

News

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HERITAGE

Butchers revive memories of Pigtown

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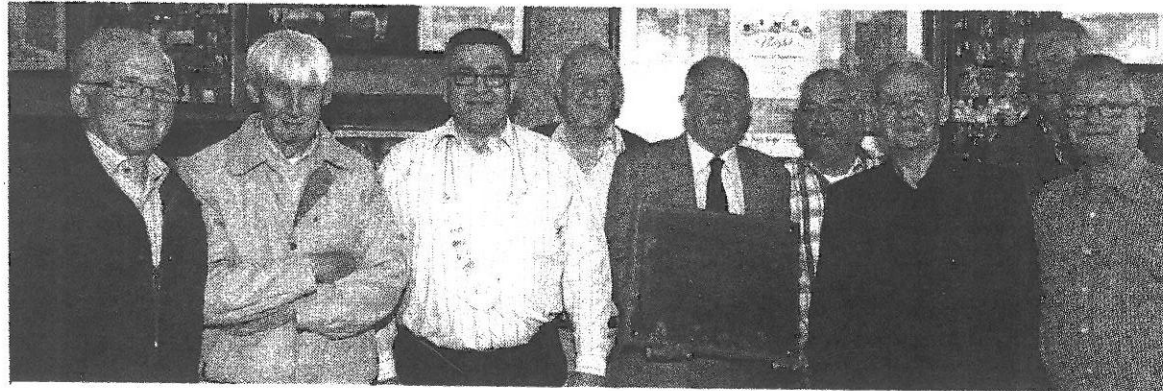
CITY Mayor Jerry O'Dea has pledged his support for a project to commemorate the contribution of those who gave Limerick its legendary 'Pigtown' status.

The Fianna Fáil councillor who was recently elected Mayor of the Limerick Metropolitan district has a special place in his heart for the butchers, as his family pub stands beside the site of the former Clover meats plant.

"I would love to see a permanent tribute to the trade and what it meant to the city and I'll be supporting the butchers' project to have a plaque or some tribute placed where the people of Limerick can see it and remember that contribution," he told the Limerick Post.

At one time, the city's four major meat processors, Matterns, O'Meara's, Clover Meats and Dennys, employed more than 1,000 people, around 500 of them as butchers.

Larry Duggan, former chairman of the Limerick Pork Butchers Union is a



Francis Duggan, John Fitzgerald, Mick McNamara, Joe Hayes, Larry Dugan, Eddie McNamara, Gerry O'Sullivan, John Tierney, and Frank McDonnell at the Limerick Pork Butchers Union presentation.

member of the committee campaigning to have a commemorative plaque or statue erected.

"The factories made a very big contribution to life in the city at one stage. The Society made a big contribution to St John's Cathedral and during the Dublin lock-out, they contributed as well. Ships used to pull in here and go off to America carrying Limerick hams", he explained.

SIPTU vice president Gene Mealy travelled to Limerick last week to make a special presentation in honour of the Limerick Pork Butchers Union. Mr Mealy presented a plaque to the president of Limerick Trades Council, Mike McNamara during an evening of music and celebration in the Gate Bar.

Mr Mealy paid a warm tribute to the trade union movement in Limerick, recalling the huge support given by

Limerick Pork Butchers to Dublin workers during the Great Lock Out of 1913.

He reminded his audience of the words of Jim Larkin who said that the Limerick Pork Butchers had "sent more money every week in proportion to their strength than any other union" and declared that the names of the Limerick Butchers "should be written in gold".

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LARRY DUGGAN

He suggested that their generosity was undoubtedly linked to their own struggle for decent pay and conditions which had seen them go through a seven-week strike in 1890.

Mike McNamara of Limerick Trades Council paid special tribute to local SIPTU activists Larry Duggan, John Tierney and Gerry Sullivan who had long campaigned for recognition of the Limerick Pork Butchers Union.

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