

Annual General Meeting 2014

Our AGM, held on the 8th of April, was much better attended than in previous years and we now have a complete committee. Those elected were: Sue Hewlett (Chair), Denis Johnston (Secretary), John Mellis (Treasurer), Peter Davidson, Peter Wells, Elisabeth Thompson and Ed Sedgwick.

The AGM was followed by a short video from the TED talks given by Michael Shermer called “Why people believe weird things”. If you missed it you can view it (with other TED talks) on the internet at www.ted.com/talks/michael_shermer_on_believing_strange_things

Website changes

Our new website is nearly up and running. Apart from having a new look and feel it will be accessible using a wide range of tablets, mobile phones, etc., as well as PCs. The address will still be www.suffolkhands.org.uk.

Meetings

Tuesday July 10th at 7:30, Ten Minute Topics – It’s a couple of years since we had a meeting that followed this simple formula. We all write on a slip of paper a short sentence summarising a topic. These are then drawn at random from a hat and after a short introduction/explanation from the person who wrote the topic we discuss for a MAXIMUM of ten minutes. After that another topic is drawn. We’ll be in the lounge at Pinewood Hall, at the top of Hawthorne Drive, Ipswich, IP8 3SL Lifts can sometimes be arranged – let us know if you need or can offer one. Guests are welcome. Get in touch or check our website for a map and directions.

Saturday 28th June from noon, pub lunch at the Duke of York, Woodbridge. The pub is on the corner of Ipswich Road and Old Barrack Road in Woodbridge, IP12 4BY. **SPACE IS LIMITED SO IT IS VITAL THAT WE BOOK A TABLE BEFOREHAND.** Please let Denis know if you plan to come before Wednesday 25th June. His contact details are shown at the end of this newsletter.

Future meetings

Meetings are normally held on the second Tuesday of alternate months. Our new committee is currently trying to plan a programme for the year and we may be able to have more frequent meetings or events. We’re hoping to invite some teachers to tell us about how the recent changes in schools are affecting how RE is being taught in local authority, academies and free schools. We’re also exploring how we might have a meeting based upon role-playing and seeing if we could engage better with University College Suffolk and its department of Nursing Studies in particular. “The Sunday Assembly: like the best bits of church but without the religion!” is a movement where atheists and agnostics gather together to meet on a Sunday. We think it would be interesting to learn a bit more about this and preferably before one appears on our doorstep anyway! See www.sundayassembly.com.

From Divinity to Darwin – the SIFRE Library

Hidden away in one of the older building at UCS, the Suffolk Interfaith Resource (SIFRE) Library is about to have a new lease of life. Containing about 4000 items, it has been completely re-ordered and re-catalogued. It is expected to be of interest mainly to teachers of RE and to sixth form students. Most of the content relates to books about the main world faiths but there are a number of books on ethics, philosophy and humanism, including religious critiques. There are also several journals and magazines going back 20 or 30 years which strikingly illustrate just how much change there has been in teaching RE over the very recent past. The library is manned by volunteers (I am there most Monday mornings) so it is important to contact beforehand both to make sure it is accessible. Contact details are on the SIFRE website www.sifre.org.uk.

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