

Ludlow Quaker Journal

June 2020



This 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. Please contact Barbara Mark if you would like to have something included or wonder if you have a subject that might be of interest. It will be published on-line only and will come out when enough articles have been gathered in. Comments and letters to the editor are also welcome.

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Many thanks to everyone who has helped me on this issue.



Here is a photo of Rei with her mum and dad. Luzili says Mads, Sisi and Rei are all doing well and getting to know each other. The sleepless nights are always hard work!

Rei was born on 10th May just before 10am.



In Memory of Elizabeth Rumble

by Anne Dyer

Elizabeth Rumble was born in 1930 in Portsmouth Naval Dockyard, where her father was head of the dock police. Her mother was a one-woman charity organisation, feeding and advising everyone who came her way. She gave Elizabeth's coat with the swans' down collar to a cold child, to Elizabeth's fury. Her parents influence was visible both in her attitudes and actions.

After University, Elizabeth joined the Probation Service, serving in the Magistrates Court and in the Divorce Court, which she greatly enjoyed.

She rose in the Service, working in various countries, and serving a short period in the prison for the most intelligent criminals. She said some of their points of view were quite hard to argue against.

She became a senior P.O. and was deeply involved in the Community Sentencing launch. She had a wonderful rapport with every kind of person.

All good people get promoted, and about 1978, this threat came on her. She had no desire to be raised to a desk job, and was thinking of retiring.

The Magistrates used to invite her to join in their discussion groups, and, in this connection, she met my mother. A close friendship was formed over their common interest in justice.

Sometime later, when visiting Westhope after her mother's death, Elizabeth and Barbara were discussing the future of Westhope Cottage, and whether we had any ideas. I had talked about running classes when my mother could no longer run the estate in my frequent absences, teaching abroad. This was magic to Elizabeth, and the three of us did a few weekend courses in 1978. It was a success. It continued to grow, mainly due to Elizabeth's way with people, both staff and students.

Elizabeth bought a house in Ludlow for when she wasn't on duty at Westhope, and got involved in local Quakers, in the course of which she 'converted' me.

Sadly, her absent-mindedness developed into dementia, and she had to go into sheltered accommodation, as I was unable to cope with her as well as do my work in the college.

Here are a few memories of VE DAY from someone who was there!

I'm probably the only member of our extended family who could say that.

In May 1945 I was a little over three and a half years old and I had spent most of the last two years living with my grandparents in Reading, thought to be a safe place in war-time. My mother spent part of her time at our home in south London, not far from Croydon Aerodrome and so very definitely not a safe location when there were air raids. Indeed a bomb landed in our back garden – and that blew the roof off our house! Neighbours would let her know when there was damage to inspect, so she could go up from Reading to organise emergency repairs.

By late April the Allies appeared to have the German forces “on the run”, air raids over Britain had ceased, so I was home with Mother. April 30th saw the death (by suicide) of Adolph Hitler, the German leader. A week later the German High Command surrendered. So on May 8th as the good news became known everyone was ready to celebrate, not just in Britain but across most of Europe.

So it was that Mother and I walked down our road to a bit of waste land, where houses had stood before a bomb flattened them. Here in the semi-darkness of early evening we joined a crowd of cheering people around a blazing bonfire. The excessive high spirits was to me rather intimidating, but what really alarmed me was the figure on top of the bonfire – a lifelike effigy about to be consumed by flames. “Who’s being burnt?” I asked. “Oh, that’s Hitler, of course!”

But for us “The War” wasn’t over yet. My father was the other side of the world. I had grown up with the phrase “Daddy’s in India”, although he had moved on with the RAF to Burma, Malaya and Singapore. This was the War in the Pacific, where the common enemy was Japan. Not until the Americans had dropped the atom bombs on Hiroshima (August 6th) and Nagasaki (Aug. 9th) – killing 140,000 and 74,000 – did the Japanese contemplate surrender. It came on the 14th and August 15th is thus VJ Day, Eventually the troops returned home, by sea, and after all the formalities of being “demobbed” (demobilised) they could rejoin their families.

Thus in early October 1945 as a four-year-old I met my father on a platform at Euston station - almost for the first time, as he had enlisted when I was only a few months old.

As my parents and grandparents lived through the horrors of two world wars we must give thanks that since 1945 there has been a general world-wide peace. Let us strive and pray that peoples still in conflict (e.g. Syria) may come to share with us the blessings of this peace.

Clive Prior

'HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF.'

(Written in 1869 during the Cholera outbreak. Printed during the Spanish 'Flu pandemic:

(Written by: Katleen O'Mara - 1869)

A POEM.

." And people stayed at home
And read books
And learned new ways of living
And stopped and listened.

Some meditated, someone prayed
Someone met their shadow.
And people began to think differently
And people healed

And in the absence of people
some, lived in ignorant ways
Dangerous, Meaningless, Heartless,
The earth also began to heal

And when the danger ended
And people found themselves
They grieved for the dead
And looked at new choices.

They dreamed of a better world
And saw fresh visions
And shared new ways of living
And began to heal the earth and it's people.'

With thoughtfully sharing, Friendship.

Maiya.

Julia Reynolds has written this for the Appleseed newsletter, about how 'lock down' is effecting her.

The Appleseed group is run at Woodbrook and was named after Johnnie Appleseed, who travelled across the United States planting apple orchards. The name also refers to George Fox's image of Christ and his people as the seed of God.

Appleseed seeks to balance thinking and feelings by using art based response activities.

The group was started by Chris Cook and Brenda Heales who have written a book about the methods called ' Seeding the Spirit- the Appleseed Workbook.'

Julia says. 'have been painting flowers. This one was made from a sketch I did in our community garden.

Also came across this I had copied a long time ago:

'To see the world in grain of sand
And heaven in a wild flower
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour.' (William Blake)

Think this fits our time. We are getting more aware of the value of nature. At times, too, an hour can seem like eternity in lockdown.
Hope you are keeping safe and well. '



Also from the Appleseed newsletter we are allowed to share the thoughts from

Felicity Cox

Our Meeting usually goes for a bluebell walk at this time of the year. As obviously we can't do that this year, we have been invited to offer up anything about bluebells to be circulated around us by email instead.

I couldn't find anything I liked, so I sat down this morning and produced this:

The Bluebell

Where the beech tree grows, there grow I
My bells the colour of a cloudless sky,
The purest, clearest of cerulean blue,
Deep and strong – and tinkling too.

If you are a mouse, or a woodland guest
Or a very young blackbird still in your nest,
You'll hear my bells as they chime in the wind,

Or – if you are a person who never has sinned.

But – if you are a human with a sensitive ear
You can still catch my music when my bells appear
Through the bright green of the beech tree's new leaf
It just takes quiet stillness, for those with belief
To feast on my music, my bells and my colour
To stand and to listen – hear my overture to summer

Bluebells in Kathleen's garden



from Liz Perkins

I am gardening, cooking, and stitching – I started work on a big project inspired by mediaeval monasteries at the beginning of the year. Luckily I picked my embroidery tutor's brains very thoroughly before lockdown! The picture is the first motif, based on the Irish pattern of a collection of individual cells; the second one, inspired by the classic monastic plan, is nearly finished. There couldn't be a better time to meditate on enclosure. I am reminded of the words of Abba Moses of the Desert Fathers: 'Sit in your cell, and your cell will teach you everything.'



Assisted dying

This subject is scheduled to come to Area Meeting when time permits, and seems to be becoming more urgent daily with new discoveries in extreme treatments.

There is a very moving article in The Friend of 13th March from the mother of a daughter who went to Switzerland to end her life, being unable to do so here. That must have been enormously distressing.

The article outlines previous attempts to get a law passed to enable people suffering from incurable illness and serious incapacity to make it legal to arrange to end one's life, but so far all have failed, although a majority of the general public support the principle.

There are several organisations supporting a change in the law, including the Humanists and the Unitarians. For Quakers, Leeds Area Meeting has taken a lead, and published a book in 2016, entitled "Assisted Dying: A Quaker Exploration" with 11 articles on various aspects by different people, mostly Quakers. Apparently a copy was sent to every local meeting, and I have recently bought one, further to a letter in The Friend of 1st May from two of the editors.

It seems that some people think that one should live out one's term and wait for God to decide when one should go. But in fact human beings seek to prolong life now, by every possible means, as we have advanced treatments for every organ that may fail. There comes a time when doctors may agree that it is time to switch off a life support machine as it causes more suffering and will not have a lasting effect. So in some ways assisted death is already happening.

There is still a risk that someone helping another to die can be taken to court for murder. Although it could result in acquittal it would be extremely upsetting.

There are many proposed safeguards for a person requesting to end their life. They must be regarded as terminally ill by two doctors, have written a letter asking to be released, have the capacity to make the decision and to take the action, and have been informed about palliative care available. Some people already make an advance decision put with their will to say they do not wish to be resuscitated by certain methods.

The book mentioned above has a table at the end giving the criteria for an assisted death in several countries where it is permitted, Switzerland, Belgium and the US state of Oregon. It also describes the law here and attempts to change or clarify it. There is an article by Jan Arriens on reflections on death row, and others on palliative care, the morality of assisting others to die, and a number of other relevant aspects of the subject. There is an acknowledgement of "wise suggestions" by Stevie Kray. I assume we have a copy in the library, but I would be happy to lend mine to anyone interested.

Anne Adams

Recipes

Many thanks go to Beth for sharing another two of her recipes with us.

BETH'S SCONES

I've been making these since I was nine, so there isn't really a recipe as such. After 45yrs practice, I just sort of know how much to put in, so my answer when I'm asked about the 'recipe' is usually 'some'!

I've tried to reverse engineer things by using the scales after I've added stuff, but there's actually a lot of leeway with a primitive bread recipe (which is what scones

are) so just go ahead & practice, they'll turn out okay, and the more you practice, the better they'll be.

There are a few golden rules which will make things better no matter what you're baking.

Always pre-heat the oven. Put it on before you start getting things out & it'll be ready when you've finished putting your recipe together.

Always use 'altered milk' in scones. By that I mean buttermilk if you can get it, milk that has 'gone off' works really well (and saves waste), but in the absence of any of these you can sour milk with a few drops of lemon juice or put a tablespoon or two of plain yoghurt in the measuring jug & make it up to half a litre with milk.

Always use an egg. You can make them without, & in the days when eggs were at a premium (during the war) this was understandable, but now I can't see why you would miss it out, eggs are cheap & you'll always get a good raise'

Work fast & handle as little as possible – everything on the equipment & ingredient list on the work surface before you start. Most spoiled scones happen because of over handling & 'dithering' because you don't have what you need to hand.

Get your cooling rack & clean tea towel ready to wrap the scones immediately they come out of the oven, this keeps them soft & explains why a lot of tea shop scones are hard on the outside.

PLAIN (SWEET) SCONES

Ingredients

300g self-raising flour

70g cold butter, cubed

40g sugar

1 egg half a litre 'altered' milk (see 2 above)

Extra flour for cutting out

Equipment

Mixing bowl

Scone cutter

Ordinary table knife

Baking tray (Either scattered with a generous layer of flour or use a peice of baking paper)

a cooling tray

Clean tea towel.

Method

Preheat the oven to 180 degrees (160 for a fan oven)

Rub the butter into the flour, incorporating as much air as you can, until it resembles breadcrumbs (I can't do this anymore, so I put the flour & butter in the food processor & whizz it up.)

Add the sugar & mix with your knife to combine

Make a well in the centre with the knife & crack the egg into it. Add the liquid & mix in a figure of eight with the knife until just combined (the quicker the better). The mixture should look quite rough & be fairly wet, but flours differ, so if you're not happy, add a handful more flour)

Spread a generous handful of flour on your work surface & tip the mix onto it. Cover the mix with more flour & pat it flat (it should be about half an inch thick, NEVER use a rolling pin)

Working quickly, cut out your scones, roll the edges briefly in some of the flour on the work surface, & put them on the baking tray pushed up against each other, so they have to be broken apart when cooked (this ensures all the raise is upwards & prevents them spreading out).

Push the remaining mix quickly together & cut out more scones. (should give about eight big fat scones, the last one might be a bit meagre – the cook or any available grandchildren get to eat this one hot from the oven!)

Don't be tempted to put a milk or egg glaze on plain scones, it only makes them more likely to burn & they'll stick to your tea towel. They should be soft & floury.

Bake in the middle of your oven for about 20 to 25 minutes. Ovens vary, check them after 15 minutes, be prepared for them to take longer. They're ready when they're nice & brown & well risen.

Put the tea towel on the cooling tray & break up your scones on to it straight from the oven. Wrap them up & leave to cool for as long as you want – eating them hot enough to melt the butter is excellent, but probably not good for the digestion.

Scones freeze well & are the one thing apart from cooking fish where I would recommend using a microwave. 30 second bursts from frozen will give you a scone that is just warm as if from the oven.

Cheese scones

Ingredients

300g SR flour

40g cold butter, cubed

75g grated strong cheddar cheese

1 teaspoon whole grain or smooth mustard

1 egg

Half a litre 'altered' milk

Approx 75g grated cheese for topping

Method

Either; rub in the butter, flour & grated cheese together as for plain scones or tip them into the food processor & whizz together.

In your bowl, add the milk & egg & mix quickly and cut out the same as for plain scones. This mixture will be drier & stiffer than for sweet scones, but there is more fat, so they will end up much the same.

When your scones are ready for the oven, top them with a generous pinch of grated cheddar & proceed as for plain scones.

There is no reason not to cook both types at once as long as you leave a gap between them on the tray.

Other suggestions

Add dried fruit to plain scones (sultanas, currants, cranberries or any mixture of these)

Use either self raising wholemeal flour or add baking powder to plain wholemeal. These are called 'wheaten scones' in Scotland.

Add very finely chopped & cooked onion to cheese scones

Add very finely chopped ham to cheese scones

Use scones instead of bread for picnic sandwiches, Ian & his brothers & son are very fond of cheese scones with a slice of cold ham.

Bake scones in a ring inside a greased & floured sandwich cake tin, good idea if taking to someone else's house as they can be left in the tin & transported easily.

Leave out the sugar & add a pinch of dried herbs & ground black pepper to the plain scones & put uncooked on the top of a casserole 20 minutes before it finishes cooking. Americans call this cobbler.

Use sweet scones the same way as (7) to make sweet cobbler. Tinned peaches, stewed apples, anything you fancy.

Make tiny herb scones (7), halve & serve with drinks, topped with a dollop of sour cream or crème fraiche & either a bit of smoked salmon or a little mock caviar. Grate some lemon zest on top.

Add cinnamon & replace some of the milk with cooked apple puree for Christmas scones.

Quick Quiche

Your intro here.....

PASTRY CASE FIRST

In the food processor:

Put 9 rounded tablespoons of plain flour in the processor with the blade in place, Cut ½ of a 250g block of butter into 1cm cubes and tip into the flour. Whizz to crumbs.

With the processor running put a pinch of salt down the tube.

Tip 1 whole egg [break and check it first] and 2 tablespoons of single cream or milk down the tube with the processor still running.

The pastry will come together in a lump. Switch off and tip onto a floured surface.

Roll out the pastry to less than 1cm thick, fold and lift it to line a greased quiche tin. Don't worry about cracking, patch it with your fingers.

Separate an egg, [save the yolk to put in the filling] and beat the white with a fork to break it up. Brush the case with the egg white and stick it in the freezer while you make the filling.

FILLING

Finely chop a small onion, or large shallot and saute in some butter with a few bacon lardons till soft but not coloured.

In a big bowl mix together 4 large eggs, 1 small tub of crème fraiche, the spare yolk from before and a pinch of salt, mix until smooth.

Take the quiche-case out of the freezer, scatter the onion and bacon on the pastry and tip in the egg mixture.

Put the quiche on a baking tray, grind some black pepper on top and cook at 180C FOR 25-40 MINS UNTIL WELL RISEN AND A PALE BROWN ON TOP.

VARIATIONS

Grate a little cheese on top before cooking, Swiss cheese like Emmental is good.

Sliced sauteed mushrooms and 1tbspn of drained sweetcorn.

Small pieces of any nice veg you like eg broccoli, carrot, new broad beans, sliced tomato

Italian style with pieces of sun dried tomato and some olives. Drizzle the top with a little oil from the sun dried tomato.

Fish- salmon and asparagus is good, so is tuna and sweetcorn.

Make it up yourself! If it works in pasta it will probably work in a quiche.

Build Back Better

As a member of the QPSW Economics and Sustainability sub-Committee, I have just been consulted on whether Quakers nationally should become part of this, and given enthusiastic support, and signed up personally. (BBB are keen to have Quakers on board).

In asking for support from the committee, our (not-furloughed) QPSW Programme Manager for Economics and Sustainability, Olivia Hanks, writes: *"Build Back Better is a campaign for a coronavirus recovery that tackles inequality, protects public services, provides good jobs and builds an economy which can tackle the climate crisis. It is not owned by any one organisation but is being convened by Green New Deal UK. It is prioritising voices from youth, unions, health and frontline workers, but is open to any organisation that shares its aims. A list of organisations will be published online in the next few weeks, but so far I'm aware of: Medact, Green Jobs Alliance, several unions including Unite and Unison, UKSCN, JCWI, Greenpeace, 350, New Economics Foundation. I believe CAAT are also involved. This is a crucial moment for the UK, and it's really important for everyone who wants to build a fairer, greener economy to unite around some key principles. This will make it easier for our voices to be heard by government, and for our narrative to be adopted by the general public. "*

Another member of the committee, Chris Martin, from Birmingham, has written in his response: *"All the West Midlands climate action groups are starting to fall in behind Build Back Better (BBB) and we have a large coordination meeting next week. Also both Birmingham City Council and the West Midlands Combined Authority are bringing out post Covid recovery and transport emergency plans. There are factions within both that would just like to see post-Covid money poured into an 'old economy' recovery and factions which have visions for a new future. "*

This notice has come to Area Meeting from Colin Brown

This poem shared Maggie Taylor-Sanders

Our Real Work

It may be that when we no longer know what to do
we have come to our real work,
and that when we no longer know which way to go
we have come to our real journey.
The mind that is not baffled is not employed.
The impeded stream is the one that sings.

Wendell Berry

Book Review

Universe as Revelation, An ecomystical theology for Friends by Jo Farrow and Alex Wildwood 2013 , Pronoun Books

I picked out this book from a pile awaiting sorting by our librarian, because I was intrigued by its title. Should the book be classified under 'Spirituality' or under 'Environment' What was it about? The blurb on the back explains that the authors 'have surveyed recent thinking on the spiritual dimension of the environmental crisis and the integrity of creation and have sought 'an ecomystical perspective...' What the book seeks to confront and explore is the generally acknowledged trend, already observed by Gerald Priestman in the 1970s, that during the later 20th century increasing numbers of people from all kinds of backgrounds did not consider themselves 'religious', but acknowledged the significance of 'spirituality' in their lives. The authors consider that this shift in approach was not sufficiently taken on board in Quaker thinking at the time. The two authors have contributed alternative chapters, an ingenious balancing act, coming to common conclusions that connectivity with the universe is a key to spirituality. They seek to rediscover early Quakers' 'long-lost testimony to the goodness of Creation' setting this in the context of other movements informed by awareness of the ecological crises of our age. Attitudes change fast; today, climate change has moved to the foreground of our consciousness, so that a book published in 2013 already seems out of date in some respects. Yet exploring contemporary forms of spirituality and their roots, in the context of our changing understanding of the universe and the needs of our planet remains a relevant challenge.

The authors have arrived at their beliefs by very different paths. The stories of their spiritual journeys run through the book and give it a helpful grounding. Jo Farrow's background was in the Anglican church; she studied theology and became a Deaconess, but became aware that nothing in her religious life could compare with her childhood wonder and sense of unity with the natural world. She came to think that Christianity 'became concentrated, not on earth or this world, but on heaven and the next world' She changed direction, studied art, taught art and design, became a Quaker, and Secretary of Quaker Home Service, describing her experiences in her book 'The world in my heart', 1990 . In contrast, Alex Wildwood did not have a Biblical background, and felt that although he was happy with being a Quaker, he could not describe himself as a 'Christian'. He was excited by the many new paths to spirituality that were being explored, including James Lovelock's Gaia theory (the interaction of living organisms allowing the earth to form a self-regulating system to maintain conditions for life on the planet). Such an approach rejected the concept of man's domination over nature, replacing it with the idea that the human race is simply embedded within the earth's living system. Likewise, the rejection of a 'patriarchal sky God' appealed to feminist thinking, while greater awareness of and respect for the living earth tallied with beliefs of ancient communities such as those in Australia and New Zealand. He explores a large number of writers on modern spirituality, from different backgrounds, and finds common ground between them: the need to return to a more earth-centred religious awareness, together with a new understanding of our interdependence and responsibilities. He shares much of the approach of the environmental activist Joanna Macy, (whose book 'Active Hope' was recommended reading for our Area Away weekend) .

Wildwood also tackles the knotty 'God question'; asking if there are ways of imagining divine presence in new ways. He recognises the sense of awe inspired by

considering the immensity and complexity of the universe, and writes of his own experience of Inner or Inward Light,' the shimmering movement and energy of existence itself, present throughout the universe'. Jo Farrow pursues this subject in more detail, recognising how others have experienced the 'journey into darkness' when a theistic God is abandoned or appears to withdraw, and she offers instead the intense experience of feeling at one with all aspects of life in the universe. She feels that Quaker meetings 'should have something about them that helps us to say a full-blooded 'Yes' to life, rather than occasions when we sink into a serene oblivion in order to escape from the pressures and challenges'.

The book has an extensive bibliography and is a helpful introduction to the ways in which diverse routes to spirituality have been explored and shared over the last fifty years. It challenges us to consider how our Quaker practices need to evolve in order to be relevant to today's world.

Bridget Cherry

A 'Mental health warning'

sent in by Pat

Just be careful because people are going crazy from being in lock down.

I have just been talking about this with the microwave and the toaster while drinking my cup of tea and all of us agreed that things are getting bad. I didn't mention anything to the washing machine as she puts a different spin on everything. Certainly not the fridge as he is acting cold and distant. In the end the iron calmed me down as she said everything will be fine, no situation is too pressing. The vacuum was very unsympathetic.... told me to just suck it up, but the fan was more optimistic and hoped it would all soon blow over! The toilet looked a bit flushed when I asked its opinion and didn't say anything, but the doorknob told me to get a grip! The front door said I was unhinged and so the curtains told me to..... yes, you guessed it pull myself together.

Sent by Rohan Lewis

I wandered lonely as a cloud,
Two metres from the madding crowd,
When all at once my name was called
To enter Waitrose hallowed hall.

This was the pensioner's special hour
I'd gone to get a bag of flour,
But I forgot -when through the door -
What I had gone to Waitrose for.

The Waitrose staff are extra kind
I told them it had slipped my mind,
They ask what else I had forgot
They clearly thought I'd lost the plot.

I phoned my wife again to ask
She reminded me of this special task
"I need some flour to bake a cake
With all that cream you made me take!"

"Ah yes, I recall" I had to lie,
I dared not ask what flower to buy,
But then I saw them at the tills

A bunch of golden daffodils!

Ludlow CTAL Food bank at the Rockspring Centre.

I wanted to share the main points of a recent report from the Food Bank (15th May 2020), to show how it is responding to the present crisis. From January to March 2020 was the busiest time yet in terms of food parcels given out, only to be exceeded by April when some 61 food parcels were given out. So far this year 533 people have been helped. This is an increase of 39% on 2019. There are 43% more single female recipients and 63% more single males. The number of single parent recipients is up by 74%, and the number of couples is up by 31%.

Most came from Ludlow, but some were from Craven Arms in the north, to Wigmore in the south. Cleobury Mortimer now has its own Food Bank, but not apparently Craven Arms.

This pressure on the Bank has meant that the organisation has become much professional with a management committee, and much more division of functions. Isolation of many older volunteers has led to the recruitment of many younger volunteers to accept deliveries and fill and deliver the parcels. New working practices have been adopted, which means that the whole process is now much safer for both volunteers and those accepting parcels.

Giving to the Ludlow Food Bank during this period of change and hardship has wonderfully increased – in work, food and money. Deepest thanks to all of you who have responded. In terms of the Meeting's involvement, since I am now isolating, it is up to individual members to take any donations themselves to the Rockspring Centre in the morning (Monday to Friday) between 9 and 1pm and preferably between 9 and 11am. Obviously this is not possible for many, so it would be helpful if the Meeting, either collectively or individually, made financial donations to the Food Bank, so that they can purchase food. If anyone wants the bank details I am happy to give them out.

John Cherry. jcherry58@yahoo.co.uk

News about our Environment

This is from The Quaker Testimonies Publication of 2003

Simplicity

Simplicity is not just about possessions but also about attitudes. Because of their integrity in business dealings, many early Friends prospered in business, especially in the 19th century. The wealth they accumulated was not, however, sought for its own sake but was often used for the wider benefit of society and especially the dispossessed. We live much less simply than our forebears a hundred years ago, or than people in most other countries in the world. Simplicity involves constantly challenging the way we live and what our true needs are, and especially how our own standard of living is sometimes achieved at the expense of others. It means standing aside from the fuelling of wants and manufacturing of new desires.

Extract from University of Cambridge research bulletin 7th May 2020

Researchers find long-term, climate-friendly stimulus policies are often superior in overall economic impact – not just in slowing global warming.

As ever, good can be extracted from even the darkest hour, but it requires clear thinking, imagination and bold leadership.

Emily Shuckburgh

An [analysis](#) of possible COVID-19 economic recovery packages shows the potential for strong alignment between the economy and the environment. The direction of these measures over the next six months will largely determine whether the worst impacts of global warming can be avoided, and research published today reveals that climate-friendly policies can deliver a better result for the economy – and the environment.

Drawing on a global survey of senior central bank and finance ministry officials, as well as learnings from the 2008 financial crisis, economists found that green projects create more jobs, deliver higher short-term returns per dollar spent and lead to increased long-term cost savings, by comparison with traditional fiscal stimulus.

“The COVID-19-initiated emissions reduction could be short-lived,” said lead author Cameron Hepburn from the University of Oxford. “But this report shows we can choose to build back better, keeping many of the recent improvements we’ve seen in cleaner air, returning nature and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.”

“The markets are not unduly worried about UK public debt and neither should we be,” said co-author Dimitri Zenghelis, Special Advisor to the Wealth Economy Project, Bennett Institute, University of Cambridge. “The key is that new borrowing is invested wisely to generate productivity-enhancing innovation, resilient output and a sustainable expansion of capacity. We cannot go back to the old model of business as usual, instead we should confront the economic threat posed by ‘fear’ through investment in building back better.”

A team of internationally-recognised experts came together to assess the economic and climate impact of taking a green route out of the crisis. They catalogued more than 700 stimulus policies into 25 broad groups, and conducted a global survey of 231 experts from 53 countries, including from finance ministries and central banks.

Noting that 'green' policies could be widely defined, the study focused on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions as the key environmentally-beneficial criteria. The paper, to be published in the *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, observes that desirable policies have a large return on investment, can be enacted quickly and have a strongly positive impact on climate. Examples include investment in renewable energy production, such as wind or solar. As previous research has shown, in the short term, clean energy infrastructure construction is particularly labour intensive, creating twice as many jobs per dollar as fossil fuel investments, as well as being less susceptible to off-shoring.

Other desirable policies included building efficiency retrofit spending, clean research and development spending, natural capital investment for ecosystem resilience and regeneration, and investment in education and training to address immediate unemployment from COVID-19 alongside unemployment from decarbonisation. For developing countries, rural support scheme spending, such as on sustainable agriculture, was also highly ranked. Meanwhile, non-conditional airline bailouts performed the most poorly on both economic impact and climate metrics.

Most G20 governments have implemented significant relief measures as a result of the pandemic. But, as yet, none has introduced any significant fiscal recovery measures. The study authors hope that countries will seize this generational opportunity to take account of these criteria into national plans – for their economies and the environment.

In addition, the *COP26 Universities Network* has drawn on this research and other analyses to create a [briefing](#) for policymakers outlining a path to net-zero emissions economic recovery from COVID-19. The network, a growing group of more than 30 UK-based universities, including the University of Cambridge, was formed to help deliver climate change outcomes at the UN Climate Summit in Glasgow and beyond.

They have put together a briefing that identifies nine fiscal recovery policies that promise to bring both short-term high economic impact and long-term structural change to ensure the UK meets its 2050 climate goals.

“Shaping the national and global recovery from the coronavirus pandemic in a way that supports the response to climate change and other environmental threats simply makes sense – not only does analysis suggest that green recovery packages deliver greater economic benefit, but investing appropriately in research, innovation, infrastructure and skills training, and matching that with robust institutional structures, will help create a fairer, more resilient, sustainable world with benefits for all,” said Dr Emily Shuckburgh, Director of [Cambridge Zero](#). “As ever, good can be extracted from even the darkest hour, but it requires clear thinking, imagination and bold leadership.”

Among the policies emphasised are: renewable energy, reducing industrial emissions through carbon capture and storage, investment in broadband internet to increase coverage, electric vehicles and nature-based solutions. The group further called for the Cabinet Committee on Climate Change to be renamed the Climate Change Emergency Committee to reflect the urgent need for action.

“Currently, the UK directs €10.5bn in subsidies to fossil fuels. Reallocating this capital to jobs-rich renewable energy projects would be a win-win for the economy and environment,” said Brian O’Callaghan, economist at the Institute for New Economic Thinking, University of Oxford.

The briefing highlights the leadership role of the UK in the leadup to COP26, as well as the opportunity to lead by example with a green recovery package. But the universities warned that the specific designs of any policy would ultimately determine its effectiveness.

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Published in *The Friend* as ‘**In the Balance: Habitat destruction and humanity**’ (1 May 2020, p 13)

Last October’s issue of *Hourglass*, the Extinction Rebellion newspaper, carried a short article by an NHS doctor, Amelia Cussans, on health aspects of climate change and (although she didn’t mention it directly) the related matter of environmental degradation. Her concern was with the effects of heat. What she was noticing was that ‘the traditional NHS winter crises are now matched by summer crises.’ Heatwaves were increasing deaths amongst elderly people, while extreme heat raised pollen counts and airborne allergens, thus triggering asthma, a condition that 5.4 million people live with in the UK. She talked about the strain on A&E – no summer low season any more. Her emergency department waiting room was packed and the corridor crammed with trolleys holding unwell patients because there were no spare beds. And yet: ‘I find myself wondering whether we will remember 2019 as the good old days when everything was under control.’ How astonishingly prescient that looks now.

Or perhaps, again, not so prescient. The whole point of the Extinction Rebellion message was that scientists have been telling us the facts for years; we knew that catastrophe was imminent. The only question was in what form, and when. Years ago, researchers working at the intersection between ecology and virology coined the term ‘the Next Big One’ - the ‘NBO’. Previous Big Ones or near-Big Ones have included HIV, Ebola, Nipah, and SARS. All of these have been traced back to novel interactions between human beings and animals or

birds in places previously untouched by humans since the world began, allowing viruses that had co-evolved relatively amicably with their hosts over millions of years to migrate into new hosts that had never encountered them before – us. The pathogen behind SARS is now called SARS-CoV. Our new coronavirus is SARS-CoV-2. That’s how close we have been to this one before.

We have become used to thinking of the logging of the rainforests and clearing of jungle habitats in terms of loss of species and the effects on our atmosphere – but what the same activities also do is dislodge untold numbers of microbes into our own living sphere. COVID-19 is what ‘upsetting the delicate ecological balance’ really looks like. As David Quammen puts it in *Spillover*, his definitive account on the subject for non-scientists: ‘We cut our way through the Congo. We cut our way through the Amazon. We cut our way through Borneo. We cut our way through Madagascar. We cut our way through New Guinea and northeastern Australia. We shake the trees, figuratively and literally, and things fall out.’ And: ‘When the trees fall, and the native animals are slaughtered, the native germs fly out like dust from a demolished warehouse.’ So when Amelia Cussons concluded that ‘reversing climate change needs an astronomical international effort, but has the potential to be the greatest health accomplishment of the 21st century’, she was, again, speaking even more truly for environmental destruction.

In some senses this is happening before our eyes. It is hard to think that anything less than this pandemic would have forced governments and global money to act on the scale that they are, and with the science of spillover become rapidly more accepted, big efforts will turn to preventing the NBOATO (the Next Big One After This One), which surely must include reducing habitat destruction. But even in the best likely scenario, we can be sure that some with power will continue to nudge (or wrench) things in their own interests where they can, and that the poorest and least able to fend for themselves will continue to suffer most – foot soldiers and cannon fodder in this new world-war-like mobilisation of international efforts. If logging the rainforests stops, who will look after the ex-loggers? Not the owners of the logging companies.

So while we Quakers need to draw our strength as we always have done, in stillness and silence (which lockdown is enabling the luckier among us to rediscover in new ways), our outward task will be – as always – to look out for those being rolled under the juggernaut of the new mobilisation, and those disappearing beneath the wheels of whatever new world order may start to emerge as the viral dust settles.

Kersti Wagstaff

Rainbows



It has been wonderful to see the rainbows around the country. Many families have made rainbows and some of these have been used to decorate windows and nursing homes. How amazing is that? The rainbow still resonates. It still stands for hope, rescue and preservation. (Noah's Ark floated, full of the animals of the world, until there was somewhere to land.)

A rainbow is wonderful in its natural state as well. The light is divided up in a droplet of water and the 'prism' sends the light of a rainbow out toward our eyes. How amazing is that?

Thus Covid 19 has brought the rainbow out in all of us.

However there was a serious side to the story of Noah. It was that God and Noah made a covenant (a commitment or promise) with each other that the world would not be destroyed again if humans played their part and looked after each other and creation. One can ask if we are doing this, as human CO2 production and resource demands are causing Global Warming which is creating Climate Change.

Barbara

These two articles have been on the Ludlow Quaker Meeting Facebook page.

To help spread the message 'like' and share with family and friends if you can.

