

# Forty-Three newsletter

Number 481  
May 2019

Oxford Friends Meeting  
43 St Giles Oxford OX1 3LW



## Diversity? Inclusivity?

The April edition of 43 was a treasure trove of interest and inspiration, and if I want to know more about Early Quakers, Climate Emergency, Mobile Phones for Rough Sleepers, or Gardening at the Meeting House I can contact the members of our meeting who wrote about these subjects. But there were at least three articles I wished to respond to and offer my input as requested, but alas shall not be able to. The only contact details given for How Did You Get Involved with Quakers, The Great Poppy Debate and The Library of Things are email addresses.

I am not connected in this way, along with about 16 per cent of the population. If you live on the street, or if your budget just about covers rent and food, you are unlikely to have an email address or the funds to make the connection. If you were brought up in the pre-digital age, and are fearful of all things to do with computers, you may well not have one. If you have difficulties seeing, it may all be too much for you. And gradually life is becoming more and more complicated for the non-digital. The public library will shortly discontinue its reservation system unless you have an email address. You can now only order your car parking permits, which allow your friends to visit you and park outside your house, online. I could go on but you're all bored already.

I made a conscious decision not to have a computer and be connected. It was something to do with having a sense of all conditions. I am sad that not all Quakers sign up to our principle of equality with its beautiful offspring diversity and inclusivity. But I'm grateful to the editors of 43 who accepted this article in hard copy. Thank you Friends.

**Elisabeth Salisbury**



Oxford Friends at Marble Arch  
Extinction Rebellion camp (see over)

**Deadline for contributions to the Month 2019 issue: noon, Monday 20 May**

*Contributions, preferably of 500 words or fewer, can be emailed to [newsletter@oxfordquakers.org](mailto:newsletter@oxfordquakers.org), or a paper copy can be left in the pigeonhole of any editor. Items for the calendar (on the last page) can be emailed to [office@oxfordquakers.org](mailto:office@oxfordquakers.org). For information: tel. 01865 557373 or visit [www.oxfordquakers.org](http://www.oxfordquakers.org)*

## Extinction Rebellion!

A number of Friends from Oxford Meeting have taken action in different ways to support Extinction Rebellion. Some Friends have been participating online in affinity groups and decision-making. Other Friends joined the March to London, and in London joined protest sites at Marble Arch, Waterloo Bridge, Oxford Circus, and Parliament Square. This article is an account of just some. We would welcome stories from others about this inspiring mass protest so clearly following the nonviolence principles from Gandhi and Martin Luther King.

After a rousing send-off from supporters on 10 April from Folly Bridge, some Friends took the boat to Abingdon and then walked 13 long miles to Wallingford, where they were entertained with a feast by Sustainable Wallingford

(<https://www.sustainablewallingford.org/>).

Abingdon Carbon Cutters had made a beautiful soup, salad, and cakes lunch at St Ethelwolds House. They joined the march again from Richmond Park on Sunday, a procession of several hundred, flags flying, along the A4 into Hammersmith. They stayed three days at Marble Arch, including an all-night vigil on the miraculously traffic-free six-lane highway!



Others joined ‘the rebels’ at the Rebellion sites (Waterloo Bridge, Oxford Circus, Marble Arch and Parliament Square) at different times during the week. They were deeply impressed with the extraordinary level of organisation which meant that hundreds of rebels were present at each of the sites

every day. They were also impressed by the totally peaceful and nonviolent nature of the protest.

It is likely that in this coming week (from 23 April) there will be more focus on the political aims of the movement – namely, that Government should tell the truth about the climate and ecological emergency; that it should act now to halt loss of biodiversity, reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2025, and create a Citizens’ Assembly on climate and ecological justice. Sounds impossible? We can only try, inspired by our Quaker testimonies to peace and sustainability.

**Virginia Allport  
Sue Smith**

## Climate Change

Here is an interesting set of statistics about caring for our common home, on why reducing our intake of meat matters.

The Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM) has said: “*Scientists evaluated scores of studies from around the world to estimate the amount of GHG [Greenhouse Gas] emissions per serving of food*”, for example:

One serving	Equal to driving an average-size car
Potatoes	0.27 kms = (0.05 kgs of CO2 equivalent)
Apples	0.32 kms = (0.06 kgs of CO2 equivalent)
Asparagus	0.43 kms = (0.09 kgs of CO2 equivalent)
Chicken	1.17 kms = (0.24 kgs of CO2 equivalent)
Pork	4.07 kms = (0.86 kgs of CO2 equivalent)
Beef	15.78 kms = (3.35 kgs of CO2 equivalent)

Certainly ‘Food for Thought’.

**Margaret Paton**

For more detailed information , see GCCM website, <http://catholicclimatemovement.global>



## Quaker Protest at DSEI Arms Fair Tuesday 3 September 2019

*Refusal to fight with weapons is not surrender. We are not passive when threatened by the greedy, the cruel, the tyrant, the unjust. We will struggle to remove the causes of impasse and confrontation by every means of nonviolent resistance available.*

QF&P 24.10

Quakers have for years protested at the international bi-annual arms fair known as Defence and Security Equipment International (DSEI). Protest at national level is being led this year by Roots of Resistance, a grassroots network that was created by Friends as a direct response to DSEI. In preparation for demonstrations at this year's fair, Roots of Resistance's website (<https://rootsofresistance.org.uk/>) says:

*"Taking place in east London every two years, DSEI is*



*a huge trade show bringing together 1,500 arms companies with representatives from militaries from around the world. Some of the world's largest companies market tanks, planes, drones, rifles, ammunition, surveillance technology, training, and a huge array of other weapons.*

*"In witnessing our testimony to peace, Friends have been driven to join the movement of resistance to this arms fair, which brings global human rights violations to our doorstep. Arms fairs like DSEI are a key root cause of the violence and injustice around the world.*

*"Roots of Resistance is planning to build an unprecedented Quaker presence at the 2019 fair, standing together against DSEI and the global arms*

*trade."*

Roots of Resistance are recruiting area organisers who can act as points of contact in their area meetings, and work to bring Friends to London in September 2019. If 100 area organisers can be recruited who each bring 10 Friends, that's 1000 Quakers at DSEI!

Oxford and Swindon Area Meeting has made a start. We held an initial meeting in March, and 18 people are already intending to join the protest in September. Our next planning meeting is at 43 Tuesday 30 April, 6:00-7:30pm. If you can't make that, there will be others soon. Ideas for participation include creative protest, making a banner, and singing peace songs. Your presence simply being there is valuable. Visit the Roots of Resistance website ([rootsofresistance.org.uk](https://rootsofresistance.org.uk)) for more background information as well as for inspiration. If you would like to be involved, please get in touch!

Sue Smith and Sally Reynolds

### The Brush and the Pen



Following on from Friday with Friends on Save the Children Fund, a reminder that an evening of poems and paintings called **The Brush and The Pen** will be held in support of the fund on Saturday 4 May at 6:00pm with refreshments available from 5pm.

Tickets priced £10 are available from the office.

## The Anchor Programme

When Jane\* heard about The Anchor Programme, she was living in a women's refuge in Oxfordshire. She had been in a steady relationship with a man for five years, and during this time he had exercised increasing psychological control over her. He also threatened her parents and friends with physical violence. "You are constantly worried that he's about to hurt you," she recalls. "To avoid his verbal abuse and his threat of violence I kept changing my behaviour. Finally, my fear of staying with him overcame my fear of leaving him."

When her partner was out of the house for a few hours she packed a suitcase with some clothes and personal papers, and drove off in search of a safe place to spend the night. She stopped at a B&B and parked her car in a place where it could not be seen from the road. Next morning when she went to pay the bill at the reception desk, the B&B owners refused to accept payment. She was amazed but immensely grateful for their generosity.

Jane then went to the County Council office and explained her situation, especially her need for safe emergency accommodation. By early afternoon the Council had found a place for her at a women's refuge. She stayed there for a couple of months - until learning from a friend that her ex-partner had somehow found out where she was. She then went straight to the police, who arranged for her to stay in a safe house in Oxford.

But Jane was by no means free of her abusive partner. "After leaving him," she recalls, "I had to communicate with him on my mobile phone about some household bills which I had paid. He then left messages on my mobile about harming me and my family. I changed my mobile number so he couldn't contact me, but then he phoned my parents and left threatening messages about what he would do to me. But my parents didn't pass those messages on to me."

While staying at the safe house in Oxford, Jane heard about The Anchor Programme from a woman who was attending its training workshops, which are

held in the Garden Room at 43 St Giles, Oxford. These are designed to support people – particularly women – who are experiencing emotional distress and have experienced physical, sexual, or emotional abuse in their domestic relationships.

"Domestic abuse and violence," says the Anchor Project Team Facilitator, "are huge problems in the UK. Up to 73 per cent of abused women experience depression or anxiety disorders. Every week two or three women are killed by their partners, and many more suffer serious physical injuries and psycho-social harm."

The Anchor Programme's training sessions cover topics such as self-esteem, abuse, coercion and control, relationships, and interpersonal skills. The course consists of 24 two-hour group sessions, one per week, spread over a period of six months. Attendees also receive a one-hour individual session weekly. The training sessions are an absolutely confidential space. Nothing that is discussed is spread outside of the twelve participants and the four facilitators.

During the training sessions the participants learn about the various kinds of legal, practical, material, and psychological support available to help them deal with - and escape from - abusive relationships. Amongst the innovative training methods used by the Project is the Emotional Thermometer, which is designed to help the participants and the trainers share their feelings. At the start of each training session, and at the end, everyone says how they feel, expressed as colours, namely:

Red = highly aroused, impulsive, aggressive, full of emotion

Green = in a place where thoughts and emotions can be acknowledged and processed more effectively

Blue = cut-off, detached.

"The thing to realize about all three of these states," says Heather, "is that they are absolutely *normal*. There's nothing to be ashamed or worried about having them. If someone in the group asks you how you are, you can reply using a colour, or even a mixture of two colours, and they will understand."

For Jane, the training provided by the Anchor Project has been a liberating and empowering

“Experience is the best teacher. I was very fortunate to get a housing association flat. I’m now doing a degree at college, which I think is amazing. I left school after doing O-levels. I never thought I would do a degree, but here I am, living in Oxford, doing a degree and enjoying it. Life doesn’t get much better than that!”

“My physical and mental health problems are still there, but I can cope with them. All this is due to The Anchor Project. I’m still trying to keep myself safe. And I’ll continue thinking about him and his threats until the day I die.”

**Glen Williams**

\*To protect Jane and her parents, her name and the place where she lived before coming to Oxford have been withheld.

If you are, or think you may be, experiencing domestic abuse, or are worried about a friend or relative, the Reducing the Risk website is full of information and telephone numbers of organisations that can help. It can be found at : <http://www.reducingtherisk.org.uk/cms/content/am-i-experiencing-domestic-abuse>. If you would like to talk to someone, please call the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse helpline on 0800 731 0055.

*Glen Williams is doing interviews with members of the public who are users of Oxford Meeting House. The interviews are part of a project to create closer links between the users and the Meeting. This is the third article in the series.*



The baby mat! (see next article)

## News from Children & Young People’s Committee

### All Age Worship and Birthday Party

Thank you to all who took part in the All Age Worship on *Growing Up in the Meeting*, and Babies’ First Birthday party, on 31 March. We were pleased that children and young people were able to take on roles such as welcoming and reading notices, so thank you to all who supported them in this.

### Kenyan baby mat

Friends may have noticed the new baby mat in the meeting house on Sundays. This is to provide a quiet space for our babies to sit at the end of Meeting for Worship. The mat was made by Katherine Gee from a *kanga* she and Matthew bought in Kenya. *Kangas* are used for clothing and other purposes throughout east Africa. The motto “Watu Kwa Amani” on the mat is Kiswahili for “People of Peace”. A wall-hanging of the same design is on the wall of the meeting room of the only silent Quaker meeting in East Africa, at Friends International Centre, Nairobi. So it feels a fitting fabric on which our Quaker babies sit!

### Co-operative play equipment

We have recently purchased some Quadro Play equipment for the Meeting House garden. This is colourful play equipment, designed to encourage creative and co-operative outdoor play for our younger children. It replaces the climbing frame in the back garden that was condemned on safety grounds seven years ago! This new equipment is moveable, and can be re-configured into many different shapes – from a house, to a puppet theatre, or a large table!

**Matthew Gee**

### SAVE THE DATE: FAMILY DAY

***Our annual Family Day (formerly ‘Charney Barney’), will be back at Oxford Meeting House on Sunday 14 July, from 12:30pm onwards. It will include lunch, games, activities, treasure hunt and a comedy workshop. It will be suitable for children from babies through to teenagers, and their families. More details, including how to book, will be available nearer the time.***

***Children & Young People’s Committee***



## James Rendel Harris

It is difficult to resist a call from Oxford, especially when scholarship in Quaker history is concerned. Meryem Rosita, an Oxford Quaker and Postdoctoral Researcher at the Faculty of History, organized a workshop on 29 March about experiences connected to relief work during and in the aftermath of the Great War, with special focus on Quakers' contribution. She invited me, too, although my expertise covers a different topic – the experiences of James Rendel Harris (1852-1941) and his wife Helen Balkwill Harris (1841-1914) bringing help to the survivors of the 1895 massacres against the Armenians of eastern Turkey.

Rendel, as friends called him, and his wife Helen were Quakers, a phenomenal couple. But it is particularly his life that has interested me, to the point of writing a biography which took me over twenty years of research and which was published last year. Born in Plymouth, he was a mathematician trained in Cambridge, who turned soon to Bible scholarship and later to early Christian literature, history, folklore, and anthropology. Among Quakers he is best remembered as one of the leaders of the liberal movement that produced the so-called "Quaker Renaissance" in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and as the first director of Woodbrooke. Without his multifarious work for the Society, British Quakerism would have looked different today.

I am grateful to Meryem for giving me the opportunity of talking about Rendel not only at the Faculty of History but also at the Oxford Meeting House in the evening. We were a few people gathered around a table with cakes and coffee in the garden room. The participants asked me searching and difficult questions, trying to highlight different sides of Rendel's biography. It was a nice surprise to discover that the company included the grandchild of William Charles Braithwaite, an important Quaker and close friend of Rendel, and a descendant of a Quaker family from Plymouth.

I tried to give a sense of Rendel's amazing life, though there was time for discussing only a few moments of it. He travelled seven times to the Middle East, gathering large collections of ancient

Christian manuscripts and discovering masterworks. He was a champion of the Armenian cause and more than once in their relief work he and his wife almost lost their lives. Rendel was also a public figure, a household name among nonconformists in Britain, an advocate of conscientious objection during World War I, and above all an indefatigable investigator of all sorts of questions within the Humanities. He wrote an amazing amount of articles and books, including devotional writings that impressed the likes of William Gladstone. Surprisingly enough, Rendel, who opposed Tories all his life, was also an inspirational figure for the famous conservative politician J. Enoch Powell, who, as a young classicist, used to visit him in Birmingham and even dedicated a poem to him.

As Rendel believed, life is mostly made of the people we meet, and the best part of my research on him has been the people I got in touch with, like the Friends at the meeting in Oxford.

**Alessandro Falcetta**

Alessandro Falcetta is the author of *The Daily Discoveries of a Bible Scholar and Manuscript Hunter* (2018), a biography of Rendel Harris (1852–1941). Harris was the first Director of Studies at Woodbrooke College in Selly Oak.





## Preparing for Britain Yearly Meeting

You are invited to two meetings to prepare for the main themes of Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM): 'Privilege' on 2 May, and 'Power' on 10 May at the Meeting House. Both meetings start at 7:00 pm and finish at 9:00 pm and will include reflections about us and the Society of Friends as well as society in general. All are welcome, whether you are intending to attend BYM or not.

The booklet 'Owning Power and Privilege' will be used during the preparatory meetings and can also be used in our Postcode groups, Young Adult Friends (YAF), and other study groups. Copies can be found in the Elders' pigeonhole, along with information about attending BYM, including information for Young Friends and those attending for the first time. These documents, and the BYM programme, can also be found at: [www.quaker.org.uk/ym/spiritual-preparation](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym/spiritual-preparation). If you need a hard copy and there are none in the pigeonhole, please let the office know so more can be ordered.

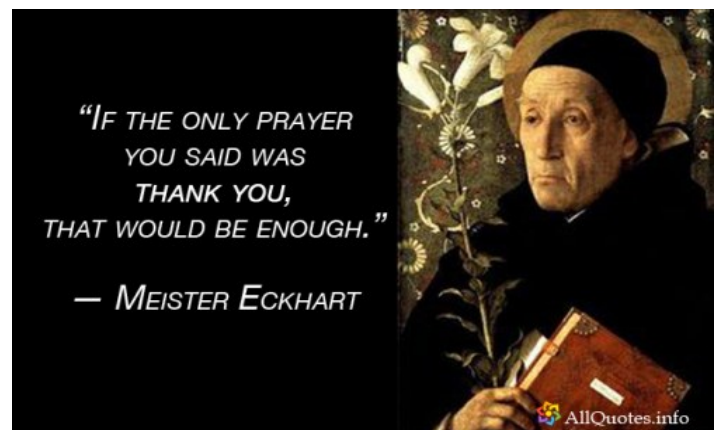
A flipchart is set up in the Meeting House where all members and attenders can contribute thoughts about how power and privilege affect our approaches to climate justice, sustainability, inclusion, and diversity.

**Jenny Buffery and Anne Watson**

## 'Reasons for the heart' Day Retreat Saturday 4 May

On Saturday 4 May, working with Oxford Centre for Spiritual Growth (OCSG), we are hosting a **Day Retreat** called "Reasons for the Heart". This is a meditative exploration of the work of Meister Eckhart, from 10:00am-4:00pm led by Prof. Mark S. Burrows. Tickets are £35 and booking is essential. Forms are available in the lobby, or you can book through OCSG's website: [www.ocsg.uk.net](http://www.ocsg.uk.net). Concessions are available.

On Friday 3 May from 19:00-21:00pm Mark has also agreed to lead a free evening of poems by Rainer Maria Rilke and friends. Please let us know if you wish to attend as this will be an open and popular event. A collection will be made for OXFAP.



## Training Evening: Wednesday 22 May 7:00-9:00 pm

This evening of discussion and training will help us think about how we meet and greet and manage visitors to the Meeting House and 43 who may be vulnerable, distressed, intoxicated or visiting with criminal intent. Our focus will be on how we establish boundaries while upholding our welcoming ethos. It may be of special interest to staff / Friends on Duty / Pastoral Care Group.

This session will be facilitated by Chris White and Hoonie Feltham. This started as an office staff training session but it was felt that the session may also be of interest to others. Please let the office know if you are coming:

Office - [office@oxfordquakers.org](mailto:office@oxfordquakers.org)

T: 01865 557373

# CALENDAR FOR MONTH 2019

*All at 43 St Giles unless otherwise indicated*

Date	Time	Event
Wed 1 May	7:00—9:00 pm	Enquirers' Evening: Quaker ideas about God
Thurs 2 May	7:00—9:00 pm	Preparation for Britain Yearly Meeting
Fri 3 May	7:00—9:00 pm	Friday with Friends: Poetry of Rilke and Friends
Sat 4 May	9:30—4:00 pm	(Booking essential)
Sat 4 May	5:00pm for 6:00pm	The Brush and The Pen: an evening of poems and paintings
Sun 5 May	10:30-11:30am	Combined Meeting for Worship
Sun 5 May	12:00-2:00pm	Local Business Meeting
Tues 7 May	8:00-9:00pm	First Tuesday Group
Fri 10 May	7:00-9:00pm	Preparation for Britain Yearly Meeting
Mon 20 May	4:00-6:00pm	Poems in the Library: staying still/moving on
Wed 22 May	7:00-9:00pm	Training for Friends on Duty and Staff

## From Quaker Faith and Practice

I should like to change the name 'seekers' to 'explorers'. There is a considerable difference there: we do not seek the Atlantic, we explore it. The whole field of religious experience has to be explored, and has to be described in a language understandable to modern men and women.

Quaker Faith and Practice 26.17

### MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

**1st Sunday of each month**

10:30am at 43 St Giles  
(followed by tea and coffee)

**2nd 3rd & 4th Sunday of each month**

9:30am & 11:00am at 43 St Giles  
(followed by tea and coffee)

**Monday**

7:00pm Young Adult Friends at 43 St Giles  
(followed by baked potato supper)

**Tuesday & Thursday**

7:30am at 43 St Giles  
(followed by breakfast at 8:00am)

**Wednesday**

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

**Headington LM worship on Sunday**

10:00am at The Priory,  
85 Old High Street, OX3 9HT

*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.

*The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the editors.*

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