

# HATCH 33

Limerick Centre for the Unemployed,  
33 Thomas St. Limerick.

NOVEMBER 1992

FREE

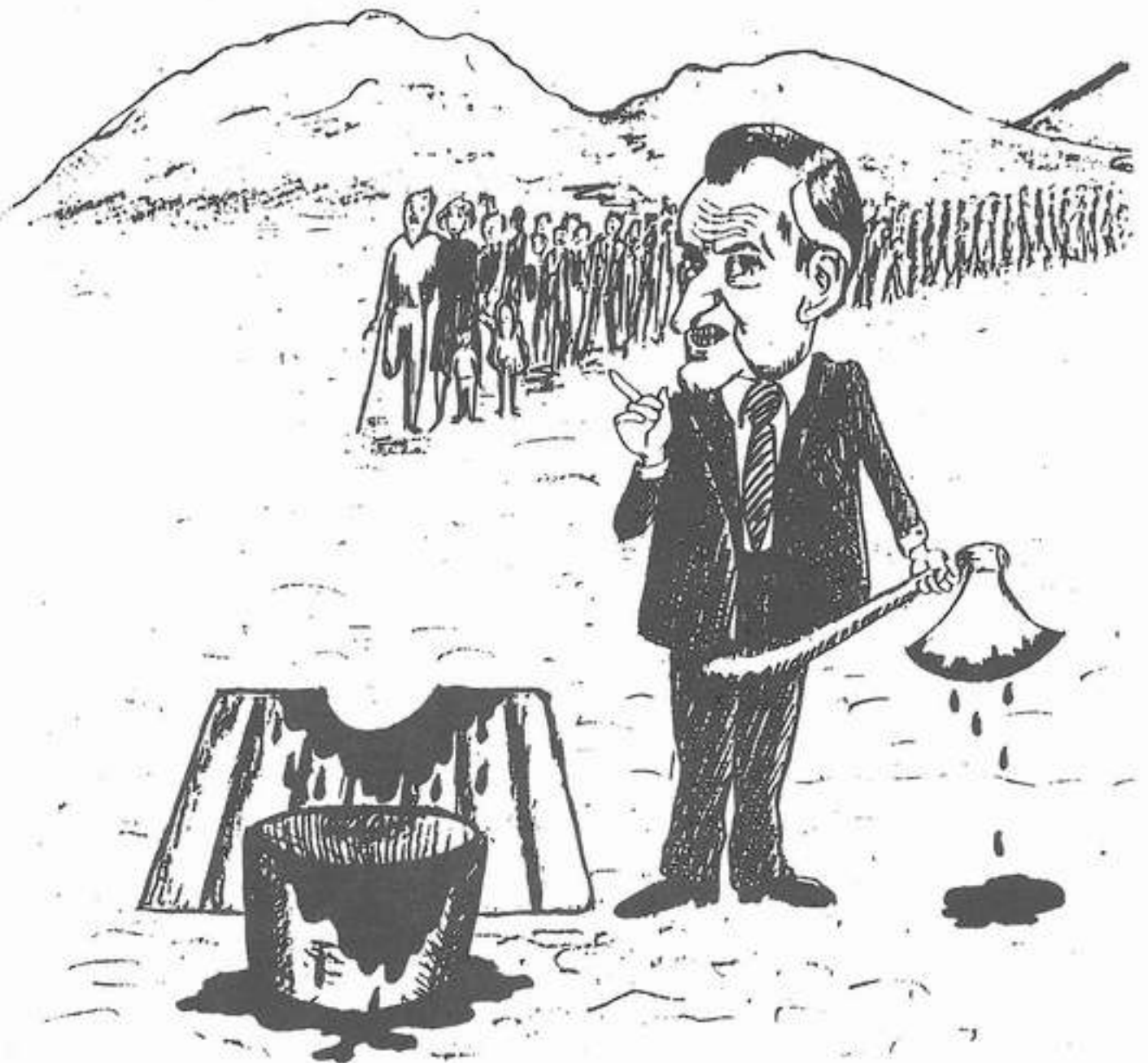
## GOVERNMENT PUTS BOOT IN

Since Charlie McCreevy took over as Minister for Social Welfare last year there has been a concerted campaign mounted by his Department to cut back on social welfare expenditure and reduce the living standards of the unemployed.

The economic offensive against the unemployed section of the working class is a direct result of the failure of the government and the E.C. to provide jobs for the citizens of this country.

Faced with an ever increasing welfare bill government leaders have decided to reduce welfare payments rather than tackle unemployment. By targeting the unemployed they are saying that we, the victims of unemployment, are to blame for the economic problems of this country.

Among the new regulations introduced by McCreevy is the limitation of **Exceptional Needs Payments** to a maximum of £100 a year. What many people don't know is that once you have received a pay-



### Who's Next For The Chop

ment you can't apply again for the rest of the year.

For example, if you were given £25 towards an ESB bill that is all

the money you will receive that year, you haven't got another £75 in the 'bank' to draw upon.

It is estimated that the restrictions

*Contd. Page 2*

## Government Puts Boot In

placed on Exceptional Needs Payments will reduce expenditure in community care areas from anything from between 30-55%.

Over the past few months there have been changes in other areas such as injury and disability benefit, maternity allowances, and dental/optical benefit. All these measures have been introduced with the aim of cutting costs and restricting eligibility.

Maybe Charlie McCreevy should change the name of his Department to the 'Poverty Creation Agency'.

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## THE SAMARITANS

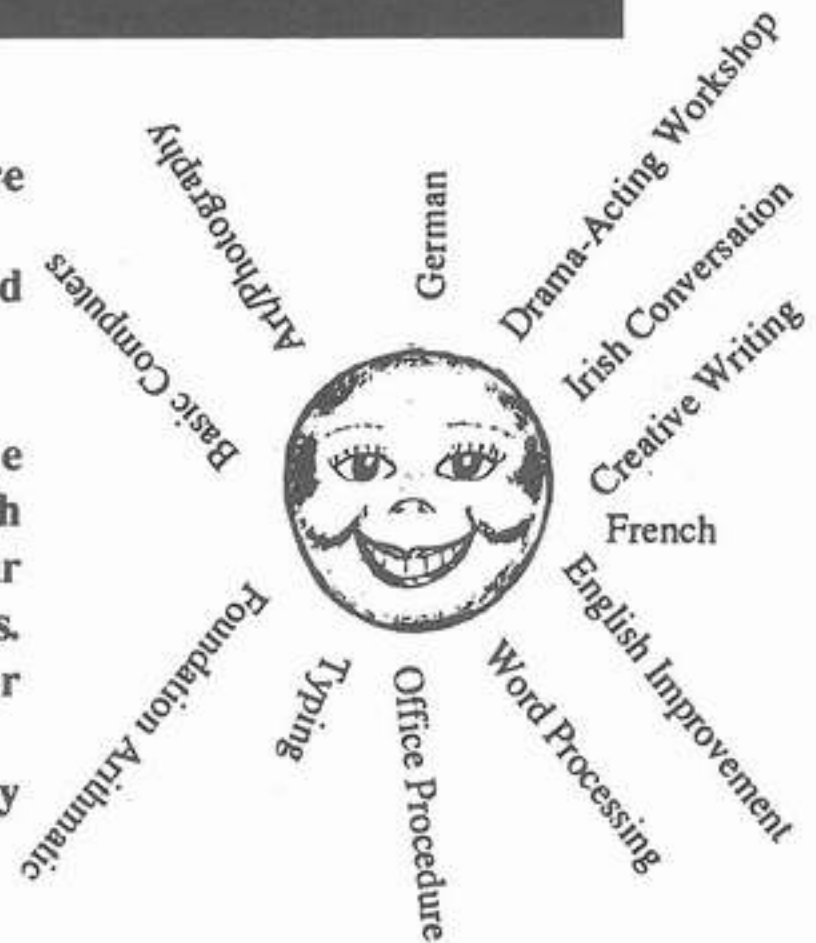
25 Upper Cecil Street, Limerick.

## What Can We Do For You

The Limerick Centre for the Unemployed is just one of a network of Centres, approved by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, to help the unemployed. Each Centre is tailored to meet the needs of the unemployed in an atmosphere of comradeship, and is serviced by a dedicated staff who themselves have experienced the dole. Among the services provided by the Limerick Centre are:

\* Provision of free educational classes for the unemployed, and those on low incomes.

- \* Advice on Social Welfare problems.
- \* Help with the layout and presentation of C.V.s.
- \* Information on emigration.
- \* Representation of the unemployed in their dealings with the Social Welfare services, labour exchanges and other state agencies.
- \* Introduction to computer technology through free courses.
- \* Information on schemes run by FAS and other statutory bodies.



### EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor: Dave Lee

Graphic Artist: Marji Daly

Advertising and Distribution:  
Mike Ryan

*Please note: Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the Limerick Centre for the Unemployed.*

### THE LIMERICK CENTRE FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

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# Middle Class Hit By Recession

Over the past year there has been a dramatic increase in the number of people looking for help at the social welfare advisory office in the Unemployed Centre. And it's not just people from areas such as Moyross and Southill who are seeking advise.

Noel Naughton, who works at the Centre as an advisor, told Hatch 33 that more and more people from private housing estates are making enquiries about welfare benefits, emigration and FAS training schemes.

Says Noel, *"We are getting a lot of calls from places like Raheen and Caherdavin; in fact Caherdavin is on a par with Garryowen. You may find this surprising, but we've have people from Castletroy ringing us up. A lot of the enquiries are connected with debt and mortgages."*

As the recession rolls on remorselessly many skilled and white collar workers are suffering a sharp drop in living standards and falling into serious financial difficulties. Recent interest rate increases will plunge more families into debt with the High Street money lenders.

Noel told us that he has noticed a significant increase in social welfare enquiries from country areas over the last year. Unlike their city cousins, county people usually have no idea about their entitlements and often don't know who to turn to for help.

He said that his biggest headache at the moment was trying to cope with the large number of changes in social welfare regulations that have been introduced in recent months by Charlie McCreevy.

*"It's not only the claimants who are bewildered by all the changes."* Noel commented; *"civil servants in different sections of the social welfare system are interpreting the rules in different ways."*

*"The changes seem to be accelerating and we are being bombarded with them. We are finding it increasingly difficult to keep up,"* he freely admitted.

*"But I do know one thing for certain, the new rules are not good for those who are being affected because it usually means less money at the end of the week."*

## On The Town



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# ACTION NOT WORDS ON JOBS FRONT

**The Government hasn't a clue what to do about unemployment. Behind the wall of words put up by the politicians lie paralysed brains numbed by the growing economic crisis.**

Their policy of hoping that emigration would drain off the unemployed has failed because of the recession in Europe and America. Already economists are predicting that by the Year 2000 there will be half a million people on the dole in Ireland.

Government leaders prattle on endlessly about the important role private business has to play in creating jobs. But the reality is that the private sector in Ireland has never solved the twin problems of unemployment and emigration, and never will.

No matter how many job creation agencies are set up and no matter how much money is thrown at the business community, unemployment in this country is going to continue rising.

The European Community has been an economic disaster for Ireland. Since we joined the E.C. unemployment has risen to record levels while countries like Germany have become more powerful and prosperous.

**Emergency measures are required to deal with the unemployment crisis and it's time that the State stepped in and generated the jobs that the private sector can't, and won't, provide.**

State manufacturing industries, owned and controlled by the people of Ireland, must be established to process natural raw materials such as timber, animal skins and wool.

A smelter to process our large deposits of lead and zinc ore should be built by the government. This would lay the foundation for an Irish metallurgical industry and create thousands of jobs.

Existing state and semi-state companies should be encouraged to expand and compete on the open market. These are just some of measures that could be implemented to put the country back to work again.

Those economic 'experts' who believe that the jobs crisis can be solved solely by promoting small businesses and tourism are living in cloud cuckoo land. The time has come to dump the failed free market economic philosophies of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. The State must now take the leading role in promoting productive, wealth creating industries in this country.

**If drastic action is not taken to solve unemployment then the men of property will continue to hoard up wealth while the rest of us face a lifetime of poverty, humiliation and despair on the dole.**

Dave Lee

## Daydreaming Boy

Recently a man came into our office and told us the following tale of dozy incompetence at the Limerick Labour Exchange.

Last July he finished drawing Unemployment Benefit and applied for Assistance. He waited patiently for his claim to be considered and was finally told on Tuesday 1st September by the civil servant on the hatch that he had qualified.

The happy claimant was informed that he would be getting about £56 a week and would sign on in future on Wednesday mornings. Calculating that he was due £280 as a back payment he borrowed money to pay for school books.

Imagine yer man's surprise when the following day, Wednesday 2nd September, he was told that the whole thing had been a dreadful mistake and he wasn't

due any money at all. In fact, his claim hadn't even been processed!

Salt was further rubbed into his wounds when a week later he was informed that his claim for Assistance had been disallowed because of his wife's earnings.

Naturally the man was very angry with such a stupid mistake. Perhaps the dozy daydreamer who was responsible should have his knuckles severely rapped by his Supervisor.

It is a pity that the staff at the Limerick Labour Exchange, who are generally very pleasant and efficient, have been let down by one of their colleagues.



# BRIGHT NEW FUTURE FOR OLD EXCHANGE

The old Labour Exchange in Cecil Street was a dreary and dismal place inhabited by miserable looking civil servants who never seemed to smile. Happily, the dole office has moved to a brighter modern building and the staff are a lot more pleasant these days.

The former Exchange has also brightened up considerably since it was taken over last year by the Limerick School Project, Limerick's only multi-denominational national school.

The school is run by democratically elected management committees and as a multi-denominational school it is open to children of all religious beliefs and none. Teachers encourage the children to take a tolerant attitude towards other religious faiths and respect different cultures.

In the religious education core curriculum, which is taught daily, the children look at the various festivals and beliefs of Hindus, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists etc. Moral issues such as War, Justice, and the exploitation of the Third World are also examined.



According to Siobhan Doherty who teaches 5th and 6th Class, *"The core values of the world's religions are similar to our own; Love one another, don't act in a selfish way."*

Parents who belong to a particular religious group are given the facilities to organise religious instruction classes for their children outside normal school hours.

The Limerick School Project opened in September 1989 at the Red Cross Hall in Cecil Street with just two teachers. Since then the school has rapidly expanded and now there are six teachers looking after about 180 pupils. Last year several classes were moved to the former Labour Exchange building because of lack of space at the Red Cross Hall.

The school is open to girls and boys on an equal basis and every effort is made to ensure that sexual stereotyping is avoided. Says Eileen Kennelly, the School Principle, *"regardless of the social background or religious beliefs of the children every child in our school is treated equally and given an equal opportunity to develop their abilities."*

Multi-denominational schools are springing up all over the country. It is a welcome development for it lays the foundations for a more tolerant Ireland and prepares the children for their role as citizens of Europe.

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# MUSIC PAGE

## DREAMS COME TRUE



Recently Gary Stone, a Limerick country and western singer, released his first album "Dreams" on the Harmac Music label and the record company kindly sent Hatch 33 the following press release:-

Limerick man Gary has been an exciting voice that has been making itself heard in the musical scene for some time now. But, 1992 is Launch Year for this hugely talented vocalist.

"Dreams" is Gary's collection of his own material, having taken a year to write the songs that he had been carrying around in his head for some time now.

"Dreams" features songs that come from Gary's own experience of life. Dealing with friendship, emigration, love and discovery, the lyrics are as meltingly attractive as the music is unforgettable.

'This first album is stamped with a real streak of star individuality. There is nothing dogmatic or dictatorial about Dreams but its gentle persuasion and mesmeric impact have that effortless sounding ring of truth that is undefined test of merit where listeners are concerned.

*'Gary Stone has been impressing audiences and those in the business for some time now. Listening to his compositions on Dreams consolidate the opinion that is fast growing - this is one Limerick musician who is poised on the threshold of big time success.*

'Some of the big names in the business are already interested in Gary's overtures and there is a genuine air of excited anticipation awaiting its announcement.

'Recorded in Pinewood, Sun Studios and Rope Walk, "Dreams" features class musicians: Drummer - Fran Breen who is currently with Nancy Griffith; Rachel Prine on bass who was formerly married to legendary song writer - John Prine; Fleadh Cowboys own Paul Kelly on violin and mandolin; Liam Murphy from Black Velvet Band on lead guitar, Donegal man - Percy Robinson on steel guitar, with John Ryan on keyboards.

"Dreams" is a dual exposure of Gary Stone composer and vocalist. His clear ballad delivery is perfectly pitched against an easy, cool sweeping instrumental background that gives his songs every chance to reach out and grab the listener.

'And, seconds into the first track the compelling blend of haunting lyrics, cool, clear diction and the sheer magnetism of his unforgettable voice have to go to make this debut album a **BESTSELLER.**'

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Sun:	5.30 - 7.30 Waynes Country 9.00 - 11.00 Suzie King

# ST. MUNCHIN'S FIGHTING SPIRIT

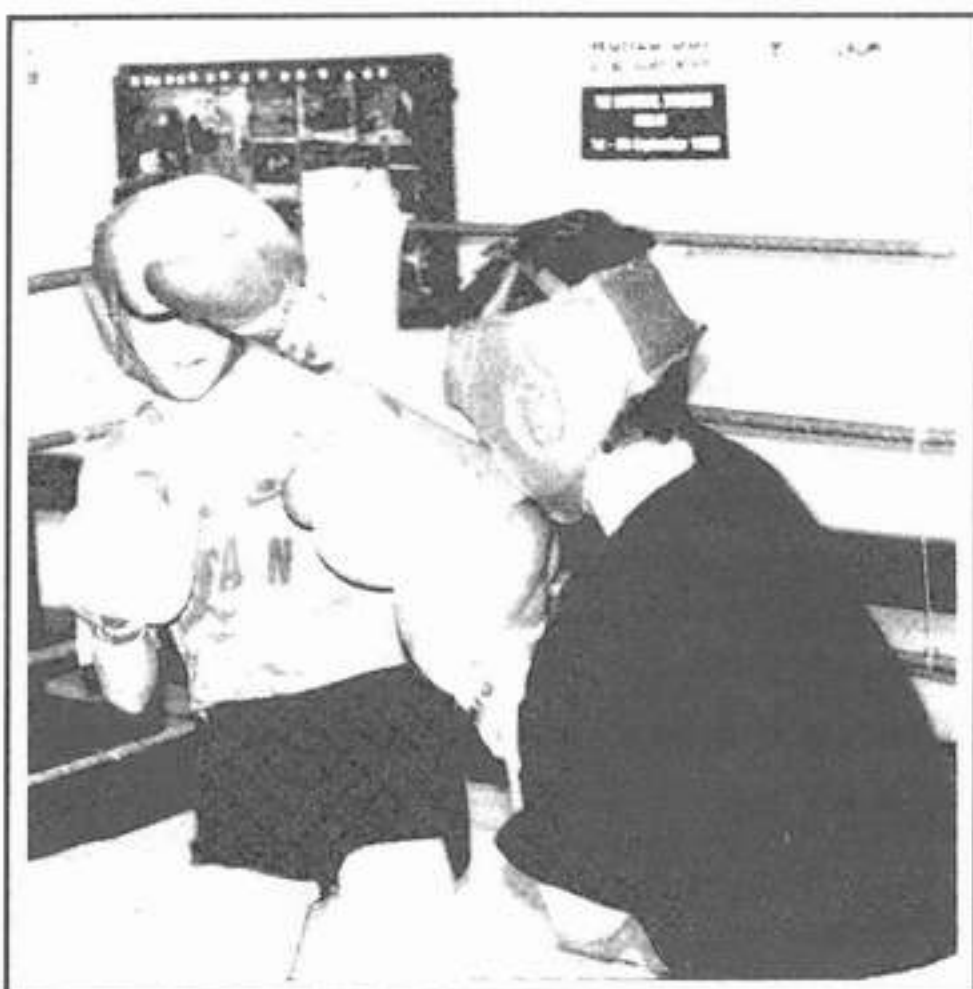
St. Munchin's Boxing Club in Cross Roads, Thomongate, has produced many fine boxers over the years and one of the best is 26 year old Pat O'Halloran who has won one Junior and two Senior Flyweight championships at national level.

Pat, who is a soldier in the Irish Army and lives in De Valera Park, is a personal friend of Olympic gold medallist Michael Carruth, Wayne McCullough and Paul Griffin. Before the Barcelona Games Pat helped to train the Irish boxing team at their training camp in Germany.

He believes that Wayne McCullough has a great future ahead of him. "Wayne is one of my best friends," Pat told Hatch 33; "he will be going Pro by Christmas and I have no doubt that he will become a world champion."

Pat is a trainer and coach at St. Munchin's Boxing Club and he told us that the gold medal victory at Barcelona had given a great boost to Irish amateur boxing. "I was in Dublin recently and visited five different boxing clubs. It's black in Dublin, chaotic and mad," said Pat.

"There are lots of kids coming along wanting to box, wanting to be like Michael Carruth and win a gold medal. But people don't realise the dedication, training and discipline that goes into boxing. If you want to be successful you have to eat, sleep, drink and think boxing.



"Believe you me, when a youngster sees the training we have to go through he'll be saying to himself, "Will I or won't I." It's the boy who is dedicated to the sport that will succeed."

Boys can join an amateur boxing club as early as nine years old but they won't be allowed into the ring until they are eleven. Nowadays the sport is very strictly controlled to prevent injuries and head guards must be worn.

Pat said that there is a lot of pressure on referees these days because of the tight safety controls. "Referees who don't do their job properly won't be allowed into another contest," Pat informed us.

He believes that boxing is an ideal sport to learn self control and self discipline. "Boxers are not supposed to be aggressive outside the ring and they should always obey the referee," he said. "Anyone who uses his skills on the street will be thrown out of St. Munchins, except, of course, if it was only for self defence."

Most amateurs give up competition boxing at the age of 27 or 28 because after that it's usually downhill all the way. Pat intends to hang up his fighting gloves next year and spend more time coaching and inspiring the young hopefuls in St. Munchin's. "I want to put back into boxing what I got out of it," Pat said.

"I want the parents to get involved and help their kids out. Boxing is all in the mind and it's most important that parents become involved and give support."

Pat is quick to defend boxing against the critics who think that it's not a true sport, just two fellas belting each other. "All boxing does is keep kids off the street," he pointed out; "boxing has kept a lot of kids out of trouble with the Guards and on the right track.

"It's a great sport because it's inexpensive and makes you physically fit and mentally alert."

St. Munchin's Boxing Club is open for training on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays from 6.30pm to 9.30pm. Anyone who wants to find out what it takes to be a boxer should drop into the club any Monday evening.

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