could have added to the talk given by Naseer Arafat, Palestinian Architect, “On a Tour of Palestine”.

Naseer Arafat, urbane, cool, friendly, then gave us an illustrated talk which turned out to be a horror Film on slides. We saw maps of lands covered with little red dots of colour which, when enlarged, turned hills into densely packed houses and snaking walls cutting off not only lands in a zig zag of enclosures, but also people now no longer able to move freely to school, to work, to tend their fields, but also unable to do anything without permission as the walls slowly strangle their independence. Householders having to prove their ownership of a property owned by their families for generations. New laws that demand papers to prove their rights. Laws that demand their houses to be destroyed by themselves or pay for others to do it for them. Photos of frightened angry children struggling in the arms of soldiers. Dead children, destroyed homes and the endless snake of the walls. Those walls built by Palestinians desperate for work. (I think of those Jews who were forced to pull the bodies out of the gas chambers in the last war). So a talk without an answer, without hope, full of helpless anger, We then later meet at tea and I don’t know what to say.

Here the Q.C.C.I.R. report was comforting to find people realizing the huge difficulties facing us in trying to find solutions. Dr Jane Clements who is on the Forum for Israel and Palestine, spells this out sympathetically and recommends us to read, “An Uncivil War” by Keith Kalin-Harris, which is what I shall do.

It was a very interesting day, but ghastly trying to write this report which I hope you will forgive for its lack of expertise, but the computer is still a wayward instrument.

Sophie Meade, Dolobran LM

Mid-Wales and Southern Marches Area Meetings Newsletter November 2015

Contents

Editorial	3
Almeley-Wootton Spiritual Life Report	4
Not in our name…	6
Jim Waterhouse 1926—2014	10
Our Faith in the Future	14
The Church: Towards a Common Vision	15
Quaker Life Rep. Council	16
Let Your Life Speak	18
Patricia Russell 1935—2014	19
A Vision for Wales	22
Quaker Faith in Action	24
Quaker Meeting Houses	25
Peace Education Report	28
Montgomery Spiritual Life Report	30
Meeting of Friends in Wales—Welshpool	35

Meeting of Friends in Wales at Welshpool Methodist Church
Saturday, 24th October 2015

The Methodist Chapel in Welshpool is a marvellous warm, friendly, busy place. It has endless lists of jobs to do, by whom and when, lists of activities for the year stuck on the walls, with short term information on blackboards on the floor. Everything exposed to view. Wonderful!
There were 30 Friends present. On our chairs was a pile of papers, concise, excellent reports which we were to discuss. Unfortunately there was not time to read them properly until I got home. It was obvious they stood on their own without me adding to them. Therefore I suggest Friends read them themselves, I list them below.

The Eisteddfod report by Cynthia Rowland
Meeting for Sufferings by Frances Voelker
Quaker Life Representative Council
by Angela Ormrod
A Vision for Wales workshop in Aberystwyth
by Deborah Rowlands

This one, a very important report for Friends in Wales, to which I'd liked to add a thought. During the meeting we only had three Friends speaking in Welsh. I believe there must have been others who could have spoken Welsh and would have liked to. Our translator, Bryn, is brilliant. Is there an opportunity to encourage the use of Welsh in these meetings? We were also told of an excellent exhibition in Birmingham on the First World War which Friends in Wales would like to take and add the stories coming out from Wales.

I wish I had been able to read the reports before the meeting, especially that of Q.C.C.I.R. Interfaith Peace Building Day Conference held at Friends House, which

In what other ways does your involvement with Quakers nourish your spiritual life?

* Being part of a community of like-minded people, on both a large and small scale, is both reassuring and inspiring. I feel accepted for what I am, and helped to live my life as I feel I should.
* Knowing that, in a troubled world, I am in tune with other Friends on matters of fundamental importance.
* Sometimes I feel guilty because I am not more involved with Quakers, my time being taken in other ways.
* Being part of a community with certain common attitudes and approaches opens opportunities for spiritual discussion and companionship ranging from the formal (Discussion group or 4th Sunday) to Afterwords and more informal conversation. Being challenged is as useful as agreement.
* It has made me more aware that we are lucky in the Western world to be able to freely talk about our religion and beliefs.
* Lots of wonderful published material. Helpful and nourishing. The knowledge that Quakers are worldwide and active in lots of spheres of influence. And several Woodbrooke short courses and weekends.

We also asked what wld make it easier for people to come to Meeting and an afternoon Meeting was mentioned twice. We are thinking that the next time we hold a short meeting plus shared meal we wld hold it in the afternoon followed by tea.

We continue to feel concerned over the problem of those who come once or twice and then disappear, or those who continue to attend but very infrequently. We have to accept that people have different levels of involvement, partly because of the nature of a wide spectrum of beliefs and degrees of convincement, partly because not everyone wants the same thing out of Meeting, and we need to accommodate this.

But all the levels of Quaker life are important and feed into our worship locally. These different levels are both important and nourishing, right up to our world-wide activity – what is being done in our names.

Editorial

Dear Friends,

With such a cornucopia of reports and contributions, we have needed to extend this edition to 36 pages. Most gratifying, Well done!

Ideally, it would be good if we could have a backlog of non time-sensitive contributions to augment the regular reports for times when we are struggling to build up a decent sized newsletter. Think on!

John and Felicity Rogers, editors

Please send any material for publication in the Newsletter to:

newsletter@smquakers.org.uk

Or, john309rogers@btinternet.com

Or, by post to John and Felicity Rogers
26 Mortimer Road, Montgomery, SY15 6UP

Telephone: 01686 668478

Almeley-Wootton Spiritual Life Report, 2015

Our meeting at present has approximately 58 Friends who associate themselves with Almeley Wootton Quaker Meeting. In practice we have about 40 Members and Attenders of all ages who regularly contribute to, and lovingly support, the Meeting; the oldest being 95 and the youngest 2 years of age. Some Friends are servants of the meeting in an administrative role, others offer service as suppliers of practical skills such as gardening, housekeeping or providers of refreshments; or they simply and quietly uphold the Meeting by their presence which is of great value and importance. All are appreciated and cherished in what they do. The average attendance by Friends of all ages during the past twelve months had been 21; two years ago it was 17.

As Friends will know, Almeley Meeting is situated in a rural community. Many of us come from an urban environment, yet we are very aware that many of our neighbours are farmers, or others who earn their livelihood directly or peripherally from farming, and that the area is an agricultural factory floor. We are also aware, and appreciate the benefits, of living in such a beautiful landscape, while at the same time we are not unaware of the difficulties, and often hidden stresses, present in a rural community such as ours. It is our intention in the near future to start a designated fund to support those in need in the local community.

Almeley Meeting is thriving for many reasons, not least that we have been able to extend our Meeting House with the Roger Prichard Room, which has given Friends an opportunity for more outreach, both within and without our Quaker community. We are pleased that our ecumenical link with Anglicans in the village continues to thrive. We are maintaining our presence at the Kington Show, and have made connections with the agricultural chaplain for this area. Further afield, and following our 'White Poppy letter' to the German Quaker Journal two years ago regarding our misgivings about the commemoration of the First World War, our link with Germans Friends in Hanover has grown and promises more personal contact. Children's Meeting recently made prayer flags for Hanover Friends, who wrote back explaining how touched they had been by the gift.

Our Children's Meeting is now well-established and is a welcome feature of the whole Meeting, the life of which has been enhanced by their joyful exuberance, and

* As a Quaker, this is my Quaker 'family'. It feels like I belong here, and I miss it if I don't come to Meeting.

Does Meeting meet your expectations?

* Yes mostly. Where it fails this is usually due to my distraction.
* I feel dissatisfied with how difficult it is to centre down and dismiss wayward thoughts.
*Yes I feel very much part of the Meeting, so my input is important – as is everyone else's. This is how it should be. The monthly discussion group and other opportunities to talk about and share spiritual insights and faith are also important to me.

In what way does Meeting for Worship nourish your spiritual life?

* Simply by being
* Being part of a worshipping group helps me to focus on deeper issues. Other people's ministry or a reading from Advices and Queries can give my thoughts some direction.
* Because of the silence there are no barriers to receiving and reflecting on the spiritual dimension to life. Ministry (mostly) enhances this.
* I relish the peace, quietness and time to think. I value the members of the Meeting for their values, wisdom and kindness, and learn from them.
* It is difficult to be precise, but somehow that hour spent in silent worship with like-minded Friends does recharge the spiritual batteries.
* It gives me peace to spend time to think more about God, and what matters to me, to give more thoughts about forgiveness for others and for myself.
* MfW offers the discipline of coming back to a fixed point, a fixed frame of reference. Without coming together at that Sunday Meeting one can drift in response to the plethora of other influences that have no particular value base. Getting back to the starting point tethers one.

various ways. E.g. we have a half page in each issue of the Montgomery Crier and include one A&Q each time. We have recently extended this to Llandyssil newsletter and given time will take it further.

As our contribution to the fund-raising effort in the town for the restored War Memorial we organized a showing of Joyeux Noel, valuable in its own right as part of our message about peace, but also a way of engaging with e.g. The British Legion and other bodies in the town.

And we continue involvement in ecumenical activity in Montgomery, with remembrance services, carol services, contributing readings or prayers.

In our last report we said we had an initial visit from Imam Sohayb from the Moslem community in Craven Arms. Since then we have had him back for an open meeting and have been to give talks to the women and men of the Moslem community.

What we think about Meeting

In all this our Meeting for Worship is central, and as part of the preparation for this SLR we circulated a questionnaire to all our Members and Attenders, however infrequent, with questions such as
What brings you to MfW? Does MfW meet your expectations?
In what way does MfW nourish your spiritual life?
and followed this up with a lunchtime discussion expanding on the answers.

This is what arose from those two exercises:

What brings you to MfW?

* The friendship and the great feeling of the silence.
* I come to Meeting because it feels 'right' and there is something lacking if I don't.
*Being part of the Quaker community in Montgomery; being part of our shared worship; the opportunity for silence and reflection on the week past and the week ahead.

the presence of their parents. Until February 2013 we had had no regular Children's Meeting for several years. Since then it has grown from three Young Friends and one family, to twelve Young Friends (aged 2–14) and six families attending every third Sunday of the month. Two of those families came to our weekend at Trefeca.
Children's Meeting is lively, enthusiastic and rewarding, and highly valued by our meeting. We use "Journeys in the Spirit" from Friends House which helps our Young Friends to go deeper and experience the Quaker way directly. The Richard Prichard Room has greatly enhanced the experience of Young Friends meeting there.
Faith groups, meeting regularly, can sometimes lapse into a cosy, self-congratulatory, admiration society; that this route has been avoided by Almeley Meeting is obvious to all who visit. Our Meeting is a lively, spiritually aware diverse group of Friends who find unity and strength in the stillness of our Meetings for Worship. Ministry is always welcomed, and on occasion, profound, when it speaks to the condition of those present. Both in Meetings for Worship and in our Meetings for Learning, we are challenged to address our inner-most thoughts and prejudices. We scrutinise the basic assumptions of Quaker religious language asking questions such as, 'What do we mean by spirituality?' 'What do we mean when we talk of the spirit?' 'What is equality?' 'In what ways are we equal?' We find there is wider understanding to be gained from our diverse answers. We also make space for mutual respect and love for our different approaches, encompassing traditional and radical religious philosophies.
One such memorable learning group was the 'Aging, Death and Dying' afternoon, the purpose of which was to give us the opportunity to talk openly about our thoughts and feelings concerning the fact of our own death. The intention was that through this process we would feel listened to, understood and supported, that we might learn from each other and that it might increase our sense of connection. The workshop was designed to ensure thatc everyone had their own time to speak, and then in turn to listen, enabled by questions on three topics: first we considered our own aging, then we thought about the dying process, and then death itself. After each section we had the opportunity to feedback our thoughts about the process itself, and to make changes to suit our needs. At the end of the afternoon, over the ubiquitous tea and cake, we all said how uplifting and enlightening the workshop had been, and how much closer to each other we felt.

Friends are aware that we bring personal 'spiritual histories' to our Meeting. It is part of being human and carries our life experience. It is a willingness to challenge and be challenged in love that invigorates Almeley Meeting. In the stillness, when we have the unfathomable experience of something which is greater than ourselves, letting go of our prejudices can be wonderfully liberating. There is in Almeley Meeting a tangible atmosphere which could be described as a 'harmonious buzz'.

Elders, Almeley Wootton Quaker Meeting, September 2015

NOT IN OUR NAME …….

Background:

We camped, 70 of us, families from Southern Marches & Mid Wales Quaker Meetings and their friends from across England and Wales and beyond. This year we met in Rhayader, mid Wales, a freshly cut field surrounded by hills and above, red kites riding the warm currents in a wide reaching sky.

We gathered, as we always do, for activities of walking, swimming, cycling and games, the sharing of meals, the telling of stories from the year and the rhythm of Meetings … and held by this we had many discussions about our society.

For five years and more, many of us have felt more and more frustrated by the direction of our society: its deliberate dismantling of our welfare state, the diminishing of the value of many of its members and the denigration of our environment. Over this time, and in our own ways, we have engaged with our local Meetings and through our individual communities to say 'No' to this direction and to call for 'the closing of the gap' of its inequalities.

A way forward:

From our collective frustration we have generated these materials and ideas which we entrust to you, our Society of Friends with its deep

For the next 5th Sunday, in November, some of us are planning to visit Pales for their afternoon Meeting.

We have also experimented with holding a shorter MfW with shared lunch after and this brought in several Friends and occasional Attenders who we hadn't seen for a while, as well as a few local people. We are planning to do this again.

Our monthly discussion group has been through various permutations.
For some months we followed St John's Gospel, using as our method of discussion that used by remote rural communities in South America who may not see a priest for months.

Currently we are using passages from Towards the Source which is proving a rich resource, but next year we will begin using material from Being Friends Together. One of our Members has volunteered to research the different 'pathways' and we will decide, at our January pot luck get-together, which we would like to follow.

Meeting Care Group

our Pastoral and Spiritual care of the Meeting Group has simplified its title to Meeting Care group but remains our version of Elders and Overseers. At a recent meeting we had a radical discussion about the role of the Group and realised we need to let people know again that it exists, and what it's for, and who's on it, in case people want to ask for help and support, but also to make the point that people can go to anyone in Meeting with whom they feel comfortable. In particular we revised our view of the 'direction of care' (i.e. that we are there to serve need in the Meeting rather than prescribe for the Meeting). We have put a permanent notice on the board with names of those currently in the group, plus the Clerk and Correspondence Clerk of our Meeting.

Outreach

We have held an 'open door' Meeting in the Town Hall during Quaker Week (well-attended but cold!) but our outreach events are not necessarily in Quaker Week and happen in

Spiritual Life Report for Montgomery Meeting

Putting together our Spiritual Life report we face the usual dilemma about what counts as our spiritual life as opposed to just how we organise the tea rota, but have concluded that, apart from the tea rota, most of what we do is about nurturing our worshipping community. So this report is a mixture of what we have done since our last report, three years ago, and how our Members and Attenders are feeling about the Meeting.

Meetings

We continue to hold Meeting for Worship on 1st, 2nd and 4th Sundays in Montgomery, joining with Dolobran on 3rd Sundays. We remain a small Meeting, with only occasional ministry, (though do try and read one of the Advices & Queries each time) but Afterwords continues to prompt some profound and unpredictable discussion.

On 1st Sundays we hold Meeting for Worship for Business, and the monthly circulation from Friends House is sent round prior to this in case anyone wants to raise issues.

On 4th Sundays we have been prefacing MfW with a half hour discussion of one of the A&Qs followed by 45 minutes of MfW. Having followed this pattern for 2 years we have now moved onto using this time for looking at passages in Quaker Faith & Practice. This is in response to the request from Yearly Meeting for Meetings to study QF&P in preparation for any revision that is planned. So we are following their outline of chapters per month.

On 5th Sundays we decide whether to join with adjacent Meetings e.g. Llanidloes, or with Clun Meeting at Bishop's Castle; or whether to go further afield e.g. when we last reported we were planning to visit the Orthodox monastery on the Stiperstones. There is a 'roundhouse' chapel in the grounds that is perfect for Quaker meeting and the monk there, Brother Silouan, welcomed us so warmly that we returned for a second visit.

roots in the well of social justice, to employ in a national campaign of protest at the policies being perpetrated in our name:

- 'Not in Our Name' declaration from our young adults, parents and grandparents
- 'Not in Our Name' declaration from our Young People
- The wearing of a specific coloured ribbon, woven with the words, 'Not in My Name' – to symbolise us saying 'No' to what is happening and identify our connection with others who feel the same. They might also invite others to initiate discussions about what it means
- Similarly badges bearing the same colour and the words, or 'Close the Gap' or 'Not in Our Name'.
- Credit card sized cards with examples of inequalities, *eg. the increase in the number of food banks contrasted with the number of subsidised bottles of champagne consumed by MPs in the Houses of Parliament over the same period.* Similarly, challenging mistaken beliefs in our society

  - all the above could be launched to coincide with Quaker Week in October.

- Holding a silent protest/ vigil in Parliament Square or other appropriate central London public place, using these materials. Meetings could be invited to send members from each local meeting in their area. The press/ media officer at Friends House could generate media interest
  We believe that this protest/ vigil should be repeated on an annual basis over the lifetime of this parliament to monitor the accelerating inequalities and their impact and to keep speaking truth to power.

We are aware that Quakers at many levels are grappling with this issue but we are concerned about the absence of a visible Quaker presence speaking truth to power in a way that is heard by our friends, our neighbours, our colleagues and ourselves.

NOT IN OUR NAME – DECLARATION

from our Young Adults, Parents and Grandparents

1. Your degradation of my disabled friend
2. Your shaming of my unemployed brother
3. Your sanctioning of my sister as economically worthless
4. Your driving to despair my vulnerable son
5. Your pushing into poverty my child
6. Your honouring of profit above my person
7. Your plundering of our natural resources for the benefit of a few
8. Your taking apart of our trusted welfare support
9. Your stoking of fear of each other
10. Your careless disregard of our cohesive society.

Drawing on the essence of Quaker Faith and Practice:

We hold that when choices arise concerning the welfare of our neighbour it is our challenge to live adventurously and to speak truth to power.

manageable. Having averaged 6 hours a week at the last report this has steadily increased to average 10 hours. This is a reflection on the good developments of the project but increases the need for the admin of the project to be shared.

We have just finished a programme at Llansantffraid primary, and next half term will begin programmes at Hafren and Corris primaries, with 3 more already lined up for the Spring term. We are getting to the end of the programmes at Llanfyllin High School. These have proved a real challenge and steep learning curve, it being such a different environment in which to deliver the programme. We are learning all the time as we develop.

I am also liaising with related initiatives, notably the Wales Peace Project, partly to check we are not duplicating, partly to see how we can support each other, and also as part of my search for a Welsh-speaking tutor.

Having spoken to numerous WIs etc on the topic of 'The local history of Quakers in Montgomeryshire' I recently had the idea of asking them if they would like an actual 'peace education' session (something along the lines of the session we ran at AM this January) and several are sounding interested. The messages we are trying to get across could usefully go to all age groups.

Finally, as I have reported before, the showing of Joyeux Noel gave rise to the offer from Tavistock Peace Group to lend us their exhibition 'The Road to Peace', which will be in Newtown Library in January and Aberystwyth Arts centre Feb and March. Rupert Gude has now offered to do a talk at the Arts Centre on opposition to WW1 to co-incide with the exhibition so we are in process of arranging that.

Helen Porter, Montgomery LM October 2015

Peace Education Report for November '15 AM

I have continued to recruit volunteers and we now have a healthy number of very high calibre volunteers, several of whom already have experience and skills in this sort of work and I'm very confident that, having done the basic training and experienced a programme in partnership with a professional tutor, they will be able to pick up on the programme in pairs. (N.B. it is impressive what skills are out there waiting to be used. It is always worth an ask!)

I did go to the expense of a newspaper ad (plus article) and this brought in two volunteers, but much more cost-effective (i.e. no cost and some time) was speaking to a local U3A which produced 5 volunteers.

I have recruited one more tutor but am still searching for a Welsh-speaking tutor, to overcome the bottleneck of giving our Welsh-speaking (or learning) volunteers the experience of a programme with a tutor. I have followed up several leads for this and am in hopes that something will emerge.

It is obviously the schools in the west of our area who are requesting Welsh programmes, though one Head is so keen to get us in she has elected for an English programme sooner.

Our tutors have now delivered the first training sessions, one either end of a half term so that those involved in a programme that term can report back. We have another set of training lined up for this second half term.

So it is actually schools I need now, to make use of our keen volunteers. However I am concerned that the programme should develop gradually so that it remains

NOT IN OUR NAME — DECLARATION

from our young people

1. Having to pay for higher education
   In our name - there should be an equal chance for people to learn.
2. Stopping people from other countries coming into the UK/treating them harshly or violently/making them slaves
   In our name - Treat people from other countries fairly
3. Restricting money to support vulnerable people
   In our name - Give support to children and young people who have suffered trauma
4. Overtesting children in education and having to follow a set curriculum
   In our name - Allow children to follow their own interests in learning and support the ones who are struggling
5. Testing on animals
   In our name - Care for all animals
6. Private hospitals having more money than public ones
   In our name - More money for public hospitals and their staff
7. The government not listening to what people are saying. It's not really a democracy any more. The voting system isn't fair
   In our name - We want a fair democratic system
8. Destroying land to make money for shareholders of big companies (e.g. fracking)
   In our name - Give people ownership of their land and look after it.

Testimony to the grace of God in the life of Jim Waterhouse, 1926–2014

Jim Waterhouse was born 1926 in Bamfurlong, Abram, Lancashire, in what is now Greater Manchester. He and his young brother, considerably the youngest of the family, formed a strong bond. His father was a colliery carpenter and it was in his workshop that Jim learned many of his early skills.

His connection with the Christian faith began early when evangelical ministers in the local Anglican mission church played a large part in his childhood and he became a young Sunday school teacher at 14 and Scout leader at 16. However, by the age 20, in 1947, he was no longer a devotee of the Anglican Church, but felt himself to be a communist, no doubt a result of the war and of his work in Abram.

The influences of education and that of his father shaped his early professional life. In 1938, aged 11, Jim won a scholarship to Ashton in Makerfield Grammar School and the family moved to an old farmhouse in Bamfurlong where his father's workshop was now adjoining. Although this meant lots more jobs to help with, Jim was spurred on to academic success and won the chairman's prize for the highest school certificate grades. The Headmaster recommended Science 6th form for Jim, but his father wouldn't let him go and in 1942, he followed two of his uncles into Naylor's structural steel works.

His hope of joining the drawing office was soon achieved and he continued his studies at Wigan Tech. At 18 he applied to join RAF but Naylors had applied for reserve occupation status. The company was moving into civil/structural work rather than colliery equipment, including items for Russia after the end of WW2. By 20 he had achieved a 2nd class BSc Engineering degree.

Jim's professional life can best be described as devoted to the needs of others in the practical tasks with which he was involved in the UK, and most particularly abroad.

If we think of anything later on that we feel we should have told them, we can let them know about it at any time.
Examples of local differences included

Swarthmore having a solar array on its land and a meter inside the Meeting House showing how much the array is contributing.
A rare saxifrage growing in Kendal's garden, so they leave a patch unmown in order to let it set seed,
Rain water collected at Bull Street Meeting House which is used to flush the ladies toilets.

Having agreed to go to Birmingham for the briefing on 5th September, I decided to volunteer as Area Co-ordinator because it only involved passing some papers to members at Dolobran and a bit of liaison. Everything had to be sent to the architects before 19th October 2015.
As you will have gathered, I have discharged most, if not all, of my duties for the next Area Meeting on 7th November at Aberystwyth. At the time of writing I do not know the dates of the architect's visit to Aberystwyth and Dolobran, but if it is known before the 7th November I will let the Clerk know. An architect will visit us and spend about half an hour at Aberystwyth and an hour at Dolobran. A report will be sent to Area Meeting in due course,.

Elizabeth A Darlington, Aberystwyth Local Meeting.

- To provide local and area meetings with better information for now and the future
- To provide Local Government planning officers with a better idea of the needs, uses and values of Quakers in their communities (this will also be of use to local Quakers in either an application or an objection sometime in the future).

A summary report prepared by the architects will become the property of the Area Meeting and will have importance in considering the following:

Outreach – witnessing to our values

Hirings – serving the community

Accessibility – concern for individuals

Security – attitudes to crime and deprivation

Maintenance – sustainability

Energy efficiency -) stewardship of the globe
Environmental issues) – and of our finances

It will give us a chance to reflect on our attitudes to bikers, cars, crime, and homelessness. How many homeless sleep in your porch they asked?
The architects compared their work with Quakers and with Catholics. With catholic buildings they only met the priest, but with Quaker buildings they met several interested local volunteers which they enjoyed and found very encouraging.

In 1947 at the age of 21 he moved to the City of Birmingham Water Dept. He helped to tackle post war damage, remodelling the entire system, including the supply from the new Claerwen reservoir and then designing rapid sand filters to replace old filter beds and waterworks near Coleshill, supplying Nuneaton and Coventry. In 1950 he joined Southport & District Water Board and whilst working on the boreholes and pumping stations on the Lancashire plain, he also managed to study geology and became an Associate Member of the Institute of Civil Engineering. He progressed to a job with Inland Waterways in 1953. This post included improving the navigation of the river Weaver for larger vessels carrying salt cargoes heading for Ireland. The famous swing bridge on the A49 is another testament to Jim!

There is a sense in Jim's life during the 1950s that he was looking for something more, which just required a catalyst. This came as the result of a 'difference of opinion' with one of his superiors leading to an impetuous job application. It was 1955 and a development engineer was needed for the Tema water supply from the Volta in the Gold Coast, an important post in a country preparing for independence and needing to develop its bauxite reserves potential. Jim moved on to Ghana in 1957 as Hydrologist for the whole of Ghana and Engineer in charge of Waterworks for the capital Accra. However, the new government minister under Kwame Nkrumah requisitioned the main generator creating a very difficult management situation. In 1958 he moved back to the UK, joining a firm of Consulting Engineers, based in London, but still travelling to many places overseas.

With all this moving about he did though manage to meet his future wife, Susan, through a shared interest in walking, and debating at the Nonplus Club in Westminster. Susan, who had a physics degree, was from a Jewish background and had newly returned from three years working on low-cost housing projects in Israel. They married in 1959 and during the years that followed, Jon, Ben, Abraham and eventually, Deborah, arrived.

Jim was combining family life with a lot of overseas travel, designing waterworks abroad. After a narrow escape in Uganda ahead of Idi Amin's coup, he decided to do research on the re-use of treated sewage effluents with applications in his engineering work. During this period Susan was an

early supporter of the National Housewives Register, an organization which later became The National Women's Register. 1968 brought a post at Silsoe College of Agricultural Engineering partly funded by Overseas Development Administration, teaching in term time and working abroad during vacations; here he progressed to be Head of Field Engineering and about this time the children insisted that they be included in the travelling lifestyle of their parents. Jim became Associate Professor at the Memorial University of Newfoundland in 1976 later to become full Professor. Susan held various posts within research and education and the boys progressed through University. However, Deborah expressed a wish to go to University in the UK and so the family came to Hereford in 1986, where two years in the sixth form there enabled her to go on to Manchester University. Meanwhile Jim, now 60, feeling too young to retire returned to Newfoundland to complete the academic year there.

Through friendships in the 1960s, Jim and his family were introduced to Quakers in Dorking. Jim became a member of Hereford Meeting in 1988 whilst Susan enjoyed the Cathedral for its music. In Hereford Susan, Jim, Sue Nichols (nee Leach) and Brian Redmayne formed the Rent Guarantee Scheme to help homeless people find accommodation, a scheme taken on later by Hereford Council. Sadly Susan died in 1994. He supported Area Meeting, not only by being a regular at Meeting for Worship for Business, but also served as Area Clerk. The annual camp witnessed Jim's practical dexterity and his down to earth problem solving skills informed by his engineering background, especially in poor weather. He camped with us and shared in the fun and even in his final year when he could no longer stay overnight, he enjoyed an evening's entertainment where campers young and old sang, played music, mimed and much else besides.

In 2003, Jim moved out to Staunton on Wye to become a neighbour of the Redmayne's. From here Jim joined us at Almeley Wootton Meeting where he drew on the many skills he gathered through his long and colourful life to become a valued member of the premises committee for the Meeting House and Grounds, Treasurer and many roles besides, but above all, a true Friend to all of us.

Jim loved the Meeting House, cared for it using his precise engineering skills honed from many years of experience, but above all he loved

BRITAIN YEARLY MEETING'S QUAKER MEETING HOUSES HERITAGE PROJECT in conjunction with THE ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY PRACTICE

Much has happened since Area Meeting at Machynlleth on 11th July! At that meeting I offered to go to Birmingham on your behalf for an introduction to Britain Yearly Meeting's Quaker Meeting Houses Project held at Bull Street Meeting on 5th September 2015

Ingrid Greenhow, A BYM trustee, welcomed us all very enthusiastically and assured us that they are already about half way through the project which will include Quaker Meeting Houses in the Channel Isles. There are some who think their particular Meeting House is not "historic". Both she and I tried to explain that what is everyday to us will be part of history to someone in the future. Aberystwyth's own little modern building has a plaque proclaiming, "this church was built with the generous help of the Joseph Rank Benevolent Trust". How many of you know that and what "church" it refers to?

The point of the survey is partly to find out what Britain HAS got. Apparently it was not known how many Meeting Houses Quakers own, because not all of them are lodged with Friends Trusts Limited. There are some with their own separate trusts. The women architects working on our behalf are all very well informed. They had just finished visiting Meeting Houses in Cumbria and showed us some of their more interesting discoveries – pictures of interiors, exteriors and artefacts.

- The purposes of all this work are several:

- To assess the heritage we do have in Meeting Houses and burial grounds

Quaker Faith in Action

Quaker faith springs from a deeply held belief in living our lives according to our spiritual experience. Some of our spiritual insights, which we call our testimonies, stem from deep experience and have been a part of Quaker faith for many years. These testimonies:

- Flow from an inner conviction and challenge our normal way of living
- Exist in spiritually led actions rather than rigid, written forms
- Are governed by continuing spiritual experience and are not imposed in any way
- Require us to search for ways in which we can live them out for ourselves

It's not easy, but with loving advice and a supportive community Quakers are encouraged to keep trying.

Truth and Integrity
Quakers try to live according to the deepest truth we know, which we believe comes from God. This means speaking the truth to all, including people in positions of power. Integrity is the guiding principle we set for ourselves and expect in public life.

Justice, equality and community
Quakers recognise the equal worth and unique nature of every person. This means working to change the systems that cause injustice and hinder true community. It also means working with people who are suffering from injustice, such as prisoners and asylum- seekers.

Simplicity
Quakers are concerned about the excesses and unfairness of our consumer society and the unsustainable use of natural resources. We try to live simply and to give space for the things that really matter: the people around us, the natural world, our experience of God.

Peace
Quakers are perhaps best known for our peace testimony. This arises from our conviction that love is at the heart of existence and all human beings are equal in the eyes of God. Our way of life must therefore reflect this. The peace testimony has led Quakers to refuse military service and to become involved in a variety of peace activities. These range from practical work in areas affected by violent conflict to the development of alternatives to violence at all levels – from the personal to the international.

Meeting for Worship and often delivered ministry in his quiet, thoughtful way, weaving experiences during the week into it. His ministry was uncomfortable for some, thought-provoking for many and often grounded in the Biblical texts, emanating perhaps from his evangelical upbringing. He was unafraid of using the 'God' word when he felt it appropriate, and he upheld, and was an anchor of, traditional Quaker thinking – an element that helped to maintain a healthy spectrum of ideas in Almeley Wootton Meeting.

The love expressed previously in this testimony characterises how Jim will be remembered. In love he protected all of us from an ego-centric view of the world. During his final years as insults to his body increased, he never once complained, or spoke about his stays in hospital, rather his conversation focused on the future. Sometimes he could appear stubborn and annoyed if his world view was challenged, but as Friends got to know him, loving the meeting as he did, he was being protective and caring. Jim sometimes expressed hostility to the Roger Prichard Room project, which he considered a conceit, but was treasurer to the project throughout, though never convinced that the funds would be raised. He kept a photocopy of every cheque sent to the project committee, because he really did believe that we would have to return the money.

When the Roger Prichard Room was complete, it was suggested that the first meeting for business should be held there. The meeting went ahead without Jim, at least initially, because he felt that our business meetings are Meetings for Worship and as such should be held in the Meeting House itself. It is a testimony to Jim to his life-long experiences, to his perceived stubbornness or strength of conviction, but above all to his spirituality and our respect for his wisdom that our business meetings continue to be held in the main Meeting House.

We are grateful for having known Jim Waterhouse.

Our Faith in the future

'Our Faith in the Future' is a word picture of what Quakers in Britain today would like the Society to be like in the future; 'leaving each individual, meeting or committee free to discern where they are today and then decide on what actions they need to take to move their part of Yearly Meeting towards this vision.' The text is based on over 300 contributions from Quakers throughout Britain. It offers six themes which encapsulate the shared aspirations of Friends across the Yearly Meeting.

- Meeting for worship is the bedrock of living as a Quaker
- Quaker communities are loving, inclusive and all-age
- All Friends understand and live by Quaker discipline
- Quaker values are active in the world
- Quakers work collaboratively
- Quakers are well known and widely understood

There is no list of work tasks as that is the responsibility of other groups to discern, in the context of their changing challenges and leadings.

Our faith in the future is intended as a 'simple and clear point of reference, a touchstone for Friends in Britain Yearly Meeting.'

"Our beautiful, life-filled planet is threatened and impoverished as never before. Quakers have a vision of how different the world could be, and should be if we all lived in the light of love, compassion and respect.

(Stevie Krayer).

Celebrating Wales. We should be taking every opportunity to promote the positive aspects of living in Wales….. the culture, the community, the environment. The joy of living here and how our lives are enhanced.

A vision statement: As Quakers we do have a voice that is heard and should use it to make a bold statement of our vision that all could subscribe to. Such a statement should be presented in a simple single sheet format, akin to the Quaker Faith in Action document. (on next page). Some scepticism was expressed as to how widely the media would publish such a document. We were assured though, by our youngest member in attendance, that it would be distributed widely and rapidly through the social media.
Promoting a new nationalism. Not an aggressively militaristic nationalism, but a civic nationalism; a pride in our land and community. This could stimulate a new vitalism, such as the Scots have found and a sense that we too can determine our own future.
Interacting with the Powers. We can only change the outcomes of undesirable influence on society by communicating with those that control them. Keeping abreast of trends and developments within political and government spheres will enable action to influence their outcomes. Gethin Rhys's paper lists many routes by which to keep informed of and to respond to, the governance of Wales.
Networking. Consulting widely with other groups and organisations in formulating policy and challenges will increase the legitimacy and effectiveness of interventions that seek to influence the decisions of policy makers.
Communicating with our political representatives. Building personal relationships with our representatives can enable our opinions to influence the discourse of government decision making. Not forgetting the appreciative feedback regarding positive outcomes will enhance the respect for our challenges.
Well-Being of future generations (Wales) Act 2015 The implementation of this act will have the potential to be the route by which a renewed vision for Wales could begin to be achieved. A necessary consideration for all new legislation, if respected and effectively applied, it could be transformative. As such it offers an opening by which new legislation that is contrary to the best interests of Wales and her people can be challenged.
Whilst our deliberations generated much useful thinking on the practicalities of process, little was said of the Vision to be sought. But then as Quakers we hold a vision that is guided by our testimonies. The attached 'Quaker Faith in Action' states clearly and underpins what is our Vision of a fair and just society,

Tom Brown, Machynlleth LM

Gweledigaeth I Gymru / A Vision for Wales
MfW Conference, Penparcau, Aberystwyth
19th September 2015

For a conference to consider such an important matter it was sadly not well attended. Just 23 of us, including the table and three speakers, gathered to share a day of exploration and information sharing.
The speakers were well chosen. The Rev'd. Gethin Rhys, the Cytun National Assembly Policy Officer, presented a paper on how to get involved in the work of the National Assembly for Wales and Welsh Government'. The paper, with its wealth of contact details, is attached. Gethin's advice on how to influence the political processes is to build relationships with your local and regional Assembly Members. By using the WAG website we can keep abreast of proposed legislation and the many consultation opportunities to influence its outcomes. His recommendation was that, acting in association with others, rather than as a single organisation or individual, is always likely to carry more weight. Individually, though, direct personal communications with your local or regional A.M. can be very effective.

Elizabeth Allen, our second speaker, is a member of West Scotland AM and was engaged from the outset in establishing Quaker Parliamentary Advocacy in Scotland. She is now convener of General Meeting for Scotland's Parliamentary Liaison Group. Elizabeth recounted for us the two year process of working towards the appointment of a GMS/BYM Scottish Parliamentary Engagement Officer in 2014. A role that is much akin to that of Gethin Rhys for Cytun in Wales, but with a significant input to supporting and enabling the political activity of Scottish meetings. But Elizabeth cautioned that Wales is not Scotland. Since the independence referendum there is a new vibrancy in Scottish society that has emboldened people to be more challenging and self-determined in visioning their future.

Our third speaker was Jessica Metheringham. Formerly a civil servant, Jessica has worked in Parliament and with the Electoral Commission. A member of Westminster Local Meeting, she gave the 2014 YMG George Gorman lecture on equality. She is now the BYM Parliamentary Engagement Officer. In describing her work Jessica noted that in her solitary role and with the breadth of its remit, National, European and Local, keeping abreast of the changing political climate is important to being effective. Providing information, advice and assistance to Quaker Meetings at all levels and to individual Friends throughout Britain, is a primary function of her role.
Informed by the knowledge and experience of our speakers we proceeded to consider how we might find and promote 'A Vision for Wales'. Some proposals generated by our deliberations were as follows.

The Church: Towards a Common Vision.
The response from Britain Yearly Meeting.

The latest World Council of Churches paper, 'The Church: Towards a Common Vision' challenges us as Friends 'not merely to articulate the sources of our faith, but to express how the spiritual treasures of our Quaker Way sustain us in the world today. What inspires us from our historical experience and what strengthens us in the present? At the heart of our Quaker faith is the vision of a Church unmarred by bitter ruptures, held together in bonds of love. Yet unity does not consist in uniformity of belief or practice, but rather in a mutual recognition between people - expressed in care and a joyful acceptance of difference.'

We agreed the response prepared by the Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations. It is hoped that the document will be used, together with the study guide, to help our meetings to grow in unity and to articulate what we can say as Quakers to the wider Christian Church. The response and the study guide are available on the Quaker website. The response is well worth reading and contains some inspirational passages.

Julian Rutherford, Hereford LM,
reporting from September Meeting for Sufferings.

Mid Wales Area Meeting
Quaker Life Representative Council
October 9th – 11th 2015

The overall theme of this Rep Council was **"What is the ground and foundation of a gathered meeting?"** We were asked what lies at the core of our Quaker life? and how can this best be nurtured? As usual we were divided into 8 "home groups" of around 10 participants each, who then came together in plenary sessions. In some sessions we were asked to use "worship sharing", others straightforward discussion. Some found "worship sharing" inhibiting, while others found it appropriate and helpful for a topic inviting us to share thoughts of a deeply personal nature where discussion is neither appropriate nor expected. This just goes to show that we're all different and you can't please everyone all of the time! Some participants had brought objects, poetry, artwork, examples of activities in their meetings which had brought all ages together and deepened the sense of community and commitment of the meeting. For others the silence in which everyone is accepted and valued was, in itself, the foundation of their meeting. We were each given a copy of **"The Worship Kit", by John Lampen.** This delightful little book calls itself "a young persons guide to Quaker worship", but has a great deal to offer us all, young and old!

"What is our relationship with Quakers and our Meetings? It was perhaps significant that almost everyone spoke of their local meeting, although there were references to Yearly Meeting. Where does Area Meeting fit in? Later in the weekend we were challenged to consider whether we thought of **AM as "us" or "them".** For many it is the latter, although AM is an essential part of the whole structure, and can be a source of enrichment for all. Membership is, after all, of our AM. I was in a "home group" with the Northumbria AM rep., who told us about the imaginative restructuring of his AM (widely scattered geographically like ours but includes some larger meetings and all ages) that has resulted in a huge increase in numbers, of all ages, attending meetings. Quaker Faith and Practice is not prescriptive about how AM should be structured, only the business that must be dealt with. Each AM is different geographically and in number and size of local meetings. Ours is small in numbers, with small local meetings over a wide geographical area with poor public transport links which doesn't make meeting together easy. Our spring and late summer

But of course, Pat had a life out with the Society of Friends. Amongst other things, she was a dedicated and accomplished spinner and weaver. Making her own garments and household draperies and taking part in the Guild's demonstrations throughout the county. She was an active U3A member, hosting courses on family history in her home. And of course, her succession of much loved dogs played an important part in her life, although, to the uninformed eye, it sometimes seemed it was the dogs who organised Pat!
Pat was usually one of the last to leave the meeting house after worship on Sundays, but on those occasions when she did dash away as soon as she had drunk her tea, it was to be home in time for the Formula One motor racing on TV, a form of sport for which she had a passion, derived we think, from her father! And, as recorded at the beginning, there was never any doubt whan Pat was at one's front door, her knock could be heard halfway down the street!
Finally, dementia began to take its course. This Pat met with her customary serenity and as another friend has commented, "my recollection is of her continuing cheerfulness and ability to engage with people, soul to soul, albeit hardly through words".
Our enduring memory is of one who we deeply miss and which would rightly be inscribed on her tombstone, if one existed, is:
Truly, Pat personified love in action.

It was absolutely typical of Pat that as her teaching career developed she began to focus on children with "special needs" and it was in this area that she spent the majority of her professional life, culminating as the headmistress of a "special needs" school. She arrived in Ludlow in retirement in 1994, transferring from Thaxted MM, which she had served as MM Clerk. She later served Ludlow as PM Clerk for three years, but it was in the field of pastoral care that Pat's gifts were fulfilled to the full. If any Friend had needs, Pat was there. In addition to the innumerable visits with "get well" greetings cards and flowers from her garden, her car was always available if transport was needed, for example to take a disabled attender to a place where she wished to scatter her mother's ashes. Washing was taken home from those in hospital, shopping done, a carefully chosen book to pass the time; a meal provided (she was a good cook) and so many other examples that Friends have recalled. Phrases voiced by Friends at Pat's memorial meeting included memories of:
"Her uncomplicated and honest response, coupled with kindness and good humour".
"The numerous little kindnesses that were her service to both humans and canines that crossed her path".
"Her smile and engaging way lifted the spirits of neighbours and strangers".
"She seemed to me to be blessed with the characteristic of being constant, which along with her kindness, made her very approachable".
"When out shopping, she had the knack of opening the most "closed" of minds with her wit and humour." "She became my mentor. I could always count on some good common sense from her, but more than that, she lighted the load by simple and direct solutions".

gatherings on Sundays are better attended than our meetings for business. Is there some way the two could be combined? Is there a way of delegating some of the business to a working group? How can we increase interest in AM for all ages? Perhaps this is a question for us all to consider. Help is available from Q Life Central office if requested.

This formed part of a session on the **work of Quaker Life Central Committee,** the function of which is to support Friends and Meetings, to make Britain Yearly Meeting more inclusive, and to make Quakers better known in the UK. To this end Quaker Life provides a wealth of study and outreach materials, runs the Quaker bookshop, offers support for clerks, elders, and overseers, and support for deepening the spiritual life of Meetings. In addition to some paid staff at Friends House, the Central Committee comprises of 12 representatives from all over Britain who meet 4 times a year for a weekend to set the strategic direction for their work and to take an overview of the work of the staff in Friends House. The Committee works as a community of different ideas and experiences. All their time together, including business, is regarded as worship. Rep Council meets twice a year and serves as a channel of communication between Central Committee and Area and Local Meetings.
Two notable recent publications are **"With a Tender Hand"** handbook for elders and overseers and **"Being Friends Together"** study materials for Meetings. The latter is an amazing online resource with a huge variety of materials which Meetings are urged to make use of. There seems to be something there for everyone in the four main pathways of world, spirit, community, tradition, and plenty of help is available, if needed in the form of visits, on request. Machynlleth Meeting is already using the resource, and Montgomery Meeting is in the process of subscribing. Is anyone else using it?

We also heard about the work of the **Book of Discipline Revision Preparation Group**. This group has been set up to prepare the ground for a likely revision of **Quaker Faith and Practice** at some time in the future. At this stage they are not inviting suggestions for revision, but encouraging all Friends, either in groups or individually, to engage in a programme of reading QF&P from October 2015 to April 2017 which will ensure that all are familiar with the book before revision is considered. Leaflets with the programme of readings are available as hard copies from Friends House or online at qfp.quaker.org.uk/reading.

This weekend twice a year is an excellent opportunity for sharing news, ideas, and worship with Friends from all over England, Wales and Scotland. Please do let me know, as your Quaker Life representative, of anything you would like me to take to the next Rep Council in April 2016, and anything in this report that you would like further information on.
Angela Ormrod, ormrodar@gmail.com, Montgomery LM

Southern Marches Conference

Let Your Life Speak-
Is it a seven-days-a-week thing?

Discussion, questions and answers, workshops,
Walks and entertainment, (plenty of) good food

"Get away from it all" next February for a week-end in good company, meeting up with Quakers from across the Southern Marches area.

When? February 12th – 14th (Friday early evening to Sunday afternoon).
Where? The Pioneer Centre, Cleobury Mortimer, 10 miles east of Ludlow. All rooms with en-suite facilities.
How much? £95 per head (all in, no extras)
Financial assistance available, Children free.
Further details and booking forms from your Local Meeting Clerk

If, nearer the time, there are vacancies to be filled, it may be possible for Quakers from Mid-Wales to apply.

Testimony to the Grace of God in the Life of Patricia Russell (1935 – 2014)

At the memorial meeting for Patricia Russell at Ludlow, a Friend told the following story. He and his wife, shortly before their move to Ludlow, wrote to the PM Clerk, introducing themselves, giving the date they intended to move in and expressing their intention of attending meeting on the Sunday following their arrival. They duly arrived late one evening and rose early to await the arrival of their furniture. They answered the door, summoned by a thunderous knock which would have awakened the dead, expecting to see a hefty removal man. Instead they were greeted by a beaming little person, who announced, "I'm Pat Russell, P.M. Clerk. Here you are". She handed over not just a card of welcome and a potted plant for the table, but an invitation to coffee at her home the following Saturday, "So that you can begin to get to know a few Friends before coming to meeting." This account aptly summarises Pat's great gift; her ability to enhance the lives of those whom she encountered in maybe small, but supremely important ways, flowing from her loving concern for all.

She was born into a nominally "C of E" family in London, but it was when she left home to go to teacher training college that she made a conscious decision to explore the various branches of the Christian church. She went about this until the day came when one of her contemporaries invited Pat to join her at the local Quaker Meeting. For Pat this was a life changing experience; she was one of those who knew she had "come home" and that no further exploration was necessary. She soon joined the Society, and for the rest of her life worshipped with Friends wherever her teaching career took her, including a spell in Australia.