

in brief

Adare sings

FRIDAY, March 3 is the date on which Croom's Colaiste Chiarain will premiere its own choral compositions as part of a major concert in Adare.

The National Chamber Choir of Ireland will give a recital at St Nicholas' Church of Ireland that evening as part of its national spring tour but the evening will begin at 8pm with a pre-concert performance of works by students from the Croom school.

Composition workshops are part of the NCC's education project for senior cycle second level students. During the tour the choir meets students who are in the final year of this two-year programme in order to rehearse and record works composed by them. The students then have the opportunity to perform the results of their work.

The Adare concert is presented by Limerick County Council Arts Office in association with Colaiste Chiarain. Tickets at 10 euro (concessions six euro) will be available at the door on the evening.

Garda meeting

A NEW branch of the retired Garda Association has been established in County Limerick and held its first meeting on Wednesday last in Rathkeale House Hotel.

A meeting of the full Limerick branch will be held in the Garda Club on Friday, March 31 at 8pm. All retired gardai and widows of members of the force are welcome.

Railway evening

A TRIP down memory lane will be undertaken by members of the Age of Rail in County Limerick and North Kerry on Friday, March 3 at Newcastle West Library when a slide show will be presented for surviving railway men and their families.

Commencing at 8pm the show will be presented by Barry Carse the well-known photographer of Irish railways whose slides will illustrate all the stations between Limerick and Foynes as well as those between Rathkeale and Fenit. These include Rathkeale, Ardagh, Newcastle West, Barnagh Devon Road, Abbeyfeale, Kilmorna, Listowel, Lixnaw, Abbeydorney and Tralee.

This is the fourth annual reunion of railway personnel and their families who served on the old North Kerry railway but the evening is open to all.

The occasion will also mark the handing over to Limerick County Library of the collection of railway books belonging to the late Francis (Francie) Kennedy of Kilmallock who died last June. Mr Kennedy was an avid railway enthusiast.

William Street fashion opening

THE well-known fashion outlet, The French Connection, is to open on William Street before the end of March.

The British company has recently dropped the UK from its brand name. In bringing business to the city centre it gives a much needed shot in the arm to city business.

Water supply

OVER 11.6 million euro in government funding has been allocated to upgrade and improve the quality and standard of Limerick's water supply and the quality and standard of its water treatment plants. This is an increase on last year's allocation to Limerick by 4.15 million euro.

Welcoming the development, Defence Minister, Willie O'Dea said he has had many meetings with his Cabinet colleague, Environment Minister, Dick Roche on the issue and had requested an increased allocation for Limerick this year.

"He did this by more than four million euro and I'm now confident that this massive allocation for Limerick will mean the quality and supply of water in the city and county will now be hugely enhanced and improved in full compliance with EU drinking water standards," he said.

Ecstatic rowers say never again

by Marie Hobbins

LIMERICK will extend a welcome home never to be forgotten to Corbally man, Paul Gleeson and his Canadian girlfriend, Tori Homes, whose tenacity and courage brought them to the finishing line last week after their epic three-month rowing race across the Atlantic Ocean.

The only Irish competitor to complete the race, Paul, who prior to his departure admitted to the Limerick Post that he was a mere novice at rowing, was particularly concerned when the only other Irish team to compete, Gearoid Towe and Ciaran Lewis, survived a daring rescue mission after their boat capsized last month.

Another bad experience for Paul and Tori was when she was thrown overboard by a freak wave before being rescued by Paul. Even when, after three months at sea, the couple were just a quarter of a mile from the finishing line at Antigua, they faced potential disaster when one of their oars broke and there was a sense of touch and go before Paul managed to successfully repair it.

Just over half of the 48 teams participating finished the rowing marathon after starting out from the Canary Islands last November and Paul and Tori are

one of the few teams to have completed the race without outside assistance after other competitors were forced to withdraw due to technical problems or had to be rescued at sea.

Due back in Limerick on or about March 5 the victorious couple were welcomed on to dry land in Antigua last Thursday by Paul's delighted parents, Bert and Lourdes and his sister Audrey who came laden down with the ingredients for a traditional full Irish breakfast. With the family, Paul and Tori are now enjoying a relaxing holiday on the Caribbean island.

"My family arrived with rashers and sausages and Barry's Tea so we had a massive fry-up and just to taste a slice of toast was such a novelty and to use a toilet for the first time in three months without it moving all over the place was marvellous," said Paul.

Aged 29, Paul is the youngest Irish man to row across the Atlantic and Tori is the only Canadian to have completed the race. A delighted Paul who two years ago cycled across Australia for charity, said he is extremely proud to have been the only Irish competitor to complete the race.

"It's a really great feeling and the last few days in particular were extremely enjoyable but I would never do it again - it was hell," he said. His

declaration is surely music to the ears of his parents.

Mayor Diarmuid Scully told the Limerick Post that he is planning a mayoral reception and rousing welcome home

party for the couple when they return. The date will be announced shortly.

"All of Limerick is extremely proud and delighted that Paul and Tori finished the race

safely. They are true adventurers and their courage, determination and staying power is an inspiration to us all," he said.

Paul and Tori undertook the race to raise

funds for the third world charity, Concern. Donations can still be made to Paul and Tori's transatlantic row for Concern. To contribute two euro text the word ROW to 57252.

Minister scores for avenue



Workers from all over Limerick park their cars on Summerville Avenue, depriving the residents of their parking spaces.

CONGRATULATIONS have been extended to Limerick City Council by Defence Minister, Willie O'Dea for their guarantee to introduce disc parking on Summerville Avenue, South Circular Road.

The minister said he had been approached by the residents who were frustrated and inconvenienced by people from all over the city parking in their avenue.

"I've been campaigning on

their behalf and am now very pleased that City Council has done the right thing here and accepted that a very serious problem existed in Summerville Avenue. The residents were seriously suffering with parking because of a lack of disc parking on the street and I was determined to try to help by making representations on their behalf," he said.

"Their concerns have been listened to and rightly so. Because

of the avenue's proximity to the city centre, city workers were using it to park their cars for hours, thereby making it almost impossible for the residents to find parking outside their own doors on their own street. This was a situation that simply had to be addressed and I will ensure now that the disc parking mechanism will be set up on the street without delay," said the Minister.

Skatepark will glide into Arthur's Quay

AFTER years of campaigning, during which they continued to electrify passers-by with their daring jumps and speedweaves, Limerick's young skateboarders are to secure their very own skatepark which will be located in the city centre's Arthur's Quay Park. This decision over-rides a move to locate the facility in O'Brien Park on Clare Street.

Last week members of Young City Council had been assured by director of services with Limerick City Council, Oliver O'Loughlin, that the residents of Clare Street would be consulted and their observations taken on board in relation to the council's intention to locate the city's first skateboard drive in O'Brien Park. The park was identified by the council in its application submitted to the Department of the

Environment for funding to construct, maintain and manage a skatepark in Limerick. That application was submitted to the

Department under its Pilot Scheme of Funding of Skateboard Parks in July of last year, under which one million euro

had been set aside. Because of the interest shown by local authorities in the scheme the amount was increased to

two million euro and the minister in announcing the skateboard grants said: "Up to now financial assistance has concen-

trated on the provision of playgrounds for younger children with few specialist facilities being provided for the older age

group." The Minister said he was delighted that the two million euro would be available for "the provision of these recreational facilities at a time when we are encouraging children and teenagers to become more active". Although City Hall's initial decision to locate the skatepark in O'Brien Park was welcomed by the skateboarders and Cllr John Ryan who has been lobbying for a facility for the skateboarders, the concerns of local people were voiced by Cllr Kieran O'Hanlon who urged City Council to take those concerns on board and enter into full consultation with the residents.

With grant approval secured and consultation on design requirements ongoing with local skaters, headed by the Limerick Skatepark Action Group, Oliver O'Loughlin, director of services with City Council, having met with the residents living adjacent to O'Brien Park has now decided that the

skateboard drive will be located in Arthur's Quay Park. "Everyone is delighted with this decision - the residents and the skateboarders themselves and so is Tom Shortt of Limerick Skatepark Action Group. Arthur's Quay Park is completely central, it is visible to everyone, unlike O'Brien's Park which is very much a residential park and the whole ambience of Arthur's Quay Park is one of youthful activity and participation. I think that having the skatepark located here will encourage and develop participation in the sport and will bring other skateboard teams to participate in competitions in the city," Cllr O'Hanlon told the Limerick Post. It is expected that City Council will now seek tenders for the construction of a skatepark and proceed with the project.



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