



FORTY-THREE

OXFORD FRIENDS' MEETING
43 ST.GILES OXFORD OX1 3LW

NEWSLETTER

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Selfish Quakers!

Selfish Quakers? Surely not! After all, we Quakers are, by and large, noted for our generosity. But there's one thing we sometimes seem reluctant to share – our Quakerism! Yes, I can hide it no longer; this item is about outreach, but you've already read this far so please don't desert me now.

I don't think I'm giving away any secrets when I say many Oxford friends are unenthusiastic about outreach. I can understand why. We're a tired Meeting, we've had many stresses recently and we definitely don't need yet another committee. But my own experience convinces me that none of this need stand in the way of outreach.

I've found that the world is full of people who are interested in Quakerism, but what can we offer them? We've already said that now is probably not the right time to instigate a formal outreach programme. And we don't need to. All we need to do is something very simple – as individuals, own up to and share our Quakerism. Come on friends; let's not be selfish!

I don't think I've ever deliberately steered a conversation to create an opportunity for me to mention that I'm a Quaker, but it's amazing how often it comes up. Which of us, for example, hasn't been asked countless times what we would be doing at the weekend? Doesn't this provide the perfect opportunity to mention we're going to a Quaker Meeting?

I've found that much more often than might be expected, the response, once Quakers have been mentioned, will be along the lines of, "Are you a Quaker? Quakers sound interesting – I'd love to find out more."

When this happens to me, I'm happy to chat about the Quaker way for as long or short a time as seems appropriate but – here's the crucial bit – I don't leave it at that. I reach into my pocket and pull out one of those postcards you can send off to Friends House to get a free information pack. I've never had one refused.

I'll be first to admit that I don't know whether anyone has ever used one of the cards I've given

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From *Pacific Yearly Meeting, Advices and Queries*

Share your Quaker faith. Take time to learn about other people's experience of the Light and, as you learn, give freely from what you have gained. Respect the experiences and opinions of others, but do not be afraid to say what you value. Welcome the diversity of culture, language, and expressions of faith in your Monthly Meeting, the Yearly Meeting, and the world community of Friends. Encourage discourse with Friends of pastoral and programmed traditions, and with members of other faiths.

Deadline for contributions to the July 2014 issue: noon, Friday 24th June 2014

Contributions, preferably of 500 words or fewer, would be appreciated to newsletter@oxfordquakers.org, and items for the calendar on page 6 can be emailed to lukesamuelmartin@gmail.com. Paper copy can be left in the newsletter pigeonhole at the Meeting House. For information: tel. 01865 557373 or visit www.oxfordquakers.org

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them, but at least I've created an opportunity for them to find out about sharing the wonderful things the Quaker way has to offer. Isn't that what outreach is all about?

I realise that by now my blatant proselytising will have resulted in several weighty Quakers exploding in their chairs. I apologise for their pain, but I really don't see this as proselytising. I never try to change anyone's views or beliefs; I just try to give them an opportunity to find out about something that may – or may not – be of interest and great value to them.

I see this process as useful outreach with little effort and definitely with no committees. If you agree, why not try it? Let's not be shy, let's be ready to share – I know there are many people who will appreciate and benefit from our efforts.

Keith Wilson

Fond Memories of Hans

Hans Hammersmidt died on 4 May. He was 84.

Hans regularly attended our 9:30 Sunday Meetings in Oxford until a few years ago. He spoke of a warm attachment to Friends but could no longer get out so early on Sundays!

I knew him for only the last 30 years of his eventful life. Born

in Berlin, he was just eight when, answering the door of the family home, he had admitted the Gestapo that was to arrest his father. The memory of this remained alive and always close to the surface. Fortunately, his mother engineered his father's release from a concentration camp (Sachsenhausen) – and the family then left for England, to settle in Oxford. However, his father never fully recovered from his experience.

Hans went to the Oxford High School for Boys in George Street and, on leaving, worked at Blackwell's publishers. In his thirties, after a dispute with his mother over atomic weapons, he set fire to their home in Oxford. This led to incarceration in Broadmoor – from where, in due course, his mother obtained his discharge. While his mother was admirably capable, I sensed his relationship with his disabled sister, Gretel, was

the closer. Incidentally, he enjoyed his time in Broadmoor, becoming its librarian, though his strong views on atomic weapons were unchanged.

Later, he worked for Oxford Council as a street cleaner, making many acquaintances of those who stopped to listen to this incongruously cultured man with his strong views, critical of governments. His repertoire was not limited to verbal persuasion for he would put matches to five pound notes to demonstrate his indifference to Mammon (inducing apoplectic rage in one Walton Street resident). He even peppered his friends with statements, as well as harangued church leaders with whom he sometimes had extensive correspondence. I once commented that his views were too radical for anyone in assumed authority to absorb. He rebutted the tag 'radical', most vehemently. He found it absurd that ordinary people allowed their national governments to retain atomic weapons.

In his later years, he would often say how lucky he had been and, long before his final illness, of how he was ready to die. Perhaps he had been lucky – for he had the comradeship of his wife Olga, whom he had met on a trip to St Helena; a son, Richard; and a young grand-daughter. He had travelled widely – even returning to his native Germany in the 1950s, to experience, uncomprehendingly, the ugliness of 'racial' abuse there. But, elsewhere, he was forever surprised by people's basic fairness and friendliness.

He made donations to Unipal (the educational charity for Palestinians) but, otherwise, though naturally an anti-Zionist, felt the Jewish community received enough criticism over Israel without his joining in. His family had been persecuted in Germany despite being fully assimilated; nevertheless, he maintained throughout that assimilation was the only way forward.

Many relatives and friends came to a service at Oxford crematorium on Monday 19 May, when we said farewell to Hans, with the accompaniment of some of his favourite music, including Mozart and Brahms, and later assembled for refreshments in Headington. Although the occasion was a happy one – as Hans would have wished – we felt sympathy for those close to him who faced an acuter, starker loss.

Richard Phillips



World War One 100 years on: what hopes for the future?

We hold in memory those who died, those who served and suffered through the fighting of 1914-18. Perhaps one of the most compelling reasons for reflecting on what we have learnt in the years between is to prevent its happening again. Conflict does not go away just because we refuse to fight. But there are ways of responding to injustice and aggression today that are constructive and lead towards an understanding of the causes of war and the needs of the opposing parties.

Witney Quakers have asked three speakers who have built up knowledge and experience of work in conflict areas to share in a programme of talks and discussions. We invite you to reflect with us on their experience. After the talk and questions there will be a break for refreshments and more informal conversation. All are welcome. There is no charge for the evenings but it would be a great help if you could let us know you are coming. Contact hmsb@phoncoop.coop; jen_franklin2003@yahoo.co.uk or 01993 706744.

Wednesday 25 June

Wesley Room, Methodist Church,
High Street Witney
7:00pm for 7:30pm

'The Role of National Narratives in Conflict and Conflict Resolution'

Rosemary Hollis: Professor of Middle East Policy Studies at City University and Director of the Olive Tree Programme that enables Palestinian and Israeli students to learn about each other while they study. Rosemary is an arresting speaker with wide experience of the problems of the Middle East as a practitioner and academic.

Thursday 11 September

Congregational Church, Witney,
6:30pm for 7:00pm

'Sustainable Security: Addressing the Real Threats to Global Security'

Richard Reeve: Director of the Sustainable Security Programme at Oxford Research Group (ORG). He will outline the range of projects that ORG offers around the world. Sustainable Security centres on

how we can better identify and respond to the drivers of insecurity in the long term. He will speak about how the system of militarised alliances in Europe and Asia continues to drive conflict and how the huge transition in global power this century might help to shift international security policy towards addressing rather than suppressing the real causes of conflict.

Wednesday 8 October

Wesley Room, Methodist Church,
High Street Witney, 7:00pm for 7:30pm

The Post-Yugoslav Peace Link

Violent conflict casts a long shadow. After a war it takes many years to build the peace at community level. Those who have experienced war and those who also work to transform the conflict that remains carry a heavy burden. These volunteers continuously work within an environment of trauma, grief and danger, often in isolated circumstances. Judith Baker will talk about some of the peace building work and its steady growth over fifteen years.



An Invitation to Afternoon Tea

All 'senior' members and attenders of Oxford Meeting are most warmly invited to afternoon tea at FMH on **Sunday 15 June** at 3:00 pm.

This afternoon tea party has been arranged in place of the 'Over 70's' day held in past years at Charney Manor.

Please contact
Tanya Garland if
you intend to join
us on this occasion
- 01865 244260.



Managing our Premises: finding a new warden

On Sunday 18 May, after a careful process of discernment, a specially convened Local Meeting for Business agreed to appoint a non-resident warden as manager of our meeting houses. The person we are looking for will be supported by the Assistant Warden and additional caretakers when needed.

The Premises and Finance Committee (P&F) is implementing Local Meeting's decision. The Committee's *Wardenship Review Group*, (set up last June) has already begun the work of finding a person with the right skills and qualities, in sympathy with Quaker values and with respect and understanding of the ways of Friends.

By September we hope to recruit someone who will start work during the autumn. This may seem a long time, but each stage of the process takes time. And the summer holidays are right in the middle. Meanwhile, we are grateful to our temporary Warden, Sean Gibson and Assistant Luke Martin, who are supported from time to time by Alex Simari and members of the Meeting. New names may need to be added to these before a full appointment is made.

The core Wardenship Group is: Alan Allport, Jill Green, Ursula Howard and Elisabeth Salisbury. There is a wider 'reference group': Ruth Kim, Ruth Mason, Jo Dobry and Janet Toye – who will read and comment on plans and papers. The Area Meeting (OSAM – formally the employer) is involved too. OSAM's Employment Review Group has created new policies and guidelines for Meetings with wardens to use under a 'scheme of delegation'. This group is convened by Katharine Nicholas of Oxford Meeting; Richard Stamper is also a member.

The main work will be done between meetings – there is detailed paperwork to create and consult on. P&F will look at the Wardenship Group's proposals and will regularly inform Local Meeting for Business of progress. Finally, we are seeking help from experts in recruiting people to voluntary organisations; and from Quaker Life in London. We want to make sure we are doing things well as good employers.

Ursula Howard

Welcome Connor Slamon

My name is Connor, I took on the role as gardener at FMH in March. I can be found in the garden, every Wednesday from 12:30 to 4:30 pm. I started my career in estate work and forestry, then worked for friends for many years, before starting-up my own business 'Oxgreen Gardening', earlier this year. I am thrilled to have 'The Friends Meeting House' on my client portfolio, working in the open air, in a lovely setting, is what it's all about for me.

Connor Slamon



For Sale

There are five 'stone effect' covered Belfast sinks in the garden at FMG for sale to raise money for new plants. These are ideal for herb or alpine gardens. Please contact **Tanya Garland** on 01865 244260 or **Stephen Yeo** on 01865 882439 if you would like to have one or more.

5 June is
World Environment Day.
www.unep.org/wed

16-22 June is
Recycle Week.
www.recyclenow.com

7-11 July is
Oxfam Water Week.
www.oxfam.org.uk/waterweek



All Age Meeting for Worship

Sunday 8 June, 11 am

The children will be helping us to think about **Truth**, which has been the central theme for the children's group over the past few months.

Jane Fisher



Illustrated by Janice Duke



We are co-operative organisation owned and funded by the community. You can become a member to get more involved in what we do. Join us as a volunteer on the land or take up a regular volunteer shift on the VegVan and Sunday markets. We want to help people create a local food system Oxford can be proud

of, so if you've got an idea you want to take forward – get in touch.

The VegVan: Oxford's Mobile Greengrocery

It's a shop...in a van! The finest, freshest local and organic fruit & veg Oxfordshire can supply, with additional produce from the UK and the rest of Europe. Come aboard and have a browse.

Thursdays

Summertown, 12:00 – 3:00 pm, in front of Tesco and Sainsbury

East Oxford, 4:30 – 7:00 pm, Magdalen Road, outside the Rusty Bicycle

Fridays

Jericho, 11:00 am – 2:00 pm, Little Clarendon Street
Oxford Railway Station, 3:30 pm – 7:00 pm, main entrance

Saturdays

Headington, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm, Barclays Bank, Old High Street

Sundays

South Oxford Community Market, 9:30 am – 12:00 pm, Lake Street Community Centre

Summertown Farmers' Market, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm, Banbury Road, in front of M&S

Oxford's annual Friendship Walk: Thursday 12 June, from 5:30 for a 6:15 start

Starting from the Oxford Synagogue and Jewish Centre, Richmond Road; walking via the University Church of St Mary the Virgin, High Street; and ending at the Central Oxford Mosque, Manzil Way.



Photographs from last year's walk are at www.oxcof.org.uk

CALENDAR FOR JUNE 2014

All 43 St Giles unless otherwise indicated

Sunday 1	12:30 pm	Meeting for Worship for Business	Monday 16	7:30 pm	Young Adult Friends
Monday 2	7:30 pm	Young Adult Friends	Wed 18	1:45 pm	Friends Fellowship of Healing
Friday 6	7:00 pm	CND Concert		Monday 23	4 - 6 pm
Sunday 8	11:00 am	All-age MFW (see p. 5)	Tuesday 24		7:30 pm
Monday 9	7:30 pm	Young Adult Friends	Sunday 29	12:30 pm	Bring-and-share Lunch
Wed 11	11:00 am	Poems		Monday 30	5:00 pm
Saturday 14	All Day	Jungian Lectures	7:30 pm		Young Adult Friends
Sunday 15	3:00 pm	'Seniors' Afternoon Tea (see p. 3)			

Environment and Economic Justice Group

Tuesday 24 June at 7:00 for 7:30pm,
31 Riverside Road OX2 0HT
(off the South side of the Botley Road)

Subjects under discussion will include the current housing crisis and inequality in the light of the book *Capital* by Thomas Piketty which has received worldwide acclaim.

Dennis Price



MEET in Oxford

The low cost trauma therapy service which our Meeting supports will be holding its first AGM on **Monday 30 June at 5pm at FMH**. Anyone who is interested in hearing how

MEET is progressing is very welcome to come to this meeting.

Sandra Figgess

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Sundays at 9:30 and 11 am at 43 St Giles
(followed by tea and coffee)

Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7:30 am at 43 St Giles
(followed by breakfast at 8 am)

Wednesdays at 12:15 pm at 43 St Giles
(followed by tea and coffee)

Headington LM worships on Sundays at 10 am
at The Priory, 85 Old High Street, OX3 9HT

OPENING TIMES (43 ST GILES)

Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday, 9:30 am - 1:30 pm

Forty-Three is available online, at
www.oxfordquakers.org/newsletter

If you are considering writing an article or notice but would prefer it not to go online, please don't hesitate to contribute it. Just indicate that the piece is not for inclusion in the internet version — no reason will be asked for. Articles and notices are very welcome to appear in the print edition only, and the same applies to calendar items.

*Editorial Team: MARK EBDEN, PENNY ORMEROD,
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