

Forty-Three newsletter

Number 501
January 2021



Oxford Friends Meeting
43 St Giles, Oxford OX1 3LW



Charity Appeal January 2021 Oxford Winter Night Shelter (OWNS)



COVID-19 has meant the Oxford Winter Night Shelter cannot operate as it has in the past. But OWNS wants to continue offering help to homeless people where it is needed.

In partnership with a local charity, OWNS is setting up and will run a small day service which will complement that being offered by The Gatehouse (<http://oxfordgatehouse.org/>) and The Porch (<http://www.theporch.org.uk/>), working with extremely vulnerable and hard to reach people.

Guests will be referred to OWNS by The Porch, The Gatehouse, Crisis, and St Mungo's (the City Council's outreach team).

Work should be completed by Spring. It is hoped

this service will eventually be available seven days a week throughout the year.

Charity Appeals 2021

As we are unable to have collections after Sunday Meeting for the foreseeable future, we are starting a new charity appeal system in 2021.

Each month there will be an appeal in 43 for a charity, with details of how to make a donation. This information will also appear in weekly notices and on general circulation.

Your generosity will enable OWNS to provide a shower, convert the existing toilet to be accessible, install a washing machine/dryer, and fit out a kitchenette, as well as furnish the centre. It will be a sanctuary for the most needy.

A start-up budget of £15/20,000 is anticipated.

Cheques made out to Oxford Winter Night Shelter should be sent to OWNS, St Michael at the North Gate, Cornmarket, Oxford, OX1 3EY

Bank details:
Barclays, Cornmarket, 20-65-20 a/c 83541320

Elisabeth Salisbury

Please send newsletter contributions well in advance of the intended publication date.

Articles, preferably of 500 words or fewer, can be emailed to 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

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

In Memoriam

From Monday 16 to Friday 20 November the City Church of St Michael at the North Gate was open from 10:00 to 16:00 each day for anyone to come in, light a candle, and remember one of the 13 men and women who have died on our streets since November 2019. A prayer card with the candles suggested the following prayer:

*Father in Heaven,
We remember those who have finished this life
and thank you for all that was good in their lives.
We praise you for the love and grace they
received from you. Meet us in our sadness and
help us to remember friendship, love, and
laughter. We pray in the name of Jesus our
Saviour, Amen.*

The names of those who died were listed as follows:

Kevin Barber, Calvin Bonney, Kevin Breene, Krzysztof Chuchro, Ben Clarke, Lukas Cuiro, Mark Gonzalez, Terence Hanks, Zara Hastings, Tomasz Pater, Snowy (Dennis Price), Dexter Thompson, Sharon Marzz.

May they rest in peace.

Elisabeth Salisbury



Frank Auerbach

Head of Catherine Lampert, 1986

Oil on canvas 51.4 x 47.0 cm

This head emerges restless in line
a chaos of colour sweeps
of the brush vehement across
and swirling in switchbacks
paint layered scraped back
layered again and again thick, thick
viscous dark and glowing urgent
to reach the fierce inner core.

Concentrated thought
deep eyes slashed black
a cheek squirling and crumbling
mouth carrying pain
burdened and beautiful
strong in repose.

*(Auerbach came to the UK at the age of 8
with the Kindertransport.)*

Brigid Schroer



Three modernist embroideries by Marian Stoll

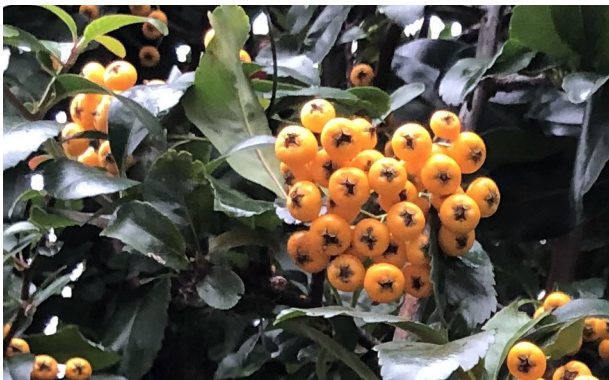
Poems in the Library January and February 2021

Poems in the Library are on Mondays from 16:00 till 18:00. Assume Zoom unless you hear otherwise, and assume you will get the link much nearer the time.

11 Jan - with the (voluntary) theme of SLEEP
1 Feb - to be decided in Jan ... tho' actually 'to be decided' is not a bad theme anyway, but that's to be decided ...

We have a good number of participants at our sessions, so no worries. But/and please send me (stephen.yeo@phonecoop.coop) the email of anyone, whether a comer or goer to things at 43 St Giles or not, who you think might enjoy what we do.

Stephen Yeo



Marian Stoll

If you attended our Local Business Meeting on 1 November 2020, you will have heard mention of the Stoll Fund during discussion of the Annual Accounts. Some Friends may wonder who Marian Stoll was, and what purpose the fund serves.

When sorting through old documents recently, I came across an interesting article from the 43 Newsletter of August 2010, written by John Cottis of Faringdon Meeting. (Reprinted in box on the next page.)

I thereupon contacted John, who researched a bit further, and sent me some pictures of Marian Stoll's embroideries, and the link at the end of his article.

The Stoll Fund (known some years ago as the Stoll/Pendleton/Warner Fund) continues to be used by the Oxford Meeting Pastoral Care Group to help Friends in need. If you would like to make a donation to the fund, this would be greatly appreciated.

Ursula Kneisel
on behalf of the Pastoral Care Group

Continued on next page ...

Who Was Marian Stoll ?

Sometimes, when you turn over a stone, you come upon the unexpected. I was looking for the origins of the Stoll Fund in the archives so that we could decide whether it ought to be 'restricted' or 'unrestricted' in the Area Meeting's accounts. I first found it called the **Marian** Stoll fund in accounts for 1992, when the 'Marian Stoll Capital' was valued at £1,850.

Hunting further back, I came to a file of minutes of Overseers from 1984 – 1990 with references to expenses for a visit to Jordans, for the costs of holidays for Friends, and for 'Christmas gifts from the Marian Stoll Fund and the Pendleton bequest', which seemed to confirm the idea that these funds started from legacies.

Further back still, in the Quarterly Meeting's Book of Members, Marian Stoll was shown as a member of Oxford meeting in 1946. At this point, serendipity came to my aid, when I mentioned to the archivist cataloguing our Quaker records, what I was doing.

"Ah! I think I remember seeing some papers about that", and she came back with a few sheets that gave me the facts I needed. But the story amounted to much more than the facts.

Someone (I'm afraid I can't remember who) had told me that they thought Marian Stoll might be American, and indeed she was. She grew up at a home for the elderly run by her grandparents. Her education seems to have been paid for by one of the residents, and later it was said of her that 'she must have been born with a needle in her hand'. More likely, perhaps, she was called on to help with the darning from an early age.

She married, but divorced, I gather, in 1911. It was at the age of 42 that she first came to Oxford and found friendship in the meeting; and it was as Mrs Stoll that Ottoline Morrell took her photograph in 1931. Is it taken at Garsington Manor?

Searching the internet for anything about 'Marian Stoll' the first site I opened was from the National Portrait Gallery, who have this snapshot by Ottoline Morrell in their photographic archive: 'Marian Stoll – embroidress'. And then I looked at the site of Esther Fitzgerald (Rare Textiles), which proved very helpful in filling out her life as an artist and her link to the artistic world through Ottoline Morrell, with whom she corresponded. She had studied in Vienna (and she insisted on using Viennese wools throughout her life); she visited Paris; and came to Oxford in 1921. Her 'wool pictures' were exhibited in Oxford and at the V&A. She was featured in the magazine *The Studio* in 1927 and her work much praised.

She returned to America in 1931 and was featured in *Life Magazine* in 1940. She died in Southmayd Home, Waterberry, Con. in 1961 and left half her estate to the Home (with her pictures) and the other half to Oxford Meeting. She wrote of her time in Oxford, 'I think of you so often, you were all so wonderful to me'.



John Cottis

and more at www.EstherFitzgerald.com

Outside the Box

My parents Henry and Pauline Rothschild attended St Giles Meeting; Pauline's memorial gathering was held there; and the family was lovingly supported by a number of Friends from the Meeting. The Meeting house has also been the venue for the festival of living and dying I curate called *Kicking the Bucket*, and I met with the funerals group to consider different aspects of preparing for end of life. I am an unreliable attender of Faringdon Meeting.

My work as a celebrant, founder of Westmill Woodland Burial Ground, and performer led me to write and tour nationally a one person show called *Outside the Box – A Live show about Death* because I passionately believe we need to open up the conversation about death and dying to reduce the sense of fear and isolation that thrives on our silence.

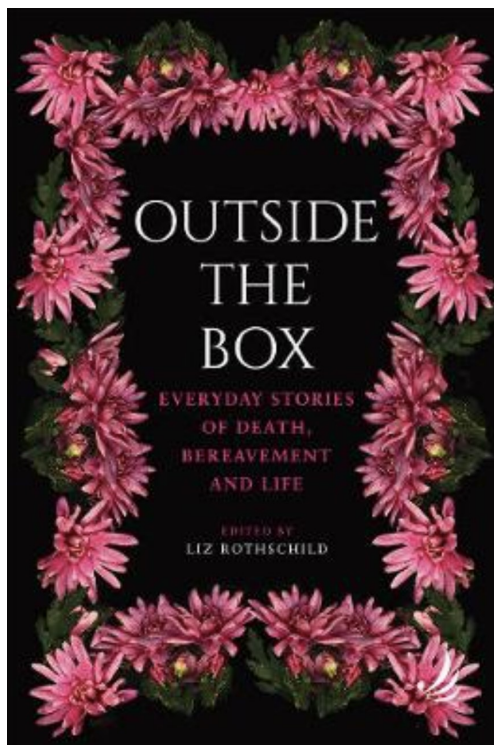
There has been wonderful progress in recent years from many places such as Dying Matters (www.dyingmatters.org) and the Death Café movement (www.deathcafe.com) but there is still more to be done.

My show was made up of stories from my own life, those I work with, and others. During the course of the nearly 100 performances, I would have post-show conversations with my audiences and invite them to share a story with me. I gathered many wonderful and thought-provoking stories that I knew needed to travel further, and so I came up with the idea of a book.

In November *Outside the Box – Everyday Stories of Death, Bereavement and Life* was published by PCCS books. It consists of 274 stories arranged in themes and responded to by a wide range of experts – from a palliative care doctor and nurse, midwife, therapists, former chaplain, dementia experts, child bereavement charities, and me –

and contains a wide range of resources and some wonderful original artwork.

I also worked to broaden the type of stories I received, inviting more from men, seeking out racial diversity, and reaching out to the homeless community and those with learning disabilities. There are some wonderful books written by experts in a range of fields, but I wanted to foreground the experiences of ordinary people and show how much they have to share on the subject when they feel invited to contribute.



I hope it will prove a trustworthy manual to guide people through life. Some may read it from cover to cover but many I suspect will dip into different sections when they feel the need or seek specialist advice to support a friend.

Why write a book about death? It is my experience that by avoiding the subject we live in fear and that when we allow our mortality in it can lead to some wonderfully honest conversations with others and ourselves about what really matters in life. COVID has shown all of us this during this year. I believe that death can teach us about life if we will only let it.

<https://www.pccs-books.co.uk/videos> – This was the launch event. It consisted of storytelling from the book, and some of the experts in conversation with me.

The best way to buy the book is from the publishers, PCCS. Postage is free in the UK.

<https://www.pccs-books.co.uk/products/outside-the-box-everyday-stories-of-death-bereavement-and-life>

It is also available from all good independent bookshops Waterstones and Amazon.

www.woodlandburialwestmill.co.uk

Liz Rothschild



Mum – the Only Option?

She sits there by the Rayburn rubbing the wart on her left eyelid
Reading the newspaper the way she always has
Mind still sharp for crosswords and scrabble
She doesn't give up looking for winning solutions easily
Why should she need care?

Her blood is ours.

She lies childlike asleep warmed by an electric blanket
Worn sheepskin slippers by the bedside with holes in the toes
Shirt, cardigan, and blouse worn five days in a row lain on a chair
Wooden floorboards store memories of falls she keeps secret
Does this mean she is no longer safe?

We can feel her confusion.

Her memory fails her again and again
Friend's names, what she did five minutes ago,
Where she went on holiday,
Her life erased, her life, now present moment repeated again and again
Does this mean she must quit her home and independence?

We feel the betrayal in our children's hearts.

So I'm going to the home for three days. Oh, three weeks?
How strange, and it's just across the road from here?
Does everybody know? Can I take my radio?
Oh, I have my own room, I thought there were wards,
And I'm going because of my problems with my memory?

Trying to understand.

What crime has she committed to lose all most dear to her?
What system of justice requires her to relocate to a residential home?
To forego the freedoms she spent a lifetime treasuring
To burn up her carefully managed estate in a market of care
How did it come to this?

Our mother is disappearing into age.

Juliet Henderson
2014

Can You Help with Community and Diversity Practice and Policy of Thames Valley Police?

At our Local Meeting for Worship for Business on 6 December, racism in Oxford was one of the items. This is part of the minute from that discussion:

“We would like to invite Friends with relevant experience to put forward their own names, or the names of others known to have experience, to Nominations Committee, to join the Police Independent Advisory Group (IAG) which monitors diversity in Oxford. We suggest the appointment ideally be made initially for two years from the point at which they are appointed to the IAG committee, and that young people be encouraged to apply.”

The Independent Advisory Group is community-led, and advises and monitors policing on matters of community and diversity such as hate crime and stop-and-search. Current members include representatives from both universities, several churches and faiths, LGBT, and other concerned groups. More information about its remit and function can be found at <https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/police-forces/thames-valley-police/areas/au/about-us/partnerships-sponsors/what-is-an-iag/>. (Links may need to be copied and pasted into your browser.)

Meetings take place every three months and seem to be generally held from 18:00 to 20:00. Although the Oxford IAG does not put its minutes online, a google search of ‘Oxford IAG Thames Valley Police’ will give you access to minutes of related meetings and papers that will give you an idea of the issues discussed. You might also look at the stop-and-search policy and practice at <https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/st-s/stop-and-search/>.

In the first instance Nominations would like names of Friends who are interested in this work themselves, and suggestions of people who might be approached. Our nominee would apply to join the IAG and the application would be vetted by normal police methods, so the whole process of joining takes some time.



If you think you might be able to do this work, or know someone in our Meeting (or Headington Meeting) who might be appropriate please contact Nominations through Linet Arthur who can be emailed via the Office.

Other ways Quakers might engage in issues of local racism:

There are other ways in which Quakers can engage with issues of racism in our city in addition to individual action in campaigning groups. For example, Oxford Anti-Racist City (ARC) would like Quakers to endorse their vision and values, see <https://www.antiracistcity.com/oxford> and <https://www.antiracistcity.com/about-vision-values>.

ARC is a platform for a wide variety of local groups, initiatives, and events that have anti-racism in their underlying values. Local Meeting agreed that it would be useful to gather a small group of Friends who can look at what ARC does and its content, with a view to considering what Quakers can endorse, and bring this back to the next Local Meeting in February. I am convening such a group, please contact me, annewatson1089@gmail.com, if you wish to join it and meanwhile look at what ARC offers.

One of the things we might consider is whether we can participate in the ARC series of **Uncomfortable Conversations**, see <https://www.antiracistcity.com/events>. They say:

Continued next page ...

“The increased discussions and actions around dismantling systemic and systematic racism through education, the justice system, representation in the arts, employment and politics has led to conversations at all levels of British society. Anti-Racist City Oxford are facilitating a series of conversations for Oxonians in a safe space to explore some of the questions and sensitive topics through a dialogue, opportunity for Q&A. These conversations will be based on lived experiences and will aim to give participants the tools to continue their own learning in this sensitive area.”

The website lists the conversations that have taken place so far, including titles such as: ‘Do we really need Black Lives Matter?’; ‘Institutional, systemic and systematic – what?’; and ‘I’m not racist, I have black friends’.

ARC have suggested that Quakers might like to host an ‘Uncomfortable Conversation’. Our reputation for social justice and opposing slavery might give us some credibility but might also lead to an interesting conversation about contradictions in our colonial history, our demography, or about other

persecuted or ignored groups. Perhaps people who followed the Woodbrooke course during 2020 might be able to suggest and/or offer something appropriate. I am not necessarily the best person to convene a Conversation as I did not follow that course, but am happy to be a link for people who think they might be able to follow this up, with discernment by LM.

Finally, as individuals:

Mothers 4 Justice - Ubuntu is a local organisation that aims to disrupt the pipeline between school and prison into which too many young black people get sucked. They are setting up training for people of all ethnic backgrounds who will volunteer to be alongside young people and their parents during arrests, charges, warnings, court, sentencing, punishment, community orders, prison, release, probation etc. When this scheme is launched it will be announced via a General Circulation email, but you could also watch out for it at <https://mothers4justiceubuntu.com/>

Anne Watson



**Enquirer Meetings in January and February
(by zoom)**

date	time	topic	presenter
7 January	19:00 for 19:30	Social Action and Quakers	Ruth Mason
21 January	19:00 for 19:30	Belief and Uncertainty	Lis Burch
4 February	19:00 for 19:30	Care in the Quaker Community	Carol Saker
18 February	19:00 for 19:30	Quaker Testimonies	Elisabeth Salisbury

The zoom room will be open from 19:00 for informal chat. These meetings are open to all, whether new to Friends or not, whether attending Oxford or another Meeting.

Web address: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87383304611?pwd=Vkkya2ZweVVRZjRmOE1JVDBFdTdwUT09>

Meeting ID: 873 8330 4611

Passcode: oxford

Might It Be Possible?

One Sunday recently, I went angry to Meeting. I'd been reading a newspaper report about a large demonstration held in London the previous day. I forget the precise focus of the demonstration, but I know the views of the demonstrators were almost diametrically opposed to my own. I was incensed! How could they take to the streets to propagate such misguided views? How could they justify the disruption and the waste of public resources to police the event?

In Meeting, I started to wonder what motivated the demonstrators to leave their warm homes to tramp the streets of London on a cold, miserable November afternoon. It occurred to me that they must be committed to their cause, have deeply held ideas and beliefs, and have decided the only way they could get their message heard was by demonstrating.

Then I thought about the (admittedly few) demonstrations I have been on. Why did I go? Because I was committed to the cause, I had deeply held ideas and beliefs, and I had decided that demonstrating was the best way to get the message heard. This comparison is of course simplistic, but nevertheless the motivations are spookily similar. In fact, if the situation had been reversed and one of the London protestors had been reading a report about a Quaker demonstration, they would probably have been as angry as I was!

I realised that — even though our views were poles apart — I shared a common aim with those demonstrators: we both wanted others to, in effect, heed the suggestion of Advices and Queries Number 17 and 'think it possible that [they] may be mistaken'.

It's sometimes hard to see the other point of view but I feel I owe it to those protesters, and others with whom I disagree, to at least try. And to try genuinely without, as far as possible, prejudging the issues. Don't misunderstand me — I'm not saying that I will change my viewpoint, just that I will try to be open to hearing new arguments and new facts. Number 17 only calls for us to think about whether

it's possible we could be mistaken; the final judgement is still our own.

I also realised that 'think[ing] it possible that [I] may be mistaken' is a dynamic and ongoing commitment. Convenient as it would be, I can't evaluate an issue then use that same evaluation as the basis of my thoughts and actions in perpetuity. Things change; issues need to be revisited and reconsidered. It has to be an ongoing process.

I'm not sure reading that report of a demonstration in the Sunday papers affected me in the way that the demonstrators would have ideally wanted. I'm pretty sure my viewpoint wasn't shifted, but at least it provoked me into reconsidering the issues the demonstration highlighted. It also made me reaffirm my commitment to trying to understand — though not necessarily adopt — the views of others, and to never letting my opinions and beliefs slumber for too long undisturbed!

Keith Wilson



Happy New Year!

All best wishes to everyone for 2021.
Many thanks for your splendid contributions
to the newsletter.
Do keep your articles coming!

Newsletter Team

Joining a Meeting for Worship with Oxford Quakers

1. You can attend meetings via Zoom or in person at 43 St Giles. To attend in person you must book via **Oxford Quakers Eventbrite** page <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/oxford-quakers-30657885404>
You can book up to the day of the meeting.
2. You can join all our **Zoom Meetings for Worship using the same Meeting Identity** for all meetings throughout the week.
To Join any Zoom Meeting for Worship click on this link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87383304611?pwd=Vkkya2ZweVVRZjRmOE1JVDBFdTdwUT09>
The Meeting ID: 873 8330 4611
You may need to enter a passcode (again the same for any meeting). **The Passcode is: oxford** (all lower case)
If you are **dialling in on the phone:** +44 203 901 7895 United Kingdom or +44 131 460 1196 United Kingdom
The telephone passcode is: 525212
3. You can uphold the meeting quietly in your own home at these times.
4. You can join the unconnected but simultaneous meetings.

From Quaker Faith and Practice

*Careful listening is fundamental
to helping each other;
it goes beyond finding out about needs
and becomes part of meeting them.*

12.01



MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

All meetings for worship are now blended.
For more information, contact the office at
office@oxfordquakers.org
+44 (0)1865 557373

Sunday: Meetings for Worship
9:30 & 11:00

**First Sunday of each month:
Meeting for Worship for Business**
12:15

Monday: Young Adult Friends
20:00

Tuesday & Thursday: Meeting for Worship
7:30

Wednesday: Meeting for Worship
12:15

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. The same applies to calendar items.

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

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