

1998-1

The DIT Examiner : the Newspaper of the Dublin Institute of Technology Students' Union, January, 1998

DIT : Students' Union

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Recommended Citation

DIT Students' Union ,The DIT Examiner : January, 1998, Dublin, 1998.

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the DIT Examiner

The Newspaper of the Dublin Institute of Technology Students' Union

January 1998

DX

98

Cash for a lash?
Gucci for coochie?
Veal for a feel?
The Post-Graduate
Journalists offer
us sex for money
and more besides.
pp 11-14.



Mexico's Zapatistas
are under threat
from the Mexican
government.
Agallamh le
Muirceann de Barra,
a chaith tamall i
mbaile beag Diez
de April. pp4,5.



All the usual DIT
sports reports and
info including hurl-
ing, soccer, rugger
and kick-boxing.
Be the first to
know.
pp 15-19



International sailor
and yachtsman,
Barry Hayes, a DIT
bakery manage-
ment in Kevin St.
He spliced the
mainbrace and
hoist the jib with
the Examiner, p18.

LIBERTY LOCAL NEWSPAPER A SUCCESS

IF YOU happened to have found yourself in a newsagents in the Aungier Street locality over the Christmas period you may have noticed a fledgling newspaper among the masses of well-knowns.

The Liberty, Dublin's newest local newspaper was in the shops from the 18 December of last year. It is being produced by the second and third year Journalism students from DIT Aungier Street. The free newspaper aims to serve the communities surrounding the college by keeping the people informed of their local news.

The Liberty was launched by local TD John Gormley in Aungier Street on 17 December, 1997. Mr. Gormley applauded the student's initiative and praised the high quality production. The students recognised that there was a need for a newspaper such as The Liberty to cover local news from the area. Finbarr O'Reilly, third year student and editor explained the reasons behind establishing the new paper, "We felt that by taking the initiative to establish and produce a local paper we believed we were fulfilling two objectives; to put our skills and knowledge into good practice and in turn producing something worthwhile for the community."

The Liberty is available in all local newsagents and the material in the paper is of local origin. In its first edition it examined important local issues. It investigated the possible problems posed for the area by the Harcourt, Meath and Adelaide Hospital's imminent departure to the new hospital in Tallaght. It also looked at the uncertainties faced by the teenagers of Aungier St. who have nowhere to go now that the YMCA youth club has closed.

The DIT journalists have positive plans for the future. They plan to publish on a monthly basis and they also hope that in time they can expand to cover more areas.

Michelle Kelly
13-1-98

CHECK YOUR HEALTH

The DIT Students' Union will be getting health conscious over the next few weeks as it goes into hyper-drive on the information front.

Among the notable organisations which will be visiting the Institute in the near future are the Meningitis Research Foundation, the Dublin Aids Alliance, Cherish (one-parent family support group), Brainwave (Irish Epilepsy Foundation), as well as the other AIDS charity Cairde, the Irish Family Planning Association, and Alcoholics Anonymous.

Kevin Street's Welfare Week takes place from February 10-12, and will include information stands, guest speakers, and various related events. The other DIT sites are still in the process of organising the schedules of their Welfare Weeks, and it is intended to facilitate the students of all colleges.

For more specific details check noticeboards in your local Students' Union offices or ask your Welfare Officer for information on dates and times.

Film Festival of the South

Sick of the cliches, violence and special effects of Hollywood movies? Want to see how filmmakers from outside the US and Europe portray issues and tell stories?

From January 30 to February 1, the fifth 'Voices from the South' festival of films takes place at the Irish Film Centre in Temple Bar. The 'South' is the term now used instead of 'Third World' and the festival will include films from Latin America, Africa and Asia.

This year's programme features the winner of Best Latin American Film at the Sundance Film Festival, the Brazilian 'Landscapes of Memory'. Also recommended is a film from South Africa, 'Kini and Adams', which was shown in the main competition at Cannes last year.

In addition, two workshops will take place. The topical subject of racism in Ireland will be discussed in 'Multi-cultural Ireland - Myth or Reality?' And the economic problems facing workers and trade unionists will be examined in 'The Global Economy - A Fair Deal for the World Workers?'

Further information can be obtained from the IFC (679 3477) or the VSI office (855 1011 / email <vsi@iol.ie>).



At the launch of The Liberty shortly before Christmas were, l-r: Nora French, Head of the Communications Department, Green Party - Comhaontas Glas TD, John Gormley, Finbarr O'Reilly, Editor, and Dr Ellen Hazelkorn, Director of the Faculty of Applied Arts, DIT.

the DIT Examiner

DITSU, DIT Kevin Street, Kevin St., Dublin 8.
Ph: 402 4636 Ph/Fax: 478 3154

Leading the Country (Up the Garden Path)

"Thanks a million big fella, thanks a couple o' hundred thousand moustachioed fella, thanks a few grand a half dozen others." Certain people appear to have been quite lucky when it came to their mates lending them and the kids a few bob here and there. True, Haughey was very unlucky in the way that his entire world was turned on its arse because Lowry was caught fiddling the tills, albeit on a smaller scale. So it was hardly his own fault that CJ Haughey was caught; once again, the gobshites of the country conspire against him.

If our most prominent and successful politicians and statespeople are as twisted as bad bóithrins it doesn't offer much hope for rooting out corruption in other areas. Diligently tackling 'crime' while diligently committing it is risible. In the aftermath of various revelations since the McCracken Tribunal can we believe anything our so-called representatives tell us to be true? Obviously not every politician and councillor is lining his/her pockets, but the guilty ones make life harder for the honest bunch.

Maybe we should just come to expect a little bit of corruption as a matter of course — what the hell, a wee bit couldn't harm anyone. I'm off to re-zone Newgrange for a short while.

Ceannaire na (Mic)Tíre

"Milliúin buíochas, a chailleach, céad míle buíochas a chara chroiméalach, míle buíochas le mám eile agaibh." Is cosúil go raibh an t-ádh le roinnt mhaith daoine agus airgead a fháil ar iasacht acu ó chairde dos na leanaí anseo agus ansiúd. Le bheith fíor, bhí mí-ádh mhóir ag baint le cás Uí Eochaidh, nuair ar casadh an saol aige féin bun os cionn toisc amaíocht Lowry. Ar shlí ní fhéadfa an milleán a leagan ar Chathail féin; arís, d'aontaigh gruagaigh na tíre chun an mháistir a leagadh.

Más rud é go bhfuil ár gcuid polaiteoirí is mó le rá chomh lúibha le droch bhalla ní fhágann sé mórán dóchas go bhfaighfidimid réidh le fadhb na coiritúlachta i gceantair eile. Ag troid i gcoinne na coireachata go dúthrachtach ar lámh amháin agus á chleachtadh go dúthrachtach ar an lámh eile — tá seafóid faoi leith ag baint leis sin. Tar éis do rudaí áirithe teacht chun solais i ndiaidh Binse Mhic Reachtainn tá sé deacair orainn rud ar bith a deir ár n-ionaidaithe linn a chreidiúint. An ndóigh, ní hé go bhfuil gach polaiteoir agus comhairleoir ag cur paicéid donna ina gcuid pócaí, ach cruthaíonn iompar an chuid eile fadhbanna don lucht ionraic.

B'fhéidir gur cheart dúinn beagáinín truailliú agus breabaireachta a sheasaimh mar ghnáthrud — *sure* cén dochar an dhéanfadh sé? Táimse ar mo shlí go Brú na Bóinne chun roinnt ath-zónáil a dhéanamh ar feadh tréimhse.

Cearbhall Ó Siocháin

DITSU Elections

Nominations Open:

Tue 10 February 1998

Nominations Close:

Tue 24 February 1998, 5 pm sharp

Nomination forms available from local SU
Offices on 10 Feb 1998

Polling Day:

Wed 4 March 1998

So apart from being the largest
students' union in the country

What has **Ditsu** ever done for me?

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- + PAYPHONE IN SU OFFICE
- + CONDOM MACHINES IN TOILETS
- + FRESHERS, HALLOWEEN, CHRISTMAS, RAG, EASTER, LAST CHANCE BALLS
- + FASHION SHOW
- + BEER PROMOTIONS
- + CHEAP PASSPORT PHOTOS
- + FRESHERS WELCOME PACKS
- + POSTAL ADDRESS FACILITY
- + AND ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT US TO DO!

Ditsu

**RUN BY STUDENTS FOR STUDENTS
SO GET INVOLVED!
IT'S YOUR STUDENTS' UNION.**

Watch out for the February edition of the DIT Examiner, which will focus (haw haw) on photography. Contributions on anything to do with photography gratefully accepted.

Clarifications

Should you encounter anything you feel is in need of clarification in this, or any other issue of the DIT Examiner, please contact the editor and any such matters shall then be clarified in the subsequent edition.

EDITOR Cearbhall Ó Siocháin EAGARTHÓIR
LAYOUT ChaOS LEAGAN AMACH
Land Re-Zoning by Esther Rantzen

Lettuce to the Editor

Any lettuce sent to the Examiner for the attention of the Editor should be clearly marked. Ní ghlacfar le haon leitis mbarbh. Sending dead lettuce to the Editor is a strict no-no. Tig libh scríobh chuig an seoladh seo a leanas:

*The Editor,
DIT Examiner,
DITSU,
DIT Kevin St.,
Kevin St.,
Dublin 8.*

*An tEagarthóir,
DIT Examiner,
DITSU,
ITBÁC Srdid Chaoimhín,
Srdid Chaoimhín,
BÁC 8.*

I'm with the Band

Dear Editor,

In response to a review of a gig by Michael McCormack, namely the Charlatans, Wednesday 26 of November [see *DIT Examiner* Dec 97], I would like to express my heartfelt sorrow and disgust after reading what promised to be a top review by an 'obvious' fan who turned out to be a Charlatan himself, who wouldn't know and doesn't know Tony Rodgers [Rogers] from Tony Ferrino [Ferrino] or John Squire from John Major. Firstly, Rob Collins (rip) sadly died in July 96 and then Primal Scream's Martin Duffy helped the lads prepare for their Knebworth and Glasto slots and he helped put the finishing touches to Tellin' Stories which was already recorded and released in April. After seeing the band play Manchester Apollo May 10 '97, we, the fans, were introduced to the new Hammond man, Tony Rodgers, esq., who had joined in March.

Tony was a friend of Jon Brookes and was in a band called Joab [Job?], who already have two albums (Tony told me this in Judge Roy Beans at Sam 27 Nov). Therefore Martin Duffy was not playing with the band in Dublin or any other tour date for that matter, this I can guarantee as a person who spent seven hours with the band that night and three the following night in Belfast. Secondly, I cannot believe that a 'fan' would make such a massive cock-up. So Mick, if you review a gig please do some research into the band beforehand, especially if you claim to love them. Anyway, the Charlies played a fuckin' blinder and if by chance you saw Tim laugh and walk over to Martin who also laughed just after something was thrown on-stage, its because I threw a bag of Revels up. If your [you're] a fan you'll get this. I had asked Tim if this would be OK, when I met him, Jon and Jim, their security guard, and he agreed, so don't bother writing a sarcastic response to this as I know I'm right and your [you're] wrong and you should feel completely like a prick.

One to another,
Ciara Murphy.

Michael McCormack replies:

Your editor has asked me to respond to this letter. I have neither the time nor the inclination but feel if somebody calls me a prick I should perhaps give some sort of opinion on my attacker's diatribe. I'm a music fan, first and foremost and wrote the review because of that. I'm sure Tony Rodgers will excuse me. I loved Rob Collins' sound and had heard that not only had Martin Duffy finished the album but that he had accompanied them on stage quite willingly until they got a replacement. Mea culpa. I should have checked. I wrote as I felt on the night and tried to concentrate on the music in the review. Your response seems quite personal but I sincerely hope I don't know you. I'm not going to hone in on any of your comments specifically (Tony told me this...we, the fans etc...) as they seem, sadly, those of an anal groupie. The difference between a groupie and a music fan is immense and so I cannot begin to understand where you're coming from — I mean you spent seven hours with the band in Dublin and three in Belfast!!!

Yours with very little respect,
Michael McCormack.

Not wanting to appear as if I'm trading punches with you but if you check out Backroom Window, you'll find that Martin Duffy played two very emotional sets with the band on the 11 and 17 August '96 and also appeared on the White Room around the same time. These were their first live performances since Rob's death. In the words of their publicist: "Duffy won't be the replacement for Rob, but they are looking for a session kind of a keyboardist that won't be a full member like Rob Collins was...". A later press release in the spring stated — "a friend of Martin Blunt's sent in a session tape. This resulted in a temporary session player — Tony Rodgers (no 'd' required). He is at present on an extended contract." We could both be accused of not checking our facts, no cynicism intended.

Is There a Doctor in the House?

Dear Editor,

As a student of the DT603 Course I am finding the consistent contemptible treatment of myself and fellow students fairly monotonous by now. Music and Drama students have survived on the vain promise of a stage for the last 42 days. We were fools to place any faith in an institution that cannot provide their students with basic requirements for their course.

All "Doctors" take note, here are a few handy hints for future reference:

- *four boxes and a rug do not make a stage
- *practice rehearsal rooms do not include foyers,
- *corridors or hazardous halls that endanger your life.
- *Classes would not be continually disrupted if we had vital class equipment, production materials and adequate space.
- *Rats and mice are not the intended audience when production pieces are performed for "the public and invited audience of theatre / TV professionals" (DIT promotional literature).
- *When Guest specialist lecturers are referred to as 'priceless', you still have to pay them.
- *Internal politics should not prevent the DT603 course from being the only course without a course tutor.
- *A full semester is 14 weeks not 12.
- *When 'Practical work is the essential thrust of a three year Diploma course' it is customary to have practical exams.
- *It is beneficial to remember that the DT603 course is one of the public faces of DIT.
- *Before scrambling for University status, it would be advantageous for DIT to cope with college status first.

Yours sincerely,
Lisa Farrelly.



Saucy Santa
Kevin St Students' Union hosted a visit by the chuckling king of gift-giving (left) when he came in to get advice on the latest line in suspender hosiery. Vicious rumours abounded at the time that it was Aungier St's PRO but no-one felle for that one. (Please forgive Sunday Turd 'news' style.)

Attention All Thesis Students!

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9.30am-5pm Monday to Friday

December 97 Crossword Competition Winners

1. Nobody.
2. No person in particular.
3. Not a sausage.

(anybody out there give a bang? the X-word is worth £60 a month)

ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS!!

Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland
Architecture Centre
Exhibition Programme

Running until the 13 February
O'Donnell & Tuomey Architects - Selected Works

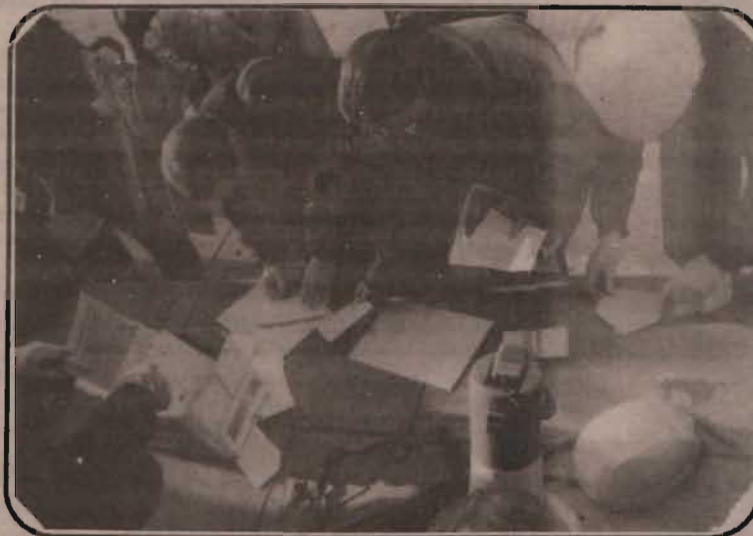
Architecture Centre open 9:30 - 5pm Mon-Fri thru lunch
RIAI Architecture Centre,
& Merrion Square,
Dublin 2.
Ph: 676 1703

Social File

Mexico's Zapatistas

Government Sanctioned Massacre?

On December 22 1997 forty five indigenous refugees were massacred by pro-government paramilitaries in Acteal, Mexico. Survivors identified those who carried out the massacre as being members of Mexico's ruling party, the PRI.



Those killed were civilian Zapatistas who have been in

rebellion against the Mexican government since January 1 1994. In the days since the massacre the Mexican army has raided many other Zapatista communities in Chiapas, destroying houses, stealing money and food and torturing some of the inhabitants. One of the

major Mexican papers reported that such a raid was carried out on Diez de April on January 5. This community was featured in a recent Teilifis na Gaeilge documentary and more than twenty Irish volunteers have visited it in the last year.



Clockwise from left: The Irish-Mexico Group protest outside European Union House in Dawson St. on the 12 January; passers-by show support by signing letters to the Mexican Embassy; an IMG member urges lunch-time shoppers to help the Zapatista's cause.



If you think you would like to help in any way you can contact the Irish-Mexico Group at IMG, c/o LASC, 5 Merrion Row, Dublin 2.
Ph: 676 0435
or email @

mark_c@geocities.com

You can also make a difference by cutting out the attached letter and sending it to the Mexican Embassy, 43 Ailesbury Rd., Dublin 4. It will only cost you 32p and an envelope.

Dear Sir,

I was horrified to hear of the massacre of 45 indigenous peasants before Christmas. I am disturbed to hear that the Mexican government facilitated this attack. It is appalling that the recent response of the Mexican government has been to send the Mexican army to harass indigenous communities.

I have heard reports of the army destroying houses, stealing money and killing animals. Given the extreme poverty which these people are forced to live in, the actions of the Mexican army are calculated to cause further suffering and misery. This is unacceptable. It is true that Chiapas is isolated, but do not feel that the actions of the Mexican government go unnoticed.

Yours,

Eve Arnold - A Retrospective

"I got interested in photography by accident — a boyfriend gave me a camera and I was hooked," says Eve Arnold, the photojournalist who has probably photographed everyone who was anyone over the last 50 years. And she's still going strong.

The exhibition of her work at the Gallery of Photography in Meeting House Square, Temple Bar, covers a fraction of the 3/4 of a million photos Arnold has taken in her lifetime.

Spanning her career, the show includes pictures of filmstars, unveiled women in Arab harems, celebrities, ordinary Americans, Chinese peasants and political events such as the McCarthy trials and the growth of Malcolm X's black Muslim movement. An education in 20th century history, the exhibition includes a picture of one event which many now deny took place: a mass meeting of black Muslims and the American Nazi Party (in full Nazi uniform), where they discussed dividing the US between them.

The exhibition, which is free, runs until the end of January. The accompanying poster (price £1.50) is an unusual, seemingly unposed, photo of Marilyn Monroe.

Going Abroad?

Socrates Exchange Programme

Attention: All students participating in a Socrates exchange programme in 1998.

In preparation for your stay abroad a language / culture course will be offered over a 12 week period starting on Tuesday 27 January. The overall aim of this course is to facilitate your integration in the host country. The course will be offered at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels in French, German and Spanish. On satisfactory completion of the course students will

have gained 3 ECTS credits. the course will run every Tuesday from 5:30pm to 8:30pm at the following venues:

Spanish
Beginner: Kevin St
Intermediate: Kevin St
German
Intermediate: Cathal Brugha St
Advanced: Kevin St
French
Intermediate: Cathal Brugha St
Advanced: Cathal Brugha St

Further information about the course can be obtained from Leonie Carruthers at 402 4673. Please note that the registration must take place before Friday 23 January. You may register by telephoning 402 4673 or by email to learruthers@dit.ie.

Coicís i Chiapas

Inton Léinn Chumarsáide in ITBÁC Sráid Áinsear i Muireann de Barra, agus i sa bhliain deiridh dá céim. Chuaigh sí amach go baile beag Diez de April i stát Chiapas i Meicsiceó an bhliain seo chaite mar chuid d'fhoireann scannáin fáisnéiseach ar son Teilifís na Gaeilge. Labhair sí leis an Examiner i dtaobh an eachtra.

Cén cheangal a bhí agat le Meicsiceó agus le clár Teilifís na Gaeilge?

"Bhuail mé le Éamon agus Deirdre, an bheirt tuismitheoir a chuaigh amach lena gcuid páistí, Aoife (4 bl. d'aois) agus Siobhan (bliain go leith), go Diez de

agus ansiúd, go háirithe ó bhfodar le bheith ag gluaiseacht trén tír go ciúin; ceathrar clainne agus cúigear criú, trealamh scannánafochta, trealamh video, agus bhí video digiteach leo chomh maith. Bhí sé tuirsiúil go maith, ach lean siad leo.

Cén aidhm a bhí leis an glár?

"Bhuel, léargas a bhí ann ar an saol ansin, agus léargas ar shaol na ndúchasach tré shúile ghnáth chlann a bhí ann. Bhí sean-chara le Deirdre agus Éamon amuigh ann, chomh maith (an t-iriseoir Michael McCaughen), agus bhfodar ag iarraidh bualadh leis siúd. Bhfodar ag iarraidh a chruthú dóibh féin chomh maith nach raibh an saol lasmuigh de saol clainne imithe ar fad orthu. Agus sflim gur chruthaigh siad é sin, ach nach bhfuil sé éasca in aon chor rud mar seo a dhéanamh le páistí."

Bhfodar ann díreach roimh olltoghcháin do Mhaor chathair Meicsiceó, tréimhse a bhí baolach go maith, cé go n-admhaíonn Muireann nár thuig sí ag an am an dáinséar go

nafochta seo ar fad le scrúdú a dhéanamh orthu. Agus measaim go ndearnamar é sin chomh cineálta agus a d'fhéadfaimís. Ach bhfodar an-fháiltreach; ar an gcéad oíche bhí cóisir mór fáilte ann os ár gcomhair."

Mhair an scannánafocht coicís, agus d'fhill na cúirteoirí ar bhaile San Cristobal. D'imigh an chriú abhaile



Siopa combarchumann Diez de April agus luí na talún.

April, ag cruinniú den Irish-Mexico Group anuraidh, agus, cé nach raibh a fhios agam ag an am go raibh sé i gceist acu dul go Meicsiceó, bhí ag labhairt Gaeilge leo agus bhí an nasc déanta. Is é David Raine, [léachtóir Cumarsáide i Sráid Áinsear] a bhí dom mhúineadh anuraidh, duine de léiritheoirí an chlár, agus tré comhtharlithint tháinig Éamon agus Deirdre chuige ag iarraidh air an mbeadh suim aige clár a dhéanamh dá dturas. An t-aon choinníol a bhí ann domsa ná go mbeadh orm féin foc as mo chuid costais féin. Thosaigh mé ag lorg urraíochta, agus ar deireadh fuairas roinnt airgead ó Bhord na Gaeilge, agus chuireas airgead do mo chuid féin leis chomh maith."

Cén chomhlacht a bhí taobh thiar de?

"Bhuel, bhunaigh David Raine agus Michael Collins comhlacht léirithe anuraidh, Vinegar Hill Productions atá air, agus b'é seo an chéad tioncnamh acu. Mar sin ba rud ana-dheacair é ag tús, mar nach raibh aon aitheantas ag an gcomhlacht dul agus rud mar seo a dhéanamh. Ní raibh TnaG ró-shásta leis, caithfidh mé a admháil, agus bhí cruinnithe i ndiaidh cruinnithe againn ag iarraidh brú a chur orthu. Bhí siad amhrasach go n-éireadh leis, agus bhí an cheart acu ar shlí, mar nach raibh aithne acu ar an gcomhlacht agus ní raibh criú proifisiúnta ann ag an bpointe sin. Ach chuir Éamon agus Deirdre an-chuid oibre isteach ann, agus ar deireadh ní raibh TnaG in ann séanadh dóibh. Thug Bord Scannán na hÉireann an chéad cead leanacht leis an glár sular dheimhnigh TnaG go raibh siad sásta tacú leis."

Cé chomh mór is a bhí an chriú a chuaigh amach go Chiapas ar deireadh?

"Bhuel bhí Éamon agus Deirdre [múinteoir agus teirpí ealaíona iad faoi seach] ann, nach bhfuil aon chúlra scannánafochta acu, mar sin nach raibh mar chuid den chriú, go díreach, ach go hoifigiúil bhfodar ann mar stiúrthóirí. Bhí siad mar léiritheoirí agus stiúrthóirí, agus cruthaíonn sé sin fadhbanna mar go bhfuil siad ag iarraidh iad féin a stiúradh agus bhfodar beirt mar ábhair an chlár chomh maith, mar sin bhí sé deacair ar uaireamh. Mar chriú oifigiúil ansin bhí fear cheamaire as Béal Feirste, Conor Hammond, a bhí ar fheabhas. Bhí Roger Walker ann, cara le David Raine, a dheim an fhuaim, agus mé féin mar Léiritheoir Chúnta, agus ansin bhí Michael Collier, a bhí sa cheathrú bliain Cumarsáide i Sráid Áinsear anuraidh, mar Fhear Cheamaire Cúnta."

Chothaigh méid iomlán an ghrúpa fadhbanna anseo

grinn. Bhí orthu a bheith aireach an t-am ar fad faoi mar ar labhair siad, cad faoinar labhair siad, agus faoi bheith ag trácht ar Diez de April, an áit ar a raibh a driall. (Bhaisteadar Gleann Dá Loch mar ainm rúnda ar an áit.) Bhí ráite acu le húdaráis Mheicsiceó go rabhadar ann mar thurasóirí, ach cén fáth go mbeadh



Muireann féin i bhforais ag an tobar uisce gar go baile.

turasóirí ag iarraidh dul go stát Chiapas, áit nach raibh siamsa ar bith ag baint leis?

"Ní bhraitheann siad ró-chompórdach agus iriseoirí thart," mar a deir Muireann.

Ar chur an modh agus an chaighdeán maireachtála ionadh ort, fiú agus taighde éigin déanta agat ina thaobh sular fhág tú Éireann?

"Bhí go h-iomlán, agus cé go raibh mé ullamh chuige, agus go raibh grianghrafearna feicthe agam, an rud a chuaigh i bhfeidhm go mór orm ná go raibh baile beag cúig nóiméad thuas an bóthar, San Cristobal de las Casas, le infrastruchtúr iomlán; bhí gach rud ansin, trealamh cumarsáide, seirbhís agus eile. Bhí bochtannas ann, ach ba bhaile turasóireachta é, agus bhí sé sin le feiceáil go soiléir ar fud Meicsiceó."

An raibh muintir Diez de April fáiltreach romhaibh?

"Bhí siad do-chreidthe fáiltreach. Bhí siad amhrasach chomh maith mar le blianta anuas tá NGOs (non-governmental organisations) agus dreamanna den tsaghas sin ag teacht, ag tabhairt airgead dóibh, agus ag déanamh geallúintí, agus ansin d'imeoidis go tapaigh. Agus ní hamháin go raibh muid ag teacht chun cónaí ann, ach bhíomar ag teacht leis an treallamh scanná-



Veronica agus Olga, beirt pháiste ón mbaile.

go hÉireann ach níorbh leor sin do Mhuireann. Chuaigh sí ar ais go Diez de April arís.

"Bhí sé go h-iomlán éagsúil, caithfidh mé a rá go raibh sé níos fearr ar shlí."

Mar gur thuigeadar go raibh suim níos doimhne agat san áit seachas díreach jab a bheith agat, teacht agus é a dhéanamh agus imeacht arís?

"Bhuel, b'fhéidir é...ach roinnt acu níor aithin siad mé! 'Bhí tú anseo cheana? Ní fhaca mise tú..' a bhí ag cuid acu! Ach ar bhonn pearsanta, measaim, mar bhí mé in ann dul timpeall agus rudal a thógáil isteach mé féin, seachas a bheith á thógáil isteach dara-lámhach, mar dhea, trén gceamaire."

An raibh tú riabh i mbaol tú féin, nó an raibh eagla ort ag aon am?

"Dúradh linn go bhféadfadh an t-airm teacht isteach sa bhaile ag aon am, mar sin bhí an baol sin i gcónaí ann. Ach fiú agus sinn ag taisteal ó Diez de April go San Cristobal nó a mhalairt, bhíodh roadblocks i ngach áit. Bhfodar ag faire dos na dídeanaigh as Guatamala agus cé go raibh ár bpáipéaraí ar fad againn, is dócha go bhféadfaidís an scannán a thógáil agus féachaint air, agus bhéimís caillte ansin."

An raghfá ar ais ann?

"Ba bhreá liom dul ar ais. Agus ba bhreá liom dul ar ais go Chiapas, seachas Meicsiceó, mar go bhfuil sé chomh mór sin. Ach rachfainn ar ais dá mhóthóinn go bhféadfainn rud éigin cruthaíoch a dhéanamh. Caithfidh mé a admháil gur mhothaigh mé mí-chompórdach ag déanamh an scannáin, agus bhí an-chuid ceisteanna agam, 'An bhfuil an cheart againn teacht anseo?' agus bhíomarna saibhir agus bhí na daoine seo bocht, agus bhí deacracht agam é sin ar fad a chur le chéile. Ach ar an taobh eile den scéal, ní bheidís féin ag iarraidh ár saoil a bheith acu ach oiread."

Is léir go bhfuil dáinséar ann i gcónaí do mhuintir Diez de April go dtiocfaidh an t-airm isteach agus gach rud leo a ghoid nó a scriosadh. Maígeann Muireann gurb é sin ceann de na rudal ba shuntasal faoi mheoin na ndaoine; cé go raibh agus go bhfuil an baol ann nach mbeidh todhchaí ann dóibh sa chás sin, leanann siad leo gan staonadh, gan laige chroí. Treabh iad atá lán de dhóchas in amanta éadóchasacha.

Athchraolfar an chlár, Chiapas, ar a raibh Muireann ag obair ag 8:30in ar TnaG Dé Máirt 27 Eanáir.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

We begin another year, full of resolutions and new beginnings. Christmas things have been put away and we look forward to the Summer and all that it holds in store for us. There will be assignments and projects that will take time in the weeks and months ahead. Perhaps there is a special person whose company you have been enjoying and consequently everything is wonderful, or for others the significant other has recently disappeared. Well it is new beginnings time and let us make the most of it. Yes we all know, we have eaten too much, wasted so much time and did not realise any of the ambitions that had been planned for the break, so let us begin once more!

Even the resolutions from January 1 are beginning to fray at the edges but we will try to realise that life is for living and people will help us if we make the first move. '98 is full of potential and really we can make of it what we choose. "You are a child of the universe..." Desiderata reminds us and it is the responsibility of each one to carve and forge a connection that is of our own making. We are called to be creative and imaginative and let us realise these sentiments in all that life presents before our eyes.

To all in DIT, I challenge you to give of your best not just for those in your department or school but for the youth of Ireland whom we serve and respect for these are the Irishmen and women who will bring us into the next millennium. We look to our President and the Directorate to realise the ambitious challenge they have set before themselves. We look to each head of School to be responsible and diligent in bringing about the Faculty structures which we await, for we believe this is the best way to serve our aspiring graduates and professionals in the years ahead. We look to each teacher to present us with course work that is relevant and interesting, presented in a fashion that is challenging and attractive to encourage students to extend themselves academically, so that they can give of their best, especially at exam time.

We look to ancillary staff and the SU to join in the mammoth task in piecing all the experiences together so that we, as an Institute, can and will achieve all that our mission statement expresses in words.

'98 will be one of the most significant years in the lifetime of this Institute. For all of us, students and staff, it is good to be associated with DIT at this time. It promises to be the biggest third level Institute in the country and so it is for us to lead where others will follow. This is truly challenging for all when we remember that we are located on 'the island of saints and scholars' and this

title was conferred in the previous millennium. So the standards have been set for us by previous generations, we have now to realise this excellence across the board. Nothing happens without patience and dedication, research and thorough examination. There is no time for sitting on laurels. We must try to give of our best, discover new and innovative ways to progress and constantly respect and share with those who are our colleagues and friends.

We are called to respect and admire excellence, to encourage and educate those who seek knowledge and to live in harmony with oneself and those with whom we cooperate daily. We must be constantly aware of those who are strangers to our shores, either by choice or by chance, for they, too, are part of our community. This is the Year of Human Rights and if a soul among us feels ostracised or excluded, then, as a society, we are all blemished and compelled to look at our use of resources. As we continue on our academic endeavours, we should be mindful of the good work being done in Social Action Programmes across many of the sites. The many hours of generous sharing with school pupils in their own academic weakness has already proven to be worthwhile. These are the students of the future DIT and we have a debt to share, for others have done the same for us decades ago.

Together let us greet this New Year with renewed enthusiasm and with respect for knowledge and those with whom we work and study. We owe it to ourselves and others to share our giftedness and resources with those who are unfortunately disadvantaged, no matter what criteria we use. Little is of our own making, it is often the product of the initiative of another with a little help from our friends! With personal insights and creative imagination we research and publish for posterity and sometimes graduation can be the only goal. For many, herein lies the key to success.

We must always be mindful of those in pain and sorrow, those who are broken in any way, by fate or accident, that their concerns need to be pieced together gently and patiently. In time, and after much healing, they too will grow to run at their own pace and put their own mark on a society that we will hand on for them to pass to their children years from now.

Finbarr A. Neylon (Kevin St.)

Kevin St Welfare Office
presents

meningitis

find out what it is

talk by

Avril Ivory
of the

MENINGITIS RESEARCH FOUNDATION

wed 28 jan
1 pm
rm. 007

*info video showing every
lunchtime*

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DAY

talk

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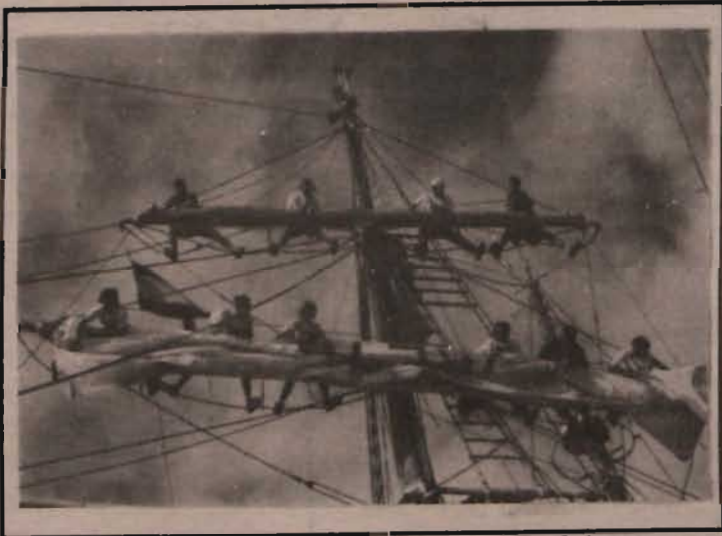
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"Arr! Tom Lad! Be you a nautical cove?!"

Aungier St journalism student and SU PRO, Sir Thomas Felle, journeyed round the Cape of No Hope on the mighty cutter, The Asgard, matey, with weavils in the biscuits and only rain to drink. Nary a whiff of land caught he as he battled man and beast, wind and waves to beach his stricken vessel on welcoming shores, loaded with ripe, juicy pineapples and other exotic vegetables. The DIT Examiner spoke to him over a jug o' rum in The King's Legs, the notorious -- if fabricated -- sea-farer's watering hole. (Well, the words 'The' and 'Asgard' are completely true).

Sailing Away



THE SEA has always mystified me. I suppose there is an old sea dog in me that dreams of running away to sea and spending the rest of my life on a cruise ship in the Caribbean. A place where the sun never sets and where parties never end. Where all you have to do all day is lounge on deck soaking up rays of sun and sipping cocktails. If that is what you want out of a holiday at sea, then the Asgard II is definitely not the place to go. If you want to do something a little different though, it most certainly is.

I made my decision to go on the Asgard when I was about 16. I remember reading a promotional leaflet about sail training on the vessel and thinking how great it would be to get the chance to go and sail on it.

Discovery

It's a very romantic idea really. The notion of setting sails, roughing the storms at sea to reach new lands, new destinations in the name of discovery. The life of a sailor is glamorised also by the notion that there is some heart broken woman waiting in every port for him to call again. With all those ideas racing through my mind I suppose it was no wonder, then, that I applied for a berth aboard the Asgard II for cruise 97/24 (sailing in the South Atlantic Ocean off the West coast of Africa). One of the hardest things on board



to get used to was the speed at which everything seemed to happen. (Perhaps this was amplified by the lack of speed at which the boat travels in summer winds.) Less than one hour after I met the other nineteen trainees I was everybody's best friend. This intense relationship fostered on board is enforced by the fact that one must sleep, eat, wash, shower, swim, and work together twenty-four hours a day. It is a very strange feeling and one I had never experienced before, so it took some getting used to.

Time itself seemed to go extremely quickly as well. It seemed like three years had past since I left rather than



three weeks, when I finally stepped off a Ryan Air flight in Dublin Airport to sub zero Irish weather.

Thirty five degrees was the standard midday temperature, so it is understandable one found it hard to reminisce with misty eyed fondness of how all the family were enjoying themselves sans electricity in the freezing cold wilderness of the West of Ireland.

Old Acquaintance

As is customary among the Tall Ships Federation, of which the Asgard is a member, Christmas Day was spent on the island of La Palma, south of the Canary Islands, with many other tall ships from allied nations. Boat races were held in our honour; however, the Irish contingent fared badly. We did

manage, however, to sink one or two other dinghies before calling it a day and retiring to the evening sun-filled deck with a rather large helping of Christmas dinner leftovers and duty free. The new year was equally celebrated on another of the Spanish islands in the Canaries.

One of the most fascinating parts of the whole adventure was just plain sailing. The ship itself consists of a series of ropes tied to pieces of canvas and a couple of wooden poles and planks keeping it all together. If you know what you are doing with those ropes and pieces of canvas, it can be one of the most thrilling experiences of your life.

Setting the course to port at full brace, with jibs and topsails at full sail didn't mean much to me before embarking on the trip, and the truth is it still doesn't. I don't honestly believe, however, that is what the whole Asgard experience is about. Yes, you do develop a sense of what sailing is all about. Yes, you do learn a respect for the sea only a sailor can have. But the team-work, the group-challenges you face for simple things like conserving water (because if you don't you can't drink) are onerous responsibilities, ones which can only make for a stronger personality in the long term.

Farewells

Everybody, at one stage or another in their life, promised departing friends letters would come on a regular basis. With the best intentions in the world, however, I put off the writing of those letters until one day it was too late.

The Asgard has heard those untruths many times over the last seventeen years, and no doubt my promises were no different. The friends I made were lifelong, and although we did share many experiences that really were incredible, we all had one thing in common: we were on the Asgard. Once that is taken out, all that is left is stumbling conversations about "what are you doing now?" or "do you remember when we...did something on the Asgard?". For that reason, unfortunately, I had to come back to reality

after spending a lifetime in Tír na nÓg. Luckily for me, however, all that happened when I touched Irish soil was that I felt the cold.



HISTORY OF SAIL TRAINING IN IRELAND

The Asgard was originally designed and built in Norway, in 1905, and was the wedding present to the wife of Erskine Childers, father of the late President Childers. The name Asgard is an old Norse word meaning Home of the Gods. In July 1914, Asgard, with Erskine and Mary Childers and four others on board sailed to the North Sea to collect a cargo of guns which had been bought in Hamburg for the Irish Volunteers. After a difficult voyage the cargo was landed at Howth on July 26, 1914. Asgard was sold in 1926 by the Childers family and passed through many owners before being purchased by the Irish Government in 1961 because of her historical associations.

In 1968, the Government formed a committee known as Coiste an Asgard and placed Asgard under her guidance and control to be used as a sail training vessel for young people in Ireland. Sailing training cruises were carried out on Asgard each year from 1969 to 1974. Asgard left the waters in 1975 and was transferred to Kilmainham Jail Historical Museum in 1979 for exhibition to the public. The sail training scheme continued from 1975 to 1980 on the Bermudian Ketch Creidne, built in 1967, which is now used as a sail training yacht by the naval reserve, An Slua Muiri.

Asgard II was designed especially for sail training and was built by the late Jack Tyrrell in Arklow, Co. Wicklow. It was commissioned by former Taoiseach, Charles Haughey on 7 March 1981. Asgard II carries as her figurehead a carving of Grainuail, the famous 16th Century pirate Queen.

BOOMING ECONOMY A FIGMENT OF OUR IMAGE 'N' NATION?

If you believe all the reports on the subject, the Irish economy is booming, as it did throughout last year. This is despite the poor performance of the Irish punt on the international currency markets. To most lay people, having managed to understand the relevant economics as to how and why the country is so well-off, there seems to be a contradiction here: if there is so much prosperity in Ireland, why is our currency so weak, notably against the British pound, given that Britain supposedly envies our economic success?

Various analysts and economic experts have tried to explain the apparent contradiction to us, on news reports and elsewhere, with suitably non-technical terms so that we might understand this better. As I have yet to hear a proper explanation, each attempt leaves me with the same impression: the Irish punt is weak on international currency markets because, well, it just is. This has long since left me thinking the unthinkable: maybe our economy is not booming or, at least, is not as healthy as been suggested.

So, where do we stand?

Last year was apparently a year of unprecedented economic growth and prosperity in this country: property values have continued to rise; foreign investment in Ireland is at record levels; building of new residential and commercial properties continues at an unprecedented rate; personal salaries in general have risen; interest rates have remained static; and people generally have more disposable income, resulting, amongst other things, in record numbers of new cars on Irish roads and record amounts of money having been spent by consumers in the run up to last Christmas. At the end of last year, our prosperity as a nation culminated in Charlie McCreevey's celebrated "give-away" budget, leaving people with even more money to spend. Things simply could not be better.

Or could they? Unemployment is reported to have been declining steadily during the last year and more but official figures tend to be unreliable and if anything underestimate the position because of the seasonal variations and numerous other factors that are taken into account in order to determine "true" unemployment levels.

Without being an economist, I understand that an "economic boom" comes about when a certain percentage of the population is unemployed (a British Conservative MP (in)famously declared a few years ago that the unemployment of some was "a price well worth paying" for the prosperity of others), with a certain further percentage being employed on moderate or negligible wages, leaving the remainder of the population particularly solvent. This means that, by definition, not everyone can be party to the country's success.

I remember early last year I was listening to a radio program when the presenter (whose name I do remember, but who shall remain anonymous) quoted yet another report which confirmed the success of the economy and which forecast that this was likely to continue for the foreseeable future. The presenter then announced that we should all be glad and enjoy our prosperity.

No doubt those who regularly find themselves penniless can join in the jollification around them.

Kevin O'Brady

"This is my castle, stupid!"

Foreign students met an eccentric castle owner and got more (and less) than they bargained for when they ventured out of Dublin.

By Judith Serrano Traveria

A group of fifty Erasmus students trudged through the mud and rain to spend a weekend at an isolated castle, in the Slieve Bloom mountains. We had read in the tourist leaflet: "Castle Ballaghmore, built in 1480 by the Gaelic Chieftain MacGiollaphadraig, beautifully restored and furnished. Only £5 per night".

The owner of the castle, Ms. Helen Gail, was waiting for us at the door holding an umbrella. She was a fifty-year-old woman — far too ordinary-looking to be an aristocrat. Grinning from ear to ear, she welcomed us: "This is Ballaghmore castle, the residence of my family for three hundred years. Here is a Sheela-na-Gig carved in stone — a pagan fertility symbol to ward off evil. I say that to you so that you realise the historical importance of this castle."

Ms. Gail showed us around. On the ground floor there were two toilets, a huge banquet room took up the first floor, and on the second there was a bedroom — but it wasn't big enough to sleep fifty people. And there were no beds. We stared at her, "Downstairs there are some mattresses," she said, "You should take them up in case you don't want to sleep on the ground." One of the 'guests' replied angrily: "Very funny! And there aren't enough mattresses — we'll have to share." We also had to share the lamp — there was only one. Just when we thought it couldn't get any worse, Ms. Gail added: "By the way, do not use the toilets because there is no water in the castle."

Then she left. We waited, thinking she had gone to get some food, but after two hours, she hadn't come back and we decided to go out. In the distance we could see a light and hear some music, so we thought it was probably a pub. We were right. The atmosphere was good: Irish traditional music, drinks and people laughing and talking. Then we saw a familiar face. It was Ms. Gail. She was alone, looking cheerful and waiting

for her fourth pint of Guinness. The beginning of the seventh Irish song made her roar with laughter and she started to sing and dance: "I belong to aristocracy. I am aristocratic and I always do what the hell I like!". She was going around in circles. She was radiant with happiness. Ms. Gail was definitely drunk.

The barman explained, "The truth is that the castle was built in the fifteenth century. It was partially destroyed by Cromwell's forces in 1647. Then it was restored in 1836 by Mr Ely who found a hoard of gold in the land. Ely was shot by an angry tenant and never lived in the castle. The castle was then used as a granary and afterwards fell into disuse until this woman bought it seven years ago and restored and furnished it. That's all."

After spending the next day walking along Sli Dala and a Bronze Age route, we were exhausted, but there was no rest. Our landlady had prepared a simple banquet for us: bread and wine, (and a bit of Irish stew). In the middle of this 'feast', she stood up and called out: "Shut up. I am going to sing a song in French."

Many of us preferred to go to upstairs to listen to techno-music. But soon Ms. Gail turned up to say: "Turn the music off." One of the guys replied, "We have paid to do what we want." She answered, "But this is my castle, stupid". We turned the music on again — preferring to be warm dancing, than to be cold in bed.

By Sunday afternoon we were more than ready to go back to Dublin: Like the first day it was raining and Ms. Gail was at the door, with the same smile as two days before. She said, "I suppose that you do not need anything else now."

Theodore, a German student, replied: "What I really need now is to go home and to have a hot shower.."



Host, Ms. Gail, (seated), Queen of her castle. Mmm..

1798 : Will it endanger the Peace Process?

All can celebrate and mourn the 1798 rebellion because it involved all religions. Wolfe Tone, "father of Irish republicanism" and founder of the United Irishmen, aimed to break the connection between Ireland and England by violent means and to unite Irish people of all religious beliefs in that struggle. It was the making of modern Ireland because it contained the origins of Republicanism, Loyalism, Unionism and the foundation of the Orange Order. All this remains with us today.

How will the various factions see the commemoration of 1798? The loyalists will undoubtedly see it as the routing of Protestants by Catholics. In 1898 there were claims over who "owned" 1798. The 1898 celebration was claimed for Catholic nationalism, for Father John Murphy and "Boo-lavogue" which was in fact written in the 1890s. One could say the celebrations have already begun though and long before the New Year as well. I wonder were we to take any political vibes from the rendering of "A Nation Once Again" when Mary McAleese became president? The Orange Order announced plans to re-enact some of the 1798 battles. Maybe Lady Gregory was right. In 1898 she simply suggested planting trees instead of all the rhetoric, so as to avoid triumphalism.

In the early 1990s the Irish Peace Process was well under way. Northern Secretary Peter Brooke had publicly acknowledged that he found it difficult to envisage a military defeat of the IRA whilst Republicans realised a military victory for the IRA was not a possibility. So if the commemoration of 1798 did encourage a "tiocfaidh ar la" syndrome it seems there would be a shortage of arms anyway. The Unionists, however, are not convinced. Raymond Ferguson, a Unionist councillor says: "If the IRA piled up weapons on every street corner and the army collected them in lorries, it wouldn't matter. Unionist people still would not believe them, we need trust not gestures." It was fortuitous decommissioning wasn't an issue in 1798 since weapons of a different sort were at a premium anyway. The opposition of the paramilitary Loyalist factions to decommissioning presented the Unionists with a particular dilemma last year.

Internment had notable repercussions from 1798 in the sense that it resulted in Irish people through-

out the world organising and collecting funds to aid the republican campaign. American involvement in the Peace Process does not stem directly out of 1798 although emigré United Irishmen, themselves inspired by the American Revolution, were active in founding the Republican party in the U.S.

From 1798 onwards feminist demands accompanied nationalist struggles. Mary Ann McCracken was one such United Irishwoman. She and others paved the way for Constance Markievicz who was the first female M.P. in Westminster when the Republicans won a landslide electoral victory in 1918. Women against Imperialism was founded in 1978. If Roisin McAliskey is extradited to Germany, Minister Straw will ruffle more than a few feathers. Yet the real timebomb this year is Billy Wright's death, more so than the actual bicentenary celebrations of 1798.

There's no doubt about it, 1798 will endanger the peace process. But the thing is that we're celebrating it anyway. Orangemen are marching every year and don't we know it? We need no re-enactments of 1798. The battles are surely on-going. Without 1798 there would be no northern crisis. There would be no Billy Wright. There would be no Peace Process. Without a doubt, Wright's death has been the greatest danger to the Peace Process since it commenced. In fact, he was a bigger danger than the Drumcree marches and I imagine than any re-enactments to come. His incarceration during Drumcree III demonstrated this. Billy Wright is to Loyalism what Bobby Sands was to Republicanism. Both martyrs if not icons in time. "I am me and I'll see it to the end. I am not leaving the battlefield" were Wright's words in 1995. It has to be said. He stood his ground facing death after six previous attempts on his life. He saw it to the end. My guess is so will the L.V.F. because, as Wright said, even if "you find yourself out-gunned, out-resourced, out-financed and out-numbered by your enemy...your only weapon is to be even more ruthless than them". My guess is that we could be in for another long haul of tit-for-tat in Northern Ireland. Billy Wright was king. His mourning will last. He will not be forgotten so easily.

Carmel Killoran

Theatre review

A Couple of Blaguards

reviewed by Eoin Hennigan

No doubt many of us will do unusual jobs at some stage in our lives - but how far would we go? Gold smuggling to India is certainly unusual, but one I'm sure we would choose to leave off our CVs. A certain Malachy McCourt, on the other hand, makes no secret of this period of his life.

This is just one aspect of an unusual life which is being recalled at Andrews Lane Theatre, in a revised version of *A Couple of Blaguards*, a play co-written with his older, better known brother Frank.

Performing throughout this month, the play tells the story of their early childhood in Limerick and their emigration to the country of their birth, the US. Don't expect Angela's Ashes though, because this play has been around for what must now seem like forever, having toured the world in the early 1980's.

This time round Frank is not taking part and so the role of Frank McCourt goes to Mickey Kelly, who performs it with relative ease. No doubt, Frank's recent success with that book will lead many people to see the play, but it is Malachy who emerges as a real character.

From their early life in the "lane" in Limerick, the play hilariously follows the McCourt's family life and experiences with religion - especially Frank's confession on the day of his holy communion.

Frank's introduction to the work of James Joyce, is amusing, particularly as it involves the US army and a girl called "Joyce"! Malachy, it seems, has never held back when insulting people in the US. A controversial radio and television career ended with the sack from his shows because Irish Americans found him too offensive. One of the funniest scenes, though, is that gold smuggling experience to India.

The play loses none of its spark by having Mickey Kelly in Frank McCourt's role. Kelly, long used to working with Malachy, is superb opposite the younger McCourt. In fact, the change from the original line up possibly gives the play a new lease of life, at a time when Frank's involvement may have led people to expect a stage version of his Pulitzer Prize-winning book.

Directed by Nye Heron, *A Couple of Blaguards* is at Andrews Lane Theatre until the end of January, and then switches to Limerick for the first week of February.

Poet's Corner

with Maolsheachlainn Ó Ceallaigh

Keyboard

The secretary types the mail
One eye kept where the phone-book lies.
The light of evening starts to fail
But letters must receive replies.

His fingers type with thoughtless ease
Through paths he cannot help regret.
Too long he's stroked the same old keys,
A juggler of the alphabet.

Too long he's dialled the numbers crammed
Within the phone book's tiny print.
Too long he's let his dreams be jammed
In filling in this weary stint.

Why should he type this heartless scrawl
Of business terms and platitudes?
Or make call after thankless call
To cool the clients' attitudes?

The keyboard's letters mock his plight
They lie there in three static rows.
Could he but get the sequence right
They might break down in deathless prose —

But this is where he earns his bread.
No time to vanquish writer's block
In wrestling with A to Z,
The keyboard's combination lock.

Just think! How every moaner's name
Inside the phone-book lists are shown
On par with folk of wealth and fame
Made equal by the telephone.

Just think! Only the different ways
The keyboard's letter-keys combine
Divide the bureaucratic phrase
And evergreen poetic line!

Just think! The same few molecules
Are tangled everywhere we look
They mix one way to shine in jewels
Another way to squelch in muck.

He rises broken from his chair
To drive back home through darkened roads.
The phone and keyboard linger there
The holders of unbroken codes.

Iconoclast

An errand needed running; I was sent.
I walked once more my theatre of terror.
What years of trial and fearfulness I'd spent
Within these rooms! I felt I was a fool
But now it was too late to mend the error.
But what would I have been, had I not went?
Was I too scared to walk into a school?

I had no need to fear — a dozen eyes
Were straining past me everywhere, to see
The antics of a hundred girls and boys
And not an eye could wander from the task
Of keeping track of them to look at me.
And when they did, they seemed to recognise
As much in me as if I'd worn a mask.

And suddenly I felt a surge of glee —
These were the titans I had held as Gods!
And all the time they had been bound by me!
their lives spent listening to children wail
and being kept in bondage by the sods.
The errand run, I quit the building, free,
And left my dead divinities in jail.

Finding a Proper Pint

If you drink draught Guinness with any degree of regularity, or maybe if you only drink it occasionally, and if you have any concerns at all for the future well-being of our national drink, you may have noticed that it can be with some difficulty that you can find a proper pint. Too many pubs seem to assume that their customers - maybe as part of some kind of a new, modern, dynamic Ireland - only want to drink trendy designer bottled beers. This is most acute in Temple Bar, here in Dublin, but it appears to be spreading.

A few weeks ago I was in a particularly well known pub in Temple Bar which I understood to be reliable for a decent pint but what I was given was instead *vin ordinaire*. This, I believe, may well be part of the general demise of proper pubs, selling proper draught Guinness, in the Dublin area and elsewhere.

About four years ago (would you believe), I had as perfect a pint of Guinness as I think it is possible to have: a decent head, good consistency, not too bitter - in fact, ever so slightly sweet if anything - and no after taste. Basically faultless. That was in Mulligan's (Poolbeg Street, for the uninitiated). About two years ago, I had a similar experience, on this occasion in The Palace Bar (Fleet Street), which in fact has thus far escaped the encroachment of trendy drinking demands. Away from Dublin, a pub that I know in Kerry - but which I prefer not to identify, lest everyone else finds it and alters it somehow - serves the best pint that I have found in the provinces.

The worst pint of Guinness that I have come across to date, in this country, was also about two years ago in a well-known, highly prestigious, hotel in Dublin, shortly before a rugby international. In my experience, the more prestigious the establishment, the worse the draught beer because this tends to make way for wines and spirits for the appropriate clientele.

It may be that the hotel was hoping that the supporters were all so drunk that they would not realise what was being served. When I ordered, the drink that I was given looked like Guinness - although it cost rather more than a pint normally would - but to this day I think that a saucer of rain water would have been preferable and would certainly have more closely resembled what I wanted. Until this point, I had thought that truly undrinkable Guinness was only served in Britain. In any event, pints since have been somewhere in between, although thankfully for the most part nearer to Mulligan's pints than others.

Apart from the fact that pubs may prefer to sell bottled beers because they cost more, there is surely no legitimate reason for any self-respecting pub to serve Guinness of any kind other than that which Arthur intended, whatever else they may be selling. After all, it is part of our heritage.



KEVIN O'BRADY

DX 98

A supplement to the DIT Examiner

January 98

WE all know how it is when you're a student, and you're broke, and you need cash. Badly. How badly? Badly enough to go out with a man three times your age?

That's the solution Japanese girls are finding very lucrative these days. Middle-aged Japanese businessmen, referred to as 'oyaji', which translates as 'middle-aged man', are more than willing to spend large sums of money on the school-girl of their choice, in return for conversation, companionship, and sometimes more.

The girls meet their oyaji on a regular basis, going to bars and restaurants with them. Those who wish to maintain only a social relationship tend to meet the men in groups to avoid intimacy. According to Kumi Kunimoto, a nineteen-year-old from Tokyo, "many girls tend to go out in groups so they don't have to have sex with the guy. It's easier that way, as the guy can't really take you alone somewhere."

Sometimes the girls are taken to karaoke clubs. Kumi describes one friend of hers, who went to a karaoke club with her oyaji. "He told her he would pay 2,000 yen (£10) for each song she sang. She took two of her friends with her and they sang as well. Each of them got 20,000 yen (£100) each, just

Girls for sale

Karaoke and Tamagochis are now part of Irish life. Will schoolgirl prostitution be the latest Japanese craze to hit Ireland? FIONA MCCANN reports on the 'Gucci-for-gropes' trend.

singing karaoke."

Kumi's close friend, Naoko, has been meeting with several oyaji for two years now, but maintains that her relations with them are never sexual. "Naoko has three oyaji. She doesn't have sex with them or anything, but she introduces them to someone who will, if that's what they want. She knows so many oyaji, and so many girls who are involved in that kind of thing."

The oyaji phenomenon has recently become a frighteningly common source of income for Japanese schoolgirls. In a society often criticised for its materialism, labels are important status symbols even in schoolyards, and every girl wants a Gucci handbag or a Donna Karan handkerchief.

Lonely businessmen have capitalised on this by offering schoolgirls designer clothes and presents, making them the envy of their friends. "They do it for money," Kumi claims. "Some girls take the guy with them shopping and let him pay for everything. They buy Chanel purses



and Prada clothes." Brand names are highly prized and necessary for social acceptance. "Everybody has brand names," says Kumi, "How are you going to feel if you go out with ten girls, and everyone of them has Prada or Gucci stuff? You're going to want it too."

Finding oyaji is never difficult. Hachiko square, beside Tokyo's busy Shibuya station, is a well-known pick-up place. According to Kumi, "if you just sit in the square wearing a highschool uniform, some guy is going to come up to you. Or even just walking around, at a

traffic light. They just come up and ask 'jikan aru?' [do you have some time?] That's what they usually say."

If you are diffident about picking up a man on the street, however, there are private clubs that cater for girls interested in becoming involved in this kind of

arrangement. They're known as 'Date Clubs'. Girls register, and then are shown into a room which is watched by a video camera relaying everything to eager businessmen. The men choose the girl that interests them, and the club makes the introduction.

"The guy pays 9,000 yen (£45) and the girl gets 3,000 yen (£15). Then she goes out with him," Kumi explains. "Sometimes, the girls have sex and get a lot of money, or sometimes they go out to dinner with them, or somewhere like that, and try to get the money some other way."

These dating clubs avoid public censure by ostensibly operating as escort agencies. They simply make the introductions and what happens after that is not their concern. "The company tells girls not to have sex with guys or go into the cars alone with them. But the guys who go to the club never hear the same things," says Kumi. "The company tries to make it look legal but everyone knows the things they do aren't legal."

With the government and the general public turning a blind eye to the activities of these dating clubs, it isn't surprising that so many young girls see it as a viable option for making money in a relatively simple manner. The question of morality *Cont. on page 3*

DIT sex poll

MORE than one female student in ten would have sex for cash. Results of a random survey of 100 Aungier St. students show that 14% of women would "sleep with a man/woman for money." Of these, 4% would do it for under £250 while 8% would need over £1,000 before revealing all. Men are much keener, with 72% willing to have sex for cash (although some did specify a good looking woman) and 28% of these, almost 3 out of every 10, would do it for less than £250.

One male student pointed out

that sex for money is "the oldest business in the world. It goes back to prehistoric times when the women went with the best hunter. Today's vice is merely a continuation of a natural process in our evolution." Male students were able to see the commercial side more easily than their female counterparts, with one student claiming sex for money wasn't wrong "because money makes the world go around."

When it comes to a mere kiss, 42% of women have no qualms, although 10% of these would demand over £1,000 before pucker-

ing up. True to form, men are keener (88% said yes) but a moralistic minority (10%) said no. Female reactions were varied, with one female student enthusiastically agreeing to kiss for cash: "definitely, for over £5 I would."

As far as the euphemistic "anything in between" (full sex and kissing) figures were almost the same as for sex, but prices were slightly lower - only 20% of men and 6% of women would charge over £1,000.

Moving down the scale, 58% of women said they would go out for dinner with a man/woman, in exchange for expensive presents and 48% would do it for cash although 16% wanted over £1,000 plus the price of the dinner. One woman said no to kissing, because: "That would involve physical contact," but yes to a meal: "Dinner is

just food." Another said she couldn't do it "unless I was acting."

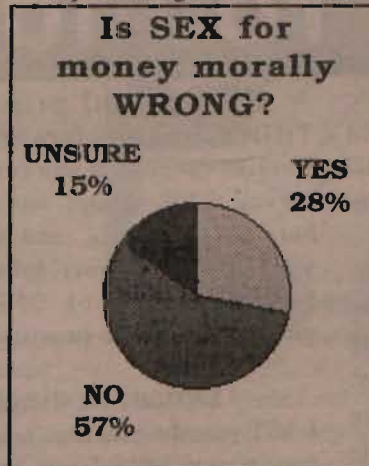
The majority of students questioned had no moral objection to "performing sexual services for money", although one female stu-

dent commented that "doing it for fun and doing it to support a drug habit are two different things."

Are students in Dublin turning to prostitution to supplement their grants? 4% of women and 20% of men say they know of students selling sex. While many of the guy's answers were obviously not serious, one woman said "I had a friend (student) once who was with a guy one night and she just happened to mention how broke she was. The next day the guy gave her money." Another female student said: "I have my suspicions."

One student, however, seems to have resolved the moral dilemma: "I think it is not moral. I prefer masturbation."

SARAH MARRIOTT & FIONA MCCANN



dent said: "selling myself would be my very last option and the only in life and death circumstances." A



Saint of poitin and revenge

SARAH MARRIOTT braved the house of Maximon, the Guatemalan folk saint who demands cigars, money and poitin

ROBERTA'S husband hit her from head to toe with a bunch of twigs. She rubbed the local poitin, 'guaro', into her hair and scattered banknotes onto the figure at the altar.

This was no ordinary place of worship. Instead of praying to Jesus on the cross, Roberta was praying to a strange figure wearing a suit, seated in an open glass case. Instead of offerings of flowers, the faithful had donated money, cigars and bottles of 'guaro', which were piled around his feet.

As the alcohol mixed with the tears that streamed down her face, Roberta wailed and prayed to her idol, Saint (San) Simón, also known as Maximon (Ma-she-mon). This 'church', in the village of San Andrés Itzapa, near Guatemala's old capital of Antigua, is one of the few places where you can see this little-known Guatemalan saint.

Maximon is not your typical saint -- supposedly he helps his believers in all their wishes, good

It looked more like an extremely weird party than preparations for praying

or bad. People looking for revenge or a curse on a business rival, straying partner, or politician will burn black candles.

One of the theories is that Maximon is really Judas Iscariot, the betrayer of Jesus. Judas was worshipped by Catholic Mayans, who viewed him as the saint of the poor because he gave his blood money to the destitute. Church leaders preached vehemently against this view and said he was the equivalent of a gangster. This would explain why Maximon is often dressed as a 1930s mobster.

Maximon's popularity cuts across all sections of Guatemalan society, although 'casas de

Maximon' exist in only a few villages. At the streetstalls in front of Maximon's home in San Andrés Itzapa, Indian village women in their traditional embroidered blouses and head-dresses mingled with urban Ladinos (Spanish-speaking Guatemalans) in European clothes. Everyone bought offerings for the saint, who was obviously fond of fat cigars, fireworks, alcohol and coloured candles. Also on sale were six-inch-tall statuettes of the man himself, complete with out-sized black hat.

Worshipping Maximon is not for the faint-hearted. The strange wailing, soulless drumming and explosions coming from the courtyard were getting louder, and I was getting increasingly nervous. As insurance against someone turning on me, I bought an amulet, consisting of a smudged photocopy of Maximon, a clove of garlic, a few red beans, a magnet and a small coin, all inside a tiny imitation horseshoe.

Clutching my amulet like a security blanket, I stepped into the chapel's courtyard. Drunken men and women lurched around heaps of smoldering cigars, while one man systematically hit another with a handful of branches. It looked more like an extremely weird party than preparations for praying to a saint. As nobody seemed to even see me, I entered the church.

The windowless building was the size of a tennis court, and had the same basic layout as a church. But instead of pews, there were huge stone slabs covered with flickering candles and mounds of dripping wax. Instead of holy pictures, the walls were decorated with stone plaques carved with messages of thanks to Maximon. And instead of calm meditation, there were scenes of wild abandonment as women poured guaro over their faces, into their mouths and over their clothes, while smoking cigars and lighting candles.

One wall was dominated by a life-sized model of a white man, like a tailor's dummy from a nightmare. Dressed in a black checked suit, grey

tie and broad-brimmed hat, with black staring eyes, and a luxuriant Mexican-bandit-style mustache, Maximon was Hollywood's idea of a mafia don. From the waist down, he was covered with a grubby guaro-soaked blanket. According to legend he was originally a Catholic priest who lust-



ed and chased after women, and eventually had his legs cut off by a jealous husband.

Feeling drawn towards the figure, I nervously tiptoed up the steps towards Maximon. A strong presence emanated from the saint and, flinging a few dollars onto his lap, I felt an eerie fear. Perhaps, as some say, Maximon really is a pre-Columbian Mayan god of the underworld, whose powers over life and death are as strong as ever.

Even today, in my own home, far from Guatemala, I treat Maximon's statue and amulet with all the respect that a saint or a devil could wish for.

round the world

Circumcision holidays

MASS circumcision ceremonies could become a tourist attraction in Malaysia, according to Mr Chik, the minister for culture, arts and tourism.

"Mass circumcisions are cultural activities that could be turned into money-making ventures," said Mr Chik after attending a circumcision ceremony in Kuala Lumpur. He said tourists would "enjoy watching something that was different from the norm." Forty-eight boys were circumcised in the ceremony he attended. Let's hope Lord Falite doesn't get the same idea.

Killers and prostitutes

THINK twice before going to the Russian far east. According to a recent survey, 27% of boys want to be members of the mafia, and 9% of these want to be contract killers. But the burning ambition of 25% of teenage girls is to become prostitutes.

Dream destination

LAST year the exchange rate for baht, the currency in Thailand, was 14 to the pound, but with the Asian economic crisis, you now get 64 baht to the pound. And tourism has slumped, so it's a buyer's market. A

romantic bamboo beach hut for two on a tropical island will cost under £2.

Pirated bargains in Russia

PIRATED computer software is the best buy in Russia. For about £3 you get a CD-ROM stuffed with programs. One disk might contain as many as 15 programs, such as: Quark Xpress, MS Publisher, Adobe Photo Shop, MS Office professional, Pagemaker, Coreldraw and Powergou. Two words of warning: before buying check that the majority of the programs are in English, and if you have them, keep it quiet. Software piracy is illegal!

Internet travel

CHECK out the Internet for cheap flights, holidays and info on working abroad. For late bargains and packages, like £99 to Athens, £325 to Bangkok, and £159 to New York, take a look at www.cheapflights.co.uk For last minute package holidays, visit www.bargainholidays.com, a daily-updated site which offers great deals from the big names in travel such as Airtours, Cosmos and Thomson. For seasonal jobs in the US, ranging from ski resorts and camps to national parks and cruises, surf www.cool-works.com/showme/

TIM Severin is an explorer with a difference. He has travelled across the Atlantic ocean in a boat covered with oxhides, from Muscat to China in a medieval-style trading ship, and led a 5,500 mile journey by bamboo raft across the Pacific in 1994. He has followed the routes of historical pathbeaters, including Marco Polo, St. Brendan, Ghengis Khan, Ulysses and Sindbad the Sailor.

These men uncovered new worlds, but with the earth entirely mapped and chartered, the job of an explorer seems redundant. Tim Severin would disagree. "We live in a three-dimensional world and my travels actually introduce the fourth dimension of time. When you revisit known areas, and you have added an extra dimension, that of time, you see things quite differently."

Tim Severin illustrates this in his new book, 'The Spice Islands Voyage', which weaves together his own experiences travelling in the Indonesian Spice Islands, and those of Alfred Russel Wallace, who made the same voyage 140 years before him.

It is this dual perspective that differentiates 'The Spice Islands Voyage' from other travel books. "If I'd just gone down and described it, that would have been very

The Spice of life

Explorer Tim Severin, author of the famous *Brendan Voyage* talks to FIONA MCCANN about his voyages through the Spice Islands of Indonesia

straight and rather flat. But looking at it as what it is now and then moving to another perspective and seeing it as Wallace saw it, brings everything into much deeper relief."

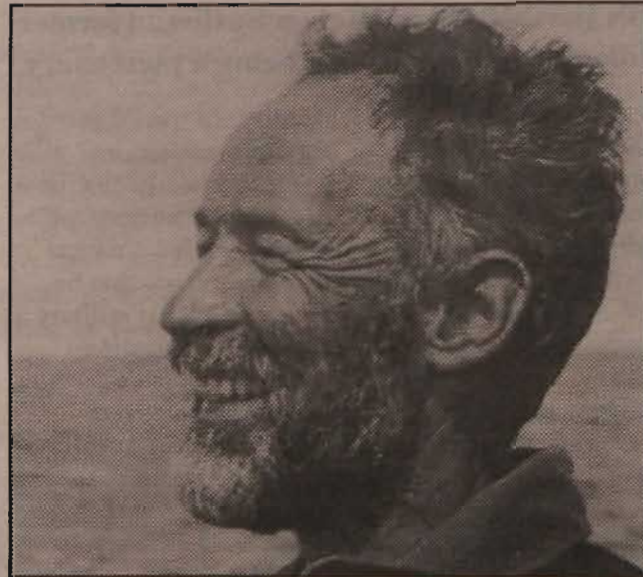
"The Spice Islands Voyage' documents his discoveries while following the path of his nineteenth century predecessor. Severin's enthusiasm for Wallace's work was clearly a major reason for choosing to follow this particular journey. "I read his journals, his original field journals... There he is, suffering from fever, semi-starving... and yet, he's writing down as though he's sitting in the study in Europe. Beautiful prose... He's a really unusual and decent person."

He even admits that part of the motivation behind this project was "to bring him back into public notice... He's something any culture should feel proud of having produced." Added to this was his interest in the changes that have taken place in one of the most beautiful

areas in the eastern hemisphere. "I wanted to make a comparison about how much of the rainforest was left, how many of the wild animals that he writes about, what has changed, and the lives of the people."

"The Spice Islands Voyage' blends history, biography and ecology, recording the many surprising discoveries of Severin and his crew. "I had expected all the sort of things that you hear about the destruction of the rainforests. And I found that. But what surprised me was that occasionally, I found the complete opposite. In one or two places, it was... identical to the way Wallace described it... and in one particular case, there were actually more species of birds than in Wallace's day. It was actually better. Now that came as a complete surprise."

Unfortunately, these findings proved exceptions, and much of 'The Spice Islands Voyage' documents discoveries which were less than positive, of environmental



destruction on a grand scale. "There were rainforests being chopped down. There were other places where people were eating rare animals... The blackest spots were the two cities in the area where we went to. They were really squalid and had a lot of pollution."

Although such activities are quick to incur criticism from Western countries, Severin contests that there is much the Western world could learn from the people of these areas. "One thing I would say that we'd benefit from is their

extraordinary degree of tolerance. They're very laid-back people in many many ways."

The learning process can be a two-way thing, as Severin claims that the Western world could learn from its own mistakes and pass this knowledge on to the people of the Spice Islands. "I would hope that we can teach them not to be too materialistic... They look to us for being materialistic and we're beginning to realise that materialism isn't the answer... So funnily enough, we should teach them the thing which

is the exact opposite of what they expect."

For many places in these areas it may be too late. "I don't see any hope for the cities. It's interesting because in a way what we were seeing in the two Indonesian cities out there were the slums of Victorian England which Wallace had left behind when he went out there."

The prognosis is not entirely negative however: "I think that as long as property rights are respected, the natural environment out there will survive. Where villages and small communities own the forests around them, they look after the forest. When they don't, the forest is chopped down and exploited. There is hope that these really lovely areas will survive, with that one proviso."

Most importantly, 'The Spice Islands Voyage' allows us a glimpse of a fascinating and exotic piece of the planet, through the perspectives of two men, 140 years apart, who set out to explore far-away islands which most of us can only dream about. Severin, who has seen them all first-hand, has documented his journey for those dreamers. "I think armchair travel is a great thing. I'd be delighted if they armchair-travelled with me!"

The Spice Islands Voyages, published by Little Brown, £20.00

21st century geisha girls

From page 1

never arises: "Because so many girls are doing it, nobody feels guilty about it. They think it's the best way to get money," Kumi explains.

On principle, Kumi herself has no objections to it. "If one of my good friends said to me 'Oh, I'm meeting my oyaji today for karaoke, do you want to come?' Of course I would go because they know their oyaji for a long time. Sometimes they just have to meet them for a few minutes just to get presents from them, so I'll go with them. Why not? Free coffee! Two of Naoko's oyaji were really nice. I've met them. They chat, we go to karaoke, they'd give us 5,000 yen each (£25), and then we just leave."

Kumi has other problems with the oyaji phenomenon however. "I don't want to have any troubles so I don't want my own oyaji. Naoko is lucky, but

there are so many bad ones, Yakuza ones [members of the Japanese mafia]. Naoko's friend was in Shibuya after school and the guy picked her up and she went out with him. The guy was part of the Yakuza and was also linked with the police. He had sex with the girl, and then he refused to pay. He said that he could go to the police any time about her, as he knew her school, her name, everything. So she was really scared and just

They chat, we go to karaoke, they'd give us 5,000 yen each

went back home without getting any money. That happens a lot. I've heard three stories about the same kind of thing."

Kumi has no sympathy with those who get caught in these kinds of predicaments. "If those girls get in trouble, that's their own fault. They should have

known beforehand. I do worry about my friends. But as long as they don't tell you the truth and try to hide it from you, you can't do anything about it."

She is particularly worried about her younger sister, whom she suspects of being involved with an oyaji. What initially tipped her off was her discovery of expensive clothing in seventeen-year-old Nobu's wardrobe. "Suddenly there were so many expensive clothes in her closet. There was a coat there that cost 55,000 yen (£250). I was pretty damn sure she couldn't afford it because she works in McDonalds three days a week. She doesn't get that much money!... There's no other way to get those clothes except by getting an oyaji."

What confirmed her suspicions was a phonecall she answered while her sister was out. "I answered her phone once and it was a guy. The guy said 'Hi, what are you doing now?' I knew it was one of those guys, I know the way they talk. I told him it was the wrong number!"

In Japan, where technological development has gone hand-in-hand with a low crime-rate, the casual acceptance of schoolgirls as young as fifteen going out

with middle-aged men for Gucci accessories raises questions about the definition of civilisation. Businessmen with more money than they can spend turn to girls half their age to fill the void that company life cannot. "That money is nothing to them," Kumi points out. "Those guys get good money, and they have nothing to spend it on."



They live by themselves, so they have loads of money to spend."

Such an arrangement may raise moral questions, but oyaji are so common now that they are accepted as the norm by

most schoolgirls. "There are so many girls involved. Nobody can stop it now." Kumi is adamant that she will not

There's no other way to get those clothes except by getting an oyaji

become involved, but the lure of easy money for small favours is naturally tempting.

Schoolgirls have stepped into the gap left by the demise of the 'geisha girls', the young women who combined their skills in various ancient Japanese arts with sexual skills in the earlier part of the century. In a society where women remain second-class citizens, the younger generation, far from overturning the status quo, are feeding the existing stereotypes by falling into their given roles of mother or whore. There seems little likelihood of a change. Most Japanese women accept their situations, and use what they can to make them at least materially comfortable. With typical Japanese stoicism, Kumi shrugs. "Sho ga nai", which roughly translates as "it cannot be helped."

Soldiers for sale or just hired help?

IT'S a highly controversial legacy of the Cold War - specialist military companies providing advice and training to third world governments. Executive Outcomes is the leader in this field, but the South African firm struggles to shake off the 'mercenary' tag with which they have been labeled.

Eeben Barlow is no ordinary ex-soldier, although he does not look and sound like somebody who is widely accused of being a mercenary.

During his military career he was a member of a covert group in the special forces of the South African army during the apartheid era.

"It was decided they did not need my services any longer," says Barlow of the end of his army career. He contends that he left with a clean record.

That was 1989, the year he established Executive Outcomes, which turned him from a faceless member of an elite army unit into a mercenary - in the eyes of the media and western governments.

"All I could do was soldiering," he says about why he established the company.

Last year *Time* magazine described Barlow as a "military marketer extraordinaire".

March 1997 and Barlow, as chairman, is representing Executive Outcomes at the world's largest military exhibition IDEX, a biennial extravaganza of military muscle in the Middle East, the biggest market for buying

EOIN HENNIGAN met Eeben Barlow, a former soldier, widely accused of being a mercenary.

and selling arms.

Much to the embarrassment of the South African defence minister, Joe Modise, who was at the show, the company took a stand to promote its services.

"They could be an embarrassment to the foreign policy of South Africa," a South African official said at the time.

Barlow says that during the course of the show he was approached by three Middle Eastern governments.

Barlow expressed an interest in his services.

It is not the only company of its kind in the world. There are at least two British, two American and three French companies which provide similar services. But his company is by far the most widely known and the most controversial.

It's a booming market, where contracts are worth millions of dollars and where soldiers can earn more money than they ever dreamed of in a regular army. A bone of contention for western governments are the reports that companies like Executive Outcomes are getting diamond mining concessions, as reportedly happened in Angola.

The company has 40 full-time employees and a

database of over 2,000 former servicemen.

Barlow admits that he used to get "cheesed off" at being called a mercenary and insists that he runs a specialist military training organisation which is available for hire by legitimate governments. He likes to call them "privatised peace-keepers."

"Our mission is to provide a highly professional and confidential military advisory

service to legitimate governments; sound strategic and tactical military advice, and a total apolitical service based on confidentiality, integrity, professionalism and dedication in order to create a climate for peace and stability.

"We give the most professional training packages currently available to armed forces covering aspects related to land warfare, air warfare and sea warfare," says Barlow.

As well as sending members to various countries for training, Executive Outcomes also has a reaction force on standby in case its members come under attack.

According to Barlow, the company was instrumental in ending the long running civil war in

Angola.

The reaction force was deployed there, and launched a pre-emptive strike which killed 280 Angolan rebels. Another force was sent to Sierra Leone to protect a humanitarian aid convoy.

The night before I met Barlow, several of his people were under siege in an army barracks in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

He denied reports that his men were effectively under house arrest and that they were to be deported, saying news reports were misleading.

PNG's armed forces, which Executive Outcomes were training, as a sub-contractor for a British company, were suppressing a long running secessionist guerilla war.

"Our people have stopped the activities they were busy with and they were asked by the Prime Minister to remain at their quarters and not to go out until the situation was resolved," he said.

The situation, though, did not resolve itself. A lynch mob gathered in the capital determined to see these "mercenaries" leave the country. The situation also cost Julius Chan, the Prime Minister, his job.

Asked if he would return for the next IDEX exhibition in March next year, Barlow had a simple answer. "If the world remains in turmoil as it is."

As Barlow might say, he doesn't start wars, he just advises governments on how to deal with them.



Executive Outcomes company logo

A future of soft forwards

RUGBY

WHAT has happened to Irish rugby? With another championship about to start, Ireland look set to retain the wooden spoon.

Why is it that in this new professional era, Ireland has taken a step backwards despite so many Irish players playing professionally in England and home-based players on full time contracts?

We have some players who individually are quite good but put them together and you get an unholy mess. The common denominator seems to be lack of fitness.

In our quest for answers to this conundrum, we should take a look at how Wales has suffered since in the late 1980's.

They suffered a lot from defections to rugby league but their demise was more deep rooted than that.

Upon meeting Welsh legend

Gareth Edwards last year, I couldn't resist the temptation of asking him about the Welsh demise. During his international career, Wales won six triple crowns and three grand slams between 1969 and 1979 but just ten years later Wales were the whipping boys in the Five Nations, a position they gladly handed over to Ireland.

"The demise of the heavy coal and steel industries in Wales bred a future

of soft forwards, in contrast to the heyday of tough hard men who worked in these industries."

A tongue-in-cheek response but one with a lot of truth in it. Adapt this to Ireland and maybe we are not producing the men who would be naturally fit from their everyday work.

Edwards went further. In the late 1970's there was a change in the Welsh school system which meant rugby was no longer the main sport in the schools. Allied to this was neglect on the part of clubs to develop young talent.

"The clubs have never really paid too much attention until they (the players) got to the senior clubs. I think there was a void left

that the Welsh Rugby Union failed to foresee, which meant there was a gap between the schools and the clubs which led really from a very successful era which they should have capitalised

on, to an era where they lost their way."

Clubs not paying attention to young players, sounds familiar doesn't it?

No wonder Edwards went on to comment that Lions tours "might be the one opportunity at the moment that players from the lesser countries have to compete against South Africa, Australia and New Zealand on a level playing field."

EOIN HENNIGAN



Taffy doesn't play for Wales anymore...

THE Tamagotchi is the latest toy craze to hit the world. It has already taken over Japan where an estimated five million have been sold. The idea was thought up by a Japanese housewife, Aki Maita, who was unable to get a pet for her children and decided it would be a good idea recreate the needs of a pet. Not only popular for children, it has become a craze among sad lonely business executives. Who needs pornography when you can look after a pet on your keyring?

A Tamagotchi starts life by hatching a tiny cyber pet image on an egg shaped key ring, which costs between £10 and £20. It can be a dog, cat, bird

Virtual insanity

JOHN MURRAY had a happy childhood, that was until this Christmas, when he got a Tamagotchi. John has not been the same since.

or dinosaur. Each pet lives in real time and when it beeps, you must tend to its eating, sleeping, drinking, education and inoculation needs. In case you think there is a technical problem, it is natural for it to shit to its heart's content.

Each Tamagotchi comes complete with a cable for cyber sex purposes. The cable, with a connection on either end, plugs into a port of each Tamagotchi and procreation can com-

mence. Babies will only be produced under traditional circumstances. Both Tamagotchis must be a different gender and of the same species, so there is no chance of a cyber dog getting it on with a cyber dinosaur, because that wouldn't be real life now, would it?

The craze has created millions of emotionally distraught children grieving after "virtually dead" pets. A young boy in the English midlands has developed the first Tamagotchi

crèche. He charges up to 70 pence an hour to ease your guilt. He keeps them in a range of shoe boxes with name tags on each pet and tends to the needs whenever they beep.

I developed an emotional connection with my five-year-old dinosaur. After neglecting it for a couple of hours I returned to find it almost dead in a pile of its own shite crying out for medicine. I feel there may be a sinister plot at work by Japanese corporations to hypnotise us into emotional dependency.

Remember, a Tamagotchi is not just for Christmas, it's for life. It's a mind game you won't win.

DX.98

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GAA CLG

Bob Coghlan

Youthful DIT more than a match for Wexford Seniors

Wexford 1-13
Dublin Institute of Technology 0-16



Comin' atcha like a ten-ton truck, DIT don't give a flying tackle.

For this match against a senior Wexford selection, DIT were missing many of the regular first team players such as Seán Duignan, Gerry Ennis and Enda Hoey. With a number of the team under 21, it was a youthful side that took to the pitch against a team of Wexford men fighting for their county lives.

PJ Coady signalled his intent early on with a great run and shot which yielded the opening point of the game to DIT after 5 minutes. Wexford came straight back into the match with 3 points before Mark Murphy and PJ Coady put over 4 points without reply for DIT. Each side registered a further point each before Wexford scored the only goal of the game after DIT failed to clear the ball out of defense.

PJ Coady started the second half in the same vein as he started the first by placing a 20 metre free over the bar to bring the sides level. This was followed immediately by a point from Anthony Coote to give DIT a deserved lead. Wexford then dominated most of the following ten minutes of play and registered four points in succession before Mick Fitzsimons scored a point for DIT following a great interchange with Anthony Coote. Both sides then exchanged further scores with PJ Coady scoring with relative ease assisted by great points from Joe Cullen following a superb 40 yard solo run, and from Mark Murphy from

almost the dead-ball line. Dermot Maguire then kept DIT in the match with two great saves within a matter of seconds to deny certain Wexford goals. DIT hearts were lifted further shortly after this by the sight of Lorcán MacMathúna returning from injury when he came on as a sub for the hard-working Phil Blake. Wexford then scored from a 65 to regain the lead but this was cancelled out by Joe Cullen and followed up by a PJ Coady free to give DIT the lead in injury time. Wexford drew level within a minute and their relief was evident as the final whistle signalled a draw between the teams. A special mention is deserved for the commitment shown by the DIT back line including Alan McKeogh, Darren Caulfield and Colin McGee, as well as the industrious Trevor McGrath. It was a great performance by the team especially in view of the conditions with a strong, biting wind sweeping across the pitch throughout the match.

McKeogh; D. Caulfield; C. McGee; D. Spain; T. McGrath; P. Finnerty; P. Blake; B. Devereaux; PJ Coady; (0-8); M. Fitzsimons (0-1); A. Coote (0-1); J. Cullen (0-2); M. Murphy (0-4); T. Holden.

DIT Team: D. Maguire; A.



DIT Captain Seán Duignan (right) before pre-Xmas GTC game.

!!Fitzgibbon Cup!!

DIT v Tralee
Sat 31 Jan
Terenure Grounds
2:30

(winners to play winners of
Galway v Trinity
Wed 4 Feb
Terenure Grounds, 2:30)

Sideline View

Happy New Year and welcome back to the opinionated column that is Sideline View. It is getting to the crunch time of year with leagues reaching their final stages and championship games in the offing for many teams.

Fitness will play a key role and hopefully it, and not the seasonal Irish weather, will be the main issue concerning the many DIT teams in the coming weeks (unless, of course, you're a member of the Chess Club and all you need is a room and a brain).

With most of the GAA teams on a winter break, I was reduced to watching foreign sorts over Christmas. On St. Stephen's Day, I shook off the after effects of the Christmas turkey and pud, and made the trek to Dalymount Park. After searching half of Dublin City before the match for a snooker hall that was a) open, and b) not full of teenage girls seeking a companion to give them Christmas cheer, I wandered into the match five minutes after kick-off to find that most of the crowd hadn't even noticed the match starting such was the excitement of the game.

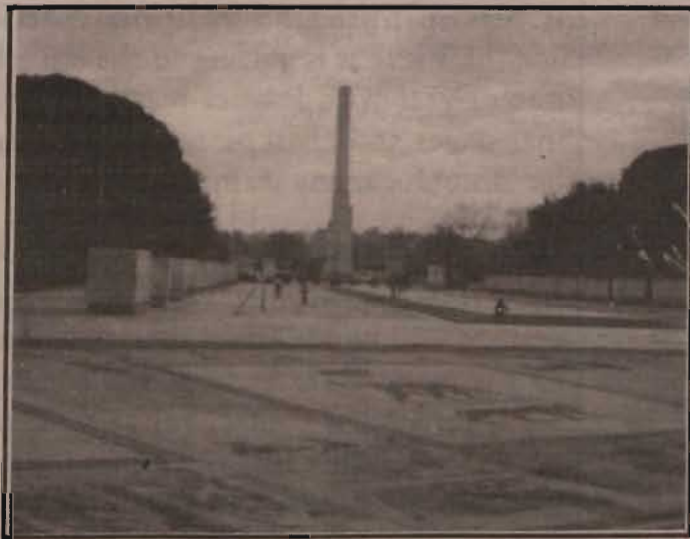
An hour and a half later Bohemians had beaten Derry City 1-0 in a match that was as likely to make an impact on the Championship race as London had a chance of winning the All Ireland. Bohs won the game despite the best intentions of one of the linesmen, who double-jobs as a CBS porter (identity of said person shall remain with the writer of the column). Mind you, you know what they say about not giving up the day job!

Hopefully 1998 will bring me better matches to watch and if so you'll hear about them soon.

Slán,
Bob Coghlan.

FORZA ITALIA!!

Football, Fireworks and Fanatics — All Roads Lead to Rome



The walkway up to the Stadio Olimpico.

Having suffered greatly at the hands of the stormy Christmas weather (the greenhouse in my back garden was blown down), I emptied the coffers (no, not Union money) and headed off to the Eternal City of Rome to see in 1998. Upon arrival at Rome's Fiumicino Airport I asked one of the locals for directions on how to reach my hotel. 'You Inglese?' enquired the man. 'No,' I replied, 'Io sono Irlandese.' Having realised from my statement that I was in fact Irish, the man became extremely helpful and told me everything I needed to know.

My holiday was intended primarily as a culture trip but I was soon sucked in by the gravitational force that affects most Italians — football. As I travelled through Rome, I read graffiti that reminded me how glad I was to be Irish. Walls which read 'Liverpool FC must Die' and 'England F**k Off Home' were interesting enough but another wall which read (when translated) 'England Die — We support the IRA' left me in little doubt that the Italians had little time for our neighbours from across the Irish Sea.

On New Year's Eve, I headed for the Piazza del Popolo for a huge open air concert. In typical December temperatures (about 17 degrees Centigrade), people danced, drank and partied in the New Year. I encountered a group of Scots from Glasgow and Edinburgh, and we, in turn, met a couple of American girls studying in Europe. Suffice to say, I did my bit for Inter College relations with one of the girls who I found out to be studying in England.

Having thought that I would see the night through without any reference to soccer, I was reassured when a guy near me lit up a bright signal flare. Next thing, hundreds of people around me started jumping up and down waving Roma football scarves chanting 'Forza

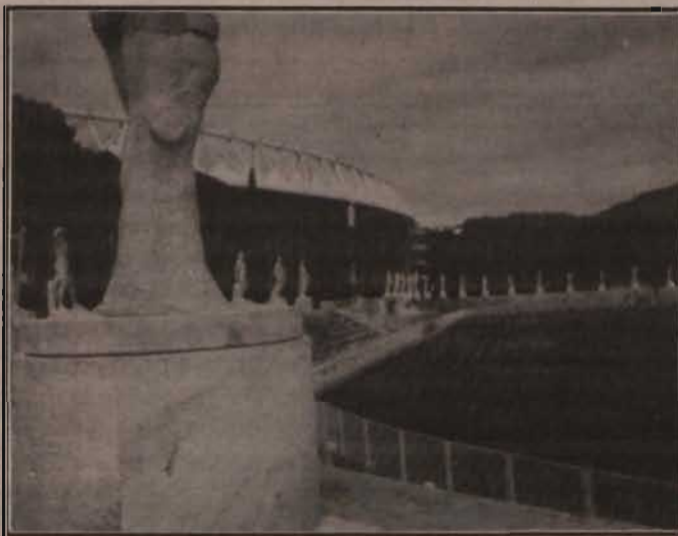
Roma, Lazio merde!' which basically means 'Strength to Roma, Lazio (Roma's city rivals) are Shit!'

I decided against starting a rival chant for fear of breaking the Public Order and Incitement to Riot Acts in one fell swoop.

On January 2, I ventured forth into the heart of Rome, having eventually recovered from New Year's Eve. To my surprise, I came across a poster for the

Rome branch of the Glasgow Celtic Supporters Club, advertising the Rangers-Celtic match live on Sky Sports in the local Irish pub. Images were conjured up of the Pope taking a break from afternoon prayer to head down to the 'Fiddler's Elbow' draped in Celtic colours singing the Latin version of 'A Team from Glasgow Rangers went to Rome to see the Pope.' The following couple of days

were spent visiting Rome's many cultural sights such as the Colosseum, Piazza di Spagna and Circo Massimo. After a few days of culture, my appetite for sport had grown, and what better way to satiate that need than to head up to Rome's Olympic Stadium for an Italian Cup Quarter Final between Roma and Lazio. Along with 59,999 crazed individuals I journeyed up to the Stadio Olimpico in the hope of seeing some good football.



Stadio Olimpico (left) and the training arena.

My great plan was to arrive up at the stadium early to see how it looked before it filled up. No such luck!

Ninety minutes before kick-off and at least three-quarters of the crowd had already arrived. All around me, there were explosions, people firing rockets across the pitch, others waving huge flags hanging off 15 foot poles, and a few quiet ones sitting munching through boxes of pasta preserving their energies for the game ahead.

I found myself situated in the North Curve amongst the Lazio supporters, so I decided to blend in with those around me and purchase a blue and white scarf. To my immense joy, the section I was in was populated by the 'Lazio Ultras' a fine bunch of individuals. The Roma team came out onto the pitch to be

greeted by fireworks from their own fans, while down where I was (by now standing on the seats so I could see over those in front of me) the Lazio Ultras gave barely disguised Nazi salutes and shouted the Italian version of 'Death to Roma'.

As the match started I observed that the front ten rows of the stand were left vacant. The reason for this became apparent after two minutes when Lazio took the lead. I was suddenly lifted and carried forward as the crowd surged forward from the back of the stand. People leapt off seats into the melee of celebration taking place at the front of the stand. The stadium shook with the sound of explosions. One person near me had torn his seat off the ground in delight and had hurled it on to the running track around the pitch.

By half time Lazio were 2-1 ahead and the crowd paused for breath. Suddenly the two large TV screens at either end of the ground burst into life and Stadio TV appeared on the screens. For the first time in my life I got to watch an Italian sitcom on television, at a soccer match!

The second half of the match followed much the same pattern as the first and, as the final whistle approached, Lazio were 4-1 ahead. By this stage the crowd around me were in near orgasmic delight. People danced, sang, shouted obscenities, threw fireworks on the pitch and some fans were balanced precariously on top of the high glass partition that separated sections of the stand.

Around the time of the match when, if you were in Lansdowne Road, the stadium announcer would call the stewards to their end-of-match positions, the stadium security arrived on the running track in front of the Lazio fans. A line of Italian police formed in front of the stand with Alsations straining at their leashes on one side, and semi-automatic machine guns pointed in the general direction of the crowd on the other.

Not surprisingly, the Italians never have any problems with people going on to the pitch at the end of matches.

As the crowd poured out of the stadium at the end of the match, we were greeted by riot police and police helicopters flying overhead. Now that's security for you! I hid my scarf and headed down towards a group of Roma fans waiting to get the bus stop on their scooters waving flags and scarves, and paying little attention to the road in front of them. All in all, it was quite an experience.

As I departed Rome to return to Dublin, I remembered that Rome was supposed to be the religious capital of the world. The only thing I'm not sure about is whether that religion is Catholicism or soccer. Forza Italia!

Bob Coghlan

Fringe Notes

By John Murray

Honor Blackman delivered the message first on Top of the Pops when she sang "kinky boots, kinky boots everybody's wearing kinky boots." Growing up I seemed to be very far removed from the lure of kinky boots. You wouldn't see any women in Ballinasloe, Athenry or Loughrea wearing them.

In County Galway women in boots means something totally different than in Dublin. It conjures up images of farmers wives, wellington's and muck. So you can imagine my shock when I arrived in the middle of Grafton Street to discover that in Dublin women in boots means something closer to bondage than the bog. It took me quite a while to acclimatise to this fashion phenomenon.

Imagine your worst dilemma. Your girlfriend returns home from a shopping trip and tells you that she has bought something that will excite you to distraction. Your mind races with thoughts of what it could be; rubber, leather, whips, chains, or handcuffs?

She goes upstairs and tells you to wait in the living room as she sorts out her mind blowing shopping. You are still on edge of your seat when she struts into the middle of the room wearing "Fuck Me Boots" (FMB's), arguably the kinkiest female fashion accessory ever invented.

You can't remove your eyes from the vamp your girlfriend has become. How could one item of clothing wreak such havoc? The dilemma is clear, even though she has never looked better you don't feel confident to let her out alone wearing these boots. If she goes out wearing FMB's without you, she will distract, provoke and tease. It would definitely be better if she wore safe clothes like dungarees or grandfather shirts on the nights you can't accompany her.

Wellingtons have the distinction of being the only boot made in rubber that aren't a sex accessory, but they can't compete with FMB's. If there was a Nobel prize for footwear, the inventor of FMB's would have it. They amazingly manage to sexualise one of the most banal parts of the female anatomy, while having the added benefit of only being truly effective when accompanied by a short skirt.

On one of my first nights in Dublin I was enthralled by the pleasures of a girl who was wearing FMB's. Everything was going fine until one of my friends started pointing at her boots behind her back. I panicked, blushed, looked towards her boots and mumbled something incomprehensible. She turned to my friend and said, "So what, I'm wearing the boots. Do you have a problem with that?" He replied, "No I was just looking for that stool behind you to sit on."

PUT THE BOOT DOWN

Martin Searson

Netherlands U21 24
DIT 21

Wednesday 7 Jan 98

DIT fought bravely til the final whistle before narrowly losing out to a more physically strong Dutch U21 Team. After a long day, this was always going to be a tough game, in their newly built national stadium.

The Dutch opened up the scoring with a fortunate try, where an unlucky bounce caught both *Vinny Quinn* and *Derek O'Shea* out of position for their right-wing to race 30 yards to score under the posts. Just previously, *Richard Ball* missed a penalty opportunity, which proved costly at the end.

7-nil, and captain *Gary McGloughlin* urged his charges to register a score. After some excellent forward play, notably through *Gareth Ryan* and *Tom Clifford*, DIT forced a penalty, where *Richard Ball* made it 7-3. Straight from the restart, DIT again pushed forward and the Dutch were once again penalised for offside in mid-field. *Richard Ball* punished them once more to leave the score at 7-6. Unfortunately, the Dutch reacted to their lapse in concentration, and thundered their way to the DIT line, to score just before half-time.

A serious talk from captain *Gary McGloughlin* instilled some spirit into a dejected DIT side. Some fine breaks in mid-field by *Dave Keogh* and some excellent line-out play from his club mate, *Rory Keane*, set *Dave Keogh* up for DIT's first try.

DIT had gained the lead for the first time in the match and minutes later they should have extended their lead, except a narrowly missed penalty by *Richard Ball* would have settled any nerves.

As DIT tried to register another score, they were met with some strong clinical tackling and invariably they lost possession in the loose. The Dutch quickly upped the tempo of the game and this time they scored in the left-hand corner. The conversion was missed.

Following the re-start, *Shane Kavanagh* and *Gareth Guilfoyle* tried desperately to break the gain-line, but the Dutch persistently killed play by infringing at every possible moment. However, the DIT were rewarded for their efforts when strong driving from *Rob Colleran* enabled *Tom Clifford* to score just right of the posts. The conversion was missed, and the score now stood at 19-18.

But all hopes of a victory were killed off when the Dutch scored their fourth and final try with only

three minutes on the clock.

Richard Ball reduced arrears to leave the score at 24-21 to the Dutch.

DIT 12
Garda 10

Wed 14 Jan 98

This match was never going to be a friendly. The Garda — currently top of Group A, Division 1, against the DIT, top of Group B, Division 1 of the Irish Colleges Ascent Cup. The Garda, lead by former Terenure College player *David Moriarty*, powered their way to the first try of the game and the omens were looking poor for this depleted DIT side. With ten regular first choice players rested, after a tough, competitive tour in Amsterdam, Garda were always going to start favourites.

Jamie O'Brien opened up the scoring for DIT when he followed up and gathered his kick ahead, to score neatly under the posts. *Brendan Walsh*, his teammate from the Kevin St Kings slotted over the conversion, to give DIT a slender 2 point lead. Some great lineout play from *Tommy Guy* helped DIT to stay in touch, but Garda always looked like scoring. This time their big No. 8, *McManus*, ploughed his way through a fragile defense, and Garda were once again on top. Again the conversion was missed, which proved very costly. After half an hour, *Brendan Walsh* restored DIT's lead with some quick thinking at a short penalty, to dart over the line. The conversion was missed, but DIT held on til half-time, just in front at 12-10.

The second-half resumed at the same pace as was evident in the first-half. Some tenacious tackling from the Aungier St pairing of *Neil Finnegan* and *Rory Keogh* prevented the Garda team from scoring once in the second-half. Also, some fine clearances from out-half *Malcolm Vaughan* relieved any danger posed by the Garda.

DIT remained resolute to register an historic victory over a formidable opponent. The best has yet to come!

DIT Team:
Nigel Grothier (M); *Jamie O'Brien* (K); *Rory Keogh* (A); *Neil Finnegan* (A); *Vinny Quinn* (M); *Malcolm Vaughan* (M); *Brendan Walsh* (K); *Gareth Ryan* (B); *Rónan Ó Dúill* (K); *Paul Weber* (A); *Tommy Guy* (M); *Barry Enright* (B); *Dave Bogossian* (B); *Daniel Lehane* (K); *Ronan O'Donnell* (K).

The Dutch Report

Joe McGrath

DIT Ditch Dutch!

Next day, Friday was a Day of Total Abstinence as we had a match against provincial side Eemland which we won handsomely because *Derek O'Shea* wasn't playing due to injuries sustained in the Red Light District (which we christened The Netherlands — ouch). After the match — which was really tough because Eemland were reeeealy big guys — we had a number of injured warriors including *Frank Collins* (deflated ego), *Nigel Crothier* (PMT), *Garret Guilfoyle* (flatulence), *Richard Ball* (piles), *Ciarán Marrinan* (burst silicon implants) and *Rory Keane* (frontal lobotomy). After a few dry sherries with the Eemland team we repaired to the Red Light Area to liven it up. *Ronán Ó Dúill* had a spot of bother with some dykes but you'd expect that in Holland. However, *Tom Clifford's* Banana Routine attracted a lot of attention and we now hope to get him a senior management position or any kind of position with Fyffes. *Vinnie Quinn* and *Murrough McDonough* did not get into any trouble whatsoever and their mummies will let them go on tour again. *Jamie O'Brien*, *Cathal Nichol* and *Barry Enright* were tried in absentia and found guilty of a number of crimes relating to the possession of intoxicating liquor and pornographic material and will not be allowed on tour again and *Shane Kavanagh* will shortly be awarded his doctorate in herbal medicine. *Daniel Lehane* and *Ritchie Corcoran* were elected the Tour's Most Valuable Players by a committee composed of *Daniel Lehane* and *Ritchie Corcoran*.

The DIT Rugby Club would sincerely like to thank the following businesses for their support in making the Dutch Tour so successful:

AIB, The Big Tree, Bank of Ireland, McGrath's, Hill 16, Guinness, The Shakespeare, The Airways, The Four Seasons.

Particular thanks to Esat for their generous sponsorship so buy your mobile phone from them!

Coming soon: DIT Rugby have won all their matches to date in the Bank of Ireland Ascent Cup — the premier competition for third level rugby. Join us and support your team in the rest of the group matches on 4 and 11 February against University of Ulster and DCU.

Dutch Ditch DIT

Holland U21s 24
DIT 21

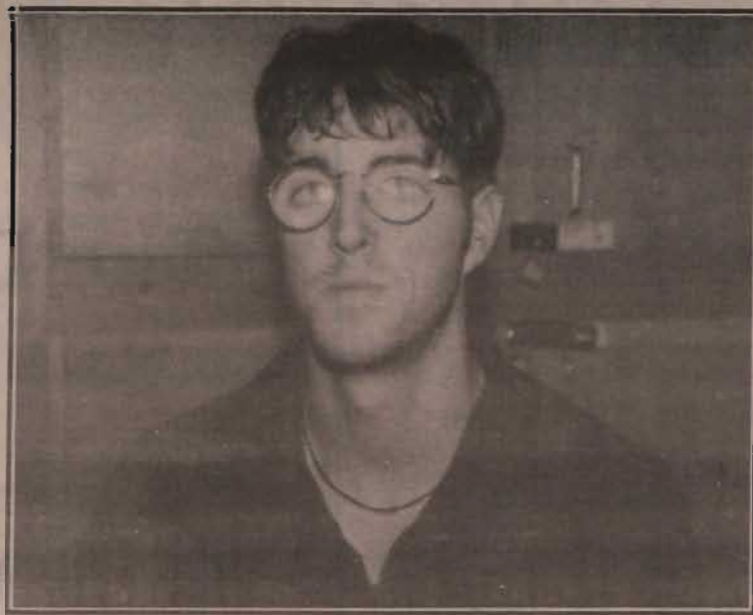
DIT Rugby Club are Proudly
Sponsored by Esat

At 8:00pm on Wednesday 7 January 1998 in Amsterdam, DIT Rugby took on the Dutch U21 Team in the National Rugby Stadium. This was a superb result against a very strong side and except for travel tiredness the result could easily have gone in DIT's favour. Two give-away tries in the first half cost us the match. Numerous pitchers of beer with the Dutch team after the match did much to restore spirits and at 1:00am the touring party set out to check out the night-life. On the way the Tour Director (Acting) had to negotiate his way out of a spot of bother with the local police concerning a flag that the forwards had acquired in the course of the evening. We also had some minor problems with some Dutch farmers who were trying to sell grass and other herbs in the early hours.

The cultural tour of the Dutch capital began the following morning with visits to the Torture Museum which now includes a copy of the DIT's Exam Regulations; *Sweaty Betty's* Emporium for Young Gentlemen, The Bulldog, and the *Mike Tyson* Art Museum (we think that's what its called — something to do with some bloke who painted some sunflowers and got his ear bitten off in a fight). *Gary McLoughlin*, 98FM, OBE, the Tour Captain, *Niamh O'Callaghan*, Mountjoy Sq. Sports Officer, and Tour Director (Acting), *Joe McGrath* were hosted by the Netherlands Rugby Board for a slap-up meal in one of Amsterdam's finest restaurants while the rest of the party got chips in Burgerland except for *Rob Colleran* who donated his to the pigeons. Nice one Rob!

Craig Adams celebrated his 21st Birthday in 21 night-clubs, *Martin Searson* and *Garret Ryan* spent the night in handcuffs, *Alan Temple* decided to become a fireman and *Rory Keogh* became the tour's leading scorer on and off the field — a typical day in the life of a touring rugby team.

Barry Hayes, from Schull, Co. Cork, is a sailor of International class both with the DIT and in his own right. He docked at Port Examiner recently.



Barry Hayes is in his third year of a four year Apprenticeship in Bakery Management in DIT Kevin St. Apart from going to classes in college and sailing as often as possible, Barry Hayes tries to fit in a 40hr week as a supervisor with Lir Chocolates, an Irish confectioner based in Dublin who produce yummy handmade sweets made with Belgian chocolate. (The yummy I can personally vouch for.) Apart from the need for a 34hr day, his life is pretty full, but he gave the Examiner 30 minutes to ask him why he likes getting wet and all that stuff.

When did you first start sailing?

"I've been at sailing since I was 13, and I'm 21 now. A friend took up sailing, and I was completely a water baby, and I said 'Yeah, I'll do it for the craic.' I was very lucky because the secondary college I went to had given us boats to sail so the opportunity was there, and I found that I was good at it so I just kept plugging along. I went to my first National Championships when I was 14, and came 40th out of 80. I was 2 years sailing at that stage so the signs were good. I skipped the first and second level sailing courses [not the usual way of doing it]. Normally if you're a beginner you always do your first level course, to know what you're doing and be capable of controlling the boat. I went out sailing with my friends and they basically took care of me and I just learned from them and went straight on to level 3."

Barry's next National Championships saw him sailing in a 420 dinghy [two man craft measuring 4 metres 20 long] the boat used for all initial youth training. Dinghys differ from yachts in that they have no keel or weight underneath, which means the crew use their weight to control the boat, 'hiking' over the edge of the boat by means of a trapeze. You've seen it on TV.

Of course, playing with water can be like playing with fire, except wetter. Barry was caught in a violent storm outside Schull Harbour when he was fifteen and only sailing a year. A strong gust

whipped the boat onto its side, taking him with it and dragging him under the boat. He was briefly trapped under water with the sail above him, unable to breath. Eventually, he broke the surface when the wind again lifted the sail off him. So how do you guard against such accidents? One word says it all.

"Experience. My helm [the person in control of the helm and therefore steering the boat] was very experienced but he slipped on the tiller (the steering wheel) and because there was so much high wind and waves the boat just flipped on itself. The whole show just ends at that point!"

The Intervarsities are up next. What will you be sailing in those events?

"There's going to be 420s, which I'm experienced in, and Laser IIs. I'm training right now in GP (General Purpose) 14s, testing sails for a sail-maker, which is handy, because sails cost about a grand apiece."

Which of the two boats would you be more comfortable with for the Intervarsities?

"The 420. I went to two National Championships where I came third in both, and I've had about four or five years experience in the 420."

Who are the ones to watch this year?

"UCD and Trinity. We should beat them: we have the team, we have the experience, but we don't have the boats. You'd have to pay about £5,000 a shot for the dinghys we train in, so it seems like a lot in the short term, but it's cheaper than hiring boats for each event which is what the DIT does at the moment."

Are you also involved in the Round Ireland Race?

"Last year I took part in the Round Ireland event, and we raised about £50,000 for Cystic Fibrosis, we have about £49,000 of it so far, we're just collecting the end of it. But we set a record for the smallest boat ever to go around Ireland. We went around in a 22 foot boat, a Hunter (one design). Legally the minimum is 28 foot, but that'll be brought up to 30 foot this year."

That record cannot now be taken away from them, since the proposed

new regulations stipulating a 30 ft minimum will ensure their achievement remains a fixed one. It was a three-fold exercise: to raise money for the charity, to meet the challenge of taking such a small boat around the island, and to gain experience and training from the trip. They succeeded admirably (or Admirally, to slip in a crap nautical pun) in all three aims.

"It was my first real experience of yachts. My job was to get the boat around and get everybody safely home as fast as we could. There was a crew of five and a skipper above me but he had no experience of racing mode. So if the shit hit the fan, if we hit a Force Five [Gale], things really, really would have gone wrong on a 20 foot boat."

So, are you mad, or what?

"Well," he laughs, "there's a fraction of that needed alright. You need ball bearings in your hands and that sort of stuff. But the one we did last year was just a one-off, to see if we could do it without assistance."

They did an' all. This year Barry will take on the Round Ireland with Paul Birchall, skipper of the 20 foot sloop from the previous year, but it will be a proper competitive race this time, against a fleet of other ships.

But long-term, Barry's sights are firmly fixed on the Olympics. It's not his confidence or his experience which worries him: he's got plenty of that. No, what he needs more than anything is dosh. Spondulics, pesos, dollars, bills. It's an expensive business, sailing, and in Ireland the situation is appalling, according to Barry. Aisling Bowman, who, with others, represented Ireland very well in the last Olympics, and undoubtedly had much more to offer Irish and International sailing, has thrown in her lot with the sport, frustrated at the financial insecurity of a future without funding and proper sponsorship. She is a serious casualty.

Barry Hayes needs much more experience under his belt if he hopes to qualify before the 1999 Olympic deadline comes round, but without funding, the battle is well nigh impossible, and he, too, may be forced to give up something to which he has devoted nearly half his life.

Chess Society

Competition for all levels

Starting
Thur 26 Feb

5pm K-154

All welcome

Big Prizes, celebrations afterwards



For more information contact

Michael at

Doctor_Who9@Hotmail.com

Or Contact Student Union

Also Chess Society meets every

Thursday @ 5pm in K-154

LORRAINE COTTER: WORLD CLASS KICK-BOXER

Lorraine Cotter is an Environmental Design student in DIT Mountjoy Square, in her third year. She has a list of achievements and titles of a Martial Arts nature as long as your arm, which would indicate that she could knock the cack out of you should the need arise.

Hailing from Dundalk, Co. Louth, the 22 year old took home a silver medal in the World Championships of 1993 (she was just turning eighteen) in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on the east coast of the US.

She is the National Semi-Contact Champion for the years 1991-1994 inclusive, and the National Light-Contact Champion for the same years and also for 1997. She had to retire temporarily from competing in the years 1995 and 1996 due to college commitments, though she continued to



dit champs

train for her brown belt all the while. In November 1997 she went out to the World Championships in Poland, where teams and competitors from the US, Germany, South Africa,

Canada, Italy, England and Poland faced each other.

Lorraine was eventually beaten in the third round by the US, giving her a position just short of a placing, coming in fourth.

From the DIT's point of view, the kick-boxing World Championships are a very high profile occasion. Lorraine received sponsorship funding from the DIT's Student Services Achievements / Awards Scheme.

Congratulations are due Lorraine here, and we wish her all the advantages and benefits of the DIT's support in coming competitions and tournaments.

Sky News continues to Partridge it up

NORTHERN TALKS

On 9th January, Sky news showed the press conference given by the British Secretary of State,

Mo Mowlam, in the Maze prison, following her meetings with Loyalist and Republican prisoners there. One of the questions, from Eamonn Mallie, asked whether these meetings meant that the prisoners were being recognised by the British government as political, after 25 years and more of insistent to

the world that "we have no political prisoners in Northern Ireland". Mo Mowlam's response was that while there had been no change of policy in this respect, the British government regarded prisoners in the Maze as "different". This was not defined and so for the moment they apparently have no official status other than that they are "important to the peace process".

The point surely is that those engaged in paramilitary activity for political purposes - as in the case of

Northern Ireland - must be political prisoners, if convicted of an offence, as they would in any other part of the world, other than these islands. But that argument can be left to another day.

In the Sky news studio, after the press conference had been shown, the presenter, Frank Partridge, tried to summarise the main points of this and said, twice in quick succession, that the Republican paramilitaries, "the IRA and the UVF", were considering their positions. This was not subsequently corrected; Sky

news seems to hope in these situations that no-one will notice or that no-one will know any better anyway.

Given the size of the audience of Sky news at any given moment - in homes, offices, pubs, hotel rooms and elsewhere - and given how hugely influential Sky's generally tabloid style of reporting can be, it is not surprising that so many people, particularly in Britain, do not understand Northern Ireland's politics.

Kevin O'Brady

CLONE DANGERS, AND PRONTO

Playing God

Ma...I'm a clone and I'm nearly one.

On February 24, 1997, Dolly, the first, fantastic cloned sheep was born. Meatier pigs, woollier sheep, cows that give more milk were forecast.

For years farmers have been looking for this through selective breeding. Dolly was about a third heavier than she should have been at birth. The scientists who pioneered sheep cloning admitted its commercial future may be doomed because many of the lambs are born abnormally large and die after birth.

Sheep and humans are not that different biologically. Prospects of cloning humans in the future are very likely. There is much controversy around this, though. Legally, would a clone have the same rights as a human? Who would be cloned and more importantly why?

Cloning would make it possible to regenerate broken, missing or damaged cell tissue, even organs. This would benefit billions of people who wish for...a new arm? One benefit would be to clone exceptional people. If technology got into the wrong hands though, it could include those whom we have enough of. But

for people unable to reproduce they could finally have someone to call their own. Homosexual couples could now have "offspring". Having your loved one back in your life or a duplicate of your idol may all come in time if you wish it.

Cloning itself though is nothing new. Scientists have been cloning sheep and cattle from embryos' genetic material since the mid 1980s. The significance is Dolly's material came from an adult cell, not an embryo.

Science fiction has helped nurture bizarre ideas about cloning. In the hustle and bustle of today's world most people could do with a clone. Say if you're spending more time working than living. But what do I tell people if they need to know? Long lost cousin, twin from outer space. "A clone is really just a time-delayed identical twin of another person" says Steven Vere in *The Care for Cloning Humans*. The difference between twins and clones is that twins result from two parents, sperm and egg. Cloning can result from one parent cell.

When cloning comes about, people will be willing to pay anything for a clone. A type of black market for embryos could easily develop. Some parents spend a great deal on in-vitro fertilisation. The septuplets born in Iowa last year are the most recent, unusual outcome of in-vitro fertilisation. Who knows how much parents would be willing to pay for cloning their own

children? Barbara Ehrenreich of *Time* writes, "Any normal species would be delighted at the prospect of cloning. No more nasty surprises like Down's Syndrome - just batch after batch of high-grade and generally speaking immortal offspring!" [*Brave New World or what? - Ed*] Cloning from an already existing human will provide the opportunity for parents to pick their "ideal" child, also doing away with labour pains.

Religion is the root of many peoples' beliefs about cloning and abortion, the notion that all creatures come from God with their own certain uniqueness about them. In America 93% think cloning is wrong. This is perhaps why an American scientist is currently finding it so difficult to find resources to fund his experiments. He has said he will set up in Mexico if he is disallowed in the U.S.

In *Alice in Wonderland*, the Red Queen of Cheese and Alice take off running at a seemingly impossible pace, the scenery a dark green blur behind them. However when they stop, it seems as if they haven't gotten anywhere. The Red Queen tells Alice that you have to run just as fast as you can to stay right where you are, and that to get anywhere, you'd have to run twice as fast. Will this be the the case with evolution?

Carmel Killoran

SONIC BIONIC

ALBUMS

Juniper
Weatherman - 3 Track CD Single
PolyGram

Weatherman itself opens this disc and has flashes of potential, and simple but inventive guitar effects that take them above other acts purely because of their creativity. Less banal than the title might indicate, but that appears to be the whole crux of the biscuit.

Little Sister (or Little Susie as their PR company carefully misnamed it in the blurb) is a ponderous, shady piece that's a bit of a creeper, in that at first listen it's hard to stick with but is more subtle than you might imagine. Its unusual enough to merit credit.

Rage is the last tune here, though anger is the last of the emotions that springs to mind in this early-Cult-sounding tune that just might have been stuck on as a filler. It's a lot more genuine than banging a poxy remix on the end, which happens far too frequently. Rage doesn't challenge too much and is not up to anything in the way the first two are.

Lyrics are, perhaps, more grown-up than the music, and Weatherman would seem to be to the fore-runner here. Though being touted as more than just your average guitars band — instruments they can play include clarinet and harmonica — the music didn't live up to the claim. Methinks a softly, safely record company approach might be to blame.

Stay tuned to the Examiner in February when an interview may be forthcoming.

ChaOS

Fatal Flower
Humm Along to This....
(Independent Release)

The music of Fatal Flower is deeply rooted in 70s American music, particularly rock of the ilk of Kansas, Yes, and Canadian demi-gods Rush; its melodic, structured, FM friendly and commercial.

The first number, *I'm Going Home*, is at worst, perhaps, slightly predictable, containing no-hidden-meaning lyrics, and not much you won't have heard before in terms of the genre. It is a decent original composition, though, and its up-beat tempo and immediately familiar tune deliver on the humming promises.

Madeleine, a standard enough ballad, is a Roxanne-tale of a girl jerked around by life, until it eventually crushes her: "She's a shadow of her former self / Afraid of being left on a shelf... They found her body late last night / It was floating in the pale moonlight". The accompanying guitar rhythms are great, fundamental ska.

For dangerous riffage levels, though, *Son of a Preacher*, a Jethro Tull-esque RRR-rock-k-k-k classic is the one to listen to. It might as well be Ian Anderson and co. minus the ever-present flute.

Some might argue that there is nothing new in this kind of music; its AOR, its un-kup, and in some circles they'd be right. But, then, they'd be the same type of people who'd listen to cover bands all night. This is original, and you'll hum along to it.

ChaOS



GIGS

The NME Brats Tour
Redbox 13 Jan

If the tour formerly known as the NME Brat Bus is a preview of the bright young things of alternative '98 we can only assume that indie has no more tricks up its sleeve. There are no more indie songs to be written. The Warm Jets and The Stereophonics merge into one big start-stop spiky guitar thing. Someone could be the new Cast, someone could be the new Supergrass. Does anyone even want to be the old Supergrass? Didn't any of these young people listen to music last year? The kids want slow prog rock. Go and buy Radiohead and The Verve you annoying little fucks and come back with something we want to hear.

Sandwiched in the middle somewhere is Asian Dub Foundation. This is what it must have been



Lionrock, with Justin Robertson, centre.
Get him in the Kitchen, Jan 29.

like to see the young, angry, vibrant Public Enemy. If ADF aren't smothered by molly-coddling, ethnically-correct critics from The Guardian they'll soon be IT. When merging beats and guitars is bad it's horrid but when it's good it's wicked. As trip-hop nods off up it's own ass here are wordy contenders for the future of hip-hop for whiteys.

Brendan O'Connor

Contributions to Sonic Bionic regarding anything musical welcome. On disk or not at all please.

DIT Battle of the Bands

The DIT Battle of the Bands is being held in the Mean Fiddler Tues 27 Jan, Tue 3 Feb, and Tues 10 Feb, with winners being announced each night. Twelve bands will perform in total, and will consist of bands from the Band Societies in Bolton Street, Kevin Street and Aungier Street. Four bands will play every week for three weeks and everyone is guaranteed a great night, four bands and cheap beer for £3 isn't bad! It will be judged by Tony Holohan (Music Soc), Dave Mooney (Photo Soc) and Ian O'Carroll (Velo Records), and overall winners will be announced on the last night, Tues 10 Feb.

It will be organised by the three Band Societies and Barry Smyth (Bolton St Ents Officer). Admission will be £3 and there will be numerous promotions and prizes.

The winning band will play at the Rag Ball, receive a cash prize, and get two days in SONIC recording studios on Capel Street. The second prize is a £100 gift voucher courtesy of Goodwins of Capel Street. The whole event is being sponsored by SONIC Studios, Heineken and Goodwins in association with the Mean Fiddler.

Among the bands to perform will be The Lotus Eaters, Cisco Pike, Paleside Poets, Synergy, Legless, Carnaby, and Soma, Mobius, Watergate, Hollow Point and Smoking Jacket.

We would like to thank everyone for their support and we hope it will continue for the battle of the bands. Thanks!

CLUBBED TO A BLOODY PULP

Influx

@ Redbox

Thursdays @ Kitchen

Jan 31 Darren Emerson (Underworld)
Darren Price (Jnr Boys Own / Underworld)
Billy Scurry

Jan 22 Glen Brady (Influx)
Johnny Moy (Influx)

Feb 7 Ian Pooley (Force Inc, Germany)
Kevin 'Reese' Saunderson (Inner City, Detroit)

Jan 29 Justin Robertson (Lionrock)
Stephen Mulhall (Influx)

Feb 21 SLAM/Soma Records Party
feat. SLAM, Funk D'Void and MAAS

Competition

Influx are offering two pairs of tickets to the Emerson/Price/Scurry holy trinity on Jan 31 in the Redbox (1st correct entries).

All's you gotta do is answer this Q.

Q1. What's Darren Emerson's first name?

Answers on an old mule to:
The Editor,
the DIT Examiner,
DITSU Kevin St,
Kevin St,
Dublin 8,
Ph: 402 4636

Fatal Flower

Fatal Flower are a five-piece group from Dublin who jacked-in their jobs nearly two years ago to pursue a music career full-time. They are due to release a three track CD single independently, Humm Along to This, in the next month or so. Earlier this month, three-fifths of the band came into the extensive offices of the DIT Examiner to answer a few questions on making their own music, battling the music industry, and not giving up.

Was the band complete before you quit working?

"We actually got our fifth member [Liz Lawlor — drums] just as we were quitting. Up until then, myself, Mark and Dave used to work together in the same place and so we used to jam a bit, and we played a couple of charity gigs which were organised through the job, more talent nights than anything else," Colm explains. "We found that we were hitting it fairly well and that we were coming up with a lot of the same ideas and we'd a lot of the same feelings for what we wanted to do and what we wanted to get out of it."

"I had worked with Paul musically, two or three years ago," says Mark, "and I knew his style, and I knew it would work with Colly's. So then we were a four-piece, and we auditioned a drummer, and we got Liz on board."

What unites Fatal Flower?

"Common desire." Mark seems clear on the band's unity of purpose. "We all have the same love for music, and we realised after a very short period of time that we could write really good music together, and it's the same desire that gave myself and Colm and Paul the need to just quit our jobs. We knew we just couldn't what we were doing anymore, we knew that music was the only thing that we really wanted to do. And everybody in the band has one goal and that's to be successful in this band."

And what's successful?

"A record deal. The recognition for our musical talent."

How different are the musical influences amongst the five of you as individuals and how does this affect your own output?

"Well the influences that we have are entirely different," Colm continues, "and because of that, it works great. When we actually get down to writing, there are five people writing. It's not the case that somebody is the main melody writer and somebody is the main lyric writer — everybody gets involved in every aspect of it. And when you have that sort of situation everybody is able to get their own influence in. But Dave made the point recently, he's playing the sort of bass guitar that he always wanted to play. And I'm playing the sort of guitar I've always wanted to play, so is Paul, and the same for Liz with the drums. When you get the big melting pot going, everybody is doing exactly what they want to do, and what comes out is Fatal Flower."

They claim to have a unique bond in that they are nearly always unanimous in their musical decision making, whether writing or playing; always five united in agreement. They're obviously tight.

They did a demo in '96 — they were only together eight weeks — and they recorded and mixed eight tracks in one day, a feat which, given a £10,000-a-day studio and a £20,000-a-day producer would still be impossible if the musicians were not able to nail their numbers in one or two takes per song. They produced a promotional pack which included a brochure and carefully created, and time-consuming art-work. But then it appeared that they had done too good a job. Mark has seen too much of it:

"When you approach people they say 'Look, you've gotta look professional and give it your best shot', and then when we supplied it [the promo package] to people in the industry, they acted as though we were already signed and had loads of money. But nobody bothered their arse checking into it."

Record companies (which are profit-making organisations, after all) are notorious for moving the goalposts to suit themselves as the markets dictate, something which makes sound business sense, but shags-up the creative side of things. The problems arise when you try to bridge the gap between the creative aspect and the business side of the process. Record companies are rarely truthful when it comes to rationalising anything to the creative members of the industry, and Fatal Flower have had first-hand experience of this all too often.

So are the record companies too complacent, spoilt for choice in Ireland?

"Any of the bands who we've met who have a serious approach to original music and have a love for it have agreed that the problem with the Irish music industry is that there's too much talent. They [record company execs] can sit there and go 'We only have to sign ten bands this quarter, we'll just go out and listen to a few gigs. There's enough good musicians out there, we can pick anyone we want.' Ireland is fifth in the world for producing musical talent — not per population — the FIFTH largest no matter what the population! And that's phenomenal when you look at countries like America, which has 265 million people, and we're the fifth in the world. And the talent scouts can just sit there on their arses and go 'Well, who are we going to make this



Fatal Flower l-r: Liz Lawlor, Dave McCormick, Paul Greaves, Mark Verjans, Colm O'Brien

month?" which is a real pain in the hole." Though Mark has said it, the whole band feel the same way, though it hasn't left them bitter about every aspect of the musical process.

Have you been turned off gigging as well?

"Not as much, no," maintains Colm. "It depends on the venue. In some venues they are perfectly up-front, and then there are others which specifically do not like speaking to bands, they much prefer dealing with agents or managers. In Dublin, there are about half a dozen venues where original bands can play. Of them, about three are open to taking in new bands and promoting showcase nights and new-band nights."

They speak highly of the Music Centre in Temple Bar, which runs showcase gigs on a frequent basis, but feel that, like other venues throughout the city, it isn't utilised enough. The regularity with which the same safe-bet bands revolve through the Dublin circuit is manifested in the frequency the same posters can be seen popping up in the same places. It's got to the point now that, had they the financial ability, they would have left the country long ago. Hello another Cranberries, Therapy?, Lit, etc., etc., etc. Do they think Irish bands can make it in Ireland without being forced abroad? Not bloody likely. Mark states their aims.

"We want our music to be heard, we want exposure. Our ambition is to tour world-wide, if we got the chance, even if we were on £50 a week, the desire is the music and the performing and the entertainment. And we've all had jobs where we've made money and the reason we chucked our jobs and went on the dole was because we were lying to ourselves."

So the lesson is 'If you want to make it, leave Ireland'?

"You can come back, and of course everybody will love you then, but no-one's prepared to take the risk."

Will the record company attitude change?

"Not in the near future. They may change their focus [from boy bands, girl bands and variations] to good-old rock bands and audition four guys to orchestrate some other financially viable package, but I don't think they're going to open their eyes and start priming the proper talent for recognition."

The Father Ted scenario ('ooh, a bit risky, don't think we can run that on RTE, unless of course someone like, say, Channel 4 can show us we're wrong...') is all too often the case. Fatal Flower don't hold out much hope that record companies will change their spots very soon, but that hasn't weakened their resolve: if anything it's fuelled it.

Fatal Flower will be playing gigs in Slattery's of Capel St. on Sat 7 and Sat 28 Feb. Give it a go.

For CD single review see page 20

Mean Fiddler

January

Wed 28 Craft, Savage Lucy.
Doors 8:30 Adm £4/£3

Fri 30 Wishbone Ash
Doors: 8:30 Adm £8.50

Sat 31 Groovy Things
Doors: 8:30 Adm £5

February

Sat 7 Bad Manners
Doors: 8:30 Adm £8

Sun 15 The Exploited
Doors: 8:30 Adm £6

Thurs 19 Nick Heyward
Doors: 8:30 Adm £6

Fri 27 Manor
Doors 8:30 Adm £5

Reddit?

F***ing in Europe

Did you know that it was the Irish who developed the art of the verbal sandwich? British soldiers after World War I began the fashion of using fuck every other fucking word, but it was the Irish who inserted fuck into the middle of words: "Yer man Irwin made an absofuckinglutely diafuckingbolical hash of that fucking free kick, so he did."

But be careful in France, where the translation of fuck, *baiser*, also means to kiss. Yet in Germany and Scandinavia, nobody would be insulted by the f-word, because it has no meaning at all, apart from the literal one.

Each region has its own preference for insults. In Spain, the most popular ones are based on whores. This insult, which almost caused a huge fight in a Barcelona bar would seem odd here: "I shit in the slippers of your grandmother, the daughter of a whore". Not blasphemy which we would find shocking is also popular — and many of us can imagine using the Catalan curses: *Em cago en el cor de Deu!* or *Em cago en l'ostia consagrada!* (I shit on God's heart or on the sacred host). And what about the lengthy: *Me cago en los venticuatro cojones de los apostles de Jesus!* (I shit on the twenty-four balls of Christ's apostles).

So how can Europe ever be united, if we cannot even understand each other's insults and curses? That's where 'Your Mother's Tongue', written by London 'Times' journalist, Stephen Burgen, comes in handy. An essential guide to the bad language of Europe, and how to insult anyone from Finland to Turkey (and how to recognise when somebody has insulted you), it is full of fascinating historical and etymological detail about why we swear, curse and blaspheme the way we do.

According to Burgen: "The problem with trying to understand the vernacular, especially someone else's, is that cultural meanings tend to outweigh the literal ones." In English, 'bastard' is not a serious slur — it's often used in a jokey way and is almost never used to mean a child born out of wedlock — but it's a terrible insult in Italy, where they prefer *figlio di puttana* (son of a whore). And as you know if you've been to Greece, their favourite dirty word is *malakas* (wanker) but if you used it in Germany you would be taking your life in your hands, whereas in France it merely means incompetent. And nowhere but southern Spain, would the expression, "Oiga, pichi!" (Come here, little dick!), be the best way to get served in a bar.

In Ireland, Burgen explains, "Some Irish people have bastard built into their names. After they invaded Ireland, the Norman aristocracy found it a useful place to dump all their unwanted, illegiti-

mate progeny...The routine was to give the bastards a few acres of Co. Dublin or Wicklow and allow them to allude to their noble origins by adopting names such as Fitzgerald or Fitzmaurice. The 'fitz' prefix means *filii* (son), by which everyone understood that this was Maurice or Gerald's 'bastard'."

The French have also given us French letter, which they sometimes call *capotes anglaises* (English raincoats) — and the verb to sodomize in French is *anglaiser*. In Spain, *ingles* describes someone with a taste for sexual masochism, whereas in Portugal 'wife-swapping' is called *casamento a inglesa* (marriage English-style). Unfortunately, Bergen has no answer to the mystery of where we get our ideas about other nations' sexual habits.

So does this modern acceptance of swearing mean that there are no more taboos? According to Burgen, "lifting the lid off sexual and religious taboos isn't the same as lifting the taboos themselves; saying fuck every third word shouldn't be confused with sexual liberation. The truth is that 'bad language', rather than weakening taboos, serves to map out and perpetuate them. Rather than being liberating, it often trails in liberation's wake. For example, relatively few people in Europe these days believe that a woman who has had more than one lover is a slut or a whore but the pejoratives remain."

There was only one thing which disturbed the seemingly unshockable Burgen: the Dutch insult people by suggesting they are terminally ill. He explains, "I'm assured that this is quite unconscious and as meaningless as calling someone a bastard or a *putain*. But it upsets me, which only goes to show that, in my case at least, the lid is still firmly screwed down on the death and disease taboo."

But where would we be without slang and swearing? The last fucking word must go to Elmore Leonard, in Glitz: "I bet him a hundred bucks he couldn't go the whole trip, from wherever we were at the time all the way to San Juan without saying 'fuck' in one form or another at least once....He could barely speak. He'd start to say something and there'd be a long pause, like he was learning a foreign language. Finally he said, 'Fuck it,' and handed me a hundred-dollar bill."

Your Mother's Tongue, A Book of European Inveective
By Stephen Burgen (Indigo 1997, £6.99)
Reviewed by Sarah Marriott

Telling Daniel about the World

Letter to Daniel is the most recent of the writings of BBC correspondent Fergal Keane to have been put into book form. It is a collection of 43 short, easy-to-read pieces, all written between 1991 and 1996, when Fergal Keane was a BBC reporter, firstly in Africa and then in Asia and Australia.

According to the introduction, the collection came about following the radio broadcast and publication of what is now the title piece, *Letter to Daniel*, in which he describes his feelings about becoming

a father; people wanted to know whether his BBC writings were available in print and he decided to collate his favourites. These were written for BBC radio's *From Our Own Correspondent*, various newspapers and magazines, except for two which had not previously been published or broadcast.

The collection is divided into four parts. Although there are personal insights into the writer throughout, the first part is the most private, relating principally to Fergal's upbringing and family.

My Grandmother's House is a recollection of childhood holidays in Cork and will be familiar to anyone who had an Irish childhood. *Letter to my Father* explores his ambivalent relationship with his father. In *Letter to Daniel*, he shares with us his feelings and thoughts at becoming a father and tries to reconcile his joy with the suffering of children that he witnessed while working as a reporter in Africa and Asia.

The second part of the collection relates to South Africa and Rwanda. The timing of his writings on South Africa are significant because he was there during the final years of the apartheid regime. Most of the pieces veer between anecdote, commentary, reportage and opinion, which do not always combine smoothly. His disapproval of the apartheid regime is clear, although his portrayal of South Africa's entire political history following the arrival of the Dutch settlers as the subjugation of blacks by whites is arguably too simplistic.

Season of Blood is a graphic account of the slaughter of Tutsis by Hutus in Rwanda and in *Spiritual Damage* he explains how the events that he has witnessed in Rwanda have affected him.

The third part covers Fergal's work in various Asian countries and in Australia. His writings on Hong Kong are again significant because he was there a year before the resumption of government by Beijing. The writing here is generally more reflective. For example, *Sound of the City* is a quasi-philosophical commentary on the fact that Hong Kong seems to exist purely for the creation of material wealth; *Father Joe's Ousing* describes the outing of a group of children which reminds Fergal of his own childhood summers; in *Rajana Devi's Last Moments*, he tries to understand the thinking of a Tamil suicide bomber; *Farewell Hong Kong* considers the possible future for Hong Kong after the reversion to Chinese rule; in *St. Patrick's Day in Taipei*, he explains his ideal way of celebrating St. Patrick's Day in Ireland; and *The Lady and the Generals* is an admiring profile of Aung San Suu Kyi, the Burmese Opposition leader.

Whether or not you are familiar with any of Fergal Keane's other works, *Letter to Daniel* is an informative addendum to his news reporting for radio and television. It provides a varied and interesting view of world conflicts, and, although perhaps combining too many writing styles, it allows the writer to give personal opinions, which is not always possible through orthodox reporting.

Letter to Daniel
By Fergal Keane
Reviewed by Kevin O'Brady

THE IRISH TIMES

DITSU Simplex

CROSSWORD

Competition

PRIZE: First 3 correct entries drawn will each receive a £20 gift voucher for DITSU Students Union Shop.

RULES: Only open to members of the DIT colleges. Employees of DITSU and THE IRISH TIMES are not eligible to enter. No Photocopies - one entry only. Entries close: Fri 13 February

SEND TO: THE IRISH TIMES / DITSU, Crossword Competition, The DIT Examiner. (to be dropped into local Union office)

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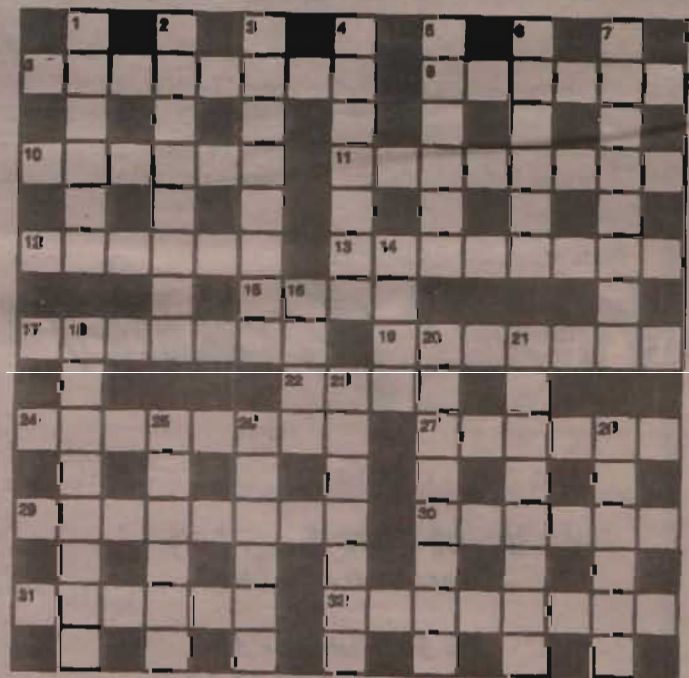
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ACROSS

- 8 Determined, mind made up (3)
- 9 Deep, steep valley containing river or stream (6)
- 10 Pester, annoy continuously (6)
- 11 Extol, praise very highly (8)
- 12 I'd mean to be in the middle (6)
- 13 In raptures (8)
- 15 Trumpet, lead pipe used as a weapon (4)
- 17 Just a faint light (7)
- 19 Fixed up by the editing (7)
- 22 Female voice of the lowest pitch (4)
- 24 Great effort or fight (6)
- 27 Description of an event (6)
- 29 Shot a bow at Jerome Ken's musical (8)
- 30 Without any difficulty (6)
- 31 Monkey-nut (6)
- 32 Game of chance played with a ball on a wheel (8)

DOWN

- 1 Pick up the tab, etc you could (6)
- 2 Place for sun-bathing (8)
- 3 Since Una became such an annoying person (8)
- 4 Rubs or strikes out (7)
- 5 Groups of notes going up and down (6)
- 6 Is a mystery, very difficult to understand (6)
- 7 The winter one is December 22nd (8)
- 14 A short note or a slip of a thing (4)
- 16 Spoken, not written (4)
- 18 This child returns home to an empty house (8)
- 20 Beautiful, splendid, showy (8)
- 21 One who pretends to be someone else in order to deceive (8)
- 23 Tight garment worn for gymnastics (7)
- 25 Relax, ease the tension (6)
- 26 Cave (6)
- 28 Tell a story (6)

For December 97 Winners see p3

COMPETITION NO. 5



Gráinne Fox

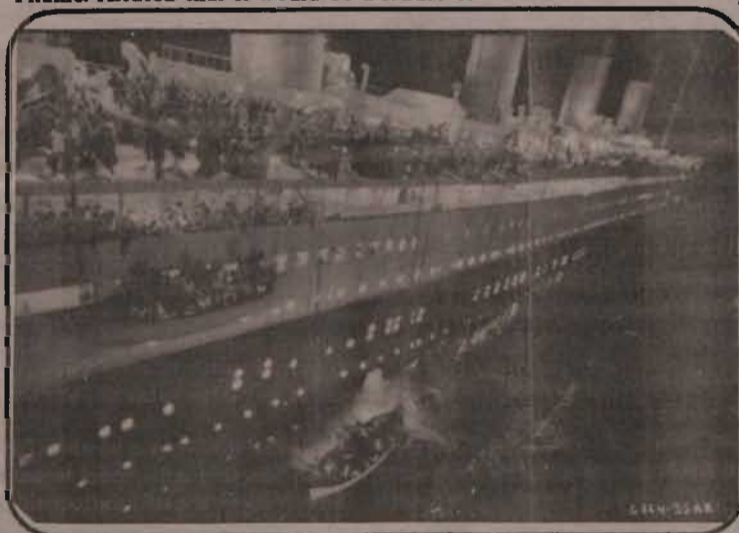
Titanic

Starring: Leonardo Di Caprio,

Kate Winslet, Billy Zane

Director: James Cameron.

Director James Cameron has confounded all cynics who have been gleefully anticipating the film Titanic. Assured that it would be a failure of



The impressive mock-up of the unsinkable ship, as it, eh, sinks.

Waterworld proportions, it has gone on to reap financial rewards — to the tune of \$35.6 million on its opening weekend — and is a sure thing for the Oscars in March. Epic seems too small a word to describe this movie, which is by turns, sweepingly romantic and action-packed with the most seamless special effects.

The story begins in the present with explorer Bill Paxton determined to loot the ghostly remains of the RMS Titanic which lies at the bottom of the sea. As he and his team busy themselves with finding out where the swag could be hidden, a gentle older lady, Rose De Witt Bukater, a survivor of the sunken ship, tells a rapt audience about the young man she met on board.

It flashes back to the ill-fated maiden voyage and we meet Rose as a beautiful young woman played by Kate Winslet, who boards first class with her widowed mother and stiff-upper-lipped fiancé Cal, played by the dashing Billy Zane. A bit of a rebel is our young Rose, who finds herself mixing with upper class she does not like, engaged to a man she does not love and a life of tedium and dinner parties stretches before her. Seeing no other way out, she decides to grit her teeth and jump overboard, only to be saved by 3rd class passenger Jack Dawson — Leonardo Di Caprio.

A friendship strikes up between the unlikely couple and for the first two hours of this three and a quarter hour movie, we follow their budding romance. Like a lot of period films, issues of class and the rigid nature of Edwardian society crop up from time to time, especially when Jack meets the rich folk for dinner and the dastardly Cal tries to undo him. Rose's mother is none too fond of him either, as she sees her daughter's marriage as the only way she can ever retain their place in Bostonian society, her husband died leaving them penniless. For about the final hour of the film — and I'm not giving anything away here — the action kicks in as the lovers scramble down flooded corridors, try to escape the evil clutches of Cal's manservant and struggle to survive as the Titanic finally starts to sink.

Stories about trouble on the set of Titanic have been in the media ever since shooting began. Talk of ill-treatment reached hysterics when Kate

Winslet complained of nearly drowning twice during a shot, food poisoning struck the crew and many aspenions were cast upon the marbles of Captain Cameron being lost and rolling around on deck.

But here Cameron has brought us a masterful film and dispelled all doubts about his sanity. Titanic is made in the same vein as *Gone With The Wind*, old fashioned romance on a grand scale injected with modern action packed effects.

The attention to detail is meticulous, the exterior shooting set especially built was 755 feet long. The special effects are the most carefully crafted I have ever seen, but you would expect no less from the director of *The Abyss* and the *Terminator* films, and he does not disappoint. Apart from various stunning shots of the ship itself pulling out from the dock and expert crowd scenes, watch out for the shot where Rose is spotted amongst the thousands of people flailing around in the water the night the ship sank, it

truly takes your breath away.

Kate Winslet turns in a great performance as young rebellious Rose who falls in love with the rather handsome Leonardo Di Caprio as Jack, who is here thoroughly charming and natural. In fact, the strength of the two lead's performances make the "poor boy meets rich girl" plotline wholly believable. Kathy Bates also stars as one of the more famous survivors, Molly Brown. Romantically moving, genuinely enthralling, go see this film.

Starship Troopers

Starring: Casper Van Dien, Denise

Richards, Dina Meyer.

Director: Paul Verhoeven.

When Robocop was released in 1987, director Paul Verhoeven said of Science Fiction; "...SF should always be poetic, it has to do with the divine and with God or other levels of paradise... that you want to believe in". I am not a sci-fi fan and perhaps that leaves me at a disadvantage in trying to articulate in a positive way exactly what I thought of *Starship Troopers*.

Set 5,000 years into the future, this movie charts the exploits of young idealistic high school graduates who sign up for the army. Planet Earth is at war with a race of giant alien insects. Johnny Rico (Casper Van Dien) volunteers for the mobile infantry, while his girlfriend, Carmen (Denise Richards) joins the Fleet Academy and has ambitions to become a starship pilot. Their friend, Carl (Neil Patrick Harris), is accepted to military intelligence.

They go their separate ways and begin training. Rico encounters the usual rigours of boot camp and meets up with old school friend Dizzy Flores (Dina Meyer), who still has a crush on him. Due to his carelessness during a training exercise one of his friends gets killed and he is promptly punished. He begins to realise that he may not be cut out for this army lark and is about to leave when he finds out that his home town of Buenos Aires has been destroyed, his parents have been killed

and Earth is preparing to go to war with the Arachnids. Naturally angered at the idea of gigantic spiders wiping out his turf, Rico decides to plead for his place back with his battalion and goes to war.

What follows is a barrage of violence where Rico proves himself in battle and within two shakes of a lamb's tail, our cheesy, all-American, he-of-the-chiselled-jaw, hero becomes lieutenant of his own platoon.

Starship Troopers is based on the 50's novel of the same title by Robert Heinlen, which is regarded as the classic Sci Fi novel from that time. Verhoeven has changed much of what was good in the book and brought gore and violence to the forefront. The novel was more of a social commentary and had intimated on the futility of war; it was not glorified, whereas the movie leaves a lot to be desired. The scene where one of the insect brains is captured and the mind reading Carl can tell that it is scared of the soldiers is one of the more confusing moments in the film. Was Verhoeven hoping that his audience would see that he was taking the piss and laugh along? Or indeed, was he taking the piss at all?

According to the production notes, the script had been worked on for two years...it doesn't show. From the virtually unknown cast gathered from the talent pools that are Melrose Place and Beverly Hills 90210, nobody apart from Dina Meyer acquires themselves too well in the acting stakes. Paul Verhoeven may have been paying homage to the 50's B movie and Casper Van Dien certainly acts like he has just wandered in from an episode of *The Twilight Zone*. Richards is particularly annoying as his selfish girlfriend and because this leaves the audience not really giving a toss whether they meet up again or not, the half-hearted romantic subplot is superfluous. Harris has forsaken the white coat of Doogie Howser for a black leather gestapo look as he stomps around trying to find out what exactly the Arachnids are after and why they have started to suck peoples brains out.

Some have found that they enjoyed the film specifically because it was so ludicrous with laughable acting and a seriously dodgy script. However, without decent script and believable actors, it's a lot to ask of an audience to depend upon the effects for their only enjoyment.

As with all bad B movies (and indeed with Verhoeven's mega turkey *Showgirls*, which is now enjoying revitalised interest within the cross-dressing community in America) it could become a cult classic, although exactly why is beyond me. "Poetry" and "Divinity" were distinctly lacking.

Resurrection Man

Starring: Stuart Townsend,

Brenda Fricker, James Nesbitt.

Director: Marc Evans.

Based on the novel *Resurrection Man* written by Eoin McNamee, this film tells the story of a group of young men who get caught up in a bloody killing spree in Belfast during the seventies and the journalist who tries to track them down.

Stuart Townsend plays Victor Kelly, the leader of the gang of killers, charming and persuasive, he loves his mother (Brenda Fricker), and has the rest of the group in the palm of his hand. He is the instigator of mindless murders, the gang go out at night in their car to hunt down anyone who happens to be wandering home from the pub. They become known to the police as a pattern forms and their trademark is to always use knives.

Ryan (James Nesbitt) is the alcoholic journalist intent on finding out their motives for committing such cruel and brutal murders; his marriage in ruins, he becomes obsessed with finding the head man Victor, who is now a feared local legend. Meanwhile, the gang is terrorising the streets and Victor himself becomes slightly unravelled. He starts to lose his grip on reality

and becomes almost psychotic, as he begins to kill even more indiscriminately, his own friends and admirers. A routine knee capping goes wrong and one of Victor's friends is brought in for questioning by Herbie (played by Derek Thompson, with a nifty northern accent, better known as Charlie from *Casualty*). Ryan is now hot on the trail of the gang as he is getting tip offs from an informer and has encountered Victor's girlfriend along the way.

Unlike many other films about the North, politics, although an obvious element in the situation, is not the reason why the Victor goes off the rails, he develops a thirst for the most gruesome killings purely out of his own psychosis.

All the performances are good, if some actors underused — John Hannah (as the previous top dog McClure) and Sean Mc Ginley (as an evil preacher) — yet there was something lacking by way of explanation as to why Victor turned out the way he did. Coupled with many torture scenes which are not so much graphic as simply unnecessary, Not an easy watch.



Dizzy, Johnny and Sugar show off their big weapons to an unimpressed ant.

Whether or not you are intended to take this kind of film seriously is ultimately up to the individual. If you go along with the idea of seeing these American teenagers fighting against giant insects and getting their limbs torn off repeatedly you may even enjoy it. The Computer Generated Images create some good effects in the alien creatures themselves and should please some Verhoeven fans. The media break motif from *Robocop* is re-employed here as the Fed Net which gives you the option of seeing more of the gruesome tests carried out on the captured insects.



Club USI

SUN

PREMIERSHIP FOOTBALL

[MONTHLY DRAW FOR A SONY PLAYSTATION]

MON

KARAOKE - CARLSBERG PROMOTION

[MONTHLY DRAW FOR MATCH TICKETS]

TUE

HEADPHONE SEX ON4DEX

[RESIDENT CHRIS GOLDING WITH GUEST DJS]

WED

SEVENTH HEVIN

[DJ MICK GLYNN]

THU

GUINNESS PROMOTIONS

[DJ, PRIZES & GIVE AWAYS]

FRI

DJ SEAN HARLEY

SAT

DJ CHRIS GOLDING

Hanging out in the city - Club USI - Temple Bar

OPEN TO 11.30PM

OPEN TO 1AM