



# Forty-Three newsletter

Number 468  
April 2018

Oxford Friends Meeting  
43 St Giles Oxford OX1 3LW



## The First Aldermaston March

It was J B Priestley's article in the New Statesman in February 1958 that made me and thousands of others go on that march. Priestley argued that the monstrous danger posed to the whole planet by nuclear bombs must be averted, and that Britain was ideally placed to lead the world away from the nuclear holocaust. We could get rid of our relatively small number of nuclear weapons without upsetting the 'balance of terror', and invite others to try out any method of inspection to ensure we had none hidden away. The difficulty of 'verification' had been one argument against nuclear disarmament ... which everyone agreed would be a good idea if only ...

On Good Friday we joined the huge crowd in Trafalgar Square and listened to some speeches before setting out. We spent the first night under a grand piano in someone's house in West London. When we woke up, it was snowing – the worst Easter weather in living memory. No one will want to march in this, we thought, so we had better go. But hundreds of others had thought the same. As we marched, we were cheered by jazz bands at the road side, or by singing "Oh When the Saints" and similar songs.

We marched great distances, and to be honest it was no fun: my feet ached, I longed to stop and

rest. We slept in various schools or halls in Slough and Reading. We carried flags and banners, and from a distance the march looked like a giant shabby snake. Bystanders seemed astonished or bemused, but even the tabloids grudgingly admired us for turning out in such awful weather.

At last we were walking along the grim security fence of the huge base, the queer buildings and structures and pipes, the notices about police dogs and electric wires ... till in Falcon Field we listened to more speeches before setting off for civilisation. As we passed the Atomic Weapons Establishment again, David pointed to some rabbits, inside all that security fencing, munching and flicking their ears ...

Irene Gill



Aldermaston March 1959

**Deadline for contributions to the May 2018 issue: noon, Friday 20 April**

*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 [office@oxfordquakers.org](mailto:office@oxfordquakers.org). Paper copy can be left in the pigeonhole of any Editor.*  
*For information: tel. 01865 557373 or visit [www.oxfordquakers.org](http://www.oxfordquakers.org)*

## Britain Yearly Meeting Coming up Soon!

Britain Yearly Meeting is the ultimate decision-making body for the Society of Friends in Britain. It is happening at Friends House in London from 4 to 7 May this year. Yearly Meeting is the 'Annual General Meeting' of Quakers in Great Britain. It usually meets in London over one of the May bank holiday weekends, but every third year it meets for a residential, week-long gathering outside London.

This year will be one of the London-based meetings, so if you haven't been before, or haven't been for a while, it's an exciting opportunity to go and check it out. Quakers will be there from all parts of Great Britain, so you can meet other Quakers from around the country, hear about other meetings, and experience being part of a large Quaker gathering. We in Oxford are lucky, in that it is possible to attend just for the day, if you cannot attend all of it. The website says "Yearly Meeting is when Quakers in Britain come together to worship, to make decisions and spend time as a community".

The full programme, and documents to prepare, are here:

[www.quaker.org.uk/ym/documents](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym/documents)

Register your attendance at  
<http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym>

This will give you all the information about Yearly Meeting, and will ask you to register if you plan to go (so they know numbers for catering, etc.) It explains what to do if it's your first time, how to volunteer to help, how to apply for bursary funding if you need it, how to prepare, and what to do when you first arrive. The Welcome Desk and Information Desks are the place to start – to pick up name badges, collect any papers you need, find plans of the building, and generally get any help you need to find your way round. Experienced Friends will be on hand to help, and if it's your first time they will make sure you feel welcome and ready to enjoy the whole experience.

This year the main sessions will be about whether it's time to revise and update our Book of Discipline (Quaker Faith & Practice, the 'red

book'). This anthology is usually revised once a generation, and was last updated in the 1990s. There will be lots of other activities going on around the main sessions, including a public lecture – the Swarthmore Lecture – on the Saturday evening, and a Groups Fair with representation from many Quaker groups and special interest meetings – for example, Quaker Peace and Social Witness Peace Education, Quaker Disability Equality Group, and Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network – to name just a very few!

It's often fascinating and inspiring to be part of such a large gathering, experiencing the movement of the spirit as items are considered and decisions are reached. It's highly recommended to attend yearly meeting if you can!

**Lis Burch**



Chris Alton will be giving the 2018 Swarthmoor Lecture at Yearly Meeting

## Garden News

The Gardening Group meets every Thursday morning to tend and care for the garden. You are very welcome to join us. No gardening experience or knowledge is required. Just turn up on a Thursday morning or contact the Office (or [stephen.yeo@phonecoop.coop](mailto:stephen.yeo@phonecoop.coop)) for more information. We garden from 9:00 to 11:00 and 11:30 to 1:00, with a mid-morning break for tea and cake. You are welcome to join us for all or some of the time. If you are planting seeds at home please think about bringing on some extras for the Meeting House garden. Contributions most welcome.

Stephen Yeo



## Summer Retreat

Please save the date for our Summer Retreat on **2 June**. Further details and times to follow. As with our December 2017 retreat, 12:00 noon through to 4:30 pm seemed to work well, with a simple colourful lunch at 1:00 pm. Although in mid-summer we might prefer afternoon and early evening?? Please get in touch if you would like to become involved in the organising, offer suggestions for any focus the day might have, or have other contributions and ideas. It's all food for the soul and body! Email [office@Oxfordquakers.org](mailto:office@Oxfordquakers.org) or [stephen.yeo@phonecoop.coop](mailto:stephen.yeo@phonecoop.coop).

Stephen Yeo

## Berks and Oxon Regional Meeting

### Spirituality in Action Unpacking Discernment

Saturday April 21st 2018, 10:30-4:30



### Reading Quaker Meeting House 2 Church Street RG1 2SB

*Reading Friends will be our hosts, providing coffee etc*

*from 10:30 and tea at 4:00pm.*

*Please bring your own packed lunch.*

*If you are hoping to bring a child/children with you, childcare for 4-10 year olds can be*

*available. Please contact Leon at*

*[Leon.spence@gmail.com](mailto:Leon.spence@gmail.com) to confirm beforehand.*

*Other enquiries to Lina at [linajordan24@gmail.com](mailto:linajordan24@gmail.com)*

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## Holocaust Remembrance Day

The Oxford Council of Christians and Jews with the Oxford Jewish Congregation warmly invite you to a special commemoration Yom HaShoan (Holocaust Remembrance Day) on Wednesday 11 April at the Oxford Jewish Centre, Richmond Road, Oxford OX1 2JL, followed by refreshments. For further details please contact Shirley Hoy [oxfordccj@gmail.com](mailto:oxfordccj@gmail.com).

Elisabeth Salisbury

## Inspired by the Meister Friday with Friends, 13 April

Last summer I went on a retreat in Spain based on Meister Eckhardt, the 13<sup>th</sup> Century philosopher and mystic. Going back in time? Not likely! I was met by the most modern and contemporary stuff. 'Hey this guy is more Quaker than Quakers' I thought. 'Is' not 'was'. I certainly feel this is a man who speaks down the centuries. Yes he looks a bit dour, but what a sense of humour! And his God seems to be a lot like mine which I find refreshing. I'd certainly like to have them both round to dinner. Let's give you a flavour of his ministry: "God is at home, it is we who have gone out for a walk"; "If the only prayer you said was thank you that would be



enough"; or how about "the eye with which I see God is the same eye with which God sees me".

This is no fridge magnet theology but I'm hoping it whets your appetite for an evening of sharing the wisdom of the Meister. His sermons, such as remain, are dense and require considerable depth of thought but, luckily, the focus of our retreat was a modern interpretation of these in the form of short poems by Mark Burrows (an American, currently Professor of Theology at the Protestant University of Applied Sciences in Bochum, Germany) and John Sweeney (a British investigative journalist and author). Their book, *The Book of the Heart: Meditations for the Restless Soul* interprets Eckhardt's works in an accessible, fresh, and immediate way – bringing them to life for us today. The word 'outrageous' comes to mind. Come along, share some inspirational poetry, and find out why!

As the Meister said "The price of inaction is far greater than making a mistake".

**Deb Arrowsmith**



## 43 Kitchen News Scores on the Doors

The kitchen at 43 has recently been registered with and inspected by, Oxford City Council Environmental Health department. We are really pleased to have been given a Four Star rating (Five stars is the maximum awarded). It was suggested that we should offer food handling and hygiene training to people that use the kitchen for cooking and preparing food for groups and shared meals. There is a 2-hour online course that is recommended. If you would like to do this course, please contact the office and we can arrange it for you.

Do join the office staff for **Soup Tuesday** lunch at 12:30-1:30 pm. We are always in need of soup makers if you would like to volunteer! We are now receiving a Tuesday delivery of excess fresh vegetables from Oxford Foodbank which would otherwise go to landfill. Why not come along and select some to make some soup!

**Deb Arrowsmith and Jacqui Mansfield**

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## DON'T FORGET!!

**To receive information, notices, and news from the Meeting** you need to have filled in a [Data Protection Information Form](#). This gives us your permission to hold your details on our system. Forms are available on the clipboards in the garden room – please fill in and return to the Office. Forms are also being emailed out with notices each week until the end of April. If you haven't filled in a **form since August 2017** please do this now or your details will be removed from our lists.

## Hear the People's Voices! England's Hidden History in Song and Story

Concert by the Sea Green Singers, 7:30 pm  
Saturday 28 April 2018, in the Meeting House.

Most people in the street will know little about Quakers – we are part of England's hidden history. We started as one of many other groups such as the Diggers and the Levellers, challenging the political, economic, and religious established order. Quakers believe now, as they believed then, that everyone has a direct relationship with God and their inner light, with no need for churches, priests, or the Bible as intermediaries, and that war and fighting is wrong. For these beliefs, Quakers were persecuted and excluded from public life for centuries, as were other dissenters.

The Sea Green Singers are bringing to life this hidden history of England, at an evening of poetry, song, and pictures. Come and hear about those who stood for freedom and economic and social rights that we now take for granted: the Chartists, the Tolpuddle Martyrs, the Suffragettes, anti-nuclear campaigners, and our very own George Fox.(below).

Register your seat now! Collection on the door for Crisis Skylight and Oxford Friends Action on Poverty.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/hear-the-peoples-voices-tickets-43660013275>

Sue Smith



## Midsummer coffee and cakes Invitation to all

Pastoral Care Group invites all members and attenders at Oxford Quaker meeting to a mid-morning coffee, tea, and cakes occasion in the garden on Wednesday 13 June. A Wednesday has been chosen so that people can stay on to attend mid-week Meeting for Worship, if they wish. We hope to see those who don't often manage to come in to 43 St Giles, but everyone is welcome.

Carol Saker



Drawing by Auguste Renoir

## Community Integration Grants

The Community Integration Grants create connections between people from different backgrounds. The grants are for groups that work in partnership to encourage mutual understanding and a sense of belonging to the wider community. Awarded by the High Sheriff of Oxfordshire, grants are available for community organisations that bring together groups across different cultures, age groups, faiths, classes, abilities, or life experiences. Applications open on 3 April and close on 31 July 2018. For more information please visit [www.oxfordshire.org/community-integration](http://www.oxfordshire.org/community-integration)

Elisabeth Salisbury

# CALENDAR FOR April 2016

All 43 St Giles unless otherwise indicated

Sun 1st	12.30	No Business Meeting (Easter Sunday)	Fri 13	7 for 7.30pm	Friday with Friends: In- spired by Meister Eck- hardt
Mon 2	All day	Office closed	Mon 16	4-6pm	Poems in the Library "Vision(s)"
Tues 3	7-9pm	First Tuesday group	Wed 18	1.45-3pm	Friends Fellowship of Healing
Sun 8	12.:30- 2pm	Local Business Meeting	Sat 28	7:30pm	Sea Green Singers concert
Wed 11	6-8pm	Enquirers Meeting: Membership and Convincement			

## Gifts to Asylum Welcome

Asylum Welcome is grateful for all the gifts from Oxford Meeting and sends us the following message: "We currently have enough of most of the food basic staples. However we are very short of 1kg bags of sugar and this is something our families really need. At the moment we are having to buy it with our limited budget so would you be able to do just a 1kg sugar collection for us in the coming months?"

If you could help us with this we would be absolutely thrilled." Please leave in the box under the foyer table in the hall at 43.

**Elisabeth Salisbury**

## Memorial Meeting for Kate Joyce

The Memorial Meeting for the life of Kate Joyce will be held in the Meeting House at 3:00pm on Saturday 5 May, followed by tea in the garden.

**Tony Joyce**

*Forty-Three* is available online, at [www.oxfordquakers.org/newsletter](http://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: SHERRY GRANUM, CATHERINE REDFORD, SUE SMITH, KEITH WILSON (Joint Editing and Production);*

*DEB ARROWSMITH, JACQUI MANSFIELD and MAX HOWELLS (Calendar and Distribution)*

## MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

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

**Mondays** at 7:00 pm Young Adult Friends  
(followed by baked potato supper)

**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