



December 2020 – January 2021

# LUTON IRISH FORUM

WELFARE, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES

## Members enjoy a Christmas dinner at LIF - or at home

More than 100 members and clients of Luton Irish Forum are enjoying a Christmas dinner thanks to funding from the Government of Ireland and supporters of Luton Irish Forum.

"As we can't have our usual big Christmas party with a couple of hundred at the Celtic Club we're putting on Christmas dinners here for limited numbers each day Monday to Friday and will be delivering dozens more," explains Mary Winter, Trustee and Clubs Volunteer who is organising the festivities.

"Because we were able to create a Covid-Safe environment, many of our clubs reopened in September and October but we had to close again during the November lockdown. Members told us how much happier and better they felt in themselves for being able to come in to LIF that we're delighted to welcome them back for a traditional Christmas dinner."

Other members and clients from our welfare advice service will also be coming in to LIF centre for Christmas



Huge thanks go to Christmas dinner organiser Mary.

dinner or a two-course meal will be delivered to their door.

As well as a delicious dinner with trimmings and pudding, cooked and served by Jack Strathers Catering, attendees enjoyed listening to recorded music as well as a game of bingo, a raffle with extra special prizes, seeing friends old and new and just having a

good chat and a laugh (at a social distance!).

Typical are the comments made on the first day of our Christmas lunches.

*"I was so happy at the thought of this that I had my hair done!"*

*"I haven't had an excuse to get dressed up for months."*

*It's more depressing this lockdown, there is nothing to do in the garden nothing is growing it's depressing."*

*"It's lonelier now especially at this time of year, not going out and seeing my family and friends."*

*"I'm so glad dinner is going ahead. When my family call they always ask what I'm doing at the forum I can't wait to tell them about the Christmas dinner."*



*Merry Christmas & Happy New Year*

Our offices close 4:30pm on Wednesday 23rd December 2020 until 9:30am Monday 4th January 2021.  
Our social clubs will not run w/c 4th January, please get in touch to check for the weeks following.

# Add a cuppa, sit back and relax

Can you find the words or phrases listed below and then a seasonal message hidden in the wordsearch? Ignore the spaces between words and letters in the grid may be used more than once. See bottom of page 4 for the message. Thanks to puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.co.uk

- |              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| ADVENT       | HOLLY AND IVY  |
| ANGEL        | MINCE PIES     |
| BELLS        | NATIVITY       |
| BETHLEHEM    | PLUM PUDDING   |
| CAKE         | PRESENTS       |
| CAROLS       | REINDEER       |
| CHIMNEY      | SAINT NICHOLAS |
| CRACKER      | TINSEL         |
| DECORATIONS  | TREE           |
| FAIRY LIGHTS | TURKEY         |

S	E	I	P	E	C	N	I	M	C	X	B	B	H	D
S	T	H	G	I	L	Y	R	I	A	F	E	C	L	E
S	S	S	Z	Y	R	B	R	P	K	O	T	R	E	C
K	S	K	A	V	Y	E	E	E	E	J	H	A	S	O
S	L	M	M	I	E	T	O	L	P	J	L	C	N	R
I	S	P	P	D	N	Z	I	V	L	Y	E	K	I	A
K	T	S	N	N	E	T	Q	V	E	S	H	E	T	T
T	N	I	K	A	G	K	N	K	I	A	E	R	H	I
M	E	R	R	Y	C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	O
R	S	T	O	L	T	U	O	V	C	L	A	A	O	N
G	E	S	M	L	T	A	J	G	S	H	O	N	F	S
N	R	Z	T	O	A	N	G	E	L	I	O	R	D	K
H	P	R	C	H	I	M	N	E	Y	L	R	L	A	J
Z	E	P	L	U	M	P	U	D	D	I	N	G	A	C
E	E	O	Y	U	T	N	E	V	D	A	M	T	C	S

Christmas and New Year can be an especially difficult time of year for many people, even when we don't have a pandemic. Anyone can feel a bit down so we found five super tips that psychologist Susan Quilliam gave to Age UK on how to lift your spirits and we reckon they're good for all ages. Thanks to ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/mind-body/5-tips-to-boost-your-mood/

## 1. Smile

'When you smile it triggers mood-boosting hormones in the brain. So even if you don't feel happy, put a smile on your face and you may soon start to feel more positive.'

## 2. Keep busy

'It doesn't matter whether you tidy up the garden, wash the dishes or go for a walk - any activity that helps to break up your routine and gives you a sense of achievement will do the trick.'

## 3. Talk to someone

'It doesn't matter whether you meet up face to face, talk on the phone, chat online or use Skype, connecting with other people helps to bring you out of yourself.'

## 4. Help others

'Research shows that helping other people will help to lift your mood. So do a favour for a friend, donate to charity or volunteer.'

## 5. Live in the moment

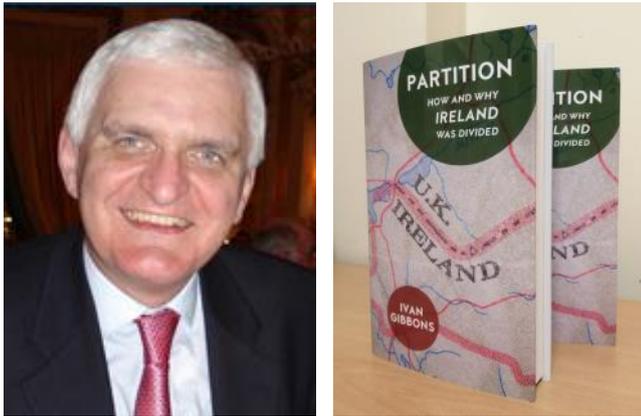
'If you're feeling low, try to regulate your breathing and pay attention to what you can see, hear and feel at the present moment. This will help you to feel calm and bring you back into emotional balance.'

## Find the missing numbers

The missing numbers in the puzzle on the left are whole numbers between 0 and 9. The numbers in each row add up to the totals on the right. The numbers in each column add up to the totals along the bottom. The diagonal lines also add up the totals to the right. The answers are given at the bottom of page 4. Thank you to puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/

				7
0		7		10
		1	5	8
	1			15
4				13
7	9	18	12	9

# Viewers log on to Irish history



*Dr Ivan Gibbons and his recently released book.*

Renowned historian Dr Ivan Gibbons gave a particularly interesting and informative talk at our latest Cultural Seminar held on 3rd December.

Dr Gibbons shared his knowledge and research to accompany the release of his book – *Partition How and Why Ireland was Divided*.

A century on from The Government of Ireland Act, Dr Gibbons explained why Ireland was partitioned and how the two states on the island were created. He spoke with excellent knowledge, passion and humour on this most emotive of subjects and then went on to field an hour's Q&A from an enthusiastic and engaged audience, on subjects ranging from reunification to Brexit.

Held via Zoom, all 100 spaces available free at the event were all pre-booked, including whole families tuning in together, with some viewers from as far away as the USA and Brazil.

"I'm glad it was online as otherwise I would have missed it as I live in Edinburgh," commented one.

Another said: "A brilliant evening...I feel I've learnt so much. Ivan is such a good communicator."

There was praise too for "...the good atmosphere created by the organisers and participants."

View a recording of the talk and the Q&A on our YouTube channel online. Members who are not online can request a free DVD of the event by phoning us on 01582 720447.

Tom Scanlon, Chair of LIF Trustees, says: "Partition How and Why Ireland was Divided is a must read. It is very Informative and as we have come to expect well researched, highlighting many aspects rarely discussed, and the political manoeuvring that took place with little regard for the wishes of the people of the whole Island of Ireland 100 years ago."

Dr Gibbons' book is available now from Haus Publishing at £12.99. See [www.hauspublishing.com/history-and-biography/partition-how-and-why-ireland-was-divided-by-ivan-gibbons/](http://www.hauspublishing.com/history-and-biography/partition-how-and-why-ireland-was-divided-by-ivan-gibbons/)

## Let's celebrate Irish women in comedy!

Join us for a FREE Zoom event, with or without afternoon tea, on Saturday 30th January from 12:00 to 1:30pm.

The full event programme will be announced soon (keep an eye on our social media) but spaces at the event and Irish Afternoon Teas can both be booked now.

Created specially by Jack Berr Catering with produce from Gerry Taylor Irish Butcher, these afternoon teas will be delivered to your home by 11:30am on event day. Delivery is available to Luton addresses only but teas can also be collected from 8:00am on the day, from St Joseph's Parish Centre, 68 Gardenia Avenue, Luton, LU3 2NS.

Each afternoon tea serving will include Irish foods such as soda bread, Kimberley

biscuits, fruit brack and Barry's tea bags as well as a selection of rolls, scones, and more.

Irish Afternoon Tea costs £10.00 per person with free delivery. Please specify any allergies and dietary requirements when ordering.

To join the event online, book via Eventbrite, email us at [info@lutonirishforum.org](mailto:info@lutonirishforum.org) or phone 01582 720447. DVD recordings of the event will be available by request.

### St Brigid's Day Afternoon Tea

Celebrating Irish women  
in comedy

Online via Zoom  
Saturday 30th January 2021  
12:00pm - 1:30pm

Online event FREE  
Irish Afternoon Tea delivered to your door £10

Tickets available online via Eventbrite  
and at Luton Irish Forum



LIF Office Manager Liz O'Halloran excelled herself in the 'decorate a Christmas tree' test!

# Welcome to new staff and student

Hello to Liz O'Halloran who joined us in a new role at LIF, that of Office Manager, in October.

Liz first worked with the Forum as a temporary staff member for six months back in January 2019, then became a volunteer and Chair of the Luton St Patrick's Festival organising committee.

In her current role Liz is supporting the ESF Digital Skills project, developing new systems and procedures and putting them into practice and assisting members as well as dealing with health & safety matters, building facilities, and the day-to-day organisation of reception services.

"Being back is like coming home, LIF and all the members feel like a family," says Liz.

Welcome also to Julia Wierzbowska who is on a student placement with us three days a week from November until May 2021.

A second year Social Work degree student at the University of Bedfordshire, Julia is working with experienced welfare service colleagues on tasks such as supporting clients in making housing benefit applications and completing associated medical forms. Other members may have spoken to Julia as she's also been busy phoning round for feedback on our services, updating people on

## Diary

Please get in touch or check online for latest details and updates.

Tuesdays 11:00am-1:00pm  
**Art Group by Zoom**

Tuesdays 7:00-8:00pm  
**Irish Language chat by Zoom**

Thursdays 10:00-11:00am  
**Tea & Chat by Zoom**

Fridays 11:00am-2:00pm  
**Art Group by Zoom**

Fridays 2:30-4:30pm  
**Calligraphy by Zoom**

Tuesday 12th January 2021 5:00-6:30pm  
**Trustees Meeting by Zoom**

Saturday 30th January 2021 12:00-1:30pm  
**St Brigid's Day Afternoon Tea by Zoom**

Christmas arrangements and providing information by phone and online.

"I'm getting to know the place and talking to lots of different people. I didn't know what to expect but it's much better than

I could have hoped for," says Julia. "The atmosphere here and everyone is so nice, LIF members are really friendly when you phone them up. I'm also learning policies and getting a lot of good experience already."



Student Julia Wierzbowska and her excellent Christmas jumper!

Answers to puzzles on page 2.

Wordsearch: Merry Christmas. Missing Numbers (left to right, top to bottom): 0271, 2015, 1185, 4621

## Luton Irish Forum

Kathleen Connolly House, 102 Hitchin Road, Luton, LU2 0ES T. 01582 720447  
info@lutonirishforum.org www.lutonirishforum.org F Luton-Irish-Forum T @IrishinLuton  
Charity No. 1113069 Company No. 5651900