

# Quaker <sup>Tasmanian</sup> Newsletter

October 2023

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Meeting for Eating at the Empire Hotel in Deloraine, May 2023. David Johnson and Kevin Sheldon

Photo: Sally O'Wheel

## Know One Another: Sally's story

Way back in April, when the colours in the garden glowed red and orange, pomegranates hung crimson on the tree, I had a prompting to resurrect the TRM Quaker Newsletter. David Johnson was coming to Deloraine. Jason, David, a Buddhist nun and I held a Meeting for Worship in the NAB bank in Devonport, holding them in the Light to try to influence their funding of fossil fuel projects. These events I dreamed of sharing in our newly resurrected newsletter. I photographed them, with this in mind.

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### Tasmanian Quaker Newsletter

Tasmania Regional Meeting  
The Religious Society of Friends  
(Quakers) in Australia

**Contributions:** Copy for TQN should be sent to the editor: [rmtasnews@quakersaustralia.info](mailto:rmtasnews@quakersaustralia.info)  
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The image adopted as the logo for Quakers in Australia represents the Aurora Australis, a natural phenomenon of the southern hemisphere, associated with Antarctica, a fragile and magnificent part of the planet. The Aurora Australis is considered an appropriate logo because of its association with:

- pure light, the centrality of the Light for Quakers

- beauty, a quality many associate with God or the Spirit within
- nature, a permanent reminder of everyone's responsibility to care for the world
- the colour blue, used by the UN
- the ephemeral and intangible, a reminder that language is inadequate to describe God, the truth or the Spirit within.

## Know One Another: Sally's story

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Things move slowly in the Religious Society of Friends and I get impatient, not understanding why things have to take so long. It has taken until October. Now the daffodils have finished and it is tulip time, cherry blossom time, new green leaves and time to sow tomato seeds.

I have been a Friend since the late 1990s when John Gray started a meeting in Deloraine, attending the North West Coast meeting for over 30 years. I am a retired teacher and the co-convenor of the Australian Quaker Narrative Embroidery Project for which I have edited a newsletter since the middle of 2017 (<https://www.quakersaustralia.info/Stitches/newsletter>). I live in Forth, onion capital of the world, and love to read, to potter in

the garden and do embroidery. I also try to write and draw.

Sue Headley and I have worked together before on the Yearly Meeting Publications Committee. I so love and respect Sue and rejoice that she mirrors my leading and also wants to see a TRM Newsletter in your inbox on a regular basis. She will be the Southern Correspondent and I will be the Northern. We will gather your stories every month. Sue will lay it out.

Please send all your stories, poems, book reviews, recipes, photos and drawings to us. We are more than ready!

*Sally O'Wheel*



Native snail, Kunanyi Photo: S.Headley

## Launceston Meeting going public

WE HAVE a banner and we now have permission to hang it on the fence beside "our" parking space



in Paterson Street each Sunday. It needs some renovation so we're having a "sewing bee" to repair the word QUAKERS. Then we'll look at possibly changing the rest of the wording to something more

appropriate to the purpose of visitors and passers-by finding us in the hidden non-cafe where we worship. We may also add a pocket for passers-by to take a pamphlet about Quakers and even information about the NWTas Recognised Meeting in Deloraine.

We are also developing a Quaker Card. We are ready to use the current version (see below) although there are a few points of discussion. It will go as A4 on the glass door of the venue replacing the old photo/postcard of our meeting folk – only two of those in the photo still worship in our group, and be printed on card in a smaller size for handing out.

*Julie Walpole*



## How do we resist the militarisation of Australia?

DR SUE Wareham delivered the Tasmanian Peace Trust Lecture on the last Sunday in September. Dr Wareham is the national President of the Medical Association for Prevention of War. She spoke on 'Resisting the Militarisation of Australia'.

Militarisation, she said, is "the deliberate extension of military objectives and rationale into shaping the culture, politics, and economics of civilian life so that war and the preparations for war are normalized. It is an excessive reliance on the threat of force to pursue policy goals in difficult international relations".

In Australia, consequences include press biases toward enemy stereotyping and its harmful impact on ordinary Australians of Asian heritage. She noted the "Red Alert" articles published by Channel 9 earlier this year as a clear example. She also spoke on the shift in focus at the Australian War Memorial, from memorial to advertisement and sponsorship from weapons makers. We have gone, she said, from mourning war to exulting war, a quote she attributed to Professor Peter Stanley in his advocacy for "honest history".

Dr Wareham summarised the increasing influence of the weapons industry on education,

from its growing role in funding academic research to Lockheed Martin funding of The National Youth Science Forum.

The impact of militarism on our economy includes the acceptance of AUKUS without meaningful debate, the expansion of our military expenditure and the decline of support for diplomacy and closure of peace research centres at the universities of New England and Melbourne, she said. She explained how deterrence was an argument for the buildup of militaries prior to WWI, and underlined the fact that deterrence is no more than a theory.

Asking 'Where to from here for ordinary citizens', Sue highlighted actions on nuclear weapons, war commemoration, weapons companies in education and war powers reform.

Among her concluding remarks was this:

"While none of us individually can take on the whole system of propaganda, decisions, lies, secrecy and sanitising that are leading us to war, each of us can identify a niche where we can join with others and make a difference."

The ball is in our court.

*Robert Rands*



Web links to some of Sue's references are given below. The link to a video of the TPT lecture is not yet available on the TPT's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@TasmanianPeaceTrust>, but a transcript is available at: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1THSwygw3QZK-enEJ-ketxHzDTf2TwS17/edit?pli=1>

### References

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*Hell-bent: Australia's leap into the Great War*, Douglas Newton, Scribe Publications, 2014.

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<https://teachersforpeace.com.au/>

# Ars Poetica

By Archibald Macleish (1926)

A poem should be palpable and mute  
As a globed fruit,

Dumb  
As old medallions to the thumb,

Silent as the sleeve-worn stone  
Of casement ledges where the moss has grown —

A poem should be wordless  
As the flight of birds.

\*

A poem should be motionless in time  
As the moon climbs,

Leaving, as the moon releases  
Twig by twig the night-entangled trees,

Leaving, as the moon behind the winter leaves,  
Memory by memory the mind —

A poem should be motionless in time  
As the moon climbs.

\*

A poem should be equal to:  
Not true.

For all the history of grief  
An empty doorway and a maple leaf.

For love  
The leaning grasses and two lights above the sea —

A poem should not mean  
But be.

---

The Roman poet Horace wrote a poem with the title 'Ars Poetica' some 2000 years ago and Macleish joins in the conversation. This is a poem about poetry and we can leave it to High School students in English Literature classes to analyse it line by line.

Belen Fernandez writing her usual ferocious opinion piece for Al Jazeera Online (1) says:

"That anyone can still apply the term democracy to the US with a straight face, is meanwhile, a testament to the corruption of language."

If, like me, you are trying to follow the debate on the Voice referendum, are we not also experiencing a "corruption of language itself"?

The Calvin Center for Faith and Writing, invited poet and theologian Padraig O'Tuama along with poet Marie Howe to consider the topic 'Can Poetry Save The World'. The podcast (2) with these very experienced and talented communicators gave many examples of the power of poetry and life-enhancing words to effect change. They mention Adam Zagajewski's poem 'Try to Praise a Mutilated World' which I read as a variation on a theme of the so-called Franciscan Blessing:

"... May G-D bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you really can make a difference in this world, so that you are able, with G-D's grace, to do what others claim cannot be done."

Steve Louis Smith

Launceston Worshipping Group

<https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2023/9/28/corruption-is-as-american-as-apple-pie>

<https://ccfw.calvin.edu/podcast/can-poetry-save-the-world/>

## A funeral in the manner of Friends

MY TONY was a survivor of Catholicism and hated religion. However he did respect my Quakerism (I never gave up hope of converting him!) When he died I decided to hold a Quaker funeral. After all, the funeral was more for me than for him.

He had a large circle of friends, most of them atheists and some of them were worried when they heard there was to be a Quaker funeral. They were afraid there would be “God bothering”.

The Forth Town Hall filled up, more chairs and more chairs needed. We were arranged in big concentric circles around a wonderful cardboard coffin which had been painted at an open house at our place the day he died. It represented the kelp forests of East Coast Tasmania where Tony had loved to dive for abalone when his lungs allowed it, and when climate change had not killed them off. Plum blossom and wattles from Jackeys Marsh were strewn over the lid and around the floor.



Jason McLeod introduced the ceremony, explaining that Quakers found That of God in everyone and everything. He explained that the funeral would be held in silence but that we were all free to contribute our memories and love of Tony, keeping our message brief and punctuated by silence between offerings, not responding to what someone else had said but speaking our own truth. There would be no clapping because it was not a performance. The big group followed Jason’s guidelines, many, many friends contributing.

Lisa Yeates sang through her tears, choosing a song from the forest protests at Terania Creek, and then led us in ‘Let the Long Time Sun shine upon you’, as the coffin was wheeled out to the waiting hearse.

Then we feasted and drank champagne. As Tony would have expected.

Even the die-hard atheists had to admit that it was a wonderful funeral, and were even enquiring where their closest meeting could be found.

*Sally O’Wheel*



## Annual cycle trip to Peace Park includes memorial plantings

ADULTS AND children cycled to the International Peace Forest on Sunday to plant four new shrubs in memory of departed Friends Jane Walker, Peter Wilde, Christine Mister and Ruth Raward. Ruth always came to these annual events with the children.

The shrubs are at the Berriedale Road end of the Park and we trust that as they grow they will help shield the Aboriginal Memorial Garden from the traffic racing overhead along the Brooker Highway. The Berriedale Peace Park or International Peace Forest is between the bike track and Chardonnay Drive, starting at Berriedale Road. Good news is that Glenorchy City Council will be replacing the worn-out display board that tells the history of the Peace Forest, which was started by Eve Masterman after the 1986 International Year of Peace.

A delicious morning tea or elevenses was shared before the trip back.

In case you are wondering, the plants, spades, potting mix and quite a lot of water were taken out by car. A number of participants also opted to travel by car rather than bike. However it is an excellent journey by bike and the cyclists thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

*Peter Jones  
& Sally  
McGushin*



## Aboriginal Elders Memorial Garden at the Berriedale Peace Park

IN THE early 1990s Berriedale resident Eve Masterman came upon an article about International Peace Forests where areas of waste ground could be planted and dedicated as an area of peace. She took her idea to the Quaker Peace and Justice Committee and with their support took it to the Glenorchy City Council who liked the idea and earmarked the area of waste ground on the western side of the railway line through Berriedale, next to Chardonnay Drive, as a suitable area.

Trees were planted, sometimes in memory of local people and sometimes in memory of larger issues. Eve planted a little copse of white birches as a peace area and the Council built a small kiosk. Unfortunately the trees planted in memory of the Armenian Massacres were taken, as was the olive tree WILPF planted. But the small forest gradually developed into an attractive area for people (and birds) to visit.

Other Berriedale residents, Aunty Ida West and Rose Brown, put forward the idea of an Elders Garden to remember past and present Aboriginal Elders and to link the area to the Healing Garden, which was being developed at Wybalenna. An area at the southern end of the park was turned into a garden, with the plantings suggested by Aunty Eva Richardson, and an interpretative sign created. The garden was officially opened by then Mayor, Terry Martin in 2004.

Eve Masterman died in 2014 just before her 106th birthday and a memorial rock with a plaque was placed in the park in her memory. Aunty Ida,

Rose Brown, and Aunty Eva are also no longer with us. In 2022 the Glenorchy Reconciliation Group, of which Aunty Ida had been founding members and Aunty Eva a long-time member, looked at the garden and saw the need for restoration work. The tree the Council had planted in the middle had grown too large and taken the space over and the sign had faded to become almost unreadable.

The Council agreed that a new garden could be created between the old one and the kiosk. With input from Karadi and the Reconciliation Group a new sign, brought up to date, was created and put up. A ceremony was held on the 2 August 2023 where Emma Robertson from Karadi welcomed about twenty people to Country and explained the significance of the garden and the Mayor, Bec Thomas, committed the Council to ongoing care of the garden and the park. Then everyone pitched in to plant species which have special significance, and are mostly indigenous to the Glenorchy area, either as “bush tucker” or for weaving, including such things as chocolate lilies, Poa grasses and dianellas.

So if you are ever in Berriedale take the time to wander through the park, read the sign, have a picnic, and give some thought to the Elders who once called this land home. It is a lovely peaceful place and remains as a tribute to four special women, Eve Masterman, Aunty Ida West, Aunty Eva Richardson and Rose Brown.

*Jennie Herrera (President)  
Glenorchy Reconciliation Group.*

## Yes campaigns in Tasmania



Jason McLeod, running a Reconciliation Tasmania Conversation Table at Mole Creek.

Friends walked for Yes across Tasmania on the weekend of the 16 and 17 of September. Here are Drew Thomas and Sally O'Wheel in Burnie. Ruth Raward's granddaughter, Eve, was spotted in Hobart. Friends joined the walk in Launceston but we missed out on photos of them! They also attended a Voice workshop at the Pilgrim Church next to where they meet for worship. We all hold the Referendum in the Light and remain hopeful of a good outcome.



Claire Raward: We actually didn't manage the walk but gathered at the beginning. I can say that it was great to see community members like Uncle Rodney Dillon leading the Yes rally and welcoming us all to country with some smoking /fire. It was a peaceful gathering and it felt good to be surrounded by people united in strength for First Nations people.

Eva at the Yes rally in Hobart.  
Photo: Claire Raward



## An almost forgotten Friend

FOR SOME years, I have been interested in the *Dictionary of Australia Quaker Biography* (DAQB), my interest in it being aroused some years ago in Hobart in the 90s, when I read almost the entire dictionary aloud to Margaret Wilkinson, who was blind. Back then, each RM had one copy, in six or seven enormous files. I was permitted by our librarian, Bronwen Meredith, to take them out one volume at a time, quite an honour as those of you who remember Bronwen, would realise.

Since then, the DAQB has gone digital and is available to us all on our Quaker website, a huge amount of work to get it there! It has, however, quite a few gaps, and I have made a list of about a dozen that I know, all in Tasmania, the only RM of which I have enough knowledge to do this.

I have recently been researching one such Friend, Lilian Foxcroft, whom I remember as an elderly Friend at Hobart Meeting when I was a young Friend in the mid-60s. My information comes mostly from Western Australia Regional Meeting, Trove digital newspapers, and from other online searching.

Lilian was born Lilian Norbury in England in about 1884, and clearly grew up to have a strong sense of social justice, and a desire for equality for men and women. My earliest information about her is that she joined the Suffragette movement which included the Pankhursts; and in 1910 was arrested for smashing windows of the Liberal Association. She was found guilty and sentenced to fourteen days hard labour along with other Suffragettes. She continued her protest in gaol, refused to eat and was force-fed. Her embroidered signature is found on a quilt commemorating 80 suffragettes who suffered the same punishment, and which is in the Museum of London.

Lilian married Gilbert Foxcroft, a school teacher, in 1911, and soon after that they migrated to Western Australia. They had not been there long, when events leading to the Great War had Lilian writing long impassioned and eloquent letters to the editor of the *West Australian* daily newspaper. They were printed in full, as were a few responses to them, one of which included “This has brought upon my poor devoted head a typical, feminine fulmination.”

Needless to say this brought another response from Lilian which included “At the risk of being accused of feminine pertinacity, I must again emphasise the point, that this gentleman did not know what he was talking about.”!

Her letters in 1914 and 1915 were on warfare, not surprisingly; and she was strongly against the idea of conscription, and through the Anti-Conscription League of WA, urged people to vote against the referendum. Her lengthy argument against the referendum was published in the Perth *Sunday Times*, which attracted an also long rebuttal from the Editor.

She also lectured publicly in Kalgoorlie against the referendum; but this got her into trouble with the law once again. She was charged with “having, on December 12 made statements likely to cause disaffection to his Majesty”. Lilian was fined £15, a huge sum for the time. She was in good company, as another person accused of such offences was John Curtin, a future Prime Minister.

Moving forward a few years, I find that Lilian applied for Membership of the Society in 1937. Her application spoke of her becoming ill at ease in her Catholic Church, as she felt that the ritual tends to lift from the members of the Church the personal responsibility which she believed should be shared by all. She was accepted into membership in 1937, and her membership, with that of Gilbert’s, was transferred to Hobart when they moved there in 1955. Gilbert died in 1962 at the age of 71, and Lilian, who spent her final years at the Strathhaven Nursing Home in Glenorchy, died in 1969 at the age of 84.

Few of us now amongst Australian Friends have memories of her, but Charles Stevenson remembers ministry from Lilian at the 1957 General Meeting when she spoke of sunshine suddenly entering her drab prison cell, just as Spirit can illuminate our humdrum lives. Stephanie Farrall tells me that immediately after she and Lyndsay married at the Hobart Meeting House, Lilian gave Lyndsay the important advice: that gratitude must not only be felt, but voiced. Good advice indeed!

I hope that something of Lilian’s life can now be entered in the DAQB, and that Friends from various RMs might be inspired to fill in any gaps from their own meetings.

Lilian’s letters of 1914–15 can be found in ‘Trove’ digitised newspapers and are well worth reading.

*Liz Field, New South Wales Regional Meeting  
(and former member of Tasmania Regional Meeting)*



Liz Field