Ludlow Quaker Journal

January/ February 2024

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.

David Milner

Friend David Milner died in hospital on Thursday 8th February. He will be very much missed.

Here is a photo of David on his 90th birthday

David was a very clever man. He was a scientist and engineer and had a great love of art. This reading was read out on the Meeting for Worship on the Sunday following his death.

Quaker Faith and Practice 21.32

Along the paths of the imagination the artists and mystic make contact. The revelations of God are not all one of kind. Always the search in art, as in religion, is for the rhythms of relationships, for the unity, the urge, the mystery, the wonder of life that is presented in great art and true religion. Horace B Pointing 1944

David was very active with environmental issues.
He ran the Ludlow Christian Ecology group for CTAL with Barbara Mark and Hilary Jackson for 10 years, from 2000 to 2010
He was also on the Ludlow Meeting Sustainability group for may years.

Here is a photo of David in 2017 at a climate vigil in Ludlow, with other friends, who we miss.

The Big Plastic Count 2024 : can you help?

The Ludlow Churches Together group ' Caring for Creation' discussed the up and coming Earth Day on 22 April 2024. The theme this year is Planet v Plastics, calling for a 60% reduction in the production of plastics by 2040. The goals are

1. to promote awareness of the damage done by plastic

2. to phase out single use plastic by 2030

3. to demand policies to end fast fashion and the amount of plastic it produces and uses

4. to invest in technologies to build a plastic-free world.

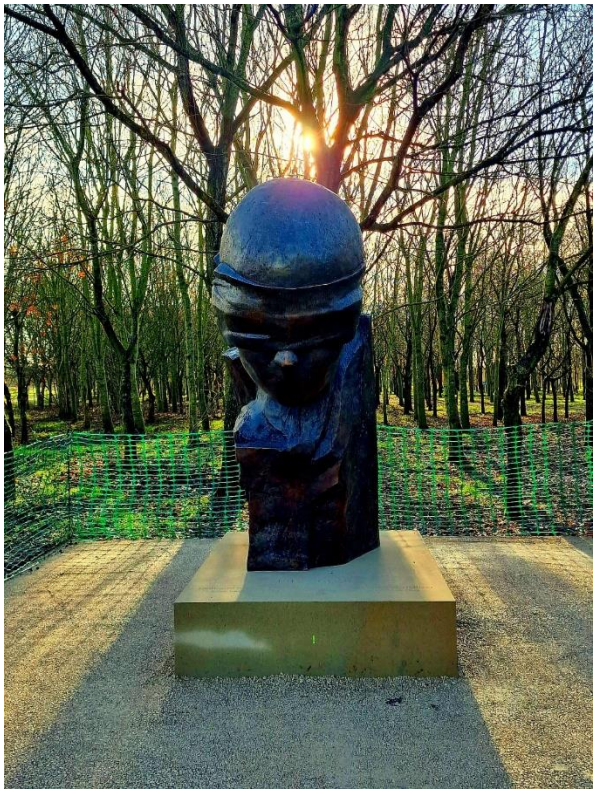
They wanted to encourage people to avoid single use plastic and goods unnecessarily wrapped in plastic. (Ireland has started a deposit scheme and refund on returns for plastic bottles, which has been talked about in UK but not proceeded with and it is commonly done in Scandanavian countries.)With that in mind the group decided to contact congregation and ask them to consider joining the Big Plastic Count (thebigplasticcount.com) between 11th 1nd 17th March. The organisation wants to use

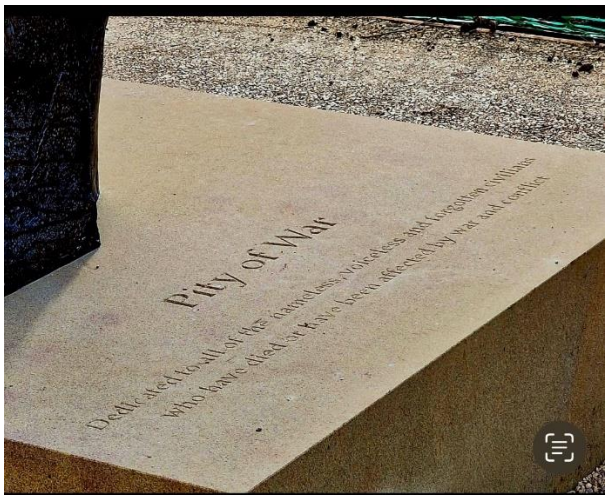
the results to convince UK politicians to lead the way at the Global Plastics Treaty talks aiming to pave the way for a worldwide reduction in plastic production.

Forms available to print on the website so you can record your plastic count.

Pity of War sculpture

Part one of this Pity of Project is nearing completion.
The sculpture went up at the National Memorial Arboretum last week.

Here is a photos of it in place. 



Here is the inscription on the plinth

The Pity of War provides a space to remember and reflect on the effects of war and conflict and to provide a place of remembrance to the Unknown, Forgotten and Voiceless civilians affected. From WW1 to the present day we are all aware of the significance of such conflict on Civilians and the profound effect to the lives of countless communities, populations and individuals worldwide. It will be a place for quiet reflection and contemplation on the wider impact of humanity on humanity for decades to come.

The Pity of War was initially developed from two concepts. Sculptor Peter Walker developed the concept from his side, after realising that in his conversations with his war generation grandparents they never spoke about their experiences, and lived with the effects of war for years post their service. Like many the effects are unknown, and when these veterans became civilians their stories often when untold, and fell silent. Alongside this the artist was looking for a way to visualise a memorial to the civilian we see on the news, in conflict zones and footage, the fleeting images of individuals and communities whose lives are for ever effected. Combining these to thought processes developed the initial concept.

The Pity of War Trust was developed due to the story of Quaker Joyce Gee, a remarkable woman who's life had, at an early stage, been effect by the blitz as a young girl. She both saw and experienced the impact of war first hand on the civilian population as well as living with the effects her whole life. It was her passion to provide a place and memorial to everyone who, like herself, War and Conflict had crossed the threshold of her life.

By combining these two elements together the pity of war project was created.

Exhibition at Ludlow Methodists

The maquette of this sculpture will be exhibited at Ludlow Methodist Church between Monday 18th and Saturday 23rd March, in the mornings.

A Friday Morning in November.

They lay buried in white dust for two hours
A table flying from the blast settled
Across their bodies as they drifted just
As in a normal bed time calling them
To sleep. The city burned an orange glow
Warm in the night; occasional rumbles
Marked the distance as in summer thunder
Storms across the land punctuating dreams.
They would have slept the coming years away

Unhurt, unknowing who had won the war

Never to have recognised a new day

But for that chap whose spade knocked on the door.

Two souls freed for a spell to live their life

A dusty daughter and an airman's wife.

With kind permission of Jennifer Bell. This is a childhood memory of the bombing of Coventry in 2nd World War.

Vigil for a Ceasefire in Gaza

On Saturday 3rd February the Radnor Palestinian Links group held a vigil in Ludlow, for a ceasefire in Gaza. Ludlow Meeting was contacted by the daughter of Friend Margaret Saunders (who used to worship at Ludlow Quakers) to invite friends to join them.

We note that Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) has joined many other groups writing a letter to the prime minister asking him to use diplomatic pressure on the Israeli government not to destroy Rafah, as it has done across Gaza. The letter also calls on the government to suspend arms sales, and other military support, to Israel while they await the ruling of the International Court.

Although the Hamas attack was terrible we have to ask if the killing of so many is really a way to promote peace in the area?

Shared Lunch in December 2023

Lots of Ludlow friends came to this shared meal before Christmas where we had some readings, some carols were sung and some saved childhood Christmas decorations were shown to us all.
However we were all very aware that, as we sung these carols, the place of Jesus' birth is being rip apart by conflict and hate.

Our Ukrainian families Christmas 2023

On the 17th of December, 45 Ukrainians plus volunteers and hosts attended the panto-mime, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs at Ludlow Assembly Rooms. It was the first pantomime that many of our guests had attended, and they absolutely loved it. There was a mixture of emotions, surprise, fear (the wicked Queen was rather scary for some of the younger children) bemusement around The Dame, and great hilarity throughout the show. Thank you to the Ludlow Assembly rooms who were such a help in organising tickets and the system for using tokens for refreshments. Also, thanks to Peter Higgins and Oksana for help before the event, and on the day.

On December 22nd, our annual Christmas party took place at Bitterley village hall, over fifty people attended, with a Ukrainian Father Christmas, who was transported to the village hall by vintage tractor decked in Xmas lights, and accompanied by another five tractors decked out with sparkly lights. BBC Midlands Today filmed part of the party, and it was televised live that evening, I was interviewed and also Olena K who talked about the celebrations and the importance of feeling part of your community and having local support. Presents were given out by Father Christmas, for all children and teens.

The food was brilliant, everyone brought food to share, and a volunteer made lots of trifle and Xmas pudding. The Ukrainians sang traditional Xmas songs and played party games. It was a great evening. A group of people contributed £180.00 towards the cost of the Christmas presents.

Interfaith

Mark and Sohayb again attended a Holocaust Memorial cherry tree planting, this year at Ellesmere School.

28th January was Holocaust Memorial Day and the Methodist Church in Ludlow included commemorating four subsequent genocides.

11th February The Shropshire Humanists held a Darwin Memorial Lecture at the Walker Theatre in Shrewsbury when the speaker was Dr. Isabelle Winder.

1st March is the World Day of Prayer, formerly Women's World Day of Prayer, will take place at St. Laurence's in Church Stretton at 10.30am on Friday

The prayers on this occasion were written by the Palestinian Women, but possibly prepared up to two years before the present conflict.

20th April is a Festival of Poetry and Music will be held on Saturday, 20th April, at Madley, Herefordshire, HR2 9LS, and will include workshops and activities by several different faiths.

Recipe

AVOCADO EGG SALAD (low carb & gluten free)

Ingredients

4 eggs, hard-boiled and chopped
1 avocado
1 small red onion, finely chopped
1/2 red bell pepper, chopped
3-4 fresh basil leaves, chopped
handful rocket leaves, chopped
6 olives, chopped (I like kalamata or niçoise)
2 tbsp lemon juice
1 garlic clove, minced (I use a fine cheese grater)
1 tsp mustard (I like Dijon)

Method

Hard boil the eggs. Place in a small pan, cover eggs with cold water and heat up until water boils, then take off the heat and leave on the side for 15 minutes. Put eggs in bowl of cold water for 5 minutes, then peel them.
Open the avocado, scoop it out and put in a large bowl. Add the garlic and lemon juice and mash with a fork.
Chop the eggs, red onion, basil leaves, rocket leaves and olives together, mixing in the mustard. Add all this to the avocado mash and mix all together with a few turns of black pepper and after you have had a taste, if you want, add a little salt to suit your taste.
Note: This salad is nice in a sandwich!

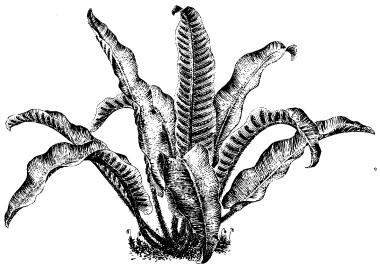
Thank you Peter for another lovely recipe

From The Friend 23rd February 2024

I do believe that there is a power which is divine, creative and loving, though we can often only describe it with the images and symbols that rise from our particular experiences and those of our communities. This power is part and parcel of all things, human, animal, indeed of all that lives. It's story is greater than any one cultural version of it and yet it is embodied in all traditions. It is a power that paradoxically needs the human response. Like us it is energised by the reciperocity of love.
'It wills our redemption, longs for us to turn to it. It does not create heaven and hell for us, but allows us to do that for ourselves. Such is the terrible vulnerabitity of love'
Havey Gillman 1988 (Quaker Faith and Practice 26.31)

Environmental News

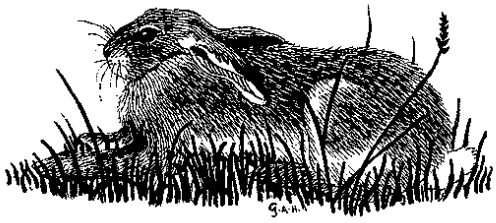
CARING FOR
GOD'S ACRE



January news

Fronds and Folktales

Take a stroll through a peaceful churchyard or cemetery, and you'll likely encounter a fascinating group of plants that have graced the Earth for millions of years—ferns.
In the cool and damp environment of the UK's climate, 64 fern species flourish. These remarkable plants can be found on walls, especially those facing west or north, and in the sheltered, shaded nooks of burial grounds and under trees. Once they find a home, they can even thrive in drier spots like walls. Here you may spot the delicate spleenwort, the charming wall rue, the vivid rusty back, and the elegant shield fern. Venture under the canopy of trees, and you might encounter the graceful lady fern, the stately male fern, and the regal royal fern. If the soil has lime, you might be lucky enough to discover hart's-tongue fern or, even more rarely, adder's-tongue fern.
Unlike flowering plants that reproduce through seeds, ferns reproduce via spores. These tiny, dust-like structures contain the genetic material needed to grow into a new fern plant. Spore reproduction is a primitive and efficient method that has contributed to ferns' ability to colonize diverse environments.
In some cultures, ferns are considered protective plants. Folklore suggests that carrying a fern seed or a piece of fern would grant protection against evil spirits, witches, and misfortune. Ferns were sometimes worn as charms or incorporated into talismans to ward off negative energies.
So, next time you're in a churchyard, take a closer look at these green companions that have been part of human folklore and Earth's story for a very, very long time!



February news

Boxing into spring

As winter thaws and the promise of spring fills the air, the natural world awakens from its slumber. Among the many signs of the changing season, one creature stands out as a symbol of vitality and renewal: the hare.
March marks the beginning of the breeding season for hares, a time when these usually shy animals put on their energetic 'boxing' displays.
It was often assumed that the boxing was rival male hares (bucks) fighting against one another over the females (does). However, it is now known that the boxing is the female hare's response to fending off over-amorous males. It's quite a sight and not unusual to see fur flying! This fast and furious display is thought to be the origin of the phrase 'Mad as a March hare'.

Hares are also renowned for their impressive athleticism, capable of reaching up to 45 miles per hour in short bursts. This remarkable speed, coupled with their ability to change direction quickly, allows hares to evade predators such as foxes, owls, and stoats. Adult hares normally live to 3 or 4 years but can sometimes live much longer.
In folklore and mythology, hares have long been revered as symbols of luck, fertility, and intuition. Their connection to the changing seasons and the renewal of life makes them a perfect symbol for March, a month marked by new beginnings in the natural world.

Andrea

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

Toilet Rolls

Trying to find replacements for my Traidcraft products has been quite a journey. I have found the loose fairtrade tea in Co op, the best being loose Breakfast tea in Marks and Spencer though. However toilet rolls has been the most difficult to sort out for me.

The Ethic Consumer tells me that an average Brit gets through 127 rolls per year. The paper and pulp industry is the biggest user of virgin wood, taking a bout 35% of all trees, and is very energy intensive. So it is worth trying to buy environmentally sustainable toilet rolls.

Separating the fibres to make pulp for papermaking takes far fewer resources when those fibres are recycled from recovered paper than when they're derived directly from trees. So it makes sense to recycle. tissue made from recycled content has one-third the greenhouse gas emissions of tissue fibre made from virgin wood.

As toilet paper is a disposable product and it can be the end of the line of many recycling of fibres, such as printing paper or cardboard. The final product needs to be turned into high-value products as much as possible. Toilet paper is a higher-value product than cardboard.

I know Sainsbury is supposed to have good recycled toilet paper, but we have tried 'Honest Supplies', which come 25 in a card board box and no plastic. Very pleased so far!

Here are the choice Ethical Consumer advises.

What is it made of?	Brands selling this type of toilet roll
100% post-consumer recycled	Honest Supplies, Naked Sprout, Serious Tissues, Who Gives A Crap
100% FSC-certified bamboo	Bamboo Bobbi, Bazoo, Bumboo, Cheeky Panda, Naked Sprout, Who Gives A Crap
100% recycled (pre- and post-consumer)	Ecoleaf by Suma
100% recycled (not specified whether pre- or post-consumer)	Essential, Feel Good, Soft on Nature
A mix of uncertified bamboo and recycled sugarcane pulp	Greencane
FSC Mix	Andrex, Cushelle, Nicky, Regina, Velvet

What is it made of?	Brands selling this type of toilet roll
Virgin fibre (no certification on packet)*	Cushion Soft, Gentille, Soft on Nature Luxury

William Morris at Home

In search of an alternative to Traidcraft I have found another brand I am getting to know called William Morris and Home. On 12th February 2024 The Body Shop closed. That was a sad demise of a leading environmentally friendly brand. The William Morris at Home may be something that can fill a bit of that gap. I am certainly very happy with the hand creams.

Herefordshire Meadows

I have recently read about ' Herefordshire Meadows'. This began in 2016 as a countryside facilitation funded group to work with farmers on environmental protection and development projects. It is well worth looking it up. In 2019 they got funding for grassland restoration works and now work with Herefordshire Wildlife Trust with these projects and making new wildlife sites. They run workshops and go into schools. They have now got funding from Herefordshire Council as part of their Natural Flood Management schemes.

Friends in jail

The Friend (23rd Feb 2024) tells us about a Tottenham Friend Marcus Decker who has spent over a year, of a two year, seven month sentence for unfurling a banner on the QE2 bridge, in a peaceful non violent action, in 2022, demanding the government stop oil and gas exploration. He is now threatened with deportation as he only has a pre-settled status in UK.
Another Friend, Amy Pritchard, from Liverpool is on trial at London Crown Court, for being part of a group who broke a window at JP Morgan's European HQ. She had previously been to prison for breaching the judges, Silas Reid's, rule that no one could talk about their motives in court.
Other Quakers joined a group outside the court to 'Defend Our Juries'.