

By LEADER REPORTER

A RECENT sponsored "row" raised £1,000 for Limerick Boat Club, it was disclosed at its annual dinner in the clubhouse — the first to be held there for several years — on Saturday night last.

But the heavy Government tax on equipment was criticised by the club president, Mr. Martin Connery, who pointed out that the cost of a boat could be raised considerably by VAT.

A fashion show was held in the club premises, the first ever to be held there, on Monday night of this week, in an effort to raise funds.

Proposing the toast to Ireland, Mr. Connery, declared: "Looking at the different age groups here tonight, from the younger to the more senior members, I have no fear for the future. We have been 113 years on the water, without cease, and looking at the attendance tonight we will be many years more on the water."

**Encouragement**

He went on: "We have one of the youngest committees in the history of the club, and the encouragement that they are getting from the older members is very heart-warming."

But he commented: "Every year, I have asked the Government and I will ask them again, to help rowing not with finance but with fairness."

"If we buy a boat in England, we have to pay £6,000 sterling, but when we get it here, it costs us over £9,000 because of Government taxation. We have to pay £150 each for oars."

"We are finding it harder and harder to raise money for equipment."

He said that, on the following Monday night, there would be a fashion show in the clubhouse, in order to help raise funds — the first ever in the history of the club.

Proposing the toast to Limerick Boat Club, vice president, Mr. Paddy McKenna, said: "We are 113 years young. I have been involved in the boat club for a long time, and it is a long time indeed since I have seen such enthusiasm."

"John Delaney and the other young members have a lot to do with the success of our new kitchen outside, and if we keep going on the water as we are going on land, there is no fear for Limerick Boat Club."

**Castletroy**

As an aside, he remarked: "I must congratulate Charlie O'Connor, life vice-president, who has been elected president of Castletroy Golf Club tonight."

In a brief address, before proposing the toast to the crews, Mr. Tony Barry, vice president, congratulated the incoming captain, Mr. Niall O'Brien, wishing him the best for the coming season.

"He told me that he has 12 novices and several crews in training, at the moment, and I hope he does well," he remarked.

He extended his thanks to Mr. Desmond O'Malley, T.D., former

# Boat club stays afloat despite VAT

Minister for Industry and Energy, who was absent that evening, for his efforts on behalf of the oarsmen to have a pass opened for boats at the salmon weir crossing the river from the Distillery to the Island Field.

While the pass had not yet been secured, he hoped that such would be achieved in the near future, because of the rough river conditions there.

He commented, to some cheers: "If we had a pass by the weir, it would save us having to go up by Athlunkard!"

**Welcomed**

Mr. Tony Tynne, life vice president, welcomed in his toast to the guests, the presidents of the three sister clubs, Mr. Jack Meehan, of Athlunkard, Mr. Dermot Henahan, of St. Michael's, and Mr. Noel Clancy, of Shannon.

He had a particular word of welcome for Chief Superintendent John Reynolds who was on his first visit to the club that night.

In a reference to the difficult security situation, Mr. Tynne said: "We thank you for coming in this time and age."

He formally welcomed Mr. Michael Hoctor, general manager of Limerick Harbour Commissioners, and Captain Kevin Donnelly, harbour master.

"Only for the harbour authority, we would not be here," he said. "In 1870 the Harbour Board gave us this island in the middle of the Shannon for three shillings a year rent charge. We are still paying the three shillings, and when we forget it, our regatta secretary, Mr. Joe O'Connell, puts it in for us."

Mr. O'Connell, who was also present on behalf of the Regatta Committee, is an officer with the Harbour Board.

Mr. Tynne paid a particular tribute to Mr. Denis O'Shaughnessy, himself a member of Athlunkard, who had, he said, done wonderful work on the columns of the *Limerick Leader* to promote rowing in Limerick, all of it with great fairness to all the clubs.

He also welcomed Mr. Christie Madigan, "a great trier", and the Press generally.

**Total of 43**

Replying to the toast to the guests, the president of Athlunkard Boat Club, Mr. Jack Meehan, said that in Limerick the rowing clubs had combined wins reaching a total of 43 in the past year.

He said he himself had been lucky enough to witness in Strathclyde the achievement of four Limerick oarsmen who were on the crew which won an outstanding victory for Ireland.



At Limerick Boat Club's annual dinner (from left): Denis O'Shaughnessy, Vinny O'Connor, Colm Larkin, Martin Connery, Christy Madigan, Joe O'Connell, Ger Sheehan.



At Limerick Boat Club's annual dinner (from left): Brian Hanrahan, Michael Hoctor, Dick Roche, Martin Connery, Chief Supt. J. Reynolds, Kevin Donnelly, Phil O'Doherty.

Of the Irish oarswoman, Nicola Ryan, he said he had had the good fortune to have rowed with her father years ago.

Commenting on the fashion show to be held on the boat club premises the following Monday night, he said that in Athlunkard they had been "lucky enough to see the light years ago" that a ladies' committee was essential to the progress of any club.

**Niall Wixted**

The club president, Mr. Con-

nery, referred to a sponsored mini-marathon "row" which had been held recently, at the instigation of Niall Wixted. It had been decided to give a prize for the highest amount raised by any one oarsman, but who had come out on tops but Niall himself.

"We raised £1,000, and only 30 oarsmen took part," said Mr. Connery.

He added: "Without members of the likes of Niall — he follows in his father's footsteps — we would not be where we are."

He presented to Niall Wixted a

silver tankard with the simple inscription: "To Niall, with thanks from Limerick Boat Club."

In a brief address of reply, Mr. Wixted said that the credit should go to Niall O'Brien, incoming captain, and the crews.

The night concluded with a special word of thanks to Mr. Michael O'Rourke, of O'Rourke Catering, for the well-served meal.

Among the others present were long-standing members such as Mr. Dick Roche, Mr. Brendan Hanrahan and Mr. Phil O'Doherty, life vice presidents.

# All you ever wanted in a Bank

