

FARINGDON PEACE GROUP ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 6th October 2021

PRESENT

Phil and Jennie Chesterton, Karen and Sjoerd Vogt (chair), Steve and Jenny Braithwaite, John and Janie Cottis, Jill and Dave Headey, Marge Crosby, Helen Harris

1) AGENDA

Adopted

2) APOLOGIES

None

3) 2020 AGM MINUTES

Read and approved.

4) MATTERS ARISING

None

5) DATES FOR DIARY

Online events of interest

- Jenny B has organised a fantastic climate change exhibition in the Friends Meeting House (FMH) including FPG's 'Carbon Footprint of the Military' display. Parts of it will be re-used elsewhere.
- Weds 13th Oct. FPG member and Town Councillor Rosalind will ask the Town Council to adopt the Treaty on the prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Other members going in support.
- Armistice Day/Remembrance Sunday Nov. 14th – FPG will lay its wreath containing white poppies as usual.
- Dec 7th or 14th Women in Black vigil for Bethlehem in Market Place. TBC

FPG Meetings

- Weds 3rd Nov, 7.30 - FPG Monthly Meeting. **'Explaining COP26 – What can we expect?'**. Speaker – Pete Dilley, local XR activist. Via Zoom.
- Weds. 1st December, 7.30 – Ask David Johnston MP to talk about COP26. Via Zoom.
- 5th Jan 2022, 7.00pm - New Year's Social at Karen and Sjoerd's, covid permitting. Bring and share food and drink.

6) REPORTS AND DISCUSSION

a) FPG Meetings – Jennie

Jennie has had a well-deserved little rest from organising meetings this year, though monthly meetings carried on till lockdown in March and have now resumed via zoom:

Nov - Jennifer Gibson from **'Reprieve'** -a human rights group; Dec - Calvin Tucker **'Latin America: the Left fights back'**; Feb - Sjoerd Vogt **'False Flag Operations'**; Mar - Phil Chesterton **'Whatever Happened to the Chagos Islanders?'**

Thereafter we were overtaken by covid-19 and therefore have missed out on hearing about: **'Vision 2020- and the decision of the United States to dominate Space'** and **'First use' of Nuclear Weapons'** – a talk by a retired Polaris submarine Commander, which Jennie hopes to rearrange, possibly for November.

The talk on ‘**The Impact of the UK’s Nuclear Test Programme on Fiji and the Christmas Islands**’ with ex-Faringdon resident John Cooper will not take place as, due to Covid restrictions, John could not travel to Fiji as planned.

20 people enjoyed the New Year’s social at Karen and Sjoerd’s in January.

Other Activities and Events – Jennie Oxfordshire Peace Campaign (OPC)

We were represented at meetings by Jennie, Phil and Helen. Thanks are due, once again to Nigel Day and Chris Brennan for the spadework behind the meetings and organisation of the annual Rally at (USAF) Croughton. On 5th October 2019, the speakers were Paul Mobbs (our guru on all things Croughton), Dave Cullen from the Nuclear Information Service (we have had several talks from the NIS at the Peace Group) and Fabian Hamilton, a Labour MP who was Minister for Peace and Disarmament in Jeremy Corbyn’s shadow cabinet. It was at this Rally that we first heard about the young Harry Dunn, killed 3 weeks previously in a road accident outside the base, by the wife of an intelligence officer. The court case regarding the extradition of Anne Sacoolas continues.

This year, 2020, CND organised a zoomed Rally on behalf of OPC and those who couldn’t join can watch it here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UXb7rEvOm5E>

Shared Humanity

We were asked by Howard Grace (who had spoken at one of our monthly meetings) to host a meeting with Letlapa Mphahlele, which we were very pleased to do, as we had only previously seen Letlapa on film. From being a soldier fighting during the long struggle against apartheid in South Africa, he had changed to talking to groups, especially school students, about the power of forgiveness, and our ‘shared humanity’.

Remembrance Day Sunday 10 November

The British Legion again allowed us to lay a wreath on the War Memorial in memory of ALL those who have died in wars. Thanks to Karen for performing this task.

Armistice Day Monday 11 November

In the Market Square, we held a Women in Black Silent Vigil for Peace and 5 women on the vigil were supported by 3 men giving out leaflets explaining why we were there.

Extinction Rebellion

Thanks to Karen and Helen who took part in various events, resulting in a court case for Helen, (which was eventually thrown out).

General Election Hustings 25 November

Following what has become customary for Faringdon Peace Group, we organised hustings in the Corn Exchange, for a gratifyingly large audience.

Vigil for Peace in Bethlehem

We held our usual Women in Black vigil for Bethlehem in the Market Place in December.

b) Faringdon Advertiser and posters round town

A couple of meeting reports have appeared in the Advertiser, but editor Lou says she is always short of space, so we do not have a reserved slot as we did in the Folly. Karen will write shorter reports and see if we can appear more regularly.

A short report and photo of the Big Ride for Palestine passing through Shellingford was published.

c) Treasurer – Steve

Steve presented the Income and Expenditure account for the year ending 31st August 2021, which showed a balance of £2450. In 2021 again we have had no income from the Grand Peace Fete.

We have not had to pay rent or speakers’ expenses since lockdown, but with £2000 ring-fenced for the Peace Plaque, potential XR expenses and 40th Anniversary celebrations, we are not in a position to donate to worthy causes.

Subscriptions to Network for Peace will continue for our monthly copies of Peace News, which Jennie has continued to distribute, and to CND, partly because FPG insurance is arranged through them.

Thanks to Steve for doing the finances and to John Cecil for auditing the accounts.

d) Grand Peace Fete – Sjoerd

No fete this year, but Peace Picnic in Uffington on the day it was due to take place.
No need to make the decision yet about GPF 2022.

e) Resources – Pete, Phil, Karen

Liz and Adam have moved to Westmill. FPG gazebos and other equipment now being stored in a NT barn in Coleshill. Safe and dry but need to book someone to open up when we need anything.

f) Artistic Projects – Karen

Peace Plaque

Still no progress. Karen reluctant to take it on herself so will talk to Sue again and get a commitment from her.

g) Monthly Meetings help

Meetings are still being zoomed, so no speaker transport or hospitality is needed.
Jennie as always, would welcome suggestions for meetings – topics and speakers.

h) Press Reports – Sand

None.

i) Any other reports

Black Lives Matter

Liz organised a series of 3 zoomed sessions, the final one in February ‘**Exploring the dynamics of difference: race, power and privilege in the UK**’. 15 of us attended and have

7) ELECTION OF OFFICERS

All officers were willing to stand again but extra help was welcomed with different tasks.

All were thanked for their hard work during the past year.

Chairs: Sjoerd, Phil, Dave H, Adam, Pete, only needed once or twice a year

Secretary for meetings and activities – Jennie, but with help

Secretary for minutes, Reports and posters – Karen

Treasurer – Steve

Artistic Co-ordinator – Karen with help from Marge

Fete Organiser – Sjoerd (with Jennie and Marge and over 70 helpers!)

Website/computer lists – Sjoerd (active list) and Dave/Jennie (very active list)

Resources – Pete, Phil, Karen

Publicity, Fete and press releases – Sand

Syria Link – Sjoerd

8) FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Remembrance Day, 8th November

FPG is now definitely on the list of local organisations who lay a wreath at the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday and Karen has already received this year’s wreath (£17). Karen will add white poppies. The Town Council will have a small ceremony at the War Memorial, but no public wreath laying. Suggest we do ours on the afternoon of the 10th. Time TBC.

Women in Black Vigil for Bethlehem

December. Date/time TBC. Men welcome in support

40th Anniversary Celebrations

FPG has kept going continually since the first meeting on Oct 7th 1980, so this year is our 40th Anniversary!
Plans to celebrate are on hold, but the Peace Plaque will be installed this year come what may!

40th Anniversary booklet

Jennie and Phil suggested publishing a little booklet and asking all to contribute. 40 pages? Chris suggested asking all to contribute memories in various forms to create a miscellany rather than a year by year account.

Dave happy to put it together, Sand happy to co-ordinate content.

9) DONATIONS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

We have ring-fenced £1000 for the Peace Plaque, £500 for potential XR expenses and £500 for 40th Anniversary celebrations. Hopefully we have budgeted for more than we need, but with £200 still to pay for the BLM sessions, finances will be very stretched, so no spare for donations.

Subscriptions will continue for Network for Peace, Peace News and CND.

Helen suggested circulating FPG bank account details, so that people can make a donation. (Details now on website)

Sjoerd to follow up with email.

10) ANY OTHER BUSINESS

FPG ukelele group

Jenny would like to start an FPG virtual ukulele group. She knows of 4 members who already play and would like to encourage others. Contact her if interested.

Gloria

Sadly Gloria will be moving away from Faingdon in the New Year to be closer to her children. Many thanks for all her support and contributions over the last few years to the Fete, vigils and meetings. We will miss her but wish her all the very best in her new home.

The meeting ended at 20.31, sadly without drinks or birthday cake!

Thanks to all who attended and to Sjoerd for facilitating.