



Malvern Quaker Meeting Newsletter

August 2020



The deadline for next Newsletter is Tuesday 25th August.

Elizabeth Rolph

Newsletter@malvernquakermeeting.org.uk

Update on the Meeting House

Richard Bartholemew

Paul Wyatt and I went to the Meeting House to look at the changes in our use of the building that we might have to adapt to once the Area Meeting Trustees agree that we can open up again for worship.

The sort of issues that we looked at was the spacing of seating in the main Meeting Room- so we think that we could have about 25 people max there. Excess chairs would need to be put into storage in the loft.

The front door would be the entrance (for those without mobility difficulties) and the back door the exit. Kitchen, library and children's room are likely to be off limits for the foreseeable future. The Women's and Disabled toilets can stay as they are, but the urinals in the Gents WC would be taped off so that only 1 person is in there at any one time.

There will probably be no lettings while the virus is still a problem so that a week's duration between usage should put paid to any active virus being there for the following Sunday.

Another new thing to bear in mind is that the current advice is to have places well ventilated so we will have to work out what that means in mid winter when we would not normally have the windows open. Keeping our coats, gloves and scarves on perhaps?

Given the fact that a number of Friends may not feel ready to return to the Meeting House straight away after re-opening we need to be mindful to have measures that are actively reassuring and effective about making it a safe place to meet.

Sunday mornings



Fifteen to twenty of us are meeting by Zoom each Sunday, for 40 minutes of worship followed by 'afterword' and news of friends. As well as regulars we are pleased to have a couple who have not yet been to a physical Quakers Meeting, and Gren Gaskell who used to come regularly to Malvern Meeting.

Elizabeth Rolph



At the same time there is a Meeting for Worship at the Cube for half an hour from 10.30. They are now sitting around the oak tree at the rear of the building (About six friends have been meeting in the Quaker Peace Garden but have had to relocate because of a dance class in the building).

There is a 6-person limit in the current Government guidelines so this needs to be adhered to. Should you come (and it is delightful in the warm weather) and there are already 6 people gathered then we would ask that you sit separately.

This is not an official meeting of the Worcestershire & Shropshire Area Meeting whilst AM Trustees are considering the procedures needed for safe meetings on Quaker premises (our garden as well as our Meeting House) but rather we meet in the spirit of Friends, sitting adventurously and waiting on the Lord.

Richard Bartholomew

75th Anniversary of the devastation of Hiroshima August 6th 1945.

The Malvern Churches' Justice and Peace Group is pleased to confirm the annual Peace Vigil can go ahead and will take place in Great Malvern Priory Church grounds on **Saturday 8th August at 12noon.**

This year is the 75th anniversary of the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki which we will commemorate in a short act of witness. There will be no meditation in the Priory as in previous years, but we shall stand holding the placards for 20 minutes. There will be no distribution of leaflets and social distancing will be observed. All are invited to join us to pray for peace in areas of conflict throughout the world.

Anthony Gann
Malvern Churches' Justice and Peace Group



News from Quaker Peace & Social Witness

Ahead of this 75th anniversary of the atomic bombs Quakers in Britain has been supporting Christian CND's call on the UK government to work for a global ban on nuclear weapons and to cancel the current programme to replace Trident. [Read more about why Quakers are involved in this work and opportunities to get involved.](#)

Lyttelton Well

At our Meeting for Worship for Business in July we considered an appeal from Lyttelton Well Counselling Service. Here is an extract from their appeal letter:

Professional counsellors (all Christians) give their time free, though we do meet some of their travelling and supervision costs. There is an increasing demand for counselling, for which we make no charge, whilst counselling normally costs £40-£50 per hourly session. We have recently begun specialist counselling for couples and also 16-19 year olds. In 2019 our counselling service had a deficit of £7,500 which was subsidised by other parts of The Lyttelton Well. Without the support of Churches and individuals across the town none of this could happen.

We agreed to make a donation of £250. Those at the Meeting would have liked to give more, but there is a limit to how much the Meeting can give to a non-Quaker charity. As there is no Special Collection this month please consider giving directly to them, <https://www.thewellcounselling.co.uk/support-us> One option is to join their PAWS – Pound A Week Scheme. An individual contributing what they might spend on 2 cups of coffee a month raises £52 in a year (£65 if it is gift aided).

Here is an extract from their letter of thanks for our donation:

As you are aware, we continue to be able to offer counselling either online or by telephone during the current Covid-19 crisis and expect there to be significant demand for this service during these current difficult times. Your donation will help to cover some of the costs of maintaining this service.

Please would you pass on our thanks to all members of your Malvern Meeting for thinking of us and contributing these much needed funds.

You can also support them by going to their excellent café and bookshop.

Opening Times

Cafe: Monday to Saturday, 10am to 3pm

Bookshop: Monday to Saturday, 10am to 4pm

100 Words

Judith Badman has resumed work putting together details of regulars at our Meeting. If she hasn't been in touch with you and you'd like to be included please send your contribution to her. The original intention of this was to help us remember people's names – to go on a file in the Meeting House. We are considering sending the document to all on the Meeting email list (with no contact details) – is this a good idea?

Here are a couple of recent additions.

Annie

A war baby, conceived in hope, and nurtured in austerity

Outsider

Rebel

Yet unsure

Explorer and adventurer in place and ideas

Doctor

Mother

Listener to people and to God

Perplexed by life and loves and duties

Painful unraveling of 25 year marriage

Self doubt and low self esteem

Rejuvenation with bell ringing and new friends

Hospice work enlivening

Retirement and new marriage a new era, still developing

In spite of recent severe threat to health and ability.

Today is all

Tomorrow is only "if I'm spared"

Anne Burge

PS Written about 5 years ago. Previous health threat now diminished.
New one less severe and easily treated.

Hugh McMichael

Communist mother and atheist father. Separation for 4 years due to wartime evacuation, with abuses.

Worst and best thing that ever happened to me was facing death aged 17. Brought this experience into my doctoring, initially in hospitals then in hospices where I returned control to the residents.

Took these experiences into prisons, including 4 years as a chaplain in Long Lartin, where I found caring men who have been damaged by society.

Links with Quakers? Yes, in Long Lartin, but the notion of god within us, silence and the Q commitment to social causes have always appealed. I feel I have found friends!

PASTORAL CARE GROUP

Judith Badman

Every Quaker Meeting has some sort of "looking out for one another scheme". In Malvern we have had for some time four people we call Overseers who have divided all those attending Meeting regularly [or who have done so in the past] among the four and each tries to ensure that everyone in each of their two small groups knows one another and all look out for one another as the overseer does. The name Overseer is on the way out and we have just agreed with our parent body, Area Meeting that we call ourselves a Pastoral group. These are at the moment, Jon Critoph, Jill Etheridge, Judith Badman and just added at last Area Meeting, Paula Kingston, a welcome addition as we have been without our fourth person for nearly two years.

So people reading this, do you wish to be matched up with an Overseer/pastoral carer? Most are but we have some new people coming to Meeting now and wondered if you feel ready to be more part of Meeting in this way?

If you are interested, Give Jill Etheridge or Judith Badman a ring or email Judith.

Jill E: Tel no: 01684 564266

Judith B: judith.badman1@outlook.com Tel.no.:01684 491281

Restoring Relations : a course review by Paula Kingston

A few months ago, in the time long, long ago before lockdown, I was forwarded an email about a new course developed by two Quakers, Alistair Heslop and Ivan Hutnik. The aims of the course were to:-

- provide an understanding of the causes of conflict (in Quaker Meetings) and how it can be prevented and handled better, and
- develop local facilitators to provide training and help facilitate restoration in the event of conflict emerging

At the time it was envisaged as 4 face-to-face half-day workshops. I was impressed by the clear and professionally presented course outline, and having recently attended a weekend course on non-violent communication, I decided to sign up as it seemed to be in the same kind of territory.

Seven others, all involved with Quakers and from across the country, had also signed up, so we were set to go, - except that Covid-19 now precluded face-to-face meetings. Undeterred, Alistair and Ivan set about transferring the course into an online format suitable to be delivered via Zoom.

The outcome was not only a course which demonstrated excellence in using Zoom for an interactive learning workshop, but also one which demonstrated excellence in course design and delivery to optimise individual and group learning.

And what a group we were! Trust was created very early on by both our facilitators and the group members, who were self-disclosing, good at listening, non-judgmental, insightful and demonstrating of humour and wit at just the right times and in just the right ways. I couldn't have selected a better group had I been able to personally choose all the participants! (Maybe that's Quakers for you...?)

We were gently led through understanding the nature of conflict and how we as humans react in conflictual situations, then looking at the stages of conflict and the landscape of conflict, which is different from different positions and perspectives. If we had arrived thinking that we would be dealing with others in conflict, we rapidly shifted to examining our own reactions in situations and looking at our own contributions to conflict.

Just at the point when I was wondering how I could possibly cope with all the complex factors involved in human conflict, Alistair and Ivan introduced tools and techniques to enable a pathway to be found through the tangled undergrowth. For example, looking at my story, your story and the third story -the third story being a more neutral overview of what happened, how those involved felt about it, and the contribution of formal and informal roles and identities.

As you will have gathered, the workshop was participative and learning came from both taking part, from watching and listening, and from the insights and wisdom of our facilitators. Zoom was used to excellent effect and we were assigned to break-out rooms for one-to-one work, were able to do group reflections and watch our contributions appear on screen in front of us, courtesy of Alistair's mastery of the electronic whiteboard, and do group role plays, skilfully managed and illuminated by Ivan.

We not only learned a huge amount about ourselves and about conflict, but we also had a lot of fun as we got to know each other better and were able to be more relaxed. At the time of writing we still have two sessions to go on facilitation skills, to ensure we are ready to take on such a role in helping with a local conflict. As a member of the pilot group for this course I can only say that it has been a huge privilege to be involved. I thoroughly commend this very high-quality course to everyone.

The aim is to run further workshops in the future and if you are interested and wish to find out more, or register as a future participant, please email alistair.heslop@redmantle.net. I am happy, of course, to chat with any of you informally about my experiences and answer your questions, if I can. My email is paula.kingston49@yahoo.co.uk and my phone number is 01684 891566.

Clerks Correspondence

Friends Housing Bursary Trust has sent out its appeal and a summary of its finances during 2019.

The Trust was set up in 1946 to assist elderly Friends and long-term attenders with the cost of residential care. It now also tries to help those who wish to remain in their own home or supported accommodation. It relies on funds from donations, grants and legacies and modest income from investments. A significant proportion of their funding comes from Local and Area Meetings as well as from individual donations.

During 2019 they made quarterly grants to 11 Friends, mainly at the rate of £305 per quarter. They made a one one-off payment of £700. Income sources were: £4,409 from

Meetings and individuals; £9,200 from Charitable Trusts; £2,183 from investments. Their income exceeded expenditure by £932. To donate to this very worthwhile charity (No.212218) please pay into their account directly, Sort Code 40-52-40 A/c 00011012, giving your name as reference, and also emailing f.s.ashmore@gmail.com with the name and amount. If you wish to give by cheque the Clerks can supply details.

Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network – QUARN

QUARN is joining with others to campaign for the lowering of the exorbitant Home office fees currently required of people who have been accepted as qualifying for Discretionary Leave to remain following an application for asylum. These excessive fees, paid by people in already vulnerable situations, also help fund the wider immigration system. These applications for Further Leave to Remain used to be free. In 2015 the Home Office introduced a fee. These fees have risen steeply and now far exceed the costs incurred for each application.

People in this vulnerable situation should not be financially subsidising the system. The system of requiring people to make these repeated applications over a ten year period is relatively recent and causes unnecessary emotional suffering. You may like to write to your MP about the injustice of charging such high fees. Highlight the failure of the government to implement the Supreme Court ruling in December 2019 that profit at the expense of children is unlawful. The QUARN website will signpost you to others working in this field here:

<http://www.qarn.org.uk/homepage/vulnerable-people-paying-for-immigration-system/>

Note from Co-Clerk Jill: 'I see the address of QARN is Leicester Quaker Meeting House in Queens Rd, Leicester, a road along which I walked daily into university lectures from 1964 - 8!'

Quaker Voices on Mental Health

This is a newly forming group, which will in time become a Quaker Recognised Body. It is a group for people interested, concerned or passionate about mental health. There will be an inaugural meeting online on 22nd August 2020 at which the shape of the work of the group will be discerned.

For more information email Newsletter@malvernquakermeeting.org.uk

Area Meeting Report for 2019

Clerks have received a draft copy for comment on its accuracy. Please let us know if you would like to see it. The final version will be presented at AM in September.

The role of Area Meeting Trustees

Elizabeth Rolph

I listened in to the informal meeting before Area Meeting on July 11th. A few points worth sharing:

Area Meeting is a Charity Incorporated Organisation – regulated by charity law not company law. Trustees and Members are all responsible for the financial matters of Area Meeting and this is one of the reasons why we have to keep an accurate Register of Members.

Friends Trust Ltd own the Meeting Houses, but Area Meeting is responsible for maintenance.

Area Meeting owns the Quaker burial ground at Ironbridge.

Look out for the next session before Area Meeting on 12th September – I found it a useful 20 minutes.

The Key to Survival is MAD

Michael Townson

m = mutuality a = awareness d = diversity

Lucy and Michael Townson started coming to our Zoom meetings in May. This was written for their parish magazine - St Joseph's RC Church.

The 'Sermon on the Mount' reported in the Christian New Testament Gospel of Matthew is a central text, containing as it does the essence of Jesus the Christ's moral teaching on which the Kingdom of God is based. It culminates in the principle on which all great religions - and many humanists - agree:

"Always treat others as you would like them to treat you" - what is known as the 'Golden Rule'.

Mutuality - treating each other with love and respect - is a foundation of God's Kingdom, and thus the key to the survival of human society: we look out for each other and we support each other. This is only possible, however, if we are truly Aware of our needs and the needs of others, if we are aware of the difference between Needs and Wants (or desires). We must also accept the Diversity of human needs, and accept that the needs of our sister or brother might well be different from ours; this requires the gift of Empathy, the ability to 'walk in someone else's shoes'.

We are called to be Open to the needs of others: to turn our backs on them is to turn our backs on God.

But these MAD principles do not only apply to our interactions with our fellow-humans. They must inform our approach to the whole of Creation. In an important elaboration of Jesus' teaching, Pope Francis enjoins us to heed 'the cry of the poor and the cry of the Earth'.

The relationship of Mutuality applies to Creation generally: we expect the Earth to provide us with food, drink and shelter. How do we respond to her needs? Do we cherish her and nurture her?

What about Awareness? We think we have the right to plunder the Earth as we see fit to fulfil our perceived needs; how aware are we of the needs of the Earth, if she is to blossom and flourish? If for no other reason than enlightened self-interest, we should look after the environment on which we ultimately depend.

And what about Diversity? How important is it for us to treasure not only the diversity of our human family - 7 billion people, each different but all created in the image of God - but also the richness and diversity of the 'natural world'. To what extent do we honour and respect that diversity?

Thus the principle embodied in the Golden Rule must inform our relationship and our interaction with the whole of Creation, of which humanity is but a constituent part.

Assisted Dying: A Quaker Exploration by Leeds Area Meeting (2016) Book Review by Melanie Jameson

It may seem to be a bad time to consider this book, however it is anything but maudlin. Having had a concern to explore this area for a number of years, Leeds AM has approached certain Friends for their contributions in order to present a balanced picture. This approach enables a wide array of viewpoints, preceded by an introductory section on the history of Assisted Dying coming before parliament along with reasons why this is increasingly an area of public interest.

The purpose of the publication is described as twofold:

- A resource for individual Friends, including those who feel that the Society of Friends should consider taking a public position on this issue, by laying out legal background
- An aid to reflection and discussion in Local and Area Meetings

More recently, the issue has come up in Meeting for Sufferings, with AMs asked to feed back.

The contributors, eleven in all, come at this topic from all angles: deep discernment; availability of good palliative care at the end of life; theology; mental health issues; the dilemma of dementia. Our Swarthmore Lecturer for 2021, Tom Shakespeare (who is disabled) declares that 'death is not the answer to disability' however terminal illness, which is the main context for the discussion of Assisted Dying, gives rise to different considerations.

The concluding section raises more questions than answers, in keeping with the overall ethos of the book. For example: are we being led by our own opinion or by Quaker discernment? Does Assisted Dying deprive people of a 'natural death' OR has the medicalisation of 'prolonging life at all cost' already done away with the opportunity of a 'natural death' in many instances?

Finally, the editors declare that the matter of Assisted Dying is clearly a humanitarian issue, for people of all faiths and none to consider. They provide a number of Appendices with information on organisations, publications and their research.

Do let me know if you wish to borrow this book. mj@dyslexia-malvern.co.uk

This matter is likely to be considered at Area Meeting in September.

Advices & Queries No 33

Are you alert to practices here and throughout the world which discriminate against people on the basis of who or what they are or because of their beliefs? Bear witness to the humanity of all people, including those who break society's conventions or its laws. Try to discern new growing points in social and economic life. Seek to understand the causes of injustice, social unrest and fear. Are you working to bring about a just and compassionate society which allows everyone to develop their capacities and fosters the desire to serve?

Thoughts on the Presence of Fear

Richard Bartholomew

A friend recently sent me an interview with the American thinker Wendell Berry and then him narrating his essay In the Presence of Fear.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gGPg4PuSTvQ>

I found it both stirring and inspiring as he links together those themes that concern us- the protection of the planet, opposing terrorism and making positive peace.

Friends may value spending 40 minutes listening to him talk about why he writes (to face his fear about many of the things that threaten us) and his love of the land, as he is a farmer/philosopher.

He chooses to minimise his use of machines so does not have a computer, so for those Friends who would rather read his words from the page, they are available in his book entitled *In the Presence of Fear* which we might like to get for the library perhaps?

For example "The aim and result of war necessarily is not peace but victory.....What leads to peace is not violence but peaceableness, which is not passivity, but an alert, informed, practiced, and active state of being. We should recognize that while we have extravagantly subsidized the means of war, we have almost totally neglected the ways of peaceableness. We have, for example, several national military academies, but not one peace academy. We have ignored the teachings and the examples of Christ, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and other peaceable leaders. And here we have an inescapable duty to notice also that war is profitable, whereas the means of peaceableness, being cheap or free, make no money."



**Quaker
Council for
European
Affairs**

Tomorrows Europe

The last few months have rewritten the rules. COVID-19 has caused human tragedy and economic crisis on an unimaginable scale. But it has also forced us all to reflect on what we really care about. How we live our own lives today and the kind of world we want to see tomorrow.

Many of us will have had similar thoughts about the potential for real change in this defining moment. The opportunity to build back better, fairer, greener societies than we had before.

We can only make this radical transformation happen by working together at the European level - because violent conflict, unjust economic policies, structural inequality and climate change are complex problems which don't stop at national borders.

Europe's leaders recently agreed the basis of the EU's recovery plan. But Europe's Quakers want to do better than simply "recover". We want to take this chance to build a sustainable, fair and peaceful Europe for everyone who lives here - and for people across the world who are impacted by the choices we make.

AROUND EUROPE is the Quarterly magazine of QCEA:

Here are some snippets.

COVID- 19 QCEA's You Tube channel features exclusive interviews with policymakers, civil society leaders and key experts, exploring the impact of COVID-19 on peace, human rights and the future of the European project. Come and join the conversation, and subscribe to see new videos as soon as they're on line. Visit www.youtube.com and search for "QCEA" QCEA and QPSW still hard at work for Peace Education

Peace Education

Despite the challenges of lockdown, QCEA are still working on a project started this time last year to strengthen peace education involving movement building from the 'bottom up', and influencing policy makers from the 'top down'. Supported by legacy funds from BYM, staff are adapting their workplan to the current health crisis and subsequent restrictions in terms of meeting.

Kosovo / Serbia

The EU's efforts to normalise relations between Kosovo and Serbia suffered a setback in late May when the Kosovan President Hashim Thaci rejected the EU's proposed special mediator.....Normalisation of relations between (the two countries) after the conflict in the 1990s isn't only vital for reconciliation, but is also a condition set by the EU for eventual Kosova membership.

For more information and to see the full magazine, go to <http://www.qcea.org/>

Support Quakers providing holiday accommodation

Dell House, Malvern Wells

Elizabeth & Kevin Rolph

Perfect for visiting friends or family, the Dell House is now open for B&B and self-catering. In our B&B rooms we will have no more than two households booked in at any one time and each household will have their own dining area. We are keeping a minimum of 48 hours between bookings of rooms or apartments. See www.thedellhouse.co.uk



Our two acre garden is perfect for relaxing and socialising and guests are welcome to have visitors (Liz Flanagan brought lunch for her friends who were staying here and spent the afternoon with them – do contact her if you want a reference!)

Our garden is also open under the National Garden Scheme – book a slot on their website to visit Wednesday or Sunday afternoons, <https://ngs.org.uk/product-category/garden-tickets/the-midlands/> or contact us direct.

stay@thedellhouse.co.uk

News from Glenthorne, in the Lake District

Open from 7th August with suitable measures in place.



The sheep were not observing new guidelines when they visited last week to graze on the enticing grass and plants in our garden. As I tried to persuade them to leave they decided to check if we were open before casually trotting back up the Easedale Road. They may have heard of the recognition from Visit Britain that we are ensuring processes are in place to maintain cleanliness and aid social/physical distancing. See www.glenthorne.org

The Centre Quaker Congenies in France

The Centre is available to book in its entirety for large family and friend groups, for bed and breakfast or self-catering guests. There is a kitchen at your disposal, and large, beautiful and peaceful gardens, for guests to relax in with a good book, a drink or a shared meal. <https://www.maison-quaker-congenies.org/en/>