

The Australian Friend

ISSUE 1223 DECEMBER 2023 ISSN 1326-0936

The Australian Friend is a web journal published on line at: AustralianFriend.org. This printable version does not include the full range of content available at AustralianFriend.org

Visit AustralianFriend.org to:

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

Looking back, looking forward



George Fox's 400th birthday is coming. Illustration by Marcela Terán/Liberation Works

Editorial

In this issue, as we approach George Fox's 400th birthday, we look back to past spiritual guides, and forward to see how our ancient testimonies can be applied to the current state of the world.

Ann Udy remembers Rufus Jones, the value of his teachings, but even more, the value of the deep silence he helped to create in meetings for worship at Haverford College in the USA. David Swain has researched the legacy of Rudi Lemberg, both to biochemistry and to Australian Quakers.

At a time of war, we look at the contributions made to peace building by individuals such as our Friend Harold Wilkinson, and our institutions such as Quaker United Nations Office and Quaker Service Australia. We are called to continue to support all those working for peace, and to have faith in the Great Ocean of Light which guided George Fox.

The Young Friends of Burundi are learning more of their Quaker heritage, but also offering their own insights and seeking to forge relationships with Quakers of different backgrounds.

And we look forward to Yearly Meeting next year in Adelaide, when we will once again have the opportunity of meeting in person, and finding new friends and inspiration.

THE AUSTRALIAN FRIEND EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Noted

This is our regular feature in which we briefly record interesting publications and websites that have come to our attention. Inclusion of an item in this format does not preclude a possible longer review in a later issue. We welcome suggestions for inclusion.

Racism explored

Enlarging the Tent is a book of dialogues between two British Quakers, Jonathan Doering and Nim Njuguna, on the topics of racism and racial justice, and the Quaker responses to them. The eight dialogues are accompanied by ten worksheets for use by individuals and discussion groups.

The book will be published by John Hunt Publishing in December. We intend to include a review of it in our next issue.

George Fox's 400th Birthday

Friends around the world are making plans to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the birth of Quaker

co-founder George Fox in 2024, through intergenerational events and activities that share the stories that connect us.

To support Friends wishing to organise events and activities, the FWCC World Office has published a birthday pack featuring children's stories, a dramatic monologue, Bible study and prompts for worship sharing, as well as links to possible songs, meditations, courses and games. You can access the pack at www.fwcc.world/fox.

Although Fox was born in July, events will take place throughout the year including celebrations at several Yearly Meetings; a special exhibition

at the Quaker Tapestry Museum in England; online courses from Woodbrooke Quaker study centre; online sessions from both Experiment with Light and the Quaker Theological Discussion Group; and the World Plenary Meeting which is taking place in South Africa and online.

The World Office is compiling a full list of events which will be published online. If you are planning any events, or you would like more information please get in touch with FWCC by emailing Susanna Mattingly, Communications Manager, FWCC at susannam@fwcc.world

AF

Contents

- | | | | |
|-----------|--|-----------|--|
| 4 | Devoted Friends | 20 | Book review
<i>Tomorrow there will be Apricots</i>
<i>An Australian Diplomat in the Arab World</i>
by Robert Bowker |
| 6 | Rudi Lemberg | 20 | Book review
<i>The Low Road</i>
by Katherine Quarmby |
| 9 | Yearly Meeting 6-13 July | 21 | Doubt |
| 10 | Remembering Rufus Jones | 22 | Now more than ever |
| 12 | Meet Trish Johnson | | |
| 14 | A vibrant exchange | | |
| 16 | QSA Notes | | |
| 18 | Know thy Friend | | |
| 19 | Book review
<i>Killing For Country</i>
by David Marr | | |



George Fox's 400th birthday is coming.
Illustration by Marcela Terán/Liberation Works



Devoted Friends

glimpses of QUNO Geneva in its 75th year

ADRIAN GLAMORGAN | WEST AUSTRALIA REGIONAL MEETING AND ASIA WEST PACIFIC SECRETARY FOR THE FRIENDS WORLD COMMITTEE FOR CONSULTATIONS



Quaker House, Geneva, home of Geneva Meeting and Quaker United Nations Office. Photo by Adrian Glamorgan



Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge speaking on the 75th anniversary of Quaker United Nations Office. Photo: Adrian Glamorgan

Quaker United Nations Office is now officially 75 years young, with an enduring role for change. The old world cottage, Quaker House in Geneva, is not far from more than a dozen international agencies plus the UN Human Rights Council. The tranquil spot can serve as the homespun venue where diplomats are invited together for quiet discussions and wholesome food. It's a time to breathe, off the record.

Staff map the diplomatic gaps, and quiet opportunities, and seek out solutions that the diplomats and their countries may not dare to hope for, or discover to their advantage. Interests may converge. But QUNO's main task is not just helping to amend clauses, but helping the world community reassess values.

At one such meal, a diplomat turned to Laurel Townhead, QUNO Representative for Human Rights and Refugees, and warmly affirmed Friends' methods, relishing the meal and the opportunity: 'If you sit down and you eat together, if you share bread and you share salt, then you've reached a different level of communication and contact and understanding.' The gathering of diplomats with refugee-led NGOs seemed to be a success. Laurel explained to me that although she would have liked to have continued to be part of those conversations she'd facilitated at Quaker House 'we weren't needed again because after we'd facilitated one conversation it was possible for the diplomats who were involved with the

refugee-led organisations to take that forward on their own...they'd created that space, they shared bread and salt and they could take that forward without us needing to be involved.' QUNO's long term commitment to work does not need to hold on to any one of its successes, when so much else still needs to be done.

Lindsey Fielder Cook, QUNO Representative for Climate Change explained about one important meeting in March 2023 involving the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change which creates reports on climate science adopted by States; once that report is adopted by states, it creates an accountability, and accordingly is very influential. 'In the approval session, which is about seven days, nonstop sentence by sentence. About two in the morning there was a complete divide in this plenary of over 100 states where one side, primarily less developed, were saying 'we need this sentence that more money is spent on fossil fuels than on climate action' and meanwhile another voice, primarily developed countries,



Laurel Townhead, Representative for Human Rights & Refugees, Quaker House, 2023. Photo: Adrian Glamorgan



Lindsey Fielder Cook, Representative for Climate Change. Photo: Adrian Glamorgan



Florence Foster, Representative for Peace & Disarmament



Andrés Naranjo, Program Associate for Sustainable & Just Economic Systems. Photo: Adrian Glamorgan

were saying ‘we need to clarify that the \$100 billion promised has not been given,’ and they were going back and forth and back and forth trying in this sort of political nightmare. And so I put down our buzzer. I was called and I said ‘it is important that both these statements are in this report. Both statements are ethical statements, both statements are true, both statements have a moral call: we need to have them both in here.’ And there was silence in the room and then both those statements for accepted. So it's almost like trying to come into a space...to move us beyond the politicisation and see the human face in it.’

On that occasion, QUNO brought a silence to proceedings, settling delegates. Silence is something Friends know well, for its granting of insight, unhurried wisdom, and collective peace. So although I had thought much about QUNO’s track record in helping bring about conventions (like the Chemical Weapons Treaty, and Arms Trade Treaty), there is an extra dimension Quakers can offer. For Lindsey, QUNO’s discernment focuses ‘if there is something that we can contribute, based on what we would morally and ethically wish to offer.’

There are many of those meetings.

I asked each of the staff to describe a typical month at QUNO.

Florence Foster, Representative for Peace and Disarmament, summarised everyone’s near-identical response. ‘I don't think that's such a thing at QUNO! The average month normally has a key conference in it somewhere and so it's a lot of preparing towards that conference, depending if we're actually going to engage actively, by taking the floor, making statements, or is it influencing from the sidelines: so there might be a lot of one-to-one meetings with delegates around a coffee or lunch to make sure that our messages are passed through, and hopefully owned by a state that might be taking the floor there. It might be that we have side events, public events, where we are organising a panel session with different stakeholders, and it might be that we’re then doing quite a lot of preparation towards that. There's a lot of internal reporting that has to happen, either to donors or to our own committee yearly meetings...’ There are more iterations. Flo has many skills that interleave her work, mentioning in passing she is trained in mediation. At the right moment, she has been known to produce cakes in the kitchen. The other representatives also have diverse

life experiences, qualifications, and life responsibilities; and yet there they seem to have in common the best Friends could hope for: clear minds, kind hearts, and devoted effort.

QUNO Geneva’s newest programme associate for the newest theme, Sustainable and Just Economic Systems, Andrés Naranjo, is passionate about Friends helping transform the rules that have created so much global poverty, and misdirected human values. He acknowledges the current form of globalisation fosters economic interdependence, possibly serving as a mechanism of peace, making war too costly between nations. However, the current system ‘also has its drawbacks, and one of the major drawbacks of trade and trade policy is the lack of inclusivity of people that are affected and impacted by trade, for example, Indigenous communities, women and children. Trade needs to take into account the historical injustices, between and within member states of the World Trade Organization.’

The World Trade Organization is a relatively new organisation, and QUNO is adapting to its presence as an opportunity for transformation of much

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23



Rudi Lemberg

A seeker in three countries

DAVID SWAIN | NEW SOUTH WALES REGIONAL MEETING

Wahroonga Meeting House sits in a block of over an acre, most of it covered in native forest. To understand how this Meeting came to be so blessed, we need to look at the life of a remarkable Quaker, Max Rudolph Lemberg.

Rudi was born in 1896 in Breslau, Germany (now Wroclaw, Poland) into an 'emancipated and fully adapted professional' Jewish family. 'In the liberal middle-class atmosphere of my parents' home, adherence to the Jewish religion was more a matter of decent loyalty to one's forebears than a religious conviction' he recalled. The family tradition was law rather than science. Rudi's father was a leading lawyer, and his younger brother also became a lawyer. The wider family, however, included several of Germany's leading scientists.

Rudi's youth seems to have been almost idyllic. He was 'well-protected, even over-protected' by his mother, but soon developed a love for nature, and spent as much time as possible walking, climbing and later skiing in the German valleys and mountains.

He attended a liberal *Gymnasium* (high school), and went on to Breslau University to study chemistry, physics,

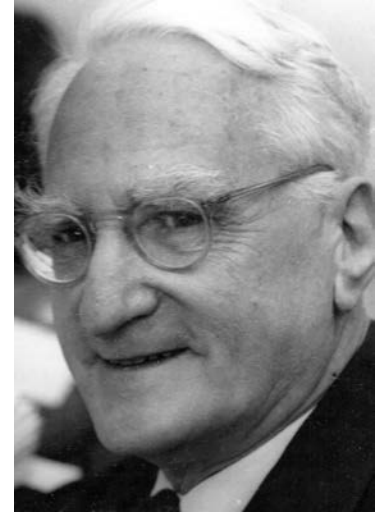
mineralogy, and geology. But a few months into his studies the First World War broke out. Rudi, believing in the justice of the German cause, attempted to join the army, but was rejected on medical grounds.

He returned to his studies at the universities of Breslau, Munich and Heidelberg until in 1917 he was finally able to enlist in the army. He found himself as a gunner and telephonist in the trenches of the Somme. He was wounded, but was awarded an Iron Cross (Second Class) for an attempt to repair telephone wires under fire.

The war led to two changes in Rudi's life. Firstly, he became a pacifist. He wrote 'I was not a coward and could face the dirt, danger, and death of the trenches, but what I found unbearable was the deliberate attempt to destroy human dignity which the drill sergeants indulged in behind the front, encouraged by their officers'. Looking back, he saw this as a training school for the concentration camps of the later Nazi days.

And while in France Rudi became a Christian, joining the Lutheran church, 'but not without a great deal of scepticism.'

After the war Rudi returned to Breslau University to study for his PhD, which he passed *summa cum laude* (with first class honours). He also had had a long period of contact with the German youth movement including the *Wandervogel*, and did social work with Breslau boys' clubs. It was through this work that he met his future wife, Hanna Claussen. Hanna had been born in Breslau and, although from a Jewish



Rudi Lemberg

family, had had a Christian education.

Rudi was advised that prospects were poor for a scientist with a Jewish background in German academia, so took a job as an industrial chemist with the Bayer chemical company. This exposed him to the problems of German inflation of the period. 'Our salaries were paid daily and had to be spent the same evening in town, because the next day their value had decreased by a factor of ten.' Eventually he was retrenched, but received a good redundancy payment that enabled him to return, with Hanna, to Heidelberg and university research.

He was granted a Rockefeller Fellowship to research in Cambridge. He returned to Heidelberg, but the rise of Hitler led to his dismissal from the university. Fortunately, he received an invitation from friends in Cambridge to return there, so he and Hanna returned to England in 1933. It was at this stage that they came to know Quakers, and for a while stayed with an old Quaker lady.

As much as they liked England, it

was obvious that not all the refugee scientists could stay in Cambridge. Rudy accepted a position as a biochemist at the Royal North Shore Hospital in Sydney, not with enthusiasm as he thought that outside a university he would be isolated from others working in his field.

Before leaving Cambridge he risked a visit back to see his parents in Breslau, believing he would not see them again. He was right. His father died before the war, but his beautiful, talented mother died in a concentration camp.

As Rudy had feared, for some years in Australia he worked in isolation, with a small staff in a small laboratory. But there was little demand for his services from the medical staff, which allowed him to continue his research. After World War II, however, he was able to expand his laboratory and increase his reputation among scientists. By the end of his career he had been awarded the title of Professor Emeritus from Heidelberg University and DSc from Sydney University. He was also founder and first president of the Australian Biochemical Society.

In 1955 Rudy and Hanna bought a little over an acre of land in Wahroonga, at that time an outlying Sydney suburb. On this land, which they called 'The Sanctuary', they built a small house designed by architect Hugh Buhrich. Buhrich was also a refugee from Nazism; he had progressive political views and a Jewish wife, both of which made life under Hitler impossible.

At this time Rudy joined Quakers and started holding meetings in the small living room at The Sanctuary. He was assisted by Max and Erica Wohlwill, also German refugees, and Eric and Enid Pollard. Members of the

Wohlwill and Pollard families are still active Quakers.

In 1962 Rudy and Hanna offered to build a Quaker Meeting House on part of their land. In 1968, with the proceeds of Rudy's Britannica Australia Prize, they extended the Meeting House by adding the hexagonal Meeting Room. Again, the architect was Hugh Buhrich.

His Academy of Science biographers tell us:

His desire for open discussion of the philosophical and sociological, on a real-world plane, led him for many years to participate actively in and often lead the wider discussions provided by the Friday evening forum of the Society of Friends, to which not only senior members of the community came, but also many students. For some young people these discussions, especially in the 1960s, left an indelible impression. Men such as Dr H.C. Coombs, chairman of the Reserve Bank and later chairman of the Australian Council of Aboriginal Affairs, Thomas Keneally, novelist, Charles Birch, biologist and theologian, Peter Mason, physicist, women such as Faith Bandler, aboriginal leader and spokeswoman, and Dorothy Butler, the mountaineer, presented their views on major contemporary issues at these forums, the venue of which was a Meeting House given by Lemberg to the Society of Friends, and set in the beautiful native bush garden of his home at Wahroonga.

In an outline of his beliefs, Rudy wrote: 'I am an evolutionist, not a vitalist, of Chardinian rather than Darwinian hue.' He was a follower of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, the Jesuit priest, paleontologist and philosopher



Hanna Lemberg

who suggested that evolution was progressing to a point of union with God.

Rudi goes on: 'I am a Jew by birth, a Christian by adoption, and, although greatly impressed by the theology of such men as Paul Tillich and Martin Buber, yet at home in the silent worship of a Quaker meeting.'

His Academy of Sciences biographers confirm: 'Although a protestant and a member of the Society of Friends, shaped by his education and his long association with his gifted and devoted wife Hanna, he had within him elements of the Hebraic faith and would often emotionally identify with the Jewish cause in controversial issues.'

Rudi was interested in the relationship between science and religion. Nobel Laureate Sir John Eccles encouraged him to write a book on the subject. Rudy planned a book of 50 chapters but only completed six of these before he died. These chapters were published posthumously.

His impressions of Australia are interesting:

In many respects Australia is akin to Mediterranean lands, and at its glorious coast line Homer's Odyssey becomes alive. Life is easier and some Nordic gloom evaporates like mist in the warm sun; but the land of the Lotophagi – here called beach-lizards – is also on these coasts. Perhaps the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23

Quakers Australia Annual General Meeting

The Formal AGM session is at

2:30pm AEDT on Saturday 20 January 2024

online at this Zoom link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9036798841?pwd=aS9uZ0haN2ExZWZ3akxsQmdROWwrUT09>

BRUCE HENRY | QA PRESIDING CLERK

The AGM will be part of the January Online Mini-Yearly Meeting 2024 Friday 19 – Sunday 21 January 2024

with

Online Meeting for Worship,
Formal & Information sessions,
Friendly School & convivial times,
and much, much more

All sessions are online and open to everyone

Friends, you are warmly invited to join us for an online Yearly Meeting weekend in January. An innovative program is being developed and can be seen in outline by clicking on <https://www.quakersaustralia.info/news-events/news/quakers-australia-agm-and-mini-yearly-meeting-january-2024> (see in particular the link to the program outline) or by going to the JanYM24 calendar at <https://www.keepandshare.com/calendar19/show.php?i=2974167&date=2024-01-19>.

The Quakers Australia AGM and any other business sessions will be open to all, as is our usual practice for Yearly Meeting sessions. In effect, this is a second, albeit experimental, Yearly Meeting gathering for 2024. You don't need to be a representative from your Regional Meeting to attend, as has been the case for past January Standing Committee meetings. In fact, we're keen to call this a 'January Yearly Meeting' weekend and not use the term 'Standing Committee' at all. Decisions requiring our spiritually grounded, corporate discernment can be made in January without having to wait for July.

Apart from any necessary business, the January Yearly Meeting 2024 (JanYM24) weekend will offer times for gathering in worship with one another and opportunities for inspiration and reflection. There will also be a Friendly School (or two—one on Friday evening, the other on Sunday), Preparatory and Information Sessions, and community time (on Saturday) for social connection and having fun together. We hope to include ways for children, families and isolated Friends to be involved. We encourage Friends to gather in pods. There will be plenty of time free from Zoom. We are also inviting Friends from Aotearoa/New Zealand Yearly Meeting to join us.

We encourage you to come and experience the variety and richness of our Quaker life and look forward to seeing you online during this weekend in January.

SUBMITTED BY THE JANUARY YEARLY MEETING 2024 TASK GROUP AND THE YEARLY MEETING CLERKING TEAM

ANY QUESTIONS? PLEASE CONTACT KERSTIN REIMERS ON KERSTIN7REIMERS@GMAIL.COM



Yearly Meeting 6-13 July

West Beach, Adelaide SA

JO JORDAN | SOUTH AUSTRALIA AND NORTHERN TERRITORY REGIONAL MEETING

Friends have been eagerly awaiting the next face to face Yearly Meeting and it is on the way! It will be in winter, at the same site as YM17, close to the sand dunes of West Beach with open skies and the sound of the sea.

This will be a yearly meeting accessible to all, on-ground or online. Many of the sessions will be hybrid, taking place within the venue and available simultaneously online. Some sessions will run in parallel, face to face and online.

During the past five years children and young people have missed out on the experience of belonging to the family of Friends at a Yearly Meeting. So we believe that it is important to go out of our way to encourage families to attend this YM24 because the cost of travel to Yearly meeting for a family is challenging enough.

There will be no charge for children or JYFs attending Yearly Meeting 2024.

Children and JYFs may stay and share meals at The Retreat free of charge. In addition, we are offering, also free of charge, an exciting camp experience to Junior Young Friends and a children's programme for the younger children. This has been made possible with support from the Grace Geraldine Brown bequest and from the Children

and Junior Young Friends Committee.

The JYF camp will be at the Woodhouse Activity Centre at Mount Lofty, a venue owned by the Scouts SA, from Sunday 7th July and returning to the Retreat on Thursday 11th July. There will be experienced Guides on site as well as the supportive Quaker presence of Tracy Bourne and Andrew Bray in residence. The venue offers lots of challenging activities as well as an evening around the campfire.

The children's programme at The Retreat will be in the spacious Poolside room, in the centre of the Retreat complex, close to an outside play area. It will be staffed by qualified child carers as well as Quaker volunteers who possess a Working with Children certificate.

Accommodation at The Retreat has been reserved for Friends in well-designed, comfortable holiday homes, called Shacks. Some of the Shacks are wheelchair accessible. All have well equipped kitchens which are perfect for self-catering. All have two bedrooms with either one king size bed or two or three single beds. It is possible to register for either a single room, at extra cost, or sharing with one or two others.

The main meeting area where formal sessions are held is near the western boundary of The Retreat, at the Sea Rescue headquarters. The lounge areas of the shacks may be used as smaller

meeting spaces for Friendly School or Share and Tell sessions during the week.

Friends can decide to self-cater, or register for catered boxed lunch, and for dinner at the Golf Club near the entrance to the Retreat. The Golf Club will be catering for vegetarian, gluten free and diabetic diets, but Friends with less usual diets will need to self-cater. Regular trips to the local supermarket at Harbour Town will be organised or Friends may travel on the local bus which stops outside the entrance to The Retreat.

Wednesday, in the middle of Yearly Meeting, will be a rest day. There will be a range of excursions available that day, so let the organisers know if you would like to visit a particular venue which is not too distant from The Retreat. The CBD is about 20 minutes away by bus or car and the Adelaide Hills about 30 minutes by car.

We don't know when Yearly Meeting will be meeting again face to face, so don't miss out on this special opportunity and register as soon as you can!

If you have any questions about YM24, contact Jo Jordan josephinaj@icloud.com or Topsy Evans topsy104@icloud.com

AF

Karkalla

This photo features Karkalla growing on the sand dunes at West Beach, the site of Yearly Meeting 2024. Karkalla is the name given to this plant by the Kauna People of the Adelaide Plains and adjacent areas, its botanical name is *Carpobrotus rossii*. It occurs around Australia's coast (including Tasmania), and in mallee and saltlake landscapes from Shark Bay to Kurna Country to Rockhampton, reflecting the wide extent of Quakers in Australia. Can you find out the name given to this plant by the First Nation on whose unceded land you

live? Please bring this to Yearly Meeting 2024.

The flowers, fruit and leaves are widely used and eaten by Original Australians. The fruit is left on the plant to mature and sometimes to partly dry. The fresh fleshy leaves are edible, either raw or lightly heated on coals. Besides food fibre and minerals, Karkalla can be a significant source of water, vitamin C and antioxidants. The undiluted juice from a broken leaf soothes itches, insect bites or stings, and burns. The juice of several leaves finely chewed can be used as an oral swish for throat and mouth infections.



Karkalla. Photo: Harald Ehmman



Remembering Rufus Jones

ANNE UDY | NEW SOUTH WALES REGIONAL MEETING

This article is based on a talk given by Anne to the Wairoonga Local Meeting.

There is a misunderstanding about my connections with Rufus Jones. He was not a lecturer at my university, but at Haverford, the other Quaker-founded university, located a couple of stops away from Bryn Mawr on the train.

My memory is not to be counted on as I have recently discovered several times. But I do not remember ever actually meeting Rufus Jones. I did and still do feel that he had some impact on my life.

When I began at Bryn Mawr I went with a new friend to the church she wished to attend—an extremely high Episcopal (or Anglican) church. The service included sprinkling of water and genuflection (to me always unexpected). I was technically an Episcopalian but LOW Episcopalian which is quite different to the high church. I certainly did not fit in the church my friend wanted to attend.

For some reason I chose to try going to Haverford College for Quaker Meeting.

Here was a situation the direct antithesis of a helpful space for a Quaker Meeting—a huge tiered university lecture hall with seats rising high on three sides and a stage at the bottom for the fourth side. The elders sat on the stage. Even though there were a good number of people there, we looked scattered. We did not begin to fill even a tenth of the available seats.

I kept going. The quality of the atmosphere was such that I found myself in a depth of silence (without any thought or effort on my part) that took over and enveloped me. But how could that be managed in this space

which was about as far away from a decent Quaker Meeting space as I could imagine? It was, indeed, a mystery to me. However, I somehow connected this atmosphere with one of the elders whose name was Rufus Jones.

I do not remember anything like a coffee time after the meeting. I don't know, really how I would have met him. We came, sat in the Meeting and then went home. I knew which one of the elders he was and noticed that he spoke fairly frequently.

Recently I read a book by Douglas Steere which began uncovering the mystery about the atmosphere of the Haverford Meeting.

Through this book I discovered that at Haverford there were over the years – in addition to Rufus Jones – two other Quaker lecturers. All three men had a profound understanding of the use of silence. They all not only lectured but also interacted with the students individually, joined them in study groups and organised occasional retreats.

One of these lecturers was Douglas Steere. He was involved with just about every Friends ecumenical outreach, including being the official Friends observer at the Second Vatican Council. He travelled extensively on behalf of the American Friends Service Committee and was the initiator for the formation of the Ecumenical Institute of Spirituality. He was a faculty member from 1928 to 1964.

The other one was Thomas Raymond Kelly, who wrote my all-time favourite devotional book, *A Testament of Devotion*. Rufus Jones said about this book that it was one of the few

great devotional books which he could recommend 'along with the best of the ancient ones'. He also was thoroughly involved with multiple Friends organisations.

Thomas Kelly began teaching at Haverford and relating to the students in 1936. He died in 1941.

The Haverford meeting benefitted hugely from the presence of these three men. In addition, I believe increased strengthening of the depth of the meeting came because more and more of the people in attendance (such as the students) were growing in their ability to use the silence well. The influence of the three men through their close involvement with the students may have accomplished more than their actual presence.

On both sides Rufus Jones' forebears were Quakers for generations. Thomas Jones and his wife Thankful had come from Wales to Massachusetts in 1690.

From the time Rufus was big enough to wield a small axe he helped cut wood, drove cows to & from pasture, milked them, helped with hoeing, weeding, threshing, and haying. There was work pressing to be done, even so, time was taken for daily Bible reading & silence. This must have impressed upon the boy its importance. When occasionally silence was broken by one speaking simply and quietly to God, he may have at some level realised both the reason for the silence and the communion that was sought and experienced in it. Unconsciously he acquired a conviction of the reality of the 'unseen world impinging on his world of things'. It became the basis of his mature faith.

He said, 'Almost nothing was said



Rufus Jones

in the way of instructing me. It was not a narrow, rigid set of dogmas from which the developing mind reacts. God was an indwelling Spirit. The life in our home was saturated with the reality and practice of love.'

Rufus Jones records an instance of his mother's discipline that not only reveals his own normal boyish sins but sheds light on the quality of his mother and her sureness of touch. He describes the hot summer day, the turnip patch choked with weeds, and the task which his parents set him before they drove off to Augusta for the day. Along came a band of his friends, with tackle and bait, urging him to go fishing with them. They promised to help him with the weeding — after they came back. It was late when he returned and with a pang he saw his mother watching his approach.

Mother in silence took me by the hand,' he wrote, 'and led me to my room. I knew what I deserved and expected to get it in full. But a miracle happened. Mother put me in a chair, kneeled down, put her hands on me and told God all about me. She interpreted her dream of what my life was to be. She portrayed the boy and the man of her hopes. She told God what she had always expected me to be, then how I had disappointed her hopes. 'O God,' she said, 'take this boy of mine and make him the boy and man he is divinely designed to be.' She bent over, kissed me and went out and left me alone in the silence with God.

In September 1879 a tall, thin, eager country boy who had never before ridden on railroad train, steam

boat or horse car traveled by all three of those conveyances and arrived at the school which is now known as the Moses Brown School. It was then a co-educational boarding-school, one of the best of that distinctive type developed by Friends during the nineteenth century.; The scholarship which he was given covered all expenses.

In spite of his haphazard preparation in rural schools Rufus was well able to take his place with others of his age. He joined the Latin class reading Caesar, took up geometry enthusiastically, began Greek. Weak in science, he entered the class in natural sciences — astonished to find that the world was not made in 6 days and man did not begin with Adam. Through the guidance of a wise teacher Rufus made this hurdle without difficulty, & found his religious faith more secure when it marched with facts.

His grandmother, Susannah Jepson Jones, through her mother, Peace Robinson, was descended from the great John Robinson of Leyden, who said to the Pilgrims as they left Holland, 'God has yet more light and truth to break forth from His word.' 'Grandmother Susie' added to her practical ability, as her grandson testifies, 'breadth of mind and depth of heart, and a culture whose source and origin nobody could explain.'

Rufus Jones' literary style is clear, warm, lighted by his inimitable humour and penetrating shafts of insight. His memory was faithful to homely details as well as to the reaches of the spirit. Though I do not remember specific witness by Rufus Jones, I'm sure his speaking was the same.

In 1882, when he just 26 years old,

he wrote a book which eulogised his uncle Eli and aunt Sybil. But Rufus Jones' life and work seem to be contrary to theirs. My feeling is that a few years later he could not have written as he did at 26.

Eli and Sybil Jones regularly went travelling around the world leaving their children with friends and relatives. Their main purpose was to convert people to their faith. They did set up a school (perhaps more than one) but there was a lot of pushing for conversion.

At one stage a three-year-old, in tears, begged her mother not to leave her. At another time they left behind a one-year-old baby.

Rufus Jones' later books were about Mystical Religion, Practical Christianity, Atonement and Prayer, etc. He always respected the beliefs of others and did not try to change them.

He played a crucial role in promoting Quaker principles of peace, social justice, and religious tolerance. He became a prominent figure within the American Friends Service Committee. His travelling was for further humanitarian work and conflict resolution. He was actively involved in promoting international peace and understanding. He met and spoke with the Dalai Lama. He traveled extensively, delivering lectures and fostering connections between different religious and cultural groups—always working to bridge religious and cultural division.

He was a special person and no doubt with others was responsible for the Haverford Meeting being full of silence which was especially enveloping.

AF



Trish Johnson in Kings Park in October 2022

Meet Trish Johnson

from the Atherton Tablelands Worshipping Group

JUDITH PEMBLETON | QUEENSLAND REGIONAL MEETING

Trish Johnson was born in Pietermaritzburg in Natal, South Africa, during the apartheid era and her family's commitment to social justice meant she was aware of the racism and inequity within that system of government from an early age.

Trish's mother was part of the 'Black Sash' movement, a movement of white South African women who campaigned against the National Party's removal of mixed-race voters from the voters' roll in the Cape Province.

As the apartheid system began to reach into every aspect of South African life, Black Sash members demonstrated against Pass Laws and the introduction of other apartheid legislation. The movement would later open advice offices to provide information concerning legal rights to non-white South Africans affected by that legislation.

When Trish graduated from university with a psychology degree, she was the third generation of women in her family to graduate. Trish's mother and grandmother were university educated in an era when it was unusual for women's intellectual gifts to be recognised and supported in this way.

Trish's mother graduated as a botanist. Her father was a horticulturalist and this common

interest formed a strong bond for their partnership and engendered a love of natural beauty in Trish from an early age.

The family lived in the parks that her father managed, and in her early life Trish often went with her father when he was designing landscapes. Trish was very close to her father and was greatly grieved when he died when she was just 19 years old.

Later in life, Trish realised that her father probably had undiagnosed PTSD following five years of active war service. She remembers her father as a gentle and courteous man who nevertheless hated loud noises and could not bear anything to be broken.

There were difficulties in the marriage but after what Trish describes as 'a strong Christian conversion', her mother's faith brought the family together.

Trish's family moved from South Africa to Perth when Trish was 11 years old. Her father became the Superintendent of Perth's beautiful Kings Park, one of the world's largest and most beautiful inner-city parks and a rich cultural heritage site.

While they left the apartheid system behind, Trish is aware that Australia was 'every bit as racist' as South Africa was. The move was easier for Trish, who says she quite likes change than

for her parents who had no family in Australia. They had left all their family behind including Trish's many cousins whom she missed. And though she appreciated Perth's beauty, she also missed the mountains of Natal – the beautiful Drakensburg ranges – when they moved to Perth's very flat environs.

From these beginnings, Trish developed her maxim: 'You can never have too many flowers'.

She remembers her godmother who had a wonderful garden and people wondered why there were no weeds – 'There is no room for them' was the response.

Trish studied at the University of Western Australia, at a time when she described psychology as being 'rats and stats' – observing rats in mazes and learning about statistics for research purposes. She found this was not a terribly useful preparation for her first job which was in the prison system!

Trish met David Johnson at university and they married in 1972 when she was 21. In their early married life they spent two years travelling overseas after David finished a doctorate in geology, travelling in south-east Asia and India, where they saw the Taj Mahal by moonlight and then on to England and Europe.

Trish and David were both brought up in the Anglican tradition, though

while travelling found themselves attracted to the meditation practices of Buddhism. In the early 80s with a young family, Trish and David were drawn to Quaker worship.

The writings of early Friends such as Isaac Pennington and 20th Century Quaker Thomas Kelly have touched her deeply and continue to provide guidance in her life. She and David feel fortunate they share a deep commitment to the spiritual journey.

They have worshipped within larger Quaker Meetings in England and Canada when on study leave. Their first Quaker Meeting in north Queensland was in 1982, and Trish remembers Rhoda and Francis Dorrell and other Brisbane Friends travelling up to North Queensland gatherings that were held in the late 80s when there were a lot of Quakers in the Tablelands, Mackay and Rockhampton, but those families have died or dispersed. There is currently a small Meeting in the Atherton Tablelands, mainly online.

When living in Townsville far from the larger Brisbane Quaker Meeting, Trish said they learned a lot about spirituality with the nuns of the House of Prayer & Spirituality, a contemplative community offering an oasis of solitude, for retreat, prayer and meeting spaces for individuals and groups whose meeting room was

similar to a Quaker Meeting, with a circle of chairs surrounding a central round table.

Trish and David were two of a small number of Australian Quakers to see the need for one central place of retreat where Quakers could seek and find spiritual renewal. From this early vision, Silver Wattle Quaker Centre was established – against much opposition within Friends at the time. Without Yearly Meeting backing, this small group went ahead and found the venue, raised the funds and put in endless unpaid hours to make the vision a reality.

Helen Bayes was the inaugural Centre Director, followed by David and Trish in 2013–2014, three of the Silver Wattle 'pioneers', who moved from their homes to live and work on site in its early years.

Trish remembers that money was scarce and the daily demands at Silver Wattle required a great deal of time and energy. She estimates that she worked 12-hour days and David regularly worked a 16-hour day.

Just as well Trish describes herself as being very active and having a great deal of energy! Trish has always been physically active, in sport as a young person and she is currently swimming, and doing Scottish dancing, yoga and Pilates.

When other Friends took over at Silver Wattle, Trish and David returned to north Queensland. Trish's psychology career had continued to focus on human interactions and in a long career she has undertaken mediation training, and worked with veterans and trauma.

She is pleased that now, as she finishes her career, the sole practice she opened in 2000 has expanded and now has seven psychologists.

Trish is not renewing her registration to practise psychology at the end of 2023 and says she is relieved not to feel responsibility for others. She finds retirement brings a great deal of active discernment as she is approached to do many things, and has been learning to say 'Yes' only when spiritually led to do so.

She is also finding that life is not 'poorer or lesser' and says you have to let go any sense of 'relevance deprivation'. Instead, she finds it freeing to be able to make statements she wants to make and to put more energy back into activism.

The issues that are important to Trish are environmental, First Nations, opposition to nuclear weapons and refugees.

AF

A vibrant exchange

YOUNG ISRAEL IZERE | KWIBUKA YEARLY MEETING, BURUNDI

We rarely include items from overseas, but we thought this article provided a good insight into different Quaker traditions in different parts of the world, The Australian Friend committee.



A vibrant exchange of ideas and beliefs unfolded on August 11, 2023, as Simon Lamb, Clerk of the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) world office, visited Burundi's Young Friends for an open discussion. The event took place at Rohero Monthly Meeting within Kibimba Yearly Meeting and marked a significant moment for the Burundian Young Friends as they engaged in a thoughtful dialogue with an international Quaker leader.

Simon Lamb's visit to Burundi coincided with his trip to Africa for the planning committee meeting of the 2024 World Plenary Gathering and the Central Executive Committee of FWCC.

Following this important meeting in South Africa, he extended his journey to Burundi as part of his summer break to connect with Burundi Friends Church's

Young Quakers. Accompanying him was Myron Guachalla Montano, the current Young Friend Representative within the Central Executive Committee of FWCC.

The open discussion covered a range of compelling topics, including Quaker theology, Quaker testimonies, Christian values, and the history of Quakerism. This dialogue was of great significance as many Burundian Young Friends seek a deeper understanding of their own church's history and evolving beliefs.

Simon took the opportunity to shed light on the foundational beliefs of early Quakers, including the teaching that Christ's inward light resides within every human being, enabling each person to minister and serve as a pastor.

The discussion also touched on the concept of unprogrammed worship, which involves silent meetings where individuals gather to directly

experience the voice of God. This style of worship sparked diverse perspectives and stimulating questions from the Burundian Young Friends.

As the conversation unfolded, the young Friends posed thought-provoking questions, including:

1. Quaker History and Evolution

How did Quakerism develop in Africa, particularly in Burundi? What led to the diversity in Quaker traditions, worship styles, and activities among different Quaker groups?

2. Inward Light of Christ:

Is every individual truly born with the inward Light of Christ, or is this Light only revealed upon accepting Christ into their lives? Isn't this Light of Christ rather an external dimension that reveals itself to a troubled/lost soul?

3. Knowledge in Silence:

How can individuals grow their understanding of God in the absence of



Tuzoba Ico Twigize

guided biblical teachings and pastors? How can salvation and the inspired word of God be known to new members or unbelievers in silence – where there is no structured preaching?

Simon Lamb dedicated ample time to address each question, leading to a rewarding and captivating exchange. The enthusiastic participation of the Young Friends kept the conversation engaging and meaningful. The talk turned out to be so intriguing that the Young Friends didn't want to end the conversation.

The event concluded on a positive note, with the Burundian Young Friends inviting Simon for a return visit in the near future to hold more of such discussions. The Young Friends also suggested a three-part plan to foster connections between Irish (& British)

Friends and Burundian Friends:

1. **An exchange program** between Burundi Young Friends and Irish Young Quakers.

2. **The establishment of internet hubs** for Burundi Young Friends to facilitate communication and learning opportunities. These hubs would also enable a number of Burundian Friends to virtually attend the upcoming 2024 World Plenary meeting through internet-based computer workstations within these hubs.

3. **A 5-day conference** around 2025, focusing on biblical teachings, discussions, and business coaching, featuring British/Irish Quakers to empower the Burundian Young Friends.

Simon's meeting with the Youth was graced by the presence of 'Tuzoba Ico Twigize,' (meaning 'Forge our own')

a self-help group of Burundian young women supported by the Friends Women's Association. (This group aims to uplift the socio-economic status of young females through various activities including design and branding, crafting handmade baskets from recycled plastics, financial savings, loans and micro-investment initiatives, entrepreneurship as well as training and workshops.

In summary, Simon's visit to Burundi's Young Quakers sparked a dynamic and fruitful exchange of ideas. The event not only enriched the knowledge of the attendees but also paved the way for future collaborations and connections between Quaker communities across borders and FWCC Sections.

AF



QSA Notes

Reflections on the 2022/23 project year: Highlights and priorities

FLEUR BAYLEY | QSA PROJECT MANAGER, CAMBODIA



Farmers in Uganda work to improve nutrition, achieve year-round food security and increase income.
Source: St Jude Family Projects

The year ending June 2023 was another busy but successful year for QSA's international development projects focused on the interrelated areas of poverty reduction, food, and water security; 10,339 people directly participated in six ANCP projects in Cambodia, Uganda, and India, of whom 57 per cent were women and girls.

QSA is a long-standing participant in the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP), the Australian Government's longest running and most extensive NGO program. Despite being one of the ANCP's smallest NGOs, QSA continues supporting in-country partners to achieve great results for their communities.

Here are some highlights from the 2023/24 project year and insights into our project partners priorities.

Trialling new ideas

QSA has supported Bunrany Hun Sen Development Center (BRHS) in Pursat, Cambodia, for almost ten years; initially, it was a handicrafts training centre, then a more commercial operation focusing

on handicraft production and marketing, purchasing handicrafts from producers in rural areas, and providing handicrafts training. The Centre was adversely impacted by COVID-19, exacerbating a trend of declining sales and reduced training numbers.

It was recognised in 2022 that the Centre needed to become a self-sustaining social enterprise providing skills training and employment, and a consultant was engaged to create a new business unit. It was recognised that introducing new arrangements across the existing organisation would interrupt production, training, and sales activities and may seem threatening to current production and management staff. Known as the Enterprise Project (EP), the new unit is a separate production and sales operation, implementing new employment practices and production processes, new designs, and innovative marketing and sales systems. The EP aims to demonstrate new approaches and methods BRHS can adopt to achieve future self-sufficiency.

Demonstrating inclusiveness

A key objective for Khmer Community Development (KCD) is improving relations between the majority Khmer and ethnic Vietnamese communities who face significant disadvantage and discrimination. KCD uses participatory processes throughout its project planning and implementation so that all community members can participate in discussions and leadership. Inclusive community discussions are a robust governance method for needs assessment, awareness-raising, and problem-solving. KCD also consciously recruits Vietnamese speakers to help facilitate these processes and their work. KCD has also partnered with a specialist NGO to improve the participation of people with disabilities in KCD's work. Practical activities are also integrated into project work to enable participants to increase their awareness and support for people with disabilities. Home visits with training and materials to generate income and improve family nutrition are options available to participants with disabilities, as well as study visits to the



Chickens are a vital element of the permaculture project in Pursat. Source: Department of Women's Affairs



KCD workshop to gather information about the concerns and experiences of rural women in Cambodia. Source: QSA

Phnom Penh Centre for Independent Living to enable participants to share their experiences.

In 2023, KCD focused on enhancing its strategic approach to gender, increasing its capacity to understand and improve gender equality in its development programs. This included activities with women to gather information about their experiences and concerns and raise awareness and support for gender issues in local authorities and communities.

Working with local partners

QSA's relationship with its partners is informed and guided by Quaker teachings that espouse equality as one of its fundamental principles. Partner

organisations tend to have a geographic focus and, depending on the partner, either consult with community leaders or are led by the communities with whom they work to select project areas. Their work is shaped or informed by specific local issues, and they have the expertise to address gaps, interests and needs identified by the community. Most project participants across QSA's work are women, with many initiatives aimed at female empowerment, including encouragement and support for involvement, coordination and leadership in groups and at community levels. QSA supports its partners in engaging their communities and facilitating grassroots initiatives that are ultimately informed

and owned by the communities.

An example is a long-standing partner, the Department of Women's Affairs (DWA), in Pursat Province, Cambodia. Each commune in the province prepares an annual 'Investment Plan' that identifies community needs across a wide range of issues, including health, education, road infrastructure, and policing. Provincial authorities, including the DWA, discuss these plans with the communes to review and select communities based on criteria considering social and economic factors such as poverty levels and market access. Local community representatives, including women's groups, support and invite participants.

Christmas gifts that really make a difference

An economical, environmentally appropriate, and sustainable way of giving with gifts identified by our partners as the most meaningful way to improve the lives of their communities.

Order online and download a gift certificate you can print or email.

www.qsa.org.au/living-gifts



QSA is a member of the Australian Council for International Development and is a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct. The purpose of QSA is to express in a practical way the concern of Australian Quakers for the building of a more peaceful, equitable, just and compassionate world. To this end QSA works with communities in need to improve their quality of life with projects which are culturally sensitive, as well as being economically and environmentally appropriate and sustainable.

Follow QSA on Facebook to see more photos and stories facebook.com/quakerserviceaustralia

and to download a PDF version of this edition or to view previous issues of QSA Notes

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

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



ACFID
MEMBER



Harold Wilkinson

Know thy Friend

Harold Wilkinson

PETER JONES | TASMANIA REGIONAL MEETING

Harold Wilkinson was born in Western Australia, coming from a farming family there. His father, Laurie, was an Anglican while mother, Nancy, was a Congregationalist. Disillusioned with the weak stand of the Anglican church on social justice issues during the Depression years, they turned to the Oxford Group and Moral Rearmament movement.

In Perth, Laurie had moved towards taking a stand as a Conscientious Objector so met Cyril Gare, a local Quaker, who introduced the family to Mount Lawley Meeting, which they joined soon after the Pacific War ended. With their strong commitment to social justice, both his parents joined the Labor Party and stood for pre-selection as candidates for Federal Parliament.

Harold attended local primary schools, Perth Modern School, and then went on to the University of Western Australia (UWA) to study Agricultural Science, continuing to do his PhD there on Soil Science and Plant Nutrition.

He strengthened his involvement in Quakerism through attending Young Friends camps and Yearly Meetings as well as joining the Student Christian Movement. Cyril Gare told him about

a course at the International Peace Academy in Vienna in 1970 and from there he continued to Canada to pursue his studies at Guelph University in Ontario. There he met Barry Hollister from the Quaker UN Office in New York and went to work at the QUNO office from 1971 to 1975, concentrating on youth related activities and Conscientious Objection as a human right. He attended Mornington Heights Meeting in New York and was put on the Quaker UN Committee as a 'young person' and non-American!

Heading across the Atlantic to England, they ended up in London where Harold's wife, Nancy, found a job with the Quaker Childcare Project in Islington while Harold looked after their two young children, Rohan and Anna. Harold also returned to Philadelphia on a fund raising venture to raise money for establishing a more permanent location for the burial ground of George Fox (he had died in London in 1691).

On his way back to Australia, Harold spent some time in Washington DC with Friends National Committee on Legislation (FNCL) before they all returned to Perth in 1978. His absence during these years, meant that he never got to see his father in Canberra where

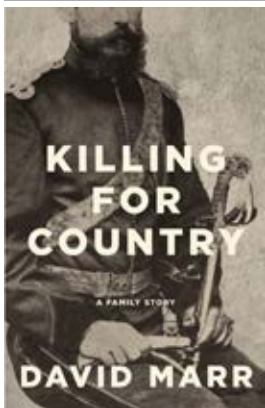
he has served as an ALP Senator, the party the family had become involved in because of their passion for social justice from 1968 to 1975.

Looking for a new home with more congenial weather, the family headed for Sydney but were waylaid in Canberra where they joined forces with the Purnell family and became part of Canberra Meeting. Nancy found a job in the public service while Harold once again looked after the children at home, before he too eventually joined the public service.

At Meeting, he became involved with the Peace Committee and later with the FWCC Asia-West Pacific Committee, joining forces with Ronis Chapman and Michael Searle in the FWCC Asia-West Pacific Committee. This was also a time when he became involved with the United Nations Association, serving on the local committee as well as the Federal Committee where he became President and Secretary.

Nancy had died in 2002 and Harold remarried while getting involved in more Quaker concerns. This work has continued with his ongoing commitment to the Quaker Peace and Legislation Committee with David Purnell and Margaret Clark.

AF



Killing For Country

BY DAVID MARR

Published by Black Inc, 2023, ISBN: 9781760642730

This is a remarkable piece of writing and history. It helps fill the gap in knowledge of the frontier wars, especially in Queensland in the 19th century. Starting from curiosity about his own forebears, the author researches in great detail the background to encounters between colonists and First Nations people, in which human and race relations were set. In three substantial chapters headlined by names of his relatives, David Marr recounts the inexorable way in which those arriving in a 'new' country used relentless means to occupy the land and remove impediments to that goal. Using the available records in newspapers, court proceedings, and government reports, he traces the lives of British settlers from upper class backgrounds who became dominant in the seats of power – as squatters, as magistrates, as public servants, and as police. In many cases, the same people served in each of these capacities in different stages of their lives, thereby ensuring a culture of control over others less fortunate or well-off. Convicts, ex-convicts, and free settlers were encompassed by this environment, and Aborigines were the primary victims of it. The Native Police became a symbol of this situation in Queensland – recruited and led by whites and comprising many

Indigenous members (coming from the southern colonies) paid to track and eliminate people from other tribes unknown to them.

The book outlines the way in which, from the earliest days, conflicts arose about the newcomers invading the lands of Indigenous people. The result was often killing on both sides. For example, sheep and cattle brought in by the settlers would roam widely (no fences in those days), and an Aboriginal group would kill a shepherd in retaliation. The next step would be a collective punishment by squatters and/or police, killing multiple people found in tribal groups near the area where the shepherd was killed. The Native Police were ostensibly tasked with keeping the peace between settlers and Aborigines, but inevitably took the squatters' side. Rules established by the British authorities to protect the rights of the local people were openly ignored, and rarely was a proper investigation done into the killings.

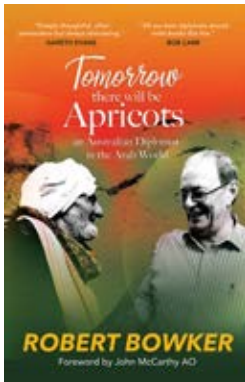
There were some journalists, lawyers, governors and public officials who tried to promote a more humane approach, and this did lead in some areas to relative peace, usually because a squatter/farmer was prepared to negotiate with the First Nations people a mutual agreement to share the use of the land (as was intended by the formal rules of settlement). The Myall Creek case was, however, the only one in which whites were actually charged and convicted of massacring Aborigines. The fierce objection to their sentencing and execution meant

that no further such trials occurred. The general view was that the invaders represented a much higher level of humanity than the Aborigines, and that therefore the occupation of land must proceed in order to bring 'civilisation' to the colonies. In exploring how his own forebears contributed to these thoughts and acted in defence of the dominance of whites, David Marr found a disturbing continuation of this sentiment even today among descendants of the settlers of that era.

It is hard to imagine a more poignant time to read such a book, when the Referendum on the Voice has failed and there is division in our country. I find that David Marr concludes with observations that identify with my own response to the ongoing issue of recognition of first peoples. He clearly rejects the idea that we must not apply today's standards to the people of earlier generations, and must move on. He says that many Australians have changed so little, have failed to listen to Indigenous voices, and have denied the truth about how the country arrived where it is today. Nevertheless he holds out the hope that the spirit of the Statement from the Heart will eventually have its fulfilment. I too pray for more reflection among us all about what we value and how we can share what Indigenous Australia has to offer.

DAVID PURNELL

Canberra and Region Quakers



Tomorrow there will be Apricots – An Australian Diplomat in the Arab World

BY ROBERT BOWKER

Published by Shawline Publishing Group. Australia. 2022. pp.307. Paperback ISBN 978-1-9228-5042-3

The title of the book is a Syrian saying roughly equivalent to the English expression ‘Pigs might fly.’ Bowker writes that it gives appropriate weight to the human qualities of the Arab world. It captures an unquenchable, droll optimism which, together with the deep appreciation of culture and hospitality, ranks highly among the virtues that define what it means to be an Arab. It also reflects an abiding scepticism towards those in positions of authority.

Bowker was an Australian diplomat for 37 years, mainly in the Middle East. He speaks the language. After he retired as a diplomat, he spent ten years researching the Arab world at the ANU.

The book describes the realities and prospects of the Arab world, concentrating on Israel and the Palestinians, Syria and Egypt. More than 7.3 million Palestinians live either as citizens of Israel or non-citizens in the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem, alongside 6.8 million Israeli Jews.

In April 2021 the Human Rights Watch released what Bowker believes to be a compelling 213-page report arguing that Israel’s policies towards

the Palestinians met the definitions of apartheid and persecution, and hence crimes against humanity. In 2022 Amnesty International confirmed the report. Bowker maintains that the ‘two state solution’ to these problems, whereby statehood is conferred on the Palestinians, is now impossible. He holds that the best hope lies in person-to-person outreach by Palestinians to Israelis.

In Syria the recent history has been tragic. There have been 640,000 deaths, including the deaths of 306,000 civilians, 90% of whom were caused by the Syrian Government and its allies. Half of the Syrian population is displaced or living in neighbouring countries. There are 3.7 million Syrian refugees in Turkey. Syria, writes Bowker, is gravitating towards a patchwork of territories controlled by war-lords.

Beyond the coastal and urban areas, in Bowker’s estimation, Syria will be a wasteland for decades. The central government under Assad is doing what it can to gain control. Bowker recommends a gradual, calibrated, conditional engagement with the Assad regime.

More generally, Bowker writes, the path of Arab politics since the Arab Spring of 2011, has been one of evermore entrenched authoritarianism, amidst periodic upsurges because of inadequate economic performance, corruption and joblessness. Regimes will probably survive because of the absence of any credible, coherent alternative.

However, the base of the social pyramid is shifting, he believes, through the



impact of rising levels of education, literacy, nutrition, web-based connectivity and the employment of women. There has been something of a Muslim diaspora over the last fifteen years, and millions of Muslims will be on their mobile phones reporting on life in other countries. If hope is added to all these factors, there could be a genuine renewal.

If there is a movement towards secularisation, as there has been in the West, there is likely to be a variety of responses, not all of them peaceful. We should be ready with constructive, respectful, solutions.

The book is in two parts. The first is about Bowker’s diplomatic career, the second consists of his reflections on the Middle East.

REG NAULTY

Canberra and Region Quakers

The Low Road

BY KATHERINE QUARMBY

Published by Unbound (January 2024) ISBN: 9781800182394

The reader is drawn into this beautiful story from the first page. We travel together, with the two main characters, on their life- journey through to the final page. It is based on a true story which begins in 1813 in the Waveney valley in South Norfolk where the author grew up.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21



Doubt

NOËL STAPLES | PETERBOROUGH MEETING, CAMBRIDGESHIRE AREA MEETING, UK

I don't suppose any of us would claim to be without *doubt*. The 18th century French philosopher René Descartes said there was only one thing he could be certain of and that was 'I think therefore I am' (*Cogito ergo sum*). Put your hand up now if you have ever felt totally *certain* about something – *absolutely* and *completely* without a *doubt* about it? Are you sure? You see, just me pushing and pushing the question makes you wonder, 'Am I really sure?'

Doubting has driven our thinking and reasoning. It helped produce the world as we see and experience it now. If we were completely *certain* about a thing, why would we think, reason, or ask questions about it anymore?

Doubt drives change. Obviously we can't live at relative ease if we doubt everything, so we don't. For now, we accept that what we perceive around us is real, or true – at least unlikely to change any time soon. We can observe over time that there has been no obvious

change in something, anticipating that the situation will probably continue that way for the foreseeable future.

What about our mystical Quakerism? At its centre is the acknowledgement that we experience, uniquely for each of us, some kind of energy or force which flows through everyone and everything. Our Friend Gerald Hewitson described in his 2013 Swarthmore lecture how he experienced 'love cascading through the universe'.

We apply words like spirit, the light, the divine, God, Allah, and so on because without a word for something we can't think it or talk about it. When we say we *know* it is there, in us, all around and through everything, it is an epistemological challenge – *how do we know it?* It can certainly affect us. We Quakers believe it is an experience anyone can have. We don't know what it is, but we do know what it does to us. Our Quaker testimonies bear witness to how it has affected many of us in our

daily lives. It gives us responsibilities which we try to live up to.

Quakerism is a religion of doubt, of uncertainty, of seeking. It is also a way of life. Most established religions have some written down certainties or ideas to which you can (or even must) subscribe if you wish to be a member. We don't. Our *Quaker Faith and Practice* includes examples of how Friends' attempts to describe their experience of the strange power or energy that seems to be in everything and how it has affected their lives. QF&P is not 'written on tablets of stone' and is now being revised again. We are told our *Advices and Queries* are not rules but guides, as St Paul says in the Bible: 'The letter killeth but the spirit giveth life: (2 Corinthians 3:6)

While we must live our daily lives with some certainties, in our spiritual life there is no such certainty. I often wonder just what is this 'thing' I

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

BOOK REVIEW - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

The life-journey of the two central women, Hannah and Annie concludes in Australia where they had been transported to Botany Bay. It is in Australia that they are reunited after many years apart.

This life journey, told with infinite compassion, at times heartbreaking and accurately and immaculately researched, details the lives that many women at the time had to endure. It is told through the words of Hannah who honours her mother's last words; 'write down what you cannot say out loud' to the final chapter when Hannah and Annie are together in Australia having been thrust apart for many years. Hannah says 'I am finished now

with the past: I have written it down and spoke it out loud'.

These are two strong and determined characters; they represent the 'forgotten voices of the past – convicts, servants, and the rural poor'. They endure life in the Refuge for the Destitute, where they first meet; the strong, deep, loving bond between them is sensitively dealt with. They endured the humiliation in the courts of the Old Bailey.

Whilst in Newgate prison in London, they are visited by a Mrs Fry and we are treated to a brief snap shot of the great Quaker reformer, Elizabeth Fry. The 'ladies of Newgate', Quakers, also visited the convict ship before Hannah is transported to Botany Bay.

Their story concludes in a tranquil, rural setting in New South Wales, where Hannah and Annie are at peace and find happiness after their turbulent life - journey. 'Oh! ye'll take the high road and I'll take the low road' the opening line from a song sung by the Scotch weavers. The Low Road is a clever and subtle reference to those who are parted in life's journey. Will they ever meet again?

This is a compelling and exquisitely crafted story, immaculately researched and written with such love.

LEONORA DAVIES

Hampstead Meeting, UK



Now more than ever

The ocean of light and love

MARGARET CLARK | CANBERRA REGION QUAKERS

Two weeks after Hamas brought death to the Supernova music festival at Kibbutz Be'eri, I attended a bat mitzvah at the local synagogue. When commencing the service, the rabbi reminded us that every life has times of darkness and times of light, including this significant day, even as a deep darkness was spreading over Israel Palestine.

In his journal George Fox wrote *I saw also that there was an ocean of darkness and death, but an infinite ocean of light and love, which flowed over the ocean of darkness. (1647).*

It is often said that Fox's 'ocean of darkness' was a personal description of his experience with depression and despair, and the experience of an ocean of divine love so intense that it overcame the feeling of hopelessness and isolation.

With respect to things personal, the metaphor can also describe shared global experiences of both deep despair and fear, and great light and hope, including the current circumstances in Palestine Israel.

Anyone who has been caught in an ocean's undertow has no doubt about its power. The sudden loss of balance, strong powerful forces pulling one down and under; no possibility of taking a breath as each wave pounds face, ears

and eyes. Fear, panic, and desperation as the wet darkness enfolds one into the silent abyss. It's often impossible to stay calm or rational. Arms and legs thrash wildly, hoping to fight back the darkness, and find the surface light. Even from the safety of the shore, a memory – no matter how distant, vague or even inherited, can erupt and the urgent need to fight is overwhelming.

Both Palestinians and Israelis are caught in a shared dark undertow, relentless and full of heightened generational passion. Most are ordinary people living, perhaps barely, in a disastrous situation.

Many faiths, including Christianity, have stories of those who could still a raging ocean and calm storms.

He calmed the storm to a whisper and stilled the waves. (Psalm 107:29, NLT).

It's fair to say that Friends have the capacity, if not the calling, to seek divine guidance in building the 'ocean of light', disrupting those decisions and actions that threaten to pull humanity into an even darker crevasse.

Some Friends courageously follow leadings to bring oceans of light into areas of dangerous conflict. For most of us, those opportunities are closer to home, but no less challenging. It requires courage to remain open, and responsive to that of God in each

person, including those with whom we fundamentally disagree.

Fox was clear, the ocean of light and love is infinite. It is not only far larger than the ocean of darkness, but also endless. Significantly, it flows over the darkness unperturbed by the undertow beneath, regardless of how turbulently it churns.

In short, Light and love always triumph over hatred and anger.

In jointly awarding the 1947 Nobel Peace Prize to the Friends Service Council and the American Friends Service Committee, the Nobel Committee celebrated 'their pioneering work in the international peace movement and compassionate effort to relieve human suffering...carried out without regard for race or nationality'.

In the intervening seventy-six years Friends have untaken many acts, both great and small, to relieve human suffering, remove the occasion for war, and work toward ensuring that the ocean of light and love prevails.

Friends, our current times are no different, the urgency is unmistakable, and the needs are great. In words and deeds we must seek that of God in everyone and re-commit fully, passionately, to the living ocean of Divine Light and Love.

AF

DOUBT – CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21

experience. It seems quite overwhelming at times, astonishing, amazing and even frightening. Am I just imagining it? But it does seem so real!

There is comfort in the knowledge that I am not that unusual and that the mystical experience I have had been familiar to people and expressed

in their unique ways down the aeons of time. Doubt is not easy to live with when, in everyday life, we must have enough certainties to be able to live with reasonable equanimity. Reading the Quaker mystic Thomas Kelly's *A Testament of Devotion* is always reassuring. He so obviously writes from

a lived, deep mystical experience. Even so, an element of uncertainty remains, and perhaps it is the uncertainty of mystical experience with which many people would find it hard to live.

AF

more. QUNO Director in Geneva, Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, is keen for what could come from Friends engaging with the WTO. In immediate terms, the current treaty negotiations to bring about a treaty ending plastics pollution by 2050 would be historic.

But the question of healing historic and continuing injustices is also a matter close to her heart, and a key theme in the coming World Plenary of Friends in Johannesburg, in August 2024. QUNO is not just about clauses, it is about values and processes Friends have been proclaiming since 1652.

If the spiritual dimension needs to be intrinsic to the methods of QUNO staff, then the Geneva director's time growing up in apartheid South Africa has much to teach us. A pacifist and longtime Friend, Nozizwe joined the African National Congress in 1979 when it was decidedly illegal to do so.

As the South African government grew more extreme, Nozizwe experienced arbitrary detention without trial, which turned into a year

in solitary confinement. People dear to her were killed. I am in awe of how such experiences can temper and strengthen the precept of loving that of God in everyone.

The Quaker pacifist was elected to parliament, serving as Deputy Defence Minister and Deputy Health Minister, while she upheld the interests of 12% of the population infected by HIV, while trying to deal with a Minister who thought more garlic, not antiviral drugs, was the answer.

When much younger, Nozizwe came to Geneva to speak at the UN, a formative experience. Now she is back with her passion for justice, for the past and continuing wrongs to be recognised and redressed. It is an added bonus that the QUNO director is someone who is recognised by many diplomats in a way that can assist QUNO's active presence.

In short, my invitation to Friends is to rethink QUNO. Yes, it is a place where much good international work is done. That work is exhausting, and needs our help – campaigning in our

own part of the world, in support, as well as finding new ways for your meeting and mine to more deeply fund the offices in Geneva and New York, to extend the work that goes into the many forums, and to recognise our own role. Devotion needs practical funds to continue.

For decades – 75 years – QUNO staff have been doing this service with devotion, creating a steady Quaker presence and developing trust and finding openings. Their work builds on what is discerned, and what can be afforded.

So far from my home or yours, it turns out that those faraway policies and treaties forged in New York and Geneva matter, not just on a global scale, but as they manifest in many corners of the world, including yours and mine. Quaker House in New York and Geneva are about making every corner of the world a better place, and they need our prayerful help, as we need theirs.

AF

Australian sun had also something to do with my conversion from the Lutheran to the Quaker faith. This statement may appear odd in view of the fact that England, where Quakers originated, is hardly a sunny country; yet the climate of the Quaker soul is essentially sunny and cheerful. Some political rethinking became necessary.

But he says: 'I have ultimately found full acceptance in Australia; the most notable sign, even more than honours received, is perhaps the Australianisation of my name into 'Lemmy.'

Rudi died in 1975.

Hanna, Rudi's much-loved wife, shared his love of the Australian bush and The Sanctuary. She was largely responsible for converting the 'bush' of

The Sanctuary into a 'bush garden', with camelias, azaleas and rhododendrons. She was also skilled at craftwork, and some of her needlepoint work is held at the National Museum of Australia. After Rudi's death she remained at The Sanctuary until she died in 1998, aged ninety-eight.

References

The information and quotations in this article, unless otherwise indicated, come from

Lemberg, M.R. 1965. Chemist, biochemist, and seeker in three countries. *Annual Review of Biochemistry* 34: 1-21

Other interesting information about the Lembergs (and a lot of biochemistry) can be found in the following:

Barrett, J. and Robertson, R.N. 1978. Max Rudolf Lemberg 1896-1975 *Records*

of the Australian Academy of Science 4 (1)

Bhathal, R. 2000. Lemberg, Max Rudolf (Rudi) (1896-1975). *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University

Lemberg, M.R. 1966. Seeking in an age of imbalance. The 1966 James Backhouse Lecture. Australian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).

Lemberg, M.R. 1979. The complementarity of religion and science. *Zygon* 14: (4) 349- 375

The Australian Friend 1975. Max Rudolf (Rudi) Lemberg (1896 - 1975), *Australian Quaker Biographies*.

Sydney Regional Meeting n.d. Lemberg, Hanne (Hanna) Adelheide 11 October 1899 - 25 July 1998. *Australian Quaker Biographies*

AF

The Australian Friend

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

Contributions

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

Contribution deadlines

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

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

Subscriptions

The Australian Friend is available free of charge online at AustralianFriend.org. *The Australian Friend* is also available by post at no charge to members of Australian Yearly Meeting. Members who wish to receive *The Australian Friend* by post, or to notify changes in contact details should contact their Regional Meeting Membership Secretary.

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

Coordinating editor: David Swain

Editorial panel: Margaret Clark, Rae Litting, Sue Parritt

Production

Mailing list CAustFriend@Quakersaustralia.info

Layout Sheelagh Wegman, Hobart TAS

Printing and distribution National Mailing and Marketing, Canberra

Copyright

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

Disclaimer

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