



# STAFFORDSHIRE QUAKER

SUMMER EDITION, JUNE 2015

## 'THIS LIGHT THAT PUSHES ME'



Next month, on behalf of Area Meeting, Lichfield Friends will be presenting an exhibition highlighting the lives of African Quaker peace builders, 'This Light that Pushes Me'. The peace makers are from nine sub-Saharan African countries and all have experienced some form of violence. The exhibition traces the journeys that have trans-

formed that suffering into a force for social change. The launch at Friends House last year coincided with the 20th anniversary of the Rwanda genocide.

The Lichfield venue will be the Dyott Chapel at St Mary's Heritage Centre in the Market Square. The showing will be in the week beginning on 20 July.

Lichfield Friends will open the exhibition with a short Meeting for Worship at 12.30 pm on Monday the 20th and close it in the same way at 12.30 pm on Sunday the 26th. They hope to rely on help from members of Lichfield Meeting in setting up and dismantling, but would appreciate additional help in stewarding.

The exhibition will open at 9.30 am and close at 4 pm on each day of the week. A member of Lichfield Meeting will be there every day for the first half hour at least. Volunteers to fill the 3 x 2 hour slots during the remainder of each day are needed. One person per slot would be enough, but two would be preferable.

Anyone who can help should contact Rosemary Crawley, Lichfield Clerk.

## WORDSMITHS OF WOLVERHAMPTON

*Articles in this issue from*

- Rachel Arnold
- John Babb
- John Nicholls
- Win Sutton

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## STAFFORDSHIRE AREA MEETING

At December Area Meeting we heard some bright news: our AM is growing!

- There were 247 in Area Meeting, with a net increase on the previous year of 25 attendees.
- There were 125 members, a gain of 1 over the previous year.
- We welcome Jenny Meade from West Scotland, who has joined Lichfield Meeting.

We have however over the last six months very sadly lost four precious Friends who between them were associated with Staffordshire Area Meeting for a grand total of well over 100 years. See page 2.

## JOHN JORDAN

JOHN'S GENTLE  
INSPIRATION,  
GUIDANCE,  
KINDNESS,  
FRIENDSHIP AND  
LOVE HAVE  
EMBRACED AND  
STRENGTHENED  
US ALL.



John Jordan died peacefully in hospital after a long illness. Area Meeting will be writing a testimony to his life, but it would be good to remember his "Good-bye" attended by his family and many, many Friends.

It was held in the City Chambers at Stoke Town Hall, in the manner of

Friends. The huge room was filled with family, friends, Quakers, ex-students, colleagues, Film Theatre associates and others, all drawn by their affection for John. Many people spoke of their memories and warm connections with him.

Before the start and at the end of the Meeting for Worship we listened to record-

ings John had made as a recording engineer. They included some wonderful laughter of children.

On a card for each guest were pictures of John and Grace and this appreciation. "Just as flowing water touches and nourishes everything on its seaward journey, so John's gentle inspiration, guidance, kindness, friendship and love have embraced and strengthened us all".

To end a memorable and moving occasion we all went upstairs to eat chocolate cake. John's favourite.

Peter Holland,  
Stone

## LOSS AND CELEBRATION

This has been a sad year for Friends in Staffordshire. We have lost four Friends who were part of the fabric of Area Meeting and/or their Local Meetings for many, many years.

We have lost not only John Jordan of Stone Meeting, who played such a big part in the life of our Area Meeting, but also John Moxham of Wolverhampton Meeting and Fabian Lance of Uttoxeter. John Moxham had attended for over 40 years and was in membership from 2003, whilst Fabian too had been part of his own Meeting

for that length of time.

We have also just heard of the death of Sue Cook, a birthright Quaker who was a member of Stafford Meeting for many years before she and her husband Peter moved to Moreton-in-the-Marsh about seven years ago,

We hope to be able to celebrate the lives of John Moxham, Fabian and Sue more fully in the next issue. We would welcome any memories or thoughts about all four Friends.



*For Clarice Dawson's 80th birthday Sue Cook organised the making of a quilt, to which most members of Stafford Meeting contributed. Here is her own panel.*

## DESPAIR AND HOPE

*'How can we open ourselves fully to the pain of the world without despairing or turning away?' In a discussion group shortly after the May election, members of Stafford Meeting considered this and other questions which had been sent out in advance of British Yearly Meeting. Feelings of despair about inequality and suffering in the world, and the prospects for positive change, were expressed. Nigel Peckett said that he often deals with his feelings by writing poetry. One of his poems is printed here.*



Darfur refugee child's drawing

## REFUGEE

Oppressed by war  
Cruelty unimaginable  
Towns turned to flames  
Killing without pity  
Families gather possessions  
Fleeing from danger to danger  
Fleeing from uncertainty to uncertainty  
Fleeing from hunger to hunger  
Fleeing from thirst to thirst  
Cold nights and burning days  
Camping in the filth  
All our possessions spent  
Crammed into the hold of a derelict  
Cast adrift  
Cast adrift  
Adrift

*Little Haywood 21<sup>st</sup> April 2015*

Nigel Peckett,  
Stafford

## MEMORIAL

*A party of 22, mainly from Heswall Meeting, visited the Quaker Service Memorial at the National Arboretum. Penny & Alan Vernon of that Meeting, well-known to a number of Stafford Friends, reported:*

*... In the entrance hall of the visitors' centre we were*

*pleased and surprised to see panels about the Society of Friends and Quaker relief work in conflict areas... The Arboretum was opened in 2001 so most of the trees are young. The area is a haven for wild life. The River Tame borders the Arboretum and as pollution levels*

*have fallen, fish and bird life have returned ... The Millennium Chapel of Peace and Forgiveness ... contains beautiful wood carvings and the Millennium Prayer is carved on the door. The prayer (below) was written by Anna Crompton, a 13 year old girl.*



Dear Lord, our heavenly Father, at the dawn of a new millennium, in a world of darkness, give us your light.

In lands of war and prejudice, grant us peace.

In a world of despair, give us hope.

In a world of sadness and tears, show us your joy.

In a world of hatred, show us your love.

In a world of arrogance, give us humility.

In a world of disbelief, give us faith.

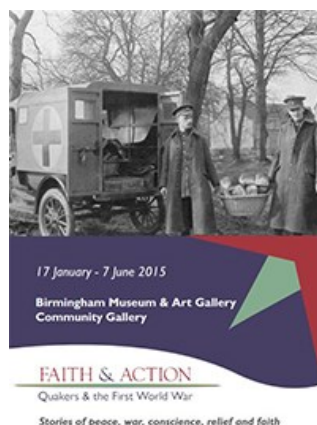
Give us courage to face challenges of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, housing the homeless and healing the sick.

Give us the power to make a difference in your world and to protect your creation.

Through Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Amen.



## 'FAITH AND ACTION': QUAKER RESPONSES TO WORLD WAR 1 AN EXHIBITION IN BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM & ART GALLERY



My work with the Quaker Service Memorial Trust has transformed my response to the Quaker peace testimony. I was a pacifist long before I started attending a Quaker meeting in the 1980's. But my pacifist beliefs remained unchallenged for many years and our response to events like the Iraq war were entirely in tune with my beliefs. Interviews with close to 20 people who served in the FAU or FRS in WW2 have forced me to reflect on the significance of the individual choice and test of conscience faced by Quakers and others during both world wars. Significant numbers of Quakers chose to enlist, whilst different members of the same family chose to take a stand against war. People of my generation, post-national service, have not had to face the same dilemma, though some have bravely dedicated their whole lives to working for peace.

This exhibition documents the response of Quakers to WW1 and has been produced by Central England Quakers. Much of the story relates to events and individuals from Warwickshire Monthly Meeting, though inevitably national events such as the formation of the Friends Ambulance Unit are explored. We are made aware of the significant Quaker employers in the area and how they responded. What emerges is the story of a response to war

that is very wide ranging, from relief work at home and abroad to ambulance work alongside the French army.

A contrast is made between brothers Laurence & Egbert Cadbury, with Laurence joining the FAU and serving in Belgium whilst Egbert became a pilot who shot down zeppelins.

The marvellous caricatures produced by Birmingham artist Joseph Southall for left-wing and anti-war pamphlets figure prominently.

For myself, it is two pages from the Warwickshire Monthly Meeting minute book of 1915 that provide something both thought provoking and inspiring. What these minutes show is the length that Friends went to support those Quakers who had chosen to enlist and consequently resign their membership of the society. Each was appointed a 'correspondent' to keep in touch with them and acceptance of their resignation put off until the end of the war. At that point they welcomed back into membership all those who felt themselves still to be part of the Society of Friends.

The minutes also show a copy of the letter sending Christmas greetings (1915) to all those who had enlisted before the Military Service Act (1916) compelled them to do so. This letter in-

cludes the following .. *In sending you a message of love from this Monthly Meeting we have it in our hearts to remind you that no external circumstances has the power to rob us of that deeper friendship that the Christmas message brings so nearer to us. Underlying the conflict of material forces there is another warfare in which we all are offered the privilege of engaging. "Take thy part in the suffering hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." Those of us who bravely accept this challenge are united by a bond that nothing can destroy.*

The religious language used may seem strange to us but the message is clear that they wished to support those who had chosen to fight and ultimately keep them as members. This seems to recognise that each of us has our own decision to make in time of war and that our individual conscience rightly dictates the choice we each make.

Great credit should go to Betty Hagglund and the CEQ team that produced this exhibition. Visitor numbers have been good, including those who made a deliberate choice to visit and those who simply wandered in when touring the Art Gallery.

The exhibition closes on 7th June but a travelling version is being planned.

John Babb,  
Wolverhampton



## ROGER SHACKLETON CARR: A STAFFORDSHIRE MEMBER OF THE FRIENDS AMBULANCE UNIT IN WORLD WAR 1

Without known surviving relatives it can be difficult to find out the story of local Quakers who served in the Friends Ambulance Unit in WW1. Friends House Library have put online the FAU record cards and these were the starting point for following up the name of Roger Shackleton Carr of Wolverhampton, whose name I picked up at a talk about the FAU in the Cadbury Research Library.

In 1915 when he finished his schooling, Roger immediately enlisted in the Friends Ambulance Unit. His father appears to have paid for his kit. Roger was qualified in first aid and as a driver.

Roger became a member of the Section Sanitaire Anglaise No 14 and his principal role was to be an ambulance driver. Each section of the SSA had 22 ambulances. These sections served along-

The extract below - from 'The Friends Ambulance Unit 1914-1919 A Record' by Meaburn Tatham & James E Miles - gives an idea of the work of SSA 14

Roger survived the war without major injury and left the FAU in January 1919. He married in the 1920s and died in 1965 in Bilston.

Like others serving in the FAU, he was given absolute

From October 9th, 1916, to February 12th, 1917, with the exception of three weeks at Vaux, the Convoy never spent more than twelve days in one place. They had now exchanged Belgian sand for Somme mud, and their Christmas was spent at Grandvillers in miserable conditions. In January, at Croix Brise, the Convoy worked at its nearest part to the line; their *postes* here were only 200 metres behind the French trenches and 400 from the German. A landmark during this trying period was their long journey over frozen and snow-bound roads back to Malo for new cars; the Convoy then went to the Châlons sector, and thence to Suippes. Here things were fairly quiet till April 17th, when, like S.S.A. 13, they shared in the great French offensive in Champagne, and were kept constantly running in areas under heavy shell-fire. The number of wounded carried in the first day alone of this attack was 667. But for the most part the rest of 1917 passed without very much that was outstanding from the general routine of the stationary warfare during these months. While the Section lay at Bouleuse, west of Rheims, they regretfully bade farewell to their *Chef-Adjoint*, Richard Barrow, whose place was taken by Arthur Pearson.

THE NUMBER OF  
WOUNDED  
CARRIED IN THE  
FIRST DAY  
ALONE OF THIS  
ATTACK WAS  
667

Roger Carr was born in 1897 and his parents were Quakers. In the 1901 census his father, Frederick Carr ran a laundry service in Wolverhampton. Roger was sent to Bootham School and that is where he appears in the 1911 census. By the time of the war the family were living at Wheatstone Park in Codsall, Staffs.

side French regiments in the field as the English Army was apparently reluctant to work with the FAU in this way. They worked up and down the whole Western Front and they were the FAU sections most closely involved in working with fighting soldiers. Roger worked with SSA 14 from December 1915 to June 1918.

exemption from military service in the British army on the grounds that his work was 'indispensable'.

It is frustrating that we do not know more. What were Roger's feelings about his FAU service? Did he remain a Quaker the rest of his life?

John Babb,  
Wolverhampton

Roger Carr's FAU record card can be seen by using the following link-  
<http://fau.quaker.org.uk/search-view?forename=Roger&surname=Carr>  
Copy and paste link into your browser and then click on each page to enlarge for viewing.

## FRIENDS, CONSENSUAL AND COERCIVE SEX, AND CHILD ABUSE

*John Nicholls raises searching questions about Friends and sex abuse, though some structures he advocates for the Society are in fact already in place. Win Sutton, our AM representative on Meeting for Sufferings, points below to what our AM is doing.*

The few survivors of the Friends Ambulance Unit should be our role models. But the life of one took a very unfortunate turn. In February he was convicted for child abuse. Over 20 years while a teacher he had abused pupils. He was convicted on 23 counts against 12 victims. I understand he had a long standing association with Friends during the period he was committing abuse and was still a member at the time of his conviction.

Rape and child abuse may be some of the most distasteful topics. But that is negligible compared to the distress suffered by their victims. Fortunately these are now being reported fully in the media. But most reports make clear that restorative justice is hard to obtain. So every effort must be made to prevent the offences.

I suggest that child abuse can be discussed as part of the conflict between consensual and coercive sex. Society needs to establish clear guidelines for what is truly consensual activity as opposed to what involves coercion and may cause lasting emotional harm.

I wish to raise the question of whether Friends are doing all we can about child abuse, i.e. recognising warning signs of suspicious behaviour and attitudes, then intervening at an early stage.

The Sex Offenders Register lists at least 60,000 offenders - at least one in a thousand of the UK population. The governor of Whatton prison, Nottinghamshire, which houses entirely sex offenders, has estimated that 1% - 2% of the entire population may have paedophile tendencies. BYM has about 12,000 members, around 20,000 including attenders. Realistically any group of this size will have a few people with paedophile tendencies.

The professionals of 'Circles of Support' provide useful services for those child abusers who wish to mend their ways. Also professional social workers and psychiatrists offer counselling to the victims of child abuse. Most Friends lack this professional training. Our useful contribution to tackling child abuse is to ensure that any suspicious behaviour is investigated and resolved at the earliest opportunity.

When dealing with child abuse our priority must be to ensure that potential victims do not become actual victims. This justifies an appropriate degree of surveillance and intervention when there are grounds for suspicion.

It is the most elementary common sense that when child abuse occurs at a regional level in any organisation the staff of the head office should feel free to make whatever enquiries they feel fit. So concerning the background to the offences of the Friend mentioned above the senior staff of Friends' House should not have to wait for an invitation from any Area Meeting. Moreover all members and attenders should be obliged to cooperate fully with such enquiries.

In case something along the following lines is not being done, I wish to suggest that Friends' House could issue guidelines which will enable Friends to report, investigate and resolve any suspicions of child abuse. These guidelines should make clear when concerns should be reported to the Police. To ensure consistent and thorough investigation and resolution all such activities could be reported formally to the Recording Clerk. We must never assume that "it can never happen again here" or "that is the only one exception".

At this point I will explain my experience of child abuse. Although I have never been a victim on 2 occasions I have had close encounters with this issue. When discussing each I will start with the lessons which can be implemented.



## FRIENDS, CONSENSUAL AND COERCIVE SEX, AND CHILD ABUSE (CONTINUED)

The first concerns those who work with children. When anyone becomes noticeably unhappy about working with children then consideration should be given to transferring them to an adult only environment. While I was at primary school between 1960-1962 I was a pupil of a teacher who shortly after became an active abuser. While I was in his class his behaviour deteriorated from being a very jovial person to completely morose. Around 1964 he started abusing children. He was allowed to resign and leave the area. If there had been effective intervention at an early stage when his conduct was giving cause for concern then he could have been transferred. In, for example, an administrative job at County Hall he

would have continued being employed by the same employer. It is this childhood experience which persuades me that early and effective intervention is essential. Secondly child abuse is a serious crime. Anyone with genuine suspicions is obliged to explain these to the Police and not "to take the law into their own hands". Recently in Wolverhampton a criminal who has been the leader of organised crime has been intimidating people by making in public malicious and unjustified accusations of paedophilia. In 2012 the Police took from me 3 written statements. One victim of these malicious accusations has needed 2 separate series of counselling sessions from Wolverhampton Healthy Minds. Although the

professionals did their duty the victim felt they had done little more than massaging the symptoms.

In conclusion I feel that these issues are a good opportunity for revising the relation between Friends' House and Area Meetings. I have long been satisfied that AMs would benefit from a closer relationship with some guidance and monitoring from the Recording Clerk and Nominations Committee.

Finally nobody should dismiss these concerns with the cliché 'we must not conduct a witch hunt'. Child abusers conduct worse things than 'witch hunts'!

John Nichols,  
Wolverhampton



I hope John's article will help Friends to be aware we must be vigilant in protecting our young people - "see something, say something!" John's article is timely as AM agreed a minute in April:

**"11. Data Protection/Data Safety Compliance.** We are required by law to comply with the Data Protection Act. As we are not an independently registered charity or CIO we are covered by BYM Data Protection policy and registration with the Information Commissioner but we are asked by Friends' House to answer Yes or No to the following three questions:

1. Have you taken reasonable steps to ensure that all Friends/

*Attendees in the area meeting, including local meetings, are aware of the Britain Yearly Meeting data protection policy and its implications?*

2. Have you obtained the explicit agreement for the listing and using of personal data of individuals not in membership and from the parents or guardians of children and young people under the age of 18?

3. Are all the officers and employees of meetings and committees who keep and use information on members keeping it in accordance with the BYM Data Protection and Information Security Policies?

We have considered these questions carefully. We feel that LMs should make it clear to members and at-

tenders that the BYM Policy on Data Protection is available online and, at least, to publish its URL. We feel that this measure would constitute the 'reasonable steps' referred to in Question 1."

Another minute in the same month: 5 (iv) **Safeguarding Co-ordinator** "Nominations Committee has brought forward the name of **Teresa Murray** to serve as **Safeguarding Co-ordinator**. Teresa has confirmed her willingness to accept the position." Information from Quaker Life is available at: **www.quaker.org.uk/sites/default/files/Meeting-Safety-September-2014.pdf** or I can provide hard copy.

SEE SOMETHING,  
SAY SOMETHING!

Win Sutton  
Wolverhampton

## DR ROWAN WILLIAMS: 'THINKING ABOUT POVERTY'

*Rachel made these notes on a talk by Rowan Williams in Wolverhampton. His ideas have inspired her social art projects as a mixed media artist*

Deuteronomy 15 has two contradictory statements: "There shall be no poor among you" and "You shall always have the poor with you". Poverty is however not a law of nature. There are enough resources for all of us. Dr Williams identified four levels of poverty:

- **Poverty of security** Vulnerability to crisis. Things go wrong in life on a low income and one can lose everything.
- **Poverty of relation** Deep emotional security relates to domestic life, knowing who is there for you, knowing what the emotional reactions will be. A stressful way of life does neurological damage to children.
- **Poverty of access** Not knowing who to talk to when in crisis, which organisations to contact, not knowing human rights. No liberty to make a difference if one can vote, no skills in lobbying, not knowing where the solutions lie.
- **Poverty of culture** Poverty of the imagination, "I don't know how I can be other than what I am". Apathy, cynicism, no hope, decline in lifestyle, leads to a malfunctioning society.

To end poverty we have to think how to address all 4. We have to clarify what is

non-negotiable with benefits & welfare. Certain levels of welfare should be kept. Employers should have family-friendly policies and child-care provision. There should be vigorous debate, campaigns, local experiments e.g. credit unions, gardening projects. These should develop skills. Organisations should ask government questions directly.

Poverty of culture. Churches present a model of the good life, the generous life, to learn to trust one another. Set out a vision where dignity is not taken away. .

People are not to blame for poverty, the deserving poor attitude has come round again. What could the generous life be like? Don't underestimate human generosity - it is there. Community, education, cultural networks.

**The Rowntree Foundation of Poverty document** pursues these issues.

There is poverty in the quality of parenting. The poor need more society, not just more from the state. They should not be segregated. More apprenticeships are needed. Workers should

have some power in companies.

Poverty is not a lack of material wealth but of dignity, agency and relationship. Poor people should be seen not as victims but as agents in their own destiny, using their own imagination and capacity for relationships.

The media should make sure politicians listen to the people. Not many vote so people don't think they can make a difference. If most people don't vote we don't have a true democracy.

Poverty of access. Can any media address this aspect? Faith communities should be brokers in making connections, and focus on the whole society and not competitive individuals. The emphasis should be connecting skills and people. Historically the church lost its nerve in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The old principle of Christian thought was that money is sterile. People are now making money more alive than it is. People talk about what markets do, but its what agents do not markets.

Rachel Arnold,  
Wolverhampton

POVERTY:  
'I DON'T KNOW  
HOW I CAN BE  
OTHER THAN I  
AM'





## QUAKERS AND EQUALITY

*Extracts from an article for Leek Churches Together magazine.*

From the start, **women** had equal status within the Society. Elizabeth Hooten (1600-72) was among the first to be convinced by Fox's preaching, and the first woman to become a Quaker Minister; Margaret Fell (1614-1702) was a founder of the Society and considered the "Mother of Quakerism"; the first Quakers to travel to the USA, to promote the faith, were Mary Fisher and Ann Austin.

All hierarchy went against their principles. They refused to raise their hats to their social betters, or call them by any titles. There is a story that George Fox, on meeting Charles II, refused to doff his hat and greeted him with "How fairs thee Charles Stuart?"

This belief in equality made Quakers "natural enemies" of the slave trade. In the UK and America they were the first organisation to take an active abolitionist stance.

In America this began in 1688 when 4 German Quakers issued a protest in Pennsylvania. This inspired others to protest through writing and direct action. During the 1740s and 50s the movement became more active; Friends such as John Woolman (1720-72) and Anthony Bezenet (1713-84) demanded Quakers cut all ties with the slave trade. In 1775 the Pennsylvania Abolition Society was formed, and 7 of the

10 members were Quakers. Through the 19th century the Quaker voice was heard increasingly. Friends such as John Greenleaf Whittier (author of "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind") became active. Others were involved in the "Underground Railroad".

In 1761 London Yearly Meeting issued a "strong minute" against slave trading. Along with William Wilberforce were several Quaker abolitionists, including Joseph Sturge, who founded the British & Foreign Anti-Slavery Society (now Anti-Slavery International). With experience of campaigning for their own rights, Friends had much to offer. Methods they used are still in use today – they pioneered mass petition and consumer boycott (refusing to buy Caribbean sugar). They commissioned Josiah Wedgwood to produce a badge depicting a kneeling slave, with the words "Am I not a Man and a Brother?", later adapted, with a picture of a kneeling woman and the words "Am I not a Woman and a Sister?".

In the early 19th century Elizabeth Fry, inspired by William Savery, an American Quaker, took an interest in helping the poor and the sick. A visit to Newgate **prison** horrified her. She founded a school for prisoners' children and a system of supervision for female inmates. She founded the Association for the Reformation of Female Prisoners

in Newgate that led to the British Ladies Society for Promoting the Reformation of Female Prisoners.

The current **testimony** looks at ways in which our life-style causes inequality:

**Economic justice** has always been a concern with many threads, like ethical investment and fair trade.

**Crime, community and justice:** Elizabeth Fry's work continues today with the Quaker Prison Chaplains. Over 90 prisons are visited by Quaker Chaplains.

**Human rights:** Quaker Peace & Social Witness and Quakers at the UN work for the protection of human rights. The Geneva office focuses on Women in Prison and the Children of Imprisoned Mothers, refugees and conscientious objectors.

**The Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine & Israel** organises volunteers who accompany Palestinians and Israelis in their non-violent campaigning to end the occupation. They aim to reduce or prevent threats and incidents of violence and human rights violations. Several churches and church related organisations take send volunteers.

**Parliamentary liaison:** Parliament is lobbied on such issues as immigration and asylum.

**The Quaker Housing Trust** is a housing charity, dealing with concerns on housing and homelessness. I

Linda Skellam,  
Leek



"HOW FAIRS  
THEE CHARLES  
STUART?"

## QPSW SPRING CONFERENCE: MAKING CHANGE HAPPEN



EXCELLENT  
RESOURCES  
DEVELOPED IN  
RESPONSE TO  
THE  
INFILTRATION  
OF THE ARMED  
FORCES INTO  
SCHOOLS.



I was nominated by Staffordshire AM to spend the weekend of 13th-15<sup>th</sup> March at Hayes Conference Centre in Derbyshire with about 120 other Quakers, exploring the work of Quaker Peace and Social Witness. The majority of participants were, like me, first-timers sent by their Area Meetings and it was easy to meet and get to know people straight away.

Turning The Tide (TTT) is an initiative from QPSW which promotes non-violent action for social change. The objective is to turn the tide of oppression and injustice by developing new tools, forged from love, to empower people to change situations without resorting to violence. Members of the TTT group led presentations and workshops showing how this has already been effective and how it can be used in many different situations to avoid violence and to heal communities. We heard via Skype from Agona Benard Lismadi, a Kenyan journalist and pastor who, with training and support from the TTT team, leads a local group of peace workers. Since violence, widely reported after the 2008 Kenyan elections, there has been a need to adopt new ways of dealing with political and social discord. He described how the new approach has transformed the way potentially violent disputes have been resolved. He spoke

eloquently and I was impressed by the transformational effect the programme has had for many communities.

Delegates were invited to explore and contribute to a draft proposal for a radical new economic model being developed by QPSW's Economics, Sustainability and Peace sub-committee. An aspirational text has been put together, based on the principles of Quaker testimony, and we explored sections through "silent discussion": each section was put on a large sheet of paper and arranged so everyone had the opportunity to write comments, questions, additions and amendments. This is part of a wider consultation with Quakers in Britain and can be found on the website.

Another great opportunity was to meet peace workers on one year placements funded by QPSW. Three peace workers are on UK placements and they led an excellent workshop explaining their roles. One works with the Oxford Research Group looking into the government response of rushed legislation after recent terrorism threats. Another is with the Campaign Against the Arms Trade, working on ideas to transform the production of companies currently producing arms to move into the renewable energy sector.

Militarisation within state schools in the UK is another issue being tackled by QPSW.

There are excellent resources which have been developed in response to the infiltration of the armed forces into schools, where they begin the recruitment process with impressionable teenagers. There is a short animation (available on YouTube) explaining the dangers of militarisation in schools.

There were many opportunities to learn and reflect: small home groups met several times over the weekend, where we could get to know a few people better and talk over ideas. Some time was also time set aside for silent worship and I appreciated the quality of silence (especially coming from Stone meeting where Meeting for Worship is usually punctuated by express trains!)

I am grateful to Staffordshire Area Meeting for giving me the chance to attend this conference. It was a privilege to take part, to learn from well informed and enthusiastic people and, most of all, to meet with other Quakers from all over the UK and beyond.

Marion Stanfield,  
Stone

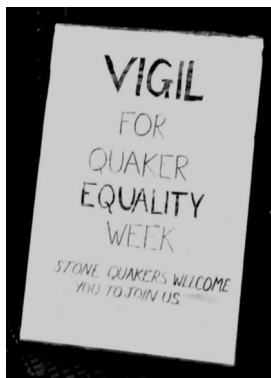
## WORKING FOR CHANGE: QUAKER EQUALITY WEEK

*This article is one of a series produced for the Leek Churches Together magazine,*

Quakers (or Friends as they are otherwise known) aim to express their faith through their way of life. To assist in this, the Quaker testimonies play an important part in helping Friends to discern rightful action. These testimonies are not imposed, but are guidelines in the quest to live a more spiritual based life.

There are five testimonies: Peace, simplicity, truth and integrity, earth and environment, justice equality and community.

The testimony of equality has always been of great importance to Friends. It recognises the equal worth and nature of every person, considering that there is "that of God in everyone" (the words of George Fox). This means working towards changing the systems that cause injustice, aiming to help all those who suffer as a result of inequality.



*Members of Stone Meeting braved a wet and cold day to hold a vigil in the local high street.*

From the 6th to the 13<sup>th</sup> of March this year many Meeting Houses all over the country participated in Quaker Equality Week, which aimed to raise awareness of the need to tackle economic inequality. The week had been timed so that it was ahead of the forthcoming budget statement, and the general election, as both events provide opportunities to express opinions on those issues that concern us.

Initiated by Manchester and Warrington Area Meeting (comprised of all the Meeting Houses in the area), the initiative was taken up by over 80 Meeting Houses over the country.

The main events included vigils - outside meeting houses or public buildings,

or in other prominent places within town centres. Displays and exhibitions also played a part, in libraries, universities, community notice boards etc. The posters were created especially for the campaign - so the theme was consistent throughout the country.

In other areas, "write-in" workshops enabled individuals to create letters to send to MPs, parliamentary candidates, companies and others, and pre-election debates with the prospective candidates helped to get the message across. There were coffee mornings, films, and discussion groups.

Linda Skellam,  
Leek

WORKING  
TOWARDS  
CHANGING THE  
SYSTEMS THAT  
CAUSE  
INJUSTICE.

## WOLVERHAMPTON WANDERERS



### A LONG HISTORY

Wolverhampton Meeting has moved around a lot in its time. The photograph shows the current Meeting House (built 1969), which is in fact the third in the history of Quakers in Wolverhampton. They began meeting in the late 17th century, though following a general period of decline the Meeting closed in 1806. It only revived in 1896, when Friends met in rooms at the top of Darlington Street. They continued to meet there until the Meeting House in Horseman Street was opened in 1903. Since then the Meeting has grown to be the largest in Staffordshire.

### THANK GOODNESS WE GOT THEM BACK

*After all the contributions to this issue from members of Wolverhampton Meeting (along with John Babb's research on another, historical, Wolverhampton Quaker, Roger Carr, page 4), we are pleased that Wolverhampton Meeting decided years ago to return to Staffordshire Monthly Meeting! This was after a period in Warwickshire Monthly Meeting. The story in this limerick is said to be absolutely true, including the exact words in the last line!*

A Wulfrunian Quaker once sighed  
 'So, Warwicks MM, it's goodbye'  
 We've chosen alas  
 To move back to Staffs  
 'Good riddance' was one Friend's reply

Roger Oldfield,  
 Stafford

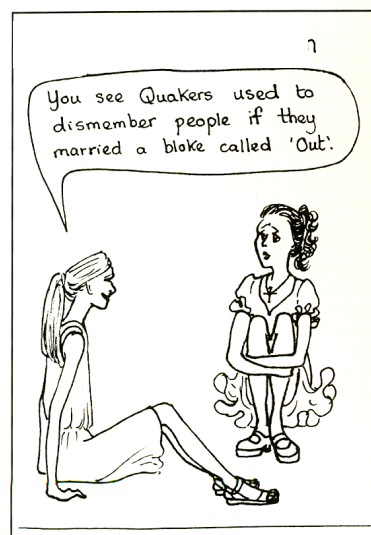
## BLOGGING QUAKERISM



I have started a Quaker blog. The web address is [www.quakerquotes.tumblr.com/](http://www.quakerquotes.tumblr.com/). Currently I'm posting some of my favourite quotes from Quaker Faith and Practice, but I would love it if Friends could send me their favourites, whether they're from QF&P or from anywhere else. I would also like Quaker ideas, Quaker history, or anything Quaker-related that I could post. Please email me at [quakerlass@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:quakerlass@hotmail.co.uk).

Gayle Yeomans,  
 Stafford

## BLAGGING QUAKERISM



CLOSING DATE FOR AUTUMN ISSUE: SEPTEMBER 29, BUT PLEASE START NOW!

ONE PAGE TAKES ABOUT 620 WORDS

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