

2005: a year to make poverty history?

“Massive poverty and obscene inequality are such terrible scourges of our times.....that they have to rank alongside slavery and apartheid as social evils.”

These were just some of the words of Nelson Mandela as he spoke to a crowd of thousands at a rally in London's Trafalgar Square on 3rd February. The event was organised to coincide with a meeting of the G7's finance ministers by the Make Poverty History coalition.

The mobilisation, now including Quaker Peace & Social Witness (QPSW), was set up especially to put pressure on UK and World leaders to undertake the bold reforms needed to put an end to the extreme poverty faced by millions across the developing world.

This year international decision makers have an almost unprecedented opportunity to implement policies that could directly benefit the poorest people in developing countries. In September, world leaders will come together at a major United Nations conference looking at the progress that has been made in implementing the Millennium Development Goals



Nelson Mandela, Bob Geldof and the children from an Edinburgh school at the Make Poverty History Rally in Trafalgar Square, 25 January 2005.

(MDGs). These were agreed by governments at a series of UN conferences in the 1990s and seek, amongst other things, to halve poverty and hunger, establish universal primary education and improve health levels across the developing world by 2015. Despite being championed by politicians around the world, progress in their implementation, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa has been poor. By Gordon Brown's own admission, on current trends, Africa will not achieve many of the goals until years after 2015, in some instances as many as 150 years too late.

In December, the politicians will meet again, this time at the World Trade Organisation Ministerial confer-

ence in Hong Kong. Here they will try to get closer to finalising the 'Doha Development' round of trade talks. These negotiations were launched in 2001 with the aim of enabling developing countries to benefit more from the international trading system. Recent trade talks have seen developing countries play an increasing role in the negotiations, and, with the help of organisations including the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in Geneva, there have been some small steps forward in promoting a fairer process. However, like the Millennium Goals, overall progress has been slow and many have argued that there has not been sufficient political will on the part of many developed countries to make a pro-development trade round a reality.

However, both conferences could bring about a real change in direction, if the will is there. As Nelson Mandela



put it “poverty is not natural. It is man-made and can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings.”

Make Poverty History wants to show political leaders that current levels of progress are unacceptable and that much more needs to be done. In particular the campaign will be calling for justice in international trade, cancellation of un-payable developing country debt and an increase in both the quality and quantity of international aid.

A particular target for these demands will be the UK government, which through its positions as this year’s President of the EU and chair of the G8 has a considerable amount of influence – to drive agendas and to persuade other governments to act.

Throughout 2005 the mobilisation will be encouraging as many people as possible to put pressure on the government to act. There are plenty of ways that you or your Meeting can get involved – from wearing a Make Poverty History white arm-band, (available through the Quaker book-shop) to writing to your MP and other decision makers or by attending the pre-G8 rally planned in Edinburgh on 2nd July.

For more information contact Suzanne Ismail, Quaker Peace & Social Witness, Tel: 020 7663 1055; e-mail: suzannei@quaker.org.uk or check the websites for Make Poverty History or the Trade Justice Movement.



Photo: Linda Grove

Key dates and campaigning opportunities for 2005

March: The final report of the UK Government’s Africa Commission is expected. The commission was set up to examine the needs and problems of the world’s poorest continent and to generate ‘practical actions’ for a better future. It is expected that the report’s conclusions will be key discussion points at the July G8 summit.

April 10-16: Global Week of Action on Trade – see p12.

July: UK assumes presidency of the EU.

July 2: Make Poverty History will hold a rally in Edinburgh in advance of the G8 summit. It is hoped that 100,000 people will attend and demand that the leaders of the G8 make the reforms needed to end poverty.

July 6-8: The G8 Summit will take place in Scotland at the Gleneagles resort. The leaders of the G8 have the power to make the reforms needed to put an end to poverty, so it is important that the messages of trade justice, debt cancellation and better aid are put on their agenda.

July 13: The 20th Anniversary of Live Aid, when rock stars performed at a 16-hour concert split between London and Philadelphia to raise awareness of and money to alleviate famine in Africa. The anniversary is expected to attract considerable publicity.

September 1-5: The UN General Assembly Special Summit on the Millennium Development Goals will discuss the progress made in working towards the target of halving poverty by 2015.

December 13-18: The 6th World Trade Organisation Ministerial Conference will be held in Hong Kong.

To find out how to do your bit to Make Poverty History see:
www.makepovertyhistory.org

Quaker work to Make Poverty History

Quaker work towards the eradication of poverty is well established, both locally and centrally.

Through the work of the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in Geneva, Friends have been working with World Trade Organisation delegations to promote fairer negotiation processes, and ultimately more just agreements in international trade. Martin Watson, QUNO’s Trade and Development Representative explains more about this way of working on pages 8-9.

Similarly the article on page 11 features the work that Robin Robison of QPSW has been doing to convey developing country concerns about the social impact of International Monetary Fund and World Bank conditions to officials within the institutions and to press for changes that will really improve the lives of the poorest people.

Suzanne Ismail also reports on the work that QPSW has been doing to provide Friends with information, ideas and resources for campaigning on trade issues on page 12. Meetings around the country have used these resources to raise awareness of trade justice issues and to try and persuade decision makers of the need for urgent and concrete changes to the current system.



Ecumenical
Accompaniment
Programme in
Palestine &
Israel

Supporting Israeli peace groups

Gila Svirky, an Israeli peace activist and founder of the Coalition of Women for Peace made this comment about the solidarity presence of EAs with Israeli peace groups: “The international component is critical for peace in the Middle East. It’s critical for informing public opinion and having a different opinion to (mainstream) Israeli opinion. You are coming to do something very important and we in the peace movement in Israel are very grateful to see you.”

The twelve Ecumenical Accompaniers recruited to serve during 2005 include EAs from Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Scotland.

The EAPPI has just produced *Separated Families*, a report written by Anna Seifert, a Friend from Godalming, Surrey, who served as an Ecumenical Accompanier in Sawahreh, in the outskirts of Jerusalem last autumn. The report tells the stories of Palestinian families who cannot live together in Jerusalem because Israeli legislation currently prevents Palestinian residents of the West Bank who are married to Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem from becoming residents of Jerusalem and living with their spouses. The report can be obtained from EAPPI, QPSW or from www.quaker.org.uk/eappi.

Quaker Peace & Social Witness (QPSW) began its third year of implementing the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel on behalf of an increasing number of partner churches and church-related organisations in Britain and Ireland. Pax Christi UK and the Baptist Union of Great Britain have joined recently the list of partners.

For a year and a half now, the EAPPI has had a team of Ecumenical Accompaniers dedicated to supporting Israeli peace groups which oppose the occupation. Although all EAs take



Photo credit: EAPPI

Ecumenical Accompaniers accompany a demonstration of Israeli and Palestinians at the Ar-Ram checkpoint in the West Bank, January 2004. Ar-Ram is the location of a checkpoint between Jerusalem and Ramallah.

part in activities organised by Israeli peace groups at some time or other during their three-month service, the purpose of this dedicated team is to reach out to these groups on a more intentional and consistent basis than the majority of EAs can do.

Since its inception, the Jerusalem Team has accompanied Israeli organisations at peace vigils, demonstrations, checkpoint watching, house rebuilding and olive harvesting days, to name just a few of their activities. During last summer EAs also provided solidarity support through attending trials of Israelis refusing to serve in the army or specifically in the occupied territories. EAs have also delivered training on nonviolence to young Israelis and have organised public meetings at Israeli venues. South African EAs gave a presentation on comparisons between apartheid South Africa and Israel-

Palestine and German EAs spoke about their personal experiences of living with the Berlin Wall. Some EAs also work in the offices of specific Israeli peace groups providing them with support of various kinds.

The EAPPI local programme coordinator says: “The message that representatives of the churches worldwide are providing solidarity support for Israeli peace and justice organisations is important for us to convey here and with our churches abroad. It supports the voices of those who frame the conflict as one not between two polarised groups – Israelis and Palestinians – but between those who are advocating an end to the occupation and a just peace, and those who have an interest in maintaining the occupation.”

*Floresca Karanasou,
QPSW, for more information look
at the websites: www.quaker.org.uk/eappi
or www.eappi.org*

The Way Forward for our young people's work

The independent consultant's report on our work with children and young people has now been published.

Key areas which emerged from the consultation are:

Vision

There is a need to make the spiritual vision of the work much more explicit, and to develop facility in looking at the spiritual process and outcomes which undergird the work. At present this is definitely 'there' but is often obscured by keeping children, young people and volunteers content rather than having the courage to own this vision directly. Young Friends in the consultation reported how important and profound spiritual experiences and training have been for them.

There is also a need for children and young people to share the responsibility and ownership of the work of the whole Society. At present the young people are dependent on adults being their advocates, and whilst generally older Quakers make good advocates, children and young people do not have sufficient political access to make decisions. Increasing their access and input in the whole work of the Society would bring benefits for them and for the Society itself.

Quaker identity

There can be a sense of frailty in being a member of a minority denomination and the development of a strong sense of identity may help to compensate for this. For identity and sense of belonging to be fostered and developed it is necessary for Quaker history and practice to be taught. Also Friends gain a great deal by gathering together to celebrate and understand what it is to be a Friend in the 21st century, bringing the experiences of Friends in the past and interpreting them for the future.

Junior Yearly Meeting and the

Under 19s Programme at BYM are key opportunities for children and young people to gather. The consultation and the response to the cancelling of JYM 2005 illustrated the importance and worth of these events and indicate that they need to continue and be supported. Other opportunities to 'gather', for example summer schools, the Leavers, summer gatherings and so forth, also need continued support and celebration.

Other ways of supporting Quaker identity which emerged from the consultation included the request for materials which could be used by meetings. In further discussions this idea was developed into an 'Ages and Stages' pack which could give an overview, a rationale, possible activities and resources to help children and young people develop an understanding of key themes which are part of Quaker life e.g. Peace Testimony, Spirituality. For this to progress additional resources will be needed.

Working systems and structures

One of the key findings of the report is the suggestion that we develop a centralised resource model and the direction for the future seems to be through good, informed and clear networks. This will be achieved by building on and enhancing initiatives such as the Travelling Team and the Resource Co-ordinators. Importantly, more of the resources available in Quaker Life should be geared to supporting Friends developing and delivering the work locally.

Another recommendation is that the Under 19 Programme at yearly meeting should be managed through the Children and Young People's Section and that this be phased in over two years, with the aim of rationalising the strengths of different ways of working and administrative support.

The report has also emphasised the need for increased management time

and supervision within Quaker Life to ensure the work is balanced and that staff are properly supported and managed. This is in hand.

The consultation included questionnaires to monthly meetings, interviews with key staff and committee members, residential events with the Children and Young People's Committee, young people and the Travelling Team and individual Friends making contact and sharing their thoughts. The consultant, Maxine Green, valued the experience of working with Friends and feels that the qualities that have informed the consultation process bode very well for the future development of our work with children and young people.

What next?

The report will be used by Quaker Life staff who will work with Friends to develop and implement the ideas and recommendations from the consultation. In order to be able to run Junior Yearly Meeting in 2006, some of the recommendations concerning staff have already informed a recruitment and selection process that is currently underway with the aim of having a full staff complement in Children and Young People's Section of Quaker Life by Summer 2005.

The report has gone to Meeting for Sufferings and copies have been sent to all Meetings and Friends who have requested it, or expressed an interest in the process. It is possible to read and download the report at www.quaker.org.uk

Friends attending Quaker Life Representative Council in March will have an opportunity to meet the Consultant, explore the findings of the report and contribute to the future direction of the work. A series of meetings have been planned to give Friends across the country a similar opportunity. The first of these will be in Bristol on 23rd April, followed by

a meeting at Friends House on 30th April and in Newcastle on 14th May.

For further information contact the Children and Young People's Section of Quaker Life, 020 7663 1017; e-mail janetf@quaker.org.uk

Young People - the way forward

Meet the consultant • Explore the findings of the report and the future delivery of the work

Bristol – 23rd April • Friends House, London – 30th April
Newcastle – 14th May

Preparing for the largest ever under 19 programme at Yearly Meeting

Five under 19 planners aged from 15 began their voyage to Yearly Meeting, along with new and more experienced Core Team members. The day was funded from the former Sibford Summer Gathering funds. This enabled the members to work together on ideas for all age worship, games to play and suggestions of how to facilitate groups. There was exploration of how groups could work to include everyone. There was rank and open discussion about the use of alcohol at Yearly Meeting. If some members of our Yearly Meeting residential gathering are not allowed to drink during the week, can we operate as an inclusive community if over 19s use alcohol?



Photo by John Fitzgerald/QCD

The Under 19 and Over 19 Core Team members preparing to work together in a collaborative way in preparing for the largest ever Under 19 Programme at a yearly meeting.

What some of the team said they enjoyed about the day:

- “the exercise that highlighted different needs, especially vision and lifestyle differences, which not always apparent on a medical form or on the surface”
- “communal juggling... writing poems about Quaker Business method...worshipping with the ribbon weaving wheel... reflections using pebbles in the pond”

If you want to join us on the Under 19 Programme at Yearly Meeting in York 30th July – 6 August 2005. Information is available from Jane Dawson: Tel: 020 7663 1160.

The closing date for bookings for the BYM under 19 programme is 31 March 2005.



Photo by John Fitzgerald/QCD

Friends House staff model the new fluorescent cycling vests to promote the BYM website, quaker.org.uk From L to R: Nik Dadson (website manager), Graham Spackman, Chloe Kay, Chris Gregory and Marigold Bentley.

The cycling vests can be purchased from the Quaker Bookshop, Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ. Tel: 020 7663 1030. Price £6.50.

Young people's events up to BYM

This year there is no JYM, but it should be back on track for 2006. Meetings may always ask Quaker Life for the pack which was designed to help meetings run their own event. Contact details: Quaker Life, Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ Tel: 020 7663 1013 Email: janetf@quaker.org.uk for general information about events for young people. Please also contact the individual organisations running the events mentioned on this list. Leavers, 1 The Lodge, 1046 Bristol Rd, Birmingham, B29 6LJ Tel: 0121 414 0099 Email: qyt@leavers.org Website: www.leavers.org

July 23 – 25 Young Women's Arts Weekend, The Pales, Mid-Wales Ages: 14-25 Exploring issues facing young women using drama and creative activities. Contact Alison at the Leavers.

July 10 – 17 BYTF – Children of Hamlin, Epping Forest, London Ages: 14-25 Performance of Children of Hamlin to be presented at the Big Youth Theatre Festival. Contact Alison at the Leavers.

July 23 – 29 Lancashire & Cheshire Summer School at St Bees School, Cumbria for those of secondary age on 1/9/05 Contact Kizzy Isaacson on 0161 225 5392 or kizzy.isaacson@lycos.co.uk

July 27 – August 4 Songbook Concert York (in conjunction with BYM) Ages 14+ Summer Launch Concert of 'Sing in the Spirit - a book of Quaker Songs.' The songbook and CDs will be available for purchase at Yearly Meeting. Contact Alison at the Leavers.

July 30 – 6 August Under 19s Programme at Britain Yearly Meeting will be held at the University of York. For costs please see booking form for a variety of charges (go to www.quaker.org.uk and follow links to York YM to download form). All participants must have a responsible adult living on site. Contact Jane Dawson U19prog@quaker.org.uk or 0207 663 1160. Booking deadline is 31 March 2005.

July 30 – 6 August Northern Young Friends Summer Gathering at the Read School, Drax, near Selby for 11–16s (as on 30 June 2005). Costs £180 (£160 for subsequent young people in same family) – to be confirmed. Contact Ken Latham, 38 Baldovan Terrace, Dundee DD4 6LS. Tel: 01382 860936 or email havefun@summerg.freerve.co.uk

For future events see the website: <http://u19s.quaker.org.uk/under19>

'Powerful unwritten rules'

An attender who had been worshipping with Quakers for some months spoke twice in one meeting for worship – from the heart, with insight, but twice! He was distressed when advised gently that this was not the Quaker way: 'How was I to know? No-one ever told me!' Quakers may not have a formulated creed but we have characteristic practices and a strong love of 'right ordering' to our express our faith. How do we learn the unwritten rules, the norms of behaviour, the implicit assumptions

about what we do and why? Our understanding of discipleship implies a shared search and clarity, not an imposition of rules. Friends leading workshops in eldership and oversight have devised

ways in which a whole meeting can deepen its understanding of our spiritual life and its expression caring, in witness and service.

This co-operative game stimulates lively discussion about assumptions without implying criticism of individuals. It works best when as many in the meeting as possible play it together – experienced Quakers and newcomers, young and old. Those with a competitive spirit may wish to offer prizes: we suggest a round of *Divine* fairly traded chocolate every time agreement is reached, with double rations if *Quaker faith & practice* is quoted in support!



Some members of Finchley PM discussing the boundaries.

Photo: Trish Carn



The Boundaries Game by the Quaker Life Committee on Eldership & Oversight, published by Quaker Books, £5.00 plus 80p postage and packing. It is available from the Quaker Bookshop, Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ. Tel: 020 7663 1030.

Practising equality

Our Testimony to Equality calls us to give equal respect to each person: Advice 22 reminds us that we are all “unique, precious, children of God”. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), now fully in force, makes clear that we are not to treat people as if they have the same ability or disability, with a formulaic response. Some things, such as level access to public buildings are, indeed, expected under the Act, others need flexibility and special consideration. However, what makes the real difference is our attitude. Are we alert to the variety of needs? Have we taken the time to anticipate what this person or that might find helpful? Have we invested in an audit of our buildings and services? How do we show we are willing to make an effort, and so encourage people to say what they actually need? BYM departments and their committees have been considering their responsibilities, and would welcome comments and suggestions from Friends, on some of the ways they have been responding to the DDA.

Representative Councils search hard for venues suitable for up to 85 people with at least a dozen or more bedrooms reached without long corridors or flights of stairs. Getting it within the price range is another story! Most venues have loop systems in the main hall, but as Quakers often work in groups, we need some adapted group rooms too. The portable loop system and personal hearing aids bought for the 2003 Summer Gathering can now be taken to Councils and other events.

The Accessibility & Support subgroup of Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee invited the Committee on Eldership & Oversight to use ‘speech-to-text’ again at its gathering at Yearly Meeting 2005. The last time ‘speech-

to-text’ was tried, the words on the screen were extremely helpful to nearly half (not just those with significant hearing problems) but extremely distracting to many of the rest, especially when words were misinterpreted. We need to learn how best to use which technology: At York we hope the screen will be better placed, and the interpreter given a full glossary of Quaker vocabulary, well in advance.

The DDA requires us to make reasonable adjustments. In the historic parts of Swarthmoor Hall, for example, only the entrance and great halls can be accessible to someone in a wheelchair. Members of the Quaker Life Committee on Eldership & Oversight, meeting there recently, responded with a variety of ingenious suggestions to the challenge faced by the Hall Committee. Imagine a video offering a virtual tour of the whole Hall, in the company of its historic residents! This would be good for all abilities, excellent outreach, and a wonderful souvenir. What other creative ideas might Friends have?

The Act applies to what we do and how we behave, not just to buildings and material aids. Someone who cannot hear well, even with assistive technology, might still be able to follow an invited speaker, if given the speaker’s own notes to read the evening before. A computer reads texts out loud to a blind member of the Committee on Eldership & Oversight, provided we send him documents by e-mail or on disk. Computers have made it easy and cheap to produce texts in large



Photo: John Fitzgerald

One of these Friends struggles to hear. How would you know, and how would you respond?

print on request, from a local newsletter to *Documents In Advance*.

The Act defines ‘disability’ widely and places a legal duty on ‘service providers’. What is the most important service Quakers actually provide? How accessible are our meetings for worship, the silence, the spoken ministry, the shared preparation before and the friendly fellowship after? How, for example, do we react to someone whose back pain means he cannot sit still for ten minutes? Do we feel disturbed or sympathetic whenever he walks out to the garden for a minute and then returns? If we quake when we feel that call to stand and minister, and hardly remember what we said, let alone speaking simply – could someone else make a note, and repeat it in simpler words or pictures to someone with a learning disability?

Quaker Life can provide advice on where to find the ample free information available. Perhaps the most useful place to start is the Disability Rights Commission where *Organizing Accessible Events* covers many typical Quaker activities. The Quaker Life Resources Room has also started a collection of useful resources, for example the RNIB *See it right* pack.

Anne Hosking – Quaker Life

Information on compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act was circulated to each meeting by The Advisory Committee on Property. Further copies are available from Kevin Ellis at Friends House (020 7663 1085).

Resources room: 020 7663 1013.

Useful websites include:

Disability Rights Commission: drc-gb.org
RNIB: rnib.org.uk • RNID: rnid.org.uk

Dyslexia style guide: bda-yslexia.org.uk/main/information/extras/x09frend.asp

Controlling Knowledge

How many newspapers, periodicals, magazines and books do you read during the week? You may be a prolific reader. If while reading, you come across information that can be applied to your work or other activities, can you use this without breaking the law?

Take a look at the inside cover of any magazine or book and the chances are you will find a line saying something like ‘Copyright © 2003 by John Smith. All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted except as may be expressly permitted by the publisher’. This is a copyright, a legal mechanism designed to ensure that authors are protected from people copying or “stealing” their work. Fair enough, but it does mean that you can’t use the information unless you get permission which normally costs money.

Trading knowledge is an economic activity. I produce information; you want it and pay me for it. The financial reward encourages me to undertake further research and keep producing information that is useful for society. This is the basic Research and Development (R&D) model that has been used in Europe for hundreds of years.

Copyright is just one form of protection alongside patents, trademarks and other systems that can loosely be classified as Intellectual Property Rights or IPRs. These cover a remarkable scope of human activity, from the latest pop song in the charts to a critical medical breakthrough saving the lives of millions. Scientists, artists, performers, researchers and basically anyone involved in creating an original product, can be protected by a form of IPR. The money earned from people buying their intellectual property, allows them to keep producing new ideas. But what happens if someone can’t afford to buy the intellectual property they need?

What happens if you are a teacher in a developing country with no budget to buy books? Do you copy text books for the students (an illegal activity) or not teach? This example brings us to the central contradiction of the

IPR system. Human development has always been dependant on our ability to copy. We learn by copying, as anyone who has children knows. But if we are prevented from copying by an IPR, we can’t learn or progress.

For this reason, IPRs only offer protection for a limited time period. Traditionally, patents last 20 years and copyrights for the life of the author. Once this time period is over, anyone is allowed to copy the information for free. However, over the last decades pressures have been applied to increase the protection period. Copyrights can now be applied for the life of the author plus 70 years. This means that the teacher in the developing country has to wait until the author of the school text book dies and then an additional 70 years before being legally allowed to copy the book. Whether we are talking about copyrights, patents or other forms of IPRs, the trend is towards longer protection periods.

IPRs are particularly important for developing countries. Over 90% of the world’s patents are owned by companies in North America, Europe and a handful of Asian countries such as Japan. These are knowledge-rich economies and their dominance in the world’s markets is dependant on their intellectual property. The R&D gap between the developed and developing world is increasing. The only way

developing countries can catch up is through copying.

Copying has historical precedent. The French and British copied the Swiss who had copied the Germans. The North Americans and Japanese copied everyone. For most of human history, IPRs have only offered protection within national boundaries not across them. This meant that a US citizen could visit Germany, study the latest inventions and reproduce them in the USA without breaking any laws.

This is no longer possible. The USA with support from the EU, Japan and a handful of other countries, decided that IPR protection should be enforced through the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The TRIPS agreement (Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) allows the owners of IPRs to enforce protection in the 146 countries that are members of the WTO. The majority of these countries are in the developing world. Their ability to copy and catch up has effectively been withdrawn.

The fundamental issue at the heart of IPRs, is striking a balance between human needs and private rights. This balance has been shifted significantly in favour of private (largely corporate) rights by the TRIPS agreement and other international treaties on IPRs. The expansion of IPRs into the food system, health care, scientific research and other critical fields for human



Photo: Steve Morgan

development is frightening. Seeds for staple crops such as maize are patented. Drugs needed to treat patients are patented. Even plant and animal genes used in scientific research can be patented. Farmers, doctors and scientists are finding that private companies now control access to the basic tools they need for their work.

The story does not finish here. The TRIPS agreement has some 'flexibilities' that give developing countries a little space. The Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in Geneva and Quaker International Affairs Programme (QIAP) in Ottawa work together with developing countries to maintain and increase these flexibilities. Most recently developing countries changed the TRIPS agreement to allow for the temporary suspension of patents on essential drugs for HIV/AIDS and other diseases. Over the next years QUNO and QIAP will be looking at bio-piracy and misappropriation. The vast majority of the genetic resources on the planet are located in developing countries. The traditional knowledge on how to use the plants and other genetic resources are held by

people in the developing world. Increasingly however, these genetic resources and knowledge are being copied and placed under patents in North America, Europe and elsewhere.

To prevent bio-piracy and misappropriation, developing countries are trying to persuade the USA, EU and Japan that all patents should show where the genetic resources and traditional knowledge used in an invention have come from. The legal term for this is a 'declaration of origin'. However, the USA and EU are being lobbied by sections of the business community to resist a declaration of origin.

The issue is a simple one. If a company wishes to use resources that are held in another country, they should first seek permission (prior informed consent) and agree the terms (access and benefit sharing) under which a resource can be used. For the business community this means they may have to share their profits and ownership of the patent, which they are loathed to do. They are therefore lobbying hard to ensure that negotia-

tions taking place in the TRIPS Council, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the World Intellectual Property Organisation, do not result in a mandatory declaration of origin. QUNO and QIAP are supporting developing country negotiators in all three forums by engaging legal and technical experts to offer advice; holding off-the-record dialogues to build coalitions and negotiating positions; commissioning publications that analyse the negotiating texts and make recommendations.

When IPRs were first being developed, the goal was to ensure that society at large could benefit from the intelligence and creativity of individuals. We now have a situation in which IPR enforcement harms the social and economic development of the world's poorest countries. Helping find a balance in the IPR system is one of the greatest challenges faced by the international community. If we get it wrong, millions of people in the developing world will lose out – yet again.

Martin Watson, QUNO, for further information see www.quno.org

'Prayer, stillness and activism'

Each year Britain Yearly Meeting provides a platform for the Swarthmore Lecture, an opportunity for an experienced Friend to interpret to the members of the Religious Society of Friends their message and mission and to share with the public the spirit, aims and fundamental principles of Friends. The Swarthmore Lecture has a history of producing personal and profound ministry, and the 2005 lecture will be firmly in that tradition.

Although better known by many of her friends as an energetic nonviolent activist, this year's lecturer, Helen Steven, is motivated and inspired by a deeply held faith. The lecture's theme of prayer, stillness and activism will provide a special opportunity to explore the links between prayer and activism. It is essentially a personal journey of discovery, following the leadings of a questioning mind that takes nothing for granted, and leads into a re-appraisal of the very foundations of our faith.

Helen's journey in prayer and activism starts in Scotland. She is a graduate of Glasgow University and taught history in Glasgow for seven years. In 1972 she went to Vietnam as part of a Quaker project working in orphanages in Saigon, along with Ellen Moxley, who is now Helen's life-long partner. These two years were a life changing experience and committed Helen to working for peace.

Brought up in the Church of Scotland, Helen was inspired by the way Friends put their faith into practical action, and she became a member of West Scotland Monthly Meeting in 1976.

In 1979 Helen was employed by the Iona Community as their justice and peace worker, and, inspired by the commitment to social action of the Iona Community, she became a member of the Community in 1981. Supported by the Iona Community and Quaker Peace and Service, Helen and Ellen started Peace House, a resi-



Photo: Seve Whiting

dential centre in central Scotland. Twelve years and 10,000 guests later they left Peace House, and Helen founded the Scottish Centre for Nonviolence in Dunblane.

Helen's work for peace has taken her to NATO headquarters in Brussels, to many international conferences, to demonstrations at Faslane naval base, and occasionally to prison. In 2004 she and Ellen were awarded the Gandhi International Peace Prize.

Helen Carmichael & Helen Steven

Supporting the UK peace movement

What do these people have in common? Jim – Greenpeace • Hannah – Quaker Peace & Social Witness (QPSW) worker in South Africa • Duncan – United Nations High Commission for Refugees • Kathryn – Leap Confronting Conflict • Stuart – Movement for the Abolition of War and QPSW Peace Campaigning & Networking Group • Kiri – CRESST (Conflict Resolution in Sheffield Schools Training) and Steering Committee for Conscience the peace tax campaign • Martha – QPSW Placements Group.

Answer: they have all been QPSW Peaceworkers in Britain.

The Peaceworker (Britain) programme helps towards Quaker Peace & Social Witness's (QPSW) aim to engage with groups that seek to achieve peace and social justice by their transforming work. In 2001 the programme was given a boost when the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT) and QPSW agreed a joint initiative to develop it. In practice this has increased the number of Peaceworkers from one, to two in 2003/4, to three this year. The programme aims:

- To provide a comprehensive and creative experience in peace work at a national level for a young person, or an older person seeking a

change in their lives.

- To strengthen the links between Quakers and other organisations working for peace and justice. We particularly like to include small and struggling organisations for which a Peaceworker can make an enormous difference.
- To help ensure the viability of peace organisations and strengthen elements of peace movement thinking and practice.

Why do we spend money employing someone to work for other organisations? Part of the answer lies in our Quaker emphasis on building long-term relationships for change. We are good at networking and we value the gifts and strengths brought by others. We also see value in planting seeds and watering them.

We believe the Peaceworker programme benefits our own work by:

- Enabling QPSW to be involved in peace work that may not feature strongly in our own programmes: for example mediation, arms trade research, developing civilian contributions to the prevention of violent conflict, campaigning for conscientious objection.
- Developing a strong relationship with someone who is likely to continue making a valuable contri-



Simon Heywood – Conscience, the peace tax Campaign

but ion to peace. Our 'fruiting' rate is impressive and indicates that being a Peaceworker can be a life-changing experience.

- Strengthening the relationships between Quakers and host organisations. It's the people in the organisations that build the relationships and the process of negotiating, problem-sharing and solving, regularly evaluating and sharing in the work creates bonds that can outlast the placement.
- Developing a community of Peaceworkers. Last year Bethan Hillas, a Peaceworker in 1996-7, was married and three previous Peaceworkers were invited. And a current Peaceworker shares a house with a former Peaceworker. QPSW also arranges reunions.

How does it work?

Each February QPSW invites organisations to bid for a Peaceworker. In March we advertise the posts and in May interview candidates. The interviewing panel includes one person from QPSW's Placements Group to which these Peaceworkers are accountable. The fascinating part is that it's an exercise in matching the requirements of the organisations with the skills and interests of the candidates. At the time of interview neither the panel nor the candidates know what the specific job is. The successful candidates are offered the placements that the panel believes will best develop and chal-



Emma Mayhew – CAAT – with Paul Ingram



Kat Barton – Peace News

lunge them, and add most value to the host organisation. Meetings are held with the new Peaceworkers and host organisation very soon after the appointment to agree the placement and job description. After a two-week preparation period at Friends House and Woodbrooke the Peaceworkers start work in September.

The peace movement in Britain is small but resilient and Quakers occupy an important place within it. The Religious Society of Friends, in peace movement terms, is large and well resourced. This lays upon us a responsibility to support and work collaboratively with fellow organisations, many of which are characterised by dedicated and grossly overworked people labouring in small offices. Time and again we are reminded that one person for one year can make an enormous difference.

*Steve Whiting, QPSW Programme Manager.
Tel: 020 7663 1061. Email: stevew@quaker.org.uk*

Not for Quakers!!



Photo: Steve Capleman

The new 'Live Simply' recyclable Quaker pen is available from Quaker Life Outreach Section – but they are not for Quakers! At least the idea isn't that Quakers use them themselves but that Quakers use them for outreach. You could leave them in your Meeting House for other groups to take away, hand them out on school visits, offer them to your local library... the possibilities are endless! The pens are available free from Outreach Section in return for your suggestions on how to use them.

*Contact Carmel Keogh on 020 7663 1017
or e-mail: carmelk@quaker.org.uk*

Broadening policy debate at the IMF

Following joint work last year with American Friends Service Committee in Nicaragua, Robin Robison continues to bring the voice of Nicaraguan people to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Robin Robison, of the Quaker Peace & Social Witness's Economic Issues programme, has met several times with officials at the IMF and World Bank in Washington. At a meeting in January, he built on existing links between IMF officials and civil society groups from Nicaragua. Bringing these groups into contact with IMF officials helps to make the decision-making process as open as possible. Robin continues to link with and gain insight from local groups in Nicaragua.

A particular focus of the meeting in January was how debt relief granted to the Nicaraguan government is being

allocated (see *Quaker News* Autumn 2004). Debt relief is granted on the condition that resources released are directed to poverty-reduction projects. Research commissioned by QPSW in 2003 seems to show that well over \$100 million in debt relief granted by the IMF has been spent on servicing internal debt, rather than poverty reduction. This is illegal under Highly Indebted Poor Countries* rules and is a misuse of funds.

In London, Robin Robison is making a Quaker contribution to NGO meetings of the coalition of voluntary organisations which have come together to form the 'Make Poverty History' mobilisation. This links with the work of Suzanne Ismail (see pages 1-2 and 12). Working with others in this way gives QPSW additional influence with government officials in the Treasury and the Department for

International Development. It is important that we use these opportunities to influence policy, as the UK government is one of the big decision makers within international financial institutions such as the IMF and World Bank. Our experience in countries such as Nicaragua helps us illustrate the grassroots impact of policy decisions.

**Highly Indebted Poor Countries are countries whose levels of debt are so high relative to their capacity to generate income that it is virtually impossible to repay them. In many cases these countries have repaid more than the original sum of their loans, but due to spiralling interest charges they continue to pay.*

*For further information contact:
Robin Robison, Quaker Peace & Social Witness. Tel: 020 7663 1039.
Email: robinr@quaker.org.uk or
Suzanne Ismail, Economic Issues Group, QPSW, tel: 020 7663 1055.
Email: suzannei@quaker.org.uk*

Trade justice to *Make Poverty History*

Over 100 organisations have got together to form the Make Poverty History coalition mentioned on page 1. They aim to put pressure on the government to use this influence and to push for fundamental changes in economic policies that will benefit developing countries. The key messages are 'trade justice', 'drop the debt' and 'more and better aid'. The UK government will be particularly important in all of this as in 2005 it holds the posts of president of the EU and chair of the G8. With both of these positions comes a significant amount of influence – to drive agendas and to persuade other governments to act.

Trade Justice Update

Through its membership of the Trade Justice Movement (TJM), Quaker Peace & Social Witness (QPSW) is continuing to offer support and resources to Friends and Meetings campaigning for fairer trade rules.

Demands to make trade fair are part of the core demands of the make poverty history coalition and in this important year it is vital that the trade justice message is made loud and clear and that decision makers take it on board.

Taking its lead from Brazil, where several country-wide popular votes have been held on trade issues, the

TJM is holding a 'Vote for Trade Justice' to demonstrate public concern about the unfair trade rules that cost developing countries £1.3 billion every day. Over 150,000 votes have been cast so far, with a target of over one million by the end of the year.

Getting Involved

Many Friends and meetings have been actively promoting the campaign, having requested over 12,000 voting cards from QPSW to date. Displaying posters, collecting 'votes', holding Trade Justice vigils or public debates are just some of the other ways that Friends have been getting involved.

There will be plenty of other opportunities to promote the campaign this year (see dates on page 2). The week of 10-16 April has been earmarked a Global Week of Action on Trade



Photo: Paul Dix/QPSW

A coffee farmer would typically receive less than 25 pence for the beans used to produce a jar of instant coffee sold for over £1.75.

where campaigners all over the world will be demanding that their governments and international institutions implement the reforms needed to make fair trade a reality.

Campaigners are encouraged to organise events and generate publicity showing that trade rules should not interfere with people's rights to food, a livelihood, water, education and health. The G8 summit, UN summit on the Millennium Development Goals and World Trade Organisation Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong will create other opportunities for action.

QPSW can provide you with 'vote for trade justice' ballot cards, an action pack, briefings and other campaigning resources.

Suzanne Ismail, QPSW, tel: 020 7663 1055, email: suzannei@quaker.org.uk

Facts about poverty:

IMF driven reforms in Nicaragua resulted in a doubling of the price of water between 1994 and 2000. As a result many poor families couldn't afford to pay for it and were forced to obtain water from untreated sources or forgo basics like education or medical care. (QPSW/Nestor Avendano)

In 2000, a coffee farmer would typically receive less than 25 pence for the beans used to produce a jar of instant coffee sold for over £1.75. (fair-trade foundation report spilling the beans on coffee)

According to the World Bank, 2.8 billion people live on less than \$2 per day, and more than 1.2 billion earn less than \$1 per day. (World Bank website)

Between 1999 and 2001 one third of the total population of sub-Saharan Africa was classified as being undernourished by the UN.

In 2000 women in South-Central Asia were 26 times more likely to die during childbirth than women in developed countries. (based on UN figs)

Quaker Life consults on the Future of the Quaker Tapestry

Photo © Quaker Tapestry Scheme



The Quaker Tapestry, that remarkable collection of 77 panels illustrating 350 years of Quaker history and achievement, has not attracted sufficient visitors to its home in Kendal Friends Meeting House to ensure its financial viability.

The Tapestry is run by an independent charity and is not part of the centrally managed work of Britain Yearly Meeting. At present it is housed in a museum setting in Kendal Friends Meeting House, where all 77 panels can be seen for much of the year. About half the panels go out for a February roadshow in a different location each year, this year in Exeter. There is also in Kendal a considerable collection of archive material relating to the development of the panels and many Quaker artefacts, either displayed or in store. The Tapestry has strong support from both Friends and non Friends in the Kendal area.

Kendal and Sedbergh Monthly Meeting and the Tapestry Trustees have sought the help and advice of Meeting for Sufferings, who in turn have asked Quaker Life Central Committee to work with the Trustees to consult widely and then suggest a

way forward. The aim is to consider how to make the Tapestry 'a national resource for outreach and inreach'.

Quaker Life Central Committee has appointed a group of four Friends (including two from Outreach Committee) to work with Richard Summers, the Assistant General Secretary of Quaker Life and the Tapestry Trustees to try to discern a way forward. As part of this process, we are consulting all local meetings in the Yearly Meeting and constructive suggestions from individuals are also invited.

Some suggestions already made include:

- moving it to a location which is accessible to more people;
- incorporating it in a proposed 'Peace Museum' in Yorkshire;
- using it more flexibly as an inspirational resource for Friends and others;
- linking specific relevant panels to displays of the current work of Friends at home and abroad;
- keeping the administrative base and half the panels in Kendal and making the remainder more accessible.

Do you favour any of these suggestions, or do you have creative, imaginative suggestions of your own? The Quaker Life Consultation Group would welcome ideas from meetings and individuals. Do bear in mind that whatever is suggested should make more effective use of the Tapestry panels for outreach and inreach and be more financially sustainable than the present arrangement.

Suggestions are needed by 16 April 2005 please, by the convenor of the working group:

Phil Lucas, Quaker Life Consultation Group, 6 Upper Bow, Edinburgh, EH1 2JN or e-mail: phil@pplucas.fsnet.co.uk



Photo © Quaker Tapestry Scheme

Changing Expectations

What do you expect when you visit or contact Friends House and other BYM centres?

If you visit Friends House, you will find much that has changed: a warm welcome, bright modern meeting rooms and outstanding Library and archive, a well-stocked Bookshop and a bustling restaurant with high quality award-winning food. We try to make it a real home for British Quakers and ensure a Quakerly ambience for the thousands of visitors who also use it. This has brought excellent returns in the form of outreach and additional income for Quaker work. Swarthmoor Hall has also been transformed.

When you contact Friends House for news, information or practical advice and help for your meeting or committee, we are ready to respond and assist where we can and delighted to tell you about the work staff do on your behalf or put you in touch with other Friends working in similar fields.

All this you should expect - and more, but clearly you need to know what the possibilities are. The emphasis of our operational plan for 2005-2007 is therefore to ensure much clearer information about the services and facilities already on offer, to tailor them to the priorities and changing needs of your meetings and committees and make our work on your behalf even more effective. In other words to work with you to make best

use of our resources, boost understanding of Quakerism and Quaker work and anticipate and change your expectations for the future...

THE ISSUES WE FACE:

Britain Yearly Meeting continues to face the problems identified in the Long Term Plan: 'spiritual hunger, changing needs amongst the membership and in the wider world, over complex structures and processes, overload in information and gaps in communication. We also face problems of declining and overstretched human and financial resources. For example the plan foresees contribution income remaining static at £2 million in monetary terms whilst, over the next three years, the real value of this will decline through the effect of inflation. At the same time priorities are changing and we would like to undertake more work in support of our young people, our meetings and yet more witness in the world.

OUR SUCCESSES:

Working in partnership, committees and staff have responded flexibly to the concerns and requests of Friends, developing imaginative projects and providing resources and support for meetings and individual members and attenders while maintaining the existing centrally managed work programmes and generating additional income to meet the challenge of doing

so within our means.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE ACHIEVED IN THE NEXT 3 YEARS:

If we are to do more with the resources we have we shall need to work more closely together in order to gain better understanding of the changing needs, priorities and possibilities. We will need to foster networking and work together with meetings and other Quaker or voluntary groups and with other church partners to release energy and resources for Quaker work and to encourage the participation of Friends of all ages.

OUR PRIORITIES:

Over the next three years in order to harness resources entrusted to us in the most effective manner we will:

- ▶ be both proactive and responsive in supporting the life and witness of our meetings
- ▶ further develop the centrally managed work of the Yearly Meeting, e.g. by consolidating and building upon existing successful work, such as work with children and young people
- ▶ further improve the quality of our services and facilities in Friends House and other centres
- ▶ continue to raise the profile of Quakerism and of Quaker work, whether done centrally or locally
- ▶ improve governance, management and accountability within the Yearly Meeting responding to the requirements of legislation, as appropriate
- ▶ generate more resources for Quaker witness
- ▶ develop a working culture that is effective, proactive and harnesses the strengths of committee members and staff without overload

The results should be more witness in the world, better communication and mutual engagement and a wider audience for Quaker faith and the spiritual and temporal witness of our religious communities.

FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS CHART

	Year 2005		Year 2006		Year 2007	
	Submitted to MfS Nov 2003	Current Position	Submitted to MfS Nov 2003	Current Position	Submitted to MfS Nov 2003	Current Position
TOTAL	£	£	£	£	£	£
Income	6,862,100	6,846,000	6,563,200	6,588,100		6,692,000
Expenditure	6,934,300	6,846,000	6,768,200	6,622,600		6,839,700
Balance	-72,200	0	-205,000	-34,500		-147,700

Notes

- 1 The projected income from the leasing of Courtauld House is included in the figures.
- 2 These figures include an allowance for a number of existing staff to join the Stakeholder pension scheme and for the equalisation of the employer contributions.
- 3 They take no account of any decision to be made by Meeting for Sufferings regarding the finances of either Friends World Committee for Consultation or the Quaker Tapestry.

A MORE IMAGINATIVE, FLEXIBLE AND EFFECTIVE APPROACH

We look forward to working in different ways with local meetings to meet their needs and support their witness in the world. We will continue to clarify and develop the help we give our meetings and monitor the cost of these activities to ensure we obtain the best value from the contributions our meetings make towards this help. We will continue our policy of investing now in developing the quality of central facilities, services and skills for longer term gains. We also expect the activities of BYM centres to cover more of their costs and give better returns for the resources invested in them.

We aim to achieve a balanced budget in 2005.

*Recording Clerk's Office,
Friends House, Euston Road,
London NW1 2BJ*

FOSH: Friends of Swarthmoor Hall

Launched in March 2004, FOSH has had a very successful first year.

In the autumn of 2004 members of FOSH took down several trees in the gardens and grounds to let light in and to help shrub and border beds remain so. Other gardening work was completed and two saw horses were made to be used to log up the mound of tree branches and trunks that lies in the meadow. The garden workshop was tidied and cleaned and work began on indexing the small library of books in the Hall.

For further information about helping as a FOSH member at the Hall contact Bill Shaw 01229-583204 swarthmrhall@gn.apc.org.



Photo shows a team of FOSH members with Bill Shaw, the Hall Manager, (left to right: Ruth Corry, Peter & Kath West, Bill, David Corry) gathered around the remains of a willow in the Staff House garden.

New distribution for third edition of *Quaker faith & practice*

Britain Yearly Meeting will be publishing the third edition of *Quaker Faith and Practice* in March 2005. In a change to previous editions the Quaker Bookshop will be working in partnership with Methodist Publishing House who will take on the bulk of storage and distribution. MPH have a modern and efficient warehousing and dispatch facility situated in Peterborough and currently handle distribution for CTBI, Epworth Press, Foundery Press and The United Reformed Church in addition to their own Methodist list. Under the new arrangement BYM expect to benefit from increased storage capacity at Friends House and more time available for developing and improving our bookselling service to Friends.

Courses at Swarthmoor Hall

MIND WHAT STIRS IN YOUR HEART

with Maria Brown & Vera Dolton • 15-17 April
A time for reflecting on what moves us most deeply and guides our decisions and actions. £130 res, £90 non res (includes some meals).

CALLIGRAPHY

with Mary Stone • 23-24 April
Learn the basic techniques. A basic set of pens and card included. £105 res; £70 non res (includes some meals). Friday dinner & B&B £25 extra.

DRYSTONE WALLING FOR BEGINNERS

with Bill Shaw • 20-22 May
A practical workshop for anyone who wants to learn the skill of drystone walling. Participants must be able to do some fairly heavy lifting and lots of back bending. Max. 8 participants. £95 res., £55 non-res.

A WILDLIFE BREAK

with Michael Thompson • 6-9 June
Visits to local and RSPB nature reserves in South Cumbria and North Lancashire. £200 res.

TAI CHI

with Roger England • 10-12 June
This weekend series of tai chi chuan sessions and workshops explores all aspects, utilising Wu-style tai chi chuan. It is suitable for people of all ages and fitness. £130 res, £90 non-res

1652 COUNTRY PILGRIMAGE

with a team of guides from Quaker Life 1652 Committee • 23-26 June
For anyone who wants to experience the early history of Quakerism through visits, talks and discussion, based in the heart of the 1652 country. £180 res, £120 non res includes some meals. Both include minibus travel.

*For further information contact Bill Shaw
01229-583204 • swarthmrhall@gn.apc.org
www.swarthmoorhall.co.uk*