

NELSON RECOGNISED MEETING NEWSLETTER

Quakers - the Religious Society of Friends – Aotearoa New Zealand Te Hāhi Tūhauwiri

April 2024

Spiritual Thought

“Friends meet together and know one another in that which is eternal, which was before the world was.”

George Fox, 1657

News of and for Friends

Recent events:

Palestine Solidarity: On 3 March, several Friends attended a showing of the film “1948: Creation and Catastrophe” which told the story of the Nakba – the murder and displacement of Palestinians. Horrific, but not on the scale of what is happening now.

Nelson Friends have been turning up in support of Palestine at the rallies organised by Te Tau Ihu Palestine Solidarity and PSNA (Palestine Solidarity Network Aotearoa) held on Saturday mornings at 10.30 since 14 October last year. We carry the banner “Quakers for Peace” and feel it helps when people see a Christian group taking part. In fact our local MP, Rachel Boyack, raised the fact that she would like to see other Christian groups taking part as a group – of course special individuals like Anglican Archdeacon Harvey Ruru always take part. John Michaelis came recently with his guitar and led us in singing some protest songs. Somehow singing raises the spirits.

SSFCC: Several Friends took part in the Nelson Student Strike For Climate Change held on 5 April. For the first time the School Strike highlighted six issues:

- Retaining the oil and gas ban
- Upholding Te Tiriti
- Ending the Fast Track Bill
- No new mines
- Climate education for all
- Free Palestine

Elizabeth Dooley attended a Walking/Cycling conference in Wellington around 19 March. The main speaker was Janette Sadiq Kahn, whose recent book “Street Fighting” tells the story of New York’s transformation from traffic clogged hell to pedestrian paradise (perhaps I exaggerate but the changes are exciting – people getting together over lunch in the middle of what was a major highway a few months ago, for example). The intention of the conference is to promote safe

walking and cycling and convince New Zealand there is a brave new world out there with clean air and companionship for all who care to step out of their car.

At the end of the conference we all went to Parliament to protest the new Government draft policy statement on land transport. Our Quaker Climate Correspondent, Philippa Fletcher, was there with her husband. MPs from opposition parties came to meet us but no-one from the Government. I don't think they are big on clean air and companionship...

Gwen was at the SSFCC march, but she deserted us Quakers to carry a Greens banner. She does have the excuse of a shoulder injury and the Greens flag was very light. Gwen was cycling home from the World Beyond War talk given by Dr John Reuwer at the end of February when she slipped and fell, damaging her shoulder. Fortunately, she was hosting Dr Reuwer overnight, so she had medical attention 'at hand' when she arrived home. Her shoulder is healing well. Gwen decided early on that she needed no intervention and checks each day to see how far she is able to raise her right arm. As soon as she can raise it above her head, she hopes to be able to get back on her bike.

Gwen also attends the Palestinian rallies regularly.

Recently Gwen recalled "I knew Coretta [King] when we both were students at Antioch College in southern Ohio. In her autobiography she recalled her encounter with Quaker practice, which she had earlier heard of at Lincoln Normal School in Alabama (southern U.S.). "I had come under the strong influence of the Quakers at both Lincoln and Antioch; historically, they were zealous advocates for abolition, equal rights for women and peace issues. I used to sit quietly in the chapel at Antioch and try to deepen my relationship with God in the Quaker way. The Quakers would sit and wait for hours for the Holy Spirit to move them. The process is like meditating and communing with the Spirit. Whoever is moved gets up and says what's in his or her heart. If you feel like singing, you sing. There is no choir, so if you feel like joining in, you do, but there is no formalized worship. The Quakers also believe in an uncluttered life and living simply, without a lot of materialism." (Coretta later met and married Martin Luther King Jr.)"

John D has been having an exciting time working with his friends Katie and Dean Shannon who have just launched a book (6 April) called "It's not the Dog We're Training". John is responsible for the illustrations and the cartoons. Katie and Dean were interviewed today on Jessie Mulligan's "Afternoons" show, and you can download the interview by going to RNZ's website. I have had a look on Katie and Dean's website (called www.rainwaterhomestead.com) and I have seen a couple of the illustrations, and they are a hoot. I think Paper Plus are carrying the book in stock. I can't wait to get a copy - I'm pretty sure the man in one of the illustrations is our very own John D with a puppy hanging on to his arm by her teeth (well, she hasn't got hands - what could she do?)

Phillida has been unwell lately and Friends and Soroptimist friends have been dropping in food and loving kindness. We hope she makes a swift recovery.

Kataraina is also unwell, having injured her hip/spine to the extent of being in a lot of pain and pretty much housebound. Friends and Soroptimist friends have been visiting her as well. The steps to her door are challenging but she would like to see people - and once you get up the stairs, there's a rewarding view - plus Kataraina's good company.

Lizi has just spent a harrowing few days looking after Patch the dog while Elizabeth took off to Auckland to visit a sick friend. Patch proved a less-than-perfect house guest - bullying Lizi's dog,

Izzy, to the point that Izzy spent most of her time under the bed. Fortunately, Lizi's delightful grandchildren did their best to keep Patch amused when they got home from school.

Lizi has also been keeping in touch with **James**, who is having health issues at present.

Sandi and Sam have returned to Maine. While they were here, Sam worked on Maurice Gee's chair which had been inundated by the Maitai for a second time. He was pictured with Maurice when the chair was reinstated.

Palestinian Rallies every Saturday at 10.30am, 1903 Square, and sometimes at Tahunanui Beach: Nelson Friends have faithfully attended the weekly rally for Palestine, carrying the 'Quakers for Peace' banner (first used in 2003 to protest the Iraq war.) Scott, the co-ordinator of Te Tau Ihu Palestine Solidarity, encourages us to persist 'it does make a difference.' Local Palestinians have gone on record to say they feel grateful for the support. Check the Te Tau Ihu Palestine Solidarity FB page for venue.

DIARY OF EVENTS:

Wednesday 17th April 7pm in the Meeting House, Home Discussion Group, Clive to lead a discussion on: How do you know you are being led by God?
All welcome

Sunday 5th May 10am the Flop House, Takaka: Top of the South Meeting:
Timetable: 10am welcome and a cuppa
10.30-11.30am Meeting for Worship
11.30: Introductions, Reflections and Notices
12.15-1pm: Shared lunch - GB Quakers will provide for those travelling, but we suggest those with special dietary needs may want to bring something just in case.
1 to 2.30pm Workshop on Topic "Understanding Treaty Issues Now" led by Anne Potaka.
There will be car-sharing available so please sign out if you would like a ride.

Deadline for the 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 for the May letter to Jan Marsh by the end of April.

A reminder about Quakers NZ 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. **You can subscribe to the Aotearoa NZ Friends Newsletter there.**

If I must die

by Refaat Alareer

This month's poem was written by Refaat Alareer and translated by D P Snyder. Refaat Alareer was killed by an IDF airstrike on December 6, 2023, along with his brother, nephew, his sister, and three of her children.

If I must die,	not even to his flesh
you must live	not even to himself —
to tell my story	sees the kite, my kite you made, flying
to sell my things	up above,
to buy a piece of cloth	and thinks for a moment an angel is
and some strings,	there
(make it white with a long tail)	bringing back love.
so that a child, somewhere in Gaza	If I must die
while looking heaven in the eye	let it bring hope,
awaiting his dad who left in a blaze —	let it be a story.
and bid no one farewell	

Online Resources: visit our own website quakers-in-nelson.org.nz, the national website quakers.nz and our Face Book page [@Nelson Quakers](https://www.facebook.com/NelsonQuakers).

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

All Sundays: Meeting for Worship, 10am, Quaker Meeting House, 30 Nile St. Nelson

2nd Sunday: Meeting for Worship, 10am, Family Service Centre, Talbot St. Motueka

3rd Wednesday: Home Discussion Group, 7pm – 8.45pm. Topic & venue tba

Children are welcome at all Meetings for Worship and activities will be provided for them.
