



# THE DORKING GRAPEVINE

## Dorking Quaker Meeting

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September 2014  
 No. 481

**Quote for the month** is contributed by Catherine Carr  
*Difference of opinion was never, with me, a motive for separation from a friend.*  
 (Thomas Jefferson 1743-1826))

### Dates for your Diary

<b>Midweek Meeting</b>	12.45-1.15pm	<b>Every Wednesday</b> , followed by simple lunch
Thursday 11-Friday 12 Sept	2-7pm	<b>Exhibition at Meeting House for Heritage week</b>
Friday 12 Sept	7.30pm	<b>Meditation meeting</b> in Meeting House
Saturday 13 Sept	10.30 onwards	<b>Area Meeting</b> at Dorking
Sunday 14 Sept	6.30pm	<b>Meeting for Worship</b> at Park House, Leatherhead
Sunday 21 Sept	After MfW	<b>Peace One Day event at Meeting House</b> (details p.3)
Friday 3 Oct	7.30pm	<b>Study Group</b> in Meeting House
	<i>Sunday 5 October – World Quaker Day</i> (see p.6)	
Sunday 12 Oct	6.30pm	<b>Meeting for Worship</b> at Park House, Leatherhead
Friday 17 Oct	7.30pm	<b>Meditation meeting</b> in Meeting House

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### Notes from Preparative Meeting ...

Sunday collection for June/July, for **Cape Town Quaker Peace Centre**, raised £189.30. The collection for August/September is for **Quaker Homeless Action** (see page 6).

Editor's note: Since February, **Wednesday Meeting** has given £200 to **Besom**, £200 to **East Surrey Domestic Abuse Services**, and £200 to **Beatitudes**.

Advices and Queries read *Dorking*: No. 9 in July, and No. 31 in August. *Leatherhead*: No. 3 in July, and No. 8 in August.

We heard from Su Johnston, convenor of **Premises Committee**, with updates on the information already shared on the small hall notice board and on page 2 of this Grapevine. A firm familiar with our drainage system has been consulted about changes to the downpipe and guttering, to prevent recurrence of the **damp problem on the large hall wall**, and we await their report. A consultant has inspected the damage, and he found that the moisture level is still 90% despite our use of a dehumidifier. A further drying out period of at least 12 months will be needed, and he recommended removing the damaged plaster, and some of the wood panelling, to facilitate the drying out. However, Premises Committee has had differing suggestions on the amount of plaster and panel removal needed, and it awaits written reports before deciding on the best way ahead. There was considerable discussion about the **garden**. We agreed to hire a gardener for 2 days this autumn, at a cost of £200, and approved the proposal to work towards a wildlife-friendly, low-maintenance garden, with protection for the plants in memory of Friends and relations. If Friends wish to help towards restocking the garden with suitable shrubs, then money, rather than plants, would be preferred, as the gardener has access to wholesale prices, and is able to select shrubs best suited to the soil and conditions of our garden. The problem of suitable areas to scatter ashes was discussed, and this will be borne in mind. The beech hedge will be pruned so that a final height of 6 foot can be maintained.

**Peace and Social Witness Committee** has drafted a **letter to our MP** about the detention of immigrants for unlimited periods without trial, on the basis of information provided by QARN (Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network – see [www.qarn.org.uk](http://www.qarn.org.uk)). This letter will be circulated to Friends by email, to encourage them to write letters to our MP in their own words, as these are believed to have more impact than letters from organisations or groups.

Bob Humphreys reported on last Friday's **study group on Poverty in Britain**, which had been an inspiring and useful event. The problem was explained in an introductory paper circulated before Friday, and an extract from this can be found on page 4. At the study group Friends looked at the national and local situations and considered what could be done. They were surprised to find just how much is already being done locally, and how Friends are involved. There are many groups – Besom (see page 4), Home Start (see page 5), Food Banks (see next paragraph), Beatitudes (see Wednesday Meeting funding under Collections on page 1). It's possible that Leatherhead Lions may run Project Wenceslas again this year – they raised £14,000 last year, for people in fuel poverty, by collecting the winter fuel payment from those who didn't need it. Rachel Hope will write an article about it in a future Grapevine. A valuable local resource is the CAB which has had its grant cut drastically. The Wednesday Meeting has donated at least £200 to Dorking CAB in the past. Friends at PM hoped that they would consider doing so again as it was understood they have further funds in hand. It was recognised that political influence was needed for there to be real change, and Friends may wish to lobby their MP on the subject.

Rosemary Elias reported on progress with **the Dorking Food Bank**. It is clear there is a real need for this, especially by households in the Goodwyns/Rough Rew area. Since the last steering group meeting in June, Debbie Harrison, a prime mover of the project, has moved on, and progress had stalled. However, there is now a meeting arranged for 9 September, which Rosemary will attend. A major need is for an organisation able to back the project financially, but, as funds of the order of £100,000 are needed, this is not something we can do as a Meeting. Anyone keen to be involved in setting up the project should speak to Rosemary, who will feed back information when it is available. Meanwhile we considered whether we could help those in need in Dorking by offering transport to the Leatherhead Food Bank, which can supply people from elsewhere, provided they have the necessary red voucher from an approved source. Rosemary will raise this idea at the meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Dates for PM in 2015.** Our Clerk proposed the following dates: 18 January, 1 March, 3 May, 5 July, 6 September, 1 November. Please contact the Clerk if you have any comments about these dates, which will be finalised in November.

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### **News from Premises and Finance**

(Some updates to the following information will be found in the last paragraph on page 1)

We have several repairs to be done, and we are getting quotes for them: The kitchen windowsill needs to be replaced, and the whole window painted, and that will go ahead.

We are looking at re-routing the downpipe by the boiler-house door, which has caused such damp damage, and we hope that the problem will not then arise in the future. The plumber will also be asked to replace the overflow pipe on the water-butt with a flexible hose, which will be easier to clear of blockages, and stop the overflow water going onto the kitchen wall.

A sample of the plaster which needs to be replaced, below the meeting house window inside, is being sent for analysis so it can be appropriately sourced. A consultant is coming to have a look behind the panelling there, to see where the damp has got to and what effect it might have had.

The front steps have had the edging paint re-done, and the edging of the flower beds in the back garden have a very pleasing effect, thanks to Adrian.

The wild flower grass has been cut, and the cuttings are being taken away. In future, management of this area will include more frequent cutting, so that the height of the grass does not become so difficult to deal with – as this year it has been.

There are still lots of weeds – a constant job – and the bed by the grave stones needs a good seeing-to. Do pull up a weed when passing. Better still, with some Friends and a picnic, have a real go at it en masse!

The laurel bush in the neighbours' garden has large berries on it, and these are poisonous if eaten – WARNING. But Jan has been in touch with the people next door, and they have given permission for Jan to cut back the bush, and some branches that are overhanging the Meeting House roof. Thank you Jan.

Any comments – please contact the Premises Committee.

Su Johnston

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### **Forgiveness – action on the International Day of Peace? Sunday 21 September 2014**

Come to a shared lunch (a Peace Meal?) after meeting for worship, followed by worship sharing over the following Buddhist mantra/prayer:

*"If I have hurt or harmed anyone knowingly or unknowingly,  
I ask for forgiveness.*

*If anyone has hurt or harmed me knowingly or unknowingly,  
I forgive them.*

*If I have hurt or harmed myself knowingly or unknowingly,  
I offer forgiveness".*

Lois Lodge

On behalf of the Peace & Social Witness and Outreach Committees

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### **Peace & Social Witness and Outreach Committees report**

- It has been decided to cancel the outward-focused African Peacemakers exhibition on the 20/21 September, and concentrate our efforts on peace building within the Meeting.
- There will be a Peace Meal (shared lunch) on the 21 September, followed by worship sharing over the Buddhist mantra/prayer on forgiveness (see above for details).
- John Lampen (author of *Love Growing in Us*, a recent focus of the study group), and his wife, have been invited to talk to us after a shared lunch on the 23 November.
- Sally is set to engage with some secondary schools in the area, on Peace One Day/the International Day of Peace, i.e. in the run up to 21 September.
- We feel our parents are a bit overloaded at present and that running primary school assemblies this year is an 'ask' too far. So we intend instead to practise making poppies in red, white, and purple, at children's meeting for worship on 9 November, with Martin Hunka as storyteller. Over coffee we'll ask him to tell us the story too, and ask the children to show us how to make poppies.



- White poppies are available via Lois, and we ask that you make a special effort this year to take them out into the community, by giving them to friends and relations. It seems appropriate to do this whilst the red poppies are being sold in October and early November. In the meantime we're going to deliver five white poppies to each of the primary schools in Dorking, and ask them to consider selling them alongside red poppies.

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### **Mobile numbers for Contact List**

If you are happy for your mobile number to go in the Contact List in 2015, please give the number to Colin Brewer at Meeting or on 01372 456421, or [colin.brewer@phonecoop.coop](mailto:colin.brewer@phonecoop.coop), or text or phone 07790 417 581

## The Besom Box appears again!

Just a short note to thank you all for your support, especially Wednesday Meeting for a very generous donation. I have put the box out again simply because so many people in our own area are experiencing very hard times, so please be as generous as you can. I will again put a 'Basic List' of food that's needed, and please check sell-by-dates. Thank you.

Veronica Mills

PS. If you could save your **milk bottle tops** only, I would be very grateful. The Harvest Church at Goodwyns will then send them out to India where they are made into Wellington boots for the children, thereby creating employment and income. I also collect **stamps of any sort** (including 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class) for the Leprosy Mission. Please leave tops and stamps in a bag at the Meeting House (with my name on), and I will collect either Wednesday or Sunday. Many thanks.

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### Discernment

I have been asked by our Clerk to write about my understanding of discernment. This article is based on my reading of Quaker Faith & Practice (see the Index for references to discernment in the text) and Peter Eccles's Swarthmoor lecture *The Presence in the Midst*, and my attendance at a Clerking course at Woodbrooke, and my (limited) experience of Quaker meetings for worship for business.



*The Presence in the Midst*  
by Doyle Penrose

Doing Quaker business is an act of worship involving discernment. We are each advised to come with hearts and minds prepared, and to be ready to listen carefully to what others say, and hear the truth they have to offer. We all wait on the Spirit to help us reach a 'sense of the meeting', which is neither compromise nor consensus, but contains sufficient unity/truth to carry the meeting forward. We will know we have reached a good enough 'sense of the meeting' when "The harvest of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness and self-control" (Galatians 5:22, Revised English Bible).

Sadly we do not always achieve this 'harvest of the Spirit', we do not always bring heart-led and mind-led factions together, we work to temporal imperatives rather than at the pace of Spirit, we are too fixed on 'my' solution, or we harbour grudges and misunderstandings over a long time. A meeting which gladly takes difficult and contentious issues to Preparative Meeting for discernment because it trusts Friends, and expects an outcome that is beautiful in its creative simplicity, is a healthy meeting.

A Meeting that fears what will happen at Preparative Meeting (that it will get out of hand) is not a Meeting where Friends are being heard, or where Spirit is trusted. A meeting that seeks to deal with contentious issues out of, and away from, Preparative Meeting is one where Weighty Friends could exert undue influence, and it denies the fundamental premise of Quakers – that we are all equal.

I would like to suggest that one reason for Preparative Meetings (on occasions) giving off 'more heat than light' is that some people are not feeling heard, or taken seriously, or respected. Perhaps we should all be willing to say "*We are sorry for the distress caused to you by our actions. It was not our intent. Although we thought we had consulted (discerned) widely, we obviously have not listened well enough, or heard and understood what this issue meant to you. We undertake to do better next time.*"

Lois Lodge

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Extract from introduction to **Poverty in Britain** study group

12 million people in Britain today live in poverty; about 20% of our population. Most of them receive state benefits, but there is also a raft of long-established charities supporting such as the homeless, the disabled, the jobless and the hungry. In addition, the relatively modern Trussell Trust has quickly established over 200 food banks.

Many may remember from school history how the Victorians neatly divided their poor between the 'deserving' and the 'undeserving'; the latter being classified as lazy, feckless, scroungers. Although massive societal changes have occurred since then, similar divisions remain, and we will discuss the twenty-first century poor.

## Volunteers wanted for Home-Start

Home-Start Guildford is a family support charity covering Guildford, Bookham, Fetcham and Wotton. They provide home-visiting volunteers with parenting experience, to support families who are struggling to cope. Difficulties might be due to post-natal depression, illness/disability (of parent or child), multiple births, family breakdown or financial worries. Parents may need emotional or practical support, to give their children the best possible start in life. That's where Friends might be able to help. The next Volunteer Preparation Course starts on 24 September. If interested, call Harriet on 01483 511181 or [emailoffice@hsguildford.org.uk](mailto:emailoffice@hsguildford.org.uk) for more information.

Item provided by Frances Harber

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### **Sharing my experience of JYM 2014** by Jo Tranter of Horsham Meeting

(Those of you on email may have seen this report in papers in advance for Area Meeting, but not everyone has email, so your editor thought it worthwhile to fill a space with this lovely contribution.)

A few weeks ago I went to JYM in Bath, and can say that it is easily one of the best weeks of my life. The entire week was packed full of fun activities, discussion groups, lectures, special interest groups, and I know I didn't have time to do even a quarter of what was on offer.

When I arrived, I was slightly terrified. This was my first Quaker event, so I was completely in the dark about what was going to happen. Luckily I found the light switch very soon after arriving. Everyone was kind and welcoming, and from the very beginning I felt part of the Quaker family.

Throughout the week we did a wide range of activities. Some of these took place in our base groups. Base groups were groups of around 12, and in these we played games and bonded, but also discussed the theme of JYM.

On Sunday, we were introduced to the theme 'The changing face of Quakers, where are we going?', and were asked to choose the most important word. I chose Quakerism because whatever happens we will still be Quakers. I was quite decisive about this and firm in my view that was the most important word for me. Then, of course, after everyone else had explained why every word was the most important, I was completely clueless.

This idea of challenging beliefs followed through the week. Every point someone raised was valid, and challenged my beliefs in some way or another. I found myself asking what my beliefs were and, perhaps more importantly 'why?' Throughout the week my beliefs have changed, and I feel as though I have developed spiritually as well.

One part of the week which struck a chord for me was the George Gorman lecture on 'Equality, is it really what we think it is?' I found that this lecture raised some very big issues, such as in education, standard of living, opportunity and value in society, as well as asking 'how can we change it?' 'How much are we prepared to give up?' and 'Is an equal society actually possible?' One quote which stuck with me was "You feel sexism as 1000 paper cuts, not one blow to the head."

Simon Best, a young Quaker, ran several sessions on what it means to be a young Quaker. We discussed the testimonies and how we carried them out in our lives, and were given some statistics on young Quakers; the most controversial being that over half of young Quakers disagreed with the statement that 'violence is never justifiable'.

Throughout the week I learnt a lot about Quakers as an organisation. I learnt more about meeting for worship for business, and attended two business meetings with JYM. I also learnt about some of the many Quaker projects, and was amazed to see how much Quakers were doing, and shocked to see how much there was to do, as I learnt about issues I didn't know existed – such as Funeral Poverty.

I immensely enjoyed the week and I will always treasure the memories I have. I met lots of wonderful people, and made friendships that I am sure will last. I am incredibly grateful for this amazing opportunity, and I would like to thank Catherine for supporting me during the week, as well as West Weald Area Meeting who sponsored me to go. It has been an amazing experience, and one I will treasure.

I can't wait for the next one!

## Friends World Committee for Consultation...

. . . invites every Quaker meeting from around the world to celebrate **WORLD QUAKER DAY** (WQD) on 5 October, 2014.

As the sun rises in each area of the world, we want to remember that Quakers are worshipping through every time zone, celebrating our deep connections across cultures and Quaker traditions. We are united in love, and can accompany each other on this special day that draws us together. As we worship, let us hold each other in prayer and thanksgiving.



The theme of the day is **Let Your Life Speak: Living the Kabarok Call for Peace and Ecojustice**, which connects us to the work we did at the World Conference of Friends in 2012 in Kenya, taking the work forward in the context of our spiritual communities.

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### Collection for Quaker Homeless Action



The August/September collection is for Quaker Homeless Action.

Quaker Homeless Action is a national charity, run primarily by volunteers. QHA's vision is for a society where homeless, marginalised and excluded people are empowered and supported to break out of exclusion, poverty, and isolation, to experience life in all its fullness.

QHA is a small and flexible organisation that focuses on projects that are not funded by other organisations. Our projects include a Christmas Shelter, mobile libraries for the homeless,

befriending projects and other work.

The majority of funding for the work of Quaker Homeless Action comes from donations from Quakers.

See [www.qha.org.uk/](http://www.qha.org.uk/)



### Reflection from our Elders – contributed by Bob Humphreys

#### **Food for thought - a poem by a foodbank client**

*I know what it's like to use the same teabag twice,  
To cut the mould from the bread, to rescue a slice.  
I didn't ever think I would be in such a mess  
While working full-time for a living, while suffering from illness and stress.*

*I choose to work to pay my own way  
But have no spare money at the end of the day.  
The cupboards and fridge are empty, what else can I do?  
Throwing my three elderly pets on the street? – It just wouldn't do.*

*I don't have a partner for support, the children have grown and left home.  
No luxuries do I have that I can call my own.  
I do not have a plasma screen TV,  
No tumble drier here for me,  
No plush leather sofa or latest mobile phone, no holiday do I take or house do I own.*

<http://www.trusselltrust.org/latest-news>