

# Lancashire Quakers – News of Recent Events

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## **Bailrigg Quakers – Into the Woods!**

On Monday the 26<sup>th</sup> of September, blessed with glorious sunshine, Bailrigg Friends held their lunchtime Meeting for Worship in the newly opened 'pods' in the woods near the Lancaster Institute for the Contemporary Arts building. After worshipping in two groups, friends squeezed together into one pod for a shared lunch.



The pods – which look a bit like a cross between a pine-cone and a space capsule – provided a new environment for worship and a welcome opportunity for fellowship afterwards.

Bailrigg Friends hope to repeat the adventure - either in the pods or in some other new venue – once in each of the University terms.

*Lisa Whistlecroft*

## **Bailrigg Quakers – 'Full of life' at Lancaster University**

Bailrigg Meeting at Lancaster University is changing. With some sadness, Bailrigg Friends have decided to suspend the Thursday evening Meeting for Worship that has been held without a break since at least 1972. Student ways of life have changed in forty years and the Thursday evening time no longer seems attractive.

Monday lunchtime Meeting for Worship is growing! Eight to ten people now gather in the Chaplaincy Centre to worship from 1pm to 1;30pm on Mondays and we warmly invite other local Friends to consider joining us if they have time. Car parking is problematic but the buses are now much more frequent – and stop right outside the Chaplaincy Centre!

The Chaplaincy Centre's tag-line is 'Full of Life'. Quakers are, indeed, full of life (and light) at Bailrigg.

## **The FIG Tree in Garstang**

The FIG Tree is the world's first International Fair Trade Visitor Centre located in Garstang, the world's first Fair Trade Town. Following a long struggle to secure our lease The FIG Tree finally opened in November last year and contains an exhibition, a specialist fair trade and local produce café, a small fair trade gift shop and workshop area and games room.

The main purpose for The FIG Tree is to provide information around the four interrelating heritage themes of Fair Trade (in the world's first Fair Trade Town), the British Atlantic slave trade (nearby Lancaster was Britain's fourth largest slave trade port), Quakers (due to its proximity to '1652 country') and Chocolate (Garstang has a community link with the cocoa farming community of New Koforidua in Ghana). Over time and with further funding we hope to expand our small exhibition and initiate our workshops including our unique interactive chocolate making events primarily aimed at children from disadvantaged backgrounds in Northern England and other disadvantaged groups.

The FIG Tree also lies at the start of the Fair Trade Way, the world's first long distance Fair Trade heritage trail that centres around the same four themes. The Fair Trade Way runs from Garstang to Keswick passing through the Fair Trade Towns of Lancaster, Arnside, Kendal, Windermere and Grasmere taking in the beautiful scenery of the Lake District National Park as well as places of interest such as the Lancaster Maritime Museum, Levens Hall, Kendal Meeting House, Rydal Mount and Dove Cottage. There are plans to walk the Fair Trade Way as a joint event with Oxfam from 24<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> August 2012 with evening events held in each Fairtrade Town along the way.

During Fairtrade Fortnight (27<sup>th</sup> February – 11<sup>th</sup> March) The FIG Tree will hold a special Coffee Afternoon at 3pm on Sunday 4th March. Abiyot Shiferaw, co-founder of the Oromo Coffee Company will demonstrate a traditional Ethiopian coffee ceremony and tell his remarkable success story. Damian Blackburn from Bolling Coffee Roasters in Meltham, Yorkshire will tell the story of coffee from its mystical origins in Ethiopia to modern day Fairtrade coffees such as their famous 'Grumpy Mule' brand. Damian will also invite you to join him in some coffee cupping (tasting) of a range of special coffees. Both Oromo coffee and 'Grumpy Mule' from Bolling is served in the cafe and Oromo coffee is also sold in our shop. Tickets £5 (including coffee and cake) will be available to purchase in February from The FIG Tree.

The FIG Tree is always in need of volunteers to help out in the café, putting up exhibitions and/or running the workshops, so if you happen to have some time on your hands we would love to hear from you.

For further information or to volunteer in The FIG Tree contact: Bruce Crowther, Director of The FIG Tree, Tel: 01995 602637 Email; [brucecrowther300@gmail.com](mailto:brucecrowther300@gmail.com)

## **The Retreat, York Newsletter**

The Spring edition of The Retreat Newsletter is now available on [www.theretreatyork.org.uk](http://www.theretreatyork.org.uk). and includes articles on art and gardening projects as well as an evaluation of the longer-term Clinical Outcomes of a DBT-informed residential Therapeutic Community.

## **Courses at Glenthorne in 2012**

The programme of courses at Glenthorne may be viewed at [www.glenthorne.org/events](http://www.glenthorne.org/events)

### **News from Doublejoy – December 2011**

This week is the big week in Double Joy's annual calendar. Our top class sit the national examination, under tight security which always adds to the stress, and then they leave us on Thursday to go to stay with their relatives. This major adjustment in their lives needs to be monitored by our social workers. For one thing - they are very unlikely to get three meals a day.

Then on Saturday ten new children will arrive – all of them suffering from malnutrition. On admission they will get a bath and new clothes and the treatment of external parasites and any other obvious sickness. Then they will settle in their houses where the first wonder will be three meals a day. When they learn that nobody dies here they will think they are in heaven. On Monday they will go to Aram Market and select a thousand shillings worth of clothes – something that they could never have imagined doing. Their health will be closely monitored and assessed and if any child presents as needing immediate medical investigation he will be taken to Kisumu for that. All the new children will have this assessment before Christmas.

Within our compound remedial teaching will take place with the idea that as many of the new children as possible should catch up before the new school year starts in January. Their poor health will cause us considerable expense. Also we have to be ready for the children who have started new lives at home to fall sick and to return to us at any time. So these three months are the most expensive of the year.

Christmas will be celebrated simply with a chicken for each house.

via Jenni Stephenson

### **Carys Davies awarded V S Pritchett Memorial Prize**

Congratulations to Carys Davies (Lancaster Meeting) who has been awarded the V S Pritchett Memorial Prize by the Royal Society of Literature for the best unpublished short story of the year by a British or Irish writer. The story, entitled, *The Redemption of Galen Pike*, is set in a small town in 19<sup>th</sup> century Colorado, and tells of an unlikely friendship between a condemned man and a Quaker woman who visits him in jail.

### **Outreach at Garstang**

Our Outreach Event on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October, as part of Quaker Week, was felt to have been successful. It was around the theme of peace. Susan Andrews' Peace Plough had been lent to us for the event. There were inspiring readings of peace poetry and all donations have been given to QPSW who have already been sent £97 and there is more to come. Hospitality included a soup lunch and refreshments throughout the afternoon and the book stall was popular.

## **'The Generals and 21<sup>st</sup> Century War'**

This booklet by Brian Walker (Yealand), which was published last year by Westmorland Regional Meeting, is available to view on the Record page of this website:- [www.lancsquakers.org.uk/the-record](http://www.lancsquakers.org.uk/the-record).

### **Economic Justice and Sustainability – BYM Minutes**

Copies of Minutes 23 (Sustaining the Natural World) and 36 (Economic Justice) from Britain Yearly Meeting 2011 have been added to the Testimonies pages of this website. Go to [www.lancsquakers.org.uk/testimonies](http://www.lancsquakers.org.uk/testimonies) and follow the links.

### **Economic Justice and Sustainability – Meetings in Lancaster**

On Sunday the 20<sup>th</sup> of November, following Meeting for Worship, 30 of us stayed to continue exploring the challenges set by Minute 36 of Yearly Meeting, which commits us to being a low-carbon sustainable community, and Minute 23 which identifies the need to address injustices in the global economic system. By asking 'What questions are we as Quakers asking ourselves now?' we were able to identify questions that had a common theme or focus and thus come up with several clusters of questions that have given us an agenda to work on over the coming months. The cluster themes will be displayed in the William Stout Room on the 4<sup>th</sup> of December.

Marie McCusker

### **'1652 Country' Pilgrimages - a new contact**

The 1652 Committee of Quaker Life has appointed a paid Pilgrimage Coordinator to take on some of the administrative and other duties that were really too much to ask of the stalwart volunteers who have made pilgrimages to 1652 Country such a wonderfully enriching experience over many years.

Lisa Whistlecroft (of Bailrigg Quaker Meeting) is now taking on that work and will be supported and mentored by Jenny Foot in the coming months. Lisa is answerable to Jane Pearson, the Manager of Swarthmoor Hall, and will be working closely with Jane. Quaker Life is intent on ensuring that pilgrimages continue to offer opportunities for spiritual development, deepening understanding of the roots of Quakerism and physical engagement with our unique landscape. So if you have ever been involved with local pilgrimages – as a leader, speaker, accompanier, driver, welcomer, provider of accommodation, walking guide, or pilgrim from this island or overseas, please be willing to share your experience and wisdom with Lisa.

Her official contact details are:- Lisa Whistlecroft, 1652 Country Pilgrimage Coordinator, Quaker Life Network, The Religious Society of Friends. Email: [1652@quaker.org.uk](mailto:1652@quaker.org.uk); Tel: 020 7663 1052. If you phone her, it will be cheapest, locally, to use her home number (in the Area Meeting directory).

## **Audio Version of Area Meeting Newsletter**

A prototype audio version of the Area Meeting November newsletter is now available. Clerks of Local Meetings will have a copy for circulation. If you know anyone who may like to receive an audio version of future Newsletters please ask them to contact their clerk or Phil Chandler at Lancaster Local Quaker Meeting. Also, if you are willing to organise the reading of a future edition, please contact either Phil or Sally Wallace of Morecambe Meeting.

## **Fellowship Day – Our Prison Ministry**

Over thirty Friends gathered at Lancaster Meeting House on the 24<sup>th</sup> of September to hear about the work of prison chaplains and visitors.

The Rev. Brian Mayne shared some of his experiences as Regional Chaplain (Northwest) for the National Offender Management Service, covering seventeen prisons from Haverigg in south Cumbria to Styal in Cheshire, and from Liverpool to Rochdale.

Marianna Birbeck spoke of her work in prisoner education. She showed examples of poetry, which reflected the vulnerability, rage, depression, sadness and despair felt by prisoners which could not be expressed in any other way.

Gordon Slaymaker and Sue Heward told us about their role as chaplains at Longcroft, where sixteen ex-prisoners are housed by the Langley House Trust. They hold a fortnightly Meeting for Worship of 10 to 15 minutes, often with a reading. However it has become apparent that the residents have difficulty understanding the position of Quakers due to the unconventional method of worship.

The final session was held by a group from Preston LQM who are currently holding a Meeting for Worship in Wymott Prison.

A much fuller report on the day, by Sally Wallace, and a report by Janet Edmunds on the work done by Preston Friends at Wymott has been published in the November edition of the Area Meeting Newsletter.

## **What do you do with Medicine that you no longer want?**

Many of us have bathroom cabinets full of medicines and pills that we have found unsuitable, not needed or never finished. If you take them back to the Pharmacy they are just destroyed. But now there is a way of making them available for use by those in the developing world who desperately need medical supplies. A member of St Helens Church is collecting Medicines etc for an organization called Jacob's Well. The Medicines must ideally be in their original packing, and obviously within date. Apart from medicine and pills any other supplies such as incontinence pads, bandages, ointments, surgical aids etc. would be welcomed. Judith Taylor would be happy to pass on any donations.

## **Travelling with Quakers**

Two Friends have recently quite independently mentioned to me the 'Directory for Travelling Friends'. This is published by the Friends General Council in the USA. It is a list of Hosts, world wide, who are happy to welcome Friends into their homes for a few nights or so, when travelling in their country. It's a wonderful way of meeting fellow Quakers and getting to know the real country, not just the tourist version.

Do consider being a host, or a traveler. Go to [www.fgcquaker.org](http://www.fgcquaker.org), click on publications and go to Directory for travelling. Or e-mail [chela@fgcquaker.org](mailto:chela@fgcquaker.org)

- Judith Taylor