



FORTY-THREE

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

NEWSLETTER

Number 427 (online version)

OCTOBER 2014

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Welcoming Friends

The first time I was 'on the door', I was really nervous. What was I going to say? How would I know if the person I was greeting was a shy newcomer or an -established Oxford Friend whom I just didn't recognise? What if I couldn't locate the right information leaflet?

In the event, none of that mattered. It helped that I could look back to the many different Meetings Tony and I had been lucky enough to attend, which helped me think about the variety of welcoming styles I'd encountered. In Paris, I was greeted in French by a kindly Friend whose accent didn't sound quite right. Mine wasn't either, but it took a few minutes to realise that we both hailed from the UK. In the Hague, a very small Meeting, we spotted the welcomer from afar, looking up and down the street as if she had almost given up hope that anyone might be coming. In some places, welcomers themselves seemed so shy that greetings were barely audible; in others, hands were heartily shaken before we were halfway through the door. On one occasion – and only one, I am happy to say – I felt that the people at or near the door had so much to say to each other that my unexpected arrival was not particularly welcome. What had I learned from these experiences?

I came to realise that there are various styles of welcoming and that I do best if I use the style with

which I felt confident. Usually I aim to step forward, with my hand outstretched and a 'Welcome' on my lips. If I know a Friend by name, I use that name, unless I am having a senior

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From Quaker Faith and Practice

Prayer is an exercise of the spirit, as thought is of the mind. To pray about anything is to use the powers of our spirit on it, just as to think clearly is to use our mental powers. For the best solution of every problem, the best carrying out of every action, both thought and prayer are necessary... To pray about any day's work does not mean to ask success in it. It means, first to realise my own inability to do even a familiar job, as it truly should be done, unless I am in touch with eternity, unless I do it 'unto God', unless I have the Father with me. It means to see 'my' work as part of a whole, to see 'myself' as not mattering much, but my faith, the energy, will and striving, which I put into the work, as mattering a great deal. My faith is the point in me at which God comes into my work; through faith the work is given dignity and value. And if, through some weakness of mine, or fault of others, or just 'unavoidable circumstances', the work seems a failure, yet prayer is not wasted when it is unanswered, any more than love is wasted when it is unreturned.

QF&P 20.08 Mary F Smith, 1936

Deadline for contributions to the November 2014 issue: noon, Friday 17 October

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 oxfordpms@yahoo.co.uk. Paper copy can be left in the newsletter pigeonhole at the Meeting House. For information: tel. 01865 557373 or visit www.oxfordquakers.org

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moment. In that case, I must acknowledge that the name escapes me or even that I don't immediately recognise the face. I am very happy to offer information to newcomers. However, as a fairly outgoing person myself, I need to be aware that not everyone wants an explanation of what they may well know already or a prolonged greeting, and that sometimes a smile may suffice.

The common thread of the various welcomes I have experienced is the recognition that what matters is the warmth of the encounter between welcomer and welcomed. Each Friend arriving for Meeting for Worship brings a unique contribution. Getting to the Meeting House by 9:00 am is sometimes hard for a late riser like me – but I love greeting (and being greeted) and really enjoy being part of Oxford's welcoming team.

Judith Atkinson

To Oxford Meeting,

This is just a quick note to say thank you to everyone at the Meeting who made my time studying in Oxford much more bearable!!

I came to Meetings for Worship on many Sundays during my time studying music at Christ Church, and I am so happy to have met wonderful people, even if I could rarely stay to chat! You are all so kind and welcoming.

I'm now moving to London to study at the Royal Academy of Music, so I unfortunately won't be in Oxford very much at all. I wish you all the best and will think of you often.

In Love and Friendship,

Chloe Angharad :-)
chloe.angharad@gmail.com



Open Doors 13 September

After a gap of a year while we were refurbishing the Meeting House we once again opened our premises to the public on the Saturday of the Oxford Open Doors weekend. In the library we had the national exhibition commemorating Friends' work in conflicts from the Franco-Prussian war to the present day; in the Meeting House knowledgeable Friends complemented the peaceful atmosphere with information about Quakers, our worship, beliefs and values; and the garden, as always, wowed everybody.

In a very full day, when we were rarely quiet, 320 adults and 22 children came through our open door. If we discount the three who came in only to use the loos, the persistent seeker after a hand-out, some of the Ride and Striders who only wanted their form signed and wouldn't stay, we probably welcomed 300 people, many of whom had never been in Quaker premises before and had only a hazy idea of Quakerism (Quaker Oats anyone?). Our wonderful welcomers had fascinating conversations with so many interesting and interested visitors.

Please volunteer next year for the most successful outreach project we have done and join Alan Allport, Virginia Allport, Judith Atkinson, Jenny Buffery, Gwithian Doswell, Val Ferguson, John Gould, Peggy Heeks, Kate Joyce, Tony Joyce, Tina Leonard, Laurie Michaelis, Penny Ormerod, Eric Roberts, Sue Smith, Anne Watson, Anne Watson, Glen Williams, Kath Wilson, Keith Wilson in welcoming our visitors. **Elisabeth Salisbury**

Conditions for Creativity

The John Macmurray Fellowship is this year holding a seminar on **11 October** in the Garden Room on the theme of 'John Macmurray and the Conditions for Creativity'. Short papers are to be presented, with plenty of time for discussion. Anyone can come along and join in the conversation, so do consider coming on the day (or see me in advance), especially if you are interested in creativity. Arrivals and coffee are from 10:30 am with the first session at 11 and a break for lunch from 1 to 2 pm. This year you need to bring your own lunch, but hot drinks are provided. The day ends with tea at 4 pm. The cost is £12, students and unwaged £3.

Jeanne Warren

Many thanks to everyone who came to and/or donated to the singing-and-cream-tea event in the summer raising funds for Action Duchenne. We had a wonderful afternoon and raised over £900 – a fantastic total! This money is helping to fund cutting-edge research to find effective treatments for Duchenne muscular dystrophy. Thanks to everyone!

Kathy Wedell 2

Welcome to Deborah Arrowsmith,



who will take on the new post of non-Resident Meeting House Manager from early November. Deborah is a Quaker and for the last several years has been part-time Warden at Norwich Meeting. We are delighted she is joining Oxford Meeting.

Deborah has worked in businesses, voluntary organisations and as a self-employed designer. Deborah has qualifications, expertise and interests in fine art and design, and has applied her skills widely in business settings including textile design, product design, sales, exhibitions, management and small business advice. Some of you will already know about Deborah's creative work as a gardener. With an RHS Diploma in Horticulture, she has initiated the national Quaker Gardens Project, based on concern for Quaker gardens and burial grounds – working with Meetings across the country and teaching courses at Woodbrooke. Deborah also initiated the Legacy Garden at Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) in Bath – check out the BYM website (and www.quakergardensproject.org.uk) and read all about this wonderful project in a recent issue of *The Friend*. We look forward to Deborah's arrival and enabling the whole Meeting to welcome her.

To ensure a smooth handover, we will extend Sean Gibson's contract so that there is an overlap with Deborah to help her settle in, meet people and get a sense of the scope of the post. Sean has also offered to provide training for Deborah and interested Friends in the use of the office IT systems.

Ursula Howard

League of Friends

I volunteer at the John Radcliffe hospital with the League of Friends. We are very short of volunteers. They only need to come in for few hours a week, fill rolls, pour tea or serve customers. If you are interested could you call David Simpson on 01865 220997? Thanks.

Dave Ridge 3

Quaker Jargon

New to Oxford Quakers? Some of our common acronyms are explained in an article on pages 4-5 of the April 2009 issue of *Forty-Three*, available for free at www.oxfordquakers.org/newsletter

The book *Quaker Speak* (ISBN: 0951944029), now in its fourth edition (dated 2008), is available from the Quaker Centre Bookshop, Friends House, London, or for £3 by ordering online: www.quaker.org.uk/shop/quaker-speak

The book is also available for £3.50 inc. p&p from Chris Petrie, 2 Tillman Close, Settle, BD24 9RA, 01729 822677, chpetrie@btinternet.com.

BPM (Becky, Penny and Mark!)

Christians on Ageing

Never heard of it? I'm not surprised, although it's been around for 30 years. I belong, mainly because this is a unique association. We do have a Quaker Group on Dying and Death (QDD) – but ageing? Our testimony to equality leads us to turn a blind eye to ageing. "We treat all age groups the same" an overseer told me some time ago. In a similar way, the social witness survey currently being undertaken by Churches Together in Central Oxford has no place for the subject of ageing, focusing instead on poverty, homelessness and welfare.

Perhaps we need to reassess these attitudes. Erik Erikson has identified specific tasks in adjusting to later life: putting one's past in order; maintaining links in a changing society; becoming reconciled to death. Attending to these becomes even more necessary as longevity increases. So, back to Christians on Ageing. The association revised its priorities this year, in line with a survey of current needs. Members said that they needed help in living their faith.

There is a lesson for all religious groups here. While we focus on social support we may be neglecting the spiritual needs of older people. Some local Quakers tell me "The sheep look up and are not fed". As new elders and overseers are appointed for the triennium 2015-17 let us recognise that our members have both spiritual; and pastoral needs, and that often we cannot separate them.

Peggy Heeks



White poppies will be available in the Meeting House every Sunday after Meetings for Worship from **12 October**. They will also be available from the Warden's office for passersby in St Giles, and from the main Blackwell's bookshop.

Sue Smith, Penny Ormerod, and Becky Riddell

Pointless slaughter? Or heroic endeavour?

Far from the public being enjoined to believe Germany caused the First World War (see the September *Forty-Three*, page 3) what strikes me is the reluctance to face this apparently uncomfortable fact.

The British government dragged its feet. The French kept back their troops 10 km from their border. Germany gave its full backing to Austria-Hungary, leading to war with Russia.

In a telegram of 27 July 1914, analysed by the great German historian Fritz Fischer in his 1961 *Griff nach der Weltmacht (Attempt to Seize World Power)*, the German Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg fears that the Austrian/Serbian conflict will wane; while aware that France and Britain, who are putting pressure on Russia, desire peace. If we reject the (British) attempt at mediation, he writes, "that would...make our position impossible here in Germany, where we have got to appear as though the war had been forced on us."

Prussia had a long record of military aggression. It was, as was said, "not a state with an army, but an army with a state". After the victory against France of 1871, celebrated annually, a belief prevailed as to German invincibility. This was fuelled by social Darwinism, held not least by Helmuth von Moltke, Chief of the General Staff: the idea that nations, ethnically defined, were involved in a struggle for survival, decided by war.

Meanwhile Wilhelm II was a military maverick, appearing several times a day at Potsdam in a change of military uniform. Subsequent to his English – and liberal – mother, Vicky, subjecting him to humiliating procedures in the vain attempt to cure his withered arm, he rejected all for which she stood. A photograph of him and his six sons in

military dress striding through Berlin to the Zeughaus (the military arsenal) says it all.

A major exhibition in that same Zeughaus this summer (in which I spent fascinating hours) does not evade the continuity of outlook between Wilhelminian and Nazi Germany: expansionism, military aggression, and subordination (particularly in the East) of 'racially inferior' peoples.

It was the unprovoked attack on Belgium that brought Britain, treaty-bound to protect Belgium, into the war. As late as 2 August a divided Cabinet had, at most, envisaged a naval blockade to protect the Thames Estuary; Asquith writing that there was no question of an Expeditionary Force. The subsequent loss of life appals; yet 88% of men returned.

God knows what would have transpired had we not resisted. The plan was to annex Belgium, permanently occupying northern France including the channel ports (which would have threatened Britain). At Brest-Litovsk in 1918 Germany took a third of Russia's population, 54% of its industrial base, and its best agricultural land. Versailles looks mild.

Nor would such a 'peace' have been likely to prevail. Between August and October 1914, German troops killed over 6,000 civilians in Belgium and France, removing a further 23,000 to prison camps. Widespread rebellion may well have followed. Intoxicated by yet another military 'success', who knows what adventures the Germans would have embarked upon.

Pointless slaughter? Or necessary endeavour?

Daphne Hampson

Online there's an interactive map that includes Quaker events and exhibitions from all around Britain telling the stories of Quaker involvement in, and resistance to, the War:
www.quaker.org.uk/WW1-events-map

'Commemorating the Peacemakers'

A Day Conference and Evening Concert at FMH
Saturday **15 November**, 10 am to 9:30 pm

www.for.org.uk/events/commemorate

Details to follow in the Nov issue of *Forty-Three*

Sue Smith

Brummana High School

This Quaker school is situated near Beirut. In summer 2013 the following account of its history was written by Philip Manassah with Tanya Garland.



Tanya also interviewed Philip for the December 2006 issue of Forty-Three – to request a copy please email newsletter@oxfordquakers.org.

The school came about because of civil war in Syria in the mid-nineteenth century. News reached England and America of 11,000 Christian men being massacred by the Druze, and it was decided that the area needed support. The Friends' Syrian Mission began and Quaker ladies helped with nursing in Beirut: in 1867 two American and two English Quaker ladies went out to Syria and again in 1868. They started a small boy's school up in the hills a few miles from Beirut in the village of Brummana and then it was developed by Theophilus Waldmeier with money he was given by English Quakers. Theophilus moved up to Brummana from Beirut and expanded the school after visiting London where he stayed in Black Heath and travelled back and forth and around England to get support for the school. He eventually became a Quaker which helped in his mission as Quakers supported him. His aim was to educate 30 to 40 boys as boarders and train them in a vocation. He was supported in this as well as being provided with money for a home and salaries for the teachers from the Quakers in England.

My grandfather's brother Bshara Manassah, became the first principal. There were three brothers, all trained as doctors in Beirut: Antonius, Bshara and Spiradon, and my father was the youngest Antonius. He came to England to train as a doctor at Leeds University and then at Moorfields Hospital in London and he stayed with Quaker families. While in London, he met his future wife and my grandmother Henrietta Bennington, who was training as a nurse. In order to practise as a doctor in Syria which was at that time part of the Turkish/Ottoman Empire, he had to have further qualifications from Istanbul. When he returned to Syria with his new wife, he set up

home in Brummana and was the local doctor and pharmacist for the school. I never met him but I knew Philip who was Spiradon's son, and my cousin Tony, but I don't think they were involved in the school. My grandfather Antonius was a doctor for the whole area and spent his time refurbishing the school hospital. After 1899 he had full responsibility for the hospital while also travelling throughout the area on horseback visiting patients. My father, George, was born in 1900 and in 1914, my grandfather sent him to the Quaker Saffron Walden School. He later set up his life in this country and married my mother Eunice who was a nurse. They had three children, Antony, Meriel and me Philip, the youngest. They only visited Syria two or three times but my father's sister Dorothy who was a Quaker and a nurse in London, became a member of the governing body of the school and would visit the school twice a year. The British group attached to the school was undersigned by Quaker Peace and Service.

During the civil war which started in 1975, all the English staff and teachers left and local people kept the school open. After the civil war, when my aunt retired I became involved because of my family connections with the school. The English Quakers needed to decide what to do about the school which was costing a lot of money and I went out with them on a visit to review the situation. It had been the school's Cultural Society who had kept the school going during the war and this society was made up of old boys of the school and they were very keen to keep the school with the British Quakers financing it. Our committee under Andrew Clark went out to Brummana to negotiate the terms and conditions of running the school with these old boys of the Cultural Society. It was 1985 and it was decided by the London Quakers to keep the support going.

Andrew Clark did a very fine work setting up a separate committee that would include other interests such as support for the Farm School in Greece, and he changed the name of the committee to QuIET (Quaker International Educational Trust) which is still running today and is registered as a charity. The Trust regained control of the school and it put the relationship between the Quakers in England and the local people in Lebanon (and the responsibilities) on a legal basis. The school is now very valuable and

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the site is a very beautiful one and this Trust has now retained the management since 1985. There is a Brummana Monthly Meeting with local Quakers – a local management group, and two annual AGM meetings, one in Lebanon and one in London – and they report back to the QuIET Trust. Anyone could put forward a name to be considered as representatives, which includes some local members.

The school today is a private institution and licensed and accredited by the Lebanese Ministry of Education, with 900 students, boys and girls, from nearly 30 countries and it has over 100 teachers made up of ten nationalities as well as taking volunteer Quaker staff and gap-year student interns. The address is PO Box 36, Brummana, Lebanon, telephone: 961-4-960430/1/2.

Thank you for your support!

In autumn 2013, I was raising money for Raleigh International so that I could volunteer with them for ten weeks in the spring in Tanzania. I would like to thank everyone who donated or employed me whilst I was fundraising. Here are some of the things my team and I did in our Village.



This is Charlie 3 – the name of my team: there are seven volunteers from the UK and seven volunteers from Tanzania.

We are at Kibululu Primary School where we have painted a mural with messages about handwashing, boiling water, looking after water pumps, and not sharing water sources with animals.

We were working in and around Mgongo, a village in the Singida region of Tanzania. In the first phase of our project, we researched what health and sanitation resources our community needed and wanted. We also held events and taught lessons in schools where we reminded people how and when to wash their hands, boil drinking water, and other good hygiene practises. We also helped the local people lay pipes connecting a water borehole to water distribution points throughout the village – some people used to walk for over an hour to collect water; now it's ten minutes away at most. The toilets at Mgongo primary school were not

finished by the last Raleigh group so we helped complete that as well.

In the second phase of our project, as well as continuing to give information and education to the community we built rocket stoves. Rocket stoves are made out of bricks, mud, ash, water and cow dung, which can all be found in the village. They are incredibly efficient, meaning less fuel is needed and the fuel burns more completely, reducing the amount of smoke produced and smoke inhalation. Because they are so efficient they heat and boil water fast – making boiling all drinking water, to make it safe, much easier and quicker.

We also gave the local health clinic tippy taps: these are not plumbed-in as the clinic has no water pipes, but they provide a place for health workers to wash their hands in between patients, preventing the spread of disease and making the health clinic safer.

Thanks again for all your help, I learnt a lot and I think my team and I made a difference as well.

Isobel Sutherland



Fridays with Friends

7 for 7:30 pm in the Garden Room

17 October

A New Framework for Quaker Work

Meeting for Sufferings has set up a working group to develop a new Long-Term Framework for 2015-20. They want our discernment on how Quakers are led to work together and speak out in the world. Their questions to us are at www.quaker.org.uk/way-ahead We'll address them at this Friday with Friends event led by **Laurie Michaelis** and **Stephen Yeo**.

7 November

Art and the First World War

Felicity Allbrooke will show and talk about her recent paintings and drawings inspired by the centenary of the First World War, together with earlier work on the theme of war. She will follow this with an illustrated talk on a personal selection of art from the

6 First World War.

The Struggle for Education in Zimbabwe

I spent most of August back in Zimbabwe working with a number of different groups and was able to take money raised through the children's spring plant sale, collections after Meetings and some additional donations, to deliver by hand to the headmaster of the Success Academy. As always he sends back messages of thanks and gratitude to the Meeting and maintains a strong and positive attitude in the face of difficulties which would overwhelm most of us.

Success Academy is housed in an ordinary bungalow in the dusty, desperately poor, peri-urban settlement of Hatcliffe Extension on the edge of Harare. Daily it opens its doors to almost one thousand children, many of whom are orphans or in families where money for school fees (even government schools in Zimbabwe charge fees) is not available. They "hot seat", some attending in the morning and others in the afternoon, and thanks to previous fund-raising by the Meeting, there are now actually some seats and desks, whereas before most children were sitting on the floor!

Their teachers are usually young volunteers from the community who have been through education but not found jobs, which is usual in Zimbabwe where unemployment levels are around 85%. The headmaster writes this time:

"The children of Success are experiencing quite a myriad of challenges due to the down-warping of the economy. Many children are walking a distance of 15km to school, which is too long a distance for young children. The immediate challenge is transport fares for grade 7 pupils to the exam centre which is 30kms away. The Form 4s are old enough to walk to the exam centre. We have bought benches, textbooks, some toilet material and paid teacher incentives through your donations."

In Zimbabwe everyone in primary school sits exams in grade 7 to determine whether they can go on to secondary school, so it is crucial for the children that they have this opportunity and the

funding raised this time will be used for this purpose.

The children walking 15 kilometres to the school are from farm workers' families who are amongst those worst hit by what has happened in the country. Previously they would have attended school on the farms where their parents worked but schools, jobs and often access to health care as well have disappeared as a result of the land invasions and takeover of these farms.

I couldn't help feeling sorry for the Form 4s who will be facing such a long walk before they sit the equivalent of their GCSE exams but there are so many needs that they do not come top of the priority list. Many of the school's pupils are orphans living with relatives (who are often struggling to provide for their existing family) or in child-headed households so help is often needed with basic needs such as food and clothing. The school also badly needs more toilets and these are under construction at the moment.

Jane Fisher



International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

17 October

www.un.org/en/events/povertyday

United Nations Day

24 October

The UN General Assembly once recommended that the day be observed by member states as a public holiday.

www.un.org/en/events/unday

Young Friends General Meeting

will be taking place 17 to 19 October, in Nottingham.

Dates for next year's gatherings:

20-22 February, 22-25 May, and

16-18 October 2015

<http://yfgm.quaker.org.uk>

CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER 2014

All 43 St Giles unless otherwise indicated

Sunday 5	12:30 pm	Meeting for Worship for Business	Monday 13	7:30 pm	Young Adult Friends
Saturday 4	10 am to 4 pm	Let Your Light Shine! — see page 2, Sept issue	Wednesday 15	1:45 pm	Friends' Fellowship of Healing
Monday 6	12:45 pm	Quaker Knitting	Friday 17	7 for 7:30 pm	Friday with Friends
Monday 6	7:30 pm	Young Adult Friends	Monday 20	7:30 am	Young Adult Friends
Saturday 11	10:30 am – 4 pm	'John Macmurray and the Conditions for Creativity' — see page 2	Sunday 26	12:30 pm	Bring-and-share lunch
Sat 11	10:30 am	Quaker Quilting	Monday 27	7:30 pm	Young Adult Friends



Friends World Committee for Consultation invites every Quaker Meeting and Church from around the world to celebrate World Quaker Day on **5 October**. As the sun rises in each area of the world, we want to remember that Quakers are worshiping through every time

zone, celebrating our deep connections across cultures and Quaker traditions. We are united in love and can accompany each other on this special day that draws us together. As we worship, let us hold each other in prayer and thanksgiving, and let our hymns of praise resound across the world.

Quaker Week will run from 4-12 October: www.quaker.org.uk/outreach

1 October is World Vegetarian Day and 1-7 October is International Vegetarian Week.

www.worldvegetarianday.org
www.vegetarianweek.org

Good Money Week, previously known as National Ethical Investment Week, runs from 19-25 October

www.goodmoneyweek.com

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

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

Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7:30 am at 43 St Giles (followed by breakfast at 8 am)

Wednesdays at 12:15 pm at 43 St Giles (followed by tea and coffee)

Headington LM worships on Sundays at 10 am at The Priory, 85 Old High Street, OX3 9HT

OPENING TIMES (43 ST GILES)

Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday, 9:30 am - 1:30 pm

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. Articles and notices are very welcome to appear in the print edition only, and the same applies to calendar items.

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