

LIMERICK SAVOY: ANY SUGGESTIONS?

MYSTERY SHROUDS the fate of Limerick's Savoy, the giant entertainment complex which closed at the weekend. Odeon (Ireland) Limited, the owners, are non-committal. If they have already hatched definite plans for the disposal of the magnificent auditorium, restaurant, bars and banqueting suite, they are certainly not revealing them.

In fact, it is not even known at this stage whether they intend to sell the building, not to mention the sort of price they would be asking if they did.

That is understandable. Odeon have several valuable properties lying idle in various parts of the country as a result of the cinema slump. Matters involving millions of pounds cannot reasonably be expected to be finalised as quickly in real life as they are in Hollywood movies.

What, then, of the Savoy in the short term?

It has been hinted that a brick wall might be built to block the extensive frontage of the Bedford Row premises. Traders in the locality, which already has its fair share of eyesores, would naturally oppose the idea. A vandal-proof grill would surely be preferable.

Better still, however, would be a decision by Odeon to let the ground floor, not necessarily as a bar, until the property is ultimately disposed of. As one local businessman says: "There would be no shortage of applicants". Moreover, such a move would benefit both Odeon and Limerick as well as the lucky tenant.

And Limerick obviously has a legitimate interest in the future of the Savoy, a social mecca for so many years.

The Corporation would be well advised to examine the possibility of saving what is perhaps the most magnificent auditorium in Munster. This is not to suggest that the local authority should go into show-business. They might, however, be able to use their not inconsiderable influence to advantage for the community.

Could they not call together cultural groups and businessmen, some of whom have reportedly made enquiries about the possibility of taking over the complex?

A conference centre cum concert hall, owned by a consortium of local interests enjoying the benefit of rates relief, might just be a viable proposition.

That, of course, is only one suggestion. There are bound to be others. Now is the time for them to be publicly aired and, if necessary, acted upon, before the fate of the Savoy is finally sealed.

ODDS AND ENDS BY AN MANGAIRE SUGACE

RE-READING my notes about the Fedamore News last week I remembered a song that was written by a Fedamore Fenian who had to leave his native place after the 1867 Rising.

A surprisingly large number of songs were written about the Fenian Rising. Peter O'Neill Crowley alone must have had at least a dozen songs composed in his praise and in his memory. That most stirring Fenian song, "The Bold Fenian Men" was written by a Fedamore man in exile, Michael Scanlan, of Castlepollen.

The Fedamore song is unintentional and sincere. It was written by a man of the people, expressing the dreams and hopes of his people, in

OLD FEDAMORE SONG

My comrades, O God, must I
leave them,
And bid them a lasting
adieu,
Where hearts to the cause
of old Erin,
Were firm, loyal, loving
and true.
But I hope they may soon
see thy waters,
From Herbertstown on to
Banogue,
Flow red with the blood of
the Saxon,
My darling sweet winding
Camogue.

Farewell unto thee, mother

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