



# **FORTY-THREE**

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

## **NEWSLETTER**

Number 420 (online version)

**MARCH 2014**

**40 pence**

### **Reporting International War Crimes**

Below are the notes I used to report crimes recently at Reading Police Station with Janet Toye, Susan Clarkson and others (see the February issue of *Forty-Three*, page 6). We chose Reading because Burghfield Atomic Weapons Establishment is so nearby and presents a risk to those living in southwest Reading.

We had worked with the police beforehand, and as a result they were ready on Saturday 8 February for about 60 people to report crimes. All our statements were typed up. The whole atmosphere was very good. Anti-nuclear songs cheered us along, provided by The Red Choir from Swansea and Raised Voices from London.

Please consider going with a couple of friends to report a nuclear weapons crime at your local police station, or you can do it via their 101 telephone number.

**Sarah Lasenby**

*I wish to lay information about war crimes:*

*Our nuclear weapons could never be used lawfully because of the colossal extent of the collateral damage. Therefore the use would be counter to humanitarian law and would be a crime. In relation to other humanitarian issues the impact of the existence of nuclear weapons creates terror and is thus a crime against humanity.*

*The International Red Cross say they would be quite unable to cope with the medical needs produced by a modern nuclear weapon's explosion.*

*Preparation for the actual use of nuclear weapons is a crime because these weapons are so massive and the humanitarian disaster that would occur would be so horrendous. In any case, the design and preparation of nuclear weapons is a conspiracy. Just threatening to use them is an intentional crime. Talk of nuclear deterrence is a conspiracy to commit a war crime.*

*Nuclear winter: the dust created by the kind of explosions from modern nuclear bombs would result in a nuclear winter lasting up to ten years. By then there would be so little food that most people would die and there would be terrible unrest. To pursue this end is a crime.*

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### **From Quaker Faith and Practice**

All our senses are given to us to enjoy, and to praise God. The smell of the sea, of the blossom borne on the wind, of the soft flesh of a little baby; the taste of a ripe plum or bread fresh from the oven, the feel of warm cat's fur, or the body of a lover – these are all forms of thanksgiving prayer.

**From QF&P 21.24, Bella Bown**

**Deadline for contributions to the April 2014 issue: noon, Friday 21 March**

*Contributions, preferably of 500 words or fewer, would be appreciated to [newsletter@oxfordquakers.org](mailto:newsletter@oxfordquakers.org), and items for the calendar on page 6 can be emailed to [lukesamuelmartin@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://www.oxfordquakers.org)*

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*As well as conventions for biological and chemical weapons we also have a convention against the use of cluster bombs. We urgently need a convention banning the use of nuclear weapons. One hundred and forty-six countries support this.*

*Nuclear Weapons are 'increasingly hazardous and decreasingly effective.'* – Mikhail Gorbachev.



*Sarah Lasenby was interviewed and photographed by the Oxford Mail last September for an article on Wool Against Weapons (see the September 2013 issue of Forty-Three, pp. 4-5). Photo by Andrew Walmsley.*

## Wool against Weapons

We are Knitting against Nuclear Weapons as part of the Wool against Weapons project. Our shawls are to be ready for **9 August**, Nagasaki Day, when the finished shawls will be joined and stretched for seven miles between the Atomic Weapons Establishment sites at Aldermaston and Burghfield – to protest against Trident and all nuclear weapons. Please come to a knitting afternoon at FMH in St Giles on Saturday **22 March**, 2 - 5 pm. Come for the three hours or just drop in when you can.

It is said that Oxford Quakers started British Quakers knitting in pink. This is another chance to join in and to come together to chat about this project.

Gwithian and Sarah have arranged the afternoon at FMH for a knit-against-nuclear weapons event. You may already be knitting pinkish shawls against nuclear weapons or maybe you want to. Bring along any shade of pink wool, needles, crochet

hooks etc, or borrow on site. Knitters old and young, male and female, novices or expert – all are welcome. Please come to find out how you can help with this wonderful project.

This is going to be an important event supported by CND. With so many shawls coming from all over the country, we feel confident that we shall get publicity for what will be a very colourful opportunity to make the world a safer place.

**Sarah Lasenby**, 01865 725991

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## Quaker Socialist Society

The Quaker Socialist Society is holding its annual general meeting at FMH on Saturday **29 March**. The formal business will be done between 12 noon and 1 pm. After lunch, **Stephen Yeo** will speak on 'Three Socialisms and the Society of Friends: which one and why?' Stephen taught and wrote social history at Sussex University before becoming Principal of Ruskin College, Oxford, 1989-97. Since then he has worked closely with the Co-operative College in Manchester and become a Member of Oxford Meeting. Everyone is welcome to the afternoon session.

**Marieke Clarke**, 01865 557807  
mariekefclarke@pop3.poptel.org.uk

## Prayer

Some days, although we cannot pray, a prayer utters itself. So, a woman will lift her head from the sieve of her hands and stare at the minims sung by a tree, a sudden gift.

Some nights, although we are faithless, the truth enters our hearts, that small familiar pain; then a man will stand stock-still, hearing his youth in the distant Latin chanting of a train.

Pray for us now. Grade I piano scales console the lodger looking out across a Midlands town. Then dusk, and someone calls a child's name as though they named their loss.

Darkness outside. Inside, the radio's prayer –  
Rockall. Malin. Dogger. Finisterre.

**Carol Ann Duffy**  
(chosen by Yvonne Dixon)

## Please Keep it Fresh, Friends!

Many of you will, I'm sure, have noticed that I spend a lot of time lurking around the kitchen; indeed, you only have to look at me to realise that I never like to be too far from food. However, during my lurking I have noticed something that I find a little unsettling. Recently, on at least two occasions, items that were past their use by/best before dates have been brought in for a bring-and-share meal. On one of those occasions, I know for sure that the item made it to the table and was, at least in part, consumed.

I certainly don't want to appear ungrateful to those whose contributions make our bring-and-share lunches so popular and successful, and I do understand that items past their sell-by date can sometimes be fine to consume. However, I don't think that we should serve them at bring-and-share meals.

The reason is simple – if I'm thinking of consuming something that's out of date at home, I know it's out of date and by how much, so I can make an informed choice about whether to go ahead. But at a bring-and-share meal, the items on the table no longer carry their sell-by dates, so an informed decision about whether or not to consume them is impossible. Nor do I believe that we should leave it to those in charge of the bring-and-share to make decisions about whether out of date items are okay to serve – their decision might not be the same as yours or mine. You or I may have a sensitive stomach, while they may be blessed with the proverbial cast-iron constitution.

In short, I would like to make a plea that friends contribute only food and drink that is in date, and that those in charge in the kitchen should politely but firmly refuse anything that isn't. Some friends will, I'm sure, feel I'm being unnecessarily finicky, but I think that the consequences of even a single case of illness traced to a bring-and-share meal would create a whole lot of trouble and inconvenience, and not just for the person who was unwell!

**Keith Wilson**



## Food for Thought

Quaker Peace and Social Witness is supporting an ecumenical campaign called *End Hunger Fast* which aims to shift public opinion and promote debate on food

poverty in the UK. The campaign will culminate in a vigil in Parliament Square on Friday **4 April**. For more information go to: [endhungerfast.co.uk](http://endhungerfast.co.uk).

If you are planning to take part in any way, please contact me or any of the OxFAP (Oxford Friends Action on Poverty) committee: Sue Smith, Ros Weatherall, Susan Clarkson and Trio Watson.

**Jo Dobry**

[josdobry@gmail.com](mailto:josdobry@gmail.com)

## Good luck, Luke!

Our assistant warden, Luke Martin, is raising money for our neighbours, the Gatehouse drop-in centre. He and a couple dozen others from the university will be hiking fifteen peaks in Northern Ireland on 29 March, in the Mourne Mountain Challenge.

[www.justgiving.com/  
teams/keblemournechallenge](http://www.justgiving.com/teams/keblemournechallenge)



## The Canterbury Commitment Group

is running a conference at Swanwick over the weekend of **7-9 March**:

[www.quaker.org.uk/canterbury-commitment](http://www.quaker.org.uk/canterbury-commitment)



## I wonder what books you keep by your bedside?

My bookcase includes the Bible, *Quaker Faith & Practice* and lots of poetry. In addition there is a collection of *Daily Readings*, published in America. Although Leonard gave it to me years (decades?) ago each day's reading comes to me afresh every time I open it. The reading for '1<sup>st</sup> Month 25' is about the 'lifetime wellness plan' of Moses Bailey, a Quaker who lived to a great age. Here are extracts from it, which you may find a source of inspiration and enjoyment.

- ♥ Keep the desire for knowledge burning strong. Appreciate what you know and marvel at all that's left to learn.
- ♥ Read the Bible again and again. Take what is helpful to you.
- ♥ Choose life work that you enjoy. Figure it out and don't settle for less.
- ♥ A steady correspondence with friends old and new provides stimulation and satisfaction.
- ♥ Eat vegetarian. Eat only when hungry and befriend yogurt.
- ♥ Read two new books a month for a lifetime. Build a tower of knowledge, book upon book.
- ♥ Avoid all advertising. It'll rile the blood.
- ♥ In the Quaker faith there is great power. Only living the faith releases that power.



Peggy Heeks

"It isn't enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it, and it isn't enough to believe in it. One must work at it."

**Eleanor Roosevelt**,  
Chair of the committee that drafted and approved the UN Declaration of Human Rights

Dear Friends at Oxford Meeting,

Thank you very much for your generous donation of £195.80 to Trident Ploughshares. We will make sure it is well spent in the cause of peace! Many thanks again.

In peace,

Jean Oliver, TP Treasurer

### Environment and Economic Justice Group

Wednesday **12 March** at 7 for 7:30 pm  
in the Library at FMH

Subjects included will be a Report on the Canterbury Commitment, Fossil Fuel Disinvestment and a discussion on the book *Ten Billion* by Stephen Emmett. **Dennis Price**

**Area Meeting** will be held in Charlbury MH on Saturday **8 March**, at 10:30 am and 2 pm. The afternoon speaker will be Iain Strachan from Abingdon Meeting.

### Yearly Meeting Gathering

I'll be keeping a list of Oxford Friends who are going to all or part of Yearly Meeting Gathering this year (**2-9 August** – see page 1 of the December issue). Please let me know if you'd like to be on the list, which I will circulate to those going whenever new names are added.

**Val Ferguson**, valfergus@gmail.com

**FTWEEKEND  
OXFORD  
LITERARY  
FESTIVAL**

**22-30 March**

Oxford Friend **Donna Dickenson** will speak on 'Me Medicine vs We Medicine', questioning the rise of personalised healthcare, from 4-5 pm on Friday **28 March** in the Oxford Martin School. Tickets: £11.

<http://oxfordliteraryfestival.org>

## Quakers in Bolivia



*This photo was taken soon after an Area Meeting in July 2011, as a few final Friends were leaving the Meeting House in Sorata. From left: Aymara people; pastors on a raised platform; Tina's group talking to a local Friend.*

*A few minutes later, here is the shared meal after Area Meeting. The women and girls are in traditional dress and the men and boys wear Western clothes.*



*The following Sunday, here a Meeting for Worship has just ended in La Paz. The service was led from the stage and the young people provided lots of music. There are 30,000 Aymara Quakers in Bolivia.*

**Tina Leonard**

## CALENDAR FOR MARCH 2014

*All 43 St Giles unless otherwise indicated*

Sunday 2	12:30 pm	Meeting for Worship for Business (LMWB)	Wednesday 19	1:45 pm	Friends Fellowship of Healing
Monday 3	7:30 pm	Extra LMWB	Saturday 22 March to Sunday 30 March		Literary Festival ( <i>various locations</i> ) — see page 4
Monday 3	7:30 pm	Young Adult Friends	Saturday 22	2-5 pm	Knitting against Nuclear Weapons — see page 2
Tuesday 4	2 - 6:30 pm	Quaker Vigil ( <i>at Aldermarston</i> )	Monday 24	4 - 6 pm	Poems in the Library
6 pm on Friday 7 March to 2 pm on Sunday 9th		Canterbury Commit. Gp ( <i>in Swanwick</i> ) — see p. 3	Monday 24	7:30 pm	Young Adult Friends
Saturday 8	10:30 am and 2 pm	Area Meeting ( <i>in Charlbury MH</i> ) — see page 4	Saturday 29	Morning start	Regional Meeting ( <i>location TBD</i> )
Monday 10	7:30 pm	Young Adult Friends	Saturday 29	12 pm	Quaker Socialist Society — see page 2
Wednesday 12	7 for 7:30 pm	Environment and Economic Justice Group — see page 4	Sunday 30	12:30 pm	Bring-and-share lunch
Mon. 17	7:30 pm	Young Adult Friends	Monday 31	7:30 pm	Young Adult Friends

## Oxford International Women's Festival

**5 to 16 March**

25th Anniversary: Changes for Women, Women Making Changes

Highlighting women's issues and celebrating the achievements of women from Oxford and beyond.

[www.oxfordinternationalwomensfestival.co.uk/2014-festival](http://www.oxfordinternationalwomensfestival.co.uk/2014-festival)



**Bon voyage, Mark! We look forward to seeing you in August after your time in Canada.**

*Forty-Three* is available online, at [www.oxfordquakers.org/newsletter](http://www.oxfordquakers.org/newsletter)

*Editorial Team: MARK EBDEN, PENNY ORMEROD, and BECKY RIDDELL (Joint Editing & Production); TINA LEONARD, DEBORAH FILGATE (Proofreaders); LUKE MARTIN (Distributor and Subscriptions)*

### 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