

Update August 2023

Northern Friends Peace Board

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Call for government to promote conditions for peace in Ukraine and to support the rights of conscientious objectors

At its meeting in June (report on our website at <https://nfpb.org.uk/2023/07/06/nfpb-june-meeting/>) NFPB members agreed to publish a statement calling for the UK government to work to promote preconditions of peace, writing:

"We call on the Ukrainian, Russian, British and all other governments, as well as international organisations, to create the preconditions for a just peace. This will involve planning the reconstruction of the areas devastated by the war and restitution and rehabilitation of the infrastructure destroyed and the rich farmlands damaged. At the same time, the world community should redouble its efforts towards creating the environment in which a lasting cessation of the fighting can take place to enable negotiations for a just and stable peace."

It also asked *"for the rights of all soldiers regardless of their nationality to be respected and that they be treated according to the Geneva Convention. No person should be tortured. The right of all conscientious objectors who refuse to fight should be upheld, and they should be given the opportunity of alternative service."*

In distributing the statement, NFPB encouraged Friends to raise these concerns with their members of parliament, having also sent a letter to the Foreign Secretary on these matters. We would be interested to hear from Friends of any responses from parliamentarians.

Assistance for refugees

Friends in Central Europe continue to raise funds for projects in the region to support Ukrainian refugees – see <https://fwccemes.org/news/quaker-support-for-ukraine>

Quaker support for Ukrainian pacifist

Friends are amongst those who are concerned at the treatment by Ukrainian security services of pacifist Yurii Sheliashenko in early August. Read more here:

<https://thefriend.org/article/friends-uphold-arrested-ukrainian-pacifist> and <https://ebco-beoc.org/node/584>

and view an international petition here: <https://shorturl.at/kmtF4>

NFPB Website

Our website is in need of a bit of maintenance and we are in the process of making new arrangements for this. In the meantime we have added new content to a number of our pages on current concerns, as well as updating leaflets for downloading and keeping our calendar of coming events up to date.

If there is an event coming up that you would like us to add to our website calendar or have another item of news to share, please let us know.

Forthcoming NFPB meetings

Our next two Northern Friends Peace Board meetings will be in Central Edinburgh on 23 September and in Bolton on 2 December. Friends in the vicinity of these meetings are very welcome to attend. Please contact us for further details. Arrangements for meetings in 2024 have yet to be made - **if there are Meetings that would be interested in hosting NFPB we would be pleased to hear from you.**

We shall also be planning further short online meetings to share news and explore particular themes and issues; please get in touch if you would like to get updates about when these are to take place.



Images from our recent meeting in Darlington

Rethinking Security

The **Alternative Security Review (ASR)** that has been underway for a couple of years now is due to publish materials to promote a human security strategy, this autumn. We shall be looking at ways of sharing this material with Friends.

Thank you to all those who contributed to the (ASR) via the Visualising Security workshops and/or the online questionnaire. You can read about one local group's work to gather views from the community here: <https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/2023/08/03/the-worries-box-what-really-makes-people-feel-insecure>

There is now also a growing series of **podcast** episodes covering themes such as "*Rethinking Climate Change and Food Security*", and "*Policing, borders and hard security within the UK.*" These podcasts and subsequent ones can be found heard via:

- <https://soundcloud.com/rethinking-security>
- <https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/rethinking-security-podcast/id1693614071>
- and <https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/rethinking-security>

Arms trade witness and action

NFPB members will be amongst those Friends witnessing at the **DSEI** arms fair in London in early/mid-September. Quaker Roots - <https://www.quaker-roots.org.uk/> - have been preparing for this for many months. We uphold

all those undertaking this peaceful action as an expression of their opposition to the arms trade.

Friends are particularly invited to join the '**No Faith In War**' witness on 7 September – see <https://www.quaker-roots.org.uk/2023/05/17/no-faith-in-war-thursday-7th-september/>

If you are new to these issues and/or would like to find out more or connect with others, there is a lot of information available through the Campaign Against Arms Trade website at <https://caat.org.uk/>.



Peace Round-up – read all about it

In addition to the NFPB Updates, we publish a round-up of peace-related news every 4-6 weeks.

Here are links to some of the pieces included in recent months. Back and current issues can be found at <https://nfpb.org.uk/resources/publicity-information-outreach/#peace-round-up>

Please get in touch if you would like to be added to the email list for these.

Captains, Kings and soft power: a Quaker view <https://www.ekklesia.co.uk/2023/05/14/15308>

The UK and the Ukraine War: Drones vs Diplomacy

<https://dronewars.net/2023/05/15/the-uk-and-the-ukraine-war-drones-vs-diplomacy>

Reshaping Multilateralism in Times of Crisis

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2023/05/reshaping-multilateralism-times-crises>

Cooperation on climate, peace and security is needed now

<https://theelders.org/news/cooperation-climate-peace-and-security-needed-now>

Welsh resistance to militarism on the rise as new network launched

<https://www.ppu.org.uk/news/welsh-resistance-militarism-rise-new-network-launched>

Bradford's Peace Museum to move to Salts Mill in Saltaire

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles>

Nuclear Weapons

Hiroshima and Nagasaki days, Oppenheimer, and international action

Friends in different parts of the country arranged and supported acts of remembrance and witness on the anniversaries (78 years) since the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the act that heralded the start of the era of nuclear weapons.



Quaker Nagasaki Day vigil in Manchester

This year the vigils had added poignancy, coming as they did just weeks after the release of the film Oppenheimer. The **International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)** has published some notes to promote wider understanding of the nature of these weapons and the circumstances of their development and use. With links to an action-pack, these can be found at:

https://www.icanw.org/oppenheimer_facts_myths_nuclear_weapons .

See also <https://cnduk.org/oppenheimer/> for **CND** resources and comment.

And as part of the *Peace Education Network*, Quakers in Britain are making available free resources for use in schools – read more about this here: <https://shorturl.at/crLX8>

Also during August the latest international nuclear weapons non-proliferation discussions took place in Vienna, with lack of progress there being in contrast to the framework created by the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Reflections on the urgency of the current situation and the need for real progress on nuclear disarmament, with comment from the Mayor of Nagasaki and the UN Secretary General, can be read here:

<https://www.commondreams.org/news/bombing-of-nagasaki>

The Mistake



Whilst the film about Robert Oppenheimer has had a lot of publicity, a smaller-scale, but at least as powerful, performance on the circumstances surrounding the production and use of the first atomic bomb is being taken around the country this autumn.

Written by London Quaker Michael Mears, and performed by him and Shigeko Nomura, the play uses verbatim testimonies and remembrances from eye-witnesses to interweave the stories of the survivor, the scientist and the soldier to create a drama – about what happens when scientific discoveries unlock the awesome power of nature, and “the genie is let out of the bottle”.

Tour Dates

We have listed here the dates and locations of performances in the North. Details of these and other – southern - dates between 8th September and 30th October are available via <https://michaelmears.org/tour-dates-for-the-mistake/> . Friends' support in attending and in publicising these performances will be much appreciated.

All performances will be followed by a Q and A with the cast for those who can stay.

September 2023

Tue 12, 7.30pm - **Chester**, Wesley Church Centre

Wed 13, 7.30 pm - **Caernarfon**, Galeri Theatre
Doc Victoria

Sat 16, 7.30pm - **Wickenby**, Lincolnshire,
Broadbent Theatre

Tues 19, 7.30pm - **Lancaster**, Gregson
Community & Arts Centre

Thurs 28, 8pm - **Hull** Truck Godber Studio

October

Wed 4, 10.30am - **Doncaster**, McAuley Catholic
High School

Wed 4, 3pm - **Doncaster**, McAuley Catholic High
School

Thurs 5, 7pm - **Pontefract**, Ackworth School

Sat 7th, 7.45pm - **York** Theatre Royal Studio

Tues 10th, morning - **York**, Bootham School

Wed 18th 7.30pm - **Buxton**, Green Man Gallery,
Hardwick Studios

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