



STAFFORDSHIRE QUAKER



SPRING EDITION, FEBRUARY 2013

MEMORIAL TAKES SHAPE IN THE RAIN



Paula Knight (Lichfield) took this photograph of the Quaker Service Memorial foundations and stonework in December. Rain has slowed the work down, but completion is scheduled for February, including fitting the seat backs with inscriptions referring to the Society's commitment to peace, the Friends Ambulance Unit, FRS, and Nobel Peace prize. For the latest news see page 4.

FEATURE

- *Prisons: faith and action in the lives of Staffordshire Friends*



WHY PRISON?

Three contributions to this issue reflect a renewed focus on prisons in our Area Meeting.

Jamie Wrench of the Crime, Community and Justice group which is part of QPSW led a most interesting workshop on "Why Prison?" at October's Area meeting held at Stone. A large number of Staffordshire Friends were present which included most of our Quaker Prison Chaplains. NAME QPC from Central England Area Meeting who has visited the new HMP Oakwood near Wolverhampton on our behalf was also able to attend.

Jamie asked us to consider four questions:

1. What is prison for?
2. What do you think prison should be for?
3. Which of these pur-

poses could only be accomplished by prison?

4. Which of these purposes could not only be accomplished by prison but by other means?

We did this exercise as a whole group as we were limited by time but Jamie intended it to be done in small groups. We were aware that our answers as Friends were not necessarily representative of British society. However, Jamie made the point that evidence received from the public is not as extreme as politicians would have us believe.

Jamie had 18 stories written as part of the "Learning from Experience" project



stuck around the room and we were asked to read them all and find one that "spoke to us." Unfortunately we only had a short time left so we could not all share our choices. The stories were incredibly moving. Fifty have been collected by the project and I believe they are available electronically. There is also a DVD, "The Fear Factory," which can be downloaded for free.

Jamie finished his talk by explaining that he had a lot of material which he was not able to use due to pressure of time. He may produce a ten week study pack for Meetings to use. It would be good if it was available for any interested group to use.

Margaret Crossland, Stafford

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SUNDAY MORNING AT THE PRISON

This poem was written four years ago as a result of visits to Drake Hall Prison.



Sharp sunlight slants through the chapel window
turning the strong red and green and blue of the painted glass
to stains of gentler colour, crimson and sea green azure,
which lie over the floor and across the homely chairs.

We are here today to share with the women our experience of Friends
so we have arranged the chairs in a rough approximation to a circle
where we can sit side by side. The chaplain welcomes us and at once
we are launched into the foot-tapping, hip-swinging rhythm of a hymn –
but not one of the sober, serious songs of praise we are used to.
This is music to dance to, to fling out the arms, to shake a tambourine to,
to shake a stick at the devil, to praise the Lord with a loud voice.

Our Quaker quiet is a marked contrast but we sit companionably together
and hope the women are able to savour the silence with us for a while.

Soon we shake hands and exchange smiles. The ice is broken.
We share in their prayers, and then are invited to listen to the choir
who sing and swing and rattle though the offerings rehearsed for us.
Even the most sober-sided Friend is now ready to belt out
the final invigorating song of joy and reassurance.

Next comes coffee and biscuits, which are so much appreciated
that the plates are cleared in no time. I admire the skill
of some ladies who can balance a coffee cup
and pick up three biscuits at once without losing a crumb.

I tell the choir leader how much we enjoyed their music.
Unexpectedly she hugs me. *I saw you swingin'*, she says.

Betty Titley, Stone

*I SAW YOU
SWINGIN'*

BEING A QUAKER PRISON CHAPLAIN

After attending several Quaker Prison Chaplain Conferences at Woodbrooke, I know that there are lots of ways of carrying out the role of Quaker Prison Chaplain. Some undertake statutory duties others (me included) don't.

I go into Stafford Prison every Monday afternoon. Until November of last year the two hours I had with the lads was taken up by an hour of Meeting for Worship followed by tea and biscuits and then a discussion arising, mostly, out of question or concerns of the lads.

At the QPC Conference last October there was a workshop on "Friendly Bible Study" using a booklet published by the Quaker Press of Friends General Conference. This meets the following tests...

1. A Bible study method should affirm that of God in all participants. It should affirm the equality of all participants. It should not expect any authority figure as leader. Everyone should be able to experience the Spirit working out of the silence.

2. It should affirm the availability of continuing revelation in our spiritual lives.
3. It should recognise the authority of personal experience as central to our spiritual lives.
4. It should connect the Bible witness to our actions in daily life.
5. It should affirm the continuing nature of our spiritual journeys in a community of faith.

In November I introduced Friendly Bible Study to the group who attend on Monday afternoon. It has been welcomed by the lads and has encouraged two or three more to attend. We still have time for a period of silent worship and part of the study involves worship sharing which they have taken to quite well, although I do have to remind them to listen without comment sometimes!

I also attend a study session led by one of the Anglican Chaplains on Tuesday afternoons. She has introduced periods of silence into these sessions which the lads appreciate. They all say how they value the time to just be still and quiet. I try to be

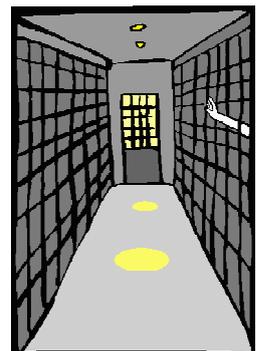
available to talk to any of the lads when they need it and have also contacted Meetings in the areas they are moving to on release when they have shown an interest in attending Meeting for Worship on the out.

I attend the regular Chaplaincy meetings when the Chaplains of all faiths get together to discuss the work of the Chaplaincy and any problems or developments there may be. This is a good team building exercise and is always followed by a shared lunch!

I also attend any special services such as the carol service and recently a service when the Bishop of Stafford was the preacher and one of the lads was confirmed.

Dennis was QPC at Stafford for almost ten years and I always went in to support him. I feel privileged to have taken over from him (he was a hard act to follow). I am very grateful for the support I get from Stafford Friends and especially from Maggie Jeays and Nigel Peckett who attend the Monday Meetings as often as they can.

Joan Gripton, Stafford.



JUSTICE SHOULD BE COMPASSIONATE, FORGIVING AND HEALING
 – RESTORATIVE, NOT RETRIBUTIVE. WE WANT TO CHANGE
 ATTITUDES AND ENCOURAGE THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE
 SYSTEM TO MOVE TOWARDS THIS VISION OF JUSTICE.

Quaker Crime, Community and Justice Group

QUAKER SERVICE MEMORIAL - INAUGURATION 20 APRIL



The Quaker Service Memorial trustees are confident that we are into the final straight for the completion of the construction contract for its inauguration on 20 April. Final details of the programme on the day are still being worked out, which include contingency plans for weather which we have learned not to predict. Plan A takes us to the memorial site in the morning, with lunch in our marquee followed by short addresses and the opportunity to view the exhibition and videos of past member's recollections. Plans B and C are variations on this schedule.

All our meetings will be receiving invitations to attend. We will also be asking for volunteers to help with stewarding on the day: welcoming visitors onto the Arboretum car park, and guiding to our site from the marquee. (If costs are a factor in joining us, we have funds for this purpose from the Francis Camfield Trust.) Contact Anthony Wilson with any enquiries, and one of our trustees will get back to you: we will be needing this help, as we are expecting visitors from round the country who have not been to the Arboretum before.

The Quaker service exhibition is available for meetings to borrow, for display in their own premises or in libraries, civic centres, galleries or other public venues; loans can be for a week or more, to attract more local publicity. Stewarding is not necessary, but could be an advantage. We can forward a borrowers pack, and a full viewing of all 12 panels

Contact: Anthony Wilson (Lichfield Meeting), Quaker Service Memorial Trust, 10 Beacon Mews, Lichfield, WS13 7AH, 01543 258016, gaijalane60@hotmail.com

HUMANITY AND BEAUTY IN WATERFALL ROAD

Members of the Society should support people whose activities and beliefs are compatible with ours.

Marnie Sweet spent a couple of years at Friends School Saffron Walden. Outside her house she has a stall where she sells plants and second hand books. Every year she sends several thousand pounds to the Tamaho Primary School in Johannesburg, where many of the children are AIDS orphans.



She is a friend of the nephew of the late CND activist Hilda Murrell. By her house she has a small birch grove planted as a memorial to Hilda. It has about 40 birches now over 10 years old, 20 younger

birches and a memorial stone. A footpath open to the public goes to the grove.

All of this is in an area worth visiting. Marnie's address is Tan-Y-Bryn, Waterfall Road, Llanrhaeadr-Ym-Mochnant, easily accessible for Staffordshire Friends. Her house is 1½ miles from the village, easily identified by the notices, the bookstall and plants.

Waterfall Road has several tourist attractions. At its end there is the Pistyll Rhaeadr waterfall, the highest in Wales, counted as one of the 'seven wonders of Wales'. 200 metres further on from Marnie's house is the Heritage Conserved deciduous woodland, 5 acres of

3000 deciduous trees, established on rough hill pasture in the early 1990s. Between these there is Coed Mathew, a memorial woodland to a farmer's son who died at the age of 4.

Please support Marnie's activities, deliver her all those books you no longer need. And have a good day visiting the Waterfall Road and the beautiful countryside around. Hilda Murrell's cairn, where her ashes were scattered, is in the Maengwynedd Valley. This was one of her favourite walks and the last entry in her *Nature's Diaries 1961-1983* published by Collins (1987).

John Nicholls, Wolverhampton

THE BRIDGE OF GRACE

This is an abridged version of a talk given at the Quaker Universalist Group conference in 2003. The theme of the conference was 'Building Bridges: Inner and Outer'. The article was published in 2003 in the Universalist, and in 2007 by the Quaker Universalist Fellowship in the USA in the book 'Universalism and Spirituality'.

A few years ago, I was deep into the silence of Meeting for Worship when an image of a narrow steep sided gorge came into my mind. High in the gorge was a graceful masonry arch bridge. Being a former bridge engineer, I started to imagine how the bridge had been constructed. Several possibilities came to mind, but the most likely seemed to be that it had been supported by a temporary wooden framework (or formwork as it is referred to by engineers). If so, the stonework would have been placed on the arch-shaped formwork block by block, starting from the two abutments and finishing with the placing of the keystone in the centre. During construction, the scene would have been quite unsightly, as most bridge construction works are. But after the laying of the keystone, the temporary supports, having become redundant, would have been removed. Thus, the scene would have been slowly transformed from an unsightly mess to one of graceful beauty.

These images appeared to me to be a metaphor for our inner journey towards that state of grace we all seek. I saw the partially constructed bridge as the incomplete state of spiritual development that most of us exist in. In this state we support our spirituality with a whole host of religious notions, ethical principles, choice passages from favoured texts, poetry and music. Without these props our incomplete 'bridge of grace' is in danger of collapse. But once the bridge is complete, when that state of grace is finally achieved, all strivings cease, and our props give way to an all embracing sense of knowing that lies beyond reason.

This is the common experience of mystics of all ages, that as we achieve grace or nirvana (call it what you may), all former props become redundant and fall away to reveal the beauty of the true Self. However, if we fail to maintain the bridge, through lack of attention to our Self, or we overload it with excessive outward activity, it may deteriorate to the point where the props have to be reinstalled.

Less than a week after I ministered to this effect in Meeting, my wife and I were walking up the Vintgar gorge in Slovenia, and there above us was a beautiful masonry arch bridge,



Vintnar Gorge

very much like the one I had visualised. Just past the bridge was a log cabin that sold refreshments. We went in to buy ice creams and there on the walls of the cabin was a series of photographs showing how the bridge had been constructed - the erection of temporary formwork and its finally removal to reveal a graceful arch bridge.

This could have been a remarkable coincidence, but my mind has remained open on this matter, and I am left with a lasting sense of mystery that I do not seek to explain. The metaphor itself is as meaningful to me today as it was then. Sadly, having once completed my bridge, I overloaded it and failed to maintain it. It is now a ruin that I am struggling to restore.

P.S. Unfortunately, this task has since been made even more challenging by a traumatic road accident in 2006.

Bill Walley, Stafford

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HENRY AND ALICE BOWMAN: 17TH CENTURY STAFFORDSHIRE FRIENDS



Quaker dress, 1675

In 1995 Christine did a part-time Keele University Certificate course in Local History. The most enjoyable part of the course for her was learning how to research.

Her paternal grandparents had attended a Leeds Meeting in the late 19th century, and as a young teenager she'd learned a little about Quakerism from her father. This led her to make the subject of her Keele dissertation 'An Exploration of Quakerism in Staffordshire During The Latter Half of the 17th Century.' As she read and transcribed the documents in Stafford Record Office, she reports, she began to think 'There are some thumping good stories here'.

Monthly Meeting Minute Books and Sufferings Books contain many materials about personalities, and the two people she has chosen to write about here are Henry Bowman and Alice, his wife, each one of them a thorn in the side of the established church and local constables, Christine is 'glad to say!' She assumes they lived near Stockley Park or Alstonfield.

A few instances: In 1660 Henry Bowman makes what appears to be his first appearance in the records. He was sent to Stafford Gaol (somewhere near Gaol Square), 'for refusal to pay tithes, though the Tithes demanded was not above 12 shillings in value'. Throughout 1660/61 many Staffordshire Friends were being imprisoned for refusing to take the Oath of Allegiance.

Recorded numbers vary between 117 and 183 probably because Friends were at first reluctant to report their Sufferings. Henry and Anthony Bowman (Henry's brother, I think) were in this group. Sentences for this 'offence' ranged from 2 to 8 weeks. To add insult to injury prisoners were ordered to pay the costs of transport to the gaol. They refused, of course, and Henry had household goods, valued at one pound eight shillings, confiscated by bailiffs. A memorandum in the notes at the back of the Minute Book, referring to this event, reads 'hereabouts was the great sufferings in the castle chamber'.

In 1663 Henry and Alice refused to pay a 4/- fine for not attending church and had a brass kettle taken from them worth 18/-, but it's in 1664 that Alice makes a rare solo appearance when on Easter Day she was 'moved to go to the steeple house where the priest and people were eating bread & drinking wine [taking the Sacrament], and for speaking to the people she was hauled forth and had before the Justices and sent to prison and, at the quarter sessions, sent from the gaol to the house of correction to remain till the next sessions in the meantime, she having a young child sucking on her breast, it fell sick and died there'.*

I don't know how long she spent in the House of Correction, or how long Henry

was imprisoned in the same year, probably for not going to church. He also had 3/6 (17½p) - worth of goods confiscated. There was a rising scale of fines for skipping church, which, if not paid could result in further spells in gaol or lead to 'transportation to His Majesty's lands across the seas'. He also had goods confiscated for refusing to swear on oath when summoned on a Jury. Henry had more brushes with the Law, mostly for refusing to pay tithes, go to church or swear on oath.

He had probably died by 1687, as Alice, with their son, also Henry, conveyed a piece of land at Alstonfield, to be used as a Quaker Burial ground. It is known that her home at Stockley Park in the parish of Tutbury was used for a Quarterly Meeting as late as October 1689. In November of the same year she made a Will in which she is described as a widow and mentions three sons and three daughters. The Inventory of all her 'Goods Chattles and Credit and ready money', dated September 1690, probably the year she died, shows that Henry and Alice seem to have done well for themselves. I can't find a copper kettle worth 18/- among the household goods, but the estate was worth £545-11-5.

* This is where I set the first paragraphs of my book.

Christine Miller, Stafford

FOR SPEAKING
TO THE PEOPLE
SHE WAS
HAULED FORTH
AND HAD
BEFORE THE
JUSTICES AND
SENT TO PRISON

TRUSTEESHIP FOR OUR AREA MEETING

Staffordshire Area Meeting Friends are asking where we have got to as regards our governance, our registration with the Charity Commission (CC).

In September 2011 we agreed to adopt the recommended governing document (Minute 10). Then Minute 11 reads: “*We ask AM Nominations Committee to start the process of appointing new Trustees, whilst recognising that decisions made will depend on consultations that still have to take place.*”

This decision was in response to the requirement that religious bodies would have to register with the CC in the same way as all other charities. AMs with an income of over £100,000 are already expected to complete this process. However, the CC is now so understaffed and overloaded with work that the smaller AMs like ours will not now be expected to register for at least another two years.

My response to this was to put matters on hold, as registering is not possible. Now, as a result of Friends reminders, I have checked with the Recording Clerk’s Office and your Governance Group are encouraged to proceed with the improved governance arrangements. There is no obstacle to our having good governance just because we cannot register. Our structures are our own responsibility as long as we act with integrity.

Our present Trustees manage the Staffordshire Monthly Meeting United Charities (which was made up of seven original charities, consisting of those meetings with a meeting house, a General Purposes Fund used mainly for repairs and maintenance, and Relief in Need charities). AM is responsible at present for the appointment of three Nominative Trustees representing the interests of the AM, of which there are at present two, Sandra Chambers and Anthony Wilson, and one vacancy. The remaining trustees are known as Co-optative Trustees and represent the 5 meetings with meeting houses, and are appointed by their Local Meeting, with some legal limitations. Nominative Trustees have tended to represent those meetings which do not have a Co-optative Trustee. Anthony is going to replace Alan Rogers as the Co-optative Trustee for Uttoxeter and Burton, thereby creating another vacancy for a Nominative Trustee.

It was intended that when AM became registered we would propose that the two Charities, the AM and Staffordshire Monthly Meeting United Charities, could be amalgamated. However the AM will for the time being not be registered and will continue to be known as ‘exempt’ in CC speak. This means that we will need Trustees for the Staffordshire Monthly Meeting United Charities, and Trustees for the AM in accordance with our Minute. One way to do this will be to have the same

Trustees for each body, so they meet together to deal with both charities, registered or not.

Thus Nominations Committee will be looking for Trustees to fill the vacancies. “In terms of the law, a group of trustees controls the assets of a charitable trust and ensures that these assets are used for the purposes for which the trust was established.”

Handbook for Trustees.

The trusteeship of our Society is laid upon all of us, but the formally appointed trustees take the trouble to ensure that things are being done properly – they are not afraid to ask awkward questions. They are required to:

- safeguard the assets of the meeting;
- ensure that these assets are applied for the proper purposes of the meeting;
- provide for accounting records to be kept and annual reports and accounts to be produced.
- ensure both that the meeting acts within the law and observes relevant laws and regulations.

Handbook for Trustees

See www.quaker.org.uk/sites/default/files/Handbook-for-Trustees-March-2009-rev.pdf

Win Sutton (Wolverhampton), Convener, Governance Group, Staffordshire AM, with thanks to Peter Blockside (Stafford) and Berry Dicker (Lichfield)



THE TRUSTEESHIP OF OUR SOCIETY IS LAID UPON ALL OF US, BUT THE FORMALLY APPOINTED TRUSTEES TAKE THE TROUBLE TO ENSURE THAT THINGS ARE BEING DONE PROPERLY

WHOOSH! THERE ONE MINUTE, GONE THE NEXT?



LIVENING UP
OUR SPIRITUAL
FAITH WITH
ACTION AND
EXPRESSING IT
TO OTHERS

At December Meeting for Sufferings we considered Minute 36 and Whoosh! With me so far? Maybe not. MfS considered whether the titles we hope will attract attention to your work have become a bit too obscure. OK - so Whoosh! is a Britain Yearly Meeting movement towards livening up our spiritual faith with action and expressing it to others. Only small steps so far. See Minute 36 below.

This was my first experience of MfS, so I thought abbreviated versions of some Minutes might give an idea of what goes on. An important outcome of the appointment of BYM Trustees is that there is more time in MfS to give to Minutes from our representatives on BYM Committees and from AMs. I will try to give a flavour:

Sustainability The Minute reads: We have considered three challenging aspects brought to us by the **Minute 36 Commitment Group**. (In Minute 36 BYM agreed to adopt a testimony to working towards environmental sustainability.)

Is our concern for becoming a low-carbon sustainable community seen by Friends as a spiritual issue? We were reminded that 'The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it.' (Psalm 24) There can be no doubt that this is a spiritual concern. But fear and guilt can drive out our spiritual awareness. There may be resistance to the Group because of the perception that we are being told what to do.

• What help do AMs want from the Group, & what reports of progress are they willing to send? How should we explore the concern with meetings who have made no response? We ask MfS representatives to ask the clerks of meetings who didn't respond what their difficulty was ... so that appropriate help can be offered where it is needed. [*Clerks - You know who you are! Win*]

• Are the suggested activities for the Group appropriate? We recognise that friends are looking for encouragement from the group, and ideas that are within their ability to carry out. General monitoring through AMs will minimise the risk of critical comparison between one local meeting and another, or one individual Friend and another.

Minutes from Committees

(i) **Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee**. This responds to our minute forwarding the minute from Surrey & Hampshire Border AM regarding the boycott of settlement goods. QPSW Central Committee is not persuaded that the BYM boycott should be extended to include all Israeli products. MfS accepts this advice.

(ii) A minute from **Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations** ... informs us that it intends to engage with papers received from the World Council of Churches Central Committee.

Minutes from AMs

(i) Minute 15 10/12 of **Northumbria AM** (informs) us of a Pilgrimage for Peace & Justice from Iona to London beginning 19 May ... to highlight the inadvisability and injustice of the Government's proposal to spend up to £100 billion renewing the Trident nuclear missile system. This minute has been sent to Quaker Communications and Services, Quaker Life and QPSW for advice.

(ii) Minute 13 of **North Wales AM** held in October (proposes) a revision of the Book of Discipline, Quaker faith & practice. Full revision takes place every generation or so; the last in 1994. Minute sent to Church Government Advisory Group.

(iii) From **Swarthmoor (South West Cumbria) AM** on future developments at Swarthmoor Hall. The Project Group has met once and is meeting with the National Trust next week. It was good to experience Friends working together to reach clarity on a matter which risked becoming a source of conflict. Views and feelings were expressed very openly. This seemed to lead to understanding and an easier, more creative relationship between the Friends involved.

Rob Horton (wrobw.horton@yahoo.co.uk) and I will try to be brief and interesting in future reports. If you want to comment, please contact us. Win Sutton, Wolverhampton (01902 744485, winsutton@gmail.com)

QUAKER LIFE REPRESENTATIVES COUNCIL

In October I was privileged to be asked to represent our AM at the QL Representatives Council, at Woodbrooke, in place of our Friend Joan Holland, who was not well enough to attend.

Between 80 and 90 Quakers met to hear about the work of QL, and to discuss the needs of our Area and Local Meetings, and it was a joy to feel a part of the Society in a way we tend to forget as we focus on our Local Meeting.

The organisation that is Quaker Life may seem remote, 150 miles away in London, but it is there to support us, each Area and Local Meeting in Britain, and it wants to know our opinions and needs. It is clear that we are listened to, and that much effort is put in to finding ways to help.

The theme of this autumn's council was 'Deepening the life of the Spirit through service', and the clerk, Terry Wood, reminded us that we are a shared priesthood, and, that if we all share the responsibilities of our Society, no one should be overburdened. Service should be a joy, not a chore.

Jocelyn Burnell told us of the many Meetings she has been part of during her life, and how she has served them and grown from this work. Taking on roles in our Society, whether at local or national level, helps to build community: working to-

gether we worship better together. She quoted Kahil Gibran: 'Work is love made visible', and said that we can show our love through our service, and thereby help to create a strong community. There is a tendency among Quakers, I think, that, when someone accepts a role, the rest of us relinquish our responsibility, while as Friends we are all responsible, and, if not actually doing the work, we should support and uphold those that are.

Richard Summers, QL general secretary, stressed how those at Friends' House work on behalf of Friends, trying to support Local Meetings and to strengthen the community that is Britain YM, but they have to know what Local Meetings. QL can provide ideas, encouragement and resources: we should use them more; recognising our connection to them. The theme of Quaker Week will be Quaker worship, and we were advised to begin to think about this now so that we shall be ready to respond to enquirers. It was suggested that we hold an outdoor Meeting for Worship, perhaps not on a Sunday, and not at the Meeting House. Representatives told of Meetings they had held in town centres, for example outside Barclays Bank. Another idea was a 'Bring a friend' Sunday, which may include a shared lunch. We were encouraged to try an all-age worship next spring, perhaps putting an open invitation in our local paper. Workshops have been arranged to help us to do this.

In our 'home groups' of 9 or 10 we discussed how our Local Meetings support those who serve, and encourage others to do so. One Meeting had made a list of all the jobs that needed to be done, from washing up to trusteeship, so that people know the roles that must be filled, and the work that is done on their behalf. They are invited to tick any they would be prepared to consider. This does not commit them to anything, but helps Friends to know each other better.

Nancy Irving, General Secretary, Friends World Committee for Consultation, quoted Roger Wilson's definition of service: 'Simple human kindness at some personal cost'. Meg Hill, from QL Central Committee reminded us that 'all we do as Friends springs from our spiritual life and endeavour'. Zelig Gross pointed out that, if we do not concentrate on the spiritual aspect of Quakerism, we could just be a business group.

I recommend that you look at the QL Network website, and ask to receive the newsletter: www.quaker.org.uk/qlnetwork. This can be sent by post: call 020 7663 1007. If you have any questions or comments please get in touch. I should love to share my enthusiasm with you. The Society is alive and kicking, and we are part of it!

Maggie Jeays, Stafford



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THE INNER LIGHT AT SUMMER SCHOOL

Summer School for me was a second home where I could be as wacky and weird as I wanted, and it was this 'release' that I believe allowed me to grow as a person and a Quaker because my mind wasn't preoccupied with trying to conform to other people's opinion of normal. I forged new friendships and strengthened old ones. I met people from Edinburgh to Brighton, people whom I may not meet again at Summer School but hopefully things like London and Gloucester link.

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On the Saturday the majority of us assembled at Friend's House, London. Here we started our reunions (to be finished in Saffron Walden), here some of us hit it off with the newcomers almost immediately, and for others it would take slightly longer. This was also when we had our first Base Group session, That was where I met the cutest little fellow from Brighton meeting, he could Diablo and would spontaneously sing for no reason other than he enjoyed it. Thus I befriended the first of my three best Quaker friends.

On the Sunday we had a 'Godly play' from the Leavers all about how we have damaged the world with our ignorance, and about those with the insight to try and correct it; we then visited the nearby maze which was made more difficult by un-

clear instructions from those on the tower at the centre. I eventually made it in the sweltering heat, made my escape and went for a drink.

On Monday we were visited by someone who had volunteered for QUNO who told us about the house in Geneva where delegates come to talk things over in a quiet environment with the promise of a home cooked meal, the appeal of which is that the

against weapons essentially won.

Tuesday was of no real spiritual note, a trip to the market and some Barn dancing, but it was the day when I met my second Quaker friend, a polish boy called Arek, we were fast friends and we continue to be.

On the Thursday we had meeting for worship at Jesus



William sits up whilst all others lie down. Wacky!

only food available in the UN building is processed sandwiches. The evening was mainly spent involved in a UN simulation where we had to decide (as the UN security council elected or not) how to deal with an alien presence; the choices being nuclear weaponry stationed in orbit, weaponry in orbit but not nuclear, or none whatsoever. After much debate Russia who was not present decided to use their VETO (the staff later confided their worries about being lynched) in the end the people who were completely

Lane meeting house and went to see the city, this was thoroughly enjoyable because I found a market stall that I had given up on finding and bought an embossed belt for £7 (very happy with this). This was also with which I sealed a friendship with the third person.

In conclusion S.S. was thoroughly enjoyable and has in many ways helped me find the Inner light.

William Essex, Stafford

PLANTING OLIVE TREES IN PALESTINE

Since 2011 **The North Staffordshire Olive Tree Campaign** has demonstrated support for farmers losing their land to the Israeli military occupation by sponsoring nearly 200 olive trees in the West Bank of Palestine. The cost of an olive tree has risen to £15 which covers the cost of a young tree, preparation of a field, an irrigation system and a protection tube.

The NSOTC is now part of newly launched **Sumud Palestine** which will continue to work in partnership with the JAI *Keep Hope Alive* Campaign to support farmers by sponsoring olive trees and with the Palestinian Counselling Centre by sponsoring psychotherapists to conduct training workshops for mental health professionals working with traumatised families and children. The

first sponsored psychotherapist conducted a workshop in Ramallah in the West Bank in December.

For more, see: www.sumudpalestine.org.uk, email angela.glendenning@gmail.com or write to 32 Dartmouth Avenue, New-castle-u-Lyme, ST5 3NY

Sumud stands for steadfast perseverance and staying put despite continuous assault:

- The maintenance of Palestinians on their land and building alternative institutions so as to resist and undermine the occupation
- A collective 3rd way between submission and exile, between passivity and violence to end the occupation.
- A non-violent attitude of life that forges a 3rd way between acceptance of the occupation and opting for

violent struggle.

Sumud Palestine has raised £7338.29 and disbursed £2262.50 to the JAI *Keep Hope Alive* Campaign.

The Destruction of olive trees On 21 November, settlers from the Israeli settlement of Carmel, south of Hebron Hills, uprooted most of the 400 olive trees planted by the campaign in 2012. This is a common occurrence. To *keep hope alive* more trees will be planted.

Commenting on the sparse media coverage of the march in London to protest the recent onslaught on Gaza *Keep Hope Alive* campaign organiser, Baha Hilo, said: 'We are thankful to each and every one of the 10,000 marchers, media is not where we get our hope from, but from the voices and efforts put forward by you and the many others who work tirelessly for a just solution of the people of Palestine.'



'SUMUD
PALESTINE'
MEANS
'STEADFAST
PALESTINE'

Disappearing Palestine 1946 - 2008



Angela Glendenning (Stoke Meeting), Mohammed Mukhaimar, Salem Maarabouni, Waqas Butt, Sajid Hashmi, Pat Mood, Jeanine & Masoud & Alastair Young

CELTIC SPIRITUALITY WEEKEND

From May 17 – 19 at Claridge House Quaker Centre Kenneth Boyd Browne (Stone Meeting) will lead reflection on Celtic themes in the book *Anam*

Cara by John O Donohue, as an aid to our spiritual journey. Cost £190 per person, non residential £109 for course and meals.

Kenneth is a BACP Senior

Accredited Counsellor and Psychotherapist, and qualified Spiritual Companion.

0845 345 7281 or 01342 832 150 www.claridgehousequaker.org.uk



PIONEER ACCOMMODATION UNITS

I have designed durable long-term accommodation. The full-size prototype is available for inspection in my garden at 11 Audlem Walk, Wolverhampton.

I am working on a half-size display version which can be taken to any location by public transport. I shall be pleased to bring this to any Meeting.

The full-size unit has potential to provide secure long-term accommodation for the homeless in this country and in developing countries. I want as many people as

possible to see the display version.

The accommodation consists of units each of one room. Each room has floor space 7 ft by 5 ft and the height of an average adult. The one-room units can be placed back-to-back to provide larger rooms and side-by-side to create a terrace. The design can be modified to provide larger rooms.

The accommodation is made from materials available from any builders' merchants. It can be assembled with DIY skills. The cost of materials for each room unit is about £250.

Each one-room unit is assembled from several modules (4 for floor and walls, 1 for door in door frame and 4 roof modules). This permits easy assembly and dismantling with compact storage for transportation

If an occupant did not have a permanent location then they could easily move between temporary locations. The weight of materials for each one-room full-size unit is about 100kg. This can be moved manually by one person using a trolley.

John Nicholls, Wolverhampton

SOME EVENTS IN 2013

Feb 9: Sumud Palestine, 2.00 - 5.00, Mitchell Arts Centre, Hanley (see p. 11)

Feb 11: Bill Walley, Staffordshire Quaker History, 6.30, Stafford FMH

March 18: Peter Shilston, Tolkien's moral compass in

The Lord of the Rings, 6.30 Stafford FMH

April 20: Quaker Service Memorial Inauguration (see p. 4)

May 17-19, Kenneth Boyd Browne, Celtic Spirituality, Claridge House (see p. 11)

AREA MEETING 2013

9 Feb Stafford

9 March Stoke

11 May Leek

13 July Uttoxeter

14 Sept Wolverhampton

12 Oct Stone

14 Dec Lichfield

Staffordshire A. M.?



You're lucky to get away by 5.00 p.m.

WWW.STAFFS-QUAKERS.ORG.UK IS FOR YOU!

'Staffordshire Quakers', the official website of the Religious Society of Friends in Staffordshire, is not just aimed at enquirers. It is also there to keep all F/friends in Staffordshire Area Meeting informed and refreshed.

The menu includes:

- *About Quakers*
- *Meetings (details of Local Meetings)*
- *AM Business*
- *SQ Newsletter*
- *History*

- *Links*
- *New 'Quaker Worship' leaflet*
- *Study Sessions*
- *Quaker Service Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum*

Bill Walley, creator of the site, welcomes fresh material. Local Meetings can update their sections with information about current activities. See for example Stone Meeting's details. This is a way to show enquirers we are a living, active community, not just people hiding in buildings shown in the photographs.

Bill would like each Meeting to check (preferably through a nominated contact person) their particular page(s) from time to time and notify him via e-mail (wjwalley@globalnet.co.uk) of any necessary addition, amendments or deletions (i.e. out of date material) so that he can keep the site up-to-date and looking fresh and alive."

Have a look, at www.staffs-quakers.org.uk. Please note that copies of this Newsletter are archived on the website.

CLOSING DATE FOR SUMMER ISSUE: MAY 26, BUT PLEASE START NOW!

ONE PAGE TAKES ABOUT 620 WORDS

GABI AND ROGER OLDFIELD

8 MENDIP AVENUE, STAFFORD, ST17 0PG

ROLDFIELD@BTOPEWORLD.COM