

Snip snip and shave on the web

HUGH
& CONNOR
MCALLISTER

The Grafton Barber, run by brothers Hugh and Connor McAllister, has launched its own website.

The McAllisters' incorporation of information technology into their business does not stop there. They have installed Internet access in their Grafton Street shop, and hope to make laptop computer facilities available to customers in the near future, who will be able to surf the web while having their hair cut. The website is intended to promote the brand and market products.

Hugh, 31, and Connor, 28, were originally introduced to the world of hairdressing by their Belfast-born father, Hugh senior, who was part of the team that represented Ireland in international barbering competitions in 1969.

In 1994, the two sons set up the first national team in 25 years and competed in the world championships of barbering. When asked what motivated them to re-form the Irish team and compete in the world cup, older brother Hugh laughs and gives a simple reason: "Ego!"

Shortly after their World Cup escapades, the McAllisters opened their own Grafton Barber shop after extensive renovations to an older shop. They recently opened a second branch at the Green Dol-

phin in South Anne Street, another traditional barber-shop which has been there since 1948.

Between the two branches, the brothers now employ 14 full-time staff. They run a barber school and are in the process of launching their own range of styling products.

Many of the films made in Ireland recently have benefited from the McAllisters' expertise as stylists. They worked on *The General* and *Saving Private Ryan*.

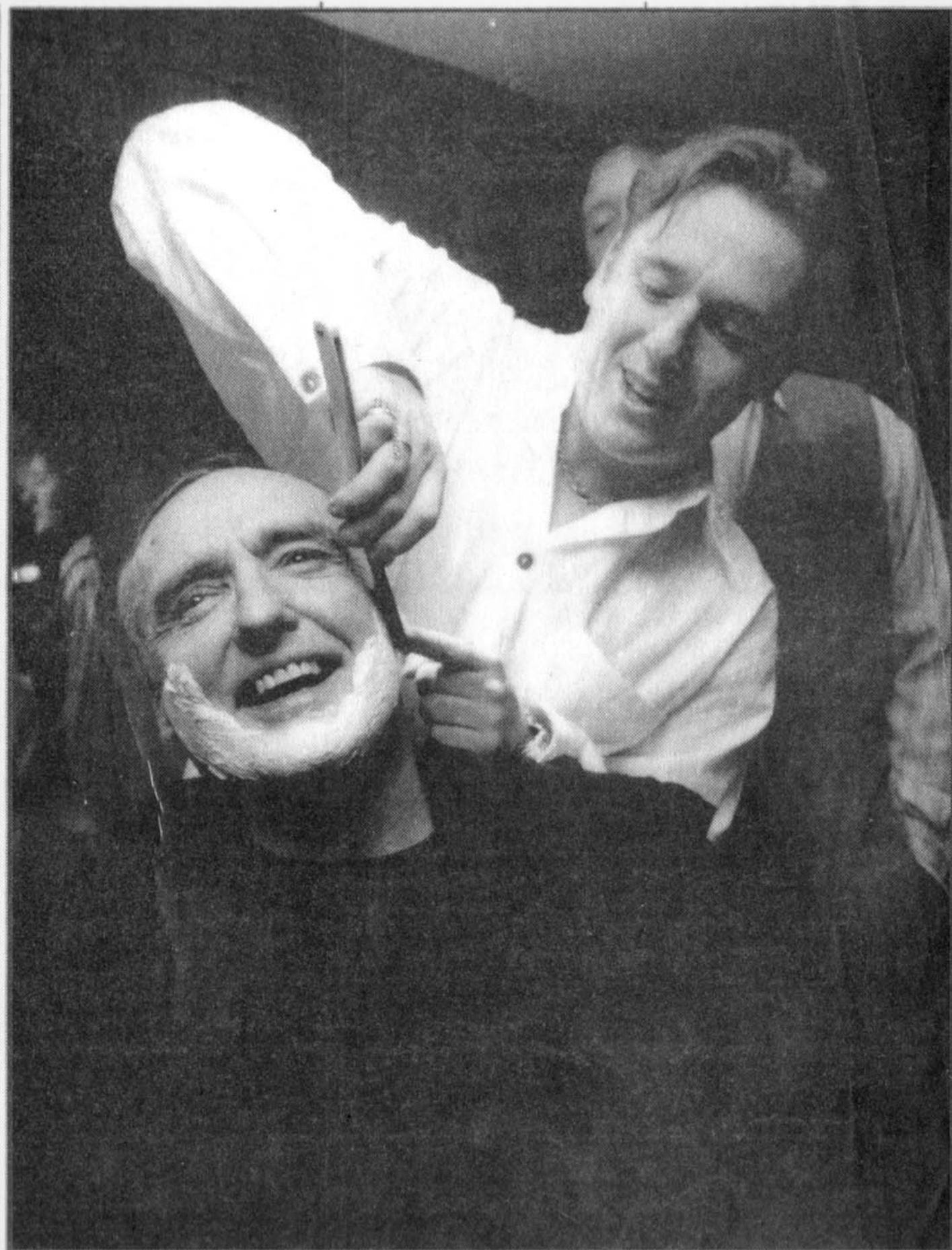
Some of the actors, impressed by the McAllisters' cutting ability, have returned for more at the Dublin shops. Regular customers include Gabriel Byrne, Brendan Gleeson, Dennis Hopper (*see photo*), and Brad Pitt and Johnny Depp whenever they're in Dublin.

Apart from the normal cutting services, they also offer colouring, wig fitting, open razor shaving with hot towels, and even manicuring.

So are Irish men getting vainer? "They're just looking after themselves an awful lot more," says Hugh. After all the celebrity namedropping, Hugh is not keen to name a few of his manicure and wig clients, even through both shops have private cubicles for these services. "No chance, we'd have to close down in the morning!"

The Grafton Barbers website is at <http://www.grafton-barbers.com> and was designed by mark@vsystems.net

Niamh Costigan



Connor McAllister with Hollywood actor Dennis Hopper