



Stylish turnout for the Law Ball at the Pavilion



Chuck Feeney: the homeless billionaire: P24



# AN FOCAL



UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK

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# ULSU sabbatical officer elections

## ... from the Wolfpack to the Wolf of Students' Union

Paul Austin

ULSU sabbatical election campaigns kicked off early this year. The Wolverine Wolfpack assaulted the Students' Union on Thursday of nomination week causing quite the racket as they collected their nomination packs. The team, all running on the same ticket for the three sabbatical positions, were hurried out of sight until they could be questioned by the secretariat of the Electoral and Referenda Board (ERB) as to their intentions. Hurdle overcome, the campaigning began in earnest despite clear regulations forbidding early campaigning.

Most of the campaigning did appear to centre around a near empty Stables Courtyard but this team was not to be discouraged. The €50 fine which would be the expected reaction from the ERB was considered money well spent to get the 24 hour jump on the competitors and one member was even quoted as saying "If the ERB and their false sense of authority feel like putting the wolverines at a disadvantage then we will play the hand we are dealt" (boards.ie 2014). Due to unforeseen circumstances, and in no way related to the hard night of campaigning the night before, each member of the Wolfpack failed to hand in their completed application form before the 5pm Friday deadline and unfortunately a great



opportunity was missed.

Friday afternoon was a tense time for all potential candidates and anyone who was hanging around the main courtyard was ambushed by various potential candidates for a last minute proposal name and student number to replace another, which for one reason or another had been deemed not valid. Some awkward glances were exchanged as one presidential candidate almost asked another to propose him. Some names were harder got than others and one proposer drove a hard bargain at selling a raffle ticket in return. The deadline passed and VP/Academic candidate Mike Forde breathed a sigh of relief to find that he was the only candidate to take over the role from Paddy Rockett and would be deemed

elected unopposed due to an inability of the electronic ballot to provide for reopen of nominations.

Tensions heightened even more as the scheduled meeting of candidates and campaign managers was delayed by 20 minutes as one potential candidate's campaign manager was already under scrutiny from the ever vigilant ERB. The campaign manager left the building through the assembled teams followed by rumours varying from an incomplete application to forged names on the form, and so the race for DP/Welfare was left to two.

Monday morning was the calm before the storm as teams made last minute alternatives for posters or t-shirts as Snap Printing had broken down, t-shirts were not delivered or on account of

other unexpected early misfortunes. One thing for certain however, there was no shortage of sweets, lollipops or even strawberries. Nobody will give away free pain au chocolat though and get away with it on Red Raisin's turf. Mark Nother's presidential placards were very prominent around campus, quickly paired with Caroline Hennessy's considerably smaller placards running the same colours as the current Welfare Officer's winning campaign last year, leading to concerns that the SU may be endorsing a particular candidate. Students were brought down memory lane for another brief period as an emotive campaign team set up stall to re-elect ULSU President 2009-2011 Ruán Dillon McLoughlin. A short lived dream as they were quickly closed down due to fears, from the current President, of confusing the electorate. Campaign manager Oisín Bates was quoted as saying "Ah here lads".

Tuesday kicked off with a bit more life and the fine weather had the campaign teams out in force with treats, fliers and promises, ready for any passers-by who made eye contact with them. There was only one thing missing. Had Tommy Bolger dropped out, was he a joke candidate or was he still suffering from the weekend? He had posted a great video Monday afternoon, but that got taken down within minutes, and surely the ERB would not approve a campaign video which seemed to take the piss out of the role. And was that a

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## NEWS

# AN FOCAL EDITORIAL COMMENT

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Welcome to the March issue of An Focal. A lot of changes have been made to our structure and we have freshened up our website and added a YouTube channel to our portfolio which was a great success during the sabbatical officer elections. My thanks again go to the people involved who made this possible, especially the Editors and Contributors. Don't forget that we are always looking for more contributors. If you feel you have something that would be of interest to other students or if you want to give any feedback or suggestions on how to improve An Focal, please feel free to contact us at [anfocal@ul.ie](mailto:anfocal@ul.ie).

Regards, Paul.

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### CREDITS

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*Thanks to everyone who contributed to this issue.*

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# Special Olympic Games in UL



## Rachel Lyons

THE University of Limerick is delighted to welcome the 2014 Special Olympics Ireland Games back to Limerick in June. The University will host the games over four days from Thursday 12th June to Sunday 15th June.

The official launch of Special Olympics Ireland Games took place at UL on December 4th with the support of well-known business, media and sports figures such as Paul O'Connell and David Wallace. Matt English, chief executive of Special Olympics Ireland said they were confident people all over the country will respond and ensure the games are a major success.

The Special Olympics Ireland Games were last hosted in Limerick in 2010 and is sure to be a highlight of Limerick City of Culture 2014. The Games will kick off with an opening ceremony on Thursday 12th June with sport competitions starting on Friday 13th June. As well as being the main residential centre, the UL will host the athletics, aquatics, basketball, football, bocce, gymnastics and kayaking competitions.

In what will be one of the largest and most prestigious sporting events to take place in Ireland this year, 1,500 Special Olympics athletes from throughout the island of Ireland will travel to Limerick. They will be accompanied by 500 coaches and official delegates as well as a



contingent of over 3,000 family members. The Games will be supported by a team of 3,000 volunteers who have been, and will continue to be, recruited from the Mid-West region over the next number of months.

Special Olympics competitions in each of the sports have been taking place over the past number of months at regional level, and athletes from each of the five regions have now qualified to compete at Irish level. For the next seven months these athletes will be busy training in their local clubs, supported by their volunteer coaches.

Eunice Kennedy Shriver established the Special Olympics in the 1950s and early 1960s, when she saw how unjustly and unfairly people with intellectual disabilities were treated. Through her vision, the organisation would grow into a global movement and change the lives of millions. Today 3 million athletes in more

than 180 countries around the world benefit from being involved with the Special Olympics.

Special Olympics Ireland was founded in 1978. Over the past 36 years the organisation has grown significantly and today has 10,500 athletes participating in 15 sports in 397 clubs throughout the island of Ireland. They are supported by a network of more than 25,000 volunteers, making Special Olympics one of the largest voluntary organisations in Ireland.

UL President, Professor Don Barry welcomed the announcement in saying "The University of Limerick is delighted to have the Special Olympics Ireland Games back in Limerick in 2014. Almost four years ago during the 2010 Games the University of Limerick, our campus and our community buzzed with an excitement that has been unparalleled since and we very much look forward to it all again. We know the 2014 Special Olympics Ireland games will be bigger, better and an even greater success drawing on the huge volunteer base in Mid-West region."

"As Ireland's sporting campus we are always overjoyed to see committed, hard-working athletes coming to UL to use our facilities and so we are tremendously happy to see that so many Special Olympics athletes, will be here to participate in the 2014 Special Olympics Ireland Games."

For further information about Special Olympics Ireland please visit: [www.specialolympics.ie](http://www.specialolympics.ie)

## Two towering omens point skyward to UL's highflying future

### Daniel Tighe

UNLESS you are incredibly unobservant or indulgently self-absorbed you will have noticed, depending on your perspective, a couple of awe inducing phallic symbols of modern engineering stretching skywards or alternatively two towering eye-sores puncturing the UL skyline.

The construction site in the middle of our University is due to the Bernal Project, an ambitious €52m science and engineering initiative to make UL the country's foremost research institution in the fields of pharmaceutical science and engineering; energy and sustainable environment; modern and biomedical materials and engineering.

Large scale capital projects are particularly welcome in trying economic times, and in a boon to the local economy and wider 'knowledge economy', the project will provide 225 jobs, of which 150 are short-term construction jobs while 75 are long-term sustainable research and teaching positions in UL. Funding for the project will come largely from philanthropic donations with UL's most enduring supporter

Atlantic Philanthropics stumping up over half the €26.3m to the project. The balance will come from UL funds and state funding.

The project and ultimately building is named after the world renowned Tipperary born scientist, John Desmond Bernal (he has an extensive Wikipedia page so he must be famous), often referred to as the father of molecular biology for his pioneering work on X-ray crystallography. The Nenagh native spent the majority of his academic and working life in Britain, where he made a large contribution to the Normandy landings in World War II, by helping with the mapping of the landing sites.

The building is designed by UL favourites, RKD Architects, who have previously designed the Kemmy Business School and Tierney Building for the University. The four story building, replete with scientific laboratories and lecture theatres, is due for completion in March 2015 with full occupancy anticipated by April 2015.

Taoiseach Enda Kenny speaking at the project's launch in October said: "The 150 construction jobs will be a



great boost for the sector and I also welcome the 75 high-quality, high-skilled permanent jobs in the project."

Also speaking at the launch, UL President, Professor Don Barry, said; "The imperative in growing the University and contributing to the economic development of Ireland is premised on developing a deep knowledge infrastructure and human capital base that will attract investment and stimulate the development of high-end industry and services at the core of a revitalised "smart" economy."

Vice President of Research at UL, Dr Mary Shine, said: "Through the Bernal Project the University of Limerick is attracting top researchers from some of the world's top 100 ranked universities to bring their expertise to Limerick in support of Irish recovery and growth. This investment will have major significance in promoting Ireland as a location

for Foreign Direct Investment and job creation particularly in R&D and advanced manufacturing. The Bernal Project provides an opportunity to align the strategic needs of the State with those of the University in their common goal to impact economic, educational and social development nationally."

UL will appoint 10 leading professors to lead the research projects that will be run from the science and engineering department. To date, five leading international researchers have been appointed as Bernal Chairs. These include Professor Mike Zaworotko as Chair of Crystal Engineering, Professor Ursel Bangert as Chair of Microscopy and Imaging, Professor Bartek Glowacki as Chair in Energy, Professor Harry Ven den Akker as Chair in Fluid Mechanics and Professor Gavin Walker as Chair in Pharmaceutical Powder Engineering.

The final five Chairs in the areas of Biomedical Engineering, Biopharmaceutical Engineering, Biocatalysis, Composites and Energy will be appointed in due course. I hope the new building has a room big enough for all the chairs.



## POSTGRADUATE OPPORTUNITIES

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- MSc in Work & Organisational Psychology/Behaviour (f/t & p/t)
- MA in International Tourism (f/t & p/t)
- MSc in Economic Analysis (f/t & p/t)
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## FEATURES



# Union books Ellen DeGeneres for AGM in last-ditch attempt to boost attendance

Joe Milford

ULSU has announced the booking of Ellen DeGeneres as special guest for its up-coming AGM. The decision to book Ms DeGeneres has reportedly been made in response to the poor attendance of last semester's AGM which failed to make quorum and was reportedly 'no craic at all'.

In light of recent low AGM attendances, the decision to book Ellen has reportedly been made in the hope of appealing to a student population with an evidently overwhelming disinterest in student politics.

Some readers may note that this is not the first time that ULSU has turned to gimmicks to boost AGM attendance. Indeed, the AGM of academic year (2012/13) saw the use of spot prizes and

goody-bags as an attendance incentive. Though the exact contents of the goody bags are not known to this reporter, it is rumoured that they included surplus tape cassettes from Paddy Rockett's unsuccessful rap album.

Some have criticised the union for deciding to book such an expensive celebrity. Though the final cost is not known, critics have estimated it to be equivalent cost to booking DJ Ber for over two hundred International Nights.

It is not known what Ellen will bring to the AGM beyond her infamous fun-loving charm and witty crowd interaction. Some have suggested that she may follow her recent Oscar stunt by ordering a delivery of Five-euro pizzas, others have suggested an announcement of free I-grades for all in attendance. Only time will tell.

## The joys of creeping the car park

Bernadette Moroney

THE Mature student experience in UL is no doubt a positive one, however aside from organising study time, a whole process of events dictates my day. As all students experience financial hardship throughout their degree programme, particularly mature students. One parent families such as 'me,' who are constantly struggling to make it through the week, willing my Yaris to reach its destination, and often trying desperately to ignore the fact that my car could stop at any moment. When I do eventually make it on campus, I become a tactical stalker, watching and waiting for any sign of someone moving their car so I can get free parking, as there is no way I have three Euros to spare for parking. After a considerable amount of surveillance I trail slowly behind a hapless student, saying, 'Are you going out? Too which they reply Tonight? Ha, No, of the car park. The joys of creeping the car parks are just one of many survival tools to make it through four years, a teenage daughter who wants credit for her phone and uses all my broadband credit because she needs to

'Like for the one Who....., a cash machine that reads Insufficient funds, they will print that on my headstone, and the constant juggling of modules to try to make my timetable fit the school runs. After all this is organised than I have to study, make deadlines and try to maintain my QCA. In all of this the most important advice is persevere, with one semester remaining, I've headed for the East gate more than once, with the towel truly thrown in. But even in this there is learning, to overcome the little adversities, the car park, the lack of funds, wearing the same wardrobe for all seasons, as even penny's has exceeded your budget, even for all that persevere. The journey is short but hopefully the accomplishment will be long lived. So I thank my fellow matures, for listening to my dramas and empathising, sharing their own hardship stories, a valuable support in UL, when you can whinge to random people and it is considered acceptable. As I face a, what is a matter of weeks left in UL, I consider the real world and it's opportunities, and I am apprehensive but positive that my ability to persevere are tools enough to see me through.

## Plassey 10K launch day

IN a break from the recent poor weather conditions, the sun shone gloriously all over the campus on Monday, 10th March and the second year Sports and Exercise Science students were hard at work launching the annual "Plassey 10K". This event is organised by the second year Sports and Exercise Science students each year under the guidance of the ARENA/UL Sport and the PESS department. This year's launch took place in the courtyard, outside the library and ARENA, each

charities. The two chosen charities this year are The Mater SADS Foundation and Donal Walsh-LiveLife.

This year the run will take place on Sunday 6th April at 11am and registration is now open. The launch day was a huge success with €941.52 raised for the chosen charities. Olwen Kennedy (Race Leader), wished to thank all of the students and staff of UL who gave so generously on the day and is looking forward to seeing as many students



area awash with activities. Music was playing, games were taking place and cakes being sold all in the name of two worthwhile charities.

The "Plassey 10K" is organised in memory of Jacinta O'Brien, a former member of the staff in the PESS Department. Jacinta passed away at peace in her sleep from the condition Sudden Adult Death Syndrome. This year marks the 10th anniversary of her death and this is how we remember her whilst also raising much needed funds for local

and staff participating on the day. Registration is taking place in the foyer of the Arena daily so look out for students there and sign up for the race if you have not yet done so. There are small competitions running alongside the event (e.g. guess the number of Bon-Bons) with many prizes on offer (e.g. signed Munster jersey, 3 month gym memberships and Elvery Sports gift vouchers).

We hope to see you all on the 6th April for what promises to be a great day!

Further information about the race can be found online at:  
<https://www.facebook.com/Plassey10k?fref=ts>  
<http://www.jacintaobrien10k.com/>

## Plassey 10k: sign up, you might surprise yourself!

Ben Panter

BETWEEN the sunshine, the election campaigners and the Spin SW crew outside the Arena, campus had the feel of another rag week. It would have been hard not to notice volunteers press-ganging people into taking part in this year's Jacinta O'Brien Plassey 10K. The race was fittingly named after the popular physical education lecturer, who died suddenly on February 3, 2004. Intoxicated by the buzz off the day and feeling adventurous, I signed up.

Sometimes my head is full of nonsense: I'm in denial about my age; I'm a die-hard smoker and construction sites have taken their toll on my back; I will be lucky to survive. Realising that I might need a bit of help to finish the course, I went to the training ground expecting it to be full of students keen to improve their chances.

Ominously, the only other participants in the session were first year psychology students. I hope the nonsense in my head stays in my head. As a journalism student, they probably have the same fear around me I console myself.

Knowing that my enrolment fee is going towards good causes has made me feel more positive and, according to Professor Orla Muldoon from UL's Psychology Department, there are more reasons for the rise in spirits. "There is a very strong link between exercise and mental health. People can improve their self-esteem and their body image. People also receive a boost from endorphins which are neurotransmitters – 'they're the equivalent of natural antidepressants.'"

The beautiful Brianne O'Rourke, an exchange student from Canada who is currently studying sports sciences, runs the session. I ask about my prospects she says: "I think you can run 10k in a month but you'll have to train more than once a week." She tells us to visualise an anaconda chasing us on lap two and a bear chasing us on lap four to improve our pace. The shrinks do not flinch at this suggestion of delusional thinking.

The endorphins flow, as does the conversation; Professor Muldoon was right, the mood lift is powerful and it is surprising how good running is for breaking the ice. Entry for the Plassey 10k is €20; psychiatry is a bonus.

# Films currently in the cinema

Paul Saunders

HERE is a round-up of all the major films currently showing in the theatres in Limerick. Before 6 o' clock every day or all day on Wednesdays in the Odeon and Omniplex theatre's student prices are only 5 euro, so there is no excuse for not taking a well-earned break and enjoying a movie and some over-priced popcorn.

**Dallas Buyers Club:** The Oscar-winning film is still showing in theatres in Limerick and is a must-see for McConaughey's performance alone. The story tells of Ron Woodroof, a homophobic drug addict cowboy, who is diagnosed with HIV and given thirty days to live. Woodroof sees an opportunity to exploit the situation and sell unapproved drugs to the gay community. McConaughey and Leto, who both won Oscars for their performances, are captivating in their roles, and this film is one of the last Oscar nominees left in Limerick cinemas.

**12 Years A Slave:** This year's recipient of the coveted Best Picture Academy Award, is a truly powerful tale that is equally amazing and disturbing. Every aspect of the movie is incredibly well put together; every performance is Oscar worthy with particular praise for Fassbender's disgustingly racist cotton-trader. The movie is incredibly powerful and is shocking when you consider that it is based on a true story. Solomon Northup's tale of captivity is the best film of the year, a must-see. Like Dallas Buyers Club, this is your last chance to see the Oscar-winning film on the big screen in Limerick.

**The Lego Movie:** A movie based around Lego building blocks sounds like a shameless 2-hour promotion for the brand, but the end result is possibly the best animated movie of 2014. The movie's animation is flawless and the voice performances are top notch. The film tells the story of an everyman builder who, in an unlikely turn of events, is perceived to be the master builder who will free the Lego universe from President Business' rule. Every superhero imaginable turns up



in this movie and the hilarious jabs at modern life make the Lego Movie a hilarious must-see for everyone.

**300 Rise of an Empire:** A sequel/midquel/prequel to the beloved 300. The film takes place before, during, and after the events of the previous film and brings more gore, violence, and action to this instalment. Fans of the first film will definitely enjoy this follow up.

**Need for Speed:** Aaron Paul's first movie after the end of Breaking Bad is based around the incredible popular video game series. While the film has little to do with the video games, it promises to deliver high speed action chases and vengeance. What more could you ask for? It seems like big, dumb fun and Aaron Paul is always fantastic to watch on screen.

**Non-Stop:** Another film like Need for Speed which is sure to be incomprehensible and ludicrous, but immensely fun, is Liam Neeson's latest action vehicle. The 61 year old Antrim man stars as an air marshal who somehow hates flying, trying to foil a passenger who promises to kill someone every 20

minutes. The film is over-the-top and barely plausible but incredibly fun to watch as Liam Neeson terrorises already-terrified people on a plane for 90 minutes.

**Robocop:** Staying with action movies, as there appear to be a considerable amount of them out at the moment, Robocop, a remake that has been in the

making for years, has finally been released. While the film contains very little of the over-the-top gore and satire that made the original a critical darling, this remake still offers the timeless pleasure of watching a half-man, half-robot destroy other giant robots.

**The Grand Budapest Hotel:** Wes Anderson offers another uniquely quirky tale of murder and mystery set in a fictional European country between world wars. If you like Wes Anderson, this could quite possibly be his best film yet and Ralph Fiennes gives a fantastic performance. The whole cast is made up of A-list stars, and watching them play insanely quirky characters is highly enjoyable to watch.

**The Stag:** The only Irish-made film available in local cinemas is The Stag. A quasi-rip of The Hangover which appears to feature every year in cinemas, follows the events of a bachelor party that has gotten a bit out of hand. People apparently like the film as it has been nominated for an IFTA and it is making quite a considerable amount at the box office, so it must be doing something right.

Hopefully there is a film for you in that selection of the best Limerick cinemas has to offer. Admission is only the cost of a pint, and after rag week, don't you want to keep that sobriety pledge?

## UL style . . .

Mikie O'Loughlin

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UL is not exactly renowned for its fashion trends, but to be stylish going to college doesn't take much. Here are 5 simple tips in how dress for the UL campus.

### 1. Ditch the Tracksuit

Most people with any sense of style are sick of seeing people wearing GAA tracksuit bottoms everywhere they go. We get it, you made your county's minor team, but please take off the free gear they gave you! Nothing about a tracksuit is fashionable or attractive.

### 2. Dress Up

Make an effort coming to college. Nobody is expecting a three piece suit or floor length gown, smart casual is key here. Dressing appropriately exudes an air of confidence which in turn will be well reciprocated by lecturers, tutor and fellow peers. Making an effort coming to college is not too difficult. For a guy, try a pair of chinos or a slim fitted jeans pair of jeans with a nice shirt and cardigan, or a jumper and a pair of Converse and

you're well on your way. For the ladies, a pair of high waisted jeans and a shirt always look nice.

### 3. Use Accessories

Accessories make an outfit! For girls, jewellery and bags are the most essential accessories for an outfit. Probably the most obvious and mandatory accessory for any college student is their school bag. Let your schoolbag symbolise your personality, and let the colour, design and style be more important than the function any day.

### 4. Don't be Afraid to Experiment

College is used as the primary way to experiment with most things: education, alcohol, sex and sexuality, but why limit your experience? Experiment with your sense of style to embrace your personality.

### 5. Dress to Impress

College is a great spot to meet the love of your life, but that's not going to happen if you're in the Stables wearing last night's jeans complete with beer stains, a top that your aunt bought you for your 15th birthday, and Asics trainers.

Always be prepared, you never know who is going to sit beside you in your next lecture in the Kemmy.

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Public Relations Officer: David Tierney

## FEATURES

# UL commits to smarter travel by creating a ULST coordinator role

Sean Collins

THE vision of University of Limerick Smarter Travel is to create a more liveable and lovable campus through the development and promotion of sustainable means of travel.

This vision creates an attractive image with a range of positive benefits for sustainable travel such as walking, cycling, car-sharing and taking the bus. University of Limerick Smarter Travel (ULST) is a subproject of Limerick Smarter Travel which is a Department of Transport and European Regional Development Fund sponsored project. Leveraging on good work carried out by the Buildings & Estates Department over the last few years and with part-funding from Limerick Smarter Travel, the University is investing in smarter travel initiatives for students and staff until 2016. Indeed, President Don Barry has signed a charter committing the University to implement a range of measures that will foster a strong culture of sustainable travel.

Many staff and students were introduced to ULST during the Feasibility Study and Strategy Development stages of the project, and now Ross Higgins, as ULST Coordinator, and Sean Collins, as ULST Deputy Coordinator, are tasked with implementing the smarter travel strategy which involves the rolling out of a range of infrastructural designs and smarter travel



promotions aimed at, not only removing barriers, but serving to actively encourage alternatives to single-occupancy car use.

New shared pedestrian / cycling paths have been designed that will make the University more navigable. Feedback from staff and students through surveys,

community engagement events and focus groups, suggests a consensus for the requirement of secure bike parking. This has led the design for such facilities, some of which are expected to comprise bike stands housed in swipecard accessed enclosures. These facilities will be

positioned in locations of high demand such as adjacent to the Students' Union Courtyard and the Foundation Building. Designs are also being drawn up for new shower facilities which are proposed to be installed in some campus-central buildings.

The second role of the ULST team is to improve perceptions and awareness about the positive effects of sustainable travel physically, mentally, socially, financially and environmentally. Building on good work completed in 2013 with initiatives such as the development of the University of Limerick Journey Planner, 2014 have also started positively with a successful Week 1 event where smarter travel information, free bike mechanic services and freebies were given out to engaged staff and students from the smarter travel tent in the Main Plaza. A sense of a bike culture is being created on campus led primarily by the Tuesday offerings of the Bike Doctor, offering free basic bike repairs. Many other promotional events and activities, such as the Marchathon Student Walking Challenge, Green Week, Safety Week and the Smarter Travel Change Lanes Challenge, all aim to encourage sustainable travel. Staff and students are informed of such events through email and others through the Limerick Smarter Travel Facebook and Twitter pages.

ULST welcomes comments and queries to SmarterTravel@ul.ie

## Peter Tait: Limerick industrialist and Confederate Army supplier

Oisín Bates

When considering Irish involvement in the American Civil War, what is mostly likely to come to mind are those who supported the Union, and more specifically, the men who fought in combat. Indeed, of the 1.2 million Irish immigrants living in America at the time of the Civil War, only 84,000 were living in the Confederate States. While roughly 150,000 Irish fought with the Union Army, only 30,000 (approx.) fought with the Confederacy. One lesser known Irish connection is that of Limerick businessman Peter Tait.

Having moved to Limerick from the Shetland Islands in the early 1840s, Peter Tait built a trading business that grew into the city's largest textile factory. By the outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861, Tait's factory was producing enough textiles to supply the Confederate Army with jackets, trousers, caps, shirts, blankets, boots, stockings, and haversacks. Though it is not possible to decipher the exact quantity of textiles exported, Texan historian Frederick Adolphus estimates Tait's Limerick factory – along with two English sister companies – to have provided the Confederacy with at least 53,600 ready-made uniforms as well as thousands of unassembled uniform sets and materials. The significance of Tait's exports is consolidated further in that his jackets are the only imported Confederate Army jackets which are known to have survived.

Alongside his textile trade, Tait served three terms as Mayor of



Limerick between 1865 and 1868. Such was his legacy as an employer and politician that Tait's Clock Tower was erected in his name, a monument which still sits within sight of Colbert Train Station, or perhaps more familiar to some UL students, Costelloe's bar. As foreign competition grew in the latter nineteenth century Tait's textile trade declined, leading him to leave the city. It is evident from his success in Limerick that Tait was an innovative and hard-working man. It is perhaps fitting in this case that Tait, in 1890, would not meet his death in predictable circumstances, but in the process of establishing a cigarette factory in Russia.

### Pizza 'n Pasta

Served 4-7pm

**LARGE PIZZA SLICE  
+ CHIPS JUST €5**

**DAILY PASTA SPECIAL  
€5**

**FREE MINERAL  
WITH THIS FLYER**

*Coca-Cola*

Scholars Club

CAFÉ BAR

# UL SAFETY WEEK 2014



## #MAKINGANIMPACT

### Week 8: March 18th-20th



#### Tuesday, March 18th

Bike Doctor in SU Courtyard with SmarterTravel  
– 11.30 - 4pm

Is your bike in need of repair? Bring it along for some basic repairs and pick up a FREE goodie bag and bike light from the Road Safety Authority.

Launch of CleverMiles' "College CleverLeague"  
– ALL DAY

Three UL students will battle it out for the next 6 weeks with students from 9 other Third Level Institutions to find out if our college has the most skilled drivers in Ireland. Follow the competition on [www.facebook.com/Clevermiles](http://www.facebook.com/Clevermiles)

Hi-Vis Party in the Library with UL DJ Society  
– 9pm til late

Time to break out the Neon! You can also pick up some FREE hi-vis gear at the door.

#### Wednesday, March 19th

CPR Demonstrations with the Order of Malta in the SU Courtyard\*\*\* – 10.30 - 1pm

Learn basic CPR skills with one of our Charity Week charities.

"Hot Wheels" with the Irish Wheelchair Association and Kerry, Maria and Harry from the Welfare Team – 11 - 1pm

Take part in a campus wide treasure hunt in wheelchairs. Kick off in the SU Courtyard. First team back wins Vouchers for dinner in Milanos, plus goodie bags for all competitors. If you and a friend want to pair up for the race, email [suwelfare@ul.ie](mailto:suwelfare@ul.ie)

FREE Bike Repair Workshop in EGO-10 – 1 - 2pm  
Learn how to carry out basic repairs yourself, for free!  
You must RSVP to [SmarterTravel@ul.ie](mailto:SmarterTravel@ul.ie) before Tuesday at 4pm.

RSA Shuttle in Main Plaza – 10 - 4pm  
Come along and give the different simulators a go!

RSA Rollover in SU Courtyard – 10 - 4pm  
Experience how it feels to rollover in a car crash!

#### Thursday, March 20th

"Rob my Bike" in the SU Courtyard with Billy, Nora and Alan from the Welfare Team

– 11 - 12pm and 1pm - 2pm  
Do you think you know how to lock a bike safely? Put your knowledge to the test. Lots of prizes to be won incl. bike helmets and high quality bike locks.

RSA Shuttle in Main Plaza – 10 - 4pm  
Experience the dangers of drink driving!

RSA Rollover in SU Courtyard – 10 - 4pm  
Learn the value of wearing a seatbelt!

*If anyone wants to help out or get involved in Safety Week, email [suwelfare@ul.ie](mailto:suwelfare@ul.ie)*

*Facebook: [UL Safety Week 2014](https://www.facebook.com/ULSafetyWeek2014)*

*Twitter: [#MAKINGANIMPACT](https://twitter.com/MAKINGANIMPACT)*

*Coordinated by the ULSU Welfare Officer and the ULSU Welfare Team*



\*\*\*LOCATION IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE DUE TO WEATHER CONDITIONS. KEEP AN EYE ON THE FACEBOOK PAGE FOR DETAILS

## Skills-based training on risk management (STORM) workshop

Sheila Cotter

SUICIDE is a global and national public health concern. Ireland since the 1980s has experienced an alarming increase in the rate of deaths by suicide with the incidence of suicide ranking 5th within the European Union.

Within the clinical environment nurses identify and subsequently manage suicide risk.

Skills-based training on risk management (STORM) provides nurses and other healthcare workers with an empirically supported suicide prevention training package. It focuses on developing, through rehearsal, the skills needed to assess and manage a person at risk of suicide.

This year all 3rd year BSc Nursing (Mental Health) students completed a one day workshop and were awarded with a STORM certificate. The day was organised by Therese Hennessy Course Director for the programme and Bernie Carroll, Resource Officer for Suicide

Prevention from the HSE facilitated the workshop.

The inclusion of this training highlights risk assessment as a core nursing skill and aims to increase each student's knowledge of suicide and the management of suicide risk. Hence, each student will become familiar with risk assessment questions; they will develop greater confidence in suicide risk management skills. The placing of STORM training in the 3rd year provides an opportunity for students to draw from knowledge and perfect skills learnt in previous modules.

We all found the day very challenging, as suicide is very emotive. However, it was a fantastic learning experience that benefited each member of the group both personally and professionally.

It was felt that the workshop was well placed in preparing us for our internship where there will be working within acute mental health clinical settings.



## MSc in Economic Analysis

THE MSc in Economic Analysis at UL is specifically designed to equip students with the practical skills required for a career in economics. The current global economic crisis demonstrates the need for well-educated and trained economists in a number of spheres. The programme has a strong applied public policy focus which will prepare graduates for positions that require the application of economic knowledge and practical skills. Special features of the programme include a unique collaboration with the Central Statistics Office (CSO) in the delivery of a module in data access and analysis. The course also includes the opportunity to experience an international business workshop to enhance your learning experience; this has previously included visits to the European Commission and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

The MSc in Economic Analysis has recently been ranked by Eduniversal in

the top 50 Masters in Economics within Western Europe- <http://www.best-masters.com/ranking-master-economics.html> and we have an extremely strong employment record with 100% of graduates from last year's class employed in full time positions within 2 weeks of graduation. These include positions within Bank of Ireland, the Central Bank of Ireland and Sherry Fitzgerald.

The programme is available on both a full and part time basis with specific details of the course structure, fees and contact details available in the course brochure or online at <http://www.ul.ie/business/content/msc-economic-analysis>. This also includes various testimonies of past graduates that highlight their positive experiences within the course.

Please don't hesitate to contact either Darragh Flannery ([darragh.flannery@ul.ie](mailto:darragh.flannery@ul.ie)) or Donal Palcic ([donal.palcic@ul.ie](mailto:donal.palcic@ul.ie)) if you have any questions about the course.

## STUDENTS' UNION

# Student nurses demonstrate

Peter Hanrahan

THE last few years have been tough for student nurses in Ireland. Decreasing staff levels on wards has meant that workloads have increased even for supernumerary students (1st to 3rd students who are unpaid and supported by a qualified staff nurse at all times).

In addition to this the government has cut the pay rate of a 4th year intern student from 80 % of a qualified staff nurse initially to 60% and now to 50%. This means that a rostered 4th year intern who has the case load of a qualified nurse and is responsible for their care and care plans now earns €6.49 an hour for the duration of his/her internship.

This is significantly lower than even minimum wage and seems very unfair when the workload that is required is taken into consideration.

And then there's the issue of the graduate scheme which sees a newly QUALIFIED nurse paid 85% of that of previously qualified nurses. Basically they will carry out the exact same workload for 15% less in year one. But that is a matter for another conversation.

This pay rate cut is a key topic of conversation amongst nursing students in Ireland. They see it as hugely demoralising, find it hard to motivate themselves at times and at worst feel massively undervalued.

Can something be done about this

situation though or are nursing students held to ransom in order to receive their qualification? On Thursday March 6th students from all over the country made their voices heard. A Union of Students of Ireland led protest took place at 2pm at the HSE headquarters just opposite Heuston Station.

A busload of students from the University of Limerick accompanied by Emma Porter (President of the Students Union) joined other colleges such as U.C.D., D.C.U., Trinity College, N.U.I.G, U.C.C and W.I.T. in demonstrating for this cause.

A number of speakers including Joe O'Connor (President U.S.I) and Dean Flanagan (I.N.M.O) put forward strong cases arguing why student interns should be getting at least minimum wage.

There was good media coverage of the protest and students from U.L. gave excellent accounts of the situation to RTE news. The trip was very beneficial in terms of contacts made and representatives from the students intend on making the trip to Dublin again for the L.R.C. hearing on April 2nd.

The Students of The Department of Nursing and Midwifery would like to thank both the Department and the Students Union for the support they have shown and would also like to take this opportunity to welcome any support that might be received in the future.

## ULSU annual general meeting . . . be informed

Paul Austin

THE ULSU AGM is scheduled to be held on Wednesday of week 9, 26th of March 2014. AGM is the highest power of government of the Union after Referendum.

The quorum for a General Meeting has this year been reduced from 200 to 100 members of the Union, of which all students of UL are members.

Any motions for consideration to a General Meeting shall be given in writing to the SU President (supresident@ul.ie) by the end of Wednesday of week 8. Such motions must be proposed by 5, and seconded by 10 members of the Union.

The President shall give notice of the General Meeting before Wednesday of Week 7, 12th of March, and post the agenda two days prior to the meeting. All meeting documentation must be made available on the Union website.

Currently, the main possible Agenda item for the AGM is an informative item surrounding the topic of ULSU's possible re-joining of the Union of Students in Ireland.

The information surrounding this topic will be put forward to all of the members present to make them aware of the current situation.

Should any student wish the SU to run a referendum affiliation to USI, they may mandate the Union to do so by collecting 200 signatures in favour.

A referendum can be held on any issue if student council or general meeting decides by a two thirds majority or a petition of at least 200 students who are members wish to call a referendum.

All of the above information can be found in the University of Limerick Students' Union Constitution and in the minutes of Student Council meetings.

# AN FOCAL

Have you got what it takes . . . ?

An Focal requires a  
**MANAGING EDITOR**  
for the 2014/15 Academic Calendar

Tasks involved in this role include but are not limited to the following:

- \* Managing a team of volunteer Sub Editors.
- \* Managing a team of co-op students.
- \* Securing sufficient advertising to ensure that An Focal is self-funding for the entire year.
- \* Meeting advertisers demands to ensure satisfaction and guarantee repeat business.
- \* Sourcing news and journalists/reporters in order to provide content for the paper.
- \* Frequent liaison with the graphic designer and approving of copy proofs before printing.
- \* Liaison with the printers to confirm details of each issue and to ensure that each issue will be delivered on time and to a satisfactory standard.
- \* Communication between staff and Sabbatical Officers of ULSU in order to ensure the Unions best interests are upheld while maintaining editorial integrity.
- \* Ensure that a broad and active distribution network is upheld and that all copies are distributed and the entire campus is targeted.
- \* Managing of a budget to cover printing, advertising and running costs and constant liaison with ULSU accountant to ensure best accounting methods are upheld.
- \* Responsible for overall policy decisions on all content that is published.
- \* Ensuring that all content printed is of a sufficient standard and complies with the Press Council of Ireland's Code of Practice.
- \* Ensure the online aspect of An Focal ([www.anfocal.ie](http://www.anfocal.ie)) is updated regularly.

Effective people management, communication and time management skills are deemed as essential. The successful candidate must be prepared to work autonomously with minimum supports.

Prospective candidates should submit their written application to [anfocal@ul.ie](mailto:anfocal@ul.ie) outlining what experience they have and why they feel they are best suited for the position. Candidates will be informed of the status of their application by email and should be prepared to be called for interview early in week 11.

The successful candidate will be expected to understudy the existing Managing Editor during the preparation, publication and distribution of the final issue of An Focal for the current semester which is due to be published in Week 13.





# Strasbourg . . . a bizarre hybrid

Jane O’Faherty

IN SPITE of its apparent unity, Europe proves to be quite a controversial continent in terms of travel. Major political disputes and differences may continue to appear among our neighbour nations, but European travel has to be one of the more common topics that still divide opinion.

Even now, voyaging in Europe comes down to an inevitable argument. You could prefer the “pretty”, “romantic” and warm side of the continent, championed by France, Spain and Italy. Failing that, you could choose the “ordered”, “prosperous” and “modern” destinations of Northern Europe, namely Germany and Scandinavia. The contrast between these two ideas of our continent couldn’t be starker. In response, many travellers – me included – have aligned themselves with one particular vision of Europe.

As a teenager, I had decided that France would be my future home. For me, there was no better place in the world. That decision was absolute at the time. However, after spending six months in France through co-op and Erasmus, I was no longer quite so zealous.

I still loved the lifestyle of cycling, buying baguettes and drinking wine in cafés, but I was growing ever more curious about what lay to the north and east of France’s borders. This curiosity resulted in an impromptu trip to Strasbourg, in the French region of Alsace. Accompanied by another curious Irish friend, I wanted to see this city before venturing further to Germany.

Amidst our ideas of what defines France and Germany, Strasbourg seems to be some sort of bizarre hybrid. The Germans and the French both fought for control of the city for centuries, eventually resulting in a culture that borrowed elements from both worlds.

Today, Strasbourg seems to be at peace with its dual identity. Its diverse history led to the city becoming the official seat of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe, the European Court of Human Rights and a number of other key institutions.

The primary reason that many people



visit Strasbourg is to see its European district. In fact, visiting the European Parliament buildings was the biggest attraction for my friend and me. On discovering it was closed on the day we arrived there, it was time to find something else. All we knew of Strasbourg was its political importance in Europe. What else could we do there?

Contrary to what my friend and I first thought, Strasbourg is not wholly reserved for diplomats, activists and politics junkies. In spite of its overseas image of a businesslike, glass-fronted metropolis of industry and international relations, Strasbourg’s city centre is something quite different.

The centre is somewhat divided up by the River Ill, which creates the islands that make up Strasbourg. One of these quarters, Grande Île, was the first city centre in the world to be classified as a UNESCO heritage site. Once you’re there, it’s easy to see why – its medieval timber-frame houses, ramshackle roofs and cobbled streets combine the best of both

the quaint and the grandiose.

In the heart of the city centre, you will find Strasbourg’s immense cathedral. The Cathédrale Notre Dame de Strasbourg dominates the cityscape with its Gothic, almost skeletal frame. Religious or not, it’s worth it just to pay a visit and marvel at its massive interior. The cathedral also houses one of the most beautifully strange artefacts to ever be seen in a church – the Astronomical Clock. Adorned with clockwork cherubs, skeletons, zodiacal symbols and constellations, it seems to combine the seemingly incompatible worlds of saints and star-signs.

While visiting the cathedral, be sure to climb the hundreds of steps to its very top for stunning views over Strasbourg’s skyline, from sparkling modern skyscrapers, medieval houses and mountains in the distance.

When it comes to dining out and nightlife, the city maintains its sense of living in two worlds. Nestled in Strasbourg’s winding streets, hearty German Brauhaus are on an equal par

with more delicate French bistros. Both will offer regional specialties such as Flammekueche – a pizza-like dish with crème fraîche, cheese and bacon. If you’re feeling brave, try the deceptively delicious choucroute, sour cabbage served with potatoes, sausages and other meats.

If dining alfresco is more your thing, a picnic by the banks of the river is not only recommended – it is obligatory. In spite of its traditional and old-world atmosphere, Strasbourg’s wide array of wine bars and craft beer pubs manage to balance the youthfulness of the city with its authenticity.

Strasbourg has always been seen as the common ground between two very different concepts of Europe. It encapsulates elements of art and cuisine that seem very French, and yet preserves the steadfast, earthy nature of German traditions. It is a city that seems both old and young, without having to try too hard. However, it’s not quite right to call Strasbourg a clash of cultures – it’s far more harmonious than that.

## A Wisconsinite in Limerick

Alex Thomas

AS I sit here at my built-in desk, in my single, fully furnished room, inside of my student house, a part of the lovely Kilmurry Village, I cannot help but notice that things are not quite the same for me as they were a few months ago. There are quite a few differences actually, including being over 5,000km away from my home university, the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point, United States.

Two months ago, I would have been huddled at my desk, under every blanket that I own, trying to keep hold of any bit of warmth I could find. If I were to venture outside, I would have to cover all parts of my skin to protect it from frostbite. My eyes would obviously be left, but even those might have to be covered by sunglasses, just so I could see through the glare

reflecting off of the blankets of thigh-high snow.

Here in Ireland, the weather presents a different set of problems to deal with. Instead of blankets of snow, there is a concern of being submerged in depths of water! And instead of risking frostbite when venturing outside, there is a threat of a being blown away, or even a tree falling on you, as the Storm Darwin illustrated this last week.

As I think about the weather, I enjoy the solitude of my fully furnished, one-person bedroom, listening to the sounds of students walking the streets of the lovely Kilmurry Village. I have my own space, which is something that I am very grateful for after living within seven feet of another person for the last two years, having shared a room with a roommate.

To live on campus here means something entirely



dissimilar to what it means on my home university. Here, I can walk down the hall to take a shower in a bathroom shared with two other students. I do not have to walk to a bathroom which is shared by over twenty people and hope that one of the three showers is open. I can also walk down the stairs and make myself a tasty dinner with groceries stored in a series of presses. Something like that would be very impractical to do when sharing a kitchen with fifty

other students, like in the dormitories from the States.

With that said, because things may be a bit different does not hinder my experience that I have had here so far. In fact, I would even say being in such a new environment has bolstered my experience here. With the ability to learn new things around every corner it is almost impossible to be bored with the culture that is evident here on this campus and in this city. There are a lot of unique

experiences to learn from here on this campus, from hiking the countryside; to touring great sites with the international society; to seeing the fresh selections available at the Milk Market; to even just standing and watching a hurling practice next to the Arena. The list can go on and on but the point is that this campus offers a lot of opportunity for involvement, for meeting new, unique people, and furthering oneself both professionally and in general character. The people of this campus have a lot to offer and I thank them for that.

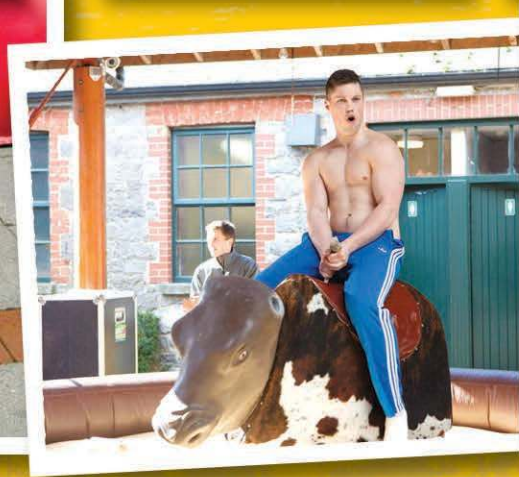
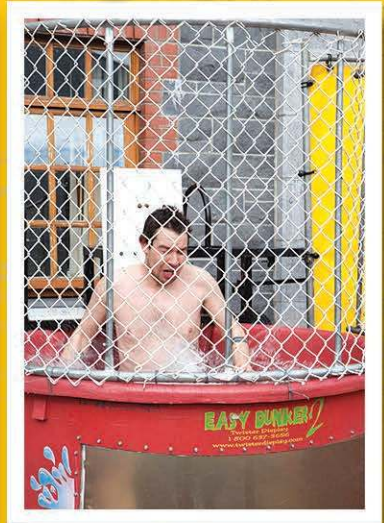
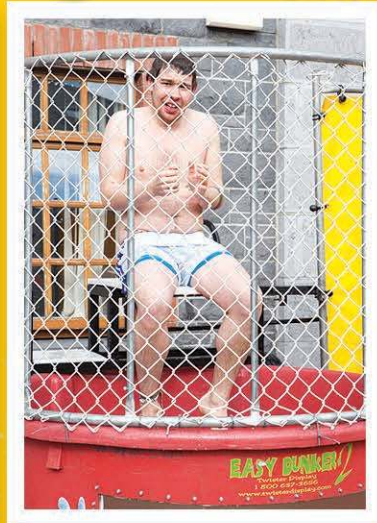
My journey here is only just beginning but I intend to learn the most I can while I am here and make the most of what this campus so graciously offers. For now, I gather my waterproof jacket, leave my pleasant village, and head off towards campus, towards the next adventurous experience.

# CHARITY WEEK

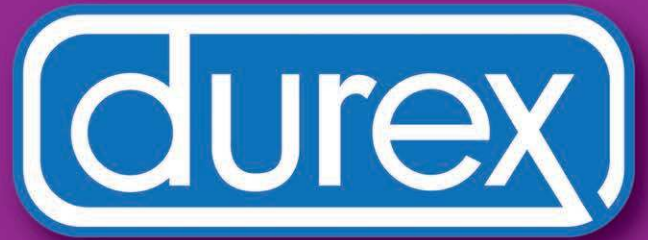
Photographs courtesy of UL Photographic Society



## Paddy gets plunged



# 3 Durex for €1 in the SU



Your €s go to the Charity Week Charities



## STUDENT SPEAK with COLLEEN BALLARD



Brian Mulholl.



Diarmuid O'Callaghan.



Adriane Tabuena.



Geroid Mackey.



Sean Moran.



Matt Terry.



Ronan O'Doherty.



Gemma O'Connor.



Mark Hynes.

# What was your high and low of Charity Week?

FOR some it is the social highlight of the student calendar, for others the bane of university life. Whatever the stance, Charity week permeated the campus recently. Be it the blue t-shirts and collection buckets, emails of lost keys, money and phones or the perceptible absence of numbers in lectures, its presence was unavoidable.

Enjoyed for various reasons, its main purpose is to raise money for charity and the four worthy causes chosen this year were; Heart Children Ireland, The Order of Malta, St. Gabriel's School and Centre and Acquired Brain Injury Ireland.

So out we went last week to hear your high and low (for those of you that could remember) of Charity Week.

**Kealan O'Carroll. Mechanical Engineering**

High: The atmosphere around the courtyard – the afternoon pints!

Low: The venues were moved into town rather than staying on campus. It's better craic if it's around campus.

**Jamie Fogarty. Mechanical Engineering**

High: Women!

Low: Money went into town so was taken from the campus.

**Sean Moran. English and History**

High: Enjoying myself after dark.

Low: Two lads have gone missing.

**Ronan O'Doherty. Biomedical Engineering**

High: A few cushty birds around the place.

Low: Had an exam. Cheltenham wasn't on the same week.

**Geroid Mackey. BA Joint Honours**

High: Monday and Tuesday were great, people out with a positive attitude. Wednesday onward died down a bit.

Low: Hearing about the two guys that have gone missing.

**Mark Hynes. New Media and English**

High: Really good atmosphere in The Stables on Monday.

Low: Waking up 5pm on Thursday not knowing what planet I was on.

**Adriane Tabuena. Applied Languages**

High: Everyone participating, helping support small charities.

Low: People promoting drinking.

**Kevin Murphy. Music, Media and Performance Technology**

High: Getting hammered with my friends.

Low: My toaster getting smashed.

**Brian Mulholl. Computer Science**

High: Activities set up in the courtyard, people could make a show of themselves, like dunking their friends and feel good doing it for a good cause.

Low: The excessive drinking. Drinking games. Constant cleaning up takes away from the original purpose of raising money for charity.

**Matt Terry. Mechanical Engineering**

High: A lot of additional activities outside classes and chances to meet new people.

Low: Bad things that go along with heavy drinking. Two lads gone missing.

**Gemma O'Connor. Environmental Science**

High: Atmosphere around the college.

Low: Mid-term exams, spent the whole week in the library.

**Clodagh Callanan. HPSS**

High: Pints in the sun at The Stables.

Low: By Thursday it was so noisy all the time I was sick of it.

**Diarmuid O'Callaghan. BA Joint Honours**

High: Good atmosphere around the place on Monday. Lots of activities.

Low: Some were getting drunk way too early in the day.

**Laura McWey. BA Joint Honours**

High: Parties going on around college campus and houses having something going on.

Low: The cost of it all.

**Sam Halpin. Applied Languages**

High: Buzz around campus, everyone happy.

Low: Two guys disappearing.



Kevin Murphy.



Kealan O'Carroll and Jamie Fogarty.



Clodagh Callanan.



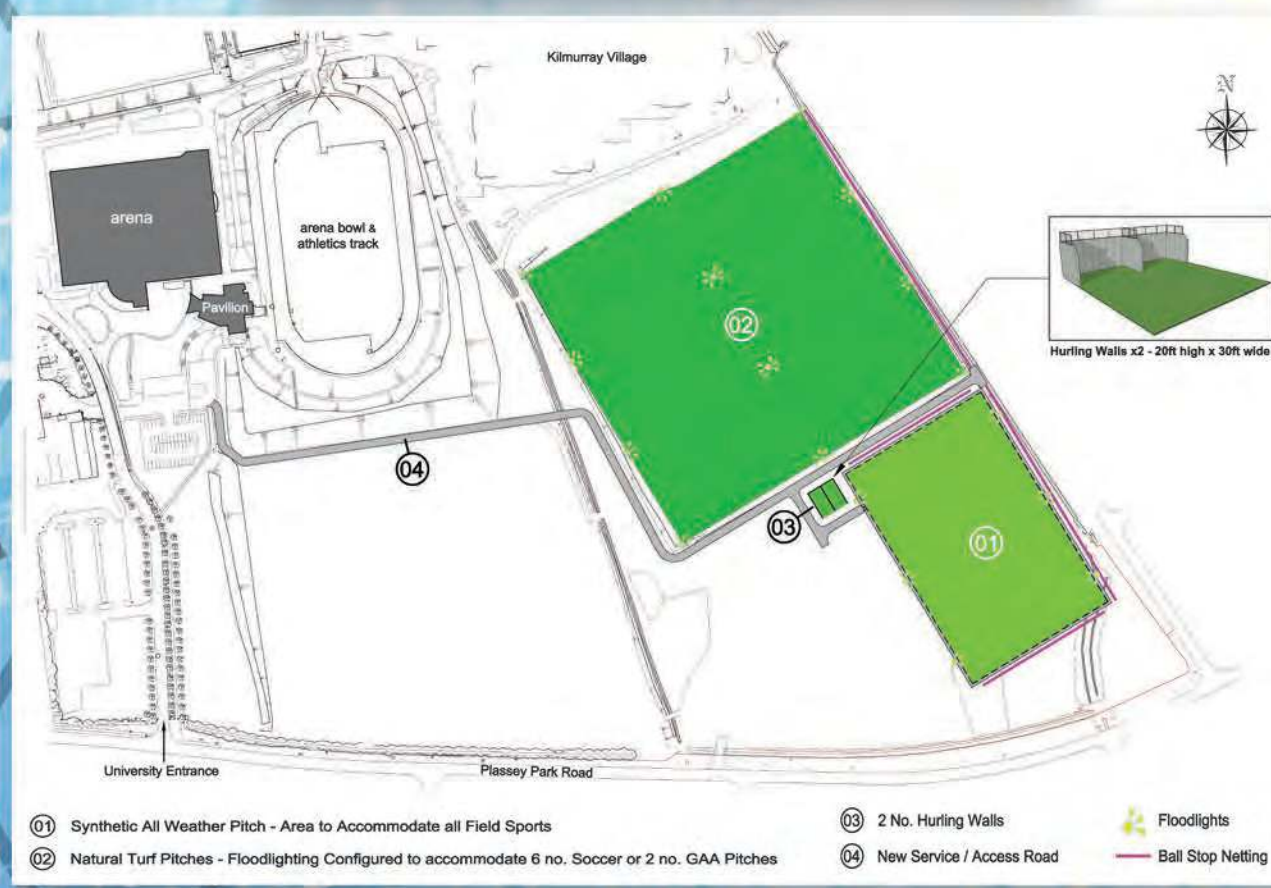
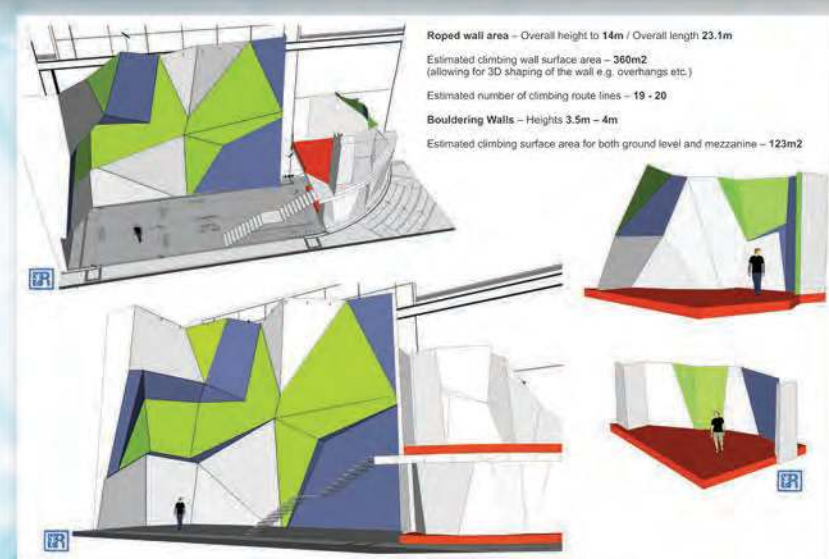
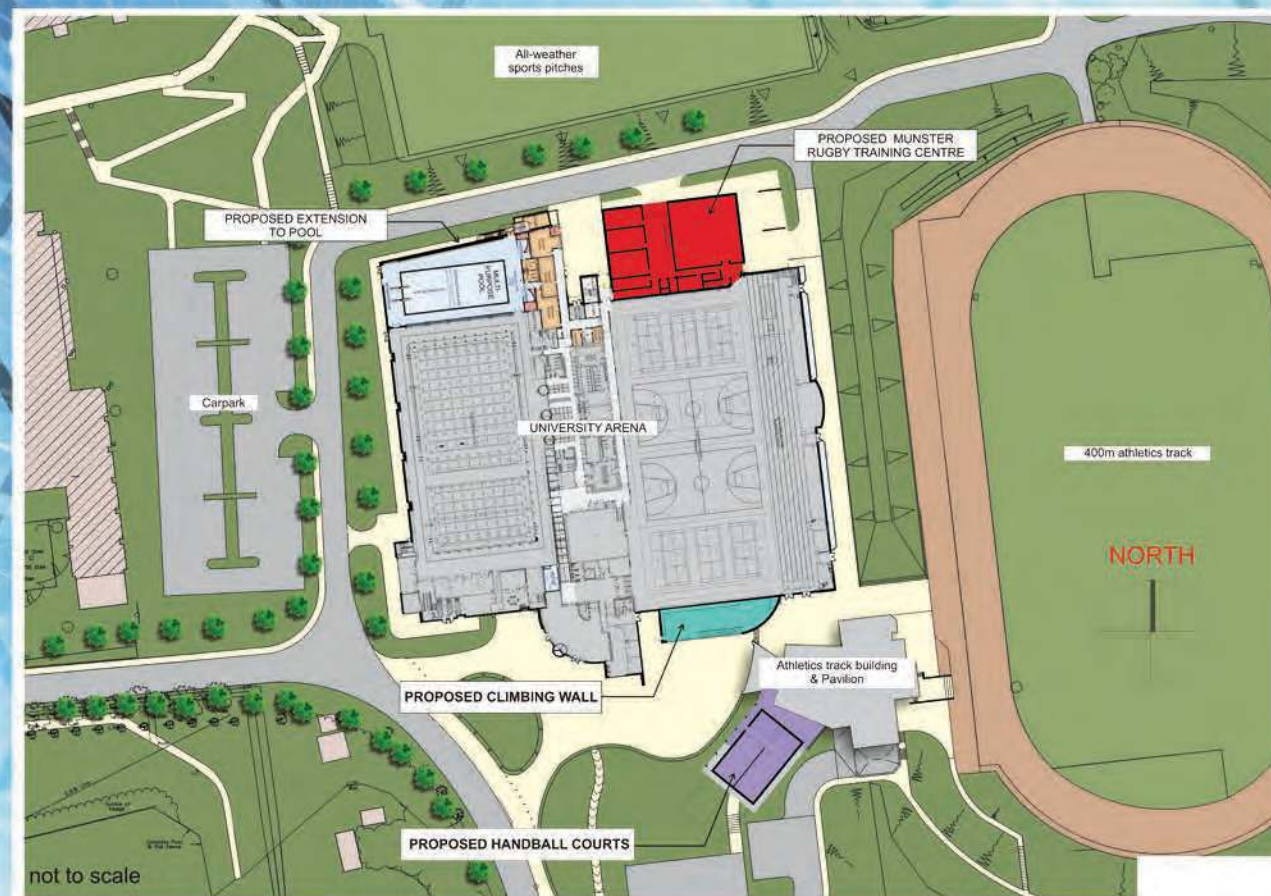
Sam Halpin.



Laura McWey.

# REFERENDUM INFORMATION

# REFERENDUM INFORMATION



Students will be asked to vote YES or NO to the following:  
 "To introduce an Annual Student Levy of €67 to contribute to the development of (i) an Arena extension, (ii) the cost of a needs analysis and design of a new Student Centre and (iii) the upgrade of Maguire's pitches, the building of Handball Alleys and a Climbing Wall".

Project Details:  
 (i) An extension to the Sports Arena including the construction of a Climbing Wall, a 25m Pool with Diving facilities and expansion of studio facilities  
 (ii) A needs analysis carried out among Students, Students Union and Student Services with a view to determining if there is a need for a new Students Centre and if so what it would look like and what facilities it should have\*  
 (iii) An upgrade of Maguire's field to include Gravel Raft Pitches, An All Weather Pitch, Handball Alleys and a Climbing Wall

If students **VOTE YES**, each student will be charged a levy of €67 annually and the above projects will go ahead.

If students **VOTE NO**, students will not be charged a €67 levy and none of the above projects will go ahead.

- \* Student Centre  
The project comprises a needs analysis and design of a new Student Centre.
- \* A taskforce comprising representatives of the student body, Students Union, the University and Campus Life Services will be set up to carry out a detailed needs analysis to establish the future requirements for student societies, Students union, student social and support facilities.
- \* The analysis will be undertaken by an external expert advisor who will undertake a wide-ranging process of consultation with the student body to develop a brief for the design of a new Student Centre.
- \* The taskforce will appoint a design team to design a new Student Centre based on the agreed design brief.
- \* The design concept will be proposed to the student body and a referendum held to decide on proceeding with the project.

**"Questions for the referendum can be asked using #ulref or emailed to referendum2014@wolves.ie"**

"A total of €6000 has been made available to facilitate the running of 3 distinct campaigns. €2000 has been dedicated to the Yes campaign, the No campaign and the Vote campaign. To get more information on each campaign or to get involved contact the email address above."



# REFERENDUM

# 2014

**POLLING WILL OPEN FOR VOTING**  
 from 8 am on Thursday, March 27,  
 to 12 noon on Friday, March 28  
 Online Voting: <https://vote.ulsu.ie/>



FEATURE with NANCY-JANE CARRAGHER

# Addiction -v- Culture

## ... a gift from Guinness to the Emerald Isle

SPENDING a year abroad, I quickly realised that the Irish alcoholic stereotype had travelled far and fast. Mentioning my Irish nationality often elicited all sorts of dodgy remarks from my new foreign friends. Their main questions revolved around drinking until passing out, how green Ireland actually is and the honest-to-god existence of leprechauns. That's right; it appears Irish culture as we know it has been reduced to include just three rivetting themes: tiny made-up people that hang around rainbows, the colour of the grass and the Irish people's penchant for getting wasted.

But looking at the news, Ireland can hardly complain about its self-made reputation – what have we given the world at large? Irish pubs, St. Paddy's Day and Guinness.

On a European level, Ireland does not fare well on the 'one to alcoholic' scale: Irish adults beat off all competition from their counterparts across Europe when it comes to binge-drinking, with 44 per cent of drinkers stating that they binge drink on a regular basis, according to AlcoholAction Ireland. From 1980 to 2010, Ireland went on what looks very much like a complete bender – as the rest of Europe decreased its average alcohol consumption by an average 15%, the Irish increased theirs by 24%.

It appears that this trend spans a worryingly wide amount of the population too, especially when it comes to Ireland's teenagers: AlcoholAction Ireland recently reported a survey showing that 9% of girls and 13% of boys said that they first got drunk at or before the age of 13. Due to the developing state of the brain during adolescence, drinking can have very damaging long-term effects.

Yet 40% of Irish children surveyed admitted to binge-drinking during the last month. As they get older, nothing improves: a mental health and young people survey showed that over 60% of young adults report excessive drinking. Is this a 'culture' to be proud of? What's more, could this simply be a deep-seated and damaging addiction of Irish society as a whole?

### ANNUAL CHARITY-FOCUSED AND/OR ALCOHOL-INFUSED OCCASIONS?

Let's examine recent events:

Charity Week 2014 was a raging success, particularly for The Stables Club which celebrated its 27th birthday last Wednesday. Manager Declan Collins said he noticed people becoming more responsible, having a good time but not drinking excessively. Present in The Stables from 2pm to 1am every single day through rag week, Declan claimed that "[students] have enjoyed themselves, they've had fun but they have behaved themselves impeccably both in The Stables, in the estates and in the nightclubs". In fact, Declan, who's worked in The Stables from day one, believes the culture of binge-drinking is on its way out: "I've seen a big change in the last two years. Three years ago, if we were having this conversation I might have said something else. I've seen this change not just in rag week but slowly and surely over a two year period... [people] are just coming in to socialise and not binge-drinking and having to have a lot of drink. That kind of culture is beginning to change."

He continued, relaying some words of wisdom for students, "We always have had a line of responsibility of the individual here, I believe that once you're over 18,

you're responsible. You behave once you leave your house and when you go out into public, you should always be able to manage yourself. If you have too much to drink, go home."

Declan also emphasised the event's focus on charity, "The one big thing that the student union got right this year in rag week was the charity aspect of it. It's the first year in a while that the student union have got it right. You can have a lot of fun but at the same time we're doing a lot of good for people". Similarly, The Stables Club prides itself on its own charitable contributions, having collected over 19,000 euros for

contributor to Irish tourism. So, people do come to Ireland to experience the legend of a country steeped in alcohol, whether it's in order to participate in or simply observe our mad drunken antics.

Stables Club manager Declan pointed out that his one business provided employment for between 22 and 36 people, depending on the week. With 15 full-time workers and 10-15 part-time students on their payroll – the importance given by creating jobs cannot be ignored.

Still, on the flip side of the business coin is the sizeable social influence granted alcohol brands. They proudly announce their two million euro budget for responsible drinking awareness campaigns. But that appears almost comical in comparison to the cut they reserve for their drink promotion costs – 70 million euros a year.

The wonderful health benefits of alcohol have been reshaped time and again, but what does drinking cost the Irish people? 3.7 billion euros every year is paid out in connection to alcohol-related harm. As Limerick TD Dan Neville, a strong campaigner against suicide, pointed out to the Dáil last February, "While the connection between alcohol abuse, suicide, attempted suicide and self-harm is internationally recognised, it is not highlighted often enough. Alcohol dependence often leads to social decline and isolation, which is a potent cause of suicide."

Along with the immeasurable human cost involved, 1.2 billion euro is spent annually on dealing with alcohol-connected crime, from violence to vandalism. The healthcare system estimates a 1.2 billion euro cost for the treatment of alcohol-related injuries and diseases. 2,000 hospital beds per night are occupied for alcohol-related reasons. The statistics go on and on and on. Is this nationwide alcohol-related trauma and tragedy part of our culture now too?

### CHALLENGING THE NORM

On March 4th, The Cross Party Oireachtas Group on Alcohol Misuse was launched in Dublin. With an eye cast watchfully over the Public Health Alcohol Bill, the team will be addressing how pricing, marketing and availability of alcohol can be changed in an attempt to tackle the harmful relationship Irish people have with drinking, i.e. stop people drinking so much, so often and curb marketing and sports sponsorship allowances.

Former political advisor to the British Labour Party Alastair Campbell, a high-profile advocate on the dangers of binge-drinking and its social acceptance in England and Ireland, spoke at the inaugural meeting. Pointing to how socially-ingrained the practice is, he said, "You never have to explain why you drink; you always have to explain why you don't".

So it appears things are being done. Will a strong decision be made by the government? And most importantly, can it change anything? Is binge-drinking, getting wasted, pub-crawling and session-having part and parcel of Irish culture or is this just an addiction we can curtail?

As boisterous videos of Nekominations circulate the Facebook pages of the young and vodka-endowed, the international community is suffering a hangover from its annual worldwide session – St. Patrick's Day, courtesy of our island nation. And the real question of the hour is this: Is Ireland ready to shed the whiskey-induced stupor of self-denial and attend an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting of its own making?



charity over the last three 'Christmas days' as well as sponsoring "well over 35,000 a year to clubs and societies".

However, can a Charity Week that often translates into student-speak as few classes and too many shots really be an exercise in philanthropy? Then there was St. Patrick's Day, a success the world over as usual. Are we not just shooting ourselves in the foot though, by hosting a national festival which revolves around going to the pub?

### DRINK-RELATED INCOME AND COSTS

In the midst of economic hardship, the business end cannot be ignored: the Drinks Industry Group of Ireland prides itself on bringing in much-needed cash for Irish businesses and claims to support 62,000 jobs. According to the group the Irish alcohol sector has a three billion euro turnover, while generating 1 billion euro worth of exports. It even puts itself forward as a major

Photographs courtesy of UL Photographic Society

# THE LAW BALL AT THE PAVILION



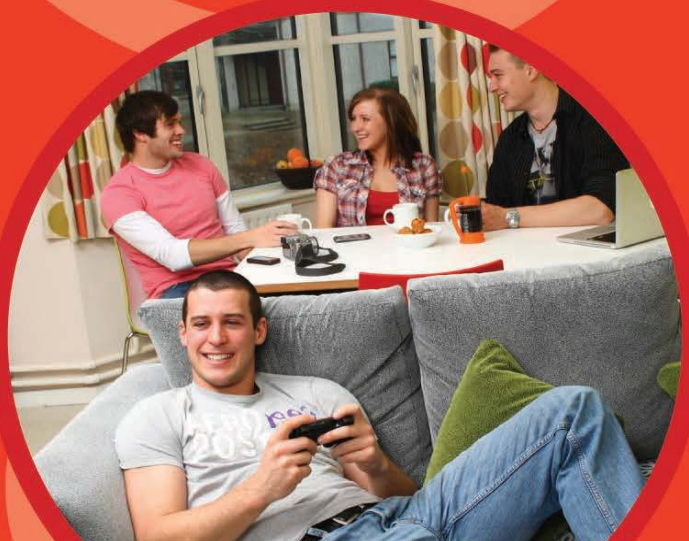
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## ELECTION

# Mike Forde: your new VP Academic

HEY folks! My name is Mike Forde and I've been elected unopposed as your new VP Academic.

Firstly I'd like to thank everyone that encouraged and supported me throughout the past few weeks. Each kind word and offer of support truly meant a lot and I am very grateful to have such wonderful people in my life. With this in mind I'd also like to thank Paddy for the wonderful and dedicated work he has provided towards the Students of UL.

During his time as VP Academic Paddy has contributed countless hours of hard work towards the Union and I wish him the very best of luck towards his future. Now to tell you a little about myself.

I'm 22 years old, from Cobh in Co. Cork and study Politics and Public Administration. During my time in UL I've been strongly involved with the Union in which I currently sit as a Department Rep and on the Constitution reform committee.

Alongside this I'm also very involved in C&S having been strongly involved with the Surf Club since first year and a rake load of different societies. In the past I've also worked with both Cork City Council and in the European Parliament.

Continuing on from Paddy's brilliant work I promise to be hardworking, dedicated and engaging. With this position I'm here to represent you, the students of UL.

During my time as VP Academic if you have any issues, idea's or questions I would truly love you hear them.

Student engagement is one of my number one priorities and I plan on fully utilising both class reps and student council in new innovating ways to ensure the student voice is in full force. Alongside this over the next year I have several key priorities I wish to tackle or develop which I have highlighted in my manifesto.

The first issue I wish to tackle are those revolving around academic advisors and FY supervisors. What I'm pushing for is set regulations and guidelines for these two positions. Increasing the engagement with students and advisors has the potential to enhance the student and academic experience in UL by offering strong support and direction. The same can be said for FYP supervisors.

While my supervisor is fantastic, I've heard many other stories where they are not. By tackling this issue we can push for better support and guidance on students FYP's. Library and Lab hours are another area I wish to tackle. While it's not feasible to have a 24 hour computer lab and later library hours every night of the week what I do hope to achieve is an extension of computer lab hours for the likes of the Venus labs and push for one or two late night extensions in the library each

week.

New and improved skills workshops are something I strongly wish to work on. While the Department of lifelong learning does exist to cater for this, at present it only offers Public speaking, Organic gardening and writing workshops. What I'm hoping to call for is more relevant workshops that can benefit students in terms of employability and training for industry standards.

Digitalisation of the library and more access to e-journals is a key priority. While our library may not be the largest it can potentially offer the resources of one. That why as a whole I'm pushing for the development of e-education in UL. Leading into this is increased selection of modules in which many students are calling for. This would allow students to both broaden and specialise as much as they like. Lastly I'd like to offer better support towards international and Erasmus students.

I hope to engage with these students on a far greater level and ensure they are given the support they need while in UL. Alongside these points I'm also hoping to push for student academic journals in each department, academic awards and a campaigns committee.

Again I'm truly delighted to be in this position and promise to do a wonderful job. I'm very excited for the upcoming college year and I truly to look forward to meeting and working with all of you.

—Mike



## ULSU sabbatical officer elections

CONTINUED  
FROM P1

clip of the current Academic Officer getting sick into a bucket? Concerns were allayed by Tuesday afternoon as there was Tommy in the courtyard, with his widescreen TV and speakers blasting the video on loop right across from the Union door.

Within hours the plan began to unfold as the video went viral and got attention from the international press. Tommy had only to set foot on campus and he had voters coming up to him eager for a chat and a picture with "yer man from the video".

Hustings were held on Wednesday evening and despite expectations of another display of publicity from the Wolf of Students' Union, they turned out to be a

rather mundane event. Mike Forde, who was running his information campaign, spoke about his plans for the Academic Office after Paddy finally hands over the keys in June. Caroline and Shane put forward their plans for greater student engagement, largely based around the existing Welfare Team which Catriona set up this year. Chats with Carol and healthy budget dinners from Shane were the candidates other two main selling points.

Lorna justified her plan for a 65% pay cut which would go back to the students most in need, Mark addressed the on-going co-op concerns and Tommy told us about his list of every student in Plassey and Kilmurry. He never did quite explain what he plans on doing with the list but to quote the man himself "there is method in his madness".

Voting day there was a distinct carnival feeling around the Union Courtyard, with different coloured chalk being used as the final campaign strategy and Mark had the music pumping. Voting began and the total numbers rose quickly in the early hours but they never reached the total engagement figure of last year. On Tommy's only concrete campaign promise of the entire campaign, to double the number of students voting this year, he owes a fiver to the person he made that bet with at Hustings.

Half 8 at night in the Stables and the numbers were in. Without RON, Mike graciously won unopposed. Did the people want to go for a run with Caroline every Tuesday and Thursday or did they want Shane's STI packs? Would Lorna's proven record of student activism reach the

voter, or Mark's extended library facilities or would it be Tommy, who promised nothing but "personality" (Late Late Show 2014). Shane's personable approach obviously reached people and he won with a sizeable margin, while Tommy, currently on a running total of 170,277 votes, now has the opportunity to fulfil his promises of engaging the students who were never previously reached. A task I have no doubt he will complete considering that within less than 48 hours of being voted President-elect, he has quite likely had more national and international exposure than any ULSU President before him.

Tommy, Shane and Mike, I wish the three of you the best of luck in the coming year. I have no doubt it will be an interesting one for all concerned.

# UL Capoeira public meeting

Pádraig O'Donoghue

AS a member of the UL Capoeira club interim committee, I would like to invite you to a public meeting next week at 6:30pm, Thursday March 27th. If you are interested in the development of the club or you would like to run for committee membership, then please attend! This is an opportunity to help create and steer a vibrant new club around a meaningful activity involving flared, white pants.

In case Google is down, Capoeira is a Brazilian martial art that incorporates elements of music, dance, and acrobatics. (Yes, music and dance. Hard-man types may have to look elsewhere. Mixed martial arts, maybe.... bare-knuckle boxing, a life of crime, etc.) But capoeira is open to everyone. Do not rule yourself out because you think you aren't fit enough or because of your age.

Capoeira appeared in the slave communities of colonial Brazil in the sixteenth century. It is an expression of freedom and defiance. It would (presumably) have offered a creative outlet for the individual and also served to foster cohesion in their fragmented communities. But it was also a form of rebellion against a prejudiced social hierarchy based on discrimination. So the self-liberation and self-empowerment of the oppressed are in its DNA. It follows that diversity is honoured in capoeira. Every capoeirista (capoeira player), from the beginner to the elderly mestre (master), contributes something unique to the game;

idiosyncratic movement, a certain strategic style, distinct personality, vocal timbre, etc.

I urge anybody who isn't already physically active to try it out. Although it's one of the most vigorous and rigorous (both -igorous) forms of exercise, you'll be too focused on the game to really notice – agonising backs-of-the-legs stretch notwithstanding. Whatever bulls\*\*t New

Year's resolution you made, forget it! Do capoeira instead, it's easier.

Surubim from Grupo Biriba Brasil is currently giving classes on campus which run from 5.30-6.30pm on Thursdays, upstairs in the Dromroe Student Village Centre. Everybody is welcome. (The cost of classes for students is €2.) If you are going, wear flexible track pants and bring water. If you're still a little apprehensive about

starting classes and considering asking a friend to go with you, then save your breath. You might as well be asking them to elope with you to Ballinasloe. That's how cool it will sound to them. Just go yourself. Surubim is an excellent teacher. Your friend can join in their own time.

Muito obrigado, meus amigos.  
Go to facebook.com/ULCapoeira for more information.

## Update on Student Council

Dean Shanahan

THE Student Council was introduced this academic year under the new constitution to replace the Class Reps Council of previous years. This is a huge step towards a fairer and more effective student representation structure within the Union. Any student is welcome to attend and view the proceedings that are on Tuesdays 6pm, week 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 every semester. However, only the elected Department Reps and Interest Group Councillors have a vote. You can find out how the Council works on ULSU website. Here is the latest of what is happening.

At the Week 6 Student Council Meeting the Student Council amended our ULSU Constitution's Articles for the last time by surrendering its power to change the articles of our constitution. The council does, however, retain power to change the Schedules and appendices of our constitution by qualified majority. The Articles can, now, only be amended by UGM or Referendum.

Student Council also voted to put forward the Capital Projects to a Referendum. I am sure you will be hearing the details of the referendum in the coming weeks. The Union will be running an information campaign through the Referendum Steering Group. There is a provision for both a Yes and a No campaign so if you feel particularly strongly about either please do not hesitate to get in contact with your Union. We would love to have campaigners for both sides expressing their opinions.

We also heard from Peter Hanrahan about the Student Nurse

Protest in Dublin on the 7th of March. Peter expressed his concerns that not enough Second Year nurses are getting behind the Student Nurse's Campaign for fairer pay stating that it will severely affect all Student Nurses when it comes to Work Placements. Currently the pay can be as low as €6.49 for Work Placements. You can read more about this in Peter's Article on page 8.

The Postgraduate Students Union Memorandum of Understanding has finally been signed and at this Council Meeting was added to the Appendices of our constitution. This was a great success for Lily Carroll and Emma Porter, the presidents of the two Unions. This Memorandum of Understanding will ensure better communication and cooperation between the ULSU and the PSU.

Currently we have the following vacancies on Council . . .

- \* Co-Operative Education Councillor
- \* Civil Engineering and Materials Science Department Rep
- \* Maths & Statistics Department Rep
- \* Physics & Energy Department Rep
- \* Irish World Academy and Dance Department Rep
- \* First Year Rep
- \* Architecture Department Rep

Please remember that the Student's Council is there to represent YOU. If you are interested in any of the above positions please do not hesitate to get in contact with Liz Gabbett or Mark White in the ULSU. In the wise words of Peter McWilliams, "If you're not actively involved in getting what you want, you don't really want it."



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## ENTERTAINMENT

# The Irish World Academy of Music and Dance

Colleen Ballard

FRIEDRICH Nietzsche said a lot and he shared a profound comment or few on music and dance. Take two – “without music life would be a mistake” and “we should consider every day lost on which we have not danced at least once”. Maybe extreme, maybe not. Worth keeping in mind in the, at times, intense world of learning. We have the opportunity to enjoy both on our doorstep.

Students travel from around the world to study at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance. Yet it is easy to take for granted or forget to acknowledge this gem based North across the living bridge. The building, which is custom built to accommodate performing arts especially music and dance, is striking and on entering you feel enveloped in calm, students in groups chatting while their limbs or instruments gently rest. Yet within these walls vibrant sounds of collaboration and experimenting in performing arts reverberate.

So what is the Academy?

Founded by Micheal O’Suilleabhain, this year the Academy is celebrating 20 years of teaching and research. As stated on the Academy’s website, a space is provided where “musicians, dancers, composers, singers, conductors and choreographers explore together. Musicologists and choreologists research alongside live performance”. The Academy is recognised around the world as a leader in the area of Irish traditional music and dance learning and research.

Over time research has diversified to include a variety of areas; music and dance ethnography, music and health, and more recently festive arts. Arts practise is an emerging research area here at UL. All genres of music are incorporated in the available courses including classical, world music, hip-hop and jazz alongside different styles of dance including ballet and contemporary. Performance and academic study are given equal regard. The courses are very student focused and individual attention is given to students enabling them to grow as artists.

So you’re not studying music or dance?

The academy is keen to stress that there are free cultural events that they readily encourage a more general UL body of students to engage with. There is ample opportunity to become familiar with this UL facility or have an occasional taste. Every Tuesday from 1.15pm to 1.50pm there are FREE informal traditional music lunchtime concerts and absolutely anyone is welcome to enjoy them. Or you can discover music you’ve never heard before and instruments you never knew existed through a number of concerts on Wednesdays and Thursdays as listed below for the coming weeks.

For those who need a break from the head wreck that can be study and assignments (and observing around me now that’s the majority of us), these concerts offer a welcome relief and refreshing change of pace, be it inspiring, relaxing or invigorating. A change can be as good as a rest in preparation for more research, studying, reading, lectures, tutorials, assignments . . .

Irish World Academy of Music and Dance  
LIST OF LUNCHTIME CONCERTS:  
(All begin at 1.15pm)

Tuesday March 18th  
Women’s Concert Chorale from Wisconsin  
Writings of American Poets set to music, American Folk songs and Irish Traditional Songs

Thursday March 20th  
Blue Monk Quartet  
Versatility of the saxophone including jazz, classical, contemporary

Wednesday March 26th  
Music Students  
Variety of ensemble music

Thursday March 27th  
Denice Doyle and Peter Dains  
Violin and Piano

Thursday March 27th  
The Choir of Jesus College Cambridge  
British choral music from the 16th century to the present

Wednesday April 2nd  
K. Sridhar

The Sarod playing musical styles within North Indian Classical Music

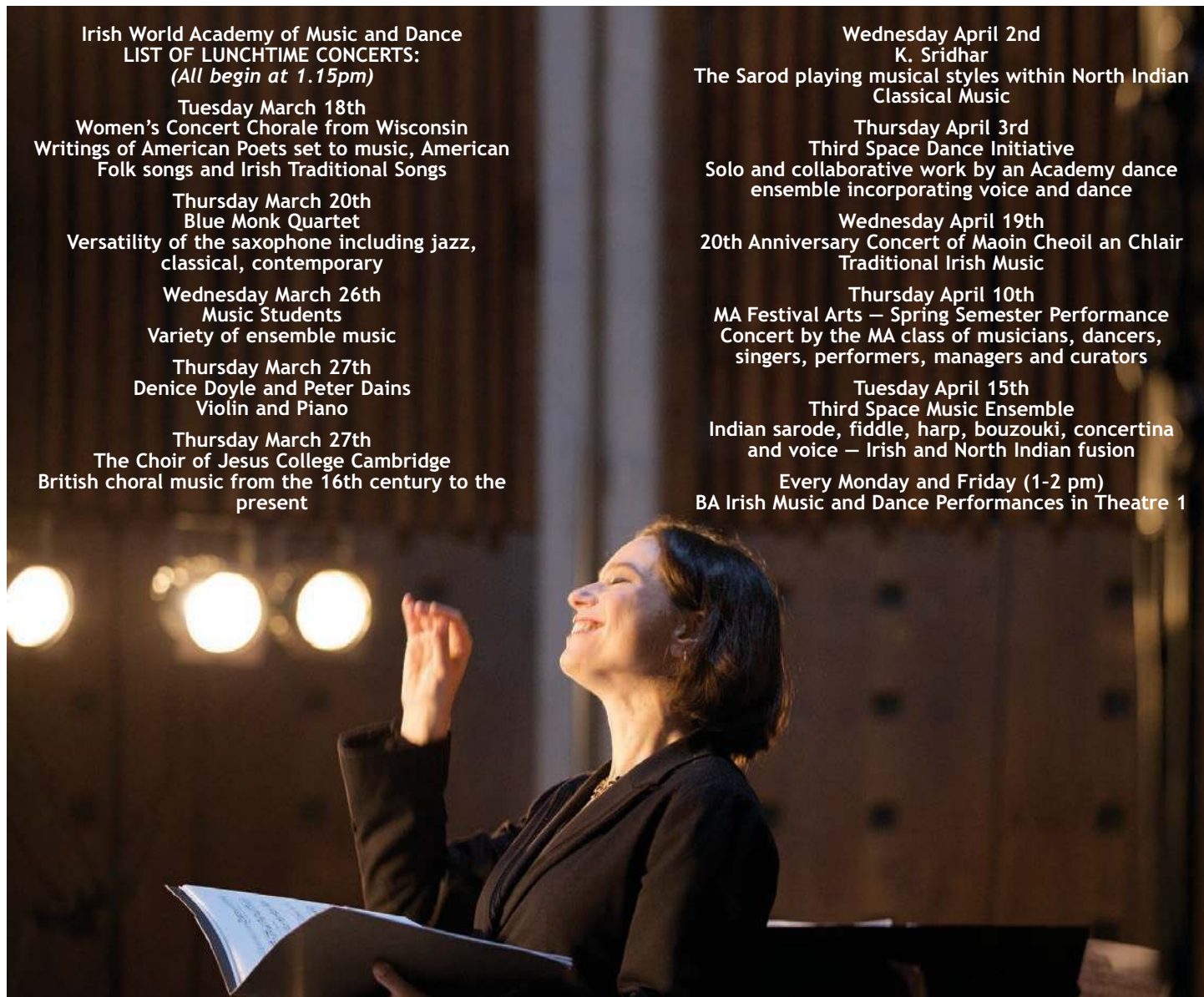
Thursday April 3rd  
Third Space Dance Initiative  
Solo and collaborative work by an Academy dance ensemble incorporating voice and dance

Wednesday April 19th  
20th Anniversary Concert of Maoin Cheoil an Chlair  
Traditional Irish Music

Thursday April 10th  
MA Festival Arts – Spring Semester Performance  
Concert by the MA class of musicians, dancers, singers, performers, managers and curators

Tuesday April 15th  
Third Space Music Ensemble  
Indian sarode, fiddle, harp, bouzouki, concertina and voice – Irish and North Indian fusion

Every Monday and Friday (1-2 pm)  
BA Irish Music and Dance Performances in Theatre 1



## Raging Sons . . . one to watch

Rachel Lyons

A FIRST year, Steven Tynan and a former U.L. student, Colum Kelly are releasing their debut E.P. as part of Raging Sons, a five piece original rock band based in Limerick City.

The band are a familiar sight around Limerick venues such as The Stables and Cobblestone Joe’s and beyond, having already played The Mercantile and the Olympia in Dublin. It comes as no surprise that bass and keyboard player Steven studies Music Media and Performance Technologies here in UL.

The Sons pull influences from the likes of Oasis, The Doors and Muse to craft their own style of upbeat rock. After forming in mid-2012, the Sons have been on a gigging spree across the country playing alongside the likes of The Riptide Movement, The Stunning, Ryan Sheridan, Walking on Cars and more. Shortly after reaching the final of the Rose of Tralee Festival 2013 Battle of the Bands, Raging Sons entered the studio to begin recording their debut EP.

It’s an exciting time for the band, their debut EP will feature the track Lust which they are making a video for at the moment. The launch will be taking place at one of their regular venues, Upstairs at Dolan’s on Sunday March 4th and is sure to be great night. They also recently



played in Whelan’s Dublin as part of their hugely popular New Music Nights and took part in the Battle of the Bands in The Stables in Week 7.

The band are planning to perform during Indie Week which is taking place as part of Limerick City of Culture from April 23rd to 26th. They can also be seen playing in The Crafty Fox in the next few weeks.

Keep an eye out for Raging Sons as they continue to surge forward into the consciousness of the Irish music scene.

Check out Raging Sons at: [www.ragingsons.com](http://www.ragingsons.com)  
[www.facebook.com/RagingSons](http://www.facebook.com/RagingSons) [www.twitter.com/RagingSons](http://www.twitter.com/RagingSons)

# The Grid

## Exclusive communication for Clubs and Societies

**EMAIL US YOUR CLUB OR SOCIETY DETAILS AND THIS SPOT COULD BE YOURS . . .**

**email: [anfocal@ul.ie](mailto:anfocal@ul.ie)**



### Dance UL

Wednesdays: Ballet 7.15, Contemporary 8.15 Dromroe Village Hall  
Thursdays: Jazz 6.30, Zumba 7.30, Hip-Hop 8.30, Irish Dance 9.30 Kilmurry Village Hall  
Classes: €3 each (or €20 for a 10 class prepaid class card)  
Membership: €5  
Check out our Intervarsity Routines and other fun videos at [www.youtube.com/user/OfficialDanceUL](http://www.youtube.com/user/OfficialDanceUL)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/OfficialDanceUL](http://www.facebook.com/OfficialDanceUL)  
Twitter: @DanceUL

### Krav Maga

The training venue is a PESS building (Old Sports Building), on UL Campus. Everyone is invited for a 1st trial training.  
Training Times:  
Mondays 8:15pm - 10:00pm  
Wednesdays: 7:00pm - 9:00pm  
Please join us at:  
<https://www.facebook.com/ul.k.maga>  
Or email us at:  
[ulkravmaga@gmail.com](mailto:ulkravmaga@gmail.com)

### UL Poker Society

UL Poker Society is back in full swing this semester with our weekly tournament at the Sports Bar at 6.15 on Wednesday nights. The best way to keep up with all the action is to join our Facebook page UL Poker.

### ULKC

Training: Pool Tuesday Wednesday Thursday 9:30pm - 10:30pm  
Social: Meet up every Tuesday at scholars before pool - 8:30pm  
Events  
Club trip to Bandon Co. Cork - St. Patricks Weekend

### ULSAC

Training: Club Diver Lectures continue every Tuesday at 6pm @ SG019  
Skills Training on Tuesdays after Lectures  
Upcoming Trips:  
1) Kilkee 29th/30th March  
2) Aran Islands over Easter  
Keep up to date on:  
[www.facebook.com/ULSAC](http://www.facebook.com/ULSAC)  
Any queries, email: [ulsac.pro@gmail.com](mailto:ulsac.pro@gmail.com)

### Outdoor Pursuits Club

Climbing Wall open this week.  
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 1900-2200  
Club Run this Wednesday 1800  
Meet at Climbing Wall  
Caving enquiries, contact [cavingopc@gmail.com](mailto:cavingopc@gmail.com)  
Sign up for beginner orienteers at climbing wall.  
Website: [www.ulopc.ie](http://www.ulopc.ie)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ULOPC](http://www.facebook.com/ULOPC)

### UL Ninjas

Ladies Training - Tuesday 18:00-20:00  
Hockey Astro  
Beginner Training - Wednesday 20:00-22:00 Hockey Astro  
1/2nd March - The Siege of Limerick - UL North Campus  
22nd March - Women's IV's - Trinity College  
22nd March - Developmental IV's - Trinity College  
Contact us at [ulultimatefrisbee@gmail.com](mailto:ulultimatefrisbee@gmail.com)

# Updates from the Clubs and Societies development manager

Paul Lee

## REFERENDUM 2014

THERE is a second referendum planned for Week 9 of this Semester, the previous referendum was narrowly defeated in 2013 but there has been a more focused approach this academic year trying to learn from the concerns of those students who voted "no" and a higher engagement level with those student who believe additional facilities are required and necessary. Probably the most controversial aspect previously was a proposal to build a new Students Centre. In the proposed new referendum the

intention is not to build a new student centre but to secure funding to explore professionally with the current student body IF they want/need a new students centre. If the answer from that research is effectively "No" then case closed. However if the student body as a result of that work carried out by researchers over the next academic year 2014/2015 do feel it is required then we enter into a new process with the student body most likely in the Academic Year 2015/2016 to see how that might be brought about. That is the fundamentally different change this time around to those already suggesting it is a "Lisbon

2" approach, it is not.

The other aspects of the Referendum for Week 9 involve the redevelopment of the training area known as "Maguire's". For the 1,200+ members involved in student field sports promotion this is different this time around with the addition of a small "hurling wall" and the inclusion of a single synthetic pitch. From the perspective of the Arena Extension and re-development, there would be a new 25m pool (same as last time), a climbing wall and two 40 x 20 handball alleys as separate facilities adjoining the Arena area; this would complement another 1,300+ members involved in all

those combined student sports.

More detail is to follow shortly on the big question of how much would this cost the students of UL. A public meeting for all students to raise whatever questions or objections they may have will be scheduled shortly.

To clarify in advance too that the new Munster Rugby training facility is not forming part of the proposed referendum, it is a separate project and separately funded. Regular meetings with the University are on-going as are the internal ULSU meetings with a Referendum Steering committee.  
Watch this space!

# UL Life Society

Aoife Coughlan

THE UL Life Society is one of the latest clubs and societies to join the already broad spectrum available on the UL campus. Due to the controversial subject matter involved it is unsurprising that debate has been sparked concerning the society's place in campus life.

According to the society's Facebook page their aim is to "to promote the inherent sanctity of human life" and they hope to achieve this by informing students of the issues involved in the sanctity of human life, by engaging in a relevant dialogue with students on issues such as abortion and euthanasia. They aim to mobilize students to take action to protect human life in Ireland. The society says it hopes to run an information event in Week 5 to discuss the debate around the life of the unborn child with interested students. The PRO of the society Stephen Brady, when asked why he thought there should be a Life Society in UL, said: "Students, no matter what they are interested in, should always be given the opportunity to form a society or club."

In January 2013 the initial idea of the Life Society was brought to the Development Officer of Clubs and

Societies Paul Lee. Discussions then began regarding their becoming an official UL society as they continued to operate as an independent entity.

All UL societies are required to adhere a number of pre-requisites before being allowed a trial period of 15 weeks. UL Life Society has fulfilled all of these. However, due to objections which were raised it was necessary to put the society's acceptability before a vote of the Clubs and Societies executive.

This vote took place on Tuesday the 11th of February. The vote went against the Life Society by a single vote with many clubs abstaining from the vote. This outcome designates that, for now, the Life Society will not be regarded as being under the umbrella of UL Wolves. ULSU president, Emma Porter, said: "The students' union has an equality policy, which provides that all union processes be available to all eligible students. The Life Society have gone through the process to become a society, however, a democratic vote by the Clubs & Socs Council has gone against them."

As of now they may continue to operate as a society but without the support of the union. The Life Society

said that objections raised were not responded to because of time constraints and he hopes they will be given the chance to "hear and respond to the objections so that there can be a more informed vote by the Clubs and Socs Council."

This begs the question as to how much politics and ideology should play a part in the decisions as to what sort of societies can be set up. In the past UL has seen proposals from a Muslim society, Saudi Arabian society and a Palestinian society, none of these have gone so far as to request the 15 week trial period to becoming an official society but neither have any have incensed as much debate as the Life Society.

In Trinity College Dublin the Central Societies Committee decreed that it would not support either the proposed Pro Life Society or the proposed Pro Choice Society as they were both deemed to be in existence only for the duration of the national debate on abortion. The handling of the issue is one that concerns the Clubs and Socs body and UL Wolves have started the opening of discussions with the Student Council on procedures for the handling of proposed new societies in the future.

# WHAT TIME IS IT? DanceUL TIME!

**Nina Pongratz**  
*Public Relations Officer*

DANCE UL brings four dance pieces to the All Ireland Dance Intervarsity and comes home with two first place trophies.

Limerick, March. 9 – On February 26th, 35 of UL's finest dancers and choreographers hopped on a bus at 6am for the Cork Institute of Technology to compete in the 2014 Dance Intervarsities where they performed four routines: Irish Dance, Hip-Hop, Jazz, and Contemporary. The University of Limerick was one of 11 Universities attending the competition alongside DCU, UCC, UCD, NUIG, and more. UL placed first in Irish Dance and Hip-Hop.

Leading up to the big event Dance UL was in full gear rehearsing and planning for the competition. On Monday

February 24th, the Intervarsity squads had the chance to show off their talents to the UL community in a preview performance in the Jonathan Swift Theatre. Each routine was well received and Dance UL was confident that placing was in their future.

"Preparations with Intervarsities were stressful yet so enjoyable. The amount of work that goes into routines that only last for a few minutes is incredible. The dancers give up their social lives and sleep cycles in order to represent their club. Each routine that was entered on the day was a credit to the dancers and choreographers and I can honestly say that Dance UL left everything on the floor in CIT," says David Tidswell, Choreographer for this year's Contemporary routine and past winner of a Jazz Intervarsity



routine. "Pride in our members would be a complete understatement."

Since the competition, The University of Limerick and surrounding Limerick community has shown tremendous support. On March 8th, Dance UL was invited to present the Jazz Intervarsity routine at Limerick

City's Culture Night for International Women's Day in St. John's Square. Dance UL has also been invited to perform at the Limerick City of Culture event in partnership with Munster Rugby on April 5th as a cultural precursor to the Heineken Cup Semi-Final between Munster and Toulouse.

Amid all the success and excitement, Dance UL classes are up and stronger than ever. Dance UL offers six technique classes a week including Ballet, Contemporary, Jazz, Zumba, Hip-Hop, and Irish Dance. All levels and new members are always welcome.

Set up in October 2008 Dance UL teaches a range of classes in Ballet, Hip-Hop, Irish dance, Jazz, Contemporary, and Zumba. The aim of the club is for students to have fun and meet new people while practicing and learning the art of dance. Dance UL currently has over 200 members and encourages both non-dancers and dancers to join. Winning "Best New Club 2009" in UL's Clubs and Societies ball, Dance UL also has been granted countless awards at the All Ireland Intervarsity Competition each year.

## UL Comedy Soc to face ULFM on the football pitch

**Bryan Danielson**  
*Reporter Extraordinaire!*

The University of Limerick Comedy Society has decided to take to the football pitch to settle an ongoing rivalry. Following a challenge made to the Society's Facebook page by ULFM presenter Mike "The Bull" McCarthy, 15 of Comedy Soc's finest football hooligans will face off against the radio society in a game of Junior B Gaelic Football. Although the finer details of the arrangement are still to be confirmed at the time of writing, it has been decided that the match will take place on Thursday, 3rd of April with a 5pm throw-in!

Speaking from the Society's international headquarters in the back of the Scholars' Club, Society team Bánisteoir Eanna Brown commented that he was confident in his team's victory. "We may not have nearly the same quota of Kerry men as the radio guys do but we have a secret weapon that practically guarantees our victory and ensures that we will be having pigeon for dinner that night."

When asked about what sort of panel he had picked for the match, he simply tipped his fedora and said "All will be revealed in time, young padawan.!"

Both society county boards are expected to release their panels in the next week. Those interested are advised to keep an eye on social media outlets as well as An Focal and ULFM for further updates!

Queries to [ulcomedysociety@gmail.com](mailto:ulcomedysociety@gmail.com) (to be marked FAO An Bhánisteoir)

## Chronicles of the Past

CHRONICLES of The Past is a social initiative being run by Enactus UL. Each week we visit local nursing homes hearing great stories and bits of wisdom from the elderly residents.

The aim of the project is to connect generations; we can learn from them and they enjoy our visits. We want to share the "Words of Wisdom" with you! In each new edition of An Focal there will be a new piece of wisdom from one local nursing home resident. If you are interested in getting involved with the project look us up on Facebook or email [enactusul2013@gmail.com](mailto:enactusul2013@gmail.com)

# Divers of a lost Lanzarote

THE magic of life underwater begins with the wonder of weightlessness. Like a feather from Hermione's first year classes, you take in the illusion and let it trick you. You ignore the gear on your back and just feel the magic that comes with scuba diving.

I joined ULSAC for two reasons: my love for quirky marine life – inspired by Sir David Attenborough – and to become an adventurer. Granted, the latter might sound childish, but when your inner Indiana Jones is dejected by the realisation that most of the earth has been discovered, learning that the earth is over 70% water and less than 5% has been explored, brings new hope. Joining ULSAC was the next step in making

dreams a reality.

The club's recent trip to Lanzarote is a testament to the organisers, the club, and the UL Wolves. The trip was worry-free and the location left me dumbstruck: three villas in a row quite literally a stone's throw away from the dive centre and beach, became our home for the week.

Thankfully too, the club's variety of members, from all walks of life and varying levels of diving experience, rapidly dissipated any lingering worries I had of inadequacy and fears of being the "newbie".

A shared desire for underwater exploration was enough to bring everyone together. Lanzarote quickly became more than just a diving trip,

leaving with tight bonds and new friends, diving stories, tales from the deep, and more than my own share of embarrassing photographs.

My mind still drifts back to that feeling of effortless weightlessness, seeing an octopus on my first dive, finning through hundreds of fish, playing with a grouper the size of a man with the temperament of a Labrador, a close up with a starfish, a cave collecting exhaled divers' breath on its roof like mercury spilled on a countertop, and glimpsing history as we frolicked around dozens of piled-up wrecks, our own private undersea playground.

The blue of Lanzarote will be visited again surely, and I look forward to future dives, with more fish and more to sea!



# UL Kayak Club's fifth consecutive victory — you'll want to read this

ALL good things come in fives: that iconic 90s boyband that brought us hits such as 'slam dunk (da funk)' and 'everybody get up', promotional packs of Curly Wurly bars, and now consecutive kayak intervarsity titles.

Like the Harry Potter franchise, UL Kayak Club has enjoyed significant growth and success in recent years. Unlike the Harry Potter franchise, UL Kayak Club lacks flying broomsticks and has more than one Ron Weasley lookalike (for further details compare Micheál Howard's beard with Rupert Grint's, circa the latter Harry Potter films).

The first day of competition brought kayak polo and a much anticipated grudge match with DIT. Like the contending Clare and Offaly hurling teams of the mid-90s, the meeting of UL and DIT was hyped by a history of bitter rivalry. Unlike the aforementioned 90s hurlers, UL and DIT's kayakers had the advantage of online social networking. Accordingly, trash-talking was undertaken in a far more efficient manner and a forfeit was arranged whereby the losing team was required to take a swim in the canal on which the game was to be played. Unfortunately for those neutral spectators in attendance, the game ended in a draw. The DIT game proved to be the hardest-fought of UL's games. Though UL won all of the other games in its pool, the draw to DIT meant that DIT would progress to the knockout stages on greater points difference.

The second day brought two events, whitewater and long distance. UL's whitewater team of Emer 'wee Mer' Farrell, Conor 'Concy' Bredin, Ethan 'mad-dog' O'Brien and Simon 'pug-life' McCormack got UL off to a great start with a second-place finish in the whitewater race. After whitewater came the weekend's largest event, long-distance racing. The long-distance event comprised of a number of races, of approximately 5 and 10 kilometres, across a range of disciplines. UL was represented across the vast majority of disciplines and a number of UL students placed highly in their respective races. The most impressive victory was that of Eoin 'grassman' Farrell and Gavin 'fruit&veg' Sheehan who came first in the two-person kayak race, bringing UL to four consecutive wins in this discipline. Big fair-play-to-ya's go to



Brianne 'maple-syrup' O'Rourke and Alison 'ghetto-ballin' Bailey — both in their first year of kayaking — who came second and third respectively in the women's high-performance category. Congratulations also go to Simon 'slamdunk' McCormack and Ethan 'boss-playa' O'Brien who came second in their respective disciplines.

Special congratulations also goes to Seán 'ginger-Tupac' Murphy for beating UCC in a rated-R striptease dance off on the riverbank. Huge thanks and respect of course goes to all the others from UL who competed in the long-distance race. It is probably best not to name every member that competed in the long-distance event given how many did so, but it is worth stressing the team effort involved. Everyone contributed to a great team effort and are worthy of the most disgustingly high of praises. Like ridiculously high. Like filthy high. Like hide yo' kids and don't tell yo' wife high.

The final event of the weekend was freestyle kayaking. UL's team put in a solid effort and, against stiff competition,

managed to secure a first place finish for UL. UL was represented in the freestyle event by a lovely bunch who you'd have no problem bringing home to meet your parents: Eoin 'krazy-legs' Keyes, Eoin 'eight-ball' Farrell, Conor 'big-stuff' Bredin and Caoimhe 'thug-life' Farrell. This fifth-consecutive intervarsity win is a testament not just to the club's current members but all those who down the years devoted countless hours of time and effort to the training and development of

the club. With UL Kayak Club enjoying its best run of intervarsity wins in the club's history, the future is looking as bright as ever.

If you're interested in trying out kayaking and getting a silly nickname of your own, check us out on the grid.

P.S. Windsurfers . . . let's hope you can put your money where your smack-talkin' mouth is, #6inarow. Best of luck to you guys, but remember . . . we (ULKC) are waiting, we are watching, we are training!



## #6inarow — a call out to ULKC

I'M sure everyone has heard the hype about UL's Kayak club returning in the past weeks with their fifth intervarsity win in a row. I mean #5inarow was all over Facebook weeks before the competition even began! What many people don't know is that UL's very own windsurfing club claimed the right to #5inarow in April last year.

UL Windsurfing club have had a very successful run of things in the past few years. First they dominated in Achill, and then in Castlegregory, they went on to take over the hills of Donegal in Downings and destroyed Belmullet for the last two years running. The UL windsurfers have taken over the west coast of Ireland and now they're back in their home spot, Castlegregory.

The club is hosting the Irish windsurfing Interschools this year and are determined to make it the best one yet. With plans well under way the windsurfers have two remaining weekends to venture down to Kerry and train in the hope of retaining the cup for the 6th year in a row. With the other clubs in the country growing and growing it's going to be a close one to call.

So here's some friendly competition for the UL Kayakers and Windsurfers. Whichever club lasts the longest in their run of dominating the Interschools must be served by the other club for a day. Butler's baby! We'll be one ahead of you guys soon, so you've got some catching up to do. #6inarow

## The International Society never sleeps

THIS time, we took our members on an unforgettable journey all the way to Galway, the second (after Limerick of course) student capital of Ireland. First, we visited Spiddal, which is a Gaeltacht, coastal village in County Galway. This was definitely a must-see for our International students who may have never even heard Irish being spoken before. Next, we went to Salthill, after which everybody was allowed to explore the city of Galway at their own leisure.

It might not be so obvious here considering

the weather, but it was indeed Carnival time celebrated in many countries all over the world. We just couldn't resist and threw our own Carnival party Irish-style in the Stables. It was a huge success with creative costumes, onesies, and glitter to be seen everywhere. DJ Ber and DJ Stephen Howard kept the crowd entertained as we danced through the night. The Carnival TGIF was also part of this year's Charity Week and contributed to raising funds for the chosen charities.

Last but not least, we have a very important

announcement to make! We are very proud to say that the International Society was shortlisted for this year's Clubs & Societies awards in two categories: Best Individual — our president Tríona O'Sullivan, and Best Society. We'd like to thank all of our members for their contribution and support, without you the society would not exist!

We hope to see you all at our events this week. Don't forget about St. Patrick's TGIF on Friday, and participate in the greenest party of the semester!

Monika Gaciarz, PRO

## SPORT

## UL helping to tackle childhood obesity

Eoghan Wallace

THE organisers of Ireland's biggest fun run for kids are hoping to get children as young as four out on the running track in an effort to combat the rising levels of childhood obesity in Ireland.

The Barrington's Hospital Great Limerick Run, in association with the University of Limerick, unveiled details two weeks ago details of its Kids Run for Fun, which will take place in UL on 3 May. The event is in its second year and following its success last year, the number of children between the ages of four and 12, allowed to participate has been increased to 2,000.

Speaking at the launch, Joe Leddin, co-organiser, said it was shocking that some 100,000 children in Ireland are obese. "This is a frightening statistic and out of the 27 EU member states, Ireland has the fifth-highest rate of child obesity," Mr Leddin said, adding, "It is shocking. It's like everything, if you get kids involved from a young age, it's a great discipline."

There will be four distances open to participants; 1k, 1.5k, 2k and 2.5k. All will take place on UL's grounds. Wheelchair athletes will also compete their distance of choice on the track.

UL Vice-President, Prof. Paul McCutcheon commended the event, stating, "As a university we are conscious not only of the attraction of sport but also of the long-term health benefits of sport and, in particular, for children and young people."

UL's Director of Sport, Dave Mahedy, also stressed the importance of getting children involved in physical activities from as young an age as possible: "One of the big problems is people are stopping kids running around the playground because they might fall and hurt themselves but the knock-on of that is they are going to get big and unfit."

Mr Mahedy said that by coming to UL and seeing sports stars such as Paul O'Connell in the gym or Gráinne Murphy in the pool this will encourage kids to imitate them because they will have witnessed such dedication to sport first-hand. "You have got to encourage them and subtly encourage them by setting them a challenge like this and it's not a huge run. They might like it and decide they would like to join a club or something else," Mr Mahedy added.



## UL Handball enjoy plenty of success Stateside

Barry McMahon  
PRO, UL Handball

UL HANDBALL continued its recent domination of the college scene, as 14 club members travelled to North Carolina State University to compete in the U.S. National Collegiate Championships, bringing home nine medals including silver in the men's team event, sixth-place overall, and each player reached the last 16 at least.

The club was successfully represented by Cork's golden girl, Catriona Casey and Limerick sharpshooter Martina McMahon. The girls teamed up for the very first time in the collegiate championships and took very little time to get.

They combined superbly in a perfect display of doubles handball, with Catriona's impeccable kill shots and Martina's power serves. They conceded less than ten aces in the entire tournament. They comfortably secured their title with a final scoreline of 21-0 / 21-1, against rivals Lake Forest.

Catriona Casey, who dominated the Women's Open, took to the court in devastating form, winning her first game 21-0 / 21-1, immediately laying down a marker for the rest of the tournament. She progressed to the semi-finals with ease, where she met her doubles partner, Martina.

Both ladies traded aces and provided the crowd with some spectacular rallies. However, Catriona's skills and experience proved too much of a challenge for the Cappagh girl. Catriona then dominated Sligo IT's Amy Corrigan to complete a three-in-a-row, the first such treble in the

tournament's history.

UL had four representatives in the Men's Open, among them Niall Bolton who excelled, winning the Men's A final in style. He refused to give his opponent more than single figures throughout the tournament; his power, fitness and long reach proving too much. Colin Corbett and Colm O'Lúing plotted courses for the semi-finals of the Open Plate, following opening losses for both in the Open.

Paudi Quish looked set to face Bolton in the A final, refusing to concede a single game, until the quarter-finals where he badly injured his finger. Paudi astonished many with his abilities and is certain to secure silverware in the future.

Two UL pairs entered the Men's Open Doubles. Colin Corbett and Niall Bolton paired up top reach the final, showing great belief and understanding in each other to defeat some high-quality doubles pairings. Unfortunately, they lost to Daniel Cordova and C.J. Laffey from Lake Forest in a tight encounter. The Lake Forest pair also defeated Paudi Quish and Colm O'Lúing in the semi-finals.

Bill Lyons led the way for the first-year singles, finishing second after being narrowly beaten in the final despite an elbow injury. Bill showed great heart in reaching the final and his performances bodes well for the future.

Sean McNeil, Stephen McNicholas and Conor Quinlan all made impressive starts to their National Collegiate careers, all three winning at least two games before bowing out. Similarly debutants Jacob Loughnane and Ronan Broderick both had a great week of handball and lost narrowly in the semi-

finals of the A Doubles.

When Shane Walsh and Alex Sheehan stepped off the court it was described as the perfect doubles game. It had kill shots, trick shots, diving, comebacks on both

sides, and wild enthusiasm from the crowd. Shane had the perfect percentage game, while Alex's exceptional retrieving were too much for their opponents from Lake Forest, as both secured more gold for UL.

## The Siege of Limerick 2014

THE Siege of Limerick is the UL Ninjas flagship event, and is the largest tournament in Ireland, and one of the most anticipated tournaments of the year. This year's edition saw 32 teams compete, with 22 in the Open division and 10 in the Ladies division, including teams from across both Ireland and Europe. The Siege of Limerick 2014 took place on the University's 3g astro turf pitches on the North Campus.

With UL entering both an Open and a Women's teams, there was a strong home interest in the competition. UL Open began the tournament as 6th seeds, placed in a group with Gentle, a team from Gent in Belgium, the Dublin-based Jabba the Huck and NUI Maynooth.

UL Open, having progressed to the semi-finals, faced off against their old adversaries Rebel.

This game was played in conditions which resembled all 4 seasons in the space of half an hour, with the sunny blue skies soon making way for gusts and hail. The adverse weather, combined with unforced errors, saw UL slump to a defeat against the eventual winners of the tournament. This left UL fighting

with UCC for 3rd place.

UL Ladies' last game of the weekend was to maintain seeding against UCD. A fierce contest played in a strong wind resulted in a well-deserved victory for UL, their first of the weekend. This victory ensured that they would finish in 9th place and hold their seeding. UL open slumped to a double game point defeat to UCC in the 3/4th placed game to finish 4th overall, and beat their seeding by two places.

French club team YAKA comfortably defeated Rebel Ultimate in the final of the Women's division, whereas Rebel and the Dublin based Ranelagh played out one of the most memorable finals in the history of Irish Ultimate. Rebel overturned a large deficit to emerge as winners of The Siege of Limerick 2014, retaining the title that they won in 2012. This capped off a phenomenal weekend of Ultimate, with all those attending enjoying themselves immensely. A big thank you to the 5 TD's and to the University of Limerick Sports Department for being so accommodating, hopefully next year's edition maintains the lofty standards that have been set over the last 2 years.

## 2014 Collingwood Cup . . .

# UL men suffer twin penalty heartbreak

Jamie Flynn

DESPITE finishing the tournament unbeaten and only conceding a single goal in three games, UL Men's soccer team suffered the penalty shoot-out heartbreak not once but twice at the 2014 Centenary Collingwood Cup, held in University College Dublin.

11 teams competed in the competition with UL one of the unlucky few to be drawn with a preliminary game. UL faced Queen's University Belfast in the first round match, the winners of which would face NUI Galway the following day, in the quarter-finals.

UL last faced Queen's in 2009 when they recorded a 1-0 win. This was also the last occasion when UL won a match in the Collingwood Cup. UL started well and drew first blood when Ben Savage, sent through on goal, coolly slotted home between the keeper's legs.

Minutes later Savage found himself in a similar position, but the Queen's keeper did just enough on this occasion to deflect the ball wide. UL were unfortunate to lose centre-half Jack Molyneux in the 40th minute, after suffering a knee injury. Barry Hooton was forced to replace him. UL saw out the remainder of the half and Ian Sullivan's men came in one up at the break.

Queens hit a purple patch in the second-half and came close to scoring numerous times. Joe Collins managed to head clear off the line in the 52nd minute, while Queens' best chance came minutes later when they hit the post. Stephen Walsh had to be at his best, making three crucial saves to keep Queen's at bay.

After weathering the storm, UL regained control of the game and went two up in the 65th minute. UL won a free-kick in centre of the pitch, some 28 metres out from the Queen's goal. Jonathan Hannafin stepped up and slotted home a free-kick Cristiano Ronaldo would have been proud of. UL saw out the remainder of the game comfortably and progressed to a quarter-final meeting with NUI Galway.

NUI Galway had an advantage over UL in the quarters, having had a full day's rest. That said UL did enter the quarter-final match fit, with a win under their belts. NUIG retained the ball well early on but never really threatened the UL goal. UL centre-half Andrew Cowpar did well to clear any danger and the centre-midfield partnership of Peter Higgins and Joe Collins ensured NUIG couldn't break down the UL team. At half-time the game was scoreless.

The game opened up slightly in the second-half, but chances were still few and far between. NUIG's fluid passing was less evident in the second-half and UL began to enjoy a greater percentage of possession. The game ticked on with half chances for both sides, but no team really looked like making a breakthrough.

The introduction of Adam Collins on the right wing gave UL an outlet, with Collins tormenting his opposing full-back for the remainder of the game. The best chance



of the game came when Collins beat the NUIG left-back and swung in a cross for Ben Savage. If the 6' 5" Savage had been just a couple of inches taller, UL would have surely taken the lead.

Even in extra-time the deadlock could not be broken and both goalkeepers finished the game with clean sheets. The dreaded penalty shoot-out loomed and unfortunately, Lady Luck was not on UL's side.

NUIG's keeper saved UL's third penalty which gave his team the chance to progress to the semi-final. He converted and NUIG progressed to the semi-final 4-2 on penalties, eliminating UL from the 2014 Collingwood Cup.

The loss in the quarter-final meant UL dropped down to the Farquhar Cup semi-final, where they faced the University of Ulster Jordanstown. UUU had beaten the Royal College of Surgeons 6-0 in their opening game, before losing 2-1 to DCU in their quarter-final clash.

Both teams, clearly disappointed with the previous day's loss, lined up in an attacking fashion, ensuring it was

an expansive and open game. UUU struck first inside two minutes after a misplaced clearance allowed UUU an open goal. UL then settled into game and later equalised through Darragh Culleton after a well-crafted move from the left-hand side.

The deadlock couldn't be broken so once again penalties would decide the victor. Unfortunately, more penalty heartbreak awaited UL, as UUU progressed to the 2014 Farquhar Cup final. Despite conceding just one goal in three matches, and leaving the tournament unbeaten, UL left the Centenary Collingwood Cup empty handed.

UL's quarter-final conquerors, NUI Galway went on to the final of the Collingwood Cup where they met NUI Maynooth. The final, broadcast live on Setanta Sports, finished in a 2-1 victory for NUI Maynooth, giving the Kildare college their first ever Collingwood Cup; a feat UL will hope to emulate in the coming years. Meanwhile, UUU went on to lift the Farquhar Cup, after a 4-1 win over Trinity College.

## Going in hard, coming out wet . . . at the 2014 swim varsities

Rebecca Austin

SECOND semester has been a huge success for the new club in the wolf pack, UL Swim Club have returned victorious from their first intersivities in Waterford, with their team of 11 coming home with six medals.

After pulling out of campus on the Friday morning it wasn't long before Chris started practicing for his events, with the backstroke beginning somewhere between College Court and Elm Park.

After arriving in Waterford the day was already off to a good start when everyone identified the right changing rooms. The standards of competitors varied from recreational, those swimmers there for the socialising, through to swimmers from the Irish national squad, there to not



only break but smash records.

After the day's races we parted ways for dinner, where our lovely Rose donned the cooking apron and played mammy to all the hungry wolves. After we returned to the hotel for the evening's entertainment of dancing away the rest of the energy we had left.

We made the most of our weekend by stopping by Tramore beach and going for a quick dip,

despite the cold temperatures. Our spirits couldn't be dampened as our total medals tally for this year is already over 30. It's been a good year! After getting all our Wolves gear we are well decked-out and ready to go to more competitions, in the pool or braving the elements on rivers and shorelines across the country.

So, what's next for UL Swim Club? After our first major competition we have the taste for gold, with plans to go on and take part in the Thomond Open water swim this coming May, right here in Limerick. It should be the perfect event to break into the open water scene this summer. We are also having a full moon party in the Stables on Tuesday, 18 March with the Windsurfing Club, which should be a great excuse to meet the other clubs and socs before the C&S ball.

### UL Equestrian Club enjoy success at the Intervarsities

Muire O'Farrell, PRO, UL Equestrian Club

UL EQUESTRIAN Club were proud winners at the show-jumping Intervarsities, hosted by UCD last month. Patrick Duggan, Aoife Leonard and Paul McDermott outshone the opposition and secured the win for UL.

The team were presented with their prizes at a Dublin ceremony surrounded by club supporters. It was a fantastic victory and huge honour for a club only in its third year of existence. We wish them further successes in the future. Yeehaw!

# Chuck Feeney: the homeless billionaire

Jake Watson

HOW LONG would it take you to spend \$7.5 billion, and what would you buy with it? Standard answers would probably include justified luxuries such as; cars, big houses, fancy clothes, maybe a yacht or two. Why not? You're a billionaire.

Chuck Feeney was a billionaire. In 1988 Forbes declared him to be the 31st richest man in the United States with an estimated value of \$1.3 billion. Forbes was incorrect, in two ways.

For starters, the figure should have been considerably larger. But the main error was that the money no longer belonged to Chuck Feeney.

Feeney was born in New Jersey in 1931, born into an Irish family whose roots traced back to County Fermanagh in Northern Ireland. He grew up in a very modest working-class environment before serving in the United States Air Force during the Korean War. Following this he began to sell liquor, duty-free, to US Naval personnel out of Mediterranean Ports. This was during the 1950's. It was in the first year of the following decade that he would begin to make his fortune.

The Duty-Free Shoppers Group was founded in 1960 by Feeney and another American businessman named Robert Miller. His wealth, over the next twelve years, expanded to \$7.5 billion. But Feeney didn't want it, and in 1982, after setting aside some relatively small amounts for his children and first wife, he began Atlantic Philanthropies.

So when Forbes declared his wealth to be \$1.3 billion in 1988, it wasn't a gross underestimation of what Feeney had in his bank account. It was a gross underestimation of what Feeney was in the process of giving away.

His money, or rather, his foundations money, began to pour into every part of the world, from the US to Vietnam, Bermuda to Australia, Africa to Ireland. It funded health projects, science research, and in Ireland in particular, third-level education.

Which brings us to UL. You may not have heard of Feeney, but if you have walked across the Living Bridge, you owe him a thank you. If you have ever seen a show in the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, or even performed in one, know that it was in a very large part Feeney's doing. Likewise for the Glucksman Library, Graduate Entry Medical School and many others.



“I want the last cheque I write to bounce.”

According to the UL President Professor Don Barry, Feeney has been 'intimately involved' in UL's progress, having made his first grant to the school in 1990, the year after UL was officially made a university by statute. He was the driving force behind the UL Foundation and even the initial chairman.

But that is not all he has done for Irish education. Atlantic Philanthropies has thrown roughly \$1.5 billion into the vault in Feeney's attempt to create in

anonymity in his donations, wanting to draw no attention, desiring no headlines featuring his name.

He has no home, but lives in foundation-owned apartments in Dublin, Brisbane or San Francisco. He stays in his daughter's apartment when he is in New York. When Feeney flies between these modest living quarters he flies economy class because it gets him there just as quickly as first, and adjusts his rubber Casio watch to the new time zone. Having arrived in these cities, he

motivating him to set up his Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation-has described him as the perfect example of 'giving while living'.

Feeney believes in giving, and gives to what he believes in. His moral opposition to the Vietnam War prompted him to give hundreds of millions of dollars to the country for health and education. He has given almost \$400 million to cancer research, and very quietly funded the Irish peace process.

Feeney wants to give away everything in the years before he dies, and sadly those years seem short. Now in his 80's, his heart stopped in 2010 and he now requires a pacemaker. But while he is still alive, you can be sure he will still be giving.

You can be sure he will be happy when he does, because he says that it feels good to give, and that people forget how good it feels to give. Chuck Feeney's particular tale may be too far-removed from peoples everyday lives to serve as a template for how they should be lived (how many of us will ever be billionaires?), but the man who has offered almost literally everything he has to the world should at least stand, during his life and after it, as a testament to how good it is to give.

Chuck Feeney wants nothing left once he dies. He is giving while living. His final wish?

“I want the last cheque I write to bounce.”



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Ireland a world leading research- and education-based economy. Just under \$200 million of this has gone to UL. In 2012, he was awarded an honorary doctorate of Law from every university on the island of Ireland as a thank you for what he has done for Irish education.

Feeney has been described as the billionaire who is trying to go broke. Feeney himself has said he would like to see all his-or rather, his foundation's-money go before he dies. But he has gone about this process with no pomp or ceremony which is so synonymous with the financial elite of the world; until 1997 he strictly wanted absolute

drives no Porsche or Maserati, or anything at all, because parking is hard to find in big cities.

As of 2012 Atlantic Philanthropies had given away \$6.2 billion. They will have allocated the remaining \$1.3 billion by 2016 and by the closing of the decade will have ceased their operations completely. Feeney believes people with money have an obligation, and was the main inspiration behind Warren Buffett's 'Giving Pledge', a promise signed by 90 of the world's billionaires to give away half of their wealth before they die. Bill Gates-to whom Feeney was a role model in