

CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE June & July 2018

If you would like more details about any of this correspondence, please contact Claire

Friends Housing Bursary Trust Annual Report and Appeal

G.M. minutes

A.M. minutes

Sustainability gathering Swanwick 19-21 Oct

'Find out about Quakers' midweek Charney Manor, Oxfordshire 26-28 September

'Find out about Quakers' Swarthmoor Hall, Ulverston 28-30 September

Facilitation & Leadership event for 15-21 year olds 19-21 Oct Woodbrooke

Young Quaker magazine

Among Friends magazine

Woodbrooke courses

Northern Friends Peace Board newsletter

15th September is a day of action for HSBC organised by the Stop Arming Israel coalition

N.B. The next local business meeting will be on Sun 7th October

Directory

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Dumfries Quakers

Newsletter for September 2018

Meetings for Worship

- Sunday 2nd 10.30 am at Cumberland Street Day Centre Dumfries followed by shared Bread & Cheese lunch (see p 6)
- Sunday 9th 11.00 am at Carse of Ae Cottage, Shieldhill Lochmben, the home of John & Jan Lethbridge. Discussion of the book 'Christian Beginnings'. Followed by shared lunch.
- Sunday 16th 10.30 am at Cumberland Street Day Centre, Dumfries
- Sunday 23rd 9.45 am Conversation before Meeting for worship at 10.30. Come at either time.
- Sunday 30th 5th Sunday, so no Meeting for Worship in Dumfries .. Possible outing to Wigtown Meeting and Book Festival. Details to come during the month from the Clerk.

Diary Dates

Saturday 15th General Meeting in Glasgow

Saturday 29th to Sunday 7th October NATIONAL QUAKER WEEK

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The Monthly Reading in July - chosen by Linda Russell

Criticism

**Every
time you
make a judgement
or a criticism, you are
sending something
out that is going
to come back to you.**

I love being me

Can you imagine how wonderful it would be if you could live your life without ever being criticized by anyone? Wouldn't it be wonderful to feel totally at ease, totally comfortable? You would get up in the morning, and you would know you were going to have a wonderful day, because everybody would love you and nobody would criticize you or put you down. You would feel just great. You know what? You can give this to yourself. You can make the experience of living with you the most wonderful experience imaginable. You can wake up in the morning so thrilled to find yourself and feel the joy of spending another day with you.

From 'Heart Thoughts' by Louise Hay

Random musings

Quakers value simplicity and equality, and perhaps the traditional Quaker funeral is a prime example of this, as, incidentally, would be the traditional Muslim funeral.

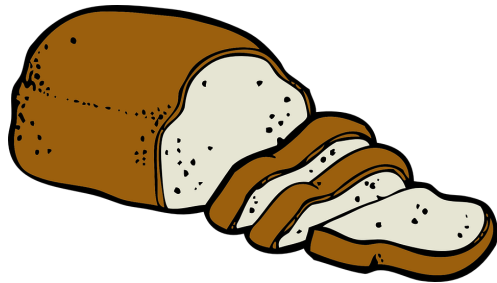
A recent Area Meeting newsletter carried information about what is called 'direct cremation', as being a remedy for the current phenomenon of funeral poverty, and indeed this arrangement was advocated by the author of the article from his own experience.

But I wonder if notions of equality should come into a funeral at all? A funeral is, after all, about one person, the deceased, and is our way of formally saying goodbye to them. No comparisons of any sort are being made. Those funerals which I consider to be the 'best' I've attended have been the most personal, and have heavily involved the family and friends of the deceased. When a eulogy is delivered by a stranger, be it minister or undertaker, it is usually blatantly obvious, especially if, as can happen, the wrong name is used.

Of course, such involvement can be a lot to ask of close relatives, especially very soon after the death, which is when we in Britain habitually bury or cremate our dead.

So I was interested this week to watch the artist Grayson Perry examine funerals in different cultures, including an Indonesian people whose tradition is to wait a year or more before finally parting from their loved one, when they feel ready to let them go. The body stays in the home all this time and is visited by family and friends, and treated in much the same way as before their death. In our present-day culture the body ceases to be the person immediately, and we refer to the 'remains'. Some people are most insistent on that. Grayson Perry was left wondering, "When do we REALLY die?"

Bread and Cheese lunches on First Sundays

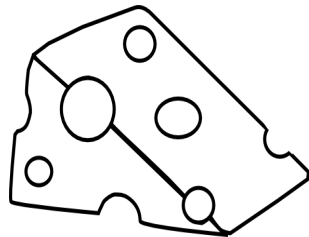


You will see from the Minutes of the recent Business Meeting, on page 5, that we are going to introduce a simple Bread & Cheese lunch after Meeting for Worship on the First Sunday of each month, beginning on September 2nd. This is for a trial period up to Christmas.

The plan is for each of us to bring some bread and some cheese to share. Butter/spread will be provided. The emphasis is on simplicity, and each person need bring no more than one generous portion. We will have this, with our coffee and biscuits, after Worship as usual.

Obviously, vegans and other non-turophiles are not barred from attending, and can use the opportunity to acquaint the rest of us with their favourite cheese substitutes!

And please no Stinking Bishop!



The monthly Reading in August - chosen by Peter Morton

Quaker Faith and Practice 20.05

The people whom I know who live a truly nonviolent life are in touch with the source of power, call it what you will; the Light, the seed, God, the holy spirit. Many others of us find this wellspring when we need it, and lose it again, find it and lose it, find it and lose it. Regrettably I am one of the latter. When I have something very difficult to face that I know I can't cope with, then I turn desperately to the source. One of the things I find most infuriating about myself is that I often let the contact go when the emergency is over and flounder along without it for months on end when my everyday existence could be transformed by it. It is as if I opened the blinds in my house for only an occasional hour when – for example – I had an important visitor, or a cable arrived, or I had to sweep up some broken glass; and afterwards allowed the blinds to fall closed again. So that for ninety-per-cent of the time I bumble around, do my housework in semi-darkness, strain my eyes trying to read and can scarcely discern the features of those to whom I talk. More than anything I want to learn to live in the Light. So I think, anyway, but in fact I perhaps don't altogether want to take the demands involved, don't want to see all the dust in my life.

Jo Vellacott 1982

Charity Collection for September and October

FARMS FOR CITY CHILDREN

I first heard of this charity when the son of a friend went to work at their Devon farm. And when I looked at their brochure, I discovered that John's old primary school had spent a week at one of the farms! So I felt it was somehow intended that I should support it.

The charity was founded in 1976 by the author Michael Morpurgo (War Horse) and his wife, Clare. Their aim is to provide an opportunity for children from the inner cities to experience life in the countryside with all the proven benefits of the natural world.

There are three farms, with farm schools: in Gloucestershire, Devon and South Wales, and each year more than 3,200 children are able to enjoy what can be a life-changing experience. When the children visit, their time at the farm is screen-free: no phones, TVs, laptops, iPads, iPods or DVDs. They become farmers for a week, and spend their time in the fresh air, doing purposeful work, taking responsibility, having contact with animals, eating good food and having space to play. Children from John's old school said: *"We enjoyed not relying on technology like laptops, TV and mobile phones. Have realised there is more to life than TV! We liked cooking. It feels good and makes us proud to see people eat it."*

We who live in this beautiful, rural area, surrounded as we are by so much green space and unpolluted atmosphere, may not realise how lucky we are. Let us support the work of this charity so that more children can enjoy what we can easily take for granted.

Thank you.

Jan Lethbridge

farmsforcitychildren.org

Reg Charity No 325120

Religious Society of Friends – Dumfries Meeting Minutes of Local Meeting 19th August 2018

The Reading was the first part of Quaker Faith & Practice 20.26

Second Sunday Discussions -

9th September – Linda Russell will lead a discussion on Vermees book "Christian Beginnings". We still need a venue for this Meeting
14th October - Peter will share with us his ideas about prison reform. This will be at Nancy's home. Please check the venue with Claire nearer the time.

Possible change to second Sundays – We discussed the holding of our second Sunday house Meetings and also having a simple bread and cheese lunch after a regular Meeting for Worship. We have decided to continue with our discussions at our house Meetings as before, but for the rest of 2018 we will have a shared bread and cheese lunch, tea and coffee together after each first Sunday Meeting for Worship. We will review this in the New Year.

Collections – In September and October Jan Lethbridge will collect for Michael Morpurgo's 'Farms for City Children'
In November & December Linda Russell will collect for the local Salvation Army's Christmas period

Summer Outings. We had to cancel our visit to attend Meeting at Brigflatts last month due to extreme weather conditions. We hope to visit Wigtown for Meeting on 30th September & then go to talks at the Wigtown Book Festival

We took part in the Allanton World Peace Prayer Festival on Sunday 24th June with a Quaker information stall & activities for children from 2 – 4pm before the Flag Ceremony. A few people showed an interest and took leaflets. We thank Jan & John Lethbridge & Linda Russell for arranging the stall.

Castle Douglas Friends are thinking about holding a retreat at Allanton next Spring and Friends from Dumfries & Wigtown have been invited to join them as they need 10 people to hold the retreat. We have asked for more details from their clerk.

A.M. will be in Argyll on Saturday 25th August. Unfortunately no one is able to take part

Our next L.M. will be on Sunday 7th October before A.M. in Ayr on Saturday 13th October

Signed – Claire MacLeod L.M. Clerk