

# Two Limerick Charities Will Benefit from Richard Harris Film World Premiere of "Bloomfield" at Limerick Savoy on Friday next

ON FRIDAY next, November 6, the World Premiere of Richard Harris's "Bloomfield" will be staged at the Limerick Savoy. The event will make local film history, and perhaps Limerick never before has been so closely identified with a screen production: the director and star is a Limerickman, Richard Harris; the theme music is by two local composers, Billy Whelan and Niall Connery; the sponsors of the premiere are Messrs. Halpins Tea Company, and two Limerick charities will benefit—the handicapped children and the Christian Leadership Movement.

The part played by Mr. Dermot Foley, M.P.S.I., president of the Limerick Lions Club, and Mr. Jim Upton, sales and marketing manager of Messrs. Halpins Tea Company Ltd., in securing the world premiere for Limerick is well known. Richard Harris must be warmly commended for his wholehearted cooperation in bringing "Bloomfield" here, and so helping, in a very practical and substantial way, two very deserving local charities.

"Bloomfield" was made in Israel because that's where the story is laid, because it is about ordinary yet vital human beings such as are found in that new country, yet it has no political overtones, and because Israel is just about the only football-playing country in the world where star players remain amateurs and cannot amass fortunes—an important factor in an ageing player's life.

"In addition to capturing the vitality and colour of the extraordinary city of Tel Aviv," says Wolf Mankowitz, "Bloomfield" emerges not simply as a story about a football player who is facing his last game, but as a deceptively simple account of the problems of a man in the crisis of his life as seen by a boy who must decide whether he will inevitably face that same crisis."

The picture is brilliantly directed by Richard Harris, who stars in it with Romy Schneider and eight-year-old Kim Burfield.

Scripted by Mankowitz, "Bloomfield" has the same quality of authentic, un sentimental childhood which made his "A Kid for Two Farthings" a classic and an enormous commercial success.

Producer Heyman calls the film "a tiny plea for individuality in an age of conformity. A man's quest for freedom at any cost in the face of the inevitable."

In sports-conscious Israel, good football players are heroes, and Eitan (Richard Harris) is the greatest. So it's no wonder that he is idolized by Nimrod (Kim Burfield), the best ten-year-old footballer in the country (who knows?) Maybe in the world.

When he learns that Eitan will be playing what may be his last game in Jaffa the following day, Nimrod peddles all his worldly goods (a camera without a lens, an Arab knife with no blade, etc.) to scrape together the price of a ticket to the game, then hitch-hikes to Jaffa with a truckload of shapely members of the Israeli Women's Army.

After watching Eitan practising at the Bloomfield Stadium, Nimrod tails around the city behind the player until Eitan makes friends with him. Then the two star footballers have a glorious time, taking a ride in a car that breaks down, going to the beach, running by the river, and playing with a ball.

But, although Eitan is a happy-go-lucky fellow who lives only for today and to whom football is the only reasonable way of life, he is gradually discovering that he is not exactly without his hang-ups.

For instance, a beautiful and talented girl, Mira (Romy Schneider), is madly in love with him. Which doesn't sound bad, except that after an affair, which has lasted six years, she's naturally growing impatient and wants him to get football, take a job and marry her—or at least live with her.

But what job? Eitan's life has been the kibbutz, the army and athletics. He's already in debt, and no one will lend him more money. He's turned down an expensive-only job from a club's committee. But he's still the perpetual optimist who believes that he has a million friends, and that something will turn up.

The truth is that, although he's known and admired by tens of thousands of fans, not one of them can offer him a job. The best offer he has yet is from Yasha (Maurice Kaufman), wheeler-dealer and big-time gambler with plenty riding on the next day's game. He offers the athlete a cup of the take, a flashy car and a job, if he will throw the game.

Eitan accepts the car and typically takes Nimrod on a wild ride that ends up with the car in the sea. But that night, once involved in the game, the footballer's desire to win takes over, and Eitan plays his best. Yasha realizes this immediately, and the question in his mind is "Will Eitan throw the game?" But the question in the minds of Nimrod, who idolizes him, and Mira, who loves the man, is "Can Eitan, with age, old injuries and dissipation

## The Production

"Bloomfield," which has captured magnificently the vitality and colour of the extraordinary city of Tel Aviv, began filming on October 20, 1969, and completed filming on February 2, 1970.

Ten days after the shooting began, Richard Harris took over from the original Israeli director, completing the picture with brilliant results. The only footage seen in the finished product will be his.

Financing of "Bloomfield's" 2 million dollar budget was unusual and imaginative and could well set a pattern for future moviemakers. Ten individual financiers invested, including a mixture of leading banking institutions—such as the House of Rothschild, Fung of Funds and Henry Ansbacher & Co.—and of individual investors such as Oakhurst Productions, L.T.C. and World Film Services Ltd.

It's also what Producer Heyman refers to as a "co-op picture." For instance, in lieu of taking his salary in cash, Richard Harris took a share. In a sense, this makes Harris a co-financier as well as director and star.

One of Britain's most accomplished and imaginative cinematographers, Prague-born, Otto Heller—who will be remembered for his camera work on scores of his films, including Oliver's "Richard III," "The Ipcress File" and "Alfie"—caught the action as well as the stark beauty of Israel with his colour cameras.

He has a one-line part as a cobbler in a Jaffa shop with Kim Burfield. So that, in addition to being the last film to be photographed by Heller, "Bloomfield" marks his first and last appearance as an actor. On February 19, shortly after returning from Israel, he died in a London hospital as a result of a fall.

## Richard Harris

Richard Harris brings to the role of the star football player, Eitan, a wealth of training and experience as a stage and screen actor. It is his first experience as a director—a role which was thrust upon him when the original Israeli director left the film. But the superb results Harris has achieved on the screen prove that his background has served him well in this regard also.

Born October 1, 1931, in Limerick, Richard studied acting at the London Academy. At the end of his stay there, he put all of a year's earnings into a production of Oedipus "The Country Girl"—and lost the lot.

His first break came in 1956 when stage director Joan Littlewood gave him a small part in her production of Beckett's "Quad." This was followed by a role in Miller's play, "A View from the Bridge," and then a tour of Russia and East Europe in Littlewood's Theatre Workshop production of "Macbeth."

His performance in a television production of "The Iron Horse" led to a contract with Associated British Pictures, and his first film role in "Alive and Kicking," in 1958. The same year he played a gun-happy A.R.A. member in "Snake Hands with the Devil."

Parts in pictures such as "The Guns of Navarone," "Mutiny on the Bounty" and "The Long and the Short and the Tall" followed; then he played a starring role in the 1962 production, "This

## Sporting Life

won an Academy Award Nomination, and was truly on his way. Playing roles in some twenty films over the past twelve years, Richard has ably proved his versatility with varying parts in such pictures as Antonioni's "The Red Desert," "Zawadi," in which he played Captain Hawkworth, "The Bible," portraying Cain, and "Caprice," a suspense comedy in which he co-starred with Doris Day.

In 1967, he clinched the coveted role of King Arthur in "Camelot," for which he won the Hollywood Foreign Press' Golden Globe Award as Best Actor in a Musical.

That was followed by "The Molly Maguires" and last year Richard starred in "A Man Called Horse" in Mexico and in the title role of "Cromwell." Harris has proved himself a talented singer as well as an actor. In addition to doing the "Camelot" numbers on record, he has also been a hit in the pop field with "The Yarn Went On Forever," the album "A Tramp Shining," and the single hit from that one, "MacArthur Park."

## Romy Schneider

Romy Schneider, who plays the starring role of Mira in "Bloomfield," is still a young woman, but she already has more than fifteen years of experience in film acting.

She had her first screen part at fifteen years of age in "Weisser Flieder" (White Lilies), and the film proved so successful that the talented young actress was in immediate demand for other parts.

Since then, she has appeared in many films, including "The Cardinal," "Good Neighbour Sam," "What's New, Pussycat?" "The Pool," "10.30 p.m. Summer" and "Triple Cross."

During the filming of the latter picture, Romy married West German actor-director Harry Meyen, and they now maintain homes in Hamburg and Lugano with their three-year-old son, David Christopher.

Last year Romy starred on the Dean Martin television show in Los Angeles, and her latest film, "Choses de la Vie" ("Things of Life") made in France, will be shown at the 1970 Cannes Film Festival.

## Kim Burfield

Eight-year-old Kim Burfield plays the role of Nimrod, and like Romy Schneider, is from an acting family, but in a different sense. Kim's father is a driving instructor, and his mother a housewife, and all the children in the Burfield household are actors. "Bloomfield" is Kim's first feature film, but he has been in two television plays.

It was Richard Harris who saw Kim in one of his TV performances and recommended him for the role. In addition to being a most promising actor, the boy is a normal, sports-minded kid, whose favourite sports are swimming and naturally—football.

## The writer and co-producer

London-born Wolf Mankowitz was graduated in 1946 from Cambridge with a master's degree in English Literature, and the same year was given an award for poetry by the Society of Authors.

His best-known book, "A Kid for Two Farthings" was later made into a hit film. His play, "The Bespoke Overcoat," was a great success in London in 1965 and, as a film, won six top awards, including First Prize as Best Short Story Film at the Venice Film Festival, a British Film Academy Award, and an Oscar for Best Two-Reel Short Subject.

Between 1955 and 1960, Wolf collaborated with Oscar Loewenstein to produce, in addition to his own music, such as "Expresso Bongo" and such presentations as "The Threepenny Opera," "Moby Dick," "A Taste of Honey," "The Hostage" and Ionesco's "Rhinoceros."

Wolf was married to Ann Margaret Sellmann in 1944, and they have four sons, ranging in age from eight to twenty-three.

## The Producer

John Heyman is the producer. His company, World Film Services Ltd., has also produced such films as "Privilege," "Boom," "Secret Ceremony" and "Twinky."

## Theme Music

Bill Whelan (20) and Niall Connery (22) have been writing songs together for the last three years. During this time, they have made several attempts to catch the attention of London publishers with their works. As is the case with most songwriters, their early endeavours met with little success. Finally, their tapes arrived in the offices of Limbridge Music, the publishing firm owned by Richard Harris, Dermot Harris and John McMichael.

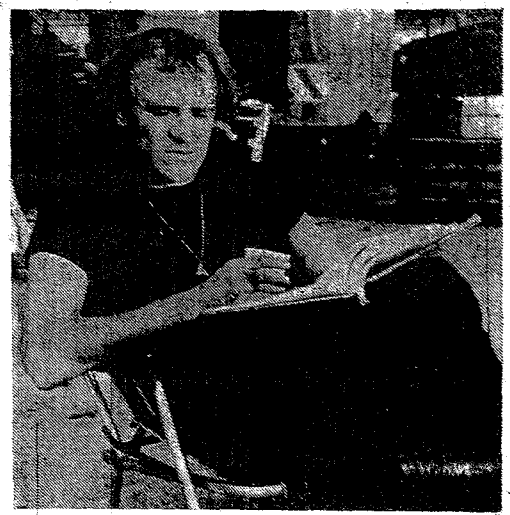
Dermot, who manages the firm, considered one of the songs, "Denise" as a likely choice for "Bloomfield." In time, the song was chosen as the theme music. Subsequently, Bill Whelan wrote a song with Johnny Harris, the musical director for the film, which was also included in the score. This piece is entitled "Eitan's Theme." The two writers were then offered a contract for a year with Limbridge Music, which they signed.

Both of the songs are included on the soundtrack L.P. of the film.

In addition to the film music, they have written about forty songs, which are at present being considered by major recording artists. Richard Harris also intends to record a few of their songs for his forthcoming L.P.

Both Limerickmen, Bill Whelan is a final year law student at University College, Dublin, and Niall Connery is a medical representative.

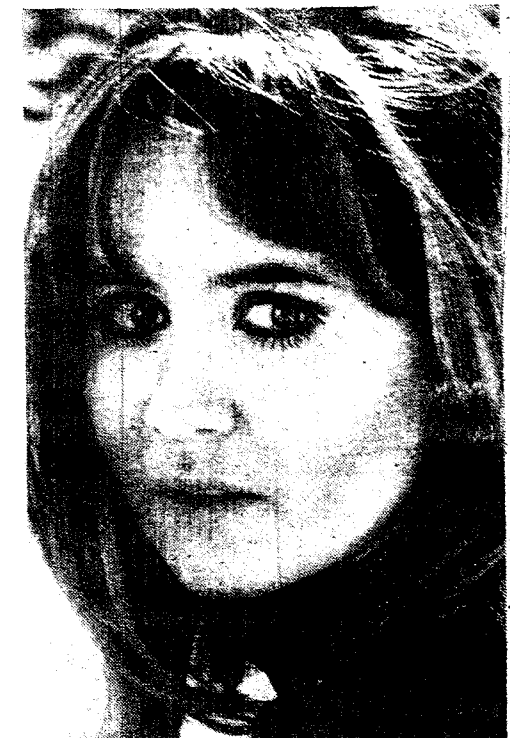
Bill Whelan won first prize in a disco jockey competition sponsored by Halpin's Tea Company two years ago.



"Bloomfield" is brilliantly directed by Limerickman Richard Harris, who is also starring in the film with Romy Schneider and Kim Burfield.



Dusty Springfield is another guest to attend the World Premiere at the Savoy on the 6th November next.



World famous Lulu will be one of the many guests to attend Richard Harris's film, "Bloomfield," in the Savoy Cinema on Friday night next, November 6th.



Maurice Gibb of the Bee Gees will also be attending the World Premiere on Friday night next.



Richard Harris and Romy Schneider in a scene from "Bloomfield."

"If I told you this whiskey is the real true Jameson—distillery-bottled and sealed by Jameson themselves, what would you say?"

"Make mine a large one."

**Jameson Red Seal Whiskey**

JAMESON RED SEAL WHISKEY

Limerickman Jim Upton (pictured above) with Mr. Dermot Foley, M.P.S.I., Chairman of the Limerick Lions Club, and film actor Richard Harris, secured the "Bloomfield" premiere for Limerick. Jim is sales and marketing manager for Messrs. Halpins Tea Co. Ltd., who are the sponsors of the premiere.



The Bee Gees, who will be flying direct from London to attend the World Premiere of "Bloomfield" in the Savoy on the 6th November next.



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