



THE DORKING GRAPEVINE

Dorking Quaker Meeting

(available on the web at: www.dorkingquakers.org/index.php/newsletter)

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Quakers: Simple, Radical and Contemporary

Events for November – 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. All are welcome.

Fri 9 Nov	2.30 – 4 pm	Meditation and Spiritual Exploration
Sat 10 Nov	10am – 4pm	Area Meeting/Fellowship session (see below)
Sun 11 Nov	6.30 – 7.30 pm	Candle Lit Meeting
Sun 11 Nov	6.30 – 7.30 pm	MfW (Park House, Leatherhead)
Sun 25 Nov	12.30 pm	Friendly lunch – all welcome
Mon 3 Dec	8.30 – 9pm	Healing/Upholding Prayer Group (in Friends' homes)
Sun 9 Dec	After MfW	Traidcraft Stall – see Traidcraft news on page 3

Area Meeting on Saturday 10 November will be at Dorking MH.

Programme:

10.00 for 10.30 am to 12.45 pm Area Business Meeting
12.45 to 1.45 pm Lunch (Bring and share)
1.45 to 4.00 pm Fellowship session (see separate box)



Fellowship session - Saturday 10 November, 1.45 pm to 4.00 pm

Workshop '**Opening the Door**' facilitated by Peter Allen-Williams and Leo Barnard, from the Quaker Life Mental Health group. The workshop will help us explore what mental health issues might arise in Quaker Meetings and consider what steps we might take to enable us to deal lovingly and effectively with them.



Jenny Whiting writes ... I am hoping next year to go to South India to help set up a

project involving input from occupational therapists from the UK. The project is under the umbrella of a charity called Salt of the Earth (SOTE) that I have had involvement with over the past few years. The charity is partnered with three non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in South India which are involved in providing care to vulnerable groups of people in their local communities.

see www.sote.org.uk



To raise funds for SOTE I am organising an Indian meal on Thursday 22 November at Chilli and Spice, 84 South Street from 6.30 pm, meal at 7.30 pm, and would love to welcome Friends.

Cost £22 per person (vegan), excluding drinks.

www.chilliandspicedorking.co.uk

To book a place, or for more information, contact me on 01306 252619 or 07714 271377. There is limited seating (30) so please book early if you want to come – *more than* half the seats are gone as I write this!

About the Quaker Council for European Affairs



Quaker Council for European Affairs

The Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA) is a unique actor in peacebuilding and human rights advocacy at the European level.

Its small size allows it to be more responsive – and drives it to be more innovative – than other organisations with far more resources.

Its home, Quaker House, is a much-loved” safe space” at the heart of the European Quarter of Brussels where a wide range of actors can meet in a neutral, discrete setting, to think and speak freely.

The centuries-long Quaker heritage gives it something which money cannot buy; a reputation for integrity and trustworthiness.

QCEA brings people together, and builds the bridges which are needed to respond to the cross-cutting challenges facing the world today. And the enthusiastic and dedicated team are among the very few organisations in Brussels which are placed to perform this vital role.

Over the last two years QCEA has overhauled how it works and is now using ‘quiet diplomacy’ as a major tool in its advocacy. Bringing together people in the relaxed and confidential surroundings of Quaker House, it provides a space where diplomats, officials and civil society can speak freely and openly. They have been astonished at how successful this has been – having thought that it may take years to establish a reputation in this area, but in fact over twenty such meetings have taken place in the past year and others are now asking QCEA to host meetings on their behalf. **This is clearly something that there was a need for in the European institutions and only Quakers are providing it.**

Much more information on their work can be found at www.qcea.org and will also be available after Meeting for Worship during November.

Keith Poulton

What do we mean by Discernment?

In Quaker business meetings decisions are said to be reached through group discernment rather than by voting or through consensus. Recently 14 Dorking Friends shared their understanding of discernment and agreed the following points.

- * The aim of group discernment is to arrive at a decision which everyone present feels is the right one for that time and is most in keeping with the spirit of love and truth.
- * The process can be lengthy and should only be used for significant decisions, and especially for those where there are conflicting views on what the outcome should be.
- * Friends should come with open minds, prepared to LISTEN carefully to the views of others.
- * The acting Clerk needs to be sure that facts (such as cost, available options, likely consequences) have been researched and preferably made available to the group beforehand. The facts should then be clarified at the meeting to ensure there is no disagreement over them.
- * There should be an opportunity to share emotional responses to the issue, confident that others present are truly listening. If there are very strong emotions in the group about the issue then it could be helpful to arrange an opportunity for these to be aired and heard beforehand. Threshing Meetings are the traditional Quaker forum for this.
- * Once facts and emotions have been heard then the Clerk should call for a period of worship where the issue can be 'held in the light'. Friends can then offer 'ministry' if they sense a prompting of love and truth – it is often those who have not been emotionally involved in the issue who can be most open to such promptings.
- * If the discernment process has gone well then the ministry may suggest a way forward which everyone feels is right.
- * If no clear way forward appears it may be best to defer the decision to another time if this is practical.

This quote from Quaker Faith and Practice (3:03) is helpful:

If we sometimes think things are wrong with our meetings for church affairs, it would help us to look at the situation in perspective if we could realise how many troubles arise not from the system, but from our human imperfections and the variety of our temperaments and viewpoints. These meetings are in fact not merely occasions for transacting with proper efficiency the affairs of the church but also opportunities when we can learn to bear and forbear, to practise to one another that love which 'suffereth long and is kind'.

Anne Brewer



WANTED!

Does anyone have a hand bell that would like a new home at Dorking Meeting? This would be most useful when we have meetings which include a break (e.g. lunch break at ABM) and we wish to summon everyone back to get on with the business.

Many thanks, Keith.

TRAIDCRAFT NEWS



Since the announcement in October, that Traidcraft was proposing to cease current trading operations at the end of the year, there has been better news. Hundreds of messages of support from shareholders, Fair Traders, fair trade shops, staff, suppliers, and producers convinced the Board that Traidcraft's mission isn't yet over and they are investigating a proposal which would mean Traidcraft is downsized, but transformed into a fair trade business fit for the 21st century. If the proposal is accepted, Traidcraft will continue to operate, and we will be able to continue to shop with them and change the lives of growers and artisans worldwide.



This is a project that Friends might be interested in ... but at the moment it is only focusing on the First World War. We thought that during November we would like to remember some of those linked to our Meeting who more recently said NO –

RESPECT THE LAWS OF THE STATE BUT LET YOUR FIRST LOYALTY BE TO GOD'S PURPOSE

Advice and Queries No. 34

We are pleased to welcome Geoff Squire who has transferred from Ifield Meeting to Dorking Meeting. He brings with him the story of his father – Harold Squire from Street Meeting in Somerset – a man who said no. Our thanks to Geoff and his sister Celia for sharing their father's story ...

Conscientious Objector- One Man

Harold was born in 1908 in Long Load, a small village in Somerset, where his father Frederick supported his wife and their seven children by quarrying the local Lias Limestone. They all attended Quaker Meeting in nearby Long Sutton until Frederick moved his family the short distance north to Street where they attended Street Meeting. When Harold married Doreen Wetherall in 1935, they remained in Street and were devoted to the Meeting. Harold was especially active in the community becoming well known for his dedicated involvement in the Scout movement, the Workers Education Association and ecumenical work in the area. He was employed as a Puller Over in C&J Clarks shoe factory in Street.



Harold Squire at retirement

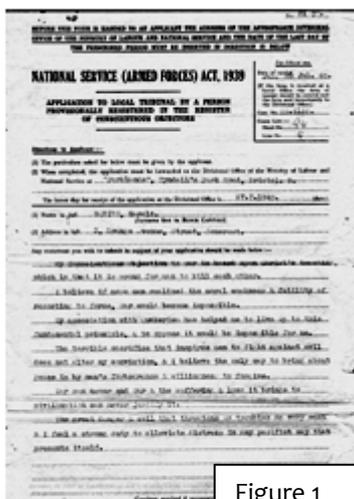


Figure 1

With the onset of the Second World War he was well aware that he would have to report to enlist to train for service in the Armed Services. Now in his 30's, Harold was in no doubt about the action he would take. His complete rejection of all forms of conflict was not just a matter of principle for him, it was the cornerstone of his way of life, a belief so central that it would inevitably lead to his refusal to comply with National Service.

The following is drawn from the recollections of family members and those in Street Meeting who knew him well in addition to a few documents in our possession.

Harold attended his Call Up as required in July 1940. He immediately registered his refusal to do National Service through his submission for exemption as a conscientious objector under the National Service Acts 1939 to 1941 (Fig.1) This resulted in his summons to appear before a Tribunal in Bristol which did not

take place for over a year. We assume that during this time he was allowed to continue at his work in the shoe industry since it was one of those 'Reserved Occupations' which justified exemption.

On 27th November, 1941, and without any legal representation, Harold faced the Tribunal. He was able to produce several simple but compelling written testimonies as to his character and the sincerity of his pacifism. His exemption from National Service was granted on account of the nature of his employment. This was not acceptable to Harold and he immediately appealed the decision declaring:

“I object to the exemption given by the Local Tribunal as I have a conscientious objection to any kind of conditional exemption from military service. I realise my obligation to the community and I fulfil it as I conscientiously can as I originally stated”.

The documents in our possession do not make clear the result of his appeal since once again in 1942 his case was referred to the same Tribunal which repeats “the importance of the work on which he is engaged as reasonable excuse for his non-compliance with the Tribunals order”.

Throughout the duration of the war Harold continued his work and his activities in and around Street Meeting. He visited, by bicycle, COs imprisoned in Shepton Mallet gaol and rode throughout central Somerset supporting their families.

This period came to an end on the arrival of a Ministry of Labour and National Service notice of 6th June, 1946. It states simply that Harold, “a conditionally registered conscientious objectorbe released from the obligation to undertake work subject to which he was so registered” ..

We believe the most significant aspect of the Conscientious Objectors like Harold is not just the bravery or defiance in the face of much public criticism and peer rebuke. It is the sustained quality of their moral code, the lifelong rejection of armed conflict and their devotion to Peace shown in the lives they led. In Harold’s case this was acknowledged by others who did not share his point of view, such as:

“Harold has always held peaceful views and has confirmed these views by his attitude in life generally..... we do not in any way share his views... ..but have no hesitation in supporting him.”

These testimonies supporting Harold offer a model to which we all might aspire.

Geoff Squire and Celia Green

Next we have the stories of three other COs related to Friends associated with Dorking Meeting.

Remembering my father

Anne Brewer writes: My father, Alfred Burgoyne, had a health condition that killed him in 1950 when I was 7 years old but he refused to ask for exemption from military service for health reasons and instead prepared a paper asking for exemption on grounds of conscience. I have a copy of this paper.

His basic argument was that he was a Christian and believed that war was contrary to the teachings of Jesus. He went before a tribunal and his application for CO status was accepted and he was sent to do work on the land.

A good thing was that, during the process, he came across quite a number of Quakers and was delighted to find people who thought like he did. So he investigated further and decided to apply for membership of the Religious Society of Friends, and my Mum did too. They were both accepted into membership and my Dad was later active on the Quaker Peace Service Committee (I think that was the name of QPSW at the time). Then they registered all 3 of their children, when we were born, as birthright members. So I have my father’s determination to be a CO to thank for my lifelong association with Quakers!



Some memories of my father – a CO during WW2



Val Rowling writes: My father, William Brown, never spoke to me of his experiences of the war, or of the friends made at that time, but I am in little doubt his perspective on life changed utterly.

He went first to the Quaker Relief Training Centre at Spiceland, not far from where I now live, undertaking an intensive practical skills course including farmwork, building repairs, laundry, mechanics, cooking (he was hilariously inept always) and first aid. Then attended the Friends Ambulance Camp for social war work, while his appeal to register as a CO was considered. He'd held pacifist views since a child, growing up in a Quaker family, attending two Quaker schools from the age of 7.

We still have several diaries of his days in the FAU, covering his time in Finland, North Africa, Palestine and Syria between 1941-1944.

Some entries are extraordinarily poignant, of his misery of being without his girlfriend (my mum), and his family, of the loss of friends, of missed communication and misunderstandings. Some express a heaving boredom with often meaningless routine and a barely concealed, frustrated impatience to be elsewhere - except for the rare opportunities to play a round of bridge or prepare a concert for the troops he travelled with - singing songs with a man named Jim. I never heard him sing. Other entries reflect painfully on his CO status. He offered his resignation after four years with the unit, because he felt he could no longer work alongside army ranks that held almost identical principles of involvement, 'filling gaps, saving lives', but his request was ignored for months. A compassionate officer recognising his very real distress, found him a job as head of the unit's store office in Jerusalem. He withdrew his resignation and stayed with the FAU until he re-joined civilian life in 1945.

He survived plagues of insects, bouts of dysentery, and was once nearly blown out of the sea where he was swimming, when an unexploded mine hit a rock nearby - 'but I sustained no damage'. He worked as a stretcher bearer carrying enemies, allies and civilian patients to and from hospitals, he instructed others how to drive ambulances and service and maintain vehicles - desert sand storms were notorious.

There were moments of joy and deep appreciation, and I include three brief passages:

14 Aug 1941 'Gratified to find us still afloat this morning; so we have evaded U boats after all ... wonderful lights in the water during the night, showers of green phosphorescent sparks around the ship sleeping on deck, unbearably hot, but all ports below opened - vests, pants etc stretched across them to form makeshift mosquito nets ...'

28 Aug 1941 'Introduced to an elderly lady who took our addresses and said she would write to our families she'd seen us and how we were. She lost her son in the first war and knows how pleased a mother is to "get news"' ...

10 Sept 1941 'AA guns of every sort kept up an incessant shindy for nearly an hour and shrapnel rained down around our tents, but fortunately none of it came in ...'

The diaries ended abruptly after he sailed for home, with a few words of thankfulness for being alive and relatively unscathed to meet a different set of challenges.

Frank Farnell

Monica Farnell is a member of Epsom Meeting but attends both Leatherhead Meeting and Midweek Meeting. These are some extracts from a longer piece that her husband Frank wrote about his experiences as a Conscientious Objector in World War 2. Frank grew up in a Christian family, but it wasn't until adulthood that he began to find out about pacifism and to come to the conclusion that '**... a Christian should not kill, even in war time**'

Frank registered as a CO in 1939 losing his job with an insurance company. In November 1940 he was sentenced to 9 days imprisonment for refusing to undergo a forces medical examination: **After my fate had been decided I was taken down ... Then I was put in chains in a Black Maria and taken to Armley gaol in Leeds. This is one of the dreadful Victorian prisons. I was taken to Reception, had a bath and changed into the grey prison clothes. Then I was taken to my cell and the heavy steel door was slammed to. I heard the warden's footsteps going away along the corridor.** The next nine days were spent in the same routine ... a hard bed made from boards, slopping out at 6.30 am, sewing mail bags, exercising in a yard, rationed food and being locked up for 19 hours.

In January 1941 Frank joined a group of Pacifists working in Poplar helping those who had lost everything in the air raids on the East End of London, and helping to deal with incendiary bombs and rescue work. But in September 1941 Frank refused again to attend a Medical Examination and was sentenced to six months hard labour in Wandsworth Prison. Once again the same routine and being locked up for 19 hours. After his release he returned to help at Poplar and to work on a market garden. After the war he applied to work with the Friends Relief Service and went to Germany to work with refugees. He worked at the Quaker Rest Home in Bad Pyrmont which was run by Corder and Gwen Catchpole. Frank met many people with different beliefs and attitudes throughout these years – experiencing kindness, hostility and anger. The arrest by the policeman who handcuffed him and yet who was a family friend ... **He told me I was a coward and would regret this slip of mine as long as I lived, no girl would marry me.** And the prisoner who asked why he was in prison: **When I told him that it was for refusing to kill, he was amazed. He was there for killing a man, for which he had been sentenced to death himself.**

After Frank's return to England in 1949, having completed three years in Germany, he then applied to the Home Office for training as a Probation Officer and had several successful interviews . **One member of the final Committee, however, said that I was not an ideal person to look after people who had broken the law --- as I needed a Probation Officer to look after myself.**

(A full e-mail copy of Franks Wartime Experiences is available on request.)

AN EXTRACT FROM A LETTER ...

c/o Guard Room
No. 5 Training Centre
Pioneer Corps
Denbigh
N. Wales
Monday September 7th, 1942

Dear P,

Thank you very much for your letter which I received this evening. There was also a parcel from home, so I am well off to-day. You will have heard all the latest news from home so I will not repeat it now.

I have not been to the Sergeants Mess since Thursday as I am now on remand. I was not sorry as I have had a bit of a cold, but I hope to go up again. Up at the mess we spend most of our time cleaning tins and the cooking utensils and peeling potatoes and other odd jobs. We hear the wireless a bit up there and sometimes hear bits of the 1 o'clock news. One of the fellows in the guard room has daily papers sent on to him each day so we keep fairly well up with the news. I am in the room with 6 other CO's and I am the youngest but one. We have quite good times and some good discussions. We rise at 6 o'clock and then wash. After that we have breakfast, (we have all our meals brought to us in the Guard Room) and then shave. At 9.30 we go on Commanding Officers Parade. If there is time after this we can go for exercise if we wish. Exercise is a march along the road for about half an hour.

I should certainly like a few sweets if you can spare them. Please give my love to N. Sorry to hear about Sherwood and the milking.

Yours affectionately, M (a relative of an attender at Reigate)

Notes from Prep Meeting of 4 November

Frances Poulton, serving as Clerk, outlined the situation facing our **Nominations** Committee – please see her important message following these notes. Colin Brewer, as convenor of nominations, took us through the list of Friends willing to serve in various roles in 2019 and these were all appointed except for Keith Poulton as Independent Examiner. Romy Elias pointed out that the Charity Commission have made it clear that Independent Examiners must be completely independent from the organisation whose accounts they are examining, so a member of the Meeting should not be appointed to this role. Keith and Romy will consult over this and report back later this year with a suggestion to resolve this problem.

Su Johnston presented a draft **annual report for Dorking Meeting** which will be presented to Area meeting on Saturday 10 November. With two minor amendments the report was gratefully accepted.

Colin Brewer presented **the budget for 2019** which was gratefully accepted. Our finances are in a healthy position and we agreed to loan £25,000 to Area Meeting so that a loan from Britain Yearly Meeting to Area Meeting, for building works at the Blue Idol, can be repaid.

Rachel Hope gave us an update on **Premises matters**:

- The fridge and vacuum cleaner need to be replaced, at a cost of approximately £300 and £150 respectively.
- The source of an irritating noise in the heating system has been identified and the problem rectified.
- To help our hirers, small plaques bearing room names are to be fitted.
- Damp in the ladies' toilets may be caused by lack of a damp proof course, and a survey is to be undertaken.
- A recent report on the screen highlighted that it is elderly and should not be used often. Expenditure of up to £1000 was agreed for cleaning the screen and treating it with boiled linseed oil. The cupboard housing the winching mechanism will be altered so that the mechanism itself can be properly examined.
- Some work on the lighting switching system in the roof space is also being considered.

The **Seeded Meeting** proposed for 21 October had to be postponed due to road closures. Children's Committee hope to arrange for a suitable date in the future.

(If you wish to see any of the papers mentioned in the above notes, please ask Anne Brewer, who will give you a copy.)

An important message for everyone

At Preparative Meeting we considered appointments for next year and we are delighted that there are new names on the list produced by Nominations Committee. There are many jobs to be done, and working with others can be very rewarding in itself, as well as making sure the Meeting we all love continues to flourish.

However, it has become increasingly difficult to find people willing to fill certain roles, namely Elders, Overseers and Clerks. This year we have formed a small clerking team and working together has been a good experience, but time moves on, circumstances change and we need others to come forward in the future, to ensure continuity of the process.

The good news is that Woodbrooke run some excellent courses on different Quaker roles, and details of next year's programme are now available. It can be daunting considering taking on something new and challenging, but attending a weekend course with others in the same situation was certainly a great help to me, and I'm sure to many others.

If you want to find out more, do ask the current Elders, Overseers, Clerking team or Nominations.

Frances Poulton