



*Market Cross, Chichester*

*Photo: John Kay*

# NEWSLETTER

**SOUTHERN EAST ANGLIA AREA QUAKER MEETING**  
**April 2019**

## **Diary Dates for April/May**

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April, 2.15 pm, Area Meeting Sudbury

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> to Monday 27<sup>th</sup> May, Britain Yearly Meeting; Friends' House, London – theme: 'the assumptions of privilege'

**RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)**  
Clerk to Southern East Anglia Quaker Meeting: Diana Naylor  
c/o Colchester Quaker Meeting House  
6 Church Street, Colchester CO1 1NF;

Web Address: [www.essexsuffolkquakers.org](http://www.essexsuffolkquakers.org)

email address: [AMClerk@essexsuffolkquakers.org](mailto: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

## Editorial

Dear Friends

This is the beginning of a new era which has many difficulties! We knew that it must come and we are beginning to live with it.

Our Warden, Mervyn Carter, has retired and we are struggling to come to terms with it.

It is not just that he looked after the building but that we had not realised how much we depended on his knowledge.

In addition, we have come to realise that the life of the Meeting and familiarity with the regular users depended on him.

Yes, we are coming to terms with it, but we also have to come to terms with a lot of deterioration in the state of the building that has been going on.

er uncomfortable. One set of letters, see below, had us all in stitches while at the same time giving us much to talk about.

Letter to my Inward Teacher  
Dear Inward Teacher,

I was disappointed to learn that you were on leave this evening and so unable to be present to help me. One thing I learned from the quotation that was read to us was that at time of emptiness Quakers should not look for external help whether from books or people, but that they should rely on you. I'm not sure where that leaves me in your absence. Floundering I guess.

Yours sincerely

.....  
My Inward Teacher's reply  
Dear .....,

Nearly everything needs improvement or alteration. And yes, we have made a beginning. Several lists and paper are available for you to see.

In the meantime, the life of the Meeting goes on. For instance, the usual happenings, and of course, Yearly Meeting, and regularly things like Monthly Meeting and our get-togethers.

News, please, to Valerie Graves, by the middle of the month.

More people will be involved in opening up and locking up. See the notice board.

Local News

We have had some deaths and local serious illnesses. Tim Holding has died, but Alison Leonard is getting better.

We had an all-age Meeting, which as always was fun.



Thank you for your letter. I am sorry to have been away when you felt you needed me, but since the quotation read is largely a new idea for you, or at least a re-stated one, my abandoning you might help you to take a first step on the path of independent healing.

Good luck anyway, I may be back.

Best wishes from

Your I.T.

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

## The Inward Teacher

Eliza Jones

This was the topic for consideration at our February Being Friends Together. Our facilitator Phyl read out a couple of quotations including one from Ben Pink Dandelion for us to ponder over, before leading us on a guided meditation adapted from *Conversations with Christ* by Douglas Gwyn. We followed up the meditation with an exercise in reflective journaling, first writing a letter to our Inward Teacher and then writing our Inward teacher's reply to us. This was quite a challenge and some of us found it rath-

## News from Earls Colne

Jenny Kay

The photograph of the Quaker Lucy Greenwood 1825 - 1895 which formerly hung in Saffron Walden Friends School is now in Earls Colne Meeting House. It was given to us by the Greenwood Trust, a Quaker Charity which distributes educational grants to young people in local Area Meetings.

With the support of local Quakers and other influential supporters including the Courtaulds, Lucy Greenwood founded the Halstead Industrial School which took in girls between 6 and 12 years old, found wandering or not under proper guardianship. The girls were sent to the school on the orders of a justices or magistrates. They stayed until 16 years old receiving usual school instruction and the skills needed for domestic service. The school was



Lucy Greenwood

residential and holidays were arranged at a house in Walton on the Naze. The school which was highly thought of continued after Lucy's death and when it finally closed the charity was formed.

Rosalind Kaye has published a book on Lucy Greenwood and Valerie Graves has written a pamphlet, both available from the authors and hopefully to be found in our Meeting Houses.

## Wildspot

from Valerie Graves

It is getting to be more of a wildspot because for instance it is more difficult to get your grass cut. Some people now have artificial grass but I'm afraid I think this is a bit low!

We are lucky in that we haven't had any real snow. Fingers crossed. Everything is a bit wrong, plants coming up in wrong places or at wrong times. A particularly lovely ceanothus which died some years ago is now regularly flowering again, and crocuses all over the place.

## Chichester Long Weekend

John Kay

Jenny and I went to Chichester this past weekend, mainly on an overdue visit to family in that area. Some Friends may remember Bill Webb and his wife Jenny, (previously Nimmo), both of whom were members of Colchester Meeting who moved to Chichester 12 years ago. We met them at the Market Cross and they took us by car to their bungalow for tea and a pleasant morning socialising and catching up with our lives. Both are very involved with Chichester Quaker meeting and as a



consequence, like the rest of us have many calls on their time. They particularly wanted to be remembered to Colchester Friends, and we promised to

do that. Saturday we spent in the company of my two grandchildren and their partners and Sunday we had lunch with my sister and her husband.

## Revisiting a Swarthmore Lecture

John hall

A couple of weeks ago, at a meeting of Friends from Clacton and Harwich, the silence at the start of the meeting was so deep that I felt obliged after to comment on it. What is it about Quaker silence that is so noticeable when it happens? Why is it that some Meetings for Worship are so profound, and others are just a collection of people sitting together?

In his 1955 Swarthmore Lecture *Where Words Come From*, Douglas Steere tried to answer this difficult question by suggesting ways in which we should address our behaviour in Meeting. He suggested using the techniques of the formal liturgy as a method of centering down: "aspiring into remembering into whose presence [we] come; of penitence; of thankfulness for absolution; the acts of adoration; of intercession and consecration, and of openness to concern." While this might have been ac-

ceptable language to Friends almost 65 years ago, I suspect many Friends would find some of this difficult today. He does, however, offer advice with which we could unite. For instance, he says, "While it is not a matter of time, few meetings can gather in less than a quarter of an hour and some find it takes at least twice that long before a deep level is reached." He also places emphasis on each Friend to apply her or himself by saying, "In laying [the liturgy of other Christian services] aside as Quakers do in their silent waiting worship, there is a responsibility whose magnitude it is scarcely possible to exaggerate that is placed squarely upon the Quaker worshipper himself. Here indeed is a service of worship that demands that every believer be his own priest." Consequently, there is a need for each of us to apply an internal discipline because if we do not, we can enter "drowsy, day-dreaming, wool-gathering states". Thus, we need to consciously settle down

by "recalling the greatness of God whose cosmic ordering of the infinite spaces is as fathomless as his love" because it is not only effective but is a tool against distractions which challenge everybody. But how is this achieved?

I would suggest we need to consciously be aware of all those Friends in the room with us. There are many techniques to help establishing this consciousness. One example is to treat the Meeting as a garden and each Friend a flower. Imagining that one is a bee, visiting each flower allows us to draw each Friend into our thoughts and thus into a gathering Meeting. Fighting off distractions is a difficult exercise, but by us concentrating on all the Friends in the Meeting, we are working to ensure that it is gathered.

John Hall  
Clacton Meeting

450 words

## Books

from Valerie Graves

I have far too many! Right now I'm taking them all out (gradually) and putting back what I still want. I have always had a rule that if I get a new book I had to get rid of one, which is sometimes difficult.

I have rediscovered old favourites, which is nice. One is *Wild Swans* (Jung Chang, 1991), which is a huge and very frightening book but I later discovered that the author managed to get away to England and is in fact alive and well, living in London.

People are naughty about borrowing - and not returning - books.



## News from Sudbury

Robin Hart

Every two years Sudbury Town Council opens St. Peters Church and the Town Hall for all the local voluntary organisations and churches to showcase their work and activities. It took place on Saturday

## The American flag

From “Things you never knew about Quakers” by John Martin, Quakers in Britain.

A question for you: did the Quaker upholsterer Betsy Ross invent the American flag? That depends on whether you prefer myth-making to history...

Taught to sew by her Quaker family, Betsy became an upholstery apprentice. She fell in love with another apprentice, was kicked out of the Quakers for eloping with him, and then started her own upholstery business with her husband John. They attended Christ

## All Age Worship

March 31st

Janet Thomas

Although we did not have an All Age Meeting for Worship we were very happy that Amber and Elle joined us one Sunday in February. Clearly showing a great potential as App designers they shared their inventions at the end of Meeting for Worship. One was a Yoga App which allows the user to choose an exercise to suit their mood, level of ability

*Southern East Anglia Area Quaker Meeting*

March 2nd. Tim Tibbits booked a table for Sudbury Friends and made an informative display of Quaker Posters, DVD, and leaflets to give out to enquirers. Sudbury Friends were there through the day to answer questions. There was quite a lot of interest and we

Church in Gloucester City, New Jersey, which also counted George Washington among its congregation.

Betsy's upholstery business also produced flags. According to legend, during this time Betsy, in the company of a small group of rebels including Washington, drafted the 'Betsy Ross flag' – a forerunner of today's American flag.

When she died, Betsy Ross was buried in a Free Quakers burial ground. Free Quakers were those kicked out for failing to adhere to

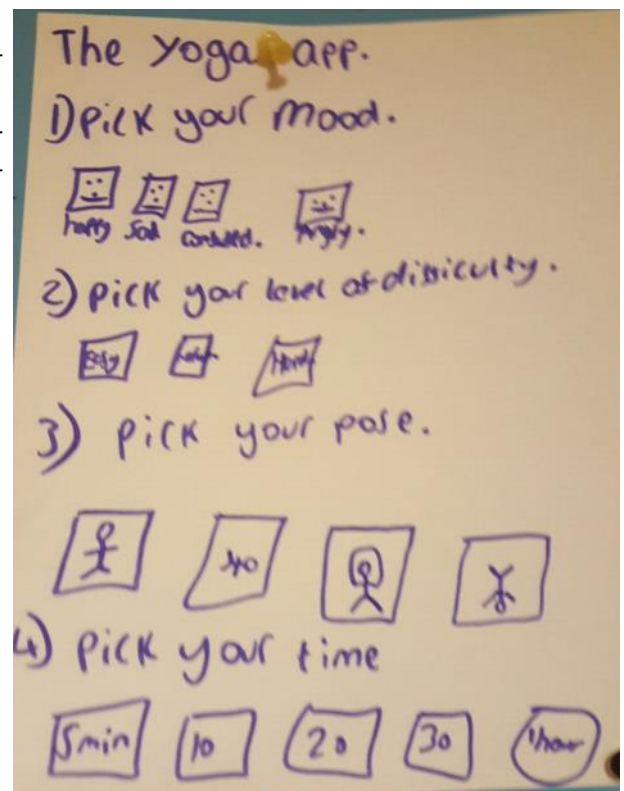
ty and amount of time have available, and the second *Arms Around The World*, makes it possible for you to contribute your opinion on items of news, charitable organisations, religions and other.

Amber and Elle also shared with us their thought on activities they would like to see going and take part in with others at the local meeting. Our next All Age Worship is the last Sunday in March, March 31st and as it is Moth-

felt it was worthwhile taking part.

The benches in the Meeting House have been sent for auction and replaced with comfortable upholstered chairs. We have kept two of the benches in the Meeting Room and the ones in the gallery 'for old times sake'.

the Quaker peace testimony during the American Revolutionary War – but that is story for another time.



er's Day our theme will be Mothers. We look forward to having our children and young people with us and hope that a good number of them will join us that Sunday. With their help we will be looking to come up with a plan of activities or events they would like to get involved in over the course of the year.



## All Age Outreach Conference 2019

15 - 17 February 2019, High Leigh Conference Centre – Hertfordshire

Attended by Dave and Una Lawrence ~ Earls Colne Meeting

### Where are we now and what we do from now on.

There was from time to time mention of falling membership and concerns expressed about the future of the Quaker movement; however, this is accepted about our faith and many others, but we are here, the focus of the conference was to be on what we do from now on and was explored through three presentations on outreach

#### 1. Our buildings and premises.

Generally, to have premises that are bright, clean and welcoming in appearance; safe and healthy for anyone who may attend. This for the purposes of worship; and for letting out commercially in a business-like way to the highest standards that can reasonably be expected.

This was regarded as an essential first step by all ages, and very powerfully brought home to us by a group of young children who very confidently, and without notice to anyone, launched a short play at the end of a period of worship.

They had built their own meeting house from cardboard and other materials from the craft room. This was their stage.

The play commenced ~

Visitors then arrived at the meeting house.

The visitors comprised of dolls, teddy bears, plastic astronauts and a miscellany of animals, who each in turn complemented those welcoming them on how nice and clean it was, how bright and tidy, and how comfortable they felt. They admired the kitchen, they liked the toilets, it felt peaceful in the main room for worship.

2. Friends meeting for worship and working as a community within the wider society. (A&Q 18)

This was where the concept of having an all age conference really came into its own. The

atmosphere and essence at the heart of the conference was that of a family, not just all ages, but different races, cultures, sexuality, and different stages in life. This diversity added creative dimensions and was a pointer to the possibilities that await as a result of becoming more inclusive and more representative of the diversity in the communities where we live.

We had suspected that ‘all age’ would be distracting, instead it was stimulating. Little ones in the corner playing with toys, a toddler walking off with a large copy of Quaker Faith & Practice in both hands, a multi-tasking mother sharing her opinion on a subject, while browsing through notes, while dipping into her handbag for a pen, while breastfeeding!

This is where children can help, they disrupt! We need disrupters!!

Nothing was lost and so much was gained.

We will reach out better from the stability offered by such a healthy family ‘home style’ environment; even when, as with all families there are stresses,

misunderstandings and mistakes made. For us there were some friends that we could relate to more closely than others, but amongst us all there was a mutual trust and respect for each other and a willingness to listen to and digest all contributions.

Many of the outreach ideas for us as a group stemmed from serving the outside community as a response to the promptings of love, in action. The consensus was that in so doing our testimonies of Equality, Justice, Peace, Truth, Integrity, Simplicity and Sustainability being lived out will attract those around us where the “*persuasion of insight, humanity and good sense*” (From: QF&P 28.09 above) will take root.

### 3. Our personal life and leadings? (A&Q 27 & 28)

The first joint presentation was indirect in style and led by a couple, Lucy and Kevin Vento. On stage they engaged in a conversation around the issues that led to them finding each other and finding the Quaker faith as being for them. I should add that this was ably supported by their young children climbing up and down, interrupting and being jointly cared for by them and a busy granddad!

The couple had met at university. For Lucy it was a case of following in the family Quaker tradition and finding that it suited her personal core beliefs.

For Kevin it was a story of researching many different religions and faiths and being disappointed, mainly due to the, *‘forms of evangelism ... mass emotional appeal, idiosyncratic*

*demands or autocratic compulsion’*. (From QF&P 28.09 above). Until, that is, he met Lucy and found himself comfortable within his relationship with her, her wider Quaker family and their beliefs. Ironically, the Quaker meeting house had stood a short distance from where he lived, but he had never noticed it...

The next presentation followed a short break. This one more direct in style by Nim Njuguna, previously a Baptist Minister for 30 years. He touched on many of the personal emotional and cultural reasons that can consciously and unconsciously generally prevent us all from successful outreach.

Fear and distrust of difference is a natural response for many creatures, no less us all as human beings. Despite our best efforts and as much as we consciously stand for equality and justice there is a need to face this reality about ourselves, and the effect it has on our thinking and behaviour. Within a group of the same age, same social background, same race, same culture, same sexuality ~ where rapport is easy, we may enjoy the cosy comfort zone of an echo chamber, hermetically sealed from those who are ‘not one of us’, and so able to ignore them, leaving them alone.

The price we pay is stagnation, and the opportunities we miss are those of the adventurous growth of love and understanding, enrichment and inspiration that can enliven us all.

“The outreach need is to bring our meeting back into a

balance that reflects the makeup of our wider society”.

“One needs to be uncomfortable about our comfort zones to become more inclusive and gain from it...”

“Consider what we get ~ and consider what we give”.

If being true to ourselves honestly correlates to the values of the Quaker testimonies, then by our love in action we are bound to encounter others who, in their search for the truth will respond in spirit to who we are and what we do.

This is an edited version of the full report by David and Una which includes the references and an appendix of ideas and suggestions. The full version is available from David

[<dlcps@btinternet.com>](mailto:dlcps@btinternet.com)

and on the SEAQM website.



## Apples

from Valerie Graves

When you have been eating real organic apples you are spoiled by anything else! Andrew, John and Joan Tann's son, usually has a number of young people, often from other countries, to help with the work. He also has a few vegetables and things like medlars and quinces.

The cottage next door to the orchard, where Joan Tann lives, is very old and very full of things. I believe it goes back to fifteen-something. It is in a very old bit of country.

## Interesting Quotes

John Kay

In surfing the Net recently I've come across these interesting quotes from children's literature.

### The Twits

"A person who has good thoughts cannot ever be ugly. You can have a wonky nose and a crooked mouth and a double chin and stick-out teeth, but if you have good thoughts they will shine out of your face like sunbeams and you will always look lovely" Mrs Twit. Roald Dahl.

Mary Poppins

## From Colchester Meeting Notices

It is with some sadness but with much understanding and good wishes we learnt that Peggy Lewis will no longer be part of our meeting but will worship at and belong to the community of the church of St James the Less on East Hill. She has had dual membership for 3 years after 60 years a Quaker.

## Giving lifts

from Valerie Graves

This reminds me of camping holidays years and years ago, when it was an unwritten rule, coming back from a holiday on a big main road with a big car in camping outfit, you should stop at a big junction and lift any walkers on the road. You usually stopped at a cafe to fill up the car - and your guests. It was great fun and very instructive. People don't do this now, I don't think.

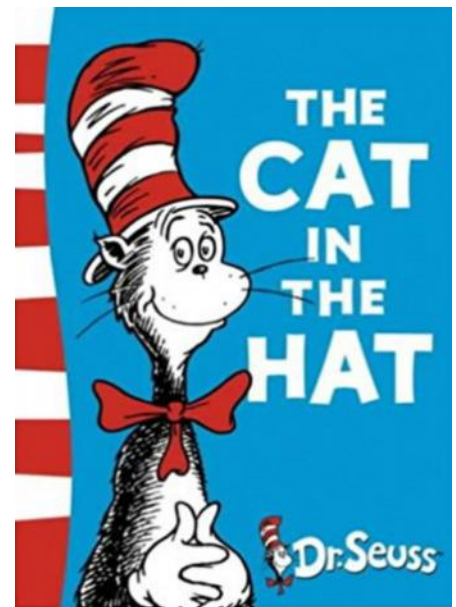
"In every job that must be done, there is an element of fun. You find the fun and 'snap', the job's a game." - Mary Poppins - P.L. Travers

### Watership Down

"You know how you let yourself think that everything will be all right if you can only get to a certain place or do a certain thing. But when you get there you find it's not that simple." - Richard Adams

### The Cat in the Hat

"be who you are and so you will to feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind." Dr Seuss.



## Taxis

from Valerie Graves

We used to have a cottage, which all the family borrowed, on the Norfolk coast, but as I got older I used it less, and we sold it. My youngest, who used to get called in for minor repairs, was so relieved (because he no longer had to do repairs) that he bought me a taxi account. This is a marvellous idea which I use a great deal and which is a god-send because you get all of the advantages of having a car, with none of the problems. In addition you get the interest of being driven by people from all over the world!



## Winnie-the-Pooh

from Valerie Graves

Something you didn't know about 'Winnie the Pooh' (Not at all related to Friends)

In the magazine Countryman, you'll find a picture from Canada about Winnie-the-Pooh. He came originally from Canada, from Winnipeg, who became at-

tached to the British Army during the First World War. He had lived with the British Army with the Veterinary Corps. He was lent to the Regents Park Zoo where he was looked after during the war, and where Christopher Robin saw him with his nanny. The picture is of Lt Harry Colebourne and Winnie.