



October-November 2022

LUTON IRISH FORUM

WELFARE, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES, EMPLOYMENT SKILLS



Celebrating Black History Month

We had a very enjoyable Autumn Social on 5th October hosted by our very good friends at Luton Celtic Club.

This year we celebrated Black History Month (October 22) with guests from the Luton St Vincent & Grenadines Association.

We were entertained by steel pans, learned about dominoes, a game popular within both our communities, and enjoyed West Indian food in addition to our usual Irish buffet. It was a great opportunity to meet friends old and new across both communities.

We are very grateful to our traditional musicians Brian Burke and Kevin Naughton and DJ Eamonn Cunniss who all volunteered their time and kept guests on their feet well beyond the planned end time!

Huge thanks to Liz, our Event Coordinator, Fiona who decorated the hall and produced an excellent booklet on the heritage of our communities, and last but not least, our trojan volunteers, without whom we would not be able to organise these events!



Hammersmith Tea Dance was so good – we went back for more!



Everyone who attended the Tea Dance at the Irish Cultural Centre Hammersmith on Thursday 16th September was so delighted that they had a second trip on 20th October.

The Tea Dances have been running once a month and are a great opportunity to get out enjoy a great time. On both occasions there was a warm welcome from our friends at Hammersmith Irish Centre. LIF members soon took the floor and danced to hits as diverse as 'Do ya wanna dance?' and the classic waltz tune 'My Old Sligo Home'. Everyone was in such a party mood, it was a struggle to get them off the dance-floor.

The wonderful Eammon Cunniss volunteered his time, entertaining everyone on the coach and took to the dance floor to show us his 'Strictly' moves.



There were some super wins in the raffle and Pauline Hiney, Betty Keeler, Anne Mead went home with lovely prizes.

Thank you to our friends at Secret Angels who were very kind and donated lunches for the trip. Kathleen and Roisin had such a fabulous time that they thanked Liz for organising the event with a touching Thank You card.

Shall we go back again?



Luke named Irish Person of the Year

Our own Luke Kitching has been named Luton and District Irish Person of the Year 2022. The popular annual awards celebration at St Joseph's Parish Centre was attended by more than 150 people. The award is sponsored by Gerry Taylor Irish Butcher.

Luke is a Trustee and Treasurer at Luton Irish Forum. During lockdown, Luke was part of LIF's Befriending Service, keeping in touch with isolated members and doing their weekly food shop. In addition, he was part of an initiative that collected 8,436 food items for a Christmas Food Bank Appeal for Luton Food Bank, Noah Enterprise and two local schools.

On receiving the award, Luke said, "I feel honoured to have been recognised by my community."

When Luke is not involved in local charity and voluntary work, he is teaching Irish dancing with The Finbarr Conway School of Irish Dancing. Previously, Luke has danced at World Championship level and has a room full of trophies to his credit. Luke believes that Irish dancing has instilled in him great life skills as well as giving him some fantastic friendships. He has recently passed his ACCA Accountancy exams which is a great career boost for his Accountant role at Stonegate Group of pubs.



What Luke loves most about volunteering is "seeing the amount of people that our work benefits across the wider community through all the different services offered".

Unstoppable Liz steps out for our groups

The unstoppable Liz O'Halloran, our Events Coordinator, has raised over £800 for LIF seniors!

Liz has been doing a virtual Ring of Kerry Walk, passing places of interest on her epic 124 mile trek. She's received virtual postcards from some great beauty spots and landmarks. Liz visited Tea and Chat to proudly display her medal for completing the challenge. Fitting in an average of 5-6000 steps a day during the week and anything over 10-12000 on the weekend, Liz has even walked lengths of the LIF carpark to notch up extra steps. What she likes best is that her village is full of lovely countryside, so walking didn't seem like a chore.

On raising such a huge amount of money, Liz said, "I'm chomping at the bit with more ideas of how I can raise money for LIF and incorporate lots of fun elements too!"



Liz is already planning a fashion swap event called Swishing and has some ideas in the pipeline for Women's Christmas on 6th January.

Watch this space!

Diary

This programme may be subject to change. Please refer to our What's On for activities run by external organisations. Events take place in the Forum unless stated. Suggested donation for attending LIF social groups is £1-2 per session, including refreshments.

Events

Fairytale of New York

Monday 21st November 7:30pm

The Grove Theatre, Dunstable, LU5 4GP
LIF Members £23.50 inc free programme (worth £5)
Expressions of Interest to LIF Reception

Birmingham Christmas Market

Thursday 24th November

Traditional German stalls, gifts and crafts, winter food and drink.

£15 inc coach

Please message or contact Reception with expression of interest.

Memorial Mass

Sunday 27th November 11:30am

Our Lady Help of Christians, Castle St. Luton, LU1 3AG
Refreshments after in Parish Centre.

Irish Network Stevenage Social &

Bingo

Tuesday 29th November 11:00am-1:30pm

The Celtic Club, Chobham Street, Luton, LU1 3BS
Hot soup & dancing to Eamon's Country Sounds.

Normal admission price

Christmas Social

Thursday 8th December, 12:00-4:00pm

Celtic Club, Cobham Street, LU1 3BS
LIF Members £6.00, non Members £8.00.
Advance booking via LIF essential.

GRT Christmas Party

Sunday 18th December 12:00-3:00pm

St Mary's Church, West St, Dunstable
Santa, family fun and health advice.

Clubs & Activities

Mondays from 1:00pm

Knit & Natter

Tuesdays 10:00am-2:00pm

Art Class by Zoom

Tuesdays 11:00am-1:00pm

Tuesday Club inc bingo

Tuesdays 7:00-8:00pm (term time only)

Irish Language Chat via Zoom **Back in 2023**

Wednesdays 11:00am-12:45pm

Wednesday Club including bingo

Wednesdays 1:00-2:00pm

Gentle Exercise

Wednesdays 7:00-8:00pm

Trad Irish Music Session

Thursdays 10:00-11:30am

Tea and Chat including occasional speakers

Fridays 09:30-11:30am (term time only)

Baby and Toddler Group

Fridays 12:00-2:00pm

Art Class

Fridays 2:30-4:30pm (last Friday of month)

Calligraphy Class by Zoom **Back in 2023**

Saturdays 10:00am-11:00am (term time)

Irish Dancing Classes - Beginners from 3 years old
First lesson free! Details from Finbarr 07930 563258

Sundays 11:00am-1:00pm

Pipe Band Practice

Save the Date!

St Brigid's Day 2023

A Celebration of Irish Women in the NHS

Saturday 28th January 2023

South Beds Golf Club

Afternoon Tea Tickets available soon



LUTON IRISH FORUM

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