

EMEYF Annual Meeting (AM)

**Quaker House, Brussels, Belgium**  
**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2011**

**Present:** Tonje Hundevadt, Esther Koehring, Wanda Dahme, Laurina Pfeiffer, Leo Vincent, Hannah Slater, Kristen Skarsholt, Vivian Barty-Taylor, Marielke Nieuwerth van den Akker. John Nicholls, Paul Sladen, Samuli Huusko

**Greetings:** Jonathan Riddell, Matt Loffman, Callum Shaw, Julia Ryberg, Ian Gobham, Catherine Skargold, Martin Spreij.

-----

**AM 11/01 Welcome**

We are grateful to be together in QCEA's magnificently refurbished Quaker House in Brussels. We look forward to a productive weekend under the watchful eye of colourful wallpapers and mysterious light switches and welcome everyone present.

**AM 11/02 Practicalities**

Hannah Slater took us through the practicalities of living in Quaker House. Leo and Kristin have briefly introduced the nominations process and the importance of clear communication.

**AM 11/03 Nominations Committee**

We appoint to nomination committee for the duration of Annual Meeting 2011 the following people:

- o Leo Vincent
- o Vivian Barty Taylor - Subject to consent BC
- o Laurina Pfeiffer
- o Esther Koehring

We wish them well in their deliberation of the following roles:

- 1 Elder
- 1 Consolidating Treasurer
- 1 Charitable Committee Treasurer
- 2 Members of Spring Gathering Planning Committee 2013

### **AM 11/04 Location of Spring Gathering 2013**

We have considered where to hold Spring Gathering 2013, the main event of EMEYF's annual activities. Sitting in the inspiration of the Margaret Fell room, we agree to hold Spring Gather 2013 in Britain, with suggestions of Swarthmore Hall and Pardshaw having been made. We are coming up to EMEYF's own 30th anniversary and it would be inspirational to hold EMEYF Spring Gathering where Quakerism began. We hope to re-enforce the connection with British Young Friends.

We ask Nominations Committee to find two, or three names to help start organising the event.

### **AM 11/05 Spring Gathering 2012 Progress Report**

We have heard an update from the Spring Gathering 2012 planning committee. The gathering will start on 6 April 2012 to 13 April 2012 in a small village outside of Dresden, Germany, near to the Czech order. We note that the Spring Gathering is just after the German Young Friends' gathering, and just before the World Conference in Kenya. We hope that connections can be formed between these events.

The venue has space for up to 30 Young Friends and the theme that has been chosen is of "Encouraging Community." We uphold the committee in their work, and look forward to a successful and rewarding gathering in 2012.

### **AM 11/06 Accounts to Date**

Jonathan Riddell has not been able to join us in Brussels and has instead sent consolidated accounts to date. These include the initial payments of the latest grant from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, and a donation from Sweden Yearly Meeting. We also heard from German Young Friends about the transfer of their donation.

In reviewing these accounts we have struggled with not being able to have the personal input of the treasurer. The largest turnover of donations this year was made around the fund-raiser for the Joint Gathering in 2011. A large amount of the surplus has been transferred to the John Warder Fund and is intended for use towards helping young and isolated Friends attend gatherings, as agreed with EMES. This sum does not appear in our accounts for 2011. We are grateful for those organisations that responded to the specific funding request and note the larger donations in response to our fundraising effort.

We ask the EMEYF Charitable Committee Trustees to investigate access methods to the UK account. We recommend that it would be possible for more than one person to have access.

We ask Jonathan Riddell to add clarification at the point of handover to the new consolidating treasurer. The queries raised<sup>1</sup> will need to be addressed before the accounts can be audited and made available in EMEYF's Annual Report.

### **AM 11/07 Budget for 2012**

Jonathan Riddell has proposed that our budget for 2012 be closely based on our budget for 2011. We note that as presented this does not include funding for sustainable travel or a budget for offering training to new post-holders.

We ask our consolidating treasurer to investigate adding these with corresponding sources of income.

### **AM 11/08 Outreach/National contact people**

Marielke Nieuwerth- van den Akker has noted that in the past we used to start our meetings with the reports from National Contact People. We miss this level of close contact.

In addition to asking Yearly Meetings at a national level, in future we hope to ask Young Friends organisations to make their own nominations directly. We are aware of three large groups of organised young friends: German Young Friends, Irish Young Friends, Young Friends General Meeting (YFGM) in Britain. German Yearly Meeting have already reserved budget for two representatives and we hope to remind German Young Friends and others to nominate representatives to EMEYF. We ask our Secretary to draft a proposal with the help of CC and align with the Outreach committee appointed at SG2011.

### **AM 11/09 Companionship Programme**

EMES have a Ministry and Outreach officer to provide isolated friends with a link person on their spiritual journey.

Leo Vincent has been working with Julia Ryberg in preparing materials for a companionship programme. Leo introduced the possibility of what changes might be necessary to make it work for young friends, such as between a group of friends or having a longer period of contact with a companion. Ultimately, we would like to encourage those people to attend some of our gatherings or an online meeting for worship.

Young Friends interested in being companions should contact Leo or the Secretary.

### **AM 11/10 Future of EMEYF Summer Gatherings**

---

<sup>1</sup> See Queries for Consolidating Treasurer in notes at the end of these minutes

Marielke Nieuwerth van den Akken spoke passionately about the summer gatherings in France in 2001 and in Norway in 2008. These events provide another opportunity for EMEYF to meet during a different part of the year. For some friends, this may be their only opportunity to attend a longer EMEYF gathering.

Summer Gatherings can be diverse and offer a wider experience to our other Gatherings, allowing us to connect in a different way and explore and continue our journey as a community. It has been suggested that we could organise an event during Summer 2012 as a follow-up to the World Conference. We ask Friends to consider the possibilities of a Summer Gathering, what form and shape it could take and what service friends might offer in helping to enable this extra dimension to the EMEYF community.

### **AM 11/11 Summer 2015 Reunion possibility**

There has been the possibility raised around our 30th anniversary year in Summer 2015 being celebrated with a Summer reunion. This could be an all-age event providing a space for other former EMEYFers, and their families. We have already received an offer from a Dutch Friend, and first EMEYF clerk, involved with the beginnings of EMEYF to assist with organising such an event. We ask Marielke to continue facilitating investigation of this possibility and report back to Spring Gathering 2012.

### **AM 11/12 QCEA Representatives' report**

We have received a QCEA representative's report from Matt Loffman. We attach this report to the minutes. We thank Matt Loffman for his ongoing contribution to this role.

### **AM 11/13 Elders' report**

Marielke Nieuwerth van den Akken and Leo Vincent have provided a written report, in addition to their spoken highlights of the year, including the joint Gathering with EMES. We attach their report to the minutes. We thank our Elders for their care in both the stewardship of EMEYF and the pastoral care of young friends across Europe.

### **AM 11/14 Secretary's Report**

John Nicholls as the outgoing EMEYF Secretary, having left QCEA in October 2011, gave a report of his activities in 2011. This period of time included the production of the Annual Report, attending Communication Committee in London and the joint Gathering with EMES. Further details can be found in the report attached to these minutes.

Hannah Slater, our new Secretary spoke of the value of getting to meet members of EMEYF and is looking forward to her QCEA and EMEYF role. We look forward to getting to know Hannah further and wish her all the best in the year ahead.

### **AM 11/15 Gatherings Coordinator Report**

Kristin listed the gatherings that have happened and that are in progress, giving a positive outlook. Friends may wish to read more about these events in the Gathering's Coordinator's Report.

### **AM 11/16 Nominations Returns**

We thank the concentrated and careful discernment of our Nominations Committee during the weekend. The following appointments have been made:

#### Spring Gathering Planning Committee 2013

Ben Jarman  
Miranda Barty-Taylor  
Laurina Pfeiffer

#### Elder

Esther Koehring for a period of 3 years until Annual meeting 2014

#### Consolidating Treasurer

Theo Wieldraaijer for a period of 1 year until Annual Meeting 2012

Unfortunately we have been unable to come forward with a name of a UK-based Friend for the role of Treasurer to the Charitable Committee at this time. We ask Jonathan Riddell (subject to consent) to stay on in the role of UK Treasurer until such a time as the post can be fulfilled. We ask the Trustees and Communications Committee to consider possible names and forward these to Spring Gathering 2012.

We also ask Spring Gathering 2012 to consider names for Recording Clerk at Annual Meeting 2012.

FWCC's nomination committee have requested suggestions of names for an additional Young Adult Friend Committee representative. As we were only a small group gathered here this weekend, we ask our Secretary to send out a wider communication to the whole of EMEYF with details of the requirements, so that CC may forward suggestions.

We thank all those out-going post-holders for their terms of service.

## **AM 11/17 Annual Meeting 2012**

We expect Annual Meeting to be held in Bad Pyrmont, Germany during November 2012. We ask our Secretary to find a weekend that fits around other Quaker events happening during the same month and then to finalise the dates with Communications Committee. We warmly look forward to seeing friends there.

## **AM 11/18 Closing Minute**

We thank all those that have contributed to our weekend here in Brussels. We particularly thank Hannah Slater for taking of the logistics and catering, and the staff at QCEA for their hospitality.

We have had pleasant weekend, sampling Belgian waffles, and working it off afterwards by running back in time for sessions. We have enjoyed jumping out in the park to get the blood flowing and repeated games of "Unable, Unwilling," a far too realistic game about the Quaker Nominations process.

We enjoyed the opportunity to meet with and worship with Belgian Friends on Sunday morning.

We have been joined by Friends from Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Finland and Britain with the opportunity to speak many exotic languages, both in Quaker House and with those we've met. We look forward to continuing our f/Friendships in the year ahead, and look forward to meeting again in 2012.

## **Notes**

### **Queries for Consolidating Treasurer**

Q: JRCT exchange rate differences

Q: YFGM grant / Spring Gathering mix up

N: Attendees have not claimed all of their travel expenses

Q: Budget for QCEA rep

Q: 58.88 CC meeting budget accommodation

Q: Which local meetings have made donations?

Q: Access to the bank accounts. Cut and dry method so that this doesn't happen again. May be a case for re-examining the way in which we handle our accounts. May we should ensure that we still have access to the British Account. Internet banking exists. Codes for managing the British Account?

Q: Examiner for UK-accounts for 2010

Q: Examiner for the consolidated accounts

P: EMES Folder from Anneke to

P: Follow up to those donators from Spring Gathering 2011, and contact again for 2012

## **EMEYF Representative to QCEA Report 2011**

Dear Friends,

It has been a busy year at QCEA with plenty of hard work in the major project areas. This year is also one where young Friends have an opportunity to increase their participation in QCEA activities.

Our former secretary, John Nicholls, made real progress in examining some of the issues surrounding the Palestine-Israel conflict from a European Union (EU) perspective, publishing a number of briefing and discussion papers. Young Friends are invited to read these informative, carefully-researched papers to gain an understanding of how the conflict fits into the EU – the role our representatives have in the conflict and some of the actions others in Europe have taken, either to create pressure for peace or take a stand against injustice. This conflict is happening now, affecting millions of people including Friends. As Quakers we are called to action and Friends are encouraged to educate themselves as to what action is appropriate for them.

In criminal justice issues, a new policy report was published in May that made recommendations to the European institutions regarding the re-integration of ex-prisoners. This area of human rights is one where Quakers have considerable expertise. Considering that the majority of offenders that enter prison will re-enter society at a later date, the paper examines how member states can improve their handling of offenders both inside prison and when they are released. Advocacy work on reintegration, alongside the development of alternatives to imprisonment, continues.

Energy sustainability work continues where QCEA has been advocating for more limited energy consumption within the EU. QCEA are pressing for binding energy efficiency targets to ensure that governments and businesses continue to operate sustainably and with future generations in mind. Young Friends are encouraged to seek ways to limit their own energy demand – fact sheets looking at the environmental costs of flying and meat consumption are available on the QCEA Website.

There are a number of ways young Friends can get involved in the activities of QCEA and contribute to the representation of Quaker interests at the EU level. By signing up to QCEA Action Alerts (click 'Get Involved' on the QCEA Homepage), Friends receive a message advising of an easy way to take part in supporting QCEA policy objectives. Small actions, such as writing a letter to your MEP or a member of the European Commission, can make a real difference in some of their decision-making processes, particularly where public consultation is taking place.

Young Friends are also encouraged to consider taking up posts as Programme Assistants at QCEA. The role offers excellent experience of the European institutions and exposure to the policy-making process.

Finally, Liz Scurfield and Martina Weitsch, Joint Representatives of QCEA, are stepping down in autumn 2012 after many years of dedicated service. Young Friends are invited to consider if they or someone they are aware of may have the necessary skills to be a new Representative. Further details are available on the QCEA Website.

It has been a positive and informative year as EMEYF Representative to the QCEA and I look forward to continue to strengthen the connections between EMEYF and QCEA next year.

In Friendship,

Matt Loffman  
*EMEYF Representative to the QCEA*

## EMEYF Secretary Report 2011

I look back at the end of a full and busy year as EMEYF Secretary with gratitude for the experiences I have gained and for the help of those I have met along the way. I was new to EMEYF when I began the Secretary position, but easily found my footing thanks to a clear handover from the previous Secretary Joe Casey and a warm welcome at my first EMEYF event - the Annual Meeting 2010 in Bad Pyrmont, Germany.

At Annual Meeting, I met a few familiar faces as well as many new ones, and was pleased that the catering arrangements that I was responsible for went smoothly. I thank Leonie Glahn for her warm hospitality and invaluable help at the lovely Quakerhäus. As 2010 came to an end, I finalised the euro accounts with the help of Xavier Verhaeghe, the Office Manager at QCEA, and sent them to our treasurer Jonathan Riddell. His cooperation and willingness to answer questions over the course of the year has been much appreciated. I was also very pleased to hear that our grant application to the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust had been successful. I know EMEYF as a whole is extremely grateful for this contribution that will help secure our work financially for the coming years.

Moving forward to the spring, I attended the Communications Committee meeting in London that was well hosted by Leo Vincent and Friends at Forest Hill Meeting. We had a productive weekend and it was good to see other committee members again and get to know them a little better. I presented my draft version of the Annual Report after collating contributions from EMEYF post-holders, and received valuable input that allowed me to finalise and print it in the weeks that followed.

It wasn't long before Easter was upon us and I was travelling to Herzberg in Switzerland for the EMES-EMEYF Joint Gathering. In my EMEYF Secretary capacity (I also gave a presentation on my programme work at QCEA during the event), I helped with the EMEYF business sessions. I presented the EMEYF Annual Report 2010 to the gathering as a whole, and enjoyed singing a round of our Spring Gathering 2010 epistle song on the last evening. Special thanks should go to the Spring Gathering Planning Committee for all of their hard work in making the event a success. A number of Young Friends who were at an EMEYF event for the first time told me they really enjoyed the gathering, and hope to come to further events in the future. I also appreciated the joint aspect of the gathering, which gave the opportunity to meet and discuss with many Friends from the Section as a whole, as well as Friends from other parts of the world attending as part of the International Planning Committee for the World Conference of Friends in Kenya in April 2012. This was a real pleasure, and gave me a sense of both the global diversity among Friends and the core values that bring us together.

As the year went on, my contact with others involved in EMEYF continued electronically, through emails and Skype calls with Communications Committee (CC) members, and correspondence with a number of Young Friends from the Section and across the world. I always enjoyed this contact as it reminded me of the wider community I was helping to serve over the course of the year. I am also very grateful for having regular contact calls with CC members to discuss work progress and upcoming priorities. This gave a good sense of direction to the Secretary's work, and I strongly hope this continues in the future. An additional note of thanks should go to Marisa Johnson the EMES Executive Secretary. She has been a real help to me over the course of the year and I have greatly valued our contact.

As my year approached its end, I made preparations for the 2011 Annual Meeting in Brussels. I composed and sent out an invitation, and dealt with correspondence, registration and practical arrangements that will be finalised by the new Secretary. The QCEA Representatives were helpful in offering advice and recommendations in this regard. I also was pleased to note that the EMEYF/QCEA contract was finalised during the course of my year, and will be signed in

person at the Annual Meeting. I hope EMEYF and QCEA can maintain a positive relationship that will richly benefit both organisations for the future.

I look forward to attending the Annual Meeting in Brussels as an EMEYF participant, after a rewarding year serving as Secretary. I hope EMEYF can continue reaching out to Young Friends across the Section and provide the community that I have enjoyed being part of over the last twelve months.

John Nicholls

*EMEYF Secretary - October 2010 to October 2011*