

November 2025 - January 2026



out & about

North London District



History



Art/Crafts



Online



Dining Out



Walks



Games



Day Trip



Meetings



Social



Talks



Coffee Morning/
Afternoon Tea



Quiz



Welcome to the new edition of Out & About, incorporating Cultured Comments, the Magazine of North London District

Bob Sinfield – our new columnist

We welcome a new regular contributor to our pages. Bob Sinfield is well-known to many Oddfellows members having entertained them at local Branch events and via online Zooms.

Bob is an actor, author, presenter and raconteur. He has appeared at theatre festivals from Edinburgh to Brighton and written scripts for some of the best comedy performers of the last four decades, including Bob Monkhouse, Leslie Phillips, Tracey Ullman, Joan Sims, Stan Freberg and Rory Bremner. He writes for us from today.

Bob's new drama Peter Sellers At Sea premiered on Radio 4 Extra in September. It marks what would have been the star's 100th birthday.

Retirement

I am retiring from the post of District Event Organiser on 30 January 2026. I'd like to thank all the members that I have known since starting in 2009 for their friendship. Health and happiness to you all – and Carry on Oddfellowing!

Paul Fitton

Editor

Front cover: Jackie Lancaster's photo shows the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Albert Hall – one of our September Friendship Month events.

Paul Fitton's photo shows happy members at our Trafalgar Square tour in August.

A bit about us...

The Oddfellows is a not-for-profit friendly society that's been around for over 200 years. Our aim is to bring people together through our social events, as well as support our members with a range of benefits and services. The Society is run by our members for the members. For more information visit www.oddfellows.co.uk or call 0800 028 1810 to speak to one of our team.

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Magazine Editor: Paul Fitton: see left

**You are invited to send letters,
contributions and photos for the
magazine by the deadline of Friday
2 January 2026 to Paul Fitton.**

November 2025

TUES
04

Family History Help and Tutorial



2pm



Free



Online



Paul Fitton shows how you can best use resources for tracing 17th and 18th century ancestors in this month's family history presentation. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.



WED
05

Eat Out at Larkswood Harvester



12 noon



£ Two courses £12.99, Three courses £14.99

Feast on mouthwatering rotisserie chicken or tuck into full-of-flavour dishes straight from the grill, all alongside fresh, unlimited salad with vegetarian and vegan options. Book by Tuesday 4 November 2025. Larkswood Harvester, Unit 5 Larkswood Leisure Park, 175 New Road, Chingford, London E4 9EY. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).



November 2025

THURS
06

Drinks and Nibbles at Warren Street



5.45pm



Members £5
Guests £10



To celebrate bonfire night, we will be having some warm soup and rolls with our drinks!



Please note the earlier start time of 5.45pm. Duchess House, 18-19 Warren Street (entrance first door on the left on Grafton Mews), London W1G 9AB. Please let Jackie know on 07788 418267 if you would like to come along at least three days in advance so that she knows how many people to cater for.

FRI
07

Transported to Australia Talk and Rhiannon Rees' Moonlight Walk Talk



2pm



Free



John Silver was a young Suffolk man who was suddenly transported to Australia for housebreaking in 1834. Hear about his life in Suffolk, Tasmania and Melbourne and how he 'lives on' today in Paul Fitton's presentation about his relative. Rhiannon Rees completed the September 10km Thames Moonlight Walk. A challenge in which participants see London's landmarks in a different light. Rhiannon will share a poem that she has written to share her remarkable experience. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.

FRI
07

Songs from Stage and Screen



1.15pm



Free



Step out of the busy streets of Covent Garden into the beautiful Actors' Church for a free lunchtime concert celebrating the magic of stage and screen. Featuring a mix of favourites from Les Mis, Prince Of Egypt, Sound Of Music, West Side Story, Wicked, Lord Of The Rings, Gladiator, Cinderella and more. Please book your ticket early - limited availability. St Paul's Church, Bedford Street, London WC2E 9ED. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).



November 2025

TUES
11

Art Unscrewed



4pm



Free



Online



Our monthly paintalong with Dulcie Rowe continues. On this occasion, we are painting Beach Huts. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.



FRI
14

Early Explorers in Australia



2pm



Free



Online



The Burke and Wills expedition was an 1860–61 attempt to cross Australia. Led by Robert O'Hara Burke and William John Wills, the team successfully reached the Gulf of Carpentaria. However, their return was plagued by misfortune, leading to the deaths of Burke and Wills from starvation and thirst, a tragic end to an ambitious journey. Ian Hutt gives another informative presentation. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.

THURS
13

Strolling through Korean Gardens and a Meal at Little Korea



11am



Free, Meal £12 to £20



An exhibition that reimagines Korea's rich garden heritage through large-scale digital projections, immersive soundscapes and multisensory environments, the exhibition brings to life celebrated gardens such as Soswaewon, Bokido and the Secret Garden of Changdeokgung Palace. The exhibition presents the Korean garden not only as a historical legacy, but also as a living source of artistic and philosophical inspiration, offering a rare pause in the flow of daily life, inviting visitors to reflect on where nature and art meet. A short walk afterwards takes us to Little Korea, for lunch. Book by Wednesday 12 November 2025. Korean Cultural Centre UK, Northumberland Avenue, London WC2N 5BW Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).



November 2025

THURS
20

Quilling - Ancient and Modern



2pm



Free



Quilling - aka paper filigree, paper scrollwork, rolled paper - is a very old paper craft dating from around the 17th Century, when it was used to decorate religious artefacts and other objects. Today



it is popular as a decorative medium for greetings cards, pictures and such more. Cathy Russell has been quilling for almost 40 years having bought a quilling kit at a craft fair. She is an accredited member of The Quilling Guild (UK), having met the high standards required to achieve this. She will explain some of the history of quilling followed by a demonstration of modern quilling and its uses today! She creates pictures, greetings cards, Christmas tree ornaments and uses quilling to decorate a variety of other objects as inspiration takes hold! Enfield Baptist Church, Cecil Road, Enfield EN2 6TG. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).

FRI
21

Double Bill: The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World and The World's Shortest Ever War



2pm



Free



Online



Ian Hutt gives the first presentation. We probably all know several of the ancient wonders of the world. Do you know how many still exist today and what happened to the others? All will be explained! This is followed by Paul Fitton describing the complete story of the world's shortest ever war, the Anglo-Zanzibar war of 27 August 1896 - from 9am to 9.38am to be precise. (Will the presentation be longer!). Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 2 for details) for a direct link.

FRI
28

The Perfect Playground



Michael Gilbert returns to give part three of his Crystal Palace trilogy - The



Perfect Playground. It covers the history of the Crystal Palace leading up to its destruction by fire in 1936. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.

December

TUES
02

Family History Help and Tutorial



2pm



Free



Online



This month's family history guide talk shows the useful information that you can gain from inquest records. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.

FRI
05

Marriage Through The Ages



2pm



Free



Online



Paul Fitton's presentation takes in marriage from its earliest days over 4,000 years ago, through medieval times to the present day. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.

THURS
04

Christmas Meal in Enfield



1pm



Two courses £24.25, Three courses £28.75



Members in and around Enfield may join us for a festive dinner at The Cricketers. This north London village pub is decorated inside and out with cricketing paraphernalia and memorabilia.



A £5 deposit is required. You will be advised of menu choices, which must be selected in advance. Book by Thursday 20 November 2025. The Cricketers, Chase Side Place, Enfield EN2 6QA. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).

Booking and cancellations

Please remember the importance of early booking for all events to avoid disappointment or cancellation due to lack of support. Please note that a place is not guaranteed at any event until full payment has been received.

December

MON
08

Railway 200 Exhibition



1.15pm



Free



The Travelling Railway 200 Exhibition Train is returning to London in December and we are offering you the opportunity to visit with other members. Inspiration comprises four train carriages, spanning the past, present and future of the railways in its 200th anniversary year. Rail's history is explored in a 'Railway Firsts' coach, highlighting landmark moments in rail's development. Alongside will be a 'Wonderlab on Wheels', inviting visitors to test their engineering skills with hands-on exhibits.



Next is the 'Your Railway Future' carriage, which showcases some of the lesser-known roles in rail and encourages people to join the railway to shape the next 200 years. The final coach is a 'Partner Zone', offering an exhibition space. We will finish with a meal nearby - cost as per menu. Book early to receive full details. Limited ticket availability. If you can't make this date, we are also visiting the exhibition at Victoria Station later this month. Book by Friday 5 December 2025. Paddington Station, Praed Street, London W2 1HQ. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).

THURS
11

Festive Drinks and Nibbles at Warren Street



5.45pm



Members £7, Guests £15



Join us to celebrate the festive season with some fizz, canapes and mince pies (other drinks also available as usual). Please note the start time is now 5.45pm. Email Jackie to book your place at this event at least three days in advance please.

We look forward to seeing you! Book by Monday 8 December 2025. Duchess House, 18-19 Warren Street (entrance first door on the left on Grafton Mews), London W1G 9AB. Contact Jackie on 07788 418267.

December

FRI
12

Greenwich Park - The Queen's Favourite



2pm



Free



Greenwich Park is the oldest Royal Park and teeming with history. Why was it so popular with Queens of England? How did Greenwich come to be the centre of the world with its iconic Royal Observatory? Tudors, giant steps, anarchists, French gardeners and Canadian history all feature in its 600 year history. Chris Hawkins returns following his Lesnes Abbey presentation in September. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.

TUES
16

Art Unscrewed



4pm



Free



Join regular instructor Dulcie Rowe as she guides us as we paint Highland Cow. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.



THURS
18

Sing Along Christmas Carols at Lauderdale House



5.30pm



Free



Wrap up warm, bring a torch or lantern and come and join us in this festive sing along outside, on the tea lawn of Lauderdale House. We will sing through seasonal favourites with the help of professional singers and the resident pianist, accompanied by mulled wine and mince pies (which you can buy at the café). This is an outdoor event and chairs will be provided. It's your responsibility to wrap up warm - lots of layers are advisable!

Lauderdale House has asked that we bring a lantern or torch, if we have one, to help light up the tea lawn! The singing starts at 6pm, but please get there at 5.30pm when the doors open, so that we can get our seats all together and you have time to get your mulled wine! Buses stop outside Lauderdale House, which you can get from Archway Tube or Golders Green. Limited tickets will be given on a first come, first served basis - book by emailing Jackie. Lauderdale House, Waterlow Park, Highgate Hill N6 5HG. Contact Jackie on 07788 418267.

December

FRI
19

Railway 200 Exhibition



12.30pm



Free



The Travelling Railway 200 Exhibition Train is returning to London in December and we are offering you the opportunity to visit with other members. Inspiration comprises four



train carriages, spanning the past, present and future of the railways in its 200th anniversary year. Rail's history is explored in a 'Railway Firsts' coach, highlighting landmark moments in rail's development. Alongside will be a 'Wonderlab on Wheels', inviting visitors to test their engineering skills with hands-on exhibits.

Next is the 'Your Railway Future' carriage, which showcases some of the lesser-known roles in rail and encourages people to join the railway to shape the next 200 years. The final coach is a 'Partner Zone', offering an exhibition space. We will finish with a meal nearby – cost as per menu. Book early to receive full details. Limited ticket availability. If you can't make this date, we are also visiting the exhibition at Paddington Station earlier this month. Book by Thursday 18 December 2025. Victoria Station, Victoria Street, London SW1 1JU. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).

FRI
19

It's Chrissmaaaaa! Online Christmas Party!



2pm



Free



Join an online Christmas party. Bring your own food, drink and party streamers. Look out for Father Christmas squeezing down the chimney as you enjoy Christmas themed fun and frolics with your Oddfellows friends. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.

January 2026

TUES
06

Family History Help and Tutorial: My Family and other Famous People and how to find out more



2pm



Free



Paul Fitton tells the story about the lives of his ancestors and advises you how to discover your ancestor's interests and pastimes. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.

January 2026

THURS
08

Drinks and Nibbles at Warren Street



5.45pm



Members £5
Guests £10



The first Warren Street get together of 2026! We will have the usual wine on offer and also lots of soft drinks for those doing 'dry January!' Please note the start time is now 5.45pm. Duchess House, 18-19 Warren Street (entrance first door on the left on Grafton Mews), London W1G 9AB. Please book with Jackie on 07788 418267 if you would like to come along.

FRI
09

The Life of a Cotton Mill Worker



2pm



Free



What was life like for cotton mill workers 200 years ago? The Industrial Revolution changed the lives of thousands of people. Discover how their lives were affected in Paul Fitton's presentation. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.



THURS
15

Oddfellows Membership Benefits - More than just Optical and Dental!



2pm



Free



You may know about some of the Oddfellows' membership benefits, but there are many of them. You may have been able to use them to help when you needed them, but weren't aware that you could apply for help - financial or otherwise. Paul Fitton's talk takes in Convalescence, the Care Helpline, Legal Aid, Citizens Advice, Financial Aid and many more. We'll be playing a game to help them to stay in your memory. This will be followed by free light refreshments and general chat. Enfield Baptist Church, Cecil Road, Enfield EN2 6TG. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).

FRI
16

Two Firsts! Dixie Locke Talk and The Story of Laika - the First Dog in Space Talk



2pm



Free



Double Header! Dixie Locke was Elvis Presley's first love. This is a sweet tale of love between a couple of teenagers with their whole lives in front of them... and how things could have been. Paul Fitton's second presentation tells the story of how a stray dog in Moscow became the first earthling to enter space back in 1957. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.

January 2026

THURS
22

Lunchtime Concert at Holy Trinity Church



12.45pm



Free



Banish the winter blues with Kosmos Ensemble's Lunchtime Concert at Holy Trinity Church in Kensington. Part of Imperial College London's free lunchtime series, this trio will put a smile on your face. Music from several European cultures glides into hot-blooded tango and Asian melodies - described by the Times as 'telepathic rapport... and dazzling virtuosity'. The concert starts at 1pm and is a free event. Meet in the entrance just before 12.45pm, to ensure we get seats together. Holy Trinity Church, Prince Consort Road, London SW7 2BA. Please let Jackie know on 07788 418267 that you are coming along.



FRI
23

Wallington's Henry Codling



2pm



Free



Michelle Andrews tells the story of one of her distant ancestors, Henry Codling. You'll have a glimpse of his life as a carpenter/joiner on the Wallington



Estate, Northumberland in the 19th century. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.

TUES
27

Art Unscrewed



4pm



Free



At the end of our one hour session, you'll have painted Whisky Sour. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.



January 2026

**WED
28**

The London Silver Vaults and a Meal



11am



Free, Meal as
per menu



A visit to The London Silver Vaults is jaw-dropping! This hidden gem in central London is a centre of excellence and expertise, a magnet for royalty and celebrities. Familiar faces such as Mick Jagger, Princess Margaret, Liberace and Gregory Peck have visited. Don't worry, you don't have to buy! You can just 'window shop!'. Meet outside on Southampton Buildings and enjoy lunch locally afterwards. Book by Tuesday 27 January 2026. The London Silver Vaults, 53–64 Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1QS. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).



**FRI
30**

Tour of Trafalgar Square



2pm



Free



Online

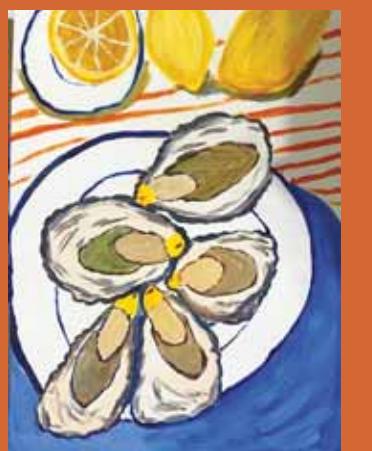


135 members have already enjoyed our tours of Trafalgar Square. Paul Fitton helps you to explore the history of the vicinity with some secrets and surprises in store, in a virtual tour. Travel back to King Henry VIII's time, learn about Nelson, discovering who was the real hero of Trafalgar and hear about the beautiful buildings surrounding the square in this virtual tour. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.

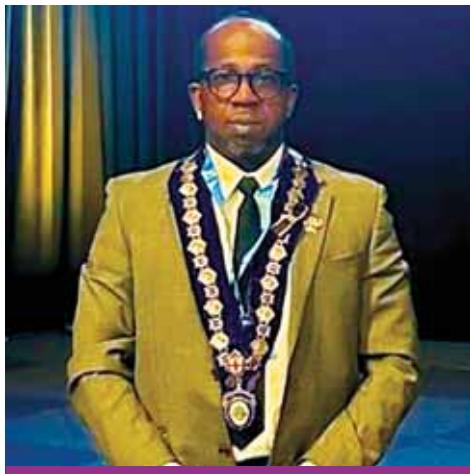


Art Unscrewed

Our monthly paintalong with Dulcie sees members relax for an hour as they follow her guidance on 'how to' paint each image. The sessions, given via Zoom, are suitable for beginners and practised artists. This is Michelle Andrews' pop art style image of Oysters painted at September's Art Unscrewed session. Find out more in the events listings.



Chairman's Letter



Lyndon Adolph.

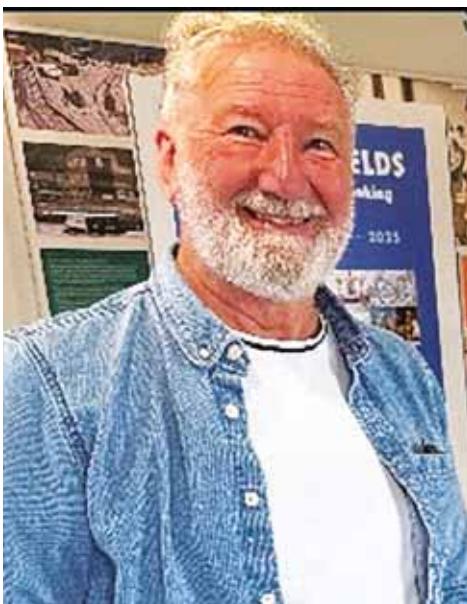
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Firstly on behalf of the Trustees and Committee of Management, I would like to say a huge thank you to Paul Fitton who is retiring at the end of January. He has been an integral part of North London District for the past 16 years organising the most fantastic events for us all. His annual boat trips, treasure hunts and pub lunches are legendary and we will miss his gentle, affable charm. I know that you will all join me in wishing him the best for his retirement, and of course you will be able to do so in person when you see him at events over the coming 3 months.

On a sad note, Sister Joyce Caplin passed away in September with some of you attending her funeral. Joyce was the Secretary of The Good Samaritan Lodge and had been a member for over 60 years. Our thoughts are with her family.

We are coming to the end of the year and the nights are drawing in. We've had a busy and successful year; welcoming new members to events which have included the fantastic Hog Roast in Islington in September, and hosting the Southern Group Conference. Terry, Paul and the team have worked hard at maintaining all our properties so a huge thank you to them. As this magazine covers the months of November, December and January, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everybody a Happy Holiday season, Happy Christmas and New Year.

**Lyndon Adolph
Provincial Grand Master
(District Chairman)**



Paul Fitton

Obituary - Joyce Caplin

We are saddened to report the passing of Joyce Caplin.

It can truly be said that Joyce was a person who made a difference. Her contribution to North London District Oddfellows was immense. In its 190 years, the District has awarded only 37 District Merit Jewels recognising such contributions. Joyce is one of the recipients.

Joyce took an active part in Oddfellows activities in north London right from the beginning of her membership. She acted as Secretary for two Lodges/Branches, her own - Good Samaritan - and Good Companions). She passed through the Chairs of the Branch and served on various District Committees, representing North London at Oddfellows Regional and national Annual Movable Conferences. Joyce was elected as Provincial Grand Master (District Chairman) for the first time in 1995 repeating this role in later years.

Joyce worked as Assistant District Secretary to District Secretary Derek Elmer, latterly at our office in Highbury Place.

Joyce and Derek retired and moved to Broxbourne in Hertfordshire at the end of 2011. They continued to host Good



Samaritan Branch committee and social events every fortnight, despite an hour's drive each way. They also attended the monthly meeting of two other Branches and supported two social groups.

Joyce's commitment from grass roots to national level and the ease with which she could help all members says much about Joyce herself.

Our condolences go to Joyce's family.

Used Stamps

Jane Parkin is collecting used stamps for Many Tears Animal Rescue Charity. She would love to receive your used stamps. Please either hand them to her or send to her at Oddfellows Hall, 27 Belmont Close, Clapham, London SW4 6AY.



Didn't we have a Lovely Time, the Day we went to...

Thames Riverboat Trip



A wonderful day, with one voyager saying, 'What a great day those who didn't come along missed'. Our Thames Clipper boat took us from Westminster to Putney Pier where we embarked with a choice of exciting adventures. Most visited Fulham Palace with its magnificent botanical gardens and a park café lunch while others opted for a riverside walk past boating houses and pub/restaurant meals.

All the members, including a few first timers got on so well with each other that they've already agreed to meet up again at our next central London outing. Everyone returned home with a smile on their face after a lovely day in west London.

Photo by Paul Fitton

Winchmore Hill Historical Walk

Stuart Delvin led an interesting guided tour from The Green along Hoopers Road to Bourne Hill.



Photo of the Botanical Gardens by Paul Fitton.

Tour of Trafalgar Square



135 members have enjoyed this popular tour in the past ten years. Without leaving the square, Paul Fitton covers the history of the area going back to King Henry VIII's time, the story of Nelson – and the real hero of the Battle of Trafalgar, tells the background to the statues, the surrounding buildings and uncovers the secrets in the nooks and crannies of the square in 45 minutes. Our lunch was in the atmospheric, subterranean and modern Café in St Martin's in the Fields Crypt - a unique dining experience surrounded by history and original brick-vaulted ceilings. Photo by Paul Fitton

Guided Tour of Clapham's Blue Plaques

A dozen members from all over London learned about a dozen famous Clapham people whose former homes display blue plaques during a 1½ mile walk led by Paul Fitton. Perhaps the most poignant was the story behind WWI poet Edward Thomas in Shelgate Road, the writer of Adlestrop, which says so much in its 16 lines. Afterwards, we ate at the London and South Western in Clapham Junction.

London Treasure Hunt

Unfortunately, Friendship Month's central London event had to be cancelled because of the transport strike.

Symphonic Queen at the Royal Albert Hall

Members experienced an evening of rock like no other listening to the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra delivering a tribute to one of the world's most iconic rock bands, Queen filled with timeless classics such as the iconic Bohemian Rhapsody.

Art Tour at Tate Britain

Roger Turner's latest tour guided members through a selection of 20th century paintings. Jackie Lancaster's photo shows some of the members listening to Roger intently. He will be hosting a tour in the National Gallery in the Spring - keep an eye out for details.



Linda Regan

Someone once said that we learn something new every day. I don't know who said it, but I feel sure that is something I will learn on another day.



What I really want to tell you about, is, what I learned today.

I had a hospital appointment, and after giving in my name at reception, I was told to sit in the waiting area, which was situated in between three wards. This I did. However, as I delved into my bag to get out my book to read while waiting to be called, my attention was drawn to a hospital cleaner in the aisle with a dustbin and brush. He was tutting and rattling the scooper loudly as he tried to sweep something up. And to my horror, I saw it was a rather large and lively Daddy Longlegs spider who was fighting like mad to avoid the degradation of the prickly broom.

“No, stop”, I cried loudly, making every head in the waiting area turn in my direction. “Please. You might hurt him”.

You may know by now I am very animal orientated and don't believe we have the right to harm anyone from the animal kingdom.

“It's a spider”, the cleaner told me. “They are ghastly. They frighten everyone. I need to get rid of it”.

“No, please. You might break one of its legs if you brush too harshly. I'll pick it up and I'll take it outside”.

As I bent down to retrieve the poor creature, which was attempting to run for its life as I'm sure it was petrified, I caught it in my tissue and assured it all was well, that it was safe and I would find it some nice greenery and earth outside where it could scamper about and be safe. At the exact moment out came my doctor to call me in for my appointment.

“Can you just give me a moment”, I asked him as the spider wriggled around trying to free itself from the tissue I had placed around it. “There's a spider here and rather than get swept up, I'll just take it outside”.

The doctor smiled, “We get a lot of those in here at this time of the year”, he told me. “It's because its warm in here and it's the time of the year when they lay their eggs”.

“Oh”, I said, “Now I have learned something”.

“You didn't know it was the time of the year that spiders mate?” He shrugged, “Well why would you”.

“No, I didn't”, I told him, “And I didn't know they laid eggs either, so that's something else I've learned”. I glanced

down at the spider and then looked up and jerked my head to the signs on the wall. "But actually, I've learned three things". I pointed to the sign on the wall that said, "Straight ahead for the **Maternity Ward**". "I didn't know spiders could read, either". That seemed to amuse him.

Then I thought again, "No, four things", I added, looking down at the leggy creature now curled into a ball in my tissue. "In that case this little lady must be a **SHE**, so why is **SHE** called a **Daddy Longlegs**?".

Oddfellows Memorabilia

By Paul Fitton

Continuing our look at Oddfellows Memorabilia, here are two rare Oddfellows jewels. They commemorate the centenary of the Oddfellows in 1910.

The first was engraved and presented to 'A F Oberall PPGM Jan 1911'. The front of the jewel bears the words. 'Manchester Unity 1810 CY 1910 IOOF with the title bar, '1810 MUIOOF 1910'.



The second medal was produced in 1910 to recognise 100 years of the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows. It is of silver-gilt and enamel and was made by Spencer of London and has a Birmingham hallmark for 1910.

The Oddfellows 1910 Annual Movable Conference was held in Southampton and presided by Grand Master Edward Bourne.



Bob Sinfield Remembers Peter Sellers

Inspector Clouseau, Major Bloodnok, Dr Strangelove, even James Bond: these characters and so many others were brought to life by one of film and radio comedy's greatest names, Peter Sellers. Whenever I get the chance to address an Oddfellows gathering on the subject of this extraordinary performer, I jump at it (no mean feat at my age).

Born 100 years ago to theatrical parents who toured the country as a variety act, young Peter seemed destined to make his mark as a comedian and impersonator. But at that time, the talkies were in their infancy and wireless mirth was strictly rationed by the dour Lord Reith, so it wasn't until the post-war era that he broke into BBC radio by phoning a top Light Entertainment producer and pretending to be Kenneth Horne. His mimicry was so convincing that it led to a glittering - if poorly paid - comedy career in 'steam' broadcasting, notably on the long-running Goon Show.

Cinema success beckoned and in the 1960s, he became an international star, sharing the screen – and romantic scenes – with the likes of Sophia Loren...but he found it hard to distinguish fantasy from reality and went round telling the world that Sophia was in love with him. Nobody believed this, especially not her.

Still, he really did get to play the ultimate ladies' man, 007, in a massively unpopular



version of Casino Royale where he refused to appear on the set with Orson Welles despite being in the same scene as him. Worse disasters were to follow and, by the early '70s, he had a string of box-office flops behind him, plus three broken marriages and a fourth one on the way.

It was then that he decided to make a pirate comedy caper called Ghost in the Noonday Sun. His plan was to shoot the picture on a ship off the coast of Cyprus. Fellow Goon Spike Milligan was drafted in to work on the script and a young Hungarian director called Peter Medak tried his best to call the shots and cope with the increasingly erratic behaviour of the star. Everything went wrong from the first day and when completed, it

was deemed to be so bad that Columbia Pictures refused to release it.

Some good did come of it, though. While on *Cyprus*, Sellers made a commercial for *Benson & Hedges* (you could do that then), wearing a Clouseau-style overcoat. This led to a revival of the bungling French detective so beloved of slapstick fans. Peter Sellers was back on top.

So, a happy ending, then...of sorts. It was short-lived, though, and so was he. Sellers died of a coronary in 1980 at the shockingly early age of 54. I've been a fan of his since childhood and am still an enormous admirer of his outstanding gifts as a character actor...but knowing what I do of how difficult he could be, I'm very glad I never had to make a film with him!

Oddfellows – a Benevolent Society

Branch Committees run the business of Oddfellowship – but what do they discuss?

The Oddfellows has long been associated with the care and welfare of members and have to respond to their needs. You may be interested to see these two responses to members to Branch benevolence. They show their feelings for the Oddfellows friends that they have made and summarises the care, support and thoughtfulness behind Oddfellows membership.

Member 1

'My Branch sent me a cheque to help cover the cost of taxis. We have a local charity that has volunteer drivers who take you to medical appointments, wait for you and bring you home. The cost is a lot less than conventional taxis where you would have to book two journeys. I also applied to the Care Section of Oddfellows and they have contributed towards the cost of a new riser/recliner chair. My old chair had been my dad's and rather old and

not a riser. It has made a huge difference. Oddfellows have been so good to me.'

Member 2

'If anything were to epitomise the meaning of Fellowship, it is the cheque in my hand right now. Its monetary value is of minor consequence, but well received nonetheless. Its intrinsic value is immeasurable and, that of its effect on our two adult children. They didn't understand our need to attend 'The Club' and odd excursions to places of interest. They know now that it was the foundation of something that we are so privileged to enjoy and be part of as Oddfellows, and friends of you all.'

'The respect, friendship, support and love emanating from this small piece of paper, are a testament, that we made a life enhancing decision to join the Oddfellows. Thank you all.'

Don't these sentiments show just what a caring and benevolent friendship group we have.

Keep Young and Beautiful

Part Three© By Paul Fitton

Last time, we signed off talking about memory. I remember arriving at work 20 years ago and opening my bag to pull out my phone. I was surprised to pull out the television remote control. I spent the rest of the day wondering how my wife was going to watch Bargain Hunt using my mobile phone to turn on the television!

Well my memory can't be that bad. I remembered that story!

You'd think with all the brain cells that I'm losing so rapidly, my weight would reduce, but no - my weight stays the same.

One thing that I am losing though is height. I've shrunk from 6'2" to 6 feet in the last year. When I was young, my mum used to mark my height with a pen on the door frame as I grew. Now my wife marks the door frame measuring how I shrink! I look like John Wayne riding a

horse – without the horse. I'll have to give up driving soon at this rate as my feet won't reach the pedals.

Are you finding bending down difficult? I now have a de

minimus rule if I drop any coins. If it's less than £2, I don't bother, knowing that I'd have to try and stand up again afterwards.

Are you looking forward to the new year? Watch out for that awkward moment when you realise that 1972 and 2026 are as far apart as 1972 and 1918.

I'll give you a little piece of advice for a longer life at the end of each of this series of articles. Today's tip is keep breathing.



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

Zooming is... Great!

You will have seen how many great topics, great presenters and great members contribute to our District's weekly Zooms. The feedback is exceptional every time, as you can see from these excerpts following Chris Hawkins' presentation about The History of Lesnes Abbey.

Any member can join the 15 online weekly sessions. They cover a range of insightful topics and dynamic activities: quizzes and games – such as Countdown, art paintalongs, crafts, live music, dancing,

Chi Gung, meditation, seated yoga, Tai Chi, family history guidance, presentations on hundreds of engaging subjects, as well as coffee mornings and general social chat.

These are ideal for any members with an interest in the topics, enjoy interacting or for anyone needing company.

You can read about the Zoom sessions that our District hosts in the programme of events in this magazine or at www.oddfellows.co.uk/events.

That was fascinating, thank you. 😊

Thank you Chris, that was so interesting

I missed it, Sadly. I am in different time zone and got the hour calculations wrong. By chance is there an offline link?

FYI, this is Michelle

USA

Thank you so much. I have learnt a good deal today. Sorry I have to leave early. Stephanie

I hadn't realised Cardinal Wolsey's role in the dissolution of the monasteries.

Thank you for a very interesting talk. I'm listening to the discussion whilst I'm attending to some work.

Thank you. Very good and interesting presentation.

I love Greenwich Park, Spent my Childhood at Lesnes Abbey and Greenwich Park, and of course New Eltham (can't remember the name of that one (sorry Nanna Jenny)

Letters and Feedback

Zoom

“Wonderful talk which has totally opened my eyes. I had no idea how magnificent the relocated Crystal Palace was.”

Ian Hutt

“I felt Michael Gilbert’s presentation about The 1851 Hyde Park Exhibition was knowledgeable and interesting and well worth the 90 minutes of my time.”

Wade Miller-Knight

“I really enjoyed the talk on the Belgian royal family... quite fascinating and how it was told. I am curious about history, royalty stories etc. I am especially pleased that I clicked on the link and zoomed in, no problem! Keep me informed from now on.”

Anon of Mallorca

A Christmas Poem for the Little Ones – The Bairns or Children

By Jacqueline Ingleby-Douglass, our Resident Poet

‘Mammy... Daddy... Santa’s been.
May we go downstairs?
We heard the sleigh bells and
some noise –
the scraping back of chairs.

He must have found the brandy
and the sweet mince pies.
He found the stockings on our bed.
That man is very wise.

Let’s hope he’s brought my laptop.
Let’s hope he’s brought my bike.
Let’s hope he’s brought us loads
of things,
The things he knows we’d like.

What’s that - it’s only midnight?
and Santa hasn’t been.
So back to bed to try to sleep.
We think that’s rather mean.

Boat Trip



“ The 30 July Boat Trip went very well. It was my first event since joining and felt welcomed by Paul and other members. Thoroughly enjoyed the Boat trip, it was nice seeing the sights along the Thames. Visiting Fulham Palace and Gardens was interesting. An enjoyable day out.”

Lorraine Toynton

“ I had a really enjoyable day on the Thames boat trip. There were three of us from St Mary Cray and Dartford, along with members from South and North London Districts. Travelling from Westminster Pier to Putney on one of the Thames Clippers, was a new experience for me. We had time for a snack lunch, and visiting Fulham Palace and the Botanic Gardens, before our return to Westminster. Looking forward to the next Oddfellows outing!”

Sue Potts

Lunches

“ This is just to say thank you for organising the lunch yesterday, tasty food at a very reasonable price, and as usual good company!”

Anon

Out and About

“ I've just read your Out & About magazine from cover to cover. It's about 4x thicker than we ever got from my own District. That only had the diary - no news or interesting articles. Regarding the presentations, my mother remembered when the Crystal Palace caught fire!”

Anon of another District

“ I have just received the latest magazine - and am very impressed with it. The presentation and the content are excellent. Also, somehow you consistently find interesting topics for your excellent Friday talks. You sure congratulated on the quality and content you always provide. Very well done.”

Ian Hutt

“ What an excellent magazine the August to October edition is! It must have taken a lot of work to put it all together.”

Anon of Clapham



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 your Branch Secretary Terry Rowland on 020 7226 1740.

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**

Unity Mutual: A brand-new website and exciting Oddies member benefits

Unity Mutual, the financial arm of the Oddfellows, is delighted to have launched a brand-new website.

The fresh design reflects its updated brand identity, but more importantly, it has been built with accessibility and inclusion at its heart – a continuation of the Oddfellows' ethos.



Whether looking for information on savings, investments or life insurance, the new site is easier to use, clearer to navigate and designed so that everyone can get the most from it.

Unity Mutual has partnered with Recite Me to introduce a full suite of accessibility tools, allowing visitors to customise their browsing experience. These include a text-to-speech function, styling features and translation options, which ensure their online services are available to all –

including those who may face barriers due to disability, neurodivergence or limited English language ability.

James Gilliver, Chief of Operations at Unity Mutual, explained: "Accessibility is extremely important to us at Unity Mutual. Our new website reflects our promise to inclusivity, ensuring all customers can access information in the way that best meets their needs."

"But it's not just about accessibility. We've also worked hard to make our content clearer and more engaging, so you can feel confident in understanding your financial choices. Our aim is to empower you and your family to make informed decisions about saving for the future."

An extra reason to take a look is that Oddfellows members can currently benefit from special Guaranteed Investment Bond rates, available exclusively through Unity Mutual.

To see the new website, its new accessibility features and for more information about its products and rates, go to www.unitymutual.co.uk/oddfellows, and discover how Unity Mutual can help build a brighter financial future.

Thank you for saying 'yes' to friendship

This Friendship Month, we've been encouraging people to say 'yes' to trying new things, making new friends, and discovering all the brilliant things happening at our Branches throughout the nation.

It's safe to say, September 2025 has been another fabulous celebration of friendship. The Oddfellows' CEO, Jane Nelson, said: "Friendship Month 2025 has once again demonstrated what the Oddfellows is all about, and I'm thankful of every single

person up and down the country who had been a part of it."

"Saying 'yes' to trying new things can be daunting, but you've all done an excellent job of showing how positive it is to be a part of friendship groups like ours. So, thank you for saying 'yes' to helping make your Friendship Month events a success, whether that's organising events, serving cups of tea, or simply making people feel welcome and comfortable. It all adds up to another wonderful Friendship Month."



Birmingham Oddfellows



Bradford Oddfellows



Brighouse and Huddersfield Oddfellows



Albert Oddfellows



Derbyshire Peak Oddfellows



Cambridge Oddfellows



Heart of the West Oddfellows



Concord Oddfellows



Halifax Oddfellows



Sudbury Oddfellows

Application deadlines approach!

Whether it's enhancing careers or highlighting fantastic people, the Oddfellows has a number of ways we can give our members a boost – but we can only do so if we hear about them.

Deadlines for applications to be submitted for two of our wonderful schemes are fast approaching – the Apprenticeship Educational Award and the Making a Difference Awards.

Apprenticeship Educational Awards



Each year, the Oddfellows grants up to three Apprenticeship Educational Awards, which consist of £250 per year for the duration of the apprenticeship.*

Eligible members must apply via their Branch. If you, or someone you know, has been an Oddfellows member for five or more years, which includes Young Oddfellows membership, and started or plan to start an apprenticeship in 2025, get in touch with your Branch Secretary.

The Branch's deadline for submitting applications for consideration is **Wednesday 31 December 2025**.

*Each case is reviewed on personal merit. For previous recipients' stories, details on eligibility and how to apply, visit www.oddfellows.co.uk/educational-awards

Making a Difference Awards



Want to shine a light on those special people at your Branch who go above and beyond? Every Branch has them, so make sure we hear about their brilliance.

Any member can nominate a fellow member, so if there are people at your Branch who make a difference, speak to your Branch Secretary to find out how you can nominate them.

The deadline for Branches to submit their shortlist is **Saturday 31 January 2026**, so get your nominations in as soon as possible so they can be considered.

To find out more about our Making a Difference Awards, the categories, nomination process and the prior winners, go to www.oddfellows.co.uk/makingadifference

If you've missed these deadlines this time don't worry, just make a note for next year!

At a glance

November 2025

Tues 4	Family History Help and Tutorial	2pm
Wed 5	Eat Out at Larkswood Harvester	12 noon
Thurs 6	Drinks and Nibbles at Warren Street	5.45pm
Fri 7	Songs from Stage and Screen	1.15pm
Fri 7	Transported to Australia Talk and Rhiannon Rees' Moonlight Walk Talk	2pm
Tues 11	Art Unscrewed	4pm
Thurs 13	Strolling through Korean Gardens and a Meal at Little Korea	11am
Fri 14	Early Explorers in Australia	2pm
Thurs 20	Quilling - Ancient and Modern	2pm
Fri 21	Double Bill: The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World and The World's Shortest Ever War	2pm
Fri 28	The Perfect Playground	2pm

December

Tues 2	Family History Help and Tutorial	2pm
Thurs 4	Christmas Meal in Enfield	1pm
Fri 5	Marriage Through The Ages	2pm
Mon 8	Railway 200 Exhibition	1.15pm
Thurs 11	Festive Drinks and Nibbles at Warren Street	5.45pm
Fri 12	Greenwich Park - The Queen's Favourite	2pm
Tues 16	Art Unscrewed	4pm
Thurs 18	Sing Along Christmas Carols at Lauderdale House	5.30pm
Fri 19	Railway 200 Exhibition	12.30pm
Fri 19	It's Chrissmaasssl! Online Christmas Party!	2pm

January 2026

Tues 6	Family History Help and Tutorial: My Family and other Famous People and how to find out more	2pm
Thurs 8	Drinks and Nibbles at Warren Street	5.45pm
Fri 9	The Life of a Cotton Mill Worker	2pm
Thurs 15	Oddfellows Membership Benefits - More than just Optical and Dental!	2pm

At a glance

January 2026

Fri 16	Two Firsts! Dixie Locke Talk and The Story of Laika - the First Dog in Space Talk	2pm
Thurs 22	Lunchtime Concert at Holy Trinity Church	12.45pm
Fri 23	Wallington's Henry Codling	2pm
Tues 27	Art Unscrewed	4pm
Wed 28	The London Silver Vaults and a Meal	11am
Fri 30	Tour of Trafalgar Square	2pm

Forthcoming Event

Sunday 26 April 2026, 7.30pm

The Shoop Shoop Show - The Cher Collection
Aldwych Theatre, 49 Aldwych, London WC2B 4DF

Get ready to experience a Cher show like no other! 'Turn Back Time' with The Shoop Shoop Show - The Cher Collection, an exhilarating music-led production with a party atmosphere is led by international powerhouse vocalist Rachael Hawnt, the winner of ITV's Starstruck.



The show spans every decade of Cher's incredible career so be prepared to be dazzled by disco HITS and pop rock chart-toppers. With incredible custom-made costumes, jaw-dropping production, choreography and a world class live band, The Shoop Shoop Show - The Cher Collection will have you singing and dancing the night away. Save up to 46%. Subject to availability. Contact Paul on 07851 910619, paul.fitton@oddfellows.co.uk

Cost: Tickets £12.50 Grand Circle, £20.83 All Areas and £29.17 Dress Circle and Stalls. Please book by Tuesday 21 November 2025.