

Limerick Unemployed Centre, 33 Thomas St.

Issue No. 3. November, 1987.

FREE • FREE • FREE • FR

Toucandance

Ms. Ireland

• THIS ISSUE • THIS ISSU

Fuel Scheme Scandal

Hundreds of Limerick people may be out in the cold this winter because of the chaos caused by this years Fuel Scheme. Government Departments were so busy this summer devising cuts, that they seemed to forget that winter was just around the corner! As a result the Fuel Scheme '87/'88 was badly advertised and confusion was the order of the day.

For the past six weeks, the Advisory Service in the **Limerick Unemployed Centre** has been flooded with enquiries regarding the Scheme. "The main problems, we encountered, were that application forms were not available until the last minute. In some cases no forms were available on October 2nd, the date that applications were to be in by!", said a senior advisor in the Unemployed Centre. On top of this officials in the Labour Exchange in Limerick received **NO** information from Dublin on how the Scheme would operate this year. They were as much in the dark as we will be without our Fuel Vouchers.

Because the Scheme extended for the first time to people with dependants in rural areas, the workload on officials in Labour Exchanges throughout the country was increased. Any fool would have been aware of this and should have planned accordingly. However, these days, planning for the welfare of the unemployed and their vulnerable sections of the community seems no longer fashionable.

Just how confusing and mismanaged is this Fuel Scheme? Well, in Limerick alone, there are four different distribution points for vouchers.

These are the **Post Office, Labour Exchange, the Corporation** and the **Health Board**. Hardly a recipe for efficiency!

The ads that appeared in local newspapers announcing this years Scheme were themselves riddled with complicated hazy information; even a legal-eagle would have problems unravelling it. Long-term unemployed people (on the dole for 15 months or more) are entitled to apply to their local Labour Exchange for their vouchers, yet this fact hasn't been advertised at all. A source in the Department of Social Welfare in Dublin, revealed "that because of the haphazard way it (the Scheme) has been introduced this year a lot of unemployed people who

Continued on page 2.

Limerick Family Planning Clinic
4 Mallow Street, Limerick.
Tel. (061) 312026.



- Full range of contraception methods.
- On the spot pregnancy testing.
- Rubella, Breast exams, Smear and V.D. testing.
- Courses on menopause and P.M.T.

Counselling on sexual and marriage problems.

ALL SERVICES ARE STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Fuel Scheme Scandal

are living alone may miss out on their entitlements". Health Boards have been notified to tighten up on means testing – so be warned!

The Department of Social Welfare is constantly saying how concerned it is about the well-being of what it calls 'The vulnerable sectors of the Community'. Yet there is no provision for people on so-called 'short-term' welfare payments like Disability Benefit. Often these payments are less than long-term ones. Another obvious contradiction in the Scheme.

Next year the Government intend to bring all applicants under one scheme – the National Fuel Scheme. With this years Scheme we have witnessed nothing but confusion and chaos; are we due for a repeat performance next year? You can be sure the coal bunkers of our worthy decision-makers in Dublin are well stocked up.

Are you Bringing up Children On Your Own?

If so you may be interested to know that there is a support Group for One Parent Families in Limerick. We are called "GINGERBREAD" and we meet every Thursday night at 8.30 p.m. in the Unemployed Centre, 33 Thomas Street, Limerick.

Our Group is open to anyone bringing up children on their own. Male and Female, Widows, Widowers, Divorced, Single Mothers, and Separated people.

We meet for a chat and we plan our activities at our meetings. Among the events which we have coming up are Childrens Hallowe'en Party, Sale of Work, Parents Night Out, Annual Social, Childrens Christmas Party. We have Social Welfare Advisors and Legal Advisors attend our meetings from time to time.

We are a Support Group but that does not mean we sit about moaning about our problems. If you want to talk to any of our members about any problems you may feel free to do so. If you just want to sit and listen that's o.k. too. We usually go to the Pub after the meeting! We would love to get more members so any single Parent is Welcome to come along.

You may phone any Thursday night from 8.30 to 10.00 p.m. Phone 46090 and we will have someone to talk to you.

Did you know?

- * That if you are an unmarried mother or deserted wife and you are claiming your Unemployment Benefit, you can claim full Unmarried Mothers Allowance/Deserted Wives Allowance and also claim your stamps at a reduced rate.
- * That you have the right to appeal any decision regarding your dole payment made by Department of Social Welfare.
- * That if you are claiming your stamps for more than six months, you can qualify for another 15 months of Unemployment Benefit if you put up another 13 full stamps.
- * For information on any of the above contact our advisors at the Unemployed Centre, 33, Thomas Street. Phone: 46056.

EDITORIAL BOARD

Co-Editors:	Helena Close/Dave Lee
Administrator:	Eleanor Murphy
Layout:	Mary Spellman/Paula Cannon
Advertisements:	Paula Cannon
Sports:	Tony Colbert



Master Ki Ha Rhee, 8th Dan Black Belt founder of the Republic of Ireland Tae Kwan Do Federation who was in Dublin recently with the founder of Tae Kwan Do General Choi Hong Hi.

Self-Defence on The Dole

Mr. Michael O'Donovan, spokesman for the Limerick Branch of the Republic of Ireland Tae Kwan Do Association (R.I.T.A.) informs us that they have recently begun classes in Roxboro Community Hall on Monday and Wednesday nights at 7 p.m. and, that membership is now open.

"We offer special rates for children and unemployed who have an I.D. card from the Unemployed Centre (in Thomas Street).

Instruction is under Mr. Billy Keane 3rd Dan Black Belt.

The R.I.T.A. have a club in Limerick for the last few years, and are based in the Corporation Sports Complex in Corbally on Tuesday nights at 7 p.m. and on Thursday nights at 8 p.m.

"We have had a very successful year", says Michael, "when a number of our members won National prizes in Competitions during the year".

Although similar in some respects to Karate, Tae Kwan Do (which means literally Foot Hand Art) differs in that it originated in Korea. It is a non contact sport and has been in Ireland since the Fifties, with clubs now in most of the larger towns throughout the country.

Another interesting feature of the Club (R.I.T.A.) is that it is affiliated to the International Tae Kwando Federation so that if any member wishes to practise the Art in another country he or she is in a position to do so, therefore, if you want to do kangaroo kicks downunder this is the Club to join.

the
LEIDIGIE
59 CATHERINE STREET
unique fashions

Award for Achievement



When 'Hatch 33' first came out last July, we announced that one of our aims was to publicise the achievement of Limerick's unemployed men and women. As part of the aim we are launching the 'Hatch 33 Award for Achievement' which will be presented annually.

There are many achievement awards presented to people in Ireland. But they are mainly organised by large private and public institutions and they tend to emphasise success in the business and professional world. The ordinary people of Limerick, especially the unemployed rarely get a look in.

The 'Hatch 33 award for achievement' will be different. Success shouldn't be seen only in terms of profit making and career building. Unemployed people are as capable as others of accomplishments and they should be recognised. Also we want to acknowledge those non-profit making and voluntary organisations in Limerick which have made a contribution to making this City a better place to live in.

Our Award for 1987 will be presented at a ceremony next January and we are asking our readers to send us nominations. The type of people that will qualify for nomination are:-

- (a) *Unemployed individuals who have made achievements in the fields of sport, art, education etc., and unemployed groups that are working for the interests of unemployed people.*
- (b) *Individuals and non-profit making organisations that have helped the unemployed in the area of education, sport, etc.*
- (c) *Groups who have established democratically controlled Worker Co-ops.*
- (d) *Non-profit making and voluntary bodies that are actively working to deal with social problems.*
- (e) *Persons who have written articles or books about the history of working class people in Limerick.*

The closing date for nominations is Friday, 18th December. For further information contact **Eleanor Murphy, Helena Close or Dave Lee** at the **Limerick Unemployed Centre.**

Telephone (061) 46056.

Christmas Edition

EXCLUSIVE

Priest who has no Faith

in Government Policy

TYPING

Do you need an experienced typist/secretary?

Phone:- Shiela 310442.

Go For a Dip!

Swimming is no longer an expensive hobby for Limerick's Unemployed! **Roxboro Swimming Pool** have announced great reductions for the unwaged this season. On Tuesdays from 4-5 p.m. swimming is absolutely **FREE**, but you must bring along your Unemployed I.D. card (available at Limerick Unemployed Centre) or else your dole card.

Every other day Roxboro are offering the use of the pool at **Half Price** for the unwaged, but don't forget your I.D. card.

NASTY, EVIL, MALICIOUS RUMOURS

There is absolutely no truth in the rumour that personnel from the Department of Social Welfare have been assigned to snoop on people signing on and following them home to see if they are working or not. Absolutely *no truth*, no truth in any way shape or form.

So if you see suspicious people lurking around the Dole Office or following you home, you must report them to the Gardai. They could be robbers, crooks, subversives - perverts even!

You would be doing society a favour by getting them arrested. Note down their car numbers and write down an accurate description of them.

But there is *no truth* in the rumour that these people are working for the Department of Social Welfare.

Do you hear me? *No truth whatsoever.*

Don't forget your **Dole Card** if you want to get your dole. Have you noticed that if you forget your dole card you get treated very badly on some hatches? whereas on other hatches you get away with it. Have you noticed that if you are late signing on (although you may have joined the queue on time) on some hatches you get a lot of hassle? Well a number of people signing on have organised a competition.

You'll be able to vote for the best and the worst hatch operator. The hatchet man will let you know the results.

The Hatchet Man.

KEEP LIMERICK WORKING!

WORKING!

HOTLINE OFFICE

KEEP
LIMERICK
WORKING!



Sheila Cullinane operating the "Hotline" telephone.
courtesy, PRESS 22

JOBS SAVED

The Keep Limerick Working Campaign during the month of October was a great success. A "Hotline" phone was installed in the campaign office at the Unemployed Centre, 33 Thomas Street.

The "Hotline" phone never stopped ringing, with people encouraging, making enquiries, or seeking advice. We succeeded in saving jobs for several people, jobs which otherwise would have been lost.

In fact the campaign also provided one unemployed person with a temporary position operating the telephone service and I should know!

Kevin Uniacke, Managing Director of Shannon Confectionary had this to say

"We distributed price lists with "Keep Limerick Working" on the back of them to retailers in the Limerick region. The campaign helped us by putting us in touch with the right people who were willing to do all they could to help us to get our sweets into local shops".

Perhaps the success of this short term venture will encourage all those people involved in the Keep Limerick Working Campaign to co-operate again in future.

Sheila Cullinane

IS THIS JUSTICE?

Tony missed his Jobsearch interview. He had to go to Cork on that day to collect his wife from hospital. This failure to get to the interview resulted in his dole being stopped. His hatch supervisor ignored a doctors letter, a hospital exit card, proof of travel – but more importantly Tony's word. **He filled out an appeal form.**

Tony was declared guilty and unlike the law of the land Tony is guilty until he proves his innocence.

Tony's case is just one of many who are cut-off their dole money. In most cases people appeal and can wait for up to 12 weeks to meet an Appeals Officer. In the meantime you live on Supplementary Welfare.

Apart from the reduction in money while on Supplementary Welfare – the "guilty person" is faced with the worry of the Appeals hearing.

The hearing of an appeal case is held in a small room in the Glentworth Hotel. A deciding Officer comes down from Dublin to hear you prove your *innocence*. Trade Union and employer representatives help the Deciding Officer but ultimately they are only there to advise. A case can take less than 10 minutes to be heard. 10 minutes for a stranger to reach a decision which can affect a person for the rest of their life.

Jobsearch has resulted in an increase of appeals which, given the Government cut-backs, can only mean longer delays in getting the case over. Longer on Supplementary, longer worrying, longer "guilty".

Tony will probably win his case. But he can't be too sure. Like hundreds of others he has been done a grave injustice.

And what if he wins his case. Will they apologise – like hell they will!

NOTE

Any unemployed person who needs help with making an appeal should contact the Unemployed Centre. We can provide a person to represent you at your appeal.

You've Gotta Picket A Politician or Two

Anyone on the dole is aware by now that in Limerick there is a very active Unemployed Association working for the interests of the unemployed. The Association has regularly given out leaflets at the Labour Exchange and put up street posters. Pickets on local political offices and T.D.'s clinics have been given excellent coverage in the 'Limerick Post'.

The Limerick Unemployed Association was formed in September with the aim of improving conditions for the unemployed and putting pressure on T.D.'s to make sure they look after our interests.

At the moment we are demanding that the Christmas bonus be retained. So far no decision has been made by the Minister for Social Welfare on the Christmas bonus but we are optimistic that it will be maintained at last years level. But our long term objective is to get the bonus restored to its 100% rating.

Another issue we have raised with the Minister of Social Welfare was that the weekly cushion payments of £10 - £20 paid to married men affected by last years so called Equality Directive be kept on after Mid-November. Our representations have had some effect because the payments are now to continue until January 1st. 1988. However we have heard that the Minister for Social Welfare is thinking of ways to phase out these cushion payments, so we still have a battle on our hands.

In order to make T.D.'s aware of these issues, we have mounted well attended pickets on local politicians and Fianna Fáil H.Q. Also what T.D.'s say,

and more importantly DO, locally and in the Dáil will be carefully monitored to see if they are pulling their weight or not. The unemployed will be kept fully informed. Our Association is currently collecting signatures for a Political Register which pledges people not to vote for any political party that does not oppose all dole cuts.

These activities can be effective for many people of voting age who are on the dole and we can, if we refuse to give any preference vote to back sliders, upset their chances of getting re-elected.

The Limerick Unemployed Association will be around as long as unemployment remains and will be taking up many issues in the future.

Meetings of the Association take place every Friday morning at 11.30 a.m. at Connolly Hall, 91 O'Connell Street, and any unemployed persons can attend. These meetings are devoted to planning actively and are not talking shops.

Presently, discussions are taking place with other unemployed groups in the country with the intention of creating a National Association of the Unemployed. Then the Government will have to listen to us.

The Limerick Unemployed Association is an independent organisation and has no formal connections with the Limerick Unemployed Centre.



Members of the newly formed Limerick Unemployed Association at a recent picket.

WORKERS CO-OPS COME TO LIMERICK

In these dreary days of cut-backs, bigger dole queues and emigration - whats new and whats different. Although it does not often make the headline there are a growing number of people creating work for themselves through worker co-operative enterprises.

There are now about seventy such co-operatives either trading or in the processing of setting up in Ireland today, involving about 500 people. Most of them are in manufacturing, producing footwear, furniture, clothing, pottery, films and videos, crafts, food, engineering, publishing, printing, computer software and all types of services like cafes, creches, laundrettes, bookshops, bicycle repairs.

Recently the co-operatives have come together in a federation called the Network of Workers Co-ops. They aim to overcome the isolation many co-ops feel by sharing experiences and trading between each other, as well as lobbying for more resources to be placed at their disposal. The recent national plan has a section devoted to job creation by Worker Co-operatives and including the proposal to set up a Co-operative Development Council. The Network is meeting the appropriate state agencies and the trade union movement to get support for the type of ser-

vices and support they feel such a development council should have. The Network has been assisted by Workers Unity Trust which is an initiative by the Federated Worker Union of Ireland, in levying 10p per week off each member to help workers co-operative and their unemployed members. The Waterford Trades Council has recently established a similar fund.

For workers, often women coming back into the work place, it is a difficult task to define products, learn business and marketing skills, do market research at the same time as learning how to direct and control. There are some state supports under the Youth Employment Agency and AnCO's Community training programmes. In the latter case, the Irish Productivity Centre (I.P.C.) has played a key role in taking groups through all the difficult stages of co-operative development right up to start-up stage. Because workers co-operative are in themselves an innovation, the I.P.C. believes in groups, have a deep understanding and commitment to co-operative principles - an ingredient as important as the product, the market or business skills.

THEY ARE CURRENTLY RUNNING A COURSE IN LIMERICK AND ENQUIRIES CAN BE DIRECTED TO THE LIMERICK UNEMPLOYED CENTRE, 33 THOMAS STREET, LIMERICK.



We've read it all before in the annals of the Music Press. You latch on to a catch phrase and slap it on to any band that shows a hint of promise. This years flavour is "The Band most likely to", or worse still "Music Press Poll-Topper of the year". But lets leave these labels for other (lesser?) bands. How about "Toucandance – the band you're most likely to enjoy yourself to". And thats what matters when the money's spent.

Just how good are Toucandance?

Over to Eamon Hehir, lead singer, guitarist and wearer of hats. "I think we're brilliant; one of the best bands in the country – and you can print that!" Is this arrogance or the plain truth? Seeing is believing, and their live performances that I have witnessed are tough acts to follow. A powerful, unforgettable seven piece band with a string of songs and melodies that you hum to yourself for days afterwards. And thats not all. Toucandance live are not just another rock band, riddled with "rock-band cliches", no po-faced guitarists offering never-ending guitar solos or drummers with epileptic arms, that think drum rolls should last an hour. This band got it right. They decided from the start that they wanted to put on a show; and thats what you get for your money, a show thats innovative, visual and great fun.

Let's Dance

To describe the female members of the band, Mary and Dawn as just backing singers would be an understatement. Their interpretation of the music on stage is imaginative and entertaining. It almost borders on choreography at times, but without the constraints of planned dance routines. The fun element is maintained throughout, as Eamon (hatless at this stage), points out "You can't be running around the stage, getting up to all these antics unless you're getting it from the music in the first place, some of it is choreographed, but as a crack, not as a formal thing". There isn't a trace of formality in their lives set. Here is a band that makes you want to dance – and dances with you.

Demo Tape

Toucandance have till now concentrated mainly on writing

material and developing/refining themselves as a band. Their demo tape which fell into my possession recently, lacks the polish of a really good recording studio and therefore doesn't do justice to their music. Nevertheless it contains some truly great songs. Take "Green Eyes" – a song about jealousy with great lines like "I don't want to see you happy with him, I don't want to see you happy with anybody else". Or "Parcels from America" with "Watch me grovel in the dole queue/Humbly bow my head/Whisper "Thank You" to the welfare girl/For this my daily bread". The demo tape displays the versatility of the band, and moves with ease from urgent energetic songs like "Leaving the Club" to the haunting mesmeric chant of "Steve Brodie". Great stuff.

Back on the Road

Will Toucandance get the breaks that they more than deserve? We need first of all to see more of them live and Eamon (still hatless) says that "now its time to whack into it as regards playing live". They have loads of new material and are ready to take the show on the road. That's the best news I've heard this year! But breaks are important and Toucandance find encouragement in the fact that other Limerick bands like "Tuesday Blue" and "The Groove" have been given those breaks.

Breaks or no breaks, Toucandance ooze confidence. There's 100% commitment all round. They're a band that will never stagnate; they constantly work at new material and new ways of presenting that material. Other Irish bands please note the latter. And most importantly, they still maintain that element of fun. They enjoy it.

The plain truth is that they are the best band to come out of Limerick in years. They received an ecstatic review in the September edition of "Hot Press" and Eamons comments on it? "Justified"! This is not arrogance. To describe this band as "brilliant" is almost an understatement. Toucandance can do it.

You can see Toucandance live in The Savoy, Bedford Row on Saturdays 14th, 21st, 28th November. And if anybody got a huge dole increase recently you can catch them in the Mean-Fiddler, London on 7th. November!

Helena Close

SPORT

Profile

PROFILE ON ANGIE McNAMARA (Body-Builder) Ms. IRELAND '87 by Tony Colbert

In this issue of 'Hatch 33', I have decided to do a profile on local woman, **Angie McNamara**. Angie who is from O'Malley Park took up training in 1984, when she realised that she was putting on weight. Angie who was 12 stone at the time (which is a bit much for her height, 5'2") realised that if she didn't do something fast, she would have to buy size 16 skirts. So she decided to join keep-fit classes in Southill.

DETERMINED

Angie also did a lot of road running and went on a strict diet. By Christmas 1984, she reduced her weight to 8st. 2lb, which made her even more determined to keep her body in shape. In 1985, Angie had a message from her brother, Tony, (who is International Body-Building Champion) and went to see him at **Bullman's Gym**, where he works out. To her surprise, Angie saw a lot of women weight training, and with a bit of persuasion from her brother, she decided to join. She worked really hard and began to re-shape her physique.

VULGARITY?

Angie told me that the **Limerick Leader** refused to print a photograph of her posing and said it was vulgar. But she says "It's just a sport. There's nothing vulgar about it. Taking up body-building was the best thing that ever happened to me, it changed my whole way of life. I have never felt so healthy since

I started the sport. Besides, I have represented my country as the Ms. Universe in London".

STEROIDS

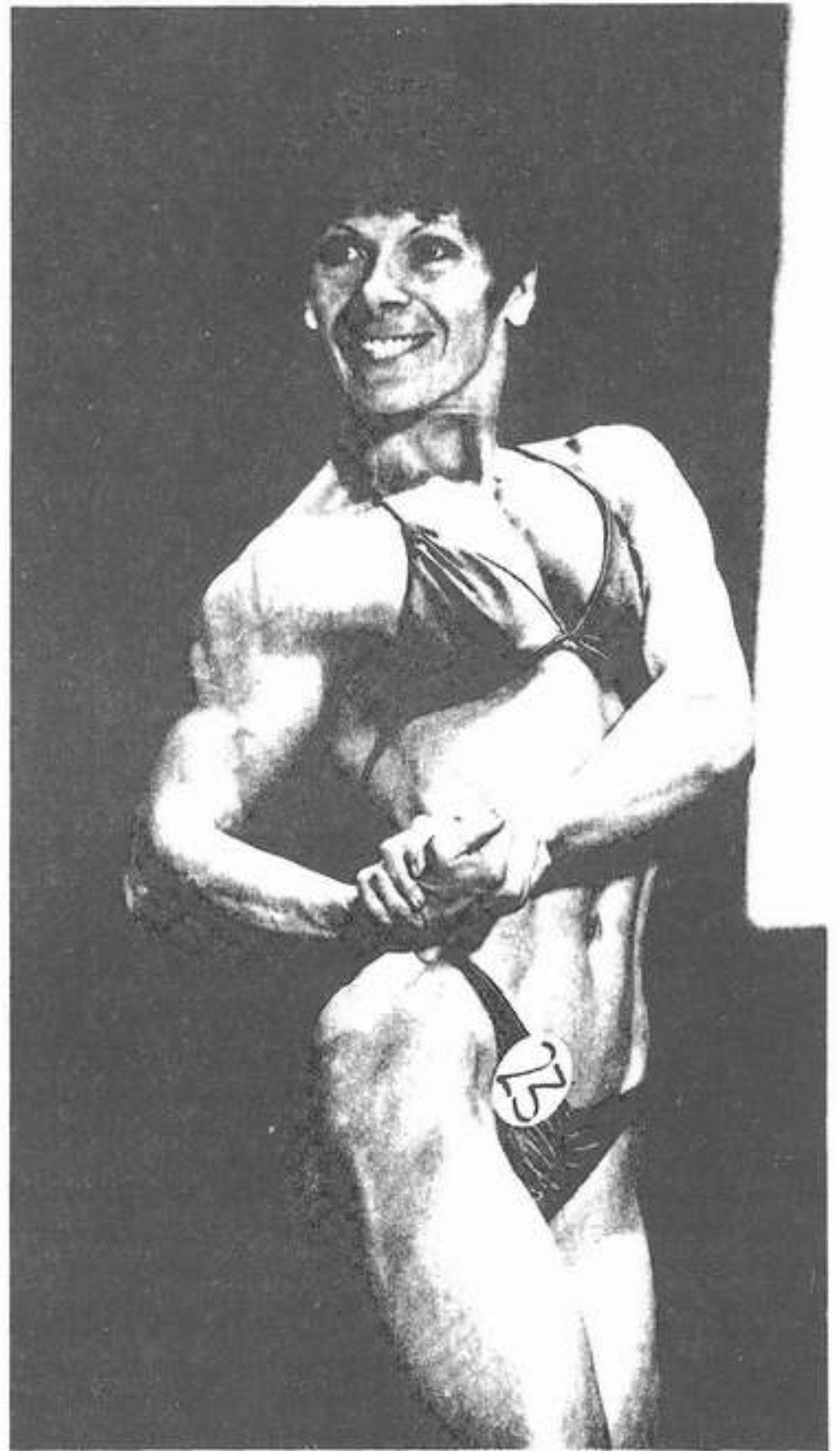
When we spoke to Angie she told us that she developed so fast when she took up body-building, that she was accused of taking steroids, which she never did. In fact, she didn't even know what steroids were at the time!

JEALOUSY

Angie also says there is a lot of jealousy in the sport (even in gyms) and that applies to men as well as women. She adds "it's crazy because everybody should pull together and help each other out". She also adds that she would be delighted to help anybody who decides to take up the sport.

COMPETITIONS

In March, 1986, Angie entered her first competition in Dublin, and was placed second. Two months later, she qualified in Cork to represent Ireland in the Mid-Summer Classics. This is an International Show between Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. To her surprise, she was placed third. After this competition, Angie took a break until April of this year when she entered the Spring Classics in Dublin and was placed first. Following this competition, she began training in the **New World Gym** in O'Connell Street. The Proprietor, **John Mansfield**, encouraged her to go forward and represent his gym in the Irish Championships, in Belfast. So she trained hard and on August 29th the results showed when she won and went on to represent Ireland in the **Ms. Universe** in London, on September



Angela McNamara in peak condition for the recent Ms. Universe competition.

12th. Though she wasn't placed she made it to the last 13 and learned a lot.

SPONSORSHIP

Angie would like to take this opportunity to thank her sponsor, **Mr. John Mansfield**, who has been so helpful since her move to **New World Gym**. Angie points out that the sport is very costly, as you have to eat a protein diet and a lot of sup-

plements. "John went so far as to cover the costs when I took part in the Ms. Universe Competition in London". "I would also like to thank my close friend, **Tony Ryan**, for his support and last but not least my three children - **Michael, Angela** and **Sophia** for their whole hearted support". Angie is determined to enter the Ms. Universe Competition again next year, and I wish her the best of luck.

RADAR STORES

Camping and ex-army equipment
Protective Clothing, Boots,
Wax Jackets, Rainsuits, Gloves,
Caps, Rucksacks, Canvas Bags,
Shirts, Jumpers, Scarves, etc....
CALL TO FOX'S BOW, LIMERICK.

I.T.G.W.U.



In the Frontline of the Fight
For Jobs and Fair Pay



NEED ADVICE?

Your Limerick Representatives are:

LIMERICK NO. 1 Sean Buckley. Phone: 315090.

Hotels, Catering, Restaurants, Fast Foods, Cleaning, Security, etc.

LIMERICK NO. 2 Tony Nolan, Phone: 317289
Clerical & Industrial.

LIMERICK NO. 3 Tony Walshe, Phone: 317431
Limerick County Branch covering all aspects of Trade Union organisation.

91, O'CONNELL STREET.



LIMERICK BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE

CROOM; 8 to 9 p.m. Monday 16th November.

ANCO RAHEEN; Thursday 5th. November
2 to 4 p.m.

PALLASGREEN; Thursday 12th November
8 to 9 p.m.

RATHKEALE; Thursday 10th December.

HOWMEDICA; Thursday 10th December.

LIMERICK; Monday 21st December.
Wednesday, 23rd December.

Tuesday, 29th December.

Monday, 4th January.

EQUALITY NEWS

New quarterly publication of the Employment Equality Agency

Get your FREE copy every quarter by contacting:



Employment Equality Agency

36 Upper Mount Street,
Dublin, 2.

Phone: 605966.