



## CATCHING THE BOAT - THE IRISH IN LUTON

The valuable contribution of settlers from Ireland to life in Luton will be documented in a project made possible by a £50,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The settlers often worked in the same industries, helping to build up the town's economy in the years following the Second World War.

Run by Luton Irish Forum, *Catching the Boat* will look at the common experiences of incoming communities in Luton. The project will focus on the working heritage of the Irish community from 1940 to 1960 by exploring themes such as industries in which people were employed, their methods of travel to the UK and their uniforms or work clothing.



**Peter Blessing - On the buses**

service during the 1940s – 1960s, regularly crossing the Irish Sea between Dun Laoghaire and Holyhead, to bring Irish people to the UK. The float will be showcased at the Luton Carnival and St Patrick's Day Festival to raise public awareness and celebrate the contribution of the Irish communities to Luton.

More than 100 local schoolchildren will be involved in the project, learning more about this heritage by taking part in a series of workshops and creative activities. They will produce artwork and creative writing pieces to tell the story of the contribution of Irish community, which will form the basis of an exhibition at Stockwood Discovery Centre.

Robyn Llewellyn, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund East of England, said; "This project will help to show how different communities settled in Luton and then made their own special contribution to its development. It's a story of shared endeavour and achievement."

Tom Scanlon, Public Relations Officer for Luton Irish Forum said "This is a timely opportunity for a generation of people forced from their native countries in search of employment. It will allow them to tell their own individual stories often harrowing; sometimes amusing in hindsight before they are lost to us for ever. We are proud to be part of this great project."



**Pat Leonard - Bus Driving Instructor**

Members of the community will be encouraged to get involved by sharing their personal memories and stories at reminiscence workshops. A team of volunteers, including students from Barnfield College, as well as members of the community, will be recruited and trained to collect and catalogue the oral histories. These accounts will be used, alongside existing recordings, images and artefacts, to produce an exhibition and fully accessible community archive to increase understanding of this heritage.

A highlight will be the construction of a carnival float based on the ship Princess Maud, which played a vital part in the Dunkirk rescue and was then in

## Baby & Toddler Group

Our baby and toddler group for parents/carers and children under school age. Will be starting in February and will be running on a Friday morning at our centre on Hitchin Road.

If you would be interested in this type of activity we would like to hear from you. We would also like to hear from people with children who are at school already who would like to help. You can contact us on 01582 720 447 or email us [nicola@lutonirishforum.org](mailto:nicola@lutonirishforum.org).



## Help needed for the St Patrick's Festival

We are looking for volunteers to help with the St Patrick's Festival and Parade on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

Stewards are needed to help in the set up area, steward the parade, supervise road closures and help to maintain safety at the main stage area.

Volunteers are also needed to help on LIF's stall at Market Hill and inside The Arndale to help give out programmes and sell Shamrock.

Anyone who can help should contact Nicola on 01582 720 447 or email [nicola@lutonirishforum.org](mailto:nicola@lutonirishforum.org).

## LIF GAELIC CHOIR

Come along for a taster session with Luton Irish Forum Gaelic Choir. They meet on the first Monday of the month, the next date is 5th December. All meetings take place at Kathleen Connolly House, 102 Hitchin Road, Luton, LU2 0ES from 7pm.

Suitable for complete beginners as support will be provided with the language. Call Luton Irish Forum on 01582 720 447.



The welfare service will close for the Christmas period on Friday 16th December at 12noon, the remaining services will close at 1.30pm on Wednesday 21st December. With the exception of the Wednesday Club which will take place on 21st and 28th December.

There will be no minibus service on 28th December.

All services will resume as normal on Tuesday 3rd January 2012 at 9.30am.



## DISCOUNTED FUEL FOR OLDER PEOPLE Warm Home Discount Scheme – Update

The Warm Home Discount (WHD) came into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 and will replace social tariffs and other voluntary arrangements previously offered by energy companies. The WHD has been separated into two groups of eligible households the **Core** group and the **Broader** group.

Households in the **Core** group who have been data matched through the DWP will automatically receive the discount of £120 in the first year. Eligible households must be in receipt of the guarantee element of pension credit (without a savings element) and it is estimated that 650,000 will qualify. All eligible households should receive the rebate before the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012; however there may be some households who qualify but who cannot be automatically processed. Where this is believed to be the case customers should contact their supplier direct for more information.

Criteria for the **Broader** group has now been finalised by the six main energy suppliers for this year. However it appears that some customers who meet the suppliers' eligibility criteria will not receive the rebate due to limited available funding and this element will operate on a "first come, first served" basis.

British Gas is the only supplier to date that has committed to pay the rebate to all customers who qualify and apply before January 2012. Consumer Focus has produced a briefing on the Warm Home Discount, providing an overall view of the scheme's qualifying criteria/contacts for individual suppliers etc. The briefing can be found at [www.consumerfocus.org.uk/files/2010/01/Consumer-Focus-Briefing-on-the-Warm-Home-Discount-Scheme.pdf](http://www.consumerfocus.org.uk/files/2010/01/Consumer-Focus-Briefing-on-the-Warm-Home-Discount-Scheme.pdf)

Please note that three (EDF Energy, npower and ScottishPower) of the main six suppliers have not included customers in receipt of Pension Credit Savings element in their Broader Group criteria this time round. Unless they qualify under other criteria they will not be eligible for the rebate until the next round.



## SHOPPING DISCOUNTS THROUGH RYANAIR WEBSITE TAKE MONEY EVERY MONTH!

Some people may have noticed when booking flights through Ryanair that they are offered a discount of £10 off their flight if they sign up to Shopper Discounts & Rewards. Anyone considering this should be aware that you will be asked for your credit or debit card details and charged £10 EVERY month. If you have been unfortunate enough to sign up for this you can cancel it. The companies email address is [customerservice@shopperdiscountsandrewards.co.uk](mailto:customerservice@shopperdiscountsandrewards.co.uk).

## MEMBERSHIPS

Membership for 2010/2011 expired on 30th September, to renew your membership for 2011/2012 see our membership secretary Angela Duffy or come into our offices Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4.30pm.

New members are also welcome and can apply in the same way. All members are invited to our bi-monthly members meetings the next one takes place on Tuesday 17th January at 1.30pm in The Martin O'Hehir Room.

## New Activity Charges

From January there will be some increased and some new charges for activities. This is to help cover the running costs of the centre. Many of the charges will be nominal.

The Tuesday and Wednesday club will not be affected but for all other activities pick up a revised What's On from Luton Irish Forum or our website [www.lutonirishforum.org](http://www.lutonirishforum.org).



## Gardeners Wanted

Now we are back in our new centre we are looking for some volunteer gardeners to help with maintaining the outside space. Anybody who is interested can leave their details with a member of staff by calling into the centre or telephoning 01582 720 447.



## 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](http://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.

## ARE YOU INTERESTED IN JOINING A SPANISH LANGUAGE GROUP?

To be held on either a  
Monday or Tuesday

From 1.30pm - 2.30pm

(day to be decided once names confirmed)

At 102 Hitchin Road, Luton

To add your name to the list please  
speak to Jacqui or Nicola



Muchas gracias!

## Volunteer Computer Club Helpers Wanted

We are looking for volunteers to come along and help participants at our Computer Club on a Monday from 10am to 1pm and Thursday from 12noon to 2pm.

Volunteers will be asked to work with 2 to 3 people who have little or no experience of using the computer.



The areas you will be asked to cover are word processing, using the internet for searches etc, using email such as yahoo and using Facebook and other social networking sites.

If you could help on a regular basis we would be keen to hear from you on 01582 720 447 or email [nicola@lutonirishforum.org](mailto:nicola@lutonirishforum.org).

## Interested in Playing Bridge?

Luton Bridge Club who meet at our centre on a Thursday evening are looking for players to join their club.

If you can play Bridge and would like to come along on a Thursday evening please contact us on 01582 720 447 and leave your name and telephone number and your details will be passed to the club organiser.



## South Luton Credit Union

South Luton Credit Union still have a collection point at Luton Irish Forum on a Tuesday and Wednesday from 11.45am to 12.15pm. Anyone wishing to join the credit union can come and speak to one of their volunteers. They will be in the downstairs hall to the right of the doors.



# Luton Irish Forum



## 16th to 18th March 2012

### Friday 16<sup>th</sup> March - Launch Night;

**7.30pm** Sean O'Riada sung Mass at the Holy Ghost Church, Westbourne Road followed immediately after by the annual launch dance in the Parish Centre with music by the excellent country and rock'n'roll band Mustang.

### Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> March – Parade Day;

**9am** Pre-parade Mass with Luton Irish Forum's choir singing the Sean O'Riada Mass in Gaelic at Our Lady Help of Christians Church, Castle Street.

**11am** onwards there will be entertainment with teams of Irish dancers, traditional musicians and a host of other dancers and singers all performing at Smiths Square in The Mall.

**11am** Annual Parade leaves Manor Road to make its way through the town centre to Market Hill where there will be the presentation of Shamrock to the dignitaries followed by an afternoon of music by top class bands.

**7.30pm** We round off the day with 'The Field' by John B Keane performed by The Grange Players from Sligo at Luton Library Theatre.

### Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> March – One more night in the Theatre;

**7.30pm** Another chance to see 'The Field' by John B Keane at Luton Library Theatre.

### Tuesday 20th March - Cultural Seminar to Close Festival

**8pm** Cultural Seminar with guest speaker Professor Mary Hickman followed by reception and networking.

**The Parade** - We are always looking for new and exciting entries for the parade so if you would like to take part either as a walking troupe or a float please give us a call. Don't forget we also need individuals to come along and carry the county flags to make sure all the counties are represented.

**Stewarding** - The Parade and Market Hill events would not be possible without volunteers willing to act as stewards on the day, we welcome those who have volunteered with us before and those who would like to help for the first time. If you can help or would like to know more please give us a call.

**Sponsorship** - The Festival would not be possible without the support we receive from the local business community, adverts in our St Patrick's Festival Brochure start at just £80 and thousands of copies are distributed free over the event.

Luton Irish Forum, 102 Hitchin Road, Luton, LU2 0ES  
Phone: 01582 720 447 Email: [info@lutonirishforum.org](mailto:info@lutonirishforum.org)

