

Suffolk Humanists Monthly Bulletin

Our next event:

"Book Review"

"Book Review" : 8th October 7.30 pm.

Instead of our regular meeting we had originally planned a special visit to the "Lines of Sight - on the trail of W G Sebald" exhibition at the Norwich Museum. However this has not been possible so we will have a normal meeting at the Thomas Wolsey with a "Book Review".

So please come along ready to talk about one or two books that have inspired you recently - or indeed at any time. They needn't be directly concerned with humanism or secularism.

Place: Thomas Wolsey pub, St Peters Street Ipswich (upstairs room on left).

Report on September Event: "Visit to the Tomline Refractor Telescope at Orwell Park Observatory"

Our Winter Newsletter is going to provide an in-depth coverage of this visit and the history of this telescope which was constructed over 150 years ago. Suffice to say that once we had scaled the spiral staircase leading to the dome at the top we were told by Dr Paul Whiting about how and why the observatory was constructed. The story began with the fabulously wealthy Colonel George Tomline who purchased Orwell Park in 1848. Mainly to impress his guests he commissioned the construction of Orwell Park Observatory in the early 1870s, during a major extension to the mansion.

The building involved elements of political intrigue and some mysteries. For example it is not known how the telescope which weighs several tons could have been raised. It sits on top of a solid pillar running up through 5 storeys of the observatory tower inside the mansion.

One theory is that the telescope was slowly raised as the tower was constructed and the supporting column was built up underneath.

We were very fortunate in that the sky that evening was mainly clear, at least for some time, and we were able to view Jupiter and Saturn whose rings were clearly visible.

Help please - "Tuesday Takeover" on Radio Suffolk .

This weekly show is hosted by Jon Wright and offers local groups the opportunity to take over the Radio Suffolk studio for a few hours every Tuesday evening. It provides a mixture of lighthearted and sometimes serious conversations about local issues .

The programme on 29th October is going to feature a number of faith representatives - and us - to identify, examine and discuss particular issues facing our groups. I would expect that issues of interest to us e.g. faith schools, collective worship and organ donation (see below) will come up.

As with most talk shows the discussions are interspersed with music recordings and we have been asked to suggest a few.

So far 'Imagine' and 'Albatross' have been suggested but have you any tracks that might be appropriate? Suggestions appreciated. Send your ideas to denisjohnston@btinternet.com

Max and Keira's Law - organ donation.

You may not have heard of it but it is the term commonly used to describe the recent change in the law regarding organ donation.

From spring 2020 the organ donation system is changing in England. The aim is to increase donation rates and help more patients get the transplants they so desperately need.

The important difference is that adults in England will be considered potential donors unless they choose to opt out or are excluded. There are more than 6,000 people currently waiting for an organ in the UK and three people die each day while on the waiting list.

Keira Ball was a nine year old girl who died after a road traffic accident in the summer of 2017. Through her donation Keira was able to help four people, her kidneys went to adults, her liver went to a baby and her heart went to a young boy – Max Johnson – who was nine at the time.

The legislation is commonly referred to as Max and Keira's Law, in memory of Keira and in recognition of all the campaigning by Max Johnson's family.

Humanists in the UK have campaigned for the introduction of an opt-out system for many years and HUK have expressed their delight at this outcome.

Please note however that the date of 'opt-out' has not yet been set but is expected to be some time around spring 2020. In the meantime it is vital that you are on the NHS Organ Donor Register and/or carry an organ donor card and make sure that your family know your wishes.

See <https://www.organdonation.nhs.uk> to register and for more details.

Future talks and events

Saturday October 26th: Monthly lunchtime get together at the Duke of York Woodbridge.

Tuesday November: 12th "Evolution of art in war" at the Thomas Wolsey.

Saturday 30th November: Monthly lunchtime get together at the Duke of York Woodbridge.

Tuesday December 10th: Either Ancient Winter traditions or the Celebration of UN Declaration of Human Rights. The details for the UN event have not yet been published and as there may be a clash with our regular meeting some change may be required.

We are also planning a daytime visit to Down House in the near future.

Suffolk Humanists

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