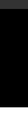
SCRAPBOOK



The photo and the advert date from the 1960's and show the Skyline Tenpin Bowling club location.
This street-name later changed from Market Place to Market Place and the building in the mid 70's was transformed into the Technical College Students Union.
Dundalkians, however, kept the Bowlers' Alley tag going!

The Bowling Alley appeared to cash underline in the mid-late 70's. This weren't a band playing an organised gig but a gang of local odd-balls who frequented the Club, and called themselves The Snap-On Brothers.
When talking about the Snap-On Brothers, it's usually accompanied by words like - crazy, mad, loony, maniac etc.
Not depicting a problem mind you, but rather, describing their humour & antics.
Not a band, as far as I know, they didn't actually perform on stage as an act, they just sort of 'slipped into a performance' at the drop of a hat.
The main men were - STEVE SMITH aka Dave, DAVE MANN aka Eric (above pic) and a sporadic MURRAY TOOH.
A few of them worked in a garage, hence getting their name from Snap-On tools!

DJ Brian Wilson gives a detailed account of one of their performances...

"The Snap-Ons... they were a bunch of around 25 regulars, kinda led by Dave and Eric, aka Steve Smith and Dave Mann. Dave and Eric had a couple of parts going on in the theatre and act out of the words to Meat Loaf's "Paradise By A Dashboard Light" and "Dr You Like My Nose Can Happy Together", from The Mothers of Invention's "Live at the Fillmore East" album.
At the time, the disco was in "the wee hole" and the bands were "through the room" (the downstairs big hall). When the band started at 11 in the big hall, he took a break for half an hour so as to encourage the punters to go through to give the band an audience. After that point, the audience would become quite drunk (Dutch courage) and the band would be fine. This particular night, Zeek and Ozz asked me for "Paradise" in their non-dance period so they could do their stuff. The was a big audience in the big hall, so I had to go through to the theatre to get the sheet music and did doing Ellen Feiberg was on the floor in front of the disco. As you know, they both loved her to dance with.
Around 5 minutes into it, the band finished a wee bit earlier than expected and people started coming back through from the other room. Zeek and Ozz were so engrossed in their performance that they didn't notice the audience building up around the dance floor. As the record started to fade out, Zeek and Ozz almost lifted their breeks when they got a chorus of cheers and applause from the audience.
Dave swore they would never do that again... this is the same Zeek who now leads a lunatic band in Ireland!"

PETE THE CARERA

One Bowlers' Alley regular (or resident is probably more accurate) worth mentioning was a guy called Pete The Carrera. He was not only a Bowlerpin Circus pointer but a photographer too. He was there each week, documenting much of the goings-on and, as a result, he left behind a wealth of photos, mostly of the Snap-On Brothers.
Unfortunately, Pete has since passed away, and so his portfolio may never be seen.

Another familiar face at the Bowler Alley's at the 80's was the chief technical officer, Hilary.
Hilary was a Dundalkian who had left the town to become a sailor and now ran one of the main contractors to a factories called Deadhead.
Hilary used to receive his gear and crew from Deadhead.
She was also a talented artist and did most of the artwork that cropped up in Deadhead.
The above photo was taken in 1984 at the Bowler Alley's Fancy Dress Disco. Circus Of Hell. Needless to say she managed to grab an interview with the guys for the factory.
Hilary was also a member of the Bowler Alley's Pin Collectors Club that night but the exact date isn't per known, so the gag has still to appear in the news page.

1980-IDA ORIGINS

This is a very loose bit of basic background info about how the Tech gigs in Marketgart got started...

For many decades, the Art School & Tech were managed as one body called The Dundee Institute Of Art & Technology. Although the 2 were in separate buildings (art in Perth Road, Tech in Bell Street), the Tech College had acquired an annex in the Marketgart by 1974.
In 1975, The Dundee Institute Of Art & Technology split into 2 - *Duncan of Jordanstone College Of Art and Dundee College of Technology*, and were now managed separately.
In 1976, the Marketgart annex was officially designated area for entertainment.
Prior to 1976, Tech College gigs were put on at The Palace in South Tay Street.

Running parallel to this mid 70's college activity - The Palace sold their premises to Mackie Wallace who owned the JM Ballroom.
The JM closed down in 1974 to build a new nightclub (The Barracuda) and Wallace continued to run the Palace under that name until the Barracuda was ready in 1976.
The Palace then closed down and reopened again in 1976 as Gamblers.

This transformation is also reflected in the 70's music press - the college gigs go up to the end of 1975, disappear for a year, then reappear in Gamblers/Barracuda in 1976 onwards.
The resident Dreamers Disco started up in Gamblers in 1976 as well.

So although it's difficult to track down the exact dates, month-wise, these yearly sequence of events (74 to 76) all seem to interlock together with what was going on behind the scenes.

DUNDEE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
TALENT CONTEST
for PUPPET BANDS.
Both forms of Puppet participation invitable, from:- - Hand-puppets, Glove, Rod, Hand-Jointed, Marionettes, Puppets Operated by Electronic Devices.
Entry forms & further information available from:- Mrs. Jeffrey, Secretary, Dundee Institute of Technology, Bell Street, Dundee.
Closing date for entries: 1st March 1974.
Entry forms must be returned to the Secretary, Dundee Institute of Technology, Bell Street, Dundee.
Once previous departments have been contacted, entry forms will be posted to Dundee Institute of Technology, Bell Street, Dundee.
Entry forms will be posted to Mrs. Jeffrey, Secretary,

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In a corner of the Bowlin' Alley in 1979, these 3 guys are enjoying their 10th pint of the evening!
The trio, however, all have links to the local music scene.
Left, is Ronnie Chalmers, most known for being the lead singer & guitarist with early 80's band, The Grip.
Middle, is Stuart Firm, who had recording & rehearsal studios in town - The Seagate Studios. He was also sound engineer for his own PA Systems available for hire. In 1982 he was in a local band called Just Little Boys.
Right, is Billy Hamilton, who was roadie with The Grip and occasional lighting engineer.
So a typical, regular boozy scene at the Bowlin' Alley in the late 70's.

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CONTACT

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