

CROYDON FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

March 2021

Dear Friends: We all have two dates in March firmly in our minds: the 8th when the children go back to school, to the relief of working parents and the children themselves, and the 29th, when we can have outdoor meetings of up to six people in local parks and gardens. We are still in the seasons of Lent and of Spring, and Easter is just around the corner, in April. So many of us have been vaccinated. Our newsletter reflects our hopes and plans for the future and our gratitude for small and large pleasures. But we must first record our gratitude for the company of our Friend Wilf Hayler for so many years, as we now publish his obituary. ***Gillian Turner and David Parlett***

Wilfrid Hayler (9 May 1931 – 21 February 2021)



*Wilf Hayler with a portrait of his grandfather Guy.
(Photo by courtesy of his cousin John Hale)*

Wilf Hayler was a member of Croydon Quaker Meeting all his life, the son of a nationally-known Quaker, Mark Hayler, who had been a conscientious objector in the First World War; yet he never lived in his father's shadow.

The trauma of his mother's death when he was very young and being sent away to board at Friends School, Saffron Waldon, had an immense effect on him, and he used to say that it was the root cause of the depression he suffered from all his life. But he was immensely proud of his father and loved the aunt who brought him up.

He remembered his time at Saffron Waldon with gratitude for the many friends he made. He became Secretary to the Old Scholars Association, helped to organise reunions, attended all the

meetings as Croydon Meeting's representative, and kept up-to-date the list of Old Scholars' deaths.

He was a librarian, a profession that suited his studious nature, and the custodian of his father's diaries and other papers, liaising with the Imperial War Museum.

Music was his great love. He sang and played the piano, and in this capacity regularly organised carol-singing in the meeting house at Christmas. He had a wide knowledge of classical and light music, especially that of the big bands of the 1930s, and when Philip Barron moved to Bernhard Baron Homes in Eastbourne took over as co-presenter of Croydon Friends' regular Christmas and Easter sharings of words and music.

He shared his knowledge not only with the meeting but also as a volunteer DJ at Mayday Hospital Radio (now Croydon University Hospital). He greatly enjoyed his weekly stints, collecting requests, organising a programme, and playing patients' choices over the internal radio.

He was a man of strict morals and a lifelong pacifist who neither drank nor gambled. Later in life he part-owned a racehorse and followed its fortunes on the race-track. Visiting the stables and talking to the manager and stable hands gave him great pleasure, which he shared with a fellow-member of the meeting. We remember them telling us all enthusiastically, after Meeting for Worship, which racecourse they were visiting that afternoon and which horses they were following (but of course not betting on).

Wilf was very popular with the younger members of the Meeting. He was always kind, approachable, with a sense of humour they enjoyed. Everyone who attended the musical concert given in aid of a Young Friend going to university remembers Wilf's songs, which he sang unaccompanied, to much laughter.

His decision to remove to Bernhard Baron Cottage Homes was made after much thought and soul-searching. It is a Quaker Foundation, and several members of Croydon Meeting were in

residence there and spoke favourably of its organisation and caring atmosphere. Clearing his house and finding a home for his vast collection of books and sheet music, many of historic value, was very time-consuming. He faced his new life with courage, finding tasks which would support the lives of the other residents, especially the Quakers, reorganised their library, and, after a lifetime of living alone, settled in to a structured day among people he had little in common with. He kept in touch with his friends at Croydon, writing from time to time for their newsletter, glad to see visitors when that was allowed, always happy to chat on the phone.

Wilf died on Sunday 21 February 2021 at the District General Hospital, Eastbourne, after a brief illness, aged two months short of 90. He was valued as the oldest and longest member of the Meeting, and was much loved by us all.

GT, DP

Thinking Wilf might have been a member of Quaker Action on Alcohol and Drugs we contacted QAAD for confirmation. Alison Mather kindly responded as follows: 'I have emailed our trustees, and unfortunately none of them knew Wilf. Two of them suggested that Trevor Grubb (Wandsworth LM) may have done so, but I have exchanged emails with Trevor today and, once again, I'm afraid he was unable to help. I'm glad that you contacted me, nevertheless, and send my best wishes to all at Croydon LM'. We await details of Wilf's funeral arrangements.

Photo from Eka



One of the simple joys we have found during these times has been visiting the ancient woodland of Croham Hurst. We usually go there in the morning or early afternoon, but the other day we were a little late to head out. However, this meant that we got the unexpected treat of witnessing a gorgeous sunset from the top of the hill. We weren't the only ones; it amused us to see many others at the top watching the sun setting. Some had set out picnic blankets on the ground and others were taking photos as we were. Now we purposely head out slightly later in the day so that we can catch the sunset, and have recently seen another beautiful one at Park Hill Park.

Jade F-G and Eka R

History will remember:

History will remember when the world stopped and the flights stayed on the ground. And the cars parked in the street. And the trains didn't run.

History will remember when the schools closed and the children stayed indoors, and the medical staff walked towards the fire and they didn't run.

History will remember when the people sang on their balconies, in isolation, but so very much together in courage and song.

History will remember when the people fought for their old and weak and protected the vulnerable by doing nothing at all.

History will remember when the virus left and the houses opened, and the people came out and hugged and kissed and started again.

Kinder than before.

Donna Ashworth

A Gaelic Blessing

St Patrick's Day 17 March

*May God be with thee in every pass,
Jesus be with thee on every hill,
Spirit be with thee in every stream, headland, ridge and moor.
Each sea and land, each path and meadow,
each lying down, each rising up,
in the trough of the waves, on the crest of the billows,
each step of the journey thou goest.*

Peter Millar, Iona Community February 2021

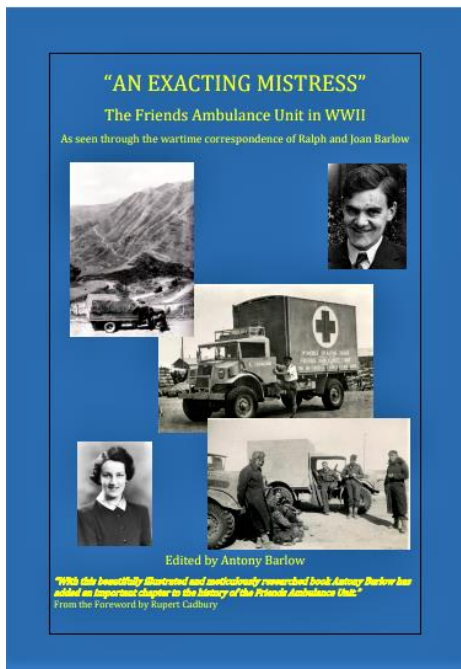
More news of Friends

Two members of our Croydon community, **Antony Barlow** and **Madeleine Pennington**, have joined our list of published authors including Joyce Trotman and David Parlett. Also included is Chris Alton, a child of the meeting and a tenant of our Meeting flat, who wrote the Swarthmore lecture of 2017. There may well be others.

An Exacting Mistress

'The Friends Ambulance Unit in the Second World War':

The wartime correspondence of Ralph and Joan Barlow, Edited by Antony Barlow



As we reach the 80th anniversary of the year my father joined The Friends Ambulance Unit, it is perhaps an appropriate moment to take another look at this remarkable voluntary organisation, comprised of people from many different backgrounds – Quaker of course, but also Methodist, Anglican and none – all of whom joined to make a difference. This book attempts to tell the personal story of one of these, my father, not through a detailed day-to-day account of the Unit's many life-saving acts both at home and abroad, but through the many letters my parents wrote to each other, while my father was serving abroad in the Middle East, East Africa, India and China, telling of their own struggles, either with depression, or separation or bringing up two children in war-torn Britain. In one of his letters he called the FAU 'An Exacting Mistress', which I have taken as a title.

Though, of course, it touches on the war, it specifically does not tell the story of the fighting that took place throughout the Second World War, not only in the UK, but worldwide. To most that is well known and well

documented, with its tales of heroism, of 'the few' fighting alone against the might of Germany; of the horrors of the blitz, destroying the homes and livelihoods of the ordinary person in terrifying nightly bombardment; of their suffering as they were badly wounded or killed; of the pluck of those who rescued the hundreds of trapped soldiers at Dunkirk; of the gallantry of the military at Alamein; of the starvation and loss of human life at the siege of Stalingrad. Nor does it tell of Nazi atrocities or, for that matter of the equal loss of life sustained by the Axis powers.

Instead this book tries to tell the story in between these spaces, where in the midst of battle, there are people trying their best to save the lives of the wounded, whether they be civilians caught in the crossfire of enemy bombing, or soldiers wounded in what Wilfred Owen calls the 'cess of war'. This is the story of those who joined the Friends Ambulance Unit in 1939 and 1940, not to fight, but to make a difference whilst at the same time, standing against 'the truth untold/The pity of war, the pity war distilled.'

My father started a memoir which he began in his usual understated way as follows: 'In the course of the war, I was fortunate enough to travel rather widely and I have ventured to think that extracts from my letters to Joan might be of interest.' I have tried my best to complete his work as he envisaged it but in addition to add my mother's replies in as well, forming a fuller picture of the way the war unravelled for one family.

AB

'An Exacting Mistress' published by Quacks Books at the end March 2021 at £20. Available to Friends at £15.00 +p&p Please contact Antony Barlow (artspublicity@hotmail.com)

What wilt thou do in the end?

One of my favourite passages in *Quaker Faith and Practice* is the story of the second-generation Friend Samuel Bownas, who found himself the target of ministry at Brigflatts Meeting in 1696 (QFP 19.60). He was about 20 years old when an elderly member of the Meeting met his gaze, and declared: 'A traditional Quaker; thou comest to meeting as thou went from it, and goes from it as thou came to it but art no better for thy coming; what wilt thou do in the end?' The passage is dear to me because the first time I ever ministered, aged 17, was also at Brigflatts – and also on the subject of being a second-generation Quaker, though I wasn't aware of Bownas's story (and wasn't being admonished) at the time. I was alerted to the similarity of our experiences years later in a chance conversation with an older Friend at Woodbrooke.

All this reminds me that I am part of a living faith – not merely a shared heritage, but a shared process of spiritual discernment reaching across many generations – which has been grappling with many of the same struggles from the start, and has relied on the same Divine Spirit to make sense of them.

This is what came to mind when, earlier this week, Gillian suggested that I might write something about my upcoming book for the newsletter. The book is being published this month, and considers why Quakerism changed (read: calmed down!) in the transition between its first and second generations. It is adapted from a doctoral thesis I completed in 2017, and particularly focuses on Friends' changing understanding of 'the inward Christ' during this period, but its actual content is for another time. For now, Gillian asked me simply to share something of what led me to the subject, as well as some of the struggles and joys I found along the way. When I stopped to look back, it suddenly didn't seem that surprising that I had ended up exploring the ways in which later Quakers made sense of the experiences of those who came before them.

Maybe the shape of things is always clearer in retrospect; in practice, of course, the book came about through a series of seemingly sensible decisions along the way. I have always been fascinated by religious ideas, so I applied to study theology at university; I wrote my dissertation on early Quakers as an antidote to an extremely traditional university course; I carried on studying because I loved reading early Quaker writings so much that I didn't want to stop; this then encouraged me to apply for a residential scholarship at Pendle Hill in Philadelphia, through which I was able to access the brilliant American Quaker archives at Swarthmore and Haverford Colleges. Moving to Croydon and taking up a non-academic job perhaps brought about the main challenge of the writing process: finding the time to fit it in alongside a largely unrelated working life. Nonetheless, I am aware of how incredibly lucky I have been to have every single one of these opportunities, and there has been joy at every step of the way. There have also been Quaker Meetings at every step of the way – and I know I am not the only member of Croydon Meeting to have spent time at Pendle Hill. This is yet another reminder of how intimate and interconnected our community really is. In all sorts of ways, the facts of any one personal story are inseparable from a larger picture.

It is with this in mind that once again I am drawn back to the challenge posed to Samuel Bownas in 1696. 'What wilt thou do in the end?' Each of us must of course make our faith our own, but nothing 'ends' with the individual in a community. Quaker history is sometimes set

against modern-day Quakerism, as if one is dead and the other is alive – and of course, we can all be guilty of idolizing heritage. However, for the most part I have experienced Quakerism (past and present) as a unified and coherent spiritual whole: a voyage through a set of individual testimonies which together witness to the reality of a Living Spirit over hundreds of years, and point forward to an unfolding experience yet to come. Above all, it has been a privilege to spend such quality time with long-departed Friends. Whatever we do in the end, we won't be alone.

Maddy Pennington

Harbingers of Spring

These two poems make me smile and feel happy.

The first brings back early days at school. The second one is in a rich Dorset dialect, causing much laughter for me while reading out loud.

Margie Ashley

Pippa's Song

*The year's at the spring,
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hill-side's dew-pearl'd;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn;
God's in His heaven-
All's right with the world!*

Robert Browning

The Spring

*When wintry weather's all a-done ,
An' brooks do sparkle in the zun,
An' naisy-builden rocks do vlee
Wi' sticks toward their elem tree;
When birds do zing, and we can zee
Upon receipt boughs the bud o'spring,-
Then I'm happy as a king,
A-vield wi' health an' zunsheen.*

*An' many times when I do vind
Things all goo wrong, and vo'k unkind,
To zee the happy veeden herds,
And hear the zingen o' the birds,
Do soothe my sorrow mwore than words;
Vor I do zee that 'tis our sin
Do meàke woone's soul so dark 'ithin,
When God would give woone zunsheen.*

William Barnes

There are four verses! I have picked the first and last, hopefully friends will like! - MA

The Inner Light Begins to Glow

I'm sure that in common with many others I have had far more conversations on the phone lately than in any other previous time. (Apart from the logging in of far too many calls in a long distant adolescence). I know that I am not alone in feeling that talking on the phone and use of platforms such as Teams and Zoom are not as satisfying as face-to-face meetings and, I suppose, were never really designed to replicate the same experience. As a bit of a Luddite, I chortled to read Zoe Williams in *The Guardian* recently admitting to hating Zoom and being 'sick of the sight of my own fringe'. It is, however, all we've got at the moment while we wait for the government roadmap to roll out.

Gratitude should be given for the many and varied online communities which have flourished during the pandemic, particularly as they are so helpful to those who are shielding, experiencing illness, have caring or work responsibilities or have difficulty in travelling. Of course, for many folk internet-based communication is a wholly satisfactory and convenient experience and some may wish to continue linking up with others in this way long after rules are loosened. But why is it that for others it seems so inadequate?

One possible reason may be the importance of non-verbal communication. Studies by Dr Mehrabian, the Armenian-American Psychology professor at the University of California, suggested that 70%- 90% of the communication that we use to convey thoughts and meaning is non-verbal. We notice head movement, posture, eye contact and hand gestures. It may be that

on the 'electronic highway' these vital cues are not so clear, nuance may not be captured, body language may be misinterpreted, facial expression not read precisely, and tone of voice sometimes not perceived accurately. The recent viral YouTube fracas concerning the chaos and disorder which descended upon the Handworth Parish Council's Zoom meeting highlights what happens when both verbal and non-verbal communication are not understood. It is without doubt that very few people in attendance were reading, let alone understanding, the regulations on that occasion.

The prospect of a little more person-to-person interaction and social mixing is hopefully in view for those who want, and are able, to emerge blinking from staying at home. The joy of attending Meeting for Worship in person and sitting down in the silence is perhaps a possibility for the not too distant future and it is reassuring to know that the Meeting House stands patiently waiting for the return of Friends and attenders. The precise nature of the experience is for the individual to divine but it can be interesting to read the thoughts of others regarding their own unique points of view. In 1657, George Fox urged Friends to:

'meet together and know one another in that which is eternal, which was before the world was' (QFP 2.35).

In the section entitled 'Approaches to God' in *Quaker Faith and Practice* there is much to ponder on why coming together is so treasured and powerful. Worship, of course, can take place at any time or place and we may feel the Presence, which some call God, 'in whom we live and move and have our being' on a mountain top or at the kitchen sink. Spirit knows no bounds, but in coming together 'there is a giving and a receiving, one helping the other without words. So there may come a wider vision and a deeper experience.' (Qfp 2.11)

Pierre Lacout speaks of silent waiting and attentive hearts and minds:

'In silence, which is active, the Inner Light begins to glow - a tiny spark. For the flame to be kindled and to grow, subtle argument and the clamour of our emotions must be stilled. It is by an attention full of love that we enable the Inner Light to blaze and illuminate our dwelling and to make of our whole being a source from which this Light may shine out.' (Qfp 2.12)

Dorothy Marshall describes her process of centring down and the very real appreciation of being in the physical presence of others:

'When Meeting for Worship begins, I like to look around and see who is there, and this normally leads to a feeling of gratitude for the friendship, warmth and support I've found among Friends. If I know of any difficulties or problems being experienced by anyone present, I would think along those lines' (2.51)

Another Friend writes that Quakers do not see worship purely as an individual pursuit:

'The waiting and listening are activities in which everybody is engaged and produce spoken ministry which helps to articulate the common guidance which the Holy Spirit is believed to give the group as a whole.' (Qfp 2.37)

Thomas R. Bodine (Qfp 2.47) explains his idea of the goal of a truly gathered meeting:

'(It) is to become fused into something bigger than the sum of the parts'.

He goes on to speak about the sense of unity which may develop 'a sense of togetherness with one another and that something outside ourselves'.

The need for human closeness and community may be very strong when we have been living for some time under certain restrictions. The thought of once again enjoying the nourishment that comes with the welcome, acceptance, stillness and spiritual connection offered by participation in a gathered Quaker meeting certainly brings comfort.

Barbara Earl

Thoughts in Lockdown

The Religious Society of Friends is rooted in Christianity and has always found inspiration in the life and teachings of Jesus. How do you interpret your faith in the light of this heritage? How does Jesus speak to you today? Are you following Jesus' example of love in action? Are you learning from his life the reality and cost of obedience to God? How does his relationship with God challenge and inspire you? (A&Q 4 Quaker Faith and Practice, Britain Yearly Meeting)

When I came to Quakerism many years ago, this Advice and these Queries were my inspiration. Within the meeting I found many friends who had the same leanings, who liked to study together to discuss the questions and take up the challenges. Finding out more about the life and teachings of Jesus underpinned and supported my Quaker life. Over the years we met in

each other's houses, in small groups in the meeting house, and I remember much of what we studied together: John's Gospel. The Beatitudes. The Gospel of St Thomas. Philippians. We tried various meditation practices: Experiment with Light, Ignatian meditation exercises and various books about George Fox, Margaret Fell and Quaker history.

Somehow over the years the emphasis on bible study lessened as we focused on other aspects of Quakerism, particularly the Testimonies : Peace, Sustainability, Equality and so on. The balance of Faith and Practice shifted so that I found myself studying the bible with the Baptists on Tuesdays and listening to Premier Christian Radio in general and to the contributions of David Jeremiah in particular. I do not always agree with what he says, but he seems somehow to convey what Pope Francis calls 'the joy of the gospel'.

I have spent most of these lockdown months getting to know my bible again, learning favourite texts by heart, studying and meditating. The passage from Qfp 1.57 below speaks my mind.

1.57 'Ye must be born again'. In the teaching of Jesus nothing is more insistent than this strange doctrine. He who never wasted words, Whose message was always terse, alert, vital, thought it necessary to drive home this mysterious dictum with the tremendous emphasis on 'Verily, verily',.

It is the essence of His gospel, the key to the kingdom of Heaven. Yet how little, comparatively, do we of the Society of Friends, dwell on this doctrine in our messages, lectures, and epistles. How little do we try to understand it or realise it.

We have distinctive views on most other points, but on this - the most vital of all - we are content to leave the expounding of the central teaching of Jesus to the oft-times rather crude evangelistic methods of certain religious bodies, with an attitude of mild approval or doubtful distaste. Perhaps that is why we as a religious Society are not more effective in the world to-day, why our witness lacks coherence and unanimity. If a military metaphor be allowable, we are advancing on the wings but held stationary in the centre.

Would we not do well to take up anew the doctrine of regeneration, and re-examine its meaning and implication in the light of psychology, seeking new light on its essential significance for our lives? Samuel W. Kingston. (1882 - 1946)

Also, in a more recently published pamphlet, which I remember reading with Godfrey in a study group: *'It is time that we reminded ourselves that the uniqueness of Quakerism does not lie in its pacifism, or in its concerns with social reform, education, mental health, and international affairs. It lies in its capacity for spontaneous worship and for the spontaneous expression of that worship.'* - Clive Sanson (1910 - 1981) in *Pamphlet: Heart and Mind Prepared*.

So many of us have also been reading and meditating since the first lockdown last March. I hope, when at last we can meet again in person, we will discuss and share our spiritual lives, deepen our knowledge of our Christian heritage and broaden our understanding of worship.

Joyce Trotman

Meditation

When one thinks of meditation, what often comes to mind is the image of someone sitting in the lotus position breathing in and out, looking very calm and stilling their mind, sometimes making strange 'om' sounds. It is an image many aspire to, but it is unlikely I will ever be able to sit in the lotus position. Sitting cross-legged on a cushion for three hours at a time for talks on a South Korean trip two years ago was a challenge, but the lotus position is unlikely to happen. However, I know that is not needed for my own meditation practice. What is needed is consistency, a willingness to let go, and an openness to discovering deeper layers within, without any expectations.

Concentrating on the breath, following it in and out, is a wonderful tool for slowing down and relaxing. For many people mantras will help, whereas I find them distracting. If I'm in a meditation session and the facilitator keeps giving instructions, I find myself getting irritated and wanting to tell them to shush - not a great way of meditating. I find the most helpful sessions are those where after the initial instruction, the facilitator keeps quiet and just allows the participants to experience the silence. I love the gratitude meditations that I do as part of energy healing sessions with Jung Shim, a South Korean practice. We are encouraged to start with a breathing exercise and then open up to gratitude. Focusing on what we are grateful for uses our thought processes, but it is amazing how we can move from thought to a feeling of an openness to

nature. If distracted, going back to an image of the heart being like a big flower that is opening up can bring a sense of calm.

Meditation is often linked to mindfulness and many will know the writings of Thich Nhat Hanh and his teachings on being fully present to the world by bringing body and mind together. 'When body and mind are together, you are fully present. You are fully alive and you can touch the wonders of life that are available in the here and the now' (quoted in *Shambala Sun*, July 2010) Thich Nhat Hanh teaches that mindful breathing is our anchor.

In this practice, we can be present in everything we do. An inspiring article I read some time ago was advising that washing dishes can also be a form of meditation - I haven't completely embraced this!

The silence and awareness I can experience in a meditation session is different to that which I experience in a Quaker Meeting for Worship. For me worship and meditation are two different things: in meditation my journey is alone, in worship it becomes a corporate journey. *Quaker Faith & Practice*, 2.39: '...In the united stillness of a truly 'gathered' meeting there is a power known only by experience, and mysterious even when most familiar. There are perhaps few things which more readily flow 'from vessel to vessel' than quietness. The presence of fellow-worshippers in some gently penetrating manner reveals to the spirit something of the nearness of the Divine Presence...'

In *The Amazing Fact of Quaker Worship* by George Gorman (The Swarthmore Lecture, 1973) in discussing an awareness of unity: 'No one can say at what precise moment this happens, but that it can, and does happen, has been known by Quakers throughout their history. The only outward sign of it is a greater depth of silence, the intensity of which may literally be felt, for all restlessness has been stilled.' In the same Lecture, there is a wonderful observation of Quaker silence which made me laugh: 'They Quakers just came here and sat and sat and nobody never said nothing, until at last they all died and so they gave it up.'

Pam Sellman

A Small Mystery

While we all wait for our return to the meeting house and to see the new plants beginning to flower in the garden, both are visited daily by hirers, our tenants and by Will and Eka as they open, clean and close the buildings.

Worrying reports have started to come in of our new camelia bush, planted carefully by Kate Orchard in the autumn, has been uprooted most evenings in the last fortnight and has had to be replanted every morning.

Who could be going this? Surely not passers-by or, surely not, the youngsters coming in for their exams in the meeting room?

However, our cctv revealed the culprit, as Michelle shows here. We think he must have been looking for worms in the soil. Eka has laid a couple of large stones around the roots, and so far, all is well.



Lifting Lockdown

The government's current plan to lift lockdown restrictions is that two people will be able to meet recreationally in public outdoor places from 8 March, and up to six people or two households will be able to meet outdoors (including in private gardens) from 29 March. Aside from enabling more social contact, this also allows scope for individuals to meet for worship in person, in a limited way, while the Meeting House is still closed. Do contact the elders (Pamela Sellman, Michelle Dumont, or Maddy Pennington) if you are interested in taking part in worship in this way.

Events

Sunday 14 March: Croydon Friends local business meeting (by Zoom) 1pm.

Sunday 21 March: Area Meeting Committee meeting (by Zoom), time to be announced.

Sunday 18 March: Fourth-Sunday session: Pan London Governance. Local Meetings have been asked to consider the proposals from the Steering Group and report back to AM before the next area meeting on 16 May.

Sunday 25 April: Fourth-Sunday session: What is a Quaker concern?

Sunday 23 May: Fourth-Sunday session: Quaker inclusion - where have we got to?

Yearly Meeting

Plans are in hand for YMG to be an all-age, online, inclusive event, grounded in worship. It will be spread over three weeks instead of one. Main business and worship will happen Friday to Sunday, 30 July to 1 August and Friday 6 to Sunday 8 August. There will be sessions for children and young people from Monday to Friday, 2 to 6 August. During the three weeks beginning in mid-July there will be opportunities to get used to online platforms, and meet each other in online community spaces – from reading and craft groups, to singing together.

Collections

March 7 Croydon Local Meeting; **14** Timanne School, Nairobi; **14** Friends Family Group, **28** St Christopher's Hospice; **April 4** Quaker Work at Home and Abroad

The deadline for the April edition is 28 March 2021

Please give, send or email contributions (no longer than 500 words, please) to Gillian Turner *Tel/07805087981 email gillianturner033@gmail.com images (photos, drawings etc) to quakers@davpar.uk*

The trees are coming into leaf

*Like something almost being said;
The recent buds relax and spread,
Their greenness is a kind of grief.
Is it that they are born again
And we grow old? No, they die too,
Their yearly trick of looking new
Is written down in rings of grain.
Yet still the unresting castles thresh
In fullgrown thickness every May.
Last year is dead, they seem to say,
Begin afresh, afresh, afresh.*

Philip Larkin



Photos by Liz Collins