



ABINGDON PEACE GROUP

Newsletter

September 2022

The APG newsletter is back after its accustomed summer break and we hope there is plenty of information useful to you and that some of it may prompt you to action. Here are two suggestions/pleas.

Why not come to the annual Croughton **Keep Space for Peace** demonstration. It's a CND national event locally organised by the Oxfordshire Peace Council (which includes APG). **Abingdon runs the tea tent**, so we will need veggie/vegan finger food and people serving drinks. See page 2.

Please help by supporting the **Jumble Sale on Oct 8** by donating items to sell, by sorting goods and by generally assisting. For details and timings see diary.

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Next meeting: Tuesday, September 20 at 8.00

Back at the Northcourt Centre!

Film screening

Ithaka – the Fight to Free Julian Assange

Julian Assange founded Wikileaks in 2006, which came to the world's attention in 2010 with the publication of leaked US military documents and video footage concerning the behaviour of the occupying forces in Iraq. The information released outraged many citizens all around the world but, predictably, incensed the American authorities. For much more detail of Wikileaks publication of government and other documents go to https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julian_Assange

For the last few years he has languished in prison in London pending extradition, which now appears to be approaching fast. He is in declining health. On humanitarian grounds (he faces 175 years in gaol) and out of gratitude for his actions we must surely oppose sending him to the US.

The film is centred on his father's and his wife's joint quest to campaign on his behalf. This film, (110 minutes r.t.) is an Australian production that has been screened in UK cinemas since July.

The Free Julian Assange campaign is organising a human chain in London around Parliament in support of Julian Assange on 8th October. Contact: <https://dontextraditeassange.com>

There will be no admission charge but you you may wish to contribute to cost of hiring the film.

NB The film booking, as we go to press (end of August), has not been confirmed. If we cannot proceed as planned, we will organise an alternative discussion or speaker, probably on the same topic.



U.S.A.F. Croughton

(US communication base)

Keep Space for Peace

Stop militarisation of space

Saturday 1st October 2022
12.00 – 3.30pm

National march and rally – Speakers:

Paul Mobbs – 'Croughtonwatch'

Dave Webb - Convener Global Network

Tom Unterrainer - Chair, CND

This major U.S. communication and intelligence base supports space communications, data links, military drone information, bomber guidance, missile defence, diplomatic communications, and command and control war fighting functions. It is a key link in the 'chain' controlling US surveillance, armed drone and special forces operations across Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. The new U.S. 'Space Force' is part of the militarisation of space. This will also need ground stations like USAF Croughton.

(RAF) USAF Croughton main gate is on the B4031, off the A43, 2 miles North of M40 junction 10, just South of Brackley, Northamptonshire. Travel west on the B4031, past the main gate, turn left at mini-roundabout on eastern edge of Croughton village, and park at signed site, not at main gate. The demo starts at 12.00 from the car park, along B4031 to Main Gate.

Event finishes 4.00pm. There will be music, a food stall and a disabled toilet.

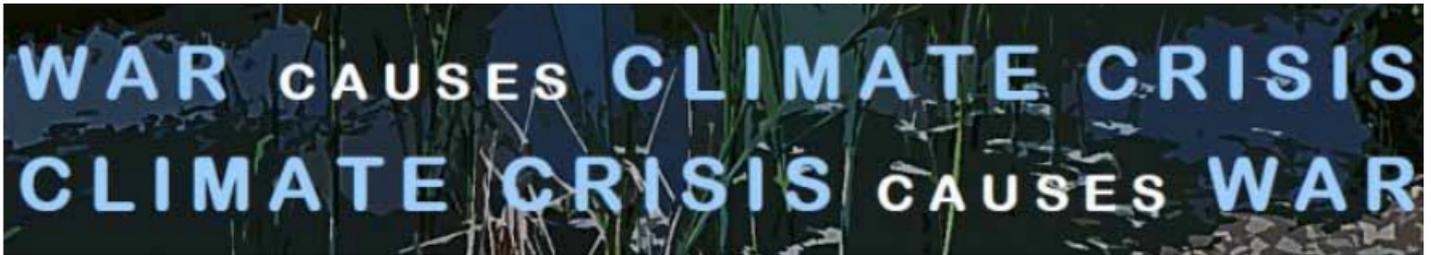
Add your flags and banners to the display

Minibus leaves St Giles, Oxford 10.45 & Oxford Rail station 11.00 (£8)
 pre booking essential - contact:- 01865 248357 / oxonpeace@yahoo.co.uk

Car-sharing will be available from Abingdon – send a message to abingdonpeace@gmail.com and we will contact you.

Event organised by Oxfordshire Peace Campaign

A day school for climate and peace campaigners



It may – or may not – be too early to say whether the war in Ukraine and with it the renewed threat of nuclear-tipped Cold War will wreck or accelerate national and international efforts to respond to an ever-worsening climate emergency. It certainly poses questions for how grass-roots climate as well as peace campaigners 'think' effective action in the coming months and possibly years ahead. This educational workshop has been put together to provide space in which to learn, reflect and respond. The workshop welcomes anybody with an interest. Contributors will include Nafeez Ahmed, RethinkX writer and analyst, Stuart Parkinson, Scientists for Social Responsibility, Andrew Simms, Rapid Transition Alliance and New Weather Institute, Tim Street, nuclear weapons expert.

The workshop is being part funded by Rescue!History <http://www.rescue-history.org.uk> but we would appreciate a £5.00 donation from waged folk, or whatever participants can afford. Unwaged for free. Eventbrite registration will follow. WOCC hall size means there will be a cap on participant numbers,, so please register early. Further enquiries, contact Nuala Young on NualaYoung@hotmail.com Supported by MAW (Movement against War), Oxford CND, Oxford FOE, Swindon XR, Faringdon Peace Group.

4 x B52 nuclear capable US bombers arrive at Fairford

4 x B52 nuclear capable US bombers arrived on Thursday August 18 on exercise at USAF Fairford on the Oxfordshire / Gloucestershire border – <https://ffdmovements.blogspot.com/>. US U2 intelligence gathering planes already operate out of the base.

There will be a national CND gathering at USAF Lakenheath on September 17 to protest at the potential return of US nuclear bombs to Britain, while local campaigners plan to gather at USAF Fairford on the same day to protest at the exercises by nuclear capable US bombers carried out from this base.

Martin Bell and Ben Griffin in discussion 'on peace' on UN International Day of Peace

At 7 pm Wednesday 21 September the Movement for the Abolition of War is holding this event in central London. It is both in-person and on-line.

MAW Vice-President Martin Bell, known to millions as a distinguished former war correspondent, will exchange ideas with Ben Griffin, a former SAS soldier, who you may recall visited us in Abingdon a few years ago and gave an inspiring talk. After leaving the army he became a central figure in Veteran for Peace UK. The two men will talk about their experiences, share insights and discuss how to stimulate a public debate on peace before taking questions live and via streaming for those participating remotely. Don't pass up the chance to be part of this significant and exciting joint Movement for the Abolition of War/Veterans for Peace encounter!

Venue: The Brockway Room, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL

Register with Eventbrite for in-person & on-line at <https://tinyurl.com/32keh286>

NPT Review Conference ends without agreement

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is reviewed every five years and the latest one has just concluded. The central part of the NPT is that signatory states who do not have nuclear weapons desist from acquiring or developing them while the nuclear states act *in good faith* to pursue nuclear disarmament aimed at the ultimate elimination of their nuclear arsenals. It is clear that very little progress has been made. For some reason our communications media have not been running headline after headline about the conference and indeed seem somewhat queasy about the nuclear threat associated with Russia's invasion of Ukraine or the sometimes incautious responses to it on the part of the NATO countries. The Unfold Zero website has an interesting commentary. Go to:

<https://www.unfoldzero.org/npt-review-conference-ends-without-agreement-what-next/>

Of course, we now have the TPNW, The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear War embedded, like the NPT, in international law. Our leaders (in those non-signatory nations who profess to defend us with their nukes) are embarrassed by this recent treaty and affect to show contempt for it, for the rest of the world and for us. Well, contempt is a two way street. We cannot accept their stance and refuse to retire meekly from the debate.

Quiz Questions: Q1 Who won the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize? And what happened next?

Answer: Russian journalist Dmitry Muratov.

Q2: what did he win it for? Helping to establish Novaya Gazeta, (closed down in March).

Q3: what happened to the \$500,000 prize money? He donated it to Unicef.

Q3: what did he do with the medal: He sold it by auction raising \$103.5 million.

The proceeds will go directly to UNICEF in its efforts to help children displaced by the war in Ukraine, saying he was particularly concerned about children who have been orphaned because of the conflict in Ukraine and added that it's important international sanctions levied against Russia do not prevent humanitarian aid.

Harrumph, bet that made him feel good!

www.politico.com/news/2022/06/20/nobel-sold-for-ukrainian-kids-shatters-record-at-103-5m-00040871

Nuclear war between two nations could spark global famine

'A pall of smoke from burning cities would engulf Earth, causing worldwide crop failures, models show.' For article go to <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-022-02219-4>

New NIS Report - 'Extreme Circumstances: The UK's new nuclear warhead in context'



A new report from Nuclear Information Service that gathers together all available information from UK and US on the Replacement Warhead Programme. It aims to understand why the warhead is going ahead and work out what can be determined about its likely characteristics. This report represents more than 12 months of research and writing and offers analysis and recommendations. Download it here: <https://www.nuclearinfo.org/article/new-report/>

Recommended sources of information

The bimonthly Oxford CND newsletter is highly recommended – we frequently draw upon it and are grateful to do so. The current edition carries John Gittings' regular one page article and looks at the very significant influence of CND and the peace movement in the 1980s – and not just in the UK. Here's a gem that John has unearthed: 'In the month after the Chippy [Chipping Norton] branch was set up, the British defence secretary John Nott announced plans for a publicity campaign to wean "well-meaning innocent people" away from CND, warning that peace groups were dominated by "a

tiny number of left-wingers,”. Files relating to her Washington visit (released in 2011), reveal according to an analysis by the Margaret Thatcher Foundation that “*the real problem for the politicians was uncertainty as to their ability to manage public opinion with unilateralism rising in popularity*” [our italics]. If you would like to have an emailed copy drop a line to oxfordcnd@phonecoop.coop.

Another extremely valuable resource is Salisbury CND's website www.cndsalisbury.org.uk/ (and the rest of the website) for up-to-date news and listings. Their coverage of events would put most of Fleet St to shame (if it had the capacity).

DIARY

Fri Sep 9 – Sat 10 Sep: Aldermaston Women’s Peace Camp – Nuala 01865 749459.

Sat Sep 17: Lakenheath airbase in Suffolk all day: further info from CND <https://cnduk.org/lakenheath/>

Sat Sep 17: USAF Fairford main gate demo – 12.00 noon – oxonpeace@yahoo.co.uk or 01865 248357.

Wed Sep 21: Ben Griffin and Martin Bell discuss peace. Venue: The Brockway Room, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL at 7pm. Event hosted by the Movement for the Abolition of War. Further info: <https://abolishwar.net/on-peace/>. Register with Eventbrite for in-person & on-line at <https://tinyurl.com/32keh286>. See also item on page 3.

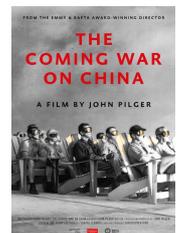
Sat Oct 1: Rally at USAF Croughton - ‘Keep Space for Peace’ week. Annual Oxon Peace Campaign event (APG is a constituent part of OPC). Speakers – Paul Mobbs (Croughtonwatch), Dave Webb (Global Network) and Tom Unterrainer (CND Chair). This major U.S. communication and intelligence base supports space communications, data links, military drone information, bomber guidance, missile defence, diplomatic communications, and command and control functions. It is a key link in the ‘chain’ controlling US operations across Europe, Africa and the Middle East. And see page 2 (<https://cnduk.org/events/keep-space-for-peace-week-march-and-rally-at-usaf-croughton/>)

Fri Oct 7 – Sat 8 Sep: Aldermaston Women’s Peace Camp – Nuala 01865 749459.

Sat Oct 8: Abingdon Peace Group Jumble Sale – Doors open for the sale: 3 – 4pm at the Northcourt Centre (in Tatham Hall). Please deliver items for sale between 1.30 and 3pm and stay on (or return) to help with the clear-up. Please note different timings from past jumble sales.

Sat Oct 8: human chain in London around Parliament in support of Julian Assange - <https://dontextraditeassange.com> . And see also front page.

Tues Oct 18: Screening of The Coming War on China, with John Pilger taking questions afterwards. Directed by John Pilger 2016, 113 mins. Showing at the Prince Charles Theatre, Leicester Square London at 6pm; The film can also be viewed on YouTube. You can book tickets by going to <https://www.stopwar.org.uk/>



Sat Oct 29: Militarism & Climate day school, West Oxford Community Centre, Road,OX2 0BT. (see page 3) contact Nuala 01865 749459.

Corrections and contributions to this newsletter are very welcome. Abingdon Peace Group meets on the third Tuesday of each month except August. All who are interested in peace and campaigning for it are welcome to take part. The Group has no party political affiliations. Contact us on abingdonpeace@gmail.com and (01235) 526265 & 522163.