

From child prostitute to lawyer

- John Devane's shocking book

by Mary Earls

CONTROVERSIAL Limerick solicitor John Devane worked as a child prostitute down the docks and was initiated into pedophile rings in Limerick and Dublin in his younger years.

In his shocking book, 'Nobody Heard Me Cry', he reveals that a garda, priest, lawyers and married business men were amongst his regular clientele, forcing John into a life of alcoholism, despair and attempted suicide, to escape his past.

The father of two said that writing his autobiography opened up a lot of boxes that he had wanted to keep closed, "but it helped my recovery".

A recovering alcoholic who has been on the dry now for six years, John said that he wanted to clear all the skeletons out of his closet by writing this book and it was also "a heartfelt plea to hear the cries of other children in need".

"A lot of people know about my past, but I think it will really shock people as well. A number of fellow professional people will ridicule me for it and say that I am self publicising, but feck the begrudgers. I wanted to record my life story for everyone who has been abused and who felt they were somehow to blame for what had happened to them. My mother slapped me across the face when I first told her that our neighbour had abused me and she said that neighbours don't do things like that. She just didn't believe it at the time and abuse wasn't openly talked about in those days. I also made a statement eight years ago to the gardai and I was told that I had left it too long, so this is something I needed to do," John told the Limerick Post.

Representing many of the city's feuding families



and those coming from disadvantaged backgrounds, John also works in the Children's Court.

"I stand up for the down trodden in Limerick because I have been there. I am one of the most successful solicitors in Limerick and I hate myself at the best of times. I'm always waiting for the bubble to burst. My public persona is hiding a lot of my insecurities. But that all goes back to what I went through as a child. I was drinking 15 pints a day plus shots at times to try to block out my past and I tried to commit suicide three times. But Alcoholics Anonymous

has helped me deal with why I drink," he said.

The book is also a story of survival and hope, says John, because he managed to get his life together, against all the odds, by going back to education and becoming a defence lawyer.

Growing up in an atmosphere of poverty and neglect, in 1960's Limerick, as his mother attempted to bring up five children alone, John fell prey to the predatory clutches of a neighbouring man at only eight years old.

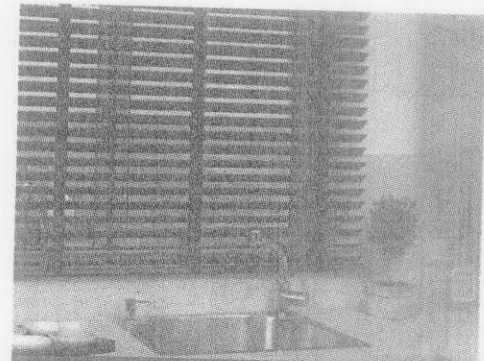
This began a cycle of sexual abuse and beatings which culminated in him being sold as a sexual plaything down the docks.

Unemployed and facing a bleak future, John went back to college to study law at aged 26.

But five years into practice he had to face one of his abusers when a man came seeking representation who failed to recognise him as the boy he had interfered with years earlier.

"I was always told that if you want to get anywhere you need to educate yourself. And this has now enabled me to help others who have fallen through the cracks and need a second chance at life," he said.

Published by Hachette Books Ireland, 'Nobody Heard Me Cry', which is a real page turner, is currently on sale and is the first instalment in a three book deal.



10% off

Wooden Venetian Blinds

Offering a full range of window blinds, awnings, and shutters including:

- Venetian
- Vertical
- Roller
- Roman
- Wooden
- Conservatory
- Commercial

ApolloBlinds

Call now on 061 423 795

Or visit our showroom at:
Unit H3 Eastway Business Park,
Limerick, Ireland
www.apolloblinds.ie

FREE quote • measure • home visit

It couldn't be simpler
Hotel / Flights Online

letsgotravel.ie
a Limerick Travel Company

Organic

Tadhg O'Connor