

# Among Friends

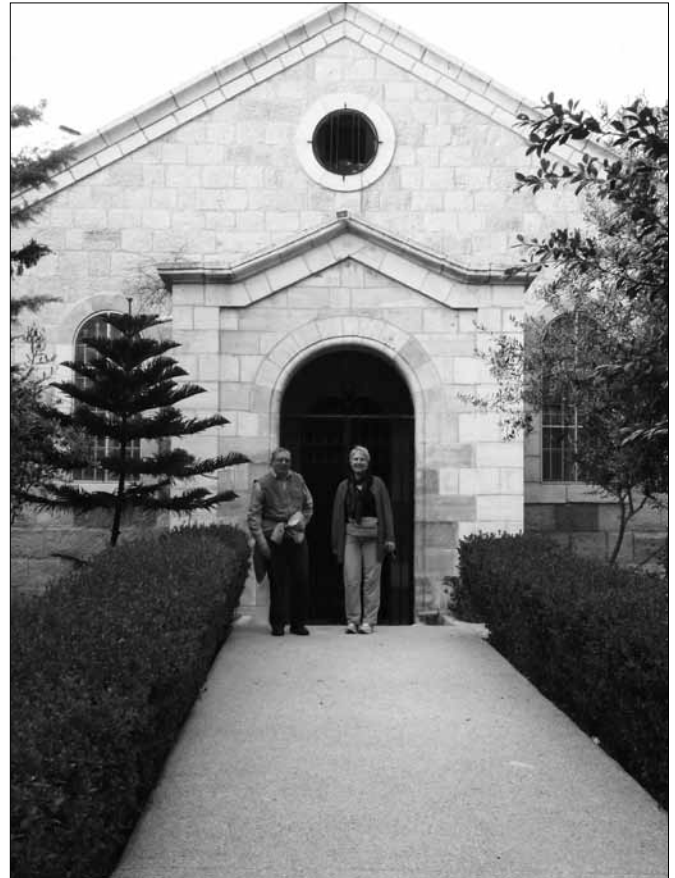
No 118: Summer 2010

Published by the Europe and Middle East Section of Friends World Committee for Consultation  
Exec Secretary: Marisa Johnson, P.O. Box 1157, Histon, Cambridge CB24 9XQ, UK emes@fwccemes.org Tel: +44 (0)122 347 9585

## Why am I a Quaker? How am I a Quaker?

With these words, a number of Friends took turns in introducing the Business sessions of Britain Yearly Meetings from 28th to 31st May 2010. The words struck a chord with me, as I recently returned from my first visit to Africa, where I took part in the FWCC Africa Section Triennial in Bungome, Kenya. Unfamiliar patterns of worship and radical differences in theology can lead to questions about identity, and this process can be uncomfortable, even threatening. But the questions are valuable, and can lead to insight and renewed commitment, if asked humbly and with an open heart.

Our shared heritage is one source of unity - Friends from German Yearly Meeting write about their visit to Pendle Hill on page 10. On 7th March 2010 Friends gathered in Ramallah to celebrate the centenary of the dedication of their lovely Meeting House. Colin and Kathy South remind us of the history of the Quaker presence in the area on pages 4 and 5. The celebrations were joyful and inspiring, especially in the midst of ever increasing pressures and hardship for the few remaining truly local Friends. Such presence, though precarious and fragile, is really "Salt and Light", the theme of the Friends World Conference which will be held at Kabarak University, Kenya, in August 2012. The International Planning Committee met there in May, before the Triennial of FWCC Africa Section.



*Tofie Frykman and Marisa Johnson outside Ramallah Meeting House. Photo by Sue Glover Frykman*

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The 350th Anniversary of the Quaker Peace Declaration falls this year too. Friends from Germany and Switzerland worked on approaches to conflict at their gathering in Lindenberg – see page 3. Switzerland Yearly Meeting also took this as their theme, and asked a Friend from Vienna, Jalka, to talk about her Peace Testimony. The text of her talk can be found, in both English and German, on the EMES website. Europe and Middle East Young Friends explored conflict during their Spring Gathering at Moyallon Centre in Northern Ireland. In their sung epistle, text reproduced on Page 8 – they acknowledge that “it’s not quite as simple as a cup of tea, but we choose to be a community.” From our common Quaker roots to our very divergent branches, all reaching out for the Light and heavy with fruit, we too can choose to be one Community.

*Marisa Johnson, Executive Secretary*

## Remembering

### Berit Kyllingstad Collett (13 May 1939 – 11 December 2009)

Berit Collett died two weeks before Christmas among her family at her home in Lyngdal, Norway. She had been fighting pancreatic cancer since 2006.

Berit was born and raised in Sandnes, Norway, the daughter of the owner/manager of a small factory making furniture, windows and doors. She remembered riding with her father in the factory truck, clandestinely distributing food using the factory's fuel ration during the Nazi occupation. In young adulthood Berit lived in France, England, Spain and the USA before settling in Norway in 1973 with her husband Stephen and their six children (later to be seven). After taking an MA degree in English Berit taught in public schools while continuing studies in pedagogy and Gestalt psychology. She became an adept practitioner of confluent learning –promoting development of both cognitive and affective aspects of education- and a proponent for humanistic schooling. She was hired by her county and national school systems to create and disseminate programs for improving the school environment and for building positive relations between homes and schools.

In 1986 Berit and Stephen were sent by AFSC to head the Quaker United Nations Office in New York, where they served until 1998. Berit was director of Quaker House for QUNO – the facility near UN headquarters for Friends' mediation work- and leader of QUNO's human rights program in New York. Among many areas of her work, she made particularly useful contributions to the adoption and promotion of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to preparations for the Fourth World Conference for Women (and led the FWCC delegation to Beijing in 1995) and its upgrading of the program of action for women's rights, and to the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

On returning to Norway, Berit taught language skills to immigrants and asylum seekers and led workshops helping unemployed persons to reconnect and take charge of their lives. She continued working into the last year of her life, while also serving on the governing council of Norway Friends Yearly Meeting and as an elected representative for the Socialist Left party on her city council. Berit was a member of Kristiansand Monthly Meeting on the south coast of Norway.

Berit is survived by Stephen and her seven children and ten grandchildren.

### Lore Horn (1927-2009)

David Blamires remembers: in early November 2009 I was in Bad Pyrmont to give a talk to a group of German Quakers about Quakerism from the 18th to the 20th century and heard of the recent death of Lore Horn.

When I made my first contacts with German Quakers in the mid-1950s Lore was like an older sister to the lively group of German Young Friends. Because of my strong links with German Friends over most of my adult life, I decided to attend the memorial meeting, which was held in the newly refurbished Quaker office in Berlin on 6th December. During the period when German Friends were forced to have two separate yearly meetings, one in the west and one in the German Democratic Republic, Lore was the crucial figure keeping the two groups in contact and making regular visits.

In the summer of 1956 I had joined an international Young Friends group on a two-week visit to Karl-Mar-Stadt (formerly, and now again, Chemnitz). We had hoped to have a workcamp, but this proved impossible, so we became an official delegation instead. I remember that during the visit, at Lore's instigation, we studied Martin Buber's Essay Elements of the Impersonal, which explores similar themes to his more famous I and Thou. In Karl-Marx-Stadt the group was guided by Marie Pleissner, a remarkable Friend and teacher who had suffered under the Nazis and was active in one of the smaller political parties allowed in the GDR. Lore was devoted to Marie and her sister Ilse.

During much of her life Lore, living in West Berlin, worked indefatigably in the Quaker office in East Berlin and was latterly clerk of the reunited Yearly meeting. I managed to see Lore on a few occasions when I visited Berlin more recently. Knowing of my interest in German children's books, she handed over to me a book that Marie Pleissner had given her – a superb catalogue of the early children's books in the State Library in Berlin. It is a wonderful, useful and tangible connexion between the three of us.

The memorial meeting was a fine occasion, giving heartfelt thanks for Lore's dogged, generously given long-term support of many individuals and the fabric of German Friends' organisation and witness for reconciliation between divided groups.

# Peace on Earth: What is that? – How do I get there? German/Swiss border meeting, March 2010

**Christian Pinkert**, Zürich Group, writes:

On May 8th, Quakers from Switzerland and Germany came together in Lindenberg in the magical southern Black Forest.

We lit a candle in the chapel for a good weekend meeting, greeted friends old and new, shared a meal, enjoyed feelings of relaxation and well-being. We used the Pilgrim's Hall - looking out through floor-to-ceiling glass doors onto the terrace and further over the valley to the surrounding mountains.

“The causes of every strife” was the theme on Friday evening. What causes war, violence and conflict in my life? How do I try to overcome such causes? We reflected and shared in small groups and all together:

“When you are beside yourself, go inside.”

- Jesus said: “My peace I give you...” - inner attitude to meet others
- Peace is homegrown – it is a process
- I cannot change the world but I can change me and through this the world is changed.
- Keep practicing..... one can learn this
- “I would like to get away from the unhappy habit of evaluating – it blocks!”
- “The way is curvy and stony but I do not give up hope.”

We ended with music and dance and an epilogue of silent worship.

Saturday started with Meeting for Worship. I felt the deep quiet “swallow” me. A feeling of being at one with the worship group - a moment of sheltered security.

We explored “My peace testimony”: In what part of my life is it especially important to live out my peace testimony? What is it especially difficult? When do I feel pressure to do



*Photo by Kerstin Mangels*

more, to do less? What supports me? What hinders me? In the afternoon we were given “guidelines for a written resonance on postcards”:

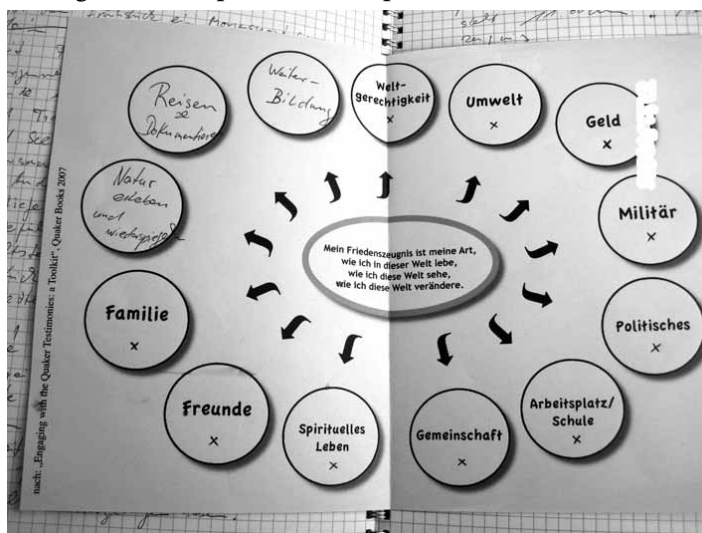
1. “Peace on earth, what is that?” “My image of peace.” and
2. “How do I get there? My way to more peace.”

We worked creatively on these questions and then we shared with each other what had come to us about these questions. For me the result was quite surprise: images of my life up till now with a view of what lies ahead, the essence of my soul. To dive so deeply into the depths of such a theme was possible thanks to those who made up the group, and to the competent preparation by the leaders.

In the evening Johannes Bircher demonstrated “EFT” (Emotional Freedom Technique), a method that can free people from burdensome emotions. I tried it out and it was exactly right for me. Many thanks, Johannes.

Looking back and a looking forward: suggestions were collected and organisers for next year were found. After a tasty lunch, we headed off homeward, each away in his own direction. In happy anticipation of the meeting from 1st to 3rd, April 2011 around the theme of “the sermon on the mount”, we said farewell to one another and departed.

*P.S. This report is also available in German on the EMES website: [www.fuccemes.org](http://www.fuccemes.org)*



## Central European Gathering

**Brian Phillips** *from Toronto, writes*

God's grace was certainly very much present on the shores of Lake Balaton in Hungary as 36 Friends and attenders came together there for the 2010 Central European Gathering of Friends from 21 to 24 May. It was my very great privilege to have been invited to lead this richly gifted and loving group of Quakers and seekers through a series of reflections on the theme of inter-faith relationships and dialogue in the twenty-first century. The generosity of spirit and responsiveness of this very diverse yet truly united community made this an enormously rewarding endeavour. We explored together the ways in which a number of the world's great religious traditions hold within them a remarkable store of wisdom and guidance for the transformation of conflicts and the repair of broken bonds – an inexhaustible resource for all those engaged with societies and communities confronting the challenges of reconciliation.

We looked carefully at some of the particular dilemmas of inter-faith work in the contemporary world – including the question of whether a focus on shared ethical insights rather than discussions of doctrinal



*Central European Gathering on Lake Balaton, Hungary.*

*Photo by Maija and Matti Mäkelä*

similarities and differences might offer a better point of departure for conversation across traditions. Our deliberations on these and other issues were always stimulating and often very moving as F/friends connected deeply with the theme – sharing both spiritual and practical perspectives in the presentations and the discussions that followed throughout the weekend. I came away from this gathering convinced that there is a very vital and most promising current of Quaker life running through the Central European region – and that this precious stream had indeed gained new strength through our shared experience of thought, word, deed, worship, and delight at Balaton.

## Anthony Storr: Solitude

ISBN 0-00-654349-9 (1997)

**Jane Rose** *of Finland Yearly Meeting writes:*

Anthony Storr in this relatively short book (about 200 pages) explores the place of solitude in our lives. He does this by using biographical sketches from the lives of famous artists of all disciplines and ages from Kant to Kafka and Beethoven to Beatrix Potter. Storr's starting point is the premise that while love and friendship are an important part of what makes life worthwhile they are not the only source of happiness, and that those who choose something other than friends and family (like work or creativity) as the main focus of their lives are not abnormal or taking 'second best'. One of the

most interesting points is his reference to 'the capacity to be alone', developed in childhood, which can be considered as a sign of maturity even in those of us who would not consider ourselves to be especially creative.

This is a very readable book, and while offering insight into some of the great creative geniuses of our civilisation, it also makes the reader look at his or her own life anew and consider the value and different uses of solitude within that life from childhood to 'the third period'.

## Midwives of the Spirit: Reflections on and further practice of “Eldership á la Bonn”!

**Sue Glover Frykman**, *Sweden Yearly Meeting with the support of Lars Longueville writes:*

During the 2010 EMES Annual Meeting I was one of six Elders appointed to uphold the clerks during the meetings for worship for business, meet with them in worship before and after sessions, welcome Friends into the worshipping space with a formal handshake and a smile at the door, begin meeting by being the first person in the worshipping space, try to be a channel for the spirit during meetings for worship and for business, take responsibility for closing meetings for worship, lead the silent grace at mealtimes and be available for consultation or discussion on matters relating to Eldership during our time together in Bonn. At the Annual Meeting I learned more about the role and experience of an “accompanying Elder” and realised that we all – not only those travelling in the ministry – need to be accompanied and nurtured in order to birth and shepherd the Spirit that is within us. It became clear to me that Eldership is something other than Oversight. Eldership involves a faithful nurturing of the Spirit so that it can grow, strengthen and be heard and felt in our meetings and in our wider communities and circles. In other words, spiritual growth requires the skills and tenderness of a midwife, a shepherd, a gardener.

What struck me most during our time together in Bonn was the tangible sense of harmony, gatheredness and discipline. These aspects have also reminded me of the original Quaker meaning and significance of Gospel Order, which in a nutshell refers to the radical transformation and re-ordering of lives and relationships that stems from a covenant relationship between the Quaker

faith community and God (or whatever name we wish to use for the Divine or ‘spiritual Other’).

At Sweden Yearly Meeting, held from 13-16 May 2010, we decided to practice “Eldership á la Bonn”. In his capacity as an Elder, Lars Longueville, the other EMES representative, was naturally involved in this ‘experiment’. As the presiding clerk, I found it both valuable and uplifting to have 15-minute meetings for worship with an Elder pair before the business sessions and in this way become “yoked” together. The recording clerk (Kerstin Backman, a former EMES representative) also expressed gratitude for the Elders’ upholding of us all during the meetings for worship for business. Similarly, in their evaluation of the event, the YM Arrangements Committee said that they welcomed the active responsibility taken by the Elders and hoped that this would become an integral part of future yearly meetings.



*Lizz Roe of Woodbrooke and Jenny Routledge knitting.  
Photo by Marie-Helen Drouin*

## Friends in the Middle East

**Colin and Kathy South** write about the history of the Quaker presence in the Middle East

Since the seventeenth century, Friends have been interested in and have visited the lands surrounding the Mediterranean including Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Friends have been concerned to speak the Truth about the Love of God that they had known and experienced through the Light that comes from God and from Christ and was available to all. They were imprisoned, badly treated and abused and led George Fox to read the Quran and know it well enough to reference it when writing to the Great Turk to 'call his people to stop oppressing and inhumanely using the English people whom you take captive'.<sup>1</sup>

It was with a similar imperative to those early Friends that enabled Eli and Sybil Jones to ask their Meeting in China, Maine, USA in 1867 to liberate them for service in Europe and the Holy Land. They set out in April for Britain on their way to the Middle East. They travelled widely in Britain. Their concern for the Middle East led two Friends, Alfred Fox of Falmouth and Clare Miller of Edinburgh, to join Eli and Sybil Jones in their mission. This party arrived in Beirut in October but following a winter in the Lebanon the party had to return to England in February 1868 for Sybil to recover her health. Palestine, however, had been their goal and Sybil's health restored, they

travelled to Palestine arriving in May 1869.<sup>2</sup>

In 1869, Ramallah was 'a Christian village of about three thousand inhabitants' and in May of that year the women of the village asked for a school for Girls. Boys could be educated at either of three small schools for boys, at the Anglican<sup>3</sup>, Catholic or Greek Orthodox schools, but there was no provision for girls' education. London Yearly Meeting agreed to support a concern for providing education for girls in village schools surrounding Ramallah. Meanwhile London Yearly Meeting supported an existing school outside Beirut founded by Theophilus Waldemeier, a German missionary who became a Friend as a direct result of contact with the same travelling party led by Eli and Sybil Jones.

The Friends community in Ramallah in those early years grew as a direct consequence of mission activity sponsored by British friends and was led largely by British Friends until 1888. In 1888, the responsibility for Ramallah Friends schools was given to New England Yearly Meeting to help share the responsibility for mission in the region as London Yearly Meeting's interest in Foreign missions grew. American Friends were encouraged to found a Girls School in Ramallah running along the same lines as the existing school in Brummana, Lebanon.

'A local Friends meeting was already growing in Ramallah but with the advent of the newly created American Friends Mission Board (later through various metamorphoses to become Friends United Meeting), a house was purchased and a monthly meeting organised in 1890 with a membership of thirty-five people. It was laid down within five years as Friends did not feel equal to the task. It was however revived in 1903 and has carried on continuously since that time, it is the only monthly meeting that has ever been set up in Palestine'<sup>4</sup>

The great great grandson of the American Quaker missionary, Timothy B Hussey, who purchased the land for a new stone Meeting House, dedicated on the sixth



Photo by Sue Glover Frykman

day of the third month, 1910 was present at the centennial celebrations of that same Meeting House on 7th May, 2010. His name is also Timothy Hussey. His great great grandfather in that same place had been seventy nine on that same day one hundred years ago.

The banner inside the garden wall of the Meeting House visible from the gate on the main road states 'Ramallah Friends Meetinghouse – A century of witness: working for justice and peace.' This is 'a picture in smoked glass' of a community that lived through the last days of the Ottoman Empire, the First World War, the British Mandate, the Second World War, United Nations partition, the First Israeli War, the Hashemite

Kingdom of Jordan, the Israeli invasion in 1967, the Israeli occupation and the first Intifada, the Palestinian National Authority under Yasser Arafat, the Gulf war, the Second Intifada, the rout of the town under Operation Defensive Shield and the latest Palestinian struggle for representation in the West Bank. Some of the stories of service to the Community within the walls of the Meeting House are told in 'Stories from the Ramallah Friends Meeting 1869-2010' published this year by the Friends International Centre in Ramallah.

Through the worst days of the Second Intifada, the Meeting met in a beautiful room with an arched roof in the Friends Girls School as the Meeting House was in very poor repair and the Meeting House roof was in danger of collapse. Jean Zaru, as Clerk of the Meeting, Nabil Ajlouny and Violet Zarou were the mainstays of the Meeting at this time and loyally met each Sunday when not prevented by illness, travel or curfew. Internationals working at the Friends School, Friends serving with EAPPI or the many international visitors from the USA and Europe frequently and sometimes regularly bolstered numbers and helped keep the meeting vital and alive as they exchanged news of the latest events and ministered out of love and compassion, faith and hope. For British Friends, Colin and Kathy South, the Meeting was a lifeline during the most difficult of these days.

From 2002 onwards, Jean Zaru and her sons Saleem and Walid with the strong backing of Philadelphia and



*Jean Zaru, Clerk, arriving for Meeting. Photo by Tofte Frykman*

Baltimore Yearly Meetings brought the old Meeting House back to life, refurbishing the roof and basic structure, re-establishing the beauty of the stone work, replanting the garden and including a small flat for a resident manager of the newly established Friends International Centre to be based at the Meeting House. Now with the continued support of the Yearly Meetings, it hosts a programme of hospitality to visitors, culture and the arts and a place where meetings can take place to discuss issues of importance to the international community and to the NGO community in Israel/Palestine. It is proving a great venue for concerts and the Centre and Meeting House provide an opportunity for continuing service for Kathy Bergen as Manager who has given many years of her life to working for peace and justice in Palestine.

## References

- 1 'Quakers Relations with Muslims in 17th Century', Galen R. McNemar Hamann 12.15.09. Galen quotes George Fox (Fox, Vol 6, 85)
- 2 'Friends in Palestine', Christina Jones, Print Press, 1981.
- 3 Christina mentions two local boys schools...there were in fact three local girls schools..she may not have known about the Anglican Boys School (1857) ref. Riwaq Centre for Architectural Conservation – Ramallah.
- 4 'Stories from the Ramallah Friends Meeting 1869-2010', FICR, 2010

## Roses of Haddenham

**Jane Rose** of *Finland Yearly Meeting* writes:

I have in my possession a piece of writing entitled 'Haddenham Quaker History' written by Walter Rose (1871-1960). In these 40 pages (written in 1916) he traces the history of Quakers in Haddenham, a village near Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, England, mostly through the Rose family records, from 1660-1870.

Thomas Elwood made his first and only recorded visit to Haddenham Meeting in 1660. Elwood writes: At first I went to a town called Haddenham in Buckinghamshire...., where, at the house of one Belson, a few who were called Quakers did meet sometimes on a first day of the week but I found little satisfaction there.' Walter Rose comments that Elwood was evidently a seeker and 'had not [yet] attained that stage of experience when from the richness of his heart's experience he had spiritual help to give to others.'

Walter Rose summarises the records of Haddenham meeting for more than two centuries- the place of the meeting, from its completion in 1747, being the family farmhouse. He adds his own thoughts: 'Their hallowed associations are woven about its structure. Its small carefully tended burial ground contains the remains of loved ones endeared to memory'

The first definite record connecting this Rose family with the Society of Friends is as follows and is taken from the Luton and Leighton register:

*Rose Jane died 23.4.1694. Wife of Edward, a Yeomen. Residence Haddenham, Bucks. Place of burial at Haddenham in his own ground*

Reading Elwood's words brings me back to our small meeting in northern Finland. The meeting in Haddenham comprised about 5-7 Friends: this has parallels to my 'local' meeting which also 'meets sometimes'. I also hold in memory a meeting I visited on Cape Cod in 2000 where a group of 5-7 elderly friends kept alive a small meeting in a large Meeting house each Sunday. I wonder how many small meetings of 5 or so Friends there are round the world, in isolated and not so isolated places, which are trying to keep Quaker faith alive by 'meeting sometimes'. We might hope that visitors to these small meetings would not be finding 'little satisfaction' but be grateful for the mustard seeds of faith that propel Friends to continue to 'meet sometimes'.

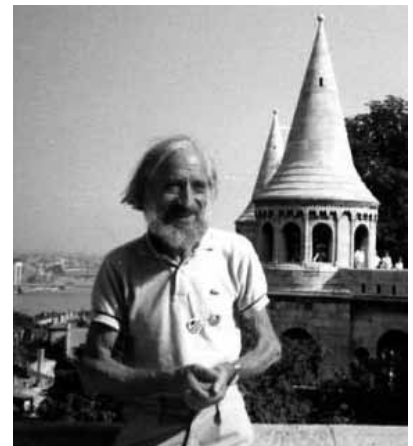
## Georges Elias

**Jeanne-Henriette Louis**, Clerk of *France Yearly Meeting*, writes:

Georges Elias died on April 13th, at the age of 88.

Georges always trusted non-violent means to solve conflicts. In this capacity he represented FWCC in the Congo at the beginning of this decade. Friends heard at his Memorial Meeting how a Friend went to get a visa for him and the official was astounded and impressed that someone of his evident age was preparing to undertake this service.

Georges became clerk of France Yearly Meeting in the mid 1980s. He moved to Congénies a few years ago. After his funeral his ashes were scattered in the Quaker graveyard of Congénies. We are grateful for his luminous life.



## 2010 Anna Lindh Prize goes to Jean Zaru

The Anna Lindh Memorial Fund named in memory of a young Swedish politician who fell victim to an act of inexplicable violence seeks to support people, who in their daily lives have the courage to fight indifference, prejudice, oppression and injustices in order to promote a good life for all people in an environment marked by respect for human rights.

In a part of the world that is often painted in different shades of violence, Jean Zaru is a beacon of hope. She is an advocate for dialogue between religions and is, as a lone female church leader in the Middle East, a role model for women's leadership. During her entire life, Jean Zaru has chosen non-violence to resist the oppression under which she lives. Non-violence because it exposes and challenges the structural violence on all levels. Non-violence because it makes the oppressors realize that they, too, are victims of the violence they impart. Non-violence because Jean Zaru believes in the human being, the entire human being. *From the Anna Lindh Prize website (www.annalindhsmminnesfond.se/in\_english)*



## News from Brussels

In the last edition of Among Friends you will have seen a report on the QCEA Study Tour to Israel/Palestine and the decision of QCEA Council to approve a programme of work arising from that visit. Here, we provide a brief update on what we have been able to do so far on this and on some of our other work.

### **Israel/Palestine Programme**

The initial focus of the work has, of course, been more research and some intensive networking with other NGOs working in and on the region to ensure that we did not unnecessarily duplicate and that we made alliances wherever possible.

One of the issues we had identified as an area of work for us was the issue of visas, residence, and the right to enter the occupied Palestinian Territories. In April 2010 we became aware of two new Israeli Defence Force Orders (1649 and 1650) which seriously jeopardize the ability of a number of different groups of people to reside in the West Bank. By defining as infiltrators 'anyone who entered the Area unlawfully following the effective date, or a person who is present in the Area and does not hold a permit' the IDF orders potentially jeopardize Gazans living in the West Bank whose addresses are still registered in the Gaza Strip and their West Bank-born children; Palestinians who relocated to the West Bank under family reunification provisions; Jordanians residing in the West Bank; Palestinian residents of Jerusalem; foreign-born spouses of Palestinians; and foreign citizens working in the West Bank, particularly with NGOs and Human Rights groups.

We immediately wrote to decision-makers in the EU to raise the matter with them and to ask them to use their good offices with the Israeli government to call for a withdrawal or significant amendment of the orders. On the basis of the letters we sent, we had meetings and phone calls with a senior advisor of the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs, with an advisor of the EU Special Representative to the Middle East Peace Process, senior staff in the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union and the European Commission, the Spanish Presidency and relevant experts in the permanent representations of 7 Member States. As a result of both our work and that of other

NGOs, we are given to understand that the EU and several Member States will monitor the situation more closely than would otherwise have been the case.

We are undertaking a survey of Quaker involvement in Israel/Palestine; if you have not yet been asked to complete our on-line survey but you have information to give us, please contact [mweitsch@qcea.org](mailto:mweitsch@qcea.org) and we will send you a link to the survey.

Our regular, biennial conference, which will take in October this year (as usual in conjunction with BYM's QPSW) will focus on this area of our work. A notice of the conference is elsewhere in this edition.

### **Peace, the European Security Strategy and the European External Action Service**

2010 is the anniversary of the Quaker Peace Testimony (or more accurately the Declaration to King Charles II – and even this is disputed, so it might also be in 2011 that the actual anniversary falls). To mark the occasion we have collected a number of documents: the Declaration to King Charles II, the William Penn essay on Europe, the 1987 New Zealand statement on peace, the 2008 Switzerland YM statement on the Responsibility to Protect and the 2010 Netherlands YM response to the World Council of Churches on 'Just Peace' and we are putting all of these into a new publication to come out later this summer. The new material will be a short paper on the European Security Strategy and the notion of security this is built on. The short paper will also be presented by Martina Weitsch at the AGM of Church and Peace in June 2010.

This publication brings together a number of strands of our work and will support our advocacy on peace and in particular on the European Security Strategy, the European Union Foreign Policy and the development of the European External Action Service (EEAS).

This latter development (the EEAS) has been very high on our list of priorities in the last 6 months or so since the Lisbon Treaty was ratified. The development of the service has taken centre stage in the discussions in Brussels and this has been the time to influence it. Liz Scurfield, in her role as part of the steering group (Troika) of the Human Rights and Democracy Network has been able to engage in discussions on

this with several of Catherine Ashton's\* advisors. We are told that peacebuilding and conflict prevention is a silver thread running through everything the EEAS will do; we will monitor this in detail.

### **Criminal Justice work continues**

Our new report on 'Alternatives to Imprisonment' was published in February 2010. This presents our research on the use of alternatives to imprisonment in the 47 member states of the Council of Europe. We are now using this to start the process of advocacy on our recommendations at the Council of Europe (CoE). In June, Liz Scurfield will be discussing the first steps in this process with relevant MPs in the Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE.

Work has also started on a new survey to establish the kind of support available to offenders when they are released from custody. We are in the early stages of

this and would welcome any information that Friends have regarding practice in this area in their countries or contacts with relevant NGOs.

### **Sustainable Energy Security**

After the publication of our study on the Nabucco pipeline project and its human rights and development implications in December 2009, we also published a study on the European Union Sustainable Consumption and Production Action Plan. We are now moving into the advocacy phase of the project where we will input into policy developments in the EU on the basis of the recommendations from these papers and a number of fact-sheets we have so far published.

*Martina Weitsch and Liz Scurfield, Joint Representatives*

\* Catherine Ashton is the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs

## **Working for Peace in the Middle East: What can Quakers do?**

*QCEA/QPSW Conference in Brussels, 29-31 October 2010*

Reflect with Friends from across Europe on what Quakers can do:  
at home, at EU level, and in the region

A range of workshops using a variety of approaches and techniques, including music and drama

Keynote Speakers:

**Ute Caspers** (a member of German Yearly Meeting with extensive experience in the region) confirmed

A speaker from one of the EU Institutions has been invited

A live in concert on Saturday night – **David Ferrard: Songs for Peace and Justice**

Optional additional **½ day programme** on Monday 1 November:

An introduction to QCEA and its work in Brussels

Further information available at: <http://www.quaker.org/qcea/conferences/index.htm>

Booking is essential as places are limited! The deadline for bookings is Friday 30 July 2010.

If you live in the UK please download a booking form the website and return to:

Anne Wilkinson, QPSW, Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ

If you do not live in the UK, please download a booking form from the website and return to:

Joe Casey, QCEA, Square Ambiorix 50, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium, Fax: +32 2 230 6370

or E-mail: [jcasey@qcea.org](mailto:jcasey@qcea.org)

## Teaching in China

**Pier Cesare Bori**, a member of the Bologna Worship Group in Italy, writes:

I spent two months as a visiting professor in a great university in Beijing. Much of my time was spent in preparing a seminar in which, with about ten advanced students, we read and commented in English on Pico della

Mirandola's Discourse on Human Dignity. Pico in 1486 wrote this Oration (the so called Manifesto of the Renaissance) to speak of the freedom of man, and of his calling to the highest vocation to be one with God, through a path which comprises moral perfection, full intellectual expansion, mystic union. He thinks that in every culture such a path can be found. From image to full likeness (Genesis 1, 26-28), this is his program for every human existence. During the seminar a translation into Chinese was provided by my students (I taught in English, but used also a little of the Chinese version), so that at the end of the seminar we had a full translation of the text. It will be printed, and presented at the Shanghai Expo on the 10 of September 2010.

What has all this to do with my Quaker choice? Incidentally, I entered the Society nearly 20 years ago, as an individual member, applying for membership in London to avoid having to reject my catholicism, which was generously accepted. First, my Quakerism, following Rufus Jones and his Spiritual Reformation, is humanistic, marked by a fundamental trust in human nature and human insight (especially in his capacity to interpret history and the past). Secondly, my teaching is marked by the persuasion that a light enlightens everybody. While as a historian I am concerned about



*Pier Cesare Bori and his Beijing University students*

differences in cultures and languages, as a human being and as a teacher I am convinced - and my experience confirms it - that I can understand others, and they can understand me.

Third, in a key passage of the Oration of Pico there is a mention of "the true Apollo who illuminates every soul that comes into this world", which has a deep resonance for me: here we are! And - the most beautiful thing for me - both the Oration, and a fundamental passage in the biography of George Fox have in common the idea of the return to the Garden of Eden and the vision of Paradise. Certainly it would be more difficult to do what I have done without my deep persuasions about the Light and the worship in Spirit and truth, without that exhortation: "to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one".

But of course, explaining Christianity, Catholicism, Protestantism, Quakerism and the varieties of it would have been totally impossible...I in some way was all that, but in that moment those categories had no real meaning. The real thing was that we were together, reading and understanding Pico, who spoke to us from five centuries ago...and perhaps speaking a little "in the same spirit".

# Epistle from EMEYF Spring Gathering 2010

*To the tune of "Lord of the Dance"*

**Hug, Friends, wherever you may be  
It's time to see conflict differently  
It's not quite as simple as a cup of tea  
But we choose to be a community**

We gathered on a Friday, and the weather it was grim  
Not a sunny image but Moyallon let us in  
Twenty joined the dance, to Norn Irn we all went  
And with wisdom from nine countries, seven days we spent

*Hug, Friends ...*

We opened our eyes and are shocked to have found  
Two halves of Northern Ireland, in this conflict they are bound  
In politics in Stormont; murals painted on the walls,  
Physical divisions between Shankill and the Falls

*Hug, Friends ...*

We opened up our minds and our hearts to fill  
Guided by our speakers and by Symon Hill.  
Jesus' inner strength taught us to act nonviolently  
We can find this in ourselves through creativity

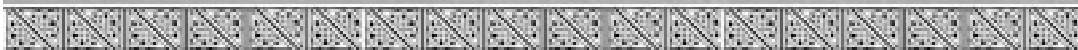
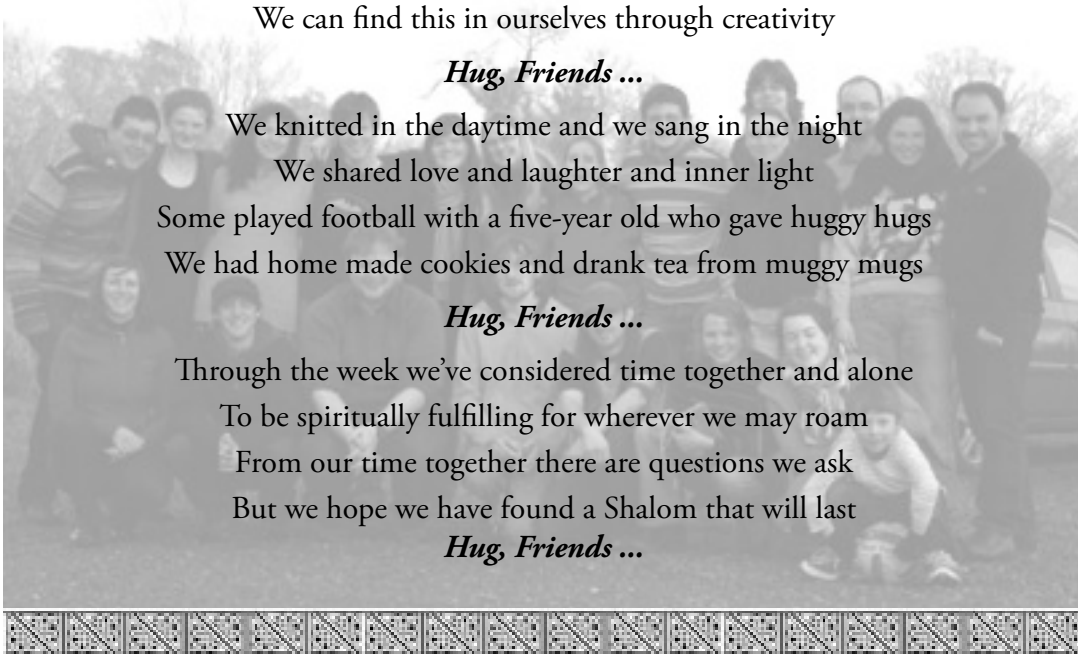
*Hug, Friends ...*

We knitted in the daytime and we sang in the night  
We shared love and laughter and inner light  
Some played football with a five-year old who gave huggy hugs  
We had home made cookies and drank tea from muggy mugs

*Hug, Friends ...*

Through the week we've considered time together and alone  
To be spiritually fulfilling for wherever we may roam  
From our time together there are questions we ask  
But we hope we have found a Shalom that will last

*Hug, Friends ...*



## Return to Tbilisi

**Michael Eccles**, *Britain Yearly Meeting writes*

Having visited Georgian Friends in January 2009 as an EMES Visiting Friend I was privileged enough to be asked to travel back to Tbilisi in October 2009 with Julia Ryberg, of Sweden Yearly Meeting, to run a Woodbrooke-on-the-road for Tbilisi Worship Group. I did this as part of my work at Woodbrooke.

About ten Friends joined the course, and we spent 2 intense days with Friends from the Worship Group considering what it means to be a Quaker in the world today, and more specifically what it means to be a Quaker in Georgia. There was no common language in the room; so working through the medium of English, Georgian and Russian, and with a little Swedish too, we covered topics such as the Quaker business method and Quaker testimony. We looked at different roles within meetings such as clerk, elder, treasurer and considered how this role could be carried out in Tbilisi Worship Group. The training days ended with us looking at the life of the meeting, and we asked Friends to tell us what the meeting's strengths were. They offered: unity, openness, honesty, friendship, kindness, peace-loving, pluralism and faith. For me this was a strong and fitting end to the Woodbrooke-on-the-road sessions.

We also supported an 'open door' event held at the end of the first day at the suggestion of local Friends.



*Georgian Friends and Julia Ryberg (right)  
Photo by Michael Eccles*

Three enquirers came to learn more about Quakerism. Although local Friends had hoped that Julia and I would lead the session, we turned it round and suggested they took the lead as everyone had something to share of their experience of Quakerism.

After these two days, Julia and I stayed on in Georgia as EMES visiting Friends. This gave us a chance to meet with some Friends for longer periods and to get to know a bit more about the life of the meeting. We heard more of the humanitarian work of *Friends House Georgia* which is continuing to support people, many of whom are still displaced from the 2008 war in South Ossetia.

We also carried out four membership visits on behalf of FWCC's *International Membership Committee*. This was my first time carrying out membership visits for the IMC, and I found it a deeply moving experience. I heard how long and hard people had been seeking a spiritual home, and also the relief and gratitude of finding Quakers. I was humbled by these visits and am extremely grateful to have been asked to carry out this service. I am glad to say that we were able to recommend to the IMC that all the people we visited were admitted into membership and I'm even more glad to say that they are now all formal members.



*Georgian Friends. Photo by Michael Eccles*

## A visit to 1652 Country

**Annie Janssen** writes:

At the top of the hill stood a large wooden cross. We were startled and rather irritated to find it there. If any place can be thought of as “sacred” to Quakers, it is Pendle Hill in Lancashire, where George Fox had his famous vision of “a great people to be gathered”. For us 21st-century Friends, the cross erected on this spot carried connotations that made us uncomfortable. And it certainly interfered with our imaginative connection with Fox’s moment of divine inspiration. But what remained uncertain was how Fox himself would have reacted - would he have loved the cross or loathed it?

This was the kind of question that occupied us for much of the time we spent in 1652 Country – “us” being ten members and attenders of the German Yearly Meeting who were making a pilgrimage to England at Eastertime to learn about our Quaker roots. On our journey, we heard so many thrilling stories of the courage, faith and tenacity of the early Friends, and often wondered: what would they think of today’s Quakers? Would they see us as worthy “descendants”, or would they consider our modern Quaker way to be unrecognizable as a natural evolution of their own?

Since being a Friend is often more about asking questions than finding definitive answers, we were not unduly worried by these musings. It was enough to be sleeping in Swarthmore Hall, Margaret Fell’s home, which had played such a prominent role in early Quaker history, and to have the chance to make a fascinating excursion each day to a site of importance to Friends - not just Pendle Hill, but also Lancaster Castle, where many Quakers were jailed and tortured, as well as several early meeting houses. Our visit to the Quaker Tapestry in Kendal acquainted us with dozens of significant episodes in Quaker history and a brief stay at Woodbrooke helped to link the home of modern Quaker education with our pilgrimage to the sites associated with the initial development of Quaker thought. At the

end of our stay in Great Britain, we were also pleased to be able to visit the library at Friends House in London (and were doubly pleased to see German Yearly Meeting publications prominently displayed there!)

But as with most Quaker events, the most meaningful and enduring part of this journey were the encounters we had with individual Friends. The warmth of the welcome we received in Kendal, Uxbridge and Wanstead Meetings, where Friends lavished attention on us as if we were visiting dignitaries, the way we were pampered by the staff at Swarthmore Hall, including the Friend who served as mini-van driver and patiently ferried us around Cumbria for four days, the graciousness of the members of the “1652 Committee” and all the Friends along our pilgrim trail who presented enthralling talks or tours, the enormous amount of time Friends spent finding and coordinating our accommodation in Kendal and London (and keeping us advised of travel options in the face of a threatened rail strike!), and the extraordinary generosity of the many British Quakers who opened their homes to us so that we could spend our time among Friends rather than in an anonymous hotel - these experiences and impression have spiritually enriched our lives and forged new friendships. Surely that is something of which George Fox would have thoroughly approved!



*Photo by Annie Janssen*

# News from Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre

## An update from Julia Ryberg

The **Quaker in Europe on-line course** is running in Dutch and will soon begin in Russian and German. Once these courses are underway, the course will have been conducted 13 times in 9 languages. The facilitation training has been run 4 times so far. Translations are continuing in various languages. A preliminary evaluation has been undertaken, and the feedback has been positive on the whole. A more in-depth evaluation will be undertaken when the course has run in a few more languages. We are learning both about the potential and the limitations of on-line interaction for Quaker learning and fellowship. Some suggestions have been made for improvements

to the existing course and for additional courses. As always, please feel free to get in touch with me if you are interested in getting involved in the project in any way.

**Woodbrooke's next Director has been chosen.** Woodbrooke Trustees are pleased to announce the appointment of Sandra Berry of Southern East Anglia Area Meeting as Director of Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre when Jennifer Barraclough retires at the end of this year. Sandra is currently employed as a programme manager within the Human Resources section of the Design and Innovation Department of British Telecommunications. In this role, she is involved with continuous learning and professional development. She also represents the department on a BT-wide working party responsible for

recruitment into BT's telecom venues for the 2012 Olympics. She is Clerk to her Area Meeting trustees, has served on the Children's Committee and has thirteen years' experience within Britain Yearly Meeting. A full profile of Sandra will be on Woodbrooke's website soon. Visit [www.woodbrooke.org.uk](http://www.woodbrooke.org.uk) to find out more.

We are pleased that three European Friends, from Ireland, Finland and Sweden, are taking part in the 2-year **Equipping for Ministry course**. The course requires a lot of commitment, including travel to Birmingham 3 or 4 times a year, but the rewards are high - for the individual Friends themselves, for their local Quaker groups, and for the British participants in the course who benefit from wider European perspectives. The framework of the course helps people to deepen their understanding of Quaker belief and witness, to deepen their personal spiritual practice and to share with others in seeking how to live faithfully as a Quaker in their own context. To find out more, contact Judith Jenner by emailing [judith.jenner@woodbrooke.org.uk](mailto:judith.jenner@woodbrooke.org.uk) or call +44 (0)121 415 6781. Applications for the course beginning in January 2011 need to be received by October 2010.

**Stay with Friends when you come to the UK.** Did you know that you can visit Woodbrooke as a residential guest without attending a course? Bed & breakfast, half board and full board are offered. Use the Centre as a base for a visit to the Midlands, or as a tranquil space in which to take time out for a personal retreat. Woodbrooke is easily accessed by air, road and rail. Please visit our website for more information.

*Thinking of attending a course? Catchpool Fund bursaries are readily available if financial help is needed. Contact Julia Ryberg, European Project Co-ordinator, for information on the Catchpool Fund at [julia.ryberg@woodbrooke.org.uk](mailto:julia.ryberg@woodbrooke.org.uk) or +46 (0) 175-715 30. See [www.woodbrooke.org.uk](http://www.woodbrooke.org.uk) for general information and to request a course brochure.*

### Eva Koch Scholarship 2011

We are now taking applications for the Eva Koch Scholarship, offering full board and an honorarium of £500. It is tenable for 14 weeks and is to be taken in 2011. We are seeking proposals in any area of Quaker Studies. The majority of the research will take place at Woodbrooke (Birmingham, UK) where recipients will have access to our well stocked library with its major Quaker collection. No postgraduate qualification is necessary. Closing date for applications: 13 September 2010.

Interested? For an application pack contact:  
Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre,  
1046 Bristol Road, Birmingham, B29 6LJ, UK  
Telephone 0121 472 5171  
[enquiries@woodbrooke.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@woodbrooke.org.uk)  
[www.woodbrooke.org.uk](http://www.woodbrooke.org.uk)



### Study at Home for a PhD in Quaker Studies

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For further details, please contact Ben Pink Dandelion or visit the Woodbrooke website.

+44 (0)121 472 5171  
[b.p.dandelion@bham.ac.uk](mailto:b.p.dandelion@bham.ac.uk)  
[www.woodbrooke.org.uk](http://www.woodbrooke.org.uk)



THE UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre

## Diary Dates 2009/2010

We are short of space for full postal addresses and phone numbers. Please contact the EMES Office if you need this information. More dates for 2010 and beyond are available on the website: [www.fwccemes.org](http://www.fwccemes.org). Please send items for inclusion in the diary to Marisa Johnson at [emes@fwccemes.org](mailto:emes@fwccemes.org).

**14-18 June 2010: Quaker Vigil at largest Arms Fair in Europe** – Eurosatory, Paris

**20-25 June 2010: QCEA Study Tour: Brussels.** Information from [sgoertz@qcea.org](mailto:sgoertz@qcea.org)

**24-27 June 2010: Norway Yearly Meeting:** Information from <http://www.kveker.org/>

**4-19 July 2010: QUNO Geneva Summer School**

**14 July -13 August: Quaker Youth Pilgrimage:** This biennial event will take place in the Northwestern United States. General information on the pilgrimage may be found on our website <http://www.fwccemes.org/emes/quaker-youth-pilgrimage>.

**16-20 July 2010: France Yearly Meeting:** St. Thomas Centre, Strasbourg

**3-5 September 2010: World Family of Friends,** Quaker World Relations Committee of Britain Yearly Meeting invites Friends to a conference at Woodbrooke to explore the diversity of the world family of Friends. [enquiries@woodbrooke.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@woodbrooke.org.uk)

**11-12 September 2010: Finland Yearly Meeting:** Oulu, Finland

**17-19 September 2010: Border Meeting:** Nikolauskloster, Jüchen (near Neuss) Germany. Psalm 8 “When I Consider the Heavens.....” How recent discoveries about the universe affect the way we think about ourselves, our world and our religion” - speaker: Jocelyn Bell Burnell (Astrophysicist and Quaker)

**29-31 October 2010: QCEA/QPSW Conference in Brussels. Working for Peace in the Middle East: What can Quakers do?** See <http://www.quaker.org/qcea/conferences/index.htm> for details and page 10.

**4-7 November 2010: German Yearly Meeting: Bad Pyrmont**

**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 119: 1 October 2010**