



Coventry and Warwickshire Humanists Newsletter March 2024

Dear Fellow Humanists

Welcome to the March edition of the Coventry & Warwickshire Newsletter. Hopefully, by the time that you receive this newsletter, you will be preparing to tuck into a selection of hot-cross buns and Easter eggs. Further hoping to discard the Christianity connotations of these delicious snacks and remembering that we celebrate the Spring Festival of Eostre (or Ostara) – (See the March 2023 Newsletter for more information about the Pagan god Eostre).

When I deliver a discussion on Humanism to local schools, I always mention that that the start of European Summer Time (the day that the clocks go forward) is one of my favourite days of the year. A day to wake up to longer periods of daylight, to see the spring flowers budding and knowing that new animals are being born. A new beginning after a cold and damp winter. Coincidentally, this year Easter Sunday is the same day as the start of European Summer. An opportunity for us all to celebrate. A Happy Eostre to you all.

Brian Goredema-Braid

Chair of Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists

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Meetings:

Thursday 21st March: This was the first in-person meeting of 2024. It was good to see so many of our regular attendees after what seems a long absence since December! The main discussion was led by John Goodfellow on what a Humanist perspective on the current Israel/ Hamas conflict might look like.

John began by saying briefly why he believes that we have an obligation as Humanists to think about the current crisis - yes with compassion and tolerance - but also in a rational and informed way which rises above the war cries and slogans of the current political debate in the UK and beyond. Definitely not an easy subject, but to suggest how it might be done without taking sides and apportioning blame. John prepared a brief handout with maps of the area which enabled the group to grasp some of the geographical, religious and political complexities of the region without making it too grim!

John also provided a brief overview of definitions of Zionism as a key to an understanding of the evolution and current Israeli political and military strategy. The same with Hamas as an example of an extreme religious, political and military group. The discussion also included the historical and present role of the UK in and the crisis, politically and in terms of protest. Overall an excellent presentation from John Goodfellow. It has been suggested that we continue this discussion at the April meeting? I have provided a review of the film 'Shoshana' which deals with the tensions around 1930's Palestine – a film well worth watching

Other issues discussed at that meeting included fixing a regular sequence of Executive Meetings. The Executive Meetings will take place on Zoom on the second Thursday of each month. The next time and date will be at 7.00 pm on Thursday 11th April. Joining instructions will be published nearer the date.

The meeting included the decision to send a donation to the Uganda Humanist School. At a previous meeting following the funeral of Roy Saitch, we agreed to send a donation of £235. We would like this money to be used by the school in whatever way is best for them. We would also appreciate it if there could be some acknowledgement at the school that this money was given in memory of George Broadhead and Ray Saich, whether this is an inscription on the item, a label on the shelf where it is kept or an announcement made to the pupils.

Andrew Ireland has managed to locate the former Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists library. This consists of 4 boxes of appropriate Humanist books and publications. It would be helpful if someone could take over the role of 'Branch Librarian.' This is not an onerous task. It only requires someone to make a list of the books and publications and to forward the list to Humanists in Coventry & Warwickshire. The Executive Committee will help anyone who volunteers for this invaluable role.

Thursday 25th April: Please note that our sequence has changed for this meeting. Instead of meeting on the third Thursday of the month (18th April) – we are for this month meeting on the fourth **Thursday – 25th April.** The reason for the change is that quite a number of us are away on the previous week. In my case, I am appearing in the play 'Pressure' at the Talisman Theatre all of that week. (More about that later!) At the time of writing, we do not have an external speaker. It has been suggested that we continue the discussion on Israel and Palestine? There is certainly much more to discuss.

Thursday 16th May: The topic of discussion will be Humanist Pastoral Care led by Clare Elcombe Webber the Head of Humanist Care. This meeting will be online – hopefully at Waverley Day Centre. It was difficult for Clare to travel to Warwickshire on that evening, so an online meeting with Zoom at the Waverley Centre seems to be the best way forward – and also being environmentally friendly too! There is more information about Pastoral Care below in this Newsletter.

Humanist Pastoral Care:

As we are inviting Head of Humanist Care, Clare Elcombe-Webber to an online meeting on 16th May, it is appropriate that we publicise the need for Humanist Pastoral Carers in the Coventry & Warwickshire area. I am not aware of anyone in the area who is currently fulfilling these duties in either a hospital, prison or university/college? We have quite a few Celebrants and School Speakers in our area – but no Pastoral Carers? I completed the Pastoral Care training course some 10 years ago. I was actively engaged in both Olney Prison and at Coventry University. However, I have now devoted most of my time to being a School Speaker, which is probably more appropriate for my background as teacher and youth worker.

The work as a Pastoral Carer is not onerous – probably one or two days or evenings a week at most. But it is a worthwhile and fulfilling role which would suit anyone who is good at talking to people and is a good listener.

Coincidentally, I have received an invite to a **training weekend coming in Coventry for humanist pastoral care in hospitals and prisons on Saturday 24th May and Sunday 25th May.** It would be a great pity if no-one from the Coventry or Warwickshire area cannot attend this short course – especially when it is on our doorstep!! If this particular course is too short notice, there will be other courses in the near future, but not necessarily in Coventry

Please see these words from **Lindsay de Wal**, NRPSN Manager:

When you're facing a difficult time, coming to terms with a diagnosis, or just need a listening ear, you should be able to explore life's big questions with someone who shares your worldview. But despite 53% of the British population saying they have no religion this provision is sorely lacking.

Join us in changing this.

We have a small but incredible volunteer team driving change in chaplaincy and pastoral care in the Midlands, including in both healthcare and prisons, and we would love to be able to provide pastoral support to more non-religious people in need.

We're running training for new pastoral care volunteers in Coventry on Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 May 2024, would you like to join us?



You'll need to be able to commit at least half a day a week to volunteering, and you'll need some tenacity along with the confidence and interpersonal skills to work with religious colleagues. You'll be rewarded by being a positive support to people in their hour of need, and by being part of real change. We're working hard to try to establish more paid pastoral care posts as well, so it could lead to a career.

Lindsay De Wal - NRPSN Manager

If you would like more information or to discuss the training, do not hesitate to contact me by email (training@humanistcare.org.uk). More information about the Non-Religious Pastoral Support Network can be found on the [NRPSN website](https://www.nrpsn.org.uk).

We'd love to have you with us.

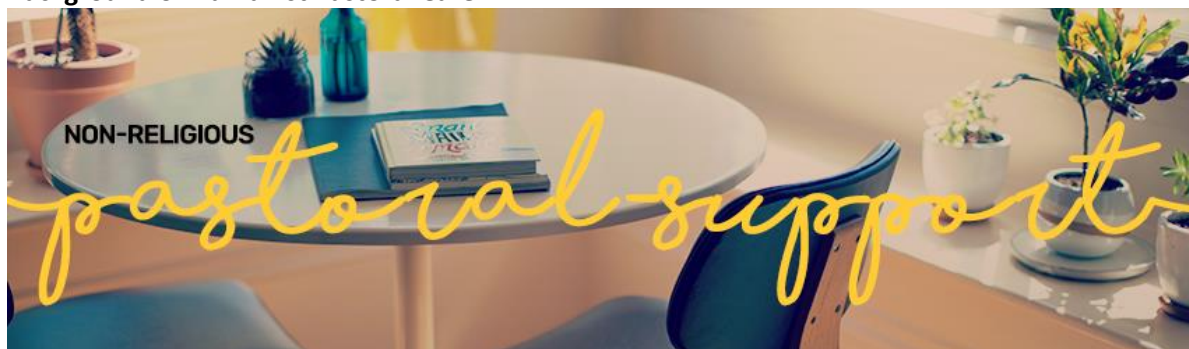
The details:

The course is non-residential but lunch will be provided for both days. Course costs will be met by Humanists UK for Humanists UK members, and non-Humanists UK members will need to sign up for a one-year membership in order to take part (or pay a course fee of £225 inc VAT). Any travel, personal, or accommodation expenses must be covered by attendees.

To apply, please download an application pack and application form. This should be completed electronically and emailed to training@humanistcare.org.uk. We only have 12 spaces on each course, awarded on a first-come-first-served basis but with priority going to those who are geographically closest to the venue.

Applicants will be required to take part in a telephone interview in advance of being accepted onto the programme.

Background of Humanist Pastoral Care:



Humanists UK is committed to ensuring that all people with non-religious beliefs have access to pastoral support, just as religious people have access to such support. It does this through its pastoral arm, Humanist Care. We are also committed to ensuring that non-religious people should be able and capable of providing pastoral support to all those who want it, irrespective of their religion or belief.

We are building a network of Humanists UK accredited non-religious pastoral carers to provide that support, and now have over 250 operating across a range of institutional settings throughout the UK.

Thirty years ago, there was a significant gap in the provision of non-religious funerals and other ceremonies. Humanists UK pioneered the development of humanist ceremonies, developing quality

standards, training and accrediting celebrants and increasing awareness. Today we conduct thousands of ceremonies and demand continues to increase. We provide a much-needed service to non-religious people at significant times in their lives. We want to build on this success with our non-religious pastoral support programme.

Why is Non-religious Pastoral Care important?

There is a huge shortage in the provision of pastoral support for and by non-religious people in health care, prisons and other institutions. There are about 800 full time equivalent chaplains employed by prisons and NHS hospitals. All but a few are religious. There are thousands of volunteers. We estimate that well over 99% of them are religious. Yet 32% of the prison population is non-religious. About 22% to 45% of hospital patients are non-religious. Of course, religious chaplains can support non-religious people, just as non-religious pastoral carers may support religious people. However, data from a major hospital shows only 4% of patient visits by their Spiritual Care Department are to patients of 'no faith'. Some patients actively reject approaches from religious chaplains. Yet many patients, staff and carers would really benefit from the provision of non-religious pastoral support. We believe that it is most important for people to have the option to receive care from someone of like-mind at a time of crisis.

Prisons, hospitals and hospices recognise the importance of holistic care, including meeting people's pastoral and 'spiritual' needs. This provision needs to be appropriate to that person's religion or belief. For example, a Hindu may wish to speak to someone who believes that they may return to this life, a Christian to someone who believes they may go to heaven, and a non-religious person to someone who believes this is the one life we have. Good pastoral support often depends upon establishing a rapport with *a like-minded* person.

Non-religious patients may face the same fears, hopes, anguish, questions of meaning and purpose, sense of loss and bereavement as religious patients. After all they are part of our common humanity. Non-religious patients may not identify these issues as 'religious' or 'spiritual'. However, they may need and want appropriate care and support.

A history of the Non-Religious Pastoral Support Network

A pilot project was first conducted in 2011 at Winchester Prison. This included meeting inmates with 'nil' religion on admission, holding discussion groups and providing bereavement support. Our work was well received by inmates and the prison management alike. Since that time, we have come an extraordinarily long way, by working with Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service to ensure similar support is made available in prisons all over England and Wales. Similarly, our impact on the NHS England Chaplaincy Guidelines 2015, ensured that for the first time a recommendation was made for the provision of appropriate like-minded care to the non-religious in all NHS hospitals. Humanists UK increased its scope in 2016, by encouraging all non-religious people (not just those who identify as humanist), with the right motivation and competencies to become pastoral support volunteers. The 'Non-Religious Pastoral Support Network' (NRPSN) is Humanists UK's network of accredited non-religious volunteers who provide pastoral support. The NRPSN comes under the umbrella of Humanist Care but has its own governance structures, objectives, and quality assurance procedures. The NRPSN runs courses of induction, training, accreditation, and continued professional development for potential and existing non-religious pastoral carers. Our main accreditation programme consists of a rigorous pre-course selection, a two-day residential module, which includes; an understanding of pastoral care practice, the non-religious perspective, role play, and where appropriate the final award of accreditation. This is followed up with monitoring and peer support. After accreditation volunteers apply to their local institutions as non-religious pastoral care volunteers, an unpaid role. Institutions would give further specific training relevant to the post e.g. in prison security, infection control.

Ultimately thousands of patients, prisoners, staff and carers will benefit from pastoral support appropriate to their needs, values and non-religious beliefs. In addition, non-religious people will be more able to make a significant contribution volunteering for this important social activity.

What can you do?

If you would like to train as a non-religious pastoral carer please take a look at the Non-religious Pastoral Support Volunteers application pack or contact us at info@nrpsn.org.uk. We are also recruiting Non-Religious Pastoral Support Network Regional Coordinators for those already accredited.

Assisted Dying:

Assisted dying could become a reality. Recent and current news shows the strength of forces both inside and outside Parliament working overtime to block the will of the public on this issue. At the time of writing, there is a new Bill to legalise assisted dying in Scotland

Please see these words from Lauren Nicklinson, Member of Humanists UK ...and life-long assisted dying campaigner

I fought alongside my father Tony Nicklinson, and Humanists UK, for a change in the law – and the courts said it was for Parliament to handle.

Following today's big report on assisted dying and with an election just months away, I'm writing to you today to help the campaign cross the finish line – and hopefully get a proper vote on Parliament in the next 12 months.

As someone who's faced the heart-wrenching agony of watching a family member deteriorate in unbearable suffering, and then die in terrible pain – all because of our broken law – it upsets me to think what a farce the recent inquiry has been.

Months ago, Humanists UK raised concerns that the parliamentary inquiry into assisted dying was biased heavily against it, being mainly composed of MPs who were on the record opposing assisted dying on 'sanctity of life' or religious grounds... We were right to raise those concerns.

To their credit, the inquiry process was thorough. Opponents of assisted dying put forward lies and fake news horror stories about Canada, and tried to push the idea that assisted dying and high-quality palliative care were a binary choice. But as the report eventually showed, the evidence went against this. The Canada scare stories evaporated under scrutiny. And the evidence showed that palliative care is no worse, and often improves, in societies with assisted dying.

So, faced with overwhelming evidence for assisted dying, and public support of 90%+ that beats every other issue in politics hands down... what did the report conclude? Absolutely nothing! A political stitch-up, designed to put off the inevitable!

They couldn't stand up a case against assisted dying. So, the committee instead produced a glorified research paper, rather than a real report!

There is hope. Rishi Sunak and Keir Starmer have both recently responded to the campaign and said that yes, they would allow time for a free vote on assisted dying and would implement it. Starmer has personally advocated for it for years, too, and his Labour Party recently cited Citizens Juries – used in France and Jersey to pave the way for assisted dying – as something a Labour Government would back.

We have an opportunity now, with the deck cleared by this inquiry, to push for assisted dying and up the ante of our campaigning work on this issue in the run-up to the election.

As the inquiry shows, there are no done deals in politics, and stitch-ups can happen at any stage. A humane assisted dying law with strong safeguards will give people choice at the end of life – a choice that my father and millions of other Brits were denied. A choice that *all of us* would want for ourselves when and if the time comes.

I know that 98% of humanists strongly support this campaign, to help Humanists UK continue to fight this good fight.

Yours hopefully,

Lauren Nicklinson

Member of Humanists UK ...and life-long assisted dying campaigner

P.S. Along with Andrew Copson, I was part of the group of campaigners who gave evidence to Jersey's recent citizen's jury which led to a successful vote in their parliament for assisted

dying. We're still devoting time and effort to seeing this implemented the right way, which will be huge for the whole of British Isles – and this campaign – in the coming months.

NB: Please watch the French film 'Everything Went Well' on BBC4 on Saturday 6th April. It shows a family coping with an elderly man who wants to go to Switzerland for assisted dying. Excellent film

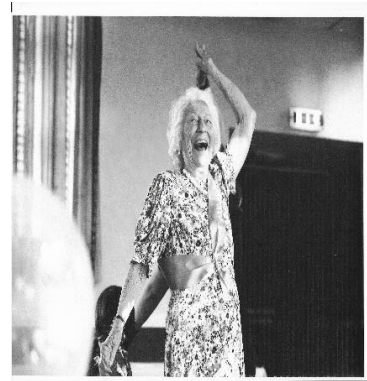
Issues of Local Interest:

Audrey Raishbrook's 90th Birthday Party: Long serving and stalwart member of Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists celebrated her 90th birthday earlier in March. As those of you who know her well, are aware that despite her age Audrey is very fit and active. The birthday party was held at the Standard-Triumph Social Club in Canley and was very well attended by her family, friends and friends from the Humanist group.

Here are some photos of Audrey at her party



Some 'famous faces' here?



My favourite photo

'Colder Than Here' – At the Bear Pit Theatre 12th to 16th March:

Quite a few of us were privileged to support Jacquie Campbell who directed this wonderful play written by Laura Wade. It addresses the taboo subject of death with more than a touch of 'black humour'. The action took place in a family's lounge in Leamington Spa and various burial grounds in the local area. Myra, the mother of the family is suffering from terminal cancer and wants to plan her final resting place. This brings up various issues and conflicts within the rest of the family, husband Alec and daughters Harriet and Jenna. Jacquie obviously made use her experience as a Humanist Celebrant to develop the theme of the play.

A very enjoyable evening, well done Jacquie.

To conclude, I have copied a poem from the programme – 'Tuesdays with Morrie' by Mitch Albom:

*As long as we love each other and remember the feeling of
love we had, we can die without
ever really going away.*

All the love you created is still there.

*You live on in the hearts of everyone you have touched and
nurtured while you were here.*

Death ends a life, not a relationship

Pressure by David Haig – at the Talisman Theatre in Kenilworth – 15th to 20th April:

I have to mention this play – as I am appearing in it! However, it is well worth mentioning as it is a great play written by actor David Haig about his father who was the senior meteorologist during the lead up to 'D-Day' in June 1944. The pressure comes from various characters who are looking for a clear day for the invasion including General Eisenhower, the Commanders in Chief of the British Navy and Royal Air force and the American meteorologist. Conflicting forecasts from the two meteorologists raise the tension. A tense but very funny play which obviously commemorates 80 years since the D-Day landings.

Poetry Selection from Audrey Raishbrook:

Despite the excitement of her birthday party, Audrey has chosen one of her favourite poems - Invictus by William Earnest Henley:

Out of the night that covers me
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance,
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate
I am the captain of my soul.

**Film Review: It is a great pity that some of these films are not on the usual cinema circuit. These two films have such a lot to show and to learn from
Origin:**

An inspired adaptation of Isabel Wilkerson's life as she digs into the nuance of discrimination while writing what would become her New York Times bestselling book - Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents. Already established as the first African-American woman to win a Pulitzer Prize for journalism, Isabel Wilkerson (Aunjanue Ellis-Taylor) is confronted by the question of race again when a colleague asks her to write about Trayvon Martin's death. Her husband encourages her to tackle the case, but she's more interested in the core of where racial injustice comes from. After a double tragedy forces her to reorient her life, Isabel begins a research project which spans the globe, as she travels to Germany and India where she investigates the disenfranchisement of Jewish people during the Third Reich and the marginalization of Dalit 'untouchables'. An absolutely brilliant and clear understanding of the hidden barriers of racism, very much based on how the world justifies its caste system. (There are limited showings of Origin at Midlands Arts Centre and Everyman, Stratford-upon-Avon and the Mailbox in Birmingham.)

Shoshana:

Directed by Michael Winterbottom, this fascinating drama centres on the romance between a British police officer and a socialist Zionist writer but puts history-telling over emotion

It is a film that speaks in a complex way to the current Gaza debate, contending that Zionism has anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism in its 20th-century manifestation: a rage against the British masters. But the implication is that it learned habits of ruthlessness from these very people.

The film is based on the true story of Shoshana Borochoy, a socialist Zionist writer who came with her Ukrainian family to Tel Aviv as a child in the 1920s and grew up to have a long-term romantic relationship with a British police officer called Thomas Wilkin, who was assassinated by the militant group Lehi, otherwise known as the Stern Gang, in 1944.

In classic Hollywood style *Winterbottom* distinguishes between the “good Brit” – the thoughtful, good-natured Wilkin, who wants to engage with the non-violent strand of Zionism – and the “bad Brit”, the dead-eyed colonial police officer who simply believes in violence, torture and suppression. This latter is Geoffrey Morton, played by Harry Melling, who gained a footnote in history after being accused of shooting Zionist Avraham Stern in unclear circumstances. The difference between them is important, although in real life, working closely together as they were, Wilkin and Morton might not have been quite as different as all that.

The movie is costumed, staged and acted with intelligence and care although, after a while, whenever you see a street scene in wide shot, quiet for a few seconds, you tense for the inevitable bomb-blast. In 1930’s Palestine, the Zionists are the terrorists. The central Romeo-and-Juliet love story is oddly subdued and opaque, with some unrelaxed line-readings, and so the political irony and even tragedy of their relationship is submerged also. I can imagine David Lean giving Thomas and Shoshana’s love affair 10 times more throttle, although *Winterbottom*’s concern is for clarity and context, not emotional fireworks.

Douglas Booth plays Wilkin, and Shoshana is played by the very stylish Russian actor Irina Starshenbaum

Available on the BBC Radio 4 I-Player:

Alice Roberts on Desert Island Discs: The former President of Humanists UK and presenter of ‘Digging Up Britain’ chooses her favourite discs to take to a desert island. In between the records, Alice talks candidly about her Humanism. This programme was on at 11.15 am on Sunday 24th March and repeated at 9.00 am on Friday 29th March

In Our Time – 9.00 am Thursday 22nd March: The historical debate programme discussed ‘Julian the Apostate.’ Melvyn Bragg and guests discuss the last pagan ruler of the Roman Empire. Fifty years after Constantine the Great converted to Christianity and introduced a policy of tolerating the faith across the empire, Julian (c.331 - 363 AD) aimed to promote paganism instead, branding Constantine the worst of all his predecessors. Julian was a philosopher-emperor in the mould of Marcus Aurelius and was noted in his lifetime for his letters and his satires, and it was his surprising success as a general in his youth in Gaul that had propelled him to power barely twenty years after a rival had slaughtered his family. Julian’s pagan mission and his life were brought to a sudden end while on campaign against the Sasanian Empire in the east, but he left so much written evidence of his ideas that he remains one of the most intriguing of all the Roman emperors and a hero to the humanists of the Enlightenment. There is also an excellent novel on this period ‘Julian’ by Gore Vidal

Humanist History 1963

I am indebted to Susannah Garrett for passing on this interesting excerpt from a newspaper cutting from 1963. Which states:

“Following a debate at the Umbrella Club, Coventry, on a motion ‘That this house believes that modern man is outgrowing Christianity’, a Coventry Humanist Group has been formed.

The inaugural meeting will take place at the Great Meeting House tomorrow. Mr GD Cuddon, the secretary tells me that the group will offer opportunities for debate and discussion on the development of a constructive alternative to man’s religious concepts.

He said that these subjects had considerable topicality with the publication of the Bishop of Woolwich’s book, ‘Honest to God’. It is now proposed that the group will participate in voluntary social services. To help with this, the members will co-operate with any religious or political organisation

The group is affiliated to the Ethical Union, which is due to be incorporated into the British Humanist Association on May 11th”

I feel that this is something that we should follow up and develop our own history of Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists. I would welcome any further information related to our history.

Film Preview:

Ghostbusters - Frozen Empire: When the discovery of an ancient artefact unleashes an evil force, Ghostbusters new and old must join forces to protect their home and save the world from a second ice age.

Baltimore: Based on the life of Rose Dugdale, a British heiress-turned-IRA member, played by Imogen Poots. In April 1974, she masterminds an audacious art heist at Russborough House, the residence of Sir Alfred Beit. The film's title refers to the village of Baltimore in County Cork.

Monkey Man: An action thriller film that marks the directorial debut of Dev Patel, who stars in the lead role. An anonymous young man, sets on a journey to hunt down a group of corrupt leaders who are responsible for his mother's death. His journey of exacting revenge soon makes him to become the saviour of the poor and powerless people, who are tormented by the corrupt leaders

Mothers Instincts: A taut, stylish and unnerving psychological thriller. In 1960s America, suburban housewives and best friends Alice (Jessica Chastain) and Céline (Anne Hathaway) seem to have it all. But when a tragic accident shatters the harmony of their lives, guilt, suspicion and paranoia begin to unravel their sisterly bond and a gripping battle of wills develops, revealing the darker side of friendship and maternal love.

Kung Fu Panda 4: Po needs to find a new dragon warrior. One for the grandchildren?

Seize Them: British mediaeval comedy film. an arrogant queen played by Aimee Lou Wood becomes a fugitive in her own land after being toppled from her throne by a charismatic revolutionary played by Nicola Coughlan

Red Island: Set against the political instability of Madagascar following the country's attainment of independence in 1960. It follows the life of 8-year-old Thomas, the son of a French military family

Frida: A 2024 documentary film about the life of Mexican painter Frida Kahlo.

Back to Black: Biographical drama film based on the life of British singer-songwriter Amy Winehouse, played by Marisa Abela. Directed by Sam Taylor-Johnson and written by Matt Greenhalgh, the film also stars Jack O'Connell, Eddie Marsan, and Lesley Manville. The film delves into the life and career of Winehouse, beginning with her early days in the early 2000s as a North London jazz musician and culminating in her rise to fame

The New Boy: Australian drama which follows a young Aboriginal Australian orphan boy who is brought into a Christian monastery, run by a renegade nun, where he begins to question his faith and loyalty to his heritage.

The Delinquents: A Spanish comedy heist. An invisible bank clerk in Buenos Aires. Over dinner with his colleague he tells him that he stole exactly \$650,000, which is exactly double what he would have made until his retirement. He plans to turn himself in, but not before offering to split the money and to hide it for the duration of his incarceration

The Sweet East: A satirical and surrealist comedy road film.

Macbeth: BAFTA Award winner Ralph Fiennes and Olivier Award winner Indira Varma star in a brand-new production of William Shakespeare's Macbeth.

Still on the Circuit:

Bob Marley: One Love - A biographical drama film based on the life of the reggae singer and songwriter, from his rise to fame in the mid-1970s up until his death in 1981. The film stars Kingsley Ben-Adir as Marley, alongside Lashana Lynch as Rita Marley, and James Norton as Chris Blackwell. An excellent bio-pic of the iconic singer

Wicked Little Letters - A British black comedy mystery film with an all-star cast including Olivia Colman, Jessie Buckley, Anjana Vasan, Eileen Atkins, and Timothy Spall. Based on a true scandal that stunned 1920s England, the story centres on two neighbours in the seaside town of Littlehampton. A series of obscene letters begin to target the other residents, with suspicion falling upon one person. As the outrageous letters continue to escalate. She risks losing both her freedom and custody of her daughter. A female Police Officer is determined to find the real culprit.

Dune: Part Two – An epic sci-fi fiction film and sequel to *Dune* (2021), it is the second of a two-part adaptation of the 1965 novel *Dune* by Frank Herbert, and follows Paul Atreides as he unites with

the Fremen people of the desert planet Arrakis to wage war against House Harkonnen. Starring Austin Butler, Christopher Walken, Rebecca Ferguson and Josh Brolin.

Hamlet - Two-time Oscar nominee Ian McKellen stars in this thrilling and uniquely modern take on Shakespeare's classic tragedy.

TV Preview:

Saturday 30th March: A good night for fans of Ella Fitzgerald!

17.05 – Channel 5: Ocean's Eleven - Action crime caper starring George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Matt Damon and Julia Roberts. Supercool crook Danny Ocean has only just been released from prison, but is already planning his next job.

20.35 – BBC2: Ella Fitzgerald in 10 Pictures

21.30 – BBC2: Ella Fitzgerald at the BBC

22.35 – BBC2: Ella Fitzgerald's Other Show

23.15 – BBC2: Ella Fitzgerald at Ronnie Scott's

00.45 – BBC2: Ella Fitzgerald Swings – Followed at 02.30 Ella Fitzgerald Sings

21.25 – BBC1: Traces – Start of the second series of this crime drama series

00.45 – Channel 4: Ad Astra - Science-fiction drama starring Brad Pitt and Tommy Lee Jones. In the late 21st century, life on Earth is threatened by a series of mysterious cosmic surges.

Sunday 31st March:

19.00 – BBC1: Mammals – The start of a new David Attenborough nature series

21.00 – BBC1: This Town - Drama by Peaky Blinders creator Steven Knight, following young people drawn into the ska and two-tone scene in the Midlands during the early 1980s.

21.00 – ITV1: Passenger – Another episode of this thrilling drama series

21.40 – BBC3: La La Land - Romantic musical starring Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone. In Los Angeles, a pianist and an actress endure an endless cycle of bar-room gigs and auditions in the hope they can turn their ambitions into a professional career.

22.00 – ITV1: Apocalypse Now – Directed by Francis Ford Coppola, this epic war drama starring Martin Sheen, Marlon Brando and Robert Duvall. **(Repeated Thursday at 22.15 on BBC4)**

00.15 – BBC4: Hemmingway – A documentary serialisation of the writer's life. Next episode at 01.15

Monday 1st April:

22.00 – BBC2: Woman in Gold - Drama based on a true story, starring Helen Mirren and Ryan Reynolds. In the late 1930s, Austrian-born Maria Altmann and her husband flee to the United States when the Nazis arrive in Vienna. Decades later, the now-widowed Maria discovers artwork belonging to her family and stolen by the Nazis has been obtained by the Austrian government, notably Gustav Klimt's *Woman in Gold*, a portrait of her aunt Adele.

22.00 – BBC3: Easy A - Comedy starring Emma Stone. When a little white lie about losing her virginity makes the previously anonymous girl the talk of school, she decides to exploit her new-found notoriety to improve her social standing.

23.40 – BBC2: The Mercy - Drama based on a true story, starring Colin Firth and Rachel Weisz. In October 1968, an amateur yachtsman sets out on a round-the-world race. But the event proves more difficult than he had anticipated

Tuesday 2nd April:

22.40 – BBC1: The Dropout – Another 2 episodes of this intriguing drama series - 23.30

23.15 – Mary Queen of Scots - Historical drama starring Saoirse Ronan and Margot Robbie. In 1561, young Catholic queen Mary returns to Scotland to reclaim her throne, which threatens the status of her cousin, Elizabeth.

Wednesday 3rd April:

21.00 – Channel 4: Professor T – Another episode of the comedy drama series starring Ben Miller

Thursday 4th April:

20.00 – BBC4: On the Waterfront - Classic crime drama starring Marlon Brando and Rod Steiger. One-time boxing hopeful idles his time away on New York's dockside, protected by his brother while "working" as a strong-arm man for the corrupt leader of the dockers' union.

21.00 – BBC2: Robin Williams in 10 Pictures - One of the greatest stand-up comics of all time and a Hollywood recognisable actors. Can a handful of photos uncover new truths about his life?

21.00 – Channel 4: Taskmaster – Another episode of the comedy series

00.15 – BBC1: The Blair Witch Project - Supernatural horror starring Heather Donahue. In 1994, three students went into the Maryland woods to make a film about the legend of the murderous "Blair Witch". They never returned, but a year later their cameras are recovered, complete with terrifying footage of their experiences.

Friday 5th April:

21.00 – BBC1: Have I Got News for You - a welcome return of the comedy satire show

21.00 – BBC3: Blinded By The Light - Comedy drama starring Viveik Kalra and Kulvinder Ghir. Luton, 1987: outcast Javed, the son of Pakistani immigrants, is introduced to the music of Bruce Springsteen. Through his love of music, Javed grows in confidence and finds the inspiration to pursue an interest in writing

21.00 -BBC4: Marvin Gaye: Live at Montreux – The late great soul singer from a 1980 concert

23.00 – ITV1: Casino Royale (1967) – No, not the Daniel Craig version, this is a comedy spoof starring David Niven as 007

23.05 – BBC2: I Tonya - Comedy drama based on a true story, starring Margot Robbie and Sebastian Stan. Figure skater Tonya Harding defies her detractors to rise to the top only to suffer an ignominious fall when she becomes embroiled in a plot to attack her rival, Nancy Kerrigan.

23.05 – Channel 4: American Pie - Four teenage boys pledge to lose their virginity before their high-school prom, but their efforts have hilarious and outrageous consequences.

23.35 – Barry White in Concert – Another concert from one of the late all-time greats of soul music

Saturday 6th April:

21.00 – Channel 4: The Lost City - Action comedy adventure starring Sandra Bullock, Channing Tatum and Daniel Radcliffe. A bestselling author is promoting the latest in her series of adventure novels when she is kidnapped by a billionaire who believes she knows the location of a lost treasure.

21.00 – BBC4: Everything Went Fine – Exceptional drama on the process of assisted dying. Shortly after he suffers a stroke, a father asks his daughter if she will help him end his life. It's a difficult request for a daughter to take on, but, as she discovers, it's also just another facet of her complicated family life. A Must-See film!

21.35 – BBC1: Traces – Another episode of the crime thriller

23.10 – Channel 4: Under Siege - Action thriller starring Steven Seagal and Tommy Lee Jones. The *Missouri*, the US Navy's biggest battleship, is hijacked by ruthless criminals, intent on stealing its lucrative nuclear arsenal.

23.55 – BBC1: Captain Phillips - Drama based on a true story, starring Tom Hanks. A tense stand-off ensues between Captain Richard Phillips and Muse, the leader of Somali pirates who hijack his container ship. But both men are also subjected to outside political forces.

Cartoons:



Some Funnies to Finish With:

Old man struggling with a jigsaw asks his neighbour for help. She says, "What's it supposed to be when finished?" " A rooster he replies, "she sighs and says," Let's put the cornflakes back in the box and try again later. "

Boss: Where you yesterday? There was no-one to cover your shift

Me: I'm sorry, I was becoming a father yesterday

Boss: Congratulations – I am very happy for you – Is it a boy or a girl?

Me: I will let you know in 9 months' time

Boss: You're fired!

I said to the travel agent, 'I'm looking for a relaxing holiday in Romania'

He said 'Bucharest?' I said, 'I'm trying to.'

I went to the pub and I promised to have 2 pints and to be home by 10

These days, I usually get those two numbers mixed up

I have just sold my favourite homing pigeon on EBay for the 22nd time

I went to the doctors. He said to me, 'What is the problem?'

I said, 'I have broken my arm in several places'

He said, 'Well, don't go to those places!'

Apparently, soul singer Bill Withers has a brother called 'Bear'

He wrote the music you hear on the phone when you have been put on hold

Sadly, my wife fell on to the airport baggage carousel – Fortunately, she came round quite quickly

I told the bank manager that I wanted to open a joint account

He asked, 'Who with?' I said, 'The customer with the most money!'

I usually keep an empty bottle of milk in the fridge – just in case anyone wants a black coffee

I got fired from the calendar factory. All I did was take a day off.

When I was in the army, the sergeant major said to me, 'What does the word surrender mean?'

I said, 'I don't know – I give up!'

Do people who drive electric cars listen to AC/DC? Or something current?

Why is there always a shop selling luggage at the airport?

Who do they think is going on holiday with armfuls of clothes?

Saying, damn it! We'll pack when we get there

April Fool's Day: The day GB News will fool their watchers by sneaking in one properly researched, factually correct story. Be aware!