



Jean Zaru and Franco Perna, centre, at Triennial Interest Group on Palestine- also Helen Bayes and Topsy Evans are on the right

If undelivered please return to:

Hong Kong Friends Meeting
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Let us work first for justice. Reconciliation and peace will follow close behind. Desmond Tutu

“A few months ago, I learned a South African Word: ‘Ubuntu’.
Desmond Tutu defined the concept behind the word: A person with ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others and does not feel threatened that others are able and good. For he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs to the greater whole”

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Editorial

Can you notice a small change to the FWCC/AWPS logo? This is the “inc”, which is short for “Incorporated”, now provides a legal framework for the operations of our Section. Thanks to Topsy Evans for your hard work in organising this.

Since our Section Meeting in Dublin, there have been three annual Gatherings, to which AWPS sent their greetings: In October, the General Conference of Friends in India met for three days at Friends Rural Centre, Rasulia. Mid-India Yearly Meeting’s annual gathering took place in November, as did Japan Yearly Meeting. We are mindful of the need to continuously seek new Light in our Gatherings, and to focus and act on findings from the recent Triennial.

An interactive AWPS website is in course of development. The AWPS Study Booklet will be posted there. It includes contributions from Friends in the Section. The theme of the Bhopal Gathering is “Gathering in Clear Light and Fresh Hope”. Meetings are asked to create ways of studying this in small groups, by way of preparation for the Gathering. Print off your copy from the web. It has been translated into Hindi, for maximum outreach in India.

Intervisitation took place in India with Emily Chapman-Searle and myself in October to the affiliated Yearly Meetings and groups. The response from all of the groups, plus isolated Friends was heartening. We now have a draft agenda in place for the Bhopal Section Gathering from 6-12 November 2008, plus a number of pre-and post Gathering suggestions.

The application form is on p.14-15. Please use this to advise your details and level of participation. You will need to ask your Clerk, Pastor or other senior member of your Meeting/Church, if they accept your involvement in this event. Please pray for a truly representative and Spirit led Gathering.

Valerie Joy, Executive Secretary.

Offerings:

I would like to lead an Interest Group

If so, please write the topic here (attach more information if necessary)

.....

I would be happy to lead a Home Group

I offer to be on the Pastoral Care Committee

Worship co-ordinator

Other jobs are:

Bookstall co-ordinator

Music/Singing Co-ordinators

Dance Enablers (traditional, Circle dancing etc)

Games/Enthusier

Yoga, or Tai Chi facilitator/s

Medical person/liason/contact

Help Desk volunteers

Interpreters (English to ?) please state language

Computer Experts/Technology Problem assisters

Thanks for your offers of help. You will be contacted closer to the event to advise who you will be working with and if possible to commence some early preparation.

Please email this form to valerie@fwccawps.org or mail it to Valerie Joy to 17 Bourrelet St Tarragindi 4121 QLD Australia by 5 February 2008.

Applications for Section Gathering , 6-12 November 2008, are now sought

The Section Gathering will attract Quakers from around the world, and will be like a Triennial, with worship and speakers reflecting the flavours and variety of our Quaker witness. The costs will be very affordable, much lower than at the 2005 Gathering in Seoul. AWPS needs to know numbers attending and also offers of assistance by February 2008. Each applicant will need their form endorsed by the Clerk or Pastor of their Meeting. Accommodation in the Pastoral Centre is in shared 2 person ensuite bedrooms. Mineral water will be on sale at cost, and vegetarian meals will also be provided.

In completing the application form, please also consider prayerfully how you would like to be involved in the planning and implementation of the activities at the Gathering. On receipt of registrations, I will mail the agenda and other details to assist in your planning. A registration payment will be due by April 30 2008. The remaining monies will be paid in Indian rupees at the Gathering.

REGISTRATION FORM: For both the Young Friends and AWPS Gatherings:

Name:

Address:

Tel: mobile:

Email:

I am registering for the Young Friends Gathering 2-5 November Yes

I am registering for the AWPS Gathering 6-12 November Yes

Are you a FWCC representative Yes

No

This is to say that (insert name here) is a Friend in good standing

Clerk or Pastor's Signature:

Name of Quaker Meeting or Friends

Church.....

In the case of isolated Friends, please contact Valerie Joy for further advice.

More News from the Dublin Triennial 2007

Proposal for a World Conference in 2012, bringing together 1,000 Friends probably in Nairobi, Kenya.

1. The changes to the FWCC Constitution, which bring it into line with current practice, have been accepted.
2. Budget proposal 2008-2012: This allows for re-structuring of the FWCC central office staff to include a full-time person with expertise in modern communications. This will allow for closer communications with and among the sections.
3. The FWCC Committee from 1 January 2008 to December 31, 2012 will include: Clerk:Dudzile Mtshazo (Central and Southern Africa YM); Assistant Clerk, Elizabeth Gates, Philadelphia YM); Clerk of Central Executive Committee, Jocelyn Burnell (Britain Yearly Meeting), Treasurer: Roger Sturge, (Britain Yearly Meeting); At large members: David Bucura (Rawanda YM), Kenya Casanova (Cuba YM) and John Fitzgerald (Ireland YM).

4. FWCC Looking Ahead: A summary of the responses to four questions on future directions for FWCC are:
More emphasis on personal and small group contacts through section exchanges

- * Information resources
- * Faith and action: opportunities and success stories
- * Leadership development at the Yearly Meeting level and
- * among Young Friends

The full text is available from the World Office www.fwccworld.org. We are asked to carry these ideas back to our Yearly Meetings and worship groups. We were challenged with the question, "Is your Yearly Meeting ready to accept and take responsibility for visitors travelling in the ministry? Can you arrange for a welcome, organize travel and give hospitality?" We want Friends everywhere to become aware that we are part of a wider Quaker family, in which we have relatives all over the world. Our family also requires our financial commitment."

Grants for the Study and Practice of Christian Mysticism: Annual 'Grants of up to \$1,000 are made by the Elizabeth Ann Bogert Memorial Fund,

administered by FWCC Section of The Americas. Look at their website for more details. Due date for proposals is 1 March 2008. Seven copies of the proposal should be mailed to Bogert Fund Secretaries, 4818 Warrington Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19143. Email enquiries to muccidem@verizon.net.

Young Adult Friends

Greetings from Australia to all the Young Friends in the Asia West Pacific Section (AWPS) of the Friends World Committee of Consultation. Following the World Gathering of Young Friends in 2005 and the AWPS gathering in Seoul 2005, there were discussions on running a gathering for Young Friends in AWPS. I have recently returned from 14 months overseas, including 3 weeks in India where I travelled with Valerie Joy Executive secretary of the section.

We met with Friends from the four FWCC affiliated Yearly Meetings and groups. We stayed at the Pastoral Centre in Bhopal, where the next Section gathering will be held. The Gathering will be held from 6-12 November 2008, at the Catholic Pastoral Centre in Bhopal.

A gathering for Young Friends of the Section will be held before the Section Gathering, in the same venue, from 3-5 November. Some Young Friends will participate in the Section Gathering. Others will choose from amongst a range of offerings to be listed.

I am wanting to hear from people who are interested in being involved in planning this event. There are a wide variety of opportunities which could be included on the program.

The theme for the section gathering is 'Gathering in clear light and fresh hope'. We could use this theme, or we could have our own theme, or we could have an additional theme. What suggestions do Young Friends have?

Please pass this information on to other Young Friends in the section, and email me on em8smem@yahoo.com to let me know your plans and ideas. We need to firm up on numbers, so early registration is essential- see page 14.

Emily Chapman-Searle, Australia Yearly Meeting.

tourism on the visit to the world heritage site at Sanchi, and hopefully you will plan other side trips pre or post gathering. Acquire an Indian Travel Guide- Lonely Planet, Fodor or other well known guide. Internal travel in India is by air or rail. Train travel is one of the joys of India, the network is extensive and prices are reasonable. The India Railways website is www.indiarail.gov.in and another helpful site is www.seat61.com/India.htm

Before you leave for a long journey

Without any worry

Can you ask this person

To look after your family?

Even when you are cast out from the whole world

And are in deepest sorrow

Do you have someone

Who will welcome you warmly and freely?

In the dire moment when your vessel has sunk

Is there someone

Who will give you their life belt and say

"You must live before me"?

At the execution ground

Is there someone

Who will exclaim for you

"Let him live, even if you kill the rest of us"?

In the last moment of your life

When you think of this person

Can you leave this world smiling broadly

And feeling at peace?

Even if the entire world is against you

When you think of this person

Can you stand alone for what you believe?

Do you have this person in your life? Ham, Sok Hon. *Works 6*, sent to us by Steven Kim of Seoul MM.

I want to share a true story with you which to me is what Thanksgiving is all about:

In late October my friend Tony was taken ill and hospitalised. Tests showed he most likely had pancreatic cancer. The median survival rate from diagnosis for pancreatic cancer is 3 to 6 months according to the US Centre for Disease Control and only 4% of pancreatic cancer patients survive for 5 years or more from diagnosis. So this was bad news, and a long operation to remove the cancer was done.

Tony is a strong willed, sensitive man. A retired Mandarin or senior civil servant. with a sharp wit and a love of history, poetry and language. This morning, Tony was feeling a bit better but misunderstood the diagnosis to mean that his cancer had not been completely removed. He knew what that would mean. A life expectancy of a few months only. Once the surgeon finished his report we were all in tears. The tumour was cancerous. It had been removed. Detailed examination of the removed organs, surrounding tissue and all the lymph nodes showed that the cancer was localised and had not spread. So far as could be ascertained, the cancer has been successfully removed and no further treatment is required. The prognosis for Tony's five plus year survival is "Better than 50%". A reprieve. A sentence of life. Our tears were tears of joy and of Thanksgiving.

For Tony, his family and friends and that includes my family, Thanksgiving is no longer only an American holiday, it is our special holiday too.

Julian Stargardt, Hong Kong MM

Section Gathering in India's Heart: Bhopal is a city of lakes, capital of Madya Pradesh, the site of the world's worst industrial accident, the headquarters of the Ekta Parishad, and has been home to Quakers for over 120 years. Start planning to discover the magic of India for yourself, and participate in the thinking and planning of the AWPS for the next period.

To visit India, you will need a visa, valid for 6 months after entry. It is essential that you apply for a tourist visa. You will be engaging in

'Peace in Our Land' Conference, Solo City (Java, Indonesia), 1-8th December, 2007

The AWPS was represented at this Conference by the following Friends: India: Devdas Shrisunder, Bhopal, Norris Hamilton, GCFI and Jairaj Brown, Bundelkhand.

From Aotearoa New Zealand, Elizabeth Duke, Christina Gibb, Graham John.

From the Philippines Friends Church: Jaime and Lydia Tabingo, and Betty Pulido.

From Australia YM: Jarrod Mckenna, Dale Hess, Sienneke Martin, Gerry Guiton, Jo Vallentine and possibly part time, Mark Deasey. Janet Scott from Britain Yearly Meeting and Rudy Pantou from the Indonesia Friends Church will complete the Friends representatives. They will meet with the other Peace Churches, to discern ways of working towards peace and justice in the forthcoming decade. Please pray for this conference, that its deliberations will lead to recommendations for peace in our time, in our region and our world. A helpful website is:

<http://www.peacetheology.org>

You can contribute \$s to AWPS Newsletter

If you appreciate receiving the AWPS Newsletter, you may wish to contribute towards the cost of production. Annual cost is AUD \$20. Please send this, or its equivalent in your currency to your Treasurer. This office bearer can then make an annual remittance to AWPS Treasurer, Topsy Evans, PO Box 181 Glen Osmond, SA 5064 Australia. Please also remember AWPS in your will—***Thanks***

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Taipei Worshipping Group:

We rejoice with Canadian Friend Jennifer Dow, who has been led to establish an Unprogrammed Meeting for Worship in Taipei. Taiwan has many programmed Quakers, but we have not heard from them for some time. Jennifer has rented a suitable space and has asked for advice on Quaker material to translate for the new worshippers. She shares her observations on Chinese-Taiwanese thinking, which is piqued by Quaker concepts of equality of people, time and place of

speech. "I consider our most valuable contribution lies within our differences, not within our similarities".

"Quakers Christian heritage is something I value. I welcome ministry that includes Christ and God in meeting for worship - as equally as I welcome ministry that includes Adapa and Seth".

"After much consideration, I would like to use Quaker material that uses no Semitic-descendant (one-God, Christian) terminology. Quaker faith and practice has already extended itself beyond Semitic-descendant practice. Taiwanese-Chinese culture has historically shown (and currently shows) resistance to the various faiths descendant from the Mesopotamian agricultural revolution and the expansionists' insistence on one-god. (Note: descendants of Semitic faith and practice... but I'm not sure if Semitic faith was real or convenient... includes Jewish, Christian and Muslim faith.)

Is it inappropriate to our heritage to deliberately exclude Christ and God from our initial selection of material to be translated into Chinese? It feels inappropriate for me to include these names in material to be translated, given I am the local Friend organizing the worship group, and I have no faith in these names.

We all exist in community and I am unable to resolve this question in my own mind. I will wait for guidance." I would like to meet you and others in our section and am starting to converse with people in Taipei about my possibly going to India in November 2008

Jennifer Dow, jendow.zhendao@gmail.com

News of Friends :

- Michael Corbett and family are making their annual pilgrimage to Manila. They are excited that this time they will visit South Korea and join in worship with Seoul Friends over 2 Sundays in December. As a result of the Seoul Section Gathering, we think of the Meeting in Seoul with great affection. Canberra Meeting has established a sister relationship and Friends from there visit.
- Mamoru Hitomi, Japan YM has translated the QUNO leaflet into Japanese. Thanks Mamoru, it is being posted on our updated website.

These groups labored to produce minutes for distribution to the world, reflecting deep concerns on these issues. These sessions contained high conflict, and stretched us.

There were also opportunities to attend Interest Groups, which shared serious international projects and witness. I attended a Quaker UN Office (QUNO) update; Women in prison and their children: Quaker publishing; and Israel-Palestine peace initiatives, given by Jean Zaru of Ramallah, Palestine. See photo, p 16.

Jean is a 'Weighty Friend'. "God is not a real estate agent!!!" "I have found 30 years of dialogue on religious dogma to be a waste of time. I dialogue instead on common values, then join hands to act together on these things." "If human rights are to mean anything anywhere, they should mean something here!" "We just do not talk about direct and structural violence enough."

Prior to attending the triennial, I could not imagine an 8-day Quaker meeting for business. Toward its end, I wish I could live in such sustaining community forever. It is more than just something to aspire to: it is our *heritage* as Quaker (Christian)s.

Sadly, to conserve finances and carbon units, a triennial will not occur in 2010, but instead there will be a World Gathering of Friends (once-a-generation) in 2012. Business agendas of FWCC affairs are adjusted accordingly. See you in Nairobi!

Barbara True, Australia Yearly Meeting

Thanksgiving Day 2007: Thanksgiving is an American holiday, originally to celebrate a successful harvest, it's like the English and European Harvest Festival only more so. Most famously celebrated in 1621 by the Pilgrim Fathers at Plymouth in New England¹. Nowadays Thanksgiving is a time when families and friends gather together from all over the world to celebrate together. In a sense Thanksgiving is a celebration of life, of family and of love.

¹ According to Wikipedia, Thanksgiving was first celebrated in America in 1619 to celebrate the foundation of Berkley Plantation in Virginia, source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thanksgiving>

shirts and were loving hosts. Harp music graced our welcoming, as did traditional Irish dancing. Charles G. Lamb and Charles B. Lamb, in particular, led Friends in body, spirit and humor.

The impact of meeting Friends - from Kenya (>200,000 members!), Latvia, Canada, Belgium, India, Indiana, Ramallah, Bulgaria, England, the Congo, Denmark, Geneva, Mexico, Japan - was arresting, bewildering and exclamatory, but then quickly a source of rejoicing. All business was conducted in English, Spanish and French, with simultaneous English test typed and projected to the left of the large meeting auditorium stage. (I think we converted the tireless court reporter to Quakerism.) Other cultures and languages took turns saying grace or singing before meals.

The Triennial was attended by Friends of both long-standing FWCC involvement as well as those who, like me, were first timers, attending on observer status as representatives of the own yearly meetings. This is a once-or-twice-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

The theme was "Finding the prophetic voice of our time. 'Prophecy', admittedly, is not typically heard among 'silent' Friends. Unprogrammed meetings are, however, in the minority, and the styles of worship at the triennial were weighted to reflect the types of worship which are, in fact, practiced. (As I write this, during a section meeting of Asia-West Pacific (AWPS) Friends, the African Friends are heard singing in rich Swahili next door. AWPS comprises 4% of world membership, Africa Section 43%.)

'Prophetic' in a Quaker context does not mean 'to predict the future' but rather 'to speak as inspired by God', to seek to find God's will. Seven plenary worship sessions reflected different styles of Friends' ministry, which many times pricked the conscience and paused lazier complacencies.

Six Working Groups met on topics submitted by yearly and sectional meetings. These were: environment and sustainability; violence; HIV/AIDS; Young Friends; outreach; and human rights.

- Arvind Swan has translated the AWPS Handbook into Hindi. Others in India are translating Quaker material, for distribution amongst Friends groups, and also for posting on the web.
- The India Friends Working Group of Philadelphia YM are looking forward to sending 6-8 Friends who will participate in the AWPS Section Gathering. They will also arrange some pre and post Quaker learning opportunities, for both Indian and overseas participants. Viv Hawkins, who visits India regularly on behalf of IFWG will again be visiting Friends in India early in 2008.
- Charles and Marge Lamb and Bong Soo Kwag all visited Hong Kong Worshipping group on 18 November. Local Friends took them out to lunch after Meeting.
- Anna Sternfeldt, who has been living in far north Queensland for 12 months is about to move to Malaysia. She asks if there are any Quakers there. If readers know of any Friends there, please email Anna direct at anna@thegoodtourist.com

Africa Section News:

Receive greetings of love from our Section.

Coming to the AWPS gathering of 6th - 12th November 2008, the Executive Committee has appointed two Friends to accompany the Executive Secretary and the Clerk to India. The two Friends are:
(1) John Sabwa: the current Assistant Clerk to Gladys Kang'ahi. John Sabwa has held several leadership positions in our church. He is a member of Nairobi Yearly Meeting. He has been the Clerk of the young adult Friends of Nairobi Yearly Meeting for many years till he retired four years ago. Besides, he was the Vice-Clerk of the main office of Nairobi Yearly for the past three years before his appointment to the Section as the Assistant Clerk. This will be the 1st time for John to travel out of East Africa for an International Conference.

(2) John Mikisi: He is the Treasurer of the Africa Section. Prior to this he was the Assistant Treasurer of the Section for three years. In addition, John is also the Treasurer of Ngong Road Monthly Meeting, which is one of the most powerful Monthly Meetings within Nairobi Yearly Meeting.

John is a professional Accountant who works with the Total Oil Company and is a very dedicated member of our church.

This will be the first time for John to travel for an International Quaker Conference. Once again we would like to appreciate the kind invitation and the initiative of our twin-ship. We know there is a lot to learn from each other.

Moses Musonga, Executive Secretary, Africa Section.

Quaker United Nations Committee New York meeting October 2007.

What a strange committee meeting we had. Since our last meeting the director, Rob Callard, had resigned and left. Jessica Huber one of the representatives had also left and fortunately Sarah Clark the third representative had returned from maternity leave. Hence we were two permanent staff short. The programme assistants from 2006/7 had stayed on for an extra 6 months to help the office bridge gap before we get two new members of staff.

Fortunately the staff has been able to continue with the programme work. Work on the Peacebuilding Commission, monitoring the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as other areas of conflict in the world.

Linley Gregory, November 2007

Japan Yearly Meeting November 17-18 2007

On the Saturday evening I had the privilege of sharing with Friends at Japan Yearly Meeting a little about the work of Quaker United Nations Office. It was a pleasure to be able to sit with Friends, as the 40 of them met for business – hearing reports, discussing how to update Friends Centre, the way to rewrite their “rules”, hearing reports of the Triennial and several other topics.

My gratitude is with Friends in Japan for their care they took of me during my time amongst them.

Linley Gregory, Aotearoa New Zealand

Palestine and Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT): Christina Gibb of Aotearoa New Zealand has been actively involved in the work of ‘accompaniment’ and ‘getting in the way’ for several years in Hebron. She expressed delight, that Mary Rose from Aotearoa/NZ and I from Australia YM, came to learn the work of CPT for peace in Palestine. We now look for other Friends from the AWPS to prayerfully consider whether they may also be called to volunteer

their presence to CPT in 2008. To learn more, go to the website: www.cpt.org, and/or email Christina on cgibb@ihug.co.nz, Mary Rose on mary.rose@hotmail.com, or Valerie Joy. If you are not sure about committing to CPT, AFSC is arranging a delegation from 24 May-7 June 2008, which will tour the Palestinian refugee camps and the ruins of Palestinian villages within Israel. Meetings will also be held with Palestinian and Israeli activists, historians, and public figures who will share perspectives on the past 60 years and consider prospects for historical justice.

QUNO Geneva

The Committee is deciding on a possible shift in emphasis for the 3rd programme area. Martin Watson who has been working on Global Economic Issues and movement of people across national borders to find work, has resigned to take up a better paid and more prestigious position in Geneva.

This will provide the committee with the chance to look at new possibilities, and they are considering including the humanitarian issues involved with climate change, as well as the economic pressures it will bring - possibly trying to take a combined work forward involving the other two programmes of Peace, Disarmament and Refugees and Human Rights as well.

The third position as QUNO Representative will be advertised soon, once a decision has been made, so watch this space on these evolving areas of commitment. *Topsy Evans*

FRIENDS AND PROPHECY: FWCC DUBLIN 2007

On the 11th to the 19th August 2007, 308 Friends from 41 countries gathered in Dublin, Ireland, for the 22nd triennial meeting of the Friends World Committee on Consultation (FWCC). FWCC is the body which unites the four sections of Friends from around the world. If you’ve ever asked yourself if there are Friends in Palestine, this is the place to find out.

We gathered at King’s Hospital School, founded in 1670 under Charles II (a persecutor of early Friends!). Irish Friends wore green t-