

AUGUST 2019

WALKING CHEERFULLY

FOUNDED 1926

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



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We recognise that the Light may not be warm and comfortable but be a spotlight exposing our vulnerability, complicity and fear. It is from such discomfort, even being broken, that spiritual growth can come alive. We want to stay with the struggle and hold the tension.

From the Epistle of Britain Yearly Meeting, 2019



Joelle Nininahazwe has just returned back to Adelaide from the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) Summer School in Geneva . She will be speaking about the event at the special weekend being arranged at the Meeting House for September 14th and 15th.

YEARLY MEETING 2019

Reports back from Yearly Meeting are always exciting. It is vital to keep abreast of the present state of our religious society. At this year's report back session about twenty four Friends heard that the chief experience of those who attended the Yearly Meeting is that things are positive. We were told of the important fact that the annual Yearly Meeting event consists of all ages. Another facet of the experience of Yearly meeting is that we have to meet the coming challenges in a spirit that is both non-judgmental and seeks a way forward through the maze of different attitudes.



There were some exciting developments. The welcome to the country was an amazing event. The Junior Young Friends (who call themselves Jifs) were able to participate helpfully in the session of earth care, and perhaps most worthwhile of all was the report and ongoing plans of the North Korea Working Group. The Quaker Earthcare Committee Epistle on climate Emergency and Species Extinction is a fine epistle, too long to include in *Walking Cheerfully* but all readers are urged to read and consider it, - indeed it should be obligatory reading! - by going to the Yearly Meeting website.

It says in part: "Thus Australia Yearly Meeting resolves to more accurately name the environmental crisis affecting the planet as a climate emergency, crisis or breakdown, preferring phrases such as global heating over global warming. The mass species extinction occurring is also a threat to life on Earth. Our plain words must communicate the catastrophe honestly and accurately, prompting both love and truth in our hearts."

Another high point in the Yearly Meeting sessions was the Backhouse Lecture given by Jason MacLeod *Animating Freedom: Accompanying Indigenous Struggles for Self-Determination*. This is available for \$20 and is an outstanding lecture. Jason McLeod, began accompanying the people of West Papua in 1991 when he was invited to work alongside Indigenous people as they searched for nonviolent ways to be freed from occupation by Indonesia. It is a profound treatise about the way forward for indigenous people. "He has walked alongside Papuan leaders as they travelled from West Papua to Washington ... It is a journey that has taken him deep into the mountains and forests of West Papua; from the halls of power to the inside of police interrogation rooms."

The Yearly Meeting was also the pinnacle of Jo Jordan's three year term as Presiding Clerk. The new Clerk is Ann Zubrick from Perth.

YEARLY MEETING 2019 EPISTLE TO FRIENDS EVERYWHERE

Australian Friends gathered in Hobart, Tasmania 6-13 July at The Friends' School, under the gaze of the majestic kunanyi / Mount Wellington. Janice Ross, a Saltwater woman welcomed Friends to Lutruwita (Tasmania) in Palawa-kani language and English with stories of her ancestors and elders held in the land and waters of this region. Meeting in winter, when the days are darker and colder, we have been reminded of the ongoing process of renewal, beginning in darkness and moving towards the Light. Friends reflected on this theme in the Friendly School held on the first day of our meeting. We are deeply saddened by the extent of the climate and species crisis that is threatening the survival of living things on our planet. Many Friends are taking individual and collective action on reducing our impact on global heating. A Quaker Earthcare Climate Emergency and Species Extinction Epistle has been offered as part of our Earthcare testimony and Junior Young Friends urged us all to move towards a vegetarian or vegan diet out of respect for all creatures and for the environment. A group of Friends built a "cairn of mourning" as a reminder of what has already been lost and of the importance of grief in the healing of our relationship with the earth before we can act effectively. As one Friend asked; "We need to listen as the Earth. What is the Earth hearing?" The Backhouse Lecture, given by Jason MacLeod, reminded us of the joyful obligation of a life of service as he spoke about his experience accompanying the West Papuans in their struggle for freedom. He described his experience of the deep and abiding love of Spirit that unites all things. He challenged Australian Friends to make a commitment to working together even before we decide on what we want to do. We are challenged by the dwindling numbers of members and a higher proportion of older Friends. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find people to take on administrative and committee responsibilities. We are asking ourselves, what is essential to the ongoing life of our meeting. What can we let go? We are using technology more often as we gather, and Friends are experimenting with online meetings and worship, including a Standing Committee meeting by Zoom and live streaming of the Backhouse Lecture. We hope that these new ways of communicating will be more inclusive and reduce our collective carbon footprint. However, these new technologies cannot replace the value of gathering together in faith to care for each other and for ourselves. We continue to affirm the necessity of meeting in community. At the same time, the burden of organising our annual gatherings is becoming too much for smaller regional meetings. We are being challenged to explore new ways of doing business and meeting in community. The Truth prospers in the many ways that Friends act in the world: through our peace projects, social justice actions, building relationships with other faiths and our work with Original Australians. Many Friends care deeply about and are involved with refugee and asylum seeker issues, and a generous bequest to Quaker Service Australia has enabled some of this work. We see the need for "Active Hope" as we strive to mend our broken world. We are grateful for the many ways that God lives through us, uniting us in hope as we continue to seek the Truth in difficult times.

Jo Jordan,
Presiding Clerk

AUSTRALIA JUNIOR YOUNG FRIENDS EPISTLE 2019

After the JYFs all arrived and settled in, we embarked on a field trip to the Tasman Peninsula where we met with a local marine biologist, Karen Wilson, to discuss “marine biology things”. On Monday morning, we held a Q&A panel with older Quakers. This included questions such as ‘What led you to Quakerism?’ and ‘Why do we hold Yearly Meeting?’. Afterwards, we had a session with Joss Brooks discussing the eco city of Auroville, where he lives as a gardener. That night, the JYFs attended the annual Backhouse Lecture, presented by Jason MacLeod, about his work in West Papua. On Tuesday, we headed off to the JYF camp. The trip started with a visit to Port Arthur, an old convict industrial port, where we took various tours around the site to gain an appreciation for its historical context. Afterwards, we arrived at the Blue Lagoon Campsite. Following dinner that night, the JYFs were treated to a “Crate Climbing” exercise by the Blue Lagoon camp staff. We then went to the facility’s recreation room, where we enjoyed music, ping pong, pool and air hockey. Wednesday morning began with breakfast, followed by meeting for worship. Then, representatives from Sea Shepherd arrived to conduct a day of activism introductory education. This included a trip to the local beach, where we discussed the effect that microplastics and other seemingly insignificant pieces of rubbish have on animals. After spending an hour searching for litter, we had a firmer understanding of the amount of plastic pollution in the ocean, the importance of reducing the amount of waste you produce, and the importance of recycling. Afterwards, the whole group returned to the campsite, where Sea Shepherd gave a presentation on the history of their organization’s eco-activism. After the presentation, the representatives facilitated a workshop for the JYFs to form groups to brainstorm simple solutions for environmental issues. The next activity was a bonfire held at Blue Lagoon’s bonfire pit, where we shared music, laughter, and fellowship amongst gathered friends. That night, we watched a Sea Shepherd documentary about Operation Jeedara, a program where the organisation sent one of their ships on a documenting expedition into the Australian Bight. The aim of this was to expose, to the public, the natural wonders of the place and its ecological importance in the world. The program successfully blocked British Petroleum’s installation of an off-shore drilling rig in the area. This proved the power of activism to the JYFs. That night, the JYFs conducted their camp’s epilogue, where sections of a tourist map from Port Arthur historical site were torn and scattered throughout the main hall. The aim was for the JYFs to find and collect the pieces, and then piece the broken map back together. The last piece was deliberately missing, because the message of the epilogue was for JYFs to reflect on was the importance of being happy with what you have, even in circumstances which do not meet all personal expectations. That night, the JYFs conducted their “Sleepover” (sleep used lightly), where the group took up residence in the common room of Blue Lagoon’s main hall and stayed awake until the wee hours of the next morning, playing games and hanging out in the spirit of the light. The next day involved enjoying the facilities of Blue Lagoon whilst preparing ministry for the JYF-run All Ages Worship on Friday morning. Upon returning from camp, the JYFs took part in multiple preparatory and formal sessions, including the Earthcare session. The main ideas put forward by the JYFs were their care for the environment and desire to take direct action. The next morning, the JYFs lead Friday morning’s All Ages Worship with ministry focusing on the integrity of Earthcare. Friday evening concluded with a breakout concert series performed by JYFs and other members of yearly meeting to celebrate the gathering of Quakers from around Australia. The SPICE Girls’ performance was a highlight for many JYFs. After some teary goodbyes on Saturday morning, the JYFs departed from a successful Yearly Meeting.

TIM BOUVERIE. APPEASING HITLER. CHAMBERLAIN, CHURCHILL, AND THE ROAD TO WAR.

The Bodley Head. London. p.497. \$36.00. ISBN 9781847924414 [pbk]

Reg Naulty.

What is of special interest to Friends in this story, so well told by Bouverie, is the strong inclination to pacifism which existed in Britain between the wars, and the huge efforts of Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain to preserve peace. Bouverie writes "the campaign against the arms manufacturers was continued by the Left [in the decade after World War 1]. The Liberals were wholly committed to disarmament; while the Labour leader, the Christian Socialist George Lansbury, wanted to disband the Army, dismiss the Air Force and dare the world to "Do Your Worst."" [p.28]

The politicians of the day were well aware of the sympathy for pacifism, and took it into account in their campaigning. The spirit of pacifism possessed the educated, moneyed class to such an extent, that, when the threat of war became real towards the end of the 1930's, there was a procession of amateur diplomats to see Hitler in the cause of peace. There was Lord Lothian, the historian Arnold Toynbee, Lord and Lady Astor, the chairman of the Economist, and others.

Moreover, the Prime Minister right into 1939, Neville Chamberlain, was in some respects, a model Quaker. He not only wanted to forestall a war with Germany, he wanted to avoid war for all time. For a Conservative Prime Minister, he did a surprising amount to help the poor. In fact, he laid the foundations for what became the welfare state after the war. And whereas some of his colleagues regarded Hitler as an evil being with whom no compromise should be attempted, Chamberlain thought differently: "The dictators are too often regarded as though they were entirely inhuman. I believe this to be entirely erroneous." [p.131]

Although Hitler did display casual ruthlessness in conversations with British leaders, his behaviour showed very human traits. He suffered a bad attack of nerves before he overran Czechoslovakia, and the tension before he invaded Poland seems to have brought on a full-scale breakdown. So Chamberlain was right to try to reach his human side.

But Chamberlain had some attitudes which hampered him. He treated the Labour Party like dirt, he regarded the Americans with frigid disdain, he held the League of Nations in contempt, and he put too much store on his own assessment of people from very different backgrounds. He liked Mussolini who considered Chamberlain a "tired son of a long line of rich men", and he would lose Britain her empire.

An unexpected feature of the story is that the people from the German opposition to Hitler, who kept on popping up out of the blue. One was Ewald von Kleist Schenzin, a Prussian conservative, sent at the behest of the anti-war head of German military intelligence, Admiral Canaris, who tried repeatedly to frighten the British Government into re-arming. Another was a senior officer from the German General Staff, another was the chief of staff of the German Foreign Minister, Ribbentrop.

The book is full of interesting characters, Lord Halifax, nick -named Holy Fox by Churchill, being one of the most memorable. He was a deeply religious man, Vice-Roy of India during one of Gandhi's civil disobedience campaigns, over which they negotiated. The press dubbed them "the two mahatmas". Hitler met him when Halifax was foreign minister, and referred to him as "the English parson". Everyone wanted Halifax to succeed Chamberlain, but he declined, and Churchill became PM.

Bouverie's story would of interest to Friends.

COOPERATION ABOVE COMPETITION - A GUIDING PRINCIPLE FOR A BETTER FUTURE. AND PERHAPS ANOTHER QUAKER TESTIMONY?

Harald Ehmann

This discussion is for non-Quaker readers. Friends will notice that we have long practiced some of the points mentioned. It draws considerably on the Quaker testimonies and practice.

This short discussion outlines the principle that at each difference of view or experience with others we need to seek out cooperation rather than confrontation, conflict, or competition. We need to give cooperation a much greater priority than competition. The evidence for, and advantage of doing so is all around us in the long eons of all aspects of the living world, from cells to whole ecosystems, from the Proterozoic to the present. Life on Earth could not have reached its present stage if cooperation were secondary to competition. Better ways of being and doing for essentially the whole of the interacting beings and entities is the product of true cooperation, with only a minor part being played by competition.

The preeminence of, and preoccupation with competition in human activities from work to politics is at the expense of cooperation, and therefore our wellbeing and better furtherance. The dominance of competition is a flawed and dangerous fallacy that is out-of-context and contrary to the blindingly obvious evidence that immerses us. As a species we would not be where we are had we not given cooperation the dominant role in our evolution. We and many other species have highly developed cooperative behaviours to cope with the elements and the unexpected. Perhaps our current relative freedom from hostile environments has blurred our awareness of this.

Competition in nature is a minor yet sometimes important first discriminator between two or more options for finding an advantageous and also a more cooperative outcome. When competition exceeds its due role in nature it is mostly morphed into non-injurious combat or ritual to dissipate the negative potential of ongoing competition. It becomes a form of cooperation to test fitness!

We humans have a highly developed capacity for running competitions of ideas and policies before implementing them. Unfortunately we do not have a sufficiently well-developed capacity to evaluate the impacts of implementing an idea or policy before putting it into practice. We often do so far too quickly and at our collective peril eg weapons of mass destruction, refugees, coal.

In our recently evolved industrial, political and neo-social ways of being and doing we appear not to have yet learned when competition has exceeded its due role. We have put too much executive power into the simple voting method of scoring the success of the competition of ideas. Particularly in our political system we need to adopt more meaningful determining percentages than those which hover in the 51-61 versus 49-39 ranges. We do not have a sufficiently developed form of non-injurious implementation that serves to avert harm to our collective wellbeing and better furtherance. Nor to minimise the potential of ongoing and negative competition.

A narrow majority needs to become a restraining hand of caution and consideration of the consequences for the whole of the interacting beings that are affected by any implementation. Rather than forcing a narrow majority outcome onto a narrow minority it would be far better to take the idea back to the drawing board of discussion, debate and

discernment. The same applies to any heavy-handed dominating approach to legislation by government departments.

Yes, some issues need immediate responses: social safety and threats from the elements such as fire, storms and other natural disasters. And there are other issues that need urgent responses: comprehensive and fair social security and health, the climate emergency and the current sixth extinction event. Responses need to be evidence-based.

However in a third group there are many issues that have no inherent immediate dangers, or lack sufficient good evidence, or which are in contention between significant minorities in society as a whole. We need to be mindful of the corrosive nature of a disregarded narrow minority. These issues require a far more measured response including to not change the policy directions until there is a better resolution of the issue and the solutions. Let them mature rather than letting them alienate. Take at most a minimal step. In the case of existing legislation that is failing or has failed the opposite response is in order, namely amend or repeal without delay.

Better resolution can best occur by taking the idea back to the pending stage for further development with additional information, and by discussion, debate and discernment. In this third group of issues are many political ones that seek to make changes to social, taxation, and economic policies that have disproportionate impacts on our collective wellbeing and better furtherance. Taking such a cautious approach is in keeping with the best interests of the entirety. This ought be the measure of real politicians-for-people and the governments they compromise.

Oversight, ignoring and suppression of sound principles that serve the entirety of our collective wellbeing and better furtherance are counter to the lessons of life and are ticking time bombs.

So in our endeavours we need to befriend and engage our opponents for only together will we all together resolve our differences, recover together, heal together and move on together into a far more cooperative, peaceful and sustainable world for our collective wellbeing and better furtherance. Refusing to walk in another's shoes, righteousness, political correctness or bureaucratic domination only hinder what almost everyone seeks.

Cooperation is actually easier and more likely to produce good long term outcomes, whereas conflict produces mere victories that only suppress for a time the discontent. Such suppression only festers and fuels future conflict, causes injuries, suffering and misery, and unnecessarily obstructs the ever rising tide of life.

With thanks to the core wisdoms of all Faiths, the known record of Life on Earth, and to Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela.

SIVER WATTLE COURSES

Celtic Spirituality (4-6 October) led by Nila Chambers.

Listening to the Landscape (21-24 November) led by Anne Felton and Peri Coleman. This course is a hands-on experience of the spirit, geology and ecology of the land at Silver Wattle.

Silver Wattle Water Dreaming: Aboriginal Spiritual Ceremony (6-8 December) led by Ceane Towers and Shane Mortimer.

End of Year Retreat (29 December-4 January) led by David and Sue Woods. Reflection on the year that has been and the year that is to come.

Full details of all courses are available at www.silverwattle.org.au/upcomingcourses

FINDING LIGHTNESS IN THE LIGHT

Kerry O'Regan

This article originally appeared in the April 2019 issue of Friends Journal. Reprinted with permission. Friends can subscribe to the Friends Journal at www.friendsjournal.org/subscribe/.

I wasn't always a Quaker. I was born into a big, boisterous Irish Catholic family where there was lots of fun and laughter. In fact, one of my mother's adages (and she had a whole barrow-load of them) was that "a little nonsense now and then is relished by the wisest men." Not that we told jokes as such; it's that we somehow saw the jokes in life. We relished the ridiculous and the absurd, and there was a pervasive sense of playfulness around words, around ideas, and around situations. Anything was fair game. Well, not quite anything. We weren't allowed to be unkind, and we didn't joke about S-E-X or anything like that. We were devout too, but somehow we knew that irreverence is not a lack of reverence.

I don't want to provide a spiritual autobiography, except to say that I moved through Protestantism, where I found a much clearer separation between prayer and playfulness. You could be frivolous and you could be devout, but not at the same time, and there was a kind of conscious earnestness attached to both. Eventually, I ended up among Quakers. Ah, the Quakers.

We Quakers have a bit of an image problem when it comes to fun and frivolity, and I suspect that goes right back to the beginning. For all his talk of cheerful walking, George Fox was not really much of a cheerful chappy. I think he meant something quite different by the term, but I'm glad he said it. It gives me a certain license somehow. But being a Quaker was a serious business, what with William Penn's stern warning of *No Cross, No Crown*, and Thomas Ellwood's daunting account of his visit to the Peningtons soon after they had become Quakers. He discovered there "so great a change from a free, debonair, and courtly sort of behavior, which we formerly had found in them, to so strict a gravity as they now received us." No jokes please; we're Quakers.

There have been some attempts to push back against this. No less a weighty Friend than Thomas Kelly aspired to another way of being Quaker. He had a sense of pervading joy, and speaks of his attempts "to keep one's inner hilarity and exuberance within bounds." He goes on to assert that "I'd rather be jolly Saint Francis hymning his canticle to the sun than a dour old sobersides Quaker whose diet would appear to have been spiritual persimmons." Perhaps we can be good, do good, and yet have fun at the same time. Perhaps weightiness does not have to mean heaviness; simplicity does not have to mean austerity, especially austerity of the soul.

We seem keen at times to prove this about ourselves. We are not humorless. We do have a sense of fun. Our meetinghouse library has a copy of a 1950s publication called *Laughter in Quaker Grey*. The editor, William Sessions, compiled a selection of anecdotes—real, embellished, apocryphal—which tell funny tales of Quakers, real and imaginary. I think there may have been a later edition as well. More recently, Chuck Fager has produced a similar publication called *Quakers Are Funny*, and a more strongly argued (well, at least more strongly titled) *Quakers Are Hilarious*. There are even a couple (that I know) of online groups for Quakers seeking to encourage each other to explore their lighter, more playful selves.

Within such a framework, there are some suitable funny stories I could contribute from my own life. One is a (probably apocryphal) story a dear, old Quaker woman used to tell.

A group of youngsters was describing to each other what kind of grace their families would say before meals. When it came to the turn of the little Quaker boy, he explained, “We don’t say grace; we just sit there and smell our food.” (Boom! Boom!)

The second is (as we Aussies would say) a ridgy-didge true story. We run a thrift shop here in Adelaide, and a customer once asked how that could be. How could we have a Quaker-run shop? After all, “Quakers are all dead.”

But is there anything to be gained by being humorous? In evolutionary terms, it seems as though there could be. Having a bit of a scan through the literature of evolutionary psychology, I find the idea that humor may indeed be “evolutionarily adaptive.” The theory goes that a significant element of humor is that there’s always a last-minute twist. Things are brought together that we don’t expect to be together. The final step, the punch line, is a surprise, and somehow that jolt of the unexpected gives us pleasure (the sort of pleasure we call humor). In evolutionary terms, this frees us up to seek other than the usual, predictable answer to situations. The pleasure of humor transfers to a pleasure in the new and unfamiliar. It encourages us to be adventurous and to take risks: to be creative.

And, in fact, there is another whole field of research which shows a connection between humor and creativity. Those who had watched a funny film before attempting a problem-solving task performed better than those who watched an instructional film on mathematics. There are other positive effects of humor which have been identified as well: humor as tension breaker, as connection maker, as sneaky teacher.

Humor has had a place in religion, or at least in some religions. The laughing Buddha comes to mind. Humor seems to be an essential part of at least some versions of Buddhism. I don’t think I’ve seen an interview with the Dalai Lama where he hasn’t been laughing in delight at the essential humor of life. And the koans of Zen involve a freeing of the mind from the rigidly logical and predictable, such that the disciple arrives at an unexpected, but somehow just right, place: through humor to enlightenment.

There is humor in the gospels as well, if we allow ourselves to see it as such. Jesus’s storytelling and preaching are rich with hyperbole and with the juxtaposition of unexpected elements. The stories are full of the element of surprise. Who would think to imagine the blind leading the blind? A laughable idea. Or a camel struggling to enter the eye of a needle (even if it’s not a needle as we know it). Or people with great beams of wood in their eyes complaining about the splinters in others’ eyes. Or meek people inheriting the earth. It’s not belly-laugh stuff, but it’s ludicrous and arresting, and—yes—humorous. We could even argue that this very quality of not-the-expected is an essential component of the gospel message, and there must be something significant in that.

I’ve been speaking as if humor is always a good thing, but of course that is not necessarily so. The same stuff can be used to fashion both swords and plowshares. What presents as humor can be hurtful and destructive—or at least distractive. Humor can be cruel. There is “humor” that belittles, that excludes, that denigrates whole groups through negative stereotyping. Who hasn’t been charged with *can’t you take a joke?* Humor can be used as a means of undermining others in a way that does not respect that of God within them. It can also be used as an easy way out. It can distract or deflect from a situation that actually needs to be dealt with seriously. Let’s just make a joke and trivialize the issue, so we don’t really need to address it. Humor can indeed do harm. It can be used as a weapon or as an escape, a get-out-of-jail-free card.

But, even with those caveats, I would like to make a case for our embracing humor in our lives as Friends. Let us collect and laugh together at our funny little anecdotes that point

out our peculiar idiosyncrasies and help unite us as a people. There's also a serious side to this funny business. There is value in the particular quality of humor that welcomes the unexpected and unpredictable. This can be freeing, allowing us to cast aside those constrictions and rigidities that can be both limiting and divisive. It can help nurture a climate where we are open to those Aha! moments where we arrive at the unexpected and unpredicted outcome that is as right as it is surprising. Open, if you like, to the promptings of the Spirit which may seek to take us to places our more cautious tight-laced selves could not have imagined. And, besides, what fun we could have along the way.

COMPLACENCY

Charles Stevenson

Complacency encroaches imperceptibly, like the advancing years.

So! It is good to be jolted every now and again, usually after a crisis. Do we do things out of habit, having persuaded ourselves that it is necessary when in stark reality it might no longer be necessary! Periodically I question whether I come to meeting out of habit. That question is a challenge because I'm not sure of the answer.

Would I be a different person had I not attended meeting? I think I would be much the same.

Yet, I cherish the hour from the uproar of the media, so many disputing voices, the traffic and advertising pressures. This was emphasised for me recently when the silence in our meeting for worship was shattered by the ringing of a mobile phone! It made me realise how much the silence of the meeting for worship is an hour away from that relentless world. It is an hour when I can see myself, and my life – my condition – in perspective. I find it a precious experience to reach to something beyond myself, and see my being as just a speck in the landscape of the universe, both in time and in the now. I'm sure that for me this can happen through reaching down into my authentic self in the simplicity of silence. For others the recitation of prayers, the ritual. I am more inspired with my own thoughts, perhaps muddled and shallow, but because they are mine, and freed from the dominating pressures that are all around us, they challenge me to face what we call the world with equanimity.

My wife said that just as the house needs to be swept, dusted and vacuumed so Sunday is the day to clean out the soul: "Create in me a clean heart O God, and renew a right spirit within me." (Psalm 51)

There is another benefit. The precious sense of belonging to a community, so essential to the human condition. I am fortified more than I often realise by being part of a loving community, and the advantages that derive from it.

Now, all this could be self-delusion. I rather think not, though. It is easy to slip into the condition of the disciples on the road to Emmaus who only realised how much they appreciated their guest after he had gone! It is the same for me: the tendency to take things for granted. I do need to question my complacency.

NEWS OF FRIENDS

Colin Talbot died 4th July. It is hard to imagine that we will not meet his bright and positive person again. He was the Regional Meeting Treasurer 1999-2004 and the Southern Meeting was held at their home for many years. His funeral was largely attended at Hackham where one learnt that Colin had been very active, in a number of different groups - from rugby to choirs.

A fine obituary to **Max Raupach** appeared in *The Advertiser* on Saturday July 6th 'Salt of the Earth Scientist Loved Soil'.

We are sorry to record the death of **Mary Barker** of Fleurieu Meeting who died on 4th July aged 85. She had been in a nursing home for almost a decade.

Not many of the present generation will remember **Patrick Gethin** who died recently in Perth. He was a fun-loving and warm-hearted personality, one of the early members of the Eastern Suburbs Meeting. As a lawyer he was much involved with conscientious objectors during the Vietnam War.

Humphrey Tranter has been much on the mind of Friends. Having been severely scalded in an accident at home, he has spent several weeks in hospital. Humphrey is a well-loved Friend, and has been an ardent supporter of the Quaker Shop for many years.

Sejin Pak is about to leave for China for a Peace Training seminar.

Trude Menka was mentioned very warmly by Richard Tognetti on ABC Radio's Conversations recently. Richard stayed at the Meeting House in Devonshire Street as a young teenager studying music. Trude who is now aged 99 was the warden at the time. South Australian Friends will remember Trude as Trude Rose. (from the NSW Regional Newsletter August/September 2019)

SOUTH AUSTRALIA AND NORTHERN TERRITORY REGIONAL MEETING OFFICE BEARERS May 2019

NB. Dates in brackets indicate the year of the appointment.

Nominations Committee: Roger Keyes, Convenor (2018) Elizabeth Magarey (2016), Topsy Evans (2018)

Co-Clerks: Yarrow Andrew (2014), David Barry (2018)

Treasurer: Topsy Evans (2006)

Assistant Treasurer: Geoffrey Greeves (2006)

Finance Committee: RM Treasurer, RM Assistant Treasurer, Local Meeting Treasurers and Local Meeting Assistant Treasurers.

Seal Holders: RM Clerk, RM Treasurer

Member Contact Group: Kerry O'Regan, Kate Alessia (2016)

Newsletter Editor: Charles Stevenson (2013)

Web Maintainer: David Evans (2019)

Grace Geraldine Brown Bequest Committee : Christine James (2018), Peter Webb (2016), Judy Greeves (2016) Topsy Evans *ex officio* (Treasurer)

QSA Linkages Representative: Topsy Evans (2017)

Discretionary Fund: Julie Webb, Margaret Philp, Elizabeth Magarey, Topsy Evans (all 2019)

Auditor: TBA

Public Officer: Treasurer

Registering Officers: Gillian McCarthy, Kerry O'Regan

Membership Secretary: Inga Tolley

Archivists: The Clerks and Assistant Clerks of Local and Regional Meetings, Charles Stevenson

Funeral Committee: Charles Stevenson, Jo Jordan, Peter Webb

QSSANT (Quaker Service SA & NT): Robin Sinclair (Convenor) Topsy Evans, Christine James, Elizabeth Magarey, Jo Jordan, Ann Rees, Anne Johnson, Jo Wilmot, Sejin Pak

Child Protection Contacts: Gillian McCarthy, Yarrow Andrew

Fellowship of Healing: Barbara True, Beverlie Hopkins

Yearly Meeting Thanksgiving Fund Committee: Christine Collins, Bronte Collins, Robin Sinclair, Charles Stevenson (2019)

YEARLY MEETING REPRESENTATIVES

Standing Committee Representatives: RM Clerk and RM Treasurer **representative on Quaker Values Committee (Friends School) (4 year appointment):** Peter Webb (2016)

Nominations Committee: Topsy Evans (2018)

Handbook Revision Committee: David Evans (2009)

Correspondent to Peace and Legislation Committee: Peri Coleman (2019)

Children and Junior Young Friends Committee: Yarrow Andrew (2019)

Quaker Learning Australia: Julie Webb (2019)

Safe Quaker Community Committee: Diana Campbell, Matthew Lycos (2019)

Indigenous Concerns Committee: Harald Ehmann (2010)

FWCC (Friends' world Committee for Consultation) and AWPS (Asia-West Pacific Section of FWCC) Correspondent: David Evans (2017)

Presiding Clerk's Support Group: Charles Stevenson, Inga Tolley, Topsy Evans, Kerry O'Regan, Margaret Philp, Joelle Nininahazwe (to YM 2019)

REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS

South Australian Council of Churches (up to 3 positions): Jenny Stock (2019), Jo Jordan (2019)

West Terrace Cemetery Community Consultative Committee: Jenny Stock (2019)

TOASTY TOES INDOORS...

BUT FROM THE WINDOW I WATCH

HAIL BOUNCE ON GRAVEL

Robin Sinclair

THE ARA HANGOUT PROGRAM

From Topsy Evans.

NB. ARA: Australian Refugee Association.

The ARA Hangout program, strongly supported by Quaker Service in South Australia, has been designed to provide a safe, supportive and judgment free space for young people of a refugee background. It operates on Friday evenings at Salisbury. The program was designed as a prevention strategy for young people involved in or participating in negative activities and environments. The program has been operating successfully for over two years through various funding opportunities.

The space is set up as a youth friendly setting and the session is facilitated by an ARA staff member, who has extensive experience in working with young people with complex needs. The space also includes access to a computer and internet, television, video games, board games, indoor activities, snacks and outdoor sporting equipment. We also have volunteer mentors within the program and their role is to participate in activities and practice English with young people and assist with homework or job seeking. The volunteer mentors at the Hangout program are a major strength to program as they help in creating a stable and encouraging environment through their approach, knowledge, advice and guidance.

As of April we have had over 75 young people (aged between 12-25 years) who are registered in the program and we have an average attendance of 14-19 young people each week. They young people who attend include; young people of Bhutanese, Nepali, Syrian, Afghani, Burmese, Congolese and Liberian backgrounds.



The participation of the Syrian youth and in particular young Syrian women has been a highlight. In the last few years we have been working hard to encourage participation of Syrian young women in ARA youth programs. This was an issue for a number of

reasons, mainly related to differences in cultural norms and not being able to mix with the opposite gender. Nonetheless, ARA has worked intensively on building the trust of the community and in providing reassurance to the Syrian parents with teenage children that we can offer a safe space for their children to socialise and participate within the community in which they live in. The four young Syrian women that attend are great role models to their community and are actively promoting the benefits of ARA youth programs within their community.

A young man who is in regular attendance at the Hangout Program will be taking part in the ARA Youth Ambassador Program in May. We recognise that that this young man has the potential to make a great leader with appropriate support and guidance. This will be an opportunity for him also to share his story and experience and create new and diverse friendships.

One of the young women in the Hangout program has attended the ARA Young Women's leadership camp in the April school holidays and she was the only young woman from the Syrian community to attend. This was achieved through intensive work with her parents to resolve and clarify the barriers and misunderstandings that parents often have and in turn has been a magnificent experience for the young woman. This opportunity has provided her with access to services, confidence building, and greater understanding of Australian systems but also to focus on her health and wellbeing issues. Earlier in the year we held an employment readiness session with the young people at the Hangout focused on interviewing skills. In this session presented by the ARA employment team, they held practice interviews with the young people and provided information about interviews, what is required and helpful tips. We have supported a number of young people to apply for part time employment and also access various ARA services to meet their needs. Recently two young people have been able to find part-time employment in the retail and fast food industries. They have been supported in this process by practicing for interviews, gaining a tax file number and learning about rights and responsibilities of an employee and employer.

ARA Youth Hangout is also an opportunity for other service providers to engage with young people from refugee backgrounds. We encourage a variety of guest speakers from various organisations to attend and engage with young people.

In the recent survey we have conducted, young people indicated that they come to the Hangout program for the following reasons; food, volunteer mentors, activities, peer to peer support and relationships. A number of young people have also commented how much of a positive impact the program has had on their confidence. When asked about ambitions and future goals, we have seen optimistic comments including; attending TAFE or university, becoming an artist, becoming a lawyer, becoming a soccer player ... We are always seeking ways to improve and develop this program to meet the needs of young people and for us the priority is to ensure it is accessible to young people and that they feel safe and welcomed to attend the program.

ARA Youth hangout program is a unique program which provides young people with stability and an opportunity to feel safe and included. This program has been successful thus far, due to the values which focus on safety, inclusion and diversity. We are proud of the program and feel that the need for the program to continue is great. With funding, it will continue to provide a safe space for young people, with age appropriate activities and skilled facilitators and volunteers.

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.
Clerks: Milli Stein and Geoff Greeves.

Fellowship of Healing: 2nd Wed and 4th Friday 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: David Evans (08) 8338 2143 WMSEastern@quakersaustralia.info

Fleurieu: 11 am second & last Sunday of each month. Old Council Chambers, The Strand, Port Elliot. 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:

Contact Katy Egger (08) 8953 0803 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.

Co Clerks: Yarrow Andrew, David Barry RMSANTClerk@quakersaustralia.info

Treasurer: Topsy Evans. RMSANTTreasurer@quakersaustralia.info

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