

NELSON RECOGNISED MEETING NEWSLETTER

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

February 2026

Spiritual Thought

"Nothing does reason more right, than the coolness of those who offer it, for **truth often suffers more by the heat of its defenders, than from the arguments of its opposers.**"

— William Penn

Early Quaker and founder of Pennsylvania

The quote above almost makes me wonder whether William Penn had been on Facebook. Remembering that one of the early names for Quakers was Friends of the truth, I'm mindful of the need to 'coolly' defend the truth whenever we can by making sure we know the facts from a reliable source. Hard to do when we are swamped with unreliable information through so many channels.

News of Friends

A pre-Christmas lunch was hosted by Christine at her home and lunch on Christmas Day was hosted by Phillida. Both events were enjoyed by those who attended and are particularly welcome at a time of year which can feel lonely to some.

Our annual summer social was held in February at Clive and Margaret's orchard in Appleby on a lovely sunny day. John M set up his keyboard under a tree and played old favourites and John D treated us to some blues with harmonica and percussion. The shared lunch was, as always, delicious, colourful and healthy.

We appreciate those Friends who generously open their homes to enhance our connection and the life of the Meeting, and all those who attend, contributing food, music, warmth and conversation.

James has been diagnosed with Covid and is in the medical ward at Nelson Hospital. He is allowed visitors 'at your own risk'. All visitors will be required to wear an N95 mask to avoid contracting or spreading Covid. A phone call is also possible.



Jan B, Jan M and Christine made up a small sewing bee to create tote bags, using the kits Peter Watson sent to us from Whanganui. His design with watermelon pockets and green ribbons, in aid of peace and justice for Palestine, made colourful and effective bags which our local Palestine support group is happy to sell on their stall.



From Business Meeting

Summer Gathering at Teapot Valley 29 December 2026 to 4 January 2027

Adele has kindly agreed to be our liaison person for the planning group and will attend some Zoom meetings on our behalf. As the year goes on there will be various tasks local Friends can do - choosing a route for a day's walk, contributing to the programme, offering workshops or skills-sharing. Then when Friends start arriving we can help with transport, among other on-the-spot things. Keep Summer Gathering in mind and find out what you can offer to make it a success.

Roles in the Meeting are assessed at this time every year. Most Friends seem willing to continue as before, with a few changes. However, there is a need for at least **two more Friends to be on the Premises Committee**. John and Lawrence have been stalwarts over quite a few years but will not be available to their usual extent. Contact Jan or Clive if you think you can help. Most of the major tasks are up to date but there is

always a need to do ongoing maintenance and to work with Jan Sellers regarding the flat upstairs.

We discussed **twinning** with the meeting of Wei-Ling and Michael Bickerton who attend a small meeting near Birmingham and who were in Nelson over the summer visiting family. We are not sure yet what would be involved but will explore the idea. Jan will be in touch with Wei-Ling.

This is separate from a project to have Nelson City twin with Ramallah, a Palestinian district on the West Bank, where there is a Friends' School. Christine and Peter are following up on this.

DIARY OF EVENTS:

Monday 16th February 9.30 to 11 am the group of Friends who have been attending Te Ataatarangi Māori classes will resume practice sessions at the Meeting House. All welcome. It helps to know the method and be aware that we are not a beginners' class but are working towards simple conversation.

Sunday 29th March our next Business Meeting. Note that this is actually our April meeting, held early to avoid Easter.

At a time to be decided: a discussion on building community in our meeting, using questions from the Respect and Safety Committee, a YM group who met recently at our Meeting House.

Please let Jan or Lizi know whether you prefer a Wednesday evening as we do for the Home Discussion group, or a Sunday afternoon after Meeting for Worship.

Poem

Flowers of War

The rata is too red this bitter year,

We who have known so much of suffering

Can't quell our rebel hearts, while flowers fling

Blood's colour at us like a vengeful spear.

The Kowhai flaunts her gold too boldly here.

Avert your eyes, it is not good to see

That guilty colour worn by any tree,

Since gold has laid youth on a bloody bier.

Patrice Mourant (White) Quoted in *On These Islands I runga I ngā motu nei, Quaker Faith and Practice in Aotearoa New Zealand*.

Patrice Mourant won a prize for this poem in 1939. The award was quickly followed by a visit from a plain clothes policeman. She was refused a place at teacher's college and subsequently lost her job as a hospital aid in Hokitika. Even such gentle, lyrical pacificism was not to be tolerated as NZ followed Britain into war!

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 March letter to Christine: c.gillespie@xtra.co.nz **The cut-off date for items for the next newsletter is Friday, 13 March 2026.**

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.

Notice: there is currently a content freeze to allow us to transition to our upgraded website. If you have any questions, please get in touch with the helpdesk.

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

Christchurch MM Meeting for Worship can be attended each Sunday at 10.30am by Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87862680716?pwd=e1pt0MhuXXuUP9fawEaxbxLKPWzndE.1>

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

3rd Wednesday: Home Discussion Group, 7pm – 8.45pm. Topic & venue for this month, see above

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