

Society of Friends (Quakers), Geneva Monthly Meeting Annual Report for 2014

Geneva Monthly Meeting (GMM) continued to be very active in 2014, with Meetings for Worship held every Sunday at 10:30 and the number of worshippers typically between 8 and 15. We welcomed visitors from various other Quaker communities in Europe and locations further away. We remain primarily an Anglophone community, however the first Sunday of each month is “Francophone”, during which those present are encouraged to speak French.

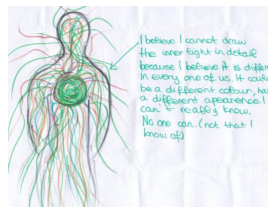
We continued to meet at Quaker House and to share the building with the Quaker UN Office, which occupies the offices on the top floors and now owns the building. To help coordinate maintenance and renovation work on the building an official appointment has been created to establish a point of contact with QUNO. Other religious groups continue to use the Meeting Room regularly as well (Unitarian Universalists, Buddhists, Muslims, and others).

Geneva Monthly Meeting is currently composed of 55 members (compared to 54 in 2013) and 46 friends of Friends (compared to 48 in 2013). We are thankful for the number of children in our community and in addition to the Children’s Meeting held once a month, a Children’s Nursery is now being organized on the last Sunday of every month. Discussions have started with QUNO about possible renovations to the sous-fumoir in order for it to be used by the children.

We gave thanks for the expression of the Grace of God in the life of two long-standing and very active members of GMM, Sonja Krummel and Ellen Mouravieff-Apostole, who passed away in 2014.

The social life of the meeting remains very active, with the Overseers organizing Open Houses on Sunday afternoons at the homes of members, as well as several birthday parties, the annual Christmas party, the summer barbecue and the annual Mystery Tour. This year’s Mystery Tour took us to the Chateau de Prangins to see some very detailed decoupage and try our hand at this art. Approximately 20 people then walked down to the lake and enjoyed an excellent presentation on the historical significance of the Promenthoux Beach. Overseers have also been active in maintaining contact with members of Meeting who fall ill or are unable to come to meeting for whatever reason.

To encourage outreach, a children’s booklet published in 2010 by Britain Yearly Meeting entitled *Quaker Meeting and Me* has been translated into French with the title *le Culte quaker et moi*. Also as a form of outreach, Geneva Monthly Meeting joined in a series of exchanges organised by Geneva’s interreligious platform in November. About a dozen guests joined meeting for worship, including five who also joined Children’s Meeting and participated in drawing what the Inner Light meant to them. Here are a few examples:



Our Social Concerns Committee was also very active in 2014 in proposing appropriate projects and organizations to receive our donations. We provided grants to help young people from other parts of the world participate in the QUNO summer school, as well as to Peace Direct; PECEP, to support the fees for a number of children for one year attending PECEP pre-schools in Gaza; SED, the educational programme for Dalit girls in India; GSsA, le Groupe pour une Suisse sans Armée; War Resisters International; Casa de los Amigos in Mexico City; and a project to provide relief supplies to communities affected by the floods in Burundi.

The committee also arranged collections after meeting for worship for several worthwhile causes, such as Voix Libres, Twiga, The Social Education for Development Trust in Tamil Nadu (founded by the Royston family), AGORA (Aumônerie Genevoise Œcuménique auprès des Requérrants d'Asile), Alternatives to Violence Programme (AVP) in Kenya, and La Coulou.

Geneva Monthly Meeting Elders continued to nurture the spiritual life of the meeting in various ways, such as selecting queries to be read at the beginning of Meeting for Worship twice a month. Elders also organized the programme for the SYM Annual Gathering in Herzberg on the theme "Switzerland Yearly Meeting: Past, Present and Future".

News and Views, the quarterly newsletter, continued to provide news on the Quaker community in Geneva, including photos from the various social events, updates on the activities of our members, and articles on topics of interest. The library acquired many new documents and pamphlets in English, French and German, along with a computer to help manage the catalog. Members of meeting continued to represent GMM at some of the meetings of several local associations, such as the Plateforme interreligieuse and the Rassemblement des Eglise et des Communautés Chrétiennes de Genève.

Bob Bowers,
Clerk, Geneva Monthly Meeting
5 May 2015