

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)
CHEADLE HULME MEETING
Sunday 31 May 2015

10 Friends present.

1. Hildegard Brooker. We record with sadness of the death of Hildegard Maria Brooker on Sunday 10 May 2015 at the age of 92. Burial is to take place on Tuesday 9 June at Sale Friends Meeting House followed by a meeting for worship at Emmanuel Church in Didsbury.

Hildegard Rujder was born in Vienna on 19 June 1922. Her parents had moved there from Hungary via Berlin. Her father was born into an orthodox Jewish family and her mother into a Catholic family, but they both decided to abandon their religious backgrounds and converted to the Lutheran Church, where they were married and where Hilde was christened. However, the family was not particularly religious.

In 1939 Hilde came to England as a refugee with the Kindertransport, and this was to influence her throughout her future life. With the help of Quakers her parents were also able to escape to England just before the beginning of World War II, and in due course became wardens of the refugee hostel set up by Quakers in Cheadle Hulme. Later they became members of Cheadle Hulme Meeting. Hilde was employed as a helper in the hostel for a time and had very happy memories of living there.

She had an artistic temperament. Before moving to Cheadle Hulme she studied fashion design at the Liverpool Art School. She later trained for the stage and became a successful actress. However, after her marriage to Tony Parker in 1944 and the birth of their two children, Kristen and John, she was unwilling to leave the children behind in order to go on tour. This was a time of much happiness, but also of turbulence and difficulties, and Hilde and Tony's marriage ended in divorce. In 1961 she married Ray Brooker but that marriage, too, failed to last.

Both Hilde's mother and her daughter, Kristen, met tragic and unexpected deaths, her mother in a road accident while making a return visit to Vienna, and Kristen through sudden illness in Belgium while returning with Hilde from a holiday in Vienna.

Hilde studied art and particularly enjoyed painting portraits and the human body. In later life she gained a certificate in art therapy. She was a talented artist and good company, and she made friends through her art and through her many other interests, including her love of music, and at rallies in support of, for example, CND.

As a young mother in Stockport, Hilde embraced the Catholic Church and worked tirelessly as a volunteer for the St Vincent de Paul Society at that time. She never lost touch with the Catholic Church but certainly became disillusioned by some of its teaching and practice. She much admired Pope Francis and kept abreast of religious news, and of what was happening in

the world generally until shortly before her death. In the late 1980s Hilde made contact again with Cheadle Hulme Quaker Meeting and in 1997 joined Friends, bringing with her a wide interest in and knowledge of religious matters. Becoming a Quaker brought some stability to her life, and she was very much part of the Meeting.

About this time she moved to Didsbury to be near the Jewish community there, for she had a great respect for Jewish traditions and for her relatives on her father's side. She loved living in Didsbury and had a wide range of friends there. She enjoyed her balcony garden. In 2005 Hilde organised a campaign to protest about the poor maintenance of Didsbury's Fletcher Moss Park, and this galvanised public attention and led to the formation the following year of the Friends of Fletcher Moss Park and Botanical Gardens.

Throughout her adult life Hilde always lived under the cloud of her mental health issues, which at times were enormous and overwhelming. In old age she suffered greatly from arthritis, needing replacements in both hips and both knees. Her deformed and painful hands made her dependent for care on others, which she found very trying. But she continued to live life as fully as possible, and was most appreciative of her friends and carers who took her out for a coffee or a meal, to the park, or to the Saturday morning coffee concerts at Emmanuel Church. In the year before her death she started to learn computing. Hilde's artistic temperament was never far beneath the surface and it could bring pain as well as joy. She has been described as 'feisty' and relationships with her could be challenging, but she made the most of a sometimes difficult life and gave friendship in good measure. Her gratitude to Quakers for the help they had given her and her parents was always present with her.

We give thanks for the grace of God as shown in the life of Hildegard Brooker.

2. Minute regarding Hildegard Brooker. Minute 1 should be forwarded to East Cheshire Area Meeting and to Hilde's niece, Lesley Smith.

3. Readings. Paragraphs 18 and 23 of *Advices and Queries* have been read in Meeting for Worship.

4. Intervisitation. Peter Eccles and Taylor Giacoma will visit Frandley in June. Alan Ingram will visit Crewe and Nantwich in July.

5. East Cheshire Meeting, May Business Meeting. The Friend appointed attended this meeting and a report was given after meeting for worship. The relevant minutes have been noted.

6. East Cheshire Meeting, June Business Meeting. We appoint Taylor Giacoma and Peter Eccles to attend this meeting to be held at the Ridge Methodist Church, Marple on Saturday 13 June at 11 a.m.

7. Meeting finances: 2014 accounts. Further to Minute 4 of our last meeting, Rachel Mulliner has presented the accounts for 2014. The General Purposes fund is down to £3,786.65, which is £1,213.12 less than we had at the beginning of the year. The total Meeting assets have gone down from £36,440.91 to £25,245.34, a decrease of £11,195.57. This is largely due to spending £7,670 on the construction of the wall in front of the Meetinghouse. We accept the accounts pending Geoffrey Clifton's examination of the accounts. We thank Rachel Mulliner for her work on the accounts.

8. Contribution to Britain Yearly Meeting. We agree to contribute £2,000 to Britain Yearly Meeting this year from the General Purposes Fund.

9. Christian Aid. Alan Ingram reports that, during Christian Aid week, members of the Meeting collected £125.16 by house to house collection (four roads) and £374.16 from the sponsored walk (four walkers). We thank Friends who supported this endeavour in various ways.

10. We agree to respond to the following appeals:

10a. Wolverhampton Quaker Meetinghouse Roof. We agree to contribute £60 towards the Wolverhampton Quaker Meetinghouse Roof appeal from the General Purposes Fund.

10b. Oakham Meetinghouse Roof. We agree to contribute £60 towards the Oakham Meetinghouse Roof appeal from the General Purposes Fund.

10c. Horsham Meetinghouse. We agree to contribute £60 towards the Horsham Meetinghouse appeal from the General Purposes Fund.

11. Literature. We agree to give Peter Eccles £21 to purchase literature for the Meeting.

12. Meeting Outings.

12a. Quaker Tapestry in Kendal. We ask Taylor Giacomina to organise a visit to the Quaker Tapestry exhibit in Kendal.

12b. Peace Museum in Bradford. We ask Peter Eccles to organise a visit to the Peace Museum in Bradford.

12c. Fletcher Moss Park. We ask Rachel Mulliner to organise a picnic at Fletcher Moss Park.

13. Lunch and viewing of the Swarthmore Lecture. We agree to have lunch after Meeting and listen to the 2015 Swarthmore Lecture. Peter Eccles agrees to provide a soup, bread, and cheese lunch. Funds will be collected for the Quaker Project Fund.

14. Quaker Songs. We ask Mike Nash to put forward a few possible Saturday evening dates when the Quaker Songs Project, of which he is a part, could perform at the Meetinghouse.

Signed,

Taylor Giacoma and Peter Eccles