



STAFFORDSHIRE QUAKER

AUTUMN ISSUE, OCTOBER 2015

TALKING TAX JUSTICE

A group of Lichfield Friends met this week with John Christensen, founder with Richard Murphy of the Tax Justice Network. The growing media and political interest in corporate tax avoidance on an international scale is largely due to their efforts, which have been actively supported by Christian Aid and the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust.



l-r: Berry Dicker, Paula Knight, John Christensen, Jenny Meade, Anthony Wilson.

Richard Murphy is a member of the Society of Friends. In 2014 he gave the Salter Lecture for the Quaker Socialist Society at Yearly Meeting in Bath. A Profes-

sor of Practice in International Political Economy at City University London, he has been described as the

creator of 'Corbynomics'.

Jenny Meade & Anthony Wilson, Lichfield Meeting

EXPLORING LINKS

- *Refugees*
- *Inequality*
- *Climate change*



COMING TODAY OR WITHIN 2 WEEKS!!

SUNDAY OCTOBER 11

REFRAMING THE ISRAELI-PALESTINE CONFLICT

Dr Jeff Harper, Coordinating Director of the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions.

Proceedings start 3.00 pm. Dr Harper speaks 5.00 pm. Equality Hall, Raymond Street, Stoke-on-Trent

Angela Glendenning
Stoke Meeting and Sumud Palestine

TUESDAY OCTOBER 20

ADA SALTER: A PLAY

7.30, Deaf People's Centre, 59A Lichfield Rd, Walsall.

Arranged by Walsall Quakers and Walsall TUC. Ada Salter, brought up a Methodist, became a Quaker in 1914. She was a campaigner for equal rights, a socialist, republican, pacifist, environmentalist, trade union activist and leading light in the transformation of Bermondsey's slums in the early 20th century.

WED-SAT OCTOBER 21-24

BURNT ALASKA: A PLAY

Wed 21 Stoke
Thurs 22 Wolverhampton
Fri 23 Lichfield
Sat 24 Shrewsbury

The play, performed by Riding Lights Theatre Company, looks towards the UN conference on climate change in Paris and beyond. It is supported by Lichfield Diocese

'Warming entertainment' (Fracking Times)

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EXPLORING LINKS - REFUGEES - INEQUALITY - CLIMATE CHANGE

RESPONDING TO MINUTE 36 AND THE YEARLY MEETING EPISTLE, 2015

LIVING OUT OUR FAITH IN THE WORLD -
- ARE WE READY TO MEET THE CHALLENGE?

'Earthrise', Dec 1968, NASA

In 1980 Carl Sagan gave this photograph the following caption:

'The home planet of an emerging technical civilisation, struggling to avoid self-destruction. This world is observed from a temporary outpost near its lone natural satellite.'

Quotations between double quote marks "are from the minute or epistle, available at <http://old.quaker.org.uk/ym> or from me or maybe your Local Meeting clerk. Quotations between single quotation marks 'are from other sources and immediately referenced on first quotation.

The minute and epistle challenge us to "consider when we are part of the problem" ... "through the possessions we hold and the houses we live in" and that "we may be called to give up our privileges". "We need to go deeper to find" ... and "tackle the root causes of injustice and inequality" "on our threatened planet". We will be encouraged in "the deep spiritual and intellectual searching that could underpin a 'true social order' for our age".

Through various quotations from Quakers and others, and personal commentary, I hope to stimulate thinking and action to start 'to meet the challenge' set before us.

'The Creator of the earth is the owner of it. He gave us being thereon, and our nature requires nourishment, which is the produce of it. As he is kind and merciful, we as his creatures, while we live answerable to the design of our

creation, are so far entitled to a convenient subsistence that no man may justly deprive us of it.'

John Woolman, 1763 (Part of Qf&p 20.32)

'If John Woolman's approach is the right one for the Society of today it is not enough to go over our own behaviour in detail, cutting a bit here and pulling back a bit there; **we must be concerned with our and society's attitude to life as a whole**, to 'live answerable to the design of our creation'.'

Michael Lee, 1976 (Qf&p 20.34)

'We need to remember that the work of our time is bigger than climate change. We need to be setting our sights higher and deeper. What we're really talking about, if we're honest with ourselves, is **transforming everything about the way we live on this planet**.'

Rebecca Tarbotton, 2012, in a speech in her capacity as Executive Director of the Rainforest Action Network. She tragically drowned two months later, aged 39.

Quoted by Naomi Klein in her 2014 book, 'This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate'.

'It would go a long way to caution and direct people in their use of the world, that they were better studied and knowing in the Creation of it. For how could [they] find the confidence to abuse it, while they should see the great Creator stare them in the face, in all and every part of it?'

William Penn, 1693

For me, the deep "root causes of injustice and inequality" are also the root causes of our "threatened planet". Not just the planet, the survival of much of life including the human is threatened because we are not living 'answerable to the design of our creation'. Climate change, with its consequences of increasing, and increasingly serious, flood, drought, starvation and mass migration, is the loudest messenger of this. 'Global warming from human activities' is implicated 'as a factor that played into the Syrian conflict'. (The Guardian, 2 Mar 2015, 'global-warming-worsened-syria-drought') John Nicholls of Wolverhampton Meeting kindly drew attention to this by circulating Monbiot, 27 May 2015, 'a-prehistory-of-violence' at September AM. This article claims, 'As the evidence accumulates, it now seems that climate change was the commonest cause of mass

LIVE
ANSWERABLE TO
THE DESIGN OF
OUR CREATION

JOHN WOOLMAN

LIVING OUT OUR FAITH IN THE WORLD (CONTINUED)

extinction in the Earth's pre-history' and we, on our present course, will cause the next one.

Refugees, inequality, inadequate housing, poor health, competition for resources... are other voices of not living 'answerable to the design of our creation', of having 'the confidence to abuse it'. Why and how has this happened?

Qf&p 25.14 does not answer the 'why' but does identify the 'how' and 'the implications of undertaking the responsibility' of bringing about the radical change needed. It adds detail to the sentiments of Qf&p 20.34 and Rebecca Tarbotton quoted above. (Twenty five years on, the first sentence of Qf&p 25.14 would now more accurately read, 'We are at the climax of crisis.' and the phrase 'is folding' in the second sentence could read as 'has folded'.)

Are we content, though, just to respond to crises - refugees, flood, drought - as they happen and not work for systemic change? Are we happy just to stick plasters on and avoid radical surgery to ourselves and to the ways of the world?

"Can we ... recognise that everyone and everything on the planet matters and can be thought of as a divine commonwealth, or kin-dom?" As I realise that there is that of

Life or God in every blade of grass to tall tree, in every ant to human to whale, in every part of Earth from inner core to outer atmosphere, in Moon, Sun and Cosmos, and as I love all these as part of the great Oneness! I do not want to harm anyone or anything and change and restoring Earth become a joy rather than a sacrifice.

I am aware that my carbon emissions are causing harm to Earth's systems and death to her inhabitants². Harm to anything is harm to myself. I think it's time to remove the log from my own eye before thinking that campaigning for peace in other areas will be effective. Rex Ambler in Qf&p 25.15 states 'Our testimonies against war and inequality (in respect of humans) ... apply in the same way to our treatment of our natural environment ... in which every creature in its own way serves the interests of the others.'

"We need to rethink what needs to grow in the world and what does not." As we grow in appreciation of Earth's abundance to meet our needs and learn to co-operate instead of competing for resources as dictated by the current economic system, we will find that everyone is fed, clothed and housed (what more do we want?) and the 'occasion for all wars' (A&Q 31) taken away.

"Can we transform the way the world is going ... ?" Are we thinking and working towards being 'patterns and examples' (George Fox, 1656) of "a 'true social order' for our age" and of "a new economic system", irrespective of the lifestyle and monetary changes we ourselves may need to make? Does the Quaker saying, 'I can go this far and no further' (source not found) apply when a rapid evolutionary shift in our thinking and behaviour is required? This shift has been described as the human race moving from the adolescence of treating Earth as a plaything to the adulthood of respect for her and her systems (Charles Eisenstein in 'Sacred Economics') or living 'answerable to the design of our creation'.

So, are we up for the challenge?

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." Margaret Mead, (1901-1978), an anthropologist known for her work on the relationship of culture and personality.

Why just one group? Why not lots of small groups changing the world simultaneously?

Rob Horton, Stafford, MfS Alternate, Staffordshire Area Meeting

"CAN WE ...
RECOGNISE THAT
EVERYONE AND
EVERYTHING ON
THE PLANET
MATTERS AND
CAN BE THOUGHT
OF AS A DIVINE
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OR KIN-DOM?"

Notes

1. Qf&p Ch 25 is called 'Unity of creation'.
2. For example, see The Independent, '1,000's-killed-by-extreme-weather-in-2015'



WE MUST SPEAK
OUT FOR THEM,
SPEAK TRUTH TO
POWER

THE NAMELESS

In stillness we gathered remembering all those
Who stood strong for peace midst the bombing and noise
Birds whistling and rustling whilst building their nests
Sweet music of peace in that haven of rest
Spring flowers abloom and the faint hum of bees
Green buds and fresh blossom in burgeoning trees
Soft warm April sunshine and cool leafy shade
Nobel words of peace before us displayed.

“the silent help from the nameless to the nameless”

Nameless they stay though honoured in stone
Upheld in our hearts, their life's work now done.
Stars shining around them by day and by night
Reflecting our purpose to bathe them in light.
We gave thanks for their service to wounded and poor.
They gave of their all yet fought not in war.
And there we remembered twixt river and hive
Their deeds and devotion forever alive.

“the silent help from the nameless to the nameless”

But still they are coming yet more nameless ones,
Fleeing in terror from the roaring of guns
Homes, families countries behind them, all lost
In turmoil, destruction, lives turning to dust
And we also nameless must answer by deed
In a world that is governed by might and by greed.
Stand strong we must for justice and right
Give succour and love, turn darkness to light.

“the silent help from the nameless to the nameless”

Ours not to judge the why or the where
But to answer the need with love and with care
Like the man of Samaria we ask not who they are
But give what is needed without pause or demur
Our giving is silent as those from before
But we must speak out for them, speak truth to power
For power is against them and thinks we are too
Not so, we are for them and power needs to know.

“the silent help from the nameless to the nameless”

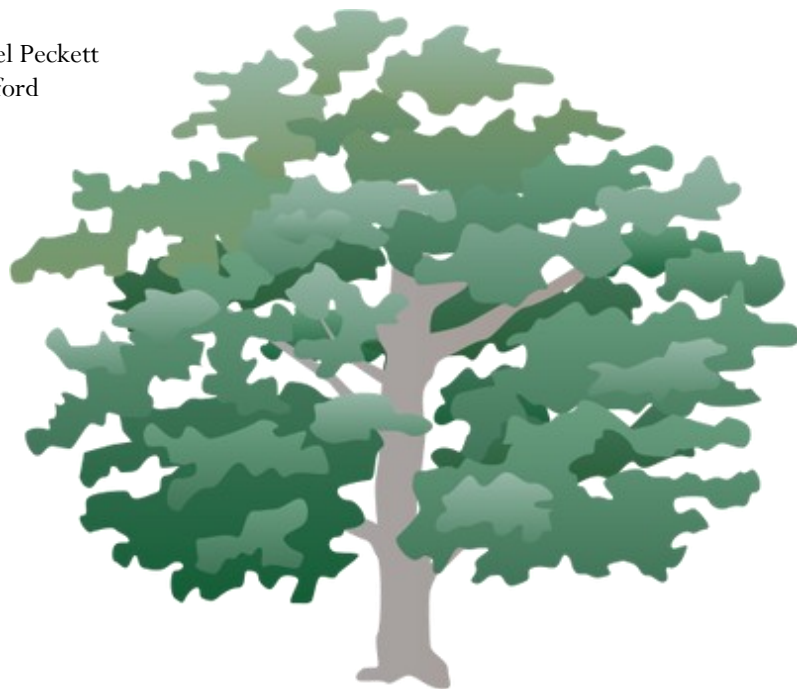
By a member of Staffordshire Area Meeting



THE FOREST

Ten thousand leaf falls
 Each season a heart beat
 Each year a breath
 Countless manlives
 Yet only twenty oaklives have passed
 Since the ice left.
 I covered the bare earth from shore to shore.
 Northwards land darkling with pines,
 Southwards broadleaved greened.
 Sheltered by boughs deer foraged,
 Beavers gnawed and wolves hunted.
 Man roamed
 Walking wide over the leaf strewings.
 Knew me as Herne or sometimes Green Man
 When I whispered in his dreams,
 Telling secrets of the woods.
 Man's heart turned.
 Not content to take what was freely given.
 My tall trees were felled and burnt for fields.
 Now you push me back to the margins.
 I wait as I have always waited,
 Pass you will
 Just as the devouring ice.
 I have eaten many proud cities
 Nothing now but green humps and hollows
 Where wild things rule.
 I am patient.
 I wait.

Nigel Peckett
 Stafford



WHAT CAN YOU GET FOR 40P?

Last Friday I drove to Ty Mawr, a medieval hall near Welshpool, probably the biggest medieval hall in Britain, in its heyday a very important place. It was saved from dereliction by a lottery grant and the Powys Castle estate. Just before restoration it was a tumbledown cow shed. The hall is now complete with the solar at one end and the cattle stall at the other, these have been turned into a kitchen, living rooms and bedrooms. The oak beams are made from whole, mature trees, and the medieval craftsmen's tool marks can be seen. Once I slept in a bedroom there and spent a lot of time lying in bed just admiring the craftsmanship. Both the house and the small garden are open to the public 4 times a year. I go to these open days dressed in 15th century clothing, as do several others. We sleep in the garden and during the day we carry out tasks of the time such as cooking on a fire, leather working and making pottery.

Back to last Friday, the camp had been set up and only Alex and I were left in the garden. The others, who lived locally, had gone home. We sat in the awning of Alex's tent, looking at the view. The view is wonderful, trees, hedges, fields, you can see no modern intrusions at all. We sat there looking at the green hills and trees, in the growing darkness. There were no modern sounds, no aeroplane, car or tractor noise, not even a mobile phone because there is no signal at Ty Mawr. All we could hear were sheep, cows and the swifts racing round the trees calling, as many people must have done in the past. Just in front of where we were sitting the road passes the garden, a narrow country lane; however, long ago it was the main road between England and Wales. We wondered who the people were who had used the road and thought of the armies that had marched past. Now, just a road with about four cars a day driving along it. We talked about trivial things nothing of any great importance. Small things about our families, friends and what happened at work. We sat there as the sun sank and the summer lightning flashed on the hills. The air was warm and as we felt content with the bit of the world we sitting on. A memorable evening, just sitting still with a friend on a warm summer night costs nothing, certainly less than forty pence and yet worth more than a king's ransom.

Nigel Peckett
 Stafford

SEVEN WAYS TO THINK DIFFERENTLY

- ABUNDANCE THINKING
living in gratitude and balance
- SOLUTIONS THINKING
believing there are solutions to any problem
- SYSTEMS THINKING
sensing the interconnectedness of all life
- THINKING LIKE NATURE
discovering nature around us reflected within us
- THINKING FOR THE FUTURE
considering larger timeframes
- CO-OPERATIVE THINKING
learning to collaborate with each other
- FROM THINKING TO DOING
moving into action and turning our dreams into reality

From
'7 ways to think differently'
by Looby Macnamara

Contributed by
Rob Horton
Stafford

SMALL STEPS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

My ecological activities this year have started to produce some results – from a bed of compost I have grown some beetroot.

Perhaps I may remind Friends of the big picture.

First I have been composting ALL household waste - anything not actually toxic. Be a touch scatological & you will imagine what this included. But once the decomposition was complete none of the ingredients were recognisable. I spent one year of topping up the bin each week. After another year of letting nature complete its work I

had 250 kilos of compost. That was the remains of 1750 kilos of ingredients. Care to guess what they were & how much of each?

Then I put 200 kilos into a trough in which it will be completely secure from erosion. Why just 200 kilos but not the full 250? Every time you transfer compost from one container to another, one spade full a time, it occupies a larger volume.

The trough consists of sides without any bottom. It sits inside a moat whose water can flow freely into the compost. The moat has covers to

prevent evaporation. So rainfall on to the compost is retained during the hottest of hot spells.

A few lessons about companion plants are being learnt the hard way. I did plant a row of turnips alongside the beetroot. But although their seeds sprouted first these wilted when the beetroot grew larger.

The trough is in my front garden. I made another which is in the garden of Wolverhampton Meeting House. Here it may be examined by anyone who is interested, even if they have never



SMALL STEPS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION (CONTINUED)

heard of Friends before. I do want this work to be copied and adapted by as many people as possible. Such troughs may be the remedy when agricultural soils are poisoned by fracking.

I am completing another trough three times larger. This will have 3 sections each about 2 feet by 4. So I shall be able next year to experiment with many combinations of adjacent vegetables & establish which are compatible. As the troughs are much smaller than an allotment I am planting the seeds closer than is usual. The compost resembles well rotted farmyard manure. So it should have sufficient nutrients to nourish plants whose leaves touch, almost overlapping. And it should remain fertile for many years.

How slowly does nature create fertile top soil? Merely a centimetre a century. Negligible compared to the erosion of bad farming practices! In contrast my trough has compost 20 times deeper than a century's natural accumulation after just 2 years.

2015 was supposed to be International Year of the Soil. This has not received the publicity it deserves. Some peo-

ple have estimated that by the end of this century many agricultural soils may be exhausted!

Some environmentalists believe that the plough was the worst thing man ever invented. When you remove the trees whose roots hold soil in place then erosion & desertification are inevitable. It is entirely legitimate to graze animals among trees. Also it may be laudable to change the variety of trees, the composition of a 'climax' woodland (the variety of trees which naturally reproduce). There is evidence that the variety of trees in the Brazilian rainforests is not natural; instead the number of fruit & nut bearing trees may be the result of deliberate planting by the indigenous tribes.

We cannot return to the practices of hunter-gatherers. But if we insist on having grains & vegetables in large quantities then we should create terraces in which soil or compost will be secure from erosion.

Since agriculture started far too many cultures have ignored the fertility & security of their soils & proceeded to degrade them. How many civilisations have perished

from ecological collapse?

The natural soil in my front garden was good for grass & trees only. Using planned actions I have covered that with something richer and as secure. Just small steps in the right direction – I must not boast. But it is high time we had a culture which gave high priority to increasing the fertility and security from erosion of whatever we use to grow crops!

PS Have you guessed the composition of the 1750 kg which went into my compost? I started with 500 kg of leaves & grass cuttings, then 100 of kitchen waste, now hold your breath 100 of excrement & 1000 of urine. Diligently I weighed & recorded each week's top-up! As I started with the 500 kg of leaves & grass cuttings there was never any health risk! If the urine & excrement had been disposed of & wasted in the usual way then the flushing would have taken many tons of water from Severn Trent. From now on whenever you flush a lavatory estimate the quantities of different materials involved! Very serious 'food for thought', Friends!

John Nicholls,
Wolverhampton



SOME
ENVIRONMENTALISTS
BELIEVE THAT THE
PLOUGH WAS THE
WORST THING MAN
EVER INVENTED.

VISIONING NEW FIRE WITH THE KINDLERS

'The Kindlers' are an experimental group working to rekindle the power of Quaker worship by renewing and deepening our spiritual practices. Regular workshops are held at Friends House, London, as well as on-the-road at local meetings throughout Britain Yearly Meeting. Threshing sessions encourage an engagement with contemporary religious perspectives. Outcomes of the work are published in accessible booklets for personal use and for study groups. The project is an initiative of North West London Area Meeting.

A group of 15 friends from 5 meetings met in Lichfield for the Kindlers workshop entitled "Ready for Transformation". Alec Davidson and Michael Hennessey led the workshop, following up on themes from Ben Pink Dandelion's 2014 Swarthmore Lecture.

In the morning session we looked at personal change, and working in groups of 3 we thought about what this

meant for us, what would get in the way of it and how we might go forward. We then reflected on our spiritual journeys, looking at any key points and then what prompted them. After this we considered what we particularly wanted to change in ourselves and how being a Quaker affects this process.

In the afternoon, working in "local meeting" groups, we focussed on themes from the recently published Quaker leaflet "Our faith in the future" - meeting for worship, Quaker communities, Quaker discipline, Quaker values, working collaboratively, being known and understood. We started to look at what is going well in our local meeting, we identified areas where change is needed and how we might move forward on these areas. It was the beginning of what might be a valuable process, if we put aside time, and have the energy, to continue with it.

Overall this was a stimulating workshop which provided us with a structure for reflecting on changes that we might make personally and in meetings. Many of us came away with increased awareness of what is working and not working and practical ideas for change both for ourselves and for meeting.

Several of us thought that the only negative was the flyer for the workshop, with the title - 'Ready for Transformation' - and the description both being unhelpful and possibly off-putting. Part of the description read: 'What would it mean to be transformed by Spirit to see life differently?'

In reality, however, the facilitators were very open, friendly and non threatening. A good experience that other Meetings may find very useful.

Rhoda Wharton
Lichfield

A STRUCTURE
FOR REFLECTING
ON CHANGES
THAT WE MIGHT
MAKE
PERSONALLY AND
IN MEETINGS

GORDON COOPER

Uttoxeter and Burton Local Meeting has announced the death of Gordon Cooper.

Although not in Membership, Gordon Cooper was a long-standing and much valued Attender at the Meeting.

The funeral was held at Bretby Crematorium in Burton on 22 September. It was conducted by a member of the Humanist Society.

We would be pleased to receive any contributions about Gordon and his life for the next issue of Staffordshire Quaker.

SUE COOK

Sue Cook, who died in June, was a member of Stafford Meeting for many years. She had a wide range of talents, but for many in that Meeting, as well as for people beyond it, her most visible legacy lies in her magnificent quilts.

At her funeral Sue's daughter Clare said : 'When mum was first diagnosed, she gave me a letter that had been written to her, thanking her for one of her quilts. She had been greatly moved by the words and asked for me to use them today'

The words were in the form of a poem 'Summer Meadow', written by a member of Stafford Meeting, which is printed below.

A SUMMER MEADOW

A bag of scraps, discarded rags,
You strewed across the floor,
And where I saw disharmony
Your practised eye saw more.
Your quick hand sorted and arranged,
Moved piece by piece by colour, size,
They came together, rested, changed,
Confusion to my watchful eyes.

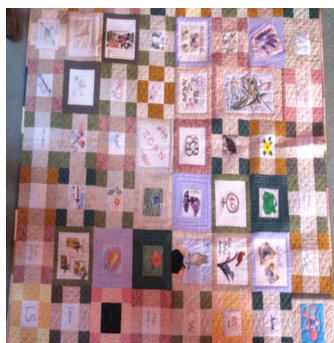
But you could see the worth of each
Small piece of fabric as it lay,
A pattern forming in your mind,
Each portion had its part to play.

And now a field of summer flowers
Is spread across the floor,
And harmony and beauty lie
Where muddle was before.
You never doubted that a thing
Of loveliness and wonder could
From spurned, unwanted cast-offs spring,
Each remnant part of something good.

And is creation fashioned thus,
Each atom given a special role,
And can it be that He can see
This worthless scrap, part of a perfect whole?



'Stardreamer',
made by Sue in 2000 for Grace,
daughter of Maggie Setterfield and
Jeremy Milln, at that time mem-
bers of Stafford Meeting.



Sue managed to persuade almost
everyone in Stafford Meeting to
produce a panel for this quilt,
which was given to Clarice Daw-
son of Stafford Meeting on the
occasion of her 80th birthday.



AND IS
CREATION
FASHIONED
THUS?



'Shining Stars',
made by Sue in 2004 for Wilfred,
son of Maggie Setterfield and Jer-
emy Milln, at that time members
of Stafford Meeting.

FABIAN LANCE

Fabian Lance, a member of Uttoxeter and Burton Local Meeting since 1970, died on 3 January 2015.

Fabian was born in 1934 in London. He experienced the blitz and tells the story of him and Richard Briars, who was a school fellow, having to dive for cover, though during the worst of the war he moved with his mother to Broadway, while his father remained at the BBC where he was an engineer. Later Fabian discovered one of the reasons for him and his mother moving out of London was to save his father having to explain his absences as he set up radio equipment for the secret services in various parts of the country. It was in Broadway he developed his love for the countryside.

After returning to London and finishing his education he learned farming from British Boys for British Farming (BBFBF) at Ettington in Derbyshire which trained city boys in agricultural work. Once he'd finished his course he got a job on a farm down in Sussex where he became friendly with the local vicar and was confirmed into the Church of England. Eventually, through the vicar's contacts, he went out to Australia where he stayed for 5 years only returning because of his mother's bad health. He overstayed his welcome and had to do National Service.

After that he went back to BBFBF as a trainer. From there he went to work as deputy warden at the YMCA at Brighton where he met Beatrice who was at college there. He left Brighton and studied for his Residential Childcare Certificate and having obtained that got a job at Stamford House, the biggest Remand Home for boys in London. He and Beatrice married in 1967 in Coventry Meeting House and started their new life living in a staff flat at Stamford House. After a period as deputy warden in a home for maladjusted boys in Essex, Fabian took up a post at Riverside Approved School near Ellastone where he remained until a cost cutting exercise saw him and three other qualified staff given early retirement.

In 1970 his first daughter, Emma, was born and 20 months later, Hettie appeared on the scene. By that time the family had bought a cottage in the nearby hamlet of Wootton and lived there for the rest of his life.

He created the garden, kept goats and chickens. Later on, after the goats had gone, a donkey and mule appeared. The mule threw everybody who tried to ride her, but between shafts she was as steady as a rock. A farmer friend taught him to drive her and he and Oggie went for miles along the country lanes.

On his retirement, he took to gardening to implement his pension until his health deteriorated. There is a photograph of him at Uttoxeter covered with grass from the burial ground, which he used to go and cut each week taken by Jo Corby.

His health gradually deteriorated over the years but he was still able to enjoy holidays abroad, especially the river cruises as he felt less limited by his increasing lack of mobility. He also loved the annual family holiday where we rented a house and both girls and their families and Beatrice's nephew used to spend a week together.

He loved people, being with them, talking to them and learning their story. A very taciturn painter came to do some work recently and Beatrice sent a text to the girls to that effect, adding "Even Dad was having problems". The next day a second text read "Correction - Dad now has xxxxx's full biography". Over the years he quietly gave his support to Uttoxeter Meeting.

Beatrice Lance,
Uttoxeter

More memories of Fabian, sent by Peter Highfield, are on the next page.

HIS LOVE FOR
THE
COUNTRYSIDE

JOHN MOXHAM

Our Friend John Moxham died in January. He was a "salt of the earth" person, his regular presence always making a positive contribution to our experience as a meeting, but not attracting particular attention. He was with us for over 40 years, taking membership in 2003, in tandem with his membership of Beckminster Methodist Church. His spoken ministry was offered with a particular awareness of our young adults, which they recognised and appreciated.

One of the first things I learnt about John was that he had a beehive on the roof of his garage - a man of many parts.

He was an engineer by profession, a second hobby being the miniature railway which ran round his garden. On one occasion he thought of offering to move it to the Meeting House for the benefit of Friends and friends during a summer event, but then



realised that there would not be enough passengers to make the amount of work it would involve worthwhile. His technical skills were valuable as a member of the meeting's Premises Committee from time to time.

Further to his relationship with young people, in his retirement he gave much of his time, with others, to establishing and maintaining Trinity Training, a training centre which helped those who for a variety of reasons found it difficult to move from school to work. John

brought this commitment to us on a number of occasions, and we were glad to support him.

Also he was a Bible scholar, and was glad to arrange and lead study sessions for us. One aspect of this interest was his trips to Palestine, taking groups to show them the historical background from an academic viewpoint, though I don't know that any Friends joined him. I think he was leading groups of Methodists or Bible students.

John continued to attend meeting for worship even when it became physically difficult. We are pleased that we were able to hold a meeting for worship with John and his wife Barbara at his care home a week before his death, at the age of eight-nine years.

Win Sutton and other
Wolverhampton Friends

A "SALT OF THE
EARTH" PERSON

FABIAN LANCE (CONTINUED)

I have known Fabian from the '80s, but lost my belief for a long time. When I started searching again, I felt I could ask in honesty to be a member of Meeting once more, was accepted, applied - and Fabian was still there! His firm faith had kept him on the way.

For about ten years I have

been unable to attend, but Fabian and Beatrice became my monthly lifeline to Meeting and I soon realised the warmth and friendship I had missed all those years.

We both did National Service. The only times I have seen him not angry, but furious, was when the conversation touched on wars: such a

gentle soul as he.

He still came to see me, even when afflicted by the disease which eventually ended his life. He would doggedly make his way down the steep drive, and then slowly, slowly up it. What an example!

Peter Highfield
Uttoxeter

ANSWERING THAT OF DOG

ALFIE



Alf would just like to say how much he enjoys coming to Meeting.

He's sorry about wanting to shake paws too soon sometimes. The Truth be known, he's finding the clock a bit tricky to read and sometimes thinks we've ended when someone is

simply moving about. Being a modern sort of guy, a digital clock would be easier. He tries to get going quickly at the end of the hour because he has more paw-shaking to do than anyone-else and he likes to treat everyone Equally.

Alf was impressed by the successful outcome of his recent recruitment drive. Two other dogs turned up. Despite some of his baser instincts, Alf showed good self-control and shared the

space Peaceably. The biscuit crumbs, though, were his and his alone. It's Simple, a Collie can only be Quak-ered so far...

Alf Walfie Woo (to give him his full, as yet unofficial, Kennel Club name) is considering setting-up a Blog. 'The God in Dog' Blog, maybe. What do you think?

David Morgan
Stafford

TITCH

'Do we not credit God with a sense of humour?' asked Clarice Dawson in the March 1990 issue of SQ. Her article included this lovely drawing showing Len Leech, dog-rug on arm, entering Stafford Meeting to find his dog Titch causing mayhem. As all tried to settle, Titch trotted round and round the vase of gladioli which Naomi Alexander had left on the floor. What was he planning to do? As Dennis Gripton (striped pullover, left) struggled not



to giggle, members of the whole meeting found themselves struggling with split-

ting sides and teary eyes to maintain the worshipful silence.

STOP PRESS

SQ asked the 'two other dogs' for a response to Alfie's remarks about the three of them sharing space Peaceably.

Unfortunately Judi (Dench) and Alice (Tipper) did not reply. Their owner, Emma Bartlett of Stafford Meeting, told us:

'Judi is too awoof to respond, being human after all.

And pretty Alice doesn't understand the question.

In Meeting their devotion is to mummy (hence wanting to get on my lap!)

CLOSING DATE FOR NEXT ISSUE: JANUARY 31, BUT PLEASE START NOW!

ONE PAGE TAKES ABOUT 620 WORDS

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