

# CHELTHENHAM QUAKER

SEPTEMBER 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.

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

### August

Saturday 25 8 pm Meeting for Worship at Greenbelt  
Monday 27 6.30 pm Meeting for Worship at Greenbelt

### September

Sunday 2 11.45am Local Meeting for Worship for Business  
Tuesday 11 7pm Area Meeting for Worship for Business at Nailsworth Meeting House.  
Tea from 6pm  
Wednesday 12 2.30pm Book Circle at Margaret Cooper's (see below for details)  
Thursday 13 7.15 pm Pastoral Care Group Meeting (meeting starts at 7.30 pm)  
At Nina Odescalchi's house  
Sunday 16 12 noon Meeting for Learning (see below)  
Tuesday 18 2.00pm Meeting of Elders  
Thursday 20 2.30pm Healing Group at Maureen Steffen's new home

### October

Thursday 4 6.00pm Evening Public Meeting  
Wednesday 10 6.00pm Evening Public Meeting

**MEETING FOR LEARNING** will be a preparation for Quaker Week, especially for the two evening events planned by our Meeting for Thursday 4 October and Wednesday 10 October.

**SEPTEMBER COLLECTION** will be for St Vincent's & St George's Association. Based in Cheltenham, this Association provides a wide range of care and support services to members of the community with disabilities, complex needs and health conditions. Alison writes: They provide accommodation and support (training, work etc) for people with complex needs, generally not older people, but people of working age (ie not just young people). Local Quakers will be interested to know that Quaker Housing Trust has helped them over the last year by providing a small grant and a larger loan to buy a new property in Gloucester to house 3 people, one with severe physical disabilities. QHT has also provided a grant for a conservatory at Well Close, mainly for the use of the residents of their bungalow and flats. Volunteers and financial contributions welcomed. Contact them by phoning 01242 237099, calling in at St Vincent's Centre or Well Close House or writing to them at Lansdown Parade, GL50 2LH. Website: <http://www.stvsandstgs.org.uk> .

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

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

Monday 17 September at the latest

## NOTES FROM JULY AREA MEETING

**This was held over from the last newsletter**

**Appointments:** Rowland Carson (Cheltenham) was appointed as a Funeral Friend for the remainder of the Triennium.

**News of Friends:** Ellie Roberts had gained a place on the QUNO Summer School which was currently on, and has also been appointed to the post of Programme Assistant for the Human Impact of Climate Change Programme at the Quaker United Nations Office.

Rosie Bailey (Wotton under Edge) has been appointed to Quaker Life Central Committee.

John Miles (Nailsworth) has been appointed Clerk for the group of Quakers who serve as a body of members that oversee the work of The Retreat, an independent psychiatric hospital founded by Quakers in York some 200 years ago. In his capacity as Clerk he is ex officio a member of the Board of Directors of The Retreat. The approach to psychiatric care at The Retreat is innovative and highly successful. We will invite John to talk to us about its work at some point.

Jan Gronow (Cirencester) and Colin Gerard (Nailsworth) have been asked to be present at the Trustees' Conference 15 September 2012 at Friends House

Alison Crane (Cheltenham) and Morgan Woodland celebrated their marriage on 17 June, following their civil partnership which took place in January 2012. We wish them well.

**How Does the Truth Prosper: Cirencester Quaker Meeting:** The report on how the Truth prospers in Cirencester Quaker Meeting was read out by the Cirencester Clerk. The interesting account of their activities demonstrates the strength and vitality of the Meeting. A new and most welcome development is the monthly Children's Meeting.

**Minutes of Concern from Area Meeting to Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee:** Yearly Meeting is an occasion when the concerns of one group of Friends can be shared with the meeting as a whole as it seeks God's guidance and relates each particular insight or service to the others brought before it. (QFP 6.04)

As an Area Meeting we are able to send minutes of guidance and concern to the Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee. The next Yearly Meeting is in London, 24-27 May 2013.

We ask Local Meetings to consider concerns which have been raised in their Meeting in time for the LM's minute to be forwarded to the Area Meeting Clerk for the September Area Meeting.

**Strengthening Area Meeting:** To ensure the widest possible internal circulation of Area Meeting Agenda and Minutes we agree that they be circulated via Area Meeting News of Friends. This is not the same as putting them on the open internet – AM News of Friends is a direct email communication to named representatives, so there is little risk of communications getting into the wrong hands.

**THE RENDEZVOUS SOCIETY (GLOBAL FOOTSTEPS)** is looking for short term interest free loans from members and supporters to help the charity to ease their current cash flow problems caused by the large recent expense of refurbishing the headquarters at 16 Portland St. We are hoping to raise £10,000 for a period of a year. Although cash poor the charity does own the building, so your money will be secure and we will consider early repayment if necessary. Once the building is re-opened and brought into full use (as a fairtrade cafe, shop, meeting place and resources centre), and with a comprehensive fundraising strategy and business plan, we should soon get back into a sound financial situation.

The charity recently celebrated its 25th anniversary. It was set up in the 1980s, pioneered by Dennis Mitchell and others, including many local Quakers, to make friendship links with communities in other cultures. Sustainability has always been at the heart of what we do. We currently have active links with communities in Kenya, Bangladesh, Poland, Germany and Slovakia, as well as working closely with community groups in Cheltenham.

The building will be open through "Cheltenham Ecohab", part of the National Heritage Open Days on 8th September. Come and see the insulation and renewable energy technologies. The official re-launch of the building will be on 4th October. Website: <http://transitiontowncheltenham.org.uk/ecohab.php>

Please contact Alison Crane (trustee) if you have any questions or think you can help.

## LIBRARY NEWS

October 14<sup>th</sup> **Bring and buy book sale** (voluntary donations, actually)

Live with less  
Bring a lot of books  
What sort of books?  
For a good cause?

*and share your pleasure  
and take home a few  
any sort (well nearly)  
donations for our library, and books left over will go to  
the excellent British Red Cross Charity Bookshop*

Thank you

### **Suggested Reading from our Library**

'*The World Turned Upside Down*' by Christopher Hill (cat. no. H29). Radical Ideas during the English Revolution, including the birth of Quakerism. Written by 'one of the finest historians of the present age'. A long book, but you could try just reading chapter 10 – 'Ranters and Quakers', for example.

'*Deepening the Life of the Spirit*' developed by Ginny Wall (cat. no. SP68). A slim and concise collection of helpful ideas for developing spiritual practices which can further open the door of our hearts, to let the light shine in. Lots of references too for finding out more.

Alan and Nancy Sentance

**THE QUAKER BOOK CIRCLE** meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 2.30pm at member's homes. This takes the form of informal chat (discussion) on the book of the month chosen by members, books that have proved spiritually helpful or informative, chosen by members of the group.

The next meeting is on Wednesday 12th September at Margaret Cooper's house.

The book will be "*Learning to Fall*" by Philip Simmons, published by Hodder, 2002. Copies available from Amazon. If you have any difficulties obtaining the book please contact me.

We give a very warm welcome to new members. If you would like any more information do please contact me,  
David Clayton.

### **QUAKER WEEK 2012 – Planning so far**

The week will be marked at Cheltenham by two evening meetings, each with its own title:

Thursday 4th October "*Why I became a Quaker*",

Wednesday 10th October "*Quaker Peace and Simplicity*"

Each evening will commence with a light meal at 6pm, followed at 7pm by personal statements, of six minutes each, from three individual Quakers. This should raise questions, to which participants may contribute answers. We felt that specific items, such as the business method (no voting), would arise in the personal statements or, after these, in the answers to questions.

We need to enlist the participation of most Friends, whom we ask to bring a friend or neighbour to one or both meetings. We shall be advertising the meetings to attract enquirers. The presence of most Friends is seen as important to the success of the meetings.

### **FIFTH SUNDAY TALK BY ROBERT MAXWELL IN JULY**

Anyone wanting to follow up Robert's fascinating talk may like to visit the website for the Salt and Light Conference which he attended:

[www.saltandlight2012.org](http://www.saltandlight2012.org)

Robert alluded to a statement from the World Conference, reprinted overleaf

## The Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice

The Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice was approved on 24 April 2012 at the Sixth World Conference Friends, held at Kabarak University near Nakuru, Kenya. It is the culmination of the FWCC *World Consultation on Global Change* which was held in 2010 and 2011.

“In past times God’s Creation restored itself. Now humanity dominates, our growing population consuming more resources than nature can replace. We must change, we must become careful stewards of all life. Earthcare unites traditional Quaker testimonies: peace, equality, simplicity, love, integrity, and justice. Jesus said, “As you have done unto the least... you have done unto me”.

We are called to work for the peaceable Kingdom of God on the whole earth, in right sharing with all peoples. However few our numbers, we are called to be the salt that flavours and preserves, to be a light in the darkness of greed and destruction.

We have heard of the disappearing snows of Kilimanjaro and glaciers of Bolivia, from which come life-giving waters. We have heard appeals from peoples of the Arctic, Asia and Pacific. We have heard of forests cut down, seasons disrupted, wildlife dying, of land hunger in Africa, of new diseases, droughts, floods, fires, famine and desperate migrations – this climatic chaos is now worsening. There are wars and rumors of war, job loss, inequality and violence. We fear our neighbors. We waste our children’s heritage.

All of these are driven by our dominant economic systems – by greed not need, by worship of the market, by Mammon and Caesar.

Is this how Jesus showed us to live?

- We are called to see what love can do: to love our neighbor as ourselves, to aid the widow and orphan, to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable, to appeal to consciences and bind the wounds.
- We are called to teach our children right relationship, to live in harmony with each other and all living beings in the earth, waters and sky of our Creator, who asks, “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the world?” (Job 38:4)
- We are called to do justice to all and walk humbly with our God, to cooperate lovingly with all who share our hopes for the future of the earth.
- We are called to be patterns and examples in a 21st century campaign for peace and ecojustice, as difficult and decisive as the 18th and 19th century drive to abolish slavery.

We dedicate ourselves to let the living waters flow through us – where we live, regionally, and in wider world fellowship. We dedicate ourselves to building the peace that passeth all understanding, to the repair of the world, opening our lives to the Light to guide us in each small step.

Bwana asifiwe. A pu Dios Awqui. Gracias Jesús. Jubilé. Salaam aleikum. Migwetch. Tikkun olam. Alleluia! “

### And Finally

The link to the recipe for cheddar, onion & herb wholemeal scones which we enjoyed at the lunch is:  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2012/jun/22/summer-baking-recipes-fearnley-whittingstall>

I hope to reproduce it in another edition of the Newsletter