

Share & Tell Summary

There were 16 different Share and Tell sessions held as part of Australia Yearly Meeting 2022. The sessions covered a wide variety of topics, reflecting the variety of interests and experiences of Friends in Australia. The sixteen sessions were:

- Being equal, living with integrity: Spirituality and gender diversity
- Reflecting on our changing practices and process: Handbook revisions
- Lilian Foxcroft: Suffragette, anti-conscriptionist, Quaker
- The Shape of Hope: An asylum seeker story.
- The Integrity Project
- Peace Building en Las Americas
- Refugees and Quakers
- Small Meetings and Worshipping Groups
- Future visions for the AYM Office
- Quakers and Privacy: tinfoil hats or sensible sceptics?
- Are your home/ health insurances & super really green?
- Australian Quakers Permaculture and Refugees - a big contribution
- Singing Quaker Stories 1
- The Australian Friend
- Singing Quaker Stories 2
- Blessed are the Peacemakers

When registering for AYM'22, Friends had an opportunity to offer a session. If they did, they were contacted and sent an additional form to complete with further information, allowing them to be timetable appropriately by Em Chandler.

Most session facilitators were able to manage their own Zoom support or able to contact a Friend to help them, with the minority asking for the co-ordinator to find a Zoom host. With such a small number, Em Chandler was able to undertake this Zoom hosting herself.

The session "Integrity and Gender Identity" was held in the week before Yearly Meeting began, and was just as well attended as the remaining sessions which were held during Yearly Meeting.

The AYM visitor from Aotearoa/New Zealand Yearly Meeting was able to offer a session about working as a Quaker volunteer in Guatemala, with two other sessions having outside presenters ("Are your home/health insurances & super really green?" and "Blessed are the Peacemakers").

Many Share and Tell sessions facilitators have written brief reports which are also included in Documents in Retrospect.

Em Chandler (VRM), Coordinator

Share and Tell Sessions Reports

**Not all Share & Tell Session presenters submitted reports.*

1) Being equal, living with integrity: Spirituality and gender diversity

Clerk/Convener/Presenter: Evan Gallagher, Eneko Axford, Em Chandler

On Sunday 19th June 2022, 28 Friends joined a Share and Tell about: "Being equal, living with integrity: Spirituality and gender diversity". Two Friends shared their experiences from recognising that they were living with gender dysphoria, to the joys and some of the challenges as they began living true to their gender. We heard how some Meetings had begun the work to make trans and non-binary Friends welcome, but also that we had only begun the journey to full

inclusion. Are we called, as a community, to do more so that we can unambiguously offer our loving support?

2) Lilian Foxcroft, Suffragette, Anti-conscriptionist, Quaker

Clerk/Convene/Presenter: Liz Field

I have long been interested in the DAQB, and have gradually realised that a number of Quakers do not appear in it. Lilian Foxcroft is one of these, and I used her story to encourage Friends to explore the DAQB, and perhaps discover and fill in any gaps from their own RM. Lilian Foxcroft (nee Norbury) was English and was gaoled in 1910 and even-force fed there amongst many other Suffragettes for their actions. In 1911 she married Gilbert Foxcroft and they came to Western Australia in 1912. Here she campaigned against military conscription in meetings and newspapers, being eventually arrested and fined £15.00 for her stance (a lot of money in 1916) She joined Friends in 1937 and moved to Tasmania with Gilbert on his retirement. She died in 1969 at age 84.

3) The Shape of Hope

Clerk/Convener/Presenter: Jill Parris

This session focused on the history and formation of Hope Co-Op from a classroom to a lively, creative cooperative that values the human, equality, agency and participation of Asylum Seekers (AS). Board decision-making guarantees the primacy of AS voices by ensuring more AS than partner members votes. "Hope" focuses on social connectedness, helping with job readiness and educational support (university places and living support). Hope Co-Op won the 2022 Victorian Government Multicultural Business Award and has secured funding to extend our work to families of AS members. "The Shape of Hope" tells individual stories and outlines our short history. To find out more visit <https://www.hopecoop.org.au>

4) The Integrity Project

Clerk/Convener/Presenter: Wies Schuiringa, Sue Ennis

The history, purpose and the proposed action of the Integrity Project were explained. Twitter workshops will be held 20 July so Friends can participate more in the social media campaign for the action on 4 August. Future actions are planned. Participants at this session discussed "Integrity in Public Office" in breakout rooms and also had time to view websites such as www.ourdemocracy.com.au, <https://australiandemocracy.org.au>, <https://publicintegrity.org.au/about> and the QPLC summary of the document State Capture. The Integrity Project has used the information from these sources for its project development. QPLC has been asked to advise AYM if the project can be endorsed by AYM so the project can be promoted as supported by "Quakers in Australia".

5) Refugees and Quakers

Clerk/Convener/Presenter: David Evans, Rowe Morrow, Dale Hess

Direct Recruitment from Refugee Camps - Global Workforce an Addition to Humanitarian Aid: David Evans discussed examples of Friendship Societies with refugees in long-term refugee camps, citing Cisarua Learning in Indonesia, and the Dadaab and Kakuma camps in Kenya. Examples were also given of direct recruitment from refugee camps as is happening in Adelaide where Hotel management are offering jobs to Ukrainian refugees with the support of their current working staff. A modest donation to Cisarua Learning <https://www.cisarualearning.com> is a good way to get involved with a functioning Friendship Society. The slide presentation with pictures and texts, and more information, is available from David Evans at ddeevans1@gmail.com

6) Small Meetings and Worshipping Groups

Clerk/Convener/Presenter: Michael Bayles

Fourteen people predominantly from small meetings and worshipping groups around Australia and New Zealand, discussed how their meetings fared over the last couple of years with the COVID pandemic. The importance of community and reaching out brought people closer as a group but

the impact of COVID found a lot of meetings struggling through the period. What we have learnt is to embrace new technologies such as Zoom which can overcome geographical barriers and reach out to isolated Friends by telephone and virtual gatherings for meals. Mask wearing or not wearing, in face-to-face meetings is a factor for many meetings.

7) Quakers and Privacy

Clerk/Convener/Presenter: Martin Kealey

A Drabble for Documents in Retrospect: Privacy is the right to decide whom to trust, and with what. Our small meeting could only find more questions than answers. Is speaking anonymously really speaking truth to power? When should one go on the record? Complex systems are hard to trust; choose them wisely. Privacy and disclosure are a balance, with benefits and costs that may not accrue equitably to everyone involved. Cloistering to avoid threats limits interaction with everyone else as well. The young and inexperienced may not see the hazard in disclosure; they need our care. Trust is not transitive. Words let fly cannot be recalled.

8) Australian Quakers Permaculture and Refugees - a big contribution

Clerk/Convener/Presenter: Rowe Morrow, Dale Hess

Rowe Morrow and Dale Hess reported on the Afghan Refugee Pilot Project in Portugal. This project is a partnership between an international team, Mértola Council, Association Terra Sintrópica, Edmund Rice Centre, and the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs with half the funding supplied by the Thanksgiving Fund. Its aim is to rehabilitate the land, the economy and society in Mértola region of Portugal and serve as a model for other locations. The integrated design provides adaptation to global warming and desertification, a learning opportunity for young Afghan refugees, and language, legal, cultural, spiritual, and social support.

8) The Australian Friend

Clerk/Convener/Presenter: David Swain

Around 20 Friends attended this Share and Tell hosted by the Australian Friend. A presentation 'demystified' how the quarterly magazine comes together and how to navigate the AF website to find both current and archival material. As the AF is now under the care of Australia Yearly Meeting, we look forward to having committee members from around the country. We say good-bye to Wies Schuiringa and acknowledge the passing of Peter Williams. At the same time, we welcome Sue Parritt to the committee. Lively discussions led to several suggestions for the committee to consider. The Australian Friend will continue to showcase Australian writers and enrich the spiritual and secular lives of Friends through both an online and print presence.

8) Blessed are the peacemakers: Friends Peace Teams-Asia West Pacific

Clerk/Convener/Presenter: Valerie Joy

25 Friends attended. This year, we decided to do a simple presentation of our most recent project in West Papua. This was possible because the two workers Selly and Sint are presently at Peace Place in Java, undergoing mentoring for their work with children in an orphanage in Jayapura. Kins Aparece the Asia Coordinator introduced the Power of Goodness storytelling method, and following a reading of the story, we discussed acting on our conscience. A camera took us around the main meeting hall, the school, past the Library and outside where the Permaculture project is established.

9) Future visions for the AYM Office

Presenters: Working Party on the Long-term Role and Work of the AYM Secretary and Office (Emily Chapman-Searle, Jude Pembleton and Margaret Clark).

Some thirty Friends met to think both creatively and practically about the design and roles of the next AYM office (after Yearly Meeting 2023). After hearing a short update about the work and thinking of the working party, Friends were sent into small groups to discuss: possible roles and how work could be clustered together, what does AYM need to keep or not, how paid and

volunteered positions could work together, what work is essential and how could an Office be maintained. Groups were also encouraged to design their ideal AYM Office.

Ideas, questions, and suggestions were then shared together in the larger group. Notes from the groups and thoughts of individual Friends were also shared in chat or emailed to the working party. It was a lively, interesting and very engaging group who, while raising practical matters of funding and implementation, remained unrestrained in their vision of possibilities.