

2011 tourism season gets underway

THE 2011 tourism season was officially launched at Limerick Racecourse with a tourism trade event which gave Limerick operators an opportunity to network and showcase their operations to the local tourism and hospitality industry.

With over 50 exhibitors, the evening was attended by a wide representation from the tourism sector, including accommodation, attractions and activities operators as well as transport and key local and national agencies.

Hosted by Shannon Development, West Limerick Resources, Ballyhoura Development Ltd, Limerick County Council and Limerick City Council, the main purpose was to provide a networking platform to educate and inform front line tourism and hospitality staff as to what is available to visitors in the wider Limerick area.

Labour market is 'catastrophic' - ISME

ISME, the Irish Small & Medium Enterprises Association, in response to the latest redundancy figures, has called on the Government to immediately turn its focus on the 'catastrophic' labour market, now that efforts have been made to address the toxic banks. The Association outlined, that the jobs crisis now needed to take priority, with a strong emphasis on generating economic activity, the key to future jobs growth.

The figures confirm that there have been 13,404 redundancies to date, with 40% of these occurring in March alone.

The number of redundancies is the same as the corresponding month in 2010, following reductions in the previous two months, indicating that the situation has deteriorated.



Professor Martin J. Leahy.

UL's Martin

J. Leahy honoured

UNIVERSITY of Limerick-based Professor Martin J. Leahy, has been elected as 'Fellow' of the Society of Photographic Instrumentation Engineers.

Professor Leahy has been honoured for his innovative contributions in developing commercial biophotonics and imaging devices from idea to industry.

Through his research, he has developed a range of pioneering applications such as a laser Doppler blood perfusion monitor, a laser driver and temperature controller, a tissue viability imager, and a fluidized bed gasifier.

Professor Leahy is the founding director of the Charles Parsons Initiative at the University of Limerick, a Science Foundation Ireland-funded initiative which focuses on energy and environmental sustainability research.

40 years on and Limerick celebrate historic first FAI Cup



Standing: Jack Tuohy (secretary), Willie Flaherty, Hughie Hamilton, Ritchie Hall, Kevin Fitzpatrick, Joe O'Mahony, Tony Meaney, Seamus Coad, Michael Wallace (chairman), Ewan Fenton (manager)
Front: Billy Higgins (director) Sean Byrnes, Joe Bourke, Al Finucane (captain), Paddy Shortt, Andy McEvoy, and Dave Barrett.

By John O'Shaughnessy

Night when the city went soccer mad to be recalled

APRIL 21, 1971....that was a memorable date in the annals of local sport.

It was on that evening that Limerick AFC claimed the FAI Cup.... for the first time.

Three days earlier, they had figured in a scoreless draw with Drogheda United at Dalymount Park, and the replay, played in torrential rain at the same venue, saw the Shannonsiders emerge victorious 3-0.

Now exactly 40 years on, three members of that team, Al Finucane, Joe O'Mahony and Kevin Fitzpatrick, have banded together to organise a coming together of all surviving members of those associated with the club at the time, for what has been described as a delayed celebration party.

The date: April 21, 2011, at Clohessy's Bar.

Scottish-born Hughie Hamilton was hero on the night with a two goal burst, after Southampton native, Dave Barrett, had set the ball rolling with a memorable first strike.

For the record, the team was: Kevin Fitzpatrick; Joe Bourke, Richie Hall, Sean Byrnes, Al Finucane, Andy

McEvoy, Seamus Coad, Joe O'Mahony, Paddy Shortt, Tony Meaney, Dave Barrett.

The team was managed by the late Ewan Fenton, winner of an FA Cup medal with Blackpool in 1953, and who had guided Limerick to the 1965 and 1966 FAI Cup finals, beaten by Shamrock Rovers on each occasion.

Cork-born Pat Shortt, Tony Meaney and one-time Blackburn Rovers player Andy McEvoy, have also passed on.

The directors of the club were Michael Toomey, Michael Wallace, Billy Higgins and Jack Tuohy, all deceased.

Joe O'Mahony told the Limerick Post that they had made contact with Dave Barrett and Richie Hall, who both signalled his intention to attend the event.

Hall lives in Newcastle, where he had started his soccer career, and Barrett is in Southampton.

"We are making efforts to communicate with Hughie Hamilton, who is believed to be in the Hartlepool area"

Family members of deceased members have been invited to attend the get-together, which will be an informal occasion.

Back to O'Mahony: "This will our first time to gather as a group and in fact, those who followed our fortunes back in the 1970s are invited to come along and renew acquaintances".

The Cup replay was not televised live, but the late

Limerick cameraman, Eamonn O'Connor, made a full recording of the match and it was shown a few days later at the Belltable, filling out over three nights.

Recalled Joe: "Ours was only the third time that Limerick won a major trophy since they were formed in the late 1930s.

"The first was when they had their name inscribed on the Shield, in 1953, when former Blackpool and England great Stanley Matthews travelled over to the Markets Field to present the trophy.

"Prior to our success, the club won the League of Ireland championship".

Interestingly, 11 years after that historic 1971 cup triumph, Fitzpatrick, O'Mahony and Finucane were in the side that lifted the trophy for the second and last time, beating Bohemians at Dalymount Park, thanks to a Brendan Storan headed goal.

Concluded Joe: "Now we have the chance to re-live that great occasion at Dalymount Park, and expect three big cheers at Clohessy's to commemorate the moment each goal went in".

* Goalkeeper Kevin Fitzpatrick played in all of Limerick's five FAI Cup final appearances, in 1965 and '66, '71, '79 (when they lost to Dundalk) and '82.

*Ewan Fenton, who steered Limerick to three final appearances, later went on to manage Linfield in the Irish League.

Irish Rail clamp down on fare dodgers

Passengers face €100 fine

By Colum Coomey

IRISH Rail has stepped up revenue protection measures in an effort to clamp down on fare evasion on their services nationwide.

This move comes in response to customers using discount tickets purchased on the Irish Rail website for off-peak services at peak times.

Jane Cregan of Irish Rail explained:

"When you reserve a seat on a particular train it is non transferable to another service. If you want to use that ticket on another train, then you are obliged to pay a surcharge

of €20".

Passengers who are caught manipulating the system face a hefty penalty.

"If you are caught on a train with the wrong ticket, you will be asked to pay a €100 fine, as well as the full fare for that particular train," added Jane.

"Revenue Protection and fare evasion is something that we take very seriously. We have invested a lot in the area to ensure that it is effective.

"We have introduced an automatic ticket validation system at Dublin Heuston Station".

The Revenue Protection unit travel on board trains throughout the national network, as well as

Irish Rail are trying to clamp down on customers manipulating the system



carrying out inspections at stations. Of the 16 services serving Limerick to Dublin-Heuston on a Friday, four are offered at a

discount rate 5.30am (€10), 10am (€15), 11am (€15) and 20.55pm (€10). The remaining 12 services are priced at €29.99.

Some customers are booking the discount rate tickets and trying to use them on the premium rate trains.

Any customers caught with a ticket for the wrong service will be forced to pay the €20 surcharge, or fined €100.