

CHELTHENHAM QUAKER

JUNE 2013

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)

May			
Friday	24	Until Monday 27	Yearly Meeting at Friends House, London
Wednesday	29	2.30	Quaker Book Club at Margaret Cooper's
June			
Sunday	2	12 noon	Local Meeting for Worship for Business
Saturday	8	11am talk, 2pm business	Area Meeting for Worship for Business see below for details
Wednesday	19	2.30pm	Premises Committee
Sunday	16	12 noon	Meeting for Learning see below for details
Thursday	27	7.30	Pastoral Friends meet at Nina Odescalchi's

Area Meeting for Worship for Business will be held at Cheltenham Meeting House at 2pm Saturday 8 June following a talk on the voluntary work in Afghanistan undertaken by Voices for Creative non-Violence UK at 11am. We are responsible for providing drinks at lunchtime and for tea at the close of the meeting.

Meeting for Learning: on Sunday 16 June will be a continuation in the series "Why I am a Quaker", speakers to be announced.

Elders would like to have the names of Friends who have not already spoken but would be willing to do so, or names of other Friends who you would like to hear, for a future date.

JUNE COLLECTION is for Woodbrooke, which is Europe's only Quaker Study Centre. Situated in Birmingham, it is a wonderful resource for us to experience short courses on personal spiritual growth, theology, creative arts and training for Quaker roles. We can also stay there to use the library or art room, or to explore Birmingham. Donations can be given over the phone 0121 472 5171 or sent to Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, 1046 Bristol Road, Birmingham B29 6LJ. The website is at www.woodbrooke.org.uk/donation.php.

Friends who are taxpayers are encouraged to send donations directly to the charity, using Gift Aid or a charity voucher (CAF, Charities Trust, etc), possibly adding a note to say that they belong to Cheltenham Quaker Meeting.

REQUEST FROM PASTORAL CARE GROUP: A particular responsibility of Pastoral Friends is to support all those in Meeting who wish to be supported. To help us do this, if you expect to be away from Sunday Meeting for some weeks, please would you let a Pastoral Friend know, so that we are not unnecessarily concerned. Thank you.

When Pastoral friends meet we hold friends in the Light. If you feel you need support or you know of someone in Meeting who may need support, please tell one of the Pastoral Friends.

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 June at the latest

Web address: http://www.cheltenhamquaker.org.uk/current_cq.pdf

BRITAIN YEARLY MEETING will be held from 24-27 May at Friends House, London.

If you are a member you can just come along and if you are an attender you should ask for an elder to send a letter of recommendation. No need to book (See *Quaker faith & practice* 6.15).

What's on the agenda: The two main themes this year are feeding in to our wider consideration of 'What it means to be a Quaker today':

1. 'Trust in the Spirit'

This session will explore some of the tensions of being part of a community with a shared discipline, how we draw the strength to trust decisions which we might personally not be comfortable with and how we help others who feel challenged by this discipline.

2. 'Trust in trusteeship'

We hope in this session to explore what it means to be a Quaker trustee and how it may differ from service as a trustee in the broader community. How do we maintain our Quaker values and keep a clear sense of the spiritual basis underpinning our work? Fuller explanations are in *Documents in Advance*.

We can see how others are responding to the questions asked as spiritual preparation and add our own contributions by visiting <http://quaker.boards.net/boards/8/truth-prosper> website.

NOTES FROM MAY LOCAL MEETING

Nominations: We agreed to send the name of Dorothy Carson forward to Area Meeting as Elder. We agreed to appoint John Cross to join the Premises Committee, Margaret Cooper as Librarian and Mary Neville as Assistant Librarian.

Fifth Sunday 30 June: Alison Crane and Pat Dannahy are offering to lead one or more sessions on 'inclusion'. The Meeting was pleased to support this suggestion.

Solar Panels: Alison Crane reported that the Premises Committee has researched the different options for these. The table below gives the details of these. It appears that Conergy, a German manufacturer, who make all the components as well as assembling the panels and associated equipment, will best meet our ethical and environmental concerns. We asked Premises to first arrange for a survey of the roof, and then finalise this decision for early installation. Local Meeting agrees to pay the surveyor's fee.

Comparative details for different PV suppliers

	LG	833	ET	CONERGY
APPEARANCE	black	black	black	black
CARBON				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power of panel • Efficiency • Performance • Country manufactured 	250 watts (x16) 15.5% 80.2% at 25 years S Korea	250 watts (x16) 16.4% 90%at 25years China and Spain	250 watts (x16) 15.37% 81.4% at 25 years China	250 watts (x16) 15.36% 82% at 25 years Germany
FINANCIAL				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation • Total Income • Product warranty 	£6,800 £32,964 10 years	£6,800 £32,964 10 years	£6,300 £32,964 10 years	£6,800 £32,964 12 years
ENVIRONMENTAL Waste Policy	PV cycle	Ceres	PV cycle	PV cycle
ETHICAL	Involved in military equipment & environmental destruction through mining	Chinese working conditions. Use Gallium - rare, combined with arsenic - toxic	Chinese working conditions	
QUALITY	ISO 9001, 14001	ISO 9001, 14001	ISO 9001, 14001	ISO 9001, 14001

Spiritual Adventure Day: We had feedback from this day, what had been appreciated and what could have been better. It was felt the presence of Friends from Forest of Dean Meeting enhanced the day. Feedback from us to the Asha Centre will include the suggestion of a hearing loop if we are to use it again.

Are we a "FairTrade Church"? Rowland Carson gave us the background to this question, which came from Churches Together. There are three goals:

- i. use FairTrade tea and coffee for refreshments;
- ii. move forward using other FairTrade products such as biscuits and fruit;

iii. promote FairTrade during the annual FairTrade Fortnight and other events during the year
There is a national central commitment from QPSW. We were reminded that Global Footsteps Café – founded and supported by Friends - is a source of FairTrade products close to our Meeting House. Meeting would like the question of sustainability raised with Churches Together.
We asked Premises Committee to consider the question of ensuring that sustainable cleaning and paper products are purchased.

NOTES FROM MAY AREA MEETING

Membership: We welcomed Nigel Smith (Cheltenham) who has transferred from Nottingham and Derbyshire Area Meeting and Geraldine (Cherry) Foster (Nailsworth) who has transferred from Central England Area Meeting. Barbara Jones (Nailsworth) has transferred to Sussex West Area Meeting.

Testimony to the Grace of God in the Life of Mary Chick: This was read out and will be forwarded to Friend's House together with a photograph of Mary.

Treasurer's Report: Major expenditure has been incurred relating to the restoration and repairs of Gloucester Meeting House following the fire, which will result in Area Meeting's financial resources being considerably reduced.

Minutes of Record: Judy Roles (Cheltenham) and Val Kirby (Nailsworth) have been accepted to assist Yearly Meeting Gathering 2014 Planning Group.

Feedback from the Meeting for Worship held for the marriage of Sophie Robinson and Sean Elliott at Painswick Meeting House in April: Kim Roberts, the Registering Officer, gave a moving account of the wedding and its effect on a number of participants. It is well worth reading this in the Minutes of Area Meeting.

Area Meeting Camp: will be held Sunday 18 August to Sunday 25 August at Charmouth, Dorset. Further Information in the folder in the Library.

WOOL AGAINST WEAPONS

Between now and August 2014 a 7 mile long PINK KNITTED SCARF will be created to stretch between the Atomic Weapons Establishment sites at Aldermaston and Burghfield, where nuclear weapons are made.

To make the scarf 7 miles long, we are going to need 11,000 "units" of knitting or crochet.

Each unit in any –or all- shades of pink will measure 60cm wide and 100cm long – any thickness of yarn, any style, any stitch – be creative. You will need approx 80 – 95 stitches across if you use dk yarn on roughly size 7 needles, with about 100 rows. Grab a tape measure as it's a bit tricky, and varies wildly! Thicker wool and/or thicker needles will need a different number of stitches, as will crocheting. Needle size has been a bit of a hotly debated issue – just pick up your nearest needles and give it a go...it doesn't really matter. Wool stretches!!!

NB: if anyone has any spare pinkish (from baby to purple!) yarn could you bring it to meeting for others to use if needed.

Ann Caro

GLOUCESTER MEETING

Further to the announcement in May's Gloucester Quaker newsletter, Gloucester Meeting is delighted to confirm that all being well they will be returning as planned to the Meeting House for Meeting for Worship on Sunday 26 May at 10.30am.

They hope that as many Friends as possible will be able to come, and they would especially welcome any Friends from elsewhere in the Area Meeting who wish to join them.

WHY AM I A QUAKER?

The text of Jo Joy's presentation at our Quaker Week Public Meeting in October 2012

I had had a profound experience at a rather challenging time of my life, which brought me suddenly into a relationship with the living God.

I had joined a local church, which initially was very helpful and nurturing to my newly found faith, but I found myself in a difficult position there and needed to find some space in order to think things through. I therefore went to Quakers, having attended a day on healing at the Gloucester Meeting House.

I was taken by the simplicity of the worship, the sense that I was 'with' others, and yet nothing was expected of me. I could just be, to join with what was going on, not having to find a page number or stand up, sit down, whatever. I was given a leaflet about silence, whose words spoke such wisdom to me that I felt I needed to spend more time exploring this simple yet profoundly moving expression of prayer.

When I first came to faith I experienced a sense of needing to get on with something, to tell the world about Jesus- do you not know- have you not heard? sort of approach. Yet I had a young family to support, the church I was at did not seem to give me what I needed and something has kept me going back to sit in silent contemplation, just marvelling at the wonder of God. We are all on a journey; for some there is a lot of singing and shouting, even the same person experiences noisy and then quieter times in their spiritual life. For me I have discovered that I am a Contemplative, and this realisation in itself has been hugely comforting and inspiring for me. I love going to different services with different types of singing and praise, yet because music creates powerful feelings in me I find it so very stirring that I am overwhelmed by it, then get confused as to what is my emotion and what is of God.

I have a sense now (although was less aware at the time) that perhaps God was encouraging me to come away to a quiet place, to learn more about him in the spirit rather than running away from the God Father figure which, to be honest on reflection terrified me. (I think of Jonah, who, when God asked him to go to Nineveh, determinedly set off in the opposite direction! How I can identify with him!)

For the past 9 years or so I have found myself returning to the quiet of Meeting, not sure what I'm seeking or why I'm there, yet my attitude has changed. I look forward to going, there are no "shoulds": to me it seems entirely logical to get still and quiet enough to hear the still small voice of the Lord speak. It is a practice which I try to follow at home, and I know now with the experience of doing this regularly that I am much better prepared for my day if I take the time to seek first the kingdom of God.

I am grateful for the gentle advice and support which has been extended to me by Friends. The biggest thing I have learned is that it is ok sometimes to just sit with the questions rather than seek to find answers and end up more frustrated than maybe we are meant to be. I am particularly encouraged by practising the meditation called "Experiment with Light". I have had profound meaningful experiences throughout the years which have brought me so much inner strength to deal with the different life challenges I have faced. It also has been through Quakers that I learned about "Lectio Divina", again a very powerful practice which is so helpful on the spiritual journey.

Taking communion is still a very important aspect of faith for me, and I still maintain links with other churches. I know I still have a lot to learn, but I am very grateful to have encountered George Fox's teaching and his reminder, in the rush and bustle of this busy world, to be cool and still in thine own mind.

I also find it challenging and yet strangely helpful to seek that of God in everyone - and it is a constant surprise to me where and in whom He is found.