



THE QUIET WORD

September 2014 issue no.8



Meeting for worship

[GILDERSOME Friends Meeting House](#) 75 Street Lane, Gildersome, Leeds, LS27 7HX
tel: 0113 2564944 or 07973 450 368
Sundays, 10.45 am

[ILKLEY Friends Meeting House](#) Queens Road, Ilkley, Leeds, LS29 9QJ
tel: 01943 600 806 or 01943 601 181
Sundays, 10.30 am

[ADEL Friends Meeting House](#) New Adel Lane, Leeds LS16 6AZ
tel: 0113 2676293
Sundays, 10.45 am

[CARLTON HILL Central Leeds Friends Meeting House](#) 188 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds, LS2 9DX
tel: 0113 2422208
Meetings for worship:
Sundays, 10.45 am

[ROUNDHAY Friends Meeting House](#) 136 Street Lane, Leeds, LS8 2BW
tel: 0113 2933684
Sundays, 10.45 am

[OTLEY Friends Meeting](#) 1st Sunday of month 10:45 at various houses.
3rd Sunday every month in The Court House—usually in the Robing room.
Enquiries :0113 318 8084
dmr@cooptel.net

[RAWDON Friends Meeting House](#)-Quakers Lane, Rawdon, Leeds, LS19 6HU
tel: 07582 960092
Sundays, 10.45 am

[LEEDS UNIVERSITY](#) Tuesdays, 1.05pm
In Claire Chapel, The Emmanuel Centre which is alongside the main entrance to the University of Leeds Campus opposite the Parkinson Building (with the white clock tower).
Organised by the Leeds Universities Chaplaincy

[Bedford Court](#) First and third Wednesdays, 10.30 am



Banksy graffiti—Gazza wall 2003

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Dates for your Diary

Thursday 4 th September 6pm to 7pm	Meeting for Worship at Carlton Hill
Saturday 13th September 10am	The Light Group at Adel
Saturday 13th September 1:00pm - 4:00 pm	Heritage Open Day Fairfield Friends' meeting house
Saturday 20 September	the 2014 Leeds Quaker outing will be to Liverpool.
Sunday 28 th September 7.30pm	Rawdon Amnesty Concert
Thursday 2 nd October 6pm to 7pm	Meeting for Worship at Carlton Hill
Thursday 9 th October	6.30 refreshments, 7pm start. 'Quaker Quest' at Carlton Hill
Friday 10 th Oct 6.30pm refreshments 7.15pm - start	Quaker journeys at Roundhay
Thursday 16 th Oct	Quaker Quest at Leeds University Chaplaincy
Sunday 12 th October 1.15pm	Leeds Area Quaker meeting at Rawdon QMH
Saturday 18 th October 10.30am to 4pm	Quakers in Yorkshire at The Mount School, York
Sunday 18 th October 7.30pm	Rawdon Amnesty Concert
Saturday 25th October 10:00 am	The Light Group Adel

Thinking about Membership at YMG

Lots of Yearly Meeting Gathering was given over to thinking about 'belonging'. Some of it was about membership – and here are some things I heard, and liked.

Call everyone who comes to a Quaker meeting a **participant**.

Talk about **entering** into membership, **welcoming** into membership, the **journey or path into** membership (with **companions**).

Don't ever say **accept**, **allow** or **admit** into membership.

Some of these words I will try to use here in Leeds – or perhaps we will develop our own better versions. It's very hard to change the language you use. Several years ago I made a vow not to talk about 'oversight' (or its connecting words) but to say 'pastoral care' instead, and that lasted about six months. So, let's try again to add some new words,

Susan Robinson
Otley Meeting



We're not going

I must be crazy even considering going to Israel in a time like this. Last year when I took my daughter on a train in Israel she was horrified by a gun-carrying soldier. "I don't like this gun, mum", she whispered in an anxious voice and clutched my hands. She grew up in a peaceful place where people don't walk around carrying weapon. She believes racism is a thing of the past. How will she react to sirens and rockets and a public atmosphere which is more militaristic than I can remember? "No", I said to my husband, "we may as well go on holiday to Iraq: ancient culture, gorgeous food, nice sunny weather and yes, some security issues. Seriously, do you really think I can go to see family in Israel just now?" I rang my friends in Tel Aviv. Some of them (surprisingly, all are parents) think I'm over-reacting. Big deal, one or two alarms a day can't stop you from living your life. The more left wing they are, the more serene they seem to be. As if, compared with the suffering of the people in Gaza, it is somehow wrong to complain. Your skin is too thick, I say. I got used to live quietly in Leeds. All this nonchalant pretension is not for me anymore. Yes, I think it is actually a very big deal!

Three days later, we're in Israel. Don't ask me why. I probably just wanted to see my family.

We're there

The airport is deserted. It's got this post-apocalyptic feeling you don't want to feel when you come home. We walk to the passport control without any queue and silently leave. On the way to my mum's house we drive past a demonstration. They wear flags like strange supermen and carry signs in support of the army. I am tempted to shout something back but decide not to: in the last few days some of our friends were attacked by right wing bullies during demonstrations; some were even followed home after the demonstration was over. Perhaps it's not wise to provoke them with a child in the car. Hold on, have I really had this thought? Has it already come to this? The sour feeling of despair and alienation is spreading in my throat.

In the morning, at my mum's, the alarm goes off: Hamas is shooting rockets. I wish I could ignore it, but my mum takes Lila and her cousin to the relatively secured stairwell. I can hear explosions in the distance, not sure Lila did. Her 5 years old Israeli cousin explains that "the baddies are throwing bombs". I'm troubled by this black and white perception of reality. Do you really think there

are good and bad people? Lila answers calmly and wisely: everyone can be bad sometimes. Phew; not spoilt yet.

Going native (again)

I can't begin to tell all the surreal anecdotes from our time in Israel. My brother is called for reserves as a psychiatrist and I can hardly meet him. When he finally comes home he tells sad stories about treating soldiers who suffered trauma in the war. My activist friends were attacked on demonstrations against the wars, some with rocks. When we go to a café we hear the sirens and see rockets exploding above us. In the quiet country house where my brother lives, we see fighter aircraft zooming and know exactly where they're heading.

After ten days I can't even be bothered when the sirens cry in Tel Aviv; I'm having coffee with a friend. Yes, I've gone native. Can't believe how quickly it happened. Everything seems normal. Now you see me – now you don't. That's what humans do: keep going, adapt, go on living their lives in spite of everything. But at the same time, how immoral and blunt it is when thousands of lives are crushed in their names!

Going home

Israel is a lovely place. The weather is good, the beaches are beautiful, the food is gorgeous (there's even a vegan trend in Tel Aviv!) and the creativity is dazzling. Lila had a great holiday. She didn't notice there even was a war. But as we came back to Leeds, our neighbor wouldn't play with her: Israel kills Muslims and I'm a Muslim, she said. I think it was her mum's words, which made me even sadder. Lila can't tell people about her lovely holiday anymore. She has to apologise and explain she wasn't anywhere near any war. What can I tell her? I'm tired of answering for Israel myself, and it's getting harder all the time. Fear, hatred and racism are growing in ways I can't begin to tell in this short space, and the widening crisis in the Middle East doesn't make it easier. It seems like the area is packed with violent fanatics, but I know it's actually packed with human beings. It's hard not to lose hope, but what else can I do?

I'm tired of answering for Israel myself, and it's getting harder all the time.

Yael Arbel

Roundhay Meeting



Press release 08 August 2014 - Quakers urge recognition of Palestine

Amid faltering ceasefires and talks, Quakers in Britain are calling for urgent action on Gaza. They urge the UK Government to recognise Palestine as a nation state; they call for a comprehensive arms embargo on all sides in the conflict and for an end to Israel's blockade of Gaza and occupation of Palestine.

The calls for action come in a statement made by the decision making body of Quakers in Britain, the [Yearly Meeting](#), attended by 2,000 Quakers in Bath. As part of their commitment to peacemaking, Quakers continue to challenge anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.

The Yearly Meeting heard essential steps towards full and fair negotiations:

Palestine to be recognised as a nation state

An end to indiscriminate fire by all sides

A comprehensive arms embargo

An end to Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory and blockade of Gaza

Freeing elected Palestinian leaders now held as political prisoners

The use of international law to hold all parties to account for their actions.

The Yearly Meeting heard that this week that Quakers were invited to meet Foreign Office ministers on the crisis. Teresa Parker, programme manager for Israel and Palestine for Quakers in Britain, was among representatives from faith and secular agencies who went to share views and experience of the region.

A key motivation for Yearly Meeting is valuing all life. The Yearly Meeting statement says:

"As we among other Nobel Peace Laureates have said, 'The conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelis will only be resolved when Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territory is ended and the inherent equality, worth, and dignity of all is realised.' Peacebuilding is a long and demanding path to take... We long for – and will work for – a time when the deep fear experienced on all sides is replaced by security and a just peace."

The Yearly Meeting statement in full reads:

A statement on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict made by Quakers in Britain at their Yearly Meeting in Bath, 8 August 2014

"At this time of sombre anniversaries, as we observe the centenary of the outbreak of World War I and the anniversaries of nuclear bombs dropped on the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki we find our Quaker testimonies to peace and equality again compel us to speak out.

"The hostilities in Gaza are the latest eruption of the deep and long-running conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. Root causes of this conflict, including the structural violence of occupation, must be addressed. Such violence damages all the people of the region. The present time, with its faltering ceasefires and talks, is a time of both crisis and opportunity.

"From our long-standing Quaker experience of working on this issue in Palestine, Israel and Britain, and from listening to the testimony of Quakers in Ramallah, we are convinced that the UK Government has a real role to play. A starting place would be for the UK to recognise Palestine as a nation state on the same basis as it recognises Israel. We note that 134 states have already recognised the State of Palestine. The UK Government should also play its part in creating a real opportunity for peace by drawing groups such as Hamas into the political process and thus away from violent resistance to the occupation. We have seen around the world how those once labelled as terrorists can come to be recognised for their statesmanship. It is our view that freeing elected Palestinian leaders now held as political prisoners would help Palestine to develop as a flourishing economic, political and civil society.

"The international community remains complicit in the conflict for as long as it fails to make full use of the mechanisms provided by international law, to hold all parties to account for their actions. Under international law, at all times, all parties should distinguish between civilians and combatants, though as Quakers we place equal value on every human life. The Israeli Government's ongoing blockade of Gaza and its apparent collective punishment of

the people must end, as must indiscriminate fire by all sides.

“Amid the present crisis, we are reminded that the people of the West Bank, living under Israeli occupation face restrictions on movement; loss of land and water; demolitions; the continuing building of settlements; detention without trial and violence by settlers and the Israeli military. Such suffering often sows seeds of future violence.

“The anniversary of World War I reminds us how easily militarised societies can slide into armed conflict and become blind to the alternatives to war. At such times, the international community has a responsibility to avoid fuelling the conflict. We join others in asking for a comprehensive arms embargo on Israel, Hamas and armed Palestinian groups. Quakers in Britain ask the UK Government to take a lead on this by halting arms exports to Israel.

“As we, among other Nobel Peace Laureates, have said, ‘The conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelis will only be resolved when Israel’s occupation of the Palestinian territory is ended and the inherent equality, worth, and dignity of all is realised’. Peacebuilding is a long and demanding path to take, but an essential one.

“Quakers in Britain feel called to act alongside others to address the roots of violence. We continue to uphold Quakers in the region and those working nonviolently for peace and human rights within Israel and Palestine. Quakers will continue to challenge anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, as we oppose all forms of prejudice. We long for – and will work for – a time when the deep fear experienced on all sides is replaced by security and a just peace.

Signed

Chris Skidmore

Clerk of the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain

Quakers in Britain send human rights monitors to the West Bank, East Jerusalem, but not Gaza. On behalf of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and other Christian agencies Quakers in Britain runs the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI). Ecumenical accompaniers focus global attention on Israeli and Palestinian peace and human rights groups. EAPPI uses the standards of human rights and international law to work for an end to the occupation and for a just peace with security and dignity for all.

Ends

Notes to editors

134 nations have already recognised the State of Palestine (source: Palestinian Mission UK).

The Nobel Peace Laureates’ statement is here <http://www.quaker.org.uk/news/nobel-peace-laureates-call-real-peace-between-israelis-and-palestinians>

The Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) is a World Council of Churches (WCC) initiative which was established in 2002 in response to a call made by the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem, and Palestinian and Israeli NGOs. Since August 2002, about 1,000 ecumenical accompaniers from more than 20 countries have served in Israel and Palestinian territories. More than 160 of these EAs were from Britain and Ireland.

See www.quaker.org.uk/eappi

Quakers are known formally as the Religious Society of Friends.

Around 23,000 people attend 478 Quaker meetings in Britain. Their commitment to equality, justice, peace, simplicity and truth challenges them to seek positive social and legislative change.

At the Yearly Meeting Gathering, 2,000 Quakers, including 300 young people, have been at the University of Bath campus for a mixture of worship, business, interest groups, and significant lectures, exploring ‘*What it means to be a Quaker today*’. Junior Yearly Meeting, for 14 to 18 year olds, has run alongside YMG.

Media Information

Anne van Staveren

0207 663 1048 07958 009703

annev@quaker.org.uk

www.quaker.org.uk

Camping at the Yearly Meeting Gathering 2014

As the rain cleared, Friends started to arrive on foot, by bike, car and motorhome. We came from all parts of BYM including four friends from Orkney.



We were blessed with a very large field well away from the noise of the main road. The brisk fifteen minute walk from the university campus to the camp field took us past the 'Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' sign, as well as over a cattle grid and past a field of hens, with fresh eggs available from

the Rainbow Wood farm house. The exact time of the walk was much disputed and one friend accompanied by her young child reported that it had taken her one hour and ten minutes as there were so many interesting distractions on the way! What was not disputed was the positioning of the camp marquee because this was determined by the cow pats, or rather the lack of them in just one part of the field!

Our field had 48 tents of all shapes and sizes, as well as 13 camper vans both big and small, and one caravan. We enjoyed a huge 'village green' at the centre of our community, but with just one tap for about one hundred people, as well as five portaloos and no waste or recycling facilities, there were times when many of us felt challenged. Showers were much talked about – there were none, but friends were able to use some showers on the campus, including the 'fantastic 50p showers' at the university sports hall.

We held a daily Meeting for Worship in our camp marquee and agreed to remove one of the side panels so that we could enjoy the view during worship. The sound of sheep, swifts, cattle and children during our worship was much valued. From Monday onwards, we held a daily epilogue which was quite simple – a candle on a table.



On Wednesday, young and old across the camp field came together. A fine evening enabled us to sit outside and enjoy one another's company as the sun went down in an exceptional sunset. During the evening we shared snacks, held a very competitive sack race, flew kites and played a game of rounder's. The young people were keen to play against the adults, and with

some reservations this was agreed – what a mistake! A large cow pat marked the bowling position and, bating first, the young people soon amassed a



near impossible target of 28 rounder's. In the fading light, a rather dubious draw was eventually declared.

Skittles, music, songs and an impromptu drumming workshop occupied those not playing rounder's. A 'rocket stove' was also fired up and became our focal point as the last of the daylight faded. With our rocket stove fire and candles, a circle of seated friends and a multitude of children within our circle, we settled down to a moonlit epilogue – a magical and deeply spiritual moment for all that were there.

Robert Keeble
Carlton Hill Meeting



Leeds family go to Yearly Meeting Gathering

It seems appropriate that I'm summing up my experience at YMG whilst sitting in the Penn bar in Wells. Apparently William Penn addressed a large crowd of people gathered in the market Square from here, before being arrested and marched off to jail (later he was released on the intervention of the Bishop of Bath and Wells).

How do I sum up this Gathering? Well to start with we have been exposed to many, many new faces of Quakerism. When travelling down, Jane and I discussed how we'd approach YMG and what we wanted to get from it. In terms of approach we decided we should really try to be ourselves and not follow type by trying to be what we thought we should be. Secondly, we were determined to gain some clarity as to what the terms "spirit" and "spirituality" mean to us and to others,. Finally, we wanted to understand more about the Quakers as a group and as individuals.

So how did that work out:

Being ourselves – This wasn't as difficult as we thought! There is such a variety of people/ personalities/outlooks at YMG that we generally felt comfortable and accepted.

Spirituality – This is obviously a difficult term to pin down and it became clear to us that it may remain so! However, we do feel that we better understand what is meant by the spirit of a meeting.

Understanding Quakers – Well, how realistic was this! I definitely feel we know a lot more about Quakers and am also aware there is so much we don't. So much thought has gone into virtually everything. I am amazed at the level of knowledge there is around the subjects discussed. I have been particularly impressed by the widespread ability to summarise information, this is within general meetings not just meetings for business.

The absolute highlight of the week was simply meeting people. The more people we talked to, the better our understanding of what and who Quakers are. A word of advice to anyone going to YMG – Always allow double the expected time to get anywhere as you will invariably get caught up in a conversation with people – often people you have never met before. There is a superb array of eccentric characters and plainly nice people. I have to say the more we spoke to people the more we felt we belonged.

I did find some of the business processes more ritualistic than I had expected, this isn't a criticism, I just find it

a bit unexpected (the practice of saying "I hope so" instead of yes is one such example), I also find there are often ways of wording that seem to be overly intellectualised and could be plainer in order to convey a point.

For us, the most confusing part of the week was the Swarthmore lecture. The lecturer suggested that Quakers had lost their way by accepting groups like the non theists and should revert to more traditional Christian beliefs. This was very surprising given that we (as non theists) have always been made very welcome. We wonder what implications this has for us and for our kids' involvement with the Quakers in the future.

I was very impressed with the attitude and care towards the young people at YMG. A huge effort has been made to cater for them and to allow them to flourish. Our kids were so well looked after and I feel we have done something very beneficial and influential to their lives by introducing them to the Quakers. The Junior

There is a superb array of eccentric characters and plainly nice people

Yearly Meeting really showed what could be in store for our kids in the future. The members seem confident and easy going, they even went as far as saying

in their minutes that they saw Quakerism as a tree branching out from an original trunk, in contrast to the Swarthmore lecture. I think it was fantastic that they were given and felt the right to give their version on the way forward. I witnessed two younger members (circa 15 years old) say good bye to each other. They stated they wouldn't see each other for months and gave each other a hug. This has really stuck with me- I would never have been so openly caring and mature at that age.

Overall it is the people and their welcome that has stuck with us most. We have met some really wonderful folk from other meetings, in particular York, Huddersfield and Harrogate- we look forward to seeing them again in the near future.

Would we go to YMG again ? I hope so.

Mark Wells

Roundhay Meeting



Lessons we can learn from Geese

As each goose flaps its wings, it creates an "uplift" for the other birds to follow. By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds 70% greater flying range than if each bird flew alone.

Our Lesson: People who share a common direction and a sense of community get where they are going quicker and easier -- because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of flying alone. It quickly moves back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front of it.

Our Lesson: If we have as much sense as a goose, we stay in formation with those headed where we want to go. We are willing to accept their help and give our help to others.

When a goose tires, it rotates to the back of the formation as another goose flies to the point opposite.

Our Lesson: It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership. As with geese, people are interdependent on each other's skills, capabilities and unique arrangement of gifts, talents or resources.

The geese flying in formation honk to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

Our Lesson: We need to make sure our honking is encouraging. In groups -- where there is encouragement to stand by one's heart or core values and encourage the same in others -- is the sort of honking we seek.

When a goose gets sick, wounded or shot down, two geese drop out of formation and follow it down to help and protect it. They stay with it until it dies or is able to fly again. Then they launch out in formation and try to catch the flock.

Our Lesson: If we had as much sense as geese, we would stand by each other in difficult times as well as when we are strong.

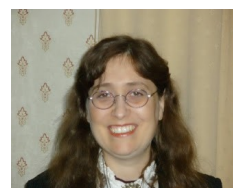
Text used in Tuesday's YMG epilogue, run by JYM

Rose is a rose is a rose.



In last month's issue of the Quiet word Rose Anderson kindly contributed some Haiku poetry she wrote based on the Hyde Park area in Leeds. In return for them I got her name wrong. Not great when you are relatively new and have a new name for every one to learn.

So ignore whatever Shakespeare has to say on the subject, Rose Anderson from Carlton Hill meeting is called Rose and a lovely name it is too.





There's something about a Circle... Yes- it's round! That roundness gives everyone an equal place, an equal chance. There are no corners in which to hide. We are all together- members of the same Circle community to enable the core member to move on to integrate within his wider community.

I have been a volunteer for Circles of Support and Accountability in Yorkshire and Humberside (YHCOSA) for about 3 years and completed my second Circle early this year.

I suppose it was a mixture of having some extra time available, my wanting to make the community a safer place for children and downright nosiness which brought me in. Right at the start I was infected by the enthusiasm of the coordinator and thoroughly enjoyed the training sessions, which gave me plenty to think about too. Being a member of a Circle of Support and Accountability sits for me within the Testimonies to Equality and Peace. It is also a place in which trust and truth are fundamental building blocks. It is a place of taking responsibility for the past and looking forward to the future.

The core member (CM) of the Circle is joined by 3 or 4 volunteers from the community, who can be of all ages and from all walks of life. Each Circle I've been in comprised a good spread of younger and older volunteers with a variety of levels of experience and of course different personalities but because of the unity of purpose we worked well together. I didn't join Circles with any express intention of meeting interesting, friendly people – that was an unexpected bonus! Another bonus was in my own personal self-development.

There was definitely an element of suspense as we were given details of our core member some time before we met him and in both cases it was a huge relief to actually discover the person behind the disclosure. In his first meeting with the Circle, he disclosed his

offence in his own words. This is a big thing, as you will imagine, both to tell- and to hear- but it is the first stepping stone to building the all essential relationship, the first meeting with the person with whom we shall share time over the next 12 months. Note that word, "person". Not a stereotype or a newspaper headline.

The development of the relationship was fascinating – a lot about working on his self-esteem and helping find ways of integrating into the community safely but also being aware of undercurrents of secrecy. At those times reflecting back to the coordinator and working with the other professionals was even more essential.

YHCOSA is an extremely well organised charity and I always felt safe in high the level of support for the volunteers – it isn't everyone's choice of activity but it certainly makes a difference to society and those directly involved. Support for the volunteers is second to none. There is regular supervision, both as a group and individually, and there is communication with probation and the police if there are any concerns. Training is thorough and offers ongoing opportunities.

I am starting a new Circle tomorrow. It will be different. It will teach its own lessons. It will be my third Circle. Good – time to go round again!

If you are interested in volunteering for Circles or would like to find out more, please contact Amii Hough on 01904630911 or amii.hough@yhcosa.org.uk

**A Doncaster Friend contribution
for the Quiet Word**



Diary of a literary Nobody

The Russell Croft Blog

Hugh Shimmin's Liverpool.

On Saturday 20th September the Leeds Area Meeting Outing will be to Liverpool "A flavour of maritime Liverpool". 'Coincidentally' Neil Ashcroft who is also helping to organise it has written a blog about Liverpool .

This article is from a series of blogs by Neil Ashcroft's alter ego, the writer Russell Croft .

<http://www.russellcroft.net/blog>

The action in my latest novel has moved to Liverpool and features an expedition to some of the lowest quarters of the city's North End in 1864. My research for this has sent me back to reading the little-known journalism of Hugh Shimmin.

Writing in the 1850s and 1860s, often in his own publication the *Porcupine*, Shimmin invokes a desperate Liverpoolian landscape of squalid and overcrowded living, causal labour, acute poverty, hopeless drink dependency, savage bare-knuckle and dog-fights, and riotous disorder. His sketches are peopled by feckless parents, for whom the consolations of drink take priority over the care of their children, acquisitive publicans, compulsive gamblers, canting clergymen, and inert and indifferent public authorities. Several of his pieces describe scenes of domestic life on a Saturday night, where the husband has his meagre wage in his pocket and he and his wife (or perhaps himself alone) go forth from their hovel to squander their family's subsistence on getting incapably drunk. In one account Shimmin tells of how often babies were smothered at night as a result of being overlain in bed by their drunken parents, and of how often such tragedies were knowingly recorded by corners as "accidental". The *Porcupine* was well-named, as Shimmin spared no one in his zeal to prick the pomposity of those persons in authority

he identified as being responsible for the persistence of intolerable conditions in the city.

Such campaigning was highly praiseworthy and Shimmin is regarded by historians as having exerted a beneficial influence, particularly in his agitations for public health reform. There is however a prudish, and perhaps prurient, side to his jottings. Shimmin emerges as a harsh moral judge of other peoples' behaviour, and he is as hard on the vices of the underclass he chronicles as he is on the negligence of the city fathers. Sometimes he can simply come across as a sanctimonious kill-joy, looking down on the innocent pleasures of others, as he does when he writes about a day at the Aintree races. And one wonders, as one does with that much more famous social recorder of his times, Henry Mayhew, about his role as an observer. He seems to take an uncommon interest in low places and pastimes. He clearly sits through whole sessions at, say, a "free-and-easy" entertainment in a pub, or a prize fight in its upstairs room without "making his excuses" in classic *News of the World* fashion. His prosperous attire would certainly have marked him out for attention, but he never tells us anything about his own participation in such events. I cannot help suspecting that he was, at least to some degree, enjoying himself.

Most of the appalling slums in the North End that Shimmin decried were gone before the Second

World War, and good riddance to them. I am not alone, however, in charging the city fathers of the post-war period with excessive zealotry in their urban cleansing. In the interests of social engineering, and the avaricious petroleum carriage, very little of the pre-war North End remains standing. From Vauxhall Road, all the way across Scotland Road and Great Homer Street (which are in effect urban motorways now), and up to Everton Brow, there is almost nothing to indicate that this was once one of the most populous and characterful urban areas in the country, and one that was known all around the world as a result of its proximity to the docks. One must guard against romanticising terraced housing, but surely a good proportion of the stock built in the late

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was worth saving? My own grandmother spent her childhood in a now long-demolished terraced house off West Derby Road in the 1890s and 1900s. I cannot help contrasting the warm community life of those times, which she sometimes talked to me about, with the desolate 1960s council estate on the city's outskirts in which she ended her days, harried to her demise by burglars grubbing for drug money. What would Hugh Shimmin have made of that?

Neil Ashcroft
Adel Meeting



Leeds Area Meeting Outing Saturday 20th September

'A Flavour of Maritime Liverpool'



It falls to Adel to organise this year's area outing, and the chosen destination is Liverpool. Meeting us at Adel at 9:00 am, and then Carlton Hill at about 09:30 am, the coach will drive us to Liverpool where we will go to the Quaker Meeting. They have a vegetarian café there and we hope to be given a modest welcome by local Friends over lunch.

After lunch we plan to move to the Pier Head, where the splendour of the city's 'three graces' can be appreciated. The Museum of Liverpool is just next door. Within easy striking distance of the Pier Head is the Albert Dock, with its preserved nineteenth century warehouses. These house the Liverpool Maritime Museum, the International Slavery Museum, and the Tate Liverpool. All these museums are free. The organisers also hold out the enticement of a trip by ferry 'over the water' to Birkenhead and back, £8 return (adults) and £4.50 (children). We plan to set off back to Leeds at 5pm and drop-off at Carlton Hill and Adel on arrival (about 7-7:30pm).

Who could resist such an enlivening and thought-provoking programme? We would hope to cover the cost of the coach by collecting donations of £10 or £15 from each participant, and we are aiming to fill 30 places. If you wish to claim one or more places then please e-mail Neil Ashcroft - neil@ashcroftn.fsnet.co.uk

(please note that the address given for him in the red booklet is wrong) with the relevant details, or write your name on the sign-up sheet on the noticeboard at Adel. Alternatively you could telephone Neil (0113 2677740)

Black Star: Britain's Asian Youth Movements**Anandi Ramamurthy**

Book Review by Pascal Ansell (pascalansell@gmail.com)



'70s Britain evokes a defiant identification with a new and radical Britishness. Facing the brunt of fascist abuse and police indifference, these second-generation South Asians, unlike their parents, knew that they wished to stay in Britain and grew up in an environment both challenging and hopeful.

Another popular chant went: 'Labour, Tory, both the same: both play the

racist game', which expressed dissatisfaction and aversion to mainstream politics. Immigration laws had become even tighter with the 1971 Immigration Act, and the trial of the Bradford 12 (members of the United Black Youth League who were prosecuted for making petrol bombs for the purpose of self-defence against skinhead gangs) a decade on spread awareness of the problem of fascist and police violence in Britain.

As for the movements themselves, an interesting aspect of the Bradford AYM – and one of many instances of their shrewd organisational skills – is that party membership was forbidden. This rule alone prevented derailment by outside debates and 'factional disputes'.

The British Left failed to defend Asian youth, and the blinkered 'Rock Against Racism' movement highlighted that, according to one AYM activist: 'we can't dance away racism'. Ramamurthy provides details of the various failings and tokenist inclinations of the British left, and the AYM's shared conviction that they had to fight their corner with their own means, avoiding tokenism and co-option by Trotskyists including the Socialist Workers' Party.

Despite the youth movements defining themselves as 'Asian', a black political identity was cultivated, distinguishing them from political predecessors, and enabling 'a collective identity and solidarity with Africans and African Caribbeans in the struggle against racism.... It was an identity that was inclusive rather than exclusive'. Such a moniker represented their determination 'to build solidarity between Africans, Caribbeans and Asians.'

For activists of any involvement, it is a moral boost to read such a positive series of collective struggles, especially those conducted with such ingenuity and common

sense as in the case of the Bradford AYM.

Black Star is also a useful reminder of a murky topic and potential peril: state funding. Thus Ramamurthy explains how (specifically in the Bradford and Salford AYM) state patronage corrupted and diluted movements of radical worth, eroding autonomy, strength and unity. One manifestation of this creeping problem was that, when particular individuals were being paid, others perceived no need to get involved. Hegemony was maintained, and state influence effectively removed the teeth of the AYM.

By its very nature a state-funded campaign group finds it difficult to effectively target state institutions, namely institutional violence, police racism and vigorously unfair immigration laws. '[C]ampaigning was effectively uprooted from the heart of their work' in favour of more politically-palatable activities like youth centres and sports clubs and less potent, milder campaigns like education, equal opportunities, housing reform, all of which were 'worthy but not revolutionary' according to the Institute of Race Relations' Ambalavaner Sivanandan.

Ramamurthy is unequivocal: 'The pursuit of state funds was to lead to the disintegration of the [Bradford AYM] movement.'

Finally, while Ramamurthy's academic rigour is laudable - and the interviews add something of an emotional kick - it should be noted that a more literary slant could have transformed this book from a worthy and sobering textbook into a moving account of a hard struggle, fought well.

For example, in one moving incident, a young set of activists heading to a demo on a bus, learn traditional folk songs from an elderly Pakistani man. There must be a wealth of similar day-to-day accounts worthy of space.

Pluto Press, 2013; 204pp; £19.99

'This review originally appeared in Peace News: www.peacenews.info

Pascal Ansell
Carlton Hill Meeting
pascalansell@gmail.com





Heritage Open Day 2014

Farfield Friends' Meeting House



Saturday 13th September - 1 pm to 4 pm

Local volunteers will be present to explain the building and its history. There is no charge. Built in 1689 and one of the earliest Quaker Meeting Houses, Farfield has been carefully restored by the Historic Chapels Trust, with the support of English Heritage. It lies beside the B6160 between Addingham and Bolton Abbey. The Dales Way footpath passes through its grounds. Limited parking adjacent.

For further information please phone 01756 710587



News updates from Friends House:
Every month, staff at Friends House, London, inform Area and Local Meeting Clerks about news and events that may be of interest to local Quakers

Facilitation and Leadership *Friday 10 – Sunday 12 October 2014, Woodbrooke, Birmingham* Facilitation and Leadership is an event for 15- to 21-year-olds. The weekend will explore ways to work as a facilitator and lead groups. It will cover understanding groups and facilitation skills, equal opportunities and being a Quaker facilitator.

www.quaker.org.uk/facilitation-and-leadership

Gathering for young adult Friends 17–19 October 2014, Nottingham. Young Friends General Meeting is the national organisation for young adult Quakers in Britain who get together for social and spiritual gatherings. We will spend time together as a community, explore our faith and ways of living out the Quaker testimonies. Visit

<http://yfgm.quaker.org.uk>

Equipping for Ministry *Starting January 2015 at Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre* Applications are open now for January entry to this two-year programme. Structured around time spent at Woodbrooke and personal study time at home, the programme nurtures our Quaker priesthood of all believers, providing an in-depth grounding in the key aspects of life as a member of the Quaker faith community. For further information: www.woodbrooke.org.uk/efm

Celebrating Quaker work DVD The short film Celebrating Quaker work takes a look at the work of Quakers in Britain through the personal reflections of Friends from Northumbria (subtitled version available at www.quaker.org.uk/ym).

Safeguarding updates A new September 2014 edition of “Meeting Safety” has been prepared.

www.quaker.org.uk/meetingsafety

Meeting for Sufferings consultation: . The way ahead – consultation on the framework for 2015–2020

The working group invite your discernment of what Quakers in Britain are led to do together now and during the next few years, to work together more on shared concerns and to speak together clearly to the world. More details and guidance are in the attached consultation invitation and online at www.quaker.org.uk/way-ahead

Peace Education Schools Outreach Day 11 November 2014, Manchester Friends Meeting House Quaker Peace & Social Witness, in collaboration with Pax Christi, are facilitating another Peace Education Schools Outreach Day. The workshop, supported by Northern Friends Peace Board, is aimed at people involved with work with children and young people, or those with plans to do some outreach to local schools. Participants will be encouraged to share peace education project experiences or plans, and engage with new peace education resources. There is no charge to attend the event but participants must book their place in advance – spaces are limited. To book your place, please contact Ellis Brooks, 020 7663 1009, ellisb@quaker.org.uk

Disinvesting from Fossil Fuels – a new briefing for Friends

Quakers in Britain have agreed that their centrally-held funds should not be invested in fossil fuel extraction companies, “our existing investments in these should be sold”. Friends have discerned that investment in these companies is incompatible with a commitment made by Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) to become a low-carbon, sustainable community. This decision has prompted many Friends and Quaker meetings to consider whether they too could disinvest, both as individual Quakers and as meetings. QPSW has produced a short briefing giving the context and details of the BYM decision, explaining the disinvestment process and giving ideas for action.

www.quaker.org.uk/disinvest-fossil-fuels

QPSW Sustainability and New Economy Grants

QPSW Sustainability and New Economy Grants are now available for new or existing Quaker-led projects focused on sustainability issues or which work towards building a new economy. We are looking to fund projects that create change in and of themselves and which demonstrate that an alternative way of doing things is possible. Grants of between £100 and £2,000 will be distributed to successful applicants in early 2015. The deadline for applications is 1 December 2014. visit www.quaker.org.uk/sustainability-grants

New World War I peace education materials available

QPSW has produced two new resources for peace education: Conscience (primary school-focused) and Conviction (secondary school-focused). They encourage reflection on World War I and provide children with opportunities to develop their own moral compass. Suitable for use in children's meeting, or as an outreach opportunity with local schools. The centenary of World War I and UN international Day of Peace (21 September) provide opportunities for schools to engage with peace education. Copies are £5 each and may be ordered from the Quaker Centre, visit www.quaker.org.uk/shop or call 020 7663 1030.

Food Banks are not enough – practical steps to challenge inequality

Saturday 29 November, Birmingham Central England Area Meeting invites Friends to take part in a day conference on ine-

quality and austerity on Saturday 29 November in Birmingham. The day will focus on practical ideas to help us overcome our feelings of frustration in the current situation. It will not include a lot of analysis or background information as we feel that there is already a high level of knowledge of the issues. Barbara

Forbes, forbesbarbarae@yahoo.co.uk

Day of Action on Climate Change 21 September, 2014

Join people around the world to call for strong global action on climate change and to challenge the power of the fossil fuel industry. The day of action has been called because on 23 September global leaders will be meeting in New York for the Climate Summit organised by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. On the 21st, which is also International Day of Peace, Quakers will stand alongside others taking action on climate change, because without stopping climate change we can't have peace. You can join the action by joining other Quakers on the People's Climate March in London, going to regional events supported by 350.org or doing something at your meeting. See www.quaker.org.uk/idp for more ideas for International Day of Peace.

Quaker Activist Gathering Saturday, 15 November at Friends House

QPSW is offering a one-day opportunity for Quaker activists to share experiences, learn new skills and be inspired to continue living out our Quaker faith in the world. <http://www.quaker.org.uk/activist-event>

Political party conferences

Are any local Friends members of political parties? Quakers in Britain will be at the Green, Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat party conferences. We would like to hear from Friends who plan to attend. We're also holding a fringe event at the Labour Party Conference. Called “a moral 21st century nation: shared visions”, it asks four people to speak about their wider vision for the UK at home and on the world stage. If you live near Manchester, or will be at the Labour Party Conference, then please come along. All are welcome.

www.quaker.org.uk/public-issues

Epistle from Britain Yearly Meeting held at University of Bath 2-9 August 2014

To all Friends everywhere,

We send our loving greetings from Yearly Meeting Gathering. Over 2,000 of us have come together as a community of all ages, “to see one another’s faces and open our hearts one to another”.

Our theme of ‘Commitment and Belonging’ was the culmination of a three-year process of exploring what it means to be a Quaker today. It led us to look inwards at the meaning of membership and outwards to our service in the world.

Coming into membership of the Religious Society of Friends is not simply arrival at a comfortable place; it is also a point of departure: a commitment to the Quaker community and to a life-long process of learning, together with others. What matters most in this community is the quality of our relationships.

When we are faithful to our discipline and trust in the Spirit, we may be led in unexpected ways. In his Swarthmore Lecture Ben Pink Dandelion urged us to be open to the possibility of transformation – to “seeing and feeling the world in a new way.” He reminded us that our core insights, of encounter with the divine, discernment, worship and testimony, are all inherently collective. We should rekindle a strong sense of our Quaker identity, our clarity about who we are, and we should reclaim the spiritual. Our ‘love in action’ is not an alternative to the spiritual life; we need to be both Martha and Mary.

Through the week we followed ‘Journeys’, of faith, witness, governance, and much more. In particular we have expressed our outrage at the deep hurts inflicted by economic injustice, and our passionate concern that we should uphold the most vulnerable and those supporting them. What would our world look like if we truly lived out our testimonies?

An inspiring report and film from our Trustees celebrated our centrally managed work. We have welcomed the outcome of the work on same-sex marriage begun at YMG in 2009. Our divestment from the fossil fuel industry arose from the commitment to sustainability made at Canterbury in 2011. While many share our concerns about the future of our planet, and all its inhabitants, there are things that we, as Quakers, are called to do. The Canterbury Commitment is about all our testimonies, and we can do most as a community working together. We are enjoined to pray, talk, think, share and act. Whatever you are called to do, be faithful to your calling. God has no hands but ours.

In an all-age, reflective commemoration of the outbreak of World War1, we reclaimed the white feather as a symbol of peace and created with our feathers a dove of peace. In our epilogue vigil the lights around the circle were extinguished in mourning, and re-lit in hope. But one hundred years after the ‘war to end all wars’ we are anguished at continuing wars, particularly in Israel/Palestine. We support the work being done on our behalf by Quaker Peace & Social Witness and the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel and have endorsed the public statement from Quaker Peace & Social Witness to be issued shortly.

Our community has included almost 300 children and young people. Their joyful sense of belonging here has been rooted in their exploration of the Yearly Meeting themes, through playing, sharing, working and worshipping, as part of the whole Gathering. The Young People have thought about commitment and belonging and the diversity of Quakers in the world. Junior Yearly Meeting affirms the spiritual basis of ‘being Quaker’ but for them ‘community’ may be more important than ‘membership’. We are reminded that children and young people are an equal part of our Quaker community and should be treated as such. Further thought will be given to how we support children and families in our Meetings.

In the face of our distress at the darkening of the world, we are renewed in the hope and love that is also part of our faith, and this Gathering has been an occasion of joy. We have seen on film the faces of local Friends, telling us their stories of how they live out their ministry, and Friends from around the world telling us of their beliefs. In all-age worship we have looked into our neighbours’ faces and seen love. This week has given us time and space for worship, ministry, decision, creativity, art expression and chance encounter - ‘doing different things together’. We leave to the university a Legacy Garden, created during the week as a tangible expression of our hope for future generations.

The more we listen carefully to one another the closer we come to an intimate connection with the greater whole. We are challenged to become beacons for change in the world and to have the courage to ‘hope beyond imagination’.

Signed in and on behalf of Britain Yearly Meeting

Chris Skidmore

Clerk