

NELSON RECOGNISED MEETING NEWSLETTER

Quakers - the Religious Society of Friends – Aotearoa New Zealand Te Hahi Tuhauwiri

September 2022

Spiritual Thought

"Creeds are milestones, doctrines are interpretations; Truth, as George Fox was continually asserting, a seed with the power of growth, not a fixed crystal, be its facets never so beautiful.

John Wilhelm Rowntree, 1904

Upcoming event

[Treaty of Waitangi Weekend at the Settlement, 7-9 October 2022. Please register by 1 October](#)

Recent Happenings

Here in Nelson, and Tasman District, Local Body elections will be held, with voting open from 16 September to 8 October, with this being the first time we have used the Single Transferable vote system – so no more wasted votes. There are several candidates' meetings being held to help us get to know the people putting themselves forward. Please take advantage of these and vote wisely. There's a Candidates Meeting at Victory School on Thursday 22nd September, beginning with music at 7.00pm which I am sure you would all enjoy. Telephone Elizabeth for more details 0212130719 (elizdooley@hotmail.com).

News of Friends

Phillida and John were evacuated early (as were Barbara and Andy) because of health concerns. John is making a slow recovery from a heart attack. Their home was not damaged, although their housemates got COVID in the middle of everything! All are now back at home. I live in Cleveland Terrace and we had great excitement (plus a visit from the Prime Minister), but are almost back to normal now with only one house yellow stickered. Civil Defence came from many parts of the South Island to assist and did a marvellous job.

John and Anthea Michaelis are back in Nelson.

Maree and Lawrence are also back in Nelson. We are keeping Lawrence busy with repairs to the Meeting House. He will be supervising the installation of a heat pump into the Meeting Room this week. Lawrence has also supervised the installation of an air purifier, which is fairly quiet and very reassuring.

John Dainty is not back yet but he is bringing his long walk through Ireland to a close. "I arrived at Ballycastle on Friday to complete the walk. Been great experience. Heading south now to storytelling fest in Co. Kerry..." And here is the man himself:



With an illustration of another part of his journey:



Elizabeth is part of Nelson Sustainable Transport who are hosting the Nelson local body Candidates Meeting (see above).

Shona is baking a cake for Sunday Meeting, 18 September. Thank you, Shona.

Gwen is persuading people to get out and vote. There are some great candidates standing and they deserve your vote. Gwen is happy to tell you who they are.

Ami Kennedy is keen for people to develop an understanding of Citizen's Assemblies and how they can strengthen democracy both locally and nationally. She would love to come and talk to us about it. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Elizabeth 0212130719.

Book Reviews

Reaching for the Stars. Nora Waln, 1939

Although the book was published in 1939 and I borrowed this copy via inter library loan from the National Library, I have found it an absorbing read and some of you might also care to read it. The book was written by an American Friend, Nora Waln (1895-1964). She left America for China around the age of 20 and lived there for 12 years, writing an account "The House of Exile" of the family she lived with and the life she shared and observed. This book sold well in Germany, as well as many other countries, and was admired by Hitler. However, in Reaching for the Stars, Nora Waln chose to take an even-handed approach to all the people she met and the events she witnessed in her four years in Germany, ending in 1938.

Her husband was in Germany to pursue his love of music and went from teacher to teacher throughout Germany. While she herself was a respected Journalist and published author, she describes herself as a dutiful wife, prepared to make a pleasant home for her husband wherever that happened to be. She was knowledgeable about the history, botany and agriculture of Germany and her description of the musical life of Germany and Austria describe highly cultured people. The Walns were clearly quite wealthy and the people they stayed with were usually aristocratic, but from time to time, Nora Waln made a point of travelling to meet ordinary people. When she describes people, I believe she strives for accuracy and often relates incidents where she simply records on the page without comment. Time and again, an event is described = a murder/suicide and the events leading up to it, for example, or a visit to a Labour Camp escorted by a Nazi officer. The reader must make of it what they will. She learned that the signs outside villages banning Jews were erected by the Nazis, not the villagers, but should any local interfere with them, they would be shot.

Waln believed at the time of publication that the good hearts and minds of the German people would find a way to overcome the evil of Nazism but history proved her wrong. All her friends who were pacifists or Jews did not survive the war.

I found it valuable to read this book because I would have acted as the individual German people did. Before any 'action' the Nazis would go in and remove individuals they believed might 'cause trouble'. They would not be seen again, although their ashes were often returned to their family. Those families were shunned out of fear. The Nazi party formed a paramilitary wing back in 1921 – the Brownshirts, and these thugs made it their business to attack and break up any other political event or party. That was 18 years before WW2. It seems we must be vigilant if we are to maintain a healthy democracy.

Next is not a book review. If you follow the link, you will find yourself reading a delightful piece of fiction:

[The Uncommon Reader, Alan Bennett](#)

Phillida has sent a link to this story, printed in The London Review of Books in 2007. It's a story about the late Queen (and Bennett at his best):

Quote: “ Thus it was the dawning of sensibility was mistaken for the onset of senility’

https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v29/n05/alan-bennett/the-uncommon-reader?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20220910icymi&utm_content=20220910icymi+CID_41c48d28a19353ab684a8903d9fabd78&utm_source=LRB%20email&utm_term=Read%20more

Thank you Phillida – it is such an enjoyable way to remember the Queen (as she might have been...)

Friends around New Zealand are preparing a testimony to the life of **Joan Cameron**, hich will be put together by Christchurch Meeting. In memory of Joan, I borrowed a couple of her poetry books and have chosen a poem written by Ruth Mary Fawell:

Tiredness

What a sense of blessing

In this yielding

To layer upon layer of tiredness

After effort.

Just to lie here

Relaxed, outstretched,

Every muscle loosened

Open to the inflowing

Peace, extension

Of the little self,

Merging of all being

With the wider ocean

What a sense of blessing

In this very simple act

Of letting go, of yielding

To Common or garden

Tiredness.

1974

Deadline for next Newsletter Our Newsletter is a way to share our lives – to help build our Quaker community. Thanks to everyone who has sent contributions. Please consider sending in your news, a book review, a quote that speaks to you.... Send newsletter items to Elizabeth Dooley elizdooley@hotmail.com **The cut-off date for items for the next newsletter is Friday, October 21st 2022.**

A reminder about Quakers Aotearoa Website

<https://quakers.nz/> is the database for the New Zealand Religious Society of Friends. It is a useful source of information on people and events. Please get into the habit of referring to the database, and please make sure your details are entered and up to date. This is where we go when we are looking for a Friend's phone number, etc. This database is only as good as the data you enter so, please make use of this important communication tool. Nelson Meeting newsletters and lots of other material is posted and archived there.

Online Resources: visit our own website quakers-in-nelson.org.nz, the national website quakers.nz and our Face Book page Nelson quakers.

Our Programme: below is a reminder of the different activities each month.

Sunday: Meeting for Worship, 9.00–10.00am **vaccine pass required**

Sunday: Meeting for Worship, 10.30 – 11.30am No vaccine pass required

Next Meeting for Business Sunday 2 October, 12.00 pm No vaccine pass required, Zoom participation will be available.

Children are welcome at all Meetings for Worship.