

# CROYDON FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

## August 2016

**Dear Friends,**

At last – August! Holiday month even for those who are retired or out of work, and with no Quaker business meetings. In our newsletter we have been able to catch up with Friends who have been out of touch, and perhaps in our September edition we will read about those holidays taken or books read this month. Here is Cecily's poem to put us in the mood. **Gillian Turner**

### **A Thought of Trees**

Trees laugh at us,  
laugh at our fussing fretting  
having getting -  
standing there for centuries  
being  
just being themselves.

They won't worry if their leaves  
have failed to grow a hair's breadth  
by next Tuesday week  
or whether they'll produce enough rich loam  
to nourish them and see them through another year.

Somewhere within their roots  
they've grasped eternity.

I like to think near trees -  
they sort me out;  
I like to laugh with trees -  
smile at my own fussing fretting  
having getting;  
I have to grow near trees -  
concrete kills me.

**Cecily Taylor**

### **News of Friends**

Two birthday greetings:

**Betty Ellis** will be 96 on 11 August. She has been very ill and unable to eat, and has lost a lot of weight. She has slowly managed to put some back on, but still finds difficulty swallowing, and is housebound. However, she keeps in good spirits as always and is always glad of a chat over the phone. She thanks everyone who has phoned her up since she has been ill.

**Godfrey Turner** will be 80 on 9 August.

**Celia Snaith** is back now home and more mobile. Her daughter from America is staying with her at present.

### **Final Months of my Masters and time in the Netherlands**

I have now returned home after the completing on my Masters in Globalisation and Development Studies, which I undertook at Maastricht University in the Netherlands. I had a really fantastic year, met lots of really interesting people, and learnt so much. I am really grateful I had the opportunity to live and study in a European city like Maastricht.

Last time I updated you I was in India conducting research for my final Thesis which is now completed and graded and I'm pleased to say I passed! My Thesis was on the concept of women's empowerment globally, and how the agendas set by multilateral institutions such as the UN may

not reflect the necessities at the ground level. My time in India was tough, but I am so glad I had the opportunity to go and speak to so many women and hear their stories.

Throughout the Masters programme I took many modules on diverse topics, from the use of science and technology in development to the rise of East Asia, both economically and as development partners. My favourite module, although a bit morbid, was on the different ways to conceptualise poverty. It made me re-think the term completely, we learnt about topics such as environmental poverty, philanthrocapitalism and economic value chains.

I now hope to use all of this information I learnt and skills I gained to get a job in the international development sector. I hope I can return to Maastricht soon to see all my friends who are still there, but I also now have friends all over the world who I met there.

**Sophie Collins**

### **News from Colchester**

At last I've got my home sorted and have bought (completed just last Friday 22nd) the home I've been living in since I came here on 1 December. I couldn't find anywhere to my liking and my friend John said that he would be willing to sell, we negotiated and I am now a homeowner again. It's great not having to go through all the packing up again though I have many boxes that have never been unpacked yet so I am working my way through them just as if I had only now moved in. I've been here 8 months already and can hardly believe it.

Thank you for your email telling me that the Quaker tapestry is on display in Chelmsford Cathedral. Chelmsford is about 25 miles from Colchester but on the same line as you will be travelling on from Liverpool Street. I could get the train and meet up with you in Chelmsford but will need to confirm after I hear from friends who have tentatively "booked" coming to see me during the August bank holiday week. Provided they are not coming on the 27th then I will look forward to coming to Chelmsford to see you all again and to properly catch up on all news. I very much like looking forward to and reading the newsletter and hearing what is going on in Croydon so do please continue sending it to me.

I am off this afternoon to continue my volunteering at a local charity book/coffee shop. The shop raises money for St Helena's hospice which is a really worthwhile cause and I enjoy my four hours on a Saturday afternoon working there. Four hours of sorting books is heaven. I went on the till last Saturday (only one or two minor errors!) and am waiting for some time to be trained to work behind the drinks counter. We provide all sorts of teas and coffees and various soft drinks, biscuits, cakes etc and there will be a lot to learn. When I'm out and buying a coffee I tend to stick to black Americano so the hardest part for me will be trying to remember what all these different types of coffees are, cappuccinos, lattes etc - we are so spoiled for choice - a good dose of living simply would do us all some good!

I hope that all is well with all Friends at Croydon Meeting. If things work out right I look forward to seeing you on the 27th. I'll be in touch as soon as I know what my friends are doing.

**Dave Perry**

### **Lilian Stephenson**

Lilian, who died on 9 July aged 88, was known to us at Croydon Meeting through her daughter Merrily. Merrily grew up in Croydon and eventually married and moved to York, where she became a member of York Meeting. When she died in her forties in York, Lilian and Henry, her husband, wanted to celebrate her life with her old school and other friends in the Quaker way, and so held a memorial meeting for worship in our meeting room which many Friends attended, followed by refreshments which we helped to organise.

Lilian and Henry wanted to make a permanent donation in memory of their daughter, and so gave us tulip bulbs, lilies and a peace rose, which Peter and Megan planted and care for, and which brighten up the garden throughout the year.

The funeral will be held on 3 August at Old St Mary's Church by Clissold Park, where her family comes from and her daughter Madeleine lives. Godfrey and I hope to attend the service on behalf of Croydon Quakers.

## July/August 2016

Having spent over two months in Wandsworth Prison, an escort arrived on July 24 and returned my father to Aldershot Barracks, but apparently they decided he was useless to them, as, a week later, he was released and returned home to Norwood, not knowing what the future held, except the probability of further future detention.

August became a month for helping other COs, but his first visit was to Croydon No Conscriptio Fellowship (NC) where he met those (mostly women) who were giving guidance and help to COs and their families.

His brother Glen was, at this time, in Wandsworth Prison and Mark, with his Father Guy, attempted to visit him but were refused permission, as he was awaiting his tribunal. Visits to the tribunals to hear the cases of Clifford Allen and Francis Mayell, both Quakers, followed a talk about his experiences at Croydon Friends Meeting on August 9th.

Meanwhile, his brother Glen, who had been unsuccessful in claiming exemption at the tribunal left Wandsworth for Dyce Camp, near Aberdeen, which later became notorious because of conditions and was eventually closed. A close friend, Bert Gunn was reported killed on August 19, and this sad event resulted in the following poem: WEFT

### TO BERT GUNN

*(killed in France while taking provisions to the men in the trenches)*

Sometimes  
 'Tis given to us to live out all our days!  
 To have the old man's tales  
 And wait with courtesy for death!  
 To talk of youth, of yesterday,  
 And all the different ways  
 Where unknown sorrows might be leading to!

Sometimes  
 What we long for most of all is gone  
 'Ere yet we grasp it!  
 And the eager hands we hold  
 Are never filled, are never filled at all;  
 And in the passing of ourselves, as we were known to men,  
 We cannot help but think to find  
 Some little light, if just perceptible,  
 To lighten up the mystery of the change! MUCH

### “A vain hope for glory...”

*On Page 5 of a Croydon Meeting newsletter, published, I think, in 1999, Cecily Taylor found the extract below. Page 6 was the Monthly Meeting Report written by Pat Roberts. It was held at Purley on 16 October and there were lists of deaths, a marriage, changes of Meetings, appointments and events, none of which gave the year, except for one – 2000 The Quaker Youth Pilgrimage. Here is page 5:*

A king is not saved by his army nor a warrior preserved by his strength. A vain hope for safety is the warhorse. Despite its power it cannot save. Psalm 32

Three days ago I discovered it was fifty-one years since I started a military career. For forty years from the beginning of that career I had continuous experience in the theory and practice of war. No-one studied it more keenly than I did, and I was in a position to know what war really meant. And the only conclusions I have been able to read are these – that war seldom if ever, settles anything.

More frequently than not it leads to fresh wars. Preparing for war never seems to prevent it, but rather to precipitate it, and in its conclusion war is just about as disastrous to the victor as to the vanquished.

Therefore I say that it is the duty of all today to concentrate on how best to preserve peace. What we want is less suspicion, less mistrust, less fear in our international diplomacy. We want a more generous and Christian spirit.

**Field Marshall Sir William Robertson 1929**

## **For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”, Romans 3:2**

In the American drama, “Deadwood”, the rather lonely, volatile and alcoholic character of Calamity Jane grieves the death of one of her only friends, Wild Bill Hickok, and remembers him in this way, “He took you as he found you, saw the best in you ....was sweet to me”. Her abiding memory of him is clearly that of a friend who shows compassion and acceptance to a less -than -perfect young woman with a very difficult and unstable temperament. Wild Bill’s own character defects do not in any way detract from his demonstration of humanity.

We know from our own *Advices and Queries* that we are called upon to respect that of God in others regardless of the unfamiliarity of its expression or however difficult it may be to discern. Seeing the best in others and showing compassion under difficult circumstances is one of life’s tougher challenges and it helps us to remember what has nurtured those whose behaviour we may find abhorrent, difficult or hard to comprehend. (As others must remember when dealing with us). Understanding does not, of course, imply that one must condone certain actions but it is a more loving and fruitful response than purple - faced indignation.

Alice Miller, the late Swiss psychotherapist and author, wrote, “It is very difficult for people to believe that every persecutor was once a victim. Yet it should be very obvious that someone who was allowed to be free and strong from childhood does not have the need to humiliate another person”. This chimes well with Auden’s words: those to whom evil is done. Do evil in return.

One person who did show empathy to those who had transgressed society’s norms was Elizabeth Fry. In *Quaker Faith and Practice* (23.98/99), we read of a young woman of utmost conviction who devoted herself to work for prison reform. She spoke of the need to approach others in the spirit of mercy rather than judgement and reminds us that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

In 1847, Priscilla Buxton wrote of her, “There was no weakness or trouble of mind or body which might not safely be unveiled to Elizabeth. Whatever various or opposite views, feelings or wishes might be confided to her, all came out again tinged with her own loving, hoping spirit. Bitterness died as the “most favourable construction possible was always put on every transaction”.

Elizabeth embodied hope to the degraded and reviled and did not abandon them as others did. She found or made some point of light and did not despair for them in “this world or another.”

**Barbara Earl**

## **Children’s spirituality**

Being a child today can seem like hard work....being educated at school with one eye always on performance indicators, be able to play only with a grown-up keeping some sort of surveillance, experiencing a family life that can be unpredictable and insecure....All of this, could be a worse case view but statistics would seem to paint a rather glum and dispiriting picture.

This week’s conference of the Association for Children’s Spirituality in Lincoln was very aware of what happens in the real world. But the academics and child care professionals from all over the world nevertheless sought ways to place a positive emphasis what parents, teachers and children themselves can do to enhance children’s experience of a positive and rewarding spirituality. Quite how can that spirituality be defined, why is it desirable and how can it be developed in schools and other settings? The conference’s purpose was to explore ‘the ways in which spirituality is conceived in and across cultures’, while rejecting attempts at religious indoctrination. Jack Miller (University of Toronto) opened the conference with a discussion of how one public school in Toronto has implemented a holistic curriculum that focuses on developing the whole child – body, mind and soul. Another keynote speaker, Joyce Ann Mercer (Yale Divinity School) discussed ‘restorative spirituality’ approaches to coping with children’s trauma.

Of course, one of the main controversies in the whole field is quite simply to define the nature of children’s spirituality. Early and still very influential experts such as Jean Piaget and James Fowler felt that very young children (perhaps under seven years old) were pre-religious and so not able to grasp what spirituality is. More recent developments have seen the ‘splitting’ of religion and spirituality, so that children and adults can be the latter without having to be the former. One of the most influential books in this area, ‘The Spirit of the Child’, was written by David Hay and psychologist Rebecca Nye (revised in 2006). They argued that there can be an approach to spiritual education which transcends the religious-secular boundary by conceiving of spirituality as

a natural human predisposition that can be called 'relational consciousness'. This relational consciousness can be seen as an experiential awareness rather than an intellectual one.

Of course, many speakers at the conference discussed (or at least, mentioned) mindfulness and meditation – and its increasing presence in schools and other educational institutions. The closeness of these trends to Quaker silent worship was not specifically discussed though the parallels are obvious. The Quaker writer, Margaret Crompton, reflected on her own considerable record of professional and other publications. Within them she had argued for an awareness of spirituality and linked techniques in the professional training of social workers.

The conference was regarded as a great success by its attenders. The next conference will be held in 2018 in Quebec City, Canada.

**Helen Johnson**

## Adult School Hall

**7 July to 27 August National Community Service - The Challenge** is using the Adult School Hall as a base for their charity work in Croydon during the summer months.

The National Citizen Service is a government funded partly residential programme for young people aged 15-17 year old living in England. It is an exciting opportunity for young people to build skills for work and life, while taking on new challenges and meeting new friends. The programme was designed and piloted in 2009 by social integration charity, The Challenge, who remains the largest provider of the programme. In the 2016 Queen's Speech, it was announced that the scheme would be permanent through the National Citizen Service Bill which once enacted will see statutory framework for the programme put in place, as part of a £1.2 billion investment.

NCS promotes a more cohesive society by mixing participants from different backgrounds and builds the programme around the idea of social integration. The programme empowers and supports the young people's transition into adulthood and enables young people from very different backgrounds to work together to create social action projects in their local communities.

The scheme takes place in the spring, summer or autumn coinciding with school holidays. Groups of teenagers undertake a residential visit to an activity centre for an Outward Bound-style course in the countryside involving hiking and team-building activities. This is followed by a residential week of team challenges in which they develop different skills by working with experienced practitioners in music, drama, enterprise, sports, media or photography. As part of the last phase of the programme the participants create a community-based project to raise awareness of a particular issue. Those completing the course receive an NCS certificate recognised by UCAS.

With over 800 young people taking part in NCS 2016, Croydon is one of the largest boroughs of London showing increased interest every year. NCS delivers the programme in various venues in Croydon namely the fascinating complex Stanley Halls in South Norwood and the Adult School Hall which is an outstanding youth- friendly venue. The Quaker Hall is home for hundreds of young people of Croydon this year who come as part of their last phase of the programme in which they deliver their social action campaign working with a local charity.

In Croydon, NCS has established and maintained strong relationships with over 200 charities, college consortia, voluntary, community, social enterprise and private sector, growing every year as the programme is risk assessed and regularly quality assured. For 2017, NCS is aiming to double the number of young Croydonians taking part in this fantastic self-development opportunity for community-building purposes and social integration so that future generations get educated valuing our differences rather than letting them divide us.

There are two projects taking place in August in the Quaker Hall, Media and Photography. On Sunday and Monday, 14 and 15 two photography groups will work on a presentation of the history of the Hall and its place in the community; another group will use the Meeting House for its presentation of Quakers in Croydon. The Media group on Wednesday 24 August from 11 – 3 will decide how these presentations could be used on social media and for cards, posters etc.

**Andreea Danilove Assistant Programme Manager**

## Rosie May Foundation

The Rosie May Memorial Fund is a registered UK charity and was founded in January 2004, which donated money to the Sheffield Paediatric Intensive Care Unit, who worked hard to try to save the life of Rosie May following a tragic incident.

Following the Tsunami that hit Sri Lanka at the end of 2004, Mary and Graham Storrie founded a home for girls whose lives had been severely affected by this event, in memory of their own daughter. In Sri Lanka, orphan and vulnerable girls are afforded few opportunities, and often end up working in the sex trade or become married and pregnant before the age of 15. The Rosie May home in Sri Lanka houses orphan and vulnerable girls to prevent this.

In 2008 the Rosie May home was completed, and at first could only house 5 girls, but now is home to 20. The foundation work to help the girls in crisis, providing them with a safe place to live, reuniting sisters, paying their school tuition and teaching them other skills such as cooking and IT. This prepares the girls to have greater opportunities when they leave the home than they would have ever had otherwise.

The Rosie May foundation works closely with their partner organisation in Sri Lanka, Project Hope, which offers young mothers at risk of abandoning their babies the support and opportunity to empower them to help themselves, by improving their life chances and outcomes and those of their children.

The donations that go to Rosie May go to paying for the upkeep of the house and the girls' tuition to school. The Rosie May home has permanent Sri Lankan staff who look after the girls, but mostly survives off foreign volunteers who come for a minimum of 3 months to cook with the girls, teach them English and provide welfare support among many other activities.

Thank you for your donations!

**Sophie Collins**

## No more an eye for an eye

*I was struck by Giles Fraser's article in The Guardian of 29 August entitled "Father Jacques Hamel died as a priest, doing what priests do". Here is an extract:*

I have never read my scriptures as an instruction manual from God. More a reflection of a historic real-world human struggle for faith, in which faith is discovered. And the difference between good religion and bad religion – like the difference between good and bad people – has little to do with who is right and who is wrong about God and absolutely everything to do with how each religious tradition manages its own propensity for violence.

And it is here that the language of sacrifice is especially tricky. I have no time for the idea that Jesus is sacrificed on the cross to appease an angry God. If that's true, then God becomes the enemy of humankind and I am against him. No, Jesus absorbs the violence that comes from us not from God. He receives our blows, our punishments, our disdain. And, despite his innocence – or, rather, precisely because of it – he refuses to answer back in kind. No more an eye for an eye.

In other words, the sacrifice of the cross is the non-violent absorption of human violence. The offer of love in return for hate, even to the point of death. This is the horrendous price that peace is sometimes asked to pay.

**D.P.**

## Events and opportunities

**18 August - 2 September, at Friends House.** "Echo Chamber" is an Art exhibition by Fiona Meadley, inspired by conscientious objectors in the First World War. It comprises a sound installation and a photography exhibition, together with space and time to respond. The Quaker Arts Network is looking for volunteers to help steward the exhibition from 11am to 4pm daily (except Bank Holiday Monday 29 August). This is a great opportunity for Quaker outreach as well as a chance to learn about history and to reflect on the choices we have to make in relation to war. Those who stewarded last year said it was very enjoyable with some excellent conversations. It would be helpful if volunteers could do at least two half shifts or a whole day. Travel expenses of up to £50 will be reimbursed. For further details contact Jill Green on 01865 580121 or email: [quakers@greenfig.org.uk](mailto:quakers@greenfig.org.uk)

**Saturday 3 September:** Preparing for Quaker week: day session at Friends House, Euston.

**Monday 3 October** Lancaster University are running a course on 'Radical Spirituality: the early history of the Quakers'. This is a free, three-week online course. For details, go to the Lancaster University website.

**4–6 November 2016, Woodbrooke, Birmingham** 'So you've read Quaker faith & practice, what next?' - a weekend organised by the Book of Discipline Revision Preparation Group especially for Friends of less than about 10 years standing. A chance to reflect on the spiritual experience of reading Quaker faith & practice and to consider its meaning in our lives. Bookings via Woodbrooke on 0121 472 5171 or online at [www.bit.ly/wbform1](http://www.bit.ly/wbform1). Other enquiries to [qfp@quaker.org.uk](mailto:qfp@quaker.org.uk)

**4–6 November 2016, Charney Manor** New to Quakers? Want to explore Quaker worship? A weekend event for newcomers at Charney Manor. Booking form at: [www.charneymanor.com/events](http://www.charneymanor.com/events) Email: [admin@charneymanor.com](mailto:admin@charneymanor.com) Telephone: 01235 868206

**Apply for a QPSW Sustainability & New Economy grant** Got ideas for a project that will help to build low-carbon, sustainable communities or a more just kind of economics? Apply for £100–£2,000 before 3 October 2016. More at: [www.quaker.org.uk/sustainabilitygrants](http://www.quaker.org.uk/sustainabilitygrants)

**Quaker News – Quaker Week issue** Quaker News issue 96 should reach meetings by 23 September, in good time for Quaker Week (1–9 October)

**Philately will get you somewhere.** Nearly £8,000 was raised for Quaker work this year through collections of stamps the Friends' Stamp Club. The club need some new helpers to assist with this work, including at least three people to help with sorting. Training and guidance will be given. If you can come to Friends House a few times a year for a few hours, please get in touch. Contact: Helen Bradford: [helenb@quaker.org.uk](mailto:helenb@quaker.org.uk), 020 7663 1071.

**New economy booklets now available** The new economy project exists to support Quaker discernment about our economic system and how it could be improved. To do this, we are producing seven booklets about different aspects of the economy. The first two booklets are now available! Booklet one asks 'What's the economy for?' and explores alternative ways to measure economic progress. Booklet two looks at work and business structures that would be compatible with Quaker values. You can read the new economy booklets online, or order paper copies for yourself or your Meeting. Contact Cait Crosse: [caitc@quaker.org.uk](mailto:caitc@quaker.org.uk), 020 7663 1035.

### Collected in July

3 Quaker work at home and abroad **22.00**

10 Area Meeting **35.00**

17 Woodbrooke **41.00**

24 Croydon local meeting **48.55**

31 Rosie May Foundation **80.00**

### Collections in August

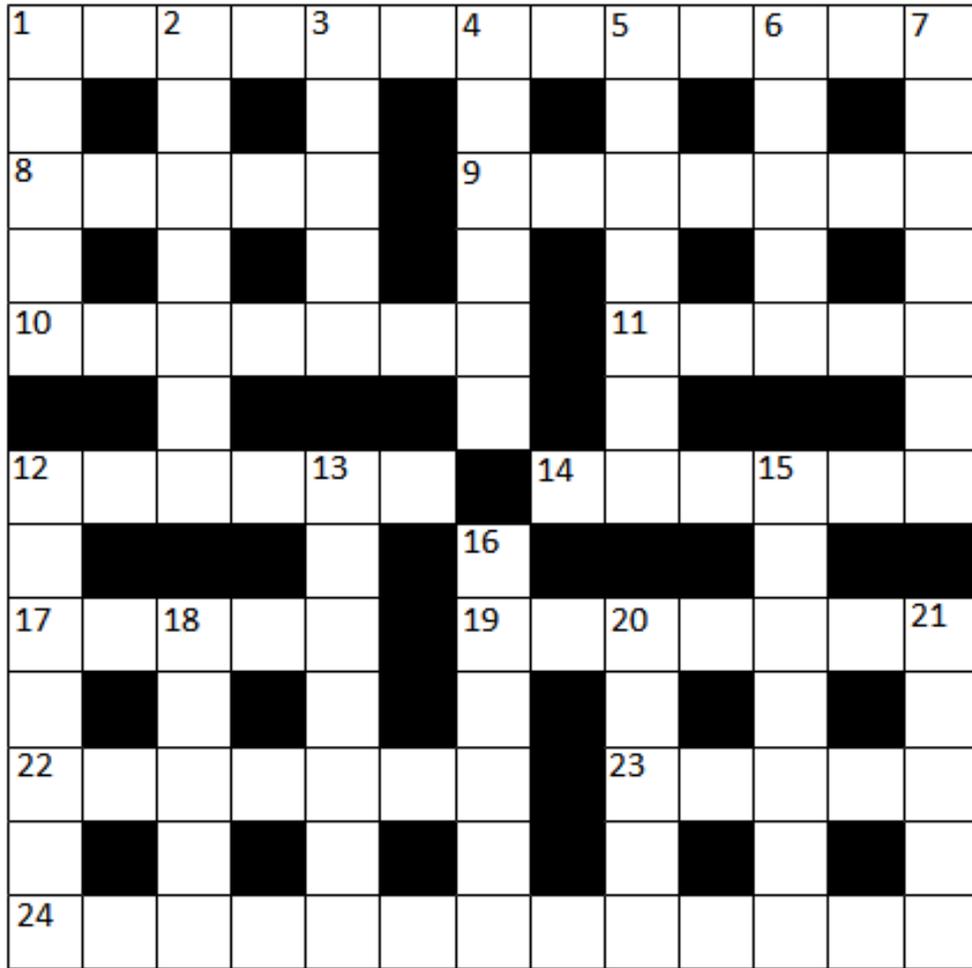
7 Quaker work at home and abroad, 14 Croydon Refugee Centre, 21 South London AQM, 28 Mind in Croydon



*Breakfast every Sunday morning from 9 to 10 am.  
Please join us for muesli, toast and coffee. Coffee available until 10.15*

**The deadline for the September edition is Sunday 28 August 2016**  
Please give, send or email contributions (no longer than 500 words, please) to Gillian Turner  
Tel 020 8688 9659 email [gillianturner033@gmail.com](mailto:gillianturner033@gmail.com)

**Friendly Crossword #11** by Grumpy Old Quaker



**Across**

- 1. Friend of Piglet (6-3-4)
- 8. Bright arrangement of 11 ac. (5)
- 9. Rampart (7)
- 10. Charity (7)
- 11. Musical arrangement of 17 ac. (5)
- 12. Things given in quantity surveying (6)
- 14. "In quires and places where they sing here followeth the -----" (6)
- 17. Broad arrangement of 18 dn (5)
- 19. A gigantic Philistine (7)
- 22. An explosively gigantic quantity (7)
- 23. A well-voiced group (5)
- 24. Charlatan sought by Dorothy (3,6,2,2)

**Down**

- 1. Well-gotten gains (5)
- 2. Couldn't be closer (7)
- 3. Clumsy (5)
- 4. Underground euphoniums? (6)
- 5. Oriental (7)
- 6. It's due to circle before the flank (6)
- 7. Murmur and tap your fingers – boring (7)
- 12. Mark the boundary (7)
- 13. Italian conductors (7)
- 15. Divert guillotine's object? (4, 3)
- 16. Things to be discussed (6)
- 18. Royal arrangement of 8 ac. (5)
- 20. Clear (5)
- 21. Car hire firm sounds pain-inducing (5)



Solution to #10