

# NELSON RECOGNISED MEETING NEWSLETTER

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

December 2023

## Spiritual Thought

“Every breath we take, every step we make, can be filled with peace, joy and serenity.” **Thich Nhat Hanh.**

## News of and for Friends

Recent events included our last Home Discussion Group:

### **Topic: Improving the life of the Meeting and the connections between us:**

Eight of us got together at Christine's, including Elizabeth by Zoom. The topic was what we want in our Meeting in 2024, including having fun. We had lively discussion and much enjoyable dispute about whether the tea trolley should be left in the activities room or brought into the Meeting Room, and which would facilitate ongoing discussion better after Meeting for Worship.

Here are the things we collectively hope will come about in 2024: a monthly home discussion, which means people putting their hands up to host the group and choose a topic.

We also talked about having a monthly shared lunch, one associated with Business Meeting and the other simply a social.

We would like to have a February Birthdays Quiz night and remember Patricia at the next one. We then discussed how to foster discussion after MfW, because the early birds really enjoyed round table discussions at Melrose House.

We made the distinction between Reflections, which is a form of worship sharing as we come out of our meditation/ contemplation (i.e., arising from MfW), and

discussion, which is free flowing and interactive. We wanted to encourage those who can stay for a cup of tea and talk after notices, so that we can hold such impromptu discussions.

**A Christmas Lunch** was held at Christine's peaceful oasis of a home in Richmond on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December Christine hosted a happy gathering with a lovely, healthy colourful lunch, and animated discussion (the Free Speech Union, roses, American politics (?), and lots of catching up. Elizabeth biked from Nelson to show off (and bring Patch – there's no party without Patch). She was so late she could have missed out on the food, but Peter came to the rescue and presented her with a heaped plate of delicious salads – plus a few little tasty cakes and biscuits – Yum! Thank you, Christine.

### **Now for our local Friends:**

**Clive** has started the thinning on his apple orchard. He is looking forward to having all his children home for Xmas. He recently listened to an online interview with Colonel Lawrence Wilkinson who was Colin Powell's Chief of Staff. Clive heartily recommends catching the podcast - the link to this podcast on You Tube is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xcm1oWMnpS4&t=2001s>

Also recommended by Clive - Jeffrey Sachs.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWDUNnvoT4s>

"Both are long interviews with American voices that in my view are important to hear." (Clive)

**Christine** is delighted that her son's father is footing the bill for her son, his partner, and her grandson to come from London for 2 weeks over Xmas. They will spend a few days together in Nelson.

**Lawrence** and **Marie** are currently with their children in Auckland

**John M** has been performing in concerts with Tasmonics and Haven Choirs. He is intending to go to Summer Gathering in Mosgiel after Xmas and is looking for someone to share the driving to Dunedin. He plans to give two talks at SG: one is already scheduled for 2pm on Sunday 30 December on Friends Peace Teams, and he'll also present the talk he gave us at the Top of the South Meeting on Quakers and Privilege.

**Elizabeth** and her NELSUST friends are lobbying the Nelson City Council in the hope of seeing a speed of 30kph become accepted in the streets of Nelson. This will keep all of us safe when walking or cycling. The same group are lobbying to have what is known as the East/West cycleway link completed. This would allow children from five schools to walk or cycle to school safely, away from cars. If you like these ideas, please let your local council know your preferences.

**John D:** Over the last year or two, John has discussed with Elizabeth (me) the possibility of installing insulation panels underneath her chilly little wooden house, perched on the side of a hill. No scaffolders were willing to provide access. John finally worked out a plan – only possible because he has experience as a mountain climber! He carried the wooden planks and joists he needed through the neighbouring property which is a little less steep. He then carried the bulky parcels of insulation panels down the outside wooden staircase (42 steps) and up the steps he cut into the clay bank below. Perched on goodness knows what, he built a platform which he somehow moves along from time to time while inserting the panels. He has completed between two thirds and three quarters of the task so far. Unlike anyone else I can think of, he does all of this silently – meditatively. If any of you would like to see a miracle, come along to 127 Cleveland Terrace. I'm rather looking forward to Winter!

**Peter** recently stayed at the Friends Centre in Mt Eden and had interesting conversations with resident friends Val and Ann. They are leaving their roles this coming April, and moving to Whanganui, which is undergoing a revisioning process at present. Peter may be relieving them in their roles for two weeks in early April as there is a gap before the new Resident Friends arrive.

**Phillida** is staying in Nelson for Christmas. Her family arrives on Boxing Day for three weeks. She'll have her eldest granddaughter staying for 5 days as well.

**Ocean** is doing well at gymnastics, swimming, and trampolining. She is having trampolining lessons.

**Shona** is continuing with her writing over the summer holiday, together with catching up with friends and family; golfing and swimming.

**Lizi** is delighted to learn that Whanganui Meeting are using her artwork on cards, to raise funds for Palestine for peace recovery initiatives. She will be entertaining her nieces and whanau over the holidays.

## Report from Oxfam on Climate change

Christine has found an important report from Oxfam on Climate Change which she hopes will be widely read:

Oxfam Press Release summary:

- *Carbon emissions of richest 1 percent surged to 16 percent of world's total CO2 emissions in 2019.*
- *Their carbon emissions are enough to cause 1.3 million excess deaths due to heat.*

- *Unequal countries suffer seven times more flood fatalities than more equal countries.  
Fairly taxing the super-rich would help curb both climate change and inequality.*

<https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/carbon-emissions-richest-1-percent-more-double-emissions-poorest-half-humanity>

## DIARY OF EVENTS:

Wednesday December 20th 7pm-9pm Home Discussion Group, to be held at Phillida's home in Dommett Street on the topic "Peace and War in Gaza". Everyone welcome

Thursday December 21<sup>st</sup> Webinar COP 23, Quakers, and the COPs. A report back and follow up. Zoom link to follow.

Thursday, December 21<sup>st</sup> 5.30pm John and Anthea's home, Chisnall St, Omaio, Stoke: Peace Singers is a small informal singing group that has met on Thursday nights at home through most of the first part of 2023. We will gather again at 5:30 pm on for a potluck, a brief discussion about Peace Singers' future and to sing of course. You are all most welcome even if you have never attended before. Our songs are well known, and we have lyrics and chords too, if you bring an instrument. Come for the fun of singing. The address is Chisnall Street Stoke. Ring John if you have any questions.

Friday December 29<sup>th</sup> to Saturday January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, SUMMER GATHERING Tirohanga Camp, Otago. Friends in Dunedin Monthly Meeting look forward to welcoming you to this all-age opportunity for Friends, families, and people exploring Quakers to enjoy one another's company. John Michaelis will be giving two presentations. For Nelson Friends wishing to hear John, The Zoom link is the same for both sessions: **Michaelis Zoom link ID: 608 906 3518, P/W: Peace**

Sunday 31st December – last Meeting for Worship for 2023.

**Motueka Meeting** will be taking a break over the holidays. Linda Glew will advise a date and venue in time for the next Newsletter.

## Talking Turkeys

Benjamin Zephania

### **A special poem for Christmas from the late Benjamin Zephania (a Brummie-Caribbean): Talking Turkeys:**

Be nice to yu turkeys dis christmas  
Cos' turkeys just wanna hav fun  
Turkeys are cool, turkeys are wicked  
An every turkey has a Mum.  
Be nice to yu turkeys dis christmas,  
Don't eat it, keep it alive,  
It could be yu mate, an not on your plate  
Say, Yo! Turkey I'm on your side.  
I got lots of friends who are turkeys  
An all of dem fear christmas time,  
Dey wanna enjoy it, dey say humans destroyed it  
An humans are out of dere mind,  
Yeah, I got lots of friends who are turkeys  
Dey all hav a right to a life,  
Not to be caged up an genetically made up  
By any farmer an his wife.

Turkeys just wanna play reggae  
Turkeys just wanna hip-hop  
Can yu imagine a nice young turkey saying,  
"I cannot wait for de chop,"  
Turkeys like getting presents, dey wanna watch christmas TV,  
Turkeys hav brains an turkeys feel pain  
In many ways like yu an me.

I once knew a turkey called ... Turkey  
He said "Benji explain to me please,  
Who put de turkey in christmas  
An what happens to christmas trees?",  
I said "I am not too sure turkey

But it's nothing to do wid Christ Mass  
Humans get greedy an waste more dan need be  
An business men mek loadsa cash".

Be nice to yu turkey dis christmas  
Invite dem indoors fe sum greens  
Let dem eat cake an let dem partake  
In a plate of organic grown beans,  
Be nice to yu turkey dis christmas  
An spare dem de cut of de knife,  
Join Turkeys United an dey'll be delighted  
An yu will mek new friends "FOR LIFE."

Here is a link to several eulogies to Benjamin written in The Guardian – clearly an exceptional human being.

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2023/dec/07/a-sandy-place-a-recipe-for-a-nation-and-a-christmas-plea-three-poems-by-benjamin-zephaniah>

---

**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 for the January/February letter to Christine Gillespie, [c.gillespie@xtra.co.nz](mailto:c.gillespie@xtra.co.nz) **The cut-off date for items for the next newsletter is Friday, February 9th, 2024.**

**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.**

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

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

3<sup>rd</sup> 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.