

CHEL TENHAM QUAKER

FEBRUARY 2015

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 two of the Children's Meeting volunteers.

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

January			
Thursday	22	10.30am	Area Meeting Peace Group at Park Street Mission, Gloucester
Thursday	22	7.30pm	Cheltenham Interfaith see page 2
Sunday	24	Morning	Sale of Fair Trade Products
Sunday	24	Morning	Food Bank Collection
Sunday	24	After Meeting	Fourth Sunday Worship Sharing
Wednesday	28	2.30pm	Quaker Book Club at Margaret Cooper's
Friday	30	10.30am	Coffee Morning at Footsteps Café see below
February			
Sunday	1	Noon	Local Meeting for Worship for Business
Friday	6	10.30am	Coffee Morning at Footsteps Café see below
Sunday	8	1.30pm	Area Meeting for Worship for Business at Old Town Hall, Stroud
Monday	9	2.00pm	Meeting of Elders
Saturday	14	10.15	Area Meeting for Learning at Gloucester FMH. See page 2
Sunday	15	Noon	Meeting for Learning see below
Sunday	22	Morning	Food Bank collection
Sunday	22	Morning	Sale of Fair Trade Products
Sunday	22	After Meeting	Fourth Sunday Worship Sharing
Monday	23	7.30pm	Cheltenham Interfaith Group see page 2
Wednesday	25	2.30pm	Quaker Book Club at Margaret Cooper's
Thursday	26	7.30pm	Meeting of Pastoral Friends
Friday	27	10.30am	Coffee Morning at Footsteps Café
Saturday	28	10.30am	Pre-election Workshop at Gloucester FMH see page 2

Meeting for Learning: Sunday 15 February after Meeting for Worship, topic is "What canst thou say?": a Quaker approach to religious belief. It will be facilitated by Alison Crane, Dinah Clements and Dorothy Carson.

Footsteps Café: If the café is shut because of lack of volunteers, please go down to the café opposite M&S side door, and we will meet there.

Gloucester Meeting House is not open at present due to repairs to the heating. Meetings will be held at Park Street Mission for the time being. This is at the back of the Northgate Street Sainsbury, off Gouda Way, in Gloucester. Check venue for other advertised meetings at the Meeting House. Please notice that Area Meeting on 8 February, previously advertised as at Gloucester MH, will now be held in Stroud.

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 16 February at the latest

Web address: <http://www.cheltenhamquaker.org.uk/newsletters.php>

FEBRUARY COLLECTION is for Woodbrooke, our Quaker Study Centre in Birmingham. Its mission is the fostering of a vital Friends' ministry, where ministry encompasses faith, witness, love and service. Woodbrooke has a wealth of short courses, as well as offering in-depth study, retreats and online courses. We are very lucky to have such a resource so close to home. Bursary help is available and there are special offers for first timers, new members, Young Friends (18 to 30 years old) and some courses.

You can donate by phone on 0121 472 5171 or send donations to Woodbrooke Quaker study Centre, 1046 Bristol Road, Birmingham B29 6LJ. More information at www.woodbrooke.org.uk.

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.

CHELTENHAM INTERFAITH

Thursday 22 January 7.30pm There will be a talk on *Subud* by an international spokesperson for the movement. *Subud* is an international spiritual movement that began in Indonesia in the 1920s, founded by Muhammad Subah Sumohadiwidojo, at the heart of which is a spiritual exercise. There are groups locally and in 82 other countries with some 10,000 members. At Cheltenham FMH. There is a charge of £2 for non-members of the group.

Tuesday 27 January 6.00pm There will be a Holocaust Memorial Day Commemoration, Borough Council, Promenade, and Cheltenham.

Monday 23 February at 7.30pm: Talk on *Islamic Issues in the News* by Dr Chris Hewer. Chris Hewer is a Christian; former advisor to the Bishop of Birmingham on Inter-Faith Relations; Lecturer on Christian-Muslim Relations at Selly Oak College; St Ethelburger Fellow in Christian-Muslim Relations in London and writer and media communicator. At Cheltenham FMH. There is a charge of £2 for non-members of the group.

MEETING FOR LEARNING ARRANGED BY AREA MEETING

This free workshop will be on Saturday 14 February at 10.15am to 1.00pm at Gloucester Meeting House, with the title *Transformations*. It will include celebrating our wide range of backgrounds and belief and ask '*how can diversity fuel transformation of the Society of Friends?*' Bring a packed lunch if you would like to share some social time or discuss the issues informally after the workshop. Everyone welcome but please book with Alison Crane by Sunday 8 February.

See details of the workshop on page 4

WORKSHOP ON PREPARING FOR THE MAY GENERAL ELECTION

Area Meeting Peace Group have arranged a workshop to be held on Saturday 28 February, 10.30am to 12.30 pm in Gloucester Meeting House. Discussions will range from identifying the key concerns of Quakers, to how to frame incisive and challenging questions to candidates at hustings.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

These can be recycled at Marks & Spencer's Cheltenham store (upstairs in the men's department) until the end of January. Foreign stamps are being collected by June Drummond and sent to QPSW, who sell them to raise funds. Cut round them leaving a quarter inch margin round the stamp.

RUTH WEST (NÉE STUBBS) 1ST JULY 1916 - 19TH NOVEMBER 2014

A short biography
by Richard Lacock and Philip Paull

This account of the life of Ruth West is compiled from the experiences of Philip Paull and Richard Lacock from their visits to Ruth during her latter years. A relative said that Ruth's memory was not entirely reliable about the facts of her life.

The elder daughter of Clifford and Margaret Stubbs, Ruth was born in the city of Chengdu, Sichuan Province of Western China. The Friends' Foreign Mission Association had sponsored Clifford Stubbs as Professor of Chemistry there at the West China Union University, a foundation of Quaker and other Christian bodies. That was where Ruth's father arrived in 1914. He was a man of outstanding personal and academic qualities. From a Presbyterian background he then became a Quaker. His sweetheart, Margaret Lees, joined him in 1915 and the two were married in Chengdu.

Thus Ruth was born in China as a birthright Quaker. In her nineties she could still count up to twenty in Chinese. When Ruth was ready for proper schooling she was sent to The Friends' School Saffron Walden as a boarder. One day the fourteen-year-old was called to the Head Teacher's study to be told that her father had been murdered. Ruth refused the offer of spending the day in her room, choosing to return to lessons.

Subsequently her widowed mother, Margaret Stubbs, together with sister Jean and brother John, all returned to Saffron Walden School. Margaret was appointed as a Junior House Warden. This allowed the family to stay together, and the children to get a good education.

Ruth passed the exam which was equivalent to today's A-levels, and continued to Birmingham University, where she qualified as a doctor. This was about the beginning of the World War II. She moved to London, where she met and married Leslie West.

Their children are Roger, Jeremy, and Lyn West.

Ruth was a Medical Officer of Health in Surrey where they lived until retirement. At that stage Leslie and Ruth moved to Cheltenham, and transferred to Cheltenham Quaker Meeting, part of what is now Gloucestershire Area Quaker Meeting. A reason for the move was to be nearer Lyn, who lived at the Camphill Village near Newnham. Sadly Leslie died quite suddenly: his Quaker funeral was at Cheltenham in January 1995.

For many years a visit to Camphill Village, led by Ruth for the sale of work, was a regular fixture for Cheltenham Friends on the first Saturday in December. After a fall, and several weeks in hospitals, Ruth's son Jeremy found her a place in a care home, where she lived for nearly five years.

Much of Ruth's life had been in the service of others, and this characteristic of caring continued to the end. When she reached the stage of being able to do little practically, friends who came to visit her would comment that they felt better for their visit. And if a carer brought Ruth a drink, she would always first invite a visitor to drink with her. Doing and Being were important parts of her life.

This quotation from *Quaker faith & practice* 20:10 came as a response to the attacks in France at the beginning of January:

The place of prayer is a precious habitation....I saw this habitation to be safe, to be inwardly quiet, when there was great stirrings and commotions in the world.

John Woolman, 1770

Go online to read *Quaker faith & practice* at <http://qfp.quaker.org.uk>



Gloucestershire Area Quaker Meeting
Meeting for Learning



Transformations

Celebrate our wide-ranging beliefs: How can diversity fuel the transformation of the Society of Friends?

Saturday 14th February 2015

10.15am - 1.00pm

(followed by packed lunch social)

at Gloucester Friends Meeting House
Greyfriars, Southgate St, Gloucester GL1 1TS

- Hear about Ben Pink Dandelion's view of the nature of British Quaker theology today, from his 2014 Swarthmore Lecture.
- Share what lies at the core of our own beliefs as Quakers
- Be challenged by Ben Pink-Dandelion's call for personal and group transformation.

Workshop facilitator: Val Kirby of Nailsworth Local Meeting

Please bring your own lunch if you would like to share some social time or discuss the issues informally after the workshop.

Tea and coffee will be provided.

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The workshop is free to attend, but please book a place as numbers are limited.

To book a place: please contact Alison Crane by **Sunday 8th February.**
