

FRIENDS SOUTHERN SUMMER EVENTS  
Summer School Epistle 2008

Dear Friends,

From the 16th to the 23rd of August, 80 young people and 23 staff joined at Friends school, Saffron Walden to explore the theme of Love and Peace in Different cultures with speakers, workshops and games we were able to investigate the theme in depth with open minds.

The young people, who travelled from different corners of Britain and some from further afield, discussed the theme and issues surrounding it in Base Groups, These sessions also gave us the opportunity to socialise and discuss Quakerism with a smaller, more personal group of young friends.

We had four speakers visit us over the week to share their experiences Of Love and peace, in Different Cultures. These included Maggie Foyer, a staff Member Of Senior conference who has travelled extensively trough Palestine and Israel. We Were also joined by Chris Nickolay who shared with us a unique story from Godly Play, which was not only thought provoking but also gave us the chance to interpret it in our own way.

During our free time we enjoyed a day trip to Cambridge. We visited Jesus Lane Meeting House for a very moving and emotional Meeting for Worship in which many Friends ministered. We then spent the rest of the afternoon shopping, punting and generally having a laugh.

The tradition of Secret Friends was, as usual upheld in style. Many gifts and hugs were exchanged in the typical manner of Summer School participants.

The newsletter provided everyone with up-to-date gossip including who hooked up with who and the great kidnapping of a staff members wooden giraffe! A couple of young people too, footage of Summer School and are hoping to produce a Short film.

Meeting for Worship and Epilogue were a really important part of the week and we found the silence helped calm us at the beginning of a jam-packed day. Many people ministered, or read passages from various sources. These periods of worship created a real sense of community.

Dotted throughout the week we had socials with games such as the caterpillar game and Quaker style musical chairs. There were also activities ranging from cooking with chocolate to Morris dancing and Friendship bracelet making.

The themed disco provided amusement for everyone where many fruits and vegetables gathered in the drama studio to boogie on down and raise the roof many of us offered our “wonderful singing voices to the community with the karaoke evening.

The last night harboured many happy couples at the bonfire and the entertainment were as raucous as always! For many young people and staff, this was their laSt Year at Summer School. goodbyes were not easy and emotions ran high as many said “Farewell” to one of the best things in their lives.

During this year's Business meeting we agreed that next year the main theme will be Justice and Equality. The theme for the disco Ireland and/or the seaside.

Matt Alton, Freya Aquarone