



Marie's 2nd Music Quiz

Marie Haworth is itching to test your musical knowledge with another quiz at our meeting next week, Wednesday 12th May. Not to be taken too seriously, but challenging enough to exercise the little grey cells! Guests welcome.

Changes in Europe

The entry of ten new member states to the European Union on May 1st has introduced millions more religious believers to Europe – these states have a higher proportion of believers than elsewhere, and will shift the balance of influence in favour of the religious. We are promised a referendum on the draft European constitution, which includes Article 51:

1. The Union respects and does not prejudice the status under national law of churches and religious associations or communities in the Member States.
2. The Union equally respects the status of philosophical and non-confessional organisations.
3. Recognising their identity and their specific contribution, the Union shall maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with these churches and organisations.

The International Humanist & Ethical Union and other secular organisations have written to European Heads of Government, demanding that Article 51 be deleted in full. The IHEU wrote: "The Human Rights experts and activists assembled under the aegis of the International Humanist and Ethical Union point out that in so far as Article 51 seeks to protect freedom of thought, conscience and religion, it is superfluous since these freedoms are already protected by Article 10."

Please write ASAP to the Prime Minister and to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and of European Affairs expressing your disagreement and requesting the withdrawal of article 51 from the draft Constitution. The increasing religiosity of government here, in America and now Europe is alarming, and should concern anyone who cares about democracy, whether they're religious or not.

★On Wednesday 14th July we'll watch a video – 2500 years (& more) of Free Thinking (made with the support of the European Humanist Federation).

★Apologies for the brevity of this newsletter, due to the usual problems – too much to do, too little time. There will be something more substantial soon. Please send contributions to: 5 Hadleigh Road, Elmsett, Suffolk, IP7 6ND.

★We meet at Castle Hill Community Centre in Ipswich from 7.30 to 10 pm. Phone 01473 658828 for directions and to offer or request a lift.

★New members who haven't yet had their free copy of *A Short Course in Humanism* can collect them at the next meeting, but if you can't come phone the above number and we'll post it.

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