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Quote for the month is from the poem *Emergings* by R S Thomas.

*as form in sculpture is the prisoner
 of the hard rock, so in everyday life
 it is the plain facts and natural happenings
 that conceal God and reveal him to us
 little by little under the mind's tooling.*

Dates for your Diary

Midweek Meeting 12.45-1.15pm	Every Wednesday , followed by simple lunch
Friday 19 October 7.30pm	Meditation Meeting at Meeting House
Friday 2 November 7.30pm	Study Group at Meeting House
Sunday 4 November 9.00am	Preparative Meeting
Saturday 10 November 10.30am	Area Meeting at Dorking
Sunday 11 November 6.30pm	Meeting for Worship at Park House, Leatherhead
Friday 16 November 7.30pm	Meditation Meeting at Meeting House
Saturday 17 November 11.15am	Regional Meeting
Through October to 4 November clothing collection for Gatwick Detainees see page 2.	

Notes from Preparative Meeting

Collections:

September collection for Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) raised £56.
October collection is for Quaker Homeless Action, and **November's** for Quaker Social Action.
Midweek Meeting collected £200 for Dorking Besom and £300 for the new Dorking-based charity 'My Time for Young Carers' (see page 3).

Advices and Queries read in September: Dorking - nos. 10, 22 and 7 Leatherhead - no. 1

Our Treasurer presented the budget for 2013. Our financial position is improving. This is thanks to the generous support of members of the Meeting, and increased lettings income, thanks to our wardens. We have also received in 2012, a welcome £100 from the Butterhill Playgroup towards the turfing of the back lawn in 2011. We agreed to pay off immediately a further £3,000 of the loan from Area Meeting, leaving £12,000 still to pay.

Our Clerk read a draft report on the life of our Meeting over the past 12 months and, with a few amendments, this was welcomed and agreed. The report will be given at November Area Meeting.

Catherine Carr reported on the work of Outreach Committee. They are keen to make outreach relate to the activity of other groups, or areas of work, within the Meeting. For example, they suggest an outreach activity in 2013 relating to the 2013 World Day of Peace, which is being promoted by our P&SW Committee. Outreach Committee have three other ideas for 2013. Other suggestions from Friends included initiating some outreach in the Leatherhead area, focused on the Meeting for Worship there, and supporting Heritage Week again in 2013. A joint meeting

with Elders will review the outreach proposals and, it was hoped, produce some definite proposals for activities and dates, to be included in the 2013 Meeting Events Calendar.

Lois Lodge reported from P&SW Committee on their activities during 2012, and their plans for 2013. The latter includes two events based round the Peace One Day/Global Truce movement, two collections for men's clothes for the Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group (GDWG), and perhaps a visit in April to the dedication of the Quaker Service Memorial. Meanwhile there is to be another collection for the GDWG this month (see below).

Finally we discussed our preferences for an Area Meeting Learning Day in 2013, if one was to be held in Dorking. We feel our Meeting House is ideal for workshop-type events, and suggest the following themes – sustainability; an Appleseed-type exploration of our spiritual lives; a Woodbrooke-on-the-Road event.

Autumn collection of clothes for Gatwick Detainees

Sorting through your wardrobes ready for winter, and got good quality men's items to spare? Know anyone else doing the same?

Bring them to the Meeting House any Sunday up to the 4th November, OR drop them off at Sarah Freeman's garage if there's a lot! She'd appreciate them coming in plastic bags, and a note through the door to let her know they have been delivered. Most of the detainees are at the younger end of the age spectrum so you might need to raid your sons' and grandsons' wardrobes!



Lois Lodge

New Grapevine series – invitation to contribute

Quaker News of Summer 2012 had an article 'Sharing our Quaker stories'. It says *Sharing our stories enables us to see the whole picture, to recognise ourselves and each other as we truly are. Ultimately it is about allowing ourselves to find and greet that of God in all of us.* Your editors thought that the Grapevine might be a good medium for sharing some of our stories, initially based on our experiences around the topics chosen for the recent 'Who do you think we are?' event, namely God, Christianity and Worship. We would welcome contributions for this series – please hand to Anne or email to anne.brewer@phonecoop.coop. To start the ball rolling here is:

Quakers and God – from Sarah Freeman.

I believe in the concept of God and I am convinced of that existence. But I believe that God is far from an embodiment in a spiritual sense and even less so in a material sense. My understanding is very much in tune with the Quaker phrase 'that of God within you' and the fundamental belief we hold that there is that of God in everyone.

I would extend that of God too, to say it can, for me, be in a simple moment, a few words, an attitude, a discovery, a piece of music, an empty beach at sunset or a wooded glade. It can come surprisingly.

I want to tell you how I heard Kofi Annan talking on the Today programme a couple of weeks ago about the situation in the Middle East, and it was one of the most moving conversations I have heard with respect to that conflict. His interviewer was determined to provoke expressions of despair by saying - '*You exercise patience but it gets you nowhere*', but while Kofi Annan agreed there was frustration, his sense of ongoing peaceful means shone through, as he said about elections: '*One has to have the confidence that what they engage in is clean and above board, but to do that they have to have respect for rule of law, and for human rights.*' His conversation with the president: '*we were able to discuss a potentially peaceful plan, political transition, which came out of the Geneva communiqué – I told him that the strong transformational winds blowing through the region cannot be resisted – you cannot bend the wind, so bend the sail and embrace the reform and the change.*' Annan says the president '*sees it in his own way*' and he says '*it is the Syrians I really feel sorry for and I cry for. You have innocent victims caught in the middle.*'

I don't know if it was his words, or his quiet measured tones, but that is the kind of proof to me that there is that of God at work on our planet in surprising ways.

I went through ten years in my life when I intellectually accepted that there was no God. Having grown up in a vicarage, theology was a normal subject in my development, but on a cognitive level, and that didn't work. So from twenty years old I stopped thinking about it. Then came a realisation that I couldn't do without it.

I needed to know God if I was to survive in this life. Quakers provided me with what at first seemed a gentle answer – an acceptance of a spiritual presence, underpinned by the values I revered, of equality, peace, economic justice and sustainability. The God in it all is the certainty that there is an overwhelming principle of love, for people, for the earth we live on and for providing hope and resolution. The Higgs Boson particle which scientists are attempting to understand is also known as the 'God particle', and many people disapprove of the nickname. I puzzled about this, but when I read what the Higgs Particle is claimed to do – to be a 'sticky' field, for example, that enables other particles to form the mass that is us, I can understand why that metaphor has come about. God, for me, is the basic reason why we exist, and the positive force that perpetuates our existence.

As I am in this certainty about God, I can live with hope, and with thankfulness for the amount of genuine goodwill and caring that is in the world. That is very significant, and it is a guiding principle when things are very low.

In due course I came to clearly understand the presence of God when there is savagery too - the very powerful words that George Fox spoke, about the darkness and the light, and how his faith convinced him the light was the most powerful. George Fox was the 17th century founder of the Quakers, and went through periods of extreme anguish in his early ministry and imprisonments. During one time, of what he called inward suffering, he said:

... the Lord answered that it was needful I should have a sense of all conditions, how else should I speak to all conditions; and in this I saw the infinite love of God. I saw also that there was an ocean of darkness and death, but an infinite ocean of light and love, which flowed over the ocean of darkness. And in that also I saw the infinite love of God; and I had great openings.

I know that it seems that we are losing sight of the old-fashioned notion of God, and the saving grace of God. There are many tragedies, and they leave many people bereft in every sense. But I think we have to remember that there is quiet, considered work going on all the time, in many different ways, to make the world a better place, and that of God is interwoven into that.

I hope I have been able to convey a little sense of what I think God is about for me as a Quaker.

Appeal for children's class from Catherine Carr

Sunday 4th November in children's class we will be making up containers with bird food – a mixture of seeds and fats for the colder weather. I hope we will be selling them at the meeting.



I'd be grateful if people have any interesting containers - such as coconut shells - that could be used, if they could bring them in, preferably in advance of the 4th so I can work out what is needed. Also if anyone has a source of cheap bird seed, could they let me know?

My Time for Young Carers



My Time runs free clubs and school holiday activities for young people aged 8 to 12, with caring responsibilities. From early in 2013 a new group will meet at Dorking United Reformed Church on the 2nd Wednesday of each month, from 5.30 to 7.00pm.

Mid-week Meeting has raised £300 towards the start-up costs of this charity in Dorking. Members might like to know that **volunteers are also needed - to drive young people to and from sessions and help run activities.**

Please contact Ted on 01306 889501, or email tedbellingham@aol.com, for more information.

Library books

We have recently been given several new books for the library, but sadly only one book has been borrowed in the last 3 months 😞! Below is a list of the recently added books and from now on, the librarians will put out a selection of either new or topical books, on the library table, on Sundays, to tempt you into borrowing one!

The Quakers – The American Religious Experience

Women and Quakerism in the 17th Century

Two weeks in May 1945 – Sandbosgel Concentration Camp and the FAU

Listening for the Voice of Truth – Bible lessons from a 2009 Annual Gathering of Friends in the USA

Seekers Found – Atonement in early Quaker experience

Quaker Footprints – the story of Beccles Quaker Meeting

Quakers and Christianity – a different way of understanding Revelation

A View of the Ocean – an autobiography of Jan de Hartog and his discovery of Quakerism

Where do I belong? A Refugee's Life – the story of Shabibi Shah from Afghanistan who came to talk to the meeting on refugees and asylum seekers, organised by our P&SW Committee last October.

If you want a book on a particular Quakerly topic do talk to Rachel Fardon, who is always on duty at the library table. With the help of our up-to-date and comprehensively indexed catalogue, she will probably be able to find you some relevant titles, as our library is very well-stocked.

A poem from a visitor

Sue Norris, a Quaker friend of Anne and Colin Brewer from St Helens, Lancashire, who lives with autism and cerebral palsy, visited the Meeting a few weeks ago and spent her time with the children's meeting. She has sent us the following poem in which she recorded her impressions of the event.

I came

I saw

I felt

I knew

I heard

I went

will keep in my heart
the gathered meeting
the children
as wee babies sleeping
the garden

till next time
I can reflect on the hill

Reflections ... On the theme of "Listening"

From Friends Quarterly (2012 no.3) by Geoffrey Durham:

If love is often the first motion, kindness is never far behind and both are to be found, above all, in listening. Quakers listen. It is part of what it means to be a Quaker today.

Or more succinctlysome words I found on the counter of a repair shop in Kingston:

For loving enough to care

For caring enough to listen

For listening enough to understand

Thank you.

(Source unknown)

Mary Brooks, on behalf of Elders