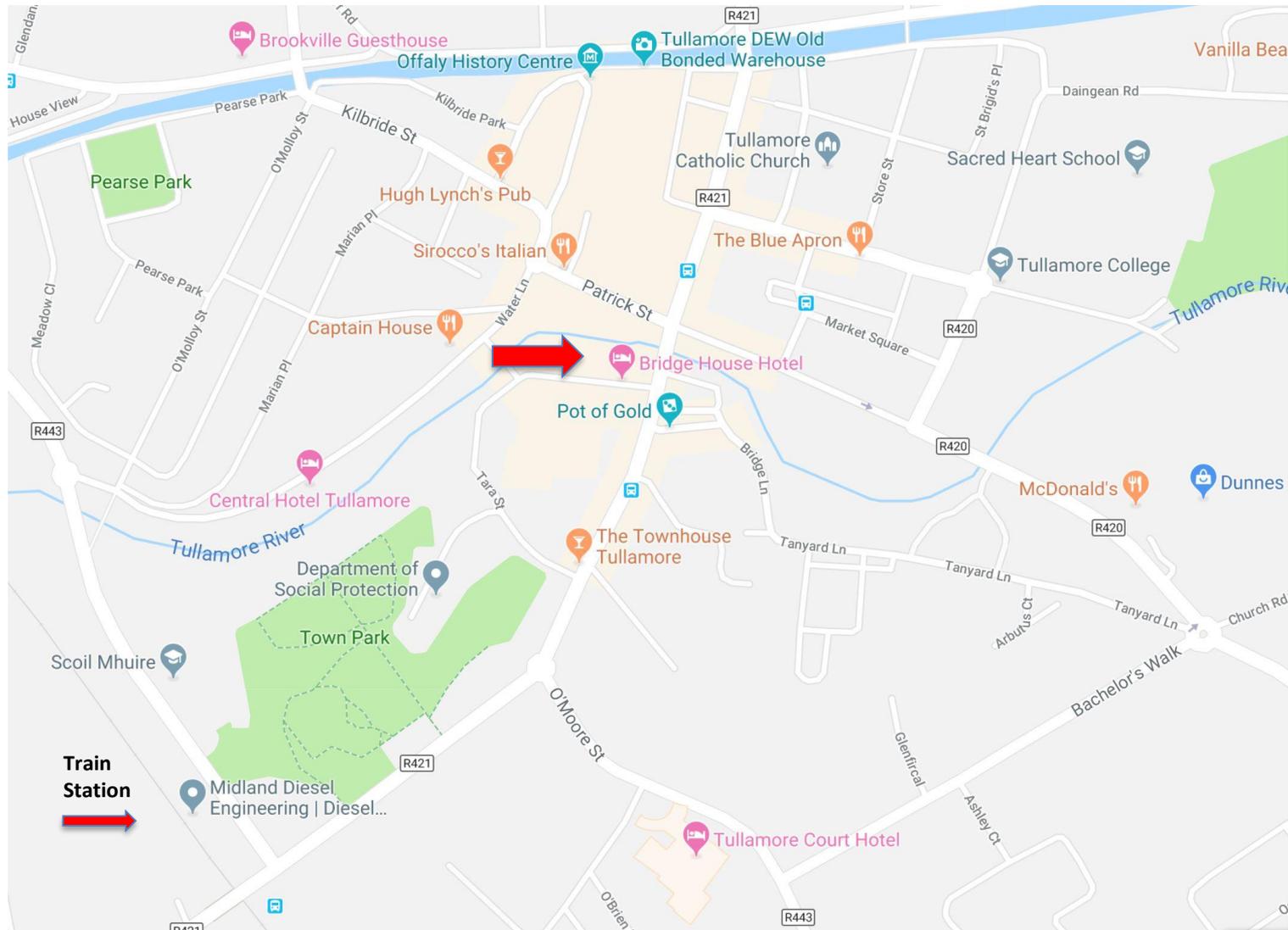




**ALL IRELAND
HUMANIST
SUMMER SCHOOL** '19



IFH
IRISH FREETHINKERS
AND HUMANISTS



The All Ireland Humanist Summer School is in its 17th year, and will take place in Tullamore for the first time. The Bridge House Hotel will host the event on the weekend of Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th of September. **It is advisable to book accommodation as soon as possible.**

This is a two-day theme-based event with guest speakers and discussions, as well as social activities. This year's theme is *Humanism and the New Ireland*.

Tickets are now available for the full weekend, for individual days, and for the Saturday night meal (three courses) which will also take place at the Bridge House Hotel. **Prices are as follows:**

- Saturday only - €30 / £26
- Sunday only - €15 / £13
- Full weekend - €45 / £39
- Saturday dinner - €35 / £30

Concessions (half-price) for Saturday and Sunday are available for students, OAPs and the unwaged. (Unfortunately we cannot offer a reduction on the Saturday night meal).

[For residents of the Republic of Ireland, see more information on how to book tickets here.](#)

Those from Northern Ireland who are interested in attending can contact Brian McClinton on 07962122038.

For further information, contact Eamon Murphy (in the south, +353879608295) or Brian McClinton (in the north, +447962122038)

Humanist Summer School 2019 – *Humanism and the New Ireland*

Timetable for the weekend (*Friday-Sunday, September 6th – 8th 2019*)

- Friday Night: Informal gathering for drinks for any early arrivals. Details TBC
- Saturday Morning: Registration from 9.15, with Summer School to kick off at 9.45
- Saturday Afternoon: Summer School to resume at 14.30, after breaking for lunch from 13.15
- Saturday Evening: Meeting from 18.30 in the bar of the Bridge House Hotel, with dinner from 19.00
- Sunday Morning: Summer School resumes at 9.45
- Sunday Afternoon: The event concludes at 13.15

Informal gathering in Tullamore for drinks on the Friday evening. Details TBC

Saturday 7th September

09:45	Welcome & Introduction – Steve Rawson (Chair, HAI)
09:50	<i>The Role of Humanism in Shaping a More Secular Ireland – Noeleen Hartigan CEO, HAI)</i>
10:30	<i>Ireland’s Environmental Obligations - Eamon Ryan (Green Party leader)</i>
11:20	Break for tea/coffee, scones and biscuits
11:45	<i>The Future for Civil Society Organisations in Ireland - Liam Herrick (ICCL)</i>
12:30	<i>Northern Ireland: Excluded from the More Progressive Ireland? - Speaker TBC</i>
13:15	Lunch in the town
14:30	<i>Accommodating Beliefs and Unbelief in a Diverse Ireland - Patsy McGarry (Irish Times)</i>
15:20	<i>The Changing Role of Women in Political Leadership - Martina Fitzgerald (Journalist, author)</i>
16:10	<i>A Poetry Reading by Sarah Clancy</i>
16:30	Closing Remarks from Steve Rawson

Social Evening and Dinner @ 7pm at **Bridge House Hotel**

Entertainment will follow the meal. Drinks from 6.30 at the hotel bar

Sunday 8th September

09:45	Welcome & Introduction – Roger Kelly (Chair, Irish Freethinkers and Humanists)
09:50	<i>A surprise slot! To be confirmed on the day</i>
10:05	<i>Irish Humanism: Where to from here? - Brian McClinton (Irish Freethinker and Humanist editor)</i>
10:45	<i>Inclusion and the Spirit of Giving in the “New Ireland” - Catriona Twomey (Cork Penny Dinners)</i>
11:25	Break for tea/coffee, scones and biscuits
11:55	<i>The New Ireland: What Young People Want - Siona Cahill (USI President, activist)</i>
12:35	<i>Uniting Our Shared Island - Professor Colin Harvey (Queens University, Belfast)</i>
13:15	Closing Remarks from Roger Kelly

Humanism and the New Ireland

The history of humanist, secularist or atheistic organisations in Ireland has been a long and varied one. The members of Rationalist Press Association, which existed in Dublin in the 1940s, discussed issues considered so abhorrent to contemporary society that it had to exist in secret, and one member who travelled to Switzerland to attend a conference of atheists felt the need to do so under an assumed name. In Northern Ireland, humanist organisations spent decades offering a sort of ‘third way’ between the pillars of Catholicism and Protestantism that were doing so much to drive a wedge through the middle of that society.

When the Humanist Association of Ireland was founded in 1993, homosexuality had only recently been decriminalised in the Republic of Ireland. Referendums in December of only the previous year had allowed for the dissemination of information about abortion services in other countries, and legalised divorce was still years away. In the north, an IRA ceasefire was still a year away, and the Good Friday Agreement which followed in 1998 could scarcely have been predicted.

The Ireland of 2019 is remarkably different; socially, politically and religiously. The last four years have seen referendums in the south to legalise gay marriage and repeal the Eight Amendment which effectively prohibited abortion in all circumstances. About one tenth of people in the Republic do not identify themselves as having a religion and the north of Ireland is seeing a gradual but notable move away from its traditional political structure, with gains for the Alliance Party and Greens in particular.

However, as we move towards a more inclusive, progressive and secular island, humanism and society in general still faces many challenges. There is a real danger that the north of the island could be left behind in some of the social progress being made. Brexit threatens the political and economic security of the island, whilst at the same time perhaps making Irish unity a real possibility for the first time in decades. Education remains segregated according to religion, and Ireland remains a laggard in terms of environmental and climate policy.

The 2019 All-Ireland Humanist Summer School, which takes place in Tullamore on the second weekend of September, will explore these issues and more, looking at our environmental obligations, Church/State relations, and what the future Ireland holds for young people. There will also be poetry readings and plenty of other entertainment and opportunity to socialise.





Sarah Clancy is an award winning poet from Galway city and the author of three collections of poetry, *Stacey and the Mechanical Bull* (2011), *Thanks for Nothing Hippies* (2012), and *The Truth and Other Stories* (2014).

Her work has also been published in the United States, Canada and the UK, and in translation in Poland, Slovenia, Mexico, Spain, Nicaragua and Italy.

She has won many awards for performance poetry and her work has been included in many of the recent anthologies of Irish Poetry.

She is on twitter @sarahmaintains and her books can be ordered at www.salmonpoetry.com



Martina Fitzgerald is an author and journalist, formerly RTE's Political Correspondent.

She is the author of the No.1 bestseller *Madam Politician: The Women at the Table of Irish Political Power*, which received critical acclaim following its publication in 2018.

Martina has been a journalist for almost 20 years and has reported extensively on recent general elections and referendums. She was named as one of the most influential Irish reporters on Twitter last year.

Martina is a graduate of UCD.



Colin Harvey is Professor of Human Rights Law in the School of Law at Queen's University Belfast.

A Fellow of the Senator George J Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice, and an Associate Fellow of the Institute of Irish Studies, he has served as Head of the Law School, a member of Senate, and a Director of the Human Rights Centre.

Before returning to Queen's in 2005 he was Professor of Constitutional and Human Rights Law at the University of Leeds. He has served as a Commissioner on the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and is the editor of the Series *Human Rights Law in Perspective* (Hart-Bloomsbury) and is on the editorial boards of *Human Rights Law Review*, *Northern Ireland Legal Quarterly* and *European Human Rights Law Review*. He has written and taught extensively on human rights law and policy and recently led an ESRC funded project on the consequences of Brexit for Northern Ireland.



Noeleen Hartigan is the CEO of the Humanist Association of Ireland.

With over 25 years experience in the not for profit sector, Noeleen is recognised as a leader in human rights, strategic change and the intersect between creativity and politics. She has worked with national and international NGOs including the Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed, the Simon Communities of Ireland, Amnesty International and the Planned Parenthood movement.

More recently, Noeleen has worked in the creative sector supporting the strategic goals of Chamber Choir Ireland and Science Gallery International. She holds a BA in English Literature and Philosophy and an MA in International Relations. She is also occasionally to be found directing, acting and singing for fun.



Liam Herrick is Executive Director of the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL).

Prior to his appointment to his current role in November 2016. , Liam worked as Advisor to President Michael D. Higgins for almost three years. He was Executive Director of the Irish Penal Reform Trust between 2007 and 2014.

He has also worked as the first head of legislation and policy at the former Irish Human Rights Commission, as well as with the Law Reform Commission and the Department of Foreign Affairs. He is a former member of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, a former Board member of the Children’s Rights Alliance, and a member of the Minister for Justice and Equality’s Strategic Review Group on Penal Policy (2012-2014).



Brian McClinton is an author, publisher and retired teacher.

He has been active in Humanism in Northern Ireland since 1984 and, along with Sean Kearney, set up the Toland Summer School in 1998, a precursor of the all-Ireland Summer School, of which he is also co-founder. He is well known to Irish humanists as the editor of *Humanist Ireland* and *The Irish Freethinker* and *Humanist* magazines.

He is the author of a Humanist Handbook and *Ulster’s Third Way: The Humanist Alternative Beyond Orange and Green*. He has also had a lifelong interest in the Shakespeare authorship question and is the author of *The Shakespeare Conspiracies*.

He taught for 36 years at Friends’ School, Lisburn, and is now retired and lives in Lisburn.



Patsy McGarry is Religious Affairs Correspondent for the *Irish Times*.

Appointed to his current role in 1997, he had previously reported for *Magill* magazine, the *Irish Press*, the *Irish Independent*, and *Sunday Independent*. He has been with the *Irish Times* since 1994. In 1998 he was awarded the Templeton European Religion Writer of the Year for articles in the *Irish Times* on the Orange Order stand-off at Drumcree; the papal visit to Cuba that year; and articles criticising the Irish churches for failing to practise what they preached on reconciliation.

He is the author of *While Justice Slept: The True Story of Nicky Kelly and the Sallins Train Robbery* (published in 2006) and *First Citizen: Mary McAleese and the Irish Presidency*, published in 2008, which is the official biography of former President Mary McAleese.

Eamon Ryan TD is the leader of the Green Party in Ireland.



He was born in Dublin and raised in Dundrum and Dartry. He began his political career as a Dublin City Councillor for the Rathgar-Rathmines ward and went on to serve both as a TD for Dublin South and as Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.

He was the founding chairperson of the Dublin Cycling Campaign and is a founder of the business Irish Cycling Safaris. He won the 1996 Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year award. In recent years, Eamon has worked for a European climate organisation and chaired the digital policy group in the Institute of International and European Affairs.

He was elected to represent Dublin Bay South in the 2016 General Election.



Caitriona Twomey is the coordinator of Cork Penny Dinners.

Cork Penny Dinners serves up to 2,000 hot meals a week and is one of Ireland's longest standing charitable organisations. It provides the hungry of Cork with hot meals seven days a week, all year round. Services are free of charge to those in need. The organisation has recently expanded and has begun opening at night to help Cork's homeless.

Catriona worked as a volunteer for the organisation for many years and has run the service since 2007. She has overseen the development of the service with a new centre that will house a medical facility, which will also hold classes in life skills and trades, the idea being to foster social interaction with people in need while developing their full potential.

She was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Laws by University College Cork last year, and was named Cork Person of the Month for April 2019.