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A photograph of the protest against the war in Iraq, organised by UL Against the War

by Bernadette Sexton

The possibility of war in Iraq has dominated global media over the past six months. Last Thursday, this pervasiveness came to a head when a U.S. led attack on Iraq came to fruition. What separated this from past wars however were the enormous divisions that exist worldwide regarding support for the war, indicative by a failure of the UN

Security Council to amalgamate to support the U.S. and British invasion. To coincide with the outbreak of war, a broad based coalition of non-political students and staff known as "UL Against the War" organised a 10-minute walkout from classes at 12 noon in solidarity with the innocent Iraqi civilians who will die in this war, and who have been dying in their thousands since 1980. The walkout was part of a worldwide demonstration organised across the

country and globe.

As the sun shone down on Limerick over 1,000 members of the UL community turned out in support of the movement, one of the largest protests ever to occur on the Plassey campus. The protesters comprised of an ample cross-section of students and lecturers from all academic disciplines and of all ages. A

continued on page 6 & backpage

FEES PROTEST

Leaving
2:00 Wed. Week 7
from the SU
More info on backpage

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

Last Weeks Winner
Donal O'Driscoll
for
"The Game of Politics"

Criminal Offences

On the 7th of March, 2003 at 2:30am 4 students were observed on camera breaking down the fence at the back of a house in the Orchards and they were observed going into their houses in Elm Park.

Also, 3 students entered Oaklawns at 4:09am on Friday morning 14th March, 2003 and pulled a tree from the garden of 47 the Orchards and threw it in the middle of the road

Tapes and information regarding the above criminal damage have been passed to the Gardai in Henry Street

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President - Eoin Ó Broin

Hey All,

As I write this myself, Gráinne & Gemma have just come back from a function in Student Services Offices to celebrate their refurbishment. Who thought this would ever happen? It certainly appears to be a much more desirable location to work in now. The resources have been forthcoming from University management to enable improvements to the physical office space there to be made. Now resources have to be given to the staff working there. Adequate knowledge of the service provided for the front desk staff. Sufficient staff dealing with grants. Above all opportunities for staff to get promotions up the clerical grades to encourage them to stay working there. If the staff there can't get promotions why should they stay there. Some of them are actually UL graduates. Now no one came to UL to take up a dead end job so why should those working in Student Services do so? This is something I will be taking up with Dr. Downer as soon as I meet him and with the head of human resources on campus Ms. Anna Doughan as soon as I meet her. Next Governing Authority takes place this Tuesday. If Dr. Downer has not come back to me regarding the issues I raised there last time, such as the Universities Policy on Student Services, then I guess I will just have to raise them there again.

Demo Day this Wednesday. We are hoping to get as many UL Students out as possible. All first years, all second years and as many third & fourth years that have the time. The Demo against fees was originally supposed to take place last Wednesday but class reps decided last Tuesday evening that another week of preparation would increase

the turnout from hundreds to thousands. Given the events that were looming last Wednesday and the genuine opportunity to get more people out I am glad they decided this. Unfortunately it doesn't look like we will be joined by our brothers from the other 3 Limerick Colleges this time as for various reasons the timing isn't right for them. It is for us though and we are going to make a big noise. Minister for Education, Noel Dempsey, is addressing USI congress on the same day in Killarney and is probably going to announce his plans there. What better way to respond then with a big demo! See you at 2pm outside the Students Union.

The same afternoon at 4pm in the White House Dr. Downer & I launch the UL Alcohol Policy. I will be practising bi-location;-) It is over 18 months since my predecessor Mike Phelan, Clubs & Societies Development Officer Paul Lee and a number of well placed people within the University sat down to formulate the policy. At the time a lot of people were skeptical as to whether the policy was worth the paper it was written on. Fully implemented, the alcohol policy holds great opportunity for the expansion of the extra mural activities available on campus. For example it includes more revenue from the on campus clubs for clubs & societies, a 3 year plan for the introduction of the half day Wednesday, increased capitation for the SU to bring them in line with DCU's level of capitation, a University led committee to obtain non - drinks companies sponsorship for clubs & societies and a late opening non-alcohol serving café. Clubs & Societies Council have given the University Management until week 9 for tangible evidence of

support for the Alcohol Policy to be forthcoming. If it isn't we shall go to the press.

Congratulations to all winners at the recent Clubs & Societies Ball. In fact congratulations to all that were nominated for awards. The standards of those nominated this year was phenomenal. The awards were like the Oscars! A testament to the long hours put in by the organisers within these clubs & societies. Any of you who haven't joined a club or society in your time in UL should seriously consider the opportunity they provide. New friends, new skills, new horizons, new adventure and a break from the studies!

We have a rag mag RAG MAG! Thanks to the students who put in the hours developing it! Their pseudonyms will revealed be in the mag. This will be a collectors item! If you want to get involved with raising money for charity during rag week call in to myself or Gráinne. We have collection permits for Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Don't forget GARDA on campus on Tuesday evenings in the SU. The more there is reported the clearer picture can be got of what's going on around.

Congratulations to UL Anti War for getting such a big crowd out of lectures for the Rally for Peace on Day X. Day X being the day war on IRAQ started. I have never seen such a crowd gather in UL for any other protest or rally. Perhaps there hasn't been for at least 20 years. As I write this the "Shock & Awe" strategy of the US Army is reigning down on Baghdad. Lets hope they are precise. However in my opinion the death of



one innocent Iraqi civilian is not worth it. Who are we to say it is? If the liberation of the Iraqi were the only reason for this war one could argue the point but when it quite clearly is not the attacks are nothing short of an abomination.

We are finally calling to the housing estates around campus this week. Oak Lawns, Elm Park, College Court and Millford. In our hands we will have information about Community relations & information regarding your options for Waste disposal & recycling. We can also discuss the accommodation survey, the Demo on Wednesday & the UGM this Thursday. The UGM is a must attend for those of you who want to see what the your Union has been up to for the year, those who want constitutional Changes and motions brought forward and presentations on major SU projects such as the UL Boathouse. Hope you are in when we call!

Slán & Beir Bua!

Eoin

Welfare/Deputy President - Gráinne Heffron

Dia Dhaibh

It's been a strange week. The war in Iraq seems a bit surreal as every day life goes here as normal. Congratulations to the organisers of the Peace protest on campus on Thursday. To be honest I was surprised at the amount of people who turned up and impressed by the effort put in by the organisers. I am not sure where I stand on the war. I can see both sides of the argument but I sometimes feel that there has to be a better solution than war.

One positive thing is the way in which ordinary people are coming out on to the streets to protest about what they don't agree with. For too long protesting has been seen to be the preserve of the 'hippy tree hugging types' (no offence to anybody intended). It is everyone's right to protest and responsibility too. If you don't agree with something you shouldn't stand idly by and say what

can I do? At the end of the day we are lucky enough to live in a democratic society where freedom of speech is everyone's right. We should make use of that right whatever it is we want to say 'Bomb Iraq' or 'No Blood for Oil'.

This week we are having our own protest about the proposed reintroduction of third level fees. The protest in October was a great success and we are hoping to build on that success. I am asking everyone to come out and support use. Perhaps it seems a bit trite protesting about money when the Iraqi War rages on but unfortunately the world doesn't stand still and politics here still goes on.

So I hope to see you all at the Demo on Wednesday. Have your say and make a stand. People really do have the power.

Slán, Gráinne



Education - Margaret Ryan

Hi everybody

Well, it's a month since I last wrote, because as you may remember I was a bit under the weather when it came time to write the last article. It's now week 6, so only three weeks to the elections, which is kind of a scary thought. This time last year, I was trying to write my Final Year Project and build a campaign, ready to roll at 5 pm on Thursday of week 8. Well, I was unopposed, so the campaigning part at least was easy... If any of you out there are thinking of going for Education officer, please make sure to call in to me if you have any questions. I'll be more than happy to answer anything you may want to know about. I'm not running again myself, because I don't think I'd be able to do a second year of it, but I certainly wouldn't have missed it for the world. I was going to copy and paste from my predecessor's column on this, but it's way too long and Paddy would kill me stone dead!

The Education Officer, according to the ULSU Constitution, is responsible for

(i) The development and implementation of the Union Education Policy;

(ii) For keeping the student body informed of the same.
(ULSU Constitution, Article 9)

What does this mean? Well, the representation part involves sitting on Academic Council, Academic Regulations Committee, Academic Programme Review Committee, Student Affairs Committee, Student Adviser Working Group, Orientation Week Working Group, among others. Here I put forward the views of students, which I mostly hear from Class Reps. Informing the Student Body of the same happens through this column and through Class Reps Council. Also, everyone is free to call in to me to ask about anything specific that they may want to know about.


I also help individual students when they have academic problems. This may range from explaining how to get a re-check or appeal a result, to bringing up cases with academics.



Union Admin is the last part of this. I don't really have too much to do with this end of things, but I do sit on the Line Managers Committee with the other sabbaticals, and on Exec,

which is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Union.

The last thing I have to say today is to talk about advisers. (I know, get off



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Education - Margaret Ryan

the soapbox already...) Make sure to go to your adviser at least once a semester; they're your link with the university structures, and they can advise you on different procedures in the university. To find out who your adviser is, log into Sigma, and it will be on the first page. To find a list of

your adviser's responsibilities, check out <http://www.ul.ie/studentaffairs/advisers> and click on Student.

I think that's about it for this week, enjoy Kollege Week next week

Margaret

Communications - Paddy Buckley

Hi everyone,

As you can see I'm short on space this week, so I'll keep my article to a minimum.

The Stables and Scholars Club court case is getting closer and closer. Production of Club ID cards has started, and we expect to start distributing them early next week. If you've already applied, you will be emailed to inform you to pick up your card. If you haven't already applied, then please visit the website www.ulsu.ul.ie/clubs and register as soon as possible.

Kollege Week is only just around the corner, and promises to be to a great blast as usual, turn to page 12 for a preview or pick up the Kollege Week Magazine in the SU reception for more info. Hopefully everyone will have a great laugh as usual, and please give as generously as you can to the charities that will be collecting over the the week.

Paddy
P.S, My email went on the blink this weekend, which meant I lost the name of some of the authors of this weeks articles. Apologies to anyone this happened to



As our trip to China in late January was totally booked out, we have organized another fantastic weeklong holiday there for the end of term as follows:

EIGHT DAY TRIP TO CHINA FOR SHOPPING AND SIGHTSEEING.

Departs: Shannon Airport on Friday 30th May to Friday, 6th June 2003.

Price: 1,099 Euro per person sharing. Single Supplement is E 130.
A special 8 day trip to Beijing, China, from Shannon Airport via Moscow, has been arranged by the University of Limerick, Students Union, from the 30th May to 6th June 2003 to enjoy the guided tours to the World's most exciting attractions, experience the remarkably inexpensive shopping, and visit the best market.

Price Includes: return flights Shannon/Moscow/Beijing with Aeroflot; Executive Coach transfers; 6 Nights 4 star Hotel accommodation with half board (breakfast and evening meal); Guided tours (inc. entry fees) to The Great Wall of China, Peking Opera, The Forbidden City, Shopping Centre, Market, and a unique visit to a Chinese Medical Centre and Clinic. Also included are all travel and security taxes, 24 hour Emergency Service, an information pack of most popular activities; and group insurance (over 75 years of age not covered - alternative quote available).

Not included: Chinese visa and tips (approx. Euro 50. total) and departure Tax 12 Euro

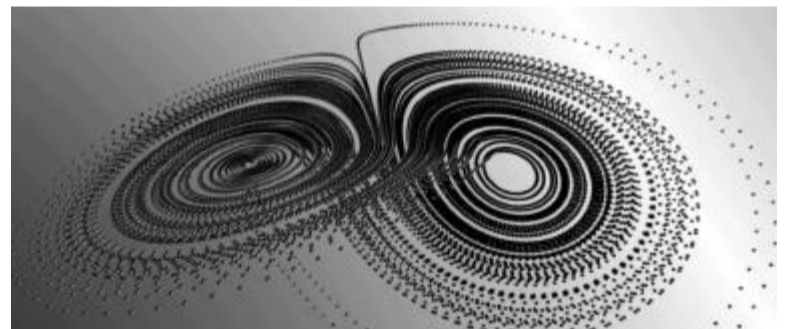
This holiday, which is open to the public, is arranged for the Students' Union by leading Irish group travel company, New Standards in Travel (N.S.T) Omni Park, Santry, Dublin. Flight by Aeroflot departs Shannon at 09.25am on Friday 30th May. Return landing at Shannon at 23.45 on Friday night 6th June.

Booking forms are available from: Paul O'Connor, UL STUDENTS UNION, University of Limerick, and must be completed and returned with cheque for 1,099 Euro payable to ULSU, before Tuesday 2nd April. There will be a 10 day "cooling off" period from the date of booking, to allow you to reconsider, after which there is a non refundable 200 euro Administration and insurance charge imposed. Cancellation after that is in accordance with booking conditions.

All profits go to a ULSU charity fund.
Further information from Paul O'Connor at 061 234106; or E-mail paul.oconnor@ul.ie

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For further information contact: Dr. Kieran Mulchrone, Department of Applied Mathematics, UCC, e-mail: kmulchrone@ucc.ie, phone: (021) 4903411.

Alternatively see the diploma website at: <http://appliedmaths.ucc.ie/diploma/index.htm>

Response to Feminism Gone Too Far

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in response to Thomas King's article titled 'Feminism Gone too Far' as published in week ten's edition of An Focal. I would sincerely like to apologize to you Thomas King on behalf of all the female population of U.L. I am sorry if we hurt your feelings by being served first at the bar but I thought you would be pleased to avail of the opportunity to indulge in the glorious sight of our rear behinds. I am sorry for all the times you made our tea and fetched our ashtrays for us and not succumbing to your ulterior motive for doing so i.e jumping into bed with you.

But please don't sound too perturbed- you should realize how lucky you are- not all college blokes still have their mothers pampering them with unnecessary luxuries, as you call them, such as cushions- remember what they are now- yes, they're the things that you so often demand on your usual place on the couch whilst watching Buffy. And toilet-seat covers or doilies- sorry never heard of them!

O yes I am really sorry for all the times I have done the dishes for you but I thought it was my place in the kitchen, haven't you told me so for the past 100 years? And I am apologizing for all of us out there who wear makeup- but I thought you liked those girls with lots of it, with ironed hair and high heels- remember- the ones with the 'great personalities' whom you seem to chase after in the pub like a panting dog in heat and whom you call sluts when they reject you?

And as a final word I am sorry you don't have a girlfriend, I thought all girls would love a pair of kneepads for their birthday, I know I really would! Maybe if you opened your mind to the immense female population out there who don't like Dawson's Creek, or Westlife and who prefer soccer, and beer and hard core beats you would succeed in finding a girlfriend- OOPS- Silly me- I forgot you told me before- they're lesbians aren't they?

Yours truly, and again, with my most sincerest apologies-
Oonagh Carroll.

P.S. About that 'Risky Business' you mentioned- don't worry you'd have come well before the Rigour Mortis had even a chance to think about setting in.

On the Anti War Peace Protest

First of all, everybody, be they for or against the war, agrees Saddam Hussein is a dangerous and violent man. Everyone agrees that Iraq, and the Middle East would be better off without him. The issue of weapons of mass destruction is only a symptom of this problem. As long as Saddam Hussein is in power in Iraq, he will always seek to acquire weapons of mass destruction. As long as Saddam Hussein is in power he will be a menace to the people of Iraq, his neighbours and the Western World.

The problem is how to get rid of him. From our point of view, this is the essential sterility of the position adopted by most peace protesters. We have never heard anyone who is against the war propose a genuine method of removing Saddam Hussein from power. They bemoan sanctions, while refusing to admit the reality that they have been the only thing keeping Saddam Hussein from acquiring a truly terrifying arsenal of weapons. They refuse to acknowledge that the "Oil for Food" program was abused incessantly by the dictator. And finally while they all profess a desire to rid Iraq of its dictator, they refuse to accept the reality of the actions necessary to achieve that goal. At least people in favour of the war are realists. Saddam Hussein will not voluntarily leave, and will not be overthrown, leaving one alternative: regime change imposed by external military force. If you will the end, then it is only honest that you will the means.

The second major problem is that many of the peace protests seem to be nothing more than a veneer of morality covering what amounts to little more than virulent Anti-Americanism. The United States of America acts on the world stage in its own interests. So does every other country, Ireland included. America reacts more strongly to threats because it is more endangered than other countries. A nuclear armed Iraq will not attack Ireland. It will not use these weapons to threaten Ireland. It will use them to intimidate America. Ireland's national interests may be incidentally affected (in the form of rising oil prices, or a biological contagion, or God forbid an attack on Sellafield), but we will not be directly attacked. And if our national interests were affected, who would we turn to for help? America.

Not only that, the great fear in America is not a Saddam Hussein armed with weapons of mass destruction. No nation state can threaten America, because the principle of deterrence still holds when it comes to relationships between nation states. The fear is that he will give these weapons to a terrorist organization, which as September 11th proved are essentially undeterrable. We in Ireland can dismiss this possibility as improbable. Why? Because as previously mentioned, it won't be in Dublin that anthrax or smallpox is released. It will be New York or Washington or Boston. A thermonuclear device detonated in Manhattan would kill more people in a heartbeat than the

entire Holocaust. We can afford to dismiss a possibility like that, because it will never happen to us. September 11th showed the Americans they can't.

And why is America the victim of these attacks? Why will it be America that is targeted? You can quote historical precedent all you want, say they did this wrong, and that wrong and now they are getting their just desserts. Or vice versa, one can say that they are a force for good in the world, that humanity is better for America and what it has brought to the world. And its all shying away from the truth. One can trade example and counter example of American foreign policy until the cows come home. The real reason why they are hated is the same reason why the French were hated in the 1700's, the British in the 1800's and the Russians and the Germans in the 1900's. It is because they are the foremost power in the world. If the United States of America takes a position, any position, on any issue in the world, then they will immediately be accused of imperialism and neo-colonialism by anyone who opposes that position. Morally, the Americans are no worse than any country that has occupied the preeminent position in the world. In our opinion, they have been far and away the best.

An awful lot of what has been going on over the last few weeks, both on the streets of capitals around Europe and in the United Nations has had very little to do with a rational evaluation of the situation in Iraq, and an awful lot to do with reflex Anti-Americanism. And the problem with this is that the debate on whether or not military action is justified or not has become sidetracked. The future of the people of Iraq is not being determined by a rational debate. The debate, both in the homes and schools and offices of Ireland and in the United Nations has moved away from an evaluation of whether or not military action is necessary, and instead turned into a vox pop on whether or not you like America. And that polarization has not been caused by the Americans. It has been fermented and bred by people who instinctively dislike America.

Peace protests have done nothing to solve the problem of Saddam Hussein. They have driven a wedge between the Western Powers, and put a stake in the heart of the United Nations. And they have not done so on the basis of logic or reason. They have been used as a vehicle to express Anti Americanism, and in doing so ransomed the Iraqi people against the political agenda of a few.

Paddy Buckley & Eamonn O'Flynn

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Huge Anti-War Rally in UL

by Aidan Hehir

On the 20th March over 1,000 students and members of staff gathered in the sunshine to protest against the commencement of military aggression against Iraq. In what was one of the biggest rallies ever held in the University, students clearly demonstrated their opposition to war on Iraq and showed solidarity with the plight of the innocent Iraqi civilians currently enduring yet another round of US led bombardment.

Organised by UL AGAINST THE WAR this walkout was timed to co-ordinate with similar actions across Ireland and the wider world. The scale of the demonstration should leave no one in any doubt but that the majority of students in UL oppose the bombardment of Iraq and Ireland's complicity in it.

While students gathered to voice

"Hundreds of students signed an anti-war petition and over €400 was collected for UNICEF's humanitarian efforts in Iraq."

their opposition to the war, in Dail Eireann the Irish government sought to align itself to the US and Britain's illegal military action. There can be no doubt but that this war has no basis in law yet the Irish government seeks to stand side by side with the aggressors. This decision, which flies in the face of popular opinion, makes Ireland complicit in a war that has not been sanctioned by the UN, that is waged against a people who have already had to endure the most

draconian and putative sanctions regime in history. The sanctions imposed on Iraq by the UN Security Council have crippled a once prosperous nation. The victims of these sanctions are the innocent Iraqi civilians who are left to die as their country degenerates further into poverty and despair. According to former UN assistant Secretary-General Denis Halliday, *"If UN sanctions were terminated -- and if the lives of the people were to be restored and the economy rebuilt and society and culture restored -- the capacity to go forward with change via a multiparty democracy, as foreseen in the constitutional change under consideration, could become viable"*. The sanctions have strengthened Saddam Hussein's abhorrent regime and bred a seething resentment against the West amongst citizens of Iraq and the wider Arab world. It is this resentment coupled with the deep anger generated by Israel's treatment of the Palestinians that drives young Arabs into the hands of Al Qaeda.

While our Taoiseach railroaded our neutrality and had the affront to state in the Dail that any refusal to deny the US access to Shannon Airport would constitute "a hostile act" pleading that this would be "counter to our long term interests", students in UL came out in force to show that they looked beyond sectional gain when assessing actions that necessarily result in the deaths of innocent men women and children. It was fitting that while students are so often roundly criticised for their selfishness and apathy, on the 20th of March we unashamedly raised our



Baghdad after the first "Shock and Awe" strikes

voices in protest while our government mumbled their way into sheepish compliance lest they offend Uncle Sam. Hundreds of students signed an anti-war petition and over €400 was collected for UNICEF's humanitarian efforts in Iraq.

We in UL AGAINST THE WAR are a broad based non-political organisation, which aims to promote and co-ordinate anti-war activity in UL. We comprise a cross-section of the UL community and call on all students and staff to help us build a strong opposition to this war. It is clear that the government have made their shameful choice to compromise both our neutrality and our morality. It is therefore up to the people of

Ireland to take to the streets to stand up for human rights and international law. The hugely successful rally in UL is part of a wider global movement of people that aims to make international politics more humanitarian and responsive to the wishes of all the worlds citizens. Movements of people, and in particular students, have traditionally shaped human history and the power of mass protests to change the policy of government's should not be underestimated.

**For further information
contact**

ULAGAINSTTHEWAR@hotmail.com

Biggest Protest Ever In UL Against War

continued from frontpage

collection was arranged by the organisers to aid the humanitarian relief effort in Iraq by UNICEF, with over 400 Euro contributed. Hundreds signed a petition opposing the war. Students' Union President Eoin O'Broin and 4th year HPSS student Katherine Harford addressed the assembled crowd. Mr. O'Broin stressed that the walkout was not a diatribe of anti-American innuendo. Instead it was anti-American foreign policy. It was anti-terror and not anti-business. Ireland has incredible links with the United States indicative by the amount of Irish students who obtain J1 visas every summer to go to Boston and New York. Indeed Ms. Harford stated; "if this is anti-American then this is anti the millions of American people who oppose their own government. In fact this anti-war sentiment is for my growing concern for the long-term consequences this war will have, in threatening global security that jeopardise American vested interest, as realists

themselves acknowledge."

She went on to add that the objective of the walkout was to "reflect on consequences of war from a humanitarian perspective. It was a time to think about the thousands of refugees fleeing to the borders, for the people who have suffered 12 years of sanctions, and the civilians who will be targeted weapons, dismissed as collateral damage. I think of my own family and to know what is happening as a result of war I would not wish on anyone." Ms. Harford was unambiguous in her assertion that she did not represent everyone by stating her beliefs nor did she pretend to, her primary concern is humanitarian issues be they in East Timor, West Papua, the Middle East, Afghanistan, or the Congo. She remains convinced that freedom is not the objective of the American and British troops striking Iraq pre-emptively. "The West is not going in to liberate the people of Iraq, that is propaganda espoused by the West. It's about control not freedom.

We've encouraged the Kurds to rise up before against the Saddam regime only to abandon them to face the consequences alone."

The organisers of the walkout called for a minute's silence in respect for the innocent Iraqi civilians who will die over the coming days and weeks and who have already suffered since 1980 from the Hussein regime and western indifference. A minor yet visible and vocal pro-war contingent was also present amongst the crowd. During the minutes silence an unidentified lone male made his thoughts known pertaining to support for the U.S. invasion and the success this will have in freeing the country from a ruthless dictator, destroying the Ba'ath party, and bringing democracy to the country. Students' Union Communications and Campaign Officer Paddy Buckley and Societies Officer Eamonn O'Flynn hoisted a "USA Lets Roll" banner and walked through the crowd while the speeches were being made. In response to this Ms.

Harford professed, "I have more respect for the guy who stood up in front of a thousand people to express his opinion than I do for two people who undermined a student and staff initiative. Their message was unclear therefore the only conclusion I can come to is that they made a mockery of themselves and the Students' Union of which they represent in trying to upstage the incredible efforts of a large group of University of Limerick individuals."

Mr. Buckley outlined his reasons for showing his disdain for the walkout. "Peace protests like today's have done nothing to solve the problem of Saddam Hussein. They have driven a wedge between the Western Powers, and put a stake in the heart of the United Nations. And they have not done so on the basis of logic or reason. They have been used as a vehicle to express anti-Americanism, and in doing so ransomed the Iraqi people against the political agenda of

continued on backpage

We Go To War

The reason for war is simple; since the terror attacks of September 2001 the American's have felt what it is like to live in fear. This fear lead them to spear head a war on terror, the only flaw in this proved to be the failure to win this war. The armies were require to capture Osama Bin Laden and bring him to justice, but a failure to achieve this meant that while the "partners of peace" caused a change of regime in Afghanistan they could not hold aloft the figurehead they chased. This invasion was akin to the police chase being televised on an U.S. news network, they were able to portray the American army as heroes in the struggle to capture a fugitive. The failure of the police to capture the fugitive is regarded as a failure, unfortunately this was the case for the Americans. A superpower caught with its pants down by a terrorist group with a budget that pales in comparison to the defense of The United States of America. The insult of training terrorists in there own country and even having the security agencies housing some of them, retaliation was called for

in the wake of 9-11 but that retaliation was always going to be inadequate should they fail to get the figure head. So the world is aware of the American attitude to be the biggest and best defeat in anyway was not and could not be accepted. So with a failing economy the easiest option to win a war was to pick on an old adversary Saddam. The dictator always a threat in American eyes the unstable in an unstable region the regime should have been changed after the last conflict in the gulf but the failure to follow through then with

"A superpower caught with its pants down by a terrorist group with a budget that pales in comparison to the defense of The United States of America."

international backing has meant that a split in the security council and with quiet a good possibly that it may be permanent.

Baghdad has been in breach of UN resolution 1441 no country could actually say that they have complied too the letter of the law. From the very beginning there have been deep routed flaws in the actions of Iraq, first the documentation that the UN sort failed to give the information required, this was a sign of what was forth coming from the Iraqi leadership. An oversight it was called but any company that has stock will keep a record of what it has stored. The leadership of the UN wants to avoid war this is in conflict with the view that Saddam represents a constant threat to the peace of the world and the security of the United States. American patience has worn thin and with George Bush at the helm you have a man who fills the role of the Texan stereotype, trigger happy, in favour of the death sentence and now he has signed the

order for the death of many thousands of men and it is likely women and children will endure this fate too. Surely Madman Hussein has heard the old adage of "like father like son". Former president Bush once said that he wanted a country of Waltons not Simpsons but I don't recall John Walton setting of to the other side of Waltons mountain to lay siege to a neighbour that he didn't get on with. But after suffering a defeat in the gulf war and a decade of sanctions surely Saddam must realise that he faces defeat and the full wrath of a nation scorned. Hitler knew when he was beaten and decided to kill himself or at least disappear Saddam has refused either option and condemned his country to yet another

war, a leader someone who people look to follow his fist grasped so tightly around Baghdad that he takes away peoples freedom to move. His subjects don't seem him as a leader they live in terror of reprisals and if he stays in power they will come the Kurdish people in the north of the country can vouch for that. Surely the time has come for the UN to stand up and resolve itself to change and no longer sit idle allowing millions of people to suffer



American B52's operating over Afghanistan

at the hands of a dictatorship and also from starvation caused by the red tape of sanctions. The world has a term called "basic human rights" and nobody to stand up for them that has too change we no longer use the term genocide it has been replaced by "ethnic cleansing" same difference innocents die because of religion/race/colour it doesn't seem to matter. The world is getting smaller and the western world sees through rose tinted glasses people need to show the courage of their convictions or war will become the normality.

Forum on Europe Report

by Elaine Byrne

The Convention is moving very fast, we are already more than half way through. Dr. Kirsty Hughes, Senior Research Director at the Centre for European Policy Studies, Brussels and former Deputy Chef de Cabinet to Commissioner Anna Diamontopoulou, spoke to the Forum.

She believes that there is no one dominant influence within the Convention, but rather a combination of dynamics. However there is an obvious left / right split within the Convention esp. regarding the Economic and Social Rights Group which has largely failed due to this split. There is a general consensus by those at the Forum of the various criticisms of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, President of the Convention on the Future of Europe.

Some negative aspects of the Convention. The Convention has essentially postponed debate on the role of the European Commission and Council while member states have moved on in the debate. The Convention is thus left out of this debate. The issue of executive power, the balance of power structures within the Commission and the Council are thus been discussed (and informally decided) outside of the Convention. The

debate on this issue will be over before the Convention will reach it, making the Convention irrelevant on this issue and raising the question of democratic accountability.



The European Parliament

Some positive aspects of the final proposals of the various working groups within the Convention; a consensus has been reached on a single legal personality (3rd Pillar). This will have consequences in other policy areas, primarily enabling the EU to have a strong voice on international issues. Mr. Alan Dukes (Fine Gael) questioned if a single legal personality would necessarily ensure what was hoped would happen would actually happen. He also criticised the limitations on the EU budget and suggested that 1.27% of GDP was going to put the EU under pressure from 2004 with the admission of new members.

The Convention has endorsed the introduction of an exit clause, a get out of the EU card. It has been proposed give the Bill of Fundamental Human Rights formal legal status rather than the political declaration which currently exists. The principle of subsidiarity is to be reconfirmed and given greater emphasis. The Council is to meet in public when in legislative mode. Competences are to be defined. There is a greater emphasis on clarifications and simplification of procedures and instruments. The position of High Representative is to be strengthened.

Dr. Hughes has made the observation that no one was defending the position of the rotating presidency. She noted that traditionally there was an element of competition / tension between the rotating President and the EU Commission President and that this could be resolved through an elected Commission President.

Mr. Proinsias De Rossa MEP, Joint Oireachtas Representative at the Convention, has proposed that a future EU constitution should include a binding EU commitment to international disarmament. Mr. Dick

Roche Minister of State, Government Representative at the Convention, supported the recommendation that National Parliaments should have a 'EU Week.' The Government believes that the current balance between the institutional triangle (The Commission, Council and Parliament) should be maintained. (i.e. does not support the creation of any new institutions) The Government has reiterated its position on taxation to the Convention. Mr. Michael D Higgins, Labour, questioned the content of the Convention debate with regard to the lack of reference on the ideology, history and culture of the EU. He suggested that the debate within the Convention was anti-philosophical and that the question of identity was not being addressed. He argued that the institutional focus of the Convention was too narrow.

Further updates on the National Forum of Europe in the next edition of An Focal. The Forum will be visiting the University of Limerick, Jean Monnet on Monday 31st of March. This is a revised date. Senator Maurice Hayes will chair the Forum and John Cushman MEP will be the keynote speaker.

(<http://www.forumoneurope.ie/>)

The Liberation of Iraq

Just how many of the "anti-war" group of students of the University of Limerick know what they are talking about? Do they know about the town of Halabjah in northern Iraq, where 15 years ago, almost to the day 5,000 innocent Iraqi civilians were massacred by Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party regime using banned chemical weaponry. Do they not remember Hussein's unprovoked military assault on his nearest middle eastern neighbour Iran? His invasion of the relatively small Gulf state of Kuwait? His orders to launch SCUD missiles at his arabic neighbours in Saudi Arabia, and the nearby state of Israel? Do they think of the



Gas bombing of Halabjah in 1998

countless victims of persecution, execution, rape and torture, who have experienced Saddam's rule first-hand during his long reign of terror? Will there be a similar walk-out in solidarity with those innocent Iraqis who have perished at his evil hands? Shi'ites, Sunnis, Christians, Kurds, Palestinians... his victims are those of every race, religion and ethnicity. Why was there not a protest months ago in solidarity with these victims? With

the hundreds if not thousands dying weekly on the whims of this psychotic and despotic man. When was the protest in Limerick, or Dublin, or London or Leipzig, Paris, Melbourne, Islamabad, Cairo and Washington against the constant war waged by Hussein on the Iraqi people themselves? I did not see them, did you? When will these misguided UL students walk-out in support of a peaceful and democratic Iraq? How many more Iraqis must die at the hands of this man before the dawn of freedom breaks over the Tigris and Euphrates?

Certainly many innocent Iraqis will die during the course of this invasion, but once it is complete the senseless and needless slaughter will cease. If Hussein's regime is not removed from power the slaughter will continue, indefinitely. Many thousands of Europeans died during the liberation of mainland Europe in 1944 and 1945. That is a fact! If this was the case again, would you be protesting against the liberation of Europe from the shackles and chains of oppression with which they had been enslaved by Hitler. Will you now deny the same chance of liberation to the Iraqis? Do they not deserve a chance to rule themselves, to live in freedom, to experience life, free from oppression and violence? Saddam Hussein denies them this chance, noe you too are denying the Iraqi people this chance.

Some people claim the Americans are driven by a sense of greed and selfishness. Is this the case? I think not. The USA fought, defeated and occupied the Empire of Japan in WW2. Did they stay in Japan to exploit her in any way? No. Did they free the Japanese people from fascist oppression? Yes. Did they instigate democracy, rebuild Japan, educate her people, restart the economy and give the destiny of Japan to the Japanese people? Yes. Did they abuse Japan for their own economic interests? No. Only 30 - 40 years after the end of the war, Japan, a country devastated by war, the

detonation of two atomic bombs and the loss of almost an entire generation, Japan was the worlds economic powerhouse. The USA was in recession, and the very nation it saved was now more successful than she was. The same case for West Germany. Indeed most of Europe was rebuilt after WW2 by monies donated from the USA to us under the Marshall Plan.

So, now that at last, the liberation of Iraq is at hand, and Saddam Hussein has authorized the use of the biological and chemical weapons he

had actually "destroyed", against the allied forces (including all and any Iraqis in the area who are sacrificed so

that Hussein and his henchmen can continue in power), we should be celebrating. Celebrating freedom, democracy but most of all - life. Be glad you live where you do, have what you have and are what you are. Be happy you do not live in a country with no civil rights, random arrests, arbitrary justice, torture, state sponsored rape of female prisoners, a country where the leader does not kill 5,000 of your fellow citizens to test his new chemical weapons, a state where there is a 100% electoral turn-out at presidential elections, and of that 100% a 100% vote for the dictator running your country. Remember, not even Hitler himself could manage that considerable achievement. Be glad for the Iraqi populace which shall soon have the opportunity to one day enjoy a similar life in their own nation and an active role in determining their own future and destiny.

If letting Saddam Hussein continue his slaughter of the innocents, by opposing this war/liberation is your idea of peace, I would rather live in a world of war. And a helpful hint to the anti-american brigade in the University, try not to let any Heinz ketchup fall out of your BigMac and onto your lovely designer Nike clothes after the protest.

Its only TV, but I Like It

by *Mikey Stafford*

God bless George W. Bush. He knows how to produce good TV, he's probably gained an appreciation for it since he gave up his many vices, one can't be sniffing the Devil's dandruff when they run the most powerful corporation in the world. My hunch is that he percolated the idea for "The Persian Gulf War II: The Prodigal Son" in the aftermath of the September 11th attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Centre. He, like all of us, was probably glued to his TV during the aftermath; it was very difficult to tear yourself away from all that anger, recrimination and human anguish.

With the relatively disappointing viewing figures for the Afghanistan campaign he knew he'd have to procure a more dislikeable villain than the relatively obscure Taliban regime. Now, he's taking a leaf from Ian Fleming's book (excuse the pun) and going back to the well. Why bother with an inferior villain when you can go back to your very own

Blofeld? Saddam Hussein is the archetypal villain, I think it's the moustache; you just can't trust a man with a moustache.

With the basic plot outlined, all Bush had to decide on was whether to go with the fully-loaded, big budget war classic or the more artistic assassination thriller. I think we all knew the latter was a non-starter, Saving Private Ryan or The Specialist, no contest. Anyway, with \$328.7 billion spent on defense last year alone, an expensive project was never going to be a problem.

As usual the event shall be broadcast by the seasoned professionals at CNN and Sky News, no one does death and destruction quite like Ted Turner and Rupert Murdoch. I especially like the cheeky presumptuousness of Murdoch's Sky News, long before it became clear that George Bush had no intention of adhering to the UN's resolutions (the security council prefers romantic comedies) they were heading their bulletins with the catchy phrase

"Countdown to War". This really is a golden time for the news channel; it's usually difficult to make the broadcasting of UN meetings and House of Commons debates a tantalizing prospect, but in the current climate they're selling themselves.

The main event itself is obviously of primary interest to all viewers but some of the spin-offs are very entertaining in their own right. The World Peace rallies last month were some of the best comedy produced since Seinfeld. There is nothing more amusing than millions upon millions of mere mortals thinking that they can dissuade an artist like George W. Bush and his co-executive producer, Tony Blair from launching a full-scale assault upon Saddam Hussein and his 60 million co-stars. There's no place in show business for morals and a conscience.

My one concern regarding the project is it's artistic direction. The Commander in Chief of the original

Gulf War distraction, General Norman Schwarzkopf had a very



George W. Bush

competent military brain but he had little imagination. Furthermore the constant carpet-bombing and scud missile attacks, while effective, were a little repetitive. I propose the installment of Steven Spielberg or possibly John Woo as Commander in Chief. While neither has any great experience in matters of national security, their artistic vision would be a little more creative than anyone in the Pentagon's. There's nothing like an awe-inspiring firework display to take one's mind off an imminent depression.

Its only TV, but I Like It

While holding the public's attention for the duration of the war will not be a problem, prolonging the duration of it may be. While the US-British axis has no trouble supplying adequate troops, supplies and weapons to fight till doomsday; the Iraqis possess a rather more modest arsenal and won't be able to withstand the onslaught for more than a month. The lack of local allies compounds this problem. We can't have it both ways I suppose, if Saddam Hussein's regime was a genial compatriot to it's neighbours it probably wouldn't be of much interest to George W. Bush, well there's always the oil sub-plot I suppose. Hans Blix and the other UN weapons inspectors are a further problem in this respect, destroying

Saddam's few Al Sammoud missiles. Not everyone likes lengthy films I suppose.

Following the war's finale there's always a chance of a good old-fashioned civil war. With any luck CNN and Sky news won't be too hasty to get their cameras out of there. While the initial conflict would be of a grander scale, a civil war would be more passionate. The allied powers, while consummate professionals, have little impetus to fight on a personal level. While I'm sure there performances will be believable, they may give the impression of being a little emotionally detached. On the other hand, a civil war fought by the



Saddam Hussein

inhabitants of a leaderless, war-torn country could be even more electrifying than the initial US instigated invasion. I'm sure they will lend a hand in the aftermath though; the installation of a puppet leader mixed with the flood of oil dollars can

only fuel the flames of disillusionment and confusion.

While it's only a mere whim, I have an inspired idea for the perfect finale. With all the fighting and bloodshed, there's a definite chance of disease and famine becoming a major problem in the region. This may well be compounded by many Iraqi families being left without some or all of their male family members. Not only will it be entertaining but it will also aid the plight of the millions of impoverished survivors. I can see it now, "Britney Live in Baghdad"; let's just hope she doesn't sing Hit me Baby One More Time, I'll never get anything done with all this great TV.

Cén difríocht ar féidir linne a dhéanamh?

le St. John Ó Donnabháin

Tá cogadh ag teacht, tá sé sin beagnach cinnte. Tá mise glan in aghaidh an cogadh seo, caithfidh mé a rá, agus téim chuig agóid go rialta. Agus ceist amháin a cloisim arís is arís eile ná: "Cén difríocht ar féidir linne (nó leat) a dhéanamh?" Is ceist maith é sin agus ceann a caithfidh muid roinnt ama a caitheamh air de bharr an stádas atá ag muintir na tíre seo sa domhan.

'Sé soiléir go creideann mise ins an cumhacht atá ag an gnáthdhuine chun aistriú dearfach a dhéanamh i saol gach éinne. Cén fáth? Tá roinnt samplaí ar fáil chun mo phointe a

léiriú. Smaoinigh faoin cogadh i Vietnam. Bhí orthu é sin a stadadh de bharr an méid daoine a tháinig amach ag agóid (agus bhí níos mó daoine amach ar an 15ú Feabhra, creid nó ná creid). Gnáth daoine iad sin.

Smaoinigh ar na daoine a chuaigh síos go Caransore Point nuair a dúirt an rialtas go rabhadar ag smaoineamh ar stáisiún núicléach a thógáil ann. Níor tharla sé sin áfach, fáth mór le sin ná na gnáthdhaoiné a chuaigh amach agus a rinne torann mór chun aird a thabairt ar an rud seo a bhí ag cur isteach go mór orthu. Smaoinigh ar Tom Hyland, fear as Baile Áta Cliath a thosnaigh ag lorg saoirse le haghaidh muintir East

Timor tar éis clár teilifíse faoi fadhbanna na tíre sin a feiscint. Agus le obair cruai, d'éirigh leis aird David Andrews, Aire sa rialtas, a tógaint agus tríd an obair a rinneadair, fuair roinnt daoine eile eolas ar seo agus chuireadar brú láidir ar rialtas Indonesia chun saoirse ceart a thabairt go muintir East Timor.

Taispeáineann na samplaí seo, mar aon le roinnt samplaí eile go bhfuil cumhacht ag gach éinne difríocht a dhéanamh go saol daoine eile. Fiú le déanaí, ar dtús dúirt an rialtas nach raibh eitleáin ag dul tríd Aerfort na tSionnaine. Nuair a bhí fhios ag gach éinne nach raibh sé seo fíor, dúirt siad nach raibh aon airm acu ar bord

na eitleáin, ach ní raibh sé seo fíor ach an oiread. Anois tá brú ollmhór á chur ar an Taoiseach stádas ceart a thógaint ar Iraq.

Creidim má tá daoine ina chónaí i tír daonlathach, tá an-béim ar gach éinne an méid is mó is féidir a dhéanamh chun domhan níos fearr a chur ar fáil d'ár leanaí. Mar 'sé sin is ciall le daonlathas: "de na daoine, le haghaidh na daoine". Tá an t-ádh linne, níl clú againn conas a braitheann sé chónaí i dtír gan daonlathas, gan bia, gan aon rud...Is féidir linn difríocht a dhéanamh, 'sé in ár lámha.

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Are we getting value for money from our TD's

by *Brendan Coffey*

As the Dáil adjourns until the 25th March, and for no particular reason, as there's no holiday period at the moment as far as I'm aware, are we getting an efficient service from the TDs that we employ?

As it stands, the Dial sits on three days in the week, when in does sot, which is hardly half the number of weeks in the year. Yet any regular or even sporadic viewer of the news or Oireachtas Report will rarely see a full house, in fact not even a quarter full the majority of the time. The job title is "Teachta Dala", if my Irish still holds up from doing the leaving cert last year! means member of the Dáil. Surely that means turning up at the house and acting like a member, i.e. attending the Dáil when it sits?

Yes I'm fully aware that attending the Dáil isn't the sole function of our public representatives but they only have to attend three days a week, whilst most of the late Spring, Summer and early Autumn, the Dáil doesn't even sit. What exactly are we paying these truant politicians to do? Surely Monday, Friday and the weekend is ample time to meet constituents and attend to constituency matters? How on earth do TDs think they are going to represent their constituents if a lot of them don't even bother to attend Parliament on a regular basis?

Certainly I'd love to know the logic behind playing truant yet supposedly being paid a very good wage to represent constituents in the forum of our national parliament. Whatever about ministers being absent in order to attend European meetings and summits, but even then matters of state should take precedence, what about TDs whose job is a TD, no more and no less? But then the matter is quite that simple because is there any TD that works as a TD, no more and no less?

There are numerous TDs that are simultaneously councillors, members of local committees and health boards. It's no wonder then that when avidly watching Oireachtas Reports each night that the majority of the House members are absent. And that in a nutshell is the obvious reason why there is a need for the proposed dual mandate Bill. On the face of it, this is a crazy situation. TDs are elected to voice people's concerns in the Dáil. Councillors are elected to attend council meetings and sit on whatever local committees, as they are wanton to do. Tads should concern themselves with the matters of the area they are elected to represent but if these public representatives can't even manage to get to parliament to voice those concerns, what's the point in

having a parliament designed in such a manner, if you believe in our own political structures and democracy?

TDs are paid enough to be able to make it to work, three days a week. If they can't do what they're paid to do, then they shouldn't be doing it in the first place. Those TDs that will argue for the retention of the current illogical framework of being a TD, councillor and health board member all at once, obviously don't see the job of TD as demanding of all of their time, as it should, and in my view do not treat it with the respect that such a role commands and deserves. As



Leinster House

Fine Gael TD Michael Ring has vociferously argued, if the current set up were to end, TDs would lose touch with the communities they seek to represent but sitting on a local council is hardly necessary in order to get in touch with the needs of the community. TDs have clinics, and two days on which parliament doesn't sit to meet the needs of the community, and whatever happens at council meetings can be obtained,

from my own experience, or at least should be obtainable, if councils are reluctant, but wouldn't it make sense for councils and local committees to forward their concerns directly to the TDs who have the necessary power to act?

Why is it that when important votes on motions and legislation are being taken in parliament, invariably there aren't 166 votes cast? However mundane or irrelevant legislation may seem to a TD, not turning up to carry out the functions which they are elected to do, is to treat the Oireachtas and its procedures with utter disdain and disrespect. It's now reached the stage where Ministers sponsoring legislation aren't even bothered to turn up to present it, and as we saw last week, were off on a jolly boys outing to Cheltenham, when permission to do so had been refused. The actions of Mssrs McCreevy and Parlon are only reflective of a general attitude to parliament, and which is evident nightly on Oireachtas Report.

Not only should TDs be compelled to turn up for work in the present climate, but also in the era of the new dual mandate Bill, it should be even more disgraceful if a TD fails to turn up for a sitting of the Dáil. You never know, a full House all the time may help inject some much needed life in to the activities of the Dáil and help keep those back benchers away from the Dáil bar!

More Than Just Housemates

by *Anne Sheridan*

They say falling in love is hard to do - or maybe that's breaking up? Anyway what we are never warned about is when it's your housemate you find yourself falling in love with. There should be warnings about these kind of situations, like health warnings on cigarette packets or posters warning about unsafe sex and HIV on the back on toilet doors. Finding yourself attracted to a housemate should be in this category also and carry a similar health warning, such as "Within 2-3weeks you will begin to feel at any second you could self-destruct from the sheer frustration of it all".

Will it be the beginning of a beautiful relationship? Mmmm. A back up plan if Mr./Ms. Right does not make themselves known to you in The Lodge? Perhaps. But wait what if he/she finds their Special Someone and you're left holding the burning flame of desire? Panic, nerves and sudden emotional outbursts are bound to ensue like wildfire. By this stage you might not even be with them yet but it doesn't stop you from imagining the worst.

Without a doubt the hardest and most excruciating part of this scenario is getting the person in question to notice you. You try everything, no stone is left unturned. You make him cups of tea; you suck in your Bud belly in his presence aiming to look like Britney Spears, whereas in reality you could easily pass for six months pregnant. You don't scratch yourself in any rude places, belch, burp or emit any toxic gases that Bush might declare to be a threat to national security or a nuclear weapon. And still - nichts, nada, nothing! Occasionally you get a bit psychotic when you're drunk, let loose in a Meryl Streep Fatal Attraction manner. But that's it; you draw the line there, hard as it may be.

Last year I shared a double room with a friend who was getting a bit of Mr. Lover Lover with a nice quiet (so he seemed) chap in the downstairs bedroom. I don't know for whom the situation was more agonising - them or me? Whereas I was the confidante and force-fed all the gory details of their nocturnal antics, the rest of the house remained blissfully ignorant of where the noises and bumps in the night were coming from. While they contemplated the

existence of rats in the attic, I forced my laughter into the duvet and tried not to think about it.

Unfortunately, the fun ended here. The problem with exchanging bodily fluids with a housemate is that no matter how hard you try, things are never just that "casual". Things are bound to get a bit serious. With every phone call or text message he received, her teeth would grind in perfect harmony with the ring tone. "Who's he talking to?" she would demand from me and work herself into a tizzy that it was the good-looking friend from his class who lived never door. Never do you assume that it really is just a friend who might be ringing, the worst will be imagined miles before any logical explanation. The extent of the jealousy/paranoia/insanity, which this girl endured, stretched so far as seriously acting on a desire to ring the guards to break up a house party in the Hawthorns, to which he was invited but she wasn't. Fortunately, by the time she managed to break through all the barbed wire strategically placed around her bed, he had arrived home. The crisis has been averted but only until the next time.

So there you have it - the low-down on some of the extra-curricular activities of housemates. Which leaves only one remaining question - is it worth it? Maybe. It may only last a moment, a minute or an hour but that doesn't diminish its value. So what if he's got a relationship phobia or she's a streetwalker, to put it politely, - all "relationships" have their problems. And so what if you're both after different things - doesn't love conquer all?

Just remember this. When that someone is leaving on a bus back to Galway, Gorey or Georgia, USA; when words just aren't enough, when you're walking away but want to look back and when they appear to vanish into thin air without so much as a backwards glance - if it wasn't for love then what was it for at all? As the Godmother of Soul Aretha Franklin sang, when you look out on the morning rain (and it rains a lot in Limerick) and all you feel is tired and uninspired, and then there's a smile to greet you when you walk in the door and an arm around you at night - sure what is love only knowing that the good times are just around the corner?

Mick McCarthy returns to football

by Anthony Kirpatrick

Just over one week ago, the most charismatic man to be involved in Irish football returned once again to the unpredictable game. This time facing a more notorious and challenging task than he adhered to with the Irish squad, and more particular with Roy Keane in Saipan: to prevent plummeting Sunderland from being relegated to the midst of the Nationwide League Division one. Mick McCarthy is of course the man I am referring to.

McCarthy, along with his assistant Ian Evans, received a rapturous welcome when unveiled to the Sunderland fans at the Stadium of Light over a week ago. These people believe that McCarthy shall become the saviour of the club, and to be quite frank, I fully agree with them.

McCarthy enters a club planted firmly

to the bottom of the Premiership, and with less than ten games to play for this season; the prospect of survival in the top flight is about just as easy as making your pet goldfish walk up a concourse of stairs. His predecessors in Howard Wilkinson and Steve Cotteral were dismissed two weeks ago for placing the club within the dire straights it now finds itself in: even though Sunderland are not only one

of the most prosperous football clubs in England, but also contain many top class professionals such as Kevin Phillips and Danish goalkeeper Thomas Sorenson.

“Sunderland have been dubbed as the worst side ever to play in the Premier League due to their poor performances this season, but I believe McCarthy shall in fact do wonders with the team”

Champions League Review

by Anthony Kirpatrick

As the final set of group games took place in the Uefa Champions League Tuesday and Wednesday night of last, the stage was set for each of the three English sides to qualify for the quarterfinal stages. However, Spanish opposition once again prevented the British onslaught within the most prestigious club championship in the world, as both Arsenal and Newcastle United were knocked out at the second group stage.

Last Tuesday night Manchester United moulded a young and inexperienced team together for the trip to Deportivo La Coruna. Although the Red Devils lost the game 2-0 through goals from Victor and an unfortunate headed own goal from the youngster Lynch, they still progressed to the quarter finals: a major step closer to the title in which they won back in May of 1999. Match-day 12 on the Wednesday night however proved to be a more nerve-shattering affair, as both Premiership leaders Arsenal, and high-flyers Newcastle United were still uncertain of their Champions League fate.

With Arsenal obtaining the ever-daunting task of needing a draw in Valencia to qualify for the quarterfinals, the stage was set at the Mestalla stadium for a highly tempered square off between the two great rivals of European football.

After an exceptional start from the away team, with a Thierry Henry shot after just twelve seconds troubling Canizares in the Valencia goal, the Spanish side began to take the game to Arsenal. Eventually, the Norwegian striker John Carew broke the defence and made it 1-0. This left a sigh of relief amongst the home fans, as they knew for Valencia to qualify from the so-called 'group of death', they needed to defeat the English champions. Concluding the opening goal, it was all one-way traffic from the Spaniards. French maestro Thierry Henry never needs an occasion to score, but he of course

obliged with an exquisite strike concluding the break to even matters, curling a low strike past the oncoming Canizares. 1-1.

Matters on the pitch went into a rather disgraceful manner in the preceding minutes after Carew's second, as Valencia resorted to numerous amounts of time-wasting and diving so as to hang on to their much needed victory. A victory they eventually received. So Arsenal bow out of Europe at the second-round stage for the second year running. Their track record against Spanish teams in the competition is a dire one, picking up only one draw and six

according to plan for the magpies. Throughout the opening period they managed to contain one of the most attackingly minded clubs in Europe. In fact, until a severe Titus Bramble error on the hour mark, it had looked like the English club were going to be victorious in not only the match, but at keeping prolific goal scorer Patrick Kluivert from the score sheet. But once Kluivert had opened the scoring courtesy of the Bramble mistake, Newcastle diminished and lost all hope. Eventually they succumbed to a late Motta goal on 75' minutes. The result did not pay any significance in standings at the end of the night, as Inter Milan had beaten Leverkusen



Patrick Kluivert

defeats in the last thirteen years of the competition. Now they must concentrate on the remainder of the league and domestic cup, and at the same time should in no way be ashamed of the magnificent effort they portrayed in Europe this season.

Newcastle United also had Spanish opposition in the form of F.C Barcelona at St. James's Park on match-day 12. Although the magpies needed to be victorious on the night, and to also receive an enormous favour from Bayer Leverkusen in the other group A match, Newcastle coach Sir Bobby Robson was in defiant mood. He was certainly in no position to give up, regardless of the concurrent permutations against his club qualifying for the quarterfinals stage on the night.

Everything seemed to be going

also by a score line of 2-0.

Sir Bobby Robson after the match made no excuses, but vowed to bring his side back into the competition for next season. And if Newcastle remain in their current league form, and can fight off a major challenge from Chelsea, they should be visiting the wealthy pastures of the Uefa Champions League yet again next season.

So now the remaining question that needs to be asked is 'who will win the European Cup this season?' It is painfully close to call, and with Arsenal now out, I predict either of the Milan clubs to achieve glory. But it could go any way depending on the quarter and semi-final draws, and more nerve-shattering moments are a certainty within the remaining games.



Mick McCarthy

Sunderland have been dubbed as the worst side ever to play in the Premier League due to their poor performances this season, but I believe McCarthy shall in fact do wonders with the team; Just not this season. Far too many points have been dropped throughout the year for the club to stay in the Premiership, and even though the Irish man will more than likely have to sell the top players in his side if they in fact are relegated, I firmly regard McCarthy as more than capable of re-strengthening the team and producing a swift and unnoticed return to the top league in Europe. He achieved exactly the same feat with the Republic of Ireland squad concluding the departure of Jack Charlton, and although club football is quite different to the International scene, McCarthy has the relative experience necessary to turn Sunderland around.

St. Patrick's weekend witnessed McCarthy's opening game in charge of the Black Cats, this time against fellow league strugglers Bolton. And although at times Sunderland appeared to be playing like a completely different side than to the one under Wilkinson, they were still outclassed on their home turf by a Bolton side inspired by top stars such as Ivan Campo and Yuori Djorkaeff. The final score line an unflattering 0-2.

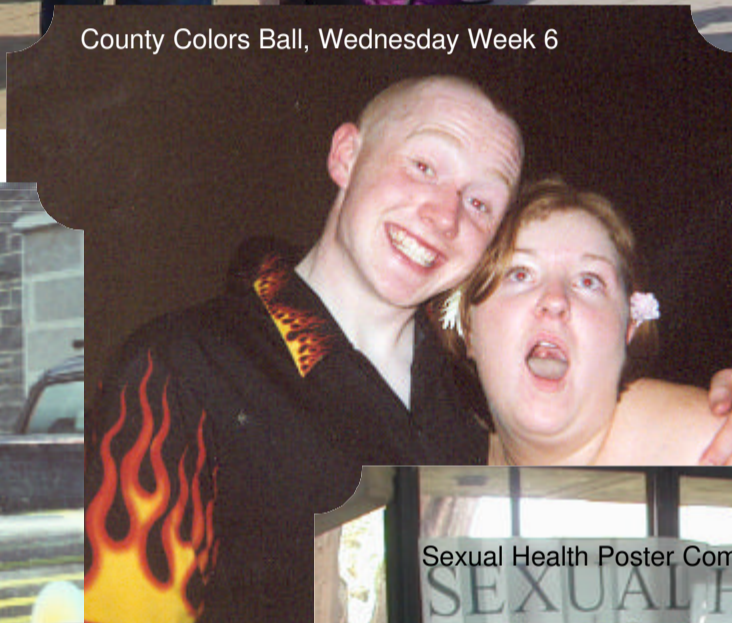
Concluding the match last Saturday versus West Ham United, whom are in fact another team fighting for survival; a welcome break due to European qualifying games arises for McCarthy and his depleted team. Prior to this break, I believe we shall begin to see the Irishman's work with the team being portrayed within every game, and by that stage the real dog-fight for Premiership survival will be fully underway.

Photos from Week 5 & 6

Anti-War Protest - Thursday Week 6



County Colors Ball, Wednesday Week 6



Handing out BPM drinks, Week 6



Sexual Health Poster Competition, Week 6



Clubs And Socs Ball Week 5



Game Soc LAN Party, Week 6



County Colors Ball, Wednesday Week 6



Photos from Week 5 & 6



Clubs And Socs Ball Week 5



Clubs And Socs Ball Week 5



The Stables Club

at The University of Limerick

www.stablesclub.com

Week 7

Monday

Music Soc
UL Band

Tuesday

Karaoke

Wednesday

BAND: Free Beer

Thursday

Noel McLoughlin

Friday

Party Night

Ladies & Gents Basketball Night out



Pool table Sat & Sun

Video Jukebox from 5pm
weekdays

Week 8 - Kollege Week

Monday

Daytime events in Courtyard (1 - 6)

Video Jukebox from 3pm

Music Soc - Battle of UL Bands

(9.30pm)

Tuesday

Daytime events in Courtyard (1 - 6)

DJ (6 - 9pm)

Karaoke (9pm - close)

Wednesday

Daytime events in Courtyard (1 - 6)

DJ (6 - 9.30pm)

BAND: Free Beer (9.30 - close)

Thursday

Daytime events in Courtyard (1 - 6)

DJ (6 - 9pm)

DJ Aidan (9pm - close)

Friday

Noel McLoughlin (from 5pm)

DJ Aidan (8pm - close)

Please note :

Members are restricted to
one guest each
Age ID is required

Toilets in courtyard will be open for use

Arena Sports Club

The Arena Sports Club - THE Sports Venue

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

NEW EVENING FOOD MENU!

CALL TO THE ARENA SPORTS CLUB, AND TRY SOMETHING FROM OUR DELECTABLY DELICIOUS NEW FOOD MENU!

WE GUARANTEE SOMETHING TO SUIT ALL TASTES - CALL DOWN FOR A LOOK, YOU WON'T LEAVE ON AN EMPTY STOMACH!



SEE OUR SITE AT www.arenasportsclub.com

WEEK 7

Monday

Premiership Night

Tuesday

The Best of Music

Wednesday

French Table Quiz

Thursday

Trad Session with the Folk Club

Friday

Music Night

The Arena Sports Club remains open at weekends

T: (061) 332780 | E: info@arenasportsclub.com

WEEK 8

KOLLEGE WEEK

Through Kollege Week, we will be operating our usual schedule showing soccer matches, and other major sporting events.

Why not drop in for a quiet evening, or afternoon break?

Our food menus will operate as normal until 7pm each evening

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

YOUR WEEKLY NIGHT OUT- WEEK 7

Wednesday Nite @ Docs

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

Thursday Nite @ The MARKET

MURPHYS COMEDY NITE

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

Week 7: Des Bishop



Tickets
on sale at door
Price 8 Euros

UL ARTS OFFICE SPRING FILM FESTIVAL

presents

MONDAY 24 March



THE BOX, Directed by Brian Kelly
MULHOLLAND DRIVE, Directed by Francois Ozon

Stepping out of a car on Mulholland Drive, gorgeous brunette Laura (Elena Harring) narrowly escapes being killed, twice. Firstly by her gangster companions and secondly by the joy-riding teenagers whose hot-rod smashes into the car and kills everyone inside. Meanwhile, perky, wide-eyed blonde Betty Elms (Naomi Watts) arrives in Hollywood from Deep River, Ontario with naïve dreams of making it big in the movies. Her actress aunt has lent her a flat in an old fashioned courtyard complex, presided over by the fussing, motherly Coco (Ann Miller). But as soon as she moves in, Betty finds a terrified naked woman in her shower, a traumatised amnesiac who cannot remember how she got there, or how she came by the blue key and wads of dollar bills in her handbag. She calls herself Rita (a name snatched from a poster for Gilda) and, in between auditions, the selfless Betty decides to help her find out who she is. As always, Lynch's film is not about plot or characters, but about surrendering oneself to a mood. An atmosphere of menace pervades the entire film. Smart-aleck director Adam (Justin Theroux) is pressured by a sharp-suited man-played with tight-lipped menace by composer Angelo Badalamenti-who insists that he re-cast the lead actress in his latest film. Adam receives gnomonic advice from a leathery character called The Cowboy, who meets him in a corral at the top of Beachwood Canyon.

Two cops have a bizarre conversation over breakfast at a Winkie's diner. A dwarf in a wheelchair gives cryptic instructions over a mobile phone. Yet there are also episodes of swooning romanticism: Betty and Rita share a bed and enjoy a lesbian encounter which is all the more erotic for being so tentative and oblique. Later, they visit a strange after-hours joint called El Club Silencio, where a female performer performs a stunning, Spanishlanguage a cappella version of Roy Orbison's 'Crying'. On a superficial level, Mulholland Drive is a generic tale of thwarted ambition and shattered dreams. But it is also a surreal exploration of Hollywood's false allure, which is based in no small part on the idea of being someone else. People become actors, actors become the characters they play. Actors become stars, audiences project identities on to the glamorous people they imagine them to be. Dreams are manufactured, nothing is real, even identity itself is fluid. If you can immerse yourself in Lynch's world of make-believe, perhaps you too will lose yourself.

THE RIBLOCK FOUNDATION

Director : Christopher Roche

LE PLACARD (THE CLOSET)

Director : Francois Veberm France / 2002 / 85 mins

Pignon(Daniel Auteuil) is a nebbish, despised by his ex-wife and teenage son, mocked by fellow workers and even edged off the company photograph of the condom factory where he's chief accountant. Hearing that he's about to be made redundant, Pignon is advised by his new neighbour, a kindly middle-aged gay (Michel Aumont) to spread the rumour that he's homosexual through fake photographs of him in a gay bar. The scheme is partly an act of revenge by the gay neighbour for having been fired for his sexual preferences 30 years earlier.

The trick works as the firm's politically correct boss (the marvellously straightfaced Jean Rochefort) doesn't want to appear homophobic and is eager not to lose the pink franc (or pink euro). As a result Pignon becomes a colourful personality, gains a new confidence and wins the respect of his rebellious son after appearing with a giant condom on his head in a gay pride parade. The film's only real loser is the homophobic personnel manager (Gérard Depardieu), the victim of a prank by a colleague who tells him he'll lose his job if he doesn't become friends with Pignon. In the event he falls in love with him, loses his wife and ends up in a mental hospital. It's a well-performed movie that provides chuckles rather than biglaughs, and at the end one suspects that in addition to Cage aux Folles, a major influence was Sydney Pollack's far funnier, but similarly smug, Tootsie.

MONDAY 31 March

DANIEL AUTEUIL GERARD DEPARDIEU THIERRY LHERMITTE



with all films followed by

THE DEBATING UNION WEEKLY DEBATE

WEEK 7 "THIS HOUSE WOULD DISBAND THE UN."

Harder Generation

by *Timmy Hennessy*

In the words of Mickey Mac (remember him?), Welcome, welcome, welcome.. Not much going on this week (apart from lust) mainly due to the madness of Kollege week due so soon (its that time again!), but there are some lovely prizes to be won if you bother to read through. The introducing section will return as soon as Markie Mark decides to get his arse in gear and do up a chart.

Lust returns!
I think its fair to say that everyone enjoyed paddys weekend - the weather was nice, the alcohol was the same as it always is (if it ain't broke, don't fix it..) and the weekend kicked off down at docs in emphatic style, with Lisa Lashes treating the limerick faithful to a night of uplifting hard house. And giving us just 2 weeks to recover, Lust return on the 28th of march with one of dance music's genuine superstars, Mauro Picotto.

As I explained last time round, Mauro has been around for quite a while, being responsible for packing clubs around the globe, producing chart topping tracks (komodo, iguana), creating new styles (euro-techno) and inspiring some of those oh-so-annoying ring tones that kids insist on reviewing on long bus trips (you know the ones!).

This will be the first time Mauro has played limerick, and is set to be one of the biggest nights doc's has seen. Don't miss it!

Tickets: €25 from empire and ticketmaster.
Support: Main room: Dermot C & Leoine, Courtyard: Glimmer twins & soul clinic resident Jody. Win 2 passes for the night by emailing your name and why you should win to hardergeneration@eircom.net

CD Review: Music For A Harder Generation (Mixed by Anne Savage)
This is the first in a new series from the UK's largest hard dance label Tidy. Anne Savage is one of hard house's leading ladies, voted no. 27 in the worlds top 100 dj rankings. The album is a fairly dark affair and shows how much techno is starting to influence hard house, while at the same time including some cracking uplifting tracks. Its not the same style album as say the euphoria series (madness from start to finish) but much more subtle, and works a lot better.

Put simply its one of the better hard house cd's I've heard, and if you like your music hard n techy, its well worth getting. And anyone who harps on about hard house being cheesy should check it out as well.

Music For A Harder Generation is out on March 24th on Tidy. To win a copy answer the following question in an email to



Anne Savage

hardergeneration@eircom.net
Where did Anne finish in the world Dj rankings?
Chart:
Project Mayhem - Unknown (B-Side) [Short Circuit]
Unknown - Shiny Disco Bollox [White]
Dave Holmes - Freedom [Tidy]
Unknown - Phat 9 [White]
F1 - Recoil (Glazby's Done n Dusted Mix) [Tripoli]
Dial M For Moguei - Beat Box (Paul Maddox Mix) [Tripoli]
DMF & Marc Johnson - Jam Busta [Babydoll]
Alan Pullen - In My Head [Class A]
Ilogik - My Life [Elasticman]
Sol Ray & Dynamic Intervention - World Of Sound [E-Traxx Ltd.]

A chara,

An bhfuil tú ag iarraidh trealamh HiFi le luach €400 a bhuachaint ó Cloney Audio?

Tá Seachtain na Gaeilge ag tacú le MEAS, agus tá muid ag iarraidh DO SMAOINTE le haghaidh póstaer as Gaeilge (ar nós an phóstaer ar an taobh eile den litir seo).

Déanfaidh abairt amháin nó dhá abairt cúis - agus má tá siad maith go leor beidh tú in ann Tivoli HiFi raidió le luach €400 a bhailiú ó Cloney Audio - an príomhsoláthar HiFi in Éirinn (Is féidir sonraí faoin Raidió Tivoli a fheiceáil ag: www.ruark.co.uk).

Roghnaídh moltóirí an buaiteoir agus beidh an cinneadh deireannach acu (ní dhéanfaidh siad comhfhreagras le éinne faoi).

Tá an duais curtha ar fáil mar chuid d'fheachtas 'Bíodh meas agat ar alcól agus meas agat ort fhéin' atá ar siúl ag MEAS, le tacaíocht ó Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn. Is í aidhm an fheachtais seo ná na rioscaí a chur os comhair daoine óga maidir le an-iomarca a ól.

Ní gá ach an fhoirm thíos a líonadh agus a chur ar ais chuig:

**An Bainisteoir Taighde agus Tionscnaimh,
MEAS,
Merrion House,
1-3 Fitzwilliam St. Lower,
Dublin 2.**

Nó is féidir leat an teolas (le do sonraí fhéin) a chur chuig:
info@meas.ie

----- Scrios Anseo -----

Ainm: _____ (I mBLOCLITREACHA LE DO THOIL)

Seoladh: _____

Uimhir Teagmhála: _____

Complete the following sentence with

- a HANGOVER
- b MY GIRLFRIEND

'I woke up with a/b and John woke up with a/b.'

Respect alcohol. Respect yourself.



Complete the following sentence with

- a INHIBITIONS
- b HANGOVERS

'I will overcome my a/b, but forever succumb to my a/b.'

Respect alcohol. Respect yourself.



Complete the following sentence with

- a THE PATTERN
- b PUKE

'They thought it was a/b on my shirt, but it was actually a/b.'

Respect alcohol. Respect yourself.



Complete the following sentence with

- a SLASH
- b KEBAB

'I remember going for a a/b and came round with a a/b across my face.'

Respect alcohol. Respect yourself.



Clubs & Societies Events: Week 7

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT/SUN
Games Society Role-Playing Games 7:45 - 12:30, EM019 7:00 EG006 Enviromental Soc Meeting, 7:00 Meeting Room 3 in the SU Debating Union Weekly Debate 8:00, Jean Monnet Archery Club Training 7-10 Old Sports Building Traditional Music Music Session Castletroy Park Hotel 9:30 Fianna Fail Meeting Room 4, 6:00 - 7:00 Outdoor Pursuits Climbing Wall Open 7-10, PESS Building	Games Society Role-Playing Games 7:30 - 12:30, EGO06 UL Kickboxing Training for beginners to advanced 9-10 Old Sports Building Dance Club Salsa Dromroe Village Hall Beginners 6:30 - 7:30 Advanced 7:30 - 8:30 Kayak Club Pool Sessions 10-11, Arena Pool Outdoor Pursuits Climbing Wall Open 7-10, PESS Building	Games Society Role-Playing Games 19:00, EG006 including Apocalypse Kayak Club River Trip 2:00 The Store Judo Training PESS 6:00 - 7:30 Archery Club Training 7-10 Old Sports Building Enviromental Soc River Clean Up, Along UL 12 Noon Equestrian Club Beginners Day 3pm, East Gate Car Park St. Vincent De Paul Reflection on "New" Eire 7pm, SU Center Chess Club Meeting, Main Canteen 6-8pm Debating Union Maiden Speaker Comp C1 Corridor, 6pm	Karate Club 6:00 - 7:30 Training Gym in Old Sports Building Traditional Music Music Session Sports Bar 9:30 Dance Club Irish Dancing Dromroe Village Hall Beginners 6:30 - 8:00 UL Kickboxing Training for beginners to advanced 9-10 Old Sports Building Kayak Club Pool Sessions 10-11, Arena Pool Games Society Role-Playing Games 7:00, EGO06 LAN Gaming 6:00, Outside SU Labour Youth Trade Union Stand Canteen, 12-2 Jan O Sullivan TD SU Building	Aeronautical Soc Ex RAF Pilot Lecture A1053 6pm Tennis Club Training/Practies All Levels Mountain Biking Sunday Cycle Start at PESS 11:00 Aeronautical Soc Vist to Queens, Saturday 11am Outdoor Pursuits Hillwalking - Knockmealdown Sunday 9am from Stables. Bus - 7 Euro	

Clubs & Societies Events: Week 8

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT/SUN
Games Society Role-Playing Games 7:45 - 12:30, EM019 7:00 EG006 Music Society Open Mic Stables, 9:30 Drama Society ISDA @ Trinity 5:30 Enviromental Soc Meeting, 7:00 Meeting Room 3 in the SU Debating Union Weekly Debate 8:00, Jean Monnet Archery Club Training 7-10 Old Sports Building Traditional Music Music Session Castletroy Park Hotel 9:30 Judo Training Arena 8:00-10:00 Fianna Fail Meeting Room 4, 6:00 - 7:00	Games Society Role-Playing Games 7:30 - 12:30, EGO06 UL Kickboxing Training for beginners to advanced 9-10 Old Sports Building Dance Club Salsa Dromroe Village Hall Beginners 6:30 - 7:30 Advanced 7:30 - 8:30 Tang Soo Do 7:30 - 9:00 Training Gym in Old Sports Building History Soc History of Iraq Display Main Canteen Athletics Club Training 6 - 7:30 Middle Distance 5:30 - 7:00 Sprinters at the Running Track Kayak Club Pool Sessions 10-11, Arena Pool	Games Society Role-Playing Games 19:00, EG006 including Apocalypse Kayak Club River Trip 2:00 The Store Judo Training PESS 6:00 - 7:30 Drama Soc Drama Workshop 7:30 B1023 Ten Forward "I Went Down" 7:30 PSA Center Archery Club Training 7-10 Old Sports Building Kayak Club Pool Sessions 10-11, Arena Pool Sailing Club Sailing 2pm, Foundation Building Chess Club Chess Playing 6-8, Main Canteen	Karate Club 6:00 - 7:30 Training Gym in Old Sports Building Traditional Music Music Session Sports Bar 9:30 History Soc History of Iraq Display Main Canteen Dance Club Irish Dancing Dromroe Village Hall Beginners 6:30 - 8:00 UL Kickboxing Training for beginners to advanced 9-10 Old Sports Building Kayak Club Pool Sessions 10-11, Arena Pool Games Society Role-Playing Games 7:00, EGO06 LAN Gaming 6:00, Outside SU Judo Training Arena 8:00-10:00	Softball Club Training Pitch 1, 2:00 History Society IHSA Conference UCC Outdoor Pursuits Weekend Trip to Wicklow Friday, 5 outside Stables	Tennis Club Training/Practies All Levels Saturday 11-12:30 Softball Club Training Pitch 1, 2:00 Athletics Club Training (Saturday) 12 - 2 at the Running Track Mountain Biking Sunday Cycle Start at PESS 11:00 Outdoor Pursuits Rockclimbing Burren, Co. Clare Sunday 9am from Stables. Bus - 7 Euro

Rowing Club Report

by Ronan Ivers

On the back of a super win at Cork Head of the River the Rowing Club was hungry for more success on the water. The 2003 Tribesmen Head of the River held during the St. Patrick's weekend proved once again to be the climax of the winter rowing calendar. A record entry with crews travelling from all parts of Ireland proved to be an excellent test of current form. The Corrib at full flow led to extremely competitive racing over the 3 and a half miles. There were excellent performances from the University of Limerick crews. The Novice Men's Squad, under the coaching of Brian O'Shaughnessy, recorded a win in the first race of the day with the 'Tecnomen' Four. They also put in an honourable performance in the eights event

finishing 4 seconds behind the winners. The squad is supported by a development Novice Eight and will be hoping for further improvements in the forthcoming regatta season. The second novice eight completed the course in a time of 16 minutes, placing it midway down the field in this largely contested event. This heartening performance can be attributed to the stalwart coxing provided by the Captain.

The second race of the day saw the scullers in action. Cathal Moynihan represented the college in the Men's Novice sculls while both Noreen Stokes and Kasey O'Shea competed in the Novice Women's sculls. Each sculler put in an encouraging performance and are looking forward to the 'straight course' regatta events. The Women's Squad, under the



UL Rowers in action at the Tribesman Head of the River

More Info?

For information on the Rowing Club, visit
www.ulrowing.com

Aeronautical Society

by Ruth Bagnell

It's week 6 and we've been quietly scheming for the last few weeks. Lots of upcoming events to keep your aviation interest alight. We have organised an inter-university event with Queens University Belfast. A group of Queens Aeronautical Society members will arrive on FRIDAY WEEK 7 and EX-RAF harrier pilot Gerry Humphries has been invited to speak that evening in A1053 at 6pm. All are welcome. Some intersociety bonding will take place in the Scholars afterwards.

Week 7 will be a very busy week for the society. Our hoodies go on sale at the start of the week for €25. The attractive attire sports a logo stating 'WE GET HIGH' and a winged UL Crest on the front. Contact Norah Patten, Treasurer, to order.

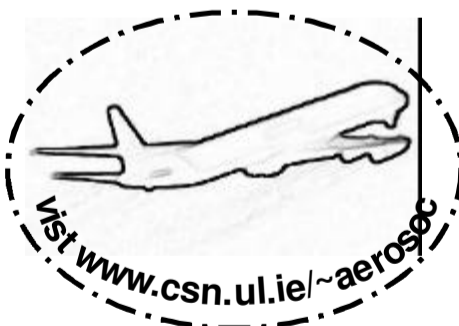
ODDFEST runs from Tuesday to Thursday of Week 7. This week will promote intersociety activities. UL Aeronautical Society will be running a Flight Simulator in SU Room 5 in conjunction with UL Computer Society. A Balloon challenge will be run on Wednesday Week 7 at 2pm. This will involve creating a craft to assist the decent of an egg from a second storey window. Those who successfully get the egg to the ground without breaking it will be rewarded.

Saturday of week 7 will consist of a trip to Shannon for the UL Aeronautical Society and the Queens Aeronautical Society. The group will visit Shannon Aerospace and Lufthansa Turbine Technologies among others. Contact Conor

McBreen, Chairperson, to book your space. Spaces are limited on this popular trip. Thanks to the Mechanical and Aeronautical Engineering Department for funding this trip.

A trip to Coonagh Airfield will take place over the next few weeks. This event is also being organised by Conor McBreen. He is investigating the possibility of some flights around the Shannon area. Contact Conor for more details or check out the website. Places will be very scarce on this trip also.

UL History Society has approached the society in relation to organising a joint trip to Foynes Flying Boat Museum. This venture should happen



before week 10. Fourteen places will be available on this trip, unless an overwhelming number apply to go. More details will be on the website soon.

So just remember to pop in to SU Room 5 during Oddfest (Week 7) and try to turn up on Friday Week 7 to show the Queens Aeronautical Society a good Limerick welcome. Keep an eye out for the Aero Soc hoodies on display around campus next week.

guidance of Ailis Holohan entered the coxed eights and fours events. The girls met some stiff competition from the crews of NUI Galway who were competing on home ground. Further details and photos are available on the Clubs website:

www.ulrowing.com

The next event for ULRC is the Neptune/Commercial regatta being held in Dublin followed by the Intervarsity Championships which will be held in Castlewellan in April.

Calling all surfers and windsurfers...



Meeting for all on Wed., 26th March
7pm, Students Union,
Room 4

The UL windsurfing club are looking for new members.

If you are an experienced windsurfer, surfer, or just a beginner with an interest... please come along. Everyone is welcome.

We will be discussing trips for the remainder of the term, the summer, and next year.

For more information see: www.ul.ie/~winds

Rugby Club Report

by Caroline Mahon

UL women fail to qualify

It should never have come to this! UL were forced to play a qualifier for the semi-finals of the league because of an appeal by UCC to get their result against Tralee IT to stand even though they did not play the game in time. If it sounds like I'm bitter, it's because I am. UL had qualified and at the last minute were told that they had not and in fact had another game to play. However these issues are for another day. The result is that following the encounter between UL and UCC on the 5th of March in UL, UL are no longer in the league. For the first time in the leagues history, the women's team will not feature in the final. Maybe it is a sign of the development of rugby and a demonstration of an increase in the standard of women's rugby but I'll leave being positive about it for another day.

UL lined out with a strong side despite missing their four internationals and were very hopeful for a win against the UCC team. In the previous meeting between the teams, UCC defeated UL but UL only fielded eight players that day. The two teams were evenly matched in strength and determination but UCC seemed to use their strengths to the full. The game saw many seasons but neither team were going to let the weather get in the way of a good performance. Going into the second half, no score had yet been registered and UL were facing into the wind and hailstones. A few

tri before it registered with UL the consequences of losing the game. Some good phases of play were put together but to no avail and even a late try from Claire O'Leary was not enough to stop the college women from qualifying for the semi's. There were some good individual performances among the UL team. Mairéad Kelly looked very comfortable at full back and Edwina Mc Carthy coped very well in a new position for her, scrum half. Laura Real cleaned up some good ball in the lineouts and Amy Burns had a strong game in the forwards. The team played consisted of: Kate Hennessy, Emma Stanley, Amy Burns, Laura Real, Caroline Mahon, Edwina Mc Carthy, Rachel Tucker, Emma Carroll, Sinéad Glackin, Mairéad Kelly, Lysa Coburn, Orla King and Claire O'Leary.

UL men tame the Americans

UL withstood a strong challenge from the touring Michigan State University side to win 27-10 in a friendly rugby fixture yesterday. UL, consisting mostly of Freshers, made light of the heavy conditions on a rain lashed UL main pitch to run in 5 tries in a convincing performance. Not intimidated against the visitors' bigger forward pack, the home eight tore into their work right from the off, continually pinning MSU down in their own half. The pressure soon paid dividends when rangy lock Liam Crowley burst clear from a maul and galloped in 20m for the first try, duly converted by evergreen out half Tony Hall on the 8th minute. Eight minutes later UL had their second try courtesy



Kate Hennessy near the try line against UCC

handling errors prevented the ball from getting to our strong runners in the back line and UL rarely threatened to score although having much possession. A clever kick from one of the UCC players put her into space and across the line for the first score of the game. UCC got another

of big prop Dave Kerin, who crashed over from a sustained forwards' rumble. The Americans, continually on the back foot in the podgy conditions stickled gamely, but had their defences breached once more in the half with 8 minutes to go until the break. Impressive fullback



Lynne Cantwell, in action against Spain

Gearóid Fitzgerald made a break out from inside his own half and feed to wing Josh Piles who used his pace and guile to scamper past three defenders for the well taken try. It was an especially sweet moment for Josh, an American, to score against his compatriots. 22-0 up at the break, UL: started the second half as they had finished the first with a tenacious forward effort and some slick handling out wide putting winger Mark McQuaid over in the corner with just 5 minutes gone. To their credit MSU never gave up and their perseverance was rewarded with two quick fire tries in the 12th and 17th minutes. However, it was too little too late and both teams managed to keep the other out for the remainder of the game. Everyone contributed to the home side's victory, none more so than tigerish wing forwards Tom Ryan and Kevin Dinan who turned over a mountain of ball between them and worked well with rangy No. 8 Gary O'Driscoll. Hooker Paul McCarthy was his usual abrasive self until coming off with an injury with 20 to go. Nothing was lost when his replacement John Johnston took the field. Scrum half Billy Fitzgerald was industrious behind the scrum while second centre was rock like in both attack and defence. Overall a good result for the team, the bulk of which will be involved in the O'Boyle Cup fixture versus Waterford IT at UL on Wednesday, 12th of March. Kick off 2.30pm.

the Irish team could not get back to back wins following their win in Spain and lost to France by twenty points. The French did not deserve this gratifying score line but their win was deserved on the night. Ireland are getting stronger with every game, every year and next years encounter between the sides will be much closer I'm sure. Ireland next take on Wales, in Wales on Friday the 21st of March. Good luck to the team but especially the UL girls, past and present.

Keith Matthews and Barry Murphy are two more UL students that have been also representing Ireland. The two club mates are partners in the centre for the Irish U-21 team who are unbeaten to date in the Six Nations. Good luck to the boys in their next game, also against Wales.



Keith Matthews and Barry Murphy at trials for Irish U21's

College Internationals

The college women represented Ireland very well against France on the 8th of March in Thomond Park. Lynne Cantwell, Louise Beamish, Sarah Jane Belton and Fiona Coghlan all got another cap in the green shirt of Ireland. Unfortunately

Irish Peace Society - Interview with Tom Hyland

by Eoin O'Suilleabháin

When something gets me going, I'm like a pit-bull terrier so I am'.

And a pit-bull terrier is exactly the animal Tom Hyland is like. I just couldn't put my finger on the type of animal he reminded me of when I first encountered him the conferring of his honorary doctorate here in UL just three weeks before. So, the Irish Peace Society arranged for him to give talk, and there he was, proclaiming that ineffable animal-ness that had been so tantalisingly alluding.

Those of you readers who don't visualise certain people as animals may perceive the above paragraph as a little offensive, but quite the contrary is true. On Tuesday, 18th of March, Tom Hyland gave the most intimate, informative and engaging talks that the Peace Society has seen all year, which is not mean feat coming from the society that just won

the best society of the year!

Tom Hyland was a Dublin Bus driver. But one day, after randomly seeing a documentary on RTE, he realised that the course of his life had just changed, forever. The documentary was on the appalling situation in East Timor. East Timor had been subject to the most severe oppression under Indonesian control. The Western world was supplying Indonesia with arms, and nobody wanted to rock the boat. That is, until the pit-bull got wind of it. Now East Timor is the world's first democracy of the 21st century.



Irish Peace Society
www.peace.ie

Tom gave up his job and set up the East Timor Ireland Solidarity

Movement. He joined the dole queue and worked non-stop for a people he had never even met. This led him on a huge journey, geographically, politically, emotionally. Tom flew to Timor first class with foreign affairs minister Andrews, part of an international delegation with motorcades and limousines. *'You could really get to like that lifestyle, but then you always have to ground yourself again, ground yourself with the people'.*

And Tom did spend time with the people, and still does, teaching sex education to the prostitutes of the capital, Dili, and educating a nation

graveyard, where the Indonesian army had previously massacred a group of innocent Timorese mourners, Tom entered an abandoned tomb, and just broke down. It was that massacre that was caught on video by a Western reporter, the massacre that blew the top off Indonesian oppression on the island, and the same footage that had inspired Tom to abandon all, and following his calling.

Tom seems to have a profound modesty over the work he's done, almost seeming embarrassed by the attention he has received. A lot of the people at the talk wanted to hear much more about his own personal journey, that being as inspirational as his achievements in the world of global politics. But for all that, we'll just have to wait for the book, which, Tom assured me, will soon be released, will reveal all, and he'll be making sure that he's miles away in East Timor for its launch. You can chalk me down for a copy!

ravaged by oppression. He recalled to us, when going through the

Young Fine Gael Report

by Barry Walsh

The University of Limerick Branch of Young Fine Gael continued with their big plans for the 2nd Semester by holding a Seminar on Agriculture on Monday March 10th, to raise and discuss the future of Irish agriculture, in the light of CAP reform and Enlargement of the European Union. Addressing the Seminar were Mr. Ruadhri Deasy, Vice-President of the IFA; Mr. Seamus Phelan, President of Macra na Feirme; and Senator Noel Coonan, Fine Gael Spokesman on Agriculture in Seanad Eireann.

The Seminar was ably chaired by the charismatic Chairperson of ULYFG, Sinead Carey, who invited each of the speakers to make a short presentation to the Seminar, before the floor was opened up to Q&A. Mr Deasy spoke about the impact of the EU on farming in Ireland, and the negative effect of multinational companies and mass imports from South America on Irish farming. Seamus Phelan, whose younger

brother FG Senator John Paul Phelan is a great friend of ULYFG, spoke brilliantly on the role of Macra na Feirme, particularly in relation to the promotion of farming among young people. Sen. Coonan spoke in particular on the policies of the present Government and their failings.

The floor was then opened up to questions to the panel, and a lively debate ensued among the 60 or so people who attended the Seminar. Many local residents and people from as far away as Co. Clare came to hear what the top-class panel had to say, having seen the Seminar advertised in the Farmer's Journal. Even members of UL Ógra attended, obviously impressed by the ULYFG

set-up. Those in attendance were then treated to refreshments and the opportunity to speak one-to-one with the three expert visitors. The Seminar was a great success, owing to a great team-effort. Special mention must go to ULYFG Organiser James Lawless, who set up the whole event. Thanks also to Chairperson Sinead Carey, Vice-Chair Lorraine Munnelly, and

Elizabeth Munnelly for their input.

ULYFG then focused their attention on the Clubs&Socs Ball, and the trip to Brussels over Paddy's weekend! Watch this space for more!



Young Fine Gael at the Seminar on Agriculture



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Outdoor Pursuits Club Report

by Mike O'Connor & Joe Terry

Trip to Dingle in Co. Kerry

This weekend we travelled in to the wilds of Kerry. A large group met outside Stables Saturday morning some knowing each other others new to the outdoor experience but all enthusiastic. We arrived down at our destination the village of Clochan, underneath the imposing shadow of our challenge for the day, Mt. Brandon, all 952 metres of it. We quickly organised the group and equipment before heading of on our trek. The weather on the way up was unusually clear offering spectacular views over lakes, bogs, rivers, waterfalls, mountains and the Atlantic, The darkness of the mountain after Winter contrasting sharply with the striking blueness of the ocean. It is a long lead up to the summit with varying degrees of steepness and terrain. While we walked we talked and while we talked we climbed, all adding to the richness of the experience both physically and socially.

A small group of the more experienced members of the club ventured on past the summit to take in a few more peaks, while the main body relaxed and recovered after a tough final few metres.



A sheep, as seen in Dingle

The weather held up for us as we again reached sea level visiting a few historical ruins on the way. So the work/walk done for the day now it was time to replenish our energy levels with showers, hot food and even a little socialising in the pub, conveniently situated next to the hostel. "The landlady's eyes opened wide with delight" is an understatement as she saw her customers doubling in numbers. She quickly rallied two extra barmen to help cope with the influx. The multi-cultural mixture of our group added to the amazement of the locals and a good time exchanging views and experiences followed. Every country from America to Spain to Russia was represented and even a few from Ireland all sharing the common bond of a challenge enjoyably overcome.

After a fine hearty breakfast on Sunday morning and with packed lunches all prepared we headed to Dingle for the day. Unbelievably the weather remained glorious for us. We

explored the peninsula from this base with many members cycling to the beach at Ventry another heading of to Dunquin, others more hardy swimming in the bay in MARCH! A few explored the alleys and surroundings of the village itself. Eventually we had to head back to Limerick but keeping the memories of a very successful weekend, friendly, fun, healthy and satisfying.

Trip to the Reeks

On the morn of the eleventh day of the third month of the third year of the third millennium (year of our lord) a small (but efficient) team from the Outdoor Pursuits Club left the University with one goal and one goal only; to climb Carrauntoohill (and probably Caher on the way, and may Benkeeragh if the weather was nice, and to come back alive, and to get some food afterwards, and stop somewhere to find a toilet; in retrospect perhaps there was more than one goal but work with me here) With breakfast provided by maiden fair behind the deli counter in Castle Island the team were ready to tackle Ireland's highest peak. Incidentally Castle Island is not really an island and there is no castle- or none that I've ever seen anyway. No doubt I'll be corrected in the next An Focal by some bitter Kerryman. I just explain it to the foreigners as having been a trick to fool the English: A bit like naming Greenland green even though it's a white barren desolate lump of ice but not very much like Iceland which is also a white barren desolate lump of ice (again I expect to be corrected by a bitter Icelander). I will never understand what we were doing or who we were trying to fool when we called Limerick Limerick We hardly called it Limerick on the off chance that Cromwell would look at the map, see Limerick and say "No, I will only attack poems of more than five lines"?

Happily fed the team of Irishmen, Germans, Danes, Mayo people, etc. prepared to launch their attack on the mountain from the West and having left Liam, the bus driver to establish base camp, made their move. The weather was lovely for the start with an UnIrish sun in the sky but quickly Thor, god of Kerry intervened and showed us what she could do (Yes, I am aware that Thor was male- for fear that I get any Vikings writing in). She can do (in no particular order) hail, rain, sleet, wind (which can lift you from your feet and then change direction so that when your leaning forwards against it you can still get knocked over when it decides to come at you from behind), horizontal hail (which is a nice way of bruising your face and contrary to popular belief can remove contact lenses).

The group made it (painfully) to the top of Caher where the decision was



UL Outdoor Pursuits Club

*Rockclimbing, Hillwalking,
Mountaineering and Caving*

website at <http://www.csn.ul.ie/~opc/>
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made that some people could go back and others would go on to Carrauntoohill (the highest mountain in Ireland). The descent was relatively uneventful other than the aforementioned individual, whose identity shall remain confidential, that lost the contact lens. Successful, the triumphant group made their way to Kate Kearney's Cottage for some of her famous soup.

And so it was with the teams objectives completed: With two mountains climbed, our stomachs filled and a few nations, one county and a thousand year old civilisation offended we all went home safe in the knowledge that lots of people would have things to write about in the next An Focal.

Aconcagua Slideshow

The Outdoor Pursuits Club Aconcagua 2003 Expedition will be giving a slideshow on Thursday the 27th of March. The slideshow will start at 8pm and will be held in the Students Union Building in the University of Limerick (Room 5). Admission is free and all are welcome. The slideshow will give an illustrated view of the overall expedition for the team of seven climbers. It will be a unique chance to see what is involved in the organisation of an expedition of this size and also a chance to meet some of the climbers involved.

For more details E-mail: frank.cox@ul.ie or see the website at www.aa2003.com

Pagan Society

by Sarah Ryan

Put on your pointy hat and hop on your hoover.....

Since the 6th march there have been reported sightings of brooms circling the students Union! The UL Pagan Society is currently establishing their membership base. The Pagan Society is the second religious group to set up in UL, and currently the only



university associated Pagan society in the country!!

Generally considered as a nature/earth based religion, most aspects of Paganism date from pre Christianity. The Pagan society

intends to keep its members as up to date as possible with the Pagan world. There will be information available, and a number of excursions are being considered to festivals throughout the country during the summer. Trips are also being scheduled for next year to England in order to form ties with societies of the same nature in Britain.

After only three meetings, there are already plans to attract a number of guest speakers. Invitations have been given to: among others, a long time practicing Druid and author of several published works, and also a highly respected homeopath practising in the area. During the week of Oddfest, the Pagan Society are planning to make a tarot reader, a palm reader and rune castings available for the low price of 2 euro per student. So come to the SU on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday of week 7 and catch a glimpse of your future...

The Pagan Society meets every Wednesday from 7.30 in Meeting Room two of the Students Union. All new members are welcome. For more information e-mail pagansoc@skynet.ie

Kayak Club Intervarsity

by Seona Dillon Mcloughlin

Think back to the weekend of the 21st of Feb... Were you one of the many people who were wondering what was with the amount of cars with roof racks and boats strapped on top? Well, the reason was that UL were hosting the Kayak Intervarsities 2003. This event involved 13 colleges from around the country competing in a number of events; canoe polo, freestyle rodeo, whitewater race and long distance.

It all started at 5.00pm on Friday when all the clubs started arriving in their dribs and drabs into the Sports Arena, where they were greeted with smiling faces and quality, health conscious party packs! Thanks to Paul and the lads for putting them together. It took a good while for all the clubs to arrive and get registered but finally the first event was ready to commence.



Action from the Kayak Club intervarsity

The first event of the intervarsities was the canoe polo competition held in the University Arena 50m pool. It was possibly the largest intervarsities polo competition ever held with 13 clubs entering. The event brought crowds of people into the viewing area. With each club shouting their support for their own team the atmosphere was buzzing! But what got the most shouts and support was the stalker who ran starkers all the way around the 50m pool! The event was organised by our club polo head Emmett, with help from Carmel Vekins, Alan Ward (aquatics manager) and Ciaran (spud) Murphy. The event was in a knock out format with D.C.U and U.L seeded from last years event, giving us a by to the quarterfinal stages. In our first game we swept by Castlebar I.T with a 7-0 thrashing then meeting U.C.C in the semi-final. This was a tense affair with U.C.C sitting back and defending their hearts out. In our attempts in pushing forward to get a goal we were caught on the break twice to go 2 goals down. Thanks to Dara we replied immediately with a

goal, and then in the dying minutes Spud got us the equaliser. It was then on to golden goal extra time. Thanks to the brilliance and invention of Spud who got a smashing golden goal with a reverse handed throw in to the net. Then on to the Final where we met our old rivals D.C.U. They always put out a very strong team every year, but this year they were very strong with national players spread throughout their team. They found it easy to reach the final. In the final we played our hearts out but to no avail, we were hammered 7-2 with 2 goals from our own national player the brilliant Edel Quinn. Overall we were happy with how the event ran, a big thank you goes to Carmel Vekins and Michael Griffin (referees), Alan Ward (aquatics manager), all the Arena Staff and Lifeguards who worked late and Ciaran (Spud). Our own team who did us proud were Emmett, Dara, Edel, Spud, Jimmy, Paul, Mick and Pauline, well done lads. This was

the first Canoe Polo event held in the Arena pool, and it proved to be an excellent venue. Hopefully we will see a lot more polo played there. After the final, 300 paddlers packed themselves into Doc's nightclub where we had a crazy night out!

With an early rise on Saturday morning, all competitors and helpers made their way to the Deel river for the whitewater race. Due to the lack of rain the Deel was running at quite a low level so there wasn't as much white water as expected. Nevertheless it was an entertaining race, with the gorge section adding an interesting challenge near the end of the race. Homer, Decky and Eamonn ran for UL. They had a clear run apart from one or two pinning incidents. This was a close race with UL coming 2nd with only a 3-second difference between them and DCU, who came 1st. The event was certainly a success. Thanks to Cathal and Dave Tucker for making sure everything ran smoothly.

As soon as the whitewater race ended it was straight to the local

playspot, Curragower for the freestyle rodeo. There was a guaranteed release from E.S.B. Thanks to Morgan O' Sullivan who helped with the negotiations. With 200 cumces of water the wave wasn't at its standard level. As a result of this the competitors had a tough challenge to stay on the wave for 60 seconds. Despite this there was a great variety of moves. Spins, greengrinds, blunts were the business of the day. GMIT's Brian Cahill came 1st in the men's and Siobhan McGrisca from UCG came 1st in the women's. UL were the overall winners of this event because of the massive team effort put in by Don, Jimmy, Ross, and Edel. Well done lads! It was actually one of the biggest rodeos in Ireland and it wasn't even a national ranking rodeo. Proof of the success was the 200 spectators standing in the bitter cold and still the atmosphere was buzzing! The DJ kept everyone in high spirits as he blared out the tunes on the P.A. system! Fair play to the judges for sticking out the cold for all those hours and thanks to everyone who helped organise this incredible event.

Back to UL after the rodeo and the Sports Bar filled up with paddlers who took advantage of the great food being served there. After our bellies had been filled, it was time to relive our schooldays and dress up in dodgy school uniforms for a night out in Castle Oaks Hotel. A surprise event was organised which turned out to be a hypnotist. This went down a treat! It was brilliant craic and enjoyed by all! Thanks to the Ents crew for keeping an eye on things it was a cracking night overall!

10.00am next morning all able bodied paddlers brought down their boats to the Shannon for the Long Distance race. There was an incredible amount of competitors and everyone was in great form apart from the odd sore head! UL did particularly well in this event. Edel Quinn came 1st in the women's fibreglass. Homer came 1st in the men's plastic and Jimmy came 3rd in

the men's plastic. In women's plastic Jenny Johnston came 2nd and Mick Fallon and Pauline Keany came 1st in the Canadian boat race. This event was enjoyable for everyone as paddlers of all experience could participate and it was great craic for teams to compete together.

Everyone, thoroughly exhausted after the race, retreated into the function room in the Scholars where there was finger food and a display of photo's thanks to Brian Hanahran. During the course of the weekend members of the ULKC helped sell raffle tickets to raise money for the Special Olympics. Kayaking is being introduced as a new sport in the Special Olympics and this year kayaking is going to be the demonstration sport. We managed to raise 770 Euro. Well done everyone! Finally after thank you speeches and all the rest, the results were announced. The room erupted with shouts and cheers when it was announced that UL won the intervarsities 2003! This result certainly reflected the outstanding team effort on part of all the competitors! CONGRATULATIONS! This Event would not have been possible without the help of the following; ULSU, DOC's, Castle Oaks Hotel, Outdoor Adventure Store, River Deep Mountain High, H2O extreme, Mc Nulty Travel, Uisce Adventure Centre, Curragower pub, ESB, UL arena, Sports bar, and the Scholars. Also thanks to Niklas, Katie, Connor, Kipper, Dave, Mick Bryne, Morgan and the two Daves for their medical expertise.

The response we got after running the event was unbelievable! So many people said it was one of the best intervarsities they've been to! The weekend was all down to the dedication and hard work of the varsities committee. Fair play guys! The months you put in planning certainly paid off and you made the Kayak Intervarsities 2003 the unforgettable and outstanding event that it was!



UL Kayak Club in the Arena Swimming Pool



Society of St Vincent de Paul



Over a thousand students went all the way to Docs on Wednesday the 12th for the First Annual St. Vincent de Paul County Colours Ball. The Ball was held to raise money for the Society. See if you can spot yourself below. Most counties were represented with a big showing of Cork and Kerry



Environmental Society

by St. John O Donovan

As usual, it's been a busy couple of weeks for the Environmental Society in and around campus! The last couple of weeks have seen us involved in quite a number of events and such: the grassroots gathering, peace activities, the Carbusters Conference, the Clubs and Socs Ball, proposal to plant trees in Elm Park, setting up a new e-mail list, investigating some pollution in the river, upcoming talks and the River Clean-Up. But apart from that little lot, not too much!!!

We'll start with the peace activities. Last week some Enviro Soc members went to an all night vigil for peace on the streets on Limerick. Around 40-50 people came, at some stage of the night or other. It was a strong showing on what was a quite cold evening, and the point was made that this war is NOT IN OUR NAME! We received virtually nothing but support (bar one or two cranks) and even had people trying to force money on us!

On St. Patrick's Day we went to the parade in Limerick City, and took part in the "Limerick 4 Change" float. Everyone was brilliantly dressed up, from the sublime (Síle as an 'arms inspector', examining people in the crowd's arms), to the ridiculous (my 'fabulous' purple suit, festooned with anti-war paraphernalia). We staged a "die-in" in front of the assembled dignitaries on O'Connell Street, to emphasise the reality faced by the people of Iraq. Ironically enough, we began the parade in Sarsfield's Barracks! The parade ended in King John's Castle, where the Irish Army had a recruitment stand where they were showing children as young as 5-6 years old how to use a

frightening array of weaponry, with no education as to the effects that these weapons can have on people. Needless to say, we objected strongly to this misrepresentation of the work of the work of the Irish Army, especially on such a family-oriented occasion. Aside from these unsavoury incidents, the day was a big success, with lots of singing, dancing and applause from a bumper crowd. Also, the UL coalition against the war has been busy, organising a walk out from lectures on Day X (the day war breaks out) at 12 noon, followed by a vigil on O'Connell Street at 6pm of the same day, and a demonstration the following Saturday, also in town. Enviro Soc would encourage everyone to take part in these actions to the full, and to show your opposition to this terrible war.

The Grassroots Gathering also took place in Limerick last weekend. Saturday was a day of workshops, including ones on gender and non-violent direct action. Sunday concentrated more on discussion, with a range of highly contentious issues being hammered out. Then those who were still around took part in the Paddy's Day festivities.

Delia and Ailbhe are currently living it up at the Carbusters Conference in Prague in the Czech Republic. Carbusters advocate a move away from an automobile dependent society towards a more people, and environment, friendly alternative. We await their return on Saturday with interest!

We also have a proposal in with the head of buildings to plant the fields on either side of the entrance to Elm Park with trees, and this is pending, depending on our ability to deliver transplantable trees. Watch this space! A new mailing list has also been set up:

envirosoc@skynet.ie. Get in contact! Thanks a million Dom, Shane and Delia for saving us from all that Spam! Yesterday we also went about investigating some dodgy-looking liquid flowing into the river (check for pics), but we will be looking into this matter in depth over the next while.

Then the River Clean-Up. This will take place next Wednesday, the 26th of March, at 12 noon, at Kilmurry Village reception, finishing down at Drumroe. We want to clean up the banks of the river Shannon so that it may realise its potential as a beautiful local amenity for students and members of the local community. Groups from a number of local schools will be attending (up to 200 children!), and we will provide gloves, bags, etc. So come along, spread the word, and help us make this a great day for all concerned.

Later on the same evening, Dr. Jack O'Sullivan of Zero Waste Ireland is coming to UL to give a talk on the subject. This will undoubtedly be a hugely interesting and informative lecture from one of the foremost experts in this area in the country. Come along to SU room4 at 8pm on Wednesday the 26th of March to see for yourself. Also we hope to confirm a talk on bio-diesel in the very near future. "Who's going to save the US once they have saved the World?"

ODDFEST

**Do people think you're odd?
Have you ever worn odd socks because you just don't care?
Are you not particularly busy next week?**

Well thank your lucky stars, because we at UL ubs&Socks love you so much that we've laid on a week of lovely Oddness, just for you.

On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of Week 7, there is piles of stuff happening, just because it can. We'll be LAN gaming, killing each other, getting our palms read, throwing things out of windows, bouncing on bouncy castles, running around, building things out of LEGO, watching lots and lots of films, high kicking, being thespian, choosing an international man of history, not caring what anyone thinks of us, and going on in a General Goings-On sort of way.

Just check out the timetables and if there's something you like the sound of, come along and have a look. Call up to Room 5 of the SU between 12 and 6pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. See what we're all about, get your Tarot Cards read and revel in your ODDness!!

Participating Oddities

- AIKIDO CLUB
- AEROSOC
- CHESS CLUB
- DRAMASOC
- GSOC
- HISTORY SOC
- LEGOSOC
- PAGANSOC
- RADIOSOC
- SKYNET
- TENFORWARD

General Oddities

Events running all day in Student Union (Rooms 4&5)

Room 4
Tenforward: ODDscreen Showings (Wednesday and Thursday)

Room 5
Legosoc: Challenges and Playtime
Pagan Soc: Tarot, Rune and Palm Readings
Gsoc : Killer
History Soc: International Man of History - voting

Odddays

Tuesday:

Star Wars in 30 Minutes	Scholar's Courtyard	1pm	
Kevin Smith Day	Location TBC		1:30 - 8pm
Chess Simul	Meeting Room 5		4.15 - 5.15

Wednesday:

Martial Arts Exhibition	Stables Courtyard	12:30-2pm	
AeroSoc's Balloon Challenge	Room 5	2pm	
LAN Gaming	Room 5		2-6pm
Flight Simulator	Room 5	3-4pm	
Table Quiz: The Geekiest Link	Scholar's Function Room	7:30-9:30 pm	

Thursday

Bouncy Castle	Scholars Courtyard	1pm - 8 pm	
Musical Chairs	Scholars Courtyard	3.30pm	
Possibilities (Drama)	Scholars Function Room	7.30pm	
International Man of History	Scholars Function Room	7.30pm	
ODDball (soul clinic)	Dolan's Warehouse	Later (5Euro)	

An Bainisteoir

Another hectic two weeks, and yet more exclusive news reports to be revealed. It's nice to see Irish music making a name for itself for once more, on the platform the country is most at home with, the Eurovision. As if You're a Star wasn't bad enough having to watch as Louis Walsh guided us through the type of artists that you can make money off, we now have the news that chosen song wasn't even original. Well that's nothing new for Louis. But, then what was original about another reality TV programme, that adjudicated musical talent by way of a popular vote, and to top it all gave us an Irish winner named Mickey Joe? Not only have the tenuous links to Father Ted's version of the Eurovision made that episode even more hilarious, but the Lifford man's green guitar seemed to take the biscuit in the marketing of the stereotypical Irish male solo artist. Somehow I don't think the show ever aimed to be original.

An Bainisteoir has been hearing lately of the problems of disciplining players, with Alex Ferguson's incident with David Beckham, and having watched Any Given Sunday the other evening, An Bainisteoir can relate to those problems and as manager of the local junior C football team, it is essential that you lay down the law from an early stage. Under tough new regulations that have been laid down by the GAA authorities, fielding a junior C side will become even tougher. It is vitally important to get as many U/16 players on the panel as possible, in an effort to get the average weight down under the new limit of 20 stone. The weight restrictions are to apply as the GAA wants to dumb down the junior C championship, in an effort to reduce the level of alcohol sponsorship in the competition. It has long been a problem to get players on the training pitch, as junior C players are always busy being signed up to endorse the latest brand of alcohol.

St. Patrick's was a great success in promoting Ireland again this year, as countless numbers of people got sick with alcohol over the bank holiday weekend. No longer does the 17th March mark the day when Irish people actually march where they're welcome! But it has of late become the day when most teenagers get pissed for the first time. An Bainisteoir has seen many a fine Senior footballer in the making fall foul of the St. Patrick's day spirit when his first taste of alcohol will confine him to the Junior ranks, and most likely a lifetime of Junior C action, and possibly some football as well.

It was nice to see Chris Tarrant being asked the questions last week, as the case of the cheating Who Wants To Be A Millionaire, millionaire came before the courts. Apparently a bout of tactical coughing is being pinpointed as the manner in which the million pound winner cheated. Of course the real reason for the case is to try and rekindle some interest in the show, which has been taken off Irish TV altogether and its popularity looks to be waning across the Irish Sea also. Then again is it any wonder that people are fed up answering fifteen questions to become a millionaire, when in Ireland all you have to do is get elected to your local council? Obviously England isn't quite as corrupt as Ireland, seeing as the authorities over there take you to court before they give you the money, as opposed to the Irish attitude of money first and I'll see you at the tribunal.

P. S. - Readers will note that there was an omission in the last issue, where a health warning from the EPA failed to appear. An Bainisteoir would like to inform readers that the hacks at An Focal are governed by strict 'obscene content' laws, and the warning which featured a full frontal of Brian Cowen was felt to be far too obscene for readers to see.

Your Stars

by Mystic Meg

Aries: (March 21—April 19)

It might be heartfelt, but your long, freeform version of "Old Man River" will get your lily-white ass laughed off the stage.

Taurus: (April. 20—May 20)

Your discovery of an unabridged dictionary will take much of the fun and creativity out of Scrabble.

Gemini: (May 21—June 21)

You haven't worn it since college, but don't be surprised when your old suit still fits. It is made of rubber, after all.

Cancer: (June 22—July 22)

Just so you know: If you speak fluent Farsi and have a thorough knowledge of Middle Eastern culture but don't like travel, it's a good time to keep your mouth shut.

Leo: (July 23—Aug. 22)

Something big is in your future. Please be sure to note the absence of any specific positives in that sentence..

Virgo: (Aug. 23—Sept. 22)

All those jokes about your attention span would probably get you down if you ever stuck around to see how they end.

Libra: (Sept. 23—Oct. 23)

Once again, it seems like you're the only one who can get word back to Earth before all hope is lost.

Scorpio: (Oct. 24—Nov. 21)

The Army's okay, you suppose, but you just can't see yourself wearing any uniform that doesn't have two broad leather straps crossing over a bare chest.

Sagittarius: (Nov. 22—Dec. 21)

Your relief is palpable when the Crimewatch reenactment of your upcoming mugging leaves out the pants-wetting.

Capricorn: (Dec. 22—Jan. 19)

There's nothing wrong with you that a good night's sleep wouldn't cure. Assuming, of course, that you don't count the cancer.

Aquarius: (Jan. 20—Feb. 18)

You'll eventually be the one to get the girl, thanks to your patience and the fact that you don't care that she's dead.

Pisces: (Feb. 19—March 20)

The old ass-Xeroxing prank will go awry when your boss catches you in the act and makes you the ass-Xeroxing supervisor for the entire Northeast region.

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continued from frontpage
a few."

In the aftermath of the walkout Mr. O'Flynn stipulated his beliefs on the current peace movement in Ireland and globally. "When I look at the protestors in Ireland, a particular section - probably the most vocal - promotes a message, which is clearly not just anti-War, but also anti-American. They claim to represent a majority of people in Ireland. I believe they blatantly and intentionally misrepresent Irish opinion. Yes, there are those against the war, but are not anti-US and support many US principles and policies. Then there are those like me who outright support the US and the war effort. Unlike some I'll wait for elections to determine where the majority of opinion lies. What annoys me most about the anti-American protestors and this proves my point, is that they are never seen protesting any other war except for those involving the US. In my opinion they are using the war on Iraq to forward a political agenda, such as anti-globalisation and this to my mind is deplorable and shameful."

Mr. O'Flynn continued to dispel the functioning of the UN. "Diplomacy and the UN failed, when the French refused categorically to consider a second resolution the door allowing additional time for the weapons inspectors was firmly shut. The problem with the UN is that it's a talk shop. We need only look to Bosnia and the actions or rather inaction of Dutch troops at Srebrenica who ushered Milosevics' army as they went to massacre 7000 people. The UN is quite simply a sham,

particularly in dealing with a determined dictator. I'm deeply grieved by any war, however I believe this war is necessary, justified and will ultimately sow the seed for a better future for the people of Iraq and bring a quick end to their long suffering. As such I firmly disagree with those who advocate doing nothing, I'm sure they'll find a warm home in France or Holland. The one thing I'm glad we all agree on is that we should dig deep into our pockets to aid the humanitarian effort that will follow the war."

Asking those who attended the rally for their reasons for coming out in such numbers and making such a clear statement to the Irish government and the world at large garnered a variety of responses. International Relations PhD candidate Gerard Downes gave his reason as foremost, "to let the Irish government know that their compliance with an illegal and immoral war is not supported. The Irish taxpayer paid a lot of money to allow me study the history of this country and nowhere did I come across reference to its colonisation by the United States. Having listened to the words of Bertie Ahern and Mary Harney I realise now that I was obviously mistaken. There is a large lacuna in Irish history waiting to be studied, namely, the downgrading of Dáil Eireann to the status of a provincial council whose sole duty in international affairs is to rubber stamp decisions taken in Washington and Whitehall. We are told that Washington and Whitehall have supported us unstintingly in the Northern Ireland peace process. In return, we support them unstintingly

in waging a war, the consequences of which have not been thought through. As a trade-off it's very lopsided."

A kaleidoscope of personalities participated in the walkout last Thursday at noon. They did so for a variety of reasons; humanitarian concern, solidarity with innocent civilians who will cease to be individuals and will instead attain the surgical term 'collateral damage', fear for global long-term security, relative short-term gains versus absolute losses in the long run, and anger at the Irish government for allowing the continued use of Shannon airport contravening Irish neutrality. They did so in tandem with millions across the

world. The organisers were obviously delighted with the reception. "We were able to facilitate a feeling of concern amongst many of the UL community who came out in such large numbers in solidarity with the people who are suffering. It was an amazing achievement by all those involved. They were ready, eager and willing to do something, and what happened is a reflection of their efforts. Whatever people say I am delighted with the turnout and effort of everybody involved in organising the largest protest ever pulled off in UL and I'm deeply proud to be a part of it and its message" concluded Ms. Harford.

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