

Southern Africa Quaker News

March 2023



Journal of the Religious Society of Friends in Southern Africa

Issue 252

Southern African Quaker News

© 2023

This newsletter is about the work and activities of the Religious Society of Friends in Southern Africa.

It is published by the Southern Africa Yearly Meeting. SAYM is a small Meeting of Friends in South Africa, Lesotho, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Zambia.

SAQN is distributed free to Members and Attenders of SAYM. Copies will be sent on request to any other interested persons at the cost of printing and postage.

Please send contributions and correspondence to editorsaqn@gmail.com

Please visit our website www.quakers.co.za where you will find details about local Meetings, or write to heathwhite@me.com for further information.

Design by Liz Gowans

lizgowanspublishing@gmail.com

Layout by Heath White

heath@ihwhitedesign.com

Printed by PostNet, Goodwood, Cape Town

ISSN 1028-5768

No. 252, 2023/1

Cover photograph: Daniel Limpitlaw

Contents

page 3

Editorial

SOUTHERN AFRICAN YEARLY MEETING 2023

page 4

Epistle from SAYM 2023

Thoughts on Yearly Meeting 2023

Benonia Nyakuwanikwa

Photos of YM

Lucille Lückhoff

QUAKER CREATIVITY

page 7

I am the very model of a modern

Quaker meeting Clerk

Justine Limpitlaw

QUAKER THINKING

page 8

SAYM support for Universal Basic Income

George Ellis

The Legal Rights of Trees

Jen Stern

The creation of new money naturally

Rory Short

QUAKERS IN ACTION

page 12

Broken Earth, Broken Family

Kevin Johansson

Anniversary of Botswana Quakers' Protest

Roy Love

TESTIMONIES

page 17

Rowland Dale

Vertrees Maherbe

Karin Fry

QUAKERS TRAVELLING

page 19

Visiting a Country of Contrasts

Bronwen Ellis

TAILPIECE

page 20

More photos from SAYM 2023

Editorial

This January past, Quakers from all over Southern Africa and some countries even further afield, met in Hartbeespoort, at the Good Shepherd Retreat Centre for the Yearly Meeting. This was the first in person meeting since the covid 19- pandemic. I attended online and saw it as a space where people come together to learn, celebrate and work on the Quaker community as a whole.

I am also excited to say this edition contains the first piece of Quaker poetry, since I have been working on SAQN.

There was lots of talk about inclusiveness and the joys of diversity. All this is what has led me to put forward the following idea. It has been in my mind for a while and now the time seems ripe. In the spirit of inclusiveness I want to try an experiment.

I am opening up SAQN to submissions in languages other than just English. I would like this to be a space for all Quakers to express themselves in the language that they feel most comfy in. We are a diverse community of many languages. Our

local version of Quaker Faith and Practice, Living Adventurously has several testimonies in languages other than English and I feel our newsletter should be no different.

It will very much be in the spirit of living adventurously. I have talked it over with CWMM and we think the best way forward is as follows: I ask that every non English submission has been checked by two other people who are fluent in that language. It will then be translated into English and the translation shall be added below. This way it can still be understood and enjoyed by everyone.

I already have one volunteer to help with translations, and more are most welcome. Quakers are now welcome to send submissions in any of our beautiful languages to: editorsaqn@gmail.com This may be a bumpy road with some potholes to fill, but I think I would not be living very adventurously if I did not go down it.

Bronwen Ellis

*Good Shepherd Retreat Centre,
where SAYM 2023 was held*



SOUTHERN AFRICA YEARLY MEETING 2023

Epistle from Southern Africa Yearly Meeting Gathering

Held in hybrid format (onsite at Good Shepherd Retreat Centre, Hartbeespoort, near Johannesburg, South Africa, and online) from 3 to 8 January 2023



We send warm greetings to Friends everywhere!

Friends Southern Africa were excited to meet in person and to welcome Friends from Kenya, Burundi, Rwanda and Britain; and Friends online from Southern Africa, Britain and Sweden Yearly Meetings. Also attending were Tim Gee, General Secretary of Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC), and Bainito Wamalwa, Clerk of FWCC Africa Section. Our delight is in the attendance of an unprecedented number of young friends, children and young young friends representing almost all local meetings. We give sincere thanks to those who have made this meeting of 132 Friends possible.

In the face of structural and systemic inequality, environmental and climate degradation, and social instability we considered the theme of Ubuntu as both exploratory and as a response. Ubuntu is a word that means “humanness”. Its essence is captured in the principle: “a person is a person through other persons.”

A person’s value as a human being depends on acting for the sake of community and promoting community interests before individual interest. The concept of community is a core Ubuntu value in African thinking about humanity. Statements which encapsulate the essence of ubuntu include *Umuntu ngu muntu nga bantu* – I am because you are.

In introducing the topic the clerks mentioned the vision of the Prophet Ezekiel who saw a valley of dry bones and the hope of the gathering would be to put flesh on the dry bones.

In considering the applied meaning of Ubuntu in other cultures and Quaker testimonies, we drew on the life experiences and reflections from Friends. We also shared concerning the equivalent of Ubuntu in other cultures, how the Quaker community lives or can embrace the precepts of Ubuntu; whether Ubuntu could be applied in all geospatial contexts; whether Ubuntu can be associated with the growth of Quaker churches in East Africa; what Ubuntu could mean in efforts to resolve the climate crisis and other crises we face, including inequality; whether Quakers- in the spirit of Ubuntu were doing enough to promote economic

inclusivity. Lastly, we explored the concept of Ubuntu from a Quaker perspective. We valued the researched inputs and recommendations of the panelists who inspired the rest of the discussions which followed.

Further dimension was added by the Richard Gush lecture presented by David Niyonzima from Kwibuka Yearly Meeting in Burundi, who is vice Chancellor of the International Leadership University of Burundi and President of Trauma Healing and Reconciliation services. He shared his personal experiences of the genocide in Burundi and how he had felt the light of God, telling him to overcome fear and hatred. This led him to forgive the person who had informed the army which subsequently killed 8 of his students. He cited many countries where darkness had been overcome by Light and spoke about African countries in need of healing from trauma. He said that Quakers need to respond to the ocean of darkness with Light. The talk led to deep feelings of unresolved trauma amongst us and reflections on forgiveness and healing.

We shared remembrances and testimonies to the lives of departed Friends.

The Young Friends focused on the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP). This was enriched by facilitation from Quakers from different meetings. Young Friends appreciated the emphasis on better communication as a life-skill. There was a wider discussion on how SAYM should conduct AVP training in future. It was suggested that AVP training should not be concurrent with YM to enable facilitators and Young Friends to attend YM sessions. There was a report on AVP progress in Southern African countries and possible further SAYM involvement.

Children and Young Young Friends used the SAYM motif of the hands symbolically to explore Ubuntu from an Individual (one finger) and family, community, Ubuntu in different languages (the other fingers). They also went swimming, watched movies, went on night-walks and the cable car excursion. The children presented a short video made during their night-walk and read two poems which they had written concerning Ubuntu.

Southern African Faith Communities Environmental Institute (SAFCEI) Executive Director Francesca de Gasparis, in her impassioned presentation, spoke of Wangari Maathai with whom she had worked in Kenya for six years. Her recommendation to Quakers was that we work collaboratively with other faith organisations on issues regarding fossil fuels, energy, food security and climate change. We should work from the individual level upwards and embrace different types of activism.

In anticipation of the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) World Plenary Meeting in South Africa, 5-13 August 2024, an update on the various

preparations was given by the Clerk of the Local Arrangements Committee, Thuli Mbete. The IPC Co-Clerks, Bainito Wamalwa (Clerk FWCC Africa Section) and Nancy Fee, contributed to the update. Tim Gee (General Secretary FWCC) taught us the new Quaker song.

With warm Friendly greetings from Southern Africa Yearly Meeting which we all felt was one of the most loving, connected, spiritually enriching and African Yearly Meetings we have ever had.

The spirit of Ubuntu lives!

Reasons to Celebrate

Friends celebrated being together once more on the Celebration evening at YM 2023, and the flowers from Friends celebrated Gregory and Lindiwe's 27 years of marriage.



Thoughts on Yearly Meeting 2023

Benonia Nyakuwanikwa, Harare Monthly Meeting

My experience at Good Shepherd on 3-8 January was like a snail coming out of its shell and finding its way. The gathering came at an appropriate time after the devastating Covid 19 pandemic.

What a lovely fresh atmosphere, that was conducive for living Ubuntu. I really enjoyed the sameness of worshipping, sharing meals, mingling and doing business meetings together. It was like a generous outing to learn and enjoy fellow-Quakers' company. I had a chance to swim after such a long time. How blessed I felt. I came back home energised, relaxed and ready to face 2023 with much hope.

The growth of a family comes to fruition when young

ones come up and take over responsibility from the older ones, otherwise the family becomes extinct. The attendance by young friend and children made me glow with joy.

Allow me to quote from "Be patterns: an illustrated Advices & Queries" of 2021 which reads:

Be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come, that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them: Then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one. – George Fox, 1656

May we be blessed and seek The LIGHT always.

Images of YM 2023

Photos by Lucille Lückhoff



Basic and Advanced AVP workshops were held for Young Friends.



Benonia Nyakuwanikwa and Nancy Fee



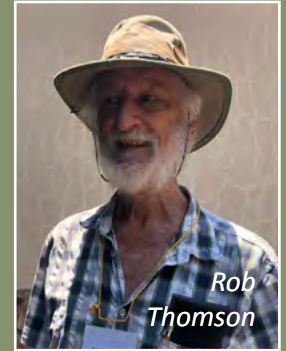
Dudu Mtshazo and Richard Gush lecturer David Niyonzima



Kelitha Schmid



Michael Moys



Rob Thomson



Denise Moys



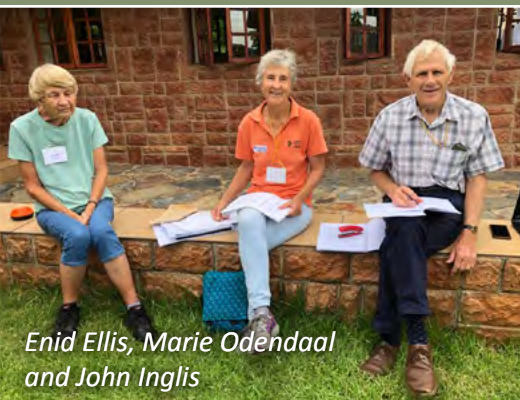
David Letlhogonolo and Helen Vale



Jessica Bishop



Thuli Mbeta

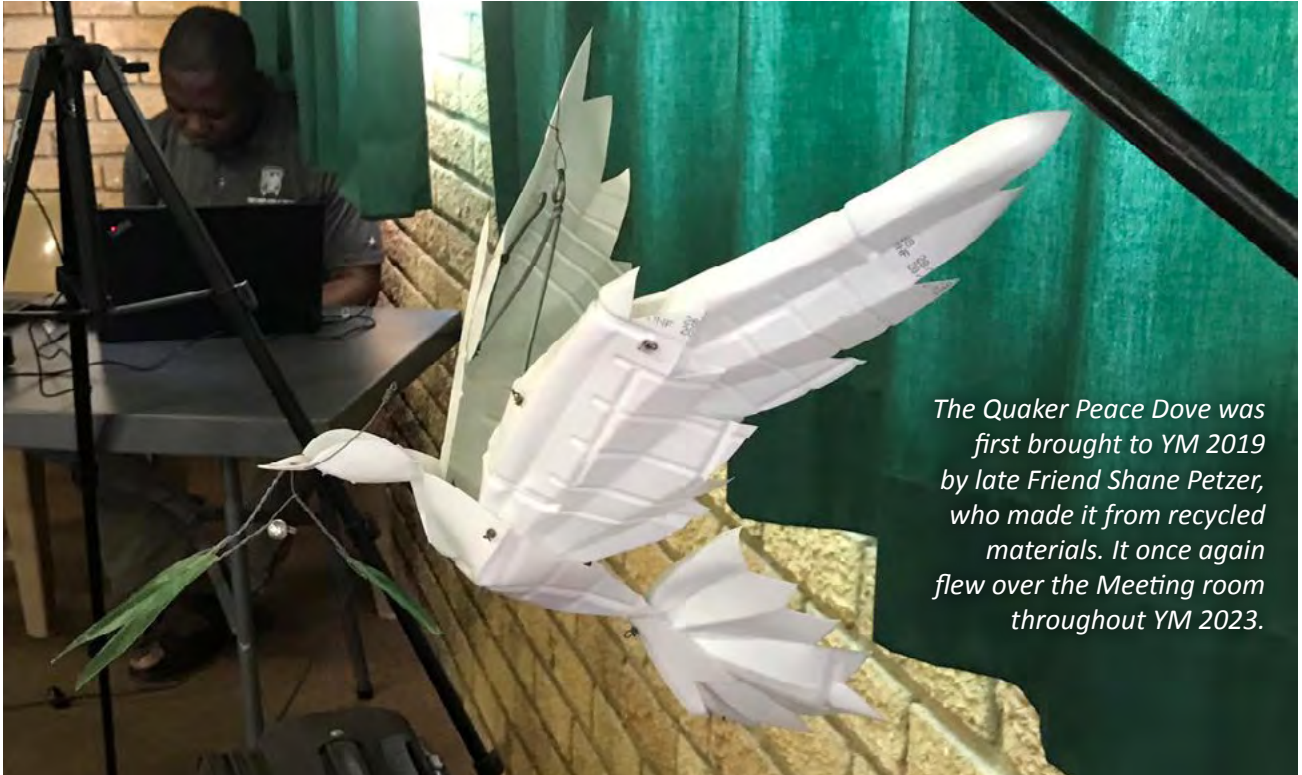


Enid Ellis, Marie Odendaal and John Inglis



Helen Vale once again facilitated a YM favourite: morning aqua aerobics

QUAKER CREATIVITY



The Quaker Peace Dove was first brought to YM 2019 by late Friend Shane Petzer, who made it from recycled materials. It once again flew over the Meeting room throughout YM 2023.

Doggerel performed at the 2023 Yearly Meeting Celebration, inspired by Justin Ellis and with apologies to Mr Gilbert

Justine Limpitlaw, Quaker Community of Johannesburg

I am the very model of a modern Quaker Meeting Clerk -
I have information spiritual, financial and secretarial.
I know the followers of Fox, and can quote their fights historical,
from Prison Reform to Nuclear Disarmament, in order categorical.
I'm well acquainted, too, with matters of the Still Quiet Voice Inside,
I understand the need for Silence, where the Spirit doth reside.

About the Quaker Testimonies I'm teeming with facticity
on all their various elements from Equality to Simplicity.

I'm excellent at AVP and peace-building more generally
I know to break the ice and can worship-share most generously.
I understand the meanings of ancient Quaker phrases used in kind:
From "Weighty Friends" and "gathered meeting" to "that Friend speaks my mind".

In short dear Friends, in matters of religion - from Revelations to the Ark -
I am the very model of a modern Quaker Meeting Clerk.

SAYM support for Universal Basic Income (UBI)

George Ellis, Quaker Community of the Western Cape

Whither South Africa?

It is common cause that South Africa experiences high unemployment and inequality and extensive poverty. This threat to the stability of the South African society and economy is seen every day in:-

- high levels of crime,
- gender-based violence,
- protest action,
- the wholesale theft of infrastructure,
- increases in mental health problems,
- reduced levels of trust, and
- large numbers of skilled people of all races wishing to raise their children elsewhere.

The poverty-stricken masses have nothing going for them, see no hope for their future, and have nothing to lose. South Africa is a tinderbox that will catch fire if another match is thrown into it, as happened in the Durban riots in July 2021.

South Africa may be considered a real-world example of where the world is going. Globally, quality employment or any employment is becoming scarcer and scarcer, and inequality is deepening. Economic growth, job creation and wage work are becoming less and less likely to provide a solution to unemployment, inequality, and poverty.

We believe

Quakers in Southern Africa embrace the principles of Ubuntu. We seek solutions that recognise the interdependence of all citizens, that each person is worthy of dignity, being recognised, being heard, We acknowledge a collective responsibility to ensure that all members of our communities have the means of subsistence.

What should we do?

In the spirit of Ubuntu, we believe that to make a difference to our current crisis levels of large-scale poverty we need to implement a Universal Basic Income (UBI), to all people in the country, regardless of age, gender, or income.

How would it work?

The UBI would signal to the poor and dispossessed that their plight has been heard, and action has been taken. At a local level, both urban and rural, it will

immediately give hope and dignity to each person. It will support better nutrition, improve access to education, allow people to set up small businesses, and more fully participate in social and economic life.

In pilot trials elsewhere, it has increased both physical and mental health. It should also contribute to decreasing levels of crime and violence. There is evidence that it strengthens demand in local and national economies which would have a further positive impact if the increased demand was met by locally produced and more labour-intensive commodities. Increased economic activity and greater social stability would engender confidence in the country and stimulate both local and foreign investment.

Why a universal basic income and not social grants?

- Firstly, it is less intrusive than a social grant, as it allows each person to maintain their dignity and avoids the humiliation involved in defining and proving poverty or any other criteria,
- Secondly, it eliminates the need for a vast, inefficient bureaucracy required to impose such criteria on potential recipients. This reduces administration costs and removes the possibility of corruption related to the officials controlling these payments.
- A simple pay-out system could be via a smart ID card given to everyone who is a citizen or immigrant. If a person pays income tax, the money paid out in UBI would revert to the State via SARS.

Can the country afford it?

A UBI is desirable, but is it affordable? The Quaker answer is that we cannot afford not to do it. However, we accept that the UBI might require incremental steps.

To whom, and how much?

The first question then is: how much? The ideal is a Universal payment firstly, to each citizen irrespective of age, gender, or income; secondly, that the income would be at least equivalent to the upper-bound poverty line.

The upper-bound poverty line is acceptable only if the South African public sector provides well-functioning health care and education with school feeding, and water, electricity and refuse removal at an affordable rate, as well as infrastructure, safe transportation, security, and public communication systems.

How will the money be raised?

The Institute for Economic Justice provides detailed models and calculations and proposes several possible financing sources, namely,

- taxing or raising taxes on resource rents, luxury goods, carbon emissions, wealth, dividends, estate duty, currency transactions, financial transactions,
- abolishing medical tax credits and retirement fund contributions for high income earners [over R1m per annum],
- cancelling employment tax incentives,
- reducing irregular and wasteful expenditure in the public sector,
- reducing profit shifting by multinationals.
- Some countries and economists also propose a social wealth fund which is amassed through corporate dividends paid in recognition that wealth is socially produced and reliant on the expropriation of the commons.

A key aspect of affordability is that the money raised and paid is distributed across the country and thereby stimulates the economy everywhere.

Who else supports UBI?

Support for UBI is wide spread across many organisations:

- the trade union movement,
- the Department of Social Development,
- the Institute for Economic Justice,
- the Black Sash,

- the Studies in Poverty and Inequality Institute,
- the Climate Justice Charter Movement,
- South African Food Sovereignty Campaign.

While all groups support some form of a Universal Basic Income, they may differ in approach.

As Quakers in Southern Africa we offer our support to all these voices, while holding our ideal position of a UBI, of at least the upper-bound poverty line, for every citizen.

We recognise that a UBI is no panacea for South Africa's woes. Much work needs to be done to create the Ubuntu vision of a peaceful, harmonious, and prosperous society. However, we urge the Government and the people of South Africa to be moved by the spirit of compassion and to act urgently by implementing a UBI as soon as possible.

For more information on the UBI, and links to where it has been tried elsewhere, see

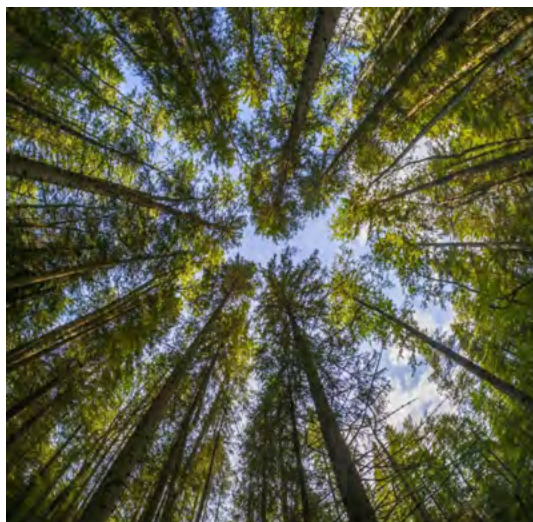
- Hein Marais, In the Balance
<https://www.quakers.co.za/discussion-documents-on-a-universal-basic-income-grant/>
- NANGOF, Making the Difference! The BIG in Namibia:
<https://www.eldis.org/document/A50498>
- Institute for Economic Justice
<https://www.iej.org.za/publications/>
- SPII
<https://spii.org.za/big/>

The legal rights of trees and rocks and hills and lakes and things

Jen Stern, Quaker Community of the Western Cape

Tree huggers

The term tree hugger was coined to describe the Chipko Movement in which villagers clung to trees in the Gopeshwar forest to protect them from being cut down to manufacture tennis racquets. The loggers, realising they would have to go through the people to get to the trees, left. This strategy has spawned a plethora of similar movements since then, but it was inspired by a much earlier, somewhat more traumatic,



incident – the Khejarli massacre. In 1730, also in India, 363 people were killed trying to protect trees from being cut down – yes, by hugging them. The trees, which were sacred to the local Bishnois people, were destined for use in the construction of a palace. When the foresters arrived, one woman instinctively hugged the nearest tree, saying they would have to go through her body to cut down the tree. They did. Then her daughters

hugged the three closest trees. They, too, were hacked down. A further 360 villagers were hacked down protecting the trees before the rajah for whom the palace was intended relented, apologised and conferred a protected status on the remaining trees.

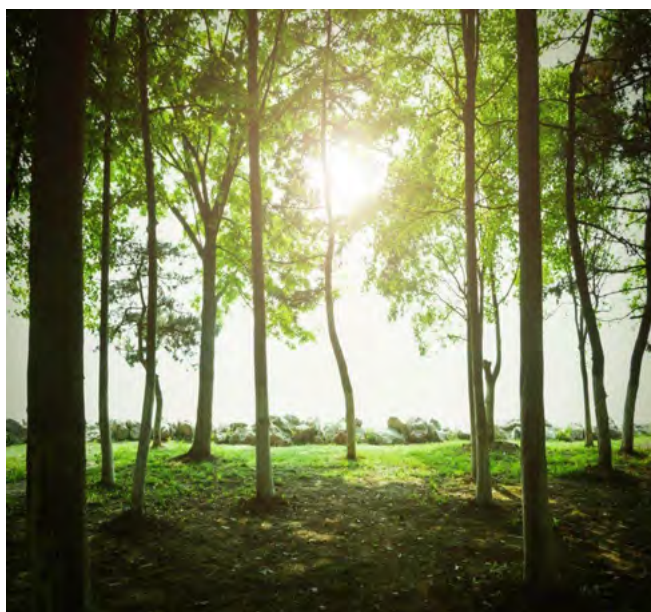
That's unthinkable today. Right? There is no way we could get away with hacking down tree huggers. But that's just it. In 1730 in India (and definitely not only in India) *some people* had no more rights than trees or stones. Sure, hacking them down was messy, and hard work, but they were – well – 'different to us' so they weren't *really* people – or at least not people like us with, you know, 'rights'. Unthinkable!

How did trees get rights?

In his seminal work *Should trees have Standing?*, University of Southern California law professor Christopher Stone

wrote: 'It is this note of the *unthinkable* that I want to dwell upon for a moment. Throughout legal history, each successive extension of rights to some new entity has been, theretofore, a bit unthinkable. We are inclined to suppose the rightlessness of rightless "things" to be a decree of Nature, not a legal convention acting in support of some status quo.' He goes on to describe how in different times and places, women, children, black people and

other 'others' were seen as inherently rightless. Slaves could be bought and sold, it was impossible for a man to rape his wife because she had no right of refusal, and it was legal to sell one's children (even in the Bible). In Ancient Rome (from whence much of our legal system derives), men had *ius vitae necisque* (the right to life and death) over their children, which has been interpreted to mean that a father could not be prosecuted for killing his children as he had 'created' them. (I'm on shaky ground here, but I suspect a mother would not have been granted the same immunity.)



So what?

So what does this really mean for us living in the 21st century? We live in a country with some of the best human rights legislation in the world and we have comprehensive environmental protection legislation – at least on paper. But we also know that – despite this – women, children and poor, unemployed and/or homeless people are not effectively protected. They are what George Orwell in his satirical masterpiece, *1984*, would have referred to as 'less equal'. And our comprehensive environmental protection legislation is studied in detail by many people – not so that they can comply with it – but so that they can find loopholes to effectively and with impunity flout any inconvenient regulations. Yup, trees, rocks and streams would definitely have been considered 'much less equal' if Orwell had considered them at all. But he was writing in a time when 1984 seemed waaaaay in the future.

In practice

What this really means is that we need to be aware of the fact that things change, values change and norms change. You only have to think of the people who, having been 'blindsided' by being publicly shamed in campaigns like #metoo, throw up their hands in horror and disclaim in their defence: 'It was the 1960s – that was normal.' So, before you start looking for loopholes in environmental

legislation, think and reflect on these people, and think back to the things that were considered 'normal' in South Africa in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s.

Many of us have already been caught on the wrong side of history, and – in retrospect – realise that we should have known better. Just because something is not illegal (yet), does not mean it is right or moral.

Stern, J. "The Legal rights of Trees" (2021). *Estate Living*. Available at: <https://www.estate-living.co.za/news/the-legal-rights-of-trees/> (Accessed: 12/01/2023)

*... before you start looking for loopholes in environmental legislation ...
think back to the things that were considered 'normal' in South Africa
in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s.*

The Creation of New Money Naturally

Rory Short, Quaker Community Johannesburg

Right now South Africans are very worried about inflation because it reduces the purchasing power of their money by devaluing it. The devaluation arises through a dysfunction in the system, the money system, which manages our money. If the system produces too much money it devalues it giving rise to inflation. The system and its managers function on the premise that they and the system decide when and how much new money is to be created. They should not actually have that role. In fact the ideal entity to make the decision to create new money is the individual consumer who needs money to make a purchase and sometimes makes the purchase by credit card. The credit card allows the purchaser to make the purchase by creating new money to do so. New money created to make a purchase means that the money is natural.

The creation of new money, by natural means only, would free society from the burden of inflation, but of course, not the burden of genuine price increases.

The voluntary exchange of goods and services is a wholly natural human activity. We need it for our survival. So if new money was only created as a by-product of completed voluntary exchanges money would become a completely natural phenomenon and as the value of our economy, as an entity, is represented by the total value of money in circulation. Ordinary people are likely to have a better feeling for the economy as such.

Each completed exchange can be seen as an atom of wealth because each participant is more satisfied after the completion of the exchange than they were before the completion. However, like all things in this world the feeling of satisfaction is transitory. The atom of wealth has a life span that can vary from a single moment, like the momentary relief one feels when slaking one's thirst, to aeons, like the duration of cultural traditions. Nonetheless an economy can be seen as being built from these atoms of wealth even though each atom has an uncertain life span.

When thinking about exchanges we tend to, simplistically, think of them as involving only two individuals but the economy is not built only from such simple exchanges. Anyway there are inherent difficulties in successfully arranging exchanges between just two individuals. This is because what person A is being offered by person B might be just what A wants but what B is offering to A in exchange is not necessarily what A wants.

This difficulty is avoided if we conceive of an exchange

as involving, not just two individuals, both of whom both give and receive, but three individuals. Then by selecting one individual as the prime mover in the exchange and replacing the other individual with two individuals, one of whom gives to the prime mover and the other of whom receives from the prime mover. Then we are freeing the process of exchange as such from the number of individuals involved. This freedom enables a successfully completed exchange to involve three individuals, rather than just two.

But such a three person exchange has to involve money in the process as follows.

A wants what B is offering so A accepts it and honestly records, in money, the value of the offering giving the money to B who, if the validity of the recording is generally accepted, could then present the recording to a third person C, in exchange for what C is offering.

The difficulty with this solution is in guaranteeing the honesty of the value of the money. This breaks down into two lesser difficulties and these are resolved as follows.

Values are nothing but quantified desires and desires exist only in the heads of people. Thus, unless the individual concerned wishes to reveal their desires to others, they are not visible. Should they wish to reveal them they would need to use a commonly understood language to do so otherwise their desire would still be opaque to other people.

We also know that desire, in an individual, varies in strength, so we need a language, or symbolism, which can represent desires of varying strengths. The accepted symbolic systems for the communication of quantities of anything, including desires, is the number system.

When numbers are used for the purpose of communicating desires they are known as values and when values are recorded physically the recordings are known as money. Consequently money, when honestly created, can be seen as a true record of desire and it can thus be used as surrogate for real goods and services in an exchange. It is in fact through the invention of money that the infinite increase in the opportunities for completing exchanges arose thus enabling economies to grow.

The above also describes the absolutely certain way of creating new money with a guaranteed value. The mechanism for doing so is already in existence, purchases by credit card, as the value of the new money is confirmed once the credit card debt is settled.

Unfortunately, historically, and currently, across the

world, the view is that new money can be created independent of completed voluntary exchanges. This detachment of the creation of money, from the reality of completed voluntary exchanges, easily gives rise to money not representing honest value with a raft of economic problems, like inflation, as a consequence.

The detachment from completed, voluntary, exchanges, is however actually not necessary. Money systems, that allow for the use of credit cards, enable the card users to produce new money at points of purchase and the value of the new money is confirmed once the card user settles the card debt. In other words the debt settlement completes the exchange and guarantees the new money's value.

It would not cause a shortage of money in circulation if the above was the only way that new money was allowed to enter into circulation as money would be

created as needed by purchasers using credit cards and inflation, created, by the present method of creating new money apart from completed exchanges would cease.

As we can see from the above money is a store of value. Its primary purpose being to store the value between the two halves of a completed exchange. Consequently, as it is the nature of exchanges to complete. Money should not be salted away. For the health of the economy money should be spent rather than being held unspent for any length of time. Spending money does not mean wasting it but should involve either purchasing something with it or investing it. If banked and unspent, say for more than 30 days, then the holder of the money should be charged a monthly 'holding' fee on it by the bank.

QUAKERS IN ACTION

Broken earth – broken family

Kevin Johansson

This is merely an investigation into a new way of thinking about our earth warming, the destruction of the earth, and the increase in the dysfunctionality in our families. This is my opinion, treat it as such. But if you feel within a stirring, then come and join the journey. There are no hard and fast rules. All is evolving.

The root causes of both earth destruction of the environment and family dysfunction are the same. So let me begin at the beginning.

ROOT ONE: In the Old Testament – or Torah – one reads about Adam (which means soil translated) and Eve in the Garden of Eden. They eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (this is another discussion on its own but I need to stay narrow in my explanation.) Thus they break their relationship with the Creator (God) and thus God says now you will have to sweat for your food and thorns cover the earth. Root = we have broken our understanding of the link between God and creation. Lost our connection with Mother Earth.

ROOT TWO: God comes looking for Cain and Abel, but Cain out of jealousy has killed Abel – so God says because of the spilt blood of Abel, the land will no longer produce – thus it is cursed. Root = man hating man, wars. Siblings hating siblings.

ROOT THREE: In Malachi we hear that Elijah must heal the hearts of the fathers towards the sons


and daughters or the land is cursed. Root = family dysfunction. Missing fathers.

Thus we have the symptoms - the polluted rivers and seas, the dysfunctional families. We put all our energy into trying to solve the symptoms, but they will always be there and they will always grow, because we fail to address the root causes.

What is the root cause in our communities? It lies in the psychological work that needs to be done. In the unpacking of trauma and negative emotions. If these are not addressed, they will manifest in the physical world. And in our communities, through negative behaviour. We need to unpack the dark side of our lives.

The unpacking of the dark side of our lives.

When I refer to the dark side, I am referring to those dark areas in our personalities which lie hidden within us all. We have both good and bad living within us. This is our conditioned selves. Our environment that has conditioned us. Are we allowed to openly express the dark side? Is anyone willing to listen to this dark side? Not really, because of condemnation, or shock at what this dark side might reveal! So, we hide this, afraid to express our vulnerabilities because unfortunately there is no real safe environment to be free to explore this root. Also possibly, no real trained listeners who will put aside judgements. Who will listen to us? If we do not express this, it will come out through subconscious




Oude Molen
Food Garden
& Nursery

Alexandra Road, Pinelands, Western Cape

MAIN OBJECTIVES

As a **therapy garden** to address trauma and emotional challenges faced today in our communities as well as **food security, nutritional awareness, medicinal and herbal plants, self-economic empowerment, environmental awareness** and our **spiritual relationship** to Mother Earth.




WE WALK THE PATH TOGETHER

We have selected organisations that can address the challenges in our communities who have track records and proven outcomes.

VISION STATEMENT
We help communities discover sound values and use their strengths, talents and resources to develop themselves.

MISSION STATEMENT
Authentic Family is committed to work in partnership with communities and organisations to facilitate holistic development and effective utilisation of resources. Holistic development encompasses spiritual and social (family and life) skills and the development of technical, career, business and management skills.

Integral community model for transformation (ICMT)



behaviour, usually negative, in our communities and our families. Yet all we want to hear is the “good stuff”, and we thus bury the negative stuff. Now I am not suggesting we must focus on the negative, otherwise we will just spiral into depression, and even lose the will to live. What we need is to constantly check our thoughts, as these do create the reality we live in. The only freedom I have is to choose my thoughts. However, if some of my thoughts are dark and I do not face them and embrace them, then I will not deal with them. They will eventually express themselves negatively in my community.

This does not mean we beat ourselves up, or we do not forgive ourselves. I think we need to heal in community. It is not easy to heal alone. Healing alone can be done, but it’s not easy.

I am not going to explain how all this needs to be done, there are many self-help books and new science to deal with these issues. Meditation and nutrition play a part. YouTube has lots of good advice (and bad advice, so choose carefully). We all need to find a path that works for us, individually and collectively.

I am inviting you onto just one of many paths. The New Monastic path. This is not what you think, cloistered monks behind high walls. No, the New Monastic is us lay people who follow a spiritual path, understanding the link of the creation to the Creator. We define this Creator through our own experience, through our own search for The Beloved or The Divine.

We can be married or single. There is a lot of

information on Google – so I am not going to go into it here. We do not need to be drenched in religion or spirituality. We are normal human beings just trying to get through the chaos of life. How do I survive my everyday life? How do I express myself in community? How do I deal with the conflicts within me?

Real questions on life

For me I express this through practicing the life of a Poustnik in a Poustinia as a Quaker.. Have I mastered life? Oh no! I have more questions than answers. But it is the questions that make life meaningful to me and the communities I serve. Am I better than others? Never. In fact, I sometimes wish I could restart the game of life. Have you ever played a game and it begins badly, so you just return to the beginning? Unfortunately, this life isn’t a game.

So a New Monastic is an opportunity to look at the root causes of dysfunctionality. Taking full responsibility for ourselves without projecting our shadows onto others. Realising that this walk is a lifetime journey. One step forward two back sometimes, but forever heading forward to the ultimate goal. To return as prodigals from the world stage and go back home to the ultimate reality as did the Prodigal Son.

So, I am inviting you to join us on this journey, or even as just a friend.

Kevin Johansson
kevin@johansson.co.za

Anniversary of Botswana Quakers' protest on 1st March 2003 in Gaborone against the invasion of Iraq

*Roy Love, Botswana Monthly Meeting, 1989-91 and 2001-03
(Now York Area Meeting, Religious Society of Friends, UK)*

The 19th of March 2023 marked the twentieth anniversary of the joint US and British invasion of Iraq in 2003. This was part of the wider response to the al-Qaeda attack on The World Trade Centre in New York on 11th September 2001, in which 2,977 people died. This had already led to a US and British invasion of Afghanistan on 7th October 2001 in a failed attempt to catch the leader of al-Qaeda, Osama bin Laden.



There were, of course, protest movements by peace groups, including Quakers, across the world. One such was Botswana Monthly Meeting. Clearly we would have little influence on our own, but as part of opposition around the world to acts of response to violence with more violence, Friends in Botswana followed their spiritual leadings by making their own public statement. We applied for and received a permit for *“permission to conduct a silent Vigil for Peace in 1st March 2003 ... to indicate opposition to the impending war against Iraq”*.

Accordingly, on that date some 11 of us assembled outside the British High Commission for a 30 minute vigil before walking to the US Embassy for a further period of 30 minutes. The High Commission was at the top end of the central Mall in Gaborone, and so we were seen by a fair number of passers-by. The close-up shows Chris Love and Sheldon Weeks while Shelagh Willet was also close by.

The US Embassy was in a quieter area, within an enclosed compound, but we were told to make our protest from the other side of the road, where we duly

lined up opposite the entrance, with our placards. We were, however, noticed, and the next picture shows us about to be photographed by a person from the embassy in the red T-shirt and blue shorts The final picture is by one of us photographing him as he photographed us one by one along the line!

Now one might think that what we did was of little consequence apart from satisfying our own Quaker consciences against all wars. However, the fact of being photographed meant that we had been seen, and that the incident could well have been added to an American awareness of opposition demonstrations elsewhere around the world. Were a country list to have been compiled then Botswana would have featured!

Earlier that year the meeting also sent a letter to the US Ambassador to Botswana in following the US/British invasion of Afghanistan on 7th October 2001, also in response to 9/11. An extract follows.

As members of a traditional peace church ... we urge you to recommend to your government that the present military offensive against Afghanistan cease immediately. This we also do from the basis of our faith in the teachings of Jesus Christ. As Christianity is the principal faith in the United States we cannot see how your government's response to the dreadful events in New York on September 11th can be construed as in any way consistent with the principles of the New Testament.





US actions to date ... are the least honourable from a nation that professes to lead the world in civilised values...This is a time surely for statesmanship rather than belligerence; for setting an example; for confirming the dignity of human life and intelligence; for understanding; for moral leadership rather than for brute force; and for appealing to those of all faiths and none to seek only peaceful solutions to the problems which have divided the international community.

It is with great concern that we have observed news reports of US action in Afghanistan. As members of a traditional peace church with what we consider to be an honourable record of active concern



Right: Outside the US embassy

Below: A US embassy staff member taking a photo of the demonstration



for social justice in North America and Britain, we urge you to recommend to your government that the present military offensive against Afghanistan cease immediately. This we also do from the basis of our faith in the teachings of Jesus Christ. As Christianity is the principal faith in the United States we cannot see how your government's response to the dreadful events in New York on September 11th can be construed as in any way consistent with the principles of the New Testament. Nor are they reconcilable in our view with the inspiration and insights of any of the founders of the world's major religions.

Our point is not that US actions to date are likely to be counterproductive in hard political terms, but rather that they are the least honourable from a nation that professes to lead the world in civilised values. It is incumbent on the leaders of all nations to rise above the crudity and obscenity of the violence which others have used. This is a time surely for statesmanship rather than belligerence; for setting an example; for confirming the dignity of human life and intelligence; for understanding; for moral leadership rather than for brute force; and for appealing to those of all faiths and none to seek only peaceful solutions to the problems which have divided the international community.

The government of the United States has an immense responsibility today to humanity as a whole which includes its own citizens, to set standards, both

domestically and internationally, which contribute to the progress in human moral evolution. In our view, this must be a reversion from violence. It is surely wrong to answer stone age politics with more of the same.

We are profoundly disappointed with the lack of imagination and inspiration in current US foreign policy, and with the absence of any apparent basis in the values of love and respect for God's universe, which all religions uphold and upon which our uniqueness within creation ultimately depends.

Yours with concern and in prayer

Botswana MM of the Religious Society of Friends
(Quakers)

Unfortunately these two invasions, of Afghanistan and Iraq, have had lasting repercussions which we are still witnessing in parts of the Middle East, Somalia and the Sahel region of West Africa. Underlying it all, perhaps is the interesting question of the difference between what the west calls a 'Just War' and how armed 'Jihadists' see themselves, and what are the real motives in each case, as well as the importance of history in determining grievances? It is sad that I feel the sentiments of the letter could equally be sent today.

- <https://thediplomat.com/2016/02/standing-on-common-ground-explaining-just-war-and-jihad/>

Aerial view of the Okavango in Botswana



TESTIMONIES

Francis Rowland Dale

Born 23 May 1934

Died 8 January 2023

Always known as Rowland, I first knew about him when I worked as the Associate Secretary of the Friends Peace and International Relations Committee, at Friends House in London between 1974 and 1975. He was a very active Secretary of the Northern Friends Peace Board from 1977 until 1985.

Rowland was born into a Quaker family in Shipley, Yorkshire, but the family moved around during his childhood and he initially grew up in the rural Essex town of Saffron Walden. He was the eldest child with his sister Rosemary and two brothers, Jonathan and Jeremy. (Jonathan Dale gave the 1996 Swarthmore lecture 'Beyond the Spirit of the Age').

The family moved to Swansea during the second world war years when his father became a lecturer at the University of Wales. As a young man Rowland attended the University of Cambridge but disliked it. Later he trained as a teacher in Sheffield where he met his wife Pat. He then worked as a teacher mostly at Foxwood School in Leeds, teaching history and general studies.

In 1977 he decided to leave teaching and became the secretary to the Northern Friends Peace Board. In 1983 the Board published a report "Towards a Quaker View of 'Russia' ". Contacts between Russia and Quakers date back to 1697.

Rowland was a member of the editorial group which produced the report in 1983. He had helped organise two delegations to the Soviet Peace Committee in the Soviet Union and their return visits to Britain and contributed a chapter on the Soviet Peace Committee which makes very interesting reading.

He left the NFPB in 1985 and, following the separation from his wife, moved to Saltaire on the edge of Bradford. He subsequently returned to teaching in a supply capacity and in the late 1990s was pleased to be elected as a Bradford City Councillor.

Rowland arrived in South Africa in January 2003 and transferred his membership to Cape Western Monthly Meeting. He quickly got involved with the work of the Quaker Peace Centre in Cape Town and Gun Free South Africa.

In 2018 Rowland decided to move back to Britain and asked me to help him continue to support a number of people in Cape Town whom he had been helping financially for some years. Rowland continued to give money to certain very needy people right up to the time

of his death. Many people here will be very saddened to learn of his passing.

Rowland went to live at Oak Tree House, a residential home with Quaker connections and close to Selly Oak in Birmingham. He transferred his membership to Central England Area Meeting and became a member of Selly Oak Meeting. Due to the Covid pandemic the meeting was closed down until recently, but Rowland used to go and tend the garden there and later met with a few Friends for meetings in the garden. He also joined the Peacemakers Management Committee but was unable to attend the Zoom meetings and decided to step down after a year.

Susan Groves has written that Rowland "was a loving presence in Oak Tree House, showing great interest in people's stories and generally having engaged in historical, political and friendly conversations.... Oak Tree House happily had a piano (which Rowland would return to play even when he was in Queen Mother Court). He practiced daily and people would love to hear the strains wafting through the building. On several occasions he gave piano recitals at Oak Tree House – either on his own or alongside other performers."

Rowland was very passionate about peace issues and helping the poor. He will be missed by many people in South Africa.

He leaves three children – Linda, Andrew and Christopher and five grandchildren.

Graham Thomas

A Tribute to Vertrees Malherbe

Vertrees, or Candy as her many friends knew her, was born in the U.S.A. at Sandy Springs in the Quaker countryside of Maryland. She came to South Africa to marry her South African husband Paul, whom she'd met while he was studying at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the USA, and they lived for some years in Durban. After work related commuting between Durban and the USA, they finally settled in Cape Town, had two children, Lucinda Jane and Paul and enjoyed a loving family life. Now, her son Paul and his wife Rachel, have two sons and live in the USA.

Many Friends knew Candy from our younger days in community activities such as Black Sash and The Institute of Race Relations. Like many, she taught

less privileged adults at Night School, She would drive into areas without street lighting, which few of us volunteered to do. For married women, day time teaching posts were difficult to find, and Candy spent many daylight hours in various archives, researching her extended Malherbe family, and other family histories. Candy wrote a number of books including her domestic worker, Lettie's Family Story, Koi San people's histories and An Eastern Cape Rebellion. According to her work colleagues, her razor sharp mind and cheerfulness had inspired many UCT M.A students and lecturers.

Vertrees was a most able, quite severely disabled person, whose calipers and crutches seemed very insignificant, as she communicated warmly with all who knew and worked with her. Self pity was something she had no time for. She started coming to Quaker Meetings in Cape Town from time to time, about 20 years ago, when she could still manage our steps. At that time, Black Sash friends had regular Legiwatch Meetings over coffee with Candy and we continued this until very recently. Once she moved into her retirement home, various Friends visited, held Meetings for Worship with her and enjoyed coffee with her afterwards. We resumed this once or twice after Covid Restrictions allowed this until sadly, the time came for Vertrees to leave us.

A Quakerly Memorial Service for family and friends was arranged by Paul on the 26th June 2022. This gave all who attended a wonderful overview of Vertrees' long and very fruitful life. At the end, a family friend sang the Quaker song, "Tis the gift to be simple, Tis the gift to be free".

Bridget-Nomonde Scoble

Quaker Testimony to celebrate the life of (Diana) Karin Fry

Born 20 April 1941

Died 24 September 2022 aged 81

Karin was a 'war baby', her early life being greatly affected by having an absent father serving in the conflict. She was brought up by her grandparents, and it was to this loving couple, that she always attributed her love of nature.

Aged 8 she was sent off to boarding school in The Lake District where she was to make friendships that would last her whole life. She did well at school and upon leaving trained to be a speech therapist. She met and

married Tim Fry and they had two daughters Christa and Trinity. Both girls went to Quaker Boarding Schools in Somerset, not because they were Quakers - although there was Quaker ancestry in the family - but because it offered a good education and was close to their grandparents.

During this time she also trained to be an Acupuncturist and became interested in complementary medicine and healing of various sorts.

It was after the girls left school in the late 1980s that Karin started attending Rugby Meeting and was accepted into Membership in February 1991. It was the start of an illustrious Quaker 'career'. Karin became a Quaker visitor at a prison for young male offenders where she had a big impact on many young lives for several years, very much enjoying the work she did there. She then joined the Alternatives to Violence (AVP) programme, over many years taking its ethos as far as India and Bosnia just after the conflict ended there. In 1991 she was part of the team who designed the Quaker Tapestry under the auspices of the 5th Conference of FWCC, and was very proud to add her stitching prowess to one of the panels.

She was widely travelled, spending some time in the USA when newly married, and there were many holidays spent in Europe, with a 60th milestone birthday spent in Nepal with friends to mark the occasion. Perhaps the most influential foreign sojourn came when she and Tim came to visit Trinity in Cape Town where she had married and settled with John and produced two granddaughters. They bought a house in Mowbray which made frequent visits possible.

It was after Tim had passed away that Karin decided to set up home near her grandchildren in Cape Town and to begin another journey of discovery – this time, living and deepening her spirituality on her own terms. She moved to Mowbray permanently in the early 2000s and started regularly attending the Cape Town Quaker Meeting just down the road from where she lived. She soon became an active member of the Meeting, becoming involved in The Quaker Peace Centre. She had a short term as Clerk, and was a regular member of the weekly Prayer Meeting and also an Elder.

During this time she bought a plot of land at Betty's Bay and built a 'holiday' home for herself and family, but it soon became apparent that this was the place she wanted to live full time. The house was ideally and purposely built halfway between the sea, and Harold Porter Botanical Gardens set in the Kogelberg Mountain Range, and it was here that her innate love of nature really flourished. She soon met a group of like-minded people and became involved in various 'spiritual growth' study groups, eventually setting up several of her own on topics ranging from Ken Wilber to Eckhart Tolle, her beloved Mayan calendar, and many more. She became a Transference Healing practitioner, travelling

overseas with Christa to attend conferences on a regular basis. She also had what was to become a truly awe-inspiring crystal collection built up over the years, and an encyclopaedic knowledge of their various properties and uses.

I met Karin at the Meeting prayer group in the late 2000s, before she had moved to Betty's Bay full time and we soon became close friends, and later even closer as 'spiritual buddies'. I was privileged to spend long 5-day weekends once a month for many years, broadening my own spiritual journey through the various study groups, and of course Karin's own enormous knowledge and wisdom which she shared

unstintingly with me.

I have done my best to sum up Karin who was always somewhat of an enigma, even to those who knew her very well, myself included. She was a person of deep integrity and spirituality, a lover of nature and all things 'sacred', and a wonderful friend to those of us across the world who were privileged to know her during her lifetime. She is very much missed but will remain in the hearts of those of us who shared life with her, and will continue to be 'loved silently as she was once loved out loud'.

Caro Attwell

QUAKERS TRAVELLING

Young Friends visiting a Country of Contrasts

Bronwen Ellis

In January this year we were visited by a group of young Quakers from George School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. They attended two of our meetings during their stay in South Africa. They had three weeks in Cape Town before moving on to Johannesburg. They were a diverse group of youngsters and definitely filled



Quaker House with plenty of energy and talk while they were here. I have heard other visitors from afar say they could come to any quaker house and still have it feel like home there. I think it is safe to say this group did feel this welcome here. They were very moved by their other experiences in the communities they visited and in getting to know their host families. Their accompanying teacher Erin Sio, was kind enough to share the essays they wrote about their time here. I will try to share some highlights here, though they did have much to say I think I sadly cannot fit in this space.

They had been told on arrival That South Africa is "a Country of contrasts" and they should expect to see this. This is definitely true as they described: "That single statement has constantly been on my mind for the last two weeks. We have driven from settlements to million dollar home towns and seen gorgeous beaches after

passing fields of litter. A World Cup Stadium in the background of young, barefoot boys kicking a wad of cloth and paper and stayed in a huge five star hotel, before passing people asleep on the sidewalk." — *Alice Morrison*

What I did find a little surprising was how hopeful and positive they generally said people in this country

are, despite having very little. "Going into this trip I knew Blikkiesdorp was going to be the hardest for me emotionally. Walking into Blikkies, I immediately felt an energy shift. I was steered to the kitchen to help prepare lunch and future meals. I found myself most moved by Gladina. Gladina is a woman with a free spirit and a green thumb. She welcomed us into her home and it wasn't until I realised how optimistic, proud and content this woman is, that I broke down. Gladina is so happy to call her home her home." — *Mimi Noe*

And we are seen as friendly and welcoming people: "This also leads into how I would describe our trip to the GS [George School] community. I would describe our trip as one that was filled with love. I briefly talked about this when I spoke at meeting, and since then I have seen even more of it, but everyone that I have interacted with in South Africa have been the most

genuine and welcoming people. I want the rest of the GS community to understand that yes, there are ‘bad’ and ‘scary’ people but on the flip side there are also some of the kindest people I have ever met. Whether it be my host family or the people we’ve met at Quaker meeting, the young kids we played with at church and the Amazing gardener we got to meet at Blikkiesdorp. They all have a spirit for life that cannot be matched.” — *Amani Speller*

I have so often found that South Africans like to play the blame game, across the board if there is a problem, it is who is to blame and then to complain for the next while. There is a very angry side to the country, that we all need to hold in the light sometimes.

They still very much understand the scale of poverty and the painful history we have. “One very prominent and constant issue I thought that was highlighted in South Africa’s past was the mistreatment of black people, especially black men in their prisons during apartheid. This became very apparent to me after visiting Robben Island and Constitution Hill.

Dehumanization was a constant word that was brought to my mind while walking through these places. Hearing how these people were treated like animals and given the bare minimum for survival or not surviving at all was heartbreaking.”

One thing I think I did not consciously realize that was discussed by some of the students was how much we use art in the country. “Frequently, art is used as a form of expression in some cases to demonstrate trauma, show emotion, aid inclusivity, etc. Whether it be painting, photography or literature, art has been a strong form of expression for South Africans post-apartheid,” says Demaris Walker-Descartes.

“Art tells a story and there are so many forms of it within South Africa, whether it’s a playing piece where people can express their feeling post-apartheid (in the TRC film we watched before traveling to SA), art in museums, art in creations (sculptures, artifacts, gifts, paintings) there is so much art around and as it continues to develop it will help South Africa to grow.” — *Folashade Olaleye*

TAILPIECE: MORE PHOTOS FROM YM 2023

