



Brighton Friends News

A Monthly Publication of Brighton Quaker Meeting

July 2020

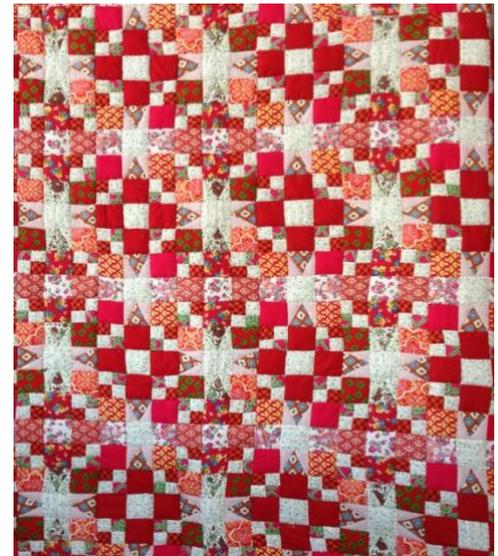
www.brightonquakers.net

Issue 308

Fair Trade Shop

The Fair Trade Shop at Brighton Marina has been open from 11 am to 5 pm since June 18. There are hand sanitisers at the entrance and we will be maintaining the 2 metre distance.

Our lovely producers in Kenya, India and Nepal continue to have an extremely challenging time, so, in order to try and support them with more orders, we'll be discounting a lot of the clothing. We pride ourselves on very good quality, hand loomed, natural fabric for clothing, which is very well made. Our prices are already extremely good value for the quality because we believe that Fair Trade should be accessible to all.



The shop is rarely crowded - indeed it's usually a haven of peace and calm - but if you're worried and vulnerable, and would like to book a private slot before 11 am or after 5 pm, please phone me on 07401 593574.



Let's hope the 'new normal' ushers in a fairer, more equitable and people-centred way of shopping.



See you soon!

Barbara Wilson

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

Living Adventurously

Quaker Meetings often have a selection of elderly, not to say venerable, people who faithfully come to Meeting for Worship every week, dispense wisdom and otherwise occupy their time with a little light volunteering and culture. Talking to these sprightly octogenarians can uncover amazing stories – this man spent many years in Nigeria teaching botany; this woman founded an orphanage in Uganda; that person taught the first biochemistry course in the USA, while his wife published cutting-edge treatises on psychology of sex; this one helped found the Asian University for Women, in Bangladesh.



An oft-quoted exhortation from George Fox, one of our founders, written in prison in 1656, may account for this. He said: 'in the living presence of God, be patterns, examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone.' I suspect this has given Quakers permission to quest, interact and learn in our individual ways. And, though 'cheerfully' meant 'courageously' at the time of writing, Quakers have invariably undertaken their journeys with gusto and enjoyment! One of our 'Advices' starts with a two-word imperative: 'Live adventurously.'

From mid seventeenth century until 1828, religious non-conformists were barred from parliament, from working in the civil and military services, from learning or teaching at English universities. So Quakers were brought up to be tradespeople and craftsmen. Diligent and sober, the companies they founded included Cadbury, Fry, Rowntree, Carr's and Huntley & Palmer biscuits, Clarke's shoes, Barclays and Lloyds banks, Bryant & May, and iron founders of the industrial revolution. Nowadays, there are still Quakers in business and the crafts, but also social workers, therapists, academics and activists. We helped start Oxfam, Amnesty International, Greenpeace and many smaller, more local charities and activist groups.

For people who have a rather 'inward' spiritual practice, sitting mainly in silence listening for the word of God and leadings of the Spirit, we get out there in the world a lot. Although our first concern is to cultivate an awareness of God and 'enter with reverence into communion with the Divine', this practice and the ensuing experience of connectedness with the rest of creation, lead us to roll up our sleeves and get involved with social issues. Maybe this is unusual for followers of a rather mystical Christian tradition, but I like to think it gives us the best of both worlds.

*Janet Shimmin,
Swarthmoor Quaker Meeting*

*This article is also published under 'Faith Viewpoint' in Westmorland Gazette.
Would this encourage you to write for your local papers?*

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What I've been doing during the lockdown

Kate Mackrell

I'm housesitting for a friend in Rugby. I've been: going vegan, eating the stinging nettles in the garden, zooming with Brighton Friends, cutting my hair with the lawnmower (well, the lawn scissors), and micromanaging water usage. You know the water that goes down the drain while you're waiting for it to run hot? I save it in a watering can and put it on the garden.

And LITTERPICKING! This is one of the highlights of my existence right now. I've been doing it most days since early April, and posting my adventures on Facebook, with pictures. Some of it is tedious (cigarette butts on chunky gravel, and broken glass); some of it is challenging (the beer can just visible and out of reach beyond the barbed wire fence); some is irritating (the carefully tied poop bags), but mostly it's a real pleasure.

I notice all the small things, and am blown away by their beauty. I was initially disappointed about not being locked down in Brighton, on the edge of Sheepcote Valley with a distant sea view. But I'm discovering that an ordinary Midlands town is also beautiful. I'm about ten minutes' walk from a path that goes beside a sheepy field and past a pond. There's also beauty along ordinary suburban streets – astonishing flowers, but also grass growing beside lampposts, and quirky dead leaves. For the first time in my life, I have noticed the small eggshells that birds are tossing out of their nests.



Then there's the thrill of the chase – particularly on a windy day, where litter can blow out of my bag as quickly as I get it in. Litter is also really good at hiding – it's great to find stuff that's clearly been around for ages.

It's also the encounters with living critters – bees, moths, ladybirds, the woodpigeons that take off with a whistling sound when they see me, the sheep who growl at me (I kid you not!), the cows who refuse to observe social distancing – and the people. I've been almost entirely on my own since 21 March, but carrying a litterpicker, all I need to do is go out the door when I want people-contact. I say "hello" to everyone I pass, and get lots of conversation back. I've learned loads about the local fields and met one of the farmers. I'm getting to know the guy who runs the local convenience store.



And walking is good exercise. Blessings on John Rignell's Pilates – it's giving me the back strength to walk further and further. I have alas not had much time to litterpick this past month and I miss it. It's become a form of walking meditation. I would love other people to discover that it is a joy to do, and I'm wondering if what stops people is anger. Almost everyone I talk to is angry about litter, and I

imagine that filling a bag with every single cigarette butt while being angry would be exhausting. I feel sad sometimes, but mostly I'm focusing on freeing nature just a little bit, and that brings joy.

I'm hoping to do a sponsored litter-pick here, with the help of Rugby Meeting. I now have a working bike that will give me access to more far-flung litter, and I will have a lot more time after the end of July, so I will keep you posted!

Terrie Adams

When the lockdown of three weeks was announced I couldn't imagine being able to cope with the instant change to my lifestyle, so the first two weeks were spent slowly cleaning through the bungalow, always leaving jobs for the next day and the next. Come the fourth-fifth week I was revelling in the freedom of No Appointments, No Responsibilities and No Have To, just fully experiencing a state of BEING in the Flow of Life – it was a revelation.

One outstanding experience was a walk I did down a lane at the end of my road. On one side were horse chestnut trees with alternate red and white flowering spires and on the other were hawthorn and elder, both in full bloom – I had to stop every few steps in a state of wonder and awe. The vision, the perfume and the bird song took my breath away.

I am blessed with the freedom of a garden to the rear, and a view of fields and the downs to the front so in no way have I felt limited either mentally or physically, and for me the Peace, the Quietness and the Slowness have all been a great learning curve and a sheer joy.

Sally Beamish

It started with the NHS clapping. My husband, a singer, and I, plus a guitarist friend, have formed a trio of voice, viola and guitar. We decided to perform a short song on our doorstep every Thursday at 8pm. When the clapping was brought to an end a few weeks ago, a neighbour suggested we carry on, and it's become a weekly tradition in our street. Other neighbours have contributed songs - there are music students opposite, and a steel pan player next door. Songs so far have included Irving Berlin, Stevie Wonder, the Beatles, Cream, Bobby McFerrin, and Bach!



We're going to continue for the foreseeable future, so if anyone fancies coming along to York Road and joining the audience on the pavement, that would be great! We play three songs every week.

As professional musicians, we feel it's very important at the moment to keep music live, and to remind ourselves of the joy of sharing music with others.

Poem

Do not be dismayed by the brokenness of the world.
All things break. And all things can be mended.
Not with time, as they say, but with intention.
So go. Love intentionally, extravagantly, unconditionally.
The broken world waits in darkness for the light that is you.

L.R. Knost

*Award-winning author, feminist, and social justice activist,
Founder and director of the children's rights
advocacy and family consulting group
Little Hearts/Gentle Parenting Resources.*

Minimise the spread

A resident of Thousand 4 1000, a skilled seamstress who is a refugee from Iraqi Kurdistan, is making high quality masks to help [minimise the spread](#) of the Covid-19 virus within the local community.

The masks have a double layer of cotton, with space for a disposable filter (such as a paper towel). The top edge has a mouldable wire, to help fit the mask more closely to your face. They are hand washable, so they can be cleaned and reused when you next need to go out for shopping or essential tasks.

www.thousand4thousand.org.uk/masks

Submitted by Val Whittington



Masks For All

Thousand 4 1000
is a local charity providing housing and support to asylum seekers and refugees in Brighton and Hove. We are giving cash support to more than 50 forced migrants in the city during these tough times. You can support our work by making a donation in return for high quality masks sewn by a refugee seamstress.

www.thousand4thousand.org.uk/masks

Do you recognise the needs and gifts of each member of your family and household, not forgetting your own?
Try to make your home a place of loving friendship and enjoyment, where all who live or visit may find the peace and refreshment of God's presence.

Quaker Faith & Practice Advices and Queries No. 26

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Brighton Quaker Sanctuary Meeting report. July 2020

Rooted in the conviction that there is that of God in every person, Quakers across Britain are working to welcome people seeking sanctuary.

Brighton Meeting has committed to be a Sanctuary Meeting. A Sanctuary Meeting is a Quaker Meeting that is committed to:

- Joining local initiatives to build a culture of welcome
- Building alliances with groups opposing racism
- Working with others to change the laws on destitution, detention, deportations and removals.

The Sanctuary Group has been involved with the local refugee and migrant community in a number of ways. Sadly the coronavirus lockdown has seen the suspension of Global Tots. The group has a firm connection with Voices in Exile - Angela Bargawi is our Quaker representative. The Meeting makes a sizable donation to the work of Voices in Exile each year.

Other groups we link with locally are Sanctuary on Sea, Brighton Migrant Solidarity, and Thousand 4 £1000. We have been represented at the Refugee Forum by Ann Howard, and one group member hosts an asylum seeker. We have links to QARN - Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network. We pass on requests for support that we receive at Meeting to MP's or the government.

We have been running Global Tots for over 12 months but it has been suspended due to the lockdown. This is now a time to review this work led by Angela and a team of volunteers.

Angela's thoughts on where we are now:

I have been thinking about what the future might be for Global Tots which has really been Brighton Meeting's own contribution to the Sanctuary idea. It seems too early to know what demand there may be for such a touchy/feely project in the present circumstances, but things should be clearer come September when nurseries etc. open. I also don't know how Quakers stand legally (or morally) if we might risk spreading the virus. It was going well, if a bit unevenly, before the enforced hiatus and it would take new outreach in the new School Year as our original children move up and start Infants. Input from Young Friends has always been most welcome and offers them a taster of working with children/teaching English to non-native speakers. We hope the Meeting will bear with us in this uncertainty.

Although not actually linked to us as a Sanctuary Meeting, we are very aware of the admirable work undertaken by the Brighton Table Tennis Club, a Sanctuary Sports Club founded and led by one of our Meeting members, Tim Holton. We thank Tim for the wonderful work undertaken by the club, particularly with young refugees and asylum seekers as they settle in Brighton.

Through the Interfaith Contact Group we are linked to the Brighton and Hove Upstander's Network. Helen Ledger is the group representative. The network is set up to support the community in challenging hate crimes and to stand up against all hate crimes including racism.

Sanctuary work in our city is so important. The group would like to review our work and explore new avenues and see where we can be of most use in the community, working with the refugee and migrant population. We would welcome new members and fresh ideas as we move forward and develop our role.

Sanctuary Meeting Group

Lend With Care update July 2020

The www.lendwithcare.org team set up for Brighton Quakers has now lent over £8,000 to entrepreneurs, many of them (but not exclusively) in rural Africa. This amount has been widely spread amongst borrowers, often to groups of businesswomen in African villages who support one another in ensuring loans are repaid (this helps to minimize the risk of default).

The coronavirus outbreak has of course made it very difficult for our borrowers and the risk of delayed payments or defaults is greater than would have been otherwise. In practice, repayments are still being made and although they might sometimes be delayed, the borrowers seem determined to repay what they have borrowed.

A useful way of thinking about this is that a loan which cannot be repaid is still money which is going to a borrower in poorer parts of the world. So, in essence, it could be considered as *somewhat like* a charitable gift from the lender's perspective. As I originally considered [lendwithcare.org](http://www.lendwithcare.org) as a way for me to maximise my financial impact, beyond what a gift could achieve, I feel that the prospect of some of my loans reverting, in essence, to charitable giving is not that bad a thing.

Be that as it may, with the amount above lent out, Brighton Quakers are the third biggest lenders of any faith groups in the scheme, following behind a Muslim lending team and a national team for "Bible-believing Christians". Find out more at <https://lendwithcare.org/info/how-it-works> .

Jason Evans

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

Inter Faith Contact Group

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 August 4 at 7-8pm.**

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

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



Sheila Boyer and Helen Ledger
Interfaith Contact Group

I do not know the course I am to run, all is hid in mystery, but I try to do right in everything... Look up to true religion as the very first of blessings, cherish it, nourish and let it flourish and bloom in my heart; it wants taking care of, it is difficult to obtain. I must not despair or grow sceptical if I do not always feel religious. I felt God as it were, and I must seek to find Him again.

Elizabeth Fry, 1798, Quaker Faith & Practice 26.40

Community in Action

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

Meeting House Garden

Our garden is still growing as it is tended to by our wonderful gardening team. To see 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 taken by Terry, our warden. This one was taken by Susan White.



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

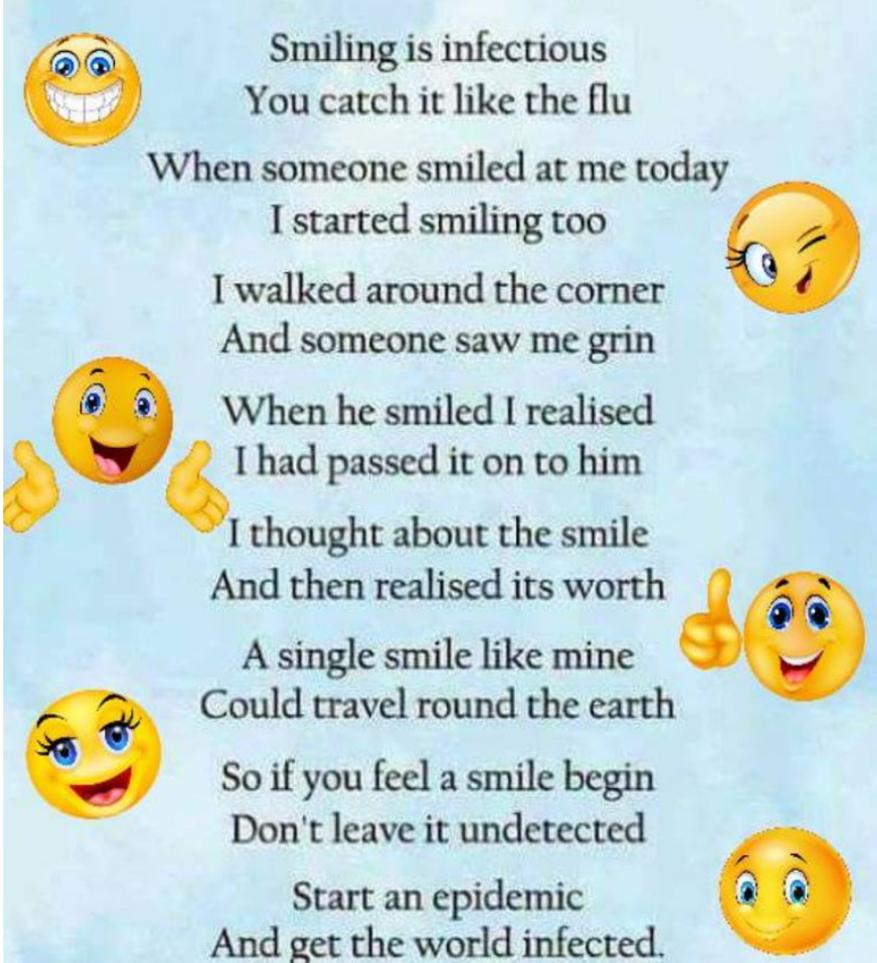
Being Friends Together

The East and West groups continue to get together regularly on Zoom.

A third Being Friends Together group started last week but if you missed that Zoom meeting 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 Quakersim and share spiritual journeys. If you would like to join please contact the elders via bqelders@outlook.com

Want to start another epidemic?

Spike Milligan about smiling



Smiling is infectious
You catch it like the flu

When someone smiled at me today
I started smiling too

I walked around the corner
And someone saw me grin

When he smiled I realised
I had passed it on to him

I thought about the smile
And then realised its worth

A single smile like mine
Could travel round the earth

So if you feel a smile begin
Don't leave it undetected

Start an epidemic
And get the world infected.

Brighton Permaculture

This month the appeal is for a local green organisation. Brighton Permaculture Trust (BPT) has been suggested and I've been asked to speak to it.

I'm very proud to be a trustee for BPT as it's a tiny charity which achieves a great deal. However, at the moment we are wondering if we can keep going past May of next year. If you are interested in knowing more please visit our website at:

<https://brightonpermaculture.org.uk/>



If you would like to donate then visit this page on our website:

<https://brightonpermaculture.org.uk/category/donate/>

Susan White

Appeals

In these strange times we cannot put donations in our Appeal Box. Our chosen charities could lose out much needed donations. The appeal for July is Brighton Permaculture. See Susan's article above.

There are two ways to pay:.

- **cheque** - please make payable to Brighton Quaker Meeting and send it to the Meeting House. Write the name of your chosen charity on the back.
- **BACS** - Account name: Brighton Quaker Meeting, Sort Code: 08-92-99, Account number: 65009567. Please also send an email to brightonquakertreasurer@gmail.com to let the treasurer know the amount you have donated and which charity it is for.
- alternatively you can donate directly through their website.

Quaker Tapestry Museum is not yet open to the public but they now offer a virtual tour of the museum. Go to <https://www.quaker-tapestry.co.uk/museum/>

The custom of appointing certain named Friends to attend our meetings for church affairs may lead others to the mistaken conclusion that their responsibility for these gatherings is of less importance than that for the meeting for worship. But the privilege of membership implies that every Friend should feel concerned to attend these meetings.

1959, Quaker Faith & Practice 10.06

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 - 10.30–11.30am

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

Children's Meetings are now being held via Zoom at 4pm on Thursdays.
July 9 & 23

August 6 & 20

This will change if 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)

After a short hiatus Meetings for Worship for Business have restarted via Zoom.

The next **MWB** is on **Thursday August 6** at 6.30 pm. Items for MWB must be sent to the Clerk at least one week before the meeting, i.e. **Thursday July 30**. **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, 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 July 18 at 10.30 am via Zoom

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

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 **August** newsletter is **Tuesday August 4**. 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 - brightonquakernewsletter@gmail.com.

A prayer

Lord,



We pray for balance and exchange. Balance us like trees. As the roots of the tree shall equal its branches so must the inner life be equal to the outer life. And as the leaves shall nourish the roots so shall the roots give nourishment to the leaves. Without equality and exchange of nourishment there can be no growth and no love.

Amen.

*Michael Leunig.
Australian poet and artist
Photo – National Geographic*

Submitted by David Fielder