

# NATIONAL UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP

# NEWSLETTER



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**SPECIAL FEATURE**

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**New NUF President, Rev Bob Pounder, spends  
time with his grandson**

*In the flow of religious thought and practice,  
Unitarians represent openness and inquiry in the spiritual quest*

Reg. Charity No. 1040294

## Secretary's Notes

**Ken Smith**

Tony McNeile's recent Viewpoint was entitled 'Synchronicity'; perhaps the fact that this year's General Assembly meetings in Nottingham ended on the warmest day of the year to date may be a harbinger that better weather is at last on the way. It was encouraging to have a good attendance at the NUF AGM, despite three other meetings competing for the attention of delegates. Thanks to the dedicated work of John Wilkinson and his Unitarian TV team, you will be able to see edited excerpts from it in due course on the NUF website. An archive of NUF video meditations and video worship is now established on a separate page of the fellowship website for ease of reference.

The opportunities (and challenges) presented by social media such as Facebook and Twitter were highlighted by the main guest speaker, Dr. Terasa Cooley, from our 'sister' denomination in the USA. She particularly drew attention to the cultural changes being wrought by the media revolution; a move from passivity (sitting and listening to the preacher?) towards interactivity, a move from institutional activity (e.g. church/denominations) towards grassroots organisation (she cited the Occupy movements) and a move from face to face encounters towards virtual meeting (NUF Internet Forum?). Seen from this perspective the NUF is no longer a 'second best' for those who are unable to reach a chapel but may form a vital part of the future for a movement such as ours. These changes have many implications for the future activity of all religious groups that seek to engage with the fifty percent of the population who claim to have 'no religion' in the 2011 census.

Joan Wilkinson has indicated her wish to 'move on' from editing the Newsletter later in the year as her involvement in the UK Unitarian TV has increased. I do hope that we can recruit a team of persons who could share this task; Joan has told me that she has herself learned much through the activity of editing the newsletter and preparing it for the printers so do not be deterred from offering your services even if you are not a 'computer geek'.

NUF has recently produced an attractive leaflet promoting the activities of the Fellowship, which folds into three sections for easy display on church bookstalls. If you would like a small collection of these for your church, please contact the secretary. If you know of someone moving to an area out of reach of a Unitarian church, the NUF is a good way of 'staying in touch.'

## Best Wishes to Dorothy Archer on completion of her term as NUF President

Five years ago Dorothy was invited to be our President and she only agreed reluctantly. She was concerned that her health may deteriorate and she would be unable to fulfil her role. Having worked with Dorothy during my time as Secretary I assured her that if that did happen we would deal with it as the circumstances required. And so her term began and now, having completed her term she can look at having served with three secretaries, outlasting two and settling a third in his job well. She has continued through times in hospital and then moving into a care home, when she could no longer manage at home. Most people would not have coped, but not Dorothy. She missed not one of her President's Pages and continued to keep in touch with her Secretary and Committee. To be connected by phone was crucial to her and after much organising she managed to get a phone in her room. Each of her Officers on the Committee appreciated this link.

Ken writes: "Since becoming Secretary I have valued regular 'phone calls' from Dorothy usually following the latest Committee Circular. Her knowledge over many years has been invaluable and she has always been supportive of the efforts of the Committee. Last summer I had the privilege of visiting her one afternoon and spent a busy couple of hours discussing current NUF matters as well as learning much of the past achievements of the Fellowship."

Elizabeth Barlow reiterates the sentiments expressed by Ken highlighting the gift that Dorothy had of listening, reflecting and then finding a way to work through difficult situations. She did nothing without wise deliberation.

My relationship with Dorothy began when I first joined in 1991, when I joined the Book of Fellowship to which Dorothy belonged. We held quite different perspectives on many issues but were at one in that we both looked to the future of the Fellowship in recognising the need for publicity and introducing new elements through which we could reach out. She had been the driving force behind the Publicity Sub Committee and knowing that our Internet work was vital encouraged us to develop that aspect as well as the Publicity Leaflet.

Dorothy has a love of jewellery and I'm not too bothered so in one of our light-hearted conversations she suggested we were like 'Chalk and Cheese'. So from that point on she has been Cheesy to my Chalky. Thank you Cheesy for your friendship and encouragement over many years.

*Joan (Chalky) Wilkinson*

## From Our Minister

**Tony McNeile**

Saints and Sinners are everywhere. If we are honest with ourselves there is a bit of both in all of us. Those two aphrodisiacs, temptation and opportunity can turn the most determined Saint into a Sinner. Add to this the fact that each one of us is an ingredient in the grand recipe that makes a cake called Society. For its preservation Society has to decide what makes a Saint and what makes a Sinner and the leaders of the Society are expected all to be Saints. How calamitous when one of the leaders is unmasked as a Sinner – and how we all laugh, but it is not always funny.

Our friends in the Catholic Church are having a hard time at present because many of their Saints have been discovered to be Sinners after all and it is very embarrassing for them. Does this rock the church to its foundations? No, because the faith of the Catholic Church is strong. It is a religion of certainty, where the facts have been laid down as truth and all must believe in them – and most of the followers do. What is struggling to stay upright is the organisation of the Catholic Church as it sorts out the Sinners from amongst its leadership. We might say that its insistence on Sainthood in some areas of its life is going too far in this modern age. Celibacy for the priesthood was introduced by the Council of Trent in 1553 as one of the counters to the Reformation and the profligate behaviour of the priests up to that time.

Unitarians do not have a 'Church Society' as the Catholic Church does. Unitarians of old taught that the seat of authority was the conscience and that was an inborn gift from God. We are born with the senses of justice and injustice and know for ourselves what is right and wrong. Unitarians also taught that these were religious values to be set as the bedrock of our Society.

Maybe it is the decline of religion and its teachings on values and human responsibility that has led us back to an age where there are more Sinners than Saints leading our Society. We are finding now that the cake they have been making is full of lumps and inedible bits. It could be a time for the next Reformation.

## Worship Piece

I met a gentleman recently who said he had been a Unitarian all his life and was pleased to have lived near to a Unitarian chapel. Then he added that he had never been inside because he didn't like doing 'communal things'. He was proud of his individuality.

From time to time I come across many people who say they believe in something and they are happy to go as far as that. Others have said that the great outdoors is their cathedral and they feel the presence of God more keenly outside than inside.

I think there is a lot to be said for 'communal things'. It is being able to share in the religious experience for one thing but it is also a place to hear and be heard. In the ideal religious community a person should be able to admit to the difficulties of life and celebrate life's joys. It is a place to explore those something feelings and deepen the bond with life.

In my youth I used to think I was a rugged individualist – now I am just an individualist, but I do enjoy this Unitarian community.

### **Prayer**

*My heart was lifted out of the miserable cold, when one day dawned with a clear blue sky and a rising temperature. The whole earth seemed to be rejoicing in it with me and I was filled with love for life.*

*In our prayers let us give thanks for those moments that lift our spirits and fill us with joy. Let us acknowledge the Spirit of Life, the presence of God in those moments. Let us keep them in our memory as a bolster against darker times. Let them be the source of optimism and hope and let us look forward to being in them again.*



# The Unitarian Music Society

**Tony McNeile**

The Unitarian Music Society is open to all Unitarians who have a love of music – whether it be playing an instrument or singing. There are many people who neither sing nor play but do have a love of music and being with those who do perform. They too are welcome (everyone loves an audience!) But there is more to enjoy than just listening.

It all began in 1928 when Unitarian church organists first met on an informal basis to discuss concerns and common interests. From that it became about all church music, not just organ playing, and now it has become about music.

A magazine 'Cantemus' (Let us sing) is produced for members twice each year and there are get-togethers just to produce music and enjoy one another's company. Most recently they were invited by the Glasgow Unitarian Church. They have also run a workshop for the Horsham congregation.

The next meeting is at Great Hucklow from 9 - 12 August this year.

As a non-singer and non-musician I really appreciate the sets of CDs the Society has produced. The choir has sung most of the hymns in the Hymns for Living hymn book and the Sing Your Faith hymn book. I use them at some churches where there is no organist and we all enjoy singing along – even I !! I turn the volume up and sing from a hide within the sound.

For more details about the Unitarian Music Society please contact: [adie@unitarianmusic.org.uk](mailto:adie@unitarianmusic.org.uk).

## UKUTV News

**Joan Wilkinson**

February was a busy month for the camera crew. On 17 February they travelled to Sevenoaks to film the service led by Rev Daniel Costley. This can now be viewed at: [www.ukunitarian.tv](http://www.ukunitarian.tv) under the 'Services' heading in the Guide.

The following weekend saw the camera crew again in action. After the training day on media presentation, Rev Danny Crosby recorded the NUF Worship for March. This can be accessed through the NUF web

site: [www.nufonline.org.uk](http://www.nufonline.org.uk) clicking on the 'Worship' box in the right hand column. At the time of writing the worship there had been 220 viewers. On the Sunday it was on to Altrincham to film the service. This was led by Rev Daniel Crosby. This can be viewed on [www.ukunitarian.tv](http://www.ukunitarian.tv), again under the 'Services' heading in the Guide.

At the end of March the team travelled to Newcastle-under-Lyme to film Louise presenting the NUF worship for April, which can be accessed on the NUF website. Members will be pleased to hear that in order to make NUF video material easily accessible, two web pages have been added to the NUF website: [www.nufonline.org.uk](http://www.nufonline.org.uk), one is for reflections/meditations and the other to archive each month's worship service following its removal from the front page. This means that you can have a resource that is easily negotiated, available at any time and constantly growing.

Anyone wishing to take part in the production of the NUF Worship or would like to sponsor this initiative then please contact me: details are on the back cover of this *Newsletter*. Donations are now eligible for Gift Aid. The autocue, which the NUF purchased with a grant from the Millennium Fund is proving invaluable in enabling us to produce better material.

New material filmed at the GA meetings will gradually become available. Don't miss the interview with Bill Darlison, GA President for the coming year. You can read more about this interview on page 13. In a further interview, Chris Goacher, spoke of how he came to be a Unitarian and what it means to him now. For Chris, the importance of relating to other individuals in their deepest needs is something that he is concentrating on at the moment as he takes a sabbatical from his congregational ministry. John Midgley entertained us as he recounted an episode from his regular column in *The Inquirer: A Funny Old World*. John was a natural performer for the camera. The NUF AGM presentations, about which you can read about on pages 13 and 14 were a particular highlight with about fifty people attending.

UKUTV is one year old, a year of good progress.

## May is Mary's Month

White fair weather cumulus floats high above,  
tardy ash leaves break free from their shoots,  
a passionate thrush greets the soft morning,  
cherry trees hang silkly rich in cream and pink.  
Girls garlanded with white and green circle  
the Beltane fire, rejoicing at the conception  
of new life and the old darkness fled behind  
the hill of winter cold and grim discontent

This is a month of hope, of renewal and growth,  
rabbit kits play in the new grass, sun haloed  
in a misty dawn amongst wood anemone  
and celandine; on the bank companula sound  
their ethereal violet-blue bells; black bryony, its  
pale green petals like a necklet of dew-kissed opals,  
encircles the spiny common-hawthorn hedge,  
where shy dormice feed and hedgepigs nest.

This is the Month of Mary who bore Jesus, a time  
of periwinkle skies blue like the Lady's flowing mantle,  
of cowslip and primrose that carpet the Lady's path.  
Sea pinks are cushions on which once the Lady sat,  
and clusters of pale wisteria roof the Lady's bower.  
A narcissus shines bright as the Lady's evening star,  
lilies-of-the-valley mimic the Lady's soft tears,  
and purple lilac is heavy with the scent of a Tomb.

The plangent death call of the white owl is heard  
across greening field and burgeoning wood,  
and the savage thorn that lurks within the gilded bush  
is a sword that pierced the soul of the Lady, standing  
mute and patient beneath the leafless Easter Tree.  
In the month that is Mary's, birth mingles with death,  
and the mysterious circle that is both our end  
and our beginning is for ever made complete.

*the gilded bush'* – Gorse Bush

*Naomi Linnell*

## NUF Officers comment on their time at the GA



Elizabeth Barlow, NUF delegate, will be writing a full report for the next publication but these were her initial thoughts: *Lovely to see old friends, meet new ones and put faces to names, both within the NUF and wider Unitarian movement.*

Here you can see Elizabeth making time to look after the stand, endeavouring to explain to a passer by, what she would gain by joining the Fellowship.

Ken Smith commented that:

*Having a presence at the GA enables NUF officers a rare opportunity to meet members face to face and establish our distinctive contribution to the Unitarian family.*

It also gives the opportunity to capture images of officers, who work hard in the background to ensure that the NUF continues to function smoothly.



Louise Rogers is a member of the Fellowship, who seems to have been born with 'volunteering in her bones'. From being a marshal at the Paralympics to sitting behind the bookstall at the GA, her natural outgoing friendliness encourages people to browse and buy. The pile of carrier bags surrounding Louise

are those saved for buyers to collect later. Here she is pictured on the first day – I feared she may disappear completely by the close of the meetings. Louise would like to thank visitors to the stand for:

*...coming in to the shop to browse, buy and chat.*

Joan Wilkinson practising some interviewing skills as she speaks to Chris Goacher. Many readers will remember Chris from his time as our NUF Minister. He recalled how he discovered Unitarianism in his family history and also explained what it means to live out his Unitarian Faith. Members will be advised as soon as the video becomes available on the Internet.



## Introducing the new NUF President Rev Bob Pounder

It was in 1993 that I first stepped into a Unitarian church, it was a return to religion but not quite the same religion of my childhood. Before making that first step, I had gained a general idea of Unitarianism and from what I could make of it; it seemed a better option than the dogmatic certainties of the evangelical Christianity I had experienced with the Salvation Army. I am still very fond of the Salvation Army, I like its exuberance, the brass bands that were still very much in evidence when I was a child, and its insignia - 'Blood & Fire' and the passion and the sincerity of many of its soldiers and preachers. But I knew that underneath all that that there was a steely dogma, an assured certainty that the Bible was the literal word of God, every word was meant to be indisputably true. As a boy and as a recruit to the band, I was told, "Don't keep asking questions, you'll never learn anything if you keep asking questions." There was this love and energy in the Salvation Army, but also a sort of conservatism, I could not accept the theology, and that is why I could not go back.



As I walked into the Unitarian Church at Mossley, Edith Barber met me at the front door. She said, "A stranger!" I said, "Well, it says outside, *everybody welcome*, so I'm here." Edith handed me a red hymnbook. The words on the front cover, read *Hymns of Faith and Freedom*. These words seemed to express everything that I was looking for: *faith and freedom*, freedom to think and to be allowed to do so within the church. I liked the chalice logo too; it seemed a good symbol, almost like an oil lamp that one might read about in the Bible stories. But although the chalice has become a symbol of our denomination, from my Unitarian Christian point of view it cannot replace the cross, that symbol of the church universal, that symbol of sacrificial love.

The old church building at Mossley was a lovely place to go although by this time it was coming to the end of its life. From this church, and its Minister the Rev. Pat Shaw I began to get a feel for the denomination and to understand something of its history and its special theology. The congregation and members at Mossley were warm and friendly, but it was a bit hard in those days to square my revolutionary left politics and militant trades unionism with sitting down on a Sunday morning with a predominantly female congregation, many already in their late 70s and 80s.

A younger lady at that time was the NUF's very own stalwart, Dorothy Archer. For some reason, Dorothy and I struck up an accord and became very good friends and we both still are, twenty years later. Dorothy introduced me to the National Unitarian Fellowship, it was a great gift because it took me outside the parameters of Mossley and introduced me to many interesting people scattered throughout the UK. I became involved in the NUF's tapes of fellowship. The tapes of fellowship or perhaps the tape of fellowship was simply a C90 cassette tape, you played it, listened to the recording and then recorded your own comments or message for say 15 to 20 minutes, sealed it back up in an envelope and then posted it on to the next member and so the conversation circulated. It could take months to go around, but it gave a fascinating insight into the very different lives of all the other Unitarian correspondents. The tapes of fellowship created conviviality and a connectedness that still fills me with affection for all the people I met on tape all those years ago. Some names I have unfortunately forgotten but Frank Hytch was definitely someone who made a big impression on me, a sincere, thoughtful and educated man. Later, I got to know Joan Wilkinson and little realised at the time what a key member of the NUF she would become in taking the organisation into the 21st-century.

In 1996, Dorothy asked me if I would consider becoming the editor of the Viewpoint. I accepted this position, and this was before I had a proper computer and definitely, the Internet was way out of reach to me at that time. As the Viewpoint editor, I had the pleasure of getting to know Walter Bunting, who was then the secretary of the NUF. It was always a pleasure to speak to Walter by telephone, which I often did; he was energetic and full of good humour, always ready to share or to hear the latest joke.

In 1997, I was elected to the position of Brigade Secretary of the Fire Brigades Union in Greater Manchester. This job became so all consuming that I had tailed off all Unitarian activities by 1998 and what little time I had left I spent on the Workers Revolutionary Party, but throughout the years that followed, I continued in some way to acknowledge the spiritual side of my life. In 2004, I retired from the fire service but not entirely in circumstances that I would have wanted. There had been a disastrous national strike in 2002, and a leadership collapse at national level that led to demoralisation and reaction. Time to go; after 25 years in the fire service, 18 years as an operational fire-fighter and what you could say were seven tumultuous years as a full – time union secretary.



I had joined the Royal Navy at 15 years of age on September 16, 1969, at the boys training establishment, HMS Ganges, Ipswich. I served 10 years in the navy before joining the fire service in 1979. Life outside the fire service and the Fire Brigades Union led me into the Manchester branch of the NUJ (National Union of Journalists) as a freelance writer; I became a union representative for the NUJ and a campaigner for asylum seekers.

It wasn't long before I found my second Unitarian church, Oldham Unitarian Chapel in 2005. With the freedom of retirement and tenuous self-employment, I became more involved with the life of the church once again. Theologically, I was greatly influenced by the work of the Rev. Dr David Doel, a man whom I deeply admire, whose work and ministry confirmed to me religion's deepest truth; the power of love. This truth first became more accessible to me through his wonderful work on the interface of depth psychology and religion. Through David's work, my Christian faith, the faith of my childhood was made mature, resilient and deep. I owe him a great debt. In 2010, I completed my ministerial training and became the Minister for the Unitarian Chapel in Oldham, which is a great privilege.

As I look back over my life I give thanks for all those people who have in one way or another helped me to become, in spite of my many faults, who I am today. The many years serving as a union rep in which a big part of the job was in having the privilege to help so many people in so many different ways I think was in itself a ministry of sorts, as authentic as anything I might do today.

Thank you for inviting me to be the NUF president, I didn't seek to take this position, but having been asked, I became convinced that the right thing to do was to accept. I'm sure you would all want me on behalf of the NUF, to give Dorothy, our retiring President, a big thank you for carrying out a term her term of office so diligently and conscientiously. Dorothy is one of those people who are able combine integrity, insightfulness and compassion with a lot of common sense. In one of Dorothy's more recent presidential letters she quoted Emerson when she said, "A friend is one before whom you may think aloud." That is one of the great pleasures of visiting Dorothy and spending time with her, she reflects that great value of the NUF; she allows you to think aloud. She is a true Unitarian. Thank you, Dorothy.

# The GA President's Message of Transformation

Joan Wilkinson



Bill Darlison, in an interview recorded for the NUF, always came back to the need to offer a spiritual depth in our worship, not by plucking things from the air – the fleeting. “If we want to appeal to a wider audience we need to have a focus – go deep”. We need to look at our own spiritual tradition more such as the Transcendentalists, all too often ignored. There is also a great store of sacred literature that we are able to draw on. For Bill, the sacramental aspect of worship is essential.

Too often we still keep talking about whether religion is true or false. This can only be divisive within the movement and display an incoherent philosophy to the outside world. Bill believes strongly that we do have a central message but it needs to be presented in a coherent way. The message he tries to advance is that **“all religion which transforms the individual is valid religion.** It’s not about philosophical or religious truth claims but about the influence it has on the person...a spiritual life of transformation from self-focused to being capable of honest relationship with the other and a clear notion of their role in life and its purpose”. He feared that we don’t always do this.

When asked how the NUF could help in spreading this message he pointed out that when he started out in ministry he obtained a CLF (Church of the Larger Fellowship and our counterpart in America) booklet of services, which was very useful, and of which he continues to use, especially Rites of Passage services. The NUF could look to do the same. He thought that the advent of the Internet offered new opportunities, especially through video services, so people could sit at home, still participate and find spiritual nourishment. Bill himself had listened to audio services but thought the potential was even greater for film when viewers could see the people involved; these could give a sense of connection not possible with audio.

The interview is about 30 minutes in length, in which Bill shares with us his religious background and how he came to be a Unitarian and Minister. In a self-effacing manner he explains why the Dublin congregation grew so much during his 14 years there due to the religious situation and changes of the divorce law and re-marriage in church, plus other factors not down to him. The full interview can be seen on the NUF website: [www.nufonline.org.uk](http://www.nufonline.org.uk) .

*Photo courtesy of John Hewardine*

## Jo James's responds to the question 'Why do you want to be a Unitarian Minister?'



*"...be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and to try to love the questions themselves like locked rooms and like books that are written in a very foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you win then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer."*

Rainer Maria Rilke; *Letters to a Young Poet*. [<http://www.pa56.org/ross/rilke.htm> ]

At its slot at GA the NUF invited me, along with some of my colleagues in ministry training, to respond to the question: **"Why do you want to be a Unitarian Minister?"**. Below are some notes towards this event.

I'm grateful to the NUF for asking a question which is so simple – so direct, and so hard to answer. For me it's also an exciting question an enlivening question and these are all responses that suggest that this is a question I may be "living". Living the question is one of those phrases that enters the public consciousness and is maybe in danger of becoming a bit of a cliché.

The danger of clichés is that they become dead words, they become emptied of content, we repeat them without being in any danger of actually being affected by them and so already, just from this far into the consideration of the question, I'm able to begin to formulate the beginnings of an answer. I want in ministry to make sure that the Word is living, to minister against cliché and for liveliness, for vivid discourse, live debate, active dialogue, and creative questions; questions that produce answers which must be lived instead of closed down, answered definitively or completed. And going back to the question; the answer to any lived question will always, necessarily be incomplete, partial. Because the perspective will always be a changing one; the understanding is a process; the witness is ongoing.

Nevertheless here are a few of my [partial and incomplete] responses to the question.

When I began thinking about this I found a conversation came into my mind which I remembered from my time working in the experimental theatre. While the established theatre was 'splendid', grand and spectacular, the ex-

perimental theatre was small, radical, impoverished. While TV and film had mass appeal [and ever more trivial terms of reference] the experimental theatre was serious, provocative, interventionist. It had values and it emphasised its integrity. It had understood that it shouldn't compete with these other forms but it should affirm instead its own unique validity.

On one occasion I was at a large gathering of film makers, actors and directors and in the evening some of us were sitting and discussing things over a drink and some one asked me why I was working in this area – why did I want to be a performer? As often happens this question turned into a spectator sport and my inquisitor warmed to his theme; why did I persist in this marginal, elitist form, there's no audience for what you do is there? It's not popular, you don't draw an audience? You're not profitable, and what you do doesn't make much sense, it's not obvious what your work means - you're obviously alluding to something but we cant really be sure what it is? By this time the whole room was enjoying watching me be pulverised but I suddenly found my voice and I answered that it was precisely because it was pointless that I knew it was worthwhile, that although it didn't have an end focus or goal it had, instead, a developing vision to which I could in my own way contribute. That its lack of popularity was what convinced me that some people would need it and cherish it more than ever, and that its integrity and its values meant that it might be able to maintain and preserve something we might otherwise lose.

The director Eugenio Barba proposed that his theatre might be able to provide “cultural resistance to the spirit of the times”. I have discovered that ministry in the Unitarian denomination might allow me to turn his phrase slightly whilst holding to its originating precept; I want to be a Unitarian minister so as to provide spiritual resistance to the culture of our times.



Ralph Catts, Maria Curtis, Anna Jarvis and Matthew Smith also engage with the question and the audience, offering their own personal response to the question: “Why do you want to be a Unitarian Minister?”. The meeting was filmed and can be watched on: [www.nufonline.org.uk](http://www.nufonline.org.uk).

# Remembering Hilda Handoll

Joan Wilkinson

On 10th April the NUF lost a long and valued member in Hilda Handoll. She had held many positions in the Fellowship, including being the organiser of the Books of Fellowship between May 1989 and February 1995 and then NUF President from March 1997 to August 1998. Over the years she had served on the committee many times.

It was her feistiness that first struck me and her readiness to stand up for the underdog and for what she thought was right. In 1998 she published a short book of poems and short stories in, *Life Goes On*. It is in there that the full range of her interests and commitments over the years are revealed, including political, religious, the natural world and general consideration of people and society. Her writing was often humorous as well as hard-hitting. If there were women like this in the NUF I knew it was the right place for me.

She was a regular at the Hucklow NUF Weekend and grateful of that which others were doing there. She didn't hold back in expressing a different point of view but these only served to make others consider more carefully their own. Until recent years, when her health deteriorated, she tried to get to the GA in order to attend the NUF AGM. Whereas most people shrank from taking the minutes, Hilda was always a willing volunteer.

After the illness of her later years she still longed to visit The Nightingale Centre again but it became too difficult. However, a couple of years ago her daughter, Hilary, brought her to visit John and I, and although it was becoming very hard for her to walk unaided, it was the same Hilda as ever. On this visit and in numerous phone calls since, Hilda was always keen to have news of the NUF and especially about those members she had known through the Books of Fellowship and those she had met at AGMs and at the Hucklow Weekends.

Just before Christmas, Hilda moved to be near her beloved family in Norfolk, leaving her home in Wales. Her thoughts were always for her family even when it meant leaving her friends of long-standing. Our thoughts and prayers will be with her daughters Allison, Hilary and Jill, and her sons Malcolm and Richard.

The funeral at Kings Lynn was taken by Kate McKenna from the Octagon Chapel, and a memorial service to be led by Mel Prideaux will be held at Prestatyn to allow her old neighbours and friends, the opportunity to celebrate Hilda's life.

# A long-term solution to unwanted immigration

**George Cope**

Attitudes can be shaped by celebrated historical events.

The United States of America accepts itself as a nation of immigrants. The words of Emma Lazarus grace the base of the Statue of Liberty: 'Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore, O send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me: I lift my lamp beside the golden door'.

Likewise, the 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity' ideals of their revolution may still resonate in French attitudes, Sadly, ideals have not been consistently adhered to.

Immigration may originate in the demand/pull of labour shortages or in the supply/push of people seeking to escape intolerable living standards, a legacy of colonialism, continued today by Western unfair trading. The Fair Trade Movement is a response to this. Unfair, too are the EU Economic Partnership Agreements. Oxfam and the World Development Movement have highlighted 'land-grabbing' by Western corporations. Instances have occurred of UK aid prioritising business interests over the needs of the poor. In terms of self-interest, low-wage areas are a threat to our jobs. Their people can't afford our products, while our jobs can be exported to such areas.

Questionable Western wars (Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq) result in immigrants as refugees. Western powers, those defenders of freedom and democracy, bizarrely sell arms to despotic regimes. This produces immigrants as asylum-seekers.

The obvious long-term solution to unwanted immigration would be to halt all these ravages inflicted on the developing world.

On economic and humanitarian grounds we have more in common with the immigrants and their people back home than ever we do with the bankers and their bonuses, or with tax-avoiding big business. Viking, Laval, and Mode 4 all indicate an EU anti-working-class bias and an aim to force down wages. Carl Sandburg describes humankind as 'the family of man'. A family takes care of all its members. This concept should dominate our thinking in attempting to construct a more equitable economic model.

*The above was published as a letter in the 16 January edition of the Derby Telegraph.*

## Phil Silk's Book List

*Hymn to Old Age* by Herman Hesse; translated from German by David Henry Wilson; 2011; 253 pages. This is an anthology of passages on the theme from his poetry, letter and other prose over a period of decades. "Shining through these literary gems is a deep love of life, an acceptance of death, and an exhilarating youthfulness", as the flyleaf puts it.

*Counselling for Toads: A Psychological Adventure* by Robert de Board; 1998; 153 pages. After counselling for 20 years, he takes an imaginary Toad of Toad Hall through 16 chapters from first to last interview, diagnosis to completion, featuring the transactional analysis approach. *Wind in the Willows* will never be the same again for you. It is not only entertaining, it is educational too.

*When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advise for Difficult Times* by Pema Chodron; 2005; 193 pages. An American Buddhist nun, she explores her spiritual journey and promotes meditation as the best way to find and live with compassion. Worth reading and again.

*Sharing the Quest* by Muz Murray; 1986; 259 pages. Raised a Christian, he has travelled the world and studied widely and become a universalist mystic, open to all, belonging to all, continually seeking on the spiritual path. This is a challenging book; inspiring, puzzling, frustrating...

*Secular Evangelism* by Fred Brown; 1970; 128 pages. This is a surprisingly sympathetic approach to the secular society by a Salvation Army hostel leader in London. You could call it "Love in Action for troubled souls." I hear he has since been expelled as a heretic...

*Hot Chocolate for the Lover's Soul; 101 True Stories of Soul Mates* by Arielle Ford; 2001; 413 pages. Anyone interested in the ways people become couples can find this interesting, if the overriding theme of destiny does not put you off.

*Hothouse Flower* by Lucinda Riley; 2011; 579 pages. This is a WWII novel, a lively one focused around an English estate with international aspects.

*This Body of Death* by Elizabeth George; 2010; 596 pages. This novel tells the story of three ten-year old children who commit a terrible crime and what follows. Challenging...

*Defy Gravity: Healing Beyond the Bounds of Reason* by Caroline Myss; 2009; 225 pages. This is a challenging book. A mystic healer, she tries to help people fully develop their spiritual life, in theory and in practice. Worth rereading.

## Diary Dates

The Meditational Fellowship Ivy House in Warminster 10-12th May. Instruction and spiritual nourishment, silent meditation, music, and Sunday service. All are welcome. Participants are asked to bring poems, music etc to contribute. Contact Brenda Knopf O2380 555 333

Rediscovering the Bible – a monthly Bible reading Group Meeting on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7pm, 11th March, 8th April, 13th May, 10th June 2013: Essex Church, 112 Palace Gardens Terrace, London W8 4RT

Bhagavad-Gita: investigating the most important Hindu scripture, monthly on first Wednesday of the month at 7.30 pm at Golders Green Unitarians, 31½ Hoop Lane, London NW11 8BS [www.ggu.org.uk](http://www.ggu.org.uk)

18th May IARF invite you to the Meaning of Being a Survivor and AGM of the British Chapter of the International Association for Religious Freedom. This will be hosted by the Croydon Unitarian Church CRO 1ER (10 minute walk from East Croydon Station). Rev Feargus O'Connor 020 7837 4472

The Nightingale Centre Open Day at Great Hucklow. Visit the refurbished Centre, take in lunch, afternoon tea and all the stalls and activities – 1st June. For details and residential availability contact Stella on: 01298 871218 or [info@thenightingalecentre.org.uk](mailto:info@thenightingalecentre.org.uk). Browse the Centre's website at: [www.thenightingalecentre.org.uk](http://www.thenightingalecentre.org.uk) to keep up to date with events and activities taking place at the Centre this year.

15th June Stuart Coupe and BeHeld will present a service/folk concert as the main programme of The LDPA Summer Quarterly which will be held in charming Billingshurst Chapel, High Street, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9QS contact Danielle Wilson 01323 769 813

## New Members

We extend a warm welcome to new member: Mr Bernard Lavery.

Warm wishes are extended to those members, who are suffering with illness, bereavement and other members who may be distressed in any way.

Your Editor will be taking a holiday so please send your contributions for the July issue to our Secretary, Ken Smith. The closing date will be 16th June but earlier would be appreciated.

# Points of Contact

- President:** Rev Bob Pounder, 27 Marne Avenue, Ashton-under-Lyne OL6 9DW  
Tel: 0161 3396740 email: bob.pounder@zen.co.uk
- Secretary:** Ken Smith, 12 Gravel Road, Church Crookham, Fleet, Hants GU52 6BB  
Tel: 01252 628 320 email: kensmith4@btinternet.com
- Treasurer:** Elizabeth Barlow, 67 Wychall Park, Seaton, Devon EX12 2EL  
Tel: 01297 625955 email: treasurer@nufonline.org.uk
- Membership Sec:** Howard Wilkins, 46 Brookside, Burbage, Hinckley, Leics. LE10 2TL  
Tel: 01455 635043 email: membership@nufonline.org.uk
- Minister and Viewpoint Editor:** Rev Tony McNeile, 102 Turton Road, Bradshaw, Bolton BL2 3DY  
Tel: 01204 591570 email: tony.mcneile@nufonline.org.uk
- Newsletter Editor:** Joan Wilkinson, 10 Shirley Close, Castle Donington, Derby DE74 2XB  
Tel: 01332 814055 email: joanwilk@nufonline.org.uk
- Webmaster:** John Wilkinson, 10 Shirley Close, Castle Donington, Derby DE74 2XB  
Tel: 01332 814055 email: postmaster@nufonline.org.uk
- Forum Manager:** Ken Smith, 12 Gravel Road, Church Crookham, Fleet, Hants GU52 6BB  
Tel: 01252 628320 email: moderator@nufonline.org.uk
- Books of Fellowship:** Alan Oates, 28 Placehouse Lane, Old Coulsdon, Surrey CR5 1LA  
Tel: 01737 551788
- Distributor:** Derek Harvey, Flat 2, 34 Broomgrove Road, Sheffield SL10 2LR



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of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches  
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email address: [nuf@nufonline.org.uk](mailto:nuf@nufonline.org.uk)

Website: [www.nufonline.org.uk](http://www.nufonline.org.uk)