Ludlow Quaker Journal

September/ October 2022

This Journal will publish anything that Friends think is of interest; so its range may be very wide. If you find it too long, select only what interests you from the Table of Contents. Please contact Barbara Mark if you would like to have something included or wonder if you have a subject that might be of interest.
It will be published on-line only and will come out when enough articles have been gathered in. Comments and letters to the editor are also welcome.
Do remember if this copy is pdf you can listen to it via Windows 10 'read aloud' option at the top of the sheet.

Contents:

page 2. Quaker work on Truth and Integrity
page 4. Pilgrimage to The Pales
page 7. Wild flowers by Julia Reynolds
page 8. American Friends library
page 9. Speaker from Iona Community and Caring for God's Acre
page 10. Visit to National Memorial Arboretum
page 12. Ukrainian dish
page 13. Christian View Point and death of a Queen
page 14. Loss or Damage: Climate Action
page 15. Shropshire Wildlife Trust CEO asks for help
page 16. Gardening party at Ludlow Meeting House and plant magic
page 17. Book review

Many thanks to everyone who has helped me on this issue.

Quaker Truth and Integrity Group (QTIG)
The action Quakers are now taking, on this issue, was triggered by Ludlow Quaker Meeting. It was then nurtured and fledged by Friends in Wales. It is now a very active group, officially recognised by Britain Yearly Meeting in March this year.
Yesterday the steering group released the declaration that has been deeply considered and discussed at many levels.

Truth and Integrity: Finding Common Ground

Truth and integrity have been at the heart of the Quaker movement for over three hundred and fifty years. We were once called Friends of the Truth, and have a tradition of speaking truth to power and exercising quiet diplomacy. Whilst our record is not flawless, historically we have stood firm in relation to the abolition of slavery, prison reform and conscientious objection.

As people of faith we seek a world transformed, where compassion, equality, truth and integrity are guiding principles. In the meantime, our belief in equality and the intrinsic worth of each individual means that we value democracy as a form of government.
Just as we wish our children and grandchildren to inherit the beautiful planet we have experienced, so we want them to enjoy the benefits of a mature democracy where truth prospers and the rule of law applies. Governing with truth and integrity is essential for generating trust; when that trust breaks down people become disillusioned, and leaders lose their mandate to govern.
At the core of Quakerism we experience a sense of oneness, wonder and mystery. That universal sense provides the basis for the cooperation so urgently needed in our troubled world. We seek kinder ground: the ground of tolerance, respect, mutual cooperation and shared ethical and spiritual values, where oppression can be addressed and reconciliation sought between those of opposing views. We know that this vision is shared by many other individuals and groups, of all faiths and none.
The world has entered a deeply troubling phase. Standards of truth and integrity in politics, public and commercial life and social media are being undermined to the extent that democracy itself is under threat. Many of those in power would seem to act with impunity, disregarding facts and scientific findings. Respect for the judiciary is being undermined and trust in our institutions is threatened. All this is set against a backdrop of the climate emergency and increasing inequality and polarisation.

It was in response to this need that the Quaker Truth & Integrity Group was set up as a national Quaker body in Britain in March 2022. QTIG has committed itself to:

- upholding standards of honesty and integrity in our lives and organisations;
- acknowledging that the majority of those in public life/politics are people of goodwill and finding ways of working respectfully with them on 'kinder ground';

- helping to ensure the Nolan principles (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership)[1] continue to govern public life;
- working towards a system of truly inclusive, participative democracy, where people feel their wishes and needs are truly respected and taken into account;
- encouraging constitutional reform and strengthening systems of accountability;
- promoting higher standards of truth within the media, including social media.

With these objectives in mind, we intend to institute a national Truth Award to recognise exceptional contributions towards the enhancement of standards of truth and integrity in public life.

In a society in which lies, injustice, inequality, deception and entitlement are prevalent it is only the truth – in all its uncomfortable forms – that will heal us.
Where truth and integrity flourish, so too can personal relationships. Where truth and integrity stand firm, so too can our democracy and our precious traditions. Unless truth and integrity are universally acknowledged and practised, at a fundamental level, international relations cannot fully and completely address the crises that threaten our very existence.

We invite others to join us in this endeavour. We are looking to find partners, people all across the political spectrum who are of good faith and goodwill, so that we can engage together in this urgent and vital work of transformation. Can we work together?

> *We are not for names, nor men, nor titles of Government, nor are we for this party nor against the other … but we are for justice and mercy and truth and peace and true freedom, that these may be exalted in our nation, and that goodness, righteousness, meekness, temperance, peace and unity with God, and with one another, that these things may abound*. Edward Burrough, 1659

I hope that you will all find this helpful and inspiring.

The steering group are asking for help with different projects that it is hoped will grow out of the work. At the moment there is a need for help with the letter writing group and a Truth Award group. Please contact Jan Arriens of Clun Valley Meeting, in our Members book, for more information.

Quaker Truth and Integrity Group has a web site of that name on the www.quaker.org.uk site

---

1 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life

Pilgrimage from Caebach Chapel to The Pales

On 9th September a group of Quakers set off from Caebach Chapel in Llandrindod Wells to The Pales which had been organised by John Senior. As the Pales is about to be gifted to the charity Addoldai Cymru it was a way to celebrate the connections of other non conformist religious bodies and experiment with walks, or maybe pilgrimages, between such places of spiritual journeys.

Before we set off we had a time of worship and then collected something from the chapel grounds to take to The Pales, a sign of this walk of connection.

Caebach Chapel

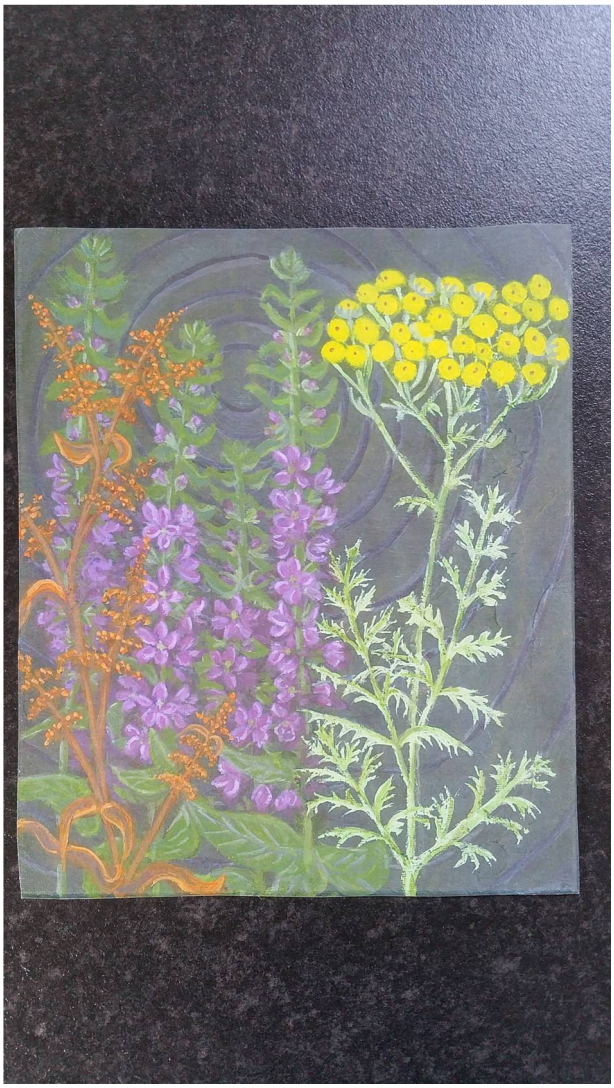
The walk took us along tracks, old drovers routes, footpaths and across fields. The weather was lovely and the scenery wonderful.

This is our group having our lunch and a rest.
We never made it to The Pales because the rain started but we all ended up together at a cafe in Penybont, organised in advance by John. We were given free tea and coffee and some bought good tasting cakes.
However Angie collected up some of the items we had taken from Caebach Chapel and on her next visit to The Pales made a slate plaque of our journey.

These are the items our pilgrims brought from Caebach for the Pales.

Wild Flowers

Julia wanted to share her love of wild flowers, or weeds as they are sometimes called, with The Journal. She always looks out for these flowers when walking or doing every day things like shopping. Her mother told her the names of so many when out walking with the family.
Now she is looking them up and finding out fascinating facts and stories, myths and uses for these common plants. The books she found useful were ‘Weeds, weeding and drawing’ by William Edwards and ‘100 Flowers and how they got their names’ by Diana Wells.
Recently Julia has started to draw and paint the ones in her locality. The one below is Purple loosestrife which grows by the river close by.



Purple Loosestrife is very interesting botanically because it is trimorphilic. Which means the flowers bear three different lengths of stamens and pistils which means they

can only be cross-pollinated. Charles Darwin had found this out and the diagram below is from his studies, which had made him very excited. It is very unusual.

Julia was reminded of the poem ‘Mindful’ by Mary Oliver.

This starts

Every day
I see or hear
something
that more or less

kills me
with delight,
that leaves me
like a needle

in a haystack
of light.

Julia will be starting the monthly art classes she runs again at Ludlow Meeting House on 21st September.

American Library of Friends writings
I am sending you a link Friends may like to have if they have not already.
It is a massive piece of work being done by Friends in America on creating a Library of Friends writings from 1650 to 1890 that can be listened to, downloaded or bought.
It is an excellent resource for both the Meeting House Library to have and for Friends personally to download the App to have on their computer or mobile phone. The source is totally free of charge.
It is a really wonderful resource for us Friends to have.
https://www.friendslibrary.com/

Title of the book: True Religion
This is taken from the work of William Law who's work on the Spirit of Prayer was read by Friends of yester year but is little known today. This I believe would be in accord with our principles today.
All religion is the spirit of love, all its gifts and graces are the gifts and graces of love; it has no breath, no life, but the life of love.
Love is of no sect or party; it neither makes nor admits of any bounds; you may as easily enclose the light or shut the air of the world in one place, as confine love to a sect or party. It lives in the liberty, the universality, the impartiality of heaven.
Jesus said: God is love.

Thank you John Crook for sharing this with us

Speaker from Iona community
An open meeting where Ruth Harvey, Leader of the Iona Community, will give a talk about ' Building a more just society' on 12th October at 7.30pm at Ludlow Methodist Church.

Newsletter CfGA: The Wood Wide Web

Autumn colours will be adding a touch of drama to our trees in the next few months. But while the scientific world have understood for 100's of years why these leaf colour changes take place - it has only recently been discovered that amazing things are happening under the soil too…

Described by some scientists as a 'woodwide web' studies have found that trees are connected to each other through underground fungal networks where they communicate and share water and nutrients with each other in times of need. For example if they are under attack by insects they will send distress signals to other trees which then have time to alter their own behaviour to protect themselves better. Trees living connected together in forests have far longer lives than isolated trees.

Studies at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver have shown that particular trees in a forest use their deep roots to draw up water and make it available to shallow-rooted seedlings. These same trees also detect distress signals from other trees and increase the flow of nutrients to support them.

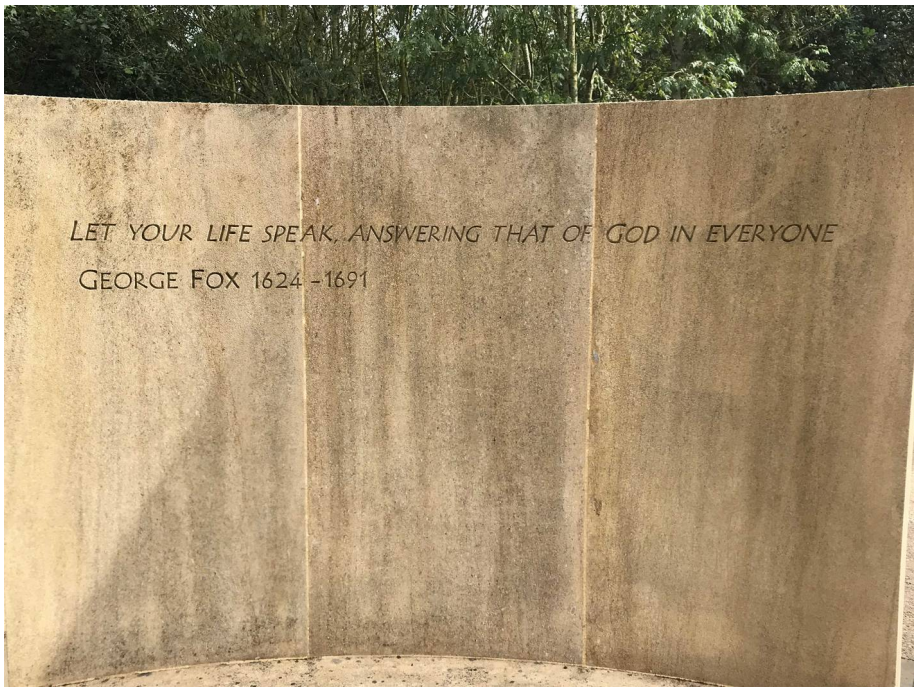
Until recently the western world has generally thought of trees as striving individuals, disconnected from each other and competing for limited resources such as water, nutrients and sunlight. Now, with an ever increasing body of scientific evidence, this idea is being replaced with one where trees have evolved to live in interdependent, co-operative relationships. A woody wonderland indeed…

Andrea
Andrea Gilpin andrea@cfga.org.uk
www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk
(For a marvellous read on this subject look up the book 'The Hidden Life of Trees' by Peter Wohllenben.)

National Memorial Arboretum
June Buckard and Jane Bishop were invited to join The Orleton Evergreen's trip to The National Memorial Arboretum in August, because there was space on the coach trip. It is lovely to be able to share some of their photos and thoughts as Southern Marches Area Meeting hope to be helping to put up another sculpture there in recognition of the suffering of civilians in war called The Pity of War.

Here is the sculpture for evacuees. June and Jane found this most moving. The attention to detail on the children is amazing. We hope the Pity of War sculpture could be close to this, as they are both to do with civilian struggles, but our group has little control about that.

There is a Quaker sculpture there, which has been there many years now, in remembrance of the Ambulance core.
June and Jane reflected on the quiet and peacefulness of this spot. Off the beaten track but very powerful As they took this in a small open bus appeared doing a tour. The tour guide spoke very well about the sculpture and about Quakerism.



Thank you Jane and June
Ukrainian Borscht Soup

This is the Ukrainian version of borscht which is different from the Russian or Polish versions. However, no two Ukrainian cooks agree on the precise recipe.
This recipe will feed 8 people so halve the quantities for 4 and freeze half. It will freeze exceptionally well for up to 3 months in the freezer.

Ingredients

2 tbsp Olive oil
1 Onion
1 Leek
6 small Beetroot (borscht is all about the beetroot)
4 Carrots
2 sticks Celery
2 Bay leaves
1 litre Stock (chicken, beef or vegetable)
400 g White beans (drained from a tin)
2 tbsp Tomato puree
2 tbsp Red wine vinegar
3 tbsp Parsley
2 tbsp Dill (many cooks add a lot more dill)
Salt & Pepper

Method

Peel and dice all the vegetables. (You can wear gloves to stop your hands turning purple from the beetroot.)
Heat a large pan and add the olive oil.
Fry the onion and leek for 3 minutes and then add the rest of the vegetables, beans as well as the stock, tomato puree and the red wine vinegar.
Add in the bay leaves and half the parsley and season well with salt and pepper to taste.
Cover the saucepan and simmer for 20 minutes until the beetroot and carrot are soft and cooked through.
Stir through some finely chopped dill.
Serve as a chunky soup or blend up the soup for a smooth silky version – you can blend up half and then keep the other half chunky so you get a nice thick base with some chunks in. Drizzle on some live yoghurt and sprinkle on some more dill and serve with crusty bread.

Notes
Add potato, celeriac, parsnip or swede, if you have some that needs using up.
Vegetarian - use vegetarian stock and almond or cashew yoghurt.

Thank you Peter

Christian View Point September 2022

You will know that Kate Bush has returned to popular attention forty years after the release of her record "R*unning up That Hill."* On my PC I have watched various "reactors" a legion of whom (mostly American) have grown up in the period over the pandemic. These 'vlogger's seemingly had little or no knowledge of Ms Bush and so recently we have seen a revaluation of her work and creative presence. Even those who didn't like /understand her work realised they were hearing/seeing a unique artistic presence. It is still relevant to this generation and has not aged or withered.

Religion provides similar processes of creative revaluation, to be a successful faith group needs stable core beliefs. But to move on it needs a process of refreshment and review. Some Quaker beliefs go back to the 17th Century. Since then changes have occurred in the everyday living of that faith. Quakers may be more "liberal," may dress differently, we live in a very different world. Our literature may have writings which comes from these beginnings but they still provide goose bump moments. In the presence of their spiritual insights we still experience contemporarily relevant voices.

Colin Sheward words for the Ludlow Advertiser

Queen Elizabeth 11

The death of a very well respected lady, Elizabeth 11, Queen for 70 years from 1953 to 2022

The Queen's Coronation in June 1953 at Westminster Abby. This photo taken by a school boy who was one of a few to be chosen to line the streets, who is now my brother in law.

The 96-year-old monarch died on 8th September 2022, at Balmoral.At Windsor Castle, a rainbow arched over the grounds just as the Union Jack flag began to be lowered in honour of the monarch's death. The sombre mood changed and the rainbow brought joy back into people's hearts.

Loss or Damage Compensation

News from Nick Read OBE FRAgS
The Brightspace Foundation, 21 Ryelands Street,
Hereford HR4 0LW
Mob: 07973 361055
Also Working in our Meeting House for Climate Change Action Group

These key questions are all answered in Carbon Brief's **special series** about loss and damage published last week.
Months in the making, the series delves into the science and politics of how climate change is causing irreversible losses and damages across the world – and speaks to key stakeholders on the frontlines of the impacts from Kenya to Bangladesh.
It comes just a month before **COP27**, the next round of UN climate talks in Egypt in November. For many developing countries attending the negotiations, loss and damage will be the pivotal issue.
All of the articles in the series are now available to read online.

More information about Loss or Damage Compensation

Make COP count

Thursday 22 September was the Loss and Damage Action Day – an international day to stand in solidarity with those living with the worst impacts of climate breakdown, and to call on wealthy countries and fossil fuel corporations to pay up for this loss and damage they continue to knowingly cause. Quakers and other faith communities around the UK engaged in prayer, reflection and action to mark the day.

What is loss and damage?

Loss and damage caused by climate breakdown is a present reality for people around the world, and it is getting worse every year. For people in the global majority, extreme weather events (hurricanes, wildfires, flooding) and slow onset events (rising sea levels, desertification) are destroying lives, livelihoods and biodiversity.

Despite being recognised in the Paris Agreement, there has been no progress on where money to pay for loss and damage should come from. It's a priority for countries most vulnerable to climate breakdown, and it's fundamental to climate justice. At COP26, countries representing 85% of the world's population put forward a proposal for a new loss and damage financing facility. This was rejected, but it's the closest we have ever come – and we must keep up the pressure.

Quaker work on loss and damage is about placing justice and equality at the head of our climate action. Whether you consider it solidarity, compensation, or reparations, we know hundreds of billions a year are needed – and that money must come from those who caused the crisis.

Find out more about the Make Polluters Pay coalition campaign

Shropshire Wildlife Trust Branch News

Letter from Shropshire Wildlife trust CEO Richard Grindle.

Dear SWT colleagues, trustees and branches,

I'm sure you have all seen the news in the last few days: our new government seems to have launched an attack on the environment, allegedly in the interests of promoting economic growth. New growth zones are being set up which will loosen planning controls (not yet planned for Shropshire, but could be). EU habitat regulations and other protections are likely to be discarded, with no detail yet on what would take their place. Perhaps most alarmingly, it seems that the Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes - one of the few good things to result from Brexit as far as the environment is concerned - might be scrapped in favour of a return to EU-style area-based payments.

The Wildlife Trusts with National Trust, RSPB and others are lobbying in Westminster. Craig Bennett is at the Labour conference this week - TWT and SWT are of course politically neutral, but surely this is an 'open goal' for Labour now to position themselves as the party of nature and climate.

Locally we need to ensure that our MPs are in no doubt as to the strength of opposition to these proposals. I am writing to the MPs, and spoke on Radio Shropshire this morning alongside RSPB; we are putting strong messages out on social media, and we will lead on this in the supporters newsletter this week. But we need this to go as wide as possible – a great opportunity to show the 'Team Wilder' approach in action. Please can you all encourage your contacts and any other groups you are involved with to contact their MPs and generally make as much noise as possible.

A simple guide to tweeting and emailing MPs can be found at https://www.shropshire-wildlifetrust.org.uk/defend-nature. On social media please use the hashtag #DefendNature.

Please share the word and give Shropshire's nature a voice.

Yours,

Richard

Gardening Party at Ludlow Meeting House.

Wednesday morning is the usual time for a group to get together to tackle the garden at the Meeting House. Joy Crouch does an amazing job at getting us all together as well as looking after the garden with help from Sally Milner. It is a large area. The top garden is now laid out with delightful beds surrounding a lawn where worship and general gatherings can take place. The bottom area has vegetables in this year but suffers from bind weed and slugs.

The photo here is of friends working on 28th September

Plant Magic
The photo below is of cords made with different every day garden plants.
Phi Evans has experimented with the plant fibres to make these beautiful platts.
She has run two courses at the Cart Shed, talking to the staff and volunteers about their willow, and teaching them new skills.

This December she will be running wreath making workshops at orchard cottage.

Phi is an experienced gardener with a great knowledge of plants. She does botanical surveys , having done a couple for the Caring for God's Acre site in Orleton. She is now involved with VOW, verging on wild, a project on road verges for Herefordshire wildlife trust.

Systems of Suffering – Dispersal and the Denial of Asylum
by Jonathan Darling
Pluto Press, £17.79

JONATHAN DARLING, associate professor in human geography at Durham University, has written a challenging book on seeking asylum in Europe, in particular, focusing on the hidden practice of dispersal, the system we have here in Britain that separates asylum-seekers and refugees from mainstream life and can end up harming them.

A handful of private companies have been contracted by the British government to provide asylum accommodation, so people who have been forced to leave their homes due to violence, war or persecution are first put into a detention centre and then dispersed across the country while they wait, often for months or even years, for refugee status and the right to remain.

The words of Kwame, a young asylum-seeker, say it all: “It’s a business strategy. To save money they buy cheap properties, but they don’t give a care about people.”

Asylum-seekers are given no choice over the location of their accommodation, and are not allowed to work or contribute, regardless of their skills, experience or qualifications — a situation which is likely to keep them in a low and downcast state.

This book is the result of six years of research based on the voices and experiences of refugees and asylum-seekers in four cities — Birmingham, Glasgow, Cardiff and Sunderland — with the broader political, social and economic context running parallel.

The politics of dispersal, given a background of austerity, privatisation and right-wing populist thinking, is connected to a wider series of social justice concerns around housing, inequality, poverty and racialised disadvantage evident in contemporary Britain, a point starkly illustrated by the tragic events at Grenfell Tower.

Through continual government underfunding, lack of investment and changes in the law, local authorities are unable to provide both developments and oversight based on local needs.

Dismantling public infrastructure is a deliberate Tory strategy to downscale the effectiveness of local councils and widen the outsourcing of services to the private sector where profit takes precedence over people.

Darling sets out new ways of putting care into practice, but with a Home Office focused on driving down support costs and stigmatising those seeking refuge, even feeding this book to Priti Patel for breakfast would be unlikely to permeate official consciousness.

Therefore, like so many asylum-seekers and refugees, we can only live in hope that change will come.

This book will help the cause and provides us with powerful evidence as to why we need to bring about change.