

May - July 2025



the **ODDfELLOWS** SINCE 1810
making friends, helping people

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

With summer approaching...

You'll find plenty of activities to do and plenty of places to go in our events programme of 36 events in the next three months. District events include: Tutankhamun: The Immersive Experience, new West End musical *The Great Gatsby*, National Trust visit to 575 Wandsworth Road, Westminster to Putney boat trip, concerts, walks – and what Oddfellows members may like best of all... a host of opportunities to eat out!

Odds... and Ends

You can read all our regular features in this edition, including regular contributors: actor/author Linda Regan, our resident poet Jackie Ingleby-Douglass as well as members' stories. Other features include Oddfellows Memorabilia, Letters and Feedback and much, much more.

Paul Fitton
Editor

Front cover photo shows members enjoying one of our social events. Photo by Stephen Brading.

The photo above shows some of the members enjoying one of the regular Thursday evening socials at our rooms in Warren Street.

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
Monday 30 June to Paul Fitton**

May 2025

TUES
06

**Family History Help
and Tutorial**



2pm



Free



Online



WED
07

Drinks and Nibbles



6pm



Members £5
Guests £10



Our regular family history sessions help you to trace your ancestors. Paul Fitton's monthly presentation shows you how you can date family photos and perhaps identify mystery faces. The questions and answers that follow will also stimulate interesting discussion to maintain interest. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.



Duchess House, 18-19 Warren Street
(entrance first door on the left on
Grafton Mews) W1T 5LR. Contact
Jackie on 07788 418267.

May 2025

FRI
09

Walking in Zoomland - Kennington to Stockwell



2pm



Free



Our virtual Blue Plaque Urban Walk from Kennington to Stockwell allows us to see the former homes of film star Charlie Chaplin, Field Marshall Montgomery, artist Vincent Van Gogh and wartime secret agent Violette Szabo. Learn a little about each one on our pictorial tour and more as we tour. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.

MON
12

Eat Out at The White Bear in Ruislip



1pm



As per
menu



Nestled in the heart of Ruislip, The White Bear is a characterful and welcoming pub with a well-stocked bar with two log fire places, cosy and colourful nooks and crannies for a quiet pint or leisurely lunch and a bright and airy main dining room overlooking the garden. Cost as per menu - generally £15 to £25 for main course with discounts available for members. Book by Friday 9 May. The White Bear, Ickenham Road, Ruislip, Middlesex HA4 7DF. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).

TUES
13

Art Unscrewed



4pm



Free



Join regular instructor Dulcie Rowe as she guides us, as we will be painting Abstract People by Gary Jonathan Maddox. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.



May 2025

THURS
15

Cheese and Wine Experience



2pm



Members £1
Guests £3



Join us sampling and enjoying different tasty cheeses and learn about each one whilst also enjoying a nice glass of non-alcoholic wine in Paul Fitton's presentation. An experience as flavourful as it is fun. The church does not allow alcohol on its premises. Book by Monday 12 May. Enfield Baptist Church, Cecil Road, Enfield EN2 6TG. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).



FRI
16

Children's Wartime Diaries



2pm



Free



Online



The most famous personal diary of WWII is that of Anne Frank, but she wasn't the only child to keep a record of family life at that time. Paul Fitton looks at other wartime diaries written by children in Poland, Leningrad and Hiroshima. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.

WED
21

National Trust: 575 Wandsworth Road



11am



£15



Visit this National Trust property. Only six places available. Born in Kenya in 1935, Khadambi Asalache was a poet, novelist and British civil servant. He bought 575 Wandsworth Road in 1981 and spent 19 years transforming it, decorating the floors, walls and ceilings with intricate hand-carved fretwork, and paintings. Cost: £15, this fee applies to all attendees. There are no concessions available. Wandsworth Road Station is on the Overground and two minutes walk away. It is one stop from Clapham Junction. You may also take buses 77, 87 or 452 from stand G at Vauxhall Bus station. Book by Friday 16 May. National Trust, 575 Wandsworth Road, London SW8 3JD. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).

May 2025

FRI 23 London 1851 and the Great Exhibition



The Great Exhibition of 1851 was probably the most successful, memorable



and influential cultural event of the 19th century. With Prince Albert's energetic patronage and Joseph Paxton's gigantic pre-fabricated building of iron and glass, Hyde Park was from May to October 1851, filled with over six million visitors who were able to view over 100,000 exhibits. The first in a series of three presentations by Michael Gilbert. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.

FRI 30 Flight Sergeant Les Fitton - Wartime Service



Hear about Les Fitton's RAF wartime service on what would have been his 100th birthday. Presentation by Paul Fitton. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.

THURS 29 The Great Gatsby - A New Musical



The Great Gatsby is the brand new musical based on the classic American novel by F Scott Fitzgerald. Set in the Jazz Age in New York, the new Tony award-winning smash-hit Broadway success is coming to



London's West End and you can be one of the first to see the show. Book now - limited discounted ticket availability. Book by Thursday 24 April. The London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4ES. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).

June

TUES
03

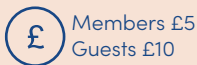
Family History Help and Tutorial



Paul Fitton helps you to find out whether any of your relatives were transported as convicts in today's monthly session. He demonstrates the presentation with details about life of one of his own relations. The questions and answers that follow will also stimulate interesting discussion to maintain interest. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.

THURS
05

Drinks and Nibbles



Duchess House, 18-19 Warren Street (entrance first door on the left on Grafton Mews) W1T 5LR. Contact Jackie on 07788 418267.

FRI
06

Murder, Madness and Mayhem? - The Belgian Royal Family



For a monarchy that has only been in existence since independence in 1830, be assured there's lots to tell. Explore



their links with the British Royal Family. 'Prima!' said a Belgian audience member in East Grinstead. 'Brilliant!' St Lukes Ladies, Rochester. Zoom Meeting ID: 876 1449 6492. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.

MON
09

Pub Meal at the Whittington in Pinner



Dine in the company of other members at the Whittington, a Greene King pub at the heart of Pinner. Cost: Main course prices between £8.49 to £16.29. Book by Friday 6 June. The Whittington, Whittington Way, Pinner, Middlesex HA5 5JS. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).



June

TUES
10

Art Unscrewed



Join regular instructor Dulcie Rowe as she guides us, as we will be painting Flamingoes (artist unknown). Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.



THURS
12

Summer Indoor Picnic



A picnic with a difference! We're eating indoors. Please note that this event has been changed from the third to the second Thursday of the month for June only. Book by Friday 6 June. Enfield Baptist Church, Cecil Road, Enfield EN2 6TG. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).



FRI
13

The Mystery of William Arnold



William Arnold was an American who murdered his parents. He was imprisoned for life in 1958, but escaped from prison eight years later – the last inmate to successfully escape from the Nebraska State Penitentiary. Find out what happened next 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.

MON
16

Tutankhamun: The Immersive Experience



Step into the heart of ancient Egypt. Explore a civilisation shrouded in mystery where grand temples and the gods of the pyramid land awaken before your eyes. Dive into the myths and riddles buried in the desert sands and dissolved in the waters of the Nile and uncover the secrets of one of the most fascinating eras in human history. Tickets are subject to availability. Cost: £22 for senior – valid ID required on the day and £23 for adult. Book by Thursday 12 June. Excel London, Royal Victoria Dock, 1 Western Gateway, London E16 1XL. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).

June

MON
23

Pub Lunch in Highbury



12 noon



As per menu



Join other members for our regular meal at the White Swan by Highbury and Islington station. Cost as per menu, typically £10 including drink. Book by Friday 20 June. The White Swan, 255-256 Upper Street, London N1 1RY. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).



FRI
27

Salvation Army Lunchtime Concert



12.30pm



Free



A get together to listen to one of the free lunchtime concerts at the Salvation Army's Regent Hall on Oxford Street. The concert starts at 1pm and lasts one hour. Tickets are free and places are allocated on a first come first served basis. So with that in mind, we will meet at 12.30pm in the foyer in order to ensure we all get a seat. Nearest tube station is Oxford Circus. Please do let Jackie know that you will be coming by emailing her. The Salvation Army Regent Hall, 275 Oxford Street, London W1C 2DJ. Contact Jackie on 07788 418267.

FRI
27

The Story of the Mobile Phone



2pm



Free



Ian Hutt explores the history of mobile phones, which began in 1973. The 90s saw the rise of GSM networks and the first text message in 1992. In 2000s, we witnessed the advent of smartphones, starting with Nokia's iconic designs and BlackBerry's email capabilities. The 2007 release of Apple's iPhone revolutionised the industry with touchscreen interfaces and Android soon followed. With rapid advancements in technology, including 4G, 5G and sophisticated mobile applications today mobile phones are essential multifunctional device. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.



July

TUES 01 Family History Help and Tutorial



Our regular family history sessions help you to add flesh onto your ancestors' bones. Paul Fitton's presentation today tells you what you can learn from family heirlooms. The questions and answers that follow will also stimulate interesting discussion to maintain interest. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.

THURS 03 The Green to Grovelands Park Historical Walk



Following on from his previous walks, local historian and Oddfellows member Stuart Delvin takes us on



another short historical journey. On the way, Stuart will tell us about the history of the area. Please note that our exit from the park has a steep climb. The return walk from the Green to Grovelands park totals about a mile and a half. Meeting at The King's Head, you may wish to arrive earlier to fortify yourself. Book by Wednesday 2 July. The Kings Head, 1 The Green, Winchmore Hill, London N21 1BB. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).

FRI 04 The Life of a Cotton Mill Worker



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.



SAT 05 Hog Roast and Drinks in the Sun!



Join us for a hog roast (and salads too). The bar will be open and hopefully it'll be a sunny day. Ticket prices include your food and one drink (glass of wine or soft drink). All of the family are welcome. Please book your tickets and pay in advance to secure your place by contacting Jackie Lancaster. Book by Wednesday 25 June. Pride of Islington Branch, 70 Ronalds Road, Highbury Crescent Rooms, London N5 1XA. Contact Jackie on 07788 418267.

July

FRI
11

Peter Sellers - All at Sea

🕒 2pm

£ Free

Online



Raconteur, DJ and gag writer to the stars Bob Sinfield brings us his unique storytelling skills with the hilarious and disastrous story of what happened when the great comic actor tried making a pirate movie on the high(ish) seas off Cyprus in 1973. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.



SAT
12

Dine at The Agra in Stanmore

🕒 12 noon

£ As per menu



Established in 1978, the Agra is a traditional and authentic Curry House based in Stanmore, specialising in Tandoori, Balti and Vegetarian



dishes. Book by Thursday 10 July. The Agra, Stanmore, 33 Stanmore Hill, 33 Stanmore Hill, Stanmore HA7 3DS. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).

THURS
17

Samuel Franklin Cody - The First Man to Fly in England

🕒 2pm

£ Free



Mary Cody-Cowdrey tells us about her remarkable relative. Colonel Samuel Franklin Cody was a sharpshooter, trick-rider, became famous for his unique manned war-kites and was the first person to fly a plane in the UK. A remarkable man and an Oddfellow! Mary will show her vast collection of photos, postcards, posters and other ephemera in her telling of Cody's incredible life, including his relationship with Buffalo Bill Cody, of Wild West fame. Enfield Baptist Church, Cecil Road, Enfield EN2 6TG. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details).



FRI
18

The Origins of The Salvation Army

🕒 2pm

£ Free

Online



Find out how and why The Salvation Army was founded 160 years ago. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.

July

TUES
22

Art Unscrewed



Join regular instructor Dulcie Rowe as she guides us, as we will be painting Whispers of Twilight by Irina Nova. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.



FRI
25

The Clowns Museum



Curator of the Clowns Museum Mattie Faint presents the Life of Grimaldi, King of Clowns. Mattie will also show us his most recent television appearance on Songs of Praise and a recent

film about the ceramic egg collection of painted clown's faces. Zoom Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020 and Passcode 1810. Contact Paul (see page 3 for details) for a direct link.



WED
23

A Walk and Lunch in Golders Hill Park



Golders Hill Park is tucked away between Golders Green and Hampstead and its secret is its mini zoo! It has a great café serving everything from toasties to pasta. It also serves some of the best ice-cream in London.

Meet Jackie next to the café at 11.30am from where we will go for a short wander around the park, look at the animals and then back to the café for a bite to eat. The 210 Bus goes up the hill from Golders Green tube station (Northern Line) – alternatively it is a 15 minute walk up hill to the park from the tube station. Please let Jackie know in advance that you would like to attend Book by Wednesday 16 July. Golders Hill Park, Golders Hill, North End Way, London NW3 7HD. Contact Jackie on 07788 418267.

WED
30

Thames Boat Trip: Westminster to Putney



11am



Members £21.15, Guests £25.40



Our annual boat trip takes us from Westminster to Putney and back. Discover the capital's attractions on our adventure. You'll find plenty to do and see when you arrive. For example, you can lunch in Putney, stroll along the Thames riverside, or cross Putney Bridge and visit Fulham Palace, its museum and historic rooms, its 13 acres of beautiful botanic garden and

a walled garden full of horticultural delights. Tickets are non-refundable, unless taken up by a reserve. As with all District events, full details will be sent to all bookers. Book by Monday 30 June. Westminster Pier, Victoria Embankment, London SW1A 2JH. 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.

Learn, have fun, and stay in touch from home

We've online events for all to enjoy. Give one a try.



To see what's coming up visit www.oddfellows.co.uk/events

OEW/1024SMALL

Chairman's Letter

I would like to acknowledge my pride and honour at becoming the District Chairman/Provincial Grand Master for the third consecutive year. However, it is with sadness, as Lynda Atherley, who passed last year, was due to replace me this year.

Oddfellows is for everyone to enjoy and be involved. The social side is so important for everyone as I am sure you all agree. However, equally as important is the one in 20 members who volunteer for roles. Primarily, the officers of the District Committee of Management but also those members assisting at local events. In summary – new faces needed! Does yours fit?

I was very pleased to meet members at the Warren Street social in March. There was

certainly a buzz in the air.

Thank you to the District Committee and our small administrative team for their work. They ensure that you receive the membership benefits that you're entitled to as well as providing 36 events for you in the next three months.

I look forward to seeing many of you and wish you a healthy and happy year.

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



Oddfellows Memorabilia

Paul Fitton continues his look at past Oddfellows items

This is a Shortland Bowen wall hanging oak barometer and dial thermometer. It is an early gauge by Shortland Bowen, listed in their catalogue of c1934 as model J116. Its price was '95/-', or £4.75 today.

It was a Manchester Unity of Independent Odd Fellows presentation piece to a Past Provincial Grand Master, with a silver plated plaque engraved, 'Presented to PPGM R Pearmain by the Loyal Widows Protection Lodge, MUIOOF, in recognition of his services to the Lodge

and Cambridge District. 1948'.

The 11cm square dial aneroid barometer is graduated in inches hg. The 8cm dial thermometer is a

Rototherm. Both dials carry the Shortland Bowen logo. The back has a hanger at the top, measuring approximately 23.5cms x 32cms.



Keep Young and Beautiful - Part One

By Paul Fitton

First of all, an apology. I'd like to apologise to all the Oddfellows who phone me. I never ask how they are, otherwise I spend the next thirty minutes hearing about gammy legs, knobbly knees and bits dropping off. I have to use my remaining time sparingly!

Best to make the most of it. I worked out that if I lived to age 100, I'd only have another 10,767 sleeps... plus all the daytime dozes, of course!

I'm making the most of leap years. The bliss of having an extra day!

It all started when I reached three score and ten. I realised with a jolt that I had to relearn how to walk like a 69 year old again.

I decided to help myself further, I made a concession to myself and stopped being as adventurous. I no longer stand on one leg to pull on my socks. Now, I sit on the side of the bed to perform the task. The only trouble is, I can't stand up afterwards!

In public however, I'm much too proud to accept a seat on a bus or a train – and then regret turning down the offer for the rest of the journey. I try to reverse the effect and often wish to give up my seat. Once again, sadly, it's difficult to have 'lift off'. I even have to stand up as my train leaves the antepenultimate station to make sure I

reach the door to press the open button in time, otherwise I end up in Margate.

The worst was when I went to an Oddfellows dance and asked one of the ladies, 'Do I come here often?'

Look out for part two in the next edition

Does He Love Me?

By our Resident Poet,
Jackie Ingleby-Douglass

Does he love me? Does he not?
Do I care? No! Not a jot.

He stole my money and my heart.
Mother warned me from the start.
Said I was pretty and so sweet.
Then he swept me off my feet.

'Way to go girl!' friends did shout.
Then drank and sang and fell about.

Toast the bride and toast the groom
They're fighting in another room.
Behind closed doors he was a cad.
Wicked evil and so bad.

But I care not. 'Why's that?' you say?
Because I know I'll have my day.
The money wasn't mine to take.
The bank account was just a fake.

I'd spiked his drinks. Was that a sin?
Mixed in crushed up Warfarin.
I'm so pretty and so sweet.
What I did was pretty neat.

Activity Suspended at Sheringham Lifeboat Station

A new Lifeboat is scheduled to be launched in the third quarter of 2025 at Sheringham bearing the name of the Oddfellows. However, the Lifeboat Station has been closed due to safety concerns in respect of the structure of the Lifeboat Station and the movement of the land behind. All activity, including lifesaving operations, at Sheringham RNLI was suspended on 11 February 2025. Search and rescue cover is being provided by Wells RNLI and Cromer RNLI, Sheringham's flanking stations. We shall keep members advised.

The Oddfellows donated a Lifeboat to the RNLI for the first time in 1961. The Manchester Unity of Oddfellows. The Oakley Class type vessel was presented/ named by Oddfellows Chairman (Grand Master) JG Barnes and named by HRH Princess Marina, Duchess of Kent. The boat served for 29 years, launching 127 times and saving 134 lives. It has been RNLI Sheringham's longest serving

lifeboat and is now in permanent display at The Sheringham Museum. We donated a second lifeboat in 1994. Named the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows, the Atlantic 75 type vessel was named by Oddfellows Chairman (Grand Master) JW Goulding. It was the first Atlantic 75 lifeboat to be placed on service by the RNLI. Spending 13 years on station, the lifeboat made 115 launches and saved 15 lives.

The Oddfellows 2007 is the third vessel funded and donated by The Oddfellows at Sheringham. The B-Class Atlantic 85 fast response lifeboat entered service in 2007 when it was named by Secretary of the Oddfellows East Anglia Group Conference Alison Adamson. At that time, it was the most modern state-of-the-art class of inshore lifeboat in the RNLI fleet.

The cost of this third vessel was £135,000. The Oddfellows also raised £68,000 for the required new drive-on, drive-



Photo of a coastal wall mural at Sheringham taken by member Neil Chatterton.



Photo of a coastal wall mural at Sheringham taken by member Neil Chatterton.

off launch and recovery carriage and £147,000 for the amphibious tractor.

This lifeboat's size is 8.3m x 2.75m (27 feet x nine feet one inch) and its speed is 35 knots (40mph). It houses four crew: Helmsman, Radio Operator, navigator and a fourth member. Its technology: Radar, Chart Plotter, VHF Radio Direction Finder.

The Oddfellows has a manually operated, self-righting mechanism that inflates a large airbag with compressed air. The engines are inversion-proofed and can be restarted following a capsize.

As at 15 December 2015, the lifeboat had made 56 launches saving three lives.

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.

My First Match

By Alan Pitts

I was taken to my first professional football match in 1949. The venue was Highbury and I was aged 7. I was taken by the mother of a child that my mother looked after. She came from north London after the war to Brixton.

We caught the Arsenal supporters' bus outside Brixton town hall. It started out from South Norwood bus terminal. Upon arrival at the ground, I was taken to the end which had the magnificent clock on

display. I remember being passed down to the front to join all the other children. The police band played before the match and again at half time, marching up and down. The crowd sang the 'Up the Gunners' song which I learnt as time went on. I was taken for about three years.

Later in 1958 I became a Crystal Palace supporter travelling by bus from Herne Hill. I remain a supporter to this day.

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

Imperial War Museum



Soho and Chinatown Tour

The wettest day of the year – but still fun! Several members apologised for absence as a result but those who did attend scooted around Soho's alleyways and past doorways with stairs leading to who knows where before sheltering in an Italian café for coffee and cake. The rain worsened, resulting in a sprint to Chinatown and a promise to repeat the event on a sunnier day! As always, it was great to see members exchanging phone numbers to meet up again at another Oddfellows event.



Winchmore Hill Tour

In the second of our three historical walks, local historian and Oddfellow Stuart Delvin spoke in detail about the 18th, 19th and 20th century buildings bordering the old village green and about local characters who have helped to retain the semi-rural atmosphere. Our next local guided tour of the area will be on 3 July.

Carlyle's House (National Trust)

It's extremely rare for our events to be cancelled but our visit had to be cancelled for reasons out of our control.

National Gallery

A very big Thank You to Roger for a fascinating and engaging look at six portraits across the centuries. We all loved it. Photo by Jackie Lancaster.



Lunchtime concert at Lauderdale House

Really enjoyable! Check the magazine for more dates. Photo by Jackie Lancaster.



Linda Regan

And here we are, and hasn't it come round quickly, but, yes, Spring has arrived. The clocks have gone forward and the light evenings are upon us. May is nearly here too, with its two bank holidays. (I have no idea why they call them bank holidays, these days banks holiday all the time, as it is very difficult to find a bank that isn't shut). Apparently, it goes back many years to when banks needed days off to count their money. It doesn't need two long days to count my money, but of course there are other customers.



Easter is lovely too, because we get another two days of holiday, and there is chocolate to be shared courtesy of the Easter bunny. My Hubby once confided in me that he had never seen a live rabbit. 'But rabbits are everywhere,' I told him, especially if you live near countryside, which we do. So, I took him walking around fields and other grounds where I had seen many a rabbit

on my early evening dog walks. Every time I saw one and shouted to him, 'Look over there quick, darling, a rabbit.' But by the time he had turned in the direction I was frantically pointing in, the rabbit had disappeared down into its warren.

Realising, this project wasn't going to find a rabbit for him, I decided on another idea. I hired a very large rabbit costume from a local fancy dress shop. (Grey in colour, with long rabbit ears and big feet like Thumper in Bambi).

I waited till he was out filming, just a few days before Easter, and had rung to say he was on his way home. Then, I quickly changed into the giant rabbit costume and was ready with a large carrot in my hand. Before he had time to put his key in the door, I opened the door and stood to welcome him in the full rabbit costume.

First of all he looked bemused, his head moved backwards on his neck, and he frowned quizzically. I grinned and was about to squeak the words, 'Say hello to the Easter bunny, but before I had the chance to speak, he peered toward me and said, 'Linda why are you dressed as a cat?'

In loving memory of...

Brian was delighted to be asked to give a few recent talks at Oddfellows branches, along with his wife Linda Regan. He had clear memories of being made an Oddfellow and brought into the organisation by his father who also belonged to the organisation. He was delighted too, to be taken to the house he lived in as a child, after he gave his talk at Clapham. Many thanks to all for your kind hospitality to him.



Another Walk Down Memory Lane

A tribute to Derek Elmer who passed away aged 80 in 2024. In his Own Words...

I celebrated 50 years of membership recently. I was initiated into the Pride of Westmoreland Lodge on 11 May 1965. I remember the date well as it was the day after my 21st birthday and I must have still been drunk! The Pride of Westmoreland Lodge met at 'The Favourite' public house in Hornsey Rise, N19 in those days and a friend and I were initiated at an Inter District visit from South London. Following our initiation we were asked if we would like to take the White Degree at the Northern Degree Lodge the coming Friday – I was hooked.

In due time, I passed through the chairs of the Lodge and degree Lodge and became in the District and Unity. I served on the various District Committees, being

Provincial Grand Master (Chairman) in 1981 and 2001. I was also Provincial Corresponding Secretary of the District from 2004 to 2011; I also found time to be financial secretary of the Mechanics Friend and Amicable Lodges, who, in the early 90s, amalgamated with the Bruce Castle and Beaconsfield Lodge to form the Charles Hewitt Lodge, Under Future Policy in 1989.

I attended AMCs (Annual Movable Conference) of the Society from 1975 to 2015, either as a deputy or a visitor, missing 1979 and 2014 for personal reasons.

Until ill health prevented him, Derek and Joyce still attended Branch events up until 2014.

Seen outside The Oddfellows Arms in Tynemouth, Northumberland

Have you an amusing Oddfellows photograph?

Please email or post it to the Editor. See page 3.



Letters and Feedback

Art Unscrewed

"I enjoyed the session. I'm not an artist but it is good as it takes you out of the everyday and its problems and helps you to focus on something else, namely Art."

AW

Ploughman's Lunch

"Thanks very much for the lunch yesterday at Enfield Baptist Church. It was very good and I enjoyed the company of the other members."

DB

Charity Shops Zoom

"Thank you for your presentation. It was so thoroughly researched. I found it very interesting and it was appreciated by all."

Christine Mitchell

Make an Event of it

Did you know that Oddfellows members may attend events at any Branch in the UK?

You can find information about events across the UK by using the Events Finder function at www.oddfellows.co.uk. Just search the postcode or the place name, and you can then filter by date or distance to see what events are on in different areas.

Your nearest Branch would love to see you and can advise if there are any particular events you'd like to try and answer any questions you may have. You can find information about the branch on page 3. You may wish to contact the event organisers before attending, so

they are aware of you and can make you feel welcome.

Your online Open Day invitation
Our monthly online Open Days cover what you can expect from membership and some Oddfellows history. You can view dates and how to register by contacting District Events Organiser Paul Fitton at paul.fitton@oddfellows.co.uk.

Try an event or activity
There's no need to become a member first. So, find out what in-person events are coming up near to you, or try one of our free online events on our website. You would be welcome to attend any, regardless of your geographic location.

Oddfellows Travel: Destination Mystery

In November last year, 16 Oddfellows and three friends boarded a cruise ship with no idea of its destination.

With six mystery ports scheduled in 11 days, there was a lot to pack in, and there was plenty to keep them entertained on board: interesting talks, a murder mystery, craft sessions, quizzes and a drinks party.

Port one

Dawn broke on day two, revealing Gijon in northern Spain as the first destination. Some set out on organised excursions while others explored independently.



Port two

An overnight hop delivered our travellers to their second secret Spanish stop – Ferrol.

Wendy, an Ipswich Oddfellows member and cruise host, said: “It was an interesting port, not well known to many regular passengers. There was a mix of interesting architecture and maritime history – the naval museum was a must.”

Port three

The ship next docked in Porto, Portugal, where the group were greeted by a broad

esplanade and a sweeping sandy beach, and they discovered a thriving fish market.

Port four

Back in Spain, the fourth port was a warm, sunny Malaga. “It was amazing,” said Wendy. “The cathedral was well worth a visit, also the Roman amphitheatre.”

Port five

The Spanish odyssey and Roman themes continued at the penultimate stop in Cadiz.

“The sea defences were testament to the city’s position close to the entrance of the Mediterranean,” Wendy said.

Port six

Having worked out their next stop, Wendy said: “Lisbon wasn’t quite such a mystery, but a delight nevertheless. The highlight was a lift ride to see magnificent views over Lisbon and the River Tejo.”

Surprises and celebrations

Before returning, the Oddfellows crew received a mystery gift bag containing souvenirs from Spain and Portugal, Fred. Olsen gifts and chocolates, and celebrated a member’s birthday with cake provided by the chef and singing waiters.

See Oddfellows Travel’s 2025 group holiday schedule, including a cruise to Iceland in July, by visiting www.oddfellows.co.uk/travel

Trio receive university funding

Congratulations to the latest recipients of our First Degree Course Educational Awards: Lillie Buckley, Edward Smith and Torsten Ellis.

Easing the pressure

Each year, a selection of Oddfellows members heading to university for the first time are chosen to receive a non-repayable bursary of £900 per year for the duration of their studies.

Jane Nelson, CEO of the Oddfellows, said: "I'm delighted that the Society can play a part in enhancing Lillie, Edward and Torsten's university experiences.

"Attempting to budget finances alongside studying is as tough as it's ever been but this funding from our Educational Awards will help to ease those stresses as they embark on this exciting stage in their lives."

Each year, our Fraternal Board chooses who will receive the funding, based on the applications received.

Grand Master (Chairman) of the Society, Barbara Needham, added: "I'm so proud that we are able to give the younger generation a bit of a financial boost, which will help them to take these all-important next steps on their way to making their mark on the world.

"I wish them every success over the next few years and beyond."

Lillie Buckley, Nottingham Trent Branch member

Lillie started studying Veterinary Science at the University of Bristol in September 2024.



She says the funding will allow her to purchase a new laptop for doing her university work, as well as helping to cover travel costs for work placements which she'll complete as part of her studies.

She said: "When I found out I would be receiving the funding, I was extremely happy and honoured to have been chosen. I want to say a huge thank you to the Oddfellows, as this will help support me throughout my degree and I can't wait to see what the future holds.

"I am loving the course so far. We've learnt lots of interesting things. In the future I would like to be a small animal vet, however I am keeping an open mind as I love cows!"

Edward Smith, Erewash Valley Branch member

Chemical Engineering student Edward began his course at the University of Manchester in September 2024.

He plans to follow his studies with a chartership while working as a Process Engineer. A Process Engineer designs, optimises and manages the processes used to transform raw materials into finished products in manufacturing or chemical plants.

“I felt very proud, honoured and relieved to receive extra funding to help with my studies,” he said. “I would encourage all eligible students to have a go at applying for this award.”



Edward says the money will go toward purchasing books and other learning materials.

Torsten Ellis, Derby Derwent Valley Branch member

Torsten has been reading Theoretical Physics with Mathematics at Lancaster University since October 2024.



He says the funding will allow him to budget better when purchasing learning materials, such as textbooks, and taking part in extra-curricular activities.

He added: “It felt great to learn I had been chosen for the funding. I was also somewhat relieved as it means I will have to worry less about my finances over the course of each year.

“My modules are split between the physics and maths departments, which is great because I’ll get a rich understanding of both and I’m looking forward to next year when I can pick modules and advance my understanding of both fields.”

Unity Mutual: Seasonal scam spotting



With tax season coming to a close, scammers start to move their attention to new opportunities.

As new financial scams emerge, people get targeted in different ways. Our financial services brand, Unity Mutual, has assessed what to watch out for in the coming months.

April to May: The tax refund scam

With key tax deadlines passing, fraudsters may take advantage of taxpayers hoping for a refund. You may receive emails, phone calls or text messages claiming you're due reimbursement.

Verify any tax-related communication through official government channels before responding to avoid being caught out.

Summer scams: Holidays, events and ticket fraud

From June to August, scammers often aim to exploit the excitement of summer holiday planning by offering fake 'not to be missed' deals on accommodation and flights, often through unofficial websites.

Concert and sporting event fraud is also on the up, and attempts to sell fake tickets on social media platforms are becoming increasingly common. Avoid these traps

by booking through reputable travel agencies and official events websites.

August to September: Back to school scams

As students and their families prepare for a new school year, fraudsters like to create fake offers for school supplies, loans and student rental accommodation.

If an offer seems too good to be true, verify it with official sources before taking action.

Stay vigilant year-round

While some scams are season-specific, fraudsters are always on the lookout for their next victim.



Stay informed, be sceptical of unsolicited requests for money or personal information, and always verify who you're dealing with before taking action.

For more financial tips and resources visit www.unitymutual.co.uk/knowledge-hub
To view Unity Mutual's range of family friendly financial products* visit www.unitymutual.co.uk/oddfellows

For more information call 0161 214 4628.

*Terms and conditions apply



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**

At a glance

May 2025

Thurs 1	Lunchtime Concert at Lauderdale House	1pm
Fri 2	South London's Actors	2pm
Tues 6	Family History Help and Tutorial	2pm
Weds 7	Drinks and Nibbles	6pm
Fri 9	Walking in Zoomland Kennington to Stockwell	2pm
Mon 12	Eat Out at The White Bear in Ruislip	1pm
Tues 13	Art Unscrewed	4pm
Thurs 15	Cheese and Wine Experience	2pm
Fri 16	Children's Wartime Diaries	2pm
Wed 21	National Trust: 575 Wandsworth Road	11am
Fri 23	London 1851 and the Great Exhibition	2pm
Thurs 29	The Great Gatsby - A New Musical	2.30pm
Fri 30	Flight Sergeant Les Fitton - Wartime Service	2pm

June

Tues 3	Family History Help and Tutorial	2pm
Thurs 5	Drinks and Nibbles	6pm
Fri 6	Murder, Madness and Mayhem? - The Belgian Royal Family	2pm
Mon 9	Pub Meal at the Whittington in Pinner	12 noon
Tues 10	Art Unscrewed	4pm
Thurs 12	Summer Indoor Picnic	2pm

June

Fri 13	The Mystery of William Arnold	2pm
Mon 16	Tutankhamun: The Immersive Experience	11am
Mon 23	Pub Lunch in Highbury	12 noon
Fri 27	Salvation Army Lunchtime Concert	12.30pm
Fri 27	The Story of the Mobile Phone	2pm

July

Tues 1	Family History Help and Tutorial	2pm
Thurs 3	The Green to Grovelands Park Historical Walk	2pm
Fri 4	The Life of a Cotton Mill Worker	2pm
Sat 5	Hog Roast and Drinks in the Sun!	2pm
Fri 11	Peter Sellers - All at Sea	2pm
Sat 12	Dine at The Agra in Stanmore	12 noon
Thurs 17	Samuel Franklin Cody The First Man to Fly in England	2pm
Fri 18	The Origins of The Salvation Army	2pm
Tues 22	Art Unscrewed	4pm
Wed 23	A Walk and Lunch in Golders Hill Park	11.30am
Fri 25	The Clowns Museum	2pm
Wed 30	Thames Boat Trip: Westminster to Putney	11am

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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