

AN focal

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK STUDENTS' UNION

Aontas Na Mac Léinn

U L S U
Ollscoil Luimnigh

Week 3, Sem 2

Edition 9

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Price: Free as a bird!



The Sculpture at the entrance to the Glucksmann Library.

photo: Gabbie Ni Riain

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NOTICE:
Kollege Week is Week 7 this year. Nobody will be allowed into the Stables and Scholars Club during Kollege Week unless they have their membership sticker.
Apply online at www.clubs.ul.ie and collect your sticker from the Students' Union

Council Adopts Recovery Plans for SU and Shop

An emergency Class Reps Council was convened last Thursday, to vote on a recovery package for the Student Union Shop. Council had deferred the vote after the presentation of the recovery package and accepting the proposal to restructure of the Students' Union to aid in its own financial difficulties.

The principle item of discussion for the Council on Tuesday was the proposed changes to the union staff structure and finances, which were reported in the last edition of An Focal. While there was a few questions form members of the Council regarding the plan there was no opposition to its acceptance.

The meeting on Thursday resulted from a vote of the council to convey an emergency General Meeting to vote on proposals on the restructuring of the board of directors, clarifying the control and ownership and on the financial recovery of the Shop.

Pat Carroll, the Students Union's Auditor and who has been working as financial consultant to the Union recently, explained that the SU Shop urgently required a cash injection. In order to do this, a loan of €110,000 will be needed

to enable the implementation of the ULSU Services (the SU and Durmroe Shops) Rescue Package. The loan would be taken out by the Union and paid back by the ULSU Services Ltd.

Included in this proposal was also a restructuring of the management and clarifying the control and ownership structure of the Shop. This proposal would formalise the 100% ownership of ULSU Service with the Students' Union and insure that representatives of the Students' Union would sit on the board of directors, and be required to present financial reports to Class Reps Council on a quarterly basis.

Speaking after the Council one Class Rep said, "It is great that there is transparency in the Shop."

Members of the Council questioned the proposal and the amendments made, before accepting the proposal without opposition.

"The Shop is saved!" Eoin O'Broin declared, speaking after on Council's acceptance of the proposal, "It is good for a number of reasons, primarily there are resources in place for ULSU Services, to see the business out of its

current difficulties and to move into profit within 18 months."

Continuing and explaining what this meant for the Students' Union, Eoin said: "At the same time by seeking the loan the Students' Union has begun to use the tool that are necessary to engage in any forms of expansion of services, that may wish to be involved in the future." The SU President speaks of the hope that with the recovery of the shop and its expected profits in the future that this will assist the Union in developing services and resolving its recent difficulties.

With Council passing the respective resolutions by Class Reps Council, it is hoped that the current difficulties experienced by both the Students' Union and ULSU Services will be a closing of a chapter in the Student's Union history. It will be now the responsibility of the current Executive, Council and their successors. It could be argued that one thing to ensure the future success of the Students' Union is the participation of the Students' of the University of Limerick.

News

Student Assaulted

A serious assault occurred on the Dublin Rd last Thursday night. Three UL students were harassed, and one was assaulted.

Three female students were walking home together from the Kilmurray Lodge nightclub early Friday morning. A car stopped the driver got out and began harassing the women. One of the women, who was attempting to take the car's registration number, was then seriously assaulted by one of the passengers. Gardaí have been informed and are investigating the case. If anyone

has any information regarding this incident, please contact the Gardaí at Henry St. Garda Station (061-212400)

If you are the victim of any crime, please call into the Students' Union and fill out an incident form, as well as reporting it to the Gardaí. The more evidence the Union has that student safety needs to be dealt with urgently, the better chance there is of progress being made. Personal alarms are available at the Students' Union from the Welfare Officer and the Education Officer.

Community Garda on Campus

The Community Garda will be on campus on Tuesday of Week 3 between 12 and 2, for the purposes of giving out Garda Age Cards.

If you wish to apply for an Age Card, you will need your Birth Certificate, two passport photographs, your UL ID card and the application fee of €6.

The Community Garda is also on campus on Tuesday evenings between 7 and 8 in the President's office in the Students' Union.

If you need any advice or help, want to report a crime, or simply want to register for your Garda Age Card, call in on Tuesday evenings between 7-8pm.



OECD comes to UL

This past two weeks the proposal of reintroducing college fees was once again an issue for considerable concern among the students of U.L and other Universities, Colleges and Institutes of Technology around the country.

The issue was raised again as a result of an economic review published last year by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, which noted that the general international trend is one where students at third level pay fees and Ireland's "exceptional" policy of eliminating fees had "yet to show noticeable results".

The review by the OECD also recommended the Australian style of "study now, pay later" student loans as a possible way of overcoming the vast opposition there is to third level fees in this country. The organisation highlighted the fact that many countries have successfully introduced fees and have made considerable provisions for the less well off.

Such proposals may come as a shock to many students who may have felt that after last year's various nationwide protests the issue of third level fees had been somewhat laid to rest, at least for the time being. It is also interesting to note that a vast majority of students know very little about the OECD itself and yet this organisation could be responsible for persuading the government to bring back third level fees.

The OECD is an organisation with 30 member countries which produces internationally agreed instruments,

decisions and recommendations in areas where multilateral agreement is necessary for individual countries to make progress in a globalised economy. The independent Directorate for Education was created in July 2002. It has since worked on reviews of its member countries educational facilities and systems and produces reviews and recommendations on what it considers to be the most effective ways of running the educational facilities of these countries. In its most recent proposal the OECD has announced that it will visit a number of universities and colleges throughout the country over the coming weeks in order to see first hand how the educational facilities of Ireland are functioning. It is widely expected that after they complete this review they will make their final recommendations to Education Minister Noel Dempsey, on what they deem to be the most efficient system for fees at third level.

Although Education Minister, Noel Dempsey has indicated that the issue of third level fees is off the agenda for the "foreseeable future" this latest development is certainly an issue that could put serious financial strain on many students and their families.

Boathouse Agreement Signed



Another milestone in the Boathouse Project was reached last Monday when the University and Student' Union signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the construction of the Boathouse. Discussions & Negotiations have been on going since last May to get the wording of the memorandum acceptable to all parties. The memorandum paves the way for the design team of architect, quantity surveyor, Civil Engineering Consultant, Mechanical Engineering Consultant, Electrical Engineering Consultant, Management Consultant & Service Engineers to be assembled and a building construction firm being hired. The memo goes through background,

management & financing of the project and effectively releases the funds for the project to begin. Points of note are that there will be the 4 Student Representatives on the Boathouse Building Committee, which will be jointly chaired between the Vice President Admin & Secretary of the University John O'Connor and the Student's Union President. All decisions of this committee will be on a consensus basis. The memorandum concludes with a section on management & administration of the Boathouse once complete and is on view in the Students' Union Clubs & Societies Office and Class Reps Development Office.

Anti-Cutback Campaign

Education is a right, but it can't work on cuts this tight. That's the message being sent out by the university Students' Unions around the country. Government cutbacks have been imposed on all universities in the country. In the University of Limerick cuts have been made across the board, in departmental budgets, wage budget, non-wage budgets and so on.

In UL, students are invited to take part in the postcard signing campaign, on Monday and Tuesday afternoon, in the Students' Union. Postcards will be sent to the Minister for Education by ULSU.

The text of the postcard reads:

Dear Minister McCreavy

We, the University Students of Ireland, are writing to protest at this Government's deplorable approach to third-level education. It is difficult to believe that at a time when Ireland is making the move towards an information economy, the Government is willing to gamble our success by cutting the legs from underneath the nation's trainees.

With the savage cuts to the University budget, students are paying more each year for a parallel decrease in service. Education is a right, but by relegating its quality, you are doing it a wrong.

We now call on you to rethink your position on our future, we ask you to stand up to the responsibility of providing for a level playing field, where every student has the opportunity to avail of a decent standard of education.

Signed _____



Take part in the Postcard Campaign

**Students Union
Monday and
Tuesday Week 3
12-3pm**

News

Big Improvements in SU shop

This semester, buying your lunch, your snack, or your dinner in the Students' Union shop is a greatly changed experience. It's almost like a new shop. The changes are evident as soon as you walk in the door; clean and bright, with well stocked shelves and a good variety of produce, it's a far cry from the dusty, empty shelves of yesteryear. The deli is now open until 6.30pm in the Student Centre shop. Queues, both for the deli and the shop, are moving much more

quickly, and the atmosphere is, in general, much friendlier. The majority of the changes are down to new manager, Fiona Doyle. Originally hired as a retail consultant, she has been working as shop manager since the previous manager left in January. According to Fiona, the shop will continue improving until it's on a par with any convenience store. "We are putting an emphasis on trying to do more student specials and offers," she said, "

and we would hope that students will continue to support their local shop. We accept that there will be busy times in the shop and that queues are inevitable, but we are working to minimise them as best we can, with the space restrictions we are working under." There will be a suggestion box in the shop from Week 3, so you can let Fiona and her staff know what you want from your shop There will be special offers advertised in An Focal on a regular basis.

U L S U S h o p Special Offers

Week 3/4

Aontas Na Mac Léinn



this wednesday & every wednesday

ulsu presents



SPANK!

launch night wed. feb 18th

**A MASSIVE WEDNESDAY NIGHT PARTY @TRINITY ROOMS
TWO ROOMS OF DANCEFLOOR ACTION
KEITH IN THE MAIN ROOM, TINA T IN THE QUARTER CLUB**

free admission before midnight
every wednesday €5 after

FREE BUSES FROM ALL OVER CASTLETROY & O'DWYER'S PUB. SEE MAP ON FLYER FOR DETAILS.

**Buy one bottle
of BPM Energy
Drink, get a
second FREE!**

**Mars, Malteser,
Twix, Mars:
Buy any three
for €1.50**

**Buy any 2
Dolmio
Products, get a
FREE Wok or
Lasagne Dish**

while stocks last

Keep your eyes on
An Focal for more
special Offers in the
next edition

News

Computers for Students: Good News and Bad News Good:50 More Computers in Library

What was the first thing you used to see as you entered the Library? A long queue of students for the PCs stretching back almost to the toilets. Well friends that could be the last time you might catch such a sight! You see, those responses and comments you write in the student surveys that you are asked to compete every now and then can sometimes help to deliver improvements. In relation to IT services, the last student survey indicated that students were happy enough with what was on offer from the PCs in UL except that the queues were so long and a lot of time was spent waiting to get a PC for that important piece of work. Armed with this vital information ITD and the Library made a (successful) bid for funds to the University's Quality Support Unit to upgrade the facilities and infrastructure (desks, power and network cabling) in the Library PC Commons. ITD in turn allocated funding for the 40 new Dell PCs (complete with CD writers

and 17" flat screens). Declan Maguire of ITD said planning for the work began in November 03 and the work itself occurred in the inter-semester break in February.

This involved some inconvenience to students and staff in the Library but was kept to a minimum with the objective of having the new PCs installed for Week 1. ITD are proud to report that all the work was completed on time and that students are now benefiting from the increased availability of PCs.

There is now total of 135 open access PCs in the Commons up from 88 - an increase of over 80%. Mr. Maguire would like to thank everyone who helped to successfully deliver this project.

So in future if you see a queue in the Library near the toilets it could be just that there's been a sudden call of nature!

Bad: 24-hour access offline until Week 6

In a similar situation to last semester, ITD have decided to close the 24-hour labs in the "Vax" at 1am until week 6. An Focal spoke with Gordon Young, head of ITD, to find out why.

Why are UL No Longer able to support a 24-hour lab for the full 15 weeks of semester?

"The simple reason is the cost. We have to pay the security company to cover the labs from the time that the computer laboratory finishes, through the evening, right the way through to the next morning, all day Saturday and all day Sunday, and we have to pay that cost per hour to the security company

The University suffered cuts in related to the HEA Grant which came through. Which materialised itself eventually down to cuts in ITD, both in pay and non-pay cuts."

Do you have an estimation as to when

it will be up and running?

"We normally bring it back up in week six. The reason we shut it off for the first weeks is because it wasn't being used. We were looking at the records, there was nobody in the lab after one o'clock, or maybe only one or two people, so we were paying a high cost for low utilisation.

Last semester, the figures changed in week six, because people wanted to do projects, so that's when we brought 24-hour access back in. Things may be different this semester, we'll keep an eye on the numbers that are there late at night."

ITD seems to be dealing with cuts by putting the money it does have into services which have a higher demand. Cold comfort if you've been kicked out of the lab with report to finish for 9am the next morning.

Alternative Careers Fair Tuesday, Feb 2nd

UL's first Alternative Careers and Volunteering Fair will take place on **Tuesday, Week 3 in EG010 from 12pm-3pm.** This will be a very colourful and interesting event with a mix of organisations offering opportunities from various sectors including Non-Profit Organisations; Local, Regional and Community Development; International Development; Social Services; Youth Work; Voluntary Sector; Summer Work; and the Arts.

An Focal spoke to Mary Sweeney, who organised the event.

Where did the idea behind the Fair come from?

We want to provide services to as wide a population of students as possible. We're conscious that a lot of our careers services that we offer as part of our regular programme may seem to be geared towards the business, engineering and the sciences. And sometimes students in other areas, such as humanities, or students who are interested in the less conventional careers, feel that there isn't anything there for them. So the idea behind this is to complement the main careers fair we held in October. It reflects the diversity of the student body. We've a lot of students doing different types of courses and looking at different areas. We wanted to help them find some kind of a pathway.

How has reaction been so far?. The initial response has been that people think it's a very good idea, and that it's interesting. It's going to be quite colourful. We're very enthusiastic about it, and we're hoping that the enthusiasm will spread out. We do want to get the word out to all students, not just final years. We think there's something in this for everybody.

I think it's important for us to introduce students to all types of opportunities. Be it conventional careers or atypical careers. And careers that allow them to adopt a good work / life balance. We also want to focus on the non-corporate sector and encourage students to look at areas like social and community development and voluntary work and things like that. Because they're not glossy, those

organisations don't have the resources to advertise in newspaper, so we'd like to provide a service to them and make sure that students know that there are those kinds of alternatives there.

I think students are becoming more aware of the need for a balance between their work and their personal life. People know that it can't all be about work. A lot of people want the security too, and work long hours. But there are far more people working staggered hours, taking career breaks, job-sharing, working from home. There are a far greater variety of work patterns. Right throughout the employment sector there's a view that the workplace has to accommodate people's commitments.

How do you see the Fair's future?

We want it to become part of the calendar. It depends on how successful it is. We're delighted with the response so far from exhibitors. The University of London is running something similar in March, and they only have 20 companies. We have 30, covering everything from Community and Development work, Voluntary Work, Performing Arts, even Religious Orders. It's very broad. We would certainly like it to be part of the calendar, but that will only happen if it's supported by students.

Will the Fair be of benefit to someone who sees their career path as already being mapped out?

Very much so. A number of students are interested in work that's hard to get into. The UN or something like that. Having had some experience in voluntary work is a huge asset for any kind of job anywhere. Anybody interested in developing his or her own skills and gaining valuable experience that would be just as useful for a teacher or someone working in the bank.

The fair will cover summer work and part time work as well as full time. For example, Shannon heritage, who want entertainers for medieval feasts, will be present. So it's not just for final year students, it's for everyone from first year, all the way up.

It's an information fair more than a jobs fair. So please come along and see what's happening on the day.

Organisations Attending the Careers Fair

Organisations Attending	Limerick Youth Service
Ballyhoura Development	Macnas ,(Performing Arts, Galway)
Organisation (Community Development)	MEI RELSA (English Language Schools)
Barretstown Gang, Kildare	National Youth Council of Ireland
Camphill Community, Kilkenny	Oxfam
Comhlamh (International Development)	Paul Partnership
Community Forum Limerick	Shannon Development
Daghda Dance Company	Shannon Heritage
Federation of Music Collectives	Signature Services (summer work in the USA)
Franciscan Community	Simon Community
Focus Ireland	Sli Eile (Community & Volunteering work)
Foroige (Youth work)	Suas (International Development work)
Glenstal Abbey	TECS Summer Camps in Spain
Irish Chamber Orchestra	UL Students' Union
Irish Peace Institute	USIT
I-to-I Ireland (Voluntary work abroad)	Volunteer Mission Movement
Leargas (International Voluntary work)	

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News

Probably The Best Campus In The World...



By Tracy Lynch

If you have spent many a sleepless night wondering about the infrastructural future of our campus, trying to figure out why there are numerous luminous yellow-coated workmen walking around and a gigantic crane overlooking UL, then this is the article for you! We thought it was time to reveal to our students the facts and figures concerning all capital projects - those completed in 2002/2003, those currently under construction and those planned for the campus in the future.

And what better to start with than the one designed by Sean Scully - "An Crann Soilse" - which caused the most controversy last semester. Completed in September 2003, officially unveiled by the artist at the front gate to UL in October 2003, and resulting in a lot of mixed opinions around the campus, a major element of this design is a landscaped roundabout edged in granite settings. The sculpture is further accompanied by two masts and an enveloping yew hedge.

Also completed last year was the reconfiguration of the 33m pool in the PESS building and the provision of new amenities such as a new physiology lab for the Physical Education, Physiotherapy and Sports Science students and also a biochemistry lab for the latter. This came to a cost of E900,000 and was funded by grants received from the HEA.

The CSIS building also underwent substantial reconfiguration work which resulted in the provision of new research labs. This work was completed at a cost of E146,000 and funded by a grant from Science Foundation Ireland.

Land was also swapped between a house and a farmyard on the North Bank in order for work to begin on the new Health Sciences building. There were also minor works such as improvements to infrastructure and the landscape costing E140,000, of which E95,000 came from a grant from the HEA.

So lately (unless you've been walking around with your eyes closed!) a lot of construction work has been taking place around the campus - hence the luminous coats and cranes! At the moment there are six main construction projects in operation overall. The proposed Mill Stream Courtyard buildings are mainly

staff related and will include amenities such as a faculty/staff common room with meeting rooms and an underground car park for 50 cars and a 100 bicycles. The work has been contracted to last from March 2003 to Oct 2004 at a cost of E5.65million and is to be funded by the Foundation and commercial funds from campus catering operations.

Construction also commenced in August 2002 on the campus Link bridge. This will link the future North and South campuses and is scheduled for completion in August 2004 at an estimated cost of E13million.

Work on the Engineering Research building which will be located to the north of the Foundation building also began in August 2002 and the estimated cost of E14million will be equally shared by the State and Foundation. This is to be completed in Oct 2004 and will include a new 120-seater lecture theatre to replace the Donogh O'Malley Theatre as well as an undergraduate design studio.

The North Bank is to get its first academic structure in the form of the Health Sciences building which will cater for 500 nursing students, 100 physiotherapy students and 100 occupational, speech and language therapy post-graduates. Work commenced on this in early last August, will cost E20million and it is scheduled for occupation in June 2005.

The North Bank will also be home to Thomond Village - the fourth of its kind in UL. Construction commenced in March 2003 and the project is due for completion next January. Providing an additional 503 en-suite study bedrooms and costing E34million, this will be funded primarily by commercial borrowing, a tax saving scheme for investors, a grant from the Foundation and small equity from Plassey Campus Centre Ltd.

So, by now you're probably thinking that UL is going to have the biggest campus in the world! But wait.... There's more! At present there are many capital projects at the planning stage as well as those which require funding. Planning permission has been obtained for a fifth student village - The Citadel - which will be comprised of apartment blocks of 500 en-suite study bedrooms. Construction for phase 1 (324 bedrooms) is scheduled to commence in early 2005 and this phase will be completed in September

Lynch Southcourt Hotel

Will be interviewing for part-time staff on Thursday, March 4th in Students Union building from 10am to 12:30pm.

Ask at Students' Union for more information



2006.

Plans for a spectacular pedestrian bridge over the Shannon, which will link the North and South campuses, have also been drawn up. However, the problem of funding this project with its price-tag of E13million - still remains to be solved.

A brief is currently being prepared for an extension to the Kemmy Business School. The site for this new building will hopefully be located due south of the Schumann Building.

The student body voted, in a referendum, to fund the provision of a boathouse on the Shannon to provide facilities for the Rowing, Kayak, Sub-Aqua and the Mountain Bike Clubs of UL. A fund of E4million is being provided for this project.

Funding has also been earmarked by the State to provide facilities for the performing arts in Ireland and a bid has been made for part of these funds to be allocated to UL for the construction of a building next to the Health Sciences

building on the North Bank. This project will cost an estimated E14.4million. A competition is now to be conducted under the auspices of the RIAI to appoint an architect to design the structure. A concept plan has been prepared for the upgrading and reconfiguration of the PESS Building. This building was the first to be completed on campus in 1972 and is currently in dire need of renovations. The estimated cost of the renovations is E8.5million.

Finally, a plan for the expansion of the Glucksman Library has been submitted to the HEA as a priority project for funding. The existing library was built to accommodate 7,200 full-time students. Phase 2 is targeted to provide for 12,250 students at an estimated cost of E23.8million.

So there you have it, the facts and figures of the future UL wonder-campus... probably the best campus in the world!

In Memoriam

Joe McElligott.

Senior Technician, ECE Dept.



Joe McElligott, our friend and colleague died recently. Joe joined us in 1979 and was well known, respected and liked by all. He held the position of Senior Technician in the ECE Department. He was a friend to all and would be the first to stretch out the hand of friendship and aid to anyone who was in need. This was well known by many of the staff and students who worked with Joe in the ECE Department as well as the rest of the University. Joe was one of the founder members of the Disabled Sports Committee and was involved with the committee for many years. A keen golfer, he organised events to help fund the Disabled Sports weekend, such as a bi-annual Golf Classic. On Friday 13th February Joe went to his final reward after a short illness. He's probably not resting in peace, but organising a poker classic 'up there'. Joe will be missed by us all.

Faculty and Staff ECE Department

Features & Opinion

The Political Interview - Sinéad Carey

'Taking a hands-on approach'

In the second of his interviews with members of UL's political organisations, Mikey Stafford speaks with Sinéad Carey of Young Fine Gael on issues such as voter apathy, the "hands-on" approach and a party reborn.

Another interview, another of my HPSS classmates sitting opposite me. Sinéad is one of the 110 members of the UL branch of Young Fine Gael, an organisation well engaged at the national level. "We have 3 members of the UL branch on the National Executive Committee. I am the vice-President myself, Elizabeth Munnelly is the National Secretary and John Lawless is the director of European Elections. We have always had an involvement on National Committees."

I asked Sinéad what activities is Young Fine Gael involved in at campus level. "All our meetings are open to the public, we try to keep them on very popular themes, by holding them on issues of current interest. For example we recently had a talk on electronic voting." The party is also heavily involved in the local election campaign in the area as "a lot of the candidates in the local elections are former members of Young Fine Gael so we would know them personally."

Perhaps YFG's biggest success last year was its sleepout in aid of the homeless of

Limerick. "That began last year with the UL branch of Young Fine Gael and it became a National campaign this year. We slept out on the streets of Limerick for 24 hours, they did so also in Galway, Dublin and Cork this year. We got national coverage from the 3 main newspapers and we raised €3,500."

Sinéad sees such actions as necessary in the current political situation. "We are very in favour of taking a hands-on approach, policy papers are great but the only way you're going to highlight the real issues, the fact that the most vulnerable people in our society have been overlooked by this Government is to go out and take action."

Despite the apparent success of the youth wing of the party, the senior ranks are still failing to gain significant support. How does Sinéad view the party as a whole in light of this failure to date? "I know where you are coming from, we have been down in the polls recently, but internally we are more united than ever. We may not be viewed by the public as being as big as we would like to be but internally there's more solidity in the party than ever before."

Sinéad is characteristic of most Fine Gael members, in her unwavering trust in the leadership of Enda Kenny, despite the majority's indifference. "My opinion is that if Enda Kenny could meet in small groups, every voter, he would be the next Taoiseach. I have no doubt about that.

He has a lot going for him, he's honest, he's credible, and he addresses the real issues. He does not believe in grabbing headlines just for the sake of grabbing headlines."

But by grabbing headlines a leader draws attention to his party and its policies. To date Kenny has failed to make a major impact on the electorate as whole. "I agree with you, but I think the next 6 months are going to be the key. In local elections it is the candidate that people vote for and people do vote across party lines, so it is going to be the candidate in the local area rather than the leader."

Sinéad views voter indifference as at least partly responsible for the poor figures received by the main political parties in recent times. "There is a huge apathy out there. You know yourself, only 40% of our age group will vote in the local elections in June. It's very difficult to engage young people in particular. The tribunals haven't helped, the scandals that have come out, the litany of things that our public representatives have gotten away with."

An instilling of political interest in the schools is one way Sinéad feels this apathetic climate can be improved. "I think possibly the CSPE programme in secondary schools could be enlivened a small bit to try and engage people of that age. I have heard of places where it has worked very well. If people feel involved they will engage a little bit more."

She is quick to point out YFG's efforts on campus to increase the level of political participation. "Here in UL Young Fine Gael has run for the last 5 years a get registered to vote day. We feel that this will help, because if you are registered than there's a greater chance that you will go out to vote. This past year we registered about 800 people, previous years we've gotten 1,500 to 2,000."

Obviously, Sinéad hopes these fledgling voters will help put Fine Gael into power at the next General Election. Does she feel the party is effectively portraying itself as an alternative government?

"People are very unhappy with the Fianna Fail-PD government and they are starting more and more to see Fine Gael as an alternative. We have the policy areas, benchmarking for example, a lot of people don't like it but we're also being commended for taking a hard stand on a hard issue. The same with the neutrality issue, Enda Kenny is getting a fabulous reception everywhere he goes." She is, however, not remiss of the damage inflicted upon the party in 2002. "It's never easy to come back from a defeat like the one we suffered in 2002, but it has made a lot more aware of the public's perception of us."

Fair Trade - What's it all about?



**Guarantees
a better deal
for Third World
Producers**

Dónal ó Driscoll interviews Peter Gaynor of FairTrade Mark Ireland

Q. Could you explain to people what exactly FairTrade Mark Ireland does?

A. Fairtrade Mark Ireland is a charity that is supported by all the major overseas Irish development agencies. The Fairtrade mark is a bit like the Guaranteed Irish mark, but it is awarded to products like tea, coffee, cocoa, bananas and other tropical imports. It ensures that the producers of those products get a better deal in their trade with First World countries. We run the Fairtrade label and we encourage companies in Ireland to trade on Fairtrade terms. We also encourage supermarkets and other businesses to sell Fairtrade products and consumers to buy these items.

Q. How did the idea for Fairtrade Fortnight come about? What is happening over the two weeks?

A. Fairtrade Fortnight is the main awareness-raising period for Fairtrade in Ireland. It is really about encouraging people to redouble their efforts particularly in relation to promoting fair trade and Fairtrade products. This year it runs from the 1st to the 14th of March. We encourage our supporters - organisations like Oxfam, Concern, Christian-Aid Ireland, etc to get their volunteers to promote fair trade. We also work with other sections of society such as students and women's groups to promote the Fairtrade campaign. We encourage people to do anything they can - from something as simple as just telling their friends about Fairtrade - right up to more complicated things like converting their town into a Fairtrade

town - which can take a lot of hard work to accomplish.

Q. What would you like people to consider when buying their tea/coffee etc?

A. The FairTrade mark was set up to guarantee that the people of the Third World would be getting a better deal in their business tradings with the rest of the world. As Martin Luther King once said. "Before we leave our breakfast tables in the morning, we have depended on half the world" and we won't have peace on earth until we have recognised that fact. Products like tea, coffee, cocoa, bananas etc are exported by Third World nations and unfortunately they currently get a very poor deal for their efforts. They get paid a tiny percentage of the price we as consumers pay for their products. We're asking people to think of how they spend their money and ask them to buy products that have an independent guarantee so that African, Asian, South American and other Third World producers can get enough money to cover their production costs and still have some left over for investing in community projects.

Q. The first Irish FairTrade town was recently established in Clonakilty, Co. Cork. Do you hope to see many more towns follow suit in the near future?

A. Clonakilty has an amazingly energetic and committed town committee. They have inspired us and will undoubtedly inspire other towns. They are the first but they certainly won't be the last.

Q. How easy is it for people to play their own small part in promoting Fairtrade?

A. It is really simple. All we are asking is for people to buy Fairtrade products and tell their friends about them. We will support you by giving you posters and leaflets to give to interested parties - friends, shopkeepers etc. It is as easy as that - we don't look for money - we just want more people to buy the right products so that those in the developing world are given a fairer deal. The idea behind all of this is to promote self-sufficiency - the more people are getting a fair price for their products then the less they'll need our charity.

Q. What are Fairtrade Ireland's plans for the future?

A. We plan to extend the range and volume of goods that we sell. We were set up to promote trade justice between Ireland and the developing world but we don't just want to promote justice for their shopkeepers and businesses. We want to see everyone in the Third World get a fairer deal for the products we buy from them. We have big plans for our campaign - the biggest being to make buying Fairtrade products a part of people's normal daily or weekly shopping habits.

**Fairtrade Fortnight
takes place from
March 1st to 14th.**

Graduates Done Good - Martin Sheehan

a.k.a Mr. Binman

Every fortnight, we interview a UL graduate who is doing something not quite of the ordinary with their lives. This fortnight, Keith Whelan talks to Martin Sheehan Jr, an Environmental Science graduate who is now completing his Masters. If you know someone who we should interview, email sucommunication@ul.ie

From B.A. to Binman !

They say a title can be deceiving. Never judge a book by its cover. The above is a case in point. So is the person I'm interviewing. As he sat comfortably back on his couch, you could see that the day was done and he was more interested in sipping his tea than talking to me. Rubbish may be his game, but he wasn't going to talk any. When it comes to Martin Sheehan, he became successful because of rubbish. We joke and jest how many times after a degree, graduates fall on hard times but not Martin. He grabbed the wheelie-bin by the handle and brought the family firm of "Mr. Binman" into the lives of many in the mid-west region. As one of the main waste disposal firms, the aforementioned business has come along way since the early days of Martin's college days in UL. "I can even remember my student number", he says, with the first two digits indicating the year of his entry - 1994. He completed his B.A. in Environmental Science and at the moment is in the process of completing his masters. "There was no reason to do any other course. I even did my FYP in future recycling. The family business gave me the interest and the inclination that this industry would be my career path", he remarked.

"I didn't know what I wanted to be and Binman made that choice for me. I'm lucky the business came along when it did and gave me the opportunity to study

something from its beginnings, and see the business grow and be able to apply the knowledge I was gaining in theory and apply it in a practical way", he said. When I asked him about the best and worst things about UL he said, "The exams were the worst and The Stables was the best! They were the best four years of my life and I made a lot of good friends during that time." He commented that the degree gave him a good knowledge and standing when it came to dealing with the Local Authorities and the E.P.A. The reason I'm doing the doctorate is that I want to be more qualified than the other professional people I'm dealing with!", he said with a sly grin.

Letting him return to the topic of UL, he remarked, "I think the university has grown, certainly since I graduated. Enjoy the experience while you can but, draw the line between study and play early on and that is the key to surviving university".

He continued by saying, "I was in the Outdoor Pursuits Club. Mad bunch. Great lads.

Tried one of the martial arts...didn't enjoy that quite so much!. With all the study, socialising in the pub and work, I didn't get a chance to join many societies. I have no regrets though." Martin Sheehan will tell you different but behind his image as a Ali G wannabe with his catchphrase "keep it real", there is a Gordon Geco waiting to get out.

Why give up smoking?

"There is no single thing that you can possibly do that will have such profound health benefits as giving up smoking."

29th of March is D-day for the smokers of UL. From that date, the smoking areas in the University will disappear. It may be a time that smokers will think about giving up.

There is no denying that giving up is a very difficult thing to do. However, the potential benefits are massive. The simple facts are that smoking kills over 6,500 Irish people every year. Smoking related illnesses are responsible for one in 10 adult deaths worldwide, that's one death every eight seconds.

Here are some other reasons:

- Your taste buds are deadened.
- Your sense of smell is deadened.
- Smoking costs a fortune and brings you no benefits in return for your money. Do the sums. If you smoke 20 cigarettes a day, multiply the cost of a pack by 365. You'll save nearly €2,000 at current prices over the next year alone.

· Smokers will lose on average between 10-15 years of their potential life span.

· Smoking is a principal cause of both lung cancer and heart disease, two of Ireland's biggest killers.

· It also causes bronchitis and emphysema, which can make breathing extremely difficult. And vascular disease, which in severe cases will lead to leg amputation.

· There are over 4,000 chemicals in tobacco. At least 43 of them are known to

cause cancer in humans.

So what will happen when you stop smoking? Well immediately your body will begin to rid itself of tobacco toxins. Your clothes, hair and breath will smell fresher and maybe you will have the ability to smell them in a couple of weeks!. After 20 minutes, your circulation will improve, within eight hours nicotine levels in the blood will reduce by 50%. Within a few weeks your sense of taste and smell will improve. Your overall general health will improve; you will feel fitter and breathing problems will gradually disappear. Within a year or two of not smoking your risk of having a heart attack is reduced by half that it would have been had you continued. After three years of not smoking your risk of having a heart attack is similar to that of a life-long non-smoker. After 10 years of not smoking the risk of getting lung cancer is halved.

Many smokers are worried about putting on weight when they stop smoking. However, the average weight gain is only about 5lbs and you can lose this gradually once you have succeeded in stopping smoking. Besides, the positive benefits of being a non-smoker far outweigh the possibility of putting on a few pounds.

If you want to find out how to stop you can call the National Quit line 1850 201 203. The UL Health Promotion Group in conjunction with the Mid-Western Health Board will be running Smoking cessation classes over the semester, information is available from suwelfare@ul.ie.



UL's Annual Fund 2004

Are you interested in part-time work from mid-April to mid-May?

Are you currently 2nd or 3rd year undergraduate or a postgraduate student?

UL needs Annual Fund Representatives!

Background

The University of Limerick launches its **Annual Fund 2004** campaign on 1 April. The campaign addresses graduates of the University with the aim of raising funds for student-level projects, which make a positive contribution to the long-term future of UL (e.g., funding for scholarships, financial aid, research and clubs and societies). The campaign opens up with a mailing sent to graduates informing them about the Annual Fund 2004 and requesting a financial donation. Telephone calls are made to follow up on these mailings, for which we need Representatives.

Job Requirements

- **Ability to work minimum 3 (3 hour) shifts per week will be a requirement.** Calling times: weekday evenings, except Fridays (6:30pm - 9:30pm), Saturdays (3:30pm - 6:30pm). The location of the call room is A Block, room A2032.
- Full training will be provided and no prior experience is required, although it would be advantageous to possess the Key Competencies outlined below. **Attendance at a paid training session is essential. Applicants who are not available to attend training will NOT be recruited.** Training date is Wednesday, 14 April, and scheduled work starts the next night. Location of training room is Block C, room C1061.
- Represent the University of Limerick in a professional manner.

Key Competencies

- Reliability & punctuality essential.
- Good confident telephone manner.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Ability to establish rapport quickly.
- Target/Sales driven.
- Energetic and enthusiastic

Key Benefits

- Wages: €7.50/hour.
- Good performance in first campaign will be rewarded with invitations to work on subsequent campaigns.
- Experience gained could prove useful to your CV.
- Convenient and pleasant work environment.

University of Limerick Foundation raises funds to support and resource UL: www.ulf.ie

Please contact Maureen McGreevy for an application form:
maureen.mcgreevy@ul.ie

First group of interviews will be held during week of 15 March.

Deadline for receipt of application forms for these interviews is 12 March.

Features & Opinion

E-Voting - Too much too soon?

Richard Brennan shares his concerns about the E-Voting system due to be introduced in Ireland in June

The present administration is determined to introduce E-voting for the local and European elections to be held in June. As the Labour leader Pat Rabbitte said, the state is 'spending 40 million euro to fix something that isn't broken, based on no demand for change'. And as the criticism of E-voting increases through the media, it is becoming increasingly harder to find citizens in favour of the system being introduced. The opposition to the system has pointed out many faults to the system, lack of a paper trail, inability to spoil ones' vote, and the traditionalists' view of the manual system. All these arguments carry substance, and should not be ignored.

Many of these arguments are due to this administration rushing to appear technically efficient and advanced in the international community. The arguments above should not be brushed under the carpet and ignored. All the opposition parties (and the PD's), technical experts including the computer Department of Maynooth, and a large amount of the public are opposed to the system. The most important aspect of democracy is that the voters have full confidence in the democratic process. The public is increasingly losing confidence. The government's arrogance in this important

issue is shameful, with one senior minister calling the opposition to this as simply 'a purely cynical political exercise'. The reality is that this political exercise those carry merit.

The greatest failure of this government is its failure to introduce what has become known as the 'Mercuri system', where a paper trail (receipt) is present as well as an electronic version. An American academic, Rebeca Mercuri PhD, first proposed the Mercuri system. She has studied electronic voting for over a decade, and agrees with electronic voting, only if a paper trail is present. This one act could have the potential of re-instating the confidence of the public in E-voting. At the present our trust for democracy is been placed in the hands of a Dutch firm, Nadup/Powervote. The software industry has stated the software would be easy to write, and the chances of a manufacturing failure would be near zero. However the risk is still there, as man is not perfect, and it is man who is writing the software. Unlike the manual system, one mistake by a counter is virtually irrelevant, but in E-voting, one mistake could have serious effects if all the software contained software glitches. Take for example Internet baking. If a mistake was to occur due to a computer failure, or external interference it is possible to see there is a mistake, and correct it due to records that are kept. With the system being introduced,

(Direct Recording Electronic) there is no receipt, as the electronic record is the only record. A consultants company, Zerflow, commissioned by the department of the environment, found many flaws with relation to the security of the system being introduced. The minister has ignored the report

The greatest problem is the lack of confidence. The government has conceded on the establishment of an independent commission to oversee E-voting. The two arguments most commonly thrown out by the government are not accurate. Firstly, this system has been used in Germany and Switzerland. Wrong, Ireland's unique voting system (proportional representation) means that this is the first time this software has been used. Secondly, the fact that Ireland has used E-voting on two separate occasions in 2002, and no problems occurred. What is this being basing on, the electronic results, from the software, which is now under dispute?

The best solution is the introduction of a paper trail. However, for this to be done within 14 weeks is very unlikely, and the government has even refused to consider it. Perhaps the best solution would be for the government to remain using the manual system for the forthcoming elections in June. Then when all the measures have been taken to verify the

security of the system, introduce it for the Presidential election (if one occurs). This should not be seen as a government failure, but rather as a drive for real and trustworthy democracy. E voting should be considered a good thing; it has the potential of being more accurate. But all faults that are there should be resolved to replace trust back to the democratic process.

If you are curious about the issues surrounding e-voting in Ireland or about the Irish voting system, then the following websites may be of interest:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/3493692.stm>

A general article about the Irish voting system

<http://evoting.cs.may.ie/>

A site maintained by NUI Maynooth's Computer Science department, who have concerns about E-Voting

<http://tinyurl.com/yrbp2>

A Government press release on the subject. (This link has been compressed)

Permanent Diet Girl (PDG) - Irony is the Name of the Game

by Anne Sheridan

We all do it. How can we not? It's inevitable, like picking a scab. And it's the scab all girls will continue to scratch, until we somehow mysteriously morph into Beyonce Knowles. Either that or we'll all end up in some psychiatric ward indulging this acute social neurosis till the end of our days.

I can only be talking about one thing and one thing only. Dieting. And worse than actual dieting - when you have a possibility of achieving a result - is thinking about it. Incessantly. You know who you are! The girl that pinches her thighs and punches her stomach at work, but instead of reaching for a salad wrap at lunch goes off and has a Sloppy Joe. Yes, as we all know the great fat buster is, of course, a roll with meatballs, garlic sauce and lashings of cheese.

But the irony of permanent 'diet' girl - a world-wide condition - is not something to be laughed at. She might be a mockery, but if she is then it's a very tragic one. If suffering is what the Irish do best, as history has led us to believe, then modern day dieting has to be our king forte. More precisely, we are a nation specialising in psychological (in every conceivable sense) suffering. Despite the fact that we are a dairy-producing nation, where 14 is the

average clothes size, we have absolutely convinced ourselves that this is untrue. Walk into any Topshop, observe, and you will see hundreds of Vanessa Feltz lookalikes desperately trying to squeeze their big booty into Kate Moss cargo pants. Sheer and utter hallucinogenic madness. Madness without method, because dieting for the Irish woman is 99% inspiration and only 1% perspiration. But we are not alone. The 'sexiest' woman in the world - J-Lo - has admitted to an undeniable fondness for pizza, Southern Fried chicken, roast potatoes and gravy. Judging by the size of that infamous derriere - who are we to rubbish her? Then again, irony is this diva's middle name. Fair enough, she still claims to be 'Jenny from the Block'ä, but her delusion does not end there. Akin to us Irish girls, Ms. Lopez is in denial of the fact that she possesses the definitive female Puerto Rican figure. So she simply changes all her clothes tags from a 10 to a 6! (Don't panic she ain't as petite as she sounds - AMERICAN sizes, ah you gotta love 'em for something)

But we are all guilty. Dark chocolate (mmmm) covered rice-cakes (ugggh) are a favourite. And for many girls this really and truly is the case. The secret to understanding someone can often be found just by looking in their fridge. In the PDG's there will be . . .ooh .. low-fat oil spray, low-fat butter, milk, even low-

fat Philadelphia cheese for God's sake. And somewhere towards the back, 'discreetly' hidden, will be half a pound of Belgian chocolate. Go for a drink with a serious dieter and they'll have a vodka and slimline tonic, but the PDG's tippie of choice is naturally a pint of Budweiser. Coffee breaks are torture for her, all those pecan-Danishes and chocolate croissants - it's like interviewing Eamon Dunphy in a wine bar, you're just heading for disaster sweetie.

And the necessary question to pose is why do we torture ourselves so? The theory that it is to appear more attractive to the opposite sex has been continually shot down by men surveyed on the issue in recent years. So, if it's not for ourselves or for them, then who? The real reason we try to sex ourselves up, and most people equate sexy with being thin, is to watch another girl cringe with envy, arched eyebrow et al, as you sit in front of her and flick your poker-straight hair and long tanned limbs in unison. Men are too easily impressed, it's other women's admiration and approval we are after.

It was only when a friend of mine attended a Weight Watchers meeting that the penny finally dropped. All perfectly normal sized women gathered around competing over who ate less, and seeing



who could gasp the loudest when someone fell off the wagon and admitted to having a Chinese. I dared her to say she'd blown her points for the month by eating a deep fried Mars bar and laugh raucously as everyone fell off their seats at such incomprehensible behaviour but sadly she was already too far-gone to see the funny side. May you never know what a sad sight it is to watch your friend crying at Diet Trials, taking a bucket sized bowl of popcorn in her arms for comfort!

Congratulations to all those of you who succeed at dieting - for it is woman's greatest struggle. But to those PDG's who have developed a Chinese food phobia - feel the fear and eat it anyway. It's only a bit of weight, and take note, that's what has given the sexiest woman in the world her "edge".

Features & Opinion

EU Enlargement

EU enlargement promises much to East and Central European countries, but what will be delivered?

by Anne Sheridan

EU enlargement promises lots of things - security, peace, prosperity, stability, eliminating the black market, the list goes on. But enlargement also raises many unpalatable issues such as migration, agriculture, borders and, unquestionably, the cost of enlargement. For the ECEC's will it really be worth it? Even considering a possible referendum on EU accession in May 2002, the Czech Republic recorded the highest amount of undecided answers in a public opinion research survey conducted by CEORG, the Central European Opinion Research Group Foundation.

The Czech Republic is right to be concerned about this and whether the benefits of membership will eventually overtake the initial compromises Czech citizens will inevitably have to make.

It is only February and already Czech farmers are angry about direct subsidies as the Czech government agreed to EU proposals on farm aid, backing down from earlier demands in increases to production limits for dairy and breeding cattle, as well as sugar exports.

The Czech Republic is not alone its worries. Poland, Hungary, Slovenia, Slovakia, Malta, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania all share common concerns regarding their own independence and being taken seriously within the Union.

If they are admitted in May 2004, they will be joining a Union of 25 members,

originally designed for 6, raising questions of restructuring the existing institutions of the EU and the possible creation of a new EU constitution.

Benjamin Kuras, a Czech conservative nationalist, is one of the major critics of the integration of the Czech Republic into the EU. He sees the EU moving towards an undemocratic and bureaucratic juggernaut - "since the Maastricht Agreement the EU has been moving away from its original form as a voluntary association of free democratic countries and toward becoming a totalitarian, bureaucratic giant in which citizens lose any chance to influence their lives".

Kuras believes instead of joining the EU, the Czech Republic should join the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), which embraces Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Iceland. She further suggests that the Czech Republic should follow the examples of Hong Kong, Singapore, Macao, Gibraltar, Andorra and the Bahamas in becoming "a customs and tax oasis in the heart of Europe".

All these Czech conservative nationalists, ultra-liberals and even philosophical ecologists have been criticised and accused of being xenophobic, yet there is a modicum of reason to their apparent madness.

Although, Mr. Blair denies accusations that 'The Big Three', Britain, France and Germany, want to run Europe, it is Germany, Britain, France and Italy who maintain the balance of power, weighting 29 votes. The Czech Republic, along with Portugal, Hungary, Belgium and Greece hold 12 votes. Malta - three.

As the EU grows larger and larger, problems of management and governance will obviously emerge. Hungarian foreign minister Laszlo Kovacs believes the EU is already in danger, taking on ten new members at once being next to an impossible task. "Until now the EU's success has been because it has allowed the new member states to catch up. A Europe of two speeds would rob them of this chance", he argued.

The Czech prime minister, Vladimir Spidla, said he was not in favour of a two speed EU with countries in favour of faster integration leaving other members behind. However, if such a two-speed Union does emerge, the Czech Republic should be among the more dynamic group, he claimed.

If the ten contending members are accepted, the EU faces its biggest enlargement ever, with an increase in area of 34% and 105 million people, added to the existing 370 million members. However, one must question the EU's intentions of this enlargement. Is the EU simply issuing a wake up call in Europe's quest to catch up with the US?

Former Danish prime minister, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, believes that future member states will boost the EU's chances of becoming the most competitive economy in the world by 2010 - its so-called Lisbon strategy.

However, a recent report published ahead of a summit on economic reform in March states "the Union cannot catch up on the US as our GDP is 72% of our American partner's". This again raises the question of whether the EU is using

new members in an overly ambitious pursuit, rather than doing what it should be concerned about at present - closing the wealth gap between candidates and setting up mechanisms to bring their laws and legal systems closer in line with those of the EU.

More recently, the addition of ten new states to the European family has prompted unprecedented clampdowns in the even the most liberal countries. Even Holland is planning to cap the number of workers arriving from Eastern Europe to 22,000. Germany and Austria are likely to impose restrictions on the arrival of new workers until 2011, while France and Italy are expected to limit the availability of work permits for at least the next two years. Denmark plans to refuse benefits to new immigrants and will kick them out of the county after six months if they fail to find work.

Michael McDowell, Irish minister for Justice, is acutely aware of the potential for abuse of the social welfare system, especially when Ireland is alone in sticking to the principle of keeping an open door policy. Britain's position is currently being disputed.

Similarly, Dailis Brakauskas, a member of the Lithuanian parliament believes "we need to see an equalisation of the levels of social security across Europe to prevent people from being drawn to countries because of state handouts". Yet, equalisation of social security levels is just one of many problems that should be resolved before May 1st 2004.

Going Smoke Free



UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK

Health Promotion Working Group
University of Limerick,
Limerick,
Ireland.

Phone: 00-353-61-213143
Email: elaine.kiely@ul.ie

From 29th March 2004 the University of Limerick will become Smoke-Free

"Second-hand smoke causes:

Cancer, Heart Disease, and Respiratory Problems in adults and children."

Department of Health and Children

Want to Quit? you're not alone ...

"Quitting smoking may be the single most important thing you can do to improve your health, and your body feels these benefits almost immediately"

Irish Cancer Society

7 out of 10 want to stop!

If you would like information on Smoking Cessation Programmes contact: Elaine Kiely, Student Affairs Officer.

Seachtain Na Gaeilge



SEACHTAIN NA GAEILGE 2004

Dé Luain: 8 Márta**13.00:**

Oscailt oifigiúil na seachtaine le haíonna Gan Ainm

Ionad: Ceaintín, Príomhfoirgneamh

Official opening of week with guests Gan Ainm (UL TradSoc)

Venue: Canteen, Main Building

16.00

Léamh filíochta le Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill agus Mary Coll mar chuid d'Fhéile na mBan. Cathaoirleach : Dr. Bríona Nic Dhiarmada

Ionad: Wood Room, Teach Phleasaí

Poetry Reading with Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill and Mary Coll as part of the Féile na mBan celebrations on campus. Chair : An Dr. Bríona Nic Dhiarmada

Venue: Wood Room, Plassey House

19.00:

Imeacht an Chumainn Díospóireachta le haghaidh Seachtain na Gaeilge

Ionad: An Phluais

UL debating society debate event for Seachtain na Gaeilge

Venue: An Phluais

20.30:

Tradfest na Seachtaine le haíonna Gan Ainm

Ionad: Beár na Spórtlainne

Tradfest of the Week with guests Gan Ainm

Venue: Sports Bar

Dé Máirt: 9 Márta**10:30**

Caipe na maidine

Ionad: Seomra na n-Iarchéimithe, Clós na Stáblaí

Morning coffee

Venue: Postgrad Room, Stables Courtyard

13.00

Bord Bia na Gaeilge (Lón Gaelach)

Ionad: Caifé Aroma, Roinn na Ríomheolaíochta agus na gCóras Eolais

Lunch for Gaeilgeoirí

Venue: Caifé Aroma, CSIS

20.00:

Cleamhnas le Daithí Ó Sé (Láithreoir TG4)

Ionad: An Phluais

Blind Date with Daithí Ó Sé (TG4 Presenter)

Venue: An Phluais

22.00

Karaoke trí Ghaeilge le Daithí Ó Sé in éineacht leis an gCumainn Síochána

Ionad: Na Stáblaí

Karaoke through Irish with Daithí Ó Sé in conjunction with the Irish Peace Society

Venue: Stables

Dé Céadaoin: 10 Márta**13.00:**

Léamh Filíochta le Louis De Paor

Ionad: Dánlann Bourn Vincent, Foirgneamh na Fondúireachta

Poetry Reading with Louis De Paor

Venue: Bourn Vincent Gallery, Foundation Building

14.00:

Ceardlann Filíochta le Louis de Paor

Ionad: Dánlann Bourn Vincent, Foirgneamh na Fondúireachta

Poetry workshop with Louis De Paor

Venue: Bourn Vincent Gallery, Foundation Building

17.00

Rang aclaíochta (Circuits) trí Ghaeilge le Sinead Reddan

Ionad: Stiúideo Aerbaíochta, Airéana na hOllscoile

Exercise class (Circuits) through Irish

Venue: Aerobics Studio, Sports Arena

20.00:

Cur i láthair ag Roibeard Ó Cathasaigh ar Scéilín ó Bhéilín mar chuid de chúrsa Aonad na Gaeilge ar an nGaeilge do thuismitheoirí

Ionad: CG055

Presentation by Roibeard Ó Cathasaigh on Scéilín ó Bhéilín, guest lecture as part of Aonad na Gaeilge Irish for Parents programme

21.00:

Béile do Ghaeilgeoirí Luimnigh. Áirithini roimh 9 Márta go 061-213463

Ionad: le cinntiú

Dinner for Limerick Gaeilgeoirí. Bookings before 9 March to 061-213463

Venue: to be decided

Déardaoin: 11 Mí Márta**11.45**

Gig le Ger Wolfe dírithe ar pháistí na Gaelscoile agus teaghlaigh na hOllscoile

Ionad: Halla Ghráig Chill Mhuire, OL

Gig with Ger Wolfe for Gaelscoil Chaladh an Treoigh pupils and their parents. A family event for UL staff & faculty.

Venue: Kilmurry Village Hall

13.00

Gig Lóin le Ger Wolfe agus John Spillane

Ionad: An Phluais, Scholars

Lunchtime gig with Ger Wolfe and John Spillane

Venue: An Phluais, Scholars

18.00:

Gearrscannáin Ghaeilge

Ionad: le cinntiú

Irish filmshorts

Venue: to be decided

19.30

Comórtas sacair trí Ghaeilge eagraithe ag rannpháirtithe na Scéime Chónaithe, Gráig Chill Mhuire

Suíomh: Astroturf na hOllscoile

Soccer tournament through Irish organised by participants in the Irish Inaguge residency scheme at Kilmurry Village

Venue: Astroturf

20.30

Bus ón Ollscoil go gig G.H.F. (Louis de Paor & John Spillane) i gCaisleán Nua Thiar. Áirithintí don bhus go 061-213463 roimh 16.00, 9 Márta

Bus from UL to G.H.F. gig (Louis de Paor & John Spillane) in Newcastlewest. Bus bookings to 061-213463 before 16.00, 9 March.

Dé hAoine 12ú Márta**10.30**

Caipe le ceol / seoladh an leabhair Dála an Scéil le Proinsias de Priondargast

Ionad: East Room, Teach Phleasaí

TradCoffee morning / launch of Dála an Scéil by Proinsias de Priondargast

Venue: East Room, Teach Phleasaí

Urraíocht/ Sponsorship

Plassey Campus Centre, OL

Aonad na Gaeilge, OL

Oifig an Oideachais Idirnáisiúnta, OL

Women's Week

Women's Week - Putting Women in the Picture

Watch out everyone the ladies are coming out and with a bang.

Week 4 is going to see the campus rocking with workshops, talks and fun events relating to women's issues. Just in case you are wondering, no we have not gone mad!

The week is a fundraiser for the **Limerick Rape Crisis Centre** and **Adapt House** in Limerick. The two organisations provide vital services and help to rape victims and their families and women and children suffering from domestic abuse, so they need all the support they can get.

The week is being organised by the **Irish Peace Society, UL Arts Office and the Women's Studies Department**. We are calling on all women, men, boys, girls, people with no preference, staff and students to come along to the events. The events have been organised to cater for men and women and will prove to either be a bundle of fun or a fountain of knowledge for everyone attending!

Below is a taste of the events planned so come along and get active and help us make loads of cash for two very good organisations.

This is just a taste of it and much more will be happening. Look out for flyers and posters with venues and times.

Every is welcome to come along to all events and any small entrance fee that is charged will be going directly to the charities!

For details contact Jenny Hannon 0857167329

When sleeping women wake, Mountains will move!



Timetable of Events

Monday: International Women's Day,

Creative stalls in the courtyard,
Lila 4-ever (Film),
Lunchtime talk in FB by Eileen Trauth.

Tuesday:

Queens of the Night (Drag queen Karaoke comp in Stables- drag not compulsory but prize for best drag queen),

Rape Crisis Centre talk,
The Vagina Monologues are finally coming to UL-6.30PM).

Wednesday:

Music night in Scholars,
Seminars on, Rape as a weapon of war, Female Genital Mutilation and Women Suicide Bombers.

Thursday:

Self Defence Classes and Meditation workshop,

More events and seminars will be announced throughout the week, so keep your eyes peeled for posters, and check out the TVs in the Canteen for up-to-date information.

Student Teacher Society Presents

Thomond Ball

Tickets Available from
Students' Union

*Thursday Week 3 (March 4th)
South Court Hotel*

Formal Dress

Buses leave Scholars' Arch at 6.30pm

Price: 25euro

Music View

U.L. DRAMA SOCIETY
PRESENTS
LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS
MARCH 3RD - 6TH, 2004
LIT MILLENNIUM THEATRE
DIRECTED BY ADRAIN CROWE
PRICES* : EUR 10 CHILD/STUDENT/OAP
EUR 12.50 ADULT, FAMILY** EURO 40
BOOK AND LYRICS BY HOWARD ASHMAN - MUSIC BY ALAN MENKEN
* - CREDIT CARD BOOKING CHARGE APPLIES. ** - 2 ADULTS, 2 CHILDREN. TICKET SALES :061 322322 OR BOXOFFICE@LIT.ie

Live Review

PRESTON REED

DOLAN'S WAREHOUSE

The gig is meant to start at nine, but there's barely anyone here. At 9:45 the American guitarist Preston Reed takes to the stage. No support band, just Preston and an acoustic, a Spanish, an electro-acoustic and electric guitar. By the time Preston comes on stage, there are enough people to warrant a good gig but saying that, most people sit and no one's upstairs. Playing songs from his career spanning two and a half decades, Reed starts the gig by playing, 'Ladies Night'. An imposing figure on the stage, Preston plays the guitar a little unusually. He frets from the top, that is his hand frets notes from the top down over his low E-string. To say this man is perhaps the most impressive guitarist I have ever witnessed live would be something of an understatement. Frantically tapping with his fretting hand, Preston occasionally alternates between sliding, finger picking and strumming with his left hand before using one of the metal rings he wears on each finger to lend percussion to his playing by tapping the top, bottom, sides and front of his guitar. Ever heard what sounds like African drum beats being tapped on an acoustic guitar?! His hands are incredibly fast and his soloing is second to none, this playing is the culmination of years spent on-stage, which started at seventeen when Preston supported Allen Ginsberg famous beat poet on-stage at the Smithsonian Institute. Preston has the sound of a drummer and two very capable guitarists wrapped within his palms and six strings.

This guitarist can imitate the sounds of a bullet train, a tractor pull and even a duel, which is without a doubt stunning on-stage. When Reed plays, 'Overture', a piece about

the birth of his daughter, jaws drop and gasps can be heard as the song finishes, riding and crashing like a wave of emotion coming to a sudden halt. Speaking about his travels of the world, going to Mexico, Scotland or Japan, Preston has a song for every memory, every thought which inspired him. Thinking back to seeing a saw-playing musician as a teenager, Reed tried to capture the power of the saw, with an electric guitar and a glass slide.

But he can do more than play the most amazing metal riffs possible on acoustic guitar, switching to his Spanish guitar, he produces a series of sweet, complex and overpowering emotive notes, which seem to speak of a place far away. Slapping his guitar and launching into low-key solos for 'Slap-Funk,' Reed astounds yet again.

Normally I'd feel disappointed with just one guitar, no bass, no vocals, no rhythm, no drums, but for Preston Reed it doesn't matter, this guitar is an extension of himself, for him playing these songs is like walking. Reed is on-stage alone soloing and thudding for an amazing two hours; he plays twenty-four songs and is called back for three encores. I'm not sure just how to explain the talent of this man in words but his work will speak for itself, since 1979 Reed has recorded thirteen albums, three videos and played on three continents. Not yet signed in Ireland, Reed is trying to make himself known to the Irish public at present. Sitting in Dolan's I stare around in amazement as Preston receives a standing ovation after his third encore and the crowd still want more...this gig is probably one of the greatest ever to take place in Dolan's warehouse. I strongly urge you to check out this site and if possible see Preston Reed whenever he returns.
www.prestonreed.com



The Scholars Club Week 3 ents.

Monday

Games Night – PS2 game giveaway!

TuesdayBattle of the Bands Returns
"Gin Devils"**Wednesday****The House of Frawls** The Best in House, Hip Hop,
and Funky Tunes**Thursday***The Scholars Club Presents*
"Incognito"**Friday***Scholars Party Night*
Start Your Weekend Off The Right Way

d

Think you got what it takes to be a COYOTE?

Scholars Club, Thursday Weeks 2,4,6 & 10

Top 3 go through each week with a top prize of

€250 for the Final**Prizes of €100, €50 & €25 to be won each week**

Ask at the bar for details

Music View

Live Review

STARS OF THE CITY

HIGH STOOL

Friday night in the High Stool sees an interesting line-up of four acts, one of which is the Dublin based headliners 'Stars Of The City'. To start the night 'Gawd Noze', a local two-piece take to the stage. With powerful bass driven drums laying the support of the electro-acoustic guitar work, the sound is surprisingly catchy but feels a little empty and solitary.

Next up all the way from Dublin is 'Dave Mullem'. He takes to the stage with another electro-acoustic and quietly laying notes of sincerity, he adds his lonely vocals. This is something I like. Occasionally the second half of this act, palm mutes on his electric to add a break from the grief stricken musicianship of 'Mullem'. The stool is buzzing with speech and somehow the voice drifts away in the noise to be heard elsewhere. The third act are becoming something of a High Stool favourite, 7evenwords quietly take to the stage, but bursting into favourites like 'Next Time Around', and 'Perfect?' the crowd respond in kind, cheering on the Nenagh based five-piece. The band consists of Garry Sherlock, Owen Geaney, Thomas Moyles, Tom Brett and John Savage. This music is the art of melodic sweetness to moody angst and as such the band seem to dominate on-stage bringing their recent gigging experience to the fore and capturing their sounds in a still moment to release in a frenzied blast to the High Stool public.

Next up are Dublin based Stars Of The City, sauntering onto the stage, half smiling in anticipation of a great gig, the four piece start their gig, driving pop-based, rock infused craziness into the minds of the Stool patrons. Eager to get a good response the four, John o Connor (Drums), Mark Austin (Vocals), Brian Carroll (Guitar) and Tom Cross (Bass) leap into a frenzied hypnotic act of musical mayhem. Feeling slightly worried Tom offered an unwarranted excuse, "We're slightly unknown and the music down here is heavier". The band see themselves as pop but pop on the other end of mainstream, "More Smiths and Pixies". Despite their love of originality and their sound, which although inspired by other musicians comes from the guys themselves they admit, "If we were in the 1800's then we'd be original", feeling "It's good to be compared to someone who's fairly big, but at the same time you should be your own band". With their music gaining recent prominence and interest shown by both EMI and Sony Ireland the band are heading the New York on the 14th March for a series of shows. Tonight however the band are showing that they possess the talent and eagerness necessary to extend their name into the main Irish gigging circuit. Having been chosen to play the SXSW festival in Austin, Texas with Bellx1 and Turn this year, the future looks bright for these shining stars. For more information check out www.starsofthecity.tk. **DOG**

COULTER AND COMPANY:

UCH



COURTESY BINGPIC

The intimate surroundings of the University Concert Hall were the setting for the return of Phil Coulter and his guests on Saturday night last. The show, which is currently travelling to various locations around the country, has its origins in Limerick, where the R.T.E. production of the same name was filmed last summer.

Coulter was joined on Saturday night by singer and actress, Rebecca Storm and three of last year's Euro Star finalists, Sarah Brophy, Cat McGinty and Susan Mc Gowen, known collectively as Sweet Charity.

From the opening song of the night it was very clear that Phil Coulter is a very charismatic performer who seems intent on audience participation.

The show lasted for almost three hours with Rebecca Storm treating the audience to delightful version of the classic song "Tell me it's not true". For a singer who has been on the showbiz circuit for over twenty years her voice is still remarkably youthful and she reaches the high notes with great ease.

Sweet Charity brought a further youthful element to the proceedings, however the audience didn't respond quite as well to them and it was easy to get the feeling that they were a little out of their depth.

As for the man himself, Phil Coulter is every bit an entertainer and a very talented one at that. From the instrumental pieces such as "Loughswilly" and the Grammy nominated "Highland Cathedral" to the more recognisable favourites of "Divorce", "Scorn not his Simplicity" and "The town I loved so well", his unique ability to write both great music and wonderful songs was clearly evident. Throughout the three-hour show Coulter talked to the audience and came across as a quick-witted man with constant jokes about Euro Star. The highlight of the evening was without a doubt Rebecca Storm's rendition of "The shores of the Swilly", a song that Coulter wrote for his sister who drowned in Lough Swilly, Co. Donegal. Her heart wrenching performance highlighted not only her own talent as a singer but also cemented the viewpoint that Phil Coulter has written some of the world's best songs.

While the idea of spending three hours on a Saturday night listening to Phil Coulter may not appeal to everyone I found myself pleasantly surprised and if I had one criticism it would be that perhaps Sweet Charity were out of place and the audience would have preferred to hear more from Rebecca Storm instead. That said it was a thoroughly enjoyable show and an experience to remember! **NC**

CD Review

BALLS OF IRON - COMPILATION

Balls Of Iron, not just a deadly name! Balls Of Iron is now a famous mobile studio in Limerick city manned by producer Mark O Connor. For any of you with your heads in the ground on mars for the last year, Mark is a well-respected and highly proficient writer, musician, sound engineer and producer as well as activist and general nice guy. Involved in the AMC Mark has been in a whole range of bands including Fingal's Cave, Veneer, Moonboot, (with one of the three AMC founders Ray Murphy) and Tooth. With ten years musical experience Mark has earned a reputation as a caring producer to whom music does actually matter. Having recorded with many Limerick bands over the years Mark has in essence pieced together a compilation of some of the very best in music that Limerick city has to offer.

On the CD are Kader Fire, Atrophy, We Should Be Dead, The Riffs, Funbobby, Giveamanakick, Roper, Mr. Creosote, The Kyboshi, Niall Quinn and the Pennywhores and of course Mark O Connor. This is a piece of classic musical material, which can give even the most in-experienced an insight into the current music available in Limerick. If you intend heading to The High Stool, Quinn's or Costello's but can't tell any of the bands apart then this is for you. The music contained is emotive, quite, fast, heavy, slow, melodic and is definitely an integral part of the AMC music scene. The CD also contains many enhanced features, band and travel pictures, old fanzine issues, the AMC message board, and even Mark's interviews with Jack Endino and Steve Albini! This is a CD to be proud of, it is certainly something, which in later years will recall the intense music underground, which today's Limerick has to offer, which is easily accessibly and very affordable. This CD jumps and rages from sound to sound like an irreversible tidal wave of sound, with the bands of Limerick desperately trying to wash upon the shores of plenty and record deals. For anyone in Limerick or further afield interested in the Limerick underground striving for overground this CD is available in Empire. www.mocstudios.tripod.com **DOG**

THE MALADIES,
THE MALADIES

Apparently this Dublin band has 'made quite an impact on the Irish live scene during the past four years. So it says on the publicity sticker of the CD cover.

This explains a lot. There's ample evidence to suggest that 'The Maladies' are used to attempting to be heard over a crowd. Almost every track contains screeching and shouting vocals. Their lyrics are saturated in numerous references to bars, bartenders and the inevitable closing time.

In parts it seems like the Maladies couldn't decide exactly what sound they wanted. This has resulted in a strange

and fairly uncomfortable mixture of noises. The songs appear ill at ease with each other. There's no flow to the album and unfortunately its variety doesn't 'grow on you' either.

On 'I can't swim', it's particularly unpleasant, where an organ is thrown in and the band attempt an alt. country sound murdered entirely by a dreadful American twang. In 'Amuse' they begin to sound a bit like 'The Devlins'. The gentle piano intro is good, but then the singer pushes his vocal ability too far.

Obviously, they have a large record collection and have discovered, quite well how to steal from it, but even so, it simply doesn't work. Its' still remains party-killing, mumbo-jumbo tripe. Perhaps, they are a good live band. They should be with four years experience of it

The last line I must quote, 'Baby, someday we all have to die'. How apt is that?

If there is a god then surely, this won't be the last music anyone should hear on the day of his or her death. Whatever doesn't kill you makes you stronger. Right? **DT**

PILOT TO GUNNER - GET SAVED

Get Saved is New York City's Pilot To Gunner's second full-length album. They made an excellent start to it with their title song Get Saved. This track has a repetitive, catchy chorus and jump around air guitar qualities. Also it has an interesting heavy to mellow type of musical feature. However this feature tends to loose all interest when you hear it repeated in track 2 and in track 3 and in track 6...etc. They even manage to incorporate it into the albums attempted mellow rock track, Sorry Names, with the vocalist to blame this time.

PTG are described as "part punk, part post, and all rock". True they are rock, but by now that genre of rock can be described as "trendy rock", the type of rock that makes Tony Fenton's Chart List. At first PTG's vocalist resembled an early Brandon Boyd from Incubus, who definitely have to be an influence of PTG. However, PTG's vocalist has a rougher, angrier tone- almost a cross between Matchbox 20's Rob Thomas and System of a Down's Serj Tankien.

So with all these complimentary comparisons to excellent bands you are probably thinking that PTG must be fantastic...well, they're not, but in saying that they are not totally crap either. If you were to hear just one of PTG's songs you would probably be impressed. But after listening to the whole album, numerous times their repetitiveness actually starts to hurt. Every band has a style and a hint of rhythm that remains throughout an album but PTG's is too much and too obvious. They are excellent musicians and have a gripping vocalist but they need to loose their repetitive beat and vary their style to provide interest. **TL**

Best Tracks: 1. Get Saved

9. Downstate

Clubs and Socs Special



Clubs & Societies Ball 2004

South Court Hotel
Thursday, March 11th
Tickets are €40 .
Formal Dress

Includes 4-course meal with additional vegan and vegetarian friendly options, shuttle bus from outside the Stables and Scholars from 6pm until 8pm (and return after the function), DJ, Band and Bar Extension. Meal starts at 8.30pm.

Tickets on sale at Students' Union reception Week 3&4



Tuxedo Hire

Suit You Sir Dress Suit Hire on William Street beside the Gaeltacht Cleaners are offering a Student Tux price of €40 which includes the waistcoat (excluding waistcoat €35).

If you want to measure up for your Tux you can do so on Wednesday 3rd March in Room 3 of the Students Union from 12pm - 3pm €10 deposit and UL ID required.



A Message from Paul Lee

Hi there,

At last I have finally managed to get ahead of myself and submit an article into the An Focal and I just wanted to let people know of a few key events coming up in the next fortnight. Namely in the next fortnight we will have the annual Clubs & Societies Yearbook 0304 published which will appear on the ULSU website in next fortnight www.ulsu.ul.ie/yearbook, the hustings by the short listed candidates for the Best Club and Society of the Year which involves each club and society casting their vote by secret ballot and the winners are announced at the Clubs and Societies Ball which takes place in the South Court Hotel on March 11th.

The Clubs & Societies Yearbook 03-04 is a publication that has proved to be a very valuable tool to clubs and societies in the last few years and has continued to develop in terms of the quality of its content and the information and exposure it offers. The purpose of this publication is three fold in that it is used as a pre-cursor to the annual clubs and societies ball, records the achievements and acts as a promotional tool to recruit other students to join the various extra curricular activities on offer. I would like to thank the following sponsors of this publication as without their support this would not be possible

Great credit must be extended to all students committees who have contributed to the yearbook and who succeed in running clubs and societies

activities in between their academic endeavours, as the importance for an outlet to let off steam/take a break or simply to make new friends is a key component to getting the maximum out of your time at the University of Limerick. Once the balance is struck the possibilities of student power and initiative are limited only by the imagination of its members. Granted some clubs and societies struggle to run a table quiz but others have truly put their stamp on this University. Having just witnessed this week the signing of the Boathouse Memorandum of Association the Students Union and the University have legally entered into agreement for the construction of the Boathouse on behalf of the Rowing Club, Kayak Club, Sub Aqua club and Mountain Bike Club with a budget of €4.3 million, great credit to all concerned. As I'm on the subject of credit its great to see new clubs and societies setting new standards as such congratulations to the Camogie club on being crowned Ashbourne Champions and may I wish the Drama Society all the best with their massive production, the "Little Shop of Horrors" from March 3rd-6th in the LIT Millennium theatre.

Finally to all contemplating getting involved in clubs and societies it's far better to have tried and failed than never to try at all.

Paul Lee
Clubs & Societies Development Officer
University of Limerick Students Union

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South Court Hotel	Jurys Inn
Jamaica Inn	Plassey Campus Centre
Mc Elligotts Coaches	University of Limerick Marketing Dept

Clubs and Socs Special

Nominations for the Clubs and Societies Awards 03/04

Societies

Best Society Event of the Year

1. Irish Peace Society- Crime Forum
2. Irish Peace Society - Weakest Link
3. St. Vincent de Paul - Trip to Haiti

Society Person of the Year

1. Elaine Byrne - Young Fine Gael/Irish Peace Society
2. Timmy Hennessy - St. Vincent De Paul
3. Bernadette Sexton - Irish Peace Society
4. Patrick Mc Hugh - Out In UL

Best Society of the Year

1. Irish Peace Society
2. St. Vincent de Paul
3. Young Fine Gael

Best New OR Improved Society

1. Drama Society
2. Computer Society
3. Out in UL

Clubs

Best Club Event of the Year

1. Basketball Club- Trip to Wales
2. Kayak Club - Trip to Wales
3. Sailing Club - Hosting National IV

Club Person of the Year

1. Lorna Finnegan - Basketball Club
2. Don Maher - Kayak Club
3. Debra O'Donovan - Kickboxing Club
4. Fiona Concannon - Windsurfing Club

Best Club of the Year

1. Kayak Club
2. Kick Boxing Club
3. Sub Aqua Club

Best New OR Improved Society

1. Basketball Club
2. Camogie Club
3. Windsurfing Club



The Stables Club

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK

www.stablesclub.com

Entertainment at The Stables Club

YOUR WEEK 3 ENTERTAINMENT

- Mon** Music Society
'Open Mic'
- Tues** Karaoke Night
Fleece First Prize and a shot at the Grand Final with a €300 Prize!
- Wed** Clubs & Societies Karaoke Night
American Football, Volleyball & Waterpolo Societies
- Thu** Noel McLoughlin
- Fri** Overseas Society 70s & 80s Party Night
- Wend** Open Sat & Sun Pool Table, food & matches

YOUR WEEK 4 ENTERTAINMENT

- Mon** Music Society
'Open Mic' & Band
- Tues** Karaoke Night
Fleece First Prize and a shot at the Grand Final with a €300 Prize!
- Wed** Free Beer
The Band 'Free Beer' revisit The Stables Club
- Thu** The Willful
- Fri** Overseas Society 70s & 80s Party Night
- Wend** Open Sat & Sun Pool Table, food & matches

Weekends at The Stables Club

The Stables Club is open from 9am on Saturdays and serves food all day. We open from 5pm on Sunday evenings. All major sporting events are covered during the weekends

Weekly Afternoon & Evening Specials

New at The Stables Club!

We are now offering a range of afternoon and evening specials here at The Stables Club. Drop in to try a snack from our delicious range!

Homecooked Panini with salad & chips	€ 3.95
Chicken Twisters	€ 4.30
Saute Potatoes	€ 1.70
Chicken Wings with salad & blue cheese dip	€ 3.50
Spring Rolls with sweet & sour sauce	€ 3.50
Spicy Potato Wedges with choice of two dips & cheese	€ 3.50
Nachos & Cheese with jalapeno peppers, breadroll & can	€ 4
Chilli Potato Skins with salad (2 per portion)	€ 3.50
Pizza Slice with chips & glass of milk	€ 4

The Stables Club is a members only club. All visitors must be signed in.

The Stables Club, Stables Courtyard, University of Limerick

t: 061 330139 f: 061 330176 e: info@stablesclub.com

Drama View

Little Shop of Horrors

UL Drama Society
LIT Millennium Theatre
March 3rd - 6th, 2004 @ 8pm

A Comedy of Horrors

11 actors, 5 months of rehearsals, 4 plants, 2 acts, 1 show. After months of blood, sweat and tears the musical to top all musicals is finally here. Based on the book by Howard Ashman about a man-eating Venus fly-trap from outer-space and described by director Lisa O'Brien as "a visual and musical delight" this promises to be

a black comedy with a difference. Seymour Krelborn, a down-trodden orphan (played for alternate shows by Jonathon Kelly and Eoin Salley) is taken in and given a job by Mr. Mushnik (Dave Kelly), the owner of a run-down florist shop in a seedy part of town. Seymour spends his time doing menial tasks and dreaming of the ditsy, trashy shop assistant, Audrey (Jean Wallace). Despite the fact that Audrey secretly feels the same she continues to live in fear of her psychotic dentist boyfriend Orin Scrivello (Philip Ardiff). One day, after an eclipse of the sun, Seymour discovers a strange plant. He buys it and names it Audrey II but while caring for it he discovers the plant's rather unique appetite. The plant grows and grows, as does Seymour's infatuation for Audrey, but who will get her first?

Catching up with Lisa last Monday whilst the cast were in the midst of rehearsals she assured me that all the subversive and satirical songs which made the show famous in the first place would be included in this version - especially "Skid Row", "Dentist", Little Shop of Horrors", "Feed Me" and "Don't Feed the Plants". Ranging in age from 18 to 25, coming from many different and diverse disciplines from Computer Systems to Languages and Cultural Studies, the cast are more than ready, willing and able to pull off a show to remember. While none of the cast are studying drama here in UL, at least three

of them, including Lisa, are graduates of the local Spotlight and Expressive Arts stage schools. This combination of trained and untrained actors has been perfect for the spirit of the show and the successful pooling of talent has been, according to Lisa, already a success even before the curtain has risen on a single performance. The cast are like a "little family" to her and no doubt lots of tears will be shed when the show's run finally comes to an end.

Little Shop of Horrors doesn't have many sets as much of the action will take place within and outside of Mushnik's Flower Shop. Instead, the most visually impressive aspect of the musical will be undoubtedly Audrey II and enormous effort has gone into the task of making the plant come alive and grow before our eyes so that on opening night it will be as real a character as any other on stage. Much of the commentary will be provided by the powerful Greek chorus of Crystal, Ronnette and Chiffon who have the magical ability to be anywhere on set at any time. A treat for anyone who has ever hated going to the dentist and guaranteed to change your perception of the phrase 'flower power' forever. Tickets are selling fast so get yours today! *GL*

Prices: EUR10 Child/Student/OAP
EUR12.50 Adult
EUR40 Family (Adults & 2 Children)
Phone: LIT :061-322322 or e-mail:
boxoffice@lit.ie for more details
Box office hours are Tuesday,
Wednesday and Thursday from 10.30am
to 3.30pm. The Box Office opens at 2pm
on the day of a show.

UCH Box Office: 061-331549

Whitehouse Poets

WhiteHouse Bar, Wednesday Nights

White House Poetry revival
Wed Feb 25th, 2004

This weeks featured poet is Ciaran
O'Driscoll.

Ciaran O'Driscoll was born in Kilkenny in 1943. His collections include Gog and Magog (Galway, Salmon, 1987); The Poet and His Shadow (Dublin, Dedalus, 1990); Listening to Different Drummers (Dedalus, 1993); The Old Women of Magione (Dedalus, 1997); and Moving On, Still There: New and Selected Poems (Dedalus, 2001). He has also published a memoir, A Runner Among Falling Leaves (Liverpool University Press, 2001). He was guest editor of Cyphers, 1992/93 and co-editor of On the Counterscarp.

He has also been a recipient of the

Patrick and Katherine Kavanagh Fellowship award.

His poetry is generally acknowledged to be full of humour and irony counterpointed by compassion. He lives in Limerick.

As usual the reading is preceded by an open mic session in which anyone who wishes to read is invited to do so. Complementary finger food is provided and proceeding commence at 9.00 pm.

For further information contact Barney Sheehan at 086 8657494 or email whitehousepoets@eircom.net Website www.limerick.com/whitehousepoets..

Blithe Spirits

Belltable March 2nd - 6th, 2004

Torch players, one of Limerick's foremost amateur drama groups, have decided to perform an about face from the tragedy of "the Beauty Queen of Leenane" and to put on a production of Noel Cowards "Blithe Spirits" It runs in the Belltable from 2nd to the 6th of March.

Blithe Spirit is one of the most enduring comedies of the 20th Century. Charles, an author whose first wife, Elvira, has

been dead for seven years, is reasonably happily married to Ruth. However, when he invites Madame Arcati, a local medium, to contact a séance at his home, Elvira returns from the dead. Charles now has to deal with two wives, providing him with "double trouble". An unmissable comedy.

Admission is €12, concession is €9.

Bookings and further Information at the Belltable: Phone - 061-319866

Children's Show at the Belltable Digger, Doc and Dee Dee March 8th - 12th

From Monday, March 8th to Friday March 12th, the Belltable Arts Centre will be hosting a series of productions for Limerick's younger theatre-goers. The highly renowned Barnstorm Theatre Company from Kilkenny will return to the Belltable with their latest children's production 'DIGGER, DOC AND DEE-DEE', which they will perform at 10am and 12.30pm daily.

Dee-Dee is at war with her mother. She has not been consulted about moving to a new area and resents leaving her home and her friends. At her new school she meets up with Doc and Digger, two classmates who also have parent trouble. Doc's busy parents give him everything except the attention he needs. Digger is afraid his father will send him away. Much to Dee-Dee's annoyance the boys think her mother is great.

The three children, all isolated in their own way, are drawn together by their common need for friendship and by the threat of an older boy who is blackmailing them. They join forces to deal with the bully and the self-

confidence they gain through mutual support encourages them to tackle the difficulties they have at home, with unexpected and comic results.

'DIGGER, DOC AND DEE-DEE' is an exciting and genuinely educational play for children of six to eleven years. Adapted by Maeve Ingoldsby from Volker Ludwig's 'Bella, Boss and Bulli' the play concerns the exploits of three children, who are drawn together by their common need for friendship and by the threat of an older boy who is blackmailing them. The play deals with issues of bullying, developing self-esteem, moving house, the isolation of an only child and the conflicting demands on time of a single working parent and children's need for affection and attention. Schools attending the play will receive a detailed Teachers Resource Pack to facilitate further exploration and follow-up work in the classroom. Tickets for the production are €10 with a special group rate of only €8.50.

Booking for shows is now open at the Belltable box office on 061-319866.

Review - Lovers by Brian Friel Belltable Arts Centre

The first play, 'Winners' tells the story of two young lovers, Maggie Enright and Joe Brennan, who meet on top of a hill overlooking their home town of Ballymore to study for their upcoming exams. It's 1966 and because 17yr old Maggie has become pregnant, they have both been expelled from their respective schools. Regardless of the predicament they're in they are both full of plans for their future, of hopes and dreams for "real happiness".

In three weeks' time they are due to be married. The play is partly narrated by a man and woman who sit on either side of the stage. They begin by telling us some background on what happened earlier that day and throughout the 90 minutes fill in the details of what happens to Maggie and Joe.

Although it's quite a dark theme, about two young lives tragically cut short in a presumed boating accident on a lake, there's plenty of humour in it too. This is brought out in Maggie's talk about the nuns at her old school, who all had men's names and beards. She spends a lot of time quoting them, especially Sr. Pascal, who said, "For every five minutes you laugh, you cry for ten".

'Lovers' is set in 1960's Ireland when

changes were beginning to happen in Irish society. Family issues and Catholic values are at the fore.

It's almost as if a John Hinde postcard has been brought to life.

The actors, who narrated Maggie and Joe's story, play the roles of the lovers, in the even funnier 'Losers', the second part of the play. This time the lovers are in their forties and the situation is quite different. Hannah's mother is confined to her 'deathbed', but doesn't seem like she's ever actually going to die. She forces the unfortunate people around her to pray to Saint Philomena with her. Poetry recital takes on a new role here, leading to some hilarious 'courting' scenes.

Island theatre should be very pleased with this first-rate production. Unfortunately this production finishes it's run on Saturday 28th February, but if you do have an opportunity to see it sometime somewhere you should.

Downstairs at the Belltable there is collection of images taken of the actors rehearsing. This work by Limerick photographer Maurice Gunning is definitely worth a look. *DT*

What's On?

Calendar of Events 1st-14th March

Mon 1st

UCH - Limerick School of Classical Ballet present La Fille Mal Garde 8pm

Tue 2nd

Scholars - Rachel Loshak
Belltable - Blithe Spirits (see preview)

Wed 3rd

LIT Theatre - Little Shop of Horrors
UL Drama Soc present riotous musical comedy
Quarter Club - Rachel Loshak
Belltable - Blithe Spirits (See Preview)
Whitehouse Bar - Poetry Revival

Thur 4th

Dolan's - DOT COMedy Club with Dave McSavage + Andrew Stanley & MC Bernard O'Shea
LIT Theatre - Little Shop of Horrors
Belltable - Blithe Spirits
Dolan's - Footwork Club: KENNY HAWKES (SPACE London/ NITELIFE NRK) with Marc O'Neill and Shane Slattery. Legendary London DJ brings his magic box of house music to the Warehouse for his first visit to Limerick
UCH - Irish Chamber Orchestra Spring Series 2004

Fri 5th

LIT Theatre - Little Shop of Horrors
Belltable - Blithe Spirits
UCH - Paul Brady (Sold Out)

Sat 6th

High Stool - La Rocca, Fun Bobby (Album Launch) National Prayer Breakfast (AMC Presents)
LIT Theatre - Little Shop Of Horrors
Belltable - Blithe Spirits

Sun 7th

UCH - Royal Irish Academy of Music presents Mozart, Schumann and Sibelius with the RIAM Symphony Orchestra, RIAM Choral Society and soloists

Mon 8th

Belltable - Digger, Doc and Dee Dee (see preview)

Tue 9th

Belltable - Digger, Doc and Dee Dee (see preview)

Wed 10th

Belltable - Digger, Doc and Dee Dee (see preview)
Dolans - Albert Niland 'one of the sweetest guitarists you'll encounter outside of Madrid' 'this is refreshing, spirit-shocking music' Irish Times

Thur 11th

Belltable - Digger, Doc and Dee Dee (see preview)
Dolans - DOT COMedy Club with Des Bishop (NetWork 2's "Des Bishop Work Experience" Support PJ Gallagher. Footwork Club: Shane Slattery, Marc O'Neill + guests

Fri 12th

Belltable - Digger, Doc and Dee Dee (see preview)
High Stool - Leatherface The Dangerfields and giveamanakick

Sat 13th

Belltable - Schools Play Challenge Showcase and Awards Ceremony

Sun 14th

If you are running an event and would like it to be included, email sucommunication@ul.ie

All details are correct at the time of printing

Who else is on their way to Limerick?

Aside from the Upcoming gigs, plays and events in the next couple of weeks, the more farsighted among you will be wondering what there is to do in Weeks 5 and 6.

Those crazy kids from the AMC are bring back Electric Eel Shock, those mus must-see insane rock legends from Japan, with support from Anti-Produce and Death Before Disco. We'll be seeing some more of Dublin four-piece Coldspoon Conspiracy too before the end of the month, accompanied by the delightful The Chalets.

Phil Hartnoll of Orbital fame will be playing the Footwork club in Dolan's, and Aslan, Juliet Turner and Bell X-1 will also be gracing the stage at the

Warehouse.

Closer to home, the University Concert Hall is really spoiling us with its eclectic delights. There's going to be everything from Opera (a Puccini-fest, with Tosca and Turandot on Successive nights), Comedy (the wonderful Tommy Tiernan), Hiberno-Rock (Hothouse Flowers) and Big Band madness with the Glen Miller Orchestra.

Information can be found at www.theamc.net
www.dolans.ie
www.thehighstool.com
www.belltable.ie
www.uch.ie
and in An Focal, of course!

Where's Ben?

The Far East



The Great Wall of China!

Yes folks, Ben is actually in China this week. All our pictures are real and are not altered in any way.

Nersh

ULartsoffice

Spring Film Season
Jean Monnet Theatre
Mondays, 6pm



Monday 01 March
Russian Ark

Director Alexander Sokurov
Russia/2002/96mins

"Russian Ark" may be an astonishing achievement in filmmaking, but what makes it unforgettable is Sokurov's ability to draw us so deeply into the vibrant worlds he conjures -- without any cinematic slight of hand -- that the technical aspects of the picture become invisible and forgotten.

Monday 08 March
Lilya 4-Ever

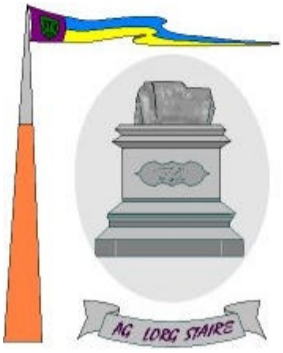
Director Lukas Moodysson
Sweden/2002/109mins



Every once in while a film comes out that should be made compulsory viewing. Although it is neither comfortable nor easy, Lilya 4-Ever (by Swedish director Lukas Moodysson) is one such film. Rarely, if ever, has a movie affected me so much.

Clubs and Societies

UL History Society Report



With a National Conference and an investigation of the Hunt Collection the UL History Society has kept itself busy at the opening of semester two. Also things are afoot for this coming semester. On the weekend of Week 1 (19th-21st of February), six delegates from the Society set out to home of the tribesmen, Galway, for the Annual IHSA Conference hosted by NUI, Galway. We were very pleased with ourselves at the end of the weekend, despite getting off to

a bad start and arriving a tad late (what's one hour between complete strangers). UL had four papers presented, ranging from the Mac Namaras of Clare, political history of Ireland and the story of Immigrants to Ireland during the Second World War. Members of the Society heard a wide range of topics ranging from the 17th Century to the 20th Century, from Ireland to Turkey and Africa.

However as with most of these sorts of events, it was what happened after the presentation of papers that we most enjoyed ourselves, "networking" with members of Societies from across the island of Ireland. The pinnacle of the conference beginning the four course dinner at one of Galway's fine culinary establishments, followed by members of the Society traipsing around the City, taking in the famous Galwegian night life and Public Houses (always

experienced in moderation) with a collection of UL, Trinity and Galway students.

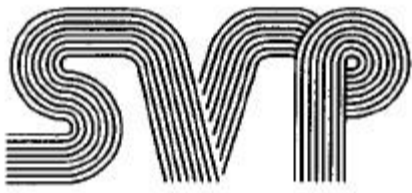
We left Galway with friends made, interest in volume five of our History Journal, and a few copies of volume four sold (retailing now at €10, contact the society: ulhistorysociety@hotmail.com). Then last Wednesday, building on the euphoria of the weekend, the Society was honoured to have John Logan, lecturer, Hunt director and around nice guy, present: The Hunt Collection Examined. Those present were became aware of the mystery of the Hunts and consequentially that of their (in)famous collection, hosted here in Limerick. The social rise of the Hunts and the development of their collection were examined and the events leading up the current press attention traced. Arising for this the Society hopes to plan a trip into Limerick to visit the Hunt-look out for

details.

As for the rest of the year, we have a few things planned. The return of some of our co-op exiles has fueled the fire for ideas, and a current project that is beginning developed is a re-enactment of the Arms Trial, again keep your eyes open for any detail. On behalf of the Society, we would like to thank those who presented papers in Galway, Declan Jackson, Siobhan O'Connor, John Maguire and Lorna Moloney. We also like to take John Logan for giving up his time to speak to us.

If you are interested in joining the UL History Society or have any ideas for events, they would be most welcomed. You can contact the Society via e-mail on history@skynet.ie or ulhistorysociety@hotmail.com.

St Vincent de Paul



A new semester, and most of our projects are up and running smoothly. Our priority at the moment is to recruit new volunteers for the three services that we provide. Volunteers are asked to spend no more than three hours a week helping either with the Homework Club, proving grinds for secondary school students or visiting lone parents and the elderly.

The homework club is where Students go to the local primary school in Kings Island and help the children there with their homework and also engage in recreational activities. (All transport costs will be reimbursed on the production of a valid taxi receipt.) This project takes place from quarter to three, and you would be home for six. For further information on this project contact Maria O'Donovan at 0235644@student.ul.ie or at (087) 7539171.

Volunteers are also needed for our paired reading project, which is like The Homework Club but instead it is for secondary school students. Volunteers help students to read and offer grinds in all subjects. If you would like to volunteer for this project or would simply like more information contact Claire Shanahan at 0227072@student.ul.ie or at (086) 1024333.

Another activity that The Society of St. Vincent de Paul runs is Home Visitations. In short what this involves is visiting single-parent families or the elderly who are in need of our help. A lot of these people maybe financially

disadvantaged or just lonely. The Society assesses each case individually and tries to help where possible with such activities as home decoration. Or, more so, on simpler occasions volunteers just sit down to a cup of tea and a chat whilst offering warmth and compassion to the elderly or lonely. Contact Catherine Behan at (085) 7396902 for more information.

Another aspect of the society is fundraising and things are looking well. The weekend of Week1 saw The UL Rowing Club hold a sponsored row in The Crescent Shopping Centre, which helped raise a superb €688.20 for The SVP. We'd like to thank fellow SVP member and also Rowing Club member, 4th year Edel Sheahan for the hard work and time she put into organising this successful event. Also a big thank you to those Rowing Club members who took part and collected money. Also a thank you to our own SVP members who collected throughout the weekend.

In Week2 the society received a cheque for €125 from the Fianna Fail Society, which was raised recently from a table quiz held in aid of The SVP. Many thanks to all those involved in organising the quiz night and to those who took part in the quiz.

Coming up in Week4 is our annual Waxing Event, which will see a whole lot of fearsome lads waxing their legs and 'other body parts' for charity. If you know of anyone or if you yourself would like to take part in this event or if you want information on any of our activities please feel free to contact me Marie-Therese Horgan at 0248843@student.ul.ie or also at (086) 4057459. Thank you

UL Rowing Club



So what's happened in the world of rowing in UL since the last issue? I hear you ask.

Club Dinner

The annual UL rowing club dinner took place in Milano's on the 7th of February. Over 50 people squeezed in to the fine restaurant, almost filling the place. The food was good, the wine kept flowing and I forgot what I ordered. We invited all the other Limerick Rowing Clubs along as well, for a good gossiping session, and a round of thumb wars to see who which is actually 'the best club in Limerick'. Not to mention improving interclub relations, and recall memories from back in the day, "when boats were made of steel and races were twice as long".

Later on we found our way to 'Pier One' where more drink was had, and the slugging matches continued. The best bit about the whole night was being told that training was on at 8am the next morning.

St Michaels Head Of The River

The rescheduled A annual St. Michaels 'Head of the River' took place on Valentines weekend. (I salute the men that managed to explain that to their girlfriends, and still manage turn up on the day.)

This time it was held on UL's home waters in Castleconnell. This Race has the largest number of entries of any race in the country. This means some serious competition.

Basically it's a soul destroying 3.5 Km sprint from Castleconnell to O'Briens Bridge. That would bring the fittest of athletes to their knees. Not me because

I'm an animal.

The 'Head of the River' was supposed to take place on the 31st of January, but was cancelled due to severe weather conditions. Being typically Irish we decided to go training that day anyway, sure what's a bit of wind to anyone. We managed to row past the first bend in the river when we were hit by a mad (yes mad) gust of wind, that pinned us to a tree. To make matters worse we started taking on water. A little water became a lot and we were forced to abandon ship. Anyway we survived, and the long walk home in our bare feet through all the fields and thorn bushes was 'character building'.

On the day of the race the start was delayed in the morning due to fog, when it cleared the conditions were perfect. UL Rowing Club set out not to be beaten on our home river without a fight. As a result we did well.

Not only did the ULRC win the Men's Intermediate Fours, the Women's Novice eights and the Women's Novice fours, the club also came 3rd in Men's Inter Sculls, 4th in the Men's Inter eights, 5th and 8th in the Men's Novice eights, 6th in Men's Senior Fours, and 7th in the Men's novice fours.

This is before even mentioning our PRO's win in the Men's Novice Double Sculls (That would be me.)

All of UL's Crews performed well which saw us finish in the top quarter in every category that we entered.

For now it's back to the gym to make sure that we keep climbing the competitive ladder.

Our next race is in Galway in early March. Check our web site for further details. WWW.ULROWING.COM

Clubs and Societies

Sub-Aqua Club Trip to Clifden

Last December a group of UL divers braved the cold conditions of the Irish coast and headed to Clifden for the weekend. After slight difficulty in locating the house in the fog, we settled in and began to organise the weekend's diving schedule.



We were up early on Saturday to plan the day's dives in greater detail and to fill the bottles with air. By 10 o'clock, the bottles and bellies were full, the fog had lifted and we were all set for a days diving. We arrived at the Salt Lake, the site of our first dive of the day, and prepared to go scuba diving. The Salt Lake is a truly unique dive site, in that it has layers of both salt and fresh water. This allows for a huge variety of marine life.

I was first in the water and being well prepared for it to be extremely cold, it was not going to disappoint me. It was freezing(!) But once the initial shock of the cold water is over you don't even notice it. As soon as you put your head under the water, and see all the life around you, the cold water is the last thing on your mind. We started to fin out away from the shore, to find a bit more depth, and in doing so took in all the life around us. I was fascinated to see so many crabs. They were everywhere, moving quickly sideways, out of our way. There was also a little baby scallop swimming in front of us at one point. It is really intriguing to watch them swim, as they open and close their shell to move through the water. As we were just

about to ascend, a huge edible crab came out from behind a rock right in front of me, with the angriest look on its face. We had a bit of a staring contest for a while; he won and I then made my way to the surface, disillusioned that I had been beaten by a crab.

After everyone had dived the Salt Lake, we headed to Ballyconneely to warm up. However, as we passed the Coral Strand, eolan and John couldn't resist the temptation and decided to go for a night dive. A night dive is very different from diving during the day as you only see the floor bed where you shine your torch. It offers the chance to see the marine life in an amazing display of colours a lot of which are in hiding during the day. Back on with the wet gear and in they went to explore the water by torchlight.

Congrats to John who completed his training on this trip, thanks to those that drove and also to Bob for letting us invade his house in Clifden. Training continues in the diving pit every Thursday from 5pm-8pm.



UL Soccer Club

Harding Cup Results

ULFC hosted the IUFU Harding Cup last weekend. Our squad of 18 had been picked by legendary Freshers Manager, Dr. Martin Hayes. We avoided having to play a preliminary round, and played Jordanstown in the Cup 1/4 Final. Things were going our way until Jordanstown scored a classy goal to set us into extra-time. Luckily, Target-Man Tommy T was on hand to score in the 2nd half of extra-time, his strike a contender for goal of the season. His "Grimace" on the sideline had all the girls chanting his name - "Tommy T, Tommy T". Tickle me Eamo added a 3rd goal as we finished the game 3-1 victors. The Cup 1/2 Final saw us play DCU. After a good huddle, we started the game well. After 2 minutes Sean "left hand goes up, drop it slowly, then lots of little steps" Allen scored a bullet header, to give an early lead. Nothing of major note happened after that, and we progressed to the final as 1-0 victors.

The Final : NUIG had looked strong all weekend, and they eventually beat us 5-1. In fairness, they were a very good team, and behaved themselves well throughout the tournament. All allegations of diving in the box have since been withdrawn. Brean Weldrick scored our goal, with a fine strike from 3 yards. In the post match Radio Roy interview, an unnamed source had this to say, "At the end of the day, all credit to the lads, they did well to get to the final

like. Sometimes you have to accept that's it not to be. The gaffers had words, but the lads worked their socks off like. Flynnsy, McGlynnsy, Gracey; they all did their best."

Ladies Senior Result



UL A 3-1 WIT

UL avenged their Intervarsity Final defeat to WIT, with an impressive performance played before a large crowd. Many of our B Team players were surprised to get a start, but it must be said, attitude good, girls in good shape. Amanda Creighton opened the scoring, finishing off a well rehearsed set piece. This was followed in the 2nd half by a fine goal by Molly Donahue. WIT pulled one back, but UL responded straight away with Molly adding a 2nd to cap a superb individual display. UL travel to SIT on Wednesday of Week 3, and then travel to NUIG for the Intervarsities on March 10th.

Team Vs. WIT 4-3-3 SJ Kelly, T Fahy, R

Hickey, F Hayes, J Duffy, L Henchy, M Ryan(c), E Sullivan, J Sullivan, A Creighton, V Mulcahy.

Subs : M Donahue, E McNulty, A O'Loughlin, A Conroy, S Travers, C Moran, A Lynskey, O Creedon.

Ultimate Simpsons Table Quiz

Wednesday Week 4 in the Sports Bar after The Champions League Arsenal V. Celta Vigo
Teams of 4 -
Entry Fee €20
Cash Prizes, Raffle and Spot Prizes DVD Player as 1st. Prize for Raffle (Donated by THE LODGE NITECLUB) This will be the true test of any Simpsons Fan.

THE 11-A-SIDE IS COMING

UL'S LARGEST ANNUAL SPORTING EVENT WILL COMMENCE IN WK 7 THIS IS A "MEMBERS ONLY" COMPETITION INTERESTED TEAMS CAN SIGN MEMBERSHIP BOOKS IN THE B1 CANTEN IN WKS 5 & 6 LIMITED TO 64 TEAMS - FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED €60 PER TEAM GUARANTEE OF 3 MATCHES YOU'VE HEARD ABOUT IT, YOU'VE PLAYED IN IT. GET READY, 'COS IT'S COMING AGAIN Contact Details: 0354813@student.ul.ie, 0353876@student.ul.ie or gotabake@hotmail.com

Collingwood Cup News

Manager Paddy Gunnigle announced the UL Squad for the Collingwood Cup live on Sky Sports News after the Final of the Harding Cup. UL are in a group of 4, including TCD, Magee and RCSI. The Collingwood takes place in Belfast in Week 3.

The Squad in full:
Ben Spicer, Ciaran McGlynn, Conor Molan(c), Eoin Killackey, Grant Murtagh, Iain Hatton, Peter Murphy, Willie Storan, Joe Normoyle, Liam O'Flynn, Liam O'Connell, Mark Holland, Steve Enright, Brian O'Reilly, Donal Barron, Steve Murphy, Danny Mullins, Antoin Mannering, Pat Finucane, Sean Allen.

Clubs and Societies

UL Rugby



Caro Mahon, Carol Dunning, Rachel Tucker, Kathleen Finn, Orla Smith, Emma Stanley, Eilish McNulty, Kate Canty, Miriam Clegg, Roisin McNulty, Gillian Burke, Orla King, and our french supporters

UL ladies rugby team secured their 3rd win in the league against Trinity last week (week 1) in Dublin. A lack of team training over the exams and holidays was evident in the scrappy start by UL. However once the team got into the game, better rucking began creating a better platform for more attacking plays. This was evident when the first try came from Carol Dunning (centre) about 20 minutes into the first half after a great drive from the forwards from a lineout. This was beautifully converted by out half Roisin McNulty. Our speedy winger Miriam Clegg scored the 2nd try. Leaving the half time score at 12-0. Shortly into the 2nd half UL 3 subs, Caro Mahon, Orla King and Kathleen Finn came on, all three making a significant impact on the game. Trinity were fairly effective at slowing down our play but we found that simple direct play was most effective. Miriam Clegg scored two more tries; Roisin converted one of these. And in the dying seconds of the game Kathleen Finn went over for UL's 5th try. This left the final score at 29-0.

Team: Jillian Burke, Emma Stanley, Deirdre O'Brien, Rachel Tucker, Eilish McNulty, Kate Canty, Roisin McNulty, Carol Dunning, Orla Smith and Miriam Clegg.

Subs: Caroline Mahon, Orla King and Kathleen Finn.

This was an impressive win in itself but even more so considering that we were without our 2 international players Fiona

Coghlan and Sarah Belton (player/coach). Sarah and Fiona were unable to play due to commitments with the Irish team in the middle of the 6 Nations. Their first game was played against France in France last Sunday in which Fiona Coghlan got her first start for Ireland making it 4 caps in total. Unfortunately Ireland was beaten with a score line of 23-5. However the score is not a fair reflection of the performance by the Irish team. UL ladies rugby wishes the Irish team the best of luck in the rest of their matches.

21/2/04 v Wales in Thomond Park

6/3/04 v England in Twickenham

20/3/04 v Spain in Thomond Park

27/3/04 v Scotland in Thomond Park

On one of the coldest days of the year and in the final match of the league UL came up against their strongest opponents in the WIT team last Thursday. It must be said that UL performed a dismal display of rugby in the first half, which resulted in an easy try for the WIT scrum half. UL retained the majority of possession in the first half but failed to convert this possession into tries. This left the half time score at 5-0 in favour of the visitors.

UL looked like a totally different team in the second half and WIT could not contend with continuity of play that UL team performed. UL's first try came from a great drive by the forwards 10 minutes into the first half, with Rachel Tucker finally putting the ball down. UL continued in much the same dynamic form for the rest of the match running over three more tries by Emer, Emma and Jillian Burke. This left that final score at 20-5 at the final whistle. This result means that the team have topped their group and are into the semi-final to be played in Carlow in two weeks time.

Judo Intervarsities

Bright and early Friday morning we left for Coleraine in Northern Ireland for the Intervarsity Championships. The team had been hit with five withdrawals in the last three days so it was a somewhat depleted squad. What followed was probably the longest bus journey in the history of the world - something close on 10 hours! Eventually we made it to our hotel and went straight to the weigh-in. There were some close calls at the weigh-in and a few of the guys had to do a bit of running to drop the excess pounds but in the end everyone successfully made their division.

Team events were the first of the day. Unfortunately due to late withdrawals the women's team were unable to retain their intervarsity championship. The men's team consisted of myself (TJ Davitt), Jeremy Tieppo, Bryan LeGear, Rasmus Liljegren and Michal Mravinac. Our first match was against last years beaten finalists UUU. Despite Jordanstown boasting a commonwealth medal winner we took the match 3-2 in a close fought contest.

We progressed through the team event and outdid UCD in the quarter-finals. Jeremy pulled off an incredible performance in this match by defeating a man literally twice his size. Of course he left it to the last 10 seconds of the match to secure the very dramatic win. Thanks to this amazing performance we managed to secure a 5-0 victory over UCD. In the semi-finals, however, we came up against Trinity College and unfortunately they got the better of us 3-2. After that setback we were still able to dispose of DCU 4-1 to claim third place. In the end it was Queens who walked away with the championship. All in all it was a very good team performance by the club.

After the team event it was on to the skill divisions of lower, middle and upper kyu. Bryan in his first judo competition did remarkably well in the lower kyu. After earning some good wins with throws and submissions alike, Bryan lost out in the 3rd/4th place play off. David Coleman, fighting in the middle kyu replicated Bryan's fights exactly with the

same unlucky result in the play-off. The difference between Bryan and David on the day was that Bryan preferred choking his opponents whereas David arm-locked his way to victory.



I was the club representative in the upper kyu and had four fights to contest to get to the final. I won two with throws and two with submissions. In the final I used a foot-sweep to upend my opposition and take gold.

In the weight divisions I secured second place in the under-90kg category and Jeremy achieved the same in the under-60kg.

Eilish McNulty was once again on top form and showed great technique to win the women's under-63kg division. Better was to come when she battled her way to the finals of the open division where she was paired with commonwealth and world student games medallist Lisa Bradley. In a very tense affair Eilish came from behind to win the championship.

After the event there was the obligatory party to attend. Even though the DJ's choice of music was somewhat questionable, a great night was had by everyone. There was more success for the club at the party as Eilish was named female fighter of the day and just when things couldn't get any better Bryan won a bottle of wine so now we had more than a few reasons to celebrate!

The club trains Monday evenings at 8.15pm and Wednesdays at 6.15pm in the old sports building and new members are always welcome. We should have videos and photos of the Intervarsity on our website in the next week. So check it out at: <http://www.csn.ul.ie/~judo>.

Aeronautical Society

TRIP TO FOYNES FLYING BOAT MUSEUM 10-12-03.

This was an intersociety event, as the trip was of interest to both the aeronautical and history societies. A group of students from both societies set off for Foynes on Wednesday morning to visit the Flying Boat Museum. It was a brief but very enjoyable outing. We were welcomed at the museum by Ms. Joan Maher, who opened the (museum especially for our visit.

Ms. Maher gave us a quick introduction to the museum and showed us a short film on the flying boats. The film included footage of planes launching from flying boats, landing, taking off, air-air refueling, transatlantic flight and also discussed the use of Foynes port before and during WW II. It)Foynes was

intended as a temporary port while Shannon Airport was being built. The first flight from Ireland to America was achieved in 1927 by Charles Lindberg. Flying boats were not used after 1943 as ground take-offs were more efficient. An example of a flying boat was the Boeing B314, which had a dining room and a honeymoon suite, but it let in a load of water if the wings were tipped when landing! The patron of the museum was the famous actress from that era, Maureen O'Hara, whose husband was the famous pilot, Charles Blair.

Afterwards we took a look around the rest of the museum, and saw many wall-charts, an old pilot's uniform, a model map of Foynes port at 2000ft., and we played the flight simulator of a flying boat. We also viewed the radio room; it contained lots of original and

irreplaceable equipment, which we tried to keep our hands off! There were oscillators, transmitters and receivers, as well as wartime confidentiality rules, such as "Keep your job under your hat"! Although we didn't have time to sample their Irish Coffee (It was invented in Foynes!), it was a great trip.

The societies would like to sincerely thank Ms. Joan Maher (of) from the museum, McElligot's coaches and all members who went on the trip.

AIR CORPS VISIT

Three members of the Irish Air Corps visited UL on Wednesday 10th and Thursday 11th of December. On Wednesday evening they gave a very interesting lecture about the Air Corps itself, to about sixty students in the Charles Parsons Theatre. It lasted over an

hour, and covered a wide range of topics ranging from military life to engineering. They mentioned that the Air Corps hope to have most of their fleet replaced in the next five years. This was an enjoyable event for the members of the Aeronautical Society, and we'd like to thank Commandant Colm Moynihan and his two colleagues sincerely for their time and effort. Interviews for Co-Op in the Air Corps were held on the Thursday, and three candidates from the aeronautical engineering class were selected based on their knowledge of the Air Corps and their academic performance to date. The Aeronautical Society would like to congratulate those chosen for Air Corps placements.

Clubs and Societies

UL Debating Union

Singapore 2004

Many Miles from the taverns of Drimoleague, I recently rang in the New Year in Singapore, where I had the good fortune of representing the University of Limerick at the World's Debating Championships.

Competitive international debate dates back to the early 20th century when Oxford Students braved the Atlantic to compete with American teams. However, from its inception in 1981 the World Universities Debating Championships have grown to encompass students from all continents and denominations, becoming the world's second largest student event, with only the World Student Games having more competitors. Universities bid furiously for the honour of hosting the prestigious tournament, the huge financial costs (with sponsorship in excess of \$600,000) notwithstanding. The Competition uses the British Parliamentary style of debate; a thick skin is required as one is contradicted forcibly during their speech. Having a mere fifteen minutes prior to a debate to gather your thoughts and write a seven-minute speech was an exhilarating experience and tried all students. The auditorium crackled with electricity each day as over 900 debaters, organisers and adjudicators piled in to anxiously hear the motions. We had nine debates on globally significant motions. However amongst African Tribal Warfare and Iraqi Democratisation, Irish issues were also debated furiously; is it fair in our cosmopolitan society to have religious symbols or indeed education remain within the classroom? With its volatile Celtic tiger and rapidly changing social order, Ireland proved a vital case study in many debates.

The Nanyang Institute of Technology Singapore shouldered the tremendous task of organising the event with aplomb; the pressures of the debater's day were eased by good food, four star accommodation and crazy nights out (whether on Safari or dancing at a gala ball). Friends were made and bridges

built; Islamic and American students sat happily side by side, blond western women and scarfed Muslims chatted inanely, whilst centuries of conflict unravelled as Irish and English contingents united in the search for cheap beer! The organisers did much to promote tourism within Singapore. The city at first glance has all the hallmarks of a premier modern city. However beyond the stunning buildings, proud national newspapers and democratic parliament, there remains within Singapore an archaic rule of law rife with contradictions. The former British colony is one that permits prostitution whilst criminalizing those who practise "unnatural" carnal relations, protest politically or even chew gum! Capital punishment in the tiny island is frequent and shrouded in silence, taxi drivers told of prisoners being hung within a fortnight of conviction, the families of those facing the gallows receiving scant, if any, notice. Having made the strategic decision not to smuggle drugs or carry firearms, the University of Limerick team forged ahead with their tour of city, enjoying Singapore Sling cocktails in colonial hotels reminiscent of Indiana Jones movies.

After nine spirited debates the seasoned advocates were whittled out from the under-read underdogs and in a controversial final the London Barrister team "Middle Temple" defended the rights of the unborn child and took home the title. The Tour ended on a high for Irish students who had the honour of attending a reception at Hugh Swift's Ambassadorial home. In a home adorned with photographs of great world leaders, the Irish Ambassador (a former debater) and his wife gave us all a warm welcome, leaving most debaters hell bent on joining the Foreign Service as soon as they could. The Championships were an amazing experience and I would heartily recommend all prospective college students to get involved in a Debating Society.

UL Softball Club

Defence the key as UL bid to retain their Intervarsity crown

As the UL softball club enter leg number two of this year's Intervarsity tournament in Dublin, defence still continues to be a major issue for coach and players alike. While containing some of the best offensive players in today's game in John Ryan and Adam Mantazaris, runs are still being leaked: the most notable 20+ runs against UCD in November.

Training sessions have become a much more serious affair in the UL camp, and there is an extremely confident air surrounding this group of players. Belief in yourself and your team-mates is crucial to winning any title, and that belief has never been more present than it is now. Errors in the field are becoming few and far between which is a very encouraging sight while watching this team develop throughout the year.

Since the beginning of semester two, our squad has been considerably strengthened with the addition of many new players, foreign and Irish students alike. With a panel of over 30 travelling

to Dublin this weekend, three UL teams will be fielded: The largest in quite some time for the club. This fully demonstrates just how popular the sport of Softball is becoming in both Limerick, and Ireland in general.

Although many new faces have arrived in to help the cause, some old familiar faces have returned from hibernation to aid the club they were a part of in recent years. Experienced players such as Gerard Guckian, Niall, and Rob hope to lead the way and capture the first Intervarsity title of their careers.

The team leave for UCD determined to pull back the deficit from leg one, and most importantly, to have some fun and some laughs along the way. Keep a tab on the next issue of An Focal for news on our performance in the capital.

The team now trains every Wednesday and Friday afternoon between 2 and 4 pm on the grass pitches. All are welcome. We can also be contacted by e-mailing softball@skynet.ie .

By Anthony Kilpatrick.

Peace Society

Trip to Costa Rica and Nicaragua.

The Peace Society trip to Costa Rica and Nicaragua was an unforgettable experience. Ten of us spent ten days there during the February break. The two countries were vibrant and beautiful and the people there were incredibly friendly. However the economic and social conditions were far from idyllic. The Peace Society raised money for the charity Global Learning, situated in Central America, which is dedicated to educating disadvantaged children.

Working with the G.L. volunteers, who had overwhelming enthusiasm for their work, gave us a great insight to what life is like for the people there. Despite the lack of economic resources, the quality of life there was good though in a different sense to the typical Irish

understanding of it. We enjoyed the experience of living in a totally different environment and culture if only for a short while, although we won't miss the cockroaches or mosquitoes!

The money raised for Global Learning came mostly from U.L. students who contributed to our fundraising last semester, so thank you to everyone who donated. We would also like to say thank you to Mick Dolan and all the management in the Scholars; they donated €1,796 to Global Learning and have been very supportive of the Peace Society in the past.

Caroline Carney, 25/02/04

Queer Bashing at UL

It seems we here at "Out in UL" just can't stop coming up with great new ideas to go out, get locked (...out of our houses!) and dance / 'network' the night away. Our latest event is gonna be HUGE! - "The Queer Bash!" It's on Wednesday 3rd of March in The Trinity Rooms and promises to be one of the best nights out all year.

Being the considerate, caring people that we are, we're not just confining this fantastic night out to just UL, far from it! The list of other colleges falling over themselves to come down and see how it's done include: NUIG, GMIT, Cork IT, UCC, Athlone IT, IT Tralee, Dundalk IT, Waterford IT, DCU and not to forget our usual partners in crime Mary I and LIT as well as many more. This gives us all here at UL and all the other colleges a great chance to get to know each other (...ahem).

Just in case any of you are a little

concerned about missing out on all the fun, don't be! "The Queer Bash" is not a gay-only event - everyone is more than welcome to come along. Tickets are only €5, NOT €7 as the posters say! You can get tickets from any of our members or by emailing us (see address below).

Oh, just a couple of things before I go - The Gay Guides are out and scattered all over the college, so pick one up and give it a read. Congratulations to some of our members. Firstly to our esteemed president on managing to keep his famously big gob shut for 12 hours while on stage in the Scholars last Friday. No idea how much money was raised as of yet but it was a great success. Secondly, to our new Webmaster Kevin Brohan - complements on the fantastic site Kev! (See it at heaven.skynet.ie). Thirdly to our new Secretary Will Sheehy - congratulations on the election win. And lastly but obviously not least - congrats to me - the new communications officer



(how arrogant is that?)

And just to mention before I go that we paid a little visit to NUIG on Thursday the 19th of February and they brought us to "Smells Like Queen Spirit" in The Vic. Fun was had by all, even if some people only have a vague recollection of the night (Paddy!?!)

We in "Out in UL" think it's particularly

important to be accessible and welcoming and we aim to make it as easy as possible to get involved in the society. We all understand how difficult it is if you are not sure/not out/or just out - we've all been there! - so don't be afraid to get in touch....you won't regret it.

Email: outinul@yahoo.ie

Derrick Howard

Clubs and Societies

UL Young Fine Gael



*Nobody said it was easy
(Nobody said it would be so hard)*

The last fortnight has arguably been the busiest in the history of University of Limerick Young Fine Gael. So rushed off our feet have we been, in fact, that you're all so lucky to be reading this fine article at this minute, considering how difficult it was for me to find a window in my hectic diary.

We kicked off Semester 2 with a general meeting on the Monday of Week 1, really just bringing everybody up to speed with what had gone down since we'd been away and setting out our mission statement for the term. Catrina Burke (Organiser), William Harnett (Treasurer) and Breadán Ó hÉamhaigh (Oifigeach Ghaeilge) were all co-opted onto the Committee, and told if they didn't prioritise YFG above all else for the next five months they'd be finding horses' heads and other gruesome stuff at the ends of their beds. Once you're in, the only way out is Co-op.

The following Thursday we had a visit from Senator Feargal Browne on the general topic of electronic voting and its merits and demerits. It was a lively

discussion which was well attended, with even a few non-Blues in the audience. It was agreed that the e-voting system is by no means perfect but with the traditional system there is the possibility of human error. We were all glad to repair to Los Stablos afterwards and continue the debate there.

A day later, a few YFG members headed to the Greenhills for a function that marked John Cushnahan, MEPs impending retirement. A sizable crowd attended and Barry was able to press the flesh with all his heroes (including his favourite law lecturer!). On the Sunday was Jarlath's convention, which hopefully you can read about elsewhere in these pages, which went swimmingly, so well in fact that it wasn't until late on Monday that the UL visitors to Mayo returned back to base.

Speaking of Monday, Rickard Deasy, Fine Gael Sub MEP for Munster and prospective candidate in the forthcoming elections in the Ireland (South) constituency, had a website launch in the Internet Café on Sarsfield Street, an event also attended by the Head Honcho of YFG, President William Lavelle. Rickard had obviously had the radio on in the car on the journey down, as more than once he referred to our cuddly Chairman, Barry Walsh, as Barry White. To which Barry was heard to say that YFG was his first, his last, his

everything..

It was back into the city on Tuesday, to present a cheque for €5415.23 for the Sleepout to The Brother Russell Shelter, and on Wednesday, 12 martyrs for the cause (or headcases, delete as applicable), including the newly-returned former Chairman, Robbie "The Pimp" Carroll, headed down to UCC for a debate between European hopefuls, Simon Coveney TD and the aforementioned Rickard. Unfortunately the no-holds barred scrap that everybody hoped for didn't materialise, but we ended the night more educated on matters European than what we started, and afterwards enjoyed a drink or four with our UCC counterparts before leaving at midnight as Robbie wanted to catch the last five minutes of the Lodge. Sunday was of course the Convention for the European elections, but you all know by now who was nominated so I won't bore you with the details.

All in all, a hectic two weeks but nothing we can't cope with. Did I mention we were shortlisted for Best Society, which will be announced at the Clubs & Socs Ball, and Elaine Byrne (thankfully out of the way in South America now ;)) was nominated for Society Person of the Year. Oh yeah, we rock. But it doesn't mean we're made out of stone.

Denis Hurley,
Chief Propaganda Peddler, ULYFG

UL Vikings

American Football Club

A long winter break from news was had but the training never stopped, we ended 2003 with a scrimmage game in week 12 where the offence prevailed 8-0 (pity they couldn't do it in the matches though). We had a good Christmas, met up to sort out the new season during the exams and started some serious training the last week of the holidays and we haven't stopped since. With the season starting on Sunday the 29th Feb. we are looking well with 7/8 american students coming for the ride with us. As I said the season starts Sunday and we will start hopefully with a bang and a win, I feel our team has much improved the offence line has come on in leaps and bounds and some lads back off co-op doesn't hurt either. Big Dave is back after his injury still holding on to his running back position and seems to have gotten even better over his lay-off from his form in training. And with Adam(a Yank) teaming up with him in the running back position we will be sure to make a lot of yards in the league. The defence has also strengthened up and the line are angry and ready for causing pain, the line backers are tough and Adam looks like being an ironman as he gets ready to leave his mark on the league. The other guys are still looking good to, Hayes and Con are doing well at training and Sean is coming back well from his shoulder injury so the team looks well. With Ben(another Yank) trying to hold a spot as QB, and Liom Ryan coming down for the matches it will be interesting to see who gets the nod, but one thing for sure the team will be ready for action this year and will rock more than a few boats.

The League fixtures look like this

If you would like to come to any of the away matches contact Diarmuid Haugh on 087-9237910 or at 0228087@student.ul.ie

Upcoming Vikings Matches

Match	Date	Venue	
UL Vikings vs Cork Admirals	29th Feb.	UL	
Dublin Dragons vs UL Vikings	7 t h	Dublin	
Cork Admirals vs UL Vikings	21st	Cork	
UL Vikings vs Dublin Dragons	28th	UL	
Dublin Rebels vs UL Vikings	4 t h	Dublin	
UL Vikings vs Craigavon Cowboys	18th	UL	
Carrickfergus vs UL Vikings	25th	Carrickfergus	
UL Vikings vs Belfast bulls	9 t h	UL	

Gan Ainm Hit UCC

On the last weekend of January, when most of UL's scholars were resting their feet on a fireplace smoking their grandfather's favourite pipe, the UL Traditional Irish Music Society had more important matters to attend to. The time had come around again for the annual "UCC Tradfest", a mad trad music festival which is held at the end of January every year and organised by our close allies, the UCC Traditional Irish Music Festival. Unfortunately, the timing of the festival clashed with some of our luckier members, who had flown off to Glasgow to take part in the prestigious "Celtic Connections". However, we were determined to make our mark on Cork and so a few dreary heads hit Leaside!! Thursday night was the official opening of the Festival, where the UCC Trad Soc students gave a musical exhibition. Highlight of the night had to be the performance by Limerick woman, Michelle Mulcahy, who gave an exhibition of music on no fewer than 5 instruments! After that, we all headed off to "An Brog", where instrument cases became VIP Passes and we partied the rest of the night away.

Bodies were rudely awakened once again, where our Honorary President, Michael O'Suilleabhain performed with UCC Trad Music Lecturer Mel Mercier, on Bodhran. Michael and Mel were joined onstage for 2 final sets by the UCC Trad Soc. And, in the midst of all the superstars, was one Dave Delaney proudly displaying his Gan Ainm Shirt under the shadow of "Sully". Things really got going on Friday night.

UL Trad Soc got things going in the front bar when we started up a session. Bodies then flew all over Jury's Ballroom at the Ceili. Panic started to hit in, when the music stopped and party heads pondered their retaliation. However, festival organiser Naomi Morrissey saved the day and invited us all back to her house for more tunes and mayhem.

With the weekend only half over, we crawled out of bed on Saturday afternoon to quickly make it down to The Lobby Bar, where we were to play to play tunes. We were joined by the Ballyfermot Trad Students, among others for what was a great tune and an appetizer for the night ahead.

For the headline act of Saturday night, we were treated to a set from the Josephine Marsh Band and "Four Men and a Dog". Big Gino Lupari found an unlikely admirer in local lassie Denise O'Connell, who is alleged to have thrown



her knickers at her! Denise will explain it all!!

Live Music was quickly followed by the inaugural UCC Trad Disco (Trisco).

If anyone hasn't been to a Trad Disco before, it's basically a DJ spinning trad

tracks and mixing some beats into it!! While it has to be said that the Trad Disco did not match the Ennis Trad Disco, and was abruptly stopped, it was still mighty craic and we are already in the process of organising one up in Castletroy!!!

We even decided to start an impromptu session outside the Esso Station on the Wetsern Road in Cork, and earned the taxi fare up to Naomi's after. ESSO UNPLUGGED 2004! Could it be The Hurlers next Year??

For the few who did manage to get up on the Sunday afternoon, we were treated to mighty tunes at the "Next Generation Concert", featuring UL Trad Music Tutor Brian Morrissey, Colin McGill and Ciaran Mooney!!

With the festival unofficially over, some of us headed back home to enjoy the rest of the Semester break, others started up sessions in nearby pubs!! However, I was on the next Bus up to Limerick to start Coop in the morning!!

So life goes on after the Tradfest!! Well done to the UCC Trad Music Soc for organising a great festival! We had one casualty in that our PRO, Cathal Flood was last seen jumping onto the back of a Budvar lorry heading to Rosslare!! If anyone has seen this Mallow man, he is a Banjo player and extremely dangerous so approach him carefully!!

That's all for this week! Our weekly session will continue as normal in The Sports Bar, every Monday night. BRING ON TRADFEST 2005!!

Regards, from your our Treasurer,
Dave Delaney.

Clubs and Societies

Kickboxing Fight Night

Battle of the Champions

Tim Murphy
U.L.
(70kg)

Champion vs Champion

Pádraig O'Connor
U.C.C.
(85kg)

Tuesday March 9th - Old Sports Building UL

UL kickboxing, UL taekwondo, LIT taekwondo, UCC taekwondo

UL Kickboxing Club is proud to present its first fight night which will be held in the Old Sports Building (PESS) on Tuesday of Week 4. This inaugural event will showcase the talent that is present in the club at present from the novice grades to the members who compete at international level on a regular basis.

On the night, three forms of the sport will be demonstrated. There will be points fighting where the competitors will attempt to be the first person to score a point or two. Continuous light contact sparring will also be demonstrated and this will be the format of the main event.

There will also be demonstrations of Mixed Martial Arts (MMA), along the lines of UFC and Pride competitions.

The main event of the night will be a Continuous light contact bout between UL instructor Tim Murphy and UCC instructor Pádraig O'Connor. This will be the first time that the two have faced each other in years as they compete in very different weight divisions. Tim is the lighter of the two weighing about 70kg; Pádraig outweighs him by an astounding 15kg at 85kg. This said, it should be a very interesting match as they both have World Championship titles under their

belts. Pádraig holds a TaeKwon Do World title and Tim holds a Kickboxing World title.

Battle of the Champions therefore seems to be the obvious choice for this event's. UL Taekwon Do Club will also be represented in the event with many of their members attending and competing. We will also have some members of the LIT Taekwon Do club and UCC Kickboxing club in attendance. So come along and see for yourself as spectators will be welcome.

Peace Society Present

Seminar on International Law and Civil [dis]Obedience If you support war (Bush, Blair, Ahern et al) this is an event for you to express your views. If you support peace, sustainable development, justice, the rule of law, national and global jurisprudence, this is also a seminar you should attend. By our silence we are complicit. Denis HALLIDAY Former UN Under-Secretary General has agreed to speak at UL next Wednesday night 3rd March at 7 pm. Denis Halliday resigned from his post as head of UN Humanitarian Affairs in Iraq because he believed that the UN sanctions on Iraq amounted to an act of Genocide committed by the UN. The Seminar will be hosted by the Irish Peace Society at the University of Limerick, at a venue to be announced later. It will take the format of two main speakers with contribution and questions welcomed from members of the audience, and the seminar is open to the public. Denis Halliday will address the topic of International Law - Uses and Abuses: the role of the UN and the International Community in the Iraq Sanctions and wars in the Middle East. Edward Horgan, peace-keeper/activist, will give a talk entitled "Disturbing the Peace" dealing with issues including his High Court Constitutional challenge, Civil [dis]Obedience, and attacks on US warplanes. This seminar is timed to coincide with the first anniversary of the beginning of the Iraq War and Ireland's participation in that war. All those interested in matters of war, peace, justice and jurisprudence should attend. Please tell your friends, and forward this email to contacts inside and outside of UL.

For further details please contact
Jenny Hannon, 085- 7167329
jenniferhannon@yahoo.co.uk
Edward Horgan 086-2380911
edward.horgan@ul.ie

UL Camogie Crowned Intersvarsity Champions

Dreams do come true and the 03/04' will be looked back on with the fondest of memories by all in the UL camogie club. Under the new management of two Limerick greats Tom Hennessy and TJ Moroney and our own Claire Delaney, the first mucky steps towards glory were taken in Maguire's. League games commenced with a tremendous victory over CIT. UCC were our only stumbling block (but they hadn't heard the last from us!!) We beat WIT both home and away after tough battles and then we headed to the Mardyke for a rematch with UCC. A hugely spirited effort saw us sweep the UCC attack aside recording a sweet victory over them.

The Fresher's Tournament was held in Athlone and two UL teams contested gallantly. While no honours were achieved valuable intersvarsity experience was gained. Fitness tests, circuits and more 'slogging' on the pitches followed and progress was being steadily gained. WIT away in the qualifying round was in our focus and Tom, TJ and Claire couldn't have

motivated us more. Commitment and dedication to training was vividly seen over weekends and Christmas holidays. Challenge games against MI and St. Mary's Charleville were played. The onset of the new year saw us being put through our paces on Kilkee beach during our training weekend. Even exams didn't get in the way! No stone was being left unturned in ensuring we were in tip top shape for the WIT game. The 31st of January was d-day for us - WIT in Waterford - Ashbourne Cup Qualifier - .Losing wasn't an option. So in the stormiest of conditions the girls battled against all the odds and pulled off a tight win despite trailing WIT with only minutes remaining. We had now qualified to play old rivals UCC in the Cup semi-final in Asbourne Weekend hosted by UCD on the 14th/15th of February. This gave us two weeks fine tuning before heading to the capital. Mood in the camp was fantastic and everyone was really looking forward to taking on UCC. We stayed in the Montrose Hotel, which allowed us quick

access to Belfield pitches for our puck rounds. Saturday 2.00pm quickly arrived and UCC didn't know what hit them! From the start we really took the game to UCC and with the time dwindling we were ahead by four points. A last gasp goal by UCC wasn't enough to defeat us. This had to have been one of the sweetest victories ever recorded

We were well grounded by the reality that there was still no silverware on the table. We now had to contest the final against the host team UCD the following day. O'Toole Park, Crumlin, was the setting and UCD were blitzed by the UL onslaught. Unbelievable scenes of jubilation could be seen at the final whistle. The dream had been achieved....UL 6:5 UCD 1:8. Siobhan Ryan (captain) proudly accepted the Ashbourne Cup.

The victorious panel included: Laura Comerford, Niamh Bowles, Jean O'Sullivan, Sarah O'Gorman, Sheelagh Sullivan, Regina Glynn, Amanda O'Regan, Lorraine Lally, Siobhan Ryan, Orla Bambury, Jennifer O'Leary, Aislinn

Connolly, Deirdre Burke, Aoife Sheehan, Orla Kilkenny, Roisin Corcoran, Jeannette Feighery, Louise Ryan, Eilish O'Sullivan, Moira Dooley, Eimear O'Friel, Eimear O' Regan , Jenny O'Grady, Denise Lynch, Alison White, Sarah O'Brien, Fiona Page, Nancy Ferris, Oonagh Markey, Sarah Cronin, Laura Conheady.

Sincerest thanks to Tom, TJ and to Claire for believing in us and training us so professionally since last October. To Lynn Kelly, GAA Development Officer and Neasa Fahy O'Donnell, our club president, we wholeheartedly extend our thanks. Putting up with us was worth it in the end! We greatly appreciate the financial support we received from various companies etc. during our season.

The prized Ashbourne Cup is in our possession. 1995 was the only time before this year UL captured the cup. We won't let it go too easy!

Clubs and Societies

Outdoor Pursuits Club



Scotland 2004

Well it all started off on the 'Fun Bus' from Limerick on Sunday 25th January. Time was kept well except for some unexpected delays in Blanchardstown! On the road again and joined by two new members the bus set off for Belfast with entertainment mainly provided by dishing the dirt on everyone, always to be expected! The ferry involved some of its own entertainment with the dancing feet of Aoife and Tony! Off the Ferry and on the road again, we stocked up on food while I embarrassed some defenceless shop assistant! A few hours and our very own version of 'Bohemian Rhapsody' later we arrived at the bunkhouse, our new home for the following nights. We settled into our beds and divided into food groups in which the boys were always going to be on a winner with the more girls the better theory!! Despite the minimal size of our cooking area (which got to a few members!) the meals produced were a credit to all those involved and even those who had to endure the lack of meat never left hungry! The night finished off with sorting out some gear and some 'Non Competitive' card games! Our second day involved stocking up on food provisions at the local 'Safeway' in Fortwilliam. We had a meeting back in the bunkhouse and saw the start of our very own O.P.C 'Champions League'! Day 3 was our first early start at the dark hour of 6am to venture to the hills for Snow School. With gear on and copious amounts of porridge consumed we boarded the bus and set off. Snow School was a great experience for everyone involved with all credit going to the lovely Graham and Eric. The group was divided in two for the day and all learned some invaluable lessons, including ice axe arrests, testing for avalanches, how to dig snow seats and much more. It was a great day to start off on the hills and got the singing talents of some well under way!! On Day 4 we headed off bright and early again for Stob Coire Na Lochan (1115m). We started our trek to the summit while two brave souls took the route up through Broad Gully. The views to the summit were breathtaking and made it all worthwhile, even though our very own Japanese tourist forgot his camera! On our decent we got the chance to try out our crampons while one unfortunate was thrown right in at the deep end descending Broad Gully! On Day 5 we set out for Buachaille Etive Mor, while some took a day of rest to polish the Zimer Frame!!



Some of the group took the route along Curved Ridge while the remaining 8 followed the path to the summit of Stob Dearg. The climb was lovely and we successfully made it to the summit in good time even those who were suffering from the jugs of Ale the night before! All credit to Tony also at the end of the day for his first day leading. The decent today also gave Stevo and Liam the chance to test out lessons learnt at Snow school when they had to be-lay Marcus down the steep slope.

Day 6 has to be noted as extremely successful with the whole group making it to the summit of the highest peak in the British Isles (1344m) and for myself and E.T the highest we'd ever been before! We sang a good rendition of the National Anthem and headed for home, even though poor Mark was still looking for Ben Nevis! We were back on the bus by 4.30 with a great days climbing by all. That night involved some generous amounts of beverages and the chance for some brave souls to get their bearings in the storms outside the bunkhouse!!

Day 7 was a day of rest to check out the climbing wall at Ice factor or for the more lazy members a chance to try and hitch hike and taste the not so nice Haggis!!!

On Day 8 we took to the hills again to the summit of Bidean Nam Bian (1150m). Entertainment of course provided by some wonderful singing! We had a nice trek with some added adventures and I even got to put my ice axe arrest to the test! After a little extra road trekking we were rescued by Derek and hit the pub that night for Marcus leaving us for Germany.

Day 9 was a well-earned day of rest and gave us the opportunity to bear ourselves for the night ahead! We stocked up on Bier Du Noire and Champers, played pool and sang to early hours and one lucky individual even got to enjoy some extra curricular activities courtesy of the 'Caravan'! All credit to 'MR.LOVE' at the end of the day!!!!!!

On day 10 we headed for home, and after a total of 20 hours arrived in Limerick!! All was good though and everyone survived the ordeal on the 'Big Brother' bus!!!

Overall I have to say that this being my first trip to Scotland with the club I feel it was thoroughly enjoyed by all and was a great success and amazing learning experience. I'd like to give a big, big THANK YOU to Liam and good luck on your co-op, and also to Brendan, Stevo, Mike, Aoife, Anna, Alwyn and Jenny and all those who made this years trip one to remember.

Naomi Sturdy

Scottish Trampolining Open 2004

A total of eight people from UL travelled to Glasgow at the beginning of the month to compete in the annual Scottish Open. We flew over on Friday evening and decided to make straight for training in the Glasgow Caledonian University.

When we walked into their gym hall we were completely awestruck at the sight of eight trampolines laid out before us with hordes of people gathered around, trying to bully their way up onto one of the beds. It was a completely contradictory sight to that of our own training hall with our one trampoline and one double-mini tramp.

After strutting our stuff on the bed we raced back to the hostel to prepare to 'boogey on down' with the other trampolinists for the night. Turned out we were in the same hostel as the UCC gang and some Dublin bouncers. After a quick shower and change we were out the door, making our way to the allocated location for the night. It ended up with a few acrobatical antics taking place at the back of the bar, much to the surprise of the Glaswegian onlookers!

The competition on Saturday started early in the morning much to our dismay! UL fared well in the placements in the competition. Pauric Dooley, a UL veteran, took home fourth place in the elite category. Alannah Turner and Sinead Maloney placed 27th and 50th out of 140 competitors in the intermediate category. Lisa Cahill and Karen Croften placed 66th and 78th out of 150 competitors in the novice

category. The competition was so big it was rumoured to have made it into the Guinness book of records for being the largest trampolining competition ever held in the UK.

A night was specifically organised for all the trampolinists in the Strathclyde University Students' Union. Irish students never saw the likes of this union before. The SU was ten levels high. Our function was taking place on the eighth floor with either a bar, nightclub or games room on nearly every floor below it. After taking part in a ceili and trying to get used to the sight of men in kilts, we all ended up floor hopping checking out the scene on each level.

Our last night was spent in the bar in the hostel where, we got talking to people of various different nationalities. They all thought we were a bunch of mad Irish people and when asked to do "something stupid" for a photo the acrobatical antics started again.

Because our flight did not leave until late Monday evening we had plenty of time to walk around the city and check out some of Glasgow's best features. I have to say the Glaswegian people are one of the friendliest bunches I've come across. I would recommend to anyone to pay a visit to their city.

So, if you feel the need to check out the bouncing scene or join us on some of our weekend excursions come to training in the old sports building on Tuesdays at 7.20 or on Thursdays at 7.

UL Golf Club

The UL Golf Club has been active over the past few months, even during the Christmas break and before the start of Semester 2. The main activity for the golf club came in the form of the Irish Intervarsity Golf League that has been ongoing since the start of Semester 1. We have travelled up and down the country to play that best that collegiate golf has to offer. Our first match saw us taking on the might of the golf team from Queens University at the spectacular Adare Manor Hotel & Golf Resort. In a tightly-fought contest we were edged out by a 3-2 scoreline - Adrian Feane and Ted Vaughan gaining superb victories for the home side.

Our second encounter saw us travelling to Portrush to take on the University of Ulster. In what was another epic encounter the UL team managed to grab a well-earned victory by a 3-2 scoreline. The third match in the group stage saw us taking on DCU at Limerick Golf Club. Great performances from Gary Rainsford, David Lowry and some final hole heroics from Craig Toomey meant that we would be travelling up to play UCD having beaten their Dublin rivals. We played UCD at Portmarnock in Tuesday of Week1, which also consisted of some golf club bonding in

Gibney's pub in Malahide on the Monday night!!! The golf team fought tooth and nail but just couldn't match the sheer quality of what is probably the best collegiate golf team in Ireland. Being defeated 3-2 was disappointing, especially because a victory would have seen use qualify for the Semi-Finals. Anyways, there's always next year!!! The team that represented UL during the Irish Intervarsities Golf League were: Adrian Feane, David Lowry, David Duggan, Gary Rainsford, Craig Toomey, Tom Kennedy and Ted Vaughan.

The Irish Golf Intervarsities is coming up at the end of March and places in the team are still up for grabs. Any golfers out there that want to play can contact the golf club at ulgolfclub@eircom.net or at (087) 9735922. Plans for other outings this semester include Castleisland GC, Doonbeg, Enniscrone, Castletroy GC and even the Old Head Golf Links!!!

Any new members wanting to join can do so at our membership recruitment meetings on Monday from 12-1pm or on Tuesday from 6-7pm in Room 2 of the Students' Union. Don't miss out - are all welcome from beginners to the next Tiger Woods and beyond!!!

Letters Page

Something getting your goat? Someone rained on your parade? Something about the last issue of An Focal that you cannot let pass without comment? Trying to be funny to impress your friends? Never fear! An Focal's Letters Page is here. Vent your spleen here on whatever topic you like. Just e-mail your letters to sucommunication@ul.ie

Response to Interview

A Chara,

In an interview, given by local election candidate, Mr Cathal Crowe, to Mikey Stafford in the last edition of An Focal, the Clare County Council candidate states: "Sinn Fein have no place in the democratic Chambers of Dáil Éireann." I wonder if I was the only one searching for Typos at this point? Of Course, none were to be found. Are we to take from this, that despite requesting the good people of Clare to provide him with a democratic mandate, Mr Crowe would wish to restrict this mandate? If Mr Crowe believes that Sinn Fein are not welcome in the Dáil chambers, it follows that he does not believe Irish citizens and tax payers who happen to support Sinn Fein, have a right to exercise there democratic mandate.

Since early June 2002, five Sinn Fein TDs have been taking their seats in the Dáil and have served their constituents like deputies from any other party. When entering the Dáil on that occasion, the SF deputies were completely unarmed, unlike Mr Crowe's party when they entered the Dáil to take over government in 1932. I will only accept the "That was a different time" argument if it is also accepted that the IRA have been on ceasefire since 1997.

Being a native of West Cork, I will not be faced with the decision of whether or not Cathal Crowe is a suitable candidate for Clare Co. Council. I have neither the desire, the inclination or frankly the patience to tell other people how they should vote or who they should vote for. If, for example, a party was formed that wanted to abolish electricity, the people of Ireland, or whatever constituency they may be running in, would be free to do so regardless of how big a shower of lunatics I felt they were. It is their prerogative.

Therefore I think it is wrong that Mr Crowe should seek to restrict the right of Sinn Fein supporters to exercise their right to make that decision. If Mr Crowe's belief in the concept of democracy is as fragile as that, then I think it says more about his character and political insecurities than it does about anything or anyone else.

Is Mise Le Meas

Donal O' Driscoll

CIE are ripping-off students of third level colleges outside Dublin by obliging them when buying a national travel card, to pay an extra EUR10 for a discount card for Dublin Bus & Rail services, even though they may never use Dublin Bus or Rail. At present, Dublin-based students can purchase a 'City Student Travel Card' for EUR10 which entitles them to discounts on Dublin Bus weekly and monthly tickets and for weekly and monthly tickets on Dart and Commuter Rail Services.

For an extra EUR5, Dublin-based students can purchase a 'National Student Travel Card' which entitles them to discounts on all ticket types covered on the 'City Student Travel Card' and also single and return InterCity rail tickets.

Meanwhile, if students of third level colleges outside Dublin wish to avail of discounts on InterCity rail tickets, then they must buy the same 'National Student Travel Card' for the full EUR15 even though will very rarely if ever, avail of the discounts on Dublin Bus and on Dart and Dublin Commuter Rail.

This situation means that if a student in college in Galway, who doesn't usually use Irish Rail to travel to Galway from her home, wishes to make a one-off journey to Dublin then her options are:

Pay the full adult fare of EUR35/EUR38;

OR

Buy a EUR15 'National Student Travel Card' and pay the Students fare of EUR24.50 costing a total of EUR39.50

i.e. no discount is available to that student!

"If a Dublin-based student can be given a choice between buying a 'City' and a 'National' Student Travel Card, then students based outside Dublin should be given the option of buying a national card without having to pay an extra EUR10 for the 'City Travel Card' discount entitlements

I'm calling on CIE to end-this rip-off and start treating all students from all parts of the country equally and this should be done by introducing a new EUR5 national travel card for students of third level colleges outside Dublin.

Martin Clancy

Response to Interview

Dear Madam,

With regard to the last issue of An Focal, and the interview with Mr. Cathal Crowe in particular, I take issue with two of his claims. He said that college politics was not about who had the best lollipops and t-shirts in recruitment week, yet he is a member of a party that was using that exact method to get people to join in Week 1, with posters offering cheaper flights if one joined the Con Colbert Cumann. Is it a branch of a political party or a travel agents?

Also, he said that while Sinn Féin keeps the gun in Irish politics, they were not welcome in the Dáil chambers. While I would concur with this viewpoint, it might not sound so hypocritical coming from Mr. Crowe if he hadn't been handing out Proclamations of Independence of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Ireland during the Open Days. Surely this is bringing the gun back?

Yours etc.,

Denis Hurley

Rural Rail Rip-Off?

Lifting my hands despairingly from the counter of the ticket booth at Heuston Station Dublin, I realised the disgraceful conduct of C.I.E in this country. Without becoming overly derogatory towards them, there current policy towards students, and student discounts are atrocious. C.I.E expect us, students to pay \$15 for a National Student Card, which over 50% of its features are applicable ONLY in the Dublin area!

The National Student Card as it is ludicrously called, definitely segregates Dublin from the rest of the country. How does it do this? By simply making 3 out of its 4 discount options available only in Dublin. For example, if you purchase the National Student Card, you can look forward to a discount on the Dart, Dublin Bus, Inter-City and Iarnrod Eireann. This appears to be a good deal..... if you live in Dublin!

By contrast the Dublin Student Card offered by C.I.E, works in conjunction with Dublin Bus, The Dart and Inter-City and is available for \$10. What this all boils down to, is, Students who live outside of Dublin are being asked to partly fund the discounts offered to Dublin Students, by forcing them to avail of a card which only offers them a discount on 1 out of its 4 services.

Would it not appear to make a lot more sense, to install a system much like that of Bus Eireann, whereby, a student merely presents there current Student I.D and they receive a discount?

Poetry Corner

Dear madam,

This is a poem written by myself which I think reflects the feelings and events experienced by students away on Erasmus or on co-operative placements abroad. As I myself at this moment am just back from Erasmus in Germany, I would like to share it with others as I think it mimicks the emotions one goes through before and after they become settled in a strange land.

You might like to print this poem so as to rekindle memories for students who in the past have been abroad on placements or for students who still have such a fantastic journey like this ahead of them.

Yours gratefully,

Sinead Manning

Time Away

It begins as a turbulent ride,
One running from one place to the next without a guide,
When one stops to think, one begins to feel afraid,
And so, one stops the thoughts as they invade,
For this is the only way to stay staid.

Time is passed,
New experiences become amassed,
Friends are made, ideas are conceived,
So many gifts one has received,
But time has thus deceived,

It ends as a joyous memory.

Editor: Would you like to see a poetry corner becoming a regular feature in An Focal?

Let me know by sending me your poems (short-ish ones please!) to sucommunication@ul.ie

Back Inside

Campus News* with Val

4th Year Shunned for Talking of Looming FYP Deadline

Fourth year Paul O'Sullivan was subjected to immense criticism from his peers for constantly commenting on the proximity of his FYP deadline. Paul 'Dardevil' O'Sullivan was not afraid to make his fears known at the cost of his popularity. Mr O'Sullivan informed An Focal, "I cannot afford to ignore this mountain of work and just keep spending nights down 'The Lodge' anymore, I mean this is my final year for God's sake!"

When An Focal approached some of Mr O'Sullivan's peers over lunch in the canteen its questions were met with an emphatic response. "Of course I'm not talking about my FYP, and especially not at meal times, how vulgar!" fourth year Biochemistry student Marian Walsh commented in the general direction of a dictaphone. Her sentiments were echoed by Mike Hunt, an Environmental Science student, who unequivocally denied having mentioned his academic work in a social context: "What do you think I am, paranoid or something? Paul may be obsessed with his effing FYP, but no one else would be so naïve," he shouted, clearly incensed by the line of questioning.

Mr O'Sullivan, however, remains

unrepentant at his outspoken actions, telling An Focal: "I'll continue to talk about my FYP until I hand the bugger in." Despite the criticism Mr O'Sullivan has received from fellow fourth years, the college's catering staff have taken the unprecedented step of banning all academic related conversation from the eating establishments. "We have never had problems with students confabulating in this manner before and it is putting other diners off their food," stated Christina Burke, head meal consultant.

The situation was further confused late last night when news reached An Focal of a related incident. 'The Stables's' head barman, an eye witness to the alleged occurrence, said; "We [the bar staff] were shocked, but there was no confusing the situation, Mr. O'Sullivan was spotted reading a textbook on the premises." Further investigation revealed that Paul may have been muttering "must get this finished...only ten days until the beast has to be in." When informed of the alarming incidents, the ULSU Education Officer urged students not to panic and encouraged fourth years not to mention any impending academic deadlines.

New Begging Course Set to End Student Poverty

U.L." she explained. "It is an exciting development and I look forward to seeing the first graduates gain their qualifications in four years' time, and go on to find high-powered jobs as Big Issue salespeople, buskers or whores".

"The day will come when I am approached and asked for spare change by a shabbily-dressed, pallid youth bearing a degree from this very University, and it will be a proud day indeed" she gushed.

Modules ranging from 'Becoming a Meths Connoisseur in One Year' to 'Prostitution: Use Your Body As Your Meal Ticket' will be offered. Particularly able students will be selected to take an

* The product of my imagination shamelessly disguised as legitimate news.

Painful Drinking Incident Becomes Hilarious Story

A mere twenty-four hours after enduring a night of gut-wrenching alcohol-induced grief and a subsequent head-splitting hangover the drunken exploits of first year Mark Sheehan are already becoming the stuff of legend. Mr. Sheehan has already started looking back fondly at the liver-damaging incident with affection.

"I was sick as a dog all night" enthused a dishevelled looking Mr Sheehan at lunchtime in The Scholars the subsequent day. "It was bloody shockin' altogether. I would have been better off dead," he added to an enthralled audience of fellow students. The Business student then went on to detail the events leading to this unbearable stomach-churning escapade with noticeable delight. "I started off with a crate of Dutch," said Mr Sheehan "then it was straight down to the pub with the lads to start getting the 'proper' pints in. After the sixth it gets a bit hazy".

Witness accounts help cover the gaps in Mark's memory. "He was pretty lingers by about 9" said one visitor "he was surrounded by his friends who were getting involved in all manner of drinking games. I'm not sure of the exact rules but they all seemed to lead to the downing of pints".

On leaving the pub Mr Sheehan made his way back home where he slumped over a

toilet and emptied his stomach contents whilst convulsing in almost unimaginable agony. "I was in a bit of a state and just blew chunks everywhere," he laughed recounting the period of huge pain with a clear sense of pride. Having vomited, Mark then passed out unconscious on the floor banging his head hard on the toilet bowl. He would then regain consciousness several times during the night only to find himself in a state of incredible agony causing him to convulse. At approximately 6.30am he staggered back to his room and collapsed face down on his bed. By 10am he had awoken and was enthusiastically telling his neighbour of the nights hardship whilst suffering from a horrendous hangover.

ULSU Welfare Officer, David Array, has praised the actions of Mr Sheehan. "Too few people know exactly when to stop" commented Mr Barrahy, "but Mark got it down just right." "You can quit drinking after a mere 20 units and go through a night of sheer horrible discomfort giving you a great story or you can keep going and end up in hospital". "Thanks to Mark's good judgement he narrowly avoided a stomach pumping and provided himself with an anecdote that will last for at least until he graduates" he added.

University officials have answered critics who argue that the proposed return of tuition fees will lead to student hardship by introducing a new course titled 'Advanced Begging in the Modern World'.

Speaking from the all-new, state-of-the-art Department of Begging Studies, an anonymous University spokesperson hailed the new degree as "basically, killing two birds with one stone". "Students will gain a prestigious qualification, recognised in shanty towns and back-alleys the world over, whilst at the same time being able to use the skills acquired on the course to aid their difficult struggle for survival here at

department is its exchange programme, which will see U.L.'s fledgling beggars sent abroad for a semester to test out their skills in the slum towns of either Calcutta or Rio de Janeiro.

The new course has been aptly described as "another success for U.L. and an efficient solution to the impending student poverty problem". "Now the only students banging down the doors of Plassey House looking for rights or money will be sleeping on the steps, overdosing on smack, high on meths or dead of hunger, all of which activities will be earning them valuable coursework marks."

A further feather in the cap of the new

department is its exchange programme, which will see U.L.'s fledgling beggars sent abroad for a semester to test out their skills in the slum towns of either Calcutta or Rio de Janeiro.

The new course has been aptly described as "another success for U.L. and an efficient solution to the impending student poverty problem". "Now the only students banging down the doors of Plassey House looking for rights or money will be sleeping on the steps, overdosing on smack, high on meths or dead of hunger, all of which activities will be earning them valuable coursework marks."

Ask Father Wendy



Brendan Coffey brings you the latest instalment of Fr. Wendy Sheppard Henderson.

Anonymous-Father, I write to you in the vain hope that you might be able to explain to me the meaning of life. I have begun to ask myself a lot of questions in the last few weeks, namely why no pub has managed to design a toilet where it's possible to wash your hands. These and other minor issues such as my fiancée dumping me (she was giving me some lecture about never really listening to her, but I don't know what she was talking about because I wasn't really paying attention) have been really playing

on my mind lately. Father, I'm in desperate need of some guidance.

Father Wendy-Before I start, let me once again say how great it is to receive a letter from a dispirited person. Numbers at confession have dwindled dramatically of late because people think they are not sinning anymore. As if allowing 'The Lyrics Board' back on TV isn't a sin.

Firstly, as regards the inability of pubs to provide adequate washing facilities, I am very well aware of the problems one encounters in using hand basins in pubs and restaurants. The water is either too hot or too cold; comes out too fast or too slow; and worst of all the smell of shit in some toilets is just unbelievable. I was in the library last week and honest to God a blind man on the ground floor would have no problems locating the toilets on the top floor such is the wicked stench. It's no wonder many students find it so difficult to study in college. That's why so many of them end up staying in the Stables all day-just looking for a pleasant toilet.

However, it is matters of love that yours truly is drawn to this week. On the issue of

love, let me first recommend a purchase of "Pet Sounds" by the Beach Boys, just so that you hear some of the greatest music ever recorded before you begin contemplating this sensitive subject.

Bob Dylan's "Blood on the Tracks" also comes highly recommended, and of late Fr. Wendy has got into the Streets, certainly, Mr. Skinner makes an excellent case for the legalisation of cannabis. Fr. Wendy is in complete agreement having smoked some of the incense in the seminary-it was bloody awful stuff.

Many people like to think that love is a complex issue, and that is probably why everybody encounters so many problems with this emotion. It's simple. Either you love something that doesn't physically exist or you're mad.

The only love we know is our love of God. The reasons are quite simple and straightforward. God will never reject you. God won't insist on material gifts (though all donations are gratefully received-some big compo cases coming up) and certainly wouldn't expect you to plan your day around him. All God wants is for you to fit him in whenever you can, whether that be

once a day, once a week, or even once a lifetime.

God won't get annoyed if you forget anniversaries. These are, after all, arbitrary dates that aim to mark God's achievements. They are by no means specific calendar events; sure, the first Easter occurred over two thousand years ago. Nobody would have known it was three o'clock in the day on Good Friday. There's the time difference to take into account for a start.

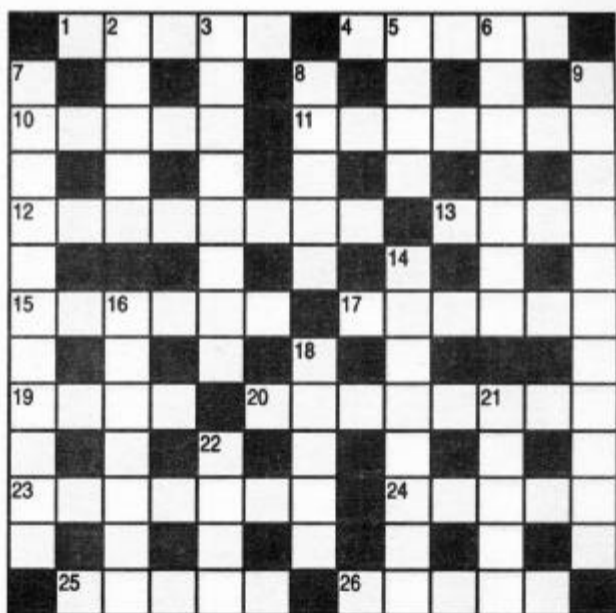
Essentially, what I'm saying is that loving existing beings is crazy. Don't get messed up in all this unnecessary emotion. Our Lord requires us to be objective. There is no need for sex in this world. The very first lesson we should note is that Jesus himself was conceived without sexual intercourse taking place. Unfortunately, few have recognised God's disdain for sex. Please follow the righteous path.

If you're feeling blue and you don't know what to do, just ask Fr Wendy about it.
Email:
askfrwendy@hotmail.com

Back Inside



An Focal Crossword #9



ACROSS

- 1. Following (5)
- 4. Local policeman (sl.) (5)
- 10. Make sense (3,2)
- 11. Euphemism replacing rude word (2-3-2)
- 12. Wage-payer (8)
- 13. Exclamation of surprise (4)
- 15. Girl's name (6)
- 17. Apparatus for mixing cocktails (6)
- 19. Sour (4)
- 20. Disinclined to speak (8)
- 23. Function (7)
- 24. Finnish steam bath (5)
- 25. Money bet (5)
- 26. Say on oath (5)

DOWN

- 2. Tired (with) (sl.) (3,2)
- 3. Ecstatic (8)
- 5. Satisfactory (coll.) (4)
- 6. Solid mass below surface soil (7)
- 7. Parting speech (11)
- 8. Wonky (5)
- 9. Relative (subject of many jokes!) (6-2-3)
- 14. Tool used by lumberjacks (8)
- 16. Something worn (7)
- 18. Aspect (5)
- 21. Fleshy part behind tongue (5)
- 22. Slope of a river (4)

An Bainisteoir as imparted to Brendan Coffey

Dear Readers,

Further to my last letter, I'm still languishing in prison. Unbeknownst to myself, my case came before the district court last week, but my solicitor was busy defending himself against claims of malpractice in the High Court, so I wasn't represented in court. The judge wouldn't let me represent myself because he met me on New Year's Eve and says I told him to fuck off when he offered to help me up off the ground.

I have a new cell mate. His name is Deco, or at least I think it is because every time he talks, he walks around the cell like a pigeon. Coupled with the fact that his voice sounds like David Beckham with a hosepipe shoved up his ass, I can't really have a conversation with him. As well as talking as though he has a hosepipe shoved up his ass, he walks as though that has actually happened, (ever since he came back from the showers the other day) and it's distracting when talking to him.

My daily routine is pretty depressing in here. I don't actually know what prison I'm in either, because the prison officers are different everyday of the week and I don't even think they know where they are. That's just the kind of look they have on their faces. I can't seem to understand them either, when they're talking. It's like listening to George Hook on acid.

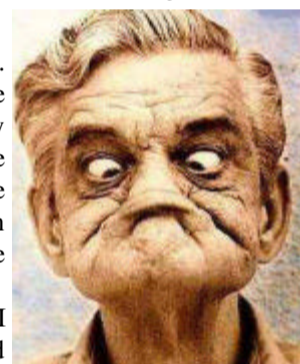
Life is getting harder and harder. None of the junior C lads have been into see me since Johnny 'Five Bellies' McCormack got kicked out of the visitors room for trying to off load the wife. He was telling me that he can't stand the woman, and that he was hoping to convince the prison officers that she was a prisoner trying to escape when he came to visit me. He even went so far as to say she was a transvestite, when the officers said she couldn't be a prisoner because this is a male prison.

I'm not surprised he's sick of her though. She's after getting herself a job. I mean, Johnny can't be expected to spend all day in the house on his own. It's bad enough that his dole money doesn't allow him drink more than four nights a week, though it hasn't stop him getting to the pub everyday since he got married-barring the one night of his honeymoon-however he's affording it.

I don't know if I can go on in here indefinitely. Oh wait; it's time for dinner. Lovely, there's bacon and cabbage on the menu, followed by jelly and ice cream for dessert. I don't believe it, there's biscuits with the cup of tea, and Fig Rolls at that (top quality biscuit). You know what; maybe life is not so bad after all.

Yours sincerely,

An Bainisteoir. .



Credit Where Credit Is Due

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Mikey Stafford, Dónal O'Driscoll, Anne Sheridan, Elaine Kiely, David Garrahy, Valerie Gunning, Brendan Coffey, Keith Whela, Richard Brennan

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SCRIBBLE BOX

Sabbatical Reports

PRESIDENT - EOIN

A Chairde,

I have had a whirlwind week which involved bringing the representatives of the Student Population – Class Reps Council, who for years have been kept in the dark about the trials & tribulations of ULSU Services Ltd. (the shop), up to speed on the state of affairs of the Company. Thanks to all the class reps who have attended the Emergency Class Reps Council last Thursday night for the conclusion of discussion and the rescue plan for the shop. Things are looking better already!



Good news from Governing Authority is that extra funds needed to implement the extended Library Opening Hours have been ring fenced by the University so we should have them soon. There was a 6.4% cuts across the board in University services and academic departments due to the Government renegeing on paying benchmarking awards to Universities.

If you have ever harboured ambitions to be a sabbatical officer of the Student' Union now is the time to start thinking about running a campaign to get elected. Elections are usually held the week after Kollege week. We will do a feature soon on what the 4 positions entail. Those interested in the intricacies of how the Union works are currently engaged in a review of the ULSU Constitution. The current version dates back to 1994 with a number of amendments in between. If you would like to get involved in this process please call in to the Class Reps Development Office.

I have been approached by representatives of the student physiotherapists who have to undertake work practise during the summer which cuts into their potential to earn money then. They don't hget paid for this work. Like the Student Teachers theirs is a case we will be investigating to see what can be done.

If you are looking to something a bit different over the next fortnight check out the Alternative Careers Fair in EGO 10 this Tuesday at midday, go to hear Irishman Denis Haliday former head of the UN Oil for Food Program in Iraq speaking on wednesday evening and see the variety of events planned for Womens week in week 4!

Best of luck to Aisling Golden (2nd Public Admin) who is contesting the forthcoming local elections for the Socialist Party. Ag tógáil guth na hÓige go dtí an mboird!

Hope you are enjoying SPANK in the Trinity Rooms on Wednesday nights and be sure to check out Air Hockey, Fuzz Ball & the jukebox in the SU Common Room.

Slán tamall,
Eoin

DEPUTY/WELFARE - DAVID



"Well, this is my chance to welcome you all back for the semester to come! I hope you are enjoying these relatively quite few weeks before the build up to assignments/exams, make the most of it! Also with Kollege Week in Week 7, it's the prefect chance to get a bit of balance between study and social life!

It's been a hectic few months in the life of ULSU. You have already read about the changes that we have needed to make because of the financial difficulties. Just to say that I hope we are building the basis for a strong and effective Union for the future. This can only be done with the support of the Students, however. Being involved in the Students' Union which can mean being a class rep, in a club or society or just calling in to ask our help make us a stronger Union. The financial problem is solvable, apathy is not!

In Week 4 the Welfare Office will be running a campaign highlighting issues around Mental Health. Surprisingly one in four of us will suffer some type of mental health disease at some point in our lives. Yet people are largely ignorant of the whole area which can lead to diseases not being treated. Garret O'Callaghan, 2FM DJ will speak on his experience of depression.

Lastly "Out in UL", the college Lesbian, Gay and bisexual society are hosting their "Queerbash" on Wednesday, Week 3 in the Trinity Rooms. There should be good fun with some questionable music choices and I encourage you to support them. There have been some reports of posters for the event being ripped down. All I have to say on this is that people should live and let live. Just give people a chance to live their lives - it's not much to ask!

Any problems that I can help you with? Email: suwelfare@ul.ie"

COMMS & CAMPAIGNS - SARAH



Hello Everyone,

I hope you're all back into the swing of things again this semester, and that the absence of the 24-hour labs isn't hitting you too hard. If it is, then TELL us about it!

We can't do anything for you unless we know what you want!

In Communications News, The new website is well on the way to being launched and we should see a test version before the next edition of An Focal comes out! Who'd a thunk it?

An Focal itself is going ok, but we always need more news writers, photographers and proof-readers. So if you want to be like Charlie Bird, come talk to me in my Office, upstairs in the Students' Union.

If anyone is interested in helping to put together a one-off magazine to be sold for charity during Kollege Week (week 7) email me, or call in to me QUICK because time is running out and very few people seem interested so far! It's going to be very light-hearted and quite low-brow, but the kid's'll love it, I'm sure, and it's all for charity.

Monday and Tuesday of Week 3 see the Anti-Cutbacks Postcard Campaign, so if you are pissed off by the cutbacks in the Third-Level sector, sign a postcard to the Minister for Education, and we'll send it off to him for you. Postcards will be available to be signed between 12 and 3pm on both days.

The next Communications Meeting will take place on Wednesday in Week three in the Communications Office (possibly moving to the Common Room if things get too crowded). Subjects we'll be discussing include Student Media Awards, The fabby computers in my office, An Focal's progress to date, and the Apostrophe (but only for a little while). Come along even if you've never written for the paper before, new faces are always welcome, and you might find that it's more fun to try to make An Focal the best paper it can be rather than giggling at the grammar mistakes!

That's all for the time being I think,

Enjoy QueerBash and the Thomond Ball and the Clubs and Socs Ball!!!

Sarah

EDUCATION - MADELINE

Hello again

Hope that you are all well and settling back in to semester two. Its been good to see all the faces back around, its was quiet lonely around here during the three weeks off. That's not saying we'd nothing to do!!! But its always good to hear ye scream and shout with joy on the receipt of your timetables, results etc ;-)



It has been an interesting two weeks. I've been really busy (actually that's an understatement) more like run off my feet with all the complaints I've heard and received from you guys out there on campus. These have ranged from lecturers' marking schemes in the exams, viewing days, results received, timetabling for this semester, lack of module outlines received, classes after six in the evening, people looking for co-op placements, classroom locations, broken projectors, the VAX being closed at 1am at night as opposed to 24 hour access... the list is endless. That's only a flavour trust me.

The story with the VAX is basically budgetary shortfalls. There is more about that in an article inside An Focal. The exam viewing days are this Monday and Tuesday, March 1st and 2nd and the exam recheck deadline has been extended due to an error with the dates to Friday the 4th of March. So rest assured there is still time yet to check out a result if you feel uneasy about it. Remember a recheck costs €25. You get a full refund however if the grade is changed. Beware though your grade can go up but it may also go down.

Kollege Week is happening on March 29th this year, which for all you guys translates into Week 7. So all I'm advising is get all the essays, projects, F.Y.P's etc done and dusted and get out there and have a good time. No Marquee in the courtyard this year for the usual reasons you all know about by now I'm sure but it'll be a blast all the same. So start saving the pennies and the euros will take of them selves!!! GEDDIT... sorry sad pun!!! Sunday blues I guess...

Anyway after all that, I hope ye've a fab 2 weeks,

Behave and take it easy schmeers,

Madeline