**Diary Dates for October**

All of October Black History Month Local details at http://www.bhmcolchester.co.uk/  
Thursday October 2nd International Day for Nonviolence To mark the birthday of M K Gandhi  
Sunday October 19th to Saturday October 25th One World Week Theme: Living Differently http://www.oneworldweek.org/v2/  
Saturday October 25th Clocks go back overnight  
Saturday October 25th to Friday October 31st International Week of Action Against Militarisation of Education and Research http://tinyurl.com/p56d3wm  
Sunday October 26th Talk on Lebanon by Anthony Johae, Colchester FMH  
Saturday November 1st Colchester Quaker Bric-a-brac Sale
Meetings for Worship

CLACTON
Sunday at 10.30 am
1st Wednesday each month
1pm-2pm with Soup & Cheese

Harwich
2nd and 4th Sundays 10.30 am
Nicholas’ Church Hall,
Stour Road, Bathside
Contact, Audrey Hind

COLCHESTER
Sunday 10.30 am
Wednesday 12.30 pm
(Soup and Cheese Lunch)

EARLS COLNE
1st, 3rd & 5th Sundays 10.30 am

SUDBURY
Sunday 10.30 am
Friars Street, Sudbury
Thursday 12.30 pm
(Bring Picnic, Tea/Coffee provided)

Area Meeting Notes
Ann Webb

Area Meeting in September was held at Colchester on 14 September at 2:15pm. There were 18 members and attenders who discussed appointments, nominations, and membership issues.

It was noted that Brenda Bather’s ashes were scattered at Roman Road Burial Ground on 29th June 2014.

The following appointments were made: Area Meeting Treasurer: Tom Tebbutt, Greenwood Trust Trustee Representative: Silvia Garton-Rogers, Assistant Archivist: Rosalind Kaye, and Summer Schools Representative: Cathleen Chabo. These have been appointed until September 2017.

The number of Elders and Overseers for each local meeting will be under review especially in light of Clacton meeting’s report of losing their warden, lettings, and other financial issues. The meeting is also in need of a Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer. The Area meeting agreed to uphold Clacton meeting during this stressful time.

Nominations Committee has also asked Area Meeting whether certain roles should be laid down such as Quaker Life Deputy and Friends Schools Representatives. It was agreed that both of these official roles should be laid down but that Friends are free to attend any Friends Schools Board meeting on a case by case basis. Area Meeting receives notice of these board meetings and will make them known.

Please see the latest issue of the Friend for the June Meeting for Sufferings report and Carol Holding’s report in the Newsletter for the September MfS report.

The Long-Term Framework initiated by Quakers in Britain will

FIRST CONTACT
FOR FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

CLACTON.......................Ray Attrill
COLCHESTER...................Carol Holding
SUDBURY.....................Peter Whiteley

Editorial

Dear Friends,

Now it is autumn, (October has always been a favourite month) a time for new beginnings, a new year at school, a much better time than spring for a good clean out and getting rid of things, with the exciting feeling of Christmas round the corner, but not so near that you have to get into a panic about it.

Well, you will say, I am fortunate, being retired and not out-of-work and hard up. These are the days of food banks and low wages. We must keep our eyes open for people who need our help.

How dreadful it is that we are again being coerced into going to war against other people. All sorts of words are being used to cover it up, but it is still war. It is time for Quakers to bring out their old skills of mediation, long-suffering patience and non-aggression. When war was declared here it simply made us more determined, and so it will now. But it is no use my saying these things.

Once again we will see thousands of hungry and frightened refugees and we shall, as always, dig deep and try to help. Among them, at this time of year, we will remember Joseph and Mary fleeing from hideous massacre. It has become changed into a pretty Christmas story, but I am quite sure that it wasn’t much fun at the time.

Anyway, it is, thank goodness, quite a long way off yet! So I will ask for news, please, by the middle of the month, to Valerie Graves, (for contact details, see AM List of Members and Attenders).

Southern East Anglia Area Quaker Meeting
be the sole focus for the November Area Meeting in Colchester in conjunction with the next steps in Discerning our Purposes. Copies of the National Consultation working group points and our own Area Meeting points were made available. Our November meeting discussion also coincides well with Paul Parker’s visit to Sudbury meeting house on October 19 at 2:00pm where he will discuss the future of Britain Yearly Meeting. Sudbury meeting requests that those attending Paul Parker’s presentation can help by bringing something to share for tea.

Area Meeting Clerk, Alison Parkes, has researched High Leigh as a site for a future Area Meeting Gathering in 2015 or 2016. High Leigh is easily reached by train or car and provides a more appropriate and intimate setting for the Gathering than the previous site, Belsey Bridge. Double and single rooms will be available and the cost is estimated at £140 en-suite per person for Friday to Sunday (full board). The clerk asks that local meetings seek names and numbers expressing interest in the Gathering and report back to Area meeting in November.

The final item on the agenda was appointment to an Inequality Conference day set for Saturday, November 29 in Birmingham. The day will focus on practical ideas to help us overcome our feelings of frustration on the issue of inequality. Suzanne Ismail, of QPSW, will be the speaker. AM asks Nominations to bring forward the name of a Friend or Attender who might be interested in going. AM will help with costs of attending.

The meeting was concluded by 4:30pm and a most generous tea followed in the Parnell room.

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**Yearly Meeting Gathering**

You definitely get more out of something the more you put in.

After a horrendous journey East-West on the first Saturday in August we arrived very late to a lovely welcome.

We had possibly not done enough background reading and we found the site at Bath University, beautiful but tiring. The beds were comfortable and the vegetarian food good but the distances between them were huge. The general organisation was superb and we were full of admiration for the hard work and articulate involvement of the team and Quakers in general.

I attempted to attend all the main sessions in the big top and wrote reams of notes and found the presentations moving and meaningful.

Marissa Johnson on Membership, who brought in her thoughtful non member son and his girlfriend for a question and answer session was memorable, and Helen Drewery from QPSW with an update on Gaza gave us food for thought. The trustee’s, treasurer’s and Meeting for Sufferings reports gave us the current pictures of our financial health and the Revision of the Book of Discipline and Long-term Framework. Jan Arriens spoke movingly about living out our Faith and the Swarthmoor lecture by Ben Pink Dandelion on “Being Open for Transformation” made us look at ourselves and our Meetings in a different way.

I found the Gorman Lecture by Jessica Metheringham (parliamentary Liaison Officer) unexpectedly disappointing but equally unexpectedly I was moved by the Retreat Lecture by Jane Muers that we attended. Both took a very simple idea to expand on. One worked for me. The other didn’t. Another evening we attended the talk and book launch of Jenny Routledge’s book on Eldership which I bought for the library. Another launch was a briefing paper on Practical support for families and friends of someone in Prison which occurred at a small lunchtime group I attended. I also attended a lunchtime group on standing up to war and militarism.

Apart from all this were the “Journeys” or longer sessions which we could opt for in one or other of the large tents round the “Village Green” between the Gathering tent and the big top. I went to four sessions on “An economic System in which Quaker Testimony can flourish” It was a popular choice and was well prepared by knowledgeable Friends.

All this heavy stuff was leavened by eating bacon butties and talking with old friends from Colchester (such as Derek and Rachel Brett, Julia Gordon, Carol Whitaker, Richard Seebohm and Vicky and Sandra amongst others) in the sunshine, taking
News from Clacton

Ernest Hall

Margaret Ahmed

Margaret Ahmed, an active attendant who, with Martha Schwager, manages our Meeting House Library, is also a mosaic artist. She created the welcoming panel that greets us – and visitors – in our Meeting House entrance lobby. Two other of her mosaics have been selected for display at the Jaywick Martello Tower Coastal Open (Essex Summer of Art event). The exhibition can be viewed at weekends during October. The photographs were taken by Martha Schwager in the Meeting House entrance lobby and at a preview of the exhibition in Jaywick.

Art Exhibition

From Martha Schwager

I went to a preview of an art exhibition of local artists’ works at Jaywick Martello as a guest of our talented F/friend Margaret Ahmed. She had had two of her mosaics selected for inclusion in this exhibition which I think runs at weekends till the end of October. I took the attached photos and I thought you might be interested in the one with Margaret and her works possibly for the newsletter. Margaret confirmed to me that she is agreeable to this plan. She suggested that it might be best to also include one of the mosaic she made for our entrance lobby at the Meeting House.

A welcome visitor

On Sunday 11th May of this year we were pleased to welcome the Swami Veetamohananda to Clacton Meeting. From 9.45 am until 10.30 he gave us a most interesting talk on Vedanta philosophy faith and practice which has many parallels with our own, and from 10.30 to 11.30 he joined us – together with followers of many other faith traditions – in a Quaker Meeting for Worship.

The Swami is to visit north-east Essex again from Friday 28th November till Sunday 30th November this year. A day of meditation and mantra is planned, as well as a further talk on Vedanta and an interfaith Quaker Meeting for Worship with Clacton and Harwich Quakers.

It is hoped that further details of plans for the Swami’s visit will be published in the November Area Meeting Newsletter.

And a very welcome Christmas event

Christmas is coming, and Clacton f/Friends have been very pleased to learn that Silva Gar-tont-Rogers and her friend Carolyn Rogers (no, they’re not related) are once again preparing a programme for our traditional annual Meeting for Carols, the highlight of Clacton Quakers social year.

It is to be held at our Meeting House at 3.00 pm on Saturday 29th December (the Saturday before Christmas). There will, of course, be the singing of traditional carols together with appropriate readings by Clacton Quakers, and occasional moments of Quakerly silence, fol-
followed by tea, mince pies and other seasonal delicacies, and friendly Christmas chat. Last year’s Meeting for Carols was generally agreed to have been the best ever. Our Meeting Room was filled with Quakers, our relatives and friends, and followers of virtually every other Christian tradition in Clacton. They had learned that the annual Meeting for Carols of those usually silent Quakers was something really special – enjoyable and entertaining, but at the same time deeply spirit-filled. A member of Christ Church URC Church said afterwards that it had ‘put her on a spiritual high’ for a week. It was good to have our unaccustomed-to-hymn-singing Quaker voices supplemented by those of members of other more vocal Christian traditions.

Make a note in your diary – 3.00 pm on Saturday, 20th December. Don’t miss it.

Another First (I think)

In the September newsletter I wrote that I was quite confident that it was the very first time that Clacton Friends had been represented at Yearly Meeting by a Young Friend, eleven year old Amber Kendall. I think – though I’m a little less certain – that Amber is the very first eleven year old whose account of her experience at Britain Yearly Meeting filled a full page of a subsequent Area Meeting Newsletter. I found her experiences engrossing and her descriptive ability most promising.

At the beginning of September Amber began her secondary education at Clacton County High School (where both my sons were pupils many years ago) I am sure that all readers of the Newsletter will wish her scholastic success and a happy and fulfilled future life.

Restorative Justice

John Lewis

Dear friends,

Two years ago some of you attended a day conference on Restorative Justice at Chelmsford Quaker Meeting House. As a follow up we are holding a conference this year on 18 October on Forgiveness and we thought you might be interested in attending. There will be speakers and a chance to ask questions and discuss the issues raised.

Ray and Vi Donovan, who lost their teenage son Christopher who was attacked and killed by a gang on the street, will be speaking in the morning. In the years that followed Christopher’s death they became involved in Restorative Justice and they have set up a charity in his name. They travel to schools and other places to tell their story aiming to stop young people getting involved in violence. They will be speaking about their experience of loss and pain and their long journey towards forgiveness.

In the afternoon Laura Shipler-Chico will speak about her experiences of working with people who have experienced communal violence and even genocide in sub-Saharan Africa. Survivors were able to meet with those who had perpetrated the violence in order to have a dialogue.
She will tell us about how reconciliation and forgiveness can enable communities to come together to work for peace. There will be an exhibition entitled “This Light That Pushes Me” about this work.

Best wishes, Kathy South, Clerk to Mid Essex Quaker Criminal Justice Group

Heritage Open Day

Robbie Spence
Sat 13 Sep.
I guess about 50 visitors came to the Meeting House during the day. One person thought it was fewer than last year, when estimate was 70, and another said it was a steady trickle all day. Donations were £55 including 2 purchases of the Parnell booklet.

Thanks to everyone who helped, especially Peggy for co-organising the day and staying on site most of the day to see to the refreshments.

Wildspot: I Do Miss My Toad!

Valerie Graves
Ever since I had a garden of my own I have had a toad. I expect I have bored you about this before? Toads don’t need a pond, but they like damp undergrowth, things like ivy and periwinkle. They also like slugs and snails, the bigger the better! So if you have a toad, you have no slugs, and vice versa. Nowadays I have huge black ones and even bigger bright orange ones. (I expect God loves them) They can destroy large plants in no time.

How wonderful it would be if one could go into Tesco’s, or perhaps one of the big stores like HomeBase and just ask for a toad! One of my daughters-in-law (who originally took a lot of persuading to cherish hers,) boasts of having no slugs in her big garden. She has at least three toads: dare I ask her to give me one for Christmas?

Sparrows

Rosalind Kaye
Valerie is not alone in seeing an increase in sparrows, after some lean years. (August Newsletter). My one time flock of some 15 sparrows was reduced to just 2 this Spring, but now 5 visit the garden when food is put out.

On the other hand, a flock of some 15 or more starlings regularly descend on the seed and take a drink of water. They are very welcome, as long as they do not keep the sparrows away.
**Thomas Paine**

Joan Rew

With all the conflict happening in the world at the moment, I thought it would be a good time to remember the words of Thomas Paine, son of a Quaker, radical thinker. There was an excellent TV programme given by Melvyn Bragg on Paine’s life in August. Not long after, before his death, Richard Attenborough had expressed great sorrow that he hadn’t been able to produce a film about Paine.

“When it shall be said in any country in the world, ‘My poor are happy, neither ignorance nor distress is to be found among them, my jails are empty of prisoners, my streets of beggars, the aged are not in want, the taxes are not oppressive, the rational world is my friend, because I am a friend of it’s happiness.’ When these things can be said, then may that country boast of its constitution and its government.”

Thomas Paine (1737 - 1809)

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**SEAQ position on nuclear weapons**

- Drafted by Rob Parkes Circulated for information/comment/suggestions
- We believe that nuclear war would be diabolical and could never be justified by the “Just War” doctrine. We believe the possession and renewal of nuclear weapons is, ultimately, not about security, but about the display of [mostly male?] power; and their retention is a symptom of the inability to “let-go” of an imperial past [too political?]. If the country continues along the nuclear weapons pathway it risks economic and physical disaster.

- We believe the country should follow an alternative pathway [basically, the Green Party position?]
- We believe the key question the government and people of this country should be considering, in relation to Trident, is “If the UK believed its survival was threatened by some future foe, would we be prepared to turn to ashes vast numbers of men, women and children, and so poison the atmosphere that many would die agonisingly over a generation?”
- We believe that no one has the right to use [nuclear] weapons in his defence or to ask another person to use them on his behalf. To rely on the possession of nuclear weapons as a deterrent is faithless; to use them is a sin. (/Meeting for Sufferings, 1955, 24:4, /QFP) /
- Nuclear weapons are perceived as having a political function in preventing a major war between nation states. We believe it is difficult to conceive of a scenario in which they could have utility in combating terrorism, which is now a primary security concern. Which cities, we ask, does the government have in mind to “nuke”?
- It can never be morally right to use these ghastly weapons at any time, whether first, or as an unthinkable retaliation after ourselves are doomed. (Based on QFP 24.27)
- We cannot tolerate a situation to spend [£xbillion] on Trident whilst a child dies of starvation every [15] seconds. [A supplementary question for us as a group perhaps is “If the UK were to dispense with an independent nuclear deterrent how can the Government provide security in the face of external nuclear threats?”]

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**Lebanon**

A Talk by Antony Johae

From John Lewis

Antony Johae, a long-standing member of this Meeting, lives in Lebanon. He will be in Colchester during October and we have arranged for him to speak after Meeting on Sunday 26th October.

To remind us all, Lebanon is about half the size of Wales, with a violent civil war raging to the east, a tense undeclared war to the south and half the population are believed to be refugees, most of whom are utterly impoverished. On Sunday 26th October Antony will try to explain how the Lebanese manage.

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**Peace-loving Tribes**

Valerie Graves

I have been reading an old favourite, “Touch The Earth”, which is a collection of sayings over many years of sorrow and tribulation of American Indians. They were the first inhabitants of Canada and the United States, and were very kind and helpful to the migrants when they first arrived from Europe. But soon more and more and more arrived and they wanted the lands that Indians were using.

Indians had no idea of property and ownership. All land belonged to their gods and they did not own it. They moved freely about, growing crops where they could, fishing the rivers and killing, no more than for their immediate needs for food and clothing, the buffalo and other animals which roamed in millions. They gave thanks for this bounty and lived well. The old and
poor were cared for, and nobody kept more than they needed.

But when the white-skins came, they saw prospects of immense wealth. They killed immense numbers of animals - sometimes just for fun! and collected thousands of skins to sell as valuable furs. They cut down millions of trees and built roads and houses all over the place. The Indians did not know how to cope with this. Sometimes they did resort to bloodshed but they were no match for trained gunmen.

The end was inevitable. The Indians were pushed into poor unsuitable bits of land, which were called reservations. They were given alcohol, which made them ill, and generally treated as non-persons. (similar things happened in Australia and New Zealand).

Things are slightly better now. Indigenous peoples have accepted school and other modern things, and they have kept many of their ancestral skills. There is a tribe, for instance, which is especially skilled at working on building sites at great heights, for instance. But how sad it is that the newcomers could not have treated them with courtesy and respect in the first place. Is there a lesson for us here? I remember reading of John Woolman going to visit the local Indians, to see what he could learn from them.

Clerk’s Corner
Alison Parkes, Southern East Anglia Quaker Meeting Clerk

Twelve adult Friends and two young people from our Area Meeting attended Yearly Meeting Gathering (YMG) at Bath in the summer. We recently met up for a shared meal at Tim and Carol Holdings’ home one evening and shared our impressions of YMG and our thoughts about what we would like to take forward.

For me, Ben Pink Dandelion’s Swarthmore Lecture was inspiring and perhaps even more so was his book, on which the lecture was based. In many ways, the Swarthmore Lecture was central to my abiding impressions of the Gathering. It raised several themes, including the meaning of membership and the power of transformation. Ben urged us ‘not just to inherit our tradition but to inhabit it’. He reminded us to joyfully find as well as continue seeking, and helped to identify some key insights into what it means to be Quaker today. Here I’ve paraphrased some of those insights:

We seek a spiritual basis to all that we do.

We are guided by a process of spiritual discernment to put our faith into action. Our behaviour is our creed.

Spiritual discernment is something we experience as individuals and, most fully, together.

We are seekers who have nevertheless found a place where we can be open to spiritual transformation.

We seek and nurture justice for all of humanity. We seek to do the right thing in the world - by listening to the promptings of love and truth in our hearts. As it says in Advices & Queries 28, we are called to “attend to what love requires of us”.

We accept the discipline and discernment of our meetings for worship for business.

The final chapter of the Swarthmore Lecture is called “Counting our strengths”, and Ben lists several. You might find it interesting to come up with your own list and compare it to his. The one that has left a lasting impression on me is the importance of Quaker Faith and Practice, our book of discipline, which provides clarity about where we are as a faith community. Ben encourages us to take our book of discipline seriously and unite with its contents.

Recognising the importance of Quaker Faith and Practice has led Tim Holding and me to initiate a discussion group at Colchester for Attenders and Friends to raise any questions they might have about Quakers, and to use QFP as our starting point for exploring those questions. At our first such meeting in September (which in future is to be called “All Things Considered”) we found ourselves discussing how eldership and oversight underpin the ways in which we care for one another in the meeting. When we meet next, on October 12th, we’ll see how QFP Chapter 12 helps our understanding of the roles of Elder and Overseer. Attenders and Friends are welcome to come along to “All Things Considered” as and when they can.

The Swarthmore Lecture will soon be in Meeting House libraries. If you would like to listen to it, it’s on YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oRO-lGD9emM

Area Meeting is hosting Paul Parker, BYM Recording Clerk, at Sudbury Meeting House on Sunday, October 19 at 2.15 pm. Paul will be speaking about the future of Quakers in Britain. All welcome. Contributions to shared tea also welcome! If you need transport to Sudbury, or could offer a lift, please contact Alison Parkes.