



Parker's Limerick



In case anybody hasn't noticed Alan Parker has just been in town. The World

famous director whose films are no strangers to the Oscars came to Limerick

and showed to all why he is so renowned. The budget of the film could only be

realised when walking through parts of Limerick that were transformed to the

1930's for the purpose of his film adaptation of Angela's Ashes. DROP Cameras

pictured the scenes.....

Limerick was alive with rumours that Robert Carlisle was down in the Cresnet Shopping centre or was seen having a few pints in Souths pub for research in to the film!! Brendan O'Carroll was around as was Pauline "Go on go on go on" McGlynn who were just a sample of Irish stars making cameo appearances for the film.

Other Cameo stars of the film were local actors and actress who played parts in the film. The people from the neighbouring streets to the film location were taking part and a carnival atmosphere surrounded the film locations between excited onlookers and excited extras for the film.

For the days surrounding the actual recording, visitors to the Clancy Strand and Cresnet Avenue parts of town increased dramatically as onlookers got a view of parts of the city that had been totally transformed. Shops, pubs and businesses were given new fronts and streets were covered with sand and fake cobblestones. Walking through the Cresnet on the morning of the shoot was like coming out of a time warp. All cars were gone from the street, street lights, Bus stops, neon signs, all signs of today's Limerick were removed. A group of kids from Moyross clad in short pants and jackets walked through the streets on their way to the actual location of the film where they were extras. A tram was parked on the street next to a horse and cart laden down with veg. It was an amazing spectacle.

After all is said and done - the traffic jams will be forgotten and even if the film isn't as successful as it is tipped to be - Limerick got a taste of Hollywood. A taste that will long stay in the mouths of those who were a part of it.

DROP's Film writer, Dave Irwin comments on the Angela's Ashes production....

Frank McCourt's wonderfully controversial autobiographical book has been translated into 19 languages, including Turkish and Croatian, and has sold 4 million copies world-wide. The book has spent 100 weeks at or

near the top of the New York Times Book Review best-seller list and earned its author, 67, a clutch of awards, including the Pulitzer Prize. The ubiquitous Frank himself is seen at every major opening in Limerick, at every charity auction, at every prize-giving and he appears on every street corner signing copies of "Angela's Ashes". Major Japanese Internet sites can be found with about a hundred photos of Limerick and 178 reviews of the book. Not only that but every house and laneway in the city is now officially owned by Alan Parker and his massive unstoppable movie production machine. And brother Malachy is seen mercilessly plugging his own Magnum Opus "A Monk Swimming" with great success it seems. Is there no escape?.....

Malachy's son Conor McCourt's film "The McCourts of Limerick" was a documentary video of the characters and locations mentioned in "Angela's Ashes". It premiered at the Cork Film Festival last year and was well received. It went on to feature in the Independent Feature Film Market (where "The Brothers McMullen" was picked up) in New York in September of last year. The current movie version of Frank's book, is as we all know, in post-production right now. Principal photography has just been wrapped up and Alan Parker (scourge of the local traffic system) is no doubt thinking idly of his next project ("Peig"?). But how will our gorgeous city be portrayed by that nefarious director?

Don't worry, period-pieces are a speciality of the house, Chez Parker; 1910's "The Road to Wellville", 20's "Bugsy Malone", 40's "Evita", 50's "Angel Heart", 60's "Mississippi Burning", 70's "Midnight Express". So, even though Cobh, Dublin and others are standing in for Limerick, we'll come out looking just as run-down, decrepit and depressing as ever. But it'll be very "atmospheric" (we all saw the smoke machines on Clancy Strand), so that's OK then. The traffic mayhem caused by the shooting schedule has to be weighed against the potential for future tourist activity and financial reward. This book is BIG; the movie will be BIG. It's our "Quiet Man". Who cares if you were trapped in your car for a few hours coming in from Shannon? It's ART, man.

