



the
Oddfellows
making friends, helping people

SINCE 1810

Winter/Spring 2021

www.oddfellows.co.uk

Capital of the Fens News

News and views from your local friendship group

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We miss our afternoon teas which we have held around our District. Our photo shows us all enjoying afternoon tea at Baytree at Hilgay back in the time when we didn't have any restrictions. Let's hope it won't be too long before we can get together again.

A Warm Welcome

Hello Everyone

We are still in uncertain times and with the colder weather things are not so easy. We did manage some coffee mornings (with social distancing) at the Crown Lodge Hotel in Outwell and was well attended. I think everyone was pleased to see some different faces. Thank you to those who were able to support these coffee mornings.

As we haven't been able to meet up for our usual social activities, other

Branches, together with our Branch Development Officers have been arranging online events. If you are able to please give some of these a try. You will find some information further on in this newsletter on how to access these online events. Should you have any concerns or just want a chat, both Alison and I are available by phone and/or email.

**Maureen
Social Organiser**

Contact Details

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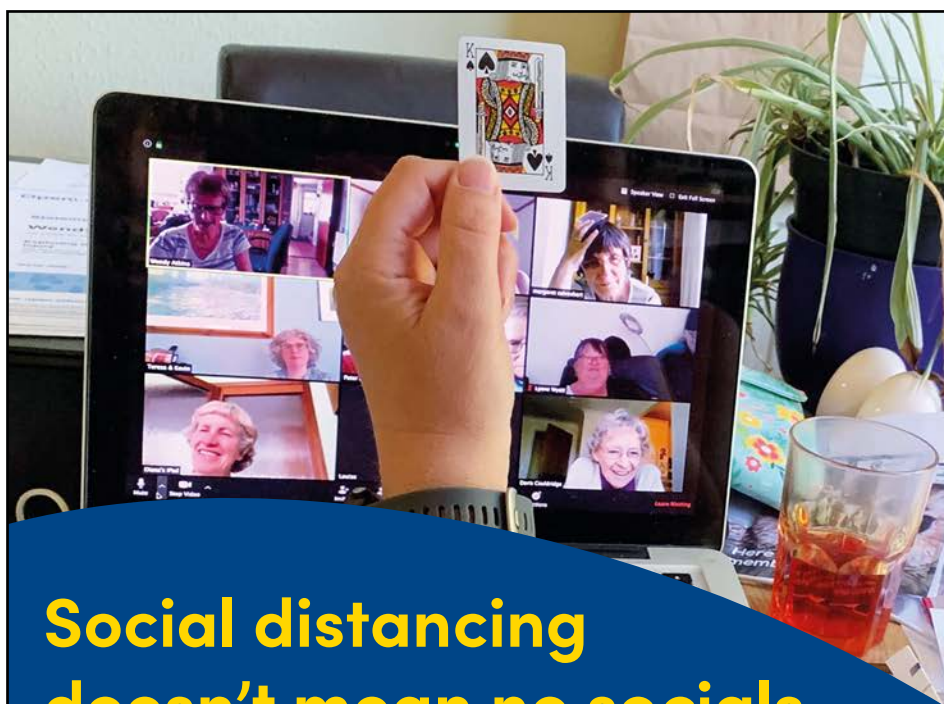
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War Memorials in Wisbech and Littleport

As our District stretches from Wisbech to Littleport we always arrange for our Oddfellows wreath to be laid in both towns. Michael Hill laid our wreath at Wisbech War Memorial on Armistice Day. Stewart Rogers laid our wreath on Remembrance Sunday at Littleport.

We used to have wreaths laid at both Outwell and Upwell War Memorials - would any of our members who live around here like to lay a wreath on the next Remembrance Sunday? We would like to hear from you.





Social distancing doesn't mean no socials...

One of the great things about the Oddfellows is sharing good times with friends.

Although we can't see each other face to face right now, we're doing lots of great stuff online.

Why not join in?

Visit www.oddfellows.co.uk/events/ to find out what's on this week or contact your local Branch.

If you type your local area it will also show online events available to you locally and across the country.

Is there someone you know who'd enjoy what we do?

Refer a friend today

To refer a friend, call Membership on **0800 028 1810**, or visit our Members' Area at www.oddfellows.co.uk or fill in the **Refer a Friend form** available from your Branch Secretary



*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

A Recipe You May Like To Try – They Don't Last Long In Our Household!

Oatie Biscuits

Ingredients

- 50g (2 oz) caster sugar
- 100g (4 oz) softened butter
- 100g (4 oz) porridge oats
- 50g (2 oz) plain flour

Method

1. Pre-heat oven to 160 °C/140 °C Fan/Gas Mark 3. Lightly grease two baking trays.
2. Measure the sugar and butter into a bowl and beat together to a creamy consistency. Add the oats and flour and work them into the mixture. Lightly knead the mixture until smooth and then roll out to a thickness of 5mm (¼ inch) on a lightly floured work surface.
3. Cut into rounds using a 6cm (2½ inch) plain cutter and place on the prepared baking trays. Bake in the pre-heated oven for about 20 minutes or until beginning to turn golden. Lift on to a wire rack to cool.

Note: I used a smaller cutter, so can cut them any size you wish.



About Stan Spinks – Our Deputy Provincial Grand Master

My name is Stanley Spinks and I am currently your Branch Deputy Provincial Grand Master (DPGM). Although I haven't been a member for very long I was soon interested in helping the Oddfellows, joining the Committee of Management and helping to organise social events.

I was born in Wisbech and resided outside, in the nearby village of Gorefield. At approximately 15 months old, my father became a tenant farmer on the Goosetree Estate (approximately three miles from Guyhirn). My siblings (five sisters – one of whom is my twin) and I all attended Coates County Primary School, and all but one of us then attended Secondary School at Whittlesey. Upon leaving school at 15, I worked for my father on a couple of occasions, and for a while managed a local sports and toy shop.

At the age of 21, I joined the Royal Air Force and trained as a storekeeper, where I remained for almost 26 years. Following training at RAF Hereford, I had UK tours at Wyton (Huntingdon), Leuchars (Scotland), Marham (Norfolk) twice, High Wycombe (Bucks) and Northwood (Middlesex). The latter two postings being in a headquarters role.

I had two overseas tours in Gibraltar and Germany of three and four years respectively. Short detachments included Cyprus, Hong Kong and the mandatory Falkland Islands (but not during the conflict). Although never really enjoying sport at school (for boys it was always football or cricket), I began playing badminton whilst at Wyton and subsequently enjoying all racket sports at every available opportunity thereon.

After leaving the RAF in 1999, I had a couple of agency jobs, but was then employed as Assistant Storekeeper at the local district council, gaining promotion to Head Storekeeper a couple of years later. I stayed in that role as we transferred to a housing association and subsequently to a builders' merchant until I retired in 2017.



Stan Spinks – Our Deputy Provincial Grand Master

Since my retirement, I have been kept (almost) fully occupied as a member of both the Wisbech in Bloom team (responsible for some of the flower beds and the numerous hanging baskets in the town), Street Pride (mainly litter picking and general tidying of neglected areas). I have been treasurer of the local branch of Save the Children since 2009, attending many local events trying to raise funds with the sales of bric-a-brac and tombolas.

Traditional Terms

Grand Master (GM): Chairman

Provincial Grand Master (Prov GM): District Chairman

Provincial Deputy Grand Master (Prov DGM):
District Deputy Chairman

Provincial Corresponding Secretary (Prov CS):
District Secretary – responsible for administering Branches

Immediate Past Provincial Grand Master (IPPGM):
Immediate Past District Chairman

Past Provincial Grand Master (PPGM): Past District Chairman

Lodge: Branch

Brother and Sister: Traditional term used in Unions, Guilds and Fraternal organisations to suggest mutual support and family

Big brand deals with Oddfellows Extra

From cinema tickets, holidays and new cars to food shopping, wine clubs and home insurance - Oddfellows Extra offers savings on many well-known brands and major retailers*



Members offers with our Oddfellows partners

***Terms and conditions apply, for more details please visit:**
www.oddfellows.co.uk/benefits/offers/



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 Alison on **01945 465909** or email **alison.adamson@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@manchestercab.org



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

100 years of the Oddfellows Orphan Gift Fund

First established in 1919, following significant losses experienced by members after WWI, our designated aid set up to support Young Oddfellows who have lost their parents marks its 100th year. The initial proposal for the designated fund stated: "The whole nation rejoices at the victorious end of a war which has entailed heavy scarifies on the part of the whole people, and the most heroic effort by the best and bravest of our manhood, and in what worthier manner can we build a memorial as a thank-offering for victory than by undertaking responsibility for the care and up-bringing of the orphans of our members?"

Support for the fund was overwhelming, and after just one year following the initial proposal, the fund had received £1,850, with a further £4,000 promised. In today's values, this would be the equivalent of just over £232,000! Now in 2021, one hundred years on from the launch of the Orphan Gift

Fund, there have been a huge number of changes to the Society as a whole, but there continues to be a need for support to help these children thrive. The fund is revised regularly to ensure recipients' needs are met, whether it's funding towards school uniforms, travel cards, musical instruments or school trips, as well as providing regular financial support.

The Orphan Gift Fund is available as a benefit of membership from day one and any child whose parents have been lost through death or desertion is eligible for support. There are currently 55 children or young adults receiving help and the Society continues to honour its members. In 2019, the fund made grants totalling £39,764. How to make an Orphan Gift Fund claim: The first step is to speak with your or the member's Branch Secretary, who will discuss available support and how to make an application. Would you like to donate to the Orphan Gift Fund?

Alison, Our Branch Secretary's Personal Experience

"My brother, Richard, sadly died in October 2011 leaving a wife and five children, three of whom were still at school and college. My sister-in-law receives a quarterly grant for these three children for school uniforms, bus fares to and from school and college. Also any books that they required. This grant will continue until all three children have finished their education. This has been a great comfort to my sister-in-law knowing that it is one thing less to worry about."

Oddfellows spirit shines throughout Friendship Month 2020

Friendship Month looked very different this year, with many of our events held online, or restricted to a maximum of six people meeting face-to-face. However, we couldn't be more proud of the way that the Oddfellows spirit shone through, as we once again celebrated the power of friendship.

We saw Branches organising COVID-secure walks and outdoor picnics, making the most of the last bit of sunshine.

Lots of Branches also turned their hands to organising virtual events, Zooming across the country to link up with members and guests all over the UK! We've picked out a selection of our favourite pictures from September, to share with you a little warmth and happiness during these cold and difficult days.

We know how important face-to-face events are to our members and as soon as Branches are able to safely hold these again, we will let you know.

ODDFELLOWS FRIENDSHIP MONTH 1 - 30 SEPTEMBER



If you have any pictures from an Oddfellows event that you'd like to share with us, feel free to tag us in them on Facebook! We're at

www.facebook.com/OddfellowsUK



Ipswich Oddfellows celebrate the launch of a new Friendly Bench, Boston and Lincoln Oddfellows plant some seeds of friendship with their potted plants, Derbyshire Peak Oddfellows host a picnic in the park, Stockport and Combermere Oddfellows network with a Zoom guest talk from local radio stars and Bradford Oddfellows enjoy a stroll along the canal.

A year like no other...

2020 has been a year unlike any I've experienced before. In March, we entered our first lockdown. Among many others, it placed restrictions on how we could spend time with friends and family, make visits to loved ones in hospitals and care homes, and even how we all earn our living.

Most devastatingly, many people were held back from saying a proper, supported farewell to those friends and family members who passed. My heart goes out to anyone who has lost someone special in the recent months. I know from personal experience how difficult it is, so if you need any comfort or help please remember to lean on us.

Coming together

It's human nature to come together in a time of crisis – to squeeze a hand, to offer a shoulder to cry on, to hug, or to simply sit side-by-side. However, despite it all, we are finding ways around things, as best we can. Nothing will ever stop us resourceful Oddfellows from giving comfort and support to each other and those in desperate need. This year, I've witnessed compassion and human kindness on a scale I've never known within the Society before, and this has really lifted me on my difficult days.

Being there for each other

I hope that if you needed help this year, you received it. I know that the staff and volunteers in our Branches have worked flat out to make sure members know they have someone to turn to. They've made thousands of calls and sent thousands of emails to check in with members and see if any help is needed. This has meant that many members were able to access critical food and medical supplies, as well as financial and emotional support. So, if anything is troubling you, please make sure you get in touch.

Keeping spirits lifted

I've seen some incredible innovation to keep spirits lifted and people connected. We'd only hosted a few online events here and there before 2020, but we're now broadcasting talks, quizzes, and even fitness sessions, straight into people's

front rooms almost daily. I know online events won't ever replace getting together in person, but they're a wonderful way to make sure we can still keep in touch, safely. I do hope you try one if you haven't already. I've also been kept in the loop on so many unexpected acts of kindness from members and Branches, such as quizzes and puzzles being posted through letterboxes, and afternoon tea hampers and flowers being dropped off on members' doorsteps. Such small gestures make a huge difference to people, so if there is anything you can do to keep this going, then please do. Kindness is infectious.

Helping others

Oddfellows have always looked further than their own front door when it comes to charitable giving, and this year was no exception. In spring, a nationwide appeal to raise critical funds for The Silver Line and the National Emergencies Trust resulted in a donation of £19,210. It helped some of those hardest hit by the coronavirus pandemic. £7,600 was also raised and sent overseas to help Australian people to rebuild their lives following the 2019/2020 bushfires.

We know there have been countless other examples of charitable giving made by members and Branches this year, so thank you for helping where you can, and being wonderful ambassadors for our Society. I would also like to give a special mention to this year's four Making a Difference Award winners, members Margaret Wells, Barry Bedford, Bruce Nicole and our youngest to date, seven-year-old Effie Bowman. Our Society is powered by the hard work and selflessness of such wonderful members. Huge congratulations to them and all who were nominated. Shortlisting these awards is such a difficult task, but it's an absolute joy to know that we have so many members out there living and breathing our motto of friendship, love and truth.

A truly special family

Looking forward to 2021, please try and stay positive. We have news of a vaccine, and therefore hope that we can be back together again, and that we can resume our daily lives with less fear, difficulty and uncertainty.



I've always known this, but the events of 2020 have confirmed just how caring, supportive, generous, friendly, and resourceful our Oddfellows family is. I am immensely proud to be a member of something so incredibly special and purposeful. I do hope you feel the same. Please accept my very warmest wishes for a happy and healthy Christmas and New Year. Until we're all able to meet together freely again, let's stay in touch. We're always here if you need us.

Take care, stay safe and stay well.
Yours always in friendship,

Jane Nelson
CEO, the Oddfellows

**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.**

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🐦 OddfellowsUK

Lupus research pushes through pandemic

2020 has seen our second instalment of the HA Andrews Memorial Fund given to the research team at the Lupus Trust. The £28,000 donation supports the day to day running of the team, which includes Bekki Velounias, who is currently working towards completing her PhD through her research with the Lupus Trust.

The team is looking into what causes the breakdown of certain cells, triggering the autoimmune reaction in lupus. Throughout lockdown, the team managed to avoid too many significant setbacks, working in the lab when they could, and analysing huge datasets when national lockdown was enforced.



Professor Jo Spencer with Bekki Velounias and our very large cheque!



Member of Ware Branch, Paul, has lupus and inspired our decision to support the Lupus Trust over 3 years.

Professor Jo Spencer, from the Lupus Trust, says, "Bekki has been a fantastic addition to the research team, and her commitment to pushing forward with work throughout lockdown has been commendable. We're pleased with how the research is progressing in the face of so many difficulties."

Jane Nelson, CEO of the Oddfellows, says, "We're so pleased to hear that the research has been able to move forward despite social restrictions. It's been a difficult year for many, and this research is needed more than ever."

If you would like to find out more about the HA Andrews Memorial Fund, please visit the 'Giving Back' section of our website.



Why not become an Oddfellows pen pal friend?

With so many of us staying safe in our homes, how would you like to write a letter to another member and become a Penfellow? If the answer is yes, get in touch.

Contact Alison on
01945 465909 or
alison.adamson@oddfellows.co.uk

Save The Date (postponed from autumn 2020)

Sunday 21 March 2021, Our District Annual Lunch at Crown Lodge Hotel, Outwell

Sunday 18 April 2021, EAGC President's Reception and Lunch at Orton Hall Hotel, Peterborough

Full details will be sent out to everyone nearer the time. Both will be subject to Government Covid-19 guidelines at the time.

Our social events meet the current COVID-19 Secure guidelines

We're doing all we can to make our meet-ups as safe and as comfortable as possible, because staying connected matters. If you're in need of company, you're more than welcome to come along and join us in person or online.



www.oddfellows.co.uk/events

Front cover image of The Well Creek on the Outwell/Upwell border by Richard Humphrey Attribution-ShareAlike 2.0 Generic (CC BY-SA 2.0)

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