

# NELSON RECOGNISED MEETING NEWSLETTER

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

November 2023

## Spiritual Thought

“Corruption and destructiveness can grow from very small seeds, as can courage and loving kindness. Consider the words you use, and your tone of voice. *Do you refrain from verbal and psychological violence? When people attack you with angry words, do you listen for the underlying hurt?*” **Advices & Queries, 2013, D.10**

## News of and for Friends

**Lawrence** and **Marie** are off to Auckland shortly to see daughter Jane’s end of year Pocket Rockets dance show. Lawrence has been in correspondence with newly re-elected MP Rachel Boyack over the issue of puberty blockers: New Zealand is now well out of line with best practice in European countries. There’s an article on this in the current issue of North & South magazine.

**Shona** continues to write daily and is getting joy from the effort. She enjoyed a visit to the Top of the South meeting in Blenheim with Christine and John M on November 12<sup>th</sup>.

**John D** is pleased to have been part of this year’s Parihaka parakuihi (breakfast) following the Dawn Blessing, leading a team effort to serve a varied menu to about 80 guests. He has written and illustrated a gorgeous story for son Noah that involved an actual voyage to Haulashore Island to hunt for buried treasure. Ask him to show it to you.

**Jan** recently had a week with members of her family in Christchurch.

**Gwen**, who is currently co-chair of Friends of Nelson Haven & Tasman Bay, was asked to cut their 50th anniversary cake. She was a founding member in 1973, when the Nelson City Council planned to fill in the estuary of the Maitai River. Read more below.

**Peter** flew out of Nelson at 6pm last Wednesday and will be away for three weeks. Before he left, he added his thoughts for a Home Discussion on what he’d like to do with our Quaker Meeting in 2024: “I’d like us to choose a spiritual theme or question for each month, upon which we focus our contemplations during the week, and (without prejudicing the ministries) offer our insights during the ministries. Themes such as “understanding”, “fear”, “love”, “desire”, “relationships”, “reality”, “daily practice”, “freedom”, “letting go”, “distress patterns”, “redemption”, “death”, “awe” . . .”

**Phillida** cancelled her visit to the UK, instead she is currently visiting family in Wellington.

**Rex** comments that four whanau birthdays very close together has made life very full. He and wife Helen escaped on a garden bus trip to Canterbury last weekend. They are working towards their next chapter together- passing on their whanau property (of forty three years) to their son & daughter-in-law and moving on with their daughter and son in law to a new property. Rex worships at (and is helping to establish the grounds at) the new Presbyterian Church in Champion Rd, Richmond as well as with Quakers.

**Christine** was busy a few weeks ago with colleagues organising a three day training in child and parent therapy which was very successful, training up a new crop of practitioners in a modality called Parallel Parent Child Narrative, originated by Heather Chambers. She also organised a display regarding Parihaka Day at the Richmond Library using a striking poster created by **Lizi** as part of the activities of the Parihaka Network in Whakatu.

**Linda** and partner Sally recently enjoyed a scenic flight over the Tasman area. Linda will be taking part in the White Ribbon campaign against domestic violence on Sunday November 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **More about Gwen's activity with Friends of the Haven:**

A founding member in 1973, when the Nelson City Council planned to fill in the estuary of the Maitai River, Gwen and a group of volunteers were able to dramatically stop the project. Much of downtown Nelson is in-filled Haven and the general public now know more of the huge value of wetlands, in general, and estuaries in particular. Back in 1973 estuaries were thought to be mudflat wastelands. The indigenous people knew otherwise and named the Haven Parararoa - the long breadbasket, i.e. an essential food source. One third of the Haven has been infilled and is an example of the commons being privatised for individual profit. The Friends of NH&TB have gone on to advocate for Top of the South coastal conservation and its history is available in booklet form in our Library, and on the Nelson Haven website - or ask Gwen about it if interested.

## **DIARY OF EVENTS:**

**Friday November 24<sup>th</sup>, Millers Acre, Nelson City, 5.30pm** the next Joy Ride, (cyclists reclaiming the City) For details contact Elizabeth.

**Sunday December 3<sup>rd</sup> 12.15pm** after shared lunch at Quaker Meeting House 30 Nile Street Whakatu Nelson: Meeting for Worship for Business. Send agenda items to Clive.

**Sunday December 3<sup>rd</sup>:** Christchurch Monthly Meeting, Zoom link as per weekly Meetings for Worship.

**Sunday December 10<sup>th</sup>, Christine's place, 12.30pm:** Shared lunch to celebrate summer/xmas. Everyone is welcome even if you haven't made it to Meeting this year.

**Wednesday December 20<sup>th</sup> 7pm-9pm** Home Discussion Group, topic, and venue to be advised.

**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 December letter to Jan March, [janmarsh37@gmail.com](mailto:janmarsh37@gmail.com) **The**

**cut-off date for items for the next newsletter is Friday, December 8th, 2023.**

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**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.**

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**Parihaka Day – a full day of commemoration and celebration:**



Archdeacon Harvey Ruru and Kaumatua at the Parihaka breakfast, paying tribute to the Kapa Waiata group Te Mana Hā, a roopu of wāhine from different ethnic backgrounds who live and work in Whakatū. Te Mana Hā are committed to learning Te reo Māori and singing waiata Māori in our community. Maria Oxnam offered on behalf of the group to tautoko the Parihaka Day Dawn Blessing on the 5 November 2023, in particular by singing during parakuihi for manuhiri gathered following the dawn blessing.

Harvey led the Dawn Blessing in Anzac Park at a crisp 5.30am with the sun already lightening the sky in the east, and the birds in full chorus. It is always a special spiritual time. This year speakers drew connections between the non-violence demonstrated at Parihaka in 1881 and the dreadful events unfolding in Palestine/Israel. As a contributor to the service noted, at a time of such terrible powerlessness for we who are distant from the warfare, what we *can* do is love all those here near to us. A message from the granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi paid tribute to the prophets of Parihaka.



Manuhiri at the breakfast following the Dawn Blessing



Kapa Waiata group Te Mana Hā who welcomed manuhiri to the parakuihi with waiata and sang beautifully throughout the breakfast. Maria at the far right is the Kaiako for the Te Atārangi class five learners from the Meeting are part of.

John Dainty did a fantastic job organising the breakfast to create a calm, welcoming ambiance for our guests. A team of about 10 of us look forward to this important part of our annual calendar. As it was Sunday, several of us went back to the Meeting House for worship and conversation before some of us went to the Cathedral to attend the performance by Te Ora Hā of an excerpt from Donna McLeod's *Tense* and her history of the 1881 events at Parihaka, followed by lunch prepared and served by members of the Parihaka Network.

# Happiness

Jane Kenyon

There's just no accounting for happiness,  
or the way it turns up like a prodigal  
who comes back to the dust at your feet  
having squandered a fortune far away.

And how can you not forgive?  
You make a feast in honour of what  
was lost, and take from its place the finest  
garment, which you saved for an occasion  
you could not imagine, and you weep night and day  
to know that you were not abandoned,  
that happiness saved its most extreme form  
for you alone.

No, happiness is the uncle you never  
knew about, who flies a single-engine plane  
onto the grassy landing strip, hitchhikes  
into town, and inquires at every door  
until he finds you asleep midafternoon,  
as you so often are during the unmerciful  
hours of your despair.

It comes to the monk in his cell.  
It comes to the woman sweeping the street  
with a birch broom, to the child  
whose mother has passed out from drink.  
It comes to the lover, to the dog chewing  
a sock, to the pusher, to the basket maker,  
and to the clerk stacking cans of carrots  
in the night.

It even comes to the boulder  
in the perpetual shade of pine barrens,  
to rain falling on the open sea,  
to the wineglass, weary of holding wine.

**Workshop: How our history shaped our Quaker processes, led by Elizabeth Duke. Report by Jan Marsh.**

On 18<sup>th</sup> November after Meeting for Worship, Elizabeth Duke spoke to a small group of Nelson Friends. Elizabeth is an experienced and committed Friend who came to Quakers at first in her native UK and became a member after immigrating to Dunedin where she has lived since 1976.

She has been Monthly Meeting and Yearly Meeting clerk in NZ and was Secretary General of FWCC (our world body), based in London with travel throughout the Quaker world, from Kenya to Bolivia and many places in between.

Elizabeth took as her starting point three questions:

1. Where/what is the community?
2. Who is the community?
3. What is the community for?

The Religious Society of Friends was founded in 17<sup>th</sup> century Britain by George Fox and reached other countries through dedicated Friends travelling in the ministry. At first it was an informal movement to show people that they could have a direct connection with God without the need for clergy, many of whom were seen at the time as corrupt and only in the role to make a living. Early Friends were filled with joy at this discovery and wanted to share it.

Elizabeth drew a parallel with early Christians who were Jews looking for reform and a deeper spirituality. She noted that the living conditions of early Christians and early Friends were very similar with the speed of travel limited to the speed of a horse and technology at a very simple level, with the difference that early Friends had the printing press, which they made good use of.

Our lives are very different today.

At first, structure and defined membership was not necessary. It was risky to be a 17<sup>th</sup> century Quaker: you could be imprisoned or fined severely for not taking the oath of allegiance to the King or not paying tithes to the Anglican church, and many Friends were. Few were going to claim to be Quakers if they did not share the values of the group.

The community developed a means of support for the families of those imprisoned or those who travelled in the ministry and as they did so, on both sides of the Atlantic, they needed to know who could legitimately claim their care. The Elders of Balby (quoted in part at the beginning of Advices and Queries) met in 1656 to clarify what it meant to be Friend and eventually a membership process was born. This still exists. An attender will apply to the monthly meeting, be visited by two Friends and a recommendation made to the meeting whether to accept them into membership.

Friends did not come to New Zealand as missionaries but as settlers: farmers, surveyors, merchants. They were far flung, and many were not able to be part of a meeting. As a result the distinction between members and attenders was not emphasised. Currently in Aotearoa there are very few roles that need a full member to carry them out.

After the initial travelling and sharing of their message, Friends withdrew in what is called the 'quietist' period and focussed on nurturing their community and educating their children. This was followed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by a time of evangelism, led by young people who once again wanted to share their message. Some meetings decided to have pastors and structured services with music, singing and prepared ministry. This caused splits to develop, especially in the US, and arguments about who was the rightful clerk of the meeting and who should administer the funds. Some of these differences were overcome in time, with different styles of meetings co-

existing. Worldwide, our style of Quakerism, with silent worship, is in the minority and most Friends are evangelical, with programmed meetings.

The last question: what is the community for? is ongoing. We need to continually balance support for the individual's personal spiritual journey with support for the community. In the past Friends perceived as 'disorderly walkers' were chastised or expelled: 'disowned'. This is not common these days as we hope to continue dialogue and to support Friends in all their diversity, but the issue of maintaining community is key to our survival.

It was a lot to cover in a short time. Elizabeth gave us food for thought and I hope the conversations will continue.

Recommended reading:

Margery Post Abbott and Carl Abbott: *Quakerism: the basics*

Audrey and Jim Brodie: *Quakers in Aotearoa*

## Summer Gathering 29 December 2023 – 6 January 2024

Friends in Dunedin Monthly Meeting warmly invite Friends and their families to Summer Gathering, taking place from Friday 29 December 2023 to Saturday 6 January 2024, at Tirohanga Camp, near Mosgiel.

The Summer Gathering Local Planning Group anticipate that registration materials will be available on the Quaker website at:

<https://quakers.nz/sgcom/events/summer-gathering-2023-2024-dunedin>

All you need to know is there. Register Now!

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### Arthur Wells ran a workshop on non-violent communication.

Arthur from Christchurch MM is a Quaker, a Buddhist, and an excellent teacher. His method was very simple: he laid out on the Meeting Room floor an array of laminated cards, each with a word representing a human need. There were over 30 of them, from basic physical needs to psychological, emotional, relational, and spiritual needs. As those of us present contemplated the words, some looking for those that were missing and others resonating with the ones there, we were reminded of our own and our neighbours' reliance on each other and our communities to create lives worth living. Since we all have the same needs for nurturance, attachment, challenge, structure, meaning, purpose, etc., and we cannot meet those needs ourselves, then our interdependence is plain to see. Maintaining community – within our families, our friendships, our neighbourhoods, our nation, and our world is fundamental to our personal wellbeing.

All this from sitting and staring at words on laminated cards on the floor of the Meeting Room.

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**A petition for you to sign in opposition to the intended opening of NZ to oil and gas exploration:**

[https://petition.act.greenpeace.org.nz/climate-resist-oil-gas-exploration-open-letter?source=p4share?utm\\_medium=gf-share&utm\\_source=email](https://petition.act.greenpeace.org.nz/climate-resist-oil-gas-exploration-open-letter?source=p4share?utm_medium=gf-share&utm_source=email)

# **OPEN LETTER TO THE OIL INDUSTRY FROM GREENPEACE**

To the global oil industry,

Everyone deserves to have a thriving ocean without the risk of catastrophic oil spills. Everyone has the right to a stable climate and a future in which Earth can sustain life in all its diversity.

Your industry puts those fundamental rights at risk, and that's why we here in Aotearoa fought so long and so hard to stop you.

Thousands of New Zealanders from all around the country marched in the streets, mobilised on beaches, fought legal battles, sailed in flotillas and raised their voices year after year until we won a ban on new offshore oil exploration permits.

We resisted. Year after year. Oil company after oil company. And we won.

Through unrelenting peaceful protest, civil disobedience, and iwi-led opposition up and down the country, one by one, we forced the withdrawal of Petrobras, Anadarko, Shell, Equinor/Statoil and Chevron.

Together, we won the globally significant ban on offshore oil and gas exploration across New Zealand's vast ocean territories in 2018.

Now, the new National-led Government under Prime Minister Christopher Luxon has threatened to reverse this ban but know this: We, the people, are steadfast in our resolve to repel you again.

We will never allow offshore oil and gas exploration to recommence in Aotearoa.

Nobody wants to see oil spilling into the sea and onto New Zealand's coastlines and beaches, nor harming our precious wildlife. Nobody wants to see climate induced storms like Cyclone Gabrielle happening even more frequently, or more communities devastated by fires and floods.

Your presence here would threaten not only New Zealand's unique marine areas but the very future of life on Earth.

You are not welcome here.

We pledge to do everything we can to resist the oil and gas industry if the New Zealand government overturns the ban on offshore oil and gas exploration.

Russel Norman,  
Executive Director  
Greenpeace Aotearoa

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

<https://fortheloveofcreation.ca/cop28-unite-act-deliver/> See more below.

## Lawrence follows a leading:

On 17/11/2023 11:45 pm, Lawrence Carter wrote:  
Dear Rachel

It was good to see you at our Quaker breakfast following the dawn Parihaka commemoration. Congratulations on your re-election!

You may recall that I spoke to you earlier about my concern over the use of puberty blocking drugs on gender-questioning New Zealand children. Later I recommended Hannah Barnes' excellent book 'Time to Think', about the UK situation.

I wonder if you have seen the current issue of North & South magazine, the one with a picture of Kim Hill on the cover? Inside there is an article about puberty blockers in New Zealand written by Emeritus Professor Charlotte Paul. The article covers exactly my concerns about the situation here, and I very much hope you have the chance to read it. It makes clear that New Zealand is now an outlier internationally, with for example our use of blockers running at 110 per 100,000, compared to 9 per 100,000 in England, where this treatment is now acknowledged as experimental. Blockers have a number of side effects including for example on bone development. They lock children into a medicalised pathway involving cross-sex hormones, followed by surgery. People following this route are almost always sterile as a result. By contrast, the majority of those who escape the medicalised pathway recover from their pre-pubescent dysphoria naturally over time. It is now recognised in European countries that psychological support, not hormones, is the preferred approach.

It's not at all a question of being unkind to trans people: rather, it's one of ensuring that children receive appropriate medical care, consistent with international best practice. This requires action from our Ministry of Health. Our decision makers need to inform themselves of the issues. Thanks again for your time.

Regards, Lawrence Carter, Atawhai, Nelson



On Fri, 22 Sep 2023 at 9:25 AM, Lawrence Carter <[lawrencecarter2@gmail.com](mailto:lawrencecarter2@gmail.com)> wrote:

Hello again Rachel

Thanks for your response to my earlier question about puberty blockers. Hannah Barnes' excellent book *Time to Think* about the collapse of the UK's gender identity service GIDS, is now available in New Zealand. It's a Sunday Times best-seller, and I do hope you will have the time to read it. It covers the area of concern I tried to express when speaking to you.

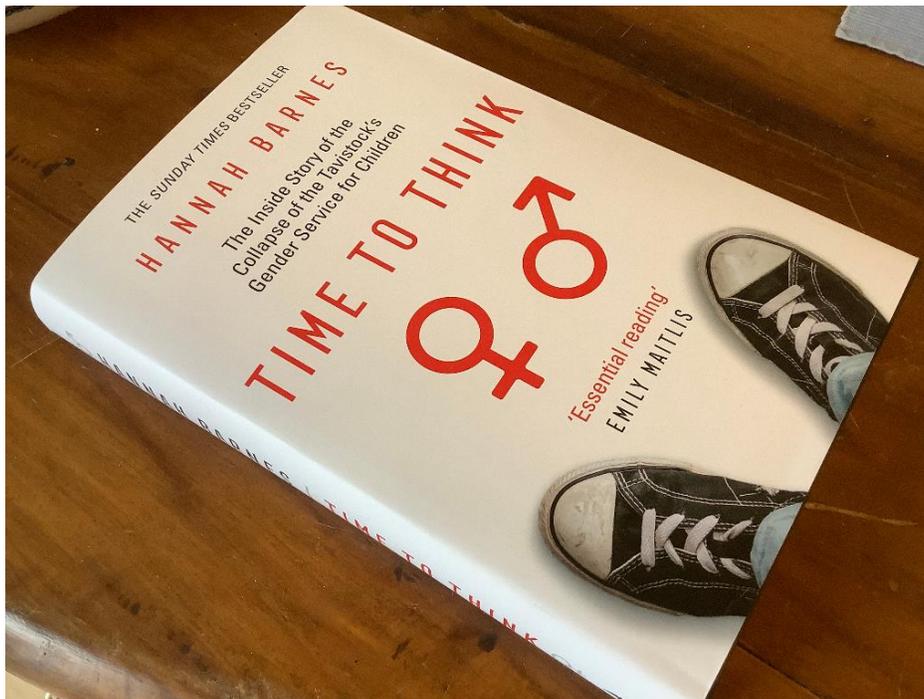
The book is important for us because it covers a period when the UK was in full 'blocker mode', under the influence of trans activist groups such as Mermaids. There are parallels with how New Zealand is right now. I do hope we can learn from the UK's sorry experience, and this book may help us to do so.

Good luck with the campaign!

Regards

Lawrence Carter  
Nelson

0211538583



On Tue, 16 May 2023 at 10:23 PM, Lawrence Carter <[lawrencecarter2@gmail.com](mailto:lawrencecarter2@gmail.com)> wrote:  
Dear Rachel

Thanks for your time on Saturday morning. You will recall that I raised some concerns about New Zealand's position on puberty blockers, and referenced the recent Listener article (May 13-20, pp 22-25, 'Transition Alley', by Andrew Anthony).

My takeaways from you were that puberty blockers were hard to get prescribed here, that it is not much of an issue here in Nelson, and that 'gender affirmation' surgery has a thirty year waitlist here.

Do you have any references for these, please? My concern is for those young people who at some point are gender-questioning. As I understand it, New Zealand still follows the 'affirmation' model, in which the child's statement of gender identity is affirmed as the overriding criterion, regardless of possible comorbidities such as ADHD. This model typically puts children onto puberty blockers, which until very recently were described as safe and reversible on the MOH website, despite being in fact an experimental treatment for this condition.

98% of those on blockers proceed to cross-sex hormones, and from there many will go on to 'gender affirming' surgery, which in most cases will leave them sterile, and often with ongoing health issues.

This wouldn't be so bad if everyone who experiences this 'transition' process is satisfied with the result, but unfortunately not everyone is. Nobody knows exactly how many detransitioners there are, but the Detransitioners site has tens of thousands of subscribers. The documentary Affirmation Generation is about the experience of such young people, largely in their own words. The tragedy is that if left unmedicalised, 80% of gender-dysphoric young people recover naturally in time.

I guess the reason I approached you on Saturday is that I see you as a representative of the New Zealand Government, and New Zealand appears to be well out of step with developments in this area in European countries such as Finland, Sweden, Norway, and the UK. I'd appreciate your comments on this.

I do hope you can find the time to read the Listener article, and to watch the documentary. The facts I have quoted are derived from the site Stats for Gender, which gives results from peer-reviewed research. Links below.

Regards

Lawrence Carter  
Collingwood Street, Nelson

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[https://pitt.substack.com/p/affirmation-generation-an-original?r=1esmdn&utm\\_campaign=post&utm\\_medium=email&fbclid=IwAR0\\_mvTRE--ngStFV2ZiEDpueSAOW7y0n4MaKAh5e-SFgjIOF5N2ABM0cA8](https://pitt.substack.com/p/affirmation-generation-an-original?r=1esmdn&utm_campaign=post&utm_medium=email&fbclid=IwAR0_mvTRE--ngStFV2ZiEDpueSAOW7y0n4MaKAh5e-SFgjIOF5N2ABM0cA8)

<https://statsforgender.org/>

From the Climate Emergency Correspondent, Phillipa Fletcher:

Kia Ora Koutou people, Feel free to ignore this email.

COP 28 is on my mind. It runs from 30 November to 12 December and is very important, because, like it or not, it is the international agreements which shape domestic and global policy.

I am wondering if anyone knows of **any plans for a silent vigil people can join with in Aotearoa NZ during COP 28.**

COP 28 is being held in Dubai (in the Middle East), chaired by an oil company person, the loss and damage funding will need to be discussed, there is also a global stocktake on how we are all getting on, and of course Quakers have big concerns about military emissions which we seem to have plenty of at the moment.

Aotearoa NZ isn't really getting on very well on the emissions front, but it is tricky as agriculture is the backbone of our economy, therefore methane emissions are a big challenge for us.

So - if there is a vigil - I for one would like to join it. OR - if there isn't one, and anyone wants to organise one, or prod somebodies else into organising one, I think bringing some attention to looking after the place where we all live, and the needs of our Pacific neighbours would be a great idea.

No need to reply. Don't look at me - I just do not have the nerve for this sort of stuff. This is what the Canadians are doing <https://fortheLoveofCreation.ca/cop28-unite-act-deliver/>

Thank you all.

Ngā mihi nui

Philippa

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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.

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