

Friends in Stitches Newsletter, June 2018

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Completed panels

This is the finished Burundi Quakers panel. Ellan was working on it at the Silver Wattle Gathering and it is now finished. Well done Ellan! It shows the unexpected arrival of twenty Burundi Quakers at Brisbane Meeting. You can read the whole story on our new Web page:

<https://www.quakersaustralia.info/Stitches/burundi-quakers-arrive-brisbane-meeting-0>



Ellan also finished the Spiritual Comfort in the Mountains - previously known as Isolation. This panel was created by Heather Stuart and her friends in Bairnsdale. Wilma worked on it during her retreat and Ellan has added to the trees. It is now complete. Well done Wilma and Ellan and everyone else who worked on this panel.

Read the story here:

<https://www.quakersaustralia.info/Stitches/jj-neave>



Continuing Cotton Controversy

Nick Brodie, historian and author of *Vandemonian Wars* spoke to Friends on Friday the 25th of May at Hobart Meeting House. It was very well attended and the Cotton panel was displayed. One of the things I learned from his talk is that the Cotton family is of all colonial Van Diemen's Land families the most well

documented. There are letters, notebooks, account books etc in three different Libraries: the Quaker Collection at the University of Tas, the Allport Library in Launceston and the Mitchell Library in Sydney. If the story that Francis Cotton met with Aborigines and recorded their stories were true it would be

documented here. It is not credible that the only documentation was burned in a house fire. Nick Brodie believes the stories are 20th Century stories and said that these kinds of creation stories were common at that time.

The issue will be discussed at Yearly Meeting and it would be great to have a good turn out at our Prep Session when it is raised.

Elizabeth Kwan, in Darwin, who wrote a school text book about South Australian history, and is steeped in the study of colonial history, sent me an email in April which says this:

With regard to the Cotton panel, I would prefer it to be withdrawn from exhibition while its designer, researcher and stitchers consider it in the light of the evidence from the Cotton Papers in the context of their times, from the 1820s to the present, taking into account historians' ongoing assessment of that evidence. I suggest the options ultimately are to

- keep the existing panel and adjust the text;
- add another panel, which places Francis Cotton, Quaker landowner in the midst of the Black War
- replace the first panel with one on Francis Cotton, Quaker landowner and the Black War.

Each option has difficulties, but they need to be faced openly, perhaps drawing on the drafts of the letter to Governor Arthur in 1831 - the face-saving request for the government to help improve conditions for Aboriginal people. I think that options 2 or 3 would be more instructive in presenting the dilemma faced by 'settlers', 'invaders', especially if they were Quakers. What did Backhouse and Walker say about these difficulties as they moved around the Australian colonies in the 1830s?

Concerning a key paragraph in your re-drafted text for the panel, copied below, what do we know of William Cotton, in having the small book published when he was 70? Did he have a copy of, or had read the 1966 publication of Robinson's journals? Hadn't Francis Cotton's children examined the contents of his desk when he died in 1884? Did William keep the manuscript he found in the desk or archived it with the Cotton Papers? When were they

lodged in the archives? Why did William believe them to be the stories...? What kind of life did he live? Is there an obituary for William Cotton?

In 1979 another grandson of Francis and Anna Maria Cotton, William Jackson Cotton (1909-1981), published a small book, Touch the Morning, stories which he said he had found in his father's desk and he believed them to be the stories his grandfather had collected when G A Robinson and the Aborigines stayed overnight on his land.

With all good wishes,

Elizabeth (Kwan)

The Website

The new Quaker Australia Website is now live. If you go to the main page <https://www.quakersaustralia.info/> up the top of the page you will see a heading 'Organisation' Under that is the heading 'National Committees'. Listed there is Friends in Stitches. Once you are there, in the top menu bar you can click on 'Newsletters', 'Panels in Progress' and 'Completed Panels'. Each panel has a link to the picture of the panel and the story about it. I would be pleased to have feedback on this work.



Ian and Linda Stevenson and Roger Sawkins examine the panels at Gold Coast Meeting

Letters to the Editor

Dear Friends

We recently visited the Quaker Tapestry at Kendal Friends Meeting House UK, and discovered that a similar tapestry is being undertaken in Australia. We saw the panel 'The Dunera Boys' being embroidered at Kendal. We would very much like to see any further panels of the history of Australian Quakers when we visit in November. Are there any panels exhibited in Melbourne, which is where we will be staying.

Best wishes
Nina and Bob Harris
2/4/18

Hi Sally,

I remember some of the Melbourne friends - Margaret Pierce and Olive Hirschfeld (nee Russell) being two that I remember and possibly Dorothy Gibbons - visiting the internees at Tatura I think it was. Olive later married Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack who had taught at the Buahaus in Germany before the war. Sir James Darling, who was Headmaster at Geelong Grammar at the time, appointed him as an art teacher there in 1942. In 1965 he had gone up to Sydney with Olive for Yearly Meeting and passed away suddenly there. He and Olive lived up near Sherbrooke Forest in Ferny Creek and I remember going into the forest to find the well known lyrebird - can't remember his name at the moment - who would eat out of your hand at times. He also had a musical instrument that he had made and used colour so that anyone could play music and was played by I think Queen Mary in England before he came out here. His

daughter Margarita Bell attended Melbourne meeting with her three children. Just a little bit about one of the Dunera boys. I remember reading a book out of my library here in Perth by Cyril Pearl about the voyage out and something of the internees and what happened to them. Best wishes to Tessa Spratt,
Faye Clay
3/4/18

Dear Sally and Tessa,

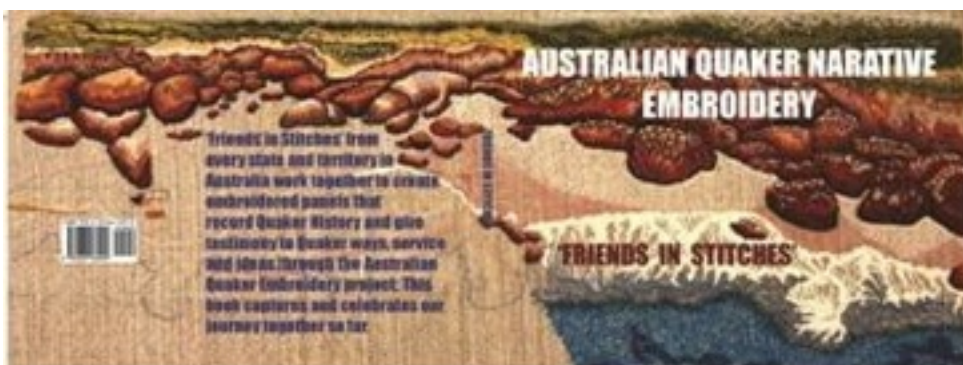
I love the panel on Silver Wattle. It will be beautiful!

Thanks for sending me the newsletter.
Peacefully,
Kaye Wright
2/4/18



Kathleen Merryweather, at the Gold Coast Meeting for Worship: She was keen to look at the panels and has a keen interest in what we are doing. Thanks to Judy Wollan for the photos.

Cover of the book. Get your copy at YM.
Or order from Tessa: tessas@optusnet.com.au



(Whoops moment when we saw the spelling! But it's not too late!)