

EMEYF Minutes, Annual Meeting 2013 and Communications Committee Meeting 12/2013

EMEYF ANNUAL MEETING 2013, November 29 - December 1, Brussels

Present: Leo Vincent, Tobias Buchmann, Esther Koehring, Kristin Skarsholt, Jenny McCarthy, Marisa Johnson, Paul Sladen, Helen Close, Rebecca Viney-Wood, Alexandra Bosbeer, Mieke van Opheusden

AM2013/01 Opening Minute

We are pleased to be welcomed back to Quaker House, Brussels for our 2013 Annual Meeting. Since our last Annual Meeting there has been a complete change of staff here at QCEA and we welcome the opportunity to meet them, including our new Secretary for EMEYF Rebecca Viney-Wood. The main theme of our Annual Meeting is to explore the work of Quakers in the Europe and Middle East section and think about how we might also become more actively involved in this work as well as consider our own outreach and ways to connect more with Quakers in the Section. We are happy to welcome Marisa Johnson, FWCC-EMES Executive Secretary and Alexandra Bosbeer, QCEA Representative, who are with us for parts of this weekend. We are looking forward to hearing about their work.

AM2013/02 Greetings

We have received greetings from: Liz Seume, Vivian Barty-Taylor, Marielke Nieuwerth-Van den Akker, Theo Wieldraaijer, Jonathan Riddell, Ian Goggin, Kathrine Skarsholt, Wanda Dahme, Johanna Buchmann, Helen Percy, Bethany Squire and Chris Venables. We send back our greetings to them.

AM2013/03 EMEYF's Relationship with FWCC-EMES

We have heard from Marisa Johnson about the history and work of FWCC and FWCC EMES. We have considered the roles of Quaker organisations and the importance and strength of working together in loosely formed organisations that spread our boundaries: theology, language, geography and even age. Following on from Minute SG13/12 from Spring Gathering we have considered how to move forward with the relationship between EMEYF and EMES.

We take strength in the fact we are one worshipping community and this is what unites us. We consider that there are opportunities for joining together both in worship and ministry. We heard that we hope to move towards openness and transparency that will go beyond the artificial borders of our organisations. We consider that we might look again at joint gatherings and increased contact through Skype meetings for worship and attendance at each other's meetings. We realise that we are much more than just two executive committees and that we would find it helpful and nourishing to promote friendship throughout our communities.

We would like to make sure that we are represented on the EMES Executive Committee. We will need to continue to work on how to make this role an integrated part of both our communities and make sure it is a valued line of communication.

We remind Yearly Meetings to consider the diversity and involvement of Young Friends in their own nominations processes when nominating EMES Representatives. We would like to ensure that Young Friends' involvement is more than tokenistic and we hope that throughout the section that Quaker Yearly Meetings and organisations might consider fully integrating Friends of all ages in their work and communities.

We are told that the next Annual Meeting of EMES is the 1 - 4 May 2014 in Strasbourg. We encourage Young Friends to attend and EMES and EMEYF will work together to enable this.

AM2013/04 EMEYF's relationship with Quaker Council European Affairs

We have heard from Alexandra Bosbeer, QCEA Representative, about the work of QCEA. We have heard about the programme areas and the types of work that QCEA undertakes. QCEA works to represent Friends from Europe at the European Union and the Council of Europe level. Whilst the work of QCEA is often seen as that of an NGO we heard that there is great importance on underpinning QCEA advocacy and work with what our faith calls us to act upon. Whilst QCEA is small, its impact in the European Community can be very big.

QCEA is governed by a council which is made up of representatives of Yearly Meetings and worship groups in Europe as well as a representative from EMEYF and EMES. The Council helps to shape the vision of QCEA and brings forward concerns of Quakers across the Section. In the office is a small team that includes Programme Assistants (PA), which are young people starting out in their career and gaining invaluable experience.

As well as our Representative role on the council one of the other key ways that EMEYF relates to QCEA is through one of the programme assistants, who spends some of their working time being the secretary for EMEYF.

We value the work of QCEA and as a community we encourage young Friends to engage with QCEA either through applying to be a PA, or signing up to action alerts, looking at the QCEA website and blog, and subscribing to Around Europe.

AM2013/04.1 Joint QCEA - EMEYF Study Tour

We have heard the idea for a joint QCEA-EMEYF study tour in April 2014. This study tour will be an opportunity for Friends to find out about the work of QCEA and the European Institutions. We see this as a good opportunity for Young Friends and also for the communities around the Young Friends who will get to hear about the work of QCEA.

QCEA has run a study tour every two years in recent history but a joint study tour we hope will include more Young Friends and increase Young Friends' engagement in QCEA. In a joint study tour, half of the places available are reserved for Young Friends.

We will work with QCEA on the programme and the advertising and promotion of the event. We are mindful to make the programme inclusive for all participants. We agree to the plan of the joint study tour and are looking forward to a successful event. We ask QCEA to work with Mieke van Opheusden [see CC2013/24 Proposed Joint QCEA - EMEYF

study tour, below] as the EMEYF point person for this project and ask all members of EMEYF to consider in which ways they might want to contribute and participate.

AM2013/05 Nominations

We have heard names brought forward for the role of Gatherings Coordinator for the period from Annual Meeting 2013 to Annual Meeting 2016. This nomination is subject to consent. We ask our current gatherings coordinator to contact these people after this Annual Meeting in the way that this meeting has agreed. [See CC2013/23 Gatherings Coordinator, below]

We are unable at this time to find a name for the UK Treasurer.

We are unable at this time to nominate an Assistant Clerk.

We ask Communications Committee to consider the other roles that might be required for EMEYF and ask them to try to fill the roles if they are urgent. These nominations can be brought back to Spring Gathering 2014 for further discernment and/or agreement from an EMEYF business session.

AM2013/06 Cary Lecture

We have heard from our Friend Esther who has been asked by German Yearly Meeting to deliver the Richard-Cary-Lecture in 2015. She has been asked as a Young Friend and as an Elder of EMEYF. We are excited to hear this news and we would like to support and uphold Esther in this task. We ask Esther to let us know when and what support she needs.

AM2013/07 Spring Gathering 2014

We have heard an update from Helen Close from the planning committee for Spring Gathering 2014. The Gathering will be in the region of Macedonia and will take place April 14 - April 21, 2014. The theme will be "Borders - within and without". The planning group have been working on the programme and are excited about the theme. We look forward to hearing more from the planning committee in the future as they finalise the details. We thank the planning committee for their work and remind them that the EMEYF community is available for support.

AM2013/08 Closing Minutes

We are grateful for our time together this weekend. We appreciated the opportunity to meet with representatives from other Quaker organisations and look forward to our continuing relationships. The process of EMEYF's discernment and restructuring has come a long way since our last Annual Meeting and we look forward to continuing to build a strong and nurturing community. We enjoyed spending time together.

EMEYF COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE 12/2013, December 18, via Skype

Present: Kristin Skarsholt, Paul Sladen, Mieke van Opheusden, Esther Koehring.
Greetings from Rebecca Viney-Wood.

We started our meeting with worship sharing, after listening to these words:

*I said to my soul be still and wait without hope
For hope would be hope for the wrong thing; wait without love
For love would be love for the wrong thing; there is yet faith
But the faith and the love and the hope are all in the waiting.
Wait without thought, for you are not ready for thought:
So the darkness shall be the light, and the stillness the dancing.
-T.S.Elliot, "Four Quartets"*

CC2013/21 Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA) Representative.

We appoint Hannah Slater as QCEA representative and agree to cover her costs in attending meetings.

CC2013/22 Clerk.

We have heard from Leo Vincent about his decision to step down as Clerk of EMEYF. We thank Leo for the work he has done for EMEYF and the time he spent with us in this period of transition of EMEYF. We hope to be able to appoint a clerk or a clerking team at Spring Gathering 2014. We see that the role can be difficult and we need to continue looking for ways to support each other in our roles.

CC2013/23 Gatherings Coordinator (See AM2013/05)

We welcome David Mangels to Communications Committee as the incoming Gatherings Coordinator. Kristin has been in touch with David, and they will work through a handover period lasting until Spring Gathering 2014. We will invite David to a CC meeting, in person or via Skype, before Spring Gathering 2014.

CC2013/24 Proposed Joint QCEA - EMEYF study tour (See AM2013/04.1)

We heard from Mieke that she is willing to serve as the EMEYF point person for the proposed joint QCEA EMEYF study tour. We thank Mieke and ask all members of EMEYF to get in touch with her about the study tour and their ideas for it.

CC2013/25 Trustees and Constitution

Following up with the minute from Spring Gathering 2013 (SG2013/10), we were asked to try to appoint new trustees for the Charitable Committee from within Communications Committee going forward. We appoint Esther Köhring and Mieke van Opheusden as new trustees, and agree to release Benjamin Jarman, Matt Loffman, Ali Ghanem & Rachel Miller (née Bryers), and thank them for their long service. EMEYF's Trustees are now: Paul Sladen, Esther Köhring and Mieke van Opheusden. We ask the new trustees to make any changes required to the constitution to bring it up to date with present charitable registration requirements and report about this at Spring Gathering. In particular, the minimum and maximum trustees to be appointed, and to remove the stated requirement for Trustees coming from the Communications

Committee to be members of Young Friends General Meeting (YFGM) in the United Kingdom. This section of the Constitution had already had to be ammended previously to follow the name change of Young Friends Central Committee (YFCC) to YFGM.

CC2013/26 Spring Gathering 2014.

We have heard via Kristin about Spring Gathering 2014 (scheduled to occur in Macedonia) that there are no major updates beyond the report recorded in AM2013/07. The dates are expected to be 14-21 April 2014, with the possibility of being able to book a venue for the weekend before aswell. We agree to publish these dates.

CC2013/27 FWCC-EMES Executive meeting, February 2014

The next EMES Executive Committee will be in Cambridge during 13-16 February 2014. EMES look forward to welcoming a Young Friend who can attend the meeting, to continue our dialogue about the relationship of EMES and EMEYF in a practical way. We ask members of EMEYF who are interested in participating to contact CC so that CC can be in a position to discern a name.

CC2013/28 Closing Minute

We will ensure these CC minutes are distributed along with the AM2013 minutes. We aim to meet again shortly in the company of David aswell.