



FORTY-THREE

OXFORD FRIENDS' MEETING
43 ST.GILES OXFORD OX1 3LW

NEWSLETTER

Number 398

MAY 2012

40 pence

Where did money from that collection go to?

Mr K. is one of the generations of Zimbabweans who remember the years before independence, UDI under Ian Smith, the liberation war and the euphoria of 1980 when Robert Mugabe came to power. He was part of the years of development, improvement in education and healthcare which followed independence, while at the same time, in Matabeleland, thousands died. More recently, he has been beaten and victimised himself, because of his opposition to Mugabe, and when I saw him in early March, he was waiting for a court hearing as he is being charged with inciting violence during a rally. Such charges are frequently brought against those who speak out against what is happening, in the hope that they will be intimidated and silenced.

When I first met him, he was deeply depressed by his own experiences and by what he saw happening around him. In particular, he hated to see the large numbers of children, unable to pay school fees and often orphaned by AIDS or other illnesses, hanging around outside their houses or playing in the dusty sand roads of his neighbourhood, because they are excluded from school. We discussed ways he might be able to do something about this – I envisaged perhaps a small-scale literacy and numeracy club.

When I next saw him a few months later, I was invited to visit the informal school he had started with volunteer help from unemployed teachers and young people in the community. We went to an ordinary bungalow and moved from room to room to greet and be greeted by the children, who covered every inch of floor space, and their teachers, whose only resource was blackboard and chalk.

In the space of a few weeks since opening, the school had enrolled 700 students, “hot-seating” with primary classes in the morning and secondary in the afternoon. Parents who can afford it pay some fees but no-one is turned away because of inability to pay.

Since that initial visit, I have seen the school begin to improve slowly with the small amounts of help they receive. They intend to spend the latest donation from the children’s collection at Meeting on locally made benches for the children to sit on and novels in Shona, to be shared between the older pupils who are studying them for O level.

Continued on page 2, column 1

From *Quaker Faith and Practice*

If we dwell in the presence of God, we shall be led by the spirit.

From *QF&P 29.01* Gordon Matthews, 1987

Deadline for contributions to the June 2012 issue: noon, Friday 18 May

Contributions, preferably of 500 words or fewer, would be appreciated to newsletter@oxfordquakers.org, and items for the calendar on page 6 can be emailed to lukesamuelmartin@gmail.com. Paper copy can be left in one of the editors’ pigeonholes at the Meeting House. For information: tel. 01865 557373 or visit www.oxfordquakers.org

Continued from page 1, column 2

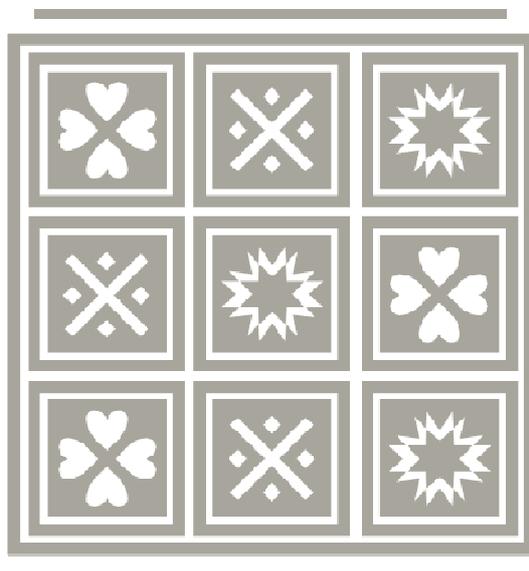
The teachers have named their school "Success Academy". It is a fragile initiative and it is easy to look and see what a lot needs to be done to improve on what is being offered to the children who attend. But it represents something very important in a situation where people often feel disempowered and hopeless, demonstrating what can be achieved if they work together, without dependence on large-scale project funding, challenging the power structures and divisions which often paralyse community initiatives in a polarised society such as Zimbabwe.

I was able to deliver the money from this year's collection in person when I was in Zimbabwe at the beginning of March, and bring back very warm thanks to all who contributed from the head teacher and others involved with the school.

Jane Fisher, janefisheruk@yahoo.co.uk

2012 Quilting Dates

On the following Saturdays from 10:30 am to 3:00 pm at the Meeting House: 5 May, 9 June, 14 July, 8 September, 20 October, 10 November and 8 December. We meet either in the Garden Room or the Long Room, bring our own needles and a contribution towards a simple shared lunch. If you are interested in joining this small group, please talk to **Dinah Lintott**, **Kate Joyce** or **Penny Thomas**.



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A Lord's Prayer

Our 9:30 Meeting in Oxford is often a quiet one. On 1 April an unusual 'string of pearls' set of Ministries focused on the Lord's Prayer, particularly on the meaning of the word 'trespasses'. It was a wonderful Meeting. Following it, I went home and revised my Quakerly version of this prayer in case Friends might find it useful. So here it is:

God in
all of us
re-
membered be your name.

Our re-
public come,
our wills be one
for all,
and all for one.

Here
we will
grow, reap, grind, knead, bake
then slice
our daily bread.

Trespasses?
The measure for mercy is ours:
we ask for no more than we give.

Lead us not into temptation, which is
to strip the evil
which is part of good in 'us'
and stick it onto 'them'.

For ours is the human condition,
the power and the story

of Now and Again,

Amen.

Stephen Yeo

Saturday 12 May is
World Fair Trade Day: www.wftday.com

Sunday 13 May to Saturday 19 May is
Christian Aid Week: www.caweek.org

Tuesday 15 May is
International Conscientious Objectors Day

Introducing Young Adults at Oxford Meeting



Sally Nicholls talking to
Tanya Garland

I grew up in Stockton-on-Tees in the North of England. My father was a sea captain in the merchant navy and my mother was a social worker for the blind and did all sorts of things – and I have a younger brother. My father died suddenly when I was two and a half from a heart attack and so there were the three of us. Mum never remarried but we had a very happy childhood with lots of books.

I did a gap year in Japan after school – volunteering in a hospital as a porter or receptionist, doing bed baths, or playing with the children. I was eighteen and loved being in such an interesting country with so many traditions and ancient history.

I studied Philosophy and Literature at Warwick for my degree. But I always wanted to be a writer. So at 22 I did a Masters on ‘Writing for Young People’ at Bath – one of the best decisions I ever made. You had to write a couple of essays, and the thesis of 45,000 words could be a collection of short stories, poetry, a novel or a play script for young people. My major work was *Ways to Live Forever* about a boy who is dying from Leukaemia. The course had a competition, sponsored by a literary agent, which I won. The prize was £500 and lunch with the agent, and after reading the book she sent it out to twelve publishers, five of whom said they wanted it. Scholastic publishers bought it and offered me a contract for a second book. The book did really well, has won loads of prizes, and they have made a film of it, which has been shown at film festivals and will come out as a DVD. The trailer is on my website: www.sallynicholls.com. My second book, *Season of Secrets*, was out in 2009, and is about the Oak King and the Holly King, and a little girl, who has a relationship with ‘the Green Man’ of mythology. The Green Man is an archetype of death, Spring hope, nature, rebirth etc – it can be used to say all sorts of things and provides very fertile ground to get a message across.

I had a really nice few years living in a little London flat with three friends, and because I had had such a fairy godmother start, for the first time I had enough money not to worry about buying books and clothes. I’d met Tom at Young Friends General Meeting at one of their weekends and he moved down to join us. We were married in 2010, and as he is doing a DPhil in Politics and the Internet, we moved to Oxford.

All Fall Down is my latest book, twice as long as the others, and finished in Oxford. It’s nice having three books written. Tom and I play a lot of games and it is something I’m very interested in. We made a card game called *Unwilling, Unable*, which is for Quakers and about responses to nomination requests – you lose if you take on too many jobs! A lot of time and energy is wasted on jobs that aren’t really needed.

I was brought up as a Quaker. I used to attend children’s Meeting, go to Summer schools and have been to YFGM since I was twenty. I’ve always valued the quiet space. I am not sure what I believe in but I find Meeting can be very helpful, and I would like more of it in my life. I’ve had the experience of a very powerful, connected Meeting for Worship; I’ve brought problems to Meeting and been given answers; I’ve prayed over decisions I needed to make and found that a useful way to come to a decision – but I’m not sure what I believe in. I feel it doesn’t matter if it is God, or Jesus, the Holy Spirit or my sub-conscious talking to me. The experience is a useful one. My mind kind of balks when I come up against explanations for spiritual experiences because a scientist will say one thing, and a Christian or a Universalist something else, and they are all telling a story to describe it.

The knowledge is limited. We cannot say God exists or He doesn’t exist. It is a decision people come to from their experience of the world. I feel uncomfortable when I have to define or describe the metaphysical. I just find that I get something from Quaker Meeting, from silence and prayer, and that is enough really. The names given to that experience are inadequate and are not really important. Not to me anyway.

*A review of All Fall Down appears in
the 12 April issue of The Friend.*

Letting the Premises

The primary use of our premises is of course for our Meetings for Worship and the hospitality which goes with them. In addition, the variety of our different spaces, from the intimacy of the Short Room to the large capacity of the Meeting House for lectures and concerts caters for the very wide range of our other activities, which are such an important part of Quaker life.

Once our own needs have been met, it is good that we can offer our facilities in support of other causes close to Quaker principles, and indeed as a service to the community more widely. Our differing rooms, and their accessible location, make them much in demand, and though this can fluctuate somewhat, there can be times when all five available spaces are let simultaneously, and a Meeting of our own is happening in the office, which can certainly keep Dave and Luke busy!

Hiring charges, with a discount system that enables us to help some needy organisations, give us a very valuable source of income; but in addition, the large number of visitors entering our buildings and our garden, which impresses everyone with its peace and tranquillity, provides a great opportunity for outreach. Perhaps we should consider how we could make more of this. The recent de-cluttering of the lobby suggests some of the potential.

To assess the full extent of the lettings programme, Premises & Finance Committee recently asked Dave for a list of all hirers during the last year. The number and variety are quite remarkable – far too many for all the details to be quoted here, though the full list is available from Dave and makes most interesting reading. To summarise, however: in addition to our own activities, over 160 groups or organisations made use of our facilities, many quite frequently or on a regular basis. The largest category included religious and spiritual groups, some enjoying the quiet for meditation. Others were concerned with health and therapy, peace and justice, education (including cookery lessons in the kitchen), social and environmental issues such as Oxfam, Christian Aid, Citizens Advice Bureau and Asylum Welcome, cultural groups and some pure entertainment and dancing. We were pleased to help the Ashmolean when they were short of room for some of their lectures, and The Playhouse when they needed extra rehearsal space. Sizes have varied from one-to-one counselling to major conferences in which the main sessions in the Meeting House split into discussion groups in our other rooms. During the summer, many groups spill out into the garden, which is also popular for lunchtime breaks and occasional garden parties.

Overall, we offer a much appreciated service, which we hope reflects our Quaker beliefs and

certainly spreads the knowledge of our existence very widely.

Tony Joyce

More information, including the full list of groups using our premises from March 2011 to March 2012, can be found at:

<http://tinyurl.com/Qpremises>

**Celebratory
bring-&-share lunch
and
CIRCLE DANCING!**

MEETING FOR MEETING
Saturday 19 May
10:00 am to 5:00 pm
St Margaret's Community Institute
Polstead Road, OX2 6TW

Build our community
Give spiritual inspiration
Deepen our Friendships
Simply enjoy being
together on a Spring day

Small group discussions
and three speakers
reflecting on what they
are passionate about

Games for kids under 6
at Virginia Allport's
house (24 Merrivale Sq)
and then to join parents
at lunchtime

**Everyone
welcome!**

Shared activities include
Clowning
Creative Writing
Feedback from 6th FWCC
Mini Clearness Groups

Memorabilia
Remember
Collection
Memo-File
Tel: _____

Illustration by
Sue Mynall

Meetings and Notices

Fridays with Friends

In the Garden Room at FMH
The sessions will start at 7 for 7:30
and will finish by 9:30 pm

Friday 15 June:
'Guide to 1652 Country'
led by Arthur Kincaid

Friday 20 July:
'Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy - the
science and the spiritual journey'

*Kathy Wedell and Stuart White will discuss
the causes of this genetic muscle-wasting
condition and current cutting-edge research
to find an effective treatment. They will also
be sharing their reflections as parents of a
child living with Duchenne.*

The warden would
very much welcome
any surplus flowers,
bulbs, seedlings, etc.
that could be grown
in the FMH gardens.
Collection could be
arranged, if necessary.
Dave Dight



Catherine Holland

Refusing to be Enemies

On Sunday 13 May at 7:30 pm Maxine Kaufman-Lacusta will be talking about her new book on the Palestinian and Israeli Non-Violent Resistance to the Israeli Occupation. Entry is free, and there will be refreshments and home-made cake on offer. Her book will be for sale at a discounted price. For more information, see page 4 of the April issue of *Forty-Three*. **Gwithian Doswell**

Recycling Corner

Three animal cages for good homes: one large indoor guinea-pig cage, one Syrian hamster cage and one dwarf hamster cage. Please contact me if you are interested. **Gwithian Doswell**
gwithian@btinternet.com

The AGM of the Charitable Company of the Oxford and Swindon Area Quaker Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends in Britain will be held on Saturday 12 May in Charlbury Friends Meeting House at 12:30 pm. Our next Area Meeting will also be held that day, starting at 10:30 am. **Robert Stocks**
(robert.stocks@btinternet.com, 01235 832147)

Listen To This!

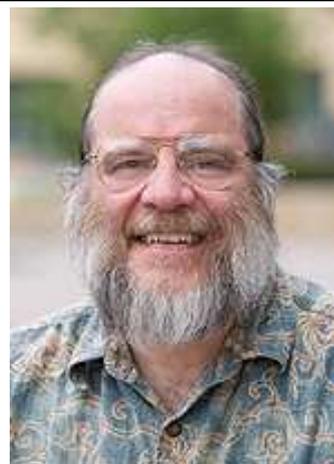
*Announcing a good, working
loop system in the Meeting House*

You may have seen we have not had the mic on the table recently and maybe you have thought the loop is not working but they are separate systems and since the engineer came and fixed it the loop is on all the time so please turn your T switch on and try it. If you have any problems please speak to me.

Sarah Lasenby (01865 725991)

Oxford Friends in Print

Letters page, 12 April issue of
The Friend, **Ron Hillier**



Accommodation Needed

Our Friends **Eric Roberts & Lauren Rusk** from California hope to be in Oxford from early July to mid-September 2012, and are looking for cat-free accommodation to rent. Can you help? Contact **Elisabeth Salisbury** or **John Gould**.

CALENDAR FOR MAY 2012

All 43 St Giles unless otherwise indicated

Saturday 5	10:30 am — 3 pm	Quilting group — see page 2	Thursday 17	7:30 pm	Meeting for Worship for Young Adults
Saturday 5	2—3:30 pm	Pamphlet discussion for those living in OX1 — see March issue, p. 7	Saturday 19	10 am	Meeting for Meeting (<i>St Margaret's Institute</i>) — see page 4
Sunday 6	11 am	Friendly Bible Study — see Feb. issue, p. 4	Sunday 20	11 am	Friendly Bible Study — see February issue, p. 4
Sunday 6	12:30 pm	Meeting for Worship for Business	Sunday 20	10:15 am — 1 pm	Fairtrade stall in the lobby
Monday 7	7 for 7:30 pm	Poetry event: Phillip Gross—see Apr issue, p.5	Monday 21	7 for 7:30 pm	Poetry event: R.V. Bailey — see April issue, p. 5
Thursday 10	7:30 pm	Meeting for Worship for Young Adults	Thursday 24	7:30 pm	Meeting for Worship for Young Adults
Saturday 12	10:30 am	Area Meeting (<i>at Charlbury</i>) — see p. 5	Friday 25— Monday 28		Yearly Meeting (<i>London</i>) — see below
Sunday 13	11 am	Friendly Bible Study — see February issue, p. 4	Sunday 27	11 am	Friendly Bible Study — see Feb. issue, p. 4)
Sunday 13	7:30	Talk by Maxine Kaufman- Lacusta — see page 5	Sunday 27	12:30 pm	Bring-and-share lunch — see below
Wed. 16	1:45 pm	Friends Fellowship of Healing	Thursday 31	7:30 pm	Meeting for Worship for Young Adults

We've started making a list of Oxford Friends who are going to all or part of **Yearly Meeting** (25-28 May – see page 1 of the April issue). Please let us know if you'd like to join. We hope that this may help you to have a more enjoyable experience. **Jenny Buffery** (01235 526285) and **Jill Green**

Our Meeting has a bring-and-share lunch on the last Sunday of each month, in the Garden Room at 12:30. The next is on **Sunday 27 May**. Many people bring foods following the LOAF principle: local, organic, animal-friendly, fair trade. All food is welcome, although as our oven is currently broken, please bring cold food, or food which can be heated on the hob. Oxford Meeting **Overseers** and **Sabita Banerji**

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Sundays at 9:30 and 11 a.m. at 43 St Giles
(followed by tea and coffee)

Wednesdays at 12:15 p.m. at 43 St Giles
(followed by tea and coffee)

Tuesdays and **Thursdays** at 7:30 a.m. at 43 St Giles
(followed by breakfast at 8 a.m.)

Sundays at 10 a.m. at The Priory,
85 Old High St, Headington

OPENING TIMES (43 ST GILES)

Wednesday - Friday, 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Forty-Three is available online, at
www.oxfordquakers.org/newsletter

If you are considering writing an article or notice but would prefer it not to go online, please don't hesitate to contribute it. Just indicate that the piece is not for inclusion in the internet version — no reason will be asked for.

*Editorial Team: MARK EBDEN, PENNY ORMEROD,
and BECKY RIDDELL (Joint Editing & Production);
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LUKE MARTIN (Distributor and Subscriptions)*