

**The Religious Society of Friends
Abergavenny Meeting
Newsletter February~March 2007**

Dates for your Diary:

Saturday 10th February **MM special Single Issue Meeting** re structures in Wales and the Borders at Almley 10.30am. Followed after lunch by the **MM February Meeting for Eldership and Oversight**

Sunday 11th February, Meeting for Worship at Llanfoist Village Hall, 10am.

Sunday 18th February, The Life of James Naylor Llanfoist Village Hall, 10am
Alternative for Young Children see details below
A Business Meeting will follow after coffee

Sunday 25th February, Meeting for Worship at Llanfoist Village Hall, 10am.

Friday 2nd March WWDOP this year is held at the URC contact Gill for times

Sunday 4th March, Meeting for Worship at Llanfoist Village Hall, 10am. Followed by a special meeting with South Wales Friends at Caerleon to discuss the proposed boundary changes. See Lynn's note below.

Saturday 10th March **MM held in** in Ledbury

Sunday 11th March Meeting for Worship at Llanfoist Village Hall, 10am

Sunday 18th March, Meeting for Worship at Llanfoist Village Hall, 10am
Followed by **a *bring and cook lunch* together!**
More details to follow.

Sunday 25th March, Meeting for Worship at Llanfoist Village Hall, 10am

Amongst ourselves. Members on the move!

- ❖ Glenys is moving on 28th February her new address is :-
10, Springwells, Ross Road, Abergavenny, NP7 6NW Tel: 01873 853 357.
Her email address stays the same:- glenys.phelpstead@coopintel.net
- ❖ Helen Groves has recently returned to Maesygartha, Vine Tree Cottage,
Abergavenny, NP7 OET. Tel: 01873 83 2176

Sunday 4th March An invitation from Caerleon Friends, Lynn writes:-

I have now been advised by Val Evans, the clerk of Caerleon Meeting, that we are invited to a discussion on a Quaker organisation in South East Wales at the town hall in Caerleon after meeting on March 4th. Representatives of Cardiff, Penarth and Trealaw (Rhondda) meetings will be there. We are asked to bring packed lunches.

The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the merits of setting up a South East Wales group of meetings in accordance with the recommendations of the Society in order to better serve our meetings.

While there is no need for all members and attenders to attend, all are cordially invited. I hope that at least all members of the Pastoral Care group will attend and those responsible for our young people.

Midweek Meeting is back again

Thank you Edna for once again offering to host MWM at her home. Note change to 1st Tuesday of each month starting on Tuesday 6th March at 10.30am at Edna Spencer's House please call 01873 85 8757 to confirm. Everyone welcome.

Fellowship of Healing

Hetta's news is that she continues to offer prayer support to a number of Friends and welcomes new names for her circle. Tel: 01873 85 9616

Retreat at Trigonos, Nantlle, Gwynedd

April 27-29. Peace in our Hearts, a prayerful retreat led by Abigail King. Please confirm bookings by 28th February forms and details of costs and bursaries contact Gill

Local Peace and Justice Activities

LOCAL SCRAP TRIDENT ACTION in February

It is planned to have a presence in Abergavenny town centre every Saturday of February. We will be handing out leaflets and will have an exhibition of facts and figures for the first three Saturdays and on 24th February there will be a silent vigil at noon for an hour.

Saturdays 11am -1pm opposite Waterstones

If you feel that you can spare some time to take part, no matter how long or short, or have any queries please ring the following numbers:-

17 Feb - Marian 830848

24 Feb - Marian 830848

London NO TRIDENT Demo and Rally 24 Feb London Rally Coach - Katrina 855760

FYI

Preparing for Peace in Wales (Quaker News from the Friend)

Three Friends from Westmorland General Meeting gave a presentation at the Welsh National Assembly about *Preparing for Peace by Asking the Experts to Analyse War* (the book was published by the GM and arose from a talk by Joseph Rotblat in 2000).

All Assembly Members were invited to the meeting on 28 July, which was organised by Meeting of Friends in Wales in conjunction with Churches Together in Wales (CYTUN) and hosted by the Plaid Cymru MP for South Wales West. The gathering included six Welsh Quakers and Aled Edwards, soon to take up the position of chief executive for Churches Together in Wales. There were also twelve assembly members present - twenty per cent of the total, with all five parties represented - which shows that this is an issue which transcends party politics.

The presentation was followed by questions and discussion. Issues raised included the concept of a 'just war'; the UNESCO 'Seville Declaration' which denies that war and violence are somehow biologically built in to the human animal; and the plight of refugees fleeing from repressive regimes. The contributions were measured and thoughtful and those present seemed prepared to listen. Afterwards a Friend said she felt that the atmosphere had been almost one of worship.

A get-together was then held at Cardiff Meeting House, with about thirty Friends present, where suggestions were made about how this concern could be taken forward in Wales.

Although the Welsh Assembly is not responsible for foreign affairs, there are several policy areas where it is trying to take a distinctive line which are relevant to *Preparing for Peace*. It was suggested that these are areas where Quakers might press them - or they might even be glad to receive further contributions.

Suggestions included:

- Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC). The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) has its own education policy (pro-comprehensive, anti-league-tables, and so forth), and its own inspectorate (Estyn), and is pursuing the Welsh Baccalaureate. Of particular relevance perhaps is the fact that it has an advisory committee on ESDGC (and a small annual fund to promote it) which might welcome both further input and ideas on peace education.

- Welsh International Sustainable Development Framework (WISDF). Although WAG is not allowed to 'do overseas aid', it is developing this policy framework on how to support some of the many links between communities and organisations in Wales and

partners in developing countries in such a way as to promote sustainable development (which is a duty laid on the Welsh Assembly by its constitution). WISDF has not yet been launched, but will be soon, and is likely to include secondments for senior public servants, twinning between NHS Trusts and hospitals in developing countries - and possibly a Welsh humanitarian response capability.

- Policy on refugees and asylum seekers. Friends are already involved in this at local level and WAG has commissioned a study on how it could improve services to refugees.

- The idea of a nuclear-free Wales. Meetings could encourage their local Council to join the Nuclear Free Local Authority organisation as well as lobbying for this at an all-Wales level.

Aled Edwards was present and he stressed that he is there to share the agendas of the National Assembly with the churches of CYTUN and enable their concerns to be brought before assembly members.

Friends left with a sense of optimism. There are plans to strengthen the powers of the Welsh Assembly and Meeting of Friends in Wales is working towards a more enabling role in its relationship with Quakers in Wales. Initiatives like this present both an opportunity and a challenge to 'speak truth to power'. We are 'preparing for peace' in Wales.

Pete Thompson, South Wales MM

news@thefriend.org September 1st 2006

Fairtrade News www.fairtradewales.com

- ❖ Our FT stall has new stocks so please come and buy. Just as a reminder the profits go to support OBUMU a local Uganda charity.
- ❖ Tuesday 13th February we are celebrating FT in Abergavenny's 1st Birthday. When our Young People at Meeting will be recognised for their FT stall.
- ❖ There is full calendar of events planned for FT fortnight, 26th February till 11th March please contact Katrina Gass on 01873 855 760 for details.
- ❖ We have been invited to support/take part in a special service at United Reformed Church on Sunday 25th March at 3pm, to raise awareness of Fairtrade issues and its importance for growers and producers. Please call Gill if this interests you.

Young Peoples Programme

- ❖ Spiritual Life Report, a presentation by our young people will now take place At MM in Almeley Saturday 12th May.
- ❖ Young People's diary. Please see below and if you can offer to fill a slot shared with others or on your own please let Penny know.

Young People's Programme 2007

When	What	Who
Feb 18 th	All Age Meeting: the Life of James Naylor with Judith Baresel (there is an alternative activity planned for younger children)	
March 4 th	Why I am a Quaker	Ronald Watts
	Baking (younger ones)	Lin
March 18 th	Walk on the wild side	Julian & Clare
April 1 st		
April 15 th		
May 6 th	Spiritual Life report ready for Monthly Meeting at Almeley	Saturday 12 th May 2007
May 20 th		
June 3 rd		
June 17 th		
July 1 st		
July 15 th		
August	Summer hols!	

NB Action plans

- ❖ Confirm dates for Link weekends this summer and write to confirm booking of Llanfoist Village Hall for our MM October Half Term Link weekend.
- ❖ Please contact Penny if you are able to help with this.

Many thanks!

Editor's Note:

Contributions for the next newsletter, thoughts or comments about this newsletter are welcome either by post or email to:

Sara at sara@burchandcope.fsnet.co.uk or Gill at gillbranch@aol.com