



FORTY-THREE

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

NEWSLETTER

Number 430 (Online Version)

JANUARY 2015

40 pence

New Year Resolutions for 2015

In the summer of last year, the Pastoral Care Group (Overseers) held a tea party for the senior members and attenders of our Meeting and I was asked to lead an activity. I had just read some of Gladstone's letters and one to his son had impressed me due to the fatherly advice it contained. He advised his son to "start and end each day in prayer and from time to time, during the day, to check in to the Divine Spirit." It reminded me of one of Marcus Aurelius's jottings asking himself, "and how is my spirit getting on today?" Gladstone continued by writing to his son who seemed to be in some financial difficulties, "limit thy wants!"

These two examples from well-known people aiming to live spiritually consciously, and also living their beliefs in practice, and wanting to hand on what they had come to value to others, set me thinking, 'What is it I would want to hand on to the young today?'

So this was the activity I put to those at the tea party. What would *you* like to hand down from *your* wisdom as advice and guidance for a good life? I thought we should leave out the ten commandments, which are already taught and in brief are 'There is only One God, Do not worship idols, Do not swear by God's name, Honour parents, Keep the Sabbath day holy, Do not lie (or give false witness), Do not steal, Do not commit

adultery (also with the meaning of pornography), Do not kill and Do not envy others.'

These are some of the examples collected from those present at the tea party in June 2014.

- * Teach good manners and by example.
- * Encourage the young – 'If you really want to do this, then go for it.'
- * Be awake to warnings.
- * Value perseverance. Stick at it and you will make progress (Tortoise and the Hare).
- * Go back to old interests with a new eye. You can return.

Continued on page 2, column 1

From Quaker Faith and Practice

When I sit down in meeting I recall whatever may have struck me freshly during the past week. This is in part, initially at least, a voluntary and outward act... It means that the will is given up to service; and it is quite possible to stop everything by taking an opposite attitude. So thoughts suggest themselves – a text that has smitten one during the week – new light on a phrase – a verse of poetry – some incident, private or public. These pass before the door whence shines the heavenly light. Are they transfigured? Sometimes, yes; sometimes, no. If nothing flames, silence is my portion.

John William Graham, 1920

QF&P 2.52

Deadline for contributions to the February 2015 issue: noon, Friday 23 January

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 oxfordquakers@gmail.com. Paper copy can be left in the pigeonhole of any Editor.

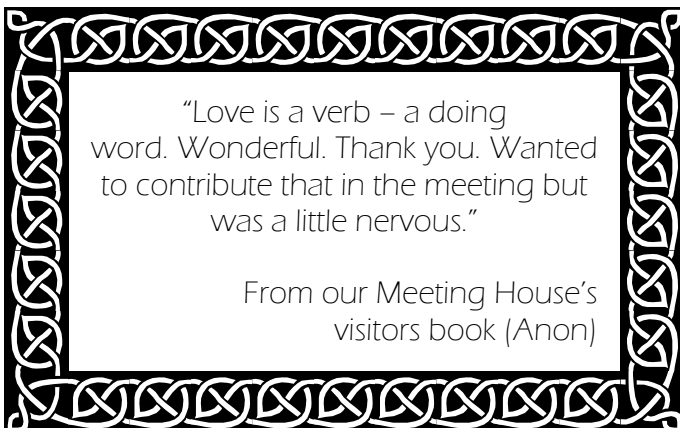
For information: tel. 01865 557373 or visit www.oxfordquakers.org

Continued from page 1, column 2

- * Recognise opportunity. Be ready to make changes.
- * Consider you might be wrong.
- * Work at being truthful and honourable in all things.
- * Duty of care for others.
- * Be a good listener and recognise when someone needs to talk.
- * De-clutter while there is time.
- * Do not judge – encourage.
- * The old way could be of value – letters, talking, not all emails.
- * Admire those who are good at things.
- * Be generous with your time, your love and your things.
- * Avoid debt. Speak bravely.
- * Accept your own limitations.
- * Recognise good things in your life. Count your blessings – friends, garden etc. Make a list of things to be thankful for.
- * Be friendly.
- * Fight for equality.
- * Have a sense of history (and family tree).
- * Life is so pressured. Take time to relax.
- * Honour confidences.
- * Learn when to say, 'No, that one is not for me – Yes. I can do that one!'
- * Listen to your inner voice.
- * Believe in yourself.
- * Don't harbour negative thoughts.
- * It is our duty to pass on bits of our family history to the next generation.
- * Be still, listen and breath consciously every day.
- * Be grateful for life.
- * To have a friend, be a friend.

I hope you enjoy thinking about things *you* value and the things you would like to pass on and perhaps write down for 2015.

Tanya Garland



Rabbit Song!

Rabbit song? What's he on about this time? I suppose if I'd used "swansong" as my title, my intent would have been a little clearer. However, there's considerable doubt about whether any kind of swan really does "sing" before it dies – check out Wikipedia if you really need to know more.

On the other hand, I can say from experience that almost the only time a rabbit makes any noise (other than a bit of snuffling, of course) is just before it dies. It seems to me, therefore, that "rabbit song" is a more accurate title.

And, dear friends, this item is, at least as far as *Forty-Three* is concerned, my rabbit song. Don't worry! As far as I know, I'm not giving notice of my imminent demise – although, of course, it's not given to any of us to know the hour and the day – but this is the last time you'll be seeing anything I've written in *Forty-Three* for quite some time.



You see, Nominations swooped and my name was put forward as a potential member of the *Forty-Three* editorial team. When this matter was brought before MfWfB, it seems that everyone "hoped so" – although I wasn't there to hear the assenting susurrations, having been banished to the most distant recesses of the kitchen. But the upshot is that I'll be joining the editorial team in January. And, by convention, members of the team don't contribute to *Forty-Three* – it would be rather like the accused in a court of law also being a member of the jury!

So, dear friends, just in case any of you were kind enough to wonder, a few months down the road, why I'd stopped writing, I thought I'd make this final contribution. That's it. For the time being at least, the rabbit has sung. Look out for its little fluffy tail (or should that be little fluffy tale?) again in a triennium or two, *deo volente!*

Keith Wilson

Depressed?

'When you find yourself, as I dare say you sometimes do, over-powered as it were by melancholy, the best way is to go out, and do something kind to somebody or another. Objects, either rich or poor will generally present themselves in the hour of need to those who look for them in earnest, although Oxford is not perhaps the most convenient place to find them in. However there they surely are if you will take the trouble of looking for them, and perhaps the very trouble of looking for them is in some sort an advantage in doing away a moody fit; although I always reckon it a great privilege of a country Parson that his resources in this way lie close at his own door.'

This advice comes from John Keble, 1792-1866, who, after a successful academic career, became a country parson at Hursley, near Winchester. With Newman he inspired the Oxford Movement in the Church of England. The quotation is taken from one of my favourite bedside books: *The English spirit: the Little Gidding anthology of English Spirituality*.

Peggy Heeks

For Quakers who believe there is that of God in every shoe

There are some Quakers who speak only to their shoe.
I wonder how it is they knew
God meant the message for their shoe.

Now people have said
since the world began,
There is that of God in everyone.
Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Jews,
But did God mean to include our shoes?

It's said that God is everywhere,
in the Earth and in the Air.
Thus even shoes might adore
To hear words sent to the floor.

But dear Friend, be assured!
The older Friend, on yonder bench,
is also yearning for your word
which is, alas, by her unheard.
So if you're moved to speak to shoes
a distant pair are the shoes to choose.

Lynne Phillips

(selected by Gwithian Doswell)

Quakers and the NHS

On 25 November in the Town Hall, Allyson Pollock spoke on "Reinstating the NHS: why and how?" She explained how we had lost it in 2012, when the new legislation (the 'Lansley bill') removed the duty of the Secretary of State to provide any specific health services. Though we have seen few services disappearing in Oxfordshire, the legislation is there. By squeezing budgets, the government can make it impossible in future for hospitals and GPs to provide a complete range of services. People who can afford it will get them privately, others will do without.

This prospect, of a pre-1948 England where the cost of illness is feared, is not acceptable to Quakers. Therefore I like the idea of asking prospective parliamentary candidates if they would, if elected, support Prof. Pollock's NHS Reinstatement Bill 2015. She is an expert in public health, the author of two books and many articles, and she has worked with parliamentarians such as David Owen to produce a draft bill which overcomes the worst features of the Lansley bill while causing as little disruption as possible to the health service. The idea is to have a bill ready for consideration early in the new Parliament.

If you go to www.nhsbill2015.org you can easily ask the candidates in your constituency to give you their response. There is also a summary of the bill and a link to the complete text.

This initiative is gaining support but it will need more, since the main political parties as well as the media are very hesitant to call a spade a spade and say, "We lost our way with the NHS, now it is time to undo the damage."

Jeanne Warren



Environment and Economic Justice Group

20 January, 7:00pm for 7:30pm, Office of FMH

We will be considering actions, for the group to take, to promote our aims. This being in the light of our studies and actions to date.

Dennis Price

Correspondence

Each month, a list of correspondence that has come into Oxford Meeting in the past month is circulated. If you want to be on the email circulation list: clerk@oxfordquakers.org.

The paper correspondence is placed each month in a labelled box on the mantelpiece of the Library. Please feel free to read the letters there. They are intended for us all!

Highlights of Current Correspondence



Quaker Voices is a British bimonthly journal available for £20 per year. If you want to take out or renew your subscription for 2015, now is the time to do it. Contact Marleen Schepers, 020 7663 1143, or visit www.quaker.org.uk/quaker-voices

Quaker Peace and Social Witness (QPSW). This is the British Quakers' department working for peace and social justice. It has produced two new resources for peace education:

www.quaker.org.uk/conscience-and-conviction. QPSW funds small grants for overseas projects involving young people or education. The deadline for submissions is **27 February**. Telephone Helen Thomas on 020 7663 1117 or visit www.quaker.org.uk/grant-making

Adult education grants for mature or graduate Quakers, particularly those equipping themselves to serve society or our Society, are available through Helen Thomas or at www.quaker.org.uk/grant-making. If you want to submit an application for 2015/16, please do so before **30 April**.

Quakers have an office in Geneva (Quaker United Nations Office) where important diplomatic work is done on our behalf, achieving changes in international standards and practice. Rhiannon Redpath, who works in QUNO's Peace and Disarmament programme, will speak to meetings in March and April about her work. To invite her to Oxford we'd just need a Friend to organize this, perhaps as a Friday with Friends.

Friends House have a new leaflet explaining in brief how we as individual Quakers fit into our local and national Quaker structures. To see it call Juliet Prager, 0207 663 1101, or visit tinyurl.com/shGuid

Marieke Clarke, Val Ferguson, and Mark Ebdon 4

Thank You

To everyone who bought Christmas and greeting cards made by the Bamporeze group in Rwanda, or necklaces and bracelets made by Kath Wilson from our Quaker Meeting. Special thanks to Trio Watson and Kath Wilson for running the stand selling these items. We received

£706 from these sales on four Sundays in November to December. The money will be sent to Bamporeze, who will use it to support people living with or affected by HIV and AIDS – for example, with medical expenses, food production or children's schooling.

Glen Williams

We, the Children of the Light

See the Light that burns within,
touch it, feel it, watch it spin
through an all pervading arc,
sense how love ignites its spark
to a bright consuming flame,
which burns intensely just the same
in every soul, through every birth,
a light that measures each life's worth,
a light that shines for each to see,
it was, it is, and will always be
the flare that guides us through the night,
we, the Children of the Light.

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Friends in Print

Sue Smith, *The Friend*,
'Turning the Tide', 18 September

Sandra Figgess, *The Friend*,
'Thought for the Week - God is
One and God is Many',
p 3, 28 September

Lesley Morris, *The Friend*,
'Reflection - Divinely inspired',
p. 14, 28 September

Laurie Michaelis, *The Friend*,
'Climate actions without
fanaticism', pp.10-11, 16 October

Rupert Booth, *Quaker Action on
Alcohol and Drugs Newsletter*,
December 2014, 'Is addiction all
in the Mind?'

Meetings and Notices

Fridays with Friends

7:30 pm in the Garden Room, with refreshments from 7 pm

16 January

My Writing Journey — Book discussion
Led by **Sally Nicholls**

Sally will discuss her writing journey, including *Ways to Live Forever*, *Close Your Pretty Eyes*, and an upcoming book with Quakers in it.

30 January

An evening of Plain speaking
Led by **Deb Arrowsmith**
and **Dorothy Dammitt**.

Plain speaking is an old Quaker tradition that serves us well if rightly used. Come along to an evening of full and frank views, exchange wise words, have some fun, get things off your chest and begin to find clearer ways of speaking truth with love to each other and speaking out confidently about our Quaker ways.

The Cost of Life on Earth Companies, climate change and your money

Friday **27 February** and Saturday **28 February**

A conference organised by the Oxford Group of the Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility. Sunniva Taylor from Friends House is one of the speakers and Oxford Meeting's Environment and Economic Justice group will be contributing to a workshop at the event. For more information write to eccroxford@hotmail.com or book directly at www.eventbrite.com/e/the-cost-of-life-on-earth-tickets-13816147469

Planning committee includes **Sue Smith**, **Patricia Wright** of Oxford Meeting, and **Bridget Walker** (01865 766604) of Headington Meeting.



OXFORD CLASSIC JAZZ

They will be performing in the Meeting House on **Saturday 7 February** from 7:30 to 10 pm

Cookies and hot fruit punch will be provided. Tickets (£10 or £6) at www.classicjazz.co.uk or phone 07932748379.

All proceeds go to Oxford Friends Action on Poverty (OxFAP).

Jo Dobry

Poems in the Library

On Mondays, **19 January**, **23 February** and **16 March** from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm.

Stephen Yeo

Area Meeting

This will be held in Oxford MH on **Saturday 10 January**, at 10:30 am and 2 pm. In the afternoon session, we will be considering the various responses from Local Meetings to the Long Term Framework questions.

Thought for the Day 1

O Lord,
Grant that we may
not be like porridge,
stiff, stodgy and hard to stir,
but like cornflakes,
crisp, fresh and ready to serve.

Thought for the Day 2

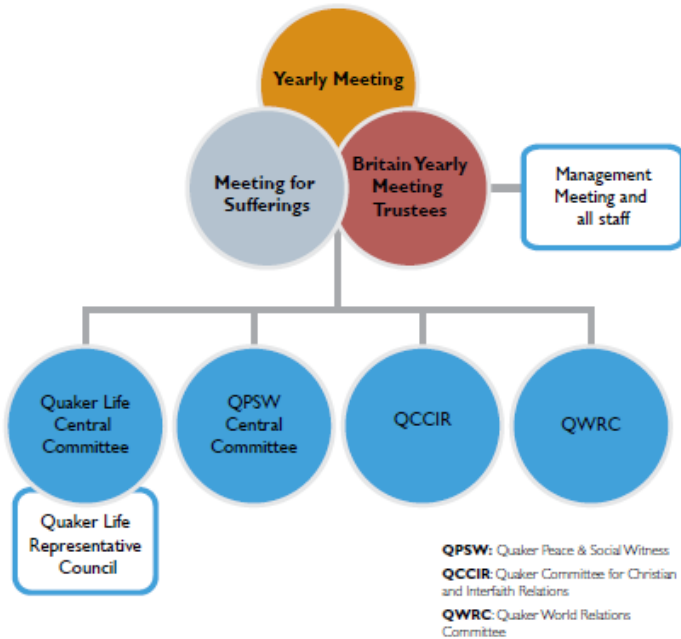
O Lord,
Grant that we may
not be like cornflakes,
lightweight, brittle and cold,
but like porridge,
warm, comforting and full of goodness.

Peggy Heeks

CALENDAR FOR JANUARY 2015

All 43 St Giles unless otherwise indicated

Every Mon	7:00 pm	Young Adult Friends	Tuesday 20	7:00 pm	Environment & Economic Justice Group—see page 3
Saturday 10	10:30 am 2:00 pm	Oxford and Swindon Area Meeting — see p.5	Sunday 25	12:30 pm	Bring-and-share lunch
Monday 19	4:00 pm - 6:00 pm	Poems in the Library— see page 5			



Quaker Structures

Responding to requests from local Meetings, we have a new leaflet, explaining in brief how individual Quakers fit into our local and national Quaker structures.

Download a pdf version at <http://www.quaker.org.uk/groups-and-structures> or contact Juliet Prager, 020 76631101, for printed copies.

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

Subscriptions for *Forty-Three* in 2015

Please fill in this form if you wish to continue or begin a subscription. Please circle the appropriate amount:

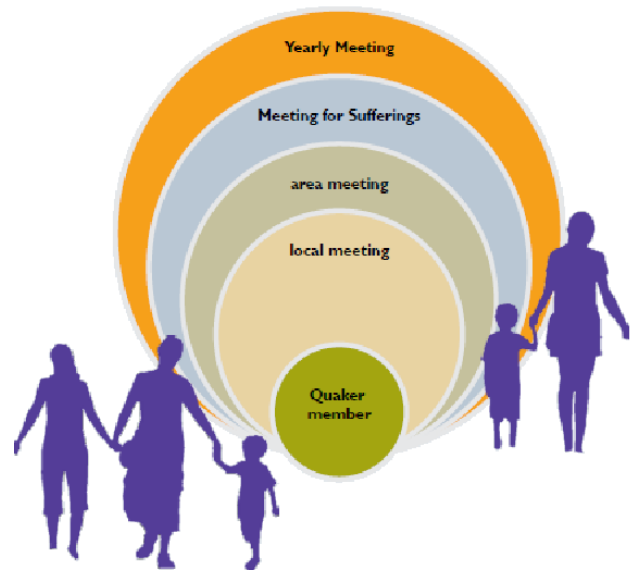
Mail out: 1 Year, Jan. - Dec. @ £10

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