

We'll miss the pub when it's gone

Eamonn Fitzgerald www.spotlight-online.de 03.04.2009

It's Friday, so after work we'll go to the pub — while there's still a pub to go to, that is. The sad fact is that the pub is dying. In Britain, 39 are going out of business, forever, each week. And it's just as grim in Ireland.

Why are pubs disappearing? Life's changing — that's why. Instead of going to the local, which might sell Guinness and crisps, many people today prefer the "gastropub", a restaurant in a pub setting that serves smoked haddock and prosciutto risotto with a glass of Sauvignon Blanc. As well, youngsters now prefer clubbing and drinking mojitos or caipirinhas to traditional pints of beer. Another thing: supermarkets are pricing alcohol so low it makes going to a pub a waste of money. And the ban on smoking has forced smokers to drink at home, while rising unemployment means fewer people can afford to go out. Finally, an evening chatting online, with a few bottles of beer nearby, is an increasingly popular way to spend time.

What do we lose when pubs die? An important part of life, I feel. Take Dick Mac's bar in Dingle in Ireland. It's a shoe repair shop by day, but in the evening it fills up with fascinating people, like Lisa Hannigan, and friends.



The pub is more than a place to have a drink. It's the centre of community life; it's an open living room where everything from the weather to the quality of the football team or the performance of the cricket side is passionately discussed and songs are sung. We'll miss it when it's gone.

that is = nachgestellt d.h.; grim = schlimm; setting = Rahmen; smoked haddock = Schellfisch; ban = Verbot; shop = Werkstatt; living room = Wohnzimmer; performance = Leistung; side = Team

Lisa Hannigan - I don't know

I don't know what you smoke or what countries you've been to
if you speak any other languages other than your own but I'd like to meet you

I don't know if you drive if you love the ground beneath you
I don't know if you write letters or panic on the phone still

I'd like to call you all the same, if you want to, I am game.
I don't know if you can swim or if the sea has any draw for you

if you're better in the morning or when the sun goes down
I'd like to talk to you
I don't know if you can dance if the thought ever occurred to you

if you eat what you've been given or push it round your plate still
I'd like to cook for you all the same, I would want to, I am game,
If you walk my way and I could keep my head we could creep away in the dark

or maybe not, we could shoot it down anyway.
I don't know if you read novels or the magazines if you love the hand that feeds you
I assume that your heart's been bruised I know I'd like to know you

you don't know if I can draw at all or what records I am into
if I sleep like a spoon or rarely at all or maybe you would do?
maybe you would do

if I walk your way I will keep my head we will feel our way through the dark
though I don't know you I think that I would do I don't fall easy at all