

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in
Australia Inc.

DOCUMENTS
in
ADVANCE

Yearly Meeting

Held virtually from 4 – 10 July 2020

with some Preparatory and Open Sessions held via Zoom in May and June 2020

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Draft Timetable for our Virtual Yearly Meeting 2020

* Please note this a draft version and will no doubt change as we refine our program.
Find the Timetable here: <https://www.keepandshare.com/calendar38/show.php?i=2838431>

DRAFT TIMETABLE FOR VIRTUAL YEARLY MEETING 2020							
Times	Sat 4 July	Sun 5 July	Mon 6 July	Tues 7 July	Wed 8 July	Thurs 9 July	Fri 10 July
10am	Introduction s/Welcome (CRM)	Meeting for Worship (CRM)	Meeting for Worship (CRM)	All ages Meeting for Worship (C&JYFs)	10-10.45am Meeting for Remembrance (AYM Officers)	All ages Meeting for Worship (C&JYFs)	Meeting for Worship (CRM)
10.30	Welcome to Country (FNPCC)	10.20am Friendly School- Sharing & Close	10.20am Plenary Peace Concerns (QPLC)	10.30am Plenary Children & JYF Committee	10.45-11am Break	Backhouse Lecture Feedback	Share & Tell Breakouts 10.30am- 12.00pm
11- 11.15am	Break	Break	Break	Break	Plenary FWCC, including AWPS Visitor (FWCC Committee)	Break	
11.15 – 12.00	Worship Adjourn	State of Society Presentation (CRM) Adjourn	Plenary Earthcare (Earthcare Committee) Adjourn	Plenary Quaker Service Adjourn		Online Opportunities (IT Committee)	
4.00- 5.30pm	Friendly School Presentation & Sharing (CRM) Adjourn	4-4.30pm Summary of Epistles (CRM)	4-5pm Plenary Indigenous Concerns (FNPCC) Adjourn 5pm	Formal Session 1 Adjourn	Formal Session 2 Adjourn	Formal Session 3 Adjourn	Formal Session 4
		4.30-5.30pm Plenary State of Society, RM Reports Adjourn					
7-8.30pm		Backhouse Lecture (Backhouse Lecture Committee) Adjourn					9pm Closing MfW Epistles read

General information to prepare for our Virtual Yearly Meeting 2020

One purpose of Yearly Meeting is the reaching of decisions on AYM policy and conduct. Other reasons for Yearly Meeting are the enriching of fellowship between Friends, mutual support in spiritual growth and the discussion of current issues. (Handbook of Practice & Procedure 6.1)

Come to meeting for worship with heart and mind prepared. (AYM Advices and Queries 10)

YM2020 Hosting Committee looks forward to welcoming Friends to our virtual Yearly Meeting which is hoped will be inclusive, inspiring and connecting. New forms of using online techniques will be used.

We shall try to make the replacement a good substitute, which builds a sense of community, allows learning and sharing and enables business to be progressed.

Yearly Meeting 2020 was due to be held at the Avondale University College, near Lake Macquarie between Sydney and Newcastle, between 4 July and 10 July 2020. The new event, offered through Zoom technology, will focus on these same dates.

Of course, all Quakers world-wide are facing similar challenges and opportunity. We plan to make use of wisdoms that are being discovered by others, and add them to our own creativity.

Because the event is to be wholly on-line, the business of YM will be done in a different way, with additional pre-YM opportunities for Regional Meetings and Friends to be in touch with the YM committees about their reports in *Documents in Advance*. This should reduce the number of items coming to the business sessions for discernment.

Due to issues around Zoom fatigue, not all of our usual features of YM can be appropriately transferred to the online environment over the main week of 4-10 July. There is scope for additional 'meetings' to be arranged more spontaneously during the week, by committees or individuals, for specific meetings or socialising. Technical support for this can be arranged. Similarly, should interest groups want to meet beyond the week that could be made possible.

Elders and Pastoral Carers at Yearly Meeting 2020

The purpose of appointing Elders to our Yearly Meeting is to seek to nurture the spiritual life of the Yearly Meeting community. Elders seek to ensure that the deliberations and decisions of our Meetings for Worship for the conduct of our business are made under the discernment of the Spirit.

These roles are under development in the virtual environment. We anticipate that the Friends nominated to these roles will be able to 'meet' with the convenors before the event to clarify details. We would think it to be appropriate for YM2020 Meetings for Worship and probably the business sessions to have a rostered Elder holding each meeting. Pastoral care issues related to the virtual YM may well arise and we think it useful to have a designated pastoral care group with whom Friends can communicate.

Testimonies

It is anticipated that, due to the need to reorganise meetings to fit the online environment, Testimonies will be published on the websites and this year will not be read aloud. At each business session, the Clerks will list the names of those who have died from two Regional Meetings and remind Friends that Testimonies are published on the YM20 website. There will be a page which contains a list of all the Testimonies, each of which will be a link to the Testimony document.

Australia Yearly Meeting appointments

Please note:

- Appointments are as known in May 2020. (Appointments have been updated online since the 2019 List was published in *Documents in Retrospect 2019*.)
- This list is updated on the Members Resources Page of <http://www.quakersaustralia.info/>
- All appointments are to the end of the Yearly Meeting in the listed year.
- The AYM Clerk and AYM Secretary are ex officio on all AYM committees except Nominations and Thanksgiving Fund.
- Email addresses are not case sensitive

AYM Officers

Role	Names	Term ends	Email
AYM Presiding Clerk	Ann Zubrick, WARM	2022	Clerk@quakersaustralia.info
AYM Secretary	Jacque Schultze, NSWRM	2020	Secretary@quakersaustralia.info
AYM Treasurer	Roger Sawkins, QRM	2021	Treasurer@quakersaustralia.info
AYM Membership Secretary	Michael Searle, CRM	2021	membership@quakersaustralia.info
AYM Website Coordinator	Roger Sawkins, QRM	2020	web@quakersaustralia.info
AYM Public Officer	David Purnell, CRM		Private email

Committees and Working Groups

Should there be any changes to RM appointments on the various committees they should be brought to YM 2020, to ensure an up-to-date list

Committee	Names	Term ends	Email *
Australia North Korea Peace Support Group	Sejin Pak (SANTRM), Wilma Davidson (CRM), Sue Ennis (VRM), Adrian Glamorgan (WARM), Dale Hess (VRM), Rae Litting (NSWRM), Rowe Morrow (NSWRM), Roger Sawkins (QRM) and David Swain (NSWRM)	tba	CDPRK@quakersaustralia.info
<i>The Australian Friend</i> , Committee, NSWRM	Garry Duncan, Rae Litting, Wies Schuiringa (Convenor), David Swain.	2021	CAustFriend@quakersaustralia.info
AYM Presiding Clerk's Support Committee, WARM	Gina Price, Allan Knight, Michael Hertz, Ruth Watson, Tonya Jensen, Vivienne Dawes	2022	CClerksSupport@quakersaustralia.info
AYM Secretary's Advisory Committee, NSWRM	Helen Gould, Jackie Perkins, Wies Schuiringa, Jennifer Burrell, David Cooper, Mary Pollard	2020	CSecretaryAdvisory@quakersaustralia.info
Backhouse Lecture Committee (Expert) 6-year appointments	David Tehr, WARM and Sue Parritt (VRM), (Co-Convenors); Kerry O'Regan, SANTRM (2023); Mark Macleod, TRM (2024); Sieneke Martin, VRM (2025); YF, vacant	2021	CBackhouse@quakersaustralia.info
Child Protection Committee CP Contact Friends	Maddy Walker (TRM) & Yarrow Andrew (SANTRM) Co-Convenors)	2021	CChildProtection@quakersaustralia.info
	Stewart Betts & Kerrie Smyth, CRM;	2021	
	Linda Page and Belinda Bonham, NSWRM	2021	
	Tania Aveling & John Beattie, QRM	2020	
	Gillian McCarthy (Lewis) & Yarrow Andrew, SANTRM	2021	
	Maddy Walker & Ron Frey, TRM	2021	
	Kyrstie Crane, VRM	2021	
	Jenny Turton, VRM	2020	
	Lesli Grant & Henry Esbenshade, WARM	2021	
	Alex Brosnan, YF	2020	
Children & JYF Committee	Lisa Wriley, NSWRM (2020); Emily Chapman-Searle, TRM (2022); Maxine Cooper, QRM (2022); Melissa Nininahazwe, SANTRM (2022); Josh Crane, JYF & Miriam Hope, JYF (2020); Alex Brosnan, YF (2020)		CChildrenJYF@quakersaustralia.info
RM Correspondents	Raina Emerson, CRM; Jasmine Payget, NSWRM; tba, QRM; Helen Chuter, Maree-rose Jones (JYF) TRM; Diane Bretherton, VRM; tba WARM		

Children & JYF Co-Coordinators	Tania Aveling (WARM) and Gina Price (WARM)	2020	CJYFCoordinator@quakersaustralia.info
Earthcare Committee, WARM	Adrian Glamorgan, Brenda Roy, Jo Vallentine (Convenors), Elizabeth PO', Helene Fisher, Lizzie Nicholas, Gina Price	2021	CEarthcare@quakersaustralia.info
Finance Committee	Jane Drexler, TRM; David Lowry, David Lowe, QRM	2021	CFinance@quakersaustralia.info
First Nations Peoples Concerns Committee	Chris Hughes and Sharee Harper (VRM, Convenors); Gedda Fortey, CRM; John McMahon, VRM	2021	CFirstNations@quakersaustralia.info
RM correspondents	Anne Felton, CRM; Elspeth Hull, NSWRM; Sitara Gare, QRM; John Duguid, Harald Ehrman & Ruth Primrose, SANTRM; Sally Gale, TRM; VRM: tba; Clare O'Leary, WARM	various	
Friends in Stitches; Australian Quaker Narrative Embroidery RM correspondents	Tessa Spratt, VRM & Sally O'Wheel, TRM (Convenors)	2020	CStitches@quakersaustralia.info
Curator	Wilma Davidson, CRM; ellan, NSWRM; Mary Grbavac, QRM; Robin Sinclair, SANTRM; Patricia Wood, WARM. Jacque Schultze, NSWRM	Various 2020	
Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) Committee FWCC RM Representatives (4-year appointments)	Jonathan Benyei, CRM (2022); Rowe Morrow, NSWRM (2020); Marian James, QRM (2020); David Evans, SANTRM (2021); Julie Walpole (TRM), 2021; Sue Ennis, VRM (2023); Sharon Matthews, WARM (2022); Connor Chaffey, YF (2020) Ex officio: Ronis Chapman, AWPS Secretary (2020); Harold Wilkinson, AWPS Treasurer (2020); Maxine Cooper, AWPS Assistant Clerk (2021); Aletia Dundas, AWPS Representative to QUNO NY (2022)		CFWCC@quakersaustralia.info
Handbook Revision Committee, NSWRM (Expert)	Wies Schuiringa (NSWRM), Julie Walpole (TRM), Bev Polzin (VRM)	2022	CHandbook@quakersaustralia.info
Information Technology Committee (Expert)	Roger Sawkins, QRM (Convenor); Michael Searle, CRM; Jacque Schultze, NSWRM	2020	CTechnology@quakersaustralia.info
Nominations Committee	Bev Polzin (VRM), Convenor (2022); Wilma Davidson, CRM (2021); Mary Pollard, NSWRM (2020); Emily Walpole, QRM (2022); Topsy Evans, SANTRM (2021); Kerstin Reimers, TRM (2022); Allan Knight, WARM (2021)		CNominations@quakersaustralia.info
Peace & Social Justice Fund Committee, CRM	Peter Hillery, Peggy Storch, Graham Jensen, Marilyn Webster & Harold Wilkinson	2022	CPSJ@quakersaustralia.info
Publications Committee (Expert)	Judith Pembleton, QRM (Convenor); Jenny Stock, SANTRM; Margaret Bywater; TRM; Jim Palmer, VRM, Dawn Joyce, QRM (2022); Sue Headley, TRM (2022)	2021	CPublications@quakersaustralia.info
Quaker Learning Australia, WARM QLA Meeting for Learning facilitators	Brenda Roy (Convenor), David Tehr, Sharon Matthews, Michael Hertz Fiona Gardner, Catherine Heywood (VRM); Jenny Spinks (CRM)	2021	CQLA@quakersaustralia.info
Quaker Peace & Legislation Committee (QPLC), CRM RM Correspondents	Harold Wilkinson (Convenor), Margaret Bearlin, Ronis Chapman, Margaret Clark, Gareth Knapman, David Purnell, Shobha Varkey, Shannon Zimerman Greg Parkhurst, CRM; Jackie Perkins, NSWRM; Felipe Oliveira, QRM; Peri Coleman, SANTRM; tba, TRM.; Beverley Polzin, VRM; Rosemary Longhurst, WARM.	2022 various	CQPLC@quakersaustralia.info
Right Holding of Yearly Meeting Committee	Jennifer Burrell, NSWRM (Convenor); Geoff Greeves, SANTRM; Felicity Rose, TRM; Bev Polzin, VRM; Liaison Friends: Alan Clayton VRM, Emily Chapman Searle SANTRM, Gina Price and Tania Aveling (also QRM) Children's/JYF coordinator; vacant, WARM.	2020	CHoldingYM@quakersaustralia.info
Safe Quaker Community Committee (Expert) RM Contact Friends	Chris Hughes, VRM, Convenor (2022); Diana Campbell, SANTRM (2022); Ronis Chapman, CRM (2020) Chris Larkin, CRM; tba, NSWRM; Judith Pembleton, David King, QRM; Matthew Lykos, Diana Campbell, SANTRM; Maggi Storr, Jenny Seaton, TRM; Chris Hughes, Susan Nelson, VRM; Sharon Matthews, Heather Williams, WARM	Various	CSafeQuaker@quakersaustralia.info

The Sanctuary Management Committee	Miriam Goodwin (Convenor), Jacque Schultze; Bill Brennan, (2020), NSWRM	2022	CSanctuary@quakersaustralia.info
Thanksgiving Fund Committee, SANTRM	Bronte and Chris Collins (Co-Convenors) Fleurieu RM; Robin Sinclair Adelaide Hills RM, Charles Stevenson, Eastern Suburbs LM	2022	CThanksgiving@quakersaustralia.info
Website Monitoring Committee	Judith Pembleton, QRM; Margaret Bywater, TRM; Jim Palmer, VRM	2021	CWebMonitor@quakersaustralia.info
Yearly Meeting Planning Support Committee (Expert)	Michael Searle, Harold Wilkinson, CRM; Emily Chapman-Searle (SANTRM); Yarrow Andrew, (SANTRM)	2021	CYMSupport@quakersaustralia.info

Young Friends Appointments

Role	Names	Term ends	Email
Clerk	Joelle Nininahazwe, SANTRM	2021	RMYFClerk@quakersaustralia.info
Treasurer	Callista Barrit, NSWRM	2020	callista.barritt@gmail.com
YF Liaison with Silver Wattle Quaker Centre	Gabbie Paananen, NSWRM	2020	quack397@gmail.com
AYM Friends World Committee for Consultation	Connor Chaffey	2020	connorchaffey@gmail.com
AYM Child and JYF Committee	Alex Brosnan, TRM	2020	alexbrosnan508@gmail.com
Safe Quaker Community	Larissa Barrett	2020	

Australia Yearly Meeting Representatives

Role	Names	Term ends
Aotearoa/New Zealand Yearly Meeting, April 2020	Matthew Lykos, SANTRM	2020
Australia Palestine Advocacy Network (APAN)	David Purnell, CRM	2022
Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC)	Alan Clayton, VRM	2021
Australasian Centre for Corporate Responsibility (ACCR)	David Shorthouse, CRM	2021
Friends Peace Teams Council	Jane Drexler, NSWRM	2022
Independent & Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN)	David Purnell, CRM	2020
NCCA Church Leaders	Presiding Clerk	2022
NCCA Assembly members	Presiding Clerk	2022
	David Purnell, CRM	2022
NCCA Faith and Unity Commission	Janet Duke, VRM	2022
NCCA Safe Churches Network	Ronis Chapman, CRM	2021
NCCA Social Justice Network	Wies Schuiringa, NSWRM	2022
Silver Wattle Quaker Centre Advisory Committee	AYM Nominee: tba	

Associated bodies (Not appointed by Australia Yearly Meeting)

Role	Names	
Australian Friends Fellowship of Healing (AFFH)	Barbara True, (<i>Wholeness</i> editor), SANTRM ; Heather Herbert, CRM; Barbara Kearney, NSWRM; Maggi Storr, TRM; Kaye Wright, VRM; Lesli Grant, WARM	
AFFH Charitable Trust	Trustees: Alison McConnell Imbriotis (Convenor), TRM; Jackie Perkins, NSWRM	
Friends Peace Teams	Jane Drexler, Valerie Joy, John Michaelis, (AYM); Nadine Hoover, Fenna Mandalong, Tom Martin, Gay Howard, Deb Wood, Mark Hoover, Janet Anderson (USA); Kins Aparece (Philippines); Petrus Kuelson, (Indonesia); Park Jungjoo (South Korea); Subhash Chandra, Ram Paudel (Nepal)	

The Friends' School Board	Presiding members: Craig Stephens, Presiding Member TRM nominee; Mary Beadle, Deputy Presiding Member, Board nominee (effective 16 May); Natalia Urosevic, Deputy Presiding Member (2023), Board nominee TRM Nominees: Sally McGushin (2021); Karen Wilson (2022); Mary Beadle (2023) Board Nominees: Karen Davis (2021); Robert Pennicott (2021); Sam Ibbott (2023) Ex Officio Appointments: Ann Zubrick, AYM Presiding Clerk; Nelson File, Principal, Shaun Sargent, Secretary to the Board of Governors	
The Friends School Quaker Values Committee	Tracy Bourne, CRM; Liz Field, NSWRM; John Beattie, QRM; Peter Webb, SANTRM; Mary Beadle, Karen Wilson, Sally McGushin, TRM; Oliver Lovell, VRM; Allan Knight (Convenor), WARM; Nelson File, TRM (Principal, ex officio)	CSchoolValues@quakersaustralia.info
FWCC AWPS	Ronis Chapman (AWPS Secretary, 2020); Harold Wilkinson (AWPS Treasurer, 2020)	ronisc@fwccawps.org
QSA Management Committee	Garry Duncan (Convenor), Miriam Goodwin (Treasurer), Richard Gibbons, Mary Jo Merindol, Chris Sargeant, Pia Reiersen.	convenor@gsa.org.au
Regional Meeting Appointees	Alex Nicholson, CRM; Rae Litting, NSWRM; Rhoda Dorrell, QRM; Jo Jordan, SANTRM; Karen Dedenczuk, TRM; Anne Herbert, VRM; Henry Esbenshade, WARM; YF, vacant. Ex officio: AYM Clerk, AYM Secretary Jackie Perkins, Executive Administrator; Michael Morrissey, Public Officer,	Administration@gsa.org.au
Silver Wattle Quaker Centre Ltd (SWQC)	SWQC Ltd Board: Sheila Keane (Clerk), NSWRM, David Liversidge (CRM), Tracy Bourne (CRM), David Johnson (QRM); Ex officio: SWQC Director	sheila.keane@silverwattle.org.au
SWQC Ltd Advisory Committee	Alan Clayton, VRM; Janet Duke (VRM), Helen Bayes (VRM), vacant (AYM Nominee)	
Werona Users Group	Anne-Maree Johnston (Secretary)	anmajo@bigpond.com

AYM Group email addresses:

RM Clerks Clerks@quakersaustralia.info
RM Newsletter Editors Newsletters@quakersaustralia.info
RM Web Maintainers WebRMs@quakersaustralia.info
AYM Committees Committees@quakersaustralia.info

Additional email address can be found here: (<https://www.quakersaustralia.info/>), listed under **Quaker email addresses and website abbreviations** at: <https://www.quakersaustralia.info/resources/administration-resources>

Statement of Membership for 12 months ending on 31 March 2020

	Total Adult Members					+/-	Total Adult Attenders		+/-	COM (Children of the meeting)				+/-	C M		+/-		
	Current year				Previous Year		Total	C		P	C	P	Total					C	P
	F	M	NBP	Total															
CRM	49	36		85	89	-4	88	88	-			40	33	+7	0	0	0		
NSWRM	136	71		207	220	-13	147	157	-10			13	18	-5	0	1	-1		
QRM*	39	37		76	75	+1	69	69	-	6	7	13	13	-	0	0	-		
SANTRM	59	31	1	91	106	-15	66	51	+15	1	3	4	14	-10	0	0	0		
TAS	87	44		131	128	+3	132	123	+9			29	32	-3	0	0	0		
VIC	108	56		164	166	-2	117	150	-33			27	30	-3	3	2	+1		
WARM	50	27		77	78	-1	90	93	-3			8	8	0	0	0	0		
TOTALS	528	302	1	831	862	-31	709	731	-22	7	10	134	148	-14	3	3	-		

The 2020 Statement of Membership figures incorporate corrections of 2020 membership statistics, as provided by RM Statement of Membership Secretaries.

*QRM figures are from 2019. They will be updated in 2021.

Attenders: Adults, children over 18 years & Young Friends, as of 31 March

COM (Children of the Meeting): Children under age 18 years, as of 31 March

CM (Child members): Those children in actual membership of the Meeting, as of 31 March

NBP (in Adult members): Non-Binary person

MOVEMENT OF RM & OVERSEAS MEMBERS IN AUSTRALIAN RMS AND TO/FROM OVERSEAS

RM	RM Members living overseas	RM members who live interstate	Members of other Australian RMs who live in the RM's area	Overseas members who live in the RM's area
CRM	3	10	16	2
NSWRM	3	12	14	7
QRM*	0	3	8	2
SANTRM	0	3	0	0
TRM	4	14	0	2
VRM	3	4	13	1

WARM	1	4	1	4
Totals	14	50	52	18

TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

RM	Transferred from another Australian RM	Transferred from overseas	Transferred to another Australian RM	Transferred Overseas
CRM	1	0	0	0
NSWRM	1	0	1	0
QRM*	0	0	0	0
SANTRM	1	0	1	0
TRM	0	1	1	0
VRM	1	0	0	0
WARM	0	0	0	0
Totals	4	4	3	0

Meetings/Worshipping Groups in each Regional Meeting

RM	Local Meetings	Total	Recognised Meetings	Totals	Worshipping Groups	Totals
CRM	Canberra (Northside)	1	Bega Valley, Wagga Wagga	2	Bateman's Bay, Canberra Southside, Goulburn	4
NSWRM	Blue Mountains, Devonshire Street, Hunter Valley, Wahroonga	4	Kiama, Northern Rivers	2	Central Coast, Central West, Mid-North Coast, Upper Blue Mountains, Thirroul	5
QRM	Brisbane	1	Darling Downs	1	Atherton Tablelands, Brisbane Western Suburbs, Townsville, Gold Coast, Redlands	6
SANTRM	Adelaide, Eastern Suburbs	2	Alice Springs, Fleurieu	2	Adelaide Hills, Darwin, Southern	3
TRM	Hobart	1	North West Coast	1	Launceston, Kingsborough, Southern Tasmania, South Hobart	4
VRM	Friends Eastern, Northern Suburbs	2	Ballarat, Diamond Valley, Geelong, Gippsland, Kyneton, Melbourne City, Mornington Peninsula	7	Bairnsdale, Bayside, Home Worship Fellowship, Kilsyth, Youngish Friends	5
WARM			Fremantle, Mt Lawley, South Coast	2	Beverley, Bridgetown, Albury, Denmark, (in recess-Bunbury, Geraldton)	6
Totals		10		17		32

AYM Officers' Reports

AYM Presiding Clerk's Report to Yearly Meeting 2020

'Praise the path on which we're led'.

My term as Yearly Meeting Presiding Clerk started smoothly and easily. At Jo Jordan's invitation, I attended the National Council of Churches Triennium Meetings in Canberra in June 2019 during which NCCA formulated strategic directions and planned the 2020 gatherings—now all on hold. In November I attended the NCCA AGM in Sydney and, with David Purnell, participated in an Assembly focussed on Moral Discernment.

At 2019 January and July Standing Committees and YM2019 I carefully noted the Clerk's role. Post Yearly Meeting there was little for me to do, so attentive had Presiding Clerk Jo Jordan and Yearly Meeting Secretary Jacque Schultz been attending to items arising from YM2019. Since September 2019 emails, Standing Committee and other Zoom Meetings, the National Redress Scheme and now planning for a 'virtual' Yearly Meeting 2020 have added significantly to demands upon the AYM Secretary, the Presiding Clerk, Regional Meeting Clerks, and the Canberra RM Planning Committee. Who could have envisaged last July that we would be planning YM2020 entirely online?

Standing Committee (SC) agreed in July 2019 to hold on-line Meetings using Zoom technology. In the first Zoom Meeting, August 25th, SC approved the Yearly Meeting Budget. At a further October 27th SC the report from the Right Holding of Yearly Meeting Committee was accepted. We noted that 'Friends wish Yearly Meeting to remain an all-age community event with connecting and sharing time to deepen the collective spiritual experience at the heart of our discernment and decision making. We value the voice and contributions of Friends at every age and life stage. We asked: how might technology be creatively and usefully employed in conducting our Yearly Meeting Business?'. This question now is front of mind. Together we are slowly learning and refining skills to support Quaker business processes online. Social distancing means YM Clerk, YM Assistant Clerk and YM Secretary are in three different States and Territory and two time zones. Minuting under these conditions requires detailed preparation, sustained attention and discipline from everyone.

Last November, staff from the National Redress Scheme (NRS) notified AYM office of a claim 'citing Quakers'. Jacque Schultze and I each attended a webinar to understand the how the Scheme operated and convened a special Standing Committee Meeting asking: Should YM join the NRS? If so, under what structure, and what next steps would be needed? Responses from each Regional Meeting and YM Associated Bodies came to Mid-year Standing Committee in Brisbane in January. I welcomed the chance to meet face to face as we prayerfully discerned how we might proceed. Brisbane Friends' hospitality and care sustained us through long, challenging Business sessions. And we were blessed by deafening rain as we gathered for closing worship.

In the absence of a quorum in the Kelvin Grove Meeting House for the AYM, a small of number interstate Friends joined the AGM via Zoom so the Meeting was quorate.

When Standing Committee met again via Zoom on March 8th, we acknowledged that we face 'unknown unknowns' in relation to possible NRS claims which can be lodged until June 30th 2028. SC minutes record our discernment to guide processes and decisions.

I attended the Quaker Service Australia AGM in February at Devonshire Street Meeting House, Sydney. Jackie Perkins had just returned from overseas, visiting several locations and projects. Her photos and stories of changes in the lives and communities spoke volumes. We all enjoyed learning more about the challenges and successes of the ongoing Cambodian toilet project.

The Presiding Clerk is an ex officio member of The Friends School Board. In February I attended the Board Planning Day in Hobart. The agenda included updates and plans for further campus developments and upgrades. Senior staff from each section of the school shared their experience and approach to pastoral support and care for students and staff. My visit included an opportunity

to attend weekly Gathering with Clemes students and, following Hobart Meeting on Sunday, a luncheon for Former Scholars who left TFS 50 or more years ago.

I have participated in all TFS Board meetings via phone, and now a Zoom link. The school has made significant adaptation to provide online learning while Tasmanian schools remain shut down. The School's communication with and support for students, families, staff--shared with the Board--has been exceptional, reflecting the Purpose and Concerns Statement.

I have signed petitions on behalf of Yearly Meeting including the International Day of Peace Statement, Global Faith Leaders petition opposing the Adani Mine, and a further petition to the Federal Government to become a signatory to IPAN. Letters included one to Government supporting the release of the Biloela family from Christmas Island Detention Centre, and to NCCA inviting Christian leaders to speak out against Indonesian Military violence in West Papua. I am grateful to individual Friends and Committees who assist in drafting and crafting correspondence. In December and January YM office received letters of support and concern from Friends around the world as they witnessed the terrible impact of our bush fires.

I have experienced support and concern from many Friends this year. Jacque Schultze has been a wonderful guide and mentor in all manner of AYM matters. I have asked much of David Purnell as YM2020 Assistant Clerk and valued his wisdom, perspicacity, and experience as a SC co-clerk. I have met with my support group every eight weeks or so. Allan Knight has worked alongside me as a co-clerk for some Zoom SC Meetings. Many others provide gentle listening, encouragement, and reassurance 'that all will be well'.

Recently, during WARM meeting for worship online, I sat with the Poem "Praise the Rain" by American poet laureate Joy Harjo. The poem suggests using the word **Praise** as a response to *all* we see and experience. No rush to judgement. Simply observe and express Praise. At the end of a long dry summer, it had finally rained in Perth two nights in a row. Not much rain. Enough to suggest transition to a gentler season. **Praise the rain.**

In this, my first year as Presiding Clerk it has been easy to express Praise for the many blessings and opportunities that have come my way and hard to Praise the challenges and difficulties accompanying this time and role. The poem invites me, us, to simply Praise them all. Join me Friends to **Praise** our way through.

Ann Zubrick, AYM Presiding Clerk

AYM Secretary's Report to Yearly Meeting 2020

Following Yearly Meeting 2019 in Hobart, I began working with our new Presiding Clerk, Ann Zubrick to plan for the upcoming year. Ann and I initiated nearly weekly Zoom meetings to plan for online Standing Committee meetings (the first full SC meeting was in September to discuss the YM2020-21 Budget), followed by several other Zoom meetings, both emergency and regular.

In mid-September AYM received notice from the National Redress Scheme that there were applications to the Scheme naming Quakers. Initially I communicated with the NRS Relationship Manager to understand the Scheme's requirements and parameters. Ann Zubrick and I participated in NRS overview webinars and I attended a daylong training session. In December, Standing Committee met via Zoom to consider and discern whether AYM should join the NRS. At SC1.20 in Brisbane, it was agreed that that AYM would apply to join the NRS as a Participating Group, with AYM as the Representative for the Participating Group. Standing Committee accepted the name of Jennifer Burrell to be the Quaker Representative Contact Person on the National Redress Scheme, and she immediately began liaising with the Scheme and working with the RMs about information that was needed from them to join. I continue to work with Jennifer as needed about the Scheme.

Following through with my plans to visit regional meetings and some of the smaller meetings and worshipping groups in 2020, I visited SANTRM 6-10 March before the Coronavirus had drastically changed our lives here in Australia. Past Presiding Clerk Jo Jordan helped provide opportunities for me to meet with Friends to discuss many things (including lots of questions about the AYM website and how to use Find a Friend!), to have shared meals, as well as include visits to the Quaker Shop and a trip to Friends in the Fleurieu Worshipping Group who meet in Port Elliott. I was grateful for this time with Friends to learn about their concerns and to share time in worship and community.

On 17 March I initiated a “go to” page for Friends during the time of the Coronavirus disruption <https://www.quakersaustralia.info/news/update-quakers-australia-during-coronavirus-disruption> which began with listings of closures and cancellations of Quaker events and activities, and then evolved to include listings of online meetings for worship and Zoom tutorial sessions. I worked with the dedicated group of Friends (Emily Chapman-Searle, Di Bretherton, Sheila Keane and Michael Searle, with assistance from Rosemary Epps and Ronis Chapman) who rose to the occasion and responded from “the grass roots” to develop these sessions. The “quick response team” recognised the need for Friends to become equipped to use Zoom as a way to maintain community during this time of social distancing. They created Zoom tutorial sessions for all Friends, to teach the basics of getting connected to and learning to use using, Zoom feedback / reflection times, and sessions about using Zoom for Meetings for Business. They have been invaluable in helping us all transition to navigate being in our new online Quaker community.

Simultaneously, CRM initiated discussions about threats that Covid-19 might present to the holding of YM2020 and it was agreed at a Standing Committee meeting via Zoom that a physical gathering for YM2020 should be cancelled as a response to COVID-19. With the change of plans for YM2020, I began working with the CRM YM20 Hosting Group, the AYM Presiding Clerk and others to assist with adapting and adjusting plans for YM20 to become a virtual Yearly meeting Gathering. In holding a shortened virtual YM there will be fewer Formal sessions so YM Business will be attended to differently this year. Reports with Items for Consideration were sent early to RMs (prior to Documents in Advance 2020 being sent out) to allow May and June RMs to consider and send their responses to the AYM Secretary. Reports with Part As & B’s have been uploaded early to the YM20 website. There will be some Preparatory or Open Sessions held prior to VYM20. The CRM YM2020 hosting group is exploring creative ways in which other aspects such as the Backhouse Lecture, Friendly School, State of the Society address, Share and Tell, Welcome to Country and concert contributions of YM might be held. And as we move towards preparing for a virtual Yearly Meeting 2020, the instruction and skills of the Quaker Zoom Technology Group will no doubt continue to support us all.

I look forward to the YM20 Hosting Committee providing an assessment of the YM20 Gathering to help us shape our future Yearly Meetings, the handling of YM business and the spiritual life of our Society.

I assisted the C&JYF Coordinators and Lucy Slevin, the EFG Camp Leader, in the planning for the Easter Family Gathering (10-12 April), by arranging Zoom sessions for the weekend’s activities, as well as sending links for resources from Quakers and others around the world who were also shifting gears to hold online youth gatherings and worship meetings. The Coordinators and Lucy, along with the JYFs and families and Friends created a meaningful, enriching and spirit-led program for everyone.

I continue to send out the AYM Secretary’s Newsletter and attend to the many other duties (great and small) that are part of the Secretary’s role. I remain grateful to serve Friends in the role of Secretary for the Society.

Jacqueline Schultze, AYM Secretary

AYM Treasurer's Report to Yearly Meeting 2020

The Covid 19 virus continues to transform the financial world and make uncertainty the 'new normal'. As with personal and business finances, the two main concerns of AYM will be with cash flow and the value of our assets.

Cash flow

AYM is dependent on Quota payments (usually quarterly) by Regional Meetings. At the date of this report these are all up to date. Their situation was discussed at an online meeting of treasurers in April and it seemed that there would be no problems this financial year.

As far as AYM itself is concerned, we have at present around \$40,000 in our bank account and have three term deposits, each for more than \$40,000, maturing in May, July and October this year. They are with Bank Australia, Maleny Credit Union and Bendigo Bank respectively. Our cash position is thus secure.

Federal Government support

On 24 April we also received a grant of \$10,000 from the Federal Government as part of its Covid 19 support packages. We were eligible because we pay GST on income and outgo and we also have an employee for whom we remit tax to the ATO. There appear to be no strings attached to the grant.

Asset values

The value of our assets is of course difficult to judge at present. At the time of writing our share investments are worth around \$75,000 (perhaps 11%) less than they were at the end of September last year.

This is only of concern if we need to sell them, which we don't in the foreseeable future. Nor would it be advisable to do so in the current fluctuating situation. However, it does affect two aspects of the near future:

- Standing Committee has previously agreed that up to \$100,000 of surplus funds could be distributed and part of that amount has already been allocated internally. Clearly in the present situation no further amount can be allocated.
- We are about to join the National Redress Scheme and have no details of the 'one or more applications' they have received in our name. These may involve expenditure in the foreseeable future but we have no idea how much or when until we are admitted to the Scheme.

It remains to be seen when and if the stock exchange will recover, although that seems likely to be a number of months or years into the future.

Budget and Quotas

With an 'online' Yearly Meeting there will be little need for the full subsidy of \$15,000 in the budget for the current year, although the Organising Committee may have some expenses. In addition, other gatherings and travel may be limited or non-existent for a number of months. The reduced expenditure may well result in the budget and Quotas for the coming year being lower than would otherwise be expected, but that remains to be seen.

Conclusion

It would seem that AYM's financial situation is comfortable for the foreseeable future. The 2020/21 budget and Quotas will be discussed in August and that will be a better opportunity to check on the longer-term situation.

Matters for Consideration

We have no matters for consideration by Yearly Meeting.

Roger Sawkins, AYM Treasurer, April 2020

Finance Committee members: David Lowry, David Lowe (QRM) and Jane Drexler (TRM).

Regional Meeting Annual Reports

Canberra Regional Meeting Report

This is a summary of the full report that is available on our websites – www.actquakers.org.au and www.quakersaustralia.info/organisation/regional-meetings/canberra-regional-meeting

1. Climate and Earthcare

Following YM 2019, a working group was established in CRM to identify further action by individuals and collectively. As a result, Friends have actively supported public events (such as the School Strike in September 2019, the Religious Response to Climate Change conference in November, and the People's Climate Assembly at Parliament House in February 2020). We have held Friends Fridays to hear from experts such as Andrew Glikson, a climate scientist member, and to map out ways forward with this concern. We sought practical ways to help following the summer bushfires.

2. National Redress Scheme

We held special meetings to be clearer about the implications of joining, and decided to go ahead in faith. We recognised that discussion of this topic could raise painful memories for some Friends, and we offered pastoral support if needed. We have appointed two Friends as contact people for the scheme, and are part of the discussions within AYM about how best to share responsibility for providing relevant information and meeting any payments for redress under the Scheme.

3. Structures of CRM

With the help of a working group, we have held conversations about our priorities as a Meeting, reducing the number of committees, ways of using volunteers rather than appointees for some of our work, and about dividing our business more clearly between regional and local matters. One outcome of our exploration has been a decision to amend the Rules of the Incorporated Association to specify more clearly the range of groups covered by our Regional Meeting. We have decided that, for use within the Society, we would like to be known as "Southern NSW and ACT Regional Meeting" (SONARM).

4. Hosting YM 2020 and Health Crisis

The impact of the global coronavirus (Covid-19) has meant a complete review of YM 2020. The hosting group recommended (and Standing Committee agreed) to cancel the physical gathering, and to explore alternative (on-line) ways to handle the different elements of Yearly Meeting occasions. Within our region, we have had to cancel many of our regular face-to-face Quaker activities including meetings for worship and other gatherings. In place of those, we have worked on offering online arrangements to help Friends keep in touch. See the full report on our websites for details of activities within our worshipping groups.

Report prepared by David Purnell & Lorraine Thomson, Co-Clerks

New South Wales Regional Meeting Report

Several governance matters were completed: the updated constitution was accepted by the RM, the insurance review and the safety management plans were completed.

The light rail construction in front of the Devonshire Street Meeting House was finished, the trams are running with little noise from the trams coming into the building. At DSMH, all compliance issues were met and new wardens have now been appointed.

Wahroonga LM has undertaken several building maintenance projects Hunter Valley and Northern Rivers LMs have had to move as the Uniting Church sold the buildings where they were meeting. We have experimented to make our RMs more accessible by using sound amplification at the meetings (for Friends with difficulties hearing) and using Zoom for Friends who live regionally. This experimentation has not been completed yet.

The RM co-clerks went on several road trips to visit all Local Meetings and Worshipping Groups that are part of NSWRM. There are as many Friends in regional NSW as there are in the Sydney basin. These were most rewarding visits and spiritually nourishing.

NSWRM has few children and JYFs as part of our meetings and we encourage the families to participate in gatherings organised by AYM or other RMs.

Local Meetings and Worshipping Groups have had an increase in enquirers.

Friends participated in the Palm Sunday rally in support of asylum seekers and refugees and in the school strike for climate change action.

Ecumenical and interfaith participation:

Wies Schuiringa is still a Board member of the NSW Ecumenical Council and acted again as president for several months. Information about ecumenical and also interfaith activities, mostly in Sydney is provided to Friends. Friends across NSWRM participate in local interfaith events.

NSWRM will work further on making our RMs more accessible with microphones for those physically present and Zoom (with good sound and sight) for Friends who participate from a physical distance.

We encourage RM clerks and other city-based Friends to visit regional and outlying Meetings and Worshipping Groups to worship together and to know one another in the things that are eternal.

Report prepared by Jennifer Burrell and Wies Schuiringa, Co-Clerks

Queensland Regional Meeting

In the last half of 2019 and early 2020, Quaker activities in Queensland continued as they had for several decades. We rejoiced that the Kelvin Grove Meeting House often filled with 40 or more worshippers on Sunday morning. Regular enquirers visited and some continued to attend. In 2019 and early 2020, we had visitors from other faiths and from Queensland Police Community Liaison Officers. Thanks to outreach by our caretakers, hiring fees from outside groups (now lost with the Meeting House closure) covered basic maintenance costs.

Our Meeting hosted Friends from each Regional Meeting in October for the Safe Quaker Community training workshop run by Ronis Chapman and Robin McLean, and in January 2020 for a face-to-face Standing Committee and the Annual General Meeting of the Society. At the AGM, even with two representatives from each Regional Meeting and the Yearly Meeting officers present, we struggled to get a quorum of 30 members. QRM membership numbers are dwindling as few see its relevance to their participation and commitment to the Meeting. Many attenders faithfully undertake key roles in the Meeting. In *Documents in Advance* 2019, Queensland recorded 76 members and 69 attenders in our six far-flung small worshipping groups and one large worshipping group at Kelvin Grove Meeting House.

Since the regulations to slow the spread of COVID-19, we have been forced away from our beloved face-to-face Meetings into virtual Meetings using technologies few would have thought themselves capable of using. Queensland had just once used Zoom to include a Friend from the Sunshine Coast in our Meeting for Worship for Business on 1 March.

In north Queensland, David and Trish Johnson are now offering their regular 45 minutes teaching and 45 minutes worship via Skype. David and Trish held a Quaker retreat at Siloam Centre in Atherton in November on Quaker Prayer Cycles that Friends from Townsville and Mossman travelled to attend. The Gold Coast and other smaller Worshipping Groups had been meeting face to face mainly to support an elderly Friend who could not travel to Kelvin Grove. In Darling Downs, illness of members had forced halts to regular worship. Now that Queensland has begun

offering regular Meetings for Worship via Zoom, these have allowed any Friend from around the state to join in.

Queensland Quaker peace and social justice activists have been on the front lines of environmental and social justice protests such as anti-Adani events and the Friday school strikes holding high our Quaker banners. Kelvin Grove Meeting House now has a large yellow banner at the entry declaring "There is no Planet B: Quakers urge action on our climate crisis". On second Sundays, guest speakers and focus groups on peace and social justice issues have offered Brisbane Friends the chance for planning and sharing. Our Peace Vigil has been held on the first Friday of each month until the end of March 2020. We keep in touch with the other peace groups that join us every month. Just Peace, WILPF and Believing women for a culture of peace.

This year, the African Great Lakes Refugee Project has been laid down. This had been a Regional Meeting Concern since February 2015. Abel Sibonio continues his work in his retirement from his home.

At Kelvin Grove, our small and faithful forest working group tends the lovely bushland surrounding our Meeting House. For months drought threatened well-established natives until summer rains brought relief. Our library workers have undertaken a complete audit of all holdings, and all library resources have now been entered online. The Meeting House and its entry points are undergoing an extensive review of its suitability for those with access difficulties. Further advice and planning will be sought.

Our Pastoral Care Committee, including Elders and Overseers, reviewed their focus following a Silver Wattle Quaker Centre eldering course attended by four members. Third Sunday worship sharing has reflected on Quaker approaches to prayer, worship, and other topics often taken for granted. Small group gatherings for deeper sharing planned for 2020 have halted for the pandemic regulations.

Our focus now is on reaching out to those who are isolated and struggling with unwelcome change and loss. Our immediate future holds many uncertainties that will call for strength, courage and faith. May we gather in whatever ways are possible to hold all in the Light as our lives slow and boundaries shrink.

Report prepared by Judith Pembleton and Marian, Co-Clerks

South Australia & Northern Territory Regional Meeting Report

Within the South Australia and Northern Territory Regional Meeting our practical and spiritual lives have been very much constrained by the current requirements for social distancing, and the Government imposed closure of all places of worship. Some Friends have noted that the inability to access our regular Meeting places reminds us that these locations, while familiar and dear to us, hold no particular spiritual significance of themselves.

Electronic methods of worshipping have gained popularity with Friends, who now engage in regular virtual Meetings for Worship. We continue to meet virtually to worship and care for ourselves and the communities in which we live. While this has reinvigorated communication with some of our more remote meetings, it has left some Friends feeling more isolated.

In the midst of all this turbulence and focus on social distancing, Adelaide Local Meeting (ALM), supported by the whole of SANTRM has embarked on a new initiative involving a residential unit, owned by ALM, that has been tenanted at commercial rates. The rent has been reduced, such that it is now within the reach of someone living on government welfare payments. The intention is that the unit can be used at a reduced rent for a period of two years to support someone that is currently in distress, to return their life to order, with the hope that the tenant will move into the mainstream rental market in time, allowing the same benefit to be extended to someone else, subsequently.

ALM are looking to support someone recently released from prison or detention, someone leaving a domestic violence situation or someone that is currently homeless. At the end of the two year

period the tenant will be gifted a sum of around \$2,000 which we hope will defray a future rental bond payment and relocation costs.

We are also working hard to prepare to participate in the National Redress Scheme.

Our Friends Jean-Paul Nininahazwe and Marie-Gorette Bucumi have revisited their homeland in Burundi, meeting with Friends from their Quaker Church the Friends School having fled the country in the 2005 uprising.

Quaker Service South Australia and Northern Territory (QSSANT)

The Quaker shop is still the most important activity for the QSSANT committee and for SANTRM in general, as a form of outreach and service and the means of raising and contributing funds to QSA. As many as sixty helpers, both Friends and sympathetic non-Friends are involved in its successful operation. Jo Jordan has taken over from Kerry O'Regan as Manager of The Quaker Shop. (A video of Quaker Shop History and present day activities has been loaded to the SANTRM website <https://www.quakersaustralia.info/organisation/regional-meetings/south-australia-and-northern-territory-regional-meeting>)

In March the shop closed temporarily and for an unknown length of time because of CORVID 19. This means that no more money is being raised. In normal times QSSANT contributes \$6,000 a month to QSA and this is important to them because it pays the rent and helps to maintain the Office, without which QSA could not function. It was decided to draw on the Contingency Fund, set up some years ago for emergency repairs and other crises, to continue to send a regular monthly amount to QSA. After consultation it was agreed that the regular donation should be continued but reduced to \$3,000 a month, since it is not possible to predict how long this might have to be continued.

Report prepared by David Barry, Clerk

Tasmania Regional Meeting Report

This year, as part of Australia Yearly Meeting's preparation for joining the National Redress Scheme for people who have experienced institutionalised child sexual abuse, Tasmania Regional Meeting, like every other Regional Meeting, pored over many decades' worth of minutes, reports, newsletters and correspondence to prepare an accurate record of our past. Those records, sometimes detailed and sometimes sparse, gave us an opportunity to observe who we have been, what we have done, how the Truth has prospered amongst us, and how Friends have, or have not been, in peace and unity. They also give a picture of how much we have remained the same. Annual reports are an opportunity to reflect on the same over a smaller timeframe.

We are mostly the same people as we were a year ago. During the past year, we have been joined by new attenders at our meetings and accepted new applications for membership and transfers from other Meetings. We have also lost a similar number of members through death, transfer, or resignation. Some attenders come for a while and then find that Quakers are not whatever it was they were seeking, while others stay and become actively involved. Worshipping groups continue to grow and change and build supportive links within. In the North-West, the Devonport local meeting moved its Sunday worship to Deloraine to reflect the changing location of its members and renamed itself North-West Tasmania local meeting.

As we did half a century ago, we continue to take on big causes that have long exercised the hearts and minds of Quakers – peace work, social justice, Earth care. However, we also continue with the practical and day to day things that love demands of us – caring for one another, offering a warm and welcoming friendship to those who have sought out Friends at their first meetings, as well as to those in the broader community in the countless and varied causes that we each take on in each of our communities. Caring for our children and Junior Young Friends by creating safe and nurturing spaces for them, continues to be an important concern. While the number of children in the meeting each Sunday is small, we also are aware that every week during term time, over 1,000 children spend time in Gathering in the Meeting House and thus forms an important outreach of this Meeting.

Like other Meetings around the world, we have been challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic and have had to explore new ways to experiment with meetings for worship and conducting our business, as well as finding ways to reach out to isolated Friends. Sunday meeting for worship has become truly state-wide, as well as enabling very geographically isolated Friends to participate. This 'holy experiment' continues to provide new ways to seek the presence of the divine and for us to consider what practices we might want to continue once the pandemic is over.

Report prepared by: David O'Halloran and Maddy Walker, Co-Clerks

Victoria Regional Meeting Report

Quakers in Victoria have been holding their breath for a year, waiting for renovations to our Centre to be completed. Finally, on April 3rd, 2020, we resumed occupancy. The renovations included a new exciting roof, a balcony and double-glazing and the finished product is impressive. Unfortunately, we will not be able to use the building for some time because of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Meanwhile, Melbourne City Recognised Meeting have been meeting for Worship at the Welsh Church.

The Pandemic has of course disrupted our Quaker life over the last 6 weeks, and in response, a number of healthy on-line Meetings have sprung up. Some Meetings are setting up Circles of people so that we can better keep in touch with each other.

However, before that,

- Each of Victoria's 13 Meetings had been spiritually nourished by regular worship and discussions.
- Friends Eastern, Northern Suburbs and Melbourne City Meetings had all been blessed with a steady number of new attenders, some of whom come to Meeting regularly.
- Young Friends in Melbourne met socially from time to time.
- The Fellowship of Healing met at Friends Eastern and held in the Light people suffering in body, mind or spirit.
- A small Experiment in the Light group met regularly, as did a worshipful Writing group.
- Children's meeting was held monthly at Northern Suburbs. We are delighted to have welcomed three new babies in 2019: Felix Jillard (January'19), Indri Freeman-Muscat (September) and Kai Yan Stewart (November)
- We were saddened by the death of Elizabeth and Art Veno, Barry Hardingham, Elizabeth Smart, Daryl Dykes, Rob Bennett, Anne Kane and Deborah Shrader
- Many children and JYFs joined adults at the Amberley Gathering in October. The many activities for young and old were a joyful expression of Quaker life in Victoria.
- The Peace and Social Justice Network met regularly during 2019, to share news of their activities, and take action, on issues related to Peace, refugee support and Climate change
- The weekly vigil supporting justice for First Peoples in Bourke St. continued to be a valuable witness
- Many Friends were disturbed by the Climate Emergency and had a renewed desire to take action on the issue of Climate Change.
- The Victorian Quaker Fund supported Rowe Morrow's Permaculture training programs with refugees and displaced people in various international settings.
- VRM encourages people from Victoria to attend courses at Silver wattle by offering scholarships, administered by the Elders.

In these uncertain times, no doubt we can continue to experiment how best to greet 'that of God' in the world.

Report prepared by Anna Wilkinson and Bruce Henry, Co-Clerks

West Australia Regional Meeting Report

For a small and largely ageing Regional Meeting, the Members and Attenders in WARM are remarkably active in several areas, both within and without Friendly circles. We have two weekly metropolitan Meetings (Mt Lawley and Fremantle), as well as four small regular country Meetings (Geraldton, Beverley, Albany and Denmark).

There have been some inquirers coming to Meeting after seeing information about Quakers online. With the Mt Lawley QMH itself now connected to the internet via NBN, the hope is that future workshops, seminars, etc. can utilise this facility creatively to do both spiritual inreach to fFriends and outreach to the general public. WARM is looking at what online video meeting application we should subscribe to.

For the second January in succession, WARM hosted a successful Quaker Peace and Creativity Summer School at the Mt Lawley Quaker Meeting House, with dozens of members and others attending workshops and presentations.

We host the AYM Presiding Clerk Ann Zubrick, so the hope is that although we are geographically remote from the rest of AYM, we will stay spiritually and functionally close to concerns of Quakers across Australia. Standing Committee asked WARM (SC7.19.17.3) if it could host the 2022 YM. WARM held a threshing session about this matter. Afterwards in a Business Meeting we discerned a Minute that WARM “does not have the capacity to be the primary Regional Meeting to host or organise the 2022 Yearly Meeting”. We are saddened by this truth and nevertheless pray that we may be an organising RM for components of YMs, and that we will be able to host the YM again sometime in the future.

At the last YM in Hobart during July, there was a contingent of nine fFriends and one Junior Young Friend from WARM who attended. In October 2019, WARM also had two representatives in Brisbane attending a three-day workshop for Safe Quaker Community Contact Friends.

The finances of WARM remain a constant concern of sorts. We are in a process of contacting all fFriends connected with WARM individually as a means of inreach. We are also looking to ask them each to consider making regular contributions into the WARM Treasury so that our AYM quota of around \$200 per annum per Member can be paid easily. The Regional Meeting requires finances left over after paying our AYM quota for QMH overheads and maintenance, support for individual concerns, and the hosting of workshops and seminars.

With the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic social distancing requirements, WARM has adopted online “Zoom” Meetings for Worship. We hope this might attract more isolated fFriends, especially given the massive geographical size of our Regional Meeting. We will be holding our first online Business Meeting on the first Sunday in May. The current Zoom account is also being used for committee and social meetings.

We note that:

- WARM is a small and largely aging Regional Meeting
- WARM does not currently have the capacity to be the primary Regional Meeting to host or organise a Yearly Meeting
- Only a small number of WARM fFriends contribute financially
- WARM is geographically isolated from AYM (and the rest of the world) but we are hoping new online video technologies will assist us in connecting better
- We are unsure whether the online video meeting platform Zoom is the best program to subscribe to and will be giving this question discernment at the May Business Meeting.

Report prepared by David Tehr, Clerk

Reports from AYM committees, working groups and associated bodies and others

The Australian Friend Committee

PART A: REPORT

Achievements/Activities:

The Australian Friend is published four times a year in March, June, September and December. The online issue is live on the first Monday of those four months at australianfriend.org and the printed issue is home delivered about 2 weeks later.

At times the editorial panel has worried that not enough articles have been submitted but it always comes good by the deadline. We are seeking articles by Friends from around Australia and we may not always know what talent exists in RMs, other than NSW. The AF articles are not so much a report of the work of a committee or activity, those are more suited to the AYM secretary's newsletter but are more of a reflective nature: Quaker history and contemporary issues, reflections on spiritual journeys and Quaker practices, the Quaker relevance of our activities, actions and life experiences. We are available to assist with reading through a draft article and provide some guidance. Book reviews and poems are also welcome as well as Letters to the Editor and comments about the published articles.

Peter Hillery, Bega Recognised Meeting moderates the online comments and Peter Jones, Tasmania RM assists with the articles "Know thy Friend". Suggestions can be made to Peter Jones for Friends to be featured.

Issues/Analysis:

We know that Friends who read the AF online, and do not receive the printed issues are often not ready to read the whole online issue in one go and then don't return to read the remainder of the articles. If that is you, you can let your RM membership secretary, or us know and you can be registered for printed AF issues.

The Australian Friend can only exist when Friends submit articles, so keep writing Friends.

Committee members: Wies Schuiringa, Garry Duncan, Rae Litting and David Swain (NSWRM)

Australia North Korea Peace Support Group

PART A: REPORT

Achievements/Activities

The Support Group is exploring the possibility of making contact with the Federation for the Protection of the Disabled in North Korea to see if there are ways in which we could collaborate. We had hoped to make an initial visit in May, but the outbreak of the coronavirus has delayed our plans.

We still hope to be able to visit in October, but the chance is rather uncertain due to the rapid worsening of the coronavirus situation. We will have to wait until the virus crisis is over. Sejin is eager to lead another general tour to North Korea if enough people (12 including Sejin) want to go. However, we will have to wait until the corona virus crisis is over even if we have enough number.

Issues/Analysis:

Dealing with north Korean authorities is often difficult and slow. But we will persist and continue our work.

The coronavirus situation changes everything, but it will be over soon or later.

Committee members: *Sejin Pak (SANTRM), Wilma Davidson (CRM), Sue Ennis (VRM), Adrian Glamorgan (WARM), Dale Hess (VRM), Rae Litting (NSWRM), Rowe Morrow (NSWRM), Roger Sawkins (QRM), David Swain (NSWRM)*

Australian Quaker Narrative Embroidery Committee: Friends in Stitches

PART A: REPORT

Achievements/Activities:

The following panels are being stitched:

Ballarat Friends (Ellan in NSW); Cherish Our Place (Sally in Tasmania); Dunera Boys (UK Quaker Tapestry); Kiama (Moiria Darling, Victoria); Elinor Robey Embroidery - Peace (Margaret Bywater - Cambodia); North Adelaide Meeting House and Silver Wattle (SA Friends in Stitches group); the 350 Year Exhibition ((Tessa Spratt in Victoria).

The following panels are in progress but are stalled:

The Friends' School; Kelvin Grove; Walking in the Light; Allowah Grove.

Activities have included:

- Exhibition at Moonah Arts Centre in Hobart followed by an exhibition at the Launceston public Library.
- Exhibition at Mont de Lancey Historic Homestead, Wandin, Victoria.
- Exhibition installed at the Brisbane Square Library; workshop planned and a speech at the Lyceum Club but these events had to be cancelled due to the COVID 19 lockdown. The exhibition was taken down by the Library staff and safely stored in our suitcases.
- Book launched at 2019 Yearly Meeting, Tasmania
- Production and sale of 2020 FIS Calendars.
- Newsletter produced monthly.
- Web page maintained and expanded to include location of each panel and 'items for sale'.

Issues/Analysis:

- The Committee has an ongoing need to attract more designers and stitchers as Friends have had to lay down their involvement. We need more supporters to organise local stitching groups as well as to organise exhibitions to show our work.
- We have enough fabric for 70 panels. We have 32 panels either completed or being stitched. That leaves 38 opportunities for future panels. It would be good to have some Quaker History buffs come up with 38 "must-have" ideas for panels, for example, about George Washington Walker, Jo Vallentine and early convicts. These would give us a framework for future planning and stimuli for designers. At the moment the development of panels is somewhat ad hoc. That may not be bad – i.e., this being spirit led. But the list of topics could also be spirit led and could be useful.

We ask all Friends to consider the joys of becoming involved in our creative and exciting project, in the capacity of a historian, a designer, a stitcher, an organiser of a local stitching group or an organiser of an exhibition in your town. No previous experience necessary.

Committee members: *Tessa Spratt (VRM) and Sally O'Wheel (TRM), (Conveners); Jacque Schultze (NSWRM), curator.*

The AYM Archivist's Report to Yearly Meeting

NOTE: This Report was to have appeared in Documents in Advance 2019 but was omitted. The Report was sent to RMs during the past year and responses were requested.

PART A: REPORT

According to the current Handbook of Practice and Procedure in Australia (the Handbook) the Australia Yearly Meeting Archivist (YM Archivist) (section 5.2.7) has: “responsibility for the general oversight of the records of Australia Yearly Meeting. This includes advising and assisting the AYM Secretary with the records of the AYM office regarding the legal requirements to retain certain records and the selection of items for the Australian National Archives. The Archivist liaises with the AYM Treasurer concerning financial records.

In addition, the Archivist communicates with RM Archivists (2.5.3) for the same purposes and seeks to promote a wider awareness of the heritage of the Society in Australia. Advice and assistance may be given for exhibitions and publications.”

General Oversight of the Records of AYM

Where records of the Yearly Meeting office are no longer current or necessary for the office’s administrative purposes, the YM Archivist reviews this material and sorts, according to its historical importance to Australian Quakerism, records for lodgement with the Australian National Archives for preservation in perpetuity, records (particularly financial records) that need to be kept for a period of time and ephemeral records that need not be preserved.

This process of review and lodgment occurs upon a change of YM Secretary and movement of records to the new YM Office and, sometimes, within the tenure of a YM Secretary, given the quite considerable annual accretion of records. During the tenure of the present YM Archivist, over a hundred archive boxes of material have been transferred to the Australian National Archives, sorted into designated subject categories and accompanied by an index list of this material.

Communication with RM and LM Archivists

This is a role that is not greatly exercised. Most Regional Meetings have reasonably long-term and stable arrangements for maintaining of their records and have experienced members with understanding of the preservation needs for these records and their management. There is occasionally some call for consultation and discussion; for instance, the present YM Archivist, some years ago, spent time at the WARM Meeting House at Mount Lawley looking at and providing some advice in relation to the WARM Archives which had long been wonderfully and lovingly maintained by Patricia Wood.

However, there is scope for liaison between Regional Meeting Archivists (and potentially with some Local Meeting Archivists) in areas of information and outreach. The potential for archives to pursue such a role was explored in a recent seminar at the University of Melbourne on Social Movements, Archives and Memory. An excellent, highly professional, exercise in this direction is the ‘World War One: Quaker witness to peace and non-violence’ travelling exhibition initiated and coordinated by Jenny Madeline and others in NSW Regional Meeting that has, over the past couple of years, been seen in a number of venues in different States across Australia. There is enormous latent potential for an imaginative use of our archival heritage to be employed in this direction of information and outreach.

Issues/Analysis

Records Management

Recently there has been liaison between the YM Archivist and members of the Handbook Revision Committee with respect to a number of matters regarding archives, but particularly those relating to document retention and access to confidential records. A concise statement concerning these matters is proposed for insertion in the Handbook, but it might be useful for a more expansive account to be placed on the record.

Friends have, historically, taken great care in preserving records relating to their meetings and activities. However, meetings generate a considerable amount of paper and other material and there is often confusion as to what records should or need to be kept and, if so, for how long. It is therefore useful, and good records management practice, for meetings at all levels (from Local Meetings to Yearly Meeting) to develop and maintain a retention schedule for records. A retention schedule should identify:

- Records for permanent retention – these would include a master set of minutes and agenda, including agenda papers; important legal records (eg title deeds to meeting houses,); important administrative records (eg membership registers) and important historical markers (eg pamphlets written by Friends to commemorate an important anniversary of the Meeting).
- Records for which should be kept for a period of time – most importantly financial records which should be kept for a minimum of seven years and then reviewed for their significance for permanent retention (eg major banking records) or destruction (eg everyday receipts).
- Records that do not need to be preserved – ephemera (eg advertising brochures not relating to Friends) that do not illuminate the work and activities of Quakers.

Allied to this task of discerning the period of retention of documents is that of the physical safety of archival records, particularly from the dangers of fire and, possibly, theft. It is good practice that the master set of minutes and agenda, membership registers, important legal documents and similarly important documents are kept in a fire-safe safe. Similarly, with the almost universal use of electronic means of recording data and information, there is a vital question that this can be preserved. Simply saving to memory stick, CD, DVD and other forms of electronic storage is problematic since such media are prone to degradation and, over time, technological irrelevance. Accordingly, it is good practice that important documents are preserved in hard copy form. As well, there are documents of a confidential nature (for instance some matters dealt with by Overseers and Elders) that need to be dealt with great sensitivity. Better practice, that has been formalised in at least one Regional Meeting, is that such sensitive records should be kept in the fire proof safe in a compartment with a separate key and that access is only given to the Clerk and an Elder. Where such documents are transferred to a permanent archive this should be accompanied by a clearly articulated and very lengthy access embargo period.

An exemplary rendering of these principles into a clear and succinct set of policies and procedures has been developed by Jennifer Burrell, the Archivist for Blue Mountains Local Meeting, as the Archives Policy for that Local Meeting. It is recommended as a template that, with any necessary adaptation for local conditions and needs, can be usefully adopted by other meetings.

Blue Mountains Local Meeting Draft Archives Policy

Accessible Archives	
1	Minutes, agendas, and associated reports, business and background papers.
2	Items relating to the meetinghouse, including plans, photographs of working bees, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note that the Regional Meeting, as the property owner, should have originals of all documents relating to ownership and insurance.
3	Local Meeting officer-bearer lists, attendance books / lists.
4	Local Meeting Newsletters. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note: 1 copy of each issue should be sent to the State Library NSW to comply with legal deposit legislation.
5	Photographs relating to the local meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note: photographs should be clearly labelled and stored in archival-quality conditions, eg. in mylar sleeves or archival standard albums.
6	Financial records. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retained for 7 years according to legal limitation of liability and Australian Taxation Office requirements.
7	Miscellaneous correspondence and other items. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain for 7 years according to legal limitation of liability and Australian Taxation Office requirements
8	Committee meeting minutes and associated papers (excluding Ministry & Care and Nominations).
Confidential archives	

9	<p>Minutes from Ministry & Care and Nominations committees, and from any other confidential meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note that redacted minutes may be circulated and if so, these are treated as non-confidential minutes
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PART B: RECOMMENDATIONS

All archives should be stored in safe dry conditions.

1. Local Meeting archives should be stored off-site, to decrease the risk of damage by fire, flood, vandalism, theft.
2. An electronic copy should be submitted with the hard-copy archive. The LM archivist must re-copy material to more modern electronic storage as required.
3. Where relevant, standard archive index categories used for Regional Meeting archives should be used (eg. 'Local Meeting', 'Meeting House').

Access to Local Meeting archives may be requested by any member or attender of the meeting, with the exception of confidential archives. A request to view a specific section from a confidential archive record should be approved by the Ministry and Care Committee in writing. Current documents may be held by the Clerk or relevant committee while in use, after which they should be given to the archivist for review for destruction or retention. This check of current documents by committees and office-bearers should be done annually.

Submitted: Alan Clayton (VRM), Australia Yearly Meeting Archivist

Backhouse Lecture Committee

PART A: REPORT

Achievements/Activities:

Since the end of the 2019 Yearly Meeting, the committee have met several times via zoom. With the stepping down of Yarrow Andrew, plus the fact that the committee has no Young Friend representative, we have written to the AYM Nominations Committee asking for the names of both a YF as well as another Friend to be brought forward to join the committee as early as possible.

We have assisted the 2020 Backhouse Lecturer Fiona Gardner towards finishing the text for the lecture, which is now at the printers. Although there will be no physical YM this year due to Covid-19, we decided to print 100 copies:

- 60 copies will be sent to the AYM Office to fulfil library and standing orders.
- 40 copies will be kept as in-house stock with Interactive Press to fulfil orders
- Additional orders that come to IP will be POD (Print-on-Demand) with our supplier.

Fiona, Michael Searle (as YM technical advisor) and BhL Committee Co-convenor David Tehr met via zoom on Tuesday 21 April to begin preliminary discussions about how the lecture would be delivered this year. Initial talk centred around getting the lecture delivered and recorded with high quality video and audio before YM so that there would be no glitches due to internet drop-out or buffering. Details are yet to be finalised.

The name of American Friend Jon Watts (instigator and initial producer of QuakerSpeak videos) was put forward as the 2021 Backhouse Lecturer and was enthusiastically endorsed by the January Standing Committee. We are hoping to have Jon stay for some time after YM in Victoria so that he can visit other Regional Meetings, as well as spending time at The Friends' School in Hobart. An exact itinerary is yet to be finalised. Jon has also expressed a desire to connect with at least a few Australian Friends in the year before he travels here in order to help him prepare for his lecture

Issues/Analysis:

- The committee feels it is under-staffed and is hoping to have both a YF and another adult Friend appointed as soon as possible.
- The exact manner in which the 2020 Backhouse Lecture will be delivered is yet to be finalised.

- The exact itinerary for Jon Watts during his visit to Australia is yet to be finalized.
- A name for the 2022 Backhouse Lecturer is yet to be discussed.

Committee members: Sue Parritt (VRM) and David Tehr (WARM), Co-Conveners; Dawn Joyce (QRM); Kerry O'Regan (SANTRM); Mark Macleod (TRM); Sieneke Martin (VRM)

Child Protection Committee

No report was submitted.

Children & Junior Young Friends Committee and Children & JYF Coordinators' Report

PART A: REPORT

Achievements/Events:

- **July-October 2019: Finding our (four) feet:** Establishment of CJYF Co-ordinators routines for newsletter publication (generally bi-monthly), support for children and JYF events, and communication with Regional Meetings.
- During and after Yearly Meeting 2019, there was in-depth discussion with Yarrow Andrew as Convenor of the Child Protection Committee, regarding Child Protection concerns that arose as a result of a Junior Young Friend's personal circumstances.
- **November 2019-January 2020: Summer Camp:** CJYF Co-ordinators worked collaboratively with the Children and JYF Committee, Kyrstie Crane (VRM) and a team of Friendly Responsible Adult Presences (FRAPs) and JYF volunteers. We oversaw registrations, camp program design and risk assessments using templates created by parent volunteers in previous years. Due to bushfires we were unable to travel to the Goughs Bay camp venue Kyrstie had booked. Instead Kyrstie opened her home to eighteen JYFs and up to ten adults. Thanks to her family's hospitality and the generous service of many others, we had a successful alternative camp experience.
- Following JYF Summer Camp, we again consulted with Yarrow Andrew regarding Young Friends volunteering as FRAPs for children and JYF events. We have developed a draft policy regarding what we are terming the "FRAP Gap" - a guideline that suggests a five-year gap between young people "graduating" from being JYFs, to having them volunteer as FRAPs at JYF camp and other events for children under the age of eighteen.
- The communication aspects of the role (newsletter, monthly reports, communication with regional meetings and individuals) continued.
- **February-April 2020: Planning for Easter Family Gathering (Gina) and beginning to plan for AYM 2020.** Like most, if not all Australians, our year has been greatly altered by the COVID-19 pandemic, so that our initial planning for the Easter Family Gathering and the Children and JYF programs for AYM 2020 focused on "in person" events and activities.
- We created a generic position description for the role of Camp Leader and appointed Lucy Slevin (YF) as Easter Family Gathering Camp Leader. A working group in mid-March determined that a face-to-face Easter Family Gathering would not be possible due to COVID-19 concerns (which quickly grew into travel and gathering bans). They then planned and facilitated an online Easter Family Gathering that was attended by 53 people from Australia and overseas. The virtual gathering was warmly and positively received. A Junior Young Friend and a Young Friend were key members of the technical support team and provided a professional and skilled technical hosting of the event.
- We have consulted with Andy Bray, who has volunteered to lead the JYF program at AYM 2020. We have also contacted Ronis Chapman to offer support for planning the AYM Children's program.

Issues/Analysis:

- When the coordinator role was first developed, it was envisioned as a means of bringing Quaker children and young people into the life of the Religious Society of Friends through practical and spiritual support for local and regional meetings, and advocacy for matters

relating to children and JYFs.

- The role has naturally evolved and the survey conducted by the Children and JYF Committee in June 2019 identified three priorities for us as new coordinators. These were support for children and JYF programs, support for planning events, and communication with Regional Meetings to raise the profile of children and JYFs within Australian Quakers.
- Support for children and JYF programs via a specific Australian Quaker Children's Meeting curriculum is a concern of Tania's that has not resulted in a finished product as yet.
- Greater support for events (summer JYF camp, the Easter Family Gathering, and Yearly Meeting) was clearly communicated as a priority by several individuals and the CJYF Committee, as responsibility for planning these had tended to rest with a small group of busy parents. The CJYF Committee approved an additional stipend of \$1200 in total (\$600 for each of two key organisers) for each event, and this additional funding has been very welcome.
- Planning for Summer JYF Camp 2020 and the Easter Family Gathering has been time consuming and it has sharpened our awareness of the generosity of many parent volunteers who previously undertook the organising of these events. We can see the value in having the Children and JYF Coordinator/s continue to take a key role in preparation of children and JYF events, particularly because familiarity with the tasks that must be completed during the planning phase will build efficiency and thoroughness, and avoid having a new team of volunteers needing to "start from scratch." It will also enable our Child Protection obligations to continue to be met in a changing legislative environment. As society comes to terms with the trauma experienced by victims of child sexual abuse, we are aware of a greater need for transparency, risk assessments, appropriate supervision of children, and professional leadership at events that include children under the age of 18.
- Communication with Regional Meetings and committees is an essential aspect of the Coordinator role. Identifying how best to communicate with Regional Meetings and individuals is taking time and we have appreciated the patience and feedback of interested Quakers.
- Building intergenerational connections has been a particular concern of Gina's within the coordinator role and these connections were a satisfying aspect of both Summer JYF Camp and the Virtual Easter Gathering.

PART B: FOR CONSIDERATION

We request that AYM provides feedback on the value (or not!) of the following potential CJYF Coordinator offerings:

- Virtual Australia wide - All age meetings for worship
- Virtual Australia wide - Children's meetings for worship with stories and activities
- Virtual Australia wide - JYF meetings for worship and worship sharing

We request that AYM provides direction regarding the format and timing of Coordinator newsletters. Are Regional Meetings happy with the current electronic format, and if not, what is their preferred format?

We ask AYM to determine whether Australia-wide guidelines would be helpful and provide direction accordingly. We have been asked by one Regional Meeting to provide guidelines for its Children and JYF coordinators.

Committee members: Children and JYF Coordinators (Gina Price and Tania Aveling) and Children & JYF Committee (Miriam Hope and Lisa Wriley, Co-Convenors; Josh Crane, Alex Brosnan, Emily Chapman-Searle, Melissa Nininahazwe, Maxine Cooper).

Earthcare Committee

PART A: REPORT

Achievements/Activities:

In the past year we have continued our work with listening deeply to the land and river scapes, moving towards our final riverside meeting point some 250km from the mouth of the Swan River in

Perth. Thanks to YM Secretary and Presiding Clerk we have provided gritty Quaker messages to leaders of politics and industry along with YM2019's Epistle of Climate emergency and Species Extinction, and to the world in response to this summer's devastating bushfires.

We presented to a national audience at the Australian Earth Laws Alliance conference on Building Earth Ethics (In Melbourne), as well as to WARM's Summer School.

We remind Friends the Earthcare Invitation (Pray/Ready/Act/Celebrate) continues to be produced for the extended community, and all are accessible via the webpage

<https://www.quakersaustralia.info/Earthcare>

WARM has hosted the Earthcare Committee since 2015, and is preparing to lay down the role at YM 2021. There will be an opening to discernment at this year's YM as to which RM may pick up the Committee, and what the transition may look like.

PART B: FOR CONSIDERATION

1. that all Quaker Committees, Groups and Meetings add a simple reflective earth-caring moment (in silence or perhaps with a word/poem/quote) to the start of each gathering session they may have, however they meet and wherever they are; and
2. that an audit of earthcare activities in each RM be part of their yearly Report, as has been in previous years, with the additional record of any climate change mitigating practices, shortcuts or 'hacks'/tips they can offer from their experience to the wider Quaker community.
3. that RMs consider hosting the Earthcare Committee beginning at YM 2021.

Committee members: Brenda Roy, Jo Vallentine, Adrian Glamorgan, Elizabeth PO', Helene Fisher, Julie Ivy, Margaret Hodgkin, Vivienne Dawes, Elizabeth Nicholas, Gina Price (WARM)

First Nations Peoples Concerns Committee

PART A: REPORT

Achievements/Activities:

The committee continues to see its role as a national clearing house of information, to provide assistance and support Regional Meeting correspondents around Original Australian related activities engaged by them and others within their Local and Regional Meetings. To correspond with outside bodies when requested by Original Australians. To this end it conducts a Skype facilitated hook up with committee members and Regional Meeting correspondents every two months. The committee also distributes donations made by Quakers to the committee upon request by Original Australian individual and Organisations.

Activities the committee has been involved in since last Yearly Meeting include: writings letters to the Victorian premier in relation to the on-going campaign to save Djab Wurung Sacred Tress near Ararat see <https://dwembassy.com> and The Queensland Government over its extinguishing native title over Wangan and Jagalingou Country to clear the way for Adani to build its massive coal mine on their ancestral lands .

The Committee distributed the following funds:

- \$1490 to Richard Swain to attend a world wilderness conference conservation strategy in India March 2020. Richard is an experienced river guide who takes people on river tours to show them the damage of feral horses and invasive species in the Kosciuszko National Park.
- \$2500 to Koorlong - Noongar Songs in Schools. <https://madjartilmoorna.org.au/home>
- \$2500 provide funding to enable a First Nations woman selected by Auntie Dixie and Belinda to attend The UN Domestic Violence conference in New York and
- \$2000.00 towards the expense incurred by Shane Mortimer in presenting a paper on Allodial title at world leaders conference in Portugal Conference.

Issues/Analysis:

The Committee still believes real reconciliation between Australia's Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples can only truly happen when we engage in real compassionate listening, acknowledge past wrongs and work together to create a new process where real self-determination is acknowledged and respected by the non-Indigenous community and governments and statutory Authorities. Trust, respect and community are created by individual people at the local level engaging with each other and learning from each other.

Committee members: *Chris Hughes and Sharee Harper (Co-Conveners) (VRM), John McMahon (VRM), Larissa Barritt (YF). Correspondents: Sitara Gare (QRM), Anne Felton (CRM), Elspeth Hull (NSWRM), Sally Margaret Gale, (TRM), Harald Ehmann (SANTRM), Clare O'Leary (WARM), Jackie Perkins (QSA), Gedda Fortey CORE (Committee on Racial Equality)*

Friends Peace Teams – Asia West Pacific Report

PART A: REPORT

Achievements/Activities:

- 7th International Peace Training, Pati, Indonesia. This is held each year in January. This year was the largest with 46 participants coming from 10 countries and around 6 languages.
- Work on the online training of facilitators has really increased. It was begun in 2019 as the need grew to reach out to more countries but at lower cost. It allows us to reach more people who are not able to travel. A further on-line training of 11 sessions is about to commence to suit the time zones of Australian and New Zealand facilitators.
- Using Creating Cultures of Peace and the Power of Goodness our work with youth is growing. This helps them to face the violence in their societies through stories, activities and games.
- We continue to integrate peace with the earth through permaculture into peace activities. Children are particularly receptive to this integration and now remind each other to care for the plants, compost, and water. Fund raising took place to implement the Permaculture Plan at Peace Place, designed with the support of Paula and Ian Paananen.
- Support continues for facilitators in West Papua, who have participated in the annual Cultures of Peace Training at Peace Place. They are using Power of Goodness stories and activities to reduce violence in homes and communities

Issues/Analysis:

- We have found that a constant presence in a community does bring wider results. It gives people time to be more receptive to what we are doing and so begin to engage.
- FPT AWP continues to support the work in the North Caucasus and Ukraine. However, people working for peace can face a high level of personal danger and we have to be very aware of this.

PART B: FOR CONSIDERATION

We ask Australian Yearly Meeting to continue with the annual \$1,000 grant as well as the travel subsidy of \$1,000.

Submitted by: *Australian Friends: Jane Drexler, Valerie Joy, John Michaelis; USA Friends: Nadine Hoover, Gay Howard, Fenna Mandolang, Tom Martin, Deb Wood, Mark Hoover, Janet Anderson. Indonesia: Petrus. Nepal: Subhash Chandra, Ram Paudel. Philippines: Kins Aparece. South Korea: Park Jungioo.*

The Friends' School, Hobart

The Friends' School continues to have wide outreach in the broader community through the School (starting the year with 1265 students and 890 families), Friends Health & Fitness (over 1200 members in January 2020) and Friends' Early Learning (serving approximately 240 families). Each of these organisations operates within the same guiding Quaker principles that are found in the

School's [Purpose and Concerns](#).

The School started the year anticipating a full year of learning and growth for all its staff and students, however, before Term 1 was finished the School (along with the global community) found itself in a different place. We transitioned to 'distance learning' on 30 March, two weeks prior to the term break. Distance learning is anticipated to continue well into Term 2, commencing on 27 April. We will continue to closely monitor the situation in Hobart and recommence face-to-face classes on campus when it is safe to do so.

Last year, Karen Wilson (current Board member and member of Tasmania Regional Meeting) fulfilled the role of the Quaker Community Coordinator (Early Years through to Year 12). The School thanks Karen for her thoughtful and wide-ranging service in 2019 as the Quaker Community Coordinator.

This year the School has replaced the Quaker Community Coordinator role with the position of Gathering Elder at each of the School levels. The Gathering Elder's role is to work with staff and students to prepare for each week's student Gatherings. The Gathering Elders are Jess Lund (Morris - Friends' Primary Years), Lou Giudici (High School, Years 7 - 10) and Maddy Walker (Clemes, Years 11 and 12). All three are long-time staff members and members of Tasmania Regional Meeting. Gatherings for students across the School continue to happen on a weekly basis where the students gather in silence for an age appropriate length of time via distance learning platforms.

In January 2020, all staff were shown David Johnson's QuakerSpeak program – "The Prayer Life of Quakers" and were given the opportunity to discuss the video. David Johnson had planned on visiting The Friends' School in May 2020 as part of his ministry trip to Tasmania, however, that has now been put on hold. A visit from Sanjeev Shukla, the 2020 FWCC Asia West Pacific Section (AWPS) visitor to Australia Yearly Meeting, has also been cancelled due to COVID-19.

This year the School's Quaker Values Committee welcomes three new members; Tracy Bourne (Canberra Regional Meeting), Oliver Lovell (Victoria Regional Meeting) and John Beattie (Queensland Regional Meeting). Tracy is a current and past parent of students at the School (Emily and Rosie) and Oliver is an alumni (Class of 2008). The committee had anticipated meeting in Hobart during the Annual General Meeting weekend (14, 15 and 16 May), but the meeting of the QVC has been cancelled for 2020.

As part of my letter welcoming families to the new school year, and in reference to the terrible bushfires that raged across Australia over the summer, I included three **Advices & Queries** (45, 46 & 47).

#45 Try to live simply. A simple lifestyle freely chosen is a source of strength. Do not be persuaded into buying what you do not need or cannot afford. Do you keep yourself informed about the effects your style of living is having on the global economy and environment?

#46 The land of Australia is not our possession. We are no more than temporary guardians of it; neither the first nor probably, the last. In the brief time of European settlement, vast areas of this country have been damaged. Do you try to live in harmony with the land, knowing that you are part of it? Do you protect and husband its water and other resources? Do you look with respect on the claims and rights of others to share in the wealth and freedoms of Australians?

#47 We live in a land of unique grandeur and beauty, harsh and majestic, but at the same time fragile. Have you discovered its wonder and mystery, and has this awareness quickened your spiritual insight and helped you to recognise that of God in everyday life? Rejoice in the splendour of God's continuing Creation.

The Friends' School will endure the pandemic that is sweeping the world. We are uncertain what the School will look like a year from now, however, I can say with certainty that the School will continue to put the **Purpose and Concerns** into practice on a daily basis.

Submitted by Nelson File, Principal, The Friends' School

Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC)

PART A: REPORT

Achievements/Activities:

- We meet frequently via Zoom.
- We formulated and distributed the Application Package for AWPS visitors to AYM. We appointed Sanjeev Shukla, Principal of Sohagpur Friends School for Girls (in India) as our 2020 visitor. AYM Secretary issued the invitation; we arranged a month-long programme for Sanjeev to visit 3 Meetings and the Friends School in Hobart.
- COVID intervened. Sanjeev will present digitally to AYM.
- AYM Treasurer agreed to hold the funds for Sanjeev's travel so that the visit can occur later.
- We have one AWPS visitor application for YM 2021
- We share any international Quaker news with each other and with our RMs.

Issues/Analysis:

- We hope to have two representatives from AYM at the AWPS Gathering (currently scheduled for October in Singapore). We will seek funding for them in the AYM budget
- Three more Friends complete their terms in 2020. We look forward to their replacements and hope to resolve the 'staggering' of terms so that 2 Reps change each year.
- We appreciate the involvement of 4 ex officio members in our meetings.

Committee members: Connor Chaffey (YF), David Evans (SANTRM), Jonathan Benyei (CRM), Julie Walpole (TRM), Convenor, Marian James (QRM), Rowe Morrow (NSWRM), Sharon Matthews (WARM) and Sue Ennis (VRM). **Ex officio:** AWPS rep to QUNO NY Aletia Dundas, AWPS Treasurer Harold Wilkinson, AWPS Assistant Clerk Maxine Cooper, AWPS Secretary Ronis Chapman, AYM Clerk, AYM Secretary.

Handbook Revision Committee

PART A: REPORT

Achievements/Activities:

The Handbook is the Handbook of Practice and Procedure in Australia, the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia. The Handbook is updated from time to time to describe current practice and procedures.

At YM 2019 the revised 7th edition of the Handbook was accepted, apart from three entries that were to be discerned by Regional Meetings and for further discernment at YM 2020. The HRC identified another issue that was referred to the RMs for discernment. The recommended revised entries are in the attached document.

After the vast amount of work done in preparation for and at YM 2019, it seemed that the finalisation of the 7th edition for the AYM website would be a fairly easy task as there was only further editing, numbering, cross referencing etc to be done. Once the web version was completed, further discussions would be had about the feasibility of a printed edition.

As the HRC set to work after YM2019, factual and stylistic inconsistencies in the 7th edition showed up and work was done by the HRC to ease the task for the final editors. The Publications Committee has been keen to participate in making the 7th edition ready for the website. Negotiations between the Publications Committee and HBR are continuing as we seek to find the way forward in being able to offer the 7th edition online.

Issues/Analysis:

It is important that the web version of the 7th edition of the Handbook is placed on the AYM website so all Friends have access to the same information about our practice and procedures. We hope that this work will be completed soon.

PART B: RECOMMENDATIONS

Four suggested changes to the Handbook are in [Appendix 1](#) for the discernment of YM2020.

Committee members: HRC: Wies Schuiringa (NSWRM); Julie Walpole (TRM); Beverley Polzin (VRM).

Information Technology Committee

As the world turns upside down our IT arrangements become much more important and we can only hope that the internet continues to function well.

Adaptation to the Coronavirus situation

The AYM Secretary has implemented an update page www.quakersaustralia.info/coronavirus on our website for Friends during the Coronavirus disruption. It has news of our adaptation to the crisis and links to online Meetings for Worship and other information.

It is a good example of the ways in which the website can quickly help to keep our community in touch. Our Facebook pages have also enabled Friends to keep sharing news and ideas.

There is also a page www.quakersaustralia.info/YM2020 with information about the new arrangements for Yearly Meeting. With the ban on gatherings the Organising Committee and Office Bearers have a major challenge on how our usual activities can be put online. The website will continue to be a source of current information about the re-designed event.

Map for finding Meetings

Another significant change to our website in the past year was the implementation of a map system for finding a Meeting for Worship at www.quakersaustralia.info/meetings (or any of the Regional Meeting pages).

Whilst this can only provide information about physical meetings around Australia it does provide contact information for enquirers. It remains to be seen how effective this will be in the new circumstances.

New film for Enquirers

We have contracted George Underwood, a professional film maker in Tasmania, to produce a new video for the enquirers website at <https://www.quakersaustralia.org.au/>

It is being funded by a grant of up to \$15,000 from the Thanksgiving Fund. George has done five interviews and prepared an initial sample film for us. We have asked him to interview more Friends but as they involve travel (Melbourne and Adelaide) those are now on hold.

In the interim we have commissioned an initial version of the video from the work he has already done. We this will be available shortly and we will ask him to extend it once the Coronavirus restrictions are lifted.

Printable lists

We have had some difficulty arranging new versions of the printable lists of Meetings, Members, Attenders and Children but are hopeful these can be updated soon. In the meantime, the 'Find a Friend' page <https://www.quakersaustralia.info/friend-finder> (which is only available to Friends) on the website provides contact information for Friends.

Generic email addresses

Julie Walpole of Tasmania Regional Meeting has been kindly helping us by checking up on the various generic email addresses. Some RM Office Bearers, all AYM Committees and all Meetings for Worship have email addresses which they need to monitor on a regular basis. Not all the contact Friends seem to be doing so.

We have now co-opted Julie onto the Committee for this purpose and she will be contacting Regional Meetings shortly to try to ensure all the addresses are being monitored correctly.

Streaming, recording and virtual events

The agreement by Standing Committee that some sessions of Yearly Meeting could be 'live streamed' over the internet has been overtaken by the current crisis. Not only has the YM gathering

been cancelled but the organising committee and AYM Office Bearers are now planning a series of virtual events on the web to replace it.

Use of Zoom software

At our suggestion the AYM Presiding Clerk thanked the four Friends, Emily Chapman-Searle, Diane Bretherton, Sheila Keane and Michael Searle, for taking the initiative to organise training sessions about Zoom and how to run effective meetings using it as soon as the social distancing restrictions were announced. These have been very popular and are enabling Friends to continue to participate in their Meetings of various kinds.

With Meetings for Worship (including for business) now taking place online isolated Friends and others at a distance are able to take part, which adds a new dimension. Many Meetings are reporting an increase in attendance. An interesting challenge for Friends is to develop ways that combine physical and online meetings once restrictions are reduced.

Matters for Consideration

We have no matters for consideration.

Committee members: Roger Sawkins (QRM), Convener; Michael Searle (CRM); and Jacque Schultze (NSWRM), with Julie Walpole (TRM), co-opted.

NCCA Ecumenical Report

At Jo Jordan's invitation I attended the National Council of Churches Australia (NCCA) Triennium Meeting in Canberra in June 2019. This Gathering enabled me to meet with delegates from Member Churches and Organisations. I valued the time to share worship and ideas with NCCA members, to participate in small groups and to contribute to planning sessions as together we formulated ideas incorporated into NCCA's Triennial Strategic Plan.

In November I attended the NCCA AGM in Sydney and, with David Purnell, participated in an Assembly focussed on Moral Discernment. Planned 2020 NCCA events including National Assemblies and Heads of Churches Meetings are now on hold. At present there are no invitations for Heads of Churches or Assemblies to meet online.

I have joined the Western Australian Heads of Churches (WAHoC) which meets six times a year and have much appreciated the fellowship and support offered me from this group of faith leaders. Our most recent meeting (April) was via Zoom and this option will be used until COVID19 rules governing gatherings are modified.

The regular NCCA newsletters contain inspirational reports, reflections and messages. I encourage Friends to read and share a contribution from Pacific Conference of Churches response to the COVID19 pandemic on Earth Day, 22 April, 2020, in NCCA April #2 newsletter. It is a testament to simplicity. This newsletter can be found here: <https://www.ncca.org.au/ncca-newsletter/april-2020-2/item/2081-earth-day-2020022>

Ann Zubrick, Presiding Clerk

NCCA Faith and Unity Network

The Commission met by Zoom for four hours over two days, 23 and 24 April. This meeting replaced a planned two-day long meeting. It was therefore significantly truncated. It was my first attendance representing Friends and I was made very welcome. We spent an extended period of time after acknowledging the traditional owners of the country and worship led by Clayton Spence, a Salvation Army Officer, on what is theological reflection in a time of pandemic. As I participated this was an opportunity for me to listen and observe how the Commission functions. I felt privileged to participate in gentle deep pondering about the complexities the pandemic is creating around the world. The uncertainty created in people's lives was acknowledged and prayed through.

Morag Logan, from the Uniting Church, presented a lengthy discussion paper about the Commissions "Theological Response to the Royal Commission on Child Sexual Abuse. This forthright honest appraisal from a theological perspective launched a wide-ranging discussion of this complicated historical understandings of the short comings of the Church in the past. Continuing work is to be undertaken by the Commission to present study materials in the future.

Gerard Kelly who chaired the meeting with aplomb, presented a preliminary draft of a Statement on Ecumenism. We explored at length what the kingdom looks like from an ecumenical point of view at this point in time. The group acknowledged the centrality of kindness, prayer and creativity in these uncertain, distressing times.

We hope to be able to meet face to face next time. I look forward to contributing to the ongoing work of the Commission and would be happy to receive any feedback from Friends.
5th Day 5th Month 2020.

Submitted by Janet Duke (VRM), AYM Representative to the NCCA Faith and Unity Network

NCCA Social Justice Network

The Social Justice Network has not met for about 12 months. I have been the AYM delegate to this Network for a number of years.

The NCCA, at its triennial mid 2019 decided to restructure the Social Justice Network and establish a number of task forces to address specific social justice issues. The Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce has continued and a staff member of Act for Peace has been the coordinator. Other taskforces have not been set up yet e.g. climate change, Indigenous, family violence. Member churches have been asked for nominations to these new task forces however the details of the expectations for these task forces have been unclear and the AYM nominations committee has not been able to get clarifications what would be required of members of these task forces.

The NCCA has had an acting general secretary for the last two years and currently the recruitment is happening for the permanent position.

My recommendation is that we wait for the position of the NCCA general secretary to be filled, and see what unfolds regarding the reformatted Social Justice Network.

Submitted: Wies Schuiringa (NSWRM), AYM delegate to the Social Justice Network of the NCCA

Peace & Social Justice Fund Committee

PART A: REPORT

Achievements/Activities

This committee is under the care of Canberra Regional Meeting. Between April 2019 and March 2020, the committee met 3 times.

For the 2018-19 Quaker financial year, the fund had approximately \$28 100 available for projects and grants totalling just under \$30 000 were agreed to. A special Standing Committee meeting on 10 September 2019 agreed to the over allocation. However, due to visa problems and North Korean red tape, \$9000 granted to the Quaker North Korean Working Group was unused.

For the 2019-20 Quaker financial year, the fund has approximately \$31 000 available for projects and as at March 2020 grants totalling \$1200 have been agreed to.

FUNDED PROJECTS

During the period April 2019 to March 2020, the following projects have been agreed to:

- Friends Peace Teams – Asia West Pacific: \$3800 to support Paula Paananen and others design and initiate a permaculture site, develop an integrated peace and permaculture curriculum for facilitators and teachers, and train youth interfaith leaders in personal and social transformation programs at the Peace Place, Pati, Indonesia.
- Jason MacLeod and Rosa Moiwend (Pasifika): \$4000 to support West Papuans observe and monitor the self-determination referendum in Bougainville.
- Extinction Rebellion (XR) in South Australia (Yarrow): \$1000 to help support 3 XR volunteers.
- Quaker Peace and Legislation Committee (QPLC): \$500 for two Quaker representatives to attend the Annual General Meeting (a fund-raising activity) of the Australian Palestine Advocacy Network (APAN).

Issues/Analysis:

The committee asks all Regional Meetings and individual F/friends to consider making a contribution to the Fund as part of their annual contribution.

We ask all Treasurers to include the fund as part of their annual contribution request letter.

Committee members: Peter Hillery (Convenor), Graham Jensen, Peggy Storch, Marilyn Webster and Harold Wilkinson.

Publications Committee

PART A: REPORT

The Committee is geographically separated, in several states and two countries, so we meet via Zoom several times each year as reporting or decisions are needed.

1. The pamphlet updating continues and the working group has completed the rewrite of the leaflet 'Speaking in Meetings'. We hope this will be on the website by Yearly Meeting 2020.

2. The working group, which includes Charles Stevenson, have looked at Elisabeth Stevenson's book on Quaker Ways and while they acknowledge that the content is dated, Charles and Jenny do not feel a leading to update it. We therefore intend to liaise with AYM's Children & YF Coordinators to see if this could be undertaken as a project with our young people with a view to bringing it up to date. This could incorporate some of the modern ways that young Quakers in Australia are keeping in touch.

3. Handbook of Practice and Procedure — Publications Committee has spent some time trying to get this draft edited and presented in an easily useable format for the final checks and changes, given that it is not yet finalised. It has been difficult to find someone who was willing to undertake this editing and layout as in its present form the publication has highlighted segments that are yet to be finalised and the numbering and referencing had further work to be done.

- Julie Walpole, Tasmania RM, has gone through and brought consistency to the numbering and referencing.
- Sue Headley, Tasmania RM, has undertaken to look at this and review the numbering etcetera to simplify the numbering to make this more easily useable.
- When this is finalised, Sue will endeavour to do the editing and layout.
- Sue is liaising with the Handbook Committee in this work.

Our understanding is that the Handbook Committee hopes to have this available online for consultation prior to YM2020.

4. Creative Commons licenses —

In DiR 2019, the following is noted: Handbook Section 2.6 – it is recommended that AYM publications committee should review its guidelines to include copyright and intellectual property considerations.

- Margaret Bywater reports there are at least six different Creative Commons licenses.

- Sue Headley advises there may be few advantages in using CC licenses for AYM publications as most things are publicly available on the web and extracts can be used with acknowledgement.
- Publications Committee would need to look at proposed publications on a case by case basis to make decisions re Creative Commons licenses.

5. Regional Meetings use of the AYM logo

- We have received several requests from VRM to use the AYM logo modified with the VRM name underneath for posters and for a public sign on William Street when their library was under construction.

6. Issues of ownership and copyright of AYM publications

As a result of misunderstanding and a lack of clear, signed agreements in the layout and design of the second edition of the Friends in Stitches publication, a great deal of hurt, disappointment and difficulties arose when it came time to launch and sell this publication. In an endeavour to avoid such future difficulties, Publications Committee undertook to draft an agreement to be signed by anyone undertaking layout and editing for AYM Publications that clearly outlines the responsibilities and ownership of copyright of such publications.

This matter continues to be under consideration and this Committee welcomes contributions and support in developing this contract.

Issues/Analysis:

We ask Regional Meetings to recommend to the Committee which pamphlets they wish to be updated and to provide any they have developed for their own use.

Committee members: *Judith Pembleton (QRM, Margaret Bywater (TRM), Co-Conveners; Jim Palmer (VRM), Jenny Stock (SANTRM), Dawn Joyce (QRM), Sue Headley (TRM)).*

Quaker Learning Australia Committee (QLA)

PART A: REPORT

Achievements/Activities:

WA Regional Meeting (WARM) has held responsibility for QLA for two of our three-year commitment. Initially a committee of five F/friends, we have contracted to a small group of three, due to unforeseen changes of circumstance for two of our members. Since we all carry other workloads within the Meeting, our initial enthusiasm to grow the scope of QLA has been tempered by reality.

The Meeting for Learning course (which is under the care of QLA) has been hosted by WARM for the last two years. The two retreats held at the monastery at New Norcia were a deep and nourishing time for all concerned and have brought many WA F/friends closer to each other through the process of support groups and through the fruits of opening to the Spirit during this time. Close links have been forged across Regional Meetings strengthening us all. We are thankful WARM experienced this opportunity.

In 2020 Meeting for Learning (still under the care of QLA) is to be held in the Clare Valley, South Australia. With the restrictions currently in place because of the Corona virus, it is unclear at this stage whether a 2020 residential week will be possible. We are hopeful it will be able to proceed. We are happy to note that Tasmania Regional Meeting will host the 2022–2023 Meeting for Learning programme.

We have struggled to transfer and update the new QLA website. Our vision of a fuller, more comprehensive website is still a work in progress. Although small in number and restricted by other commitments, the QLA committee is inspired and hopeful of developing Quaker learning resources, information and links as Friends become more attuned to spiritual life online

PART B: FOR CONSIDERATION

We ask that AYM continue to budget \$3000 per annum to QLA to support Meeting for Learning should it be able to go ahead.

WARM's 3-year commitment to the QLA committee finishes in 2021. We are happy to continue for a further year if AYM finds this appropriate. We encourage other Regional Meetings to consider hosting QLA committee from 2022.

Committee members: Brenda Roy (Convenor), David Tehr, Sharon Matthews, Michael Hertz

Quaker Peace & Legislation Committee (QPLC)

PART A: REPORT

1. Religious Freedom. The Federal Government has put out two drafts of legislation that it proposes to place before Parliament in 2020. We have made a submission that the legislation prioritises religious freedom over other freedoms and discriminates against vulnerable groups.

2. Communication. We have continued to issue documents for use by Friends in their peace witness and prepared letters for the Clerk to send to government on current concerns;

- Action Alerts: US-Iran Conflict; Foreign Fighters; Climate Change and the Pacific; West Papua; ABC Legislation; Bushfire Inquiry.
- Watching Briefs: The Work of QUNO; Lethal Autonomous Weapons: Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS); New Morrison Government: Protecting Whistleblowers; Social Defence; Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); UN Human Rights Commission; Defence Review; Government Accountability in Australia; Death Penalty and Australia.

3. Areas of concern. We have responded to the following issues: Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty; Israel/Palestine concerns; Military drones; Human Rights; Whistleblowers in ACT; Social Defence publication; West Papua; Sri Lanka; UN Reform.

PART B: FOR CONSIDERATION

1. That all Regional Meetings commit to a partnership with QPLC in the coming year to develop workshops, outreach and resources based on the peace testimony and designed to build more effective peacebuilding methods and action.
2. That AYM issue a public statement after the YM gathering calling on all those in positions of leadership to seek ways to promote cooperation and consensus in political, business and community life, building upon the spirit of mutual support that has been evident during the health crisis caused by COVID-19. This statement could reflect the vision of the recently established Commission for the Human Future.

Committee members: Harold Wilkinson (convener), Margaret Bearlin, Ronis Chapman, Margaret Clark, Gareth Knapman, Greg Parkhurst, David Purnell, Shobha Varkey (CRM). Greg Parkhurst attends as correspondent for Canberra Meeting.

Quaker Service Australia (QSA)

PART A: REPORT

Quaker Service Australia (QSA) continues its development work as a public company limited by guarantee with regional meeting appointees fulfilling their obligations as members of the company. The annual QSA weekend gathering (including the annual general meeting) was held in February 2020 where input was received, plans reviewed, reports approved and annual company position appointments made. Project reports were a highlight of the weekend including those from the Aubrey bequest funding refugee and asylum seeker projects around Australia.

A feature of the annual QSA weekend gathering is the coming together of the linkages committee's interstate representatives and *ex officios* with the NSW based management committee. Nine

linkages committee meetings have been held during calendar years 2019 & 2020 (to date) – seven by teleconference and Zoom, and two in-person during the annual February QSA Ltd meetings in Sydney. In September 2019 Topsy Evans laid down her responsibilities after many years as the linkages committee convenor. Karen Dedenczuk (TRM) and Henry Esbenshade (WARM) subsequently became the linkages committee co-convenors.

2020 has begun with a high workload for the QSA staff with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) periodic accreditation this year. Working remotely from the office, due to the recent COVID-19 implications, has added much more complexity to the year as the pandemic dramatically affected many development projects. Adjustments to plans have been needed at short notice fitting within revised guidelines from the Federal Government.

QSA is aware of the plight affecting refugees and asylum seekers within Australia due to a reduction in income as jobs close as a result of COVID-19. Most state governments have made financial provision for refugees and asylum seekers in their relief packages, with the exception of NSW and Victoria. We agreed to a request for funding from Jill Parris, Victoria Regional Meeting on behalf of Hope Co-op Support Fund, for \$12,500 to support asylum seekers in Victoria who have suddenly lost their jobs due to the pandemic. An equivalent amount of \$12,500 has been made available to asylum seekers in NSW via the Asylum Seekers Centre for their distribution to asylum seekers needing support.

Foresight into a world greatly impacted by the health and economic disruptive winds of change remains the task ahead as QSA adjusts to ever-increasing world needs. Together we can and do make a difference to the lives of many thousands in the countries we work with our partner organisations. With determination, creative interactions, and resourcing QSA will continue to build a more peaceful, equitable, just, and compassionate world. The support of Australian Quakers is valued and needed more than ever before.

PART B: FOR CONSIDERATION

QSA sends the names of the following Friends from NSW Regional Meeting for confirmation as members of QSA Management Committee:

- Pia Reiersen
- Garry Duncan

Submitted by: Garry Duncan, QSA Convenor

QSA Management Committee: Garry Duncan (Convenor), Miriam Goodwin (Treasurer), Richard Gibbons, Mary Jo Merindol, Chris Sargeant, Pia Reiersen. RM appointees: Alex Nicholson, CRM; Rae Litting, NSWRM; Rhoda Dorrell, QRM; Jo Jordan, SANTRM; Karen Dedenczuk, TRM; Anne Herbert, VRM; Henry Esbenshade, WARM; YF, vacant. Ex officio: AYM Clerk, AYM Secretary. Jackie Perkins, Executive Administrator; Michael Morrissey, Public Officer

Review of Standing Committee Report to Yearly Meeting

1. Introduction

The issue of a review of the role and processes of Standing Committee arose at Yearly Meeting 2019, particularly in the context of the Preparatory Sessions for Handbook Revision Committee and the Right Holding of Yearly Meeting Committee. This matter was crystallised in the Recommendations to Yearly Meeting from the latter Preparatory Session. In particular, Recommendation 3 (based on Recommendation 5 from Documents in Advance) stated:

We recommend a review of the role, responsibilities, authority and delegations of Standing Committee and the rules of the association of AYM. We recognise that Standing Committee cannot effectively review its own processes. We note that Yearly Meeting has already asked Standing Committee to devise a process to review its emergency-decision making processes. We ask AYM to broaden the scope and propose a process for the review of its role, responsibilities, authority and delegations and report back to Regional Meetings.

We have been asked by the Presiding Clerk to provide some advice as to the issues relating to Standing Committee that were raised at Yearly Meeting 2019. We have also been kept informed by the Right Holding of Yearly Meeting Committee of its ongoing process of discernment, including its various working documents and background papers. In particular, we have been specifically referred to its draft November 2019 Background Paper.

2. The Structure and Governance of the Religious Society of Friends in Australia

The corporate form by which the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) operates in Australia is that of an incorporated association under the *Associations Incorporation Act 1991* (ACT). This incorporated association, 'The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia Incorporated', is the ongoing manifestation of 'Australia Yearly Meeting' ("AYM") as distinct from the use of that term to refer to the annual gathering of this association. The revised Rules of this association ("the Rules") functionally serve as the 'Constitution' of this association.

Every Quaker who is in membership with one of the seven Regional Meetings around Australia is, by virtue of this fact, also a member of Australia Yearly Meeting.

An overview of the governance arrangements for AYM is set out in rule 5 of the Rules, namely:

The conduct of the affairs of the Association shall be controlled by the Association in Yearly Meeting, the Standing Committee and the officers of the Association, in accordance with the Act, these Rules and the Handbook. In addition to Standing Committee, other committees and representatives may be appointed under Rule 7 below.

Yearly Meeting is stated to be "the gathering of Australian Friends held from time to time, usually annually, to conduct the business of the Association as a General Meeting of the Association" [definition of 'Yearly Meeting' in rule 1.3].

Standing Committee is a Committee of the Association [rule 6.1] whose role is stated as being "responsible for implementing decisions taken by the Association in Yearly Meetings and for the management of the Association between Yearly Meetings in accordance with the Handbook" [rule 6.5]. A simpler statement of this role is provided in the Handbook as "Standing Committee carries on the work of Australia Yearly Meeting between YM gatherings" [section 5.3.2]. Finally, in the Glossary to the Handbook, Standing Committee is described as "effectively the executive committee of the Society".

3. Overview

Standing Committee is defined in the Rules as "the Committee of the Association" in the context of the following framework:

- Both the *Rules* (Rule 5) and the *Handbook* (Section 5.3.2) make it clear that the affairs of the Society are controlled by Yearly Meeting, Standing Committee and the office-bearers.
- Standing Committee is responsible for implementing decisions of AYM and managing the Association between meetings of AYM. It is also to monitor other committees between AYM sessions.
- The *Rules* (Rule 6.5) give Standing Committee essentially the role of an executive committee, with flexibility to hold meetings as needed, to delegate responsibilities, and to make decisions for the management of AYM.
- To date Standing Committee has met twice a year face-to-face, once before the AYM session, and once mid-year, and has confined its mid-year work mainly to matters that cannot wait until YM. There is no legal restriction on the expansion of this role to include such things as amending the Handbook, approving the annual budget, and delegating the organising of the AYM timetable.
- In particular, the *Rules* (Rule 5) allow Standing Committee to hold a special Yearly Meeting session to be the annual general meeting of the Association, with a quorum of 30. This means that the AGM can be held at a time separate from AYM.
- Urgent decision-making has hitherto be left to a small group (three) of office-holders (Clerk, Secretary, one Standing Committee member). Standing Committee can be convened at 14 days' notice if necessary. This could change to enable a shorter time for convening Standing Committee (e.g. 3 days) for an electronic meeting.

A general point to be made is that the *Rules* are clear that the management of the Association will be based largely on the *Handbook*. This means that changes in procedure can be made to the *Handbook* and then subsequently made to the relevant *Rules* once well established.

4. Responsibilities of Standing Committee

Now that AYM is developing its business procedures for the annual gathering, in response to the range of concerns to be dealt with, it is clear that Standing Committee will be expected to undertake a more active role throughout the year. This will not only help with the flow of decision-making but will support the work of the office-bearers (Presiding Clerk, Secretary, and Treasurer). As well as the list of tasks contained in section 5.3.2 of the Handbook, specific additions to the work of Standing Committee have been suggested:

- Consider and approve the budget taking into account the views of Regional Meetings and Yearly Meeting.
- Approve changes to the Handbook that have been endorsed by all Regional Meetings.
- Consider long term issues affecting the future of the Society.
- Hold a special Yearly Meeting as the Annual General Meeting of the Association.
- Assume the role of decision-maker in urgent situations.
- Co-opt temporary members with particular expertise and experience and/or to undertake identified tasks.

It is not intended that Standing Committee will overrule a decision of Yearly Meeting. If an issue arises where a Yearly Meeting decision turns out to raise unexpected difficulties, Standing Committee can consider referring that issue to Regional Meetings or a YM Committee or office bearer for discernment and advice about appropriate action.

5. Membership and Meetings

The membership of Standing Committee comprises two classes of members. The first is ex officio members by virtue of holding specified officer roles within AYM; the second are appointed members [rule 6.1].

The ex officio members are:

- the Presiding Clerk;
- the Immediate Past Presiding Clerk;
- the Treasurer; and
- the Secretary.

Also, the Handbook provides that, during the final year of the Presiding Clerk's term of office, the Friend appointed as the next Presiding Clerk shall be a member of Standing Committee. In one sense this may be seen as a prospective ex officio appointment, but as it is not, in this sense, authorised by the Rules it is more correctly seen as an ad hoc or temporary appointed position.

The appointed members are:

- two members appointed by each Regional Meeting;
- up to two representatives of Young Friends, nominated by Young Friends and confirmed by Standing Committee; and
- such ad hoc or temporary members as may be appointed by Standing Committee.

The expectation that there will be more meetings (four or five a year) of Standing Committee raises the question of how they are held. We are keen to see the number of face-to-face meetings (two a year) maintained, as the group experience adds considerably to the quality of discernment, especially on major concerns. One of the two face-to-face meetings is to include the AGM.

The use of electronic methods for another two or more meetings a year can work if appropriate supports are in place for the participation, clerking and recording of the decision-making. It may help if the agendas for these meetings are brief, focused on a few items, and circulated several weeks ahead. The clerk may find it useful to have it agreed that, for each item, initial comments will be made in turn by each RM, YFs and then office-bearers, before the wider discussion ensues.

In short, it will require self-discipline by all involved. We are aware that the current Presiding Clerk has asked an experienced Friend from their own Regional Meeting to assist with drafting the minutes, and this practice may add a valuable resource to on-line meetings.

A question that arises is whether others not on Standing Committee might be invited to Standing Committee meetings. The face-to-face meetings have already a practice of inviting specific contributors for particular items. However, the on-line meetings pose more difficulty as indicated earlier. It may be that observers could be invited without speaking rights, but this will need to be considered carefully in view of the extra demands placed on the clerk/s.

There has been a suggestion that the quorum for Standing Committee meetings should remain at six, but that this should include the Presiding Clerk or alternate. We agree with this suggestion.

PART B: ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

6. Recommendations

1. That Standing Committee be recognized as the executive committee of AYM, with responsibility for the ongoing management of AYM through the year.
2. That Standing Committee carry out its role within the guidelines of the *Handbook*, including regular consultation with Regional Meetings.
3. That the membership of Standing Committee remains as at present, and meetings held as needed to suit the timetable of AYM business through the year, so long as at least two face-to-face meetings are held each year.
4. That on-line Standing Committee meetings be set up so as to make possible the most effective participation in, and clerking and recording of, the decision-making.
5. That the preparation process for meetings of Standing Committee ensure that Regional Meetings have time to receive adequate information and arrange maximum participation by as many members/attenders as possible.
6. That amendments to the *Handbook* as outlined in Appendix A to this report be made to give effect to these recommendations by expanding the capacity of Standing Committee to carry out its responsibilities.
7. That no change be made to the Association's *Rules* until the new procedures are well established.
8. That the points raised in Appendix B be noted for future discernment in the light of experience of the changes being made in Standing Committee's work.

Appendix A: Suggested changes to Handbook (changes in italics)

- Section 5.3.2 The first sentence be changed to read "*Standing Committee is the executive committee which carries on the work of AYM between YM gatherings*". An additional sentence be added to the paragraph, reading "*Standing Committee can co-opt temporary members for particular expertise and experience and/or to undertake specific tasks*".
- Section 5.3.2 After the first sentence in the second paragraph, the following be added: "*Regional Meetings are expected to ensure that their representatives are well informed of the views expressed within their Regional Meeting on the issues before Standing Committee*".
- Section 5.3.2 The first sentence of the third paragraph to read "*Standing Committee meets at least twice a year face-to-face, and at other times as required*". The last sentence to be expanded to say "*the quorum is six members, including the Presiding Clerk or alternate*". The list of items that can be dealt with by Standing Committee include the following – (a) *approves the budget taking into account the view of Regional Meetings;* (b) *approves changes to the Handbook that have been endorsed by all Regionals Meetings;* (c) *considers longer term issues affecting the future of the Society;* and (d) *convenes a special yearly meeting for the holding of the annual general meeting of the Association in accordance with Rule 9 of the Rules.*

- Section 5.3.2 The fifth paragraph be deleted and replaced by the following: “*Standing Committee can delegate any of its tasks to an office-bearer or committee*”.
- In Appendix D, the fifth paragraph on urgent decision-making be re-worded as follows: “*When urgent matters arise, the Presiding Clerk can call special meetings of Standing Committee with at least 3 days’ notice. In exceptional circumstances, where there is an imperative for a decision to be made in a very short time, a decision may be made jointly by the Presiding Clerk, the AYM Secretary and one other member of Standing Committee (plus the AYM Treasurer is appropriate)*”.

Appendix B: Items for Future Consideration

1. The terms of RM members on Standing Committee.
2. The inclusion of national Committee conveners in meetings of Standing Committee. This is the situation with the equivalent Britain Yearly Meeting body – the Meeting for Sufferings - at least in relation to certain names committees.
3. The role and responsibilities of national office-bearers.

Submitted: Alan Clayton and David Purnell, December 2019

NOTE: The Report was sent to RMs during the past year and responses were requested.

Right Holding of Yearly Meeting Committee

The Report (PowerPoint presentation) with Items for Consideration, can be found on the YM20 website here: https://www.quakersaustralia.info/sites/aym-members/files/pages/files/RHYMreport_0.pdf

Committee members: Jennifer Burrell (NSWRM), Convener; Bev Polzin (VRM); Felicity Rose (TRM), Geoff Greeves (SANTRM), Michael Searle (CRM).

Safe Quaker Community Committee

PART A: REPORT

Achievements/Activities:

The new Committee wishes to extend its appreciation the extensive work of the previous committee and their offer to facilitate the Contact Friends Workshop delivered at Brisbane Friends’ Meeting House between 4-6 October 2019. Every state and territory from around Australia were represented – 6 Contact Friends, 7 Regional Meeting representatives and 2 facilitators

We began by looking at the differences between a counsellor and a Contact Friend (CF). We listened to Jennifer Wallace who presented a half-day session on “The Gentle Art of Verbal Self Defence”. We looked closely at the new *Safe Quaker Community* policy. The overall feeling was that the policy is comprehensive and informative. *Robin McLean and Ronis Chapman Co-Facilitator April 2020.*

The new Committee meets via zoom currently monthly and has decided to invite any Contact Friend to offer agenda items, provide feedback on any agenda items or participate in our meetings as they feel so moved to do.

The Contact Friends list has been updated and will so be distributed to all Regional Meetings and uploaded onto the website to allow Friends to be aware of not only their own Regional Meeting Contact We would like to thank Ronis Chapman for agree to extend her time on the Committee until AYM 2020 this has help us find our feet in this important area of our internal and external witness

Issues/Analysis:

The Committee has altered the current SQC policy and procedures to reflect our corporate decision to join the National Address Scheme through its remit from AYM to make slight changes to this living document.

The committee, will contact the Regional Contact friends for details on issues they have dealt with and how they are currently keeping records. A list of previous Contact Friends and reports of their activities in the previous 12 months should be held by the relevant Regional Meeting. We await to hear if AYM wishes to determine a standard record keeping policy rather than leave it up to each RM to determine their own processes.

We would like AYM Nominations committee to bring forward another name to join Chris Hughes and Diana Campbell on the Committee at YM 2020.

PART B: FOR CONSIDERATION

That each RM in their regional meeting report to AYM report on the way they have been implementing the Safe Quaker Community policy over the last year, particularly given that after the national workshop held in Brisbane, Pastoral Care and Oversight committees are supporting Contact Friends.

Committee members: *Chris Hughes (VRM), Convener; Diana Campbell (SANTRM), Ronis Chapman, CRM*

The Sanctuary Management Committee

PART A: REPORT

The Sanctuary is the name of a house and grounds in Sydney that was part of the Lemberg Bequest to Australia Yearly Meeting. The property is behind the Wahroonga Meeting House, and has been leased as a residence.

Achievements/Activities:

- Continued rental of the Sanctuary property throughout the year
- No major expenses (the previous year a number of significant works were undertaken)

Issues/Analysis:

Funds from rent are being rebuilt following the expenses of the previous year and the period in which the property was empty. Hence no funds have been released during the year for Quaker activities.

Committee members: *Miriam Goodwin, Bill Brennan and Jacque Schultze (NSWRM)*

Silver Wattle Quaker Centre

Silver Wattle has had a good year, but there have also been some big changes. For a start, we moved closer to our goal of sustainability, installing 57 new solar panels and 4 inverters to upgrade our capacity to 25 kilowatts. As funds appear, we will purchase batteries to complete the system.

Our Centre Directors, Catherine Hutchison and Brendan Caulfield-James, departed at the end of 2019, leaving Silver Wattle far better than when they arrived. They were instrumental in getting new heating and air conditioning installed, along with energy efficient hot water systems. Catherine's organisational and business management skills created a level budget and stability in operations. Brendan's anchoring presence as a resident Elder was instrumental in building ecumenical relationships which continue to resonate.

Felicity Rose has stayed on at Silver Wattle in 2020 to keep things ticking along while the Board focuses on building up a resident community before recruiting new Centre Directors. Everything was going along beautifully... and then COVID-19 hit and the bottom fell out of everything!

The Board's response was swift and decisive. We shut the Centre and will not be holding courses or venue hires until restrictions have been lifted, perhaps resuming course offerings in September if permitted. Staff are being retained with support of the government's JobKeeper scheme. The financial burden is being managed but we could not do so without our donors and their ongoing generosity.

To make the place safe, Felicity spent 2 weeks in self-isolation and every surface of every room was cleaned within an inch of its life. We welcomed Anne Felton to the cottage in mid-April and, as restrictions are eased, we hope to continue to build the resident community there.

In late March, Silver Wattle teamed up with AYM to create online learning opportunities for Friends to learn how to use Zoom and to connect. We are experimenting with more ways to nurture the spiritual lives of Friends while in isolation.

The shutdown provides an opportunity to step back and discern anew what ministry is asked of Silver Wattle. It is a time of faithful waiting; actively and expectantly waiting. It is fertile ground for new openings. By the time this report is read, everything will be different again; and Silver Wattle will still be there responding in faith.

Submitted by Sheila Keane, Silver Wattle Quaker Centre Board Clerk

Thanksgiving Fund Committee

PART A: REPORT

Achievements/Activities:

Since our last report to Yearly Meeting in 2019 the Thanksgiving Fund Committee has made the following grants:

- Diana Campbell of Alice Springs Meeting, \$1710 toward expenses to attend Yearly Meeting in Hobart 2019
- Marie-Joelle Nininahazwe SANTRM, \$900 to attend QUNO Summer School.
- Jennifer Burrell for the Right Holding of YM Committee, \$5000 to support the work required to consult friends about desirable designs for YM. This Committee significantly underspent and returned \$4653 to the Thanksgiving Fund.
- Michael Searle \$4000, to travel to India to support Indian Friends Schools, especially Madyha Pradesh.
- Up to \$15000 for AYM Technology Committee for the production of a suite of videos about Quakers. No funds have been drawn from this yet.
- Faith Coleman \$5000. The second of 3 instalments towards her concern for the health and wellbeing of the Coorong environment and its dependent human community.
- Diane Bretherton, Dale Hess and Helen Bayes \$3000 to support travel in the ministry for Paul Buckley.

Issues/Analysis:

The Clerking workshop at Silver Wattle was cancelled due to coronavirus. Course fee grants to Michael Corbett, Marian James and David Barry were refunded. David Barry has a \$525 flight voucher in hand.

No funding will be transferred to support travel in the ministry for Paul Buckley until dates can be verified.

Committee members: Bronte Collins, Christine Collins, Robin Sinclair, Charles Stevenson (SANTRM).

Web Monitoring Committee

No Report was submitted.

Note: A recommendation from AYM Nominations Committee regarding this Committee will be coming to YM20 for consideration.

Yearly Meeting Planning Support Committee

No Report was submitted.

**See the Right Holding of Yearly Meeting Committee Report for recommendations concerning this Committee.*

Appendix 1: Handbook Committee- Revisions

The Handbook Revision Committee was asked to contact Regional Meetings to discern several matters that did not reach unity at YM2019. Responses to the questions were received from most Regional Meetings.

1) Chapter 1, 1.4

Minute from YM19: *Friends asked that the Handbook reflect our tradition of allowing for a Friend not in agreement with a decision to stand aside, which can then allow for a decision that the meeting is in unity on, to be accepted, and also that the Handbook reflect the possibility that a Friend may have a stop in their mind which can result in a matter being deferred for later discernment. The Handbook Revision Committee (HRC) is asked to revise the wording presented to YM2019 to make this clear and present another draft of this section to YM2020.*

5 Regional Meetings responded.

<i>The revision entry presented at YM19:</i>	Proposed entry in the 7th edition of the Handbook:
<p><i>Standing aside</i></p> <p><i>Guidelines: ‘There is no such thing as ‘blocking’ the working of the Spirit within the meeting.</i></p> <p><i>It is incumbent upon all members of the meeting to support the decisions of the meeting that have been made in right ordering’ (Roger Walmsley, this we can say, 2.37, 2003)</i></p> <p><i>Rarely, a single Friend is not able to unite with a course of action which is otherwise clearly the ‘sense of the meeting’. In this case the Clerk must discern how to proceed and minute the matter.</i></p> <p><i>The dissenting Friend could be invited, or might offer, to unite with a minute, despite their doubts on the course of action.</i></p> <p><i>If the Friend has what is sometimes called a ‘stop in their mind’, they may wish to stand aside from the minute rather than join with it. This may signal a need for the Meeting to pause to consider more deeply, perhaps to lay the matter aside for future re-consideration. The dissenting Friend may hold an aspect of the truth which other Friends need to hear.</i></p> <p><i>It is sometimes the case that the Meeting and its Clerk feel that the contentious matter has been well seasoned, deeply thought through, yet the dissenting Friend</i></p>	<p><i>Standing aside</i></p> <p><i>Guidelines: ‘There is no such thing as ‘blocking’ the working of the Spirit within the meeting.</i></p> <p><i>It is incumbent upon all members of the meeting to support the decisions of the meeting that have been made in right ordering’ (Roger Walmsley, this we can say, 2.37, 2003)</i></p> <p><i>This expression refers to the infrequent times when the Clerk discerns that the sense of the meeting is very close to unity on an action and a single Friend, or more than one Friend is not able to unite with this course of action. In this case the Clerk must discern how to proceed and minute the matter.</i></p> <p><i>The Friend who is ‘out of unity’ could be invited, or might offer, to unite with a minute, despite their doubts on the course of action.</i></p> <p><i>When a Friend has a “stop in their mind”.</i></p> <p><i>This expression refers to the infrequent times when it is discerned that the meeting is very close to unity on an action, but a single Friend is unable to unite with the minute. When this occurs, it is important that the Friend be given adequate opportunity to be heard in explaining their reasons for doubt. Other Friends present may then wish to speak. Once this has happened the outcome will be one of the following three options:</i></p>

<p><i>is still not in unity. It may be that this Friend is not willing to stand aside.</i></p> <p><i>If the gathered Meeting for Worship for Business so chooses, the Clerk may record the minute with which the Meeting as a whole is in unity, noting that a Friend is not in unity with this decision.</i></p> <p><i>The name of a Friend who chooses to stand aside is recorded if they wish it.</i></p> <p><i>It is important that all voices are heard, and that the meeting listens with respect and empathy to Friends who are not in unity with the wider opinion. However, no Friend may in effect veto the matter before the meeting.</i></p>	<p><i>a) Friends realise that further consideration is required either then or at a subsequent meeting; or</i></p> <p><i>b) The Friend who is not in unity has been heard and has heard responses which enable them to unite with the minute; or very rarely</i></p> <p><i>c) The Friend still cannot unite with the minute although all others present are in unity with it. In this case, the Clerk may say that that this is the way forward which Friends want; and offer the dissenting Friend the opportunity to ‘stand aside’ from the minute, which would either record that there was general unity but that a single Friend could not unite with the minute, or record that Friend xy wished to stand aside from the minute. This should only happen very rarely, as unity is a vital aspect of Quaker process, and frequent use of this would undermine the Meeting’s confidence in the process and possibly with the Clerk.</i></p>
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2) Chapter 2, 2.5.2

From Documents in Retrospect YM 2019: *It is recommended that the HRC consult with RM finance committees on the wording of this section and prepare a draft rewording for YM2020, and in the meantime that this sentence be removed from the Handbook.*

The sentence is: *"The Regional Meeting should be aware of all accounts and investments held within the Regional Meeting."* The sentence is not in the 6th edition of the Handbook.

Responses were received from five RMs to the sentence: two responses were in favour of including the sentence in the handbook and two did not see a need for this sentence.

Proposed sentence:	Proposed entry in the 7th edition of the Handbook:
<i>"The Regional Meeting should be aware of all accounts and investments held within the Regional Meeting."</i>	Some Regional Meetings hold a record of all bank accounts and investments held by Local Meetings and Worshipping Groups within their Regional Meeting

3) Chapter 4, 4.3.2

During YM19 it became clear that RMs have different practices for the use of their Meeting House for weddings.

RMs were asked to respond to the question about the use of their Meeting House(s) for weddings. 6 RMs responded.

Current entry accepted at YM19	Proposed new entry
<i>A couple who are not Quaker or linked to Friends may wish to celebrate their wedding or commitment within our meeting house and ‘in the manner of Friends’. They write to the appropriate Clerk to ask that the meeting agree to such a ceremony, and agree to a time and a place. This decision is normally discerned by the Regional Meeting for Worship for Business.</i>	<i>A couple who are not Quaker or linked to Friends may wish to celebrate their wedding or commitment within our meeting house and ‘in the manner of Friends’. This request would be a venue hire and each Meeting can decide if they hire out their Meeting House for such occasions. The couple would bring their own celebrant as a Quaker celebrant can only conduct the marriage ceremony for couples</i>

	who are Quakers or linked to Friends. The couple contact the appropriate Clerk to ask that the meeting agree to such a venue hire, and agree to a time.
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4) Chapter 3, 3.5.3

RMs were asked to respond to a question that the HBR committee identified after YM2019
Six RMs responded.

Regional Meetings were asked to share their practice if the visitors' report for a membership application includes a recommendation about the applicant's acceptance into membership. RMs differ in their practice. Is it useful if the visitors include a recommendation for membership or is this the discernment of the Regional Meeting for Worship for Business and not to be influenced by a recommendation in the report?

Current entry:	Proposed entry in the 7th edition
<p>The Report</p> <p><i>In preparing a report on the visit to be heard at the Regional Meeting for Worship for Business, Visitors are asked to include information about the applicant's religious and spiritual journey towards the Society, and an assessment of where the applicant stands in relation to its principles and Testimonies.</i></p> <p><i>The visitors should:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Check the accuracy of all factual information contained in their report with the applicant.</i> 2. <i>Complete the report in full, including a recommendation about the application.</i> 3. <i>Finally, present the report to the Regional Meeting for Worship for Business.</i> 	<p>The Report</p> <p>In preparing a report on the visit to be heard at the Regional Meeting for Worship for Business, Visitors are asked to include information about the applicant's religious and spiritual journey towards the Society, and an assessment of where the applicant stands in relation to its principles and Testimonies.</p> <p>The visitors should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Check the accuracy of all factual information contained in their report with the applicant. 2) Complete the report in full, including a recommendation about the application. 3) Present the report to the Regional Meeting for Worship for Business. <p>If there is hesitation about the applicant's readiness for membership, this can be discussed with the applicant and also with the Elders or M&C. The presentation of the report can be delayed.</p>

Appendix 2:

Minutes of the Mid-Year Standing Committee, 17-18 January 2020 of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia, Inc at Friends Meeting House 10 Hampson Street, Kelvin Grove QLD 4059

AYM Officers

Presiding Clerk	Ann Zubrick
Past Presiding Clerk	Jo Jordan (apologies)
AYM Treasurer	Roger Sawkins
AYM Secretary	Jacque Schultze

Standing Committee Representatives

Canberra RM	David Purnell & Lorraine Thomson
New South Wales RM	Jennifer Burrell, Wies Schuiringa (Co-Clerks)
Queensland RM	Jude Pembleton (RM Co-Clerk) & Marian James
South Australia/Northern Territory RM	Topsy Evans & David Barry
Tasmania RM	Maddy Walker & David O'Halloran (RM Co-Clerks)
Victoria RM	Bruce Henry (RM Co-Clerk) & Sieneke Martin
West Australia RM	David Tehr (RM Clerk) & Tonya Jensen
Young Friends	Lindsey File

Standing Committee Minutes

SC1.20.1: Opening worship and acknowledgment of custodians

Standing Committee began with a period of silent worship during which Marian James from Queensland Regional Meeting, acknowledged and paid respects to the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we were meeting, the Jagera and Turrbal people, mentioning the many ways original Australians have cared and continue to care for country through changing times and seasons. We acknowledged their contributions and elders over millennia.

We held in the Light Friends whose communities and lives have been directly impacted during this extended and continuing period of bush fires.

At the beginning of the opening Meeting for Worship the Presiding Clerk read the following passage from *This We Can Say*:

“Friends do not pretend to have all the answers. As wayfarers we are on a journey in search of truth and on an exploration of the unseen world of spiritual dimension. We have to learn to struggle with doubt. So Quakerism is not an easy faith. It would be more comfortable to have a ready-made creed, rules and regulations. But perhaps this is the greatest thing about the Religious Society of Friends: it is what we each, individually and personally have found to be true that matters most, even if what we have found is bewildering and stressful at times. After more than three centuries, the challenge of George Fox still rings true---‘What canst thou say?’ ”. *Quaker Ways 1996, This we can say, 1.87.*

SC1.20.2: Clerking Assistance at SC1.20

David Purnell agreed to act as co-clerk during this Standing Committee, to assist the Presiding Clerk with clerking matters and with preparation of draft minutes for consideration.

SC1.20.3: Reports with financial implications

There were no reports with financial implications.

SC1.20.4: Reports for noting

We note and accept the following reports from Section C of the Agenda:

- *SC1.20.15: Publications Committee Report
- *SC1.20.16: Handbook Revision Committee Report
- *SC1.20.17: AYM Children's & JYF Coordinators' Report
- *SC1.20.18: FWCC Committee Report **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Section B: Reports for decision making

SC1.20.5: AYM Secretary's Review Committee

Standing Committee acknowledges the many contributions of AYM Secretary Jacque Schultze to AYM.

Friends were reminded that the AYM Secretary's initial contract to July 2020 was four years. This 2016 arrangement avoided the three-year term for the Presiding Clerk and AYM Secretary concluding simultaneously.

We accept the Review Committee's report and recommendation that the AYM Secretary's contract be extended until July 2023.

We ask the AYM Treasurer to ensure that the salary be increased annually by CPI.

We note, with some concern, that the role of AYM Secretary and the demands of running the AYM office continue to increase. In addition to more frequent Standing Committees, the AYM Secretary schedules multiple Zoom meetings for Australian Friends, manages and maintains social media, and advises AYM Committees on procedures and deadlines. We do not believe that this work is or can be completed within the allocated hours for the position.

We ask AYM Nominations Committee to bring forward the name of a Friend or person suitably skilled and knowledgeable in archival processes to assist the AYM Secretary in uploading and archiving AYM documents.

We ask AYM Nominations Committee to bring forward the name of a Friend or person to assist with maintaining and extending our online and social media presence, especially for outreach purposes.

We ask AYM Nominations Committee to let Friends know that the either task could be done as a voluntary or paid role.

We ask the AYM Secretary to prepare a position description for each role.

We ask that AYM Nominations Committee bring names to the AYM Secretary, circulate the names to Regional Meeting Clerks, before holding an urgent decision-making Zoom meeting to discuss the

nominations and remuneration if required.

SC1.20.6: Right Holding of Yearly Meeting Committee Report

This area was well canvassed throughout YM2019 in Hobart and the RHYM Committee reports have been loaded onto the AYM website. Several Standing Committee members attended the webinar organized by the RHYM Committee in November 2019.

Standing Committee approves the RHYM Committee report. (which was included in the SC1.20 Agenda. We note that while Friends recommend and support a collaborative organisational model for our YM gathering, we have yet to progress this very far in practice.

We invite Regional Meetings, AYM Committees and individual Friends to respond to RHYM Committee suggestions on ways to streamline our business processes.

Standing Committee heard that two RHYM Committee Friends attended the JYF Camp in 2020 and that JYFs want to be a part of YM business, contribute to YM business sessions and attend to business items relevant to them.

To accommodate this will require input from AYM Presiding Clerk, the AYM Secretary and the Canberra Regional Meeting Hosting Committee for YM2020.

Standing Committee noted the RHYM Committee will lay down its work at YM2020. The Yearly Meeting will then decide how we continue to monitor the experiments in place.

SC1.20.7: Future mid-year Standing Committees

SC1.20.7.1 Standing Committee and AGM, 15-17 January 2021, NSWRM

NSW Regional Meeting provided an update on plans to host Standing Committee 2121 which will be held January 15-17 2021, at Devonshire Street Meeting House. An organisational committee is yet to be formed.

SC1.20.7.2 Standing Committee and AGM, 14-16 January 2022, TRM

Tasmania Regional Meeting will provide an update on the plans for hosting SC1.22 and the 2022 AGM at a future date.

SC1.20.8: Future Yearly Meetings

SC1.20.8.1 Yearly Meeting 2020, 4-10 July 2020, CRM, Report to Standing Committee

Standing Committee heard plans for Yearly Meeting 2020, to be held at Avondale College from 4 July 2020 to 10 July 2020. The Yearly Meeting gathering has been shortened by one day from 7 to 6 days. The registration and accommodation costs for YM2020 are less than those for Avondale YM in July 2018.

The planning committee continues to give thought to the balance between community and business across the shortened Yearly Meeting. A new format Friendly School will be a three-and-a-half-hour session, on Sunday morning, for all participants on the topic of individual and corporate discernment, based on a paper by Murray Short of Aotearoa New Zealand Yearly Meeting. The Backhouse Lecture, to be given by Fiona Gardner, will be on the topic of 'Seeking Union with Spirit: Experiences from Spiritual Journeys'. More business sessions will happen in the second half of YM.

We note that David Purnell will be the designated Assistant Clerk at YM 2020. David will provide the assistance to the AYM Presiding Clerk and the AYM Secretary at formal and other sessions. The Hosting Group members attending Yearly Meeting will undertake the other functions needed to support the Presiding Clerk and AYM Secretary at Yearly Meeting. The key coordinating roles have been filled by Friends within CRM and others around Australia.

Plans for the JYF camp have yet to be confirmed. JYFs coordinators plan to support JYFs who wish to attend and contribute to YM Business sessions.

We ask Regional Meeting Clerks to encourage Friends in their Meetings to attend YM2020 and apply to their Regional Meeting or to the AYM Thanksgiving Fund for financial support if that is needed.

SC1 SC1.20.8.2 Future Yearly Meetings

We note that Queensland Regional Meeting was not able to find a way forward to hold more than a Business & Backhouse Yearly Meeting in July 2021. We recognise that it was a bold proposal—one which YM2019 was not willing to accept.

Victoria Regional Meeting is willing to host YM2021 but as yet has not decided dates or venue. VRM hopes to reach a decision of venue and timing in early 2020. We foreshadow the possible need for a Standing Committee meeting in the first quarter of 2020 if VRM chooses a time other than July 2021 to hold Yearly Meeting.

We note that Western Australia Yearly Meeting does not have the capacity to be the primary Regional Meeting to host or organise the 2022 Yearly Meeting. WARM indicates a willingness to contribute as a Regional Meeting for components of a YM in 2022.

We note that changing the timing of Yearly Meeting has implications for financial commitments and for reports for AYM committees.

The Right Holding of Yearly Meeting Committee has proposed that the reporting timetable (for Regional Meetings, AYM Office bearers and AYM Committees) should remain as at present to fit the timing of the AYM AGM. The State of Society address could also be held at the AGM. This would mean that reports would not need to be included in Documents in Advance for Yearly Meeting. Items for Consideration at Yearly Meeting would have to be handled in a different way from current practice.

The principal of involving several regional meetings in organising Yearly Meeting gatherings appears to be established now.

To make progress in this direction the Yearly Meeting Planning Manual is a useful guide for dividing tasks among Regional Meetings, groups and individuals.

The flow of meetings of Standing Committee and Yearly Meeting warrants further examination as we explore a more effective sharing of the responsibility for carrying forward the corporate life and business of the Society.

We encourage Regional Meetings to consider these issues and report back to SC7.2020.

We hear the suggestion that it may be time to consider having an ongoing Yearly Meeting Committee to organise the annual Yearly Meeting gathering.

The dates for future Standing Committees and the AGM after January 2022 will be determined at a future Standing Committee.

SC1.20.9: Nominations Committee Report

Standing Committee accepts the recommendation of the AYM Nominations Committee that Janet Duke represent AYM on the Faith and Unity Commission beginning with the first Meeting in Melbourne in February 2020 and makes this appointment.

SC1.20.10: IT Committee Report on streaming YM Sessions

Standing Committee sees the value in making some Yearly Meeting sessions available to Friends who cannot attend Yearly Meeting but wish to participate in real time for agreed components.

Standing Committee accepts the suggested protocols in the AYM IT Committee Report. We support the Presiding Clerk's concern that we need to proceed with caution on the live-streaming of Yearly Meeting sessions, concentrating initially on the more formal parts of Yearly Meeting. Standing Committee agreed that it would be helpful for Standing Committee to approve the recommended streaming arrangements prior to their confirmation, at the Standing Committee meeting prior to the YM2020 gathering.

SC1.20.11: Review of Standing Committee Report

We receive the Review of Standing Committee Report prepared by David Purnell and Alan Clayton. We ask all Regional Meetings to carefully consider the Report at a Meeting for Worship for Business before the end of March 2020 and send their responses to the AYM Secretary. The report and responses will be collated as part of *Documents in Advance 2020* before coming to YM2020 for discernment.

SC1.20.12: Backhouse Lecture Committee Update

We do not wish to set a precedent by offering an honorarium to the Backhouse Lecturers. However, we applaud the plan for American Quaker Jon Watts to be in Australia for an extended period of time and visit Regional Meetings. We encourage the Backhouse Lecture Committee to seek funding from the AYM Thanksgiving Fund for this visit. We ask Regional Meetings to make extra efforts to publicise the visit as a significant opportunity for outreach.

SC1.20.13: AYM application to join PCC (Pacific Conference of Churches)

In a business session following the Backhouse lecture YM2019 in Hobart, Jason Macleod asked YM2019 to consider becoming a Member of Pacific Conference of Churches. The Presiding Clerk followed up with an enquiry to NCCA to ask if they were members. Liz Stone, General Secretary of NCCA informed the Presiding Clerk that NCCA was not a member, nor was NCCA considering membership. However, there are good relationships between NCCA and Pacific Council of Churches. The Uniting Church in Australia has been a member of Pacific Conference of Churches for many years.

The Presiding Clerk asked Victoria Regional Meeting Friends to enquire how an application to the PCC might proceed. Dale Hess from VRM provided a letter for Standing Committee to consider should Standing Committee decide to proceed with an application for PCC membership.

We note that the Uniting Church in Australia is a member of the Pacific Conference of Churches, but is the only NCCA member church that has joined. NCCA itself is not a member, although its secretary has been welcomed as an observer at a PCC meeting. We see the value of closer connection with the PCC in relation to the concerns of Pacific peoples, as a form of solidarity and

support and in a spirit of partnership. Despite being active in Asia through FWCC-AWPS, our links with the Pacific are less strong.

We recognise that the PCC may not accept AYM as a member (e.g. because of the lack a credal statement). We realise that if AYM was accepted as a member, it will involve a commitment to resources and representatives to make the participation effective. AYM will also need to be willing to contribute in an organisation with very different religious traditions.

We have some caution about making a decision at this time. As there is time before an application would be considered (September 2020), we wish to allow more time for discernment.

We ask Jason MacLeod to provide background details of the reason for this request and of the mutual value of PCC membership to Friends and Pacific peoples.

We ask the Presiding Clerk to contact Jason MacLeod, Dale Hess, Sue Ennis, Aletia Dundas and the FWCC-AWPS Secretary for their input and to facilitate wider conversations with Friends on how to further relationships with Pacific churches and peoples, so that a report could be prepared and sent to Regional Meetings to consider.

We invite Regional Meetings to consult more widely among Friends in their Regional Meetings about this proposal, and report to Standing Committee in July 2020.

SC1.20.14: Reading of Testimonies at Yearly Meeting

We learn that Tasmania Regional Meeting Friends participated in a session where they considered how Australian Friends might write a Testimony to the Grace of God in the life of a Friend that spoke directly to Spirit at work across a Friend's life rather than being a eulogy. We hear that TRM Friends would like Testimonies offered at YM to reflect or encompass the Grace of God in the life of that Friend.

We remind Friends in Regional Meetings of the AYM pamphlet and written guidelines which are available on the AYM website, and the reference in the Handbook to consider when writing a Testimony.

We ask the Assistant Clerk for each Yearly Meeting gathering to ensure that the read abridged Testimony to be read at a Session (which may also be combined Testimonies) is 500 words in total. Friends are advised that the full Testimonies are available to be read at Yearly Meeting In a folder prepared by the AYM Secretary. They also appear on the AYM website.

SC1.20.15: Process for Surplus Fund Ideas

SC8.19.3 Surplus Funds Working Group Report

Standing Committee agrees that the \$80, 000 remain the AYM Reserve fund.

We lay down the Surplus Funds working group at this time.

We are reminded of the importance of the need for thoughtful stewardship of funds and are cautioned about retaining monies without purposes for which the monies might be used. We encourage Regional Meetings to put forward bold ideas which engage YM Friends in projects to inspire others.

There is confusion amongst Regional Meetings as to the process for how Friends are supposed to "put forward bold ideas".

Standing Committee agreed that funding to support Australia Yearly Meeting's decision to join the National Redress Scheme, as well as funding for additional administrative support for the AYM Secretary and AYM Office, will come from the Surplus Funds.

Standing Committee heard that the IT Committee is producing a video with the working title "Are

you a Quaker?" The Thanksgiving Fund agreed to provide \$15,000 for this purpose. Standing Committee is unable to fund the IT video from Surplus Funds at this time.

Standing Committee agreed that Surplus Funds are not available to Regional Meetings or AYM Committees at this time.

Standing Committee accepts the offer from Canberra Regional Meeting to draft processes to apply for surplus funds in the future, and to bring these to Standing Committee in January 2021.

SC1.20.16: FWCC-AWPS Visitor to YM2020 Update

Standing Committee heard that the AYM FWCC Committee has agreed to accept the application of Sanjeev Shukla, Principal of 'our oldest Friends (Quaker) Girls School Sohagpur' in Central India, to be the 2020 FWCC-AWP Section Visitor to Yearly Meeting 2020.

The FWCC Committee will next meet on 28 January to confirm Sanjeev's application and discuss further preparations for the FWCC-AWPS's visitor to YM2020.

SC1.20.17: AYM Joining the National Redress Scheme

Standing Committee agrees that AYM should join the National Redress Scheme. We believe it is the right thing to do and an important commitment to make. Standing Committee hopes that all Meetings and worshipping groups will join with us. SC12.19 Minute

We are committed as Friends to deal with any application with sensitivity recognising heartache and pain which continues. As Friends we value the Quaker tradition that places a high priority on respect and support for individuals, and a commitment to acknowledge and affirm those who are marginalised and vulnerable. Our AYM policies on Child Protection and Safe Quaker Community show that we take seriously issues of child abuse, and are open to approaches from anyone who has such an experience within any of our worship groups (Adapted from Canberra Regional Meeting's response to joining the NRS)

Regional Meetings were asked to consider the question: Are you (your RM) willing to join the National Redress Scheme as part of a Participating Group, with AYM as the Representative for the Participating Group?

The Standing Committee 1.20 Agenda was amended to include a Faith in Action session to consider responses from Regional Meetings and Associated Bodies to this question.

Having noted the responses from all Regional Meetings and AYM Associated Bodies, we affirm that AYM will apply to join the NRS as a Participating Group, with AYM as the Representative for the Participating Group. This Group includes: AYM, Canberra Regional Meeting, New South Wales Regional Meeting, Queensland Regional Meeting, South Australia/ Northern Territory Regional Meeting, Tasmania Regional Meeting, Victoria Regional Meeting, Western Australia Regional Meeting, separately incorporated local meetings (Adelaide Local Meeting, Blue Mountains Local Meeting); and AYM Associated Bodies, namely Quaker Service Australia, Australian Friends Fellowship of Healing Charitable Trust, Silver Wattle Quaker Centre, The Quaker Shop (Adelaide) and Kangaroo Valley Centre Association Proprietary Ltd, known as Werona.

We note that the average amount paid for redress determined under the National Redress Scheme is around \$80,000 and the maximum \$150,000. We are confident that AYM can take financial responsibility for the financial commitment required by the Participating Group. How the costs are apportioned among the entities in the Participating Group will need to be determined. The Quaker Representative Contact Person on the National Redress Scheme will work on this in association with relevant Friends and Associated Bodies.

Standing Committee accepted that in joining the National Redress Scheme an additional administrative load will be placed on AYM Office Bearers.

Standing Committee agreed that appropriate funding be made available to support this additional administrative load.

Standing Committee recognised the time that may be required of Friends at the Regional Meeting level to gather the requested information to meet the requirements of the National Redress Scheme, and that Regional Meetings may seek funding support from AYM.

Standing Committee acknowledges that participating in the NRS may evoke distress/pain for some Friends. We recognise our mutual responsibility to provide pastoral care.

Standing Committee agreed that we will need to have a person to liaise with the Scheme in making our application and that it is not within the scope of the AYM Secretary's job to do this. Whilst the AYM Secretary is willing to be the liaison person, we would need to appoint a temporary AYM Secretary for at the very least three or four months; alternatively, we need to find a person prepared to liaise with the Scheme so that the AYM Secretary is not involved. The Presiding Clerk will discuss this with the AYM Nominations Committee. SC12.19 Minutes

AYM Nominations Committee brings forward the name of Jennifer Burrell to be the Quaker Representative Contact Person on the National Redress Scheme. Standing Committee accepts this nomination and gratefully accepts Jennifer Burrell's offer to do the work on contract at an agreed rate, covering the period from 20.1.20 to 30.6.20. We ask that these arrangements be brought to an urgent decision-making meeting of Standing Committee to formalise the arrangements as soon as possible.

This commitment will be reviewed on 31.5.20, at a special Standing Committee meeting via Zoom.

Standing Committee asks Jennifer Burrell to scope the position requirements, to provide a timeline for the work to be done and to report monthly to the AYM Presiding Clerk on achievements, and to each RM NRS Contact Person and to Associated Bodies. Regional Meetings will need to appoint a RM NRS Contact Person.

Standing Committee agrees that the AYM Presiding Clerk sign the NRS Memorandum of Understanding on behalf AYM.

We ask Jennifer Burrell to check with the AYM Associated Bodies that they have a Child Protection Policy and a Safe Quaker Community Policy equivalent.

We hope that a public statement can be made in due course about the decision of AYM to apply to join the National Redress Scheme. Such a statement should take into account:

- our recognition of the priority to be given to those who have experienced abuse
- the requirements of the National Redress Scheme as regards media statements
- the commitment we have as a religious community to inclusiveness and respect of all people in our community and the policies that we have on child protection and Safe Quaker Community which reflect this.

We ask the Presiding Clerk to work with the AYM Child Protection Committee Convenors and the AYM Safe Quaker Community Committee Convenor to develop a draft statement for wider circulation.

We hold in faith our ability to fulfil all the requirements for this undertaking.

SC1.20.18: Future Meetings of Standing Committee via Zoom

No set dates for future Standing Committee meetings were confirmed at this time.

SC1.20.19: Minute of Gratitude for Hospitality

During this Standing Committee we have considered some major changes and challenges for both AYM and Regional Meetings. We value time together to listen and to seek ways to live more adventurously, especially in our business practices. Friends around Australia have upheld us in Spirit. Queensland Regional Meeting Friends' hospitality and practical assistance have been generous and caring. We leave after our time at Standing Committee on Jagera and Turrbal land renewed in faith and purpose.

SC1.20.20: Faith in Action II session

We have heard from Duncan Frewin from Queensland Regional Meeting about the Great Lakes Refugee Project, the work of Abel Siboniyo and the effect on the local meeting because of their involvement with supporting Abel's work. The work began as a concern brought to the meeting by a local Friend and grew to a five-year long commitment to support Abel's work with the Burundian refugee community.

We are grateful for the commitment of Queensland Friends to this project, and for their faithful service.

SC1.20.21: Closing Worship

We closed SC1.20 with silent worship. The Presiding Clerk offered this reading:

"If there is an identifiable approach to service, we could hope that it is embodied in this: that as in worship we follow the leadings of the Spirit and the Light faithfully, we are prepared to be led where it takes us—to let go of comfortable certainties and be taken into new knowledge, and also into painful and difficult experiences. The journey is not a comfortable one for the most part—it can be terrifying at times, and often leads close to despair. If we accept that there is that of God in everyone, others cannot be objects of charity. We go prepared to encounter their full reality, and to be taught and changed by it."

This we can Say 3.22, Mark Deasey 2002

Appendix 3: Minutes of the AGM 2020

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia, Inc. Annual General Meeting Minutes

**held on 19 January 2020 at Friends Meeting House 10 Hampson
Street, Kelvin Grove QLD 4059**

The Rules of the Society state that:

In addition to any other business conducted at an Annual General Meeting, the business of the meeting shall be:

(a) to confirm the minutes of the last preceding Annual General Meeting and any other meeting of the Association held since that meeting;

(b) to receive from the Presiding Clerk, the Secretary, Regional Meetings, representatives and committees of the Association reports on the activities of the Association during the last preceding financial year;

(c) to receive and consider the audited annual statement of accounts, the auditor's report, and a

report as to the membership of Standing Committee, as are required by the Act to be submitted to members; and
(d) to appoint officers of the Association, committee members, an auditor and representatives of the Association. (Rule 9.2)

AGM20.1 Silent Worship

We began with a period of silent worship at the which the Presiding Clerk read the following passage from *This We Can Say 2.17* by Cathy Davies, 1997.

I believe that we are asked and expected to do things, to change our direction in life or to help others in certain ways, by listening to that still small voice, the leadings of the Spirit. All sorts of things happen and opportunities arise, directing us in ways we are expected to take; and these coincidences can be quite disconcerting, pushing us forward. I believe we have to be constantly aware of that call of the Inner Light and be prepared to be under the guidance of the Spirit.

AGM20.2 Acknowledgement of Country Worship

Presiding Clerk Ann Zubrick acknowledged and paid respects to the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we met, the Jagera and Turrbal people. She acknowledged with gratitude the many ways original Australians have cared for and continue to care for country through changing times and seasons.

We were asked to hold in the Light Friends whose communities and lives have been directly impacted during this extended and continuing period of bush fires.

AGM20.3 Minutes of previous AGM

We confirm the minutes of the previous AGM held on 19th January 2019 at the Canberra Meeting House, Turner ACT. The Minutes, published in the Members Section on the AYM website <https://www.quakersaustralia.info> and in Documents in Advance 2019, include reports of Australia Yearly Meeting activities and membership of Australia Yearly Meeting Committees.

AGM20.4 Report from AYM Presiding Clerk

During the year the Presiding Clerk Ann Zubrick has presided over several meetings of Standing Committee, including its first held via Zoom video technology. An important question that has arisen as a result is how technology can be creatively employed in conducting the business of the Society of Friends.

The Clerk has attended meetings of QSA, The Friends' School Board, and the NCCA. In addition, public statements, petitions and letters issued on behalf of Australian Friends have reflected our concerns for peace, justice and the environment.

Ann Zubrick ended her report with a message to us all—what does love require of us now?

AGM20.5 Report from AYM Secretary

We accept the report of the AYM Secretary. Jacque Schultze has assisted with administrative support, maintained regular communication with Friends through a newsletter, e-mails and phone calls. Her visit to A/NZ YM as AYM Representative was uplifting and inspiring, especially in exploring how Spirit works in our lives.

A review of the Secretary's role was made during the year, leading to Jacque's appointment being extended for a further term. Standing Committee is seeking ways to ease the workload by providing practical and spiritual support.

We are grateful that our administrative processes are so faithfully strengthened by our Secretary's commitment and energy.

AGM20.6 AYM Treasurer's Report to the Annual General Meeting 2020

Roger Sawkins has reported that the General Fund shows an excess of income over expenditure as a result of small savings, offset by slightly higher office expenses. Overall quotas for the year increased by 4%. Substantial bequests were received by the Peace and Social Justice Fund and The Thanksgiving Fund. The average investment earnings spread over the various AYM funds was 6%. Carbon offset payments were made to Greenfleet.

We accept the annual audited accounts for 2018-2019 and record our appreciation for the work of the Treasurer and Finance Committee.

We reappoint A.H. Jackson and Co as our auditors for the 2019/20 financial year.

AGM20.7 Regional Meeting Reports

Regional Meeting representatives provided a summary of activities of their Regional Meeting during 2019. We heard ways in which Friends were involved in the translation of concerns into action through their activities in peace, earthcare and climate emergency, refugees, social justice, protest, and simply holding concerns individually and collectively.

The spiritual life in our meetings is diverse, enriching, exploratory and centering. We recognise that many meetings are in transition: some welcoming new members, others looking at better ways at using the resources and people within both small local meetings and worshipping groups. Regional Meetings are exploring different ways of meeting participation by using Zoom video technology. We have much to learn as of yet. Through these processes we deepen our sense of community.

These reports enhance our understanding and appreciation of our Quaker meetings.

AGM20.8 Report on activities of AYM Committees

The *Handbook* describes the work of AYM Committees as follows:

The corporate activity of Friends is mainly undertaken after consideration in Regional Meeting Business Meetings and by Australia Yearly Meeting Committees, seeking to discern what the Spirit requires and then bringing important issues to the next Yearly Meeting.

Australia Yearly Meeting has 26 committees and working groups, including Standing Committee as a committee representing the whole of Australia Yearly Meeting. Members of these Committees are appointed by Yearly Meeting except for the Quaker Service Committee, which is appointed at their AGM and confirmed at Yearly Meeting.

In most cases the Committee's purpose is indicated by its name. The current membership of these committees is listed on the AYM List of Committees, which is updated on the AYM website.

AGM20.9 Appointments

We confirm the appointment of office bearers and committee members on Standing Committee and those attending the Annual General Meeting of the Society:

Office bearers are:

Presiding Clerk	Ann Zubrick
Past Presiding Clerk	Jo Jordan
AYM Treasurer	Roger Sawkins
AYM Secretary	Jacque Schultze

Standing Committee Representatives:

Canberra RM	David Purnell & Lorraine Thomson
New South Wales RM	Jennifer Burrell, Wies Schuiringa (Co-Clerks)
Queensland RM	Jude Pembleton (RM Co-Clerk) & Marian James
South Australia/ Northern Territory RM	Topsy Evans & David Barry
Tasmania RM	Maddy Walker & David O'Halloran (RM Co-Clerks)
Victoria RM	Bruce Henry (RM Co-Clerk) & Sieneke Martin
West Australia RM	David Tehr (RM Clerk) & Tonya Jensen
Young Friends	Lindsey File

A list of the 35 Members and Attenders present at this Annual General Meeting are as follows:

Name	Regional Meeting	Member/Attender
Rae Litting	NSWRM	Member
David Swain	NSWRM	Member
John Dundas	NSWRM	Member
Anna Wilkinson	VRM	Member
Susan Girard	NSWRM	Member
Susan Freeman	NSWRM	Member
Frances Long	QRM	Member
David Tehr	WARM	Member
Maddy Walker	TRM	Member
David O'Halloran	TRM	Member
Mary Grbavac	QRM	Member
Margaret Keya	Nairobi Yearly Meeting	
Michael Corbett	QRM	Member
Ann Zubrick	WARM	Member

Tonya Jensen	WARM	Member
Graham Bligh	QRM	Member
Jennifer Burrell	NSWRM	Member
Judith Pembleton	QRM	Member
Duncan Frewin	QRM	Member
David Barry	SANTRM	Member
Bill Fisher	QRM	Member
David Purnell	CRM	Member
David Lowry	QRM	Member
Lorraine Thomson	CRM	Member
Helen Webb	QRM	Member
Lee Skye	QRM	Member
Valerie Joy	QRM	Member
Marian James	QRM	Member
Christine Venner Westway	QRM	Attender
Rhoda Dorrell	QRM	Member
Roger Sawkins	QRM	Member
Bevan Wiltshire	QRM	Member
David King	QRM	Member
Wies Schuiringa	NSWRM	Member
Jacque Schultze	NSWRM	Member

AGM20.10 Closing Worship

The meeting closed with a period of silent worship.