Stepping off the treadmill
Respect

Do you respect that of God in everyone though it may be expressed in unfamiliar ways or be difficult to discern? Each of us has a particular experience of God and each must find the way to be true to it.

When words are strange or disturbing to you, try to sense where they come from and what has nourished the lives of others. Listen patiently and seek the truth which other people’s opinions may contain for you. Avoid hurtful criticism and provocative language.

Do not allow the strength of your convictions to betray you into making statements or allegations that are unfair or untrue. Think it possible that you may be mistaken.

Advices & queries 17

Cover image:
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See page 3.

The Friend Subscriptions
UK £86 per year by all payment types including annual direct debit; monthly payment by direct debit £7.25; online only £69 per year.
For details of other rates, contact Penny Dunn on 020 7663 1178 or subs@thefriend.org

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the Friend 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ • Tel: 020 7663 1010 • www.thefriend.org
Editor: Ian Kirk-Smith ian@thefriend.org • Production and office manager: Elinor Smallman production@thefriend.org
Advertisement manager: George Penaluna ads@thefriend.org • Subscriptions officer: Penny Dunn subs@thefriend.org
Sub-editor: George Osgerby subeditor@thefriend.org • Journalist: Rebecca Hardy news@thefriend.org • Environment correspondent: Laurie Michaelis green@thefriend.org • Arts correspondent: Rowena Loverance arts@thefriend.org
Clerk of trustees: Paul Jeorrett • ISSN: 0016-1268 • The Friend Publications Limited is a registered charity, number 211649 • Printed by Warners Midlands Plc, The Maltings, Manor Lane, Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 9PH
Thought for the Week

Stepping off the treadmill

There had been a sharp frost overnight. The sun appeared early and it was set for a beautiful day: oh what joy after months of winter gloom and cold temperatures! How blessed I am to be retired and therefore more free to seize opportunities as they arise. Today was undoubtedly one such opportunity, beckoning me out into nature.

I’d just driven to an area not far from home. It is one I’m not familiar with. I started to plod up a steep bridleway through woodland, and soon after this the words came into my head: ‘My soul is weary.’ I couldn’t tell you what my ‘soul’ is exactly; and ‘weary’ contains not only tiredness but a hunger. Nonetheless, the statement rang deeply true.

I’ve been busy lately with a mixture of day-to-day necessities and challenges, new projects, and fresh connections with individuals and groups. Most of it has been interesting, stimulating and life-giving, but it has all taken a great deal of energy. What comes to me now is that I need time and space in which to assimilate what has been going on.

Modern life is a kind of forward stampede or, to change the metaphor, a treadmill of sorts. Just as we have services now that are available 24/7, so it feels we have come to have a 24/7 expectation of ourselves: always to be doing, thinking up more doing, with no inbuilt stopping any more. Once upon a time Sunday was the designated day of rest, when shops closed, along with other facilities, and people had the opportunity, permission even, written into life to breathe out, come off the treadmill, halt stampeding and give themselves time to catch up with themselves (or their souls). The disturbing thing is that relentless ‘treadmilling’ has become so much part of of how life is now that we can, all too easily, not even be aware that it is so.

As I continued up the path the quiet enfolded me, punctuated from time to time by the piercing sound of birdsong of different kinds and the occasional passing aeroplane. My pace was slow, partly because of the steepness of the slope I was on, but also by choice. I wanted to slow down to nature-speed, and as I did so my thinking slowed too. It became deeper, more reflective, and more spiritual: less peppered with my activities, concerns and wishes.

I had been reading a section of a book by Thich Nhat Hanh before I went out, in which he talks about what he calls ‘singleness’. Things do not die, but simply take up different forms. My thoughts turned to my mother, who died four years ago, and for whom I still grieve. I recalled her eccentricities, her determination to be true to herself, her joyfulness, the way she used to laugh sometimes until tears poured down her face, her articulacy and her failure to suffer fools gladly. I miss all these things but, in the quiet of nature, underpinned by Thich Nhat Hanh’s writing, I could feel those characteristics of my mother very much alive in me; and in that connection, the grief within me eased and was replaced with a companionability I hadn’t felt for a long time.

I continued on up the path until I reached a high point. I took in great deep breaths of fresh air and delighted in the big wide view over countryside, which already has the early hum of spring on its way. It doesn’t take long to step off the treadmill. But, in my experience, it’s essential.

Judy Clinton
Gloucestershire Area Meeting
Meeting for Sufferings

The Canterbury Commitment: where do Friends go now?

A KEY ITEM in the morning session of Meeting for Sufferings on Saturday 7 April was the report of the group appointed to review the work of the Britain Yearly Meeting Sustainability Group (BYMSG).

The purpose of the BYMSG, which was set up as a working group of Meeting for Sufferings in October 2014, is to oversee and encourage progress in relation to the commitment made at Yearly Meeting 2011 in Canterbury to become a low-carbon sustainable community.

Jane Stephenson, clerk of the Review Group, said it was made up of four Friends and set up in April 2017. She talked about its terms of reference and how it had gone about its report – consulting as widely as possible: from committees to Area and Local Meetings, and individual Friends. She explained that it had been tasked with considering improvements that could be made and whether the BYMSG was the most effective way to oversee and encourage progress in becoming a low-carbon sustainable community.

The review group acknowledged the hard work of the BYMSG and its achievements, such as successful gatherings, including a special interest meeting at Yearly Meeting Gathering in 2015, and the commitment by trustees to write sustainability into the terms of reference of central and standing committees.

It also stressed the progress made by the board of the Hospitality Company in reducing the carbon emissions of Friends House and the appointment of a position at the Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva. However, it stated that ‘the work of the Group appears to have been beset by confusion, frustration and poor communication on all sides’ and highlighted a ‘lack of clarity in relation to its authority’ and that the group ‘sits outside the Quaker structure’.

One of the key recommendations in the report was to lay down the BYMSG. More ‘shared ownership’ of the commitment was to be encouraged as well as a special meeting planned for later this year that would include a wide range of participants – such as Quaker Peace & Social Witness (QPSW), Quaker Life Central Committee (QLCC), BYM trustees, representatives of Sufferings, the board of Friends House (London) Hospitality Ltd and members of the Sustainability Group – to decide how the commitment should be brought forward.

It was recognised ‘that the review has raised wider issues, one of which is the relationship between the centre and outside’. The move towards a low-carbon community can, it was stressed, be a ‘joyful process’ and not one that is just about ‘hair shirts’.

A Scottish Friend described the report as ‘exemplary’ and recognised the good work that had been done on the concern. However, he said he was troubled that in laying it down one merely ran ‘the risk of recreating the situation we have today’.

A Welsh Friend shared these concerns and recommended that no time limit should be made on laying down the BYMSG. Another Friend reiterated the need for a strong spiritual basis for the commitment and said: ‘Friends do not like being told what to do and in the absence of a clear spiritual basis I wonder if we need to be clearer on this. This would enable Friends to unite behind it more than we have so far.’

A Friend said he was ‘disquieted’ by the ‘lack of oomf’ in the report and what he had heard. The Canterbury minute, he stressed, was ‘seminal’ and yet Sufferings was hearing of ‘limited resources’.

He said: ‘I feel that minute 36 needs to be central to our work. It needs serious resources. We seem lost for what to do.’

Another Friend, experienced in the area, reminded those present: ‘We are not different from other groups in struggling with these issues. There are Friends who feel that they have the answer and want to push it and others who do not want to look. We are all part of the problem. There is dividedness within each of us alongside the outer dividedness. It is hard. It is not surprising we get stuck.’

He believed that the issue of sustainability is the most important one Friends have had to deal with in recent times.

A Friend, who worked as a specialist in the area, said: ‘The way we are struggling is not unlike other large organisations. There is absolutely a place for a single group outside the official structures.’ He felt it was important to have groups ‘at the edge’ and said that in time these ‘pressure groups hit the buffers’ and suggested that was the case and if ‘we are ready to own it at the core of the organisation, we should do it adventurously’.

Lis Birch, speaking as clerk to the BYMSG, said that Friends needed to be bold. She highlighted a concern mentioned several times in the report – that the
Letter of Greeting to Ireland Yearly Meeting

A LETTER TO IRELAND YEARLY MEETING 2018, which meets in Limerick on 18-22 July, was agreed at Meeting for Sufferings.

The letter highlighted the impact that the UK decision to leave the European Union was having on Ireland as well as on Britain. It recognised the close connection that exists between Friends in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, and encouraged Quakers to maintain them.

The letter recognised that ‘Europe has become a place of refuge for people fleeing war, persecution and destitution in Africa and the Middle East’ and referred to the last public speech made by Christ before his arrest in which he invites ‘every one of us to welcome the stranger’.

It stated that ‘our government’ has created a ‘hostile environment’ and that this was ‘increasingly embedding policies of discrimination, backed up by violence, into the practices of the British state’. It also mentioned the ‘Sanctuary Everywhere Manifesto’ in the need to support a culture of sanctuary.

2017 was the third year in which Britain Yearly Meeting has explored the theme of ‘Living out our faith’ in the world. The letter acknowledged some of the work being done to address this theme and highlighted the plight of the impoverished and the need for a ‘safety net’ for them.

Several references were made in the letter to subjects such as loneliness and sustainability. The decision of Britain Yearly Meeting to divest from fossil fuels was also highlighted.

BYMSG was ‘outside the existing structures’.

She continued with energy and passion: ‘It’s shameful. We have a Yearly Meeting concern. A group was set up. How do we come to think of this group as on the outside of the structures? Why can’t that work? ’

‘We have set up’, she said, ‘committees and staff to effectively “outrank” the Sustainability Group. This is more Kafka than Quaker’ and cited the fact that it had taken twelve months for a requested meeting with Friends House staff to actually happen ‘and even then it was not a dialogue’. She explained that her experience had prompted her to ask: ‘Are you going to shoot the messenger or heed the message?’

She said it was ‘right that climate change should be embedded. The major problem is how we work with the existing Britain Yearly Meeting work plan. It is shocking that it has taken so long to get existing structures to incorporate’ the concern.

She expressed concern that ‘money could be found for secular and political concerns’ and yet, she felt, the Sustainability Group related to a major Yearly Meeting commitment ‘to our faith and our lives’. She stressed that Meeting for Sufferings had a responsibility and said: ‘Area Meetings – it’s your responsibility for reaching members, and if you do this Meeting after Meeting, year after year, it could work.’

Lis Birch explained: ‘In the last twenty years, there have been at least five groups that have tried to promote sustainability and, one after another, they have been laid down. Why? We set up groups and, when they find a voice, they are laid down. This is not a pattern and example to follow. We must look to new ways of working.’

She said that ‘there should be a thorough review of our structures, including central structures, and including our centrally managed work. We must be prepared to review our structures. You have to be clear what love requires of us now.’

A Friend agreed that the commitment to sustainability was on the same level as the testimony to peace: ‘I recognise it as a corporate commitment, an area where we definitely need a leading. That can only come from those who have studied. Our willingness to change is a really important part of our being Quakers.’

A Friend who was on the Quaker Life Central Committee said that ‘quite a bit of time’ had been spent ‘considering how we can bring sustainability into our work. There is a willingness.’

However, he added that the bit ‘disturbing us most is what is happening at Local Meetings. We need to find a way of recreating the power and inspiration of the large gathering and of some of the speakers we have heard this morning’.

A Friend said she was ‘flabbergasted’ to read a yellow page made available to Friends attending Sufferings. It was a minute written by the Sustainability Group that contained a response to the review report. It represented the Group’s thoughts on the report and she said she was surprised their views seemed not to have been incorporated in the report.

A Friend, who had years of experience in industry, said: ‘If you have tried something five times and failed then there is something deeply wrong with your culture. It will not be technical. What is it that has caused this to fail five times? This needs to be addressed.’

A draft minute was presented after lunch. It reaffirmed the commitment to sustainability, affirmed the spiritual basis of the concern, highlighted the need for leadership, mentioned the four recommendations of the Review Group, but was ‘unable to unite to lay the Sustainability Group down’ and recommended the subject ‘be developed further’.
Response to the ‘post-truth world’

A MINUTE FROM SOUTHERN MARCHES Area Meeting (AM) on “Post-truth world” – What can we do? was heard at Meeting for Sufferings on 7 April at Friends House in London.

Friends in Southern Marches AM have again been discussing the question of restoring truth and integrity to the public sphere. Their minute states: ‘We need to begin with ourselves before we point the finger at others. As individuals we should be more open to listening to those we do not agree with (including via social media), and not just talk to those who share our views. We should also consider reading newspapers promoting different views from our own, and writing letters to them.’

The minute continues: ‘At Area Meeting level we would like to hold a workshop on truth and integrity.’ It asks elders and overseers to look into making arrangements for such an event.

The minute also expresses the wish for the issue to be taken up at national level: ‘We hope that our Yearly Meeting might be a public champion of truth.’

Friends from Southern Marches asked Meeting for Sufferings to test this concern ‘and in particular to consider reviving the programme on Truth and Integrity in Public Affairs, which was laid down some years ago.’

Speaking to the minute, a Friend who is also a civil servant talked of ‘a real understanding of what this means in our present climate.’ He said: ‘With the advent of social media this is a time Friends need to start thinking again’ about these issues.

He added: ‘There is a lot of legislation… Get ridding of red tape [can be] problematic, awkward, inconvenient.’

The subject is something Friends should take on,’ he said. ‘It does need that wider testing within the Society.’

Another Friend had two observations to make. First: ‘Too much policy is now being based on conviction rather than evidence.’ Second: ‘There is increased contracting out of government services to commercial undertakings, who then claim secrecy as part of that undertaking.’

A request for ministry in this area of public life was also made. A Friend said that there ‘is not a great deal of guidance on this in the current book.’

Another Friend was ‘glad there is some sense of urgency’ about the matter.

The minute will be sent to Area Meetings for further discernment.

MEETING FOR SUFFERINGS agreed to add to the court and prison register the names of three Friends whose witness was described on 7 April.

Two of them, Jo Frew from North London Area Meeting (AM) and Simon Watson from East London AM, were arrested in September 2017 outside the Defence and Security International (DSEI) arms fair at the ExCeL exhibition centre in London Docklands.

On 7 February this year, Jo Frew, along with three others, appeared at Stratford Magistrates Court and was found not guilty of obstruction of the highway.

On 8 February Simon Watson, along with three others, appeared at the same court and was cleared of wilfully obstructing a public highway. Both cases are being appealed, Sufferings heard, and may reach the High Court.

Sufferings also heard that Ian Bray from Brighouse West Yorkshire AM, with other members of a group, carried out four nonviolent direct actions in eight days in March last year as part of the Stop Killing Londoners, Cut Air Pollution campaign. They have been charged with criminal damage and are waiting for a court date to be set.

FRIENDS AT Meeting for Sufferings agreed to register Quaker Bolivia Link as an external group for five years. Registration is to be reviewed by April 2023. It is the latest group to be registered as a Quaker Recognised Body.

Friends were also asked to send in the names of new representatives and alternates for the 2018-2021 triennium.

All recommendations must be given before Yearly Meeting meets over the weekend of 4-7 May. New representatives will be appointed then.

Friends were reminded of the three questions on diversity within Meetings that have been given to Area Meetings, committees and groups for consideration and were encouraged to send their responses to Meeting for Sufferings.

The three questions are:

In what ways is your Meeting (or committee or group) already diverse?

In what ways could it be more diverse?

What would help your Meeting become more diverse and what are the opportunities and barriers to this?
Quakers speak out against military action in Syria

FRIENDS HOUSE released a statement on 12 April urging the UK government not to take military action in Syria and to work for peace instead.

The statement said: ‘We see with horror the death and devastation being imposed on the people in and around Syria. We believe that the use of chemical weapons should be challenged. However, as a faith community our religious understanding and experience is that true peace cannot be imposed by military might.

‘We remain convinced that there are both moral and pragmatic reasons to oppose military action in Syria. Bombs dropped from the air kill indiscriminately, and also increase the risk of terrorist retribution. Those who suffer the most in violent conflict are non-combatants, ordinary people including women and children.

‘Instead, we support the process of building peace. Peace is rarely immediate or easy, but it results in genuine long-term security. True peace comes from hard work and thoughtful actions.’

The statement urged the prime minister ‘not to sideline democratic processes, and to consider the long-term impact of any action in Syria.’

Rwandan Friends’ appeal success

FRIENDS WORLD COMMITTEE for Consultation (FWCC) has closed the successful campaign to help Rwanda Yearly Meeting address an urgent need to install lightning rods on thirty-five buildings in Rwanda Yearly Meeting.

The appeal followed several fatal lightning strikes in that country that affected churches, schools and other buildings. The Rwandan government decreed that lightning rods, costing about £400 each, must be installed on all church and state buildings before the end of March or they would be closed.

The generosity of Friends around the world has ensured that the goal of £14,000 has almost been reached.

Rwandan Friends will be now able to meet new government safety requirements, which was brought in at very short notice, and continue to meet as Friends in safety in churches, schools and the Friends Peace House in Kigali.

The FWCC has decided that for any money that arrives after the target has been reached donors will be contacted.

They will be offered the choice of having the cheque returned; contributing to the general fund of FWCC either in the World Office or Section office; or asking FWCC to send the contribution to Evangelical Friends Mission, which is raising funds for Rwanda Yearly Meeting’s long-term building needs.

Peace protestors make West Midlands ‘weapons inspection’

LONDON QUAKER Jo Frew was one of ‘The People’s Weapons Inspectors’ – Christian peace protestors who blocked the gates of arms manufacturer Roxel in the West Midlands on 7 April.

They attempted to inspect the site because they believe it is supplying weapons components to be used by the Saudi Arabian military in its war in Yemen.

Some protestors blocked the gates by locking their arms together inside fortified drainage pipes.

Jo Frew, who entered the site with the aim of questioning Roxel’s directors, said: ‘By licensing arms sales to Saudi Arabia, the British government is escalating the conflict.

‘We felt compelled to act. We call upon the British government to refuse applications to licence further arms sales to Saudi Arabia.’

Churches Together Birmingham survey

QUAKERS IN BIRMINGHAM have been invited to take part in a survey to help find out how Birmingham Churches Together is working. The aim of the survey, called ‘Celebrating Unity in Mission,’ is to help understand ‘the shape of our mission and ministry in the future’.

It asks what kind of activities participants do in partnership with other worshipping communities and faiths.
Letters
All views expressed are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the Friend

God, words and us
Thanks to Hilary Johnson and Robin Bowman for their valuable report of a workshop on ‘God, words and us’ (6 April).

The general trend of the book God, words and us is underlined by a pressure to abandon the term ‘theism’ while retaining the term ‘nontheism’, a theme traceable in the theologies heard in the workshop itself. Two observations:

First, the workshop report suggests that debating transcendence may be an 'error' since transcendence cannot be logically proved. ‘Friends, though, have never attempted to offer a logical proof of transcendence. We accept it, along with immanence, as a matter of Christian faith supported by personal experience and the testimony of others whom we can trust. These include our early Quaker forebears, the wonderful Thomas Kelly, and the great Christian mystics from Augustine to Merton, as well as the many seasoned Friends whose spiritual wisdom and maturity we all recognise.

Second, the report further suggests that speaking of transcendence at all may be ‘the thin end of a credal wedge that has little place in our Religious Society’. That leaves us with immanence only. But it can be argued on the same basis that immanence, too, is ‘the thin end of a credal wedge’. We are then left with nothing. In the end, the overall effect of God, words and us may be to leave us lamenting our Christian experience and the testimony of others whom we can trust. These include our early Quaker forebears, the wonderful Thomas Kelly, and the great Christian mystics from Augustine to Merton, as well as the many seasoned Friends whose spiritual wisdom and maturity we all recognise.

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The article ‘God, words and us’ talks about discussions over the difference between ‘atheism’ and ‘nontheism’. It is time someone pointed out that, linguistically speaking, as far I can see, they mean exactly the same thing.

The confusion has perhaps arisen through ignorance of the meaning of the Greek roots of the words. Theos is the Greek for ‘God’. The prefix ‘a’ means, quite simply, ‘not’ or ‘non’ – exactly the same as in words such as ‘asymmetric’ or ‘aphasic’.

So, ‘nontheist’ is just a partial translation into English of ‘atheist’, nothing more or less. To pretend otherwise is simply evasion.

Peter Bolwell
19 Priory Close, Hastings TN34 1UJ

Being true to the essence
A contributor to the Friend (16 March) says Quakers in Britain have moved on from a belief that Jesus was ‘uniquely divine’. In a sense that is right – in as much as early Quakers had a ‘Christology’ it was less about dogma but about discipleship, about following Jesus’ example and teaching: about Christian discipline in the experience of Friends.

Mention was also made about attenders/new members objecting to Friends ministering about God, Jesus, or reading from the Bible in Meeting for Worship. In one of our Meetings an attendant requested that we would no longer speak of Jesus in them. After a while an elderly Friend rose and said that this would not be possible, since ‘the Spirit would require us to speak of Jesus’. He then fell silent and stood for such a long time that Friends began to wonder whether there was something wrong with him. Then he added: ‘And if the Spirit does not I will!’ It was in this spirit that I wrote my article (2 March).

Friends need to ask themselves what ‘being true to the essence’ actually is. George Fox said: ‘There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition… Christ it was who had enlightened me, that gave me his Light to believe in, and gave me hope… and gave me his spirit and gave me his grace.’

I pray Friends may celebrate the presence of Christ in our midst, that they may celebrate the corporate Christian mysticism of early Friends again in their Meetings.

Kees Nieuwerth
Netherlands Yearly Meeting

Meetings and Young Friends
Thanks to my fellow Wooldale Friend Sarah Sheard (6 April) for reminding us of what we can offer young people – and what they could offer us, if they gave us their own ‘faith and practice’ book.

I have had experience recently of what Young Adult Friends (YAFs), members of Young Friends General Meeting (YFGM) and other YAF groups, are giving us. I was impressed by articles in the February edition of The Young Quaker, with their fresh ideas, careful reflection and deep spirituality.

Looking through some past issues of the Friend, I came across the article ‘Decline or revival?’ (4 August 2017) by Laurence Hall of YFGM. He points out that recent research and his conversations with YAFs show that many of them are ‘profoundly committed to Quaker faith, worship and witness, but are estranged from the practices and culture of official Quaker structures’.

For many of us older Friends also, Area Meetings and other Business Meetings have become a duty and a burden, rather than a spiritual experience. They are all too rarely, despite some excellent clerking, ‘Meetings for Worship for Business’.

For the sake of Friends young and old, often ‘time-poor’ in different ways, we should give our urgent
attention to them. Perhaps smaller, simpler agenda items can be dealt with through emails, phone calls and short discussions after Meeting for Worship, and we could reserve our very valuable process of discernment for more complex, face-to-face issues of conflict or major change, as well as for Meetings for Clearness.

Judith Smith
Wooldale Meeting, West Yorkshire

Transgender Friends
We fully support the article and letters in the Friend (30 March) on the issues of gender and identity.

As parents of a transgender child, we were deeply disturbed by earlier contributions that, to our minds, gave a very one-sided and over-simplified view of the fraught issue of gender identity by assuming a homogeneity of beliefs and attitudes in transgender society which does not exist. We also consider it presumptuous to dismiss out of hand treatments and approaches to gender dysphoria that have recently emerged and will no doubt evolve and be refined in the future.

More importantly, we were dismayed by the absence, in our opinion, in some contributions of any explicit empathy and support for transpeople who frequently suffer intense personal distress.

We strongly believe that the approach of Quakers should be to support, encourage and minister to the individual needs of transgender Friends, their parents, their partners and their children and not, as it seems for some Friends, to be so definitive on how these needs should be addressed.

Anonymous
Names and address supplied

Dragons in my cupboard
If you have lived through a difficult childhood you may have your own dragons that will reveal themselves at odd moments.

We have successfully crushed and buried the monsters of anger, fear, hurt, injustice and rage that lurk beneath the surface. We present for the most part an acceptable image to society at large. But those feelings are still there and they can cause us untold damage.

The problems arise when we fail to address and share with others our pain and hurt, thereby releasing the dragons from the darkness of our minds. We need to bring these dragons to the surface of our consciousness, to own them, to experience the disbelief and shock of what we see and allow the monsters to speak to us and not rule us.

By allowing them into the light of day we will find them less alarming. We are then able to transform them, thus releasing the enormous amount of energy that has been used to hold them down.

As we grow we learn to take responsibility for our own negative parts, and to let go and give back those of other people. We can then move beyond the shadows, the sins and the dragons, and be brave enough to step outside and use the tremendous power of the creative gifts that are within each one of us, waiting to be tapped.

We must let go.

Christopher Price
HMP Gartree

Out, standing in his field
Being a Quaker is a serious undertaking but not so serious that humour is forbidden. Humour is, surely, one of the qualifications for claiming to be a ‘whole’ person. There should be joy in our hearts as we join Anthony Gimpel (6 April) in working to achieve our measure in helping to bring about the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth through love and compassion.

With that in mind, a phrase from Rowena Loverance’s seminal article in the same edition on ‘The Nobel Peace Prize’ caused a ‘merry conceit’ to pop up. On page 11 we read: ‘Those who have spent a lifetime in the field…’ In this case, that refers, of course to the field of a particular experience.

On holiday in Cornwall some years ago, when passing a farm, I saw a remarkably lifelike scarecrow. On returning the next day, the scarecrow was still there. Furthermore, it waved! I stopped the car and asked: ‘Why are you there dressed up as a scarecrow?’

He answered: ‘I’m hoping to win the Nobel Prize. I’m a farmer and this is my land. A Nobel Prize is awarded to anyone who is outstanding in his own field.’

Peter Boyce
Winchmore Hill Meeting, London

In essentials unity,
in non-essentials liberty,
in all things charity.

letters@thefriend.org

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I wonder how many Friends remember the logo used initially by the Friends Home Service Committee, which later became Quaker Life? It depicted a tree, but the interesting point was that it not only presented the trunk and foliage but also, in equal measure, the whole root system. Along with these characteristics, we need to be aware of the creatures inhabiting the tree both above and below the ground. The point of this logo should be obvious: namely, that the living root-function is as important or even crucial, and of added significance to the tree above the ground.

Perhaps the metaphor can be developed even further when considering the configuration of the Banyan tree, with the branches cascading down to join the voluminous root system, a notion which is perceived as being spiritually symbolic in certain religious cultures.

**A ‘corporate state’?**

Earlier in our Quaker tradition there appeared to be no practical problems with our ‘bottom-up’ system, with initiatives and leadings coming primarily from the Preparative, Monthly and Quarterly Meetings. That is how things were fifty or more years ago.

My view, and I imagine it is the same for many long-term Friends, is that there has been a great deal of change in more recent times that is not helpful in enabling our beloved Religious Society of Friends to flourish and grow in active membership.

We need, therefore, to improve a number of aspects to advance the appeal of our faith and practice. This I know is a bold, but heartfelt statement, suggesting that we have been unconsciously led (perhaps not always by the Spirit) along misconstrued paths.

We have, I believe, evolved into a top-down ‘corporate state’ Religious Society that resembles the world we inhabit. This is the kind of world where attitudes are, I believe, to let somebody else take responsibility for running the show while we do our own thing. We say we shall get involved when we feel like it, but please provide us with freedom to believe what befits us. We want to be committed only when it suits us as there is so much more that is egocentric on offer elsewhere to engage with.

Now, back to the logo. In recent years, I believe, our roots have been eroded drastically since the demise of Quarterly Meetings. The tree and branches have been festooned with a panacea of imitation flowers, which may appear to be authentic but are actually unfit for long-term survival. Continued existence embraces sustained numerical growth to function in concert with our unique and creative faith and practice.

One enlightened and long-term attender said to me a while ago that he felt there is ‘no substance’ and is now no longer worshipping with us. This, unfortunately, is frequently the pattern in Meetings across the length and breadth of Britain Yearly Meeting. It is not always the shortcoming of the attender.

**Derrick Whitehouse is concerned about the effects of ‘too much change’**

*Photo: Jeroen van Abeelen / flickr CC.*
Why?

Where did we go wrong in this come-day, go-day world we inhabit? I suggest the problem arose when Quarterly Meetings appeared to be running down, leading to the creation of General Meetings that were not compelled to be as regular and even became non-operational in a number of regions.

This was the point of looming disaster when we, Britain yearly Meeting and everyone who loves our Religious Society, should have asked the question: ‘Why are Quarterly gatherings not working?’

The reason, in my opinion, was that both Friends and long-term attenders simply ‘could not be bothered to participate fully when there were other attractions’. As a consequence this essential feature of the root system of Britain yearly Meeting was shattered in an instant and that, dear Friend, represents why we are in a pickle now. If we do not recognise this to be the case, and do nothing about it, then our beloved Religious Society will continue to wane.

We hear cries of ‘We must appeal to a wider range of people’ – but that is the next big error of judgment. It is not our way to become extra ‘happy-clappy. This form of worship is carried out more successfully by other faiths. We must rise above haggling over theism and nontheism to a point where we have a common understanding of ‘something there’ that is an enigmatic essence acceptable to everyone. This, I feel, is the only way forward for a truly ‘Religious’ Society of Friends.

The tradition of Friends

We have to share with one another and practice, diligently, ways to pray and become a people of prayer for all members and attenders by way of a variety of techniques and adaptations. An exciting and stimulating experiment demands this. We need to explore ways of silent worship so that everyone understands how to move into the stillness of waiting and listening to ministry that is always spiritually uplifting. This is the tradition of Friends.

It is so much more than simply sitting still and hoping. We need to know that all those who worship with us must have, and feel the need to develop, these skills in all their diverse and meaningful forms.

For some reason we are not especially good at facilitating the development of worship and prayer in many Meetings. Instead, we leave it to chance, which may be why folk are not inspired to stay with us. Do they truly understand and progress in our exceptionally meaningful Quaker way of worship?

We contend that our worship is the dynamic that leads to our wisdom and enlightened practice in the turbulent world we inhabit. However, I am not convinced that our good works are always spiritually-led. Are they led more by a moral prompting?

We must understand there is a philosophical difference between the motivation and application of the two perspectives if we are to remain a ‘religious’ society.

Consolidate our foundation

So, here we are, thoughtful people running around and attempting to function effectively as a spiritual body rooted in wide-ranging forms of religiousness. In doing this we value not only ourselves but also strive together with other people to make a worthwhile contribution to the development and wellbeing of the wider world.

This is where we are – much admired for our originality and desire to serve everyone and everything and yet we appear to be dwindling towards dying out. We must stop playing around with questionable attitudes and consolidate our foundation based on universal values that have been adopted by Quakers. We will then be ready to move away from the present top-down functional style and re-establish a vibrant bottom-up culture. We have to move back to recreating and revising forms of quarterly convergence that are different from the previous structure. I would suggest just ten fully functioning sectors on a regional basis.

A purposeful and dynamic culture

Everything then hinges on full commitment for regular shared activity and participation by everyone in order to make it work in an imaginative and spiritually vital manner. This means not simply to function for the few but the development of an exciting, purposeful and dynamic culture that is inspirational spiritually as well as vibrant socially, where everyone will want to participate, appreciate and enjoy.

It is as simple as that. If we become committed to a form of unselfish, mystical dynamism we will, without doubt, flourish and grow. We can become as a tree with an unwavering and tenacious root system founded on a steadfast, spiritually uplifting, life and understanding in which all inhabitants know and feel they want to join in, flourish and grow personally.

Friends will then feel they truly belong, are content with, dedicated to and prepared to be of increasing service and bestow spiritually our witness, both personal and corporate, on this troubled but so beautiful world.

Derrick is a member of Broad Campden Meeting.
Well, how can I best express my thanks and congratulations to the thirty or so Friends who did the thinking, praying, meeting, listening and writing that gives the material for this book? And to the team who produced it, editing and arranging, providing footnotes where necessary and resources at the end, creating the final attractive short paperback?

A first comment about God, words and us is that only Quakers could have spent such a huge amount of time and energy on this task of listening, in depth, to their own inner longings for meaning and, at the same time, an equal amount of time and energy listening to the oh-so-different longings and meanings of others. Even more remarkably, they have managed to step aside from the ‘belief systems versus secular reductionism’ that swirls around in our culture, while still being intellectually informed by it.

The second thing to say is that the book shows ‘theism’ and ‘nontheism’ to be wholly inadequate terms. The much-feared conflict between them, when it is as closely examined as it is by these Friends, is pretty much hot air. It’s clear from these pages that the best thing to do now is to throw both terms into the waste bin on collection day – not, please, into the recycling – and instead, find words for your own experience and pay attention to others articulating theirs. And when there are no words, the silence will do fine. We are Quakers, are we not? And Friends.

Spiritual influences

God, words and us makes plain the huge variety of spiritual influences that are supporting and enlightening Friends in these turbulent times. From Psalm 84 to Hinduism, from Buddhist meditation to parish Anglicanism, from the Sea of Faith Network to Tarot cards, these Friends acknowledge their debt to numerous wisdoms and experiments. They seem to me to be representative of British Friends at large. You have only to read Patterns and Examples: Experiencing the Spirit of other Faiths, published by the Hampstead Interfaith Group in 2005, to see how widely we are still exploring.

I wrote in my chapter for that book about those of us, particularly women, who are refugees from
centuries of deeply damaging forms of patriarchal monotheism. (Indeed, the true horrors of this are only now becoming clear.) For more than a decade my spiritual path was enlivened and inspired by the annual Goddess Conferences in Glastonbury, where I absorbed worldwide stories of goddesses in myth and in spiritual practice. So, when things are tough, I can turn to Bridget for healing, Ceridwen for stamina, and Aphrodite for enduring love.

These adventures have complemented my regular Quaker worship, Quaker ways of decision-making and Quaker commitment to community, and provide a strong basis for my ambition to find a better relationship with our Mother, the Earth. They have also been challenged and balanced by the experience of living with a couple of scientists in the family, both doubtful about the idea of transcendence, both active Quakers.

**Healing and hope**

In *God, words and us*, Beth Allen makes a plea for Friends to find a theology which offers both healing and hope. She recalls a Quaker discussion about God-language and nontheism at which several clergy were present: "[One] priest asked, "I work with many people who are in the depths of misery. How do Quakers show people who are in despair that there can be hope?"

There was silence. Beth Allen continues: 'As the chair, I asked all there: "Do Friends have anything to say about this? Does anyone?" At length a non-Quaker who is a professional counsellor rose and replied from her clinical experience. We Quakers had nothing to say about hope."

This story touched me deeply, and not because I’ve failed to find hope among Friends. I’ve found it often, and it isn’t a false hope. The support of Friends when I’ve despaired about the state of things, and about my own inadequacy in the face of those things, has been genuine, and deep. I could describe it as attention of the same kind and quality that the author and critic John Berger writes of his doctor hero in his novel *A Fortunate Man*: ‘His satisfaction comes… where he faces forces which no previous explanation will exactly fit, because they depend upon the history of a patient’s particular personality. He tries to keep that personality company in its loneliness.’

Though I’ve known this kind of loving attention, I haven't recorded it under the heading ‘Quaker theology’ or asked for it to be entered in *Quaker faith & practice*. But if I'd been at Beth Allen's meeting that day, I could have offered it as a story. I could also add stories of its opposite: blank expressions, or even bristles of hostility.

But we are human beings, fallible, and often confused, and we are sometimes simply not up to this level of attention and response.

**The process**

What I remember from my churchgoing days (and this is purely personal recollection, not to be generalised at all) is plenty of talk about hope: hope of redemption, hope of heaven, hope of a God who would intervene and save me if I prayed hard enough. These hopes vanished, one by one. I felt betrayed, bereft. Better by far, I feel now, the fallible, tentative, human, humane offerings of Friends, who are no surer than I am of the outcome of my or their anguish, but who are willing to keep me company in my loneliness.

My reading of *God, words and us* – and maybe it’s a reading between the lines – is that the theology of this book, the hopefulness of this book, lies not in its conclusions but in its process; in the methods and the commitment that these thirty or so Friends employed to listen to themselves and each other to bring it about. Most religious bodies wouldn't dream of undergoing this exercise, because it would threaten their power structure.

Quaker structure, when it requires voluntary commitment, undermines power. We occupy a post of responsibility for a few years, then give it up and hand it on. Our decisions are made corporately, with those at the desk not dictating, but listening. In a Quaker business meeting, a single Friend's contribution – a young Friend, maybe, an inexperienced Friend, a mentally disturbed Friend – can change the course of our decision-making process. Power is there, but it is fluid power, following (if we are disciplined enough and careful enough) the river of the Spirit, rather than the self-made channels of our egos.

A final word is the word ‘discipline’. The Quaker way is a difficult road, without any of the rewards promised by our current status-seeking, consumerist way of life. It needs discipline to keep going, and we all need time off to recharge our batteries. But, for those of us who stay the course, it's worth it. I hope the thirty or so Friends who created *God, words and us* will feel that this has been worth it too.

* Alison is a member of Hebden Bridge Meeting.

God, words and us: Quakers in conversation about religious difference *edited by Helen Rowlands* is published by Quaker Books at £8. ISBN: 9781999726928.
In December 2008, nearly ten years ago, I came across a remarkable sentence of George Fox and copied it into my inner diary: ‘You have the light to see all evil and the power to withstand it.’ Early Quakers lived that message and in spite of – or, perhaps, because of – the animosity and persecution meted out to them, experienced amazing strength and creativity. Now we are in the twenty-first century and this insight is still precious. I can see different levels to which it applies. For each one I have modified the words ‘evil’, ‘power’ and ‘withstand’, replacing them by more appropriate words with respect to the different levels of experience.

First of all, my perspective is to look at the level of national and international politics. I see the harm we are doing to each other and to the planet. I put George Fox’s insight into the first person with these words: ‘I have the light to see all the exploitation and manipulation and I also have the courage to resist them.’ Action together is the way forward. Each one of us can find other people and take action together. For myself, I am supporting the work of Stop Fuelling War, a group based in the Quaker building in Paris, raising awareness in France of the obscenity of Eurosatory, the arms ‘fair’ to be held at the Paris-Nord Villepinte Exhibition Centre from 11-15 June in Paris.

I look now at a different level, our personal relationships; in my case, the behaviour of acquaintance, friends and family towards me in ways that I may consider negative or difficult. Some, or rather much, of this behaviour may be because of my own ‘closedness’. My phrase is now: ‘I have the light to see difficult and what I consider to be negative behaviour and I also have the resilience to respond and not to react.’ Action is, however, difficult. The problem is the speed of response required. When I receive a word of criticism, I try, immediately, to be conscious of my breathing in order to avoid rapid reaction. It’s a tall order.

My third level is even more difficult. It is the level of my own negativity, my self-centred and self-righteous way of living. Seeing one’s own negativity can be frightening. George Fox’s approach looks daunting: ‘Now you must die in the silence, die from the wisdom, die from the knowledge, die from the reason, and die from the understanding.’ I softened this in my inner diary to: ‘To die is to turn back from the misleading reactions that we usually mistake for “life”.

An article in the Friend (5 September 2017) going back to when I was pondering George Fox nearly ten years ago helped my phrase change. It was about focusing: ‘From focusing I learned how to relate to those places in myself, rather than being in them or overwhelmed by them.’ My phrase is now, therefore: ‘I have the light to see my own lack and the confidence to relate to it in creative ways rather than being stuck in it and overwhelmed by it.’

I think it is important here to avoid heaviness. So, I conclude with the upbeat tone of Isaac Pennington: ‘And from this measure of life, the capacity increaseth, the senses grow stronger; it sees more, feels more, tastes more, hears more, smells more. Now when when the senses are grown up to strength… doubtings and disputes in the mind fly away and the soul lives in the certain demonstration, and fresh sense, and power of life’(To Friends of Both the Chalfonts).

Is there any action that we can take which helps us in all three levels? It’s closer than we think. Quaker Voluntary Action is our homegrown way of combining practical work with free time, reflection, fellowship and fun.

Richard Thompson reflects on a quotation from George Fox

Richard is a member of the Languedoc Group, France Yearly Meeting.

Further information: www.qva.org.uk
A small green insect slow-crawls the keyboard,  
a cumbersome climb on delete to home.  
Wait…  
It moves on for break,  
and then pause  
before travelling back to insert,  
which he did, or she. Now lost forever  
I’m afraid to continue  
lest squashing an insect prolong my karma.  

I’m at play, seizing an idle moment,  
yet this creature, alive as I and as curious,  
share the strange world of technology.  

And it’s strange to think as he climbs the keyboard  
that as I watch him and wonder, he doesn’t watch me  
and think, ‘what is she?’ and I felt unnecessary,  
superfluous, like a giant, cut-off from so much life  
that just gets on with the business of being.  

Trish Munn  
Clun Valley Meeting
EIGHTEEN UNDISTURBED GRAVES thought to be from an old Quaker graveyard have been found under the grounds of the Corn Exchange on the Royal Pavilion Estate in Brighton, local Friend Tony Tree has told Eye.

Archaeologists also discovered three broken up skeletons. It is believed Regency builders moved them. All the remains are being cleaned and looked at by the osteological team of the Archaeology South-East office.

The remains are thought to be from ‘Quakers Croft’ – a Quaker burial ground that existed before the Royal Pavilion Estate was built, and before the Quaker Meeting house moved to its current location in Meeting House Lane in 1805.

Garrett Sheehan, from Archaeology South-East, said: ‘We believe the skeletons we have found are between 200 to 300 years old. The Bishops Map from 1803 showed this area marked as Quakers Croft, and a Quaker burial ground was known to exist here – it was the extent of this that wasn’t clear until now.

‘The construction of the Riding School here at Brighton Dome was completed in 1813, so the burials pre-date that. In this area, outside the old riding school, we have up to eighteen burials that remained undisturbed. Interestingly, there are also up to three disarticulated skeletons buried here that were presumably moved during the original riding school construction.’

The first Quaker Meetings for Worship were held in private houses in Rottingdean, a small village near Brighton, around 1656. The first burial ground was there and the first burial recorded in 1659. It is still there and is a protected site.

In 1700 a converted malthouse was leased for 1,000 years for £105 to satisfy the need for a permanent building for Meeting for Worship. This was in North Street. The premises and attached land comprised the tenement, malthouse, outhouses and a croft of pastureland. The meadowland behind the Meeting house was let and known thereafter as Quakers’ Croft, and a smaller piece at the Spring Walks (Church Street) was used as a burying ground.

Friends moved to the present Meeting house in Ship Street in 1804 and until 1854 this was used as a burial ground. Burials were then moved to Black Rock.

The Black Rock Meeting House and Burial Ground were subject to compulsory purchase and demolished by the council to build the access road to the Brighton Marina in 1972. Friends were removed to a new Quaker burial site at Lawns Memorial Park in Woodingdean, Brighton.

Terry Bryne, warden at Brighton Meeting, said: ‘The discovery of this burial site has opened up a fascinating new chapter in the history of Brighton Friends. It will help us understand how local Friends lived more than 200 years ago and will be added to the story and interpretation of the early Brighton Quakers. We are now searching within our archives of burial records to identify the remains. We will be working with the archaeology team to help complete the story of early Friends in Brighton.’

The remains that have been found will be reburied alongside other Friends at Lawns Memorial Park in the near future.
Deaths

Peter ANNISON 5 April. Husband of Ruth, father of Lindsey, grandfather of Keziah (Kizzy) and Tara. Member of Bainbridge Meeting, previously Adel (Leeds) and Nottingham. Aged 78. Quaker funeral and burial 1.30pm Saturday 21 April, Bainbridge FMH (Wensleydale). Car parking courtesy of National Park office (5 minute walk across village green). If preferred, join family and friends for recollections and refreshments at 3pm at Sycamore Hall (near National Park office).

Claire COOKSON (née Gaffen) 8 April. Member of Ealing Meeting. A Memorial Meeting will be held at 2pm on Wednesday 25 April at Ealing FMH. Contact: qwarden@gmail.com

Paula GESCHWIND (née Paulina Caswell) 20 January. Member of Ealing Meeting. A Memorial Meeting was held on 15 April.

Memorial meetings

Eleanor M BARDEN Memorial Meeting 2pm Sunday 29 April at Northampton Meeting House, Wellington Street, Northampton NN1 3AS. Contact: foreleanor@btinternet.com

Kate SCHAFER A Memorial Meeting to celebrate Kate’s life will be held at 2pm Sunday 13 May at Friargate Meeting House, York YO1 9RL. Enquiries to James Schaffer, email: yelvertonuk@gmail.com

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE QUAKING? Diana Sandy
A collection of essays and letters reacting to events and issues as they have happened in the Society of Friends over the past thirty years. Available from: Radius Publishing Ltd Grape Lane, York YO1 7HU Tel: 01904 635967 £5 plus £1.75 postage

Marriages

John WELTON to Mai TARGETT at Exeter Friends Meeting House, 16 February.

Friends & Meetings

Calls for contributions

David PERYER A testimony is currently being prepared. Please send any relevant material to Barbara Windle either at Friargate Quaker Meeting House, Friargate, York YO1 9RL or email to bwindle@waitrose.com

Diary

QUAKER BUSINESS METHOD: HOW IT WORKS AND WHY IT WORKS A cognitive science perspective from Peter Cheng. 2–4pm, Thursday 3 May, central Birmingham. Book your free place by emailing ulrika.froberg@ anthonycollins.com, or see: www.goo.gl/kn1qgP

QUAKER CONCERN FOR ANIMALS AT YEARLY MEETING AGM Saturday 5 May at the Penn Club: 11–12.30. Special Interest Meeting: Vegan Living as Quaker Witness Saturday 5 May, 5.30–6.30pm Drayton House. Details: www.quaker-animals.co.uk

THE TESTIMONY OF EQUALITY Where do we as individuals stand? We invite you to join Border Meeting 2018, near Cologne, Germany, 7–9 September. Full details: https://bordermeeting2018.blogspot.de or email border.meeting@gmail.com, tel. +49 172 46 50776. Registration closes 13 June.

Hosting an event at BYM?
Put a Diary notice in the Friend!

Woodbrooke invites you to the Swarthmore Lecture to be given by Chris Alton

Changing ourselves, Changing the world
at Friends House, Saturday 5 May, 7pm
or watch online via www.woodbrooke.org.uk/swarthmore

The Swarthmore Lecture is a public lecture open to all, however to help BYM staff in their planning please register via www.quaker.org.uk/ym

A book to accompany the lecture will be published in July.

Friends & Meetings

Personal entries (births, marriages, deaths, anniversaries, changes of address, etc.) charged at £30 incl. vat for up to 35 words and includes a copy of the magazine. Meeting and charity notices, (Changes of clerk, new wardens, new Members, changes to meeting, Diary, etc.) £25 zero rated for vat. Max. 35 words. Three entries £60 (£50 if zero rated); six entries £97.50 (£81.25 if zero rated). Entries 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 that excludes terms of endearment and words of tribute. Guidelines on request. Telephone: 01535 630230 Email: ads@thefriend.org

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Classified advertisements

George Penaluna, Advertisement Manager, The Friend, 54a Main Street, Cononley, Keighley BD20 8LL E: ads@thefriend.org

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MID-WALES, DOLOBRAN Meeting House cottage. Simple, rural, secret, heavenly retreat. Sleeps 3. Donations. Tel. 01938 500746. sandsmeade@btinternet.com www.dolobran.llanhub.uk

DELIGHTFUL COTTAGE. Picturesque village in North York Moors. Superb views. Sleeps 6. Garden, Aga, open fire. Perfect base for walking holidays. Lilacottageomotherly@gmail.com

SCOTTISH ISLES (HARRIS), WIND, RAIN, rainbows, sunsets, seals, otters, walks, eagles, golden beaches, orchids, Heaven! Shorefront contemporary bungalow. Sleeps 2. All comforts, horizon views. www.milbothy.co.uk, 01859 530400.

Friends Historical Society
Quaker history for today

Come and see us at the Groups Fair at Yearly Meeting on Sunday 6 May, 6–8.30pm

You are also invited to our Presidential address by Gethin Evans
Cymru: concern, conscience and caution: Quaker cameos in Welsh History at 12.30pm on Sunday 6 May in Drayton House, Room B03 Ricardo.

More details on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/FriendsHistoricalSociety or email: gilskidmore@waitrose.com

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Please support us at gofundme.com/rebuilding-quakers-in-ghana
Contact JaniceAcquah@gmail.com
or Martin Williams 07909 425247.

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www.centre-quaker-congenies.org or call +33 466 71 46 41, +33 466 35 27 16.

books
TWO QUAKERS DESCRIBE their near death experiences in the current edition edition of Reaching Out, the journal of Quaker Fellowship for Afterlife Studies. To request a free copy, email angela1@webbscottage.co.uk, or write to QFAS, Webb’s Cottage, Woolpits Road, Saling, Braintree, Essex CM7 5DZ. www.quakerfellowshipforafterlifestudies.co.uk

events
QUAKER SERVICE MEMORIAL TRUST EVENTS 2018
Sunday 6 May 12:30 Yearly Meeting PACIFISM UNDER TEST QSMS will launch its DVD *Pacifism Under Test* at a Special Interest Meeting in Friends House Library. This DVD contains new filmed interviews with some of those people who served in the FAU and FRS during World War Two.
Tuesday 15 May Conscientious Objector Day
Saturday 22 September International Day of Peace
A Meeting for Worship will be held at the Quaker Service Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire at 2:30 p.m on both dates.
www.qsmt.org.uk

miscellaneous
QUAKER MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES and other bespoke calligraphy. Liz Barrow 01223 369776, lizbarrow3@gmail.com www.lizbarrow.co.uk
Please always remember to mention the Friend whenever you reply to an advertisement.

the Friend, 20 April 2018
Quakers Sharing Experience
GLENTHORNE QUAKER CENTRE, GRASMERE
Friday 15 - Sunday 17 June
A Lakeland weekend facilitated by Geoffrey Durham and Lea Cowin
As featured in the Friend of 26 January, this event offers the chance to explore our stories of spiritual encounter and their power to enrich our lives. An opportunity for sharing, learning and knowing one another in that which is eternal. £190, full-board.
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INVITATION
Quakers & Business Group
Come and see us at the Groups Fair!
You are invited to our Special Interest Group "Quakers and Business: What went wrong?"
Saturday 5 May at 12:30 in Drayton House Room B03 Ricardo
And welcome at our Gathering "Quakers & Leadership" a provocative and challenging day exploring Quakers and leadership, including speakers, workshops, time to reflect and the AGM.
Saturday 30 June 2018 at Friargate Quaker Meeting House, York.
For further details for all of the above visit www.QandB.org

Britain Yearly Meeting
Service Delivery Assistants Swarthmoor Hall
Hours: Part time – 15 per week (flexible, including weekends and bank holidays). Location: Swarthmoor Hall, Cumbria.

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For further information about Swarthmoor Hall, please go to www.swarthmoorhall.co.uk and for details on how to apply, go to www.quaker.org.uk/jobs

Closing Date Monday 30 April 2018. Interviews Thursday 3 May 2018.

Britain Yearly Meeting is committed to equality in all its employment practices.

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