



# Malvern Quakers

## Newsletter

Spring 2012

March - April - May

### The Chips are Down: a Quaker Challenge to us all

Adapted from Peter Bevan's  
summary: *Meeting for  
Sufferings and Sustainability*

Considerations of sustainability at Yearly Meeting Gathering 2011 led to a challenging Epistle and the statement, in Minute 36: "The action we are ready to take at this time is to make a strong corporate commitment to become a low-carbon, sustainable community." In the course of a week of extended reflection, discussion, decision and action, the following queries were offered as a way of continuing this conversation at a local level:

1 How are we supporting each other to live simple, joyful and spirit-led lives that sustain the world we live in?

2 To what extent do you see your Meeting's response on this issue to be driven by guilt and fear and to what extent by love and joy?

3 How has your meeting engaged with this priority as a faith community? How do our testimonies shape our response?

A process has now evolved to support this commitment. Guidance for Local Meetings is being given in the form of the Sustainability Toolkit (we have 3 copies, for circulation)

and a supporting website. A group of Malvern Quakers had a first look at the Toolkit in February where we began to grasp what is required of us. The Kit contains a Meeting questionnaire to report what steps have been taken; this is in order to establish a baseline against which future progress can be measured. The Toolkit goes beyond the actual Meeting House to the actions of individual members of Meeting. The first part of the completed questionnaire has been forwarded to the Recording Clerk.

Peter Bevan comments that, for him, the spiritual basis for this concern relates primarily to our testimony to Simplicity and to Gandhi's example of Reverence for life. The action that is now being considered is challenging:



every individual member is asked to be accountable for their actions in relation to sustainability. However Peter proposes a positive outlook: where we see crisis, we can also see an opportunity to remake society as a communion of people living sustainably as part of the natural world. By leading the simpler lives of a low-carbon society, we draw nearer to the abundance of peace, freedom and true community. Love, rather than fear, can still lead us through the crisis. The previous clerk of Meeting for Sufferings reminded us that the Earth is God's work and not ours to do with as we please. We recall Gandhi's saying, often quoted by Quakers: 'Live simply that others may simply live'. As a Quaker community, we try to live what we believe, guided by the values of simplicity, truth, equality and peace. Too often we fall short of honouring them. Climate change is challenging us to ask anew what our faith leads us to do.

For more information see [www.quaker.org.uk/sustainability](http://www.quaker.org.uk/sustainability) or contact Sunniva Taylor on 020 7663 1047 or [sunnivat@quaker.org.uk](mailto:sunnivat@quaker.org.uk)

We are lucky in Malvern to have a Transition movement which has been grappling with this matter for several years and has formed several smaller subgroups in order to respond to changing priorities. See [www.transitionmalvern hills.org.uk](http://www.transitionmalvern hills.org.uk)

**Malvern Friends Meeting House 1 Orchard Road Malvern WR14 3DA**

**Email: [malvern@wsq.org.uk](mailto:malvern@wsq.org.uk) Website: [malvernquakers.org.uk](http://malvernquakers.org.uk)**

All Welcome at Meetings for Worship:

Every Sunday at 10.30am

Third Thursdays 12.00 noon (followed by bring-your-own lunch)

Visit  
our new  
LOCAL  
website!

# Diary

All events are held at Malvern Friends' Meeting House, unless stated otherwise. Please note that attenders should seek permission from PM to go to Area Meetings.

Friday 2 March

Women's World Day of Prayer – theme: Let Justice Prevail  
Services: 2pm Somers Park Methodist Church &  
7.30pm St Mary's Sherrards Green

5, 14, 21 & 29 March

Churches Together in Malvern – Lent Talks 2012 *See Panel*

Fridays 9, 16, 23 & 30 March 6.30

Quaker Quest at Worcester Friends Meeting House *See Page 3*

Sunday March 4 12.00

Preparative Meeting for Church Affairs (PM)

Saturday March 10 11.00-4.00

Area Meeting (Bewdley)

Monday March 12 7.00-9.30

Malvern and Worcester Quaker Healing Group  
For venue details contact Mary Calloway on 01684 892482

Thursday March 15 12.00-12.40

Mid-week Meeting for Worship. Bring your lunch

Sunday March 25 3.00

DRAMA from the Plain Quakers: **The Chocolate Paradox**  
*See article in Winter 2011-12 Newsletter*

Sunday 1 April 12.00

Preparative Meeting for Church Affairs (PM)

Monday 9 April 7.00-9.30

Malvern and Worcester Quaker Healing Group  
For venue details contact Mary Calloway on 01684 892482

Thursday 19 April 12.00-12.40

Mid-week Meeting for Worship. Moving Prayer 2.00-3.30

Saturday 21 April 2.00-2.30

Meditation on Peace, at Quaker Peace Garden,  
Albert Rd North (within Youth Centre Grounds)

Sunday 29 April

5th Sunday – shared lunch and talk by the Equality Trust

Wednesdays 2, 9 & 23 May 7.30

Study Groups - Topics relate to our testimonies

Sunday 6 May 12.00

Preparative Meeting for Church Affairs (PM)

Saturday 12 May 11.00-4.00

Area Meeting (Shrewsbury)

Monday 14 May 7.00-9.30

Malvern and Worcester Quaker Healing Group  
For venue details contact Mary Calloway on 01684 892482

Thursday 17 May 12.00-12.40

Mid-week Meeting for Worship. Moving Prayer 2.00-3.30

*Looking Ahead*

Wednesday 6 June

Open day in Malvern Meeting House as part of Civic Week

## Churches Together in Malvern – Lent Talks 2012

Monday 5 March

An ex-prisoner talks of his journey to faith

Wednesday 14 March \*

Chancellor of Regent's College

Wednesday 21 March

A visually impaired athlete talks of his work  
with young disabled people

Thursday 29 March

Journey into Prayer

Venue: Lansdowne Methodist Church

7.15 refreshments 7.45 talk & questions

\***except** 14 March:

Venue: St Andrew's Church, Poolbrook, 7.45 start

Tuesday 6 March 6.45 for 7.30

**Worcester-Palestine Friendship** presents a  
Public Meeting with speakers from **Zaytoun** to  
speak about this Community Interest Company  
founded to market artisan Palestinian produce.  
(WPF distributes Zaytoun produce to Malvern  
Quakers.)

*plus* an exhibition of Children's Art from Atfaluna  
School for Deaf Children, Gaza City

St Andrew's Methodist Church, Pump Street,  
Worcester, WR1 2QT Admission Free

Wednesday 21 March 7.00 for 7.30

**DO WE NEED OUR ARMS TRADE?**

**Amnesty International** presents a  
Public Meeting with expert speakers.

The Chase School, Geraldine Road, Malvern  
Admission £5 - tickets from Books for Amnesty,  
3 Edith Walk, Malvern, 01684 563507.  
Students Free - no ticket needed.

Details: [malvern.amnesty.org.uk](http://malvern.amnesty.org.uk)

## Who's Who in Malvern Meeting 2012

**Elders** *responsible for spiritual matters*

Richard Bartholomew

Jill Etheridge

Cally Law

David Simmons

**Overseers** *responsible for pastoral matters*

Liz Flanagan

Betty Hudson

Melanie Jameson

Adrian Lamont

**Clerk** Hazel Court

**Assistant Clerk** Paul Wyatt

**Lettings Clerk** Mary Callaway

**Treasurer** Jill Etheridge



# Notice Board

## **Introducing your new Clerk: Hazel Court**

Last May, I celebrated 20 years as a Quaker, 13 of which have been spent in Malvern. Most of my working life as a secretary/PA was spent in London, and I experienced a variety of working environments, which ranged from solicitors' offices, an oil company, a professional medical body, an arts organisation and the National Health Service.

My parents were active members of the Plymouth Brethren (Open not Exclusive). In my mid-twenties I decided to be confirmed, as my then fiancé was an Anglican. Living in north-west London, I was involved with one of my local Anglican churches which worshipped in the Anglo-Catholic tradition, and spent nine happy years there. Later I moved from London to Cheltenham, and became interested in Quakers. I applied for membership about 18 months after first attending Cheltenham Meeting in 1989. At Cheltenham I was assistant clerk for about four years, as well as an overseer, and it was a large Meeting.

On my retirement I moved to Malvern, where I have appreciated having time to enjoy my main interests in literature, walking and gardening. Here in Malvern Meeting I have been an overseer, elder and gardener, although not all at once! I hold the view that membership of the Religious Society of Friends offers me an opportunity to take an active part in my Local and Area Meetings.

## **Equipping For Ministry**

*Helen Chiverton*

I have now started the two year Equipping For Ministry course at Woodbrooke. This requires me to attend 1 week residential and 3 courses each year with a concluding weekend in January 2014.

I am fortunate to have the support of both Local and Area Meeting, for which I am very grateful. Elders and Overseers are being kept up to date. Although I won't be able to attend Meeting as often as usual, I am happy to chat to anyone interested in what I am doing.

## **Update on the Quaker Peace Garden**

*Melanie Jameson*

The Quaker Peace Garden is intrinsically tied in with the future of the Malvern Youth Centre, in whose grounds it stands – and this future remains under threat. The formation of the Malvern Community Collective (MCC) has rallied support, proposing a wider remit for the Centre to serve the community as a whole, always relying on its mandates from public meetings. However the Council has responded by granting a long lease on the Youth Centre building but fencing off most of the land with a view to selling it for housing, thus curtailing the varied outdoor activities of the Centre, in particular, the way the grounds have functioned as a meeting place when the building is not open.

The relationship with the council is a roller coaster affair where something positive is offered only to be subsequently undermined. At the time of writing, a dedicated team, including a number of councillors, is fighting to maintain this space for Malvern's youth. I am especially aware of the needs of disaffected young people who are prepared to learn skills in the informal setting of the Youth Centre but have ceased to engage with education.

And right in the middle of this turmoil sits what the local people have termed the Quaker Peace Garden – perhaps there is a role for Quakers to become more involved here.

We are holding a Meditation on Peace in the Garden every season of the year. Join us for a half hour at 2pm on Saturday 21 April 21 for the Spring Meeting.

Please contact Melanie if you are interested in being kept up-to-date with the MCC or could volunteer some time to help look after the garden.

## **Our New Website**

Take a look at our new website:

**[malvernquakers.org.uk](http://malvernquakers.org.uk)**

and check out current events at our Meeting House.

You will be able to access past editions of Malvern Quaker Newsletter from it.

Our thanks to Peter Hardman for building the new website for us.

## **Quaker Quest comes to Worcester**

*David Baker*

Quaker Quest is a radical approach to outreach for Friends throughout Britain Yearly Meeting which started as a concern of Hampstead Monthly Meeting in 2002.

A number of Meetings have now used Quaker Quest and have found it rewarding for all involved: enquirers, regular Attenders and even seasoned Friends. In autumn 2010 it was run in Telford, with considerable success. Following this it seemed only right that we should repeat the exercise in the southern half of the Area Meeting.

Sessions will be held at Worcester Meeting House with a major input from Malvern and Bewdley Meetings. The four evening sessions are on Fridays 9, 16, 23 & 30 March from 6.30 p.m. They will follow the following pattern:

1. Questers arrive, are welcomed by Friends and invited to share a simple meal.
2. The Host explains the programme and introduces the topic for the evening.
3. This is briefly explored by three speakers in order to provide a range of views.
4. Questers then discuss what they have heard in small groups.
5. A further short talk on the topic is followed by an open session for questions.
6. A short Meeting for Worship concludes the evening.

The Topics are

- Quakers and God,
- Quakers and Worship,
- Quakers, Christianity and the Spiritual Path,
- Quaker Faith in Action.

We hope that this initiative will help others to find a spiritual home with Friends.

Quaker Quest is a major undertaking and needs the support of the whole Area Meeting. Please contact me with offers of help via **[davidbaker854@btinternet.com](mailto:davidbaker854@btinternet.com)**.

Guidance on running the event, together with information on the roles of Host, Speaker, Facilitator and Welcomer is available on the website **[www.quakerquest.org](http://www.quakerquest.org)**.



**Book Review**

Andrew Jameson

**Being a Quaker –  
A Guide for Newcomers**

by Geoffrey Durham, 2011

Quaker Quest £6.99  
ISBN 978-0-9558983-2-7

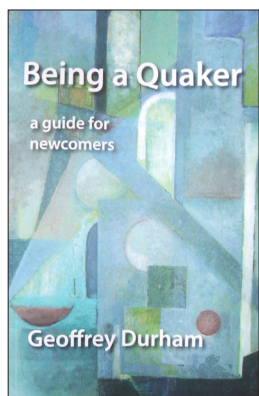
This is the first introduction to Quakers to be published for more than ten years. In an easy narrative style, the author takes us through his first discovery of Quakers, his first try at Meeting, his questions and doubts, his shocks and his discoveries. Some of us will have had similar experiences, and it is a comfort to know that these are perfectly natural. He describes the nature of the Quaker Meeting, and the customs associated with it.

The section How Local Meetings are Organised is invaluable in de-mystifying the next stage of becoming a Quaker, which is taking part in Quaker activities, and possibly serving the Meeting in some way. We go back into the history and the campaigning nature of Quakerism, and compare it to other branches of Christianity. Next we look at Faith in Action and discuss how we may live the classic four testimonies, truth, equality, simplicity and peace, and the case for the addition of sustainability. At the very end we find how to become a Member, how to find out more, activities for young people, and a reprint of Advices and Queries.

Borrow this book from our Library or – even better – buy it, keep it on your bedside table, read and annotate it. I wish it had been available when I was taking my first steps.

You can buy it at <http://www.quaker.org.uk/shop/being-a-quaker>.

I hope you'll enjoy reading it as much as I have done.



**Who are we cohabitating with?**

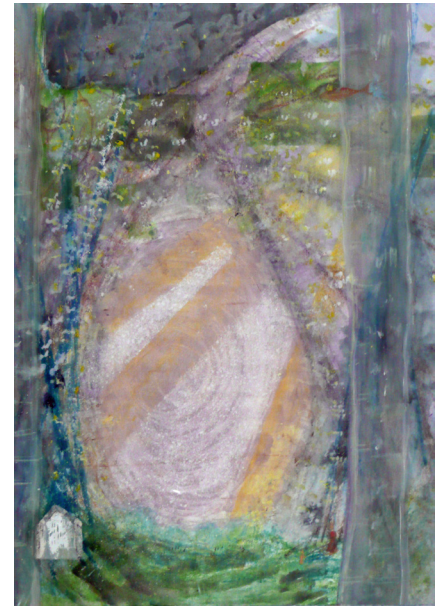
Mary Calloway, Lettings Clerk

'People are with you for a reason, for a season or for life' (recent words in ministry) seems to be true of our hirers. Since 1982, Malvern parents have been bringing their children to the Meeting House for ABRSM music exams. Some of the former candidates are now parents themselves. The exams take over the Meeting House 3 times a year in the daytime, ably co-ordinated for the last 16 years by Eileen Wilson. A recent visitor at Mid-week Meeting for Worship turned out to be a father who had spent his waiting time reading Quaker books in the library. This is a valued letting but also may be useful outreach.

We now have three yoga classes every week, very different in approach, together with (fortnightly) Tai Chi, Buddhist meditation and Five Rhythms Dance. U3A Discussion Group and Malvern Dowers meet monthly. The Meeting House is a popular venue for Saturday workshops too. Coming shortly: Bookbinders, Non-violent Communication, Malvern Quilters. One Saturday was requested by three different hirers!

We have not gone out of our way to increase bookings; the growth has been organic. Enquiries often come from people who have personal experience of the place and feel it would lend itself to their own speciality. Feedback is usually good. Like Eileen Wilson, people say that they find the Friends' Meeting House 'calm and welcoming'.

It gives me quiet satisfaction to facilitate community use of our premises. I was once myself an appreciative hirer – a contact which eventually led to my becoming a Member. I was there for a reason – and probably for Life!



**Woodbrooke: A Daily Reflection on Awareness**

Picture by Viv Quillin

1. Begin by accepting whatever today has brought; be thankful for it.
2. Is there anything in your day today – however small – which seems to hold a particular significance for you?
3. Be still, let something surface, accept and hold it.
4. Open yourself to what you might understand from this experience; or to there being no understanding.
5. Ask for the grace to respond to what you find.

**The Newsletter**

This Spring edition of 'MQN' is edited by Andrew and Melanie Jameson. As announced in the Winter Newsletter, for the time being it will be edited on a rotational basis. Please look out for details of how to contribute by email to the Summer Newsletter (preferred); give them to Cally Law or Mary Calloway; or place them in the brown envelope on the noticeboard. The deadline is 10 May.

If you are contributing creative writing, photography or artwork, please provide the name of the author/artist so that they may receive due credit.

If you would like to receive an email copy of the newsletter, please contact Peter Thomas at [petergt@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:petergt@hotmail.co.uk).