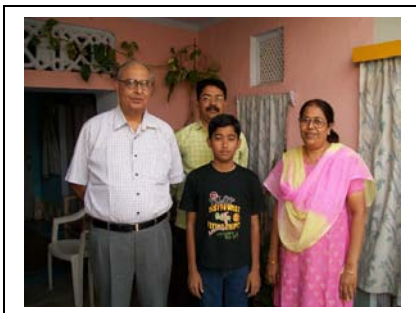




Clerk Dilawar Chetsingh, email: chet@airtelmail.in
 Secretary Valerie Joy, email Valerie@fwccawps.org
 PO Box 6297 Upper Mt Gravatt, 4122, Australia
 Treasurer Topsy Evans, email em502752@a1.com.au
 Website: <http://www.fwccawps.org>

December 2009

Issue No 84



Friends meet in Chhatarpur to plan the 5th AWPS All India Friends Gathering.

CONTENTS:

3: Editorial	Quaker Studies 11;
4: AWPS 2009 Essay; 5 th All India Friends Gathering; GCFI pp 4-6	11-12 Epistle from Netherlands YM
6-7 News of Friends; QUNO York Report	12-14 Global Change Section
8-9 Korea to welcome WCC	14-17 Friends Peace Teams Indonesia initiative
9-10 Korea's TRC; Friends to visit Korea in May 2010	17-18 AWPS Treasurer's Report; 19-20 Australian Quaker Centre

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;

December 2009

Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken up into
fragments by narrow domestic walls;
Where words come out from the depth of
truth;
Where tireless striving stretches its arms
towards perfection;
Where the clear stream of reason has not
lost its way into the dreary desert sand of
dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward by thee into
ever-widening thought and action-
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let
my country awake.

Rabindranath Tagore



Tapestry by Etsuko Yoshino
A member of Mito monthly meeting, Ibaraki Japan

"Dear God, when I am wrong, please make me willing to see my mistake. And when I am right - please make me tolerable to live with." Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Nobel Prize winner

Editorial:

Friends, “Living our Faith”, or “Faith and Action” inspired by James 2: 14-17, is a powerful message for Quakers today. Faith and Action are strong channels, through which the Holy Spirit brings us closer to God. Parker J. Palmer in “The Active Life”¹ cautions against allowing our action to become “re-action”, blindly and anxiously carrying out activities, in a state of high tension. Action, he argues, needs to come from a source of who we are and what we have discerned we are meant to do. Action comes from a place of exuberance and vitality, inner freedom. The opposite of Action is not Faith. Here we have the paradox of a both/and situation.

The story of Mary and Martha, Luke 10:42, where Jesus expresses a bias towards Mary, sitting at his feet, as opposed to her sister Martha who is immersed in mundane housework, gives more pause for thought.

Our Faith is a counterbalance in this busy life, where we need to be grounded, to spend time in prayer, study, reflection, in awe of the beauties of creation- to slow down and just allow ourselves to BE. When we have got these aspects into a healthy balance, our lives will be guided into serving God through works of justice, peace and love.

The natural disasters in the Philippines and the response to these from Friends around the globe have been the principal AWPS activity during this quarter. It is linked in many ways with Global Change, where great efforts are being made by Friends to think, discern and plan for a safer future for humankind. Please pray that we will all change our perceptions, our arrogance over our use of the environment, and humbly seek forgiveness for being part of this damaged and broken world.

We need to uphold each other in prayer as this work takes place.

Valerie Joy, Executive Secretary AWPS

AWPS 2009 Essay: Following very careful deliberation, the \$2,000 has been awarded to John Cartwright, an isolated Friend

¹ *The Active Life*, Palmer, Jossey-Bass, 1990

from Geraldton in West Australia. The theme will address how Buddhism speaks to the Quaker condition in Asia. John has already commenced research in Australia, and will spend time studying and writing next January in the Fo Guang Monastery in Kaoshing, Taiwan. Prior to that, he is attending Australia Yearly Meeting in January, to meet with committee members and other Friends. He hopes his essay will be ready for posting on the website by late March, and a shortened version for the June 2010 Newsletter. See back page for a photograph of John Cartwright.

5th All India Friends Gathering: Have you wondered about living as a Quaker and Christian where the dominant culture is Hindu, Muslim, or another religion? Quakers in India are a tiny minority. They have been in Madhya Pradesh for over 100 years, following UK and USA missionary effort to Mid India and Bundelkhand. Previous gatherings have been held in Itarsi, Bhopal, Rasulia and Sohagpur.

Friends can work together despite differences in theology and practice and enrich both aspects in the process.

The next All India Gathering will take place in Chhatarpur MP from 11-14 February 2010. Planning meetings with representatives of the different Yearly Meetings and groups are taking place to decide on the program and the theme. Please pray for their discernment. If overseas Friends are able to visit at that time, they would be most welcome to attend. Please contact Jairaj Brown, the Secretary early, as accommodation will need to be arranged: jairajbrown@gmail.com

General Conference of Friends in India

Congratulations to the General Conference of the Friends in India (GCFI), for achieving their 50th anniversary in 2009.

Minute adopted by GCFI on Sri Lanka.

"The GCFI discussed the humanitarian crisis in Sri Lanka during the course of its 50th Yearly Meeting held at Rasulia 11th to 13th September 2009. Friends expressed grave concern at the treatment of Tamils in refugee camps, and prayed for the speedy resolution

of the long-standing dispute between the Sri Lankan Tamils and Sinhalese .

Members deplored the behavior of all parties involved in the conflict, noting that all the principal actors had blood on their hands, and condemned the LTTE for its violent armed struggle against the Sri Lankan government and its slaughter of hundreds of innocent Tamils and Sinhalese, as well as the Sri Lankan government's massive human rights abuses, mistreatment of its citizens and muzzling of all dissent policies. The Meeting also urged the government of India and the Indian public to work with Sri Lanka in resolving the current crisis.

Friends prayed that with the unconditional surrender of the LTTE, and the deaths of Prabhakaran and his associates, a genuine and durable peace would emerge in Lanka. Sincere hope was expressed that communities which have coexisted peacefully beside each other for centuries would again learn to do so.

Towards that end, the GCFI urged the Sri Lankan government to take up a speedy rehabilitation of the more than two hundred thousand internally displaced persons of the conflict to prevent the current humanitarian crisis from getting worse, and also prayed that a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, on the lines of the one headed by Archbishop Desmond Tutu be set up to work to heal the wounds arising out of the conflict.

The very first meeting of the GCFI in 1959 had passed a resolution condemning the then South African government's policy of apartheid. In considering this resolution on Sri Lanka at the fiftieth anniversary of GCFI, Quakers in India continue their involvement in international issues and hope and pray that their concern for the suffering of the refugees in Lanka is shared by all Quakers, Gandhians and like-minded persons. We urge you all to pray for a future, lasting peace in Sri Lanka.

Individual friends interested in forming an informal working group to discuss the situation in Sri Lanka are encouraged to write to

GCFI (Correspondent: Dilawar Chetsingh chet@airtelmail.in) or contact Adhiraj Parthasarathy (adhirajp@gmail.com)."

News of Friends:

Cristina Montiel of the Philippines Unprogrammed Friends writes: Typhoon-Ondoy rebuilding continues in our school in particular and in many other places in the Philippines. Recently around 15 faculty and graduate students from our psychology department had group sessions with almost a hundred personnel from our school who voluntarily responded to an open call to join a healing session. I had 5 members in my own healing group. As they shared their hearts they cried, and I also cried. After an hour and a half, at the end of the school-wide healing session, we had a (catholic) mass to offer our grief, and pray for "lakas loob" (inner strength) and continued kindness. Even the priest who said mass broke down crying at several points in the mass. Thanks to Friends for listening. Thanks for your support.

Adhiraj Parthasarathy writes to ask if Friends in all Sections, who are concerned about the situation in Sri Lanka, who would be prepared to form an informal discussion/working group. The task would be to work towards an epistle which takes a position on Sri Lanka. Once ratified, this statement could be sent far and wide. Please contact Adhiraj on: adhirajp@gmail.com

Vidhya Moses, Elder member of Nowgong monthly meeting and mother of Manish Mosis (Member of Rakhwal Sabha - Nowgong Church Council) departed this life in September.

Arvind Swan from Mid India YM recently suffered a major heart attack. Friends there send their thanks for your prayers for Arvind. He has been discharged from the hospital and is taking rest at home. But his 30% of his heart is damaged. We trust on our Lord Jesus for his saving grace and pray for further healing.

Nadine Hoover from Friends Peace Teams is back working in Indonesia. She speaks of Ririn, who cares for Nasrul, a 12 year old

boy, who is confined to a wheelchair. Ririn found a wheelchair with trail bike tires, so he can really get around. Nadine writes “This story made me cry. It’s hard to convey the joy, life and hope that radiates from Ririn’s story” see other News from Nadine, p14.

From Ohio YM Epistle: “Ellen C.”, is a Friendship Doll sent from Wilmington, Ohio to Nagasaki, Japan in 1927. Ellen C. survived the bombing of Nagasaki and will have a homecoming in 2010 as part of an exhibit co-sponsored by the Peace Resource Center and the Quaker Heritage Center, both of Wilmington College in Wilmington, Ohio.

Piyush Augustine sends greetings. “I recently completed my internship and apply for my medical registration. After that I am able to apply for work as a doctor. My Skype username is piyushaugustine. Recently Mahoba YM organised a health check camp (Swasth mela) at Charkhari with government hospital doctors. Many people gained benefits from this camp.”

Quaker United Nations Committee for New York

QUNO (Quaker United Nations Office) in New York is in good heart, even though the financial recession is affecting it. The last four and a half years has seen many changes to QUNO (Quaker United Nations Office) NY. Firstly, the start of the restructured committee with equal representation from AFSC (American Friends Service Committee) and FWCC (Friends World Committee for Consultation). Only one of the present staff was there four and a half years ago. The emphasis of the major programme work has changed. AFSC’s ability to finance QUNO NY has changed.

The current programme areas are:-

Peacebuilding Where QUNO is promoting to the wider UN community the importance of repairing relationships at all levels of the affected societies.

Prevention Where QUNO is encouraging the wider UN community to consider preventing violent conflict and peaceful settlements of disputes.

Quaker Liaison Where QUNO NY supports other work done at the UN in Friends name plus facilitates outreach to Friends.

I have enjoyed the privilege of representing FWCC and especially the AWPS on this committee for the last 4 years. I hope that I have been able to represent your group's concerns to the committee. Thank you for supporting me in this role.

Linley Gregory

World Council of Churches - News Release

KOREA STANDS READY TO WELCOME WCC

A beachfront location, an opportunity to be a witness for peace and reconciliation, and a commitment to engage the breadth of the region's church community as widely as possible: these are among the features those attending the World Council of Churches' 10th Assembly in Busan, South Korea can expect in 2013.

"It is a really great joy to be able to invite the WCC Assembly to Korea," said Rev. Dr Jong-wha Park, chair of the international committee of the National Council of Churches in South Korea. "You can experience there how a wide ecumenism may be possible." He also expressed hope that the WCC's presence could "contribute greatly toward peaceful reconciliation and reunification" for the divided peninsula of Korea.

Busan, on the southeastern corner of the Korean peninsula, is the second largest city in South Korea with more than 4 million people. An international airport offers connections throughout Korea and most of eastern Asia, as well as Hawaii and other locations in the Pacific.

Among the unique features in Busan named by the site visit committee were the diversity of churches and the interreligious context of Korea, the "new horizon" of holding an assembly in the

Far East for the first time and the strength of local congregations, along with the hope for unity on the peninsula. Park re-iterated the local steering committee's plan to invite North Korean churches to the assembly and to promote dialogue and cooperation in the years leading up to the event. He also expressed his desire for evangelical and Pentecostal churches and other religious groups in South Korea to have a presence at the assembly. Many of those churches joined the WCC members in extending the invitation to host the assembly.

The participation of groups beyond the WCC membership will be determined by central committee and its work with the assembly planning committee. The assembly is always expanding and changing.

FWCC General Secretary *Nancy Irving* writes: The WCC is made up of national churches and only 3 Quaker organisations hold membership: Friends General Conference, Friends United Meeting, and Canadian Yearly Meeting. So there will be no FWCC delegation to Busan. Kwag Bong Soo (from Seoul MM) has already responded. Janet Scott and Eden Grace always attend, and Janet usually takes the lead in getting the Quakers together. Last time there were about 20 and Margaret Fraser was one of them, attending individually. I will make sure there is space for Friends to gather each day. If they want to put on an interest group, that needs to be arranged well in advance so it can be scheduled. Quakers from both programmed and unprogrammed Friends are asked to consider attending.

Friends who wish to know more about life in Korea, may contact Steven Kim, a member of Seoul MM: Steven is Head of International Cooperation Team, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, email: wadans@empal.com; www.jinsil.go.kr/english

Korea's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Visit to Tanzania and Rwanda: by *Steven Kim*

Commission President Ahy Byung-ook visited Tanzania and

Rwanda to build an international alliance on past settlement and reconciliation. Ahn visited the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the Tanzanian Human Right Commission and held an interview with *Daily News*, a Tanzanian daily paper. In the interview, he stated that "Punishing the offenders may be an effective preventive measure. However, it is usually never the end of the story because some people may find the process unfair or feel bitter," he continued to explain that in the end, national unity would be more important than 'an-eye-for-an-eye' justice seeking.

Ahn also visited the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission of Rwanda, Gacaca Court Headquarters, the Association of Genocide Widows (AVEGA), and the Kigali Genocide Memorial Center to discuss the experience Rwanda had in terms of dealing with its past through war crimes trials and attempting reconciliation of society. In an interview with the *New Times*, he praised the efforts of the Rwandan government to build unity and reconciliation since the genocide in 1994.

The Commission expects the president's African trip will be an initiative to improve human rights and democracy across the world by dealing with the painful past of the traumatized nation. The past-settlement experiences from Rwanda shall provide a valuable reference for Korea's own work, particularly in regards to building reconciliatory unity within the nation.

A Friends Group Visit to Korea:

In May 2010, a small group of Australian and New Zealand Friends will visit Korea and Japan, with intervisitation amongst Friends in those countries. For further information, email Patricia Fitzgerald pafizzgerald@hotmail.com

Quaker Studies: eQ – Quaker Studies Online

Friends from Boston USA have just opened an opportunity to explore Quakerism through online courses open to all – wherever
10 **December 2009**_____

you live, whether you've ever been to a Quaker meeting or not. For information visit: <http://www.bhfh.org/qsp/>.

Quaker Studies use Moodle, the same technology Quaker Learning Australia is considering for Australian on-line Quaker learning. This is also the way Friends in Europe are studying their Quaker faith. You can visit www.fwccemes.org to see how this is organised.

Epistle from Netherlands Yearly Meeting, 22-24 May 2009 To Friends Everywhere,

Loving greetings from the Dutch Friends. We take pleasure in sharing with you the inspiration that we received during our annual gathering which had as its theme "Conflict Prevention". It was a great joy to us to be together with so many Friends and guests, young and old, from far and near, in the Woodbrookers House in Barchem.

During the welcome to Friends from abroad, a German Friend told us a story about someone who wanted to study Dutch. When asked, "Why do you want to do this, when it is hardly useful?" she answered: out of love. This story was a fitting start to our gathering, since a loving desire to come closer to the other is an important step in the prevention and the healing of conflicts.

During the meeting for worship our attention was caught by a toddler who is enchanted by a beam of sunlight coming in through the window. Time and again he totters over to it, trying to catch the sunlight in his little hand. A spontaneous and symbolic act that seems to express what we focus on in our meeting for worship.

As an introduction to this year's theme we did an exercise from the AVP project (Alternatives to Violence Project). While making a human knot, we experience what it feels like to be entangled in a relationship. This exercise already teaches us something about conflict prevention. We also discover that exercises such as this can change the atmosphere and get us into a relaxed mood.

In the meeting for worship a story was told about two British Quaker youths who felt they had to protest against Great Britain's participation in the war in Iraq. They were taken to court and punished. The children worked with this story, creating role plays which they later presented to the Meeting. Our guest and Friend David Niyonzima told the children about the war in his country Burundi and about child soldiers who have been forced to fight in the war. Later he told the adults about his life and experiences in the wars that have ravaged his country. Traumatized himself, he decided to found a centre for trauma therapy and reconciliation.

Our guest Neil Endicott spoke of his work in Brussels with the Quaker Council for European Affairs. He confronted us with the dilemmas and the possible conflicts that Europe may have to face in the near future in order to safeguard its energy resources.

We look back with feelings of gratitude to this gathering. We enjoyed being together and experienced our closeness as Friends during the meetings for worship and during our social events. In the way that we attempt to deal with conflicts we can express our Peace Testimony, *Kees Nieuwerth*, Clerk.

Note: Valerie Joy attended this Yearly Meeting and was impressed with the use of exercises borrowed from the AVP Program.

Global Change Section:



Pendle Hill Pamphlet #403 by Jennie Ratcliffe

on How can we change the direction of our impact the earth and begin to undo the damage we have wrought on so many species, including our own? Can we depend on technological, political, and economic solutions alone? Jennie Ratcliffe, drawing on her years of experience and reflection as a scientist and active participant in peace and ecological concerns, believes that a deeper transformation is needed. A spiritual awareness of our oneness

12 December 2009 _____

reminds us that we live in intimate relationship and kinship with each other, the earth, and the Divine. Grounded in reciprocity, reconciliation, simplicity, and nonviolence, this awareness can guide us toward a deeper integrity, a reverence for the human and natural communities upon which we depend, and more sustainable ways of living.

Jennie Ratcliffe's lifelong concern has been to make connections: between nonviolence, social justice, and ecological sustainability; between science, ecology, spirituality, and politics; and between contemplation and social action. After obtaining a Master's degree in environmental pollution studies and a doctorate in epidemiology in England, she has worked for the past 35 years as a research epidemiologist in environmental and occupational health, including for the Centres for Disease Control, the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, and the Universities of London and North Carolina. She has also worked with the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science, Friends of the Earth, and Physicians for Social Responsibility, among other organizations, and helped found local groups engaged in fostering a peaceful and ecologically sustainable future. As a member of Durham Friends Meeting, North Carolina, she serves on the Peace and Social Concerns and Earthcare Committees, and is a member of Quaker Earthcare Witness. She was the Henry J. Cadbury Scholar at Pendle Hill in 2006, where she began work on a book about the spiritual dimension of the ecological crisis from a Quaker perspective. This essay grew out of preliminary work and discussions during her time at Pendle Hill.

AWPS Global Change Committee Minute: sent by Julian Stargardt:

‘Following our consideration of strategy and the Asia Working Group Report we invite Friends to consider and share ideas in writing for a global change code of ethics and once agreed upon to share our concerns with f/Friends around the world. We shall circulate relevant papers from the 2005 AWPS Seoul Meeting.’
Contact friends.hk@gmail.com or jovall@iinet.net.au

Global Warming — just the tip of the iceberg

Harro Drexler spoke with Friends at Wahroonga Meeting in Australia about the problems and detrimental effects facing humanity and the environment now and in the future as a consequence of human activity on planet earth. Harro has just published his new book *Global Warming - just the tip of the iceberg*. PPbk \$40, Ebook \$22. To purchase, go to <http://www.globalburdensolutions.com/> or <http://www.globalburdensolutions.com/Home/tabid/605/language/en-AU/Default.aspx> If you buy via the web site, the email is directed to Harro. Payment is via Paypal for convenience. Once payment is completed the book is dispatched.

Friends Peace Teams: INDONESIA INITIATIVE NEWS by Nadine Hoover

Spiritual Companions are trying creative ways to build friendships. People who feel a part of this initiative to connect communities of conscience are invited to join us by sending your background, how you spend your time and things that are important to you. We have guidelines and examples from others, so please ask if you'd like to join. I am translating them all and will put them on the website.

Spending time with friends in Aceh and refugees from Aceh has made such a difference and stalled repeated attempts to evict the refugees. They are now planting, growing, building and generally building a new life. Spending time this summer visiting also led to many discussions about ethical, simple living. We have come to a point that when friends are not honest with me, others feel compelled to tell me. I consistently tell them that they are not dishonest with me; they are dishonest with themselves. Taking the time to have these conversations is at the heart of our best work in the world.

New freedom to travel! This summer was the first time in decades I was able to travel in Aceh without a special government permit

and military intelligence following my every move. The peace accord has held for four years now and the January and July elections were without major incidents. So the Indonesian government has eliminated the special permits. This opens up some of the rural areas that were the “base of the war.” I think this is a critical time for a foreigner to enter those areas. Abuse of authority has become so standard that although police and military know the war is over and they aren’t supposed to shoot people, they still humiliate and harass them and take portions of their produce. Having outside observers forces changes in that behavior that having just local people do not.

Loans. Revolving loans are available for income generating projects. Two of our four loans have been astonishingly productive.

Dahlan used his to put his family’s fish farm back in operation. He was been able to begin building a training site for Alternatives to Violence workshops out over his fish pools because it is quieter there. He has conducted AVP workshops in the rural areas hard hit by the war—Alue Merah and Gampong Leh in Nurussalam, East Aceh. I am looking forward to freely traveling to these areas in the spring. He testifies to his family and friends that living simply, working hard, being generous and peacefully settling disputes is what he wants above all else.

Pak Darmo, the head of Barak Induk Refugee Camp was also very successful with planting chili. I was amazed to see the area planted to green beans last winter was already overgrown to twice my height. That rate of growth would take three years at home at best! They are planting rubber trees among the chili. They say they are going to use the chili to break the ground and plant rubber trees among the chili. After the second planting of chili they are going to replace the chili with papaya as the rubber trees grow bigger. Darmo’s example in planting is encouraging others to plant more.

Alternatives to Violence Project workshops are continuing in East

Aceh and North Sumatra. In Langsa the staff of the Bustanul Fakri School has used AVP as the foundation for their orientation for new students and for a special weeklong training during the mid-year holiday. They call it peace education, since staff run it. They students really love it!

Wheelchairs are available for free from the World Wheelchair Mission. They have sent 550 wheelchairs to Pondok Kasih Surabaya in Java, who have in turn agreed to send as many as we need as long as we cover the transportation. We decided to order two at this time to pilot test one in the refugee camp and one in East Aceh. Ririn in Medan will receive the wheelchairs and deliver them to Mislán in the refugee camp and Dahlan in East Aceh. If they work well, we can order more later.

Teacher scholarships are coming to a close. Six teachers completed the equivalent of an Associate of Arts degree and Ririn is in her final year pursuing a psychology degree. She will be assisting us in translating our website to Indonesian. She also continues to support the refugees in conducting AVP workshops.

Trauma Healing AVP Advanced Manual will hopefully be out in October. It takes an enormous amount of time to write, especially if it has to be done in two languages. Thanks for all your support and care. It is wonderful to be able to stay with our friends through this time of growing peace and recovery from some of the world's worst human and natural disasters. *Nadine Hoover*, Friends Peace Teams, info@consciencestudio.com

FROM THE AWPS TREASURER

As the end of the financial year approaches there is little to report about our finances except to say, with joy, that we are under budget in expenditure. This is due to some of our provisions for upgrading of computers for the Committee to enable SKYPE conferencing not having been used. Some of our major donations for the year arrive about this time, as several YMs begin their

financial years, and send us their grants around now, so it is too early to say much else.

However, in early October John Ocol's graphic pictures of the flooding around the Friends Church (PEFC) in Manila set off a flurry of donations from Friends around the world. These donations were sent to the AWPS account here in South Australia, for forwarding to Friends in Manila. This proved to be an interesting logistical exercise, but by the time of writing (27th October) AUD 12,000 of a total of AUD14, 950 has been sent.

The two groups of Friends in the Philippines have devised very different programmes at short notice, and which complement each other well. The major share of the funds raised, AUD 12,000, has gone to PEFC, but AUD 3,000 has been sent to an unprogrammed Friend, Cristina Montiel, of the Psychology Department of Ateneo University in Manila. She has arranged training in the university in post trauma counseling for a range of people who will be able to use their skills in helping those suffering in the aftermath of the typhoons which caused so much damage.

PEFC has begun an extensive relief operation in both Manila and in the north of the country. A second typhoon, which arrived shortly after the one which ravaged Manila, caused great damage in the north, and PEFC is able to do work there as well as Manila, through its church networks.

The response to the appeal for help has been astonishing, particularly from Yearly Meetings in Europe and North America. We on the Section Committee are very grateful to be able to channel help to Friends in the Philippines, and we hope that this experience will bring us all closer, regardless of our different traditions and practices. We are all Friends.

The next Section Gathering will be held in Manila in March 2011, so those attending will be able to see at firsthand, the results of the work done by the Friends there. **Start saving now, so that you can participate with us in 2011.** *Topsy Evans*

€/\$ Help Support this Newsletter: You may wish to contribute towards the cost of production. Annual cost is AUD 20. Please send this or its equivalent in your currency to your Treasurer. This office bearer can then make an annual remittance in \$AUD to AWPS Treasurer, Topsy Evans, PO Box 181 Glen Osmond, SA 5064 Australia. Your donation can be even more useful by combining with other Friends to send a lump sum, so minimising bank charges. If you would like to use internet transfers, please contact Topsy Evans on tevans@c130.aone.net.au for our bank details. Please also remember AWPS in your will—*Thanks*

AWPS Section Gathering: 1-7 April 2011, Young Friends Event 7-9 April and conference on Global Change in AWPS to be held prior to the Section Meeting. Philippine Friends are still being challenged by natural disasters, but are looking forward to welcoming Friends from **everywhere** to the Section Gathering. The Theme of the main Gathering is “Living our Faith”. If you wish to contribute a reflective piece of 400-500 words for the Study Booklet, please send this by 1 February 2010 to valerie@fwccawps.org

A Brand New Vision- The Australian Quaker Centre (AQC)

The AQC has completed a 7-week course program at *Silver Wattle* near Canberra. November to February is unprogrammed residential time on a B&B basis. We have sufficient feedback now, from evaluation sheets and personal comments, to make the following summaries:

Silver Wattle provides a wonderful, peaceful, secluded and inspiring setting with abundant birds and wildlife. The cold will restrict offerings during the winter and early spring. While the hills behind the buildings have been degraded by feral goats most of the property is in a natural state bordering Lake George.

18 **December 2009**_____

Accommodation is rated adequate to very good, though individual desks and chairs are needed in the rooms. The main meeting room is very suitable with comfortable chairs, though it needs heating in winter. The library has an excellent selection of Quaker books. Computer/internet access is available in the public areas, The aim is to keep food simple, and the AQC diet is less varied than some expect as we balance two issues: providing locally grown, seasonal and sustainable food while maintaining cost control.

Silver Wattle has an exceptionally conducive atmosphere for spiritual development and personal interaction during courses. Its open landscape and birdlife are especially appreciated. The presence of a Resident Elder every week to hold all in the Light, and to support, staff, teachers and participants in private discussions, has been very important.

We realize many things went wonderfully well, and a great many people have said how valuable their time was at AQC. Based on feedback and the experience of resident staff, we see *Silver Wattle* as a very suitable place to house the AQC.

Advantages include its facilities, standard of accommodation and size. Now we know the place, we wish to avoid the huge effort that would be involved in searching for and negotiating other venues year by year. Further, we can build on established advertising, web presence. Accordingly we have started discussions with the Catholic Diocese, owners of the property, to explore ways to use *Silver Wattle* during 2010 and perhaps beyond.

We know we need a cheaper course structure if possible, and are drawing up a 2010-2012 plan, noting the following points:

1. Deepening our Quaker faith is the core AQC business, so courses in Quaker heritage, spirituality and prayer are

- prime concerns. We anticipate several of the 2009 courses will become annual offerings.
2. We are developing a business plan, which draws from broader markets, especially faith groups and community organizations working for the environment, peace and justice.
 3. We need to build on relationships already started with Indigenous peoples and Elders.
 4. Some other possible AQC activities include:

Family and children's camps including spiritual, outdoor and music offerings

Visits by Quakers and Quaker groups from overseas

Involvement in March 2010 in the biennial, two-week "Weereewa Festival" of science, environment and arts, focusing on the local area.

Retreats for other faiths and groups

Nonviolence training

Preparation for living in a world beyond peak oil

Mini-conferences or planning sessions for local church, government and NGO groups.

Further information on planning for an AQC in 2010 will be available in December. Please visit the website: aqc.quakers.org.au

David Johnson, Helen Bayes & John Baker
Lead team for the AYM AQC Working Group



Shiny Manuel from Marble Rocks MM, India at AQC; Antoinette Kwizera, Valerie Joy, Helen Bayes and Shiny Manuel at the Australian Quaker Centre.



Empathic Listening to Victims of Philippines Floods, at Atenao University- project by Unprogrammed Friends



Children at a relief centre receiving assistance from Philippines Evangelical Friends Church



John Cartwright, the AWPS Essayist

If undelivered please return to:
Ronald Titus
11/3 Minaxsi Apartment, B 105
Housing Board Colony, Kohefiza
Bhopal MP 462001
INDIA
BOOK POST

22 December 2009 _____