



THE DORKING GRAPEVINE

Dorking Quaker Meeting

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Quote for the month is the *Serenity Prayer* in its original form, as written by American theologian Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971):

God, give us the grace to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed, courage to change the things which should be changed, and the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other.

Dates for your Diary

Midweek Meeting	12.45-1.15pm	Every Wednesday , followed by simple lunch
Sunday 12 April	6.30pm	Meeting for Worship at Park House, Leatherhead
Friday 17 April	7.00-9.30pm	Hustings in the Meeting House
Sunday 26 April		Leith Hill Walk from Capel MH
Sunday 10 May	After MfW	Traidcraft stall in Meeting House
Saturday 16 May		Area Meeting at Reigate – see request for books/DVDs below

NB. No meditation meeting in April due to clash with Hustings meeting.

Fellowship News

Hope to see you at Capel on Sunday 26 April for the Leith Hill Walk event!

Meanwhile the Area Meeting Fellowship Committee have decided to build up the AM community spirit by offering opportunities not only to get together, but also to support each other's projects! Inspired by an idea from a Horsham Friend, we are proposing a sponsored walk round the Meeting Houses, to support Horsham's building project (details to be announced when the Horsham Friend has decided on date and practicalities), a 'Readathon' to support Ifield's building project (details below), and a Spring plant and produce sale in 2016 at Capel to help them pay off their large debt to Area Meeting (details to follow later). If the Blue Idol still needs help we'll think of something else, or has anyone got a suggestion?

The 'Readathon'. Friends with books and/or DVDs that they are willing to lend are asked to bring them to Meeting – labelled with a name sticker if they would like them back, rather than them finally going to a charity shop. Give them to Anne Brewer, who will take them along to the next AM – **May 16 at Reigate**. The idea is for other Friends to borrow 10 books/DVDs for £5 or 5 for £2.50, and return them at the next AM (July 12 at Ifield) having rated them (1 to 5 stars). If successful, the process will be repeated as often as seems worthwhile. The books/DVDs will be finally returned to the lender, or else passed on to a charity shop if the owner no longer requires them. **The money raised to go to Ifield to help pay for repairs to the North Wall.**



Anne Brewer, Sarah Freeman and Val Rowling

Study Group, Tuesday 31 March

Quaker social concerns and the pending 17.4.15 hustings



A lively study group discussed wide ranging Quaker concerns. It was recognised that these concerns could form appropriate questions for the five parliamentary candidates at the 17th April hustings. Quaker testimonies were considered to be good guides to our reactions to subjects like the UK's socioeconomic inequality, instanced by the top 1% of the population owning more wealth than the remaining 99%. This has contributed to the dismal poverty associated with benefit changes, zero hour contracts and the growing number of food banks. Other concerns discussed included: immigration, asylum seekers, Islamophobia, EU membership, NHS cuts, caring about mental health, Trident, homelessness, MPs' second jobs, the environment and renewables.

Voters intending to submit their question at the hustings were urged to be subject-specific and to the point. There will be time for a total of only about six questions, with each one directed to the five candidates in turn. Questions used at the hustings will be selected prior to the event, from among the many anticipated. **Voters hoping to have their questions among the chosen six are advised to send them to Catherine Carr prior to 12th April.** This advice is offered also to those questioning voters who could not attend the study group

Bob Humphreys

Relevant to the above:

In preparation for the 2015 General Election, Churches together in Surrey are hosting four evening meetings at which guest speakers will provide valuable information to help equip you in your decision as you cast your vote. The meetings are free and no booking is required. Please arrive at 7.30pm for 8pm - 9.30pm. Details are as follows:

Child poverty - Thursday 19th March, Dorking Christian Centre, Speaker - Nigel Varndell, Director of Church & Community Participation, The Children's Society

Housing - Tuesday 14th April, St. Dunstan's RC Church, Shaftesbury Road, Woking GU22 7DT, Speaker - Alison Gelder, Director of Housing Justice

Social justice - Wednesday 22nd April, Godalming United Church, Bridge Street, Godalming GU7 3DU, Speaker - John Arnold, Executive Director of Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility

Woodbrooke course – Love in Action



Woodbrooke (www.woodbrooke.org.uk)

In March I attended my first course at Woodbrooke. I was blown away by the atmosphere of the place – such peace and tranquillity just a stone throw away from a bustling city! - and was very impressed with the personal care shown by the staff and Friends in Residence.

The course, entitled 'Love In Action' was very intensive – and most excellent. Based upon a model of human interaction devised by Susannah Temple (who was also the tutor), called Functional Fluency, it examined ways we interact with others (and with ourselves) in professional and personal relationships, and proposed positive and constructive ways of conducting those –

through short presentations, diagrams and workshops. I found it fascinating and highly useful – and would recommend it to anyone wishing to deepen their understanding and improve the quality of their interactions (of any kind) with others.

Judy Johnson

News from the Blue Idol LM – the William Penn Time Capsule



Blue Idol Meeting House

The Blue Idol Meeting House, near Coolham, which dates back to the sixteenth century, was originally a farm house, until William Penn helped purchase it for the Quakers. The grade 1 listed building has been undergoing very extensive renovations over the past year including replacement of the roof – see photos.



Blue Idol Meeting House under repair.

You may have seen on the TV News programme 'South Today', an item referring to the placing of a Time Capsule in the roof of The Blue Idol Meeting House, before it is sealed up again. The contents of the Time Capsule were chosen by pupils of the William Penn School in Coolham, the only Quaker primary school in the UK. The school is strongly supported by members of Blue Idol Meeting, and always has two Quakers serving as School Governors, one of whom is currently Colin Hope. The Time Capsule contents chosen by the children are as follows:

- Letter of explanation from the school
- Drawings showing the Quaker Values
- Prospectus
- Photographs of pupils performing at May Day celebration and Christmas nativity
- List of current pupils
- List of current staff with brief biographies
- List of current governors with brief biographies
- PE T-shirt with William Penn logo

Information from Colin Hope

News from your library

We have recently added three new books, donated by members to the Meeting library.

THIS LIGHT THAT PUSHES ME: Stories of African Peacebuilders. Published by Quaker Books in 2014. An inspiring collection of personal stories by Africans, who are working for peaceful resolution of conflict under extremely taxing conditions.

SPECTACLE REALITY RESISTANCE

Confronting a culture of militarism

David Gee



ForcesWatch

SPECTACLE, REALITY, RESISTANCE: Confronting a culture of militarism. Written by David Gee, and published by ForcesWatch in 2014. A well-written but demanding book, described by the publishers as follows: At a comfortable distance from warfare, our culture easily passes over its horrific reality in favour of an appealing, even romantic, spectacle of war. Militarism, past and present, attempts to control public opinion by aligning it with its own worldview. Yet, over the last decade, most Britons have opposed Western military ventures abroad, and some veterans – once recruited, controlled and partly dehumanised to prepare them for war – now challenge militarism and our own participation in its controlling dynamic.

In this book David Gee takes a fresh look at a culture of militarism in Britain, exploring these dynamics – distance, romance, control – in three essays, accompanied by three shorter pieces about the cultural treatment of war and resistance to the government's increasingly prodigious efforts to regain control of the story we tell ourselves about war.

VISIONING NEW FIRE: working for Quaker renewal. Compiled and published by The Kindlers in 2013.

Ask the acting librarians, Elizabeth Cooper or Anne Brewer, if you would like to borrow one of these new books, or one of the older ones come to that! There is a wonderful selection of reading material sitting on the shelves.

From our Besom Link



The AGM of CTD (Churches Together in Dorking) was held recently and below is a copy of the report on Besom. I do hope it explains more of the work that we do.

Veronica Mills

BESOM IN DORKING report for 2014

We've had another busy and rewarding year responding to over 70 referrals for those in need. We thank God for those that have given generously of their things for us to pass on (white goods, furniture, household items) including a large amount of food. We always take a food box to new recipients and this is usually a surprise and gratefully received. I am about to complete my first year heading up the Dorking Besom and I am beginning to know what I am meant to be doing! I am very grateful to my predecessor Jackie Gardner for her on going advice and guidance.

We thank God for the team giving their time and working so hard every Thursday collecting, delivering, cleaning, sorting and polishing. Our prayer time before the day starts is precious and I think we are encouraged and changed through that, and by the work we do. We often offer to pray with those we help and it is rare that this isn't welcomed. We have had a number of referrals who have been in fairly desperate circumstances and it always surprises me to find people of all ages appearing to have almost nothing apart from the clothes they stand up in.

We thank God for new time givers and our Church contacts. We are a truly ecumenical team, our regulars come from 6 different Churches, and we have a Besom contact person in every local Church. We have seen an increase in referrals for those living in the villages, and so it was fantastic that our contacts in Capel, Newdigate, South Holmwood and Westcott, as well as the MU in Bookham, New Life, Quakers, Boxhill Fellowship, St Pauls, URC and Crossways put together most of the 60-70 Christmas Hampers given to our recipients this year. It was great to have such an enthusiastic response from all the congregations doing the Hampers and we have heard moving stories about the reaction of some who received them.

We thank God for answered prayers and His generous provision on which we rely. Besom do not fundraise, however we have been blessed over the years with money given by those wanting to support our work, including one regular amount by standing order, (running costs of circa £550/month covers our rent, van, insurance etc) and so we are very grateful for all donations large and small.

Please pray for our work and for someone to share the day to day running of Besom with me. There will come a time when we will need a successor especially in view of my age!

Jamie Wood

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Reflection from our Elders

Advice and Query Number 7.

Be aware of the spirit of God at work in the ordinary activities and experience of your daily life. Spiritual learning continues throughout life, and often in unexpected ways. There is inspiration to be found all around us, in the natural world, in the sciences and arts, in our work and friendships, in our sorrows as well as in our joys. Are you open to new light, from whatever source it may come? Do you approach new ideas with discernment?