

FOY NEWS

Spring 2018



The Foy Society

A fellowship of women and men who, in a spirit of free inquiry, seek to understand the nature of present issues and problems - political, social and religious.

Founded in 1924 as The Fellowship of Youth, in 1957 we became known as the Foy Society. We had gradually taken on the role of an inter-generational group.

Despite the fact that most of our members are Unitarians, all are welcome to join and participate, whatever religious background. Our discussions and interaction thrives on a rich texture of input. Please feel free to join us.

Cover picture: It is many years since the editor climbed to the top of Peter's Rock but one of the Winter Walks from Great Hucklow passed that way in January.

Hard copies printed by: David Warhurst, using the GA Zette machine and lots of patience.

Deadline for material for the Autumn issue: 15th August, 2018,
See back page for contacting editor.

Contents:

Page 3 President's Piece

Page 6 Winter Walking Weekend

Page 8 Basic Income

Page 9 Foy Society "Inequality" motion for the Unitarian GA

Page 12 BIRF "Oldies" get together once more

Page 14 Some Flagg history on how it all got started

Page 17 Obituary to John Clarke

Page 18 Colin and his Ukelele Band "Ukes Akimbo"

Page 22 Ramblings from Room 10

Page 26 Our next Conference on "Storytelling"

Page 28 Foy Conference Programme

Pages 30 and 31 At the Conference

Page 32 News of Members

President's Piece

Our current
Foy President
Tim Baker at
The Nightingale
Centre in
Great Hucklow



Hi again fellow Foyers! A long, super, belated happy 2018 and I hope you are starting to get close to coming out of hibernation, now we are edging closer to the joys of spring. I'm certainly ready for winter to be over now!

But it's not been all dark, gloomy days and nights, the last few months. I've had some positive Unitarian events and news to comment on. When the weather was milder, in my busy birthday month of October, I managed to squeeze in another trip to Hucklow (fresh off the plane from Amsterdam), for a new event named **Uni-Fest**. This hoped to plug the gap for those Unitarians who find themselves in a limbo of fun communal events they actively want to attend, that are not 'Age specific' or entail joining a society whose interests and ethos you may not wholeheartedly agree with, or perhaps feel pressured to agree with, just to have a good number of social events to attend.

My experience of Uni-Fest was a positive one, it was an all-ages event so all were welcome whether bringing extended families or just the curious lone visitor, like myself. It was well attended and there were various

activities for the kids present, including a trip out to the Chestnut Centre which I was sad to miss. I was not feeling very well on the Saturday. I managed to drag myself from my sickbed for dinner and a show, where everyone was invited to display their various talents. What we got was a very full and action-packed show whether it be singing, dancing, comedy sketches, story telling or poetry reading.



Truly intergenerational entertainment



A great event for saying "Thank You" to John Harley



The event also was the last official one of John Harley as **Youth Officer**. John has been in the role for well over a decade and is now moving on to pastures new in his life. He was honoured at the end of the event and thanked for all his years of service, (both official and unofficial) in the movement. I first met John as a teenager at what used to be known as YUC week (now FDA) and enjoyed his encouragement and enthusiasm for his role. He has effectively promoted the importance of youth within the Unitarian Movement and has inspired so many of us through the years, whether they be older 'youths' like myself, those now tackling the transition into young adulthood like our fabulous and committed GA Zette team, or those who are still able to attend the various youth events at present. John's

will be a hard act to follow. Naturally, we wish him well in all he does and hope he still remains active in the movement in other ways.

The other new thing I experienced was getting to meet and attend a service by the new Minister of Upper Chapel Sheffield, Andrew Phillips. At a time when it is now much more difficult for chapels to find full-time Ministers and periods of lay-preacher and congregation-led services are becoming more the norm. It is great when someone comes in with enthusiasm and experience. It was a delight to talk to Andy after the service and see him at work. So much so, I felt inspired to become an official member of Upper Chapel after many years of being 'of no fixed abode' and as Upper is the chapel I tend to visit most often now, it made sense to rubber stamp a firmer link there, even though I can't attend most of their gatherings.

There are plenty of events coming up in the Unitarian calendar, with (hopefully) a sunny spring. First up is the General Assembly Meetings, in a brand new location in Daventry. I look forward to quoting Mark Twain to the various golfers on the venue's course and checking out if the Pool/Spa facilities are as good as they were in Birmingham. My one 'official' act of "Presidential Duty" will be to propose a motion to the assembly, that has been decided on the back of last year's Foy Conference, on the subject of **Inequality**. I'm happy to announce that our Foy Rep will be Lynne Varley this year and I have great faith that Lynne will represent our interests and ethos in a befitting manner, having been a long-time Foy attendee and active Foy Council member. (Ed: See page 9 for more about the Foy motion.)

The highlight of our year is, of course, Foy Conference, where the subject will be **storytelling** and if there is one thing I know Unitarians can do as well as anyone, it is tell a story or two, I can't wait to hear all the offerings both in the workshops and during social time. During this Foy Conference, I will be stepping down from my role as President after 2 years and, as one of my last acts, passing the torch to another. I do have a few potential people in mind who I shall contact to ask and encourage to consider representing us as we close in on our 100 year anniversary. As ever, the role is open to any member, so if you want to know a bit more about it please e-mail me. I'll be happy to answer as best I can.

I wish you all well as ever, and look forward to seeing you at G.A.

Tim Baker

(Foy President 2016-2018)

davidfbaker@hotmail.com

Winter Walking Weekend 12th-14 January, 2018

The Dawson Family's experience

Friday 3.30, school's out and everybody jumps into the car and off we go, full of anticipation: we are looking forward to beautiful surroundings with great company. Georgina and Charlotte are wondering how long the big walk will be and Florence is trying to remember who she met last year.

The food waiting for us when we arrive is just what we need and then we go and get our rooms ready: Florence shares with Mummy, Charlotte shares with Daddy and Georgina shares with Poppy (the dog). And then the girls disappear in search of their friends.

After a hearty breakfast we get ready for the main part of the weekend: the big walk. There is a bit of a flurry while packed lunches and hot drinks are stowed away and walking boots, gaiters, coats, hats and gloves are put over warm layers of clothes - it seems particularly cold this year.



The men discuss tomorrow's walking route whilst the women have much more serious things to talk about



There are two options for a big walk. The first starting directly from the back door with the alternative setting off in cars to walk on Kinder Scout. We joined the walk leaving directly and enjoyed an 11 mile circuit. It was a slow start as the large group negotiated stiles, some with more ease than others! As we split from the short walk, the pace increased and we headed down Cressbrook Dale, along Millers Dale then up Tideswell Dale before leaving the bottoms to head through Litton and back into Cressbrook Dale, up Silly Dale and back to the Nightingale Centre. Both Georgina and Charlotte managed the 11 miles with few complaints (Georgina does now have new

boots!) Charlotte especially was very proud to have completed 11 miles (and probably managed to hold everybody's hand at some point). Poppy's only complaint being that she wasn't allowed to play with sheep.

Once the big group has left, the parents (and grandparents) with smaller children get themselves ready for a smaller walk. We have a nice amble up the hill, but the wind is so cold that we turn around quite soon and make our way back to the warm Nightingale Centre for hot drinks and our own packed lunch.



In the afternoon, Colin has a surprise for us: he has brought his balloons and starts making dogs, horses, cats, hats, leads for dogs, giraffes, bigger balloons with faces and all sorts of other things. These keep the children (and adults) entertained for the rest of the day - and the Sunday morning, too!

We sleep well that night. After another hearty breakfast, some of us go on a shorter walk and others enjoy a service at the chapel with readings and a story helped by the children. All too soon it is time to say good bye to old and new friends and the beautiful Peak District and we are on our way home.

Isabel Pebody on Basic Income

Last year, for the first time for many years, I came to the Foy Conference. Inequality has always been of interest but my main intention was to find what we can do about it. The contribution of providing a basic income for everyone was discussed.

The idea has been there for a long time but I think its time has now come. Early Unitarians and Dickens and others have tried to show that there is no distinction between deserving poor and undeserving poor. But our system still reflects the division. Children and old people are deserving as are those who are disabled. In order to receive help, people have to prove they are unable, not fit for work. What sort of a message is that?

We have free education, free health care. We also have a basic pension (basic income?) for those of retirement age. There has been some attempt at supported housing but this has become grossly inadequate. Providing a basic income will provide adequate food and a roof overhead. What is more, it will take away the nagging anxiety about where the next meal will come from, where to sleep. Sometimes poverty stimulates – What can one do about it? Something creative, or just steal what you haven't got? Mostly poverty causes depression and defeat and resentment.

Essentially, a basic income would provide a survival level income, probably about what the DWP pays out of work adults (£75 per week for those over 25). The advantage is that everyone would receive it and means tested benefits would disappear. There would be no incentive to cheat and millions would be saved in administration.

There are many studies (try putting 'basic income' into Google) which show that, having a reliable source of the basic necessities improves wellbeing, health and ability to contribute, and in the long run benefits everyone. We have been supporters of the minimum wage. We need to go further and support the concept of basic income.

Ed. My thanks to Isabel Pebody for sending her thoughts on “Basic Income”, following our last “Inequality” Foy Conference.

Since then, as Tim has told you in his President’s Piece, Foy Council have decided to raise the profile of inequality within our society by tabling a motion to be voted on at the coming General Assembly Meetings in Daventry. Those of you who attended our last conference will probably have been persuaded of the many reasons why we should reduce inequality but today I read, in the latest issue of the Inquirer, that John Taylor, in a letter to the editor, states that “there is no extreme deprivation or inequality in this country” and remarkably compares it to the 19th Century Potato Famine in Ireland. Yes, there is certainly much work to be done. My thanks to David Warhurst for sending me the following:

Motion for GA Meetings on Equality



This General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches:

1. Commends the excellent work of the Equality Trust which has shone a light on the evidence that inequality harms *everyone*, not just the poor, in all communities.
2. Urges Unitarians to take cognisance of the research findings of the Trust and to support the drive towards greater equality in society wherever possible.
3. Resolves that the General Assembly signifies its support by registering as an affiliate of the Trust and instructs the Executive Committee to make the necessary arrangements to put this into effect as soon as possible after these meetings.

Proposed by: Tim Baker Seconded by: David Warhurst

Background Paper:

Unitarians have long been in the vanguard of campaigns to promote equality in society in areas such as gender, race, LGBT. Hardly surprising, then, that the Penal Affairs Panel meeting at last year’s GA meetings and the Foy Society Conference in May, on the subject of ***Inequality in Society***

were both well attended. The PAP meeting was addressed by Professor Kate Pickett. She introduced us to the wide range of research evidence from around the world which supports the contention that economic and social inequality in any society is bad for **everyone**. Professor Pickett was joined by her colleague, Professor Richard Wilkinson, at the Foy Conference where there was more time for them to go into much greater depth on the extensive data and analysis, which has been undertaken on this subject.

Profs Pickett and Wilkinson are co-founders of ***The Equality Trust***. This is a registered charity that works to improve the quality of life in the UK by reducing economic and social inequality. As a registered charity, it is completely independent of political parties. It seeks to achieve its aims by:

- campaigning for changes and policies that can reduce inequality.
- informing the public and politicians about the damage caused by inequality, supported by the best and latest data and research available.
- co-operating with organisations and groups from across our society including businesses, trade unions, charities and others to prioritise inequality reduction.

Recent revelations about high salaries and bonuses paid to the likes of university vice-chancellors and company executives have reinforced the Trust's finding that the UK has a very high level of income inequality compared to other developed countries. There is a wealth of data on the Trust's website - www.equalitytrust.org.uk – which demonstrates how this conclusion was arrived at and the damaging consequences of it.

Becoming an Affiliated organisation would give the GA direct access to research teams, publications, affiliates-only briefings and networking events and a listing on the Trust's website linked to our own website.

How much will it cost? Here's a surprise for you – this motion has been fully and accurately costed! Affiliates are requested to contribute £100 per annum.

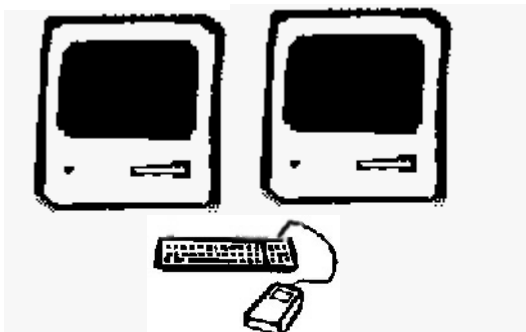
Foy believes that the work of the Trust aligns closely with Unitarian social concern and is worthy of our support. Affiliation would identify us clearly with the drive to reduce inequality and build a better, fairer society.

Some Thoughts from the Editor's Office...

John Hewerdine



Our offices are in the roof space of our home by the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, not far from the centre of Chorley, in Lancashire. Dot has her desk at one end, near to the radiator, which is sometimes turned on. Mine is at the other end with a radiator, which only gets turned on at Christmas, when the family are staying. We were both brought up in the days of frugality, though it isn't often now that we can scrape the frost off the inside of the Velux roof windows. We are, however, going through one of the colder spells of February. For this edition, I have given myself the luxury of bringing my computer down to our breakfast table, where it is usually warm.



You are more honoured than you realise though. It is not a laptop I use for Foy News but an old fashioned computer with separate keyboard, a stack (with motherboard and processor, two hard drives, CDR and CDRW drives, two monitors and lots of wires. The kit is very old and tired but I convince myself that it is, (though extremely slow with one particular drop-down menu), still capable of achieving more-or-less the results you, as readers, have come to expect.

It just occurred to me that, if I printed a picture of our rarely featured treasurer, he might take pity on me and buy me a shiny new Apple with all the latest trendy software for manipulating the amazing pictures you all send me, to make them even more amazing. Forget all that stuff I have been telling Richard Varley and Colin Partington about needing new cameras.





Oldies

BIRF House Party

Great Hucklow September 2017

A somewhat smaller than usual (select?) group of 14 - 13 Oldie IRFers and ANother, more later about him - met at The Nightingale Centre on the evening of 26 September 2017 for a three night stay. Weather forecasts were fortunately inaccurate so we enjoyed dry and much of the time, sunny days with the downpour arriving just when we left on the following Friday morning.

Despite many visits to Great Hucklow and its surrounds, we still managed to enjoy and find new pursuits in the area.

Bakewell with gentle strolls and the River Wye with its ducks, geese and trout to watch from the 'padlock' footbridge, it's proliferation of delightful cafes was our Wednesday morning. Then on to the David Mellor factory in Hathersage followed by a very leisurely pub lunch.

Thursday we used our Travel Passes and took the bus to Buxton. We all booked for a trip on the 'Tram' ride (actually a cleverly converted milk float) and discovered parts of the town we had never seen, all of us particularly impressed by the little St Anne's Church on Bath Street, a real gem. One group enjoyed a guided walking tour while others relaxed in the park and/or cafes (more tea and scones or cakes!).

In the evenings, there was plenty of chatting and of course games. Also consumption of some wine and beer and several mugs of hot chocolate.

Bananagrams, which tends to be a somewhat riotous game anyway, and which the ANother – a member's brother-in-law – took to with enthusiasm, with several very original spellings, which he insisted were real words (we already have one of our number good at this!), was joined by another new

word game 'Stick up and Shout'. The latter was marked as suitable for ages 8+ so we thought we could manage it, which we did – just. Sadly, the fiendish jig-saw puzzle, unfinished in 2016 and carefully stored and brought all the way from Bucks again in 2017, remained untouched; so in 2018 it will be there.

We had The Nightingale Centre to ourselves and as usual we were well fed and well looked after by the staff.

BIRFers, note 2018 - dates reserved for us in 2018. From dinner on Monday 17 September to breakfast on Friday 21 September.

Contact me for details. vawalker55@gmail.com 01296 613501

Valerie Walker



British Memorial Service for the life of

Geoff Kent

Sunday 6th May at 11.00 am
The Nightingale Centre, Great Hucklow

British friends who knew Geoff are invited to send their memories of time spent with him to Rev Ernest Baker who has kindly agreed to lead us in this celebration of a life which many of us shared.

ernestbaker@tiscali.co.uk

FLAGG AND THE FELLOWSHIP OF YOUTH

written by Annie Beard Woodhouse, undated

and kindly sent to us by Joy Winder

It is not often wise to explain oneself but as so many more members are coming to Flagg, there seems to be so much misconception as to the why and wherefore of the Flagg camping site that I am going to make an attempt.

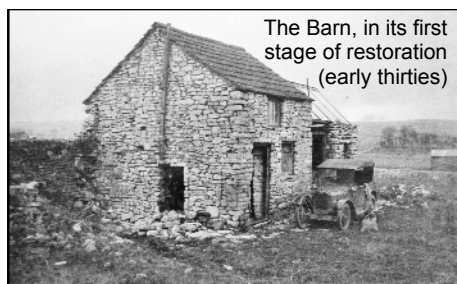
In the autumn of 1928 there was a report in the Inquirer of a meeting held at Flagg, when the suggestion was made that the Chapel should be sold and the memorial window transferred to another of our chapels. I wrote at once to the Inquirer to protest and to point out that in these days of motor transport, Flagg and our country chapels generally were of much easier access and suggested that it would be a splendid piece of work for our churches if the Fellowship of Youth would revive and maintain Flagg Chapel. I was just on the eve of departure for India and asked Humphrey Winder (her nephew), who was keenly interested and was a member of the Council of F.O.Y to make inquiries during my absence, both as to possibilities at Flagg and from the trustees of the Chapel of whom Rev Lawrence Scott was the chief. I pointed out that unless a cottage could be found and rented where one could stay, there would be little chance of doing anything permanent.

On my return in the spring of 1929, Humphrey reported that he had visited Flagg and also the Rev Lawrence Scott. The man who had charge of the keys of the Chapel had a smallholding which he was prepared to sell. Rev Lawrence Scott had taken Humphrey for a young farmer in search of land! He said that the Chapel must be sold for a village hall, it having been used in recent years by the youth of the village. I visited Flagg and was vividly reminded of a day forty years previously when I had driven there with my father (James R. Beard) then President of the B & F.U.A (British and Foreign Unitarian Association) who conducted the service. We decided then that although we had only returned that week from Switzerland, we had found nowhere in that country, such invigorating air as we had that day enjoyed. The smallholding at The Green presented possibilities. The cottage, though in a very bad state of repair, could be enlarged and might do for a weekend cottage – though the whole undertaking was a much larger job than I had contemplated.

It is of interest to record that there was another cottage in the village at the time, which we did not hear of until years later. If we had rented that, there would have been no question of a camping site for the F.O.Y.

At Whitsuntide 1929, the Cheshire branch, with most of the Council and Officers, were camping at Whaley Bridge. Arrangements were made for a visit to Flagg on the Whitsunday and we had a picnic tea in the ground adjoining the Chapel, which we inspected and found to be in a desperately bad condition – playing cards in the pulpit etc. The matter was then thoroughly discussed and I put it to the members and the Council of F.O.Y who were present: Would it be a wise thing to buy The Green or not and would the F.O.Y support the restoration of the Chapel and the services there? The first evidence of the fear of taking responsibility then showed itself and I pointed out quite clearly that they need not take the matter too seriously for I intended to use The Green as a weekend and summer cottage. The proposition was agreed to with only one opposed who was doubtful about the water supply.

Having suffered severely from neuritis and heart trouble for many years, the prospect of having easy access to the Baths and treatment at Buxton had an attraction for me, and the land at The Green could be let to a farmer and used for camping in holiday time.



Negotiations went ahead and in January 1930, the land and cottage were purchased and the first camp held at Whitsuntide 1931. There was much correspondence and great difficulty as to the proposed trust for I did not intend to keep the possession of The Green in my own hands; my desire being that it should be a centre of Unitarianism in the neighbourhood, which had been much neglected both from a religious and social point of view.

When my grandfather, Dr John Relly Beard was Secretary of the Unitarian Village Society one hundred years previously, there were six little chapels and preaching stations at Great Hucklow, Bradwell, Flagg, Monyash,

Sheldon and Ashford but now reduced to the two first mentioned. Rev George Street had done good work in holding week night services for many years at Flagg, Litton Mill and Pomeroy but had retired several years previously.

The first idea was that the Chapel and The Green should be held under the same trust but this did not prove possible. The appointment of new trustees was difficult for there was no money available and I had expended all my spare cash in the purchase of The Green. F.O.Y again showed signs of its fear of responsibility so that in the end, the British and Foreign Unitarian Association accepted the position of custodian trustee – the property of The Green reverting to them if the terms of the trust were not fulfilled.



Early
Unitarian
Visitors
To Flagg



My desire all through had been for the furtherance of Unitarianism and as each Unitarian has their own point of view as adhering to our principle of Liberty, it may be well for me to state mine. I base my religious and social beliefs in the two great Christian commandments – Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy mind and with all thy strength and the second is namely this – Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

This I take to mean that we must develop first of all our spiritual and eternal natures, love, truth and beauty as shown in worship, in art and in literature and in nature and our material natures as shown in friendship, right relations between men and women and between employers and employed. I believe in a righteous government of the universe and hold as Harold Nicolson says in his Peacemaking 1919 “a conviction that human nature can, like a glacier, move but an inch or two in every thousand years” . To me, the greatest happiness has come through service of my fellow creatures and I desire therefore to help others to that happiness – Sacrifice stood on the threshold of Love – As I enter in, she said, I become Joy...



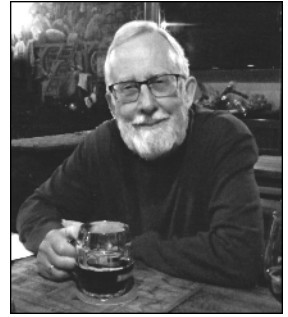
John Clifton Clarke

Memories of him by Mike Carter

13 November 1944

to

20 October 2017



John Clarke, who died just before his 73rd birthday, will be remembered by many of you who met him at UYPL and IRF meetings in the 1960s - 70s. I first got to know John when we both started work in the Zoology department at Leicester University. I think that this must have been in the summer of 1963. (John would have given the exact date as he had the knack of remembering such occasions in his life).

John was a member of the Unitarian Church in Leicester and regularly went to UYPL events at Great Hucklow and Flaggy and to the UYPL holidays. He was at the IRF conference in Sharpness in 1969 and Berlin in the early 1970s. Because John had captained a narrow boat on a UYPL holiday, he was amply qualified to become 'Captain John' on an IRF 'second week' on the Wey and Godalming Navigation (no wrecks or drowning were reported!).

In the early 1970's John decided that he would change careers and he became an archaeologist digging at sites mainly at Hadrian's Wall, York and Wakefield. He finally moved to Bath 25 years ago for temporary work cataloguing archaeological finds. His stay in Bath became permanent and he was to become part of this adopted family in Batheaston.

John always thought that work was a distraction from what he really wanted to do and he managed to 'retire' shortly after moving to Bath. He had a lifelong interest in classical and folk music, bird-watching, reading and good food but his main hobby was his love of beer. He was one of the early members of CAMRA and always joked that he could not imagine life without beer and the companionship that it brought. He had many friends in beer-drinking, bird-watching and archaeology circles who will miss his jokes and good-natured friendship.

John was a bachelor and had no siblings.

Mike Carter

(a.k.a. Mythical Mike)

mikecarter@f2s.com

Colin Partington **and his Ukelele** **in** **Ukes Akimbo**



The Ukelele is the most common instrument in schools in the UK. Why? Ukelele Groups are one of the fastest growing communal groups in the UK. Why?

Let me tell you how I became attached to my Ukelele.....

It all began in March 2014, when Andy Webster, the Musical Director of the Brampton and District Choir I sing with, decided to stop being a Musical Director and become a Ukelele player!! He was a professional musician, playing the French Horn in the army and then in theatre orchestra pits for many years. But he had never played a Ukelele - so he bought one and learnt to play it. One month later, he advertised locally in Brampton that he would start Ukelele lessons. I knew him so thought this would be a laugh, so I bought a Ukelele and started lessons. Five one hour lessons with a gang of learners for £35, followed by weekly strumming sessions. Since I had never played an Instrument before (apart from a bugle in the Boys Brigade a ~ few years ago), this was a golden opportunity to learn something new.

Loved it, though I struggled at first and was limited to just a few chords. On our fifth Lesson, Andy told us that instead of a lesson, we eight were going to play to a French Exchange group in Brampton. Gulp - my first performance.

And every week I attended the Ukes Akimbo Strum Session in a real ale pub. It's a hard life. By then the Ukes Akimbo has grown to over twenty strummers, and now we are over thirty.

Andy then started organising more performances and more joined the Ukelele group – now called “Ukes Akimbo” (look for us on Facebook and Youtube). We performed to schools, WIs, village groups and a Woodworking group - In addition Andy and two of his musical pals formed a Ukelele Band - The League of Ukelele Gentlemen (look on Youtube) and they organised bigger events.

- They hired the Gilsland Spa Hotel in Northumbria and more than 150 Ukelele players, mainly from the north spent a weekend strumming together, listening to professional players perform and attending learning workshops. This year will be it's third year, now with over 200 strummers, including the Ukelele Orchestra of Great Britain -a star group.



They hired a steam train from Pickering to Whitby and filled it with 350 Ukelele players, providing workshops and entertainment in the local Pickering Working Mens Club. Great Weekend. This year will be it's third year.

- They hired a hotel in Morecambe for “Mokelele Summer Ukelele Spectacular”,
- We all attended the first Scottish Ukelele Festival in Dumfries – great time was had by all. Now on it's third year.
- They also organised trips on the Thames and Mersey and a Uke Express in Minehead



So why do I like it?

- Ukeleles have four strings, tuned GCEA. Some have 5, 6, 8 or even 10 strings, but laid out in the four string pattern. Four Strings are much easier than 6.
- Ukeleles come in various sizes - Soprano, Tenor. Baritone and Bass
- Ukeleles can be amplified.
- They cost £20 upwards, so schools can buy a load for the children.
- If you are in a group, as we are, then if you don't know all the chords required in a song, then you miss them out until you have learnt them. Thus experienced players and novices can play together and make good music.
- A band can divide into subgroups, so some are strumming quite fast, some quite slowly, some are plucking the strings, some are playing a backing sound i.e. we are an orchestra playing different parts. Some can play a bass ukelele, or a tambourine, or a rattle, or a kazoo, or a mouthorgan - and some of Ukes Akimbo do all those things.
- And we all have a good singsong - some louder than others - some singing rather than playing that piece of music.

What do we Play?

- We hardly ever play a George Formby song.
- We play classics, like 'The Blue Danube', with us orchestrated
- We play modern pop
 - Adele's 'Rolling in the Deep'
 - Bruno Mars' 'Count on Me'
 - The Divine Comedy's 'National Express'
- We play older pop songs
 - Joe Browns 'I'll see you in my dreams'
 - Flying Pickets 'Only You'
 - The Zutons 'Valerie'
 - The Human League's 'Don't you want me Baby'
 - The Scaffold's 'Lily the Pink'



Ukes Akimbo playing at Hayton School

We play folk songs

- 'The Wild Rover'
- And at Christmas we play Christmassy songs
- We play **anything** – usually arranged for ukelele by Andy.

So I recommend you find a Ukelele Band near you and join in.

You'll loveit...

Colin Partington

Member of Ukes Akimbo



Ramblings from Room 10

**Idle thoughts
of a not so idle fellow**

Richard Varley

Last December, I ran out of Peter Robinson's DI Banks crime novels, having completed the reading of the twenty three books in the series. The next one is still in hard back format, so I will wait. As I progressed through the series,, I found that I wasn't just reading each story in its own right, but was becoming engrossed in the progress of the main characters themselves.

Since then, I have read three enjoyable, but very different books. The first, recommended by Lynne, was a very impressive debut thriller 'Lies' by T M Logan. As I approached the dénouement, I found it increasingly difficult to put down' to the extent that I read the final hundred pages after breakfast one morning, before going out mid morning! If you want to know why, then you'll have to read it! I followed this by a book, which was our book group book-to-read for January, 'The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry' by Rachel Joyce. The blurb on the rear cover reads "When Harold Fry leaves home one morning to post a letter, with his wife hovering upstairs, he has no idea that he is about to walk from one end of the country to the other. He has no hiking boots or map, let alone a compass, waterproof or mobile phone. All he knows is that he must keep walking: to save someone else's life." It was a very thought provoking read.

The third, was one I had chosen, 'A Clear Blue Sky', the biography of Jonny Bairstow, the Yorkshire and England wicketkeeper batsman, in which he relates his early life and cricket career to date and the influence of his father David, also a Yorkshire and England wicket keeper batsman who committed suicide when Jonny was eight years old. He recalls how, on the day he returned home, along with his mother and sister, to find his father, he often wonders how differently things might have turned out had they not been delayed by half an hour on returning home that day: they might have discovered a cry for help, rather than a tragic outcome.

'Lies', in which the scope and dangers of modern technology feature heavily in the plot, reminded me of some of my thoughts in my last Ramblings, in the September 2017 edition of this erstwhile publication. Shortly before that, I had read two pieces from the Opinion Matrix column in the 'i' newspaper. On each day, this section has a series of short extracts from comment columns in other publications. Recently, two extracts were headed 'Social Media - if Facebook is worried, we should be too'. The first was from an editorial in the Sun and read, "when even Facebook bosses fear they are destroying society, it's time to worry. The global giant is out of control and in a state of paralysed confusion over its role in society and the harm it does. It must be reined in by the law."

Tim Stanley in the Times was quoted as saying "It has been taken as read that criticising social media is like trying to hold back the tide. But just because change is inevitable doesn't mean that we should be ambivalent about it. Eventually the consensus will emerge that social media is unhealthy and antisocial". A couple of weeks later, Ian Burrell, in his 'Media on Monday' column, commented on the Facebook CEO, Mark Zuckerberg's, statement in his new-year message, that he promised to try and "fix" Facebook. He felt that "Zuck's promise to fight hate speech is a bit rich, coming from someone who has gifted extremists with their most effective platform in a generation, helping American white supremacists to rise again and promoting the cause of the odious Britain First (which has 1.9 million 'likes' on Facebook, more than the Conservatives and Labour combined)".

Some of my recent reading has led me to ponder quite deeply. Change is as inevitable as night follows day. There is the suggestion that, as we grow older, we tend to increasingly fear change, wishing to retain that with which we have become accustomed. It is difficult to determine whether or not this is true. Is it that, in experiencing change over an increasing period of time, we become better at considering the potential effects that any particular change might have: perhaps we develop a more cautious approach?

There is little argument that the current generation, which has reached retirement age, has experienced a period of greater change than previous generations. For instance I recall, as a youngster, the technological advance by which we could actually dial another telephone number rather than having to go through an operator: STD or subscriber trunk dialling I recall! In those days, you used to have to go to the phone; now the phone goes with you and is a device that is capable of carrying out a myriad of tasks that our forebears would never have dreamed possible! At the start

of my industrial career, a computer sat in its own large air conditioned room: now it sits in a handbag or a pocket!

So what can the effects of change be? Last year, Jamie Doward in the Observer published a report on a study that suggested that the more time children spend chatting on line, the less happy they feel about their life overall: that Instagram, Facebook and WhatsApp can have an adverse effect on self-esteem. I understand that you cannot have a profile on Facebook until you are thirteen. I would like someone to explain to me just how that can be enforced. How is it possible to realistically prevent a child under thirteen from accessing this very powerful means of social networking? We should not underestimate the electronic dexterity of the average primary school child. They have grown up in this technological era, whereas it has launched itself on the older generation who have chosen the extent to which they wish to embrace it. It is easier for them: they know what it was like before!

I fear that a fundamental problem with change is that we are all too ready to take it on board without fully considering what the drawbacks could be before we experience its full impact. The World Wide Web provides a facility to legitimately research various topics but equally affords the opportunity for the unscrupulous to use it for very dubious means. The devices, on which this 'research' can be carried out, are so small that their use can be easily concealed from those who should be exercising control. If a child is using a mobile phone, are they really just making a phone call, or sending an innocent message....? There are parental controls on devices, but just how many parents are really savvy to the hazards of their use and ensure that the appropriate controls are put in place? Do they really know what their off springs are accessing in their bedrooms?

I reflected recently that I have been making less use of my e-reader, preferring to read the printed book. Is this a subconscious reaction to the advent of modern technology? Last year, the Guardian reported that a Nielsen survey found that UK eBook sales had declined by 4% in 2016, the second consecutive year that the digital share has shrunk. It suggested that readers committed to physical books can give a sigh of relief, as new figures reveal that eBook sales are falling while sales of paper books are growing - and, interestingly, the shift is being driven by younger generations!

Recently, Lynne and I have been concerned that one of the areas that our local County Council is looking at to make financial savings concerns local libraries. It results from the fact that it appears that Northamptonshire is experiencing the greatest rate of population growth in the country, but

government funding support is failing to keep up with it. It prompted Lynne to write to our MP on the subject and one interesting statistic he revealed was that whilst Northamptonshire receives £673 per person to spend on local services, the second lowest of all County Councils, East Sussex gets £832 per head!

Clearly, there is a responsibility for local authorities to ensure that they are spending prudently. Whilst listening to a local radio programme, my attention was drawn to an item, which appeared in Private Eye's Rotten Borough Awards for 2017. They gave an 'Away with the Fairies Award' to Daventry District Council who, in an attempt to boost tourism, had awarded itself planning permission to dig a link to the Grand Union Canal, two miles away, from the town centre. The only snag is that they cannot afford the £24m that is needed, so they have come up with a compromise. The plan is to dig less than a mile of it, with the result that the only way a narrowboat could reach the planned waterside inns, shops and housing is by crane and lorry! Just what kind of enlightened thinking is that?



Photographs and text - Richard Varley



Our next Foy Conference is on the subject of **Storytelling** Jennifer Rowland tells us about it

Hello everyone! As we get closer to May, I find more and more that I want to talk about with you; stories are really exciting! Below is a bit more detail about the conference, but it would be lovely if even people who can't come could share some experiences with us - in turn we'll share these as resources after the event. Please email me at jabrgm@gmail.com with suggestions of great childrens' books to help people buy presents - are there any that kids in your family love?

Memories of Hucklow or of FOY. For example: How long have you been coming to The Nightingale Centre? How different is Hucklow now from your first experience of it? What is there that you're nostalgic about? Anything that you're very glad has gone? Have the physical changes made any difference to how you use the buildings? What memories of old friends are conjured up when you're at Hucklow? What was the most ... experience you ever had there - hottest, coldest, silliest, most dangerous, most peaceful...?

How have your times at Hucklow compared to times at Flagg?
When did you join FOY, and why? Did you ever serve on Council, or as President?

Here are a few words about storytelling from Amanda Smith, a professional storyteller who is leading a couple of our workshops and telling stories on Saturday evening:

"Storytelling is an ancient art form and the quality and integrity of its practice is to present the traditional tales repertoire. This contains stories that have lasted through generations and across cultures, containing wisdom and experience that acknowledges and celebrates the human condition beyond divisions of age, culture etc.

Storytelling works best in an intimate environment. It is adaptive, exciting and relies on the storyteller's relationship and engagement with the audience."



Storytime, magical moments of early learning...

If you want to see Amanda talking about her approach for a couple of minutes, you can find a video of her by searching Youtube for "Amanda Smith storyteller" or going straight to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4c9LgTcG46Y>.

We are going to explore many sorts of story together over the weekend of the conference. As well as Amanda's workshops about telling stories well, we'll be looking at the stories we tell of our lives and our histories; with a story quilt, we'll be seeing how a story can be told without words, and on Sunday evening we'll be sharing stories in poems and songs - bring your favourites!

We want to dive in and ask what is a story, anyway? Why do humans love narrative? What kinds of stories does our society think are important, and what could we gain if we listen to different tellers?

We're excited about being able to have a children's programme (for roughly primary-school ages) on the Saturday, and would love to see plenty of young attendees for the whole weekend or just on Saturday.

And finally, we still need one person to lead one of the morning devotions. Are you interested? Please email me.

Jennifer Rowland

Foy Conference Programme

4th-7th May, 2018

Friday 4th May

7.00pm* Evening meal

* if you expect to arrive after 7.00pm, and wish to have your meal saved for you, please let the Nightingale Centre know in advance.

8.15pm Introduction to the conference theme, followed by Epilogue

Saturday 5th May

8.00am Morning devotions

8.30am Breakfast

9.00am Saturday arrivals begin

9.30-10.45am A. Short Walk, or
B. Beginning a Story Quilt

10.45-11.10am Refreshment break

11.10am Welcomes and announcements

11.15am – 12.45pm Session 1 A. Narrative: stories are everywhere
B. Children's session

1.00pm Lunch

2.15 – 3.45pm Session 2 A. Life and family stories
B. Children's story time / creating a story

3.45 – 4.15pm Refreshment break

4.15 – 5.45pm Session 3 Telling a story well
Children's session

6.00pm Dinner

7.30pm Games

9.00pm Epilogue

9.30pm Session 4 Late night stories

Sunday 6th May

9.00am	Breakfast	
10.30am	Service on the conference theme	Old Chapel
11.00am	Memorial Service for Geoff Kent	Peach Hall
12.00-12.30pm	Planning for 2020 FOY Conference – brainstorming/ declaration of proposed topics	Hibbert Room
1.00pm	Lunch	
2.00 – 3.30pm	Session 5 – Visual stories: story quilt	Peach Hall
3.30 – 4.00pm	Refreshment break	
4.00 – 5.30pm	FOY AGM	Peach Hall
6.00pm	Dinner	
7.30pm	Stories in song and poem	Peach Hall
9.00pm approx.	Epilogue	Hibbert Room

Monday 7th May

8.00am	Morning devotions	
8.30am	Breakfast and clear rooms	
10.00 – 11.00am	Foy Conference 2020 planning	
11.00 – 11.30am	Refreshment break	
11.30am – 12.45pm	Session 6	Telling new stories; reflections and wrap-up/closing circle

At the Conference:

The Story Quilt Workshop

with Vicky Hewerdine

At the upcoming Foy Conference, we will be running a workshop on visual storytelling through the genre of Story Quilts.

Story Quilts are an old form of textile folk art, often made by community groups, with each person contributing a patch (based on a common theme or story) which will then be sewn together to form a larger piece. We hope to be able to create our own Story Quilt together, telling the story of **Foy's relationship with Great Hucklow**.

We would love everybody to take part in creating our quilt. You do not need to have any prior sewing skills, or any particular artistic leanings in order to join in. This workshop will be suitable for all ages and all skill levels, and we encourage everyone to come along and have a go.

If you would like to get your creative juices flowing in advance, think about one thing which you love about Hucklow, and about ways in which you could depict this in a single image. Maybe it's a walking boot, or a cup of tea, or a lovely view.

Keep it simple and direct. We are interested in the expression of and communication of an idea, rather than perfect technique.

Think of how expressive a child's drawing or a piece of folk art can be, even when technical considerations such as proportion are of no consequence to the artist. Please do not be inhibited by or intimidated by any such worries!



We will have some materials on hand, but if anyone happens to have any small scraps of fabric, thread (both regular sewing and/or embroidery thread), or sewing kits (needles, scissors, etc), please do bring them along, as this would be very helpful. We look forward to creating something special with you all!

Also at the Conference:

“Sing us another one”

with Jimmy Timiney

Tell Us Another One, Sing Us Another One

This year, we will come to know more about story telling and how to put a good story across, it's going to be great fun. Someone mentioned a while ago that a sing-a-round would be a good idea for a social, and then someone else suggested, 'why not have a story telling session through poems and songs, either with or without music?'. 'What a splendid idea' the people cried in unison, and so the seeds were planted.

This will happen on Sunday evening at the conference and you are invited to bring along a contribution. The poem or song can be factual or fictional, personal, amusing and so on, but not too long please. You can simply come along to listen or just fall asleep after a splendid dinner. You are also invited to bring along a musical instrument for a community sing, using some of the traditional story songs from Unisongs. It's probably only the Foy society that uses them now, but we know most of them, and some people are getting too old to learn new songs.

The session will be led by Jimmy Timiney and Vicky Hewardine through no fault of their own.

Everyone loves a chorus – everyone loves a chorus – everyone loves.....

News of Members

Hazel Warhurst



Congratulations

Alan Ruston and Rev. Dr Ann Peart on being nominated for Honorary Membership of the General Assembly.

Best wishes to both **June Pettit** and **Helen Copley** for a happy retirement.

Special Birthday Congratulations

Neill Warhurst and others who have celebrated milestone birthdays and managed to keep the news quiet and to those who have special birthdays approaching. You know who you are!!

Health News

As in the last edition of Foy News, we have in our thoughts those members who are going through difficult times with their own, or a family member's health problems: In addition to members I mentioned in the Autumn edition of Foy News, and who are still being challenged as they cope from day to day, we send our love to:- **Pat Kent, Valerie** and **Colin Horsfield, Brian** and **Kathy Packer** and **Sheila Weddell**.

Other News

Our last issue carried details of Frank Pinder's new address. It seems as though he has problems now with his own health as well as Brenda's. Please send greetings, if you will, for old times' sake. rednip3@talktalk.net

Trevor Mettam has moved to a Nursing Home from the previous Care Home. I'm sure he would appreciate hearing from old friends.

His new address is:

Seven Hills Nursing Home,
17 Cherry Tree Road,
SHEFFIELD,
S11 9AA



Foy Conference Bookings

I am pleased to announce a record number of bookings for the 2018 Conference so far. If you intend coming but haven't booked yet I advise you to contact Stella at the Nightingale Centre as soon as possible. We will continue to promote the conference to non-Foy members at the GA meetings in April.

Is Your membership at Risk?

Foy Subscriptions

These are unchanged at the very low rate of £7.50 for an individual and £10 for a couple. The new financial year runs from 1st April 2018 and my postal address, the same as the Treasurer, is on the back page of Foy News. Please make cheques payable to "The Foy Society".

If you find it easier to pay online the details are as follows:

Account name: **The Foy Society** Sort code: **09-01-50** A/c no: **05454689**

Why not set up a regular payment and in this way you won't forget.

Hazel Warhurst

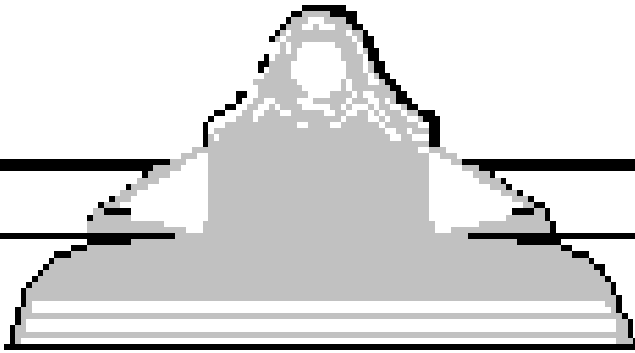
Flagg Welcome Weekend

25th-28th May

2018

Never visited or stayed at The Barn? Come along and join us for the weekend or just for Saturday. The gathering will involve a mix of activities with a service on Saturday afternoon and a social in the evening. The rest of the Bank Holiday Weekend will be a social time with some gentle walks for those inclined.

Give Neill Warhurst (see back page) a ring if you would like to sleep in the Barn, camp or join us for any meals....



Run by the Foy Society
Open to All

Foy Conference 2018

4th-7th May

Storytelling

**With Jennifer Rowland
and
Amanda Smith**

Our next conference will be held at The Nightingale Centre

If you haven't booked but would like to find out if there is still availability contact Joan Partington, conference sec.

Joan Partington

<coljopartington@gmail.com>

Some useful contacts

Treasurer and Printing:

David Warhurst,
18, Priory Way,
Ingleby Arncliffe,
N. Yorkshire. DL6 3LR



01609 882442

Flagg Contact:

Neill Warhurst
Flat 2, 9, Grosvenor Road,
Scarborough,
N. Yorkshire. YO11 2LZ



(Mobile) **01723 365589**

Membership Secretary:

Hazel Warhurst,
18, Priory Way,
Ingleby Arncliffe,
N. Yorkshire. DL6 3LR



(mobile) **07765005870**

General Secretary

Richard Varley
60 Weggs Farm Rd
NORTHAMPTON.
NN5 6HD



01604 587860

Conference Secretary:

Joan Partington,
“Sandcroft”,
Townhead, Hayton,
BRAMPTON,
Cumbria. CA8 9JF.



01228 670565

Editor - Foy News:

John Hewerdine,
Whittle Wharf,
Whittle Springs,
Chorley,
Lancashire. PR6 8AE



01257 269502

Editor's email : john@hewerdinefamily.co.uk