

Quaker News



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

No 61 Winter 2006/7



Checking up on checkpoints

New head of QPSW

Big Outreach Conference

www.quaker.org.uk

Quaker News Winter 2006/7 Contents

New head of QPSW appointed	4
Checking up on Checkpoints	6 & 7
'Circles' wins at the Justice Awards	10
Criminal records, meeting records	13

Cover image: Palestinians queue to pass through Checkpoint 300 near Bethlehem.
Photo: Liz Burroughs/EAPPI

Editorial

This year my daughter has celebrated Eid, Hanukkah, Thanksgiving, Diwali and Easter, amongst other special days for different people from around the world. But then she is three and amongst children from the inner city at her nursery.

We often speak about our need and desire to reach out to others. We know there are people who might find a spiritual home with Quakers if only they also knew we are still around. Geoffrey Durham reminds us of ways we can do this – not with the loud certainties of proselytising, but by being open to others and welcoming them (p8).

Both Quaker Quest and the 2007 Outreach Week will give us opportunities to make our words speak to others in the year to come (p9).

Quakers may not have a creed, but we certainly believe in action. One expression of this is the powerful work of ecumenical accompaniers in Israel–Palestine. Their evidence of the effect of checkpoints is gathered for the UN and brought home to our own Parliament (p 6 and 7).

The work of the accompaniers is one of the projects being supported by meetings in our activity appeal. More than 60 meetings have so far signed up to take part (p15). This is exciting news. It is good to know that the work done in the name of Quakers in the UK has such strong support from Quaker meetings.

With best wishes for the year to come

Rachel Rees

Head of Communications and Fundraising

Quaker News

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

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

Tel: 020 7663 1162
Fax: 020 7663 1001
Email: qnews@quaker.org.uk
Editor: John Fitzgerald

Printed by Thanet Press Ltd

In brief

Library reveals more

Friends House Library has one of the best collections of 17th and 18th century Quaker and anti-Quaker books and tracts in Britain (possibly the world), and Library staff have just started an 18-month project to add details of this collection to the online catalogue, which can be accessed at: www.quaker.org.uk/catalogue

We are grateful to the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, Pilgrim Trust and Sir James Reckitt Charity for funding this project.

Contact:

Heather Rowland
The Library
heatherr@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1129

Testimonies Toolkit

The latest publication from Quaker Peace & Social Witness's Testimonies Committee will be launched during Meeting for Sufferings in February 2007. *Engaging with the Quaker testimonies: a toolkit* is the product of five years of exploration by the committee into the nature of testimony. It is offered as a resource with tools to help Quakers engage with the testimonies in their own lives and work. The toolkit in printed and audio formats is available from the Quaker Bookshop, priced £8 + post and packaging.

Contact:

Quaker Bookshop
020 7663 1030
bookshop@quaker.org.uk

Steve Whiting
QPSW Testimonies Committee
020 7663 1061
stevew@quaker.org.uk

New Recording Clerk appointed

The new recording clerk of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) will be Gillian Ashmore.

Gillian, who comes from Kingston upon Thames and is assistant clerk of Kingston Meeting, will take up her new post with the Society in May 2007.

She said: "I feel excited and privileged to be invited to become recording clerk, and more than a little scared.

"But I have always believed in living adventurously so in that spirit

I will do all I can to serve the Society well."

Gillian is a former civil servant whose last post was as Regional Director of the Government Office for the South East.

Since leaving the civil service in 1998 she has undertaken a variety of short-term roles, including interim chief executive of the Equal Opportunities Commission, project leader on the Police Reform Project for the Home Office and interim executive director of the

Fostering Network, a charity representing foster carers and children. She currently works for an arts centre in the East End of London, working across cultures and bringing international artists into contact with the local community.

Gillian has also been chair of the Refugee Housing Association, a Board member of the Metropolitan Housing Partnership and a Governor of Richmond Adult Community College.

Quakers join 'Shut DESO' action



Britain Yearly Meeting staff (from left to right) Kate Cargin, Michael Bartlet, Marigold Bentley, Helen Bradford, Steve Whiting and Young Friend Jez Smith form part of a human chain around DESO (Photo: Maud Grainger)

At lunchtime on Monday 16 October, around 250 protesters — including several Quakers and Britain Yearly Meeting staff — made a human chain around the Defence Export Services Organisation (DESO) HQ in central London, designating it a 'global danger zone' and calling for it to be closed.

The event was part of the Shut DESO Action Day

organised by Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT), the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FoR) and SPEAK as part of the CAAT Call the Shots campaign. DESO is the government department dedicated to helping UK companies sell their military equipment and services overseas. It is through DESO that the UK taxpayer subsidises the

export of arms into areas of conflict and to governments that abuse human rights.

Read the full story in the latest issue of Disarm, the QPSW peace and disarmament newsletter.

Contact:

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

Library supports bicentenary of the slave trade abolition act by cataloguing rare items

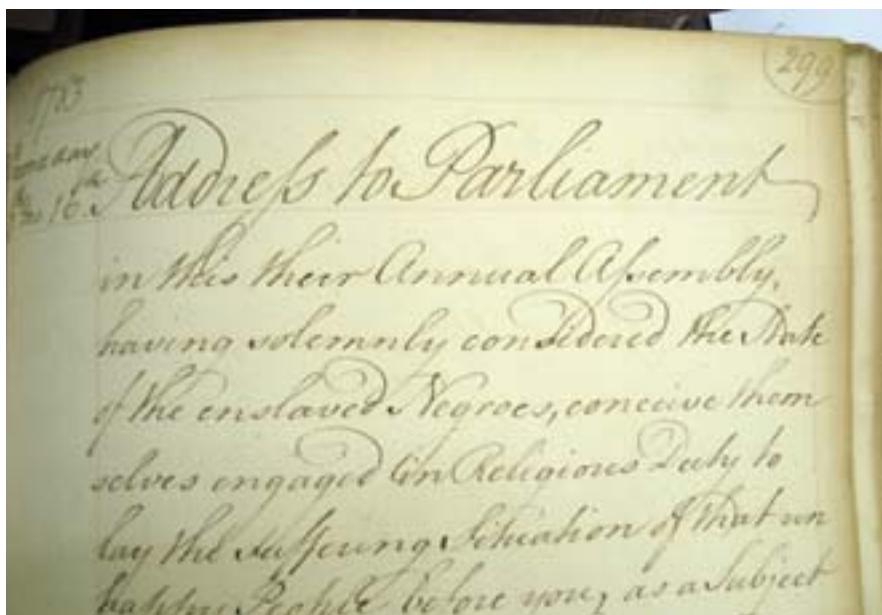
Many Friends will know of the forthcoming commemoration of the bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act 1807.

In the spring issue of Quaker News (No. 58), we reported that the Library at Friends House had just begun to catalogue its extensive holdings of anti-slavery material. This has been completed, and over 2,400 items have been added to the online catalogue, which can be searched at www.quaker.org.uk/cat.

As well as many works on the history of the slave trade, the collection is rich in 17th century pamphlets from the time of the early abolition movement by authors such as Rush, Sandiford, Benezet, Woolman, Heyrick, Bradburn and Ramsay.

Two copies are held of Clarkson's prize-winning Cambridge Latin dissertation *An essay on the slavery and commerce of the human species*, helpfully translated and printed by the Quaker printer and ardent abolitionist, James Phillips. Other fascinating items include a Peckham advertisement for East India sugar basins and Dr. Falconbridge's 1788 *Account of the slave trade on the coast of Africa* to Wesley's *Thought on Slavery* (1774) and a Philadelphian 1785 reprint of *Baxter's Directions to Slave-holders*.

Already, the catalogue has been used by non-Quaker organisations that are planning events and exhibitions in 2007, such as the Museum of London and Museum of Docklands, the British



London Yearly Meeting in session on 16th June 1783 drew up and agreed one of the first anti-slavery petitions to be presented to Parliament. The text of the petition, which appeared in many newspapers, was recorded in full in the Yearly Meeting minute book.

Empire & Commonwealth Museum in Bristol, and the Palace of Westminster. We have been receiving an increasing number of enquiries too from Friends researching the history of abolition for events planned by their meeting. Warwickshire Monthly Meeting, for example, is planning an exhibition 'Quakers in Birmingham & district working against slavery' to be displayed in Bull Street Meeting House.

To help enquirers we have published a guide to Library resources on Quakers and the origins of the abolition

movement (Guide 9), which can be downloaded from www.quaker.org.uk/library, or requested from the Library. Pages on the BYM website are being planned which will include information and resources to help meetings in their event planning.

Contact:

David Irwin
davidi@quaker.org.uk
 020 7663 1042

Supporting Quaker Youth Work

Representatives of 20 different Quaker youth events gathered on 28 October in Friends House for the first ever Quaker Youth Work Conference. More than 30 people came from events including regional summer schools, national youth events, link groups, junior young friends and monthly meeting camps in England, Scotland and Wales.

The day was planned and facilitated by the staff from the children and young people's staff team, the under 19s programme, the Leavers and Young Friends General Meeting. It was set up to provide opportunities for networking,

to explore common issues and to learn from each other.

Discussion groups considered Quaker worship and spirituality, boundaries, timetabling and safety. Helena Chambers of Quaker Action on Alcohol and Drugs facilitated a session on working effectively with young people on the issues of drugs and alcohol. Participants also heard how others do things and shared resources and ideas.

People were very enthusiastic about the day, and hoped that this event will happen again in the future. The day

showed that Quaker youth work is organised by people who take their role seriously and care about young friends but who feel isolated at times. We hope that the positive effects of the Quaker Youth Work Conference 2006 will be felt by the young people who participate in the variety of youth events offered by Quakers throughout Britain.

Contact:

Howard Nurden
howardn@quaker.org.uk
 020 7663 1012

New head of QPSW

Kevin Franz, currently heading ACTS, Scotland's national ecumenical body, will be starting as the new head of Quaker Peace & Social Witness in January.

Kevin has been general secretary of ACTS for the past eight years. He says, "Much my work for ACTS involved placing stepping-stones in the river, trying to link churches and communities divided by history. And it comes from a deep place within myself."

Kevin grew up in Scotland as the child of a Scot and of a German POW whose home lay across the iron curtain. Hunger for justice and peace were inescapably part of his growing up.

It is that integration of life and work which he sees expressed so well in QPSW: "Friends can take great pride in the quality of the work carried out within QPSW. I have already seen something of the life and work of the central committee and of the staff. Their links with the lives and concerns of Friends give the work its deep rootedness and authenticity. I feel privileged to be invited to be part of it."

An autumn packed with training opportunities

The new programme of training opportunities for Friends and meetings on working with children and young people has got off to a flying start.

Between September and December, volunteer and staff trainers have worked with Friends from at least 100 meetings. There has been a wide range of events and training days, including a childrens' spiritual development conference organised jointly with Woodbrooke Quaker study centre in November, which had 49 participants, and seven themed workshops with 79 participants from 40 meetings. Four more themed workshops are planned up until February and then eight more until July 2007.

Members of the Travelling Team and Under 19s Core Team took part in a 24-hour training event in the use of a children's work and story telling method called 'Godly Play'.

Some comments from people who have attended the three themed workshops:

'Developing work with children and young people': "Directions and

stimulation to think about the why of children and young people's work and material for the what."

'Working across a wide age range with small numbers': "A breathing space to reflect".

...and what about the trainers? This year the CYPC Travelling Team had its residential weekend in the Barmoor centre in Yorkshire. The team took a tough reflective look at the new ways of working and began to plan the next round of themed events. There was a great growth in our knowledge and practice as a team.

(for details of these go to: www.quaker.org.uk/cyp, select 'Training Opportunities' from the menu on the left hand side, click on 'ready made workshops' then follow the links for more information).

Contact:

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

All change at Quaker House Belfast

Quaker House Belfast, a joint project of Britain Yearly Meeting and Ireland Yearly Meeting, is on the move. Formerly located in the university area of Belfast, Quaker House has moved

have a useful input."

Quaker House has been working with church and other groups to tackle a worrying increase in racism. Another aspect of the work involves bringing

record meetings between politicians.

Mo Mowlam, former Northern Ireland Secretary, said of Quaker House Belfast: "I wouldn't have been able to talk to such a cross-section of people except for being able to meet in that house. They told me who to listen to. Without them my life would have been much tougher than it was."

"They told me who to listen to. Without them my life would have been much tougher than it was."

Mo Mowlam on Quaker House Belfast

to an office in the city centre. The new location is much better suited to holding meetings, which are a key part of the work at Quaker House Belfast. Moving to an office also allows for much more flexibility in accommodating the representatives, who were previously housed in Quaker House itself.

Quaker House representative Anne Bennett explains that the work she does is evolving too: "We work on peacebuilding, and are always working to identify new areas where we can

small cross-community groups together to consider the future of Northern Ireland. Quaker House has also hosted a number of seminars on dealing with the past, looking at the issues of truth and reconciliation.

Quaker House Belfast was first established in 1982, and has worked since then to make a Quaker contribution to peacebuilding in Northern Ireland conflict. Through the 1980s and 1990s, a large part of the work involved informal and off-the-

Proceeds from the sale of Quaker House will go back to Britain Yearly Meeting. While the new arrangements will give Quaker House more flexibility, they will mean more financial support is needed. Quaker House receives a grant from both Yearly Meetings each year, but also relies on the generous support of local meetings, both in Britain and Ireland.

Contact:

Anne Bennett
quaker.house@ntlworld.com
028 90 249 293
www.quakerhousebelfast.org

Checking up on checkpoints

6

For several years now, Quaker Peace & Social Witness has managed the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine & Israel, sending volunteers from the UK to Israel–Palestine. **Floresca Karanàsou** tells how the programme is now giving monitoring reports to international bodies, including the UN and Red Cross.

The Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) cooperates with the United Nations (UN) and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). The EAPPI supplies these agencies with reports on the monitoring of gates along the separation barrier and of checkpoints within the West Bank.

The Israeli authorities regularly tell the UN and ICRC about what restrictions of movement Israel imposes

checkpoints to the United Nations' Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), which has requested them. UN OCHA uses these EAPPI reports in order to compile their own report about the ability of Palestinians to access Muslim and Christian holy sites in East Jerusalem and to practise their right to worship.

The fact that EAs are placed in various locations within the West Bank and are able to monitor several checkpoints on a regular basis has enabled the EAPPI to be of use to this

the northern part of the West Bank, has been reporting to the ICRC any irregularities or inconsistencies in the operation of the barrier gates in that area since last spring. The gates are sometimes not open when they are supposed to be and Palestinian farmers have to wait indefinitely for them to open.

Farmers can only access their lands on the other side of the barrier if they have permits issued by the Israeli authorities. They may be refused these permits on 'security grounds' for reasons that are not made clear to them and they have no right to appeal against such decisions. On some occasions the farmers have been asked to provide evidence of their ownership of the land they want to gain access to in order to get through the barrier gates, but such evidence could be land deeds which are very old. The Ecumenical Accompaniers monitoring these gates have witnessed arbitrary use of power by young Israeli soldiers who are on duty at the gates.

In 2002 Israel began to build the barrier in response to suicide bombings perpetrated by Palestinian militants, which have killed hundreds of Israeli civilians. The International Court of Justice has condemned the barrier, because much of it has been erected within the OPTs rather than along the internationally recognised border between Israel and the OPTs, known as the Green Line, but Israel claims that the barrier has enhanced its security. Since 1993 Israel has also been operating a system which controls the movement of Palestinians within the West Bank and particularly into East Jerusalem. In September there were over 520 checkpoints and other physical obstacles established, according to the United Nations.

Contact:

Floresca Karanàsou
florescak@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1073



Photos show Palestinians waiting at Checkpoint 300, near Bethlehem. Many have to face long queues on their way to and from work each day.

on Palestinians and what rules apply at any given time in any location. The reports of Ecumenical Accompaniers have enabled these the UN and ICRC to monitor what actually happens on the ground, to verify whether these rules apply and to raise any problems with the Israeli authorities.

Since last July Ecumenical Accompaniers have been sending reports on their monitoring of

UN agency, which lacks the manpower to monitor the numerous checkpoints as extensively as the EAPPI can. The focus of the EAPPI reports has been the checkpoints around East Jerusalem, which restrict the movement of Palestinians living in the rest of the West Bank into East Jerusalem and into Israel.

The EAPPI team based in the Palestinian town of Tulkarem, in



Background to the EAPPI programme

So far, more than 320 Ecumenical Accompaniers from 13 different countries have acted as human rights observers in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and have supported Israeli peace groups in various ways. Of the 320 EAs, 48 have been sent by QPSW and they have originated from the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

QPSW has recruited 14 Ecumenical Accompaniers to serve in 2007, two more than in previous years. The increase has been made possible because of considerable savings we are able to make on our medical and accident insurance premium thanks to the change of insurance provider made by Quaker Finance and Property.

Submitting evidence to a government enquiry on the Occupied Territories

In October QPSW made a written submission to the inquiry of Parliament's International Development Committee on British government development aid to the Occupied Territories. Development aid is no longer channelled through the Palestinian government because of the victory of the Islamist party Hamas in Palestinian legislative council elections last January.

The QPSW/EAPPI submission focused on two out of ten issues addressed by the inquiry: the impact of the separation barrier; and of Israeli settlements on the Palestinians' livelihoods. The submission quoted what Palestinian villagers and farmers themselves had said to EAs over the past two years about these two issues.

Hannah Rought-Brooks, a former EA, volunteered her time to research and draft this submission and Michael Bartlet, QPSW Parliamentary Secretary, and Floresca Karanasou, QPSW Middle East Programme Manager, finalised it.

As a result of this submission, QPSW was also invited to provide oral evidence to the International Development Committee, one of only four organisations invited to do so. Floresca answered questions about the QPSW submission on 31 October 2006 together with three other witnesses, the representatives of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, Christian Aid and OXFAM.

For the latest news on the EAPPI programme, see the journal letters online at:

www.quaker.org.uk/jl

Expressing our uncertainty in no un

The Big Outreach Conference took place at Whitby from the 27 – 29 October. 120 Friends from all over the country came together to challenge and inspire each other to do more outreach in their meetings. **Geoffrey Durham**, a member of Hampstead MIM Quaker Quest, gave the keynote address. This is an excerpt from his talk- you can download the full text from www.quaker.org.uk/qn

I'm a member of Hampstead Monthly Meeting in London. I came to Quakers about twelve years ago at a time when I was undergoing a fairly testing spiritual crisis which I found quite difficult to handle.

I had rediscovered a religious dimension to my life which hadn't been there for at least 25 years - if indeed it had ever really been there at all. I had tried Buddhist meditation classes and I returned for some time to the Anglican church of my childhood, but nothing was actually hitting the spot.

Then a strange thing happened. I

“My life with Quakers is the single most inspiring, moving and, Heaven knows, most rewarding thread running through the whole of my adult life.”

found myself in the same traffic jam outside the same Quaker Meeting House every day for three weeks. I kept staring at the poster on the board outside. It read: “Peace is a process to engage in, not a goal to be reached”. After 21 days of this, I thought “perhaps that's for me”, because I had a strong, deep feeling that the Quakers were Good People. So I decided to try a meeting.

I think I'd describe myself at that time as a spiritual orphan. I didn't know what my background was and I didn't know what lay ahead. I had a lot of purpose in my life, but no meaning. But I kept coming back to meeting and after two or three years I slowly realised that I was becoming a Quaker. And I joined the Religious Society of Friends.

My life with Quakers is the single most inspiring, moving and, Heaven knows, most rewarding thread running through the whole of my adult life. I owe a great debt to this Society for the insights, understandings and spiritual push – I might even say spiritual kicking from time to time - that it has given me.

Are Quakers aware of how little they

are known, I wonder? And do they want to do anything about it?

About five and a half years ago, I had a thought – one of those thoughts that you know is significant because an idea plops into your head entirely unwanted and just won't go away. This one was really insistent and just wouldn't leave me and had all the hallmarks of a divine leading. It was this: I THINK I SHOULD DO SOME OUTREACH. And, true to my track record with divine leadings, I thought, “There isn't any Quaker Outreach. Phew. That was a close shave. I won't have to do any.”

Then at Hampstead Monthly Meeting the following week an extraordinary thing happened. A concern was raised and a plan was adopted for a new kind of outreach. It was to be called Quaker Quest. And I knew at once that this was what I was being led to do. I've been involved with Quaker Quest from that moment.

If Quakerism changed my life, then Quaker Quest changed my Quaker life. It is a good way of doing outreach and it really communicates Quakerism to the people who come. And one of the most wonderful things about it is the spiritual nourishment it gives to those of us who are passionately committed to it

We don't have to preach. People with a spiritual hunger don't want history lessons. They don't want sermons. They don't want commands, either. So what can we offer them?

We mustn't be afraid of offending people with what we have to say about our own faith. If you tell people clearly who Quakers are, who you are, what your experience is, and they say: “Well it's not for me”, then that's fine. Give them a nice cup of tea and show them



Geoffrey Durham, a member of Hampstead MIM Quaker Quest group

politely out of the door.

But you may be surprised at how rarely that happens.

Because what we have to say is very attractive. We offer a spiritual journey: a journey that is undertaken with others in our meeting, and which is reflected in turn in their journeys. We offer a faith which is based on personal experience and which contains no dogma - Quakers do not believe what they are told. We offer a spiritual life in which belief is shown through action, so it follows that there is no dotted line which you have to sign.

Above all, we don't have all the answers: what we have are some very good questions. We have what Ben Pink Dandelion calls “The Absolute Perhaps”. Friends, we have to express our uncertainty in no uncertain terms.

Never forget that the decision as to whether or not a first-time attender comes back will be taken at quite a superficial level. It will be taken in 75 minutes. 60 minutes for the meeting and 15 for the cup of tea, if you're lucky.

The next Outreach Conference, if there is one, will be in three years time. But please make sure that by the time you come back there have been at least three Quaker Quests in each town and city in your area. And if nobody comes, don't give up, because repetition works.

Above all, help the members of your meeting to understand that almost nobody in Britain has the faintest idea who Quakers are. And help them to appreciate that outreach is a source of joy and of love.

We need your help, Friends. Be patterns. Be examples. And be publishers of truth.

Uncertain terms



Quakers
The Religious Society of Friends
www.quaker.org.uk

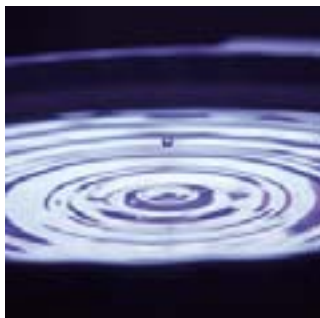
A way to God

Quakerism is a way of life rather than a set of beliefs. Quakers seek to experience God directly, within themselves and in their relationships with others and the world around them. These direct encounters with the Divine are where Quakers find meaning and purpose.



Quaker spiritual practice

The bedrock of the Quaker way is the silent meeting for worship. We seek a communal gathered stillness, where we can be open to inspiration from the Spirit of God. During our meetings for worship some may feel moved to speak: something anyone can do, as all are considered equal. Meetings can be held anywhere, at any time, although they are often on Sundays in our Quaker meeting houses.



National outreach week 2007

Imagine if all the energy for outreach within the Yearly Meeting was concentrated into one week...

From 22 – 30 September 2007, Quakers will be concentrating national advertising and local activity to make a big splash.

Steve Cappleman, who is co-ordinating the week, says: “By combining the efforts of Friends across Britain into one big week, we can boost the profile of the Quaker faith in Britain. Working together means we will multiply the impact we can make.”

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

There will be a wide range of ways for local meetings to get involved. National Outreach Week will complement regular outreach activities such as Quaker Quest. Linking advertising together should boost the profile of Quakers locally and nationally.

The plans received a very positive response from Quaker Life Representative Council in October, and meetings around the country are looking forward to taking part.

For more information on National Outreach Week,

Contact:

Steve Cappleman
stevec@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1016



Resources for Quaker Outreach
Quaker Life
2006-2007



Meetings inspired by Geoffrey's challenge to do more outreach will find plenty of resources and support from Friends House.

A new exhibition, part of which is shown at the top of this page, is available for meetings to borrow. The exhibition has an accompanying leaflet, which can be ordered free from the Quaker Bookshop.

The new outreach resources catalogue (above) is packed with materials to help your meeting raise its profile. To get a free copy of the catalogue,

Contact:

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

Quaker action against nuclear weapons

Around 90 Friends from the south of England took part in the Faslane 365 blockade of Faslane, the Trident nuclear weapons base, at the end of October. This was the largest group since the project began a month earlier.

Activities on the day included meetings for worship, vigils, fence decorating, singing, circle dancing and conversations with police. Many Friends also blockaded the gate to stop work on Britain's nuclear arsenal, which is the purpose of the year-long continuous blockade.

Twenty-six were arrested, detained and released with a warning letter from the Procurator Fiscal (the local public prosecutor). For more information,

Contact:

Steve Whiting
steveuw@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1061



Quakers from Milton Keynes were among those at the Faslane 365 blockade

'Circles' wins at the Justice Awards

The Hampshire and Thames Valley Circles of Support and Accountability team are proud winners in the Engaging Communities team category of the Justice Awards.

"It is an acknowledgement of the outstanding success of the project and a tribute to the commitment of our extraordinary volunteers, without whom such a scheme could never be possible," said Helen Drewery of Quaker Peace & Social Witness, who manages the team.

Circles of Support and Accountability was set up as a pilot project in the Thames Valley area, under the auspices of Quaker Peace and Social Witness, four-and-a-half years ago.

Based on the principles of restorative justice, it works on the idea that high-risk offenders are far less likely to re-offend after their release from prison if they are given the opportunity to build non-judgemental relationships with other adults – the volunteers – who support their efforts to rebuild their lives

while at the same time holding them accountable for their actions.

Patricia (Baroness) Scotland, Minister of State for Criminal Justice, who chaired the judging panel, said: "Protection of the public remains the number one priority for the government. The principle behind Circles is that inclusion in society makes people safer and that alienating people or forcing them onto the margins of life only brings added risks.

"Circles strikes a good balance between inclusion and vigilance. Involvement with Circles substantially increases the contact offenders have with statutory agencies."

More than 100 trained volunteers are now working in 'circles' with high-risk sex offenders in Thames Valley and Hampshire. They work alongside statutory agencies such as the police and probation service.

Some 28 sex offenders or 'core members' are rebuilding offence-free lives with the help of their circles, and

the team is working with more offenders as they prepare to join a circle on their release from prison.

The figures speak for themselves: in the four-and-a-half years that the project has been running, not one of the core members has committed another sexual offence. Evidence from Canada, where the idea first developed 12 years ago, confirms that circles can greatly reduce re-offending rates.

Helen Drewery said: "This work shows that the community can respond positively to the challenge of released sex offenders living in our communities.

"Our overriding aim is that there should be no more victims. The offenders we work with, our volunteers and our staff team are all united in that aim."

Contact:

Helen Drewery
helend@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1102

New peaceworkers get started

Quaker Peace & Social Witness funds the placement of several peaceworkers who each work for a year within a UK peace organisation, giving valuable help in a whole range of way.

The placement programme increases the capacity of the host organisations, and helps to develop the next generation of peaceworkers. Two of the placements are possible thanks to the support of the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust.

Three UK QPSW placements have just started work, and here are extracts from their latest journal letters. You can read the journal letters in full online at www.quaker.org.uk/jl

Clare Turnbull, placed with the Omega Research Foundation

The Omega Research Foundation is a small charity based in Manchester. It comprises four full-time 'core' staff, two interns and me. We investigate and monitor the impact of the arms trade on human rights. Omega works closely with other much larger non-governmental organisations (NGOs), e.g. Oxfam, Amnesty International, International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) and Saferworld. These NGOs use Omega information and case studies to strengthen their own policy lobbying and campaigning.

My role as a Quaker Peaceworker in Omega is split. Half my time I do general research supporting the work of core staff, the other half of my time I work on an online image database of military, security and police equipment. The database is still being constructed and is due to be launched on the internet in February 2007. I am working closely with Kate, one of the interns, in the run up to the launch. It's really important that we check that all aspects of the website work properly and that it is glitch-free before it goes live.

There is a lot of work to do on the website before February: it will certainly keep me busy. The testing and checking of the site does get fairly repetitive after a while, but once it's finished Kate and I can begin contacting organisations and individuals who might be interested in subscribing. This will be a welcome

change from computer-based work particularly because I really enjoy working with people.

Charlotte Smith, placed with the Oxford Research Group

I clicked on an email, subject title: "Quaker job thingy". It was March and despite an imminent dissertation deadline my honestly-earned procrastination gene was kicking in. I read on. "Thought you might be interested in this, it could be your chance to make world peace."

Though dubious of the feasibility of single-handedly ending all war and creating inner harmony amongst the global populus, I continued to digest the contents of the email. This was exciting stuff. Here was a job to work as a QSPW one-year Peaceworker with a UK-based peace organisation, a chance to get one's foot in the door. I applied and a day before my finals I was interviewed... the rest, as they say, is history!

I have now been working for Oxford Research Group (ORG) for two months. ORG believes that non-military approaches of dialogue, diplomacy and negotiation can resolve many conflicts more effectively and with far less cost than military approaches; and that ordinary individuals can effect substantial changes in the world if they engage in an informed manner with those who shape policy and if they insist upon accountability, transparency and open direct communication. As a self-proclaimed 'ordinary individual' this approach gave me great hope!

In my second week of work I was fortunate enough to see ORG dialogue in action. In the middle of the Oxfordshire countryside we held a NATO-funded workshop entitled "What would military security look like through a human security lens?". A mix of diplomats, military generals, academics and representatives from NGOs attended. Here I saw ORG nurture human relationships, promoting deep respectful listening between those who

did not share the same views.

Kahlil Gibran said "Thought is a bird of space, that in a cage of words may indeed unfold its wings but cannot fly." During this workshop space was given so that participants could think and reflect. There was dialogue not debate. Thoughts took flight.

Maud Grainger, placed with the Fellowship of Reconciliation

So, where do I fit in, or at least within QPSW? Well, for this year, in an office above a church centre in Oxford: the hub of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, (FoR), England.

On my first or second day they said the best way to get involved in the work is just to start working. Great, I thought! And then they said 'Can you write a briefing on West Papua, we might do some work in that area!' I had never heard of West Papua but rightly assumed it would be somewhere near Papua New Guinea. Over the next few weeks I quickly learned a lot about the situation and about the dangers of getting bogged down in internet research: so many sites, so many reports. Eventually I found my way and was able to write an article for FoR's newsletter, PeaceLinks.

I applied for the Peaceworker position as I wanted grounding in UK-based peace work. This year started with a preparation period held at both Friends House and Woodbrooke, the Quaker study centre in Birmingham. Meeting the other peaceworkers was a real treat and although we are based in many different places, I do feel like I am working within a community. Just today I called on one Peaceworker for help with some research and next weekend I will join with another for the FoR youth conference, *Called to be Peacemakers*. This sense of community has really helped, as although we are based within different organisations and I hope are proving useful, I imagine a year soon passes by in the life of a charity well over 90 years old!

You can read the journal letters in full online at www.quaker.org.uk/jl

Use your wall to help build peace

Build Peace



Often we feel helpless and hopeless in the face of violence and conflict. Yet millions of people all around the world are building peace locally, nationally and internationally. What can you do to build peace?

Fellowship of Reconciliation
www.for.org.uk

Quaker Peace & Social Witness
www.quaker.org.uk/apsw

'Build peace...' is a joint art project from the Fellowship of Reconciliation and Quaker Peace & Social Witness. Developed for Greenbelt, it is designed to encourage people to think about the how we can build peace in our broken world. 'Build Peace' posters can be ordered from the Quaker Bookshop for £3 each:

Contact:

Quaker Bookshop
books@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1030

www.for.org.uk/buildpeace.html

Journeys in the Spirit to be launched in January

Journeys in the Spirit, a new resource from Quaker Life for those working with children and young people in a Quaker setting, will be launched in January 2007, when sample children's work and youth work editions will be circulated widely to encourage subscriptions for future issues. The first children's work issue will be sent to subscribers in March.

Journeys in the Spirit offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with children and young people. The children's work edition for 5-12 year olds will come out monthly, the youth work edition three times a year. This resource will provide opportunities, in an atmosphere of partnership to explore our shared journeys in the spirit. Included are sections on:

- getting ready, for those co-ordinating the programme
- gather, meeting, centering, focusing; engage, beginning to think about a theme
- respond, activities linked to the theme;
- reflect, ending appropriately
- and review, evaluating what has happened.'

This will be a useful resource for all meetings and Quaker groups, whether they offer children and young people's work every week, a few times a month, or on an ad hoc basis.

Journeys in the Spirit will be distributed via email by free subscription – a paper copy will also be available.

If you want to be sent the sample, please email your contact details to:

journeys@quaker.org.uk

If you don't have email, please phone Bevelie Shember on 020 7663 1013

or write to:

Children and young people's staff team
Friends House
173 Euston Road
London
NW1 2BJ

Book your spot for Summer Gathering 2007



Summer Gathering 2007 will take place from 21-28 July 2007 in Stirling. This residential event will be a focal point for Quakers in Britain, offering a combination of fun, spiritual enrichment, a huge variety of activities – and the chance to meet old friends as well as to make new ones.

In 2007 the University of Stirling will welcome us to a week full of hope and promise, exploring what it means to take our faith into action. There will be time to share and reflect, to explore and imagine, to delight and be joyful, to create and recreate what it means to live faithful and fruitful lives.

With a rich programme for both under-, and over-19s, the Summer Gathering Planning Group is working towards something for everyone. Why not come with your family, your grandchildren, your aunty, your local or monthly meeting, or come on your own and meet friendly faces from around the Yearly Meeting and other parts of the Quaker world? This is a chance to live adventurously with others and to experience the unique experiment in faith that is Summer Gathering. Brochures and booking forms will be available in meetings from mid-December.

21-28 July, Stirling – why be anywhere else?

For more information,

Contact:

Karl Gibbs
karlg@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1109

www.summergathering.org.uk

Criminal records, meeting records

Anne Hosking looks at how the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) process connects with Quaker procedures.

If someone in a meeting is working with children, young people or (in some cases) vulnerable adults, it is good practice to check that there is no relevant criminal record that would prevent such work.

Questions then arise— Where is information filed, by whom, for how long, and in what form? What are Friends supposed to know, what must be kept confidential?

The CRB's Code of Practice suggests that "Recipients of Disclosure information should keep a record of the date of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of Disclosure, the position in question, the unique number issued by the Bureau and the recruitment decision made." What does this mean for a Quaker meeting?

Two kinds of paper are sent out in the post. The applicant gets the Disclosure certificate itself along with a letter from the Churches' Agency for Safeguarding saying: 'There is no reason why you should not work with children... etc.' The verifier gets a similar letter, but not the Disclosure certificate.

The Disclosure certificate belongs to the applicant and should be safely filed at home. Certificates are valuable documents, even though they lose their validity quickly: a burglar, for example, could sell it. The responsible person in the meeting, probably the convenor of the children's committee or the clerk of nominations, can see the certificate and return it but it is the letter to the verifier that belongs to the meeting and which should be retained (perhaps locked in the meeting's filing cabinet along with other important papers). If the Disclosure certificate contains irrelevant information that the applicant wants to keep private, then anyone shown the certificate must forget it – that's confidential. However, the letter from the CAS to the verifier should give the relevant information.

Minutes would be the Quaker way to complete the process – what else? Minutes provide a familiar yet disciplined framework in which to handle information and decisions.



13

Once it has been checked, a CRB disclosure should be filed securely

Meetings are accustomed to taking great care of minute books, so we don't have to invent a whole new system for this kind of information.

The nominations or children's committee could minute that: 'Our verifier has shown us the letter from the Churches' Agency for Safeguarding about X's enhanced disclosure, dated..., CRB reference number... We therefore agree to nominate her to the MM camp committee (or whatever) to serve from ... until ...' The PM or MM then simply has to record that: 'On the advice of our nominations/children's committee, we appoint...' This process does assume that the responsible committee keeps minutes in the normal Quaker way, and that MM or PM are confident that the meeting's policy on meeting safety is being followed carefully.

For more information on the disclosure process, go to the CRB website: www.crb.gov.uk.

To discuss Quaker processes, contact:

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

Meetings share experiences in CRB review

Quaker Life Representative Council has recently heard back from meetings about their experiences with implementing child protection procedures, and running CRB checks.

The results were broadly positive – of 104 meetings that responded, 85 had policies for work with children and young people. Some meetings are well advanced with obtaining CRB checks for volunteers, while others are just beginning the process.

More information about working with children and young people can be found on:

www.quaker.org.uk/cyp

Get involved

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

Directory of Quaker Work

The Directory of Quaker Work as carried out by local meetings in Britain 2006 is a joint project between Quaker Peace & Social Witness and Quaker Voluntary Action.

The Directory brings together projects started by Quakers which communicate Quaker values and social testimony as well as reaching out to the local community. Intended to be updated and improved annually the Directory will grow as QPSW finds out about more of the work done throughout Britain Yearly Meeting bearing witness to Quaker testimonies.

The Directory is available via mail order from MPH (ref no. QQ207):

MPH

4 John Wesley Road
Werrington
Peterborough PE4 6ZP
01733 325 002
www.mph.org.uk

Britain Yearly Meeting Under 19 Programme

Spirituality, entertainment and adventure for all

Friday 4 – Monday 7 May 2007, London

A varied programme for 0-11 year olds and 11-18 year olds will follow the themes of Yearly Meeting in exciting and challenging ways.

Worship, be creative, play games and have fun.

Gather together, make new friends, see old ones and build our Quaker community.

For information, contact:

Simon Best
U19prog@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1160

Turning The Tide 2007 workshop dates

Jan 13	Violence and Nonviolence
Feb 10	Nonviolent Power
Mar 10	Change and conflict
April 14	Strategy and Campaigning
May 12	Nonviolent Direct Action
June 9	Building the Alternative
July 7	Spirituality and activism
Sept 8	Empowerment
Oct 20	Group Process
Nov 17	Group decision making and consensus
Dec 8	Facilitation & basic group skills

The workshops, which all take place in London, are available as a complete course or as one-off events.

Cost: £20 per workshop, £200 for all, or free by negotiation to those interested in making a minimum 1-year commitment to the work of TTT

Contact:

Sophie Reynolds
sophier@quaker.org.uk
020 7663 1064

Managing our Meeting Houses

Our annual training and support event for meeting house staff will take place at Woodbrooke from 26 – 28 February 2007.

Course facilitators include John Batt (Human Resources, Friends House), Judi Brill (Wardens on the Web), Phil Lucas (Edinburgh meeting house manager) and Bill Shaw (Swarthmoor Hall manager).

The day will feature updates on the latest legal requirements: sharing good practice on working relationships, health and safety, use of IT and witnessing to Quaker values.

To book, contact:

Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre
1046 Bristol Road
Birmingham B29 5EB
enquiries@woodbrooke.org.uk
www.woodbrooke.org.uk
0121 472 5171

Quakers and the State

From 23 - 25 March 2007, at the Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, the QPSW spring conference will focus on Quakers' relationship with the State.

- What is the State and what do we expect of it?
- Who has power and how do we speak truth to power?
- How much trust do we place in the State and what do we do when that trust is broken?
- What is the prophetic vision of Friends and what happens when this conflicts with the requirements of the State?
- What are our responsibilities: to the State, to our communities, to ourselves and to God?

The aim of the conference is to provide a spiritually-based framework in which participants are informed, inspired, and encouraged to consider challenging topics.

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

Speakers

The conference will begin on Friday evening with a speaker presentation and there will be a second speaker on Saturday morning.

Confirmed keynote speakers are Paul Whitehouse, Chair of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority and Craig Murray, ex-British Ambassador to Uzbekistan.

Workshops

Workshops run throughout the weekend and will be led by a wide range of facilitators, all of whom are experts on a chosen topic related to the theme.

Contact:

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

Fundraising news

Meetings take up Quaker activity appeal

In October, Quaker Communications sent out a leaflet to all meetings, offering them a choice of one of four Quaker projects to fundraise for.

The projects which meetings are choosing from are overseas peace projects in four different areas: Israel – Palestine, the post-Yugoslav Countries, South Asia and Uganda.

By early December, almost 60 meetings had chosen their project and received the full activity pack, with regional information, posters, recipes, personal stories and much more.

Kate Cargin of Quaker Communications, who planned the pack, is delighted with the response: "This is quite a new direction for us, and we're really pleased that meetings are taking it up. Each pack has a wide range of resources, and we hope that meetings can make use of them to plan events and activities."

Several meetings found it hard to choose just one project, and so have requested activity appeal packs for all four projects!

Staff in Quaker Communications have learnt a lot as they compiled the packs, and are now familiar with such topics as the finer points of Ugandan cuisine, and the latest in contemporary Croatian music.

Kate said: "We hope that the packs are a starting point for meetings to discover the places where Quakers work. The activities will hopefully be enriching for people of all ages."

In addition to activities and recipes relating specifically to the project region, each pack has a selection of children's games which are ideal for exploring conflict both with young children and teenagers.

If meetings need any extra copies of activity appeal materials, the pack includes a CD of files for printing. The files can also be downloaded from www.quaker.org.uk/appeal

Contact:

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

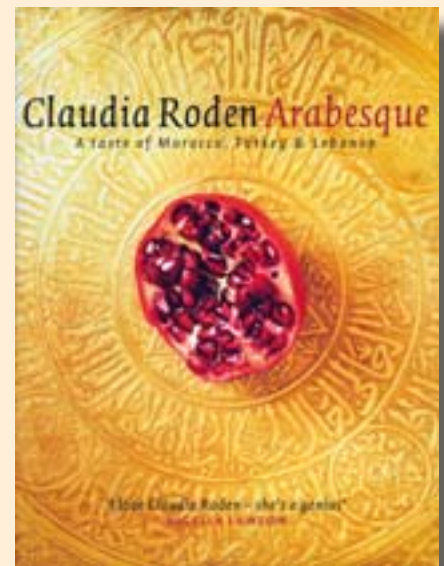
Bringing a taste of the Middle East into Quaker kitchens...

There are lots of tempting activities in the appeal packs, but cooking will probably come top of most people's list.

All the countries have a selection of mouth-watering recipes, from roasted garlic with goats' cheese, to Kashata na nazi (Ugandan coconut candy).

One highlight is a selection of recipes from Claudia Roden, whose new book, *Arabesque*, has recently been published.

www.quaker.org.uk/appeal



Recent legacy news

Jane Greer decided to name Quaker Peace & Social Witness and the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine & Israel in her will after hearing about the EAPPI from Neil Cavers, her solicitor. Neil served as an Ecumenical Accompanier in Jerusalem from late 2003 to early 2004.

Neil tells the story:

"Jane Greer was a school teacher by profession. Her husband was also a school teacher and they both originated from Northern Ireland. They had no children and her husband predeceased her by about two years. They retired to Kirkcudbright a number of years ago.

She was not a Quaker as far as I know but attended the local Episcopal

Church. She had a great love of music and also travelled extensively. She was at a talk which I gave to a "Ladies Lunch Club" in Kirkcudbright. She came to see me a short time later and wanted to change her will to include a number of different charities amongst which obviously were EAPPI and separately the Quakers. She was clearly impressed by the work done by both."

For information about remembering Quaker work in your will,

Contact:

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

For more information

How to support Quaker work

To donate, contact:

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

020 7663 1112
katec@quaker.org.uk

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

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

Just who are the Quakers?

Fill in this form for a free information pack:

Your name

Your address

Postcode

Email

Please send completed form to:

Quaker Life Outreach Section (QN)
Friends House
173 Euston Road
London NW1 2BJ

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

www.quaker.org.uk

Can you help us?

Offer your service on a committee

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

Your name

Your address

Postcode

Email

Please send completed form to:

Nominations, RCO (QN)
Friends House
173 Euston Road
London NW1 2BJ

Tel: 020 7663 1140
Email: suzel@quaker.org.uk

www.quaker.org.uk



Quaker News distribution

Would you like to receive an email whenever a new issue comes out? Go to www.quaker.org.uk/qn to sign up for email updates and read *Quaker News* online.

For queries about distribution, including changes to quantities or address,

Contact:

Updates
Quaker Communications
020 7663 1119
updates@quaker.org.uk

Large print edition

For a large print version of *Quaker News*, go to www.quaker.org.uk/qn and use 'Viewing options' to suit your needs.

Alternatively, phone 020 7663 1162 or write to:

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