

The Grapevine

The Newsletter of the Bridgend Quaker Meeting

Issue Number 9

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Bridgend Meeting Web Site

- You can access the **Bridgend Meeting** web site at www.bridgendquakers.org.uk
- The site has recently been enhanced so that past issues of Grapevine can now be accessed online. Simply log on to the site and choose the "Newsletter" tab on the home page. You will be presented with a list of all the past newsletters that are available. Choose the one you want to see, and as well as displaying it on your screen as a PDF file, you can also download it or print it off if you so wish.
- Christine Trevett has recently produced a full listing of all the books in the Meeting library. This list can be accessed by clicking the "Our Library" tab on the home page. This will present the list as PDF file and it can be printed off if required. You can also use the Find tab to search for a individual book or author or for particular



keyword. There are also a list of recommended books for newcomers to Quakers.

- The web site continues to be well visited. The above graph shows the number of individual visits made each month to the site during 2008. Over the first 11 months a total of 6688 visits were made which averages out at about 600 visits a month or 140 a week. Although this seems a lot of people I suppose that in the context of millions having access to the web it's small beer. However it does mean that over 6000 people are discovering a little about the Quakers and that there is a meeting in Bridgend

Editor's thanks

The editor would like to thank everyone for their contributions to Grapevine. The next edition will be out in early March 2009, so please let me have any suitable material. Email it to terryterry37@tiscali.co.uk

Farewell To Our Tree



*Now you see it
..... Now you don't*



The cedar tree outside the Bridgend Meeting House had recently to be cut down because its continued presence was likely to damage drains & foundations. Before & after pictures show the building bereft of its sylvan glory.

Change of Meeting For Worship Time

A decision was recently taken to change **the start time of the Sunday Meeting for Worship from 10.30 to 10.45 am as from Sunday 4th Jan. 2009.**

This followed a review of local Sunday Bus Service times and it was felt that the 15 minutes shift will make it easier for people relying on public transport to arrive at the Meeting House in timely and unhurried fashion **and** to encourage others currently using personal transport to consider using public transport as part of their contribution towards improving the environment and reducing their carbon footprint



Wildlife At Parc Prison

Some of the men on Delta Wing at Parc prison take a keen interest in local birdlife. One man, who gave a talk to the over-fifties discussion group I facilitate, provided this list of birds he had seen from the exercise yard.

Grey Heron, Cormorant, Mute Swan, Common Buzzard, Sparrow Hawk, Kestrel, Black Headed Gull, Lesser Black Backed Gull, Herring Gull, Wood Pigeon, Collared Dove, Swift, Swallow, House Martin, Green Woodpecker, Pied Wagtail, Blackbird, Blue Tit, Magpie, Jackdaw, Rook, Crow, Starling, House Sparrow, Chaffinch, Greenfinch, Robin, Wren, Racing Pigeon, Feral Pigeon, Canada Goose.

A recent development has been the building of a good-sized aviary by three of the men, using materials provided by the Prison. More than twenty assorted finches share a home with a pair of cockatiels and two budgerigars. On the floor of the aviary live half a dozen quails, five hens and a cock. These regularly provide a few eggs which the men share around using their kettles to cook them – a welcome, if tiny, treat!

Ann Lewis

A Christmas Poem

Let's put Christ back into Christmas,
For it wasn't always this way.
Now we have Robins, Garlands and Snowmen,
Even a red-nosed reindeer pulling a sleigh.

What of the babe who started the story,
And the message He brought to earth,
Of the gifts the Magi brought Him
And the miracle of His birth.

There's people suffering around us,
So as we drink, and eat our fill,
Think of all our brothers and sisters,
Show them some Peace and Goodwill.

Brynmor Evans.

Have You Read This ?

"Notes From An Exhibition" by Patrick Gale
Harper Collins 2007 price £7.99

From time to time, I read novels in which Quakers are mentioned, usually as a symbol for simplicity, pacifism and honesty, and often expressed by rather elderly Quakers, or alternatively as a byword for such values, without their being any actual Quakers in the book! "Notes from an exhibition", however, is rather different. This book is about a whole family, living in Cornwall, for whom Quakerism is a key element in their lives, shaping their responses to and perceptions of, many of their individual experiences. The key occurrence is the death of the mother, a well known and highly successful artist, who has had bi-polar disorder for most of her life. These aspects of their mother have, naturally greatly shaped family life and the individual lives of the now grown-up children. The

Idle Thoughts Of An Idle Fellow

Art is often about transformation – from one genre to another. Chaucer borrowed story-lines from Italian writers, eg Boccaccio, and Shakespeare in turn took ideas from Chaucer and from other Italians.

For those for whom Shakespeare writes too many words, there are other ways of enjoying the experience. Mendelsohn wrote incidental music for 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'.



Sir Geraint Evans as Falstaff in Verdi's opera based on the Merry Wives of Windsor

Prokofiev wrote ballet music for 'Romeo and Juliet' that conveys the passion and the tragedy. Verdi composed music for operas based upon 'Othello' and 'The Merry Wives of Windsor'; his friend Boito wrote the libretto, streamlining the action and adding new verses. In a manner of speaking, they repatriated to Ita-

ly the Shakespearean plays, derived as they largely were from Italian originals.

The highlights of 2008 for me included seeing 'Otello' and 'Falstaff' performed live by Welsh National Opera.

The latest edition of 'Friends Quarterly' is concerned with "Arts, Culture and Belief". Tony Stoller (the editor) writes: "Our attitude to culture and the arts has changed from the puritanism of early Friends, and for many of us art, music, literature are central to how we express our spirituality, perhaps as a metaphor, perhaps more than that."

One of the contributors to this edition of 'Friends Quarterly' is the composer James MacMillan (a Catholic). He writes: "Many people will still refer to music as the most spiritual of the arts....The serious, open and active form of listening (necessary for classical music, for example) could be said to be analogous to contemplation and even prayer in the way it demands our time."

Friends may have turned away from the arts in the past (while accepting the merits of *scientific* inquiry) but now at last we give them recognition and find ways to include them in our worship.

David Harries

title "Notes from an exhibition", refers to the programme notes produced for a retrospective showing of the lifetime's work of the mother, with each "note" heading up a different chapter of her life, as perceived and expressed in the lives of the main characters, primarily her children.

I have found this novel to be a refreshing portrayal of Quakerism, with it reflected in a manner that to me seems both true and authentic, and as Patrick Gale himself suggests: "You just have to believe in the potential for God or goodness in people. It is in many ways the ideal for the twenty first century"

Liz Dimond

