



Epping
Local Meeting

Epping Meeting Newsletter April 2013

Editorial by Rebecca Fricker

Advices and queries 18

How can we make the meeting a community in which each person is accepted and nurtured, and strangers are welcome?

Seek to know one another in the things which are eternal, bear the burden of each other's failings and pray for one another.

As we enter with tender sympathy into the joys and sorrows of each other's lives, ready to give help and to receive it, our meeting can be a channel for God's love and forgiveness.

I think this Advice and query sums up the essence of Epping Meeting for me this year. The kindness shown following the death of my grandparents in thoughts, emails and ministry was truly appreciated. As was the ability to share difficulties I was experiencing and to receive practical and emotional support.

It was wonderful to hear that these qualities have also extended to a newcomer to our meeting who, in our April Study Session, felt moved to share how welcoming and warm we had been, and how comfortable they felt here.

Contributions this month are as wonderfully varied as ever and I think they show what a questioning, spiritual, creative and practical community we are.



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How do you recognise a Quaker? by Judith Roads

No, it's not a joke question. But what defines someone as a Quaker apart from belief, and I'm not talking about being in membership or not. Is it shared values - if so what values? Is it belonging to a Quaker Meeting? Is it attending a Quaker meeting from time to time?

OK, so you're the only Quaker for hundreds of miles around. You know you're a Quaker because you are on a list somewhere else where there is a list of Quakers and the holders of that list therefore constitute a Quaker community. Easy. What about if you're the first Quaker ever in your country, or if you've moved to a country where there are no Quakers? Or the very last Quaker in that country. You can try and start a local worship group. Great. What about if you can't get anyone to come, or it's kind of illegal to be doing that? At what point, if you never go to a Quaker meeting for worship are you not a Quaker? Can you spend your whole life as a Quaker if you never have experience of a meeting for worship?

OK, you're telling me that you can be a Quaker even if you never attend a Quaker meeting for worship, maybe don't even want to attend a meeting for worship and don't know anyone in a Quaker community (even online). So how do you know that you are one?

Last few questions coming up – what if you are a Friend serving on a committee that is tasked with responding to requests from people wishing to be accepted into international membership and you never get to meet them except by email? Would you have everyone in that asks, and if so, why have a committee to discern whether someone is a Quaker or not? Some people find these questions easy to answer but I don't - and didn't when I served on that same committee. As Friends in Britain Yearly Meeting, we can forget that our pattern of Quaker meetings across our whole country isn't the only one.



Singing for Joy at Woodbrooke (April 2013) by Angela Kenny

As a result of not adding to my possessions for a year, my husband kindly bought me a weekend singing course at Woodbrooke for Christmas. I love to sing and we both belong to a local Music Hall group which entertains at fund raising events, so singing is very much a part of our lives. This was my first time at Woodbrooke so with SAT NAV plugged in and MAP handy I set forth. The journey took nearly 4 hours through many delays, speed restrictions and a cautious drive right through the centre of Birmingham (never again Mrs SAT NAV). I was delighted to arrive just as the evening meal was served, tired, hungry and a little nervous.

What a welcoming place Woodbrooke is. I was immediately introduced to Rosemarie and Robert who became my companions throughout the entire weekend and whom I hope will now become lifelong friends too. The new garden room is lovely and all the meals were home cooked, delicious and nutritious. There were 17 of us on the Singing for Joy course which was led by Jane Read who is an exponent of the natural voice concept of singing where no instruments, except voices, are involved. All the songs were learnt by listening and repeating and Jane has an amazing memory for sound and note as we were often singing in 2/3/4 part harmony, descant and in the round. Most of us could not read music but this didn't matter at all. All of us just sing for enjoyment so at times Jane really had her work cut out!

We worked hard starting on the Friday evening and going right through to Sunday lunchtime with only a 2 hour free time on Saturday afternoon. I took this opportunity to walk into Bourneville and look at the small town created by George Cadbury. A beautiful Tudor house called Selly Manor was open and had been taken piece by piece from its original site 4 miles away and rebuilt by George Cadbury for his town. I looked around it and it is well worth a visit. As I wandered around, the wonderful bell system in the tower of the Junior school was being played (I am told like a huge keyboard) and this gave quite a surreal atmosphere, particularly as the tune was 'Down Town' made famous by Petula Clark.

Back at Woodbrooke, singing again and now being asked if anyone had a party piece to share. This was great fun and as a group we really got on well and were now without too many musical inhibitions. I sang a Music Hall song which inspired another person to sing 'My baby has gone down the plughole'. All the songs we learnt were of a spiritual nature, quite short and from all round the world in many languages too. We were asked to sing at the Saturday evening meeting for worship 'Epilogue' and sang 'Da pacem Domine, In diebus nostris' (Give peace O Lord in our days). It was lovely for me to hear music in this setting, especially as the evening before a song had been played also. I found the silence deeper and more profound after the music.

I had a wonderful weekend and would not hesitate to go to Woodbrooke again. My journey home was re-routed so that I did not pass through Birmingham and still managed to arrive home refreshed. Incidentally, I can only remember one of the tunes and that was an Xhosa phrase which has stuck in my head like an ear worm!

Climate Impact Calculator for Individuals
(Study Group: Sunday 10th March)
by Christine Downes-Grainger

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This document was created by living witness and Quaker Peace and Social Witness in November 2011. Local Meetings were asked to fill in the Climate Impact Calculator for Quaker Meetings following Yearly Meeting Gathering 2011 at Canterbury at which Quakers in Britain made a corporate commitment to become a low-carbon, sustainable community.

Epping Local Meeting has followed this with a study session on 10th March 2013. We looked through the questions on the Individual Calculator and discussed the importance of using it to raise awareness of these issues.

So it's over to us!

- Please read the document online.
- Please gradually make the calculations about your own or family's life and fill it in.
- Please print a copy if you are in touch with someone who needs a paper version.
- Please share your successes and difficulties filling it in with others in our Meeting.
- Please share other issues that it prompts you to think about.
- Please discuss the questions and matters raised with people outside the Meeting.

Some sample questions from the form:

How many appliances do you have and how carefully do you use them?

What % of your meals do you eat away from home?

Some statistics from the form:

UK 2050 target	3.0 tonnes CO ₂ per person per year
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Current UK average	13.7 tonnes
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Some other issues:

Jeffrey Blay raised the question of the use of disposable and rechargeable batteries – the latter come in different grades and life expectancies. This can have a significant impact on what is sent to landfill.

And finally, please come to the September Study Session (probably the second Sunday of the month) with your completed statistics and an increased awareness of how we can reduce our impact on our planet's climate and environment.



www.quaker.org.uk/climate-impact-calculators

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Preparing for Britain Yearly Meeting (Study Group: Sunday 14th April) by Rebecca Fricker

7 Friends contributed to this study session, held to prepare for BYM 2013, where we reflected on the following three queries with each of us sharing our responses with the group.

How have you discerned the right way forward in your own life?

Many in the group shared personal experiences from situations which had occurred in their work or home life which were a privilege to hear.

We heard of head versus heart decisions; a sense of inner conviction and the need to trust your instincts; the use of prayer and other people as sounding boards; and the use of trained counsellors to help you make sense of decisions you have made.

What experiences have you had of Quaker meetings being guided by the Spirit when making decisions?

Again, people were happy to share very personal observations.

We heard of one Friend's experience of having an idea she was passionate about being rejected, it was a steep learning process for her but in retrospect she thinks it was the right decision for the Meeting she attended at the time.

Another Friend told us what an amazing experience it had been to witness the same sex marriage Minute being agreed at Yearly Meeting in York in 2009.

A Friend with very practical knowledge of meeting for worship for business told of how horrid it felt when decision making was not led by the Spirit and how scary it is when the Spirit leads us into a place where we were not expecting to go – especially if you are the Clerk!! You have a real sense of “how did we do that” which “feels magic”.

What do you value about the ways in which Friends work together?

- “Equality – you are never told to do anything in Area Meeting”
- “Not making a decision is a decision”
- “It does not always work but when it works, it works well”
- “Importance of silence”
- “Learning something”
- “Freedom”
- “Warm and welcoming”
- “No rules but not anarchy”
- “Not necessarily having the same values but the same way of doing things”
- “Pointing in the same direction despite all our differences”
- “Can get to a deep place quickly with Quakers”
- “Comfort with silence in a group of Quakers”
- “Importance of space and relationships between people”

Dates for the diary (April - June)

Shared lunch (last Sunday of the month):

- Sunday 28th April
- Sunday 26th May
(check in case BYM prevents this from taking place)
- Sunday 30th June

Local Business Meeting:

- Sunday 5th May

Study sessions (Second Sunday of the month):
(To be arranged at the next Local Business Meeting)

Area Meeting:

- Epping: Saturday 18th May 2pm

Other

- Britain Yearly Meeting
Friday 24th May – Monday 27th May
- Garden Party
Sunday 23rd June 2-5pm
- Open Meeting House and Garden as part of the Epping Festival
Saturday 29th June

Finally, do get in touch if there are any errors, or you have any contributions or suggestions!

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