

The Australian Friend

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Nourishment



Editorial

For this edition we sought contributions from Quakers on how they nourished their spiritual lives. We are grateful to Sally Kingsland who has responded with an article about Spiritual Direction. And Tasmania Regional Meeting invites us all to Yearly Meeting in Hobart to repower our spiritual batteries.

For the most part, however, we received articles about Quakers acting out their faith in the world. They are powerful messages of peace-making through teaching permaculture, removing unexploded military weapons left behind after World War 2, and seeking reconciliation with indigenous Australians. But the writers say little about what motivates and sustains them.

Obviously it is easier to describe what we are doing than to talk about our inner lives. Perhaps we lack the vocabulary for doing this. Perhaps we fear that if we claim to receive spiritual nourishment from sources other than sitting in silence or reading Quaker literature we shall be thought not to be In Right Ordering! Perhaps we think that not having a creed means not forming any concepts of the Divine. Perhaps we do not want to be controversial. Yet those who are willing to share often provide much needed nourishment to those who are floundering. John Milton wrote that 'They also serve who only stand and wait'. But do share with us the fruits of your waiting!

THE AUSTRALIAN FRIEND EDITORIAL TEAM

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Cover photo: Teaching permaculture in a Middle Eastern refugee camp.

Nourishing our spiritual lives through spiritual direction

SALLY KINGSLAND | CANBERRA REGIONAL MEETING



To listen another's soul into a condition of disclosure and discovery may be almost the greatest service that any human being ever performs for another. — Douglas Steere^[1]

Spiritual growth has been the central feature of my life since I awoke to the journey in 2003. Since that time I have sought out many avenues of healing, growth and development. Spiritual direction has had a major impact on my life. It does not seem to have been very common within the Quaker community but is growing.

Spiritual direction is an ancient practice in which a 'directee' is accompanied on their spiritual journey by a spiritual 'director'. Various forms of this kind of relationship have existed across faith traditions, particularly in their contemplative arms, and is possibly best known and explicitly practised through the Catholic tradition. Although named the 'director', it is acknowledged that God (however one names the Greater Than) is the true director and some spiritual directors use a third chair, or a candle, during sessions to remind all of the third Presence in the room.

The goal of spiritual direction, as I understand it, is to create a space for soul work. To generate a sanctuary for inner expansion and examination that leads to healing, growth and wholeness. Generally, the spiritual director spends a lot of time listening to the directee and supporting their discernment. This might include asking questions, making suggestions for practices for

the directee to try, and reflecting what they are seeing and hearing. The role of a spiritual director, among other things, is to nurture the directee's capacity to access their own depths and strengths. Each person has the inner wisdom they need to heal and grow and, while solitude is important, we aren't meant to walk the path alone. The spiritual direction relationship can be a place to take one's deepest questions and reflections. Clarifying what spiritual direction is not is also important. It is not such as advice, counselling or therapy. The role of a spiritual director is usefully outlined in Spiritual Directors International's (SDI) Code of Ethics².

There are many reasons that people seek out a spiritual director. Some are looking for more depth in their experience of life, some want to know why they feel that something is 'missing', some want a spiritual or religious connection and haven't found a way to meet that need in other ways. Others seek to deepen their prayer life and connection to G-d. Sometimes awakening to our inner world can be abrupt, through a major disruption in life; sometimes it may arise slowly, manifesting in discontent or malaise. It is often the same kind of reason that brought many Quakers to Meeting for the first time. What we seek, or have thrust upon us, is the opportunity for

spiritual growth and transformation that comes from the wisest part of ourselves and beyond. A spiritual director can help create the space for 'seed' to grow and be made known in our lives.

How a spiritual director manages their own life is essential, as is knowing one's own boundaries and limitations. The spiritual director needs to have learned and implemented self-care and be stable in their own life with an orientation towards the Holy. They need to have their own practices and support structures to keep them grounded in contemplation, reflection and compassion.

To be following best practice (as defined by the SDI Guidelines) they will be continuing their own spiritual growth, seeing a spiritual director, be in some kind of supervision and reflecting regularly on their role as a spiritual director. Within a Quaker context I believe that it also helps to have the Quaker community acknowledge and affirm the spiritual director's ministry.

As with all ministry, the Meeting community then has a responsibility to ensure that the spiritual director has support and oversight, or accountability, though the Meeting may well not be in a position to do that directly.

I find the Quaker Way to be inherently aligned with spiritual

direction principles and practice. At the core of spiritual direction we find attention to the inner life through listening and discernment – this sounds familiar to most Friends I think! Through Meeting for Worship, the particular Quaker manner of undertaking corporate business and other processes, such as clearness committees, Quakers are already closely familiar with the ‘feel’ of spiritual direction. While I think many Quakers will have experienced mutual spiritual friendships, spiritual direction is slightly different in that the director is putting themselves aside for the purpose of giving spiritual direction. The spiritual director also has to have made their spiritual life a priority and be actively attending to their own growth and accountability as discussed above.

Navigating spiritual direction relationships within the Quaker community can be slightly awkward as we operate as equals and are all involved in the functioning of our community. In some religious environments a spiritual director may be clergy or a nun, for example, and so slightly removed from the congregation with whom one has regular contact. I have seen various Quakers successfully serve in this role and believe it can be healthy for our communities given appropriate attention and care.

I have seen a Quaker spiritual director since 2014 and have found it to have a profound impact on my life. Through the space that the relationship has created in my life I have grown enormously. At one point in my path I had the difficult task of leaving from some very important relationships in my life and having my spiritual director to work through my discernment was critical. It was also an essential place for me to be able to retreat and continue my deep spiritual reflections while in the midst of working many hours a week for my Yearly Meeting and being a parent of small children. My spiritual director has been responsive

to my spiritual needs and brought a dimension to my prayer life that I have not found elsewhere.

Following my spiritual path involved waking up to recognise some gifts that I have to share with the world. We all have gifts, or a vocation, and I believe we are called to use our life to understand this call and bring forth what we have to offer. Although I had always been a talkative, outgoing, action-oriented person, I realised that at heart I am a contemplative with more of a gift for nurturing soul work (in myself and others) than I had realised. This was first shown to me in a way that I could understand during a week-long workshop on eldering. I was able to look back at the previous years and see how I had already been using the gift I had. Soon after this time I was approached by someone to accompany them on a regular basis.

These days many people train to be spiritual directors through one of the many excellent programs on offer in various countries. This is a relatively recent phenomenon though; traditionally this work has been done by those who have grown in their spiritual life and been mentored into the role. To date, I have been blessed with a number of amazing mentors and teachers, done a range of relevant reading, trained in non-violent communication but have not been called to undertake a specific spiritual direction course. I do have an experienced supervisor and have been working under the care of a Discipline and Care Committee who oversee my Quaker work/ministry, since 2014.

There appears to be a growing interest among ‘liberal, unprogrammed’ Quakers, including Australia Yearly Meeting, with a number of Australian Quakers undertaking spiritual direction training in recent years (and some well before that!). I posit that, in a time in which the Quaker community in Australia is quite externally focussed, there is a balancing movement in which some Friends are looking for

more spiritual depth. I suggest that there is a longing and need for spiritual nurture that is currently unmet within the Australian Quaker community and more people are finding the spiritual space they need in spiritual direction relationships.

Other places I see Australian Quakers finding this kind of spiritual nurture are in small nurture groups with Friends from their Meeting, and through spiritual friendships. It is important to remember that ‘listening someone’s soul into a state of disclosure and discovery’ is not confined to any one type of relationship or place in life. This nurture may manifest in many ways, such as through a grandmother, wise teacher or close friend.

For Friends who wish to explore spiritual direction further the Spiritual Directors International (SDI) website has useful information, and a Seek and Find Guide. Many spiritual directors now provide their services using videoconferencing technology so you do not need to be limited to the people you can find in person nearby. I see this as particularly helpful for people who identify as spiritual but are not necessarily attached to, or involved in, a religious body. SDI is an interfaith body that cares deeply about all people finding spiritual direction regardless of their various orientations in life.

Sally Kingsland recently returned from California to live in Canberra. She is a member of Canberra Regional Meeting and Spiritual Directors International.

- [1] Steere, D (1986) *Gleanings: A Random Harvest*. Upper Room, Nashville
[2] <https://www.sdiworld.org/sites/default/files/publications/Guidelines%20Revised%202014-proof1-2.pdf>

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A Peaceful Harvest:

Introducing permaculture to Friends Peace Teams

PAULA PAANANEN | NEW SOUTH WALES REGIONAL MEETING

You could throw a bean out this taxi window and it would germinate' were my first thoughts when my family and I arrived at mainland Entebbe, Uganda in 2011. We were led there to teach permaculture to the fishing communities living on the Islands of Lake Victoria.

It didn't take long to learn that the people living on the islands were experiencing very different conditions to the mainland. The islands were barren, crowded spaces without clean water, sanitation or medical support. Many traditional farming practices had been lost as people escaping war, persecution and a changing climate fled to Lake Victoria in the hope that catching fish would keep them alive. These fishing communities were experiencing 43% HIV/Aids rates.

Permaculture is a cutting edge, systems-based, ecological science. Its approach is based on three ethics – Earth Care, People Care and Fair Share. It gives people the skills to design and implement sustainable systems that work from the smallest balcony in a

Below: High tides inundate a community in the Solomon Islands.



temperate city to a hundred thousand hectare farm in a dry, arid region. Most importantly, it encourages low tech, local solutions.

With a focus on water catchment and small scale, intensive food production, the communities in Uganda were harvesting water, growing food and implementing sanitation systems within a short time. They were saving seeds and sharing with others. We trained some students in facilitation and they formed a group of local practitioners that spread information and enthusiasm from Kyunga to the remotest islands of Lake Victoria. Ongoing work and independent monitoring over several years confirmed that permaculture was embraced by the fishing communities.

The environments in which I have trained permaculture since Uganda have become more challenging. For example, communities in the Pacific experiencing sea level rise are looking at alternative growing methods as their water supply and growing grounds become salinated. Syrian refugees, having escaped the worst of war, are trying to adjust to life in dry, harsh and remote camps for internally displaced people

in Northern Iraq. Such communities are experiencing extreme stress, trauma and ongoing conflict.

My concern for the 'people care' permaculture ethic came to a head in 2017 when Friend Rowe Morrow and I were packing up our training equipment

after a month long permaculture course in a refugee camp in Northern Iraq. There were a few seeds left over from the training and they were handed to a student to distribute amongst the group. All hell broke loose. There was shouting and threats as fellow trainees protested at the perceived lack of equity and obvious distrust of the person the seeds were given to. I was compelled to ask: if people are not able to negotiate peacefully over a few seeds, what chance do they have of working together to protect and restore essential ecosystems? What about those communities, already experiencing conflict, who are now also affected by sea level rise and needing to relocate? How will they ensure the needs of their people are met whilst navigating often corrupt government structures? We know that trauma can reduce people's ability to interact with others, understand new concepts and retain information. What about those students in permaculture trainings who have experienced even secondary trauma resulting in an inability to engage, learn and implement change, despite their best intentions.

There is no doubt that the world's natural systems are getting closer to the point of collapse. It is resulting in a grab for rapidly depleting resources and predictable mass migration. As the impact of climate change is felt around the globe, the knowledge and ability to rebuild ecosystems that incorporate human needs is becoming more urgent. Permaculture offers this knowledge. But for it to work, we need strong communities that are able to live harmoniously and adapt to rapid change.

This concern led me to participate



Friends Peace Team training in Pati, Central Java

in the 6th International Asian West Pacific Friends Peace Teams Training at the Peace Place in Pati, Central Java. Participants came from five different islands within Indonesia as well as from Honduras, Nepal, Papua, Korea, the Philippines, Samoa, US, New Zealand, Australia, Malaysia, Britain, Singapore, and Chechnya. Over ten days, we explored what is required of ourselves and each other to build communities and cultures of peace. Learning how to lead peaceful, nonviolent lives in experiential workshops included empowerment, community, resilience, power, liberation and discernment.

I was invited in advance by AWP Friends Peace Teams to introduce permaculture to attendees, and it was embraced with enthusiasm. A working group was established to meet daily, in addition to three prescheduled full day workshops. More than 25 people rose

regularly before 6am to participate in the working group. Many enthused on the relevance of permaculture to the environmental problems and resulting conflicts in their part of the world. We looked at 'Peace Place' as a venue and took stock of its impact on the planet by completing a site analysis. We planned how the site would be transformed into a place where peace training, education and earth care can sit comfortably side by side.

The journey between Friends Peace Teams and permaculture is just beginning. The links between food insecurity, environmental destruction, war and climate change are well established. There is much to be done and we are discerning the way. If we are to have peace, we need to stop waging war with the earth. And yes, we can throw a bean seed out of the window and it may well germinate; but there

will be little gain if we will be fighting each other to harvest it.



Above: Paula teaching permaculture in Uganda

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How do you nourish your spiritual life?

Come to Yearly Meeting in July in Hobart

FELICITY ROSE, JENNY SEATON | CO-CONVENORS YEARLY MEETING ORGANISING COMMITTEE



The Friends' School



The Hobart Meeting House

Friends in Tasmania are delighted to invite you to join us for Yearly Meeting from 6th – 13th July 2019 in Hobart. We are grateful that The Friends' School has again offered to host Yearly Meeting.

Attending Yearly Meeting

AYM welcomes Australian Friends to come to Yearly Meeting 2019. It is our practice that Attenders should ask their home Regional Meeting for permission to attend. It is good to do this a month or more in advance of YM.

Costs for registration for adults will be \$15, \$10 concession, per day or \$75, \$50 concession for the week. Young Friends \$3 (waged) \$2 (unwaged) per day, \$10, \$5 for the week.

Dinner will be \$15/day, lunch \$12/day for adults. Children and JYFs do not pay for registration or meals while at Yearly Meeting.

People attending the JYF camp, 3 days, 2 nights, are asked to contribute \$80 towards the cost.

If cost is an issue for you, remember that Regional Meetings have some funds to support Friends who want to attend YM, and you can seek financial assistance. If you're not sure who to ask, ask your Clerk, or anyone who is an old hand!

Visitors from overseas are welcome. AYM will ask you for a contact in your home Meeting with whom we can check your bona fides. Please allow time for this to be done.

Transport to Hobart city and Friends School

A taxi from the airport will cost about \$50. There is a Skybus service into Collins Street in the city, \$18 one way, book online or buy tickets on the bus.

Accommodation

Yearly Meeting in Hobart is non-residential, which means Friends will need to organise their own accommodation. It may seem hard to imagine, but July is a busy time in Hobart with the Festival of Voices.

Accommodation books up fairly quickly, so we encourage you to book your accommodation sooner rather than later.

There may be some capacity to organise home-stay type accommodation with Friends, although many people will have already organised this informally.

The Tower Motel on the corner of Boa Vista Rd is the closest and the only one which offers a 'special rate', if people ring 03 6228 0166 and say they are coming to the Quaker Yearly Meeting (if you book online Tower cannot offer this special price).

From 06/07/2019 to 13/07/2019

- Single room rate (single bed in a small room for 1 person): \$65/night/room
- Double/ Twin room (one queen bed or 2 separate beds in one room): \$85/night for 2 people
- Triple room (3 beds in one room, 1 bathroom): \$105/night for 3 people
- Medium family room (4 beds in 2 joined bedrooms, 1 bathroom): \$125/night for 4 people
- Large family room (5 beds in 2 separate bedrooms, 1 bathroom, 1 toilet, bathroom and toilet separate): \$145/night for 5 people
- Breakfast: Continental \$8/person (Juice/cereals/milk/toast)

There are several other good places within a walk from The Friends' School, and all can be found online and are easy to book. To name a few:

- Graham Apartments <http://www.grahamapartments.com.au/>
- Bendall's B&B <https://bendall-saccommodation.com/>
- Rydges <https://www.rydges.com/accommodation/hobart-tas/hobart/>
- air bnbs and many more



Jason McLeod will deliver the Backhouse Lecture

Registration for Yearly Meeting 2019

This website enables you to register for Yearly Meeting <https://aym-rego.org/reg>

You can register yourself, and you can register other people to go to YM.

It is designed to be suitable for browsers on your computer, mobile phone or tablet.

After registering, you are able to access and update the information you provided by logging back into the system. If you registered for YM2016, YM2017 or YM2018 you are already known to this system, and you should use your existing userID and password. If you have forgotten your password, you can reset it.

If you haven't registered here before, you can easily create a new userID.

Children and JYFs

Children under 12: we are asking families with children under 12 years to register as early as possible, to allow us sufficient time to make suitable arrangements for their program.

JYFs 12-17 year old: early registration would be very helpful. The planning group for the JYFs has drafted a program which includes a 3 day, 2 night camp. Offers from Friends to help as FRAPs (Friendly Responsible Adult Presences) with practical tasks such as packing gear, setting up rooms, catering, would be much appreciated. If you can help, please contact Maree-rose Jones mumjo@southernphone.com.au

Yearly Meeting

We will meet and will serve lunch and dinner in The Farrall Centre at the

Friends School. This will help minimise Friends' exposure to the elements and reduce some of the uphill climb. We are able to cater for vegetarians, coeliacs and meat eaters. If you have any other dietary requirements, please register as soon as possible, so we can do our best to meet your needs.

We will start Yearly Meeting with a Welcome Afternoon Tea which will include a Welcome to Country. Registration will open at 2pm, with the Welcome to Country from about 4.30pm on Saturday 6th July (the first day of Yearly Meeting). We hope all Friends will be able to organise their travel so they can join us for this important part of our gathering.

Winter School

The theme for Winter School is RENEWAL.

Winter School 2019 will be at The Friends School Hobart on Sunday 7th July. Friends who would be willing to facilitate a group for Winter School 2019 are invited to contact David Evans (SANTRM) and/or Ron Frey (Tasmania RM) for inclusion of your intended activity topic in the program.

Please include a short description of your group activity (30-50 words).

At this stage, you will not register for Winter School, but will be invited to do so closer to Yearly Meeting.

(David Evans ddeevans1@gmail.com or 0419023775. Ron Frey r.frey@qut.edu.au or 0437656080)

The Backhouse Lecture

This will be delivered by Jason McLeod on Monday 8th July in the Farrell

Centre. The title Jason has given his lecture is

Animating freedom: decolonising solidarity with depth, vision, resistance, relationships and spirit: making sense of the practice of nonviolent solidarity with indigenous people

All are welcome to attend this event.

Bring your laptop, iPad, tablet or phone

At Yearly Meeting much information including agendas, minutes, reports and daily notices will be on-line. This will reduce the number of paper copies that need to be printed. It will also enable you to use your device to read the information wherever you have an internet connection, and always have the most up-to-date information.

Some paper copies of important information will be available.

Share and Tell

If you would like to present a Share and Tell session, you can let us know when you are registering online. Otherwise please contact Julie Walpole walpole_julie@bigpond.com by 4th July so timetables, equipment and room bookings can be arranged.

See you in Hobart!

Hobart Friends look forward to welcoming Friends from all over Australia, and beyond, to share with us the fellowship, fun and spiritual nurture that is Yearly Meeting.

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World War Two

Explosive Remnants of War in the Pacific

LOREL THOMAS | VICTORIA REGIONAL MEETING



Our book launch in Geneva



Abandoned unexploded ordnance at Hell's Point, Solomon Islands



Depth charges in Palau

Background

Each and every war leaves a legacy of trauma and sadness. Physical and psychological scars remain and the rebuilding of shattered lives, families and communities is a long and painful process.

Nevertheless, in most cases, rehabilitation of people and environment can begin once the war is over. The existence of 'legacy weapons' such as landmines, cluster munitions and varied explosive remnants of war (ERW) hinder this process. Accidents, with resultant death or injury continue the nightmare of the war. International recognition and funding is often necessary to provide care for survivors and to rehabilitate contaminated land. At the end of World War II, massive reconstruction efforts were needed for a devastated Europe. Little thought could be given to the tiny island countries far away in the Pacific Ocean.

Many of these island nations had been caught up in the maelstrom that was the Pacific Theatre from 1942–1945. They

had experienced savage battles, principally between Japanese Imperial Forces and the United States of America, although Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and Canada also contributed forces. Countries were invaded, fought over and then abandoned. The war was not of the islanders' making, yet they were left with a legacy that continues to threaten lives, destroys the ocean and reefs and makes land unsuitable for cultivation.

The early 1900s saw much internal change on the Japanese political scene and in the 1930s regional invasions began. These were a mixture of a desire for political domination and the need to access raw materials that were being denied them by the USA and others. There has been much speculation as to whether regional invasion and the resultant battles may have been avoided if fairer trade and diplomacy had been afforded the Japanese.

In December 1941, the die was cast when Japan bombed Pearl Harbour, with its fleet of American ships. Plans for a full scale Pacific war now moved inexorably forward. Japanese forces radiated out in the Pacific, from Burma in the west, the Aleutians in the north, Hawaii in the east and the Solomon Islands and New Guinea in the south. The wider the Japanese influence spread, the more their

supply lines were stretched. Very different battles were fought in the islands further away from Japan to those closer to the Japanese homeland. The outer islands saw a lot of running battles, whereas closer to home, Japanese forces had dug in and held heavily fortified positions. Many of the outer islands were isolated and passed by the Allied forces, leaving massive stockpiles of unused weapons which were abandoned when the war ended. The more heavily fortified positions such as Palau had caches of weapons, often on ridge lines or in caves, sea mines seeded the beaches and booby-trapped rocks held an explosive centre.

An Explosive Legacy

Naturally, the variation in battle styles meant a variation in ERW left behind as an explosive legacy. Some weapons were stockpiled, amassed in readiness for dispatch to front line troops. One such stockpile is found at Hell's Point, in Honiara, in the Solomon Islands.

More problematic are those that were dispatched to the front line, dispersed during running battles and often abandoned as the war moved on. No records of abandoned munitions were kept and, due to the fluidity of battles, they could be widely scattered.

Then there are those which were used

Explosives in a cave on Palau



in fortified situations. Weaponry already found across the Pacific ranges in size from hand grenades in underwater caves in Palau, to mortars found in jungles and swamps, to huge sea mines. Traces of chemical weapons are also suspected.

Can we give an exhaustive list of the ERW remaining in Pacific Island nations? No, we cannot. To this day, no systematic study across the region has ever been undertaken. Spot clearance has taken place in a number of places but often records have not been shared, leaving mine clearance agencies and locals unsure which areas are safe and which are not.

The two exceptions to this are Palau and the Solomon Islands. The demining agencies Cleared Ground and Golden West Humanitarian Foundation have been working in Palau and the Solomon Islands respectively, working with local communities and funded principally with money from the Australian and US Governments. The Solomon Islands Royal Police Force now has an Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team, which has been trained to international mine disposal standards. Sadly, the team is hampered in its work due to a shortage of money. The islands of the Solomons are numerous and scattered. When SafeGround researchers were undertaking field work they provided money for the EOD team, to allow them to buy petrol for the boat trips to outer islands. Normally the money does not stretch to responding to calls from these islands

In addition to the ever-present explosive danger, the weapons are old, leaking dangerous chemicals into soil and water, damaging reefs, inhibiting the burgeoning dive tourism industry and affecting farming.

Helmet Wreck

One notable underwater site is a ship wreck in Malakal Harbour in, Palau, often called the 'Helmet Wreck'. It is 189 feet long and resting on an underwater hill with its stern in 45 feet and the bow in 110 feet of water. An accurate number of depth charges on the wreck is difficult to ascertain but 167 are clearly visible. If left undisturbed there may never be a detonation. The problem is that it is not left undisturbed. A quick internet search for Helmet Wreck, Palau, will bring up multiple websites extolling the wreck as an ideal diving venue. Researchers dive there, carefully; this may not always be the case for divers keen to 'live on the edge'.

Fish Bombing

Around Hell's Point in the Solomon Islands, there exists yet another danger. Although the area is fenced off, around the perimeter, traces of scratched and dug earth are found each day. Some locals engage in a dangerous and destructive practice called Dynamite Fishing, or Fish Bombing. Small bombs are scavenged, cut open, the explosive removed and packed into a soft drink bottle. A crude fuse is then attached and the homemade bomb hurled into the water. If the venture is successful, fish are stunned and killed over a wide area. These bombs also kill sections of the reef, destroying it permanently. Some fish float to the surface and are able to be harvested. Fish killed using this method are of poor quality for eating, with broken bones and ruptured internal

organs. Still some people choose to undertake this risky fishing method for short term gain. And risky the practice certainly is. Mis-time the fuse and the bomb explodes prematurely, taking an arm with it. It is illegal to tamper with stockpiled weapons in the Solomons so not all accidents are reported. If a fish bombing victim is admitted to hospital, the cause of the accident is often mis-reported for fear of prosecution.

Fish bombing is an extremely divisive practice, pitting islanders and communities against each other, some favouring fish bombing, others striving to protect both their traditional fishing methods and the environment.

How to finally gain international attention for the on-going plight of the Pacific Islands?

Not only does lack of money hamper regional Pacific island clearance efforts, it also renders the area mute at international conferences. Very rarely are Pacific Islands able to send representatives to international treaty conferences such as the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), which covers ERW. For this reason I headed to Geneva in November, with SafeGround colleagues, to put the Pacific in focus for the international community, principally donor governments and mine action agencies. As a result of sending researchers to do intensive work in Palau and the Solomon Islands, we published a book titled *In Search of Safe Ground-*

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Food, Food Security and the Environment in North Korea:

A Permaculture Viewpoint

ROWE MORROW | NEW SOUTH WALES REGIONAL MEETING

How it came about

In October 2018 I was extremely fortunate to visit North Korea as one of a study group of people, mostly Australian Quakers. We had been asked if we had special interests, and I mentioned that I would like to visit collective farms to see how they work, as I have a special interest in food and water security. At the same time, our program included visits to the South Korea-North Korea border, the Vegetable Research Institute, a seaport, and three collective farms, which enabled us to see more of the country outside Pyongyang.

We were given a start in this country because, about 10 years ago, American Quakers (American Friends Service Committee – AFSC) had been allocated a farm to assist. They helped with pumps and other infrastructure. This created friendship and trust which we wanted to build on because they were our concerns as well. None of us saw the North Koreans as ‘enemy’. We all knew that the Australian government was bound by the present sanctions imposed by the United Nations at the instigation of the USA. It was also a time when the US President had met with the Leader of North Korea. So there was a loosening of anxiety and we were aware that North Korea and South Korea both wanted a lessening of the tensions which had dominated most of their negotiations since 1953 when an armistice was declared at the end of the Korean War. However to feel safe, Koreans need USA to declare the war of 1953 has finally ended – 57 years later.

Just as we left Australia we learned that almost 1,000,000 landmines on the border were to be removed and while we were there work started on it. There was a sense of hope.

Our concerns

During the 1990s, while I was visiting Viet Nam there was a terrible famine in North Korea and I was aware of it daily, and so regarded the present embargo and consequent suffering as unconscionable. In Hanoi, at that time, AFSC took a copy of my book as a present to the North Korean Embassy.

On this occasion we wanted to meet people, try to develop relationships based on trust and friendship and see the country while finding out if there was some way in which we could become involved in the future that would build ties, for us as Quakers, for Australia and North Korea.

Short history

North and South Korea share a long history of civilisation, and, occupation. Paleontology reveals thousands of years of continuous culture and agriculture. However, today the people are fairly homogeneous with few minority ethnic groups.

According to tradition, [the kingdom of] Silla was founded in 57 BCE by Pak Hyōkkōse, who was miraculously born from an egg. His name Pak was perhaps derived from palk, meaning ‘bright,’ since sunlight shone from his body. Seth (2016)

The Korean peninsula has probably been invaded many times since its original settlement, and the first peoples of the peninsula are said to have also colonised and established Japan. Invasions came from the Moguls and others sweeping across, or from China.

Japan occupied Korea from 1910 and during WWII and their brutal regime is still remembered. At the end of the war

Japan was expelled, by the USA in the south and by the USSR in the north. Each of the major powers set up a government in the part of Korea they controlled, with the border at the 38th parallel, but all Koreans yearned for a united country. In an attempt at reunification, North Korea invaded the south in 1950. A United Nations force, mainly American, pushed the North Koreans back to the 38th parallel, but then advanced through the country almost to the Chinese border. The whole country and every city was bombed almost to rubble. It was devastation.

The rebuilding effort took a huge amount of sacrifice and lives. Wonderful, non-replaceable temples and treasures were completely destroyed. There was enormous over-bombing, similar to Viet Nam during their American war. The people laboured unimaginably hard to rebuild bridges, roads, dams, fields, hospitals, schools, and in fact the whole country had to be reconstructed. The effort, as we saw it, was amazing, and my admiration for the people is great.

Much of the rebuilding demonstrates elegant and farsighted town planning now coming to maturity and with gracious architecture and landscapes.

After this experience with US, and, as in France and other countries with a history of frequent invasion, North Korea decided they would never be occupied again. So today they see nuclear weapons as their best deterrent, together with maintaining a large army despite the cost: however it is a People’s Army of service and works with the citizens on many integrated civilian projects, such as dam building and farming.

The landscape

North Korea is a mostly mountainous



The whole farm's rice and maize is threshed collectively



Rice harvest time

country in a cool temperate climate and, by Australian standards, good rainfall. The winters are very cold and long. The growing season is short and rainfall is sometimes unreliable. Flat arable land is at a premium. The landscape has many varied eco-systems from coastal to high mountains.

Juche and setting goals

Understanding Juche

To rebuild, the country has adopted 'Juche', the national policy developed by Kim Il Sung, which would be instantly recognised by permaculturists from Paris to Buenos Aires.

Once you read past the communist rhetoric in his speech it is striking the number of comments which support or demonstrate permaculture principles. In fact I could be lead to think the planners had access to permaculture principles and texts. And we saw much of it in practice.

Translated as 'self-reliance' Juche, is the official state ideology of North Korea, described by the government as 'Kim Il-Sung's original, brilliant and revolutionary contribution to national and international thought'. It postulates that the Korean masses are to act as the 'masters of the revolution and construction' and that by becoming self-reliant and strong a nation can achieve true socialism . . . The practice of Juche is firmly rooted in the ideals of sustainability through resource, agricultural, cultural and industrial independence and a lack of dependency. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juche>

Juche is extraordinarily like the

permaculture concepts of transition, bioregionalism, and localisation where local resources are used and renewed, and local people have an internal circular economy. It resembles the goals of transition towns. It could evidently be used with strong results in a country under punitive sanctions.

Below are some statements from Kim Jong-un's widely discussed 2019 New Year Speech, where he spoke of the policies and successes affecting the country. Many of these will be familiar to permaculturists and others interested in sustainability and resilience. What is fascinating is that these principles are seen to hold the possibility also for developing a modern sustainable future.

- The agricultural sector, by actively introducing scientific farming methods, increased the ranks of high-yield farms and workteams, and reaped an unusually rich fruit harvest in spite of unfavourable climatic conditions
- A shortcut to developing the self-sufficient economy is to give precedence to science and technology and make innovations in economic planning and guidance.
- Provinces, cities and counties should develop the local economy in a characteristic way by relying on their own raw material resources.

And he goes on to say: The country should:

- introduce seeds of superior strains, high-yield farming methods and high-performance farm machines on an extensive scale, do farming scientifically and technologically
- boost the production of livestock products, fruits, greenhouse vegetables

and mushrooms.

- launch scientific fishing campaigns, and reenergize aquatic farming.
- build on the success we achieved in the forest restoration campaign, we should properly protect and manage the forests that have already been created, improve the technical conditions of roads, conduct river improvement on a regular basis, and protect the environment in a scientific and responsible manner.
- Every sector and every unit of the national economy should enlist their own technical forces and economic potential to maximise and launch a dynamic struggle to increase production and practise economy, so as to create a greater amount of material wealth.

Energy conservation

The hotels and other buildings had low energy light bulbs and automatic energy closing off in different areas. People's individual purchases and use of solar panels outside their apartments was everywhere.

Clean air, quiet cities

The seamless efficient public transport system with electric trams, buses and trains and personal transport of electric bicycles and motorcycles result in clean air and a quiet city. North Korea appears to have jumped the air pollution and industrial and health effects of polluted air by building its integrated electric transport. They do have brown coal power stations however the cities have clean air and water – freedom from air pollution.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

They were well aware of the air pollution in China and determined to avoid it.

City street tree planting is not simply one row of trees. There are two or sometimes three rows of trees giving protection for pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists. They are separated from street traffic, and provide shade in summer.

Ultimately the city sits in parklands since there are so many extensive public areas close to urban housing. The postwar planting has matured and the hand of the designer can be seen in species choices with their colours and forms.

Collective farms

We visited three collective farms and easily recognised others in the distance. We saw strongly developed self-reliance in local areas (bioregions) and the use of local resources to meet local needs – both permaculture principles.

There is full and complete use of natural resources so that one resource surplus serves another need, e.g. the use of completely ground maize husks to serve as the substrate for winter mushroom grown to help with protein during the harsher winter months.

Fields are small by Australian, but not Asian, standards. Agriculture is still mainly seasonally heavy labour with hand transplanting, harvesting of rice and maize, and then hay-making, but the soldiers return to assist.

The grouping of rural activities on collective farms enables the most efficient use of energy e.g. threshing and storing and feeding husks to animals in nearby stables, similar to eco-villages.

These seasonal activities which engage everyone probably have cultural songs, dances and stories attached. I wasn't able to find out in the short time we had.

Agriculture and collective farms

There is a recognition that science can help with production, and what we saw was appropriate and locally applied.

The farms had individual households grouped together and each household has a highly productive garden of slightly

different crops and so a village becomes complementary in vegetables.

Although there are fertiliser factories, all household waste, including human sewerage is returned to the fields, and so are all crop wastes. Only at one farm, the soils looked hungry.

There is very little intractable or non-recyclable waste. The lack of plastic and packaging is evident because products are produced close to the points of consumption.

The residents of farms are set, and try to attain, production goals, and when they do well, everyone receives a bonus at harvest time. However cash payments as salaries, are very small because the Collective and State provide:

- Free education
- Free dental and medical treatments
- Heavily subsidised transport
- Free entertainment
- Free housing
- Free food from the farm i.e. vegetables, fruit, meat, milk and possibly more.

I don't know about work clothes and shoes. Once these costs are removed the need for cash is much less and also residents can have small private garden plots and sell the produce.

Of 100% produce from a collective farm, 60% is first used to meet the needs of the residents for food, water, animal products and the remaining 40% is sent to the cities.

Encouragement of selective local seed saving is important for biodiversity and local resilience, and is carried out scientifically i.e. understanding genetic selection.

All able-bodied people appeared to be in the fields at this critical rice and maize harvest time.

Returning to the village and assisting with these seasonal activities has been strong in Asian cultures until relatively recently, although it is now changing as countries modernise and introduce small machines suitable for small fields.

Although some drays were ox drawn,

there were also tractors. With two rice crops a year, one collective harvested 8 t/ha/yr. This seems high and may not be the average, but it has been achieved.

For rice and staples self-sufficiency is about 80% and this is a respectable figure. Numerous countries in the world would like to achieve this.

Although the 2018 figures were not available the FAO report on Food Security and Nutrition showed decline in food insecurity for 2017. <http://www.fao.org/3/I9553EN/i9553en.pdf>

People told us it was a good harvest in 2018, so it is likely that food security is even closer.

Strong connections to permaculture

We repeatedly saw the following permaculture strategies and techniques applied in North Korea:

- Crop succession eg beans after rice
- Interplanting of vegetables
- Crop rotation across fields
- Large quantities of animal and human manures
- Sophisticated irrigation planning
- A range of cultivars
- Animals grazing stubble
- People gleaned after the rice harvest
- All organic waste returned to fields or fed to animals
- However, the principles least used in North Korea are:
 - Back up of major functions, in terms of water security and harvesting
 - Value the edges and marginal in terms of rivers, creeks and hillside restoration
 - Value biodiversity: there was not an extensive range of cultivars and varieties.
 - Animals not used to assist in managing the systems

What we can contribute and what we can learn

North Korea has much to offer agriculture, and ways of living for many countries of the world: sharing resources, moving towards organic growing, commitment



Energy capture: a farm greenhouse



Bicycles, and sometimes animal-drawn carts, are seen in rural areas

to good public transport, elegant landscaping. For some of us, clear air, good transport, efficient use of resources, lack of waste and plastic and advertising is what we would like to achieve.

Permaculture can offer refinement in some of these achievements. The rivers and hills in rural areas are degraded. The rivers are used as quarries, and the hills are denuded and efforts are still being made to grow annual crops. The range of species and cultivars is small and the small gene pool could be problematic with climate change or a disease epidemic.

Water harvesting, bush regeneration, Land Care and use of more perennial systems would grant farmers greater risk reduction and stability for seasonal variation.

Seed selection and saving on a regional scale and at farms can provide important variation to national crops.

The people work very hard and to a degree which is not good for everyone. Small machinery would go far to remedy this. There is small appropriate machinery available throughout Asia.

Exchange of principles and technologies would benefit much of the western world and also North Korea. It would be valuable for everyone.

Human Rights

I was unable to determine clearly the human rights situation in North Korea. However compared with about a quarter of the world's countries such as China, Saudi Arabia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Philippines, and others North Korea is far from the bottom. As a Quaker,

I work for and defend human rights. But I wanted in this article, to draw attention to the importance of quality of life in terms of life's basic needs for clean air, food, water, work, education, employment and housing and an unpolluted environment for a healthy future of land and people. North Korea will make their future and their children's lives better and the nation's health bills less than almost every country where I work.

Appendix

My experience of communism

By enormous chance I had been lucky enough to visit the former USSR and Czechoslovakia in 1979, and then Viet Nam in 1986, and Albania in 2003 and, also Cambodia, while under, or newly freed from communist governments. Being a development agriculturist/permaculturist, I was profoundly interested in traditional models of farming as well as whether these new collective ones had promise, and to understand the impact on food security, the environment, society and culture.

In brief, collectivisation required farmers to unite in working land usually taken from mandarins or colonial land landowners and redistributed to local people. People carry out farm tasks together and share machinery. In some cases, as in Viet Nam, the traditional villages were emptied and the farmers moved into various forms of barracks. Individual enterprises were strongly discouraged or forbidden. This could work well if knowledge and decision making about agriculture was sound and

the management discerning. Where it was not, and when management came from the Central Government in the form of setting targets, crops failed and there was no enthusiasm. Sometimes there were large grandiose projects such as building levee banks which failed. In Albania the country was littered with failed powerhouses, tractor factories, aquaculture structures and so on. It is generally considered that individual farmers make better decisions than collective ones. However Cuba has a fine record of moving from famine to food security when the US placed embargos on it. And, where fields are very small it makes sense to rationalise and share machinery, animals and tasks.

From a permaculture viewpoint, eco-villages use this more economic use of resources.

Many farmers, especially the Vietnamese hated living in barracks and longed to return to their individual homes in villages where there had already been a high degree of co-operation. Some had small businesses behind buildings and quietly grew food for themselves and others. We heard that similar micro-enterprises started and thrived in NK, and were subsequently legitimised.

In Asia, collectivisation builds on strong cultural traditions and although collectivisation can be difficult for people, it is not too foreign because:

- Asian societies are largely communal and where the good of the whole community or the family is often considered more important than

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QSA Notes

Monitoring and evaluation

JACKIE PERKINS | QSA ADMINISTRATOR



Meeting with evaluation participants in Kampong Thom. Photo: QSA

Why does QSA undertake monitoring and evaluation? What knowledge does it hope to gain?

Monitoring is a way of assessing the results achieved; it's a collection and analysis of information as a project progresses, and is based on targets set and activities planned during the planning phase of the work. Evaluation, however, is the comparison of what the project has achieved against the agreed plans – in other words what you set out to do and what has been accomplished. It may take place during the life of a project or at the end and possibly also look at other completed projects for comparison of the impact – whether or not the project made a difference to the

situation for the community.

In May/June 2018, an evaluation was conducted by one of QSA's project partners in Cambodia – the Department of Women's Affairs office in Kampong Thom province (DWA KT). This work was conducted by the project partner staff, who were trained and supported in the processes by Margaret Bywater, a Tasmanian Quaker and long-standing resident of Cambodia, living in Phnom Penh. This evaluation was undertaken in thirteen villages where the permaculture training projects have been located between 2013 and 2018. Evaluations can be conducted by external consultants, to ensure that there is no bias in the reporting, or as in this case, the local staff who

have received additional training and worked together on drawing up the survey form. This greatly increased their knowledge and skills, and enabled them to have a much better understanding of the processes involved for future project evaluations.

The survey form addressed the key training subject of home food gardens – a total of 340 people (291 women and 49 men) have received training and established their permaculture style gardens. The survey teams interviewed 136 participants and looked at 66 food gardens. The focus of the training courses was on establishing permaculture gardens, educating people on social problems such as family violence, trafficking and



Assessing the home food gardens. Photo: QSA

hygiene, training in small business and raising awareness on good nutrition for families. The participants in one village which had recently completed the course showed enthusiasm for the project and many produced impressive results in developing their gardens in a short period of time. They were keen to continue developing their gardens and all were selling produce.

In another village which finished the course in 2014, the rice fields are small (0.5 hectare) but the land around villagers' homes is sufficient in most cases to enable them to grow a good range of vegetables, raise cows and chickens, feed their families and sell their excess produce locally in the village and also in a larger market

nearby. Half of the participants reported making improvements to their houses or building a new house as a result of their increased income from the sale of organic produce.

However, for two villages completing the training in 2014-5 and 2015-, the results were not so encouraging. The gardens were not so productive and the income was therefore greatly reduced, in fact it was below the Cambodia poverty line. For the staff of DWA KT, this news was a surprise but clearly demonstrated the value of conducting a study over several years like this, comparing results from villages who have received identical training courses. During a recent monitoring visit, I was able to discuss the results of the evaluation in

detail. The staff all felt the evaluation process had taught them a lot, and they were very appreciative of the training they had received from Margaret, but everyone felt that more was needed to support these two villages not doing as well as everyone else. In the next project, starting in July 2019, these villages will receive additional training and support in the hope that their income levels will bring them out of poverty and greatly improve their health and wellbeing. Without the evaluation, staff would have been unaware of the situation affecting these villages, so yes, evaluations are important.

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.

Unit 14, 43-53 Bridge Road, Stanmore, NSW 2048 Australia • administration@qsa.org.au

PHONE+61 2 8054 0400 • FAX: +61 2 9225 9241 • ABN 35 989 797 918



My response to receiving an OAM award

BARRIE PITTOCK OAM | VICTORIA REGIONAL MEETING



Barrie is now 81 years old and has a little memory loss. However, here is brief account of why he received an OAM award for his work on Indigenous matters. He is probably better known for his climate science work, but he also has had a long and ongoing interest in Indigenous affairs. He writes:

It developed gradually in my high school years when I took seriously Jesus's words 'Love your enemies' and became a conscientious objector to doing military training at the time of the Suez Crisis in 1956. At the court hearing the magistrate told me to serve my country in other ways, and I took that seriously.

At Melbourne University in the late 1950s I joined the Aboriginal Scholarship Scheme and found that no Aborigines had completed high school. I went on a hitch-hiking tour of outback NSW and Queensland, where the issues were evident: Aborigines living in fringe communities on the other side of the railway or river, in crowded huts with ten or more in each bark hut and no electricity and only one cold water tap. No wonder the kids dropped out of school!

I went on to be associated with the Aboriginal Advancement League of Victoria, where I supported, together with Doug Nichols, that only Aborigines and Islanders be on its executive.

From 1965 to 1970 I was on the executive of the Federal Council for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI) where I was convener of the Lands Rights Committee. In 1967 I was the newly appointed chair of the FCAATSI Legislative Reform Committee which in 1967 worked for the referendum to change the Australian Constitution, to establish that Indigenous people be counted in the census. The Prime Minister on the referendum's 50th

anniversary on 27 May 2017 named in Parliament ten of the original campaigners who were able to attend.

In 1970 I moved an amendment to the FCAATSI constitution that only the Indigenous members should control FCAATSI policy. The 1970 FCAATSI conference rejected this motion at their Easter conference in Canberra, and I resigned and became a non-voting executive member of the newly formed, but short-lived National Tribal Council (NTC). Unfortunately, the NTC folded within a couple of years due to lack of finance. I played a minor role in various groups supporting Indigenous rights after that, but I became more involved in my scientific work.

After my PhD on atmospheric ozone measurements in 1963, I spent a couple of years in USA at the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colorado, and spent my last 2 months touring USA looking mainly at American Indian affairs. Then, in 1965, I was appointed to the CSIRO Division of Atmospheric Research and worked first on observing and saving the ozone layer, later on the environmental effects of nuclear war, and then climate change science from the 1980s until my official retirement in 1999.

I kept an eye on Indigenous affairs and in my post-retirement days I spent a lot of time advocating renewable energy, noting particularly its advantages for remote Indigenous communities in

providing electricity for them instead of diesel fuel. Also, via solar powered hydrogen and ammonia production it could be an economic resource, both for them and to export to the rest of Australia and overseas. I advocated this with the Cooperative Research Centre for Remote Economic Participation in Alice Springs, around the late 2000s and early 2010s, but they did not then take it up except as a local power source.

I did follow this up with a paper in the Rangelands Journal in 2011, and a follow-up document on the development of ammonia as a renewable energy medium. Later in the 2010s this was taken up somewhat by a company (Yara) that is building an ammonia export business in the Pilbara region, with solar power from Aboriginal land used to generate hydrogen and ammonia from sea-water. I joined the new Australia Ammonia Association, which is going strong in the late 2010s with much new research by CSIRO and at Monash University. But now in the late 2010s I find it difficult to keep up with the new research and the cheaper and more efficient technology, which is growing rapidly, and hopefully will provide power and income for remote Indigenous communities. But it is up to younger people to follow up on this, and especially the state and federal governments.

The technological revolution is happening and it will provide income and employment in many remote Indigenous

Falls

Falls, Basket Swamp, Boonoo Boonoo National Park

Through soggy heath and sedge
the kangaroo trail drops,
scattering big-fisted rocks
as you struggle to be present.

A gurgle, a trickle, a whispering whoosh,
sips at your spirit.

Cold, clear, gushing, over, around, down giant lizard-
grey granite.
A warning wind roars up the gorge.
Desperate fire tempered she-oaks, teeter, cling.
A forest giant, lightning-flung to earth

bridges boulders, a tightrope dare.
Tentacled monster roots still
crunch dreamtime granite bricks.

Rock sitting, late summer sun, spray-thick breath,
something tugs you to the edge.
Far south-east, green ranges collide.

Underfoot, flatweed flower, crevice defying,
crinkles, tweaks
your being hears, feels, listens to ...
everything fades, silence,
a stretched second of nothing.

Boonoo boonoo, Bookookoorara!
This capillary, this vein, this artery,
this life-blood ...

Everything
falls...
even oblivion.

peter burton



Barrie and Diana at the unveiling of the statue of Pastor Sir Douglas Nichols and Lady Gladys Nichols

communities. I am pleased to have helped towards bringing this about.

Now I advocate for action on the Uluru Statement, and for Australia Day to be moved to the anniversary of the Aboriginal Recognition Referendum on 27 May 1967, or some other more suitable date than that of the Captain Phillip landing. Indigenous views should be the guide.

I am grateful that my work in Indigenous affairs has been acknowledged.

Barrie's wife, Diana, adds

The photo shows Barrie and me at the unveiling of the statue of Pastor Sir Douglas Nichols and Lady Gladys Nichols (they preferred 'Doug and Gladys', or Uncle Doug and Auntie Gladys) in the Parliament Gardens, Melbourne in 2007. Doug respected Barrie a great deal. When in his late 20s I think, Barrie went to stand at the back of the meeting of the Aborigines Advancement League (AAL) special

meeting. It was to decide on 'Aboriginal only' leadership of the AAL. The current secretary was a non-Aboriginal, good man, respected by many. But it was the era of Black Power in the USA which was having an influence here towards strong Aboriginal leadership. Doug saw Barrie standing at the back of the room and said, 'Barrie, we need an independent chair, would you chair the meeting?' Which he did, on the spot, with Doug by his side, indicating who should speak each time – one for, one against.

Doug knew the people and which way they would vote and wanted a balance in the voices heard. I am still amazed that Barrie did this; he was so able, aware and knowledgeable to be able to do it. Respect from the Aboriginal community apparently was evident. Doug was a great Elder here and Barrie helped a little in Doug's campaign to save Lake Tyres Aboriginal community in East Gippsland.

AF

Know thy Friend: Elaine Polglase

RAE LITTING | NEW SOUTH WALES REGIONAL MEETING



Quakers are told to live adventurously. Elaine was living adventurously long before she ever knew about Quakers – although like many people, when she discovered Quakers she realised ‘I have been a Quaker all my life; I just didn’t know it’.

When Elaine left school at the age of 15 she was expected to marry and live a fairly predictable life. In fact she never married, and was one of those who blazed the way for women in many fields which had been considered beyond their capabilities.

Elaine’s first job was with the post office in the overseas telephone exchange. It was interesting work as the telephonist was expected to listen to the conversations and advise speakers when their time was up! She found adventure in travel. In the 1950s she hitch-hiked around Europe – always dressing well in order to get better quality lifts! She took the Ghan to Alice Springs, and visited New Guinea, staying in a village without vehicles, radio or electricity.

During the 1950s and 60s Elaine was a volunteer visitor at the Far West Children’s hospital which treated children from the far west who needed long-term treatment – sometimes lasting for years. As some children had no friends or relatives in Sydney, and their parents could not afford to visit, the hospital visitor was the only person who could give them individual attention. Later, when she went to work in New Zealand, Elaine missed the children so much that she became a visitor at the Beramphore Orphanage, taking the children on trips to the zoo or the pictures. Again, these were children who received very little individual attention, although most did have a parent who visited from time to time.

In 1956 Elaine went to New Zealand to work for the NZ Post Office. While

she was there she saw an advertisement for people to train as Assistant Air Traffic Controllers in the new Wellington Airport. In response to her application she received a very curt reply, which made her so angry she rang up to protest. As a result she was given a job – the first woman to work in this field in New Zealand. The equipment used at that time was radar, the telephone and the teleprinter. The Air Traffic Controllers were taken flying during which they acted as radio operators to understand the pilot’s perspective.

After doing this job for 4 years she returned to Australia and applied for similar work. She was told this was not a woman’s job, even though she had good references. So at the age of 35 Elaine went to TAFE to study Personnel Administration, and eventually got a job with CSR as a Safety Officer. One of the questions she was asked at the interview was whether it would worry her if she had to go to a meeting and was the only woman present. She was able to reply, ‘I belong to an Astronomical Society. I am the only woman member and I am the President.’ CSR owned a number of factories, mines and even cattle and sheep stations. Elaine travelled around giving safety training based on the history of accidents at that place. She quickly learnt to identify work place hazards, often to the surprise of those who had walked past them every day without noticing.

Elaine says her interest in astronomy came from her father, who was a seaman. One of her great pleasures was travelling to watch solar eclipses, of which she has seen seven in various parts of the world. Her other great interest is embroidery. (It seems unlikely that a man has so far been the President of an Embroiderer’s Guild!)

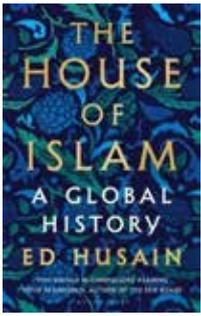
Elaine’s family were not religious, but Elaine always felt the need of a spiritual life. As her parents were

nominally Anglican, she started going to the Anglican Church, but it was a high church and she felt her musical talents were not up to the sung service. When her brother married a Presbyterian she started going to the Presbyterian Church with her sister-in-law, and found this more to her liking. While in New Zealand she became an elder in the church – this was before the Australian church appointed female elders. Elaine was not entirely comfortable with the role, which involved home visits. The purpose of these visits was pastoral care, but those visited often thought they were being checked up on! Later, when she became a Quaker elder, she was more comfortable with the role.

Elaine discovered Quakers through another interest – bird watching. On a birding trip to Lamington National Park she met Helen Linacre. At this time Elaine says she was ‘tired of being preached at’. It wasn’t the content of the preaching that annoyed her, but the assumption that one person should always talk and the others always listen. She was interested to hear how Quakers worshiped as equals, and she came to Quakers bringing with her a rich load of experience.

In addition to acting as an Elder, Elaine coordinated Quaker Learning for Wahroonga Meeting and was on the library committee. In her eighties she transferred the library catalogue onto the electronic database. She employed a tutor who came to her unit to assist her with anything she did not fully understand about the database or any other computer matters. She also was the FWCC representative for several years and visited other Meetings to present about FWCC. She enjoyed going to Yearly Meeting and to continue conversations year after year with Quakers from around Australia. She continues to attend and contribute to Wahroonga Meeting.

AF



The House Of Islam *A Global History*

BY ED HUSAIN

published by Bloomsbury, London. 2018. p. 320. \$29.99. ISBN TPB 978-1-4088-7227-7.

It is hard to imagine a better book than this about the current state of Islam, and what could be done to better its prospects. Husain was born in London to Muslim immigrants from India. As a teenager, he became a part of international Muslim radicalism, which he subsequently abandoned and wrote about in his book, *The Islamist*. Later, he studied Arabic under Muslim scholars in Damascus, and then went to Saudi Arabia as a teacher, but was distressed to find that his students welcomed the terrorist bombings on the London underground, so he returned to the UK. He now works in think tanks in London and Washington.

It is one of the merits of the book that it identifies a potential bridge between the West and Islam: the conservative political tradition, particularly the British one. Unlike the negligent West, Islam is intent on preserving the collected inherited wisdom and goodness of the past. The political philosopher Edmund Burke's (1730-1797) assertion 'society is a partnership between the dead, the living, and generations yet to come,' would be congenial to Muslims. What they want to conserve are worship of one God, the Koran, an honoured

prophet, a celebrated family life, and emphasis on the soul's journey to the next life.

Islam also favours free trade (Muslims were always great traders), the rule of law (Islam is a religion of law and obedience), and pluralism (Muslims are used to different cultures). The conservative government in Britain seems to suit their interests best, although the Christian Democratic government in Germany should have appeal.

Right now, the house of Islam is ablaze, and Husain has no doubt about who the arsonists are: they are the terrorist groups spawned by the Salafi-Wahabi version of Islam. Salafi means 'the predecessors' and refers to the first three generations of Muslims. Following an 18th century preacher in Arabia, Al Wahab, they had a literalist interpretation of the Koran, and maintained that anyone who disagreed with them deserved death. To-day, Salafism is the majority form of Islam in Saudi Arabia, which has spent billions of dollars spreading it throughout the world. Even so, Salafi-Wahabis represent fewer than 5% of the world's Muslims. Terrorist groups like the Salafi jihadi, have appeared before, and were outlawed by mainstream Islam, which, Husain argues, should be repeated.

In sharp contrast is Ahmadu Bamba, born to pious Muslim parents in Senegal, West Africa in 1853. His father was a marabout, or learned

religious scholar, who taught the boy Arabic, the Koran, poetry, and Muslim jurisprudence, which he took to without difficulty. He became a Gandhian before Gandhi, and was religiously committed to non-violence against the persecuting, imperialist French. A charismatic personality, he attracted an enormous following, and the French, alarmed, sent him into exile in 1895 to neighboring Gabon for seven years. On his return in 1902, the crowds he attracted grew even more, and the French sent him to jail in bordering Mauritania for four years.

On his return, his crowd appeal continued, and the French, by then convinced of his pacifism, permitted him to stay. He died in 1927. The village he founded as a haven for peace in 1887, Touba, is now Senegal's second largest city. About a quarter of the population is in the Mouride, a Sufi order he founded. Senegal is a rare model of democracy in Africa.

REG NAULTY

Canberra Regional Meeting

Reflections from the 2018 Treaty Workshop

CHRIS HUGHES | VICTORIA REGIONAL MEETING



Sarah Tailby (seated) and course participants including Chris (right)

I had the pleasure of attending the Treaty workshop held by the Treaty Relationships Group at the Friends Settlement at Whanganui, Aotearoa/New Zealand from Friday September 28th to Sunday 30th 2018. The Settlement community were wonderful hosts, the settlement itself is a wonderful testimony to sustainable living and the food was magnificent.

I attended primarily to hear about the treaty, its relevance to Māori self-determination within Aotearoa/New Zealand and to find out if there was anything our Committee could learn from our sister Committee in New Zealand in relation to educating ourselves, our Quaker community and the broader dominant culture in coming to terms with how we come into right relationship with the original inhabitants of the lands we live in.

During the Friday Sessions run by David James and Jillian Wychel we explored the history of the treaty through these prisms of different world views and the different narrative stories from the Māori and Pākehā perspective of historical events. We critiqued the social, cultural, economic and political outcomes for each society. We explored the growing intergenerational inequality resulting from initial and on-going colonialism and the difficulty many non-Māori New Zealanders would have in accepting this.

On the Saturday we were joined by others to explore white privilege through an activity and a TED Talk on white privilege facilitated by Sarah Tailby and Karl Snowden. Sarah, Karl and their children were a welcome addition to

the program with Karl and the children having Māori whakapapa (lineage). Their personal sharing of experiences throughout the workshop were very rich and informative. There were also articles on white privilege and institutional racism from a white perspective from both a New Zealand Pākehā and United States White woman's perspective. Issues of white defensiveness and white blindness to the privileges of being part of the dominant culture were discussed.

Whiteness was described as power, privilege and patterns of thinking associated with white people. Where white thinking is normalised and seen as neutral, nonpartisan and normal, and other non-white people are either invisible or hyper-visible. This invisible privilege is the structural racism that people mean when they claim Australia and New Zealand are deeply racist societies; that this racism is internalised and bestowed on white people from birth.

The rest of the workshop was dedicated to reports on what the committee has done since the last workshop and what it wishes to do until the next workshop.

The key learning from this workshop is the need to name and acknowledge white privilege and work towards ending it within ourselves and others. The belief of the superiority of one race/culture/class above others that justifies the subservience of all life to it, is both the cause and barrier preventing us healing our fractured world. This fracture is felt by all, if not acknowledged or named.

Until we make this shift, we as individuals and communities can't truly come into right relationship with the land

and the original inhabitants of the land we reside on. We need to be careful in the language we use and how we approach these issues, but we need to approach them if we are going to deal with them.

White people are not being asked to feel guilty about past wrongs or their bestowed privilege, but they are asked to recognise they have occurred and are continuing to occur; to work towards educating other white people about the on-going discrimination against the original inhabitants and the role of white privilege within it; to work towards a more truly inclusive, equitable society where white culture is a culture not 'The Culture'. To decolonise our hearts, minds and society is the challenged posed.

Raising the issue of white privilege and providing a different colonial history than the one taught and upheld by most the settler community can be confronting and disorientating. It often leads many into denial and/or a range of defensive attitudes and behaviours to maintain this belief or the opposite – making people descend into unproductive guilt or shame.

However, this is our work. Māori and First Australians have enough burdens placed upon them dealing with the effects of colonisation on their own families and communities without us expecting them to educate us about what we need to be doing as well. This has been continually enforced upon me by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Elders over many years.

The key reinforced learning from the workshop for me was the challenge for both Committees of how we address this internalised bias and privilege within ourselves and assist others to recognise it

within themselves. Getting participants to attend workshops and courses on 'learning about Original inhabitant's culture and spirituality' is relatively easy, getting them to come to a course to question themselves and their cultural beliefs and habits is much more difficult. However, this is the real work of our committees: to educate ourselves and others, so we can become

useful allies to those suffering, namely the land and the original inhabitants. I picked up some useful activities from the workshop in relation to starting this journey, looking at the different world views of indigenous and non-indigenous people, and the different narratives that groups tell each other about personal experiences and historical events. As they

say – 'Quakerism, come and have your answers questioned.'

Chris is a Co-convenor, Australian Yearly Meeting First Nations Concerns Committee. He lives on Taungurung land.

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REMNANTS OF WAR IN THE PACIFIC – CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

ERW in the Pacific. This was launched at the United Nations building with support from the Australian Government. We also mounted a photographic exhibition and held two lunch time panel discussions, of which I was moderator. We called for a systematic regional survey, followed by comprehensive, coordinated clearance.

The Victoria Quaker Fund supported my application, covering my expenses and providing money towards printing of the book, mounting the photo exhibition and distribution of the book to Pacific Island nations.

Closure

The task in doing this is large but not infinite or impossible. Although fighting in the Pacific Theatre was savage and covered wide spread areas, it did not

see the saturation bombing that later technology would bring. For example, the saturation bombing that took place over Laos and Cambodia by the US military during the Vietnam War delivered a higher tonnage of bombs on those two small countries than by all sides on all battlefields during WWII.

Detection of WWII era weapons and munitions is simplified due to their high metal content and physical sizes. This is in contrast to landmines, many of which were purposely constructed of plastic and Bakelite to make detection difficult.

The end result is that clearance of the Pacific nations is possible. It is definitely not a technological impossibility. With sufficient political will and funding World War II could finally be relegated to the history books in the Pacific.

About SafeGround

SafeGround is a small Non-Government Organisation staffed principally by volunteers. We pay only for extended field work and authorship/design of publications. We began life as the International Campaign to Ban Landmines – Australian Network Inc. I have been with the organisation for twenty years and have been either Secretary or National Coordinator for all but one of the last thirteen. More can be seen about our work at <https://safeground.org.au/>. Our most recent venture is to join the Campaign to Ban Killer Robots (<https://www.stopkillerrobots.org/>). I can be contacted at lorelt@optusnet.com.au should any Friend wish more information on our work or be interested in being involved.

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NORTH KOREA – CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

expressing individuality. This can be difficult for people from individualistic societies to understand.

- There are long traditions of working together at transplanting, harvesting and even building homes. Everyone is expected to participate. Soldiers are sent back home at these times to work in their native villages, and children are often on school holidays. This creates sense of belonging and purpose and real knowledge of rural life.
- Many traditional Asian farms, due to long centuries of invasion, are grouped around a common village core for security. Outside this core are the orchards, and farmers go daily to their fields to tend rice or other staples.

Further Information

- <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R41749.pdf> An excellent overview of food security in North Korea.
- <http://countrystudies.us/north-korea/49.htm> North Korean Agriculture
- <http://www.fao.org/3/a-I7695e.pdf> Elaborate description of various collective farms and how they work. They must be different in different regions.
- <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/article/inside-north-koreas-environmental-collapse/> geologists, ecologists and soil scientists describe the poor health of rivers, forest, wildlife and so on in North Korea.

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- 1 August for the September edition
- 1 November for the December edition.

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Coordinating editor: David Swain

Editorial panel: Garry Duncan, Rae Litting, Wies Schuiringa

Production

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