

AUGUST 2021

WALKING CHEERFULLY

FOUNDED 1926



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

How can we make the meeting a community in which each person is accepted and nurtured, and strangers are welcome? Seek to know one another in the things which are eternal, bear the burden of each other’s failings and pray for one another. As we enter with tender sympathy into the joys and sorrows of each other’s lives, ready to give help and to receive it, our meeting can be a channel for God’s love and forgiveness

From the Quaker Advices and Queries



Restina Nininahazwe nurses a joey after meeting. It is being cared for by Harald Ehmann.

AUSTRALIA YEARLY MEETING 2021.

Australia Yearly Meeting was held 3 – 10 July on-line. There were some outstanding addresses which make essential reading for all Friends -the State of the Society, the Presiding Clerk's Report, the Backhouse Lecture (see p. 10). These will appear in Documents in Retrospect which has been published by the Yearly Meeting Secretary. Some business sessions were exemplary experiences of how Friends arrive at decisions, expressed in the final accepted minute, a slow process, but one that goes beyond consensus to find unity in a way forward.

Kerry O'Regan



I have to start off with a confession. I reckon I've met my life's quota of Yearly Meetings. But, one thing about conducting YM by Zoom is that you can sneak in and sample The Good Bits, and leave others to do the hard work. Like licking the icing off a cake.

When you take a certain lens to something, what you see is what you see through that lens. Just before YM began, I had read and reviewed Tina Namow's life story (see p.5) and heard of her anxiety that nice, middle-class Quakers might be shocked by that story, and judge her for it. That was the lens I took.

The first Good Bit was the State of the Society address, presented by Alan Clayton in his

thoughtful, measured way. And, sure enough, he did reflect on the uniformity of Quakers in Australia. He related the story of some working-class Quaker from earlier times (I forget the details, but check *Documents in Retrospect* for the whole story) who had felt "other" in the Society of the time. He probably would here, today, as well. Can we become more diverse?

Alan reported on our declining numbers and advancing years. Service on committees and in offices is cycled and recycled through the same old few, many of whom (and I include myself here) are growing old and tired. Where is this all heading? Someone commented later that the thought of the Society no longer existing filled them with great sadness. But what other destiny is there? And how could another destiny be reached?

Another Good Bit was the Backhouse Panel—not the usual "lecture" this year, because of Covid, but instead a group of four Australian Quakers and a moderator (interestingly, all born outside Australia) exploring the topic of *Searching for Truth: Friends in a Post-Truth World*. They didn't get to address Pilate's famous question, but ranged with great care and respect, over many aspects of the topic—and beyond.

The exploration was rich and rewarding, leaving us with numerous questions to follow further. For me, it was the tensions that were uncovered. We may seem homogeneous, but drill down not very far and you will uncover difference—difference that is sometimes uncomfortable and which we don't always know how (or whether) to address. Are we endless Seekers or do we need to arrive at a place where we have found something? When

do we listen and when do we speak? How far do we accept unquestioningly and when and how do we challenge?

The nature of Truth may not have been addressed, but the nature of non-truth was, and the physicist Niels Bohr was quoted: “The opposite of a fact is falsehood, but the opposite of one profound truth may very well be another profound truth”. In the end, the panel’s exploration homed in on the importance of Love, one panelist suggesting that the question should not be: *Is your God big enough?* but *Is your love big enough?*

And the class thing again perhaps. During the Backhouse Panel feedback session, one Friend reported that her husband (I think a non-Friend) thought the presentation was “too intellectual”, noting that “Not everyone is university educated”. The fact is that most of us are, and I don’t know what we can do about that.

I went to YM looking through one lens, but I left looking through another—that tension between Truth and Love. And of course I have encountered aspects of that tension since. Hugh Mackay talking about kindness, and the fact that kindness doesn’t require love (though I think that depends on how you define love). Love is what you feel, kindness is what you do; we can act kindly towards total strangers. And a quote I came across just this morning from Blaise Pascal, “We make an idol of truth itself: for truth apart from charity is not God, but his image and idol, which we must neither love nor worship”. Reminds me of something that was written on my desk calendar all those years ago when I had a desk calendar. I made a note of it then and think of it still. A quote from one Robert Brault (whoever he might be). “Today I bent the truth to be kind, and I have no regret, for I am far surer of what is kind than what is true.” There’s something to give us pause for thought. Love and Truth—if we are to choose, which takes precedence?

So my brief little forays into YM were well worth it. The icing I took away will keep me munching for quite some time to come.



Report back session of Yearly Meeting on 18th July.

l-r Geoff Greeves, Norma Nosenzo, Judy Greeves, Peter Clarke.

Changes at the South Australian Council of Churches

Jenny Stock

On Sunday 27 June, the General Meeting of the SACC met for the last time, as the final step in its rebirth as a restructured body - Churches Together SA (CTSA).

It has been a long process during difficult times, but the new organisation better reflects the changing reality of ecumenism in the twenty-first century. We have learned to develop a new mode of operation, that of 'receptive ecumenism', a less prescriptive and more open and reciprocal way of interacting with member churches and other faiths.

Recent years have seen income fall, necessitating a down-sizing of office space progressively further from the central CBD. The strain on the Executive Officer and the other part-time office staffer has been relentless, COVID adding the final straw. Happily, a move to more spacious and safer quarters is being negotiated.

The Sunday event, held at the ever-hospitable Blackwood Church of Christ, was a time of reflection and thanksgiving, for past members, leaders and achievements.

Quakers were represented by Jo Jordan, Jenny Stock and Charles Stevenson, Jo also presenting one of the readings. A new era dawns, and we hope that friends will continue their valued role in the CTSA.

QUAKER SERVICE AUSTRALIA AND EDUCATION

Jo Jordan

In June the members of QSA met via zoom to learn about QSA's policies on the safety of children and vulnerable adults. We learnt how information about these policies are communicated to local communities in Cambodia, India, Uganda, Zimbabwe and Bangladesh. An organization called Child Wise has developed training materials so that the information is conveyed in a culturally appropriate manner.

Project partners working with QSA have been well aware of the importance of the protecting and safeguarding children for many years and all have child safety checks, as we do here. However, after a recent incident in which an Oxfam aid worker was convicted of sexual abuse of a disabled person, additional policies have been developed to include vulnerable people.

Aid organisations bring with them a financial and power difference between the organization and local people. There is a risk, not only of abuse, but a possibility that the organization can be targeted by pedophiles or others with predatory intent.

It is reassuring to know that there is awareness of risk and that safeguards have been put in place to protect children and vulnerable adults in areas where QSA operates.

Wilks Oration: "The Politics of Identity"

Friday 3rd September 2021, 7:30pm - 9:30pm, Concordia College, 24 Winchester St, Highgate SA 5063,

Stan Grant will deliver the 2021 Wilks Oration "The Politics of Identity". He will discuss key issues of our time including the Australian Identity and responses to the Uluru Statement from the Heart. There will be time for questions. A local Indigenous man will give the Welcome to Country and Vonda Last, a Ngaanyatjarra singer and songwriter, will sing.

“I won’t settle for less”, Tina Namow Green Hill Publishing 2021, \$25 plus postage \$9.50

Kerry O’Regan



Most Australian Quakers come from nice respectable middleclass families. That’s not Tina’s story. Shortly before she turned two, her family came to Australia from The Netherlands, and she spent most of her childhood roaming Australia in a caravan with her older sister, her mother, and her often drunken abusive father. In a caravan, there is no escape.

Not surprisingly, Tina left school as soon as she legally could and worked in a number of jobs, including as a telephonist in a manual telephone exchange, and as a go-go dancer in a cage. She also had a series of disastrous and abusive relationships, but eventually—surprisingly—found feminism (Did you notice that Namow is ‘woman’ in reverse?) And social justice, and political activism, all of

which she embraced with a passion.

She also discovered Janis Joplin and the fact that she, like Joplin, had a powerful voice that could connect with and move audiences. Performing—particularly singing—became, and remained, an important part of her life, of her identity. She became the front singer with a number of bands over the years, all with a political, often feminist, message. Sex, drugs, rock ‘n’ roll, here we come.



Despite her lack of formal education, at age thirty, Tina was accepted into a Social Work degree which she completed successfully, eventually working as a Narrative Therapist, primarily of course, within the field of domestic violence.

Tina tells her story with a raw and uncompromising honesty which is sometimes shocking and sometimes laugh-out-loud funny. It is a story of vulnerability and resilience, of courage and determination winning out over adversity. There are no holds barred in the telling.

With typical generosity of spirit, Tina invites other voices into her story, and sprinkled throughout the book are comments from people in her life who reflect on aspects of the Tina they knew in various contexts. This adds a richness and texture to the narrative and provides a validation of Tina’s own account of events.

The last part of the book is made up of the lyrics of many of the songs Tina has performed over the years. They represent another way in which she has told her story. Fragments from these lyrics introduce each chapter of the book, integrating the two ways her story is told. As I read this book, I thought of two of our Advices. One is about *living adventurously*, and Tina has certainly done that. The other advises us to *know each other in the things that are eternal*. I’m not sure just what things are eternal, but if any are, I am sure you will find them in this story of Tina Namow and her life.

NOTICES AND NEWS OF FRIENDS

A **special two-day seminar** has been planned for the weekend Saturday and Sunday, 9th – 10th October. On the Saturday there will be various speakers at the Meeting House in North Adelaide. The Sunday venue will be at the Girl Guides' Hall in Leabrook where Eastern Suburbs Meeting meets. Further details will be announced in the coming weeks.

The Quaker Shop has reopened after a week in lockdown. Jo Jordan, the manageress, says that the Shop has regular posts on both Facebook and Instagram. It now has a poster for publicity, designed by Naomi Carpenter (grand-daughter of Jo). Her laminated posters are on display above the cash register and in the dressing rooms.

The Adelaide Anglican Cathedral precinct has a projected \$100million plan to revamp the entire area. It is part of a proposed plan to extend the tram service into North Adelaide. This plan will have implications for the Meeting House which is surrounded by Anglican property on four sides!

Inga and Michael Tolley have celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary.

Anne Johnson had a nasty fall at home and fractured her left arm. She has spent time at Griffith rehab hospital but has now returned home. Anne is retiring from volunteering in the Quaker shop, after five years .

Kanise Neill has now left the Griffith Rehab Hospital, recovering from a serious fall. She is being cared for by the Sisters of St Joseph.

Cleo Lycos, with her husband, Chris, is touring Australia. They have been staying in Broome and are now heading south.

David Evans is vitally concerned about the plight of refugees. He was recently interviewed on radio by Peter Goers. He also ran a share and tell session on the subject at the recent Yearly meeting.

Adrian Glamorgan of Perth has been appointed the news Secretary of the Asia-West Pacific Section of the Friends World Committee for Consultation (AWPS-FWCC).

John Barton Hack. An item in the recent English Friend (18 July) reports:

Chichester Friends have launched seven podcasts for the Festival of Chichester, describing famous Quaker visitors to the town. Speaking to the Chichester Observer, Quaker Jenny Cole said that the podcasts replace a walk around Chichester which has featured in previous years of the festival. 'They are mainly about famous Quakers who have visited Chichester, from George Fox to Ian Serrailier (author of The Silver Sword), including Barton Hack who helped found the city of Adelaide and William Smith who installed the city's first sewage system,' she said.

An Adelaide Friend has written "It is curious that Barton Hack should be considered famous in Chichester. It is an exaggeration to say that he was a founder of the city of Adelaide. Certainly he was prominent. One would have thought that his mother, a gifted author, might have been considered more famous, also the Hack brothers who successfully operated the Chichester Bank until it was absorbed by Barclays Bank. Incidentally, Friends' meetings for worship in Adelaide date from the visit of James Backhouse to Adelaide in 1837 when meetings were commenced in Barton and Bridget Hack's drawing room in Hindley Street."

FRIENDS WHO HAVE INFLUENCED MY LIFE

Charles Stevenson

EDNA DARBY

One of the impressive Friends in my days as an Attender was Edna Darby. Because she lived at Hahndorf, she only came up to Adelaide for monthly meeting (as the business meeting was called). She accepted me as though I had always been about and chatted as if I knew everyone.

When she learnt of my interest in history she told me where the Mount Barker meeting house had stood, and with a rather wicked grin told me that the Hagen Arms Hotel in Echunga was named after the first clerk of the meeting (Jacob Hagen). She was a staunch supporter of the WCTU (the Women's Christian Temperance Union).

Edna Darby was slight in stature but as deeply committed a Friend as could be found. She was the mother of Ruth Beckwith and Geraldine Brown. Her husband, Leonard Darby, was most courteous to me and absolutely forgiving when I forgot to do some message in town that they had asked me to do for them.

Edna was the daughter of Wilfred and Hannah Fennell. She was born in 1887. Her mother was a sister of Esther Ashby and Frederick Coleman, and a daughter of the revered Lucy Coleman.

In 1893 the Fennell family went to New Zealand for eight or nine years where they joined Robert Leaper Pudney and his family in farming at Colyton, near Fielding. (Pudney had married Eliza Jane Matthews in the Mount Barker Meeting House. He was the founding principal of the Roseworthy Agricultural College, north of Adelaide). Edna told me with relish how she had enjoyed life in New Zealand.

When they returned to Blackwood Edna operated the post office and telephone exchange which was in their home. She was a lively member of the Eden Hills Meeting until her marriage in 1918 to Leonard Darby whereupon she moved to their farm 'Glendarra', near Hahndorf.

I only ever remember her speaking once in meeting. She quoted from Ecclesiastes "Remember thy creator in the days of thy youth". I was later at a meeting for worship in Melbourne where Edna's sister, Christine Howie, quoted the very same words!

Edna did not live long after I met her but I salute her sincerity. It was she who sharpened my interest in the history of Friends in South Australia, especially when she gave me a pile of old *Australian Friends*.

QUICK QUAKER QUIZ

When announcements are given after meeting for worship what on earth is meant when they talk about 1. QUNO 2. JYFs 3. AWPS ?

Which Quaker established Australia's first piano factory?

Who was Australia's first member of Parliament?

Answers: QUNO: Quaker United Nations Office. JYFs: Junior Young Friends. AWPS: Asia-West Pacific Section of the Friends' World Committee for Consultation.

Octavius Charles Beale. The Beale piano was once very popular.

In 1843 Jacob Hagen, the first clerk of the Adelside meeting was appointed to the Legislative Council of South Australia. He served until 1851. He was closely followed in 1844 by Joseph Phelps Robinson who was elected to represent Melbourne in the New South Wales Legislative Council. He died of scarlet fever in 1848. (Melbourne was known as the Port Phillip District of NSW until separation in 1851).

Meeting for Learning
A time for living in a Quaker Community

Saturday 4 September to Friday 10 September 2021

MfL is a year-long program that begins and ends with two six-night residential retreats. It is an intensive exploration of Quaker life experiences and spiritual nurture in community guided by three or four facilitators.

The 2021 Retreat will be held at the Sevenhill Centre of Ignatian Spirituality, in the Clare Valley of *South Australia*, approximately 130km north of Adelaide.

Each participant will have a private bedroom for the 6 nights. All accommodation, meals and a resource book are included in the price, which will be \$850. You may apply for financial assistance through your Regional Meeting. Talk with your Clerk or Ministry Convener if you are considering registering for the course and applying for support.

How to apply – for this or a future year

The Retreat is open to Members, Attenders and others in sympathy with the Quaker way. If you think this retreat might be for you, please take these steps

1. Talk to a previous participant in your local Meeting, or your Regional Meeting Clerk, to ask about their experience.
2. Write to Fiona Gardner fionagardneraway@icloud.com expressing your interest in participating. If possible this should be by the end of July 2021

Invitation to Silence

THIS SERIES OF FOUR MEDITATIONS WILL TAKE SEED THOUGHTS FROM THE WRITINGS OF THOMAS MERTON ON 'THICKETS' OR 'DENSE SCRUB' AS WE KNOW THEM AND APPLY THESE TO TODAY'S LIFE CONTEXTS.



Image: Creative Commons License: Flickr, Vicki: Mallee Scrub, Mootatunga

Di Shearer and pianist Jessica Roemischer

July 30, August 6, August 13, August 20, 2021
4pm Eastern Australia, 3.30pm South Australia, 2pm Western Australia)

Following acknowledgment of Country
and a brief sharing of these seed thoughts,
we will spend 25 minutes together in silent communion
with God, with each other and with the strangers within and without.

There will be opportunity (optional) following the closing blessing and music
to stay on for 10-15 minutes for conversation and reflection on our time together

Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83472772791?pwd=Q3NVcklEOENTM012amtVbzNtWDZlZz09>

Meeting ID: 834 7277 2791

Passcode: 537331

sponsored by

Australian Network for Spiritual Direction:

ansd.org.au.

Contacts: Jessica Roemischer www.PianoBeautiful.com

Di Shearer dishearer@icloud.com

ZOOM MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP.

RAINBOW FRIENDS AND ALLIES (LGBTIQ + allies)

Fourth Sunday of month 4 pm AEST.

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83253846845?pwd=K1MwS2Z3blZnRmo0WmQ1VE1UeTZZZz09>

Meeting ID: 832 5384 6845

Passcode: 457636

For further information: markmacleod@gmail.com or text 0425 233 144.

The Australia Yearly Meeting for Worship via Zoom is now a weekly event during the COVID-19 disruption. You can join either by computer or phone, details are available on the webpage: <https://www.quakersaustralia.info/online-meeting-worship>

The FWCC-AWPS Section Meeting for Worship Online is held every week on Thursday 6pm AEST (Sydney time). Contact Michael Searle for details at michaelsearle@iinet.net.au or visit the [FWCC-AWPS website](#).

Backhouse Panel Presentation: Searching for Truth – Friends in a Post-Truth World

TUESDAY FEEDBACK SESSION: This presentation was moderated by Jennifer Burrell. The panellists were: Duncan Frewin, Dorothy Broom, Pamela Leach and Gerry Fahey. What does Truth mean to You? Panellists made the observation that Truth is related to integrity and authenticity, how we live our lives, and how we see ourselves. The Truth that we try to live up to today is the same Truth as it was for early Friends, but the language is different. Early Friends talked of being broken and opened, whereas we are more likely to talk about finding our path or following the Light. Truth is related to living and loving. It can lead to a “heightened sense of being alive”, or being in right relationship.

But it was pointed out that Truth may be difficult to handle straight on: “Tell the Truth, but tell it slant, or every man be blind,” to quote Emily Dickinson. Diversity We heard that Friends are good at avoiding conversation about difference and difficult topics. If we really are peacemakers, we need to better appreciate and talk about diversity in such areas as gender and mental illness. Otherwise, how can we be an open and welcoming society? We need to develop the courage to speak freely and truthfully to each other.

One big difference within Quakers is between programmed, Christocentric Friends (such as our Burundian Friends) and unprogrammed Friends. As peacemakers, how do we sit with the differences between us? The points were made that: • to sit with discomfort is an important skill • those comfortable with silence are well placed to deal with difference • it is sad that many of us do not feel comfortable in using language that we think may offend others • “As I became more comfortable with my own belief, I could sit more comfortably with those whose beliefs differ from mine” • there is a Quaker space where we can ground ourselves and really listen to others; this is an important role of an Elder. Love We heard that love and truth are interrelated and that: “truth without love is harshness, love without truth is sentimentality”. We were challenged by the questions “Is my love big enough? Who do I love? How do I love?”

We need to hold on to early Friends’ teachings about love, and this needs practice, to “keep that muscle limbered up, and not let it atrophy”. Love will help us respond to others --“I want to really hear what you have to say – I know the Spirit moves in you”. Everyone experiences setbacks, injury, sickness and death; love can carry us through, it “shines through the cracks”. Truth and Love in the universe We heard that science has helped to open our eyes to the wonder of the universe and we realise that we are embedded in the ongoing process of creation. The “pale blue dot”, a picture of the Earth seen from space, brings out from us a loving response; indeed, the Earth radiates love. And if you love something, you can’t let it go.

The Monday, July 5th event will be uploaded onto the Quakers Australia YouTube channel.

ACCOMMODATION AT DEVONSHIRE STREET



Friends’ House at Devonshire Street in Sydney welcomes accommodation bookings from travellers. We have Covid-safe precautions in place, and are currently taking bookings. Please contact volunteer wardens Brian and Marie on RMNSWBookings@quakersaustralia.info; 0466 265 915; or 02 9698 7158 to make a booking enquiry.

**A BEETLE FLOATING
IN MY GLASS OF WATER ...
MUTUAL REGRET**

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.

Clerk: David Barry RMSANTClerk@quakersaustralia.info

Treasurer: Lee Harradine RMSANTTreasurer@quakersaustralia.info

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