



Foy News Spring 2022



The Foy Society

is 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: Joy Winder at her beloved “Barn” at Flagg , with her dog, Jolly, in 2015.

Photographs: Gwyneth Roper. Richard Varley and John Hewerdine.

Please don't paste images into documents, but kindly send as separate jpg attachments.

Hard Copy produced by: David Warhurst, using the GA Zette equipment

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See back page for contacting the editor

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Our President's Piece



In a world where people are becoming afraid to say or do what feels right, I feel we may lose precious connections.

In the late 1980s, early 90s I was working as a district nurse, specialising in palliative care. I was in a very privileged position of sharing time with the most vulnerable and, although many I spoke to questioned how I could do the job, I found it the most rewarding experience. I did find, however, that I tended to be a person who ran when I could walk and seemed to be busy, busy, busy. I also had a new family that meant I could not wind down at home. I wanted something to give me time to unwind and relax a little. A friend just happened to mention that they were about to enrol on a massage course at a

local college. I jumped at the chance with the thought that it was an evening for me and that you had to slow down to give a massage. I did not envisage that this would set me on a path that has brought so much pleasure and satisfaction.

I soon discovered that some of the techniques I learnt were able to be incorporated into the terminal care I delivered. When someone is approaching death, the important things in life come clearly into focus, relationships, love and friendship. It is sad that, sometimes because of a diagnosis, these things can become more difficult. People don't know what to say, or are afraid to touch someone in case it causes pain. I could teach relatives how to touch that may relieve pain.

Following my massage course, I was hooked and soon studied aromatherapy, reflexology and Reiki amongst others, and the use of such therapies in a clinical setting. When I retired from nursing, I went to work at a local hospice as a complimentary therapist. It was here, that I truly learnt the value of touch and how to adapt therapies to meet the needs of clients. Think back to when you were a child and you fell and hurt your knee, did it not feel better when your mum picked you up and gave you a hug and rubbed it better?

Having worked in schools, where policy dictates that if the same thing happens in school, a hug could be viewed as, "Inappropriate touch". Don't get me wrong, we do have to protect people, especially children and the vulnerable and ensure that we have consent to encroach on anyone's personal space. In a world where inappropriate touch, or fear of being accused of such, is such a big deal we are in danger of losing, what I feel is very appropriate touch. We do need to have all the safeguarding measures in place to steer us through what can be a minefield.

During the pandemic, there are many who have been denied this human connection. Indeed, even at the hospice, visiting numbers have been reduced and volunteers who offer therapies have been denied access, to reduce footfall. From my own experience I can say that such therapies can help reduce pain and anxiety and allow patients some headspace to get their thoughts in order. I have had the privilege of offering such therapies that I know make a difference.

I will tell you a couple of instances that stick in my mind. I had a nun as a client and after explaining the therapies on offer I was somewhat surprised that she preferred Reiki. Some religions shun Reiki. After a quiet hour she asked,

“what do you think of whilst you give the treatment?” “Oh, that’s easy” I said “I think of you”. “I know” she replied “I could feel your prayers”. I was blown away that this gentle light touch therapy could have that effect.

There was another woman, who when I asked her to tell me something about herself, said she was just waiting to die. I suggested that whilst she was waiting, she might like a back massage, which she agreed to.



Here Gwyneth brings different therapies together into one delightful composition full of exciting aromatic elements.

Such craftwork was of course very much the essence of our last Foy Conference

On my 3rd visit she was keen to show me her spare room, that was filled with crafting paraphernalia. She said that whilst she was waiting to die, she may as well make a few cards, something she had not done for months. She had gone from waiting to die to living the end of her life. Now, that is the power of touch!

If you want to know more, please feel free to ask at the FOY conference. I may even sneak an odd bottle of massage oil in my luggage if you want a taster reflexology session.

Gwyneth Roper

A poem translation for Chinese Tiger Year, 2022

Roger Mason

Hunting at Mizhou
to the tune: *River Town*

by Su Shi 1037-1085CE



This old lord, like a mad young man still sound
Leads forth a thousand riders from the town,
To right my hawk, to left my golden hound,
Wearing my brocade cap and ermine gown.
They tell me the dread tiger is my prey
And I must shoot at him while arrows last,
Then hurl my bow rather than run away
Just like Sun Lang, the hunter in the past.
Although strong wine warms up this greybeard's breast,
It doesn't matter. If I were a frontier lord
I could serve the Empire like the best,
And the Emperor could trust my loyal sword.
Round as full Moon, I bend my carved bow
To shoot north-west and lay the Dog Star low.

The Chinese Year of the Tiger began on 1 February. Su Shi was a scholar-official of the kind we call a Mandarin in English, who ruled a town in NE China called Mizhou during the Song Dynasty (960-1279CE).

This is a *ci* poem, whose meter fitted a popular tune of the time, and I have translated it as a sonnet.

Jurchen invaders from the north-west were conquering more and more of China but Su's town was away from the war front.

Sun Lang was a legendary Chinese hunter like Nimrod in the Old Testament.

Dog Star is the Chinese name for Sirius, a very bright star in the constellation Canis Major.

A brief message from Ann Usher

Sydney, Australia, March 2022

Yes, it is raining 6th March and has been for the last 3 weeks. My nephew was one of the victims. He lost his house in Brisbane, with the Brisbane River flooding and, at the moment, is in a hotel trying to find a place to live.

Yes, more rain is predicted and all the recent and older housing development, along the flood plains of coastal rivers, are at risk.

More dams are wanted, higher dam walls on existing dams (these will greatly impact the Traditional Owners sacred site especially at Warragamba Dam). The new bridge, a few years old, will replace the historic one.

Dispensing of monetary aid is slow. Those entitled to compensation from those fires 2 years ago are still waiting, so how long will these folk wait?

Sydney Mardi Gras went ahead, with thousands partying for the first time in a couple of years. Yes it rained. I did not hear of funds being raised for the flood victims but I could be wrong. The Mardi Gras family is always generous.

The consistent news this weekend is about a couple of cricketers! No comment – our time will come soon enough.

I have a photo of my relative in Melbourne, outside the Hotel, where asylum seekers are kept for up to 9 years, and the tennis player stayed a couple of nights.

You will see the fight is still on. In Melbourne. They demonstrate regularly and a 72 year-old was arrested for painting SHAME on a building.

Stay well and safe!

Ann Usher

From Down under

Message from Stella

following a card which was signed by those of us who attended the 2021 Foy Conference in Derbyshire

Dear all in FOY,

My heartfelt apologies for the delay in responding.

The flowers are beautiful and lasting very well. They were such a treat to receive; I do love flowers!

The messages were lovely and I have to admit to being a little teary at such lovely comments.

I wish I had been able to come and see you all.

I am really pleased you all had a lovely time, despite there being a few missing. Hopefully, by next year this nonsense will be a memory and everyone will come together safely.

Lots of Love

Stella

Reporters needed to give help to GA Zette Editors in Birmingham

As at previous General Assemblies, The Foy Society will be present with its computers and supporting equipment, for the production of editions of GA Zette. The shorter duration of the meetings will make this task more challenging this year and contributions to the coverage of the various sessions will be more demanding.

Editing will be carried out by Lizzie and Lizzy, who have kindly volunteered once again. Please will Foy members attending the meetings find the Zette office and make contact with them. These young folk need all the support we can offer, especially when it comes to covering as many meetings as possible.

Again, 'bring me your news' comes the cry, and once again

a response from Dotty Haughton

I have nothing to tell you. We are stuck here amid the sheep, with the occasional trip out to the shops for essentials, such as breakfast cereals and vegetables.



Really important things such as coffee and chocolate I buy on line, which ensures that someone comes to the door and may stop for a little chat and also stops our supply of cardboard from dropping too low. You can never have too much cardboard. If the electricity prices go up too high, we may have to burn it!

The sheep are fine and lambing is starting but there are none in the field by the house yet, so I have no photos. I continue to sort clothing at The Hive for the Uniform Exchange. Our official name is Cariad a Cwtch, which means Love and Hugs. Uniform Exchanges are a brilliant idea, which means that you can pass on shirts and skirts, trousers and blouses, which still have lots of wear in them and pick up replacements. We do not attract a lot of people, as many think we are only for the destitute, which we are not; we are for everyone who cares for our planet. Oops, I nearly slipped into the Dorothy Haughton Lecture on Responsible Upcycling there. We cannot think how to get our message across. Suggestions on a postcard, please.....

Spring

There are signs of spring in the garden but no daffodils as yet, despite being in Wales. I suppose all you Saesneg, down in Lloegr are up to your eyeballs in them. Followers of the adventures of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table will recognise Logres, the name of Arthur's kingdom.

I manage to get to Shrewsbury for church on a Sunday.

The only really interesting thing that has happened, has been the Oswestry Youth Music Festival, which is organised by my ex-singing teacher, now friend, Sue Turner. Musicians, singly or in groups, come to three venues in Oswestry to enter one of the 80 or so classes. They get an assessment of their performance by an adjudicator and a first, second and third are chosen. The firsts receive a trophy which is presented by the mayor on the last day.

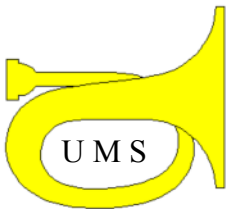


Image comes with the compliments of the Unitarian Music Society and part-simulates what is described

Found a photo on Facebook, two performers with their proud music teacher. I work as a steward, which means that I sit outside the venue ticking off performers as they arrive and handing out programmes to members of the audience, usually family and friends.

We have not yet found a way to persuade the population of Oswestry, to come in and support our wonderful young people. Suggestions on a post card, please. It is best being a steward at the Methodist church, which has no front porch and therefore we sit inside in the warm and can hear all the performers.

So that's it.

Best wishes to all

Dorothy Haughton

Dotty

Philip Colfox writes

In response to John Midgley's religion of Donald J Trump.

Just as Bush and Blair can have their religious beliefs blamed for their mistakes, such as the misconceived invasion of Iraq, so Trump can have his outlandish behaviour blamed on his religion; and why not, when religion really means the rules by which you live your life ?

As someone who, like Trump, believes in the power of positive thinking, I would not want this tool in people's toolbox for fully living their lives, to be besmirched by his extreme example. This is just as people of Bush or Blair's religious inclinations, would be sensitive to people blaming their own belief systems, for hundreds of thousands of deaths in the middle east and the political destabilisation of the Muslim world, which has affected much of humanity.

Trump simply appears to be a gangster, who has used his religious tools to do the best for himself that he possibly could. Others, who are at heart more saintly, would have produced an even more saintly result and have done so for millennia, using more conventional Christian formulations of the rule.

In defence of the theory of positive thinking, and John of course admits it has good points, I would say that it is fully incorporated into the Gospel. It is the core of the beatitudes from the sermon on the mount (*blessed are the poor etc*) and of the golden rule (*do unto others what you wish they would do unto you.*)

In my opinion, the role Unitarians can play in this, is to explore how to get all rules for living one's lives to be more useful and more effective, to share experiences in doing this and to help us all to live fuller lives. Understanding this method can be part of one's toolbox in achieving happier or fuller lives for ourselves and everyone else.

Ed: As a citizen of the world, I have a problem with politicians who always go on about putting their own country's people first. I know it's good for votes and that's why it's continuously happening, especially in the USA, but people surely need to discover another way of being patriotic, without making it all so competitive.

Ramblings from Room 10

Richard Varley



Idle thoughts of a not so idle fellow

Regular readers of this column may have detected that I have an interest in cricket, only dented but not diminished by England's recent Ashes trip 'down under'! It all started in 1955 when my Father took me to a Lancashire county championship match at **the** Old Trafford, not be confused with the **other** Old Trafford where the winter game is played.



Twelve months later, I saw the first two days of the Test Match against Australia, famous for the Surrey off spinner taking a record nineteen wickets (out of twenty). We missed the climax of the game as we set off for our summer holiday to stay with my aunts in St Leonards. We arrived just in time to switch on the radio to hear Laker take his nineteenth wicket. No elaborate celebrations in those days; he just put his sweater over his shoulders, shook hands with some of the others and walked off briefly acknowledging the applause from the crowd.

He managed to drive home, stopping off on the way without being recognised!

Some of you may recall the West Indies test team of the seventies and eighties when the team including four formidable fast bowlers who 'terrorised' opposing sides. Their slow bowlers hardly got a look in. One of that group was the Jamaican, Michael Holding. Since he retired, he became a very well-respected commentator who, with his distinctive Jamaican accent, was to be seen and heard on television. Sadly, he has just retired from that role: his distinctive voice and respected commentary on the game will be greatly missed. He was on commentary when rain interrupted play during the test match at Southampton in 2020. He used the opportunity to deliver a powerful monologue about the Black Lives Matter movement: it was shortly after the

murder of George Floyd. The next day he broke down on Sky News while talking about his own experiences of racism. The clips went viral. They reached an audience who had no interest in cricket, no idea who he was. It was also the occasion when Michael Holding and former England women's international Ebony Rainford-Brent featured in a video in which they spoke about the racism that they had experienced during their careers. I watched a very moving hour-long programme that was shown some time later in the year.

The Newtown Review of Books has an excellent review of his book and I am including a summary of some of its observations. His commentating colleagues had asked how hard it had been for him to make a film. He said that he hadn't held back. From what he said, and the way that he said it, he thought people saw anger, frustration and emotion. He just about managed to hold back tears.'

Subsequently, Holding was approached by other media outlets to talk more about the issue. His response was that he wanted nothing to do with it. But those in his circle urged him to continue to speak out. He received a phone call from Thierry Henry, the champion French footballer, who talked about instances of the racism he had experienced and encouraged Holding to continue with his developing campaign. This did the trick, and motivated Holding to write *'Why We Kneel, How We Rise'*. Both the film and the subsequent interview are available on YouTube and are highly recommended. To me, what comes through in the interview is Holding's overwhelming sense of despair. You will also find other interesting pieces you can see or listen to.

Michael Holding is not the first person to talk about racism in sport and in society more generally. What is interesting, is the number of leading Black sports' women and men, mainly from English-speaking nations, he has assembled to talk about their experiences: champion Olympic sprinter Usain Bolt from Jamaica; Grand Slam tennis champion Naomi Osaka from Japan; English footballer and one-time manager of the English women's team, Hope Powell; African-American Olympic fencer Ibtihaaj Muhammad; African American gold medallist Michael Johnson; Thierry Henry from France; South African fast bowler Makhaya Ntini; and Indigenous Australian AFL player Adam Goodes, winner of two Brownlow Medals and member of two premiership teams.

"His ambition is to educate people about why racism exists, how it works and what it is like to be treated differently just because of the colour of your skin. To understand what it 'feels' like when you walk into the room as the only Black guy; what it feels like to be eyed with suspicion; to be followed when you go into a shop; to know that your life is valued less. He wants to show how the dehumanisation of a race of people began, and was then

encouraged, to satisfy the narrative of inferiority and superiority. He wanted to educate people about the true history of mankind, which should dispel the myth of one or another race being inferior or superior." I really couldn't have summed it up any better. It makes very thought-provoking and moving reading and something I would urge you to read, especially if you are coming to this year's Foy Conference. Again, there are recordings of some of his pieces on YouTube and BBC iPlayer. Some of them include Ebony Rainford-Brent, the first Black lady cricketer to play for England. After retiring, she has gone on to become a sporting executive and a pundit for the BBC's Test Match Special; she is one of the first female expert summarisers to commentate on men's international cricket matches. She returned to Surrey after being appointed their first Director of Women's Cricket.

Since then, I have read David Harewood's biography, *'Maybe I Don't Belong Here'*, a powerful and thought-provoking account of the life of an actor, trained at RADA, who performed extensively in this country and in Hollywood. He was only 23 years old when he had a psychotic breakdown and was sectioned under the Mental Health Act. It took six police officers to physically restrain him before he was sedated, hospitalised and transferred to a locked ward. It has taken him thirty years to be able to process what he went through. The book looks at what caused this breakdown and how he recovered to become a successful actor. He explores what it means to grow up both Black and British. He was born in Birmingham and most of his childhood was spent in Small Heath. A telling statistic is that, in this country, four times as many Black men suffer mental health issues compared with White men or, indeed, their Black counterparts in the Caribbean. Space only allows me to touch on the essence of Harewood's book, but it is another work I would recommend you include on your reading list, before May if you have the time!

Whilst dwelling on my recent reading, I have nearly finished reading, or rather, listening to an audio book 'borrowed' from the library, Andrew Lownie's book *'Traitor King'* described on the cover as the *'The Scandalous Exile of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor'*, and as the exclusive new royal biography! As a result of his wish to marry a twice divorced American, he abdicated, became ostracised by the remainder of his family and lived an exceedingly lavish lifestyle, mostly in France. It is a tale of extravagance and resentment, played out in grand locations: a Rothschild-owned castle in Austria, various French chateaux, the lavish palace in the Bahamas where the couple lived during the Duke's two years as governor during WW2. One review suggests that Lownie does nothing to challenge the prevailing view of the Windsors as a thoroughly "nauseating couple". I can't disagree with that sentiment. He apparently goes

further than most, suggesting that, beyond simply admiring the Nazis, the Duke was a willing participant in a Joachim von Ribbentrop-led plan to install him on the British throne once the War was over. It is a sad but compelling, unrelentingly damning portrait.

When the defeat of Germany became certain, the Windsors became unimportant. The book descends largely into trivia, as Lownie details dinner parties the couple attended, mansions they refurbished, and the duchess' lavish shopping sprees. The list of what the Duke had in his wardrobe is mind boggling: don't ask about the Duchess' contribution. The Duke basically led an empty life with his sole hobby that of golf and some gardening. The Duchess was never granted the title HRH and it was not expected that others would bow and curtsy to her. Their lifestyle heads one to research as to how it was funded. I'll leave that you!

It is interesting to compare attitudes in 1936 to today. It is likely that Prince Charles will succeed his mother to the throne. When this occurs, we shall have a divorced Monarch with a divorced Queen, it having been announced that Camilla will be titled 'Queen': how things change. I wonder what the Duke of Windsor's thoughts would be? Other questions, that are interesting to ponder, is the holding of a coronation, involving a King and Queen, who are both divorcees, in Westminster Abbey. Watch this space. One other thought: will we ever have a Black Monarch? I guess that this all goes back to where I started rambling....

As a footnote, some of you may remember that, several editions ago, I mentioned that some of a particular supermarket's delivery vehicles were carrying small, humorous, sayings like, 'no baguettes are kept in this vehicle overnight'. I saw a another one recently: 'avocados welcome careful drivers'.....

'Covid precautions
led to mixed messages!'



2022, and not just one Winter Walking Weekend

The editor is not sure what went wrong with the concept of two reports, rather than one, now that we have been divided into two groups, for getting ourselves back into shape after the festive season. Anyway, here are some of my photographs of the first one. I was unable to do any walking myself this year. However, I was there with camera, in time for the social evening of WW1.





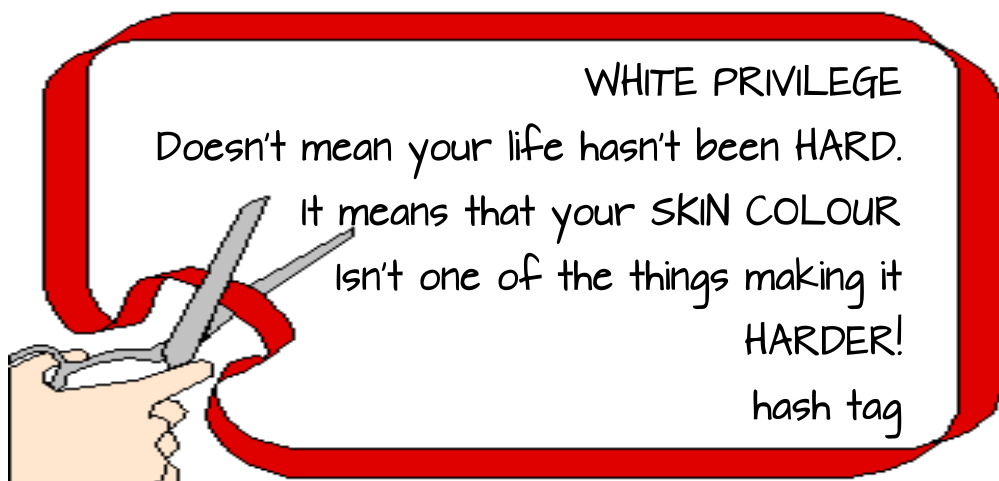
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Next Foy Conference

In response to a request from our editor, Winnie Gordon, our next conference leader, kindly sent us the following, to make us think about the subject of our forthcoming 2022 Foy Conference

Last year, the June 26th Inquirer had a picture on the front cover of a white female holding a sign saying:



For me it was a seminal moment. A truism spoken from the young that should never have needed to be spoken. It should already have been known by all.

In the April Foy Conference you will hear of lives made harder because of skin colour, of white privilege and police status that allows for avoidance of labelling, arrest and persecution for which acts any other citizens would never quickly be locked away. You will also hear of the power of a uniform in forming identity and belonging. You will hear about the difficulty sometimes experienced by People of Colour as they navigate our whiteness space, church halls. It's not all gloom, as you will hopefully leave the conference further along on your journey of justice, able to have those difficult conversations and hopefully, a step further into moving on our Unitarians.

Winnie Gordon

Ian Minter another of our Conference Leaders says



One day in March 2018, police in Lewisham, London, responded to calls raising concerns for the well-being of Kevin Clarke. Officers approached Kevin in the street. He was calm, but disorientated, having some kind of psychotic episode....

A month after Kevin Clarke's death, his mother Wendy, during an interview with a newspaper reporter, spoke these telling words:

"Kevin said this was going to happen to him. Ever since he was tasered (back in 2015) by police, when he was being sectioned, Kevin was scared...

Scared the police would kill him one day. So many people this has happened to..."

His cousin concluded: "Do I think the police are going to learn from this?"

No."

Ian Minter

Foy Society Obituaries

Anne Stephens (nee Greenhalgh)

by Janet Ford

It is with great sadness that I write this article about Anne. She had suffered these last few years with a number of medical problems and visits to the hospital and then being transferred to the Balmoral Nursing Home, Mottram. It was there that she died peacefully in her sleep with her brother Roy, by her bedside.

I had known Anne for most of her life as she was only 2 years younger, through Old Chapel day School and Secondary school. Dukinfield.

Because of her attending Old Chapel Day and Sunday school we got to know one another very well. She gave so much to our cause - in the UYPL, Secretary of the Pantomime Society for 39 years (so I am told). Examiner of Accounts of Dukinfield Old Chapel (DOC), a member of the Café Stall during the Bazaar Years then the Autumn Fair. She also worked behind stage for both the Panto & Dramatic shows with props. I have also been reminded of her years as Inquirer & Unitarian distribution secretary.

Anne had other interests outside Old Chapel life, she was a member of the FOY Society. Her interests in music included being in the DOC Choir and attending the Halle Orchestral Industrial Concerts and as a long time member of the Yew Tree Singers.

One of her closest friends from childhood was Pat Shaw (nee Bancroft) as they lived in the same area. Anne was a very private person and I greatly admired her in the ability to overcome her stammer resulting in her confidence to give verbal reports etc.

Anne leaves behind her brother Roy, his wife Jean and their family, and also Walter Young who shared much of her later years. We offer our condolences to them all, our life has been richer for knowing Anne.

Janet Ford

Bernard Omar



Words of
Rev John Harley

The congregation of Frenchay Chapel were sad to lose Bernard Omar on 10 March 2021, when he died peacefully in a care home aged 83.

Looking through past chapel newsletters, I came across a photo of Bernard cutting his 80th birthday cake. Below the photo, were the words 'Bernard has been one of the pillars who has kept Frenchay running through the years.' And indeed he did, as well as contributing to the wider Unitarian movement and to a religiously diverse world.

For some years he served as a Unitarian GA Council member, took an interest in Penal Affairs and served Maidstone Church as a trustee. Active in the Western Union, he was chairperson for a while (given an Honorary Life Membership in gratitude for his service).

Bernard and his wife Dorothy both worked very hard for Frenchay chapel, fundraising, cleaning, organising membership and social events. Both held official positions such as president of the chapel and Bristol group president. When there was no minister, Bernard led and arranged services.

Bernard was interested in people, cultures and religion. He observed what he perceived to be their strengths and their weaknesses but was always appreciative of their contributions. His growing deafness frustrated him a great deal and he wrote appreciatively of the NHS when they provided him with hearing aids.

Bernard and Dorothy enjoyed travelling with their caravan. He continued to travel when he was on his own. He accepted an invitation from Oscar, a Muslim Turk who visited and spoke at both chapels on a number of occasions, to join a group visiting Istanbul.

Bernard led a full and active life and contributed greatly to the Unitarian movement.

Susan Wildman wrote

Bernard was a devoted Unitarian and tireless supporter of the Bristol Inter Faith Group. He was a well-known character at Unitarian General Assembly Annual Meetings and active in archiving the history of Frenchay Chapel.

Peter Godfrey wrote

'The world is a better place because Bernard lived'. Right up to the end of his life he had a thirst for ideas and understanding beliefs and his sharp, wry sense of humour never left him. He was devoted to his children, David and Lisa and his grandchildren. One of his catchphrases on family holidays was 'life is exciting' - this summed up his curiosity in life and ability to wonder at the world.

Liza found these quotes on his Facebook page, which I think speak volumes about Bernard's outlook:

"What you think, you become. What you feel, you attract. What you imagine, you create". (Buddha)

He also loved Rumi's poem,

One Song, which says, in part:

*Every war and every conflict between human beings
has happened because of some disagreement about names.*

*It is such an unnecessary foolishness,
because just beyond the arguing
there is a long table of companionship
set and waiting for us to sit down.*

A challenge and invitation for the Frenchay congregation, will be to keep Bernard's legacy and service alive and ensure future generations can discover us and find inspiration from the Unitarian ethos.

Originally written by John Harley for publication in the Inquirer and reproduced here with permission.



Joy Winder 1942 - 2021

Joy in 2015 welcomes us to “The Barn” at Flagg

Because of Joy's influence on so many of us in the Foy Society, the editor has decided to print the eulogy from her Bedford Memorial Service in full. It was written by Rev. Ant Howe, with help from members of Joy's family, and delivered by Ant.

Joy was born in October 1942, to parents Humph and Daphne Winder. Daphne had emigrated to the UK from Illinois, in the United States. Joy was always very proud of that heritage. She had an elder half-brother, Jim, who due to war and the Atlantic divide, she didn't meet until she was 5. The family was soon joined by younger brother David. As a girl she enjoyed attending the small Unitarian congregation in Marple, Cheshire. She also very much enjoyed the company of the family's whippets – Jolly, Daisy and Jester.

At the age of only eight, Joy was sent to Penrhos College boarding school in North Wales. She didn't enjoy the experience, but was sociable and at times rebellious, enjoying theatre and elocution. She established some key lifelong friendships and always retained a fondness for North Wales.

Throughout her childhood and teenage years, Flagg, and particularly the Barn, were a constant pleasure with Humph. It became one of the greatest places in her life; she loved the wide skies, basic living and wonderful community.

Leaving school (after slightly misleading her parents about her academic potential - she was always proud of never gaining Maths O level) she returned to Hyde and studied household management, before working for a short time at Wall's sausage factory; an experience she always credited with her ability to handle piping hot food (“I've got asbestos fingers, you know!”)

Throughout her early adulthood, Joy remained a committed and active Unitarian and, on a visit to The Nightingale Centre in Great Hucklow in the early 60's, she met another young Unitarian, Roger Mason (*ed.* See page 6). They soon decided to marry and settled down together first in Cambridge

where Roger was studying and later in East Barnet, when Roger got a permanent job at University College, London.

First born was Helen in February 1967 followed by Isobel in December 1968. Whilst pregnant with Isobel and accompanied by the infant Helen, Joy and her good friend Rosemary, drove to northern Norway in a Mini Traveller to visit Roger who was doing field work there. Quite intrepid for the late 60s. Peter joined the family in the summer of 1972 after the family had moved to St Albans.

Anyone who visited the household at Clarence Road will remember a hive of chaotic busyness, presided over by Joy. The house was always filled with people – extended family, friends, teenagers, children, pets and those Joy reached out to support – lodgers, the homeless, international students, foster children and neighbours. The chip fryer was constantly on the go.

Joy was fiercely loyal to her extended family. One of 13 close cousins, throughout her life she was often the centre of family gatherings and worked hard to keep communication and family support going.

Despite a busy home life, Joy was never afraid to roll her sleeves up to help out the family finances, from cleaning, secretarial work, home-help organiser, even night shifts in a local psychiatric hospital.

In her forties, Joy decided to return to academia, completing a part time degree in English with History at what is now the University of Hertfordshire. This was a remarkable feat for someone with such a busy and full life and some fear of study; but her success in her degree gave her the confidence to go on and qualify as a Social Worker and then later as a Counsellor and Psychotherapist. Her psychotherapy training was challenging and life changing.

Joy's lifelong affinity with Unitarianism, saw the family being warmly welcomed into the fellowship of Enfield and Barnet. Roger and Joy separated in 1985. Her father, Humph, came to join the household in his old age and lived with Joy and the children until his death in 1990.

Joy fundamentally believed in local politics and was a committed Liberal. She stood as a paper candidate in Barnet in the 60's, worked hard for the liberals in the 70s and became a local councillor in both St Albans and Manchester in the 80's and 90's. Being a liberal was often heartbreaking, particularly when she lost her seat. When asked shortly before her death by a hospital nurse 'any allergies?', she replied 'only Tories!'

She was also a key activist in the local adoption society as well as Housing Aid in St Albans and her professional work with those with learning difficulties

led her to become a governor at a local school for children with severe and complex needs.

In the late nineties, Joy moved to Manchester. She was keen to return to her geographical roots and to start a new life away from St Albans. She loved northern life, renovating her house in Demesne Road and enjoying the multiculturalism of the local community. Here she ran a successful psychotherapy practice from her home, became a Lib Dem councillor and got involved with Cross Street Chapel – serving as treasurer for some time.

She also became closely involved with the then Unitarian College in Manchester, running a Personal Dynamics of Ministry group for those training to become Unitarian Ministers and later, serving on the college committee.

Joy was beyond delighted with the arrival of her five grandchildren during these years. First Francisco, followed by Isla, Clara, Charlotte and Seth. She was a brilliant and devoted grandmother – taking time and trouble to get to know each of them on their own without parents present and enjoyed long weekends in Rome with Fran, Stockholm with Isla and Vienna with Clara. They have many stories to tell – mostly of getting lost, eating things of which their parents would disapprove and making friends with the locals thanks to Granny Joy who had a strong belief in parenting with ‘healthy neglect.’

In 2011, Joy made her final move to the Grove in Bedford where she settled well in her flat with her two dogs. A naturally sociable person, Joy quickly made a trusted circle of friends including her neighbours, the memoir class which she continued to attend online once the pandemic came, through her voluntary work with Cruse Bereavement Support, supporting witnesses at Luton Crown Court and working actively for the Lib Dems in Bedford. She continued to be closely involved in Unitarian life: as part of the Foy society, Flagg, The Hibbert Trust, and as one of the leaders at the annual Ministry in the Making conference. Her Unitarian faith was very important to her and she treasured the friendships she made. Joy was never afraid to embrace new ideas and changes in our denomination, but was certainly ready to speak out if she didn’t agree with something – even writing to The Inquirer (our magazine) just a few months back.

She was a friend and confidant to many Unitarian Ministers – myself included. Her shrewd observations, wise advice, and listening ear was appreciated by many. In later years, when she could no longer get around as much, Joy kept in touch with everyone by phone.... And you knew if Joy phoned that you were likely to be on for some time and in for a conversation that could easily last



Ed:

Most of our time spent with Joy. was at either Great Hucklow or Flagg.

Here in 2019 is my favourite picture of Joy with her last whippet, "Jolly".

Most of the time her dogs would travel with her in the car and they loved running in the Derbyshire countryside.

two hours! When the pandemic hit, Joy mastered Zoom and spent many happy hours visiting Unitarian congregations online.

She began extensively researching her American ancestry – proudly saying that Mormons in America were assisting her in her research!.... and she was delighted to learn that two of her ancestors went over on the Mayflower – something of which her American mother was unaware.

Joy was a passionate Liberal Democrat – going to the annual Lib Dem conference, and keeping up to date on politics generally. She listened to LBC radio late into the night and was always up to date on what was happening in the world.

Over four years ago, Joy was diagnosed with cancer and was given a prognosis of just a few months to live. I guess it shouldn't be a surprise that such a stubborn woman as Joy defied all the odds and went on to live several more years. Supported brilliantly by the oncology team at Addenbrookes Hospital, immunotherapy held the cancer at bay and Joy continued to live her life, albeit slowing down as the years went by.

To her friends she was quite matter of fact about her terminal diagnosis and showed amazing strength – yet of course we all knew that Joy could burst into tears at a moment's notice about things far more trivial (a trait she blamed on her difficult boarding school experiences).

Up until a few months ago she was still doing bits of work: Unitarian, Lib Dem and as a Cruse volunteer.

As Joy became less mobile, she found great support in Joanna, her carer. Joy loved Joanna, who became a close companion and said that nothing was too much trouble for her. I know that the family are incredibly grateful for Joanna's dedication to Joy. Joy was also assisted at home by Yvette and Beata and by numerous neighbours and friends in Bedford. The family would like to thank everyone who helped Joy and enabled her to achieve her wish to die peacefully at home.

The last time I saw Joy was last July when she came to the Ministry in the Making Conference at Great Hucklow. She was determined to be there, although was a lot more frail by this point – yet she was still the latest to bed each evening, holding court in the lounge and speaking to ministry students and new ministers - - something which had been a feature of Joy's life for so many years.

She once told me that her Unitarian faith meant that she didn't fear death as she couldn't possibly believe in any judgement on the other side. In fact, she wasn't too certain that there was another side at all – and in one of my last conversations with her, she said it was a bit annoying that someone like Charles Darwin hadn't come back to tell us for sure either way!

Although perhaps Joy wasn't too convinced about God or Heaven, she was no less religious - - she saw something spiritual in people and in the power of

bringing people together in community. She was a Unitarian through and through, and she believed in what we stand for.

Joy's last months were spent at home with Jolly – the last in a long line of whippets.

When it became clear that she didn't have much longer to live, Joy set about phoning and summoning her family and friends to say goodbye, and seeing people that she wanted to see. In typical Joy blunt fashion I'm told she began conversations with "Hello it's Joy, I'm dying and I'm phoning to say goodbye".

But that was Joy..... blunt, funny, mischievous, wise, stubborn, but lovely. A unique person – not without her faults, but faults far, far outweighed by the good. I don't think anyone who ever met Joy will ever forget her.

We were blessed to have known her, and I'm privileged that she was my friend.

She'd asked Mark (Rev Mark Hutchinson) and myself to be involved in her funeral when she was first diagnosed with her illness. She told me that 'once the end was coming' that we'd have a conversation about the Service.

I phoned her a few weeks before she died to have that conversation – but she was more interested in any Unitarian gossip I knew about and, when I pressed her on the Service, she just said "I'm sure you'll all do a good job."

I won't speak for much longer as Joy once told me off for waffling in a Service I conducted that she came to!

The final time I heard Joy's voice was when I was talking to her daughter Helen on the phone. Halfway through the conversation Joy's voice broke in and declared "I'm not dead yet!".

I suppose that, given Joy's ability to defy the odds, it was actually a surprise when the day did come.

We will miss her – though she was ready to go and she deserves her rest.

And today we give thanks for Joy – for our lives have been made richer, and certainly more interesting, for having known her.

Rev Ant Howe

(Editor's Note: Dot and I were privileged to attend the service in Bedford, where two of Joy's grand-daughters, took part. Delightful memories from Isla and beautiful singing from Clara. Our thanks go to Joy's family with whom Ant Howe created this obituary, as presented by him in a most memorable memorial service.)



News of Members

Hazel Warhurst

Special Birthdays

Martin Croucher who was **80** on 6th February 2022



To **Helen Copley** who celebrated turning **60** on 7th March 2022
And in advance to our Editor,

John Hewerdine - whose 80th will be on May 31st.

Sad News

As many of you will have heard, **Joy Winder**, an inspiring lady and dear friend to many of us, died at her home in Bedford on 24th November 2021. A very moving service in celebration of her life was held on Saturday 8th January 2022, attended by a number of Foy Members in person and on Zoom. See page 23 for a full transcription of Joy's eulogy.

Former member **Ann Stephens (nee Greenhalgh)** of Dukinfield died peacefully in a Nursing Home in Mottram.

Kind Thoughts

We send our love and concern to those members who are going through a difficult time with health issues. It's good to know that a few of you have had successful operations and are on the road to recovery.

We hope you can look forward to a summer with less pain and greater mobility.

GA meetings in Birmingham

Foy will have our usual stall in the exhibition area with membership information, copies of Foy News and booking details for our **May Conference**. Everyone is welcome to spend some time there chatting to other delegates during the coffee and tea breaks. We have an excellent Conference lined up, which deserves a wide audience. Non-members are welcome to attend so feel free to encourage friends to join us at the Nightingale Centre. Please send me any news of members in good time for the Autumn edition of Foy News.

(See deadline printed inside the front cover)

Membership Subscription Rates

As many of us are only too well aware, the past two years since Covid have caused us to lose track of time. I note that there are still subscriptions outstanding from **2020-21** and **2021-22**. Please will you find time to bring your membership up to date, or let me know if you wish to cancel your affiliation.

The Treasurer thanks those who have already paid their subscriptions for the current year 2022-23. Membership is £7.50 for an individual and £10 for a couple.

If you feel able to pay more, please consider adding a donation to the Flagg Chapel Fund, which assists young people attending Unitarian events and appropriate conferences. Thank you to those who have already generously donated.

Payment by Bank Transfer is preferred: **Santander plc**

Account name: The Foy Society

Sort code: 09-01-50

Account number: 05454689

If this is difficult for you then by all means write a cheque made payable to **“The Foy Society”** and post it to the Treasurer’s address. You can find it on the back page of Foy News.

Hazel

Foy's Motion at Birmingham

The Foy motion is::

The General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches:

- i) Affirms with joy that each person's understanding and statement of their own gender identity is a matter of conscience;
 - ii) Affirms that transgender rights are human rights;
 - ii) Joins the British Medical Association, the Trades Union Congress and others in civil society in urging the adoption of a self-declaration model for gender recognition by the UK and devolved governments. And
 - iv) Requests that the Chief Officer, lobby for this model in response to UK or devolved government consultations and on any other suitable occasion.
- * There is a draft Gender Recognition Bill under consultation in the Scottish Parliament now. The call for views will remain open until after the annual meetings, giving the Chief Officer time to respond in detail, on behalf of the GA, if the motion passes (the Scottish Parliament's call for views is open until 16th May)
<https://yourviews.parliament.scot/ehrcj/gender-recognition-reform-bill/>
- * there continue to be ongoing media-driven attacks on trans men and trans women, horribly reminiscent of gay panic attacks from previous decades;
- * the psychological and medical evidence is strong that gender-affirming care saves lives;
- * there is strong evidence from peer countries like Ireland that the self-recognition model minimises bureaucracy and is not abused.

John Rowland, who will be proposing the motion, by pre-recorded video writes, "Unfortunately I am not able to attend in person this year. If you have any comments or questions in advance of the meetings, please do get in touch". j.n.b.rowland@gmail.com

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