

October 2023

# Walking Cheerfully

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Founded 1926

## Newsletter of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) South Australia - Northern Territory Regional Meeting.

Governments almost everywhere exacerbate the problem (of climate) by paying people more to exploit Nature than to protect it, and to prioritise unsustainable economic activities ...

We are living well beyond our means. At present 'we would require 1.6 Earths to maintain the world's current living standards', an assessment that reveals critical shortcomings in how little thought and how little action has gone into tackling problems that reveal 'deep-rooted, widespread institutional failure.'

- Peter Frankopan in *The Earth Transformed*, p658. See book review p 15



*Peter Goers, Penny Ruddock, Jo Jordan with Lyca - at the Quaker Shop celebration. See p. 6*

## THE VOICE REFERENDUM IS CRUCIAL

*"The Yes/Voice campaign is an important opportunity to create a more just society through giving Indigenous people a direct voice in our nation's governance."*

### A GRACED MOMENT IN TIME

**Kenise Neill**

*"It is essential to show special care for Indigenous communities and their cultural traditions.*

*They are not merely one minority among others, but should be the principal dialogue partners."*Pope Francis, Laudato Si'

We are in what could be a graced moment in time - The Voice Referendum is an opportunity for all of us to listen and hear the beckoning from times past and now for positive change in Australia.

An Aboriginal Elder and a Torres Strait Elder share their thoughts on what a YES referendum vote will mean for their children and Australia:  
*"The one battle I don't want you to never, never forget, my grandchildren, is the battle we won in 2023 - when there was a*



Artist: Mary southard SCJ - used with permission

*great movement in this country to include Aboriginal people in the Constitution and a permanent body to Parliament. I want you to never, ever forget that because during this time your Elders were shouting loud and clear....(they said) "It is about time we are in this Constitution, it has been going on too long....simple... don't worry about the words." "and I want you to remember that, my grandchildren. So that is why you are in the Constitution today." Vicki Walker, Muthi Muthi Nation Elder (Quotation from a letter to her Grandchildren written in 2040)*

*"The Yes/Voice campaign is an important opportunity to create a more just society through giving Indigenous people a direct voice in our nation's governance. It will ensure that our voices are heard and our concerns taken into consideration when decisions are made, and it will provide us with greater access to resources, services and opportunities for self-determination."* Uncle Guyson, Torres Strait Islander Elder

The call for a Voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and Constitutional recognition has been part of the national conversation from within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, in Parliament, within many Faith Traditions, and in the

Australian community over many years. One attempt for recognition was in 1988, during the bicentenary year, when there was a motion proposed by Australian Christian Churches in consultation with Indigenous Leaders.

*“The motion read:*

That this House- (I) acknowledges that:

- (a) Australia was occupied by Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders who had settled for thousands of years before British settlement at Sydney Cove on 26 January 1788;
- (b) Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders suffered dispossession and dispersal upon acquisition of their traditional lands by the British Crown; and
- (c) Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders were denied full citizenship rights of the Commonwealth of Australia prior to the 1967 Referendum;

(2) affirms:

- (a) the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage; and
  - (b) the entitlement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders to self-management and self-determination subject to the Constitution and the laws of the Commonwealth of Australia;
- 3) *considers it desirable that the Commonwealth further promote reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander citizens providing recognition of their special place in the Commonwealth of Australia.”*

Along with many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities, Faith Traditions and Civil Leaders, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council published a statement supportive of a constitutionally enshrined Voice to Parliament. The Voice to Parliament and executive government comes from the Uluru Statement from the Heart. The Uluru Statement from the Heart is the outcome of decades of conversations and meetings, culminating in a series of regional dialogues, including representatives from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community groups in 2017.

The Uluru Statement from the Heart is a gracious request from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities asking all of us for Voice, Treaty and Truth-Telling:

- Voice - Representatives from First Nations People will provide a permanent voice to be heard and have input to Parliament and executive government on legislation and policies that impact their lives.
- Treaty - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sovereignty will co-exist with Crown Sovereignty We are the only Commonwealth Nation who has not signed a treaty with First Nations People. A treaty will not mean that land owned by government and/or individuals can or will be forcefully acquired by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People or organisations.
- Truth-telling - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People have asked for a process of truth telling about Australia’s history that acknowledges colonial conflict and dispossession, and the strength and resilience of First Nations people and the gift of culture. Truth-telling is not about guilt. It will provide a time and place for deep healing. Australian Elder 2021, Miriam Rose Ungunmerr Bauman is inviting us to a healing place as a nation and beyond:

*“When we heal our ancestors from  
wounds that run deep in our family,  
When we heal out ancestors,  
we heal the world from  
wounds that run deep in humanity”* Miriam Rose Ungunmerr Bauman

The YES vote is asking for a Voice (the first point from the Uluru Statement from the Heart) being embedded in our Constitution which will recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People as the First Peoples of Australia. In summary, the Voice design principles include -

- The Voice will give independent advice to the Parliament and Government.
- The Voice will be chosen by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people based on the wishes of local communities.
- The Voice will be representative of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, gender balanced and include youth.
- The Voice will be empowering, community-led, inclusive, respectful and culturally informed.
- The Voice will be accountable and transparent.
- The Voice will work alongside existing organisations and traditional structures.
- The Voice will not have a program delivery function.
- The Voice will not have a veto power.

Our Constitution is the foundational document of governance for Australia and Constitutional change can only be achieved through a referendum.

*Polling published in February found that 80 % of Indigenous people and 60% of all Australians would vote “yes” to the voice. Every state and territory leader, from both sides of politics, supports the voice, as do religious leadership. The Guardian 23rd February 2023*

For the referendum to be successful a double majority must be achieved: which is, a majority of voters in at least four states and a vote of over 50% of voters across Australia. If this happens a Voice will be enshrined in our Constitution, and will ensure it remains a permanent part of our democracy.

The ‘No’ vote campaigns, by some Aboriginal people and others, include propositions that the Voice will not deliver meaningful change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, or that Sovereignty and Treaty should be prioritised ahead of a Voice to Parliament. As with any changes and especially something as important as a referendum there are many different views and sometimes the information we receive can confuse us, and create fear about what could happen.

Multiple Constitutional experts have pointed out that the Australian Constitution does not outline policy details. The Constitution sets up systems and structures while giving Parliament, through our elected representatives, the power to decide the detail, and to change the detail over time.

In contrast, to those who are fearful of the inclusion of “executive government” many Constitutional experts and lawyers, including our Solicitor General, are saying that a Voice to Parliament will be “effective”, if it speaks to both the executive government and the Parliament. The Voice will create no obligations upon Parliament or executive government to respond to representations.

Constitutional experts, and others, have also outlined that the Yes Vote will not be a platform that will undermine our equality of citizenship, will not result in obligations on the executive or Parliament or create ongoing court challenges. It cannot be used as a “money grabbing exercise by self-appointed Aboriginal Leaders”. A Voice will not be making decisions and will not have the power to veto Parliament or executive government. A Voice will be an advisory body and Parliament will decide what a Voice looks like and how it operates.

Whilst some changes to systems and structures will be needed when and if a Voice is enacted we can expect that life will not change for most of us. By contrast, a Yes vote will ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait People will be recognised as the First Peoples of Australia and enable Australia's First People to be heard on matters that affect them, and ultimately to have an equal place at every table. This could make an enormous difference for future generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and will ultimately benefit all of us.

In 2023, let's be part of "*a great movement in this country to include Aboriginal people in the Constitution and a permanent body to Parliament*". Vicki Walker, Muthi Muthi Nation Elder

Let's not make decisions based on fear and the possibility of what might happen or go wrong. We do manage to deal with issues when they arise and we know that many Aboriginal and Torres Strait People are asking for a Yes Vote. The people of Australia are being asked to vote from the place of love and justice, with open hearts, and a Yes vote, from most of us, will be a moment of grace - a true moment for Reconciliation.

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## NEWS OF FRIENDS

**Michael Tolley.** We are sorry to report the death of Michael Tolley on 11<sup>th</sup> September. Michael was a long-standing Friend. His gift for the ministry was unforgettable. His is a household name for many South Australians through the English Department of the University of Adelaide. There will be reference to his life in the next *Walking Cheerfully*. Meanwhile Friends are holding Inga Tolley in the Light as well as Phillip Tolley and Ann Roffe. A Memorial Meeting for Michael will be held at the Girl Guide Hall, Rochester Street, Leabrook at 11.30 am on Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> October.

**Diana Campbell** who died on 30<sup>th</sup> July was a true Friend. She was a great influence in Alice Springs where she lived and worked for the past fourteen years. She was buried in Alice Springs wrapped in an Aboriginal Flag in recognition of her rapport with the Aboriginal community. A report of her life will appear in the next *Walking Cheerfully*.

**Nina Num** who is awaiting diagnoses continues to be her cheerful self. She is missed by Fleurieu Friends.

'**Streamlines**' has replaced 'The Secretary's Newsletter'. It is "a weekly dose of Yearly Meeting news". The latest edition tells us to "honour our diverse community on October 1st" which is World Quaker Day. We are also told to "Grab your phone (or laptop) and take a selfie, and answer these questions in 2-5 minutes. What makes your meeting your spiritual home? How does the Quaker light shine in the world? And What are your current challenges and virtues?" This should be sent to the Quaker World Connections Committee [cqwcc@quakersaustralia.info](mailto:cqwcc@quakersaustralia.info)

On 7 September, Quakers Australia held for the third time the action "**Show integrity in Public Office**" at Parliament House in Canberra. We stood on the road where the cars of most parliamentarians enter their carpark in the morning and many waved back to us from their cars. The Attorney General, Mark Dreyfus rode by on his bicycle and we greeted each other.



## THE QUAKER SHOP CELEBRATES.

On a pleasantly warm Sunday afternoon Quaker Shop volunteers past and present, gathered in a huge marquee erected at the end of the car park at the rear of the shop to celebrate the shop's 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Quaker Shop was established on the initiative of Ngaire Thorp after two successful jumble sales. In those 55 years over a million dollars had been raised for Quaker Service work in various parts of the world, for refugees and for indigenous concerns. As the shop is owned by Friends a modest rent is paid to the Meeting. Electricity and council accounts are paid for by Quaker funds and do not impinge on the shop profits. A contingency fund is necessary for unforeseen emergencies such as plumbing and electrical work.

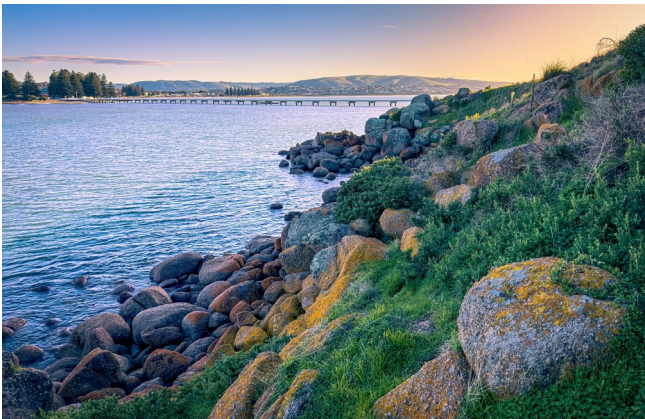
This was the occasion to meet the new shop manager, Ginny Phillips, impressively capable and devoted to the progress of the shop. There was a guest speaker, an old friend of the shop's, Peter Goers, who is a well known South Australian journalist and radio broadcaster. Peter Goers was a delight. He has a rare gift for giving speeches and he expressed his sympathy for Quakers. He spoke highly of Humphrey Tranter who indeed was a worthy member of the Adelaide Meeting. He thought that the low shop prices was one strength of the shop, unlike the high prices that some Op shops ask. To emphasise this point he told us how he had found a beautiful leather coat which just fitted him perfectly, at an op shop that would remain an anonymous, but he then proceeded to whisper were it was! Hm! \$35 would be my highest price he thought, but when he looked at the price tag he discovered that \$350 was being asked for. The coat is still unsold. He had several other amusing anecdotes. He knew the importance of brevity. He knew how to create uproarious laughter.

There was great conviviality over a splendid afternoon tea. It is pleasing to know that the Shop is in good heart.

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## AWE

**Bronte Collins**



Most South Australians will know of Granite Island off the coast of Victor Harbor. I often venture there of a morning, before sunrise, with camera and coffee in hand. It's an enjoyable fifteen minute amble from home. I clamber over rocks with care, looking for the "good photo", then usually sit to enjoy the coffee and the view. There's other amblers to have a quick chat with along the way.

Sometimes, there's the cool breezes on your face, sometimes there's the beautiful morning light and sometimes, there's some sea mist. There's always the ever changing clouds and the sea crashing against the rocks. And of course, there's the pretty granite rock formations. And there is a wonderful peace. At Granite Island, one can almost feel the Spirit of the First Nations people and their connection to Country. I am in awe of the natural beauty, the peace and the Spirit of the Island and I am grateful that I have the opportunity to visit it often.

# Yearly Meeting 2024

## 6-13 July

Yearly Meeting 2024 will be held from Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July to Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July at the West Beach Parks complex, near the foreshore at West Beach, SA. This was the site of Yearly Meeting 2017. It will be a hybrid event combining in-person and online gatherings.

The main meeting venue will be at the headquarters of SA Sea Rescue on Barcoo Rd, West Beach. Formal sessions will be held at this venue. A range of smaller spaces, for face-to-face meetings of Share and Tell sessions and Friendly schools, will be in the lounge areas of the accommodation units at The Retreat nearby. Online Share and Tell sessions and Friendly Schools will be run separately.

### Accommodation

The Seadragon and Spinifex Shacks at The Retreat have been booked for Friends attending Yearly Meeting. These are comfortable, airconditioned small houses with wifi and well-equipped kitchens, suitable for self-catering. Friends can request single or shared bedroom accommodation. Four of the Shacks are wheelchair accessible.



A range of alternative, budget style accommodation is available for Friends to book for themselves at the Big 4 West Beach Parks Caravan Park which is 800metres from The Retreat. The Caravan Park offers a range of accommodation including cabins and caravans. Please book early because YM24 takes place during school holidays and this is a popular venue.

For those who choose to make their own arrangements with accommodation, there is a bus connecting the CBD with The Retreat. For seniors, bus travel is free in Adelaide.

### Meals

A buffet style evening meal will be served at the Golf Club which close to The Retreat. However, there is a limit of 120 guests for dinner, so Friends are urged to register early. There is ample parking at the Golf Club.

A packed lunch will be available for Friends to pick from at the Pool Side Function Room at The Retreat during Yearly Meeting.

The Pool Side Function Room has been booked for activities for young children and their carers. It is close to a play ground with a large jumping pillow.

Two Sand Dune shacks at the Retreat, adjacent to an adventure playground, have been reserved for the daytime use of Junior Young Friends and their carers. However, a camp offsite during Yearly Meeting may be possible. Please contact SANTRM Clerk if you are interested in being involved in a JYF camp or working with the JYFs during YM24.

Costing for YM24 is in progress. Friends will be advised of the costs of accommodation and meals at YM24 on the registration form. Keep watching this site for updates.

*There was an information session about Yearly Meeting 2024 on Sunday September 10th at the guide hall, similar to the Share and Tell session which was held during Yearly Meeting 2023. Topsy Evans, Harald Ehmann and Jo Jordan who are on the SA Yearly Meeting Organising Committee along with Betsy Holden as Treasurer, were able to answer questions and to show slides of the venue.*

*SA Friends are encouraged to find out more about Yearly Meeting, which is a wonderful chance to meet Friends from around Australia and to find out the many interests and activities that Friends are involved in.*

## **FLEURIEU MEETING.**



*Benita Hull, Amy Marissa, Di Shearer, Bronte Collins, Chris Collins, Susan Waller, Nick Binks, Viv Binks.*

There is a vibrant meeting at Victor Harbour, known as the Fleurieu Meeting, for some people come from as far as Goolwa. Meeting for Worship is now held in the spacious and hospitable home of Bronte and Christine Collins. Di Shearer spoke enthusiastically about the Meeting for Learning retreat held at Seven Hills from which she had just returned. Nick and Bev Binks who have moved away from the area were able to be present. They have just returned from a visit to Vietnam and Panama. Nina Num, a long-standing and integral member of the Meeting, was unable to be present because of ill health.

Meeting every second month is followed by a sumptuous meal and a discussion on a particular word. This month's word was resilience. This turned out to be a fascinating aspect of life that we perhaps give little thought to. Amy Marissa put it succinctly with two perspectives: "Is having the courage to move through the crux of life's challenges, rather than fight or avoid them," and "resilience is to be whatever it takes to survive."



## Walking Cheerfully in Meeting for Learning

Di Shearer



This mandala created on the final day of our stay at Sevenhill, South Australia, represents the circle of family and friends who gathered last year and this for a seven day retreat for Meeting for Learning. A team of four facilitators, a group of ten or eleven participants, one or more silent retreatants and a husband and spiritual director were the community that gathered for each retreat.

During the months between the two retreats, eight of us worked with leadings, concerns and necessities relating to personally chosen projects, each with a self-selected support group of one to four or five. The mandala depicts the diversity of 'blossoms' that we were. The candle in the centre glowed during each daily Meeting for Worship through to the Evening Epilogue, reminding us to hold each other in the Light. Plenty of butcher paper lined the walls as we shared our thoughts and experiences of Love and Truth, Dark and Light, Individual and Corporate Accountability. We considered together where we find spiritual nourishment. All in community which we didn't define. Rather we sought to live it, both in full group sessions and in rotating small group work. Intimacy, enquiry and consolation were matched with tears, sighs and yearnings.

It was impressive on the second night of this second week of retreat to hear the projects which participants undertook over the year. One became a fine artist and chose a pet, another shared care of animals. Another gained confidence through her support group to write a prologue to her book that she might not have identified so clearly without them.

Finding collaboration with other artists was another's passion and a studio in a shared building is pending. So researching journals, attending to sacred places and expressing to others a desire to become a better person were all in the mix. Such deep and meaningful work across such a broad spectrum provided a background canvas against which three new Meeting for Learning Friends will shape their own journey over these months, each with their unique support groups and the ongoing guidance of a facilitator.

My own learning was guided by ongoing relationships with spiritual directors, Jungian analyst and supervisors/friends. It unfolded over a range of spiritual practices and groups and was held together by the faithful and trustworthy feedback from my facilitator.

I write this article to encourage you to consider joining a future Meeting for Learning. Meeting for Learning is an opportunity not to be overlooked whether you are a new seeker or a long-term Friend. Stay tuned for news of the 2024 Meeting for Learning which will be held in Tasmania.

Di Shearer, on behalf of the 2022/2023 Meeting for Learning group.  
Facilitators: David Barry, Fiona Gardner, Catherine Heywood and Jenny Spinks.



Back row l-r: Tara Ulbrich, Drew Lawson, Suellen O'Brien, Julie Webb, Graeme Johnson, Sharon Matthews, Annie Ebzery, David Barry, Di shearer, Jo Jordan, Rod Jones.

Front row l-r: Jenny Spinks, Jenny Turton, Fiona Gardner, Sejin Pak, Catherine Heywood.

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**We have been asked whether the South Australia – Northern Territory Regional Meeting is the largest Regional/ Area/ Monthly Meeting in the world? It embraces Darwin which is 3000 kilometres from Adelaide.**

## **Joelle Nininahazwe in China.**

**Olga Farnill**

Joelle gave Eastern suburbs Meeting a lively account of her work in China, which she obviously enjoys. She went with a group of foreign teachers. Beginning in March this year, she is under contract to a private company, "Muffy's International Kindergartens", in Beijing. Their HQ is in Guangzhou, with kindergartens in all major cities of China, with the latest in Wuhan. Joelle saw the job through a website advertising teaching jobs in China, of which there are many, such as "Teaching Nomad". An agent connected her to the company, after which Joelle continued their communication. Her work involves mainly administration, event- organising, and some teaching and communication with parents. The company helped her find accommodation, and provides an allowance for rent. Foreign workers must register with the police when they find accommodation. She sought shared accommodation so she could improve her knowledge and practice of Mandarin. These kindergartens value English-speaking staff, since parents place great importance on their children learning English, and those teachers and staff must speak English to the children at all times. The presence of foreign staff means they can charge higher fees. The children are aged from two years onwards, and they are kept busy learning to read and write and do arithmetic. There are some toys for play, and meals are provided, including International Food Days, which include learning about the relevant country. Classes have a maximum of 17 children, and there are 7 classes in the Beijing branch. Parents are keen for them to learn skills so they can get ahead, but the Government has recently reduced the amount of schoolwork that children have to do, as well as closing many private tutoring companies (partly because of Covid). The children wear uniforms, have a very structured program, and are assessed on their acquisition of skills, though no grades are given. A graduation ceremony is held when they complete kindergarten.

The private kindergartens are different from the public facilities, which are more Day Care Centres. Foreigners can't work in these Centres. However, secondary schools can have dedicated English teachers. A great deal of money is invested in schools-- overall, China has the highest cost in the world for schools.

There are fewer foreigners now in China since the Covid epidemic. In 2019, there were nearly three million foreigners (a great increase since 2010). But currently, there are fewer than one million, and continuing to decrease. However, communities are beginning to be rebuilt post-Covid.

Joelle is on a 6-month work-visa, which applies only to a particular city, and needs to apply 6-monthly for further visas. She is on a yearly contract, but expects to gain a further contract which will finish late next year. She has acquired a good familiarity with the language ( standard Mandarin), knowing 7,000 characters, though a thorough mastery is said to require 15,000 characters. She has made good friends in Beijing, and has joined some groups such as the Beijing Hikers, who have travelled to the Great Wall, and other scenic areas. This group also works to help people who are blind and deaf.

This experience, and her knowledge of Mandarin, will be valuable for Joelle's career, when she graduates in Migration Law. We admire her enterprise, and wish her all the best!



# Imagining a Safer World

Jo Jordan

On the afternoon of Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> August, at the Prospect Uniting Church those who were there to hear three speakers on this topic were not disappointed.

We saw a video prepared by Peter Prove, Director, International Affairs at the World Council of Churches, Geneva. Originally from Adelaide, Peter is a Lutheran and a lawyer who works at an international level for human rights and peacebuilding. His central message is that in a world of ever-expanding crises, dialogue and the work we do towards mutual understanding between peoples is central to our calling as Christians. War exists because we disagree, exclude and vilify. Men have amplified the ability to kill each other in smarter and more inventive ways, “but nuclear weapons are the dumbest weapons of them all.” Human rights, economic justice, climate justice and education are the real ways to peace building. If we address human needs rather than looking for root causes, and use justice, compassion and love, which are the principles of our faith, these will lead us towards “just peace.”

Barbara Pocock, Senator for the SA Greens, was able to be present in person. Barbara spoke about conditions in SA and, in particular, the industrial growth of weapons manufacture and surveillance in SA. “We don’t stop war by stepping up weapons but by doing something about equality.” Barbara pointed out that former politicians have signed lucrative deals with multinational weapons manufacturers, which turn the wheels of the economy of the USA. Australia seems to have given over policy to the dept of Defence by committing to the AUKUS agreement. This is a war-promoting strategy which fosters militarisation built on exclusion and fear of invasion, a fear which seems to have persisted since colonisation. The financial cost is horrendous and must have flow-on effects to our economic and social wellbeing. The government promotes the job opportunities with AUKUS, but these are miniscule compared to the far greater job opportunities if Australia made a similar investment in education, health, housing and the environment.



*Barbara Pocock*

The third person we heard from was Allan Behm, the Director of International and Security Affairs, Australian Institute Canberra. Allan had also prepared a video talk on the topic. Allan focused on the AUKUS agreement, that it was made without accountability to the public without an opportunity for discussion or opposition. Investing in high-powered, nuclear submarines poses too many risks. There are risks to our national reputation within the area, risks to our sovereignty, to our health and to our economy. No country has the capacity to handle high level nuclear waste and this issue needs to be addressed before we find ourselves with a problem without a solution. We have a responsibility to reduce risks of war between countries which already possess nuclear weapons, not increase the risk.

We were reminded of the importance of writing personal letters to our MPs to let them know how we feel about the present situation and our hopes for a safer, more equitable and sustainable future for our children and grandchildren.



## MORE ABOUT IRENE GLASSON

Charles Stevenson

*"Miss Glasson does not believe in good works being associated with long faces, but rather that health, laughter, and happiness are the finest prayers in all the world."*

-Advertiser, 29 July 1932.



*Irene Glasson with Winifred  
Welbourn (later Wilton)*

The article that I wrote for the last *Walking Cheerfully* on a significant Friend of former years, Irene (pronounced ireenie) Glasson, has provoked considerable interest, including an article about her for the British Reddiffe Chronicle as well as being referred to the Dictionary of Australian Biography. This has prompted further research, largely on Trove but also at Friends House Library in London.

Both Irene's brothers died tragically. Dr. I. Leslie Glasson, DSc, one of the University of Adelaide's outstanding students, drowned at the age of 32 when he was Professor of Physics at the University of Melbourne. Her other brother, killed near the end of World War One, was engaged to a Quaker whom we only know as "a cousin of Mary Jane Godlee". Irene Glasson's father was an esteemed musician, being the choirmaster of the well-respected South Australian Mendelssohn Choir. As an accomplished violinist and pianist herself Irene accompanied the choir until she eventually became the choirmaster.

As I wrote previously, as the secretary of the Young Women's Christian Association in Adelaide, Irene Glasson became widely known throughout Australia. Arguably she received more publicity than any other Australian Friend in the 1930s. Aided by her sense of humour she was articulate, clear headed, cheerful, and charismatic. She had some unspecified health issue which curtailed her work with the YWCA. Later she did groundbreaking work on deprived children through the Education Department. She worked with Winifred Kiek (who grew up in Mount Street Meeting, Manchester) on the importance of sex education. In Western Australia she did important work on nutrition for the general public. She was a staunch feminist. She was reported in the press for advocating, "for women to interest themselves actively in the affairs of the country. It takes both a man and a woman to make a successful home. Their co-operation is therefore equally important in the government of a country." Her condemnation of war toys for children received nationwide publicity and, as can be imagined, much ridicule. She advocated the study of international questions, tariff barriers, disarmament, the "colour question", and the drug trade. The YWCA in her day was one of the leading women's organisations worldwide. It was noted for its broadminded and progressive attitudes.

With a Cornish background it is unsurprising that she was brought up as a staunch Methodist; but she became widely respected as a Quaker. She was accepted into membership while she was in London 1921-23. The two Friends appointed visit her on her application for membership, Margaret Ford Smith and Caroline Eddington, wrote: "We have visited Irene L. Glasson today at the Times and Talents Settlement (in Bermondsey) and were greatly privileged to have had such an interesting applicant to visit. Irene Glasson was brought up a member of the Methodist Church but can never remember having any sympathy with either the forms or sacraments of that sect, and for the last five years has really belonged to no church at all." It was not only the meeting for worship that was the

attraction but also the equality given to men and women, as well as the Quaker attitude to war. It is no wonder that Ethela Fellows said that “Irene Glasson was a specially useful spokesperson. In the Monthly Meeting (as the Regional Meeting was then known) she had the position to ‘sense what was going on’ outside of Quakerism.”

Her acceptance into membership of Westminster and Longford Monthly Meeting was unique. She was accepted even though they knew of her unexpectedly sudden return to Australia the following week - supposedly to Perth where there was then no meeting but in fact she returned to her home town of Kadina to teach music until her appointment as Secretary of the YWCA in Adelaide in 1927. Whilst in England she had spent two years working at an Anglican founded settlement in Bermondsey where she had charge of girls’ clubs. Graham Taylor, the biographer of Ida and Alfred Salter, eminent Quakers of Bermondsey, thinks that Ida’s friend on the Bermondsey Council, Lilian Glasson, was a relative, but this has not been verified.



Irene Glasson

Most significant from an Adelaide Quaker point of view was the discussion group held jointly with members of the Young Men’s and Young Women’s Christian Associations which led to six of its members joining the Adelaide Meeting. Known as the Forum its activities were reported in the Adelaide evening newspaper *The News*. It met on Sunday afternoons ‘to provide an opportunity for the frank discussion of religious and social questions’. This centred on the problems of international, national, and personal life. One fascinating topic was ‘the factors making for a happy marriage’. Ethela Fellows was a member of this study group when it discussed Fascism and Communism which were raging at the time. It was argued that the Christian position needed to be strengthened in its spiritual basis to present an effectual element against these destructive portents. The future Anglican Bishop of Bunbury led the discussions but his rather conservative views were outmatched by Irene

Glasson’s wider global views. The upshot was that Ethela Fellows, with Dorothy Short (later Coleman), was taken to North Adelaide Meeting House by Irene Glasson who “showed us where we could find the key, the library and the borrowers’ register, and we were *set* for a dose of Quakerism.”.

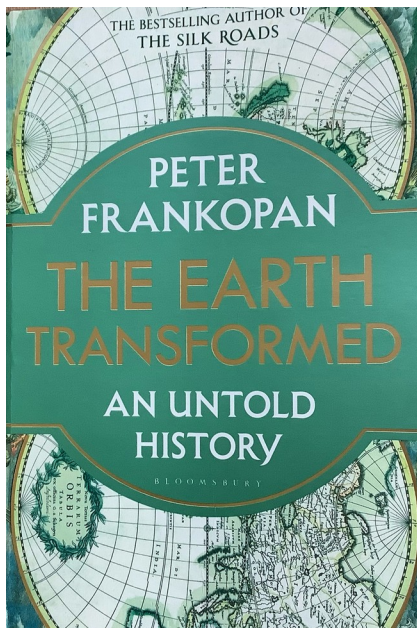
There has been along procession of outstanding men and women who belonged to the Adelaide Meeting. Possibly because she finally moved to Perth to be with family because of illness, (she died there in 1957, aged 67) Irene Glasson has not received the attention that she deserves.

## BOOK REVIEWS

***The Earth Transformed, An Untold Story*, Bloomsbury, 2023**, is not a book for the faint hearted! 660 pages...But, do let me recommend it to you.

This is a new history of mankind, from the point of view of our natural world, telling how we have suffered ecological disasters and engineered our own in turn. It's a monumental work for lay readers, covering many aspects of painstaking academic research.

If you're interested in history, for example, you will learn why Chinggis (Ghengis) Khan was able to establish the largest land empire in human history in such a short time, why the plague lasted in Europe for 500 years, and the internal workings of the 1970's CIA in the USA.



If you're interested in science, you will learn why the ENSO, AMO and NAO, and other systems, were/are important, and why.

If you're interested in geography, the emphasis on how the natural world-the environment, climate, volcanic activity, ocean currents, and a disease and pandemic profile- is a refreshing and realistic way to look at history, and the climate predicament we find ourselves in.

If you're interested in carbon emissions, you will find the full range, (so much more than the popular press), from the natural and the man-made worlds.

And if you're interested in methodology, this book presents a thorough-going scientific approach to history using drone surveys, tooth enamel analysis, ice core methane levels, moss stem analysis, archaeobotanical evidence, and everything else.

Of course, you can read rather different reviews online, and you can ask your library to order a copy.

And I am interested in any feedback, thank you. Wendy Hartley wjh2810@gmail.com

***The Empress and the English Doctor*** by Lucy Ward.

Margaret Hunter has found a book about a rather unknown Quaker who arguably did more for humanity than any other member of the Society of Friends. This was Thomas Dimsdale who was the leading surgeon in the introduction of inoculation against smallpox which had been the scourge of humankind for centuries. Although tedious in some detail, the book is nevertheless exciting. It reveals how the successful inoculation originated in Turkey, and how Britain became the leading country for the eradication of this deadly illness in the late 1700s. Friends will be irritated by the author's continual reference to to the Society of Friends as a sect! The story centres around the Russian Empress, Catherine the Great, who wanted her empire freed of the plague. The book can be borrowed from Margaret Hunter.

*With a Tender Hand: A Resource Book for Eldership and Oversight*, by Zélie Gross.  
Quaker Books, 2015. 432 pages. \$24/paperback.

This is a thorough and useful resource book for Friends. We no longer have elders or even a ministry committee in our Regional Meeting but this book is an invaluable resource for any well concerned Friend.

It acknowledges that meeting for worship is the core of our Quaker faith. It gives careful guidance in how to deal lovingly with issues that do arise from time to time. Perhaps a quiet explanation that meeting for worship is not a debate or how to restrain unsuitable ministry. Always consider a situation before acting, we are advised, and act promptly, no pussyfooting. It advocates ways of working together. It is 430 pages of advice, questions, suggestions, all leading to the kind of thriving community we want our meeting to be. Fascinating are the three ways in which one joins a Quaker meeting: drawn by the way of worship, looking for a place where one can belong to a like-minded community, or through action such as peace, environment or other testimonies. It points out that the Quaker testimonies are not an end in themselves but a result of a spiritual quest.

We are given pithy questions: What is underpinning that? What is essential here? Where is the life in this? And what am I failing to see?

The book was commissioned by Britain Yearly Meeting, to help provide ways in which a Meeting can flourish.

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## SILVER WATTLE

### Upcoming Courses

#### **A School of Mysticism. led by Drew Lawson**

Thu, Nov 9, 2023 4:30 PM Thu, Nov 16, 2023 1:30 PM

“Mystics are not special types of people but each person is a special type of mystic.” - Thomas Merton

This course is a 2-year journey to discover our divine natures and our particular ways of transmitting transformative spiritual energy to the cosmos.

There will be three week-long retreats (November 2023, 2024, and 2025) and in between Friends will be supported by their own continuing clearness committee/ support group to help sustain them on their journey from one retreat to the next.

The Retreats will be mostly in silence, after morning Worship, some group sharing and group spiritual direction. At various times during the year, in between the retreats, Drew will send out material for reflection. There will be two gatherings by Zoom during each year.

Maximum 6 participants. To prepare for and apply for the program, Drew asks you to send him a spiritual autobiography of at least seven A4 pages, by 18 September. Send to [drewoniona@me.com](mailto:drewoniona@me.com)

Cost: \$1,200 for 2023, \$1,300 for 2024 and \$1,400 for 2025. Increases are to allow for inflation.

#### **Windows to the Soul: Sharing the Journey Led by Christine Venner-Westaway**

Fri, Feb 9, 2024 3:30 PM Thu, Feb 15, 2024 12:30 PM

This six-day course offers participants a range of ‘windows’ (interactive drawing, Enneagram personality insights, small group conversations, writing/journaling) to reflect upon, share, learn and deepen their spiritual path both individually and collectively. To know one another more deeply in the Spirit is both an honour and a responsibility: to serve and enrich our Meetings as much as ourselves.

The course holds open a space for participants to reflect on their life’s spiritual journey thus far, and to gain insight into their own and other’s journeys. Participants will be encouraged, challenged and led to sink further down to the Seed.

All are welcome. We encourage participants who have walked a spiritual path for some time and are willing to examine and share their journeys and be open to and learn from others’ spiritual beliefs, values and practices.



## **THE FRIENDS SCHOOL, HOBART**

**The Friends School Quaker Values Committee (QVC) report by Peter Webb (the SA - NT Regional Meeting representative on the committee).**

The Friends' School, Hobart, is an R-12 co-educational non-government school administered by Australia Yearly Meeting. It is the only Quaker school in the Southern Hemisphere, and is the largest Quaker school in the world, with somewhere around 1300 students. It is run by a Board of Governors, which is made up of Quaker and non-Quaker members, all of whose appointments are subject to the approval of Australia Yearly Meeting.

The Quaker Values Committee (QVC) exists to advise and support the Board in the school's continuing quest to remain true to Quaker values, as expressed in the school's "Purpose and Concerns" statement, which is derived from the Quaker Testimonies.

This statement may be found on the school's website. Here is the link.

[https://secure.ermonline.com.au/education/temp/tmp\\_202308191259\\_75582330-F9B1-42CF-27C7FC7C971CC78F/TFS\\_Purpose\\_and\\_Concerns\\_04\\_2022.pdf](https://secure.ermonline.com.au/education/temp/tmp_202308191259_75582330-F9B1-42CF-27C7FC7C971CC78F/TFS_Purpose_and_Concerns_04_2022.pdf)

Printed copies are also available on the bench in the North Adelaide Meeting House.

The QVC is made up of the school's Principal, a representative from each Regional Meeting, and a number of Tasmanian Quakers.

Every year in mid-May, the QVC meets at the school, arriving on a Thursday afternoon (in 2023, May the 18th), and dispersing on the following Sunday (in 2023, May the 21st).

The area of the school curriculum being specifically observed this year was the Humanities. So, on the Thursday evening, a simple dinner was given for the QVC, with Heads of School and the Humanities staff. The staff then jointly gave a presentation focussing on how their teaching and their student relationships are informed by the Purpose and Concerns statement.

On the Friday morning, we were invited to move freely around the school and into classrooms (from Reception up to year 12), observing teachers at work with classes, and initiating conversations with students while they worked. The degree of articulate, insightful, and open self-confidence of the students is a very gratifying thing to experience. This activity continued into the afternoon, and it included attending some of the silent Gatherings – a feature of weekly life at the school. These Gatherings, held for every year level, are based on the Quaker Meeting for Worship. Their length and style, obviously, are tailored to the age group. I attended two of these Gatherings – a very young one (year 2, I think), and then the Clemes Gathering in the Farrall Centre – a group of all the senior students of the school, numbering perhaps 200 or so, sitting through a 45-60-minute silent meeting, with the silence broken occasionally by spontaneous ministry. It was uplifting to see the unfettered freedom and confidence with which students would stand and recount their personal experiences and insights in front of their peers.

This ethos of silent gathering exists because of the graded introduction of, and familiarity with, gatherings at junior levels. The year 2s had about 20 minutes, I think, during part of which time they were read a story. It was a gentle and embracing experience, beautifully led by Jess, a Quaker teacher.

Friday afternoon closed with a QVC meeting, in which discussion was wide-ranging. With two of the three Quaker staff members resigning at the end of 2023 in order to take up positions elsewhere, some of that discussion centred around Gatherings, and who would facilitate them. Also discussed was the retirement of the Principal, Nelson File, and what

support might be given to the new Principal, Esther Hill, who is the first non-Quaker Principal in the school's history (although she does have a Quaker family background). The QVC then had dinner at Walker House – the school's boarding house – with such students as remained there over the weekend.

Saturday, May the 20th, was meeting day, involving the Principal's Report to the school Association; the AGM of The Friends' School Incorporated; the AGM of The Friends' School Development Fund Incorporated; and then a combined meeting of the QVC and the Board of Governors. This meeting was a crucial part of the weekend, in which observations were shared, discussions pursued, suggestions made, and, if required, actions decided.

In the evening, the annual dinner to acknowledge long-serving staff (fifteen years of service) took place, involving the Board and committees of the Board as well.

On the Sunday, the QVC attended the Hobart Meeting for Worship, after which a meeting with Hobart Friends took place – a sharing of details of the visit, and a Question and Answer session. This closed the activities for the weekend, and the QVC members departed for their home destinations. So – what came of this weekend?

The QVC expressed its support for the work of the Humanities staff in using the Purpose and Concerns statement to inform and guide their teaching, both in their approach to the curriculum, and their relationships with their students and their own colleagues.

The emphasis in the school generally on mutually respectful and positive relationships, and involvement in community service, remains strong. Students seem to feel that the classroom is a safe place to be, and the school itself is a safe community.

An outward-looking attitude to the world and its conflicts and problems and its many different relationships, as well as issues such as power, inequality, endemic violence, and the human condition generally, are a firm basis of the Humanities curriculum.

The unique aspect of the year-level Gatherings and their effect on the ethos of the school remains a vital component of the school's focus. The question was raised and discussed of who leads the Gatherings when there is only one Quaker teacher in the school, and what kinds of support should be offered to those who do. This is a matter for internal discussion within the school, and an issue of which the school is very aware.

The incoming Principal, Esther Hill, whom we were glad to meet at various functions over the weekend, was encouraged to form a trusted support group for her role. As she is not a Quaker herself, perhaps such a group could include Quakers from outside the school.

In summary, it seemed to the QVC that the school

was seriously and in a dedicated way maintaining its focus on the Purpose and Concerns statement as the basis of the school's ethos, with Quaker values informing both the academic and social areas of the school's culture.

As the SANTRM representative on the QVC, I invite anyone with questions, suggestions, or observations they wish to air, to contact me, and I will do my best to help you.

I know that not every Quaker is comfortable about AYM supervising a private school (referred to on occasion as an "elite" school – a term which I think does the egalitarian social conscience of the school something of an injustice). But, every year, something like 150 students or so finish their schooling and go their various ways into the community, bearing with them a strong practical experience of the Quaker Testimonies in action. Even if very few of them become Friends, they are a major social outreach, and the more that Quaker values can be integrated into societal attitudes, the better.

**pocket size garden ...  
petunias, squash, bonsai  
and tomatoes**

**Robin Sinclair**

## Meetings for Worship

### **SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

**Adelaide:** 11 am every Sunday.

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

11.am New ALM Zoom Link. (Please use Chrome search engine for zoom to work best)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82235948640?pwd=cGdWM1NhNFRydXNFd3BMc0FyRE5hZz09>

ID: 822 3594 8640 Password: 521708

Clerk: Geoff Greeves.

Fellowship of Healing: in recess

WMSAdelaide@quakersaustralia.info

Meeting House bookings: RMSANTBookings@quakersaustralia.info

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

Zoom link every 2<sup>nd</sup> and last Sunday of the month.

Clerk: Elizabeth Magarey 041 8895 955. WMSEastern@quakersaustralia.info

**Fleurieu:** 11 am second Sunday of each month. Contact: Chris Collins 0407 049 535

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 Robyn Carey 0417 808 835 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:** Jo Jordan RMSANTClerk@quakersaustralia.info

**Treasurer:** Lee Harradine RMSANTTreasurer@quakersaustralia.info

**WALKING CHEERFULLY,** South Australian – Northern Territory Regional Meeting Quaker Newsletter. October 2023. Walking Cheerfully is published bi-monthly. Editor: Charles Stevenson. cestev@adam.com.au or RMSANTNews@quakersaustralia.info