

### The Millennium Cruise

When a cruise into Dublin to celebrate the Millennium year was first discussed by the Dublin Branch committee, it was thought that we should be able to encourage about thirty to thirty-five boats to take part. What we did not take into consideration was the way in which IWA1 people respond to a challenge. The outcome, as most people now know, was a huge response with over eighty boats assembled on the Mespil Road stretch of the canal. As one participant said to me: "The journey into Dublin was like child birth – enjoyable after the event!"

As an association I think that we can all be proud of what was achieved. The canal system had never before handled so many boats in such a short time span and all credit is due to the OPW, the IWA1 members who helped at the locks, and the people who brought their boats in.

By bringing this fleet into Dublin, we demonstrated that there are boats in the system capable of travelling from Dublin to

the River Shannon, a fact which many people who passed by or visited the boats learned from the crews, who did a superb public relations exercise. I would also like to mention that I walked the bank of the canal early on the last Sunday morning after the departure of the boats and there was not a scrap of litter or any mark on the bank to show that over eighty boats had spent a week moored in the section. This shows the awareness that IWA1 members have for the environment. Was it all worth while? I would definitely answer "Yes", because of the number of people who knew little about our waterways and were entertained on board and those who passed by and asked questions. It also increased the awareness of the Lord Mayor, two government ministers, the Dublin City Manager and the guests who attended the opening ceremony. I hope it showed the boat participants that it is not dangerous to journey into Dublin. Maybe we can do it all again with more boats some day in the future.

*Desmond Leyden, Chairman of Dublin Branch*



#### WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?

L. to R. Peter Hanna, Des Leyden and the Lord Mayor, Carmencita Hederman, at the opening of the Millennium Rally in Dublin.

Dublin Branch Committee is offering a valuable prize to the IWA1 member who submits the best suggestions – **What are they saying?**

Entries to Eoghan Ganly, 6 Laurel Hill, Dun Laoghaire before 31 October.

## MILLENNIUM RALLY



### Diary of Events

The fleet assembled at Hazelhatch and 12th Lock on Friday evening and boats were allocated ETDs. The first boat left from below the 12th Lock at 06.00 hrs, 7½ hours later the last boat was locked through and reached Mespil Road at 00.15 hrs on Sunday morning. Seventy-one boats of all classes and descriptions had locked down and these were joined by eight boats which had locked up from the Liffey. As those who made the journey will long remember, it was a wet and windy day. The ecumenical service, which was to have been held on the canal bank, was transferred to the shelter of the Blood Transfusion Board's forecourt because of threatening clouds. It was attended by a large crowd and was conducted by Father Flood and the Rev. Wagstaff (one wag suggested - Flood and Flagstaff!).

The distinguished guests, including the Lord Mayor, Carmencita Hederman, and the Minister for State, Noel Tracy, set out from Harcourt Terrace aboard Hillary Allen's *Maid of Allen*, together they opened the sluices at Leeson Street lock using a symbolic golden key. Arriving at Mespil Road, the official opening took place and Sean Fitzsimons presented the Lord Mayor with a scroll of congratulation from Athlone Urban Council. That afternoon many events took place: canoeing, canoe polo, waterskiing, jet skiing, a rowing regatta on the Liffey and boat trips on the Royal Canal. That night the chairman, Des Leyden and his wife, Janet, hosted a reception for those taking part in the rally. On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday it was Open House to the citizens of Dublin and the Lord Mayor replied by inviting rallyers to visit her in the Mansion House. The arrangements for this visit were made by Nuala Tracy but like some other events which she had organised, fell through because of lack of interest; everyone seemed content to stay aboard and entertain visitors. On Thursday male hearts fluttered when Annela Rice visited the Rally as part of her Zanussi trip to Ireland but disappointment was expressed when she turned up by car instead of by helicopter. The first boats began to move back up the line on Friday and that night the Shannon Harbour Rally committee organised a party and concert at the Barge Inn which proved a popular event. On Saturday some forty boats were moved out to 12th Lock and Hazelhatch and on Sunday morning the last of the fleet departed from Mespil Road leaving Hillary Allen to continue to operate boat trips in the city aboard the *Maid of Allen*.

### Sponsorship and Finance

The Dublin Branch received much help from the Millennium Office but finance was very difficult to raise in this Millennium year as there were so many other making demands on sponsors time and money. Up to a very short time before the Rally it looked as if the entire operation would have to be funded out of Dublin Branch funds. Thankfully the following companies agreed to sponsor various aspects of the cruise. Without them Dublin Branch would have faced very severe financial problems and we are greatly in their debt.

General Motors Distribution Ireland Limited, Glen Abbey (Belgard) Limited, Hickey & Co. Limited, Ganly Walters & Co., Emerald Star, Celtic Canal Cruisers Limited, Lowtown Marina Limited, O.B. Marine Limited, McCann Verdon & Company. We are also indebted to Zanussi and Mr John Lyons for arranging the visit of Annela Rice and the reception on the *Maid of Allen* with its resultant publicity.

"Now we have them in, how do we get them out?"

When the Chairman of the Dublin Branch asked me to act as lockmaster for the Millennium Rally I was flattered by the grandiose title and readily accepted the duty - like a lamb to the slaughter.

I had never really thought much about the much used modern word 'logistics', but I was rapidly to learn it's true meaning on Saturday 30th April.

#### Number of Craft:

For many weeks prior to the rally various guesses were made as to the number of boats likely to attend and it was generally felt that the maximum number would be forty. Between 6.00a.m. and 11.30p.m. on that day approximately seventy-five boats passed on the Grand Canal from Lucan into Dublin and on to the City Circle Line. A further eight boats approximately came up via the Liffey.

#### Manpower and Equipment:

This involved a total lock staff of thirty-six men (OPW plus IWA I volunteers) plus numerous Sea Scouts, with four floating supervisory staff and six emergency maintenance staff. Two Ford Transit vans were in attendance, one containing a mini joinery shop complete with carpenters, the other containing various heavy duty equipment of every fashion, and a Toyota Land Cruiser towing vehicle complete with endless steel cable. Various other heavy vehicles and cranes were on standby complete with drivers but fortunately they were not required.

#### Communications:

Lock control operated on Channel 8 VHF, by prior arrangement with Dublin Port and had separate contact with the OPW VHF system which was on a different frequency. As the range of VHF in built up areas can be limited it was essential that boats relayed radio calls and skippers of the various craft were extremely helpful and patient in assisting lock control in this task.

#### The Canal System:

The canal system proved itself that day, as nobody really knew beforehand how it would physically stand up to the pressure of such numbers of boats (40 max. we thought). It was the highest daily number of craft through this section of canal since it's construction in the 1700's.

#### Water Management:

This can be a most complex matter and even the best laid plans go wrong if the velocity of craft down the system changes. It transpired that short levels can dry out at an alarming rate. However, apart from minor flooding at certain points all went well.

#### Throughput:

In hindsight it would appear that forty boats per day is the absolute maximum that should be undertaken. Putting through seventy-five boats was a task asking too much of the voluntary staff and the OPW, but apart from that we simply ran out of daylight. This fact was clearly demonstrated the following weekend when the same number of boats were taken 'uphill' out of the City over three days much more comfortably.

#### Divers:

More voluntary divers would have been welcome and this perhaps was an oversight on our part. The OPW provided one very experienced man and, whereas he worked tirelessly on boats, his resources were really needed for clearing lock gate obstructions, etc. The IWA I volunteer diver, Brendan Thompson did trojan work but he should have had at least two other divers to back him up. Hindsight is a great thing.

#### Log Jams:

This was the term we used when boats stacked up at any particular lock. A log jam can be cleared very effectively by

## Millennium Rally cont.

putting on additional lock staff at the trouble point and marshalling the boats. However, I soon found out that if you cleared them too quickly you simply reconstructed the log jam further down the system. This was of course when I learned the meaning of the term 'dynamic flow' used by traffic engineers — much more exotic than 'logistics'.

### Security in Transit:

Trouble at the sixth lock in the form of unruly children necessitated the guards being called and they arrived promptly and in great force. The problem tended to reappear at various times during the day but there was no doubt that the best procedure is for skippers to give boat rides to as many children as possible between locks. Skippers differed in their attitude to this and indeed one might wonder how one's insurers look at this practice.

The sixth lock proved to be the most hazardous location and I witnessed the IWA lock steward, Mark Maguire being badly bitten by an Alsatian while he was carrying out his duties — and the dog was on a lead! Mark stayed at his post and was present on the sweeping lock staff when the last boats were put onto the City Circle Line in the dark at night.

### Lock Staff:

It would appear that two fit persons can operate a single lock continuously for approximately three hours. Stretch this to six hours continuous and they are both exhausted. After ten hours they are almost on their hands and knees and at fifteen hours continuous they are like zombies wandering around in the dark still clutching lock keys in their hands. In this situation it should be noted that it is essential that life jackets are worn.

Double locks were of course particularly exhausting if undermanned. Albert Black, anticipating problems with the third lock (double) for the 'uphill' return journey, fashioned a special ratchet lever lock key during the rally week which proved essential the following weekend.

A vital element in my lock staffing plans was that when the last boat in the fleet passed through Lucan the lock staff there could be progressively piggy-backed down the system with each additional lock staff thus relieving the pressure from the staff nearer the city centre. This, of course, simply never happened because the fleet was twice as big as expected and the last boat did not pass through Lucan until many hours after the planned time for clearing this lock.

It was absolutely vital that no boat should be forced to overnight west of the circle line.

I cannot speak too highly of the IWA voluntary help on the locks. It was embarrassing to ask these very same people if they would do it all again the following weekend. Most of them did.

### OPW:

I must state that the OPW were superb during the entire operation. Even though we had various meetings with their engineers prior to the rally I was worried about the actual day as there were many variable factors and such an operation had not been carried out before. The OPW were most professional on the day and their staff were extremely courteous. Cooperation between OPW and IWA lock staff was superb and Liam Maher and John McKeown marshalled their men and were more than capable of dealing with any problem that arose — and they had one or two. It was very heartening to see such fantastic enthusiasm and cooperation and, while these men hold the reins together with Noel Sommers and Kathleen Brewster, I feel it augurs very well for our canals in the future. Due to truly incredible cooperation between all concerned and fantastic patience on the part of the boat skippers, all craft were got safely in and out of the city without any major mishap.

Finally, I could not have discharged my duties as lock master without the help of my wife and children who manned the car radio all day long while I was out of the vehicle.

Noel Murphy

## Preparations for the Rally

### Office of Public Works

When the Office of Public Works took over responsibility for the Grand Canal in 1986, they determined on an ambitious programme of developments for the Canal system. In spite of extremely limited funds available it was decided to dredge and restore the Grand Canal starting in Dublin and working westwards. To this end dredgers with drag lines and a barge with a hydraulic grab together with land based machines were seen working in Dublin all through the winter and early spring of 1987 and 1988. Hundreds of tonnes of rubbish were removed, banks were graded, lock gates repaired and bridges completed. It is a great tribute to all the members of the Office of Public Works who took part in this operation that the Canal was so greatly improved that it proved possible to bring nearly eighty boats from the 12th Lock to Mespil Road in one day. This would not have been possible without the work done by the OPW in the preceding months. Ms Kathleen Brewster, Mr Noel Sommers, Mr Liam Meagher and Mr John McKeown are all to be congratulated and thanked for their magnificent efforts. The work of dredging, restoration, water management and weed control continues.

## Some Personal Impressions and Incidents

### 12th Lock

The morning dawned grey and cool but not raining. The first boats which had gone through the lock the night before departed for Dublin with hardly a sound. In spite of our best efforts to be quiet, an excited Alsatian nearly burst its lungs barking to wake the lock-keeper at the unreasonable hour of 6.00a.m. At 6.25 a.m. the Lady Jennifer was the first boat to enter the lock and make its way to Dublin. From then on to 1.30p.m. boats were passed through the lock singly and in pairs. At times it seemed as if the boats would never end.

One incident made a considerable impact on the writer. A loud hailer and leaning board are placed carefully on the ground beside the landrack. The key is fitted and the landrack is partially raised. Two Lakeland terriers, playing close by, see a convenient place to relieve themselves. A leg is cocked over the loud hailer, the portly gentleman takes his hands from the lock key to shoo the dogs away. The lock key unwinds rapidly striking the writer sharply in the middle of the head, proving that some heads are thicker than iron.

### 7th Lock

This rain. Itinerant children are pestering the exhausted crew for a ride on the boat. Captain unable to cope stands disconsolately on the edge of the canal. A small girl of some six years runs from behind and hits him hard in the kidneys, not once but several times in a determined effort to push this grumpy gentleman into the water.

7.00 p.m. — We meet Des Leydon, "How long more to go?" we ask, "another four hours he says". We nearly turn back, we cannot face it. He was wrong — it took another five hours.

9.00 p.m. — Out of the rain and the gathering dark a small female angel in welly boots appears carrying a large soggy brown paper parcel of the most delicious greasy chicken and chips that we have ever eaten.



The Inland Waterways Association of Ireland takes this opportunity to salute the City of Dublin this Millennium year. Members from all over the country will be converging on Dublin with their boats to honour the occasion.

The city canals cannot claim even a quarter-millennium but they will be 200 years old in the 1990s and they have long been an important part of the city landscape. When the Grand Canal Hotel at Portobello was opened in 1807 it became the terminus for the passage boats, and the City Liffey a popular walk for the citizens on the outskirts of the city. Today it is still providing a sanctuary even if the busy lines of traffic along its banks have marred its former tranquillity. The restoration of the city stretches of the Royal Canal has now provided a similar linear park on the north side of the city and soon boats will be able to ply again along this canal. The Association is proud of the role it has played, helped by the people of Dublin, in ensuring that the valuable heritage of the canals will be preserved.

### MILLENNIUM CRUISE AND WATER FESTIVAL IN DUBLIN, 30th APRIL – 7th MAY

#### THE CRUISE TO DUBLIN

Boats coming from the west should assemble at Hazelhatch on Friday 29.

Departure on Saturday 30 will be on a phased basis commencing at 6.00 a.m. Captains should check with the committee boat.

Bridges and locks when required will be supervised from the 9th lock to Mespil Road between 10.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. on Saturday 20 April and Saturday 7 May.

The journey should take about eight hours.

Boats approaching from the East or being trailed. There is a slip at Poolbeg on the Liffey. Captains should obtain permission from Poolbeg Boat Club. High Tide on Saturday 30 is at 1.00 a.m. approx. There is no clearance under the Toll Bridge at high tide. The sea lock at Ringsend Basin may be negotiated three hours either side of high tide. The Lock Keeper has been requested to open the lockgates at 10 a.m. 11.00 a.m. and 12 noon. There is only 9ft clearance under the railway bridge leaving Ringsend.

N.B. There will be no through passage of boats on Sunday 1 May.

**Mespil Road.** The fleet will assemble at Mespil Road on Saturday 30 April. There will be a Berthing Master in attendance. Security personnel have been engaged and will patrol from 8.00 p.m. to 8.00 a.m. The ultimate responsibility for security will remain at all times with boat owners and their crews. Members are encouraged to live on their boats whenever possible.

**Departure Saturday 7 May.** The same arrangements apply as for arrival.

Entry Fee £15.00 (to include plaque and security). Entry forms from Des Leyden, 6 Foxrock Avenue, Dublin 6, Eoghan Ganly, 6 Laurel Hill, Upper Glenageary Road, Dun Laoghaire and Brian O'Reilly at Lowtown. Please return to Des Leyden or Eoghan Ganly.

Canal permits are available at Shannon Harbour from Seamus Feeney, Lowtown from Jimmy Conroy and the OPW, 51 St Stephens Green, Dublin 2.

#### EVENTS

**Sunday 1 May – The Water Festival. Opening 12.30 p.m.**  
The Maid of Allen will sail from Harcourt Terrace to Mespil Road where the opening ceremony will be performed by a prominent public figure.

#### THE SPORTS PROGRAMME

**Venue:** Portobello Harbour. **Organisation:** Irish Canoe Union. **Event:** Senior Canoe Polo. **Time:** 10 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.

**Venue:** Mespil Road. **Organisation:** Inland Waterways Association of Ireland. **Event:** Cruiser and Open Boat Competitions. **Time:** 2.00 to 5.00 p.m.

**Venue:** Percy Place. **Organisation:** Irish Schools Canoe Union. **Events:** Canoe Polo, Shalom Races. **Time:** 9.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

**Venue:** Ringsend Basin. **Events:** Displays and competitions. In conjunction with Dalkey Jet Ski Club. **Events:** Races and Demonstrations. **Time:** 2.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.

**Venue:** River Liffey. **Organisation:** Howth Yacht Club. **Event:** Laser Race to River Liffey. **Time:** 11.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m.

**Organisation:** St Patrick's Rowing Club. **Event:** Skiff Rowing Races. **Time:** 2.30 p.m.

**Organisation:** Galway Hookers. **Event:** Race to Liffey. **Time:** Finish Toll Bridge 2.00 p.m. Approximately.

**Venue:** The Royal Canal, Binns Bridge / Cross Guns Bridge. **Organisation:** Royal Canal Amenity Group. **Event:** Trips for children in small boats. **Time:** 2.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.

**Venue:** Royal Canal, 12th Level, Leixlip/Blanchardstown. **Organisation:** Irish Canoe Union. **Event:** Long Distance Race. **Time:** 2.00 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.

**An Exhibition** will be held under the auspices of the OPW, The Lock House, 53 Percy Place during the week.

**Friday 6 May 7.30 to 11.30 p.m.** Shannon Harbour Rally Committee will host a party (music, entertainment and hot supper) at the Barge Inn, Charlemont Street Bridge. Tickets Adults £5. Children £2 from Padraic O'Brolchain tel. 806538.

It is hoped that all those bringing their boats to Dublin will take the opportunity to entertain their non boating friends at Mespil Road during the week.

## Millennium Rally cont.

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## Millennium Rally cont.

### 1st Lock

John Du Moulin and Peter Hanna greet us with enthusiasm. This is very gratifying until we realise that all they are looking for is the last boat in.

### Portobello

We are ready to give up. Padraic O'Brolchain and Brian Kelly, streaming water, cheerfully inform us that they have got ready the next three locks to Mespil Road. We must go on.

### 12 Midnight

The last lock, the last bridge, still raining, but we are home at last.

### The Swan and his Mate

At the 12th Lock between the pub and the lock there is an old mill pond surrounded by trees, rushes and water plants. A pair of swans have nested there for the last twelve years and successfully reared a succession of families. They are prized and loved by the people who live in the neighbourhood. While the fleet is making its departure from the 12th Lock the pen sits protectively on her eggs while the cobb, the magnificent male, stalks along the tow path challenging and daring all and sundry to come near his nest. Nobody is foolish enough to do so, indeed one party with their Yorkshire terrier had to go around the other way. On our return a week later we learn from the local publican that a traveller, refused drink, leaves the pub in a rage, leaps into his car and drives furiously away. Meeting the swan on the side of the road he swerves and deliberately cuts him down killing the cobb instantly.

Now the pen sits alone on her eggs. She will not feed in spite of the best efforts of her friends to feed her. It is hoped to save the eggs and rear the family but the pen will also die.

*Eoghan Ganly*

### Signing in the Rain

Spending the day in wet weather gear being the "Check-in-Buoy" at the Barge Inn, a pub with no food on Saturdays. The smooth working of the lock with boats appearing from the west in the misty rain and almost without pause entering the lock, down and away with reasonably cheerful crews.

Hardly time to handle the wet money and write on sodden paper.

In the evening, entering the Inn to be engulfed by a wave of smoky heat propelled by a pulsating din of a live band competing with the Eurovision Song Contest on television. It was really pleasant to regain the quietness of the canal bank in the rain.

I will not forget the parting remark at the end of the last pre-rally committee meeting, "See you on Saturday, come rain, hail or snow". Well, we didn't have hail or snow.

*Henry Jack*

### Suck Survey

It was reported in the recent Athlone Aerial that Noel Treacy, Minister of State at the Department of Finance, (the minister responsible for the Office of Public Works) told a meeting of the Suck joint Drainage Committee that the OPW is to conduct a survey of the River Suck to establish if a navigation could be established from the junction with the River Shannon at Shannonbridge to Ballinasloe. The survey is to commence early in September and to be completed next year. The Minister said that he was optimistic that the survey would confirm that this was "an attainable goal" and that he was hopeful that "sooner rather than later boats will be returning to Ballinasloe". The old Ballinasloe Canal was closed to navigation in 1961 and has since almost totally disappeared in bog workings so it would not be practical to try to restore it but the River Suck scheme could be feasible. Our own investigations would seem to suggest that some dredging and the construction of one lock would be sufficient to bring navigation close to Ballinasloe.



*A Presentation Plaque for Padraic Flynn,  
Minister for the Environment*

Photo: E. Garry



*The Lord Mayor, Carmencita Hederman and  
open the lock at Leeson Street Bridge*



*Noel Treacy, Minister of State and  
The Lord Mayor on the Maid of Allen*

## Dublin Branch Millennium Rally 1988



*The Fleet at Mespil Road*



*Cleaning the prop on the way to Dublin*



*A wire mattress - divers kept the fleet moving*



*Eilís Hederman and Noel Treacy  
meet Bridge*



*Sean Fitzsimons and Padraic O'Brolchain look  
happy to meet Annela Rice*



*Canals of The Avon Locks*



*Three generations watch  
the fleet leave Dublin*



*The swan at the 12th Lock*



*There's a new force afloat*

*Photo: K. Kilven*





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**Mespil Road.** The fleet will assemble at Mespil Road on Saturday 30 April. There will be a Berthing Master in attendance. Security personnel have been engaged and will patrol from 8.00 p.m. to 8.00 a.m. The ultimate responsibility for security will remain at all times with boat owners and their crews. Members are encouraged to live on their boats whenever possible.

**Departure Saturday 7 May.** The same arrangements apply as for arrival.

Entry Fee £15.00 (to include plaque and security). Entry forms from Des Leyden, 6 Foxrock Avenue, Dublin 6, Eoghan Ganly, 6 Laurel Hill, Upper Glenageary Road, Dun Laoghaire and Brian O'Reilly at Lowtown. Please return to Des Leyden or Eoghan Ganly.

Canal permits are available at Shannon Harbour from Seamus Feeney, Lowtown from Jimmy Conroy and the OPW, 51 St Stephens Green, Dublin 2.

#### EVENTS

**Sunday 1 May – The Water Festival.** Opening 12.30 p.m. The Maid of Allen will sail from Harcourt Terrace to Mespil Road where the opening ceremony will be performed by a prominent public figure.

#### THE SPORTS PROGRAMME

*Venue:* Portobello Harbour. *Organisation:* Irish Canoe Union. *Event:* Senior Canoe Polo. *Time:* 10 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.

*Venue:* Mespil Road. *Organisation:* Inland Waterways Association of Ireland. *Event:* Cruiser and Open Boat Competitions. *Time:* 2.00 to 5.00 p.m.

*Venue:* Percy Place. *Organisation:* Irish Schools Canoe Union. *Events:* Canoe Polo, Shalom Races. *Time:* 9.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

*Venue:* Ringsend Basin. *Events:* Displays and competitions. In conjunction with Dalkey Jet Ski Club. *Events:* Races and Demonstrations. *Time:* 2.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.

*Venue:* River Liffey. *Organisation:* Howth Yacht Club. *Event:* Laser Race to River Liffey. *Time:* 11.00a.m. to 2.00p.m.

*Organisation:* St Patrick's Rowing Club. *Event:* Skiff Rowing Races. *Time:* 2.30 p.m.

*Organisation:* Galway Hookers. *Event:* Race to Liffey. *Time:* Finish Toll Bridge 2.00 p.m. Approximately.

*Venue:* The Royal Canal, Binns Bridge / Cross Guns Bridge. *Organisation:* Royal Canal Amenity Group. *Event:* Trips for children in small boats. *Time:* 2.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.

*Venue:* Royal Canal, 12th Level, Leixlip/Blanchardstown. *Organisation:* Irish Canoe Union. *Event:* Long Distance Race. *Time:* 2.00 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.

**An Exhibition** will be held under the auspices of the OPW, The Lock House, 53 Percy Place during the week.

**Friday 6 May** 7.30 to 11.30 p.m. Shannon Harbour Rally Committee will host a party (music, entertainment and hot supper) at the Barge Inn, Charlemont Street Bridge. Tickets Adults £5. Children £2 from Padraic O'Brolchain tel. 806538.

It is hoped that all those bringing their boats to Dublin will take the opportunity to entertain their non boating friends at Mespil Road during the week.