Ludlow Quaker Journal

January/ February 2023

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.

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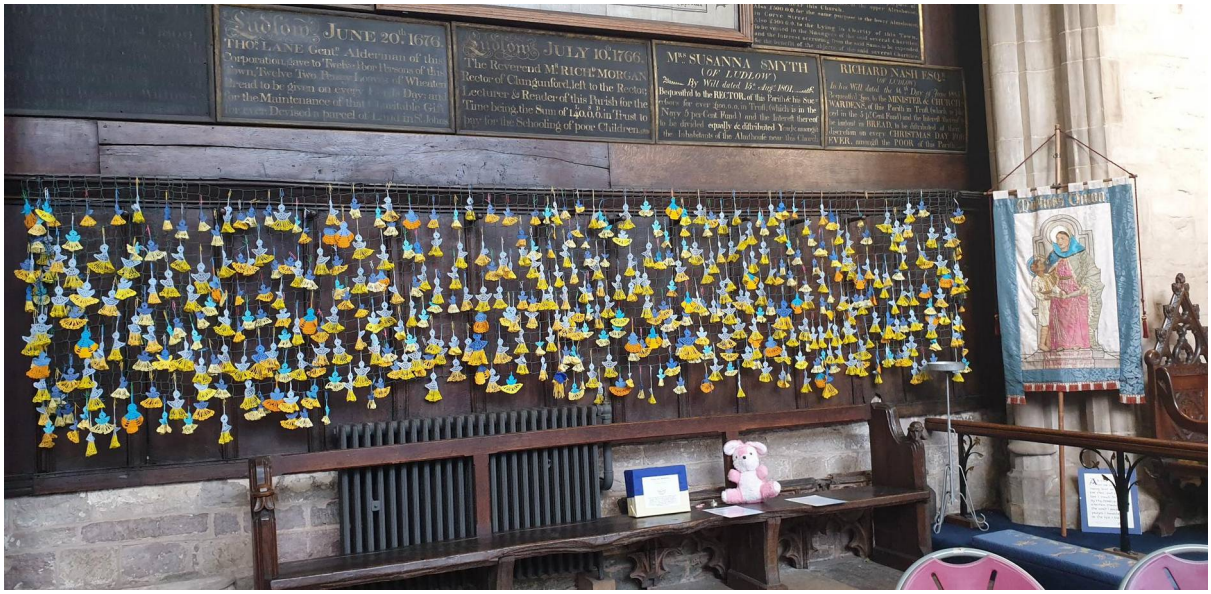
Many thanks to everyone who has helped me on this issue.

Ukrainian Angels Memorial Event on Saturday 21st January 11.00am in Castle Gardens Ludlow.

There was a beautiful display of hand made crochet Angels made by mothers who had lost children in Ukraine. Put together by Svitlana Dzedzei, a Ukrainian artist living in Cleobury Mortimer.

Here is Erica Garner braving the cold



Then the Angles moved to St Laurence’s Church in Ludlow.

We heard that, as they were being folded up on the floor of Ludlow Quaker Meeting House to be packed up and taken away, there was suddenly the sound of an air raid siren. It came from the mobile phone of one of the Ukrainians helping pack away. This was the sound from back home.

The celebrations for the Ukrainian Christmas took place on the 7th January.
This was a marvellous celebration, with fantastic Ukrainian food, games, singing and dancing, with lovely Ukrainian national dress. Thank you to Ludlow Brewery and everybody who came, and brought Ukrainian food to share. Friends of Mortimer Forest and Brimfield Vintage did the fund raised during the day.

One year anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine

The Ludlow Quilting group have been busy for a number of months making over twenty quilts to offer to our local Ukrainian families. This happened on Saturday 25th February at Ludlow Quaker Meeting House. These small hand crafted quilts that have been made to show how the quilters and wider community continue to support families who live locally. The quilts are an expression of love, support and solidarity. There was also a Shropshire Star Reporter and Photographer to talk to quilters, and Ukrainian families, which will be printed in the Shropshire Star early w/b 27th February.

Meditation

As I try and understand how life works - and
why some people cope better than others with
adversity - I come back to something to do with
saying yes to life, which is love of life, however
Inadequate, and love for the self, however found.
Not in the me-first way that is the opposite of life
and love, but with a salmon-like determination
to swim upstream, however choppy upstream is,
because this is your stream.'

Jeanette Winterson

A passage from Helen for our contemplation.

Thank you Colin for sharing this.

Fairtrade Fortnight 2023 in Ludlow

Fairtrade Fortnight in Ludlow is back! Taking place from 27 February to 12 March 2023, Fairtrade Fortnight will spotlight the harmful effect of the climate crisis on the future of our food.

Did you know that cocoa, bananas and coffee are at risk? We take these foods for granted, but climate change, combined with deeply unfair trade, means that the communities growing these crops are being pushed to the brink.

Ludlow prides itself on being a "foodie" town, boasting a wealth of independent cafes, delicatessens, restaurants, pubs, greengrocers, cheesemongers and shops selling high quality, locally sourced produce. We are fortunate enough to be surrounded by miles of beautiful countryside and have a strong agricultural community.

With the climate crisis making the headlines, shoppers are becoming more conscientious about where their food comes from and how it is produced. Quite rightly, we place high importance on the welfare and rights of the farming community, choosing to buy from them directly rather than from large supermarkets where we can't always guarantee that farmers are being paid fairly.

What's on in Ludlow

Thursday 23rd February, 10am – 2pm: Traidcraft stall @ Local to Ludlow Produce Market:

7th March, St Peter's Parish Centre, 6.30pm – 8pm: Make and share food. Contact Kim Holroyd for more information: kimholroyd@gmail.com

Saturday 11th March, Ludlow Mascall Centre, 10am – 4pm: Big Brew

Sunday 12th March, Parish Church of St Laurence, all day: Service and Big Brew

Throughout Fairtrade Fortnight, look out for our special stickers which draw attention to "endangered" products – those which are at risk due to climate change.

For more information on Fairtrade in Ludlow, visit ludlowfairtrade.com or email ludlowfairtrade@gmail.com. To get involved in wider Fairtrade Fortnight activities such as online Great Big Get Togethers, visit www.fairtrade.org.uk.

Traidcraft has closed but Fairtrade lives on

Trading ethically within a system that is unjust is always going to be difficult - especially during a cost of living crisis and before that, the Pandemic and Brexit. From the start, the odds were stacked against Traidcraft but the band of dedicated staff and supporters over the years have shown huge love and passion in putting justice at the heart of the trade.

The fair trade movement as we know it would not exist without Traidcraft. The organisation has been a key part of the fair trade movement here in the UK, founding member of the Fairtrade Foundation and a champion for trade justice for over 40 years,

Over the years, Traidcraft has done incredible work with smaller producer groups - going that extra mile by helping them find a route to market where no one else could or would.

Thanks to Traidcraft, there are much better standards and procedures in place to protect the rights and dignity of growers and producers all over the world.

Traidcraft was the pioneer for Fairtrade products such as wine, rubber for gloves, charcoal and Fair Trade Palm oil.

The mission to combat trade injustice and poverty is far from complete but the Fairtrade movement that now exists is big and robust enough to stand the rigours of the market today and into the future.

What does all this mean for Fairtrade in Ludlow?
As the Fairtrader at Ludlow Mascall Centre for the last 23 years, I am still processing the news and coming to terms with the loss of Traidcraft in Gateshead and locally. Over the years I built up a strong bond with the Traidcraft team and with Fairtraders around the UK. I have such fond memories of visits to Gateshead HQ and the Roadshows put on in different locations around the UK. The shop in LMC has been a large part of my life and that of others too.
There has been a strong Traidcraft presence in Ludlow since the 1980s and our Fairtrade Town was established in 2002 from the old Traidcraft Group. There will be a gap in the supply of Fairtrade certified products and fairly traded goods in Ludlow and its hinterland.
However, in the food sector, independent grocery shops and the two Oxfam shops in Ludlow work hard to stock a range of Fairtrade products and our supermarkets, stock some Fairtrade products. Mid Counties Coop Food Store and other Coop stores outside Ludlow are very committed to Fairtrade. In the craft sector, there are independent shops here stocking a lovely range of fairly traded goods such as toys, clothing and ceramics.
Ludlow Fairtrade Town Group is continuing to promote Fairtrade certified, fairly traded and ethical goods in Ludlow and later this year we hope to produce an update of the Fairtrade and Ethical shopping guide on both our website and in print.
https://ludlowfairtrade.com/
At present there is a stock of foods and crafts in the Traidcraft shop in Ludlow Mascall Centre.

Liz Taylor

The future of Q-CAT

Over the last few years we have approached supporters, Supporting Area Meetings and Meeting for Sufferings to let them know that we have been struggling to find Trustees which we need to continue as a charity, but no new way has opened. Reluctantly and sadly we agreed, at our Q-CAT Trustees meeting in November, to take steps to lay down the Charity. We will of course keep friends informed of what happens.

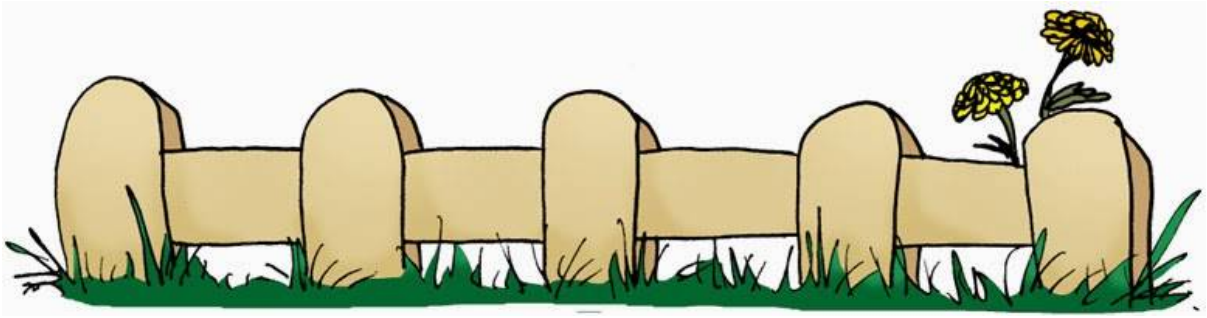
We appreciate that there are many Quakers, individually or as meetings who have a personal concern about torture and its effect on all involved. Our Newsletter in March, after the next meeting of Meeting for Sufferings, will include ideas about how friends personally might take this forward.

One purpose of this letter is to say that we do not now wish to continue receiving any donations:

Best wishes, Q-CAT Trustees

A Knock on the Door

We plan to contact you soon to say where you can view the recording of the first performance of our commissioned choral work, and details of how to borrow scores if you wish to sing this with your meeting or choir.



THE BORDERVOICES

Emotional and Mental health support to hosts , their guests and families .

Contact us please at thebordervoices@gmail.com

We are a small group of volunteers with a broad range of professional experience gained from careers working in the field of mental and emotional well-being. We are a group that includes both women and men and English will be our principal language.

We are offering a telephone-based service providing informal help and support for the emotional well-being and mental health of hosts, guests, families, and other volunteers working with and hosting refugees.
This will be a confidential, and complimentary informal service, designed to offer a place to talk over issues and concerns related to mental and emotional wellbeing,
Running one evening a week, initially for a three-month trial period these services will be confined to the Leintwardine and Leominster hubs.

The service will run on a Tuesday evening from 7 pm.

How to use this service.

Please email thebordervoices@gmail.com giving your name and telephone number, including a brief note on why you are contacting us.
On the following Tuesday we will call you back..
If you would like to find out more do drop us an email and one of us will call back on a Tuesday evening.
We look forward to hearing from you.
Best regards The BorderVoices.

The ring turns dark, Gavin Maxwell "*Ring of Bright Water*"

Recently I was struck by a memory of a book I read over fifty years ago . It was a set reading book for the then CSE English examination . And I felt a hazy warm memory although also the word "tragedy" came to mind (and that automatic of a specific memory).

The book was Gavin Maxwell's *Ring of Bright Water* , he was (amongst other things) a naturalist and he brought to his Scottish Island an Otter, *Mijbil*, from the swamp regions of Iraq.

I googled about him and then borrowed an abridged version (meant for education) from the Library and read just the introduction and a little of that had its own postscript I do not remember of my teenage reading.

And what I found was a sort of stairway of tragedy a step by step to further tragedy From the death of animal which he wanted almost as a child, as a pet and as a wild animal in one (which it seems led to its death) .

To the tragedy of his life and its effects on others- he was a "solitary" man- men in the 1950s and 60s so labelled had a mindscape that doesn't apply now.

To the environment he tried to build for himself on the island (lost in part to a fire and the tourism his books engendered) .

And even that the sub species *Mijbil* belonged to is probably gone destroyed by swamp draining by Sadam Hussein regime.

I spent an evening just thinking about this - there were so many aspects , from what we remember and why. Are things we loved and found beautiful many decades back still that and if we find that *not* to be now- does it show wrongness in our past position - or a positive act in repositioning.

Can we acknowledge right in both ?

And can we make an animal (even a person) something it is not so that you feel loved and loving.

It is strange but Maxwell's late marriage only lasted as long as his relationship with *Mijbil* (the open secret that he was Gay in a time that did not recognize same sex relationships in men). Is "*Ring of Bright Water*" actually 'Gay Literature' - whatever that means ?

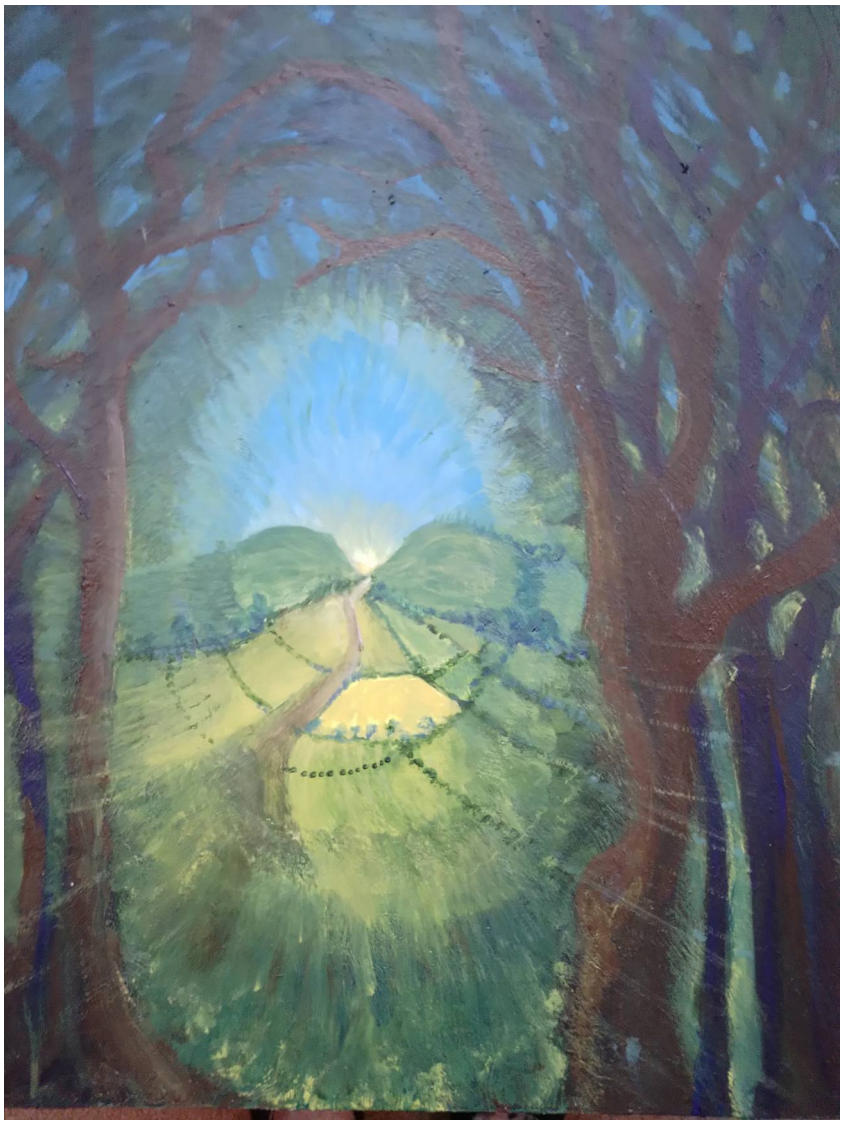
And if you throw everything into a relation with one animal would not the same energy help save the many (meaning campaigning to save the Iraqi swamp to save the others in their environment).

These and many thoughts swirled about - and I regretted I had not thought them before.

To end this thinking (and indeed fall asleep) I had to use The Light to limit the ongoing seeming unstopping flow.

I hold Gavin Maxwell in that Light but also *Mijbil* who was a creature of God made outside of Maxwell but also every bit of his literary construction (if that midnight thinking makes sense)

Colin



Some years ago I went on poetry course taken by Gillian Clarke about R.S.Thomas. The poem ‘The Bright Field’ has stayed with me ever since. I kept thinking I should paint a picture. Now I have. Seeing a bright field recently I remembered the poem. It is one of our wonderful landscapes which brings joy.
Thank you for sharing this Julia,.

I have seen the sun break through
to illuminate a small field
for a while, and gone my way
and forgotten it. But that was the pearl
of great price, the one field that had
the treasure in it. I realise now
that I must give all that I have
to possess it. Life is not hurrying
on to a receding future, nor hankering after
an imagined past. It is the turning
aside like Moses to the miracle
of the lit bush, to a brightness
that seems as transitory as your youth
once, but is the eternity that awaits you.

Churches Together Around Ludlow

THE 2023 COMPETITION

+ **We are looking** for talented performers, singers, musicians and poets, who may wish to enter **TOTALLY PSALMIC**

A Psalms competition with a £600 prize pot

(Judges may split this prize between joint winners).

+Our competition hopes to develop ways of presenting the Bible's Psalms (Songs) to a modern audience who may not have intimate knowledge of the Bible text.

+This event will be held on the evening of **SATURDAY 15TH JULY 2023 AT LUDLOW METHODIST CHURCH BROAD STREET LUDLOW SY8 1NH.**

+ FOR ENTRY DETAILS AND FORM …

Contact: Colin Sheward C/o Friends Meeting House, St Mary's Lane, Ludlow, SY8 1DZ

01584 875946 colinsheward@yahoo.co.uk

PLEASE REGISTER INTEREST BY FRIDAY 16TH JUNE 2023 FOR SHORTLISTING.

A message from Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network (QARN)

News from Refugee Action. The events in Knowsley last Friday night (10th February) were horrific and inevitable.
A large group of far-right rioters gathered outside a hotel where people who are going through the asylum system are living. The group was extremely hostile and violent, setting a police van on fire. The residents of the hotel, looking on to these scenes, were of course terrified, especially after many of them had already fled unimaginable violence.

For years, people in positions of power have been warned that the words they use will increase the number and severity of racist attacks against refugees. The dehumanising language of hate, racism and hostility used by the Government, its ministers, and its departments against refugees is fuelling far-right violence against people who have asked us for safety.

What happened in Knowsley is not the first incident of violence we have seen against people seeking asylum in the UK. It will also not be the last. Already, we know other far-right groups across the UK are getting ready to target hotels housing people seeking asylum.

There is no doubt about it. These actions are a direct result of the dehumanising language used by the government and in particular by the Home Secretary in the House of Commons.

This language is used daily by MPs and Ministers to target migrants and people seeking asylum. They are all too happy to whip up hate and then identify the hotels where people, including men, women and children, are living. This recklessness is putting lives at risk. **T**he Government must stop empowering the far right with its language and policies. If they do not, the consequences could be fatal.

The Nationality and Borders Bill has further bolstered this hostile agenda and we anticipate the new legislation announced by Rishi Sunak before Christmas will only make this hostility worse. The crisis in the asylum system was entirely designed by the Government prioritising deterrence and cruelty rather than a workable system grounded in compassion.

We know that neither these attacks nor the government's overwhelmingly hostile narrative reflect what most people in the UK believe. And because of this we are sure, that like us, you may be looking for ways to counter this narrative.

Join Quaker Asylum and Refugee network.

Write to your MP asking for quicker action on sorting out the system

Ludlow Meeting Winter Party

On the 19th February Ludlow Quaker Meeting held their annual Winter party. After a shared meal everyone settled to see what was going to be shared. Thanks go to |June and Jane for pulling everything together and hosting it.

There was a lot on offer! There was music and readings and many games to tempt even the most reluctant to join in. Below is a photo of Jane and Cynthia enjoying the riotous game of chance.

This is a lovely event where friends get to know each other a lot better.

EASY HUMMUS RECIPE
(a great snack or quick lunch)

Ingredients

1 x 400g can chickpea, don't drain
1 tbsp tahini paste
1 fat garlic clove, chopped
3 tbsp 0% fat Greek yogurt
good squeeze lemon juice

Method

Drain the chickpeas into a sieve set over a bowl or jug to catch the liquid. Tip the chickpeas, tahini, garlic and yogurt into a food processor or blender and whizz to smooth.
Whizz in a tbsp of the chickpea liquid at a time until you have a nice consistency, then scrape into a bowl.
Stir in a squeeze of lemon juice and season to taste.

CHOCOLATE MOLTEN CAKES

Ingredients

100g butter, plus extra to grease
100g dark chocolate, chopped
150g light brown soft sugar
3 large eggs
½ tsp vanilla extract
50g plain flour
single cream, to serve

Method

Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Butter 6 small pudding moulds or basins well and place on a baking tray.
Put 100g butter and 100g chopped dark chocolate in a heatproof bowl and set over a pan of hot water (or alternatively put in the microwave and melt in 30 second bursts on a low setting) and stir until smooth. Set aside to cool slightly for 15 mins.
Then using an electric hand whisk, add in 150g light brown soft sugar, then 3 large eggs, one at a time, followed by ½ tsp vanilla extract and finally 50g plain flour.
Divide the mixture among the moulds or basins.
You can now either put the mixture in the fridge, or freezer until you're ready to bake them. Can be cooked straight from frozen for 16 mins, or bake now for 10-12 mins until the tops are firm to the touch but the middles still feel squidgy.
Carefully run a knife around the edge of each pudding, then turn out onto serving plates and serve with single cream.
Thank you Peter

Things of Environmental Interest

From the news letter of South Shropshire Climate Action
Former Vice President of the United States, Al Gore, gave an incredibly powerful and passionate 4 minute speech during a panel session at the World Economic Forum, Davos in January, which summarised in just 4 blistering minutes where the world is at in relation to the climate crisis; the deliberate attempts by the fossil fuel industry to scupper any meaningful action to reduce carbon emissions including undermining the COP process; and the moral obligation that we have to take action to transition to net zero for the sake of all younger people and to prevent upwards of 1 billion people becoming climate refugees. There is a video on-line.

The Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty is a bold new proposal to phase out coal, oil and gas faster, fairly and forever. Similar to other impactful international treaties that have helped phase out the use of nuclear weapons, landmines and chlorofluorocarbons, a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty will require widespread global support – from a wide range of institutions and individuals including civil society organisations, cities, governments and citizens around the world. The current priority is for organisations and individuals to endorse the Treaty at fossilfueltreaty.org and promote the concept among their networks using the hashtag #FossilFuelTreaty

South Shropshire Climate Action has joined hundreds of organisations around the world in calling for a #FossilFuelTreaty with 3 objectives:

1. No new coal, oil & gas
2. Phase out fossil fuels
3. A global #JustTransition

Look at their video

The group interviewed Phillip Dunn MP and there is a transcript of this meeting which you can get if you contact the group. The subjects covered were:-

Government giving new licensees for coal and oil extractions
Reducing the restrictions on land based wind turbines
Asking for support of the South Shropshire Climate Action group work.
Training more youngsters in sustainable technologies like retrofitting
Changing the planning system to encourage sustainable activities.

I found this discussion with Phillip Dun rather depressing.

The Big Issue encourages environmentally sustainable activities, as well as social issues. The latest issue:-
Cambridge scientists are finding a way to convert plastics and CO2 into sustainable fuels and the film company, Bosena, is trying hard to be more environmentally friendly to seeing how the new series of Waterloo Road teaches about the struggles of deprived youngsters and BBC The Apprentice carries on humiliating youngsters.

Earth Day and The Loving Earth Project

The first *Earth Day* in 1970 inspired 20 million Americans to take to the streets to demonstrate against the impacts of 150 years of industrial development which had left a growing legacy of serious human health issues. By the end of 1970, the first Earth Day led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and other environmental laws, including the Clean Air Act. These laws have protected millions of men, women and children from disease and death and have protected hundreds of species from extinction.

In1990 *Earth Day* went global, mobilising 200 million people in 141 countries and lifting environmental issues onto the world stage. It gave a huge boost to recycling efforts worldwide and helped pave the way for the 1992 United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. *Earth Day* 2000 highlighted global warming and a push for clean energy, with 5,000 environmental groups in a record 184 countries reaching out to hundreds of millions of people around the world. Citizens around the world wanted quick and decisive action on global warming and clean energy.

Today, *Earth Day* is widely recognised as the largest secular observance in the world, marked by more than a billion people every year as a day of action to change human behaviour and create global, national and local policy changes. The fight for a clean environment continues with increasing urgency, as the ravages of climate change become more and more apparent every day.

In Ludlow a local ecumenical group called 'Caring for Creation' will be marking *Earth Day 2023* by hosting an exhibition of 50 textiles panels from the Quaker Arts Network entitled *The Loving Earth Project.* The project celebrates some of the wonderful things threatened by growing environmental breakdown: people, places and creatures. It hopes to engage people creatively and constructively with these issues, without being overwhelmed. It's also a way to share positive examples of change and why people have taken action for the sake of love for God's creation.

The exhibition of over 50 panels (including some produced locally) **will be displayed at Ludlow Methodist Church in Broad Street from Friday 21st to Tuesday 25th April, opening from 10.30 am to 3.00pm, except on Sunday 23rd when it will open at 12noon.**

'Caring for Creation' is a group of Christians from various churches in Ludlow who want to raise awareness of environmental issues. We believe that we are all stewards of God's creation and that we have a duty to love and respect all of creation. We meet on Zoom every three months – if you would like to join us please contact: kim.stilwell@gmail.com We particularly aim to raise awareness amongst the churches of Ludlow, but we also work alongside other local environmental groups such as South Shropshire Climate Action and Ludlow 21.

Ludlow 21 AGM - Thursday 20th October 2022

As this report covers activity for the whole of the preceding year, some of it will be old news, but it gives a good picture of what Ludlow 21 supports. Representatives from the following groups told us about their activities:

- **Sustainable Transport Group**

Shropshire Council is to provide Ludlow with one new bus shelter per year, with this year's on the Henley Road. We need more residents to use the buses and one way of encouraging this is to have smaller, cheaper, electric vehicles enabling a more frequent service.

The railway station is asking for volunteers to help look after its planters and there is talk of installing a lift.

- **Fair Trade Group**

This group is about promoting ethical trade in Ludlow and encouraging traders to source local products wherever possible. There was concern here about getting more young people involved to go round talking to traders. Traidcraft is to become known as *Transform Trade.*

- **Energy Group**

The Neen Sollars hydro scheme is working well, generating 60 watts of power into the grid for which they get paid. There was discussion around restructuring the wholesale market as electricity prices are anchored to the higher cost of gas and the feeling was that Ofgem should be acting more forcefully on behalf of consumers, to change this.

- **Incrdible Edible Group**

Opportunities to share seeds and seedlings seem to be very successful. There have been quite a few fruit tree donations which are being planted around the town, but are at risk of being vandalised. Surpluses of seeds and seedlings are donated to local schools. The library would like to be involved with seed swap activity and is making available useful books.

- **Green Festival 2022**

Blessed with sunshine, this was welcomed back with great enthusiasm after last year's Covid gap. It isn't seen as a money-making event but even so, generated a profit of £750. Over 30 schoolchildren wrote postcards to our MP, Philip Dunne about their energy concerns. The 2023 festival will be on Sunday 9th. July.

This ended the formal business of the AGM but it was followed by a **Green Power Hour** offering local groups a chance to speak about their work relating to the environment, climate change and sustainability. There's a lot going on but they only had 3 minutes each so there wasn't a lot of detail !

- **Friends of Mortimer Forest**

Are creating migration corridors through the forest and adjacent lands enabling animals to move around more freely. Local farmers are very supportive. On the 6th. June 2023 there will be a festival to promote their work.

- **South Shropshire Climate Action Group**

Is definitely benefiting from the two posts created from the anonymous donation last year – going for net zero emission themes relating to transport, energy, land and biodiversity. They bring a valuable pofessional flavour to what they are doing which provides greater credibility. They have joined the Marches Energy Agency and Jane Cullen is on the Shropshire Council Climate Advisory Board. There is enthusiasm

and momentum and they are anxious to promote a positive message. A new leaflet in the Tourism Office links green spaces in the area.

- **Big Solar Co-op**

This is a not-for-profit organisation in Shrewsbury which is spreading nationally. If an organisation has enough roof space (approx. the size of a tennis court), they assist in helping them to get it covered with solar panels, with the conversion of energy to be fed into the national grid. They offer advice and support with this process.

- **Castle View Meadow**

This is to do with the housing development in Fishmore Road. Ludlow 21 has helped to get pledges of money to enable the purchase of a patch of land at Quarry Bank to remain as a local green space, accompanied by a maintenance agreement to ensure it isn't neglected.

- **Ludlow Repair Café**

Works on the principle that things can be repaired in spite of built-in obsolescence ! They meet four times a year but now have an 'at home' service where items can be taken away and repaired at a more leisurely pace. There are now 18 volunteeers plus an admin. team.

- **Extinction Rebellion**

This group has been very busy with widely-spread non-violent, direct action. Their aim is to change the decision-making processes at local and national levels, that influence how we respond to the climate crisis.

- **Care for Creation**

This group works under the umbrella of Churches Together in Ludlow, encouraging Churches to question how they are responding to Climate Change demands. There is an award system for data submitted - our Meeting House was given a Silver Award five years ago which we need to renew.

- **Hands Together Ludlow**

Uses food donated by shops and hotels, to support vulnerable people and keep a watchful eye on them. They provide community lunches and afternoon teas and there's a drop-in café for young people with free food, also a Community Fridge for perishables. There are new premises in Galdeford.

- **Friends of Gallows Bank**

The town's 'other' Millennium Green which is maintained by a small group to provide a habitat for a wide range of wildlife, insects, birds. They would welcome more volunteers.

- **Friends of Whitcliffe Common**

This is maintained by local people, not the council. This year a lot of storm-damaged trees had to be felled but 30 new ones have been planted and are doing well. Although they get donations from the council and their membership, expenses are huge and they are struggling for support.

One recurrent theme was the absence of young people which could be attributed to the fact that not all 'oldies' speak their language ie WhatsApp, facetime, Twitter, tweak, whatever ! Young people know as much if not more about the climate emergency than we do but they communicate differently and so can miss out on involvement in climate change activities by older groups. We need to find ways of improving those links and using their ideas, energy and enthusiasm.

Thank you for this report Susie

At this time of year, the yellow trumpets of daffodils brighten up even the dullest spring day. Most of what we see are planted garden varieties, but a real treat is to find wild daffodils *(Narcissus pseudonarcissus)*.

Once widespread, the wild daffodil is now much rarer, having mysteriously declined during the 19th century. It now has a disjointed distribution – for instance it is found mainly in south Devon, pockets of the Black Mountains in Wales, stretches of the Gloucestershire-Herefordshire border country, the Sussex Weald, Farndale in Yorkshire, and the Lake District. Elsewhere, even in suitable habitat, it only occurs in small patches, many miles apart. For example, in churchyards.

The wild daffodil's status as a popular flower was particularly celebrated in the area around Newent, Dymock and Ledbury on the Gloucestershire-Herefordshire border which acquired the nickname of 'The Golden Triangle.' In the 1930s the Great Western Railway ran 'Daffodil Specials', from London for weekend tourists to walk amongst the 'golden tides' and to buy fresh bunches at garden gates. Many farmers and orchard-owners used to have them as a cash-crop, harvested on a 'Pick Your Own' basis. At the end of April, the meadows went back to their function of growing hay or fruit.

A 1930's guide to a village in the Golden Triangle wrote:

'They are picked by the local women and children and were sold to an agent, who sends them to South Wales, where they find a ready sale for Mothering Sunday and also for Palm Sunday, for many places the old (Welsh) custom of 'flowering the graves' on that day still persists. The daffodils are also sent to northern industrial towns....' *

How to spot a wild daffodil

The wild daffodil is smaller than horticultural varieties, with paler petals and a deeper yellow trumpet-like tube. The leaves are grey/green, flattened and around 15mm wide. It is relatively short (30-35cm) and forms clumps which carpet the ground. A top tip by expert Mick Crawley is that unless there are several hundreds of them looking particularly small and washed out, they probably aren't wild!

**Information from Flora Britannica by Richard Mabey*

Andrea
Andrea Gilpin andrea@cfga.org.uk
www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk

First of the daffodils in my garden, not wild daffodils.