



STAFFORDSHIRE QUAKER

WINTER ISSUE, FEBRUARY 2016

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

Friends in Lichfield joined Dorothy Smith as she celebrated her 100th birthday. Her youngest grandson had been brought along. After meeting we sang happy birthday and Dorothy blew out the one candle on the cake!

She had a family celebration on her actual birthday, 28th December, and on the 29th she had another party at Andrew House, where she lives.



Berry Dicker presenting Dorothy with a card and a basket of hyacinth bulbs, which she can enjoy in the weeks ahead.

She was very happy to receive a card from the Queen as well.

As a child Dorothy attended Bull Street Meeting and became a member of the Society of Friends when she was in her nineties. She is much loved by Lichfield friends and is well known in

Lichfield. She was the first manager of St Giles hospice shop here and until she was 97 she continued to help in the shop.

Rhoda Wharton,
Lichfield Meeting



Dorothy with her youngest grandson

*Beyond the acronyms:
information, inspiration and
community in Quaker meetings*

- LM
- Es and Os
- AM
- QCEA

QUAKERS, THE EU AND THE REFERENDUM

What do Quakers have to say as the referendum on membership of the European Union gets closer?

At Area Meeting in Lichfield in December, Peter Allen-Williams, a member of the Quaker Council for European Affairs, spoke on European issues, giving a Quaker perspective on the forthcoming referendum.

On page 8 of this issue of Staffordshire Quaker, Rosemary Crawley (Lichfield Meeting) provides further analysis in her account of a QCEA conference which she attended in Brussels.

Jenny Meade (Lichfield Meeting) has been struck by the arguments against remaining in the EU offered by Patrick Minford, Profes-

sor of Applied Economics at Cardiff University, when he spoke to the parliamentary Foreign Affairs select committee on the costs and benefits of the UK's membership. She points out that you can see and hear him talking to the committee on You Tube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rg4VJPrNFeY.

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ANNEMIE BARNES

Shirley Torrens, of Stoke Meeting, reports on the death of Annemie Barnes

Annemie Barnes, 1926 - 2016, an attender at Stoke Meeting for many years, will be remembered with great tenderness. Her funeral was held on 19 January at Bradwell Crematorium in the manner of the Society of Friends, and her ashes will

be interred with these of her late husband Leslie Barnes and those of her mother.

Annemie wrote an account of her life for her children, and we propose to select a few episodes of a delightful, compelling and very interesting life, including meeting and falling in love with Leslie who was with Friends Ambulance Unit. These will be



included in future editions of Staffordshire Quaker.

GORDON COOPER

We reported the death of Gordon Cooper, whom many members of Area Meeting will remember fondly, in the last issue. Freda Davies here presents some of the thoughts about him of members of Uttoxeter and Burton Meeting.

Members of Uttoxeter and Burton Meeting lost a good friend in 2015. Gordon Cooper, an attender for many years, died at the age of 88.



Wedding of Gordon and Barbara, 1950

Gordon was born in Hull, and went to school there. He graduated from university in physics.

He and Barbara married in 1950, and were to have two children. Gordon went with Barbara to teach in Nigeria, as part of the Methodist Mission. They had several happy years there, but had to return to England when Gordon became ill with tuberculosis.

After settling in Burton, he taught at Dovecliff Grammar School. Barbara became a member of Uttoxeter and Burton Meeting, but although Gordon shared many of Barbara's Quaker beliefs, and attended Burton Meeting, he now felt more comfortable with Humanism.

Gordon described himself as Barbara's chauffeur to Meeting, but his great contribution to Meeting was his true and honest Humanism. His comments in our discussion



group were always thoughtful, fair, considered and wise. He saw the good in everyone.

At Meeting he helped to prepare the room, made the tea and coffee, and offered lifts to those who were infirm or without their own transport.

He and Barbara had two children, Aidan and Kate.

Gordon is very much missed by us all.

Freda Davies, Uttoxeter and Burton Meeting

HIS TRUE AND
HONEST
HUMANISM

BEHIND THE SCENES AT FRIENDS HOUSE

Early one Monday morning in November eight Friends from Stone met on the platform outside our meeting house (Stone Station) to catch a train to Euston. We were visiting Friends House, some for the first time and others for the umpteenth time, all of us hoping to learn something new.

From Euston it is a five minute stroll across Euston Road to reach the calm and comfort of the Quaker Centre, the Friends' House main point of contact with the general public. We were welcomed warmly by Leslie Bell the Meeting Relationships Officer who gave an outline of the day's programme while we enjoyed coffee and biscuits in the worship space behind the bookshop.

A tour of the simple but elegant 1920s building included a brief history of Friends House and the opportunity to see the beautifully refurbished Large Meeting House, the Small Meeting House, and the offices from which all the central work of Quakers happens. It is amazing how much is produced by such a small team in a relatively small space! We were able to chat with some of the staff and find out what they were working on.

There is an excellent restaurant in the basement and we sat down for a delicious



lunch. Suitably refreshed we were taken for a visit to the Library and Archive where a display of documents and exhibits relating to Staffordshire had been arranged for us. The archivist took us down into the strong room where the complete archive of Quakers in Britain is stored and catalogued. It is a most impressive collection.

We returned to the worship space for some short talks about current projects: firstly Izzy Cartwright, who works in Peace Education and was excited that the Guardian was about to publish a whole page article about peace education in British schools.

Then Oliver Waterhouse, Network Development Officer told us about the work within the Quaker Life department and Sam Walton from QPSW spoke briefly about the work going on in that department, including collaboration with other organisations opposing the

Welfare Reform Bill. The session ended with a short Meeting for Worship.

Leslie Bell led a short period of reflection and feedback on the day and we spent a final half hour in the Quaker Centre (the library, bookshop and cafe area) before trotting across the road to catch our train home.

We are very grateful to staff at Friends House, especially to Leslie Bell, for organising such an interesting and enjoyable visit, and also to Joan Holland who initiated and coordinated the arrangements for our day.

Marion Stanfield,
Stone Meeting

STAFFORDSHIRE QUAKER HISTORY

Our Area Meeting Archivist is Paula Knight of Lichfield Meeting. Please contact her if you have items which might be kept. Many go to Staffordshire Record Office.

IT IS AMAZING
HOW MUCH IS
PRODUCED BY
SUCH A SMALL
TEAM IN A
RELATIVELY
SMALL SPACE!

THE LEADINGS OF THE SPIRIT



In this asexual flag:

- black represents asexuality
- grey represents the grey area between sexual and asexual feelings
- white represents sexuality
- purple represents community

I was discussing Quakers with a non-denominational priest and he asked if I'd found God in Meeting and I realised I could answer yes without hesitation (and completely truthfully). I know that my experience was probably very different to his - I wasn't thinking of a man with a beard judging people from heaven. I would rather call it, 'spirit' or 'light' than God. But whatever word you prefer to use I believe this spirit lead me to Quakers. I don't believe that watching the TV show that first introduced me to the society was random chance.

Nor do I wish that it had happened years earlier, I believe, I hope, that all things come at the right time.

I have also come to believe that the spirit has lead me to discover that I am asexual. For those of you that don't know what this is, it's a sexual orientation where the person is not sexually attracted to any gender. Understanding this part of myself, or at least beginning to understand this part of myself, is really helping me grow as a person. It's helped me connect with new people and discuss new ways to see

gender and sexualities. I consider myself fortunate to be a Quaker in this situation. I know I won't be judged, and I try to use my experience of not being judged when speaking to others of different sexualities and genders. While there is much inequality in the world I hope that one day everyone will have the safe place I do to discover themselves. And I hope that they will have a spirit leading them and helping them as I do.

Gayle Yeomans,
Stafford Meeting

COMING HOME TO WOODBROOKE

It was in 2001 that I had my 'coming home' moment – when I attended my first Quaker Meeting for Worship. I had no idea then what impact it would have on my life.

My first course at Woodbrooke, three years later, was one for enquirers. I had little doubt that the Society of Friends was where I belonged, but I felt I should just make sure. I returned home and wrote my letter.

Since then I have been to Woodbrooke many times, and, for me, it has been a source of spiritual growth and nourishment. Never easy in a large group, I found the dining-room a challenge at first, whilst the courses themselves were inspirational. In 2007 I embarked on the Equipping for Minis-

try course – a life-changing experience – and I overcame my discomforts, and learned to love Woodbrooke and the people I met there.

Now my husband refers to Woodbrooke as my second home, and it is true that I am always happy to be there. It is a blessing to live so close, so that I can go for just a day, taking a sandwich to eat in the lovely grounds, weather permitting (or treating myself to lunch, if I am feeling flush), and spending hours browsing in the library. I always meet someone I know, whether staff or a friend encountered on a course at some time. There are so many enticing courses, it is always hard to choose the one a year I allow myself. I try to discern the one to which I am led.

My last weekend at Woodbrooke was as Quaker Life Representative, and it was to the conference in October (there are two a year). This is always a wonderful experience: attended by nearly a hundred Quakers from all over the country I am bound to meet many friends, and to be inspired by the speakers, and the deeply spiritual atmosphere in which we work.

If anyone would like to know more about Woodbrooke, Equipping for Ministry or Quaker Life, please e-mail me at mljeays@btinternet.com.

Maggie Jeays,
Stafford Meeting

NOW MY
HUSBAND REFERS
TO
WOODBROOKE
AS MY SECOND
HOME

LOOKING INTO DEATH AND LIFE

In February 2014 I was told I had colon cancer. When I went home I thought it would be wise to meditate. There is something, a wonder, a mystery, to be found in all life.....

Before I would have said meditation was sitting in silence, clearing a space for stillness and peace, but now, for me meditation is resting with awareness in Presence. We all have an ego. It plays games with us, makes us doubt, exposes us to temptation, tells us stories about what is happening and how we will suffer or benefit, and we take it all in unless we develop the skill of awareness that catches the ego in the act of deception!

Within the stillness of silence there is a 'place' to be found where you realise you cannot be shaken by the emotions which arise. In that place there is no separation between 'me' and 'everything'. Once this place is found in the still silence where non separation is realised your life changes, you cannot go back. There is no success, no failure, just situations arising and passing, and your only aim is to ease the suffering that arises in a world that believes in separation.

When March came it was time for me to go for the operation. I was pretty much a nervous wreck, all that meditating was now going to be put to the test, and I felt lacking. My blood pressure

was high when I got to the hospital and it just kept rising.

No matter how much I tried to meditate I was just too wound up. Then I remembered I was not these sensations, they were not me. They were just appearing, coming and going, but I was always there. So who was I? That Presence within me, what is that? That which sees everything arise, everything fade, coming and going, yet itself remains, no less, no more.

I realised that this awareness in me is just from the point of view of me, really it's me that arises in Awareness. This me that was born and will die, this me that changes day to day, it is all within Awareness. None of that which I take to be me is my True Self! So who am I? What is it about me that is unique? What if I had been born with a different set of genes, a different mix of chemicals, with different parents, in a different location, a different situation, different circumstances, who would I be then? My appearance would be different, my thoughts, actions, my life, all would be different. So who is my True Self? This body and mind are the equipment with which I, whoever that is, perceives the world, and so body and mind are precious, but it is not who I am.

When I woke up next morning, the fear returned! A lifetime of conditioning. But

now I realised I had to say "Yes" to everything that was arising, to accept it all. With that "Yes" whatever was arising seemed to lose its power. Instead of dwelling in resisting what was arising and giving it all my attention, just say "Yes", accept it, and move on. See there is more to today, what is this moment? Is it only what is arising that is present?

For the rest of this day I was pretty calm, the operation was not until night time. My wife had to go; I was on my own....except I didn't feel alone. The presence of That Which Is was with me, as it had always been, just I never took the time to be aware of it. I was wheeled to the operating theatre. They put the needle in my back for the epidural, and that is the last I remember of that day!

It has been strange coming back into the normal world, because I see how abnormal it is. I'd like to make people aware of that Aware Presence which is our True Self. Yet it seems most people really don't want to know or change!!! Sometimes I get sucked back into the world of separation, and that's why I need a daily practice to keep me awake to the miracle of Life. To keep going on beyond, discovering new wonders, being in the mystery, not knowing, just being.

Alex Thomson,
Stone Meeting

FOR ME
MEDITATION IS
RESTING WITH
AWARENESS IN
PRESENCE

HOW DO WE GET THINGS DONE IN A QUAKER MEETING?



YOU DO NOT
HAVE TO BE IN
MEMBERSHIP TO
PLAY A FULL
PART IN THE
LIFE OF THE
MEETING, WITH
A FEW
EXCEPTIONS

Below is the first part of an article by Debs Williamson for attenders in Stoke Meeting, written when it came up that some attenders thought that you need to be a member to take on a role. Other meetings are welcome to contact Debs to get a copy of the full article. Stoke Elders and Overseers plan to produce further newsletters. Debs writes: 'I would like to see people being more aware of what's happening at area meeting level and in other meetings. I have started grabbing the copies of the SQ when they arrive and putting names of members and attenders on them. Any not claimed after a few weeks are posted on.'

Quakers believe that there is something of God in everyone and that anyone can access the divine (whatever that means to you) simply by expectant waiting in silence. Quakers have no paid ministers to interpret the will of God for their congregation. Instead that is the job of everyone in the meeting. But your average vicar, imam or rabbi does a lot more than preaching. They are responsible for the physical fabric of the building, for planning and implementing all the events that go on in a religious community and for the pastoral care of their flock. They will often have a large pool of volunteers to help

them but even so it makes a difference to have someone whose full time job it is to be responsible for these things. In a Quaker meeting as well as having no paid minister to do these things, we also believe all are equal before God and we are non-hierarchical in our methods. What this means in practice is committees; lots and lots of committees!

When you become a member of a Quaker meeting, you are made aware of your responsibility to support your meeting financially, spiritually and practically according to your means and gifts. But you do not have to be in membership to play a full part in the life of the meeting, with a few exceptions. The roles of clerk, treasurer and trustee are limited to members by our constitution and/or charity commission rules but every other kind of service within the meeting is open to attenders.

One of the most important, though often overlooked duties, is upholding the meeting and its work. This can be through silent waiting on God in meeting for worship, in a meeting for worship with business, or in our day to day lives. Having a constant awareness of ourselves, of Friends, and of the world; and of how our words and deeds affect them is central to being a Quaker.

We depend on our members and attenders to enable

us to be effective as a meeting

*God has no hands
but ours*

In our meetings for worship we seek through the stillness to know God's will for ourselves and for the gathered group. Our meetings for church affairs, in which we conduct our business, are also meetings for worship based on silence, and they carry the same expectation that God's guidance can be discerned if we are truly listening together and to each other, and are not blinkered by preconceived opinions. It is this belief that God's will can be recognised through the discipline of silent waiting which distinguishes our decision-making process from the secular idea of consensus. We have a common purpose in seeking God's will through waiting and listening, believing that every activity of life should be subject to divine guidance.

Quaker Faith and Practice 3.02

... Not all who attend a meeting for church affairs will necessarily speak: those who are silent can help to develop the sense of the meeting if they listen in a spirit of worship.

Quaker Faith and Practice 3.06

Debs Williamson,
Stoke Meeting

WOULD WE LIKE OUR AREA MEETING TO BE LARGER?

John Nicholls offers some challenging ideas on a topic rarely discussed: the size of Staffordshire AM.

Are we content to be a fairly small AM with 7 LMs? Would there be any advantages in acquiring a few more LMs & becoming comparable in size to our neighbouring AMs?

Last year Dudley LM closed. If any of our LMs closed – especially one geographically close to the centre – then our AM might be at risk of fragmenting. .

There is one advantage in our present size – we all know each other. When there is a problem or issue then Staffordshire Friends know the right people to contact. Having been a member since 1989 I have seen several issues, potentially troublesome, resolved promptly. In contrast having previously been a member of a very large AM I have known instances where inertia prevented issues from being addressed & resolved.

Given adequate management we could grow to 10 or 12 LMs with another 100 members & still maintain our present cohesion.

We should always remember one thing – the most valuable asset of any organisation is its members, their apti-

tudes & aspirations, whether they can ‘practice what they preach’ or ‘walk the walk that they talk’.

Having said that we must always remember that we are responsible for our Meeting Houses & other infrastructure. These need management which is at least competent & sometimes to a professional standard. But given Friends’ tradition of enterprise this should be no problem. There should never be any question of a professional standard of management to a Meeting’s resources “undermining its spirituality”.

In the event of a possible transfer of LMs into another AM a few important things must always be remembered. First of all no LM should be transferred against the wishes of its members.

Secondly there is the question of standards and how these do vary. By standards I mean the amount of guidance taken from ‘Quaker Faith & Practice’. Having been actively involved in Friends in the West Midlands since 1977 I do know how these do vary.

Across Staffordshire standards are uniform & high. But in 1977 I started in a PM which conducted its business as if ‘Quaker Faith & Practice’ had never been issued. There was literally not a

single copy in that Meeting House! When I transferred to Staffordshire I was amazed at how rigorously Wolverhampton Friends conducted business. But when I checked I found we were merely following guidelines.

So when considering the possible transfer of a LM all should be satisfied that their practices & standards are compatible. This could only be established if all were familiar with each other i.e. had had substantial contact over at least several years.

In conclusion if Staffordshire Friends want to pursue the possibility of growing I suggest we establish informal but strong connections with those LMs along common borders at present inside neighbouring AMs. As an example when any LM is holding a special event then extend invitations to LMs just the other side of the border.

Finally I hope we always avoid the risk of Staffordshire AM being dissolved with our LMs allocated to neighbouring AMs. I am aware that Wolverhampton was once part of Warwickshire. But there would be uncompromising objections to being transferred into Central England.

John Nicholls,
Wolverhampton Meeting



IF ANY OF OUR LMS CLOSED – ESPECIALLY ONE GEOGRAPHICALLY CLOSE TO THE CENTRE – THEN OUR AM MIGHT BE AT RISK OF FRAGMENTING

FRIENDS IN AND FOR EUROPE



Quaker House in Brussels

EUROPEAN
FRIENDS SHOW
US HOW WE
MIGHT LIVE
A & Q 16
TO THE FULL

I attended a European conference in Brussels in December as SAM's Quaker Council for European Affairs correspondent. As well as my SAM report, reports are in *The Friend & Around Europe*.

Travel by train to Brussels was exciting though tinged with nervousness. It was 3 weeks after Paris murders and a week after Brussels had been under 'lockdown'. 'Enhanced security' had the perverse effect of making me feel more unsafe. Armed police, military vehicles, and excluding barriers reminded me how far we are from that time when 'nation shall not lift up sword against nation'.

Chant d'Oiseau, the conference centre, is an adapted Franciscan Convent providing simple accommodation. On first meeting my roommate I could not immediately perceive much we might have in common and possibly she thought the same. As it turned out we both shared the long-term experience of being English, but not always accepted as such by those around us. In her case she was born and grew up in Germany, adopting England as an adult, and in my case, though born in England, my appearance leads people to assume otherwise. Our shared experience came to the fore after a discussion about the way refugees and asylum seekers are often treated; the negative images that surround them and the assumptions that are made.

The conference was conducted in English although

English was not the first language of at least half of the participants. I admired their proficiency in what were quite complex discussions. And scarcely had I taken that in when I listened to a meal-time discussion about the need to organise another 'Borders' meeting. The countries involved were Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland and Switzerland! We miss out on so much by not belonging to the Schengen area! Borderless travel is much more than mere convenience; it seems to contribute to a feeling of unity that flourishes despite language and cultural difference. European Friends show us how we might live A & Q 16 to the full.

As for EU membership, I remain fully committed, but am more aware of the need for reforms (not necessarily those which our Prime Minister is negotiating). Three areas of concern are the power and unelected nature of the Commission; progressive militarisation; and the way in which the European Central Bank disadvantages poorer Eurozone members.

Proposing legislation, implementing it, and spending the EU budget all come within the remit of the Commission. Though the cost is often represented by the press as excessive, it is really quite modest; and the Commission is transparent in the way that it works. The issue is that of non-elected power and the influences that commissioners are subjected to by lobbyists.

Increasing militarisation is taking place through more than one European institution and is particularly evident through *Operation Sophia*, and the development of drone technology. *Operation Sophia* is the use of naval operations to seize boats crossing the Mediterranean from Libya. Drone technology is an EU priority, and the concern for us centres around the use of armed drones. No policy on their use is in place and this results in widespread breaches of international law. QCEA has written about both *Operation Sophia* and Armed Drones and is taking action, including the setting up of the European Forum on Armed Drones.

The ECB, in Frankfurt, maintains the stability of the Euro. It works independently of governments. Its rulings have mainly benefited Germany (acknowledging that Germany is the dominant economy in the Eurozone); and have dreadfully disadvantaged Ireland, Greece, Portugal and Spain.

These are not the only areas of concern. The need for a European response to the refugee crisis was extensively discussed. QCEA is very much alive to refugee needs and to other concerns not mentioned here such as Trade Agreements and Arms trading. I hope that we continue to actively support the excellent work QCEA carries out.

Rosemary Crawley,
Lichfield Meeting

CONSCRIPTION AND CONSCIENCE

Leek Quakers have initiated a Peace Vigil for midday on 2 March to mark the centenary of the coming into force of the 1916 Military Service Act. There is much selective 'remembrance' of World War 1 that turns into parades of vintage military hardware at the expense of graphic illustration of the mutilation and obliteration of countless thousands of young male bodies hurled forward by officers.

The UK recognised the right not to fight in the 18th century following problems with forcing Quakers into military service. The Militia Ballot Act of 1757 allowed Quakers to be excluded from Militia service. Refusal to train to kill fellow human beings was not an issue for a century and a half until the supply of enthusiastic volunteers dwindled after the first enthusiasm at the start of the First World War. The generals' desire to build the British army to equal the combined size of the German and French armies forced Asquith's government to introduce conscription and despite warnings by the only Labour Cabinet member, Arthur Henderson, the Military Service Act came into force on 2 March 1916.

At the start of the war the Army consisted of some 80,000 regular troops. By the end over 5 million had joined, almost a quarter of the total male population, 2.67 million as volunteers and 2.77 million as conscripts.

The Act specified that men aged 18-41 were liable to be called up unless they were married, widowed with children, serving in the Royal Navy, a minister of religion, or working in one of a number of reserved occupations. Conscription numbers proved lower than anticipated, so a second Act in May 1916 extended liability for military service to married men. A third Act in 1918 extended the upper age limit to 51.

Men or employers who objected to an individual's call-up could apply to a local Military Service Tribunal. These could grant exemption from service, usually conditional or temporary.

As Arthur Henderson, the Labour Cabinet member, had warned, conscription did not prove to be the panacea for an easy expansion of the British army. By July 1916 93,000, 30 percent of those called, had failed to appear.

Men called up for military service or their employers could appeal to a civilian Military Service Tribunal on the grounds of work of national importance, business or domestic hardship, medical unfit, or conscientious objection. By the end of June 1916, 748,587 men had appealed. It is likely that little more than a third of all First World War army personnel were conscripts.

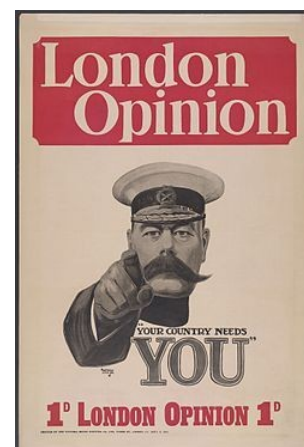
Although it has been the focus of the tribunals' image, only some 16,000 or 2 percent of those appealing were

Conscientious Objectors. Around 7,000 were granted non-combatant duties; a further 3,000 ended up in special work camps and 6,000 were imprisoned. Forty-two were sent to France to potentially face a firing squad. Thirty-five were formally sentenced to death, but immediately reprieved, with ten years penal servitude substituted.

Arthur Henderson had pointed out to his Cabinet colleagues many working men would resist serving a nation in which they did not have a legitimate share in governing and would see it as theft of their rights by rich capitalists. They resented the idea of being dragooned to face possible death by a Parliament they had no part in electing: 40 percent of males over 21 still did not have the right to vote in 1914.

Leek Quakers are inviting members of all local churches, the local British Legion Branches, voluntary organisations and indeed everyone in the community to come along to the Peace Vigil, hold aloft a Peace Poster, help to give out leaflets and devote some small amount of time to silent reflection on peace. The magnificent local Peace through Folk Choir will mark the conclusion of the Vigil with a rendering of *Dona Nobis Pacem*.

Peter Kent-Baguley,
Leek Meeting



ONLY TWO
PERCENT OF
THOSE
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OBJECTORS.



WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL: THE WORK OF TWO STAFFORDSHIRE FRIENDS



This series of e-mails reveals the part two Friends have played in the struggle to give everyone in the world access to clean water and sanitation.

A PERSONAL MESSAGE

In October Bill Walley (Stafford Meeting) wrote to local Friends about an exciting message:

I received the e-Mail below from Water Aid about a month ago. It is indeed very good news for third world countries.

So what is Rebecca thanking

THIS IS A
FRIDAY TO
REMEMBER

BREAKING NEWS LIVE FROM THE UN - WATER AND SANITATION GOAL IS SIGNED

This is the e-mail Bill had received from Rebecca Owen at Water Aid:

Dear Professor Walley,

This is it – the email I've always wanted to send you. Within the last hour, world leaders have signed a Global Goal on water and sanitation.

This means, for the first time ever, governments have agreed a target for universal

me for? Briefly it is this:

When I was a lecturer at Aston University (1969-1993) I developed and ran an undergraduate course on Water Resources (the only one of its kind in the country). The Syllabus included modules on third world problems like water supply and sanitation, and the health problems that result if they are inadequate. Several of my students on graduating went to work overseas for Water Aid.

In 1993 I organised an international 'Water Resources Conference' in Birmingham

on behalf of the Council of Europe, and later presented its findings to the Council's Environment Committee, in Berlin. I'd managed to recruit several Industrial and Institutional sponsors for the conference, and over 100 delegates from many countries attended. Thus, the conference made a healthy profit and we decided to donate it all to Water Aid.

The news that world leaders have now decided to sign a Global Goal on water and sanitation is like icing on the cake for me.

Bill

access to taps and toilets: 2030. It means, for the first time ever, they have acknowledged that ending extreme poverty will be impossible without them.

Of course, this is the beginning, not the end – the hard work to achieve this target starts now. But when the end is a world where everyone everywhere has clean water to drink and a safe place to go the toilet, the beginning is a pretty exciting place to be. Thank you for helping to make it happen.

This is a Friday to remember, a Friday to celebrate, a Friday to look back on in years to come. So please, right now if you can, take a moment to raise your glass (of clean water, naturally).

You've helped make history – you were there at the beginning.

With a full heart, slightly shaky fingers and warmest thanks,

Rebecca

CONNECTIONS

Anthony Wilson (Lichfield Meeting) replied:

Dear Bill Thanks for your message about your work on water - you can see your courses and conference amongst the building blocks in the new UN

stance. A couple of years before you went to Aston I was responsible for what became a significant (but small scale) water project in Malawi. When the Committee on International Development called for evidence (2006), it triggered this memory (*see next page*) which I forwarded to the secre-

tariat.

I found myself on a charity phone-in programme on WM Radio about 30 years ago when I was able to plug Wateraid in response to a caller - that would have been when you were in full flow at Aston.

In peace, Anthony

WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL: THE WORK OF TWO STAFFORDSHIRE FRIENDS (CONTINUED)

DEALING WITH THE GLOBAL WATER CRISIS, 2006

The International Development Committee consisted in 2006 of 11 MPs. In that year it issued a news release which announced an inquiry into water and sanitation in the following terms:

'Evidence of a global water crisis is widespread. Currently, more than 2 billion people have no access to sanitation and one billion are without access to clean water. The UN believes that over the next 2 decades the average supply of water per person worldwide will drop

by a third. The increasing scarcity of water will hit poor people the hardest, with farmers, slum dwellers and women and children amongst the most vulnerable groups. Access to clean water and sanitation are basic human requirements, and are crucial to many aspects of poverty reduction, including improved health and sustainable economic and social development.

The International Development Committee is to begin an inquiry into Water and Sanitation. The main purpose of the inquiry will be to

examine how donors – notably the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) - can support progress towards Millennium Development Goal 7, which aims to reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation by 2015, and support progress towards other MDGs through achieving outcomes in water and sanitation.

The Committee invites interested organisations and individuals to submit written evidence.'

(2006) MORE THAN 2 BILLION PEOPLE HAVE NO ACCESS TO SANITATION AND ONE BILLION ARE WITHOUT ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER

THE EXPERIENCE OF MALAWI IN THE 1960S

Anthony Wilson responded to the message above by writing to the International Development Committee Secretary:

Dear Ms Steele

Thank you for this message. I would like to have submitted "evidence" to the Committee - quotation marks because it would have been in the form of field experience in Malawi 40 years ago, when the Dept. of Community Development worked with local people to harness water flowing down mountainsides. Responsibility for rural water supplies for people appeared to fall within no ministry remit: the Public Works Dept only dealt with urban provision, Agriculture did irrigation for crops, Animal Husbandry did troughs for cattle, Health - when it

wasn't federal - did hospitals... So we tried to fill the gap with a programme which said that each village should have a source of clean water within (I think) 30 minutes' walk; that this should take the form of the simplest system appropriate (i.e. no complicated pumps on wells); and that District Councils would be responsible for oversight and maintenance.

2. In the case of these mountain springs, people rose before dawn to dig the pipelines and lay the pipes before going to work in their gardens. Our departmental engineer placed settlement tanks at appropriate intervals; and we arranged for any run-off around the standpipes to be diverted to nearby vegetable patches.

3. The cost of pipes and fittings was met by US AID: about \$3000 was enough for four schemes.

4. When the water started to flow into the villages, the local press gave headline treatment to the US funding, not the work of local people. And the Malawi government took no further action to promote this programme.

I question whether I can usefully elaborate on these anecdotal recollections: but I imagine that the issues which they raise still apply in many places.

Anthony Wilson
(formerly Commissioner for Community Development, Malawi)



HOW DO WE GET THINGS DONE IN A QUAKER MEETING? THE TRUTH

Here is another extract from Debs Williamson's article. See page 6.

Q: How many Quakers does it take to change a light bulb?

A: Thirty-three: One to raise a concern at Business Meeting that the light bulb is no longer working. Ten

at Business Meeting to set up a light bulb replacement subgroup to send a report to Area Meeting. Three to work on the subgroup and report to Area Meeting. Fifteen at Area Meeting to discern that the right way forward is to change the light bulb. One to report back to Local Meeting that

the bulb is going to be changed. One person to change the bulb. One person to write an article for the Staffordshire Quaker newsletter about changing the bulb. One to write a letter to *The Friend* saying that the decision about changing the light bulb had not been in Right Ordering.

RECIPES OF RESISTANCE

An invitation from Sumud Palestine

3.00-5.00 February 27
Equality Hall
Raymond Street
Stoke-on-Trent

Celebrate International Women's Day with WOMEN IN GAZA

Learn about life and food in Gaza and TASTE THE FOOD!

Through food, poetry, words and music Jameela's Kitchen seeks to knit together an understanding and appreciation of the daily

work and struggle of Palestinian women within the wider movement for women's rights internationally.



The event opens with a simple demonstration of Palestinian food followed by:

- A slide show to introduce Gaza and some key political issues

- A short film from Jameela's Kitchen
- Poetry by Rafeef Ziadah and Susan Abulhawa
- Questions and Answers

Admission is free but donations are requested in support of women in Gaza

For more information contact Angela Glendenning on 01782-616368

Angela Glendenning,
Stoke Meeting



Sumud Palestine

CONSCRIPTION AND CONSCIENCE

Leek Friends invite you to a Peace Vigil at midday on Wednesday March 2, Leek town centre, to mark the date of the centenary of the coming into force of the 1916 Military Service Act. Leek Meeting has invited Churches Together and other groups and individuals to take part. See page 8.



DEBS WILLIAMSON (STOKE MEETING) HAS TAKEN OVER THE MANAGEMENT OF THE STAFFORDSHIRE QUAKER WEBSITE FROM BILL WALLEY (STAFFORD MEETING). SHE WOULD WELCOME CONTRIBUTIONS TOO!



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

ARTICLES ARE USUALLY A MAXIMUM OF ABOUT 620 WORDS LONG — ONE PAGE

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