

THE YOUNG QUAKER

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Stewardship and the Earth Issue

“As a Religious Society of Friends we see the stewardship of God’s creation as a major concern. The environmental crisis is at root a spiritual and religious crisis; we are called to look again at the real purpose of being on this earth, which is to till it and keep it so as to reveal the glory of God for generations to come.”

- Quaker Faith and Practice 25.02



25.02 of *Quaker Faith & Practice* invites us to reflect on our relationship with the earth, as both human beings and Quakers. The way that our species treats the environment stands in stark contrast with Quaker values of love, Light, and humility. The Earth is suffering because of our “selfishness, ignorance and greed”. So, what is the alternative? How can we build a society that respects the Earth in light of the Quaker testimonies? These questions demand a radical reimagining of our society’s place in the world. We cannot treat all of creation as a means to our ends, as if other societies, species and generations do not matter. Rather, we have to ask ourselves what it means to treat these things

with the love and integrity that they deserve. This is a difficult and urgent task, but it is also a joyful one; it’s about how our faith can guide us to build a better and more compassionate world. In this edition of *The Young Quaker*, we reflect on Stewardship, and some of the insights and challenges that this concept brings.

News

Trans and Non-binary Weekend Rescheduled

By Jaz Higgs

Good news, everyone – 16th-18th November is the date for the Trans and Non-binary YFGM Free at Chester Meeting House, Cheshire. Registration will be on the YFGM website – keep an eye out!

This event is open to all YFGMers and is aimed at drafting a statement outlining improved inclusion of trans and non-binary people within YFGM. The weekend will include ideas sharing about how to make YFGM inclusive towards trans and non-binary people, talks from external speakers, and drafting a statement of inclusivity that we will then bring forward to YFGM to see (and possibly adopt if all is well) in February 2019.

Email yfgm.tnb.inclusion@gmail.com with any questions.

New Engaging Young Adult Quakers Project Officer

By Naomi Major

Hi, I'm Naomi Major, the new EYAQ Project Officer. I've really enjoyed the first few months - talking to so many interesting people about the project, and working with a fantastic Steering Group. I'm based at home in Cardiff, with regular travel to Friends House and around the country. I wasn't brought up as a Quaker but we went to a lot of different churches when I was growing up, including briefly going to meeting. When I went to university it was something I knew I wanted to find out more about. I was drawn to the silent worship and I felt very early on that this was something that would be important for the whole of my life.

Currently I'm working on an EYAQ webpage and I've just sent out the latest edition of the EYAQ newsletter Rising Up! I'm really keen to talk to more people about the project, so if you have time, please do get in touch: naomim@quaker.org.uk.

New YFGM Coordinator

By Faith Biddle

In late August, I began a year-long internship to be your new YFGM Coordinator. Over the coming year, I'll be helping the committed YFGMers to coordinate the gatherings that we all know and love.

It really hit home that I was working in a Quaker organisation, when my first team meeting started with a few minutes of silence. Silence and Quaker values are familiar to me, as I grew up attending Quaker meeting with my family, but having them enter the workplace was refreshingly revolutionary for me! My Quakerism has always felt a little separate from the rest of life so I'm interested to see how I develop both professionally and personally throughout the year.

Please join our facebook page and say hello via email yfgm@quaker.org or in person at the next gathering and many thanks for all the hard work in advance.

Meeting for Sufferings Report

By Laurence Hall

This meeting of the national Quaker representatives body; Meeting for Sufferings (MfS) was defined by change. Many new reps had their first MfS as the new three year cycle started & induction processes happened throughout the day.

MfS discerned on concerns on Palestine, World War One and inmate support, as well as reports from several national Quaker bodies. The main focus of discernment was the revision of the book of Quaker Faith and Practice. YFGM's minute about ensuring that the revision committee and the wider process be as inclusive as possible was very much heard and

supported by MfS. The result was that revision committee's terms of reference and the resulting minute demanded that the committee itself and the wider process of revision be constructed to involve and support Younger Friends collectively and individually as much as possible. Overall this MfS opened the way for positive work to come.

Riding for Equality

By Isaac Peat

I recently completed the ride for Equality and the Common Good, a bicycle ride from Swarthmoor Hall in Cumbria, to Downing Street. Organised by Cumbrian Friends, the ride highlighted the changes and impact of welfare cuts on the most vulnerable and a declaration was handed in to 10 Downing Street. The ride specifically spoke to me and allowed me to voice my concern about the cuts to mental health services, plus I just love riding bikes.

The ride itself was an unforgettable experience. We cycled past some fabulous sites, a highlight being seeing Pendle Hill in the mist just after an arduous climb out of Settle. People aged from 11 to 87 joined us with a core group of around 12 people doing the entire ride. Meeting Houses supported us along the way and offered lavish spreads for our hungry stomachs. To anyone who supported us on the way, a big thank you!

Revision of the Book of Discipline

By Laurence Hall

For the first time in decades, the Quaker Book of Discipline, better known as *Quaker Faith and Practice*, is to be revised. After much preparation work and discussion the 2018 Yearly Meeting discerned that our red book should be revised to reflect new

leadings and light of Friends, particularly younger Quakers who were very young or not born when the last revision took place.

Also, it was felt that the national Quaker governance structures in the Book of Discipline need to be looked into as part of the process.

This revision process offers younger Friends an amazing opportunity to really shape the nature of our Society of Friends and ensure that our experiences and voices are heard in the revised book. So, please get involved as much as possible to ensure our generation's light can shine in its pages.

Ali Mushaima's Hunger Strike

By Dom Tweed

On the 1st of August Ali Mushaima, son of Bahraini opposition leader Hasan Mushaima, began a hunger strike, demanding his father's rights to books, family visits, and urgent medical care.

Hasan Mushaima, General Secretary of the Haq Movement for Liberty and Democracy, is serving a life sentence for his role in Bahrain's pro-democracy protests in 2011. He's 70, and had been denied access vital cancer scans and diabetes treatments for over a year when the hunger strike began, a possible de facto death sentence.

On August 7th, Hasan was allowed to visit the prison clinic, though he was still denied vital diabetes treatment, and the continued denial of family visits makes it difficult to verify. Hasan was also informed that his books, including his Qur'an, had been destroyed. At the time of writing, 45 days into the hunger strike, there has been no further progress.

Quakerism and the Earth

Aidan Childs writes about seeing nature as sacred

The natural world is at the heart of what makes me a Quaker. In some ways, this seems like a naïve claim to make. I have lived a privileged western life so cut off from the world beyond the human sphere, its harshness as well as its richness. I often feel as though I do not know it at all. And I do know that meanwhile my culture is devastating the Earth.

But my connection with the Earth is the most centring thing in my life. I have always been enthralled by the world around me: the shapes of the oak branches in winter, the vastness of the sea from the Devon cliffs, the patterns in the river-waters here at the edge of Dartmoor. There are times, fleeting moments, when I feel so full of thankfulness and wonder to be alive in a world so varied and vast and beautiful. I am a Quaker because sometimes, just sometimes, a gathered Quaker meeting can take me to the same feeling of fullness. In moments like this, when I am outside, even if all I can see beyond the human world is the sky, I feel in the presence of the “sacred”. Remembering this helps me feel centred when I’m stressed.

In moments like this I feel in the presence of the “sacred”.

Is all this based on an idealised view of the natural world? Perhaps, in some ways. In my own experience, I only know a fraction of how painful life can be: of the suffering nature can inflict on any of us living things.

Yet, in those moments when I feel in the presence of something “sacred” in nature, it feels as if something physically softens in my chest. It is as if something inside me billows out far beyond me like the surface of an ocean. In some ways I feel small. But then my life, or what my life could be, also seems to grow before my eyes. Everyday tangles and fixations start to loosen around me. I sense that this ocean could carry me to places immeasurably different, immeasurably more life-filled, than anything I could scheme out for

myself.

It is as if something inside me billows out far beyond me like the surface of an ocean.

When Quakers talk about God, it is this experience that gives the word meaning for me. Long before Quaker silences made sense to me, I wanted to be silent and still outside, to let this sacredness wash over me. Later, I discovered that sometimes I could feel this sense of the sacred in other people. For me it is the same: we are part of the Earth. Sometimes in Quaker meetings for worship, being quiet with people I have shared so much with, listening to their ministry, I have felt that same billowing sense lifting me up in its currents. A sense of the sacred in the whole world is my way in to recognising ‘that of God in everyone’.

For me, Quaker ‘testimony’ means letting this sense of the sacred carry me along in its flow. A huge part of that is wanting to protect and preserve the Earth: the most precious and sacred thing I know. In small ways I try in my own life. On a political level I could be doing far more.

Quaker “testimony” means letting the sacred carry me along in its flow.

But I also hope somehow, someday, to experience working in and with nature respectfully. I would have to face some of the harder truths about the natural world, but I hope that in the process my view of the Earth would become more nuanced, richer and deeper. And, somehow, I hope that being closer to the Earth would help me discern what my small role could be in the effort to bring our culture back home to this living planet.

Ancient Confusions: An Exploration of Deep Ecology

Lynda Berry reflects on the EMES gathering in Bergen.

"Our Quaker faith of that of God in all, taken to mean in all human beings, are too narrow an expression, and we need to see that all life is one, something that includes the rock and the running creek" - Joanna Bower, 1995

I had the opportunity to head out to Bergen for the EMES annual gathering. I had not expected to find any spiritual inspiration when I arrived, mainly concerned with jumping into Fjords and opening myself to the experience of visiting Norway. However I was inspired by the keynote lecture given by Per Ingvar Haukeland entitled 'Heavenearth: in the light of all new things,' which linked Deep Ecology, Quakerism, and Sustainability. An audience member drew attention to the fact that Haukeland had used few female thinkers in his sources. Haukeland suggested that we reach behind the gender of the speakers to the spirit which inspired them. I am not writing to criticise Haukeland that question made me curious to explore how women had contributed to thinking in deep ecology, women's history, and thinking, along with other minority groups, often being less well represented. Not only this, but according to UN, women make up a large proportion of communities dependent on natural resources which will be affected by climate change. They have a key role in protecting these resources. Gender equality is very relevant to the sustainability discussion.

The mission to find a sustainable world is one of finding integration from separation.

Haukeland's talk was separated into three main reflections concerning the concept of the 'endtimes', the cultural process from darkness to light, how early Quakers considered the dark times to have ended because of the discovery of the connection to the Light, how it shows us how to act and who we really are, both our light and darkness. The mission to find

a sustainable world is one of finding integration from separation. The old world, built on knowledge, is based on consumer addiction, the new world which is envisioned, is built upon experience, where we are all united by the mystery of living. We reconnect with ourselves and each other and the natural world. The reconnection of all is expressed by the Light. In this sense all creatures are Friends, and the same Light exists within all. This radical movement towards valuing all human and non-human beings, including nature is counter to the hierarchical model which places greater value on men and culture. It is a vision which connects all discrimination as being rooted to humanity's separation from nature.

We reconnect with ourselves and each other and the natural world.

The conceptualisation of the self is also a feature of ecofeminism. The French feminist Françoise d'Eaubonne invented the term 'ecological feminism' in 1974 to highlight women's potential to bring about an ecological revolution. Historically, ecofeminism's development was linked to deep ecology's. However, this connection was challenged with the ecofeminism-deep ecology debate. Some ecofeminists such as Marti Kheel believe that the emphasis on self-realisation and identification with all nature comes at the cost of the independent being. Ecofeminism is sometimes critiqued as focusing on the dichotomy between women and men, nature and culture, recreating the dualism. This is opposed to a more non-essentialist view that women and nature can both have masculine and feminine characteristics. In terms of contemporary ecofeminists, amongst others, Joanna Macy is well known Buddhist whose work is in the tradition of deep ecology, however after becoming disillusioned, she prefers to call her field, 'Work which Reconnects; ' A ground-breaking framework for social and personal transformation; helping individuals collaborate in face of despair.

Love and Non-Human Animals

Sasha Lawson-Frost writes about how Quakerism led her to veganism.

Quakerism teaches us to see that of God in others, even though “it may be expressed in unfamiliar ways or be difficult to discern” (*Advices and Queries* 17). This is not to say, however, that we have to love everyone in the same way, or that our fundamental differences do not matter. Rather, I think it means that we must pay attention to the diverse and unexpected ways that Light is expressed in others. To act lovingly towards someone requires us to pay attention to their values, needs, and wellbeing, and to respect all these things. It is not the straightforward application of a broad rule about how to be nice to one another. To reduce love down to this would be to miss all of the sacred and precious things we find in our relationships with others.

We must pay attention to the diverse and unexpected ways that Light is expressed in others.

This love, I believe, cannot be something which we apply exclusively to humans. If acting lovingly involves being open to Light from wherever it may come, we must not turn a blind eye to the Light we might be failing to see in other species. What I believe this comes down to is a deep humility about our role in Creation. For me, recognising the world as something which was created by Love, and therefore has Love and Light manifest in all its creatures, is crucial. Seeing the natural world as something which is sacred involves a radically different relationship to the world than one which consumerism encourages. Other creatures are as much a part of creation as the human species, and they cannot merely be tools or instruments which we can use to achieve what we want. Other beings also demand our attention, and therefore the love, respect, and integrity which comes out of this.

The question, then, is how we can do what love demands of us with respect to other species. Clearly what it means to love and nurture an animal is not

the same as what it means to love and nurture a human friend. For example, with human friends, honesty and respect for the other’s choices may be really important parts of a loving relationship. On the other hand, I’m not sure what it would even mean to be honest with your pet dog or to respect that dog’s choices. (This is not to say that one form of love is inherently “better” or “more important” than the other. Both can be completely and immeasurably valuable things).

I’m not sure what it would even mean to be honest with your pet dog or to respect that dog’s choices.

One thing I do think is fairly clear though, is that loving and paying attention to non-human animals is not compatible with direct acts of cruelty towards them. If I see a pig being tortured, I can immediately see that this pig is suffering. I can immediately see that the pig is afraid, is hurting, and does not want to die. I do not need a full scientific picture of that pig’s mental capacities to see this either, any more than I need to understand pain neurology to see that when a baby is crying it is in pain. This is how Quaker convictions led me to veganism. The practices involved in factory farming, (and nearly all “free range” farming practices), are undeniably inhumane in their treatment of animals. Animals are seen as resources to be gained from, not creatures with their own integrity. Their living conditions, treatment and slaughter are all seen through the lens of profit, not compassion. With 50 billion animals factory farmed every year, I feel that this practice is one of the most pressing moral problems currently facing the modern world [1].

[1]: Source: <https://www.ciwf.org.uk/factory-farming/>

Climate Change and the Age of Trump

Tim Gee shares how we can take effective action on climate change.

Donald Trump's election was the opposite of what the environment needed. In office he has reversed plans to curb carbon emissions, approved the controversial Keystone XL pipeline and promised to 'bring back coal'. Perhaps most damaging of all, he has begun the process of withdrawing from the global 'Paris' climate agreement, which was agreed through painstaking consensus building in 2015.

The day after the election, I was speaking on a panel with the shadow energy minister about fossil fuel divestment, as part of a local campaign to shift our local council's investments. My panel-mate celebrated the rapid advances in renewable electricity and painted a picture of a cleaner future where fossil fuels are no longer necessary. Mustering the most hopeful energy I could, I made the case that even if on this occasion the electorate of the USA had made a terrible decision for the environment: our councils, churches, universities and pension funds nevertheless have the power to do the right thing.

Environmental campaigns often focus on demand: reducing consumption and promoting individual change. This is important, but there's another way of seeing the issue: only 90 fossil fuel companies are responsible for the vast majority all carbon emissions. Those companies rely on our economic consent. If companies don't have the money to extract fossil fuels, they will leave them in the ground. If that money is reinvested in renewable energy, the transition will happen faster. In other words, we can also take action to address supply.

If companies don't have the money to extract fossil fuels, they will leave them in the ground.

It isn't a new argument. After committing to becoming a low carbon community in 2011, Quakers shifted central funds out of fossil fuels. Since then, the ecumenical campaign group Operation Noah has

worked with other churches to take similar action. By September 2018 more than six trillion dollars had been shifted out of fossil fuels worldwide, including a majority of UK universities. In the same month, the mayors of London and New York penned a joint article calling on all of the cities of the world to divest. A parallel initiative addresses the money that flows to fossil fuel companies through energy bills. In 2014 a Huddersfield Friend set up a 'Renewable Energy Group Buying Initiative' for Quaker Meetings, which helped inspire a wider movement dubbed 'The Big Church Switch': by 2018, more than 5,500 churches were using renewable energy.

By necessity, Quakers are now a small part of the action. The papal encyclical *Laudato Si* has been a catalyst for the global Catholic community's action on climate change. The Church of England's Lambeth Declaration on Climate Change which followed soon after has been influential in bolstering the work of Anglican environmentalists.

More than any institutional consideration, the action is grounded in faith and a shared concern for the care of creation. It is an expression of the commitment to love our neighbours, wherever they are, and for many Quakers is an extension of the testimony to peace and against violence.

For myself, I wonder whether there might be inspiration in another of the stories that is central to the Abrahamic faiths: an 'Exodus' is an exit, and in the biblical sense describes the flight of the Israelites from their oppression in Egypt, removing the labour which was the resource from which the elites of the country profited. It was preceded by water pollution, disease and extreme weather, and the hardened heart of an unjust ruler.

The context is different, but the spirit is there. Could we be part of a '21st century exodus' of capital, out of fossil fuels and towards the clean, safe world we need?

Roots of Resistance

Peter Doubtfire shares news of a new movement forming in British Quakerism

A grassroots Quaker movement has an ambitious plan to challenge the arms trade: and you can get involved!

Roots of Resistance is a community of Friends building a creative, vibrant and radical Quaker response to the Defence and Security Equipment International (DSEI) arms fair. Our ambition is to mobilise 1000 Quakers to take action against DSEI in September 2019.

Taking place in east London every two years, DSEI is a huge trade show bringing together 1,500 arms companies with representatives from militaries from around the world. Some of the world's largest companies market tanks, planes, drones, rifles, ammunition, surveillance technology, training and a huge array of other weapons.

In witnessing our testimony to peace, Friends have been driven to join the movement of resistance to this arms fair, which brings global human rights violations to our doorstep. Arms fairs like DSEI are a key root cause of the violence and injustice around the world.

Two of the Young Friends involved in Roots of Resistance have expressed why they feel this called to this action by their Quaker faith:

“Our Quaker community is a gathering together of peacemakers. We gather, we sit together in silent worship, and we disperse again, knowing that the work of peace cannot be accomplished in our meeting houses, it can only begin there.

We are convinced that the making of peace demands us to return to our world in love, to stand firm in public, to confront the ‘powers and principalities’, and to assert that in this time of permanent war, no government which involves itself in the arms trade, no government relying on and colluding with a mil-

itarised system, can govern well or for the benefit of all. We are resolute and will not submit before a governing hand that subsidises, facilitates and profits from the sale of weapons to ruthless dictators in our name.

We will be travelling to London next September to protest the DSEI arms fair in response to the promptings of love and truth in our hearts. We invite you to join us.”

Quakers have been involved in action against DSEI for many years. Roots of Resistance is planning to build an unprecedented Quaker presence at the 2019 fair, standing together against DSEI and the global arms trade. We're recruiting area organisers who can act as a point of contact in their Area Meetings, and work to bring Friends to London in September 2019. If we can recruit 100 area organisers, who each bring 10 Friends, that's 1000 Quakers at DSEI!

Young Friends are a key part of Roots of Resistance – in the organising group, as area organisers, and as individual participants. You don't have to be an experienced activist to take part! Our outreach team are here to support and equip area organisers, and you'll be part of a wonderful group of organisers in your region and across the country who can share ideas with you and work together.

If you are interested in becoming an area organiser, we'd love to hear from you. Although our short term focus is mobilising resistance to DSEI 2019, this is just a start. We hope that Roots of Resistance can be a framework for Quaker action against injustice and oppression well into the future.

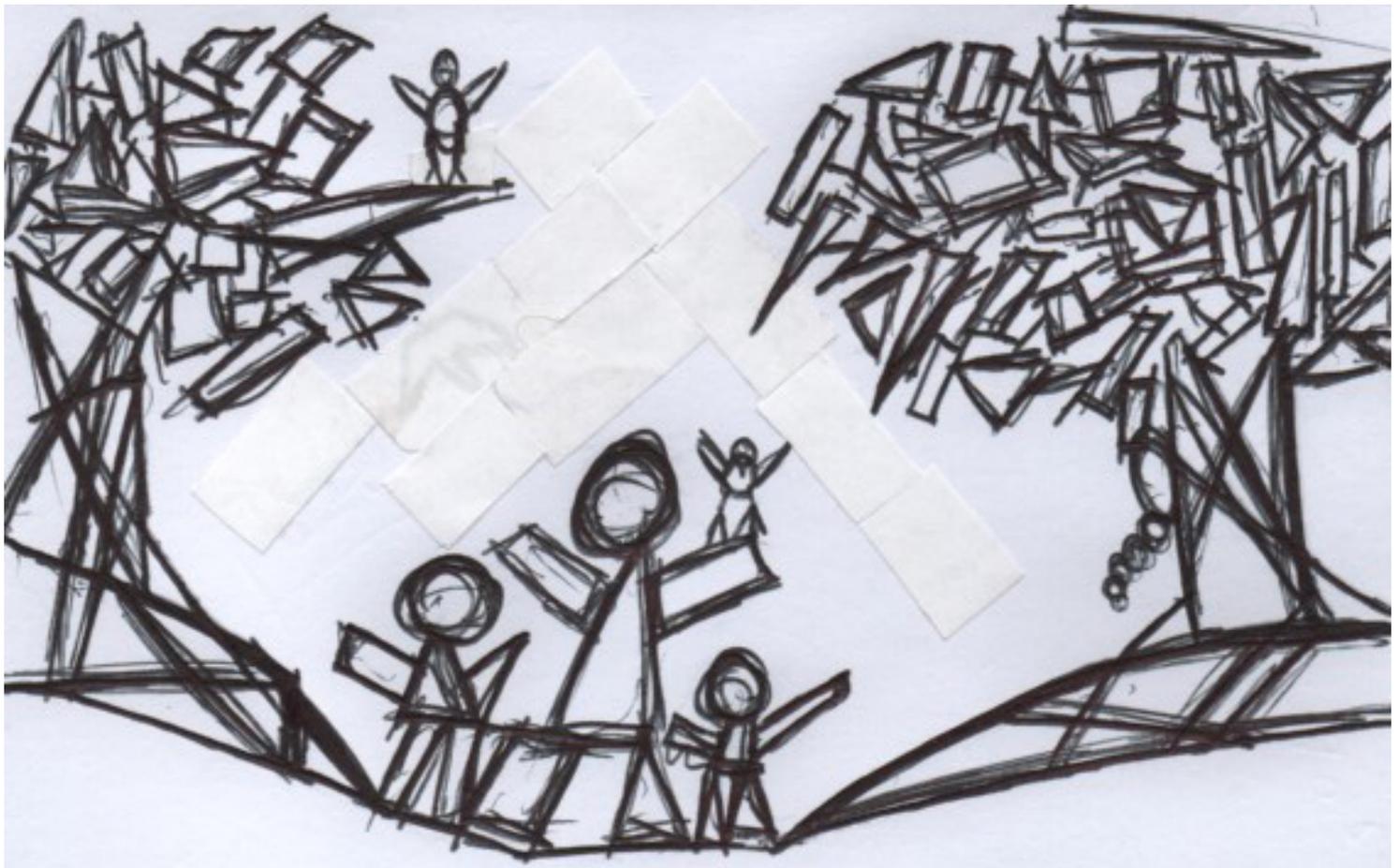
Please visit rootsofresistance.org.uk to show your interest in becoming your area organiser, and pass the message on to anyone you think would be good at this role!

The Edge of the Earth

*In this poem, **Chloe Scaling** reflects on the interconnectedness of the Earth.*

Smell the salt in the air,
Feel the wind in my hair,
Hear the breeze in the trees,
Catching the waves on the sea.
Soft rumbles as the waves roll,
Then land,
Crashing on the sand.
The rocks around are steadfast,
Changing slowly over time.
Contrasting with the sandy beach,
The ever-moving tides.

The sand, the cliffs, the rocks, the sea:
Here, the Earth is one.
The sun and moon affect it too:
The Earth and space are one.
From here, the sea is endless,
Stretching out into the world.
If we didn't know better,
This beach could be
The edge of the Earth.



Remembering Becky Garnault

I want to start with two apologies. One of politeness, one of something more profound. First I'm sorry to those who could not be included in this article. Space is a limit I wish I didn't have. Yet, more importantly, I'm sorry to you Becky. Words always fail. However much someone tries when faced with attempting to capture the great complexity of any person, particularly someone as brilliant and loving as you Becky, failure is the inevitable result. Therefore all that written here cannot be anything but failures. Yet, they are failures full of friendship, failures full of joy and most importantly failures full of love. Love for you Becky, whose compassion, commitment and care deeply touches all who know you. You will always be with us, Becky, as we act out what it really means to be a Quaker, as you never fail in doing.

"She made me feel so welcome and loved at my first YFGM in Sheffield in 2017. She would light up the room."

"In true Quaker style, I became friends with Becky before there were spoken words involved. Some music was playing in epilogue; most people sat in stillness but Becky and I "danced" across the circle at each other. Once everyone had piled out, we put the song back on again and danced in the dark. The lyrics were so true of Becky: "Burn with a passion that is wild and free, hearts on fire". I hope that YFGM's passions and values will continue to burn wild and free in honour of Becky."

"Becky was a very spiritual person and very open minded, I did a spiritual healing session with her at yfgm which I will never forget."

"The first time I met Becky, I have such a clear image of a bunch of us sitting in the corner of Sheffield Meeting House swapping funny embarrassing stories in one of the breaks. Not only did Becky seem to me like she had a spiritual peacefulness about her which I instantly admired, she also had an amazing down to earth gentle humour that

made me feel at once connected and at ease. A really special balance that I can only hope to achieve one day. When I think of Becky, I'll always remember her beautiful eyes."

"I met Becky through YALP. That first residential and Becky have had/are still having a huge effect on my life.

Unfortunately, Becky missed a chunk of that first residential. Even though she was not with us in Woodbrooke, she was very much part of our group, with visits from the rest of us and being a part of our epilogue via phone (even if she couldn't hear us singing).

Through the remaining YALP between jokes about food and cloud walking across the garden at woodbrook Becky was a strong part of our group.

A few of us continued to meet online after YALP after the end of the residential; forming a Quaker cell group. Due to life away from my spirituality, I have dropped away from this. However, building a connected Quaker community who can discuss all elements of life, providing support and upholding one another, celebrating the good times; as well as learning and developing our spirituality together."

"I met Becky at YFGM in Liverpool - she was such a wonderful person to speak to. I was relatively new to YFGM and she helped make me feel part of community and helped me to understand more about Quakers.

I bumped into her at Friends House and even though I'd only met her once before, she was again wonderful to chat to; open hearted and lovely.

She was a genuinely beautiful soul and will be greatly missed.

X"

"I grew up with Becky and Naomi (Becky's sister) in children's meeting in Cardiff, and spent many a fun link group weekend running riot in Cardiff or Bridgend Meeting House playing silly games. More recently I enjoyed spending time with her in the kitchen catering together at YFGM and sharing a love of welsh rugby. Xx"

"Becky and I were in the same children's and eventually young adult groups at various things like Yearly Meeting Gatherings over the years. She was great fun at these events and always very involved, we were BGFs together at JYM in our late teens and her knowledge and calmness in fulfilling her role were admirable. I'm hardly surprised that in the time since she appears to have become involved in just about every committee Quakers have to offer!

I'll miss the sense of humour she brought to both the business and the spiritual side of Quakers and our occasional chats about how busy life seems to have become as adults."

"I've been trying to think of the best way to describe someone as brilliant and loving as you, Becky. The fact that I can't use past tense or that everything I write seems to end in failure, shows that words simply can't cap-

ture how much great joy you bring into the lives of everyone you know. The best I can attempt to offer as an example is when you, me and Michelle were talking about the bad joke that a very weighty Quaker activist had just subjected the whole of Yearly Meeting to with the repeated punchline 'I'm watching you'. In an attempt to both undermine the hierarchy of the stage and bring a little more joy into the world, we put a piece of paper in this weighty Quaker's pigeon hole on which was a drawing of an eye and inevitable line 'I'm watching you'. And when we returned to the pigeon hole a few hours later it seemed that he had got the joke as the joyful way you live Quaker equality Becky seemed to have reach yet another person. You will always be with us Becky."

"Becky and I were both members of the Central Nominations Committee. We didn't work together for that long, maybe a year or a little longer, but I have such warm memories of the experience. I remember Becky bringing a kind of energy that seemed to wake the rest of us up. Within just a few weeks she'd suggested a whole new way for the committee to communicate which really improved the way we co-ordinated our work. She was energetic and passionate about making sure young Friends were considered for central work. She was always thinking of new ways people could be involved. It wasn't just about the work of the committee though. I remember one evening when some of us committee members had a meal together the evening before a meeting. We'd been waiting for ages and like good quiet Quakers hadn't said anything. It was Becky who walked up to the counter and made sure we actually got our food! I will not stop admiring her dynamism, the way she could take the initiative and make things change."

Writers...

The editors would like to thank all those who have contributed to this edition of *The Young Quaker*.

It would be impossible to produce the magazine without the ideas, articles and illustrations that you send in.

We're always looking for new material. If you've got an idea for an article, photo, drawing or poem you'd like to see in *The Young Quaker*, get in touch with us. The next issue, due out in time for the next YFGM in February, will have a submission deadline of 19th January.

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What is...

The Young Quaker is a magazine for young Friends everywhere, produced in print and online. Published by Young Friends General Meeting, TYQ comes out three times a year, to coincide with YFGM weekends, meaning that you can expect a new issue in February, May, and October, full of news, comment, and more.

Young Friends General Meeting is a community for young adult Quakers aged 18-30ish, in Britain. Our main events are the three General Meetings which take place at Quaker meeting houses around the country in February, May, and October each year.

If you'd like to get involved in YFGM, come along to a YFGM event, or to find out more visit www.yfgm.quaker.org.uk or email yfgm@quaker.org.uk. You can also find the YFGM group on Facebook.

Quakers, or the Religious Society of Friends, are a religious group with Christian origins. Quaker worship is mostly silent, with people speaking when called to do so by the 'Inner Light', sometimes called 'that of God within everyone'.

Central to Quakerism are the Testimonies of Peace, Equality, Truth, Simplicity and Sustainability. A commitment to these principles has put Quakers at the forefront of political and social issues; campaigning for the abolition of slavery and more recently for the legalisation of same-sex marriage.

YFGM Catch Up (May 2018)

By Michelle Dumont and Jenny McCarthy, Co-clerks

We gathered in Manchester for a May bank holiday of sun, SIGs and deep spirituality. We got to know each other through games and compliments and Quinty led us in an exploration of our ideas about and relationship with 'God'.

Alastair McIntosh shared his experiences of spiritual activism and we took part in Special Interest Groups including craftivism, revising Quaker Faith & Practice, rest and fundraising.

We challenged ourselves in discernment and discussion around our vision for the future of British Quakerism and YFGM, recognising that we need to care for ourselves and our role holders as YFGM and wider society is changing, and reflecting on how to live Quakerism in 21st century Britain.

We have affirmed people's right to self-identify their gender and look forward to a Special Interest Gathering which will deepen our understanding of gender diversity and our leadings.

We bonded with our Small Groups over washing up, tea and a treasure hunt, and enjoyed a Ceilidh, and a Cabaret evening.

We look forward to the summer and will gather again in October.