**No One is Listening ( a ghost story)**

**Episode 3. We’re going on a Ghost hunt.**

**In this episode of "No One is Listening," Emma Williams and Vic Llewellyn discuss the intertwining themes of ghosts, memory loss, and fear. Emma recounts the story of Augusta Dieter, the first documented case of Alzheimer's, and the discovery of the disease by Dr. Alois Alzheimer. They also explore the concept of memory cafes, which help people with dementia reconnect through shared stories and activities, including ghost hunts. Emma shares personal experiences and the positive impact of these initiatives, emphasizing warmth, compassion, and humour. The episode concludes with a humorous ghost hunt poem, highlighting the importance of community and connection.**

Vic Llewellyn 0:00

No one is listening, a podcast that explores ghosts, memory loss and feeling the fear.

Vic ( singing) 0:13

Puff the magic dragon lived by the sea....

Emma Williams 0:19

Augusta Dieter. Augusta was born on the 16th of May in 1850. She was well educated, but she was born into an impoverished working-class family in Germany, so she had to start work as a seamstress at 14.

In 1873 aged 23, she married Carl Dieter. He worked as a railway clerk, and they went on to have one daughter named, Thekla.

At 50, she was admitted to a psychiatric hospital in Frankfurt, and there she became a case study. She was suffering delusions and insomnia, dragging her sheets outside the house and screaming, she would cry out, I have lost myself. She was studied obsessively during her time in the hospital, and her brain was analysed after her death by Dr Alzheimer. Alzheimer's discovered that her behaviour had a biological cause, and it was a build up of plaque and neurological tangles in the brain.

I don't know. I always think of teeth when I hear that for the plaque and tangles. I think of hair because I used to have long blonde hair, and my granny used to make me brush it 100 times a day. Neurological tangles, bit different, I think.

Anyway, he called the disease, the disease of forgetfulness. Later, Augustus was acknowledged as the first ever Alzheimer's case. This is her fame. It's how you can find her on Wikipedia. I mean, you can find a lot more about him, but this is how you can find her, if you put her in. It's why she's famous. But she was a person, with a daughter ,trying to do her best, succeeding, failing, probably tirelessly cooking and cleaning and just living and hopefully laughing

Memory cafe participant 1 2:09

One fine day in middle of the night, two dead men got up to fight, back-to-back, and faced each Other, took their swords and shot each other.

Emma Williams 2:24

There was a Dutch psychiatrist called Pier Meissen, and he created the first memory cafe, in the Netherlands in 1997. It was a concept that spread across the world, and its goal was to get people out of the house and re-establish social connections and friendships.

The majority of those that go are at the early stages of dementia, and we created a series of workshops for the project, No one is listening, in memory, cafes and activity groups, and our aim was to talk about local legends, myths and ghosts, and collect stories from participants that would be people who were living with dementia and their carers and those who ran the cafes.

I have experienced dementia in a number of ways, with a number of people that I've loved and cared about, and it used to frighten me. There is something about those living with dementia that scares our very UK way of behaving. And I am a very UK way of behaving type of person. People can be unpredictable. They call out. Think of Augusta dragging her sheets at night and yelling like a living ghost.

So a Memory Cafe is obviously a stressful place to be, a sad place, a difficult place, perhaps, well, no, absolutely not. It's just absolutely not true. In each place, there was an underlying feeling of warmth and compassion and there was a lot of humour. We would go in the idea with to sort of read poems and songs around the theme. To begin,we would ask for stories from different people in the group.

Memory Cafe participant 2 4:20

You say your name. My name's Greg Bowerman, and this is a story my Father told me from years gone by when he lived in Wellington, and he had a pal from Wiveliscombe, better known as Wivey, and they'd been out on the cider one night. Well, presumably on the cider, because that's what boys of that age did. And he was cycling home no lights. But then there was no policeman around, and there was no other cars. And he came to some wooded land, and he thought, I don't know, I just feel as a presence around me, and so not someone's following me, but someone's with me. And I looked around and couldn't see anything. Anyway, he came to a bit of a slope, a downward slope through the trees, and this thing got closer. It was almost as though he was in his ear going now, hoo, hoo, hoo. So he got bit worried. Pedalled even faster, and was going down this hill so fast he'd never stopped if there was a bend. Anyway, when he came down to the bottom of the hill, the trees opened up, and this owl went by. Hoo Hoo Hoo!

Emma Williams 5:26

We also made up a ghost story, well it's actually a ghost hunt, and we asked everyone to contribute things that we would take, where we would go, what we would see, what happened. There's some very, very interesting stories. And then, I foolishly decided that I would turn that into a poem and read it back to the group, not some of the best rhymes I've ever made up, but in the case of Wiveliscombe activity group, who meet on a Tuesday, and are run by the wonderful Tamsin, we also decided to add sounds and special effects, and I think the result is not a great poem. I acknowledge that, but I think the result is just a reminder of the humanity behind Alzheimer's ,and just how much fun human beings can have and can be.

Tamsin 6:21

We're going on a trip..

Emma Williams 6:23

...said Tamsin. She got up and led the way out of Wivey Community Centre, on Tuesday at mid day

The whole group 6:37

Where are you taking us!?

Emma Williams 6:37

called back the group with a shout.

Carer 1 6:40

We're going on a ghost hunt. Now let's get the map out.

Emma Williams 6:45

So they all poured over the map. The wind made it a hassle, ( *wind noise)*but eventually, holding each corner, they found the haunted castle. ( *Ghost sound*) But first they went to the co op ...( *Laughter*).to gather essential supplies, fruit pastels, glow sticks, sunglasses and a packet of Maltesers, King size, ( *bag rustling*)the Wivey hardware for a torch, matches and a string, a lamp, a spirit reader ( *Stylophone sound*) and something to put it all in. Perhaps we could get a weapon. West Country guns is just there.

Participant 3 7:34

It's a ghost.

Emma Williams 7:35

Someone called out, it's not real. It's made of thin air. A decision was finally made to bring a net and a fishing rod, a stick and a mobile phone and off to the castle. They trod *( sound feet thumping*).Up in the turret. they waited for the spooky action to begin, but it wasn't long before the boredom began to set in. ( *yawning )*

Emma Williams 8:01

So the bottle of wine was open, and they all started to sing. ( *Singing* )

Emma Williams 8:19

But over on the opposite turret, something terrible was happening.

Carer 2 8:28

Somebody help!

Emma Williams 8:28

Came a voice from across the dark night. They turned towards the sound and saw a horrifying sight, a maiden stood there all alone, something held tight in her hand behind a ghost was approaching. It slid up the walls like wet sand. ( *sand shaker*) The group that's all you lot. Jumped into action and called back, it's going to be fine. Then they got out the fishing rod and cast the perfect zip line, *( ziiiip!)* the maiden climbed on the wire as the ghost reached the top, and she slid along to safety, landing with a skip and a hop. What a surprise when she arrived as elegant, as a bride in chapel and called out very loudly...

Participant 4 9:21

please, can you cut my pineapple?

Emma Williams 9:25

Well, the ghost slithered on the line, and everyone started to fret. But as he arrived at the turret, they swooped with a magical net, all captured and groaning away, the Ghost fell to his knees, and someone called out in the dark, can I have a Malteser, please? The king size pack was open. Everyone had at least two. The maiden ate her cut pineapple, and the ghost just turned to goo. And that was the end of the ghost hunt, and the opinion of every. One was this trip was bit scary, but also really good fun.( *Applause*)

Emma Williams 10:12

I mean, not everybody joined in. And one woman, you know, told me that she didn't. She hated poems. Never had liked them, but she did like songs, and she liked puffed the magic dragon, and she was there with her feet tapping. And I think this made Vic very, very pleased just to enjoy something, connect to people. It's what human beings are all about. And I think if we are afraid of a disease so much, then we just avoid people. And that's, I think that's a bit of a tragedy. So I got a lot from those groups about, you know, embracing things and people, and also that people absolutely love ghost stories and find them very funny.

Vic ( singing) 11:02

Brought him string and ceiling wax and other fancy stuff. OH Puff the magic dragon. Lived by the sea and frolicked in the Autumn mist, in a land called Honalee..

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Vic Llewellyn 11:33

Episode three. No one is listening has been brought to you by Emma Williams and Vic Llewellyn with music by Sam Halmarack and additional voices from Taunton Memory Cafe and Wiveliscombe activity group. This project has been supported by the Arts Council England and 10 radio.