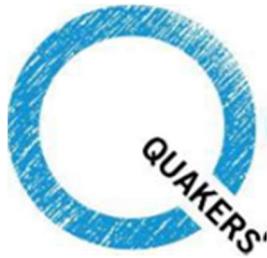


Malvern Quaker Meeting



Newsletter April 2022

Items for the May issue of the Newsletter will need to reach me by 25th April.

Malvern Quakers Away Weekend, 11-13/3/22

The weekend was a great success, and these are some of the comments that were received.



Overall – very, very rewarding. So good to make much deeper connections with so many friends. Chance to contact people with whom I have felt some tension / sense of difference. Chance to offer some of my views on challenging issues – and feel heard. My faith in fundamental Q values has been strongly reinforced. At first, I felt there was too much structure – insufficient time for informal contact. At the end, I was glad for some of the intense presentations. Should this be a regular

event? Annual? Biennial? (But some choose not to come – might that become an in-group who attended and a non-in-group?)

Accommodation Comfortable, good setting, good food.

Activities Good balance of programmed / unprogrammed.

Empowerment I felt empowered to not attend things I did not want to, or to walk or sleep instead of. I perceive that others did too.

Meeting people I met / spoke to several people that I had not before.

Sense of Trust I think strengthened.

New info impressions Yes, peace testimony, FAU, Inclusion and Diversity

What's next? Something exciting.

Richard

Venue What a lovely venue, I'd come here again. Having nice grounds is important. Appreciated that there was a chapel for us.

Food Speaking for myself, 2 main meals + cooked breakfast is OTT. Could lunch be salad/soup + fruit (or at least this option). Some of us need the opportunity to opt out of cooked breakfast.

Activities I liked the balance of self-generated activities and the fixed talk at the end. Free time and shorter spaces built in is vital, to enable us to meet our main aim of spending time together in pairs or small groups. Half hour inputs on various topics on Saturday was just right. The important issues of Diversity and Inclusion might have engaged us all had there been a small group component. Thanks to MLM for subsidising this so that anyone could attend. Let's do this again, maybe with Worcester LM.

MJ & AJ

1. Thoughts on Inclusion and Diversity discussion very interesting and useful.
2. Very much enjoyed short chats in small groups on Saturday afternoon.
3. “ “ “ talk on Friends Ambulance Unit by Tony Barlow.
4. Enjoyed light entertainment on Saturday evening.
5. Drawing Room for informal chatting very nice.

Not so keen on *Creative Listening* Activity.

Food was too plentiful. Several of us suffered as a result.

Setting is inspiring. Building fascinating and comfortable. My room, characterful and welcoming. Food delicious but rather overwhelming.

Activities I appreciated the freedom to join or not join in.

Meeting for Worship in such a beautiful setting was inevitably rather special.

Inclusion and Diversity I felt this needed managing / chairing rather more. Also, I noticed that reticent and recent friends were not invited to take part.

Short Chats Great fun / interest / challenge.

Light Entertainment A little dark at times!

Conclusion A restorative and relaxing weekend.

- Holland House is a wonderful place for a retreat.
 - * Please can we come back here every year!
 - * Great to socialise with Friends over a weekend and not just briefly on Sunday mornings.
 - * Such a retreat has been long overdue.
 - * The programme was sensibly flexible – not rigid and over-scheduled.
 - * Some sessions worked better than others but that's inevitable. Bryan

Money well spent. Very enjoyable weekend. Far too much food but WHAT food! Lovely staff. Judith

Like many others, I imagine, I was unsure what to expect when I signed up to coming on the MQM weekend away. I am so glad I did! It was a wonderful opportunity to be together with many Friends in an atmosphere of peace and calm, away from everyday cares, to get to know each other better and to share knowledge and thoughts on many matters of concern to us, and to prove that we Quakers are not all about seriousness but like to have fun as well – which we did!

An impetus for the weekend was that it be part of a healing process after the last couple of tumultuous years of conflict within our Meeting, the separations which had occurred as a result of them and the effects of the pandemic on our sense of community. Having been in the eye of the storm of one of the conflicts I am very grateful for the courage and determination of so many in our Meeting to come together to seek ways for us to resolve them as best we can, to learn, to heal and to move on. Last weekend was to me a demonstration of our commitment to each other, and to the Meeting as a whole as a spiritual community, to do all those things. I came away feeling spiritually nourished, with a strengthened sense of fellowship with Friends and a sense that we achieved a significant further step on our path to healing.

Regarding the structure of the weekend, I appreciated the balance between scheduled sessions, free time. The talk on the FAU on Sunday morning was fascinating and the speaker excellent. As to the venue, I thought it was nigh perfect for our needs and the size of the group. It was quietly located, comfortable, enough space for being all together and in small groups with nooks and crannies for time alone, a simple, beautiful chapel, wonderful spacious grounds to wander in, delicious food and last but no means least, helpful, attentive and cheerful staff.

A heartfelt thank you to the Elders and those others who gave such thought and worked so hard to making the weekend the very special weekend it was.

Annette de la Cour

I really enjoyed the weekend. It was far better than expected. The venue was ideal. Not too far away. All facilities you needed. Staff very friendly + helpful. Food fab. Now I have to diet !! The structure of the weekend suited me really well. I wasn't sure how I'd be not knowing anyone very well – But I felt very welcome + had some really good conversations with people. This group seems very positive + active + I found the weekend uplifting and inspiring. The activities were just right. I dipped in + out as I pleased so felt no pressure!!

Brilliant – Thank you all who organised it all.

Absolutely great value for money. I'd happily pay full price to come again!!

Linda

1. Accommodation – V. good – especially ensuite (for the elderly)
 2. Gardens etc – Wonderful and suitable handholds for the slippery bits.
 3. Sitting areas / dining room / chapel – all good.
 4. ‘Reflection’ time good.
 5. ‘Organised’ time OK Talk on (Friends) Ambulance (Unit) v. good.
Entertainment fun.
 6. Food - wonderful, but too much !
 7. Chat time - GOOD – Walks would be good too.
 8. Worship good. Materials (e.g., Stations of the Cross leaflet) good.
- Overall - Excellent.

I definitely got to know some people better and/or to know more about them. I felt there was good variety on the programme, and ample time for informal conversation. The venue was delightful and peaceful, the food plentiful, with an imaginative menu. The Holland House staff were extremely pleasant and helpful.

*You might like to know that the library now has a copy of the book that Anthony Barlow mentioned in his talk “An Exacting Mistress” which he has edited and was available to buy following the talk at the weekend away.
A big thank you to Judith Badman.*

We have received this article from the Revd. Lynne Sparkes of St Mary’s Pickersleigh

St Mary’s Pickersleigh runs three outreach programmes that support our local community: Pickersleigh Bears (our mother and toddler group), Refresh Community Cafe and our Community Fridge.

All three programmes give us direct contact with people in Pickersleigh who are struggling to make ends meet. January saw the most food shared from our Community Fridge, over one tonne of food, and February saw the most visits to the Fridge, over 370. People are increasingly struggling to get by on wages, benefits and tax credits, and so need other sources of help.

Your generous donation has enabled us to buy stock cupboard items, which together with food collected from the supermarkets enables people to have a complete meal. We are also able to give small grants to those experiencing fuel poverty, enabling them to top up their pre-payment meters.

Sadly, people with pre-payment meters have to pay more for their fuel than anyone else.

Since Christmas, we have been offering visitors to the fridge free hot drinks (and, if necessary, food) at our Community Cafe. These offers are much appreciated. It is often at the Cafe where we will hear of people’s problems and struggles. The Cafe provides a safe space in which to tell your story and be sympathetically heard, this is important for people who find themselves at the bottom of society and are often overlooked.

Every week Pickersleigh Bears provides a healthy snack including two portions of fruit for each child and a hot drink and biscuit for mums. It provides a place for children to play and socialise, which is especially important for those children born during the first lockdown and who missed social interaction during their early months. Social interaction is also important for lonely mums living in isolation in flats on the estate.

Advices and Queries No 4

The Religious Society of Friends is rooted in Christianity and has always found inspiration in the life and teachings of Jesus. How do you interpret your faith in the light of this heritage? How does Jesus speak to you today? Are you following Jesus' example of love in action? Are you learning from his life the reality and cost of obedience to God? How does his relationship with God challenge and inspire you?

Death and dying meeting for learning

11th June at Malvern Meeting House. 10 - 5, led by Hugh McMichael.

Hugh himself faced death as a teenager. He says the doctors were so unhelpful that he determined to become a doctor to 'do better'. He practised as a physician, often diagnosing incurable illness, then worked in hospices for 9 years. Volunteering as a Samaritan and later as a prison chaplain brought him into close contact with suicide and to question the assumption of 'will to live'. He offers a day to explore our expectations and fears around death, dying and bereavement. Because of the personal and intense nature of the subject, there will be a limit of 12 participants. People in the midst of such events may find it difficult to look at the processes which influence their responses.

This is an Area Meeting event, booking details to follow.

Special Collections

- Liz Flanagan reports that she was pleased to forward £150 to a charity working directly with Afghan families [UNICEF]. As it went via her personal bank account, she was able to add £35 tax relief.
- Jill Etheridge reports that the total collected for People in Motion amounted to £202.

Here is an article concerning April's Special Collection:

April's Special Collection - CYEN, for supporting the youth of Ugandan slums.

Kevin Rolph

The charity that I would like to offer for support for April's Special Collection is a tiny, Birmingham-based, organisation that, proportionally, achieves an incredible amount for young, disadvantaged Africans. It provides resources to help young people to help themselves out of the Ugandan slums, to train them with the skills to go back and support the whole community. It does great work in empowering girls and young women in an environment where early marriage and subservience is the norm. In addition, it encourages learning about the climate crisis.

By way of a fuller description, I can find no better than their own words:

Established in 2014, the Chrysalis Youth Empowerment Network (CYEN) exists to support young African people and train them as "changemakers", providing recreational and educational activities to enable them to have a positive impact on their communities.

The African operations are based at the Chrysalis Centre in Kireka, Kampala, Uganda, located on edge of the Acholi Quarter. It's a small place, but it has hosted two youth conferences and runs activities as diverse as taekwon-do and watercolour painting, acrobatics and intellectual boardgames, and athletics.

The Acholi Quarter is a slum district in Kampala and children there are generally poorly nourished, lacking in investment and often unable to go to school due to the prohibitive cost of school fees.

The centre is colourful and is designed to stimulate young people to think of a better future for themselves and their community. Many of the activities are run by the youth themselves, and experts are brought in to teach specialist sports or activities.

The Chrysalis Centre is the headquarters of the "Butterfly Project" for young social entrepreneurs, and it is here where young people are trained up to become changemakers.

In 2020 after many years of fund-raising and planning, the Chrysalis Secondary School opened in Lagwe Dola in the north of Uganda where secondary education is rare, providing a centre for regional transformation and social entrepreneurship, built to encourage its students to see themselves as architects of change.

The Chrysalis Youth Empowerment Network has had an enormous impact in Uganda and has trained young people from all over the country, and many of these are now running activities in their own local communities, having been trained at the Chrysalis Centre.

I encourage you to give generously. This is a little-known, incredibly efficient charity where keeping a child in education, and off the streets, costs around £1.50/day.

Donations can be made in the usual way, or you can donate directly via their website (where you can read more about their work) or on Just Giving.

Website: cyen.online

Just Giving: www.justgiving.com/CYEN

Quaker Faith in Action

We have received a link to a significant article from Quaker Peace & Social Witness. It covers the following topics:

- Quakers in Britain condemn attack on Ukraine and call for end to fighting
- Faithfully maintaining our testimony against war
- The invasion of Ukraine must be stopped – but US military aid is not the answer
- News about Ukraine – Friends House Moscow
- War is a choice, and so is peace: QCEA's position on Ukraine
- Quaker attention on peace and Ukraine – FWCC EMES

[Click here to download to print and share the full document](#)

For those not able to download and print, a paper copy of this PDF is available with the periodicals in the library.

GOOD FRIDAY – 15th April

Central Group of Churches

Members from Malvern churches will form a Procession of Witness from their respective churches to the Priory grounds for an outdoor service which will start at 10.30am. (Please note the change of time from previous years) If unable to process, please join all for the service in the Priory grounds.

Hot Cross Buns, together with a serviette printed with the Easter Message, will be distributed to passers-by in Church Street.

There will be Hot Cross Buns and Coffee available in the Lyttelton Rooms after the service.

Coffee Mornings

I propose to hold coffee mornings on the first Saturday of each month in future and hope we will enjoy good weather to sit outside and get to know each other better.

I hope we can meet again informally on Saturday May 7th.

Liz Flanagan
8 Wilton Road
WR14 3RL

SPRING

Propelled outdoors
By signs of Spring
Rebirth, renewal
Now begin.

Does Spring mean Hope?
Unfolding flowers?
Rebirth in Nature?
Lengthening Hours?

Does Spring mean Life?
Starting anew
Refreshing all
We see and do?

Does Spring mean Dying
On the cross
When Christians celebrate
That loss?

Blossoms unfold
The blackbirds sing
All heralding
The joy of Spring

Melanie Jameson

