



Brighton Friends News

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www.brightonquakers.net

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Hiroshima commemorations

On Friday August 6 Brighton Quakers joined Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) to commemorate 75 years since the terrible atomic bombing of Hiroshima. There were two events held to remember victims of the bombing at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Flowers and a wreath made from origami peace cranes were laid at the Peace Statue, and a two minute silence was held. Rebecca Johnson of International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons and Vice President of CND spoke about Ireland, Nigeria and Niue who ratified the ban on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons on Hiroshima Day itself this year. This means that the treaty is now only 7 countries short of the 50 needed for the ban to take effect.



Later in the evening the main commemoration was held at Queen's Park, which was well attended by Brighton Quakers. Speakers were the mayor, Alan Robbins, Jenny Engledow of WILPF and a speaker from CND.

Helen Ledger explained the story behind the Peace Cranes, and twenty cranes were hung on the Commemorative Peace Tree. Valerie Eliades, a local Buddhist, led an extremely moving silent walk around the pond in the park, and the event concluded with two minute silence beside the candle-lit Peace Tree.

Helen Ledger

(Ed note: Please see back page for the story of peace cranes)

FOOD BANK -- Please Remember -- FOOD BANK --- FOOD BANK

Introduction to Peace Education, June - July 2020

You could have been forgiven, during the UK's Covid-19 lockdown, for thinking we were facing not a crisis of 2020 and the future, so much as reliving World War 2. The language of front lines, heroic sacrifice, "We'll Meet Again", the invisible enemy and, where PPE was concerned, make do and mend, showed how official public discourse is more attuned to military strategy and rhetoric than, say, metaphors of caring, healing and working together for the common good. In the midst of this, instead of celebrating May Day and the world-wide contribution and cause of essential workers, as would have been highly appropriate, the UK was celebrating VE Day, complete with Spitfires and orotund Churchillian nostalgia.

In this context Woodbrooke, and Quaker Peace and Social Witness Quakers in Britain worked in partnership to offer an online course, 'Introduction to Peace Education'. It was, for those of us fortunate enough to be signed up, an oasis of sanity, pure oxygen. As well, it was a practical toolbox for developing teaching and learning in a way that will help us face emerging twenty first century challenges, like the one we were all immersed in at the time of the course.

Its satisfying logic and design are clear from the beginning. The course starts with inner peace: fostering mindfulness and mental health, dealing positively with stress, and understanding the essentials of neuroscience and evolutionary psychology, with regard to the workings of the brain, emotions and reason.

It proceeds to conflict management and peace building in relationships – through understanding empathy, and helping students develop language and awareness around emotions, as well as skills of negotiation and peer mediation. This section ranges from positive one-to-one interactions, up to building educational and broader organisational cultures that support peace and restorative justice.

These two initial sections are the foundation for looking at peace more broadly - at the equality, social justice, environmental sustainability and fair access to resources, without which peace cannot be maintained. Topics we engaged with on this occasion were the nature of systemic and cultural (as well as direct) violence; understanding and opposing racism, (timely as the course coincided with Black Lives Matter protests globally and the tearing down of statues honouring figures who profited from slavery), and non-violent opposition to militarism and the arms trade. A distinctive strength of the course here, for me, is the extent of the detail to which anyone so minded can go in engaging with more technical subjects such as human rights, international law, the Geneva conventions, and the ethics of war.

Throughout the course theory is assimilated into teaching and learning practice, and the material is presented in a way that encourages reflection on and interaction with each learner's individual needs and experience. In a brief review it is impossible to do justice to the depth of engagement with the issues and marshaling of relevant sources and detail. The presenters, Isabel Cartwright, and Ellis Brooks (in the pre-recorded segments), somehow managed to make all this richness and relevance seem personal, easy to assimilate into your day to day practice and enjoyable to work with. It is very hard to say anything about this course without risking embarrassingly unQuakerly superlatives.

An abiding memory: entering the Zoom breakout rooms after presentations during webinars, seeing the gobsmacked, slightly euphoric faces, the smiles and quick words that acknowledged we were all involved in something very important for each of us personally and, dare I say it, for the world.

This feels like the basis of the new knowledge and skills we all need, not just for schools but for life. I used to be a teacher but in recent years have worked more with businesses, corporations and NGOs – and this course would be as practically useful in these areas as in the education system. Classroom without walls. Peace and justice. With our wise leaders, at the time of writing, clearly revving up for a new cold war (or more) the time is now.

Malcolm Evans, 22 July 2020

What I've been doing during the lockdown

The Dream: A Covid Collaboration

I have a long-standing interest in electronic music and digital arts that began in the early 90s with artists such as Aphex Twin, Autechre and Black Dog. When lockdown began I thought it would be interesting to try a remote collaboration, working together with other artists to create something that kept our creativity alive. I was inspired by the track "Such Great Heights" by The Postal Service, which was a collaboration by independent music artists, mediated by the US postal service, hence the name.

I put the word out on www.joinmyband.co.uk and eventually got three responses: Daniel Kiff, synths, sequencing and production; Graeme Soady, guitars; and Callum Lamond, and we set to work. I contributed harmonica and video. Callum eventually dropped out due to outside pressures; (he has a partner working in the NHS). Daniel laid down the initial track of percussion and synthesizers, then Graeme added some guitars, and I added some harmonica and more synths. We did all this using studio software on our laptops: we have never met face-to-face!

Finally, Daniel tidied the whole thing up and I created a video, edited together from some stills I took around East Brighton. Was it successful? Judge for yourself! You can view the finished video here: https://youtu.be/v_bDVfShA5I. I think what we were getting at was the alienated, dreamlike experience of being confined by lockdown, but see what you think.

Jason Evans

Black Lives Matter

This is my contribution to the Black Lives Matter movement, offered free of charge to my listeners. My words are set to the tune Wayfaring Stranger.

<https://quakeyjase.bandcamp.com/track/song-for-allies-black-lives-matter>

Please share widely!

Jason Evans

Kindness

Before you know what kindness really is
you must lose things,
feel the future dissolve in a moment
like salt in a weaned broth.
What you held in your hand,
what you counted and carefully saved,
all this must go so you know
how desolate the landscape can be
between the regions of kindness.
How you ride and ride
thinking the bus will never stop,
the passengers eating maize and chicken
will stare out the window forever.

Before you learn the tender gravity of kindness,
you must travel where the Indian in a white poncho
lies dead by the side of the road.
You must see how this could be you,
how he too was someone
who journeyed through the night with plans
and the simple breath that kept him alive.

Before you know kindness as the deepest thing inside,
you must know sorrow as the other deepest thing.
You must wake up with sorrow.
You must speak to it till your voice
catches the tread of all sorrows
and you see the size of the cloth.

Then it is only kindness that makes sense anymore,
only kindness that ties your shoes
and sends you out into the day to mail letters and purchase bread.
Only kindness that raises its head
from the crowd of the world to say
it is I you have been looking for,
and then goes with you everywhere
like a shadow or a friend.

Naomi Shihab Nye

Submitted by Terrie Adams

The best portion of a good man's life is his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love. William Wordsworth, poet (7 Apr 1770-1850)

Kindness is always fashionable. Amelia Barr, novelist (29 Mar 1831-1919)

Two Book Reviews

The Universal Christ by Richard Rohr

This is a book that I have recently read and referenced in my ministry at Meeting for Worship on July 26. Richard takes a cosmic view of Christ and much enlarges the concept beyond what is usually understood, especially the narrow evangelical story. Richard is a Franciscan and writes from a Catholic perspective, but don't let that put you off: in Catholic circles this is dynamite stuff and way off the piste of orthodoxy. The interesting thing for me is that his conclusions about a much bolder and wider Christian message are not out of line with Quaker ideas, especially compared to the writings of, say, Lewis Benson. I know some Friends struggle with notions of Christ, coloured by contact with previous religious groups that might be quite dogmatic, but this is not a dogmatic book and if you have any interest in unpacking and reclaiming the Christ story, including a generous cosmic perspective, I suggest this is an interesting and, at times, provocative place to start.

Evolution 2.0 by Perry Marshall

One of the joys for me of Quaker good sense is the lack of difficulty reconciling science and religion, in contrast with the tired popular narrative that these spheres of human enquiry are destined to be on a collision course. In fact, this likely was untrue in the often cited case of Galileo Galilei and the Catholic Church. (In actual fact, it seems much more likely that he provoked the Aristotelean old-guard in academia rather than the Church itself, but that's another story.) Friends who might have no particular fondness for either extreme of Young-Earth Creationism or Militant Atheistic Neo-Darwinism might find some comfort in the alternative story presented in this book. Perry argues that the Neo-Darwinists (like Richard Dawkins) might be as wrong as the Creationists, not only about God but about the science itself. He approaches Evolution from an engineer's perspective, applying information theory and sharing vital stuff that cells do, that hasn't made it into the public debate, but is well known to working geneticists. These details put evolution on a very different footing than the simplistic version pushed by Dawkins.

Health warning: this book does contain scientific concepts, but is written for the interested layperson. The startling conclusion is the possibility that God is a coder, and a good one!

Jason Evans

A long-term relationship brings tensions as well as fulfilment. If your relationship with your partner is under strain, seek help in understanding the other's point of view and in exploring your own feelings, which may be powerful and destructive. Consider the wishes and feelings of any children involved, and remember their enduring need for love and security. Seek God's guidance. If you undergo the distress of separation or divorce, try to maintain some compassionate communication so that arrangements can be made with the minimum of bitterness.

Quaker Faith & Practice Advices and Queries No. 25

Mystery plant

This plant is in the rear section of Meeting House garden, near the cycle racks. It is about 6 feet tall and has cones on top of tall stems with bright dark berries

The gardeners do not know what it is. Do we have any readers who might be able to help?

Please send any information to brightonquakernewsletter@gmail.com

Our garden is still growing, as it is tended to by our wonderful gardening team. To see more pictures of our garden go to <https://www.brightonquakers.co.uk> and click on the Twitter link on the right-hand side, @BrightonQuakers. Scroll down and you will see some beautiful photos.



Inter Faith Contact Group (IFCG)



Monthly Interfaith Prayers are now being held via Zoom. We share inspirational poems and spiritual readings - Words of Connection. The next prayer hour will be on **Tuesday September 1 at 7 - 8pm.**

All welcome of any faith or none.
www.interfaithcontactgroup.com

If you would like to join please email
bqclerk@outlook.com

Light in the Lockdown – A Documentary about Faith, Community and Life in Lockdown

The Covid-19 crisis has profoundly affected us all. Many faith groups have responded heroically, even though the doors of their places of worship have been forced to close. The feeding and nurturing of people in our City and the growing awareness of the importance of spirit at this moment has been captured in a brilliant 17 minute documentary. Commissioned by the IFCG, and created by the ethical film-maker, Sarah West, it casts a compassionate light on Brighton and Hove and its people of faith. It is a great snapshot of our City at a special and tender moment in time.

You can access the film on the links above and also by clicking on this link:
[Light in the Lockdown](#)

*Rev Anthea Ballam
Chair IFCG*

Back Lives Matter (BLM) – some personal thoughts

Racism - are we Quakers part of the solution? Or part of the problem?

Following the death of George Floyd and the world-wide BLM activism that followed, some of us have been meeting as the White Privilege Group to think together about our fragility as White people in a White-majority faith group. We have read and listened to a lot of materials, which have brought home to us how complex and wide-ranging the issues are that are raised.

There was a suggestion at the last Meeting for Worship for Business (MfWfB) that we should have a Special MfWfB to discuss it, but this was not agreed. I hope it will be the next time we meet.

The Friends of Color, a North American organisation of Black Quakers, have published an "Outgoing Epistle". It concludes by asking all Quakers to heed a Call to Action and poses five questions. The first of these is:

- *What is the Spirit leading me to do about the historic and ongoing racial pandemic across my meeting, my community, my work environment and my country?*

I realise that the question generates further questions:

- *Do we agree that there is an "ongoing racial pandemic" in our Meeting? If so, how does it manifest itself?*
- *What do we understand by "institutional racism", and do we think it happens among Quakers - in our Meeting, and in the wider Quaker community?*

To see the full text of the Epistle, go to <https://www.fgcquaker.org/news/outgoing-epistle-2020-virtual-pre-gathering-friends-color-and-their-families>

I suggest that we all read at least this document before we next discuss the topic.

If anyone wants to discuss these issues with me, please feel free to contact me, by email or on my mobile. I will be away from 13th -24th August.

In Friendship, Penny Cloutte

Foodbank

I was deeply concerned to read in the 'i' Paper recently that in the U.K. 3,000 children have been admitted to hospital this year with malnourishment. We would like to invite people to donate more to the food bank collection at our Meeting House, which is open Wednesday and Saturdays 9am till 1 pm. Terry, our Warden, has agreed to collect the food donated and pass it on to Fair Trade, or cheques can be made out to St. Cuthman's PCC. The money will go to the Whitehawk Food Bank.

Moushka Cornu

FOOD BANK -- Please Remember -- FOOD BANK --- FOOD BANK

Re-opening Meeting House

The Meeting Room is now open from 10.00 to 12.00 on Wednesday and Saturday mornings for private worship. At the moment no other rooms are available, neither are the toilets.

We hope to re-open Meeting House for hirers on Tuesday September 1.

In due course we plan to open Meeting House on Sunday mornings for a blended Meeting for Worship at 10.30am. There will be friends in the Meeting Room and friends on Zoom. With a one metre social distance we can accommodate 40 friends in the Meeting Room and 15 in the balcony. We plan to purchase the equipment necessary for blended meetings.

In the meanwhile we will continue, as we have done over lockdown, with our Zoom Meetings on Sundays.

Face coverings will need to be worn in the Meeting House.

Finance and Property Working Group

True faith is not assurance, but the readiness to go forward experimentally, without assurance. It is a sensitivity to things not yet known. Quakerism should not claim to be a religion of certainty, but a religion of uncertainty; it is this which gives us our special affinity to the world of science. For what we apprehend of truth is limited and partial, and experience may set it all in a new light; if we too easily satisfy our urge for security by claiming that we have found certainty, we shall no longer be sensitive to new experiences of truth. For who seeks that which he believes that he has found? Who explores a territory which he claims already to know?

Charles F Carter, 1971, Quaker Faith & Practice 26.39

Coronavirus - Staying in Touch with each other

Message from Overseers

During this period of Coronavirus we are trying to keep in touch with each other in our Meeting. Some people may feel more isolated than others. If you do need help or would just like Friends to hold you in the Light, please contact the Overseers. If finances are a problem we may be able to help and have access to grants.

Overseers - Ann Howard, Jane Rosenberg, Terry Byrne, Chris East, Stella East, Mary McCullough, Alan Stratford, Barbara Barber

bqoverseers@outlook.com

Never, never be afraid to do what's right, especially if the well-being of a person or animal is at stake. Society's punishments are small compared to the wounds we inflict on our soul when we look the other way.

Martin Luther King Jr.

Appeals

In these strange times we cannot put donations in our Appeal Box. Our chosen charities could lose out much needed donations. To save our hardworking treasurer any more work can you please donate to your chosen appeals through their websites.

August Appeal – Freedom from Torture

Freedom from Torture (FFT) works with survivors of torture by offering a range of services from several centres in the UK. They provide therapy, individual support, creative groups, physical therapy and practical advice. For people seeking asylum they can produce medico-legal reports which provide evidence of torture. Referrals come from all over the world. The most received were from Sri Lanka but they also come from other countries such as Iran, Afghanistan, Nigeria, DRC, Turkey, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria and Sudan . . . some are children and young people, sometimes unaccompanied.

There are six Freedom from Torture centres working with torture survivors across the UK. In the early 2000s, a change in government policy to disperse asylum seekers around the UK meant that FFT needed to adapt by opening centres in key 'dispersal areas'. They also speak out against torture; report on what is really happening in other countries, and campaign for the rights of survivors. FFT provide specialist training for professionals working with survivors of torture. The needs are endless so fundraising is constant and very creative.

Our appeal this month is for general funding. You can donate directly via their website www.freedomfromtorture.org.

By the way, they can also recycle jewellery, coins etc. to raise funds. Have a look at their website.

Jane Rosenberg

The sons of torture victims make good terrorists.

André Malraux, novelist, adventurer, art historian, and statesman (1901-1976)

Community in Action

We are in lockdown but our community is still 'in action'

Coffee Mornings via Zoom on Fridays at 11.00 am. If you would like to join please email bqclerk@outlook.com

Brighton Young Quakers are a group of 18-30ish year olds who are Quaker, Quaker-ish or Quaker-interested. As we are unable to meet in person we will meet every Tuesday at 18:30 on Zoom, for some worship and a catch up. For details and to obtain the Zoom link, email brightonyaf@gmail.com. You can find the link on our Facebook group or our WhatsApp group, which can be joined via this link: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/IqONGmLatpx9pWJtKPdDEa>

Matt Alton

Being Friends Together

The East and West groups continue to get together regularly on Zoom. A third Being Friends Together group started recently but it is not too late to be part of the group. Being Friends Together is a good opportunity to get to know Friends better, learn more about Quakerism and share spiritual journeys. If you would like to join please contact the elders via bqelders@outlook.com

Clerk's mailing list - if you are not on the list and would like to be, please contact Sheila Boyer at bqclerk@outlook.com

Brighton Meeting diary

Meetings for Worship

Regular Meetings for Worship

Brighton Meeting House is temporarily closed but we have an on-line Meeting for Worship via Zoom on Sundays - 10.30-11.30 am.

If you would like to join please email bqelders@outlook.com

Children's Meetings are now being held via Zoom at 4pm on Thursdays. **August 20**

September 3 & 17

This will change when the Meeting House reopens and regular Meetings restart. If you would like to join please contact Helen Ledger or bqclerk@outlook.com.

Workshops and community events

Open Meeting

We can no longer have Open Meeting in the Quiet Room but after Meeting for Worship via Zoom on Sundays, we have the opportunity to go into 'breakout rooms' with 3 or 4 other people to have an informal chat about the Meeting before we go back to the main meeting for final goodbyes.

Meetings for Quaker business

Meeting for Worship for Business (MWB)

- currently via Zoom.

The next **MWB** is on **Thursday September 3** at 6.30 pm. Items for MWB must be sent to the Clerk at least one week before the meeting, i.e. **Thursday August 27. The only exceptions are emergencies that arise during the week before MWB.** Please email bqclerk@outlook.com or write to clerks c/o The Meeting House.

If you are a newcomer or attender and would like to join us, please contact the Clerk, who will be able to explain the procedures. If you are not comfortable with Zoom please contact the Elders at bqelders@outlook.com

Area Meetings for Worship for Business in 2020

Saturday September 19 at 10.30 am via Zoom

If you would like to join the above Business Meetings please email bqclerk@outlook.com

Regional Meeting

Saturday September 26 at 10.30 via Zoom, 'Holding Difficult Conversations in Meetings' with Ivan Hutnik and Restoring Relations Team.

More information next month.

Notices

Notices to be read out after Meeting for Worship should be sent to brightonquakernotices@gmail.com. The deadline for notices is Friday evening. Please note that Notices are still read out at the end of the Zoom Meeting for Worship on Sundays.

Newsletter Contributions

The editor wants the newsletter to reflect the diversity of thinking and experience of members and attenders. If this is to be your newsletter, we need your input: thoughts on the meeting, a passage that has inspired you, a book review, a drawing, something to share with others that might help us grow in community and spirit. Please send your contributions to the editor, Jackie Robinson at brightonquakernewsletter@gmail.com

The deadline for the **September** newsletter is **Tuesday September 1**. The editor has the right to edit contributions or hold them over until the next issue, particularly where this is necessary in order to avoid blank pages.

It is the responsibility of contributors to decide how much of their personal details should be given. To receive the newsletter by email or post, please contact the editor.

Peace Cranes

Sadako Sasaki lived in Hiroshima, Japan and was 2 years old in August 1945 when the atomic bomb was dropped. She and her family managed to escape, although her grandmother ran back to fetch something from their house and was never seen again.

Sadako had a normal, healthy childhood and was one of the best runners in her school. When she was 12 she was diagnosed with leukaemia, a cancer which affected many children who had been exposed to radiation from the atom bomb.

A friend told her about an old Japanese legend which says that if you fold 1,000 origami cranes, you will be granted a wish. The crane is a Japanese symbol of long life. She didn't always have origami paper, so she used whatever she could find - newspaper, medicine wrappings, and scraps of wrapping paper from get well gifts. It is thought that she folded over 1,000 cranes before she died. Sadako died peacefully in hospital in October 1955.

The children in her class raised money for a special memorial for Sadako and other children who had died due to the effects of the atomic bomb. They wrote and published a book about Sadako, and sent letters to schools all over Japan. The Children's Peace Monument was opened in the Peace Memorial Park, Hiroshima in 1958, on Children's Day, 5th May. The plaque at the bottom of the statue is a message from the children:

"This is our cry. This is our prayer. Peace in the world."

Every year, thousands of children come to the memorial and leave their own folded origami cranes in memory of children who have died because of war, and as a prayer for peace.

"I will write "peace" on your wings, and you will fly all over the world".



Adapted from www.activityvillage.co.uk

Click this link to
[learn how to fold an origami crane](#)

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