

Quaker News



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

No 60 Autumn 2006



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Cover image: children at a refugee camp in Gulu, northern Uganda
Photo: Sven Torfinn/Panos

Editorial

I was at the Quaker Annual Conference of Treasurers this summer. More than 80 people who think a lot about money on behalf of their meetings came together for support, to get new ideas and inspiration for their work.

A strong theme emerged. Money is stored energy. It is neither good nor evil, but has the capacity for both. As we use our money for good we bear witness to our beliefs, we carry out our faith. In the process of coming together to support a cause, communities are invigorated and refreshed. It isn't just about pounds, shillings and pence, but the strength that comes from shared work and achievement.

In this edition we launch our appeal to support Quaker work in four areas of the world – Uganda, northern India, the Post-Yugoslav countries and Israel-Palestine.

We are asking meetings to give their financial support to one of these, to learn more about the people we help, what we seek to do and how we do it (see pages 8 & 9 for more).

There is good news from Uganda as I write. A ceasefire between government forces and the Lord's Resistance Army seems a possibility. Our Uganda project has been seeing great developments,

reported on page 6.

Quakers continue to work on and think about controversial issues. We review a recent publication by Quaker Books, *Endeavours to Mend*, on page 12. This book sets out some of that work and the lessons drawn from it.

Quaker Life is launching a consultation on Quaker views of same sex partnerships (page 4). We hope that meetings will want to engage with this. It has been wonderful to see the celebration of civil partnerships: the questions now are what next, and how should we express a Quaker view to those with the power to make further change?

Enjoy Quaker News and let us know what you think about its content.

Rachel Rees
Head of Communications
and Fundraising

Quaker News

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The Religious Society of Friends, publishes 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
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In brief

Uganda latest

Following a truce between the Ugandan army and the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) on 26 August, rebel forces are assembling in southern Sudan as a significant step towards negotiating a peace agreement to end the 20-year conflict.

Uganda's President Museveni has promised amnesty to LRA leaders if peace talks are successful. For more updates, see the Uganda pages of: www.reliefweb.int

Also, see our Uganda feature on page 6.

Share your ideas for National Outreach Week 2007

The Outreach Team in Quaker Life is looking ahead to our first ever National Outreach Week, taking place in autumn 2007.

Steve Cappleman, who is coordinating the week, is writing to Friends in all meetings to introduce the week and ask for ideas.

Steve says: "By combining the efforts of Friends across Britain Yearly Meeting into one big week, we can boost the profile of the Quaker faith in Britain. Working together means we can multiply the impact we can make."

Along with a presence in the national media, the Outreach Team will be providing meetings with a 'campaign pack' of tailored resources for promoting Quakerism in their local area.

There will be a wide range of ways for local meetings to get involved. As Steve puts it: "In essence, local meetings are best placed to discern what will work best for them."

Steve is sending out a consultation to every meeting in the country.

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Circles wins Howard League award



Veronica Linklater (left) presents Becky Saunders and Chris Wilson (right) with their award certificate on behalf of the Howard League for Penal Reform and the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation.

The Quaker Peace & Social Witness project Circles of Support and Accountability won another award in recognition of its success in helping to bring down the rate of reoffending by convicted sex offenders living in the community – and as a result enjoyed a surge of positive publicity for the programme.

The 2006 Community Programmes Award was presented to the Thames Valley and Hampshire project team at a conference in July.

The award is part of a partnership campaign with the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation and the Howard League for Penal Reform to promote effective community sentences and programmes.

QPSW Assistant General Secretary Helen Drewery said: "The whole team was delighted to receive this award. We see it as recognition of the hard work put in by all our volunteers as well as staff."

The Howard League Award coincided with an article in *The Guardian* in which journalist Yvonne Roberts talked to volunteers about their work and motivation for

the project. *Church Times* and *Police Professional* also commissioned substantial features.

Helen Drewery has also been in great demand, speaking on local BBC radio stations, the World Service and Premier Christian Radio.

As a result of the publicity QPSW has had a tremendous response from members of the public around the country, lending support and admiration for this work. Many have expressed interest in becoming volunteers.

The next step is to launch the project as an independent charity as the pilot scheme and Home Office funding draw to a close.

"The hope and expectation is that a year from now we will have an independent charity to run the local work in Thames Valley and Hampshire, and national structures in place to help Circles develop across the country," said Helen.

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In brief

Too much information

Do you dread the monthly thud of papers from Friends House hitting your doormat?

Do you ever wish you were better informed about the work, but begrudge building an extension to house BYM paperwork? Do you despair of finding who you want in Friends House? If you're unhappy about how we share information – help us!

Yearly Meeting and Quaker Communications Central Committee have asked that the systems that we use for sharing information are assessed and that we change them for the better. This autumn clerks will be asked to complete questionnaires asking them what they like, what they don't like and what they want to change.

Considered responses will help us to create a streamlined and inclusive information service for all members.

Contact Nik Dadson if you have any questions about information sharing within the Society.

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Paris peace fair

Over 10,000 visitors attended the second International Peace Fair in June, organised by the French Coalition for the Decade to Overcome Violence.

Kat Barton attended the fair on behalf of QPSW, and took part in a panel discussion (in French) on nuclear disarmament, in addition to helping on the International Quaker Centre stall.

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Consultation on same sex partnerships

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Is the time right for us to ask the government for new legislation which would make solemnisation of same sex partnerships legal? This is what Quaker Life Central Committee is asking Friends around the country, on behalf of Meeting for Sufferings.

The current legal position in both England and Wales and in Scotland is that same sex partnerships can be registered as civil partnerships in law.

How far has Quaker opinion within our Yearly Meeting moved on the recognition of same sex relationships since *Towards a Quaker view of sex* was published in 1963, or since *Quaker Faith and Practice* was approved in 1994?

However, such registrations cannot take place in the context of religious worship.

Although registered civil partners share almost the same legal rights and responsibilities as heterosexual married couples, civil partnership is not recognised as marriage and should not legally be referred to as such.

Some Friends point to our testimony to equality and the experience of many of our meetings in allowing and welcoming meetings for worship to recognise and celebrate same sex partnerships.

They feel that this should lead us now to request legal authority to allow our registering officers to register such partnerships in the same way as marriages (and perhaps even to call them 'marriages').

Others feel that with the law allowing civil partnership so recently on the statute books, it would not be reasonable or helpful to press for further change at this time. Also, we

know that many in other churches and faith communities would be strongly opposed to further change.

The questions we need to ask are these:

How far has Quaker opinion within our Yearly Meeting moved on the recognition of same sex relationships since *Towards a Quaker view of sex* was published in 1963, or since *Quaker Faith and Practice* was approved in 1994?

Would all our monthly meetings allow meetings for worship to recognise and celebrate same sex partnerships?

Would we wish our registering officers and others within our meetings to work with same sex couples to prepare them for life-long commitment in the care of the meeting?

If so, do we want the law to be changed to allow such partnerships to be legally registered in the context of worship?

If so, what terminology would we wish to be used to describe such a registration and such a partnership?

Quaker Life Central Committee will be taking its soundings in the autumn and has been asked in particular to consult with the Quaker Committee on Christian and Interfaith Relations and our Parliamentary Liaison Secretary on the matter.

We encourage monthly meetings to take part in this discernment.

This issue will also be considered by representatives at Quaker Life Representative Council in October, when we shall be inviting responses from Friends throughout the country.

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Greenbelt 2006



A volunteer helps to prepare the peace zone at Greenbelt 2006. Twenty thousand people gathered in Cheltenham over the August bank holiday for the Greenbelt Christian Arts Festival. The festival's peace zone, produced by the Network of Christian Peace Organisations and jointly coordinated by QPSW, was one of the most popular areas of the site. Visitors were invited to interact with a tank sculpture symbolising war and covered in recent images of violence.

Extra places at Junior Yearly Meeting 2007

Junior Yearly Meeting 2007 (JYM 07) will take place 10 – 13 April at the Pioneer Centre near Kidderminster. This new venue has a larger capacity than our previous one, so there will be 50 extra places at JYM 07.

Some of the extra places will be taken by applications from individuals. If you would like to be sent an open place application pack please contact Quaker Life's Children & Young People's Staff Team – details below.

Howard Nurden, head of the CYP Staff Team, said "JYM is such a popular event with young Quakers, we are delighted to be able to offer extra places for 2007. It promises to be a great event."

Nomination forms have been sent to monthly meetings and Quaker schools. Each can nominate two young people for guaranteed places and up to six for additional places that we hope to be able to accommodate. Invitations will also be sent to representatives of other denominations and faiths.

Meanwhile, plans for the event are rapidly taking shape. The arrangements committee have had their first meeting, and as well as team bonding, game playing and designing mandalas to represent JYM, there was much hard work on a draft programme and theme. The committee also worked on a refined process for nominating future arrangements committees, following feedback from JYM this year.

There was much soul-searching on the theme for JYM 07. Eventually this



Participants at Junior Yearly Meeting 2006 in their base group

was fixed as "Diversity... A cause of conflict? A cause for celebration?" This will be looked at on personal, local and global levels, exploring how we can recognise differences, resolve conflicts and celebrate diversity.

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020 7663 1013

Go to www.quaker.org.uk/cyp and click on 'Junior Yearly Meeting', then 'JYM 2007' for more information.

Now recruiting volunteers

For information about being a volunteer at JYM, the under 19s programme at BYM and the Summer Gathering children and young people's programme, please contact the Quaker Life Children and Young People's office on 020 7663 1013 or email bevelies@quaker.org.uk as soon as possible.

Quakers at Faslane

Nearly 50 groups have now committed to the Faslane 365 project for a continuous nonviolent blockade of the nuclear weapons base. It has also attracted a lot of Quaker interest and support.

The purpose of Faslane 365 is twofold: to bring people to witness and impede the nuclear base where Britain's nuclear weapons are deployed, and enable them to demonstrate the range of serious concerns – from human rights to climate change – that people in the real world consider to be the vital challenges for the 21st century.

Quaker actions are planned on two occasions, by Southern Friends on

27–28 October and by Friends from the North on 12–13 November.

Friends have a choice about the level of their involvement, from sit-down blockade to silent vigil/meeting for worship and a wide range of support roles such as transport provision, legal observer, food and drink dispenser, media liaison. Individuals can decide whether or not to undertake an arrestable action.

The contact for Southern Friends is: Sarah Lasenby (Oxford)
sarahlasenby@breathemail.net
01865 725991

The contact for Friends in the North is: Mary Alice Mansell (Glasgow)
maryalice365@googlemail.com
01505 842380

Steve Whiting of QPSW is the central contact at quaker@f365.org and is in touch with both the regional contacts.

The QPSW Turning the Tide programme is contributing, along with other nonviolence trainers, to workshops for participants including Quaker groups in Oxford and Bristol.

Contact:
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020 7663 1061

The art of advocacy

QPSW's advocacy on northern Uganda has surprised us recently. **Joanna Wright** tells how a piece of work that began as a low-key exploration to help us understand Uganda's conflict better is now making waves in high circles of influence, in ways which we hadn't anticipated.

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What is advocacy, anyway? We say we want to use our experience of working with local people in order to influence the governments and institutions that affect their lives. The aim is that we do that through advocacy, 'scaling up' the impact of our work by sharing our insights and lessons with significant others. Because advocacy is still new to us, we are learning on the hoof, finding as we go along that serendipity, providence and timing are as important as hard graft.

Last year QPSW and partner NGO Conciliation Resources (CR) interviewed several ex-commanders from the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Most of them had been abducted by the rebel army years earlier and forced to attack their own communities. We met them after they had escaped, an act of courage or desperation that was made at huge risk. QPSW Uganda staff David Newton and Charles Komakech painstakingly interviewed the commanders to discover what had finally enabled them to make the decision to escape from the LRA.

The findings of the resulting report, 'Coming Home', turned into fact what had before been rumour and speculation. QPSW and CR learned about how those in the LRA keep in touch with the outside world, what they care about most (safety and economic support) and who they trust to advise them.

Most resoundingly, it became clear that there are myriad local, unsung efforts to end the war by calling on those in the LRA to claim amnesty and come home again. The research closes with a series of recommendations which encourage practitioners and policy-makers alike to make space for these efforts to flourish.

A series of meetings with diplomats and officials, thanks to excellent facilitation by QUNO New York, allowed QPSW and CR to share the findings and argue for the value of practical,

nonviolent initiatives that will encourage people to turn away from the LRA. But it was when QUNO colleagues informed us of a conference of UN agencies planning their future response to the Ugandan conflict, and QPSW argued persuasively for a place at the table, that we really started to be taken seriously.

This conformed that in influencing people, timing is essential. Julian Hopwood, QPSW Uganda's new representative, found himself in at the deep end, presenting our learning to senior UN officials despite being only a month into the job. It was the right people at the right time. The report was lauded and its recommendations are now helping form UN policy across northern Uganda.

Meanwhile, back in New York, the practical ideas of developing Uganda's amnesty, communicating better with those in the LRA, and creating a society they will choose to return to are becoming common currency, reiterated by Kofi Annan in his recent report to the Security Council.

The point of the research was not to have its findings quoted in significant circles, however. Its purpose was to identify how to catalyse change on the ground, shifting the rhetoric of the conflict from violence to hope in nonviolence, and enabling those caught up in it to develop as builders of peace.

That is starting to happen, but there is still a long way to go. At the same time as the findings from the research gathered momentum, Hilary Benn, Secretary of State for International Development, visited QPSW's partners Empowering Hands (EH). He admitted in his journal: 'As children, they saw things that no child should ever see or experience.'

EH speaking directly to the Secretary of State was a good step. But it is only when they and the hundreds of thousands like them feel the tangible effects of the support pledged by



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the international community, in wholehearted support to peace and development, that we can relax our lobbying.

At the moment, there is still much more to be discovered. David, Julian, and Simon Okello, the team's new Field Officer, are working with CR on the next phases of research. We will be as coordinated as we can, but we've learnt that advocacy is an art as much as a science.

We can be clinically strategic – building relationships, gathering information, using knowledge and contacts. However, we have also seen that creativity is needed to balance these things, grab opportunities, judge when to leap out on a limb. It looks like there will be more surprises ahead.

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For recent developments to the situation in northern Uganda, see the In brief section on page 3

Journeys in the spirit

New advocates for children and young people's work



In the previous issue of Quaker News, I wrote about children's spiritual development. Now Quaker Life are taking up that theme in a new piece of work.

In the 2005 consultation into our work, monthly meetings "highlighted the need for materials to extend the work" and suggested themes – worship, participation and Quakerism.

We want to meet these needs in ways that reflect our vision of work with children and young people as an act of partnership, of seeking and learning together. We are delighted that the consultation and our discernment have led to work on a new publication, 'Journeys in the spirit'. This will be a resource and ideas rich tool with a children's work issue each month and a youth work issue three times a year. It will be available via free email subscription or by post on request.

Each issue will have a theme. The first four children's work issues, beginning in spring 2007, will each be based on a Quaker testimony – peace, equality, simplicity and truth. Amazingly, this is the first time that resources about the testimonies have been published explicitly for children. The first youth work 'Journeys in the spirit', will also concentrate on the testimonies.

All of the material will be multi-age – for use with age ranges common to our meetings and gatherings. The resources will be rooted in the idea that

worship, stilling and centering should frame what we do.

There will be links to other organisations and sources of learning and an encouragement of learning and engagement with the themes across the meeting as a whole.

Early in 2007 a sample will go out as an invitation to subscribe. Its theme will be spirituality.

This is more than a resource produced by Yearly Meeting employees for sending to volunteers in meetings. 'Journeys in the spirit' is a shared project that will thrive on dialogue and exchange.

The writers already recruited are Friends actively engaged in children and young people's work.

Is this you? Could you be a writer? We have a simple briefing to assist writers. Get in touch for a chat if you feel even a little nudge towards this.

If this isn't for you but you are involved in your children's meeting, however small, or in Quaker youth work you will have themes, ideas and activities that will be just what is needed. Please don't censor yourself. Please, give us your ideas to pass on to writers and others – the more we have the richer the work can be.

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020 7663 1014

In the Quaker Life Children & Young People's Work Office we have been thinking about strengthening the networks that support and encourage Quaker children and young people's work.

In recent years the role within the existing 'Monthly Meeting Children and Young People's Resource Coordinator' network had become 'paper and task heavy'. For some Coordinators and in some monthly meetings, there was a lack of clarity about what to do and how to fit into other monthly meeting structures – Children and Young People's Committee for example.

We are now beginning the process of creating several well-discerned and exciting changes.

Quaker Life have invited monthly meetings to appoint (by January 2007) Friends to the role of Children and Young People's Work Advocate. This radical renaming and refocusing of the previous role has three main aims:

- To advocate the need for children and young people's work within the monthly meeting. To encourage awareness and support of the needs of children and young people in the monthly meeting
- To advocate the need for children and young people's work within local meetings. To encourage awareness and support of the needs of children and young people in local meetings
- To develop networks between neighbouring monthly meetings and in areas covered by general meetings

This network is going to be complemented by a system of local meeting contacts who will be invited to subscribe to a new style of monthly, themed, primarily email-based resources material – see 'Journeys in the spirit' in the main part of this page. There will be no limit on the numbers of contacts in a meeting.

For a very clear leaflet about who could be an advocate, what the tasks might be, the qualities and skills she or he might need, what help they can expect and how they can look after themselves in the role, please contact us.

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Helping meetings learn about Quaker Work around the world

Northern Uganda

This autumn, meetings up and down the country will be engaging with the overseas work done on their behalf. Thanks to an appeal pack prepared by Quaker Communications, Quakers of all ages will be able to select a project and explore it in greater depth. **John Fitzgerald** introduces the pack and explains how it will work.

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I can remember doing a sponsored walk the length of Ireland a few years ago. In terms of pence per mile, we probably weren't very successful. However, the walk itself was a great experience, and it helped enormously to raise the profile of our cause throughout Ireland Yearly Meeting. Fundraising is not just about money; it can be a way of helping to strengthen our community by uniting us around a common purpose.

“For a Quaker, religion is not an external activity, concerning a special ‘holy’ part of the self. It is an openness to the world in the here and now with the whole of the self.”

Quaker Faith & Practice
20.20

Community fundraising activities can help Friends in their meetings include people on the margins to see themselves as a part of the meeting and feel more connected to a wider community of Friends. Fundraising together can inspire and revitalise interest and identification with the work done in everyone's name. This can re-emphasise the relationship between the work and its spiritual roots.

Traditional appeals have been more or less limited to a request for money. This year, however, we are hoping to harness the energy and enthusiasm of meetings in a much broader way.

This appeal will offer a choice of four projects (see summaries across the page), and a wide range of ways of ‘adopting’ the project chosen by the

meeting. When a meeting have chosen their project, they can send off for more information and an activity pack of fundraising ideas, all related to the chosen project.

Kate Cargin, who has been leading the work on the new pack, said: “We hope that meetings around the country will take this opportunity to get to know more about the work that is done in their name. I'm sure it will be an enriching experience for everyone involved.”

Kate also stressed that she hopes the appeal will involve people of all ages: “We are particularly keen to talk to children and young people. They usually have lots of energy, even if they don't have much money. Here's a way to translate that energy into money.”

In a survey carried out by Giving Nation in January 2006, 60% of teenagers said that they would do more for charity given the chance.

The first stage of the new appeal will be a mailing to all meetings in October. This will introduce the projects and encourage the meeting to choose its project.

The meeting can then request a pack of supporting material, with background information on countries, the need for the work, descriptions of daily life, book lists, music, personal stories from beneficiaries and our workers. The pack will include ideas for activities and fundraising suggestions. There will also be a dedicated page on www.quaker.org.uk where all the information will be available for download.

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020 7663 1112

The initial appeal leaflet will be with meetings from the middle of October.

Northern Uganda has been devastated by a 20-year conflict between the government and a rebel group known as the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Almost 2 million people have been displaced as a result of the conflict.

According to the Uganda Human Rights Commission (report Feb. 2003) over 26,000 children have been abducted by the LRA. The children who are abducted are either forced to fight for the rebels, used as sex slaves or as porters for looted goods. They make up over 80% of the LRA forces.



“We have been able to speak with and influence leaders with whom I never imagined we would even be able to meet”

For six years, the QPSW Uganda project has worked in Gulu doing whatever is needed to support local people struggling to solve the causes or mitigate the effects of the conflict. The project's strength is its diversity and its ability to respond to present need.

Key to a lasting peace is the return and resettlement of former LRA abductees. Many have committed violent acts against their own communities and face hostility in trying to reintegrate. QPSW support has been significant in setting up Empowering Hands, a group of about 150 such young women. The group not only works to develop a sustainable life for themselves but to seek out and help others like them.

Israel-Palestine

The military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza by Israel has caused great devastation to the Palestinians.

Despite all the media coverage of this conflict, the impact of the occupation on people's daily lives and the courageous work of Israeli peace groups are not well known. Human rights abuses are being perpetrated daily that need to be recorded and publicised in order to bring them to an end.



**“We the farmers of Deir Al Ghusoun, behind the walls appreciate and thank them for all the efforts in gate watching and following up on incidents.”
signed by six farmers from Deir Al Ghusoun**

The Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel provides protection by presence for Palestinian people and offers solidarity to Israeli peace groups.

The project has helped Israeli peace activists, marginalized in Israeli society, feel that they are not alone. The EA presence also helped local Palestinians. The above quote came from farmers living in the shadow of the separation wall which cuts them off from their farmland, accessed only by heavily guarded gates.

Post-Yugoslav countries

In the wars during break up of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, each side was implicated in war crimes to some degree. Unlike in South Africa, where there was a complete change of regime, many of the same people are still in power in post Yugoslav countries and attempts to get Truth and Reconciliation commissions have stalled.

Each area has its own version of events and attributes war crimes and atrocities to the 'other side'. This leads to great distrust and minorities in each country are left in a vulnerable position.



“I faced some things I thought I had forgotten, that are painful, and I learned how to bear with those feelings.”

The QPSW “Dealing with the Past” programme works across the three most problematic countries: Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia, with one experienced local peace and human rights worker in each country. They create ‘safe spaces’ in workshops and seminars where one-sided versions of history can be challenged.

We work to create a critical mass of people who will stand against prevailing hatreds and keep alive the possibility of multi-ethnic living. It takes courage to relinquish hard-line attitudes arising from deep personal pain. Some of the programme's most remarkable successes have been the gradual coming together of different groups, at daggers drawn since the wars, to launch joint projects for peace, reconciliation and community-building.

South Asia nonviolence

Millions of grassroots people across South Asia are marginalised and living in poverty, deprived of their human rights. Issues around fishing and land rights can mean the difference between sustainable livelihood and complete destitution.

Change is slowed by a lack of democratic processes or accountability. Many have resorted to violence and local conflicts have destroyed people's lives. We bring together groups from across the region to promote nonviolence as a force for change.



“With great threats to peace and security in South Asia we very much like our QPSW—our trusted friends in the field of peace...”

The nonviolence movement once flourished in India under Gandhi and there are still groups across South Asia who are experienced and successful in its practice. Spreading nonviolence ideas and practices can be very difficult, and they often do not reach the areas where they are needed most.

We have helped create a coalition, the South Asia Peace Alliance (SAPA), with members from across six countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. SAPA has already had far-reaching impact with nonviolence methods being introduced to the Chittagong Hill Tribes in Bangladesh and the SAPA launch in Nepal being used as a platform to inform Nepal's recent urgent peace process.

In brief

Linking climate change and violent conflict

The short term QPSW work on Economics, Militarism and Aid has recently been completed. However, the style of the project and much of the thinking continues in a new three-year project titled 'Human Security and the Environment'.

Outputs from the Economics, Militarism and Aid project include the short book *Tanks and Trolleys: why economic policies matter in security thinking*, an ecumenical conference on human security and a diplomatic seminar at the UN in New York.

The new project will continue exploring and advocating the human security framework as an agenda for sustainable, nonviolent security. The project aims to increase understanding of climate change as a real security threat by establishing links between climate change and violent conflict; contributing to an increased global response to the causes and effects of climate change. This work begins in early autumn 2006 and will be led by Alison Prout.

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Geneva Summer School

Twenty-five young people spent a fortnight at the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) Geneva, gaining unique insights into how the United Nations operates.

Participants from countries as far afield as Turkmenistan, India and Lesotho had the chance to meet with diplomats and staff from numerous NGOs.

David Atwood, QUNO Director, said: "Each year the summer school reassures me that, with people like our students acting in the world in the coming years, the future of international relations will be in the care of some sound hands."

Applications for places on the 2007 Summer School will be open from December 2006.

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Membership procedures to bring 'a sense of renewal'

New membership procedures are set to bring enthusiasm and a sense of renewal, as meetings take advantage of procedures which are simpler and more centred on the person applying for membership.

Britain Yearly Meeting has agreed that becoming a member should be a flexible process adapted to the needs of the individual and the meeting. A set of guiding principles and stages were outlined in the report accepted by Yearly Meeting in May. This change follows the very successful experiments with membership procedures in some meetings, particularly since Yearly Meeting 2001.

The experiments have run alongside traditional procedures, and will continue to do so. The new approaches have brought benefits in two main areas.

Firstly, the process of welcoming long-standing attenders into membership. The traditional procedures have been a barrier for some who may have a deep involvement in their meeting. The process has been simplified and adapted for the individual. For example, in one meeting for a regular attender who is well known to local Friends, two seasoned Friends draft a very brief report and recommendation to monthly meeting.

Secondly, membership procedures can be an integral part of the way we get to know each other and pass on our

understanding. The systematic nurture of attenders has, for some meetings, become central in membership procedures. 'Nurturing Friends' / 'beFriends' are appointed who spend time with an attender to support the development of their understanding of the Society. The members involved, and the whole meeting, have gained spiritual inspiration.

As we communicate about our faith that faith is renewed. These developments share this theme with developments in the Yearly Meeting such as Quaker Quest and the Spiritual Hospitality Project. Membership procedures may sound dull but they are an opportunity for growth.

Jane Muers

Clerk of Quaker Life Membership Procedures Group

The membership procedures report and *Sharing Ideas* (which gives details of the ways in which monthly meetings have experimented with membership procedures) are both available on the website

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020 7663 1124

Latest on Trident

At the end of June, the Defence Select Committee published the first of its reports on the future of Trident. Much to the "surprise and disappointment" of the Committee, the MoD itself failed to give evidence.

However, QPSW – amongst other organisations – did submit to the enquiry, and the result was a well-balanced report which raised several important questions.

For the first time, non-replacement was put forward as an option and the government was asked to conduct a proper threat assessment and to explain the purpose and relevance of 'nuclear deterrence' in relation to current security threats.

The report called for a "genuine and meaningful debate" on Trident

replacement, a call that still needs to be heeded by Government. While Jack Straw has stated that there will be a vote, there first needs to be an open and honest public debate.

It is still not too late for Friends to take action. Write to your MP today, calling for a "genuine and meaningful debate" and urging him or her to support Early Day Motion 1614, which notes "any programme to replace Trident nuclear weapons systems would pre-empt and undermine the effectiveness" of negotiations on the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Contact:
Kat Barton
disarm@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1067

In brief

Filming at Brigflatts

Many thanks to all who defied the elements to make the filming of a Quaker meeting at Brigflatts such a success this month.

Despite the lashing rain, Friends travelled from as far afield as Newcastle and York to take part in the filming of a programme with presenter Griff Rhys Jones, which will be part of a series due to be aired on BBC1 next May.

The inclement weather meant that the open-air worship planned to take place on Firbank Fell had to be adjourned to Brigflatts meeting house. But thanks to the commitment of so many Quakers, some of whom travelled for two hours, the meeting house was full to bursting and everyone felt that worship went very well.

The programme will be part of a series about mountains and the influence they have had, and still have, on people's lives. It was a wonderful opportunity for us to bring the story of George Fox to a wider audience – and to talk about what being a Quaker means to us today.

Special thanks to Tess Satchell, of Brigflatts PM, and Roy Stephenson, of Lancaster PM, who worked extremely hard to ensure everything ran smoothly, and kept everyone fed and watered on the day.

Hereford and Worcester Meeting have also completed a short piece of filming of worship which will hopefully soon be available on the 'Where I Live' section of www.bbc.co.uk under Faith Features for Herefordshire.

Contact:
Heather Edwards
heathere@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1048

Spiritual Reviews

The last issue of Quaker News mentioned a booklet being prepared by Quaker Life on reviewing the spiritual life of meetings. This will now be published later this autumn and full details should be in the next issue. For more information:

Contact:
Anne Hosking
anneh@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1023

Photo: Sarah Santhosham/ The Friend



Horses for courses...poor weather meant that filming was moved from Firbank Fell to Brigflatts meeting house

Wardenship news

New employment age laws

New government regulations come into force on 1 October 2006, to make it unlawful in many instances for an employer to treat an employee (or even a job applicant) less favourably because of their age.

Employees aged 65 and over will have the full protection of employment tribunals for the first time, and will be able to make claims of unfair dismissal and be eligible for redundancy payments.

For the full briefing paper Go to www.quaker.org.uk/wardenship and click on 'Resources', then 'New age discrimination' for the full briefing paper. You can also write to Richard Summers for a paper copy.

Contact:
Richard Summers
richards@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1096

Wardenship information in a new format

The Wardenship Handbook, now out of date, will be replaced by a resources guide, available on www.quaker.org.uk/wardenship (click on 'Wardenship Resources' to access the online version) and by post from Quaker Life.

This will ensure that information is kept up to date in future. Where information relevant to Friends is not easily accessible elsewhere, briefing papers will be prepared and posted to

the website, or made available by post.

Wardenship Matters, the Wardenship Committee newsletter has also been withdrawn and will be replaced by web based information and news of interest to Quaker employees and employers at: www.quaker.org.uk/wardenship Again, this information will be available by post on request.

Contact:
Richard Summers
richards@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1096

Can your warden be self-employed?

The answer is almost invariably no! But now you can check for yourself whether your warden, meeting house cleaner can be regarded as self-employed.

HM Customs and Excise has launched a web page: <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/employment-status> to help you decide whether a person is employed or self-employed. It involves answering a number of simple 'yes' or 'no' questions that PAYE inspectors will use if they decide to visit you. If in any doubt always check with HM Customs and Excise or contact Quaker Life Wardenship Committee.

Contact:
Richard Summers
richards@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1096

See Page 14 for advice on insurance for meeting houses

Latest titles from Quaker Books

Endeavours to Mend

"True godliness don't turn men out of the world but enables them to live better in it and excites their endeavours to mend it," said William Penn in 1682. Quakers have been working for peace and justice in the world since then, and the new book *Endeavours to Mend* is a selection of essays by men and women who are actively continuing in this tradition.



The writers share a wide range of experience, from work with child soldiers in Africa and Asia, to support of asylum seekers in Leicester, to peace-building in Chechnya.

Editor Brian Phillips describes classic Quaker reconciliation work in divided communities as "very pragmatic, small-scale initiatives". He cites recent reconstruction projects in the Balkans, from which all "sides" are able to benefit, as an example of the practical "first step" approach to beginning to open channels of communication.

"Our size enables us to work more effectively in certain settings – to do the kind of deep listening essential for developing and building lasting partnerships," he said. But what makes Quaker work so unique and necessary in the world is that it is essentially an act of faith through lived experience.

Brian writes movingly about his experiences working with peace activists in the Balkans and he explains why small groups such as the Quakers, far from being powerless in the international arena, are well-placed to work for the good of those caught up in the bitterness of war and conflict.

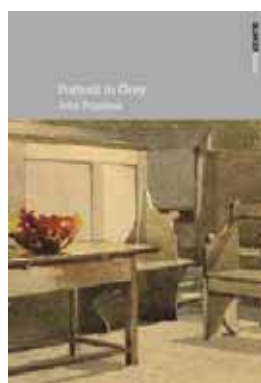
Together, these essays make a thought-provoking and uplifting volume of work, which will interest students of peace and international studies as well as anyone thinking about how small-

scale idealistic and religious groups can work for peace.

Endeavours to Mend is published at £10.00. It will be launched at the Quaker Bookshop on Thursday 29 September. Email books@quaker.org.uk or call 020 7663 1030 for more details.

Portrait in Grey

Many people have been introduced to the history of Quakers through John Punshon's *Portrait in Grey*, which was published in 1984.



This new edition from Quaker Books has been revised in the light of developments in Quaker historical and theological scholarship in the last twenty years. Yet it is not an academic book: the author's aim was to "draw a portrait of the Quakers", and show what was distinctive about them.

John Punshon was Quaker Studies tutor at Woodbrooke in the 1980s, before moving to Earlham College in Indiana. His love of teaching the subject comes out clearly.

"As I said in the original foreword, I was aiming for an impossible combination of brevity and comprehensiveness. What I wrote would be open to criticism at many points, notably its balance, its selection of material, and the stances it took. I am both astonished and gratified that people still find it useful. So it has been a privilege to prepare a second edition."

In fact, much of what makes the book so readable is John Punshon's own engaging voice.

"My perspectives have changed and enriched over the years, and for this I am grateful to all my friends and academic colleagues with whom I have carried on a wonderful conversation." Many readers will feel they are part of this conversation, too.

Quaker Books are available by mail order from MPH:

www.mph.org.uk

MPH
4 John Wesley Road
Werrington
Peterborough
PE4 6ZP

01733 325 002

Alternatively, come and browse in the Quaker Bookshop at Friends House.

...and lots of custom for the new Bookshop Cafe...

A growing stream of customers have been enjoying the new Bookshop Cafe at Friends House. Many come for the tempting selection of organic homemade cakes and the free internet access. However, most visitors are struck by the peaceful location, a welcome oasis in the middle of bustling Euston.

One customer said "Your hospitality is necessary and much appreciated... a place to be peaceful and contemplate peace."

Philip Arnold, bookshop manager, said "This takes advantage of our location on the Euston Road– people can just walk in from the street."

The Bookshop Cafe has considerable outreach potential. Having people in the cafe makes the space much more inviting for the casual browser. A number of Bookshop Cafe customers visiting London have tried out Friends House meeting on a Sunday.

Simon Watson, bookseller, said "We already have quite a few regulars who use the cafe every day."

David Preston, hospitality manager at Friends House, is pleased with the success:

"This is a great way of making Quakers more visible."

The Bookshop Cafe is open from 9am to 5pm every weekday, with late opening on Mondays to 7pm.

Meeting for Sufferings to vision its future

Meeting for Sufferings, the representative body for Quakers in Britain, is holding a special meeting on October 7. Members of Meeting for Sufferings are meeting to discern its new role, following decisions at Yearly Meeting.

In May this year, Yearly Meeting decided to appoint a new trustee body, to take on some of the work currently done by Meeting for Sufferings. From January 2007 the trustee body will oversee the centrally-managed work. This gives Meeting for Sufferings the chance to take on a new role.

“This is an exciting time, with lots of inspiring input from Friends. We shall need to unite in our outreach, trust each other, and support each other.”

“Now that we have relieved our representative body, Meeting for Sufferings, of the detailed work of trusteeship, we have freed it to take on a visionary and prophetic role for the life of the Yearly Meeting, to draw our whole community together and to release the synergy we create to work for a better

world.”

Minute 20, Britain Yearly Meeting 2006

The meeting on October 7 will begin the process of establishing this new role for Meeting for Sufferings. Meetings around the country have been gathering ideas and visions, to be presented by their representatives during the special day of worship and discussion.

There are some big questions to be considered: what will “being a crucible for sharing and testing concerns” involve? How can Meeting for Sufferings work to strengthen the links between meetings and the work done in

their name?

Rachel Carmichael, clerk of Meeting for Sufferings, said: “This is an exciting time, with lots of inspiring input from Friends. We shall need to unite in our outreach, trust each other, and support each other.”

Meanwhile, the new trustee body

will be meeting in the autumn in order to begin develop its new role. Gillian Waddilove, clerk of the trustee body, said:

“The trustee body will be building on existing planning for use of resources, hoping to align the plans to meet the wider vision of Meeting for Sufferings, and providing effective oversight of the centrally managed work.”

The epistle from Yearly Meeting encapsulated the sense of a new direction for the Society of Friends:

“We leave this Yearly Meeting ready to fly, with a new sense of direction and a renewed commitment to cooperating with the loving purposes of God.”

Contact:
Elsa Dicks
elsad@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1122

Or write to Rachel Carmichael directly:
c/o Recording Clerk's Office
Friends House
173 Euston Road
London
NW1 2BJ

Hospitals seeking Quakers

‘Hello, I’m trying to contact a Quaker chaplain urgently, as there is a patient here asking for a Quaker’. A patient may be in pain, frightened, perhaps facing bad news, or dying: time is short. Why do such enquiries come to Quaker Life every couple of months? Why not to the local meeting?

Hospitals and their chaplains ought to know how to contact the relevant local Quakers, but many don’t have that information, and the patient cannot tell them. They may be attenders, or overseas Friends. Sometimes they fall ill away from home, or have moved recently.

Some are disoriented, forgetting names or phone numbers of local overseers. People cannot always warn their overseers in good time that they are going into hospital, or equip themselves with contact details.

I guess that few hospitals have Quakers serving as volunteer chaplains already, so good information is

essential. Do they look in the local telephone phone book under Q for Quaker, F for Friend, R for Religious Society or B for Borchester Meeting? Quaker Life Outreach Committee recommends a full entry under Q, with a cross reference from F. Maybe they search the Internet – but not all meeting websites display current contact details (I found one meeting listing the clerk before last!). So they ring Quaker Life at Friends House.

In principle, the clerk or convenor for oversight and for eldership in each monthly meeting should be listed in the *Book of Meetings*, so a simple phone call should be enough, but when the book lacks this essential information, Friends House staff have to ring round all the local clerks and wardens. Every time we have to leave a message, more time is lost.

Ideally, meetings would identify all the hospitals, hospices, nursing homes and other organizations in their area

that just might need a Quaker ‘chaplain’ at short notice. Those responsible for oversight could contact the chaplaincy team, to find out what information they would find useful, and to become familiar with the hospital and its systems.

Meetings may have to consider who is the best long-term contact, plus an alternative, and then inform key staff, probably the senior chaplain. Do many monthly meetings appoint hospital visitors for Friends referred to specialist hospitals, as Hampstead MM does? But whether or not visitors are appointed, information in the *Book of Meetings*, telephone directories and on websites needs to be consistent and up to date.

“There is no time but this present.”

Contact:
Anne Hosking
anneh@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1023

Get involved

This section gives details of upcoming events and ways that you and your meeting can get involved in Quaker work.

CYP training days

Children and young people's work training opportunities for meetings organized by Quaker Life:
Workshops exploring developing work with children and young people (All on Saturdays)
York Friargate MH 25 November
Carlisle MH 2 December
Norwich MH 27 January

Workshops considering how to work effectively with a wide age range and small numbers (Both on Saturdays)
York Friargate MH 25 November
Cardiff MH 20 January

Workshops thinking about working with young people in a Quaker context (All on Saturdays)
Cotteridge MH 25 November (Birmingham)
London Friends House 3 February

For full details of these opportunities and booking details go to www.quaker.org.uk/cyp and select training or phone 020 7663 1013 and ask to be sent a leaflet.

Children's spiritual development conference

Taking place November 17–19 at Woodbrooke. A weekend of exploration and learning with Rebecca Nye as the key note speaker. For more details go to www.quaker.org.uk/cyp and select training and then conferences or phone Quaker Life on 020 7663 1013 and ask for a leaflet. Booking now, places are limited.

Contact:
Bevelie Shember
bevelies@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1013

Big Outreach Conference

Organized by Quaker Life Outreach Committee 27–29 October at Sneaton Castle Centre, Whitby. Cost: £110 per person, includes return coach from York if needed.

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

Events at Swarthmoor Hall

Growing older creatively: the prose and poetry of age! With Gordon Smith, 6–8 October 2006.

Some poets ask "let me not grow old", some vow to "wear purple... and spit". Old age is not for sissies! This is a weekend to encourage us to face the challenges realistically and celebrate the creative joys more freely.
Cost: £130 residential, £90 non-residential.

Sustainability & the Quaker Testimonies With Laurie Michaelis 13–15 October.

Quakers have long connected their spiritual lives with politics and social change, through the testimonies. In the consumer society, the need for reform is more urgent than ever.

During this weekend we will explore our response to challenges such as climate change, reflecting on the developing testimonies to community and sustainability, and finding practical action that we can take.
Cost: £130 residential, £90 non residential.

Living up to the Light: power and leadership among Friends

Are you intrigued, challenged, enraged, puzzled, excited or passionate about issues to do with authority, power or leadership among Friends?

The course will be facilitated by Pam Lunn, one of Woodbrooke's tutors; Helen Rowlands, Woodbrooke's Head of Education, and Richard Summers, Assistant General Secretary of Quaker Life. They hope that participants will gain an understanding of different models of power and authority and greater clarity about how and when it may be appropriate to offer leadership or foster it in others.

Friday 26 – Sunday 28 January at Woodbrooke Quaker Studies Centre, Birmingham. Cost £142.

Further details from Woodbrooke
www.woodbrooke.org.uk
0121 472 5171

or
Richard Summers
richards@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1096

Ensuring insurance

The need to insure meeting houses, contents, activities and to have public and employee liability cover should be clear. Proper insurance is not only in a legal necessity in the case of employees but also part of the exercise of stewardship of the resources of the Society.

Many meetings are indeed fully and adequately insured; others, however, are not. From enquiries received in Friends House it is clear that many Friends are confused by both the complexity of policies and the variety available. Advice on insurance is given in *The Treasurers Handbook*, available from Friends House.

The main insurance policy held by Friends House on behalf of the Society has so far included basic cover for meetings not otherwise insured. This cover will no longer be available from 1 January 2007 and so it is essential that meetings make sure their insurance is both effective and sufficient to meet their needs.

Friends House is working with brokers to explore the possibility of finding or developing cover for meetings, a kind of Quaker insurance scheme. If it proves to be workable, it will have to be as comprehensive as possible.

If meetings want to share any experiences of obtaining unusual insurance or of difficulties arranging cover they can get in touch with Bill Chadkirk. Bill can also be contacted about general queries connected with meeting insurance.

Contact:
Bill Chadkirk
billch@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1101

Fundraising news

'Where there's a will there's a way'. **Kate Cargin** looks at the importance of wills, why so many people neglect to make one, and how easy it is to make yours.

Over two thirds of adults in the UK would like to include their favourite charity in their will, according to a recent survey by the 'Remember a Charity' consortium.

Easier said than done it seems, as only 6% of wills in 2005 included a legacy to charity. Even worse, according to WillAid, 50% of UK adults die without making a will.

Why do people not make a will? If you haven't made yours, why might that be? Is it because thinking about dying makes you feel uncomfortable? Andrew Clark (formerly General Secretary of QPS) made a will when he was very young. His father said to him 'It won't bring the day any closer'.

Or perhaps you don't think you have anything much to leave. Most people own more than they think. If you have a job and have joined a pension scheme or have a mortgage with life insurance, your estate could be quite considerable. When you start to add it all up you may well be surprised. Even if you don't have any of these, you may have a few valued possessions, which you might like to give to friends. If you don't have a valid will, the law, rather than you, will decide who gets what. This is not always as straightforward as you might think and could cause a lot of problems and heartache.

Making a will is not complicated. It doesn't have to be a once in a lifetime decision. As circumstances change, you may want to update your will and leave your possessions in a different way. The process doesn't take very long and it need not be expensive. You can get a quote beforehand on how much it will cost. Ask for a copy of our legacy booklet, make an appointment with your solicitor and when you are making your will, could you consider making a bequest to support Quaker work?

Contact:
Kate Cargin
katec@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1112



Making a will in good time helps ensure that the fruits of your savings can be the seeds of change for the future

Letting us know

At present we have 240 legacy pledges on our database. People make different decisions about how they would like to leave legacies. Some give a fixed amount, some leave us a proportion of their estate. Andrew Clark's principle in making his present will is to treat the Society as an additional child.

Some give general funds and some like to earmark for a favourite piece of work. We have a number of pledges for Quaker peace work. Val Ferguson, former General Secretary of FWCC, has left all her charitable bequests including the one to Quakers to be earmarked for administration 'because nothing happens without the staff and the back up'.

Whatever you choose to do, we are very grateful for your support. If you have made a bequest to Quakers could you let us know? This is not legally binding and you may change your mind. However, it is still very useful to us to know that this is your intention. We will keep the information confidential. When all the information is collated and analysed it helps build up an overall picture of future legacy income.

With thanks to Andrew Clark and Val Ferguson for giving me permission to quote them.

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

Also see our Get Involved section on page 14 for ways to get involved in Quaker work, forthcoming events, publications and conferences.

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

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: 020 7663 1017
Answerphone: 020 7663 1025
Email: carmelk@quaker.org.uk
www.quaker.org.uk

Can you help us?

Offer your service on a committee

We will send you a form to fill in to be registered on our nominations database, for consideration for future committee appointments. However, please note that this does not guarantee that you will be appointed. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Your name

Your address

Postcode

Email

Please send completed form to:

**Nominations, RCO (QN)
Friends House
173 Euston Road
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www.quaker.org.uk



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