

TOWARDS WHOLENESS

No. 156 SPRING 2020

£2.50



The **Friends Fellowship of Healing** is a Quaker Recognised Body in the Religious Society of Friends. (*Registered Charity number 284459.*)

Since its foundation in 1935, it has sought to uphold the cause of a healing ministry, and seeks to be a channel to help people towards health and harmony of body, mind and spirit, which it believes is God's purpose for everyone. It has prayer groups attached to many Meetings, and also postal groups to enable isolated people, and those who may be unable to join a local group, to co-operate with others in the service of healing prayer. The Fellowship holds conferences, retreats and workshops held either at a residential centre (*Claridge House, Dormans Road, Dormansland, Lingfield, Surrey RH7 6QH*) or elsewhere. All members annually receive three issues of **TOWARDS WHOLENESS**, the journal of the Fellowship, published in March, July and November.

ANNUAL FEES

(which include all necessary insurance/materials/newsletters etc.)

UK FFH Member	£15
Overseas FFH Member	£21
QSH - Full Healer	£35 (inc FFH Membership)
QSH- Probationer	£35 (inc FFH Membership)
QSH - Full Healer/Probationer insured elsewhere	£21 (inc FFH Membership)

Cheques, payable to Friends Fellowship of Healing, should be sent to The FFH Membership Secretary, 52 Ridge Road, Middlestown, Wakefield, W Yorks. WF4 4QP

Letters, articles, news items and other contributions for **Towards Wholeness** should be sent to the editor, Gervais Frykman, 52 Ridge Road, Middlestown Wakefield, W.Yorks. WF4 4QP, 01924 264180. gervais153@talktalk.net
Deadlines: February 1st, June 1st and October 1st.

For further information about the **FFH** please contact the Clerk: David Mason, 2 Fir Avenue, New Milton, Hants, BH25 6EX. 01425 626112
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Donations for the work of the Fellowship are most welcome.

Cover photo: Howden Reservoir, Derwent Valley, by Pauline Frykman

FFH/QSH Web-site: www.quaker-healing.org.uk

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The Postal and Phone Link Groups give prayer support to people seeking reassurance and healing. Some members have joined these groups because they are physically isolated by handicap, age or geography. Others may already belong to a local healing group and are able to give additional commitment by also belonging to one of the postal or phone link groups, or are simply committed to the power of prayer.

All are welcome to join. If you would like to help in this way, please write the Postal Co-ordinator, **Maureen Anderson**, (*contact details on inside cover*) with a few details about yourself. Your letter will be passed on to one of the group secretaries who will then contact you direct and give you the names of two or three people to uphold in prayer regularly.

Talking Friends holds recordings of Towards Wholeness.

Anne Brewer records them and sends to Talking Friends for distribution to Friends with visual impairment. The subscription for one year is £3 for TW publications.

www.talkingfriends.org.uk

Alan Johnson is the convener of Talking Friends.

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FFH GROUPS – JANUARY 2020

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MOTHER & HER UNBORN CHILD	Mina Tilt, 185 Robin Hood Lane, Hall Green	B28 0JE
POSTAL GROUPS	Elliot Mitchell, 19 Florida Court, Bath Road Reading Tel 07772 248 411	RG1 6NX

The Healers Support Weekend is at Claridge House from Friday 19th June to Sunday 21st June 2020.

The cost will be £240.00 per person. Bursaries are available.

Please book through Cherry Simpkin.

The next residential course for trainee Quaker Spiritual Healers is at Claridge House from Monday 21st September to Friday 25 September 2020.

However, it may be possible to make arrangements for a non-residential course earlier than this if there is sufficient interest in your local area.

Please contact Kay Horsfield: horsfield.k@gmail.com for further information.

The FFH Gathering will be held at Woodbrooke 13th – 15th November 2020. The cost is £260. For two guests attending the gathering and sharing a room it is £455. This works out at a 25% discount. A guest who would not be attending the gathering but sharing a room with a member of the gathering would be charged £88 (full board).

The programme is to be arranged.

The number of places is limited. Bookings can be made via the Membership Secretary.

DISTANT HEALING FROM HOME

Elizabeth Angas suggested that we have one Need we pray for each month by *Holding in the Light* , doing this alone, but joining all together on the first Friday of the month at 12 noon.

March The prevention of conflict and unrest in the world.

April The sustainability of our planet.

May The prevention of famine and disease. Education for good nutrition and organic agriculture.

June The upholding of democratic and peaceful governments.

July The maintenance of music and art in our world

Please see <http://www.quaker-healing.org.uk> and choose “An Extra Way of Distant Healing” for more information.

Though it is good to think about the kindness of God, and to love him and praise him for it, it is far better to think about him as he is, and to love and praise him for himself.

But now you will ask me. “How am I to think of God himself, and what is he?” and I cannot answer you except to say “I do not know!”

For with this question you have brought me into the same darkness, the same cloud of unknowing where I want you to be! For though we through the grace of God can know fully about all other matters, and think about them – yes even the very works of God himself – yet of God himself can no man think. Therefore I will leave on one side everything I can think and choose for my love that thing which I cannot think! Why? Because he may well be loved, but not thought. By love he can be caught and held, but by thinking never... Strike that thick cloud of unknowing with the sharp dart of longing love, and on no account whatever think of giving up.

Cloud of Unknowing, from chapters 5 and 6.

EARTH HEALING

Anon

1998/9

A dream awoke me at dawn:

There is to be a set of essences made.

There will be nine in the set.

Make each on the Wheel of the Year days

and one on Tynwald Day (Manx Parliament Day)

Dowse to find the place of making.

Dowse to find the water for making each essence.

Dowse to find how long the bowl of water
is to sit to absorb the energy from the land.

The set will be known as MIE

which in Manx Gaelic means GOOD

- Manx Island Essences

Three people were to make the essences – the symbol of Isle of Man is the three-legged metal sculpture at the airport.

The full title “Manx Island Essences of place – to assist those who wish to walk the path of reconnecting with the Land.”

So began a year of insights, exploration, and trusting the process. We were taken to places which none of us had visited before.

Several box sets made their way across the water to Britain, USA, Australia.

The months after the new century was born included cleansing a small polluted lake, clearing a haunting from a house where there had been a murder, a blessing of the new room where the Manx Quakers hold the Meeting for Worship, and the expansion of the Manx Healing Centre’s work of teaching Reiki. We also held regular “healing for all” weekly sessions which occasionally included the blessing of pets.

Two Friends Fellowship of Healing members were involved with land healing, and we often used the MIE essences.

For the cleansing of the polluted lake, a group drove up the TT motorcycle roads to the middle of the Island. We chose a place to stand and held our hands out over the water – luckily no wind, just winter gloom. We silently asked the lake beings to cleanse the water. A few drops of MIE6 were put in the lake. We waited and watched and prayed. We drove home hoping all would be well.

One of us took a sample of water from the lake before and after the healing/cleansing session. The Isle of Man Government set up an Assay office so that water could be tested. The general public was encouraged to take water samples to be tested, over several years a new sewerage system was installed, and the open-air rubbish dumps re-organised. A local farmer had complained about his cattle getting ill after drinking from the lake, and the water tested as “mildly polluted.” After our session, we said nothing to anyone about our activities. However the local farmer found his lake “fit for animals to drink” when he took water for his six monthly required water tests. We thanked the lake beings and the island, and life went on.

%%%%%%%%%

The Tao doesn't take sides;
It gives birth to both good and evil.
The Master doesn't take sides;
She welcomes both saints and sinners.
The Tao is like a bellows:
It is empty yet infinitely capable.
The more you use it, the more it produces;
The more you talk of it, the less you understand.
Hold on to the centre.

Tao Te Ching 5



<https://www.claridgehousequaker.org.uk/>

Reflections on being a Friend in Residence (FiR) at Claridge House,
Lingfield, Surrey

August to October 2019

Jenny Cuff

From the purpose and values statement:

Claridge House provides a space where people of any faith or none may stay for a while in peace and stillness before returning, rested and renewed, to their everyday lives. To embody in our welcome the Quaker understanding that each person is a unique and precious individual.

Claridge House is a haven of peace and tranquillity where it is hoped that those who come as guests leave as friends. In this house of healing something unique is offered to people seeking solace and when they arrive tense and stressed from their busy lives, they do find themselves relaxing into the rhythm of the House and greatly benefit from the change of pace. The beautifully kept gardens help the process.

Interestingly I have observed that for those coming on personal retreats, that is, not guided by a tutor, at first there comes a sort of sorrow as they may be realising how much love and care and tenderness is lacking in themselves/their lifestyles as they absorb the love and care of those who serve them. By about the second day they seem to start to become comfortable at finding their still small centre which sparks an inner calm as they move into beginning a process which may culminate in becoming the person they truly are meant to be. The FiR can also be part of a supportive structure for those on courses facilitated by tutors. In these intense personal development

environments, an attendee may be deeply touched and find the need for time out with an understanding 'other person' providing confidential reassurance too sensitive to share within the group in that moment. A sensible Quaker practice observed in other gatherings and meetings to have an elder or holding Friend on standby for such occasions.

So alongside duties such as

Meeting and greeting guests, arranging flowers from the garden for each bedroom and communal rooms, writing up individually addressed welcome cards for each guest, two quiet 15 minute periods per day: 9.45 to 10 and 5.45 to 6, a bit of help in the kitchen, clearing crocks and washing up occasionally, the most fulfilling task is being there to listen to whatever people may want to share; after all they've come in response to the purpose of the House: to seek sanctuary from their problems, to process, to find healing and to begin on the road to recovery.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

May God, who in the mystery of his vision and power transforms his white radiance into his many-coloured creation, from whom all things come and into whom they all return, grant us the grace of pure vision.
Svetasvatara Upanishad, Part 4.
Compare the Quaker Tapestry, first panel.

When the Buddha achieved his enlightenment, a rain of flowers fell on him from the heavens.

“What is this?” he asked.

“This is in gratitude for your teaching on emptiness,” said the gods.

“But I have not yet spoken on emptiness,” said the Buddha.

“You have not spoken on emptiness, we have not heard emptiness; this is true emptiness,” was the reply.

From “You Don’t Have To Sit On The Floor”

Jim Pym

When I retired from work, I decided that I would create a lunch group for my friends so that I would see them once a month on a regular basis. I started off with very few, about three people. We chose a town centre pub that had recently changed hands and now served interesting food.

At that first meeting I talked about the healing I had received after an introductory session at the Meeting house with Ros Smith. I had a sore shoulder which cleared up in a very few days. A young woman who I had invited from Meeting to come along because I thought she was lonely, said excitedly, 'you are just the sort of person I've been looking for. Would you give me healing?' Somewhat taken aback as I had done no healing for several months, hadn't even thought about it really, I agreed.

I didn't even have a suitable healing chair, so I used a kitchen chair for her to sit on sideways so I could reach her back. I sat her facing my garden which was a bit bedraggled looking as it was a dull November day. Then I gave her some healing. At the end I sat and waited. She opened her eyes and said she thought the sun had come out as she had felt so much heat on her head. To say that I was astonished would be an understatement. We agreed she would come again a week later. I saw her during the week and rather flippantly asked her if she was still walking in sunshine and she assured me she was. She was also sleeping better. As the sessions progressed, she told me more about her ME. She said she had been so ill that she couldn't lift her head from the pillow, so visiting friends gave up and she had lost all her friends. She came for several months until she was better. Her story was a great success.

As the months progressed, I added more people to the group, all of them had needs. Sometimes I didn't know in advance what they were, they just revealed themselves gradually and I offered healing. There's something very freeing about going out with a group of women all about our own age. What we talk about is wide ranging and not

restricted at all by men looking disapproving, or even hogging the conversation. Most of the group had healing in one way or another, either hands on or distance healing. Whatever, it worked well. Now we are 15 years on and still going to my amazement. There was a blip a few years ago when we couldn't find a place that accommodated all our varied needs. Then we met at my house, squeezing round our dining room table with bring and share meals. Now we have found a local pub that meets all our needs, has wheelchair access, a disabled toilet and a varied menu at reasonable prices. People keep coming, one or two have died, new people sometimes find the first meeting very stressful, but we are established enough to accommodate them in the friendliest of ways and ease their fears. I just meet people and recognise their needs almost unconsciously and invite them along. They joke within the group that I meet most people in the supermarket. 'Oh, they say, where did Jan pick you up?' And I get teased in the nicest way.

There have been one or two failures, sometimes the most unsuitable people have come along, often brought by another member, and after a few months of not fitting in, or trying unsuccessfully to change us to their ways of thinking they simply give up and leave to my great relief! I don't rule with a rod of iron by any means. But I do keep a check on the more outrageous ideas that some have. The biggest problems come at Christmas. They want to give such extravagant gifts. I put a brake on that because there are always at least ten round the Christmas table so presents have to be within a very small limited price, this year it was £1.50 maximum for each person! Next year I think we won't give presents to each other, we'll give to the food bank, but we will discuss it and come to an agreement together. I'm not a total autocrat!

If you are wondering about the title of the group it was because I wanted us to be an ordinary group of women who just enjoyed each other's company, rather than the 'county ladies who met for luncheon!'

Many people who realise that they are on a spiritual journey will have become familiar with the concept of the chakras, the Sanskrit word for the energy centres that, though not physically visible, exist as vortexes of whirling energy at certain points in our bodies. Although there are very many of these energy centres, a brief consideration of the most important is:

1. The base, or root, centre, situated at the very base of our spine, and having control over the physical energy and reproductive glands. The colour associated with this centre is red.
2. The abdominal, or sacral, centre, situated just below the navel, and aligned to the lower digestive system, also the organs of reproduction and excretion, and the adrenal glands. And the colour associated with this centre is orange.
3. The solar plexus centre, situated above the navel, is a very powerful centre in that we can register what is happening there easily especially at times of tension, sudden shock, or fear. So it connects to basic emotions, including emotional love. It is linked to the pancreas – and the colour here is yellow.
4. The heart centre is situated slightly above the area of the physical heart and is the seat of unconditional love and compassion. It is connected to the thymus gland, and is said to be the linking centre between the three lower, or physical, centres and the three upper, or spiritual centres. Green is the colour that is associated with this centre.
5. The throat centre is considered to be the centre of communication, and is linked to the thyroid gland. It is the centre of self-expression, and is linked to the lungs and respiratory system. The colour associated with this centre is blue.

6. The brow centre, which is linked to the pituitary gland, has control over our perceptive and intuitive nature. This has been described as the third eye, and is used by clairvoyants and mediums. The colour here is sometimes described as indigo, and sometimes as violet, or purple.

7. The highest centre is the crown centre, often called the seat of the soul, the area of communication with the Highest Source. It is situated at the very top of the head – the crown. It is connected with the pineal gland, and with the opening of consciousness. Some consider the colour here to be purple, but most think of it as white – the white that is formed from all the colours of the spectrum of the other centres.

Most of the time we are hardly aware of the functioning of these energy vortexes, but, as has been noted, the solar plexus, in particular, can be experienced at times of sudden shock, or fear, when a tightening of the muscles there can indicate its presence (e.g. a knot in the stomach, butterflies, etc.). Other centres are less easily detectable, but an awareness of them can be developed if there is the intention to do so. Imbalance or disharmony in these centres can, and often does, lead to physical and mental illness, and many who work as healers will concentrate on trying to balance the energies in order to help bring about a state of well-being. We can, using a meditation based on the colours associated with these chakras, or energy centres, engage in a very self-healing exercise. It is advisable to be familiar and comfortable with the earlier meditational techniques, i.e. being mindful of breathing: mentally reciting a mantra or sacred phrase: visualising a candle, flower or tree, before attempting to do the colour one, because it involves several mental shifts, each with the sub-conscious intention of taking one's awareness into a higher plane, while at the same time balancing centres. However, for those who feel ready to do this it is suggested that they read it through a couple of times before starting it.

A SELF-HEALING MEDITATION ON THE COLOURS OF THE CHAKRAS

Rosalind Smith

Relax, be comfortable and warm, and make sure you will not be disturbed.

See in your mind's eye the colour, red. Allow yourself to dwell, for a moment on the negative aspects of this colour, anger, fear, etc. Then see them dissipate as the positive aspects of red become dominant and it becomes a clear and vibrant red, indicating energy and the health of your physical body ...Feel this colour at the base of your spine, and in your seated area – and feel it infuse the whole of your body. Dwell here as long as you like.

Now see the vibrant red change gently to a glowing orange colour. There are negative aspects to the area but let your mind see the clear-sightedness and sincerity and creativity associated with this centre and this colour... Feel yourself bathed in this orange glow.

When you're ready, allow the orange to blend gently into a golden yellow, clear and bright and glowing. It dispels any tension or negativity in the centre of your body, and fills you with positive, powerful, glowing energy and creativity. Feel yourself filled with this beautiful golden yellow light.

As you raise your awareness to your heart centre, see the yellow light change gently into a wonderful spring green colour. As it brightens and glows, it dissipates any unkind feelings you may have been harbouring, and opens the energy centre to feelings of love and acceptance, for all beings – and for yourself... Feel yourself filled with this beautiful green glow.

As the green changes gently into a beautiful blue, your consciousness is lifted into the area of the throat – the energy centre of communication and a more spiritual creativity. Feel that blue envelop the whole of you, and sense a relaxation and glow in the whole of your body...Let the colour fill you with clear blue light.

Become aware that the blue is deepening into a wonderful rich purple colour, an intense vibrating clear violet/purple light that seems to be filling the whole of your head, and in particular, the brow centre. This is the area of intuitive thoughts and inspiration. Feel the openness of this centre – and even in the glowing purple become aware of a lightness which pervades it and leads to:

A pure white light, situated just above your head, just at the crown centre. It is a combination of all the colours you have experienced, and as your crown centre opens to receive it, it pours down and into your head, your brow, throat, your heart and on down throughout your entire body so that you are filled with Light.

Rest here for a while, as long as seems right for you.

Now, knowing that you are filled with Light, become aware of the brow centre and see the purple colour fade gently away...

See the throat centre and see the blue fade gently away. See the heart centre and see the green fade gently away...

See the solar plexus centre and the yellow will now be diminishing...

See the orange colour at the sacral centre fade away...

And see the vibrant red at the base gently fading away...

Rest peacefully in the knowledge that you have invited the Light to enter and fill you – and give thanks.

FAREWELL JUDY CLINTON

Dear Gervais

I was sad to hear of the death of Judy Clinton recently. After reading her article in the Autumn/Winter edition of TW I had intended to write to her through the magazine about it. Her article was about the loss of her son and the never ending sadness of it and how she had found a connection to him again through meeting one of his friends many years after he had attended her son's funeral.

In the early 2000s I travelled to Greystoke in Cumbria to begin my healing training course with FFH where I met Judy. I had arrived early after a long journey. I recall it was a misty day. As I walked on the drive Judy seemed to appear out of the mist and the damp overhanging branches of trees. We both startled each other. She said, "I thought you were an Angel appearing out of the mist!"

We both went indoors and chatted for about half an hour. The chat continued during our evening meal. She explained that she was about to leave, having stayed for a few days. I sensed then there was a kind of fragility about her. I felt we had made some kind of connection and there was a feeling of loss on my part as we said our goodbyes despite the briefness of our meeting.

Since then, whenever I read something of hers in TW, I have thought about that brief encounter.

I found her recent article very moving, especially as I am currently attempting to support a friend of fifty years standing who had also recently lost her son in the prime of his life due to an accident with his medication.

I read Judy's article to her over the phone and my friend told me she found it very comforting to hear before she herself wept, just as Judy had done. My friend does not cry easily but I believe they were healing tears.

I would have liked to have been able to tell Judy how the sharing of her grief had helped someone else. Her realisation that love never dies,

the final phrase in her article, was a precious gift and one which I have been able to pass on to my grieving friend. Thank you Judy.

Carol Curtis.

January 2020.

Dear Gervais

I can't be the only old friend/admirer of Judy Clinton to have recently heard of her death from her son Graham so I rejoiced that you published her piece about her son who had sadly committed suicide so young. She gave love, care and strength in a difficult world and it's good to know how much radiant love was waiting for her.

Best wishes to the editor

Mary Hawker

22/11/19

Dear Gervais,

I received my copy of 'Towards Wholeness' yesterday and found it very poignant to read the two articles by Judy Clinton, as I had attended the memorial service held for her in Gloucester the day before.

Like many readers, I have always found Judy's articles in TW insightful and thought-provoking. Likewise, the articles that she wrote for The Friend.

I first met Judy back in the early 1990s at an Experiment with Light retreat at Glenthorne and our subsequent friendship over the years has been one of the blessings of my life. She introduced me to many lovely places that I otherwise wouldn't have gone such as Brockwood Park, the Krishnamurti Centre in Hampshire. Her appreciation of nature and her delight in bright colours and things of beauty are aspects of her being that I remember most clearly.

I'm sure you will get other contributions regarding her. I would be happy to write something of longer length if you think that appropriate.

To Judy, I say 'Rest in peace dear F/friend, your struggles with the pains of this life are over.'

In Friendship,
Carolyn

THANK YOU JUDY

Carolyn Sansom

When I think of what aids my well-being, I know that the presence of near and dear friends in my life has always been a very important aspect of this. Judy Clinton was one of those friends. Her recent, sudden death has caused me to reflect on the specific ways in which her presence in my life has aided my well-being over the years. Her death has also reinforced the thankfulness I feel for having known her, as well as for those other friends who have been, and continue to be in my life.

The aspect of my friendship with Judy that I am most thankful for, was the centrality to it of deep, meaningful conversations – by letters initially, then on the phone, then face-to-face and occasionally by e-mail. Over the years of our friendship, we both risked being honest about painful issues in our lives and allowed ourselves to be vulnerable, knowing that the other person would 'hold' that space and not judge what was being said. It is a real privilege to get to this deep level of sharing with someone and to build up that level of trust. We also explored our Quaker faith, along with insights from other religions and philosophical traditions. I will miss those conversations greatly.

The second aspect of the way in which Judy's presence in my life has aided my well-being, is that she had a deep appreciation of the healing powers of nature. We went on many walks together, and Judy was always alert to the beauty of the sights and sounds around us. She introduced me to several places, such as Brockwood (the Krishnamurty Centre near Winchester) and various Cotswold walks near her home, all of which were restorative places. I also enjoyed Judy's reaction to the places of beauty near me, which I introduced her to when she came to stay. Her joyful surprise at seeing a kingfisher on the nearby river re-awakened me to the nature on my door-step and reminded me of the benefits of keeping alert to this local beauty.

Thirdly, Judy was also inspired by colour and beautiful objects, her enthusiasm for which was plain to see! For instance, we sometimes met at the Taurus Craft centre near Lydney, (a half-way point between our homes) which she also introduced me to. It was a delight to see her appreciation of the objects made there by the various artists in their workshops. Some of Judy's 'leaf cards' were on sale there too, which was affirming of her own creative talents.

One of Judy's other talents was 'homemaking' (in the words of an old Girl Guide badge!) and she took the words of 'Advices & Queries number 26 to heart. ('...Try to make your home a place of loving friendship and enjoyment, where all who live or visit may find the peace and refreshment of God's presence.') I knew she would offer warm hospitality whenever I visited her and this was something I much appreciated. I know she offered her home to support various people and groups on a regular basis. Unfortunately, I lived too far away to benefit from those groups.

I am also thankful for Judy's humour and her gift of mimicry (in a kind way) which enlivened stories and reminiscences that she shared. I hear her laughter when I listen to one of my Experiment With Light tapes (which was recorded at an event held by her Area Meeting) which captures her and others laughing at a wry comment made by Rex Ambler.

Judy had a verse on her wall which reads:

'There's a miracle called friendship that dwells within the heart, and you don't know how it happens or when it gets its start but the happiness it brings you always gives a special lift, and you realise that friendship is God's most precious gift.'

I couldn't agree more and am thankful that I have been able to count Judy as one of my friends.

Received 21/1/20

WHEN MY BODY DIES

Judy Clinton

When my body dies, as die it will, my heart ceasing to beat,
my lungs still and flat,
I, the heart of me, will rise in bird-flight at dawn
As the sun silently bursts forth above mountains
in the hallelujah of new day.

When my body dies, as die it will, my heart ceasing to beat,
my eyes unseeing, my ears unhearing,
I, the heart of me, will dance in gurgling waters of a youthful stream,
cascading down hills
Over rocks and grass, in merriment and glittering light.

When my body dies, as die it will, my heart ceasing to beat,
no smelling or tasting,
I, the heart of me,
will waft in honeysuckle and roses on a balmy dusk evening
Gracing summer with warmth and delight.

When my body dies, as die it will, my heart ceasing to beat,
no touch felt on my skin or in my hair
I, the heart of me, will languish in grass at the side of a lake,
as the wind caresses the land
Bringing lushness and shimmer on a springtime day.

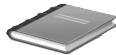
When my body dies, as die it will, my heart ceasing to beat,
no life left in the flesh that begins to decay
I, the heart of me, will soar to the heavens, dive down to the sea-bed,
flow with the rivers, roll with the seas
And be
Free.

11.02.16

Scottish Blessing Prayer

May the blessing of light be on you, light without and light within. May the blessed sunlight shine on you like a great peat fire, so that stranger and friend may come and warm himself at it. And may light shine out of the two eyes of you, like a candle set in the window of a house, bidding the wanderer come in out of the storm. And may the blessing of the rain be on you, may it beat upon your Spirit and wash it fair and clean, and leave there a shining pool where the blue of Heaven shines, and sometimes a star. And may the blessing of the earth be on you, soft under your feet as you pass along the roads, soft under you as you lie out on it, tired at the end of day; and may it rest easy over you when, at last, you lie out under it. May it rest so lightly over you that your soul may be out from under it quickly; up and off and on its way to God. And now may the Lord bless you, and bless you kindly.

BOOK REVIEWS



HOME IS WHERE – the Journey of a Missionary Child, by Margaret Newbigin Beetham.

DLT. 2019. 240pp. ISBN: 978-0-232-53408-5. £12.99.

I wasn't greatly thrilled about reviewing this book, mainly because the subject of missionaries is something I'm not in total sympathy with. This is probably because I feel strongly that no-one, of any faith or creed whatsoever, should seek to impose their way of thinking on another. But I must admit that from the start I was really 'hooked'! The author was one of four siblings who were the children of well-known missionaries of the Church of Scotland, Helen and Lesslie Newbigin, who worked in India between the 1930s and 1970s. I had

never heard of them, but then, being a Quaker myself, that's not surprising as we tend not to send these well-meaning people out across the world to convert others into our way of thinking, but rather leave it to the Inner Voice of individuals to find their own way – perhaps their own Way. Though it is true that George Fox and the Early Friends did just that.

This account of the trials and tribulations of being a child of missionaries came across as full of pathos and endurance, as she, and later her siblings, were sent back from India to Edinburgh to stay with relatives, a difficult transformation from a hot, colourful country, to a grey, cold Edinburgh to start school. They were all very young and, in their turn, none of them wanted to go. Every time their parents said goodbye to them, the children begged and pleaded to go back to India with them. All to no avail, and so they spent year after year in a sort of miserable existence, interspersed with very occasional visits, often years apart, from the parents.

The book reads fascinatingly as a sort of series of snapshots of Margaret's life, both in India and in the UK when they were collected by various 'aunties' for the school holidays. It is well-written and leads one on to 'what happened next' so I found it to be a real page-turner. The reader soon gets used to the way she changes her name and calls herself Rachel much of the time, which allows the narrative to switch back and forth from first to third person. Her younger sisters are also given different names throughout the book – Alison is referred to as Chris – and so on. But in the boarding school sisters were not allowed to speak to each other during term time, and Margaret has, rightly, attributed to this the estrangement between them which lasted well into adult life, and probably too to the panic attacks her nearest sister experienced.

In later life, she and her sisters had 'raged at the absences, the being abandoned, the sense that they were not as important' to their parents, especially their father, as those others that claimed their time

and attention all those years. ‘When he preached the sermon on the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination, he apologised to his family who, he said, had borne the burden of his ministry.’ My hope is that the author, by writing of her damaged childhood, has found a way of acceptance of the anger and sadness inherent of being the child of those who, many might feel, are following a calling. After all, if one is granted the blessing of children then surely the calling is to nurture them first?

Rosalind Smith

The Life That Never Ends – An anthology of Quaker spiritual/psychic experience. Quaker Fellowship for Afterlife Studies 2019. 132pp. ISBN: 978-1-911311-54-6. £7.00 including p&p.

In 2010, when QFAS had been in existence for 10 years, the committee felt that “One cannot continue to look at evidence for ever” (Introduction). Accordingly the narratives in this latest anthology are given with confidence. As in the title there are psychic experiences, relating to souls, and spiritual experiences, relating to the Spirit. Some are little more than tokens of the identity of discarnates, not that these may not be meaningful to those concerned. The majority expand our knowledge of the human condition in one way or another, and are bathed in love. Love is many times shown to be the bridge between the two modes of consciousness. There is a short section on animals, interesting, informative, and completely free of sentimentality. The accounts of spiritual experience are of superb quality and depth, piercing the Cloud of Unknowing and revealing transcendent Reality. Robin Goodman’s account of a Maundy Thursday in York Minster is printed below. The anthology is completed by some writing in the old style, seeking to prove survival, but really it is futile as this book and all the others can simply be ignored. There is also a rich section on the

writings of early Friends which confirms that the next world was both experienced and taken for granted in this.

Available from Angela Howard, Webb's Cottage, Woolpits Road, Gt. Saling, Braintree, Essex, CM7 5DZ, Phone 01371-850423, e-mail angela1@webbscottage.co.uk

Gervais Frykman

**York Minster
Easter Week, 1985**

Robin Goodman

It was cold, the early morning streets frost rimed as we made our way to the Maundy Thursday said Eucharist at York Minster.

The previous evening we had been there for the sung evensong; it had seemed more like a performance of sacred music than being at a service of worship. The Minster was bustling with tourists, many taking photographs despite the polite requests not to do so; milling and spilling pervaded the air with a restlessness that disturbed the atmosphere and made the act of worship difficult. The music was good and I enjoyed that.

As we walked the streets were empty, quiet and still, it was as though we were the only people around. I quietly opened the side door to go to the side chapel for the service, and felt the enormity of the silence, a waiting, waiting as the building had done for a thousand years. My feet took me, hushed, noiselessly, not to the side chapel but into the main cathedral where it was breathtakingly beautiful. The sun shone through the stained glass windows. I gazed in awe; saw much that was missed in the movement of the previous evening. I was totally alone and stood in wonderment.

A gentle feeling washed over me and I became aware of a sense of benign presence. It was as if all the worship ever offered there, all the people who had come, like me, to offer worship was absorbed and held in the air, in the fabric of the building. I hung my head in shame. I had so little to bring to this place. I knew that I should worship with every particle of my being but had so little there, one single drop when an ocean was not enough.

As I stood there ashamed of the paucity of my offering, all sense of self, time and place slipped away. The 'I' no longer existed and was absorbed into a golden Light of love unimaginable. It was within me; I was within it. I felt accepted and that the worship that I was bringing was enough, it was real and was indeed enough, the molecule that I brought was added to the whole.

How long I stood there I do not know. I had been in a place where time was irrelevant. The moment was broken by the soft footfall of an Anglican nun moving swiftly towards the side chapel, seeming almost like an image, a ghost from long ago. Suddenly there jolting me back to myself was my husband, John, asking what I thought that I was doing, he had to come looking for me because I was supposed to meet him at the chapel, I was to hurry or we'd be late. And so it was that we went to the service. It was the familiar rite, I said the well known and at that time, the well loved words.

I waited patiently for the golden Light that I had just seen and felt; that presence of love to pervade the chapel. The words distracted me. I could not feel the spirit.

Finally I came to understand what was for me, the meaning of worship, where all sense of self, time and place are irrelevant, and where love is all, and acceptance, of you, a human just as you are is important. I saw that to love God is all that is asked. I no longer had to say the words, follow the rules. All I had to do was love God and seek to come that close again.

That Maundy Thursday was the beginning of the end for me of being an Anglican.

I found the Spirit in a gathered Quaker Meeting, in walking the hills, sitting beside the waves.

This Spirit is there everywhere and is there for everyone.

MEDITATION ON SILENCE

Jim Pym

The following may help you find the Silence. If it does not, then it might help you to find the way that is right for you. Whatever your way into the Silence, I pray that you may find it. This meditation flowed out of the Silence, and it led me back into the Silence. May it do the same for you.

We often imagine that the experience of the Silence is something that only occurs in the lives of saints and sages, or those who are spiritually advanced. We feel that we have to search for it, to practise a method, or to implore God to give it to us.

This is not so. We do not have to seek it, or find it, we do not have to travel anywhere, or practise any method. The Silence is always with us, a free and unconditional gift of God to all. It is the presence of the Divine, a God who is not far off, not hidden, but infinitely and eternally with us and within us. It is our Soul, our Life, our Being.

The Pearl of Great Price

Our minds cannot grasp the Infinity and Eternity of the Divine, but we have been given a way to experience them. This way is through the Here and Now. In this present moment we can find the Pearl of Great Price which is hidden in our hearts. The Supreme Gift of God is that we can find our Divinity right where we are, in this present Moment; in the Silence.

I suggest reading the words of the meditation three times.

First, read it as if it were a poem.

Then come back to the beginning, and read very slowly, pausing between the 'verses'. Listen to your own Heart as you do so. Be prepared to repeat any passage that has a deep meaning for you.

Finally, read it again with no conditions. Accept it as a free gift from the Divine within you, and be willing to allow whatever variations may seem right for you. Pause and close your eyes whenever and wherever you feel like doing so, and, if you do not finish it this third time, it doesn't matter.

If the Silence takes over from the words, that is wonderful. That is what it is all about. Remember, you are that Silence from which all words come, and if the words lead you to know it, they have fulfilled their purpose.

When you feel the Silence, rest in it and enjoy it.

As you do so, you may feel that there is no sense of self left.

Then there will just be The Silence.

The Silence

Be still!
The Silence ...
It is here.
It is with me now.

Be still!
The Silence ...
As I breathe,
It is here;
As I breathe,
It is now.

As I feel
And experience
The Living Presence of the Divine;
Silence is here;
It is now.

Thoughts may rise and fall;
I do not own them;
I do not resist them;
The Silence ... The Peace ... The Presence;
It is here;
It is now.

I do not have to struggle;
I do not have to seek;
I do not have to rely on anyone,
Or anything.
I am the Silence.
I do not have to find it.
It is here;
It is now.

Silence is the Presence with me.
Silence is the Light within me.
Within every cell of my body.
It is here;
It is now.

Not an empty or barren Silence,
But one of full awareness,
Awareness of all that is.
It is here;
It is now.

As words fade away;
As thoughts subside on their own;
As breathing happens naturally and easily;
The Peace is here ...
The Presence is now.

The Silence ...
It is here;
It is now.

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the Hamblin Trust, the current title being Hamblin Vision.
www.hamblincentre.org.uk

Absolutely Clear

Don't surrender your loneliness
So quickly.
Let it cut more deep.

Let it ferment and season you
As few human
Or even divine ingredients can.

Something missing in my heart tonight
Has made my eyes so soft,
My voice
So tender,

My need of God
Absolutely
Clear.

Why Not Be Polite?

Everyone
Is God speaking.
Why not be polite and
Listen to
Him?

(Both by Hafez Shirazi – Fourteenth Century, contributed by Rosalind Smith)

I remember the cheese of my childhood
and the bread that we cut with a knife.
When the children helped with the
housework,
and the men went to work, not the wife.

The cheese never needed a fridge
and the bread was so crusty and hot.
The children were seldom unhappy
and the wife was content with her lot.

I remember the milk from the bottle,
with the lovely cream on the top.
Our dinner came hot from the oven,
and not from the fridge in the shop.

The kids were a lot more contented,
they didn't need money for kicks.
Just a game with their mates in the road
and sometimes the Saturday flicks.

I remember the shop on the corner,
where a pen'orth of sweets was sold.
Do you think I'm a bit too nostalgic?
Or is it....I'm just getting old?

I remember the 'loo' was the lavvy
and the bogey man came in the night.
It wasn't the least bit funny
going "out back" with no light.

Hung on a peg in that loo,
were interesting items to view,
from newspapers cut into squares.
It took little to keep us amused.

Dirty clothes were boiled in the copper,
with plenty of rich foamy suds.
But the ironing seemed never ending
as Mum pressed everyone's 'duds'.

I remember the slap on my backside
and the taste of soap if I swore.
Anorexia and diets weren't heard of
and we hadn't much choice what we
wore.

Do you think that bruised our ego?
or our initiative was destroyed?
We ate what was put on the table
and I think life was better enjoyed.

But a huge fact not hereto mentioned
in this mushy tale of nostalgic rejoice,
is the reason we all "enjoyed" our lot
Was that we had NO BLOODY CHOICE

A memory from one of my Clients - ran
an accord as I remember this life with
cut up newspapers for Toilet paper –
David Mason

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have you considered leaving something to the FFH? A specimen form of words could be: "I give and bequeath (state what...) to the Friends Fellowship of Healing (being a Charity registered under the Charities Act, No. 284459), to the registered address of the Charity as recorded with the Charity Commission at the time that this bequest comes into effect, AND I DECLARE that the receipt of this legacy by the then proper officer for the Fellowship, shall be a complete discharge to my Trustee(s) for that legacy."



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