

Among Friends

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Andean Pilgrimage

Dear Friends,

On 10th January my husband and I set out to walk the Inca Trail. We were part of a group of nine tourists, supported by two guides, nine porters and a cook. The other walkers were from half to a third of our age (!), and seemed amazed when they discovered that we were doing the trail – 44 km across the beautiful Andean mountains, reaching up to a height of 4,250 metres. To say I had been anxious about the prospect is the understatement of the year, but my husband is a very keen walker, and I didn't want to disappoint him. We crossed the Urubamba river, and began our adventure.

The trek proved very testing, but we managed. The views were spectacular, and each day, miraculously, we seemed to reach the appointed campsite before sunset.

On the last day we got up at 3.30 am and queued to enter the Machu Picchu park at 5am, walking the last six kilometres to arrive at the Sun Gate with the sunrise. But when we got there thick misty cloud did not allow us to see any of the view that we had so much looked forward to. As we made our way downhill towards the main site the drizzle turned to rain, and by the time we



Living the Transformation Photo: Rachel Bewley-Bateman

reached the main entrance we were soaked, and tired. I must confess that it felt rather an anticlimax, and all the effort of the previous three days seemed almost wasted, as though the destination was what counted.

It certainly would have been lovely to see Machu Picchu in sunshine (and we did do the following day), but along the way I had become more and more aware of all the help and support that was making this trip possible for me – from the amazing porters that carried 20kg of equipment, and constantly overtook us to go ahead and set up camp and prepare delicious and elaborate meals, to the kind guide who stayed with me as I fell behind the group, encouraging me to go at my pace - “Despacio”, slowly, he entreated me. And our fellow trekkers were also kind and supportive – the young Australian doctor giving me an inhaler when my chesty cough (probably due to the altitude) was troubling me. I never actually took it, but having it in my pocket was reassuring. So the journey was worth the effort by itself, every challenging step of it, because of the companionship of those I was fortunate to share it with. A very useful insight to hold on to, as I later reached Pisac and took part in the amazing FWCC World Plenary Meeting, on which this issue focuses.

Marisa Johnson, Executive Secretary

Inside this issue:

Renee Baz	2
The Paris Climate Change Agreement	4
BYM reps: World Plenary as “Real Fellowship”	5-8
Experiment with Light in Pisac	9-10
Remembering Edward Haas	11
Article on Eurosatory	12
Quaker Council for European Affairs: Jigsaw	13
Woodbrooke News	14
QVA working retreats	15
Diary Dates	16

Renee Baz 1919 - 2015

Amal and Juhaina Abu Khalil, Andrew and Noel Clarke, Sami and Najwa Cortas, Paul Little, Jocelyn Campbell and Na'amat Little write:

The death of Renee Baz in Lebanon on the 4th of November 2015, has brought great sadness to many of us, ex teachers, students and workers in Brummana Friends School. Renee, who was herself a pupil at the school, as was Nagib, her husband, worked as a nurse in the little Mission hospital until her marriage to Najib. She loved sports and played basketball, table tennis and tennis in the school. She maintained her interest in sports throughout her life. She always enjoyed watching all kinds sports on television but her favourite was tennis. She followed tennis tournaments around the world and knew players by name and position. She never missed an ATP tennis tournament. At times when her favourite sports were not shown on television she was eager and willing to learn other sports she was less familiar even at the age of 96 year old.

Renee Baz was a truly wonderful wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She was a true friend, (with both capital and small f), loving, forgiving, and kind especially to those in need. Renee was a truly amazing and remarkable person whom we are fortunate and grateful to have had in our Quaker community and in our lives.

Many of us carry memories of Renee Baz and Najib Baz, her husband, who both gave their lives to Brummana High School, a Quaker school in the Lebanon exemplifying Quaker values in their work and in their dealing with people. They both won the highest recognition for their services to Lebanon from the President of the Lebanese Republic. This never changed their character nor their humbleness in their living and serving people.

After her marriage, Renee left her nursing career and became the school housemother/keeper. Such a position led to other responsibilities, which she welcomed. Renee became a housemother to all those who lived and visited the school. For the rest of her working life generations of students, teachers and workers, relied on her counsel, friendship and care, which extended far more than that of one simply responsible for their physical wellbeing.

Her main responsibility was the kitchen and the food production for the family of students and staff. Food was cooked from fresh ingredients provided from farms



Renee Baz Photo supplied by Jocelyn Campbell

brought to the kitchen on a daily basis. Her husband Najib scoured the farms to purchase the best food products throughout the year. This was typical of their devotion to the school community and its health. The comfort, tidiness and cleanliness of buildings and rooms was crucial to healthy living and Renee was driven to ensure that pupils and staff received quality provision equivalent to standards provided in their own homes.

Her enthusiasm towards a clean and pleasant environment extended to both indoor and outdoor. Renee loved plants and flowers and the school always had beautiful planted terraces and gardens. The school has extensive land with 13 buildings along a hillside facing Beirut and the Mediterranean Sea. The pleasure she got seeing the school so rich in trees, plants and flowers gave her great pride. She strongly believed in the beauty of the external environment as Renee believed it played a crucial role in welcoming people, visitors, parents and the community to school.

Her community spirit and knowledge of people in the

villages surrounding Brummana was remarkable. She could recollect and talk about people who have helped and served in the school during her years living in the village and working in the school. She talked to the younger generations about their parents and grandparents and their contributions made to their own community and to the school. Her memory never faltered, it was full of wonderful events, stories and people she had met. These cherished memories comforted her especially in her later life. She always talked about the best in people and never wanted the negative to prevail in people's history.

Generations of students shared her with her children as a surrogate mother. She watched over them with tender loving care, and many of them treasured fond memories of her and speak of her with affection. Uncountable students, teachers, school staff, and principals owe her a great debt, and so does the school. She was the anchor of our Brummana Meeting, and an active member of the community loved and respected by all who knew her. She was a wise woman and had strong principles that she believed in and lived by. She was someone you could confide in, always ready to help the needy, the desperate and the outcast. Visitors were upheld by Renee's loving concern and hospitality. Renee's sitting room door was always open. She was never judgmental, and all comers were greeted by her generous smile.

Never could that sadness of life, the civil war in the Lebanon or the refugee situation wipe away the serenity on her face or her warm smile. She listened attentively and with patience and understanding, was always softly spoken, always weighed her words scrupulously, and when she spoke it was with loving wisdom, otherwise she kept her Quakerly silence. Having experienced the suffering around her she led a life of simplicity never garnering fancy material things that attract the mundane. She lived a simple life of love and gratitude with her family, friends and her faith around her.

Renee was a true Quaker, involved in all the activities

of the local meeting, which from time to time became a really international body, with Friends working throughout Lebanon and the school from overseas. She represented local friends at overseas gatherings, visited Woodbrooke in the 1960s. Her home remained the centre for Friend's gatherings, talks and discussions, let alone refreshments after Meeting for Worship. Once she and Najib had retired outside the school, she remained in the eyes of so many of us, the true Quaker soul of the school.

Renee kept in touch with many friends over the years and many visited her reminiscing of days past. For many, Brummana will never be the same without her! She will remain a true presence in lives of many friends.

Renee was the heart of the Brummana Quaker community and her extraordinary life of talent and non-stop caring for others was exemplary. Renee always ensured there were flowers or leafage in a vase on the table in Sunday meeting. William Penn used the phrase "passing from time to eternity", and of all people we can see so clearly how she will be remembered and continue to bear a good and steadying influence on the present and the future. She rests in well-deserved peace in the Quaker burial ground. Renee and Najib took great care of the Quaker graveyard in Brummana for over 60 years. They worked hard to create a quiet serene place with trees and plants providing the respect for the people who lie in the graveyard in recognition of their services to the Quaker community and to the school.

Renee Baz will be missed greatly by us all, and her legacy of friendship, love, forgiveness, and caring is a duty and an obligation for us to uphold. She left us all a heavy but happy burden to carry.

We give thanks with the world Quaker community for the grace of God as shown in the life of our Friend Renee. The next generations have her light to guide their path. She will be greatly missed by the family especially the younger generation who had a wonderful love and rapport with her. To us all she was a mother, grandmother and great grandmother who gave her life to her family.



Renee Baz

Photo: Brummana High School Old Scholars Association

The Paris Climate Change Agreement:

- now the real work begins

Lindsey Fielder Cook, QUNO Representative for Climate Change, writes:

Over the last three years, QUNO has engaged in quiet diplomacy at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). When we began this work, the negotiation room at times felt like a lion's den, so tense was the atmosphere. This is because the UNFCCC negotiations are often more about economic competition than about climate change, in a room filled with past and present experiences of exploitation. The negotiations have been haunted by the failure of Copenhagen in 2009 and crippled by mistrust and an inability to find a 'fair way forward'. Yet the stakes for humanity were increasingly clear. Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions due to human activities continue to rise, now more so amongst developing countries and setting us on course for an unprecedented rate of global mean surface temperature rise of +4C before the end of this century. This rate temperature rise would threaten eco-system collapse and human civilization as we know it.

QUNO began to offer something different, something seen as 'human' in an almost inhuman process. The QUNO off-the-record dinners, of which we have held 11 so far, had a reputation as a space where negotiators were encouraged to talk about their hopes, their fears and the assurances they needed to move forward. A space to hear 'the other' speak more sincerely, to better understand the mistrust, in turn to help build understanding. We often met one on one with negotiators, to encourage them in their efforts and listen to their views of progress in the negotiations, and also to suggest alternatives to strategies that we saw as fuelling division. Representatives from some 40 diverse countries attended our dinners; we are told by many of them that our work contributed to building trust. Because our work is funded by Quakers, we were seen as unusual, somehow beyond the 'political', and speaking genuinely for humanity.

Thus, coming from these experiences, we can say that the Paris Agreement adopted at the Conference of Parties (COP) 21 last December was much stronger than expected. But the Agreement is also imperfect, and the voices of citizens everywhere are more critical than ever if we are to ensure that the most vulnerable communities, and all future generations, do not experience catastrophic

climate change.

The Paris Agreement is best described as a 'framework for global action'. It can coordinate if not give momentum to a global effort to decrease anthropogenic greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (known as mitigation), while supporting less developed countries with finance, capacity building and technology transfer to help mitigate and adapt. It is a 'universal' climate change agreement, different from past climate change agreements because it is applicable to all countries. On the evening of acceptance, country after country described the Agreement as 'balanced', which reflects the extraordinary and intense efforts of the French hosts and the UNFCCC Secretariat.

The Agreement also has stronger than expected compliance measures (transparency), including five rather than ten year cycles for Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), with each new NDC required to be more ambitious than the last, and to be submitted to a public registry maintained by the Secretariat. The Agreement requires a 'global stock take', and includes a more ambitious long term temperature 'goal' of 1.5C - deeply significant since even a 2°C increase in global mean surface temperature would have drastic consequences for many. It is fair to say that, even days before end of the COP, none of the above points were assumed as 'a given' for the final draft.

Yet the global stock take is not until 2023, and humanity has less than 10 years to maintain a global mean surface temperature rise of 1.5C (above pre-industrial levels), meaning that we will quickly miss this chance without urgent action now. Language on human rights and indigenous rights, as well as 'ensuring the integrity of all eco-systems', was written in the preamble but not in the main text, potentially weakening their status. The NDCs are 'bottom up' rather than 'top down', where the words 'nationally' and 'contributions' reflect the lack of internationally set legally binding mitigation and financial support targets. Our governments set what they consider a 'fair and sufficient' NDC, rather than being told what is necessary; current NDC pledges are not strong enough to meet 1.5C let along a 2C target, but could result in average temperature increases over 3C. And the negotiation challenges are now about how to implement what has been agreed.

Continued on page 15

Britain Yearly Meeting representatives' reflections on the World Plenary:

From the 19th-27th January 2016, around 320 Friends met in Pisac, including over 30 Friends from Britain Yearly Meeting, and six representatives from World Relations Committee. While there, over the eight day conference, all of us had a huge variety of interesting, challenging, affirming, transforming experiences. At our recent committee meeting we considered how best to take matters forward from the Plenary Meeting, identifying key messages for our Yearly Meeting. Rather than try to summarise the whole conference here, we thought it better to offer up a selection of our many thoughts and feelings post-Pisac. We hope such sharing and development, rooted in Pisac, can continue over the coming years.

Ann Floyd

“It was a memorable and enriching experience for me, and I felt blessed to be there. It was a pleasure to be ‘travelling in the ministry’ with a close companion with whom to share the experiences of each day and I know this nourished me. I facilitated a home group and found it to be a nurturing and safe place where we could reflect together and learn from each other. I had had the same richness of experience at Kabarak, and treasured that ever since.

I participated in several workshops, including one of my own about sustainability stories for Quakers in the World, [www.quakersintheworld.org] and found the concept of the site much reinforced. From this and many other interactions I have returned home with a long action list, and new people to write for QITW, which will keep me busy for a long time.

A great pleasure throughout the plenary was to feel the energy and commitment of the 90 or so Young Friends who were there. Many of them had successfully transitioned between being children in their meetings to an adult convincement of their own. Conscious as I am of the challenges of that transition, I was also very taken by the ministry of Melinda Wenner Bradley (Philadelphia YM) about nurturing the light in children through Godly Play and much else.”

Alick Munro

We have learned that we all need to be open about



Alick and Khosi

Photo: Lee Taylor

our vulnerabilities if we are to be able to share our faith experience. The infectious intensity of the shared emotional experience of worship in the tropics is a corollary to our stillness in the Light. It is not a competitor.

Meeting in awareness of Goodness – of that which we may call God – in order to succour Faith, never knew a geographic boundary.

Many of the problems we face are universal and global. The relevance of Quakerism can be enhanced if we see ourselves as members of one global faith community.

We must share that which is best, and be generous with our privacy and our time. When we do this we realise the wish of St Paul that we are to be salt and light to the world, revealing the children of God.

Liz Scurfield

My home group of which I was the co-facilitator

came from many different traditions and the only way that I felt we could start to connect was through the Bible, so for each session I chose what I thought was a thought-provoking passage from the Bible – I read it in English and then asked one of the group to read it in Spanish. I then asked all of us a question about it. And then a second one if necessary. Here are some examples: ‘What does it mean to be a child of God?’ John 15:12-14 ‘What does it mean to you when Jesus says you should go and bring forth fruit?’ Revelations 3:20-22 ‘How did Jesus/God knock at your door?’ I was amused/ bemused to find that it was my Christian Science upbringing that was helping me make the sessions meaningful and bringing us closer together. I reflected that there are many British Friends who refer very seldom to the Bible if at all.

I very much enjoyed and value the wonderful and friendly exchanges I had with so many Friends particularly those from the Section of the Americas and Africa. There was a feeling of mutual tolerance and respect that I had not felt in Dublin and I had several interesting conversations (sometimes in halting Spanish) about homosexuality and Jesus Christ as personal saviour. This felt like real fellowship.

Huw Still

When worshipping with music & spoken prayers, I found the theological language used less of a barrier than I’d expected it might be. Knowing that everyone was coming together expecting difference, and hoping to learn from it, helped me to feel I wasn’t being disingenuous in singing words I wouldn’t normally say, and helped me to find the spirit behind the words.



Rachel Bewley-Bateman & Marisa Johnson at the Royal Inka Hotel Photo: Rachel Bewley-Bateman



The clerks at work Photo: Rachel Bewley-Bateman

The openness to hearing people use the language they find most natural for God/Spirit etc, and trusting that listeners would be able to translate/hear it carefully and lovingly was refreshing. I am saddened when I hear British Friends (and others) speak of feeling uncomfortable ministering about e.g. God, prayer, and salvation. The language I used at the event shifted – I used more ‘God-language’ more easily than I normally do.

I found myself challenged to re-examine and re-engage with my agnosticism – my beliefs haven’t been changed so much as I’ve been prompted to treat ‘I don’t know/understand’ as the start of a process rather than a stable predictable end to one. Is it important for me to know? To understand? It is more important to be useful to the Spirit, than to understand it. How can I tell when it is useful to better understand it, and how can I let go of the times when I cannot understand it?

Lee Taylor

I feel grateful, blessed, inspired, challenged and humbled to have been part of the Plenary in a wonderful spiritual location. Pisac proved a real opportunity to get to know others from different traditions – Kabarak had been much bigger and harder (for me) to come to grips with; however, I had the experience of meeting people at EMES and Kabarak as foundation. I came to recognize the work (or my experience of) Kabarak as threshing: being ‘salt and light’ continuing as a strong theme.

The wonderful geology, flora and fauna provided the backdrop – but we also heard many examples of climate change affecting lives – Peruvian glaciers

receding, Australian fires changing minds about feasible dates for their YM, the current devastating southern African drought, the aftermath of earthquakes in the Philippines and Nepal.

Queries:

How can we learn from other Sections?

How can we continue the friendships/collaboration from the Plenary?

How can we foster intervisitation, particularly for YAFs?

How do we grow new leaders in LM, AM, BYM?

Have I been transformed? What insights do I now acknowledge? Will the energizing last? Will others see a difference in me? Will I live up to the responsibility of taking forward the work?

There is a lot of work to be done: God has no other hands but ours.



Gretchen Castle & Jessica Bishop Photo: Lee Taylor

George Thurley

One of the transformations that occurred during the week for me was the realisation that I wasn't just there to learn from and about other Friends' traditions and practices, but I was also there to teach others about our traditions in Britain/Europe/Liberal Quakerism. "Teaching" in this way is undoubtedly a more uncomfortable concept for liberal Friends than evangelical ones, but that discomfort is quite necessary I feel. In my base group, I was at the seeker end of the spectrum, probably with the least certainty about my beliefs, and did my best to explain those views to the other members. It was heartening to find that others were curious about our ways of worship and practices, particularly one Friend, Jorge from Honduras, with whom I carried out a number of conversations, each of us doing our best in the other's language



*Friends from around the world
Photo: Rachel Bewley-Bateman*



*A busy time at the Craft Fair
Photo: Rachel Bewley-Bateman*



Irish Friends
Photo: Rachel Bewley-Bateman



Jane Rose & Marisa Johnson
Photo: Rachel Bewley-Bateman

Reflections from the Clerk of EMES

Sue Glover Frykman, Sweden Yearly Meeting, writes:

Three weeks have elapsed since returning from Peru. Have I managed to digest everything that happened at the World Plenary Meeting? Hardly. That process is continuing.

However, being asked to talk to Friends in the Stockholm area on Sunday 14th February, together with Annika and Julia who were also there from Sweden Yearly Meeting, helped me to begin to articulate some of the things I experienced there. We met via Skype a few days before the meeting to decide on the format of our presentation and what we should include. It became clear as we talked that we were all still processing our many impressions, thoughts and experiences, and that telling others about the gathering would help us to formulate and hopefully understand more about what we had been a part of.

We were obliged to use the materials we had to hand. The reports from the various Consultations that had taken place at the World Plenary Meeting were not yet available, nor were the Minutes from the FWCC meetings for worship for business. Annika had taken lots of photographs in Pisac, whereas Julia and I had not, and therefore agreed to put together a slide show, so that Friends would have a visual idea of the setting and who was there doing what. Rather than reading the Epistle from beginning to end in one fell swoop, we decided to read a paragraph or two at a time and then add our own reflections and expand the content. This developed into a three-way conversation of our own personal encounters, impressions, experiences and feelings which, judging by the feedback we received after the presentation, was a good recipe. We were also encouraged to tell more Friends about the gathering – in our own worship groups, at Yearly Meeting in May and so on. By then we should have the relevant reports and minutes to hand so that we add more flesh to the bones.

During our presentation we also talked about the financial difficulties of FWCC at the World Office level – both in terms of future predictions and the actual deficit from holding the World Plenary Meeting and the unexpected expenses that had occurred. Again, we were encouraged to bring these issues to the wider



Sue Glover Frykman Photo: *Rachel Bewley-Bateman*

attention of Friends in the Yearly Meeting.

What struck me most about the World Plenary Meeting was the atmosphere of openness, acceptance, listening to and learning from each other. Among other things, we were warned at the EMES Annual Meeting in June last year to expect uncomfortable approaches from evangelical Friends from South America who might challenge us as to whether or not we had been ‘saved’. I didn’t experience anything of the kind and I haven’t yet encountered anyone who did. Rather, there seemed to be a mutual desire from Friends of all persuasions to simply be together and learn from each other.

We were divided into Home Groups, which met each day to ‘touch base’ and either share things that had arisen from the day’s events or our own experiences of the divine. My Home Group used the prepared study materials some of the time and at other times not. We went to deep places in our sharing. Happily, we had begun to get to know each other in advance thanks to Woodbrooke’s Moodle online platform (and the

Friends who made this possible). This helped us to quickly gel as a group.

Having local Friends from Bolivia and Peru join us for the weekend was important. Friends from East Africa (delayed due to visa complications) also arrived on the same day, which meant that we were complete as a world family. This sense of family was emphasised (at least for me) by our Spanish speaking Friends referring to us all as brothers and sisters. I did feel, perhaps for the first time as a Quaker, that we belonged to the same family and that it was indeed worldwide.

The presence of so many young adult Friends, and witnessing their leadership skills and gifts, made me realise that I was experiencing something of a 'generation shift'. Also during the FWCC meetings for worship for business, the plea was repeated to include young adult Friends in our committees and work because we needed them there. I hope that we can encourage and nurture this in our four Sections. We will certainly be working for this in ours. Personally, I have never regarded young Friends as the future of the Society, but as part of the present. My hope is that this will now become much more tangible and real.

The overall theme of the gathering was "Living the transformation: Creation waits with eager longing for the children of God" (Romans 8:19). From the feedback that we have received I am aware that our EMES worship programme, which included the Experiment with Light and Julia's account of her personal experiences of unprogrammed worship, was powerful and touched and changed many Friends' hearts. I know from listening to a number of Friends that they too changed in some way during the gathering. But did I experience any personal transformation during the World Plenary Meeting? The answer is, not directly, but who knows what is germinating inside? I know that I was happy to simply 'be', listen and be open to the Spirit from whichever quarter it might have come. I also felt like a child of God who was loved and accepted. What is expected of me and what Love will require of me is, as yet, unknown.



Noé Alanguia & Myron Guachalla



Yulia Dvoretzkaya & Marisa Johnson



Rosemary Sinton & Pleasaunce Perry
All Photos on this page: Rachel Bewley-Bateman

Remembering Edward Haasl

Paul Holdsworth and *Kate Macdonald*, Belgium and Luxembourg Yearly Meeting, write:

In the year 2000, when he applied for membership, Edward Haasl was already serving Belgium and Luxembourg Monthly Meeting as Assistant Clerk, and as the Meeting's representative on QCEA. In February 2001, the Meeting "with happy heart ... unite[d] in welcoming Edward Haasl into membership." Edward served a term as Clerk of the Monthly Meeting from 2002.

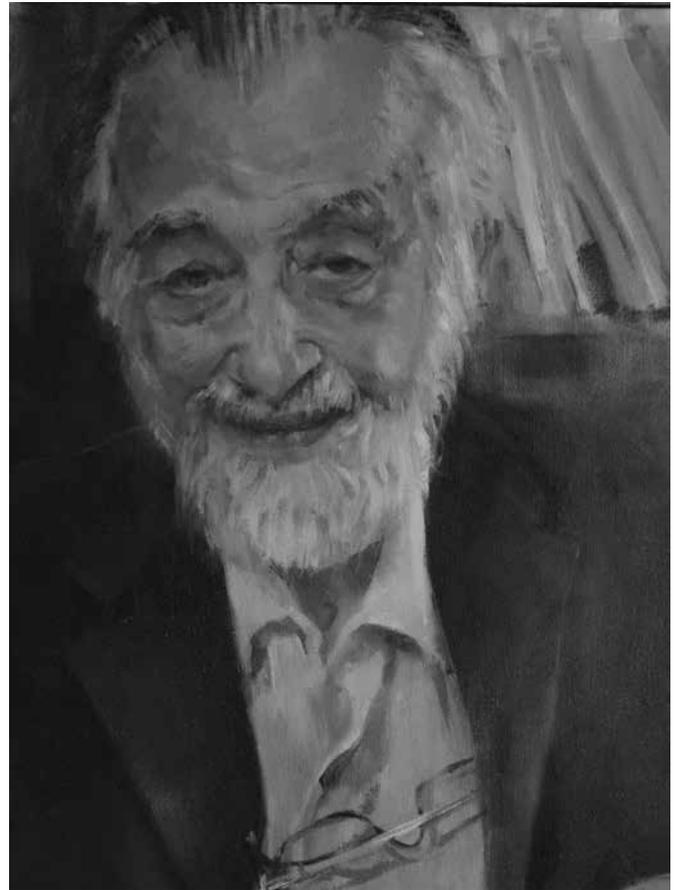
Edward was a keen supporter of the annual Border Meeting of Dutch, French, German, and Belgium-Luxembourg Friends, and also regularly took part in Netherlands Yearly Meeting.

Edward was the instigator of many important initiatives in our Meeting; he organised the first ever Monthly Meeting Residential Weekend, and it was he who brought forward the suggestion that the Monthly Meeting should become Belgium and Luxembourg Yearly Meeting, which it did in 2014.

In 2008 Edward was appointed both representative to FWCC-EMES, and Peace Secretary, an office he held until his death. In this role, he was instrumental in forging closer links with other local peace groups, and actively encouraged the Monthly Meeting to take part in a witness for peace at the Eurosatory international arms trade fair.

Edward will be remembered for many attributes: his wisdom and learning; his willingness to roll up his sleeves and do whatever needed to be done; his quiet, generous caring for Friends who were sick or in need; his irreverent sense of humour and his deep gravelly laughter. Edward was a man of enthusiasm and of passion, widely-read and skilled with words. An extract from his report on the Friends' peace protest at the 2012 Eurosatory arms trade fair gives a flavour of this – see page 12.

He had a keen interest in the history of propaganda and the development of pacifist movements in Europe before and during the First World War, and did some work, and much reading, towards a PhD at the



*Edward Haasl Portrait by Karina Knight-Spencer
(www.karina-knight.com)*

University of Leuven. His delight in language led him towards experimentation with poetry.

Editor's addendum: Ed was a great Friend of EMES, especially our Peace & Service Consultation network, and an enthusiastic participant. He was passionate about organising a big Quaker presence at the Eurosatory protests in Paris next June, and I hope that Friends will be there and make him proud.

He also served as Representative to our Annual Meetings, and few who were in Moyallon, Northern Ireland, for our meeting in 2009 and saw his performance as Jesus in a sketch about Martha and Mary will ever forget his humour and way with words. I will miss his robust and iconoclastic style, and his personal kindness and friendship to me.

Eurosatory - a vast gathering of carrion eaters

Edward Haas, then Peace Secretary, wrote in August 2014 "... Eurosatory, the largest commercial arms fair in the world, indeed, the largest fair I've ever seen, ... was a vast gathering of carrion eaters, as the evangelist would call them (Mt 24:28). To provide security and protection (the prevailing buzz words), against which no sane person would object, they enhance violence, which enhances insecurity, which is good for the arms trade. Economically, the arms industry produces the perfect product: the need has no limits and can never be satiated. It is technology and commerce run amok. Economically, politically, and ethically, it's a disaster. Not even Adam Smith would have approved.

So we demonstrated there for a week, welcoming ... wave after wave of participants as they left the train station. ... We told them that the arms trade had to cease, that peace was better than war, that weapons kill women and children. ... I've no doubt that we were considered hopeless idealists, not aware of the Real World, in which enemies – irrational and/or evil as they are -- needed to be eliminated. ... Jesus, what with his association with known zealots and proclamation of a new kingdom and disruption of commerce, would certainly have been a drone candidate. ...

Should we demonstrate at such events? Of course. But our demonstrations and urgings have to be paired with longer-term political action. We have to become involved in the messy world of politics, which means participating in political parties and in joining and lobbying governmental administrations – in a word, establishing ourselves on a larger, more directly influential stage. It means developing the argument that the arms trade is an economic parasite with the communities that pay for it obtaining miniscule economic and security benefits from it. It's an economic black hole, sucking in resources and yielding precious little

if anything in return. The returns, the added value to the local economy is limited to the salaries of the workers, which are far outweighed by the subsidies granted. The potential added value produced is exported as are the profits. It's a parasitic industry that gives little or no local or even national economic return.

We have to tell them that there is a better way of achieving what they claim they're achieving. ...

Certainly such demonstrations give witness and can preach, which is not commanding, shaming, or merely enjoining. It does mean showing the participants that there is another way for them to organize their lives and our world-wide society that what they are doing destroys not creates, and certainly does not make them, personally, more secure. The next bullet they make might well have their name on it. Drones can fly everywhere. When they arm their friends, they also arm their enemies, as ISIS is so dramatically and effectively demonstrating. We can make fleeting contact, capture their attention for a few seconds. It's a very brief window of opportunity but the only one we have. We have to make the best of it....

Is demonstrating effective? Not all by itself, of course, for it has to be paired with more targeted and patient political action. But witness we must. Like the anti-slavery movement, which commenced in 1688 with a Minute from a Quaker Meeting, the modern anti-war movement is a very long-term project. Jesus launched it a couple millennia ago, and pacifism has been the ideal ever since. Erasmus commenced its modern expression with his great treatise *Contra Bellum* in the 16th century. Quakers and Presbyterian launched the modern political movement in the beginning of the 19th century. Progress has been made. It is well to keep in mind that we are called to plant the seeds and to tend the crop. It is not for us to count the harvest.

Eurosatory Protest 2016

While not everyone will be at the vigil in Paris June 13 -17th, which comes immediately after the church and peace event near Paris , we will be in suits and following Edward's example, anyone can sign the petition on line or paper versions available from the collective's website: <http://pasdesalondelarmementparis.fr/petition> or donate to help our momentum and pay for banners etc, Please contact noneurosatory2@gmail.com for more information. Also you can follow us in English on twitter at # noneurosatory and on Facebook: in English: www.facebook.com/StopFuellingWar/ in French: www.facebook.com/Pas-de-salon-de-larmement in German: www.facebook.com/quaeker.org/stop-fuelling-war

We each have a piece of the jigsaw

Andrew Lane, Quaker Council for European Affairs, writes:

In the coming months the number of people seeking refuge in Europe will dramatically increase. Governments are not ready, either to support local communities to embrace refugees, or to work together across Europe to share responsibility.

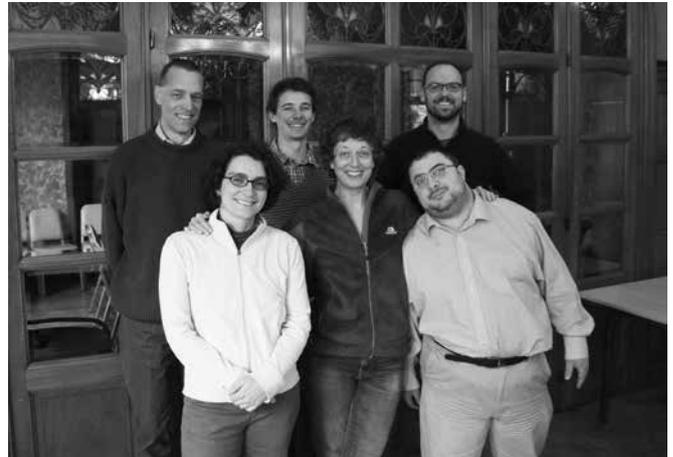
From Brussels, we will continue to encourage policy-makers to adopt policies that:

- build peace and development in the places from which refugees are fleeing,
- allow safe ways for people to travel to Europe, and
- ensure migrants are greeted with love rather than hatred when living in Europe.

None of these things are easy, and European governments are unlikely to agree the policies needed. It is possible that ‘humanitarian visas’ will be adopted, but this alone will not help everyone (see: QCEA.org/RefugeesWelcome).

In this situation, it is left to citizens to be patterns and examples. I regularly hear about action individual Friends are taking, including in Germany, Ireland and Britain. One such example has been published on the QCEA blog this week, as based on his experience working in Calais, Renke Meuwese called for human rights observers to operate there.

The challenges of migration are in addition to less visible changes that are seeing a growth in corporate



QCEA staff and volunteers

Photo: QCEA

power, including the power of arms industries. QCEA are continuing to raise concerns about the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), but it is proving very difficult to have an impact against the lobbying power of big corporations. Both national governments and MEPs have the power to reject TTIP. They are not yet ready to do this, despite three million Europeans have signed a petition against TTIP. There will be a moment later in the year when socially and environmentally concerned citizens will need to raise their voices in a final attempt to prevent it.

This month, QCEA has published its fact-sheet on the EU arms industry in English (see QCEA.org), and we hope to publish it in other languages soon. In February, Quakers sent hundreds of emails to MEPs

before an important vote on EU arms sales to Saudi Arabia. In a historic first, the European Parliament called for an EU arms embargo. We hope this will give MEPs the confidence to take many more similar actions in the future. Tim Harman (tharman@qcea.org) is working hard on a Parliamentary hearing on armed drones in April, that we hope will be another opportunity.

These challenges often feel overwhelming. However, we must rely on our faith and take encouragement from knowing that many of us are witnessing in different ways. Please contact me if you think QCEA should be sharing your experience with policy-makers in Brussels.



News from Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre

Throughout the year, visitors to Woodbrooke have the chance to attend one or more of over 150 courses and retreats on offer. Our extended programmes, such as *Equipping for Ministry, Soul of Leadership, Young Adult Leadership Programme* and our post-graduate courses also remain very popular with Friends throughout EMES. If you are interested in joining us, we would like to remind you that special funding is available so that you can take advantage of what we have to offer. As well as this invitation for you to come to Woodbrooke, there are also plenty of opportunities for us to visit to you.



Woodbrooke gardens Photo: Woodbrooke

Many Friends throughout EMES are interested in studying at Woodbrooke but find that time restraints and financial costs prevent them from doing so. Our expanding e-learning programme provides an affordable and convenient answer to this. This year you can participate in one of our *online retreats*, webinars on early Quakers, or Clerking courses. Our Postgraduate Certificate in Quaker Studies and MA in Quakerism in the Modern World are also distance courses held entirely online.

Our travelling teaching service, *Woodbrooke on the Road*, involves experienced tutors coming to your meeting to facilitate a themed workshop. Most of these are one day events, but we can extend them to suit your needs. You can choose from courses on Quaker history, theology, testimony and spiritual practice, as well as those relating to Quakers in the world. We can also help you to explore Quaker roles within your meetings.

For those of you wanting to be part of an intentional Quaker community, you can do this in two ways:

volunteering as a *Friend-in-Residence*, this involves a few weeks stay here at Woodbrooke to help us nurture our daily worshipping life, welcome visitors and support guests during out of office hour or as a *Gardening Friend*, assisting the garden manager, Steve Lock, in maintaining and developing the 10-acres of garden and grounds at Woodbrooke.

For more information about any aspect of Woodbrooke's learning programme please call +44(0)121 472 5171, email enquiries@woodbrooke.org.uk or visit www.woodbrooke.org.uk



Fireside meeting Photo: Woodbrooke

 <p style="text-align: center;">QVA 2016</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">WORKING RETREATS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">‘Let your lives speak’ opportunities for practical engagement reflection, study & fellowship</p>
<p>WOODBROOKE May 20-22 20 places £215 ensuite £205 standard Facilitators: Richard & Sylvette Thompson ‘Heart, Head and Hands’: QVA conference The Quaker Way can be a spring of vitality if we balance spiritual, mental & physical engagement Bookings: 0121 4725171 Enquiries@woodbrooke.org.uk</p>	<p>BAMFORD July 18-24 12 places £170 Facilitators: Linda Southwick & Zee Zee Heine Quaker Community gardening for sustainability Woodland paths, veg beds, scything meadow Walking & cycling in stunning Peak District Bookings: 01433 650085 mail@quakercommunity.org.uk</p>
<p>SWARTHMOOR Sept 6-12 <i>10 places £250 single ensuite £220 twin standard</i> <i>Facilitators: Jasmine Piercy & Linda Southwick</i> <i>Connect with Quaker history: work & pilgrimage Early Friends writings, tours, reflection</i> Visits: Brigflatts, Firbank Fell, Sunbrick, Tapestry Bookings: 01229 583204 info@swarthmoorhall.co.uk</p>	<p>FRANDLEY Sept 30-Oct 3 <i>10 places £60</i> <i>Facilitators: Alex Gorbenko & Jasmine Piercy</i> <i>Supporting Local Meeting in Cheshire</i> <i>Digging, planting, preparing ground for meadow Hike along canal to historic Anderton Boat Lift</i> Bookings: 07910 434941 jasmine@qva.org.uk</p>
<p>RAMALLAH Oct 17-28 12 places £490 Facilitators: Michele Gerard & John Ling Challenging study/encounter programme in Palestine & Israel supporting the olive harvest In collaboration with Ramallah Friends Meeting Bookings: 07720 784278 micha41@hotmail.co.uk</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Olive picking in Palestine</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">QUAKER VOLUNTARY ACTION www.qva.org.uk fb : Qva Coordinator</p>	

The Paris Climate Change Agreement *(Continued from page 4)*

We are told that QUNO is very much needed to continue its work of building trust in this next important phase. We ask you for continued financial support from individuals and from Quaker Meetings and Foundations so as to maintain our clear ‘voice for humanity’ in this sensitive process.

Our governments can at any time increase their mitigation and adaptation targets. But without strong calls from their citizens for urgent action, priority will to easily be given to what most drives anthropogenic GHG emissions – fossil

fuel dependent economies seeking unlimited material growth on a planet with limited natural resources. For this reason the role of citizens, both in our personal witness and in our voice for urgent action, is critical if humanity is to avoid catastrophic climate change due to our own activities. The challenge is as much a spiritual call as a material one, to live more sustainably and fairly on this earth, and to do so not in fear, but with hope and love.

(To donate to support this Quaker work, please go to <http://quno.org/donate/geneva>)

Diary Dates 2016

More dates for 2016 are available on the website: www.fwccemes.org. Please send items for inclusion in the diary to Marisa Johnson at emes@fwccemes.org.

31 March – 3 April: Ireland Yearly Meeting, Dublin

1-3 April: German-speaking gathering in Rheinfeldern
zeitschrift@quaeker.org

2-3 April: Denmark Yearly Meeting

5-8 May: Sweden Yearly Meeting

13-16 May: Switzerland Yearly Meeting

20-22 May: Central European Gathering Niwki,
Poland

27-30 May: Britain Yearly Meeting

3-5 June: Gathering of Italian Friends, Savigno, near Bologna

3-5 June: Netherlands Yearly Meeting, Bennekom

10-12 June: Belgium & Luxembourg Yearly Meeting Residential Gathering, Maldegem

13-17 June: Protest outside Eurosatory Arms Fair, Paris. Information from karina.knight-spencer@orange.fr

28-31 July: France Yearly Meeting, Nantes.

30 July – 7 August: “European Quakers of all ages Gathering”. This is an event open to Quakers of all ages, organised by European and Middle Eastern Young Friends to celebrate our 30th anniversary at Haus Venusberg, Bonn, Germany. <http://emeyf.org/all-age-gathering-2016>

Border Meeting September 9th-11th

Centre Culturel Saint-Thomas, Strasbourg, France **Theme: Border Meeting – At the Borderline**

- People of different cultures and value systems are arriving in our Western European countries, seeking refuge. In the long run this will have an impact on our social structures and on the question of what cultural values we lay claim to.
- How do we as Quakers - both as an organisation and as individuals - react to this phenomenon?
- Must it inevitably lead to a clash of cultures? Or will the values of all parties become diluted through a process of amalgamation?
- What can we learn from each other? Which values are important to me?
- Which way do we go? Towards a „multiculti“ society? Towards social inclusion? Integration? Segregation?
- Are the human rights and values which Quakers have stood up for and worked towards in the past now endangered?

Conference fee €20 (€10) 2 nights stay including all meals, bedding, towels. single room € 119, double room €105, day guests pay meals directly at the centre. Children are welcome, financial support is possible

Deadline for registration: 30.06.2016

Further info www.grenztreffen.be or Mike Zipser zipsemi@earlham.edu or Susanne Odeh s-odeh@gmx.net

Among Friends is the newsletter of Europe and Middle East Section of Friends World Committee for Consultation. We want Among Friends to reflect the diversity of Quaker life and experience across the Section and welcome articles, photos and news of forthcoming events.

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Deadline for Among Friends 136: 1 July 2016