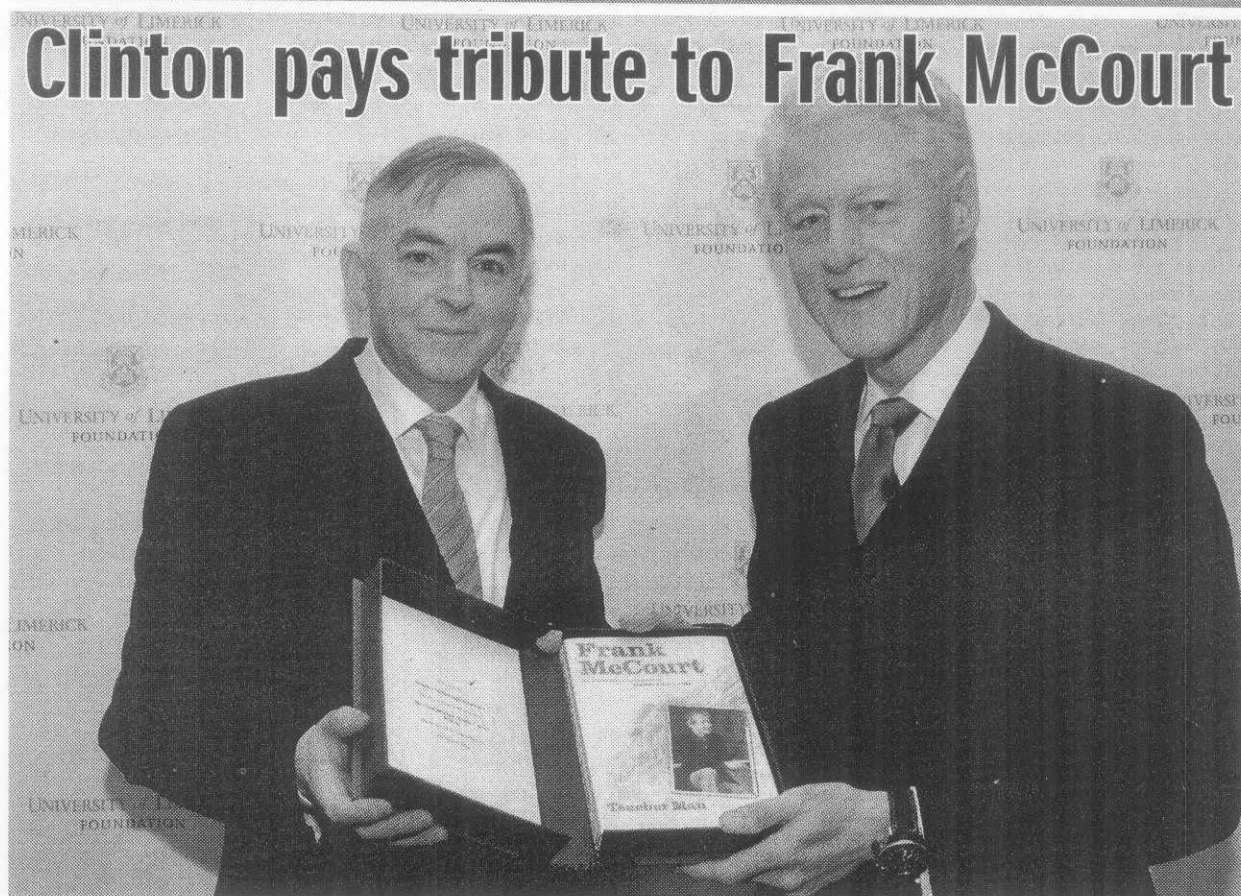


Clinton pays tribute to Frank McCourt



Professor Don Barry, President, University of Limerick presents President Bill Clinton with a commemorative issue of Frank McCourt's *Teacher Man* at the launch in New York of the Frank McCourt Chair in Creative Writing at University of Limerick.

by Marie Hobbins

"UL will bring creative writing and storytelling back to Ireland in a fresh way"

LEADING literary figures joined with the family of the late internationally acclaimed author, Frank McCourt in New York recently to celebrate his memory and establish the Limerick writer's Chair in Creative Writing in New York.

The former US President, Bill Clinton led tributes to the best-selling Limerick writer, whose memoir, *Angela's Ashes* was a best-seller throughout the world and later successfully transferred to the cinema screen.

Among those attending the event were such literary icons as Billy Collins, Tom Cahill, Colum McCann, Rose Styron and Pete Hamill who joined Frank's widow, Ellen and his brothers, Malachy and Alfie for an intimate evening in New York.

In his tribute to McCourt's literary genius, Mr Clinton said:

"Everyone has a story to tell in life but Frank wrote uniquely about his and in doing so has inspired many others to put their own stories down on paper.

"I love that the University of Limerick will bring creative writing and storytelling back to Ireland in a fresh way through this Chair."

Recalling fondly, McCourt's commitment to the advancement of the University of Limerick as a Director of the UL Foundation, Professor Don Barry, president of UL said:

"Frank McCourt was a true friend of the university and it is highly appropriate that we honour his legacy in this way.

Also paying tribute, David Cronin, chief executive of the UL

Foundation said:

"The continuous support of Irish-American philanthropists enables us to effect positive change in Ireland and the Frank McCourt chair is a perfect example of how strategic targeted investment will impact on a new generation of young aspiring writers.

The launch of a \$1 million campaign for the Frank McCourt Chair in Creative Writing has already secured \$500,000 at the opening event in New York. Appropriately the Chair in Creative Writing will have a particular focus on Memoirs.

Other philanthropists who attended the New York event included, Loretta Brennan Glucksman, John and Pauline Ryan, Tina Flaherty and Ken and Kerry Gorman.

Literary figures in attendance on the night included: the American poet, Billy Collins, appointed as Poet Laureate of the United States from 2001 to 2003. Colum McCann, an Irish writer of literary fiction whose novels include *Songdogs*, *This Side of Brightness*, *Dancer*, *Zoli* and *Let the Great World Spin*. Pete Hamill is a prominent American journalist, columnist, novelist, and author and is one of four men who disarmed Sirhan Sirhan of his gun during the aftermath of the Robert F. Kennedy Assassination. Tom Cahill, author of *How The Irish Saved Civilisation: The Untold Story of Ireland's Heroic Role from the Fall of Rome to the Rise of Medieval Europe* is a non-fiction historical best-selling book first published in March 1995.

Rose Styron is a poet, journalist and human rights activist who has published three volumes of poetry (Established in 1989, the University of Limerick Foundation is a leading recipient of international philanthropic funding in Ireland. Close to \$200 million has been raised through its international network, and its directors, alumni and supporters.

Mid West to capitalise on school tours business

A NEW school tours brochure has been launched by Shannon Development to capitalise on the potential of the lucrative school tours business for Limerick city and county.

A copy of the "School Tours 2011 in Ireland's Shannon Region" will be distributed to every secondary school in the country and to all primary schools in the region and surrounding counties.

In addition, a major marketing blitz is also planned for the UK.

Among the activity options available are specially designed walking, cycling and mountain biking trails and a range of water sports including canoeing, water-skiing, kayaking, dolphin watching, surfing and sub-aqua diving.

The purpose built University of Limerick Activity Centre on the shores of Lough Derg offers a range of adventure based programmes under the expert tuition of fully qualified outdoor pursuits instructors.

Speaking at the launch, Aisling Travers, senior tourism marketing executive, Shannon Development, pointed out that the brochure was a one-stop-shop for all school tour needs, offering a variety of activities and attractions that will amuse, entertain and educate.

It was, she said, "a great source of information, providing assistance in planning itineraries, accessing facilities and services, ticket purchase and transportation options.



At the launch of the "School Tours 2011 in Ireland's Shannon Region" brochure were: 'Brian Boru' (aka Frankie O'Gorman), with pupils from Corpus Christi School, Moyross Limerick; Edith MacSweeney, Education Dept, Hunt Museum; Aoife Cowman and Aisling Travers, Shannon Development; Fiona Kiely, Limerick Civic Trust; Hugh Maguire, director Hunt Museum; and Maeve Martin Kelly, Adare Heritage Centre.

'Turn off the red lights' campaign launch

DORAS Luimní will host the 'Turn Off the Red Light' campaign in City Hall with the aim of highlighting the dangers of sex trafficking and the demand for sexual services which fuels this cycle.

A diverse range of panellists will speak at the event to be held on Friday March 25 in the Exhibition Room in City Hall at 11am.

Limerick goes for Haka world record

By Colum Coomey

LIT students have made a rallying call to the people of Limerick to support their Guinness World Record Haka attempt in aid of the children's charity, Barnardos.

On April 2 outside of City Hall they will ask, "Can You Haka It?". In the words of LIT student, Nicola Chau, Project Manager of the group:

"We have a marketing team and a PR team to liaise with our partners, Shannon Development, Limerick City Council and the Limerick Communication Office - a lot of work has been done to organise the event."

She explained that people will be able to pre-register online or register on the day, when the groups will be broken into four smaller sections to learn the Haka.

The bar was set by 3264 participants on February 18 2008, in New Zealand but students from LIT have accepted the challenge of taking part in the competition

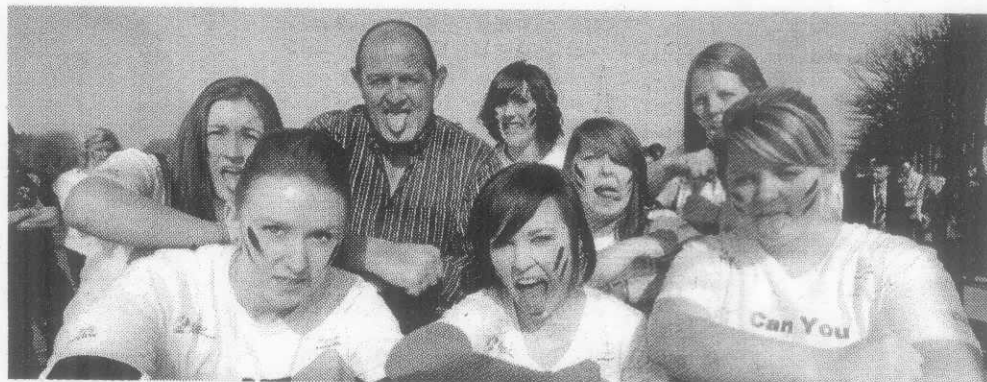
and are hoping to attract sufficient numbers by hosting the World Record attempt on the weekend of the Munster and Leinster Magners League match in April.

"At the beginning of the project we couldn't imagine the amount of time we would have to invest but every minute has been worth it, for Barnardos, Limerick and us," says Conor Barry of LIT.

Shannon Development director, Eoghan Prendergast believes the event will be of great benefit to the city, in this its year as the European City of Sport.

"More importantly it will be a great fun day out and the fact that we'll have so many down from Dublin will be a huge benefit and it is important that we host events in and around City Hall before redevelopment work on King John's Castle commences - that whole area needs public events to bring people into the locality," he said.

To register for the event log on to www.lit.ie/canyouhaka/



A group of 2nd year event students from Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) have as part of their course taken on the challenge to break a Guinness World Record for the largest public Haka. Peter Clohessy, and LIT students from left: Sarah McLoughlin, Stacey Considine, Deridre Spillane, Jullitte Epinat, Clare Broderick and Sinead Gammell.