

# Elmbridge Multi-faith Forum

Spring 2008 (Newsletter Number 10)



Since our Summer Newsletter we have:-

- Published and circulated 1,000 printed copies of our Autumn 2007 Newsletter and, thanks to our enthusiastic Membership Secretary, prepared an impressive display for use at future events.
- Been registered by the Charity Commissioners (No. 1122962), which means that we can claim back 25% of any money that is 'gift aided'.
- Joined our Ahmadiyya friends at meetings in October and December.
- Held an 'Aspects of Hinduism' evening on 6<sup>th</sup> December.
- Joined the North-West Surrey Synagogue for the Holocaust Memorial Day on 28<sup>th</sup> January.
- Visited the Friends Meeting House in Esher on 19<sup>th</sup> February.
- Been granted £625 by Elmbridge Borough Council for the year 2008-9.

## Membership

We are always pleased to welcome new individuals as members. The annual subscription is £10, for which you will receive the quarterly newsletters and priority booking for events and visits as well as invitations to meetings.

We now have over 100 members.

For enquiries about membership, please contact the Membership Secretary:

**Phyllis Woodhead**  
**01372 468783**



## Death of Councillor Mick Burgess

We were very sad to hear of the sudden death of Councillor Mick Burgess, who was Mayor of Elmbridge during the year 2003-4.

Mick was a 'larger-than-life' character, who, as Mayor, officially announced the founding of EMF in January 2004, building on the groundwork undertaken by Councillor Torq Stewart.

Mick will be sorely missed, we extend our deep sympathy to his wife, Carol, and family.



### **Report on two events at “Baitul Futuh” Mosque, Morden, Surrey, SM4**

Our cordial and collaborative relationship with the Ahmaddiyya Community in Surrey is now well established.

### **Majlis Ansarullah UK, 25<sup>th</sup> National Ijtima 2007: 27 October 2007**

This is the second such annual event that I have attended, and each left similar feelings of delight and appreciation at a community that has demonstrated how it can integrate with the rest of the (host) UK society on an equal footing and with very positive material and spiritual contributions.

As usual, following the prayer and Qur’an recital, we listened to the address of the Head of the Worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Association, Mirza Masrour Ahmad, Khalifa-tul Masih V, with his words of wisdom and conciliation to all the world.

Following his talk came the distribution of grants and donations from their charity collections which this year amounted to £120,000.

The theme of the donations was:

#### **HUMANITY FIRST**

The subtitle theme was the laudable: “**Religion is about service.**” And then their motto, which is and has always been: “**Love for all, hatred for none**”

Cheques were handed to charities ranging from those dealing with the aged to those for children, and from the Mayor’s charity to that for the Alzheimer Society. Amounts varied between £17,000 and £100, with every contribution being intelligently targeted and assessed.

As usual, the evening ended with a generous and delicious dinner. It is obvious to me that the food is made by families and is a labour of love.

### **CREATING PEACE IN OUR SOCIETY: Saturday 8 December 2007**

**Guest Speaker: Mr. A.M. Rashed, Imam of London Mosque**

On this occasion the message was clear: “Islam stands for peace and service to humankind. It stands for the spiritual, moral, and ethical values enshrined in Islam and echoes the scriptures and traditions of Christianity and Judaism.”

Examples were cited of service projects in many parts of the world, and the mission to promote happiness, prosperity and well-being came over loud and clear.

The address was followed by questions from the floor. The responses of the Imam were candid and appropriate.

The atmosphere prevailing throughout the meeting was cordial and friendly, and, as usual, was capped by the sumptuous curry meal we always savour and enjoy.

We thank the organisers for inviting us, and thank our shared members for always remembering us on these occasions.

We hope that in this way we are all sharing the mission of peace and happiness for the whole world disregarding any real or perceived differences.

**Nabil M Mustapha**



**ASPECTS OF HINDUISM**  
**Report on talks given by Ms**  
**Anjali Paul & Mr Himanshu**  
**Joshi, 6 Dec. 07**

**Introduction:** The evening was very well attended, and the hall was filled to capacity. The atmosphere and social interaction were palpably convivial and jovial, and the interest in the speakers' themes was clearly apparent.

The generosity of our members from St Andrew's Church, who provided the food, was overwhelming, as was the quality of the food.

Herewith a summary of the two talks:

**History:** Hinduism is one of the earliest religions, its origins dating back to the late Neolithic or early "Harapan" age (5500-2600 BCE). The "Historic Vedic Religion" appears in about 1500-500BCE. Originating in the "Sind" area of N.W. India (Pakistan) the "S" of "Sindhu" was unavailable to Persians, and so was replaced by "H", hence "Hindû"

In its purest form it is described as the ***Sanātana Dharma***", the **"Eternal law" or "Eternal faith"**. It has no single founder, although the inspiration and knowledge of the

***Bhagwad-gītā***, and its larger epic known as the ***"Mahābhārata"*** is attributed to **Krishna**.

**Scriptures:** The Dharma or Dharmasya can be translated as the "path of Devotional Service". It is essentially the sacred or spiritual "law" that governs the universe as well as the religious and the moral law that Krishna and later Buddha urged people to abide by.

Unlike other religions, no single scripture is available to define Hinduism. There are the ***Śruti*** ("***Shruti***") the philosophical canon of Sacred Texts and ***Smiriti***", the remembered historical, social, ethical and philosophical narrative developed over millennia. Thus we have the Bhagwad-gītā (the ***"Song of God"***) and the Mahābhārata. The former is the "Executive Summary" of Hinduism, and the key teaching in it is ***"Renunciation"***, i.e. the sacrifice of worldly desires to make way for spiritual progress, which, in turn, paves the way to enlightenment. It describes a dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna, his chariot driver. It takes place just before a battle which is troubling Arjuna, as he is likely to injure or kill many of his own family. The dialogue is a verbal endeavour to identify the meaning of existence, the nature of divine reality and the different ways to attain the highest spiritual goal.

The ultimate belief is in ***BRAHMAN:*** The "Divine Consciousness" that is formed and formless (like ice and water). It is the love of the devotee that freezes the formless God into the form that the devotee chooses. "Arjuna said: "You are the Supreme Brahman, the Ultimate, the Supreme Abode

and Purifier, The Absolute Truth and the Eternal Divine Person. You are the Primal God, transcendental and original, and You are the unborn and all-pervading beauty". God is male and female, and manifests Him/Herself in all forms, living and non-living.

That same god fulfils three roles, named the "**Trimurthi**": **Brahma** (the Creator), **Vishnu** (the Preserver) & **Shiva** (the Destroyer or Transformer), thus each possessing different attributes. Other "reincarnations of God include **Krishna, Rama & Buddha**.



**Yoga:** Yoga has a central place in Hinduism, and has been defined as "Technologies or disciplines of ascetism and meditation which are thought to lead to spiritual experience and profound understanding or insight into the nature of existence".

### **Role and Types of Yoga**

**Karma:** This is the yoga of action, leading to detachment, reducing the ego, purifying the mind, and identifying with our inner self or Atman. This leads to spiritual

rewards in this life and a higher rebirth in the next.

**Jnana:** Application of an intellectual exercise in purifying the vision through study and learning, constantly reviewing what is real or unreal.

**Bhakti:** This is the emotional attitude towards devotion and love, using chanting and prayer.

**Raja:** This is the contemplative approach using self discipline and mediation, striving to attain eight stages of spiritual development (**Samadhi**), or enlightenment.

Thus, an individual is able to choose whichever pathway or mechanism suits him in his journey of attainment and understanding.

**In Conclusion:** We learned that Hinduism is ancient, it is ever evolving, and is based on Faith and a code of conduct. It presents a variety of pathways offering choice to the individual, and accepts the principle of "pluralism" whereby God is accepted in any form that suits the individual. Pragmatism and ease appear to be the overriding intellectual, emotional and spiritual attitudes.

The meeting could have remained for much longer than the allocated time, and the EMF is very grateful to the two speakers, and to the Joshi family whose attendance as a family was very enjoyable and refreshing.

**Nabil M Mustapha**



**Holocaust Memorial Day at the North-West Surrey Synagogue.**

**Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> January, 6.30 to 9.30pm**

Over 30 of our members joined our friends from the Reform Synagogue in this memorial event for the victims not only of the Nazi regime, but of genocide in other parts of the world, notably Armenia and Dafur. The hall was packed.

We were warmly welcomed by Rabbi Jackie Tabick, then stood as Vernon and Jutta Saunders lit the 'Zachor' candles in memory of the 6 million Jews who perished at the hands of the Nazis.

We were treated to a varied 'community' programme which included:

- Direct experience and accounts of the Nazi era, Dafur and the Armenian ethnic genocide,
- Impressions of a Woking High School visit to Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp,
- Dance, drama, songs and poetry by young people from local schools and churches,
- A memorable performance by pupils from the Yehudi Menuhin School of the Second Movement of a Hayden String Quartet.

We stood whilst the ark was opened and a scroll brought out. Tom Barth then told us how the scroll had belonged to the Jewish Community in Klatovy in Poland, from which his family came. The community had been virtually wiped out during the holocaust, but, following the war, scrolls from such communities had been rescued, so that they could be claimed by

survivors or their relatives. With the support of the Reform Synagogue, Tom had managed to reclaim the scroll.

The presentation concluded with a performance of the song, 'Zog Nit Keymol', which was sung by the Jewish Partisans who fought the Nazis.

Plentiful and delicious refreshments were subsequently served.

We warmly thank the members of the North Surrey Synagogue for an evening that we shall never forget.

**Geoff Morris**



**Visit to the Friends' Meeting House in Esher on the evening of 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2008**

The Meeting House in Claremont Lane was built in 1797 and is a grade 1 listed building. It is home to the Esher Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).

Some 40 members of EMF responded to the invitation from Friends to visit them. There were also some from the local meetings of Churches Together.

Passing through a gate in the wall in Claremont Lane, we entered a surprisingly peaceful garden, part of which contains small gravestones. We passed through this garden into the Library where we were served drinks and light refreshments.

On a table by the entrance were a number of brief but very helpful leaflets and booklets, including

'Advices and Queries' (of which more later), 'Your first time at a Quaker Meeting' and a series giving 'A Quaker View' of, for example, 'Human Rights', 'Crime and Punishment' and 'Peace, Conflict and Violence'. There were also copies of 'A Quaker Chronology covering the years 1329 to 1738, setting out key dates, people and events. We were invited to help ourselves to these.

We were told that we would be invited shortly to move into the Meeting House, where we should quietly take a seat and enjoy a time of peace and contemplation.

The Meeting House was a simple, panelled Hall with benches. Posters on the wall bore the words 'Truth', 'Simplicity', 'Justice', 'Equality', 'Peace' – the principles at the heart of the Quaker movement.

After about five minutes, Ruth Bradbury addressed us. The room being so crowded she spoke from a raised bench, thought to have been used by travelling ministers in the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

In 1611 the publication of the King James 1 Authorised Version of the Bible had made the scriptures widely available. Able to read the Bible for themselves, several groups of 'puritans' began to challenge the rituals, pomp and hierarchy of the Anglican Church as they sought a simpler and 'purer' form of Christianity.

The Founding Father of the Quakers was George Fox (1624-1692), who preached that to find God we need simply to look within ourselves. We should discover our

own 'Truth' and sense of 'Justice'. Christ taught us to pursue 'Peace' and that all men are equal.

The rigorous application of these principles brought the Quakers into various forms of conflict with the establishment. The Blasphemy Act of 1650 made it an offence for anyone to affirm himself or another creature to be God, or equal with God, or **that God dwelt in the creation and nowhere else**. Was it blasphemy to assert that God was in each of us?

'Equality' meant that Quakers did not accept priesthood or the hierarchy of the Church.

Quakers would not swear an oath, because this implied that they might otherwise lie, whereas it is an obligation of Quakers always to tell the truth. They would not enter into the deceit of meeting in secret.

Those who were outside the Church (Dissenters) were not able to go to university or hold public office.. A stream of talented and highly principled people found their vocation, therefore, in founding successful businesses such as Cadbury's and Fry's chocolates or Kraft foods. They also went into finance e.g. Barclays and Friends Provident Insurance.

George Fox began his ministry in his early twenties and Quakerism was said to be 'born' when he preached to a large gathering of separatists in 1652 at Pendle Hill in North Lancashire.

Over the coming years various Acts of Parliament were passed against Quaker practices and, when the Act of Toleration was eventually passed in 1689, 15,000 Quakers

were released from jail, 450 having already died in prison.

Quakers today still adhere to the principles of George Fox and quietly 'live their faith'. There is no creed and no member is considered more authoritative than any other. In their meetings they sit quietly together, usually for one hour, during which anyone who feels moved by the Holy Spirit to offer a reading or to speak may do so.

Though the Quakers have no 'hierarchy' they do have an administrative structure in which local meetings join area meetings and send representatives to the 'Yearly Meeting' based at the Friends Meeting House in London. Business Meetings are meetings for worship in which decisions are reached by consensus

Ideas are tested at various levels and statements of guidance are produced, though always emphasizing that:

"There are no declared creeds or statements that you have to believe to be a Quaker. Our understanding of faith is that true fulfilment comes from attempting to live life in the spirit of love, truth and peace, and by seeking and acknowledging that of God in everyone. The concept of 'that of God in everyone' is a key tenet of Quakerism, by which each human being is considered both unique and precious. Interpreting what or who God is, and how God manifests in individuals, is for personal discernment"

An inspiring document is the 24-page 'Advices and Queries' which

sets out challenging questions for the individual to consider. It is taken from the book of 'Christian Discipline, Quaker Faith and Practice.

After her talk, Ruth invited us to put questions, which attending Quakers would answer as they felt so moved.

**Question: How does one become a Quaker?**

Anyone is warmly invited to take part in a Quaker meeting. There is a distinction, however, between attenders and members. If an attender wishes to become a member, he or she may submit an application locally. This will be passed to area level, and an interview will take place with representatives from both levels.

**Question: Do Quakers have to be Christians?**

Quakerism is based on Christian principles, but Buddhists and others, who accept the same principles, are most welcome. The individual must make up his/her own mind,

**Question: Do you have a children's meeting?**

Yes and they join the last 10 minutes of the main meeting, when they are expected to sit in silence.

**Question: Can you tell us about Quaker Schools?**

Benefactors set up schools, some of which meet special needs and some of which are public schools. We were the first to open a mixed boarding school - a consequence of our belief in equality.

**Question: How do you fund centrally?**

Each local meeting pays a capitation levy to fund central activities, including help with local needs. Each meeting has a premises committee.

**Question: How do you cope with weddings and funerals?**

Marriages and deaths are recognised by the State for tax purposes etc. and we do not need a Registrar.

SQIF's (Single Quakers in Family) are expected to be sensitive to feelings of family and friends. They should not inflict Quakerism. Appropriate ceremonies are held.

**Conclusion:** The members of the EMF are most grateful for a fascinating and inspirational visit.

**Geoff Morris**



## ZOROASTER AND HIS FOLLOWERS

### Introduction

Today a very small group of people are called Zoroastrians, those who follow the teachings of the ancient prophet Zarathushtra or Zoroaster known to the ancient Greeks. Originally the followers of the faith called themselves *Mazdayasnis* the *Mazda* worshippers. Zoroaster called his Supreme Power *Mazda Ahura* or *Ahura Mazda*, the Wise Lord.

Zoroaster lived in such an antiquity that his exact time and birth place could not be assessed. However there are some linguistic, archaeological and astronomical

evidences to indicate broadly his period and birth place.

We have today some archaic hymns known as *Gathas* that are attributed to the prophet. These hymns, very poetic and spiritual in style are mainly in a form of conversation between the prophet and the Wise Lord and repeatedly praising the essence of truth. Zoroaster at times similar to a philosopher asks questions but the questions are answered by Zoroaster himself and at one point he informs his followers that he has been inspired by the creator to spread Almighty's essence, righteousness. There are no mythology, no legends and no miracles in *The Gathas*. *The Gathas* and five other original religious books that we have today are called *Avesta*, the holy books of Zoroastrians and the unique language that they are written in is called *Avestan* language. There is no other book in the world written in this language. *Avestan* is close to the Sanskrit language of the oldest *Vedic* scripture *Rig Veda*. From the language we could deduce that Zoroaster was from the Indo-European race and spoke in an Indo-European dialect. There are similarities between Sanskrit, Latin, Old Greek the Slavic languages and Persian.

### History

In studying history of religions, Zoroastrianism is an important subject. About 4,000 years ago the landmass of Europe, from the Ural Mountains in the east to the country of Eire, the most western point, was occupied by many tribes that spoke in closely related dialects. One could strongly suggest that these tribes had



common ancestors that are called Indo-Europeans. Some of these tribes eventually migrated eastward towards Transoxania the land between the two rivers, Oxus and Jaxartes. From there they moved to the northern part of Afghanistan and eastern border of Iran and this group, in a restricted sense, today are referred to as *Aryans*, the noble people. The *Aryans* are a group of Indo-Europeans who eventually split into two groups, one migrating to the Indus Valley and the other to the mainland of Iran.

In parallel with the migration of *Aryans*, roughly the same time, early centuries of the second millennium BCE, another group of Indo-Europeans migrated on the west side of the Caspian Sea towards Anatolia, the Asia Minor. These people are known as Hittites. The Hittites established an empire and have left behind extensive archaeological remains and at the height of their rule they fought the Egyptians in the time of Ramses II (1292-1225 BCE).

The similarity of Sanskrit, Avestan and early European languages indicates the historical bond and eventual dispersal of the tribes spanning from Eire to India and the reason for naming them Indo – Europeans.

### **Zoroaster as an individual**

Not unlike many other ancient religions, Zoroastrians have some legends attributing supernatural powers to their hero. However these attributes are limited in number such as: laughing at birth, escaping injury when placed in the path of a herd of bovines and curing the horse of his patron Kavi Vishtasb. None of these un-natural

acts are mentioned by Zoroaster himself in his hymns *The Gathas*.

The name Zarathushtra is spelled and pronounced in many different ways, one version suggests meaning 'The golden star'. Apparently he was from a clan known as Spitman. His father's name was Poroushasb and his mother Dagdoveh. He mentions one of his daughters named Pouruchista in his hymns. In fact he conducts her marriage ceremony to Jamasb a courtier at the court of Kavi Vishtasb.

Astronomers have worked out his date of birth to be 26<sup>th</sup> March 1768 BCE. He declared his mission at age of 30 and Zoroastrians use 3,745 years ago as the start of their religious calendar. His death is remembered on 26 December at age of 77 and few months.

What makes him unique amongst all the ancient prophets is that he has left some poems in an archaic tongue, preserved probably orally at the beginning, that are passed to us today.

### **The message**

As mentioned the language of Brahmins, *Rig Veda*, Sanskrit is of the same stock as *Avestan* of Zoroaster's hymns, *The Gathas*. However, the contents of these ancient compositions are quite different, suggesting that a doctrinal diversity must have existed in the early centuries of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE amongst the tribes living on the eastern border of Iran. We also know that Zoroaster encourages his people to avoid cattle rustling and being involved in drug induced orgies leading to animal sacrifice. He

considers himself the protector of the mistreated animals and recommends a settled agricultural life.

Zoroaster selects the name 'Mazda', wisdom for his only supreme God that provides life on earth and the unknown afterlife. It seems that he deliberately avoids do's and not to do's as we see in other faiths in order to establish a general everlasting framework for '*Daena Vanguh*' the universal belief of 'Good Conscience'. In this thought-provoking *Yasna* 30.2 he states: Listen to the noblest teachings with an attentive ear. With your penetrating mind discriminate between these twin mentalities (good and evil), person by person each one for own self. Awake, to proclaim this truth before the final judgement overtakes you". We can see that he gives us the choice but recommends the path of truth '*Asha*' and talks so early in human civilization of the 'Day of Judgement'.

Zoroaster believes that Ahura Mazda, the Wise Lord, is responsible for all the goodness in this world and afterlife. In other word what is good is Godly. Now the question could be asked where 'evil' comes from? He vehemently suggests that Ahura Mazda is total goodness and the essence of truth and the opposing force is evil and falsehood. In our familiar daily life it is 'light' versus 'darkness'. If Ahura Mazda is the light that brightens our life and darkness brings gloom and misery, then similar to our experience switching off the Lord's light would automatically bring about darkness of evil, a self created mentality.

It could be concluded that the great Wise Lord of Zoroaster has no ambivalent personality to contain both good and evil, total goodness and truth are God's personality and in the absence of these noble qualities evil and falsehood appear in this world.

### **The followers**

Zoroastrianism being such an ancient belief naturally could not have been free from the flux of history. Ancient, prehistoric customs have survived and reflected in *Avesta*, the holy books, some are admirable and some unpractical. There is repeated reverence for natural phenomena, all that Ahura Mazda has created for the benefit and happiness of mankind. The four basic elements: water, earth, fire and air are to be revered and not polluted. To be environmentally conscious and live a clean green life must have been a giant step in human civilization so distant in history.

One of the short daily prayers recited repeatedly as a 'mantra' is:  
Righteousness is the best  
It brings happiness  
Pursue goodness for the sake of goodness (not for reward)".

The written history of Zoroastrian kings, in 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE, such as Cyrus, Darius and Artaxerxes is well documented in the Old Testament, Isaiah, Ezra, Daniel and Nehemiah. They are admired for being fair and generous, never forced their religion on others and had total respect for other peoples' beliefs. It has been suggested that the three wise men *Magi* who went to see the baby Jesus in Jerusalem were Zoroastrian priests on the day known as Epiphany (seeing God),

the 6<sup>th</sup> of the first month. In Zoroastrian solar calendar the sixth of the first month is the 6<sup>th</sup> day of spring, Zoroaster's birthday (26<sup>th</sup> of March).

Being traditionally farmers living close to the nature and dependent on the cycles of the seasons, all the solstice days such as vernal and autumnal equinoxes, the shortest and longest days are celebrated. The first day of spring is the start of the Zoroastrian New Year called Nou-Rooz. Additionally there is a feast day in every month for the followers to break bread with each other. Boys and girls at the age of maturity, about 15 for boys and slightly younger for the girls volunteer to go through the initiation ceremony. After the initiation they become responsible for their own deeds, any person that goes through the initiation ceremony is endowed with a white sacred cord and a white vest to use at prayer times. Zoroastrianism in modern times has not been a missionary religion and does not easily accept converts, which explains the reduction in the number of followers.

A group called Parsis (Parsees) in the Indian subcontinent are Zoroastrians who migrated from Persia (Iran) after 7<sup>th</sup> century invasion of the Arab Moslems. Though small in number they contribute enormously to the progress of business, science and political life in the sub-continent.

To a Zoroastrian, life is the microcosm of cosmic battle between good and evil, in which we are involved and we should soldier on to win the battle and become one of The Almighty's co-workers!

The ancient Zoroastrian motto that remains unchangeable today is:

**Good Thoughts,  
Good Words  
Good Deeds.**

Sharok Vafadari (21<sup>st</sup> February, 2008)



## **Elmbridge Firefighters want to prevent a fire in your home**

Last year (2006/07) Surrey Fire and Rescue Service tackled over 600 domestic fires in homes across Surrey, this resulted in 50 Surrey residents being seriously injured or killed.

Many of these incidents could have been avoided, so we are promoting FREE home fire risk checks to help Elmbridge residents prevent a fire occurring in their home.

When a home fire risk check is requested, an Elmbridge firefighter from your local fire station, Esher, Painshill or Walton, will visit your home at a time that is convenient for you, to identify any potential fire risks and offer practical advice on making your home safe.

Where required the firefighters can assist with installing a free smoke detector and talk you through what to do if the alarm sounds including how to make an escape plan for you and your family.

The most common risks people associate with fire are cigarettes and chip pans. In fact, candles, cooking and faulty appliances are also significant fire risks, and with advice from the firefighters your home can become safer for you and your family.

Fire safety does not have to compromise the way in which families celebrate their faith. Firefighters will help you create a safer home, tailoring their advice to meet the needs of your family and your religious beliefs.

A home fire risk check will help keep you, your family and your home safe from fire. Don't live to regret it, call Surrey Fire and Rescue Service on; **Freephone 0800 085 0767** to arrange yours or book online at [www.surrey-fire.gov.uk/besmartbesafe](http://www.surrey-fire.gov.uk/besmartbesafe)

For further information please contact:  
Iain Pompei – 01932 224460



## Coming Events

NB: Please let Geoff Morris (01932 868454) know if you are attending any event, so that we can get the numbers right for catering. Unless otherwise stated there will be no charge for events but donations will be gratefully received and can now, of course, be gift-aided.

### Community Workshop

In our last Newsletter we referred to plans for a 'Faith and Community

Workshop', for which part of our Community Development Fund was intended.

Discussions with the Local Authority and the Police revealed that the biggest 'integration and cohesion' problems in our area were between young people and older people. We therefore felt it best to direct our support towards a pilot project in the St. John's district of Hersham, where young people and older people will work together.

The initial workshop will take place on 10<sup>th</sup> April and we shall be asking our members to help with 'hosting'. This is an opportunity to show faiths working together.

**Visit to the Church of the Our Lady of Lourdes, Hampton Court Way – Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> June at 7.45pm for 8pm**

Father Rob Esdaile looks forward to welcoming us.

**Visit to the Jain Centre, Potters Bar – Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> July**

A coach will leave from Cobham Car Park, Downside Bridge Road at 09.15am, so that we reach Potters Bar at 10.30am. They will offer us tea (not coffee!) and we may take only vegetarian food. The visit should last about 2 hours, so that we should arrive back in Cobham at about 1.30pm. There will be a charge of £10 per head for the coach.

**Annual General Meeting – 16<sup>th</sup> July**

This year's AGM will be held in the Elmbridge Civic Centre at 7pm on Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> July. As usual, it will be followed by refreshments and a discussion of plans for the coming year.



## **INVITATIONS**

In addition to the events organised by EMF, we have been invited to the following:

### **Ahmadiyya Peace Symposium – Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> March at 5pm**

The Symposium will take place at the Baitul Futuh Mosque, 181 London Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 5PT. Following the Reception at 5pm, there will be Refreshments, a Keynote Address by His Holiness Hadrhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Head of the Worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and Dinner.

As Nabil has indicated earlier in this Newsletter, time with our Ahmadiyya friends is always well spent. If you would like to come to this event please tell Geoff Morris as soon as possible.

### **Chinese Evening - Saturday 19th April at 7.00 pm at the Guildhall, High Street, Kingston-upon-Thames KT1 1EU.**

The evening will include a Chinese buffet, Chinese classical dancing and traditional Chinese music. The event is on behalf of the Charities of the Mayor of Kingston, which are: 'Momentum' (children's cancer), Parkinson's Disease and Asian Earthquake Relief. Tickets

are £20 and may be obtained from **Lally Malik** on **0208 336 0015**.

### **Jewish Cultural Display - Thursday 8th May from 4.00 to 6.30 pm at the North - West Surrey Synagogue.**

There will be a display of religious artefacts, a talk by Rabbi Jackie Tabick and an opportunity to ask questions. Refreshments will be served.

If you wish to come, please notify **Louis Solway** (Event Organiser) by email ([admin@nwss.org.uk](mailto:admin@nwss.org.uk)) by 25th April, so that an invitation may be sent to you.



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## **Website**

Visit our Website at:  
[www.elmbridgemultifaith.org.uk](http://www.elmbridgemultifaith.org.uk).

The site contains back copies of our Newsletter with articles summarising the tenets of the major faiths of the World.