

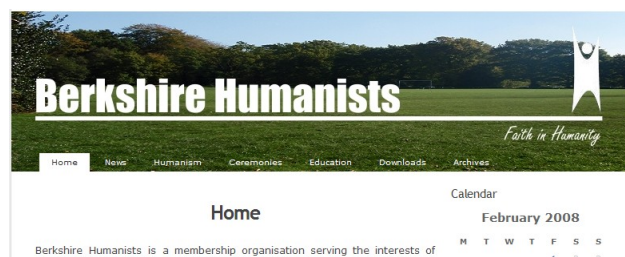


THE FESTIVE MEAL BLUBECKERS JANUARY 12th 2008

Arline took this photo and will be pleased to make colour copies.



THE NEW WEBSITE HAS ITS BASIC DESIGN



....and is now under 'beta testing'. If you wish to contribute with design suggestions, please phone us and we will tell you how to access the site (which thanks to much work and a donation for costs by Robert Ede is now up and "live"). BH plans will ALWAYS remember that not everyone can access or want to access information this way although it is natural that this will be increasingly our way of exchanging views about and outside meetings.

SO THERE ARE NO PLANS (EVER) TO CLOSE DOWN THIS NEWSLETTER

Our plans include making it very interactive and interesting locally with a definite possibility of producing our own PODCASTS. These are "mini broadcasts" produced, voiced and distributed by ourselves via the internet or CD or cassette tape. It will be our very own "soapbox" for people who want to communicate that way - so get planning your script!!

Get Ready To Meet YourHumanist celebrant

Are you prepared to talk about the death of a loved one or your own funeral? Do you plan a Humanist wedding or baby naming? You must have lots of questions about this. There has been a very pleasing response to an invitation to all the Berkshire officiants who are on the BHA website to come and meet us in April. Title, format and venue for the meeting TBD.

WHAT IS BH response to ...?

The faith communities in Reading provide reading with:

- At least 45 Community Halls
- The equivalent of between 250 and 400 full time staff
- The value of the staff is in the order of £5million a year
- From which somewhere between 5,000 and 15,000 people benefit (£1000 to £333 each).

This does not include volunteer work for secular organisations, chaplaincy work, ancient charities, almshouses and faith based schools. In trying to improve our own services to secular people in Berkshire, BH have been trying to use the award winning help on offer from Reading Volunteer Action to see what funds are available as grants and what free training will help BH. The government seems at present on a determined course to give more money to the faith based organisations and those who are secular and in need are consequently in line to miss out. They are doing this with council help in a very open and competitive process. Training for tendering and fund raising is very business-like and is available to US. The solution to this unfair way of distributing money is surely largely (but not totally) in our own hands. WE know that many of our BH members do voluntary work in secular organisations but anyone with experience in working with charities and other community organisations might consider directing some of their knowledge and advice inwards toward us at BH.

'Celebrating Linda Smith' coming to a Berkshire Theatre Norden Farm Centre for the Arts

Thursday 8th May 19: 30 to 21:50
Altwood Road, Maidenhead SL6 4PF
Box Office 01628 788997
e-mail: boxoffice@nordenfarm.org
£13.50 Standard £12 Concession

Fellow professional performers will be paying tribute to Linda Smith, late President of the BHA, in a brand new stage production reuniting Linda's comic genius with her audiences. A National tour (March-May 2008) marks Linda's outstanding contribution to the world of comedy and is designed to coincide with the annual campaign to raise awareness of Ovarian Cancer and to raise funds for crucial clinical research in to the disease.

Celebrating Linda Smith is a unique show featuring a hilarious selection of stand-up, monologues and sketches from the career of the late great comedian and writer Linda Smith. Her partner, Warren Lakin, is joined on stage by actors Kate Rutter and Mike McCarthy with special guest Carol Grimes to pay tribute to one of Britain's best loved and wittiest performers. This will be the May Berkshire Humanist Meeting See You there?

NO Committee YET!!!

BH are very grateful for the help given by Pam, Rob, John, Hugh and Alan but following an invitation to attend a first committee meeting the only people to turn up were two new-to-meetings members, Stuart and Kate Cockerell.

The non event of a committee meeting was turned into a very pleasant evening of catching up on BH activities together with humanist views and experience from the USA. Their Humanist search was initiated by contact with the Richard Dawkins Foundation. Thank you both so much for coming.

Tentative PROGRESS IN WOKINGHAM SACRE!!

After many years of battling to gain membership of this 'ring fenced' august body, David Williams has now some hope of membership from the new chair Michael Freeman. It involves a new constitution (after admitting a Buddhist member) and starting a prolonged investigation of BH. Watch this space.

INCREASED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT REPRESENTATION.

Another of our members, Alan Stuart has volunteered for this scheme and has now received the training in London. He will give us a short account/impression of his experiences and any plans for the future at the next Meeting.



Enquiries:
David McKnight
Group Secretary
4 Cherwell Road, Emmer Green, Reading RG4 8QH
Tel: 0118 947 6477
Email: membership.berkshumanists@ntlworld.com
Web Site: <http://www.berkshirehumanist.org.uk>