



Guest editor: Elizabeth Cooper
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March 2018
 No. 519

Quakers: Simple, Radical and Contemporary

Events for March - in Meeting House unless otherwise indicated

NB There is a half hour Meeting for Worship (12.45 – 1.15 pm) **every Wednesday** followed by a simple lunch of soup, bread, cheese and fruit.

Fri 2 Mar	11 am	Women's World Day of Prayer (<i>St Martin's Church</i>)
Sat 3 Mar	11 – 3 pm	National Quaker Day of Healing Prayer
Sun 4 Mar	9 am	Preparative Meeting
Mon 5 Mar	8.30 – 9 pm	Healing/Upholding Prayer Group (<i>in Friend's homes</i>)
Sun 11 Mar	12.15 – 13.30 pm	Area Meeting (<i>Ifield MH</i>)
Sun 11 Mar	6.30 – 7.30 pm	MfW (<i>Park House, Leatherhead</i>)
Fri 16 Mar	2.30 – 4 pm	Meditation/ Spiritual Exploration (<i>see page 3</i>)
Sat 17 Mar	10.30 – 4 pm	Regional Meeting (<i>see page 4</i>)
Sun 18 Mar	12 noon	Memorial Meeting for Muriel Dale (<i>Capel MH</i>)
Mon 26 Mar and Wed 28 Mar	2.00 pm	Ideas exchange (<i>at Su's - 3 Nower Lodge</i>) (<i>see page 3</i>)
(Fri 23 Mar)		Sharing Group, postponed to April (<i>see page 4</i>)
Sat 24 Mar	2.00 pm	Celebration of William Penn (<i>Blue Idol - page 4</i>)
Sun 25 Mar	About 12.30 pm	Friendly lunch – all welcome (<i>see page 4</i>)
Mon 26 Mar	10.30-11.15 am	Quaker Vigil: Broadford Bridge Oil Drilling Site

Attend to what love requires of you, which may not be great busyness

Advice & Queries No. 28

WE ARE NOW ON FACEBOOK! FOLLOW US!!

Dorking Meeting is now on **Facebook!** The idea is to show non-members of the meeting what we are doing, and to circulate information among Friends about interesting activities, either Quaker in nature or 'Quaker-friendly' in ethos. If you have any news that you feel we should share on Facebook (the type of content you might submit to the *The Grapevine*) please email it to Tara Craig at dorkingfriends@gmail.com

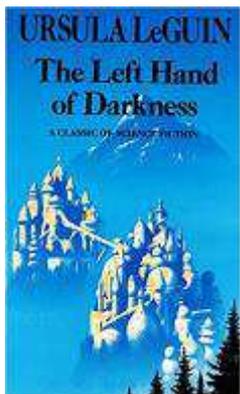
If you are on Facebook, please **'like'** the Dorking Quakers page. Thank you!

If you don't know how to access Facebook then just search online using the following search terms: **Facebook Dorking Quakers** and it should be the first site at the top of the page! (You don't have to join Facebook or log in to look at the site.)

And our thanks go to the IT team of Tara, Judy and Theresa who have worked hard to make this initiative possible.

URSULA LE GUIN

Science fiction writing is not just about aliens, space craft, rockets and gadgets; it is often a literary device for social comment which prompts us to think – could we do things differently – could we do things better – is there another way of living? The writer Naomi Alderman comments that these novels introduce us to *'other ways of living which are equally valid, equally worth of respect, equally troubling and equally beautiful ... that other cultures and modes of existence make sense on their own terms'*. (*Dystopian dreams: how feminist science fiction predicted the future*, *The Guardian*, 25th March 2017). Many feminist writers in the 1980s turned to science fiction to challenge gender inequality and racism and to explore other possible existences - books such as Piercy's *Woman on the edge of time*, Butler's *The Parable of the Sower* and Russ's *The Female Man*.



Ursula le Guin died at the end of January, this year, aged 88. In 1969 *The Left hand of Darkness* was published, which is acknowledged as one of the earliest pieces of feminist science fiction. It is about a man from Earth who travels to the planet Gethen where the people have no fixed gender – they only assume a gender to reproduce. The man from Earth is unsettled by this, but Le Guin wanted the reader to realise that there is no fixed 'normal'. *The Left hand of Darkness* challenged traditional male/female roles and now, fifty years later, provides validation for transgender people.

Quakers have been at the forefront challenging inequality publishing *A Question of Sex* in the 1960s. Yet Abigail Maxwell writes movingly in *The Friend* (23rd Feb) about the hurt and oppression experienced in Quaker circles today as a trans person. How far have we really come? Can we make fiction reality? Can we do things better?

Respect the wide diversity among us in our lives and relationships.

Advice and Queries, No. 22

MARCH COLLECTION

This will be for Quaker Social Action – promoted by Colin Hope
www.quakersocialaction.org.uk

LENT LUNCH – Meeting House, 16th February.



Once again, this was a friendly and successful morning. Over twenty people from different churches in Dorking, including Quakers, came together at the Meeting House for a simple lunch of bread and cheese. Our thanks go to Su and Frances for preparing and organizing the food – and to Judy and Theresa who helped on the day. This is a great opportunity for the Meeting to reach out into the wider community. The lunches continue through March at different Churches in Dorking and Holmwood. If you didn't manage to join us in February then why not take some time out on a Friday morning and join in fellowship at another venue? Details are in February's *Grapevine*. All money raised is for Christian Aid and our thanks go to Elizabeth Dobson for her work in promoting the event.

DORKING REPAIR CAFÉ



Bring your damaged textiles and clothing to volunteer experts at Dorking's **Repair Café** for repair. They are on hand to help, advise and show you the best way to repair your items. The first event took place on Sat 3 February and was

very successful – the next will be on Saturday 3rd March at the Christian Centre, 10.30 am to 1 pm.

MEDITATION GROUP – 16th March

The group will spend some time listening to and discussing a brief talk - possibly Karen Armstrong, or a similar Quaker thinker. There will also be some Sufi chanting as part of the session. All are welcome.

IDEAS EXCHANGE

Meet at Su's on Monday 26th March, or Wednesday 28th March (or both days!) at 2 pm for an interesting exchange of ideas on the theme: **Happenings and Events**. Intriguing!
Please let Su know if you are joining the group.

REGIONAL MEETING 17th March

Making Connections: building upon difference. Linda Murgatroyd will lead this day using a variety of arts and crafts to explore this theme. Linda was involved in the creation of the 2018 Quaker Peacemaking calendar and involved with Quaker Arts Network and the Kindlers. You can see some examples of her work at:

www.lindamurgatroyd.wordpress.com, but no experience is needed for the day! So please come along, bring a picnic lunch and enjoy a day of artistic and spiritual exploration. 10.30 am to 4 pm

Saturday 24th March – A celebration of William Penn’s life (1644 – 1718)

The Blue Idol will be celebrating the life of William Penn marking the 300th anniversary of his death in 1718. The Meeting House will be open from 2 pm, with a talk at 2.30: **The Blue Idol and William Penn’s legacy for Today:** highlighting Penn’s major contribution to the establishment of tolerance and civil rights nationally and internationally.

Tea and cakes will be available at 3.30, when you can also explore the garden and look at the new exhibition in the Barn. All are welcome.



William Penn (Wikipedia)

FRIENDLY LUNCH, Sunday 25th March



A reminder of the first of our Friendly lunches – just bring along your picnic lunch and join us for a time of friendship, good conversation and laughter. From about 12.30 pm ...
All are welcome!

PROPOSED SHARING GROUP

You may remember the piece under this heading in the February Grapevine (page 6). Well, due to one of us finding ourselves double-booked on March 23rd we have decided to change the date to **Friday 13th April**, from 2 – 3pm in the Meeting House as before.

A reminder that the aim of the Group is for the sharing of our own personal experience and for attentive listening, rather than discussion. On this first occasion we hope Friends will be happy to share their reactions to the word ‘God’. We hope this will help us get to know one another better ‘in the things that are eternal’ and also perhaps give us new ideas and approaches to reflect on, if we are feeling a bit stuck on our spiritual journey.

Anne Brewer and Eleanor Campbell (Elders)

Take time to learn about other people’s experiences of the Light

Advice and Queries, No. 5

DATA CONSENT FORMS

Please complete and return these to Colin as soon as possible! Ask Colin for one if you haven’t received, or have misplaced, your copy. Thank you!

LEITH HILL WALK



Photo by Colin Brewer on the 2017 Leith Hill Walk

This annual walk will take place on Sunday 22nd April. You are invited to join Capel Meeting for Worship at 11 am and bring a lunch to eat afterwards.

This year Martin Hunka will entertain us with the story of 'A Surrey Memory', the extraordinary Quaker recollection which launched the annual Leith Hill walk. Chris Kohler will then lead the walk leaving the Meeting House at around 1.20 pm.

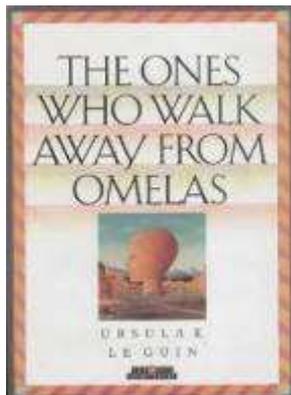
You can walk there and back – about 8 miles – or get a lift back from Leith Hill if you prefer. Tea and cakes will be waiting at Capel for your return. Who will be first back in 2018?

AREA BUSINESS MEETING Sunday 13th May

This will be held at Capel and will be followed by a fellowship session based on the Quaker Life booklet *Mental Health in our meetings*. All Meeting clerks have been sent a copy – and it is hoped that Meetings will be able to hold a discussion group to prepare for this session by considering the question below. Dorking Meeting plans to hold their discussion group on Sunday 29th April after a shared lunch.

How do we welcome all people into our Meetings including those who may at times experience mental distress?

THE ONES WHO WALK AWAY FROM OMELAS



This is a disturbing short story by Ursula Le Guin written in 1973. The narrator describes a summer festival in what appears to be a utopian city - it is a city of happiness with well-fed, cultured and serene inhabitants. There are no rulers and it seems to be the perfect world. But there is a price to be paid for this harmony – and each individual has to decide whether to accept the price, or walk away from the city. It is a story that can have many different interpretations depending on the reader – Le Guin is deliberately vague – but it is one that has haunted me since I read it.

(If you do not know this story you should be able to access via the Internet – it is only about four pages in length.)

My question is: how do we, those who did not walk away, live in Omelas?

Elizabeth

Seek to understand the causes of injustice, social unrest and fear

Advice and Queries No. 33

BEARING WITNESS

Recently I heard a police officer talking about the time when he was assigned to beach patrol – his duty was to arrest illegal immigrants as they arrived by boat. He was paired up with an older officer and the two of them waited on the beach as night fell. They waited in silence for several hours and then, just as dawn began to break, they could see boats coming out of the darkness towards them. He readied himself for action. There were eight boats and as they reached the beach and people started to jump out he could see that the boats were mainly filled with women and children. The police officer waited for his superior to give the order to move, but the older man said nothing. Boat after boat landed, the people jumped out and disappeared into the dunes behind them. When all the boats were gone and the beach was empty the older man turned and said ‘we will not speak of this again’. It was 1933, and the police officer was British and the beach was in British controlled Palestine. The boats were full of Jewish immigrants fleeing Hitler’s Germany. The two men could not have imagined the horror of the Holocaust yet to come



A scene from the film.

– yet they recognised that these were humans that needed sanctuary.

Today we know what is happening – we can see it in the news daily. Ai Weiwei’s film *Human Flow* quietly documents the journeys of refugees all around the world. More than 65 million people have been forced from their homes to escape famine, climate change and war; the greatest displacement since World War II.

I saw this film in Pixham Village Hall with other Friends – the heating wasn’t working very well and blankets were handed out to keep us warm! But I think most of us forgot the cold as we watched people stuffing cardboard into holes in tents to keep out the Turkish winter, a father helplessly trying to stop his tent blowing away in the wind and rain, children who have lost their childhood ... I found it very sad that is easier to send a trafficked tiger to safety in South Africa than it is for a child refugee to be given asylum. A tiger is more value than a child? How have we come to this?

A faulty disc meant that we didn’t see the end of the film, but it didn’t really matter. There wasn’t going to be a happy ending – we all knew that – but these people’s lives are in limbo, there is no end in sight, and so perhaps it is appropriate that we didn’t, like them, reach the end. We don’t know what will happen to them. The story is not finished.

The film was introduced by a representative of **Dorking Refugee Support**, which was created in 2015 – it is an informal group of a few hundred local residents who want to support refugees and asylum seekers in the UK. **They are collecting for Syria on Sat, 3rd March at the Crossways Baptist Church (opposite Waitrose): 12 – 3 pm. You can see the full list of needed items on the group’s Facebook page (search for: Dorking Refugee Support), but food and medicine is a priority.** The group supports Anaya Aid – a UK based humanitarian organisation providing international support responding to human sufferings in emergency and disaster situations all over the world.

www.anayaaid.org

<https://twitter.com/anayaaid>

It can be difficult when we read in the news about abuses of power in some of the Aid agencies, and we do need to carefully assess where we give our time and money. Please do look at Anaya’s website and decide whether you are able to support this collection on Saturday. Thank you.

Elizabeth