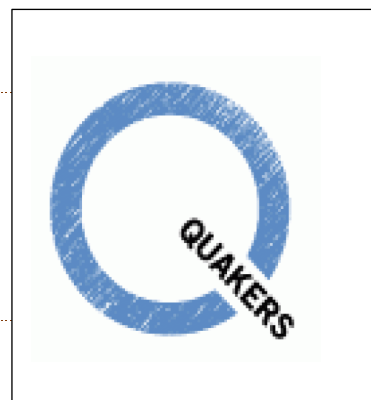


QUAKERS IN YORKSHIRE NEWSLETTER JULY 2021



News, views and events
from meetings in Yorkshire

Including **PROGRAMME** for
QiY Quarterly Meeting

Saturday 17 July 2021

To be held online via Zoom

AGENDA

Reports from QiY Trustees
and Glenthorne

Yorkshire Roots Preparing for DSEI

Racial Justice

New BYM Hub in Leeds

QUAKERS IN YORKSHIRE

NEWSLETTER JULY 2021

Welcome to July's edition of the Newsletter, including the full annual report from the Clerk of QiY Trustees. The newsletter will be available in print form for anyone unable to access the internet. Please could you let the QiY clerks know of anyone who would like a hard copy?

arthurpritchard@gmail.com or quakers@crojack.org

Reminder

Yorkshire meetings are invited to send news of events and activities for inclusion in our newsletter, which is published four times a year, ahead of QiY quarterly meetings. We also appreciate receiving in advance the names of **AM representatives to QiY** – please indicate when you register.

Deadline for contributions to October issue: 15 September 2021

The newsletter, including the quarterly meeting programme, is sent to all meetings via AM and LM clerks. If you know of anyone who would like a personal copy, please contact us.

Quakers in Yorkshire Website quakersinyorkshire.org.uk Please let the co-clerks know if you see any errors relating to your meeting or if there are additional items you would like to include here.

Have your meeting's contact details changed? We always need up-to-date email and telephone details of local and area meeting clerks. Under Data Protection regulations QiY cannot receive personal details from other parts of the Religious Society of Friends. This information must come from you individually, so please let us know.

Next meeting

July's meeting of QiY was planned to be held at Pickering Meeting House, but the uncertainty about COVID regulations has obliged us to meet on Zoom again. We hope that our meeting planned for York Friargate on 16 October can go ahead as a live, or at least, a blended gathering. We will hear reports from the York Schools in the morning. In the afternoon we hope to have a session from the Book of Discipline Revision Committee and a fuller session on our plans for action at the time of COP26 in November.

Quakers in Yorkshire

Annual Review for 2020

What is Quakers in Yorkshire?

Quakers in Yorkshire is a registered charity with the objective of providing services to support and nourish Quakerism in the region of Yorkshire covered by the seven participating area meetings. It exercises this responsibility partly by holding four open meetings each year. These undertake necessary administration, appoint to roles, hear reports and testimonies, learn about the work and witness of Quakers and hear about charitable work of interest to Quakers. The charity organises activities for children and young people, organises an annual Easter Settlement, provides grants for outreach work and the maintenance of meeting houses. It publishes a triennial Book of Members and Attenders as well as quarterly newsletters and maintains a website. It also administers a number of regional Quaker trusts.

Trustees

Each of the seven area meetings nominates one Friend from its membership to serve as a trustee. They, together with the Clerk of Trustees and Treasurer, are appointed by Quakers in Yorkshire in session. At the end of 2020 Barbara Windle retired after six years as Clerk of Trustees. Her dedicated service was much appreciated. Trustees followed best practice by co-opting Ruth McTighe who is the lead QiY Safeguarding Coordinator so as to ensure that safeguarding issues are always on the agenda.

Pandemic

The year 2020 started like any other year, but then changed dramatically when the coronavirus pandemic led to the first lock-down and closure of places of worship. Quakers throughout Yorkshire, and beyond, had to rapidly adjust. The consequences for all activities of QiY have been considerable and are described in the following sections

Quarterly Meetings

The first quarterly meeting of 2020 was held normally at a new venue in Leeds, but the second meeting, scheduled for April was cancelled – one of very few times in the 355-year history that a quarterly meeting was not

held. The July and October meetings were replaced by virtual meetings using the Zoom platform.

The January meeting is always an opportunity for the groups providing activities for young people to report and also to hear reports from the Outreach Projects Committee and Easter Settlement. In 2020 the January meeting also heard about work in Leeds to assist asylum seekers and the national Simpler Meetings project. The July meeting heard the trustees report on the previous year as well as an annual report from the trustees of Glenthorne Quaker Centre and a talk on Deep Adaptation. The October meeting heard reports from Bootham School and The Mount School, including lively presentations by students. There were also talks on Quaker chaplaincy in Yorkshire prisons and universities.

Activities for Young People

Quakers in Yorkshire's work with Quaker young people is a significant commitment and we thank the adults who help to make this happen. The Under 19s Coordinating Group comprises independent members and representatives from QiY's two young people's groups: Junior Holidays (7 to 12 year olds) and Yorkshire Friends Holiday School (13 to 18 year olds). The Under 19s Co-ordinating Group advises on legal requirements and on best practice regarding safeguarding of children and vulnerable young people. Much effort has gone into ensuring that safeguarding documents and procedures are kept up to date.

Junior Holidays was unable to hold live events in 2020 but two online gatherings were held in June and October with the themes of Connections and Safe Harbours. These were successful in enabling the children to experience a Quaker event. Although no substitute for an away gathering, they worked well in challenging times. The hard work of adult volunteers and the leadership provided by the Youth Development Worker were invaluable.

The Yorkshire Friends Holiday School also had to take place virtually in August 2020. A group of Yorkshire and Irish young Friends came together as a loving and accepting online community.

The Youth Development Worker is employed by Britain Yearly Meeting to encourage youth development work in Sheffield and Yorkshire. The work

this year has been invaluable in the pandemic and has engaged more young people with online activities than previously with physical gatherings. The professionalism has motivated other volunteers to provide inspired activities which have helped to breathe new life into Quaker work with children and young people.

Easter Settlement

The timing of the 2020 Easter Settlement, just as the first COVID-19 lockdown occurred, meant that it had to be cancelled and bookings either returned or moved to next year.

Outreach

The Outreach Projects Committee had a low activity year. The major disruption caused by coronavirus meant that most outreach and witness activities took low priority so there were minimal applications for support.

GRASP

The Group to Reinvigorate and Simplify Processes and Practices (GRASP) was appointed in 2019 to undertake a review and provide recommendations to the seven area meetings. During 2020 it produced an interim report and consulted on its outline recommendations. A successful workshop on nominations processes was held in November 2020. Although delayed by the pandemic, the final report was published in early 2021 containing recommendations for local meetings, area meetings, trustees and sharing opportunities between meetings.

Book of Members and Attenders

Every three years Quakers in Yorkshire publishes a Book of Members and Attenders. This is a valuable resource for Friends and meetings throughout the region. The compilation of the 2021 Book took place in the latter part of 2020 and involved much work by Friends in local meetings. All the efforts of Friends are greatly appreciated.

Financial review

The COVID-19 pandemic has considerably affected the finances of Quakers in Yorkshire. Both income and expenditure were down in 2020 due to Easter Settlement being cancelled, Junior Holidays and Holiday School being run as online meetings, only one Outreach project being completed and no

applications for Adult School Union grants. Income was £30,784 compared to £67,892 in 2019. Expenditure was £37,761 compared to £72,656 in 2019.

QiY appears to have a large capital portfolio amounting to £966,584 at the end of 2020. However, 65% of the funds are permanently endowed, meaning that the capital cannot be spent whilst another 25% are restricted to expenditure on meeting houses. Thus, the funds available for grants are limited. Moreover in 2020 one of the financial consequences of the pandemic was that companies cut back on their dividends so that income from investments was reduced to £12,876 (from £16,133 in 2019).

Grants for premises maintenance totalling £7860 were given to Beverley, Huddersfield and Skipton meeting houses and Newlands Burial Ground (behind the old Brighouse meeting house). Grants totalling £13,580 were also given from the accumulated income of the Rawdon Friends School Trust for the education of Quaker children at Quaker schools. The Glenthorne Quaker Centre at Grasmere was helped during the lockdowns by suspending repayments of loans.

Appointments

Quakers in Yorkshire in session is the appointing body for both internal office-holders and Quaker representatives to external bodies and committees. It appoints governors for Bootham and The Mount, the two schools in York established by Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting in the nineteenth century, as well as governors to Breckenbrough School, trustees to Glenthorne Quaker Centre and various other regional bodies.

All appointments are made by Quakers in Yorkshire in session, partly by names brought forward by Nominations Committee, and partly by nomination of area meetings. Nominations Committee consists of representatives of each of the seven area meetings. In 2020 about 95 Friends held appointments on behalf of Quakers in Yorkshire. The hard work of the Nominations Committee is essential to ensure that the activities of Quakers in Yorkshire continue to be appreciated by Friends.

David Olver, Clerk of QiY Trustees, June 2021

Junior Holiday at Nell Bank

Twenty-five young people aged 7-13 from across the Quakers in Yorkshire area were able to meet in person at Nell Bank on Saturday 5 June. It was a gloriously sunny day and the venue was just wonderful with fantastic facilities, open space and amazing panoramic views of Ilkley Moor. The young people who attended were happy to meet friends old and new, to run around the site, to engage in problem solving and team building games and just have a great time! It was heart-warming for the adult volunteers to see them laughing and having fun together once again.



As it was only a day event it was over too quickly, but we are now planning a full weekend together on 17-19 September at Barmoor. If you would like further information about this weekend or to be added to the mailing list please contact Bronwen on bronwenalty@gmail.com

A Local Meeting's response to the GRASP report.

At our June Local Business Meeting (LBM) at New Earswick, we considered the GRASP Report. In a reflective discussion one Friend said that for him the section on the core of Quakerism (on which most of the Report was based) was the important element, described as:

- Worship, arising from conviction of the power of the Spirit/God, is central to us;
- Through our shared testimonies we aim to translate faith into action in spirit-led daily living;
- We seek to be an inclusive, diverse, supportive community at all stages of life;
- We aim to be non-judgmental, listening to and learning from each other, especially when we sense difference;
- We aim to support Friends called to witness their faith, in the wider world;
- We want to give service with joy.

What will it mean for us, as a meeting, to consider the opportunities and challenges raised by these six aspects of Quakerism? How might we take this forward? Firstly it was agreed to form a group to consider 'the core' and discern what might be done. Initiated by our convenor of elders and the Friend who had spoken originally about 'the core', it is hoped that other interested Friends will join. Especially we hope to recruit some of the vibrant younger Friends in our meeting, in whose capable hands the future of our meeting lies.

Secondly, the forward-looking GRASP Report's recommendations start with the vital matter of nominations, and so our Nominations Committee will also be invited to discern whether further simplifications to our processes and roles might be explored.

The Report draws attention to the Nominations workshop held at the end of 2020. After this a short video was made to reflect and make the most of the workshop findings and to promote the possibility of involvement in nominations and service as joyful and fulfilling. Here's the link to the video, which ends in a catchy song with the words:

Meetings go round and round
Young laughter's lovely sound
New members hear the call
It all comes back to us all ...

We'll find that when we serve
Satisfaction's in the curve
With joy and love and fun
The meeting goes round and round.

<https://youtu.be/Yo9xJdvGc9o>

The GRASP Report offers ideas to meetings about simplifying our structures and processes, in order to reinvigorate us: by simplifying, to free time and spiritual energy. GRASP itself cannot change anything. Only meetings themselves can do that. But how much *will* is there for the changes that are needed to sustain our Society into the future?

How unexpected and thought-provoking it is, then, to find ourselves at LBM approaching the situation from the other end, 'back to front' so to speak. Perhaps *starting* with the core of Quakerism might fill us with the *will* to simplify? And then perhaps, "where there's a will, there's a way"?

Rosie Roberts, New Earswick Meeting, June 2021

Proposed Quaker Pilgrimage Relay to COP26

Friends from Craven and Keighley Area Meeting are considering participating in a pilgrimage prompted by the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference, to be held in Glasgow from 1 to 12 November 2021. The idea of the pilgrimage was proposed by Friends in Norwich to bear witness to our testimonies and raise awareness in the community of Quaker concern for climate justice. Their vision is of a relay between Quaker meetings, with Friends walking, cycling or travelling by public transport or canal from one local meeting to the next across their Area Meeting before, hopefully, linking to their neighbouring AM. This will enable large numbers of Friends to participate without it being too great an undertaking for any individual.

Craven and Keighley Friends would like to know whether any other Area Meetings in Yorkshire might be interested in taking part. The route and timing are flexible as there is an awareness that it may not be possible to link meetings all the way from Somerset and East Kent to Glasgow. Parts of the pilgrimage can happen asynchronously. The important thing is publicity and consciousness raising. Shorter walks/rides across one or more AMs any time between now and November can be recorded as part of this pilgrimage. Friends are encouraged to organise activities to raise awareness of the issues locally. Over the coming months we are

urged to participate in a campaign of letter-writing to the Prime Minister, participating world leaders and people of influence, and each Area Meeting is asked to prepare a single letter which can be passed like a baton to join with letters from all participating meetings to be delivered in Glasgow, where there is to be a Quaker presence at COP26.

Extinction Rebellion (XR) and the Young Christians Climate Network have also arranged pilgrimages to COP26 and their plans are further advanced. Some Quaker Meetings are already engaged in offering them hospitality. See <https://caminotocop.com> and <https://www.yccn.uk>. However, there is some support for a distinctly Quaker initiative.

Should you want further information please contact the organiser in Norwich, Peter Belton, Email peter.belton2@ntlworld.com. Should you be interested in participating, please contact Liz Watson in Skipton, Email beam.watson@gmail.com

QIY and racial justice

As agreed at our meeting of QiY in January, a small group of Friends will be acting as a co-ordinating group for information about racial justice activities undertaken by Quakers throughout the region. Ruth McTighe will email a link F/friend in each area meeting about a month before the next QIY meeting for any updates and will present a brief report at the meeting. A copy of the report will be placed on the QIY website.

Our question for reflection is:

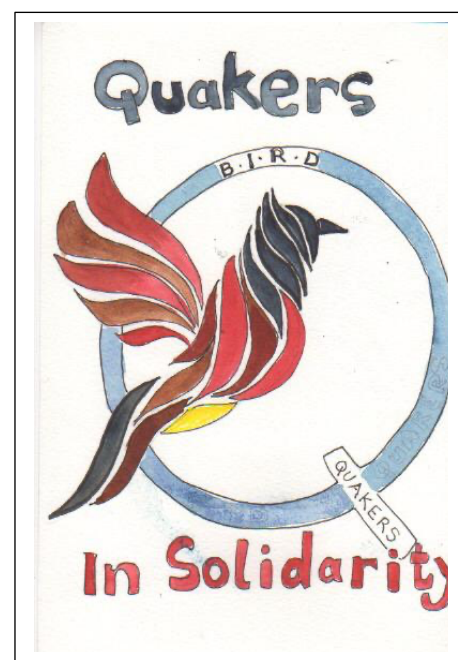
Are you going to Yearly Meeting Gathering? Even if you aren't, you can still engage in the spiritual preparation. One of the three themes is "Anti-racism - our Quaker journey". On page 5 of the document *Preparing for Yearly Meeting* is a list of resources to help in your spiritual preparation. Choose one of these and consider carefully its implications. <https://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/preparing-for-yearly-meeting-2021>

Yearly Meeting Gathering will be online between 31 July and 8 August, with some preparation sessions in the previous week. Booking is now open and is free of charge! Further information and online booking at <https://www.quaker.org.uk/ym>

Stephan Ball, Sheffield, Ruth McTighe, Barnsley, Rosemary Roberts, York, Susan Robson, Leeds.

Campaign to stop the University of Huddersfield delivering MSc in Security Services to Bahrain's Royal Academy of Policing

Most Yorkshire Friends will know that Quaker Roots is a Quaker Recognised Body, formed in 2019 as a community of Friends building a creative, vibrant and radical Quaker response to the Defence and Security Equipment International (DSEI) arms fair. There was a strong presence at DSEI 2019: www.quaker-roots.org.uk.



Since early 2020 Friends from Quaker Roots in West Yorkshire have also been campaigning, in conjunction with the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD), to stop the University of Huddersfield delivering an MSc to Bahrain's Royal Academy of Policing (RAP). This is because in February 2020 ten Bahraini political prisoners alleged they were tortured at the RAP (the same building where the MSc is delivered), with a number also alleging being sexually assaulted. BIRD has provided Roots with verbatim testimony from those prisoners. The testimonies are gut-wrenching (see some shown on placards in the photo). One of the University's own students fled Bahrain after being tortured in 2016, but the University seems deaf to his witness. Many human rights organisations condemn the lack of human rights in Bahrain.

Freedom of Information requests (sent by BIRD) revealed that the University due diligence conducted before the course was based on an outdated 2016 Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) report and a

cursory 2013 BBC profile. The fees generated for the University from delivering the MSc have been calculated at over £1m. Claims that the University is supporting UK government attempts to influence the Bahraini regime are not borne out in responses to BIRD's Freedom of Information requests: the FCO has said the government was not consulted before the course was initiated.

Roots Friends have written to Bob Cryan, the Vice Chancellor (V-C) of the University, asking for the course to be dropped, but he has not responded. Concerns have also been raised with our local MPs. Roots Friends, as the local arm of the campaign in Huddersfield, have been holding vigils at the University gates when Covid restrictions allow.

Roots, of course, are not alone in this: BIRD has been campaigning strongly. Paul Scriven, who sits in the House of Lords, has raised concerns in the House and there has been press coverage in the Huddersfield Examiner (Yorkshire Live online), the Yorkshire Post and the Times.

The campaign needs now to be escalated. BIRD has established that the University and College Union also oppose the course, not least with legitimate concerns about the safety of colleagues.

We hope that more Friends, other churches and organisations will join us, writing to the V-C and lobbying. The next vigil will be on **Saturday 26 June** at the University gate opposite Zetland Road at 11am.

Heather Bacon, Ann Bettys, Robin Bowles, Peter Bowles, Mike Casey, Susan Clarkson, Helen Meads & Arthur Pritchard.

University of Huddersfield - Bahrain Royal Academy of Policing Briefing

Summary of campaign

- Since 2018, the University of Huddersfield has been [providing](#) an exclusive **MSc in Security Science** to officers at Bahrain's **Royal Academy of Policing (RAP)**.
- In February, 10 Bahraini political prisoners alleged they were **tortured at the RAP**, with a number also alleging being sexually assaulted.
- The Director of the RAP, [Brigadier General Fawaz Al Hasan](#), was previously Director of Muharraq Police Station in Bahrain, where female human rights activists [Najah Yusuf](#) and [Ebtisam Al Saegh](#) were tortured and sexually assaulted in 2017.

- Since the revelations were published by [The Times](#) and [The Yorkshire Post](#), many others have come forward with similar testimonies, including individuals on death row, [juveniles under the age of 18](#) and [UK-based refugees](#).
- Ahmed Al Qassab, a Huddersfield student and refugee who fled Bahrain after being tortured in 2016, has written to the university asking them to end their ties with Bahrain.
- In October 2020, over 40 global academics [wrote](#) an open letter to the University calling on them to suspend teaching in
- However, the University has [doubled down](#) and refused to drop the course or even discuss their relationship with the RAP, citing the UK Government's friendly relations with Bahrain.

A closer look

Faced with the intransigence of the University management, BIRD have intensified their research into the University's relationship with Bahrain using the Freedom of Information act and other sources. BIRD have found that:

- Despite claims that "the delivery of this course is closely aligned to the mission advocated by the UK Government's Department of International Trade," FOI requests sent by BIRD and parliamentary questions asked by [Chris Law](#), have revealed no communication between the university and either the Department of International Trade (DIT) or the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) prior to the establishment of the course.
- Despite claims that the university retains regular contact with the British Embassy in Manama, FOI requests sent by BIRD reveal that the University ignored advice from the British ambassador that they acknowledge the worrying nature of the allegations presented to them by BIRD
- FOI requests sent by BIRD regarding the University's human rights due diligence conducted before establishing the course reveal that they relied solely on an outdated [2016 FCO report](#) and a cursory [2013 BBC profile](#) on Bahrain before agreeing to provide the course.
- BIRD estimates the course has generated at over £1million for the University since its inauguration, based on [standard MSc rates](#) for international students at Huddersfield
- Vice-Chancellor Bob Cryan is the second most highly paid university official in Yorkshire, [pocketing](#) £385,000 a year.

The total lack of government oversight in the provision of advanced security training to an institution associated with torture and other severe human rights violations is deeply concerning. It demonstrates Bahrain's willingness to exploit the Government's already weak human rights safeguards through the private market.

New Quaker Office in Leeds

We've opened a new hub in Leeds as part of a move to become less London-centred, and we need your help naming it, says Juliet Prager, BYM's Deputy Recording Clerk.

Quakers in Britain have set up a new base for national Quaker work in Leeds as part of a five-year pilot to test a different way of working.

A small number of staff, including Juliet, are already using the office, although COVID restrictions mean that the site won't be fully open until later on in the year. In the meantime – and until you can visit us properly – we're welcoming Friends' suggestions on what we should name it!

The office is attached to Carlton Hill Quaker Meeting House in Leeds and is an important milestone in realising Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees' vision of becoming a 'simple church supported by a simple charity to reinvigorate Quakerism'. A key part of this is to become an organisation less focused on and centred in London.

Over the last few years many Friends have seen how local development workers based across Britain have enabled BYM to be better aware of and more responsive to the needs of Quaker communities. Friends House (and Swarthmoor Hall) will continue to be important centres for Quaker work, and the Leeds office will build on this.

As well as providing accommodation for staff to work and meet with Friends, the aim is to provide a base for action and work with Quaker communities across the north of England as well as providing more opportunities to employ people outside of London. With good public transport access, there will be space for national committee meetings and to hold events in the meeting house next door.

Juliet hopes to have a proper opening event to start welcoming visitors to the hub later this year. In the meantime, there's just the small matter of what to call it. 'Friends House North', and 'Quaker Hub Yorkshire' are just two of the names that have been suggested. But do you have a better idea? If so, please let us know by emailing MCS@quaker.org.uk

Quaker Life Local Development Worker for Yorkshire

Hello Friends! As you may already have heard, I am Bridget Holtom and I am the new Quaker Life Local Development Worker for Yorkshire. I grew up in Hebden Bridge (some of you will know my parents Cathy and Mark well), and I went to Yorkshire Friends Holiday School and enjoyed

link groups in my younger years! I've been living in Scotland for 12 years where I have been a member of Portobello and Musselburgh meeting in Edinburgh.



I am excited to be alongside you in various ways, supporting the spiritual, practical and social nurture of Quaker communities in Yorkshire. The Local Development role is designed to be responsive to the needs and requests from meetings and individuals, so do get in contact if you would appreciate some accompaniment in all the amazing work you are already doing.

On a personal note, I am looking forward to being closer to my parents and twin sister and although I will miss the sea so I will be itching to get to the Yorkshire coast to do lots of swimming!

I will be based in Sheffield from the end of summer onwards with regular work from the Leeds Hub. My working hours will be Monday to Thursday 9-5pm with weekend and evening work as required. I am looking forward to meeting (or seeing you again) soon.

Bridget Holtom

The Joy of Creativity: a 'lockdown' journey

Six months before the first 'lockdown' in autumn 2019 Beverley Friends celebrated the completion of a major refurbishment of our 1960s well-loved Meeting House. By March 2020, things were going well, everyone



seems to love the 'new', airy space. We were resettling; the place was buzzing, lettings were almost at the maximum we could accommodate. We had decided that as part of our 'community offer' and aware of some 'talents and gifts' amongst us, we would hold an arts and crafts exhibition called 'The Joy of Creativity', in mid-2020.

Of course, at that point, on March 23rd, to be precise, these optimistic plans went firmly on hold.

Disappointment and sadness led us to retreat into our shells for a while. Some of us were already taking refuge in the digital world; discovering in short order that Zoom didn't only refer to cameras. Then one Friend said '*Why don't we hold our show on-line by putting stuff on our website?*'



Soundings were taken, Friends felt it was 'worth a try'. One Friend with the right experience agreed to curate and within a few weeks seventeen Friends were offering some of their work.

What have we learned? That there are many more talented Friends than

any of us had thought. We discovered that our website felt somehow more joyous too!

You can see our exhibition for yourself at
<http://beverleyquakers.org.uk/>

Look for 'The Joy of Creativity' Tab.

Photographs of Beverley Meeting House by Phil Entwistle and



Brenda Rigby, Painting 'Sun' by Rosi Robinson, Cushion by Anita Kay

Brian Fellowes

Independence from America Event 4th July 2021 2 to 3.30 pm

There will be a small presence at the Gates of Menwith Hill but most will join on Zoom. Invitations from mail@themhac.uk

A chance to hear a little more about peace work here in Yorkshire, explaining a little more about the lethal nature of the Golf Balls and calling for more accountability for American bases..

PROGRAMME of MEETING of Quakers in Yorkshire

Saturday 17 July 2021

To be held online via Zoom. Friends are asked to declare their intention to participate. Please register in advance using the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwtd-qqrD0tH9w2EtbnzbzRrbAKWbZ8VPe7>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

10.00 Meeting open for login

10.30 Meeting for Worship

11.00 Testimonies

11.05 Welcome from Clerks

Explanation of how the meeting will be run.

11.10 Appointments and releases

11.15 Annual Report of QiY Trustees, and Glenthorne

David Olver will present the report and accounts for 2020. Roy Love, Co-Clerk of Glenthorne Trustees will report on Glenthorne.

11.45 Racial Justice Our standing item on work by individuals and meetings in Yorkshire. Rosie Roberts and Susan Robson will report.

11.50 Preparing for DSEI Members of the Yorkshire Roots team will report to us on the plans for action at the International Arms Fair to be held from 14-17 September at the Excel Centre in London.

12.20 New office in Leeds and Local Development Worker

Paul Parker, BYM Recording Clerk, will update us on these initiatives.

12.50 Closing minute

12.55 Notices

Note: a young people's event will be held concurrently on a separate Zoom link. If you know of anyone who might be interested they should contact Lee Lester for more information: Leel@quaker.org.uk

Glenthorne Annual Report 2020 and update

As with many other organisations in the hospitality sector, the year 2020 was one of the most difficult experienced. We were open only from the beginning of February until the 20th March when the national 'lockdown' to control the spread of the COVID-19 virus began. Despite participating in the Government's Job Retention Scheme, in which trustees agreed to top up the 20% of salaries not covered by the Scheme, and receipt of several grants, we ended the financial year December 2019-November 2020 with an operational deficit of £96,837. Clearly, essential maintenance and basic overheads had to continue, as did the work of the manager, Laura Tortosa, particularly in ensuring that Glenthorne was benefiting from all available support, in administering the Job Retention Scheme including continued payment of salaries, and in responding to guest queries on bookings. Quakers in Yorkshire Trustees also agreed to defer loan repayments due for 2019 and 2020, in connection with exit from the Pension Trust several years ago, though this does extend the loan period.

Our Friend in Residence, Terry Winterton, has kept 'F/friends of Glenthorne' in touch with regular Newsletters and at an early stage set up a regular weekday Zoom meeting for Worship from 09.15 to 09.35, which has continued into 2021. Unfortunately, the 'lock-down' has also meant the suspension of the Welcome project which provides holidays for asylum seekers and refugees. We look forward to this recommencing as soon as possible.

Towards the end of 2020 Trustees agreed to a re-design of the garden, but the continuation of the lock-down into 2021 has restricted this development. Essential maintenance in the meantime was carried out by a combination of trustees and furloughed staff voluntarily (it not being part of their normal work). The latter, plus the sterling work of Laura Tortosa throughout, has been very much appreciated by Trustees. Laura has also kept in close touch with other residential Quaker Centres and the Quiet Company at Friends House for support and exchange of information, and with hospitality industry websites.

The beginning of 2021 saw the continuation of the lock-down, confirming the cancellation of existing bookings and short courses. The manager ensured that Glenthorne continued to participate in the government's job support scheme, and it was a great relief eventually to be open once again for guests, even if only at restricted capacity, on 17th May. Expectation of moving to normal capacity on 21st June has been dampened, however, by the extension of restrictions for a further four weeks. The financial forecast for the year-end on November 30th is for

around breakeven, depending on when all restrictions are lifted. This should still leave sufficient reserves, however, to cover the closed period December 2021-January 2022 and the start of the new season. An important part of this ability to see the crisis through has been the very generous response from those 'friends of Glenthorne' who contributed to our appeal for donations earlier this year, with a total of £18,558. For the trustees such a sum is truly a mark of how much Glenthorne means to so many former and current guests, and is a humbling and heartening reminder of the importance of the responsibilities which they carry even in the best of times. They and the staff whose jobs it has helped to save, are most grateful not only for the amount but also for its symbolism in demonstrating how much Glenthorne is loved and appreciated as a Quaker centre in the Lake District and north of England generally. We look forward to welcoming Yorkshire Friends and Attenders once again, before too long.

*Roy Love and Hugh Roberts, Co-clerks, Glenthorne Quaker Centre,
Grasmere, Cumbria*