Diary Dates for September

Monday September 4th to Monday September 11th week of protests against the DESI Arms Trade Fair, London [https://www.stopthearmsfair.org.uk/]
Saturday September 9th Heritage Open Day at Colchester QMH and Earls Colne QMH
Sunday September 10th Area Meeting - Colchester
Tuesday September 26th International Day for the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons [http://www.un.org/en/events/nuclearweaponelimination/]
Saturday September 30th, 1000 to 1630 Diss Quakers Day on Simple Living. See agenda on the Colchester QMH Notice Board Venue: [http://suffolkquakers.org.uk/diss.htm]
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
St Nicholas’ Church Hall,
Stour Road, Bathside CO12 3HS
Contact: Ros/Tony Eaton 01255 880500

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)

Ernest Hall
Janet Thomas
18th May 1921 - 1st July 2017
The Unforgiving Minute
Our longest attending dear
Friend Ernest Hall died at the age of 97 at the Beaumont
Lodge Care Home he had re-
cently entered and where he
was receiving end-of-life care.
His son Andrew and daugh-
ter-in-law Marilyn were with
him. He left two sons, Peter
and Andrew, two daughters-
in-law, Arlene and Marilyn,
and three grandchildren, Jo,
Chris and Nick.

His funeral at Weeley
Crematorium and follow-
ing Memorial at the Quak-
er Meeting House on 19th
July were filled to capacity
with his many friends, fam-
ily and members of other
churches. It was a day of
thankfulness, love and joy
which he would have very
much appreciated (and
maybe did).

He had had attended al-
most every single Sunday
Quaker Meeting and was an enthusiastic supporter

FIRST CONTACT
FOR FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS
CLACTON.........................Carol Holding
COLCHESTER......................Carol Holding
SUDBURY.........................Peter Whiteley

Editorial

Dear Friends,

Some of you will have been to Yearly Meeting at Warwick, and
come home full of good intentions. These are frightening times and we
need all our resolution to tackle

Earls Colne News

Jenny Kay

Worshipping in the oldest Meeting House in Essex is a special privilege,
especially with in close proximity with past worshippers at rest in the
burial ground. It has recently become a focus of our attention. It is still open
for burials but there is some uncertain-
ity as to the exact location of the
graves. John Tann left a message to this effect on his plan. We are investi-
gating the possibilities for a Ground Penetration Radar Survey to be car-
bied out by a member of the Colches-
ter Archaeological Group.

Jayne Meleschko and I are research-
ing the names on the tombstones. Wil-
liam Bridge Pudney (died 1904 aged
85) and his wife Elizabeth were farm-
ers at Tilekiln farm, Coggeshall Road.
They are buried next to their youngest

Earls Colne Burial Ground    Photo John Kay

son Oberlin. He was educated at Ack-
worth and then worked as a publish-
er’s assistant, living in Islington. He
died in 1890 aged 31. The most recent
burial was Ruth Lamb, still born in 1995, twin sister to Helen. The Lambs
have since moved away but their loss
was remembered in ministry earlier
this year.

Southern East Anglia Area Quaker Meeting
of the first Wednesday Mid Day Meeting, which he also attended without fail. He served us in many offices over many years and was a stalwart in every way. He was an attender and long time lay preacher at Christchurch United Reformed Church, our Quaker-friendly building close by in Church Road. He and Susan Hanson did much for Churches Together in Clacton in this way, attracting others to our own Meeting. Ernest and Susan also attended St. James Anglican Church together. Father Anthony Spooner, who was minister there for many years, comes to our Quaker Meetings and is a good friend, as was his successor, Father Peter.

Ernest invented the word “Quanglican”, for his joint membership of both the Church of England and The Society of Friends, a position also held by Terry Waite. He and Heather came to Quakers first at Ipswich Meeting after the Second World War, in which he served mainly as a Prisoner-of-War. It was surely because of his experiences during that time and the German people he met who were simply ‘people like us’ that he/they were attracted by the Quaker Peace Testimony.

He always said that he had been a much more successful Prisoner-of-War than a soldier. He and another prisoner were responsible for moving an, at that time, unknown bundle to safety in the small town of Zittau, Germany, where they were imprisoned. This bundle turned out to be a sacred relic, the Fastenteuch, which is a piece of cloth bearing many fine religious pictures. After his wife beloved Heather died, and with the aid of his family, Ernest made several visits to Zittau. He was later honoured there by the Mayor of Zittau for the part he had played in rescuing this treasured relic. Through this Ernest also made friends with a family and their children, some of whom travelled from Germany to attend his funeral. The two small children who came to the funeral and Memorial Service thought the world of him and called him “Pappi”, and Ernest was pleased to have been able to make this contribution to German/Anglo relations.

In later years he had been encouraged by Heather to take a freelance writing correspondence course. He went on to write for many periodicals including Quaker ones but also the paying kind. He wrote technical articles on plumbing for both the unlikely “Men Only” and the prestigious Readers’ Digest manuals. He had his own column in the Tendring Times for over twenty years. Ernest claimed that writing was his only skill: he was wrong.

During his final years, in his two churches and our Quaker Meetings and at home he was greatly supported and cared for by our treasured Attender Susan Hanson, who he came to look upon as a surrogate daughter, the daughter he and Heather would have liked. She went the extra mile and beyond (as she always does). His gardener Barry, through Sue, was able to help him and became a great friend who spoke so well about him at the Memorial Service.

I feel blessed to have had the great pleasure of knowing him. He nourished and enriched my own life with his humour, his wisdom, his kindness, his remarkable and remarked-upon memory, and much besides. He had a gift for Public Relations, a job he had excelled in for the Local Council and which he referred to jokingly as ‘spin’. He did not hide his light under a bushel and for that I and many others are deeply grateful. His humour, kindness, compassion and charismatic persona reached out and touched many lives.

He was a lovely and lovable man and his was a life well lived.

Janet Thomas

A Strange Visitor
from Valerie Graves

My son and I are looking after a Bearded Dragon, a lizard from (I believe) Australia. He is about 18 inches long - mostly tail - and lives in a heated glass age. He belongs to a great-grandson, is rather beautiful and when at home is affectionate, plays with the cats and likes to curl round his master’s neck. (He is a bit more shy with us yet). He eats live crickets and lots of chopped vegetation. You live and learn.
Printed List of Members & Attenders

Jenny Kay, Overseer for the List

My thanks to everyone who has supplied their details for the printed List of Members and Attenders, and also to the Friends who have helped to check the entries. There is still time for last minute changes and additions as the process is now being held up while I check that Data Protection requirements have been fully met.

I want to make sure that there is a permission slip for each entry. For many of us this will be the slip returned to Viki Grainger and Sandra Berry as I have only asked new entries to write permission slips. There may be gaps in which case I will need to contact people.

In addition we have been informed by Friends House that there have been changes in Data Protection law requiring permission from members and attenders to hold their details. BYM has sent out a suggested form for us all to fill in which will entitle the AM to hold our data, as well as how to indicate how it can be used. At the moment we only have permission from those whose details are in the book and then that permission is specific to the publication and nothing else.

So, when will the book be printed? I’m not able to say. If it gets too delayed it will have to bear the date 2018.

Yearly Meeting Gathering

University of Warwick, 2017
Jenny Kay

The Gathering has been well-reported in the Friend, the talks are available on Quaker websites along with the minutes and the epistle. (See below) The Salter Lecture given by Molly Scott Cato’s talk ‘Brexit, Chilcot and the Role of Conscience in the Political Life’ is one I warmed to especially as I am still coming to terms with the future loss of my European citizenship. There was even a drop-in session, led by Oxford Local Meeting for those of us who wanted to express hopes and fears. I listened for a while but as I didn’t stay to the end I don’t know if there was an outcome. Later in the week I learned that Sarah Dodgson has received an Eva Koch scholarship to explore how and why Quakers voted the way they did in the referendum. We filled in her survey form which can be done online.

Towards the Arts Centre, Warwick

There was a good selection of films to watch in the evenings; we took in ‘Searching for Sugarman’ about US singer songwriter Rodriguez, ‘Hidden Figures’ the story of African American women mathematicians at NASA and ‘Moana’, a Disney musical adventure animation.

Making connections with others might just be a brief experience but these occasions all make the event memorable. This year connections were made with Friends from outside our Yearly Meeting. The Friend from Sweden Yearly Meeting staying in our flat was an American who came from Brandywine Country, home of painter Andrew Wyeth, and one of John’s favourite artists. We visited the Museum there during our time at Pendle Hill. One afternoon we found ourselves wandering in the craft area with nothing much in mind. when we found a Friend from the American Friend’s Service Committee putting up an exhibition commemorating its work. We had time to help her hang the large long posters.

There is always plenty of opportunity to take in new experiences at Gatherings. For us it was the Programmed Meeting for Worship organised by Helen Gretchen of Friends World Committee for Consultation led by Friends from Yearly Meetings in Bolivia, Rwanda, South Africa and India, offering readings from Corinthians and ‘prepared ministry’. We sang ‘How Great thou art’ and ‘In Christ there is no East nor west’ at the start. The open worship although relatively short held some deep silence and ministry. The meeting closed with singing ‘A song of Peace’, a benediction and closing prayer.

I took the opportunity to try and develop my singing voice at one of the varied sessions held through the week. Following Mig Kerr’s relaxing and warming up the voice techniques, using the Natural Voice method we sang harmony songs and rounds concerned with social justice issues. I was then prepared for the musical closing celebrations where we joined in singing and then listening to the ‘scratch orchestra’. The word ‘scratch’ might have been appropriate at the beginning of the week but the final concert was of a very high standard, helped by Anne Watkinson and her clarinets.
Hearts & Minds Prepared

Robbie Spence

Hearts and Minds Prepared is a course of study of Quaker faith and practice that aims to help new and experienced Friends learn more about Quakerism.

Eliza Jones and I are going to hold a Hearts and Minds Prepared course for Friends and attenders in Colchester beginning in September 2017. I was a participant on the first Hearts and Minds Prepared course provided by Colchester Meeting, which was in 2004, and I found it so useful that I co-ordinated a course myself in 2006. Elders have decided it would be helpful to run another one now and I have offered to run it with Eliza’s help.

The course is of 12 sessions, covering:
1. Setting out together
2. Meeting for Worship
3. Personal spiritual discipline
4. Ministry and ministers
5. Liberal Friends and our Christian inheritance
6. Our corporate testimony
7. Discernment
8. Corporate discernment and community
9. Personal testimony
10. Who am I? Personal spiritual journeys
11. Who are we? Challenges, changes and eternal truths
12. What ‘being Quaker’ means to us

The course is designed for groups where some Friends may do little or no preparation for sessions, while also offering a substantial personal study programme for those who wish to take advantage of it. It is useful to have your own copy of Quaker Faith and Practice or borrow one from the Meeting House. Otherwise everything is provided.

Date, time and place
The venue will be my house (address below). The day and time of the 12 sessions, usually 2 hours each and a fortnight apart, will be a weekday or evening, depending on the preferences of who signs up.

Signing up
If you are interested, please could you let me know by sending me an email, leaving me a note in the Meeting House pigeon-hole, or signing up on the sign-up sheet that I will put on the noticeboard in due course? If you have any questions, please phone me.

In friendship
Robbie Spence, 19 Queens Road, Colchester CO3 3PD, robbie.spence@btopenworld.com, 07920 137 934

Just Be There

from Valerie Graves
A thought, following something said at Yearly Meeting: To help someone in pain or great distress, eloquence is not needed. So often people say “Oh, I can’t go and see her, I wouldn’t know what to say!” Don’t say anything, just be there. When my husband died, nearly forty years ago, people crossed the road rather than face the embarrassment of having to speak to me. I would have been so comforted if they had just been there and said nothing.
Script
from Rosalind Field
Good Morning
Conversation is a room with many doors. You open one, and move into a different room, and there you find more doors. And so you wander, from room to room, opening doors for each other, sharing time and telling.
I learned about conversations at family gatherings around the kitchen table, squashed between aunties and cousins, where stories were told, and the teapot was constantly re-filled. That’s where, as a child, I heard how a conversation moves, and turns in a moment from general to personal, from discussion to revelation.
That change, that moment of opening the door is what I always remember from conversations over the years: there was the night when a friend and I walked for miles in soft, summer rain, finding out about each other’s lives. He was far from home and had been travelling for years. He’d settled down for a few years in Sweden, married, divorced, and moved on again. I told him about my younger brother who had died when I was 13. And then, after a pause, he began to think aloud about prayer. Just quietly saying that he’d reached the point where he no longer believed prayer was about words, or asking, or thanking. It was about absence of words, a respite from the sound and the distraction of words. It was listening, waiting, feeling.
There was the moment of going through a door. And something was shared which has never left me. It’s why, when I read St Paul talking about not knowing how to pray, about ‘sighs too deep for words’, I remember my friend, and I try, again, now, to listen.
I try again to hear. To wait. And to be still.
Amen
‘Spiritual reflection to start the day’ with writer and broadcaster, Anna Magnusson.—Woman’s Hour, Radio 4, Tues 25 July 2017

Early Days of the Quaker Tapestry
from Valerie Graves
Everybody knows about the Tapestry and how it has spread all over the world, and what an amazing effect it has on everyone who sees it. But Jenny Kay and I were privileged to have seen it in its very beginnings, though I have to say that we are none too clear, now, about the details. I know that it was quite soon after I came to Colchester (1987) and that Jenny and I went to a big Quaker meeting at Nottingham. Anne Wynn-Wilson was speaking there and was given the go-ahead. She had been at her Meeting at Taunton with just one small boy who said he would like to do some sewing. The rest you can find in many very interesting books, especially the one by Ormerod Greenwood.

We set up a small group in Colchester, to do one of the panels: we would have liked the one about James Parnell as he was local, but he had already been allocated, so we did the one about Children’s Meetings, which now hangs in our Meeting House. The photo shows me working on it, in 1992.
Yearly Meeting Gathering

John Kay

Time goes so quickly it doesn’t seem as if I was still in the same month of August, yet Residential Yearly Meeting is something that I always treasure. Warwick is a beautiful and well-planned campus and our accommodation was modern and extremely comfortable. Added to that the pleasure of meeting old friends, not seen since the last YMG Julia Gordon, Jez Smith, Sandra Berry Vicky and Maude Grainger again was quite delightful. I spent a great deal of time in the Woodbrooke tent where I was able to catch up with some of my painting and meet more staff from Woodbrooke. Regretfully Tim and Carol Holding were not able to be with us as we had expected but we did spend plenty of our lunchtimes with Anne Watkinson, Sylvia Jeffcock and Anne Olding from Chelmsford Meeting.