Malvern Quakers Newsletter

Autumn 2013 September - November

Our Celebration of the 75th Anniversary of Malvern Quaker Meeting House

Janis Bethel

'Come and celebrate the 75th Anniversary of Malvern Quaker Meeting House!' These were the words that made up the title at the top of the green flier that encouraged Quakers and others to come along and join in.

Some of the words found in a thesaurus entry for the word 'celebrate' are commemorate; observe; honour; mark; rejoice and enjoy. During the celebrations that members of Malvern Meeting have enjoyed each of these descriptions are relevant. Quakers and friends have shared enjoyment during the social events and have also honoured and marked those who enabled the building of the Meeting House in 1938.

Our celebrations began with a **Victorian Tea Party** with unaccustomed decorations in the form of bunting spread diagonally across the Meeting room along with a 'tree' upon which hirers of the Meeting House, visitors and members of the Meeting were encouraged to write down their feelings about what the Meeting House meant to them.

In the library there was an interesting display of documents related to the purchase of the land and the building of the Meeting House. There was also a small display of information and illustrations of some panels from the Quaker Tapestry. Shortly after that, a **'Gentle Jazz' Evening** featuring the JC Trio was held where we could enjoy a buffet supper and socialise whilst listening to live music.

On 3 July Meetings for worship were held to mark the **inauguration of the Meeting House**. During the meetings we shared some of our beliefs and practices with some 20 visitors. As we shared tea and refreshments afterwards, a number of our visitors commented favourably on how much they had enjoyed Meeting for Worship and reacted positively to what they had heard.

In July we hosted Area Meeting followed by a picnic, and for some, a **Walk to Wynds Point** across the Hills. Again, those Friends who participated had a positive experience and were welcomed at their destination.

During **Civic Week**, on 17 July the Meeting House was open and a number of visitors came in to talk. One interesting visitor, an ordained minister who had read Quaker Faith and Practice, said that he encouraged 'Going into the Silence' when problems arose during church business meetings that he held. During the day, visitors again spoke positively about what they learned.

Our final event was the annual **Art for Amnesty** Exhibition and Sale, where there was much to see and to celebrate, knowing that Amnesty International makes a positive impact on the lives of many.



Our Clerk cuts the Birthday Cake!

more pictures on back page

National Quaker Week (NQW) and the Quaker Peace Garden

Melanie Jameson

Having put a lot of effort into our 75 year celebrations, Outreach and Hospitality are not arranging a programme of events during NQW this year. However, we would draw your attention to our short Meeting for Worship at the Quaker Peace Garden on the Sat of NQW (Saturday 28 September) in the hope that more of us might participate in what is both a witness and the quite different experience of worshipping outdoors.

Those who wish are asked to assemble around 1.30 at our Meeting House and set off on a walking meditation to the Garden at 1.45; this takes about 15 mins. Others might prefer to meet in the Garden at 2.00. Bring a garden chair.

We are delighted that June, a recent attender and landscape gardener, has offered to take the Garden in hand. Over the last few years it has become very untidy with some species swamping the original plants. With its prominent position between the Help-yourself vegetable patch and the outdoor seating for the Cube café, *Vegetopia*, it is now more prominent. June will outline her plans for the development of the Garden in our next newsletter. Meanwhile she is requesting the following plants:

Grasses (to go round the edge); lavender (compact varieties); Stonecrop or other low growing Sedums and a supply of white flowers e.g. snowdrops, crocus, Chiondoxia, Alliums, Arum alba, Campanula, and any other non-invasive white flowering plant/bulbs.
Bags of compost and white pebbles are also needed.

Malvern Friends Meeting House 1 Orchard Road Malvern WR14 3DA
***Email:* malvern@wsq.org.uk *Website:* malvernquakers.org.uk**
All Welcome at Meetings for Worship: Every Sunday at 10.30am
First Wednesdays at 12.00 noon (followed by bring-your-own lunch)

Diary

Keep up-to-date with our website
malvernquakers.org.uk

All events are held at Malvern Friends Meeting House unless stated otherwise. Please note that attenders should seek permission from Preparative Meeting to go to Area Meetings.

Sunday 1 September
Preparative Meeting after Meeting for Worship

Wednesday 4 September 12.00-12.40
Mid-week Meeting. Bring lunch and stay to chat if you have time

Saturday 7 September 10.00-14.00 Repair Café at the Cube

Sunday 8 September Fair Trade stall after Meeting

Sunday 8 September 14.00 -16.30
Area Meeting at Worcester Meeting House.

Monday 9 September 19.30 Healing group Venue TBA

Thursday 12 September 14.00
Moving Prayer led by Mary . All welcome

Tuesday 17 September 20.00 Lindisfarne House, Worcester.
A talk by Dr Sam Harris on **'Is free will just an illusion?'**
(Part of the Worcester Christians in Science Programme.)

Thursday 19 September 19.30 -21.00
Elders and Overseers meeting at Betty Hudson's House

Saturday 21 September 10.00-16.00
Malvern Hills Communities Festival at The Cube, including a speaker from the Centre for Alternative Technology

Tuesday 24 September 18.30-20.00 **'Time to scrap Trident'**
Talk by Bruce Kent, St John's Methodist Church, St Owen St, Hereford

Wednesday 25 September 13.00- 14.30
Drop-in at Meeting House for tea and chat

Friday 27 September – Sunday 6 October QUAKER WEEK

Saturday 28 September 14.00-14.30
Peace Garden Meeting for Worship All welcome

Sunday 29 September Fifth Sunday, Bring and Share Lunch after Meeting, then a talk by Mary Flynn about Fair Trade issues

Wednesday 2 October 12.00-12.40
Mid-week Meeting for Worship, as above

Sunday 6 October Fair Trade stall after Meeting

Saturday 12 October Working day to spruce up the Meeting House. All more than welcome!

Monday 14 October 19.30 Healing group . venue TBA

Wednesday 23 October 13.00 – 14.30
Drop-in for a cup of tea and discussion

19.30 Film on **Money**, shown by Jon Critoph

Sunday 27 October *to be confirmed - see opposite page*
Workshop: **Transition - One Step at a Time**

Sunday 3 November
Preparative Meeting after Meeting for Worship

Wednesday 6 November 12.00-12.40
Midweek meeting for Worship, as above

Saturday 9 November 11.00-16.00
Area Meeting at Worcester Meeting House

Sunday 10 November Fair Trade stall after Meeting

Monday 11 November 19.30 Healing group Venue TBA

Thursday 21 November 14.00 Moving Prayer led by Mary Callaway

19.30 Elders' and Overseers ' Meeting

Wednesday 27 November 13.00-14.30
Drop-in for tea and discussion

Sunday 1 Dec Fair Trade stall after Meeting

E.F.M.

Helen Chiverton

'E.F.M.,' I hear you ask, 'what's that?' Equipping for Ministry. SO? It's a two-year course run by Woodbrooke. It aims to give you a grounding in what it is to be a Quaker in the world today and how you are personally to live out that calling.

There are three Core themes to E.F.M.:

Core 1 **The Evolving Tradition**, which includes the history of Friends and the issues which face us in our claim that all of life is sacramental.

Core 2 **Experience of the Spirit**: this covers prayer, worship, discernment, sources of inspiration and sources of authority.

Core 3 looks at **testimonies, witness and action**: living our faith in todays world.

There is an induction weekend, a residential week each year and a completion weekend.

I am now in my second year and, at the time of writing, about to go to Woodbrooke for this year's residential. The courses I did last year were:

Creating Support for End of Life and Funerals (core 1)
Awakening the Fool (core 2) and
Anger: gift or deadly sin? (core 3).

The first course ignited in me the desire to work with End of Life issues and I joined the Quaker Concern around Dying and Death Network. This September I will become part of the Steering Group of the Network.

This year I have been on one course, **A Handful of Quietness**: a retreat with the labyrinth (core 2). In September I will atend **Towards Forgiveness** (core3) and in November, at Swarthmoor Hall, **Friends from the Start** (core 1).

We also have to have a project to span the two years. I have been journalling: making reports of the courses I have been on, made a record of all the books I have read, created a scrap book of my first year - and I am currently making a patchwork quilt cover for this book.

I have also embarked on gathering Friends' Life Journey 'stories'. This is ongoing and is to create an up-to-date record of the people who ARE our Meeting. I have, so far, done four one-to-one interviews with older Friends and am beginning to compile a file which, when completed, will be kept in the library with the one done a few years ago.

I am asking for help from all Friends to assist me in this fascinating journey of exploration into who we all are and how we became Quakers. When time permits, I would like to run some informal, fun sessions for all to participate in. These can be as individual one-to-ones or small or large groups, whatever takes your fancy. Please contact me if you are interested and say when you would be available.

The Library

The Library will be back to normal shortly and both 2012 and 2013 Swarthmore Lectures will be available. Anyone can use the library by signing the books out. Please let me know if study groups *etc* require any literature as I go to Friends House most months. Separate from the Library, Mary Callaway has set up a small bookcase (just outside the children's room) which has books to be taken and others put ther, if you no longer have any use for them. ***Peter Bevan***

***ERRATUM* - Woolhope Woodheat.** In the Summer Newsletter it was stated that at Canon Frome Court the amount of timber that will be used is about 700 tonnes per year. This should have been 70 tonnes!

Creating a Sustainable Life - One habit at a time

Raphael Bate

This is an account of workshop held on 30 June at the Friends Meeting House. It was first presented to the Inner Transition group of Transition Town Malvern and then was requested to be offered to the Friends. Obviously these two groups have overlapping interests in the search for the essential simple life, the antidote to 'affluenza'(addiction to consumerism) and gratitude for nature, and its careful stewardship.

> *'Find ecstasy in life, the mere sense of living is enough.'*
> *(Emily Dickinson)*

Every choice we make either contributes to life in all its variety, and the choice of an action repeated is a habit. So therefore the adopting the right habit is a powerful vehicle for healing the world or a small corner of it.

Habits are the world we live in and therefore very slippery things to get to grips with. The ways we think about them are also subject to habits of thinking, which may or may not be useful.

> *Two fishes were swimming and they met a wise old fish:*
> *Fish A: 'Hallo boys, how's the water?'*
> *Fish B to Fish C : 'What's water?'*

During the workshop we attempted to look more closely at our habits and identify the good useful ones and those that interfered with our expressed desire to live a healthy life in a healthy world. A simple and rich life full of gratitude and simple things, felt deeply. Not needing endless consumable items, but knowing what 'enough' means.

> *We could believe that 88% of resolutions made at New Year melt away before the 7th January; 65% of gym memberships are unused through the year.*

So, it is not easy. What are the difficulties?

The mixed age group responded that the challenges for them included:

- The ego wanted 'business as usual': I know who I am, I know how it is and I know who you are!
- Irritation at the discomfort that was experienced with doing something new. 'Out of comfort ' zone.
- Fear of failure
- Embarrassment
- Procrastination.
- Idealisation
- Self sabotage

Supports to change included:

- Keeping the goal simple.
- Have a daily cue
- Have a clear image of the target behavior Keep goal s
- Have a daily cue
- Have a clear vision/image of the change
- Have small steps to each stage
- Tell everyone
- Have rewards (non toxic)
- Have a buddy to check in with weekly
- Inspiring models

To embed a habit as a lifestyle also requires:

- Repeat for 60 days.
- Attitudes of optimism, curiosity, long term gain, values.
- Environment: the right place can make a difference.

Habits are a vehicle for transition. Therefore, an awareness of our motivation and behaviours can help us change for the better. The participants then recalled habits that they had changed in the past and described how this was done, and what difficulties were encountered.

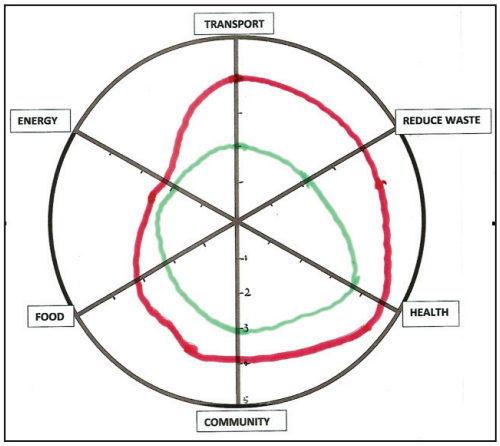
A New Goal

Members of the group then individually identified some habits they wanted to develop to make their life more sustainable.

How is your life now? Where are you on the stages below?

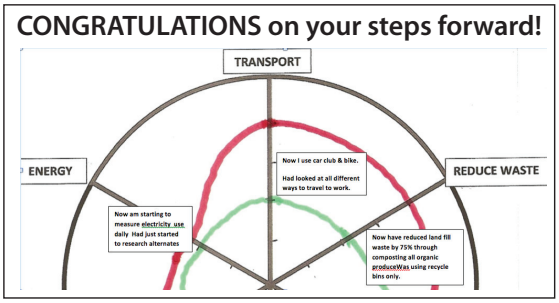
1. Aware of the problem only.
2. Thinking about it and researching the topic.
3. Taking action regularly
4. Maintaining the new habit
5. Habit becomes part of your lifestyle.

Individuals then created a Sustainability Profile (example below), using the inner line (green) to show the present condition and the outer line (red) to show where they would like to be in a given timeframe.



MINI STEPS TO SUSTAINABILITY

Discussions highlighted differences between present behavior and targets, *e.g.* using recycling bins at present, and developing a reduction in waste through composting all organic waste. This diagram can be used to illustrate balance in the different areas of one's life, showing areas which need attention, and areas of fulfillment. It can assist in planning steps to wholeness.



Explore changes in habits in mini steps and consider how it would be if you were at the next point and how you will get towards the outer ring (habit embedded in lifestyle.)

Finally, arrangements were made to get a buddy for supporting regular sharing of progress with the chosen habit and sustainable outcome. There was an enthusiastic hum of discussion and sharing of experiences throughout the session.

It is proposed to have a follow up workshop on
'Transition: One Habit at a Time'
on Sunday 27 October, with Eoin on the Enneagram and Raphael on the Habit Cycle, to go further and deeper on this journey.

Our 75th Anniversary Celebrations in pictures



Victorian Tea Party
12 May









Picnic, Walk and Visit to Wynds Point
13 July





Opening of
Art for Amnesty
2013

The Economy of Life

'The belief that God created human beings as part of a larger web of life and affirmed the goodness of the whole creation (Genesis 1) lies at the heart of biblical faith. The whole community of living organisms that grows and flourishes is an expression of God's will and works together to bring life from and give life to the land, to connect one generation to the next, and to sustain the abundance and diversity of God's household. Economy in God's household emerges from God's gracious offering of abundant life for all (John ch.10;v10). We are inspired by Indigenous Peoples' image of 'land is life' which recognizes that the lives of people and the land are woven together in mutual interdependence. Thus we express our belief that the 'creation's life and God's life are intertwined and that God will be all in all (1Cor.ch.15: v28)'.

[Paragraph 2 of the paper 'Economy of Life, Justice and Peace for All' received by Meeting for Sufferings, July 2013, from World Council of Churches, August/ September 2012}.