Diary Dates for June

Thursday June 4th UNICEF day of action for Children as Victims of War  http://www.unicef.org/gmfc
Friday June 5th Colchester Farmers’ Market
Saturday June 6th Peace Pledge Union Conference on Countering Militarism in Schools Holloway/London
Sunday June 7th Cavendish Consort concert at Colchester FMH
Sunday June 14th to Saturday June 20th Diabetes Week  https://www.diabetes.org.uk/diabetesweek
Monday June 15th to Saturday June 21st Refugee Week  http://www.refugeeweek.org.uk/
Friday June 26th UN International Day of Support for Victims of Torture  https://www.un.org/en/events/torturevictimsday/
Saturday July 4th Independence From America Day
Campaigning against US military/spying bases  http://www.caab.org.uk/about  https://twitter.com/C_A_A_B

Saturday 5th May “Concies in World War 1”

Photo: John Hall

NEWSLETTER

SOUTHERN EAST ANGLIA AREA QUAKER MEETING

Diary Dates for June

June 2015

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)
Clerk to Southern East Anglia Quaker Meeting: Alison Parkes
c/o Colchester Quaker Meeting House
6 Church Street, Colchester CO1 1NF;
email address: AMClerk@nessexsuffolkquakers.org

Web Address: www.essexsuffolkquakers.org
Meetings for Worship

**CLACTON**
Sunday at 10.30 am &
1st Wednesday & Lunch 12 noon

**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

FIRST CONTACT
FOR FUNERAL
ARRANGEMENTS
Carol Holding, Helen Lewis,
Peter Whiteley

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**Editorial**

Dear Friends,

Nearly summer time! it certainly is very nice at the moment, and there is lots of colour in the garden, looks nice even if most of it is blatantly large weeds. And the grass is growing like mad, I must try to get it cut. Rabbits are a pest, dear little things! and I have no dog now to chase them away, nor a toad to eat the slugs. But you can’t have everything.

But first I must apologise to a Friend who did not like my mentioning contraceptives in a piece about people who were trying to get away in dangerous boats. She said it was not appropriate. So I am sorry. But, you know, it is appropriate. It is easy to think about the use of such things, useful as they are, as personal and embarrassing. And so it is, and easy to forget that rape is an accepted act of war. The horror of rape is overtaken by the horror of having to give birth to the child of an enemy, and probably to be repudiated by a husband.

It must be fifty years ago that my husband and I visited a hospital in Drogheda (on the border between Eire and Northern Ireland, to the school for doctor and nurse nuns “The Medical Mothers of Mary” who were mostly sent to Nigeria. They were all provided with contraceptive tablets and told to take them every day, as the possibility of rape was very great! So this is not a modern problem.

Life is disappointing and frightening at the moment, and our government is plodding on with its plans regardless of increased need for food banks, hospitals desperate for cash, and all the rest of it. As I have often said, all we can do is make sure that nobody in our neighbourhood is in difficulties if we can help it.

News, please, by the middle of the month, to Valerie Graves, (for contact details, see AM List of Members and Attenders).

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**Area Meeting**

10 May 2015
Ann and Reg Webb

Twenty six members, attenders, and visitors showed up at Sudbury meeting house for a very productive meeting and wonderful tea.

Following a reading of Advices and Queries 18, the deaths of John Tann (Earls Colne), Norman Frith (Sudbury), and Jenny Jones (Colchester) were recorded in the minutes and we held them in the Light.

The usual business of Nominations and Appointments included the appointment of Jenny Kay to Nominations Committee, and Charles Bather to Funerals Committee (see minutes for details), while the knotty problem of how members’ contributions are to be collected continues, following our failure so far to find an assistant treasurer to undertake this work. It is hoped a solution will be found in simplifying this task to a point where someone feels able to take it on.

The resignation of a Member was recorded.

Jenny Kay reported on the last joint meeting of Overseers and Elders.

Christina Van Melzen of Ipswich and Diss meeting, addressed us about the outreach to other meetings of the Richard Waynforth Trust, which can provide help for Friends with needs from its investment income of £16000 per year. The current proposal is to extend their coverage to Norfolk and Waveney to the north, and Southern East Anglia (us) to the south. They are looking for a trustee who would be prepared to serve on the Advisory Board.

Following the proposal to make a substantial donation to Glebe House, there was good discussion, which resulted in a firm commitment to action. There was good discussion about how such a donation could best be used, the success rate of the charity, and what we, as an Area Meeting could affordably donate. We heard from Hazel Jones and Jackie Hall who spoke eloquently about the need for such places of rehabilitation. It was agreed to donate £30,000 to Glebe House initially and, in principle, for the next two years. A minute will be sent by letter to Glebe House outlining the details. It was discerned that “Quakers help lead the way” in these matters.

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*photo: Joan Rew*
News from Clacton

Ernest Hall

‘In right ordering’

Now that’s a very Quakerly phrase that I haven’t heard recently, though it was common enough when Heather and I joined the Society of Friends by convincement over sixty years ago. It referred to a Quaker event (perhaps a wedding or a funeral) that had taken place as planned and given satisfaction to everyone concerned.

I can’t think of a better way than that to describe Clacton Meeting’s very first regular ‘First Wednesday of the Month Meeting for Worship and simple lunch’ that took place on Wednesday 6th May. We had held a well-attended ‘pilot Meeting’ in March and had decided that a regular ‘First Wednesday’ Meeting would be viable. The idea was approved by Meeting for Church Affairs but circumstances had prevented the first ‘regular meeting’ taking place in April.

The Meeting on 6th May was different both from the pilot meeting and from the ‘first Wednesday’ Meetings that had been held at 1.00 pm in the main Meeting Room in previous years. We had decided to hold the Meeting from 12.00 noon instead of from 1.00 pm and to hold it in the newly refurbished small Meeting Room (many of us still think of it as the ‘Children’s Room) instead of the main Meeting Room.

Despite the weather (there was a strong, gusty wind blowing off the sea on the 6th with prolonged and very heavy showers!) there were nine of us at the meeting, more than we sometimes have at Sunday Morning Meeting for Worship. Janet and Rodney Thomas had arranged the tables and chairs to make the venue suitable for our purposes. The half-hour of worship was a deeply spiritual experience.

Satisfying periods of prayerful and expectant silence were broken only by two or three brief and clearly heart-felt items of spoken ministry. I am sure that during that half-hour we came together in ‘those things..."
that are eternal’ and were all conscious of ‘The Presence in the Midst’. Worship ended with traditional Quaker handshakes – and ‘many hands making light work’ of distributing the simple but very satisfying lunch that had been prepared for us.

I have described the lunch as ‘simple’ rather than ‘frugal’ because the latter word suggests there wasn’t much of it! That was far from the case. There were bread rolls, ample spread, and a variety of cheeses. There were also potato crisps, and a number of sweet items. I enjoyed a small apple pie. We were served with tea, coffee or soup. Friendly conversation round the table reminded me that Derek Crosfield (a very ‘weighty’ Colchester Friend who had a special interest in Clacton Meeting) had once told me that we couldn’t hope to unite with Friends in ‘those things that are eternal’ unless we first learned something about each other in those things that are temporal’.

We were all particularly pleased that Mary Smith, who had recently been in hospital, was with us. Mary always appreciates Meeting for Worship but, because she has family staying with her most weekends, is very often unable to attend Sunday Meetings. As we broke up soon after 1.00 pm she said how much she was now looking forward to the next ‘First Wednesday Meeting’. So, I think, were we all.

That Meeting would be at 12.00 noon on 3rd June. All readers of the Newsletter are warmly invited to join us – and perhaps bring along a non-Quaker friend or family member interested in Quakerism. It would be nice to be able to welcome someone from Harwich or Colchester. A former member of our Children’s Class found it worth her while to come from Chelmondiston (a mile or two from Ipswich, near the Orwell Bridge) to Clacton to attend the monthly ‘First Wednesday Meetings for Worship’ of the past.

Our Meeting House
At our Meeting for Church Affairs held after worship on Sunday 3rd May, our Premises Committee reported that the small Meeting Room was now fit for purpose. The folding doors that separated the two parts of the room had been removed, furniture had been put back in place, new net curtains had been made and long curtains rehung. The room was, as recorded above, put to Quakerly use for our ‘First Wednesday Meeting’ on Wednesday 6th May. I am sure that those of us who attended that Meeting would confirm that the room was ideal for that purpose and would wish to express their appreciation of the Premises Committee’s activities.

Work planned for the near future includes redecoration of the main meeting room, lobby, hallway to kitchen and toilets, rubbing down and re-varnishing the double entrance doors and possibly repainting the outside walls. The timing of these activities depends upon the availability of finances.

Next year the Committee hopes to restore the floor of the main meeting room and lobby, to redecorate the kitchen and replace kitchen units.

Appointments
Hazel, our Clerk asks if any member of either Clacton or Harwich Meeting feels able to take on the role of Treasurer. It is now very different from the post filled for many years by Roy Prockter.

It is a question of listing receipts and payments on a sheet each month and sending these to our Area Meeting bookkeepers together with all the supporting documents and a print-out of the bank statement for the month. The bookkeepers will, in return, provide a Profit and Loss account each quarter for the Treasurer to bring to Local Meeting. The bookkeepers will also prepare the End of Year accounts.

Hazel also reminds us that at the end of this year we shall need to find someone to fill the office of Clerk and that there are other positions that will need to be filled.

Other Activities
In her weekly ‘notices’, Hazel tells us that it has been suggested that some of the wall space in the small meeting room might be used for a continually changing display of art work by members of the Meeting. She would appreciate comments on this suggestion.

Do F/Friends have any ideas to develop and use the small meeting room beyond those of providing a venue ‘First Wednesday Meetings’ and for Area Meeting teas after Meetings for Area Church affairs?

Spring Poem
Joan Rew

“See! The winter has past; the rains are over and gone. Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come, the cooing of turtle-doves is heard in the land.”

Song of Songs 2 v 11. 12
Conchies in WW1

Saturday 9th May 15.00 to 17.00 at Colchester Meeting House

We very much enjoyed a lively and imaginative theatrical presentation that was given by Martin Pennock and the “Buried Talent” group (of Bury St Edmunds Meeting,) and friends.. After the performance we had a good discussion followed by a substantial tea.

New School Prayer:

Now I sit me down in school
Where praying is against the rule
For this great nation under God
Finds mention of Him very odd.
If scripture now the class recites,
It violates the Bill of Rights.
And anytime my head I bow
Becomes a Federal matter now.
Our hair can be purple, orange or green,
That’s no offense; it’s a freedom scene..
The law is specific, the law is precise.
Prayers spoken aloud are a serious vice.
For praying in a public hall
Might offend someone with no faith at all..
In silence alone we must meditate,
God’s name is prohibited by the Provence.
We’re allowed to cuss and dress like freaks,
And pierce our noses, tongues and cheeks...
They’ve outlawed guns, but FIRST the Bible.

To quote the Good Book makes me liable.
We can elect a pregnant Senior Queen,
And the ‘unwed daddy,’ our Senior King.
It’s ‘inappropriate’ to teach right from wrong,
We’re taught that such ‘judgments’ do not belong..
We can get our condoms and birth controls,
Study witchcraft, vampires and totem poles...
But the Ten Commandments are not allowed,
No word of God must reach this crowd.
It’s scary here I must confess,
When chaos reigns the school’s a mess.
So, Lord, this silent plea I make:
Should I be shot; My soul please take!
Amen

By a 15-year-old schoolboy who got an A+ for this entry

(The Lord’s Prayer is not allowed in most US Public schools any more.)

From Ernest Hall
The Gates of Greenham
from Valerie Graves

Thirty years ago, Easter 1985, was the occasion of the largest gathering of Friends in the 20th century, at the London Royal Festival Hall, an amazing occasion full of superlatives and excitement. I came with dozens of Chelmsford Friends, in a number of coaches. We had brought food, just as well, as local cafes soon ran out. The hall was packed: there were even queues for returned tickets. It was an oratorio to celebrate four years of witness by the women’s peace camp at Greenham Common against nuclear weapons, and yes, I had been there. You should read the article in The Friend of 24 April, ‘Steps toward Peace’ 18 April 2014.

Dear Friends from Earls Colne,

Walking for and toward Inner Peace
Jenny Kay

During May, Lucas de Groot, a Friend from the Netherlands visited Earls Colne meeting house on his annual six month pilgrimage. There was no-one to greet him but he left a note and a copy of the article in The Friend, ‘Steps toward Peace’ 18 April 2014.

Dear Friends from Earls Colne,

I stayed this night at Angela’s house in Bardfield Saling. Here is an article about my peace pilgrimage through Britain. Lovely to see the 89th meeting house I visited in Britain. So peaceful and gives me always comfort and a feeling of being encouraged in my 6 month journey on a bicycle this year. There will come an article about it in the Friend.

Best wishes,
Lucas, The Hague Meeting

Forthcoming Events
“The World is My Country”
at Colchester Meeting House
Exhibition on Heritage Open Day, Saturday 12 September 10.00 - 4.00 pm and a Public event Thursday 24 September 7.30 pm with speakers from Peace News including Emily Johns, the artist who designed the posters.
The posters highlight the highlight the untold history of people who opposed the First World War at the time.

For more information see www.theworldismycountry.info

Quote
Joan Rew
"Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever. There are many causes I would die for. Not one I would kill for. An eye for an eye only turns the whole world blind."
Mahatma Gandhi
Quoted at the Memorial Service for Richard Attenborough.

Tawny Owl Chick
John Lewis
Two days out of the nest, about a week out of the egg. Photo taken this afternoon in our wood.
They climb out and float to the ground and are fed erratically by mother for another couple of weeks, by which time they have wings.

Southern East Anglia Area Quaker Meeting
**Marie Curie**

from Valerie Graves

I have been re-reading a favourite book, a life of Marie Curie written by her second daughter Eve in 1935, a year after her death. This is an amazing story of love and dedication unequalled by anything I have ever read.

She was born Maria Sklodovska in 1867, the youngest of six children in a Warsaw ruled by Russia in absolute subjection. It was a crime to be heard speaking Polish or even owning a book or anything printed or even written in the language. But of course they did, and had a complicated system of warnings: if a Russian entered the house their book went under the floorboards and Russian ones taken up. Her father had a very poorly paid job as a physics teacher. Their mother was never fit and died when the youngest was still small, of tuberculosis. The eldest, Bronya, went to Paris on a sort of scholarship, and Marie went there later. She managed to study physics and became interested in trying to purify some strange unknown element from huge quantities of a rough ore known as pitchblende. She had to work, in very ungenial conditions in a damp dirty shed; heavy and tiring. She had met a young student, Pierre Curie (I am leaving a lot out). They married and worked together and did succeed in isolating radium and other similar metals, in minute quantities, and soon realised that these were very strange. Nobody was very interested, but eventually it became realised that they were of value. They shared a Nobel Prize in 1903.

They struggled for years on a tiny income, but they were very happy, and had two little girls. But tragedy struck and Pierre was killed in a traffic accident in 1906. Marie carried on alone, and eventually took over his teaching post - unheard of for a female! In her first lecture she made no mention of anything personal but simply carried on from his lecture notes. She was absolutely uninterested in fame of any kind.

But you must read it for yourself.

**Britain Yearly Meeting**

Friends House, London 1 - 4 May 2015 Jenny Kay

This year John and decided to make Yearly Meeting a leisurely holiday break. Arriving on the Thursday and leaving on the following Tuesday, we stayed in a hotel within 5 minutes walk from Friends’ House. Bloomsbury is my favourite part of London. I have been a regular visitor since my time teaching in Shoreditch in the late 1960s. We were selective with the sessions we attended giving us time for walks around the area, time to sit in its squares; Tavistock Square with its peace memorials and Russell Square for Italian ice cream.

The subject of the Salter Lecture on Friday afternoon was not an easy one to follow. Jude Kirton-Darling spoke on trade deals and in particular the TTIP agreement and associated ISDS. The issues are complicated. Jude is a Labour MEP with a place on the International Trade Committee EU. She is a convinced internationalist with expertise and enthusiasm for her part in the negotiating process. Her optimism for the possibilities of more transparency in the process leading to a better deal left me with some hope. We both joined the Quaker Socialist Society and hope to receive the full text of the talk.

We joined the Saturday morning session on the theme ‘Living out our Faith in the World’ in the Large Meeting room but for the final minute on this we sat in the overflow as John was finding the lack of leg-room somewhat uncomfortable. The minute is two A4 pages long. Is there a contradiction here? We must remember that what makes the real difference is not adding further to the words in the world ...

The encouragement to practical action was strong suggesting that Friends make a decision to do something straight away, however small that action might be. There was an added bonus to the overflow; we were easily at the beginning of the lunch queue. The quiche was excellent value.

Both of the special interest groups that we joined held their AGMs. We left the Friends Historical Society after the lecture on the ways in which Quakers had helped German and others interned during WW1. The Quaker Arts Network has achieved a strong presence among Quaker activities. Following the exhibition last year in Bath with one
in Friends House in August ‘Climb up the Moor’ featuring the work of Judith Bromley. She and John made one of those ‘small world’ connections when they discovered that they had both taught with the same colleague, John when he was in Basildon and Judith in Leyburn.

The Swarthmore Lecture given by Diana Francis ‘Faith Power and Peace’ was informative, moving, inspiring and helpful in showing the way in which we can speak out as members of a ‘historic peace church’. The book is essential reading and I hope to view a DVD of the talk and re-live the experience.

Yearly Meeting was an occasion for meeting up with past Colchester friends, however briefly, and a Friend from Wandsworth whom I got to know while on Sufferings some years ago. This time by taking life easy I have got much stronger memories of Yearly Meeting and for the first time have been able to put something on paper.

Before leaving London we visited the Exhibition ‘On Light’ at the neighbouring Wellcome Collection. We chose to view the ‘Slow Story Slide Show’. It was prefaced by the words ‘Nothing is static, nothing is final, everything is held provisionally.’ Jocelyn Bell Burnell

\[\text{Clerk's Corner}\]

Alison Parkes, Southern East Anglia Area Meeting

\textbf{Quakers in Scotland}

I am writing this in Aberdeen, as Rob and I are en route to the Outer Hebrides for a 2-week holiday. By the time this newsletter is printed, we will be home again, but in the meantime you may find it of interest to hear a little bit about Friends in Scotland.

Rob and I went into Aberdeen and found the Meeting House, tucked away behind Union Street, the main road through the city. It was good to see a sign pointing to the Quaker Meeting House, and a familiar poster on the grey granite wall of the building: "Cut Poverty, Not Community".

The Quaker community in Scotland is far-flung, with worshiping groups of Friends scattered across the islands, highlands and lowlands, and including a few larger Meetings. Quakers in Scotland meet quarterly for General Meeting; they last met in March and you might be interested to read the minutes of that meeting.

http://www.quakerscotland.org/sites/quakerscotland.org/files/minutes/Mar15Mins.pdf and find the common strands of matters facing us all. As you can imagine, Trident features as a serious issue, as does militarisation, especially the militarisation of schools. These are issues in which Friends of our Area Meeting and for the first time have been taking a keen interest. When we realise what action is being taken by Friends elsewhere in the country, it can inspire us to consider what else we might do.

The next meeting of Southern East Anglia Area Quaker Meeting will take place on Sunday, July 12 at Earls Colne Meeting House, 2.15 pm. At this meeting, we expect to receive the Annual Report and Accounts. Further details, including the accounts (when available), will be uploaded at the earliest opportunity to the Business page of our Area Meeting website: www.essexsuffolkquakers.org All are welcome to attend; non-members (attenders) are asked to please request permission of the clerk.

\textit{photo: Joan Rew}

\textit{Drawing of a Camellia by Rowany Rendell made during All-Age Worship on 29 March.}