

**Report of Hereford and Mid Wales MM Link Group
The Pales 25th – 27th May 2007**

Theme: “Our Spiritual Journeys”

Seventeen Linkers, including four from South Wales, explored the theme “Our Spiritual Journeys”. The sessions, led by Kate, included exploring the words for “God” and the images and feeling that came out of this (“For me God is...For us God is ...”). It was helpful to use John Lee’s model of a spiritual journey moving in four directions: outwards, inwards, downwards and upwards. We talked about sacred places for other faiths and for Quakers. Then we created and shared our own sacred place.

The theme was developed in plenary sessions, small groups, pairs and individually. We used music, pictures, history, creative listening, banner making, epilogues and group discussions to enable everyone to have their say if they wanted to. On Saturday the weather was sunny and warm and this allowed the group sessions to take place in the various sitting areas at The Pales, the favourite of which was around the beautiful pond. In the afternoon we walked to the top of Llandegley Rocks (some came down a lot quicker than they went up!).

Linda had prepared a beautiful banner and each Linker made their own design which was ironed/sewed on. Their designs on the banner send their individual messages from Link 2007 to the rest of MM and the outside world. The finished banner was a real work of art with a deep meaning. We hope that it will remain on display at The Pales.

The weekend was full of sharing and close relationships in a safe and accepting atmosphere which was a haven from our day-to-day lives. In our final session we tied ribbons on to a talking stick and ministered about why Link was important in our lives. It was a very special time together which we will all treasure.

It is six years since Linda and I took on the responsibility of Link and now it is time to leave. It has been a very rewarding experience for both of us and we have learnt so much from our Young Friends. There have been 11 Link weekends (6 at The Pales, one at Almeley and 2 each at Ross and Hereford) and 44 different young people have attended (including 6 from other MMs). There have been 28 helpers with a core of 4 to 5. The goodbyes or “au revoirs” at the end of this Link were sad, but we feel confident that there are enough of our Young Friends who want it to continue. Pat Bell will remain on the committee and be the constant adult at the weekends. He will liaise with Abergavenny PM for the next Link which will be at Llanfoist in October. Link will evolve in a different way and I, as CYP Work Advocate, will do everything I can to ensure its future success. Pat Orme is taking over Linda’s administrative responsibilities and hopefully a second co-ordinator will be found. If not, the way forward could be for some of our PMs to take on the responsibility of a Link weekend with support.

Linda and I would like to thank all those who have helped over the years: buying and cooking food, running sessions, sleeping over and to parents, some of whom travel huge distances to enable their family to take part. Most of all thank you and love to our Young Friends. They are the stars.

Kate Binney
(on behalf of Link)
28.05.07