

European and Middle Eastern Young Friends



Annual Report 2006

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Clerk's report

At Annual Meeting this year we adopted our 'Questions for Serious Consideration', which forms a part of our Under 18s Policy. The process of drafting this document was a long and painful one in which we each explored our own personal responses to and experiences of child protection, grappled with the huge cultural and legislative differences between the European nations, and agonised over whether Quakers needed such a policy. During the process, those involved developed a deeper understanding of our own attitudes, and we became a lot closer to each other as a result. We felt that the document allowed us each as individuals, and as gathering organisers, to investigate the origins of problems, and to proactively create a caring and nurturing environment. The process does not end here, and we intend to draft practical guidelines for event organisers, but this first step on the road has been a worthwhile one. I would encourage both those within EMEYF and those involved in other gatherings to look at the 'Questions for Serious Consideration', which is available on our website or through our secretary.

The year has been one of adventurous decisions. After a successful Spring Gathering in Spain, we were pleased to return to Bad Pyrmont in Germany for our Annual Meeting, and spent time investigating the possibilities for future gatherings in less visited parts of Europe and the Middle East, as well as reflecting on the experiences of terrorism in our everyday lives, and more. I wish the new clerk and everyone else involved in EMEYF well over what will be an exciting time ahead.

Rachel Bryers

EMEYF Clerk, 2003-2006

Secretary's report

My EMEYF highlights this year have been learning from a very varied group of people at both Spring Gathering and Annual Meeting, and the practical experiences of the job, many of which were firsts for me.

Spring Gathering was an excellent experience. It allowed me to familiarise myself with everyone, and what EMEYF is, means and does. It was a pleasure meeting everyone, and I hope to keep in touch. I also organised Annual Meeting in Bad Pyrmont, Germany. Organising an international weekend's meeting for fifteen people was a very useful experience for me. It was exhausting but I met new people, and shared new experiences including, of course, the Quaker Business Method which is important for young Friends to learn through doing.

One of the main responsibilities of the EMEYF secretary is dealing with the bank account. This year I have learnt to do international bank transfers, send money via Western Union, keep financial records and of course do the accounts. This was a challenge for me and I encourage others to support and educate future EMEYF secretaries in this specialist role. The 2005 Annual Report was somewhat late this year because it took a long time to complete the accounts, and to gather all reports.

The handover guidelines for the secretary have been greatly improved and are now detailed and up to date so that the new EMEYF secretary should feel confident from the beginning. The new Clerk may also contact the new secretary on his/her arrival to help clarify the role and answer any questions on EMEYF in general. Continuity between secretaries is important and hopefully continuing these handover materials will make this much easier in future.

Matt Taylor

EMEYF Secretary, 2006

Europe and Middle East Section Representative's Report

The Friends World Committee for Consultation Europe and Middle East Section (FWCC-EMES) exists to foster relationships between Yearly Meetings, smaller groups, and isolated Friends within the region. They do not get together very often but are able to share much and work together for the benefit of Friends in Europe and the Middle East.

The main gathering is the Annual Meeting at Easter. In 2006 this was held in Dunblane in Scotland. Yearly Meetings and other recognised groups within the Section send representatives to the meeting. At the Annual Meeting this year, Latvian Friends were formally adopted as a Recognised Meeting under the care of the Europe and Middle East Section.

There has been a concern for Friends like the Latvian group and others who are new to the Religious Society of Friends and its beliefs and practices. How do we foster these Friends' spiritual lives and meetings? How do we ensure that these Friends realise the responsibilities of becoming a meeting with regard to ministry, eldership, and practical matters such as finances? These questions have led the Section to appoint a Ministry and Outreach Coordinator. The person will be asked to run a feasibility study for fifteen months starting in early 2007 to see how best we can support isolated Friends and groups. Funding has been secured for the feasibility study and it is hoped that this will be the start of an important ministry to emerging groups of Friends throughout the region.

The Section is also nearing the completion of a book entitled 'The Friendly Guide to Quaker Ways', which details the principles and practices of Friends from the spiritual to the practical. This is sure to be useful as a guide to new groups of Friends.

Another opportunity EMES provides for Friends to meet is the annual European Quaker Peace and Service Consultation. This brings together Yearly Meeting Peace and Service Committees and other bodies such as the Quaker Council for European Affairs. It is usually a chance for committees to share ideas about what they are doing and where they are focusing their work, but occasionally commitments to work together on particular projects arise.

It is good for EMEYF to be involved in what EMES is doing. Plans have been agreed for a joint EMEYF and EMES gathering in Austria in 2008 and I look forward to more Young Friends getting involved in the activities of the Section as a whole.

Aidan McCartney

EMEYF Representative to EMES Executive Committee

Gatherings and Communications Co-ordinator's Report

This has been my third year as the Gatherings and Communications (G&C) Co-ordinator and it has been quite eventful. For those of you who are not very familiar with EMEYF yet I will begin by explaining a little about the role. As a G&C Co-ordinator, I facilitate the organisation of EMEYF's gatherings. EMEYF has three main events each year: the Annual Meeting, the Communications Committee Meeting, and the Spring Gathering. In my role I mostly deal with the Spring Gathering, as this is the biggest event to organise. For the Spring Gathering there is a planning committee, but if there are any difficulties or issues needing clarification, my role is to provide further information and clarification to the committee in order to ensure the smooth running of the event. I also give out general information and guidelines to get them started. This year it was an 'interesting' situation because we could not find enough people to go on the planning committee, so in the end, my fiancé and I joined them. That meant that I found myself in a rather odd position where I was fulfilling a kind of double-role. Fortunately, everything worked out very well and we planned a really good gathering. It was quite some gathering to plan too, because none of us lived in Spain where the gathering took place! This posed a bit of a challenge, but thankfully there is a lovely Quaker group in Barcelona and they were incredibly helpful.

In last year's report, I mentioned that in accordance with the outcome of a Spring Gathering Evaluation, the gathering in 2006 would be a few days shorter in order to make it easier for people with jobs to attend. This proved to be effective, as some Friends who said they would not have been able to come otherwise were able to attend after all. Many of the Friends who did have more time decided to go to Barcelona together after the gathering, where they stayed in various youth hostels and had a good time exploring the city together for a few days. This was a good compromise which allowed many people to come.

Like most years we were also faced with the bureaucracy of embassies when trying to get visas. Over the past few years it seems to have got harder and harder to get visas, which is very saddening and unjust. This year we were very happy that a Russian Friend got his visa, but we were also very sad that two other people were denied a visa and could not be with us in Spain. Overall it was a wonderful gathering though; you can read more about it in the epistle which you will find in this Annual Report.

Anneke Spreij

EMEYF Gatherings and Communications Co-ordinator

EMEYF Spring Gathering Epistle

To all Friends everywhere,
Greetings from European and Middle Eastern Young Friends Spring Gathering,
13th-18th April 2006, Barcelona, Spain.

Hola Amigos Caqueros!
High on a Spanish mountain,
Surrounded by howling dogs,
Twenty-one young friends gathered
from Europe and beyond;
Inspired by the Christian radicalism of early friends,
Exploring biblical translations,
Amigos helping during the Spanish civil war,
Frank exchanges, honest sharing,
Multiple sources of spiritual nourishment,
Faith in action around the world, punching above our weight;
Easter Sunday with local friends,
Egg hunts, beautiful walks,
Food, conversation, football and laughter;
Worshipping al fresco amidst wisteria and birdsong,
Silence deepened by echoing Church bells;
A spirituality that embraces our full humanity.

Epistle Group:

Paul Sladen, Sophie Buxton, Greta Spotswood, Helen Percy, Cath Richardson.

On behalf of EMEYF Spring Gathering; with representatives from the
Netherlands, Germany, France, Britain, Sweden, Finland, Russia, Hungary,
United States, New Zealand, Canada.

Treasurer's Report

All in all our income is quite high this year. This high income is in a great part due to receiving two late payments for 2005, one is the grant from FWCC-EMES (2554 euros) and the other is the grant from YFGM (1192 euros). Also, much of the money which was sent to eastern European friends to make their attendance of the Spring Gathering possible was returned after these friends were unable to join us in Spain due to visa difficulties. This was a great shame.

We are glad to have been able to support the 'Imagine Peace' workshop, held in Vienna with the money which was given to us through the legacy of the Dutch Friend Dina van Daltsen who has sadly passed away.

As always, we thank the Swiss friends for their generous contribution to our group. We have also received a generous contribution from the Dutch Yearly Meeting which was transferred to our accounts in 2007 as a late payment for 2006. I have asked the German Young Friends for their contribution repeatedly and it seems that they still are in favour of supporting EMEYF. However, so far they have not transferred the money for 2006 and I am still trying to find out why not.

I am glad to say that our accounts are in a very healthy state again this year. We have an income over expenditure of slightly over 4060 euros and have therefore exceeded the budgeted amount by 5350 euros. This is only in part due to the late payments and returned money mentioned above. It only makes about half (2685 euros) of the income. The other half of the money gained is in our accounts due to the fact that it was not used for the activities that we had budgeted for in 2006.

Karl Seume

EMEYF Consolidating Treasurer

EMEYF Accounts Overview 2006

		Total in Euros
CREDIT		
Grants	FWCC-EMES	2537.34
	YFGM	2368.00
	Trusts	
	Name	
	Amount	1053.76
Donations	Individuals	801.30
	Collections	
	YF Groups	
	MMs	
	YMs	622.51
	IR Gift Aid	
Activities	Spring Gathering	
	Surplus	
	Subsidy refund	
	Bursury refund	350.00
	Annual Meeting	
	Food	
	Cash Returned	124.29
	Donations	
Interest		64.21
Transfers		2737.44
Exchange Rate Differences		
Subtotal		10658.85
DEBIT		
Annual Report & Publicity		
Spring Gathering 2006/2007	Planning Group(2007) n+1	722.90
	Bursuries given	1595.73
Annual Meeting	Travel	229.48
	NCP Travel	
	Accommodation and Food	300.00
	Food	
	Expenses	
CC Meeting	Travel	763.28
	Accommodation	59.20
	Expenses	
Willy and Penn		
Administrative Expenses	Staff Costs	
	Stationary and Sundries	
	Bank Charges	65.93
	Exchange Rate Diff	

Representatives	QCEA	247.46
	EQPC	
	EMES	70.30
	Eurostatory	
	Others	
Transfers		650.00
		575.00
Other		450.00
Subtotal:		5729.28
Income over expenditure:		4929.57
Balance at 01.01.06		11934.28
Balance at 01.01.07		16863.85

