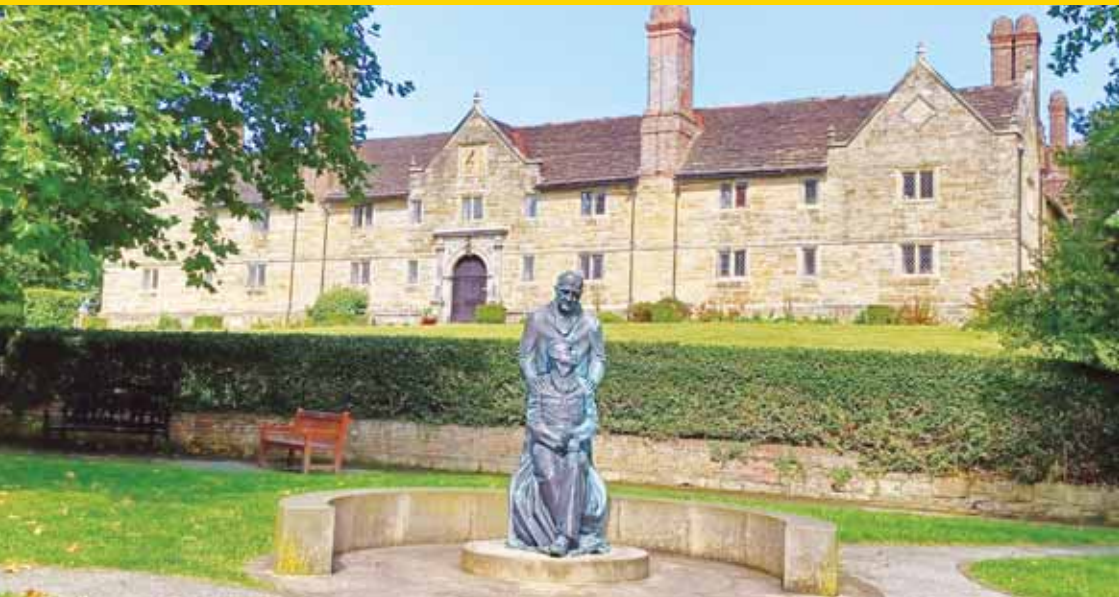


January - June 2024

O^{the}
DDfeLLOWS SINCE 1810
making friends, helping people

out & about

Tunbridge Wells



Sackville College in East Grinstead



Music



Art/Crafts



Theatre



Dining Out



Walks



Games



Day Trip



Meetings



Social



Talks



Coffee Morning/
Afternoon Tea



Online



Heartbeats - Tuesday 13 February

Welcome to the next edition of your Events Diary for the Tunbridge Wells Branch.

As a local Branch of the Oddfellows, we offer you a great opportunity to make new friends and enjoy a variety of activities. We also provide our members with a range of advice and support services when you need them. We are basically a group of friends brought together through shared interest in socialising, making friends and helping people. This issue features details of all our upcoming events from live music to eating out.

Contact Details

Tunbridge Wells Branch Office
Branch Secretary: Karen Rose

Address:

1 Southwick Close, East Grinstead,
 West Sussex RH19 2EZ

Telephone: 01342 324980

The best time to ring is during the week between 10am and 4pm but if there is no reply please do leave your name, telephone number and a short message.

Email:

karen.rose@oddfellows.co.uk

Don't forget that everyone is welcome at Oddfellows events. Even if you are not a member, we want to extend an invitation to you and your friends to give us a try by attending any of our events that take your fancy before you decide to join.

Please Note

Photography will take place at each of our events to be used across Oddfellows' website, social media platforms, adverts and promotional material.

If you would not like to be in any of these images, please let a member of staff or the photographer know.

Find us at  [OddfellowsTunbridgeWells](https://www.facebook.com/OddfellowsTunbridgeWells)

Branch venues and local contacts

Beacon Branch

Crowborough Social Club,
Croft Road
Crowborough
East Sussex
TN6 1DL

Contact: Naz Mian

Telephone: 07905 472361

Bexhill and Hastings Branch

RAFA Albatross Club
15 Marina
Bexhill-on-Sea
East Sussex
TN40 1JS

Contact: Margaret Walisko

Telephone: 01424 217243

Earl of Cottenham Branch

The East Grinstead Ex-Service's
Club
4 Station Road
East Grinstead
West Sussex
RH19 1DJ

Contact: Andy Mason

Telephone: 01342 317970

Sevenoaks Branch

The Woodman
2 High Street
Otford
Sevenoaks
Kent

TN14 5PQ

Contact: Mike Hyde

Telephone: 07711 677 683

Tunbridge Wells Branch

Constitutional Club
1 Sandrock Road
Tunbridge Wells
Kent
TN2 3PX

Contact: Karen Rose

Telephone: 01342 324980

Weald Branch

The Cherry Tree
Dale Hill
Ticehurst
East Sussex
TN5 7DG

Contact: Mike Hyde

Telephone: 07711 677683

Branch Meetings

Every Oddfellows Branch is run independently by a committee of members. Regular meetings are held to discuss matters such as Branch finances, membership and members support. Any member is welcome to attend these meetings. They are held on the first Wednesday of the month (second in January) at the Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club either before or after the talk or activity.

January 2024

WED

10

Doing Our Bit!



7.30pm



Free



Join us to welcome Steve Hookins to the Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club. In character as 'one man and his broom', 'Mr Foreman' of the Emergency Road

Repair Service. Steve will talk about the roles carried out by some of the Home Front's unsung heroes, from the Upper Thames Patrol to the workers of the MG Works in Abingdon, via the Emergency Hospital Service. He also looks at some of the civilians who were awarded the George Cross and George Medal as well as bringing a small display of genuine WWII Home Front Civil Defence badges and ephemera. Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Friday 5 January. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call 07443 926944.



MON

15

Lunchtime Get-Together Crowborough



12 noon



As per
menu



Join us for a lunchtime get-together at the Crowborough Social Club. You will be able to purchase your own lunch at the Club.



Come along and meet other members for a chat. Everyone is welcome so please bring along your friends. A drink will be provided by the Branch. Please note that booking is essential by Monday 8 January. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Naz on 07905 472361.

TUES

16

Justine Clark



8pm



£5



The Beacon Branch is pleased to welcome back Justine Clark. Singing songs from the 60s onwards and into the 2000s and beyond, her repertoire is always

current and exciting and will suit all ages. Refreshments will be provided by the Branch at The Crowborough Social Club. Please note that booking is essential by Wednesday 10 January. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Naz on 07905 472361.



January 2024

MON
22

Smokin Mojos Unplugged

L 8pm

£ £5



The Weald Branch is pleased to welcome the Smokin Mojos, a local Blues/Soul/Country/Rock band with a diverse and interesting song list and growing in popularity. Unplugged, they provide an acoustic set of their full range of music, but cut down to fit into smaller venues. Expect an exciting evening of great music. Refreshments will also be provided at The Cherry Tree. Please note that booking is essential by Monday 15 January. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Mike on 07711 677683.

SAT
27

Grand Canyon

L 12.30pm

£ Free



Join the Bexhill Branch in welcoming Ray Young to the Albatross Club. Ray spoke to the Bexhill Branch in 2022 about his trip to Peru. This time he



will talk about his travels to the Grand Canyon (Arizona, Grand Canyon and the South Rim). Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Friday 19 January. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call 07443 926944.

MON
29

Ship Towage and Salvage on the River Thames and at Sea

L 7.45pm

£ Free



Join the Sevenoaks Branch in welcoming Brian Biggs to The Woodman. Brian, a new speaker for us, will tell of his life, humorous in parts, from 1953 progressing from Boy to Master and Training Officer. Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Monday 22 January. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Mike on 07711 677683.



February

MON
05

Life Inside (Prison)

L 8pm

£ Free



The Weald are pleased to welcome John Mills to The Cherry Tree, Ticehurst. John will give an insight into the life and trials experienced by people inside prison. A new speaker to us, but this talk has been very popular with other groups. Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Monday 29 January. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Mike on 07711 677683.

February

WED
07

America's Presidents in Bits and Pieces

7.30pm

£ Free



Join us to welcome Joe Mendell to the Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club. A presentation of America's 45 (now 46) presidents but not in detail. In this fascinating presentation Joe brings out some of the lesser known facts about the men who have been President of the USA. Which President is considered to be the best and worse? Which President kept pet alligators in the White House? Things you might never had known about these men if you hadn't seen Joe's presentation. Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Friday 2 February. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call 07443 926944.

MON
19

Henry V and the Battle of Agincourt

7.45pm

£ Free



Join the Earl of Cottenham Branch in welcoming James Dickinson to the Ex-Services Club in East Grinstead. James will talk about the high point of the history of Anglo-French rivalry during the Middle Ages, at least from the English point of view! He tells the story of Henry V and his epic quest to claim the throne of France. Cry God for England, Harry and Saint George! Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Monday 12 February. Please email Karen to book your place karen.rose@oddfellows.co.uk or call Andy on 01342 317970.



TUES
13

Heartbeats

8pm

£ £5



Join the Beacon Branch for an evening of entertainment with the Heartbeats. Recognised as one of Kent's premier 'Fifties/Sixties' bands, they entertain audiences of all ages with renditions of classic numbers, as well as a few lesser played, but instantly recognisable, tunes that are synonymous with an era of fabulous music and melody. Refreshments will be provided at the Crowborough Social Club. Please note that booking is essential by Wednesday 7 February. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Naz on 07905 472361.



February

TUES 20 Lunchtime Get-Together Tunbridge Wells

 12 noon

 As per menu



Join us for a lunchtime get-together at the Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club. You will be able to purchase your own lunch at the Club. Come along and meet other members for a chat. Everyone is welcome so please bring along your friends. A drink will be provided by the Branch. Please note that booking is essential by Tuesday 13 February. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call 07443 926944.

MON 26 Vocal and Ukelele Bashing Entertainer

 7.45pm

 £5



The Sevenoaks Branch are pleased to welcome Rob Tompsett to The Woodman, Otford. Rob will be playing



and singing some well known ukulele tunes. Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Monday 19 February. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Mike on 07711 677683.

March

SAT 02 Elvis Presley Tribute

 12.30pm

 £5



Join the Bexhill Branch in welcoming Andy King to the Albatross Club.

For our first music event in Bexhill, Andy will perform as Elvis and sing a variety of hits from the King's career. Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Thursday 22 February. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call 07443 926944.



MON 04 Side By Side

 8pm

 £5



The Weald Branch are pleased to welcome Side By Side back to The Cherry Tree, Ticehurst. They will perform a variety of music through the decades to get us (and the staff and customers of the pub) singing and dancing along once again. Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Monday 26 February. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Mike on 07711 677683.

March

WED
06

From Princess to Queen



7.30pm



Free



Join us to welcome Melanie Gibson-Barton back to the Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club. The story of the childhood of Princess Elizabeth of York to the placing of the crown on her head on 2nd June 1953 which made her the Queen of the United Kingdom and 14 other Commonwealth realms. Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Friday 1 March. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call 07443 926944.

TUES
12

Move Over Dali



8pm



£5



Everyone is welcome to join the Beacon Branch for an evening with Move Over Dali, an acoustic 'bluesabilly' pop band based in Kent. Their material is a mix of original songs and unusual covers in their own style. Refreshments will be provided by the Branch at the Crowborough Social Club. Please note that booking is essential by Wednesday 6 March. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Naz on 07905 472361.



MON
18

Lunchtime Get-Together Crowborough



12 noon



As per
menu



Join us for a lunchtime get-together at the Crowborough Social Club. You will be able to purchase your own lunch at the Club. Come along and meet other members for a chat. Everyone is welcome so please bring along your friends. A drink will be provided by the Branch. Please note that booking is essential by Monday 11 March. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Naz on 07905 472361.



March

SUN

24

Sunday Lunch at La Farola



1pm



Members £28, Guests £38



Join the Earl of Cottenham Branch for a delicious Sunday lunch at the family run La Farola Restaurant and Tapas Bar. Members will enjoy freshly prepared dishes and a warm atmosphere. An early booking is essential by Wednesday 6 March due to the popularity of this occasion and because places are limited.



Cheques should be sent in advance to Karen Rose at the Branch Office to secure your place. La Farola Restaurant and Tapas Bar, 194-200 London Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 1EY. Please email Karen to book your place karen.rose@oddfellows.co.uk or call Andy on 01342 317970.

MON

25

80 Years of Desert Island Discs



7.45pm



Free



Join the Sevenoaks Branch in welcoming back Delia Taylor to The Woodman. Our very own Delia always provides us with entertaining talks, recently on the 1950s and 1960s. This is her new talk, chronicling the rise and popularity of the radio programme Desert Island Discs. Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Monday 18 March. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Mike on 07711 677683.



April

WED

03

Annual District Branch Meeting and Social



7.30pm



Free



The Annual Meeting aims to approve the 2023 accounts and appoint District Lodge Officers for the forthcoming year. A drink at the bar and a buffet will be provided for all members who attend this most important meeting at the Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club. Please note that booking is essential by Friday 29 March. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call 07443 926944.

April

MON 08 Kent Remembered



8pm



Free



The Weald Branch are pleased to welcome back Colin Harvey to The Cherry Tree, Ticehurst. Colin has given us a couple of extremely interesting films and talks, on the Falkland Islands and on the munitions ship SS Richard Montgomery. This film and talk will be no less fascinating as it looks back across previous years of life in Kent. Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Wednesday 3 April. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Mike on 07711 677683.



SAT 13 Animated Cartoon Films



12.30pm



Free



Join the Bexhill Branch to welcome Steve Hall from the Bexhill Museum to the Albatross Club. From Stone



Age to the first films, Steve will give an interactive talk with slides and items to handle, mainly looking at Victorian optical toys with a surprise at the end. Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Wednesday 3 April. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Margaret on 01424 217243.

SUN 14 Lunch and Ten Pin Bowling



12.30pm



TBC



Join us at the Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club for a two course lunch and a drink. Members to purchase their own food and the Branch will provide a free drink. We will then move on to the Hollywood Bowl, Knights Park, Knights Way, Tunbridge Wells TN2 3UX to enjoy some games of bowling. The Branch will subsidise the cost of bowling for each member. Please note that booking is essential by Wednesday 5 April. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call 07443 926944.



April

TUES
16 **Stevie Bart**



8pm



£5



Join the Beacon branch to welcome back Stevie Bart to the Crowborough Social Club. Stevie will provide us with an evening of Rock 'n' Roll from Elvis to Shakin Stevens and everything in between to help us dance the night away. Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Wednesday 10 April. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Naz on 07905 472361.



Booking and Cancellations

Please remember the importance of early booking for all events to avoid disappointment or cancellation due to lack of support.

MON
22 **Ian Petrie and Ted Handley**



7.45pm



£5



The Sevenoaks branch are pleased to welcome back Ian Petrie and Ted Handley (accordion) to The Woodman. They are always enormously popular any time we manage to get to see them. They perform a mixture of folk, and popular songs - all well-known, all worthy of a sing-a-long, and all hand-clappingly good. Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Monday 15 April. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Mike on 07711 677683.



TUES
23 **Lunchtime Get-Together Tunbridge Wells**



12 noon



As per menu



Join us for a lunchtime get-together at the Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club. You will be able to purchase your own lunch at the Club. Come along and meet other members for a chat. Everyone is welcome so please bring along your friends. A drink will be provided by the Branch. Please note that booking is essential by Tuesday 16 April. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call 07443 926944.

May

WED
01

Bisons and Custer

7.30pm

£ Free



Join us to welcome back Neil Sadler to the Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club. The latest illustrated talk by Neil will look at many diverse aspects of the USA including Yellowstone National Park; The dangerous pastime of 'Hot Potting' in volcanic geysers; How many bison are left in the USA?; 'Custers' Last Stand' and the intriguing link between the famous massacre and a Sussex headmaster. All this, plus a brief Wild West movie theme tune quiz, so saddle up and sit back for a wild ride through Montana, Wyoming and South Dakota. Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Friday 26 April. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call 07443 926944.

SAT
11

Ramble and Pub Lunch

10am

£ As per menu



The Earl of Cottenham Branch is organising a ramble in the Groombridge area. The walk will be roughly a 3.5 mile circular walk from The Crown Inn, Groombridge Hill, Groombridge TN3 9QH and will take approximately two hours.

Sturdy walking shoes are recommended as well as being relatively fit and agile for any stiles. A drink will be paid for by the Branch. A menu will be available should you wish to purchase your own lunch. Please note that booking is essential by Wednesday 1 May. Please email Karen to book your place karen.rose@oddfellows.co.uk or call Andy on 01342 317970.

A bit about us...

The Oddfellows is a friendly society with Branches across the UK. Through friendship and social events, we help our members get more enjoyment out of life, and offer care, advice and support in times of need. We welcome everyone of all ages. Find out more at www.oddfellows.co.uk or call 0800 028 1810.

May

MON
13

Unstable Cliffs

⌚ 8pm

£ £5



Join us at the Weald Branch to be entertained by 'Unstable Cliffs' who are a two person band from Bexhill. They will entertain you with Rock, Blues and Country music from the 50s to the noughties. Refreshments will be provided by the Branch at The Cherry Tree, Ticehurst. Please note that booking is essential by Tuesday 7 May. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Mike on 07711 677683.

TUES
14

Lunchtime Get-Together Tunbridge Wells

⌚ 12 noon

£ As per menu



Join us for a lunchtime get-together at the Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club. You will be able to purchase your own lunch at the Club. Come

along and meet other members for a chat. Everyone is welcome so please bring along your friends. A drink will be provided by the Branch. Please note that booking is essential by Tuesday 7 May. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call 07443 926944.



SAT
18

Margaret Thatcher

⌚ 12.30pm

£ Free



Join the Bexhill Branch in welcoming Tony Harris to the Albatross Club as he performs as Margaret Thatcher. It is guaranteed to be an enthralling performance as Tony relies on performance not notes. Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Friday 10 May. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Margaret on 01424 217243.



TUES
21

Alpaco Country

⌚ 8pm

£ £5



The Beacon Branch is pleased to welcome Alpaco Country, a mature three piece local band who play music by a variety of bands from Johnny Cash to George Strait and Merle Haggard to Alan Jackson. Refreshments will be provided at the Crowborough Social Club. Please note that booking is essential by Tuesday 14 May. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Naz on 07905 472361.

June

MON
03

Eat Your Carrots - The Invention of British Radar



7.45pm



Free



Join the Sevenoaks Branch in welcoming back Guy Bartlett to The Woodman. An ever popular speaker at our venues, Guy will be presenting the 'world premiere' of his new talk on the development of Radar in wartime Britain, and how the Germans missed its significance and the chance to overtake it. Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Tuesday 28 May. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Mike on 07711 677683.



TUES
11

Jessica Louisa



8pm



£5



The Beacon Branch is pleased to welcome Jessica Louisa, a professional singer and all round power house based in Kent, who will perform songs from the 50s to current classics. Refreshments will be provided at the Crowborough Social Club. Please note that booking is essential by Wednesday 5 June. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Naz on 07905 472361.



WED
05

An Evening at the Races



7.30pm



Free



Join us for drinks, together with horse racing on DVD and cash prizes for the winning punters. The fun and games will be followed by a buffet and the Branch meeting at the Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club. Please note that booking is essential by Friday 31 May. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call 07443 926944.



June

SAT
15

Stuart London

L 12.30pm

£ Free



MON
17

You've Never Had It
So Good

L 7.45pm

£ Free



Join the Bexhill Branch to welcome Ian Bevan to the Albatross Club. The 17th century was one of the most turbulent in the history of this country, and London suffered its own tragedies, especially the Great Fire in 1666. However, this period resulted in some of London's finest architecture the City Churches, new palaces, hospitals for veterans. Ian's talk covers the expansion and development of London during the time of the Stuart monarchs. Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Thursday 6 June. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Margaret on 01424 217243.



Join the Earl of Cottenham Branch in welcoming Paul Robbins to the Ex-Services Club in East Grinstead. A wonderfully nostalgic look

back at society, culture, news and music from the great golden decade that was the 1950s. Do you remember white £5 notes, rationing, trams, the festival of Britain, smog and The Third Man film? If so, then this is the talk to bring back so many memories! Refreshments will be provided. Please note that booking is essential by Monday 10 June. Please email Karen to book your place karen.rose@oddfellows.co.uk or call Andy on 01342 317970.



REFER A FRIEND

Share the love and make someone smile

To refer someone you know and make their day, either fill in the **Refer a Friend form** available from your Branch Secretary, or call Membership on 0800 028 1810, or visit our Members' Area at www.oddfellows.co.uk



*Terms and conditions apply to the Refer a Friend offer. It cannot be used in conjunction with any other member offer. For full terms and conditions and for details of the rewards visit www.oddfellows.co.uk/offers.

Ref 1644

June

MON
24

The Waterways of the Tsars - The Treasures of St Petersburg

8pm

£ Free



Join the Weald Branch to welcome back Rukshana Master. The first part of Rukshana's talk on the waterways and treasures of the Tsars in Russia. She has previously spoken to us about the cottage in France she bought and renovated with her husband, and the times and customs of the Raj in India and her family connection with it. Refreshments will be provided at The Cherry Tree, Ticehurst. Please note that booking is essential by Monday 17 June. Email Solveig to book your place solveig.stanhope@oddfellows.co.uk or call Mike on 07711 677683.

**Online events
you can enjoy
from the comfort of
your own home...**

**Talks, coffee mornings,
exercise classes, quizzes, fun
& games and much more**

**Visit oddfellows.co.uk/events
and enter 'Kelso' in the place name box**

Need help to attend an online event? Just give your local
Social Organiser or Branch Secretary a call or email
events@oddfellows.co.uk



OE/0122A5 V2

Give someone a great start in life **for only £10!**



**It's never too early to start
making friends for life.**

We laugh as we learn together and give each other a helping hand through the ups and downs of growing up. That's what being a Young Oddfellow is all about.

If you have a family member aged 17 or under, and would like them to experience the friendship and support of the Oddfellows, we'd love to welcome them.

There are lots of great reasons* to join Young Oddfellows – to find out more, visit www.oddfellows.co.uk/young-oddfellows

**As a parent, grandparent or guardian,
you can join them online or ask your
Branch Secretary for an application form.**



**Young
Oddfellows** SINCE 1810
making friends, helping people

***Terms and conditions apply to membership and financial benefits.
Call 0800 028 1810 for details or visit www.oddfellows.co.uk/terms-conditions**

At a glance

January 2024

Wed 10	Doing Our Bit!, Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club	7.30pm
Mon 15	Lunchtime Get-Together, Crowborough Social Club	12 noon
Tues 16	Justine Clark, Crowborough Social Club	8pm
Mon 22	Smokin Mojos Unplugged, The Cherry Tree	8pm
Sat 27	Grand Canyon, The Albatross Club	12.30pm
Mon 29	Ship Towage and Salvage on the River Thames and at Sea, The Woodman	7.45pm

February

Mon 5	Life Inside (Prison), The Cherry Tree	8pm
Wed 7	America's Presidents in Bits and Pieces, Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club	7.30pm
Tues 13	Heartbeats, Crowborough Social Club	8pm
Mon 19	Henry V and the Battle of Agincourt, The East Grinstead Ex-Service's Club	7.45pm
Tues 20	Lunchtime Get-Together, Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club	12 noon
Mon 26	Vocal and Ukelele Bashing Entertainer, The Woodman	7.45pm

March

Sat 2	Elvis Presley Tribute, The Albatross Club	12.30pm
Mon 4	Side By Side, The Cherry Tree	8pm
Wed 6	From Princess to Queen, Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club	7.30pm
Tues 12	Move Over Dali, Crowborough Social Club	8pm
Mon 18	Lunchtime Get-Together, Crowborough Social Club	12 noon
Sun 24	Sunday Lunch, La Farola Restaurant and Tapas Bar, East Grinstead	1pm
Mon 25	80 Years of Desert Island Discs, The Woodman	7.45pm

At a glance

April

Wed 3	Annual District Branch Meeting and Social, Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club	7.30pm
Mon 8	Kent Remembered, The Cherry Tree	8pm
Sat 13	Animated Cartoon Films, The Albatross Club	12.30pm
Sun 14	Lunch and Ten Pin Bowling, Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club	12.30pm
Tues 16	Stevie Bart, Crowborough Social Club	8pm
Mon 22	Ian Petrie and Ted Handley, The Woodman	7.45pm
Tues 23	Lunchtime Get-Together, Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club	12 noon

May

Wed 1	Bisons and Custer, Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club	7.30pm
Sat 11	Ramble and Pub Lunch, The Crown Inn, Groombridge	10am
Mon 13	Unstable Cliffs, The Cherry Tree	8pm
Tues 14	Lunchtime Get-Together, Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club	12 noon
Sat 18	Margaret Thatcher, The Albatross Club	12.30pm
Tues 21	Alpaco Country, Crowborough Social Club	8pm

June

Mon 3	Eat Your Carrots - The Invention of British Radar, The Woodman	7.45pm
Wed 5	An Evening at the Races, Tunbridge Wells Constitutional Club	7.30pm
Tues 11	Jessica Louisa, Crowborough Social Club	8pm
Sat 15	Stuart London, The Albatross Club	12.30pm
Mon 17	You've Never Had It So Good, The East Grinstead Ex-Service's Club	7.45pm
Mon 24	The Waterways of the Tsars - The Treasures of St Petersburg, The Cherry Tree	8pm



Interested in volunteering?

We couldn't run all our events without our wonderful volunteers. There are lots of ways you can get involved as a volunteer, from one-off help to regular support.

You can help us by:

- Welcoming members, guests and speakers at events
- Being the volunteer host at external events
- Joining the Committee of Management
- Becoming a Volunteer Welfare Visitor
- Supporting others as a Telephone Befriender

Become a Telephone Befriender or Welfare Visitor

Keep in touch with members who can no longer get to meetings, are unwell, or would otherwise benefit from a friendly phone call or visit. Could you spare a bit of your time for this rewarding and valuable role, making occasional phone calls or visits to members?

If you're interested in finding out more about helping us as a volunteer, contact Karen by phone on 01342 324980, email at karen.rose@oddfellows.co.uk

"Supporting events as a volunteer makes me feel more committed to the Oddfellows and what I do. I enjoy meeting up with other members/friends, any outings that take place, the lunches and some of the talks are especially interesting".

Cynthia, volunteer



the ODDfELLOWS SINCE 1810
making friends, helping people

Autumn 2023
www.oddfellows.co.uk

Tunbridge Wells News and Views

News and views from your local friendship group

Friendship Lunchtime Get-Togethers

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Sevenoaks Branch

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Weald Branch

Pages 12-13



Oddfellows Friendship

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Earl of Cottenham Branch



AMC



Inter-District Quiz



Welcome to the fortieth edition of your twice yearly Tunbridge Wells Newsletter

A message from your Secretary

Firstly I would like to welcome our eighteen new members who joined since April. There have been thirty-five events across our District ranging from an Inter-District Quiz and BBQ's through to music events and lunches. I do hope that you have settled in and are enjoying attending our varied social events and making new friends.

Everyone is welcome at our events, so if you can encourage family and friends to come then bring them along to try us out before they join and they will be made very welcome. Let your friends and family know that there's so much to get out of being an Oddfellows member, from our varied social events to our supportive benefits package.

Contact Details

For more details about any of the events listed, membership and the wide range of benefits available, please call:

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The best time to ring is during the week between 10am and 4pm but if there is no reply please do leave your name, telephone number and a short message.

This newsletter gives a flavour of the events that have taken place across the seven branches of the District over the last few months and enjoyed by so many of our members.

With Christmas nearly upon us it is time to start thinking about 2024. The Events Diary for the first half of 2024 has been produced and again contains a variety of



Oddfellows friendship.

events including games, music, interesting talks, walks and our lunchtime get-togethers. Please feel free to contact me if you have any suggestions for future events or would like to become more involved in the life of the Oddfellows.

This year I took the opportunity to go on a Fred Olsen cruise with the Oddfellows. There were nineteen Oddfellows members from across the country on the cruise and it was ably hosted by Wendy Atkins, Social Organiser for Ipswich District Lodge. We all dined together in the evenings and had a drinks party on the final evening to share stories of the things that we had done on the cruise. The cruise left Dover

on Monday 7th August and stopped at Lerwick (Shetland Island); Torshavn (Faroe Island) and Kirkwall (Orkney Island) before returning to Dover on Sunday 13th August. Lots of memories were made and we saw some amazing scenery and wildlife. A thoroughly enjoyable and memorable holiday.

Please note that the District Office will be closed from Monday 18th December 2023 through to Wednesday 3rd January 2024.

I do hope that you all have a relaxing Christmas break.

Karen

Friendship Lunchtime Get-Togethers

In April, twenty-eight members enjoyed a lovely lunch and a couple of drinks on an unexpectedly cold day at the Constitutional Club in Tunbridge Wells. Our next lunchtime visit to the club was at the end of May where twenty-three members and two guests attended for some more lovely food provided by Ray and his team. Both occasions were great opportunities for some good conversation and great company.

In July, a low turnout of eleven members attended the lunchtime get-together at the Crowborough Social Club. All present enjoyed a very tasty lunch and a pleasant

chat. In September, for Friendship Month, twenty-three members and guests enjoyed a delicious menu at the Crowborough Social Club. After the lunch, Lorraine (club president) and her husband Paul organised eight games of bingo with one line and full house for each game with an additional two lines for the last game. Some people were very lucky and won more than once.

Much hilarity as numbers and (mostly) correct noises and names were called out. Has anyone ever heard of 53 – koala up a tree!? A good afternoon with lots of chat and laughter.



Members enjoying the lunchtime get-together.



Getting into the Friendship Spirit.

Bowling

In April, twenty-six members enjoyed a lovely carvery at the Constitutional Club consisting of roast lamb and beef with Yorkshire pudding, vegetables and gravy. Dessert was chocolate cake, baked cheesecake, lemon meringue roulade, or cheese and biscuits. All washed down with a drink and coffee. There was plenty of time to chat before meeting up at Bowlplex where twenty-one members played two games with a drink in the break. There were fifteen



David, James and Andrew (l to r).

players with scores over 100, with the winner being James Fickling with 129 points; David Purcell scoring 123, and Andrew Stanhope 121. A great time was had by all.

Earl of Cottenham Branch

Thanks to Pete Gardner, Andy Mason and Karen Rose for their work in providing a variety of events for the Branch.

On a grey Saturday May morning, twenty-two ramblers set off on a 4.6 mile circular walk from The Three Crowns pub in Ashurst Wood. There were three stiles to tackle along the way plus a couple of very muddy areas. Much fun was had and we saw new-born foals and lambs along with a herd of cows. During the walk the sun started shining and we arrived back at the pub just over two hours later ready for a drink. Another member joined us for our well-deserved lunch. A thoroughly lovely day.

In June, Ian Everest spoke to twenty-five members about a Sussex Farm during the 1950s. Ian's interest in the history of Sussex farming dates back to his childhood where he spent the first twenty-five years of his life living on a 1,000 acre Downland Farm on which his father worked. The talk looked at life on Manor Farm, Bishopstone, near

Seaford, owned by Lionel Willett, during the 1950's and is based on a film made by Lionel's son John Willett during 1955 and 1956. After attending the Royal Agricultural College at Cirencester, John was keen to start modernising the farm by adopting new techniques and acquiring modern machinery. His father was reluctant to change with the times. The film gave us an interesting insight into farming and the gradual change to modern labour saving machinery.

More than thirty men were employed on the farm at harvest time – and twenty throughout the year. The men worked a 48 hour week, starting at 7am each day with only Sundays as their rest day. It was a tough life with little financial reward for the workers, but the men were highly skilled in many aspects of their work. Skills not



Ian Everest.



The Three Crowns Ramblers.

learnt at school or college, but passed down to them by their forbears. A thoroughly interesting and informative talk.



Sackville College - The Great Hall.

In July, twenty-nine members and one guest met at Sackville College in East Grinstead for a tour. Sackville College is a Jacobean Almshouse founded by Robert Sackville in 1609 and is still in use as an Almshouse today. In 1609, the will of Robert Sackville, Earl of Dorset, provided a sum of money with which to buy land and “build a convenient house of brick and stone” to be used as an Almshouse. The heads of the Sackville family have been Patrons of the College throughout its history. The present Patron being the 11th Earl De La Warr.

On our tour we were shown the common room where residents used to cook meals, the Great Hall with its Minstrels’ Gallery and hammer beam roof, the Chapel with its carved door, and the study. The study is where the Victorian hymnologist, the Revd. Dr. John Mason Neale, Warden 1846-1866, wrote many well-known hymns and carols, including ‘Good King Wenceslas’ and ‘Jerusalem the Golden’. The College is a charitable foundation which operates according to an act of Parliament of 1624 and a Royal Charter of 1631. A thoroughly interesting tour which was followed by a drink and lunch at a nearby pub.

Eighteen members and guests plus a dog were blessed with a warm sunny September day for a 3.5 mile circular walk from The Green Man pub in Horsted Keynes. On the way we visited St Giles’ Church to see the grave of former Prime Minister Harold Macmillan and his family. The walk took us through some beautiful countryside and we also crossed over the Bluebell Railway. Sadly we only heard the steam trains. We arrived back at the pub two hours later for a thoroughly deserved lunch and a drink or two.



The Green Man Ramblers.

Sevenoaks Branch

Once again, Mike Hyde has produced an exciting programme of talks and music for our meetings at The Woodman, Otford with each event including a very tasty buffet and refreshments.



Ian Petrie and Ted Handley.

In April, twenty-seven members were pleased to welcome Ian Petrie and Ted Handley knowing they will give us some great tunes. Their combination of Irish, Scottish and English folk music are so well played; we can still marvel at an accordion sounding like a banjo, and the speed at which Ted's fingers move, and their challenge for us to dance a hornpipe as quickly as they played it was only aimed at failure. We concluded the evening (unfortunately we had to get them to draw to a close) in the best fashion – what better than Wild Rover followed by Irish Rover? Another great evening of music.

In May, twenty-two members heard Bob Ogley tell us the story of how he became and what he did as a reporter on a local newspaper. And what an amazing and adventurous life he related. He left school at 16, and started doing odd jobs for the Sevenoaks News; he soon graduated to being a local village reporter and then, at

17, an obituary writer. After progressing through all types of crime reporting, aged 21 he found himself as a journalist in Southern Rhodesia, which he

thought a wonderful country but at the time in the grip of apartheid; he got to know Ndabaningi Sithole and Robert Mugabe well. After being there for 2 years he decided to come home, by driving a Humber Hawk car northward. But he was thwarted by a flooded Nile.

Subsequently he worked for Tyne Tees television in Upper Norwood and interviewed many celebrities. He moved on to be deputy editor then editor of the Sevenoaks Chronicle, interviewing the Beatles at Knole Park in 1966. He also visited Newry during the troubles, saw the raising of the Mary Rose, and campaigned for the A21 centre barrier, and the Sevenoaks maternity home. The day after the 1987 great storm he had the foresight to hire a helicopter to take pictures of the devastation in Sevenoaks and around wider parts of Kent – no-one else did, and his photos became widely used, and a bestselling book for him. Later he wrote several books about the local area; his total currently is 21 books which



Bob Ogley.

include some best sellers. And all of this very interesting story was related to us with humour and humility.

Peter Snipp entertained twenty-one members in June. As well as singing, he talked us through his musical career, including why Matt Monro (he found that those songs, sung in the so-easy Monro style, suited his voice). Peter is a lyric baritone, and has been professionally trained, for a while alongside Bryn Terfel. He has sung at Glyndebourne, at the Colosseum for the English National Opera, and on many film tracks (including new releases Barbie and Willy Wonka). After seeing us on the Monday evening, he was due to be at Abbey Road for a recording session the following Friday.

A professional singer. And that was really apparent in his singing – a wonderful voice with a terrific range capable of a whole range of songs from Dean Martin to operatic. This evening he included Let There Be Love; Let's Face The Music And Dance; If I Ruled The World; Mack The Knife; That's Amore - and so many more. Peter has the best voice we have had the pleasure to listen to.



Peter Snipp.

Guy Bartlett appeared in July to present Operation Chastise to twenty-eight members. Operation Chastise is better known



Guy Bartlett.

as the Dambusters Raid. Guy gave much detail about the need for the raid, and the background to the development of the bouncing bomb. It was necessary in 1943 to strike a very significant blow on the German war machine by destroying their power source; most targets were out of range or too well defended, but the hydroelectric power stations of the Ruhr dams were thought possible. Barnes Wallis worked at Vickers in Brooklands to develop a four ton spherical bomb – but this was found to veer off line when dropped so the design changed to being a cylinder.

On 16th May 1943, 19 adapted Lancasters and their specially chosen crew took off from RAF Scanton. 8 of the aircraft were lost, 3 turned back, but 8 succeeded (although the Sorpe Dam was not breached). A major success, not only in causing so much damage to the power supply and thus the manufacturing abilities of the Germans, but also in drawing troops away from building their Atlantic defence wall. And another major success as a brilliant presentation to the Oddfellows!

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A return visit to The Woodman in September by Roger Resch and Bob Kenward, two members of the Tonbridge Folk Club, appearing as The Wealden Ramblers. As before, they sang a combination of better known and self-penned folk songs to seventeen members. Bob has a liking for writing songs with a very decided Kentish flavour to them. And both traditional and new songs proved to be very entertaining and 'sing-alongable'.



The Wealden Ramblers.

How Far Can Retro Go?

In May, as a last minute replacement, John Griffiths-Colby attended the Constitutional Club to speak to thirty-five members. John spoke about Retro – is it really a style or is it just recycling? How much of it can we digest when we remember it from the first time around and was it even new then? When it comes to fashion, what goes around, will come around again. Retro is often targeted at younger folk who were not there the first (or second) time. A young person wearing some flared trousers may be seen as 'being retro' but if an older person wore them then they would

just be seen as old! John spoke about music bands returning to vinyl to release new albums and the distinctive shape of a Coca-Cola bottle.

Retro is all about being nostalgic for the past and also gives a sense of familiarity. A very interesting and thought-provoking talk.



John Griffiths-Colby.

Join the conversation @OddfellowsUK

Share your news, start a conversation or simply stay up-to-date! If you're on Facebook or Twitter, make sure you've liked and followed our Oddfellows social media pages.

Find us at  OddfellowsTunbridgeWells  OddfellowsUK

Annual Movable Conference (AMC) 2023

In May, four delegates represented our Branch at the three day conference in Eastbourne. The delegates voted on behalf of the Branch membership regarding various rule changes and reported back to the Lodge at the June meeting in Tunbridge Wells. Left to right in the picture are Solveig Stanhope, Andrew Stanhope, Margaret Walisko, and Ruth Chambers. Next year the conference moves to Llandudno.



Delegates at AMC 2023.

The History of the Red Arrows Display Team

At the Constitutional Club in June, Guy Bartlett, an aviation historian whose father was in the RAF, spoke to forty-four members about the Red Arrows. He showed us some videos of their displays as well as the earlier display teams. The first RAF display team was formed in 1938 and flew Gloster Gladiators. By 1956 they were known as the Black Arrows and were flying Hawker Hunter aircraft. The Red Arrows as we now know them were formed in 1965 with only seven aircraft and performed in 65 shows that year. A year later they were performing with nine planes. Red Arrows pilots are amongst the most

highly-qualified and experienced within the Royal Air Force. During the display season the Red Arrows perform between 75 to 85 air displays and more than 100 fly-pasts. Each pilot is hand-picked and only a very few will be given the privilege of representing the RAF both in the UK and abroad. A fascinating insight into the greatest display team in the world.



Guy Bartlett.

Weald Branch

Once again, Mike Hyde has produced an exciting programme of music and talks for our meetings at The Cherry Tree, Ticehurst, with each event including a very tasty buffet and refreshments.

We had tried to book Side By Side several times, following their successful appearance at The Bull in May 2019. But finally we were successful in getting them to appear at The Cherry Tree in May to twenty-seven members and a guest.



Side by Side.

What a successful evening it proved to be. They played a whole range of well-known tunes - Jitterbug Boogie to Road To Hell, Crocodile Rock to Give Me Some Loving, Under The Moon Of Love to Proud Mary. The pub had been arranged for us such that we had a reasonable dance floor to use; and use it we did. And not just us – the landlord and landlady, some of the locals that were in at the time, and the wife of one of the band! It was a most enjoyable and successful evening. And even when the band had finished for the night, they decided to start up again for a rendition of River Deep, Mountain High. Thank you Malcolm, Ken and Mick (and Kim and Daryl).

In June Colin Harvey showed thirty-one members a film made by and about the people living on the Falkland Islands at the time of the 1982



Colin Harvey.

invasion. Starting with a view of island life for the population of nearly 2,000 before Argentina invaded them, much of the film was amateur photography filmed secretly at the time the Argentinians were present. It showed the first landing crafts arriving on 2nd April (after a warning of a possible invasion was largely ignored the day before as an April Fool). When it was acted on, the wrong beach was defended; increasing numbers from Argentina saw the 68 marines and 10 sailors present as the island's defence force hopelessly out numbered.

The invading force assumed they would be welcomed, but the Falklanders made it very clear they were not compliant at all – the radio station played 'strangers in the night'! One of the first impositions was to change from driving on the left to the right. The aggression from the invaders and the resistance tactics of the islanders stepped up very quickly to include some very nasty incidents.

The film showed the detailed involvements of many of the locals, all heroes, but some of whom did not survive, up to the point

of the island being restored to its pre-invasion state. It was a fascinating and very revealing film of about 90 minutes that gave a very different perspective on what we already knew about the Falklands War.

We were not sure what to expect from Rob Tompsett as his blurb had said 'vocal and ukulele-bashing entertainer'.

What twenty-three members got in July was such a good sing-along evening with Rob and his electric ukulele. He played so many golden oldies, known by all, but not heard so much now - Putting On The Style; These Boots Are Made For Walking; Halfway To Paradise; Lonesome Me, and so many more. And a rousing encore with Sweet Caroline and Amarillo finished the evening on a high. Here is an entertainer we will want to see much more of.



Rob Tompsett.

Joe Mendell spent an evening in August as the living embodiment of Bob Newhart, the famous (but now aged) American comedian and raconteur. Bob regaled twenty-three



Joe Mendell.

members of his background and some of his adventures; he then progressed to giving us some examples of his 'Button-down Mind' by relating a number of his best known sketches. We heard Walter Raleigh and Tobacco; The bomb disposal expert; Bus driver training; King Kong; In-flight instructions; Buying a house; and of course The driving instructor. And we all went home chuckling merrily.

Inter-District Quiz



Quiz winners.

In July, our Branch hosted the Quiz at St Wilfrid's church hall in Horley. Stephen from the Mitcham Branch devised some tricky questions for the 8 rounds of 10 questions. The rounds included general knowledge; words ending in 'ant'; pictures; music; and needlework. Out of the 7 teams (4 in each team) that took part, our Branch entered two teams. One of our teams won the quiz with 72 points with the runners-up only half a point behind! Our Branch will be hosting again in 2024.

Beacon Branch

Thanks to the efforts of Naz Mian, a number of varied events have again been organised for the Beacon Branch at the Crowborough Social Club. Each event included a very delicious buffet and refreshments.



Shine.

In May, twenty-eight members (plus Oddity, still wearing his Coronation outfit!) enjoyed a great evening of popular music played by one of our regular guest bands Shine. The band played a wide variety of songs, mostly made famous by such artists as The Pretenders (Brass in Pocket), Traveling Wilburys (Handle Me With Care), Eric Clapton (Lay Down Sally), Dire Straits (Sultans Of Swing) and The Rolling Stones (The Last Time). They even included a song written by their lead guitarist titled Someday Soon. Everyone present thoroughly enjoyed listening to them, with quite a few members getting up to dance.

On a hot evening in June, the Moxie Dolls (previously known as the Saturnalia Sisters) entertained thirty-nine members. They took us back in time to the songs of yesteryear with their glamorous vintage sound and ambience. They sang songs

such as Hold Tight; Don't Sit Under The Apple Tree; and It's Too Darn Hot. After the break they sang some more modern songs in their own style such as I Will Survive; Diamonds Are Forever; and Oops I Did It Again! Several members got up to dance to the music.



The Moxie Dolls.



Unstable Cliffs.

In July, fifty-four members and a guest were entertained by Unstable Cliffs – a two man band from Bexhill. An excellent evening, where the duo played a wide variety of music (Country, Blues and Rock), much of it familiar and 'sing along' as well as being danceable. They also played quite a few songs not familiar to the majority but it was good to not always have just the same old songs every time! A

lovely evening with many members taking to the dance floor.

On a very wet evening in August, thirty-seven members turned up at the Crowborough Social Club. Unfortunately no petanque was possible due to the rain. However, a lovely BBQ was laid on indoors by Nick who provided pulled pork, spicy chicken and steak with lots of salad and potatoes and French bread. A baked cheesecake was offered for dessert. A lovely evening with lots of conversation and catching up.



Nick with chef Oddity.

A great evening was had with the Heartbeats in September. Fifty-seven members along with two guests from Norway attended. There was a lot of dancing to music from The Beatles and The Monkees to Dean Martin and Ray Charles. Some banter as usual from Kevin of the Heartbeats. Everybody had a super time.



Heartbeats.

A Lifetime of Service

In July, Dean Caston (a last minute replacement) spoke to thirty-three members at the Constitutional Club about Queen Elizabeth II – A Lifetime of Service.



Dean Caston.

He used audio clips and videos as well as pictures of the Queen during his presentation. Dean is a lifelong royalist and has camped out on The Mall and outside St Paul's cathedral to witness many key moments in the monarch's life and therefore some of the photos were his own. He began by playing an audio clip of the vow that the Queen made on her 21st Birthday and kept until the end of her life. He spoke about her great sense of humour and fun, as well as her fashion. He ended with a year in the life of a Monarch from the Commonwealth Day Service to the Maundy Thursday Service; the Chelsea Flower Show to Royal Ascot and Balmoral. A thoroughly interesting talk about our late Queen.

Bexhill and Hastings Branch

Huge thanks to Margaret Walisko for organising an exciting programme of talks for the Bexhill and Hastings Branch at the RAFA Albatross Club. Each talk was followed by a buffet lunch and refreshments provided by the Lodge.

In April, twenty-seven members enjoyed a fascinating talk by Andy Dinsdale entitled Plastic – An Inconvenient Convenience.

Andy is a member of an organisation called Strandline that monitors environmental pollution in the Hastings, Bexhill and Rother area. He started with a brief history of plastic since its first use as a replacement for ivory to make billiard balls in the Victorian era, through to today's "throw-away" consumerism. Andy explained that today almost 90% of items shipped around the world in massive container ships (as many as 20,000 items per ship) are made of, or encased in, one or more type of plastic. With up to 4,000 containers being 'lost' at sea each year – there is a huge downside in that plastics are not bio-degradable and so almost impossible to get rid of!

Since 2005, Strandline have carried out over 400 beach and river surveys of rubbish washed up in the Rother District



Andy Dinsdale.

at places such as Pett Level, Bexhill and Camber. Volunteers have collected masses of the waste and produced data of the type of things found. Exhibitions of collected items have been staged in places like Rye, to show local people just what is turning up.

Andy also stated that the most common route for things to enter the ocean is via domestic drains. A particular cause for concern is what is known as "micro-plastics" – tiny plastic beads almost invisible to the eye, which are used in the manufacture of many things, including facial creams, toothpaste and so on. These tiny beads get into the food chain and cause untold damage to wildlife. Research is under way to try to find suitable alternatives. A very eye-opening talk!

In May, thirty members and a guest gathered to enjoy a very informative talk on the Wildlife of East Sussex given by Ian Rumley-Dawson. He illustrated his talk with many superb slides showing many aspects of wildlife in the county. His talk concentrated largely on reserves at Rye Harbour, Pett Level and Filsham reed beds near Bexhill, also Ford Wood Reserve. Among the



Ian Rumley-Dawson.

many birds covered in the talk were both resident species and those that migrate via Sussex, some flying south from the Arctic to overwinter here, while others migrate north from Africa to breed in Britain. Species mentioned included redshank, little tern, oystercatcher, dunlin, knot and curlew.

As well as birds, Ian shared a lot of information about plants such as red valerian, lady's smock and sea pea and, of course, bluebells. Among the trees he showed the audience were common beech (together with splendid crops of beech tuft fungi), hawthorn, elderberry and turkey oak. The last is a fairly rare tree but grows in abundance on the old battlefield at Battle. In all, some 4,000 species of wild flowers and plants, and about 10,000 species of fungi can be found in Sussex. This along with the many species of birds and insects makes the county a great location for those interested in all forms of wildlife. A very interesting talk which made us all want to visit our local nature reserves.

In June, twenty-four members and one guest listened to David Hatherell, a volunteer at the Bexhill Museum, talk about the life and works of Spike Milligan.

Spike was born Terence Alan Milligan on April 16th 1918 in India where his Irish father was serving in the British Army.



David Hatherell.

They moved to England in 1931 where Spike did his own military training while billeted in Bexhill from 1940 to 1943. He later served in North Africa, where he met Harry Secombe, later to co-star with him, Michael Bentine and Peter Sellers in BBC radio's *The Goon Show*. Spike was badly affected by his experiences of the horrors of the battle of Monte Cassino in Italy.

The talk gave us an insight into a multi-faceted man – a comedian, actor, poet, musician, father and writer. Beneath the comic was a caring, sensitive, human being who tried to make humanity aware of the disasters it builds for itself through his work. A thoroughly entertaining talk.

In July, twenty-two members and one guest gathered to listen to Ken Brooks talk about the voyage of the steam yacht *Sunbeam* in 1876 – 1877.



Ken Brooks.

The *Sunbeam*, launched in 1874, belonged to Sir Thomas Brassey, the son of a wealthy railway builder, and his wife Lady Anne Brassey. The Brasseys lived in a large house called Normanhurst Court at Catsfield, near Battle.

The family, including their four children, decided to sail their ship all around the world. Due to inclement weather they were unable to start from Hastings as

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intended, but set out from Chatham on 1st June 1876. The Sunbeam carried 80 tons of coal, enough for 20 days' steaming (though sails were used whenever the winds allowed), had six lifeboats and on the voyage carried a total of 43 passengers including the Brassey family and servants, as well as the crew.

Lady Brassey kept a journal of the voyage, which later formed the basis of a book about the journey, and it was upon this that Ken based his presentation. It records that at one point on their journey they learnt that the Sunbeam had been reported sunk, with loss of all hands, but fortunately this was not the case, the loss being of another sailing ship in that vicinity at the time!

On finally returning to Hastings, the family stayed briefly in the Queen's Hotel before returning home with crowds of people cheering them all the way from Hastings to Battle. A truly fascinating presentation.

In September, thirty-one members and three guests were entertained by Mel Rees, a popular raconteur who we have seen a number of times previously.

On this occasion Mel regaled us with stories from his own life, under the

title 'Much Ado About Something'. He started by recalling some incidents from his childhood in the 1950's in Battersea, South London, where his parents owned and ran a newsagents shop, which they lived above. Mel lived with his parents until he married in 1971, and he told us that his mother would bring him breakfast in bed every Saturday morning, climbing three flights of stairs to his room from the kitchen. She brought him his last such breakfast on the morning of his wedding day, with a tear in her eye that this was the last time.

Mel believes that humour is a very important part of life, especially when times are hard, as they were in the post-war years and have become again now. He had several light-hearted tales to tell, including the observation that some people, when shopping, will always wish to be seen with carrier bags from the more upmarket supermarkets – M&S, Waitrose – and won't carry Tesco and Aldi bags in case people think they are hard up! As he ages he finds himself turning into Victor Meldrew (One Foot In The Grave), and finds he and his wife no longer wish to keep up with the news – instead of the BBC they now only watch Talking Pictures TV!

Mel explained that this year is the last that he will be giving talks as he will be retiring in March 2024. We wished him well for his retirement!



Mel Rees.

Sir Christopher Wren

Popular speaker Ian Bevan returned to the Constitutional Club in August to give forty-one members a very interesting presentation on the life and work of Sir Christopher Wren, particularly in respect of his architectural designs for the rebuilding of so many of the London churches after the Great Fire of 1666, culminating in his masterpiece, St Paul's cathedral.



Ian Bevan.

This year is the 300th anniversary of Wren's death at the age of 90. As well as being a highly acclaimed architect, Wren was also an astronomer, scientist and mathematician. Ian went on to explain that the Great Fire of London destroyed four-fifths of the City along with 89 churches. Wren was responsible for the rebuilding of 51 churches with 23 of those churches still standing today – the rest were removed or destroyed by the Victorians and the Blitz. Ian explained the various architectural features of these churches and where you can find them. A very interesting talk.

Quiz Night



Derek presenting Jack with the Branch Cup.

In September, the annual quiz was held at the Constitutional Club with thirty-seven members in attendance. Derek Fickling, our Quiz-master, had devised fifty tricky multiple-choice questions from topics such as film and television, history, geography and sport.

Questions included 'Which Italian city is served by Marco Polo airport?' a – Turin, b – Trieste or c – Venice? Answer is c.

The winner of the Branch Cup was Jack Griffin with 37 points. Second was Andrew Wallis with 34 and third was Rod Page with 33 points. Everyone thanked Derek for an entertaining and challenging quiz.

Meet the Grand Master

Vale of York Oddfellows' Barbara Needham was officially welcomed as the Society's Grand Master (Chairman) during the annual conference in May, a position she'll hold for two years.



The oldest of five in a close family, at weekends they would often travel around Yorkshire and go camping. It was during these trips she met Peter, a member of the Oddfellows since birth who would go on to become Grand Master himself.

Barbara joined the Oddfellows' Good Samaritan Lodge in Goole when she married Peter in 1973. "It was all arranged within four weeks," she said. "Nothing like the expensive events that happen today!"

"I borrowed my sister-in-law's wedding dress. Peter got a new suit. We catered ourselves in the local village hall. I think the wedding cost us £14, which is all you had to pay for the licence, and then we went away camping for our honeymoon."

Barbara and Peter would later welcome daughter Claire into the world, herself an Oddfellow, who would go on to have a successful accountancy career.

Barbara's career was in primary education, most notably a 30-year stint at a school

in Broughton where she ultimately became Head Teacher.

"It was something that I'd always wanted to do ever since I went to school. I never wanted to do anything else," Barbara said.

Despite representing the Society in a variety of roles, Barbara says that never in her wildest dreams did she anticipate becoming Grand Master.

"It's a great honour because you're just a custodian," she said. "Although you wear the chain and you're the figurehead, that's not what makes you an Oddfellow. What makes you an Oddfellow is what's in your heart."

"I just want to do my best, because the ethos of Oddfellows is what we should all live by. The whole world would be a better place if people looked after each other."

Find out all the ways you can get involved in the Society by visiting
www.oddfellows.co.uk/society-involvement



Barbara Needham (middle right) with daughter Claire (left), husband Peter (middle left) and sister Vivienne (right).

Help with Lasting Power of Attorneys

Arranging a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) can seem daunting, so our Head of Care and Welfare, John Aitken (pictured right), has answered some frequently asked questions about them.



What is an LPA?

There are two types and you can do one or both:

A property and financial affairs LPA covers decisions about money matters, for example buying and selling property, dealing with bills and running bank accounts. You can start using this at any time.

A health and welfare LPA covers decisions about health and care matters including medical treatment, where someone should live and who they should have contact with. This can only be used once the person has lost capacity.

What is 'losing capacity'?

This means no longer having the understanding or mental faculties to make decisions. Once someone loses capacity it is too late to set up a Power of Attorney. If this were to happen, family members would need to apply to the Court of Protection to take control of their assets and finances, which can be a lengthy and costly process.

How do LPAs work?

The person making the application is the 'donor' and can give power to an 'attorney' to make decisions and take actions on their behalf.

The donor can choose multiple attorneys and specify which decisions they can make. If there is more than one attorney, the donor can specify whether they can act alone or must make decisions together.

The LPA must be signed either by a solicitor or someone else of the donor's choosing to certify the LPA and confirm that they understand and have not been pressured into it.

Family members can't do an LPA for someone. Like a will, people must do it for themselves with no coercion.

How much does it cost?

It costs £82 to register each type of LPA (so £164 in total) with the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG). People on means-tested benefits or a low income can get an exemption or reduction of this fee. If you choose to use a solicitor, their costs will need to be added.

For more advice on LPAs, including how to make an application and links to relevant websites, go to www.oddfellows.co.uk/news/help-with-lasting-power-of-attorneys



Thanks for filling your September with friendship!

Jane Nelson, the Oddfellows' CEO, has reflected on another successful Friendship Month:

"Wow, what a brilliant Friendship Month we had! All our Branches have worked extremely hard to make each and every one of near 250 special taster events a great success.

"Be it coffee mornings, music events, walks, meals or games, we've loved seeing

the happy, smiling faces of people enjoying the benefits of friendship.

"To everybody who attended, hosted or volunteered at our Branches' Friendship Month events this year, I'd like to say a big THANK YOU! It's your hard work that ensures our continued success."

Take a look at some of the fun that's been had by some of our Branches!



Brighton and Sussex members enjoying a coffee morning.



Dog race night at Dorset and Yeovil.



Mitcham, Reigate and Crawley friends keeping cool from the sunshine.



A friendly game of badminton in Mid-Surrey.



Delicious pancakes at a Handforth and Altrincham event.



Too many friends to fit in a frame at Ipswich.



Relishing friendship and fresh air on a walk in Nottingham Trent.

Oddfellows Members: Do you need help?



None of us know what is around the corner...

Local Care and Welfare Support

To request contact from a Welfare Visitor and for local help and information about Branch benefits and benevolence contact Karen on **01342 324980** or email **karen.rose@oddfellows.co.uk**

Oddfellows Citizens Advice Line

Call 0800 0149 821*

(free to callers from any landline or mobile number)

Monday - Friday, 9.30am - 4.30pm

Email: oddfellows@citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk



Run by Citizens Advice for Oddfellows members, you can access free, confidential, independent advice on welfare benefits, money and debt issues, consumer problems, housing, fuel bills, employment issues and many other issues.

*The Oddfellows cannot provide legal advice and accepts no liability whatsoever for advice provided by Citizens Advice, which is an independent advice agency. If you have any queries about the advice you have received or wish to make a complaint then you should contact Citizens Advice directly. Citizens Advice operate a formal complaints process.

Care and Welfare Helpline

Call 0800 0149 822

(free to callers from any landline or mobile number)

Monday to Thursday, 9.30am - 4.30pm, Friday, 9.30am - 4pm

Email: care@oddfellows.co.uk

Run by the Oddfellows Care and Welfare Department, you can access information and guidance on issues such as accessing health and care services, supported housing, support for carers, and planning for later life. The helpline will try and identify any Oddfellows benefits or services in the community which may be of help to you.

**Visit our website page at www.oddfellows.co.uk/benefits/care
for care and welfare information**

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The Oddfellows is the trading name of The Independent Order of Odd Fellows Manchester Unity Friendly Society Limited, incorporated and registered in England and Wales No. 223F.
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