of him as Taoiseach of Ireland frightens me. I obviously have too much time on my hands to think about all this. But anyway, given that Nice has facilitated for the enlargement of the EU to 25 and that each country (currently) holds the presidency for a rotating six-month term, if the current rules are maintained, the next Irish presidency after 2004 will be in 2016. But that might all change, everything is currently on the table at the Convention. Greece currently holds the EU Presidency.

Given the timing, it potentially will be an eventful period for Ireland, a Referendum and a Presidency. And not just any old referendum.... A Constitution for Europe. It looks as if Ireland won't have to go it alone this time with a referendum, other countries are also giving it consideration.

The Praesidium is a very influential body, in that it chairs the working groups and determines the agenda. The 'Praesidium' consists of eleven individuals, the Convention Chairman and Vice-Chairmen and nine members drawn from the Convention: The representatives of

all the governments holding the Presidency of the Union during the Convention (Spain, Denmark and Greece), two national parliament representatives, two European Parliament representatives and two Commission representatives. John Bruton, Fine Gael, Former



The Plenary Session of the European Convention

ratification. A European Constitution.

Now do you follow! Ireland will be hosting the EU Presidency in early 2004. The last time we held the presidency was in 1996 with the then Taoiseach John Bruton at the helm. The thoughts of our current incumbent Taoiseach as President of

Taoiseach, is the representative from the national parliaments throughout Europe and the Chair of the critical Working Group on Justice and Home Affairs.

Ok, so that's what the Convention is about and its structure. The documents from the working groups

Membership of the Convention of Europe

15 representatives of the Heads of State or Government of the Member States (one from each Member State),

13 representatives of the Heads of State or Government of the candidate States (1 per candidate State),

30 representatives of the national parliaments of the Member States (two from each Member State),

26 representatives of the national parliaments of the candidate States (two from each candidate State),

16 members of the European Parliament,

2 representatives of the European Commission.

Convention Chair and Two Vice Chair, appointed by the European Council

The Irish representatives are (alternates in brackets): Minister for European Affairs, Dick Roche, (Bobby McDonagh) John Bruton TD FG, Proinsias De Rossa MEP Labour, (Pat Carey TD FF, John Gormley TD Greens) (John Cushnahan MEP FG) (Secretary General of the Commission David O'Sullivan)

can be accessed on: <http://european-convention.eu.int/> proposals on the table:

Now to the Forum on Europe, what I'm on. Initially, the Forum was set up by the Government to debate the Nice Treaty. If that wasn't fun enough, they decided to maintain the Forum to debate the Convention on the Future of Europe. Representatives from all the political parties (and independents) sit at the Forum, as do the 'special pillar' which includes various NGO's and bodies concerned with Europe. Senator Maurice Hayes is the chair. Meetings are normally held in Dublin Castle and are open to the public. There are several regional meetings in the next few months focusing on an overview of the Convention. Longford, February 3rd; Wicklow Town, February 17th; Kerry, March 10th and the University of Limerick, March 24th!

See I told you to bear with me! At the University of Limerick meeting, Senator Maurice Hayes will again be the chair. There will be several keynote speakers and a showing of a 15 minute Forum on Europe video on the Convention. Contributors will be from the floor with representatives of the various political parties who are members of the Forum and representatives from groups in the Forum's Special Observer Pillar. Information of the Forum can be accessed on: <http://www.forumoneurope.ie>

Ok, I guess because my Undergrad was in politics and my Masters is in politics, I find all this mildly stimulating so I'll make allowances for those of you who not so inspired. To wet your appetites, some of the

- 2 EU Presidents. Commission president elected by the parliament and a long-term council president elected by the member states / President of the Commission be elected by the people of Europe

- Tax harmonisation

- Legally binding Charter of Fundamental Rights

- Extension of qualified majority voting

- Harmonisation of EU criminal law

- Changes in the current balance of power within the institutions

Apologies for the glib way in which I have presented this, it's an attempt to simplify the methodology of the Convention and Forum. We have not yet even begun to appreciate the significance and impending consequences of the Convention. The Chair of the Forum, Senator Maurice Hayes has acknowledged this: 'Senator Hayes told a session of the Forum in Dublin Castle today that the Convention was addressing many of the issues of fundamental concern to the Irish people. "The time for us to have an input into the debate is now", he said.' (Press Release 14th November 2002)

Things are moving so fast that we can only watch John Kelly's try on video in slow motion... After it's happened.

War on Iraq

by Bernadette Sexton

The war on Iraq will occur, with or without NATO or UN backing. A 'coalition of the willing' is how George W. Bush terms the group that plan on eliminating the latest scourge on our society - Saddam Hussein. The ostensible aim of the upcoming war in Iraq is to take out Hussein, and in the process cancel state sponsored terrorism. If we were serious about tackling terrorism however, should we not be tackling the issue in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, two of the greatest supporters of global terrorism? Have we conveniently forgotten that the majority of the hijackers of the planes on September 11th were of Saudi origin, or is it that we are conveniently remembering that Saudi is the world's largest producer of oil. At the same time, in that great haven for democracy that is Pakistan, the fact that they funded the Taliban and are directly culpable for their rise does not seem to be en vogue to mention at present.

The entire Middle East is analogous to a jigsaw puzzle. Each piece needs to fit nicely to present an overall coherent picture. If one fails to account for all pieces, the entire picture is disjointed and ruined. This is the scenario at present to be found in Iraq and throughout the entire region. Ripple effects occur. Without a doubt, each Arab nation in the Middle East, and many western citizens are convinced that the true aim of the war is to gain control of the enormous oil reserves the country possesses, which is the second largest in the world. Parallel to this, what many people fear is that the underlying aim of the American attack is to redraw the boundaries of the region to suit their own geo-strategic needs.

When Americans speak about the need to cancel terrorism they fail to address the causal factor of most terror activities. It is only by seriously addressing the Palestinian issue that the Americans and the west can hope for an elimination of these attacks. Terrorism in any name or form is despicable. Equal to this, refugees living in squalid conditions in camps spotted throughout Lebanon, the occupied territories in



American F18 fighters departing for the Gulf

Israel and other such places, living without dignity, with no prospects and utterly humiliated is equally appalling. Tackling this issue head on is a primary recourse for action that the Arab world and its western counterparts must address. It is only an American initiative that can help achieve a comprehensive and lasting peace in the region for both Israelis and Arabs.

The Middle East is the breathing ground of terrorism. This terrorism is inextricably linked with the Palestinian issue and therefore peace in the Middle East. In itself this assertion is a contradiction in terms - to hold peace and terrorism in the same context is something of a paradox. This same contradiction is evident when so called 'freedom fighters' go to their death claiming, "we die because we want to live". Nonetheless, these are the issues, which we must confront, and are the issues that to date we have chosen to disregard. There will always be people who hate the US and the west for what it represents, these people cannot be comforted. There are those however, who hate us for our failure to speak out when we have

the power to help those unable to help themselves. This we can challenge.

Bear in mind, the scourge of our society in the immediate aftermath of September 11 was Osama bin Laden. No stone was to be left unturned, in the process of finding this man and bringing him to justice. With the absence of a tangible success in this objective, the focus switched to Iraq where a corporeal enemy could be found. This enemy


provides the opportunity for the west to conduct war the way we understand war to exist. The traditional army outfit enters a sovereign nation, eliminating the leader and freeing the people. It is slightly ironic however that in the process of freeing the people that thousands of them will be killed. I digress however. Guerrilla warfare does not provide this opportunity. Terrorist cells fail to play by the rules of traditional warfare; indeed terrorism is the privatisation of war.

George Bush and Tony Blair unconvincingly attempt to persuade us of substantial ties between Iraq and al Qaeda. Blair spent the last number of months promising to provide frightening evidence to show Hussein's nuclear bomb making progress. When the British government did provide the evidence it transpired that it had been plagiarised, at times verbatim from academic journals. This does not inculcate the confidence one would expect from free democracies of the west.

If the world is serious about tackling terrorism, we need to tackle its root causes. Saddam Hussein will be eliminated. Few tears will be shed in his absence. The Palestinian-Israeli conflict will continue with little respite. Tackle this issue wholeheartedly, and we tackle an essential cause of terrorism. Continue as we have been, and the monster grows.



Young recruits for Hizbollah



UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK
STUDENTS' UNION

SECOND HAND BOOKSHOP
STUDENTS UNION RECEPTION
STUDENTS CENTER
11 - 5 DAILY

BUY AND SELL ACADEMIC BOOKS
FOR THE NEW SEMESTER

CONTACT STUDENTS' UNION RECEPTION FOR
MORE INFORMATION

Principality of Castletroy

by Mike Slattery

Nestled discreetly to the south-east of the Irish city of Limerick, the Principality of Castletroy is a little-known enclave of Irish society. While not as distinguished or influential as its international counterparts such as Monaco or San Marino, it can still be regarded as a fully functioning political, social and cultural entity.

Granted, the above is nothing but the product of the mind of an arts student with more than a smidgen too much time on his hands. Unless of course the Students Union is planning a military coup of some description, in which case my ramblings are a mere coincidence. However, if Castletroy was indeed a Principality it might be best known for the isolationist tendencies of a large proportion of its residents.

As students of the University of Limerick we are blessed with arguably the most modern, attractive and equipped campus in the country. We boast three excellent hostels, countless cafes, restaurants and eateries, a stunning concert hall, sports facilities that are second to none,.....yada yada yada, we've all read the prospectus. What more could a student body wish for?

We are lucky to a further extent with the location of our campus. Castletroy is a town within a city; there are very few services which one cannot procure within walking distance of any of the housing estates of Castletroy. We have our

own shopping centre, video store, bookmakers, The Hurlers and lest we forget the Mecca of Europop that is The Lodge.

However has this embarrassment of riches led a great deal of us to neglect what Limerick City centre has to offer? With the flood of negative press that our host city has received of late thanks to media hysteria and political knee jerking, I fear that this neglect can only worsen. I must admit that prior to my Co-operative education and Erasmus placements I was hardly the model philanthropist, rarely venturing to Limerick when not in the midst of a drunken haze. I regretted this deeply during my year's absence from the mid-west and found myself looking forward to my return to Limerick as a whole and not just U.L. this February.

This tendency was never more evident than with the closure of the Stables and Scholars clubs. Students were up in arms, rightly so, the loss of these venues would be a crushing blow for the University on a number of very legitimate fronts. These have all been outlined by people better informed than me already and thus I shant waste column inches regurgitating them badly. However was the level of outrage heightened by the fact that many of us have come to rely on these clubs for our socializing? Is it possible that people were reluctant to face up to the harsh reality of having to partake of their favourite vice in the less familiar surrounds of Limerick City? Of course a campus the size of U.L. should have student bars that



goes without saying, but perhaps we've all come to rely upon them a tad too much.

Every social trend has its root causes, the aforementioned convenience and comfort of the campus and Castletroy is certainly one. The other could certainly be the media hysteria and (clumsy) political crusading that follows any violent crime in Limerick. This is an after effect reserved especially for Limerick, Cork and Dublin have no such luck. The nation's largest two cities could resemble Beirut and an eyebrow wouldn't be raised but these days it seems that the Garda Armed Response Unit is a constant presence in Limerick, shoplifters beware!

It would be a travesty if such tabloid sensationalism and political opportunism were to leave residents of this fine city with a distorted view of what is an enjoyable and generally safe place to live. So let us all embrace this fine city, the DJs of Dolan's, the awe-inspiring Doc's lightshow (no sarcasm, I usually waste a good half hour staring at that, I also like shiny coins), lest we forget the E60,000 T.V. in Brown Thomas and of course the Chinese Supermarket, got to love those seaweed sheets! Right, I'm done; I wonder will Superquinn cash a Bord Failte Cheque?



Have a FREE* Software upgrade done on your phone and receive a FREE* NOKIA HEADSET



- Free* Nokia Mobile phone repairs
- Are you having problems with your mobile phone i.e. Dropping calls, poor signal, powering off, blank screen's, etc.....

Free* Nokia Headset With all software upgrades



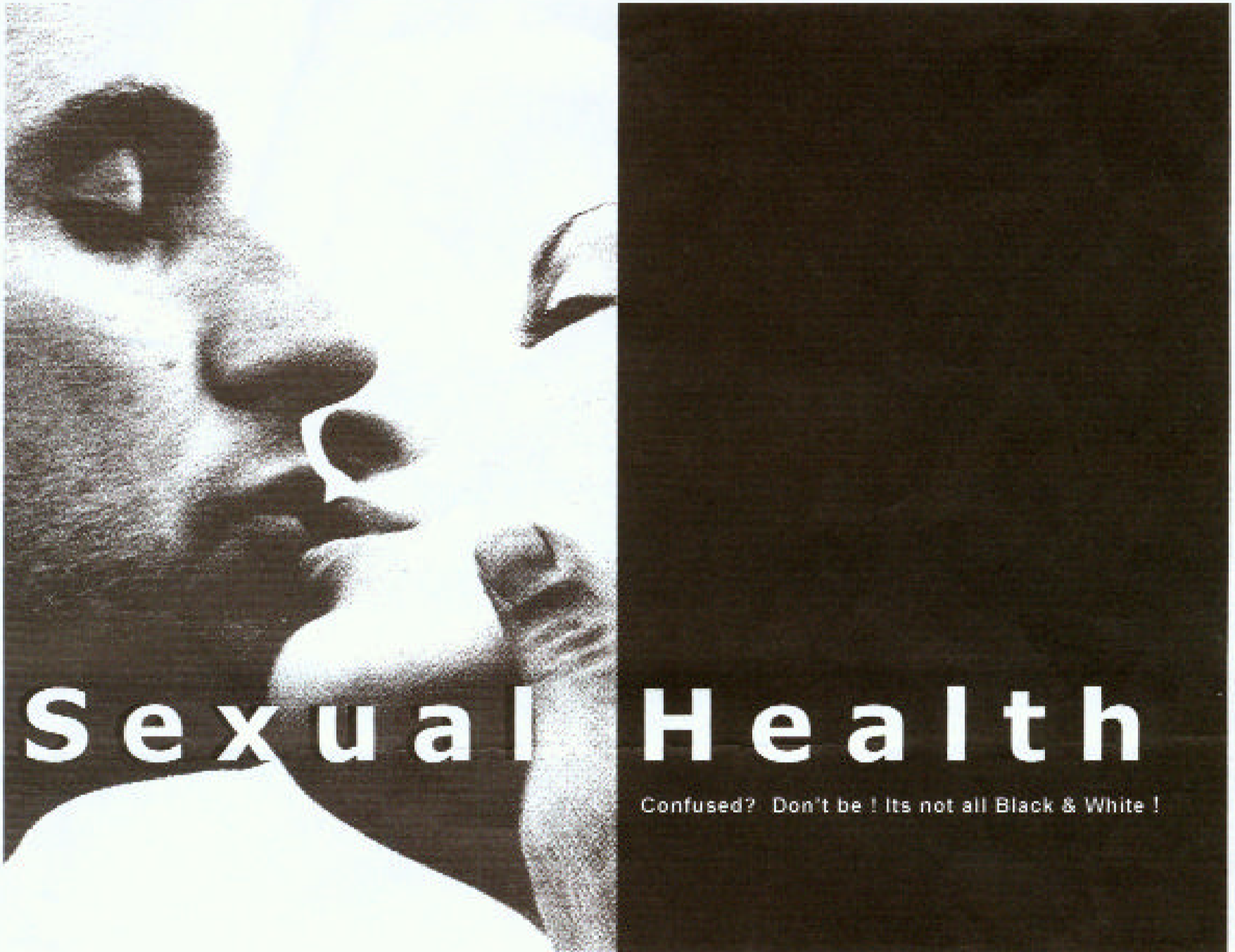
Located at the Nokia Desk in the Students Union office.

Opening Hours Monday-Thursday 9am-5pm Friday 9am-12pm

NEW 24 HOUR* TURN AROUND FOR ALL SOFTWARE UPGRADES AND REPAIRS.

* Subject to terms and conditions.

POSTER COMPETITION



Design a Poster and Slogan Promoting Sexual Health

Submission 27th February

1st Prize 500 euro

6 x runner up 250 euro

application forms & further info contact: [ciaran o'hiarnan@ul.ie](mailto:ciaran.o'hiarnan@ul.ie)

ULartsoffice™

crisispregnancyagency

Formulating & Implementing a National Strategy



Sport, politics and the National Stadium

by Lorcan MacCurtáin

While one doesn't want to bore people with yet another article about the topic of the National stadium, one felt they were certain issues raised about the subject in the last issue of *An Focal* that have to be addressed. The article in question was highly critical of the notion of the GAA being given the deeds to a new national stadium on the basis of their previous support for the IRA and the sense of narrow-mindedness and Puritanism that has dominated the organisation. While one agrees that some leading members of the GAA have been parochial and shortsighted in their outlook, it is very important to provide a context for why the GAA has supported the IRA in the past.

The GAA and British authorities have traditionally had an antagonistic view towards each other since the foundation of the former in 1884,



Croke Park

which the latter saw as a breeding ground for republicans. The tense relationship between the two would lead to the events of 'Bloody Sunday' in 1920 when, during the war of independence, the Black and Tans invaded Croke Park and shot at members of the Dublin and Tipperary football teams as well as spectators, killing thirteen.

Fast-forward to the late 1970s and the GAA were again in a precarious position. It is up to the individual to decide whether their support for the hunger strikers was a humanitarian action or simply a gesture that condoned violence. Yet, given that the British army was occupying GAA grounds throughout the North,

perhaps most notoriously at Crossmaglen in South Armagh, it would have been extremely difficult for the GAA not to offer some degree of support. And it is worth noting that despite the present IRA ceasefire, the Crossmaglen club is still in dispute with the British army over the continued occupation of their grounds.

Even if the GAA have had a mixed history, then what of other sporting organisations? The IRFU had little qualms about sending Irish rugby teams out to South Africa during the era of Apartheid, doing so as recently as 1981. The FAI sent out a team to Pinochet controlled Chile in 1974, with the team having to play in a stadium where hundreds of Allende supporters were murdered a year previously. (It didn't seem to affect Ireland, who won the game 2-1)

North of the border, sectarianism has often reared its ugly head, most notably in 1948 when Linfield supporters attacked team members and supporters of the largely Catholic Belfast Celtic team, while the RUC, whose absence from the GAA was lamented in the last issue, observed passively.

So who should build the proposed national stadium and perhaps more importantly, do we really need it? A national stadium that is to mean to be representative of all types of race and creed could hardly be built by a government whose attitude towards asylum seekers and refugees has hardly been magnanimous. A new national stadium would not address the increasing gaps between rich and poor that has taken place in the era of the 'Celtic Tiger.'

Does Dublin need another large stadium? Grandiose projects such as the 'Bertie Bowl' can be visionary, but are not applicable to the reality of a large city such as Dublin that doesn't even have a properly organised public transport system. The truth is, that regardless of whether the national stadium is built by the government (and by implication the people of Ireland), or whether the deeds are given to any one of the sporting organisations, the relationship between sport and politics in Ireland will continue to remain inseparable, and debates over hidden agendas will continue to abound.

Interview with Zoltan Zinn Collis

by Paul Dowling

On Tuesday 18th Feb., Zoltan Zinn Collis shared his horrific experiences with the UL community in a talk organised by the Irish Peace Society.

There were roughly 1,700 concentration camps set up by the Nazis and their allies in World War II. One of those was Bergen Belsen situated near the city of Hannover in Northern Germany. This is where Zoltan Zinn spent some of his childhood and lost his parents, an older brother and a younger sister he never knew.

Mr. Zinn is 65 years of age and is a retired chef. He now devotes much of his time travelling to secondary schools around Ireland giving presentations about his life and experience of the Holocaust. The talk given to the peace society in a packed Room 4 of the student's union building consisted of a documentary video and a talk by Mr. Zinn. The presentation given by Mr. Zinn, or 'the Slovak Irish Paddy' as he calls himself, was based solely on his experiences and the views expressed were his alone. Mr. Zinn admitted he is not an expert on the Holocaust but he is one of only 14 survivors living in Ireland and that his testimony should still be of some value.

Mr. Zinn has given this talk many times before. It was a rehearsed and polished presentation. But after sixty years one wonders what it is that brings Zoltan to the point of tears every time he gives the talk. The sceptic inside would ask if the terrible



Mr Zoltan Zinn Collis

events could really have such a dramatic effect on a child of four years of age. Some of the images on the video and Zoltan's recollections helped to remove all doubts.

As a survivor Zoltan never received counselling or therapy to help him overcome his lingering fear of showers, personal contact and dislike of tall poles. He spoke sorrowfully of his sister, with whom he was brought to Ireland and adopted by an Irish doctor. His sister worked hard to build a successful nursing career before

suddenly "blowing her top". Events that occurred thirty years earlier caught up with her and proved too much to bear.

Mr. Zinn said that he "will never forgive and never forget." There are those, he said, who believe that this is unproductive behaviour and that he should 'move on'. What was admirable about Mr. Zinn and his presentation is that he did not try to force his view on anybody, or try to convince us not to forgive either. He himself has undergone a reconciliation of sorts with Germany as a whole. Zoltan acknowledges that not all Germans were Nazis, or that all Nazis were incurably evil. Stereotyping people is a dangerous practice and it is still causing problems today.

Zoltan Zinn's wish is that people shall never forget those 12 million souls who perished in the Holocaust. It is a non-religious, non-political request that I think we can all fulfil.

The Future of UL

by Laura Greer

The UL campus is destined to look dramatically different ten years from now thanks to ideas developed by the Building and Planning Department.

Plans aim to expand the campus dramatically, which include additional facilities for postgraduate courses, 1000 extra student residence places, specialised buildings for certain disciplines, as well as further playing fields and parking facilities.

Development is due to take place on 124 acres of land purchased on the North side of the Shannon. Construction has commenced on a bridge spanning the river that will lead to the first of the planned student villages, Thomond Village, which will be situated diagonally to Drumroe and provide 500 en-suite rooms. Thomond village is due to be finished in December 2004.

The North side campus is due to be continued on an open plan scale akin to the existing south side of the river. It is hoped, said Brian Hand, Head of Building and Planning, that students won't have to leave the college campus and they can, "live, socialize and be involved in sports within the campus grounds."



A Model of what the UL Campus may look like 10 years from now

In relation to the recent threat to the Stable and Scholars Club licence, Mr Hand said that it was still being looked into for the appeal and that a

commission is currently sitting on the licensing laws for clubs in Ireland.

They are currently operating under a 1904 Edwardian Act which may have been suitable for Universities then as UCG had 100 students and UCD had 1000, but these numbers are far greater now and these laws are now archaic.

one side to the other.

Mr Hand said that students need a place to relax after studying or playing sport; just like members of golf or tennis clubs should have the opportunity to retire to their clubhouse and have a drink. UL is currently taking legal advice on the issue, but expressed that it would be a source of regret if the clubs were to lose their ability to serve alcohol as students would have to leave the campus in order to socialize.

A fifth student village with 3-500 student rooms called the Citadel is planned for the centre of the North side campus and is intended to be a focal point for the campus with views along the river Shannon and as far of the city. With the addition of this four-story student accommodation there will be 2,500 students spaces on campus.

Plans are also made for expansion to the Business school, alongside the Schuman building, another building is planned between the Foundation and Computer Science building and there are also further designated spots around the campus for further construction without encroaching upon the open planned landscape of the campus.

A Health-Science building to cater for 600 nursing students, 100 physiotherapists and 100 postgraduate students in occupational therapies is planned for the North side development. A performing arts building is also due to be built and is intended to place UL as a major National centre for performing arts. Other buildings are planned for Law and Languages and other disciplines, although some will depend on funding availability. A footbridge will span the Shannon between the North and South campus and it is estimated that it will take about ten minutes to go from

In coming years, far greater emphasis will be placed upon postgraduate courses and in particular, research postgraduate courses. Mr Hand sees the possible re-introduction of fees as extremely negative for students but said that numbers were nevertheless likely to continue to attend University and it will not hinder expansion as the need for third level education is as necessary as ever in the Irish employment sector.

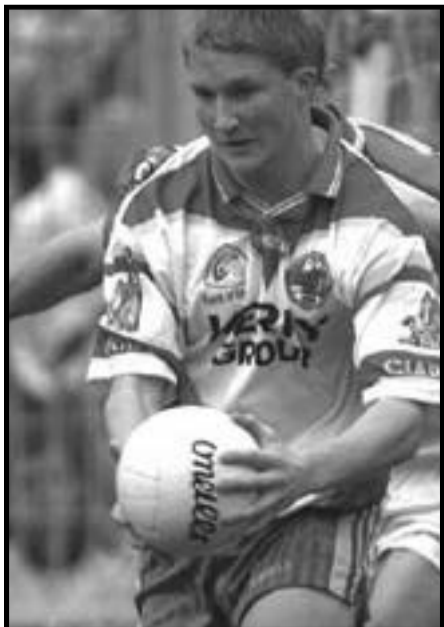
National League Review

by Brendan Coffey

The GAA season swung in to action, little over two weeks ago, with the commencement of the National Football League. Not only was the League's commencement blessed with some superb football, but the innovative idea of a Saturday night fixture, under floodlights seemed to create a new-found zeal in the atmosphere surrounding the game's opening encounter between Cork and Kerry-noticeable even through the medium of television. And so it was the Munster lynchpins, with the benefit of TG4's continued excellent coverage of the lesser competitions that opened the GAA's showcase for 2003. The renewal of acquaintances certainly whetted the appetite of most supporters, if not for signs of any retribution on Cork's part for their summer horribilus at the hands of the Kingdom.

And retribution they emphatically achieved with a dazzling display of lightning pace football and clinical shooting more befitting their aristocratic opponents. Although it was Kerry who started the game like greyhounds out of the traps, as had been their trademark all summer, with Russell and Cooper combining so effectively in attack. But, alas, a bright start by Declan Quill merely flattered to deceive and it was the football connoisseurs from Cork who delivered suave sophistication and ruthless efficiency in their assault on a Kerry team, looking like it longed to be back under South African sun, but their manager may be glad that bellicose interview is forgotten!

Colin Crowley's brace of goals blitzed the Kerry rearguard, whilst Fionan Murray provided a scintillating pass for the Michael O'Cronin to fire in a superb third goal for Cork. Graham Canty also chipped in with a superb solo-effort-in netting the second of Cork's four- and whilst he may have made a big impact since his arrival on the senior scene, little over a year ago, he will be one to watch this year, if Cork are to have title ambitions. Two red cards in the second half put a dampener on things somewhat, but Larry Tompkins couldn't be but happy with such a comprehensive victory



Mike Frank Russell



The Cork Football Team

over Cork's fiercest rivals. Paidi O'Sé, meanwhile, although still not under the media cosh over what was a storm in a teacup (we all knew Kerry people were animals anyway!). May well have wished his players showed some of the animal instincts the fans have, in what was a largely inept performance, but then it is only February.

In the other televised game of the weekend, All-Ireland champions Armagh showed no signs of post All-Ireland fatigue, and ominously for the rest of the season, they cruised passed Dublin with the same energy and enthusiasm, in all aspects of attack and defence, which was the hallmark of their march to last year's championship title. If they're this good so early in the year, albeit against a very poor Dublin outfit, then they'll take some beating this season. Indeed, it was quite noticeable how poor and inept a Blues performance, it was, with Ciaran Whelan especially insipid at midfield, and it beggars belief how the towering Raheny man still can't find an air of consistency under the management of Tommy Lyons. Lyons, himself must be wondering at how stale the team looked, in comparison to the freshness Armagh displayed, despite the indulgences which followed their All-Ireland triumph. It was not a question of fitness, as both teams are obviously nowhere near what they were at or where they will be in terms of the kind of hills they'll be able to run come the summer, but on such a fine pitch as Croke Park, Dublin should have been able to play some decent football, if Armagh could.

The most notable and encouraging facet of the opening round of matches must surely have been the attendances at both televised games over the weekend. The Munster clash attracted a crowd of some 14,000. on a cold Saturday evening, when spectators had the option of watching at home which speaks volumes for the proposal of more fixtures under floodlights. Meanwhile, 54,000 made their way to Croke, which is more than what most Leinster provincial hurling matches would attract combined. Surely, a record attendance for a League game and it must bode well for the rest of the season.

What the GAA must do now, of course, is not turn a blind eye to the positive feedback of the initiatives of the weekend, and the games more accessible to spectators. More games at Croke are the way forward, especially when provincial venues are hard to get to and extremely difficult to play on. The likes of Kildare, Meath and Westmeath, as well as most other Leinster counties and the likes of Armagh would attract support of a size, which would make it viable to use Croke Park as a venue. It would be even more so, if certain league games were offered in a double-header, say when two Leinster sides, such as Kildare and Meath have home fixtures. Not only would the association be treating the players to better facilities than what they'd be

offered in Navan or Newbridge for example, but they would be giving the fans the value of two games for the price of one, with the comfort of being sheltered from the wind and rain.

An interesting start to the League, although of course we can take most results with a pinch of salt, considering the time of year. Some nice football was played and entertaining matches resulted. Maybe now the GAA will take the opportunity to inject some much-needed life in to the much-neglected League. God knows, the fans certainly want it, judging by the attendances but maybe not those animals down in Kerry!!

Meet Community GARDA

Student Union Presidents Office
Every Tuesday 7pm – 8pm
Call in or ring 061 202326

- Voter Registration
- Driving Licence Stamp
- Passport Stamp
- Report Theft
- Take Advice

An Garda Síochána
Ireland's National Police Service

LAW & ORDER!









The Stables Club

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK

www.stablesclub.com



Week 3
Monday
 Music Soc
 UL Band - Open Mic
Tuesday
 Karaoke
Wednesday
 BAND: Free Beer
Thursday
 DJ Aidan
Friday
 Party Night



FOOD COUNTER OPEN EACH DAY FROM 8AM!
 BEGIN WITH A TOP-NOTCH BREAKFAST AND
 CARRY THROUGH TO AN EVENING MEAL BEFORE
 7PM.
 | 8AM-12 BREAKFAST | 12-3 LUNCH MENU |
 | 3-7 EVENING SPECIALS |

Week 4
Monday
 Music Soc
 Band/Open Mic
Tuesday
 Karaoke
Wednesday
 BAND: Free Beer
Thursday
 TBC
Friday
 Party Night





PHOTOGRAPHER IN THE STABLES CLUB MANY NIGHTS

T (061) 330139 - F (061) 330176
 E info@stablesclub.com
 W www.stablesclub.com



Arena Sports Club

The Arena Sports Club - THE Sports Venue

The Club features a Plasma Screen TV, and Big screen showing many sporting events. Our function room, equipped with Audio-Visual facilities is also available for group bookings. We have plenty of entertainment lined up for the year - check notice boards & posters for details.



FULL FOOD SERVICE:

Why not call to the Arena Sports Club, and enjoy a morning coffee or snack.

We serve lunches from 12-2 and offer an evening menu daily from 3-7pm.

Try a delicious Steak Bap, or a mouth watering Chicken Bap!

You won't be disappointed!

SEE OUR SITE AT www.arenasportsclub.com

WEEK 3

Monday
 The Greatest Music
Tuesday
 Trad Session - All Welcome
Wednesday
 'Open Mic' - Your opportunity to dazzle - singing, comedy or instruments
Thursday
 Jamming with the Folk Club
Friday
 Music Night

WEEK 4

Monday
 The Greatest Music
Tuesday
 Trad Session - All Welcome
Wednesday
 'Open Mic' - Your opportunity to dazzle - singing, comedy or instruments
Thursday
 Jamming with the Folk Club
Friday
 Music Night

T: (061) 332760 | E: info@arenasportsclub.com

F: (061) 339641 | W: www.arenasportsclub.com

YOUR WEEKLY NIGHT OUT

Wednesday Nite @ Docs

ALL TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM STUDENTS' UNION
RECEPTION FROM THE MONDAY OF EACH WEEK @ 9AM

Thursday Nite @ The MARKET

COMEDY NITE



Week 3: Danny Bhoy

DOORS OPEN 9:00 @ THE SCHOLARS FUNCTION ROOM
TICKETS: 5 EUROS, FIRST 50 GET 1 FREE PINT OF

Week 4: Steve Patterson



MURPHYS

UL ARTS

presents

MONDAY 24 February

KID BISCUIT AND THE KING 8MMFILM.COM

Director : Rory Bresnihan

24 HOUR PARTY PEOPLE

Director : Michael Winterbottom



Here's the real deal in a rock movie. It's a fractured fever dream that looks at the British music scene through the drug-glazed eyes of Tony Wilson, played with hurricane force and bruising wit by Steve Coogan. Remember the name. Brits know Coogan as the chat-show host Alan Partridge, a character he plays for laughs on the local telly. Most Yanks don't know him at all, but we will after this. Calling Coogan's performance dynamite doesn't do him or the movie justice. Wilson is the Manchester TV journalist who founded Factory Records after his first look at the Sex Pistols in a dingy club, circa 1976. "There were thirty-odd people there," says Wilson, addressing the camera, "but how many people were at the Last Supper?" Energized by the anarchy of punk, Wilson and his chums Alan Erasmus (Lennie James) and Rob Gretton (Paddy Considine) sign up such bands as Stone Roses, Happy Mondays and Joy Division, later called New Order after lead singer Ian Curtis (Sean Harris) hanged himself. Wilson didn't believe in contracts. He went broke doling out artistic freedom and turning a warehouse into a club called The Hacienda, where he indulged in every sex, drugs and rock & roll excess -- his marriage to Lindsay (splendid Shirley Henderson) was an early casualty -- until the fantasy ended in 1992. 24 Hour Party People could have been a cautionary fable about demon rock. But director Michael Winterbottom and screenwriter Frank Cottrell Boyce - Manchester lads just like Wilson and Coogan -- make bloody sure it isn't. Winterbottom -- free of the grim literary constraints of Jude and The Claim -- seems to enjoy running fast and loose. Shot on digital video by brilliant cinematographer Robby Muller, the movie really is a blast, mixing newsreel footage with the made-up stuff, throwing in celebrity cameos (including one by Wilson himself), and skewering whatever bull gets in its way. Like the music, the film is outspoken, roilingly funny, defiantly sexual and relentlessly in your face. I couldn't have liked it more.

RACISM

Director : Kirsten Sheridan

LE GOUT DES AUTRES (The Taste of Others)

Director : Agnes Jaoui

Jean-Jacques Castella may be a successful factory owner in a provincial French city, but you wouldn't want to vouch for his taste in clothes. Or art. Or much of anything else. To paraphrase the blues lyric, if the man didn't have bad taste he wouldn't have any taste at all. Jean-Pierre Bacri stars as the rumpled captain of industry Castella, who lives not unhappily with his wife Beatrice (Brigitte Catillon), a frustrated interior decorator who gets on with animals better than people. With his thick moustache and perennial hangdog look, Castella may be brusque and not particularly sophisticated, but everyone acknowledges him to be a very good-hearted guy. Making Castella's life more trying than usual is a big deal he's putting together with some Iranians, a transaction that means he needs a bodyguard named Moreno (Cesar winner Gerard Lanvin) in addition to his trusting chauffeur Deschamps (Alain Chabat). He's also being pressured to take English lessons, but the no-nonsense approach of his teacher Clara Devaux (Cesar winner Anne Alvaro) is not to his liking. Then, one fateful night, Castella is dragged by his wife to watch his niece in a terribly highbrow 17th century verse drama. An actress comes onstage and, in one of those coups de foudre beloved by French filmmakers, Castella is instantaneously smitten. And who does this goddess turn out to be but, yes, the woman who tried to teach him English. There are more obstacles to this relationship than the mundane one of his being married and her being rather fussy about the men she lets into her life. The cultural worlds these two inhabit, the crowds they run with--their tastes, in short--are so different that Clara is inclined to be dismissive of his attentions. And when Clara's friends patronize the industrialist he is too out of it to notice. A similarly unlikely potential pairing occurs in chauffeur Deschamps' social circle. He runs into a barmaid named Manie whom he slept with 10 years ago but doesn't remember. The bodyguard also becomes aware of her, and though he is a truculent ex-cop and she has a noticeably active social life that includes dealing hashish on the side, there is something about the way they look at each other. . . .

MONDAY 03 March



with all films followed by

THE DEBATING UNION WEEKLY DEBATE

WEEK 3 "THIS HOUSE WOULD TAKE AN EYE FOR AN EYE"

Harder Generation

by *Timmy Hennessy*

Welcome to the first instalment of the Harder Generation in 2003. Now that everyone seems to have recovered from the exams and the 2 weeks of general arsing about worrying about the fate of the Stables n Scholars, its time to get back to the madness of going out n terrorising the natives of Limerick.

Note the new introducing section, which will have features on the superstars of the hard dance music industry, first up is Tidy whizkid Paul Maddox.

News:

Hard House in Limerick!!!!!!

After the success of the Judge Jules Christmas gig, Lust makes a return to Doc's on the 14th of March presenting the ever-popular Lisa Lashes. Lisa Lashes is without a doubt the world's No.1 Female dj being the only female to make it in to the hallowed Dj Magazine Top 10 and a firm Irish favourite with her shows at the Met in Armagh and her amazing performance at the Lust Tent at last year Creamfields. Lisa is probably most famous for 2 of the best selling Euphoria compilations "Extreme" (pink and blue), both of which sold over 300,000 copies.

This is guaranteed to be a sell out gig, so be sure to mark that night free in your little black book.. : Support on the night comes from limericks main man Dermot C. Admission: 20yoyos, Tickets available from Empire, Ticketmaster outlets nationwide and on the door on the night (if there's any left!) Top Press: March 28th Lust presents Mauro Picotto.

The babies return to their giant crèche ...

Babydoll records returns to the club of the year 2002 Enigma (Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan) on Saturday 1st of March, with Rachel Auburn headlining.

Also playing on the night will be Paul Stimulant, Mark Kavanagh, Alan Pullen and Jonny Rice.

The night will also see the launch of Jonny Rice's debut on Pullen's top Irish label, Class A, 2 banging tracks titled Kikhat and Things, which get released in April.

Pre-Club Party: 8pm-10pm

Main Event: 10pm-3am

Admission: 20yoyos

Introducing:

At only 19 Paul Maddox has done pretty well for himself in the last year. Paul's career was kick-started back in 2001 when he produced a bootleg remix of N-Trance - Set You Free in his own home. The remix created

waves in the English hard house scene, grabbing the attention of N-Trance's label (who re-released the track on the strength of his remix) and Tidy Trax who offered him a position as a full time engineer & producer. He released his debut single in mid 2002, and has since churned out some of the best and most influential tracks of last year, fusing elements of techno and trance with hard house (Tension, New York New York).
Insomnia 3 mixed by Paul is out now on Tidy.

Top of Paul's box:

- 01) Anne Savage & Paul Maddox - Hellraiser [Tidy]
- 02) Tomorrow People - Scared [Tidy]
- 03) Temperature Drop - Mosquito's Tweeter [Cluster]
- 04) Paul Maddox feat Niki Mak - Reach Out [Tidy2]
- 05) Unknown - Shiny Disco Bollox [White]
- 06) Dial M For Moguai - Beatbox (Paul Maddox Remix) [Tripoli]
- 07) DAVE The Drummer - Hydraulix 16a [Hydraulix]
- 08) D'Marr Ford - Bubblegum Funk [Kcode]
- 09) Abandon - Human Error [Recharge]
- 10) Paul Maddox - Underground [Tidy White]

My 5 top of d box:

- Test Tube Babies vs. Nik Denton - Feel The Friction [Toolbox]
Alan Pullen - In My Head [Class A]
Casper & Karim - U Have Control [Passion]
Travel - Bulgarian (Paul Maddox Mix) [Tidy]
Paul Maddox vs. Ingo - Reactor [Tidy White]



Lisa Lashes

Bord Gais New Year Opera at UCH

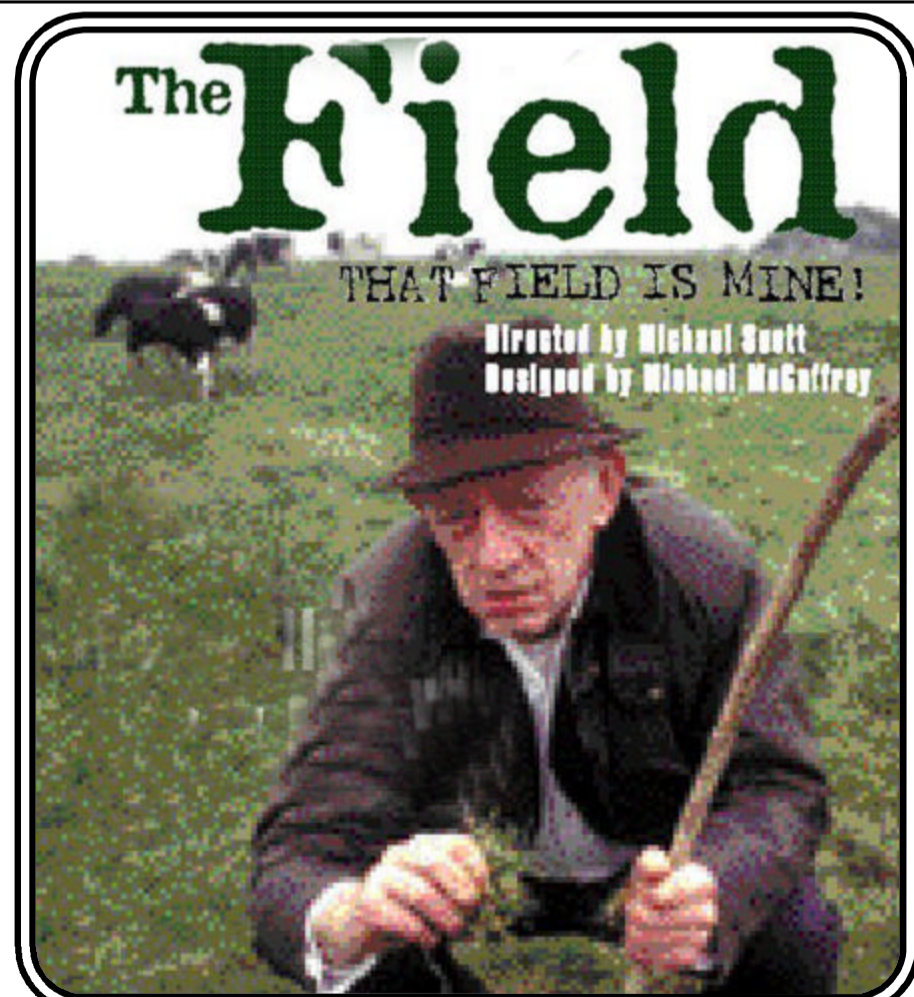
by *Brendan Curran*

On a Thursday late in January, I finally got the chance to go to an opera and see what it's all about. The venue was our own University Concert Hall and the event was the Barra O' Tuama New Year Opera Gala, sponsored for the 12th year by Bord Gáis. I set out looking forward to a night of opera sung by Roberto Aronica, Angelo Veccia, Alison Roddy, and the Limerick choir 'Voices of Limerick' who were conducted by Collette Davis. This suffered a setback when I saw that both Roberto Aronica and Angelo Veccia were sick and unable to perform. However, replaced by Englishman Bonaventura Bottone and Pole Marcin Bronikowski, it's hard to believe it could have been much better with the original billing.

I was slightly surprised when I arrived to see on stage two small tables decked with wine, a lamp and some chairs. I wasn't long in figuring out that this was all done to create a sort of drawing room atmosphere to the evening. Proceedings were presided over by John O' Flynn, who has quite possibly the most charismatic voice ever. He could have surely played James Bond with a voice like that, but what are the chances of an Irish Bond? Pianist Philip Thomas provided accompaniment, and wore a jacket, in what I guess was an attempt to look like a bit 18th Century-esque. We were treated to songs from Donizetti, Verdi and

Strauss. I was instantly stunned from what I heard. I have often heard operatic pieces on the radio, but it is no comparison to it live. Alison Roddy performed excellently, and as a soprano she could reach vertigo inducingly high notes and her voice was able to resonate in my ears. Roddy is herself Irish, from Dublin and started out with the Billy Barry kids, or the Billy Barry Brats as we used call them when they were on the Late Late toy show. But, Roddy is now performing with the English National Opera. Bonaventura Bottone didn't fail to impress either, especially with his Neapolitan songs, which included O Solo Mio. He had the crowd cheering madly. Bottone is now stranger to our shores and would like to spend some time holidaying here rather than performing. One of the highlights of the evening for me was Toreador song from Bizet's Carmen, which was sung brilliantly by both Marcin Bronkowski and Voices of Limerick.

All in all, it was a brilliant performance and an entertaining night. I would recommend to everyone to go to at least one opera, just to experience it and I will guarantee that you will be surprised. The opportunity arises shortly with the performance of Verdi's Rigoletto on May 1st at UCH, performed by famous Irish soprano Cara O' Sullivan, as well as Paolo Gavanelli who I hear is quite famous himself in the opera world. So, go on and take a look, but don't waste time in getting tickets as it promises to be a sell out.



The University Concert Hall
presents
The Field
24-28th of March
Tickets on sale from Reception



Clubs & Societies Events: Week 3

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT/SUN
<p>Games Society Role-Playing Games 6:30, EG006 7:30, EM019 including Werewof Apocalypse</p> <p>Drama Society Drama Workshop 7:30, B1023</p> <p>Enviromental Soc Meeting, 7:00 Meeting Room 3 in the SU</p> <p>Debating Union Weekly Debate 8:00, Jean Monnet</p> <p>Athletics Club Training 6 - 7:30 Middle Distance 5:30 - 7:00 Sprinters at the Running Track</p> <p>Archery Club Training 7-10 Old Sports Building</p> <p>American Football Training 6:00 Under Sports Bar</p>	<p>Games Society Role-Playing Games 7:00, EGO06 Zombie RPG</p> <p>UL Kickboxing Training for beginners to advanced 9-10 Old Sports Building</p> <p>Karate Club 6:00 - 7:30 Training Gym in Old Sports Building</p> <p>Tang Soo Do 7:30 - 9:00 Training Gym in Old Sports Building</p> <p>Ten Forward AGM 6:30 PSA Center</p> <p>Athletics Club Training 6 - 7:30 Middle Distance 5:30 - 7:00 Sprinters at the Running Track</p> <p>Kayak Club Pool Sessions 10-11, Arena Pool</p>	<p>Tennis Club Coaching, Tennis Courts 2-3 Beginners 3-4 Improved 4-5 Advanced Training 11-12:30 All Welcome</p> <p>Games Society Role-Playing Games 19:00, EG006 including Apocalypse</p> <p>Kayak Club River Trip 2:00 The Store</p> <p>American Football Training 6:00 Under Sports Bar</p> <p>Drama Soc Drama Workshop 7:30 B1023</p> <p>Ten Forward "Frailty" 7:30 PSA Center</p> <p>Archery Club Training 7-10 Old Sports Building</p> <p>Kayak Club Pool Sessions 10-11, Arena Pool</p>	<p>Karate Club 6:00 - 7:30 Training Gym in Old Sports Building</p> <p>Social Dance Classes 7-10 Kilmurry Village Hall</p> <p>Ten Forward "Changing Lanes" 7:30 PSA Center</p> <p>Athletics Club Training 6 - 7:30 Middle Distance 5:30 - 7:00 Sprinters at the Running Track</p> <p>UL Kickboxing Training for beginners to advanced 9-10 Old Sports Building</p> <p>Kayak Club Pool Sessions 10-11, Arena Pool</p> <p>Games Society Role-Playing Games 7:30, EGO06 Vampire: Dark Ages</p>	<p>Softball Club Training Pitch 1, 2:00</p> <p>History Society IHSA Conference UCC</p>	<p>Tennis Club Training/Practies All Levels Saturday 11-12:30</p> <p>Softball Club Training Pitch 1, 2:00</p> <p>Athletics Club Training (Saturday) 12 - 2 at the Running Track</p>

Clubs & Societies Events: Week 4

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT/SUN
<p>Games Society Role-Playing Games 6:30, EG006 7:30, EM019 including Werewof Apocalypse</p> <p>Drama Society Drama Workshop 7:30, B1023</p> <p>Enviromental Soc Meeting, 7:00 Meeting Room 3 in the SU</p> <p>Debating Union Weekly Debate 8:00, Jean Monnet</p> <p>Athletics Club Training 6 - 7:30 Middle Distance 5:30 - 7:00 Sprinters at the Running Track</p> <p>Archery Club Training 7-10 Old Sports Building</p> <p>American Football Training 6:00 Under Sports Bar</p>	<p>Games Society Role-Playing Games 7:00, EGO06 Zombie RPG</p> <p>UL Kickboxing Training for beginners to advanced 9-10 Old Sports Building</p> <p>History Society ISHA Paper Presentation 7:30, Room 4, SU</p> <p>Tang Soo Do 7:30 - 9:00 Training Gym in Old Sports Building</p> <p>Ten Forward Committee Meeting 6:15, Paddocks</p> <p>Athletics Club Training 6 - 7:30 Middle Distance 5:30 - 7:00 Sprinters at the Running Track</p> <p>Kayak Club Pool Sessions 10-11, Arena Pool</p>	<p>Tennis Club Coaching, Tennis Courts 2-3 Beginners 3-4 Improved 4-5 Advanced Training 11-12:30 All Welcome</p> <p>Games Society Role-Playing Games 19:00, EG006 including Apocalypse</p> <p>Kayak Club River Trip 2:00 The Store</p> <p>American Football Training 6:00 Under Sports Bar</p> <p>Drama Soc Drama Workshop 7:30 B1023</p> <p>Ten Forward "Lovely And Amazing" 7:30 PSA Center</p> <p>Archery Club Training 7-10 Old Sports Building</p> <p>Kayak Club Pool Sessions 10-11, Arena Pool</p>	<p>Aeronautical Society Air Show Review Check Website for Details</p> <p>Social Dance Classes 7-10 Kilmurry Village Hall</p> <p>Ten Forward "Road to Perdition" 7:30 PSA Center</p> <p>Athletics Club Training 6 - 7:30 Middle Distance 5:30 - 7:00 Sprinters at the Running Track</p> <p>UL Kickboxing Training for beginners to advanced 9-10 Old Sports Building</p> <p>Kayak Club Pool Sessions 10-11, Arena Pool</p> <p>Games Society Role-Playing Games 7:30, EGO06 Vampire: Dark Ages</p>	<p>Softball Club Training Pitch 1, 2:00</p>	<p>Tennis Club Training/Practies All Levels Saturday 11-12:30</p> <p>Softball Club Training Pitch 1, 2:00</p> <p>Athletics Club Training (Saturday) 12 - 2 at the Running Track</p> <p>Athletics Club Intersarsity Saturday Starting 1pm</p>

St. Micheals Head of the River

by Ronan Ivers

St Michael's Head of the River saw the first competitive action of the New Year for the crews of University of Limerick Rowing Club. The race, which was attended by over 300 crews from around the country, provided the rowers from UL with a tough challenge. Perfect racing conditions together with a strong tail wind resulted in very fast times being registered.

The UL men's varsity crew started the day by posting a very competitive time that provided a challenge for other crews to beat. After the morning session the crew was leading with a time of 10 minutes 38 seconds for the 3.5 kilometre course. As conditions improved later in the day Neptune RC and Trinity College Dublin took advantage of the tailwind resulting in the home crew being relegated to third position, with just 3 seconds separating the top three crews. Despite a late additional row by the home crew to cut the deficit, Neptune held their margin to become the eventual winners. The UL crew will

be racing the club's newest eight at the National Championships in July and are currently seeking a sponsor for their boat.

The second men's crew who began rowing in November came in a credible 10th out of the 19 crews entered in their category. This crew will be challenging the varsity eight in the months to come. Other credible performances of the day included the men's intermediate pair and our three novice scullers. Peter and Rob in the pair finished third with an excellent time of 12 minutes and 20 seconds. The scullers Colin, Rory and Cathal finished 10th, 8th and 2nd respectively in a large field of 22 entries.

The main success of the day for the club was in the men's novice double scull, in which Cathal Moynihan and club president Colin Byrne provided UL with a well-deserved victory. This was the maiden voyage for the club's newest boat and we are hopeful of continuing success for this craft.

The women's squad entered two fours and two scullers. The fours



UL Rowers in action

finished 3rd and 4th in a strong field and our two novice scullers Kasey and Noreen finished 6th and 7th. This was the first taste of competitive racing for many of these crews and we are confident that they will be challenging for silverware later this year.

The University of Limerick Rowing Club would like to thank Aquarius Business Partners for sponsoring the entries for the days racing. The rowers of UL now look forward to their next race in Cork on the 22nd of February followed by Galway Head of the River in March.



Young Fine Gael Sleep Out

by Barry Walsh

The University of Limerick branch of Young Fine Gael embarked on a campaign for a worthy cause before Christmas, by holding a 24 hour Sleepout in Limerick City to raise awareness about the problem of homelessness in Ireland and to raise money towards causes working with the homeless in Limerick.

The idea for the Sleepout began when we received information from the Alexian Brothers, an order that runs a hostel for the homeless in Limerick City, about the worrying rise in youth homelessness predicted by the Mid-Western Health Board in the region within the next two years. Unemployment, drug/alcohol abuse, family difficulties, and behavioural problems were all cited as reasons for homelessness under the age of 25. James Lawless, Organiser of the ULYFG Committee, had already

taken part in such a project, having been involved in the annual Sleepout by students of Belvedere College, Dublin last Christmas, and he was very much the driving force behind the project and its success.

The UL Branch massed an awareness campaign on campus in the run-up to the Sleepout itself, highlighting to students the plight of the homeless in Ireland around the Christmas period, and the total failure of the present Government to address the issue in spite of five years of a "Golden Age for the people of this country", as described by Bertie Ahern in April of last year. Even the most hardened members of Fianna Fáil would be at a loss when asked to level this comment with the fact that there are 2,000 homeless people in Ahern's own home city !!

The Sleepout took place on the 12th/13th of December outside



Micheal Noonan at the Sleep out

Brown Thomas on O'Connell St. Almost 20 people took part, including some members of the Outreach Society and the Environmental Society. The weather was not to our advantage from the outset, with low temperatures and light drizzles of mist and rain and at times. At 8pm Michael Noonan TD, along with local Councillors Mary Jackman and Diarmuid Scully among others, visited the group to lend their support and to boost morale. All the local representatives were delighted to see that ULYFG was so active and still so involved in campaigning for social justice.

Throughout the evening the group collected money with buckets, receiving very generously from shoppers, students of UL and passers by. The response of UL students was especially heartening, proving that our campaign had paid dividends. The group were also

delighted by the number of people who remarked positively on the efforts of Young Fine Gael, and appreciated our genuine effort to put right the wrongs of the FF Government. The project received a large amount of attention in the local media, making the headlines in both of the local papers. Members of the Committee were interviewed live on Limerick's Live95 FM on Friday morning. News bulletins also ran the story throughout the day.

The project raised €3345, which, considering the bad weather, was almost twice what we had hoped to raise. The money raised went to the Father Stephen Russell Home in Limerick, and the local St. Vincent de Paul. The success of this event served as a fitting way to end what was a brilliant 1st Semester for ULYFG, and big plans are in the pipeline for what we hope will be a great 2003!



Members of Young Fine Gael sleeping on O'Connell street

Drama Society Report

by Adrian Crowe

Hello everybody and welcome back I hope you all had an enjoyable holiday plus plenty of rest and of course that you did well in the Exams. But now on to more important matters I said I would put an article in the paper to keep you up

which is the huge IV for drama societies with about 23 colleges involved, an awards ceremony just like the Oscars really. It is going to be held by Trinity this year. The competition is in its 55th year and still going strong. I will give you more information about the Competition and how the shows are moving along in the next edition. So here it is from



Bringing shows to life beforehand

to date with the current affairs of the club, as we have a lot planned for this semester.

Firstly I would like to thank all the people who turned up for the auditions on Monday the 17th it was really appreciated and it left us with a very difficult decision in casting the three shows "The Best Gift", by Katherine Denver, "Writing Love" by Tricia Donovan both original scripts created by current and past students and also "Dancing at Lughnasa" by Brian Friel. And those who got the coveted parts in the shows are Rory Deegan, Sarah Carew, Michael Keary, Alexandra Worschech, Louise Murphy, Elaine Ahern, Rebecca Hadrill, Roísín Ní Dhonncha, Sally Keogh, Donal O' Driscoll Ruairi O'Mahony. The 2 original shows are

the mouth of the Director Tricia Donovan{this is what you would see in the program}:

Possibilities reflects the idea that when it comes to relationships, when two people are placed in the position of being in love, their first situation of getting to know one another, or the last time they ever speak, doesn't have to be permanent. Instead, they can change, rewrite, and rewind those situations until the most unique and real outcomes are achieved. In each act of Possibilities the characters must decide what is important; they must make decisions about their futures and tackle the idea of reality in love.

In the first act, entitled "Writing

More Info?

Drama Soc Workshops in the Johnathon Swift Monday and Wednesday at 7:30pm

For more information vist

www.uldramasoc.com

or email

0143138@student.ul.ie

both going to ISDA under the title "Possibilities" so wish us the best of luck.

I also want to include the low down of this show as it is going to ISDA,

"Love," a writer must search for the true definition of love. The characters he creates must uncover for him the misinterpretations, the fallacies, and must dispel the

Important Drama Soc Information

1. We need some people to help us organise a talent night. To raise cash for the society. That will involve finding people to do there little piece on stage {e.g. comedian, singer, band etc.}, advertising and so forth.

2. I would like to see people that are not interested in acting in turning up as with so much on we will need a huge amount of people for behind the scene stuff like advertising, building sets, costumes, lights and other things that make all these shows tick and run smoothly.

3. We are also going to start preproduction for "Little shop of Horrors" this is the musical we are hoping to do next year but is such a big event that we really need to get some of the work out of the way this semester, namely the large selection of puppets that need to be built. Although that will be really going on to the back burner, but I said we might as well let you know about it. Because I remember a lot of people in orientation week were asking about musicals, well there you go.

4. I want to let you know about the Clubs and Societies Ball, which is on Thursday the 13th March. The tickets are priced at €40 and this includes meal and busses there and back {it's a formal dress thing as there is an awards ceremony} and it promises to be one hell of a night.

5. We are hoping to bring a show into the Jonathan Swift in the near future it will be preformed by a group of secondary school students from St. Nessans, it was directed by our very own president Ms. Ella Daly and will be well worth seeing.

stereotypes surrounding the label "love." The character's love is new, and just beginning; but determining the reality in their love is the main focus. As the writer struggles with writing about love, his question, "What is real?" is essential to the overall conclusion of Possibilities.

In the second act, entitled "The Best Gift," two characters must decide their fate after the conclusion of their relationship. The act is set as a conversation where the characters are separately answering a series of questions. Their struggle lay in the final decision of their parting: Who will go first? What will be the outcome? An underlying idea essential to this act is the reality of communication. "The Best Gift" asks whether the stories we tell are the same stories told by our partners, both past and present.

Both acts, written by two, independent writers, are connected through their intermingling themes. "Writing 'Love,'" written by Tricia Donovan, reflects the beginnings of a relationship. "The Best Gift," written by Katherine Denver reflects the end. The two acts are shown as such so that the overall sense of a whole relationship can be seen.

This work is not a play in two acts; rather, it is a companion collection of different ideas on the same concept. It is two independent acts fused to create one overall theme: the many possibilities of love. Whether we look for reality, communication, perfection, or the ultimate end of a love relationship, there are always unlimited possibilities.



Bringing shows to life after the creation

Waterpolo Club Update

by Helena Walsh

Having played 3 away games in a row the UL Men's Water Polo Team will be happy to return to fortress of the 50m University Area Pool during the month of February. The UL Team faced 3 difficult opponents during January and did well to earn 2 away points.

The first game was an encounter with the Galway team Blackrock, who with home advantage called on a much-improved squad to the one that lost in Limerick before Christmas. It was a very even game for the full hour, UL had been a goal down at half-time with Colin Hedderman, Colm Fitzgerald and Eddie Walsh keeping UL in the game. Disaster almost struck UL in the third quarter when Hedderman was excluded from the rest of the game because of an illegal pool exit. The game looked to have left UL behind as they had been trailing the home side 5-4 with only 20 seconds remaining in the game. At that point in the game UL had been awarded a penalty for a foul in-

Waterpolo Match Results

Men's National League Division 3 - Saturday 11th January
Blackrock 5 - 5 UL

Men's National League Division 3 - Saturday 26th January
Claremorris 14 - 7 UL

Men's National League Division 3 - Saturday 2nd February
Clonmel 12 - 12 UL

side 4 meters on Brian Murray. Keeping a cool head Colm Fitzgerald scored the penalty to level the game 5-5.

The second game on the road for UL was a trip to play the table topping and unbeaten Claremorris. Things didn't look too good for UL from before the game as Claremorris fielded a number of Irish Under-19 International players. As expected Claremorris got off to a great start taking a 4 goal lead in the first quarter. UL Keeper Cosgrove was left very exposed by some poor defending as the home took a 10-2 lead during the first-half. UL Improved a great deal in the second-half and with goals from Murray and

Hutchinson UL began to make the score-line more respectable for the away team. With the final score 14-7,

Higgins and Pdraig Mulcahy taking goals under pressure from the Clonmel defense. During the third quarter UL fell apart and had trailed by 4 goals at one point, enter Colin Hederman. The Snr. Irish Team squad member started the come back by scoring from the half way line direct from a free and followed that with a number of fine goals from the 5meter area. In all Hederman scored 10 of UL's 12 goals on the day, a remarkable achievement at any level



UL Waterpolo Club in the Arena

More Info?

Both Ladies & Men's Teams will be training as always in the Arena on
Monday from 10-11pm
Wednesday from 9-11pm,

New team members with swimming or water polo experience welcome.

Claremorris look set to win promotion to Division 2 next season and given the squad they have it's likely they could win it.

The final away game for UL took the team to play Clonmel. The game was very even for the first-half with UL taking an early lead with Mark

of Water Polo. Indeed UL could have won the game in the last few seconds but overall a draw was a fair result.

These results confirm UL's status in Division 3 and the team are pushing for 3rd place in the table. UL entertain Grads of Belfast on the 22nd of



The Games Society



First Galway, Then the world

As a follow up to our first paintball trip, the Games society has formally challenged the WAR~SOC of NUIG to a paintball match. On Sunday, March the 9TH 20 members of the Galway Soc will be travelling to Take on 20 Of G~Socs finest and most trigger happy.

With CombatZone.ie offering a trophy to the winning side, we hope that this will be the beginning of a nation wide paintballing league. Our dominance of this league has been assured due to the purchasing of 20 'Fuck off cool' sunglasses, which will automatically

make us a legion of small, paintballing gods.

But for the time being G~Soc still has a number of places available on the team. Anyone interested in joining Please contact the society at Paintball@gsoc.net

Newcomers and experienced Paintballers are always welcome.

And remember folks: it'll all be over by Christmas.



Meanwhile in an abandoned Lunatic Asylum

G~Soc is also planning its second LAN party for March 21st - 23rd.

Like the First event the LAN party will (hopefully) run for 72 hours straight and accommodate up to 60 PC's, With a wide range of multiplayer games to Suit any games taste.

Experience is not an issue, as we will have players from Irish Quake team players to absolute beginners.

All that's required to participate is a PC or Laptop with a Network card, and a processor of Pentium 2 or higher.

Anyone Interested Please contact lan@gsoc.net

And remember a shiny new donkey to the man who brings me the head of colonel Montoya, before the next full moon.

UL Equestrian Club

by Patricia O'Neill

Well, it's the beginning of another semester, and a new chance for the UL Equestrian Club. It's been a turbulent time for the club in recent months, with the lack of funds severely limiting the amount of competitions participated in, as well as the amount of events hosted, by the club. With the absence of the chairperson, Caoimhe Kennedy, who has gone on co-op, the club has had the added difficulty of finding a replacement that will match her dedication. However, the new chairperson, Carol Doyle, is proving a promising and innovative replacement, which could see a turnaround in the club's fortunes. The formation of a new committee and re-organisation of meetings has, even in this short space of time, brought about a marked improvement in the club's efficiency and effectiveness.

The lack of funds has been quite crippling for the club in recent months. An especially big blow for us came about when we were financially unable to send a team to this year's intervarsities. However, with our renewed effort and organisation, as well as plenty of fundraising, we hope to change that for next year.

Because the club is effectively starting from scratch, we have plenty of fundraising events planned for this semester, so watch out for us around campus, folks! The equine bunch are well known for being some of the wildest fun-lovers on-campus, so keep an eye out for some wild and wacky events headed your way! We're not going to let the closure of a few pubs stop us!!!

Because UL's Equine Science course is unique in its kind in Ireland, we of the committee feel that it's extremely important for UL in particular to make its equestrian voice heard. With the presence on-campus of many experienced equestrians who have decided to choose horses as their livelihood, it follows that the interest, dedication, and enthusiasm necessary for the successful running of the club is definitely there. It's evident that there's a lot of talent there - the club is not the winner of four consecutive tetrathlon competitions by accident! In general, it's just a matter of reminding people that the club is there. Well, WE'RE HERE, PEOPLE!!! Still alive, very much kicking and boy, do we have stuff planned for ye!

And the club isn't just for the dedicated and (sometimes) fanatical out-and-out horsey folk either. Anyone can try their hand at riding (that's horse-riding - don't get any dirty ideas), and everyone is welcome to try. It's a completely unique challenge involving developing a skill and rapport with half a ton of majestic animal, with attitude! It's a thrill and buzz that a lot of people have never experienced. Now's your chance!!

Students will be seeing a lot of us around campus this semester, as many of the club's events and competitions, while having a definite horsey flavour, can be participated in and enjoyed by everyone. You could try your hand at betting, or putting together bridles (that's the thing that goes on the horse's head). It's a lot harder than it looks! While there won't be riding lessons until the club raises sufficient funds, there will be plenty happening in



The UL Equestrian Club in action

the meantime, with various speakers and tours being organised even as I write. The club committee is open to any suggestions members may have regarding events, etc, so by all means come along to the members meetings and tell us what WE can do for YOU!

One thing's for sure, the chairperson has plenty to be doing and the rest of the committee will be kept

extremely busy promoting the club's activities. It looks like it's shaping up to be an extremely interesting semester. Ah, so much to do, so little time! With the past adversity and recent re-organisation and restructuring, the club can only go forward, and with the amount of talent and enthusiasm for the sport that I see on-campus all the time, this writer feels that the future looks very bright for the equestrian club.



web: <http://photosoc.csn.ul.ie>
e-mail: photo@csn.ul.ie

GENERAL MEETING

Next Wednesday 26th of February

At the Sports Club (Bar) from 6-8pm

All Welcome

GROUP DISCUSSIONS.

Bring with you some photo's you wish to improve.
Get expert tips how to improve your photography skills!!

UL Green Party on War

by Aidan Hehir

The UL Green Party opposes any war with Iraq and calls for the immediate cessation of the use of Shannon Airport by the US military. We do not want Ireland to compromise both its neutrality and morality by becoming embroiled in an unjustifiable assault motivated purely by greed that will necessarily result in mass civilian casualties. The Green Party has been to the fore in exposing and protesting the use of Shannon Airport by the US and we are committed to opposing Ireland's sheepish and shameful compliance with the Bush regime's war plans. The assistance currently being given to the US, like that given during the Afghan war, is being done without Dail approval and is contrary to Article 28.3.1 of the Irish Constitution



Shannon Airport

Undoubtedly Ireland has benefited from close links with the United States. However, we cannot retain our independence or pride if we slavishly comply with Bush's global plans simply because he pays our wages. When did we officially agree to cede control over Ireland's foreign affairs to the US in order to secure jobs? There are times when morality must outweigh economics and we believe that this war must be opposed even if it does impact negatively on our relationship with the US.

The UN Charter does not authorize the use of force to achieve 'regime change' and any US/UN action based on targeting Saddam Hussein would be illegal. International law does not allow for pre-emptive military strikes. Article 51 of the UN Charter outlines the terms under which a member-state may use force in self-defence, but this force cannot be used in the absence of an attack. There is no evidence of any Iraqi involvement in the September 11th atrocities. Colin Powell's presentation to the UN Security Council was an exercise in disinformation consisting of shoddy evidence cynically designed to legitimise a US led war. The weapons inspectors in Iraq are having their work continually undermined by the US who are



Former UN Weapons Inspector Scott Ritter

frustrated by their inability to find the evidence they want. They cannot find it because according to experts in this field, it is simply not there. Former U.N. weapons inspector Scott Ritter dismissed U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell's allegation before the U.N. Security Council that Iraq is hiding weapons of mass destruction as "unsubstantiated" and based only on "circumstantial evidence." He has estimated that 95% of Iraq's chemical weapons were destroyed in the mid-nineties.

There is a country in the middle east, run by a recognised architect of aggression against innocent civilians, which does have nuclear weapons, which is in breach of UN conventions, and which has been accused by international humanitarian organisations of genocide and crimes against humanity. This country, rather than feeling the weight of the US's moral reproach, is Bush's single biggest ally. Israel's policy towards the Palestinians and the US's support for it, exposes clearly the hypocrisy of the US's moral and legal justifications for war on Iraq. This support also insures that Arabs will turn against the West. The US-based Middle East Institute has published a report by Edward Walker, a former assistant secretary of state for the Middle East, who, following a visit to Egypt and Saudi Arabia, found that popular opinion in the region was "more antagonistic toward the United States than at any time in recent memory".

The sanctions currently levelled against Iraq are wholly counter-productive. They have insured that the regime retains tighter control of food distribution and have kept the Iraqi people in a position of servitude. They have created a major economic and public health crisis in a country which, prior to the Gulf War, enjoyed one of the highest standards of living in the region. UNICEF estimates that half a million Iraqi children have died as a result of sanctions and about 5000 people are dying every month.

According to the World Food Programme, access to potable water, relative to 1990 levels, is only 50% in urban areas and 33% in rural areas and this scarcity of safe drinking water is spreading infectious disease. Sanctions have prevented the rebuilding of Iraq's infrastructure including the rebuilding of the electricity sector which powers pumps and other vital water treatment equipment. Ireland should be insisting on the lifting of sanctions and shifting towards 'targeted' sanctions as called for by such groups as Save the Children and reports for the UN sponsored by the Swiss and German Governments (the Interlaken Process and the Bonn-Berlin Processes). These indicate how sanctions could be better targeted on the arms trade and on the personal finances and travel of responsible leaders and elites. Such targeted sanctions were imposed briefly by the Security Council in Resolution 1137 of November 1997, prohibiting international travel of listed leaders until full compliance with UNSCOM inspectors had been restored. This was followed by swift Iraqi compliance. According to former UN assistant Secretary-General Denis Halliday, "If UN sanctions were terminated -- and if the lives of the people were to be restored and the economy rebuilt and society and culture restored -- the capacity to go forward with change via a multiparty democracy, as foreseen in the constitutional change under consideration, could become viable".

Never in the history of humanity has there been a state or empire as militarily and economically powerful as the United States is today. Rather than using its vast resources to effect the betterment of mankind, the Bush regime seeks to oppress and dominate international society through economic enslavement, cultural assimilation and military aggression. The people of America are themselves victims of the political

elite. The poverty, racism and economic dichotomy in existence in the US is evidence that there exists a self-serving hierarchy willing to cynically use patriotism to further their sectional aims while they covertly work towards their own proliferation regardless of the cost to their 'fellow' Americans. The Green Party is confident that the oil barons and big business interests running the White House are not truly representative of the American people.

Guardian journalist Brian Wittaker writes, "On the first day of war the United States will rain down 300-400 cruise missiles on Iraq, according to a report by CBS news. That averages out at one missile every four minutes around the clock, easily exceeding the total fired over six weeks in the 1991 Gulf war. The aim, according to the Pentagon sources quoted, is to cause such "shock and awe" that Iraqi troops will lose their will to fight at the outset. Just in case they do not get the message immediately, the US plans do the same again on day two." This war will impact greatest on those who have already suffered the most. The people of Iraq who have had to endure Saddam's tyranny are now being asked to welcome the bombardment of their country.



Brian Wittaker

Hundreds of thousands will undoubtedly die. This immanent war is a critical juncture in world history that will determine the course of international relations in the 21st century. The UL Green Party opposes a new world order dominated by the political and business interests of the US. We will strongly oppose war with Iraq and any Irish involvement in it. Mass movements have always been the catalyst for political change and we call on all UL students to voice their opposition and join the ever-increasing global movement against war in Iraq.

Kayak Club, Wales 2003

by Aidan Holmes

On Sunday the 26th January (yes the day after our exams) ULKC were again undertaking a trip to Wales. Our first stop was the river Inny on our way to catching the ferry. This is a pleasant river with a

Day 4 started again with an early rise for breakfast and then off to do the Llughy, this is a nice flowing river with a few very interesting drops which most people decided to try and navigate with some interesting results. We found that there were even



Kayaking down the "four fingers"

very nice wave at the bottom for the more adventurous amongst us. We split into two groups and set off down the river. At the start many of our newer members were very cautious, as some have not had that much experience on rivers but this caution was soon thrown aside. This is of course meant that we also encountered our first swimmer, which went to Brian, he also gets a special mention for best excuse "There was air in my bag". Having started very slowly with people trying to brush up on a few things we picked up the pace as we continued down the river and it was widely regarded as having been a fun paddle.

After the river we again set off for Dublin, unfortunately we had a slight problem with our trailer which meant that we had to bunk down in Dublin for the night. Thanks to Emilene, Richie and Claire for putting us up for the night in their respective abodes. As always we were looking on the bright side of life. This meant that we could sleep-in in the morning. Unless Cleetus was in your room where he was tapping messages on his phone, then again I'm one to talk apparently I snore. The next day Trinity kindly lent us the trailer and that we were all to get our stuff together and we were on the road again. Spirits were now very high as there had been fears about getting gear to Wales. The crossing was rough so most slept except for Ed who was unable to having taken his seasick tablets (he had to go and ruin all the fun). We finally arrived at the hostel, a day late but at least we got there.

Day 3 saw us rising early and getting ready to paddle. With water levels being fairly low the river decided was the Aberglassen, This is a nice paddle with a very nice Grade IV section at the bottom (the Gorge). It was here that we found that all our training and emphasising on looking for a rescue after you had capsized had for once paid off with many of us having never seen anyway near the same number of T-rescues being performed, fair play lads, but I think a lot of this had to do with the water being absolutely freezing. This however did not stop the swims entirely it merely cut down. Although nobody swam on the top section on the gorge we found that Wales has it's own variety of rock trolls (doesn't it Daren).

handy throw rope work (this was when he wasn't paddling the river). The same drop also claimed some other victims with Ed being the most noticeable, having run this series of four drops last year either up side down or backwards last year he wanted to conquer it this year, however he did not prove successful as he hit a series of rocks which meant that he swam (Drop 2 Ed 0).

On the morning of Day 5 we went to the river Dee. This is a pay on slalom course, which you can run as often as you like with a reasonable play feature at the bottom. This was fun except that you had to get out and walk back up to the top after every run and if you stood still for more than a few seconds icicles began to form on your gear. This pleasant little run also thought us some valuable lessons:

- 1) Trees are not your friend
- 2) Trying new skills in freezing cold water is not always rewarding
- 3) T-rescues don't always arrive on time.

We did not however restrict getting wet to paddling as I found on the walk back up to the top when crossing a little stream. Trying to keep myself I started to walk along the bottom of a boat only to find that my balance is useless and I fell over. This resulted in me lying across two boats with my ass sitting in the water and Debbie and Seona splitting their sides laughing (thanks for the help) and then I found myself incapable of standing up as I couldn't stop laughing either. By the morning of Day 6 there did not seem to be any water. Instead we had snow so we decided that we were going to have a snow day. This involved us going on a walk

Our final days' paddling took us to the Twyreyn. While we had originally planned to paddle the top we were told that we would have to pay so we decided against that and decided to paddle the lower section. This is a very long stretch of river with a nice Grade IV falls at the bottom. As per usual we split into two groups and headed down the river.

Swims to note were that of Shane who ran most of Bala falls only to mess it up at the bottom. Debbie who was knocked out of her eddy and the swim of the trip going to Richard who ran the entirety of Bala falls up-side-down and just missed a T-rescue to come up smiling saying "can I do that again" at which point Quincy nearly killed him. For future reference if you plan on staying under the water that long let us know that you are still alive and bang your boat.

there'll always be someone else to laugh). Loraine took the prize on this river. She took a bad line over a drop and found that she was stuck this ended with her having to swim but she deserves credit for being able to keep her head in a very cold situation. Debbie also took a tough looking swim having been flipped by an eddy line just before a nasty drop she swam and was saved from a very sore swim (ask Jenny) by Quincy with some very

More Info?

Visit the Pool anytime between 10 and 11
Tue, Wed or Thur
or visit
kayak.csn.ul.ie



UL Kayakers in the snow

History Society Report

by John Hickey

Welcome all to the new semester. Well what a whirlwind tour we've had since last we appeared in An Focal. Between Christmas, Exams and the replacement of the exec, we have fallen behind on our schedule and we are only now getting ourselves sorted. There have been a few changes in the running of things in the His Soc. We have a new exec, which consists of Alan Higgins as Auditor, Laura Real as Secretary, Patrick Kennedy as Treasurer and John Hickey as PRO. The new exec wishes to thank the old exec for all their hard work they put into the society and wish them all the best while they're on CO-OP. We would also like to welcome back any old members from CO-OP and hope they would return to us soon!!!!!! Another change is our meeting time, which has moved to 7:30pm in room 4 in the SU. So what have we been up to?

Before Christmas the members of the exec fasted for Concern, having to endure temptation and slugging from friends and family as our stomach groaned. We also held a display in the main Canteen raising awareness of our efforts and the work of Concern. All our hard work and starvation paid off (pardon the pun), when our final total raised was €250. We'd like to thank all those who supported us with encouragement and financial support and congratulate those who gave up



Bunratty Castle

allowing morsels of food passing their lips for 24 hours. Our small success has encouraged us to do it again next year.

As a reward and in festive celebrations, on Wednesday 11th of December, eight members of the UL History Society went off to Bunratty Castle for a gastronomic celebration of history with a Medieval Christmas Feast. Our four course culinary voyage into history began at 5:30, after being serenaded by song, mead (a medieval

'beverage'), and rhyme in the Great Hall of the Castle, built in the 15th Century by the Mac Conmara's. We were proved wrong early on in the evening to assume that this would be an ordinary meal. We were set the task at, when served our soup, to eat it minus the spoon. Needless to say this became quite comical, with the various attempts to consume the broth, especially when the soup started to spill. As we moved on through the night, one of the group began to be jibed at by the minstrel who knew he was from Tipp. However he gave it back as good as he got it. Having had our taste buds and stomachs satisfied the rest of the evening was spent listening to the melodic voices of the Bunratty Singers (who were admired by some for more than their voices). After three hours of being feed and entertained we left Bunratty Castle, some having enjoyed the ancient pleasures of mead a little too much! All had a good night and it would be recommended to anyone looking for something different

The next big event for the History Society is the upcoming IHSA (Irish History Student's Association) conference, to be held in UCC on the weekend of the 28th of February. We will be sending down two delegates to give a paper as well as some members of the History Society. A further report will be given in the next issue.

Outdoor Pursuits Club

by Aoife Nagle

UCD climbing wall was the venue this year for the annual climbing intervarsities. Nearly 150 people climbed-an unusually high but welcome number for such an event. Many more people came to watch. There were four categories-Male B, Female B, Beginner and Open A. 23 routes were set with the best 15 been counted. Points were gained based on the difficulty of the climb and there were unlimited attempts on each route. This is an unusual points system as usually there is a max of three attempts on each route -10 points given for reaching the final grip on the first attempt, 7 for the second and 4 for the third. The other system may have made the competition less competitive but this suits many people better especially beginners because there is less pressure to get it right on the first go. It also made the day a lot more relaxed and laid back which is the way the intervarsities should be.

A great days climbing was had by everyone. The competition ended with a three-way tie in the Open category. John Harrison who was climbing for UL was one of the three. In front of a crowd of cheering spectators they re-climbed the routes on the overhang until a winner was decided. John finished joint second. All three climbers had achieved a



UL Climbers at the UCD Climbing intervarsity

maximum of 515 points in the competition. Dave 'Hardcore' Wire another 'climber' from UL finished 3rd in the Male B category.

The overall winning college was found by calculating the average of the top four climbers from each college in each category. Sadly Trinity won so we had to hand over the trophy we won in Belfast last year.

For full results and pictures visit UCD's website <http://www.ucd.ie/~mountain/intvarsities/index.htm>

Congratulations to the Aconcagua Expedition team- Frank, Tom, Ed, JP, Barry, Darragh and Liam. Four of the

team of seven reached the summit of Mount Aconcagua which is situated in West Argentina on the Chilean Border. At 6962metres high it is the highest peak of the Andes and of the Western Hemisphere. This is the first expedition of its kind to be undertaken by an Irish college.

For more information on this trip, see the Aconcagua Update on Page 13



UL Outdoor Pursuits Club
Rockclimbing, Hillwalking,
Mountaineering and Caving

website at <http://www.csn.ul.ie/~opc/>
email opc@csn.ul.ie

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!!
VISIT THE CLIMBING WALL IN THE OLD SPORTS BUILDING
OPENING HOURS: MON, TUE & THUR 7-10PM

Irish Peace Society trip to Lebanon

by Bernadette Sexton

Between the 30th of January and the 10th of February 2003, 14 members of the Irish Peace Society travelled to Lebanon to study the effects of peace building in a post-conflict environment and investigate the conditions of Palestinian refugees based in Lebanon. Organised by Victoria Firmo-Fontan a society member and lecturer in peace studies the society had an intensive schedule lined up for us. We were based in Mreyjeh, Beirut, a Shia Muslim suburb of Beirut, where Paul Cochrane an American University of Beirut student kindly hosted us.

Lebanon, like Northern Ireland is a sectarian state - it is home to 17 sects. We met a cross-section of the politicians representing the various sects. These included Mr Al-Amine, former Minister of Labour, MP and former S.G. of the Baath party of Syria; and Walid Jumblatt, leader of the Druze sect, a man who spoke of making peace with his Syrian neighbours a week after they had killed his father, a man who dismissed Yasser Arafat as 'a useless symbol', and a man who boasted of the \$500 million he received from the Soviets during the Cold War - ultimately, an atypical figure in Lebanese politics. Former Prime Minister, Salim Hoss spoke of the lack of accountability in Lebanese society. While a large degree of freedom exists, there is no equal opportunity and therefore no real democracy. Corruption is endemic, and this derives from sectarianism. This issue at the heart of Lebanese politics should be tackled through development and the mindset of the people.

Remembrance a monument to the Irish Peacekeepers who died while on duty in Lebanon, and two orphanages, one of which the Irish peacekeepers operated while in Lebanon. We made a donation to the two orphanages and to the literacy project.

Throughout our stay in Lebanon what was particularly evident was the incredible hospitality of the Lebanese people, both in their homes, in shops, or in taxis. The country itself is full of contradictions - people who have nothing, offer you everything, the warm waters of the Mediterranean to the west, is contradicted in the near distance by the snow capped Chouf to the west. The landscape itself is incredibly beautiful be it the mountains, Naqoura, Tyre, or Byblos. At the same time extreme poverty stands shoulder to shoulder with decadence, as is evident when one witnesses the centre of Beirut, rebuilt for a wealthy elite at the expense of the mass public. One could also tangibly feel the fact that we were in the Holy Land. This only concentrated the feeling of being in a paradoxical situation. How can one be in a Holy Land, on the very land where so much pain and suffering has taken place?

We visited the Shatila refugee camp, home to Palestinian refugees forced out of their homes in 1948 and forced to live in poverty ever since. Here we met survivors of the massacre. We also met Chibli Mallat the human rights lawyer taking Ariel Sharon to court in Belgium for his role to play in the massacre back in 1982 when he was Minister for Justice.



The Irish Peace Society with the Abass Family

such as the Al-Bintaa agricultural centre, which teaches farmers better farming techniques and the Mousa Al-Sadr Foundation, which provides education and meals for the local community in Tyre.

The Hizbollah forced the Israelis out of Lebanon, everyone agreed on that no matter what side of the political spectrum you come from. They fought for the freedom of their country. In the process people died, too many people died - Israelis, Lebanese, Palestinians, they are still dying. Pictures of martyrs adorn every village. There are too many martyrs. Whether we were talking to Sheik Hassan Izzidine, Ibrahim Musawi, Sheikh Nabil Qaouq, Mohammad Khansa, or Hussein, one was struck by an organisation incredibly structured and disciplined with people dedicated and convinced by what they are representing.

A feeling that can only be described as surreal was overlooking Israeli settlements from South Lebanon, facing the Golan Heights, Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. It all became so real moving through checkpoints and being fenced off to prevent access to another country.

Then in the middle, you have the UN to keep the peace. Force Commander of UNIFIL operations Lalit Tewari, Timur Goksel, John Ryan, Eoin de Bruin, Patrick Dunleavy and David Campion outlined the UN duties in Lebanon and the problems they encounter.

Constructive for the future of Lebanon are youth organisations like Offre Joie. Having met numerous politicians and academics divided on a confessional basis, it was reassuring to meet young people who took social development in Lebanon into their own hands and through youth projects bring children of different religions together in a

variety of programmes. Once again it was with confidence that we donated funds towards the project knowing that the money would go to a good cause.

With our wonderful driver Hassan Awala, a former Red Cross Volunteer, one of the highlights of travelling the length and breadth of Lebanon was the privilege of witnessing the driving skills of the Lebanese. Driving the wrong direction up a dual carriageway, reversing on the dual carriageway were just some of the scenes witnessed. Ya Mohammed we discovered is the alternative to be screamed to J.C. on the repeated scenario of escaping death by a fraction of an inch.

The driving in Lebanon can be used as an analogy for the political situation in the country - crazy but somewhere there is a structure to be found - don't look behind you and drive straight ahead. In comparison the Lebanese must confront the past but at the same time move on in order to work together across the sectarian divide to create a viable future for the younger generation, free from war. If anything, the trip reinforced for the society the futility of war. Where are the winners?

Our trip to Lebanon featured in most daily papers in Lebanon, as well as evening television news features. An hour-long television documentary was shown on Lebanese television. RTE are planning on presenting a 4-part radio documentary on our experiences.

Before departing for Lebanon society members had put an enormous effort into raising money for a number of charities in the Lebanon. Bag-packing, raffles, non-uniform days were some of the tools employed to raise money. In total over 10,000 Euro was raised, which was donated to Toulin Literacy Project, Tebnine Orphanage, and Offre Joie. The society would like to express thanks to friends, family and students in UL who generously donated to the various charities that the society raised funds for.



A ruin in the Lebanon with the Hizbollah flag flying over it

Several days were spent in south Lebanon. In Toulin, we met with Abass Awala, UNIFIL interpreter and co-ordinator of the Toulin Literacy Project. We visited Tebnine, base of the Irish UN Peacekeepers while in Lebanon, the Garden of

We had a number of meetings with Amal and Hizbollah members who spoke about their political development, their work with local projects in the agricultural sphere, their provision of education and homes for orphanages in projects

For a full account of the trip to the Lebanon or more information on the Irish Peace Societies, visit

www.peace.ie



An Bainisteoir

The High Courts of London witnessed the glitz and glamour of Hollywood last week, as Catherine Zeta-Jones and Michael Douglas brought their case against Hello magazine. However, it was when under cross-examination that An Bainisteoir was able to establish the couple's real reason for suing the magazine. Ms. Jones mentioned a photo of her feeding her husband a piece of cake on a fork, which she found particularly offensive. And the reason? Well it's now emerged that Michael Douglas can't feed himself, well he is 58 after all! Naturally enough the couple didn't want that kind of information getting out, although at least Douglas has the consolation of knowing that infamously libidinous of his is still fully functioning. An Bainisteoir couldn't help noticing that Catherine was up the duff.

Still if the couple win their case, they'll have the consolation of a cool million, although Catherine admitted to not considering it an awful lot of money! Obviously though it's not as big a faux pas as Heather Mill's when asked if she was marrying Paul McCartney for his money. She retorted with the comment that she'd be marrying someone a lot richer if that was the case—presumably Bill Gates in about ten years time! Then again, maybe Heather doesn't consider close on a billion and a money printing-licence for the rest of her life a lot of money!

An Bainisteoir was also fascinated by the news from the British census that some 390,000 people are followers of the "Jedi" faith. In fact, there are more "Jedi's" than Buddhists or Jews, and one presumes that there not far behind the number of Muslims either, which means that there must be a certain percentage of extremists amongst their followers. One could only imagine the kind of terrorist threat such groups could pose, especially judging by the first five films and the military advantages they would have over al Qaeda, who now lag well behind in the terrorist league tables! In fact, maybe we haven't given George Bush enough credit for his decision to go ahead with his Star Wars style national defence. Maybe he has learned from his experience with the turban-headed moustache-grooming 'Jedi' from Afghanistan, and now realises the only way to fight these organisations is well, fighting fire with fire. We understand that Darth Vader has just been added to Bush's axis of evil.

Then again, Bush is probably too busy playing cowboys and Indians with Donald Rumsfeld in the Oval Office to be worried about the Jedi's for the moment. The Pretzel-choking oilpimp from Texas continues to hatch plans for a possible strike on Iraq, although rumours are circulating that a load of diesel has been hidden somewhere in Louth, and has got the attention of the American president. The word around the Wee county is that Colin Powell has been ordered to take samples from the Irish Sea to show the extremely high levels of radioactive substances that have been used in the region. Apparently, Bush plans to present this as hard evidence that Louth has weapons of mass destruction (WMD), to the UN Security Council next week.

And while on the subject of the UN Security Council, Bush plans to bring a load of football boots with him to the next meeting. After a telephone conversation with Alex Ferguson last Thursday, Bush has learned of the effectiveness of football boots to get the right result, after Ferguson told him of his success with David Beckham, with the Manchester United winger providing assists for both United goals against Juventus in mid-week. Bush is reported to be very impressed with the video of the match, and has ordered twenty Boots made out of Kianti, the wine of choice of Hannibal Lector. Bush's reasoning is that the boots, like Hannibal Lector, will be quiet, wise and potentially very fucking dangerous!!!

Last Weeks Crossword Answers

ACROSS: 3 Adulation: 8 Epic: 9 Whatever: 10 Leered: 13 Balsa: 14 Beehive: 15 Hat: 16 Bulldog: 17 Cahce: 21 Torpid: 22 Theology: 23 Herr: 24 Slandered

DOWN: 1 JellyBaby: 2 Tiger Lily: 4 Dowdy: 5 Leaflet: 6 Thee: 7 Over: 11 Hiccapped: 12 Legendary: 14 Bag: 15 Hormone: 18 Style: 19 Phil: 20 Boon

Your Stars

by Mystic Meg

Aries: (March 21—April 19)

Your attempt to revolutionize the world of art backfires when you realize that people have been photographing naked ladies for years.

Taurus: (April. 20—May 20)

Your outgoing nature, sweet temperament, and love of family are in no way evident outside of your description as a Taurus.

Gemini: (May 21—June 21)

It's not true that no one hears your cries for help. They hear and ignore your cries for help.

Cancer: (June 22—July 22)

Cancer and the StarCrab logo are the property of Zodiacorp Enterprises and may not be used without the company's express written permission.

Leo: (July 23—Aug. 22)

Under no circumstances should you take no for an answer this week. You'll wind up in jail or hospitalized, but the stars will have fun watching.

Virgo: (Aug. 23—Sept. 22)

Earth magick is strong in your sign this week. You know, if there were such a thing as s**t magick, it'd probably be pretty strong in your sign, too.

Libra: (Sept. 23—Oct. 23)

Your recent visit to the hospital to entertain sick children is a nice gesture, but they scream themselves senseless upon seeing you again.

Scorpio: (Oct. 24—Nov. 21)

A bump in life's road causes you to lose control of life's car and spin out of control, careening off life's cliff and into life's rocky valley below, where the car bursts into life's flames.

Sagittarius: (Nov. 22—Dec. 21)

It appears that this is your year at last, and it is—especially the "at last" part.

Capricorn: (Dec. 22—Jan. 19)

The good news is, at long last, your time machine works. The bad news is that you won't be lying about being a disabled Vietnam veteran anymore.

Aquarius: (Jan. 20—Feb. 18)

After experiencing a sudden and profound shift in priorities, you spend all your time making love instead of money, causing you to die exhausted and penniless.?

Pisces: (Feb. 19—March 20)

Despite having a good week, you are somewhat discouraged to discover that people still prefer your charismatic, black Secretary of State.

An Focal Contributors

Editor

Paddy Buckley

Writers

Donal O Driscoll
Anthony Kirpatrick
Elaine Byrne
Bernadette Sexton
Mike Slattery
Lorcan MacCurtin
Paul Dowling
Laura Greer
Bredan Coffey
Brendan Curran
Timmy Hennessy
Ronan Ivers
Barry Walsh

Adrian Crowe

Helena Walsh

Patricia O'Neill

Aidan Hehir

Aidan Holmes

John Hickey

Aoife Nagle

Patricia Moriarty

Proofreading

Marie-Claire Butler

Simon Renardson

Photographs

Ella Daly

UL Photographic Society

Patricia Moriarty

The Internet

continued from frontpage

meeting. The atmosphere in the grandstand was unforgettable for me: 4,000 people crammed in together, laughing and praying for a big windfall of moolah!! But the best part of the day was always when the horses would enter the final bend of the race. Everybody shouting and cheering on their horse to victory, certain student's attempting to streak onto the course for publicity, and my old Cork buddy once again treating me with his words of wisdom "Come on ya donkey boy. I need a new bed boy. I've wet me pants with all the excitement boy!!" That particular horse ended up turning around and going the wrong way on the final furlong...

The first race of the day was the main feature for the U.L student's in attendance, and this was the 'U.L chase'. Now my racing knowledge is quite limited I'm afraid, so do not even think about asking me what distance the race was run over!! It was a mediocre start to the racing day in this 2:00p.m race, as 'Camargue' ran out an easy winner at odds of 3/1.

The most interesting race of the day was the second race I thought however: as one of the J.P McManus trained horses was almost beaten to the post by 'Maverick Dancer', in what turned out to be an extremely close and high paced race. This win was received to the delight of the



UL Racing Society at the Launch of the Student Race Day

vast amount of U.L student's, which had backed the Limerick millionaire in the betting ring.

State of the art facilities are ever present at the Greenmount course, making the trip vastly more enjoyable for anybody visiting. The course itself finished construction well over a year ago, and now hosts not only big events on the racing calendar, but also exhibitions such as the 'Ideal homes and building exhibition' and the 'Limerick Show' on an annual basis. T.V cameras and in-race commentary are also present within

the course, all of which give a better view of the races to the many bars within the grandstand. And there are also many fine eating facilities on the grounds: with not only a restaurant on the ground floor of the grandstand, but also a Supermacs establishment, which might appeal to the younger generation.

All in all without a doubt, this was a great day to remember for everybody who made the journey. Included in the special Students' Union offer concluding the festivities in Patrickswell, was free entry to the

Market nightclub that Wednesday night. I know for a fact my Cork buddy went on the long haul into the city, and I leave you with yet another piece of wisdom from a role model well suited to our generation!!

" My god boy. Tonight is the flaming night boy. I'll be takin' the ladies home from the Market to me pad boy, for some good Cork lovin' boy. Best be off down to Mallow to see the mother again boy. Hey Anthony boy, get that stupid gimp tape recorder out of my face boy..."

THE MARKET

U.L. Semester 2

Wednesdays: FREE ENTRY B4 12am

Karaoke in Bar @ 10pm

Thursdays: Official U.L. Party Night

Dance/Chart Main Room

Disco Inferno Upstairs

- Tickets from SU, Buses from 11pm

Fridays: Bump'n'Grind R'n'B/HipHop

Saturdays: Dance/R'n'B/HipHop

Disco Inferno Upstairs

Doors open @ 10pm

Promotions Every Night : Pre-Club Party in McDaid's