



BIRMINGHAM HUMANISTS

- making sense of life
without religion or superstition.

www.birminghamhumanists.org.uk

AUTUMN / WINTER PROGRAMME 2008 / 09

Affiliated to the British Humanist Association, the National
Secular Society and the Gay & Lesbian Humanist
Association.

Current Programme

Unless otherwise stated, meetings are held at the **Friends Meeting House, at the junction of George Road & St James' Road, Edgbaston, B'ham 15** and start at **7.45 pm**.

There is a railway station and bus stops nearby at Five Ways but if you need a lift, please ring one of the committee members and we will try to arrange something. It doesn't matter if you a member or not, or even that you aren't sure whether you are a Humanist, please feel free to join us. The Friends Meeting House will be opened 15 minutes early so that members can look at and borrow books from the group's library.

Thursday 11th September 7.45 pm "What is Humanism?"

After visiting students at Cadbury College with Danny, John Edwards put together a new, shorter Powerpoint presentation on non-theistic beliefs. This is something that any member could use if he /she is invited to talk on Humanism to young people or adults. Come along to see the slides and hear the commentary - there is sure to be something contentious or erroneous so your comments could be useful.

Thursday 16th October 7.30pm "The Threat from Islam"

The original title proposed was "Is there a threat from Islam?" but this is incontrovertible! The revised title gives scope to discuss how much of a threat is posed by moderate Muslims living in the UK, Imams from Egypt preaching in UK, Saudi finance etc as well as political and fundamentalist Islam. This meeting is being held at John Lester's house (24 Belvidere Road, Walsall, WS1 3AU)

Tuesday 11th November 7.45pm "Remembrance"

A time to remember those who have fought to win us the freedoms we cherish today. Danny Collman is likely to be focussing on the holocaust and WWII particularly this year. This meeting is being held at Percy Lea's house (112 Balden Road, Harborne, B32 2EH)

Tuesday 2nd December 7.15pm START "What the BHA can do for US!"

Naomi Phillips, the Public Affairs Officer of the BHA, is coming up from London to talk to us and returning later that evening, **HENCE THE EARLY START**. Please try and come along to hear her ideas and come armed with suggestions of what you THINK they should be doing in addition.

12th – 16th Jan 2009 "New Year Meal" (Venue / date still not fixed)

We are looking to give the Wing Wah a 'miss' this year and try a new venue.

Thursday 12th February 7.45 pm DARWIN DAY MEETING

Charles Darwin was born on this date exactly 250 years ago and, coincidentally, it is also the 150th Anniversary of the publication of "Origin of the Species"! To mark this 'double celebration' Professor Richard Lea has kindly agreed to talk to us at George Road on "The Weird and Wonderful World of Reproduction in Animals" - a fascinating topic that relates in several different ways to evolution and speciation.

Wednesday 18th March 7.45 pm "Spirituality & Humanism - do we or should we, have it?"

Our member Olga Farooqui is very concerned at the use of the term 'Spirituality' by Humanists. She raised her concern several years ago when she was a member of Southampton Humanists and has now offered to present her views to us to start off a discussion. At the moment the meeting is at George Road.

OTHER GROUPS IN THE MIDLANDS

Lichfield Group still meets on the second Tue of each month at 8p.m. in an upstairs room at The Kings Head pub, Bird Street, Lichfield. Tel 0845 200 8473 for details

Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists have meetings on September 18th and 20th November. They meet at the Waverley Day Centre, 65 Waverley Road, Kenilworth at 7.15pm and urge members to enter via the side door. Tel 01926 858450 for details

Leicester Secular Society (the Oldest Secular Society in the World) have weekly Sunday events at the Secular Hall, 75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester at 6.30 pm. Tel 01162 622250 for details

Have you come across www.humanists.freeserve.co.uk yet? It is an independent site for Humanists on the world wide web that has been running for 9 years. Roy Saich of Coventry & Warks Humanists was involved in creating the site and he updates it on the first weekend of every month. I looked at it for the first time while compiling this "News & Views" and it has some excellent pages and links. Somewhat confusingly, almost every page has a link to a Menu 2 which directs you to a partner site, which hosts complementary sections to those on the independent site for Humanists. The content on this is again interesting and relevant, although some of the articles go back 5 years or more. If you'd like to see your views on the web, send your e-mails to roysaich@humanists.freeserve.co.uk

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What humanists believe:-

Humanism is an approach to life based on humanity and reason. Humanists believe that moral values are properly founded on human nature and experience alone and think that decisions should be based on the available evidence and an assessment of the outcomes of a person's actions, not on any sacred text or authoritative tradition.

Humanists believe that since we have only one life, it is our responsibility to make it a good life and to live it to the full whilst trying to improve the quality of life for everyone.

Humanists may describe themselves as atheists or agnostics but Humanism is an active philosophy more enriching than a mere negative response to religion.

Humanists are positive, gaining inspiration from human lives, art and culture, and the rich natural world.