

Garda, RUC bands liven a Limerick winter's eve

By JESSICA QUINN

HISTORY was made when the Royal Ulster Constabulary band arrived in Limerick to play in a special cross border concert for peace.

They had such a good time, it may not be long before they come back, say the RUC.

While there are no immediate plans for another concert, it is not being ruled out, says Inspector Garry White, community affairs officer

with the RUC.

The band performed alongside the Garda Síochána band for the first time in the Republic. They have already played together in Belfast.

Inspector Garry White was one of the visitors from the North who came for the concert for peace.

"This was very much a historic occasion because it was the first time that we had played south of the border," he said.

The concert, entitled Gabriel's Message, a concert for peace and reconciliation was organised by the Irish Peace Institute.

On the night, Ann McCabe, widow of murdered Detective Jerry McCabe, recited a poem of peace.

Local stars Shirley Keane, Owen Gilhooly and the Millennium North-South Youth choir featuring students from Bruff, Cashel, and the North performed.

During the concert, the individual members of the RUC and Garda bands sat side by side.

"This looks very symbolic, the combined bands together making one big band," said Insp White.

Insp White had already

been to Limerick through his work with the Irish Peace Institute.

He said he was very impressed with what he saw on this trip, particularly the University Concert Hall where the concert was held.

Another concert may be on the way, revealed Inspector White.

"That avenue is always open to be explored," he stated, "We have just finished this concert, but another is not something to rule out."

"There is no doubt that these concerts achieve a celebration of peace.

"People are coming out in the cold November night to indicate their support for peace, and the RUC is very proud to be associated with the Irish Peace Institute, over the last number of years, and we hope to continue that."

Dorothy Cantrell, of the Irish Peace Institute, explained how these concerts helped to promote peace.

"Music knows no bounds—they are all just musicians," she explained.

"These concerts heighten awareness and people build onto it."

"There is also an awful lot of networking done, and it's a tremendous opportunity which opens up corridors between north and south."

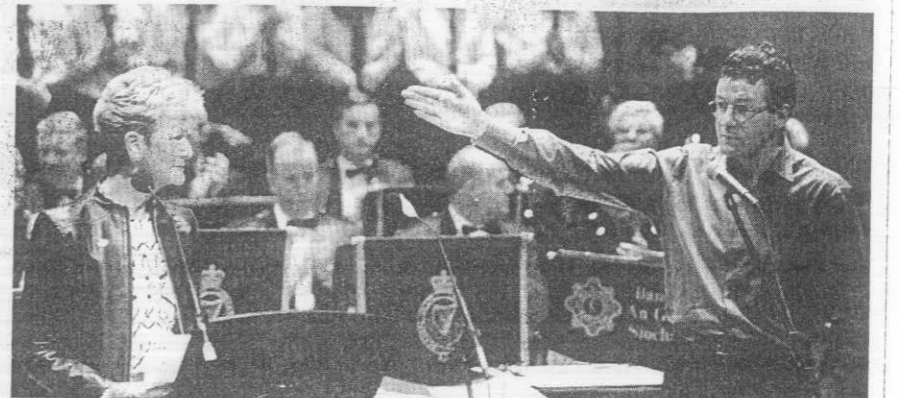
The concert was composed and produced by Dr Martin Barrett.

Conductors on the night were Inspector Billy Byrne, of the Garda Band, and Superintendent Barrie Clifton, of the band of the RUC.

Michael Shannon, the new chairman of the Irish Peace Institute, welcomed all of the musicians to this historical occasion.



A trombone player with the band of the RUC.



Ann McCabe reads a poem for peace during the concert for Peace and Reconciliation. She is introduced by Dr Martin Barrett, who conducted the Millennium Youth Choir and compered the evening.



Detective Garda Oliver Stapleton in full flight at the concert for peace and reconciliation at the University Concert Hall. In the background are members of the combined bands of the RUC and the Garda Síochána.

