

October 2017

Issue 7

Australian Quaker Earthcare Committee

The AYM Earthcare Committee has produced this Earthcare invitation for all Quakers in Australia

Earthcare Invitation

Waste and Renewal



"For each of us is the challenge to recognise the Still Small Voice and follow it even when it seems to make no sense, or when fear rises up, or when the comfort of what once was lures us to inaction." Margery Post Abbott (pictured above), Backhouse Lecture 2016

P ray



Most recent AYM Earthcare Committee river meeting venue, Sandy Beach Reserve, Bassendean – August 2017 (B.Roy)

In times of busyness, whether from social or other upheavals we invite you to consider daily practice that also connects with our precious earth: Listening to the Spirit.

In our gardening and cooking we take care to use the whole plant in its soil, its ecosystem. And as we care for our bodies in their continual round of repair and renewal, we honour the precious existence we can use for the benefit of others in this life. We pray for this complex mystery – to allow and understand it.

So, we also consider the care and use of the Meeting in ways that are meaningful... We wonder what that means for different Meetings? We wish to help people share the spiritual paths of their lives. This requires agreement in making regular purposeful meetings happen, as well as allowing for friendly times to emerge around the pattern of worship and fellowship and the required duties to sustain the Meeting. This is a welcoming, prayerful essence of Quakerism/Quakerishness.

R ead

While waiting to discover how this year's Backhouse Lecture may be published, with David Carline and Cheryl Buchanan's words still ringing in our hearts, we hope you will take the time to read (and reread) Margery Post Abbot's from 2016, *Everyday Prophets*.

You can also look up your own state's or territory's recycling record online - there is a revealing source of information at this link:

www.environment.gov.au/protection/national-waste-policy

Quaker Quote

The Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) views anthropogenic (due to human activities) climate change as a symptom of a greater challenge: how to live sustainably and justly on this earth. In our work we approach climate change as a peace and justice concern... We are supported by Quaker communities who see this challenge as a call to conscience, recognizing a personal and collective responsibility to ensure the poorest and most vulnerable peoples now, and all our future generations, do not suffer as a consequence of our actions.

from Call to Conscience, QUNO Geneva 2014

Act



Silver Wattle Quaker Centre (near Canberra) is one place that has helped many Friends develop and deepen the skills which ground these spiritual renewal practices. (Photo B. Roy)

Rather than throwing things away to the landfill, the compost of our modern ways, we can:- Reclaim, Renew, Repair, Reuse, Share, and then Recycle. At the very end of that list is discard, which is a process unto itself involving perhaps composting, burying, or, as a considered last resort, burning.

So how do we know when we are engaging in a practice that taps into a nourishing, reclaiming and renewing source? We may feel it as energising, stimulating, deepening, accepting, an experience of Transforming Power in our lives.

When we consider spiritual renewal, WARM Quakers spoke of community ways that have worked for them. They included worship sharing, attending to Advices and Queries in facilitated monthly post-Meeting gatherings, GOFF (a monthly Friday group), gardening at the Meeting House, courses on Quakerism from Woodbrooke and elsewhere, the 'cup of tea friendship' arising after Meeting for Worship, Quaker Tapestry, craft activities, fund-raising projects and 'paying the rent' to and building community with Aboriginal groups.

Do you have examples of nourishing, renewing practices within your Meeting? They may be physical, visible or hidden, spiritual?

Celebrate



Shinto Shrine at Kamakura, Japan. (A. Glamorgan)

Every time we meet as the Earthcare committee, we celebrate our environment, breathe its air, enjoy its bounty.

In Japan the Wild God is celebrated in Shinto Shrines on the edges of wild places. We, too, find ways to celebrate the bush without fences and roads or rubbish, the beaches without litter, the quiet spaces which have been in existence for thousands of years, including the ground beneath our feet and the sky above our heads...

Sometime this week, why not have a conversation with a friend or acquaintance asking them about some special part of their locality that they might celebrate for its quietness, biodiversity, shade, sun, running waters, still reflections, or family history...and be prepared to share with your friend your own experience. Relish the place. When you visit it next, you will take with you the story, the possibility, and the hope that others will see this place as somewhere worth preserving, enjoying, and honouring.

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Australian Friends are involved in *earthcare* in many ways: individually, in our Meeting Houses, and in activities throughout the wider community. See more of a Quaker view of *earthcare* at www.quakersaustralia.org.au

Please be in touch with us at earthcare@quakers.org.au
