

# The Grapevine

## The Newsletter of the Bridgend Quaker Meeting

Issue Number 3

July 2006



### An African Evening

If anyone had been walking past Bridgend Meeting House on the evening of 28<sup>th</sup> April, their noses would have twitched at the exotic smells coming from inside.

Friends had scoured the countryside, well Tescos and Swansea Market, looking for unusual ingredients such as okra, mung beans, yams and green bananas. These were whipped up into delicious African dishes that were wolfed down by those present. The aromatic, spicy sauces were ideally balanced with brown rice and couscous. Those concerned to get their "5-a-day" had plenty of options with the array of fresh, tropical fruit served afterwards.

Entertainment was provided by CDs of African music. Stalls selling plants, books and home-made produce did a roaring trade with some people almost coming to un-Quakerly blows over the remaining jar of Jane's Lemon Curd – you know who you are!

Visitors attending were very complimentary about the food, the Meeting House and the warmth of the reception they received. All in all a very good time was had by everyone there.

Most importantly **£280** was raised towards the Oxfam Unwrapped "Build a classroom" project. We are now about half way to reaching the amount needed. Many thanks must go to all those who cooked the food and those who helped in other ways.

**Jenny Sen**

### Visit to Bridgend by Lani Parker,

On Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June we had the privilege of hearing first-hand from Lani Parker, a committed and enthusiastic young peace-worker, about the aims and work of Peace Brigades International. Lani is on a one year placement with PBI in London, funded by Quaker Peace and Social Witness. She explained to us that PBI is 25 years old and has its roots in two traditions – the peace movement and Gandhi. PBI aims to work in solidarity with people in their own countries to support them in their search for non-violent alternatives to conflict situations. These are very often situations where the human rights of

**Cont. Over page**

### Annual Garden Party

This will be held on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September at 2.30 pm at the Meeting House.

The speaker will be Suzy Rogers of the Women's Education Network, who will talk about a recent education in Uganda with which she has been involved.

Music will be provided by the Slapping Skins drumming group from Aberkenfig, who play African drums



### Funeral Arrangements

This is the minute recorded at the July MM

*"The funerals committee which reported to us in January 1997 stressed the importance of conveying ones wishes about funeral arrangements in advance. A form for this purpose was included in the report. Some Friends completed forms and, as agreed at the time, they were sent to the Assistant Clerk (Membership). We feel that it is more appropriate to hold these locally and ask that the existing forms be returned to individual Friends for checking and, if necessary, updating. The forms should then be given to a locally appointed contact. A copy of the form will be circulated with these minutes"*

It hasn't yet been decided, who will hold them in Bridgend. It is planned to send a copy of the form to everyone and friends could seek advice from overseers about their completion.

**Peter Thompson**

### Midweek Meetings

It has been decided to hold a mid-week Meeting once a month. This will enable friends who for various reasons such as work and family commitments are unable to attend on a Sunday .

The meeting will be held on the second Tuesday in the month and the first one will be held on Tuesday August 8<sup>th</sup> at 7.00 pm.

A Welcoming Rota is being drawn-up for these meetings and volunteers are needed..



## Quaker Recipe - No. 2 Tofu Bobotie



Peter Davies made some Bobotie for the African Evening and it was so delicious that he has been asked to let us all into the secret!

Bobotie is one of the dishes described as most typically South African. In much of Africa today, meat is a luxury. That was also true for the Malay cooks of South Africa in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, who developed Bobotie as a delicious way to 'stretch' meat with bread. Now Bobotie is a widespread supper dish regularly enjoyed by all the racial groups in South Africa at home and in restaurants. This is a vegetarian version, but I guess that a similar quantity of cooked meat, such as chicken, could be substituted.

2 cakes tofu – 24 oz	1 tsp mango chutney
3 medium onions chopped	2 tsp minced garlic
3 thick slices of whole meal bread crumbs	
1 tbsp ground cumin seeds	125 ml milk
1 tbsp ground coriander seeds	
1/4 tsp ground fennel seeds	1 tbsp olive, or sunflower oil
5 whole cloves ground	3 oz raisins or currants
1 tspn cinnamon	

In a covered saucepan, cook the onions and garlic in the oil on a medium heat, stirring occasionally for 20 to 30 minutes, until quite soft. Add the cumin, coriander, fennel, cloves, cinnamon, turmeric and black pepper – and sauté for a couple of minutes, stirring constantly. Mix in the vinegar, soy sauce and chutney, and remove the pan from the heat.

Preheat the oven to 350° F or 180 C.

In a large bowl, soak the bread in the milk for a few minutes and then stir in crumbled tofu. Drizzle on the oil and mix well. Add dried fruit, almonds and the onion-spice mixture, and stir well.

Oil a baking dish, about 12x8 ins. Spread the mixture evenly into the baking dish and pat down. Tuck the bay leaves in here and there, leaving the stems sticking out. Whisk the egg and milk together to make a custard. Pour the custard over the mixture. Cover with foil and bake for 15 minutes. Uncover and bake until the custard is set (about another 15 mins). Remove the bay leaves after baking.

Serve with brown rice and chutney on the side. Rhaita and steamed vegetables are a good accompaniment.

**Serves 6.**

**Peter Davies**

## Regional Elders & Overseers Meeting

Bridgend elders and overseers hosted a meeting of E & Os from the central area of South Wales Monthly Meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> June. Representatives from Swansea and Neath meetings joined with us to consider ways of supporting each other in our efforts to meet the needs of our respective meetings.

Quaker Faith and Practice reminds us (12.06) that "Elders and overseers will only be able to serve well if they are known and accessible to Friends and attenders".

New appointments were made in January to serve for the next 3 years.

Elders: David Harries and Pete Thompson

Named overseer: Liz Dimond. In addition we have an Oversight Circle consisting of Jenny Sen, Ann Lewis and Peter Trevett. Peter has agreed to keep in touch with our Young Friends, particularly those who are away at university.

Other appointments:

Co-clerks: Jane Harries and Jenny Sen

Treasurer: Peter Davies

Convenor of Premises Committee: Roger Savidge

Librarian: Christine Trevett

QPSW correspondent: Jenny Sen

Grapevine Editor: Terry Robbins

Quaker Prison Minister (Parc Prison): Ann Lewis

## Yearly Meeting 2006

The 2006 Yearly Meeting was held this year in London. David Harries attended the meeting and has written this short personal account of proceeding.

The big topic at the meeting was the question as to whether to appoint fifteen Friends (only) to act as charitable trustees, instead of the large representative body called Meeting of Sufferings, whose members hitherto would count as trustees in charity law.

This proposal had been canvassed at Yearly Meeting in York, in August 2005, but Friends at that time were not ready for this step.

This year, we were better prepared, and we did take the momentous step of accepting the proposal. Incidentally, three of the trustees come from Wales.

At the Meeting we also accepted the constitution that will be sent to the Charity Commission, so that we will definitely be able to register as a charity during 2007.

In my opinion, a job well done!

**David Harries**

## Lani Parker Visit - contd

certain sections of populations are being denied or contravened – for instance the indigenous peoples of Mexico, or where it is difficult for people to live in peace, as with the peace communities in Columbia.

The work of PBI happens mainly through protective accompaniment but also through peace education and by monitoring and spreading information about human rights abuses. At the moment they have volunteers in Columbia, Indonesia, Mexico, Guatemala and Nepal. The main principles of PBI are non-violence, non-partisanship, and non-interference. In their work with the peace communities in Columbia, for example, their role is to speak to all the legal entities in the conflict but not to take sides. Through the presence of the volunteers a space is created for dialogue, and lines of communication are kept open. Volunteers also have a monitoring role in that they will pass on information about human rights abuses to organisations such as Amnesty International.

In her work in the London office Lani is engaged in building up a political and civil support network for PBI in the UK; attracting funding; recruiting and supporting volunteers; and raising the profile of human rights issues and non-violent approaches in general.

We found her talk inspiring and informative, and were able to give a donation towards the further work of PBI. We thank Lani for coming to visit us, and wish her well in her future life and career.

**Jane Harries**

