

QPSW Spring Conference 2019
Journeys of Witness.
22-24th March 2019.
Hayes Conference Centre Swanwick, Derbyshire.

A Brief Report of a full and active weekend.

Geographical Exercise.

This was a national conference and started with a geographical exercise . All the delegates took part in this ice breaker exercise, more than one hundred delegates filled the floor, communication and togetherness was the key. People from all over the United Kingdom formed a people map encompassing the UK. This says so much about who we are and how Quakers have stood the test of time, now and always.

Key Note Speech presented by Nim Njuguna.

Nim used the core message taken from Q.Faith and Practice 8-11.

Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee works for Britain's Yearly Meeting to translate our faith into action. As Quakers We are impelled by our faith to make our lives an active witness for peace and justice. Our historic testimonies to equalities, justice, peace, simplicity and truth challenge us to alleviate suffering and seek positive social change . The committee aims to ensure that its work is clearly rooted in Quaker values....

Workshops:

I inform you of the list of interesting workshops that delegates were asked to participate in over the conference main days of Saturday and Sunday.

A: Climate justice activism, where do we start?

B; How Can we teach peace ?

C: Making change happen in occupied Palestine:

D : Meet the Peace workers.

E: Quaker Conciliation: how we do it .

F : Taking action for peace.

G. Transforming crime, community and justice.

All the workshops listed give a flavour of the conference core theme being Journey of Witness ,Peace and Justice, truth being at the heart of who we are, and what we all work towards.

I Chose C: Making Change Happen In Occupied Palestine.

The delegates present were given a presentation on the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel.

This is an important and valued long established Quaker service enabling Palestinian people in the West Bank more safety and personal security just living their daily lives. This also includes marginalized Israeli peace groups. Both need EAPPI to monitor and bear witness to the Israeli occupation that is often draconian and heartless.

The presence of committed Quakers continues to ensure as much as possible that non violence and principled, protective impartiality takes place at check points and when house demolishments take place. I have a great respect for all who commit to accepting this journey of witness in the West Bank of Palestine.

Please view *eyewitnesspalestine.org* to understand how the long term effects of this illegal occupation affect the well being of all who live in their homeland that is Palestine.

And also *Breaking the Silence*. Many young and old Palestinians (but not all) have lost hope of ever being free and able to live a full and productive life.

Quaker Witness was the Conference theme throughout and I was very encouraged and privileged to be present and part of such a large gathering of like minded **Friends**.

I have tried to set the scene on how we view the world as Friends, and in particular as a Quaker peace and social witness delegate how to enact peace and conciliation as addressed in Quaker Faith and Practice Eight - Eleven (8 -11)

To end please check out the film www.war.school

The film War School is available from the London office and is a reminder why World War One and Two, Quakers who became conscientious objectors were so vilified(which press censorship help encourage). Only later did people realise the horrors of war.

Lastly I would to thank Claire Wood and her QPSW team who were responsible for the organization of this successful conference at Swanick ..

John Morgan (Nether Edge Local meeting QPSW delegate for Sheffield and Balby AM.)