

APRIL 2021

WALKING CHEERFULLY

FOUNDED 1926



PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

Gabriella Steiner Lee p 4.
Beth Chaplin – Christine Collins p 5
End of the World – Robin Sinclair
Forty Years a Friend – Jo Jordan p 7
There is new Light – Kenise Neill p 8
Notices p 9
Friends who have influenced me p 11

NEWSLETTER OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
(QUAKERS) SOUTH AUSTRALIA - NORTHERN TERRITORY
REGIONAL MEETING.

When the spirit is sore fretted, even tired to sickness of the janglings and nonsense noises of the world, what a balm and solace it is to go and seat yourself for a quiet half-hour upon some undisputed corner of a bench among the gentle Quakers . . . although frequently the meeting is broken up without a word having been spoken – the mind has been fed. You go away with a sermon not made with hands . . . you have been bathed in silence.

Charles Lamb (1775-1834) English essayist



Friends at the Palm Sunday Rally at Elder Park.



**Matthew Lycos, Harald Ehrmann and Cleo Lycos
at the recent Extinction Rebellion demonstration in Adelaide**



Roger Keyes and Yarrow Andrew at the Extinction Rebellion Demonstration



Yarrow Andrew was one of the speakers at the Palm Sunday Rally in Elder Park. He spoke eloquently about the crucial need for earth care.



Quaker Witness in King William Street.

TESTIMONY TO THE GRACE OF GOD IN THE LIFE OF GABRIELLA JUDITH STEINER-LEE

Prepared by John Edwards, Robin Sinclair and Jenny Stock

Gabriella Steiner-Lee came to Australia in 1937 at the age of two when her father Elemer Steiner and mother Anita Rozgits, a gifted dancer, left Budapest to escape the forthcoming Holocaust.



Jo Jordan talks to Gabriella

Educated at her parish school and then at St Aloysius College Adelaide by the Sisters of Mercy, Gabriella married Keith Fulton at the age of 19 and was blessed with four children. Her father had opened the first Hungarian restaurant in Adelaide, where she and her younger brother Victor often helped out. A lively, creative woman, with a flair for fashion, she for some years operated Gaby's Craft Shop in the Marion Centre.

Keith and Gaby had four children and, after their children grew older, they eventually divorced.

Then in 1991, knowing that he was already suffering from terminal cancer, Gabriella married Ron Lee. Almost immediately Ron had to go into palliative care and he died shortly afterward, leaving her to live alone for a second time. On her own for 20 years, she coped with her usual confidence and calmness and the love of her family and friends. She travelled extensively in New Zealand helping with the care of her two grandchildren.

Still a Catholic, suddenly, one day during mass, "the church left me. I didn't leave the church, the church left me." She began attending other churches, seeking to simplify her life materially and spiritually, but found that none quite met her needs. Although the founder of the Sisters of Mercy had been educated by Quakers, Gaby knew little about Friends, but was inspired to make enquiries. She began attending the Eastern Suburbs Meeting, where she immediately felt at home, and continued her spiritual journey. A year later, in 1996, she applied for and was accepted into membership.

For many years she supported QSA through regular volunteering at the Quaker Shop, organizing the book section. She was an important part of the core group at the Shop, where her thoughtful input, imaginative ideas, hard work and humour were much appreciated.

Gabriella also served as member of Adelaide Regional Meeting Ministry and Oversight Committee and represented Friends on the South Australian Council of Churches. She was active in the formation of a group to encourage friendship with Muslim women in Adelaide, and was a valued member of the Interfaith Association.

Meeting with John Edwards, whose membership was at Adelaide Meeting, resulted in more changes. They became friends and later partners, caring together for John's wife Valerie in full-time care. John and Gabriella continued with their respective meetings and while living in Belair attended the Adelaide Hills meeting together. All three Friends were together when Valerie died in 2006. In 2009 Gabriella and John married and shared in membership until declining health meant Gabriella having to move into full time care. She died on 16th September 2020 at the age of 84.

To the end Gabriella was loved by her family and friends, by all John's family and by the staff who cared for her. She was gentle, loving and kind, happy and appreciative of everything around her right to the end, leaving the wonderful inspiration of a courageous Friend walking softly and living with joy in the moment.

BETH CHAPLIN

(Alison) Beth Chaplin, formerly Anderson nee Ashby

18May 1933 - 4 February 2021

Christine Collins



Beth Chaplin

Beth was the youngest child of Keith and Edith Ashby and sister to Hazel (later Woodruff), Enid (later Robertson) and Eric.

From her birth Beth attended Meeting for Worship at Eden Hills Meeting House and as she grew older enjoyed walking with her family through the bush to the meeting house from her home at Allambee and then Wittunga, Blackwood. At Monthly Meeting for business at the North Adelaide meeting house Beth looked after the small children. This included Elizabeth Wilton (later Stevenson). Elizabeth and Beth used to play together at Beth's home, Wittunga.

In 1947 when she was thirteen, until 1950, Beth was a boarder at Friends School in Hobart. Her mother, Edith Ashby, died unexpectedly June 1947 and Beth was unable to return home to her family until the Christmas holidays. All of her life Beth spoke wistfully of her mother.

Beth met her future husband George Anderson in New Zealand when she was there to help her sister Hazel during the birth of her second child. George had come to Australia from South Africa to study citrus growing and was sight-seeing in New Zealand before he returned home.

From New Zealand Beth returned to Hobart and gained her certificate in mother craft nursing and when she was 22 she went alone by ship to South Africa where she married George.

Her three children Mark, Bryan and Caroline, her grandchildren and a great grandchild are South Africans. While Beth railed against conditions in South Africa, she loved it. In her later years she missed Australia more and more and was torn between her love for both countries. Her dedication to letter writing (always written with her black inked fountain pen) and later to telephone calls and her ten trips to Australia meant that she was always a close and dearly loved member of her Australian family.

Beth attended many significant family events in Australia and in the UK with her sister Hazel's family. While in England with her father in 1951 she met numerous Quaker family members and maintained close contact with them from then on. She was keeper of family connections and stories and enjoyed relating them.

Beth courageously endured tragedy within her family with quiet strength and stillness. She was a pastel artist. She held weekly open house morning teas and delighted in baking for them. She formed deep and abiding friendships. Her garden brought her great joy. Holding a large number of people in her morning prayers each day was her non-negotiable practice.

Her uncle Ivan Ashby wrote of seeing 'perfection in nature's sculpture' and Beth had a deep appreciation of nature too. She was a keen bird watcher and would sit daily on her verandah

and delight in the birds she saw and the zebra and wildebeest that wandered in her son's avocado farm. Botanical names meant little to her; she loved plants for their essence and beauty. She revelled in nature where ever she was and particularly held dear the Australian and South African bush and its accompanying wildlife.

Beth tested positive to COVID-19 on January 16th and died on February 4th.

End of the World

Robin Sinclair

Our planet is a tiny speck,
part of a galaxy that drifts
among a million million galaxies.
Is it – are we--- as special as we think?

It is, as we are, each unique,
a miracle of love and hopes and fears,
and when we die a small but poignant gap
exists for just a moment
and then closes with a sigh
and life goes on,
vibrant and restless as it always is,
but just a little different.

And so it is with every creature that exists,
with every species that becomes extinct...
A tragedy. And yet the gap will close
and something just as wonderful may take its place.

And if we should,
by malice or ineptitude,
destroy our world
the Universe will sigh.
But, far beyond our vision or imagining
the wonder will go on.

This poem will be in Robin's new book, (*Upside Down World*) which will be coming out before too long.

FORTY YEARS A FRIEND

Jo Jordan

It's forty years since I wrote a letter to the South Australia Regional Meeting Clerk requesting membership. Soon afterwards I had a very pleasant evening with Fran Pearce and Humphrey Tranter who were my appointed visitors. When I was informed that I had been accepted into membership I was delighted.

I had attended Meetings at North Adelaide and at Eastern Suburbs for seven years, so why suddenly request membership? Joseph, my husband, had received a work placement in the Riverland and the family was about to move to Barmera. I had felt a sense of belonging with SA Friends which I didn't want to lose. During the three years that we were away, Friends not only kept in touch, several also came to visit, which was a great joy.

When we returned to Adelaide the sense of belonging within the Meeting was just as it had always been, and remains to this day. I have been fortunate to meet and to get to know some inspiring Friends during the past 40 years. They have taught me, more than any book or study course, what it means to be a Quaker. Many are no longer with us, but the love which sustained them and gave them purpose and meaning lives on. We are fortunate to welcome new Friends to our Meetings, to get to know them, to share our gifts and to learn, with love, from each other.

The Meeting has changed in many ways over the past forty years. Technology connects us in ways I could not have dreamed possible forty years ago. Society has changed, in many ways for the better, and it continues to evolve. The guide to Quaker practice, the *Handbook of Practice and Procedure*, is constantly being revised as new insights are revealed within the Society of Friends as well as the wider world.

Although much changes, and will continue to change with time, I find there is a constant which does not change. The Meeting always offers me a place where I belong, a place of calm where I feel accepted and loved, where I find guidance and the assurance that all will be well.

A QUICK QUAKER QUIZ

What does QSA stand for in Britain Yearly Meeting?

What so these two Quaker acronyms mean? QUNU and FWCCAWPS?

What was the Quaker testimony against the tides and the seasons?

What is meant by centring down?

When and why was membership introduced into the Society of Friends?

Answers: Quaker Social Action. This organisation works for the relief of poverty, in housing, well-being, managing debts, along with other humanising activities.

Quaker United Nations Office. Friends World Committee for Consultation Asia-West Pacific Section.

The testimony against the tides and the seasons was against celebrating civic and religious festivals, especially Easter and Christmas, and certainly the pomp and ceremony on the death of famous military and naval men. The whole of life should be sacramental. Everyday should be a holy day.

Centring down is the expression used for quieting the mind in settling into meeting for worship.

Membership was introduced in 1737 in order to know who should receive Quaker poor relief.

There is New Light... We Need to Take a Path Not Chosen Before

Kenise Neill

Anniversary of National Apology to Stolen Generations (13 February)

...There is new light. If only we're brave enough to see it. If only we're brave enough to be it.

Amanda Gordon, The Hill We Climb, read at the Inauguration of President Joe Biden (20 January 2021)



FIGURE 1 LIVING IN COMMUNION ARTIST: MARY SOUTHARD. CSJ (USED WITH PERMISSION)

As we remember the brave moment in 2008 when our Prime Minister apologised to the Stolen Generations, we can ask ourselves two questions. How can we stand in truth and continue to pronounce that Australia is not systemically racist? Are we brave enough to stand with and bear witness to the historical and ongoing trauma suffered by Australia's First Nations People?

I believe we are being challenged as a Congregation, as a Church and as a Country to ensure "Black Lives Matter" in all our actions, and go on a journey to de-colonise our perceptions, our prejudices, our systems and our whole Country.

We are being called as an Earth community to a deeper spirituality – to invoke the capacity of our human heart to hold tenderly the historical and current life experiences of First Nations People across the world. (<https://youtu.be/GKcrL4NxNJM>)

If we take this journey into the "new light" we will grow in our awareness of our conscious or unconscious complicity in white supremacy.

I am writing this reflection after hearing our Prime Minister describe "Australia Day as an important marker of Australia's history" and "that the date should not be changed", despite being seen as a day of mourning by many First Nations People. He explained his position with the words:

You know, when those 12 ships turned up in Sydney, all those years ago, it wasn't a particularly flash day for the people on those vessels either. Scott Morrison, (January 2021)

This quote is a vivid example of how our whole nation has not heard and learnt from First Nations People. They have experienced and suffered abuse and neglect over generations. It is not a time now to be divisive and judgemental but it is a time for **deep contemplative listening** (Dadirri) and respectful conversations.

Let's work together with First Nations People to heal the deep, raw and open wound that began for them on the 26 January 1788. Their sovereign country was invaded with the raising of the British flag in Botany Bay. The process of colonisation has been brutal. The trauma they have suffered has been unbearable for them and it is difficult for us to hear and respond to their stories. I pray we can all listen with mercy and compassion and own our history...

Kenise Neill is a Sister of the Saint Joseph Community. She has been heavily involved in child protection. She is also an Attender of Adelaide Eastern Suburbs Meeting

NOTICES AND NEWS OF FRIENDS

THE QUAKER SHOP

Recycle while raising funds for Quaker projects
We all do our bit by reducing waste and recycling as best we can. But you can do more, at no financial cost.
Join the happy band of volunteers at the Quaker Shop and become part of a greater communal recycling effort while raising funds for Quaker projects run by QSA (Quaker Service Australia). Contact Jo Jordan 0403 913 719 to have a chat about how you can help.

QUAKER SPEAK

This can be viewed on Youtube. It is produced by Friends Journal and issued every other Thursday.
The Friends journal is a foremost American magazine about Quaker life, Quaker news and issues, important book reviews as well as obituaries of outstanding men and women. It is published monthly.
Recent subjects of Quaker Speak are Am I good enough to be a Quaker, Spirit led activism, the paradox of Quaker belief.

AUSTRALIA YEARLY MEETING JULY 3RD – 9TH 2021

This is to be an online virtual event, hosted by Victoria Regional Meeting. Updates can be checked at <https://www.quakersaustralia.info/news-events/calendar/list>:

Explanatory Sessions: During the month of April these online meetings will be held by Yearly Meeting Committees which have Part B: Items for Consideration in their Reports in Documents in Advance 2021. The Sessions are to help Friends be better informed about the matters for consideration, in preparation for discussion at regional meetings held during May and June 2021. NOTE: To see all the details and the Zoom link for each Explanatory Session, you must be signed in to the website:
<https://www.quakersaustralia.info/events/yearly-meeting-2021>

SILVER WATTLE UPCOMING COURSES

- Facing Climate Emergency, Finding Renewal Apr 23, 2021 – Apr 29, 2021
- Artists Gathering May 12, 2021 – May 18, 2021
- Becoming a Fuller Quaker May 21, 2021 – May 27, 2021
- Quaker Basics Online Aug 8, 2021 – Oct 10, 2021 For more information, visit the website <https://www.silverwattle.org.au/upcoming-courses>

The Penn Club, London, has been forced to close because of the Covid pandemic. It has long provided accommodation for travelling Friends. However, the very ancient Royal Foundation of St Katharine have offered to provide a new home for the Club. The Foundation provides a safe, comfortable place to stay with good transport links to central London. They plan to introduce a Penn Club table in their Dining Room for shared conversations and have agreed to provide a Quaker section of the library.

QUNO (Quaker United Nations Office) is concerned about the impacts of climate change on people's lives, and works to ensure that the rights and dignity of all are upheld while emphasizing the need for urgent action. It contributes towards this by emphasizing the human impact of decisions made at the international climate negotiations, collaborating with civil society and engaging with the latest climate science, and exploring linkages between climate change and our other areas of expertise, such as human rights, food policy and peacebuilding.



Anne Johnson and Sepideh Nekouparvar enjoying the launch party for Anne's art exhibition held at Transform Orthodontic Care, 50 Stephen Terrace, St Peters. Open every Friday afternoon until the end of April

FRIENDS WHO HAVE INFLUENCED MY LIFE

Charles Stevenson



Sophie Simons

Sophie Simons was a deeply concerned Friend. She was the Regional Meeting Clerk. But perhaps it was her work on the Wider Quaker Fellowship which was the most unforgettable. At the packed Meeting House the members of this Fellowship would listen to various Quaker speakers. She was deeply concerned for the welfare of others, committed to giving practical help to refugees. Many Friends and others, sought her advice. Her greatest contribution to the meeting was her gift for the ministry. "God is so near, yet so far," she said quoting St Anselm on one unforgettable morning. So simple yet profound. On another occasion she said that she had learnt not to ask why, but to accept.

This attitude sprang from the shock of seeing her husband's name spread across the cinema screen described as an enemy of the people. He was a Jewish medical practitioner in Gummersbach, Germany. One of Alfred Simons patients said

to him “Here take my bank book: take whatever you need to escape”. On the night when Sofie was going home she saw her house surrounded by Nazi SS soldiers. She accelerated and never returned to her home. Instead, with her son, Arthur, she travelled through to The Netherlands, with a tense moment when her passport was examined by the S.S. “You are coming back?” she was asked. In reality she was about to board a cargo ship bound for Australia. Meanwhile her husband escaped first to Switzerland, and then to Australia.

It seems inconceivable but our dear Sophie an ‘enemy alien’ had to report every Friday to the police at Lilydale in Victoria, a seven mile walk from Silvan in the Dandenong Ranges where she managed a poultry farm.

Cleaning windows in the Melbourne suburb of Jolimont a Quaker man stood watching Alfred and announced “you are not used to cleaning windows”. The man invited Alfred to a social gathering for refugees at the Russell Street Meeting House. This was the commencement of Sophie’s connection with Friends.

Eventually they found work in South Australia, being the guests of Keith and Edith Ashby at Wittunga. One amusing anecdote of that period was when Alfred, having travelled across on a troop train, listening intently to the new language he had to learn, claimed that he had heard a marvellous new word that could be used in all manner of ways! “Oh no, Doctor Alfred, never use that word,” said Edith Ashby, “it is not a very nice word at all.”

Eventually the Simons were allowed to practice, after Alfred, a paediatrician, had to sit for Australian medical exams. They practiced first in the Adelaide Hills because they could speak German (not a pleasant job because they found so many Nazi sympathisers!), then at Ardrossan where they attended meetings for worship at Kadina, and finally at Main North Road, Blair Athol.

Many found Sofie a tower of strength. Her lasting memorial is the porch entrance to the Meeting House.

**THE MOST WELCOME SOUND
ALMOST TYO QUIET TO HEAR ...
HOW THE RAIN BEGINS.**

ROBIN SINCLAIR

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Adelaide: 11 am every Sunday and 1st Wednesday of month 5.30 pm

Friends Meeting House, 40a Pennington Terrace, North Adelaide.

Clerk: Geoff Greeves.

Fellowship of Healing: 2nd Wed and 4th Fri of month 12.30 pm

WMSAdelaide@quakersaustralia.info

Meeting House bookings: RMSANTBookings@quakersaustralia.info

Eastern Suburbs: 10 am every Sunday. Leabrook Guide Hall, Rochester St., Leabrook

Clerk: Topsy Evans 0417 517 471 WMSEastern@quakersaustralia.info

Fleurieu: 11 am second Sunday of each month. Contact: Chris Collins (08) 8552 1654
WMSFleurieu@quakersaustralia.info

Hills: 10.30 am second Sunday of each month. Various venues.
Contact: Robin Sinclair 0418 908 163 WMSHills@quakersaustralia.info

Southern: Third Sunday of month. Contact: Barbara Talbot
WMSSouthern@quakersaustralia.info

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Alice Springs: 4 pm every Sunday at Campfire in the Heart, Ragnesi Road, Alice Springs.
Contact Diana Campbell 0422 472 918 WMSAlice@quakersaustralia.info

Darwin: 4.45 pm first & third Sunday of each month. Salvation Army Community Centre. Cnr
Lee Point Rd & Yanyula Dr., Anula, Darwin.
Contacts: John Duguid (08) 7978 7080 Barbara Sampson 0447 201489
WMSDarwin@quakersaustralia.info

REGIONAL MEETING.

Business meetings: 1 pm first Sundays of February, April, June, August, October, December.

Clerks: David Barry and Emily Chapman-Searle. RMSANTClerk@quakersaustralia.info

Treasurer: Lee Harradine RMSANTTreasurer@quakersaustralia.info

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