

YORK AREA QUAKEVINE

Quaker News, Views, Insights and Reports

Issue 4

April/May 2019



Camilla writes of her 'inspiring experience' as a barnacle beneath the boat

Thanks to XR & Lola Perrin for this photo & that shown in Friargate News

Extinction Rebellion: making values central

This Good Friday, 20th April 2019, I was arrested taking part in Extinction Rebellion's non-violent civil disobedience in London. I was a "barnacle": one of those attached to the underside of a big pink boat of truth in the middle of Oxford Circus (de facto pedestrianised along with several other sites in London).

These protests are like nothing I have experienced – it was a very moving and inspiring few days. One of the really remarkable things is the way, in a large-scale civil disobedience event, values are made so central. In front of me there was a huge banner reading "humility empathy frugality." There were workshops on non-violent communication, reminders to keep the spaces drug- and alcohol-free, young children pottering curiously. Passersby kept coming to thank us and bring refreshments, the police were unfailingly friendly and several made sympathetic comments. Assemblies were held for those of us holding the space to come to decisions together peacefully and respectfully. When someone was arrested (young or old, professor, farmer, vicar, mother of 3, from Wales, from Scotland, from Somerset) a chant would go up: "We love you. We love you. We love you."

I hadn't planned this. I went because I had some time and not very good excuses. I went because every time I read about another deadly wildfire or drought, or dying species, I feel sad and powerless. Because the changes we need will require more than individual action. Because facing this crisis will take honesty and courage, a huge shift

to focus on addressing climate change while we still have a chance, and do so in a way which safeguards the vulnerable in our communities.

Extinction Rebellion is informed by research into social change – modelled on movements such as Civil Rights and the suffragettes. It felt deeply uplifting and empowering to be able to escape the media factory of misery, the Brexit bickering for a little while, to connect with fellow humans over something important, to face my own guilt and despondency and be part of this important moment in history.

Today in Marble Arch, among the tents, a second Quaker meeting was held in support of these demonstrations. I write this on Easter Sunday. I feel like finally there is momentum. Perhaps there is hope?

Camilla Wimberley [Friargate]

Statement from: Quaker Meeting for Worship, Extinction Rebellion camp, Marble Arch, Easter Sunday 2019

We are called here in a spirit of Peace, Love and Truth to bear witness to the pain of our planet. We must take heed of the warning of science, which is clear. Those children being born into the world today face a world of catastrophe, social collapse and mass extinction. This is a Truth we can discern ourselves: we see floods and wildfires, we see famines and wars and the displacement of peoples, we see the loss of glaciers and ice caps. We grieve at the loss of so many species and habitats. We uphold the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, who are at the forefront of the struggle for Climate Justice. All over the world, the poorest are bearing the brunt, but all of us will suffer. The next generation may be the last.

This is not our world to burn. "Where were you when I laid the Foundations of the Earth?" (Job 38:4). Where shall we be if we render it uninhabitable through greed and recklessness? This heedless destruction of the natural world must be halted. **"We do not own the world, and its riches are not ours to dispose of at will.** Show a loving consideration for all creatures and seek to maintain the beauty and variety of the world. Work to ensure increasing power over nature is used responsibly, with reverence for life." (Advices & Queries 42).

As Quakers we remember and hold true to our traditions of non-violent resistance. From the start our testimony has been one of peace, of freedom of worship, and opposition to oppression and injustice.

People have come together, in grief and in anguish, because the time to change is running out. We pay tribute to the commitment and bravery of Extinction Rebellion and the School Strikes for Climate. We are with you and part of you. To all those arrested, we hold you in the Light.

To governments and businesses, we urge you to act with urgency and vigour. Acknowledge the truth: this is an emergency. Act at once to reduce carbon emissions to net zero. Establish Citizens' Assemblies to guide your actions.

To Quakers across the world, and to all churches and all faiths, we share this call for action and prayer. We all live under one sun. In the face of imminent global cataclysmic events, the time to act as one is now. As Gandhi said, "Be the change that you wish to see in the world."

*Thank you to **Graham Torr** (New Earswick) for sending this in*

Area Meeting Activities

Saturday May 11th York Area Meeting at Friargate

13.00 hot drinks

13.30 opening worship

13.45 Area Meeting Business *including*

- Membership
- Quaker Peace & Social Witness Conference
- Meeting for Sufferings in April*
- Result of Harrogate's application for QPSW funding
- York Area Meeting of Sanctuary – reviewing the first year
- A Simple church supported by a simple charity – QIY's April challenge

16.00 Area meeting concludes *with tea and light refreshments*

* April Meeting for Sufferings

A very full day included consideration of the minute sent by York AM from our January meeting. The responding minute agreed at Sufferings states:

Parameters of court and prion register

"We receive minute 4/2019 of York Area Meeting informing us that Christine Abbot, an attender at Friargate Meeting, lost a contract with the Church Commissioners in 2017, following a year's successful work, without right of appeal, on the grounds that she was attending Quaker worship and refused to give any assurance that she would cease to do so.

We agree to minute this information about Christine Abbott.

York Area Meeting has asked us to re-examine the parameters of the Court and Prison Register. We feel this needs further consideration before making a decision and will return to the matter at a future meeting.

We forward this minute to Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relationships."

Anne Ullathorne, Clerk

We shall keep Friends updated as appropriate (but don't hold your breath!).

Saturday May 25th at 7.00 pm– SWARTHMORE LECTURE livestreamed



see facing page for details

Eden Grace

Photo: Courtesy of Woodbrooke

Spiritual Experience: opportunities open for all in May

Friargate

Friday 10th May 12.30 – 3.00 BISHOPHILL GROUP. Contact Ann Holt 01904 638431 for details. We are reading aloud 'Simplicity made Easy' [Jennifer Kavanagh] after a bring-your-own cake and sandwich lunch.

Sunday 12th May 9.00 – 10.15 EXPLORING QUAKERISM a responsive, open-ended discussion sometimes using 'Becoming Friends'. Facilitated by Barbara Windle.

Sunday 12th May 11.55 – 12.30 AFTERWORD All are welcome to share responses to (or questions about) that day's worship– or their own 'nearly ministry'.

Tuesday 14th May 1.30 – 3.30 QUAKER FOCUSING The first of three new sessions for up to 9. Possibly interested? contact Madeleine Kay to find out more 01904 791919

Saturday 25th May 7.00 – SWARTHMORE LECTURE livestreamed from Britain Yearly Meeting at Friends House. Take your place from 6.40pm
'On Earth as it is in Heaven; the Kingdom of God and the yearning of creation'

Eden Grace explores the spiritual basis for climate justice. All are welcome.

Sunday 26th May 12.00 – 12.45 ATTENDERS' GROUP, Open to all, but most specially attenders, enquirers, newcomers. Get to know others in a small group, ask questions, join in informal discussion on all things Quaker. Contact Terry Kay 01904 791919

Thirsk

Sunday 19th May 7 pm SPRINGBOARD TALK: 'Archaeology, Heritage Protection & Community Engagement in South Asia'. Speaker: Nick Lewer. All welcome.

Every Monday 10.00 – 12 noon DISCUSSION GROUP

The range of subjects is widely diverse and new faces are always welcome.

Looking Ahead to June

Monday, June 17th at 7.30 pm as part of Refugee Week: a powerful and passionate speaker- Gulwali Passarlay will be speaking at Bootham School. His book 'The Lightless Sky', tells his journey as an Afghan refugee child from a life of persecution to political campaigner and founder of Red Kite charity. <https://bootham-school.ticketleap.com/refugee-week-public-lecture-by-gulwali-passarlay/>

Gulwali is a dedicated refugees and asylum-sought-after public campaigner for refugee education. His own commitment to raise for other refugees. In his struggle, danger and the harrowing year-the UK, on his own, brother. Come and hear



advocate and spokesperson for seekers across the U.K. He is a speaker, influencer and political rights, social justice and journey inspired an insatiable awareness and make a difference talks, Gulwali shares his story of resilience and how he survived long journey from Afghanistan to after being separated from his him. Tickets are free.

Tuesday 25th June 6.30 for 7pm Marigold Bentley of QPSW talks on Hope and Possibility in Quaker peace work. Acomb Meeting House.

Saturday 30th June 7pm Meet at 10 Abbotsway, York to discuss the agenda for July's Meeting for Sufferings.

A challenging Quakers In Yorkshire Meeting

The day fell into three distinct sections, which all, on reflection, had the same theme – how we embrace change as a positive.

In the morning Paul Parker, Recording Clerk of Britain Yearly Meeting, challenged us to think about the organisation and the spiritual life of our meetings. The practical thrust of the talk and our subsequent discussions focused on how we can simplify the organisation of our meetings and their administration. We were warned that change will come, slowly but inexorably, whether we will it or no. Part of the presentation centred on the size and range of meetings and a decline in numbers, a small change from year to year, but a 14% decline over 10 years. We were reminded that Quakerism isn't simply a social group for people who like to sit quietly with others! We reflected hard on Quaker practices and the way that perhaps structures do not offer the strongest evidence of witness to those who visit us or see us from outside. We were reminded that many of the concerns held by Friends over the years – for the planet, for reflective mindfulness – are very much things that appeal increasingly to young people. Friends decided to take forwards some of the ideas about organisation, and those present at the meeting were encouraged to get involved and share ideas widely with QIY trustees and others.

*Extracted from **Julian Pattison's** very helpful report*



*Paul Parker speaking to a full house in Balby (Doncaster)
Can you spot any heads belonging to York AM Friends?*

Paul Parker wrote on facebook over the weekend (27 April):

Quakers from across Yorkshire packed Balby (Doncaster) Quaker Meeting House today to spend a morning thinking about how to simplify our structures and practices to make Quakerism fit for the 21st century. Lots of great ideas, and agreement on a process for taking the discussion forward.

And then, in the afternoon, the pleasure of hearing Jennifer Barraclough speak about the work of The Retreat, and Andrew Lane updating Friends on the work of the Quaker Council for European Affairs. What a treat.

Audio Recording of York Area Quakevine

You may not know that I prepare a spoken version of every issue of *York Area Quakevine* for the benefit of anyone who has difficulty reading the text. I can supply it on a USB memory stick, on a CD or via Google drive. Roy Love joins me in the reading (adding his Scottish lilt!).

If you find *Quakevine* difficult to read or you know a Friend who is struggling with their sight who would like to consider an audio recording, then do please get in touch with me. **Chris Love**, 01904 758 344 chris234love@btinternet.com

QPSW Spring Conference 2019

Debbie Wood and Geof Sewell attended this inspiring event

The flyer for this Conference suggested that working for peace and social justice can be both personal and shared, loud and quiet, lifelong and sporadic, depleting and nourishing. The closer the time came, the more paltry my own efforts appeared. I would be meeting people who had staked a huge proportion of their lives for peace, even putting their lives on the line for it. How would we cope with the inspirational stories we would hear without a sense of inadequacy?

The Hayes Centre is a bit like a Premier Inn, set in a golf course with a conference venue attached. The staff are kind and professional and there were many interesting Quakers present. The age range was seven to mid-nineties and the demographic almost all white, articulate and highly educated. A third of the representatives were new to Quakers, a third had been attending for less than five years and a third more.

Our Keynote speaker was a retired, Kenyan, Baptist minister called Nim Njuguna. He is a former Quaker prison chaplain and restorative justice trainer. He created an openness about ethnicity and gender that was unprecedented in my experience. There were workshops in Climate Justice, International Conciliation, the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Israel Palestine, Peace Education and the Criminal Justice System. There were also chances to get to know QPSW programme leaders and both experienced and neophyte peace workers. We were also invited to set our own agenda on topics like "People like Us" and how to reverse the decline in Quaker numbers. The conference was well paced and on Saturday Night we watched films like "Pride". There were tears, laughter, smugness and lifetime-peak experiences.

At the end, Elize Sakamoto, our Japanese Clerk apologised to us all. Over the weekend, she had become irritated. She had not listened to some people deeply enough. She had spoken over them. My experience of her and the other QPSW programme leaders was quite the opposite: strong but mild, self-disciplined and spontaneous, not at all overwhelming but profoundly inspiring. When I asked her to "come and join our gang", she looked momentarily overjoyed, though. I would love to invite Friends like her to talk to York Area Meeting.

Like our Clerk, many of us had had moments that weekend where we had had to face our own limitations. It felt as if we were in the middle of a great novel and our mental furniture was being rearranged. As one participant expressed it: it's not enough to keep sending out lifeboats; we need to clean the sea. It will take me a few more weeks to fully comprehend the implications of the weekend for Local and Area Meeting but I wish, I wish I had gone to a QPSW Conference earlier in my life.

Geof Sewell (Thirsk)

Quaker Faith & Practice: extract of the month

When Goldsmiths College was founded, Caroline Graveson in 1905 became its first female Vice Principal. The College has described her as its 'founding conscience' & has named its Education Building after her. "She was 'a quiet feminist radical, a pioneer of progressive education and remained an advocate for social and educational equality to the end of her life."

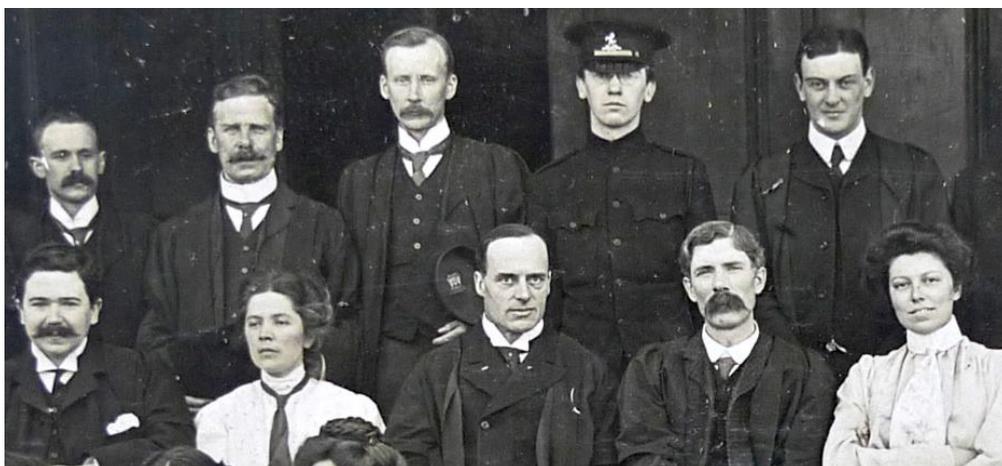
There is, it sometimes seems, an excess of religious and social busyness these days, a round of committees and conferences and journeyings, of which the cost in 'peaceable wisdom' is not sufficiently counted. Sometimes we appear overmuch to



count as merit our participation in these things... At least we ought to make sure that we sacrifice our leisure for something worthy. True leisureliness is a beautiful thing and may not lightly be given away. Indeed, it is one of the outstanding and most wonderful features of the life of Christ that, with all his work in preaching and healing and planning for the Kingdom, he leaves behind this sense of leisure, of time in which to pray and meditate, to stand and stare at the cornfields and fishing boats, and to listen to the confidences of neighbours and passers-by...

Most of us need from time to time the experience of something spacious or space-making, when Time ceases to be the enemy, goad in hand, and becomes our friend. To read good literature, gaze on natural beauty, to follow cultivated pursuits until our spirits are refreshed and expanded, will not unfit us for the up and doing of life, whether of personal or church affairs. Rather will it help us to separate the essential from the

unessential, to know where we are really needed and get a sense of proportion. We shall find ourselves giving the effect of leisure even in the midst of a full and busy life. People do not pour their joys or sorrows into the ears of those with an eye on the clock. 1937 **Caroline Graveson (1874 – 1958)** *QFP 21.22*



This shows Caroline Graveson (left) with staff colleagues at Goldsmiths (above: Caroline in much later life)

QUAKER MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Sundays

- ❖ all our meeting houses 10.30 – 11.30
- ❖ Friargate 2nd & 4th Sundays 9.15 – 10.00, after 8.30 shared breakfast
- ❖ Lamel Beeches 10.30 – 11.15 The Oaks 11.00 – 11.30
- ❖ Knaresborough, Gracious Street 2nd Sunday, 10.45 – 11.15
- ❖ Eastern Villages Group 3rd Sunday, 8 pm *contact Val Humby*

Midweek

- ❖ Hartrigg Oaks 11.45 Tuesdays
- ❖ Friargate 1.15 – 1.45 (bring lunch & gather at 12.45) Wednesdays
- ❖ Knaresborough, Gracious Street 10.45 1st Thursdays
- ❖ Harrogate 12.30 – 1 pm 3rd Thursdays



Harrogate Quaker Meeting House

Local Meetings contact details www.yorkquakers.org.uk

Acomb	The Green, Acomb	01904 795595
Friargate	Friargate, York	01904 624065
Harrogate	12a Queen Parade, Harrogate	01423 563391
New Earswick	Top Folk Hall car park	01904 763248
Thirsk	Kirkgate, Thirsk	01845 523491

York Area Quakevine (YAQ)

YAQ appears in January, March, May, July, September, November

Contributions to Barbara Windle (barbwindle@outlook.com 01904 481977)

and all dates information to Julia Terry (jhterry10@gmail.com 01904 656634)

The editor may select & edit all contributions.

Deadline for next issue: Sunday 16 June