

Curbing the demand for small arms from the grassroots to the UN

"We decided we couldn't put up with oppression. We decided to fish where we used to be able to. Guards shot off guns over our heads, but we decided not to go away."

Villager in Kenlaeng Phe

A grassroots movement

Kenlaeng Phe is a village located on the Tonle Sap River some two hours from Phnom Penh. Villagers in this rural part of Cambodia are dependent on fishing for their livelihoods.

During the 'wet season', Kenlaeng Phe is totally submerged by the rising river so houses are built on wooden stilts to prevent them from flooding. When the waters recede, the villagers make use of the fish from the pools of water that are left behind.

However, in 1987 the government began to auction off these fishing ponds to private bidders. The villagers were cut off from their ability to fish, and hence from their principal source of livelihood. They filed complaint petitions and the provincial officials recognised the villagers' rights to the ponds. Unfortunately, the paper documenting these rights



Villagers in Kenlaeng Phe share their experience of non-violent resistance.

Photo Gary Gillespie

was 'lost' by an official and those who had purchased the fishing lots at auction reclaimed them. In 1999, further incursions were made on the ponds as the 'owners' hired armed guards to protect the lots. They destroyed the irrigation dikes maintaining water flow into the ponds and pumped them dry to catch all the fish.

In Kompong Chang province, where Kenlaeng

Phe Village is located, large numbers of people own guns – a legacy of the years of armed conflict. As in most other areas of Cambodia, peoples' lives are seriously affected by the lack of adequate policing. Impunity for law-breakers, poor programmes of re-integration for de-mobilised soldiers, and poorly disciplined or corrupt police cause widespread insecurity and fear.

In the absence of government protection, the villagers of Kenlaeng Phe might have taken up arms and reclaimed the ponds by force. Fortunately, in this case, an alternative was available. One of Cambodia's leading non-governmental organisations, the Working Group on Weapons Reduction held workshops on non-violent resistance for the villagers. They began to

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understand their own power, even in the face of armed guards barring them from their ponds.

The next time the pond owners tried to pump the water lots dry, villagers held a 'fish-in'. When they went to the ponds to collect the fish a guard tried to frighten them off by shooting in the air. The unarmed villagers ran away. However, they then turned and ran towards the guard, who in turn ran off. This kind of resistance was repeated and now all the ponds around Kenlaeng Phe are back in the villagers' control.

Resistance of this type spread to other areas. As a result, the government eventually cancelled the private fishing lot concessions. Together with other villages, the Kenlaeng Phe community has now formed an active fisheries association that maintains standards for sustainable resource use. They now provide unarmed patrols, even at night, to protect their resources from people outside the community.

The success of the Kenlaeng Phe villagers reveals the equally important role played by 'outside' bodies in the resistance to the presence of guns in a community. In this case, the Working Group on Weapons Reduction and another non-governmental organisation provided training, which allowed the community to discover its own capacities for non-violent resistance to intimidation and threats. Women also played a vital role in the community action and it was important for the communities to work

together with the government for the establishment of good laws.

Reducing the impact of the misuse of arms requires greater controls on their availability. But this will not be enough. There must also be adequate responses to factors that drive the demand for weapons. In many cases this will have to do with people's feelings of insecurity and their degree of access to alternatives to the gun.

The ability of the Kenlaeng Phe villagers to sustain their livelihoods will depend on the degree to which the government fairly enforces the gun possession laws and provides proper security for the village.

At the United Nations

What is the relationship between this local story and the work of the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in Geneva? One of QUNO's central roles is to help to bridge the gap between local experience and international action. Since 1999, QUNO, along with partner organisations, has conducted workshops in regions particularly affected by small arms. Through these meetings we seek local perspectives on the impact of small arms and what is driving the demand for them. We also learn how local groups have attempted to reduce armed violence in their midst.

One such workshop took place in Cambodia in 2002.* One of our partners in the workshop was the Working Group on Weapons Reduction (WGWR), the organisa-

tion that had worked with the villagers of Kenlaeng Phe. The WGWR suggested that the workshop participants and the villagers might benefit from meeting each other. Therefore the participants, from Southeast Asia and elsewhere, travelled by road and boat from Phnom Penh to Kenlaeng Phe village. The meeting only lasted a day, but the villagers had a chance to tell their stories. The visiting participants listened to the villagers and were able to share their own experiences from around Southeast Asia. The villagers were able to place their own experience into a wider context as QUNO staff reflected on how national, regional and international action on small arms is important to the local setting, and how it must be informed by local experience if local actions are to be sustainable.

These workshops have greatly informed the way in which QUNO seeks to affect the development of international policy on small arms. Through our publications, luncheons, seminars and other methods we integrate the information gathered into different policy-shaping diplomatic communities, including those of New York and Geneva.

In 2006, there will be a review of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms. This will be a critical meeting that will determine to a large extent the shape, direction, and momentum of initiatives to reduce the impact of small arms and light weapons use around the world. What happens,

or does not happen, at that Review Conference will have an impact on the long-term prospects for sustainable development in places like Kenlaeng Phe. QUNO seeks to produce outcomes from that meeting that will positively affect the lives of people at the grassroots level.

As an office with a primary focus on international policy development, it is beyond the scope of our work to engage regularly in the daily experience of communities like Kenlaeng Phe. However, just as we have gained and learned from workshops such as the one held in Cambodia, we hope that we have also provided new insights and useful information to those we have visited and worked with. Because our work is better informed by these local experiences, our own initiatives at international policy development are more likely to have an impact.

** For more detail, see Curbing the Demand for Small Arms: Focus on Southeast Asia. This report and other information on QUNO's small arms 'demand' work, including our most recent report Conflict Resolution and Lessening the Demand for Small Arms, can be found on www.geneva.quno.info, or by writing to David Atwood at QUNO, 13 avenue du Mervelet, 1290 Geneva, Switzerland or datwood@quno.ch.*

Come to the Residential Yearly Meeting 2005 in York: see pages 4 and 13 for details.



The words 'even so' echoed through the first Information Day, on 16th October in Birmingham, on the process for checking criminal records.

Volunteers can now check with the Criminal Records Bureau whether they are clear to work with the young and vulnerable. Have they been convicted for a relevant offence, thus listed on the Sex Offenders' Register? Was there a lesser conviction? Those supervising have to discern whether the risk is negligible, low or unacceptable, and what pastoral care should be offered.

Checking criminal records may be legally possible, but many questions were raised at the Information Day.

'Overwhelmingly, in our meeting we felt that the process is needlessly difficult, wordy, complicated, contradictory and infuriating' wrote one Friend but even so, it's got to be done, 'oh yes, absolutely'. Does the process contradict our Testimony on Simplicity?

Most of us felt that changing bank accounts is much more difficult, but none of us had refused to move our money just because of the paperwork!

The process was 'horrendous' and took eighteen months for the warden whose hand is pictured, with his daughter's. 'The meeting was very supportive, and I always had the documentation to show that the application was in process.' Why get checked at all? 'First of all, the expectation of the job, given the opportunities for contact with the children, and secondly, it enables me to take children's meeting and gives parents a degree of security, based on knowledge, rather than 'he's a Quaker, he must be all right'.'

Improvements, we learned, are coming. Backlogs are down to about two months. Better guidance on verifying identity will be sent to all meetings in December. Working through the application form in the morning dealt with practical matters: in

the afternoon we reflected on deeper issues.

Of course, we agreed at the Information Day, checking records is not enough. There is no one guarantee of safety, checks are one small element in our over-all care. It was reported that in one group of Quaker women survivors, none of their abusers had had a criminal record: checking would not have saved them. Even so, said the survivors' message, checking helps to declare our values to the vulnerable, to parents, to potential abusers, and to survivors themselves.

'What if' was the afternoon's theme. What if a meeting decided NOT to check records? Probably no-one would be hurt, but those at the Information Day were not willing to take that risk. An insurance broker wrote: "the bottom line really is that all members should ensure that the relevant checks have been carried out (and they are able to demonstrate so) to ensure any potential claim will be considered under the policy. Failure to do so could prejudice the cover under the policy". Monthly meetings are ultimately responsible: constituent meetings should consult if considering opting out of what is now common good practice in youth work.

What if abuse happened – how would a victim know who was safe to tell? We considered a designated children's overseer, whose contact details would be displayed in meeting house lobbies and children's rooms, and in contact lists.

What if an offender wanted to worship with Friends? Circles of Support and Accountability were beyond the scope of the Information Day but we learned from the principles. We recognised the malign power of a sexual attraction to the young, accurately understood as a life-long tendency or addiction. Obviously a sex offender known to a small appointed group supervising boundaries and contacts within the Quaker community, would be safer than an unidentified offender. Perhaps meetings should consider the possibility calmly, hypothetically, just in case.

A few hundred Quakers have been checked so far, and only one discernment was needed. A couple of thousand volunteers have yet to be cleared. It is time to get on with the process. The discussions and reflections will continue.

Anne Hosking

For more information about the CRB procedures, and Information Days in Spring 2005, contact Anne Hosking, Secretary, Quaker Life Reference Group (Criminal Records), at Friends House. Direct telephone: 020 7663 1023, e-mail anneh@quaker.org.uk

Meeting Safety, £3.50 (£1 p&p) and Supplement: *Working with the Criminal Records Bureau Procedures* £1.00 (60p p&p). Both books together £4.50 + £1.50 p&p.

Trespass and Trust: Quaker meetings and sex offenders, by Daphne Glazer, £7 + £1 p&p.



Come to YM 2005

York • 30 July – 6 August

www.britainyearlymeeting.org.uk/york2005

Many of those, both young and old, who know how exciting residential Yearly Meetings can be, probably have the dates pencilled in their diaries already. They'll be looking forward to being inspired and encouraged by the worship throughout the week as well as finding out about projects and witness that individuals or meetings are doing, and meeting friends old and new. For those who don't know – come to the University of York from 30 July to 6 August 2005 and find out!

On one day, there will be exciting excursions such as the Doncaster Dome, The Deep – the world's only submerium, the National Coal Mining Museum, Magna (a steel works), the North Yorkshire Steam Railway as seen in Harry Potter, watersports at Wykeham Lakes, walking in the Dales and more. Other activities alongside the main sessions will include some dancing, some singing, many opportunities for worship, discussions led by Listed Informal Groups, lectures, late night cinema, early morning yoga and a lot of time and space to simply be with other Quakers.

In sessions of Yearly

Meeting we will come together to discern the mind of God on the various affairs affecting us as a People. It is our chance to exercise our shared responsibility for our Society. Everyone contributes, whether through silence or by the spoken word. The under 19s take part in Yearly Meeting too, sometimes following the topics in age appropriate groups and sometimes sharing in the Over 19s sessions. It is worth noting that Under 19s need to book well in advance, for the whole week and must have a responsible adult on campus. (Further information on page 13.)

By the end of the week many will feel challenged by aspects of what has gone on during the Yearly Meeting, but ultimately affirmed and in all probability very tired. New understandings will have been forged, new leadings may have become apparent and new friendships will have been made.

While non-members are welcome, you will need permission of the clerk of Yearly Meeting in good time. This should be sought by an elder writing a supporting letter to the Yearly Meeting Clerk, care of the Recording Clerk's Office at Friends House.

The university is making several disabled access bedrooms available to us. The campus is based around a lake, is generally

quite flat and most of the public rooms have disabled access.

As an inclusive community we run a bursary scheme which means none should be excluded from YM for financial reasons. Local overseers will have details early in the new year. Children who have not yet started secondary school will be able to share with their folks. Their fee will be £30 each in self-catering or £89.15 in half-board while the price range for Under 19s in their own

room will be from £117.50 for standard self-catering to £225.65 for en-suite half board. Over 19s accommodation ranges in price from £165.35 to £322.50 and will include a set of Publications in Advance if they want one. Unfortunately it is not possible for us to arrange a campsite this time. Non-residents will be expected to pay £12 per day.

More information will be in local meetings early in the 2005 or log on to the website given above.

How to stay cool in August 2005? The Under 19 programme at Yearly Meeting

I am currently searching for adults with experience of residential Quaker youth activities to be involved with this national event. Interwoven with the Yearly Meeting agenda this is a stimulating week for all concerned and immensely rewarding for those who are involved with running it.

If you want to find out more about what is involved with being a member of the Core Team at Yearly Meeting please email U19prog@quaker.org.uk or write to Jane Dawson, Recording Clerk's Office, Friends House, Euston Road, London, NW1 2BJ 020 7663 1160

For the coolest look next summer join the Core Team and get to wear orange at Yearly Meeting 2005.

Friends Trusts Limited

Does your meeting have any investments or own a meeting house or other property? If so, the chances are that it makes use of the services of Friends Trusts. This is because a meeting is by its nature a somewhat amorphous body with a changing population and, as such, does not possess what is quaintly termed a 'legal personality'. At first this may seem a little odd but it makes sense when you realise that, when buying or selling or otherwise dealing in property, the owners have to be clearly identified. This means that, in law, ownership has to lie with one or more named individuals or a corporate body – that is a legally constituted company.

For many years all trust property including that belonging to 'unincorporated associations' such as Quaker meetings was held in the names of individual trustees who were responsible for any dealings in the property and signing the necessary documents. Not only are such arrangements cumbersome but they also require that trustees continue to be appointed and available. It is not unknown for trusts, especially those which rarely deal in property, to find themselves without any named individual to act because those named have died. Thus in 1923 we set up Friends Trusts Limited, the trust corporation authorised to act as the legal custodian of any property owned by or in connection with 'the Religious Society of Friends, commonly called Quakers, in Great Britain'.

Whilst some meetings and Quaker trusts have continued the practice of named trustees the vast majority in England and Wales have, over time, appointed Friends Trusts as the legal owner of their property. In doing so they retain the 'beneficial ownership' of the property and the right to decide on its use and any dealings will only be carried out on their express instruction – normally a formal minute of the meeting or trust concerned. The role of Friends Trusts is to carry out their wishes as expeditiously as possible and, at the same time, ensure that the proper legal processes – including the requirements of charity law – are fully observed.

In addition to its primary purpose of holding and dealing in property, Friends Trusts performs at least two other important functions. It is the recommended recipient for legacies and gifts intended to benefit Quaker meetings or activities, whether that be general or with specific directions. This can ensure that a legacy does not 'fail through uncertainty' as can happen if the intended beneficiary is not clearly identifiable – Society of Friends is not itself unique to Quakers – or has ceased to exist during the time since the will was written. When named in a will Friends Trusts is able to receive the legacy, to give a



Photo: Michael Long

The Historic Chapels Trust has just restored Coanwood Meeting House, here pictured with some Friends from Hexham who hope to use the meeting house occasionally for its original purpose. The transfer of Coanwood Meeting House to the Historic Chapels Trust was overseen by Friends Trusts Limited at the request of local Friends.

satisfactory discharge to the executors and to distribute it appropriately in accordance with any expressed wishes. As well as acting as a 'go between' for such gifts, Friends Trusts has also been made responsible for the management and distribution of a number of Quaker funds, some of which have to be used for specified purposes and others which are at the discretion of the directors.

As a limited company Friends Trusts is overseen by a board of ten directors appointed by Meeting for Sufferings on the usual triennial basis. The day to day work is carried out by the Secretary, presently Christopher Gregory, from an office in the Finance and Property Department in Friends House. Besides dealing with a fairly constant flow of transactions

involving property and investments the Secretary is able to advise meetings on charity administration and trusteeship matters. One current area of interest is the move towards the registration of all land in England and Wales and discussions are taking place with the Land Registry to make this as easy and cheap as possible for meetings.

In short, Friends Trusts exists to provide a service to meetings and other Quaker bodies within Britain Yearly Meeting and enquiries are always welcome.

For further information contact Chris Gregory. Telephone: 020 7663 1082 or email chrisg@quaker.org.uk

Market access for small farmers in South Africa

South Africa is technically a middle-income country; however it has huge disparities of wealth for the few and enormous urban and rural poverty amongst the majority of the population. The Surplus People's Project (SPP) is an organisation which specialises in assisting people without access to their own land in the western and northern Cape regions. This work brings them into daily contact with some of South Africa's poorest people. It spends most of its time giving legal and practical assistance to those who have been evicted from the land and who need help acquiring land.

Through BYM membership of the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI), Quaker Peace & Social Witness (QPSW) got involved with discussions with the non governmental organisations

(NGOs) in the Cape about how to help small farmers. It was clear we cannot, as outsiders, become involved with land ownership as that is an internal South African matter. However, having land is not enough to raise people out of poverty. There are many other barriers for small farmers to surmount and equitable access to markets is one.

QPSW commissioned a three-month short-term project to research the available knowledge on markets for small farmers in the Cape. Two academics from Cape Town University worked on this in the early part of this year. They produced a detailed report which looks at a variety of commodity markets of importance to small farmers in the region: Roibos tea, goats, sheep, vegetables and wine, with additional studies looking at the fair

trade and organic markets. The main findings of this report are that apart from land, small farmers need access to reasonably priced capital and knowledge about both domestic and international markets.

It is early days yet but we hope that this initial exploration may lead to longer-term work in the rural Cape giving assistance to markets. The QPSW Economic Issues Group agreed that this work should move forward to the next stage, asking that careful consideration should be given to costs of trade to the environment. Discussions between QPSW and SPP in Cape Town will continue over the next two to three months, and we hope a decision about possible future project work can be made by spring next year.

The UK is a very impor-

tant market for South African produce. QPSW will be able to use its membership of the ETI to reach decision makers in the dominant UK supermarkets. The supermarkets have the power to increase their sourcing from small producers and through fair trade channels.

Trade negotiations at the World Trade Organisation can also make a huge difference to small farmers and this is where co-operation between QPSW, QUNO and South African NGOs makes sense, bringing together the international work with the local knowledge and understanding.

This project follows on from QPSW's involvement in ETI's wine market project in the Cape.

For further information contact Robin Robison, QPSW, robinr@quaker.org.uk or tel: 020 7663 1039 or Suzanne Ismail, QPSW, tel: 020 7663 1055 or suzannei@quaker.org.uk.

Changes in Education and Grants Section

Anne Bennett, the former Programme Manager for the Education and Grants work of Quaker Peace & Social Witness (QPSW), has moved to become the Representative in Quaker House Belfast (QHB). Quaker House Belfast has not for some years been managed directly by QPSW, but by a Local Executive Group of Friends in Belfast. QPSW still appoint five members to the Management Committee that sets the priorities for the work of QHB; the other five are appointed by Ireland Yearly Meeting. Bearing in mind

this partnership, Anne will write journals letters about her work, which will be distributed by QPSW as part of the regular mailing of journal letters from field workers.

We have taken this opportunity to draw together all the grant-making work of QPSW into one part-time post. The new Programme Manager is Debbie Taylor, who started in QPSW in November. She is now the contact point for the following grants:

- Brett/Bailey Awards for young people studying

peace, international relations, politics, philosophy, East/West relations and the United Nations

- Adult Grants for Friends and regular attenders who, as mature students, are following courses of further or higher education
- Joint Bursaries to enable the children of members and attenders to go to Quaker schools
- Friends Teachers Trust Fund to provide financial assistance to Friends who are or have been teachers and to non-Friends who are



Debbie Taylor

or have been teachers in Quaker schools

- Hope and Prospect Grants, for unemployed Friends and regular attenders wishing to enhance their life or start a business.

Contact Debbie Taylor for information about these grants (020 7663 1038, debbiet@quaker.org.uk).

Photo: John Fitzgerald

Quaker Life has new Assistant General Secretary



Richard Summers

Photo: Trish Carr

Richard Summers became the Assistant General Secretary in Quaker Life in October. Richard joined the Friends House staff from Hardshaw East Monthly Meeting, where he was warden of Manchester Mount Street Meeting House and latterly the executive officer of the monthly meeting. He worked for Friends in Hardshaw East MM for ten and a half years and helped develop and improve the management, finance and employment structures of the monthly meeting turning Mount Street Meeting House into a productive building providing a resource for Friends and the local com-

munity and raising a substantial income for the monthly meeting.

Richard has served his monthly meeting as an elder and an overseer, and Friends nationally as a member of Quaker Home Service Wardens Committee and Quaker Life Central Committee. He is currently a trustee for both Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre and the International Sacred Literature Trust.

One important aspect of Richard's new job will be to develop Quaker Life's role in supporting meetings. He hopes to open up a dialogue with Friends to foster mutual

understanding of how we might best support the life and witness of our meetings. He also hopes to raise awareness of the resources that are already available via Quaker Life and its committees, such as the resources room and advice and support in connection with children's and young people's work; outreach; wardenship issues; eldership and oversight and information on meeting safety, including Criminal Records clearance.

Richard welcomes contact from meetings. He can be reached by email at: richards@quaker.org.uk or by telephone on 020 7663 1096.

What do you think peace means?

Where does the word 'peace' come from and what does it mean? How do we arrive at a commitment to peace, grounded in faith, and what might it involve in practice? What is 'the covenant of peace which was before wars and strife were'?

Quaker Peace & Social Witness has prepared a series of six articles exploring these questions and more, in order to feed a conversation among Friends about the Quaker peace testimony. This project is the latest in a long-term programme concerned with exploring the roots of the peace testi-

mony in faith, as well as its practical expression in the world. Please join the conversation!

The six articles are being made available on a monthly basis from January 2005. They will be published on the Yearly Meeting web site at www.quaker.org.uk. We can also send you the articles on request by post as each becomes available. Please ask to be added to the list - there's no charge for this.

We would be delighted to have your responses to the articles and your own reflections on the meaning

of peace. If you have access to the internet, you can receive and discuss the articles on the peace testimony discussion forum managed by Northern Friends Peace Board - just send an email to nfpb@gm.apc.org to join the list. You can also write to us at Friends House with your thoughts. At the end of the project, we intend to publish the set of articles together with a summary of the responses.

We would also like to remind Friends that talks and workshops about peace and the peace testimony are available for

Meetings and non-Quaker groups - please do get in touch if your Meeting or group is interested in exploring peace in this way.

Write to: David Gee, Peace & Disarmament Programme, Quaker Peace & Social Witness, Friends House, 173-177 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ Tel: 020 7663 1067 Email: davidg@quaker.org.uk

For speakers in general please contact: Helen Bradford, QPSW, tel: 020 7663 1071 or email: helenb@quaker.org.uk

The outcomes of outreach

Outreach, the act of sharing our spiritual experience with others, brings many benefits, not least a chance to examine our own beliefs afresh. Britain Yearly Meeting's Outreach Section, based in Friends House, works hard to connect ideas with energy,

equipping Friends throughout the country as they share their faith with others. One quite visible result of this outreach work is more people in meeting. Here four Friends, who have all come to Quakers as a result of centrally co-ordinated or supported outreach, share their stories.



Photo: John Fitzgerald

CHRISTINE COULOURIS

An outreach advertisement in the national press prompted me to go to an Enquirers' Weekend at Charney Manor in the spring of 2000. I jumped at the opportunity as I had, until then, believed that one had to be born into a Quaker family in order to become a Quaker.

I cannot speak too highly of the Enquirers' weekend I attended. I was immediately struck by the atmosphere of personal kindness and tolerance of a variety of beliefs. Now I can place that as "Looking for that of God in Everyone" and treasure it as a valued aim in my life.

For me personally, seeing the outreach advertisement in the national press has given me a spiritual home which I would have been most unlikely to find otherwise. The Religious Society of Friends has a lot to offer the world's people and the planet itself. I think Outreach is vital.



Photo: Brian Moody

GEOFFREY DURHAM

About ten years ago I was going through a spiritual crisis, and I found myself stuck in a traffic jam outside Hampstead Meeting House every day for about three weeks. I kept staring at a poster which said "Peace is a process to engage in, not an end to be reached." I thought, "I want to know more."

So I legged it down to Friends House Bookshop and bought half a dozen books, four of which I read in the coffee shop at Euston station. Thank goodness the bookshop entrance was on the street: I don't think I'd have dared go inside if I'd had to brave the front door. I was particularly struck by Gerald Priestland's *Coming Home* and by *Advices and Queries*, which fell open at Advice 27: Live adventurously.

I found my way to a Meeting for Worship at Hampstead and realised that this was a place where I could be. Now I find myself involved in outreach as a real leading. Good outreach is not proselytising. I believe that thousands of people will be attracted to Friends if we just have the confidence and energy to stand up and say clearly who we are.

Enquirers' and Membership Weekends

11-13 March 2005	Enquirers	Charney
13-15 May 2005	Enquirers	Ditchingham
10-12 June 2005	Membership	Charney
4-6 November 2005	Enquirers	Charney



Photo: John Fitzgerald

CATHERINE GOODMAN

"You just have an image of Quakers, don't you... pacifists who sit in silence – that wasn't particularly interesting to me." She speaks of her first experience of a Quaker meeting: "A friend brought me along to a meeting in Brixton. I didn't enjoy it. It's so difficult to go straight into a silent meeting and work out who these people are and what's going on."

Catherine's journey really began with Quaker Quest. "Quaker Quest was brilliant, it was great to go somewhere you could talk about 'spiritual investigation' with others. The best thing was ending with the half hour meeting for worship – that was when I suddenly began to get the point. I don't think I'd have come [into Quakerism] without Quaker Quest." Outreach Section is now bringing this exciting initiative, started by London Friends, to meetings across the country.

She feels that co-ordinated outreach events are crucial for bringing more people into contact with Quakers and their beliefs; "...you could talk to one Quaker who'd be very different to another. If you go to a typical meeting for worship, you'd be basing your opinion of the whole society on what two people said. That's why organised events are important." Catherine, a 'huge fan' of Quaker Quest, suggests: "I think advertising Quaker Quest is a good idea – I feel quite lucky I stumbled across it."

For information about Quaker Quest, please see page 4 of the enclosed Quaker Meetings.

DAVID MATTHEWS

I have known about Quakers from an early age, because I grew up near Jordans. After a time in South Africa, I returned to England in 2000 and my brother-in-law asked me to attend an Alpha course. This course made me realise that I wanted to

practice my spiritual side again within a community but I wanted to join a community that would understand my very open views of our spiritual natures and I thought it would be useful to try a Quaker meeting first. I searched the web and discovered from the Britain Yearly Meeting website (quaker.org.uk) that I lived equidistant from Jordans, Watford and Uxbridge meeting. I attended Jordans first and have been very happy there ever since.

We have a gift and I believe that it is the responsibility of all Quakers to share it. Firstly, by listening to our friends' views on their own spiritual position, and then sharing our own views and hopefully from this process, we both grow spiritually. I am not worried about bums on seats (this will look after itself), my hope is that involvement in outreach enables everyone to grow spiritually. I am now on the Jordans PM and MM Outreach committees and we are working towards running a Quaker Quest during 2005.



Photo: Julia Massey Stewart

Outreach Appeal

BYM spends £100,000 each year on Outreach. We launched an appeal this autumn to support this ongoing work. See the enclosed leaflet. We do hope you will support this work.

"We are seekers but we are also the holders of a precious heritage of discoveries."

Quaker Faith & Practice, introduction.

Demanding to pay for peace

In October 2002, I began to refuse tax payments towards the invasion of Iraq, and contacted Conscience, the Peace Tax Campaign. Around then, a Manchester Quaker, Birgit Völlm, questioned tax policy on human rights grounds. Her local tax office agreed not to prosecute until the courts had ruled. Within a few months, I had joined Birgit and a group of five other activists to bring a case to court. Conscience contacted Phil Shiner, a human rights lawyer, who took the case on. We started to plan for substantial fundraising and awareness-raising activities.

At this point, I noticed an advert for the Peaceworkers in Britain scheme, run by Quaker Peace & Social Witness. I was expecting a lot of peace work this year, so I applied and got a placement at Conscience. At first, I was thinking mainly of the court case. In fact,

Conscience have plenty of projects in hand, so the court case is still mostly a leisure pursuit. In office hours I'm Conscience's Outreach Officer. My job is to answer the question which nags at every anti-war activist: What would you do instead?

Even many peace-loving people are still surprised how many answers there are to that question. I'm learning, partly by reading about all the wars which didn't happen. Europe after 1945? Economic reconstruction, political reform and unification. Nuclear war, 1945 - 90? Small thanks to deterrence; large thanks to farsighted leadership, especially in the Eastern bloc. Estonia in 1993? High-level crisis mediation by EU diplomats. Post-apartheid South Africa? The same, on both sides. Post-communist Eastern Europe? Segregation in the southern US?

Indian independence? Massive, popular nonvio-



From L to R are: Roy Prockter, Simon Heywood, Robin Brookes, Sian Cwper, Brenda Boughton, Birgit Völlm, Joe Jenkins

Photo: Gabby Morton-Jones

lent movements, and, in many, if not all cases, the active concern of the international community.

All viable initiatives, with present-day equivalents in desperate need of funding and recognition. By the time the case comes to court, I expect my perspective will have shifted. From refusing to pay for war, I'll be demanding to

pay for peace. A salutary difference.

Simon Heywood

For further information about the Peace Tax Seven see their website: PeaceTaxSeven.com

For information about the Peaceworkers UK Programme contact Helen Bradford, QPSW, helenb@quaker.org.uk or telephone: 020 7663 1071.

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A free new 28 page manual packed with ideas for outreach is available.

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Resources For Quaker Outreach

2004/2005 Edition

Produced by Outreach Section Friends House

For your copy contact Carmel Keogh. Telephone: 020 7663 1017. Email: carmelk@quaker.org.uk



The 2005 Quaker calendar with photos of Quaker work here and overseas is now available from the Quaker Bookshop. Price: £5.00 + £1.00p p&p

New photo exhibition available for outreach

'The Mike Hoyle Photographic Art Exhibition'

The exhibition is a collection of famous Quaker sayings placed next to provocative images of modern life. It consists of 22 panels each approximately 27 inches x 23 inches. It is ideal for any meetings wishing to attract non-Quakers into their Meeting Houses in a different way. It could be used to support the work

of local Quaker artists or to create a Quaker presence at local art events.

While the exhibition is free to borrow, meetings are asked to pay courier postage charges.

Bookings can be made via: Carmel Keogh, Outreach Administrator Tel 0207 663 1017 E-mail carmelk@quaker.org.uk



Quaker Faith & Practice - the religious society of friends

29. Approach old age with courage and hope. As far as possible, make arrangements for your care in good time, so that an undue burden does not fall on others. Although old age may bring increasing disability and loneliness, it can also bring serenity, detachment and wisdom. Pray that in your final years you may be enabled to find new ways of receiving and reflecting God's love.

Quaker Faith & Practice - the religious society of friends

Legacies received

Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) is grateful to have received the following legacies in the three months July to September 2004. The total for the quarter was £529,118. Sometimes the amount listed is only part of the total legacy. Meetings are given but the names of individuals are withheld. Place names refer to a meeting or locality.

Northampton PM	213,368	BYM General
Derby PM	1,114	BYM General
Basingstoke	29,279	BYM General
Chichester PM	88,549	BYM General
Exeter PM	7,510	BYM General
Bradford PM	5,000	BYM General
Sidmouth PM	5,000	QPSW Work in Africa
Salisbury PM	3,175	BYM General
Salisbury PM	8,341	QPSW
Cambridge (Oast House) PM	25,000	QPSW Peace
Earles Colne PM	8	BYM General
Devizes PM	30125	BYM General
New Milton RM	5,000	BYM General
Yeovil PM	2,170	BYM General
Kingston PM	23,136	BYM General
Penn PM	10,439	BYM General
New Barnet PM	16,707	QL General
Walthamstow PM	5,000	BYM General
Hull PM	75	BYM General
London NW5	10,000	QPSW
Sheffield	82	BYM General
Cambridge (Jesus Ln) PM	27	QPSW Peace
Cambridge (Jesus Ln) PM	13	QL General
Winchester PM	40,000	QPSW Overseas

Just who are Quakers?

For a free information pack on QUAKERS today, please fill in the form below

Name:

Address:

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Tel: 020 7663 1017 • Answerphone: 020 7663 1025

Email: carmelk@quaker.org.uk

www.quaker.org.uk

Young Friends look to the future of Britain Yearly Meeting

This is an exciting and positively challenging time in Children and Young People's section.

On 6 September Maxine Green began working in the Children and Young People's section of Quaker Life as a consultant. The centrally managed children and young people's work is highly valued and Maxine is accompanying us in a reflection on all this good work. Her brief is to look at all that Children and Young People's section does and make recommendations to the General Secretary of Quaker Life, Michael Hutchinson, about its consolidation and development. It is already clear that some strands and issues are emerging and Maxine is looking forward to reporting back to Michael and Children and Young People's Committee in early December. We are working on how to share the outcomes with the Yearly Meeting.

How is it going? Maxine is working with us for two days a week.

Questionnaires were sent to monthly meetings and so far more than 50 have been returned including some from preparative meetings and some individuals. These are already providing a lot of insight into the range of work with children and young people. As well as the larger and smaller joys and successes these have also revealed struggles, difficulties and some doubts and dilemmas. These questionnaires are a great aid to Maxine's discernment and they are also going to be an excellent tool for planning and developing our work after the consultation is completed and we are into the next phase of our work.

Since September Maxine has organised or been part of three consultation weekends with young people, Children and Young People's Committee and the Travelling Team of volunteer trainers – she has also met with Woodbrooke staff. In different ways these have concentrated on



Young Friends working on their visions for the future.

Photo: Simon Best

the roles and visions of the people and groups involved. At times these processes were uplifting, revealing and profound and they were not always easy as key areas of the work were debated.

The weekend with young people from the Quaker Youth Forum and previous Junior Yearly Meetings was very successful. Maxine co-facilitated the event with three younger trainers and facilitators, Sophie Smith, Simon Best and Michael Stiasny. Together they looked at their experience of Quakers from childhood onwards, what they felt were important areas for work with children and young people and, even more importantly, what their vision was for the future. This last was worked on with the aid of a community artist, Mandy Powell and the resulting, beautiful artwork, representing their vision for the future, is on display on the

main stairs in Friends House. Maxine says, "I was struck by their enthusiasm for wanting to be involved in shaping the future, by how they were respecting and holding Quaker heritage and methods and how they were working hard to discern how these could operate creatively in the future. There was a lot of concern about widening access to Quaker processes and experience and engagement with the spiritual journey. The young people asked: How can children and young people connect with the wider work of Quakers? What about the needs of, often, lone young Quakers in meetings? Working together on forming inclusive, all age Meetings can be tough and challenging but these young people are committed to it."

One key thing emerging from the consultation already is the role of spirituality at the core of



Thinking on their backs!

Photo: Simon Best

Children and Young People's work. This is often implicit and people across the consultation have identified the importance and benefits of mak-

ing this more explicit as a focus for the work." Maxine would like to express her thanks for the willingness with which people have involved them-

selves in different parts of the process. People have been honest, open and prepared to struggle to engage in a robust process in this important phase of children

and young people's work. This has been a good Quaker process – not always easy, but right. Maxine values being part of it.



Foot painting

Photo: Simon Best



Visions for the future of Britain Yearly Meeting produced by the young Friends at the consultation weekend.

Photo: Simon Best



Planning together.

Photo: Simon Best

The Under 19 Programme at Yearly Meeting 2005

Where? University of York
When? 30 July - 6 August

This is an exciting and popular event. A week of activities suited to each age group will explore the themes of the Yearly Meeting, and participants will have an opportunity to take an active role in Quaker processes and community. There will be lots of fun, games, quiet and noisy times, reflection, exploration and stimulation.

The Programme will run during YM sessions and there will be optional evening activities for those on the Programme aged 8 and over. All Under 19s at Yearly Meeting will need to register on the Programme and be in the care of a named Responsible Adult. Those over 16 who want to come on your own will need a named 'sponsor', agreed by parent or guardian to stand in loco parentis.

Application forms are available from the Recording Clerk's Office, Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ.

Closing date 31st March
Early booking advisable.

From Truth and Integrity at home to wider accountability overseas

For thirteen years the Yearly Meeting supported the Truth and Integrity in Public Affairs (TIPA) Programme, from its inception after Yearly Meeting 1990 until its end this year under QPSW. The work grew out of a Quaker concern in the West Midlands and in Kent and Sussex, borne out of experience of covert activity by the UK government. This led, after testing, to the concern being taken on as central work. Whilst it centred around state activity this was not the only work and in fact it covered all walks of life, and was essentially an expression of the Quaker testimony to integrity. The roots of this work can be traced back to the earliest Quaker times when Friends challenged those in authority because of their religious leadings.

The situation in the UK in relation to freedom of information and the law around covert state activity has changed a lot since this piece of Quaker work began. Certainly it still goes on but many basic things that were totally secret are now in the open, for example, information about the Cabinet sub-committee system and the structure and purpose of the intelligence services. are now available. Also we now have legislation governing the activity of the security and intelligence services, whereas in the late 1980s and early 1990s virtually all this side of State activity was hidden not just from the public but from Parliament too,

and was governed by the unwritten 'royal prerogative', in other words executive authority which is based on the ancient privilege of the monarch. We do now have legislation governing the activities of the covert wing of the State, which even though this could be improved upon, is an important step away from no Parliamentary involvement at all. When this work began Friends were pioneering work in this area, and now there are many others who have taken up this concern. Over the years through this work Friends were able to make contributions to inquiries like the Scott Inquiry into arms for Iraq and Parliamentary reports.

Over the years of the Truth and Integrity in Public Affairs Programme changed in nature and moved from a concentration on UK affairs to a concern with multilateral institutions like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, as well as around the activities of multinational companies. Many Friends and others had been raising the issues about these organisation with the TIPA Committee and the Com-mittee agreed to begin work relating to them. Over time this work grew in importance and led to co-operation within QPSW and QUNO around the work of the IMF and World Bank and in relation to multinational companies. This work is essentially about lack of accountability and openness in very pow-

erful institutions at an international level. The IMF and World Bank are controlled by the most powerful and wealthy countries in the world and Quaker work is, amongst other things, attempting to facilitate a channel of communication between civil society in developing countries and the international financial institutions. This continues in the Global Economic Issues work.

The minute from QPSW Central Committee ending the programme read: 'Our work will continue to

challenge secrecy and strive for accountability where we encounter it, for example through the Economic Issues work, the Parliamentary Liaison work, and in QUNO.' In addition, QPSW will organise a conference for Friends who face dilemmas relating to truth and integrity in their working lives at Woodbrooke in 2006.'

For further information contact: **Robin Robison**, QPSW, Tel: 020 7663 1039 or email: robinr@quaker.org.uk

Call of the Bell Bird



Photo: Trish Carn

Jennifer Kavanagh read several selections from her book, *Call of the Bell Bird*, at the book launch held by Quaker Books in the Quaker Bookshop on 1 November 2004. ISBN: 0 85245 365 5 Price £10 + £1.70 p&p. This book, and others in this issue, are available from the Bookshop, Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ. Tel: 020 7663 1030. Email: bookshop@quaker.org.uk.



A view from Belgrade from the Quaker Peace & Social Witness One-Year Worker



Photo: Yuk Maksimovic

Rob Rhodes (left) with Edin Veljovic, Project Officer at the Youth Initiative at the September YI meeting. The group photo (right) is from the same event.

The other day I was deep in conversation in one of Belgrade's many coffee houses, discussing politics. "Srebrenica never happened, you know, it was all propaganda," said the person I was chatting with.

He is not the first. There exists in Serbia-Montenegro a climate of overwhelming denial, anger and resentment, and incredible hatred and intolerance. People do not accept the country's role in the recent history of former Yugoslavia. People are quick to point out what 'the Other Side' did and deny or defend what 'Our Side' did. Thousands of people suffered massive violations of their human rights, were victims of war crimes and are still waiting for recognition and recompense for what happened. Hundreds, thousands of people remain as refugees across the region. And all the time, there are many people ready to keep hammering in the wedges that are driving people apart and preventing reconciliation.

There is, thankfully, another side: a growing group of people ready to

stand up and be counted, in spite of the dangers of intimidation and rejection this might entail. People who say: yes, Serbs did bad things. People who want to start putting things right and building a modern society that has dealt positively with its past, a society in which the foundations for yet another conflict have been removed, a society in which the sanctity and dignity of every human being is affirmed and protected. The Youth Initiative for Human Rights is one group of such people. They seek to promote justice and reparation for the victims in the region, to reduce stereotypes and prejudices, to promote mechanisms for dealing with the past, to educate young people that a better future is possible and show them how to get there.

I am fortunate to have been chosen to join them as a one-year worker for Quaker Peace and Social Witness. A recent focus of QPSW in the region of former Yugoslavia has been promoting dealing with the past here, and it is in this process that I now find

myself. I am working as Youth Initiative's Programme Advisor, helping to develop programmes, helping with monitoring and evaluation, assisting with fundraising and generally bringing a fresh eye into the work of the organisation. So far while I have been here we have developed programmes on bringing young people from multi-ethnic backgrounds together to renovate a playground, a comprehensive programme of research and reporting on minority rights violations and a media project to present the realities of crimes committed in the region in the 1990s. We have hosted an anti-fascist workshop and met women from Srebrenica and Zepa who lost husbands and sons in the 1995 massacre. This is to name just a few of the many activities that this bold and pioneering organisation is undertaking, in contradiction to so much

of society that has built walls around the past, for whatever reasons. It is a slow process, but it is gathering momentum, and I am honoured to be allowed in as part of it.

Last week, a friend of mine rang for a chat. That person has always denied the past, until a Youth Initiative workshop. On the phone, that person said: "Maybe it's not as clear-cut as I'd thought, let's talk some more". And thus it begins.



Photo: Edin Veljovic

Robert Rhodes, Quaker Peace & Social Witness One-Year Worker, Serbia-Montenegro

To read more of the work of Youth Initiative in Serbia-Montenegro, visit the website at www.yi.org.yu or send me an email at robert@yi.org.yu

New role for Alison



Photo: John Fitzgerald

Since 2001 Alison Prout has cheerfully and effectively co-ordinated and

supported our committees. She has done an excellent job of organising the Quaker Peace & Social Witness Annual Conference as well as numerous other events. Since October Alison is no longer QPSW Committee Coordinator.

Alison has now begun her new role of Programme Manager for Prison Ministry.

Trade Justice Update

Trade Justice Movement



Photo James Murton



Brighton Friends Meeting House was a hub of activity and the focal point for a Quaker presence at the Trade Justice Movement's 'Ballot on the Beach' on 26 September – the opening day of the Labour Party conference.

The event, which was attended by over 6000 people, was the public launch of the Movement's 'Vote For Trade Justice' campaign, which aims, by the general election to collect hundreds of thousands of 'votes' or pledges demanding that the UK government takes action to promote a fairer international trading system and put an end to trade rules which disadvantage developing countries.

Friends gathered for an open-air meeting for worship before joining others at the march and rally,

whilst QPSW, together with Brighton Friends and a team of other volunteers ran a fair trade café offering hospitality to those needing sustenance and a rest. In the evening the Meeting House hosted a public meeting where Magda Lanuza, a Nicaraguan trade activist who has worked with American Friends Service Committee, spoke about the impacts of free trade agreements in Central America.

Getting involved: It doesn't end with Brighton!

QPSW has been delighted to hear from Friends up and down the country who are campaigning for Trade Justice. Over 9000 voting cards have already been sent to meetings, many of which have also

been busy questioning parliamentarians about their views on trade rules, writing to local papers and holding public events to draw attention to the issues.

If you aren't already involved in the campaign, now is a great time to get started. With expectations of a general election next year, together with the UK holding the EU presidency and the July 2005 G8 Summit taking place at Gleneagles in Scotland, there will be plenty of opportunities to help get the trade justice message across to those in power.

As well as Trade Justice 'voting cards', QPSW can provide you with a Trade Justice action pack and a range of other resources for campaigners.

Suzanne Ismail

For more details see www.quaker.org.uk/qpsw/tjm
or tradejustice@quaker.org.uk
or contact *Suzanne Ismail* on 020 7663 1055,
suzannei@quaker.org.uk



Photo James Murton

Quaker News, ©MMIV 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 almost 500 centres in England, Scotland and Wales every week. Quaker Communications Committee oversees the publication of *Quaker News*, which is produced quarterly by Quaker Communications Department, Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ. Tel: 020 7663 1000. Fax: 020 7663 1001. www.quaker.org.uk. E-mail: qnews@quaker.org.uk
Editor: Trish Carn. Printed on environment friendly paper by Headley Bros. Ltd. Ashford, Kent.