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 Publisher: Rachel Fardon
 Distributor: Mary Brooks

December 2013
 No. 474

Quote for the month comes from the editors.

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Dates for your Diary

Midweek Meeting	12.45-1.15pm	Every Wednesday followed by simple lunch
Friday 6 Dec	7.30pm	Study Group at Meeting House on Food Banks
Sunday 8 Dec	6.30pm	Meeting for Worship at Park House, Leatherhead
Friday 20 Dec	7.30-9.00pm	Meditation Meeting in Meeting House
Sun 22 Dec	12 noon	Carols and mince pies in Meeting House
Wed 25 Dec	10.30-11.00am	Christmas Meeting for Worship in Meeting House
Fri 3 Jan	7.30pm	Study Group in Meeting House
Mon 6 Jan	8.30-9.00pm	Healing prayer Group in Friends' own homes
Sat 11 Jan	3.00-5.30pm	All age party at Meeting House
Sun 12 Jan	6.30pm	Meeting for Worship at Park House, Leatherhead
Sun 19 Jan	9.00am	Preparative Meeting at Meeting House

The collection in **October and November** for **Quaker Social Action** raised **£210**.

A reminder that the collection in **December**, chosen by our Young Friends, is for UNICEF UK - Syria children's appeal - don't forget to put your spare coins in your jam jar and bring to meeting at end of December/early January.

Notes from the 'extra' Preparative Meeting ...

arranged to approve the list of nominations for the Meeting, which is attached to your Grapevine with our Meeting's annual report on the reverse side and a separate A5 events calendar for 2014.

Nominations brought forward the **proposal that the Peace and Social Witness and Outreach Committees should work together as one Committee**. This caused a lot of discussion. There was concern that outreach is wider than witness and that it should mainly seek to respond to a widespread spiritual hunger - many people are seeking for a meaningful way of worship, and the Quaker way might well appeal to them. Rachel Hope pointed out that this was confirmed on a new DVD from Quaker Quest where Friends shared their path into membership. Nonetheless several Friends felt that events such as the recent Peace One Day could be an effective form of outreach, as they draw attention to Quakers and show how they have been inspired by their form of worship to offer service in the areas of peace and social witness. This encourages people to explore Quakerism further. Outreach of all sorts is important as the number of members in our Society steadily declines. Quaker lapel badges, opening the Meeting House over Heritage weekends, and taking advantage of Quaker week resources were all avenues for outreach. Would the proposed joint committee carry out the required variety of work? It was agreed that the five Friends comprising the two committees should meet and see if, together, they can come up with suggestions for 2014 of three or four activities, covering the suggested variety of approaches, to bring to PM on January 19th.

It was noted that **Premises and Finance Committee** was a very small group and that they should draw on other Friends for help when needed.

Children and Young people's Committee is currently composed largely of parents. They will discuss in February how they would like to operate, and they will report back to PM whether they need more support from Committee members who are not currently parents of young children.

The presence of an attender on our **Nominations Committee** has been approved by the Recording Clerk's Office. A Friend queried the presence of the Clerk on Nominations Committee, as this was not recommended in a Quaker booklet on nominations. However, past Committees have valued the presence of the Clerk, with their knowledge of procedures and overview of the Meeting's activities, and it was agreed to continue this practice.

We have been asked to decide whether we wish to host the **November 2014 ABM** on Saturday or Sunday. We considered the matter and agreed to choose the Saturday (15th). We are also asked to offer a programme for the day, and – as a start – we agreed to have the Business Meeting in the morning, provide a lunch and arrange a Fellowship session in the afternoon.

We have received from the Recording Clerk a briefing paper titled ***Is it time to begin a revision of Quaker Faith & Practice?*** Responses were requested by 30 November. We considered the seven queries and came up with the following general comments: QF&P is much used and valued in our Meeting. We would prefer it to be issued in 2 parts as has been done previously – one section on Church Government, perhaps in a loose-leaf form as it is frequently revised often for legal reasons, and the other, inspirational section, in book form. The latter part we felt should include more about caring for our planet, following up the Canterbury Commitment of YM 2011 to become a low-carbon community. We agreed that the issuing of Advices and Queries in a separate free booklet provided an excellent resource for Outreach.

Congratulations!

Ruth and Gordon Little celebrate their Diamond Wedding at year's end. Marrying, in 1953, on 30 December may be seasonally inconvenient for family and friends, but it enabled them to share anniversaries with Coronation Year.



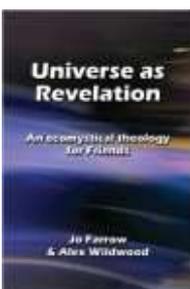
The north-easterners met as students in Newcastle. After stints in Buckinghamshire, Bermuda and Kent, Gordon's civil engineering job brought them to Bookham in 1970.

Ruth, whose father belonged to Newcastle Meeting, joined Dorking where she remains a steadfast member. She has served in roles including clerk and elder and more recently on the Quaker Quest outreach courses for people interested in Friends.

In 1980, with younger daughter Alison a vision in salmon pink as bridesmaid, the Meeting House hosted the wedding of older daughter Julienne (aka Julie) and Geoff. Many Friends were there and spoke beautifully. Julie now presides over other people's weddings as Registering Officer for North Lancashire Area Meeting. But in June 2014 her role will be simply Mother of the Groom when son Simon marries Gemma in an Oxfordshire barn. It is hoped the youngsters will be inspired by his grandparents' happy and enduring marriage, throughout which Ruth and Gordon have never lost their curiosity about the world and which, as they face the challenges of aging, continues to evolve in depth and meaning.

Alison Little

Exciting new library book



Anne Davies has kindly donated to our library a copy of *Universe as Revelation: An ecomystical theology for Friends* by Jo Farrow and Alex Wildwood. Lucky me gets to read new books, to decide where in the catalogue they should be listed, and this one was a joy to read. The title may sound daunting but it's an inspiring exploration of the human dilemma arising because we are in a time when the stories of how and why we are here are changing. The new understanding coming from scientific disciplines, of how our universe originated and how everything in it is inter-connected, is making the old stories or 'myths' untenable to many, and the authors show how a new story, which still has a sacred dimension, is emerging. (Code SQ.92, shelf 7)

Anne Brewer

What canst thou cook?

As we will all be spending extra time in the kitchen in the run-up to Christmas, I thought you might enjoy these extracts from a cookery book published a while ago by St Alban's Friends to raise funds for their building work.



The Advices and Queries of Quaker Cuisine

In cooking we risk indigestion as well as finding joy...

Bear the burden of each other's burnt offerings and pray for one another.

Therefore dear Friends, cook in the light, that the recipe may be clearly legible.

Pray that in your final years you may be enabled to find new recipes for easily-digestible meals.

Receive unwanted cooking advice in a tender and creative spirit.

Be honest with yourself. What unpalatable meals might you be cooking?

Has convenience cooking been advancing among you?

Are you able to contemplate your meals, and the meals of those closest to you?

Consider the wishes and feelings of any children involved, and remember their enduring need for security and pizza.

In what ways are you involved in the work of reconciliation between warring cooks?

Bear witness to the humanity of all people including those who can't or won't cook.

If your relationship with your partner is under strain, seek help in understanding the other's slapdash way of cooking and in exploring your own feelings which may be powerful and destructive.

(Copies of the real Advices and Queries are available free from Dorking Meeting House and from Leatherhead Meeting)

Happy Christmas to everyone. Rachel Hope

Churches Together in Dorking: News from November meeting

Surrey Faith Links

There was discussion about the presentation by the Surrey Faith Links Adviser at the previous meeting. Did CTD want to respond/become involved and if so how? I, as your Quaker rep, sang the praises of the Surrey Faith Links Newsletter. Just by reading it you become more aware of other faiths and what they stand for, eg Mitzvah Day (Jewish led day of social action) and Sewa Day (www.sewaday.org).

Sewa is a universal concept, which involves performing an act of kindness without expectation of reward. As a concept Sewa is embedded in Indian traditions, and actively promoted by different cultures and faiths – as the core belief is the same – to sacrifice your time and resources for the benefit of others without wanting anything in return. It seems to fall within Quaker week – wouldn't it be great to join in such an initiative?

Suggestions were made as to how/when CTD could engage with Faith Links, as follows:

- Invite speakers from other religions through Faith Links. A target day for this might be International Day of Peace.
- Abrahamic sub group of all faiths to compare and contrast religious texts (a 'One God Group').
- In view of the marking of the beginning of WW1 in 2014, perhaps an event to explore different views of 'Just War' and/or the alternatives.

This led into discussion of the role/approach that CTD should take to the marking of the start of WW1. Words such as Remembrance, Reflection, Reconciliation, and Repentance came up, with the possibility of an associated event (+/- other faiths). The national plans for marking the start of WW1 weren't known (at the meeting), so this issue will be returned to at the next meeting.

I was asked, and agreed, to be the advocate for Surrey Faith Links, including circulation of the Newsletter.

Peace One Day

In view of the success of our efforts in 2013, there was a desire to continue involvement in this movement. I was asked to come to the next CTD meeting with ideas.

Street Pastors

This project is going well. They are out on the streets fortnightly, and could do with another 7 - 8 volunteers.

There was comment that because of Street Pastors, Besom and Be@titudes, the relationship with the local authority and police has improved. Churches are seen to be relevant players in the local community.

Christmas events

- Carols on Gala Night 5 Dec at 6 – 6.20pm.
- Carol service on Ranmore Ward, Dorking Hospital, 12 December at 3pm, with rehearsal of choir beforehand. If you want to be in the choir, contact shona@stpaulsdorking.org.uk
- Nativity scene at Old Bandstand led by Crossways church. Will be up from 4 Dec – 6 Jan.
- Lantern procession, 14 December, will be in Meadowbank.
- Watchnight service at St Martin's on New Year's Eve (11.15pm).

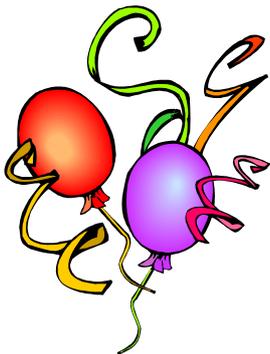
Ecumenical Lent groups

Elizabeth Dobson will pursue this with the possibility that the subject will be Churches Together in Britain and Ireland material on the right attitude to money.

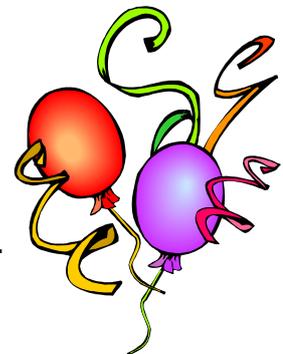
Opinion

There was a more positive feeling to the CTD meeting this time, with a feeling by those present that churches are making a difference in Dorking. There is huge potential for working together next year and witnessing for peace.

Lois Lodge



Don't forget our
NEW YEAR PARTY
Saturday 11 January
3 TO 5.30 pm
 at the Meeting House



Party Tea, Games, Quizzes and more ...

All ages welcome!

PS. If you would like to, please send a photo of yourself as a young child or baby, to Trish Humphreys for a 'guess who it is quiz'!

Reflections from our Elders

What stops us from confidently expressing our faith? I believe it is because we are not confident in our faith and not confident in the consequences of bearing witness to our faith. We need to express clearly that the basis of our faith, our witness and our action is our inward spiritual experience and the transformation which is at the core of that experience. Simon Best

Final paragraph of series of articles, **British Quakers Mission and Message** published in The Friend 22.11.13