

# The Australian Friend

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## Spiritual Growth



# Editorial

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In the last issue we complained that we lacked articles on how to nourish our spiritual life. So this time we are grateful to Wilma Davidson for sending us an article about going on retreat, stressing the need to be rather than to do. Also to Lyn Dundas who writes about the Living Experimentally Circle at Wahroonga, where Friends are nourished by listening to each other's spiritual adventures and challenges.

One of the ways in which Friends have always found spiritual nourishment and mental stimulation is through reading, and through listening to talks by experienced Friends. We include reviews of two of the annual Quaker Lectures from New Zealand, one on the subject of Can Religion Speak Truth, the other on Crime and Punishment. Both have much to say to us.

We have not taken our eyes off the wider world, and John McMahan has written a review of the peace movement in Japan, and of the contribution which Quakers have made to it.

In our next issue we will be looking at issues dealt with at, and arising from, our Yearly Meeting in Hobart – including the issue of whether we should hold Yearly Meeting in Hobart in July! Are there better ways to manage our business? Do we have too much business and too little time for wise thought and new insights? Are we addressing our own deepest needs? What can we say and what should we do at this time?

**THE AUSTRALIAN FRIEND EDITORIAL TEAM**

## Noted . . .

*This is our regular feature in which we briefly record interesting publications and websites that have come to our attention. Inclusion of an item in this format does not preclude a possible longer review in a later issue. We welcome suggestions for inclusion.*

**HEATHER HERBERT OF CANBERRA**  
**REGIONAL MEETING HAS SENT US SOME**  
**BACKGROUND NOTES TO HER WINTER**  
**SCHOOL A SPIRITUALITY FOR THE 21ST**  
**CENTURY.**

**SHE SAYS:**

I'll be 90 later this year. I've been nourished all my life by some spiritual experiences I had as a small child and some later; and by those I've heard or read of from others equally fortunate.

'Some of this awareness has been involved in the founding of every religion and every denomination and version of each – affected always by the culture, experience and understanding of the recipients, and to a degree, it seems, by the level of the sender on the Other Side.

'Our Quaker fore-fathers and -mothers had this sense of Godness as 'the Ground of our Being'; and hence deep within us as within everything else. They encourage us to be open

to the Light from both without and within.

'A group of mystics and psychics in the Friends' General Conference in the U.S. produce a quarterly, *What Canst Thou Say?*, each edition around a different topic, which is beautifully nourishing too.

'Maybe the mystics and psychics and any others interested among us could ally ourselves with that group.'

AF

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Cover photo: Spiritual growth

# Know Thy Friend: Kerry O'Regan

KERRY O'REGAN | ~~XXXX~~REGIONAL MEETING



When I reflected on how I came to be a Quaker, I kept going back and back, following the strands of influences in my life, to my earliest memories of childhood. So I think, in order to answer the question, I'll have to start there and develop the answer in a meandery kind of way, following those various strands forward until now.

I'll be seventy-five this year, which means I've been alive for three quarters of a century. The world has changed so much in that time and, probably, so have I. Being born during the war, I don't qualify as a Boomer, and I don't even know if our generation merited a label or if we've just had to manage without.

I don't, of course, remember anything of the war years, but I do recall something of the aftermath. Searchlight beams crisscrossing the night sky, my mother explaining that their purpose had been to locate enemy aircraft. I have no idea why they were still being used, but they certainly form part of my childhood memories. A bit scary, even if no aircraft were likely to be caught in the beams.

Mum had some friends who would come and visit each week, and, while rationing was no longer a thing, they'd each bring their own little pat of butter

to put on sandwiches for lunch. Perhaps other stuff as well, but it's the butter I remember. War meant sacrifice and deprivation, even in the domestic realm.

And the one-armed men, returned soldiers Mum said, who operated the lifts in department stores.

My mother was the guiding light of my life and she would talk to me about war. Two of her brothers had served in the Great War and an uncle had been killed. Dad had been in the army during World War II. Only posted in Australia, but away in army camps much of the time, leaving Mum at home with eight children to care for. Mum would tell me that 'War is a terrible thing. Ordinary men sent off to fight and kill other ordinary men. A terrible thing.' So that's what I knew about war.

I had such a happy childhood. I was the ninth of ten children my mother gave birth to, twenty years between the eldest and the youngest. Imagine. Good Catholics of course.

Coming at the end as we did, my younger brother Michael and I were the darlings of the family, cooed over and coddled by devoted older siblings. I didn't even know we were poor. Not poor enough to go hungry, though there were little things. At school, I envied the girls who had collections of

coloured pencils in beautiful wooden cases. I only ever had a small pack of six half-size pencils, and no pencil case. It's the little things you remember – the little inequalities

After a shaky start (school being nothing like my loving home environment) I came to enjoy school and do well at it. I remember after one test, having to admit that mine wasn't the top mark. (Being 'a clever little thing' was a role I played in the family.) When I told Mum whose was top, she chided me with, 'Fancy letting a boy beat you!' That was a message I've carried all my life. As a girl, as a woman, I had a particular task to fulfil. I was encouraged to excel, and being female was never presented as a limitation or impediment. In fact, it was a challenge. I was a feminist for life.

None of my older siblings had completed high school, but I was offered an Education Department scholarship that would pay me an allowance for my final two years at school. Higher education was a strange land which was totally foreign to me and to my family. But as my time at school neared its end, the nuns there – bless them – said, 'We think you should apply for this', and gave me a form to sign. I really had no idea what it was. Turns out it was an application for an Education

Department Fellowship which would fund me to study at university for four years – a Science degree plus a Dip Ed. And that's what I did. Thank you Sisters. Our future does not have to be determined by our past. Privilege (or lack of it) is not necessarily inherited.

My family were very devout. Catholic to our bone marrow. A picture of the Sacred Heart on the dining room wall, a small statue of the Blessed Virgin in the lounge room, a crucifix on the cabinet beside my parents' bed. We said the Rosary as a family every night and attended Mass together every Sunday. Being Catholic was something that permeated our lives – an unquestioned and essential part of our collective identity.

It was in that context that, in my third year of university, I fell in love. Unwisely. There were many reasons why it wasn't a good idea, one of them being that three generations of his family had proudly worshipped at the Methodist church on the opposite corner to our Catholic church. That mattered. It mattered a lot.

Of course, I thought that Love Conquers All, and so, when I finished university and a week before I started teaching, we were married.

Early in the piece I realised that, if our marriage were to survive, I would have to let go of my Catholicism. That was more traumatic than I can say. The loss of something precious that was so much part of my identity. My alienation from family. The pain that caused them. And me. A pain we could never speak of.

So I went along to the Methodist church (not that one on the corner) and tried to fit in, but it was never really right. I always felt like something of an interloper, a misfit. So, after a while, we just stopped going. And I entered into a spiritual wilderness.

But there was still, undeniably, a spiritual part of my being. Something that needed nurturing and connection. I had come across Quakers in my reading over the years and there was something there that appealed to me. It felt like a place where my pacifism and feminism, my sense of social justice and the

mystical side of my Catholicism might find a home. I even looked up Quakers in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, but I found the talk of 'clerks' and 'minutes' just plain puzzling, as well as very bureaucratic sounding. I didn't know where else to go with it, so I just let it be.

In the early 1980s we went to live in Mackay in North Queensland. (Yes, we were still married, and now with three children.) There I met my first real Quaker. Someone whose name I can't even remember, and who wasn't around for very long as it turned out. And Jess and Peter Daughtry who were also what you might call Quaker-ready. Anyway, we started having little Meetings for Worship together. Probably highly irregular, but we just did it.

We must have become official at some stage, because we became involved with occasional gatherings of North Queensland Friends, including David and Trish Johnson, Susannah Kay, and on one occasion, the visiting Topsy and David Evans. Not a bad initiation into Quakers.

In 1988 we moved to Adelaide, and I went along to the North Adelaide Meeting House, seeking to become a proper Quaker. The first person I spoke to immediately asked, 'Are you a member or attender?' I did find that a little confronting, but it didn't deter me totally and look, here I am.

As to the other threads to this story. My parents both died around the time of our move to Adelaide, and my marriage finally unravelled. Since then, my relationship with my siblings has mellowed (we can now even use the Q word), and I am particularly close to Ann, the Sister of Mercy. My children are all doing wonderful things.

And that's the story of how I came to be a Quaker – and the person I am today.



Kerry and Michael with Sister Ann.

AF



# Nourishing our spiritual lives: The ‘Living Experimentally’ Circle at Wahroonga LM

LYN DUNDAS | NEW SOUTH WALES REGIONAL MEETING

It was more than ten years ago that the first Circle at Wahroonga was held. It was begun and facilitated by our Friend Ian Hughes, who had worked with Learning Circles at universities and wanted to see how they might be adapted to the Quaker setting. I had spent three months at Pendle Hill, the Quaker Centre in Philadelphia, experiencing living in a community where spiritual nurture, growth and learning were central, and on my return, I longed for a deeper experience of sharing and community within my Meeting. For me, the Circle has become that space of deep spiritual nourishment and community, through our focussed sharing, deep listening and prayerful holding of one another. Parker Palmer’s Circles of Trust have also contributed to our evolving vision and practice.

In the university setting, the focus is on individual learning and research projects; for Quakers, the ‘project itself becomes a background and an anchor upon which to base our own personal growth, together with a deeper understanding of others’. ‘The experience of sharing transcends the importance of the projects themselves.’

1 [1] Though the project titles give focus and direction, what very often becomes most important is the journey: the people we meet along the way, the conversations we have, what we pay attention to – in our daily, ordinary, lived

moments, we find the extraordinary, and our spiritual teachers and lessons.

promptings of the spirit or their inner light.

### Some projects over the years

- The art of mindful walking through the Old Testament
- Creator, creation and creativity
- Peace, within and without
- Speaking truth to power
- Care of the earth
- History of the early Seeker movement
- Practising presence
- Exploring death and dying
- Seeking simplicity
- Living in my 80s and finding my writing voice

### Questions for Reflection

1. What is the title or one-line description of my project?
2. What did I intend to do?
3. What did I actually do?
4. What did I observe or experience?
5. What did I or might I learn from this? – reflections on the experiences
6. What do I intend to do in the following month?
7. What help can the Circle give me now?

We meet once a month after Meeting for Worship, for about 3 hours (with short breaks for the sharing of food.) At the beginning of each year we invite anyone interested to come and experience how a Circle ‘works’. We then ask participants to commit for the year. To help develop trust and depth, the Circle becomes a closed group for that year. Numbers have varied over the years, from 6 to 13 participants. Eight or nine is the ideal maximum number. The heart of the Circle is the round-table individual sharing by each person in turn, and the deep, attentive, prayerful, active listening that accompanies and supports each person in following the

Within this structure, the transformative power of ‘being listened into being’ happens. ‘Reflecting and writing on my project each month is healing in itself – but speaking it out loud to others and being listened to with attentiveness and support and love is very powerful and empowering’. ‘I experience an energy, a spirit in the Circle that is quite palpable and life-giving, binding, flowing and evolutionary – moving me into deeper faith and hope and love’. ‘I have experienced a profound sense of love, community, trust, growing and learning through being part of the Circle’.

We find acceptance, trust and courage as we share what is important, meaningful, exciting, challenging, dark, confusing, mysterious, passionate

David, this page needs a small filler but I had thought that the gray boxes might move to the top of the second page. They don't really flow within the text and might benefit from highlighting. What do you think?

and joyful in our lives. We come to know each other 'in the things that are eternal'. Often a word, words or a personal story will resonate strongly with our own experience, and connect us to each other and to the spirit that gives life to all. 'There is an echo of my own story in everyone's story, which increased a deep sense of recognition, tenderness and compassion'.

Some of us bring pain, loss, health concerns and unresolved issues into the Circle. For some, reconciling and balancing the busyness that comes with being involved in all that we love doing, and the desire for simplification, is a continuing struggle. This and other struggles offer opportunities for deep listening within, to discern what love and faithfulness might require of us. We also recognise and honour our gifts, and times of wonder, clarity, conviction, energy, laughter and sweetness. In the Circle we practise waiting, in love and in silence, holding all that is being shared in that sacred space.

We appreciate the opportunity to set intentions each month and reflect on the past month's experiences. Looking back like this, and especially over the whole year, we can see growth that is not always apparent at the time. 'This year I experienced a real sense of progress, though the black dog of self-doubt still sniffs around regularly.'

'Being accountable to the group has been most important.' However, most

often the help that the Circle provides is in 'just listening' – no judgment, no rescuing, no advising – but loving, supportive, attentive, trusting presence. In turn, we feel 'blessed' and 'privileged' to be able to accompany others in their journeys. Having an encouraging and supportive spiritual community has helped some people to try new things, be courageous, take detours, extend themselves, be more faithful to a calling. 'I have been touched by your loving support as I transitioned into a new way of being.' 'I feel 'held' and encouraged by the Circle'. 'I doubt whether I would be able to do this work without the Circle'. 'I feel a little braver in speaking my truth'. 'I feel less alone in my concerns, thoughts and actions'.

I am blessed to have some very dear Friends, whose deep spiritual friendship over many years I value greatly. I am also blessed to have had opportunities for personal 'retreats' through the generosity of Friends. These have fed my spirit. But the Circle 'nourishes my need for belonging and connection'. The Circle is the place where both individual and community are valued and tended. 'The dynamics of the group was amazing. We started with our own individual quests, and through sharing, the energy built to where I recognised our SAME journey.'

Like Rufus Jones, 'I pin my hopes to quiet processes and small circles, in which vital and transforming events

take place.'

[1] Quotations are participants' own

words, unless otherwise attributed.

AF



# Reflections on Japan's seventy-four years without waging war

JOHN MCMAHON | VICTORIA REGIONAL MEETING

*I will illustrate achievements of peace activists in Japan, from this country's unconditional surrender in 1945 until 30 April 2019, when Akihito abdicated the Chrysanthemum throne.*

The Japanese Emperor, Hirohito wanted a woman to teach his eleven-year-old son after Japan's unconditional surrender in 1945, to bring some feminine influence into Akihito's life. He required a Christian tutor, but not a fanatic. At her appointment, Elizabeth Gray Vining, an American Quaker teacher, said her instructions were: to open windows to a foreign way of life for the crown prince. She said that she did not want to view the job as 'selling America' to Japan's future leader but saw the need to 'set him free – to teach him how to have fun.' She tutored him privately, and at the elite school he attended. During this task she read with him, discussed Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence; they shared hopes for world peace while also becoming friends. In these ways Vining as a peace activist helped Akihito to free himself from the shackles of cruel Shinto-supported Japanese war ideologies and their violence. During his thirty years as emperor, Akihito followed Vining's peaceful advocacy and became a loving and peaceful activist for his country. He got away from the palace to help Japanese people in distress. Vining's efforts in setting Akihito free culminated when he married Michiko Shodo, following a love affair between the crown prince and a commoner.

Another peace maker was Akihito's father, Emperor Hirohito. In early 1945, listening to debates between Japanese peace and war factions in the protective bunker attached to his palace, Hirohito made an historic and peaceful decision: to agree to the Allies' request for unconditional surrender. At

this time Tokyo was one of six major Japanese cities, devastated by firestorms that American napalm bombings had created. Historian Paul Hams recorded that 'most of the inhabitants of these cities were either dead, wounded, or forced to flee to the countryside, and Japan was utterly defeated but had not yet surrendered.' In these circumstances, Hirohito, although hampered by a coup, and the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, constructed his peace-seeking message. Speaking to his people through radio tapes, in the upper-class Japanese language, he claimed that unconditional surrender would take place, and would prove to be difficult for his people. Japanese were surprised at Hirohito's peaceful decision, because it was different to what they expected from their Government's combative ideology, and the weapons hidden in Japan to repel fighting invaders.

Other peace advocates were the Allied Powers. Prior to 1945 they had met at Potsdam and decided on terms for the proposed Japanese surrender. Their Proclamation included peaceful pathways for a Japanese unconditional surrender, with some restrictions. For example, 'we insist that the new order of peace, security, and justice will be impossible until irresponsible militarism is driven from the world,' 'Japanese military forces, after being completely disarmed, shall be permitted to return to their homes with the opportunity of leading peaceful and productive lives, with freedom of speech, religion and thought.' The Proclamation implied that the traditional, hierarchical social system would, under the Proclamation survive.

Following Japan's unconditional surrender, an American General, Douglas MacArthur, became Supreme Commander of Allied Powers (SCAP), for the Occupation of Japan. Some Japanese found the task of accepting an occupied Japan difficult, but many embraced MacArthur's emerging peace proposals with enthusiasm. Kazuo Kawai, a Japanese scholar, in August 1945 wrote about why most people in war-torn Japan, the 'hungry, homeless, and shame-laden Japanese' were eager for peace:

*They were disillusioned, demoralised, and paralysed...war had reduced many of the Japanese to an inner state bordering on panic. Surrender came to them as a heaven-sent relief; a welcome ... deliverance from annihilation.*

Kawai further claimed that the character and presence of MacArthur influenced the Japanese to accept the occupation fully. He believed that MacArthur's 'dedicated sense of mission, the sincerity ... of his vision resonated with the Japanese people.' MacArthur insisted that the occupation be used to reform Japanese social and political life, to accord with democratic and Christian principles. As SCAP he organised the repatriation of three million Japanese who were fighting abroad at the end of the war. MacArthur also promoted the development of democratic reform for Japan. Taking other strong steps towards a peaceful occupation, SCAP used the existing national political legislature, to exercise control. This was the traditional way in which Japan had previously been governed. He ordered the release of all Japanese political



prisoners. SCAP forced the Emperor to renounce his divinity but supported him remaining as the symbolic leader (promoting peace) for his people. The new Showa Constitution, in which MacArthur played an advocate role, guaranteed that the Japanese military forces were only to be raised for the defence of Japan, rather than renewal of their global military expansion. In such ways SCAP's demands enabled Japan to embrace more peaceful pathways for many following generations.

In addition, MacArthur decided to supervise humane and peaceful social ways for Japan. In 1946, noticing that the Japanese people were dying of starvation, he did something about it. As SCAP he stated, 'lack of food for the defeated people was the main problem, making all other problems seem trifles.' So SCAP demanded that food be sent from America. Shunsuke Tsurumi, a Japanese historian wrote: 'tons of flour were released by the occupation: flour, corn and milk were the main items.' He thought in 1987 it had generated peaceful friendships in the seven years of the occupation that are still felt by Japanese living today.

Also, MacArthur's intervention for health improvement, possibly resulted in Japan experiencing the most rapid eradication of deaths from preventable diseases for any country in history. The SCAP team, headed by Brigadier General Crawford Sams organised 8000 Japanese to staff 800 district health centres, where American doctors organised the mass immunisation of the entire population. 'Thirty-five million people were vaccinated by 1950: a 40% reduction from tuberculosis deaths; and there were reductions ranging from 76% to 90% for diphtheria, dysentery, typhoid and paratyphoid death rates, reductions from Japanese encephalitis and endemic typhus diseases.'

MacArthur's motivation for peace-making achievements in 1945 arose from his visit to Germany after the end of World-War I with his father Colonel

Arthur MacArthur. He observed the social and medical plights of the German people, in the Allies ill-fated occupation of Germany. He didn't wish to see the Japanese nation suffer loss of self-respect and self-confidence evident in the conquered German people he had seen. It predisposed him to proclaim more positive outcomes for the Japanese. William Manchester, a historian of the General's motivation in all his peaceful actions quoted MacArthur: 'I was brought up a Christian and adhere entirely to its teachings.' i [i]

Another American, the lone Quaker, Floyd W. Schmoie, a professor of dendrology, promoted a peaceful reconciliation. He decided an apology to the Japanese people for dropping the bomb on Hiroshima was insufficient. Schmoie, driven by deep urges for expiation and reconciliation, in 1949, against the wishes of his Quaker Meeting, came to Hiroshima, and with carpenters assembled with his own hands and theirs, 212 Japanese-style houses for victims of the bomb.

In January 1946 soldiers of the Australian-led contingent, together with Great Britain, New Zealand, and India, formed the British Commonwealth Occupation Force, (BCOF), to join the American occupying force. Australia occupied the Chugoku region of Honshu Island. It included the Prefecture of Hiroshima, and Ita Jima Island, where they established the 130th Australian General Hospital (130 AGH), with my late aunt Monica McMahon as its Matron ii [ii]. The wrecked city of Hiroshima with its high levels of radioactivity made it a dangerous BCOF location for Australia's contingent.

Australian contingent and American occupation commanders had opposed views about their country's fraternisation with the Japanese. Lord Louis Mountbatten wanted Australian personnel to adopt a stern attitude towards Japanese



Emperor Akihito announces his abdication.

people. He demanded that Northcott, the Australian commander draw up a non-fraternisation policy to be implemented by troops and the 130th AGH staff. Northcott demanded the Australian BCOF to conduct something like a cold war against the Japanese. He wrote 'you must be formal and correct' and 'you must not enter their homes or take part in family life.' Northcott's negative views limited financial and social support that Australians could provide for the demoralised, starving Japanese. Non-fraternisation became a policy too strict for some Australian soldiers and nursing staff to peacefully obey.

Female members of the 130 AGH decided to act in a more loving and peaceful manner. Nurse Lorna Weir wrote about meeting Japanese women, some of whom had never seen a white woman before, when buying souvenirs:

*At first, they looked sad; but somehow, with gestures and chatter, we always left them smiling... We visited several places and the second time around were greeted with bright smiles and happy chatter... On these occasions our limited supply of sweets was never enough.*

Also, the Australian Army provided an opportunity for nursing Sisters to make peaceful friendships with Japanese

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

# How we nourish our Spiritual lives

## Contemplative practice

WILMA DAVIDSON | CANBERRA REGIONAL MEETING



*To allow oneself to be carried away by a multitude of conflicting concerns, to surrender oneself to too many demands, to commit oneself to too many projects, to want to help everyone in everything is to succumb to violence. More than that, it is cooperation in violence. It destroys one's own capacity for peace. It destroys the fruitfulness of one's own work, because it kills the root of inner wisdom which makes the work fruitful.*

*Thomas Merton*

For some of us it's easier to do than to be and to give rather than to receive. It has been my aim for many years to embrace these gifts and, like aiming for perfection, I know it will never be reached. The learning is in the journey.

Long before I was a Quaker I practiced Vipassana meditation, attending regular ten- and twenty-day courses, one-day courses and local group sits.

This I think is where I was first challenged to be rather than do. I would happily offer service caring for other meditators, and through the deep work during a ten-day course, realised I was there to be, to reach deeply into equanimity and peace. And be waited on!

As women we are conditioned to care for – partners, children, and eventually our parents – and many of us find it difficult to be the caree.

It was a simple remark from a Friend that helped me realise the challenge for me of receiving.

I had done something for this friend and she said 'thank you'. I then began my usual speech about how it was nothing/I was doing something similar anyway/it was a pleasure. My Friend

said 'I said 'thank you''. And walked away. I now thank the Spirit for alerting for me, through this dear friend, how difficult it was for me to receive thanks.

Since that moment I have been aware of many others for whom receiving is a challenge, particularly in my role as clinical supervisor to councillors and advocates.

Now being is integral to my spirit practice and to my everyday way of life. The first Quaker retreat I attended was in Galong, a beautiful convent with a labyrinth. After the six days we stopped. I was just getting into a deep space with the Spirit and we stopped. This was the shortest retreat I attended since practising Vipassana meditation.

I spoke to the Spiritual Director about this dilemma and he asked how long did I think I needed. Quaker worship and Quaker mysticism was so new to me then, I said I thought about a month, and happy to be alone with his guidance.

He found The Cliffs Retreat in Shoreham on the Mornington Peninsula, Victoria, a retreat centre run by Father Brian Gallagher, a member of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. The centre had two little Hermitages with all the facilities needed to be alone

with the Spirit. Brian was happy to have me there.

I have now completed my ninth visit to Shoreham. I attended for a month a few times, and then six weeks, and now attend for eight weeks. Unlike Vipassana, I do read and write – and paint and sew and other creative activities. I am in worship four or five times a day – though my spiritual director reminded me about stitching ministry and painting ministry and walking ministry and suggested when I shop – necessary after four weeks when I'm there for eight weeks – I 'take the silence with me'. And I do!

And I am blessed with the ability to be constantly present. Father Bede Griffith tells us:

*The Supreme is present among us and we must be aware that every moment and in every place, we are in the presence of that divine mystery.* (Shirley Du Boulay, *Beyond the Darkness: a biography of Bede Griffith*, p. 171.)

Spiritual direction is integral to this practice. We meet by face time or Zoom and after sharing my experiences, come away with homework that leads me further along the path.

Alone in silence there are two practices that have always gone with me. I go with no plans, a bare page ready for the guidance of the Spirit – a very different practice for me the consummate planner, yet not at all difficult. And I do only one thing at a time – alas except that I eat and read, though I am working on this!

I am often given to worship on a theme. To quote Mary Kay Rehard (Bringing God Home Pendle Hill Pamphlet 362):

*God meets us when we settle on a text and rest in it, grow familiar, and live*

*with it for a time. We begin to pray with a text when we refrain from analysing it, simply reflecting on it in our hearts and looking for others with whom to share and discuss its meaning for our lives* (p. 11).

For the past two or three years much of my worship holds:

*My being is a vast mystical presence* (Drew Lawson *Mystical Meadows*, p. 147)

which also comes with me to worship when I'm home.

My reading is vast and varied, though certain writers seem to join me often – Evelyn Underwood, J Brent Bill, John O'Donohue, Annie Dillard, Mary Oliver to name a few. Each visit also introduces me to new writers. This year they included Wendell Berry, Trebbe Johnson, Elise Boulding and Sue Monk Kidd.

Reading John O'Donohue's *Devine Beauty* led me to a new practice that has continued. His work encouraged me to look closely at colour – to gaze is how Trebbe Johnson describes it – and I sat on a rock at the beach and counted the many blues in the sea and the wonder of it. Now my beach walking ministry includes a time of worship on this rock, or another rock on the other beach in walking distance to me. Mary Oliver tells us:

*Nature and art are in this way twins: they are both beautiful, and dreadful, and in love with change.* (*Winter Hours*) and I would add Spirit led.

I have a special chair where I sit to worship and be quiet and look out to the bush and the sea, and since beginning this practice, at 10.00 am on Sundays, I 'attend' Canberra Meeting for Worship.

At home I attend several on-line MFW, and last year included these in

my time at Shoreham. This was such a gift! Being alone yet together in silence in worship with Friends, and this year often in a truly gathered meeting.

I come away with many gifts and clear direction. This year (a) I named at least one daily gift with in my hermitage, and brought home with me thanks and gratitude to all of you who have given to me physically, emotionally, spiritually. (b) I became aware of so much beauty, even in damaged places, and (c) the importance of time for rest:

## Time

Time is where it wants to be  
My friend, there for me  
Making no demands  
Giving gifts  
The peppermint tea and crochet time  
Stretches to Jack\*  
Neck massage and ball throwing time  
And the Spirit, a constant companion of time  
Smiles and knows  
After ball throwing it will be our time  
Alone, in the worship chair  
The Spirit surrounding me in  
Unconditional love.

17 February 2019

\* This year was slightly different as I cared for the resident kelpie Jack, while Brian was on Sabbatical.

And then home. This year it has taken me longer to settle into meetings and emails and other 'doings' and social events. At home I do have a silent day – don't try to contact me on Tuesdays. Friends, I am uncontactable. I know every year I feel closer to a more contemplative lifestyle. I question if my worship and holding, as I am led to do these days rather than physical works, is useful, and I am blessed with many friends who ensure me this is the case.

I am indeed blessed.

AF

# Global Action for Climate Change:

## *How Friends World Committee for Consultation involves us all*

VIRGINIA JEALOUS | WEST AUSTRALIA REGIONAL MEETING



### *A reflection on an Asia-West Pacific Section webinar*

In April 2019, twenty or so Friends from different time zones and countries joined Lindsey Fielder Cook (QUNO Geneva) and Susanna Mattingly (FWCC, London) in a webinar. This was exactly what it sounds like: a seminar conducted in real time via the internet. It provided an extensive overview of current issues in the climate change sphere, and offered an encouraging view of Quakers' roles within it.

First, we reminded ourselves what and who the acronyms stood for. Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) is the global network to which many Quaker meetings and churches belong. Because FWCC is a worldwide organisation, it holds recognised accreditation that allows Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) to be involved as an 'influencing agency' at the United Nations. QUNO has an office at both the UN General Assembly and UN Security Council.

Closer to home, the webinar was coordinated and hosted by Ronis Chapman, Secretary of the Asia-West Pacific Section (AWPS) of FWCC – this is the section to which Australia Yearly Meeting belongs. Its purpose was to explain FWCC's increasing focus on sustainability throughout the Quaker world and how, as a region, we might contribute. E-participants

in Aotearoa/New Zealand, Australia, India and Japan attended.

We learned about FWCC's role in global negotiations on climate change. Lindsey Fielder Cook described how QUNO staff create and use opportunities to talk with diplomats, negotiators and scientists from many nations, focussing on last December's COP24: the informal name for the '24th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)'. The conference was intended to provide an implementation strategy or 'Rulebook' for the Paris Agreement, and to strengthen the resolve of countries in reducing their greenhouse gases. The results were mixed. While there was less commitment from developed countries for greater finance and mitigation strategies, there were some new financial pledges for various climate funds. Common ways to measure emissions and assess global mitigation efforts have been developed, but there was less focus on human rights and the impact of climate change on indigenous peoples. Clearly, how you define the results of the conference depends on your perspective.

Susanna Mattingly outlined her role as the Sustainability Officer at FWCC and also focussed on the significance of the COP 24. Susanna's work aims

to amplify the voice of Quakers, in the context of our long-standing reputation for bridging the gap between personal and political action. She attended many Civil Society side-events, including an inter-faith co-ordination working group. This hopes to better align and communicate the voice and action of faith groups on climate change, and to build political will to mitigate its effects.

Susanna also works on developing a coherent message about climate change that speaks to the wide spectrum of Quaker traditions. She spoke, for example, about the benefits of coming together to develop common approaches to climate change, recognising that while Friends come from different theological positions, we face a shared concern of caring for the earth. Finding a way to articulate this together is offering a model for all Friends to find common ground.

Lindsey reinforced that awareness and the level of concern about climate change are shifting rapidly. There's increased attention to how humans live on the planet, and a growing concern of many people to leave a suitable legacy. Building a new and sustainable economic system is another emerging priority—perhaps Quakers can play a role by pushing the boundaries here. A human rights, peace and justice emphasis – i.e. the right to a healthy

environment – is another area of focus. The importance of inclusive solutions, rather than imposed solutions, is also an increasing focus.

Both Susanna and Lindsey asked us as AWPS to share our resources and stories of actions with them: Susanna Mattingly (susannam@fwcc.world ) and Lindsey Fielder Cook (lfcook@quno.ch). Our stories are valuable to them, giving them inspiration and energy to continue in their work. We heard, for example, from Lindsey that Quakers in the UK are involved with the burgeoning Extinction Rebellion (XR) (ausrebellion.earth) movement

and are widely acknowledged for their long experience of considered decision-making and non-violent protest action. It was similarly encouraging for Lindsey to hear that Quakers in Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia are involved with the gathering XR movement here.

It is also very useful for Lindsey and Susanna to be able to quote true-life examples of climate change impacts, and of actions real people are taking which demonstrate community concern. They tell us that negotiators easily lose sight of the ‘real people’ – that’s us – and that actual stories help ground them.

Do you have a story to tell?

## Resources:

There is practical, innovative information on the two organisations’ websites: <http://fwcc.world> and <https://quno.org>

A Negotiator’s Toolkit is particularly useful: <https://quno.org/resource/2018/4/negotiators-toolkit-second-edition>

It provides a short, coherent line of argument for each of the arguments that can arise in discussing climate change. Highly recommended.

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### CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

women. Using reparation funds, the Army paid Japanese women to do the laundry for the Australian nurses and perform other menial tasks at the 130 AGH. They were poor widows, grateful, working hard, and with excellent relationships with sisters, and service men. Australian women’s peace-making friendship meant providing them with food that was left over, such as porridge for breakfast and discarded newspapers which these impoverished women used to line the walls of their homes.

Some soldiers of the Australian Army also showed compassion for Japanese children. Colonel Michael Connors wrote about his encounters with homeless children. He wrote: ‘the kids of Hiroshima were always courteous, they appreciated small luxuries (which he gave them) more than in other areas, probably because they had less.’ Also, one unnamed British soldier wrote that abandoned children of Kure found it necessary to form vital survival relationships with Australian soldiers, soldiers who had become activists for peace, about food:

*I have only respect and admiration for the Australians. They always made sure that there was part of their meal left untouched to give to the kids. Men did it as naturally as breathing... Mascots in the form of animals showed more emotion (gratitude) than these*

*children... We had blokes with us who were good linguists. Every attempt to talk to these kids was left with some blank stare. The consensus was that these children were somewhat shell-shocked and terrified to the stage of muteness from the bombing and strafing that occurred at Kure and its environs.*

Sisters and nurses became aware of the carnage caused by the atomic bomb and its lethal radiation effects. Encouraged by Matron McMahan, sisters ignored the non-fraternisation rules and volunteered to visit Hiroshima where they offered friendly help and professional nursing skills to Japanese nursing sisters, working with Dr. Saski at the Red Cross hospital. In 1946, nurse Jean Waddell, a constant volunteer, was shocked by the partial destruction of the hospital and the smell of burnt human beings she experienced. L. Lacey in *An Unofficial History of the BCOF* claimed that the percentage of these women who later died of cancer in Australia was a horrendous figure.

Akihito was on the Japanese throne for only the last 30 of Japan’s 74 peaceful years. But he and peace activists helped to verify Mari Yamaguchi’s report as: ‘the first modern emperor whose reign had not seen a war’. Inspired by Christianity, the Quaker peace

testimony, love, and friendship achieved this great miracle. Authors Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett’s book, *The Spirit Level*, <sup>iii</sup> [iii] claimed that Japan in the twenty-first century became one of the most economically developed countries, which had the best longevity, with a greater capacity than other highly developed countries, for healing of social and political predicaments, such as teenage pregnancy, obesity, poverty, homicide, but with the exception of the status of women. They ranked Japan as arguably the happiest country in the world. These were the fruits of peace in the twenty-first century, following Japan’s seventy-four years without waging war.

[i] Manchester, William, 1978. *American Caesar: Douglas MacArthur 1880-1964*. Published by Little, Brown & Company (Boston/Toronto) ISBN 9780316024747

[ii] McMahan, John, 2016. *Monica’s War* Published by Boolarong Press ISBN 9781925236453

[iii] Wilkinson, Richard and Pickett, Kate, 2009. *The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better* Published by Bloomsbury Press. ISBN 1-84614-039-0

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# QSA Notes

## Refugees at home and abroad

JACKIE PERKINS | QSA ADMINISTRATOR



The finished quilt showing the botanical theme to the embroidery

Friends may recall that QSA received a bequest enabling support of refugees and asylum seekers, both here in Australia and overseas. In this edition of QSA Notes, we thought we would share some of the projects supported from the bequest.

From Tasmania Regional Meeting and Jen Newton, we have heard of their project. It provides small payments to individuals and groups, including contributing to the wages for a child carer, a young Somali woman, and for a

Waste to Wonderful Project. This group functions in a supportive and social way, and a woollen quilt has been made from blanket squares, dyed in indigo and then embroidered with a botanical theme. It has already been exhibited at the Art from Trash Exhibition. Looks great everyone!

All the women interact with the children and it is so lovely to see some of our older women stepping into Grandmotherly roles so that these children have a sense of an extended

family. The Waste to Wonderful project is a great example of a community development project that works! It brings together women from a range of Australian backgrounds and women from the new refugee-initiated communities in a project that circles around creativity, fellowship, shared meals, and the laughter of little children, sharing our lives, cultures and yummy food throughout the year as well as our camping trips and picnics. Sometimes the conversations are about

craft, but often they are about things like how to negotiate repayments on a Telstra bill. The project supports single mothers with small children who would otherwise be isolated, by opening doors to friendship with other women. The other women also benefit from the friendships, from their increased understanding and knowledge of other cultures and by their increased skills in supporting women from minority communities to negotiate their lives here. Advocacy is a role that we step into often with our women and their families, with Government providers, charitable organisations, landlords, Telstra, power, etc. and interpreting notices and letters which can appear official and threatening.

From Jo Flanagan CEO Women's Health Tasmania, which held a consultation with the women who use the services – here is some of the feedback from the women who have participated in Waste to Wonderful:

*When I came here I didn't have many friends or people that I knew in Hobart. When I came to the group they helped me. I had twins and they just turned one when I joined the group, so I had help from these women and now we're like family. We learnt a lot of sewing and craft from the ladies here. We go camping together, we go to picnics together, we eat together, we share our cultural food together, so we do a lot of stuff! It's just like my family here in Tasmania really.'*

'I found it has just broadened my horizon tremendously to understand what the refugee problems are. What these women, who were on their own, with children, went through, trying to settle in a new country and make new lives – that's broadened my horizon. They're a wonderful group of women. I love them.'

'We've done a lot of great things together and built wonderful friendships.'

Sounds fantastic, and so very supportive of people needing additional help at such a vulnerable time in their lives.

In West Australia, Henry Esbenshade has sent a report from the 'It takes a Village' project, which is being run by Save the Children. Funding was provided to support their work and it has enabled them to increase their capacity to provide one on one practical support to mothers and families on humanitarian and spousal visas; and to provide additional mentoring, guidance and professional support to bicultural staff so that they can increase their knowledge and skills in a range of settlement and well-being areas. Long term support has been given to four mothers originally from Afghanistan and one from Myanmar. Four were supported with antenatal and perinatal care, and one was supported with family issues relating to domestic violence, alcohol abuse, intergenerational conflict and school attendance. In addition, two were experiencing significant issues

relating to their mental health and wellbeing.

Permaculture training in Bangladesh with new project partner, Bangladesh Association for Sustainable Development, began at the start of the year. Two courses have been provided, and now on-going mentoring and support of the trainees will help them to develop their food gardens and work together for support to achieve greater food security. Currently food supplies for the refugees in camps is provided by UNHCR, and due to the huge numbers in the camps, it is subsistence food only. There are limited opportunities for fresh vegetables except those now being grown by the trainees. The chance to provide extra food for the family is a great motivator. More information about this particular project can be found in the latest edition of the QSA Newsletter, available from the QSA office at [administration@qsa.org.au](mailto:administration@qsa.org.au).

We are soon approaching the end of the financial year. When you consider where to give your end-of-financial-year donations, please spare a thought for making a tax deductible donation to QSA to help us continue our projects and the support of project partners in India, Cambodia, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Malaysia, Bangladesh and Australia. On behalf of the community groups we support, thank you Friends.

QSA is a member of the Australian Council for International Development and is a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct. The purpose of QSA is to express in a practical way the concern of Australian Quakers for the building of a more peaceful, equitable, just and compassionate world. To this end QSA works with communities in need to improve their quality of life with projects which are culturally sensitive, as well as being economically and environmentally appropriate and sustainable.

Find us on Facebook for more photos and stories: [facebook.com/quakerserviceaustralia](https://facebook.com/quakerserviceaustralia).

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## Can Religion Speak Truth?

**THE 2018 QUAKER LECTURE (AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND)**

Written and delivered by Elizabeth Duke. The full text of this lecture can be downloaded at <http://quaker.org.nz/quaker-lecture>.

Elizabeth has a distinguished ecumenical and Quaker heritage. She was born into an Anglican family but joined the Religious Society of Friends in 1976. She has served as the General Secretary of Friends World Committee for Consultation and her academic background is in Classics, Theology and Maori Studies; her lecture strongly reflects her studies and personal background.

*Can Religion Speak Truth?* is a carefully constructed and thought-provoking address that does not limit itself to a purely epistemic response to the question it proposes for consideration. It would have been easy for Elizabeth merely to address the question of truth as the correspondence between propositions and reality. Instead she has a much more expansive and nuanced notion of truth. 'My approach is that truth goes far beyond statements of beliefs; we live it – it is incarnate in action, in relationships and in the nature of all that is.' (p.3) Her reference here to truth as ontologically incarnate reminded me of the encounter between Jesus and Pilate: 'What is truth?' retorted Pilate' (NIV) – and although it was staring him in the face, he didn't stay around for an answer. Elizabeth does stay around for the answer. Truth, she argues is not merely what is taught by religion, it is lived. (p.8)

In dealing with her central concern, Elizabeth knows that she has to do more than address the question of truth; her focus is on truth in religion and therefore she recognises a need to explain the relationship between religion and other human concerns such as science, spirituality and even magic. For Elizabeth 'spirituality' is to do with the 'more than....', it is that which goes beyond the human condition. Spirituality is relational, it is how we stand in relation to the 'more than...'. She argues that religion is 'spirituality done together'. In defining religion in this way she is linking the concept of religion back to the word's etymology: 'religion' from the Latin *religare* meaning to bind together. She writes: 'I understand 'spirituality' as our relation to what is beyond human, more than human, other than human, and 'religion' as 'doing spirituality together'. In this sense religion involves some degree of communal practice.' (p.5)

### But what of science, and magic?

Both science and religion strive to say and assert that which is true about the Universe. Both science and religion seek to make claims that are driven by a desire for the truth, as does magic, according to Elizabeth. The line of demarcation that separates science, religion and magic, however, is humility. Science makes assertions supported by empirical evidence and tests and observations that are repeatable. It (i.e. science) stands before truth with humility, magic does not.

*Science seeks to understand the material world and to enable us to live in it through material technology; religion*

*seeks to find and to approach power beyond the material, in humility recognising that we cannot control it, and so relating to it through modes such as prayer which subordinate the human to the divine; magic, through formulae and practices, seeks power over the material and the divine. (p.14)*

If religion can speak truth, then we must ask 'which religion speaks the truth – some, all?' for there exist religions that make competing epistemological and theological claims upon their adherents – they can't all be 'true'. We also have the problem of morphing semantics over time. Does the concept of 'truth' have the same logical criteria for its application as the concept had 350 years ago? In response to the first of these questions Elizabeth argues that whilst all religions may sometimes get it wrong, all religions and philosophies 'incorporate some form of the search for truth.' (p.7) This sentiment has echoes of Voltaire's marvellous aphorism – cherish those who seek the truth, beware of those who claim to have found it. As for the shifting sands of linguistic application, Elizabeth cautions us to be ever mindful of how individual words' meanings may change over time.

In the central part of her address, Elizabeth turns to the Bible and in particular the first four chapters of Genesis to explore the matter of truth in scripture. She undertakes an exegetical examination of a number of key narratives: the story of Cain and Abel and the first recorded instance of murder; the naming of the animals by Adam; the temptation of Eve by



Satan and the 'fall' of humanity and the birth of moral consciousness; the Biblical explanation for the emergence of nomadic humans compared to city-dwelling humans, as well as a number of other stories. At the heart of this exegesis is Elizabeth's wish to demonstrate the difference between literal truth and metaphorical or figurative truth. These stories and narratives contain profoundly important and deep truths about the human condition and humanity's special relationship with God. They explore great truths about what it means to be human and what it means to be in this particular world. She writes: 'The truth in Genesis is not in the historicity of the story, but in the inner meanings it conveys... These Genesis stories are exemplars of myths, stories which call our imagination to find truths beyond the literal narrative.' (pp. 18&20) In the exposition and analysis of these foundational stories we note not only the scope of what it means for something to be true, but also the pivotal place of hermeneutics. It is not merely what the story 'says' but what we bring to the story.

In the latter part of her address Elizabeth turns to the relationship between 'truth' and 'goodness'. She notes that in the English language the word 'true' is sometimes used to mean 'good'. She gives examples: a true friend, a true love. 'Truth in religion merges into a wider concept – integrity.' (p.24) 'Integrity' is, of course, one of the Quaker testimonies and conveys powerfully notions of both truth and goodness, of 'wholeness' and 'completeness'. A bridge, or other structure whose integrity has been compromised is not a good bridge, it is not true. Elizabeth ponders also the famous Euthyphro Dilemma found

in the Platonic dialogue by the same name in which Socrates wonders: Is the pious loved by the gods because it is pious, or is it pious because it is loved by the gods? Is the 'good' good because God declares it to be good, or does God declare something to be good because of some quality it possesses that transcends God? If so, that would mean that there is something 'greater' than God – Goodness Itself – and such a claim would be to border upon blasphemy and apostasy.

In the last part of her address, Elizabeth turns to the difficulties that arise when we seek to enunciate truth through language and the application of concepts. It is arguable that all language is metaphor and therefore the relationship between the enunciation of a proposition and the truth is deeply mysterious. Elizabeth writes: 'Using human language and concepts, we are in the sphere of imagery, metaphor, myth or story. In the end we find ourselves in mystery, in that which is hidden but may make itself known to us.' (p.29). Her reference here to knowing is salient and interesting. Any epistemologist worth his or her salt will tell you that 'truth' is a necessary condition of knowledge. But in so doing we come full circle to where Elizabeth began her lecture. 'Truth' is so much more than the mere correspondence of that which is real to propositions. As intimated by Elizabeth, we move here into deeply mysterious territory. When Pilate demanded to know what Jesus meant by truth and if truth can, as Elizabeth has suggested, be 'incarnate', then there is a meaningful sense in which the truth was standing before Pilate's very eyes. And we remember here that Elizabeth has explained spirituality as that which

is 'more than...' And the 'more than' lies at the heart of what cannot be spoken. 'Of its nature, mystery points to what is beyond knowing.' (p.30) And here we enter into silence, into what cannot be spoken of.

So what is Elizabeth's answer to the question she poses – can religion speak truth? She writes:

*Religious thought, expressions, faith and practices can speak truth only if we live the truth in ethical integrity and humility. Humility subjects itself to the test of reason, and what goes beyond reason; it recognises that we know in part, while being content that 'the last, the utmost' is mystery. (p 31) [italics Duke's]*

Elizabeth Duke's lecture is profound and thoughtful. It addresses its subject with a broad brush and does not limit itself to a purely epistemic analysis of the concept of truth or knowledge. She digs deeply into the question examining the nature of truth in relation to other human concerns. It deserves more than one reading. She does a marvellous job of attending to an enormously complex question with perspicacity and intelligence. She concludes via negativa – in the end it is what cannot be said about truth, religion, spirituality and mystery. In the end we are reduced to silence. She finishes by quoting Pennington: 'And the end of words is to bring [people] to the knowledge of things beyond what words can

**PETER H BENNETT**

*Victoria Regional Meeting*



## Crime and Punishment

**THIS WAS THE 2019 QUAKER LECTURE DELIVERED BY TERRY WAITE TO THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS IN AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND.**

The full text of this lecture can be downloaded at <http://quaker.org.nz/quaker-lecture>.

When Terry Waite, who is both an Anglican and a Quaker, decides to share his thoughts on crime and punishment, one listens, humbled, reminding oneself that the wisdoms about incarceration that underline his 2019 Quaker Lecture come experientially from his *own* period of imprisonment.

In 1987, while he was an envoy for the Church of England attempting to negotiate the release of hostages in Lebanon, he was kidnapped and imprisoned in Beirut. He spent nearly five years in strict solitary confinement, in chains and sleeping on the floor. For three years he was allowed neither books, nor papers, and had no conversation with anyone at all beyond cursory words with his guards.

He has powerful opinions about the consequences of incarceration. His own imprisonment was political rather than criminal, but Waite is able to use it to shine a search light on the sociology and social psychology of crime, imprisonment, and of corrective interventions. He is not arguing to do away with prison sentences.

He agrees with Alexander Paterson, Commissioner of Prisons and Director of Convict Prisons in the UK during the 1940s, whose observation was that people are sent to prison *as* punishment, not *for* punishment. Prison should not

be a venue for the harsh, cruel treatment that sensational media reports may sometimes call for. The purpose of prison is *rehabilitation*.

Does this mean he's pressing for offenders to receive no negative consequences for their crimes? Of course not. Waite describes vividly, and disturbingly, the inevitable realities of a lived prison sentence, of its serious deprivations and stresses. He points out that the reality of prison is a serious punishment in itself.

My own convict ancestor, a scrawny, teenaged, highway robber with sentimental tattoos, seemingly had it easy: he was assigned to a farmer, learned how to farm, and eventually established the successful agricultural business my family runs today. But he also left us the lovingly treasured letter written by his sister in England, in which she grieves, and fantasises how they might, someday, meet again.

Waite cites Alexander Maconochie, secretary to Sir John Franklin, the Governor of Van Diemens Land. Maconochie wrote:

*The convict system, being fixated on punishment alone, released back into society crushed, resentful, bitter men, in whom the spark of enterprise and hope was dead.*

Maconochie lost his job because of taking this stance, but he eventually was appointed Commandant of the penal settlement.

Disturbingly, Waite cites the British National Council for Health and Care Excellence. It reports that more than 90% of prisoners in Britain suffer from at least one of the following psychiatric

disorders: psychosis, anxiety/depression, personality disorder, alcohol misuse or drug dependence. They report the statistics for the same diagnoses for the general British population as 10%–15%. This statistic alerts us to the cruelty and harm of increasing stress on people already compromised in coping with life.

Waite also points out that statistically it is the poorer members of society who wind up with sentences, the very people who are already disadvantaged in life. Speaking to New Zealanders, he points out that Maori are more represented in prison populations than Pakehas. And we Australians learn from the current TV advertisement that an aboriginal youth is much more likely to end up in gaol than in university.

In the light of the above statistics Waite expresses great concern about the sensationalism and focus on gory murders in the popular press. He considers that this approach invites an impression that viciousness is more typical of offenders than it actually is, and contributes to disgust of offenders that prevents empathy.

He finishes with examples of rehabilitation programs that actually do work.

He cites an early rehabilitation facility, Grendon Underwood, in the UK, which also was among the first to paint the facility in pleasant pastel colours rather than the accustomed, punitive brown! Grendon Underwood adopted a therapeutic community model in which the *community* of peers and staff become the healer, resulting in impressive statistics on reduction of re-offending.

I have, myself, worked in such a therapeutic community in Canada in

the 1960's and 70's. Our unit was not labelled a *penitentiary*, but a *hospital*. We had nurses and psychiatrists and psychologists and social workers, not warders. Admittedly our patients were carefully selected, but they included some of the most violent offenders in Ontario. Staff as well as patients attended Ward Meetings presided over by an elected patient Ward Clerk and Secretary. Many aspects of ward administration and conditions were discussed and voted on in these Ward Meetings, and problematic behaviours scrutinised and consequences dealt out. Staff whom the ward thought had behaved improperly were discussed and sometimes sanctioned in the same forum.

I cherish a recollection of a particular, shy, Inuit patient, who had committed a very violent offence. I asked him which intervention on our ward he thought had been the most valuable. He answered that he had been sitting on his bed talking to his room mate about the offence, and his room mate listened with concern. 'And when he listened to me, I started listening to myself, and suddenly I began to understand how I came to do what I did'.

Waite also alludes to Warren Hill, a facility in the East of England for people with life sentences, and people who are serving sentences of Imprisonment For Public Protection. These are people who will not be released. He describes it's welcoming attitude for new prisoners: 'From the moment you get off the bus they shake your hand and give you a cup of tea. Everyone lives and works side by side'.

Terry Waite closes with the following

quote from Elizabeth Fry, that great Quaker prison reformer:

*When thee builds a prison, thee had better build with the thought ever in your mind that thee and thy children may occupy the cells'.*

This review touches on only on a sample of Terry Waite's wisdoms in the 2019 Lecture. I strongly recommend acquiring a copy of this 2019 Quaker Lecture for your Local Meeting Library.

**ACEY TEASDALE**

*NSW Regional Meeting*

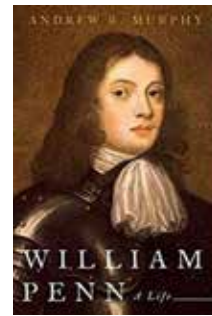
## William Penn: A Life

**BY ANDREW MURPHY**

Published by Oxford University Press (2018). ISBN 9780190234249

Marking 300 years from the death of William Penn is a new biography about his life. *William Penn: A Life* by Andrew Murphy takes a fresh approach to explore the extraordinary life of the second generation Quaker, William Penn. Seeing a void in the biographical space, Andrew Murphy sets out to tell the story of William Penn from all aspects of his life. This he accomplishes well showing the complexity and contradictions of the 17th Century social reformer and founder of Pennsylvania.

Of all the early Quaker pioneers William Penn is remembered most fondly in retrospect, though this was not universal at the times in which he lived. As a gentry convert to Quakerism, William Penn occupies an



in-between space opening royal doors of consideration for the derided Quaker dissenters. Coming to prominence as an advocate for religious tolerance, his Holy Experiment led Penn down a path close to bankruptcy as setting up a new colony took its financial toll. More of a visionary and less of a practical administrator, his second wife Hannah Callowhill Penn took the reins steering Pennsylvania for nearly 14 years going into the 18th century during Penn's later years as he suffered a series of strokes.

A great amount of mythology remains in the legacy of Penn. This has left many people wondering where the truth lies. Murphy skilfully unpacks each myth by going back to the original source documents. Several new pieces of information have emerged since the previous biographies and these shed new light on the motivations of Penn at key points in his life. A worthwhile scholarly read, *William Penn: A Life* is accessible for a range of readers interested in knowing more about the progressions throughout William Penn's life. Highly recommended for a read on a cold winter's night.

**GARRY DUNCAN**

*NSW Regional Meeting*



David: who is this – Andrew Penn or Garry Duncan?

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# The Australian Friend

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