

# Almeley Wootton Quaker News

Volume 5, Edition 8, August—October 2020

[www.almeleyquakers.org.uk](http://www.almeleyquakers.org.uk)

## Dates for Your Diary

Meetings for Worship continue online via Zoom at 10.30 a.m. every Sunday. Please contact Maggie Taylor-Sanders for a link to join.



Southern Marches Area Meeting are holding a Zoom workshop on Diversity and Inclusion among Quakers on **Sunday August 16th at 2:00pm**. The workshop will be hosted by Hilary Beynon and Peter Hussey. If you would like to take part, please contact Hilary ([hilaryannalsop@gmail.com](mailto:hilaryannalsop@gmail.com)).

<https://zoom.us/j/99256209625?pwd=THYwMG85cXBLSTRPS1pJTmlyVXY4dz09>

Meeting ID: 992 5620 9625 . Passcode: 597968

The next **MfWfB** will be held on Zoom on **Thursday September 10 from 5:45 pm for a 6:00pm start**.

The next **Area Meeting** will be held on Zoom on **Saturday September the 19th from 10:45am for 11:00am start**.

## Yearly Meeting 2020

Following the postponement of Yearly Meeting Gathering at Bath until 2021, BYM are holding an online Yearly Meeting session on Sunday 15 November for required business and worship.

This reduced Yearly Meeting will be online-only with capacity for 1,000 participants.

Registration will be required - more information will follow in due course.

BYM have emailed everyone who booked for YMG 2020 to ask them if they want to transfer their booking to YMG 2021 (31 July–6 August). If you haven't received their email please contact them at [ym@quaker.org.uk](mailto:ym@quaker.org.uk).

Bookings will reopen for Yearly Meeting Gathering 2021 on 11 January 2021 for those who have not yet previously booked.

## Library News

Anne Adams of Ludlow Local Meeting has written a book detailing the history of Quakers in Leominster. The book is titled "Quakers in Leominster, a Brief History" and can be purchased for £5 including postage directly from Anne. Please contact her directly using her [smquakers](mailto:smquakers) email address

## What on Earth can I do?

And Man said -

What on earth can I do, I am sick?

And Earth replied:

I am feeling a little better.

And Woman cried out -

How on earth can I breathe, all I do is cough?

And Earth replied:

My air is moving a little more freely.

And Man asked -

What on earth can I do to feed my family?

And Earth replied:

My soils are slowly being replenished.

And Woman wanted to know-

Where on earth can I find sanitizer?

And Earth replied;

My waters are starting to flow more clearly.

And Man demanded -

What on earth is happening to my investments?

And Earth replied:

My resources are being less exploited.

And Woman wailed -

How on earth can I go on, my parents are dying?

And Earth replied:

Fewer of my species are endangered.

And a Child inquired -

What on earth can I do?

And Earth replied:

You and I can respect and feed and love each other

... and we can be the future.

Carey Glyn-Jones

## Pity of War

A new charity "Pity of War" was formally launched on Hiroshima Day, August 6<sup>th</sup>, to remember millions of nameless, voiceless and forgotten individuals affected by war. Its objective is to promote increased awareness among the public of the wider impact of war upon civilians. Hiroshima Day has been chosen for the launch as the civilian casualties and suffering in that city (and later in Nagasaki) in 1945 encapsulate like no other event the horror of war.

Successful negotiations have been conducted with the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire for a memorial site, where a memorial statue will eventually reside. **Peter Walker**, an internationally renowned sculptor had a concept in mind and was commissioned to produce the statue. Models of the final design have been on display in several cathedrals around Britain. A Marquette has also been on display at Friends House. 12 bronze models



will be displayed permanently around the UK as well as at the British Embassy in Dubai. The design of the memorial is a blindfolded head, with neither ears nor mouth. It powerfully symbolizes the impotence of the innocent civilian caught up in the horrors of war.

Pity of War will not end its work with the memorial but will act as a catalyst for an ongoing educational program. As an expression of our Peace Testimony, it will work in schools and communities across the country in conjunction with exhibitions, readings and son-et-lumière, etc., raising awareness of not just the physical but also the psychological, social, educational, economic and cultural effects of war upon the civilian population.

Fundraising towards the memorial is underway and anyone interested in supporting the project or finding out more can do so at [Pityof-War.org/support-us](https://Pityof-War.org/support-us)

*Jeff Beatty, Kit Byatt and  
Linda Murray Hale, Trustees.*

## Musings

We humans have always been in awe of the cosmos, both astonished and in wonderment at the complexities and diversity of life. Understandably our awe is often coupled with fear, fear of the unknown and fear of the realisation that there is so little we control. This awe and fear has led to the invention of creation myths - stories that attempt to explain how everything got here in the first place and how it continues to be sustained. Our remote ancestors were more intelligent and sophisticated than we give them credit for. Sure, many of the creation stories are magical and fantastical and poetic, but often when we strip away the nonsense, we can find deep philosophical concepts buried within. Meaningful questions about reality and our place in it. We have developed many pathways toward understanding; we have learned, and continue to learn, so much. The universe is spectacular; from the planets to bacteria, we seek to understand for what purpose was our reality forged in the white hot crucible of space, while simultaneously knowing that we may never fully be able to. Theists aren't wrong when they say we still don't have all the answers and that

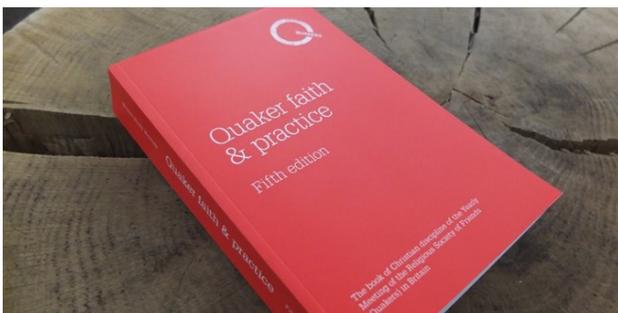
there is so much complexity that science still can't explain. But where I believe they are wrong, is in stating that this complexity necessitates a designer. However, if amazing, complex things need a designer, then who created this amazing, complex God/creator/designer? It's important to recognize that design and complexity are not the same thing. Looking at something complex and saying it requires design is begging the question and explaining a mystery with a mystery is really no explanation at all. Many theists will say, 'The human eye is so complex, it clearly serves a distinct purpose; it was designed for something, and so there must be a designer. It simply could not happen by random chance.' And to a degree, they're correct. Random one-time chance certainly did not form the human eye, but random chance and natural selection aren't the same thing. Their argument betrays a broad misunderstanding of science, and particularly evolution. Everything that has formed in the natural world, has done so as a result of natural processes following natural laws, repeated over billions of years. This is certainly not 'chance', and while it is awe-inspiring, it in no way points to an intelligent designer.

*John Tittley*

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## Quaker Faith and Practice

In 2018 Britain Yearly Meeting decided that Quaker Faith and Practice needed updating. It was felt the since 1994 when Quaker Faith and Practice was first adopted, many changes have taken place and it is becoming out of date. This is not going to be a decision was made to produce a completely new book.



The aim is to produce a book which can speak and be accessible to all present and future Quakers. Something that builds on the work and spiritual insight of previous generations.

How can Friends get involved?

- pray for and uphold the committee
- share ideas for the new book
- share inspirational and helpful pieces of writing

Ideas and pieces of writing can be submitted using the online form (offsite link) or by contacting the committee secretary, Michael Booth, at [qfp@quaker.org.uk](mailto:qfp@quaker.org.uk) or writing to Friends House.

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/resources/quaker-faith-and-practice/revising-quaker-faith-practice>

## Revision of our Book of Discipline: starting with a fundamental question

I am rather a fan of 'Quaker Faith and Practice', or as it's called more correctly the Book of Discipline, I am taking part in four Woodbrooke online Zoom meetings with some of those on the Book of Discipline Revision Committee (BDRC) to see how their mammoth task is progressing. Incidentally we got to meet the co-clerks – two wonderful young women – Quakers are very good at such equality. There are still three more sessions to go if you want to join in: 11 August, 25 August and 8 September <https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/item/revising-quaker-faith-practice/>. If that's not your cup of tea then you could look at BDRC's webpage to find out more <https://www.quaker.org.uk/resources/quaker-faith-and-practice/revising-quaker-faith-practice> But if you do nothing else how about asking yourself a question that has been fascinating me: **What is QFP for?**

*Maggie Taylor-Sanders*

## Almeley Station



Whilst looking through some old photos and papers belonging to my father I found the above photograph. It shows a branch line train on its way to Eardisley at Almeley Station in September 1935. My father was 17 when he took the photo. The family used to come down from Leeds to stay at the Old Quarry in Almeley, which my Grandmother owned.

*David Whiting*

## The Future Of Area Meeting

### A message from the Clerk

Friends have been reflecting on the Future of Area Meeting during the most recent Meetings for Business for Worship and at Area Meetings. Almeley, with very wise guidance from Ian Sterry, and has sent minutes to AM which have added to the discernment. (See AM minute AM20/48)

At the MfBfW in July Almeley Friends confirmed a strong allegiance to Friends in Wales and saw a real value in highlighting the cross border arrangement that we currently have as part of Southern Marches Area Meeting. Do Almeley Friends as a whole support this view? The alternative might be at some point in the future to consider joining an English MfBfW either Gloucester or Worcester. If you are unable to join the next BM and would like to share your thoughts on this important matter please contact Jeff Beatty, Elder, or Helen Briggs, Clerk, as it's important we hear our Friends .

*Helen Briggs*

I would like to thank all those who have contributed to this, the first edition of Almeley Wootton Quaker News with me as editor. The newsletter will now be produced every three months with the next one due in November. Please keep sending me your contribution and your ideas. It would be especially good to receive contributions from our younger members.

I would also like to hear comments and suggestions for our web site.

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In closing, Friends have recommended the following short video clip of Sir Michael Morpurgo reading a story that tells of a blackbird who is inspired to sing a special song. The story is called A Song of Gladness and is available to view on the BBC web site at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z7f7xyc>

*David Briggs*