



an Focal

University of Limerick Students Union

COLLEGE FEES THROUGH THE BACK DOOR

TERM 1
WEEK 2

INSIDE

AIRPORTS

In July, the non-tuition fee for students of this college went up from £180 to £280.

Bobby O'Connor writes on why we should be on our guard.



WILLIE O'DEA:
Meeting with Students

They say "a week is a long time in politics", but one thing is for sure, and that

accused him of at-

due to have a report prepared by mid November.

At this stage the increase seems irreversible, however we will have to fight tooth and nail to have it frozen at the increased figure.

Most importantly, we are watching closely as to how this extra money will be spent and are insisting that the University will use it to improve things like the Medical Centre and other Student Services.

WELCOME FROM THE RESIDENTS

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MORE STUFF

on our guard.

They say "a week is a long time in politics", but one thing is for sure, and that is four months of the summer and a change of government can prove to be a very dangerous time. As you are all painfully aware, your registration fee went up £100 during the summer.

In a press release issued by the Minister for Education Michael Martin on the 30th July, the Minister stated that after being approached by the heads of the Universities he was left with no choice but to increase the fees for registration, exams and students services by £100.

We in the Union were never informed or knew absolutely nothing about the increase until it was made. In a joint press statement between ourselves in UL, Trinity College Dublin, UCC and Maynooth, we criticised the Minister for his lack of consultation and



WILLIE O'DEA:
Meeting with Students

accused him of attempting to bring back fees through the back door. We then met with the Junior Minister for Education, Mr. Willie O'Dea where we outlined our fears and demanded that this would be the last increase.

We have called for a meeting with Michael Martin, but he is somewhat hesitant, as he is waiting for a HEA Commission to report back to him on the issue. The commission was set up by the previous Minister almost two years ago. Their function at the time was to investigate the £150 figure which had been imposed to pay for Registration, Exams and Student Services after the abolition of fees. The group met once and made no decision. Mr. Martin has again put it into operation and they are

have to fight tooth and nail to have it frozen at the increased figure. like the Medical Centre and other Student Services.

WELCOME FROM THE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Let me firstly, on behalf of the community welcome you to Limerick and to Castletroy in particular. I hope you will have an enjoyable and successful stay here, for the next few years. For many of you this will be your first time away from home and the freedom that this brings. There will be nobody watching your every move, however this freedom brings responsibility.

The area you will be living in is a residential one with a variety of people, young married couples, young families, widows and elderly retired people. I would therefore ask you to behave in a responsible way to your neighbours. Try and avoid noisy parties, as your neighbours need a good nights sleep as they have to go to work in the morning. Please avoid football on the streets late at night.

If coming from discos, try and avoid excessive noise. We would also ask you to try and keep the neighbourhood free of litter. Whilst the majority of students behave well, unfortunately there have been problems in the past and a number of students have gotten themselves into trouble.

I would ask that you treat your new neighbours with the same respect as you do your neighbours in your home areas.

Once again, welcome to Castletroy.

Gerry Caulfield
Chairman, Milford Grange Residents Association

News & Views

Ivan's Two Cents...

Well, I suppose the first thing I should say in this - what I hope is the first of a regular column, is to welcome everybody back, and to extend - again - a very warm welcome to all the first years, who by now are finding out what college life is all about. I hope that your summer was good and that wherever you were, that the weather wasn't as bad as it was here around the Stables courtyard where it seemed it rained all the time....summer...pah, what summer?!? Of course, the only funny thing about the weather all summer was the reaction of Met Eireann to the rather inaccurate forecast that they gave for the August Holiday weekend, when they promised that it would be sun, more sun, and yet more sun....instead it was rather wet. What had the weathermen to say, I hear you ask....well they said 'it's hard to tell what the weather will be like on a bank holiday weekend'...Go figure?. I mean do their meteorological instruments suddenly pack up and go on holiday as well? If anybody knows, would they please let me know!

Anyway, on to more serious and mundane topics. As you may have noticed, there was no small amount of building work going on here during the summer and the library should be open by February, and at the time of writing, the Mechanical, Aeronautical and Engineering /Chemical and Environmental Science building is due to be open and in use for the start of term. (It's just struck me that it doesn't have a very catchy name...still, you can't have everything!) According to those who know about these things (not your humble scribe!), it will be used mainly for postgraduate work...so now you know! One thing that comes to mind with regard to the library is Final Year Projects. It's a time honoured tradition, that a lot of students tend to do a lot of work on FYP's during the three weeks break between semesters. This may cause some problems. The SU will not stand by and watch students be disadvantaged by this. From the next edition of *An Focal* onwards however, there will be an update from Library staff on details of the 'changeover'.

So, what else did the summer hold for 'us what worked here'. It wasn't as quiet as we, or rather I, had hoped. There was a lot of movement on the issue of the Student Centre - and the good news is

that the design and plans are at quite an advanced stage - watch an *Focal* for details as they emerge. Various meetings were held during the three months between the SU, the architects, the project managers and college representatives. The ball should be set rolling in the near future.

The other thing that took up some time was the Discipline Committee. If there was one piece of advice I were to give to everybody reading this it would be 'For Gods sake, be careful'. Some of you may have heard an edition of *Liveline* on the radio, in the middle of June where an irate Castletroy resident was complaining about the behaviour of UL students. He complained of damage to his property and felt that he shouldn't have to tolerate it. Seamus Doran, who was president of the SU at the time addressed his problems and left many people feeling that there is a definite need for greater respect for each other, in terms of residents and students. Tolerance is the key to the whole thing. Few expect students to live lives which end at 10pm every evening curled up in bed with a cup of cocoa and a good book.

Many, enjoy going to the pub, having a few scoops, staggering home and telling all the occupants of one's house that

'You...are...loike...a...brusszzhhher...to...me'...or 'sissshhhter' as the case may be!. But where the fun stops is gobshites thinking that it's absolutely hilarious to piss on somebody's car, jump into a hedge and bawl out all four verses of 'Sean South from Garryowen' (or insert republican/Frank Sinatra/Oasis song of choice). It's no secret that residents in this area have had enough of, what the Gardai would technically describe as 'making a bloody racket'.

By all means enjoy yourself, but try to remember, we're not alone out here, and there's nothing to stop your resident next door neighbours deciding to have the biggest Bar-B-Q in Christendom in their back garden on the eve of the exams starting...just to let you know what it's like. Sorry about the preachy tone of this bit...I'm actually trying to warn you before nasty things like the Discipline Committee come into play, where only last week, penalties imposed went up to £100 just for what was, at the time, 'a bit of a laugh'.



Live on campus and enjoy the best of college life

PLASSEY VILLAGE & KILMURRY VILLAGE ARE PROVING TO BE AMONGST THE MOST POPULAR PLACES FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TO LIVE



Welcome Back from Bobby O'Connor, SU President.



I hope that the summer has been prosperous and the Co-ops eventful and that you all have plenty of money to spend. On behalf of the SU I would like to wish you all the best for the next year and I sincerely hope that it will be the best yet.

On our behalf we are working harder than ever before to try to ensure that it will be a great year, both academically and socially. Election promises are all good and well but we are all well aware they need to be fulfilled. A lot of work has been done during the summer and some issues have been resolved and many more are on their way.

The new library will be opened for the beginning of Term Two and thankfully my main election item of providing extra study spaces has been already been fulfilled, as extra money was allocated at the beginning of the summer and now there will be no question of any part of it being closed off.

However we still have some difficulties to encounter with the library, mainly that of the change-over. This is due to occur during the 3 week break between terms. I will be working to make sure that disruptions will be kept to a minimum. While it is certain that some disruptions are inevitable, provisions will be made. I intend to give you

more details soon, so watch carefully for any news on the library.

The Student Centre is coming along nicely and we will have the plans ready in a week or so. We will then be applying for planning permission and hopefully be January, building will commence.

Keith Pigott has been appointed as our new Entertainments Manager. Keith has a great year planned so read his column and keep in touch with him, because this is intended to be a year to remember on the Ents front.

Dates for UGM's etc have been fixed and are on the Sports Department wall planner.

I look forward to meeting you and getting your views, advice, help and support, all of which I hope to return to you in every way I can for my term of office. Best of luck in your course. Best of luck also to all clubs and societies on campus.

Here's to a successful year.

Bobby.



WELCOME FROM ELAINE KIELY, DEPUTY PRESIDENT & WELFARE OFFICER

Welcome back everyone and an especially warm welcome to all those who have joined us in the past week to become part of what is the most happenin' uni around. Hopefully you all had a sunny summer unlike us poor unfortunates who were based in this soggy city.

Introductions

But enough garble. Let me introduce myself: my name is Elaine Kiely and I am the Deputy President/Welfare Officer of the Students Union for the year ahead. This is my second year in this position as I was re-elected last April so hopefully I will not seem a dithering mass of nerves to those calling into my office as I probably did last year.

As Welfare Officer my role is to look after all those who have departed the nest and luxuries of home and provide a listening ear and advice to anyone you finds themselves lost, lonely or in need of information. I don't guarantee to have all the answers to hand but I will definitely be able to put you in touch with someone who will deal with your queries.

Queries

You may wonder what type of queries arrive in here to the Welfare Office. Well last year

they ranged from financial worries, unplanned pregnancy options and referrals, accommodation problems and advice to personal safety on and off campus, advice on discipline procedures, grant applications, information on services for lesbian, gay or bisexuals, information for lone parents, information on Third level allowances, disability information.....the list goes on. Basically if you have a problem or query about anything that affects you as a student both personally and academically feel free to drop into my office for a chat.

Welfare Issues

As well as trying to help people find solutions to their queries I also organise campaigns (usually lots of freebies involved) to disseminate information on topics that affect students during their time at university. This semester I plan on organising a Welfare Week with my co-sabbats Bobby and Ivan and any one else who is willing to give a helping hand.

The campaign will focus on issues including drugs awareness, alcohol awareness, how to claim tax back, your rights as a tenant, your position vis a vis the law...again the list goes on. Needless to say the week will include lots of entertainment with comedy, hypnotism, interesting gigs in town and out here on campus.

Community Relations

Those of you who are returnees to the university will realise that we live in a predominately residential area in Castletroy. Given the number of us that live here during the year it can sometimes happen that we forget we have neighbours who have to get out of bed at 7 am to go to work and bring kids to school.

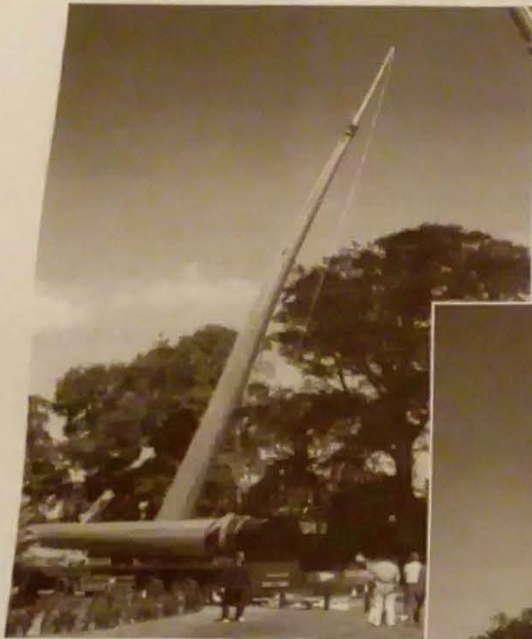
You will often find that if you take the time out to introduce yourself to your neighbours and invite them in for a cuppa then a lot of potential problems can be ironed out and avoided. A bit of give and take on both sides will ensure that you can enjoy your time in the house and that your neighbours will be able to sleep peacefully at night. Where possible try to have 'social gatherings' in houses that are not attached or near residents' homes. If you are having a little soiree make sure to invite your neighbour...you'd never know you might get that bottle of Dom Perignon you always longed for.....

So folks, just to reiterate, drop in at any stage if you have a question or problem and make sure to keep your eye on posters and An Focal for info on upcoming events within the Union. Have a great semester, lots of fun frolics and study....

SPEIR PRICKS

In his speech at the opening of the New Entrance, Minister for Education Micheal Martin T.D. said he understood that 'they have been very much a talking point since being put in place'. That's an understatement if ever there was one. But what was the scene like when they were being put there, back at the start of July?

Words and hidden camera : Ivan Moran



'Fuck me, but they're big!' I thought. In the place where the dignified front gates had once stood proud, we were now faced with one enormous crane, a smaller crane and a truck carrying the two wondrous entities which we were told were 'The Flagpoles'.

There were men with cameras, men with phones, men in shorts and men in suits....tourists stopped their tour buses to get a look at what was going on, curious locals even paused - just to get a glimpse at exactly what the hell was going to be on their skyline for quite some time to

being moved. As the first one swung gently in a horizontal position held by two cranes to the 'Ooohs' and 'Aaahs' of the assembled good timers, old timers and - let's not beat about the bush - over-timers, young children were seen scurrying for shelter in the

that this writer asked felt that they were obscene. There was no doubting the fact that they were impressive both in the size of the structures and

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The mounting of the poles (this writer is trying to use as few innuendoes as possible in this article - all of a sudden this seems more difficult than he thought!) was meant to begin at 11am. It didn't. It was also - I was reliably informed by an impatient bystander - meant to begin at 12. It didn't. Finally, at 1 in the afternoon, in the sunshine that blessed Friday 18th July, things started to happen. To the of the crowd the machines grunted into action for the first part of the operation, the removal of the poles from the trailer. Yes, the 35m poles were finally



being moved.

As the first one swung gently in a horizontal position held by two cranes to the 'Ooohs' and 'Aaahs' of the assembled good timers, old timers and - let's not beat about the bush - over-timers, young children were seen scurrying for shelter in the folds of their mothers skirts (smearing ice-cream everywhere I might add), in fear of what could only be described as one giant pencil tip dangled precariously in the air.

Then the fun really started, one crane taking over, swinging it like a giant pendulum into position over the stone base. After that two men adjusted it into the final position - and that was it. Except to do it again for the second pole.

So, what did people make of the poles? One particular bystander felt that they were 'yokes for catching birdshit with', while most taxi-drivers

that this writer asked felt that they were obscene. There was no

doubting the fact that they were impressive both in the size of the structures and the relative speed at which the operation was carried out. Of course the word 'impressive' isn't necessarily a good thing - insofar as the population of Hiroshima probably found the atomic bomb 'impressive'...('nuff said!)

To the mind of this writer there is a two-fold problem with the erections. Firstly, they look silly. There is a perception that students of this institution may not have the highest regard for the powers that be, but one thing most would agree on is that Ed Walsh had taste. Bar the occasional faux pas (cf the 'structure' outside the Schumann Building -



would somebody please tell me what that is all about) the

general look of the college and especially any new developments was that they were 'classy', 'stylish', 'modern'. The old front gates weren't modern, but two out of three weren't bad. Now the plot has been lost.

Goodbye stately front gates. Hello phallic thingummybobs.

Who the hell managed to convince the those who have control over these kind of matters as to the aesthetic splendour of two glorified telegraph poles with flashing lights on the top?!? (The flashing lights are to warn aircraft, and to presumably allow people in



aeroplanes to laugh at them as well).

According to the nice Press Release, they were designed by Dublin architects de Blacam and Meaghar, who won a competition entered by 30 entrants. Personally, I'd hate to see the entries that the judging panel thought were absolute crap!!!

Secondly they must have cost a fortune. Wood isn't that cheap. Nor were the workmen to put them there, the craftsmen who put them together or the contract managers. And then one starts to put the whole thing in perspective. All the poles do is hold flags. Nothing else.

Zanahoria

The Summer is ended and once again we gather. Some new faces, some old, some who thought we'd be out of here by now. Not much has changed. But like those who noticed not as the Nazis won their evil foothold in inter-war Europe, we are perhaps unwittingly lured into a false sense of security. For amongst us lurks an evil force which few see and fewer acknowledge as the threat that it is. The next inquisition is upon us.

Common to every revolution is a phase called the Terror. It is a time of paranoia and terrible acts of violence. A time when nobody dares speak against the regime for fear of being lynched. Today, hot on the heels of generations of political corruption we, the Irish people, have cast out the oppressors and, in true spirit of Revolution, will now unwittingly elect a Robespierre to the position of President.

But as with all revolutions, the Terror losses sight of the true ideals of the Revolution. It becomes a self-perpetuating force to achieve whatever extreme the régime is forced to dictate. And the theorists in this field tell us that dictate it must to avoid itself becoming subject to the Revolution. Hence, in Ireland, where once we had the noble aspiration of purging our political ranks of dirty dealing, now we have a farce. I offer this Autumn's race for the Aras as an example. The role of the President is that of a figure head, the sole important function of which is an occasional liaison with the Supreme Court or dissolution of a Dáil. Ideally the President is a docile, legal type. Yet this affair has become nothing less than the race to find a new, secular, female, lefty-saint Icon for the witch hunt. The Irish Terror will tolerate almost any flaw in the sought Icon as long as she reflects the Politically Correct value system of the régime.

But the candidates are flawed! Mary Robinson, who was there at the start of the Revolution, provides a blueprint for those candidates who would at least attempt to win. Her "come dance with me" legacy is now reduced to sound bites. Mary McAleese has spoken of herself as an "all embracing President" who would celebrate the

"difference and diversity," "fractures and fissures," and "texture and tapestry" of the Irish people. McAleese, a lawyer, would do better to advertise her professional background than her abilities as a glazing over the Irish social mosaic. Adi Roche is the favoured challenger. Indeed a winner, assuming that the Fine Gael / Labour vote is not split. She describes herself as a "free-thinking candidate." Yet her "Stalinist" kamikaze campaign belies her true purpose. She has been accused of behaving in a fashion after that dictator by her former colleagues in charity. Further, like McAleese, she seems on demonstrating only those of her characteristics which are less compatible with the notion of her being anyway useful for the office. When asked about the Presidents role as Commander in Chief of the Defence Forces, she stated "I don't think our own army has any nuclear weapons that we know of." Its painful, isn't it? But the inquisition will accept one of these ridiculous candidates as President. Why? Because the alternatives are perceived as worse. Mary Banotti and (almost nominee) Albert Reynolds represent the very evil of career politics that the Revolution seeks to overthrow. Further, Banotti is a divorcee so the Catholics, at least, won't be voting for her. Dana, on the other hand, is almost a naturally occurring right-wing antithesis to the lefty orthodox. She represents the Old Ireland, updated only, maybe, with Bible TV - USA on cable. Her fundamentalism guarantees she is a non-starter yet it is worrying that she has not been dismissed out of hand. Suprisingly few laughed when she proclaimed herself "pluralist."

Lest I am misunderstood, four women nominees for the presidency is not a bad thing in itself. These four women are, quite simply, wrong. Its conceivable that they will set back the cause of women with their obstreperousness. The last phase of the Revolution is Thermodore. That occurs when people just get tired of it all. Regrettably, under whichever one of these women, many years of the Terror await.

Zanahosa

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT UNIT

ONGOING COURSES

(1) Life skills	Tues. 14th Oct (Week 3)	2 ~ 3pm	Med Room
(2) Para Counselling Skills	Wed 22nd Oct (Week 4)	2 ~ 3pm	Med. Room
(3) Stress Management	Tues 28th Oct (Week 5)	2 ~ 3pm	AEG 024
(4) Study Skills	Thurs 30th Oct (Week 5)	2 ~ 3pm	AEG 024

ONLY A WOMAN: 1997 IRISH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Since Neolithic this has NOT happened. At Catal Huyuk in Anatolia, (6,000 BC or thereabouts), archaeologists found a dominant female figure, part of a resurrection myth, which indicated that the overriding power at that time was female. (James Mellaart, *The Neolithic of the Near East* (London 1975), pages 98 and 132). The trend since then has been male domination, religion supplying legislators and priests, and always increasing the masculine emphasis. (Keay Farrahill, *Sex in History* (Abacus), pages 40-44).

This is real History, the stuff that matters. It seems as if Evolution and Relativity are converging in one moment and in one place - the Republic of Ireland, 1997. Yes, this is a happening of world significance, there are no men in the symbolic leadership challenge. Wow! Isn't it amazing. I feel a burst of song coming "Where have all the old men gone? Long time passing ..."

I also keep wanting to sing *The Four Marys*. It is truly a pity that *Adi Roche* isn't a Mary. I looked up her name in the back of my old reliable *Chamber's Dictionary*, *Adi* means noble, so it amounts to much the same thing, I suppose.

But what are we to make of this extraordinary event? Is it a circus or a superwoman context?

Strangely, I can't find anybody who thinks it peculiar that there are two contestants from Northern Ireland in the race, the border barrier was perhaps broken down by the accepted

candidacy of John Hume. And maybe its just me....I live in the tiny village of Rostrevor, Co. Down, just around the corner from *Mary McAleese*. Dana was living around the other corner before she went to America. There's a lot of talent in Rostrevor! even *Ben Dunne* (*Dunne's Stores*) was born there. Yet, I am sure that I live in another country despite what everybody down here seems to think. Rostrevor is a very mystical sort of place in the Mourne Mountains, it has its own Fairy Glen. People are forever writing songs about it. There is no doubt, you can become prone to lofty visions and dreams if you live there. I came to Limerick to get away from all that, and lo and behold, it is following me already.

However, I have been keeping a deliberate ear to the ground since I arrived on campus and I have to tell you I've heard some unusual comments"a President

can sing..." "she's sophisticated enough..." "a people's presidency...." "she speaks to peoples hearts...." "and she's got brains..." "she's caring..." "a vision for Ireland...". Tell me I am mistaken, but has this got something to do with *Diana, Queen of Hearts*, and the *People's Princess* phenomenology? Is there a new age cult of *Marys Diana* (A Di!!) emerging? What the hell is going on?

If this is a bench mark in History for Women, (and I think it is), it is surely important to get it right at the outset and not to slip back into using worn out religious jargon and confusing our heads with dreams, visions and sentimentality. The future for Ireland has to be pluralist and if History is to be made, it should set the tone for toleration on the World's stage. That certainly means no hidden or blatant religious agendas. This is no longer a case of *Mary Robinson's Mna hEireann*, the *Mna* of the World need to be addressed here and I am one of them.

Guess who I'm voting for? Oh Darn! I forgot for a moment. I don't have a vote. You see I live in Northern Ireland.

Marie-Claire Douglas

Prince Charles: His

Every other paper on the planet has had some sort of comment on the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. However instead of the usual platitudes, *PConDee* offers his version of what Prince Charles might have to say about the whole thing!!!

'all the news that phitz'

The Prince speaks, god save the queen!

The Princess is dead. You've heard it all, seen it all. How could you avoid it in an age of immediate blanket full coverage? It's almost a wonder that there wasn't a live feed in the car with her. I found out on-line while checking e-mail. There is shock sadness grief. Words like tragedy and horrible are used to death in trying to express the feelings of many. This was a terrible way to die but it's redundant and misleading to single this out as a greater tragedy. It is empty and lacing to describe it as horrible; women and their companions die every day in traffic accidents and we don't even hear about it. What does set this apart is that we - even I - seem to have known this woman. Gosh, she was everywhere. We knew everything about her whether we cared or not. That's what's jarring - we never even thought she'd go away; at least not so soon. Then- poof - in the middle of the night, as we went to movies or slept in our beds she died. It's hard not to feel something, whatever it may be.

Of course for news room it couldn't happen at a better time; late Saturday night (EST) in time for the Sunday papers late edition. Late August, when the President is vacationing and most people are away for Labor Day - a dead

time, perfect for the news of a high profile death. It's not such a hard choice - interrupting re-runs for this.

Of all that will be said all the opinions all the reporting all the pictures all the coverage ultimately it will become simply that; just another story.

Soon she will be dead a long time and we will not think of her much. We - those who knew her through her trysts and trials and travels - will not miss her. Her family and friends will miss her and we'll occasionally hear about them and how they are doing as they carry on. 'People' magazine will do a story on soon-to-be-King William as the sexiest man alive and how he's so well adjusted considering. What you will not hear, though, and what we all secretly would love to hear, is someone within their inner circle speak frankly about her and her life and death. Royalty doesn't do that, see, but wouldn't that be real news. If just once it would happen, say Charles speaking at a memorial for her:

People of the world I am here to speak of Diana. You don't really know me and you think you really knew her. You didn't. I knew Diana and I'm here to talk about her as only I can. When the Queen, suggested I settle down after running around for a bit and find myself a respectable young girl - unlike



Andrew and Koo Stark - Diana's name came up. So it was arranged that we meet and start courting. Believe me I was too happy. I was over thirty and she hadn't broken 20 yet. By god, it is good to be the king! (or at least the next one) - how else would an old stiff like me get a bird like that? She was all cute teaching kindergarten and wearing those girlish high collars that were so popular at the time.

In retrospect she was probably a bad choice; she wasn't true aristocracy and she had no preparation for what was to come. She is to bear some of the blame herself though; what young girl gets to realize their dreams of being an actual Princess? So what I was older - but golly, living in a palace and the prospect of being the mother of a future king - that opportunity doesn't come around too often. She loved it all.

From the very beginning our marriage was a farce. I was never in love with her. As you all now better get used to, my heart was always with Camilla - rotyvëiler, as Diana used to call her. It's not because of her that Diana's and I split apart; we simply

No More Warnings

The last 12 months has seen major developments in the area of Community Relations between the SU, the University and residents. The incident report line has been set up, student liaison officers have been appointed and the line of communication have been firmly established. Many achievements have been

committee has heard numerous cases relating to last years Rag Week. Cases are also going through the courts, and why, I hear you ask??? Well, the answer is simple - residents are entitled to keep their property intact and they too deserve a nights sleep.

es: His True Story



and Koo Stark - Diana's name
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should never have been together. It was
all about convenience and planning.
Now with Diana out of the way we'll
finally get to be together. We produced
our family, an heir. That was probably
the best part for Diana was a bit of a
dog herself if you know what I mean.
In that sense I find myself terribly
lucky. To think an old square fart like
me having the chance to bonk a bit of
pudding that fine ...woah!

Sorry, I digress. There was though let
it be said some happy times. We saw
much of the world together and we
because of our very differences showed
each other things we otherwise would
never have seen. She learnt to play polo
- so well she bonked some guy whom
we played with. I showed her many
buildings with great architecture. She
conversely taught me how to use a
walkman and that gossiping on the
phone was an ok activity - as long as
it's not on a scanable cellular. I knew
she was more popular than I and that
pissed me off a bit. Believe me I'm not
an idiot I saw her impact; I'm in
agreement with you - why couldn't it
have been some other princess or lady
or duchess? You wouldn't be that upset
then would you? Tragically, it was
Diana. We have received many calls of
course from all over the world. The
most curious of those I thought was
from Bill Clinton. He said he was
'fond' of her. Knowing Bill does that
mean he is sorry he didn't get to jump
her...or wait maybe the old fox did!??
I wouldn't have known. The boys of
course are saddened and they show
that. Their mother taught them that,
you see. They are coping, after all one
of them is going to be king for god's

sake. They'll come around to Camilla
after a while don't worry. Speaking of
her again I will be marrying her some
time soon, but this time none of you lot
is invited. Jesus it was bad enough you
all watched the first time. The queen
has rather said ok to that only because
she still wants me to be settled.
Mothers!! But more so because she,
most of all, is glad Diana's gone way -
no more 'annis horribilus'. Not since
my great uncle Eddie the 8th and that
wicked American, Simpson has so
much bad light been cast on us. With
Diana gone we can fade back into the
aloof secrecy that is the right of royalty
and which Diana bust open. We by
nature just aren't as interesting thank
god.

Oddly, though, I'll sort of miss that. It
was rather a laugh there for a while; all
that exposure and tit-for-tat. That
interview I gave was splendid. I
thought. I hadn't had as much fun since
China. And though I never showed her
much affection - I mean what would
you do, the worlds thinking fairy tale,
meanwhile you're living without your
true love - I liked her. I mean she is the
mother of my heir after all.

Besides that she was gorgeous. I was
lucky. I'm sorry she had to die so soon
so awfully. As cold as you may think I
am I would never wish this on her. The
light she cast on us, in retrospect,
wasn't all bad. It brought about a long
needed debate on monarchy and our
purpose in general. Now with her death
it's like a metaphor for our own life.
Diana was perhaps our last best chance
at some semblance of respect.

I guess that's dead now too.

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Orientation Week

I am forty-six years old and I am going back to school. Well, OK, so the University of Limerick is not school, but at my age it sure feels like it. Basically most of my "joie-de-vivre" has been stretched like old knicker elastic. But, I thought I had better put the bravest face on it and take whatever opportunity they offer during the Orientation Week. Maybe I could even prove to some of the younger folk that there's a bit of life in an old dog.

I did my homework and avidly read 'The Students Orientation Handbook 1997', and noted the fourth item listed in the table of contents: Orientation Week - Sport and Recreation. Well, this is it, I thought, if I'm going to be here for a couple of years this was my chance to tighten that worn-out knickers feeling. A 'new' oldie could emerge from Limerick educated and toned up for the new Millennium.

And what facilities?! I was spoiled for choice...Squash courts, Diving pit, Gymnasium, Astroturf, Climbing Wall and the Great Outdoors at Killaloe, co. Clare. I wondered what Climbing walls might be and pondered about this - after all I had been pulling my hair out and climbing the walls for years, I might just be a natural at this!

I didn't consider the Water Polo. Polo means pounds (£££). And I hadn't enough of them. already stressed out, I worried about how I would feed myself, do my washing and keep up my alcohol levels.

No More Warnings

The last 12 months has seen major developments in the area of Community Relations between the SU, the University and residents. The incident report line has been set up, student liaison officers have been appointed and the line of communication have been firmly developed. Many achievements have been made and thankfully some residents have been able to rest easy at night. However, it's disappointing to report that vast problems still exist. Noise levels are still too high, vandalism is still prominent and we have found ourselves coming under growing media attention being featured on Marion Finnuanes Liveline show, the Limerick Post and Limerick Leader, just to name a few.

As the Student Union President, I feel that it's my duty to warn you and advise you about the year ahead. The residents, the Gardai and the University are taking **NO MORE**. No longer will vandalism, late night noise, playing hurling or football at 3 in the morning be accepted. The warnings are over!

Over the last few weeks the discipline

committee has heard numerous cases relating to last years Rag Week. Cases are also going through the courts, and why, I hear you ask??? Well, the answer is simple - residents are entitled to keep their property intact and they too deserve a nights sleep.

We, as students, will have a good time and we are entitled to it, but we have no right whatsoever to take over and make life hell for residents. As I said earlier, the Gardai are taking no more and they have informed me that there will be a huge security presence in the area this year. I appeal to you to respect peoples rights because at the end of the day, it's yourselves that will suffer. no one wants or deserves to have a criminal record for breaching the Public Order Act, or find themselves in front of the Discipline Committee for having too much to drink and doing something stupid.

Enjoy your year by all means, but don't do it at someone else's expense.

Bobby O'Connor

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I didn't consider the Water Polo. Polo means pounds (£££). And I hadn't enough of them. already stressed out, I worried about how I would feed myself, do my washing and keep up my alcohol levels. My Polowould come in a green pack and have a hole in the middle.

Then I read, with astonishment, that on Wednesday, there would be a Taekwondo Display - this sounded like something tremulous and tricky. I was having visions of bare-breasted women with red feathers and hula-hula skirts. Back in 1979, I had decided my nubile days were over, and no amount of jiggling jungle beat was going to turn 1979 jadedness into 1997 jauntiness. I was getting the distinct feeling that I would have to tie a knot in the knickers, I just couldn't see them stay up under the strain of Taekwondo, whatever it was.

I dismissed the Squash Courts, the Diving Pit and the Weights Room out of hand. Well I was red-faced enough with the drink, why should I push health to health problem proportions? The Playing Pitches and the Astroturf were out too, all the physical contact stuff would pull hell out of what little stretch I had left. It is a private thing, and I intend to keep it private. I plea the 5th amendment - the statute of limitations.

Let's see, what's left? There's the Windsurfing, the Sailing, the Kayaking, the Rowing and the Outdoor Activity Centre. No. They're not really me. I'm windswept and interesting enough. Why call on the Shannon or the Atlantic to drown the point? Besides there is such a thing as stretching a thing too far.

Is there anything left? Oh look!, a Dance Studio. "Here's looking at you, Kid!"

Marie-Claire Douglas


<http://www.guinness.ie>

“The Farce Side”

The official UL Comedy Club upstairs in O Donoghues. An inexpensive nights entertainment over a few pints enjoying the best of Irish Comedy and hopefully English Comedy. Comedy is forever increasing in popularity God knows we need to have a few laughs in this college but we aim to make this a regular Tuesday Night thingy so make sure you get along to the opening night this Tuesday. Full line-up details can be found at the ticket desk this week. But over the next few months here are some of the names and faces you can expect to see !!!!



Barry Murphy Dara O'Brian



Ed Byrne

Caption Competition



In the first of what we hope will be a regular series, we are pleased to bring you this, a caption competition. What do you do???.why it's quite simple. Pictured above are a few people whom you may recognise.

It's possible to guess what they're doing but what are they saying??? Drop your entries into the SU office before Thursday 10 October, with your name and ID number, in order to be in with a chance to win a nice big prize (to be decided yet!!!)