

CHELTHENHAM QUAKER

DECEMBER 2011

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Are on Sundays at 10.30 at Cheltenham Meeting House. There is a shared lunch on each fifth Sunday. Children are always welcome in our Sunday meetings for worship. If during the hour parents feel it is appropriate they can go with them to the children's room, where they will be joined by one of the children's meeting volunteers.

DIARY (All of these meetings are at the Meeting House unless otherwise stated)

November

Wednesday 30 7.30pm ***A Spiritual Basis to Sustainability*** at Gloucester Meeting House

December

Thursday 1 2pm ***Becoming Friends***
Sunday 4 11.45am **Local Meeting for Worship for Business**
Wednesday 7 3pm **Peace Group** at Cynthia Baron's all welcome
Sunday 11 1pm **Area Meeting for Worship for Business** at Gloucester Meeting House
Monday 12 7.30pm ***Becoming Friends***
Thursday 15 2pm ***Becoming Friends***
Thursday 15 2.30 **Healing Group Meeting** at Maureen Steffen's
Sunday 18 6pm **Carols by Candlelight**

January

Thursday 5 2pm ***Becoming Friends***
Monday 9 7.30 ***Becoming Friends***
Thursday 19 2.30pm **Healing Group Meeting** at Maureen Steffen's

Please note there will be no Local or Area Meetings for Worship for Business in January

A Spiritual Basis to Sustainability is a follow up meeting to the recent Meeting for Learning on sustainability. Whether or not you came to this, you are welcome to come to the follow up meeting. (See Diary). For more details contact Alison Crane

Carols by Candlelight

We will be singing carols again this year (see Diary) and contributions of readings or music will be very welcome. The carols will be followed by light refreshments. Please bring a candle if you can.

DECEMBER COLLECTION is for **Peace Direct**. This charity supports local peacebuilders in finding nonviolent solutions to conflict in Asia and Africa. It was founded by Scylla Elworthy, an Oxford Quaker. Donations to Peace Direct, Freepost RLSA-KLBC-YCTL, Development House, 56-64 Leonard Street, London EC2A 4LT. email: WWW.PEACEDIRECT.ORG

NOTES FROM NOVEMBER LOCAL MEETING

A memorial to the life of Betty Willis was read out and is reproduced at the end of this newsletter.

A large number of names were brought forward by Nominations Committee to serve in various capacities for the Triennium beginning January 2012, some to go to Area Meeting for decision. The Local Meeting appointments were accepted. These include Ian Brighton as **Local Meeting Clerk**, Pat Dannahy as **Assistant Clerk**, Mike Lang as **Treasurer**, Nan Dower **Catering Committee Convenor**, Jill Vyle, Julie Stubbs, Margot Roe and Nan Dower **Children's Committee**. For details of other appointments please consult the Minutes, held by the Clerk.

We authorised expenditure for laying a new floor in the tearoom.

We agreed that we should seek to support smaller or local charities with our Sunday collections on third and fourth Sundays, and so have deleted some and added other charities to the list.

Items for inclusion in the next newsletter should be sent to the editorial email address or by post to the editor Janet Weyers by
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19 December at the latest

HEARTSING PROJECT

I would be very grateful to receive any local contacts you can recommend as follows:

Profile

I want to be put in touch with local existing organisations who in turn have access to young people between 18 and 30 who have already shown leadership skills in their communities, and who would benefit from an intensive custom-made 2 week course in ideal surroundings (www.ashacentre.org). The ASHA Centre is a charity with a specific remit to work with those who conform to this kind of profile.

Resources

I bring between £7/£8000 pa from my flat rent; The ASHA Centre: a residential centre in the Forest of Dean set in amazing countryside, run on an ecological basis (biodynamic etc), and able to host 16 people at a time; a small team of skilled facilitators who in turn between them can call on a much larger group of variably-skilled people; access to the Picturedrome Theatre in Gloucester.

Example

I paid the fares of 14 young teachers from Israel and Palestine to come to the ASHA Centre for just such an experience. On their return home, in addition to their influence on parents and children, these women are also intending to maintain and look for ways of involving their now 'sister school' in training events etc. The Palestinian teachers would have no other way of leaving Palestine to attend courses in Israel. Following the riots, we want to act locally next time, and build community here.

PS This project is called "Heartsing" in honour of my daughter Kim, who died of cancer in 2004; each day I spent with her after she was diagnosed until she died 3 months later, I would say to her: "What would make your heart sing today, Kim?" and if possible we would do it.

Pat Dannahy

NEWS FROM THE PEACE GROUP

The Peace Group set up its stall on the 4th Sunday in October, selling Zaytoun company artisan Palestinian produce. Zaytoun Glos Quakers is a project to give active expression to Gloucestershire Quakers' non-violent commitment to peace and justice for the Palestinian people.

Great interest was shown and nearly all the goods sold. Cynthia managed to get the small remainder of the last big order, most of which went.

A total of £88.75 was raised. We hope to have a sale once a month.

Cynthia Baron

As background to this Peace Group initiative, Cynthia has sent an extract from Meeting for Sufferings Minute on Saturday 2 April 2011. Some of this reads:

"Our hearts are full of compassion for Israelis and Palestinians, all of whom are suffering from the effects of the occupation.

We are clear that it would be wrong to support the illegal settlements by purchasing their goods. We therefore ask Friends (Quakers) throughout Britain Yearly Meeting to boycott settlement goods, until such time as the occupation is ended.

We are not at this time proposing to boycott goods from Israel itself, being unwilling to jeopardise continuing dialogue with Israelis and British Jews.

Although we unite in this decision we recognize that Friends have different views, and we must treat one another tenderly."

The Peace Group also asked to have included the following report from War on Want, which shows how the growing, gathering of crops and their selling is such a difficult job for the Palestinians:

"Since 1967 Israel has increasingly encroached on Palestinian land in the West Bank through settlement building programmes. Settlements are Israeli communities built on illegally occupied Palestinian land. They serve to create 'facts on the ground': physical manifestations of land-grabbing which make the Occupation into a seemingly irreversible reality.

Israel's settlements are illegal under the Fourth Geneva Convention, which forbids population transfer into territory occupied in war. They are widely condemned as obstacles to peace by the international community, which has repeatedly called on Israel to halt its settlement expansion plan. Some settlements occupy large areas of Palestinian land and form cities of over 30,000 people.

Settlements are linked to each other by an apartheid-style network of roads which Palestinians are forbidden from using. The expansion of settlement infrastructure such as highways and tunnels and the closure of areas surrounding the settlements by the Israeli military means that fully 40% of the West Bank is now controlled by settlements. This has led to the fragmentation of the West Bank, isolating Palestinian communities and curtailing freedom of movement”.

MEMORIAL:

DOROTHY ELIZABETH WILLIS 4th April 1923 – 31st August 2011

Betty was a member of Cheltenham Meeting. She designed the structural planting and layout of the new Meeting Courtyard in Warwick Place in 1985. She came to live in Cheltenham in 1963, when selected as Gloucestershire County Council's first Landscape Architect, which was an exciting time to be working on Design and Civil Engineering projects. Betty Willis was responsible for creating the future nature-clad highways and their approaches, which included the new Severn Bridge. Today we can appreciate her planting of the Golden Valley, for example. She had a great love of trees, and pioneered the County's Tree Planting scheme, and the water filled gravel quarries that became the Cotswold Water Park. The maintenance of the many road verges were enhanced by more natural methods that she explored, in review of the excessive use of chemicals. Betty had studied horticulture, followed by the Diploma at the University of Reading, to qualify as a landscape architect. During the War she was a Land Army girl, near Cambridge. Not until 2008 was their valuable land work formally recognised, when a Veteran's Badge was proudly accepted.

A farm in beautiful Wensleydale was Betty's home with Theo and Archie her elder brothers. This was a Quaker family who attended Caperby Meeting. Jack and Dorothy Willis were third generation tenant farmers on Lord Bolton's estate. Their daughter was a somewhat retiring girl, sensitive and caring, who bred birds and animals, and made friends easily. School was Oakhurst at Arnside, and later The Mount, York. In the 1950s in a private practice their were innovative projects for the Festival of Britain that led to a varied and interesting professional life. Betty was musical – she played the violin to a high standard, and was an avid concert goer. A fan of Radio 3 and 4, she never owned a television set. As a keen Rambler she actively influenced the opening-up of footpaths for public use and pleasure. The Dalesman was received with interest, and regular visits to her family were the norm.

Betty was fiercely independent, and indignant when no longer allowed to drive. There was concern for her memory, as she became confused in her later years. Quaker friends, neighbours and others helped her along. It was only when considered to be at risk that she was moved to Moreton Hall Care Centre where she could be taken into the garden from her room, which had a magnificent view over the Severn Valley. At Cheltenham Meeting House we fondly remember the quiet, knowledgeable yet lively young person as we celebrated Betty Willis's life with many friends and a nephew and two nieces. By request in the setting of Dvorak's "The American String Quartet no.12 in F, op.96. was played, the Lento movement at the start, and Allegro non troppo at the close

Ruth Baker
Cheltenham November 2011

Doorkeeping, Flowers and Teas December 18th 2011 to April 8th 2012

Date	Doorkeeping	Flowers	Teas
December 18th	Elaine Boulter	Margot Roe	Nan Dower
December 25th	June Drummond	Janet Weyers	Philip Paull
January 1st	Rowland Carson	Nan Dower	Alison Crane
January 8th	Jo Teakle	Margaret Sheldrick	Dorothy Carson
January 15th	Jane Brighton	Richard Lacock	Ian Brighton
January 22nd	Alison Crane	Mike Lang	Pat Dannahy
January 29th	Joy Heaven	Elaine Boulter	Iris Terrell
February 5th	Jack Danes	Margaret Danes	Brenda Judge
February 12th	Pat Dannahy	Sal Drummond	Maureen Steffen
February 19th	Tim Howarth	Iris Terrell	Margot Roe
February 26th	June Drummond	Pat Dannahy	Jo Teakle
March 4th	Sal Drummond	Nan Dower	Nina Odescalchi
March 11th	Philip Paull	Cathy Rollo	Nan Dower
March 18th	Julie Stubbs	Jill and	Chris Vyle
March 25th	Dorothy Carson	Janet Weyers	Rowland Carson
April 1st	Maureen Steffen	Julie Stubbs	Mary Neville
April 8th	Nan Dower	Jane Brighton	Margaret Sheldrick

If a date is not convenient to you please arrange to swap with someone else on the list or contact Nan Dower.

Doorkeepers, you will need to arrive just after 10 am. Please read the list of instructions which is in the wooden rack on the wall by the door into the garden.

Teamakers, Please bring milk and biscuits, you will need 2 pints of milk. Lay out cups and saucers and preheat the water before Meeting. Please take your expenses from the dish for contributions. It might be a good idea to ask a friend to help you.