



Quakers in Yorkshire Newsletter

News, views and events
from meetings in Yorkshire



**York Quaker Schools
Quaker Archives and Family History**

**Programme for meeting of QiY at York
Bootham School
Saturday 19 October 2019**

EVERYONE WELCOME

Quakers in Yorkshire Newsletter October 2019

All Yorkshire meetings are invited to send news, images, notices of interests and activities for inclusion in the newsletter. It is published four times a year, ahead of QiY's quarterly meetings. Contributions should reach the co-clerks early in the preceding month.

NB Deadline for January issue: 7 December 2019.

Paper copies of the quarterly newsletter, with the programme for each meeting of Quakers in Yorkshire, are sent to all local meetings. Please let the co-clerks know if your meeting needs more or fewer copies. The newsletter is also sent electronically to AM and LM clerks. If you'd like a personal copy by email please inform the co-clerks.

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Please let the clerks know if you see any errors relating to your meeting or if there is any item you would like to include there. Please let us know if area or local meeting clerks' details have changed.

Next meeting of QiY

Saturday 18 January 2020 at St Aidan's Church, Leeds. Reports on the Under-19s Coordinating Group: Junior Holidays; Easter Settlement and Outreach Projects. Also after lunch we shall hear from Yorkshire Friends Holiday School, and from Jonathan Carmichael, Simpler Meetings Programme Manager at Friends House, who will update us on the progress of the work on simplifying processes begun at our meeting in April.

Our October meeting: Quaker Archives and Family History

Quakers in Yorkshire Arrangements Committee felt that many meetings face difficulties in managing their old records: what materials should be preserved? What should be destroyed? Where should archive material be deposited? We asked Oliver Pickering of Ilkley LM, one of our Custodian of Yorkshire Quaker Archives and his former colleague at Leeds University Special Collections, Richard High, to help us with issues and questions arising in the management of archive material. Oliver offers the following introduction to the session:

Yorkshire Quaker Archives in Leeds University Library as a resource for Quaker history and family history

Leeds University Library holds by far the largest collection of archival documents relating to Yorkshire Quakerism, stretching from the 1650s to the present day. Geographically, these holdings cover the areas now represented by Brighouse, Craven and Keighley, Leeds, and York area meetings, but there is also much that derives from the former Knaresborough and Thirsk monthly meetings. In addition, and vitally important, the Archives contain the complete records of Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting, the body that has developed into present-day Quakers in Yorkshire.

The material in the Archives largely relates to Quaker 'business': comprising minutes, property documents, financial papers and membership records. There are also epistles and advices, letters, discussion papers, photographs, and plans. The records mostly relate to the activities of Quaker Meetings, at whatever level, but records of a great variety of other Quaker bodies are also present, such as adult schools and housing associations. From the family history point of view there are birth and burial notes, some marriage registers, and in particular a complete set of the Quaker digest registers for the whole of Yorkshire, which record births, marriages, and burials from the beginnings up to 1837.

The archives are freely available for consultation, and the talk will include guidance on finding out what records exist and on making an appointment to see them. Those present will also hear how one role of the appointed custodians is to encourage Meetings to deposit present-day materials for archiving. The Archives, that is to say, are not static but forever growing!

Junior Holidays

Fun. Feasting. Finding new perspectives. Feeling accepted. Quaker children's holidays provide this and more besides, not just for the children but for the teenaged and adult volunteers too. I've been volunteering at junior holidays for three years now and each time, despite the exhaustion at the end of the weekend, I feel I've gained more than I've given. The formula is simple: ensure each child is welcomed, listened to and valued. Give them some fun and challenging physical activities. Find ways to nurture their talents and relationships with each other. Give them yummy food. Have some laughs. And give them space to explore a theme close to Quaker hearts, through discussion, reflection, silence and creativity.

We don't get it right all the time. The volunteers are generally parents, not professional youth workers or teachers, who want to encourage children to explore what Quaker values and spirituality might mean to them in a safe and fun way. Many Quaker children come from small meetings with few of their own age. Others come from families with Quaker roots but have little week-to-week contact with local meetings. We volunteer because we feel it important to give children a chance to meet others with links to different meetings and to strengthen their understanding of Quaker practice. Sometimes there are challenges, with bedtimes, homesickness or squabbles. They may have needs or issues in their lives at home. Our volunteers are pretty adaptable – we all have different skills and experiences and together we can deal with most things. And at a time when the world can look pretty bleak when you look at what adults are doing, it is inspiring to be in the company of fabulous children who show wisdom, care and sensitivity in their dealings with each other and in their reflections on the themes we explore.

So please support any children aged 7–12ish to come to junior holiday. The next is 4–6 October at Lockerbrook activity centre, near Snake Pass: we may still have a place! All are welcome, whether Quaker children, grandchildren, or their friends, whether or not they are familiar with meeting. The more the merrier. We would also welcome new volunteers, particularly those with youth work experience or experience of leading groups of children or young people in activities. Contact me at rhjgilmour@cooptel.net if you want to find out more.

Rebecca Gilmour

Junior Holiday, June 2019

Based again at the Nell Bank centre, just outside Ilkley, the theme of the first of this year's junior holidays was the earth and caring for it. There were approximately 24 children, two teenage and six adult volunteers. The holiday started on the Friday after school in very wet weather, but this didn't dampen anyone's enthusiasm and enjoyment. Saturday included activities run by Nell Bank staff, with tasty snacks and lunch to ensure everyone had enough energy to keep going. There were also times for free play and relaxation and a chance to get involved in arts and crafts. Everyone made and decorated their own 'rosy glow' book. The day ended with Epilogue, which never fails to impress and inspire, as the children and young people come up with thoughtful and insightful comments. After breakfast on Sunday morning we all gathered for a period of silent worship. This was followed by writing a positive comment in each other's rosy glow books, and then lunch and home time. This was my third time at Junior Holiday and yet again it provided a timely reminder of why I am a Quaker. I feel very lucky to be part of such a warm, inclusive and thoughtful community.

Suzanne Wright

Holiday School

This was my first time to Holiday School, and I was looking forward to it. The theme this year was 'Creative Impact', which sounded interesting. The sessions were all different, showing how you can be creative in so many ways. I enjoyed all the sessions because of this. In one of them we watched a documentary, after which we had the break followed by a question and answer session.

I also enjoyed the activity groups. You had to choose an activity group to stay in all week, and I chose sewing, and made a T-shirt! It was helpful that I had a room to myself, so sometimes when things got too much, I either went up to my room, or to the quiet room. On Thursday, in free time, the swimming pool was open, so I went down and had the best swim that I have had for ages.

One day we went into York to hold a peace vigil. Some of us worked in groups to make banners for this. I came up with the idea for my group to put "Give Peas a Chance" on it. We also put the CND logo in green blobs to represent peas, as well as big peas with smiley faces. I also found it

helpful having someone with me all the time. This was Freya, and we had a great time together.



I have really enjoyed this week and managed to deal with my overloads. I have also known when it was getting too noisy, which I haven't been able to do at school.

Alex Mansfield (Huddersfield Meeting)

Quakers in Yorkshire Survey

Over one hundred Friends responded to the Survey, published on our website and in the July newsletter, providing a wide-range of viewpoints. Most Friends who responded said they were well-informed about QiY quarterly meetings. Roughly 40% do not attend quarterly meetings at all through the year. Only a handful of Friends indicated that they always attend.

Friends generally don't have any problems with travel arrangements, but many find the distances (and time) involved off-putting. Balancing 'Quaker' and 'family' commitments were not uncommon dilemmas. Suggestions for topics ranged from Quaker spirituality and the place of mysticism within it,

to issues of criminal justice and homelessness and responding to the climate emergency. Finally, there were many ideas and suggestions about QiY: from using online streaming of events to involving Young Friends; from continuing in our quest to simplify structures to arranging group transport.

The Arrangements Committee will study the findings in detail and provide a full report in due course. In the meantime, we would like to thank everyone who took part; the insights and perspectives about 'where we are' at present will, we feel sure, prove especially helpful.

Reinvigorating Yorkshire Quakerism

The April Quakers in Yorkshire meeting at Doncaster heard from Paul Parker (Recording Clerk) who spoke about reinvigorating Quakerism. After his talk we broke into groups and enthusiastically discussed the issues. The meeting minuted that it wanted to find ways to simplify structures with the aim of reinvigorating Yorkshire Quakerism. As a result, our seven area meetings have agreed to work together to explore ways of simplifying structures, governance and proceedings, so as to create conditions that help meeting communities to grow, thrive and flourish.

A working group named GRASP (Group to Reinvigorate and Simplify Processes) has already met. At the first meeting, the Group was clear that worship and witness are the core of Quakerism - it is why we joined – with administration to help - but admin is what is growing, not the core activity. The creation of Trustees has been a huge extra: 60 big jobs for Yorkshire Quakers that didn't exist pre-2005, and at a time when numbers are declining. These jobs are taking out people who might otherwise be active in worship and witness. How many trustees do we need? Can we find ways of doing things differently?

GRASP is not a decision making body: it will consult and make recommendations for area meetings to consider. To find out more, or contribute to our thinking, contact any of the members (details in the Book of Members): Alison Clarke (York), Steve Hallett (Pickering & Hull), Jim Ledwidge (Brighouse West Yorkshire), Tracey Martin (Leeds), Sarah Myers (Central Yorkshire), David Olver (Craven & Keighley), Rosie Roberts (Sheffield & Balby), Barbara Windle (QiY Trustees).

Meeting for Worship at Farfield

Chris Skidmore of Skipton Meeting informs us that, because of the start of building work at the end of September, it will not be possible to hold Meeting for Worship at Farfield Meeting House on 17 October as planned.

PLAIN QUAKERS' SWANSONG

Some Friends will have seen this play previously – but for those unfortunate enough to have missed it, it is currently on tour:

Sunday 29 September	Bradford Quaker Meeting	2.00
Thursday 3 October	St Paul's Parish Church, Compstall, Stockport SK6 5HU	7.30
Friday 4 October	Red and Green Club, 42 Bankwell Road, Huddersfield HD3 4LU	7.30
Sunday 6 October	Doncaster Quaker Meeting House, Oxford Place, Doncaster DN1 3SL	12.15
Friday 11 October	Wooldale Quaker Meeting House, Pell Lane, Holmfirth, HD9 1QL	7.30

In his small London flat, Frank Dudley, old-school actor and self-proclaimed national treasure, struggles with the passing of time, his ambition to play Richard II still unfulfilled. Trapped in embittered loneliness, his none-too-glittering career seems to be fading into oblivion...

Free performances: collections in support of local charities

Email: plain.quakers@yahoo.co.uk Facebook: @plainquakerstheatre Twitter: @PlainQuakers

NEW Quaker in Yorkshire Banner: Our thanks to Skipton Meeting!



350 years of Quaker Worship and Witness A celebration at Norfolk Cottage

A small group of Friends gathered at Norfolk Cottage (Staintondale, YO13 0EL) on a cool, bright June day. During the week before Friends had been at Norfolk to oversee the laying of the new carpet on the ground floor, sourced in keeping with Norfolk's mission since its refurbishment in 2008 - as a 'Beacon of Sustainability'.

Norfolk was at its best, showing off the lovely view towards to sea. We enjoyed a shared lunch. Then we remembered that, when Friends first met in this area in 1669, their world and especially their experience of being Friends would have been very different from ours. Only a few years previously the Civil War had raged. Nearby, Scarborough Castle was often under siege and changed hands nine times in four years.

At the end of the war, the ruined castle was turned into a prison. And George Fox had been imprisoned there for 15 months, his health badly affected. During this time Quakers were regarded as dangerously subversive and were severely persecuted. The authority's informers would be hunting for signs of Quaker activities; the Toleration Acts were 20 years away in the future.

And yet, no doubt 'on fire', inspired by a new-found experience of God's kingdom come, inward and outward, they travelled from far and wide to be here in 1669.

On this day, in 2019, we gathered in a profound Meeting for Worship.

Later we planted trees: the first in remembrance of all those Friends from the past who had played a part in looking after Norfolk down the years. One dear Friend, our treasurer for four decades, until ill-health had intervened, helped us plant the first. The second, a lilac tree, was planted in remembrance of his late wife, as we recalled that when Friends serve on the Norfolk Committee, their family are nearly always in close support.

How will Friends be in 2369, three hundred and fifty years hence?

NEW QUAKER MEETING – UNIVERSITY OF HUDDERSFIELD



Susan Mosley informs us that Wooldale and Huddersfield Meetings are preparing a warm welcome for students and staff at the **University of Huddersfield**. They plan a **Quaker Meeting** at the Faith Centre on campus on Tuesday lunchtimes, for a brief Meeting for Worship, followed by something to eat. Called ***Simply Quiet and a Bite of Lunch***, newcomers will have the chance to meet like-minded people and to know they'll be made welcome by other Quakers in the area. Newcomers are welcome to get in touch with either Meeting before term-time. **The Faith Centre is not open the general public, so for the time being the meeting is for staff and students only.**

Programme: Quakers in Yorkshire - 19 October 2019
At Bootham School, York

10.00	Coffee or Tea on arrival
10.30	Meeting for Worship
10.55	Testimony
11.00	Welcome from QiY co-clerks
11.05	Welcome to Bootham School Housekeeping notices
11.10	Appointment of Elders for today's meeting
11.15	Presentation by students from Bootham and The Mount
11.45	Reports from Bootham: Clerk to Governors' meeting, Stephen Sayers; the Head, Chris Jeffery; Head of Junior School, Helen Todd
12.05	Reports from The Mount: Clerk of the Committee, Margaret Bryan; Principal, Adrienne Richmond; Head of Junior School, Rachel Capper
12.25	Question Time, followed by minute of the session
12.50	Representatives and Notices
13.00	Lunch (<i>bring your own, drinks provided</i>)
14.00	Testimony
14.05	Nominations and appointments
14.15	Guest speaker – Oliver Pickering of Ilkley LM, Richard High (University of Leeds Library, Special Collections) on Quaker Archives and Quaker family history
	Closing minute
16.00	Tea and Departures

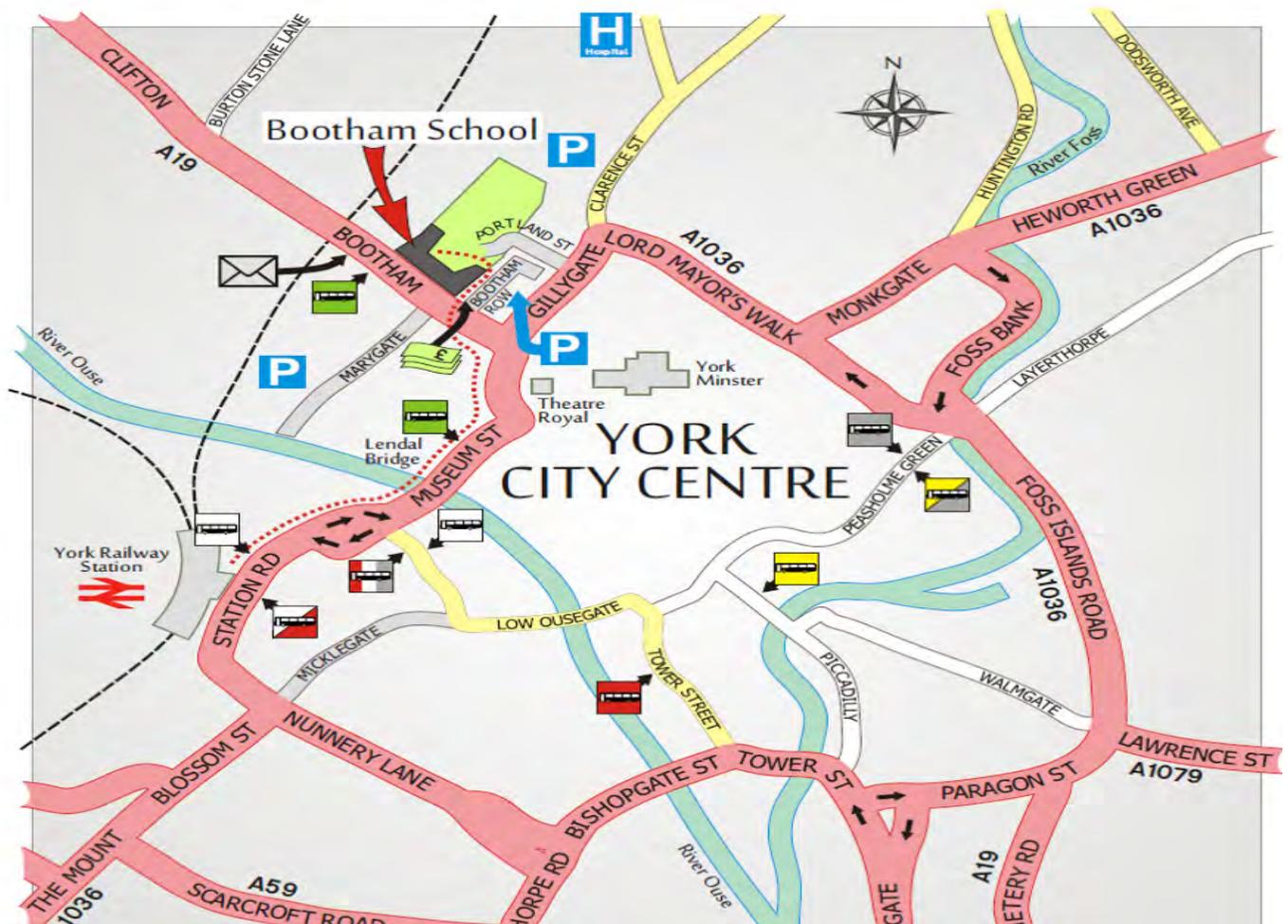
Our thanks

We record our thanks to everyone at Bootham who has helped with the arrangements for the October meeting. We also wish Chris Jeffery *bon voyage* for his visit to Quaker schools in the USA, including Sidwell Friends School in Washington DC.

Attendance Please note: in the interests of safety we will ask you to sign in as a record of your attendance at the meeting. If you are representing a meeting, please sign or tick the list of representatives.

Name Badges: There will be sticky labels for you to write your name on, but if you already have a name badge, please bring it, and wear it!

Children and young people are welcome to attend in the company of their parents or guardians, but Friends are unable to provide activities or child-care at this meeting. If anyone is prepared to run a crèche or children’s activity group, please let the Co-Clerks know.



There is some car parking available on campus from the Portland Street entrance off Gillygate. Note that buses 1, 5, 5A and 6 stop near Portland Street. For those walking from the station (it takes about 15 minutes) there is an entry off Bootham shortly after a small car park and a few shops.