

Forty-Three Newsletter

Number 543

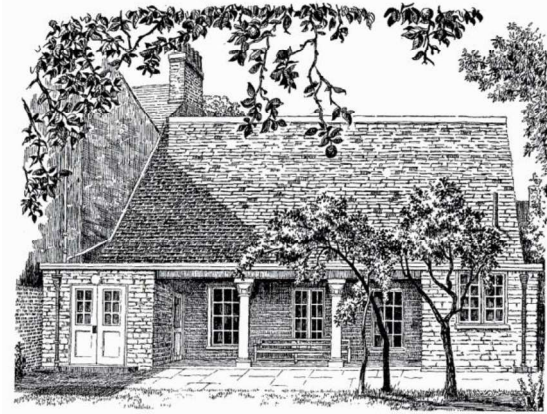
July 2024

Oxford Friends Meeting

43 St Giles', Oxford OX1 3LW

+44 (0)1865 557373

office@oxfordquakers.org



Remembering Jenny Buffery

Jenny Buffery was one of my best Quaker friends. She reached out to our family from our early days in Oxford. Maybe it helped that she had spent some time in America, where I am originally from, or that she, my husband Emlyn and I all liked applying our Quakerism to politics. She and I were both members of the committee which set up OXFAP in the 1980s, thinking that it would only be needed for a few years until British politics reverted to policies which saved people from destitution.

I also admired Jenny's undoubted excellence as a teacher, having spent a few of my early years in that profession myself. She clearly enjoyed the children. One of her anecdotes: On a school trip to France, she listened to a boy who was missing his familiar food. "What English food do you like the most?" Jenny asked. He hesitated, finally saying, "I'm having trouble making up my mind - I don't know whether to choose Indian or Chinese."

Jenny was herself. And that was a Quaker self, as she said in one of the last Sunday morning all-age worship Meetings that she attended. She valued her Quaker upbringing, and she gave generously of her time and energy to all the Quaker bodies of which she was a part. She was on Meeting for Sufferings for years. She encouraged me twice to go to Yearly Meeting

with her, experiences I would otherwise have missed. In her last years, as illness began to limit what she could do more widely, she loved doing the flowers for Meeting and also for the other rooms at 43 St. Giles.

Each of us brings our unique self to Quaker Meeting, and Jenny brought hers unfailingly.

Jeanne Warren
4/6/24



The Shoes for College become the Shoes for Work

We're in a rush, with errands here and there.
The voice of Respect comes through the speaker,
his first breath makes us think this is urgent.
We tense: Rose without Thorns must concentrate
is this Buses Only, or Low Emissions -
are we in the right place, but wrong time?

'Mum, can Straight and Narrow Way have my shoes?
You know, my college shoes. He needs them now.'
They study Business, Finance and Media.
Respect had dreams of studying Architecture,
Straight Way of being a crazy inventor.

But he's the eldest of five, has two jobs,
studies shoe-horned in while Mum's out at work.
At the bank where he stands to direct the flow
of mostly well-heeled, well-shod customers
the manager said: 'Get black leather shoes,
or, I'm telling you, don't come back next shift.'

The time-served Apprentice turned Freeman
holds his certificate and his spanner
in his hands. One bare foot, one with strong boot.
'Through adversity to the stars' he might say
had Latin been on his curriculum.

Have Respect and Straight and Narrow seen him,

this young man of bronze, hymn to advancement?

Does he still stand there, by the out-of-reach Uni - once free - the closed swimming baths, the Cathedral that charged admission?

Respect gave Straight and Narrow the shoes.
'Keep them, I don't wear them anyway'.
His friend hurried to the bank, childcare, or pizzeria.
And the Lord said: 'Why do you crush my people,
and grind the faces of the poor to dust?'

Karima Brooke, June 2024



The Coventry Boy statue (from the website of the Coventry Society). See the interesting piece about the background to the statue here: www.coventrysociety.org.uk

MEET In Oxford – past, present and future

MEET is a charity that was founded in a rather upside down way...Jane Fisher, Janet Toye and myself had undertaken specialist trainings in the trauma focused therapies EMDR and Energy Psychotherapies.

Ten years ago, these approaches to healing trauma were even less well known than they are today, but the three of us had experienced how effective they could be and wanted to put our skills to good use. And that's what gave the charity its name: MEET in Oxford stands for Making EMDR and Energy Therapies more accessible in Oxfordshire.

The Meeting House had three rooms available on Mondays that were not being used, because this was the Warden's day off. So, we approached the Meeting with our plan to run a low-cost trauma therapy service, and they were pleased to support us by making the rooms available rent free.

With help from OCVA - Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action we set ourselves up as an unregistered charity (maximum turnover £10,000 p.a,) bought a mobile phone, built a basic website and listed our service on the OCVA website. And people started to find us.

At the time, I was teaching on an Energy Psychotherapy training course for qualified psychotherapists which was based here at the Meeting House. I encouraged those we had trained to volunteer with MEET as a way of gaining experience and support in using these new techniques. Three therapists joined us in that first year, one of them being Karen Stowe who has now taken over from me as clinical lead.

By 2018, we realised that we were touching into a huge unmet need in the community. We were receiving more and more referrals and our waiting list was growing and growing. But we were still a very small organisation, with no paid staff. We knew we'd reached a turning point.

We decided to have A Meeting for Cleanness and invited all interested parties to consider the question: "Should we accept that MEET is an experimental project with a limited life, like a flower that blooms, dies and scatters its seeds. Or should we be working towards growing MEET into a more sustainable organisation with stronger roots, which can continue to exist beyond the working life of its original founders?"

Obviously, we chose the latter! This led to us becoming a registered charity in 2019. This status opened up the possibility of fundraising for developing and expanding MEET. And this was the moment when we had an unexpected piece of good fortune. A letter arrived from my godmother's executor telling me that I would soon be receiving a bequest from her estate.

It struck me immediately that this was money for MEET ... not only because MEET really needed it in order to grow, but also because it symbolised a positive connection to people in my family's past who had survived their own major trauma in Japanese occupied Indonesia during the 2nd World War

My godmother's name was Tante Liesbeth, and during the second world war, her mother and my grandmother were married to Dutch colonial officials stationed in Batavia. When the Japanese invaded, all foreigners were sent to concentration camps. However, my grandmother was sent to prison because of a false rumour that she had been plotting against the Japanese.

My grandmother later made a small booklet with drawings and memories of her time in prison in which she focuses on the mutual support, kindness and humour that sustained her. The booklet ends with a letter from a Dutch official to the Governor-General of Netherlands, East Indies. In it, he mentions Liesbeth's mother and also singles out my grandmother for her courage. This was noted by other prisoners at the time who "considered her a great heroine," because she kept refusing to make the statement demanded of her by the Japanese which would have brought more people to prison.

As I reflected on this story of kindness, support and courage, it reinforced my conviction that there was no better way to use this money than to donate it to MEET. Not least because, for us, there are none more courageous than those we have the privilege of trying to help – our clients.

We decided that our first priority was to appoint a part time coordinator to help manage the waiting list and improve our systems and processes. We hired Ana Novokovic, and over the next three years she did some vital work to professionalise the charity, for which we are very grateful.

Covid hit in 2020, and while lockdown had many obvious downsides, one positive outcome was that many more people became confident in using Zoom, including therapists. This meant that we could start recruiting therapists from anywhere in the UK. We continued to confine our client group to those living in Oxfordshire, but could meet on Zoom with people who would have had difficulty in travelling to 43 St Giles. Today, we continue to use both online and in-person therapy, increasing our reach and flexibility.

Ana decided to retire last year, and we agreed that we should recruit a Clinical Lead, alongside a new coordinator, so that we could redouble

our efforts to sustain and grow the charity. Earlier this year, Jane and I also decided that now was the right time for us to step down, confident that MEET is in the right hands as it looks to the future.

Sandra Figgess

Details on donating to MEET, our charity appeal for July, are in the appeal section towards the end of the newsletter.

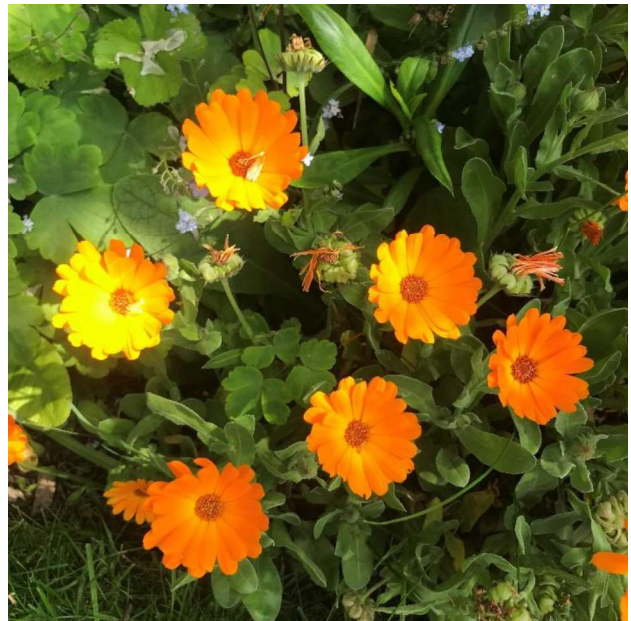


Photo: Caroline Worth

PASTORAL CARE GROUP

This group is keen to recruit new members, as we are at present down to five, one of whom has already served his turn and is staying on out of the goodness of his heart.

Here is a role description to clarify what being a member of the group entails and to encourage people to join:

Purpose

We are a group of Friends who work in the different post code areas of Oxford to foster a sense of community for Quakers within the city and surroundings. Our aim is to provide a range of friendly activities and to offer support where needed.

Skills required

Everyone has something to offer the PCG. Qualities that can help in the role include warmth, kindness, social skills, being a good listener, being available, showing an interest in other people, and being sensitive to any needs. Preferably PCG members need to be mobile. Within our group we are friends to one another.

Photo: Caroline Worth



Photo: Tasha Alden

The Role includes

- Contacting Friends in our designated area and being receptive to their needs.
- Phoning or visiting those in need, such as people who are ill, the elderly or disabled who are unable to attend Meeting for Worship, caring for the bereaved, and being aware and helpful towards Friends in financial difficulties, including using the Stoll Fund to support them on occasion.
- Ensuring that Young Friends are made welcome.
- Nurturing new members - providing information regarding enquirers' meetings, the availability of '43', The Friend, and other Quaker literature.
- Safeguarding vulnerable adults in liaison with the Meeting Safeguarder
- Attending monthly PCG Committee Meeting and collaborating with Elders.

Time Commitment

Varies from very little time → several hours weekly.

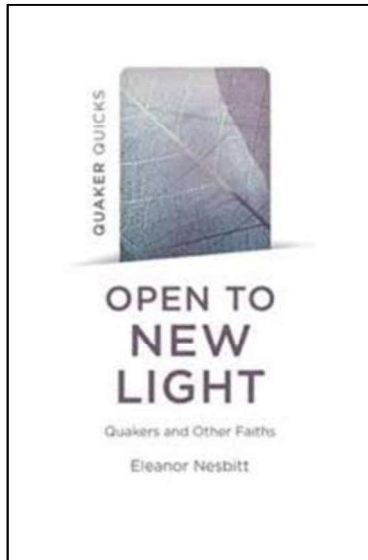
Number of People on the Committee

8–10 if possible

Brigid Schroer

Book Review

Open to New Light, by Eleanor Nesbitt (Quaker Quicks, 2023)



Open to New Light is another wonderful book on the growing list of Quaker Quicks. Like other titles in the series, this is a slim but far from slight volume. *Open to New Light* delivers a thought-provoking and insightful introduction to interactions with, and lessons learned from, other faiths, from the dawn of Quakerism to the present day.

Individual faiths are considered in standalone chapters, with each one offering a potted account of these different histories, and what the various faiths look like when seen alongside Quaker approaches to faith and practice. In addition to Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism and Jainism, there are

chapters on Indigenous religions and Humanism, with each one offering something of distinct interest.

The author also finds space to make mention of increasing numbers who identify with or hold non-theist and other less traditional views, Quakers and others. Such voices have grown in prominence in recent years, and offer distinct and valuable perceptions that only enhance an understanding that “the story of Quakers and other faiths is a story of continuity and change.”

In her introduction, Nesbitt notes the challenges of tackling such a large subject in such a limited space. In spite of these constraints she is demonstrably equal to the task, which has been attained. Here we have a quick read that stands on its own merits but which could also be a useful starting point for anyone wishing to explore either the history or theology of this rich and fascinating field. As such, *Open to New Light* is suitable for readers who want either an introduction or an aide memoire. One hopes it also finds a broad non-Quaker audience as it says almost as much about this faith as those others with which it has come into contact across nearly 400 years.

Among other reasons, being confronted with overly busy lives means that many people find

they are giving up on reading books, in spite of their best intentions. It may have been in recognition of this fact that this series was conceived and brought into being, and for which this reviewer is unashamedly grateful. *Open to New Light* is a wonderful addition to the Quaker Quicks stable.

Notices and News of Friends

News of Friends

Anne and Trio Watson

Hello! It's been a while! I think I haven't really been to meeting since Dad died, and that was nearly two years ago. Obviously, lots has happened for our family since. Not least, the closure of the Railway Bridge which has meant that coming to meeting by taxi is now impossibly expensive. Zoom has its pluses and minuses – I really miss the chat over coffee and sunny garden chillouts.

So here... Mum has recently had a very good review from the Geratology clinic at the JR. There are some issues with hearing and with mild cognitive change, but these don't stop Mum getting dug into a good book, enjoying walks around Farmoor reservoir, or making silly faces out of fruit in the fruit bowl. We have a live in carer called Lindelwa, and also other help around the house and garden. I think it doesn't get much better than this.

I'm working part time for Action Pantry in Temple Cowley which gives me a chance to spend time with Mum, and also to work on my creative things. I'm starting an imprint called Banjubec, to self publish my writings and paintings as a zine and as printed postcards. And soon I shall be moving house out of Leon Close to pastures new. Not sure what the detail will look like just now but I'm aiming to stay in Oxford if I can afford it.

It goes without saying that both Mum and I hold Oxford Quakers very fondly in our hearts and would love to see more of you. I'll make sure that our contact info is up to date in the office – please do seek us out if you have a moment, it would be gorgeous to see you. xxxx



Notices

Friends of all ages are invited to a Young Adult Friends meeting on Monday 1st July to mark the departures of Julia Dallaway and Jamie Walker from Oxford. The YAF meeting will be at the usual time of 7-9pm, followed by an optional trip to a nearby pub. Please let Julia know if you're likely to come to the pub so that she can book a suitably sized table! (Email: julia@dallaway.org.uk)

We are experimenting with having **doorkeepers for Sunday worship**. If you arrive in the first few minutes while the meeting is settling, or while someone is speaking, you may be asked to wait at the door for an appropriate moment to enter. Please contact Laurie Michaelis if you're willing to volunteer as a doorkeeper: laurie@livingwitness.org.uk.

Young Adult Friend Spiritual Accompaniment. Are you looking to deepen your Quaker spirituality and share your journey with a Friend across the generations? You are invited to an informal pairing between an older and a younger Friend, who meet over six months to explore their journey with spirituality and share about their Quaker faith. Please contact Sian (siani.saul@gmail.com) to express interest.

Friends' Fellowship of Healing will meet at 1.30pm in the Garden Room on Wednesday 3rd July.

The Treading Lightly Group will meet in the Garden Room on Thursday 4th July from 11 am to 1:00 pm. This is a small group of older Friends living on their own who meet once a month to support one another. To find out more, contact Jane MacTaggart on 01865 558555. **Please note the change of time and location.**

You are all invited to the **Quaker Garden Party** at the Meeting House on Saturday, 6th July, from 2.30 - 5.00pm. If you can, please bring food to share. And we would very much appreciate help with setting up if anyone can come a bit early.

Joyful and worshipful singing will take place in the Meeting House at 9.30am on Sunday, 7th July. All are very welcome to join in this uplifting experience. The singing will be followed by combined Meeting for Worship at 10.30am and Meeting for Worship for Business at 11:45am.

Being Among Quakers: Care in the Quaker Community. Wednesday, 10th July, 7 pm in the Library at Oxford Meeting House and also online. Three Friends talk about their perspectives, followed by reflection, questions and discussion. This is the third in a series of Enquiry Meetings that are helpful for people who are relatively new to Quakers but also of interest to others. All welcome.

For further details contact annewatson1089@gmail.com or anthearichards1@gmail.com.

The last **Ursula Franklin Reading Group** (for now) will meet via Zoom on Thursday 11th July at 7pm. Join us to discuss chapter one in Ursula Franklin's Massey Lecture series 'The Real World of Technology'. One of the first lines reads 'As I see it, technology has built the house in which we all live'. The Zoom link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8121826010?omn=84489458947> and, should you need it, the meeting ID is 812 182 6010.

The next **Area Meeting** for church affairs will be at Faringdon Quaker Meeting House on Saturday, 13th July. The OSAM AGM will start at 10:30am and will be followed by meeting for church affairs and then a spiritual nurture session which starts at 1:30 pm. All are encouraged to attend.

MEET in Oxford is celebrating its 10th anniversary on July 13th with a garden party starting at 12:30 at the Meeting House. We hope that many Friends will come and celebrate with us. Fergal Keene is our guest speaker and will be sharing his own story of trauma and recovery. This event is FULLY BOOKED, but if any Friends not attending have ideas about ways MEET could fundraise in the future, they would be very glad to hear them – contact them [here](#).

The office has created a **Premises Handbook for Quakers**. This is a step by step guide to running unstaffed events.

If anyone would like to have a copy, please email the office at office@oxfordquakers.org.

July Charity Appeal: MEET In Oxford



Making EMDR and Energy Therapies more accessible in Oxford

Low Cost Trauma Therapy with Experienced Psychotherapists

MEET in Oxford is a charity providing low cost trauma-focused therapy to people who live in Oxfordshire and cannot afford private therapy or access appropriate NHS or insurance funded therapy.

Due to the volume of referrals, we have had to close our waiting list for the time being. We hope to be able to open it again later in the year.

Who we work with

Our clients are looking for therapy because their lives are seriously affected now by difficult experiences in the past.

We include within our understanding of trauma a wide range of disturbing experiences, both repeated or enduring trauma (for example, abusive relationships, bullying, childhood abuse, neglect) and single incident trauma (for example, road traffic accidents, a sexual assault). We also work with people suffering trauma arising in armed conflict.

You can donate to MEET online here:

<https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/11204#!/DonationDetails>

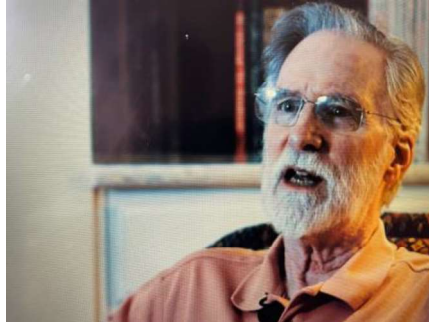
Cheques, addressed to MEET In Oxford, can be sent to 43 St Giles, Oxford OX1 3LW. Charity no. 1182200

Quaker Connection:

MEET was founded by members of our meeting, and has been a concern of the meeting for some years.

Quaker Videos in this Month's *Forty-Three*

Are SPICES 'the' Quaker Testimonies?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mzAAbRtzjCE>

8 minutes

From *Quaker Faith & Practice* 20.07

The source of our strength

Later on I was meditating, imagining Light and Love surrounding the world leaders as they gathered: 'Free them from fear', I asked ... but then I couldn't go on. I realised that all I could honestly ask was for myself to be freed from the fear which only an hour ago had threatened to ruin my day. All I could do was to come to terms with my own brokenness and make peace with myself and then with my immediate environment. And remembering the conflicts and problems in my life at that moment, even that seemed beyond me.

Susan Lawrence, 1984

July 2024

Many meetings and events are held via Zoom. Link for all Oxford Meetings for Worship:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87383304611?pwd=VkkyY2ZweVVRZjRmOE1JVDBFdTdwUT09>

Please contact the Office for more details:

Email: office@oxfordquakers.org Telephone: +44 (0)1865 557373

OXFORD MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Meetings for worship are via Zoom and/or in person.

For more information, contact the Office at

office@oxfordquakers.org +44 (0)1865 557373

First Sunday of each month:

Meeting for Worship 10:30-11:30 (in person & Zoom)
MfW for Business 12:15 (in person & Zoom)

All other Sundays:

Meetings for Worship 09:30-10:15 (in person and Zoom)
11:00-12:00 (in person and Zoom)

Monday:

Young Adult Friends 19:00-21:00 (in person and Zoom)

Tuesday:

Meeting for Worship 07:30-08:00 (in person or Zoom)

Wednesday:

Meeting for Worship 07:30-08:00 (Zoom only)
Meeting for Worship 11:30-12:15 (in person & Zoom)

Friday:

Meeting for Worship 07:30-08:00 (Zoom only)



Forty-Three is available online at

<https://oxfordquaker.com/newsletter/>

and on the Oxford Quakers website,

<https://oxfordquaker.com/>

The views expressed in **Forty-Three** do not necessarily reflect those of the editors.

Editorial Team

Tasha Alden • Nicole Gilroy • Jimin Kang • Luke Young

Office and Distribution

HEADINGTON MEETING FOR WORSHIP

Headington Meeting meets each Sunday at 10:00
at Old Headington Village Hall,
Dunstan Road, Headington, OX3 9BY

For full details see

<https://headington.quakermeeting.org/>

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Please send newsletter contributions well in advance of the 15th of the month, the submission deadline.

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