



THE DORKING GRAPEVINE

Dorking Quaker Meeting

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Publisher: Colin and Anne Brewer
Distributor: Mary Brooks

November 2016
No 505

Dates for your Diary

Venue is the Meeting House unless otherwise stated.

Midweek Meeting	12.45-1.15pm	Every Wednesday , followed by simple lunch
Sat 12 November	11.00-1.00pm	Area Meeting at Reigate MH
Sun 13 November	6.30pm	Meeting for Worship at Park House, Leatherhead
Fri 18 November	2.30-4.00pm	Meditation and Spiritual Exploration
Sat 19 November	11.00am	Regional Meeting at Godalming Woodbrooke on the Road – <i>Exploring QF&P</i>
Sun 4 December	9.30am	Reading QF&P – chapters 1, 4, and 24
Mon 5 December	8.30-9.00pm	Healing Prayer Group – in members' own homes
Sun 11 December	6.30pm	Meeting for Worship at Park House, Leatherhead
Sun 11 December	After MfW	Traidcraft stall

Preparative Meetings – Sunday 23 October and Sunday 6 November

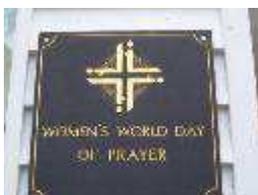
Special PM, 23 October to discuss expenditure, proposed by Premises Committee, on two projects which needed to get under way as soon as possible.

1. The cottage is now empty and has been deep cleaned, but some redecoration is needed before it can be let. The Committee has obtained three quotations for this work, and we agreed to accept the lowest at £2975. Re-decoration will start at once and should take about two weeks.
2. A few repair jobs need to be carried out, primarily electrical and plumbing. The Committee estimates that the total cost will be around £1000. A budget of up to £1500 was authorised in case the cost is a little higher than anticipated.

PM, Sunday 6 November

Advices and Queries read: Dorking Sunday: Sept No.8, Oct None. Dorking Wednesday: Sept Nos.24 and 28, Oct None. Leatherhead: Sept No.5, Oct None.

Friends were happy for Dorking Meeting to join in with the **National Day of Healing Prayer** proposed by the Friends Fellowship of Healing, on **Saturday 18 March 2017** from 11.00am to 4.00pm. Meeting Houses are invited to make their buildings available for people to drop in for as long as they wish during that period. In view of the issues currently troubling the world, the Dorking Healing Prayer Group will arrange for a Meeting for Worship in our large Meeting Room, focussed on "holding in the light" all those suffering from the impacts of war, conflict and natural disasters, and all forms of life which are being affected by the damage humans are causing to the planet. The group will draw up a rota, so that at least two responsible Friends are always present. They will invite members of other churches, and members of the general public, to join in, by means of an article in the local press.



Anne Brewer explained that we are due to host the **Women's World Day of Prayer on Friday 3 March 2017**. The service takes place in the morning from 11.00 to about 12.00. The Play Group will be cancelled for that day. It is usual for churches hosting the Women's World Day of Prayer to host the **Lent Lunch** on the same day but we do not have the necessary space to offer this. We would be happy to host the Lent Lunch on 7 April, which is during the Easter holidays when the Play Group would not be in session.

We would like to offer some hospitality, maybe refreshments before the start of the Service. Anne, who will be our rep on the Women's World Day of Prayer committee in 2017, will discuss this with the committee.

Catherine Carr introduced the list of **nominations for 2017**. The committee was grateful for the offers of service received in response to their appeal and were happy to say that most roles had been filled. However more people are needed on Premises and Finance Committee, and new members are being sought for this. When it becomes clear what new tasks the committee needs to undertake in our changed circumstance, a meeting will be arranged to outline these tasks and hopefully Friends will be able to volunteer for some of them. We will have in 2017 only two Elders and two Overseers, so they will aim to work closely together to provide mutual support. The two retiring Elders, Rachel and Romy, will organise any funeral services that may be needed in 2017, to help the new Elders find their way into that aspect of the work.

(There is a list of the 2017 appointments attached to this Grapevine for Meeting members, and on the reverse an account of the work of Dorking Besom, so as to make good use of the paper!)

Colin Hope, as Clerk, presented a **report on the life of Dorking Meeting** over the past year, to be presented to AM on 6 November. This was appreciated and approved.

Judy Johnson outlined the current work of **Premises Committee and Finance Committee**:

- 1) Redecoration of **the cottage** is now under way. This will include sanding and varnishing the floors of two rooms which have original floorboards. The remaining rooms, passages and stairs will then be carpeted. The cost of £1104, including VAT, for the carpets and underlay, plus smaller sums for fitting, and the removal and disposal of the old carpets, was approved.
- 2) The Playgroup are pleased to have use of the **big shed** at the back of the garden, instead of the small shed in front of the cottage. However, the wooden blocks previously stored in the small shed are on a wheeled platform which cannot be wheeled into the big shed, which is raised off the ground, so they have at present been put behind the garden door. Jan Elias and Colin Brewer will look at the best way of dealing with this without providing an additional shed.
- 3) There is a **crack in the wall at the bottom of the front steps**, and this appears to be getting worse. Professional advice as to the best way to deal with this will be sought, and a budget of £500 was authorised for this purpose.
- 4) **The floor in the small hall** has recently been sanded and sealed at a cost of £330, but it needs further work to complete the task to a satisfactory standard. Carsons Flooring did the last major work on this floor in 2002, and we agreed to accept their quote of £1200 plus VAT to do the job, probably in the next two or three weeks.

Catherine Carr told us about an idea from **Outreach Committee**, to have an artistic light installation to draw attention to the Meeting House. It was agreed they look into this and the alternative option of a banner, and come back to PM with more details.

There was some discussion about the **piano**. It is rarely used and damages the floor when moved about. It is needed for the Womens World Day of Prayer on March 3rd 2017 but will be disposed of after that. We will hire or borrow an electric piano or keyboard on future occasions.



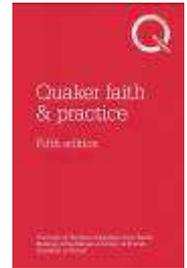
New Year's Party

The New Year's Party, traditionally held on the second Saturday of January has, in recent years, been organised by the Children and Young People's committee. The date of the party has migrated backwards a bit and has been held in February for the last couple of years. Some people have noted that it has also become rather child-focused. This is probably to be expected but, given that attendance has fallen in the last couple of years, we wonder if it has put some people off. And we wonder what to do about it. The first option is to keep it as an all-age party, in which case we would welcome feedback as to how we might make it more appealing to older Friends. We would also welcome any offers of help organising it. The second option would be for the CYP committee to organise a party primarily for the children and young people (though you would of course all be invited!). Please do let me know your thoughts! Thank you.

Katy Nunn

Report of *Meet the Overseers* on Sunday 23 October

Nineteen friends attended this rewarding afternoon, after a friendly shared lunch. We were guided through the discussion by Lois, who was moved to set up the Meeting after her study of Chapter 12: *Caring for one another*, in Quaker Faith and Practice (QF&P), which makes clear that pastoral care within a Meeting is important and quite demanding – daunting, as one Overseer commented! However, while overseers are responsible for ensuring the various tasks are carried out, they are not expected to do it all themselves.



Our three serving Overseers shared their experience of the role. Some points they raised:-

- Being an Overseer is a privilege, and helpful in enabling getting to know individuals in the Meeting. It could help the building of a caring community if everyone had a turn at the role.
- It is impossible for the Overseers to carry out all the responsibilities listed in QF&P and they are very grateful to others who help, and hope that sharing of the task will be encouraged.
- Communication needs to be two-way. Overseers can't offer caring if unaware of a problem.
- It is difficult to know when and whether to contact Friends who have not been seen for a while – tact and sensitivity are needed, as some people prefer to be left alone at times.
- They do their best but, like everyone else, Overseers are fallible and can make mistakes.

Next, we heard contributions from Friends who have been cared for. It was evident that Overseers, backed up by members of the Meeting and the healing prayer group, have done an excellent job in helping many Friends to feel well supported. Cards initiated by Overseers and signed by all members of the Meeting were much appreciated by recipients.

We discussed some problems raised:-

- Confidentiality – a Friend may be told by another of their problems but be reluctant to pass the information on to Overseers as it feels like a breach of confidence.
- In some cases, such as mental health problems, Overseers can be out of their depth as specialist knowledge is needed.
- Those who come regularly to Meeting are usually well-cared for by the community as their problems such as accident or illness are quickly apparent. However those who are unable to attend regularly can slip through the caring net, especially if they live on their own.
- The Meeting is roughly the same size as 20 years ago, but we have half as many serving Elders and Overseers. Fewer members have the time and/or energy needed to serve. We need to explore other ways of working, to ensure we continue to function as a community.

... and looked at possible solutions:-

- A regular piece in the Grapevine naming the current Overseers and reminding Friends that, if they have a problem they would like to talk over or need some practical help, then any of the Overseers would be pleased to hear from them.
- Ensuring that all those appointed to serve as Overseers are encouraged, and given financial assistance, to attend one of the training courses at Woodbrooke or elsewhere.
- An Overseer who has visited a Friend currently housebound or in hospital, and knows they would appreciate further visits, could either ask in notices for anyone willing, or approach specific individuals who they know are known to the Friend in question.
- Wednesday Meeting, Leatherhead Meeting and the group of parents of the Meeting's children are very supportive of their 'membership'. It is helpful to Overseers to be aware of these mutually supportive groups within the Meeting community.
- Sharing meals is one good way for people to get to know each other, and knowing each other helps build mutual love and trust, which leads to a culture of natural, informal caring.
- The Grapevine keeps remote members in touch with the Meeting, and it is a good idea if someone periodically contacts the recipients to check that they are happy with the way they receive it (email, post or via the Meeting House).
- The notice board of Friends' photos needs updating. It helps new attenders put names to faces. It might be helpful to indicate on the board who is serving as Elder or Overseer.
- We need to ensure anyone new to the Meeting is made welcome. Several Friends stressed the importance of the warm welcome they had received when they first came. However, sensitivity is needed - some people prefer to come and go without being cornered!
- Can we think of a better name than Overseers, which can be a bit off-putting.

Many thanks to Lois for organising the session and to our serving Overseers (Trish, Colin (B) and Frances) for all the work they do, much of which is not visible to the rest of the Meeting.

Anne Brewer

Marking Peace Day

Katy Nunn sent an account of her family's lovely activity:



As usual, 'Peace Day' was on 21st September. We felt as a family that we would like to mark it in some way (I wish I could say our home was a wonderfully peaceful haven that day but the testimony of truth prevents it...).

Organised as I am, our preparations were rather hurried in the end, thrown up before we left for school in the morning, but we did hang out a banner to let people know it was peace day. As we are on the route that many of the children at St Martin's school take to school, I thought at least a fair few people would see it. Barely had we tied it up than someone working in one of the gardens across the road called out "I believe in

Peace, thanks for putting that up". Thomas and I grinned at each other. Such a small thing, so hurriedly executed, but we knew at least one person had appreciated it. Made my day. You never know, I suppose, what ripples your pebble might make.

We had hung some doves in our trees as well, and, remembering a couple of years ago when we had done something similar with others from Dorking Meeting, I left some cut out dove shapes and paper for the wings, with a note inviting people to take one, make a dove to hang up, or write their messages for peace on it. No one added to our doves fluttering in the breeze that day. But when I took it all in the following day, I noticed that some of the doves had been taken, so you never know. Ripples...



And Colin Hope has drawn attention to the following email from Chris Pettit, whom he knows well. He is a retired professional photographer who spent several days filming a Quaker Quest video for Colin and Rachel (free of charge) a few years ago.

"You may be interested in this new documentary: <https://youtu.be/GufF06mb7eg>. This short film tells the story of an almost forgotten gathering of Conscientious Objectors in World War One at the old Quaker HQ, Devonshire House in Bishopsgate. They represented a small minority who defied the 1916 Military Service Act - the law that introduced Conscription to Britain for the first time. Members and supporters of the 'No Conscription Fellowship', they were determined to stand by their religious and political convictions, whatever the penalties. In doing so they faced intense public hostility, ridicule, violence and even death.

Feel free to share this film as you wish. More films on the theme of war and peace are available at: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLBVWk2xJ1sGjmv5ks2qDDBWPC-m6x086l>".

Reflection from our Elders

I have over the years found the writings of William Penn (1644 - 1718), in Quaker Faith and Practice, really helpful. Penn, as many of you will know, was a local Friend who helped establish the Blue Idol Meeting, which is in our Area Meeting just outside Billingshurst, and he also founded Pennsylvania.

I particularly value what he wrote about marriage at QF&P 22.35, and death at 22.95, and also about Quaker worship at 28.02:

"When you come to your meetings ... what do you do? Do you then gather together bodily only, and kindle a fire, compassing yourselves with the sparks of your own kindling, and so please yourself ...? Or rather do you sit down in the true silence, resting from your own will and workings, and waiting upon the Lord, with your minds fixed in that Light wherewith Christ has enlightened you ... and prepares you, and your spirits and souls, to make you fit for his service?" William Penn 1677

Romy Elias on behalf of Elders