

FARINGDON PEACE GROUP

FPGAGM21Events

OTHER ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS October 2020 to October 2021

Remembrance Sunday 2020

Karen laid a wreath with white and red poppies on our behalf during the afternoon. The usual ceremony was curtailed because of covid restrictions, nevertheless a few people did turn up to be part of the occasions.

Remembering Bethlehem

We held our usual Women in Black Vigil for Bethlehem on 8th December. 6 women stood silently while we had the support of 2 men who gave our leaflets explaining why we were there.

Treaty for the Prevention of Nuclear Weapons

This came into force in January 2021. We will follow this up by trying to persuade Faringdon Town Council to write to the government asking them to ratify the Treaty, which so far they have refused to do. Thus we will be joining with local councils up and down the country who support the Treaty along with the majority of the peoples of the world. Thanks to Rosalind for taking this on.

Saturday 3 July Peace Fete?? Peace Picnic!!

What to do instead of a Peace Fete? Eight of us met together in the garden of the Friends' Meeting House on 11 June and we agreed that a Peace Picnic would be a good compromise. This was the first in-person meeting for the Peace Group since March 2019! We decided to restrict numbers to 30 people, on a first come, first served basis as the government's rules were so uncertain. The result was that people enjoyed chatting to each other on the Jubilee Field in Uffington. As ever on a Peace Fete day, the sun shone!

Big Bike Ride for Palestine Friday 30 July.

For once, we didn't have to go to London for a demonstration. It came to us! The Big Bike ride was to highlight the plight of the Palestinians, and raise money for children in Gaza. As we stood in the pouring rain in Shellingford, we were able to cheer on wave after wave of cyclists on their way from Bristol to London. Roughly 200 in all! They were pleased to see us and we were delighted to see them. 8 of us were there at only 24 hours notice and I think we all found it a very moving experience. It was so inspiring to be part of supporting the Palestinians in this way.

Greenham Common 40 years on.

On the weekend of 3rd September we were able to welcome the second march from South Wales to the Greenham Common. This second march was conceived in order to tell the younger generation about the struggle to get rid of nuclear-tipped Cruise missiles from the then Greenham Common air base near Newbury. Several of our Peace Group members had spent many hours at Greenham supporting the Women's Peace Camp in the 1980's. How important it is to remember our history, and succeeding generations won't know about it if we don't tell them. There's always the danger of campaigns such as this being written out of the history books.

Three of us went over on the Sunday, a lovely sunny day, and enjoyed meeting old friends and observing some of the activities such as how to construct a bender!

Big Green Day

On Saturday 25th September, Faringdon Town Council organised a Big Green Day in the Corn Exchange. Thanks to Karen we were able to display a very attractive display entitled 'The Carbon Footprint of the Military', (with acknowledgements to the Scientists for Global Responsibility) . We were able to talk to people including our Conservative MP, David Johnston, and we collected 38 signatures to a petition asking the government to press for the figures of the carbon footprint of the military to be included in the statistics compiled by the United Nations for COP26.

Oxfordshire Peace Campaign –'Keep Space for Peace' week

Representatives at OPC meetings, -all on Zoom,- were Helen, Jennie and Phil.

As part of the annual 'Keep Space for Peace' week, for the second year running, OPC organised a Zoom rally with the valuable help of the technology experts at CND. We even had a speaker from the U.S, Bruce Gagnon, who we met in person 2 or 3 years ago. The hope was to publicise the prominence of the communications base at USAF Croughton. A very experienced line-up included Bruce Gagnon, Paul Mobbs, Rae Street and the Sea Green Singers from Oxford. The subjects covered were the frightening plans of the US to conquer not only the world, but space itself. If their plans come to fruition, there is conceivably a time when the amount of space junk becomes so great it will blot out the sun, and the world will be in permanent darkness! . The question of nuclear power was also addressed, by Rae Street, and she highlighted the work of Prof. Andy Stirling and Dr. Phil Johnston, who have exposed the link between nuclear power and nuclear weapons. The reason we have the former is because the military needs the latter.

A grim and frightening prospect – but that's where we're going. However, being in the peace movement, we are hopeful that the more people realise what is happening, the sooner we'll be able to stop it!

The Sea Green singers restored our shattered thoughts, with songs and photos of past demonstrations at the base, and the Faringdon Peace Group banner figured prominently! Thanks to all those who have taken part over the years.

Black Lives Matter

Thanks to Liz, Faringdon Peace Group . held vigils, with banners, under the Town Hall in the Market Place. These were meant to be held every first Tuesday, but covid restrictions intervened, and in the end we only met about 3 times. We were pleased to be joined by members of XR Swindon - good to link a peace activity with the struggle to highlight climate breakdown.

These vigils complimented the 3 work study sessions that Liz organised with the help of Trupti and friends.

Although we have been severely restricted by the pandemic, nevertheless, thanks largely to Zoom, we have been able to take part in many meetings, and whilst observing the rules, have even been able to meet together on occasions.

We look forward to a time when we can meet face to face again in the Friends' Meeting House.