

**I slept and dreamt that life was joy  
I woke and saw that life was service  
I acted, and behold service was joy**  
*Rabindranath Tagore 1861-1941*

**AWPS Contacts:**

- Kenneth Co Ching Po: Secretary  
2nd floor, 213A Prince Edward Rd West, Kowloon, Hong Kong, SAR China  
Kenneth@fwccawps.org; kenco1@i-cable.com
- Valerie Joy: Assoc Secretary  
10/150 Forbes St Woolloomooloo NSW 2011 Aust.  
Valerie@fwccawps.org; Valerie@hotkey.net.au
- Dilawar Chetsingh: Clerk  
B-78 Sector 36, Noida 201 303, District Gautam Budh Nagar, UP, India  
zorbac@vsnl.net
- David Bottomley: Treasurer  
Flat 3A, Hollywood Garden, Hollywood Rd, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong SAR, China: dtb@hk.super.net
- Eleanor (Topsy) Evans: Assoc. Treasurer  
PO Box Glen Osmond, South Australia 5064  
Ph/Fax +61 8 8338 2143; tevens@c130.aone.net.au

## **Editorial**

This edition of AWPS News reflects a great variety of inner and outer work in working to encourage and strengthen the spiritual life within the Religious Society of Friends, and its outreach in the world, particularly in the Asia West Pacific.

A summer haze and smaller Meetings for Worship in Hong Kong, prompts Kenneth Co to reflect on faith and prayer as integral to our daily lives, and how our work can become our vocation and our calling.

There is evidence of the work of the executive, updating the AWPS Handbook, opening bank accounts and investigating suitable legal arrangements under which to operate. All of these matters may appear dry, but underpin the work of God in holding us together.

Our FWCC links to the work at QUNO need to be revisited frequently, and the work in relation to the World Trade Organisation has implications and possibilities of improvements in the well-being of poorer countries.

A favourite part of this Newsletter for me is always to read the *News of Friends*. Here we see evidence of Friends traveling in the Ministry, studying, teaching, publishing and just being. Please remember to email Kenneth Co or myself with news from yourself or Friends in your Meeting, in your corner of the Kingdom.

I have written a little of my journey, and its possibilities for service and joy.

Finally Aletia Dundas reflects on her own relationship with the land and dealing with human relationships, via an intercultural experience in her own country. There is evidence in this Newsletter that many of us are stepping aside from our routine dailiness in order to move into new ways of thinking and relationships with others.

In Friendship, Valerie Joy, Associate Secretary

Dear Friends,

Like Paris in August, Hong Kong experiences an exodus of expatriates during the months of July and August. And it is no exception for the Monthly Meeting of Hong Kong.

However, since I do not have any travel plans for summer, I am the steady one. In a busy place such as Hong Kong, the need for solitude is even more pronounced. So, I find attending meeting for worship when there is only a handful of f/Friends a beneficial one. Just the other week when we only had four persons present, I was reading from The Britain Yearly Meeting Faith & Practice, in the section called:--The source of Our Strength, Mary Smith (section 20.08 ) wrote:—

For the best solution of every problem, the best carrying out of every action, both thought and prayer are necessary. To pray about any day's work does not mean to ask success in it. It means, first to realize my own inability to do even a familiar job, as it truly should be done, unless I am in touch with eternity, unless I do it "unto god", unless I have the Father with me. It means to see "my" work as part of a whole, to see "myself" as not mattering much, but my faith, the energy, will and striving, which I put into the work, as mattering a great deal. My faith is the point in me at which God comes into my work; through faith the work is given dignity and value. And if through some weakness of mine, or fault of others, or just "unavoidable circumstances", the work seems a failure, yet prayer is not wasted when it is unanswered, any more than love is wasted when it is unreturned...

How refreshing it was and how wonderfully the passage reminds us to marry our faith and our daily work so that our work becomes our vocation, a calling to serve *That of God* in the other person be that our co-worker, student, boss or even our enemy!

Another week during the doldrums of summer, I heard the voice ministry on the topic of Loneliness, which was defined as being alone and not satisfied with the condition; whether one wishes to withdraw from the crowd but cannot, or one is with oneself and wishes to be otherwise. So often as a Quaker, one seeks solitude in order to be with oneself or to go deeper into communion with the

For reasons that are not apparent, I do like the scaled down, very small Meeting for Worship during which the gathered silence is seldom broken by voice ministry. During that one hour so much happens internally, so much so that at the end of it I felt different, enriched, energized to go on for another week!

During this past couple of months, there has been some planned/unplanned inter-visitation:

1. Linley & Claire Gregory visited Hong Kong on their way to Denmark and England. During their week long stay they managed to worship with us twice, the second of which we heard them speak on holding a meeting for worship for business. It made us realize that running business the Quaker way is of critical importance and at the same time that it is quite an art which needs perfecting
2. Seoul (Korea Monthly Meeting) had unusual visitors in the person of Ann Bellingham, Clerk of Devon/Cornwall UK. She brought pictures of their Meeting as well as books on Quakerism as gifts.
3. Korean Monthly Meeting also had a visitor, Steve Hornberger, from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting who spent a whole month learning the Korean language! By the way Steve was my room-mate at college.

Finally, David Bottomley, our treasurer, is spending three months in Melbourne carrying on a research on curriculum in science education in Australia, an endeavour which he started years ago, and is now ready to pick up where he left off more than four decades ago! The rest of the Executive, especially Patricia, Topsy, Valerie and Dilawar have invested innumerable hours in revising the Section Handbook. They brought such devotion and detailed scrutiny to the task, that I am sure the new handbook will be appreciated by all.

Your Friend

Ken (Kenneth Co Ching Po)

Executive Secretary AWPS

## **Update on Seoul Section Gathering, 3-8 November 2005**

We have heard that both the FWCC General Secretary Nancy Irving, and the immediate past Gen Sec., Elizabeth Duke are both planning to attend the AWPS Section meeting.

The draft program includes keynote addresses from the World Office, from the World Conference of Young Friends in Lancaster, August 2005 and a prominent South Korean speaker. The latter address will be in Korean, with written notes in English. Japanese and South Korean interpreters and translators are sought, to enable the fullest participation possible. This will add to the cost of the gathering.

In the March Newsletter, application forms will be included, and it is important to return your form early if you are coming. We already have indications from over 50 Friends that they wish to be present. AWPS will sponsor costs for some participants to enable fullest participation from all of our affiliated meetings.

### **Can you help?**

We rejoice at the generosity of Friends in the AWPS, who have send additional monies to the World Office, to assist with its financial situation.

If you would like now to contribute towards AWPS Travel Funds, this will enable Friends from less well off countries to attend the Section Gathering. Please send your cheques to David Bottomley in Hong Kong, or Topsy Evans in Australia. Many thanks in anticipation!

## Revising the AWPS Handbook

The Auckland Triennial accepted a new version of the FWCC Constitution, which is acceptable for incorporation into the Charity Commission for England and Wales. It was previously updated in 1994 and was not considered adequate by the Charity Commission. The objects were not changed, apart from a new one being added, *the advancement of religion for the public benefit*. It was timely to update the AWPS constitution, to bring it into line with the parent body and this is currently taking place in the EME Section.

Major changes need to be included to our Constitution, due in part to worldwide regulations being tightened as a result of events like 9/11. The changes will be ratified at the next official meeting of AWPS, which is the Section Gathering in Seoul 2005.

The two clauses which need to be included are a “Non-Profit Clause” and a “Dissolution Clause”. In relation to the latter: “in the event of the organisation being dissolved...the amount that remains shall be transferred to the World Office of FWCC. Meanwhile, names and addresses changed significantly in 2004, and these have been updated.

The Executive of AWPS have all contributed to the new handbook, with the finishing touches being made by Topsy Evans, the Associate Treasurer in Australia. Topsy is also the AWPS representative to the Geneva QUNO Committee. Copies can be emailed to interested Friends. It has been posted on the FWCC website, which is:  
<http://www.quaker.org/fwcc/AWPS/index.html>

## Legal Status of the AWPS

Unlike the parent World Office, AWPS had not been required to seek a legal status outside that of its individual members. The previous bank account in Aotearoa/New Zealand had been opened with no requirements for this. Indian Friends were unable to open an account for the purposes of AWPS.

When difficulties were faced in Hong Kong with the opening of a bank account, it was decided that the bulk of AWPS monies should be held in Australia, as explained in Newsletter 63.

On opening an account in Australia, Topsy also obtained an ABN number, to avoid paying 50% tax on the account, and was advised that incorporation of AWPS as an association under the Associations Act in Australia would be advisable.

A Public Officer needs to be appointed to make this application, and the Executive has agreed to appoint Valerie Joy to undertake this. This position is not currently listed in the AWPS handbook, but discussion of this role will be included for Section Business in 2005.

\*\*\*\*\*

The next edition of AWPS News in December will have an article titled "Poverty, Inequality and Conflict, by Dr Roma Bhattacharjea, an Indian Quaker, working as a Regional Development Policy Adviser for UNDP.

## Quakers at QUNO involved with the WTO

The QUNO office represents Quakers through FWCC. Since the founding of the UN in 1945, Quakers have shared the UN's aims and supported its efforts to abolish war and promote peaceful resolution of conflicts, human rights, economic justice and good governance. They work through Quaker commitment to working quietly to facilitate dialogue and to promote more equitable sharing of resources and wealth by empowering those in need of both.

Brewster Grace on his retirement after 11 years as Director of the QUNO Geneva office, wrote of the crucial importance of the WTO (World Trade Organisation) in its influence on who benefits from the creation and distribution of global wealth. However, he expressed concern for NGO's like QUNO in gaining access to the WTO, where there is a culture of disdain from some member countries and the secretariat. Those NGO's who understand the workings of the WTO, see it as a means to promote justice, whether through reform or empowerment of poorer countries, find this is often an insurmountable wall.

For QUNO then, the challenge of access into the WTO has been credibility, achieved through bringing informal processes of technical and legal support to level the playing field for those most affected by powerful commercial interests. QUNO has achieved this recently on patents and public health work, which was one of the most controversial social issues ever to have surfaced in the WTO. By providing legal advice to those countries most in need to cheaper generic medicines to meet such public health crises as HIV/AIDS pandemics, developing country negotiators were better able to negotiate for greater flexibility in WTO patent rules.

More recently, the WTO signed an agreement which will scrap export subsidies and other forms of government support for farm exports from rich nations. QUNO staff will no doubt be investigating was in which its strong "behind the scenes" role can advance this decision to assist poorer

nations in keeping with the objects of the FWCC Constitution. Friends can see that our financial contributions to FWCC, directly play a part in the achievement of social justice and peace through our QUNO offices.

\*\*\*\*

### **News of Friends**

**Joseph Andugu** arrived in London on 30 June to a wonderful welcome from all the World Office staff, who all assisted him in searching for suitable accommodation. On 19 July, Joseph moved into “a nice flat”. He asks that we greet everyone in the AWPS with a holy kiss.

**David Purnell** stepped down in July 04 after 6 years as Clerk of FWCC and handed over to Duduzile Mtshago of Central and Southern Africa. In August, David is spending 10 days as Friend in Residence at Friends School, Hobart. We are fortunate that David is available to assist FWCC still– see letter drafted by him on p. 11

**Elizabeth Duke** has completed her service as General Secretary in London, and will return home to A/NZ shortly. Welcome back Elizabeth, and we do look forward to having your experience and wisdom on board, in AWP Section.

**Gerry Guiton**, recently a FWCC representative from Australia Yearly Meeting is the Cadbury Scholar at Pendle Hill from 2004-5. His research topic is “*Catholic-Quaker interactions in the 17th Century*”. En route, Gerry hopes to visit Stefano Villani in Pisa and also go to Dublin to delve into the Irish Quaker archives. He has just published a book and hopes to stay in touch with AWPS Friends: [guiton@hotmail.com](mailto:guiton@hotmail.com)

**Archana Gour**, the current Clerk of General Conference of Friends in India will commence studies at Pendle Hill on 24 September. This has been made possible by the India Friends Working Group of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. This committee also plans to resource Friends in the US going to India for an extended stay in 05/06.

Some members of the Friends Working Group, attended parts of the AWPS Gathering in Bhopal in 2002, and it is great to learn of their continuing commitment to Quakers in India. This wonderful initiative will greatly assist in Friends from different Yearly Meetings and countries “knowing one another in the things that are eternal”.

**Bronwen Meredith** from Hobart Meeting in Australia writes that she has recently been in Aotearoa/New Zealand hearing positive news about the Auckland Triennial. Bronwen is responsible for the distribution of the AWPS newsletter in Hobart.

**Sachiko Yamamoto** from Japan YM and the AWPS Executive writes that she has moved house, and can now be contacted on email:  
s-yama@fd550-net.ne.jp

**Patricia MacGregor** has replaced Patricia Waugh on the AWPS Executive, also from Aotearoa/New Zealand. Her email is a.n.macgregor@massey.ac.nz

**Linley and Claire Gregory** have attended a WILPF Conference in Sweden and have also been studying at Woodbrooke in England.

**Kenneth Co**, the AWPS Secretary is attending the Japan Yearly Meeting on 13-14 November. Please hold this Gathering in the Light.

**Valerie Joy** has retired from paid work and will shortly visit Kenneth Co in Hong Kong to discuss arrangements for the Section Gathering in Seoul in 2005.

**Abinero Gulo** from Indonesia Friends Yearly Meeting has advised that their Yearly Meeting took place in Bali in July. In future years, we hope that AWPS can be represented at this meeting.

## Letter to Australian Government re Visa Regulations

A letter, drafted by David Purnell, and signed by Ruth Watson on behalf of Australia Yearly Meeting reads:

Dear Minister Amanda Vanstone

I write on behalf of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia to raise a matter of concern in relation to the present official policy on transit visas.

As I understand the overall policy, transit visas are needed by non-Australians traveling through Australia, even if they do not go outside the transit area of an airport. However, according to the DIMIA website, there are exceptions granted for people from particular countries (copy of website extract attached).

Earlier this year there was a major international conference of Quakers from many parts of the world, held in Auckland, New Zealand. Those of us attending the conference from Australia were shocked to discover that some participants from India were prevented from attending the conference owing to their inability to obtain in time transit visas for a stopover in Brisbane. In addition, Friends from several parts of Africa (notably Kenya) were severely delayed in reaching the conference because of a similar problem. All these travelers were told of the transit visa requirement at a very late stage of their planning for the trip.

There are two points we wish to make. Firstly we regard it as very disappointing that Australia has adopted such an unfriendly approach to people traveling through our country. Secondly, the policy appears to be discriminatory in its application, despite official statements that the Australian approach to immigration is non-discriminatory.

I would appreciate your response to the points I have raised. In particular, I would like to know why it is not possible to extend the special category' status to everyone who stops over in Australia for fewer than eight (8) hours, with a valid onward ticket, as was certainly the case with the Indians and Africans I have mentioned above.

There appears to be a serious threat to the holding of international events when countries adopt such defensive policies. Such an approach by Australia is also likely to increase antagonism towards Australians traveling to and through other countries.

Ruth Watson

Presiding Clerk, Australia Yearly Meeting

## One Step on the Journey

In July, I cut a great number of ties— my home, my job and most of my possessions to leave space to explore my journey. I am waiting in the Light to see if any new areas of ministry or service will beckon.

I have acquired a campervan and am visiting with F/friends and family in Australia as well as planning some exciting trips overseas. Discovering the freedom of walking, using public transport and having time to stop, talk, listen and learn is a privilege. The wonder of sunrises over the ocean, the colourful and noisy birds in the native trees in the garden and the space to say “yes” to join in public initiatives are all gifts for which I am thankful.

George Fox was prompted to leave his home and employment to search for the Truth, which he discovered within his own heart, and had been there all along. Generations later, we are beneficiaries of his faithfulness to the nudges of the Spirit.

In seeking the signposts for my journey, I am grateful to Fox and other Quakers of their use of the **journal**. I am using this to discern patterns and to view the darkness of my shadow, which often shows up as a lack of trust, or becoming angry. I am learning to find that still small voice within, which is sometimes given to me through words of a friend, or a written word, or just an “aha” moment when I recognise that all I am being asked to do is to “Wait in the Light “ I pray we may all be given the freedom to explore where God is calling us, and to be faithful to the promptings of love and truth in our hearts.

Valerie Joy, Assoc. Secretary, AWPS

## Section Gathering in Seoul 2005

The date is to be finalized in early November, and it is hoped that Friends from all over AWPS will be represented at this gathering, and for others to hold the Meeting in the Light.

We have advised Seoul Friends there will be around 30-40 Friends present. We would like to hear from Friends now on suggestions for an **overall theme**, and also ask for people to lead worship and discussion sessions at this Gathering. Early preparation is vital, because of the need to translate study materials and business papers.

Pre and post visitation will be arranged, with particular note being made of Japan Yearly Meeting from 12-13 November. It is important to use the opportunities of Section Gatherings to draw nearer to one another and to gain understanding of the variety of challenges we face.

Seoul Friends, despite their small numbers assist with social projects. They raised funds to assist with relief work in North Korea, following the disaster in the On Chon area. They have established an organization "Quaker Peace Service", which assists people wounded by land mines, and supporting Amnesty International. It will be really special to see at first hand what are the issues they struggle with, including living in a country divided by politics, and economics, but not, I suspect, by the deepest desires of their hearts. Let us know soon of your intention to come to Seoul in November 2005 and of your hopes and expectations for the program.

If you can offer to lead in worship, discussion or social activity, please let Kenneth Co or Valerie Joy know, before November 2004, when the program will be drafted. I have a suggestion for a theme: "A Great People to be Gathered"- a vision for AWPS.

Please email us your suggestions and start planning to attend!

## **A Cross Cultural Experience Provides New Light**

Aletia Dundas, who was a member of the AWPS Executive in 2003 writes:

“Forty four your people from around Australia, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous gathered on Elcho Island off the North– East Arnhem Land coast, in Torres Strait. The purpose was to experience the “Mawul Rom Ceremony”, a conflict resolution ceremony conducted by the Dhurili Clan Nations of the Yolngu People. The ceremony and workshops in western meditation took place as we sat cross-legged in the sand.

The local children were very excited to meet us and we spent the first afternoon laughing, splashing and trying to get our tongues around the Yolngu Matha language. In exchange for letting them play with our hair, they ensured we were safe from spiders, sharks and crocodiles, but not without a few jokes at our expense.

The morning workshops were followed in the afternoons spent being “painted up”, with red ochre on our face and arms. Once painted we were then ready to enter the holy ground, and participate. We were invited to watch, dance, clap, listen and reflect.

The evening meal occurred in silence. As we ate, we imagined we were taking in all the qualities that would make us a better person. At the end of the meal, we threw our scraps into the center of the holy ground and symbolically threw away those qualities that held us back from being the special and compassionate person that each of us could be. Many found this experience very spiritual and some mornings were spent reflecting on the emotional impact of this experience.

Each of was adopted into a family form the Island, given a name, skin name and list of relatives. I was adopted as a sister by a woman named Lawarpurr, who is the same age as my real sister Jess. Lawarpurr had an adorable son, Wankal, who I was to call Wakur (son). I inherited grandmothers and cousins and felt not only accepted and loved, but overwhelmed by gratitude and a sense of connection with a person whose life experience was so different from my own.

As participants in the ceremony and as visitors to the land, we were expected to accept the traditional gender roles that existed on the island, Women and men performed different dances. Women dressed modestly in ankle-length skirts and watched the men from afar. As part of our “graduation” ceremony the women were given a dillybag and the men were given a woomera. I found myself accepting and embracing this feminine and submissive role. Women were particularly respected for their role in childrearing and there was a sense of place for everyone.

The elders told us they felt the land was calling us, and I think I understand what they meant now. It’s a feeling that there’s so much to learn from the land and the past. It’s buried in the cities. I’d like to return to Elcho Island to learn more, and I’m sure that the experience will shape the next part of my life journey, but I’m not sure how.



Aletia Dundas, Australia YM is on the bottom right hand row at the Cross Cultural conference– see story pages 14-15

*If undelivered please return to*  
Kenneth Co  
FWCC AWPS  
2nd Floor, 213A Prince Edward Rd  
Hong Kong, China