

NELSON RECOGNISED MEETING NEWSLETTER

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

September 2024

Spiritual Thought

Teaching without words,
performing without actions:
that is the Master's way.

Lao Tzu, The Tao te Ching chapter 43, translated by Stephen Mitchell

Recent Events

Top of the South Meeting at Riverside – Sunday 1 September

Jan, Christabel, Elizabeth, Phillida and John M travelled by car to Riverside to meet with Friends from Picton and Golden Bay. Rex and Clive cycled. Two Riverside residents joined us for the day.

After warm greetings and recognising familiar faces in the Riverside community, Clive invited us to move into silence.

Next, Elizabeth recounted a brief history of Etty Hillesum (1914-1943) A Dutch Jewish woman murdered in Austwich in November 1943 at the age of 29. Etty Hillesum began keeping a diary from early 1941, which moved more and more toward a spiritual life and a conversation with God. She addressed God repeatedly in her diaries, regarding God not as a saviour, but as a power one must nurture inside of oneself: "Alas, there doesn't seem to be much You Yourself can do about our circumstances, about our lives. Neither do I hold You responsible. You cannot help us, but we must help You and defend Your dwelling place inside us to the last." Using this as an introduction, the meeting discussed how we individually think of God and the role God plays in our lives. For some God is Atua and for others, science has led them to believe the important thing is to live a life where we work to be the best we can be and to treat the people we meet with love and care. We all agreed it was important for Quakers to model loving kindness to all life on the planet as we know it.

Home Group Meeting held at Meeting House – Wednesday 4 September

Topic – Practicing NVC (Non-Violent Communication)

Elizabeth introduced the idea of studying Non-Violent Communication (NVC) - a practice founded by the late Marshal Rosenberg to resolve conflict with compassion

and empathy toward ourselves and others. We learned that the deceptively simple 4-step focus of NVC is:

Observe (the behaviour)

Identify **Feelings** - both parties

Use this to identify the underlying **Need(s)**

Make a **Request** to the other party once we understand what it is we need.

John led the group through the process, an activity where, using poster paper on the floor, we brainstormed events from our lives that had left us with an unresolved situation or damaged relationship. We then worked to identify the feeling we had been left with to identify the underlying unmet need.

We learned that feelings such as happiness or contentment are linked to needs that have been met, while feelings such as anger and frustration link to needs that have not been met. We also learned how understanding our feelings helped us identify the unmet need with empathy for ourself and the 'other'.

We found we had shared an issue some time ago that had never been resolved so we worked for the rest of the time on our **feelings** and **needs** to come up with a **request** to make to the people we had an issue with. We hope to follow up on this at a later date. We all agreed this method of Peaceful Communication was useful and hope to learn more.

The meeting ended with a few minutes of silence.

Regular Event

Several Friends take part in the weekly March for an end to the Genocide in Gaza. This usually takes place on Saturday mornings, 10.30, at 1903 Square and Friends carry the Peace Banner. In fact, Attending Friends have met up with non-attending Friends on the March and we all share 'banner duties'.

News of and for Friends

Kataraina – is having a holiday in Paekakariki and catching up with Whanau. She has been dancing joyfully with Crows Feet Dance Collective – a professional group for mature dancers – and has joined up with a Ukelele group led by Shane McAllister (who makes music fun and inclusive, Kataraina tells us). She hopes to visit Whanganu-i-a-Tara before returning to Nelson in late September.

Christabel is back in Nelson after her wanderings collecting information for her new memoir

Phillida recently spent time in Auckland catching up with her co-author on An Unfortunate Experiment – Sandra Coney, as well as other people involved in the book and the story behind it.

Jan recently attended a fascinating presentation by Samuel Mehr, a psychologist who recently won the Prime Minister's science prize for his research into the psychology of music. It was intriguing to learn how music really does cross cultural and age barriers so that babies recognise lullabies and adults who listen to music from another culture can tell whether it's intended for healing, dancing, as a lullaby or as a love song.

Jo and Chris Appleton have returned to Nelson after eight years back in Lincoln. They are staying at Christine's house until she returns and then coming to my house while I'm away. Friends in Nelson who knew Chris and Jo when they were last here are delighted that they have chosen to come back here.

Lawrence and **Marie** are with us here in Nelson until November when they head North. Lawrence has been working at Restore, both online and in the shop, to sell renovated radios to raise revenue for Restore. They are both in their third year of studying Te Reo and feel the need for more kupu for conversation. Perhaps that's something that could happen at the Meeting House?

Peter has been away in Otatahi-Christchurch

Clive and Margaret are back from their cycling trip in Europe and enjoying their new Grandson. Judging from the beautiful flowers Clive brought to the meeting on Sunday, their garden must be a picture of Spring blossom.

John D is coming to the end of a very enjoyable walk in California in 30 degree temperatures, living on tacos and Tecate beer! Hopefully he will tell us about his adventures next Sunday.

Lizi designed a Peace Card some years ago and recently updated it with an inset for us to use when engaging with people about the Gaza Genocide: "If Justice succeeds, Peace will follow, benefitting both Palestinians and Israelis." Elizabeth handed some out to people from Destiny Church who come to 1903 Square to disrupt the rally held every Saturday to remind people in Nelson of the situation in Gaza.

Gwen co-hosted the 2024 AGM of the Friends of Nelson Haven and Tasman Bay Inc. The Guest speaker was Stew Robertson, DOC Marine Reserves Ranger for Te Tai o Aorere. Stew talked about Nelson's two Marine Reserves – Horoirangi (near Glenduan and Cable Bay) and Tonga Island (near Abel Tasman National Park), accompanied by very interesting video of the underwater life Stew and his colleagues record and collect data on. He then talked about his recent trip to Hawaii and the research being undertaken there. One difference is that in Hawaii, reserves are managed 'from the mountain to the sea', rather than separating land reserves from marine reserves. Also, indigenous Hawaiians manage the marine reserve fishing rather than ban fishing altogether as DOC do in Aotearoa.

Christine will be back at the beginning of October after spending time with her beloved Grandson (and his Mum and Dad!). I'm sure she will enjoy the Nelson weather when she gets here.

Elizabeth (me!) - busy planning her trip to the UK, with little side trips to Prague, Vienna, Bonn, Cologne and Brussels on the way. Brussels have a traffic free Pentagon (city centre) which I'm keen to see. I'll be in England for my oldest brother's 80th Birthday – and I fly home on my Birthday because Casey the dogsitter couldn't have

Patch for any longer – maybe I could ask the airline for a Birthday upgrade! See you all on Sunday 3 November.

DIARY OF EVENTS:

On Wednesday 18 September, 7pm to 9pm

Peter Kemp will hold a Home Group Meeting at the Meeting House to talk about:

Upholding the Mana of Te Tiriti

The government's proposed Treaty Principles Bill will damage the "good faith" intention of the Treaty of Waitangi by taking it from the realm of a sacred covenant between two sovereign nations to the realm of legalistic legislative jargon. To understand how this will work, it is essential to understand the nature of the time the Treaty was conceived in, the linguistics it involved, the two cultures it was written for, and more.

The role of the churches of the time in the framing and communication of the Treaty, and its subsequent dishonouring, requires now an active response towards upholding and protecting its nature as sacred and covenantal.

Home discussion will explore how Quakers could be instrumental in fostering/supporting a healthy church-wide response to the government's proposed bill.

Peter will open the discussion with a brief look at some of the writings on this topic of Dame Anne Salmond, Dr Alistair Reese, and others.

A poem

The Fish by [Elizabeth Bishop](#) 1911 – 1979

I caught a tremendous fish
and held him beside the boat
half out of water, with my hook
fast in a corner of his mouth.
He didn't fight.
He hadn't fought at all.
He hung a grunting weight,
battered and venerable
and homely. Here and there
his brown skin hung in strips
like ancient wallpaper,
and its pattern of darker brown
was like wallpaper:

shapes like full-blown roses
stained and lost through age.
He was speckled with barnacles,
fine rosettes of lime,
and infested
with tiny white sea-lice,
and underneath two or three
rags of green weed hung down.
While his gills were breathing in
the terrible oxygen
—the frightening gills,
fresh and crisp with blood,
that can cut so badly—
I thought of the coarse white flesh
packed in like feathers,
the big bones and the little bones,
the dramatic reds and blacks
of his shiny entrails,
and the pink swim-bladder
like a big peony.
I looked into his eyes
which were far larger than mine
but shallower, and yellowed,
the irises backed and packed
with tarnished tinfoil
seen through the lenses
of old scratched isinglass.
They shifted a little, but not
to return my stare.
—It was more like the tipping
of an object toward the light.
I admired his sullen face,
the mechanism of his jaw,
and then I saw
that from his lower lip
—if you could call it a lip—
grim, wet, and weaponlike,
hung five old pieces of fish-line,
or four and a wire leader
with the swivel still attached,
with all their five big hooks

grown firmly in his mouth.
A green line, frayed at the end
where he broke it, two heavier lines,
and a fine black thread
still crimped from the strain and snap
when it broke and he got away.
Like medals with their ribbons
frayed and wavering,
a five-haired beard of wisdom
trailing from his aching jaw.
I stared and stared
and victory filled up
the little rented boat,
from the pool of bilge
where oil had spread a rainbow
around the rusted engine
to the bailer rusted orange,
the sun-cracked thwarts,
the oarlocks on their strings,
the gunnels—until everything
was rainbow, rainbow, rainbow!
And I let the fish go.

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 October Newsletter to Christine at c.gillespie@xtra.co.nz by October 15th.

A reminder about Quakers NZ Website: <https://quakers.n z /> 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.**

Calendar:

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.
