

# The Australian Friend

ISSUE 0618 JUNE 2018 ISSN 1326-0936

*The Australian Friend* is a web journal published on line at: [AustralianFriend.org](http://AustralianFriend.org). This printable version does not include the full range of content available at [AustralianFriend.org](http://AustralianFriend.org)

Visit [AustralianFriend.org](http://AustralianFriend.org) to:

- Comment and read comments about articles in this issue
- Browse or search back issues from 2011.

## Women's business



# Editorial

**I**n this issue we look at what Australian Quakers are doing in the world and at home. At one level their field of activity is small-scale. They are teaching permaculture in Iraq, teaching sign language to children in Tajikistan, and through QSA they are supporting food security in Uganda. They have supported Aboriginal causes and non-violent training in Australia. But if knowledge is spread with love, there is no knowing how far it will go.

Just to remind ourselves that not only Quakers are doing the will of God in the world. We have the story of how a combination of Dutch and Japanese diplomats saved thousands of Jews trapped in Lithuania, often acting against the wishes of their superiors. The Japanese diplomat Chiune Sugihara is reported to have said, 'I may have disobeyed my government, but if I didn't I would be disobeying God.'

Modern Quakers are not the first to travel! Through the work of the Australian Quaker Tapestry group we learn more about Sydney Parkinson, the first Quaker to touch shore in Australia.

Australian Quakers do not just go abroad to teach, but also to learn. We look forward to the Backhouse Lecture which will be given this year by the Korean Quaker Cho-Nyon Kim.

Our next issue will report on the issues that arise from the Yearly Meeting, to be held at Avondale, NSW in July.

**THE AUSTRALIAN FRIEND EDITORIAL TEAM**

# Contents

---

## FEATURES

- 4** Teaching permaculture
- 6** Know thy Friends –  
Barrie & Diana Pittock
- 9** The 2018 Backhouse Lecture
- 10** Beginning the Sydney  
Parkinson Panel
- 12** Deaf children in Tajikistan
- 14** When love and compassion  
overcome fear and hatred
- 19** Spices of life – booklet

## REGULARS

- 16** QSA Notes
- 18** Book review –  
*Enlightenment Now:  
The Case For Reason, Science,  
Humanism And Progress*  
By Steven Pinker
- 18** Book review –  
*Errors of Eden*  
By Helen Gael
- 23** Noted



Cover photo: Women's business

# Teaching permaculture

*to long term refugees and those returning home*

ROWE MORROW | NEW SOUTH WALES REGIONAL MEETING



In a refugee camp in Iraq, people are preparing to return to their home city of Mosul which they fled when it was heavily bombed last year. With them, after a Permaculture Design Course (PDC) they will be taking new skills in permaculture. When they look at grey water running through streets, or need a way to protect themselves against the harsh summer sun, the permaculture lessons they have learnt will provide some answers to these problems.

## Transforming a refugee camp

At the beginning of their permaculture journey, as their teacher I ask them to start by working on designs for their homes in the camp. These camps have broad, dusty bare roads along which people live in tents or small cement buildings enclosed by high walls. The challenge is to make their surroundings softer, greener, and cooler, and provide some fresh food to supplement the World Food Project rations. Summer temperatures can go to 50°C and winter, drop to -15°C. Winds are savage. The residents usually live with enforced inactivity.

*Learning is a positive and critical opportunity often neglected in camps.*

## The refugee's 'home' is the priority for design and activity

The students are set tasks. They must think about

- where to create shade
- how to block the savage, dusty winds
- how to collect water and how to reuse grey water

- what food they can grow in small spaces.

With limited and boring food rations, a path towards better nutrition is a good place to start. The students begin with simple crops like tomatoes, parsley, and beans, with a pumpkin or two to cover the roofs in summer. Soon, vegetables like aubergines and courgettes are added to the mix. These crops grow fast, produce prolifically, and assist in creating much needed shade and nutrition. Then they add fruits such as grapes.

## Moving outwards to the street and the whole camp – with initiative

With inspiration the learners turn towards greening the streets outside their homes.

Here, people started with technical knowledge. First they deal with the problematic greywater which runs down the gutters and treat it to water new fruit trees which also give shade in summer when the temperature rockets.

We all walk around the camp looking at the slimy, black water in which children are playing. By using nature's techniques, this water will be cleaned. A delicate mix of plants, oxygen, and sunshine can sterilise water – a welcome skill in a place with little fresh water and stifling heat.

The students identify the wind direction, and where they need windbreaks. They learn about the types of trees, how to plant them, and what benefits they can bring, such as shade, timber, fruits, flowers, bee fodder and a multitude of other uses.

As the course continues students

develop their own initiatives. Turning to water collection, they calculate how much rainwater they can collect from the roofs of sheds, storerooms, and the mosque and identify where it can be distributed to community gardens during the dry season. They plan community gardens and small economic land-based incomes.

These were actions taken from a theoretical class. They captured the vision to transform camp. The students also took the seeds we gave them, and gave them to others who hadn't attended the class, and told them how to plant it. We didn't ask them to do that.

This year, some of the first new permaculturists will talk to Internally Displaced People (IDPs) from Mosul who have been in camps for months and who, before returning to Mosul, will have a permaculture course. Before these Iraqis return home to their blitzed villages they will meet and talk with students about the experience of learning permaculture, and what they can expect to learn.

This is a World Vision, Kurdistan, initiative. It is the beginning of a project which is the ultimate goal of Permaculture For Refugees (P4R) and will become refugee-to-refugee taught and refugee managed.

## Teaching permaculture

A Kurdistan refugee camp is where this work, initiated by World Vision International, took Paula Paananen and me in 2017. I made a pledge to myself early on in my career, that I would take permaculture to places that aren't easily accessed by permaculture teachers or



The plan

knowledge. As in the past, that could be anywhere from Vietnam to rural Ethiopia.

From a small base in the Blue Mountains Permaculture Institute (BMPI) in Katoomba and active permaculturists from Philippines, Spain, Greece, Italy and a support group working in camps and new settlements P4R by Skype. We work with displaced people across the world, and I have strong feelings about how Australia is treating asylum seekers and describe the practice of sending people to Pacific islands instead of mainland Australia as humiliating, shameful and unconscionable.

I've seen what causes mass migration of people, seen the needless suffering, and so I have a profound, deep repugnance and loathing for war and violence. After seeing the conditions refugees often live in, and after working in Southern Europe during the economic crisis, my thoughts crystallised: 'There is a better way, and it is permaculture.'

We needed to transform refugee camps from places of profound suffering and injustice into eco-villages. And this

is possible and makes perfect sense without wasting any human potential while restoring ecosystems.

The first impact of the work in refugee camps is to improve people's immediate living conditions. Camps can be regreened, refugees skilled up, and wellbeing improved. Permaculture gives people something to think about and skills they can all do, and they feel like people again with skills, purpose, hope and a future.

### Challenges to assumptions

Getting to the point where the students can design the camp for themselves is challenging. Often courses must to be translated into multiple languages and there are cultural differences to overcome, and many students are confronted when offered new ways of learner-centred learning; many of them are not used to actively participating in class. There are innumerable challenges.

When I talk about forests, perennial systems, rehydrating landscapes and sustainability, I hit another stumbling block because some students have never seen a forest. Long wars destroy forests

e.g. in Kurdistan and Afghanistan. For me, reforestation as quickly as possible is vital. Once the trees come back, so will water.

### The future: ambitious goals

I want refugees to take over the teaching, and for them to go into other camps to share their knowledge. For this to happen, there needs to be more support and facilitation from NGOs and camp managers. And beyond facilitation, they need to 'want' the refugees to succeed in permaculture and to transform the camps and settlements.

Everything happens faster when refugees teach each other. We constantly keep our focus on refugees and their abilities and potential. But we need to train more trainers.

I have recently had a breakthrough, and it came from Kabul. I was able to fund the Afghan Peace Volunteers from small personal donations and LUSH, to translate some key texts from the permaculture design course into Dari, a language of Afghanistan. The translations that the Afghan Peace

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Making compost



The model

Volunteers provide will be taken into a refugee camp in Greece. I am keen for translation work to continue, and for the refugees to be the translators.

In 2018, I ran a second Permaculture Design Course in Kabul organised by the Afghan Peace Volunteers. This was against a backdrop of 40 years of war resulting in millions of internally displaced people. There were tanks in the street, terrorist bombing down the road, and I was told by local people that in one village the bombing was so intense that the people had no land left to bury their dead.

### Permaculture for the future

I am very clear about one thing – this is much more than just a gardening project, it is a holistic sustainability project. The work goes far beyond greening refugee camps.

The nature of a refugee camp is that

its inhabitants are likely to leave one day. When that happens, permaculture students will leave behind a healthy piece of land, well stocked with fruit trees, grapes, olives, and shade trees. This will be of huge benefit to the local communities which BMPI and P4R also want to integrate into the permaculture learning and applications. Once a permaculture camp has started, the gates need to open and villagers, farmers, and other locals also need to be able to learn permaculture and work with the refugees. This is a long way from becoming a reality.

The final element to our work involves the future of the IDPs, and what happens when they return home. Permaculture can provide relevant solutions; ways to bring life back into war-torn cities, and better ways of rebuilding better than originally.

As yet, I don't know anyone who

has gone back to their home with permaculture skills, but we are full of hope for the initiative. We may soon have answers after some of our students from a camp in Iraq return to Mosul.

What is so exciting about this work, is that it not only creates a better environment in the short term, it is also provides long term solutions. There are undoubtedly some wounds that can't be healed. But if our vision is realised, permaculture could offer some startling opportunities for people returning to cities ravaged by war. It can give people the skills to take control of their surroundings, and show them how to harness the processes and beauty of the natural world in order to create a more sustainable future.

*Based on an article supplied for LUSH journal in UK.*

AF



# Know thy Friend

*Barrie and Diana Pittock*

## Barrie Pittock

I came in touch with Quakers when called up for National Service Training in 1956. I was brought up attending a Presbyterian Sunday school, but came into conflict with the minister over the fact that Jesus said to 'love your enemies', yet Scots Church in Melbourne had military banners hung across it.

In 1956 the Methodist preacher Alan Walker was running a *Mission to the Nation* with a strong emphasis on peace and justice. At one of those gatherings I came across a bookstall run by Jim Newell (a Quaker attendee at that time) for the *Fellowship of Reconciliation*, and bought a book by British Quaker Kathleen Lonsdale *Quakers Visit Russia*, and later her book *Is Peace Possible?* (Penguin Special, 1961). This, and my objection to compulsory military training in 1956, during the Suez crisis, brought me to Friends. I joined Quakers in 1959 and later became Clerk of the Melbourne Regional Meeting. My family's life centred around the Melbourne Meeting for many years.

I studied physics at University of Melbourne, with a PhD on atmospheric ozone in 1963, and was active as a student in the 1950s and early 1960s in the Aboriginal Scholarship scheme, ABSCHOL. This led me and a fellow student, Philip Boas, in 1956 to hitch-hike around NSW and Queensland to see why we had no applications for scholarships. It was

obvious – they were living in poverty in shanty settlements on the outskirts of country towns.

I was also involved in my student days in the Victorian Association for Immigration Reform, with such stimulating people as James Gobbo (later a Governor of Victoria), Ken Rivett and Jamie Mackie, who wrote the booklet *Control or Colour Bar* in 1960.

I did a post-doctoral year at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) in Boulder, Colorado, in 1963-64 working on ozone in the atmosphere. This place was chosen partly to meet D'Arcy McNickle, a Flathead Indian, author and academic, who enabled me to learn more about the rights of the Native Americans all over the USA. On conclusion of my stay at NCAR I drove around the United States visiting American Indian communities, which had local self-government and land rights and their own police forces and tourist industries. I also stopped off in New Zealand to see the state of Maori-Pakeha relations in 1964, and there I met in passing Whetu Tirikatene, the daughter of a Maori member of parliament.

In 1965 I was recruited to CSIRO, researching first on ozone as a tracer of atmospheric transport, and then as a climatologist, retiring in 1999. My work on climate has included research on ozone, potential pollution of the upper atmosphere by supersonic aircraft, the environmental consequences of

nuclear war and climate change. In the 1990s I led the Climate Impact Group in CSIRO, until my retirement. I contributed to, or was a lead author of the 1990, 1995, 2001 and 2007 reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and published more than 200 other reports and papers as well as three books on the topic.

Although Friends traditionally don't always accept awards, I have done so to reflect, in part, on the work done together with my colleagues. I was awarded a Public Service Medal in 1999 and my group won the Sherman Eureka Prize for Environmental Research in 2003. When the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Al Gore and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in 2007, I had about a one-thousandth share in that prize as a Lead Author.

On my return from the USA in 1965 I was invited to speak at the annual conference of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI), and it was there that I met Diana James, a young Presbyterian who was at that time in the company of Whetu Tirikatene, who was then studying at ANU in Canberra.

Later in Melbourne I caught up with Diana at a Victorian Christian Youth Council meeting where she was a Presbyterian representative and me a Quaker. We got married a few months later.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



Back in Australia I maintained my interest in Aboriginal affairs and was invited on to the executive of FCAATSI as convenor of their legislative reform committee. This committee's task was campaigning for the Indigenous Referendum in 1967. In 1969-70 I was a supporter of the constitutional change for Indigenous control of FCAATSI. This was defeated at the 1970 annual conference in Canberra, when, after the rallying by Kath Walker and Doug Nicholls, the National Tribal Council (NTC) was formed. I was the only non-indigenous member elected to the NTC executive, in a non-voting capacity. Its demise came in 1972, largely due to not being funded.

Friends invited me to give the 1969 James Backhouse Lecture which I entitled *Toward Multi-Racial Society*. This sold some 8,000 copies in three editions. It must have been timely. Rather than quote from it, however, I will quote on the lighter side, an associated limerick which I wrote:

*James Backhouse came on a Cook's  
tour,  
To see what convicts endure.  
The Aborigines too,  
Came under review,  
For right, not might, to secure.*

I have more recently been working advocating large-scale renewable energy development in remote regions of Australia in part to provide employment and income for Aboriginal communities suffering from lack of employment and associated social problems. I am also advocating all-electric vehicles using renewable

energy and storage, including express electric buses on main roads to ease traffic congestion. The researches in using renewable ammonia as a fuel and as a means of transporting energy are exciting developments. These are newly being implemented.

Diana and I have three sons, Jamie Pittock at the Fenner School ANU; Mathew Pittock, an automation engineer; and Chris Pittock, a plant geneticist. My beloved partner, Diana, has been an artist in metal and fabrics, and a community development facilitator and a mediator.

My memory is not what it used to be, but it is good to look back and realise that I have been supported by Friends for almost 60 years.

### Diana Pittock

My contact with Quakers began when I met Barrie at Easter 1965 at the FCAATSI annual conference (Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders) in Canberra. He had just returned from 2 years in USA doing climate research and looking into land rights of the south west Native Americans to compare with the Aboriginal situation here.

I attended FCAATSI from the Presbyterian youth group (PFA) to see whether to affiliate with FCAATSI. Barrie and I met briefly there. However, in Melbourne we then found we were both on the Victorian Council of Churches Youth committee – he from Quakers and I from PFA. By that

time, I was rather disillusioned with the church and my belief in what I understood to be my path, which I believed was to work with Indonesian friends in youth work in Indonesia. My health prevented that.

A belief that there is a spirit within people, that it was important to treat well, had become important to me. Barrie spoke of 'that of God in people' which made sense to me. We were married in September that year and a full family life started with the births of Jamie, Mathew and Chris. Our life was centred to a large extent in the Local Quaker Meeting in Toorak.

Infant teaching was my first profession for 6 years in the state education system, but I stopped when the boys were born. I was active in local community activities, assisting in establishing a 'neighbourhood house' and in peace and women's organisations. My interest was in effectiveness of community groups. This I developed further when we lived in USA in 1978/79. I trained in nonviolent social change with Movement for a New Society, a Quaker-based social change group. I wanted to know particularly about dealing with conflict in groups and communities.

On returning to Melbourne at the end of 1979, I joined with three others to form the Nonviolent Training Collective to train nonviolent protesters to stop the Franklin Dam in Tasmania being built. The training group had expanded with trainers going to different states and people

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

# The 2018 Backhouse Lecture

The 2018 Backhouse Lecture will be given by Cho-Nyon Kim, a Quaker from the Daejon Quaker Meeting in South Korea. He is a professor of Sociology. He edits a magazine on Ham Sok Hon, the prominent Korean Friend known internationally for his peace and justice witness.

Cho-Nyon Kim is deeply committed to peace and care for the environment. His special interest is the encounter between Quaker mysticism and Taoism. He attended the World Gathering of

Friends in Peru in January 2016, and the Australia Yearly Meeting gathering of Friends in July 2016. He is a facilitator for the Alternatives to Violence Project in Korea. He will give the public lecture at the German Quaker Yearly Meeting in 2018.

This Lecture explores the author's spiritual journey in the Korean religious environment, in which Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism and Christianity have all influenced cultural practice and been integrated into daily life.

Cho-Nyon Kim is inspired by the

life and thoughts of Ham Sok Hon, a prominent Korean peace activist and Quaker. He asks how we can live a simple life in a complex world. He wants to focus on how we can create a peaceful society in the face of nationalism and self-centredness.

Quakerism has similarities to Taoism in its mysticism and its sense of waiting in a meditative way. Cho-Nyon Kim concludes that he must 'lead my life in the manner of those who always seek truth with an open mind'

AF

## KNOW THY FRIEND – CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

coming to us for training. The training spread throughout the country and the dam was stopped by the Federal Government in March 1983. Forest campaigns, Palm Sunday Rallies, Iraq War protests, Women's anti-ANZAC actions, etc. were issues for which we trained people.

At the same time, I was assisting community organisations in their planning: aims and goals, strategy planning, working together as colleagues, consensus decision-making, listening, negotiating, conflict resolution, etc. Peace groups, women's organisations, forest action and other environmental groups were keen to use such training.

In about 1986 the Victorian Government established the first four Neighbourhood Mediation Centres to deal with issues of fences, dogs barking, trees, etc. I was asked to train some of the mediators for that program. This training continued for some years, and as well, I was asked to run two fascinating programs. At Melbourne University's

International Conflict Resolution Centre Di Bretherton asked me to conduct a 40-hour mediation program for professionals. They brought their skills, experience and understandings. In what situations could they be 'objective' mediators especially if they already had a relationship with a client with a dispute? Stimulating discussions!

At Victoria University, I was asked by Michael Hamel Green to facilitate an elective in conflict resolution in groups and communities with adult students from Asia, the Pacific and Africa. This had an underlying theme of cultural difference. It was wonderful, sharing what is often taught here for their consideration, and would any of it be useful in their situations? We learned from each other.

Since retirement my involvement has been with Indigenous issues a little, and reading new Aboriginal and related books by Alexis Wright, Bain Attwood, Richard Broome, Sue Taffe, etc. I was on an Indigenous Advisory Committee to the local council. Helping with the

grandchildren, keeping Barrie and me as well as possible with him now 80 and me catching up keeps me busy. Being a Grandmother Against the Detention of Asylum Seeker Children and lobbying politicians adds to my involvement.

In the early 1980s I went back to my metal work and enamelling work, having started it as a hobby in the 70s, then studied in an advanced course in USA. I continued with the course in Melbourne and in fine arts. Art is a big part of my life – appreciating it, and now working with textiles.

The importance of meditation is evermore present and grounding. Being an Elder in Victoria Regional Meeting and attending Melbourne City Recognised Meeting is a focus of our lives; a rich spiritual life – as well as the tasks that accompany it. Having a monthly worship sharing group at our home is helpful, and I try to think on the Advice: 'Let your worship and your daily life enrich each other'.

AF



# Beginning the Sydney Parkinson Panel

CATHY DAVIES | NEW SOUTH WALES REGIONAL MEETING

About a year or so after Garry Duncan and I were asked if we would help set up the Australian Quaker Tapestry Project I asked Garry how many panels he thought we should create. I was thinking perhaps ten or so, but Garry's answer was much more positive – 'Forty' he declared. Heavens above! Forty, and we hadn't even given thought to a single one! And what would they, could they be about?

Where to start? I realised that the range of subject matter was huge. Many of the English tapestry panels were based on the Testimonies, and this really appealed to me. However it quickly became apparent that each Australian Regional Meeting group was keen to tell stories that were only known to their individual Regional Meeting. Indeed not many of the stories to be told in future panels were known in other Regional Meetings, nor were stories from previous centuries. It was so easy to leave something of importance untold.

So instead I decided to start at the very beginning of Australian Quaker history, when I realised that one of the first Europeans to come to Australia, Sydney Parkinson, was a Quaker on the Cook/Banks adventure. I had collected a number of books about the *Endeavour* voyage after realising that Cook had been brought up in a part of Yorkshire

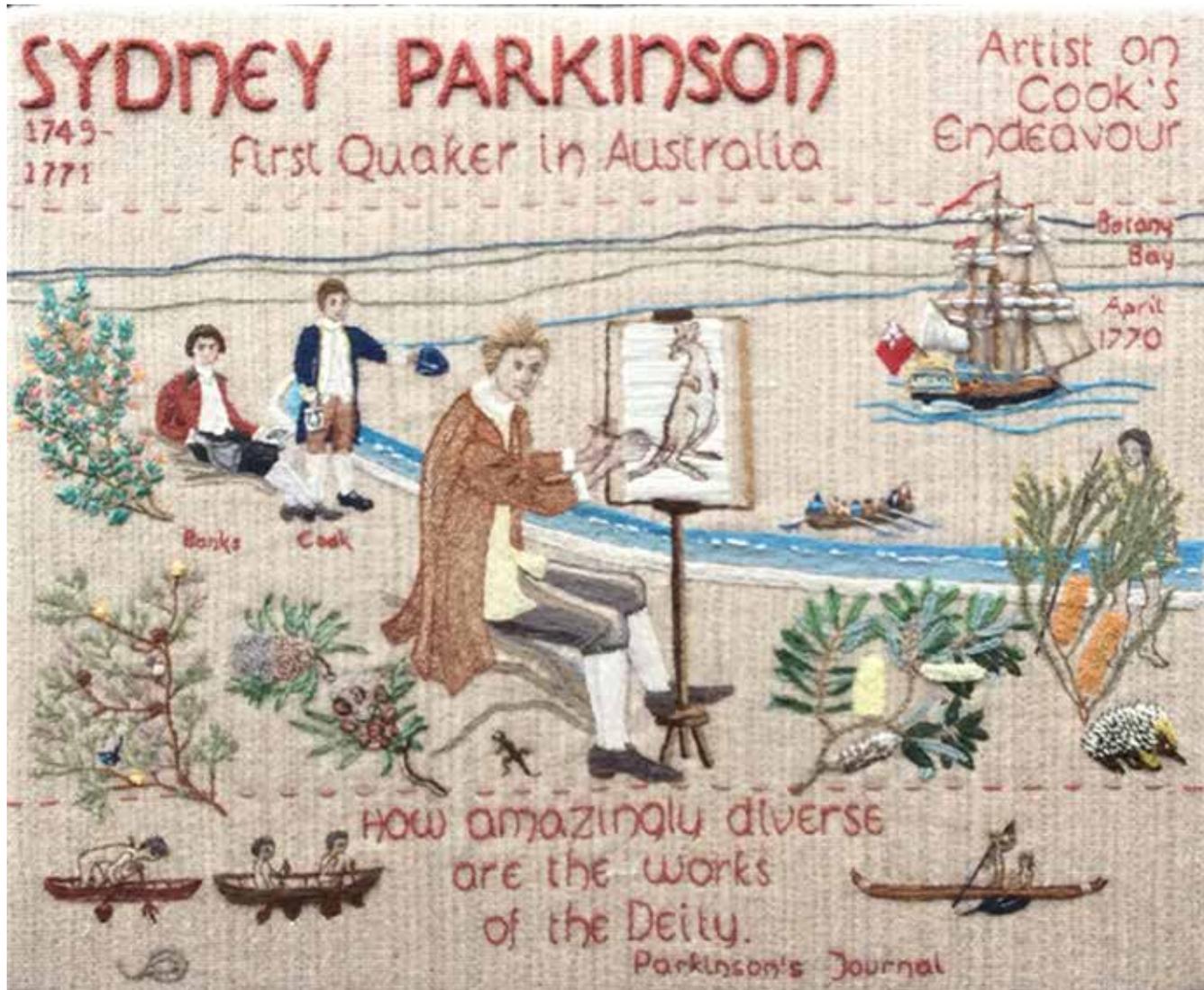
where my father was born. Cook was apprenticed to two Quaker brothers who owned ships based in Whitby and travelled up and down the east coast of Britain. He was very influenced by them, treating those around him in a manner different from most captains at that time. I became even more curious when I found Sydney Parkinson was mentored by a York Quaker nurseryman, John Fothergill. My father was a nurseryman in York so it felt very serendipitous.

So I had my subject, but how to depict him? I spent a very long time on the internet looking at masses of photos of things to do with the *Endeavour* voyage, the Transit of Venus, a number of the diaries written by those on board, as many paintings by Sydney Parkinson as I could find, the way plants were recorded at that time and how that changed to how they are recorded now. In the next few years I travelled to many of the places where Cook and Banks and Banks's gentlemen travelled including Botany Bay NSW, and Cooktown in Queensland, Murderers Bay and Young Nicks Head in Poverty Bay New Zealand and Whitby in England. In a small way I became a very minor authority on Cook, the *Endeavour* and by default on Sydney Parkinson. The father of the manager of the English Quaker Tapestry was a very well-known authority on Cook and

part of the Captain Cook Society based in Whitby, England and was happy to answer questions about him. Also at this time the *Endeavour* replica was based in Darling Harbour, Sydney so it was (and still is) possible to go aboard.

I felt completely overwhelmed by all involved at the beginning as I was very much on my own. But slowly a group of dear Friends gathered around to support me, including a group from my Meeting, Wahroonga. I also had three close Friends in Sydney who met with me once a month, and were stalwarts in their support. A year or two later Tessa Spratt suggested she work permanently with me which was an excellent suggestion as this expanded our reach beyond New South Wales. We spent the next few years visiting many other Regional Meetings, introducing them to the embroidery concept. ... But that is another story!

When I decided to embroider the *Endeavour* in Botany Bay I realised it would have been tossed around with the tide and the winds so I rang the current Captain of the *Endeavour* to ask him what set of sails would have been used to hold the ship steady. He told me, then said, 'I wouldn't worry. No matter what you show no one would be any the wiser.' Little did he know Quakers. I overheard two Quaker boaties talking about the sails' settings, saying, 'That is exactly the setting I



The plants are exact copies of paintings done by Sydney Parkinson.

From the left:

5. *Epacris longiflora*. Native fuchsia.

6. *Isopogon anemonifolius*. Drumsticks Botany Bay.

7. *Banksia serrata*

8. *Banksia integrifolia*

9. *Banksia ericifolia*.

would use.' We learnt early that we had to be very accurate.

We of course had never embroidered anything similar to the panels before, and every step was a new venture and experiment. We had been fortunate in having the manager of the English Quaker Tapestry, Bridget Guest, come to Sydney for a few days and give us a demonstration on how to embroider and had left a video on how to create a panel. We carefully followed each step, but Sydney Parkinson was then the first and only panel created and a second panel was not stitched for several more years.

To start with, a drawing is created showing everything that is intended to be embroidered on to the panel. This was first drawn on thin but firm paper and then traced back-to-front on to heavy duty white card the same size as the panel-to-be. Then this was transferred on to calico which was carefully attached to the woollen material. Only at this point could we begin the embroidery.

One of the first things we had decided was that we would keep all the panels the same size, with the same size lettering in the same colour. This, we knew, was the key to the uniformity

and cohesiveness of the whole viewing experience. One of the people who helped me so much in Sydney the first year spent many months searching for the material we were to embroider on to. I felt strongly that we needed Australian wool, not something from another country. We eventually found in Fremantle some coloured merino with an excellent staple – another learning curve, the requirements needed for weaving wool. Australia Yearly Meeting was prepared to fund us the cost of both purchasing the wool and for having it woven. We were introduced to a brilliant

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

# Deaf children in Tajikistan

DAVID AND KIRSTEN O'HALLORAN | TASMANIA REGIONAL MEETING

---

One of my favourite passages in the 'Red Book' is the following reflection from Deborah Haines (1978):

*I think I have wasted a great deal of my life waiting to be called to some great mission which would change the world. I have looked for important social movements. I have wanted to make a big and important contribution to the causes I believe in. I think I have been too ready to reject the genuine leadings I have been given as being matters of little consequence. It has taken me a long time to learn that obedience means doing what we are called to do even if it seems pointless or unimportant or even silly. The great social movements of our time may well be part of our calling. The ideals of peace and justice and equality which are part of our religious tradition are often the focus of debate. But we cannot simply immerse ourselves in these activities. We need to develop our own unique social witness, in obedience to God. We need to listen to the gentle whispers which will tell us how we can bring our lives into greater harmony with heaven.*

People are sometime curious about why a couple of Tasmanians dedicate so much of their time and money to a project in a country that few people have ever heard of, let alone know anything about, but the passage above can sometimes go part of the way to explaining it.

For the last 12 years Kirsten and I have been going to Tajikistan in Central Asia, initially observing and consulting with a local NGO that aims to raise the status of deaf sign language in Tajikistan, introduce bilingual education for deaf children

(i.e. learning written Tajik through sign language), and advocate for the Deaf. Over the years, we have taken on more responsibility and now are the primary fundraisers and supporters. It started with a small group and now we employ 11 staff in country with an annual budget of approximately \$USD30,000.

It came about through a chance encounter. Tajikistan was never on our bucket list of places – 'we don't do 'stans' was our initial response. However, the 'gentle whispers' kept on telling us that we could do something and that in fact we must.

In Tajikistan, two thirds of the population live on less than \$2.15 per day. Up to 90% of the male population has migrated outside of Tajikistan to find work. Tajikistan has a high incidence of profound hearing loss. There is little or no access to hearing aids and less than half of all deaf children access education. Our focus is to provide an early intervention program to teach pre-schoolers and their families to use sign language. This is done by employing deaf tutors going into homes, which also provides an employment opportunity



Kirsten (standing 3<sup>rd</sup> from left) and David (standing 4<sup>th</sup> from right) with tutors in Tajikistan

for deaf people. Each of our tutors has a caseload of three families at a time with a goal of teaching 170 key signs before they graduate from the program. At graduation, families have enough language skills to mix with deaf people, and deaf children are ready to start formal schooling, which uses sign language. Children who have no language to communicate with, don't develop age appropriate thinking or social skills and often display challenging behaviour. Some of the children on entry into our program cannot sit still, even though they are

5 or 6 years old. Our tutors really struggle to engage the children in the lessons. Sometimes it can take months of showing signs before a child begins to respond—just as it takes months or longer for a hearing child to begin attempts at using language. However, once these children grasp that signs have meanings, and that meanings are powerful for getting what they want—off they go! The transformation is at times nothing short of miraculous. They begin to interact, and they smile.

We have nine tutors working with 27 preschool-aged children and

their families in four municipalities. Although our project is small, we believe that it is significant—we are the only organisation in the country tackling the issue of communication difficulties in the home. Our children are all demonstrating great improvement as they and their parents work with our home visiting tutors each week.

If you would like to know more about the project, please contact us by email ([david.oh.ot@bigpond.com](mailto:david.oh.ot@bigpond.com)) or Facebook 'Deaf Children of Central Asia'.

AF



# When love and compassion

*overcome fear and hatred*

JAN DE VOOGD | NEW SOUTH WALES REGIONAL MEETING

I have a beautiful watercolour of flowers painted and given to me by a friend for my birthday. The big bunch of flowers is an extravagant and exuberant expression of love. There are many ways that we express love. It can be through music, poetry, the way we look at friends, how we listen, the tone of voice we use and how we show appreciation of what they do and say.

Compassion, our sympathetic concern for others in pain, need or sorrow, is also a very important human emotion. We know the ability to express love and compassion is an important blessing. When we feel flooded with love and blessings we are able to be more loving and compassionate. Then we feel doubly blessed. I am sure this can happen to everyone and it can happen for you! However, be aware of contrary emotions such as of fear, anger, jealousy and desire as they can take you over!

This story is about the love and compassion that civil servants (Consuls) in foreign lands had for Jews fleeing the Nazis from Poland and Lithuania in 1940 and how they devised a strategy whereby about 4,000 escaped the clutches of the Nazis.

There are many people who made their escape possible and I will start by introducing you to those who are part

of the story as it is told by the Dutch Jew Nathan Gutwirth. He and his friend Chaim Nussbaum were the first to receive transit visas for Curacao in the Dutch West Indies in 1940.

## **Nathan Gutwirth**

Nathan Gutwirth was a Dutch diamond dealer from Antwerp who was studying in Tels, Lithuania at the famous Talmudic academy. He needed to leave Lithuania with his friend to escape the Nazis and he asked for and was granted a transit visa to Curacao by Jan Zwartendijk, the new Dutch Honorary Consul in Kaunas which was then the capital of Lithuania. This whole story is told by Nathan Gutwirth and was printed in the Dutch journal Elsevier of 20 July 1996.

## **Jan Zwartendijk**

Jan Zwartendijk who had been a radio operator and was working for Philips as the director of their radio factory in Lithuania. He had just been appointed the Dutch honorary consul in Kaunas which was then the capital of Lithuania. He contacted de Decker, the Netherlands ambassador for the Baltic States by phone to ask permission to grant Nathan Gutwirth a transit visa to Curacao.

## **De Decker**

De Decker was the Netherlands ambassador to the Baltic states. His decision to grant a transit visa to Curacao for Nathan Gutwirth was central to the success of the Curacao transit visas. He granted the transit visa without seeking the approval of the Governor of the Dutch West Indies which was required by the regulations.

De Decker's approval was given *stilletjes*, or roughly translated 'quietly and secretly' so the Governor of the Dutch West Indies would not know the visa had been given in his name and also so that no one would know that those visas were not legal. The reason de Decker decided to grant Nathan Gutwirth a transit visa to Dutch Curacao was that he knew such visas were rarely approved and that the situation was critical.

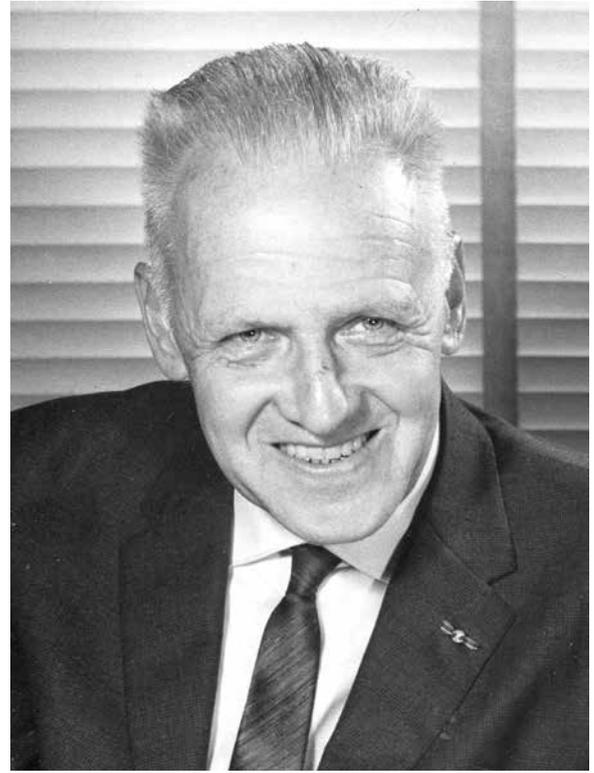
## **Chiune Sugihara**

Chiune Sugihara was known as Sempo Sugihara by the refugees as that was easier for the Jewish refugees to pronounce.

The Curacao visa was not enough. There was no other escape route except than through Russia, and the Soviets were only prepared to allow Jews to travel to Vladivostok if they could show they were allowed to enter Japan.



Chiune Sugihara



Nicolaas (Niek) de Voogd

Nathan Gutwirth then went to the consulate of Japan (an ally of Germany) where he met Sempo Sugihara. Sempo Sugihara had just been told the evening before that under no circumstances could he give out visas for travel to Japan.

This put Sugihara on the spot because he found those instructions to be immoral. These people were not enemies nor were they soldiers. They were desperate, innocent asylum seekers. There was a loyalty that Sugihara considered more important than his loyalty to his minister, which was that his dealings should be made with the wishes of his emperor in mind, who certainly would want those desperate beings to be treated humanely. So Sugihara ignored the instructions.

(Google Chiune Sugihara for lots more information.) Nathan Gutwirth got his visa to enter Japan.

### Nicolaas de Voogd

Nicolaas (Niek) de Voogd was my father and was the Dutch consul in Kobe, Japan, which had a large Jewish community. He was inclusive and

generous in Spirit, which was a blessing his brother and sister (my aunt and uncle) shared. He taught me to look at things from the point of view of those on 'the other side'.

As a diplomat he felt it was his role not only to represent the Netherlands but also the country where he had been placed. He never talked about his role in helping Jews escape the Nazis but did admit to helping to save 2000 Jews while Nathan Gutwirth claimed it was 4000.

My father died in 1977 but Nathan Gutwirth continued to send a package of fruit and flowers every Christmas to my mother.

Although I was only about 7 or 8, I still remember my father taking a night train to the other side of Honshu (the main island of Japan). That trip was cloaked in mystery. I now wonder if that was part of a plan to get the passports of Jews stuck in Harbin or Vladivostok stamped with a transit visa to Curacao.

I also remember a Jewish boy in my class suddenly being particularly friendly but I was too shy to ask why.

### The rabbis and students remember

The rabbis of the Jeshivath MIR, and their students in Jerusalem Israel placed a notice in a Dutch newspaper on 13 May 1977 which read:

*We have learnt with deep sorrow of the death of Nicolaas Arie Johannes de Voogd formerly the Dutch ambassador to Japan.*

*By the nobleness of his heart, his great compassion and God's help he succeeded in saving the rabbis and pupils of our Jeshivah in Poland together with many other Jews from the clutches of the Nazis in 1940-1941. That this was possible is evidence of the nobility of his soul.*

*We have remembered him often with deep thankfulness in the years since.*

*Chawal al deowdin welo mishtakchin.*

*His memory is blessed by God.*

*In deep sorrow. The Rabbis of Jeshivath MIR and their pupils.*

I pray that I will accept strangers and outsiders with the same love and compassion as my father did.

AF



# QSA Notes

## Many hands make light work

AI LEEN QUAH | AFRICAN PROJECT MANAGER



Above L Women's work: a group of Lyantonde women. Photo: QSA

Hardly six months have passed since St Jude Family Projects set foot in Lyantonde, western Uganda, and already there is a tangible feeling of community and friendship amongst these women. They sing together whilst they are working, and trade jokes with each other. As in many rural parts of the world, the women grow most of the food and are also primarily responsible for fetching water and wood for the home. One year ago, these women did not know one another, yet the project had brought them together.

St Jude has come to Lyantonde at their request to tackle chronic food insecurity, which is all the more acute in their region now with increasingly unpredictable changes in climate. Speaking with these women, the camaraderie developing amongst them is warming.

Cooperation and team work, the women concede, is a result of the

project that has already been very valuable and was proving a more productive way to work. Some mention that learning about hygiene and having vegetables in their diet has already helped their own and their families' health, as many of them rarely need to visit the hospital anymore. One woman adds that she has regained her confidence and been able to begin to save some money as a result of small vegetable sales.

St Jude's model is designed to firstly meet the immediate household stresses experienced by women and their families, and works over a two-year span to build long-term resilience of affected communities and their livelihoods. Stabilising food security, increasing income and mitigating the impacts of climate change are achieved through training in agriculture using hybrid and resistant planting materials. Exercises in group dynamics help to foster social cohesion, which is not

only a good outcome in itself but will contribute to greater sustainability, and reinforcement of their sense of food and general security.

Not only amongst the women have these social bonds been formed, but within their own families the dynamics have begun to shift, and for the better. One woman explains that her husband was hesitant at first about her leaving the house to meet with other women. But after she had begun to put into practice some of her learning from an exposure visit to St Jude's training centre, he has begun to follow her into the garden, eager to help and curious to learn how she is bringing more food to the table.

'My family thought the land was not useful, but they have since learned how much they can use it,' another woman laughs, stating that her husband has become very supportive because of the change in diet he has experienced. An inquisitive husband has approached



**Healthy crops. Caption: They have learnt how much they can use it. Permission obtained for the taking and use of each photograph.**

from a nearby house with his young son in tow. Acknowledged, he beams, and his first response is to thank his wife for having approached St Jude. He muses aloud that everything in the household has changed, that his wife now has respect from all the community and that they continue to

learn more and more good ideas that are starting to diffuse through the community, even to members who are not directly involved in the project. It is exciting to think that positive change like this can happen in the space of such few months. And at a cost of \$200, paid by the QSA and

DFAT project, each woman can complete her second year of training. Personally, I can't wait to see what the coming year will bring for these women – or rather, what these women will not wait for, but will bring about themselves, together with their families and their community.

The end of financial year is fast approaching, so now is the time of year to consider making a tax deductible donation to QSA to support these women and other QSA initiatives. This can be done by sending a cheque made out to Quaker Service Australia to our new office at Unit 14, 43-53 Bridge Road, Stanmore NSW 2048 or direct credit to our CUA account in the name of Quaker Service Australia, BSB 814 282, Account number 50585902. Please include your name in the reference section of the direct credit and send an email to [donations@qsa.org.au](mailto:donations@qsa.org.au) to advise us that the donation has been sent. Remember that all donations to QSA are now tax deductible! Thank you, Friends.

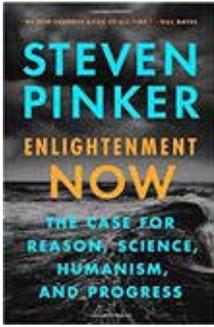
### QSA is now on Facebook

Join us online for more pictures, stories and news [www.facebook.com/quakerserviceaustralia](http://www.facebook.com/quakerserviceaustralia)

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..

Unit 14, 43-53 Bridge Road, Stanmore, NSW 2048 Australia • [administration@qsa.org.au](mailto:administration@qsa.org.au)  
 PHONE+61 2 8054 0400 • FAX: +61 2 9225 9241 • ABN 35 989 797 918





## Enlightenment Now: *The Case For Reason, Science, Humanism And Progress.*

BY STEVEN PINKER

Published by Allen Lane. Great Britain. 2018. pp. 556. ISBN: 978-0-241-33701-1

Steven Pinker, has written an amiable, good natured book. Reasonable optimism breaks out everywhere. The title, though, is a little misleading. It brings to mind someone like Buddha and his kind of enlightenment. It isn't about that, it's about the historical Enlightenment and its values – reason, science, humanism and progress. 'The Enlightenment, after all', writes Pinker, was 'humankind's emergence from its self-incurred immaturity.' (p289) If anyone suspects a hint of anti-religious polemic in that, they're right. The book is about how Enlightenment values are faring now. Pinker proves beyond reasonable doubt that they continue to deliver the goods. Prophets of doom are buried beneath mountains of data. The following is a sample of how the argument proceeds:

*Since the Enlightenment unfolded in the late 18th Century, life expectancy across the world has risen from 30 to 71, and in the more fortunate countries to 81. When the Enlightenment began, a third born in the richest parts of the world died before their fifth birthday; to-day that fate befalls 6% of the children in the poorest parts... (p322)*

The parade of Enlightenment successes goes on:

*Not only are richer people in a given country happier, but people in*

*richer countries are happier, and as countries get richer over time, their people get happier. (p.268)*

Pinker has the data to prove it. Nor is there anything crude about his analyses. For example, he makes an important distinction between happy people who live in the present, and those with meaningful lives who have a narrative about their past and a plan for their future. And his figures are right up to date. He writes that populism is an old man's movement, shown by the fact that in all three of its recrudescences – Trump, Brexit, and European populist parties, voter support falls with year of birth (p.341).

Pinker can justifiably conclude

*... more than two centuries (after the Enlightenment) we can say that it has worked: we have seen six dozen graphs that have vindicated the hope of progress by charting ways in which the world has been getting better. (p326)*

Nevertheless, Pinker is open to challenge on a number of points, especially in his account of humanism, in which he holds that the mind is the brain. That invites the following objection.

Once I dreamed that I was close to a bushfire and was impressed by the vivid orange of the flames. No one looking into my brain at the time would have seen them. They were not in physical space; they were, as we say, in my mind. Pinker acknowledges that there is a problem here, but he contends that it is a conceptual problem. It isn't. It's a problem about what is real. The orange flame was an appearance, but it was real,

and it was beyond physical space.

Pinker is a scientific triumphalist in that he expects scientific explanations to prevail. They may, but they may do so with entities which are not material. There is a trend in that direction already. Within physics there are material objects – billiard balls, planet earth, human bodies, nuts and bolts etc. These objects are solid, but some objects are not e.g., gravitational and electromagnetic fields. Gases are also not solid, but they contain molecules which are. Space-time is not made of any material e.g. wood, steel, hydrogen. It is not that kind of thing. The trend within physics to non-material objects may continue. Pinker insists that the universe is indifferent to humanity. He is denying that there is a power directing the universe for our good. In his great novel, *The Master and Margarita*, Mikhail Bulgakov asserts that everything will be as it should be; that is how the world is made. There is a huge amount of human experience behind that view.

REG NAULTY

*Canberra Regional Meeting*

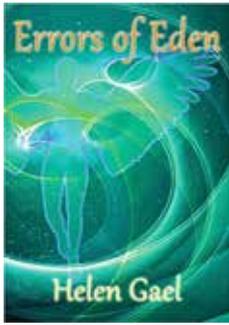
## Errors of Eden

BY HELEN GAEL

Published by Zeus Publications, 2017

Suppose all planets were created by trainee angels in an expansionist universe wherein senior angels check periodically to ensure all is proceeding well in the new worlds.

And suppose one trainee angel of



particularly creative bent came up with the idea of leaving a planet to evolve, in the certainty that whatever emerged would move towards perfection.

And then suppose that, after a few millennia, the senior angels asked for an update and were horrified by the warring nature of the inhabitants.

That is pretty much the plot of *Errors of Eden* in a nutshell, but it only hints at the humour that Helen has injected into the asides and discussions as she

creates a vision of a Heaven that runs like a corporate think tank, complete with nectar breaks for time out when the sessions begin to get 'heavy'.

The book would suit young adults or enquiring-minded earlier teens (and those who may enjoy a lighthearted take on creationism-v-evolution) and includes some brief informative snippets on the development of philosophy, science and world history.

I found myself wondering how Helen

would wrap up this intriguing report card on human development and our failure to move beyond ego, greed, and armed intervention.

Her ending fits the bill, completing the book's vision of Heaven's 'line of least resistance' reasoning.

**JUDITH PEMBLETON**

*Queensland Regional Meeting*

## Spices of life:

### *Personal Reflections on the Quaker Testimonies*

Rosemary Longhurst, West Australia Regional Meeting has prepared a booklet covering the Quaker Testimonies – the 'Spices' – Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality and Sustainability.

The booklet's introduction, a short overview of the Testimonies and the conclusion have been copied into this article. Copies of the whole booklet that include an exploration of each of the Testimonies will be available at Yearly Meeting. It can also be obtained for personal use or by Worshipping Groups or Local Meetings by emailing Rosemary at rlpj47@hotmail.com

#### **Introduction**

There seems to be a gap in Quaker literature about a core aspect of what

it means to identify as a Quaker. I've looked for accessible writings for Quakers and non-Quakers to find out what we mean by having Testimonies rather than a creed and found little currently available.

There is some serious coverage in longer book-length form, yet I haven't found anything lighter in a shorter stand-alone form. I've often thought of writing something about my own lived experience with the Quaker Testimonies to fill this gap, yet the prospect has seemed too daunting. I felt readers would expect spiritual depth and wise words beyond my capacity to provide.

Recently, however, I've found that others have enjoyed and responded to some of my short reflective 'thought-pieces' which can be as superficial or

as deep as the Spirit takes me. This collection of 'thought-pieces' is a similar offering, intended to start a process of reflection for you, dear reader. Any spiritual deepening which may arise is your own work!

I offer a brief explanation of what the Testimonies are, then a personal reflection on each of six core Testimonies preceded by relevant extracts from the Australian version of *Advices and Queries* (published by Australia Yearly Meeting, 2003). I end with a brief Conclusion which recognises that the principles involved rarely apply in isolation for real-life situations so living the Testimonies is always a work in progress.

Necessarily incomplete, these

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

thoughts are lacy, full of holes for you to fill with your own meaning.

### What are the Testimonies?

Over more than 350 years of Quaker history\*, Friends have worried less about beliefs and creeds than about how we live ‘in the Spirit’. Living the Testimonies is in essence an attempt to bear witness, to see true and communicate the truth that is revealed as best we can in the dusty, compromised complexity of living.

They are aids to being and doing, open to the leadings of the Spirit, never a set form of words. We aim to ‘let our lives speak’, always alive to continuous revelation as our practices evolve and adapt to changing needs,

*Testimonies* have arisen in many forms as a means of bearing witness to the role of Spirit in everyday life. The language we use and the society in which we have our being has changed significantly over the centuries, and so have the Testimonies acknowledged by Friends.

Behaviours which were once rich with meaning have fallen away as social norms have changed and different responses become critical for each new age.

An early refusal of ‘hat honour’ is an example: in 17<sup>th</sup> century Britain it was standard for men to doff their hat to social superiors, but Friends recognised the equality of all so invited censure or worse by keeping their hat firmly in place during all social interactions. It

was seen as a questioning of authority which troubled establishment figures considerably, but today it would have no meaning. Hats aren’t worn much and long ago ceased to be a focus of social propriety, so it’s no longer a way we can bear witness to spiritual values.

The commitment to Equality remains a key principle but we express this in different ways which are seen to be meaningful in the 21st century – perhaps we might petition for human rights, support refugees or wave a rainbow flag.

Over time, six key principles have been refined which appear to be commonly accepted in all Quaker traditions.

There are others which have particular relevance to specific times and places, yet these six seem to me to form a core guide for living a Spirit-led life in an increasingly globalised society.

In the un-programmed tradition where I belong there has long been an acronym in use as a handy reminder – **SPICE**, representing **S**implicity, **P**ace, **I**ntegrity, **C**ommunity and **E**quality.

Recently we have added a commitment to our planet in the face of environmental destruction, sometimes referred to as a Testimony to the Environment, to Conservation or to Nature. I prefer to use the term Stewardship or better, Sustainability as this seems to me a wider commitment, encompassing today’s pressing environmental concerns and more besides.

### The acronym SPICES therefore stands for

**S**implicity  
**P**ace  
**I**ntegrity  
**C**ommunity  
**E**quality  
**S**ustainability.

These are the contemporary Testimonies which I will consider in my reflections. I’ll tackle each in turn to consider what they mean for me in my efforts to live a life “in the Spirit”.

### Conclusion

Writing about each of the Testimonies separately I’ve become aware of some consistencies in my approach to bearing witness in each of these contexts. I’ve also been uncomfortably aware of inconsistencies.

Some of these inconsistencies arise because I haven’t thought things through, and these can be adjusted easily enough on the whole. Others arise from the sheer complexity of living and these are harder to deal with.

The Testimonies are not readily separable in everyday life. They overlap, get muddled and may often be in conflict. I suppose that what I’ve been trying to find in my reflections is some sort of underlying approach which might help me to work through the more knotty problems I encounter. There’s certainly no ‘one size fits all’ ready reckoner to be had, and that’s true for every kind of ethical dilemma.

I might make a stand for Integrity, for

instance, and find that it can't be done without challenging my commitment to Community or to Peace. Sometimes an attempt to be fair and assert Equality will prevent any undertaking to resolve things simply. Simplicity may present attractive solutions which are not sustainable, environmentally or otherwise. And so it goes, because being human means being challenged.

I think of these six Testimonies as a kind of handy tool-box. I can reach in and find something which might serve to unlock or ease a tricky situation. Sometimes a single tool will help, more often I'll need to try a bit of this and a bit of that in order to make headway. That's fine as long as the tools work together, each building on progress made with another. But sometimes progress in one direction cancels out progress in another, then I'm in trouble.

From these brief reflections I think I can see that it doesn't matter too much about getting it wrong sometimes, because perfection is impossible.

In our Meetings for Worship for Business where we do our best to discern a way forward, it will soon become apparent if our discernment has led us awry and then we can reconsider with new information – it doesn't mean the original discernment was meaningless, just that we didn't take something into account and maybe rushed to a decision.

A new situation presents itself and we have an opportunity to refine and improve our decision-making. It's much the same at the individual level, I'd say.

Living well is always a work in progress!

Quaker discernment in our business dealings has the huge advantage of working as a group, however. Any tendency to bias is likely to be corrected and assumptions can be challenged. 'Group think' can happen, of course, where shared assumptions go unchallenged, and highly original ideas might be quashed by adherence to tradition, but mostly the contribution of many ideas and approaches has served us well through our long history and helped us survive and thrive when other faith groups have come and gone.

It's not just the pooling of information and suggestions – that happens in non-Quaker contexts too – it's more the shared waiting where we let go of any preconceptions and open ourselves to being led. I suspect that this open waiting for the best way forward is the key factor for coming up with workable solutions to suit all involved. It's best done collectively, yet I can practise it alone as well.

So often I feel pressured to 'DO something' about a difficult situation when I don't have all the information or emotions act like blinkers. A bit of calm and reverent waiting for alternatives to 'bubble up' is bound to be an improvement on rushed action.

What's more, I can ask others for help. I don't have to do everything alone – and that's a revelation for me! Over 350 years Friends have evolved tried and tested processes for helping people with life decisions but they aren't

always apparent to newer Friends and Attenders. (Ask more seasoned Friends about Meetings for Clearness, Meetings for Healing, dispute mediation, support groups and other resources)

Most of all, though, I've recognised that bearing witness in small things gradually builds up moral muscle for dealing with bigger situations. The Testimonies help us to bear witness like this, building habitual responses to make each decision easier.

Well, commitment to the Testimonies has helped me, and I've every reason to suppose it can help you!

I haven't reached any ideal moral plane, but I'm on a journey, struggling to be the best me I can be and – I hope – learning from my mistakes as I go.

## SPICES of LIFE Personal Reflections on the Quaker Testimonies



ROSEMARY LONGHURST  
West Australia Regional Meeting

AF

Brisbane master weaver, Kay Faulkner who was lecturing in Paris at the time. She agreed to weave seventy metres of the wool for us, taking her time to do it but eventually producing more than that amount. The English tapestry wool weavers had not produced enough for themselves so we were glad to know we have enough no matter the contingency. We were disappointed to find when it came to buying the embroidery colours that there is no Australian company whose colours were sufficiently stable. Our stipulation was that we could buy a colour today or in a 100 years and the colour would be identical. Yes! We have actually planned for a 100+ year life for our panels. This also meant a crash course in how to care and conserve our panels.

But back to my actually choosing what to embroider. Let's look at the lettering first. Looking at the Sydney Parkinson panel, the lettering Sydney Parkinson is in a typeface chosen for the English Quaker Tapestry, which we think that, while it has faults, is still clear enough to be read from a distance. The size of the typeface is the same on all panels and in this largest size has an edging which gives a clear and solid outline. Originally I embroidered in a quote just under the dotted line in a very small typeface. Charles Stevenson from Adelaide saw it and was emphatic it was far too small for his eyes. It sat for ages untouched, glaring at me before Tessa kindly unpicked it for me. I also originally used the phrase, 'Live adventurously', at the bottom which I felt Sydney Parkinson epitomised, but I came across 'How amazingly diverse

are the works of the Deity', which though old fashioned still seemed so appropriate for someone as interested in ecology as he was.

The whole design has been cut into three, separated by dotted lines. The top third contains the 'title' and extra information. The bottom third contains any quotes, children's drawings, or other cartoons. The centre section shows the story.

In the lower section of the panel are three canoes, reproduced from the diaries of sailors on board. They show the local aborigines fishing in Botany Bay for stingray. The stingray would hide in the shade of the canoes. It amused the sailors watching the local fishermen to see how frustrated they became. The right hand canoe is made of bark from trees with the ends lashed together, while the left hand canoes show boats made from burnt out logs. When this was first shown I was assured that these two types of canoes were never seen together in this area. So I checked with the Capt. Cook Society in Whitby and our friend there checked with Captain Cook's diary. There were two different types of canoe as shown. The bark canoe was much lighter and less stable whilst the other floated much better and sometimes needed two paddlers. So once again check, check and check!! In a similar way I had intended to have a white cockatoo at the top of the picture but was told the cockatoo didn't move into this area until a number of years after the *Endeavour* visit.

I placed Sydney Parkinson in the middle of the picture as he was (to us) the most important person and so took

centre stage. His coat was embroidered in a stitch which I stitched back to front, and the correct stitch should have been the other side. However I liked the tweedy look so left it in. His trousers are embroidered in a cotton-like wool provided by the Australian Tapestry Workshop in Melbourne. It is possible to buy this embroidery wool offcuts with many different shades and his trousers demonstrate this.

The kangaroo is interesting as at the time I embroidered it it was acknowledged as being drawn by Sydney Parkinson. A number of years after I embroidered it it was credited to George Stubbs, the painter of horses. However all Sydney Parkinson's paintings were 'finished' by others in England, and it is possible that this is what happened with his painting of a kangaroo.

The figures of Cook and Banks are taken from a large painting by Mortimer of famous people involved with this extraordinary voyage. However, years later I came to the conclusion that Capt. Cook in the Mortimer painting was actually Lord Sandwich! Now the truth is out!

The embroidery of the *Endeavour* is taken from a photograph of the reproduction of the *Endeavour* as it catches the first of the waves leaving Whitby on its way to Australia. The boat rowing Capt. Cook ashore is an exact copy of the similar boat drawn by Sydney Parkinson in Cooktown when the *Endeavour* was careened for repairs after their near-fatal piercing with coral.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23

# 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.**

## *Love and Honour? Marriage for Peace*

This is a short (49 pp.) book written by David Evans (South Australia and Northern Territory Regional Meeting). The book exposes the ongoing phenomenon of Romeo and Juliet style

romance tragedy; families killing their own and other families' daughters, sons, sisters and brothers in the name of family 'honour'. Focused on northern India and Nepal, the stories illustrate that despite India adopting a democratic constitution in 1950, the public murder of forbidden lovers continues.

*Love and Honour? Marriage for Peace* has been written to seek a path of progress from murder to reconciliation, to acceptance, and ultimately to marriage for peace.

The book can be downloaded from David's website [ddeepans.org](http://ddeepans.org)

## SYDNEY PARKINSON – CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22

The interesting thing with this drawing is that there is a slight gap between the hat and the shoulders of the seamen, and one's eye inserts a face, even though there is not one there.

The imaginary aboriginal man was placed behind the bush, not because he was naked but because he believed that the white men were ghosts and he did not wish to be seen by them.

The plants are exact copies of paintings done by Sydney Parkinson in colours similar to his paintings. They are, from the left:

5. *Epacris longiflora*. Native fuchsia.

6. *Isopogon anemonifolius*. Drumsticks Botany Bay.

In the branches of the Drumstick there is a male and female blue wren. I had seen a pair nesting in a Drumstick a week or two previously so added them. I was unsure what the embroidered birds looked like until I saw them photographed as they are so tiny, but the female is exquisite.

7. *Banksia serrata*

8. *Banksia integrifolia*

9. *Banksia ericafolia*.

It took me about four years to finish this panel. I loved the research and found it not only a fascinating story but had many byways, and a 'boys-own' story as well. Quakers today are as adventurous and gallant as then, but often keep their light hidden. We just need to seek the hidden story within us all.

I still thank all those lovely people who helped me create and supported me with this panel.

AF

---

# The Australian Friend

*The Australian Friend* is published online at AustralianFriend.org four times a year, in March, June, September and December.

## Contributions

Contributions (articles, poems and other items) are welcome as an email attachment to CAustFriend@Quakersaustralia.info. Please ensure that images are sent as separate attachments, and not embedded in word files. We prefer images in jpg format, and a resolution of at least 300 dpi.

## Contribution deadlines

Contributions should arrive no later than one month before the publication date:

- 1 February for the March edition
- 1 May for the June edition
- 1 August for the September edition
- 1 November for the December edition.

## Subscriptions

*The Australian Friend* is available free of charge online at AustralianFriend.org. *The Australian Friend* is also available by post at no charge to members of Australian Yearly Meeting.

Libraries, other organisations and individuals not associated with Quakers can subscribe to receive *The Australian Friend* by post by contacting: austfriend@quakers.org.au. The cost is \$40.00 per year for addresses in Australia and \$50 per year for addresses overseas.

**Coordinating editor:** David Swain

**Editorial panel:** Garry Duncan, Rae Litting, Wies Schuiringa

## Production

**Mailing list** CAustFriend@Quakersaustralia.info

**Layout** Sheelagh Wegman, Hobart TAS.

**Printing and distribution** National Mailing and Marketing, Canberra.

## Copyright

Articles printed in *The Australian Friend* are copyright to their individual authors. Permission to re-publish material in other Quaker publications is hereby granted, provided full attribution of author and source is made. All other requests for republication should be directed to the editors.

## Disclaimer

The views expressed in *The Australian Friend* are not necessarily those of the editors or of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).