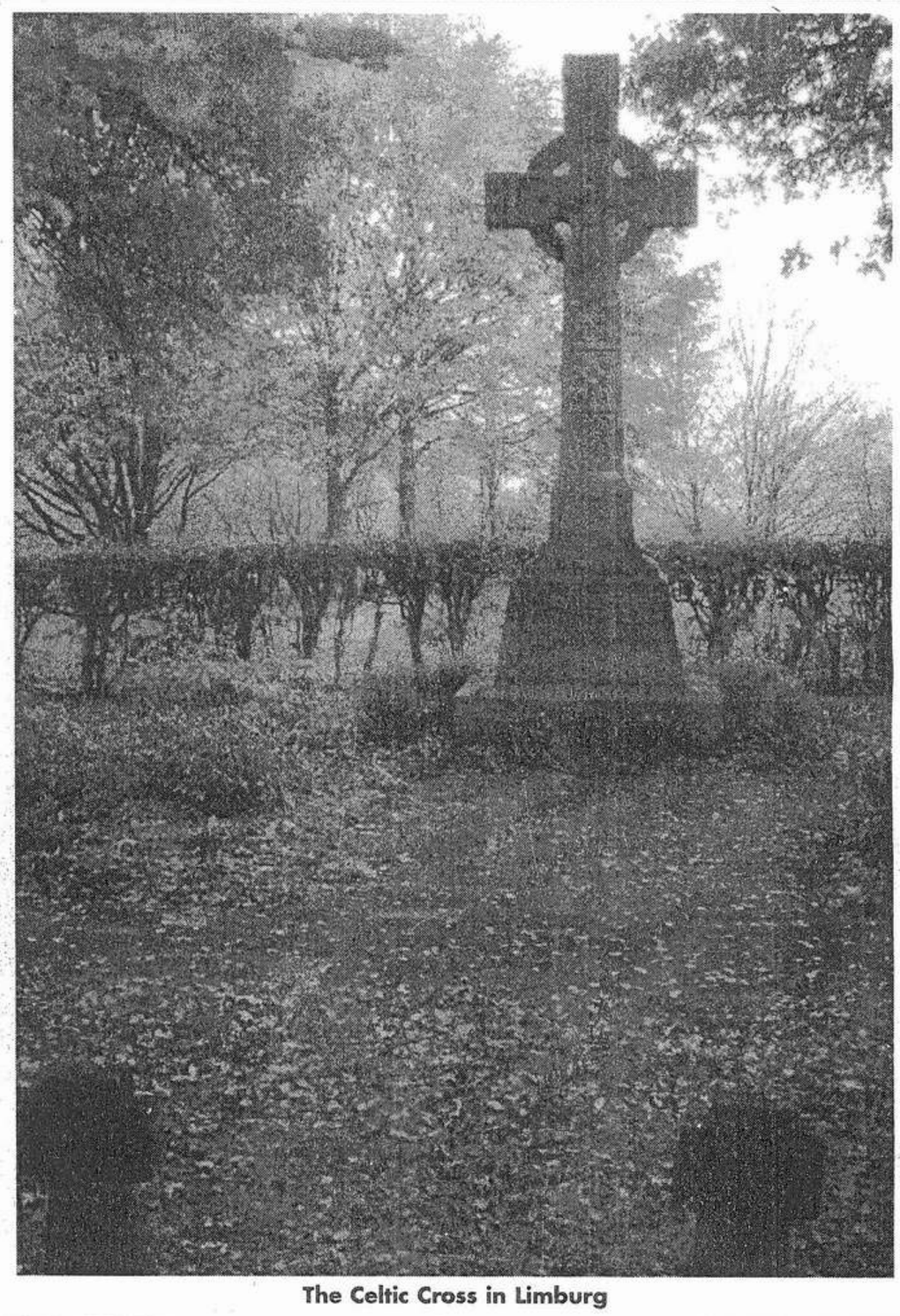
EX: LIMERICK LEADER

Pilgrims make progress with €10k donation for memorial



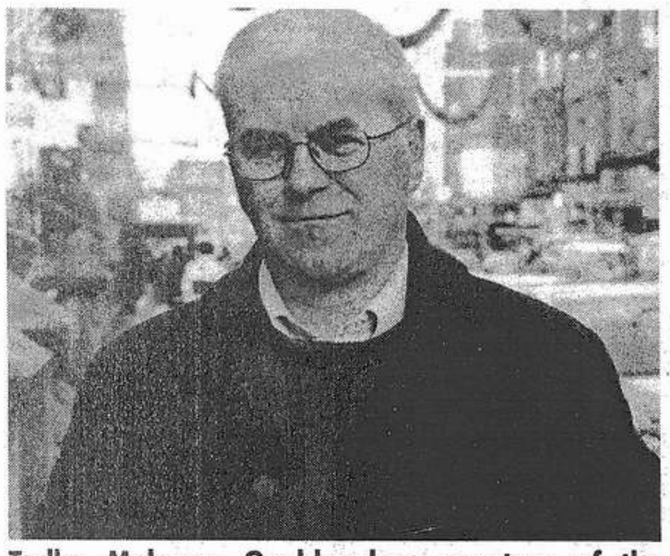
The Celtic Cross in Limburg

By MIKE DWANE

TWO Limerick men have made a pilgrimage to a war memorial in Germany bringing with them €10,000 for its restoration.

The Celtic Cross in Limburg, complete with an inscription in Irish, commemorates members of the Irish and Scots Guards and other regiments who died during the First World War while incarcerated at the POW camp there.

Located in a corner of Russian soldiers cemetery, the Cross cost 400 marks when erected in 1917 but "has become weather-beaten and faded with the passage of time", according to Tadhg Moloney, Gouldavoher.



Tadhg Moloney, Gouldavoher, secretary of the Royal Munster Fusiliers Association

Mr Moloney, secretary of the Royal Munster Fusiliers Association, has travelled to Limburg with Janesboro man Anthony O'Brien where they presented the five-figure sum to carry out the works.

"A retired German sergeant major helps to look after it and there's a huge local effort in renovating it. We found the German people to be most hospitable. We met an admiral from the German armed forces and the local burgomeister. Two Germans laid poppy wreaths at the Irish cross and we were very well treated. The only time we had to put our hands in our pockets was for the B&B," Mr Moloney said.

A cheque for €10,000 collected from all over the 32 counties made up for the hospitality however. Half the amount was donated by the Irish Government but other groups involved were the Munsters Association, the Irish Seamen's Relatives Association, the Bandon War Memorial Committee, the Royal Iniskilling Fusiliers Regimental Association (Limavady and Ballymena) and private donors.

The trip was also a personal one for Mr Moloney and Mr O'Brien.

Mr Moloney's grandfather and Mr O'Brien's father were both POWs in Germany, although not in Limburg.

"My grandfather was in Limburg once in 1915 when Roger Casement came to raise his battalion to fight the British on Irish soil. I understand he only got 50 recruits. The others felt they had taken an oath and they were not going to break it," Mr Moloney said.

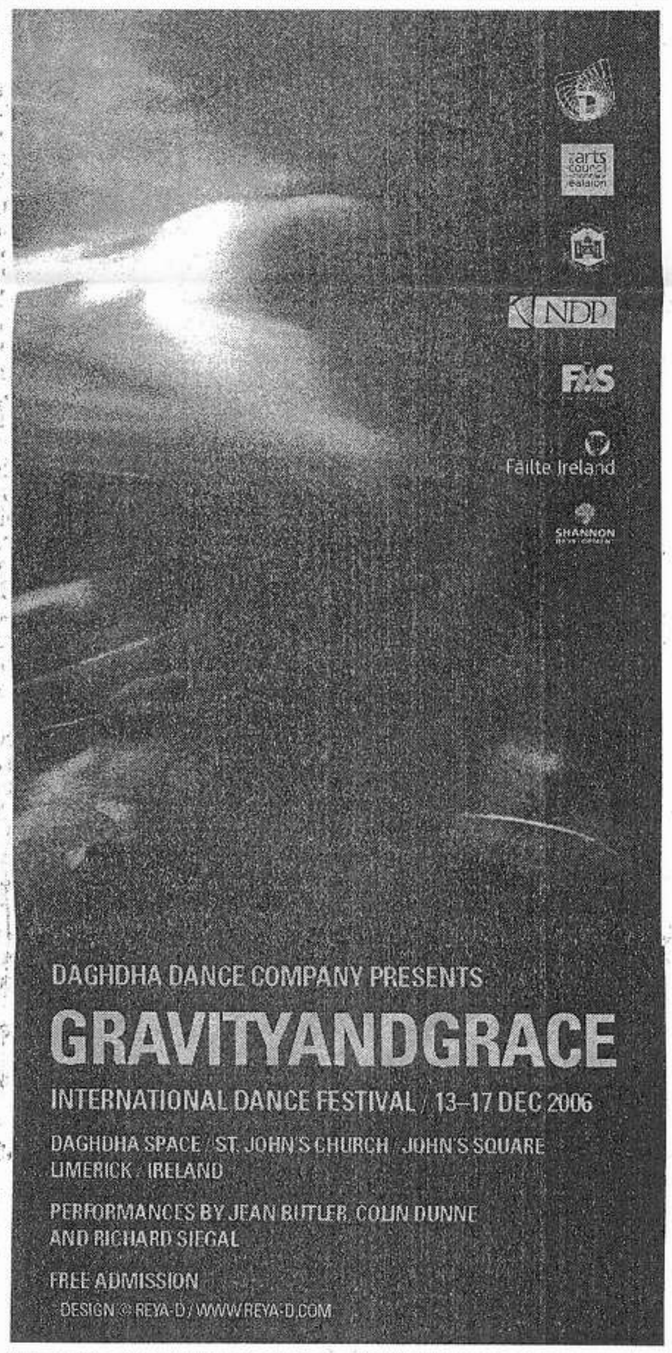
"A sergeant in the Royal Munster Fusiliers is alleged to have struck Casement in the jaw. After that he was disciplined and Casement required protection."

Two soldiers with Limerick connections were laid to rest at Limburg. Patrick Kerins, Ballybricken and Newcastle West resident David Madden both died in the POW camp. Their remains were subsequently reinterred at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery at Niederzwehren, near Köln.

An account for the restoration of the Celtic Cross remains open at the Ulster Bank at the Crescent Shopping Centre, Dooradoyle. A/C Number 30628052. Sort code 98-60-25.

Storm toys

CHRISTMAS is coming early to Limerick, at least for members of the Storm Cinema Kids Club. Youngsters who visit the cinema at Castletroy for



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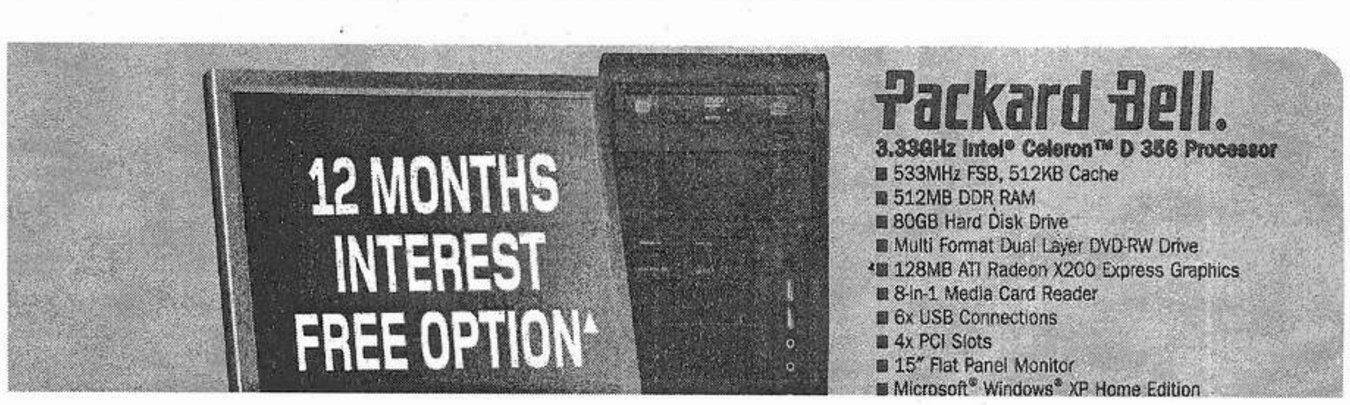
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