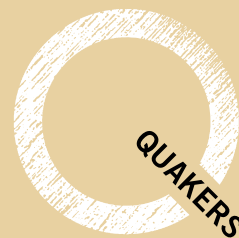


Quaker News



Remembering the Kindertransport

A quarterly update on Quaker work in the care of Britain Yearly Meeting

No 69 Winter 2008

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Cover photo: Refugee girls from Germany after arrival in a British port in 1938. Image courtesy the Wiener Library, London

Editorial

In the Holocaust, more than 1.5 million children were murdered. ten thousand children were brought out of Nazi-occupied territories on the Kindertransport. A shocking ratio. And one which can leave us overwhelmed in the face of enormous evil.

But at least something was done. By Quakers and others. People didn't just say brave things, they did brave things to help where they could. ten thousand children survived. Children who became writers, scientists, teachers, artists, parents and grandparents lived. People who, if they had not come west on the Kindertransport, would almost certainly have been sent east in cattle trucks.

Seventy years on we must challenge ourselves. What are we doing now about the terrible things Lotte Kramer, herself a Kindertransport child, speaks of on page 9. Our Quaker faith leaves us in little doubt that we are compelled to act in the face of cruelty and injustice.

"Above all we must take risks for God: look around us to the people who need help; listen to those who experience oppression; engage in the mutual process of liberation."

Quaker Faith and Practice
24.49

The challenges may be different, but the challenge to respond remains. As Marigold Bentley says about our ecumenical accompaniers, working with peace activists in Israel–Palestine (pages 12–13), at least they "can give a voice to all those working for peace in the region."

There is no time for the counsel of despair. We can stand alongside outsiders, and our small acts of love stack up as collective testament to our faith.

Rachel Rees
Head of Communications
and Fundraising

Quaker News

Quaker News © MMVIII

The Religious Society of Friends, published news of the centrally managed work of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain. This work is one outward expression of the Society's religious beliefs. Central to Quaker work and life is the quiet meeting for worship, which takes place in over 500 centres in England, Scotland and Wales every week.

Quaker Communications Central Committee oversees the publication of Quaker News, which is produced quarterly by Quaker Communications Department, Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ.

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In brief

Publications to support children and young people's outreach

Quaker Life's children and young people's and outreach staff have been working together to produce several new resources for outreach with children and young people. These are offered to provide children and young people with opportunities to find out about Quaker beliefs, values and practices.

Schools Journeys is a new resource offering ideas for meetings undertaking outreach with children and young people and to meetings hosting school visits or going into schools.

This is a free resource which can be downloaded from www.quaker.org.uk/cyp (click on 'Resources' and then 'Publications'), alternatively phone Quaker Life Outreach on 020 7663 1017 or email carmelk@quaker.org.uk

Quakers: a guide for young people and *Quakers: a children's guide* are two new introductory leaflets for children and young people new to Quakers, written and designed with help from children and young people at Yearly Meeting. Both will be available from the Quaker Bookshop from February 2009.

Reading Room opening hours extended

The opening hours of the Library's Reading Room at Friends House will be extended from January 2009.

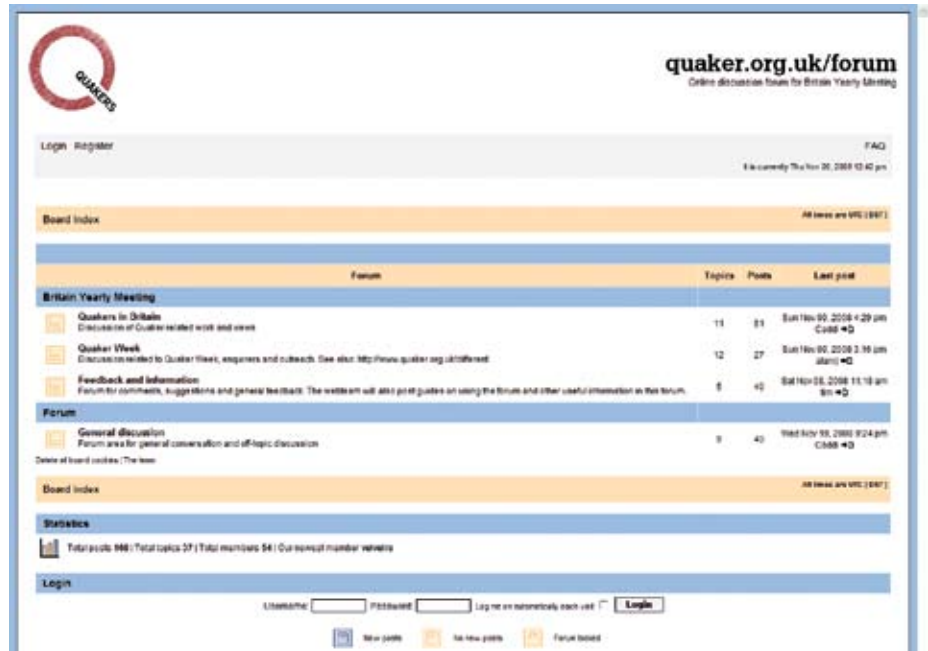
The new hours will be Tuesday to Friday from 10am to 5pm. The Reading Room will be closed on Mondays. Our first day of opening with the new hours will be Tuesday 6 January 2009.

There will be one week per year in May when the Reading Room is closed for annual stock checking and maintenance. In 2009 closed week will be from 18 to 22 May.

Contact:

The Library
library@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1135

Join a new Quaker conversation at www.quaker.org.uk/forum



Conversations build community, but the time after meeting to talk about issues that concern us can seem short. It may end abruptly as the demands of family or friends take us away from the meeting house.

Time, geography, disability and lack of transport can also mean that some Friends are isolated and don't have the opportunity to exchange their views with each other.

"This is exactly why we've created our new forum," explained Nik Dadson, BYM's Web Officer, "we want Friends to be able to talk and develop ideas between meetings and for those who can't always get to meeting to feel less isolated."

The new forum at www.quaker.org.uk/forum is an opportunity for Friends to have discussions about any subject, at any time.

The layout is simple, it's easy to use and you can create a login and password in seconds and start posting straight away. Or you can just come and take a look and see if it interests you.

"Forums can take a while to get an active community going and ours is just starting," continued Nik, "so if any *Quaker News* readers are interested we'd love them to join in."

To join the forum, go to: www.quaker.org.uk/forum



Faith at the end of the phone

Michael Booth finds that some of his most rewarding work begins with a simple phone call. Part of his role as the Support for Meetings Officer in Quaker Life is to respond to issues around pastoral care – eldership and oversight. This means that he receives phone calls when things might not be going so well.

I never know what is going to happen next. Often it is a simple query, which just takes a couple of minutes to answer. Sometimes what emerges is the story of a situation that I need more time to consider. How I respond is important. I need to turn my whole attention to what I'm hearing, so I lean over and shut the door and offer God an instantaneous prayer.

To have to admit to someone outside your own meeting that it is not perfect can be very difficult. And some Friends feel that contacting anyone at Friends House about an issue in their meeting is disloyal. I disagree totally: our experience shows that the earlier an issue is shared with us, the less likely it is to escalate.

Contacting Quaker Life for support shows that the meeting is fundamentally healthy in engaging with its difficulties, rather than ignoring them. It also shows the love and high regard that Friends have for each other, in that they wish their own meeting to be a living and joyful spiritual community.

My job does not give me authority over meetings, so I cannot respond by saying this is how to do it. I can listen, and listen carefully, to what I am being told, ask questions, discover how the meeting is dealing with the situation, enquire how the area meeting has been kept informed and involved. What has already been tried?

As well as closing the door, I reach out for my copy of *Quaker Faith and Practice*. It is always helpful to refer Friends to parts of this, checking that meetings, and their elders and overseers, are following the correct

process. I am always impressed that a common response is to be pleased to be referred to *Quaker Faith and Practice*, with Friends finding the ability to refer other Friends to it a welcome way of moving forward.

It can be so much easier to affirm that there is a course of action that should be followed, and it is printed in *Quaker Faith and Practice*. It is much less isolating than having to stand up and make potentially unpopular suggestions.

I have to remember that I am not living with the situation, but have been invited to share in the situation for a short while. I can uphold Friends in their own meetings, or as they try to encourage change, and promote careful following of the process and procedures that have stood us in good stead since the 1650s.

Sometimes, a way forward is for some Friends from outside the situation to go and visit the meeting. This is when I call upon the Quaker Life Network.

Once the phone conversation has ended, then the real work begins, both for the Friend who rang and for the meeting. What can I do afterwards? As well as any practical steps we might have agreed, I can uphold the Friend and meeting in prayer. I would be very pleased to hear from Friends who could join me in that upholding, whilst being aware that I will respect the confidentiality of those who have sought my advice.

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Get connected with the Crime & Community Justice Group Activity Group Network

The CCJG Activity Group Network was launched early in 2008 and is available to any and all groups of Friends engaged in any kind of activity related to the criminal justice system and the people it affects.

The Network is carefully designed to complement Quakers in Criminal Justice (the informal network offering mutual support for individual Quakers working in various branches of the criminal justice system), and offers a way for groups of Friends to be in touch with one another and with ourselves. It gives links to other bodies such as:

- Churches' Criminal Justice Forum: an ecumenical body, part of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, which holds twice-yearly open networking meetings
- Restorative Justice Consortium: a national body that promotes the use of restorative justice in the criminal justice system and elsewhere.
- Circles UK: the new national umbrella body for Circles of Support and Accountability around the country.

Contact is primarily via an email distribution list; we also offer to send speakers to local group events and to help the Network host an annual event at Friends House if they would like to do that.

There are currently ten groups on the Network, along with some of our partners such as Quakers in Criminal Justice and Quaker Prison Ministers Group. In some instances Friends have come together around a shared concern or specific area of action; other groups are appointed by area or local meetings. We hope the Network will inspire Friends to create specialist groups such as perhaps a Quaker magistrates group.

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Getting into the swing of it: National Quaker Week

Tom Harris led the team that supported meetings during National Quaker Week this year. He looks back at what meetings got up to, and reviews plans for the future.

Quaker meetings across the country took part in Quaker Week 2008 in October, raising awareness of Quaker meetings and the Quaker way by doing lots of wonderful outreach activities.

Over 360 packs of support materials were taken, and the Quaker Week team are impressed by the number of local events run (details of over 100 were sent to us to put on the website, and we have since heard of many more which ran too).

We're also pleased with the success of the new enquirers' website www.quaker.org.uk/different which

asked for feedback. Once again, it has been generally positive. In particular, you wanted Quaker Week again in 2009.

We have also listened to those of you who asked for more notice, in order that you could book space a year or more ahead. Quaker Life Central Committee have just set dates for the next two years (see box below). Materials and support will be available, as always, from Quaker Life and Quaker Communications.

Still, there is one thing we want to make clear: there is absolutely no compulsion for meetings to take part

"...we get the impression that meetings are getting in to the swing of Quaker Week. Enthusiasm for an event next year is much increased from the first time around in 2007 and many meetings seemed to find planning easier having done it once already."

has had over 4,000 unique visitors since 1 September.

Local meetings ran a range of events both large and small. Several meetings timed the start of their Quaker Quest cycle to fit in with Quaker Week; exciting work was done with students at university and college freshers' events; Merseyside Quakers ran "Thought for the Day" on Radio Merseyside; Wandsworth Meeting organised piano recitals; Poole Friends had a market stall; Penzance Meeting organised a display in the local public library and Lymington had a range of events including a Quaker pub quiz! These events, and many many others, reached spiritual seekers in all parts of Great Britain.

As with last year's events, we

in Quaker Week.

This is an opportunity, not a demand for service, and we hope to provide support only for those meetings which want it.

Your meeting should feel quite free to skip Quaker Week if you wish.

We would also stress that the dates are a guide, and not a straitjacket. Several meetings this year said that they could do nothing for Quaker Week as they were busy for heritage open days, or local festivals later in October. Quaker Week is about supporting outreach – the dates are flexible! As advice 28 says, "Attend to what love requires of you, which may not be great busyness."

So, what have we learned from Quaker Week 2008?

First, we have been reminded once again that it has been about inreach as much as outreach and that shared spiritual activity can help a meeting grow together and its members to know each other better in the things that are eternal.

Second, we get the impression that meetings are getting in to the swing of Quaker Week. Enthusiasm for an event next year is much increased from the first time around in 2007 and many meetings seemed to find planning easier having done it once already.

Third, we've learned a lot more about what kind of support meetings value, especially in terms of outreach materials. You gave us particularly varied feedback about the "Thou shalt" poster! Enquirers, not established Friends, were the main audience for that, and we were very pleased with how enquirers responded to it.

Nevertheless, we recognise that an effective poster is also one that Quakers are happy to use, and we will keep this year's experience in mind for next year's campaign.

Overall, we are very pleased with how Quaker Week has gone, and we know that enthusiasm is shared in many meetings across the country. The week is a true shared effort, between each of us who takes part, and we look forward to further success in 2009 and 2010.

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Dates for your diaries:

Quaker Week 2009:
3–11 October 2009

Quaker Week 2010:
2–10 October 2010

Remembering the Kinder



Photo: Refugee girls from Germany after arrival in a British port in 1938. Courtesy the Wiener Library, London

“People matter. In the end human rights are about people being treated and feeling like people who matter... The multitude and complexity of the problems of oppression and injustice often seem to overwhelm us. We can do something. Above all we must take risks for God: look around us to the people who need help; listen to those who experience oppression; engage in the mutual process of liberation.”

Quaker Faith and Practice 24.49

Anne van Staveren and Paul Peros reflect on the events of the Kindertransport.

Quaker News Winter 2008

The Kindertransport was an extraordinary operation to rescue Jewish children and young adults from German occupied Europe. Many accounts have been written; probably none fully capture the confusion, the heartbreak and the hope bound up in the bid to get children to safety. In the chaos of war it is not surprising that few had a complete picture. Here, we do not try to tell the whole story but to mark the role of ordinary people – Quakers among them – in extraordinary times.

Seventy years ago, in the aftermath of the Kristallnacht pogrom, Jewish groups in Germany were desperate for help.

The National Socialist party takeover in Germany on 30 January

An online exhibition of memories and tributes can be found at www.quaker.org.uk/kinder

1933 was immediately followed by the persecution of Communists, Social Democrats, pacifists, Jews and others.

The first mass deportation of Jewish people was on 24 October 1938 when 15,000 Polish-born Jews were rounded up in Germany and driven over the border into Poland.

What followed, in the space of a few weeks, was a remarkable act of co-operation between Quakers and others; a combination of advocacy, organisation, compassion and bravery – the Kindertransport.

Quakers were involved at all stages of this extraordinary rescue, from the first train on 1 December 1938 to the last on the outbreak of war in September 1939. In London, they joined with Jewish delegates in persuading the government to relax immigration requirements, making it easier to evacuate people from Nazi Europe. In Berlin and Vienna, they accompanied children onto the trains and through the long journey to safety. And across Britain, Quakers hosted those children who had escaped, separated from their parents, providing a new home or securing wartime employment. Many meeting houses threw open their doors to accommodate the refugees. Quaker schools waived fees; in some cases, parents of existing pupils contributed to fund additional places for the incoming children.

These were chaotic and painful times. There are stories of Quakers involved in the rescue effort trying desperately to deal with huge numbers of people pleading for assistance in leaving Germany; though many were helped, many, inevitably, could not be. The Kindertransport rescued nearly 10,000 children: of the six million who died in the concentration camps, a million and a half were children. And although we celebrate the survival of those who arrived on the

Kindertransport trains and ferries, every case is touched by grief – families divided, parents never seen again. For many, the only memories are sorrowful.

On 1 December this year, a modest commemoration at Friends House paid a quiet tribute to those who enabled almost 10,000 children to be rescued.

Axel Landmann



Kristallnacht was the signal for Axel Landmann's parents to send their only child abroad to safety. That night in November 1938 synagogues, Jewish homes and businesses were destroyed by German soldiers.

The shop belonging to the Landmann family in Finow, north of Berlin, was ransacked. Soldiers said they were looking for guns. None were found but the family were forced to sell the shop for a fixed price to a non-Jew.

In the weeks leading up to Kristallnacht, persecution of Jewish people had been intensifying. Early restrictions did not apply to Axel's family because his father was Jewish, but his mother was a Lutheran Christian. The family were not practising Jews but they still felt in danger. Kristallnacht changed everything.

Fearful of what lay ahead they accepted the offer of a place for Axel on the Kindertransport. That way,

they could be sure that Quakers and others would guarantee to look after him. They bought him a small case and prepared him for the journey. Axel's mother took him to Berlin. After that, he saw her only once more, when she visited him in England. "We could write letters," he explains. "They were sent by the Red Cross and we could write twenty-five words." But in 1940 the letters stopped and he had no news till the war was over. "I learned through the Red Cross that my mother and father had committed suicide when they heard they would be transported to Auschwitz."

The small case bought for him by his parents became part of Axel's new life. He carried it onto the train in Berlin, where he was put in the charge of an English Quaker, who acted as his escort. Near the border with Holland, police examined everyone's papers. They looked in Axel's case; all they found was a change of clothing, two textbooks with his school reports, four international reply coupons and two shillings, the only money allowed out of Germany.

Axel recalls his first week in England, at a holiday camp at Dovercourt. There were no holidaymakers, only children waiting to be collected. A week later he began his new life in Northampton. He settled with a Quaker family, the Rundles, until Mrs Rundle sadly died of leukaemia. Successive families welcomed him into their homes and in their care he went to school and on to further education, learning to make leather finishings.

Over the years he worshipped with Quakers, Congregationalists and Baptists. He became a Quaker by conviction, and registered as a conscientious objector. Axel is a member of Northampton Meeting.

Meanwhile the small case has stayed part of Axel's life. "It went with me on my first holiday in Ireland in 1939 and to school camp at Castle



Ashby. When I went to work in Eccles, it contained all I needed in my Salford digs and it was the only luggage on my honeymoon. When my work involved trips abroad the case remained the luggage of choice. Despite a broken handle, mended with string, and a broken spring in one of the clasps, it is still serviceable after seventy years and the present replacement is no better. It has now been donated to a museum but will always be remembered as the story of my life.”

Axel shares his memories when invited to speak in local schools. “We ought to use all these experiences to make war outdated. As Quakers, our peace testimony is not just a rejection of war but positive work for peace, like that done by QPSW: for instance, the ecumenical companions in Israel–Palestine. We must learn from history.”

Elizabeth Rosenthal

Looking back to the days leading up to Kristallnacht, Elizabeth Rosenthal says Jewish people were treated like “insects to be got rid of”. She was 11 years old. Her Polish Jewish father had been sent to work in Russia. Her mother, Eleonore, was a teacher until Jewish people were deprived of the ability to earn a living. She found work caring for the disabled child of a Jewish family, and then in a Jewish hospital.

Jewish children were banned from state schools and segregated. So on Kristallnacht, Elizabeth, or Betzi as she was then known, was away from home at a Jewish boarding school near Potsdam. German soldiers ransacked the place, beat up her

friend and raped his 13-year-old sister.

Elizabeth and her mother were desperate to get out of Germany and they turned to Quakers for help. Her family first came to know the Quakers in 1918 when her grandfather, Georg Hasse, helped them by offering storage space in his house for supplies to feed hungry children. Her mother helped with the distribution. Now, seeking help, she wrote to Quakers in Manchester and called on the Friends Office in Berlin, where Corder Catchpool was working. (He was the first Briton to be arrested by the Nazis. He visited concentration camps as well as German prisoners in Lithuania.) Quakers said that a family in Oldham offered hospitality to a Jewish child, and that at the end of February 1939, she should put Elizabeth on a Kindertransport train.

“She came to the train, put me in a compartment and promised to join me in one month,” recalls Elizabeth. “I remember seeing her waving and running alongside the train. It must have been ghastly for her. For me it was quite an adventure because I was going to England and I could speak English well.”

“Somewhere near the border with Holland we were given cauliflower soup and sandwiches by some Danish ladies.” They sailed from the Hook of Holland. “I shared a compartment with another two girls; I wanted to look after the two-year-old.”

“It was thrilling to be in England but it was very dim and dirty,” she remembers. Another train took them from Harwich to Liverpool Street. “We were taken into a large hall where there was a big table, full of food. We

had sandwiches, white bread cut into triangles and a big Jaffa orange each.”

“People were there to calm us down and I was pleased to be able to speak English. The two-year-old girl from my compartment was collected by a woman wearing a nice necklace. Kind people kept telling me someone would come for me. I knew they wouldn’t but somehow I had to go to Oldham.”

Completely exhausted, she was taken that night to a Jewish hostel in the East End. “Next day two lovely Quaker ladies collected me to take me by car to Euston Station. We drove by Buckingham Palace. I was very interested because I had seen pictures of the princesses.” On the train she was put in the care of the guard and a woman passenger looked after her. In Manchester, a party of Quakers and her host family met her. She settled well with a caring family, headteacher Mrs Dixon and her daughter, Nancy. But a month passed and her mother didn’t arrive as promised. “I was traumatised because I knew what was happening in Nazi Germany.”

Later, Quakers found her mother work in Manchester, as housekeeper to an Englishman who taught German. “As this job was in a village near Oldham my mother was able to visit me on her free day – a great relief, our lives saved by the work of the Quakers.”

As a refugee, Elizabeth’s mother had to report to a tribunal. Because she was half Polish she was classed as friendly alien. That meant she could work in a factory and earn just enough to have Betzi living with her.

Elizabeth’s family suffered under both Nazis and Soviets. In 1932 her father had been forced to move to Russia to work there. In 1995 she found out what happened to him. He was arrested and accused of being a spy because he had contact with people outside Russia, his own family.



He was questioned by the KGB in a punishment cell for 10 days and sent to Siberia for eight years. He died after five. Then he was declared innocent. Many of her family were deported to Poland and murdered, except her grandfather. He committed suicide.

Elizabeth and her mother stayed in England. "We both had teaching jobs after the war so we had happy careers, caring for children," she says.

Lotte Kramer



For forty years what happened to Lotte Kramer was too hard to think about. She says "One knew, but memories were too painful to express." Then she began writing poetry – and is still writing. It is a way of telling other people. "They need to know but I don't know if they'll learn any lessons. You get such terrible things happening now."

Quakers helped Lotte to escape Germany. Her teacher negotiated a place for her and five other girls on one of the last Kindertransport trains from Mainz in July 1939. She left behind a large Jewish family. She waited for years, desperately hoping for news, before finding that her parents, aunts and uncles – twelve family members in all – perished at

the hands of the Nazis. Through the Red Cross she traced her parents to Poland. They had been deported to a village near some death camps; the others had been sent to Auschwitz.

Lotte Kramer's volumes of poems speak of her family; her father, a dramatist; of the traumatic parting from her mother; of arriving in England and those twenty-five-word Red Cross telegrams. She refers to a suitcase kept for years, "stuffed tight with mother-love and heartache." And she writes about the unbearable time "when the 'final solution' became known as the unacceptable fact."

Exodus

**For all mothers in anguish
Pushing out their babies
In a small basket**

**To let the river cradle them
And kind hands find
And nurture them**

**Providing safety
In a hostile world:
Our constant gratitude.**

**As in this last century
The crowded trains
Taking us away from home**

**Became our baby baskets
Rattling to foreign parts
Our exodus from death.**

(Kindertransport, Before and After: Elegy and Celebration. Sixty Poems 1980–2007 by Lotte Kramer. Edited with an Introduction by Sybil Oldfield. Published by the Centre for German Jewish Studies, University of Sussex.)

Bertha Bracey

Bertha Bracey went to Germany for Quaker relief work in 1924, returning to Friends House in London in 1929.

As Secretary to the Friends Committee on Refugees and Aliens



she had a key role in responding to the crisis, heading a staff of 80 voluntary caseworkers, handling 14,000 case records from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia, by 1938. Brenda Bailey describes the stairs at Friends House being lined with people waiting to be seen by Bertha Bracey and the team of volunteers.

After Kristallnacht, Wilfrid Israel, a businessman in Nuremberg, asked Bertha to join an emergency British Quaker delegation to Berlin to report back to the British government. With Jewish delegates she lobbied the British government to relax immigration requirements, making it easier to evacuate people from Nazi Europe. Her name is among the roll of "Righteous Among the Nations" in Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, in Jerusalem.

Leonhard and Mary Friedrich



The lives of Leonhard and Mary Friedrich have been well documented by their daughter, Brenda Bailey. They were Quakers in Nazi Germany through the grimmest times. They were the first wardens of the Quaker meeting house at Bad Pyrmont in 1933, and he managed the Quaker publishing business. She recounts how her German father and her English mother stood up for those who were being victimised by the Nazis.

They sat with Jewish families in their homes as they waited for the Gestapo to take them to collecting centres for transportation to labour camps.

In May 1942, Friedrich was arrested by the Gestapo. The arrest warrant stated that "The existence and security of the people and the state" were threatened by his pacifist views and his friendliness towards Jews, attitudes which he had shown in his leading role in the Quakers. He was interned in Buchenwald concentration camp for two-and-a-half years until the end of the war. In his absence, Mary was subjected to many Gestapo interrogations and house searches.

Friedrich later wrote and lectured about solitary confinement and interrogation and his years in Buchenwald because he wanted people to recognise the truth, in the hope that such cruelty would be prevented from happening again. He wrote: "We were given our personal identification number and allocated an

insignia and a colour for the striped pyjama style uniforms we wore. When I was put to work in the quarry I had an additional black circle marked round my insignia, indicating I was in disgrace and in the penal work gang. In midwinter I was transferred to the stone quarry, where people were literally worked to death. My health was deteriorating, but even in this evil place I occasionally found good individuals.

"While on this job I got into trouble for wearing gloves which Mary had sent me. The SS man in charge ordered me to take off the gloves. I put them on again...he took his whip and gave me a severe lashing. I fell in the mud and lost consciousness. An SS officer asked why I was in Buchenwald. I said the charge against me was that I was a Quaker. He said that his mother had told him that his life had been saved by the Quaker feeding programme after World War I. The next day he offered me a job in the munitions factory and I would be moved out of the punishment block. I replied that I could not make bombs to drop on London because my daughter was living there. He said that as a father of five he could understand my feelings. He found me a job in a factory tool store."

"I fell in the mud and lost consciousness. An SS officer asked why I was in Buchenwald. I said the charge against me was that I was a Quaker. He said that his mother had told him that his life had been saved by the Quaker feeding programme after World War I."

The Quaker concern for displaced people today

In 1915, London Yearly Meeting reaffirmed its commitment to "search for a positive, vital, constructive message" concerning its peace testimony. In the years that followed, this found expression – as it had often before – in work with refugees and displaced people in interwar Europe. Through the work of its refugee committees, the Society helped thousands of people whose lives were uprooted by conflict. The Kindertransport was one demonstration of this Quaker concern, which continues to fuel our work today.

Quakers support work in northern Uganda alongside communities affected by years of war. Quaker peaceworkers have recently gone to Burundi to support efforts to help refugees return home as the country recovers from its own inter-ethnic conflict.

The Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva works to give a voice to displaced people. In Britain Quakers have been expressing their concern: Quakers were involved in the formation of the City of Sanctuary movement, which encourages a welcoming environment for those fleeing persecution in other countries. Many Quakers today spend many hours working with asylum seekers, in a practical way and through sharing information and raising concerns.

Today's conflicts may differ immensely from those of the past, but the Quaker concern to protect and uphold those who suffer because of violent conflict remains as firm today as ever.

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See more stories online at:
www.quaker.org.uk/kinder

In search of human security

Alison Prout reports on how a QPSW pilot project has been discovering how an integrated approach to security, poverty and environmental damage could help improve the lives of those affected by conflict.

Prompted by the increasingly rapid impact of climate change and wider environmental degradation, QPSW undertook a short-term project in 2008 looking at how climate change is connected to our existing work on peace and economic justice.

We have worked in detail on what the impacts of violent conflict, economic injustice and environmental degradation are on people living in Uganda and Bangladesh and how an understanding of the links between these issues could lead to a more effective response.

For example, in the conflict-affected



Beekeeping is one example of how new techniques can help preserve livelihoods.
Photo: Alison Prout/QPSW

areas of northern Uganda one of the issues we have identified is the need for training farmers in different techniques designed for the altered environmental conditions they face. As individuals who have lived for

many years on food aid in organised camps are now dispersing back to their villages, a failure to harvest successfully will not only mean hunger and extreme poverty for families, but also threaten the fragile peace that is taking hold in the area.

We have also engaged with the developing idea of human security. The United Nations, which has been instrumental in developing this idea, defines human security as “creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that, when combined, give people the building blocks for survival, livelihood and dignity. Human security is far more than the absence of violent conflict. It encompasses human rights, good governance and access to economic opportunity, education and health care.”

As this pilot project draws to a close QPSW will consider specific ways in which this work could be taken forward as well as learning from the innovative, multi-disciplinary nature of the project.

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Chandra Haldar at her chick-rearing shed, near Rajoir, Bangladesh
Photo: Teresa Parker/QPSW

Occupation brutalises all

Marigold Bentley of Quaker Peace & Social Witness recently visited the Quaker-supported EAPPI programme in the West Bank. She reflects on how decades of occupation have affected all communities in the region, and the role which international observers can play in this difficult situation.

The hot sun beat down on the crowded minibus. It stopped at the checkpoint. All those standing in the aisle alighted and showed their passes to the young woman soldier. She then got on the bus, with her M16 rifle on her shoulder as she squeezed between the seats, and checked everyone's passes.

The soldier shouted at a very elderly lady, her face wrapped in white, wearing the traditional costume of the region. She did not have the correct pass. She was pushed off the bus by the soldier and left to stand at the side of the dusty road in the blistering heat.

The bus was travelling from El Azariya (Bethany) to Jerusalem, a distance of only three miles, yet all those from that village now have to travel along designated roads with military checkpoints – as the wall built by Israel now cuts them off from direct routes to their family and friends.

What I have just described is a single incident of many which happen every day to Palestinians under occupation. They commonly experience humiliation, discomfort, arbitrary arrests and brutality. The soldiers who are given these tasks are very young. All Israelis serve in the army when aged 18 to 21.

The Palestinians who pass through the checkpoints in order to work, shop, go to school, attend medical appointments or sell their produce are

at the mercy of the behaviour of these heavily armed young people.

I hadn't been to El Azariya for over 20 years. In 1981–1982, I served as a housemother in a children's home there. The experience brought me to Friends because I felt that with all the bells, smells, outfits, hats, prayers and holy everything in Jerusalem, it was a desperately unholy place. Made unholy by the military repression and casual brutality of the occupation.

Only the simple Quaker meeting of Friends in Ramallah (which still stands) offered space to reflect and to develop ideas for action towards peaceful social change. I was shocked at the situation then. Now it is worse than I ever could have imagined.

The West Bank, militarily taken by Israel in the war of 1967, and the stretch of land on which the

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West Bank 1981, an Israeli soldier removes Palestinian youth leaders from a bus and checks all their papers. Photo: Marigold Bentley

proposed two-state solution depends, is now criss-crossed not only by the separation barrier, but also by a myriad of settler roads, which Palestinians can only use at risk to themselves.

There are Israeli settlements on hilltops across the region. The most fertile area of the Jordan Valley, also in the West Bank, is closed to Palestinians and designated a military area. The Palestinians are squeezed into small areas and subject to innumerable checks, restrictions and limitations in most areas of their lives.

I was making the visit on behalf of Quaker Peace & Social Witness, to visit the current BYM work in the region, the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme for Palestine and Israel (EAPPI). Britain Yearly Meeting has agreed to fund the placing of 20 ecumenical accompaniers (EAs) in 2009, which is an increase from 14 this year (2008).

QPSW is the implementing partner of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) for EAPPI, which is a programme of the World Council of Churches. Since 2002 around 65 British and Irish EAs have served in Israel–Palestine.

EAs either live alongside Palestinian communities who are particularly vulnerable or support the Israeli peace movement. They are there for three months, and when they return to their home countries they tell people



Long lines at Israeli checkpoints are a daily feature of life for many in the West Bank. Photo: Rónán Quinn/EAPPI

about what they have witnessed and experienced during their stay. They also share their eyewitness accounts with politicians and religious leaders. EAs come from Sweden, Norway, Hungary, the UK, Ireland, South Africa, Finland, the USA, Canada, Poland and Germany.

An important element of the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme is providing protection by presence. For example, the children of Yanoun say they are not frightened when internationals are present in their village. Yanoun residents were so intimidated by Israeli settlers that inhabitants left and only returned when they knew that internationals (EAs) would be resident in the village.

The village is surrounded by Israeli settlements on the hilltops, and armed settlers regularly confront the villagers tending their sheep in their olive groves. Settlers also shine bright lights into the village throughout the night. I visited Yanoun in the middle of the olive harvest, and whilst strolling in the sunshine, listening to the chatter of families picking olives, none of us escaped the forbidding presence of the surrounding settlements.

In Hebron, a Palestinian city south of Jerusalem, conditions are also tense. Hashem Al-Asa, his wife and three children have a settlement right above their house that is inhabited by hardline settlers. The settlers have cut his vines, which surround his house. They throw their rubbish into his garden and they intimidate and abuse him and his children. The children are too frightened to play outside. These settlers believe that they have a God-given right to live there and behave in this way. They make Hashem's life a living hell. Hashem invites internationals to his house on a regular basis to witness what is happening to him in the hope that it will make for positive change.

During the Women in Black weekly peace vigil calling for an end to the occupation in central Jerusalem, the Israeli car drivers shouted to us "What occupation?"

I met Dan for a Shabbat meal in West Jerusalem along with his wife and my colleague Floresca. Dan is a lifelong peace activist in Israel. I asked him about the original aspirations of the early Kibbutzim movement and the vision that so many Jewish people

had for the new state of Israel. He could not hide his disappointment over how it has all turned out. These folks fear for how military service affects their children, and how their children get treated if they attempt to avoid it. Everyone seems trapped by the systems that have been created.

It is quite difficult to know how to make a difference to this difficult situation. Through the EAPPI programme we can at least offer protection by presence and assure the peace movement and others that we support them. There are some powerful stories to be told: EAs can give a voice to all those working for peace in the region.

If you would like an EA to speak to your meeting please contact:

EAPPI
eappi@quaker.org.uk
 020 7663 1144

If you would like to know more about the Quaker Centre in Ramallah please go to: www.ramallahquakers.org

You can also read eyewitness accounts from EAs online at: www.quaker.org.uk/eappi

Get involved

Fairtrade Fortnight 2009

Sunday 22 February 2009 sees the launch of this year's Fairtrade Fortnight.

During the fortnight, people up and down the country will be taking part in events and activities designed to promote Fairtrade products.

Could you or your meeting get involved too?

We live in a world where 'normal' trade systems result in unstable commodity prices and competition often puts pressure on working conditions of the most vulnerable.

Fairtrade products offer a small but growing number of farmers and workers in developing countries a very much better deal by ensuring that they receive the cost of production of the food they grow. They also ensure that producers' working conditions are improved, and that a premium is paid to their producers' co-operative, which steadily improves the living conditions of the area in which they live.

For more information see: www.fairtrade.org.uk or for a free copy of the Fairtrade Foundation's *Church Action Guide* (available from mid December), which contains information and ideas for getting involved,

Contact:

Suzanne Ismail
suzannei@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1055

CYP events and training

Three more workshops that offer opportunities for reflection and development in relation to children and young people's work in our meetings, organised by the Children and Young People's Work Staff Team in Friends House, facilitated by members of the CYP training team and hosted by local meetings:

Working across a wide age group with a small number

Saturday 7 February, 2pm–4.30pm, Hampstead Meeting House, childcare

available. Develop strategies to work with small children's meetings of a wide age range. Closing date for bookings: 23 January.

Storytelling as theological reflection.

Saturday 7 February, 11am–4pm, Rugby Meeting House. Consider fresh approaches to telling stories to children. Closing date for bookings: 23 January.

Journeying alongside young people – exploring the spiritual

Saturday 14 March, 11am–4pm, Bradford on Avon Meeting House. Discover the variety of resources to engage in spiritual development activities with young people and consider how you might use them. Closing date for bookings: 27 February.

Download further information from www.quaker.org/cyp (select Training Opportunities and then Ready Made Workshops) or phone Bevelie Shember on 020 663 1013 for a booking form.

Way of the child

The 'Way of the Child' – a weekend at Woodbrooke exploring children's spiritual formation: Friday 27 March to Sunday 29 March.

An event for parents, families and anyone who works with children in meetings, offering an overview of the 'Way of the Child' material, giving hands-on encounter and a chance to relate this to your situation, led by two American trainers supported by the Friends House Children and Young People's Work Staff Team, programme available for children under 12. Contact Woodbrooke for more details: 0121 472 5171, enquiries@woodbrooke.org.uk

QPSW annual conference

Diversity, Difference and Division
Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, 27–29 March 2009.
Cost: £170

Keynote speaker: Marion McNaughton

This year's QPSW Conference is particularly aimed at new Friends/attenders or those new to the work of QPSW.

It is an opportunity to meet with Friends from across the Yearly Meeting to learn about the work of QPSW and to share a weekend of focused discussion and faith-based exploration of many difficult issues currently facing society.

In 2009 the conference will focus on the divisions within our society and what we mean by community. Can we celebrate difference as well as work to heal divisions? Some centrally managed work is currently being undertaken on these issues and the conference will provide the opportunity for Friends to hear more about this.

We also hope to highlight the work of local Friends and the wider Quaker family. We hope some of the questions raised in the conference can be taken back to meetings for discussion prior to Yearly Meeting Gathering in July.

Contact:

Anne Wilkinson
annew@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1062

Outreach Gatherings in 2009

At Charney Manor

Enquirers' Gatherings from 20–22 March, and 6–8 November

And Considering Membership from 12–14 June 2009

At Swarthmoor Hall

Considering Membership from 6–8 February 2009

And Enquirers' Gatherings on 20–22 February 2009 and 6–8 November

Contact:

Carmel Keogh
carmelk@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1017

Supporting the work

Codicils

Quakers have traditionally valued good stewardship, and are more likely than most people to have made a will, ensuring that future generations are provided for.

Legacy gifts are among the most valuable ways of supporting future Quakers and giving them the opportunity to put faith into action – as we do now, supported by the gifts of those who came before us. But potential supporters can be put off giving in this way if their existing will is otherwise fine and doesn't need to be changed.

Fortunately, there is an easier way. A codicil is a way of making small additions or changes to a will, such as putting in an extra gift. It's much quicker and easier than making a will, and you can make a number of changes at once. If you would like more information about how to word a codicil, you can get a copy of our free *Guide to Making Your Will* from Paul Peros, our Donor Support Officer, on 020 7866 9509 or paulp@quaker.org.uk, or download it from our website – visit www.quaker.org.uk/fundraising and click on "Making a gift in your will".

BeFriend a Book this Christmas

The Friends House Library invites you to consider an unusual Christmas gift for a loved one this year: a little piece of Quaker heritage.

By donating to the BeFriend a Book scheme, supporters will receive a Christmas card giving details about how each gift contributes to the preservation of the Library's extraordinary wealth of Quaker books, pamphlets and other materials, dating back to its foundation in the seventeenth century. Friends House Library contains the largest collection



of Quaker-related material anywhere in the world, and work is ongoing to ensure that everything it holds is properly catalogued and preserved for future generations.

The scheme enables the Library to protect these collections against wear and tear, and to make sure they are available for future Friends and researchers. All donations make a difference to the long-term care of the collections: for example, £10 will buy protective folders for pamphlets, £50 will buy a box for early printed materials, and £100 will fund the rebinding of a volume of Epistles.

You can find out more by visiting the Library pages of our website at www.quaker.org.uk/library, or by contacting Jennifer Milligan, jenniferm@quaker.org.uk.

Make a Mark for Peace: the Quaker peaceworkers appeal

For our special appeal in 2008–09, we return to a cause close to the heart of Quakerism: the peace movement. Quakers provide funded placements for peaceworkers to work with other organisations committed to bringing about and sustaining peace in Britain and abroad.

In doing so, we provide a much-needed boost to peace groups and help equip a new generation of peaceworkers to make their mark for peace.

The 2008–09 Quaker Peaceworkers Appeal focuses on learning about and supporting these valuable placements, and is being launched through our meetings.

Contact:

Katie Frost
katief@quaker.org.uk
020 7866 9508

www.quaker.org.uk/appeal

For more information

How to support Quaker work

To donate, contact:

Kate Cargin
Quaker Communications
Friends House
173 Euston Road
London NW1 2BJ

020 7663 1112
katec@quaker.org.uk

You can find out more or donate online at
www.quaker.org.uk/donate

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updates@quaker.org.uk

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Friends House
173 Euston Road
London NW1 2BJ
for a large print copy.

Just who are the Quakers?

Fill in this form for a free information pack:

Your name

Your address

Postcode

Email

Please send completed form to:

Quaker Life Outreach Section (QN)

Friends House
173 Euston Road
London NW1 2BJ

Tel: 0808 109 1651

Email: outreach@quaker.org.uk

Can you help us?

Offer your service on a committee

We will send you a form to fill in, so you can be included on our nominations database, for consideration for future committee appointments. However, please note that this does not guarantee that you will be appointed.

Your name

Your address

Postcode

Email

Please send completed form to:

Nominations, RCO (QN)

Friends House
173 Euston Road
London NW1 2BJ

John Durston

Tel: 020 7663 1121

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www.quaker.org.uk

