

# *Quakevine*

News, Views, Venues and Dates for Quakers around York  
Issue 88  
July 2011



*Joyce Pickard, Priscilla Webster, Hilary Evens & others  
enjoy Friargate's 30 year celebrations*

*photo: Raymond Williams*

## Contents

Editorial	2
Our peace testimony – 5	2
Quaker Phrases Clarified	2
<i>Quaker faith &amp; practice</i> : extract of the month	2
Churches Together in New Earswick	3
Area Meeting: July agenda; Nominations	4
Area Meeting Miscellany – volunteering opportunities – donating – see an eco-house	5
Quaker Jumbo draws Minster visitors	6
Friargate Miscellany: a) Exploring Spirituality	6
b) A Hidden Corner. c) the new DVD	7
York AM and Quakevine contact information	8

## *Editorial*

A small group of Thirsk and Friargate Friends recently spent a very enjoyable day at Friends House (see 'Backbencher' for elucidation of the term and pertinent comments!). We marvelled at the resources of the Library and were impressed that all the staff had taken such trouble to look out items of particular interest to York/Yorkshire Friends and, with David Blake, to put together a splendid presentation. Over coffee we talked informally with three staff from Quaker Life: Richard Summers, General Secretary (translation – head) took time out to talk with us, as did Alistair Fuller, the Outreach Officer who is currently preparing Quaker Week material for us all, and Oliver Waterhouse, who works specifically on the support of local and area meetings. All this, even though they were in the middle of shifting offices from the second to the third floor.

The new Recording Clerk (translation – chief executive of our Yearly Meeting's employed staff) generously took his lunch break with us and Amanda Woolley looked after the visit as a whole. We finished with a short meeting for worship in the beautifully light and simple worship space before browsing contentedly in the airy cafe-bookshop.

My reflections on the day? Both physical space and the people were wonderfully welcoming. We were warmly invited to spread the message that they are very glad to have such visits and would like other York AM Friends to visit too. I do hope we shall take them up on the invitation.  
Barbara Windle

## *Our Peace Testimony – 5*

I am accused of disobeying a military order. According to the law of the land, I should never have been given that order: according to the law of God I should not in any case obey it. For I strive to live in the spirit of Christ's love, which alone can conquer hatred, violence and sin, and which assuredly will conquer.

*Statement of John Hoare, aged 20, at his Court Martial in 1916*

## *Quaker Phrases Clarified ... by backbencher* *"Friends House has asked us to do it."*

Heard very often. Unfortunately. Friends House is actually a large building opposite Euston Station in London, and as such can ask for nothing. The offices of Britain Yearly Meeting are there; but unlike most organisations, we do not see our central offices as our headquarters. It's the other way round. The staff and committees based there serve the meetings throughout the country. If they do have a request for us, it's because we have entrusted them with a wider task on our behalf.

## *Quaker faith & practice: extract of the month*

Along the paths of the imagination the artist and mystic make contact. The revelations of God are not all of one kind. Always the search in art, as in religion, is for the rhythms of relationships, for the unity, the urge, the mystery, the wonder of life that is presented in great art and true religion.

**Horace B Pointing**, 1944 [Qf&p 21.32]

## *Churches Together (CT) in New Earswick*

When our five Local Meetings shared accounts of their spiritual lives at last year's Area Meetings, it was noticeable that a number of the reports referred to contacts the Meetings had had with other Churches in their locality. New Earswick Friends are represented on its local CT by three of its members, two on the Council and one on the Editorial Panel which produces the monthly ecumenical newsletter, 'Faith Link.' One might assume from this that the Meeting knows all about the QCCIR booklet 'Quakers and the Ecumenical Agenda,' which was published in June 2009, but if so, one would be wrong. Until, that is, it formed the subject of an A4 attachment to New Earswick's Newsletter insert in the May issue of Quakevine, followed by an afternoon discussion of the subject on the 22nd.

About 30 people including half a dozen children stayed on after Meeting for a bring-and-share lunch, of whom 16 then gathered round to hear a brief report from Elaine Ross and Kurt Strauss of the conference they had attended at Woodbrooke entitled: 'Churches Together – what is the place for Quakers?' This introduced a consideration of two of the five chapters from the above publication, one on the gifts we receive from other churches and the other on the problems we may have with the language used by other churches. In groups of four we looked at some of the questions posed in the booklet, e.g. What gifts have I received from other churches? Which of these present me with a challenge or make me feel uncomfortable? How do I as a Quaker take part in other churches' worship with integrity? How has discussion with other churches challenged me? What religious terms am I uncomfortable with?

The only conclusions we came to were that one of the greatest gifts was that of personal friendship with members of other churches, which fostered a feeling of community, and that we should be ready to say clearly what we have found when opportunities arise, or even create them if they don't. But as one of the keynote speakers said at the conference, doing things together is more productive than talking with each other, valuable though that can be. So what could New Earswick Friends do together with their Anglican, Catholic, Methodist and Evangelical Church partners? We could help with some of the existing projects, like Street Angels or the Bereavement Club, or we could enlist support for a new and exciting project to make York a 'City of Sanctuary.' But how?

One idea is to use National Quaker Week as a peg on which to hang an invitation to our fellow Churches and their members to join us for a discussion on what we could do jointly to help York to become such a City. A small group of New Earswick Friends will be considering plans for such an event, hosted by the Meeting, maybe following another lunch, maybe with invited speakers who could share first-hand experience of what it means to seek, and find, sanctuary. At all events, if the idea goes ahead, we shall invite all the York Meetings to share in this initiative, whether or not they are actively involved with their local Churches at the present time.

**Kurt Strauss**

July 2011

*Quakevine*

3

## *York Area Meeting*

### *July Area Meeting – Wednesday 6th*

This will give us an interesting mix of local /area, national and international Quaker concerns. Our trustees will be reporting. We shall hear a testimony to the grace of God in Rosalind Priestman's life. We shall look ahead to Yearly Meeting Gathering, then discuss the Quaker World Conference to be held in Kenya in 2012. Do come! We are all essential to our Area Meeting and Acomb is an excellent venue. We begin at 6.30 pm and aim to conclude by 9 pm.

### *What does a Nominations Committee do?*

*'There are varieties of gifts, but the same spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the spirit for the common good.'* (1Cor 12:4-7)

Area Meeting Nominations Committee wants to raise awareness of the process we experience when appointing Friends to serve our Area Meeting. *Quaker faith & practice* sets out guidance and responsibilities in chapter 3, paragraphs 22–30. 3:22 reads: *'It is a responsibility of a Christian community to enable its members to discover what their gifts are and to develop and exercise them to the glory of God.'*

It is one of our strengths that the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) depends on its members to share the jobs entailed in running the community, each taking on a role for a limited period of service before handing it on to someone else. There are times in our lives as Friends when we are able and willing to play a more active role, and times when we need to let others take on more of the work.

How are Friends appointed to particular roles? The process is the same, whether it is for Local, Area, Regional or Yearly Meeting. In each case, a Nominations Committee is asked to do three things: to discern appropriate names, to approach the named Friends and find out if they are willing to be considered for service, then to take the names to the appropriate business meeting for consideration and (almost certainly) appointment.

Area Meeting Nominations Committee (familiarily known as AM Noms) consists of Friends drawn from each Local Meeting. It meets to discern who should be approached about the possibility of serving Area Meeting in a given role. Where appropriate, details of roles for which service is currently needed will be made known through Quakevine. As with all Quaker committees, meetings are held in the spirit of worship. All potential names and roles are given prayerful consideration and the eventual nomination may well not be the Friend who was first suggested.

Once AM Noms has agreed the names, these come to Area Meeting for appointment. Most appointments are for three years initially, usually with the possibility of another three years if that seems the right way forward.

Noms tries to be aware of the rich variety of Quaker experience, natural gifts, acquired skills and special expertise that may be available in the meeting at a given moment. The committee is always glad to learn more,

however, and it really welcomes hearing from Friends, especially from newer Friends, of what they feel they may be able to offer.

At the same time, Noms also looks to discern the latent gifts of which an individual may be unaware. Many Friends first got engaged with an area of work which has become their abiding interest - solely because a discerning Nominations Committee asked, and persisted in asking them, to take on a role they had never dreamed of fulfilling!

**Jane Tod [New Earswick]** for Area Meeting Nominations Committee

## *Area Meeting Miscellany*

### *Please donate your unwanted books*

On Saturday 27 August 2011 there will be a Summer Fair held on Acomb Green. Acomb Meeting will be selling produce and second hand books at the event, proceeds to go to the Alternatives to Violence Project. We are appealing for donations of books. We are able to collect donations from anyone in York Area Meeting or simply come and join us for Meeting for Worship on a Sunday at 10:30 am with your donations. Come and visit us anyway - we would love to see you.

**Please contact me, Paul O’Kell. My details are in the Blue Book.**

### *Volunteering Opportunity at Arc Light*

Arc Light is looking for someone to help with administration and coordination of volunteer activities. You would be working with Paul Wordsworth, Arc Light Chairman and founder of the project. It is a great opportunity to learn about how a centre for the homeless is run and to use your communication and administrative skills coordinating activities with volunteers, staff and residents. The role is voluntary, flexible & will be built around the time you have available. For further information please contact: [ginettelytton@googlemail.com](mailto:ginettelytton@googlemail.com) or speak to **Cathy Holman**, Friargate Meeting on 07944 645005

### *Knitting Wool wanted*

If you have any odds and ends of knitting wool to spare, Brenda Tyler would be very grateful to have them to turn into new things - absolutely any colour will be useful. [tomtecards@btinternet.com](mailto:tomtecards@btinternet.com)

### *York Eco house open*

**Anna Semlyen’s** Eco house will be open on July 17<sup>th</sup> 2–4 pm. Solar PV Electric, Solar Thermal Water, Sempatap Solid Wall Insulation. Curious about eco energy or warming a solid brick house? Interested in a tax free 10% return on a green investment with the Feed In Tariff? See a 2kWhr solar rig, solar water heating & insulating wallpaper. **24 Grange St, off Fulford Rd, York, YO10 4BH.**

### *Volunteering Opportunity at The Retreat*

The Retreat is looking for people, in particular those with a CCAB Accountancy qualification and / or commercial business experience, to join its Board of Directors. These volunteers need to be in sympathy with the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) and prepared to attend regular meetings at The Retreat. For further details please contact either The Retreat’s chief executive, **Jenny McAleese**, on 01904 420900 or email the chair of directors, **Stuart Humby** at [shumby@aol.com](mailto:shumby@aol.com).

## *Quaker Jumbo draws the crowds at the Minster*

At least, that's how a tabloid reporter might have put it. The elephant concerned was two feet high, and benefited from a tusk-repair job before coming to the Minster. We used him to create interest in our stall at the Big Environment Day on 28 May. We invited people passing our stall to write down what they thought was the (environmental) elephant in the room. Suggestions varied from the obvious, such as "unrestricted air travel" to the interesting such as "debt-ridden countries exploited by rich countries" and the zany, such as "disposable nappies". The organisers had invited churches and environmentally concerned groups to a Big Environment Day to highlight our shared belief that we do not own our planet; we are its stewards, with responsibility to future generations, and to the other creatures sharing it with us. About twenty one organisations exhibited, primarily from the 'green sector'. The only other churches were the United Reformed and, of course, the Anglicans. As Friends, we wanted to show that our concern was broad, radical, and with a political dimension, as set out in Quaker Peace & Social Witness's excellent series of eight posters on Sustainable Security. We displayed these prominently. Our stall stressed sustainability and simplicity. We represented personal green practice by our soup recipes, a collection of fresh vegetables, and Joyce's bike with its typical propaganda placard. The event was designed to increase awareness of our need to change behaviour. We aimed to demonstrate Quaker environmental concern via our display, (posters of relevant Advices), by distributing QPSW's folders and leaflets on response to climate change, and by discussing issues. We had an appreciable number of visitors, many of them tourists. The Day proved a valuable opportunity for Outreach. We gave Quaker literature and talked to interested visitors about the Society of Friends. We enjoyed the day. Thank you to all who helped and to those who had the imagination to arrange the event in such a beautiful setting.

**Alastair Cooper**

### *Friargate Miscellany*

#### *Exploring Spirituality at Norfolk Quaker Cottage*

Last year Barbara Webb and Ruth Corry discussed some workshops on spirituality which Barbara had attended and the idea of a Friargate weekend exploring such themes was born. As a result fourteen adults gathered in this beautiful place with wide views for two days 'Exploring Spirituality'. Some, organisers included, felt a little nervous as Friargate had not attempted anything like this before. We all hoped for something valuable to take away from our time together. We need not have worried. Thoughtful preparation created a safe, loving atmosphere in which to develop a community of warm fellowship, compassion and mindfulness where we could relax, explore and feel receptive to the presence of the Spirit.

All activities were optional. We had a mixture of structured exercises, sharing 1:1, in small groups and as a whole. First we chose postcards to represent aspects of our spiritual journey and shared personal experiences with one other person in a spirit of trust. We contemplated the night sky with candles and song. We considered our 'soul print' on this earth – what

has shaped us - via moving questions; what is our life purpose now? what nourishes our soul? – and shared this with another person and then selectively with the whole group.

A glorious 'awareness and gratitude' walk to Ravenscar used all our senses, and we brought back symbols representing 'gratitude' to share later. Later we shared items of spiritual meaning, experienced a guided visualisation and chose spiritual quotations to take away. We tried out relaxing foot massage, and found it good, both giving and receiving. There were opportunities to sing, led by Nan Musgrove, delicious meals, laughter beside the log fire, and a place for sadness too. It was a chance to make new friends and deepen older friendships.

We felt deeply grateful for Pickering & Hull's greening of Worfolk. Its wind generator, vigilant to turn each breath of wind into energy, inspired us. We felt close to the elements. We sensed Quaker history and loving care.

After 'standing in the Light' and trying 'to find a spiritual wholeness which encompasses suffering as well as thankfulness and joy' (A&Q 10), we hope we're bringing back deeper inspiration, compassion and a fresh perspective.

*Stand still in that which shows and discovers; and then doth strength immediately come. And stand still in the Light, and submit to it, and the other will be hushed and gone; and then content comes.* George Fox QFP 20.4

**Alison Forrester, in collaboration with the group**

### *A Hidden Corner of Friargate Meeting House*

**D**o you use the Library? Do you ever *enter* it? Would you *miss* it if it were not there? If you go in, do you notice the magazine rack to the right of the door? It's full of ideas, news, reports, invitations to take action, to contribute, to see the world in a different light.

There are five shelves. The top shelf offers peace-related journals, including current publications from CND, CAAT, FOR, PPU & Peace News. (Do you recognise all those acronyms?)

The middle three shelves hold Quaker publications- Among Friends, Friends World News, Quaker Social Action, Quaker United Nations Office Geneva, Friends Fellowship of Healing, Quaker Lesbian & Gay Friends and much else.

The bottom shelf contains everything else - New Internationalist, Amnesty International, Howard League for Penal Reform, United Nations Association etc.

Some are items to which we subscribe; some are donated by Friends and others who meet here. All relate to matters of Quaker concern.

Do you have any suggestions for a better way of making these materials available to everyone who uses the Meeting House?

**Joyce Pickard** (your unofficial magazine rack co-ordinator!)

### *Demolition and Rebuilding at Friargate: the DVD*

Several Friends, unable to be present at the recent 30 year celebrations day, have asked for a second showing of the DVD mastered from Alan Pickard's original film. It will happen on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July, coinciding with Soup Sunday. Other possibilities for anyone not in York on the 17<sup>th</sup>: anyone may borrow a copy to watch in a quiet corner of the meeting house. If you would like your own copy, order it through Chris Edwards. It is suggested that a £10 donation to Ekta Parishad might be given in exchange (gift aided if possible).

## Contact details for all Local Meetings

[www.yorkquakers.org.uk](http://www.yorkquakers.org.uk)

<b>Acomb</b>	<b>The Green, Acomb</b>	<b>01904 769563</b>
<b>Friargate</b>	<b>Friargate, York</b>	<b>01904 624065</b>
<b>Harrogate</b>	<b>12a Queen Parade, Harrogate</b>	<b>01423 563391</b>
<b>New Earswick</b>	<b>Top of Folk Hall car park</b>	<b>01904 470808</b>
<b>Thirsk</b>	<b>Kirkgate, Thirsk</b>	<b>01609 780881</b>

## Sunday Worship in York Area Meeting

Time	Location	Frequency
10.30-11.30	Acomb, Friargate, Harrogate, New Earswick, Thirsk	Weekly
9.15 – 10	Friargate <i>worship is preceded by breakfast at 8.30</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday
10.30-11	Lamel Beeches	Weekly
11-11.30	The Oaks	Weekly
10.30-11.30	Knaresborough	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday monthly
8 - 9 pm	Eastern Villages <i>Storwood Grange (David Peryer)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday monthly

## Weekday Worship in York Area Meeting

Tues	11.45	Hartrigg Oaks	Weekly
Wed	1.15	Friargate <i>preceded by lunch at 12.45 (bring your own)</i>	Weekly
Thu	9.30	The Retreat	Weekly

## Friargate July Diary

1	Fri	Bishophill Group: to continue chapter 11 The case for God [Karen Armstrong]	30 Lucombe Way (David Hoare)	12.30 pm [bring own lunch]
		Book Group: to discuss <i>The Long Song</i> (Andrea Levy)	8 Holly Terrace (Marion Owen)	7.30 pm
3	Sun	MfW - Local Business Meeting	Friargate	After worship
6	Wed	Retired Friends Coffee <i>1st Wed of month</i>	Friargate	10.30 am
		Area Meeting	Acomb	6.30 – 9 pm
10	Sun	Afterword: reflections on worship	Friargate	After worship
	Sat	Justice & Peace Vigil	St Michael le Belfrey	11 - 12 noon
17	Sun	Soup and rolls. Showing of Friargate DVD	Friargate <i>see p 7</i>	12 noon
24	Sun	Attendees Group: all are welcome	Friargate	After worship
29	Fri	Book Club planning meeting; please bring ideas for our autumn & winter reading.	<i>To be confirmed</i>	7.30 pm

10.30 am Meeting Notices to: 01904 630734 or [grahamandalison@hotmail.com](mailto:grahamandalison@hotmail.com)

Breakfast Meeting Notices to: David & Margaret Laverick 01904 798 050 or [hobgate@aol.com](mailto:hobgate@aol.com)

## Contacting Quakevine

Editor: Barbara Windle [bwindle@waitrose.com](mailto:bwindle@waitrose.com) 01904 481977. Eagle Cottage, 13a York Street, Dunnington, York YO19 5PN

Editorial team: Anna Baldwin, Simon Palmour (photography), Julia Terry, Barbara Windle

Local Contacts: Christine Bailey, Lee O'Neal, Susan Hartshorne, Dorothy Riordan

Please send items in Word, Verdana 11.5 (type 11.5 in the 'font size' box & press 'enter').

The editor reserves the right to select & edit all contributions.

Deadline for next issue: 12 noon, Sunday 24 July.

*Quakevine is available by email - just ask the editor to add you to the list*