Malvern Quaker Meeting





Newsletter July-August 2024

Items for the next issue of the Newsletter will need to reach me by 27th September 2024.
Past editions of the Newsletter are on our Meeting website www.malvernquakers.org.uk.

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If you are not on the Meeting's email list and would like to be, or have changed your email, please contact emailadmin@malvernqualermeeting.org.uk

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Buffet Supper at Wynds Point

Mary Corfield



On the evening of 18 July, a large group of Friends from Malvern and Worcester Meetings attended a buffet supper at the family home of Clare Norton. For those from Malvern Meeting it was a farewell get together as Clare would be leaving Malvern and will be attending Worcester Meeting again in future.

This stunning and spacious house had previously been the home of Jenny Lind, the famous Swedish opera singer, who lived here in the later years of her life. One of the charming Scandinavian touches to the house was the porch with its columns of white paper birch trunks.

The weather that evening could not have been more beautiful and pleasantly warm and drew everyone out onto the large, expansive lawn where we sat in chairs, on benches or on a long wall to eat a delicious dinner which had been prepared for us, and to chat.



All too quickly the evening drew to a close. We will miss Clare and wish her all the best.

Advices & Queries No 18

How can we make the meeting a community in which each person is accepted and nurtured, and strangers are welcome? Seek to know one another in the things which are eternal, bear the burden of each other's failings and pray for one another. As we enter with tender sympathy into the joys and sorrows of each other's lives, ready to give help and to receive it, a meeting can be a channel for God's love and forgiveness.

Shelterbox Book Club

Liz Dimond

Shelterbox provides emergency shelter and household items to families who have lost their homes to disaster, enabling them to rebuild their lives. Shelterbox book club membership is a way of supporting this work whilst both funding disaster relief and enjoying receiving a physical copy of an excellent book in the post every six weeks. All this is for a donation of £10 per month. Subscriptions can be for a short period like three months or regular ongoing membership.

Members vote online every six weeks for their choice out of a selection of three carefully chosen interesting books. The winning book is what each member then receives. Members can take part in online book group discussions and meet the author events online.

All the books celebrate the diversity of lives around the world; they are stimulating, informative, well presented and above all well written and enable one to travel around the world without leaving home!

I was given a three-month subscription about 8 years ago, loved it, then rejoined this year at the Hay Festival where Shelterbox had a stand. I have now given two six-month gift subscriptions to family members who have big birthdays coming up. So far both have been delighted with this as a gift. Do join up, it really is a great gift to oneself or to someone else …. and easy to do online via the Shelterbox website: shelterbox.org

I'll happily discuss this further with anyone interested …. or discuss a book if someone joins up and would like a face-to-face chat about it.

Special Collections

The Special Collection for July was for Shelterbox. Melanie reported that £155.75 was collected and made up by a personal donation to £425.00.

The Special Collection for August was for the charity Quaker Social Action, with the amount we collected earmarked for 4 in 10, addressing Child Poverty. Liz Flanagan reported that £170.00 was collected.

The Special Collection for September will be for Christian Aid.

EAPPI – Life in the West Bank Talk — Ian Cave

I thought I'd let you know that I'm giving a talk in The Priory about EAPPI on Thursday 12th September 1-1.30pm. Everyone is welcome. It's going to be an abbreviated version of the talk I gave at your Meeting House last November. So, it's an opportunity for any Friends who missed that to hear about what I witnessed in Hebron between January and April 2023 when I was there as a Human Rights Monitor with the Ecumenical Accompaniment in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) programme.

The normal format for these lunchbox talks is that the audience arrive from 12.30, bringing their own "lunchbox" lunch with them, but tea and coffee can be bought in the Priory. The talk starts at 1pm, and there will be time for questions at 1.30pm and then a collection in aid of the Quakers in Britain EAPPI programme afterwards.

Malvern Festival of Biblical Literature 4 – 6 July 2024 — Mary Corfield

The first Malvern Festival of Biblical Literature was held in the Friends Meeting House early in July this year. I say 'the first' as it turned out to be quite successful, and another one is being planned for next year. The festival is a study and celebration of the Bible as a collection of literature and consists of seminars, music and poetry.

On the first day, James Priestman, Festival Director, gave an overview of the festival and explained why he thought the festival was important, and on each of the three days a seminar was held in the morning, followed by a different seminar in the afternoon. Music was provided during the breaks and at lunch by instrumentalists. On the last day the guitarist Mark Waistell, whom some of us will remember played at one of our socials last year, played and sang his wonderful, lyrical songs during each of the breaks. What a treat!

Lunch was provided each day with sandwiches made by Bluebird Tearooms. Liz Flanagan and I made cakes, and tea and coffee were always available.

People who attended the festival came from around the country, and during lunch and breaks there were opportunities for interesting discussions as well as engaging with the various speakers.

I have purchased for the library a copy of the book, 'How to Read the Bible (without switching off your Brain)', written by Revd Dr Simon J. Taylor, a gifted speaker who led the seminar on the second day entitled 'Competing Creation Myths: Babylonian and Israelite, part 1'.

The second Malvern Festival of Biblical Literature is scheduled to take place from 3 – 5 July 2025. You can go to www.festivalofbiblicalliterature.co.uk for more information.

A Birthday Walk — Hugh McMichael

On Saturday 20th July, we celebrated George Fox's 400th birthday. Worcester Quakers put on a celebration with the biggest selection and continuous supply of cakes I have EVER participated thereof! The welcome was extended not only to Quakers but also to enquirers. Thank you, Worcester Friends!

They celebrated Poetry in the garden (and inside when it rained). They also arranged a walk visiting various sites around Worcester including with our first worshipping site in 1655. The walk was preceded by an illuminating talk by Annette Leech referring to some 21 events from 1655 to 1980 matched with many photos. It has all been beautifully put together in a booklet illustrated by Clare Norton available from Worcester Quakers.

Weather that day was not on our side. The forecast was for heavy rain which did indeed arrive about half an hour after we started the walk (and, since I was pushing Annie about in a wheelchair, that was as far as I got!). That first half-hour stimulated my interest, for example finding the Old Infirmary within yards of a car park in the heart of the city. We were also treated to an informed tour of the enormous St Martin's Church before entering some of the narrow old lanes of historic Worcester. That was when the heavy rain started, and we returned for more cake!

Gentle reminder … this notice still applies!

PHONES

During Meeting for Worship..

....Please will you kindly

Turn OFF your Mobile Phone,

as opposed to Silent Mode?

As we know, Silent Mode is not always totally silent!

Naturally, if you think you may receive a really urgent call, we would understand; otherwise we would appreciate this act of thoughtful considerateness.

Elders, prompted by a Member.

2023

Cost of Living Crisis- Household Support fund

Richard Bartholomew

While many Friends may have breathed a sigh of relief after the election, thinking that positive change may be in the air - read on!

Nevertheless, the pressures of the Cost of Living have not yet abated and are still causing worry and hardship to many.

One of the measures that the last Government put in place, the Household Support Fund, has just released a further tranche of money in its Phase 4 through various agencies.

Age UK is administering in **Worcestershire** a scheme of issuing £75 Supermarket vouchers to Pensioners who DON'T receive Pension Credit and have a long-term health issue or disability OR to carers OF ANY AGE.

For **Herefordshire** residents, **Age UK** is issuing the vouchers to pensioners who DO get Pension Credit OR who get Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support instead of Pension Credit OR pensioners who have an income of less than £21000 (single person) or £26000 for a couple.

See Online Enquiry | Age UK Worcester, Malvern Hills & Hereford Localities for all the above.

In addition, see the Worcestershire Act on Energy website Worcestershire Household Support Fund Phase 5 | Act On Energy for help with energy and water bills and repair costs for heating systems.

Today's Money Guardian points out that it would be wise to go onto a fixed rate energy deal while they are still available.

If you're with Octopus, Coop Energy or EDF they have such deals available, but if you're not with any of them then the absolute cheapest fixed rate deal is with Outfox the Market's Fix'd Dual Jul24 v3.0. To get it you need to sign up direct with the company rather than go through comparison websites.

However, this deal and EDF have a £50 exit fee, the British Gas one has £100 0065it fee. Octopus/Coop Energy don't have any exit fee at all.

PEACE PILGRIMAGE

Melanie Jameson

It is not uncommon nowadays for witness at an arms fair to start with a pilgrimage.

This has happened a couple of times at the big biannual arms fair in London, DSEI.

Most of you are aware of the Three Counties Defence and Security Expo, that took place from 2018-2222 at the Showground. Now rebranded and expanded, it is taking place at the Telford International Centre for the second year from Nov 18-20.

(Mainly) Quaker pilgrims have decided that they wished to walk from Malvern to the new site in Telford from September 10-13, and saw this as spiritual preparation for the November event, a couple of months before the 'Convention'. Some of them already showed their determination to challenge arms sales wherever they take place last year when they were arrested on the MOD 'Special Projects' day in Telford. Last November many of us assembled on the following day, designated for SMEs interested in hooking up with the big players, and joined a wide coalition of witnesses for Peace.

So, back to the pilgrimage which will wend its way from Malvern to Telford, via Worcester, Stourport, Stourbridge, and Wolverhampton. Overnight accommodation is offered by various affiliated faith groups en route. Further details and social media links on the website https://peacepilgrimage.org.uk/. This includes a section: **Why pilgrimage?** with the following text by David Whyte

"Pilgrim is a word and a name that every human being might be given, at least temporarily, as an accurate assessment of their essence: a stranger to be waved at in passing, or met along the way; a someone always passing through very quickly; a someone on their way to somewhere else, never quite knowing whether the destination or the path stands first in importance; someone who underneath it all doesn't quite understand from whence they came or quite where they are going, and many times from where their next bite of bread will come from; someone dependent on help from other strangers and from those who will meet them along the way."

Many thanks to the Rolphs for providing overnight accommodation the night before the pilgrims set off – maybe some of you can join them for a takeaway at the Dell House on Monday evening (9th Sept). Thanks too to those who have offered help with transport.

It should be fine on the Tuesday – I hope we can turn up at the Elgar statue in central Malvern by 10am and give them a good send off.

Below is a taster of one of the exhibitors at the Specialist Defence and Security Convention, which illustrates why Friends and others are so strongly opposed to these events.

Featured Exhibitor: L3 Harris

One of the larger arms companies involved in SDSC in 2023 was L3-Harris – their products are illustrative of how the components made by many of the smaller companies end up causing death and destruction. Stop SDSC put together this information about them:

L3 and Harris completed their merger in 2019, making the combined entity one of the ten largest arms companies in the world. In 2020, the merged company had arms sales of $14.2 billion, out of total sales of $18.2b, making it the 10th largest arms company in the world, according to the SIPRI Arms Industry Database.

Night terrors

Picture the scene: a family asleep in their home. It's dark – power's out. There have been explosions in the city but they've learnt to live with that daily danger. Suddenly there's a blinding flash and a bang. This isn't a bomb. There are men in the house, shouting, grabbing people. Rifle muzzles appear and vanish with sudden flashes and deafening cracks. Within minutes the soldiers are gone. They've left casualties behind on the ground and they've taken the males above 15 years of age away.

This scene plays out in many countries where secret police and special forces conduct night raids to target dissidents, human rights defenders, or just people they who have been informed on.

Equipping night raids

Chances are, those armed men are equipped with night vision and communication tech from L3-Harris. Amongst many other areas of work, L3-Harris is active in electronic warfare and battlefield management, and manufactures night-vision equipment for soldiers (**company website**).

If you are interested in joining witness against SDSC, contact me to be put in touch with the Quaker-led 'Stop Telford' group.