

FRIARGATE NEWS

November 2018 *introductory issue*



Friends enjoying relaxation during the Sunday walk, the first of the new series of events being organised by Friargate Social Committee

Welcome to the interim version of Friargate News

In future – in December if all goes well - we intend to offer you a more interesting layout and more colourful presentation. And normally we shall expect to cover news of our Friends and Attenders - their interests, activities and what's going on in our meeting - over four pages.

On this occasion we need extra space to flag up and prepare for the threshing meeting on 11 November. It is a chance for all of us to share ideas about how to make the Fox Room work better for its variety of users. Do read the background papers (pp 5 - 7) and look up the Threshing Meeting leaflet to be clear what this unusual term means. Copies are in the meeting house and on the Friargate website. Do come to the meeting too!

News of people, activities, events

HOUSE GROUPS

Bishophill Group 2nd Nov, 12.30, Home of Theodore Bacon (Bring own lunch): Looking at 'God, Words & Us' [Helen Rowlands]

Clifton Group 6th Nov, 7pm, Home of David Rubinstein & Ann Holt: 'Someone I would like to thank'.

Knivesmire Group 22nd Nov. Not a set meeting, but we hope many will gather at the performance of 'This Evil Thing' at York Theatre Royal

AFTER SUNDAY WORSHIP

4th November Local Meeting for Business

11th Nov Threshing Meeting, from 11.45 – 1.30 pm. coffee & cake provided.

18th Nov Soup & Rolls, then Gardening.

Also Craft Afternoon: How to make Christmas decorations

25th Nov, Noon-12.45 Attenders Group in Quiet Room. Contact: Terry Kay

AREA MEETING Sat 10th at Friargate. Details follow in New Quakevine

ACTIVITIES

Attenders Group The attenders group is a forum for newcomers to Friargate. The informal group meets once a month after Sunday meeting for worship to discuss various aspects of Quakerism and Friargate meeting. The group decides for itself what topics to consider, and occasionally invites Friends to join them and speak about Quaker life and Friargate. The group welcomes all attenders and enquirers to join them. Meetings usually happen on the 4th Sunday from 12 – 12.45 pm, in the Quiet Room.

Terry Kay serves as link Friend for the group

Exploring Quakerism This monthly discussion group, facilitated by Barbara Windle, meets between 9 – 10.15 am, usually on the second Sunday of the month. Anyone is welcome to come along on Nov 11th

Peace Now - The personal dimension Workshop sessions on practical peacemaking, a sequel to October's conference about the world since the end of World War 1. We now think about the avoidance of the causes of conflict in the present and future. Forms for those wishing to join this day of workshops are available at Friargate. 17th November 9.45am - 4.45pm.

People and events

Remembrance Day Events This year Friargate will again be contributing a wreath of white poppies at the civic ceremony. **Rowan Palmour** will lay the wreath on behalf of our meeting. Memorial Gardens, Nov 11th, 11am

Christine Abbot's book Christine has recently co-authored a book about teaching leadership and decision making in organisations. Christine says the book is intended to provide practical guidance, and that principles included in the approach draw on some aspects of Quaker experience. She has donated a copy to Friargate. Borrow it from the bookshelf in the foyer.



White poppies White poppies from Peace Pledge Union are again on sale at Friargate. And so many people have knitted or crocheted poppies that we have a splendid display of them outside Friargate. Only yesterday we saw visitors to York taking photographs and heard how impressed they were to see them there. Finally, Friargate visible is to the world!

First, a request – then, an offer

Might you be able to offer one night's accommodation?

Michael Mears is the actor starring in York Theatre Royal's production of This Evil Thing which several Friargate Friends intend to see. His one-man show tells of a conscientious objector, Bert Brocklesby, who suffered for his stand in WW1.

Michael writes: I wonder if any Friends or attenders in York might be willing and able to offer me a bed for the night of Weds Nov. 21st, the evening before I perform my play on the 22nd? The person I was hoping to stay with is going to be away. I would be hugely grateful if anyone was able to accommodate me - and I would of course get them two tickets for the play if they were able to come along on that Thursday afternoon.

Many thanks, in friendship, Michael [MICHAEL MEARS 07960 981857]

New stainless steel floor lamps are seeking good homes

Cath Harvey writes: Friargate has four practically new Ikea Lersta Stainless steel floor lamps which are no longer needed. If you would like one or more, we would be pleased for them to go to good homes. In return, donations to Friargate Building Fund would be very welcome.

A Reminder from the 'Subscriptions' Treasurer

Earlier this year I distributed details of the annual financial needs of Friargate and of Britain Yearly Meeting [BYM]. If you have already responded, thank you. If you plan to do so but the request has slipped out of sight in your 'to do' list, may I ask you to do so, preferably well before the year end. The average sought is around £480 per person, being £255 for the local meeting and £225 to support the Yearly Meeting's central work. The latter includes grant support for the Quaker UN Office in Geneva, The Friend, Young Friends General Meeting, Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) plus new and ongoing work of Quaker Life and of Quaker Peace and Social Witness. BYM Trustees have identified declining membership as the greatest risk facing the society and have initiated a number of pilot projects aimed at revitalising local meetings and reaching out to young Friends, all of which have imminent future financial implications. More immediately, the predicted disruption caused by work on HS2 in the Euston Station area is likely to affect the income from Friends House trading activities for the duration of the work.

The sum requested is an average, of course. In practice there is a wide variation, as Friends give according to their own means and leadings. If you have mislaid the original form, then please get in touch with me: Roy Love, Subscriptions Treasurer; email at roylove439@btinternet.com or place a message in the Treasurer's pigeonhole at Friargate.

Friargate coffee rota

After Meeting for Worship every Sunday tea and coffee are provided. This is an important part of our meeting, allowing us to welcome people who are new to Friargate and to catch up with old Friends. Unfortunately beverages don't make themselves. We have a stalwart group of drink makers who are on a rota to make sure drinks are made every week. Making and serving drinks is fun and sociable and is not at all onerous (especially as we are blessed with a dishwasher in the kitchen). It is a good way of meeting and getting to know people in meeting who you may not usually speak to. You are not expected to bring tea, coffee, milk or biscuits as these are all provided.

Please contact me if you would like to join the rota. You would be asked to help make the drinks about once in every two or three months.

Mary Griffiths maryfgriffiths@hotmail.com

How might we best use the Fox Room & the Library?

Threshing Meeting ... *a meeting at which a variety of different, and sometimes controversial, opinions can be openly, and sometimes forcefully, expressed, often in order to defuse a situation before a later meeting for business.*

A leaflet explaining the purpose and process of 'threshing' is available from the meeting house or the websites: yorkquakers.org.uk or quaker.org.uk

Everyone is welcome to take part in the threshing meeting on Sunday 11th.

Resources Committee: a Discussion paper re Fox Room & the Library

Background

Until the second phase of Friargate's redevelopment the Library was in its own room, where the foyer easy chairs are now. The meeting has benefitted enormously from the opening out of the foyer area, which is now much lighter and more spacious than before. Books to buy and a small number of books to borrow are displayed there, as well as some periodicals.

The decision to relocate the books to the Fox Room, whilst good for the foyer, has had some disadvantages, principally:

- The room is more crowded than before, with a variety of items of furniture stacked in the room for group use, as well as the cupboard for Children & Young People's resources.
- Access to the Library for borrowers is restricted to times when the room is not let. This was the case in its old location too, but it may discourage borrowers.

The Sunday children's class takes place in Fox every week and this means that some furniture has to be moved around before the class. Also, it can be difficult to keep the carpet clean when doing messy activities. These problems have been shared with Resources Committee and staff.

The Communications Group has been looking at the usage and accessibility of the library and have made considerable strides in selecting suitable books to go in the open area of the foyer. Borrowings have increased as a result. It has also been reviewing the impact of leaving so many old and duplicate books on display. It does not suggest a vibrant meeting and it discourages new borrowers. Hence the increased borrowing from the new books in the foyer.

Resources Committee – ongoing maintenance in 2018

As part of our general upkeep the Fox Room is scheduled to be redecorated, and possibly re-carpeted, in 2018. Resources and the Communications Group would like to hear what the Meeting feels about the current arrangements and to explore the issues in a threshing meeting.

Questions we might ask are:

LIBRARY What Library/resources for learning & outreach do we want?

We would need to take into consideration

1. General Accessibility
2. Security
3. Appeal and Attractiveness
4. Usability, from the viewpoint of browser, borrower, and librarian.

FOX ROOM How can this room work better for those who use it?

Redecoration will undoubtedly make the letting space look brighter and fresher and is in our programme of work for this year. Resources Committee realise that it could be done while leaving the library as it is. However they have also discussed other possible changes such as:

1. Reducing the carpeted area so that the area below the hatch could have a wipe-clean surface as in the Penn Room.
2. Extending this flooring along the whole wall, perhaps installing cupboards there. This could increase the storage capacity for Children & Young People's Committee items.
3. Moving the shelves to a different wall in the Fox Room. The room may still feel cluttered however
4. Looking at what we need in a library, and how that need is best met.

Questions for the Threshing Meeting

- **What sort of Library/resources for learning and outreach do we want?**
- **How can the Fox Room work better for those who use it?**
- **What are the ideas we have not yet thought of?**

Library & Fox: additional thoughts from Communications

The Present Situation Communications Group sees the library's function in terms of fulfilling the information needs of three main user groups:

1. Enquirers & others seeking Quakerism and current Quaker concerns.
2. All seeking particular key titles about Quakerism and related topics.
3. Researchers wishing to access mainly historical titles.

The mass of older (and visually unappealing) books makes it hard for enquirers to find what they need, nor does it encourage them to browse.

Action to 2017 A Friend's informal professional advice highlighted:

- The library is well organised overall but its historical collection requires a formal review of its purpose for the long-term.
- The size makes it difficult for readers to access current key titles.
- To be an effective modern research source, the library would need greater management (costs implicit) and reclassification.
- Current low usage would not justify this root & branch work.
- Pruning could be done quickly & readily.

Since late 2017 We now have in the foyer a selection of books, both on Quakerism and other current topics of interest. The criteria include:

- Titles about modern Quakerism of interest to enquirers;
- Titles appropriate to attenders and those new to Quakerism;
- New publications of interest, dealing with contemporary issues;
- Books of use in preparing for children's classes;
- A core collection of Quaker "classics" (but in modern editions).

Its success is clear from the fact that more loans are made from the open shelf than from the whole of the main library.

The Future – thoughts for discussion Books offered for sale, however good/attractive, seem not to have the same appeal. Might elders subsume them into the foyer library, freeing both foyer shelving areas for this?

We might think of future library provision in three parts:

- New, modern books for attenders & enquirers – all in the foyer. To be updated and actively managed for accessibility and relevance.
- 'staples', all in good condition, kept in a section of the Fox Room
- Our 'reference' library, important for study & scholars, might be housed separately, making Fox more spacious and preventing a misleading impression that we are all about the past

Useful Information

NOTICE READERS FOR NOVEMBER

4th Huw Still 07915 607903. Remaining Sundays John Gray 627492
Breakfast Meeting David and Margaret Laverick 798050

COLLECTIONS

4, 11 Quaker Council for European Affairs. 18,25 Medical Aid for Palestine
NOV 4 Food and toiletries collection for Carecent

QUAKER MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Sundays

Meeting House (10.30-11.30)

Meeting House on 2nd, 4th Sundays (9.15-10); shared breakfast (8.30)

Lamel Beeches; (10.30-11.15)

Eastern Villages Group (8pm, 3rd Sunday) Contact: Val Humby

Midweek

Meeting House (Wednesdays, 1.15-1.45, Bring lunch for 12.45)

University Quiet Place (Wednesdays in term time, 2.00)

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A special thank you to those who have helped us get this far

Deadline for contributions for next issue by noon, November 18th.

Notices after Meeting

In April, Area Meeting elders and overseers explored the theme of Glue and Bridges. What binds us as a community? What links us to the world beyond? Sunday Notices fulfil both functions.

Notices need to be welcoming, informative, yet brief enough not to take the impact away from the worship.

In this spirit our elders have recently reviewed the guidelines we give to our notice readers.

From Notices guidance:

Take last minute items to the reader at the desk in the foyer.

Tell the reader if you have a report.

Otherwise, give the reader the information, rather than requesting your own slot.