

## Summer School Epistle 2009

To all Friends everywhere

From the 22<sup>nd</sup> to the 29<sup>th</sup> of August 2009, 77 amazing young people and 23 beautiful staff members came together at Friends' School, Saffron Walden, to explore the theme of justice and equality.

One of the few things young people and staff alike did not enjoy was getting up early in the mornings. However, this allowed us time to fully enjoy many fun-filled days with good friends, new and old.

There was an array of crazy activities available – glitter, break-dancing, stamping and embossing, rounders, origami and many more. When it came to activity sign up, there was always a rush for chocolate cooking!

We explored justice and equality through speaker sessions, including Matthew Bolton from London Citizens, veteran campaigner Peter Tatchell and John Hart from UNICEF. They covered a wide range of thought-provoking subjects, from human rights campaigns to chocolate.

We then went on to discuss issues raised in the sessions in our base groups – smaller groups where we talked and had fun. We also took part in other activities in our base groups such as a base group challenge and the justice simulation, where each base group took on a role in court.

Trips to Audley End, Saffron Walden and Cambridge were a highlight, as always, where we bought secret friend presents and generally had an awesome time.

Free time was spent learning dances (the Jungle Dance), making T-shirts, swimming, playing Quaker games and generally hanging out.

The socials were exceedingly sociable, with a Quaker Quiz, Any Questions and games such as the caterpillar game. As we all love dancing the discos proved to be a massive success with only a few sitting out on the dances, but they seemed to be overshadowed by the immense creation that was the barn dance, where we saw Quakers of all ages having a great time. The entertainments were at an extremely high standard this year, harbouring the nation's best comedians and musicians. Unfortunately, the last night's bonfire was put out by the fire brigade, but we still spent an emotional night outside with many singing along to the guitar.

An important part of this year's summer school was the Young People's Forum which, for the first time, acted as the Nominations Committee. We were pleased that both of them gave the young people a voice and allowed them to make changes to the format of Summer School.

Both the Meetings for Worship and Epilogues were a really important and moving part of the week. They allowed us to come together as a community and reflect in silence on the jam-packed week.

During a very successful business meeting, we organised our thoughts on the week and decided that the main theme for next year will be 'Spiritual Identity - who I am in Quakerism.'

Signed in and on behalf of Summer School

Eduin Boater-Latimer and Lucy Evenden  
Clerks