Malvern Quaker Meeting





Newsletter November 2025

Items for the next issue of the Newsletter (in Word format please) will need to reach me ***by 30th January 2026****. Past editions of the Newsletter are on our Meeting website* *www.malvernquakers.org.uk*. *Mary Corfield* *newsletter@malvernquakermeeting.org.uk*

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

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The Pity of War

Elizabeth & Kevin Rolph



We visited the National Memorial Arboretum recently on our way up north. We were pleased to see this sculpture which was unveiled last summer - the first memorial to civilian casualties of war at the arboretum. It was commissioned by Quakers, and our Meeting made a donation towards it.

The Arboretum is well worth a visit - maybe somewhere for a meeting outing next summer?

White Poppies in Malvern

Elizabeth Rolph



Liz Flanagan and I made three wreaths using greenery from the garden, and white poppies - some made by Melanie and others from the Peace Pledge Union. Two of these were laid at the main memorial by the library - one on behalf of our Meeting, and one on behalf of Peace Education. I laid one at the ceremony held at the war memorial on Wells Road. I have done this for a few years now and am always made welcome.

Melanie also distributed white poppies in various locations round Malvern, and the collection from them came to £136, with £50 of that from Greenlink (the organic shop near Waitrose).

Ros Mcgregor laid the wreath at the main ceremony. "The ceremony proceeded in a traditional manner. and it felt daunting to be a white poppy wearer amongst a sea of red, and the strong military element. But having made sure to swot up on white poppies and our

Peace Testimony no one asked me anything! I could only imagine what the Quakers must have experienced during wartime.

Liz and I were almost the last in the queue to lay our wreaths. The Active Peace Education wreath was laid by one of the children who had attended Liz's classes."

Special Collections

As is our usual practice every November through our link with St.Mary's Church, Pickersleigh, the Sunday Collection for November was for local families to enable those in need to purchase Christmas gifts. A total of £400.30 was collected.

The Sunday Collection for December is Booktrust whose mission is to get 'millions of children reading, with our programmes, support and campaigns'.

https://www.booktrust.org.uk/about-us/our-organisation/

Feedback on APE Sessions

The Downs School **Sarah McDonnell**

I would highly recommend the Active Peace workshops delivered by the Quakers organisation in Malvern. The sessions are delivered professionally and with great sensitivity and care to all children. Our Year 3 and 4 cohort benefited significantly from the Nobody Stands Nowhere course, delivered by Rosemary and Andrew Webb. The children understood the lessons being taught and were actively engaged in the weekly discussions and debate. Each session ends with a beautiful craft activity, with something made by the children to take away. The pupils really enjoyed this positive and enjoyable activity, and we received excellent feedback from our staff and pupils.

Leigh and Bransford School **Sue Dakin**

"The pupils were engaged in discussion .... it made them think about what is happening in the world, knowing they couldn't control those things, but they could control their own personal problems. ...A fun way to learn games and other activities.

Advices & Queries No 31

We are called to live 'in the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars'. Do you faithfully maintain our testimony that war and the preparation for war are inconsistent with the spirit of Christ? Search out whatever in your own way of life may contain the seeds of war. Stand firm in our testimony, even when others commit or prepare to commit acts of violence, yet always remember that they too are children of God.

New Library Accession — Mary Corfield

As mentioned in the June Newsletter, Erica Canela - an early modern social historian from Delaware, specialising in English Quaker history and the psychological trauma of the Civil Wars - has published a book about her research into the early years of Quakerism. It is titled "Zealous: A Darker Side of the Early Quakers", and two copies are now available in our library.

Book Offer — Jill Etheridge

In September I obtained a most interesting second-hand book entitled 'The Spiritual Nature of Man', by Sir Alister Hardy, F.R.S. (1979 publication). It is a very systematic survey of eight years of work carried out by the Religious Experience Research Unit at Manchester College, Oxford, which was set up in 1969.

As I have studied it thoroughly, I am now hoping to pass it on to someone else who may wish to read it.

Retreats by Stealth — Kevin & Elizabeth Rolph

The recent interview of boardgame designer David Parlett in the Friend prompted us to share our experience at the Dell House. Our change of career in 2014 was something of a leap of faith which, unexpectedly, has been sustained by the growth in modern boardgames.

When we lived in Cambridge we'd frequently said, "When the boys leave home, we'll go and do something different. Somewhere with hills." At the time we were a software engineer and a town planner, with dreams of a nice small B&B in Derbyshire. So, when our youngest started his A levels we started looking at properties.

To cut a long story short, we ended up buying a 12-bedroom former rectory in Worcestershire, set in two acres of, then derelict, garden. As soon as we walked into the building on our first viewing, we felt a sense of peace pervading the house, but it was way beyond our original budget – and in need of a new roof, new boilers, rewiring, and so on. After a few visits and holding our dilemma in the Light at Malvern Meeting we felt led to commit to the purchase.

It had previously been a guesthouse, and this is what we expected to run, but with potential for retreats, weekend workshops, etc. Back in 2015 we experimented with a board game weekend. Modern board games are a far cry from 1930s games, Monopoly etc. - about as far as a modern car is from a 1930s Austin 7. Quicker to play, more stimulating and rewarding mentally, and in many cases, cooperative.

Sixteen people came, and it seemed just the right number, enabling us to share games and meals. We intended to host one or two a year, but that soon ramped up to six a year, and now game-related bookings provide over half of our business.

We've hosted Quaker weekends, writing and acting workshops, but the explicit 'retreat' element has never materialised. However, we have seen that our games weekends fill a need for people who wouldn't consider going on 'a retreat'. From the moment they arrive we can see them relax, immersing themselves in the shielded environment of the games, eating as a community, with some taking advantage of the peace of the garden or the Malvern Hills. They leave refreshed, and ready to face the world out there. Is that not a retreat?