

Ludlow Quaker Journal

No. 10, May 2017



In 2014 Friends minuted their wish to dispense with a regular Meeting Newsletter, but to retain an occasional Journal to provide a forum for news, comment and events. The Journal will publish anything that Friends think is of interest; so its range may be very wide. If you find it too long, select only what interests you from the Table of Contents. It will only publish what the editor receives without solicitation, so if you want Friends to know about your interests and concerns, make sure they reach the editor: he will be very pleased to hear from you. Comments and letters to the editor are also welcome.

Roger B.

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John C. reports on a recent meeting:

Does the Economy Work for You?

Some nineteen people attended this meeting organized by the Sustainability Committee on Saturday May 6th in the Ludlow Meeting House. There were members of the Meeting, some from other Meetings in the area and a number of non-Quakers. One of these mentioned to me that she had come because she had a high regard for the Quakers and their independence of political parties.

Unfortunately Alison Prout, who was to have run workshops, was unable to come since she was ill, so the event was confined to the morning. Charles Grimes of Positive Money from Hereford began the morning with a very good talk. He is a very engaging speaker who was not afraid to give personal examples of how the economy did not work for him. He was followed by our member Daniel McDowell of the Ludlow Campaign for Fairness, who spoke on Fair Tax Towns and the harm that tax evasion does to the community.

I was tempted at this point to look in *Quaker Faith and Practice* to see what it said about banking, and curiously, although bankers are always mentioned in Quaker history, the term does not appear in the index. Perhaps this is covered by the qualification at the end of Chapter 23 that Friends are still seeking for a corporate view.

Back to Charles Grimes who explained the purpose of Positive Money. This is to make sure that money works for all and not just for the richest 1% of the community. After the financial crash of 2008-9, the government and Bank of England launched a programme called 'quantitative easing' which created some £70 billion of new money and pumped it into financial markets through the purchase of government bonds. This has the effect of supporting those who have assets such as property and shares, and so making those who have the most of those assets even richer, and also benefiting tax-dodging corporations. This leads to more debt, worsens the housing crisis and makes the gap between the rich and poor more unequal.

If quantitative easing has to happen, it should be directed, not towards inflating the property and share markets, but towards directly investing in productive industries, in community welfare, in employment and the health service. In this way it could improve the health and well-being of the community and not simply benefit the richest.

This would chime with entries in *Quaker Faith and Practice*, in chapter 23, especially those on Social Justice, 23.14-19. After the 1914-18 war London Yearly Meeting adopted 'eight foundations of a true social order'. No. 8 of these indicated that the 'ownership of material things such as land and capital should be so regulated as best to minister to the need of and development of man.' 23.16.

Positive Money points out that one principal way in which money is created is by banks, when they make loans. Positive Money campaigns to take the power to create money away from the banks, and return it to a democratic transparent and accountable process, to create money free of debt and put new money into the real economy rather than financial markets and property bubbles.

Much more information on this can be found on the Positive Money website, <http://positivemoney.org/our-proposals/>

Daniel McDowell talked on the Fair Tax Towns movement which originated in Crickhowell as a protest against the use of tax havens, many of which have been established in British Colonies such as Bermuda. Estimates of the amount of revenue lost to tax havens vary widely owing to the secrecy with which they are conducted, but the lowest global estimate, according to Wikipedia, is 190 billion US dollars. That is \$190,000,000,000 (using the American definition of a billion). This system is "basically designed and operated" by a group of highly paid specialists from the world's largest private banks (led by [UBS](#), [Credit Suisse](#), and [Goldman Sachs](#)), law offices, and accounting firms and tolerated by international organisations such as the [Bank for International Settlements](#), the [International Monetary Fund](#), the [World Bank](#), the [OECD](#), and the [G20](#). The amount of money hidden away has significantly increased since 2005, sharpening the divide between the super-rich and the rest of the world. Fair Tax Towns (see their website <https://fairtaxtown.com/home/our-ground-rules/>) encourages all companies to pay their fair share of tax honestly. It clearly sets out a moral compass for tax behaviour.

Steve Lewis, who founded Fair Tax Towns, resigned in 2016 to try other approaches and is now campaigning for a seat on the board of HMRC to ensure that big firms pay their tax.

Daniel briefly referred to the work of the Ludlow Campaign for Fairness (LCFF). This is a non-party organization concerned with the redress of the more extreme inequalities in our society. In an age of food banks, massive cuts to public services and a desperate housing crisis, it has been evident for years that austerity hits the poor more than the rich, the young more than the old; the slogan that "we are all in this together" is clearly nonsense. Unfortunately, all the major political parties have subscribed to this doctrine. For more details see

<http://www.ludlow21.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Ludlow-Campaign-For-Fairness.pdf>

After I had written this Carole Chapman drew our attention to a cartoon which may be watched at

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oKg_haE_eLI It is called *The Goldsmith's Tale*.

I have also acquired for the Library a book by Ann Pettifor called *The production of money or How to break the power of the bankers*.

She argues that democracies can, and indeed must, reclaim the control over money production and restrain the out-of-control finance sector so that it serves the interests of

society as well as the needs of the eco-system. This brings us back to the issue of sustainability.

Hopefully Alison Prout will be able to visit us another day, but meanwhile my thanks to the Sustainability Group and particularly Anne Adams and Barbara Mark for organising a most successful morning.

John C.

Refugee Week 18-25 June 2017

Our May Area Meeting at Ross hosted two Wolverhampton Quakers, Mike and Rosemary Fox, who are also City of Sanctuary group members, and a charming Syrian refugee, Mohamad Ali, who has recently been helped by them.



We heard how this group grew from an Interfaith group set up in Wolverhampton in 1974 and other shelters later on, who became aware of the growing need to help these displaced people and families. There are now 80 Cities of Sanctuary in the UK, and these are often in

poorer areas of the country because housing is cheapest there, for the private companies paid to look after asylum seekers and refugees. (Do look up the definition of these two words, refugees and asylum seekers. The UK has separated the two words to mean different things.) The people of Wolverhampton have, on the whole, been very welcoming to these displaced peoples, but there are inevitable conflicts over resources. For more information look at wolverhampton.cityofsanctuary.org/ If you want to offer support through donations of money or help with housing, email g.reiss@btinternet.com .

Besides Wolverhampton, we learnt that there are 59 individual refugees/asylum seekers in Hereford at the moment, some in family groups. Several Meetings have offered outings and holidays and on 15 July The Pales is hosting a barbeque for this whole group: everyone is invited. Please see the AM minutes to find out more about this event.

However before this comes Refugee Week, a national event 18-25 June. Refugee Week takes place every year across the world in the week around World Refugee Day, 20 June. In the UK, Refugee Week is a nationwide programme of arts, cultural and educational events that celebrate the contribution of refugees to the UK, and encourages a better understanding between communities: see <http://refugeeweek.org.uk/>

Refugee Week at Friends House

Friends House in London has a full programme of Refugee Week events lined up, as a way to discuss how we can reinvigorate a culture of hospitality in Britain. All the events are open to everyone. This is in addition to fantastic events across the country, including a performance of 'The Bundle' at Kingston Meeting House, a performance of 'Pericles' at Doncaster Meeting House and a whole day of activities at Lancaster Meeting House. Do look on the Refugee Week and Quaker websites to keep up to date.

On Monday 19 June the Friends House Library will open its doors from 11am – 3pm to display artefacts and objects from past initiatives to offer sanctuary, from the Boer War to the Kindertransport.

At 6.30pm, authors of bestseller 'The Good Immigrant' will discuss how an anti-racist media might look – the first of a quartet of events in the bookshop. <http://bit.ly/RefugeeWeekMediaPanel>

On Tuesday 20 June Hassan Abdulrazzak ('A Country of Refuge'), Ambrose Musiwiya ('Over Land Over Sea') and Maron Ehata ('Refugee Stories') will speak to their direct experience of seeking sanctuary in Britain. <http://bit.ly/RefugeeWeekWritingPanel>

On Wednesday 21 June internationally acclaimed author Gulwali Passarlay will be joined by Brazilian playwright Gaël Le Cornec and feature film director Sue Clayton to discuss the role of the arts in shaping culture. <http://bit.ly/RefugeeWeekArtsPanel>

On Thursday 22 June the novelists Sita Brahmachari ('Red Leaves'), Tim Finch ('House of

Journalists'), Jason Donald ('Delila') and Roma Tearne ('Brixton Beach') will gather in the bookshop to discuss the representation of immigration in fiction. <http://bit.ly/RefugeeWeekFictionPanel>

The finale to the week's events comes on Sunday 25 June -- 'Sanctuary Sunday'-- when Friends House will host to a whole day of events, featuring an expert panel on immigration detention and a 'RefuTEA' in partnership with the Refugee Council <http://bit.ly/RefugeeWeekSanctuarySunday> .

All events are free, but advance booking is recommended. To book your place visit the Facebook groups or www.quaker.org.uk/migration.

Barbara

Refugees –

They have no need of our help
So do not tell me
These haggard faces could belong to you or me
Should life have dealt a different hand
We need to see them for who they really are
Chancers and scroungers
Layabouts and loungers
With bombs up their sleeves
Cut-throats and thieves
They are not
Welcome here
We should make them
Go back to where they came from
They cannot
Share our food
Share our homes
Share our countries
Instead let us
Build a wall to keep them out
It is not okay to say
These are people just like us
A place should only belong to those who are born there
Do not be so stupid to think that
The world can be looked at in another way.

Now read from the bottom up.

Reprinted in *Resurgence*, May/June 2017, No. 302, from *You Took the Last Bus Home: The Poems of Brian Bilston* (2016).

Sent in by Anne A.

Learning About Quakers in Ironbridge

For the May Children's Meeting, we decided to do something a bit different and go to Ironbridge for the day to try to learn more about Quakers there. So three children (Rhian, Amelia and Eoin) headed up on a lovely sunny Sunday with Phi and Catherine.

The first thing we did was go up to the Quaker burial ground. It was closed for renovation, but we managed to peep inside. It wasn't like a normal graveyard! There were flat stones in a line up against the wall with names and dates on. No one had the best stone, they were all equals.



After a picnic we went to the Abraham Darby house. It was huge! There were lots of big rooms which were very nice, but they were plainer than other rich people's houses of that time. We saw where they ate, slept and generally lived. We also saw their crockery which had lovely pictures of plants on them.

In the last room, there was a rack of old Quaker clothes and also fashionable clothes that non-Quakers would

have worn. We tried them on and it was hilarious. Every single costume was *extremely* heavy! This is us all dressed up:



We found out that Quaker families owned lots of chocolate and sweet businesses such as Frys, Cadburys, and Rowntrees, whilst other families like the Jacobs and Carrs made crackers. Quakers also ran banks such as Lloyds and Barclays. Other well-known Quaker brands included Clarks shoes and Bryant and May matches, and Quakers also ran the Stockton and Darlington Railway. It seems like Quakers ran very successful businesses and we learnt about how well they looked after the people who worked for them.



Rhian

Islabikes Vision and Strategy Statement 2014

After the recent Meeting Shared Lunch, Isla gave a fascinating talk on how her company has set up the Imagine Project, re-visioning its production processes and moving from a traditional linear economy to a sustainable circular economy (look up this revolutionary concept on the web!). She sent the *Journal* the Islabikes 2014 vision and strategy statement explaining this. The editor apologises to Isla (and to you) for reformatting the statement in order to get it into the *Journal* -- the text is unchanged and original. If you want more, you can watch Isla on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXktCRkgly8>, BBC News: Circular Economy) or on *The Guardian's* on-line bike blog for 21 October 2016.

Islabikes Imagine Project

Inspired by our desire to continue providing bicycles for future generations and our increasing concern surrounding environmental issues we have been re-evaluating how bicycles may be manufactured and supplied in the future.

To ensure families can continue to enjoy the benefits of cycling in the future we will pioneer the environmentally sustainable supply of bicycles.

Adopting a new business model

We aim to do this by establishing in-house manufacturing of children's bicycles in the UK and providing these to market via a "service rental model" by ultimately having an innovative, closed loop supply chain.

Remove our reliance on raw materials

Our aspiration is to use 100% reused materials and renewable energy sources.

Responsibility for materials

We will retain ownership of the bikes and therefore overall responsibility for the raw materials. When they are returned to us bikes will be refurbished before being sent to the next rider.

Unrepairable components will be broken down into constituent materials and reused by us or sent out for use in other industries, therefore retaining their valuable properties.

Challenges

Resource availability and pricing

The era of cheap oil and materials is coming to an end. Resources of every kind are set to become scarce and with this future predicted price rises will put increasing pressure on traditional manufacturing and supply models.

Rising global consumption

Rising consumer affluence in emerging economies is resulting in an exponentially increasing demand for manufactured items and the materials they are made from. There are not sufficient global resources to continue to feed the rapidly rising demands of the world's population.

The way goods are supplied now

Almost all goods are currently supplied on a “take, make and dispose model”, also known as a linear supply chain. Raw materials are taken out of the ground, they are manufactured into something and sold to the end user. The product is thrown away at the end of its life or when the end user has finished with it, usually ending up in a landfill site. Linear supply chains are incredibly wasteful and ultimately unsustainable.

The way goods will be supplied in the future

It is envisaged that goods will be rented to the end user who will pay for the service the product provides rather than outright ownership. Once finished with they will be returned to the factory who will refurbish or remanufacture and send to the next user. Materials will move between industries with waste from one providing raw input for the next, forming a continuous cyclic flow and alleviating reliance on finite raw materials. Nothing is sent to landfill.

Isla

The Peace Movement: The Movement for the Abolition of War

The Movement for the Abolition of War, “MAW”, was formed in 2001, with Joseph Rotblat as its president and Bruce Kent as its chair, and is run by volunteers. It aims to challenge the theory that war is inevitable and seeks constructive alternatives to it. It publishes a regular newsletter, *Abolish War* (free to read on-line), and its website can be found at <http://www.abolishwar.org.uk/>. It is now part of a global movement, to which many groups are affiliated – its website says that it works closely with partners the International Peace Bureau (www.ipb.org), the American organisation World Beyond War (<http://worldbeyondwar.org/>), and in the UK the Bradford Peace Museum (<http://www.peacemuseum.org.uk/>), Peace

Education Network (<http://peace-education.org.uk/>) and Network for Peace (<http://www.networkforpeace.org.uk/>).

MAW groups are involved in their local areas, in protests about making war, and in attempts to educate others about the need to abolish war and provide alternatives. There are annual conferences with knowledgeable speakers. A youth committee organises conferences and goes into schools and universities to challenge the militarisation of schools.

The Movement's partner World Beyond War has produced a book, *A Global Security System: an Alternative to War*, first published in 2015 but an ongoing project, described as a living document which is movement-building. It is quite long with many different headings, including a vision of peace, ideas for an alternative system to war, democratisation of international bodies, a civilian peace force, non-violent direct action, building a culture of peace, common security, and many other subjects.

I was very pleased to see that so much positive work is going on to try to promote peace. However, I was disappointed that peace with the whole of creation is hardly mentioned. There is a section called "global action for the environment" in the book, but it sounds very anthropocentric. We need to give the natural world the space and importance which it deserves. Humans have been fighting nature almost since we first appeared on the planet, and in the process have destroyed thousands of beautiful, interesting and amazing species, delicately adapted to their environments. We seem to assume that the whole planet belongs to us and we disregard any other life.

MAW has run Peace History Conferences annually since 2007. The 2017 PHC (see website) is entitled "Protest, Power and Change, the History of the Peace Movement" and takes place at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 9-10 June. On Friday 9 June there will also be an associated walk along the London Peace Trail and a performance of Michael Mears' acclaimed play on conscientious objection, *This Evil Thing*. The conference is also timed to coincide with the Imperial War Museum exhibition entitled "People Power: Fighting for Peace" (23 March to 28 August). See also the article in *The Friend* of 14 April by the Editor.

Anne A.

Song for Boys and Men

Can a man be kind and caring?
Jesus was.
Can a man who's kind and caring
be adventuresome and daring,
bravely doing right
walking in the light?
Jesus did, and so I can:
I will be a Jesus man.

Can a man be sad with crying?

Jesus was.
Can a man who's sad with crying,
shed his tears, yet keep on trying,
loving to the end,
enemy and friend?
Jesus did, and so I can:
I will be a Jesus man.

Can a man be hurt and broken?
Jesus was.
Can a man who's hurt and broken
show his friends how God has spoken,
giving to us then,
power to start again?
Jesus did, and so I can:
I will be a Jesus man.

Author unknown. Sent in by Roy