Ludlow Quaker Journal

March/April 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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DO LOOK ON LUDLOW MEETING WEB SITE FOR ALL THE JOURNALS

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

Loving Earth Project

Earth Day (do look it up) was on Saturday 22nd April this year and to celebrate this the Caring for Creation group, a CTAL group trying to take action on environmental issues, and our sustainability group organised an exhibition of Quaker Art Network textile panels. These panels came from their Loving Earth Project. This was held at The Methodists Church from 21st to 25th April. Here are some photos of it.

From the cafe side, once the customers had gone.

Note from Julia Reynolds

I'm sending a photo of some butterflies 🦋 I made for the Shrewsbury XR group banner that they are taking to London at the weekend as I'm not going myself but thought this was a small way of showing support.

The banner has a portrait of Darwin at the centre. I wonder what he would think of the way we care for our planet today.? Would he consider it just evolution?.

At the end of his book Origin of Species he writes that even if we don't survive there will be some minute life form ,probably plant, that will be there to begin the cycle again. We are often drawn to supporting wildlife life, birds and animals and overlook, perhaps, the absolute importance of plants and insects.

Here are Julia’s butterflies

Notes from QUAKE

Every Saturday for more than two years, Malvern Extinction Rebellion (XR) group has held an hour's vigil on the steps to the Elgar statue in the centre of town. This group includes a number of Quakers. The silk XR flags flutter and an A-board invites people to join us 'in love and rage for the Earth'.

Twenty of us, including two local Quakers, commemorated the brave actions taken by people throughout the world who face persecution, imprisonment or even death for the environmental stand they have taken – those who we call 'Earth Defenders'. 200 people died in 2021 alone while protecting their land from extractive forces, such as mining and illegal logging. According to the Global Witness report, “over 40% of all fatal attacks target indigenous people, despite them only making up 5% of the world's population".

A ribbon fluttered from the railings for each murdered 'Earth Defender'. We also lit tea lights on the steps to represent protesters nearer to home. Many people do not know that the UK has political prisoners. 14 candles burned throughout the vigil with each light representing a brave activist from Just Stop Oil, HS2 Rebellion and Palestine Action who have been put in prison in the UK for taking direct action for climate, environmental, or social justice.

Those present felt that bearing witness to the truth in this way was moving and powerful. We were able to draw in passers-by who wanted to find out more.

Thunder in the Soul

Abraham Heschel in his book: Thunder in the Soul reminds us of the importance of awe and wonder that is forever present in our lives if we just look. How many of us are at times captured by awe and wonder at the birth of a child, captivated by nature or art. At that moment of time we meet the unnameable one that is far beyond enyet for a fleeting moment is nearer to us than our very breath. These are to use T S. Eliot's words 'epiphanies' of time. Where our world of space is caught for a passing moment in eternal time.

Out of my reading of Rabbi Heschel works this mediation I found buried in one of my books. I think it sums up the main theme of Heschel's thought better than my words can.

O Thou who art being,
out of the depth of my being
I stretch up to thine caught in fleeting time.

For thou art eternal,
thou art perfect,
thou art limitless.

I am a child of space,
unperfected as yet,

confined within my limitations of culture and self.

As yet immature,
as always falling short,
through my own self-imprisoning.

Yet as the germ of life
cracks the shell of the seed
and strains towards the light

So, I from the seed divinely given,
reach upwards towards thee caught in awe and wonder,
drawn by thy likeness.

I too am being,
being of thy Being,
atman of thy Atman.

Drawn by limitless Love,
which thou doest give
making part of thee,

I too am love
stretching upward through space into time
to the source in thee.

And to the right and left
before and behind and in and around
to others.

Let me go down,
deep down within,
until I find
the spring of being,
the well of love.

This last verse caught my attention in that it expresses what is at the heart of a Meeting for Worship.

If any of you have read the book Thunder in the Soul which is a collection of Herchel's works you will see I have said little about social justice that is because I wished to show what drove his social action and his work with Martin Luther King.

If you have not read the book I would recommend it. You will find many jewels of truth which is so refreshing to find since we are now living in an era of untruth.

Thank you John Crook for sharing this with us.

Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) report 2023

From Mo Evans

At the beginning of April I had the wonderful opportunity to go to Junior Yearly Meeting thanks to financial support from our Area Meeting. This is held annually for fifteen- to eighteen-year-olds to discuss a set theme with the help of a variety of activities including invited speaker sessions.

This years' theme was *speaking truth to power*. To me speaking truth to power is using integrity to voice the truth at a local or more national scale to people and places of power. Examples of this include Quakers non-violently protesting alongside or within Extinction Rebellion. They use their voices and actions to bring about positive change for the planet speaking truth to the government.
We had several speaker sessions at JYM, however one speaker that stood out for me was Jude Acton who talked about philosophy and communication in relation to the theme of Speaking Truth To Power. During the session she challenged us to come up with questions around the theme and we were encouraged to think about and discuss questions, for example

- 'If everyone has some power in them, do we always need to be speaking? Do we always need to be listening?'
- 'Do truths remain the same throughout our lives? Can they, do they, should they?'

In relation to the first question, there was an emphasis on the balance between listening and speaking. If we only speak, situations can be aggravated and action is not as effective as the truth displayed as more subjective than objective. However, if we only listen then no action and speaking is able to take place and balance therefore is integral in speaking truth to power.

As well as the speaker sessions, there were also opportunities for socialising through base groups and free time and evening activities during the event. JYM was an amazing opportunity not only for development around the theme, but also for making new friends and reconnecting with previous friendships. Thank you so much Area Meeting friends.

Thank you very much for this Mo Evans

Our Easter Eggs

It was Joseph Fry who is thought to have made the first chocolate Easter Egg, 150 years ago, which was hollow and filled with sweets. Joseph was a devout Christian and Quaker, as were the Cadburys and Rowntrees, who by being Quakers were barred from most professions, so went into chocolate manufacturing. They saw chocolate as a way to guide ordinary people away from alcohol toward a more wholesome innocent indulgence. The Quakers took this moral decision and combined it with other 'good works'. The chocolate Easter Egg was a part of this story.

However in this modern age there has become anxiety about the naming of the seasonal eggs. The creation of the chocolate egg pushed Easter in the child-oriented, secularised direction that Christmas had already begun to take in the Victorian period. (Decorated hard-boiled eggs had previously been given to the local poor rather than one's own offspring.)

We could blame the globalisation of chocolate eggs which means it can no longer be associated with a Christian celebration, but that might be being kind. Profit is the main aim of any company and the Easter part of the chocolate egg has become a disadvantage these companies believe. Even the supermarkets will not sell anything with any explicit religious naming.

We have seen people like David Marshal, in 2010, raising money from crowd funding to launch the Meaningful Chocolate Company which produced the 'Real Easter Egg' again linking it to Easter. Other manufacturers have for many years now avoided that link. But this company and others have also chosen the moral importance of chocolate and become Fairtrade as well as earth friendly. By 2023 1.8 million of these eggs had sold which proves, even if Christianity has dwindling numbers, the Christian story still has an importance story to tell to people.

The state of chocolate production is now one of exploitation and greed. Where as companies like Rowntrees, in York, had a history of care from doctors surgeries, female welfare, pensions schemes and provident funds as well as good housing provision, today all that has gone. The gifts that used to be given out to employees and the sports facilities were around as late as the seventies but buy outs and sell offs have changed everything. No longer are the chocolate companies owned by Quaker families and no longer care to spend money on obligations. Rowntree's was acquired by Nestlé in 1988, in 2010, Cadbury's was sold to the America-based multinational, Kraft, and is now owned by Mondelez, a company hived off from Kraft in 2012.
The Fairtrade movement was established in 1997 because of the exploitation of labour, especially in the cocoa growing areas. Nestle and Mondelaz are not Fairtrade but have made up their own labels which are difficult to verify. It is the smaller chocolate manufacturers that are now the beacons of moral concerns. Tony's Chocolonely "crazy about chocolate, serious about people" being one. It was founded in 2005 by a Dutch TV producer, Tuen van de Keuken, whose chocolate bars have irregular divisions, like crazy paving, to reflect the inequalities of the chocolate industry. In 2022 however, the company reported that 1,701 instances of child labour had been found in the previous year — a situation it has undertaken to correct.

However the industry was never quite clear of exploitation. In 2021 for instance, in light of the Black Lives Matter movement, the Barrow Cadbury Trust (created in 1920, and now an independent charitable trust "inspired by Quaker beliefs") apologised for the fact that in the early 19th Century, Cadbury's had acquired cocoa from plantations where slave labour had been used. The company eventually

organised a boycott of those plantations by British cocoa manufacturers, but they had benefited from slave labour for eight years.

This information has been taken from an article by Andrew Martin in UnHerd.

Cheese & onion tart

Ingredients

375g pack shortcrust pastry (or make your own)
75g parmesan cheese grated
4 tbsp onion chutney
50g butter
50g plain flour
300ml milk
3 eggs, separated
300g soft rindless goat's cheese
1 tbsp thyme leaves chopped

Method

Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Roll the pastry out on a floured surface until almost large enough to line a 22cm loose-bottomed tart tin, sprinkle over about a third of the Parmesan, then continue rolling to push the cheese into the pastry. Line the tin with the pastry, leaving any excess overhanging. Line the tart with parchment paper and baking beans and bake blind for 20 mins. Gently remove the paper and beans and bake for a further 10 mins until pale golden and cooked.

Spread the chutney in an even layer over the bottom of the pastry case, then set aside while you make the filling.

To make the filling, melt the butter in a pan over a low heat, then add the flour and cook for 2 mins, stirring all the time. Gradually pour in the milk and continue stirring until you have a smooth, thick sauce. Cook for a further 2 mins, remove from the heat and cool for 3 mins.

Crumble 200g of goat’s cheese, the thyme and the rest of the Parmesan into the sauce. Beat until cheese melts, then add egg yolks one at a time, beating between each addition. Whisk egg whites to stiff peaks, stir 1 spoonful into the sauce and mix, then tip in the rest of the whites and gently fold until well combined.

Spoon the filling on top of the onion chutney, crumble over the remaining goat’s cheese, then transfer to the oven and bake for 25-30 mins, until golden and well risen. Allow the tart to cool slightly before trimming the edges and serving, or enjoy cold with a green salad, if you like.

Thank you Peter for this recipe

PITY of WAR

Visit to the National Memorial Arboretum 2nd March 2023

Final arrangements for the placement of the sculpture

Jeff Beatty and Barbara Mark, from Southern Marches Quakers, met up with Peter Walker, the sculpture, and his wife and Katie at the NMA to finalise the arrangements for placing the sculpture in the grounds. The choice of position had been agreed after a previous visit in October last year.

Peter had organised for Alan Stanley, from ASBC (heritage & construction specialists) and Lis Hackett, architect, to join us in meeting NMA staff. So we set off with Andy Ansell, Head of Estates at NMA, and Paul, the person who will be on the ground as the work is erected, to the chosen site.

We had been offered three sites but chose one close to the Quaker Services Memorial. Photos attached will give an idea of the proximity to this and the way it will link up with a similar gravel path circling the sculpture. This position will also benefit from being on the main path to the NMA's own tribute to Covid victims. We expect this will be well advertised in their literature and thus will have much foot fall.

The work began marking out the site and deciding which saplings and shrubs would need to be cleared for the instalment. This was just one hazel shrub in reality and the sculpture will be neatly tucked into the trees. A discussion took place on the type of stone to be used for the plinth and how deep the foundations needed to be on this sometimes damp ground.

The NMA expect to clean the sculptures once or twice a year and charge for that service. Peter assured them that the bronze would only need cleaning once a year, and would last for centuries, and the plinth would be of stone. So our fund raising efforts will still need to continue unless we find a financial supporter!

We hope that the work of placing the sculpture will take place this August, which is a special time for this group as we launched our appeal to coincide with Hiroshima day, 6th August, as one of the most terrible attaches on civilians. The NMA allow two months for the installation from start to finish but we are not expecting it to take that long. The NMA will not allow an unveiling event to take place until everything is safely in place but we expected to organise something a little later anyway. We would not do it during November as that is a very busy time at the NMA. The Lord Lieutenant of Staffordshire and the Bishop of Lichfield Lord Spiritual Michael Ipgrave have expressed an interest to be there. So, with conversations with them, Patrons, Quakers and others we will be finding a suitable date soon.

We would like to remind everyone about visiting the Pity of War maquette this November at Hereford Cathedral and hope lots of people will be able to see this.

Laying Down Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture

The matter was considered at Meeting for Sufferings, held at Friends House and by video
conference on 4 th March 2023 and a brief minute written:
MfS/23/03/11 Laying down Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture Further to minute MfS/21/10/12, we
have been notified by the Trustees of Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture (Q-CAT) that they wish to lay
down the charity as they have been unable to find new trustees. We agree to this.
Robert Card, Clerk

So now Trustees are working on the next steps to be taken, including the right disposal of
funds relating to the closure of the Charity, closure of the website (which will not happen for a while), and archiving of material. We will send a final communication when all is sorted.
Of course, closure of the Charity does not mean that suddenly Quakers are no longer personally concerned about torture. At the end of this Newsletter we include some suggestions of how people might like to take their concern further.

Taking your Concern further
Many will have worked with or supported other anti-torture organisations. Please continue to

do so.
Is there anyone else in your Meeting, or whom you know well, who shares your concern?
Torture is a difficult subject, so support one another if you can. If you're writing to your MP, for example, perhaps share what you're doing with someone else who might raise the matter
with their MP – especially if that means that between you, you've contacted more than one
MP. Contact details for all MPs are easy to find using Gov.UK.
Although Q-CAT is being laid down, other groups are concerned about these issues. In particular, the work of the Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network (QARN) www.qarn.org.uk touches on many of the same issues. Have a look at their website.

Working with other organisations

Our explicit concern for the perpetrator as well as the victim, is not generally reflected elsewhere – and it's a difficult one, but something you may wish to raise with other groups with which you get involved.

World overview

There are over 300 anti-torture organisations around the world. For a quick overview, look up the World Organisation Against Torture. Their website www.omct.org is based on the organisation's French title, but this and all websites mentioned here can be read in English. Also look at the website of the International Federation for Human Rights www.fidh.org/en, which is strong on accountability issues. Again, the link is based on the organisation's French initials, but the site comes up in English.

Specific organisations

One UK based group in which many Friends are involved is Freedom from Torture www.freedomfromtorture.org.
Freedom from Torture works actively with survivors of torture on their rehabilitation. The website currently highlights their work to empower survivors of torture, working together to create a more compassionate world.

Other major organisations include:

Amnesty International www.amnesty.org
Amnesty International UK www.amnesty.org.uk
Amnesty is global in scope, but has a strong UK base. They campaign strongly against the death penalty and call out state sanctioned brutality around the world. Both websites are well worth a visit.
Reprieve www.reprieve.org Reprieve is a legal action NGO, but you don't have to be a lawyer to get involved – see their website.
Association for the Prevention of Torture www.apt.ch The Association deals extensively with detention issues. It has quite a lot to say about the selection, training and needs of prison staff - which probably comes as near as anyorganisation to our Quaker concerns for the perpetrators.
Medical Justice www.medicaljustice.org.uk Medical Justice works with and for detainees. Doctors and interpreters are especially welcome to volunteer (see website)
Redress www.redress.org Redress works for justice and reparations. We have often featured their work in our Newsletters.
Action by Christians Against Torture www.acatuk.org.uk
If you wish to work from an explicitly Christian perspective, find out about the Action byChristians Against Torture, which was founded in1984 by the British Council of Churches with active support from Amnesty International and British Quakers. Their

excellent website is well worth a look in any case. The Secretary writes, I and the ACAT-UK committee are deeply saddened to hear of the demise of your excellent group. Your newsletters were always spot-on and displayed tremendous commitment and capacity to monitor and lobby the UK parliament.
If any of your members wish to, you know that they are assured of a warm welcome with us at ACAT-UK. There are also groups around the world, including a very active French group, www.acatfrance.fr with a website in French and English.
Liberty www.libertyhumanrights.org.uk Liberty (formal title The National Council for Civil Liberties (NCCL)) is possibly the most comprehensive of human rights organisations. Its concerns include torture: go on the website, type the word torture in the search box, and follow the links. You will find a great deal of information, and by exploring their website generally, you will find a great many linked issues.
Keeping up to date with news
When preparing the Newsletters, the editor has always consulted the Guardian which has good coverage at www.theguardian.co./law/torture. For example, articles from earlier this year feature: torture of Ukrainian prisoners of war and of Iranian protesters, alleged abuse by British Army during the Northern Ireland Troubles, and current inadequate help for torture victims in UK immigration detention centres.

Feeding the Darkness
Lynn and Dave Morris's drama highlighting torture, which Q-CAT commissioned, has been shown far and wide in the UK. As they come up to retirement as Journeymen Theatre, Lynn reports that they gave a total of 34 performances, mostly in Quaker Meeting Houses but also in Sixth Form Colleges, Community Centres, theatres and churches, reaching an estimated audience of more than 1,200.
That has been fantastic outreach for our Concern and we are so grateful to Lynn and Dave. Associated collections for Freedom from Torture have amounted to more than £7,000, which is an added bonus.
A video of the performance is still available at https://vimeo.com/428488021.

Shropshire Wildlife Trust
latest news

Richard Grindle, CEO of Shropshire Wildlife Trust, gave an excellent presentation about aspirations of the National Wildlife Trust and Shropshire Wildlife Trust to move to work more within communities and co-operate with similar organisations to move forward with the essential task of the Nature Recovery Program.

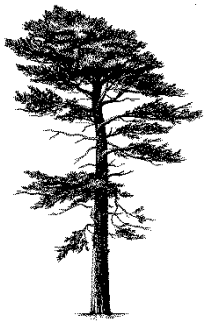
The Wilder Marches - One programme. Two countries. Three river catchments. Four Wildlife
Trusts working together to benefit nature, in partnership with land managers.
Montgomeryshire, Radnorshire, Herefordshire, and Shropshire Wildlife Trusts have formed the

'Wilder-Marches'-Partnership.
This ground-breaking partnership, crossing county and country borders, has been established to safeguard and restore the unique and biodiverse landscape of the Wilder Marches; a 500ha landscape south of Bishops Castle and west of Ludlow market town of Shropshire, north of Whitney-on-Wye in Herefordshire and east of Llanbister, Powys. Our vision is for a thriving natural world, where wildlife and natural habitats are playing a valued role in addressing the
climate and ecological emergencies, and everyone is inspired to get involved in nature'srecovery.
The Trusts are currently in the development phase, thanks to the generous support from the John Swire 1989 Charitable Trust.
For more Information please go to SWT website
or
contact:-JennyJackson-Tate,WilderMarchesProgramme
Manager:jennyjt@wildermarches.org.uk 07930952198

Branch Committee response to changes within Wildlife Trusts.
The SWT Ludlow Branch Committee applauds this new National agenda and at branch level we have already moved towards this with supporting the Friends of St. Leonard's Church Yard, Caring for God's Acres, Gallows Bank Millennium Green Trust, producing a map of Ludlow green spaces in partnership with South Shropshire Climate Change, working with Friends of Mortimer Forest with Dormouse surveys, supporting Herefordshire Wildlife Trust hedge surveying training, Hands Together Ludlow. This is along with learning more about restoring Shropshire Verges for the benefit of wildflowers and pollinating insects and CPRE (The Campaign to Protect Rural England) restoration of hedgerows.

THE-BRANCH-COMMITTEE-IS-SMALL
To volunteer to help please email Graham on
ludlowswt2@hotmail.com
Next-Branch-Meeting.
AGM 4th May 2023, Ludlow-Mascall-Centre. Please note the AGM will form only a very small part of the evening.

CARING FOR
GOD'S ACRE



Jackdaws are a familiar sight, known for their distinctive calls and their striking black plumage. They are one of the smaller members of the crow family and are easily recognisable by their glossy black feathers and grey nape, which gives them a distinct hooded appearance.

Unlike their close relatives (crows and rooks), jackdaws have a short, pointed bill and a relatively small body size, measuring around 36cm from beak to tail. They also have very striking pale irises.
One of the most noticeable features is their call – a distinctive "chack-chack" sound, which is often heard as they fly overhead. They are highly sociable birds, living in large flocks and often nesting in colonies. During the breeding season, jackdaws form pairs and build their nests in tree cavities, buildings, or cliffs. They are cheeky - often stealing nesting materials from other birds, such as magpies and pigeons. They construct their nests with sticks and line them with hair or wool.

Jackdaws are highly adaptable and can thrive in a range of environments, although they tend to favour areas with plenty of trees or other tall structures for nesting and roosting. This may be why we often see them in churchyards, chapel yard and cemeteries. They are intelligent birds, with problem-solving abilities and can remember complex tasks such as using tools to obtain food. They feed mainly on insects, seeds and fruit.

In summer, look out local pairs performing their unique courtship ritual. During this the male performs aerial displays and the females can be heard responding with a call.
Although they are not considered to be at risk, like other bird species in the UK, jackdaws are facing a number of threats including habitat loss, pollution and climate change. These factors can impact their breeding success and population numbers so, like with many species, it is important that we continue to monitor and manage our sites to ensure these characterful birds can continue to thrive.

In days gone by…

When we visit a churchyard today, what comes to mind? If we see only a group of tombstones, then we are missing much that these special places can tell us. Although now quiet and peaceful, they used to be bustling with community events where both religious and non-religious activities took place.

King James the First decreed in 1619 that ‘traditional churchyard games’ were to be encouraged providing they were held ‘in due and convenient time, and without implement or let of Divine Service.’ People frequently played games like quoits and ninepins. The church and chapel walls were used to play a game called fives. Even wrestling and cockfighting took place in the north side of the churchyard! (the south side was dedicated to more sacred activities).

There are records of Saxon Moots or parliaments being held in churchyards. Crowds would gather to watch miracle plays and sacred dramas and local markets selling food and crafts were frequently held there.

Beer festivals known as ‘church ales’ took place and were feasts of eating, drinking and merrymaking. They were organised by churchwardens to raise funds. Archaeological digs have found the footings of structures used for these varied activities.

Many churchyards also have their own unique tales and folklore that add to their charm and intrigue. These stories are yet another fascinating aspect of the riches found in these ancient spaces.

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

Some photos from Extinction Rebellion in London

21st April

on 22nd April, Earth Day procession

on 23rd April