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DISCOVER THE CONTEMPORARY QUAKER WAY

Christmas  
2010



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**Cover image:** Red candle and icicles. Photo: Val Corbett. See her website: [www.valcorbettphotography.com/](http://www.valcorbettphotography.com/)

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## Thoughts at Christmas

*Jesus loves me this I know,  
For the Bible tells me so.*

Words and images taught at Sunday school still linger in the memory. This is especially true at Christmas. In my childhood it was a time of great certainties and solidities. We were told what to believe and we believed it. Some of those beliefs were part of a defining narrative of that childhood, remembered with great tenderness: the nativity play and my image of the baby Jesus, a plastic doll wrapped in a tea towel.

The world moves on. We grow older. We challenge and question and many of those certainties crumble. We learn the difference between myth and reality and discover that there are many different kinds of truth and that Christmas is a time of year when it is sometimes hard to discern them; when the seductive and powerful force of materialism pushes us along on its manic wave. The sacred and the secular become confused in many minds.

There are two versions of the Christmas story in the Bible, in Matthew and Luke. They differ slightly. We know little of the real facts: a baby was born to very humble parents in or near Bethlehem. That is about it. Significance and meaning, however, are different from factual truth. We gradually understand the significance and meaning of that birth and life. A man was born in humble circumstances and was persecuted, reviled, despised, beaten, tortured and killed: and the message of this man was charity and forgiveness and love to all, even his enemies.

Quakers do not regard Christmas Day as sacred or special. Every day is sacred; but Friends choose to live in society and 'mend it' rather than live outside it and pray for it, as some monks do, and do not stand apart from its annual festivals. The Christmas season is still a time of celebration: of family, friends and good fellowship.

Today, many of the certainties of my childhood have gone. The trappings and traditions of Christmas continue, without Morcambe and Wise, but very much as before.

Whatever the facts, the meaning endures. Christmas is a time to remember the message of Christ: to love our enemies, to be kind and courteous, compassionate and caring, to be thoughtful of others and tender in our ways with them. In a world of much darkness, it is a message of light and love. Every candle should remind us.

Christmas Day may not be a special day for Quakers; but the annual celebration of the birth of Christ can prompt us to ask a question: What would Christ make of it?

What would he make of the bankers? What would he make of climate change and our response to it? What would he make of the over-crowding in prisons? What would he make of the Palestinian situation? What would he make of the government cuts and their effect on the poor and most vulnerable?

At *the Friend*, as the year ends, the staff wish to express our deep gratitude for the support given to the magazine by our subscribers and our contributors. The magazine could not exist without you. Thank you. We would also like to wish you all a very peaceful and restful Christmas season.

In 2011 *the Friend* will reflect the diverse life and work of Friends, as Quakers continue to be 'patterns and examples' and, when confronted with injustice, poverty and conflict, to respond to them in creative and personal ways. In doing so they are answering the question: What would Christ make of it?

**Ian Kirk-Smith,  
Editor**

# Reflections

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Photo: Photos.com

## Finding light in dark places

*'... when the snow lay round about, deep and crisp and even.'*

This Christmas the words of the carol have taken me not to the Bohemia of Good King Wenceslaus but to the small Polish town of Oswiecim. My year began there, in bitter winter weather, confronting the even more bitter reality of Auschwitz-Birkenau. I'd gone, reluctantly, to make a radio programme. There were times we could find nothing to say: sometimes words came unbidden. Unforgettably, as dusk fell on the snow-covered emptiness of the death-camp, I listened to my friend, Ed Kessler, praying the Kaddish.

What I recall most clearly was the overwhelming sense of *absence*. Here was a place marked by losses so unimaginable in scale and violence that it was for me a black hole of the spirit. The challenge at this remove is to find the spirit of Christmas in an emotional landscape that, in the words of the poet Douglas Dunn, is forever 'robbed of simplicity and innocence.' Seen through the lens of those few days in January I'm freshly aware of how the Christmas narrative is played out in the dark: a star appears, journeys are made, a king plots murder, and a child is born in a barn. For St John it is a cosmic drama of light and dark.

We can find all too many reflections of the dark context of the Christmas story in the brokenness of our world, the impact of conflict, of homelessness, violence and poverty. Yet I am filled, too, with the sense of how the story is a celebration of *presence*: ox and ass in the stable, the shepherds and magi drawn to the light, and at the centre of it the vulnerable presence of the new born child. As St John writes, 'the word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth'. Whether the story is heard as myth or narrative the truth it points to is of the transforming power of presence. Quakers know this by experience. Our waiting in silent worship offers no hiding place. We stand paradoxically utterly alone in the company of friends. Yet, the emptiness we experience in the silence is not one of desolation but is rather a space that houses potential and newness. It is, if you will allow, womb rather than tomb. It is there, as searchers together, that we find the presence of the Light and perhaps the courage, imagination and sheer doggedness to be bearers of 'grace and truth' in places of loss and emptiness.

**Kevin Franz**



Photo: Val Corbett

# The pause

Can I get to the moment of peace this Christmas, and make it last longer? The pause – the time, late in the afternoon of 24 December, when everything slows down, nothing more can be posted or bought, the front doors are shut, and the ‘busyness’ reaches its purpose – and I sit down and put aside the fretting. Will he like the present? Did the last-minute card reach that friend we had forgotten? Did I make enough mince pies? Have I got enough library books to keep me going? Too late now for anything but hope and trust – in some cases well-founded, in others more fragile!

I build to this moment throughout December. The house must be clean enough not to be shown up by the lights or disgraced by the decorations; the presents must be bought and wrapped in time; every card received must be stuck up somewhere: all so I can lay all of this aside, put my feet up and look quietly at the reason for it all.

But the moment comes – whether I am ready or not! The world doesn’t wait on my perfectionism, the baby arrives and has to make do with a manger, the door of my quiet stable is thrown open to freezing winds, the little domestic cosiness I have contrived is crowded

with unexpected visitors and awkward presents.

And on top of all this – because of that baby – I’m now expected to work for world peace, to recycle all that wrapping paper, to reconcile power-centred kings of industry and banking with shepherds expecting cuts to their minimal incomes, to stitch together the ripped fabric of the world’s communities, and to show searchers the still stable centre...

OK, baby, you win. (They always do, anyway.) I’ll do my bit. At least you are asleep now for a little while, and we have this pause, the moment of rest I’d hoped for, to gather strength and energy for next year and next year’s work.

The moments of peace come when they come – God, help me make the most of them. The baby is wrapped up warmly in love, more important than manger or cradle – Jesus, help me understand what’s essential. Other people do the washing up – Spirit, help me share out the work I hang on to. Still stable centre, thank you for the gifts – and thank you most of all for overflowing hope, trust and love.

Oh, and the music is great!

**Beth Allen**

# Nativity

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## Christmas: myths and truths

*Ernest Hall recalls the poem 'Keeping Christmas' by Eleanor Farjeon and a question it poses:*

*How will you your Christmas keep:  
feasting, fasting, or asleep?*

Early Quakers would have answered, '*We don't keep it at all, nor do we keep any other Christian festival*'. This was not because they doubted the central tenets of the Christian faith but because they claimed to celebrate them in their hearts every day of the year.

Quakers today who keep that testimony about ignoring '*times and seasons*' are more likely to do so because they believe that the Gospel accounts of the miraculous birth in Bethlehem, the shepherds' angelic vision, and the visit of the Magi, are all a myth; similar to the story of Adam and Eve or the Greek myth of Pandora and her box.

Nowadays Christmas is just an excuse for a spending spree, for overeating and boozing! Best to forget the whole silly business and get on with daily life.

Like early Quakers, I *do* believe that Jesus Christ was both human and divine. Unlike them, I think it right to celebrate his birthday. Do Friends who pay no heed to '*times and seasons*' ignore their own children's birthdays or their own wedding anniversaries? If they do, they must have unusually tolerant and understanding families.

I believe that even if the whole thing were '*just a myth*', it would be no less important because of the insight it gives us into the deepest convictions of the early Christian Church. The Christmas story proclaims that the mother of the expected Messiah was Mary, a village girl betrothed to a carpenter. Her son was to be born under circumstances that would bring into doubt his paternity and could even have resulted in her facing an accusation of adultery. His childhood

would be far from Jerusalem and the Temple, the centre of Jewish faith and culture. When told of Jesus, Nathaniel's first reaction was an incredulous: '*Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?*'

After learning that she was to be the mother of the Messiah, Mary composed a triumphal revolutionary anthem making *The Red Flag* appear pale pink in comparison!

*He hath shewed strength with his arm: he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath exalted the humble and meek.  
He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he hath sent empty away.*

Miraculously, the *Magnificat* has survived generation after generation of rule by '*the proud, the mighty and the rich*' to give hope to the poor and to inspire such martyred Christian leaders as father John Ball of Colchester in the fourteenth century and archbishop Romero of El Salvador in the twentieth.

The birth took place in Bethlehem. There was '*no room at the inn*' so, temporarily homeless, the expectant mother and her husband found shelter in a stable where their child was born, a cattle trough serving as a cradle. Strange circumstances, indeed, to have been invented by those trying to deceive the world into believing that the child was Israel's long-awaited Saviour. Equally inauspicious events followed.

The first to be informed of the newborn Messiah were neither the scholars and priests of Israel, nor the land's temporal rulers. Shepherds, tending their flocks



Children performing a nativity play in the Polish village of Mojtinny during Christmas 1947 and 1948.

Photograph from the Friends Relief Service/  
Friends Service Council Archive.  
Courtesy Friends House Library.

on the hillside near Bethlehem first heard the good news. Well down the social scale, they would have been even lower in the estimate of the arbiters of spiritual life. Shepherds couldn't obey the law of Moses to the letter. Shepherding is a 24/7 job! Nature does not heed the sabbath. Yet, they were chosen by God to welcome the baby who was to change the whole world.

The first to bring the baby gifts that were symbolic of his kingship, his divine nature, and his cruel and untimely death, were not even children of Israel. They were magi, foreign idolaters such as had been roundly condemned throughout the Scriptures. This surely indicated that Jesus was God's gift to *all* mankind.

Within weeks, Mary and Joseph, with the baby Jesus, were fleeing for their lives into the land of Egypt. How long were they there? Several months? A matter of years? Perhaps it didn't happen at all and was just part of the 'Christmas myth'. Perhaps – but early Christians (and early Friends) believed that, in the first instance, the Holy Family lived for months, perhaps years, among the idolatrous heathen.

Those first chapters of St Luke's, St Matthew's and St John's Gospels tell us that when God's 'Word' was 'made flesh and dwelt among us' he did not find his friends among the powerful, the wise, or the outwardly religious. Throughout his life he made a point of his own lack of worldly possessions ('*The Son of Man hath nowhere to lay his head*') and of his identification

with social and religious outcasts, with the poor and the homeless. '*Inasmuch as ye have done these things [good or bad] to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done them unto me*'. This, early Christians clearly believed, was the nature of their, and our, God.

I do not know how much of the gospel stories of Christ's nativity is true. I have no doubt, though, about the truth of that summation. If the Christmas story *is* 'just a myth', it is a myth that reveals fundamental truths more clearly than could any cold recounting of historical events! For Quakers (whether believing, half-believing or disbelieving the familiar Christmas story), this revelation of the nature of God deserves to be remembered and celebrated, if not every day of the year, at least at Christmas time.

*The time draws near the birth of Christ,  
A present that can not be priced,  
Given two thousand years ago.  
Yet if God had not given so,  
He still would be a distant stranger  
And not the Baby in the manger.*

'Advent 1955' by John Betjeman

*Ernest is a member of Clacton-on-Sea Meeting.*



The new settlement facing Shepherds Fields where the shepherds reputedly heard the angels' message.

## ‘Blessed are the peacemakers’

*Chris Griffin visited Palestine and Israel. He found barriers everywhere*

**T**hese few words – blessed are the peacemakers – cannot convey the lack of peace, equality, justice and sustainability in Palestine. My visit, in a group led by Andrew Ashdown and supported by Christians Aware, demonstrated distressing parallels with the time of Jesus. Was Jesus a terrorist?

We had bases in Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth. Our first close-up view of the Wall was near the Peace Centre, once the home of a Palestinian family, demolished four times. We heard from the owner and

from Jewish Israelis opposed to government policies. These included a settler in a new ‘settlement’ on West Bank territory near Jerusalem, where the only homes available were in subsidised settlements, and another working for the Israeli Committee against House Demolitions (ICAHAD). Home demolition is a colossal personal and economic tragedy.

Now, envisage a new forty-foot high concrete wall immediately behind your house. The Wall denies you access to your land, small business, local shops,



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hospital, and possibly school. That land is no longer yours!

The Wall does not run along the 1948 armistice boundary: it runs many times that distance to surround a profusion of vast new settlements, each housing tens of thousands of Israeli Jews. It also includes swathes of Palestinian farmland around these settlements, and all sources of water. Another Israeli Jew showed us where a large area of land had been seized in 1967, including two Palestinian towns, but the biggest annexation is East Jerusalem, including the magnificent walled city, and a vast acreage stretching to Ramallah and Bethlehem. Sadly, we couldn't reach Friends School at Ramallah.

I thought I was familiar with the situation, but was shocked by what I saw, particularly the height and route of the Wall, and the web of motorways throughout the West Bank. These cannot be used by Palestinians and, like the Wall, separate them from their own land and from neighbouring towns and villages. Bethlehem is being completely surrounded by the Wall and its extensive land areas expropriated.

To leave and enter the city, everyone has to pass a vast checkpoint comprising high barriers to keep you in single file, strong turnstiles electronically controlled by soldiers, a sun-baked or windswept holding area, passport control and bag search. This took our party nearly an hour; a Palestinian lucky to have a work permit may take four.

Shepherd's Fields, where the shepherds reputedly saw the star, includes sites for Christian services. Immediately facing them, across what had been grazing and olive groves, is yet another huge Israeli settlement (*see photo left*). All the land has been taken. Love your neighbours?

We met six ecumenical accompaniers, part of the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme for Palestine and Israel (EAPPI), during our visits. One of them escorted us in Hebron, probably the most sensitive of the West Bank cities (few tourists visit). My third big shock was to see recently welded-closed Palestinian shops, sprayed with Stars of David – a horrible historical inversion.

Our group met several inspirational Palestinian Arab Christians. They have all dedicated their lives to providing university and further education for, and in support of, Palestinians on both sides of the Wall in order to reduce the twenty-first century exodus of bright Palestinians, whether Christian or Muslim,

overseas. Once abroad, few return to a life of poverty and persecution. (Most of these establishments also welcome Jews.)

Naim Ateek founded Sabeel, the Ecumenical Liberation Theology Centre for justice, peace and reconciliation, and a gathering point in East Jerusalem for visiting groups. Alex Awad inspired Bethlehem Bible College and Bethlehem University. Elias Chacour, now Melkite archbishop of Galilee, founded schools, a university and an amazing church. Chacour and Awad suffered personal tragedies since their homes, among nearly 500 Palestinian villages, many of them Christian, were destroyed in 1948, yet have persevered with a lifetime of nonviolent advocacy and teaching against huge odds.

The beatitudes were emphasised throughout Galilee, particularly 'Blessed are the peacemakers'. From the Mount of Beatitudes, we overlooked the homeland of Jesus beside the Sea of Galilee, and the occupied Golan Heights. It all looked so peaceful, but hid so much tragedy, both 2,000 years ago and today. On the last day, we shared a Quaker Meeting for Worship near the River Jordan, which my colleagues unfamiliar with Quaker worship valued for quiet reflection and prayer. 'For they shall inherit the earth' has a wicked irony for Christian Palestinians.

*Chris Griffin is a member of Reading Meeting.*



Palestinians in Bethlehem. Photo: Chris Griffin.



## Faith, hope and charity

John Meadley's letter (3 December) highlights the dilemmas of ethical investment. There are no easy answers but we should have faith that our trustees have not just followed the current fashion for BP and big business bashing; faith that they used our formal links with the Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility (ECCR) to access the wealth of information on BP and other companies; faith that they prayerfully considered this information before reaching their decision by weighing in the balance the countless lives saved by cheap, oil-based, plastic water containers and medical equipment against the undoubted negative impact on the environment from producing these.

I hope that the sale proceeds have been reinvested so we do not forget the lessons of the early 1990s when we sold the family silver to pay for work and then had to sack employees because we lost the income the family silver generated. I hope that our trustees had the courage to instruct our investment brokers to compare the loss of income from the sale of BP with the gain in income from our new investments so that they know the cost-benefit effects of their decision.

I suspect that it is too much to hope that our new investments will provide a better income than owning BP shares. Therefore I have increased my charity giving by sending a cheque to Friends House. Hopefully those who applaud our trustees' courageous decision, taken for moral rather than fashionable reasons, will consider taking a similar action.

*David Holmes  
Fritchley Meeting*

I was interested in John Meadley's letter (3 December). I think there is a fundamental difference between being a consumer and a shareholder. John's examples of oil, computers, mobile phones and so forth are all products upon which most of us are dependant. In each of these purchases we can look for the greenest alternative knowing that whatever we choose we are 'supping with the devil'.

However, we do have a choice of the companies in which we invest and it is possible to invest in the energy sector without necessarily choosing to invest in the companies in which we do not approve.

Within the oil sector BG and Statoil are both much better alternatives to BP or Shell. Cable & Wireless could stand in for the mobile phone manufacturers and so on. (I know there are debates to be held about these companies as well.)

Some people who don't mind the short term volatility of cutting out the big sectors of bank, oil and chemicals can invest without getting involved in these areas; however, others need the security that including these activities in their portfolios and for them 'best of sector' is a good alternative. The fundamental difference is that as consumers we are often dependant on certain companies, as investors we aren't.

*Alan Kirkham, director  
Investing Ethically*

## Quaker artists

Calling Quaker artists and others who would like to explore how we might make greater use of visual art in deepening our spiritual lives, and in Quaker outreach!

In an increasingly visual culture, the potential for using visual art to explore, express and document our spirituality and witness is great. We are aware of many Quakers who are artists (in a variety of disciplines), others who use art but would not consider themselves artists, and Friends who would like to see Quaker art put more firmly on the map.

But what is it that 'artist Friends' are making? In what way (if at all) does it express our Quaker values and practices? How can we make better use of it?

To start finding out, we are calling a meeting at Friends House, on Saturday 29 January from 2 to 5pm. We would welcome Quaker visual artists and others



who might be willing to make things happen, for instance, through skills or experience in organising, administration, curating and art publications.

Please let us know if you plan to come. If you might be interested in any future projects, but are not able to attend that meeting, it would be helpful if you could let one of us have in advance a brief note about yourself and any particular interests or skills, with contact details, and perhaps an illustration of your work if appropriate.

*Linda Murgatroyd: murgatron@yahoo.co.uk*

*Caroline Coode: cacocode@phonecoop.coop*

*Caroline Jariwala: carolinejariwala@hotmail.com  
(or c/o 48 Kenilworth Avenue, London SW19 7LW)*

## Slavery

May I thank Kevin Bales for his article about slavery (10 December). I had just added to ministry about slavery at Ludlow Meeting, expressing my despair about slavery in the chocolate industry. I have decided to give up chocolate altogether this Christmas onward, until I hear child slavery had been eradicated from the plantations. I have written to both Free the Slaves and Anti-Slavery International after seeing the TV programme about child slavery in the chocolate industry, asking what I could do. As a Fairtrader for over fifteen years now, I know the power of the

customer. Consumer views do influence the producer.

However, every time I suggest consumers could show their anger about child slavery via abstinence, I am told that will make slaves suffer more. (This makes me think of the fight back against anti-slavery campaigns generations ago.) I have no experience with slavery issues so can not reply to this other than to say I think the people who make the most money from chocolate will make most efforts, if their livelihood is threatened. That, of course, will not stop suffering until the issues have been sorted out. But suffering is what is going on now.

I know the *Ethical Consumer* had an article about the ethics of chocolate last year and pointed to one or two companies who they think are free of this iniquity, but the TV found even Fairtrade chocolate wanting. So I shall give up chocolate as I can not see anything else to do. I do hope those people with influential positions will take up Kevin Bales' call to action. I hope to be eating chocolate again in the next few years!

*Barbara Mark*

*Orleton, Herefordshire*

## Carol Gardiner's poem

I was delighted to see that you reprinted Carol's poem (3 December). If anyone would like a copy of her poems, will they please contact me as below?

*Norman Franklin*

*Flat 5, 17-19 Elsworth Road, London NW3 3DS*

*norman.franklin@blueyonder.co.uk*

*020 7722 4543*



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*Remember if you are online that you can also comment on all articles at [www.thefriend.org](http://www.thefriend.org)*

# Experience

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## Christmas in prison: a Christmas in hell?

*Richard Scatchard describes his experience*

The festive season is upon us, the shops full of all sorts of expensive gifts – ‘things that one has always needed’! It is supposed to be the season of happiness and joy for everyone. As we know much of it is unreal, an opportunity for commercial exploitation. For many people, it can, in reality, be a period of great sadness, loneliness and strife. You can look at Christmas in a number of ways: one could say that it is people’s own choice to spend large sums of money; or, one can see it as a time when parents/individuals are left in an impossible situation – so much pressure to buy ever more extravagant gifts and food and drink. So much of twenty-first century Christmases seems to be at odds with the Quaker testimony of simplicity.

*‘Do not be persuaded into buying what you do not need or cannot afford. Do you keep yourself informed about the effects your style of living is having on the global economy and environment?’*

*Advices & queries 41 (part)*

So what of the eighty-four thousand prisoners, like me, who spend the festive season locked up behind a prison cell door in Britain? What does Christmas mean to them? What is it really like? Well, in reality, there isn’t a nice, easy, single answer to any of these questions. As with the rest of the population, we are individuals, not some sort of amorphous group about whom generalisations can be made. Not all prisoners are from broken homes or are brought up to a life of crime – as the press or social workers would have us believe. It may be suggested that to much of the British population, prison is prison – a prison is the same whether it’s situated in London, Newcastle or

Scotland. Most people don’t realise that there are different categories of prison: high security prisons; medium category prisons; and open prisons. The situation, however, is much more involved than this; there are huge differences between prisons, even though they are, on paper, officially the same category of prison. Some prisons have a reasonably good atmosphere, where a reasonable level of respect exists between prisoners and prison staff. While other prisons, which can even be located in the same city, are horrendous and can be a living hell. Some prisons are no more than glorified cattle sheds, in which one can begin to feel that there is a deliberate campaign by the authorities to remove all sense of dignity and self-respect from prisoners. Also, in some, it is a matter of survival (physical and mental) – learning to cope with isolation, drugs and bullying.

However, no matter how bad or good a prison is, it is still a prison; and the problems of these jails for many inmates can become greatly magnified at Christmas time. Why? This is for many reasons. First, prisoners are human! They do have feelings. Many have great difficulties in dealing with their feelings – this has often been at the root cause of their offending behaviour. Being locked up, isolated and separated from family and friends (often by many hundreds of miles) at this ‘special time’ creates extra tensions. The statistics clearly show that levels of depression and suicide, as well as the making of illegal alcohol (‘hooch’) and the smuggling and taking of drugs, rise significantly during this period. Christmas is often a time when an ever greater strain is placed on relationships and families: wives and children separated from their husbands and fathers. Not getting a visit or a Christmas card can



Photo: Photos.com

be a huge issue for many prisoners. As in the outside world, there is a great deal of loneliness at Christmas in prisons – many prisoners have been disowned or lost contact with the ‘outside world’. Turning the television on to see happy festive programmes, or watching the *Great Escape* or *Porridge* for the one hundredth time, doesn’t make Christmas a cheery one!

At Christmas and New Year a special prison regime operates, often with more time being spent locked up behind one’s cell door. This also affects prison staff, who would clearly prefer to be at home with their family. Christmas dinner? Yes, we do have turkey, a ‘special selection’! Again, prison food varies greatly from an inedible slop to quite presentable, edible food. However, owing to the changed prison operating hours at Christmas the food can often be ruined by the time you get to eat it. It has often been sat in a heated trolley for hours shrivelling up into a piece of ‘turkey cardboard’, or Brussels sprouts with all their taste and goodness steamed out of them. Make no mistake, in some prisons the Christmas dinner is better than many people on the outside are able to afford to sit down to. Also, in many prisons, the staff, chaplaincy team and visitors go to great

lengths to make the festive season the best it can be in prison. In the past, they would arrange little gifts and small parcels of sweets to give out, as well as giving out Christmas cards. In recent times this has been stopped on the grounds of ‘security’. Special Christmas religious services, quizzes and competitions are held.

So, in reality, life in prison at Christmas can vary a lot. It often comes down to which prison one is in; but, much more importantly, it’s down to the attitude and the state of mind of the prisoner. To some prisoners, Christmas is still the best time of the year, something different and something to look forward to and remember. To others, it is the worst time of the year; one to get through as soon as possible – dying for things to get back to ‘normal’, the standard, predictable, daily routine. It obviously has to be remembered that the vast majority of prisoners spending Christmas behind bars are there because of their own actions – it is not society’s fault. Sometimes in prison it is easy for prisoners to start feeling sorry for themselves, rather than remembering or taking responsibility for the extra pain and distress they have put their families, friends and victims through – something felt even more so at Christmas time.

# Christmas story

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## The Christmas boots

*Tim Evens was a member of the Quaker Relief Service in Europe in 1945 working with displaced persons. He tells a Christmas tale of a moral dilemma, a black market and the kindness of cobblers*



Photos: Sally Evens

Every winter I take my Russian boots out of the box in the attic and look at them. They are not really Russian. They were made by men from east of the river Vistula in Poland whose nationality was, and still is, controversial. But I call them Russian boots because, unlike the stiffer, more formal high boots typical of the Germans, these are soft and loose round the calf.

The boots speak to me: they are part of my Quakerism, part of a moment in history and part of my memories of Christmas. Their story is a small comedy played against a tragic background.

In the autumn of 1945 I was a member of the Quaker Relief Service. I was helping a group of Slavonic displaced persons (DP) set up a cobblers' workshop in an old shooting gallery near to where the Soviet zonal border runs through the Harz Mountains of North Germany. The initiative came from a young woman colleague in the relief team. I supplied the necessary German and drove her round in a fifteen-hundredweight truck.

Gradually, the group of shoemakers and apprentices became established, making children's shoes from army leather jerkins and patching up the decrepit footwear of other groups of displaced persons. Our visits were frequent, for there were endless difficulties of supply and the chief cobbler did not share our nonconformist – and official – reluctance to take part in black-market dealings! However, much we might naively insist, in bad German, on his using only what meagre materials we could bring, he would silently indicate by a wink and a

nod that we should leave things to him and not worry. We did worry, but could do nothing. We might deplore the black market, but we could not blame those who used it. Relations were cordial, though, and grew more so. In November the cobblers offered to make us each a pair of boots for Christmas.

We tried to brush the offer aside. Leather was scarce – to be used only for the most needy; but our polite deprecations went unheeded. The chief cobbler, backed by all his men, insisted that they make us boots – East European boots for the winter, quite different from the lumpish army boots we always wore. We were in a fix. Who were we to accept leather in a luxury gift? And where would the leather come from? Not from old jerkins or a mildewed German cavalry harness.

It was a dilemma. How could we refuse a gift from people who, out of self-respect, deeply desired to make some return for all that they had received through and from us? We felt very unsure; but secretly wanted those romantic boots! In the end, we had no choice whether to accept or not.

One day, in spite of our coy protestations, we were firmly sat down and had our feet measured. After this we heard no more about the boots; except that we should receive them on Christmas Day, which our friends kept according to the Julian calendar of the Orthodox faith, eleven days after 25 December.

We were at the billet, on our Christmas Eve, when a phone call came from the army unit at the zonal



Displaced persons mending shoes from old army harness and tyres. Photo courtesy Tim Evens.

border, eight miles away. The message said a DP cobbler was there. He had been arrested for smuggling leather from the Russian zone! We drove out in the thin snow, passing the cobblers' workshop on the way, to one of the wooden villas in the frontier hamlet. We met a bored young British officer there, who brightened when he saw my colleague. A young Englishwoman was a rarity in that forsaken place.

The young officer told us that our chief cobbler had been caught sneaking into the British zone with a roll of leather under his arm, having earlier crossed the other way unobserved – in those days the Iron Curtain had not come down really hard. The officer was annoyed at having to deal with a prisoner on Christmas Eve. My colleague pleaded the man's importance to the workshop. He was brought in. The officer gave him a telling-off in English, which lost much of its force when turned into half-understood German, and we were free to take him back. Cramped between us in the front of the truck, the cobbler laughed, and then winked, tapping the leather on his lap. We knew it was for our boots but tried to look as if we didn't.

It was embarrassing. We could not have let so valuable a worker go to prison for having risked his freedom, and perhaps his life, for that leather. Our nonconformist consciences, however, weighed heavily

upon us, especially when next day we took part in the innocent exchange of small, simple, presents among our colleagues. Our embarrassment was at its greatest when we took our modest gifts to the cobblers' celebrations on their Christmas Day. We prepared to receive the romantic, but illegal, zone-crossed boots. The moment came. Our Army boots were taken off. A gorgeous pair of soft grey knee-length boots were drawn over my companion's calves and a pair of black ones over mine, and my trousers made to 'bag out' at the tops. We were then stood up in our new boots and walked about to admiring glances.

We were asked to bring the boots back later if any adjustments were needed; for they had to be perfect for us. We made our halting thanks and later, much later, trod across the moonlit snow to the truck, our feet light and warm in the new boots. Our heavy, honest, army lace-ups were in our hands. With our legs feeling suddenly conspicuous, we climbed in and drove away, grateful yet guilty, to face the witticisms of our colleagues at the billet.

When I later found that my left boot did not quite fit, you will understand why I did not take it back for alterations. It is less blessed to receive than to give. It is also sometimes less easy.

*Tim is a member of Leicester Meeting.*

# Puzzle

## Friendly wordsearch

First solve the clues, then find the solution words in the wordsearch. Words can run in any direction.

- 1 Then the founder's wife slipped?
- 2 Quaker state.
- 3 A fiver for Eastern delight?
- 4 Early Friends, Mary and Isaac \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 The elders of \_\_\_\_\_ wrote a letter with a postscript.
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_ should not contain too many daffodils.
- 7 A \_\_\_\_\_ officer is involved in a Quaker wedding.
- 8 This Hall is where (1.) lived.
- 9 Every Quakeress is this flower, according to Charles Lamb.
- 10 \_\_\_\_\_'s Apology ('Sorry!').
- 11 'The place of \_\_\_\_\_ is a precious habitation' (John Woolman).
- 12 'Counsel' used to be called \_\_\_\_\_.
- 13 Early Friends' term for 'baptised'.
- 14 Who said: 'If there is one wish I would pray the Spirit to put into our Christmas stockings, it is warmth, openness, passion, a bit of emotion that doesn't mind making a fool of itself occasionally.' (Gerald \_\_\_\_\_).

D	A	W	D	F	I	C	S	E	C	I	V	D	A
E	E	X	O	V	W	G	P	R	J	G	I	R	C
L	T	C	F	Y	R	T	S	I	N	I	M	W	B
K	L	G	R	W	K	J	D	I	V	Z	C	U	D
N	A	P	H	S	W	A	R	T	H	M	O	O	R
I	U	S	P	R	I	E	S	T	L	A	N	D	E
R	S	L	E	U	T	L	Z	A	O	H	B	F	G
P	E	N	N	S	Y	L	V	A	N	I	A	S	D
S	F	M	I	T	B	P	R	A	Y	E	R	A	U
I	E	G	N	A	R	L	K	E	N	G	C	F	N
V	E	H	G	R	N	M	X	O	L	L	L	E	F
R	W	E	T	V	U	T	S	R	I	Y	A	R	O
T	B	B	O	N	G	H	B	A	L	B	Y	P	N
F	R	P	N	O	S	M	L	F	Y	X	E	S	T





# And furthermore

*Trish Carn follows Judi Dench's path through life*

This is not an autobiography. 'I have neither the time nor the skill to write one.' So begins *And furthermore*, Judi Dench's new book. However, she warns, it is not the last word as I have 'often expressed the wish to emulate my dear friends and mentors, John Gielgud and Peggy Ashcroft, both of whom continued working right to the end'.

So what is *And furthermore*? It is a fascinating personal journey through Judi's life in theatre: plays, films, award ceremonies, meeting her delightful friends and compatriots on the many stages she has graced around the world: a warm, talented, down-to-earth woman emerges from the pages and photos. She seems totally unaffected by her fame.

Her interest in theatre was sparked by early visits with her parents and two brothers: 'When I saw the celebrated farce *Cuckoo in the Nest* by Ben Travers, I laughed so much when a man jumped up in a laundry basket at the end of a bed wearing... longjohns, that I thought I would have some kind of a fit.' Her mother must have agreed as: 'I was taken home at the interval, and only brought back the next night to see the second half of the play'. Following a visit to *Peter Pan* at Leeds, she pleaded for wires to be set up in her father's waiting room so she could come flying in from the consulting room.

After her marriage to fellow actor Michael Williams and the birth of their daughter Finty, they returned to working in York where her family and Michael's parents hit it off. Michael suggested that they all live together. It was Judi's 'idea of heaven. It is like a proper Quaker community, certainly for bringing up a child, but also the whole idea of looking after your parents.' They found a converted stable block with eleven rooms outside Stratford. Finty remembers well being

brought up with her grandparents and, while it wasn't always easy, Judi says that the good times outweighed the bad and she doesn't regret it.

Her Quaker values were established at the Mount, the Quaker boarding school in York. Here Judi was greatly influenced by Joy Harvey, who had worked with John Gielgud before becoming a teacher. When speaking about acting in the professional theatre, Joy brought it all to life. She was a terrific teacher. Another great influence was the art teacher, Phoebe Brook, who encouraged the girls to do whatever they did well but not to compete. Winning was not the important thing. Judi relates: 'Deep down, I suppose I don't really approve of the awards business, even when I have won them, because you can't really award prizes for acting. That is not to say that when I have won awards I haven't been absolutely thrilled – I have – but I suspect deep down that it is something that goes a bit against the grain. Acting is such a personal, imperfect kind of art.'

In 1999 Michael became ill. When he died in November 2000, the funeral was held in the local Anglican church, which they had often attended together, although their 'churchgoing had been very ecumenical. Michael went to Mass and I went to my Quaker Meeting'.

This comment seems to me to indicate Judi's basic Quakerism. While Meeting isn't always possible, with Sunday rehearsals and the often relentless demands of her trade, the foundation is solid and her respect for others runs through the book.

**And furthermore by Judi Dench. Orion Books.  
ISBN: 978 0 297 85967 3. £20.**

# ‘Not my best side’

*‘Not my best side, I’m afraid  
The artist didn’t give me a chance to  
Pose properly, and as you can see,  
Poor chap, he had this obsession with  
Triangles, so he left off two of my  
Feet.’*

So speaks Uccello’s dragon in one of UA Fanthorpe’s greatest hits: ‘Not My Best Side’. I first came across this poem some decades ago. A student brought it to one of my classes. It was by a poet then unknown to me. We discussed the poem with great interest and enthusiasm. The poet had given voices (brief monologues) to the three principals in Uccello’s famous painting: dragon, leading lady and St George. The more we looked at the poem the more we found. What we mostly found was delight. I was delighted to have found a new, original voice; my student reacted to the implicit feminism. There were other qualities: an unmistakable peace message, a touch of wit, a disregard for so-called ‘poetic language’, art criticism, discipline (each monologue has nineteen lines) and a sense of mischief. There was also a willingness to take on the character monologue, a tradition that has suffered since the great days of Robert Browning. What none of us knew was that this poem heralded the arrival of a major talent. Surely UA Fanthorpe is one of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries’ finest British poets.

More surprisingly ‘Not My Best Side’ engages many of the qualities that characterise UA’s work: the monologues, the understated feminism, the colloquial touch, the wit, the dislike of ‘authority’, the use of paintings as a starting point. It’s almost a manifesto. Admittedly there are gaps. Missing is her sense of the importance of the ordinary: ‘There is a kind of love called maintenance, Which stores the WD40 and knows when to use it’ (though what place does ordinariness have in a poem about the slaying of a dragon?). Absent, too, is her underlying Quaker Christianity, though might the mention of the dragon ‘rising again’ after it has been killed be referential? But all-in-all, this early poem has many of the features that cause us to admire her work.

Reading some of her poetry is like setting out on a perfectly ordinary walk and finding that somehow your footsteps have been led to a strange, barely recognisable place. There’s often a surprising twist or a

sting in the tail, or just a sense of the unfamiliarity of the familiar.

UA is a shape-changer. She enters with complete confidence the minds of an extraordinarily diverse company: a cleaner, a museum attendant, Thomas Hardy, John Keats, a dog, a gaoler, a Christmas tree, a put-upon school pupil, the Person from Porlock. To each she gives a voice, a way of speaking and something to say, often something very surprising. Rather like an actor or a puppeteer, she seems to gain freedom and make discoveries through these ‘masks’. For a poet who loves silence;

*‘Harpo’s the wittiest Marx. Words are only  
For what can be said; silence  
Has a better vocabulary’*

She invests herself and her alter egos, thank goodness, with words in abundance. Magical, to me, is a poem I’d never before read: ‘The Heir’, which treats of Caliban on that island after the others have left. It’s a poem touched with magic. Evidently UA thought, as I do, that he, for all his uncouth monstrosity, was the true poet on the island.

*‘Caliban missed the music, being  
A susceptible monster. The whole island  
Was his now, sun, moon and yellow sands,  
Filberts and freshets, but somehow*

*Vacant, and not worth having. Twangling  
Instruments and spiteful hedgehogs  
In retrospect mingled. He didn’t know  
Exactly what he was missing*

*But he missed it.’*

Pure poetry. This is a terrific *New & Collected*. I met UA only once. She was charming and delightful. My copy is a treasure trove, a reminder of a unique talent, and will always put me in mind of a splendid Quaker, met once and remembered with fondness.

**New & Collected Poems by UA Fanthorpe.**  
**Enitharmon. ISBN: 978 1 907587 00 9. £25.**

**Gerard Benson**

# The Spirit of the Quakers



*A review by Jennifer Kavanagh*

In compiling this collection, Geoffrey Durham has taken on a gargantuan task: almost like producing *Quaker faith & practice* (*Qf&p*) alone. Starting from scratch, he has selected works from a wide range of Quaker writing from the seventeenth century to the present day. At its heart are *Advices and queries* in their entirety (how could a newcomer be without them?) and four long journal extracts: from George Fox, John Woolman and, more unexpectedly, from Mary Penington and the Swiss twentieth-century Friend, Pierre Ceresole – great new riches are to be found from both.

He has done a great service for Quakers in providing favourite passages at greater length, in drawing from current writing and finding texts new to us from beyond Britain and from every age. Although I find much of Fox's journal uncomfortable in its abrasiveness and sheer *certainty* (a reminder, if we needed it, that even those in whom the Spirit resides most profoundly are flawed human beings), much can be forgiven for the sheer magnificence of the longer 'patterns and examples' extract. I am particularly grateful to see more of old favourites such as the nineteenth-century Friend, Caroline Stephen, whose wisdom has always leapt off the pages of *Qf&p*, and voices new to me like the Australian Nancy Shelley:

*[Peacemakers] understand the difference between insecurity and vulnerability – the one with its roots in fear and distrust, the other a condition of life and growth.*

But this is not an alternative *Qf&p*, nor are Friends its primary readership. This is a collection of Quaker writings for non-Quakers, a well-planned journey through the major aspects of the Quaker way (including succinct links and introductions from

Geoffrey himself). A strong quality of this anthology is the personal nature of its selection. Unlike *Qf&p* – unlike, I imagine, other books in this series – Geoffrey has had to rely on his own judgement 'and accept that everything in this book must be a personal choice'. It is all the better for it.

So what is the picture of Quakers that emerges? An appropriate balance of the practical and the mystic; a powerful sense of our roots, an acknowledgement of a more quietist time, and the flowering of our richly diverse present. There is, to this reader at least, a welcome emphasis on both the numinous and the passionate; both the deep heart of our faith and worship, and the fire of our calling. Although gentle voices are given their place, there is nothing here of the half-hearted.

I know that Geoffrey had reservations about contributing to a series called 'sacred literature', but in doing so he has demonstrated our testimony to the sacred in us all. In the sober (and beautiful) covers of this book lie the spirit and passion of the Quakers: a reminder that Quaker simplicity is not to damp down but to release the Spirit – a perfect title for an excellent book. As it is Christmas, let us end with Gerald Priestland:

*Perhaps the most neglected of all the advices is that we should live adventurously. If there is one wish I would pray the Spirit to put into our Christmas stockings, it is warmth, openness, passion, a bit of emotion that doesn't mind making a fool of itself occasionally.*

**The Spirit of the Quakers by Geoffrey Durham. Yale University Press. ISBN: 978 0 300 16736 8. £9.99.**

*This book is available free with new subscriptions to the Friend, please see page 27.*

# No more chocolates for Quakers

The last year has seen two sharp signals of the final departure of the traditional Quaker enterprise. The takeover of Friends Provident by Resolution pretty much marks the end of Quaker participation in the banking and financial sectors; and the takeover of Cadbury by Kraft Foods breaks the last trading link with the chocolate giants of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

How far we should mourn their passing is an open question. Once-Quaker companies like Cadbury and Rowntree's, Barclays and Lloyds have in recent years been symbols of what was, and perhaps what could be, rather than what is. It is significant that the most compelling recent study of Quaker business, Edward Milligan's magisterial survey *Quakers in Commerce and Industry 1775-1920*, ends 90 years ago. Those of us pressing the case for Quaker principles to be a living part of major commercial enterprises risk seeming rather fusty, like a worthy book left too long on the shelf.

There is nothing fusty, however, about Deborah Cadbury's new-minted history of the great Quaker chocolate-makers, *Chocolate Wars*. Ranging from 1816, when John Cadbury was apprenticed to a Quaker tea dealer and started to learn about the new-fangled product from cocoa, to 2010, when Kraft Foods bought Cadbury to form the world's largest food conglomerate, she tells a lively and readable story. Yet it is hard to escape the sense that this is finally a 'sad tale, best for winter', and that we may have a long wait for the next spring of Quaker enterprise.

Deborah Cadbury is a scion of the five generations of the Cadbury family since the patriarch Richard Tapper Cadbury left the West Country to become a draper in Birmingham's Bull Street. She has vivid memories of being taken round the Bournville factory as a child, and her personal enthusiasm enlivens the book, without getting in the way of its scholarship. If she spends more pages on Cadbury than on Rowntree and Fry – well why not, when there is such a rattling good yarn to be told.

The book sets up the stories well, dealing with the early entrepreneurial struggles of George and Richard Cadbury in Birmingham, and the contemporary emergence of the Frys in Bristol and the Rowntrees in York. The ups and downs of their businesses are well described, and the rivalries between them sizzle in a way that we would not automatically associate with the Quaker Victorians. She writes with unabashed relish about how Joseph Rowntree sought trade secrets from the staff of his rivals – a story that delighted me, too, in the 'Chocolate Spies' chapter of my 2001 Swarthmore Lecture, *Wrestling with the Angel*.

Deborah Cadbury writes well about the Quaker context. She sees the chocolate entrepreneurs as a fable of their times, and the intrusion of the wider world is relentless. George Cadbury buys the *Daily News* in 1901 to prevent it falling into the hands of supporters of the Boer War. By contrast, Cadbury's Bournville and Somerdale chocolate factories are commandeered in 1939 to be turned into munitions factories. The creation of the model villages of Bournville and New Earswick feature prominently, as does Joseph and Seebohm Rowntree's work in researching and tackling poverty and its causes.

As Deborah Cadbury sees it, although JS Fry & Sons was absorbed by Rowntree's as the Great War ended and Rowntrees fell to Nestlé in 1988, the Quaker voice could still be heard within Cadburys into the new century. Then, in 2009, along came Irene Rosenfeld, the chair of Kraft, and the final chapter of the Quaker chocolate-makers was to be written. Read this book, and see what we have lost – and what may not come again.

**Chocolate Wars: from Cadbury to Kraft: 200 years of sweet success and bitter rivalry by Deborah Cadbury. Harper Press. ISBN: 978 0007325 55 9. £20.**

*Tony Stoller is the editor of The Friends Quarterly and a member of Winchester Meeting. His new book, Sounds of Your Life: the history of Independent Radio in the UK, is published by John Libbey Books at £22.50.*



A shop window in Kendal, home of the Quaker Tapestry

‘This is no time to be making new  
.....’  
*Voltaire (1694-1778)*  
*On being asked, on his deathbed, to  
renounce the Devil.*

‘I’m really a timid person –  
I was beaten up by .....’  
*Woody Allen (1935- )*

STREETS ..... PLEASE ADVISE  
*Robert Benchley (1889-1945)*  
*The telegram he sent after arriving  
in Venice*

‘What is a highbrow?  
He is a man who has found  
something more interesting than  
.....’  
*Edgar Wallace (1875-1932)*

‘The only “ism” in Hollywood is  
.....’  
*Dorothy Parker (1847-1931)*

‘Television is for appearing on, not  
.....’  
*Noel Coward (1899-1973)*

‘In olden days, a glimpse of  
stocking, Was looked on as  
something shocking, But now, God  
knows, .....’  
*Cole Porter (1891-1964)*

‘We have become a .....’  
*Margaret Thatcher (1924- )*

‘Better to keep you mouth shut and  
appear ..... than to open it  
and remove all doubt.’  
*Mark Twain (1835-1910)*

‘I can resist everything except  
.....’  
*Oscar Wilde (1854-1900)*

‘An atheist is a man who has no  
..... means of support.’  
*John Buchan (1875-1940)*

‘The louder he talked of his  
honour, the faster we counted our  
.....’  
*Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)*

‘My way is to begin at the.....’  
*Lord Byron (1788-1824)*

Fill in the blanks.  
Answers in 7 January edition



## The spirit of joy

THREE FRIENDS from Kenyan Yearly Meetings (below) enjoying a paddle for the first time in their lives. They had the opportunity to take a dip during the triennial gathering in Mombasa of United Society of Friends Women International. Friends World Committee for Consultation general secretary Nancy Irving said 'their excitement cheered my heart'.



## Woodbrooke 360

EYE WISHES to extend a warm welcome to Sandra Berry in her new role as director of the Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre. *Eye* is a fan of the Woodbrooke website, particularly since a virtual tour of the centre appeared there. The best view of all is the sun in the 'veranda view' tour.



## Always cake

EYE HAS RECENTLY been reading a couple of novels starring Quakers. *Dazzle the Day* is about Quakers coping with the end of the world. *Quaker Summer* is the story of a middle-class American mother dealing with a minor loss of direction and coming through with a more real Christian faith. Her inspiration comes in part from two elderly Friends whom she meets while covered in cake! The books are available from the Quaker Centre bookshop.

## The Oxford way

A SMALL GROUP of Oxford Friends have been holding extended Meetings for Worship, at approximately two-month intervals, since August 2009, Tina Leonard tells *Eye*. The Meetings are held on Saturdays, starting at 10.30am with worship, followed by a silent lunch and then time for reflection and sharing of our experiences, before some concluding worship – generally ending around 2.30pm. The Meetings were initiated following a discussion of 'What do you/I do in Meeting for Worship?' There some Friends felt that they wanted to experiment with an extended Meeting for Worship, in the manner of early Friends. A further series is planned for 2011.

## Light relief

'AFTER TEA, Friends considered how the load on the Recording Clerk might be reduced, so that he could occasionally stare into space and think about big issues facing Ruritania Yearly Meeting. Everyone agreed on the objective, the problem being how to pursue it... Meanwhile the Committee on Clerks could consider what the terms of reference of the threshing committee would be, if appointed. The Recording Clerk would act as convenor of the clearness group and, already being secretary of the Committee on Clerks, would be able to provide valuable input.'

This is an excerpt from Philip Gething's *The Quakers of Ruritania*, a compilation of articles that appeared in the Friend in the 1990s.

## And finally...

I'VE ENJOYED compiling *Eye* over the past eight months and wish to thank the many contributors and readers. You can keep up with my writing on my blog [www.nayler.org](http://www.nayler.org).

In friendship,  
Jez

## Marriages

Hilary HUBBARD and Jeffery SMITH of Alton Quaker Meeting were married on Wednesday 17 November at Winchester Register Office. (Jeffery formerly Ratcliff Meeting). Address: 2 Robins Nest, Church Street, Alton, GU34 2LT. Tel. 01420 544980.

## Deaths

Trevor Ford BELL 15 December. Father of Martin and Robert. Member of Bournemouth Meeting. Aged 78. Meeting after the manner of Friends at Quaker House New Milton 1.15pm. Committal at Bournemouth Crematorium 3pm Friday 7 January. Enquiries: Neil Scott 01202 395827.

David LINDLEY 16 December. Peacefully at Weston General Hospital. Husband of Joyce. Member of Sidcot Meeting. Aged 86. Donations: Quaker Peace & Social Witness. Memorial Meeting at Sidcot to be arranged. Contact Peter Lindley 01769 560567.

## Notices on this page

Friends & Meetings notices should preferably be prepaid. Personal entries (births, marriages, deaths, anniversaries, changes of address, etc.) from 4 January 2011: £17.20 incl. vat at 20%. Meeting and charity notices (changes of clerk, new wardens, alterations to meeting, diary, etc.) £14.34 zero rated for vat. Max. 35 words. 3 Diary or Meeting up entries £39.80 (£33.18 zero rated); 6 entries £67.40 (£56.16). Add £1.70 for a copy of the issue with your notice. Cheques payable to The Friend.

Entries are accepted at the editor's discretion in a standard house style. A gentle discipline will be exerted to maintain a simplicity of style and wording which excludes terms of endearment and words of tribute. Deadline usually Monday morning.

The Friend, 54a Main Street,  
Cononley Keighley BD20 8LL  
01535 630230. ads@thefriend.org

Stephen John COULTAS  
26 November. Husband of the late Sylvia (née Gilpin), father of Dalisa, Clare and Jeff, brother of Peter. Member of Hampstead Meeting.

Ann STAMMERS 14 December, at Thorpe Hall hospice, Peterborough. Mother of Avril and Torill, grandmother of Jasmine, India, Marcus and Jonathan. Member of Peterborough Meeting; formerly of Mid-Essex, Leicester, and Southampton. Aged 64. Memorial Meeting at Leicester QMH 3pm Thursday 6 January. Enquiries: 0116 271 5772.

## Changes to meeting

FROME LM will not meet in the Key Centre on 26 December or 2 January. MfW will be in a local Friend's house. Call 07970 926630 or 01373 451544 for further details.

KENDAL LM will be holding Meeting for Worship on Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm starting on 5 January. Enquiries: 01539 724516.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS LM  
From 2 January we will begin Sunday Meeting for Worship at the new time of 10.30am. Enquiries 01892 888373.

## Diary

JAMES NAYLER FOUNDATION.  
Towards Therapeutic Quakerism. Introductory training day for forthcoming intensive training courses in Emotion Education. Bob Johnson and others. Donations welcome. 2-5pm, Saturday 8 January. Friends House, Euston Road, London. Apply: train@TruthTrustConsent.com

RAF FYLINGDALES MEETING  
FOR WORSHIP Saturday  
1 January 2011, 12 noon - 1pm under the care of Pickering and Hull AM. Followed by picnic at Pickering FMH. Contact 01751 432416 or 01751 472827. All welcome.

## Christmas greeting

Affectionate greetings to all Friends in BYM and elsewhere from Françoise, Dennis, Libby and the 'équipe'. With our grateful thanks for all your help, encouragement and support for the development of the Congénies Quaker Centre.

## Britain Yearly Meeting



## Human Resources Officer

Permanent role. Starting salary: £24,711. Location: Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1

This role will provide full administration support to the HR function, as well as having its own significant areas of responsibility. These areas are:

- Recruitment
- Staff records
- Payroll and benefits
- Projects

The successful candidate will be CIPD qualified with experience in a similar generalist role, backed up with a strong commitment to quality and excellence in their work. The role also requires a person who is highly organised, has strong attention to detail, highly developed written and verbal communication skills, and a commitment to working within the values of the organisation.

The starting salary is £24,711 rising to £26,470, with a further review of the post grading once the top of the grade is reached.

Closing date for applications: 5pm on Friday 7 January 2011  
Interview: Wednesday 12 January.

Further details and application pack are available at [www.quaker.org.uk/jobs](http://www.quaker.org.uk/jobs) or email [quakeremploy@quaker.org.uk](mailto:quakeremploy@quaker.org.uk) Tel. 020 7663 1111.

Registered Charity No. 1127633.

## The Christmas Spirit

The Christmas season is a time of joyful, spiritual and family celebration. Often the spirit celebrated is not, however, of the religious variety and at Christmas enormous quantities of alcohol are consumed. This is nothing new.

In the nineteenth century the 'problem of drink' began to exercise leading social and religious thinkers. Drink was seen as the root of many social evils, including crime and poverty. It was destroying lives and families. The campaign for temperance became a significant social movement in the late nineteenth and Quakers, once closely associated with the brewing trade, were at the forefront of it.

Friends House Library has recently made accessible a huge amount of material relating to the temperance movement. This includes the archives of the Friends Temperance Union and much related material – books, pamphlets, posters, photographs and lantern slides.

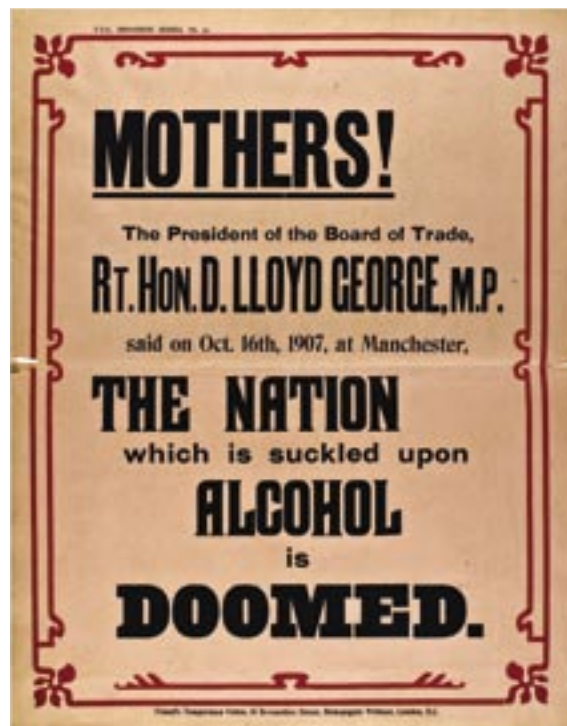
It is a fascinating collection and contains an intriguing selection of posters. Today, advertising companies spend millions to convince us to buy their products. Their message, brilliantly conveyed in images and words, is all about consumption and materialism. The temperance posters were designed to sell a moral message.

The Friends Temperance Union, formed in the 1850s, advocated total abstinence and campaigned, alongside other religious and social reform groups, for changes in the law and undertook educational and philanthropic work. There were temperance hotels, coffee stalls and youth clubs, rallies, lectures and public meetings.

The posters were a vital part of these campaigns. They were often imaginative and inventive. There is no messing around. No nuance or subtlety. Drink is evil. Say it loudly, boldly and clearly.

In the Friends House Library Collection 127 posters have been digitised and catalogued. Other material can be searched online at [www.quaker.org.uk/library](http://www.quaker.org.uk/library). It is a treasure trove of temperance sentiment, sensibility and social concern. It does not take much imagination to realise there is an enduring truth in the message conveyed by the posters: excessive drinking continues, sadly, to damage lives.

Ian Kirk-Smith





**£168,987,165**

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**337,974 HOUSES AT £500 EACH**

—OR MORE THAN ALL THE INHABITED HOUSES IN LIVERPOOL, BIRMINGHAM, BRADFORD, YORK, —AND CROYDON COMBINED.—

Printed by the Friend, Temperance Office, 10, Broadwick Street, Fitzrovia, London, W.1.

**DRINK ENFEEBLES**

The Physical Strength of the

**WORKERS**

Philip Snowden, M.P.

Published by the Friend, Temperance Office, 10, Broadwick Street, London, W.1.

**ALCOHOL**

creates an enormous

**LOSS**

to the Community through destroying the productiveness of the Skilled

**CRAFTSMAN**

Dr. R. ARMSTRONG-JONES, M.D., F.R.C.P.

Published by the Friend, Temperance Office, 10, Broadwick Street, London, W.1.

**A GREAT BATSMAN**



J. B. HOBBS (of Surrey) says:

— THE —

**GREATEST ENEMY**

— TO —

**SUCCESS**

upon the field, is the

**DRINKING HABIT**

Published by the Friend, Temperance Office, 10, Broadwick Street, London, W.1.

# Classified advertisements

George Penaluna, Advertisement Manager, 54a Main Street, Cononley, Keighley BD20 8LL T&F: 01535 630230 E: ads@thefriend.org

## jobs

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## where to stay

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### COTTAGES & SELF-CATERING

**1652 COUNTRY, HOWGILL, SEDBERGH.** Comfortable 4 star holiday cottages in Yorkshire Dales National Park overlooking Firbank Fell. Walks and Quaker trails from the door. 30 minutes to Lake District. www.AshHiningFarm.co.uk Jim Mattinson 07774 281767.

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**SUFFOLK COAST, WALBERSWICK.** Self-contained studio/annex. Very close to beach. Beautiful, varied walks. Sleeps 2/3. £115-£230 per week. Short winter breaks £35 per night. Tel. 01502 723914. Email: barbara@walberswick.ws

## HOLIDAYS

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**VISIT VIENNA.** Comfortable apartment, sleeps 4. Convenient location. City of culture and cafés. Tel. 01904 416840. anne.reynolds@uwclub.net www.holidayapartmentinvienna.co.uk

## STUDY TOURS

**BOLIVIA SERVICE/STUDY TRIP JULY 2011.** Work with indigenous Quaker villagers. Visit life-changing projects, Bolivian leaders, Inca ruins, Lake Titicaca, optional Machu Picchu. Reserve early. www.TreasuresoftheAndes.com 001 707 823 6034 California.

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T&F: 01535 630230  
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## notices

### Peace Brigades International UK TRUSTEE VACANCIES

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#### Human Resources Charity Law

We encourage candidates who, in addition to job specific skills, have a commitment to non-violence and an interest in, or experience of, the NGO sector in the UK.

We work with consensus decision making and meet once a month.

The positions are unpaid and a minimum commitment of a year would be expected.

Please contact  
susibascon@peacebrigades.org.uk  
www.peacebrigades.org.uk

## personal

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*Christmas Greetings to all our readers and advertisers.*

## miscellaneous

### FRIENDS FELLOWSHIP OF HEALING

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For details and subscription rates see  
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or contact Alan Johnson on  
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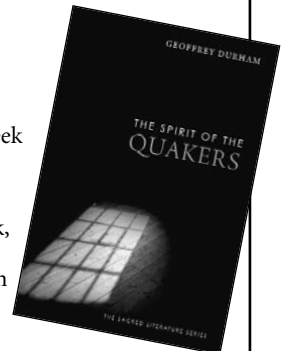
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As well as sending you your copy of *the Friend* each week, we will also send a copy of *The Spirit of the Quakers*, the new anthology compiled by Geoffrey Durham. Just out on 17 September, the book usually costs £9.99 + £1.75 p&p from the Quaker Centre Bookshop.

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A quiet moment in Ramallah Friends School's life brings to mind everyone who in Christmases past and present has walked with Friendly steps from our School into a New Year.

Thank you for joining us.

We wish everybody a peaceful New Year

*Joyce*



Ramallah Friends School