



Annual Report 2009

Quaker Council for European Affairs

30th Anniversary Celebration Issue



The Peace Pole was planted in the Quaker House Brussels garden on 21 September 2009. Here it is pictured during the unusually snowy period in December 2009.

Photo: QCEA

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Clerk's Report 2009

From one viewpoint, every year is similar to the one before at QCEA. We have two Council meetings, the Representatives and Programme Assistants attend meetings in Brussels and Strasbourg, Yearly Meetings and other events, talk to notables from the European institutions, liaise with other NGOs and produce briefings and reports. There is usually a study tour for Friends and other interested persons and every other year there is a conference for associate members. A budget is made, submitted to the Council for approval and then reported on. Quaker House is managed as a place for Friends and others to meet and even to stay. Finally, all this activity is summarized in an annual report. Of course, on closer inspection, every year is different in subtle ways. However, there can rarely have been such a distinctive year as 2009.

To begin with a regrettable difference, after the summer break, QCEA found itself for the first time ever with no programme assistants, all three having decided to resign, for unrelated and understandable reasons. In the past, a PA has occasionally left before the end of his or her contract, but this was unprecedented. Thanks to rapid and effective work by the Representatives, replacements were found in the shortest possible time and by the autumn Council meeting it was possible to present two fully operational PAs and an Erasmus exchange student to Council members. In the event, therefore, our work was unaffected. Nonetheless, such disruption is best avoided and the Representatives have more important things to do. Even if the combination of circumstances that led to these precipitate departures is unlikely to recur, measures are in hand to impress on PAs the importance of fulfilling their commitment to a full year of work for QCEA.

The other unusual events were wholly positive. Most significantly, QCEA celebrated its 30th birthday with an enlarged Council Meeting in October, to which many Friends who have been associated with QCEA over the years were invited. Happily, a great number were able to accept. In this Report you will find some of the presentations and other news about the celebrations. I would like to mention two things that are unreported elsewhere but merit a place in QCEA's unofficial history. One was the



During the Council Meeting October 2009: Liz Scurfield, Martina Weitsch, Richard Condon, Jethro Zevenbergen

excellent dinner, kindly prepared and served to the 60-odd guests at table by some members and attenders from Brussels Meeting. This reminder of the close links between QCEA and the local Meeting whose members played a key part in its creation thirty years ago was most appropriate. The other memorable moment occurred during this dinner when one of QCEA's

founder members, Brian Kendall, spontaneously leapt up onto his chair and entertained us with a spirited, melodically and lyrically perfect performance of *If I Was A Rich Man* from *Fiddler On The Roof*. The only flaw was his failure to include, in the enumeration of ways of spending his hypothetical fortune, a gift to QCEA.

The truly innovatory event of 2009 was the study tour undertaken by twelve members and associates of QCEA to the Middle East, in which I had the privilege of taking part. This exhausting



and astonishingly wide-ranging visit to so many important people and places in Israel and Palestine, which is described elsewhere in this Annual Report, represents a new way for QCEA to try to discern its rightful role in pushing the European institutions to adopt a more constructive and consistent role in the stalled quest for peace in what it now seems almost sacrilegious to call “the Holy Land”, where the situation seems anything but holy. Europe’s actions in the region have too often seemed incoherent and ambivalent and QCEA’s mission of emphasizing Quaker testimonies and values has seldom been more necessary than in this case.

A final challenge in 2009, which will continue in 2010 and beyond, has been the need to come to terms with the implications of Quaker House’s status as a listed building of architectural distinction. Anyone who visits the house will see that much maintenance is overdue. However, since listing occurred, no redecoration of or change to the historically significant parts of the building may take place unless their effect is to return the house as closely as possible to its original *art nouveau* condition. Subsidies are available for this purpose. Tremendous efforts by the Representatives and the Office Manager Xavier Verhaeghe have ensured that a plan has been elaborated that meets all the conditions, decorative and financial, and work has now begun. In dealing with the inevitable disruption caused by renovation, the Representatives and staff have once again shown their usual resilience and ability to cope with unusual demands. As ever, my sincere thanks are owed to them for the way in which they make it not only an honour, but generally a pleasure, to be Clerk of QCEA.

Richard Condon
Clerk



Current and former QCEA Representatives at the 30th celebrations: Nick McGeorge (1986 - 1988 with Ena McGeorge); Pat Stapleton (1979 - 1983 with Brian Stapleton); Margaret and Richard Seebohm (1998 - 2001) Liz Scurfield and Martina Weitsch (2002 - date)

Photo: QCEA



Highlights of 2009 - Representatives' Report

2009 was a special year for QCEA, not only because it was the 30th anniversary but also because it saw the first ever study tour by a group of Council Members with the Representatives to explore a new piece of work.

This Annual Report is longer than it has been in the past and so we will focus here only on the highlights of the year.

Women in Prison Report passed unanimously by the Parliamentary Assembly

Regular readers of QCEA's Annual Reports will remember that we have been working on the theme of women in prison since 2004. A number of milestones were reached in the past and we have certainly made significant progress in getting the issue on the political agenda of the European Parliament, the World Health Organisation (Europe) and other fora. But the main target had always been the Council of Europe. The Council of Europe publishes a set of 'European Prison Rules', last revised in early 2006, which at that date, for the first time, acknowledged that there were specific issues relating to women in the criminal justice system. We focused on trying to get a report into and adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe so that this might either be used as an annex to the European Prison Rules or inform any future revisions of them.

It has been a long process. We started in 2006 by drafting a Motion for a Resolution, by finding an MP to support this and by trying to get it on the agenda of one of the Committees of the Parliamentary Assembly. Some very targeted and quick advocacy was required when the Bureau of the Parliamentary Assembly had to decide whether simply to note the issue or to ask for a report. We then worked over several months with the MP appointed to write the report and were finally asked to write a background paper for her. The report completed, it had to pass through the Committee and then move to the plenary. There it competed with other issues - more urgent at the time - and kept on being deferred. Finally, in April 2009, the debate in the plenary happened and the report, containing 32 recommendations which pick up recommendations from the QCEA report on Women in Prison published in 2007, was adopted unanimously.

We used this as a platform to draw the attention of the member states' representatives in Strasbourg and the ministries of justice in the member states to this decision of the Parliamentary Assembly and we have been receiving a substantial number of responses indicating how different member states are dealing with the issue.

European Parliament Elections 2009

2009 was also a special year in that it saw the election of a new European Parliament. As in previous election years, QCEA undertook work to inform Friends and others of the issues raised, the importance of the elections and of participation in them and the kind of advocacy points that Friends might like to raise with candidates. We produced a set of these advocacy messages and produced a substantial number of articles in various Quaker publications to raise the profile of the elections.

QCEA also participated in a campaign run by two other organisations (both members of the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office) to engage candidates with peace issues. The campaign, called 'Europe Vote for Peace' focused on three advocacy messages which participating organisations were asked to raise with candidates in their countries. QCEA took on some of this work vis-à-vis candidates in the UK and Ireland. We also participated in a seminar in the European Parliament after the elections (in October 2009) where the work of members of the campaign was introduced to newly elected MEPs and where a petition was handed over to MEPs asking for more support for civil peace services at European level.



Energy Security - Focus on the Nabucco Pipeline Project

One major focus of the Energy Security project was the EU's involvement in the Nabucco pipeline project. Our policy officer was able to devote a substantial amount of time to researching this, to working with other NGOs and talking to decision-makers in the European Commission, the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Development and Reconstruction. He also participated in a number of meetings on the subject.

In December, a substantial report on the issue, calling on the European Union to ensure that any sourcing of gas from Turkmenistan is based on Turkmenistan embracing the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), was published and sent to a number of decision-makers. We are now using this report to undertake further advocacy.

Working with others

QCEA continues to work actively in a number of networks of NGOs. We consider this important for a several reasons. First, it assists us in being heard in the Institutions because decision-makers favour



Liz Scurfield with Sonja Van Tichelen, Director of Eurogroup for Animals and Caroline Lucas, MEP at the CSCG event on 6 Oct 2009 in the European Parliament - Photo: CONCORD

networks over single small NGOs as dialogue partners. Second, it ensures that a Quaker voice is heard in the networks and by other NGOs. Third, to make the networks effective, it is important to ensure cohesion, continuity and compromise: and because both Representatives have now acquired a status of 'old-timers' in Brussels (yes, 7 years is enough for this), we can contribute to that.

We are active in the Civil Society Contact Group (CSCG: the platform for 8 different networks) where Liz Scurfield is a member of the Steering Committee and Martina Weitsch chairs the focus group on the EU budget

review. In the Human Rights and Democracy Network Liz Scurfield is a member of the troika (Steering Committee). In the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office Martina is the Vice Chair and participates actively in a range of activities while Programme Assistants participate in working groups where this is appropriate to their thematic focus.

New work on the Middle East

The most significant departure from tradition may have been the approach we took in 2009 to working towards the discernment of new work on the Middle East. This did not come out of the blue. QCEA had not been working on the issue specifically, but we had incorporated into our annual Study Tour an element of discussion about the EU's role in the Israel/Palestine conflict. Each Study Tour since 2004 has had a half-day session on this issue with speakers from the Institutions, from other NGOs and involvement of Study Tour participants from the region (from the Friends Schools in Ramallah and Brummana). We were thus hearing of the involvement of the EU in the region first-hand and began to see that there might be some work for us to do.

This was reinforced by a presentation by Kathy Bergen, the Programme Coordinator at the Friends International Centre in Ramallah, to the EMES Peace and Service Consultation¹ in 2007.

¹ An annual meeting of Peace and Service Committees and Agencies of European and Middle East Friends held under the auspices of the European and Middle East Section of FWCC (FWCC-EMES)



So we suggested to Council that we should arrange a study trip for a group of Council members or their alternates to explore what this might mean for QCEA work, whether we could take it further and, if so, how. This was not an easy study trip to arrange, nor was it an easy trip. In the end, 12 of us from 10 different countries went for 10 days in June 2009. For most of us, it was the first ever visit to the region and was full of important and challenging experiences. We spent 10 days visiting Jerusalem, Ramallah, Nablus, Nazareth, Tel Aviv, Hebron, Bethlehem, a refugee camp and two settlements; we met with literally dozens of local NGOs, with representatives of the Israeli government, the Palestinian Authority, the European Commission and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; we met representatives of a number of Quaker or Quaker-supported projects and we worshipped with Friends in Ramallah in the beautiful and peaceful oasis that is the Friends Meeting House.



Photo: Penny Heymans

We were immersed in both the history of the region and its current affairs, walking in the old city of Jerusalem along the Via Dolorosa and being confronted by the reality of the Holocaust at Yad Vashem and the check-points in many different places.

We reported in detail to Council in October 2009 and Council agreed the outline work programme in relation to this issue and to set up a Project Advisory Group to guide our work.

*Liz Scurfield and Martina Weitsch
Joint Representatives*

Programme Assistants' Concluding Reports

My time at QCEA has been a truly incredible experience. At the heart of these experiences have been the friends, family and colleagues that have made it all possible. I would like to thank everybody who has helped me make this time possible. I would like to especially thank Friends from Brussels Meeting who have shown me such hospitality and friendship.

My work here has been predominantly focused on the energy security project. My time has been split between working with Neil, our policy officer, on the Nabucco and Trans-Sahara project and with researching and producing environmental ethical fact sheets. I have found both of these areas of work to be engaging and fascinating. This has enabled me to look into subjects such as militias in North Africa, the environmental impact of livestock production and a comparison between travelling by plane or by train within Europe. I would encourage Friends to look into these projects further as they are challenging subjects that need ethical consideration.

My work has included the broad subjects of peace tax, website maintenance and event organisation. I have particularly enjoyed the idea of everybody past and present coming together this October to celebrate 30 years of successful campaigning here at QCEA. Helping to organise this event has put me in touch with many Friends from around Europe who it has been a pleasure to meet. Equally, my work on the peace tax has enabled me to meet representatives from 'conscience' as well as the peace tax 7.

It must be reiterated however, that it is the people at the heart of QCEA who can make or break the organisation. As much as the work has been engaging, the individuals here have really made my



experience. I have met some friends here that I am sure will stay close to me for the rest of my life. I wish everybody who I have met here the best of luck in whatever path of life they choose next.

Stephen Hynd

When I look back to when I started at QCEA it seems incredible that I can have learnt so much in such a short space of time. I feel I have gained many valuable experiences. Working on the European Parliament election taught me a lot about how the structures of the EU work and how decisions are made. It's been a pleasure communicating with Quakers from across Europe, producing briefing papers on the elections which aimed to answer their questions, explaining the election process and exploring how Quaker concerns could be addressed by MEPs. I aimed to inform Quakers across Europe about the elections by writing articles for a range of Quaker publications including *The Friend*, *Among Friends*, *Quaker Monthly* and *The Friendly Word*. I've greatly enjoyed the challenge of trying to explain how EU structures work and how we can influence decisions in an accessible and interesting way. I have also tried to update the image and layout of *Around Europe* which has been rewarding.

Since the European Parliament elections I have started working on synthesizing QCEA's advocacy messages from previous reports so that QCEA can more easily work on those that are still relevant. This has also involved developing a series of posters which summarize our work in different areas. From my communication with European Quakers I have also been able to create a database of contacts so that it is easier for QCEA to communicate with Quakers across Europe.

A highlight of my time here was my trip to the European and Middle Eastern Young Friends (EMEYF) Spring Gathering in Damascus as part of my work as EMEYF secretary. EMEYF is a vibrant and exciting network of young friends and I feel extremely lucky to have learnt and shared so much with such a great group of people while in Damascus. My role of secretary has also included editing the Annual Report, putting together an anthology of our memories and experiences in Damascus, editing EMEYF's regular page in *Among Friends* as well as keeping on top of the accounts and corresponding with young Friends across Europe.

It has been fascinating being involved in the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office's (EPLO) Peace, Development and Security Working group. We have been looking at the links between EU development aid, EU security policies and conflict. EPLO's work on situations of fragility has been particularly interesting as it looks at the Commission's response to situations of fragility which cover areas that are particularly likely to develop into conflict. I have been able to channel some of QCEA's findings from the 'Mainstreaming Conflict Prevention' report into a paper on fragility which EPLO is involved in writing as well as presenting the report at a seminar organised by EPLO.

I feel grateful to all the staff here at QCEA who have made my time here so special, to Brussels Meeting who have made me feel so welcome, in particular our small discussion group and to my flatmates who have been a constant source of support and fun and made sure I never lost my sense of humour!

Anya Whiteside



QCEA at 30 - Advocacy, faith-based organisations and the European Union Institutions

An address by Jeremy Lester given at the anniversary celebrations on 24 October 2009

It is a special honour and a pleasure to be invited to be with you at this celebration today.

The first reason is that thinking about what to share with you has challenged me, challenged me to explore how I can be a Quaker, whilst being at the same time a paid servant of the European Commission. For other reasons too, it is a pleasure, but you will have to be patient, and then I will tell you why later on.

I joined the Commission in 1976, long before I came to the Quakers. I joined the Commission because of its work with development, for I was recruited from Africa, and not because of any special attachment to the European Union. The Commission has given me enough space to work in a variety of countries and functions without forcing me to do things which I could not do.

Since joining the Society of Friends, I have continued to work at the Commission, and find that there at the Commission I have space to be more or less...myself. It is true I do tend to put on my official disguise to go to the office - a suit and a tie. I am in a hierarchy where orders are given and received. Indeed, the Quaker business method is a stranger to EC hierarchies - perhaps that is a topic for the Quaker Council for European Affairs, QCEA, to take up in its relations with the Commission: how to reach a decision without winners and without losers; how to take the time for all present to own, to find themselves in a decision, and not just receiving instructions.

I'd like to suggest a geographical image of where QCEA has been over the last 30 years, and to do that I'll start close to home, closer to us, closer to me.

The Society of Friends has become part of my identity, or, to say the same thing, but looking from the other end of the telescope, I have become a part of the Society of Friends and of its identity. Each of us contributes to the identity of the Society of Friends, and it contributes to the values and the identity of each of us. The book, *Quaker Faith and Practice*, was written, and will be written again, by each of us, each of us can contribute. And in turn, it guides our values and our identity.

In a sense, it is our meetings - local, monthly - which are a channel, a mediator, of communication between our individual identities and our shared identity. I'm not always a good listener or communicator, so there is often quite a gap between "Quaker" and "me". Other people, better at listening and growing with and into the examples of the lives of others, in turn become examples for others. In any case, and here I quote *Quaker Faith and Practice*, 'the experience of belonging grows in intensity and in universality. The "giving out" of a sense of community is the natural witness of a Quaker meeting, which has within it the seed of life and of creative experience'².

You may wonder what this has to do with faith-based organisations in general and with QCEA in particular, and with how I see these issues from the Commission end of the telescope.

As I am, as each one of us is, to the Society of Friends through Meeting, so Europe is to the Society of Friends through the Quaker Council for European Affairs. Meeting links me to the Society of Friends. QCEA links Europe, through its institutions, to the Society of Friends.

When a meeting is successful, the good in other people shines on me, and I am in their light, and in so being, I have an opportunity to become better. When QCEA is successful, the light of Friends shines on Europe, and it too has the opportunity to become better.

This is a special anniversary, and I want to share my feelings with you, not my facts.

² Ranjit Chetsingh, 1967, 10.32 in *Quaker Faith and Practice*, Britain Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends



Europe is an interesting, an exciting place. Europe is an interesting way of consolidating identity. Europe stands in the world as part of the world. Through its external policy it expresses itself to the world. In a way, that has been my job for the last thirty years (for I started my job at the Commission at about the same time as QCEA itself began).

Europe is also a way to consolidate in a broader identity an amazing hodgepodge, a heterogeneity of regions, of nations, of states. I really like the words we use for it. UNION, COMMUNITY. Feel the sense of sharing and of oneness in these words. So Europe and European Institutions like the Commission, act within Europe, helping to build that sense of oneness, in all our diversity.

The Quaker Council for European Affairs, by speaking out, and by speaking in the Institutions, helps to make sure that Europe is 'one' in positive values, and not by negative exclusion.

Be it in terms of treatment of women prisoners within Europe, or of the poor and excluded in Africa, QCEA is a bridge between Quaker values and Europe. By holding Europe in the light, it brings out the good in it. THAT is its weighty and oh- so- Quakerly challenge.

I used the expression 'geographical' about this image of QCEA - I meant it in the sense of being spatially or conceptually between the local and the continental, QCEA as focusing our values as Quakers on the continental community of Europe. As a meeting bridges and holds each of us to Quakers as a whole, so QCEA bridges the gap between Quakers and the Institutions of Europe.

For the Quaker Council for European Affairs of the next 30 years, I would like to draw on an historical image, And the image upon which I will draw is that of an old word, 'palimpsest'. Maybe some of you know what it means - but I for one certainly did not until yesterday.....

Well, in the old days before paper came to Europe, we wrote by hand, manuscript, on parchment, on animal skins, prepared for writing on. And since freshly prepared skins were expensive, old parchments were often cleaned off and reused, sometimes many times. These reused skins were palimpsests. Often underneath one story one could still make out, on the palimpsest, the traces of earlier stories.

Now in Europe we've given up using parchment. Some say we will soon give up on paper, and read virtual books on electronic tablets. Whether we do so or not, I think that Europe itself is a palimpsest. Come back now with me to earlier writings on the parchment of Europe.

We could go back millennia, but let us go back to the late 17th century. To a Quaker who wrote in English but who also published in French, some say of his own translation:

"Il faut être de bronze ou de pierre, et non pas homme, pour considérer sans émotion les sanglantes tragédies qui se jouent à l'occasion de cette guerre, en Hongrie, Allemagne, Flandres,.....depuis l'année 1688....les avantages de la paix se font assez sentir a tous sous quelque gouvernement que l'on soit."³

And he continued, by proposing a project for peace in Europe, by the establishment of a parliament of deputies of all the principalities and sovereign states. Alas, Europe did not listen to that Quaker then, and nearly three centuries passed and more wars and more millions of violent deaths happened, before that European Parliament was created. It is a shame that William Penn, for that is the name of the Quaker, didn't go forward from pamphlet-writing to European institution building, with the 17th century founding of the Quaker Council for European Affairs. The European palimpsest had written upon it many bloody stories - and many heroic stories of enlightenment - and culture, too, in the succeeding years. The nationalistic and vengeful final chapter of the First World War story set the scene, through the Great Depression, for the next story, that of the Second World War.

The writers of the final chapter of *that* story did rather better. Roosevelt offered a vision of the end of empire, and of the beginnings of the United Nations. Schuman wrought the framework of the Coal

³ William Penn, Essai d'un Projet pour rendre La Paix de L'Europe, Sessions, 1986 (first published in 1693?)



and Steel Community, and laid out the structure of the European Economic Community. For the next sixty years, tragedies and wars have battered at the edges of Europe, but the European Union itself has given its citizens a long peace.

Twenty years ago, the Berlin Wall was overthrown, and Francis Fukuyama declared the end of history. No more stories to be written on the palimpsest of Europe. Well, he has retracted now. New stories are being written, and Europe and its institutions remain very relevant to which stories will be written.

Will the next stories be about Fortress Europe? Will they be about the arrival of Nick Griffin and the nationalist right in the European Parliament? Or will they be about tolerant Europe, a Europe which can stand proud in its unity and in its diversity as a beacon of multinational peace and development in a world in the making?

Neither you nor I know the answer to that question. What I do know is that Quakers have not given up pamphleteering and its modern equivalent. They continue to strive to make the positive stories the ones which prevail.

The Quaker Council for European Affairs gives Friends a voice in Europe and in its institutions. QCEA is a still small voice which insists on being heard. In true Quakerly fashion, it redefines its values and objectives from decade to decade, but always with a weighty reflection on how to encourage us to write a joyful and peaceful story on the palimpsest of Europe.

I work on the Horn of Africa. I work on European policy towards Sudan, a country whose Head of State stands accused of heinous crimes, and which is threatened by still further wars as the Darfur conflict abates. I work with European policy towards Somalia, where war is waged between a so-called so-called government and a bunch of bloodthirsty warriors of religion.

I confess that so often it is easier to see 'fighting harder and fighting better' as the solution. "They are wrong so I must win." So I, inside the European Commission, am very, very happy that QCEA's creations such as the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office can speak out for peaceful solutions. That QCEA itself is there to remind me that lasting peace does not come with the last winning bullet, but by victors and vanquished coming slowly together to share each other's pain, each other's stories, so that on their shared palimpsest they can write a story of peace.

The still quiet voice of QCEA keeps reminding us that we all have a choice how history is written. Whether Europe, as it moves to implement the Lisbon Treaty, will be, or will not be, a force for peace. QCEA is going to be needed over the next thirty years precisely because history has not stopped.

Transparent and public advocacy of one's convictions has at least as much to contribute to democracy as has the right to vote every so often. As voting expresses our individual wishes, so QCEA helps to give collective voice to Quakers so that they are heard inside the walls of Parliament, inside the Commission, and inside the Council.

Letters and lobbies are a nuisance for bureaucrats. Their life would be easier but not better were there no letters to reply to and no Parliamentary questions to parry. But without them, the next stories on the European palimpsest might not be the ones which we want our grandchildren to read.

QCEA, please keep irritating us over the next thirty years!

I began this talk by telling you the first reason that it was an honour and a pleasure to be with you as a speaker today because it set me thinking. Let me close by telling you the second and the third reasons why it is a pleasure.

The second reason is that today is a rather special day to celebrate. It's a double birthday because it's United Nations Day. Today we celebrate the anniversary of the Charter of the United Nations, we remember that sixty-four years ago on October the twenty-fourth, the charter entered into force, binding all nations to "save succeeding nations from the scourge of war.....to reaffirm faith in



fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women.....and for these ends to practise tolerance and to live together in peace with one another...”

And the third reason is that today is not only a double but a triple birthday: for the Quaker Council for European Affairs, for the United Nations and for me. That’s why it’s a rather special moment for me, for I cannot think of anything more moving than to stand here with you, guardians of the spirit of QCEA on its birthday, and to stand here with my mother, who sixty years ago today....gave birth to me. Thank you.

QCEA at 30 - then, now and in the future

This is a written version of the talk given by Juliet Prager (Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust) during the celebrations to mark QCEA’s 30th anniversary on 24th October 2009.

The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT) is an endowed Quaker trust, which makes grants to support peace, justice and equality. The Trust works at local and national level in the UK and Ireland, and at pan-European level. Its programmes focus on peace, racial justice, the responsible use of power, and Quaker concerns. At present, JRCT makes grants totalling around five million pounds a year.

Endowed foundations like JRCT have the privilege of being able to take the long view. So, this 30th anniversary celebration offered a great opportunity to dig into the Trust’s files and to think about what has changed, and what has not, since 1979 when JRCT first made a grant to support QCEA.

In 1979 the context was hugely different to 2009. Then, the European Community comprised 9 Member States: now, there are 27. Europe was firmly divided into ‘East’ and ‘West’, and we could barely consider that this might not always be the case. Now, we take free movement between Paris and Prague, or between Düsseldorf and Dresden, for granted. The 1939-45 war had ended 34 years ago - *QCEA has been in existence for nearly that long*. And in 1979, for the first time, directly elected members took their seats in a European Parliament.

Yet, much remains the same. In his original grant application to the Trust, Douglas Sanders writes of hope that the European Community would become ‘an organisation with a human face, a great experiment in international relations, a model for similar groups, and a major factor in the promotion of world peace’. Now, when I visit different parts of Europe I am surprised and heartened by the willingness and warmth of people working to explore and pursue common bonds and goals. We groan - with some justification - about the unwieldy, bureaucratic and expensive European institutions; but optimism for the European project exists in grassroots organisations, NGOs, other foundations, school students and the bureaucrats themselves.

But then, as now, there was also caution, scepticism and lack of understanding. The 1979 grant application had to explain the European Community institutions to people who knew little about them. Throughout Europe, most people still know little about the institutions - even as we edge towards acceptance of the Lisbon Treaty⁴.

⁴ This was written before the Lisbon Treaty was finally ratified on 24th November 2009



Thankfully, we now have organisations like QCEA that not only explain the institutions to ordinary people, but also open channels of communication between the institutions and the people on whose behalf they work.

Some of the practical barriers to genuine partnership that existed in 1979 are still around, even if they have morphed into a different form. In some ways, things have got more challenging, with 27 EU Member States - not to mention 47 members of the Council of Europe, and 56 participating states within the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Language differences and the geographical distance people have to travel to visit and work with each other, set real challenges, and dealing with them costs time and money. There are conflicting political drivers - and, worryingly, we are now facing an upsurge in the activities of far-right political parties.

In 1979 many Friends - and this was expressed particularly clearly by Swedish Quakers - had real and deep concerns about the idea of setting up a Quaker presence in Brussels. They were worried about the growing power of Europe, as a 'rich man's club' which at best took no account of what was then called the third world.

They were right to voice these concerns. We should remember them today. In 2009 we still need to ask ourselves about the right use of resources and the place of Europeans in the wider world. We should still raise questions about representation and participation. We can't and shouldn't speak for the poor; we must stand alongside people in other parts of the world, and find creative ways of doing so.

One significant thing that has changed for QCEA since 1979 is that Scandinavian Friends' resistance has translated into practical and financial support.

In 1979 there were serious questions about whether Quakers should join forces with other Christian representative groups in Brussels. It's my sense that those questions were fairly quickly put to rest - we have our own organisation, and work closely alongside other church groups. In 2009, this debate has been replaced by the question of how we Quakers see ourselves as a faith group in Europe, and our relationship with other faith groups, not least Islam. This is particularly important given the level of Islamophobia in Europe, and intermittent calls for Europe to be Christian.

It is no surprise that the fundamental concerns of the people who set up QCEA have remained essentially the same: peace, justice and equality have underpinned the work throughout the last 30 years. When they were working towards the establishment of QCEA, Brussels Quakers drew up a list of priority issues: fair prices for goods from developing countries, conscientious objection, fair treatment of immigrant workers, unemployment, fair and sustainable sharing of the world's resources, and peace. Now, QCEA prioritises sustainable energy, economic justice, human rights (currently focusing on women in prison) and peace. I look forward to hearing more about the outcome of the current testing of QCEA's potential role in relation to conflict in the Middle East.

So, the underlying values and in some cases the headline issues are the same. We should not be surprised about this: the values are based on and informed by our Quaker faith.

In 1979, the JRCT grant covered about 1/3 of QCEA's full costs. The organisation has grown and is now much more solid, both in its work programme and financially. JRCT contributes a much smaller percentage of the total budget.



Looking back through the papers from 1979 and since then, it is clear that Council members' sense has been: as long as we discern rightly, the money will follow. And, largely, it has!

Yet, it is also noticeable that the papers do not always acknowledge QCEA's supporters - institutional or individual - who have offered their time, skills, or money. I think that is a great shame; because the discernment which goes into those contributions is also an important part of QCEA's story. That discernment helps to underpin and inform what QCEA does.

When grant applications come to JRCT, the Trustees often meet with the applicants to learn more about the proposal before considering it at a Trust meeting. As anyone who has been through one of those meetings will know, JRCT certainly does not 'rubber stamp' applications from QCEA. Trustees have a wide range of skills and perspectives - they have working experience of private business; local, national and European authorities; and charities. They are all Quakers, but while some are active at Yearly Meeting or with other European Friends, others are mainly involved in their local meeting. Collectively, they consider each application with great care, and hope their well-informed discernment as well as their money offers something to the applicants.

Back in 1979, Trustees decided to offer a first grant to QCEA. The grant offer letter contained some interesting messages.

First, Trustees hoped that very careful thought would be given to the management of the project. Then, they hoped that members of QCEA would consider the wider aspects of the hesitations expressed by Scandinavian Friends. And finally, the letter explained, JRCT did not anticipate funding QCEA in the longer term.

Underlying these messages is a sense that JRCT Trustees wanted to encourage Quakers throughout Europe to genuinely 'own' QCEA. And, actually, JRCT has been asking the same questions during the last 30 years. Now, just as in 1979, it's important to ask how that ownership can be strengthened. Ownership means several things, including financial support! I do not underestimate the challenge, but I know that the people steering QCEA now are facing that challenge seriously and well.

QCEA has a commendable story, and it's been good during this celebration to mark the contribution of so many Representatives, Programme Assistants and others. I think QCEA is in a great state at the moment. Liz and Martina are wonderful Representatives, and the organisation is doing good, influential work. This is real Quaker witness. Of course there are still uncertainties, and things may not always be easy, but we wish you very well as you keep asking the questions you need to explore, exploring the issues that have to be faced, and discerning the best way forward.

Celebrating the Contribution of Programme Assistants

As part of the celebrations, QCEA Representatives Liz Scurfield and Martina Weitsch presented the findings of their research into the contribution of Programme Assistants to QCEA over the last 30 years. This research has been published on the QCEA website and is available here: <http://www.quaker.org/qcea/publications/Celebrating%20the%20Contribution%20of%20Programme%20Assistants%20final.pdf>. What follows is a summary of some key findings.

Whilst we may not have an exhaustive list of all the people who have served QCEA in the capacity of what has been variously called Volunteer, Programme Assistant, Junior Programme Assistant, and Researcher, we are certain that up to and including 2008 there have been at least 59 people who



contributed between 6 months and 4 years to QCEA's work. We have contact details for 81% of them - a sign that their continued interest in the organisation is long-lasting. 54% of them (or 67% of those we have contact details for) responded to our research questionnaire.

What we found:

- Just over 66% have been women.
- The majority spent between 10 and 12 months with QCEA.
- The majority gained experience in putting together *Around Europe*, running the Study Tour, and organising conferences. Nearly half were able to support EMEYF in the role of secretary and a third gained experience in managing the website.
- The thematic focus of their work was Peace (40%), Economic Justice (26%), Human Rights (21%) and other (13%).
- The majority had some connections with Quakers before coming to work with QCEA, but not all of them did.
- The vast majority felt closer to Quakers/Quakerism at the end of their time with QCEA than before and for nearly half this has led to continuing involvement with Quakers in some way.
- The range of things they have gone on to do is very wide - but the majority said that they had been able to draw on the skills and experience gained at QCEA.

Asked to rate the overall experience of working with QCEA on a scale out of 10 (with 10 being the best and 1 being the worst score), 75% rated this at 8 or above.



Former Programme Assistants meeting after a long gap at the 30th celebrations: Lia Visser, Sally Sadler, Bronwen Smith-Thomas, Lorenz Vogel, Catherine Marsden, Hans Weening, Judith Kirton-Darling, Anna Traylor

Photo: QCEA



The purpose of doing this survey was to get a feel for the impact QCEA has had on the professional and personal lives of our many Programme Assistants and to reflect the significant impact they have had on QCEA. Without their contribution it would not have been possible to run Study Tours every year (and until 2003 twice a year); it would not have been possible to produce the significant volume of publications and the large portfolio of solid research; it would not have been possible to make some of the key impacts we have made - on issues such as conscientious objection, criminal justice, peacebuilding (including the contribution that QCEA made in the early days to the establishment of the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office) among others. The website would not have been developed and improved several times; *Around Europe*, QCEA's monthly newsletter would not have continued consistently, reaching its 300th edition in March 2008. QCEA would not have been able to maintain the secretariat for the Europe and Middle East Section of Young Friends, a source of Quaker work and Quaker outreach among younger people in many countries. This short paper celebrates all this and more. There is no question that the role of Programme Assistants is a win-win situation for all those involved and for QCEA as an organisation. We recognise this here with gratitude.

After 30 years - a new Vision

QCEA has published a short document called 'A Quaker Vision of Europe' several times. This tries to encapsulate the vision which underlies the work we do and like other Quaker material, this needs revision from time to time to reflect the ongoing development of our thinking and experience. The 30th anniversary was an opportunity to refocus and reframe this document. It has been published in English and will be published in German and Dutch in early 2010. The French version will follow in the spring of 2010. Here, we reproduce the text in English:

A Quaker Vision of Europe

As members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), one of the peace churches, we believe in that of God in everyone. We believe in non-violent approaches to conflict resolution, in the intrinsic equality of all people everywhere, and in a sustainable way of life for everyone that the one earth we share can support.

On the basis of these fundamental beliefs, QCEA makes representations on behalf of European Quakers to those in decision-making roles on issues relating to:

- Peace
- Human Rights
- Economic Justice
- Democratic Governance
- Sustainable Energy Security

QCEA calls on the European Union (EU) and the Council of Europe to contribute to a Europe which is peaceful, compassionate, open and just in its dealings among the Member States as well as with the countries and peoples beyond their boundaries

Peace

QCEA celebrates the successful peace project that the EU and the Council of Europe have become.



QCEA calls on the EU to maintain its emphasis on peace and to build its external actions and foreign policy on the basis of non-military and non-violent approaches.

To that end we call for sustainable, appropriately funded, conflict-sensitive approaches to policies relating to all countries within or beyond the boundaries of Europe.

QCEA calls upon the EU to act on the understanding that sustainable peace within countries and between neighbouring countries is fundamental to any further accession.

Human Rights

QCEA celebrates the progress made by the Council of Europe and the EU in the area of human rights. The European Convention on Human Rights, the European Court of Human Rights and the Charter of Fundamental Rights are all milestones for Europe.

QCEA calls on all the European Institutions to follow these achievements with compassionate and just policies on asylum and migration, recognising that the political, economic and social circumstances that lead people to leave their homes have some of their causes in the wealth of rich countries in Europe and elsewhere.

QCEA calls on the EU to frame its future policies on criminal justice and its responses to threats of terrorism in a human rights context, thus focusing on the elimination of the causes of criminality and terrorism. QCEA believes that if we speak directly to the best in people, their best nature has a chance to respond.

Economic Justice

QCEA celebrates the achievements of the EU in bringing about prosperity for its people, in showing solidarity with those Member States that started from a lower economic base and in providing resources to non-member countries for their development.

QCEA calls upon the EU to maintain its approach of solidarity among the people and peoples of the Member States even when the global economy and the widening inequalities in a growing EU stretch solidarity to its limits.

QCEA calls upon the EU and its Member States to show solidarity beyond the boundaries of Europe, not to become protectionist and inward-looking, and to ensure that the resources it provides contribute to peace and sustainability.

Sustainable Energy Security

QCEA celebrates the leadership that the EU has shown in the context of the Kyoto Protocol and CO₂ emissions. But much more has to be done.

QCEA calls upon the EU to accept its responsibility for and to acknowledge its dependence on the environment and to recognize that an essential factor in promoting energy security for all peoples is for those of us who use more than our fair share to reduce our demand.

QCEA calls upon the EU to ensure that it does not neglect its responsibility for human rights worldwide in sourcing its energy.



Democratic Governance

QCEA celebrates the work being done by both the Council of Europe and the EU to bring about democracy within their borders and to support and encourage it beyond them.

QCEA calls upon the Institutions and Member States to become more transparent, accountable and responsive to their own citizens by ensuring that information is readily accessible. This would enable citizens to find out about the actions and policies of the Institutions and to participate in the decision-making process.

QCEA calls upon the Institutions to ensure that their relationships with other countries can be shown to be based on respect for democracy and human rights.

QCEA calls upon the Member States to accept the cost of the European project, to communicate the reasons for this to their citizens, and to provide appropriate resources at the European level.

QCEA calls upon the Member States to ensure that resources available for external actions and foreign policy match the expectations of the EU as a global actor. Those resources must be focused on peace, democracy and human rights for the peoples of the world rather than on narrow and short-term economic objectives of European and other governments.

This statement was agreed by the Quaker Council for European Affairs in September 2009. QCEA represents Quakers in the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom and through the Europe and Middle East Section of Friends World Committee for Consultation in: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Dubai, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, and Spain.



Treasurer's Report

QCEA has had another successful year in 2009. The deficit forecast last year is not, at € 11,145, a cause for alarm. However, our various funds have contributed very differently to this net result.

The separately-funded refurbishment of Quaker House has made a promising start. The cost in 2009 of € 80,615 was more than covered by receipts. These included grant aid from Brussels Region and bank interest. We are most grateful for a generous donation of € 78,570 from Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM), owners of the building, which is also to contribute to improvements yet to come. There was again a substantial surplus from hirings of Quaker House, for which we thank Xavier Verhaeghe.

The Wiles fund supported work on sustainable energy security at a net cost of € 61,898. Our consolidation work on economic justice was paid from the Marmotte fund, net cost € 2,531. All our other work was financed by the general fund, accounting for the remaining € 219,922 of expenditure.

After allowing for the other funds, the general fund income was € 198,704.

Subscriptions to *Around Europe* and from Associate and Supporting Members have tended to decrease over several years but suffered a sharp fall of 39% from 2008 to 2009. This is sad both from a monetary point of view and as an indication of decline in the interest of individuals and meetings in news from Quaker House. I would ask readers of this report to encourage those around them to take up subscriptions, details of which can be found on the QCEA website. If already a subscriber, please do not forget to renew!

Donations from Quakers were 5% higher in 2009 than in 2008. In cash terms, this increase more than counterbalances the drop in subscriptions. Some Yearly Meetings found it difficult to maintain their level of support in 2009; we hope they may be better placed in future and thank all for contributing what they could.

The income from trusts, some project-related and some core funding, was € 49,403. Of this € 43,320 represents the core grant received from JRCT, stalwart supporters of QCEA from its inception. This is 87% of funding from trusts for the year, a somewhat higher percentage than in previous years. The figure is distorted by the fact that one grant intended for 2009 arrived after the year end and will therefore show in the 2010 accounts.

I would like to thank particularly our Joint Representatives for their hard work, making good use of QCEA's resources. From the rest of this report you can see that much has been accomplished.

Finally, I wish to thank Friends everywhere for their ongoing support. We rely on it, and will need it all the more in 2010 and beyond, to continue to address the challenges we have taken up in the areas of human rights, peace and economic justice.

Tom Heydeman
Treasurer

**Statement of Income and Expenditure**

	2009	2008
Income		
Study Tour	1,742	11,050
Project related income	5,335	8,674
Associate Members Conference	32	16,589
Hirings	21,990	31,483
Subscriptions - Around Europe	1,330	2,472
Associate Members	2,520	3,410
Supporting Members	1,513	2,841
Donations - British Friends	67,454	66,432
Donations - Netherlands Friends	36,250	36,240
Donations - German Friends	13,155	5,000
Donations - Swiss Friends	1,968	1,845
Donations - Belgium and Luxembourg Friends	1,200	2,200
Donations - French Friends		1,543
Donations - Swedish Friends	1,071	2,106
Donations - Irish Friends	1,230	3,884
Donations - Danish Friends	268	268
Donations - Norwegian Friends	574	330
Donations - other Friends	3,499	1,005
Trusts and Foundations	44,403	58,803
Other donations	242	223,744
Donations for Quaker House from BYM		8,439
Donations for Quaker House from Brussels Region	57,027	0
Insurance claims received	321	0
Office Reimbursements	2,565	3,828
Travel Reimbursements	2,668	665
Renovations Reimbursements from BYM	78,570	
Interest	16,673	10,905
Total Income	363,601	503,755



Statement of Income and Expenditure (cont'd)

	2009	2008
Expenditure		
Project Expenditure - direct	17,044	21,848
Printing and Mailing Publications	6,595	6,735
Quaker House Renovations	80,615	8,157
Quaker House Costs	22,111	21,463
Office Costs	28,782	31,436
Council Meetings	6,007	2,827
Staff Costs		
Travel Costs	7,229	5,686
Staff Salary and Social Charges	161,559	137,427
Other Staff Costs, Training Costs and Fees	37,472	36,704
Taxes	2,958	3,412
Financial Charges	134	1,172
Depreciation	4,242	4,242
Total Expenditure	374,746	281,109
Balance of Income over Expenditure	-11,145	222,646



Balance Sheet

ACTIF (Assets)	2009	2008	PASSIF (Liabilities)	2009	2008
ACTIF Immobilisés (Fixed Assets)			Patrimoine (au 31.12.2006)	219,676	219,676
Matériel Informatique (Computers)	€4,483	€8,725	Bénéfice Reporté (surplus: prior years)	255,441	255,441
ACTIF Circulants (Current Assets)			Résultat Période en cours (2009 deficit)	-11,145	0
Créances (Claims)	€300	€582	Patrimoine total (au 31.12.2009)	463,972	475,117
Placements de Trésorerie (Treasury Position)			Allocated to following reserves:		
Fortis	€2,952	€8,129	General Reserve	75,302	96,520
Triodos	€326,870	€113,344	Designated Reserves		
Triodos (fixed term)	€86,194	€355,917	House Reserve	171,638	97,136
Banque de la Poste	€70,280	€15,417	Marmotte Fund	21,558	24,090
Caisse (petty cash)	€412	€1,052	Wiles Fund	130,473	192,371
Total Placements de Trésorerie	€486,708	€493,859	Cash Flow Reserve	65,000	65,000
			Total Designated Reserves	388,670	378,597
			Total Reserves (=Patrimoine Total)	463,972	475,117
Comptes de régularisation			Dettes (liabilities)		
(prepayments and accrued income)		€0	Factures à recevoir (Suppliers)	478	1,132
			Précompte Professionnel (income tax)	1,041	400
			ONSS (employer's social charges)	6,146	6,703
			Provision Pécules de vacances (reserve for holiday bonus)	19,814	19,814
			Comptes de régulation (produits à reporter)	40	0
Total Actif	€491,491	€503,166	Total Passif	491,491	503,166

Not included in the figures above are: Funds held by the QCEA British Committee as at 31.12.2009 (€ 80 894); funds held by VVQREA as at 31.12.2009 (€ 569 061); both these sums are for the benefit of QCEA but managed by independent charities in the UK and the Netherlands respectively; funds held by QCEA on behalf of EMEYF as at 31.12.2009 (€ 3170)



QCEA People in 2009

Council Members 2009

Clerk	Richard Condon
Assistant Clerk	Jethro Zevenbergen
Treasurer	Tom Heydeman
Member of Bureau	Dieter Hartwich
Member of Bureau	Noël Purcell O'Byrne
Belgium and Luxembourg MM	Florence Berteletti-Kemp
Britain YM	Tom Heydeman
Denmark YM	Hans Aaen
France YM	Phillip Spencer
German YM	Lucinda Martin
Ireland YM	Margrit E. Grey
Netherlands YM	Peter Spreij
Norway YM	Penny Heymans
Sweden YM	Annika Hollsing
Switzerland YM	Derek Brett
FWCC/EMES	Marisa Johnson
FWCC/EMEYF	Julian Weinberg
QCEA British Committee	William Waddilove
VVQREA	Peter van Leeuwen (from October 2009)

Committees

Bureau

Richard Condon, Clerk
Jethro Zevenbergen, Assistant Clerk
Tom Heydeman, Treasurer
Hennie Jansen
Dieter Hartwich
Noël Purcell O'Byrne

Finance Committee

Neithard Petry, Clerk
Tom Heydeman, Treasurer
Hennie Jansen, Treasurer, VVQREA
Marilyn Miles, Treasurer, QCEA-BC
Daphne Wassermann

Nominations Committee

Lucinda Martin, Clerk
Sue Glover Frykman
Anita Wuyts (to October 2009)

Myfanwy Thomas
Julian Weinberg

Staff Team

Neil Endicott, Policy Officer
Simone Görtz, Programme Assistant (from October 2009)
Stephen Hynd, Programme Assistant (to September 2009)
Faye Morten, Programme Assistant (to August 2009)
Marzia Risucci, Erasmus Student (from October 2009)
Sonja Schindelbeck, Programme Assistant (from October 2009)
Liz Scurfield, Representative
Xavier Verhaeghe, Office Manager
Martina Weitsch, Representative
Any Whitehouse, Programme Assistant (to August 2009)



17 December 2009 - Brussels: QCEA staff clearing snow

Photo: QCEA

Peace cannot be kept by force, only by understanding.

Albert Einstein

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

Martin Luther King

We who love peace will have the last word.

Forgiving is a decision you make for the sake of the future.

Jacinta Makokha, Executive Director of CAPI (Change Agents for Peace International)

Quaker Council for European Affairs Aisbl

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