



## Coventry and Warwickshire Humanists Newsletter October 2024

Dear Fellow Humanists

Welcome to the October Newsletter of Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists. It has been a very interesting month with some interesting meetings and events and both sad and pleasant news about some of our members. We also have some interesting local events and news for the next few months. On the national arena, it now looks possible that the issue of assisted dying will be debated in Parliament in the next few weeks with MP's having a 'free vote' without a party whip. More about this later. Hopefully, by the time you read this Newsletter, you will have turned your clocks and watches back one hour – which signifies the end of British summertime. A period that I must admit that I do not look forward to as much as the Spring clocks going forward. The end of summer for me reflects a sad time, with the hours of daylight getting shorter and the weather becoming much more cold and with a sometimes hostile and dismal climate. Nevertheless, as Humanists we must make the most of the one life that we have regardless of our trepidation of the weather.

I hope that you enjoy the rest of the Autumn weeks, and I will look forward to seeing you at future meetings.

Brian Goredema-Braid

Chair of Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists

### Important News:

#### **Susette Garrett 1932-2024**

At the Autumn Social in September, we heard that a long-standing member of Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists Susette Garrett had suffered a stroke and was taken into hospital. We learned on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October that Susette had sadly passed away in hospital. Susette was a regular attendee at the Humanist meetings. She was also a very independently minded and forthright woman. Susette did not own a mobile telephone, neither did she use the internet or email. She was very much reliant on direct personal contact which makes her in these days to be very much a unique and independent woman.

#### **Susette Garrett Funeral Arrangements:**

**Tuesday 12th November, 10 am**, North Chapel, Oakley Woods Crematorium, CV33 9QP, taken by a Humanist Celebrant, Victoria Denning. Afterwards (time to be confirmed) at Kenilworth Cricket Club, Warwick Rd, CV8 1FE, for refreshments.

The arrangements are being coordinated by Susette's cousin who lives near our members, Glyn and Heather Evans. In order to get an estimate of numbers for catering, please email Glyn and Heather Evans: [eggghen@eggghen.plus.com](mailto:eggghen@eggghen.plus.com), if you are going to the wake, and Glyn and Heather will pass on the information. Thank you.

I personally did not know much about Susette's life, in this respect I am very grateful to Martyn Darby for this brief obituary.

### **Susette Garrett – Obituary – Courtesy of Martyn Darby**

Susette was Born in the Bristol area in 1932.

She attended Bedford College, London University, which was for women. Susette majored in mathematics.

During World War 2, Susette lived in Worcestershire.

In 1954, Susette worked at Armstrong Whitley, as a programmer on the old valve-based Ferranti Pegasus computer. She worked at Automotive Products from 1968 until accepting redundancy and taking early retirement in 1982. Susette lived in rented accommodation in Belvedere Road, Coventry, from 1954 until 1961. Then she bought her brand-new bungalow at 39 Thornby Avenue, Kenilworth, where she lived for the rest of her life.

Until the Beeching railway closures in the mid-1960s, Susette travelled into Coventry for work by train from the original Kenilworth station.

For many years, Susette had a long-time partner or boyfriend in George Cudden, a Patents Attorney who lived in his own house in Ainsbury Road, Coventry, all his life. When he died, some eight years ago (maybe longer ago), having no family, he left his entire estate to Susette. It was then that Susette decided to join the Humanists.

Susette openly admitted that she had never had maternal instincts, so never had children. Despite having a lifelong partner, she never married. She trenchantly remarked “why does anyone need a piece of paper?”.

#### **Heather Evans included these memories of Susette:**



Attached is the picture taken by Cyril Hobbins in Warwick Road, about 2015. He is well known in Kenilworth for taking photographs of residents with character! Glyn Evans has kindly removed himself from the photo to make it more suitable for an obituary.

I'm afraid we know very little about Susette Garrett. I was approached by the Saundersons (Chris is her next of kin) as after her death they had checked her phone for recorded messages and found mine offering to take her to the Humanists social event that morning.)

Susette read the Guardian like us and often phoned me for clues about the day's Codeword puzzle or commented on amusing letters there. Glyn, when passing her house and seeing her in the garden, would have a good chat with her, mainly on global warming, politics, women's rights, etc. She didn't like food to be wasted and always had a 'doggy bag' on hand, was a keen advocate of a clean environment and would go around Kenilworth with big bags to pick up litter – even on Kenilworth U3A rambles!

If anyone else wishes to share any memories of Susette or has any further information of photographs, please do not hesitate to contact me to include them in the November Newsletter.

#### **Audrey Raishbrook:**

On a more pleasant note, it is good to hear that another long-standing member of our group, Audrey Raishbrook is now thankfully back to full health after a painful fall and a summer of illnesses. Audrey's regular poem is back and later in this Newsletter. In the meantime, Audrey has written about her recent illness and stay in hospital in her own inimitable style!

*“Oh No!... Not that ‘irritable bowel syndrome’ again. Not that it was diagnosed, just my desperate mantra.*

*Off to bed, fully dressed (OUCH) call eldest daughter. Not that I am interested in the seniority of an offspring at this stage. She's the nearest. Somehow a neighbour appears at the bedroom door. Soon after the paramedics and I am into the back of the ambulance after a pain suppressant. A ride to hospital. Here my memory becomes hazy.*

*Next, I find myself slid into a well-lit tunnel which resulted in discovery of ovaries at variance with the norm. So, nuts to my homemade diagnosis!*

*My stay on the ambulance trolley is swapped for an 'all singing and dancing' hospital bed (intriguing, I would say!) The next week is spent in the 'gynae' ward (my newly acquired status) in the care of those nurses, porters and manoeuvres of beds round and down the corridors. Oh yes, I forgot, I did have keyhole surgery to deal with my wayward ovaries. Just three tiny (melt in a month) knots.*

*Lots of delightful visitors and lots of interesting goodies, but sorry to say that my appetite forsook me. Not to worry, successive visitors dealt with the surfeit.*

*Present State: Making the most of my protracted convalescence. (and if it is not too early) wishing everyone a healthy and Happy Christmas"*

Audrey Raishbrook

### **Meetings:**

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October:** This was an excellent and well-attended meeting with Madeleine Goodall the Humanist Heritage Co-ordinator for Humanists UK as the main speaker. Madeleine gave an excellent overview of the Humanist heritage in Coventry and Warwickshire with various groups and individuals who were known as rationalists and free-thinkers. I was most interested in the establishment of a Mechanics Institute in Coventry, much to the suspicions of local priests. I was also intrigued to find out that the famous black American anti-slave abolitionist Frederick Douglass had also addressed a meeting at St Mary's Hall in Coventry in 1847. In his speech, it is reported that he said,

*"If you want to know an American, find out the opposite of all his professions. When he talks of freedom, remember his millions of slaves. Recollect when he talks of religion, that his Church is built on skulls, and that his humanity is bespoke by the fetters and the groans of his victims."*

I must admit that it has got me enthused into exploring more about our Humanist Heritage.

**Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November:** Our main speaker at this meeting will be Terri O'Sullivan who is the Apostate Services Development Officer for Faith to Faithless, a service of Humanists UK. This promises to be a fascinating meeting. Terri runs a peer support group and co-ordinates social events for the ex-religious all over the UK. In 2007, she founded XJW Friends, a support and social group for former Jehovah's Witnesses. Again, a very interesting topic, especially for anyone who has left or is considering leaving a religion.

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December:** Our annual Yuletide Social which will be at the Waverley Centre. As in previous Yuletide Socials, we usually ask people to bring in some food to share. We will draw up a list to make sure we have a mixture of foods. In previous years we have had a sing-song, some games and a quiz. There will be more about the arrangements in the next Newsletter.

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January and Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> February:** As in previous years, the January and February meetings have been online through Zoom. We will give you the Zoom link in the November and December Newsletters and sent out individually. At one of those meetings we will hope to have a link to Clare Elcombe Webber the Head of Humanist Care. More about this in the next Newsletter.

**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March:** This will be our first 'in-person' meeting of 2025. We have Geoff Sallis from Humanist Climate Change to address this meeting. There will be more information in future Newsletters.

### **Subscriptions:**

Thanks to everyone who has paid their subscription. If you haven't yet, we are asking for an annual subscription of £15 per person – but £20 if you can afford it. If you feel able to contribute more,

then any additional donations would be welcome. (We like to make donations to the Uganda Schools as well as individual ones.) If you can arrange a standing order to our bank account that would be great, otherwise a cheque made out to Coventry and Warwickshire Humanists can be sent to our Treasurer Adrian Davis. Or if you are going to be at the next meeting, you can give Adrian a cheque or cash.

The bank details are:

Account:  
Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists  
Account Number: 00982911  
Sort Code: 20-23-55

Or send your cheque to:

Adrian Davis  
Flat 14 Ladbroke Hall  
Ladbroke  
Southam  
Warwickshire  
CV47 2DF

#### **GRAM 2024:**

Earlier this month Adrian Davis attended the Humanists UK GRAM:

GRAM stands for Group Representatives' Annual Meeting and it is organised by Humanists UK to bring together people from the various regional Humanist groups with representatives from Humanists UK to discuss how we can all work together better. I attended this year's meeting which was held in London on Saturday October 5<sup>th</sup>, along with about 40 other people.

The day was divided into eight sessions, with talks and presentations from local groups as well as from Humanists UK. We started with some presentations from local groups talking about how they organise their meetings and events. There was a lot of variation in the size of local groups, the types of meetings they hold and the events they put on. Some groups organise 'Hustings' whenever there is a local or national election, inviting candidates from the main political parties to come and answer questions at a public meeting. Many groups have a regular monthly meeting, some in person and some only on-line. Some do not have regular meetings but organise speakers and social events (Sunday brunch, theatre visits, walks) on an ad-hoc basis. Lancaster Humanists have a member who is a University chaplain, and they are able to use university facilities to have "hybrid" meetings, with some people attending in person and some on-line. Several groups are using "Meetup", a website and app which allow you to publicise your meetings in the local area. Some groups have a theme for a series of meetings – otherwise known as a "Big Think".

As a Partner Group of Humanists UK, we have access to various resources on-line including lots of "How-to" guides, information about who to contact at Humanists UK for enquiries and use of Google Meet for on-line meetings without a time limit.

After lunch we had sessions on how to use social media, an update from Jeremy Rodell on the current religion and belief landscape in the UK (and what this means for Humanists) and some hints and tips on campaigning.

We also had a talk from Bristol Humanists and Maddy Goodall from Humanists UK about how they got a blue plaque put up to honour Emma Martin (1812-1851) who was an extraordinary Humanist activist, freethinker and midwife in Bristol. The plaque was unveiled at a public ceremony with Alice Roberts and the mayor of Bristol.

Adrian Davis

#### **Assisted Dying – First and Second Reading in Parliament:**

The Assisted Dying Bill has had its First Reading. On 16 October, 2024, Kim Leadbeater MBE, the Labour MP for Spen Valley, introduced her Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill to the House of Commons, which means it has had its First Reading. The Bill will 'allow adults who are terminally ill,

subject to safeguards and protections, to request and be provided with assistance to end their own life; and for connected purposes’.

The Second Reading will be on Friday 29 November. Humanists UK has welcomed the introduction of the Bill. The Assisted Dying Bill will apply to England and Wales only. A private member’s bill in Scotland by Liam McArthur MSP has been introduced in the Scottish Parliament. A members’ debate and vote in the Senedd (the Welsh Parliament) will also be held on Wednesday 23 October on assisted dying for the terminally ill and incurably suffering.



*Kim Leadbetter MP*

**Commenting on the first reading Andrew Copson, Chief Executive of Humanists UK, said:**



‘This really is a historic moment. There have been many assisted dying bills brought to Parliament before over the years. But now, with three-quarters of British adults in favour and a brand-new Parliament that is the most progressive ever, there’s a real chance that at last, politicians will do what the public has wanted them to do for many years now and deliver this compassionate reform so that people at the end of their lives can die with dignity at a time of their choosing.’

‘At Humanists UK, we’re committed to supporting this vital legislation. We will draw on decades of policy, research, and international experience to ensure Parliamentarians can address the key questions around eligibility, process, and safeguards.’

**Scope of the Bill:** Some of the most courageous and determined campaigners we have ever met and worked with at Humanists UK have been incurably suffering people and their families, with conditions from multiple sclerosis, to Huntington’s, to locked-in syndrome, fighting for the right to assistance to die with dignity at a time of their choosing.

It is our longstanding policy of many decades that they should have that right and we’ve been proud to work with so many of them for many years, including in the last few weeks as they have attempted to secure a Bill that would offer them the dignity they deserve.

However, the Bill is now set in stone as one in which eligibility for assisted dying will be restricted to the terminally ill. No further debate on the merits of such an approach can change that.

This is still a historic Bill which would give thousands of suffering people the choice and dignity they desire and deserve and we are committed to working for its success.



Parliamentarians will have in front of them vital questions about eligibility, process, and safeguards, that it will be the duty of all of society to help them address. Drawing on our own decades of policy and research in this field, and on the best of the international experience of the 31 legal jurisdictions in the world that are ahead of us, we at Humanists UK look forward to supporting Kim and all legislators with this once-in-a-generation legislation.

Humanists defend the right of each individual to live by their own personal values, and the freedom to make decisions about their own life so long as this does not result in harm to others. Humanists do not share the attitudes to death and dying held by some religious believers, in particular that the manner and time of death are for a deity to decide, and that interference in the course of nature is



unacceptable. We firmly uphold the right to life but we recognise that this right carries with it the right of each individual to make their own judgement about whether their life should be prolonged in the face of pointless suffering.

We recognise that any assisted dying law must contain strong safeguards, but the international evidence from countries where assisted dying is legal shows that safeguards can be effective. We also believe that the choice of assisted dying should not be considered an alternative to palliative care, but should be offered together as in many other countries.

**Here are six reasons why Humanists UK support an assisted dying law:**

***1) Dignity: Assisted dying would give people control at the end of life***

It's about making sure that every terminally ill or incurably suffering person has control over their own body. The right to die is intrinsically tied to the right to bodily autonomy, one of the basic rights that define what it means to be human. Without a compassionate law, the decision does not lie in the hands of who it affects most. As our patron, Terry Pratchett, the assisted dying campaigner and author said: 'Either we have control over our lives, or we do not.'

***2) Safety: Tried and tested assisted dying safeguard regimes around the world***

In the last 80 years of having humane assisted dying laws on planet Earth, countless societies have debated and formulated well-written laws to protect the vulnerable from potential abuse or misuse. We in the UK are in the lucky position of having a global survey of different legal frameworks to learn and choose from and adapt to our legal framework. In recent months, a new digital information war front opened up around safeguards in Canada, often by presenting cases of people who applied for assisted dying (and were rejected) or who were informally told by rude people to try and get it (but who would never have been eligible). We and others have published reports trying to correct the factual record on this. We've also looked closely at how the safeguards in Canada could be improved, and how the UK can do much better.

***3) Empathy: Assisted dying would alleviate unnecessary suffering, indignity, and fear***

The stories of assisted dying legal claimants are well-known and heart-wrenching. Take, for example, the stories of Humanists UK members Noel Conway, Omid T, Paul Lamb, and Tony Nicklinson. But these stories are just a drop in the ocean, and there are thousands more people in similar situations around the UK. A humane assisted dying law isn't just about granting individuals a choice; it's about *listening* to people who do not want to endure prolonged agony, fear, and distress. As our patron, the right-to-die campaigner, Dr Henry Marsh, said: 'As a doctor for over 40 years, I know that dying can be deeply distressing for both patient and family, despite what the opponents of assisted dying claim, however good the palliative care.'

***4) Compassion: Assisted dying would allow people to die on their own terms***

The idea of dying in a state of relative comfort, surrounded by our loved ones and our most cherished possessions, is something many of us have in mind for the end of our lives. A humane assisted dying law, with clear safeguards, could make such a reasonable vision a reality for almost everyone who wants it. Everyone deserves 'a good death' when the time comes.

Sadly, under the current law, we know that many people choose to end their lives much sooner than they otherwise would if they had the legal option to access assisted dying. This need not be the case.

***5) Clarity: Assisted dying with safeguards would give legal clarity to families***

With our current laws and ambiguous prosecution guidelines, friends, family, and loved ones of a terminally ill or incurably suffering person sometimes face police suspicion, investigation, and arrest should their loved one travel to Switzerland of their own free will to have an assisted death, or if they attempt suicide in their own home out of desperation.

A compassionate assisted dying law would, through the very safeguards we campaign for, give greater legal clarity to families whose relatives want assisted dying, and take away the threat that a family tragedy will be compounded further. Those precious last months and years together could be spent focused on quality time and making memories, with fewer sleepless nights and worries at an already painful time.

## **6) Democracy: It's what the majority of people want**

The evidence suggests that over 90% of the UK population want to see a change in the law. It's evident that the current legal framework is out of touch with public sentiment, and change is long overdue. England and Wales are quickly becoming the outlier among developed nations by refusing to adopt a more compassionate law. Scotland, Jersey, and the Isle of Man are already working towards a change in the law.

We think terminally ill and incurably suffering people should have the right in law to die, with dignity, in a time and manner of their own choosing. And most people agree!

### **An Evening with Richard Dawkins – Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October at Warwick Arts Centre**



I attended this fascinating evening as it advertised not to miss the opportunity to be part of an enlightening experience and to hear about Professor Dawkins upcoming book – ‘The Genetic Book of the Dead’ (A Darwinian Reverie). The book delves into the transformative potential of DNA in our understanding of evolution. As it says in the introduction, *“In this ground-breaking new approach to the evolution of all life, Richard Dawkins shows how the body, behaviour and genes of every living creature can be read as a book – an archive of the worlds of its ancestors”*.

This was also advertised as his last ever tour. An aim to connect with audiences in unscripted conversations touching on topics from science to religion, life on earth and beyond. With his trademark honesty and wit, Dawkins promises an evening with wisdom and insight.

Overall this was an interesting evening. However, most of the discussion was regarding only the new book. It is a bit similar to a rock music concert – Bruce Springsteen, the Rolling Stones or even Taylor Swift etc. You attend the concert because you like the music they have already performed – they tour because they have a new album and they want to publicise it. And this was the case with the ‘Dawkins concert’ – Rather than so much discussion about genetics and DNA – I wanted more on ‘The God Delusion’. However, the pre-arranged audience questions were good and enabled Dawkins to expand on the dialogue. His last ever tour – I was glad to be there.

What did concern me though, was that the Butterworth Hall at WAC was packed to capacity (1200). Most of the audience were middle aged with a good few younger people in their 20's. I am making the broad assumption that most of the audience were either atheists or agnostics, which caused me to ask the question, ‘why are they not members of Humanists UK or even Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists? During the summer I did contact the management at WAC to see if we could have a small stall in the foyer with a few Humanists application forms etc. Unfortunately, WAC management informed me that I would have to contact Richard Dawkins agent to seek permission. I did search for any information about his agent, but to no avail. I did leave a message on one of Dawkins Message Board, but I did not receive a reply.

### **Poetry Corner – Audrey Raishbrook:**

I am pleased that Audrey is now feeling much better. We have missed her poetry selections. Here she is back on form with American poet William Carlos Williams – ‘Smell’ where he admits his indiscretions, using a clever analogy of his nose, and drawing on the Whitmanian tradition of sensing and being a part of everything.

### **Smell – William Carlos Williams**

Oh strong-ridged and deeply hollowed  
Nose of mine! What will you not be smelling?  
What tactless asses we are, you and I, boney nose  
Always indiscriminate, always unashamed  
And now it is souring flowers of the bedraggled  
Poplars: a festering pulp on the wet earth  
Beneath them. With what deep thirst  
We quicken our desires  
To that rank odour of a passing springtime!  
Can you not be decent? Can you not reserve your ardours  
For something less unlovely? What girl will care  
For us, do you think, if we continue in these ways?  
Must you taste everything? Must you know everything?  
Must you have a part in everything?

### **Film Preview:**

**The Room Next Door:** It's been years since long-time friends, a best-selling novelist, and a war journalist, have seen each other. Learning of a cancer diagnosis, her friend rushes to her side they rekindle their bond. A deeply personal request will bound the two women forever. Starring Julianne Moore and Tilda Swinton. Mainly at Warwick Arts Centre WAC and Midlands Arts Centre MAC

**The Crime is Mine:** a 2023 French crime comedy film written and directed by François Ozon starring Nadia Tereszkiewicz, Rebecca Marder, Isabelle Huppert, Fabrice Luchini, Dany Boon, and André Dussollier. Set in the 1930s, the film follows an actress who gains notoriety after getting acquitted of murder for self-defence.

**The Apprentice:** A must-see before the USA election! Sebastian Stan and Succession's Jeremy Strong give career-best performances as Trump and Roy Cohn – the notorious attorney who became his mentor just as he was seeking to escape his father's shadow. Displaying a glint of charm that never fully eclipses Trump's unwavering ambition, Stan's portrayal perfectly contrasts with Strong's, who renders Cohn as a sinister and fear-mongering practitioner of the dark arts in American public life.

**Anora:** A sex worker named Anora, or Ani as she prefers to be called. She may live in a shabby Brooklyn apartment above the rattle of the subway, but every night, Ani glams up and puts on a flirty smile for the men at a local club. She meets with Vanya, a young Russian boy who joyfully throws around his parents' money. They begin a whirlwind romance that's soon threatened by Vanya's powerful family, as Ani finds herself gripping onto a fantasy by her long pink fingernails.

**Small Things Like These:** Cillian Murphy stars as a conflicted soul grappling with his town's complicity in the mistreatment of local women housed in a Magdalene Laundry in this intimately inhabited adaptation of Claire Keegan's novella. At WAC & MAC and some cinemas

**Super/Man: The Christopher Reeve Story:** This documentary pushes back against that presentation of Reeve's accident. It presents his life as a story of nearly superhuman endurance and determination: a beautiful and athletic movie star was struck down in his prime, then reconfigured himself as an activist on behalf of people with disabilities.

**Seven Samurai:** A welcome return of this excellent 1954 Japanese epic samurai action film directed by Akira Kurosawa. Taking place in 1586 in the Sengoku period of Japanese history, it follows the story of a village of desperate farmers who seek to hire samurai to combat bandits who will return after the harvest to steal their crops. Only at WAC

**Paddington in Peru:** Paddington in Peru is an upcoming live-action/animated adventure comedy film directed by Dougal Wilson. Based on the stories of Paddington Bear, created by Michael Bond, it



is intended to be the third instalment in the Paddington film series, and a sequel to the previous Paddington films

**Timestralker:** A vibrant feature which offers a playful take on the romantic comedy with a reincarnation twist. Packed with laughs and a host of familiar faces this genre-defying romp is as emotionally insightful as it is entertaining. At most cinemas

**No Other Land:** Gripping documentary No Other Land follows a Palestinian activist, who films his community of Masafer Yatta being destroyed by Israel's occupation, as he builds an unlikely alliance with an Israeli journalist who wants to join his fight. Only at WAC & MAC

**Layla:** A complex relationship between Palestinian-British drag performer Layla and their white, straight-laced new love interest. Thrown together by fate, their enjoyment of each other is increasingly complicated by urgent questions of difference. Mainly at WAC & MAC,

**Conclave:** The Pope has died. Cardinal Lawrence must lead the Conclave to select the new leader of the Catholic world. But as high-ranking cardinals gather, he discovers sides have been drawn and secrets that might destroy a future pope, perhaps even the Church itself, threaten to be revealed. Starring Ralph Fiennes, Stanley Tucci and John Lithgow. At most cinemas

**Bird:** Young Bailey feels caged in her Gravesend squat home. Reckless, wannabe drug dealer dad Bug plans to marry his new girlfriend. Older brother Hunter plots to elope with his underage partner. Meanwhile, across town, Bailey's near-feral younger siblings are menaced by her mum's new and violent lover. Small wonder she's intrigued by the enigmatic Bird, a flighty free spirit searching for his own roots. Mainly at WAC & MAC

**Still on the main Circuit or at WAC or MAC**

**Joker:** An American musical psychological thriller film. It is the sequel to *Joker* (2019), loosely based on DC Comics characters, and stars Joaquin Phoenix reprising his role as the Joker with Lady Gaga joining the cast as his love interest. Zazie Beetz, Brendan Gleeson and Catherine Keener also join the cast. At most cinemas

**Blitz:** In the face of nightly air raids, an East End mum grows increasingly worried about her son George's safety. Under the counsel of her father, she makes the heart-wrenching decision to send him to the countryside. But a few hours into his journey, George alights the train, determined to return to Stepney Green and his family. Starring Saoirse Ronan, Paul Weller

**The Teacher:** A Palestinian school teacher struggles to reconcile his life-threatening commitment to political resistance with his emotional support for one of his students. Simultaneously, an American couple seek the return of their son who has been held hostage for three years.

**Lee:** Oscar winner Kate Winslet stars in this fascinating portrait of the great American war correspondent Lee Miller, whose singular talent gave us some of the 20th century's most indelible images. Determined to document the truth of the Nazi regime, and in spite of the odds stacked against female correspondents, Lee captured some of the most important images of World War II, for which she paid an enormous personal price. Mainly at WAC and MAC – some cinemas

**The Substance:** Demi Moore portrays a fading Hollywood star feuding with the manifestation of her younger self in this award-winning body-horror satire. Desperate to secure her fading celebrity status, a Hollywood actress undergoes a black-market medical procedure that promises self-actualization, but culminates in the spawning of "Sue" a bold and brash clone of her younger self that perpetuates its existence via weekly spinal taps. At most cinemas including WAC & MAC

**Kneecap:** A 2024 comedy-drama film depicting the rise of Belfast-based hip-hop trio, Kneecap. The film stars the band members as themselves, with Josie Walker, Fionnuala Flaherty, Jessica Reynolds, Adam Best, Simone Kirby, and Michael Fassbender in supporting roles.

**The Outrun:** When 30-year-old woman's alcoholism causes the dissolution of her long-term relationship and derails her promising career in biology, she leaves her ragged London life to dry out where she grew up, in Orkney. On her father's farm, she begins to inch towards inner peace and

sobriety, while tackling some hard truths about his bipolarity and why her mother left for the mainland. An excellent performance from Saoirse Ronan. Mainly at WAC & MAC

**The Battle for Laikipia:** In the Laikipia region of Kenya, it hasn't rained for 18 months. The desperate situation engenders bad feeling between indigenous herders and white landowners who stayed in Kenya after independence. As an election approaches, the situation escalates leading to violence against animals, herders and landowners. This complex film interrogates the complicated legacy of British colonialism and climate change. Mainly at WAC & MAC

**TV and Film Preview: There will be the usual selection of horror and ghostly films this week!**

**Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October:**

**20.00 – BBC1: Panorama: Trump – A Second Chance** - Report on Donald Trump's election campaign. The former President facing more criminal charges, never before and likely never again, will a candidate fight a presidential campaign whilst also fighting to stay out of prison

**21.00 – BBC1: Mr Loverman** – Dapper, charming Barry is hiding a secret – but it's not what his wife suspects. Bernardine Evaristo's life-affirming story about being true to yourself, starring Lennie James. **Next episode at 21.30**

**21.00 – ITV1: DI Ray** – The penultimate episode of the police drama set in Birmingham

**21.00 – BBC2: Solar System** – Another episode of Humanist Brian Cox's exploration of the universe

**22.00 – BBC2: Alma's Not Normal** - If she can't be normal, she'll at least be fabulous. Wild child Alma and her clan of eccentric, unruly women aim to make waves in Bolton. Starring Sophie Willan.

**23.05 – BBC2: Ophelia** - A reimagining of Hamlet, told from Ophelia's perspective. Starring Daisy Ridley, Naomi Watts and Clive Owen

**23.25 – BBC1: Bump** - When the A-grade student suddenly has a baby, it's a shock for her, her family and her unsuspecting boyfriend. Funny, frank and heart-warming drama – **Next episode 23.55**

**Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October:**

**21.00 – ITV1: DI Ray** – The final episode of the intriguing police drama

**22.40 – BBC1: Bram Stoker's Dracula** - Eerie, romantic and operatic, this exquisitely mounted revamp of the undead legend is an artistic achievement. Francis Ford Coppola's film is grandiose in visual approach. Starring Gary Oldman, Winona Ryder, Anthony Hopkins and Keanu Reeves.

**23.40 – BBC2: Al Pacino: Once Upon a Time in Hollywood** - The Oscar-winning actor looks back on his life and career, and stories behind some of his biggest films in an interview with Colin Paterson.

**Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> October:**

**21.00 – BBC1: Ludwig** – The finale of this cryptic crime comedy drama. Starring David Mitchell and Anna Maxwell Martin.

**21.00 – BBC2: Helmand: Tour of Duty** - The story of a single group of soldiers from the Welsh Guards, who were deployed to the frontline of the war in Helmand Province of Afghanistan in 2009.

**21.00 – ITV1: Prince William: We Can End Homelessness** – Quite a tall order for a young man who has the opportunity to live in any of 6 palaces? First of a two-part documentary capturing behind-the-scenes footage of Prince William at work as he confronts the scale of the homelessness crisis across the UK.

**21.00 – BBC4: Thomas Hardy: A Haunted Man** – A repeat from 1978 of the profile of English novelist, agnostic and poet Thomas Hardy, who is famed as a deeply reserved and secretive man that put his most private feelings into his poems.

**22.15 – BBC4: Tess of the D'Urbavilles** – 2008 Television adaptation of Thomas Hardy's classic novel, starring Gemma Arteton; and Eddie Redmayne – next episode at 23.15

**22.40 – BBC1: Ghostbusters** – A female version of the Supernatural comedy starring Melissa McCarthy and Kristen Wiig.

**Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October: It is Halloween – so expect some scary films!**

**21.00 – Channel 4: Taskmaster** – Another episode of the quirky game show of Greg Davis and Alex Horne finding more weird and silly tasks for the comedians to perform

**21.20 – BBC4: Jude** - Period film drama based on Thomas Hardy's novel *Jude the Obscure*, starring Christopher Eccleston and Kate Winslet.

**22.00 – Channel 4: Everyone Else Burns** – A delightful comedy send-up of an evangelical church group – this week they are getting in a tizzy about arranging marriages.

**22.45 – ITV1: The Mummy** - Action horror fantasy starring Tom Cruise and Russell Crowe.

**23.05 – BBC2: The Omen** - Horror starring Gregory Peck, Lee Remick, David Warner and Billie Whitelaw.

#### **Friday 1<sup>st</sup> November:**

**21.00 – BBC1: Have I Got News for You?** This week Jo Brand is host with comedian Nabil Abdulrashid and journalist Tom Peck joining Paul Merton and Ian Hislop for the satire news comedy

**21.30 – BBC1: The Cleaner** – More chaos from Greg Davis cleaning up after a crime

**22.40 – BBC1: The Graham Norton Show** – This week's guests include Billy Crystal, Hugh Bonneville, Emily Mortimer, and musician Pharrell Williams and singer-songwriter Michael Kiwanuka

**23.05 – BBC2: Testament of Youth** - Period biographical drama based on the memoirs of Vera Brittain, starring Alicia Vikander and Kit Harington. Spring, 1914: free-spirited Vera Brittain is determined to study at Oxford and become a writer despite her parents' opposition.

#### **Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November:**

**18.30 - BBC1: Strictly Come Dancing** - The first ever Icons Week, with the couples performing routines that honour some of the most influential music artists of all time.

**21.00 – Channel 5: Ottoman Empire by Train with Alice Roberts** – The former Humanist President Alice is on the train to Ankara for the second instalment of her Ottoman adventure. This week she visits the tomb of Kemal Ataturk, who saw out the end of the Ottoman Empire.

**21.10 – BBC1: Apples Never Fall** – The final episode of the drama based on Liane Moriarty's (Big Little Lies, Nine Perfect Strangers) best-selling novel. Starring Sam Neill and Annette Bening

**22.25 – BBC2: Later with Jools Holland** – This week there are turns from David Gilmour of Pink Floyd, and his daughter Romany. Also appearing are Melbourne punk band Amyl & the Sniffers, post-punk veterans The The, and singer-songwriters Dhruv and Moonchild Sanelly

**23.45 – BBC1: 21 Bridges** - Crime thriller starring Chadwick Boseman and Sienna Miller. The murder of two New York cops sees a no-nonsense detective brought in to catch the killers – which requires putting Manhattan into lockdown by sealing off all of its bridges.

#### **Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> November:**

**19.20 – BBC1: Strictly Come Dancing: The Results** – Who will be eliminated tonight?

**21.00 – BBC1: Showtrial** – The penultimate episode. As the trial resumes after Justin's shocking outburst, he finally takes to the stand. Starring Adel Akhtar and Michael Socha

**21.00 – ITV1: Until I Kill You** - Fact-based drama, starring Anna Maxwell Martin and Shaun Evans

**22.00 – BBC2: The Shawshank Redemption** – Considered by many to be one of the best films ever made. Prison drama, based on a story by Stephen King, starring Tim Robbins and Morgan Freeman.

**The Apprentice:** I have recently seen this film, which is about a young Donald Trump being mentored by unscrupulous lawyer Roy Cohn. I would advise everyone to see this excellent film. Sebastian Stan is excellent as Trump and Jeremy Strong deserves an Oscar nomination for his role as Cohn. The film shows Trump as a cold calculating narcissistic liar who uses people only for how they can be of use to him. The film is good - but when I came out of the cinema I literally felt like I wanted to throw up - Trump is such a liar, cheat and shyster and such a sickening and callous bastard. But, please see the film for yourselves.

**A Few Cartoons from Glyn & Heather Evans (A reminder that it is the Budget this week!):**



### **Some funnies to finish with:**

I won't fly with Easy-jet again, I didn't like the pilot's altitude.

The first million people who send me £1 will get a copy of how to become a millionaire via twitter.

I went to my local furniture showroom. The sales guy said "This sofa will seat 5 people with no problems" I replied, "where am I supposed to find 5 people with no problems".

A routine blood test showed my veins are full of tiny little drums and guitars, I've tested for band substances.

I won 2nd prize in a competition, they give me a map of the night sky. It was a constellation prize.

Don't want to sound big headed, but does anyone have a XXL hat I can borrow.

Went to the store to pick up 8 cans of Sprite, but when I got home I realised I'd only picked 7 up.

My neighbour banged on my front door at 4am. Luckily, I was still up playing music. He yelled "How about a little respect?" Thankfully I'm an Aretha Franklin fan, so I played it just for him.

I got caught Robbing a Haberdashery this weekend...The Police let me Off with a Cushion....

With its cowboys and guns and steam trains America became known as the land of the free  
Which must have been a surprise for all the slaves

The wife just phoned me and she said I know you're seeing another woman so I'm leaving you and going to live with my sister. I said ok see you when you get here

I like giving people free advice. I'll tell you that for nothing.

Sometimes I read a text message and think, what a psycho, then I press send.

Today I purchased some shoes with memory foam. I refuse to keep forgetting why I walked into the kitchen

"My wife came back from Hawaii with a nasty rash." "Honolulu?" "No, on her back."

I've just finished writing a book about my car, it's an auto biography.

At a wedding I attended we were encouraged to throw rice at the happy couple, sadly I knocked the bride unconscious with a tin of Ambrosia.

I told my friend that I wanted to live in a monastery and that I intended to take the entrance exam. He said forget it, you don't have a prayer.

One minute you're drinking beers in the shed, next thing you know you're banned from B&Q.