



Welcome to our new AM Clerk Di & Charles

Photo: John Kay

NEWSLETTER

SOUTHERN EAST ANGLIA AREA QUAKER MEETING

March 2019

Diary Dates for March

All March and April - David Britton Art exhibition in Red Lion Bookshop

Saturday 2nd March 2-4pm Colchester Learning and Exploration Meeting:

Saturday 2nd March Clacton Friends Fellowship of Healing from 11.00 to 15.00. Meeting in silence, no ministry, organised by Harwich Meeting

Saturday 9th March Colchester Meeting for eating and fellowship - Welsh theme – 6 for 6.30pm

Saturday 16th Café Quaker and YETS 10.00-12.00

Wednesday 20th March Colchester Being Friends Together 19.00-21.30

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;

Web Address: www.essexsuffolkquakers.org

email address: AMClerk@essexsuffolkquakers.org

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

Sundays 10.30 am

SUDBURY

Sunday 10.30 am
Friars Street, Sudbury
Thursday 12.30 pm

FIRST CONTACT

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

Editorial

Dear Friends

We are having a difficult time just now as our Warden, Mervyn Carter, has left and we are having to manage without him. So we are all having to pull together. Difficult, but we are beginning

Earls Colne

from Valerie Graves

I go to this meeting once a month. It is quite small but it is good to have a different point of view!

Earls Colne is a small meeting but it has been going more or less since 1687 when the Meeting

to manage. We have a plan for the long term.

I particularly enjoyed the piece about Inner Peace by Carol Holding, in last month's newsletter.

House was built. There were times during the war when it had to close, but since then it has been opened most of the time. John Tann was its leader and a very active one, but he died several years ago. He ran an organic apple orchard, which is still flourishing, thanks to his son Andrew.



Old Times

from Valerie Graves

In our Meeting this morning we were thinking about old times and how sad some of the changes are. When I first came here, in 1987, I worked on the archives, at the university, where they are now kept, which was very interesting. But nowadays there seems to be change everywhere, which can be rather sad.

Meeting for Sufferings

Peter Whiteley

2 February 2019, at Friends House, London.

In my memory of service on MfS from 2006 - 12, some meetings have much worthwhile business and others seem overwhelmingly procedural. This was one of the latter.

Membership Matters took a long time, and even included naming me as a visitor - I stood.

Robert mentioned in his last report about proposed Young Friends representation and five nominations were accepted today.

At each session of Sufferings, as from its inception, a minute is made of Friends in conflict with the law. A Brighton at-

tender is one of the fourteen charged with 'Endangerment of an Aerodrome' when they prevented a flight deporting illegal immigrants from taking off from Stanstead. We subsequently learned that seven of those on board now have permission the remain. Chelmsford Friends supported the 14 in court and recently we learned that they will not be

imprisoned but have to do community service - surely stopping the plane's departure was a form of community service ! I was very impressed by the young member of the group who was very pleasant and articulate on TV explaining their actions.

Two members from Brighthouse Meeting have been arrested for acting in support of the "Extinction Rebellion" movement.

In March last year Southern Marches AM sent their minute of concern about 'A Quaker Response to a Post Truth World' to Sufferings. As an AM we do not seem to have considered it, but 42 other AMs responded to Sufferings invitation to consider the concern, but were not in unity. We were reminded of Advices and Queries 37 and 38 and that we can support the work of some other organisations working in this field.

We are encouraged to register for BYM in London which is held from 24 - 27 May, especially soon for the young people's programmes. The major theme is the consideration of our privilege in relation to climate justice, sustainability, and inclusion and diversity.

(As it is a bank holiday weekend travel by train for us is frequently disrupted so we

perhaps need to consider travel by minibus. Saturday is usually the most interesting day especially for first time attendees and includes the Swarthmore Lecture.)

Various appointments were made, but probably of special interest to us is the nomination of 24 Friends to begin the work of revising our Book of Discipline. They have been listed in The Friend recently, and I'm pleased include Ben Pink Dandelion who is a well known authority on Quakerism.

Trustees reported particularly on their revised investment policy in the Israeli occupied lands of Palestine.

I completed my two triennia on MfS in 2012, latterly shared with Colin Keen. In that year the meeting went from having two representatives to one from each AM. There is some concern about the working of this system but no unity on any revision of it. In our case with Robert and Carol unable to attend it was a simple matter for me to register and download the preparatory papers. Clearly from various contributions some other AMs couldn't cope so easily. Arrangements Committee welcomes comments from AMs on this matter.

Friends in Wales reported on the recognition of the deaths of at least 265

Friends in the First World War including those who served as combatants, as well as those better known for their service in the Friends Ambulance Unit, and those who died in the sinking of shipping, etc. They will be recorded in Friends House Library.

The Simpler Meetings Project was reported on and Trustees were encouraged to bear this need in mind in developing future strategic priorities. We seek a simpler church supported by a simple charity to reinvigorate Quakerism.

Peter Whiteley

POEM

Carol Holding

I never thought I lacked a brain
Arrogantly I would ignore
Instructions which come with things.

But unlike cars there is no handbook
For new I phone owners
And pride stops me asking .

My first text with shaky fat fingers
Is rich in gobbledegook
And I had forgotten how to "send"

Fingerprints, passwords and passcodes
Worry me into panic mode
Will I learn or will I buck the trend .

To an oldie please be kind
Some help this learner will not mind.

Area Meeting Gathering

A date for your diary

High Leigh 2021, AM Gathering for about 30 Friends will take place at High Leigh from 26-28th March 2021. More details nearer the time.



Southern East Anglia Area Quaker Meeting

Notes from AM Minutes

Jenny Kay

10.02.2019 at Clacton

Sixteen gathered at Clacton, the first meeting of the year and the first for our new clerk Diana Naylor. We listened to 10.03 from Quaker Faith and Practice, a fitting guide to the tasks before us.

Area Meeting and Local Meeting Responsibilities We confirmed that we have carried out Area Meeting responsibilities as set out in QF&P 4.06 and Earls Colne, Colchester, Harwich and Clacton reported that they have carried out their responsibilities as set out in QF&P 4.33 'as far as is practicable given the small number of Members within some of these Meetings'.

Review of Area Meeting Business arrangements I held our responsibilities in mind through the meeting until the final item when AM minuted that many Friends in AM are holding more than one role and we have encountered some issues in fulfilling our roles. There was a ready agreement to continue the process of review by inviting, Jonathon Carmichael, "Simpler Meetings" project manager at Friends'

Britain Yearly Meeting

This will be held between 24th and 27th May at Friends House. This year's focus is on "Examining our privilege and how far it impacts on our ability to act on urgent Quaker concerns." Bookings are also open for the children and young peoples' programme for those up to the age of 20. Area Meeting bursaries are available. For more information visit <http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym>

House to help us with this revenue.

Tabular Statement This was reported briefly. Membership remained constant in 2017 at 126 members.

Report from Meeting for Sufferings This was given by Peter Whiteley who attended as a visitor instead of Robert Parkes, our representative, who was prevented. Peter's report is on page 2 in this Newsletter.

Glebe House We have received a letter thanking AM for £30,000 contribution towards their Transitions project. This project has had a positive effect on the lives of the young people who have received its support. David Lawrence of Earls Colne Meeting is our representative with this group. We hope that someone from Glebe House will be able to report to us at a later date about how the project is proceeding.

Report on the Foodbank We received a letter from the Chief Officer of the Colchester Foodbank Charity thanking us for our donation. Colchester Foodbank have set up a separate premises fund to which we have donated £5,000. A figure between £120,000 and £150,000 is being sought for relocation to a new building. Trustees were asked to consider the

points raised in the letter as regards future contributions. A full report is on page 8.

Area Meeting and Colchester Local Meeting websites Consideration was given to the role and function of our websites. Colchester Friends we thanked for their work. John Kay offered to investigate the possibilities for Colchester LM Website.

Essex Integration This is a non profit voluntary organisation that provides essential support services to newly arriving refugees and migrants. Robert Parkes' report to Colchester is on page 5 in this Newsletter. Colchester has supported this group with a donation of £200 a month but owing to a budget deficit has asked AM to pay from central funds. The matter was referred to trustees.

Benjamin Lay The replies from Friends in America and the author Marcus Rediker are printed page 7 in this newsletter.

The next Area Meeting will be held at Sudbury on April 14th.

Friends and families in summer 2019



Picnic lunch and afternoon activities for all the family
walks, games, sit and chat.....

PUT THESE DATES IN YOUR DIARY NOW

Saturday June 22nd - Sudbury water meadows
Petanque
Croquet

Saturday 20th July - Wivenhoe woods and riverside
Art and craft
Board games

Saturday 17th August - Meeting House Colchester
BBQ in the garden
Art and craft

Steven Crisp, and Gertrude

Rosalind Thomas

Imagine that you live in Priority Street, and you want to visit Friends in Totnes, in winter. How would you do it? Drive, perhaps, or take the train to Liverpool Street, cross London by Tube, and take a train from Paddington? It will take you perhaps a day, and at the end you will find a comfortable hotel to stay in.

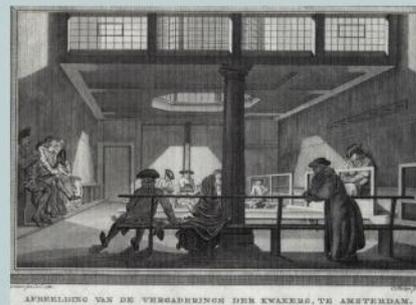
Now, imagine that the year is 1669. On some main roads there is now a system of stage coaches, but these are a new and only available on some major roads. The roads themselves are unmade, and often like modern farm tracks. The coaches travel at about five miles an hour, and every twelve miles need to stop and change horses. If there is no coach, you must ride by hired horses, or walk. At night, you may find a friend to let you stay, or find an alehouse, with damp beds and poor food. On

the roads are bands of beggars, discharged soldiers, and robbers, so danger lurks in every deserted lane for you and your companion. You are permanently cold, aching, and tired.

Why would you make the journey? Because your name is Steven Crisp, and you have a burning desire to serve God and convince everyone you meet that Quakerism is the best way to find the Truth. Steven Crisp was convinced by James Parnell in 1655, and four years later decided to become a travelling minister. From that time, he travelled constantly, particularly throughout the Netherlands and Germany, but also round England. His wife, Dorothy, saw little of him for the rest of her life.

I started to write a book about Steven after our Colchester anniversary celebrations in 2006, and have finally published it this year, just before my 80th birthday, because "if not now, when?" It draws a picture of the life of Steven, of his Colchester wife, and of his

Steven Crisp and Gertrude



Rosalind Thomas

second wife, the remarkable Amsterdam Quaker, Gertrude Derix Niesen, who married him in the Colchester Great Meeting House in 1685. It is the first book about Steven since the 1892 book by Charlotte Fells Smith, and contains information not given by her.

Available from Amazon either as a paperback or as an e-book.

Essex Integration

Colchester's Annual review

Robert Parkes

January 2019

1. For the last three years the Meeting has supported Essex Integration financially by way of a £200 per month donation. We keep this under annual review.

2. Essex Integration is based on East Hill, Colchester and is a non-profit organisation that provides a range of support services to newly arriving refugees and migrants across Essex,

most of whom have been accepted under the Home Office Vulnerable Persons Resettlement (VPR) scheme. It is part of DNA Networks, registered charity number 1086364. Until about 2 years ago it was known as DNA Fresh Beginnings. The name change to Essex Integration reflects the wider area of support and the main work it carries out. It is not to be confused with another refugee support organisation in Colchester called "Fresh Beginnings" or "New Fresh Beginnings". The Meeting has no formal links with

this other organization, although I understand some Friends individually are involved with it.

3. Under the VPR scheme, Essex Integration is currently looking after 26 families (about 100 individuals) across the county. Initial funding for each new arrival comes from the Home Office but this is designed to "tail-off" as families are deemed to be settled. In practice, this means that there are families entering their fourth year of VPR support with the prospect of consider-

ably less government funding. It is unclear how these families will be supported from January 2020 onwards. Friends of the Meeting who are "befrienders" of some of these families are only too aware that they will need support for some time to come before they can be considered settled.

4. The Home Office funding covers such things as: initial reception and translators; basic accommodation and living essentials; registration with doctors, dentists and opticians; monitoring and referral support in case of the effects of trauma (including loss, injury and mental health); sorting out benefit entitlements; arranging schooling; and setting up personal finance.

5. However, peoples' needs go beyond the basics. In this regard, Essex Integration is supported locally by a volunteer support network. The Meeting has been a part of this from the outset. This includes financial support - in our case £200 per month - which helps pay for extra needs that people have, not just on arrival but in difficult times during their integration. Last year



(2018), for example, over £6000 was spent on items and support not covered by government funding, such as: food processors, laptops (to assist study and employment), bicycles, TVs and replacement/repair of items initially provided: beds, washing machines, fridge freezers etc.

6. The voluntary support also enables Essex Integration to provide English language training (Integration through Language). It currently has over fifty people attending its morning sessions. There are plans to develop this to include the residency test element of UK citizenship application, although extra funding of this is going to be needed due to the extra expense of room hire for all the classes. Could the Meeting help out, perhaps by making room(s) available?

7. Other areas of support include help with driving theory

tests and sourcing driving lessons; support for those having to move house, not always of their own choice, facilitating school moves (after house moves) including support with applications and appeals as necessary; and general ongoing support in relation to benefits caps and changing circumstances that affect benefits

8. In terms of good news, Essex Integration now has six "clients", as it likes to call them, in full or part time work, including a licensed taxi driver, one running their own cafe and two on degree courses at university. However, many clients still face daunting challenges, notably learning English, especially for the older clients, before they can get into work. It is for this reason that the Area Meeting has set up a fund to help asylum seekers and refugees in Essex access small amounts of funding (up to about £100) to help remove barriers to learning and work, with referrals not only from Essex Integration, but also from Refugee Action Colchester and Red Cross Refugee Support(East of England).



Southern East Anglia Area Quaker Meeting

Earls Colne News

Jenny Kay

Earls Colne Friends have at last acknowledged publicly that we meet for worship every Sunday in significant numbers, enough to welcome new-comers. Our past reluctance was a concern that on 2nd and 4th there might only be one or two Friends present. We notified Area Meeting and the notice went into the Friend on 22 February. We marked this step in our progress as a local meeting with a lunch in The Three Horseshoes, Fordham, joined by Diana and Charles, our AM clerks and Cloud, the pub is dog-friendly.

Clacton News

Janet Thomas

John Hall has instigated a brand new group here at Clacton. To meet every 1st Monday from 11 am, it will last for not longer than one and a half hours, and be followed by a 'bring your own' lunch, for those who wish it. To be named Clacton and Harwich's Spiritual Friendship Group, the first session will be about our individual spiritual journey to Friends/Quakers. Friends will take turns to facilitate each Meeting, either from a suggested list of topics, or one of our own choosing.

Susan Hanson continues to confound her doctors and is an example to us all with her spirit, her light, and her love. Her husband Brian is happy

The Men's Class

from Valerie Graves

Many Quaker and other Nonconformist meetings used to hold a men's meeting in the evenings. They were very important - there were about 40 men in the Layer Breton meeting. They were taught to read

and settled now in the Care Home at Little Holland Hall, though Sue does not think he is eating enough!

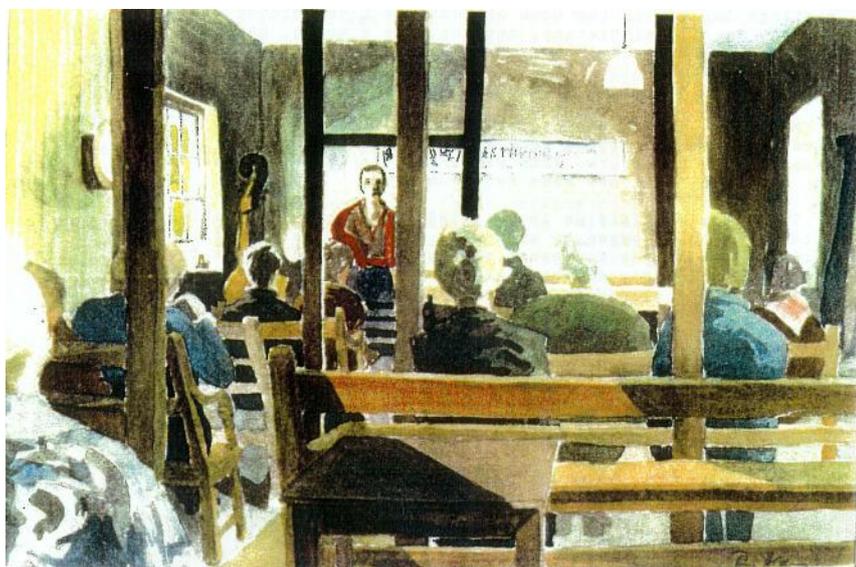
Our Meeting for Carols produced by Silva Garton-Rogers and friend Carolyn Rogers was very well received as always. Carolyn Rogers' eight year old daughter was excellent as a narrator, dressed as an angel, as were everyone else taking part. The money raised goes, as always, to Derek Crosfield House, a home for young, inexperienced mothers and their babies (and sometimes partners).

Clacton Meeting House is welcoming the new month with lots of spring bulbs on display. It is such an uplifting time of year.

and write, so that they could read the Bible for themselves, but of course it also helped them to get a job.

Now, of course, we have universal education, but then it was their only way to learn.

Watercolour by Tim Holding



Southern East Anglia Area Quaker Meeting

Benjamin Lay

The Benjamin Lay messages from America were:

From Marcus Rediker

Thank you for this wonderful news. The action of the Southern East Anglia Area Meeting brings to a close, after 280 long years, Benjamin Lay's forced exile from his beloved Quakers. Other than the abolition of slavery, nothing could have made him happier.

With warm regards,

Marcus Rediker

From Abington MM, Pennsylvania

On behalf of Abington Monthly Meeting in Pennsylvania, I thank you for sharing the news of your minute regarding Benjamin Lay. As you likely know, we approved a similar minute here in November 2017. I congratulate the SE Anglia Area Meeting on taking this step in acknowledging the truth of Friend Benjamin's message as a way to not only recognize him, but also to recognize all the people for whom he spoke. He was truly ahead of his time, and he spoke for many whose voices were not heard. I hope that more and more people will become aware of the life of Benjamin Lay, and I am delighted that our Meetings are recognizing his place in history. I will gladly share this news with our Abington Meeting community at our upcoming monthly meeting for worship to attend to business.

Peace, Loretta



Colchester Foodbank

Michael Beckett

Update for Friends

Colchester Foodbank charity works in partnership with Wivenhoe and Brightlingsea Foodbanks and is part of the Trussell Trust, Registered Charity number 1152387. It provides emergency food parcels to individuals and families who find themselves in a sudden crisis and is run in partnership with local churches, charities, organisations and individuals in Colchester.

The number of individuals supported in January was 592, all referred by social services, doctors or the police. See <https://colchester.foodbank.org.uk>

On 23 January Area Meeting received the following letter from Michael Beckett in response to our donations.

Following your offer of support our Trustees launched our "Food HQ" premises fund in May 2018 which has to date raised £41,474 of pledges and cash including your generous donation of £5,000 and your

Parking on the Forecourt

Anne Watkinson

From a notice left on the office notice board of Colchester Meeting House by Mervyn

Signed by Dick Oliver (*I don't know when that was*)

His parking instructions recognise an increasing problem then, so he gives instructions about who can and can't park and offers 'Q' stickers for those approved of.

He concludes:

Southern East Anglia Area Quaker Meeting

pledged donation of £5,000 in the next year financial year. If you may be in a position to consider providing additional support we would of course be most delighted. We hope to be in a position to purchase a property in 2020 as we believe we are likely to have raised the deposit to secure a mortgage in principle offer by then and therefore be in a position to purchase and relocate to a new Food HQ. Although the more monies we raise now the lower the interest rate we are likely to be charged.

We've approached the Co-operative foundation requesting £50,000 interest free loan repayable within 5 years to assist us in raising the deposit required we await a decision on this. We've also bid for funding from Screwfix Foundation for £5k decision awaited and also Essex Community Foundation who are in discussion with their benefactors about making a contribution decision awaited. We plan to seek additional funding to help us reach our

"The committee hopes that this will aid identification and elimination of parkers without permission. Otherwise the committee may seriously consider the warden's application for the purchase



minimum target of £120,000 and our stretch target of £200,000. More details of our calculations and the break down of our fundraising can be found here: Colchester Foodbank Food HQ Premises fund Report 23 Jan19:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1xt6yJQVe0zOT_8_w7PqMxBgFzD-QZelTaSreiXTLGig/edit?usp=sharing

I am of course able to go into more depth as required or to address one of your meetings if you think this might be helpful. As always if you or any of your members may wish to visit our Foodbank at any stage we would be delighted to facilitate this.

If you require any more information please do not hesitate to get in touch.

of a heavy-duty fork-lift truck. He has a yen to arrange for non 'q' stickered vehicles to suffer the same fate as the Royalist gun, Humpty Dumpty – cast down from the town wall by Republicans near the site of the Quaker Meeting House....."

I know how he felt!