



Luton Irish Forum

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PRESS RELEASE

St Patrick's Festival 2010

Luton Irish Forum will be bringing Irish culture to the Luton again this March as part of their 11th annual St Patrick's Festival.

The St Patrick's Festival is a week long celebration of Irish culture and heritage which gives all of Luton's communities the opportunity to experience Irish music, song, dance and drama.

As has become tradition the festival will begin with a Launch Mass at St Joseph's Church where you are invited to come along and enjoy the Gaelic (Irish) Mass sung by Luton Irish Forum's very own Choir at 7.30pm. Following this in the Parish Centre is their launch night dance with Northampton based trio Hair of the Dog who are sure to have everyone dancing the night away.

On Saturday night the festival moves in to Luton Library Theatre where The Balla Drama Group from County Mayo, Ireland will perform the much acclaimed 'A Wake in the West' a comedy drama by Michael Joe Ginnelly. This evening of laughter, which is sponsored by Luton and Central Beds Economic and Development Partnership Ltd, tells the story of Tom Healy, who not content with drinking himself to death makes a last request to be buried in the drink (at sea). Watch and laugh as Tom's request reeks havoc in his house and in his community.

Members of the Irish community, marching bands and a whole host of other colourful entries will take to the streets of Luton Town Centre on Sunday 14th as part of our St Patrick's Festival Parade. The parade will make its way from Manor Road at 11am along Park Street, up George Street and into St Georges Square where shamrock will be presented to the dignitaries. There will be an afternoon of free entertainment on the main stage from 12.30pm featuring a top class 8 piece band from Ireland, La Bamba.

Also on the Sunday there will be a craft and Irish produce market from 10am to 4pm in St Georges Square and traditional music and dance on their stage at Smiths Square, The Mall Arndale from 11.30am to 3.30pm.

Tuesday evening will see the festival back in the Library Theatre for an extravagant variety concert featuring The Duffy Brothers, Irish dancers and local traditional musicians.

There will be a further opportunity to experience Irish culture and celebrate St Patrick's Day itself on Wednesday 17th when the traditional stage returns to Smiths Square in The Arndale Mall with a fabulous display of music and dance from 11am to 3pm.

Finally this years festival wraps up with a unique treat on Friday 18th, Luton Irish Forum have been working with Biso Afrika to bring the local community an opportunity to experience both Irish and African culture in a one of a kind Afro-Irish cultural night. The event is free and open to everyone. The evening will include interactive workshops on music, dance and story telling followed by an opportunity to enjoy performance by bands from both cultures including Wraggle Taggle Ceilidh Band and Brush dancing by Ciara Gill.

For more information and tickets contact Luton Irish Forum on 01582 720 447, email info@lutonirishforum.org or visit their website www.lutonirishforum.org.

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LIF, an 858 member charitable company, was formed in 1997.

We have our own fully accessible centre; Kathleen Connolly House (KCH), which provides the base for a broad portfolio of services aimed at improving the welfare of the Irish community, particularly, but not exclusively of Irish descent through:

Improving Welfare: *Welfare assistance via drop ins and appointments at KCH, community surgeries and home visits by request;*

Advancing Education: *Presentations, Internet Café, I.T., genealogy and a library;*

Promoting Social Inclusion: *Tuesday and Wednesday Clubs, seasonal outings and trips abroad;*

Celebrating Culture: *St Patrick's Festival, The Emerald Pipeband, The Literary Society, Irish Language Group and multicultural initiatives;*

Promote health: *Health MOT days, Keep Fit, Yoga and Strictly Dance Classes.*

Commission and contribute to research and policy development:

We commissioned The Luton Irish Forum Report on the needs of the local Irish community, 2004. We have hosted and contributed to a number of local and national consultations, including Managing Change and more recently; research into Luton's health and social care services.

Contact details

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Luton Irish Forum is a charitable company limited by guarantee.

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Luton Irish Forum

11th St Patrick's Festival

12th to 19th March 2010



- Fri 12th St Patrick's Festival Launch**
7.30pm The Luton Irish Forum Choir sing at the Sean O'Riada Gaelic Mass at St Joseph's Church, Gardenia Avenue
8pm Launch dance at St Joseph's Parish Centre. Tickets cost £2.50.
- Sat 13th 'A Wake in the West' comedy drama performed by Balla Drama Group at The Library Theatre.**
Show starts at 7.30pm. Tickets cost £10.
- Sun 14th St Patrick's Festival Parade, Music Stage & Market**
9.30am Pre parade Mass with Luton Irish Forum Choir at Our Lady Help of Christians, Castle Street.
Parade assembles from 10.30am at Manor Road and leaves Manor Road at 11am working its way through the town centre to the main stage at St Georges Square.
From 12.30pm there will be entertainment on the main stage, including music from La Bamba, an excellent 8 piece Band from Ireland.
There will also be an Irish produce and craft market from 10am to 4pm in St Georges Square.
In The Mall Arndale, shoppers will be entertained with traditional Irish music and dance from 11.30am to 3.30pm in Smiths Square.
- Tues 16th Variety Night in The Library Theatre featuring The Duffy Brothers.**
Doors open 7.30pm. Tickets cost £8
- Wed 17th St Patrick's Day**
Sean O'Riada Sung Mass at 9.30am in Our Lady Help of Christians.
Celebrating St Patrick's Day with another day of entertainment in The Mall Arndale at Smiths Square from 11am to 3pm.
- Fri 19th Afro-Irish Cultural Evening**
An evening of workshops and performances from both Irish and African cultures. This event will feature Brush Dancing by Ciara Gill and music by Wraggle Taggle Ceilidh Band at Hightown Sports & Arts Centre, Concorde Street from 6pm to 10pm.
Entry to this event is free.



For more info & tickets visit our website www.lutonirishforum.org or contact us on 01582 720 447 or by email to info@lutonirishforum.org

