

Among Friends

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Dear Friends

The EMES Annual Meeting was held in Switzerland this year at Bienenberg a Mennonite Centre near Liestal. Our theme was: Living our Quaker Testimonies.

We had a rich sharing on the theme through panel presentations and in worship-sharing groups. On page two we have part of Lilian Aarek's contribution on simplicity. One of the decisions made at the Annual Meeting was that we should explore setting up a European support network for the Quaker meeting in Ramallah and for the broader Quaker work across Israel Palestine. (See pages 6 and 7) We also made some revisions to the EMES constitution in order to make EMES eligible for registration. I can report that we are now registered with the Inland Revenue in Scotland, charity number: SC 036528. This registration is recognised across Europe and will enable the present

and future Treasurers and Executive Secretaries based anywhere in Europe to work within international regulations.

The EMES Executive Committee has decided to undertake a thorough review of readers' views of Among Friends. It has been fascinating to go back over previous issues, back to 1983 when it was first published, and to recognise changing trends along the way. In the early days it was very much a news sheet with short items; sometimes there was something from every Yearly Meeting in the section. At one stage it came out six times per year. Latterly we have had three issues per year with more reflective articles and longer reports. The whole communications scene has changed dramatically since the 1980's with the advent of email and internet and we need to review what appropriately belongs in a paper newsletter which costs money to mail out and what can be communicated by email. The scene is complicated. Some people do not have access to computers, others find that their main contact with other Friends is through the internet; people in some parts of the section have access to a wealth of Quaker newsletters and other publications in their own language whereas for others Among Friends may be the only Quaker publication they receive and then it is in English and not in their native language. Please do take time to give us your views either by returning the questionnaire by post or by email.

There have been significant gatherings for Baltic Friends in April in Latvia and for Friends from a number of countries across Central Europe in early June in Hungary. We are planning space for reports from these and other regional or Border meetings in the Autumn issue of Among Friends.

*Bronwyn Harwood
Europe and Middle East Section
Executive Secretary.*

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Living our Testimonies - Simplicity and Equality

Coming from a rich and affluent country I find the testimony on Simplicity the most challenging of our Quaker testimonies. When I was younger I used to struggle with what simplicity really means – it could not be that I was meant to live in a cave with virtually no belongings – it simply would not be possible – but exactly where between rags and riches would be the right place to say stop? I found that there was no definite answer to the question. It had to be seen in relation to the given situation.

I found it fairly easy to lead a simple life when I was young, had a large family and little money. My house was furnished with handed down or second-hand furniture, we wore second hand clothes and we even hired a small piece of land together with two other Quaker families to grow our own vegetables. We also got rid of our car, and managed without for nine years.

I am sorry to say that when I look around at my house today I have to admit that I am far from leading what can be called a simple life. We have refurbished and even extended our house. Now - with a good job and more money in my hands I have bought good quality furniture when the old things broke down, etc, etc. My big house is literally full of books, CDs, videos etc, and I wonder: how did it really happen?

At the time when we extended the house and our economy was really tight, my conscience was heavy and I was really worried about whether we had made the right choices. Now that I do not have to worry about money I have stopped worrying about my house too, I just live there and I do not know whether this is ok or whether I have just managed to silence my conscience.

There is a Chinese proverb saying that when you own more than three things the things own you. Am I owned by my things? I hope not, but I suspect I am – to a certain extent anyway. It is easy to get attached to things when you live with them. Even worse, it can be quite difficult to get rid of your things even if you really do not need them. Learning to let go can be a painful process. I have tried to look through my vast number of books to see if I can let some of them go, but so far I have not succeeded. I simply cannot bear

the thought. Instead I am trying to avoid buying new books, but somehow they seem to sneak in anyway.

But simplicity is not only a question of material things. Maybe even more important is how I spend my time. I have a good job that I really love, but as I am getting older I find that it takes most of my time and strength, and there is little energy left for other activities that I consider important like reading or spending time with my grandchildren or finding time to tend to my own spiritual needs, - or the needs of others. In our modern society there is no end to the demands on our time. There is television, the Internet, newspapers (of which I get three or four into my house almost every day), music, books, films etc, etc. It can be quite exhausting only to think about all the choices we have to make. All of the things I have mentioned can be seen as good things and have positive aspects to them, but sometimes one wonders.... Some good oldfashioned self discipline is certainly what I need to work on.

I have to admit that to me it is important to have nice things in my house and clothes that I like (and they are not Quaker grey). Beautiful things make me glad, and can surely be seen as a gift of God.

I do not think we have to sell all our things or start wearing the old quaker grey. Even Margaret Fox called it a silly poor Gospel that “we must be all in one dress and one colour”. It is the inward, spiritual attitude that matters, not outward things.

What is important is how we relate to our belongings. How much we let them fill our minds and decide our lives. What use we make of them. Do I use my big house for the benefit of others? Do I use what I learn from my books and the media to become a better fellow human being and make the world a better place? I can only hope.

The testimony of equality is the Quaker testimony that really speaks to me.

I believe that one of the things that really matter in this world is how we meet other people. I really try to walk cheerfully and answer that of God in every man. To me this means considering people you meet your equals whether they are children, students, colleagues, principals or prime ministers. It means taking people

seriously, listen to what they have to say, make them feel that they are being listened to, try to understand why they behave the way they do and show compassion even if you do not agree with their points of view or with what they are doing.

What breeds hatred and hostility in this world more than anything else is of course injustice, repression, maltreatment and abuse. I believe that if people felt respected and listened to it would take away much of the reasons for all the misery and all the fighting in the world. This probably sounds naïve, but I think it is true. Only I do not know how to convince president Bush and Osama Bin Laden and all the others of this great solution to the world's problems.

I try to follow the news to keep informed and understand what is going on in the world, but it is easy to feel overwhelmed and powerless by the complicated matter of world politics.

Still I think it is important to believe that it matters what I think and do. It makes a difference when I

protest against injustice by sending letters to people of power, and as a consumer I can exercise real power by supporting fair trade or buying ecologically grown food.

In the end it is all a question about stewardship. How do I use my resources? How do I spend my time, my money, myself? Do I pray for spiritual guidance? Is love a motivating factor behind my actions? Do I really show the same respect to the dirty drug addict in the gutter and my well dressed and well adjusted colleagues? I hope I get the strength to do so. Do I really listen to people? Do I show compassion? Do I listen for the truth from whatever source it comes? I do hope that I have an open mind at the same time as I am grounded in the Quaker tradition. I hope that this will help me try with the prophet Micah to

do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with my God

Lilian Aarek, Norway Yearly Meeting

What do you know about women in prison?

In the spring 'Among Friends' readers heard about work on women in prison being done by Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA) and the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO).

Although there is a lot written on women and criminal justice there is surprisingly little detailing the lives of women prisoners inside or their children. National governments differ in how much information they collect so it is difficult to gain a truly European perspective. QCEA has sent out hundreds of questionnaires to NGOs, governments and individual contacts to gain what is sometimes very basic data. We need as much information as possible to advocate effectively on this issue. Can you help us? Do you know anyone who works in prisons or with ex-prisoners or their families? Do you know anyone who has been in prison who could tell us about life inside? Or who has interest in these issues at an academic or policy

level? There are certain countries where we have more information than others; we have had little feedback from Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Georgia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland and Moldova. We are not only looking for recipients for our questionnaires but those who can give us their personal experiences and descriptions of life inside so even if your knowledge has a narrow focus do get in touch with us. Questionnaires can also be downloaded from the internet.

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Fifth Visit To Israel-Palestine

This time I felt challenged by a question that an Israeli official had put to me last year, “Why do you always go to the territories?”, and spent most of the first week in Israel, including the Negev where some 45 unrecognized (this means no running water, electricity or other basic services) Bedouin villages are located. If the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza endure daily humiliation and trauma to move around in their own land, Bedouins in Israel, who wish to keep their community life style, face tremendous economic hardship and health problems. This was particularly evident in a village south of Beer Sheva where the authorities decided to install an electric power station, a garbage incinerator and an arms factory in the very midst of the Bedouin community, without any benefit extended to the local people in terms of jobs or use of electricity. A Jewish friend who took me there had no hesitation to state that this is a scarcely veiled Israeli policy to destroy Bedouin communities. Similar stories are common if you move around with an open eye and listening hear...

Despite the fundamentalist elements in Israeli society which seem to form a united front with Christian Zionists in the USA and elsewhere, even if there is no love between them, a vast number of alternative and peace oriented groups can be found throughout the country. They certainly do not hit the headlines, but their views do get around thanks to a myriad of bulletins, leaflets, slogans, appeals and other initiatives. Of course, like in other societies, basic opinions as to a lasting solution to the Israel-Palestine issue, vary... two states, a federation, something between? One thing though appears to gather most support among ordinary people, and that is that the military occupation of Palestine must end, before any serious talks at high level can start.

Among the literature that I picked up here and there, one document I wish to highlight here, “TRUTH against TRUTH - A complete different look at the Israeli-Palestinian conflict”, issued by Gush Shalom (info@gush-shalom.org). The publication opens with the following words, “The Arabs believe that the Jews had been implanted in Palestine by Western Imperialism, in order to subjugate the Arab world. The Zionists, on the other hand, were convinced that the Arab resistance to the Zionist enterprise was



The Wall divides a Palestinian community

simply the consequence of the murderous nature of the Arabs and of Islam. The Israeli public must recognize that besides all the positive aspects of the Zionist enterprise, a terrible injustice has been inflicted on the Palestinian people. This requires a readiness to hear and understand the other side’s position in this historical conflict, in order to bridge the two national experiences and unify them in a joint narrative”. The document then continues with 101 points which, in the words of Uri Avnery, “... demolish the myths, conventional lies and historical falsehoods on which most of the arguments of both Israeli and Palestinian propaganda rest. The truths of both sides are intertwined into one historical narrative that does justice to both. Without this common basis, peace is impossible.” I would highly recommend downloading the full text from the web-site: (http://www.gush-shalom.org/docs/Truth_Eng.pdf).

After some days with Quakers in Ramallah (see Bronwyn’s report) I ended my trip at the Tent of Nations in Nahalin, near Bethlehem, a project which is also supported by European friends, mainly through Quaker Voluntary Action. Like last year, I worked on the land, helping planting trees and generally contributing to a permanent human presence there..... the best way to prevent nearby Israeli settlers from confiscating over 100 hectares of land to expand their settlements, with the pretext that the place is not used. This coming Summer several international workcamps will be held there and volunteers are needed. Find out more from Daoud Nassar, e-mail: tnations@p-ol.com.

Franco Perna , Italy. EMES Executive Committee

Faces of Hope: Palestinian Nonviolence Conferences Focus on Ending Israeli Occupation

A Palestinian nonviolence conference held in Ramallah, April 14-16 developed strategies to end the Israeli Occupation of Palestine. Nearly 100 Palestinians from as many organizations throughout the West Bank attended the gathering. A parallel one-day conference was held in Gaza with 110 persons in attendance.

Holy Land Trust and Panorama, two Palestinian organizations, organized the conferences in partnership with Quaker Service- Jerusalem, which culminated two years of planning, training and activity around the issue of nonviolent resistance to the Occupation. Participants focused their discussions on active nonviolent civil resistance strategies. This emphasis was crucial in building more support for nonviolence work within local communities, according to conference organizers.



“A year ago nonviolence was seen as submissive, as a way for Israel and the West to pacify the Palestinian people,” said Husam Jubran, Peace and Reconciliation Director of Holy Land Trust. “Now, much progress has been made and many see nonviolence as an active tool to resist and end the occupation,” he said.

Conference attendees focused their attention on several papers that defined active nonviolence in comparison to the armed struggle and looked at ways in which nongovernmental organizations and government entities might adopt nonviolent techniques in future struggles.

Conference attendees came up with 10 action plans, one for each region, and formed committees to work on implementation of the strategies after the conference. One of the strategies is a boycott of Israeli products manufactured in settlements in favor of Palestinian alternatives. Groups are seeking to achieve tangible goals in the short term as a basis for working toward more long-term efforts to counter the Occupation of Palestine.

On Friday evening’s program, representatives from several international nongovernmental organizations, including six international peace teams working in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank, brought their greetings and support to the conference and talked about the nonviolence support work of their organizations.

In previous stages of the nonviolence organizing project, community meetings and trainings about nonviolence had been held in 10 cities in the West Bank and 3 cities in Gaza, sponsored by Holy Land Trust, Panorama and Quaker Service- Jerusalem (American Friends Service Committee). Active nonviolent opposition to the Separation Wall is underway in numerous Palestinian villages, and there is resurgence of interest in nonviolence on Palestinian campuses as well.

Future supportive work by Quaker Service- Jerusalem will continue to build cooperative relationships between the many Palestinian nonviolence organizations and focus on more in-depth nonviolence and community organizing trainings for resistance against construction of the Wall and other problems of the Occupation, including land confiscation, military invasions and home demolitions.

*Paul Pierce, Quaker International Affairs
Representative to Jerusalem, AFSC*

The AFSC web-site has much useful information about the work in the Middle East. You can also subscribe to the monthly “Faces of Hope” newsletter <http://www.afsc.org/middleeast/default.htm>

Quakers in Israel Palestine

A new EMES Communication Network

The need for a network

As Secretary for Europe and Middle East Section of Friends World Committee for Consultation I am acutely aware that Friends who live and work in the Middle East need prayerful support and a sense of connection with the wider family of Friends. At the same time there are many, many Friends in the European part of the section with a deep concern for the general situation who do not necessarily know detail of the specific Quaker presence.

I have been searching for ways in which I can facilitate effective communications. At the Annual Meeting of EMES it was agreed that I should explore with Friends the setting up of an Israel-Palestine Support Group or Network. Initially we would like to invite anyone interested to sign up to be part of an email news group. In particular we also invite contact from Friends who might be interested in taking on a coordinating role. We hope that in time we might develop a network of correspondents who will ensure that Friends in their Yearly Meetings and local groups are kept informed about all the Quaker work.

Where are Quakers active in the region?

In Israel Palestine the Quaker presence is primarily but not exclusively focussed on Ramallah. There have been Quakers in Ramallah since the late 19th Century. The once thriving but now small Quaker Meeting in Ramallah has taken a giant leap of faith in re-building and re-opening the Meeting House right in the centre of the town. They have been supported by Friends

from around the world, in particular Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and an American based International Committee, to raise the funds to develop a Friends



Ramallah Meeting House

International Centre. On 6 March this year more than 100 people, Christians, Muslims and Jews - local people and international visitors - celebrated the re-opening. There are plans to have a Resident Friend based at the Meeting House and many local groups have expressed an interest

in meeting there. This is not work that our Friends in Ramallah Monthly Meeting can carry out alone – they are dependent on the prayerful, practical and financial support of the wider family of Friends.

The education provided in the Friends Schools Ramallah over the past 100 years is well known and prized throughout Palestine. Originally, in response to expressed local needs, a girls' school was set up. This was followed some years later by the boys' school on a separate campus. The two schools still exist but now provide a fully co-educational education from kindergarten to university entrance. There are both Muslim and Christian staff and students. The Schools are owned and overseen by Friends United Meeting (USA) and the Quaker Director is appointed by them. The current Director, Joyce Ajlouny, is herself a member of an old Ramallah Quaker family.

The Play Centre in the Amari Refugee Camp has flourished over many years since it was set up by EMES and Ramallah Friends in the 1970's. It is developing well under the leadership of Muna Khleifi, who took over from Violet Zaru as Supervisor last year. Some



Play centre

European Friends have contributed generously over the years and we do need to stress that the Play Centre is still very much needed and, for it to continue to thrive and to modernise, help with ongoing funding continues to be essential.

European Friends may be less aware of the work of American Friends Service Committee in Israel Palestine. The Quaker Palestine Youth Programme is based in an office in premises owned by Friends School in Ramallah and supports youth projects across the West Bank and in Gaza. The Jerusalem Quaker International Affairs Representatives, Kathy Kamphoefner and Paul Pierce, work to support dialogue among Palestinian and Israeli peace activists and their supporters in North America and Europe; initiatives for nonviolence and those which promote a culture of peace and coexistence. Ramallah is their local meeting and they, like other Quakers living in Jerusalem, attend Meeting for Worship when they are able.

For years Norwegian Friends have been involved in kindergarten provision in Gaza. Other European Yearly Meetings have supported specific initiatives. Many Quakers visit as members of the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme or of the Christian Peacemaker Teams or other programmes in Israel Palestine and become part of the Ramallah meeting for shorter or longer periods. Every-one has stories to tell which can bring alive the situation. Journal letters and reports are available from a number of individuals and organisations.

To find out more

Here we have only had space to touch briefly on aspects of Quaker involvement. To find out more you will need to sign up to the new Network. We foresee two levels of involvement

- a) by joining an email group to receive reports and to pass on news to your local Quaker group
- b) by volunteering to help as part of a core group responsibility for gathering information and perhaps taking on coordination of specific aspects of support for example to the Play Centre or the Schools.

We hope that the proposed Network will give those with an interest the opportunity to access information more readily. The Network is intended to focus on the life and work of Quakers in the area but can also provide links to much wider information about the current situation and of the involvement of Palestinians, Israelis and the wider community in peace-building initiatives.

There is a great deal of gloomy news but we also need to hear of the good work and the signs of hope which our Friends who live with the situation day to day are able to detect.

Bronwyn Harwood

To sign up please send the following information by email or letter:

Name, address, email.

Your local Quaker group

Is your main interest in a) above – to receive information and act as a correspondent? or b) as a more active member of a core group?

It would be helpful if you could mention any particular areas of interest and experience you might have.

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Church and Peace Annual Meeting

At the Church and Peace Annual General Meeting and International Conference held at the end of April at the Christusbruderschaft Selbitz, Germany, there were about 140 participants from all over Europe. The theme was expressed by a quote from Eph. 6:12 - "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood," and the key address, given by Dr. Peter Scherle of the Hessen-Nassau Protestant Church Theological Seminary, enlarged upon this in concentrating upon 'a practical theology of the principalities and powers,' essentially looking towards unmasking them: "First, we are charged with the task of revealing the working of the principalities and powers in earthly relationships and engaging them on a spiritual and intellectual level. The most important tools for this struggle are prayer as a form of combat: pardon as a transformational practice that heals relationships and memory. The second task results from the fact that the principalities and powers are sometimes victorious. Therefore we must learn to deal with defeat and develop a spirituality of nonviolence. The third implication is that the Church itself must rely on the power of transformation, and here the perception of the respective angels of the Church is of capital importance."

This refers to the vision that, according to the first chapters of the book of Revelation, John, the seer of Patmos, had had, inspiring him to compose seven letters to the angels of the seven churches.

The general theme was dealt with by our speaker in the form of several questions to be answered:

- * Are the powers and principalities systemic or personal in nature?
- * Are they only evil?
- * What is God's relationship to them?
- * In light of current events, how are we to interpret the affirmation of Jesus Christ's victory over them?

- * What does this vision mean in concrete terms for our nonviolent struggle for justice and reconciliation, for our prayers?

These were discussed in a number of working groups reflecting concerns such as:

- * What when the powers are not defeated?
- * Legitimising Collective Violence through Self-Deception
- * Getting real about conflict in the Church
- * From Petitions to Human Carpets: Techniques and strategies for Successful Nonviolent Direct Action
- * Prayer as a Form of Combat
- * Israel and Palestine: Stories of Conflict, Stories of Hope
- * Enlarged European Union Security: Alternatives to Militarism
- * Unmasking the idol of the Almighty Market Economy.'

The plenary discussion was lively. There was considerable interest in the experience and perspective of the Peace Churches' tradition. It was good to meet many Mennonite friends (again) and a sprinkling of Friends. The conference location was in itself inspiring: in the hills above the village of Selbitz, the buildings of the Christusbruderschaft Community exuded the devoted life of its residents, sisters and brothers of this Protestant Order founded in 1949. Days began with morning prayer - on the last day, silent worship in the manner of Friends. We came away charged, as it were, with the task of putting into practice what we had heard about the power of nonviolence while aware of recurring tendencies of nationalism and intolerance. Our hosts at the Community, our companions at Church and Peace, and our own Testimonies all created images giving us a sense of courage and fortitude.

*Fritz Renken and Kees Nieuwerth.
EMES representatives to Church and Peace*

*Church & Peace contacts: International Office,
Ringstrasse 14, D-35641 Schöffengrund, Germany.
IntlOffice@church-and-peace.org web-site:
<http://www.church-and-peace.org/>*

With Meister Eckhart in Erfurt

One weekend in February twenty-three Friends and attenders gathered in Erfurt on the invitation of East German Monthly Meeting to deepen their understanding of the great mystic Meister Eckhart (c.1260-1328 AD). The city of Erfurt, roughly halfway between Frankfurt and Dresden, was where Eckhart became a Dominican friar, and where he later fulfilled important administrative functions within his order. Parts of his priory still stand as he saw them, the 13th century choir stalls in which he sat are still in use today. Our group stayed nearby in the former Augustinian priory, where Martin Luther became a monk in 1505; this has recently been restored by the Protestant church of Thuringia as a guesthouse and conference venue.

The Dominican priory is now home to a Protestant congregation whose vicar, the Revd. Johannes Staemmler, introduced us to Eckhart's famous „Talks of Instruction“ on our first night. He did so in the Refectory - that is, in the very room in which Eckhart, as prior, gave these talks to monks and novices in order to illuminate the monastic vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. Why Eckhart should be of interest to Quakers began to emerge from passages like the following:

When we go out of ourselves through obedience and strip ourselves of what is ours, then God must enter into us; for when someone wills nothing for themselves, then God must will on their behalf just as he does for himself... When I shed my own self, then he must of necessity will for me everything that he wills for himself, no more and no less, and in the very same way that he wills for himself.

We looked at the core elements of Eckhart's mystic experience: a realization of oneness with God, whom Eckhart equates with love and describes as transcending place and time; and an awareness of God as the only source of Being, as opposed to God as a mere object of thought. In this context, we saw that what Quakers cherish as „that of God in every man“ comes very close to what Eckhart called „the tiny spark of reason“. Two evening talks, by Ernst Dahme from Berlin and Roswitha Jarman from York, shed light on telling parallels between Eckhart's writings and those by George Fox as well as by 20th century Quakers like Thomas Kelly and Margarete Lachmund; even more importantly and contagiously, both speakers

testified to the role of Eckhart's insights in their own lives. Meetings for Worship were as much part of the weekend as two sessions of Worship Sharing, the latter centering on selected quotes from Eckhart's writings.

In spite of the difficulties which Eckhart's scholastic background presents to us today, we found that he has much to offer to Friends - not just because of his trust in silence, or his belief that whoever truly has God with them possesses Him everywhere and in any company. What is perhaps even more important than such obvious overlaps with Quaker experience is the radical spiritual challenge Eckhart poses. As he states in his famous sermon on Matt. 5,3, where he attempts to prepare his listeners' souls for complete unity with God:

And so we say that we should be so poor that we neither are nor possess a place in which God can act. (For) if we still have such a place in us, then we still have multiplicity.

Ursula Seibold-Bultmann (Erfurt)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Calling all Young Friends – a message from Young Friends General Meeting in Britain.

“Are you a Quaker aged between 18 and 35ish? How would like to visit young Friends in Britain - on us?! Young Friends General Meeting has a substantial bursary fund available to enable young Friends from all over the world to travel to Britain to join us at our regular gatherings in February, May, and October. Although priority is given to more isolated young Friends, if you are amongst a community of your own please do not hesitate to consider a visit either as the experience of visitors from all over is just as valuable to us as it is for you.

For more information about YFGM, please see <http://yfgm.quaker.org.uk/> - for more information on the bursary fund contact simon gray (YFGM International Secretary), simon@star-one.org.uk or c/o YFGM Office, Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, 1046 Bristol Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham, B29 6LJ, United Kingdom.

Friend in Residence/Program Coordinator, Friends International Center in Ramallah

The Steering Committee for the Friends International Center in Ramallah (FICIR) is seeking applications for the position of Friend in Residence/Program Coordinator to serve the newly established Center in Ramallah. The Friend/Coordinator will live in the apartment attached to the Ramallah Meeting House and will manage the FICIR, coordinate building use, and develop the programming of the FICIR in cooperation with Ramallah Monthly Meeting. The Steering Committee, with the advice and consent of the Monthly Meeting, hopes to appoint a Friend/Coordinator to a two-year term of service to begin in late 2005 or early 2006.

Qualifications for the position of Friend in Residence/Program Coordinator include membership in or long association with the

Society of Friends, fundraising experience, excellent interpersonal, program development, administrative and computer skills. Extensive knowledge of the history and culture of Palestine and the region, strong facility in Arabic, and experience living and working in the area are required.

Compensation will include travel and living expenses, medical insurance and retirement contributions.

To apply or to request additional information, please contact James Fine, Steering Committee Clerk, via email to jfine@pobox.upenn.edu, or fax to (+1) 215-898-2622 (marked to the attention of J. Fine), or by mail to 120 Walnut Street, Bristol, PA 19007, USA. Applications should include a resume and letter of interest. Applications received by August 31, 2005 will be given full consideration.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Europe and Middle East Young Friends

EMEYF builds closer links, encouraging exchange on spiritual matters and international friendship between Quakers aged 18-35 living in these areas. We currently have contacts in at least fifteen European and Middle East countries, and are building on this. Annual Meeting is our meeting for worship for business held each autumn; this year from Fri September 30 - Sun October 2, Maison Quaker, Brussels. We share our activities of the past year, both as EMEYF and regional groups, test and pursue concerns, build relationships, support each other and practise the business method of the Religious Society of Friends. Newcomers are always welcome – come and join us.

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News from Woodbrooke

For readers outside the United Kingdom a new brochure *Woodbrooke in Europe* is enclosed with this issue of *Among Friends*. It describes the wide range of opportunities and complements the regular brochure about courses and events. It is also coming out in German, Russian, French and Spanish.

*To order more copies contact Woodbrooke directly, saying which language versions you need.
enquiries@woodbrooke.org.uk*

Keeping in touch with Friends in France

Rosemary Vergnaud has recently taken over responsibility for "Entre Amis", an informal newsletter which keeps Friends scattered across France in touch with one another. She writes to ask if there are other Friends with a special interest in France who might also wish to receive *Entre Amis*. Please contact Rosemary who will add you to her mailing list:

*Rosemary Vergnaud, La Vallée, 27320 –
Courdemanche, France. Tel: +33(0)237481459.*



Friends World Committee for Consultation
Quaker Youth Pilgrimage
Europe & Middle East Section

QUAKER YOUTH PILGRIMAGE
13 July-11 August 2006

Every two years the European & Middle East Section and the Section of the Americas of FWCC, organise a four week pilgrimage for Young Friends either in Europe or North America.

The pilgrimage is an opportunity to promote loving understanding of our diversities within the Quaker worldwide family. The 2004 Pilgrimage was based mainly in England, the Netherlands and Northern Germany and for those who took part it seems to have been a highly successful and fulfilling experience.

Planning is now well underway for the 2006 Quaker Youth Pilgrimage, which will take place in the Midwest of the United States. It is open to Young Friends who at the start of the pilgrimage in July 2006 will be at least 16 but not have passed their 19th birthday. The Pilgrimage will bring together 14 Young Friends from North America and 14 from Europe on a four week journey of exploration. They will come from different cultural, language and theological traditions. During their time together they will experience travelling and learning together and seek to nurture their spiritual lives

The details of the itinerary and venues will be available in September 2005. At the moment it is planned to start the pilgrimage in Cincinnati, Ohio and to travel within Ohio and Indiana. The European party will meet up in England prior to taking the flight to the USA and travel back to England afterwards as a group. However these plans might well change over the next few months as we start to firm up on details.

Application forms will be available in the autumn, and the closing date for European applications will be 11th January 2006.

For further information please contact :-

Richard Waldmeyer	+44 (0)1429 235046	richard.waldmeyer@virgin.net
Caroline Evens	+44 (0)131 662 0735	caroline@ywcascotland.org

Decade of Peace Initiatives and Eurosatory, Paris 2006

Next year in June once again French Quakers plan to be present at two major events in Paris; the International Salon for The Decade of Peace Initiatives and Eurosatory, the big arms fair. On behalf of French Friends, Joy Liengaard is hoping to pull together an international working party to plan the Quaker participation in these events and invites anyone interested in finding out more, offering creative ideas or in coming, at their own expense, to a planning weekend to contact her:

Joy Liengaard, La Geriais le Port d'Or 44460 St Nicolas de Redon, France. tel 0033 299711909 joyazima@wanadoo.fr

World Gathering of Young Friends

As Among Friends goes to press Young Friends around the world are making last minute travel arrangements and scores of people are working flat out on final preparations. An international programme team are drawing on a huge range of experiences and diverse Quaker traditions to finalise plans for the worship and activities for the gathering. I'm sure you will hear from us when it's all finished!

Please hold us in your thoughts and prayers.

John Fitzgerald, Clerk

Diary Dates 2005

30 July - 6 August Britain YM. Contact Elsa Dicks, Friends House, Euston Road, London, NW1 2BJ, UK. rco@quaker.org.uk

16 - 24 August World Gathering of Young Friends, Lancaster, UK. Contact info@wgyf.org

24 - 28 August France YM. Contact Axel Jenson, Poutet d'en Bas, 09350 Castex, France. axena.jenson@wanadoo.fr

3 - 4 September Finland YM. Contact Jane Rose, jhsptrose@mail.suomi.net Karhuntie 130, SF-91500 Muhos, Finland.

16 - 18 September Belgium-Luxembourg-France-Germany-Netherlands Border Meeting. Contact Jeanette Delgado-Holdsworth, Rue du Vallon 54A, B-1332 Geneval, Belgium

30 September - 2 October Europe and Middle East Young Friends Annual Meeting, Brussels. Contact emeyf@qcea.org

14 - 16 October Young Friends General Meeting, Bristol, UK, Contact Ellie Collier, YFGM Office, Woodbrooke College, 1046 Bristol Road, Birmingham, B29 6LJ, UK. yfgm@quaker.org.uk

28 - 30 October Swiss-German-French Border Meeting. Contact K. Mangels, Küferstr. 2, 69168 Wiesloch. redaktion@quaeker.org

29 - 30 October Denmark YM. Contact Kvækerne, Drejervej 17-4, DK-2400 København NV, Denmark. m.clausen@post.tele.dk

3 - 6 November German YM. Contact Quäkerbüro, Planckstraße 20, D-10117 Berlin, Germany. buero@quaeker.org

2 - 4 December EMES Peace and Service Consultation, Brussels. Contact Bronwyn Harwood, emes@fwcc.quaker.org

QUAKER YOUTH PILGRIMAGE

**13 July-11 August 2006
Ohio & Indiana, USA**

TWO ADULT LEADERS WANTED

Two adult leaders from Europe wanted to work with two leaders from the Section of Americas to facilitate the 2006 Quaker Youth Pilgrimage in the Mid West of the USA.

Are you experienced in working with young people? Do you have the stamina and enthusiasm to spend a month travelling with 28 pilgrims? Are you comfortable experiencing different cultural, language and Quaker theological traditions? Are you able to help the young people aged 16-18 nurture their spiritual lives?

Details will be published in September 2005. Applications to be received by December 2005.

For further information please contact members of the QYP Committee:-

Richard Waldmeyer 01429 235046
richard.waldmeyer@virgin.net

Caroline Evens 0131 662 0735
caroline@ywcascotland.org

Nigel Hampton 028 388 31752
nigel.hampton@utvinternet.com

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Among Friends is the newsletter of Europe and Middle East Section of Friends World Committee for Consultation.

Also available at: <http://www.fwccemes.org>

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.

There is no set subscription fee for **Among Friends**. We depend on voluntary subscriptions. Costs of printing and distribution are rising and we hope those who are able to pay will consider an annual donation of around 10 Euros.

If you wish to make a bank transfer, please use the details below:

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Friends World Committee for Consultation
IBAN: SE92 9500 0099 6034 0466 9644
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For holders of UK bank accounts please send cheques or CAF vouchers in GBP to the EMES office. Scottish Charity number: SC 036528

Deadline for **Among Friends** 99: 21 October, 2005