

MENT & LETTERS

K LEADER

ired to make the Leader  
ired as a local journal"

HED BY THE LIMERICK LEADER LTD,  
STREET, LIMERICK

ending  
a's story  
or cheer  
deserves chance

better place, such views  
are dispiriting to hear.  
Thankfully, that kind  
of bigotry was strongly  
rejected by others who  
engaged in the online  
debate.

Others who have come  
out against Anna's good  
news have done so in a  
more respectful manner.  
They have declined  
to direct their ire at a  
wholly admirable young  
woman, instead arguing

The passing of part of my childhood

I AWOKE last Sunday morning  
to the news that the former  
Oyster Ballroom in Dromkeen  
had been gutted by a huge fire  
overnight. I was saddened at the  
passing of yet another part of my  
childhood.

It was a large part of my life  
growing up, overlooking it as we  
did from the family farm across  
the Mulcair on the Cappamore  
side. I am not old enough to  
have gone dancing there, but I  
do remember playing bingo in  
Dromkeen as a child with my  
mother in the late 1970s. I also  
remember the night that that  
Thin Lizzy played Dromkeen in  
April 1980 and my grandmother  
going down to 'experience' the  
atmosphere.

That was no ordinary  
dance night, she always said  
afterwards. She was nearly 80  
at the time!

There are still legendary  
stories told locally of the night  
that Jim Reeves played there  
in 1963 too, when over 2,500

**OYSTER BALLROOM**

SUNDAY NEXT, JULY 4—

**THE HOEDOWNERS**

FRIDAY, JULY 8—

**World-famous DAVY JONES (ex-Monkees)**  
(The World's Most Successful Group)

**AND HIS NINE-PIECE SUPER BANDSHOW**

Also! From Tyrone: PHILOMENA BEGLEY and the Fabulous COUNTRY FLAVOUR. 9.30—1.30.  
(13c)

The Oyster Ballroom, Dromkeen drew many a big name in its day, as evidenced by this Leader ad from July 3, 1971

packed into the dancehall.

The music from the bands  
who played there could be  
clearly heard miles away every  
Sunday night, from after 9pm  
'til very late. Remember,  
this was also the era before  
Facebook or, God forbid, Tinder  
and the dancehalls were the

only opportunity many people  
had of meeting members of the  
opposite sex.

My father worked there from  
the very start (November 1958)  
to close to the end (early-1981)  
and holds many fond memories  
of the place.

Pat Cosgrave (Pallasgreen)

and himself are the last two  
left who worked there the first  
night, when Donie Collins sent  
them home sweatin'. Pakie  
and Teresa Hayes were tough  
taskmasters and worked very  
hard to keep the place going,  
especially in latter times when  
people's styles and tastes had

changed with the advent of the  
lounge bar and disco.

A neighbouring child, James  
Blackwell, did a fantastic degree  
thesis a few years celebrating  
the Oyster, entitled, The  
Hucklebuck: An Oral History  
of the Oyster Ballroom. It is  
well worth searching out and  
reading.

Another part of old Ireland  
was buried in the rubble of that  
fire this week, an important  
piece that will be missed by a  
great many people, many who  
met and courted their life's  
partner there.

The ballroom in Dromkeen  
is also the cause of a lifelong  
addiction that has dogged my  
life every since: Leeds United!  
That is a story for another day,  
though.

**JAMES LUNDON**  
EX-PALLASBEG, CAPPAMORE  
NOW KILTULLAGH NORTH, ATHENRY,  
CO GALWAY

Footballers in ties,  
Limerick city 1960

I RECENTLY came across a photograph  
(above) taken in Limerick city 55 years ago  
and would appeal to any Limerick Leader  
readers who might be able to identify

