

# Vintage cars recreate 1936 Grand Prix in city

NICK RABBITS

News Reporter

THE city's streets were yesterday filled with the sights and sounds of screaming engines, burnt rubber and petrol fumes, at a special commemoration of the Limerick Grand Prix.

In 1935, 1936, and 1938, Limerick staged a full international grand prix, which consisted of a 55 lap road race around Pery Square, O'Connell Street, William Street, Sexton Street, Roxboro Road, the Carey's Road, Lord Edward Street, Punch's Cross and O'Connell Avenue.

In the most acclaimed 1936 race, some 24 motors took place, driven by the Thai Prince Bira among other celebrities.

Seventy-five years on, some 20 vintage motors retraced the steps of the original rally, organised by the Limerick Classic and Vintage Car Club.

These included the same MG which won the 1936 race.

The car, driven then by Belfast's Andrew Hutchinson, was returned to its former glory by Neil Hilton. And Mr Hutchinson's nephew, Tony Redmond was also in attendance.

Co-organiser Martin Burke said: "This route is the only one outside of Monte Carlo which remains unchanged after 75 years, so there is a bit of history attached to it. We have some fabulous cars here, which have come to help us commemorate this."

As well as the MG car, other cars on display included an Aubrey Thompson Racing Special, two Bugattis, a "supercharged" Mercedes, a Riley, and an Alvis, which won a race in Dublin's Phoenix Park in 1938.

While the cars were on display outside, the Georgian House played host to a recollection of Limerick's grand prix races. The display included photographs from the era, and Pathé footage.

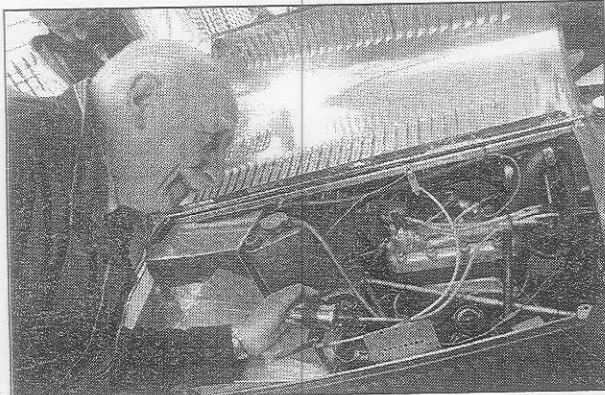
Brothers Paddy and Finn Fielding lived on Hartstonge Street when the 1936 Grand Prix were taking place. They recalled the race with great zest.

"It was a magical time in the city. The racing cars arrived on the Friday of an August weekend. On the Saturday morning, there were trials at six am. The cars used to also come into the chicane outside the Jesuit's Church. Really, it was a magical time for us," Paddy said. Finn, who was 15 at the time, added: "The one thing I feel and can still remember is the smell of the petrol in the car."



Having a great time: Young Nicky Desmond from Raheen gets behind the wheel of a Thompson Racing Special for the first time.

All Pictures: Dave Gaynor



Taking a closer look: Joe Kearney of Janesboro goes under the bonnet of a 1931 Austin Seven.



Getting ready to motor: Gabriella Kalarus and Max Cyran from O'Callaghan Strand beside a vintage Wolseley.

## Songwriters night in city

THE special guest at this week's Songwriters Night in Foley's Bar is Vinny Fitzgerald of critically acclaimed Limerick band The Truth.

Vinny will perform a special pared down acoustic version of his album at the event, which takes place on Thursday, September 15.

As Usual all aspiring songwriters are invited to attend and play there songs in front of a live audience. All types of music and singers are welcome, a limited amount of instruments will be available for use on the night. Further details at [www.myspace.com/limericksongwriters](http://www.myspace.com/limericksongwriters)

## Perpetual bowls cup

MEMBERS of Active Retirement Associations from Co Limerick attended the launch of the Active Retirement Ireland's National Bowls tournament in Dublin last week.

Now in its second year, the National Bowls Tournament will take place from September 26 to September 29, at the Breaffy Events Arena in Castlebar, Co. Mayo.

More than 400 retired men and women - from Limerick and throughout Ireland - are expected to take part in the event and compete for the Breaffy Perpetual Cup.

More information at [www.activeirl.ie](http://www.activeirl.ie)

## Executive's Conference

LIMERICK businesspeople are being encouraged to attend a unique event aimed at restoring growth to the Irish economy.

Irish Executives is hosting a seminar, codenamed IrelandWON. The not for profit event takes place at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Galway on Thursday, September 15.

The summit will bring together experts and business people from home and abroad to learn about some of the most current and critical contributing factors to growth. More information at [www.irishexecutives.com](http://www.irishexecutives.com)

## Jobs scheme 'in tatters'

AFTER the latest unemployment figures rose again, Sinn Féin's northside councillor Maurice Quinlivan believes the government's jobs initiative "lays in tatters."

He pointed out that since the government launched its much-feted jobs initiative in May, unemployment has increased by almost 30,000 people.

"The policies of austerity being pursued by this government are actually contributing to growing unemployment queues. They are forcing companies to the wall and people on to the dole," Cllr Quinlivan said.

## Man who threw bin at gardai 'should join AA'

A MOYROSS man has been handed a five-month suspended sentence at Limerick District Court after throwing a bin that struck a Garda patrol car.

When solicitor John Herbert said his client Anthony Collopy suffered from depression, Judge Eamon O'Brien replied: "Half the country is depressed, that's not an excuse".

Mr Collopy, 27, with an address

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at Whitecross Gardens in Moyross, pleaded guilty to public disorder on August 12 last.

Inspector Brendan McDonagh, said gardai had been called to Moyross at around 8.30pm on that date to deal with a disturbance.

The court heard there was a large group of people in the area and that Mr Collopy had flung a brown bin at the marked patrol car, striking it to the rear on the driver's side. Mr Collopy was intoxicated and had also been abusive to gardai on the night, the inspector said.

Mr Herbert said his client, who had been drinking on the night, was being abused by the crowd that was present.

He had thrown the "small bucket" at the people who were abusing him but had instead hit the patrol car.

The unemployed man, who receives disability benefit, is currently being treated for depression at the Tevere Day Hospital on Shelbourne Road.

Judge O'Brien suggested he should also "consider joining the AA", before imposing a five month sentence, suspended for two years.