

Craven & Keighley Area Meeting Newsletter
Summer 2014

The recent research findings of the effects of blue light from electronic screens on our brainwave patterns provides me with a good excuse to intersperse sessions of editing with walks and gardening. Thank goodness for a decent summer at last, to enjoy more health-enhancing fresh air.

As editor of this small publication I try to cover as many bases as possible within your newsletter. Hopefully I may have come close with this edition, but I am always open to (constructive) comments. In my two year experience we have had no book reviews so far – are there any of you willing to offer your comments on something that has inspired (or disappointed) you? Perhaps we can look forward to a future section on this subject. I can also put in my twopennyworth.

Pam Elstub

What is Experiment with Light?

An experience for the Area Meeting

Have you ever wondered what Experiment with Light is? Is it meditation? Is it just group therapy? How “Quaker” is it?

Along with 14 others I attended an Experiment with Light introductory workshop held on Saturday May 17 at Skipton. We were ably led by Helen Meads, Andrea Freeman, and Val Bone acted as supporting Elder.

Yes, Experiment with Light is Quaker. It is, according to Rex Ambler's research, how early Quakers worshipped and learned to be guided by the Spirit. The central event was a guided meditation which, following centring down, helping us to focus on examining our own lives, allowing the Light to shine into all aspects of our being. After a period of reflection alone, we continued what was in effect a day retreat. Following a share lunch eaten in silence, we spoke in worship sharing mode of what we wished to share of our experiences in small private groups. We then reflected back to a plenary, ending by looking at a possible option of how to form “light groups”.

So is it like meeting for worship with guidance words? Yes and no. The effect was to produce a profound sense of deepening and a very gathered meeting. We were concentrating on letting the Light show us things about ourselves that perhaps we had not recognised, rather than focusing on our Quaker community. This was seen as a necessary first step: being truthful with ourselves before we could give witness to the world.

Are we going to have local Light Groups where people meet together regularly to do this practice? Well we do actually have one already – at Bentham which is an “open” group. There are 3 groups at Hebden Bridge meeting, not in our Area Meeting but just “over the tops” from Keighley, so not that far away. We were told we would be welcome to join in. Are there any new groups locally? We don't know yet.

An interesting discovery was that meetings that have light groups tend to find there is a deepening and enriching of their meeting for worship, benefiting everyone and not just those attending light groups. For this reason alone, it did occur to me that it might be really good if lots of Friends were to experience an introductory day, even if they did not feel prompted to take it further.

This workshop was the latest in a series of annual events organised by Area meeting Elders and Overseers to which all Members and Attenders are invited.

Evelyn Shire 01535 607339

MUSIC

FOR A SEPTEMBER AFTERNOON

Saturday 13th September

2:00 pm

at the

*Friends Meeting House
Airton, Malhamdale*

Yorkshire's well-respected Vacation Chamber Orchestra returns to Airton with a programme including settings by Edward German of Kipling's "Just So Songs", a brilliant musical version of the Grimm brothers fairy tale "The Musicians of Bremen" and works for string quartet, wind quintet and mixed chamber ensemble.

Tickets £10 (no concessions) includes tea and light refreshments following the concert.

Advance purchase of tickets is advised as numbers are limited; last year's concert was a sell-out.

Please telephone 01729 830263 or 01756 753965 for tickets and information

Summary of reports from Meeting for Sufferings held 5th April 2014 and 6th June 2014

MfS 5th April

Agenda:

Items for decision:

- Revisions to both Q.F.& P and the Book of discipline
- Terms of reference for MfS Arrangements Group
- Government cuts (Welfare Benefits)
- Letter of Greeting to Ireland Yearly Meeting
- Civil Partnerships
-and miscellaneous 'Minutes received not taken elsewhere'.

For information:

- Report from the Minute 36 (Canterbury) Commitment Group
- Report from the Trustees

For reflection: a report from the Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations. Minutes are available on BYM web site:

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/sites/default/files/MfS-Follow-up-materials.doc>

The Statement on Economic Inequality: Friends and Meetings are encouraged to use the statement for reflection as well as action, and as a useful reference when speaking out in the media.

The Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations

Report of their year's work has attached the World Council of Churches Statement from its 10th Assembly in Busan, Republic of Korea last Autumn, entitled 'The Way of Just Peace'. Notable for phrases that resonate with Quaker statements on peace, tolerance, economic justice.

Proposal from Southern Marches Area Meeting for a memorial to the innocent victims of war. If our Area Meeting is minded to support the proposal, we are encouraged to contact the clerk of Southern Marches AM.

A proposal for Young Peoples Participation Days to be held alongside MfS has been agreed. Possibility to hold first event alongside our December meeting (to be confirmed). In due course, Area Meetings can expect to receive invitations to send young people to a participation day.

Agreed items for MfS to be deferred to a future date:

- Review Preparation Group to be set up along with terms of reference and named group members.

- Registration of Quaker marriages to be registered with the state as marriages wherever possible while ceasing to register civil partnerships. Church Government Advisory Group to prepare revisions of Quaker Faith and Practice accordingly.
- Minute 36 (Canterbury) Commitment Group will develop the report it plans to bring to Yearly Meeting Gathering in August; we hope to see this at our June Meeting.

References: <http://www.quaker.org.uk/meeting-sufferings>

MfS 6th June

Reference to the minutes: [MfS 7 June 2014 minutes \(PDF 100kb - new window\)](#) will show the order of agenda items.

Quaker work in Europe: Sarah Coote, BYM's representative to Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA). Spoke about work of European Friends through QCEA and Friends World Committee for Consultation Europe and Middle East Section (EMES). Members are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this. The work can be funded via donations to QCEA via the British Committee. Those wishing to help actively can also sign up for 'action alerts'.

Friends also encouraged to respond to EU consultation on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). More information on this: QCEA website - www.qcea.org Donations can be done through 'QCEA British Committee' (Simon Bond, 1 Lynton Green, Maidenhead, SL6 6AN, United Kingdom); for more information contact Simon (telephone 01628 631216; e-mail simon@armitage.biz).

Briefing note received from Gloucestershire AM with a copy of the minute from EMES about Ukraine. Financial support can be given via EMES' website <http://fwccemes.org/> or Executive Secretary Marisa Johnson, P.O. Box 1157, Histon, Cambridge, CB24 9XQ (tel 01223 479585; email emes@fwccemes.org).

Minutes from Area Meetings re aspects of state education have started a movement of concern. Threshing conference: 29-31 August at Woodbrooke. See clerks' mailing for invitation to attend; representative to be nominated from Craven & Keighley AM.

We are asked to consider the Long Term Framework when meetings receive a consultation document.

Members of MfS were asked to encourage people to complete an offer of service form! Also If Friends or nominations committees have ideas re encouraging more participation in MfS please contact Suze Lidbury (Events & Committee Services Team Leader) on suzel@quaker.org.uk or Friends House.

Proposed Young People's Participation day may take place alongside MfS in December; details to be circulated soon. Venue: hopefully in the newly refurbished

Large Meeting House to enable space for both groups to share Meeting for Worship at the start of the day, before going our separate ways.

June MfS agenda, papers and minutes available at <http://www.quaker.org.uk/meeting-sufferings>

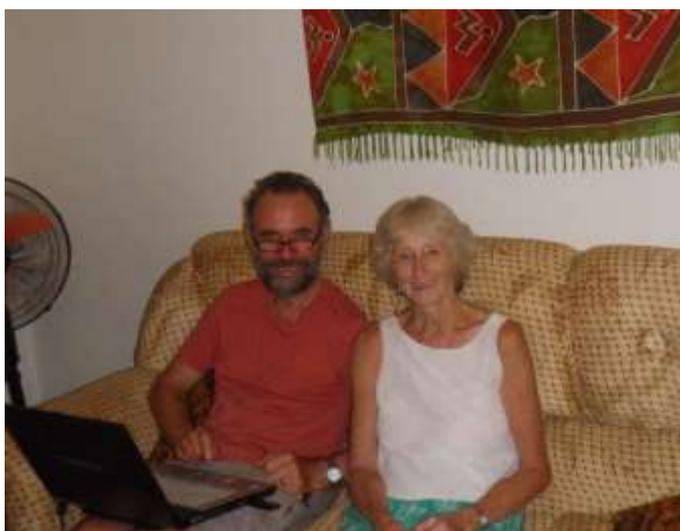
Thanks go to Christopher N.G.Hart for the full reports

Letter from Mike and Liz Watson

7 June 2014

Dear Friends,

It seems a long time since we last participated in Area Meeting activities but, as we are on the mailing list for area and local meetings, we are able to keep in touch through meeting agendas, minutes, etc. as well as through emails from Ffriends. We look forward to being back with you all before too long and catching up on much more.



We are having a wonderful time in Uganda again. This time we are here under the auspices of the University Hospital of South Manchester, which has a link with Gulu Regional Referral Hospital. Primarily the link arranges teams of doctors and nurses to visit and run specific courses for the students in the Medical School of Gulu University. The teams are generally here for just a week or two. In addition medical students from Wythenshawe come for placements of about two months and nurses may come for longer term placements on a voluntary basis. For most of the year we were living with a lovely nurse called Paxi, whose family are from Zimbabwe. However she recently returned to the UK. Our role is somewhat like that of Resident Friends in this fluid community. We are here to welcome groups and make their stay here as easy and productive as possible. It has been stimulating and fun. We often have 10 or 12 around the table for dinner. Everyone who comes is enthusiastic about their own speciality and excited to be in Africa. In addition to the teams from Wythenshawe we have groups coming from the University of British Columbia.

We also spend our days working full-time in the hospital. I have been working on the TB ward and the isolation unit for patients with multi-drug resistant TB and Mike has divided his time between the mental health unit and the hospital administration department. The members of staff are very friendly and welcoming. There are many frustrations, largely due to lack of both human and material resources, as well as erratic water and power supplies. However, we have learned to appreciate much that we take for granted as our right at home.

We have missed having a worshipping group. We are bombarded through some nights by the amplified rantings from an evangelical church nearby, and are woken by the Muslim calls to prayer from 5am. So far we have managed to have two meetings for worship: one with two visiting Friends from Faringdon Meeting, and the second with a young American Quaker who is serving in Rwanda with the Great Lakes Peace Initiative.

We return home at the end of July and look forward to seeing you thereafter.

With love and all best wishes from us both,

Liz and Mike Watson

Conference report

Quaker Peace & Social Witness (QPSW) annual conference 2014

Craven and Keighley Area Meeting nominated me to attend this yearly event. I returned from the weekend thoroughly stimulated and much better informed about the scope and focus of the work that QPSW does on behalf of us all.

I attended two workshops: -

- The new tide of militarism
- Ending fossil fuel dependency

and four “taster sessions” (talks from QPSW representatives): -

- Your faith, your finance
- Quaker asylum and refugee network
- Peaceworkers

Friday night talk: Quaker Housing Trust

My first experience of the weekend was to attend this talk by Jenny Brierley. A passion for all matters to do with housing led her to become a town planner, then the CEO of a large housing trust. A major issue that she emphasized was the considerable need for more small dwellings to be built. She also suggested that a fairer rent scheme should be introduced into the private sector. These matters are especially relevant within the M25 area of London; people of lower income unable to afford to live there as they are priced out of the market.

Workshops:

The new tide of militarism

My history of military service lent me the mantle of assuming the role of “devil’s advocate in this session. (I sense the readers who know me well nodding in total

understanding!) Some factors within our society appear historically to have encouraged a militaristic attitude, for example, toy guns in shops. Nowadays these have been added to and almost superseded by video games, showing increasing levels of violent combat that are witnessed by young people. There have been visits by the military services to schools, where they have given talks, perhaps ultimately with a view to future recruitment. They have also sold red poppies to the public, keeping themselves in the public eye and thus obtaining support for their activities. Michael Gove, Education Secretary, wishes to encourage around 100 more school cadet programmes. Of course, I would say “why not?”

2. Ending Fossil fuel dependency

This was another excellent session facilitated by Sunniva Taylor. I was finally able to understand the term: “Godly Play”, a term Sunniva uses to describe events surrounding Planet Earth from the Big Bang to the present day. Perhaps I may be able to adapt this for my own use.

Taster sessions

1: Your faith, your finances

Faith groups have been taking note of the way in which Quakers have diverted their financial investment away from fossil fuel industries, preferring where possible to use ecologically friendly energy sources. Around 40 universities worldwide have also taken up this issue and followed suit.

2. Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network (QARN)

This session was very informative but also depressing. Everything possible is being done to prevent asylum seekers from obtaining refugee status; they are moved from pillar to post, apparently to stop them making friends or joining support groups. The examples given of people undergoing this process were heartbreaking. Children reaching the age of eighteen are being deported because they are then classed as asylum seekers, even if their parents have been granted leave to stay in the UK.

3. Peaceworkers

This took the form of a talk given by three inspirational young people, associated with charities that focus on peace issues. Funded by a grant from central QPSW funds of £20,000 each, they are asked where they would like to work, and are often the only paid members of staff in their workplace. I can think of no better use of our money.

I appreciate very much my nomination to attend this event. In retrospect, I have welcomed the absence of a bus service from the railway station to Swanwick as the

return walk back helped my mind to process what I had heard and learned. Partly responsible for my enjoyment of the weekend was the experience of meeting old friends and making new ones.

My dislikes? Perhaps, first and foremost, the food. There was only vegetarian available; not a problem for me but there could have been more attention to making the flavours more interesting. And base groups: I am unsure of the point of these. The group appeared (in my observation) to expose the strengths but also the weaknesses of various people. I ended up spending some time supporting those who felt themselves inadequate in some sessions.

Michael Elstub



WOOL AGAINST WEAPONS

7 Mile long pink scarf

Various people in and around the Area Meeting have been busy knitting with pink yarn since mid-December. This is our small contribution to a national seven mile long scarf, which is to be used on 9 August in a seven mile long demonstration against the replacing of Trident nuclear weapons. It will be held between the Atomic Weapons Establishment sites at Aldermaston and Burghfield in Berkshire.

Replacing Trident will cost, according to CND, £100 billion while the NHS, social services, education services, energy conservation and much, much more are all severely if not dangerously underfunded. Just (!) one billion would help any of those public services.

At the time of writing I have collected 51 metre-long pieces in Settle which are already stitched together into rolls of 10 or 20. In April there was a tiny picture in the Craven Herald of some lengths of the scarf wrapped round the plinth of the statue in Skipton high street. I'm not surprised if you didn't see it. Some members of a local peace group who were looking for the photo in the paper missed it too. Some of us have joined demonstrations of knitting and the reasons for it in Bradford and Keighley, both covered by local papers. In May we filled a shop window in Settle with our current lengths of pink scarf, which attracted quite a bit of notice and I still intend to fill the Meeting House garden with long lengths attached to bamboo poles one day. We tried a few weeks ago but the wind was too strong.

When the August 9th event is over we shall be bringing our bit of the scarf back to

Yorkshire, separating out the pieces and making blankets to donate to various charities. For more and up-to-date details see www.woolagainstweapons.com

There is still time to get knitting. Sylvia Boyes, Keighley, Jette Howard, Skipton, and I, Settle, will gladly add your efforts to our rolls.

Tickets for the coach from Settle, Skipton and Keighley have all been taken. If you are making your own way there I can let you know exactly where we expect to be; not far from Burghfield.

Alison Tyas Phone: 01729 822313

Scarf blockade



Notice:

Area Meeting Walks

1. Saturday 6th September 2014

A walk up Penyghent starting from Settle Meeting House at 10am. Share cars to drive to Horton in Ribblesdale (or cycle/walk if you wish). There will be a 5 mile walk over Penyghent, with tea at the Penyghent cafe at the bottom. Please come prepared for one steep climb, with walking boots, waterproofs, warm clothing and drink/snack.

2. Saturday 8th November 2014

A short winter stroll around Airton starting at Airton Meeting House at 1.30pm. About 3 miles with some stiles. Please come prepared for mud with walking boots and waterproofs. Please park considerately near the Meeting House in Airton, and not on the cobbles. Tea and cake back at the Meeting House when we finish.

Please let Helen Orme know if you are coming – Tel: 01729 823857/ 860048.