

CHELTHENHAM QUAKER

JULY 2012

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Are on Sundays at 10.30 at Cheltenham Meeting House. There is usually 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)

June

Thursday 28 2.30pm **Premises Committee Meeting**
Thursday 28 7.30pm **Meeting of Pastoral Care Group** at Nina Odescalchi's

July

Sunday 1 11.45am **Local Meeting for Worship for Business**
Wednesday 4 2.00pm **Meeting of Elders**
Wednesday 4 2.30pm **Peace Group**
Saturday 14 2 pm **Area Meeting for Worship for Business** at Whiteway Colony Hall Stroud
Sunday 15 12 noon **Meeting for Learning** (see below)
Thursday 19 2.30pm **Healing Group** at Maureen Steffen's
Saturday 21 6.00pm **Summer Tea** (see below)

MEETING FOR LEARNING on Sunday 15 will be a continuation of the consideration of the Britain Yearly Meeting theme "*What it means to be a Quaker today*".

For those who missed the June meeting, the references that Ann Caro used in her thoughtful introduction are (all from QF&P): 27.03; 27.01; 27.11; 27.17; 17.12; 27.18.

Her title was "*Is our respect for difference a weakness or a strength?*" and her conclusion was "so I seem to be coming down on the side of diversity in Quakerism being a very definite and important strength. But I would want to qualify that by saying that it only remains a strength if we constantly work at deepening and developing our understanding of ourselves and each other; being prepared to listen to and respect each other (which does not mean that we need to buy into each other's views)". Our discussion ranged around this and also highlighted that we should be prepared to share our experiences with each other more.

SUMMER TEA on Saturday 21 will be a chance for people to meet socially and have fun together! Food will depend on the weather.

A donation of £5 is invited, which will go to Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva..

JULY COLLECTION will be for Hlekweni Friends Rural Service, a Quaker service founded in 1967. Its mission is to give practical expression to Quaker testimonies in the most impoverished communities in Zimbabwe, with a special focus on promoting reconciliation and nonviolence and encouraging agricultural practices which enhance environmental sustainability.

The web address is www.hlekweni.org and donations can be sent to: Friends of Hlekweni, The Quaker Centre, 1 Oakley Gardens, Downhead Park, Milton Keynes, MK15 9BH.

Money given to the charity through Meeting does not attract Gift Aid, while money sent directly does.

<p>Items for inclusion in the next newsletter should be sent to the editorial email address or by post to the editor Janet Weyers by Sunday 15 July at the latest</p>

DIARY CHANGES

At the last Elder's Meeting it was decided to put the dates and times of the meetings of Elders, Pastoral Care Group, Liaison Group and Premises in the newsletter Diary. This is to try to make our Quaker processes more transparent and to enable Friends to know when to send relevant items they would like discussed to the convenors. They are open to the appointed office holders or to others by invitation. The Liaison Committee is an informal meeting of office holders to help co-ordinate the work of the Meeting and for mutual support.

NOTES FROM JUNE LOCAL MEETING

Nominations: We appointed Jane Brighton to the Nominations Committee.

Collections and donations: The Treasurer's team of Mike Lang, June Drummond and Lydia Sutcliffe were asked to bring proposals to a future Local Meeting for coordinating donations from Meeting funds and collections to avoid overlap.

Premises committee: Alison Crane brought forward quotations for the replacement of the foyer and entrance lighting, and for solar panels for the roof. The committee was asked to continue to investigate possibilities for the lighting and given the go ahead to act on the fitting of solar panels, using their judgement to make decisions as ethically as possible, taking into account the time constraints, and all subject to the approval of the treasurer.

Britain Yearly Meeting: Roland and Dorothy Carson gave a brief report from Britain Yearly Meeting, which they attended. They encouraged us all to think of trying to attend even some sessions of BYM in future.

Supporting Friends Review: This was considered and recommendations made to Area Meeting.

NOTES FROM JUNE AREA MEETING

Membership: The death was recorded of Margaret Dale (Cirencester). A celebration of her life is being prepared by Cirencester Meeting and will be read out at the next Area Meeting.

Appointments: Liz Whiteside (Nailsworth) was appointed as Deputy Advocate for Children and Young People's work.

Judith Roles (Cheltenham) was appointed HM Prison Gloucester Quaker Prison Chaplain subject to agreement by the prison authorities.

Mary Brown (Stroud) was appointed HM Prison Gloucester Quaker Chaplain Supporter.

Junior Yearly Meeting: Annie Pickering and Ben Crane gave us a report of their experiences at Junior Yearly Meeting. Ben outlined the programme that had been arranged for the weekend, on the theme "Bearing witness to a just and compassionate society".

Annie told us that the Swarthmoor Lecturer, Rachel Brett of QUNO, a human rights lawyer, came to visit JYM, and made a very powerful impression on young friends.

Our Friend John Miles thanked them for their report. He described the excellent way in which newcomers were absorbed into JYM, and made to feel part of the group through games and activities. He stressed that JYM is planned and run by the young people themselves.

News of Friends: At the 2012 Britain Yearly Meeting the following appointments were made:

- a) Colin Gerard was appointed to the Stewardship Committee.
- b) Colin Gerard and Jane Gracie were appointed to be Gloucestershire Area Meeting's representatives on Meeting for Sufferings

Supporting Friends Review: The way new Friends are brought into membership has been reviewed. The Review was accepted but it was decided that Annex 1, and two leaflets should be worked on further by a new group. Annex 1 explores guidelines defining the boundaries of membership. One leaflet will be a general, welcoming introduction to Quakers, fairly light in tone; the other a more detailed account of the process involved in seeking membership.

It was agreed that it would be useful for this group to include a new member or someone in the membership process if possible. The names of Gordon Smith (Wotton), Judy Roles (Cheltenham) – both new members, Rowland Carson (Cheltenham) and Winifred Page (Nailsworth) were suggested. The group, convened by Val Kirby, will report back to AM as soon as their work is complete.