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*Love and best wishes to Rachel Fardon who is in Epsom Hospital undergoing a series of tests for the cause of her recent spate of falls, and with a nasty chest infection.

Quote for the month from *The Messiah's Handbook* featured in *Illusions (The Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah)* by Richard Bach "Your only obligation in any lifetime is to be true to yourself."

Dates for your Diary

Midweek Meeting	12.45-1.15pm	Every Wednesday , followed by simple lunch
Saturday 10 Jan	3.00-5.30pm	All-age party at Meeting House
Sunday 11 Jan	6.30pm	Meeting for Worship at Park House, Leatherhead
Friday 16 Jan	2.30-5.00pm	Meditation Meeting in Meeting House
Sunday 18 Jan	9.00am	Preparative Meeting in Meeting House – see below
Sunday 18 Jan	2.00pm	Special Area Meeting at Ifield – see page 2
Friday 6 Feb	7.30pm	Study Group in Meeting House
Sunday 8 Feb	6.30pm	Meeting for Worship at Park House, Leatherhead

The collection in January and February will be for **Woodbrooke**, Europe's only Quaker Study Centre, offering adult education since 1903. Here you can experience short courses on personal spiritual growth, theology, creative arts, and training for Quaker roles in a really wonderful setting and a supportive atmosphere. Woodbrooke is very grateful for financial support from Quaker Meetings.



Preparative Meeting – Sunday 18 January

Our next Preparative Meeting on Sunday 18 January will consider our input to the national consultation on the way ahead for Quakers in Britain, 2015 - 2020. The consultation letter from the long-term framework working group 'asks local meetings, area meetings and other Quaker groups and individuals to discern what Quakers in Britain are led to do together', and sets out the following four questions to assist us in our discernment.

- What is distinctive about Quaker work and witness, to us and to others?
- What is your vision of the ministry that your local meeting and Quakers in Britain are called to, now and in the future?
- What are we led to do together?
- How could Quaker structures and networks help Quakers in Britain to flourish?

It would be very helpful for Friends who wish to participate in this to take time to read the consultation letter. This has been circulated to those on email and some printed copies will be available at Meeting on 11 January. For those with a computer you can find the document here:

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/sites/default/files/Way%20ahead%20letter%20and%20guidance.pdf>

or for more context and information about the process, you could visit the special webpage for this: <http://www.quaker.org.uk/way-ahead>.

We look forward to a rich discussion on 18th January. An agenda for the meeting will be circulated by email in the week beforehand as usual but this is expected to be the main item.

Sophie Dodgeon, Assistant Clerk.

Area Business Meeting - Sunday 18 January

2pm at Ifield MH

There are two major items on the agenda.

1. Trustees

We need to consider the implications of the following, which has been extracted from the minutes of the Trustees' Meeting of 16 November 2014:

We have now been advised that, "... the Trustees of Britain Yearly Meeting have agreed to offer to the Trustees of West Weald Area Quaker Meeting a loan in the sum of up to £150,000, to be used specifically and only for the restoration of the Blue Idol currently being carried out", against the sale of the Oxted property at an appropriate date.

... The Trustees of West Weald Area Quaker Meeting ... are, in principle, happy to accept the loan on the terms and conditions set out.

Trustees will consult their solicitor about the wording of the terms and conditions of the agreement and will call a special Area Meeting to take place at Ifield on Sunday, 18th January, 2015, at which we will recommend that Friends endorse the Trustees' acceptance of the offer. ...



The former Oxted Quaker Meeting House

Our agreement to accept this loan also signifies West Weald's agreement to sell the Oxted property at some future time.

2. Discussion on the future natures of ABMs.

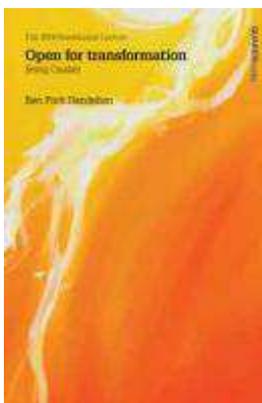
Please bring ideas as to how we can bring more life into our Area Business Meetings. If you are unable to attend, please send in your thoughts and ideas to me or anyone else who can come to the meeting on the 18th.

Lunch is at 1pm - some food will be provided, but you may prefer to bring your own.

Roger Baker (AM Clerk)

An appreciation of the 2013 and 2014 Swarthmore lectures

Journey into Life by Gerald Hewitson (book of the 2013 Swarthmore Lecture) and *Open for Transformation* by Ben Pink Dandelion (book of the 2014 Swarthmore Lecture) both seem to me to draw timely attention in completely different ways to our first Advice and Query:



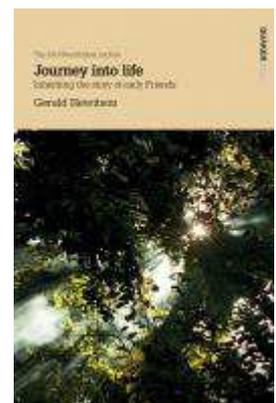
Take heed, dear Friends, to the promptings of love and truth in your hearts. Trust them as the leadings of God whose Light shows us our darkness and brings us to new life.

However we might attempt to visualise the concept behind the word 'God' in this Advice I feel sure that it is because we 'take heed of' and, importantly, act on these promptings of love and truth, that our efforts to help alleviate the multiple problems affecting human civilisation at this time, stand a better chance of being effective.

So I was pleased to read these two very different lectures, both highlighting the importance of this fundamental aspect of Quakerism.

They are based on the conviction that acknowledging and 'communing with' that divine mystery, will, through the promptings in our hearts, lovingly guide us to make full use of our gifts, our talents and even what we might consider our failings, to bring the 'kingdom of God' to life.

I found both these books quite challenging to read but worthwhile, because they revitalised my faith in the importance of giving space in my life for nurturing my spiritual roots.



Anne Brewer

Thinking Ahead

The earliest Quakers faced a dilemma. When someone died what could they do? Friends were dissenters and could not be buried in the churchyard. So the earliest properties Friends ever administered were burial grounds if a sympathetic local farmer made a piece of land available.

Our first burial ground in this area was at Richard Bax's farm near Capel. We have a photograph of it and a list of internments in the archives. As Meeting Houses were built, they had a burial ground nearby.

Quakers today face a different dilemma. Our burial ground here at Dorking was closed many years ago but is available for the burial of ashes. The burial grounds at Capel and Reigate have a few spaces left for members.

Quakers today have frequently favoured cremation but are increasingly drawn to natural burial. The space set aside by the Council in Mole Valley for natural burial is reducing quite quickly. There is, however, a new Natural Burial Reserve at Clandon Wood (near Guildford) www.clandonwood.com. You can get more information at info@clandonwood.com or telephone 01483 479614. If Friends who lack their own transport would like to visit this place, the Elders are willing to organise a group visit. Telephone me 01372 454363.



It is extremely helpful when you are planning ahead if you would fill in a form, *Advance Information for Funerals*. You can find the forms in the Information Centre. It will help the Elders in making arrangements if their help is requested. Put the completed form in an envelope with your name on the front. It will be held in our locked filing cabinet at Dorking and only opened when it is needed. If you would like to discuss anything with the Elders, we are always available.

Rachel Hope (for Dorking Elders)

Notices from Churches Together in Dorking

CTD service of Worship and Prayer for Dorking at St Martins Church on Sunday 18 January at 6.30pm. The **AGM** will be held on Wednesday 28 January, 7.30 for 7.45pm at the Christian Centre.

Reflection from our Elders

From Quaker Faith & Practice 2.47

Does punctuality matter? It's not merely a question of disturbing the peace and quiet of those already assembled... What is on my mind is more than that. If we were coming together to worship individually, each to enter into his or her private meditation, then it wouldn't much matter whether all arrived by the appointed time. In private meditation the worshippers could each "settle" separately, training themselves not to be disturbed by latecomers. But if our goal is to achieve a group mystical experience, deepening and enriching our individual experience, then, it seems to me, we need to start the process at the same time.

A "gathered" Quaker meeting is something more than a number of individuals sitting down together but meditating individually. So long as each sits in meditation in the way one does when worshipping by oneself, the worship will seldom reach that greater depth which a Quaker meeting at its best achieves. The goal of a truly "gathered" meeting is to become fused into something bigger than the sum of the parts....

As a meeting "gathers", as each individual "centres down", there gradually develops a feeling of belonging to a group who are together seeking a sense of the Presence. The "I" in us begins to feel like "we". At some point – it may be early in the meeting or it may be later, or it may never occur at all – we may suddenly feel a sense of unity, a sense of togetherness with one another and with that something outside ourselves that we call God.

Rachel Hope on behalf of Elders

DORKING QUAKER MEETING 2015

Elders: Rosemary Elias
Rachel Hope
Bob Humphreys

Overseers: Colin Brewer
Jan Elias
Trish Humphreys
Frances Poulton

Clerk: Richard Bass
Assistant Clerk: Sophie Dodgeon

Treasurer: Rosemary Elias

Local Meeting Committees:

Catering Co-ordinators Eleanor Campbell, Frances Poulton

Children & Young People Gayle Banks, Alison Carlier, Sophie Dodgeon, Judith Martin (tbc Jan PM), Katy Nunn, Rosemary Elias (ex-officio, Elder)

Peace & Social Witness Lesley Hunka, Lois Lodge

Nominations Clerk (ex officio)
Gayle Banks (to 31/12/15)
Catherine Carr (to 31/12/16)
Colin Hope (to 31/12/17)

Premises & Finance Su Johnston, Keith Poulton, Treasurer (ex officio), Wardens

Outreach Alison Carlier, Catherine Carr, Sally Elias, Lois Lodge

Wardens' Support Group Margaret Lawson

Other LM appointments

Besom Link Veronica Mills

Independent Examiner Keith Poulton

Library Anne Brewer, Rachel Fardon

Grapevine Anne Brewer, Sarah Freeman (editors)
Rachel Fardon (production)
Mary Brooks (Distributor)

Quaker Information Centre Rachel Fardon

Rota Makers Inner and Outer Doorkeepers Gill Whitman
Sunday Teas and Flowers Sheila Bowers

Traidcraft Link Anne Davies

Appointed Representatives on other organisations

Churches Together in Dorking Lois Lodge

Women's World Day of Prayer Sheila Bowers (tbc Jan PM)

Friends serving Area Meeting

AM Finance Advisory Officer Rosemary Elias

AM Membership Clerk Colin Brewer

Contact List Compiler Colin Brewer

Governor of William Penn School Colin Hope

Handbook Keeper Anne Brewer

Keeper of Records Colin Brewer

Meeting for Sufferings Rep Sarah Freeman

RM Arrangements Committee Anne Davies

Registering Officer and Deputy Rosemary Elias and Jan Elias

Safeguarding Coordinator Bob Humphreys

Trustees Su Johnston, Richard Bass

Young Friends events coordinator Trish Humphrey