



12th Annual St Patrick's Festival 2011

All of Luton's communities came out to celebrate with the Town's Irish community last month as part of the 12th Annual St Patrick's Festival. The week long celebration has become a stalwart of the Luton Cultural Calendar and brings Irish music, dance and drama to the whole community.

Festivities began with the Launch Night Gaelic Mass at St Joseph's Church followed by a Dance in the Parish Centre with music by 6 piece County Wexford band The Davitts. An excellent attendance got the weekend off to a brilliant start.

On Saturday the sun shone for the annual parade which left Manor Road and head for the town centre at 11am. As well as regulars like the World Champion University of Bedfordshire Pipeband, the parade also featured the up and coming Luton based Dance Starz and a Emigrants Wake pageant with the Strawboys.

Members of St Dymnys Gaelic Club from all age groups took part in the parade along with their visitors, from Breifne College, County Cavan. The Luton club hosted the 36 young people for the whole weekend and following the parade the teams went to Sundon Park Pitches for two games of Gaelic Football, victory went to Breifne College Cavan in both U15s and U18s games.

Prizes were given for the best group and the best individual entries and Eugene Forde from the Embassy of Ireland chose The St Dymnys & Breifne College Students as the best group and Johnny Cash as the best individual entry. The parade finished at Market Hill where the traditional Presentation of Shamrock took place to tunes from Luton Irish Forum's Emerald Pipeband. The audience were also treated to a performance of Irish Set Dancing from the Strawboys followed by music from The Davitts Showband. There was also Irish music and dance from 11am to 2pm in The Mall.

On Saturday and Sunday nights Luton Irish Forum hosted the Tydavnet Drama Group from County Monaghan who performed 'Don't Tell the Wife' at a sold out Luton Library Theatre. The festival finished on the 17th March with a St Patrick's Day Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians and Irish music and dance at Smiths Square in The Mall.

Luton Irish Forum would like to extend a big thank you to all the volunteers and supporters who make the festival possible including the St Patrick's Festival Committee, stewards, county associations, sports clubs, Comhaltas and festival sponsors.



Emigrants Wake Pageant

Luton Irish Forum Online

Keep up-to-date with what is going on at Luton Irish Forum and in the Irish community in general by looking on our website www.lutonirishforum.org, following us on twitter @IrishinLuton or 'Like' our Facebook page 'Luton Irish Forum'.

You can also see video's relating to the Forum including St Patrick's Festival Pageants on youtube.com.



LIF Membership

LIF membership costs just £1 for the year and runs from 1st October to 30th September.

Anyone wishing to renew their membership for 2010/11 needs to do so by the end of April. Memberships can be renewed with our membership secretary Angela Duffy or by contacting the Irish Forum directly on 01582 720 447.

Items for Sale

We have for sale white 6-panel wooden doors various sizes and various size radiators with fittings. Anyone who is interested should contact Noelette on 01582 720 447.

Luton Irish Live

Tune in to Diverse FM 102.8

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Members Meeting

The next meeting for LIF members is Tuesday 17th May from 2pm at The Celtic Supporters Club, Chobham Street, Luton, LU1 3BS. All members are welcome to come along and find out what is happening at Luton Irish Forum.

Step by Step Switchover Guide

Digital switchover started in this area on 30th March; below are a few frequently asked questions about the switchover.

How do I switch?

Switching to digital is as easy as connecting a digital box to your existing TV. You will need to consider all the TV equipment in your home when preparing for switchover.

When do I switch?

There are 3 transmitter groups in the Anglia TV region that will switch from analogue to digital TV at different times, starting on 30 March 2011.

Do you need a new TV aerial?

If you choose a digital TV service like Freeview, BT Vision or Top-up TV you will need to consider your aerial. If you have a satellite or cable service on all your TVs, you don't need an aerial. Most people with a good aerial now will not need a new aerial for switchover. There is no such thing as a 'digital aerial'.

Am I eligible for the Help Scheme?

You are eligible for the Switchover Help Scheme if you are aged 75 or over, or have lived in a care home for 6 months or more or you are registered blind or partially sighted, or get (or could get) Disability Living Allowance (DLA), or Attendance or Constant Attendance Allowance, or Mobility supplement.

Need further help?

Visit www.digitaluk.co.uk or call 08456 50 50 50 (Opening hours: Mon - Fri 8am-7pm Sat 9am-5pm).



The Irish Community in Luton

We have been approached by Lydia Naismith who is studying at the University of Nottingham and is writing her university dissertation on 'Luton's growth during the 1960s- Economy and Population', Lydia is focusing particularly on the Irish community, the Vauxhall car plant, Luton airport, and the M1 being built. She is hoping to find information on why Irish people chose to settle in Luton in particular.

Lydia would appreciate any information about the Irish community in Luton from 1955-1975. She is interested in why the Irish community chose Luton, the industries they were involved in, the areas of Luton they lived in and how they were received by the communities they moved in to.

Anyone who would be able to share their story and reasons for moving to Luton with Lydia should contact the Forum on 01582 720 447.

Luton City Status Bid

Luton is one of the largest and fastest growing towns in Britain, and has the opportunity to compete to win city status as part of the celebrations to mark the 60th anniversary of the Queen's reign.



Being a city would bring Luton lots of kudos, but more than that it would bring high quality jobs and investment. The last town that was granted the status of a city was Sunderland who experienced an upsurge in investment creating around 30,000 new jobs and £5 billion of inward investment. With Luton's proximity to London and outstanding transport links, it would stand to gain even more.

They want to put Luton on the map and open the new city up to international opportunities. It has already been proven that being a city gives greater esteem and is a consideration when international corporations are deciding where to locate, this can only enhance Luton's economy and create jobs.

The city bid campaign is enthusiastically backed by Luton's businesses, voluntary and community groups, as well as the council. All too often Luton has not celebrated its success, vibrancy and history as a town - now the city bid campaign is a chance to put that right.

There are many marketing materials available for display, for a supply of materials please contact Sinead McNamara by email sinead.mcnamara@luton.gov.uk or telephone 01582 546265.

Home Comforts By Bridget Costello

Home Comforts is the first novel by Bridget Costello, she lives just outside Kilkelly in Co. Mayo with her husband Eddie. They have one daughter and three grandchildren who live in Luton.

Anyone who wishes to order a copy of the book can do so before the 27th April for delivery to Luton Irish Forum by the author.

Synopsis: *Tom and Stephen's lives are changed forever after they strike up an unlikely friendship.*

Tom is a good looking man of fifty, who once had his own business, home and money in the bank. Then one day it was all gone.

Stephen means well, but unfortunately things never turn out right for him. He tries his best, but his best isn't good enough for his wife, Maura.

Maura is not a woman to cross. With rich parents, good looks and brains to burn, Maura appears to have it all. Everything that she turns her hand to succeeds - except her marriage. The only thing missing from her life is love.

Home Comforts is a story of pride, hope, loneliness and despair.

Special offer price of just £5 (reduced from £8) for LIF members, see Nicola or Jacqui to order.

Community Cash Points

We are still collecting the community cash points which you can find in The Luton News and The Dunstable Gazette at the bottom of page 2. Please help us by collecting these points and handing them in to a member of staff.

Census 2011

Census Day may have passed but there will be many people who have not yet completed their census forms. These forms will still be accepted by the Office of National Statistics for the short, yet foreseeable future. As you all know, it is very important for the Census to be completed by everyone, not least because there may be a fine upheld to those who don't.

Anyone who is having difficulty completing the form can get help by calling 0300 0201 101 or by contacting LIF on 01582 720 447.

LIF would like to take this opportunity to thank St Joseph's, Holy Ghost and Our Lady Help of Christians Parish Centres, and The Pines Hotel for hosting census workshops and helping promote the census. Also a big thank-you to The Claddagh Gaels and the LIF members who promoted the campaign and volunteered at form filling points.

