

# Lewes Quaker Meeting Newsletter

## April 2023



*"Fruits of Quaker Practice", by Sara Sawyer-Todd*

*"One of the unexpected things I have learnt in my life as a Quaker is that religion is basically about relationships between people. This was an unexpected discovery, because I had been brought up to believe ... religion was ... about our relationship with God. If we are sensitive, we find that everything that happens to us, good or bad, can help us to build a vision of the meaning of life. We can be helped ... by reading the Bible and being open to experience of nature, music, books, painting, sport or whatever our ... interest may be. It is in and through all things that we hear God speaking to us. But I do not think I am alone in my certainty that it's in my relationships with people that the deepest religious truths are most vividly disclosed."*

- *Quaker faith & practice 10.20; George Gorman, 1962*

### **Sunday morning Meetings for Worship**

10:30 a.m. start. A blended meeting, in person at the Meeting House and on Zoom. Zoom link available from the clerks on request; it is the same week to week.

During building works, there is access to the meeting room only at weekends. Please do not enter any part of the building apart from the meeting room. There is a port-a-loo in the garden. Two parking spaces behind the Meeting House are available on Sundays. Please give priority to those with mobility difficulties. The necessary vouchers are available in the meeting room.

**Children's Meeting** is held on the second and fourth Sundays of each month, at The Open Door (32 Church Twitten). Start time 10:30 a.m. Children and young people join Friends at the meeting house for the last five minutes of meeting for worship. Please email Sara at [saralucytodd@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:saralucytodd@yahoo.co.uk) for further details.

### **Wednesday lunchtime Meetings for Worship**

At The Open Door, 32 Church Twitten, Lewes. 12:30 p.m. Enter through the door marked "Thebes" and up the stairs to the first floor meeting room. Please bring your own drinks / refreshments. All are welcome.

**Meeting for Worship for Church Affairs (Business Meeting):** Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> April at 12:30 p.m. in the meeting house. Please bring your own lunch and drinks, as the kitchen is not open. Business meetings are held on the first Sunday of each month, at 12:30 p.m. The agenda in April will include an update on building/ project development, the triennial report to Area Meeting, and a report from Children's Committee.

Please do not attend any meetings in person if you have any viral symptoms. Please be aware that the symptoms of Covid-19 can resemble those of a common cold. You are welcome to attend meetings on Zoom.



Lewes Friends **gather at The Depot** on Friday mornings at 10:30 a.m. for coffee and a chat. No need to book; just turn up and join in fellowship with Friends.

**Christ Church Thinktank:** Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> April, 7.30 - 9 pm. A talk by Professor Richard Vincent on “**Mind and Spirit in Medical Treatment**”. Richard is Emeritus Professor of Cardiology at the University of Brighton and a founding member of the Brighton & Sussex Medical School, which links the two universities with the NHS in South-East England. He is recognised as an expert in the education of medical students and on the importance of integrating rigorous science and passionate care for the whole person. In his talk he will take us on an historical journey through the changing shape of medical care in this country. While appreciating the accelerating progress of medical science, he will also present observations that the mind and spirit are crucial in sickness, healthcare, and recovery. You can choose to attend in person or on Zoom. Email [j.d.smith@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:j.d.smith@sussex.ac.uk) if you would like to join by Zoom, or for any questions.

**Area Meeting** will be held on Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> May, at Eastbourne Meeting House, 17 Wish Road, Eastbourne. The study day will begin at 1:30 p.m. Friends are welcome to join meeting for worship in the morning, starting at 10:30 a.m., as well. Details will be shared in notices.



**LOSRAS:** On Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup> May, LOSRAS (Lewes Organisation in Support of Refugees and Asylum Seekers) will host a **Refugee**

**Tales Walk in Lewes.** Similar events have proven popular in the past, so do contact LOSRAS for details. The LOSRAS website is found here: [www.losras.org](http://www.losras.org).

**Woodbrooke Trustees** have released a statement about the closure of the much-loved Woodbrooke Quaker Centre in Birmingham. Before the end of 2023 the building and grounds will pass to the Bournville Village Trust, but Woodbrooke's learning and research programme will continue. The statement reads in part:

“[We] have considered in depth our current financial position ... [and] have decided that the Woodbrooke Centre shall close to the public by 31 October 2023. This has been a difficult process and we want to be as transparent as we can with everyone as we work through the challenges ... We are aware that this decision will be met with sadness by the many Friends whose lives have been enriched ... by the opportunities offered at Woodbrooke... We believe that the decision to close ... Woodbrooke Centre will best enable Woodbrooke learning and research to continue to thrive... As well as continuing our programme of learning we have agreed with the University of Birmingham ... to transfer significant parts of Woodbrooke's Library ... on a permanent loan basis. This will ensure they will be accessible for research in the

future ... We thank Friends who have upheld us through difficult times .... We ... hope you will uphold all those affected as we continue to move forward together....” You can read the full statement and further details here: [Future of Woodbrooke - Trustee Statement](#) .

### Yearly Meeting [Britain Yearly Meeting] 2023

... will be held between 28 April - 1 May, in person at Friends House in London and online. All are welcome. There is no charge to attend, but if you plan to join in person you will need to arrange your own accommodation in London. It is essential to book a place, whether you plan to attend in person or online.



The YM theme is ***‘Releasing our energy so we can follow the leadings of the spirit.’*** As in previous years, YM Agenda Committee will host preparatory sessions

online in the run up to Yearly Meeting itself, between 21 - 23 April.

[Preparing for Yearly Meeting](#) tells us that “we will need to make decisions in response to reviews of Yearly Meeting, Yearly Meeting Gathering, Meeting for Sufferings and central committees and the first stages of the revision of our book of discipline. Some of these decisions will be coming to Yearly Meeting in 2023, and some in later years.” Also, “this year, we ask Friends to consider how we centre ourselves and organise our community, so that we may best do what we are called to do.” More information can be found here: [preparing-for-yearly-meeting-2023](#).

Book to attend here: [YM 2023 bookings](#). All Friends are welcome. Registration closes 17 April. The agenda and other documents in advance are available here: [Yearly Meeting documents | Quakers in Britain](#)



**Children’s Meeting:** On Page 1 you will find a photograph of the children discovering and creating “Fruits of Quaker Practice”, taken at a children’s meeting in February. Above is another photo of the young people hard at work on this theme, whilst held in the light of the Open Door.



**Right Ordering** Our Society is now more than 370 years old. We might like to think that this is

because of our religious insights. But we should not forget the Quaker Business Method is an important part of those insights, and it is for that reason that we call it 'Meeting for Worship for Business' (MfWfB).

We are called to come with hearts and minds prepared, but equally we need to be open to new light, from whatever source it may come, and if our minds are made up before our business meeting they will not easily open up again.

The traditional description of what we do is 'finding the will of God' for this meeting at this time. That might sound rather pompous, but in practice we understand what we mean by this.

Discussions at MfWfB are ministry and it is important that there is some silence, even if very brief, between spoken contributions. Before ministering it is usual to stand and wait to be called by the clerk who will judge when it is right for the next person to speak.

Statements should be clear and simple, without undue repetition. If we agree with previous

ministry, we should not try to add our weight to it by repeating it. Of course there are exceptions, for example when a Friend presents a report and answers questions about it.

At some point the clerk will draft a minute. That may be the prelude to a final minute or it may be a summary of the position so far. We have a responsibility to uphold the clerk in prayer, or if that is not possible, at least to uphold them in silence.

It is well known that we do not vote, for many reasons, one of which is that the minority are not excluded by the majority. Voting would be a quick way to move the business on, but it would be an escape from the responsibility to come to an understanding which belongs to everyone in the meeting.

The tradition when no agreement is forthcoming is to have a time of quiet and see if a way forward emerges. And, if no agreement emerges, to hold the matter over to a later meeting and, for the while, to leave the matter as it stood before the meeting. This applies even in the case where there appears to be an irreconcilable difference of opinions, and no breakthrough seems possible. Given enough patience, other understandings can appear in an almost miraculous way.

The Quaker Business Method is a valuable legacy from our past, and we should cherish it.

David Hitchin on behalf of PaCET



**“Answering that of god in everyone”:** A Kindlers on the Road workshop will be held at Bexhill Meeting House, 15 Albert Road, Bexhill, on Saturday, 22

April, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. All Friends in the Area Meeting are invited to attend. Please bring a packed lunch; drinks will be provided. Please book in advance with Kieron on 07956

556520 or by email on [bexhillkier@gmail.com](mailto:bexhillkier@gmail.com). There is a £10 fee per person for this all-day workshop.

### Protecting the World’s Oceans

On Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> March it was reported that: “After more than a decade of negotiations, the countries of the United Nations have agreed the first ever treaty to protect the world’s oceans



that lie outside national boundaries. The UN High Seas Treaty places 30% of the world’s oceans into

protected areas, puts more money into marine conservation and means new rules for mining at sea. Environmental groups say it will help reverse biodiversity losses and ensure sustainable development.”

This supplements the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The new treaty has been years in the making. It will take years before it becomes part of the law of signatory countries, and implementation will not be easy, but it is a milestone for which we should be grateful.

Roderick Ogley (1929-2010) was appointed in 1966 to the Faculty of International Relations at the University of Sussex where he worked until his retirement, after which he moved to Yorkshire with Ann, his wife. They were attenders at Lewes Meeting for more than 20 years. He wrote several books about the working of international organisations, but his major concern was the law of the sea and the seabed.

It is impossible to tell how much of our Friend’s work contributed to these treaties and it is sad that he did not survive to see the latest one agreed. Most of the visible work was done by politicians and campaigners, but they would be of little value without the solid legal basis created by people like Roderick.

David Hitchin

**A learning opportunity:** In February, a group of about 30 students from Brighton University's School of Architecture spent the morning at the Meeting House. They were there to see an



historic building in the process of renovation.

After Chris Lawson gave a brief introduction to Quakers and Quaker Meeting Houses, Jo Saady, architect of the development project, told the students about ongoing work, planning regulations and other details of the project. They then had a chance to be shown around by members of Valley's team and Jo's colleagues from Ecotecture, and to take photos and measurements.

The photograph shows students investigating plans and exposed sections of the wobble and daub interior of the meeting room wall.



### Good Friday Walk of Witness

Chuches Together in Lewes warmly invites everyone to join the annual Good Friday Walk of Witness on Friday 7 April at 6 pm. The procession will depart from the top of Irelands Lane (by St Pancras and St Anne's Churches) and process behind the cross through Lewes to the Mount, via Lewes High Street to Watergate Lane, down Watergate Lane to Southover Road, turning left towards Station Road then along Station Road to Mountfield Road and on to the Mount, arriving about 6:30 pm. There will be pauses for scripture readings at points along the route and a short service after the cross

is raised on the Mount. All are welcome.

Stewards are required to ensure safety en route. If you can help, or know someone who could help, please contact Rob on [hoys@rockuk.net](mailto:hoys@rockuk.net).

### Quaker Reading Group



For our March meeting at Roger and Patricia's house, we discussed Apeirogon by Calum McCann. It was an extraordinary book covering the many sides

to the Palestinian/ Israeli impasse, with interconnections with history, the natural world and human nature. At the heart of the book was the friendship of two men, one Palestinian the other Israeli. Their friendship was forged through the tragic loss of their daughters and their vision of a different future.

We meet again on 26<sup>th</sup> April to discuss 'Small things like these' by Claire Keegan.

The reading group meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month. Please get in touch if you would like to join the group or the discussion of any particular book. Please email me on [janegoyder@msn.com](mailto:janegoyder@msn.com)

Jane Goyder

In April, Wallands Circle will promote the Good Cause. The rota for the following months will be:

- Cliffe - May
- Friars - June
- Needlemakers - July

If you have an idea for a good cause that the meeting could support, please speak to your circle convenor.



Quakers call for an inquiry

Quakers have joined 50 other organisations in writing to the Joint Committee on Human Rights seeking an urgent inquiry into the use of hotels for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. Since July 2021, 4,600 children have been placed in these hotels despite warnings from Home Office officials that this risks exposing them to sex offenders. There are clear indication that at least 200 missing asylum-seeking children have been kidnapped by child traffickers.

The Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network (QARN) joined the Refugee Council, Human Rights Watch and others in telling the committee that they consider such use of these hotels to be in breach of the law. Housing children in this way means they are outside the child welfare system and denied fundamental protections.

The Government's policy is in breach of the European Convention on Human Rights, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Child protection experts say hotels and B&B-type accommodation is unsuitable for any child, let alone those without parents to protect them.

QARN steering group member Sheila Mosley said: "There are massive concerns about these children being in hotels which are an adult environment. Traffickers are circling these children and they disappear into a culture of domestic servitude, sex work and ... the drug trade."

Read the full letter here: [2023.03.03 - Joint Letter to JCHR](#)

Find out more about how to support QARN here: [Article 39 QARN](#)

We give thanks for the grace of God as shown in the life of our Friend Susanna Lobb, who died peacefully at home on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023, surrounded by her family. Friends are warmly invited to a celebration of remembrance at the Rotunda in Preston Park, Brighton, 4.45 pm, Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> April.

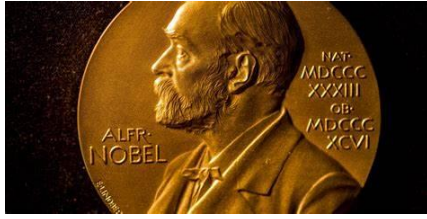


*"... This is the comfort of the good, that the grave cannot hold them, and that they live as soon as they die. For death is no more than a turning of us over from time to eternity. Death, then, being the way and condition of life, we cannot love to live, if we cannot bear to die. They that love beyond the world cannot be separated by it. Death cannot kill what never dies. Nor can spirits ever be divided that love and live in the same Divine Principle, the root and record of their friendship... Death is but crossing the world, as friends do the seas; they live in one another still.."*

From *Quaker Faith & Practice* 22.95; William Penn, 1693

In March Lewes Meeting raised £434 in donations, plus Gift Aid, bringing the total to **£499**, for **DAY-MER**, the good cause chosen by Needlemakers & Wealden Circle.

Many thanks for your generosity, Friends.



## Nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize . . .

Quakers in Britain and America have nominated two coalitions in the USA and Kenya for their work in building democracy for the 2023 Nobel Peace Prize.

Quaker Peace and Social Witness [QPSW] and American Friends Service Committee [AFSC] have nominating rights after Quakers won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1947 for work during the two world wars.

This year Quakers have chosen:

- Florida Rights Restoration Coalition (FRRRC) which campaigns for the rights of citizens disenfranchised after imprisonment
- National Council of Churches in Kenya (NCCCK) which works to support peaceful, free, fair, and credible elections

These organisations support the human right to representation by government and working towards a peaceful world. Quakers hope this nomination will draw attention to threats to democracy, from voter suppression to interference with elections.

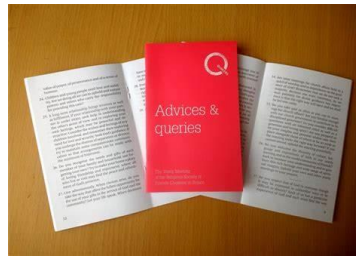
Oliver Robertson, head of QPSW, said: *“Quakers have always believed everyone has value.... The voices of the poor and those bearing the brunt of climate change need to be heard and effective democratic processes enable this to happen.”*

Rev Canon Chris Kinyanjui, NCCCK General Secretary, said they are excited and humbled by the nomination. NCCCK was founded in 1913 and is made up of Christian churches and organisations (including Quakers). It works to broaden democratic

spaces, access to education, rehabilitation of soldiers and speaking out against state violence in Kenya.

Through the work of FRRRC in Florida, the state constitution was amended to restore voting rights of over 1.4 million state citizens with past felony convictions.

For further details, visit the Quakers in Britain website: [Groups working to protect democracy nominated for Nobel Peace Prize](#)



**Advices & Queries** provides useful challenges and inspiration to Friends. *“Living Our Beliefs”*, developed by young Quakers, contains an alternative version of

*Advices & Queries*, published by Junior Yearly Meeting in 2015. Recently in the Continuing Explorers group, we delved into the original and compared it to the alternative. As a group, we felt the young people’s interpretation gained much by its simplicity. See below.

Theresa Samms  
(PaCET and Continuing Explorers)

*Numbers 1 - 5 were printed in a previous issue. Below are Numbers 6 - 15. There will be more to come in future newsletters . . .*

6. Multifaith communities are a source of richness
7. Notice unexpected moments of spirituality in all parts of your life
8. Value worship, by yourself or with others
9. Consider your whole self - good and bad - in worship
10. Come to meeting regardless of your mood; it’ll make you feel better
11. Be honest with yourself
12. Try to stay focused in meeting
13. When you feel moved to speak, speak
14. You’re not always right; listen to others
15. Take some responsibility in your meeting

**To be continued**

## Quakers in Russia: Yearly Meeting Event 22 April

I went to London last week to meet with Svetlana Gannushkina with whom I worked in Moscow on issues of social justice, mainly concerned with refugees, of which there are many hundreds in Moscow.

As described in my book Sketches from a Quaker's Moscow Journal, Svetlana and I



set up a school for Chechen refugee children, as they had no educational rights. They met at Friends House Moscow.

Svetlana has been awarded the Anna Politkovskaia Prize for Human Rights. Now aged 81, she continues to live in Moscow and work for the rights and welfare of refugees, mainly now Ukrainian, even though she is arrested, detained, taken to court and fined.

She was arrested on her birthday, March 6, in Moscow for taking a photo of Oleg Orlov as he unfurled a banner saying "NO WAR, FREEDOM FOR RUSSIA". Oleg was arrested even before the last word was visible, and his home raided last night by the militia looking for evidence of 'slander of the Russian army' - a crime which can carry a penalty of 10 years in prison.

Friends may be interested to know that I have been asked to speak about Friends House Moscow at Yearly Meeting on Zoom on 22 April.

Patricia Cockrell

## Greetings from our Friends Lou and Chris

*"All is well in Leicester! Asha is keeping us very busy. She took her first steps on Christmas Day and hasn't stopped dashing around since! Rosa is still loving school. Chris is starting a new climate campaigns job at Christian Aid in April. We are planning to get down to Lewes over the summer and hope to see some of you then. We will look forward to seeing how the meeting house development work is going."*



## Development Project: April 2023 update



*This photo shows the flat being fitted with interior wall insulation - part of the meeting's wish for our building to be as well insulated as possible.*

**Progress:** A tale of two parts: good progress and unfortunate delays. Much excellent work has been done inside the building with most of the sound and heat insulation in the flat completed. The solid limecrete floor at the All Saints end of the building has dried well and the positioning of dividing walls for the toilets and meeting room confirmed. Outside, in the alley, walls for the French Drain are done below ground and the brickwork for above ground section will follow shortly. Frustrating delays continue, however, for getting started on stabilising the high wall and creating the foyer and corridor. The agreed



solution is to insert some strong piles into the ground. The concrete base for the new foyer and corridor will be secured to the piles, and make a firm foundation for the high wall. The chosen contractor has been on site planning details with the builders. The cost and overall delay are not yet clear, but will be significant.

**Costs:** The Project Group, our LM and AM Treasurers and other Friends are spending a lot of time looking at overall figures for the project, taking note of both the anticipated extra costs due to the work on the wall and various additions, and savings that have emerged. Our architects and builders are also continually looking at ways in which costs might be reduced without spoiling the outcome. Once costs of the wall work are known a report with figures and suggestions for how to meet the increased total will be made to the Meeting.

**Working Groups:** Plans have been finalised for the kitchens, toilets and bathroom. Orders for equipment will be placed shortly, with costs slightly under budget, which is welcome.

**Fundraising:** The need to keep up donations toward funding the project is clear, so thank you to those who can give, or add to what they have already given. For ways of giving, look on the websites [www.lewesquakers.org.uk](http://www.lewesquakers.org.uk) or [www.justgiving.com/campaign/LewesMH](http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/LewesMH) .

If you have ideas for fundraising you can discuss them with Patricia on 01273 474884 or David on 01892 663522. The In-reach / Outreach Committee has proposed a fundraising event (including a cake sale) on Spring Bank Holiday Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> May, so please make a note of the date and look out for more information in notices.

The Project Group

**Quiet Ways:** Contributions to the Sussex East Area Meeting newsletter are welcome at any time. Please email [editorquietways@gmail.com](mailto:editorquietways@gmail.com) with your news items.

**Deadline for the May newsletter:** please send events for the local meeting, news, photos and other items of interest for the April newsletter to Liz at [realgirltribe@gmail.com](mailto:realgirltribe@gmail.com) by 27<sup>th</sup> April.

Thank you, Friends.

*Part of a monthly series of interesting facts about Quakers ...*



Not many people know that before 1850 more Anglican churches had been designed by **Thomas Rickman** (1776-

1841) than by any other architect. He invented the classification of medieval churches into "Norman", "Early English", "Decorated English" and "Perpendicular English". Thomas Rickman was a birthright Quaker, although disowned by Lewes Meeting in 1804 for marrying out.

David Hitchin

#### **Lewes Meeting Contacts:**

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Website Editor: Drew Fisher at [ajfscorpio@hotmail.com](mailto:ajfscorpio@hotmail.com)

Children's Meeting: Sara at [saralucytodd@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:saralucytodd@yahoo.co.uk)

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Friars -Veryan Greenwood & Anna

Milner-Gulland

Needlemakers & Wealden - Geoff Halsey

Wallands - Bronwyn Harwood