Diary Dates for August

**Thursday August 6th** Hiroshima Day, This year marks the 70th anniversary of the nuclear attacks on Japan. Colchester Quakers will be holding an Interfaith Peace Evening at their Meeting House, starting at 19.00hrs. There will be readings, moments of peace, remembrance and stillness, and light refreshments [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atomic_bombings_of_Hiroshima_and_Nagasaki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atomic_bombings_of_Hiroshima_and_Nagasaki)

**Friday August 7th** Colchester Farmers’ Market Colchester Arts Centre


**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@essexsuffolkquakers.org

Web Address: [www.essexsuffolkquakers.org](http://www.essexsuffolkquakers.org)
**Meetings for Worship**

**CLACTON**
Sunday at 10.30 am

**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

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

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**July Area Meeting**

Carol Holding

The advice No.19 on caring for and learning from children which was read in the period of worship set the tone as did the deep peace experienced by the six of us in the morning meeting, which was good as much of the business of the afternoon concerned the monetary anxieties of recent times and how we are solving them.

The first item was the joyous accepting of Graeme Johnston of Sudbury into membership and this was followed by many appointments. A Friend is sought to replace Peter Whiteley on Nominations committee and we were amazed to hear Valerie Graves is in her seventh triennium as Newsletter editor and we thanked her and John Kay who has also served for a long time. Frances Tebbutt is willing to serve a second triennium as archivist, and Carol Holding is willing to replace Sylva Garton Rogers as trustee on the Greenwood trust. Two trustees are needed to replace Hazel Jones and Tom Tebbutt who becomes treasurer and two representatives are invited to attend a QPSW conference at Swanwick in October and a QCEA biennial conference in Belgium in December where deadlines are imminent. Local meeting treasurers are needing help at Earls Colne and Clacton, Henry Ruse continues to be treasurer at Sudbury. Due to reorganisation of the role of AM assistant treasurer the job is to be split with the appointment of a paid bookkeeper and the appointment of a Quaker link person to be called Contributions Secretary. The former is to be Sue Dowden at £20 an hour, and the latter Carol Holding.

Hazel Jones gave her last report as clerk of Trustees for the last six years, work which was based on the 2009-2014 framework for Action. It was felt that advice was needed when Sandra Berry became director of Woodbrooke and a financial advisor PlanMoney was appointed. The core charitable purpose was to spend where most needed as well as to manage our reserves in the knowledge that living beyond our means would deplete these in ten years, and the recognition that professional bookkeepers while costing short term would save money in the long run. Tom Tebbutt gave us the details and a summary of both reports will appear elsewhere in the Newsletter but he began by offering great thanks to Rosalind Kaye for her work as assistant treasurer particularly for the extra year and we give thanks to Tom for salvaging an impossible situation.

We are reminded when noting that total income was less than expend-

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**Editorial**

Dear Friends,

Summer holiday time, rather selfishly I find it too hot but seems a bit unkind to say so! (but we do need some rain, so long as it isn’t monsoon stuff such as they had for the golf final the other day). Children home from school so they are often here, which is nice. My eldest son is at his house in France, and my Slovak family will be motoring across Europe. Last week I was at Ely for a diamond wedding party for a cousin of my husband, it was at a big hotel with a lovely garden, and after a lot of finger-counting I was discovered to be the eldest, so they decided that I was the head of the family and had to make a speech, but it was all good fun. We were all a bit aged.

Our Meeting continues to have lots of activities and a good many newcomers, which is good. We are reminded to make jam for the Sale, but then we were not sure whether we were going to have a Sale? In September we shall have an Open Day during Heritage Week, when many buildings in the town will be open to the public, and volunteers will be needed. This can be an interesting occasion, as we usually get a lot of visitors.

It is sad to hear of migrants drowning while trying to reach these shores, and even sadder to realise how unwelcoming we are. Who now remembers the days of the Kindertransport? (But we were not, as a nation, all that welcoming then). I think we should do all we can, to help and comfort these people, who have had a very frightening and unpleasant time. If we look back into past history, few of us have no migrants somewhere in the past. Where would the NHS, for instance, be without them?

I hope you will all have good holidays, and I look forward to hearing about them. Please write, by the middle of the month, to Valerie Graves, (for contact details, see AM List of Members and Attenders).

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**Photo by Joan Rew**
Worship on 1st July was unaffected by the work. Once again there were eight of us and it proved to be deeply appreciated by all. On the following Sunday the work was well in hand. The Meeting Room seemed lighter and brighter and, with the bookshelves and books from our library temporarily removed, it seemed larger. The completion of the internal decoration; the kitchen and toilets, will carried out at a later date.

Internal Decoration of the Meeting House

Internal decoration of the main Meeting Room, the lobby and the passage-way to the kitchen was carried out early in July. Our ‘First Wednesday’ lunchtime Meeting for Worship on 1st July was unaffected by the work. Once again there were eight of us and it proved to be a ‘gathered’ meeting, deeply appreciated by all. On the following Sunday the work was well in hand. The Meeting Room seemed lighter and brighter and, with the bookshelves and books from our library temporarily removed, it seemed larger. The completion of the internal decoration; the kitchen and toilets, will carried out at a later date.

News from Clacton Meeting

Ernest Hall

‘Hearts and Minds Prepared’ study course

A ‘Hearts and Minds Prepared’ study course is to be held at our Meeting House this autumn. It will take place on alternate Saturday mornings from 10.00 am until 12 noon, beginning on Saturday 24th October. At the beginning of July there were seven prospective participants. A maximum of eight is recommended. There may be one or two places still available. If you are interested contact Hazel who is to be facilitator, assisted by members of the group. Participants are given course folders so that they may know what lies ahead. Tea and biscuits will be available at the end of each session.

Our Library

The temporary removal of our bookshelves and books has prompted some f/Friends to question the value of some of the older books and wonder whether they might be offered to other meetings or bookshops. However Hazel Jones points out that some of the older books will prove of value to the Hearts and Minds Prepared study course and urges that removal of unwanted books should take place only after careful consideration. Margaret Ahmed, Margaret Purrett and Hazel are to look into this. Unwanted books could be offered to members and any remaining disposed of.

All of this has reminded me that those very useful bookshelves were made and installed by John Farren, a retired South African doctor. He and his wife (who had been a ward sister at the East Suffolk and Ipswich Hospital) were valued members of our Meeting in the early 1970s. John was also a very skilled amateur wood worker. The shelves he made and installed replaced less than satisfactory portable book-cases. He also gave the Meeting our present ‘hearing loop’ for f/Friends with hearing problems. The loop was installed by our recently departed and sadly missed Friend Roy Prockter.

John Farren and his wife (sorry, I have forgotten her first name!) eventually moved to Cornwall to be near relatives, where Heather and I once visited them in our motor caravan. We found that John had fitted his garage up as a well equipped do-it-yourself workshop. I believe that he died a few years ago.

Frail Friends

It has been a joy to see Jacqui Wilson’s smiling face again at our Sunday Meetings for Worship. Last month I said it was nice not to be the only Friend using a Zimmer frame. Now I’m even gladder that Jacqui no longer needs one. She’s managing fine just with a walking stick.

A forthcoming wedding.

No, it’s not a Quaker one, but the couple to be married have a strong connection with our Meeting and I’m quite sure that all Clacton f/Friends wish them well.

Mary Douglas is a loyal member of Christ Church United Reformed Church, our nearest mainstream Christian Church geographically with which Clacton Friends have for many years had a friendly relationship. Acquaintance with Friends attending Christ Church’s weekday prayer meetings led to Mary, with her fiancé Ian Layzell, attending one of our Sunday morning Meetings for Worship. They

At our Meeting for Church affairs on Sunday 5th July Hazel reported that on 30th June the Meeting’s balance stood at £3,637.52; nearly £300 more than at the beginning of the year, despite a very considerable spend on the small meeting room and new flooring throughout the front half of the building. During that period we received rent from the flat only from January until May. We will not receive rent from our new tenant until 1st August.

Meeting Finances

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both appreciated Quaker Worship and Quaker attitudes and values and now come regularly to our Sunday morning meetings on one week in every month. They have, with other friends from Christ Church, attended our Christmas Meeting for Carols, and have come to every one of our revived ‘First Wednesday in the Month’ lunchtime Meetings. Both Mary and Ian are widowed and they are to marry at Christ Church URC Church at 1.00 pm on Saturday 8th August. I am quite sure that all Clacton F/friends wish them future happiness and I shall be very surprised if there are not one or two of us in the congregation on the 8th.

Some seventy years ago when I was a prisoner of war in Germany we had in our barrack room a daily tear-off calendar with a Thought for the Day, 'Lieben und geliebt zu verden ist das höchste glück auf Erden'. To love and be loved in return is the greatest happiness (or good fortune) on earth. In sixty years of marriage Heather and I found that to be very true. I hope that Ian and Mary will find the same.

Wildspot: Colour Variants in Plants
from Valerie Graves.
I wonder if you too have noticed an amazing change in the colours of, for instance, Hollyhocks, this year. All of mine came from seeds collected from a pathway in Cley in Norfolk, twenty or thirty years ago and they have multiplied and spread all over the garden. At first they are seedlings but the following year they are six or more feet high with many flowers. They remain for several years and then die off. I though that they would stick to their original colour, but I am not sure if this is true. I mean, if it had white flowers this year it would have white ones next year, but maybe it doesn’t.

The original plants were all fairly pale with pastel colours and so have mine been, but this year I have been astonished to find very much darker and brighter colours, strong yellows and amazing dark bright reds, with some really stunning magenta shades. I cannot account for it. Looking round the garden I see that the common-or-garden rugosas are much brighter and darker too. Any ideas?

Trustees Report,
July 2015
Hazel Jones, Clerk to Trustees
This will be the last time I present the Trustees Report to you, so I thought it useful to look back at some of the reports I have given over the past five years. I became Clerk suddenly, with little preparation, when we lost Sandra Berry to Woodbrooke. Seeing what a wonderful job Sandra has done there, I realise what a very sad loss that was for our Area Meeting.

I had been a Trustee for less than a year at that time and was still trying to find out what it was all about. Area Meeting was looking at ways of bringing the 2009 2014 Framework for Action to life, so it made sense to refer to the seven priorities in our Trustees Report to show what we are doing on all those fronts. Next year we will have a new framework and the Trustees Report will no doubt look very different.

As I took up the role of Clerk to Trustees, I discovered that Trustees were responsible for a meeting worth around three quarters of a million pounds and I felt it was important to call in some expert help. I had never had to deal with that sort of money before, very possibly most of our volunteer Treasurers hadn’t either. We needed to get it right. There has throughout the last six years been a dilemma between holding sufficient reserves and using our money wisely – and what is wise anyway? Our financial advisers and many Friends throughout the Area Meeting and beyond recommend caution, ensuring our sustainability into the future. Sustainability is one of our core charitable purposes. Other Friends see the need to spend our savings now in an attempt to alleviate suffering in the world – again one of our core charitable purposes. Hence the dilemma.

As an Area Meeting we have tried to discern our purposes – maintaining our meeting houses, support for Britain Yearly Meeting, charitable giving – but can we afford to do all three? In today’s world even three quarters of a million will make very little difference in the great scheme of things but we can achieve tiny improvements.

In the 2011 accounts we were able to follow the new Area Meeting Reserves policy which seemed to indicate that we needed to reserve around £455,000 to maintain our financial viability. We had about £531,000 unrestricted money to cover this so there was some spare capacity. We were able to give large sums to Britain Yearly Meeting for advocacy work and smaller sums to Quaker Peace & Social Witness. This was due to a very generous legacy received during the year of £125,000 which to a large extent hid the fact that we were living beyond our means – Sandra Berry had drawn it to our attention the year before that living beyond our means had been the case for the past several years and this would lead to our resources being exhausted within about 10 years. The main overspend was on maintaining our...
buildings. Do we need to give more when the Annual Appeal comes round, or do we need to cut our expenditure to the bone? Or do we need to take difficult decisions when meeting houses are proving too costly to keep?

Last year, with an amended Reserves Policy and the benefit of Area Meeting discernment to guide us, we looked at Reserves in a different way. Friends’ discernment was turning to thoughts of how we might use the money we have to achieve some small measure of change in the world – how little (rather than how much) should we place in reserves in order to maintain prudent stewardship of the Area Meeting resources? The figure for Reserves was reduced from £455,000 to £120,000, and it remains at that level this year.

The accounts show that at the end of 2014 we had £506,000 unrestricted money but not all of this is available to spend without further discernment. Out of the £506,000 we really do have to set aside more than just the £120,000 reserves. Some is already committed. There is the £90,000 Area Meeting has promised for a new Glebe House project, there is provision for educational and pastoral needs throughout the Area Meeting in anticipation of the Jack Fields Fund being used up in the next few years, further expenditure to keep our buildings in good condition when we receive the next round of Quinquennial Survey reports, and £74,000 in designated funds for use for Colchester Local Meeting’s charitable giving and the former Kendall & Freshfield Trust. Trustees estimate that we will have just over £100,000 totally uncommitted savings run out to continue on an even keel financially for many years to come. The world needs Quakers!

In 2012 I mentioned the difficulties we face with our system of replacing trustees and treasurers every one or two triennia. The changeover can be stressful. Our Nominations Committee does a terrific job, but it gets harder and harder to find people willing to take on these roles. We had unimaginable difficulties when our new Area Meeting Treasurer, Roy Prockter, died in June last year. He was both a Friend of long standing and a professional accountant. We were looking ahead very positively, but it was not to be. We were in a real muddle. Roy was also Treasurer for two of our Local Meetings.

It was a difficult time and we turned to 123 Easy Books, professional bookkeepers, for help. They too have found it stressful - we don’t work in the same way as small businesses and we use strange words in ways that are not easy to understand for non Quakers. Our financial advisers, Plan Money, are being very supportive in this new process and I hope that our bookkeepers will have settled in by the end of this year. They will take a lot of the drudgery out of the Treasurer roles, leaving Friends free to fulfil a more proactive role, advising their meetings on the money available and the best use for it. We hope this new way of working will help with succession planning since the task of treasurers and trustees in the future with this kind of expert guidance will appear much less daunting. If the combination of amateur and professional is not successful long term, we have to find new solutions or accept that the Area Meeting is not a viable entity. Without the continuing committed help of Friends, I don’t see how we can do any of the things we take for granted or are planning for the future. That includes all of us working to achieve a balance between income and spending as soon as possible. The time when this becomes an absolute necessity is fast approaching and may well be with us at the end of the first triennium of the new Clerk to Trustees.
**Treasurers Report**

Preamble

2014 has been a difficult year from the point of view of recording and managing our accounts. At the beginning of the year Anne Dowden laid down her role of Area Meeting Treasurer having done an excellent job during her appointment. The work was taken up by Roy Prockter who decided to move the account recording to a computer based programme he was writing himself. Unfortunately before he could complete the task he suddenly and tragically died leaving an unfinished programme that was not understood by anyone else with much of his work locked into it.

Hazel Jones took up a holding role to keep the accounts going in addition to her work as clerk to the Trustees. Which she did for several months until a replacement Treasurer could be appointed. This with no handover documents and limited information. She also took over the accounts for Clacton and Earls Colne Local Meetings which were also previously done by Roy. A task she still does.

I would like to express our thanks to Rosalind Kaye for carrying on her work as assistant treasurer long after her appointment finished. Her dependable work was a rock in the turbulent waters of change and greatly helped me whilst finding my feet.

At this point your trustees took the decision to appoint professional bookkeepers. It was felt that the task of Treasurer had become so daunting that it was a major factor in finding anyone willing to take on the job in the area and local meetings. A factor was also that using a proprietary system would make the presentation of our accounts compatible with standard accounting practice and therefore reduce the considerable cost of auditing our accounts. This would it was hoped balance out the cost of the bookkeepers.

I took over as treasurer towards the end of 2014 and have been trying to get the accounts back into order, with the much appreciated help of Hazel and the other Trustees. I am steadily catching up with things but during 2014 there were some payments and receipts that were not made on time. For this I apologise. I hope to complete the task of catching up very soon.

Summary

The report for 2014 is an amalgamation of the Area Meeting and Local Meeting accounts. This is required by the Charities Commission as we are a single registered charity. Although each Local meeting has their own account and runs their own meeting the responsibility for our financial affairs lies with the Area Meeting delegated to our trustees.

As far as the Charities Commission is concerned the trustees are held responsible for the correct running of our finances. We have to submit two accounts: A Statement of Financial Affairs; Income and Expenditure. A Balance Sheet: A list of our assets both in property and money. SOFA Income: Contributions: £28,700 Hirings £47,700 Investment Interest: £7,200 Other: £2,500 Total: £86,100

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**Meeting for Sufferings**

4th July 2015
Robert Parkes

This is my first report as the AM’s newly appointed representative to MFS. For those of you unfamiliar with MFS, it is the standing representative body entrusted with the care of the business of the Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) through the year. Its origins go back to the early days of Quakers when it was set up to address the “sufferings” of many Friends around the country. It did this by effectively lobbying king and parliament and it’s been at the forefront of campaign and lobbying ever since: as part of the anti-slavery movement, in setting-up the Friends Ambulance Unit, the Kindertransport, and, most recently in challenging the creeping mili-
We spent time reflecting on one urgent concern in particular, the concern for refugees. We heard it is estimated there are over 50 million migrants in the world today. People are on the move. There are many different reasons for this. Many are fleeing war and persecution, others are simply trying to escape inequality and grinding poverty and looking for a better life. It is after all something humans have always done. In fact, there a very few English families who don’t have a migration story somewhere in their past. Some of you may have seen the open letter to the Prime Minister, expressing our deepest concern for the plight of migrants desperately trying to cross the Mediterranean. See http://www.quaker.org.uk/news/quakers-speak-plight-migrants. A letter to the Prime Minister, of course, doesn’t sort it. There’s a lot more to do. QPSW is exploring with Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network (QARN) how they can work together more closely. We heard that Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA) is looking at these issues and working with other faith groups in Europe who are actively campaigning on these matters. At this stage it was felt the most important action we can take as individuals is to challenge the rhetoric around migration, a rhetoric which gives licence to politicians to introduce policies based on exclusion rather than being human centred.

I came away from my first MFS with strong sense of corporative identity and recalled how in the early 19th century Quakers were a by-word for organisational effectiveness “Let us look at, and emulate the patient resolution of the Quakers. They have conquered without arms – without violence- without threats. They conquered by union.”

The next MFS is in September. I’m looking forward to it and reporting again to AM. A full set minutes of are on the Quaker website at http://www.quaker.org.uk/mfs-4-july-2015-final-minutes-follow-letter-and-other-related-papers. There is also a good report in this week’s Friend (10 July). Finally, in relation to our concern for housing, the Quaker Housing Trust is organizing an exploratory conference at Woodbrooke later in the year. Look out for details.
tries. In our worship these include those who speak under the guidance of the Spirit, and those who receive and uphold the work of the Spirit in silence and prayer. We also recognise as ministry service on our many committees, hospitality and childcare, the care of finance and premises, and many other tasks. We value those whose ministry is not in an appointed task but is in teaching, counselling, listening, prayer, enabling the service of others, or other service in the meeting or the world.

“The purpose of all our ministry is to lead us and other people into closer communion with God and to enable us to carry out those tasks which the Spirit lays upon us.”

~ London Yearly Meeting, 1986

The Quaker Tapestry
from Valerie Graves

I spoke to the collection we had a week or two ago, but I thought you might like to know a bit more.
(I should really call it “crewel embroidery” rather than tapestry, but never mind!)

It was started by Anne Wynn Wilson in 1981, when she had just the one 11 year old boy in her children’s class, in Somerset, and thought they might do something together. Anne, an experienced embroiderer, had been impressed by the Bayeux Tapestry, and from this started the eventually huge organisation of the Society of Friends’ own Tapestry. Its scope was the history and activities of the Society over the years, a “celebration of insights”, with 75 panels (many more now), thousands of Friends stitching all over the country and eventually all over the world. Anne selected the topics for each Meeting. We had a group here in Colchester: we would have liked to do James Parnell but he had already been allotted, so we had the Children’s Meeting, and we used real Members and their children. In most panels the children of the Meeting added their own drawings at the bottom of the panel.

Anne had special cloth woven, a sort of spotty flesh-colour, which was splendid and went with anything, just six stitches, including an unique alphabet, and about a hundred Appleton wools. This strict discipline ensured its uniqueness.

But nothing really explains the emotional effect of working on, and of seeing the actual finished panels. In our case it developed a wonderful bond. This is understandable, but less so is the effect it has on outsiders, especially those knowing little or nothing about Quakers but who have seen it in the large number of cathedrals and public places where it has been shown. I recommend reading one of the very good books that it has inspired.

The Tapestry has its present home at the Quaker Meeting House in Kendal, where it has a large room and also a shop and a flat where volunteers can stay, and a very good cafe. They are delighted to have visitors, and volunteers.

Needless to say, this all costs money! The panels have to be cleaned and cared for, and they now have travelling cases (which are expensive) for going to and from the various places where they are shown. The people who look after them on their travels have to be supported, too. Thousands of people tramp through the Meeting House every year and this makes expenses too. I have visited once or twice and of course it is a wonderful area for a holiday.

The next Area Meeting will take place at Clacton Meeting House, Sunday September 13 at 2.15 pm. All are welcome; attenders are requested to ask the clerk for permission to attend. To view previous AM minutes, visit the AM website: www.essexsuffolkquakers.org

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 untold history of people who opposed the First World War at the time.

For more information see www.theworldismycountry.info

Area Meetings in 2016

We ask LMs to consider the following dates and locations for Area Meetings for Church Affairs and to report back to AM in September:

Sundays:
10 January - Colchester,
13 March - Clacton,
8 May - Sudbury,
10 July - Earls Colne,
11 September - Colchester,
20 November - Colchester (3rd Sunday due to Sale in Colchester)