



Friends World Committee
for Consultation
EUROPE & MIDDLE EAST SECTION

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FWCC/EMES Annual Report 2012

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Note: The formal annual report and accounts, prepared in accordance with UK charity requirements, are available as a separate document on request from the EMES office.

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What is FWCC?

The Friends World Committee for Consultation was established at the Second World Conference of Friends held at Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, in 1937. The concept of a world organisation to express the sense of world fellowship of Friends arose as an important part of the evolution of the Religious Society of Friends in the first two decades of the twentieth century. This tentative development gained impetus from the 1920 Friends World Conference in London and the Young Friends Gathering in Jordans, England, held in the same year. No other organisation exists which links together Yearly Meetings around the world. Authority within the Religious Society of Friends lies at the Yearly Meeting and Monthly Meeting/church level, leaving these groups potentially in isolation. Hence the vision arose of an organisation to keep Friends connected and in touch with each other across the diverse spectrum of the Society.

FWCC was established to be a channel of communication among Friends, helping us to explore and nurture our identity as Quakers so that we can discover and be faithful to our true place in the world as a people of God. The current mission statement is: answering God's call to universal love. FWCC brings Friends of varying traditions and cultural experiences together in worship, communications, and consultation, to express our common heritage and our Quaker message to the world.

Representatives appointed by affiliated Yearly Meetings and groups gather in plenary sessions every 3-5 years. Between plenary sessions, the Central Executive Committee which is broadly representative meets annually to continue FWCC's decision-making processes and to guide staff. The World Office in London is the centre of worldwide communications for Friends and supports the work of the Sections. It also represents Friends with outside international organisations such as the UN.

In 2012 FWCC held the 6th World Conference of Friends at Kabarak University, Nakuru, Kenya, on the theme *Being Salt and Light: Friends living the Kingdom of God in a broken world*. Almost 900 Friends attended, from some 52 countries. At the end of 2012 the General Secretary, Nancy Irving, retired after 8 years in office. She is succeeded by Gretchen Castle.

Europe & Middle East Section

The FWCC Europe & Middle East Section (EMES) was established in 1938 and now consists of 11 Yearly Meetings, several Monthly Meetings and other smaller national groups. Events such as the Annual Meeting, occasional International Family Gatherings, border meetings, seminars, peace and service consultations, the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage (until 2012 in cooperation with the Section of the Americas), and other activities, encourage mutual understanding, leading towards the greater involvement of Friends. Two booklets, *Meeting the Spirit* and *Friendly Advice on*

Quaker Ways, have been produced and there is a newsletter, Among Friends, published three times a year. A small Executive Committee, assisted by the Executive Secretary, ensures communication within the Section and with other Quaker bodies and individual Friends. Among many other different interests, the Section also focuses on justice, peace and service issues.

Europe & Middle East Young Friends (EMEYF) are well-established, cooperating within the Section but remaining fully autonomous.

Some Quaker Addresses in Europe

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Clerk's Report on the Work of the Trustees/Executive Committee for 2012

The Executive Committee held 2 meetings during the calendar year 2012: 22-24 March in Cambridge (England) and 20-23 September in Berlin (Germany). We decided to hold our first meeting of the year in March so that we would not need to hold an Executive Committee meeting during the World Conference in Kabarak (Kenya), where we held our Annual Meeting of EMES in two 1½ hour sessions. Our first Executive Committee of 2013 has been held in Cambridge 7-10 February and it is planned to hold our next Executive Committee meeting in Kortenburg (Belgium) before our Annual Meeting in May 2013.

FWCC EMES is a charity registered in Scotland. The members who served as Trustees of the Registered Charity for 2012 have been *Rachel M Bewley-Bateman (Clerk)*, *Sue Glover Frykman (Sweden YM)*, *Neithard Petry (Treasurer)*, *Jeremy (Jez) Smith (Britain YM)*, *Lindsey Cook (German YM)*, *Roisin Brennan (Representative of EMEYF)*. *Katherine Skarsholt (EMEYF)* will attend meetings if *Roisin* is unavailable.

Marisa Johnson (Executive Secretary and also a Trustee) has prepared and attended all the meetings. *Julia Ryberg* has attended as Ministry and Outreach Co-ordinator.

Finance

Our financial situation continues to be tight in terms of having just barely sufficient financing for our core activities. We are dependent for this mainly on the contributions of Yearly and Monthly Meetings. We appreciate that most of them have kept, some even increased, their annual payments. We trust that YM/MMs will also in future be willing and able to provide the necessary finance so that EMES can continue to provide the services for Europe & Middle East Quaker work as in the past.

Although we have been satisfied with the services provided by John Norman, of Norman, Downie and Kerr Ltd., Edinburgh, it was decided during the year to appoint Sheila Fletcher of Enigma Solutions, the examiners who do the accounts for Cambridgeshire Area Meeting, as independent examiners of our accounts for 2012. This should prove considerably less expensive. Full audited accounts for the year 2012 will be available separately for presentation by the Treasurer, Neithard Petry, at the Trustees/Executive Committee in May and to the Annual Meeting of Representatives 2-5 May 2013.

Staffing

We were pleased that Marisa Johnson, our Executive Secretary, was able to give considerable time to supporting the FWCC World Office in the months prior to the World Conference. Her style and service in presenting the notices during the conference was much appreciated also. Marisa's participation in the Equipping for Ministry course at Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre complements her work for EMES. Work on developing our website continues and the Executive Committee now holds a monthly online Meeting for Worship. Networking and supporting Friends around Europe and the Middle East continues to be an important part of our work. We have very much appreciated the contribution of the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust which has supported our Ministry and Outreach work.

Julia Ryberg, our Ministry and Outreach Co-ordinator, organised an international online study course for about 200 Friends leading up to the World Conference. This was in addition to her other work, but built on her experience of online education and facilitation. Marisa and Julia have started a consultation process with Yearly Meetings and other groups of Friends around our Section to assist us in evaluating our work and forward planning.

A successful Quaker Youth Pilgrimage was held in Europe during July/August. EMES is now considering future plans, as the Section of the Americas has decided to focus on South American Young Friends on the next occasion.

World Conference of Friends 2012

Being Salt and Light – Friends living the Kingdom of God in a broken world was the theme of the World Conference of Friends, held at Kabarak University, Kenya, from 18 to 25 April. It was a privilege to be able to join with over 850 Friends from around the world for worship, fellowship and learning together. EMES organised and led a 1 ½ hour period of semi-programmed worship one morning, where Jocelyn Bell-Burnell addressed the meeting and the strains of a Norwegian flute gathered Friends for reflection and worship. Over 70 Friends from Europe & Middle East Section attended each of the sessions of our EMES Annual Meeting held at Kabarak. *The Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice* continues to challenge Friends and was the focus of the EMES Peace & Service Consultation in November.

We look forward to welcoming the General Secretary of the Conference of European Churches, Rev. Dr. Guy Liagre, to address our Annual Meeting in May 2013, when our theme will be “Becoming a Faithful Community”.

Rachel M Bewley-Bateman, Clerk.

Report from the Executive Secretary

The first few months of 2012 were taken up in large measure with preparations for the World Conference of Friends, with weekly visits to the World Office in London to lend a hand with the many tasks that needed to be completed ahead of departure for Kenya. This busy – and slightly anxious time – was punctuated with other activities, e.g. attendance at the Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations (QCCIR) of Britain Yearly Meeting in January, Quaker World Relations Committee (QWRC), also of Britain Yearly Meeting in February, a course and a conference at Woodbrooke in March, followed by a meeting of the EMES Executive in Cambridge.

April seemed to arrive very quickly, and with it the much awaited 6th World Conference of Friends, an event that will remain for many of us a-once-in-a-lifetime experience. I felt incredibly thankful and moved by the sense of community that we experienced at Kabarak, and relieved that most of the organisational challenges were dealt with in a satisfactory way. Friends were flexible and accommodating, putting their care and attention on supporting each other, rather than focusing on any shortcomings they encountered. The event really brought out the best in all of us. After the conference, those of us who serve on the Central Executive Committee of FWCC went to Nairobi for a committee meeting. We were able to express our appreciation to the World Conference Co-ordinators, Marleen Schepers and Cornelius Ambiah, who had worked tremendously hard, and left FWCC shortly afterwards. Re-entry from the World Conference required some adjustment. There was follow up to do, and catching up on the tasks that had to be put on the back burner whilst we were preparing for Kenya.

As the AGM of Church & Peace took place in April, and the venue was in Brussels, EMES was represented at this event by Edward Haasl of Belgium and Luxembourg Monthly Meeting. A report of this event is available elsewhere in the Annual Report. During May I attended QCEA Council meeting in Brussels, the last one under the stewardship of the outgoing Representatives. At the meeting the new Joint Representatives were appointed, and I served on the Transition group that was set up to oversee the hand-over.

I attended Sweden Yearly Meeting and Britain Yearly Meeting in May. These are the only two Yearly Meetings that I was able to visit during the year. They were both fruitful occasions, helping me to learn about these Yearly Meetings' current concerns. Julia Ryberg represented EMES at Switzerland Yearly Meeting, and Jez Smith at France Yearly Meeting. Letters of greetings were sent to all Yearly Meetings in session, and to Belgium and Luxembourg Monthly Meeting's annual retreat, which also took place in May.

Bronwyn Harwood represented EMES at the Central European Gathering, which took place in Poland, and was organised by the Warsaw Worship Group. The gathering was vibrant and well-attended, and Friends are developing good organisational capacity. JRCT has been providing financial support. We were glad to learn that a Hungarian born Friend, Maria Andreanszky, who had lived in Britain for many years, left a legacy to support outreach and Quaker work in Central Europe.

In June I attended another meeting of QCCIR, this time in Leeds. Rachel Bewley-Bateman was there too. We both agreed to support a former member of the committee, Richard Seebom, in putting together a response on behalf of Friends to the consultation the Conference of European Churches (CEC) had been undertaking about its future organisation.

In July I welcomed the young people participating in the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage. I met the American visitors as they arrived at Birmingham airport at 7am on Saturday 14 July, and escorted them to the Meeting House in Bourneville, where they were joined by the European pilgrims and Mai Zaru from Ramallah. I spent the day with them, and gave a talk about the role and work of FWCC. There is full report on the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage elsewhere in this Annual Report.

In August I attended Southern Summer School in Britain, where some 70 young people aged between 11 and 14 were gathered at the Friends School in Saffron Walden, and gave a very inter-active and highly participatory talk about EMES and Quaker work in the Middle East.

In September I joined the Border Meeting in Strasbourg, which was a great delight. The venue impressed me, and I have booked it for the 2014 Annual Meeting of EMES. Later in September I travelled to Berlin (by train, via Paris) where the EMES Executive Committee held its second meeting of the year. We were guests of Quäker Büro, a lovely flat in what was once East Berlin that has been used by Friends since 1925. We learnt a lot about the history of the city, and the role of Friends during the Nazi period, the Second World War, the partition and then the division of the city by the infamous wall. The story of the peaceful revolution that led to the reunification of the city, and then Germany itself was very poignant, and a rare example that non-violence can bring about positive and lasting change.

In October, I was glad to welcome Gretchen Castle to the World Office as FWCC General Secretary. Judith Roads represented EMES at Finland Yearly Meeting. Also in October, I attended another QWRC Meeting, and another QCEA Council Meeting, where the handover from the retiring to the incoming Representatives took place. I continue to serve on the Palestine-Israel Programme Advisory Group, which meets on Skype at regular intervals.

The Peace and Service Consultation took place in Kortenberg, Belgium, in November. We considered our response to the call to peace and eco-justice that emerged at Kabarak. We reflected on how we can *be the change we want to see in the world*, as Gandhi is reputed to have put it, how to work as communities of faith, rather than mere non-governmental organisations. We explored how complaints and frustrations in our lives are often manifestations of deeply held commitments to positive values. By re-framing these complaints as statements of commitment, we move from a habit of blame to one of taking responsibility for the issues that trouble us. We must be sustained by hope. Our way of making decisions is distinctive and rooted in the belief that when we set aside our small egos we make ourselves channels for a greater wisdom. Helen Rowlands of Woodbrooke facilitated the workshops on the theme. At the consultation we welcomed the recently appointed General Secretary of Church and Peace, Davorka Lovreković, a member of German Yearly Meeting. We are very pleased that she has been called to this service, and pledged to uphold and support her in this ministry.

Marian Liebmann, from Bristol, Britain Yearly Meeting, attended the Eighth European Rehabilitation Conference in Stare Jablonki, near Torun, Poland, 15-16 November 2012. This arose from contact with Tomasz Kowalski, an Enquirer, who has been in contact with EMES over the past two years due to his interest in Quaker work in criminal justice. Tomasz organised the conference, and Marian gave presentations on “Restorative Justice in the Criminal Justice System – British Experiences” and “Quakers and their Concerns for Prisoners”. After the conference Marian travelled to

Warsaw, where she spent time with members of the worship group there, who appreciated her visit very much.

Also in November, I went to Woodbrooke twice, first as a contributor to a weekend course entitled “A taste of the Middle East”, where I gave a presentation on the Quaker presence in the region, and then for a weekend of reflections on participation in the World Conference of Friends.

Three issues of **Among Friends** were published during the year, and they complement the more frequent news coverage we can now offer through the website. I am very grateful to Alastair Reid who continues to put the journal together for me, making the task much less daunting. Our presence on Facebook now has 194 followers.

As in previous years, we have been monitoring the **environmental impact** of our activities by recording all major travel and using a web-based tool to calculate emissions – see http://www.travelfootprint.org/journey_emissions. We have collected and analysed information about all EMES (staff, Executive Committee and Ministry and Outreach) travel, and attempted to measure the carbon emissions incurred. The number of journeys undertaken was 131 (compared to 98 in 2011), 16 by car (10 in 2011), 40 flights (same as in 2011) and 75 journeys by train (48 in 2011, an increase from 11,700 km to almost 25,000 km). Total carbon emissions were just over 9.6 tons, compared to 12.75 tons in 2011. The lower level of emissions in spite of the higher number of journeys can be accounted for by the fact that there were no long haul flights (Tbilisi, Georgia, in the previous year) and by the increase in train travel. Air travel still accounts for 88% of carbon emissions (96% in 2011). To put this into some kind of context, it may be worth considering that each return trip to Nairobi for the World Conference incurred around 4 tons of carbon dioxide emissions, hence the carbon footprint for the EMES Executive Committee to attend the World Conference according to the measurements used was 32 tons.

As the year drew to an end, we said goodbye to Nancy Irving, who retired as General Secretary of FWCC World Office. It was a privilege to support Nancy and her team in preparing for the World Conference, and I am grateful for what working with her has taught me. She is now spending a few months at Pendle Hill reflecting and preparing herself for other possible service. I wish her well most sincerely.

At the beginning of 2012 I embarked on a two year Equipping for Ministry programme at Woodbrooke. It may seem odd to do so when I have already been serving the Section for some years. Yet it felt right to set aside time for reflection and spiritual work to harvest the learning from the first four years, and hopefully prepare for more thoughtful and appropriate service. I have found some amazing resources through the programme, and have experienced a release of energy and enthusiasm that leaves me

feeling refreshed, humbled, and eager for more. I hope that sharing learning and insights through my work will benefit our growth as a community of faith.

I am grateful to the Clerk, Treasurer and members of EMES Executive Committee for their support and encouragement, and I am very lucky to have Julia Ryberg and Kim Bond as my colleagues. Once again, I am deeply grateful to Sue Glover Frykman for her help in putting this report together.

I approach my sixth year in my job with a sense of fresh purpose, huge dedication, and positive expectation. I look forward to working for Friends in Europe and the Middle East in 2013.

Marisa Johnson, Executive Secretary

Ministry & Outreach Development

During the first half of the year, I visited Switzerland and Finland twice each to serve Friends in a combination of retreat leadership, attendance at YM and pastoral visits. It was important to be accompanied by Jaana Erkkilä to Switzerland and by Markku Hirn to Finland. Other Friends have been asked on occasion to travel, where possible in pairs, on behalf of EMES.

The farthest journey afield was to the World Conference in Kenya. An adventure of a lifetime, it offered a huge piece of learning for me personally, and certainly for all of us who attended, about the similarities and differences among Friends worldwide. I have become more aware and more sensitive. My main responsibility at the World Conference was to work with Michael Eccles to support the nearly 100 Home Group leaders. As is always the case, Home Groups offered opportunity for significant sharing among Friends.

About 200 Friends from all over the world prepared for the Conference, even if they did not attend it, by taking part in the *Salt and Light* online study groups, focusing on the Conference study booklet. Working in cooperation with Woodbrooke, I created and administered the 16 online groups, ensuring a diversity of Quaker traditions and locations in each group. The groups worked in English, French, Spanish or Russian. Some F/friendships are ongoing as a result, and it was wonderful for many online participants to meet in person at the Conference. Thanks are due to the facilitators of each of the groups for their committed service. This was a pioneer project that will help Woodbrooke develop online global learning.

An evaluation of the *Quaker in Europe* online introductory course, co-sponsored by Woodbrooke and EMES and developed since 2008, has been completed. The course

has been shortened, revised and updated. It remains available for groups to undertake in more than 10 languages. Translations into additional languages are welcome.

Several Friends have been equipped to accompany enquirers in the *Companion* programme. The first pairing of an experienced Friend, Margaret Crompton, with an enquirer has resulted in a new worship group! The *Companion* programme remains available as a resource at any time, and more *Companions* are welcome. *Visiting Friends* resources are also available for Friends who are travelling in various contexts within the Section.

At the end of the year, the Executive Secretary and I began a consultation process to help us learn how the *Ministry & Outreach* programme has served Friends thus far and how it might continue if funding after 2013 permits the work to go on. As this report goes to press, 17 European Friends will be gathering in Sweden to explore the questions being asked in the consultation process.

We remain thankful to the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust for funding, without which the *Ministry & Outreach* programme would not exist.

Julia Ryberg, Ministry and Outreach Co-ordinator

Amari Play Centre, Ramallah

The Amari Play Centre, or the Quaker Kindergarten as most of the people in the Amari Refugee Camp call it, is one of the few preschool kindergartens serving the refugee camps in the West Bank. Since the education system in the refugee camps is supported by UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency) until the 9th grade, kindergartens do not qualify for support from UNRWA or the government educational system.

Preschool kindergartens are either run by private schools or privately run by individuals or private enterprise. Although preschool education is not supported by UNRWA or public schools, when children reach the age of 6 and are eligible for 1st grade, they are expected to have been enrolled in a kindergarten and be knowledgeable about most of the subjects taught at grade 1 level.

The Amari Play Centre provides basic educational needs for children aged 5 years and has places for 39 children from the Amari Refugee Camp. The Amari Play Centre is still housed in the Basic School for Girls run by UNRWA, and is open 5 days a week. The children come mostly from poor families. A part-time supervisor, one main teacher and two assistant teachers are in charge of the daily running of the Play Centre.

The economic situation is very difficult in the West Bank. More than half of the men in the Refugee Camp are out of work and around 260 families live on emergency food rations provided by UNRWA. The Play Centre provides opportunities for children from the Refugee Camp to acquire their early education in a healthy and friendly environment.

More than 2,000 children have been enrolled in the Play Centre since its establishment in 1974, and many of them are now fathers, mothers, teachers, workers and doctors. Quite a number send their children to the Play Centre for their early education because they have good memories of the teachers and the place.

Milk and snacks are offered to the children and sometimes hot meals. Educational material and books are also provided. All the Muslim and Christian Feasts are celebrated in addition to public feasts. Picnics form part of the activities and are always organised with a theme in mind, e.g. the seasons of the year, the environment, the olive harvest season, or visits to small local factories in the area. The children are taught to take good care of their surroundings and to care for others and help those in need.

The children learn about Quakers values, good behaviour and attitudes. One mother told me one day *“although we are living in the refugee camp and our life is not easy and is hard in many ways, I feel I am lucky to be able to send my children to the play centre for their preschool learning. This opportunity is a gift from God to our children that I value very much.”*

Muna Khleifi, Supervisor

Church and Peace

Church and Peace was founded in 1949 to encourage mainstream churches to commit to being Peace Churches. Quakers, Mennonites and the Church of the Brethren were the main original members. FWCC-EMES is a member of Church and Peace, as are some Yearly Meetings (e.g. German YM and Switzerland YM). Britain Yearly Meeting was a member once, but now considers its connection with Church and Peace to be mediated through FWCC-EMES. There are a number of individual British Friends who are members, and also one or two Area Meetings. FWCC-EMES representatives to Church and Peace are Marisa Johnson and Kees Nieuwerth (Netherlands YM).

Traditionally, Church and Peace has been organised along language zones: Francophone area, German-speaking area, Anglophone area (little activity has been reported here for the past few years) and more recently the Slavonic area, mainly the former Yugoslavia that was the main topic for consideration at the AGM. Church and

Peace facilitates networking and joint action, issues publications, organises meetings, and gives advice and encouragement.

As both Marisa and Kees were at the World Conference of Friends in Kenya at the time, Edward Haasl, a member of Belgium and Luxembourg Monthly Meeting, represented EMES at the AGM of Church and Peace in April 2012 and provided a report of the proceedings, summarised below.

Alongside the formalities of the Annual General Meeting, such as the election of a new Board, the meeting provided an opportunity to discuss a topic that is so central to European politics. For many years, Church and Peace has been in contact with partners and members from the countries of former Yugoslavia who are trying to respond to the wounds of war among the various ethnic and religious populations by fostering reconciliation through concrete social action and through training in non-violent conflict resolution. Church and Peace supports the work of these various initiatives and organisations, the formation of an inter-religious network, and the organisation of inter-ethnic and inter-religious meetings/conferences under the guidance of experienced facilitators. Church and Peace also supports the development of relationships with initiatives in other regions of Europe working for reconciliation and the non-violent pursuit of human rights and peace.

In the podium discussion and in the subsequent small-group conversations it became increasingly clear just how complex the long-term political processes that strive for integration of the Western Balkans into the EU are. How can deeply divided societies find reconciliation if there is no intellectual and political elite supporting the process? What are the effects of decisions by the EU on the situation in each country and between countries, especially with respect to the implementation of human rights standards?

It also became clear that there are currently a number of non-governmental organisations working with great tenacity to foster internal integration within their respective countries – at the social level and by making a balanced historical analysis of the causes of war and its consequences. Reconciliation will take time. Western Europeans know this all too well from their own history. And at all levels it will need targeted support for the forces of reconciliation. Europe's future depends on reconciliation in her ethnic and religious diversity. The discussions revealed that this is a tall order for the political leaders as well as for those who actively persevere in working with the people for reconciliation.

In his report, Edward Haasl, who was attending for the first time, commented: "The greatest merit of this organisation, it seems to me, is that it brings people together and reinforces their commitment to working for peace, not peace in the abstract but in this

or that very specific situation. Even activists need encouragement. Whether or not the things the activists and their organisations are doing are contributing significantly to achieving peace or are merely voices crying in the desert is difficult to determine, but to do nothing is abhorrent. The realities need to be embedded in stories and histories. This meeting served that purpose admirably. Even the overly ambitious programming in itself reflected the difficulty of comprehending, let alone resolving the situation in the Balkans.”

Later in the year we learnt that Church and Peace had appointed Davorka Lovreković, a member of German Yearly Meeting, as their next General Secretary. Davorka attended the Section’s Peace and Service Consultation in Kortenberg in November, and we look forward to supporting her in her service.

Church and Peace, the International Fellowship for Reconciliation and FWCC-EMES will sponsor Kees Nieuwerth of Netherlands Yearly Meeting to take a workshop on practical ways to build peace to the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC), which will meet in Busan, Korea, in October 2013. The Assembly will receive reports from the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation which took place in Kingston, Jamaica, in 2011, at the end of the “Decade to Overcome Violence”, which called for war to be made illegal, and for the Christian theories of “just war” to be replaced by a commitment to Just Peace. This is a unique opportunity for the peace testimony that has been at the heart of our tradition from its very beginning to find new expression and energy in mainstream Christianity.

Marisa Johnson, EMES Executive Secretary

Quaker Youth Pilgrimage

25 pilgrims, aged 16 to 18, covering all Quaker traditions, from programmed, conservative and liberal unprogrammed Meetings in North America and Canada, evangelical Meetings in Honduras, Costa Rica and Mexico, liberal Meetings in Britain and Germany and one student from Friends School, Ramallah, Palestine, took part in the month long pilgrimage in 2012.

This year the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage was held in Britain, Belgium and the Netherlands. It was successful and the success was measured in terms of the wonderful, loving, accepting, uplifting, supportive, spiritual community inclusive of everyone, which the pilgrims and leaders created together. This is an incredible achievement considering the wide range of Quaker traditions (Evangelical, Conservative, Programmed, Liberal), beliefs and practices, cultures (Latin America, North America, Europe, Palestinian) and sexualities present, which proves that God (within), Spirit, Quaker Worship of all kinds and Quaker Process will overcome and tolerate all differences with love and mercy.

What went overwhelmingly well were the spiritual explorations, the diversity of traditions and worship in the group, the learning from each other, the community building and the community they built, homestays, stays and activities at Yealand (1652 country), Barmoor, Woodbrooke, the Netherlands, pilgrim-led retreats, service projects, QCEA, Amsterdam, most food and all transport and the leader team, with much praise for Siobhan and Kate, the EMES leaders. This all reflects the fact that we were able to put in place lessons learned from both the 2008 and 2010 pilgrimages, although of course there are new lessons to be learned from 2012.

There were also various insights and a (very) few suggestions for improvements for the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage Committee to take into the future. These covered practical things such as two uncomfortable venues, difficulties with food at one location and Alternatives to Violence (AVP). These are fairly minor learning points, however. The only major difficulty was with the language skills of one leader, but this was overcome by all (including that leader), to still create a great community, and valuable learning is taken forward for the future, for both the Section of the Americas and EMES Committees.

We are very grateful to both the Section of the Americas and EMES QYP Committees for their hard work to put it together. A huge thank you also to all who contributed along the way – homestay hosts, local Friends, workshop leaders, minibuses and coach drivers, cooks, Woodbrooke and many, many others, without all of whom the pilgrimage could not have run.

We are sad to see some members leave at this time: Rachel Miller and Jenny Foot, who have contributed wonderfully to the past three pilgrimages and Martin Touwen and Kerstin Mangels, whose contribution to the 2012 pilgrimage was much valued. We thank them all for their hard work and joyful commitment to the pilgrimage. The committee welcomes a new member, Leo Vincent, and another member who is waiting to be nominated. We look forward with faith to the exploration and new challenges lying ahead for QYP.

Jasmine Perinpanayagam, Clerk, Quaker Youth Pilgrimage Committee

Reports from Yearly Meetings, Monthly Meetings and Groups

Belgium and Luxembourg Monthly Meeting

Belgium and Luxembourg Monthly Meeting (BLMM) continues to grow and evolve. A handful of attenders were welcomed into membership in 2012; the ebb and flow of new enquirers and attenders continues.

Meeting for Worship is held in Brussels every Sunday and Wednesday; every first Sunday in Brussels, there is a 'bring-and-share' lunch, a time for re-connecting and discussing. In Luxembourg a dwindling group meets approximately every month.

Children's Meetings are held every first Sunday at Quaker House, Brussels; a childminding service is provided every Sunday during Meeting for Worship, to encourage parents of young children to come to Meeting. This has met with some success.

The annual weekend Residential Meeting was held at Kortenberg Abbey in May 2012 and was attended by around 30 people. The event centred on reflections and discussions led by members of the Meeting including 'the testimonies' and 'caring for one another'. A new departure – and a very enjoyable one – was an evening of circle dancing. Taking advantage of the presence of many Friends who do not attend our usual Sunday afternoon Meetings for Business, a significant amount of time at the Residential Meeting was given over to church affairs.

One result was that the Meeting published a press release on the occasion of the Eurosatory Arms Fair in Paris in June. The statement was disseminated to the Belgian media, and was published on our website – www.qkr.be – see also below.

The Meeting has a long-standing relationship with QCEA (former members of BLMM were active in setting up QCEA, and the Brussels Meeting still meets in QCEA's offices). The meeting discussed its relationship with QCEA, and agreed to offer it continued support. It also shared with QCEA its current concerns, notably economic justice and opposition to EU militarism.

Happily, the Meeting had no deaths to record in 2012, and is glad to note that a Meeting for Worship for the Celebration of a Marriage was held on 7 July.

Paul Holdsworth, Clerk

The Quakers of Belgium and Luxembourg express dismay at Eurosatory arms fair

From 11 to 15 June 2012, Paris hosts more than a thousand producers and users of the latest means to kill. At the last exhibition in 2010, buyers from Ghaddafi's Libya were

amongst the official guests. Others came from countries that have turned weapons against civilian populations, such as Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain and Israel.

Spokespersons for Belgium and Luxembourg Quakers called for this Eurosatory to be the last. In the guise of a progressive technological and commercial fair, the banalisation of killing is taken to new heights. Nowhere in the glossy Eurosatory publicity is there reference to blood and death, to casualties and destruction. Instead, the focus is on the celebration of the latest, often electronic and robotic, equipment for 'defence', 'security', or 'protection'. George Orwell would take grim satisfaction in these examples of 'doublespeak'.

Belgium and Luxembourg Quakers, like thousands of others, like the millions who have been the on the receiving end of war and like many of those who have delivered war, are convinced that our societies' focus on military responses to the world's many problems – far from solving the problems – creates even more; it exacerbated rather than alleviated.

Eurosatory, by encouraging the development and purchase of weaponry by armies and 'security' services across the world, merely makes things worse. It certainly does not promote solutions. The world would be a grim place, indeed, if there were no alternatives at hand, but there are. Fortunately or unfortunately, we've been unable to create a structure in which, in the words of T.S. Eliot, 'no one needs to be good'.

Economic welfare and development will come not from selling weapons but from focusing on a sustainable future for all, reducing the gap between rich and poor, creating useful employment, and addressing human suffering across the world.

Belgium and Luxembourg Quakers call on economic and political decision-makers to focus their energies on building peace and not on selling, through the Eurosatory festival of destruction, the seeds of our own destruction. To survive and prosper, the European Union must disassociate itself from Eurosatory and invest its efforts in peaceful and sustainable livelihoods.

Quakers salute those who are going to Paris during this event, not to exhibit their weapons, but to demonstrate against them and to demonstrate for peace, to remind the participants that they are fouling their own nests. Coming from many countries of Europe, they are a reminder that the European Union was built on the embers of a World War in order to secure peace between nations and people, not to prepare for more war.

Britain Yearly Meeting

It has been a full year. Britain Yearly Meeting is engaged in an ongoing exploration about what it means to be a Quaker today: the theme of “Being a Quaker” has underpinned much of our corporate life this year. This combines with an increasingly confident voice in sharing our beliefs more widely. A well-attended gathering at Woodbrooke for the Quaker Life threshing event “Whoosh!” in July was “united by our determination to energise the Religious Society of Friends in Britain, and to help it build on the vitality of the past and present to create fresh fizz and purpose for the future”, and provided a clear affirmation of “the need for growth, vibrancy and the enrichment of faithful lives”.

Work on sustainability following the “Minute 36” resolution at last year’s YM continues, helped by a toolkit to support action on sustainability, and an exercise on benchmarking of our carbon footprint as meetings. It is inspiring to see what Friends in other YMs are achieving. In the face of increasing national and global disparities, BYM issued a statement on Equality. We have found ourselves in the forefront of a national debate on same sex marriage, with unprecedented media coverage of our call for legislation for equal marriage rights. See www.quaker.org.uk for more information.

The Woodbrooke Swarthmore Lecture – “Snakes and Ladders: A personal exploration of Quaker work on human rights at the United Nations” – was given by Rachel Brett to a packed audience during BYM. Many also heard Danny Dorling speak about “Inequality in Britain and its Causes” in the Salter Lecture.

EAPPI (the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme to Palestine and Israel), coordinated in Britain by Quaker Peace and Social Witness, celebrated 10 years of its work in November (<http://www.eappi.org/>). Together with Christian Aid, BYM called on the UK Government to ban the imports from illegal Israeli settlements.

We were delighted to welcome the Pilgrims in August; their month started with visits to Woodbrooke and 1652 country; the Youth Pilgrimage remains a life-shaping experience for many.

There were some terrific new publications, including Ginny Wall’s very accessible “Deepening the Life of the Spirit: Resources for spiritual practice” and new books from Quaker Life (see <http://www.quaker.org.uk/shop>).

BYM and Woodbrooke Trustees, together with the Recording Clerk and Director of Woodbrooke, have continued their discussions about aligning our work and resources. A record number of F/friends (and conference delegates) took delight in the new

Garden Lounge at Woodbrooke, enhancing the context for spiritual seeking and refreshment (www.woodbrooke.org.uk).

For many (including over 40 from BYM who attended), the highlight of 2012 was the FWCC World Conference of Friends at Kabarak University, Kenya, in April 2012, with its stimulating theme: “Being Salt and Light: Friends living the Kingdom of God in a broken world”. The conference agreed a moving Epistle and the Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice (see www.saltandlight2012.org). Reflecting on the conference later in the year at Woodbrooke, BYM Friends hoped to spread a better understanding of the world family within our meetings and to increase our wider links especially with evangelical and programmed Friends. Many at the World Conference appreciated the prepared ministry in the programmed meetings, the use of Biblical texts, the singing and sheer joy of worship experienced, and the humbling extent of social action undertaken by many other yearly meetings. We hope that BYM’s World Relations Committee will be taking a lead on this.

Membership continued its slight decline, with 14,078 members – but slightly more new members than the previous year; 8,711 attenders are recorded. 71 Area Meetings and 478 Local Meetings continue.

Britain Yearly Meeting’s Representatives

Czech Republic, Prague Meeting

We continue to be a small gathering, meeting every fortnight in playgroup premises near the city centre, from 10 am to 2 pm. We are blessed in having two musical families with five young children under eight, so the playgroup with its toys, kitchen with dining area, and several other rooms is an ideal venue. We start with half an hour of Quaker songs, accompanied by Pavel Marusinec on the accordion and his wife Irena on the recorder. We use both “Sing in the Spirit” and our own songbook made by Pavel with Czech translations, and songs in English he learned at Woodbrooke which are not in the big book yet. This half hour is one of the highlights of my week. I never experienced singing at Meetings in Britain, such as my home Meetings in Exeter and Forres.

Our Meeting for Worship takes place in a small gym at the far end of the main playgroup room. One of our attenders has a very bad back, and sometimes lies on a mat during worship. With so many multilingual people present, there is no problem in translating, regardless of whether the ministry is in Czech or English. We are blessed with visitors from overseas each year, mainly from the UK and USA, but have few regular worshippers.

We enjoy a vegetarian shared lunch together afterwards, to which everyone contributes. Like the music, this is central to my core feeling of being a Quaker, as we

exchange news and views, and taste new foods from each others' traditions.

After washing up, we have about an hour of study time together. We started the year finishing Paul Buckley's "Owning The Lord's Prayer", a detailed examination in which we re-wrote the prayer in our own words. Then we started a study of St John's Gospel. After the summer break we moved on to the Toolkit "Engaging with the Quaker Testimonies" which was both interesting and thought provoking. It is a huge help to small, isolated meetings like ours to have access to such well-written materials.

In May, over the weekend of BYM in London, we enjoyed meeting other Friends and attenders at the Central European Friends Gathering in Niwki, near Opole in Poland. Stuart Masters from Woodbrooke was our tutor over the two days in session. He was excellent, and spoke slowly and clearly and allowed frequent pauses for translation into Polish. He covered a wide range of Quakerism, some sessions aimed at attenders and new members, with plenty of small group discussion and the fun Bull's Eye game which had people arguing about walking our talk.

Richard Waldmeyer (formerly of FWCC, Europe & Middle East Section) gave us a lively account of the World Conference in Kenya. The wonderful rural scenes made up for the many hours of travel most of us endured. Two new attenders were able to join us, and Pavel and Arne Springorum did a good translation job as always, and provided an evening of music and song.

In mid June Pavel and Petr Stepanek went to Woodbrooke for two short courses, "Text32", "Doing Outreach Differently", and "The Faith of Jesus, rather than Faith in Jesus: what are the issues?" Petr found the English quite a challenge. Pavel translated the yellow cards "What do Quakers say?" into Czech, and had green cards printed to use in Outreach.

Our Treasurer, Eugene Schart, is now unable to travel to Meeting, and on Sunday 22 July we enjoyed hospitality in his home after worshipping with him.

I had hoped to facilitate some craft work in the women's prison at Svetla and Sazavou, outside Prague. Ruth Losiewicz of the Prison Fellowship told me how bored the women were, and we collected wool and other craft materials for them. Very sadly we discovered that any craft work involving visitors would not be possible, due to the restrictions on scissors and secateurs. The Prison Fellowship also works with restorative justice (The Sycamore Tree programme) and supports released prisoners. I felt uncomfortable with its very strong evangelistic bias.

In the autumn we started an evening meeting in my flat on the Monday evenings between our fortnightly Meetings for Worship, and usually two or three came. We

intend to include supper and have this earlier in the evening during the coming year.

During Advent we got together at the Springorum's home for some fellowship and singing. We also sang at a local farmer's market and then on Sunday under the Prague Charles Bridge, in what is fast becoming a local Quaker tradition.

Ella Young

Denmark Yearly Meeting

Denmark Yearly Meeting comprises around 30 members. About half of them are active and the majority live in Copenhagen. Meetings for Worship are held each Sunday in Copenhagen and at more infrequent intervals in other parts of Denmark.

A yearly retreat in Jutland, Skovhusmødet, is an opportunity for members across Denmark to meet for social fellowship and worship.

Traditionally Denmark Yearly Meeting is not a large one (the number of adult members has rarely exceeded 60), and with many of our members now being in their seventies, questions of how to keep our meeting alive, how to contribute to the world around us and how to attract new Friends/friends are ever present. The support and visits that we have received over the years from Friends in Norway, Sweden and Britain have been greatly valued.

Our Yearly Meeting was held in March, with visitors from Norway, Sweden and Britain. The theme was "The Living Presence" introduced by Diana Lampen from Britain YM. Diana spoke of the struggles of George Fox in the days before the Quaker movement was established. Diana focused on Friends today: "Where is the power we knew at first?" "Have Friends lost their first power?" "What is at the heart of our faith?"

Hanne Henriksen was the Danish representative at the World Conference of Friends in Kenya in April 2012. On returning home, Hanne spoke about the theme of the Conference, "Salt and Light", and the different challenges facing each individual member country. She also spoke with great warmth of the moving experience of being in a forum bringing together such a large number of Friends.

At the end of 2012 we began a series of meetings called "Conversations and Silence". These meetings will continue in 2013. The meetings, held at the Quaker Centre in Copenhagen, are informal evenings centred round questions and topics important to our Quaker Faith, with a short silent worship at the beginning of each gathering. So far we have discussed peace, integrity, ecology and sustainability. It is our hope that these meetings will serve the dual purpose of reaching out to people interested in Quakerism

and of revitalising our Danish group of Friends. Our experience from these meetings is one of sharing, respect, authentic conversations and hope.

Mogens Clausen, Clerk

Estonia: Tallinn Worship Group

The Tallinn Worship Group is a very small, but active monthly Quaker meeting in Tallinn, Estonia. We seek and welcome visitors, and generally meet on the first Sunday of each month in changing locations. Among the top highlights of the year was a public event the Tallinn Worship Group organised to highlight World Peace Day in September. The event, held at the Estonian Art Academy, pulled together art students to create artistic works focused on the theme of peace. The works were then displayed publicly for the remainder of the week. Member Mik Seljamaa also began creation of a board game called the “Path for Peace,” which we hope to be able to share with other meetings in the future.

A key focus of our group has been looking for ways to keep such a small meeting sustainable over the long term, particularly as expatriate members frequently rotate out of Estonia. We welcome links with other meetings and would greatly appreciate insight on best practices for bringing in new members or attenders.

Another highlight for us during the year was the participation by our member Roland Rand at the Sixth World Conference of Friends in Kenya. Roland writes: I had the privilege of representing Estonia’s Society of Friends at the Sixth World Conference of Friends held on 17-25 April 2012 at Kabarak University in Nakuru, Kenya. At the conference, one could sense both the participants’ sincere wish to live in peace and their understanding that responsibility goes with rights in order to have a fit world in which to live. The topics discussed at the conference included mutual understanding, peaceful collaboration, differences among the religions, customs and contemporary sexuality. Almost a thousand Friends from different corners of the world evinced unmistakable strength. We shared one goal – to live in peace and harmony – and together we sought answers to the question of how to repair our broken world. It was evident that the participants wanted to carry the message from the conference to the different corners of the world.

The reception by the Society of Friends in Africa was truly memorable, with its native songs, dances and prayers which expressed hope for international good-will. Presentations from the different nations showed the existence of problems, but also offered possible solutions. Workshops were attended daily with dedication by Friends from different countries. My group was led by the very competent Dorothy Day from the USA. The participants were Pauline from Ireland, Gale from the USA, Michael from England, Patricia from New Zealand, Inna from Russia, and from Kenya were Joshua, Joseph, Timothy, Moses, Masika and Shuma who taught us Swahili songs. It was a most happy experience. It rained on the last day of the conference, which

dampened some spirits, but the thought that we may meet again somewhere brought sunshine to our faces. KARIBU TENA – WELCOME AGAIN. I returned with valuable links to other meetings in Africa and from around the world, as well as the tremendous experience of being able to worship with such a diverse group of Quakers.

Bob Gilchrist and Roland Rand

Finland Yearly Meeting

It has been a time of slow growth and stabilising. We seem to get one new member every year, and in all the groups several more or less steady attenders, also some who just pop in once. They have read about us on the internet or met us at other events. But everywhere there is a core of faithful Friends who come to worship nearly every time.

For us the biggest challenge is to get together and keep the contact alive between Friends scattered all over the 1,000 km long country. Though we are few in Finland, it is marvellous to realise how many Friends there are all over the world. Three members of Finland YM (Aino Vesanen, Matti and Maija Mäkelä) were able to participate in the World Conference of Friends in Kenya in April. It was unforgettable in many ways, a cure for the spirit and many bonds were made between Quaker groups in different parts of the world. We hope we have brought home some of the Kenyan spirit, joy and solidarity. At least we have spoken much and longed for music. But we were also very moved by the many challenging situations that Friends live in or have gone through.

There are five active worship groups in Helsinki, Tampere, Turku, Northern Finland (Kokkola-Oulu) and Pori, which have gathered at their own times in the same way as earlier, at least twice a month. The study and conversation group in Helsinki gathered once a month in the winter time. Jaana Erkkilä from Kokkola finished the Equipping for Ministry course at Woodbrooke at the end of the year.

The Helsinki Worship Group was delighted that so many foreign Friends visited them. Many just came to Sunday worship, but we had also the pleasure of hosting some for several days. In June, Marge Nelson from the USA was in Helsinki and Oulu. She told about her work and contacts in Vietnam both before the war and now. Julia Ryberg and Markku Hirn from Sweden and EMES aimed to visit all the worship groups and we learned much from them.

In October our Yearly Meeting was seasoned with wonderful foreign guests: Judith Roads from EMES, Mark Millington from BYM and Anna Crumley-Effinger from Uppsala (actually Philadelphia). We stayed for three days in a religious conference centre and learned about Quaker Quest, discussed our faith and the sharing of it and of course had a proper meeting for business too. There was time to get together with Friends from different parts of the country as well.

We hope to continue building on the work we have already started. The website committee are planning a unique and coherent logo and a better visual outlook. Another committee has been formed to review the Quaker vocabulary and find proper and understandable Finnish words for Quaker terms. In 2012 our newsletter was published twice, as per usual.

Maija Mäkelä, YM Clerk

France Yearly Meeting

France Yearly Meeting returned for its Assemblée Annuelle to La Gardiole in the Gard Department, some 50 km. from Congénies, the only purpose-built Quaker Meeting House in France. There were just over 30 of us to put our theme into action “Faisons notre avenir ensemble!” – “Let us make our future together!” We took on three big DIY projects.

The first was our experimental “Boucle des Amis” – “Friendly Circle” project. There are about 100 Friends and Attenders in FYM, some isolated, some in small groups far apart. Last February, the planning team for the Assemblée Annuelle invited everyone to join the first “Boucle”. The names were arranged in a circle. Each exercised oversight of the two on his or her right and was cared for by the two on the left. Most decided to communicate via the internet and share our spiritual journey once a month. Some participants decided to use the telephone, or to correspond. The evaluation at our YM was positive and we decided to begin a new “Boucle” in September, this time trying groups of three.

For our second project the theme was “Getting to know one another better”. This is based on the booklets produced by Oxford Meeting in the UK, each with about 30 interviews, a photo and a favourite quote, Quaker or non-Quaker. All the participants worked in pairs and were given a brief example of possible questions. The interviews were written up and handed to a coordinator. It’s just a beginning!

Our third project follows the example of many different Yearly Meetings in the world. Our current “Faith and Practice” is a translation of extracts from the 1959 version of London Yearly Meeting. We will continue to treasure this, but our dream is to complement it with our own French collection of “Foi et Temoignages” – “Faith and Testimonies”. We were asked to bring along a favourite text of French experience and share it in our small groups.

Two new experiences are worth a special mention. In 2011 at our Yearly Meeting in the Pyrenees, we began each business session with a few simple movements of T’ai chi. We developed this further at Conqueyrac in a very relaxed way. Many showed their appreciation by asking for a repeat! The second was an excellent evening, well prepared by everyone, called “News of our Groups”, in which we received reports

from every part of France where there are Quakers and were able to ask questions and support one another.

In our last session, looking ahead to 2013, Friends requested that we continue making our future together with our D.I.Y approach, keeping the same place, time and most of the programme for next year.

Richard and Sylvette Thompson

Georgia Worship Group

The year 2012 was an ordinary year for Georgian Friends. They met for meetings for worship once a week, on Sundays as usual.

Georgian Friends have now been recognised by the government as an official religious organisation. Only 18 religious organisations have such a status in Georgia. Soon after this recognition, an article about Quakers, their teachings, activities, history and so on was published in a Georgian magazine. The same article was also published on the magazine's website.

Georgian Friends were visited by a Friend from Cambridge in May and a Friend from Ireland in October. These visits were very helpful, interesting and productive for Friends in Georgia.

A representative of Georgian Friends attended the 2012 QCEA Study Tour and learned how some of the different European institutions work. After his return he spread this knowledge to other Friends in Georgia and a few local NGOs. Friends also published 500 books about diabetes mellitus and spread them free of charge for people suffering from that illness. This was done with the financial support of Friends from Cambridge.

Friends in Georgia have also implemented the medical assistance programme (funded by Friends from Ireland) and a lecture project for refugees (funded by Friends from Sweden). Georgian Friends express their gratitude to Friends in Europe for their help and support.

Georgian Friends Worship Group

German Yearly Meeting

In 2012, our Friends in Austria and Bavaria came together to form the new Bayern-Österreich Regional (Quarterly) Meeting. We were also pleased with the redesign and launch of our yearly meeting website. After a long and interactive review process, the YM also updated and finalised our "Organisational Advices on living together" i.e. structures of the YM, including advice on the membership process, holding Meeting

for Business etc. Our Yearly Meeting, our regional meetings, local meetings and interest groups have concerned themselves with the following themes and events:

- Our continued response to “The Kairos Palestine Document” as a working dialogue
- Our continued response to the increasing access of military recruiting officers in schools
- Membership and belonging to a worshipping community
- “Being in this world, but not of it”
- Expanding and supporting an “Intentional Quaker Community” in Bad Pyrmont
- The week long family gathering in Hirschluch, south of Berlin
- Silent retreats / Border Meetings
- Our now finished handbook to help stimulate and integrate children, young friends, and adults into the spiritual life of the local and regional (Quarterly) meetings
- Continuing to work on our own Quaker Faith and Practice based on Friends experiences from Germany and Austria
- The structure and role of our “Peace Committee” and its work on behalf of the yearly meeting, and its interaction with our other testimonies.

In October 2012, in Haus Venusberg in Bonn, the main theme of the 82nd Annual German Yearly Meeting was “Equality – Equal opportunities – Equality of Status”. The author of the Annual Richard Cary Lecture was Ursula Bircher (Switzerland YM). We were challenged by Ursula to consider our roles and relationships within the wider society not just the way we look at each other, but actually removing our pride and treating people as genuine partners and bringing them into the decision-making processes as equals.

A total of 185 attended our Yearly Meeting, 24 of which were children, 29 Young Friends, and 16 representatives and guests from other FWCC recognised meetings. Under a glorious blue sky, our Young Friends invited us all outside to worship in expectant waiting with them.

We continue to rejoice in our active young friends, and are thankful for the investment in time, spiritual support and money our YM has provided in producing for example our handbook for inter-generational worship. In April we were pleased to welcome the Europe & Middle East Young Friends (EMEYF) at their Spring Gathering near Dresden.

We have continued to support where possible the idea of our Young Friends travelling in Tandem with older Friends as co-representatives of GYM to other Yearly Meetings.

Several members of the YM continue to travel in ministry either within the YM or within the EMES section. Five Friends in various roles travelled to the World conference of Friends in Kenya in April. Other Friends travel under concern to places of great injustice and armed conflict. We also thank our Quaker Service organisation (Quäker-Hilfe) for helping to fund Friends working under concern.

Christopher Hatton and Lutz Caspers, Representatives

Gran Canaria Worship Group

“Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them.”

My husband and I live in the south of Gran Canaria and we are international members. When we lived in Germany we attended meetings in Freiburg and in Strasbourg, but here we felt rather lost because there were no Quakers we could meet with. So at first we worshipped on our own, being aware of what Jesus taught us: “Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them.”

In winter time, the main tourist season, many people from the north of Europe come to visit. One day, Marisa Johnson from EMES sent us two Friends from Belgium who come to the island quite often, and we had the chance to meet and share our thoughts. We are very grateful for this opportunity because we need to be nourished spiritually, and we hope that more Friends will come to the island so that we will have the chance to grow in numbers as well as in spirit.

In the summer there were again only the two of us, so we started to attend an evangelical German-Spanish church in order to find spiritual nourishment. The Quaker newsletter “Among Friends” helps a lot and so does the internet and the online courses offered by EMES, but direct contact is so important and cannot be replaced. For this reason we decided to attend the Border Meeting held in Strasbourg this autumn. It was about peace in daily life and we could take part because it was held in different languages, including French and German part of it. The Quaker language is English and my husband does not speak any English. There are only a few Quakers in Spain and they are scattered all over the country, which makes it difficult or almost impossible to meet. At the Border Meeting in Strasbourg, Marisa Johnson gave me a copy of “The Friend”, with a reflection about Quakers in the Canaries. So we learned that there were two more Quakers living on our island and we contacted them. And can you believe it? At our first meeting we were 4, and at the second 7! Now we are

meeting regularly every 2nd Sunday at 12.30 pm. We are hoping to grow and to welcome other visitors from the north of Europe so that we can also grow spiritually.

Astrid Bruhn-Sanchez

Hungary, Budapest Worship Group

2012 saw the Border Meeting in Budapest focusing on “What have we found? What can we share?” and the Central European Gathering in Nitwi, Poland, with Stuart Masters from Woodbrooke deepening our understanding of the Quaker Way.

With her Eva Koch Scholarship, Berne Weiss has explored the theme “Imagining the world without war”. She shared the results of her pilot project with us in the form of a workshop.

Cathy Butler of Alton Meeting, Britain, supported and guided us along the way. She also sent us a number of Quaker booklets and a copy of Britain Yearly Meeting’s Quaker Faith and Practice, which we intend to use intensively.

At the generous invitation of Dutch Quakers, Zsuzsa Eastland attended Netherlands Yearly Meeting. It was for her a learning experience to see a large Yearly Meeting at work. We hope to strengthen our links with Dutch Friends.

Quite a few inquirers worshipped with us and some have stayed. Friends from Richmond Meeting in Britain visited us in the autumn. An old friend of ours, Arne Springorum from Prague Meeting, came and inspired us about The Hunger Project in late November.

We visited Serbian Friends in Slankamen, between Novi Sad and Belgrade, and held a good Meeting for Worship with them.

We inherited £1,900 from Mária Andreánszky, a British Quaker of Hungarian extraction, and have committed ourselves to using the money for outreach.

We are seven to nine people at Meeting for Worship and meet in each other’s homes.

The next Border Meeting will be held on 19-20 January in Vienna. For the event we have suggested the theme “Vision, Commitment, Action”.

Zsuzsa Eastland, Co-Clerk

Ireland Yearly Meeting

Ireland Yearly Meeting met in Quaker House Dublin in April 2012. We marked the 200th anniversary of Bloomfield Care Centre (founded and managed by Friends and now on the same site as Quaker House) with a thought-provoking session on “Friends and Mental Health”. Our new YM Book “Quaker Life and Practice” was launched and is recommended to all Friends. Young Friends were actively involved in several of our sessions and organised a ‘ceilidh’ on the Friday evening, especially good for those Friends who needed exercise after a day of meetings! Ruben Hilari from Santidad de Amigos in Bolivia joined us en route to Kenya and spoke about the importance of the Quaker Bolivian Education Fund. We were pleased to send greetings directly to the FWCC World Conference with the 18 Irish representatives, and have enjoyed hearing about their experiences on their return.

We continue to be represented on various inter-church and inter-faith bodies, and in June the clerk attended an Irish government reception for those attending the Roman Catholic Church’s International Eucharistic Congress in Dublin. Yearly Meeting also supported Christian Aid’s Tax Justice Campaign and Irish Quaker Faith in Action (IQFA) is as active as ever in supporting work to make the world a better place, at home and abroad. A stronger link with Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre in Birmingham has enriched our Yearly Meeting as we have embarked on a three year programme including course for “Quaker Roles” (first clerks and treasurers) and a series of “Quaker Studies” weekends.

The economic downturn has caused many of us to be thankful for what we have and to re-affirm the values of truth and integrity in public life.

Felicity McCartney, Clerk

Italy: Bologna Worship Group

We learnt with sadness of the death in October of Pier Cesare Bori, who for many years was the Convenor of Gli Amici del Silenzio in Bologna. The group continues to meet regularly, and has a lively Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/152794871433916/?fref=ts>

Italy: Milan Worship Group

The small group of Quakers (between 3 and 7 usually attend Meeting for Worship) living in North-West Italy has continued to meet in Milan, albeit with some difficulties. The group has tried to find a stable place and have regular meetings, aiming to meet once a month throughout the year. This has not been easy, also because most Friends travel relatively long distances to get to Milan from nearby provinces.

At the end of 2011, the group had organised Meeting for Worship in a room of a Baptist Church every second Sunday of the month, but then did not always meet or not

always there. The location was not convenient for many Friends. At the end of 2012, the group found a new place for the meeting, at the All Saints' Anglican Church in Milan. This is more centrally located and it is a beautiful and silent place. The first Meeting for Worship was held there on 13 January. The group has agreed dates throughout the first half of 2013: 10 February, 10 March, 21 April, 19 May and 16 June, at 2.30 pm at the All Saints' Anglican Church Milan, in Via Solferino, 17, 20121 Milan. All are welcome. A donation of 40 euro each Sunday has been agreed with the Anglican Church and the information has been sent to the list of Friends and interested people known to us.

Marco Bertaglia

Latvia: Liepaja Worship Group

In 2012 Liepaja Worship group continued to hold regular meetings for worship once a month. We were a permanent group of 8 people (2 International members of the Religious Society of Friends), with some attenders from time to time. As a group we grow in our Quaker experience of worshipping in silence and understanding the practice that helps us to learn to listen more to ourselves and others. The other part of our meeting is sharing held according to the Bohm Dialogue principles of freely-flowing group conversation. This helps us to respect what is said by others.

In September we had a meeting with Friend Agita Zake from Riga. She shared with us her experience from the World Conference of Friends in Kenya. From her report and many photos we had a great impression about this great Quaker event.

Next year are looking forward to send our representative to the Central European Gathering 2013 in Litomyšl, Czech Republic, in order to make closer connections with other Friends from Central and Eastern Europe.

Inese Ansule, Clerk

Lithuania

Vilnius informal group has two international members – Algirdas Davidavčius and Ervinas Koršunovas – and 6 seekers. We meet twice a month for silent meetings, and meetings for business when needed. We are about to prepare and launch a website www.quaker.lt which will serve Friends or those interested in Quakerism in the country (mostly in the Lithuanian language).

This year, we are going to propose, deliberate and plan with our Friends in Latvia and Estonia a Baltic Gathering of Friends (of these three countries) for 2014, possibly also inviting guests from Poland, Finland and Sweden.

Algirdas Davidavčius

Malta Worship Group

The Malta group is functioning and held its first 'yearly meeting' in November. We meet on the first Sunday of each month with a core group of just four people augmented by very welcome visiting Friends and the occasional enquirer. We meet in the hall of the Holy Trinity Church, encouraged by the Anglicans out of solidarity on this very catholic island.

Piers Headley

Middle East Yearly Meeting, Brummana Monthly Meeting

Brummana Monthly Meeting in Lebanon remains committed to its mission and values in this sad part of the world. Friends in Ramallah and Brummana meetings continue to witness wars, assassinations and brutal mass killings, sometimes amongst brothers and at other times between arch enemies. Innocent children are often the victims of these horrible wars, feuds and injustices.

Lebanon is witnessing one of its most unstable eras with little visibility of the future, as the determining factors of the local politics are governed by the larger players in the area. One of the most significant implications and consequences of what is happening in Syria is the influx of refugees and dissidents into Lebanon, causing a severe imbalance to the delicate demographics and a heavy weight on the economy since the country's resources were never abundant. Local NGOs and UN organisations are doing their best to cope with the refugee crisis, but are overwhelmed by the increasing numbers and not knowing when this will come to an end. Our meeting remains, very much like the whole country and even the bigger religious groups, bewildered by what is going on around us and the uncertainties of the toppling regimes and their replacements. Islamic fundamentalism is increasing all around, with hostile ideas spreading amongst a largely uneducated public that is attracted by rhetoric.

Brummana, in the Maten region, where the Quaker school (Brummana High School, BHS) is located, remains a safe and calm area. Many Syrian refugees have arrived, partly so they can send their children to BHS. We are making every effort to ensure that these families receive quick and friendly help at the school, with the appropriate financial help if needed. Many of these newcomers may have the means now, but it is not known how they will fare as the crisis in their own country unfolds. Many businesses in Syria have closed and family incomes have been dramatically reduced. This will undoubtedly pose a problem for Lebanon. Many protestant churches have been attacked and demolished in Aleppo and Homs, and the Supreme Council of Evangelical Churches in Syria and Lebanon (our umbrella group) is overwhelmed by the repercussions on both the work and load of the Council.

There is little that our meeting can do in this big game of power, greed and injustice. The whole area is a big volcano, with oil and red lava in its bosom. Public prayers for peace are needed. Lobbying for Justice and Peace needs to be done at all levels amongst all those who want to help. The only material help that can be secured for the needy areas is via the UN Refugee Relief Agency and the Red Cross/Red Crescent. There needs to be more compassion on the part of the politicians and decision-makers in the powerful countries. They need to see that there are many broken hearts in the families that have lost loved ones, or among those undergoing the hardship of leaving their homes and belongings. This has been going on for too long...over 60 years. The Middle East has the right to justice and its people have the right to live in peace.

Tony Manasseh, Clerk

Middle East Yearly Meeting, Ramallah Monthly Meeting

One of the priorities of Ramallah Meeting and the Steering Committee of the Friends International Centre in Ramallah (FICR) is to strengthen the growth of the Meeting. It is the spiritual base for Quaker service and witness in the area. We are a small group and need, value and are grateful for the support of FWCC-EMES.

People from a variety of nationalities – visitors, sojourners and visiting Quakers – attend and enrich our Meetings for Worship. People from different faiths also worship with us. Examples of this are interfaith peace builders and Jews. On one particular Sunday, two young Jewish women came to Meeting. Afterwards, in conversation with them, I said that “next week you will be celebrating Hanukah, and we will be centring on the light of God to enlighten us.” We have an inclusive spirituality that is welcoming to all. There is a great need for Quaker values in our area. We aim towards a pluralistic society, with equal rights for all.

The Meeting has an ecumenical and interfaith role to play in our society, especially as we have a theology that is based on non-violence and equality for women. You can read more about us here:

<http://www.ramallahquakers.org/about/about.html>.

Jean Zaru, Clerk

Netherlands Yearly Meeting

Friends can be active as individuals, as part of the monthly meeting and as part of the yearly meeting. During our yearly meeting we have ‘summoned’ ourselves to be active on a number of points:

- 1- reacting to the Israel-Palestine conflict;
- 2- experimenting with other forms of worship;

- 3- building a partnership with another Quaker meeting/Friends' Church;
- 4- giving hands and feet to the Kabarak call to start a worldwide campaign for peace and ecojustice;
- 5- taking part in the World Council of Churches' process for pronouncing war *illegal* (with the WCC's 10th Assembly in 2013 as the next step).

What have we done concerning these points?

1. We had a panel meeting on this subject during our yearly meeting. Some Dutch Friends provide courses on non-violent communication in the area, while others are active in increasing awareness in the Netherlands. These Friends are supported wholeheartedly. As a yearly meeting we have written a letter to our government to abandon a plan to strengthen bilateral relations with Israel.
2. This and the following suggestion were brought back by our participants at the world conference. Some monthly meetings have experimented carefully with semi-programmed elements. During the yearly meeting in 2013 we will share our experiences.
3. This called for some preparation. Now it is up to the meetings to take action.
4. Our peace committee is active again and monthly meetings were active during the national peace week.
5. This topic will be covered during the yearly meeting in 2013: working for the abolition of war is compared with working for the abolition of slavery (now 150 years ago for the Netherlands).

Some other items:

- We were happy to have members of the youth pilgrimage spend some time in the Netherlands. We provided them with an historic tour, a full AVP base course and historic insights of the first continental yearly meeting (established in 1677 in Amsterdam).
- About the inspiring EMES-topic of 'eldership': our monthly meetings have taken this up in their own manner, some more actively than others.

Erik Dries and Martin Touwen, Representatives

Norway Yearly Meeting

Our Yearly Meeting continues to grow, albeit in small numbers but so welcome as a turn from declining numbers in recent years.

In 2012 we have with great joy celebrated the successful conclusion of a two-year pilot programme for youth in the 13-16 year range – the years in which their school friends celebrate “confirmation” in the Norwegian Lutheran Church. We have called ours the “affirmation” programme for Quaker youth. The programme concluded with the Norwegian Quaker youth (seven) pilgrimage to the historical Quaker Yorkshire, with

the leaders (three) who guided the group. They enjoyed a visit to Woodbrooke and other points, and have an increased sense of international Quaker youth contact.

For our YM gathering in June we invited Thomas Swain of Philadelphia YM, who spoke to us on the themes of “spiritual gifts” and “building the meeting community” and led us in discussion and exercises for raising our self-knowing and pastoral concern. In recent years we have increasingly enjoyed music in the evenings of the gathering, with a number of gifted players, all-song and talent night.

Areas of development in the YM in 2012 include an expanded programme for children in the YM gathering, with more points of integration with the adult programme. Our children’s programmes in monthly meetings suffer from few attenders and a lack of activities for children, so the YM gathering provides an important foundation for children and families. A strong additional initiative for children and families has been developed in our autumnal family retreat in the mountains of Telemark. We are discussing the trade-offs between the requirement of time for adults’ YM business and the need for spiritual vitalisation, with the need to increase everyone’s attention to children and assist with needs and activities to relieve parents (often wearing several hats) and to make the children’s programme a success: in this light we are very happy for the developing contacts between Norway and Sweden Yearly Meetings in planning a children’s programme at the 2013 gathering of the Nordic Yearly Meetings.

In another area, in 2012 we made major strides in the writing of a Norway YM “faith and practice”; a draft format is under discussion and we are gathering citations from the history and breadth of the Quaker world, with primary use of Nordic and Norwegian sources.

We have begun planning for the celebration in 2014 of the bicentenary of the founding of Quakerism in Norway, the result of marines returning home in 1814 from the Napoleonic wars who had been ‘convinced’ by Friends during their time as prisoners of war in England (Norwegians were dragooned into the Danish fleet supporting France). The Society of Friends in Norway developed after its registration as a church in 1818 – the celebration of which we are planning for 2018.

Stephen Collett, Clerk

Poland, Warsaw Friends Meeting

The year 2012 was the third year of Warsaw Friends Meeting activity. We meet regularly in The Reformed Congregation in Warsaw. Our meetings took place in Congregation house on 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 5 pm (1st half of the year) and then on 2nd and 4th Saturdays at 4 pm.

Number of members of the meeting fluctuated from seven (after one American member left Warsaw) to ten (new native and foreign friends and sympathizers joined our group). During 2012 Warsaw Meeting had visitors from all over Poland and other countries. The guests were inter alia an American Quaker Joseph Landsberger and British Marian Liebmann.

Warsaw Friends Meeting manages nationwide Quaker discussion group <http://groups.google.com/group/kwakrzy> (22 members) and co-manages open forum about Quakerism <http://www.kwakrzy.fora.pl/> (34 members). Warsaw group administrates the website www.kwakrzy.pl / www.rtp.pl which is official site of Warsaw Friends Meeting, but is also open for other Quaker initiatives in Poland. In 2012 Quaker library enriched with appreciable help of friends from Bournemouth Area Meeting (Britain Yearly Meeting).

From 14 to 21 April one of Warsaw friends took part in Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA) study tour to Brussels and Strasbourg. This developing and fruitful event offer unique chance to get knowledge on and insight into the important European institutions and their commissions. Polish friend was among a group of 12 persons, most of them from England and Scotland, the others from Lebanon, Palestine, Switzerland, Georgia, Ireland and Germany.

Warsaw Friends organized in May 2012 Central European Gathering in peaceful village of Niwki, near Opole in south-western Poland. To Niwki friends came from many parts of Europe: from Poland itself, Warsaw, Krakow, Lodz, Poznan, Wroclaw, Zielonka and Opole, from Hungary, Austria, Ukraine, Czech Republic, Ireland, Britain and USA. The working language was English with instant translations into Polish and Czech languages. Woodbrooke on the Road sessions on the theme 'Celebrating the Quaker Way' and sharing by individual friends were the core of the meeting.

Two representatives of Warsaw group were guests of Bournemouth Coastal Area Quaker Meeting Residential Weekend in Ammerdown Centre (Somerset, UK) in November 2012. It was really great time with The Kindlers on-the-road and other practices renewing and deepening spirituality of the attenders of the Residential Weekend. Warsaw friends had also an opportunity during the weekend to make a short review of Quakers' presence in Poland in the past and now.

In 2012 it took place for the first time joint meeting of Warsaw and Poznan friends. In September representatives of both groups met in Hotel Gromada, in Poznań. Next meeting was held in Warsaw in December. Poznan Worship Group and Warsaw Friends Meeting are going to cooperate more closely in the future.

Portugal, Lisbon Area Informal Worship Group

We are a group of people living in the Lisbon area and interested in Quakers. One of the members had been in touch with the EMES Executive Secretary a few years ago in order to find a Quaker group in Portugal, although at that time no such group existed. Instead, the person was invited to take part in the Companionship programme with a specifically trained and experienced Quaker based in Britain. Following the Companionship programme, and realising that other members of the yet-to-be-formed group were also interested in Quakers (and had also enquired about Quakers in Portugal), an initial experimental meeting for worship was organised on 20 May 2012.

The meeting was quite successful in that the members of the group enjoyed the experience and learning about the Quaker way. We decided that having monthly meetings would be the most suitable. Since then, and until December, we have met once a month, except for August. The meetings have been stable in terms of members, with 7 people forming the core group and attending most meetings. Most of the meetings were held in Cascais, while a couple of them were held in Colares, both towns in the suburbs of Lisbon.

The meetings received very welcoming support from the Quaker providing the Companionship programme, who also sent a wide variety of books, brochures, leaflets, information etc. The Companionship programme, although provisionally foreseen for 8 weeks, is still ongoing and has lasted so far around 11 months. The group also received support from the EMES Executive Secretary.

Meetings are usually preceded by reading one excerpt from Quaker Faith and Practice in order to stimulate the act of listening and waiting. Following the meetings, there is always some time for sharing a cup of tea or coffee, and for talking about the Quaker way, or just general socialisation.

Looking at the future, the plans are to continue meetings once a month and to develop a deeper understanding and knowledge of the Quaker way. At least one of the members will initiate the request for international membership. The group is also looking at the possibility of organising an annual gathering to try to bring together the few scattered Friends living in Portugal, or organising a Border Meeting with the Spanish worship groups.

Matias Linder

Russia, Moscow Monthly Meeting

A year ago, Moscow Friends had to leave their long-time meeting place at the Society for the Blind. Looking back, we can see that the constant presence of the owner's on-duty staff gave us a strong sense that we were not at home, but guests. In our new location, since January 2012, we have felt as though the place is really ours.

What were the implications of the new space? Our new "Red Corner" community centre was free of charge and without time limits. We had our own set of keys, opening lots of opportunities for growth and spiritual development. Over the last year, the fellowship of Friends has become more informal, warmer and more sincere. During the past year our meeting was greatly strengthened in the spiritual sense. Friends prayed together and held spiritual seminars. At least half dozen new people joined us in the new premises. We joyfully welcomed and embraced our old attender who came home after 17 years of adventures in "exile" in South Africa. We listened to her moving life story of oppression, humiliation and survival without documents and without basic human rights.

We become stronger in every sense – even our finances! We are now self-supporting and do not need to ask any Quaker Meeting from abroad for help. For the first time, Moscow Friends took on responsibilities in our own location: our meeting place during this past year proved a valuable base for service to the surrounding neighbourhood. Several members and attenders used the premises to provide regular English classes for children, and organised a children's festival just before the New Year holiday.

We continued to work out the implications of our "Increasing the Effectiveness of the Meeting" self-study, mentioned in last year's report. We sought ways to pray more deliberately and regularly for those unable to attend meeting because of distance, health, or other reasons. We showed a series of documentary films about the Russian Orthodox bishop Anthony Bloom, and held conversations about this wonderful Christian public figure well-known in Britain and around the world. We put intense work into statements for our two representatives to carry to the "Salt and Light" World Conference of Friends, and in 2013 we intend to think carefully about how their experiences at that conference should influence our own worship and programme priorities as a meeting. During the year, we prayerfully followed events in the country and the world, including the tragic flare-up in Gaza.

As the year drew to a close, just on the eve of the Western Christmas, we were grieving the death of our former clerk, Galina Orlova, whose relationship with Friends in our group dates back to 1992. Galina was an educator for most of her professional life; then in 1996 she became the first staff member of the newly-opened Friends House Moscow. In addition to her staff and board work for FHM, she gave countless

hours of service to the Alternatives to Violence Project in Russia and Ukraine. For several years Galya led a Quaker discussion group, making a major contribution to the life of the Moscow meeting. It is impossible in this brief report to do justice to Galina's contributions to the Russian Quaker community. Readers may wish to request a copy of the testimony of God's grace in her life; a document that is currently under preparation. Galina's death is the most serious and unexpected loss we have suffered over the past year, but it was not the only loss. During this past year we said "goodbye for now" to three faithful attenders, two of whom moved overseas and one to southern Russia.

Our wonderful "Red Corner" has just been taken from the local community by officials who only saw the premises as a source of profit. It is no longer ours, being now under new management, and we don't have the right to hold public meetings there. As was true a year ago, we again find ourselves homeless. We hope to make arrangements for a new meeting place by the end of January 2013.

Sasha Gorbenko and Johan Maurer

Russia, Friends House Moscow (Dom Druzei)

Current situation in Russia. You may have heard the news that UNICEF has been asked to leave Russia by the end of the year. Although the government states it was because Russia is now a "donor nation", the move is likely part of its continued push-back against the recent protest movements. Unfortunately, NGOs with foreign funding have become caught up in the push-back.

One good sign is that civil society in Russia has become stronger. The main sign of course is the massive demonstrations; the second sign is that people have become much more active in all sorts of elections, especially as overseers.

The freest mode of the Russian media is the internet, and the atmosphere of the Russian internet is anti-authoritarian. Almost all popular social websites, blogs, are anti-authoritarian, online media are anti-governmental.

Sam. We were grateful to Sam Skove, our intern and new graduate of Oberlin College in Ohio (US.) He translated many of the reports and project applications for the board meeting into English.

"It's been great working here," Sam said. "It's eye-opening to see all the great work that's being done – the interesting work by Russian NGOs and the energy with which they take on Russia's issues. Besides enjoying the work at FHM, I've had the opportunity to work at KRUG. I go to KRUG three days out of the week."

KRUG is an art therapy studio devoted to the social-creative rehabilitation of youth with developmental disabilities. Operating out of a former kindergarten in north-west

Moscow, Krug presents its students with a wide range of activities designed to address development through physical movement rather than through formalized education. “The kids are all incredibly responsive,” Sam said in the FHM office. “It’s great that the teachers demand a lot from them – it’s not a time-killer.”

Outreach. FHM’s outreach project translates and disseminates (by mail and online) Quaker texts. It also sponsors quakers.ru a discussion forum for Russian speakers interested in Quakerism. FHM’s website: www.quakers.ru.

Translating Quaker terms. To help translators, Sergei developed a glossary of Quaker terms in Russian. It’s now on quakers.ru for discussion and feedback. The goal is to both refine the terms and the explanations for translators. “It’s hard to translate ‘concern’ the way Quakers use the term. Sometimes it’s used more like ‘initiative’ than ‘zabota’. The second meaning of the word zabota is ‘care’.

Other news for quakers.ru. The number of requests for printed books and booklets was down in 2012. This was probably due to the increasing popularity of downloading books. One member of the discussion forum on quakers.ru applied for international membership through Friends World Committee for Consultation. Sergei translated his application. FWCC’s International Membership program is to link “isolated Friends and worship groups throughout the world.”

Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust grant project. FHM received a 3-year grant for translating a wide range of Quaker materials into Russian. Part of the grant is also to get extensive feedback on what sort of materials young adults in the former Soviet Union would find interesting and helpful, and revamp the Quakers.ru website to meet those needs. The selection of books and other materials to translate in the second and third year of the grant will be adjusted to reflect the results of the feedback and research.

Alternatives to Violence Project – Russia. In 2012, AVP Russia coordinators held workshops from Dzerzhinsk to Dagestan in the Caucasus, from Moscow to Transdnistria, a disputed but functionally independent territory in Moldova. Among the participants in the workshops were homeless shelter residents, university students studying social work, school children with developmental delays in a boarding school, and even teens attending a yoga camp. Two new facilitators are active and already giving their own workshops. They’ve had to be very flexible this year. They’ve adjusted the workshops to fit to a university schedule, for instance, and the needs of former offenders in a homeless shelter. “In the shelter, in addition to the traditional workshops with exercises and entertainment, we also held meetings in the style of conversations. It was easier for the homeless people to be included in the conversation in this way,” Galya Lopotko, the coordinator, reported.

The School for Foster Care. The School for Foster Care is a project by the Centre for Psychological-Medical-Social Support for Children and Teenagers. It provides a series of seminars, lectures, training sessions and care and support groups for foster parents in Dzerzhinsk, Nizhegorodskaya region. Foster care parents receive financial support from the state, but nothing else – no education, training, support etc. The project is transformational for families in conflict who often have difficulties integrating foster children into the family structure. FHM funds the entire budget of the School for Foster Care.

Nina Kamina, the coordinator for the School, has started her third and final year with funding from Radley Trust. Instead of two foster/adoptive parent groups, this year they will have three groups. “The arrangements with the department of adoption and foster parents is that their candidates first go to Nina’s course,” according to Natasha.

‘For Our Sons’ Alternative Service Office. FHM now funds the office rent for the draft/conscription counselling service “For Our Sons” in Kazan, Republic of Tatarstan, Russia. From their report: “Starting in September we started to focus on [the cases of young men] who the authorities illegally tried to call up for medical examination prior the start of the conscription period. Work began on these cases when at the last moment people began to think about applications for alternative service.” Coordinators Gyerman Alyotkin and Nina Pisanova report that “the number of alternative service members and applicants to alternative service grows persistently.”

Alternativshchik and other materials. A network of activists publishes newsletters, pamphlets, etc. about alternative service to the army. The Alternativshchik newsletter is distributed to Baptists and other Protestant churches. Gyerman Alyotkin in Kazan and Vitali Adamenko in Samara are among the activists. Alternative Service to the army is guaranteed in the constitution. In practice, there are considerable bureaucratic and other barriers to receiving alternative service placement.

Project: Brochure on Paternity Leave for Alternative Service. With funds from FHM, Gyerman Alyotkin published a brochure about alternative service for fathers of young children. Unlike conscripts, alternative service workers are eligible for paternity leave. Also unlike conscripts, they may be able to receive a placement near home. Hence the title, “Army, NO! Fathers must be close-by”.

As we reported earlier, Gyerman planned to place the brochures in the state health system’s maternal care clinics in Tatarstan, the Russian republic of which Kazan is the capital. Unfortunately, the Ministry of Health refused to allow it. “What was unexpected was the stiff opposition from the Ministry of Health of Tatarstan. The refusal was appealed against in court, but the appeal was turned down. This was then

used as a news item. Gyerman and other activists were able to distribute the brochures at other venues. For example, at a conference of 200 human rights organisations in September, about 500 of the brochures were handed out. “So it is possible that this will involve new community organisations in the topic, and possibly new CSA members.” In addition, Gyerman’s service, “For Our Sons,” did make contact with new families in which the men choose alternative service.

Sergei Grushko and Natasha Zhuravenkova

Spain, Barcelona Monthly Meeting

Again, it has been a quiet but steady year for Barcelona. We do have a slow but ongoing amount of new attenders and inquirers, but Meeting does tend to be quite small and we have gone back to holding it only once a month, save in the summer months.

Before the change in the Spanish government, Nancy and Gerard Negelspach, with Rosa Serra, were very happy to receive a visit from the Ministry for Culture of the Archive Section, which continued to express interest in the Quakers and their role in Spain. They assured us that, despite the coming changes, they were hopeful that the project to translate and publish Rosa Serra’s book on the Quakers during the Spanish Civil War would continue.

Caroline Wilson

Spain, Madrid Worship Group

Our tiny group (2 Friends) is a little bit bigger now. We are seven regularly and others come from time to time. Friends visiting or living in Madrid for a short period of time have joined us and we have had quite a few visitors recently.

Our main “activity” is Meeting for Worship, on three Sundays a month. We started to study the Advices and Queries in September, after worship. It is good for us and for our attenders. We are using the Pacific YM version because it is in Spanish. At the same time we are translating the British YM version. We find both very different and enriching. Our attenders have also expressed a wish to study Faith and Practice. More translations of Quaker booklets in Spanish are much needed.

We are very interested in attending next EMES Annual Meeting. We would also like to meet Barcelona Friends, at least once a year. All of us are very interested in creating an organic vegetable garden and have talked a lot about it. It seems that we might start it this spring.

Kersten Harries and Marco joined us a year ago. It is a joy to have them.

Carmen Alcalde

Sweden Yearly Meeting

The Yearly Meeting (YM) appointed three representatives – Andreas Brand, Sue Glover Frykman and Lars Longueville – to attend the World Conference of Friends at Kabarak University, near Nakuru, Kenya, in April. Julia Ryberg also attended the Conference in her capacity as the EMES Ministry and Outreach Coordinator. It was an amazing experience! During the year the representatives have shared their own personal experiences of the Conference in various ways – in a joint report to Yearly Meeting in May, through individual and group discussions, via the YM's website, and more specifically in a dialogue article in the first ever YM Yearbook. The latter was based on a specially arranged discussion between Andreas, Sue and Lars at the Friends Centre in Stockholm, in which they asked each other pertinent questions and tried to answer them on the basis of their experiences from the Conference. Thomas Owen's address to the Conference was also translated and included in the publication.

The theme of YM this year revolved around 'concern', 'finance' and 'the best use of the YM's resources'. The insights and reflections that emerged will be included in forthcoming chapters in our book of Quaker practices.

During the year the YM went public with its new and informative website. In recent years the website has been identified as one of our best outreach tools and therefore something to invest in. The above named Yearbook is also designed as an outreach tool. In the first issue the aim has been to 'reach out' to as many people as possible by letting our Quaker lives – or experiences – speak.

The YM continues to offer retreats at Svartbäcken, near Rimbo. As an experiment, two mid-week 'work-time retreats' have been held, offering people time to reflect on their own work or projects in a peaceful atmosphere.

The Experiment with Light group in Stockholm has continued to meet on a regular basis. The Thursday evening 'worship sharing' sessions in Stockholm prior to Meeting for Worship have also continued to attract considerable interest.

The work undertaken by Quaker Service Sweden (QSS) forms an important part of the Yearly Meeting's peace and service witness. This year two committee members went to Bangladesh to visit the projects for which QSS receives Swedish Government aid funding via the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). As a result of this, Sida invited QSS to nominate two members of staff of the supported project in Bangladesh and one of its own committee members to attend a seminar in Nairobi in November on "Gender and Rights". This venture proved to be valuable, fruitful and informative. The thoughts and ideas generated by the seminar will also form the basis of future guidelines for the Swedish Mission Council, the umbrella organisation through which QSS receives government funding.

When the American theologian Marcus Borg came to Stockholm in November to talk about “A new paradigm for political theology”, Swedish Quakers unexpectedly engaged in more outreach. This was because Julia Ryberg, a member of “Seglora Smedja”, a meeting place for spirituality, culture and society, was asked to play a leading role in the weekend’s events and, during this time, talked naturally about her experience as a Quaker.

In the light of all these different events and happenings, 2012 can perhaps best be summed up as Sweden YM’s attempt to reach out to others and for members to let their lives speak in various ways – on a local, national and international stage.

Sue Glover Frykman and Lars Longueville, Representatives

Switzerland Yearly Meeting

Switzerland Yearly Meeting (SYM) held a **retreat** from Feb. 17-19 2012 at **Montmirail**. The retreat was led by Julia Ryberg of FWCC-EMES and Jaana Erkkilä of Finland YM and introduced the idea of “spiritual companions” into SYM.

A delegation from SYM participated in a march for the closure of an older atomic energy plant in Switzerland on 11 March 2012.

A delegation from SYM participated in the German-language **Border Meeting** at Lindenberg, in the Black Forest, Germany, from 23-25 March 2012 on the theme “Sources of Strength”. Every participant was requested to bring along a symbol of his or her personal source of strength.

SYM sent a delegation to the 6th World Conference of Friends, held at Karabak University, Kenya, 17-25 April 2012.

SYM held its **annual gathering** as usual over the Whitsun weekend, on 25- 28 May 2012, at a new location at Herzberg, near Aarau, on the theme “What canst Thou say?” We heard Jane Royston’s and Bob Bowers’ report on the 6th World Conference of Friends in Kenya and viewed the film “Avec les armes de l’esprit”, about how Pastor Trocmé hid Jewish children from the French and German police in the centre of France during WW2.

The Zurich Group held a meeting on 23 September 2012 on the theme of “Heimat” – where does one feel at home? With so many expatriates in our meetings, this was highly topical.

Geneva Monthly Meeting held three meetings for exploration, on “Introduction to Quakers”, “Quakers and Buddhists – Similarities and differences” and “Quaker Witness”.

The annual gathering of German-speaking Swiss Friends took place on 11 November 2012 in Zurich. We heard a report on the situation in Palestine and Israel presented by Heidi and Bruno Sägger, a Mennonite couple who had just returned from a trip to the Middle-East.

Frank van Pernis, Representative

Europe & Middle East Young Friends

EMEYF may look back on 2012 with a sense of pride and a little exhaustion! We have achieved a lot and laid the foundations for a great journey of transformation. We have gathered together, travelled together, built community together, witnessed together and, most importantly, worshiped together.

At our Spring Gathering we were grateful to have the opportunity to come together, spend time, tell our stories, and to help each other grow, all in the beautiful natural setting of the Sächsische Schweiz in Germany. Our time there was spent encouraging and building community, and we felt a sense of deep spiritual fellowship. We supported each other in growing into responsibility, from being nurtured and encouraged by community to wage and encourage community in the wider Quaker world as well as in our private, professional and social/political contexts. To reach the tiny ferry across the Elbe to Wehlen, we travelled from all over Europe. As we travelled back to our own diverse communities, we carried with us the bridges we have built and the skills that will help us to build more. As Young Friends spread all over Europe, we often feel like isolated idealists when we are faced with decisions and asked to speak truth. Our gatherings can help and encourage us, and we want to explore and encourage ways of living this encouraging community throughout the year as well.

Friends from across EMEYF attended the World Conference of Friends in Kenya. It was an opportunity to experience the many different Quaker traditions around the world, build new friendships and connections and a chance to meet other Young Adult Friends from around the world. During the Conference we all participated in the Young Adults Friends Gathering that ran in the evenings. We began with the aim of writing a minute from Young Adult Friends on the state of the Quaker World; our Quaker World. This tender process did not yield the neat and tidy minute we had hoped for. Instead, the process showed us the brokenness of our Quaker world and the tender differences that have the potential to divide us if we do not find a way to meet together in unity in the Spirit. This process was painful and uplifting at the same time, and has had a profound effect on those who were present – the memories of which

continue to haunt and inspire us. At Kabarak, with Young Adult Friends from around the world, we did not turn away from each other after this let-down, but ended the week by exploring, in loving tenderness, our differences and our similarities and by doing so our pain began to heal. We were united in a way that was much more important than agreeing a minute together. We carry this experience of the need to live through brokenness to find the wholeness within it with us, as a living minute in our hearts and spirits. This process continues now that we have returned to our own Quaker communities.

In November we met again at our Annual Meeting in Bad Pyrmont in Germany. This Annual Meeting was different from any other Annual Meeting. The only item of business we considered was the essential one of nominations. Instead, we strove to find a way forward for EMEYF by exploring our needs and visions for (Young) Friends Communities. We felt the need to break down some of the structures and history that seem to be a burden. Rather than desperately running after agendas, we decided to spend as much time as needed for small, slow and sometimes stumbling steps, and to be prepared for ways opening. We acknowledge that it is time to lay down the aspects and structures of our community that do not help us to live in the Spiritual Community we seek. Reassured and reunited in the vision of what we are seeking, we know that EMEYF must evolve and continue to be a living community if it is to survive. This is a work in progress. It is about the Spirit, it is about the Structure, it is about Energy and Revitalisation and it is about Worship, Love and Light. It is a process that has its roots in painful awareness of our brokenness, and sometimes failings, and it is growing into a process where the way forward is about taking ourselves, and the Religious Society as a whole, back to the radical faith that inspired those brave people who were willing to become testimonies of a living Spirit and create the Religious Society of Friends. We look forward to continuing our journey, and look forward to you joining us on it!

The fellowship that we have enjoyed has also been made possible by the generous support of Yearly Meetings, Area Meetings, and individuals. We thank them for having helped to enable our growth.

EMEYF

Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA) – the Quaker Voice in Europe

2012 was a year of transition for QCEA. In October, Liz Scurfield and Martina Weitsch, who had served as Joint Representatives for ten years, handed over the reins to Alexandra Bosbeer and Gordon Matthews. And that's not the only change: the funding for the post of Advocacy/Policy Officer on sustainable energy security ended at the end of October, so Paul Parrish has also moved on from QCEA. We have a new

Office Manager, Viviane Nolf, and two new Programme Assistants: Bethany Squire and Chris Venables.

Despite all these changes, and the need for new staff to learn the ropes, QCEA's advocacy work continues on sustainability, peace, human rights, economic justice and democratic governance. One of our projects has been to facilitate the involvement of more f/Friends, through our blog, our tweets and Facebook, and through action alerts. Do get in touch to make sure you are up to date with how you can influence policy at the European level.

The importance of the European Union's (EU) original *raison d'être* as a peace project was highlighted by Martina in a lecture on 11 September – before the EU was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize! The lecture was published in the September issue of *Around Europe* and has become one of the most popular articles. QCEA seeks to promote the EU's peace-building role internally and externally, and pays close attention to foreign policy and to where funds go. New briefing papers, such as on foreign policy drivers, are available on the QCEA website (www.qcea.org).

The role of the EU in relation to Palestine and Israel is still a major focus. The EU condemns the illegal Israeli settlements as an obstacle to peace but continues to trade with them. In 2012 QCEA advocated the proper labelling of produce from the illegal settlements, commissioned a video about the Rami Levy supermarket chain, worked with Friends in the Netherlands on advocacy at the national level, and wrote about the environmental costs of the occupation.

In our sustainability work, we make frequent use of the European Commission's consultations on various areas of policy to make our views known. During 2012, we commented on the EU's energy efficiency directive at several stages of the legislative process, and we responded to a consultation of the European Investment Bank on investment in energy projects.

Our criminal justice work has addressed pre-trial detention, victims' rights, restorative justice and alternatives to imprisonment. The EU requires states that wish to become Partner Countries to sign and ratify the UN Optional Protocol Against Torture. Internal and external consistency is important: QCEA pointed out to some EU Member States that they themselves had not ratified the Protocol (three Member States had not even signed it), after which some have now commenced the process of ratification or have completed it.

We also hosted the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage for the first time in 2012, as well as a study tour. The more f/Friends understand how Europe is governed, the more we can participate in influencing the policies that affect us and others in the world.

Alexandra Bosbeer and Gordon Matthews; Martina Weitsch and Liz Scurfield

Quaker United Nations Office and Committee (Geneva)

With QUNO's involvement, the UN Human Rights Council adopted its first resolution on conscientious objection to military service. This requests the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to prepare a report every four years on new developments, best practices and remaining challenges in relation to conscientious objection, with the first report to be presented in 2013. QUNO's booklet on *International Standards on Conscientious Objection to Military Service* is now available in Russian as well as English, French, Spanish and German.

The EU-funded COPING project on mental health of children of prisoners (QUNO was one of the 10 organisations involved) concluded successfully, resulting in pan-European findings and recommendations as well as one for each of the four countries researched in depth – Germany, Romania, Sweden and the UK. QUNO's *Collateral Convicts* publication (available in English, French and Spanish), presents the many valuable contributions and recommendations from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's 2011 Day of General Discussion on 'children of incarcerated parents'. QUNO published *Children of Parents Sentenced to Death* (available in English, French, Spanish and Arabic), and was invited to contribute to this particularly neglected issue to the International Commission against the Death Penalty.

QUNO published a paper commissioned from Carlos Correa: *TRIPS-Related Patent Flexibilities and Food Security – Options For Developing Countries* (available in English, French and Spanish). QUNO is involved in a human rights-based assessment of UPOV (International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants) which brings together economic development, environmental and human rights points of view. With regard to agriculture, trade and investment, QUNO is seeking to help develop a new framework including linking the Geneva actors with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation in Rome.

QUNO has been helping to build a Global Alliance on Prevention and Reduction of Armed Violence, growing out of the long-standing QUNO work around the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development. Through the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform, QUNO has been strengthening the links between Geneva and New York and seeking to have a more comprehensive and sensitive approach to development in fragile states, including addressing security needs, reflected in the post-2015 development goals that succeed the Millennium Development Goals.

QUNO's work on human impacts of climate change continues, with a publication *Diverting the Flow: Cooperation over International Water Resources* and continued exploration of a possible role for QUNO in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations (including a briefing paper about monitoring

mechanisms). QUNO is a member of the Advisory Committee for the Nansen Initiative about climate change related displacement.

During the year QUNO welcomed Diane Hendrick as Associate Representative for Peace and Disarmament. Programme Assistants Steven Heywood and Helen Kearney left, while Lynn Finnegan became Project Officer working on the Food and Sustainability Programme. The new Programme Assistants are Haifa Rashed and Ellie Roberts. Other staff are Jonathan Woolley (Director), Caroline Dommen and Rachel Brett (Representatives), Oliver Robertson (Associate Representative), Sylviane Trousseau (Office Manager) and Rene Lejeune (Finance Officer). Neithard Petry continued as the FWCC EMES member on the Committee for QUNO Geneva.

Rachel Brett, Human Rights and Refugees Representative

Quaker United Nations Office in New York

In 2012 I took over as FWCC Representative to the Quaker United Nations Committee (QUNC) in New York from Lindsey Fielder Cook, who served on the committee for six years. My first meeting in February came at a time when AFSC was restructuring which in turn affected QUNO and the committee. Adding to this, there were several changes in the committee. I was not the only new FWCC representative and February was the last meeting for three very experienced AFSC representatives. In between the meetings in February and October, a new Memorandum of Understanding was negotiated between FWCC and AFSC and later signed by both parties; likewise the agreement between AFSC and the QUNC was amended. The guidelines for QUNC are in the process of being updated. The result of this in short means QUNC will have in future greater responsibilities in planning priorities, programme plans and budgets. Committee members are expected to support outreach and fundraising.

QUNO-NY continues to have three areas of work: Peacebuilding, Prevention and Liaison, but from 2013 these three areas will be consolidated into one programme plan, as they are so much intertwined. The plan has five strategies with clearly planned activities, process indicators and short- to medium-term results as well as long-term results. Over the years QUNO has seen the UN make a greater use of approaches that emphasize inclusion and dialogue. This is encouraging as QUNO is dedicated to dialogue, both by working with diplomats and UN officials but also by bringing perspectives from outside the UN system. They facilitate off-the-record meetings, privately advocating for people-based and non-violent approaches. QUNO works closely with AFSC and other Quaker Service Agencies and with Friends' policy offices in Geneva, Washington and Brussels and with QUNO-Geneva.

QUNO-NY works to change the way the UN community thinks and acts at a policy level in New York, which then impacts the actions of the UN and others on the ground. It can be difficult to broadcast successes given the quiet trust-building work which is

so central to QUNO's work. But results can often be seen in the language used by diplomats and in official documents and in norms and standards across the UN community.

At each QUNC meeting there is a guest speaker. In February it was Graeme Simpson of Interpeace, a Geneva based organisation but with one lone employee in New York. In October Patrick Tavers, from the Canadian Mission, gave a fascinating talk on the work he has been involved in with the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), an area in which QUNO has been involved in. He spoke very highly of QUNO. Quaker House provides a safe space for in-depth discussions, engaging with civil society, bringing new perspectives and challenging set views. He also valued the good relations he had built up with the members of staff at QUNO.

I am privileged to be part of this important Quaker work, and look forward to working on the QUNC. I encourage you to regularly check the website: www.quno.org and their newsletters. Here is a link to the most recent newsletter: <http://www.quno.org/newyork/Resources/IA201209.pdf>.

Penny Heymans, Oslo

Quaker Voluntary Action

A particular focus this year has been our connections with Palestine and Israel. QVA maintained its links with Friends in Ramallah during 2012, building on the various Retreat visits that we have now held. A Working Retreat was organised in the region in October 2012, where a number of participants spent 11 days in a programme combining work and study elements.

Trustees continue to be inspired by reports from those participants on our Retreats and others who have visited Friends International Centre Ramallah (FICR). We are also fortunate to have personal experience among our number, including that of our Working Retreats Co-ordinator Jasmine Piercy, who has now visited a number of times and made many connections.

A practical way of helping FICR we agreed to undertake is our Appeal for Peacework in Palestine and Israel. We aim to provide a new funding stream for FICR from the UK, and more widely in Europe, and 75% of the money donated to the Appeal is transferred directly to the Centre.

We have written to meetings, placed adverts on various occasions including an insert in 'The Friend', and approached Trusts. There has also been work administering the donations to the Appeal. We are pleased to report that approximately £25,000 was raised in 2012, and we are continuing our fundraising efforts in 2013.

We are also planning an expanded level of work ourselves in Palestine and Israel in the coming year, subject to resources and demand, with three Working Retreats scheduled including one for young people. They are an excellent opportunity to learn more about the issues affecting these areas and the peacemakers working there. A QVA Retreat provides an organised and supportive framework for this, and I would encourage you to give one a try.

We would like to thank all who have supported QVA's work in 2012 – practically, prayerfully and financially; including of course those who have contributed directly to the Appeal already mentioned.

Conor Jerram, Clerk

Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre

2012 was another year of gentle growth and exploration for Woodbrooke as we seek to serve Friends across the section with the limited resources we have. At the beginning of the year we found that we had more resources at our disposal than we first realised, when it became apparent that Woodbrooke was best placed to host the online study groups that helped prepare us all for the 6th World Conference of Friends; Being Salt and Light. Some Woodbrooke staff gave their time to help facilitate these online groups; we often forget that technology needs people to make it an enriching learning experience. The experiences for participants were mixed and this gave Woodbrooke further insights into the techniques and practices of this type of learning. One thing was certain, it brought Friends together, even for a short period of time, who were dispersed across the globe.

The Quaker in Europe course has been revised and awaits completion of translation work. This revision has been carefully crafted by Julia Ryberg following the review that took place earlier in the year. Our other online offering, Becoming Friends, continues to provide Friends with a useful set of training materials.

Several members of the Woodbrooke team, both permanent staff and associate tutors, attended the World Conference in Kenya last year. The ripples of our experiences continue to be felt and our work at Woodbrooke is being gently shaped by it. We were often surprised by just how many Friends from across the world had heard of Woodbrooke, and we felt some sadness that the opportunities to experience Woodbrooke have become more difficult to attain for some over the years.

We have been pleased how many Friends have been able to experience Woodbrooke education at an on-the-road event in 2012 and 2013 looks likely to be a busy year for our tutors too. We were delighted also to hear that Woodbrooke will be the venue for the 2015 FWCC-EMES Annual Meeting, and we will look forward to opening the doors of Woodbrooke to welcome Friends from across Europe and & Middle East.

As ever there is much that has been done and still much more to do, but we rejoice in the opportunity we have to serve Friends.

Sandra Berry, Director

Yearly Meetings in 2013

Yearly Meeting	When	Contact
Netherlands	10-12 May	secretariaat@dequakers.nl
Switzerland	17-20 May	rorie_nazareth@bluewin.ch
Britain	24-27 May	Paul Parker, Clerk, Friends House, 173 Euston Road London NW1 2AX karlg@quaker.org.uk
Nordic (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden)	27-30 June	kvakargarden@kvakare.se ; kveker@kveker.org ; post@kvaekerne.dk and majjamakela4@gmail.com
Ireland	24-28 July	office@quakers-in-ireland.ie
France	25-28 July	assembleedefrance@gmail.com
German	31 October – 3 November	clerks@quaeker.org

Other events in 2013

Event	When	Contact
Grenztreffen Switzerland/Germany/France	22-24 March	Brigitte Seger
EMEYF Spring Gathering	6-12 April	Sarah, Laurina, Miranda emeyf@qcea.org
EMES Annual Meeting	2-5 May	emes@fwccemes.org
Central European Gathering	17-20 May	Arne Springorum or Pavel Marusinec
Border Meeting for Friends from Europe, in Strasbourg	6-8 Sept	Phil Gaskell
Peace & Service Consultation in Brussels, Belgium	17-18 November	emes@fwccemes.org

CONTRIBUTING TO FWCC EMES

The work of FWCC EMES depends on contributions from the Yearly Meetings in the Section and from individual donations. Contributions for the general work can be made using the bank details below.

In Sterling: By international transfer to:

Unity Trust Bank plc, Nine Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2HB, UK

IBAN: GB11 CPBK 0800 5150 0732 10

BIC: CPBKGB22

It is also **essential** that you quote the following details

Account Name: FWCC-EMES

Account Number: 20180696

Sort Code: 08-60-01

Holders of UK bank accounts can also send cheques or CAF vouchers in pounds sterling made out to 'FWCC-EMES'.

In Euros: Sozialbank Account

IBAN: DE35 3702 0500 0001 0795 00 in Germany just 1079500)

BIC: BFSWDE33XXX (in Germany just 370 205 00)

Name: Sozialbank

Location: Cologne (Köln), Wörthstr. 15-17, 50668 Köln

In the name of: Friends World Committee for Consultation Europe & Middle East

Holders of UK bank accounts can also send cheques or CAF vouchers in pounds sterling for the 'FWCC-EMES Amari Play Centre' to the EMES office.

CONTRIBUTING TO THE AMARI CAMP PLAY CENTRE, RAMALLAH

There is a separate, FWCC-EMES Amari Play Centre account. Contributions for the play centre should be made as follows:

By international transfer to:

CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ, UK

IBAN: GB48 MIDL 4005 3072 1385 49

BIC: MIDLGB2141W

It is also **essential** that you quote the following details

Account Name: FWCC-EMES Amari Play Centre

Account Number: 00091841

Sort Code: 40-52-40

Holders of UK bank accounts can also send cheques or CAF vouchers in pounds sterling for the 'FWCC-EMES Amari Play Centre' to the EMES office.

Please note that EMES does not hold accounts for other Quaker work in the Section

Please contact the FWCC EMES Office or the Treasurer, Neithard Petry, for further information or to inform us of bank transfers you are making.

